



THE
STRANGE DEATH
OF **ADOLF HITLER**

**“An Amazing Document of
World-Shaking Importance.”**

THE STRANGE DEATH OF ADOLF HITLER

PUBLISHER'S NOTE: We predict that the facts disclosed by this astounding book will develop world interest unequalled since Chamberlain's visits to Germany last Fall.

- What is the sensational, suppressed truth behind the zig-zag course of German diplomacy since the day of the Munich Pact?
- What was the appalling situation that confronted Chamberlain in the carefully darkened rooms at Munich and Godesburg? And how does this account for his mystifying hesitations during those hours of life or death?
- What are the details of Hitler's threats of suicide?
- How did Julius Schreck, Hitler's "double" and chauffeur, meet his death in 1936?
- What is in back of the strangely persistent rumors in London and elsewhere that the real Adolf Hitler is dead?

THE STRANGE DEATH OF ADOLF HITLER

fires a bombshell whose detonations will be heard around the world. Its appalling revelations, the intimate details which attest their authenticity, will give you the most astounding reading ever printed.

*The Strange Death
of
Adolf Hitler*

Anonymous



New York

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PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

On the last Friday in January, 1939, we were presented with the most unusual manuscript that has come to us in thirty years of publishing. The unimpeachable sources from which it emanated were a guarantee of its authenticity. The immense world-importance of the facts stated in the document gave us no alternative but to present it to the world without delay. The central and most vital fact is that Adolf Hitler, the Nazi Fuehrer and dictator, was assassinated at 2:13 A. M. on September 29, 1938, the night before the consummation of the Munich Pact; and that an opportunist double is ruling in his stead.

In view of the importance of this matter, a brief statement of the facts connected with our receipt of the manuscript is essential. It was handed to us by a German officer high in the German merchant marine, who had just arrived from the other side, and at once telephoned for an appointment and called on us. We had known him for a number of years; and knew that, like so many of his fellow-officers, he did not approve of Nazi excesses or the Nazi philosophy, although his position of course depended upon his concealing this.

When asked for the particular purpose of this unexpected visit, he stated that he was the bearer of an international secret of immense importance, which he wished us to publish, if we thought it wise. This secret, he said, was the fact that Adolf Hitler was dead, and had been dead since the night before the Munich Pact was arrived at.

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We brought out the January 14th copy of *The New Yorker* from our files, and showed him the two-column story there on page 66, claiming that Hitler had been killed in Hamburg in 1935, and that from one to four doubles were ruling in his place. But we explained that this was a facetious spoof story, not meant to be believed.

His face grew grave, as he read through the article. The facts in it were nonsense, he said; but he had the real facts, and a full statement as long as a book to prove it. We asked to see the statement. He first secured our promise never to connect his name with the matter; for that would mean more than his loss of livelihood; it would mean at the least disgrace and imprisonment, with a strong probability of death, the usual punishment for tactless frankness in Germany today. And then he brought out a huge grimy manila envelop, which had been hidden inside his coat, liberally marred with broken red wax seals, and laid it before us.

He pulled out first a brief note in French, and laid it before us. It was simple enough to translate:

M. Michel Simon
Compagnie Transatlantique
Nice, France

Dear Unknown Friend:

I am asking you to treasure the enclosed statement, and at the time of my death make it public to the world.

As to why I have a right to ask this favor of you, you may ascertain by asking your mother who Maximilian Bauer was, and whether you do not owe him at least this.

Respectfully,
Maximilian Bauer

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We asked him to tell just how the document came into his possession, which he proceeded to do. This note, he said, had been outside of the sealed package. On this present cruise trip they had put up in Monte Carlo, and he had run up to Nice for the day. Michel Simon was a young friend in the office of the Compagnie Transatlantique in Nice. He had dropped in to see him. They had gone to a café together, and then, at Michel's insistence, to the young Frenchman's rooms, two squares away. There Michel had told him of receiving this parcel by special courier from Switzerland the day before. Out of curiosity, after reading the note, Michel had opened it. But it was all in German, he pointed out, and he knew no German. Moreover, his mother had been dead for eleven years. The German seemed to be something about Adolf Hitler. Could it all be a joke? Would not his friend the German officer glance at it, and say whether it should be thrown away, or what?

But by this time the German merchant marine officer had to catch the bus to return to Monte Carlo and his ship; and so he said that it was impossible. Michel announced that *he* did not want the document; it might amuse his friend to translate it on the long trip across the Atlantic, and, the next time they met, tell him what it was all about. He had never heard of Maximilian Bauer, he insisted, and he washed his hands of the matter. And so the German officer bundled up the documents in their original envelop, and left with them.

The night after leaving Funchal, having nothing to do, he opened the package and read all night. It was all so incredibly important that he finished it the next night, and began to decide what to do with it. The world must know it now, that was clear; and yet, his own name could

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not be connected with it. He thought of his friendship with us, and set to work translating it. Already much more than half of it was completed.

We asked to see the translation. He handed us the meticulously written version in English, starting with these words that will soon be so familiar to the world:

My name is Adolf Hitler. By this name the world knows me, and it knows me by no other name. Since two-thirteen A.M. on the morning of September 29, 1938, I have been the only Adolf Hitler alive on earth.

We read through the first few pages with growing amazement, and asked him if, in his opinion, it was authentic.

"There is no possible doubt of it," he said. "No one but one at the very heart of the Nazi machine could have known some of the things there put down, that have never been told to the world, although we in Germany know them, but not so definitely, or in such detail."

Like all Germans visiting outside of the Reich, he suffered from the government veto of his having money to spend in foreign ports. We assured him that we would see that he received the translator's fee, and that there would be royalties for him later. He was to have eight days in New York City before being transferred to another ship on a South American cruise line. He agreed to finish the translation in a week, and did.

Even while he was working on it, we had the accuracy of his translation checked, to make sure that the very idiom of the original had been wholly preserved.

We checked up on two other matters. We looked first into the matter of Hitler's doubles, and the attempts on his

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life. So accurate and conservative a commentator as John Gunther, in his standard masterpiece *Inside Europe* * had this to say of his major double:

Another member of this company, whose name is unknown, and who has fancifully been called the highest paid man in Germany—according to the *London Daily Telegraph*—is Hitler's double, a man who resembles him so startlingly that he can substitute for him, if necessary, on public occasions.

An article in *The New Yorker*, December 10, 1938, described the four official doubles, one of whom even had a voice like Hitler's,** with the suggestion that there might be more; and with data about the doubles of Mussolini and Stalin as well. The theme of this article was, "Why doesn't somebody shoot Hitler?" I found that many of the authorities amplified this data. The facts, then, in THE STRANGE DEATH OF ADOLF HITLER came entirely within the range of possibility.

We next checked the utterances given to Hitler, Göring, Goebbels, von Arnheim, and the other Nazi leaders. When we first read them, they seemed to be perversions or caricatures of Nazi sayings. We found it hard to believe, for instance, that Hitler had actually said that Germany must annihilate France; that Nazis seriously said that the Jew was a parasite instead of a human being; that they called the Lambeth Walk a Jewish conspiracy; and so on. We found that all of these attitudes were given accurately in this book, and that here we had the first full-length portrait of all the major leaders in the movement.

Last of all, we tried to check the facts included. Most of

* 1938 Edition, page 11.

** P. 118.

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them are entirely accurate. A few have eluded us. We can find no official record of the suicide of Ulrica von Arnheim. On one occasion, when Hitler is said to have spoken at Nürnberg, we find authorities who place him in Vienna on that day; but, again, this may have been intentional obfuscation by the use of doubles. A few incidents appear to be slightly out of order,—but these never affect the framework of the whole. And certainly the hysterical course of German machinations since the Munich Pact indicates that something is sorely wrong with the rowdy Nazi machine there; as if the flywheel had been unexpectedly removed, permitting the most eccentric excesses of conduct, from lesser, more undisciplined minds, lacking the former internal stabilizer. When the Nazi government openly adopted its incredible policy of anti-Semitic rapine in late 1938, when each German was officially invited to surrender his mistress to productive labor and motherhood, when plans for a Pan-Nazi Europe were stressed in public utterances, it is clear that the voice of shrewd authority is missing. When the lion is away, the jackals go berserk.

As to the attempts to kill Hitler, the record is fuller. Most of these have been rigorously minimized or denied in Germany; yet word leaks out. We know now rather surely the facts of the death of his double and chauffeur, Julius Schreck, in 1936, and certain earlier and later incidents. The same applies to Hitler's plans, threats, and facilities for suicide. The only difference is that this statement is amplified, and for the first time gives the world more of the true story.

The book will speak for itself. Since it has become available, it has world importance enough to cause its immedi-

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ate publication, even if this were not pathetic Herr Bauer's intention. History has at times known such mysteries in the past; and in the long run the usual result has been the reluctant discovery that the strange revelation is the truth, or an understatement of it. Whether Hitler is physically dead and an opportunist double is rubber-stamping in his name, or whether the death is symbolic but no less real, it still remains that this amazing document is the most important book out of Nazi Germany.

THE PUBLISHERS.

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**THE STRANGE DEATH
OF ADOLF HITLER.**

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST MISTAKE

MY name is Adolf Hitler. By this name the world knows me, and it knows me by no other name. Since thirteen minutes past 2 A.M., on the ghastly morning of September 29, 1938, I have been the only Adolf Hitler alive on earth. In view of what sooner or later must be my next step, I am writing down a bald skeleton of certain important events in which I was central. Only thus may I correct the minutes of history before they are approved through error or ignorance and added to man's permanently recorded archives, and my colossal secret buried eternally with me.

I desire the name I was born with to appear on my tomb. This is through no superstition. Like all true Nazis and members of the superior German race, I am pagan through and through. I know well that Herr Gott was a boggy-man invented by the *Judenschweine*, to gull the higher race and its allied nations after death, as they endeavor to gull us through life. But *if there were* a Herr Gott with his Purge on the Judgment Day, I would not care to appear before him behind a mask, least of all behind that ghastly, leprous domino I now wear. To myself, God be thanked, there is no mask. I will not let the one I must wear till death bloat me forever before other men, and

before the folkic historians of the future, who should give credit where credit belongs for the world that Germany has rebuilt. I desire the name I was born with to appear on my tomb. I prefer it, with great reason, to the one that badges me now before men, and will badge me until my own hand or the hand of another has ended my life.

These facts, then, I will in direct chronological order set down, as far as I remember their precise sequence,—that is, the facts of my life since the night of January 29, 1933. What I was before that means nothing to the world. What it still means to me has nothing to do with this strange and incredible segment of my life since.

I preface with a brief word of needed explanation, before I arrive at that night of the first great mistake.

I was born Maximilian Bauer just before sunrise on Thursday, May 1, 1890, *im wunderschöne Monat Mai*, in Passau, Lower Bavaria. Passau, for all that favorable officials have not flattered it in the official census figures, is the most typically folkic or racialist city in this heart of real Germany, cloven as it then was by the foul machinations of the Slavophile Hapsburgs. Even the house I was born in looked out on the two halves of a divorced world. From the eastern window in the second story bedroom where I began life, you can see off to the left the Danube where the Inn flows to greeten it, and the heights of the Bohmerwald; while below, to the right, it is Austria—that Waldviertel where Adolf Hitler himself was born.

My father was an apothecary, with a degree from Munich and his own shop; my mother, his cousin, was only a governess in the home of the one deputy to the Reichstag living in Passau. I was the eldest of three children, and my parents were married just before my sister Theresa was

born, when I was barely three. During my father's last few years his ill health made him bitter, and I often saw my mother break into weeping when he taunted her about my paternity, which became his favorite little joke. He would boast to her that he made her pregnant first as the only way to prevent her from marrying a young Austrian doctor she loved dearly, since he did not wish Austrian blood to corrupt the Bauer stock; but he would add that her own actions had made it uncertain which was my real father. My parents were Catholic communicants, and I was schooled first by the Brothers. I had one uncle, who was an importer of drugs and chemicals at Nürnberg, who had been apprenticed as a youth to a Protestant importer there, and had become converted. When my father died I went to live with this uncle, and I attended *gymnasium* there. My uncle was as much a success as my father had been a failure, and he taught me his secret of success. He repeated it constantly until I learned it: Opportunity knocks once only at the door, and then it is the time to open the door. It is the sort of lesson it is wise never to forget. I have made it my motto, and have followed it.

My father's youngest sister, who had lived with my uncle Fritz when he was an apprentice, was married now to a Lutheran pastor with a charge at Basle. When I was graduated from *gymnasium*, I shifted to Basle to live with her, and I attended university there. It was here that I got my French, Italian and English, and little else except a certain disease from the woman I boarded with in my last year at the University. She seemed very mature to me, although she was but a few years beyond twenty. She was the wife of one of the porters at the university, who roomed each year four or five of the students. But it was

on a visit to her sister in Vienna, she said, that she had acquired the disease. Then I was told to go and live with yet another uncle, who held a Government post at Schwabach, and could appoint me to fill a vacancy as his clerk. But Basle had been a mere town after Nürnberg, and I had no desire to stagnate in a village when I had seen so little of the world. I remembered what my uncle the importer had said, and listened for opportunity to knock.

It did not keep me a long time waiting. At Geneva a well-to-do French merchant, Eugène Simon of Simon et Cie. of Nice, employed me as tutor in German to his sons, who were summering with their mother here in the Juras. The work was nothing, and Mme. Clothilde Simon, the mother of the boys, was very amiable and made my summer extremely pleasant. In the winter, when they returned to Nice, I went to live with the family, still as tutor to the sons, and planned thus to begin my wander-years. In the next May, Clothilde bore yet another son. I have seen him once, since. He is handsomer and brighter than his two brothers, which was to be expected.

In 1913 I was called to the colors. When war was forced on the Fatherland, after the absurd Slav assassination of the Slavophile Austrian heir to the throne at Sarajevo, my regiment was with the first division that occupied Luxemburg as a protective measure. In September, my regiment, transferred to the west, took up a strategic position along the Aisne, and after the dash to the sea was the first to enter Antwerp. When we learned the details of the frightful atrocities that French and Belgian soldiers were committing on German prisoners, our troops showed the greatest restraint to the civilians on this courageous march. It is in Stekel I have read that it was on this magnificent

march that the practice of tying down enemy girls and women to the bed before enjoying them, first became popular. According to my observation, there was no such general custom.

At the capture of Hartsmannswailerkopf I was wounded in the groin by shrapnel, and after being hospitalized for eighteen months, I did thereafter desk duty in the quartermaster's department. As a true German, I was not a Social Democrat, and after the disgraceful Armistice and the revolution which put the Jewish scum on top, I returned to Basle. After collecting my share of the estate of my uncle at Nürnberg, I began to repair my fractured life in a world which had forgotten the imperative need of German leadership.

The demand for German tutors now was very small. But there were always opportunities for the man ready to take advantage of them. At Nice, I managed to secure work as translator for a publisher. During the season I found an easier livelihood at Monaco, especially in selling instruction in the more familiar roulette systems to wealthy Americans unfamiliar with the game and its devices. For this purpose I became Alsatian, as it was more sympathetic. It was at Monte Carlo during that first spring that I met the young widow of the last colonel of my first regiment, Bavarian born like myself, who seemed utterly in a daze since her husband had been shot down by some drunken dog of a Spartacist for refusing to surrender his decorations for a bonfire. She was very grateful for my indignation, and in this state of mind I found it easy to console her. I let her live with me for seven years.

My new work finally made such a more or less permanent attachment distinctly undesirable. This work included

more than a little confidential translation for several minor governments, work well enough paid, but requiring the maximum of personal secrecy. I sent Greta back to Munich, promising to rejoin her within the month. I have never seen her since, although I have heard that she actually became so poor that she lived with a Jewish industrialist, who later took her to Berlin when he secured some government appointment from the republic. But for me, it was far wiser to confine my affairs of the heart to more temporary and less entangling relationships.

Of course, after von Hindenburg replaced the Socialist tailor as president of the Reich, Berlin again became a city in which a German could hold up his head. Even in spite of its twilight under the *Sozis*, it had of course been for half a century the cultural capital of Europe. Between my intermittent confidential assignments, occasionally I traveled throughout the Fatherland, and once or twice even visited Berlin, which had become the center of world gaiety, replacing effeminate Paris and orgiastic Vienna.

By the devil's own luck, I arrived in Berlin finally just after noon of Saturday, January 28, 1933, and registered at the Kaiserhof, using one of the various pseudonyms that helped conceal my movements when on assignment. I was a Hamburger, this time: Hummel hummel. . . . I was, of course, not alone. This time it was the exquisite little wife of the first attaché of an embassy at The Hague—we will put her down as Chiquita, which was my invariable pet name for her. Her husband had had me as guest in his home in connection with some work I was doing for his government, when he was suddenly recalled for a personal consultation. It would have been childish to miss so excellent an opportunity. I had not forgotten the *tzigana*

proverb, "Fruit not plucked now in this garden will never be plucked." Chiquita had always wanted to see Berlin and the grizzled war hero who had become President, even if it was said he had become so senile that he bowed to himself in the mirror as to one of his staff officers. These were the least I could promise her. It was not hard to persuade her to leave her two exquisite little daughters in the care of the nurse and a sympathetic maid, and to take French leave for a fortnight with me. One of the things I regret most about what happened almost at once was that I did not have even one night of the planned vacation with the fascinating little señora, so made for amusement. To this day I still do not know just how she managed to get her fare paid back to The Hague; although, attractive as she was in every way, I am sure she encountered no insuperable difficulties.

We spent the afternoon at the Tiergarten, and dined in our suite at the hotel. Leaving her to prepare for the evening, I decided to go for a stroll along the Reichstagplatz, before proceeding to enjoy the little holiday further.

As I came out of the hotel and sauntered along, I observed, but not with especial attention, that the street seemed to be more cluttered than usual with men in civilian clothes. Sometimes, I have observed, one seems to be like a central star in a constellation moving in one of the two great extra-galactic star drifts, with groups of related stars keeping their same relative positions ahead, to each side, and behind. As if one were fixed in a certain position in the movement of a wave, with the drops on all sides following the same succession of trough and crest and the intervening progress. It is an amusing fantasy that I had learned to discourage, since my profession conduced

to a constant fear of being shadowed, always so far imaginary in the past. If I had had the wisdom to heed some remote subtle intuition then, and observe with my usual acumen, all that followed might never have happened.

I decided to turn my steps toward the Chancellery, which even the President was occupying while alterations were being made in his *Palais*. I sauntered along, aware again how that faintly annoying fantasy hovered over me: the murky clusters of men in civilian clothes that seemed to keep such even distances in front of *mé*, and across the street, and just behind me. It was like a game of chess in which every lane slowly narrowed, with each piece threatening constantly to check. This thing had gone far enough, I thought. I would return to the hotel and thus, by a flank movement, castle the king.

Smiling at the fancy, I stopped for a moment to stare up at the huge frowning mass of the Chancellery, which locked up within itself so much vital to the future of my clawed land.

It was the last free moment of my life.

The group of three men behind me had caught up with me at once, and those in front had turned and were returning toward me. From across the street other groups were converging. Suddenly I felt, pressed from behind against my ribs, under my left shoulder, that definitive touch of circular metal that speaks with appalling, unanswerable eloquence. "Not a sound," whispered a guttural voice. "You know what happens if you make the outcry. Walk straight ahead, as if one of us, to where you will be led. Otherwise. . . ." He bored more firmly with the pistol into my ribs.

"Why," I began to splutter my indignation—I was not

on confidential assignment in Berlin, but on a pleasure trip, and thus my conscience was unusually free, "I do not understand. It is some mistake, no? I am not the man you wish." For suddenly I understood—I was sure of it. Evidently that suspicious oaf of a husband of Chiquita had had me followed, and had arranged this unfriendly reception for me. I could talk my way out of that, I felt sure of it, and kept wary watch for the opportunity. And *then* would I get him!

The voice came colder. "It will be easier to shoot you here, and thanks to us for it, Corporal. If you are wise, and want to be alive at dawn, you walk ahead where you are led."

And still that metal mouth bored into the ribs below my shoulder, more and more firmly. This was on an open street in Berlin in 1933. It seemed incredible, for all that I knew how tense conditions had become, with Brüning out and von Papen in as Chancellor; with von Papen out and von Schleicher in; with Communists and Nazis colloqued and threatening a general strike, arrogant over their traffic strike which had tied up the capital; with plot and counterplot until senile old Hindenburg himself had barked out at his Chancellor before witnesses, "Well, General, when are you going to lead your army against *me*?" Ach, it was a mad place to have brought Chiquita to, at this time of all times.

But I would be more than a fool to resist. If it was her husband, that I could somehow handle. If it was robbery, what were a few *rentenmarken* to a hole through the heart? Beyond this I could not think. Once they had taken me wherever they wanted me, I could explain who I was and why I was here, and get back to Chiquita before the

infatuated simpleton had worked herself into hysterics over my unexplained absence.

To my amazement, my captors—there were more than a dozen of them now—led me around the palace which I knew was occupied by the Chancellor himself, to the back and into its courtyard, and down seven steps into a vault-like chamber opening beneath it. A door opened for them, into a bald, long room with blinding lights. It had no furnishings save a long table, several plain wooden chairs, and an army cot with two blankets piled at one end.

The pistols were out in the hands of each of them now. "Strip!" commanded the leader.

"Gentlemen, there's some mistake," I began, knowing that I could appeal to them most sympathetically by telling them of my desirable companion waiting impatiently for me in the hotel suite. "If you will just let me explain—"

"Listen, you little Austrian bastard," sneered the leader of my captors, a huge bull-like brute with the whole lower right side of his face a hideous red scar, "we were given the general impression that your corpse would be worth a lot more than you, alive. *Will* you strip?"

I opened my mouth to explain, and his hand slapped against my mouth without restraint. I stiffened back again and did not topple; one by one I removed my garments. With lightning fingers they had all my papers out, and one man fingered swiftly through them. Another group confiscated my watch, penknife, loose coins, lighter, cufflinks and all my minor valuables, and examined them carefully. They even ripped open my unopened package of cigarettes, and methodically ripped down and inspected carefully each cigarette in the packet. I had no conceivable explanation of what they were looking for.

"His papers are in the name of Emil Haas, of Hamburg, the name on the hotel register. They seem correct. Is that your name, swine?"

Ignoring the needlessly embarrassing situation, I drew on my shorts, buttoned them, and slipped into my undershirt. "If you will permit me to explain—"

His heavily shod foot ground my naked toes into the stone flooring. "Is that your name, swine?"

"But, no!" I hastened to make it clear. "Yet that I can clear up also—"

"Save your breath!" said the leader. "At least, you've told the truth this once."

Another captor spoke. "Sewed in his vest are papers identifying him as Max Scharben of Pilsen."

"False, too?" demanded the leader.

"Ach, yes. In my business—"

"—And here's a note slipped in among his blank checks, Captain. Look! 'Max—Ten promptly. Adoringly your C.' It stinks of perfume."

"False too, of course."

"But, no!" I said, face paler. "The lady is even now at the hotel waiting for me. If you will give me just *one* minute. . . ."

"Yeah, that tallies, too. They said his papers would probably all be false. For what *he* is, it is the perfect disguise. A woman, of all things, in his hotel room—and she came with him, too. Unless it's a boy dressed up in women's clothes. Cigarettes, too! Well, Corporal, I'll see you in the morning, early. His Excellency will hold an early reception for you."

The continued ill treatment made me desperate. "My friend, won't you give me *some* idea—"

"You are caught this time, Adolf, for the last time." He swung abruptly from me. "Lieutenant, detail four men to watch him every minute all night, with four guns covering him. Relief detail at one. I will return at six."

He left, leaving me to curse the damnable stupidity of these baboons of Berlin secret police. It was all too clear to me now. Three times before I had been mistaken for this upstart Austrian agitator who was the head of the discredited Nazis—for so I regarded him then in my appalling ignorance—though never before to the extent of inconveniencing my plans.

Now that the burly leader had gone, I felt that it was time to let the sergeant in charge of the four policemen remaining, understand more fully what an asinine blunder had been made. "So I am Adolf Hitler, eh?" I did not hide the sneer in my voice.

"You weren't man enough to come out with it before, when the Captain was here."

"Don't be an imbecile! Because I happen to look like that misbegotten son of an Austrian Jew, am *I* to blame?" So I said in my ignorance, for this was commonly charged in those days, especially among the Sozis. "Me, I am Bavarian born; and I will tell you my real name, and let you check up at once—"

"They say he is a fox." The sergeant ignored me, speaking to the man seated beside him. "No. He is an ass. From *you*," he turned savagely to me, "not one word more. I have heard your damned speeches too often, where you promise the earth and the sun and the moon and the stars to the gullible fools that listen to you. Hold your tongue, you, or by God I'll have my men pull it out with a pair of

pliers, and I'll slice off the end! And don't think I am joking, swine!"

Well, there was no gain in arguing with a man who had ideas like that. I held my tongue through that long ghastly night. It was of Chiquita I worried most. She would never believe the fantastic truth, even if I could send a message to her; women of the Latin races are like that, a smile one moment, a stiletto the next. She might even now have arranged somehow to take a late train back to The Hague, and leave me high and dry and lonely in this detestable city of police baboons and official imbeciles. Once again I tried to get them to telephone to her. The Herr Captain would have taken care of her long ago, I was informed, as I never would. And there were to be no more words from me.

I said no more.

They told me finally to lie down on the cot. I drowsed, I do not know for how long. I roused once when the door opened and four other policemen came on for the relief. I did not wake again until the room was full of officers. They placed me in their midst and marched me out of the cell. I did not know until we were in the courtyard that the sky was gray and that day had already come.

We marched upstairs to a huge room which it was easy to see was the Chancellor's study. He was surrounded by half a dozen resplendent aides. I recognized the bald head, the broad pink face, the shrewd twinkling little eyes: His Excellency Major General Kurt von Schleicher, Chancellor of the Reich.

They placed me square before him, flanked by guards with pistols still drawn. "Excellency, here we have him."

"Well, Adolf," he studied my face, with a satisfied smile, "good morning. This is a rather early call."

"Excellency, *you* still think I am Adolf Hitler, too?"

He seated himself and beamed smilingly at me. He tapped on the floor with his right foot. "There may be something you didn't know. Already I have the Old Man's permission to lead the Reichswehr into the streets against your Brownshirts and other Nazi traitors, and ferret you out of every rat hole in Berlin. But this is easier, no? I think I board you at the Colombia Haus in protective custody until death, no? And it is not so healthy there, Adolf, ach no, and things happen, also?"

I still stared straight at him. "You *still* think I am Adolf Hitler, too!"

"You are childish. But *naturally!* I do not know what devilment you and ungrateful Franz and the old Silver Fox planned last night. That Hugenburg is no more than a swine; you would have found it out, soon enough. But I got word you were due for this conference. My men saw you arrive at the station, and watched you register at the Kaiserhof. It was clever, a lady too, and the afternoon spent so innocently at the Tiergarten! I was about to have that room raided, in spite of your lady-friend," he bowed ironically, "when you yourself saved me the trouble. You were so obliging as to walk right out in the midst of my men, and make straight for the palace where Franz von Papen and the Nationalist were waiting for you. The Austrian demagogue, the Junker spy, the capitalist reactionary: treachery makes strange bedfellows. And now, *this* morning audience. You have gone too far." His voice suddenly turned cold and harsh. "For reasons of state—"

"And I am Adolf Hitler, you still think?" I made the message peremptory from my brain to his.

He rose from his chair, came around the great desk, and walked over until he was so close he could touch me. He stared above my eyes at my hair. "There is a gray streak here," he said, his voice very much smaller. "Is this some trick? When did *this* happen?"

"This is no trick. Your police are imbeciles!"

"In God's name, who *are* you?" His voice was agonized.

"Maximilian Bauer of Basle, born Passau. I would have told them. But they knew everything. They would not listen."

"This is some damnable trick! By God, Adolf, I'll—"

There was a peremptory knock on the door of the study. At once the door was opened, and in strode an austere plump officer in a Brownshirt uniform, with battle-marred face set in a massive ball of head. I knew at once it was Captain Ernst Roehm, Chief of Staff of the Storm Troopers, and the closest associate of this Hitler. I had once heard the end of one of his speeches, and was not impressed. I knew, too, he was said to be a boy-lover. What was he doing in private conference with the Reichskanzler this early in the morning?

He flung his arm upward and forward in the old Roman salute. "Heil Hitler!" he shouted. "General, I have the honor to inform you that at eleven-thirty last evening President von Hindenburg appointed Adolf Hitler Chancellor of the Reich, and Franz von Papen Vice-Chancellor. I regret very much to announce that your dismissal as Chancellor was announced at the same time. Thanks. Heil Hitler!" He saluted again, and stood at attention. More

and more men in brown shirts were filling the room at his back.

The general stared at him and then turned to stare more slowly at me. "So!" he said. Slowly his head bowed. He locked his hands behind his back, and began to walk slowly around the great study, his lips mumbling. He did not seem to know he was not alone.

Captain Roehm was staring at me with startled wonder. "But, in God's name, who is *this* man?" His voice was curt, almost frightened.

The burly brute of a Captain in charge of me saluted. "He was arrested loitering in front of this palace last evening at ten o'clock. His Excellency was questioning him."

"*Himmelherrgottssacrament!*" Roehm ripped it out. "You, who *are* you?"

"I am Maximilian Bauer, of Basle, born Passau. I strolled out from the Kaiserhof for a breath of air, and these men—"

He caught me by both shoulders, and pushed his fingers into my flesh, shaking me as if to make sure I was real. "Did no one ever tell you that you are the living image of Der Führer, Adolf Hitler, the savior of Germany, His Excellency the new Chancellor?"

"I am under arrest," I explained with quiet indignation, "because these imbeciles took me for this same Herr Hitler. I was about to be sentenced to Colombia Haus for protective custody until death, for the same mistake."

"Good," said Roehm. "That is over. You come with me. Herr Gott in Himmel! . . . Good day, General." He swung around abruptly, and marched out. I followed, flanked with guards as before. But they were different guards this time, and they wore brown shirts.

It looked as if my future was to consist of one arrest after another.

I soon found out my mistake.

CHAPTER II

UNDERSTUDY FOR A DICTATOR

CAPTAIN ROEHM led me finally to an anteroom of the Chancellery. He had turned back to look at me once or twice with curious intentness. Now he appraised me more slowly, with pleased, satisfied wonder in his eyes. There was a sly smile on his full strained lips.

I was still uncertain as to my status. "Am I not free, Captain? The arrest was a mistake. . . ."

"Not quite." He chose his words carefully. "If you will be so good as to wait here with two of my men. . . . I will return in brief time."

He was back in less than a quarter of an hour, accompanied by four men. I could not have noticed everything about them that first moment that I came to know so well later. But who they were I knew at once, without being told. Their faces had grown as familiar to republican Germany as the faces of the Kaiser and the Crown Prince had been before the war, or Hindenburg and Ludendorff during it; and much of Germany was sick at the rowdy brutality and horror they stood for. This huge moving hill of fat with the sour killer's face must be Captain Hermann Göring, Bavarian like myself, chief butcher of the movement—he who had in 1923, at the Beer Hall Putsch, ordered his Brownshirts to crash in the skulls of their op-

ponents with rifle butts. I did not know then that he had already been named Reichsminister without portfolio, and Prussian Minister of the Interior, giving him control of the Prussian police. This sick-eyed little vulture, stumping in on his club foot, with the hideous, bitter face, must be Dr. Goebbels, the vindictive little schemer, hated within the party almost as much as without. This keen-eyed, portly man with the salt and pepper hair must be the Junker convert, Erik von Arnheim. The fourth man, with a thug's face and licking, caressing eyes, I found out later was General Edmund Heines, the tyrant of Silesia. So different were they, so extreme in so many ways, they looked like four varied human monstrosities, freaks from a sideshow.

"Gentlemen," said Captain Roehm with a triumphant gesture, "may I present to you Maximilian Bauer, of Basle, born Passau. And what do you say *now*, in God's name?"

They were staring at me as if I were the maddest freak of all. The great ox who was Göring waddled powerfully over, grunting his amazement. He rubbed harshly down my cheek, he poked me abruptly in the chest, he squeezed my biceps, he even bent over, belching, to scrutinize my legs and my shoes. Heines came up more softly and felt me as fully, but his touches lingered more and almost caressed. Dr. Goebbels, the sick-eyed little vulture, walked around me, measuring, appraising; and midway of this a vacant look blanked out his face, as if already he was off on some distant, shrewd scheme. Von Arnheim simply stood and stared, obviously flabbergasted.

"Ach ja," boomed Göring. "He is all you say. For a moment, Captain, I thought you must be pulling my leg, and

it was he himself. Such a fantastic likeness! Any time we use him, the world will never know the difference!"

"Here," General Heines stroked my hair down further over my left eye, "we darken it a little, no? Then—perfect!"

"I'd swear it was his twin," said Arnheim. "His identical twin."

Goebbels accepted it more easily. "It is providence. And we will need him, no! Captain, you have found a treasure."

"Ach, maybe," sniffed Göring, with a disapproving look that traveled from me to the vindictive party schemer. "For me, I think it would be far easier to slit his throat. It is difficult enough to handle one Adolf, with his temperamental tears and his threats to commit suicide, if his way is not the only way. Treasures are dangers, Doctor, if the wrong hand gets hold of them. A weapon's use depends on who has hold of it. You think we need *two* of him?"

"Ach, act yourself," said Goebbels sharply. "Naturally. Seat yourself, Herr Bauer. We will ask you a question or two."

"I have a friend at the Kaiserhof," I protested. "She doesn't know Berlin at all; I brought her with me. If I could only be allowed to make sure *she* is all right, and understands—"

Göring's eyes widened in Rabelaisian amusement. "Ach, a woman in his bed! That is much better."

"*Now* we know." Von Arnheim's eyes twinkled.

Captain Roehm smiled at me from under slightly lowered eyelashes. It was obvious that he was trying to woo me, and not to antagonize me. "My dear friend, that can be forgotten, until you have heard us speak. *All* will be forgotten, when you have heard us to the end."

Goebbels raised a slight imperative hand. "We have work for you, Herr Bauer. Difficult work. Interesting and dangerous work. Yet it will be paid for in proportion to its difficult nature. You are free to accept it?"

I did not like his face or anything about him. I looked at Captain Göring, and liked him no more. Heines I could dismiss with no more than a faint sense of repugnance. Von Arnheim I liked: the kind of man I would be glad to take orders from. And Captain Roehm I had liked from the start. Yet this work evidently concerned all of them, for they stared at me now as if they were five hungry hens, and I a particularly fat and juicy worm each wished to enjoy for his own purposes. I smiled back at Roehm. "Well, Captain, I am not without work *now*. How long will this assignment of yours continue?" My mind was racing ahead. They were all Nazis, that I knew,—clearly not quite so discredited now, since they had been admitted into a coalition government. It would be party work, perhaps translation.

"Until you die." Göring stared at me with sinister satisfaction.

"—Of old age," Goebbels amended swiftly. "It is a career for you, a well-paid career for you. It will be of incalculable service for the Party, for the Fatherland. We will arrange the terms later; but practically you can name your price. You are interested, no?"

"But any man would be, Herr Doktor. And this work—just what is it?"

"He will accept," said Göring heavily, "or I'll have his throat slit myself. But do it your own way, Goebbels."

"It will be necessary, first, for us to ask you a few ques-

tions." He had a notebook out, and jotted down each answer as I spoke.

I was questioned altogether for almost two hours. The five of them, but chiefly Goebbels, extracted from me my whole history, as remorselessly as if I were a clinic patient commencing a psychoanalysis. Before they had finished, I was spiritually stripped before them—the last detail of my life pitilessly bared, my aliases, my confidential work for the lesser foreign powers, my occasional affairs, even down to Chiquita still waiting, as I trusted, in the Kaiserhof. Ultimately it became more than voluntary; I realized that these five men were in dreadful earnest, and had me entirely in their power, and that a policy of complete frankness was my only hope.

"Well, that ought to do," Goebbels at last said abruptly. "It should be enough. He is not quite forty-three—twelve months younger than der Führer. He is not known in Germany, except in aliases we can conveniently annihilate completely. He is sympathetic toward the Party, but belongs to no party. He has no ties. Well, gentlemen?"

They looked questioningly, suspiciously, grimly, one at the other. Only Göring still scowled, at the end.

I grew restless in the silence. "But, gentlemen, you have not yet told me what the precise nature of this work is," I reminded them. "Since I have been gone all night. . . ."

"Even the voice, yes," nodded Göring, evidently satisfied at last. "Holy Mother, tell him!"

"He'll do," said Arnheim. "Go ahead."

"Der Führer, Adolf Hitler, was last night appointed Chancellor of the Deutsches Reich," began Goebbels importantly. "Though we go in as a minority party in the

cabinet, with only three seats, we will be the majority party soon enough—”

“—The *only* party,” snapped Göring.

Goebbels nodded. “That too, soon enough. You have been told that you resemble the Leader?”

My hands flew wide in exasperation. “But last night those baboons arrested me, and detained me all night, thinking I *was*—er—the Leader.” I caught the term of respect and used it, as more sympathetic. It was clear to me now that opportunity had guided the arrest by mistake, and everything leading up to this conference; all that remained for me to do was to squeeze the last advantage out of it.

“Precisely. It may astonish you, my friend, to know that your unconscious resemblance to the Leader may have actually saved his life, his liberty, and the success of the coup-d’état that made him Chancellor. The work,” in his huge sonorous voice, so strange from so small and deformed a creature, “will be to *be* Adolf Hitler from now on, whenever we call upon you. To make public appearances for him. To ride in processions for him. To be his substitute, his double, in other words, as we use doubles for stars in the cinema.”

“To be shot at for him, maybe,” I objected.

“Of course, if that need arises. But most assassins are surprisingly bad shots.” Arnheim smiled encouragingly. “With Captain Roehm’s precious Storm Troopers protecting you, and Himmler’s Blackshirts, and the Reichswehr now under von Blomberg, it will not be so healthy to shoot at you, my little friend.”

These distinctions meant little to me then. They mean much now. “The pay?” I hazarded.

Goebbels studied me, a sneer warping his face. "What is the most you have made, in any one year?"

There is no harm in a lie in a good cause. I multiplied my memory of my best year's income by slightly more than two, and named this figure with a deprecating shrug.

"Say ten times that, to start with," said this astounding little gargoyle, in his excitement stumping on his club foot up and down the room. "You accept?"

"You accept," Göring's chin shot out belligerently, "or you disappear, for good, this time. You resemble him too much, my friend, for your health, or his, or ours."

I pretended to hesitate still, to avoid showing too much eagerness. Such opportunities never come a second time. But a little bartering. . . .

"You are not even a Nazi yet," Goebbels purred ahead, in that silky, sonorous whisper, his vulture eyes bulging out toward me. "You will be, soon enough. And you will learn that the only salvation for Germany and the world lies in the Party; and that the Party is the Leader. It is for a reborn Fatherland and a reborn world that you will accept. Is it not so?"

"—To *begin* with, you said?" I temporized.

"God in Heaven, man, it is not money that matters, now! What Germany has is ours, now—or soon will be. We must have you. What you need, what you wish, will be yours. The dinner-bell has rung, the table is spread." His beady eyes brightened. "You will be a member of the household of the greatest man on the earth today." An exalted note swept into his tone and submerged all casualness. "You will associate with him daily, hourly, until his tiniest mannerism is yours. You will take part in world events that you do not dream of, in history as we rewrite

it, in the future as we make it, and that will end by seeing Germany where she rightfully belongs—the one power in Europe, the major power in the world. You, none other, will take part in all this! Do you hesitate still?”

“No!” I cried out, beginning to thrill for the first time to what all this might mean. For years pseudonyms, aliases, disguises, had been of value to me, as personal defensive measures. Now I was asked no more than to freeze myself into one disguise, one alias, for life; and so help save the Fatherland, and remake world history, and be paid all I needed, indeed all I wished. “No. Gentlemen, I accept.”

“Good, Adolf.” His fiery eyes seemed to burn through me. “From now on, henceforth and forever, Maximilian Bauer is forgotten. He has died conveniently.” A sardonic smirk appeared on his emaciated face. “I myself will have the simple stone engraved with his birth and his death in your Passau. From now on, henceforth and forever, you are Adolf Hitler, every moment of your life. Of course, you will have your long periods of rest, when you need not appear in public. Then that is settled. And now, gentlemen,” his bright eyes again were almost fanatical, “I go to bring him in. That pier-glass mirror will serve well for what I have to do. But have our new Adolf behind the screen, no, until I am ready?” He thumped away with irresistible energy—I noticed that the more excited he became, the more he displayed his deformity. I let myself be placed hidden behind the screen.

I heard movements in the room near the great mirror. Then came the suave silky voice, a little more excited now. “Now!” it ordered.

I stepped out. I saw a sixth man, who looked strangely

like me, standing in front of the pier-glass, his eyes blindfolded by a handkerchief. He was my height, he was slim as I, there was the same sallow tint to his complexion. It was the Nazi leader, the new Chancellor—it could be none other! Mountebank and windbag to most of the world, divinely inspired leader and redeemer to his own followers, it was surely Adolf Hitler himself!

Without a word, with satanic glee in their eyes, they had me placed beside him. Suddenly the handkerchief covering his eyes was whipped off.

I stared with startled eyes at my own veritable eyes staring back at me from another face in the mirror—only, more piercing, more brilliantly blazing, more inflexible. I turned from the two of me staring back at me from the mirror to the me standing beside me. No wonder they had arrested me! And infinite blessing they had not shot me, as well. “Excellency—,” I half stammered.

His mobile hands united, then opened wide. He looked at me first with awed animal unbelief, as if I were an illusion, a *doppelganger* evoked by the aid of some evil black magic to be at his service. His hand moved falteringly up, I swear to cross himself; then it froze rigidly at his side. He walked slowly around me, studying every angle of my face, my body.

“You are older than I,” he said finally, nodding his head with a little perturbed satisfaction. His voice shook a trifle.

“A year younger. Women,” smiled Arnheim austerely.

“A dash of hair-dye,” suggested Goebbels swiftly, “and you will forget which is yourself, Herr Hitler.”

“It will double their problem.” Hitler nodded with shrewd satisfaction. “Of course, I have other doubles, my

friend." He brought himself to speak to me at last, but not yet personally; more as if I were no more than a mere waxwork, a mere clothing dummy tricked out with his life mask. "More than one. You should see Julius Schreck, my chauffeur. Except in the brightest sun-weather, all swear I myself am driving. *He* takes the insults; *I* take the bows." He smiled sardonically. "You, you are Bavarian?"

"Born Passau, Excellency," I said.

"I know Passau," he nodded thoughtfully. "It is not far from my own Branau; I have rowed down the Inn to it. Or Linz, where I attended *Realschule*. We are men of the Danube country, we two." He hummed softly a bar or two of the great waltz. "And you were wounded in the war, they tell me."

I gave him a brief résumé of this part of my life.

His mouth twisted awry with satisfaction, and turned with a warm smile to Roehm. "You are right, Captain; even the voice is the same. Mmmm, not quite; I can hear a lighter note. It is not a great difference. My voice is dark beer, his is light; but we are both Münchner. From now on, Little Adolf—," he smiled with swift brilliance, like a sun pushing away sullen clouds, "you are my assistant, my bodyguard, my confidential substitute, my unworthier I. Good!"

"And not even a Nazi yet," said Göring caustically. "Maybe he needs a purge."

"Leave that to Stalin," said von Arnheim decisively.

"So far, Fascist Italy has concentrated all the castor oil," smiled Captain Roehm. "Maybe I will use some, yet."

"I will talk to him. He will be Nazi, soon enough." The Leader dismissed this as a triviality that a few words would correct. And he was approximately right; for I am

by nature sympathetic. "And hair-dye, yes. But no more women, Little Adolf," with a strange suppressed passion in his voice. "Not until *I* need one. And I will teach you to live intelligently. No more smoking. No drinking. Alcohol ferments the food in the stomach; it is a bad poison. You will eat as I eat, think as I think, speak as I speak. When he is with me, as a bodyguard— You will find some easy way to let him stay near me, always in disguise, except when we are this group, or when he is needed. Look! Call in Brückner. My Adjutant, my chief bodyguard." Swiftly, to me, "And you, Little Adolf, you speak to him. Anything. Ask him—oh, if the conference room is ready."

"Tell him to kick his own rump around the block," suggested Göring pleasantly.

"Or yours, Captain," said Hitler slyly. He stepped behind the screen where I had stood concealed when he entered the room.

Von Arnheim, who had acted on the suggestion, returned, followed by a heavier tread. A soldier a head higher than the tallest of us stalked in, muscle every tremendous inch of him. His face was quick to smile, but quicker to scowl. He looked at me. His heels clicked meticulously together, his hand shot forward and upward in the Nazi salute, "Heil Hitler!"

"Heil Hitler!" I returned it briskly—too briskly, as I learned soon; the Leader was noted for his lackadaisical response to salutes, just as he preferred to lounge through life in all but moments of the greatest excitement. I spoke curtly to him: "Lieutenant, is the conference room wholly prepared?"

"But yes, Herr Reichskanzler," he announced gravely.

"Are you *sure*?" Hitler himself stepped out quickly, and

ranged himself beside me. His voice squeaked upward a trifle, in his excitement.

Brückner's eyes owled from one to the other of us in ridiculous fashion. His right hand fell swiftly to the revolver at his hip. "So!" he said. "God in heaven! But this is a game you play!"

"Game? Which of us *is* der Reichskanzler?" I asked him in a sterner voice, catching the intonation of Hitler's speech precisely, even to the little squeak. I learned soon this had come from his being gassed during the war, affecting his vocal cords as well as his lungs.

"Why, Excellency—." He studied us, with a little frown. His face broke into a huge crafty grin. "I can tell," he said, "by the clothes, but most by the dogwhip. If it were a horsewhip, it would be Herr Streicher, lashing Jews and Nazis alike. Since it is a dogwhip," his eyes fawned on Hitler's face, "it is you. But, if you change *those* . . ."

Hitler's face went remote and thoughtful. "So all that differentiates us, Little Adolf, to the world, is a suit of clothes and a dogwhip. Even these will at once be remedied. You may go, Brückner, thank you. Captain," again his eyes warmed with affection toward Roehm, "I will leave Little Adolf with you. Bring him in to me later. Let me see. We have that conference at noon—."

"Little Adolf will be there," said Goebbels suavely. "From now on. It is well that he knows all that is to be known. We never know when he will be called on to talk also."

I stood at attention, heels clicked together, with the others, while the Leader marched out of the room. All the rest but Captain Roehm followed him. He gave me a soft

and embracing smile when they had gone. "Come with me," he said. His voice sunk a little, as if caressing.

I nodded and fell into step beside him.

So began my new and fantastic life.

CHAPTER III

UP A LONELY ROAD

HITLER'S Chief of Staff led me to his own quarters and closed the door. He turned to me with a quiet smile. "But seat yourself. Cigarette?" He pushed a packet toward me. "A little brandy?"

"But the Chancellor said I was *not* to." I wondered aloud.

The Captain shrugged amiably. "He is very ascetic. Sometimes I think he is afraid of life, of himself—of letting himself go, fearing how far it would take him. But he means, not when he is around; and, of course, not when you are acting as him. When you are alone, or with some intimate companion, naturally you do what pleases you most." His eyes surveyed me with appraising approval. They were strange, friendly eyes, and often seemed to caress. "I had a teacher once, said the face mirrored the soul. Your face and his are twins. I know you already, then; and I can study him in you. But how *have* you avoided becoming a Nazi? We began in Bavaria."

"Perhaps because I have been so little in Bavaria." I smiled respondingly; I had liked his face from the start. His hugely built globe head, battle-marred and crudely patched, looked like a Gibraltar to trust. And I liked his soothing voice, his deprecating courtesy. "This cigarette is a treat," I said. "After twelve hours. . . ."

He shrugged casually. "Whenever you will, you can always get what you want in my rooms."

"Even a woman?" I jested. "Such was my plan, in Berlin. At least, I brought one along with me."

His eyes saddened a little, as if I had said something indecent. "What you will. But tell me, you have never even heard the Leader speak?"

"I never saw him in the flesh until half an hour ago. If I am to be his double. . . ." I considered it. "Tell me a little of his background. The real Hitler. I mean, what one doesn't read in the papers."

"In the Party press," he spoke thoughtfully, "and Goebel's fine hand is always there, you read he is an inspired son of Germany, come to exterminate the foes of the Fatherland, like St. George and his dragon: the Jewish swine, the Marxian conspirators. He is all that. In the opposition papers, which please Herr Gott we will suppress to the last one, he is pictured as an arch-fiend, a thug, an assassin, a demagogue. He is none of these, although there is no lack of thugs and assassins in the party, and a demagogue or two, and surely at least one arch-fiend." He stretched further forward in his chair, eyes searching my face. "I have known him for thirteen years. Perhaps no man in Germany knows him better, except Adolf himself; certainly no man loves him more. Shall I then tell you what I know of him? It will take patience to listen. . . ."

"I am all ears."

"You cannot know too much, if you are to be his double. Some one might ask you a simple question about your beginnings; you could not forever evade such things. I shall start at the beginning, then. For I have talked with him

night after night until the sun rose red; I have seen him trust others and have them fail him, and learn it is never wise to trust others; and I see him now, trusting not even me, who loves him." Again his face saddened. "But I must begin at the beginning."

Adolf Hitler, he told me, was a real son of the Waldviertel, that undulating Danube land fringing this mish-mash of warring races lumped together by the Versailles Treaty as Czechoslovakia. The Waldviertel was a land of dull Catholic peasants, where cousin intermarried with cousin for generation after generation, and there were closer unions at times. They knew no higher trades than farming and setting up a little shop as village carpenter or blacksmith, or acting as miller for the impoverished neighboring hamlets. His grandfather, Johann Georg Hiedler, was a miller's helper until his death, never rising to owning his own mill. When he was fifty, he married a farm woman named Schicklgruber, by whom he had had a son five years before. This son, Alois Schicklgruber, became a cobbler, and was shrewd enough to marry a wealthy woman named Anna Gläsl-Horer, fourteen years older than himself. She sent her illiterate husband to school, bought him a little job in the civil service, and when he was forty had him legitimized as Alois Hüttler—so run the faded church records. When he was forty-six, his wife died, and he rushed into a marriage with a younger woman, who died within the year. This man, who was to become Adolf's father, was the man Adolf hates most to this day, the man who has influenced him most for good and evil.

"I had heard none of this," I said, when he paused.

The Captain nodded. "In the house next to where Alois Hitler mourned the precipitate death of his second wife,

lived a cousin of his, Klara Poelzl, a tall hysterical girl with a mysterious past. It is from such mothers great men always come. At the age of ten she had secured employment as maid in the house of Frau Schicklgruber, who later became legally Frau Hüttler and Frau Hitler. This cousin had run away to Vienna, and there she lived on her wits for ten years. To this day, no one knows how she spent those years; though there are unkind rumors of the way she lived. After all, Vienna was gay, with ample room for a young and lively girl who lacked money, but could at least please. I have talked with one man who claims to have known her then; he said he and the men of his company knew her thoroughly. This, naturally, I never told to Adolf. Well, she returned to Branau. A customs inspector, such as Alois Hitler was, needed a wife. He was fascinated by his wife's former servant grown into such a mysteriously attractive young woman, and he married her. This was 1885. Four years later, April 20, 1889, Adolf Hitler was born."

I reminded him that I was exactly three hundred and seventy-five days younger.

"But yes," Captain Roehm proceeded. "Now from such a family, imbeciles and geniuses come. There is a half-brother by the first wife, long a waiter, and now a restaurant-keeper in Berlin. His sister, Angela, was a cook in a Charity Hall for Jewish Students in Vienna: to such degradation do these foul parasites force the women of our race! The Leader has made her his housekeeper; her daughter—the mother is Frau Raupel—was the one woman since his mother that the Leader loved and wholly tolerated. Adolf himself had a full brother, who died in infancy, and a sister, unmarried, still living in Vienna. The

rest of his relatives live still all in the Waldviertel, and there are no geniuses among them. There is one first cousin, Edward Schmidt, a hunchback who cannot speak clearly—a village monster—and, like the rest, living in abject poverty.

“But there was one genius,” said the Captain impressively, “in this family. Some strange tension in his soul between the constellation that was his father and his mother, the father’s third wife, burned away all the dross in his soul, and left only flame. I do not know if I can make you see,” said the Captain. “I will try. I have read my Freud and my Stekel, and even sewers may flow clear water. What could you expect of Alois Schicklgruber then Hütler then Hitler, a cobbler made customs official, but the utter arrogance of the little swine lifted to brief village authority? He had a round hairless face, like a leprous melon—his picture is on his grave, you may yourself see it. His eyes were bitter little needles, he nourished huge, upturned moustaches as was the custom, his chin was rock. He who had been a village bastard had become the petty Caesar: let the world kneel to him! If the world snickered behind his back, at least his sickly son Adolf must hop to toe the line when the father snapped his fingers. He must make his son an official too; and, when the boy spoke of becoming an artist, the father snarled that he was a spineless weakling, a feckless dreamer, moon-struck, all laziness. It is strange how traits reappear: Adolf himself, when little Geli, his niece whom he loved, would become a concert singer, on that only put his foot down. Like father. . . . Well, this father sneered at the boy; and, when this did not suffice, there was a belt, a shoe, a stick handy, and he beat him.

"But Adolf had his ally, in this tall, mysterious, quiet mother with the sensitive features and the soft, lovely, luminous eyes. Alois Hitler, for all that he threw at her what an excellent *hausfrau* his first wife had been, what an obedient beauty his second, could never master her. And so he snarled away to the tavern, and drank and swilled like the pig he was. He died of a stroke while guzzling a bottle of cheap red wine in a tavern. He had spent his life marrying and enjoying women. Adolf is another story.

"Just before the father died, no, some years before then, when the boy was six, his mother developed cancer. It is a living death, and not speedy. It took her ten years to die; and it was not a pretty nor a happy sight for the sensitive boy. Oh, but he must be all that his father had not been; she fired him; she poured her artist's soul, her dammed-up dreamings, into his bent ears. When in 1903 the father had his stroke and died, Adolf was fourteen, a student at the *Realschule* in Linz. But his mother, too, wished him to be an artist; and in school they jeered at him as a fool, like all his cousins. Within the year he left and idled at home, living with his mother on her tiny pension, while his soul expanded. 1907 it was when he first submitted a picture to the Academy at Vienna, and again the next year. The pictures were sneered at: mere architecture, not painting. But a youth must have academic achievement even to become an architect. And so, with barely fifty *kronen* in his pocket, in 1909, his mother buried two years, he moved to Vienna to make of himself the man his father had never been.

"Now come the things so hard to say," continued the Captain. "All of Adolf Hitler, all of Der Führer, all the

greatness, was in him already. It took the cauldron of world events to bring it out, that was all. He had been bred a Catholic. But he detested his father with all of his soul: and what is the Church but the father spread all over the earth and the heavens? Even the priest called himself the Father; the pope was the Father of Christendom; the Jewish Jehovah was God the All-Father; and Adolf wanted no truck or traffic with his father or his father's people. You see? Ach, we call on a Jew then, on Sigmund Freud, as our witness; from some German he must have stolen his ideas, to vomit them out, corrupted, as his own. There was a Prince of Thebes, once, who slew his father the king, and, all unknowing, married his mother the queen. Of their kindred was Adolf. His father stood in his young mind for hated and detested authority; well, the son would rebel against the authority of others until he died. Yet his father had won his mother, once; and this must be the son's eternal Grail. To qualify to win her, dying as she was, dead as she was of the dread cancer, the son had to incarnate authority in his own body and soul, such authority as had once been embodied in the dethroned Alois Hitler, in the priest, in the Pope, in God the Father himself.

"Worst of all, the mother was dead. It would take more skill, more power than Orpheus had, to summon her back to the embrace of living arms. Such power the son must take and hold. And even in the Nordic folk-myth out of Thebes, there was a bar between son and mother that even the gods could not overleap. There was a marriage, yes, and fruit from it; but, once the secret was revealed, there was death for the sinful queen, and blind wandering over the earth's face for the sinning son. In her, the mother, the

son saw all women: and she was forbidden, hence all women are forbidden. There are some among us"—Captain Roehm stared at the wall as he spoke"—who find one way out of this maze, and it is a warm and pleasant way. There are those whom it condemns to eternal loneliness. Of such was Adolf Hitler. Let the Dutch mongrel sneer at him as a fanatical onanist, his soul is the soul of a saint, and a Caesar, and a god: no one can take this from him.

"Ach, I talk too long," he said. He refilled my brandy glass, and his own, and let its fire relight his ashen tale. "We have the young Adolf Hitler, then, barely nineteen, in Vienna. Poor. At times starving. He made tiny drawings and water-colors for the few *beller* they would bring, that he might eat. He shoveled snow in winter. He begged on the street-corners. He lived for three years in the most desolate slum neighborhood in Vienna, in a hotel for homeless men. But he grew sick at the poverty of those around him, in the midst of prodigal revelry in the palaces and the cafes; and most of all at the upstart Jews with their poisonous Jewish Marxism as the remedy. The time came when he could stand it all no longer. In 1913 it was that he moved to Munich, when he heard it had become the German center of opposition to the Jews. When he was summoned to service in the Austrian army, he pleaded his ill health as an excuse, and was let off.

"And then, the shot at Sarajevo, and the Slavophile Hapsburg shot down like the dog he was, and the outraged Fatherland rising to defend Nordic civilization against the inferior nations. Adolf's personal petition to Ludwig of Bavaria was granted—were they not both worshippers of the music of Wagner, that eternal rebel against authority?—and in October 1914 he was sent to the front, as a

German soldier. He was made orderly to the regimental staff, and hence did not have to waste his abilities in trench duty. By December, he had won the Iron Cross, Second Class. Two years later he was wounded, and yet in August of the last year he had won the same decoration, First Class. In mid-October, he was gassed and blinded—it is that which at times fingers his voice still; but his eyesight returned more piercingly than any man's in Europe.

“The heroic German effort failed. The new Bavarian Republic, a thing of Jews and renegades, denied him German citizenship; Austria would not accept him, for had he not fought with Germany? So he spent the winter with the reserve battalion of his regiment, which had become part of the Reichswehr, and for a year after March, 1919, he received food and pay from the army as a secret agent, an intelligence officer, a part of the espionage. He was sent to investigate labor, workers' and folkic groups, and report on them. He was by good fortune detailed to attend a meeting of the Deutsche Arbeiter Partei, where he heard Gottfried Feder make the principal speech. Feder was violently opposed to Jewish capital, but not of course to Aryan capital—creative capital, as opposed to exploiting capital. Adolf became a convert, and was named as the seventh member of the executive council of a party with less than sixty members.

“From then on, the party *is* Hitler,” continued Roehm. “He himself invented the Leader principle, which alone can save Europe and mankind in this troubled age. He gave the party its name. He himself designed its emblem, the Hakenkreuz—the swastika. But for his betrayal by others, he would have ruled the Reich since 1923. These years, however, have not been wasted; they have made practi-

cally all Germany the Party. Brunswick made him a German citizen, and within the year he was almost elected President instead of the Old Man. And, once he has carried into effect the Party's social program, we will see the German millennium upon us. It is *this* man, Little Adolf, whose double you have the honor to be selected to be."

"But you have left yourself out of it all, Captain, and the rest who had made this amazing success possible." I studied him with increased liking.

Again he shrugged. "Why talk of myself? All Germany talks of me." He said it bitterly.

"But I did not mean *that*, Captain."

"I know. What difference do *I* make? I have been a soldier since I was nineteen. I marched with the Freikorps against Red Munich. I fought the Communists in the Ruhr. I myself built the Storm Troopers, to protect the Leader—*my* Leader." A tense glow of worship softened his granite, battle-marred face. "And yet, they snap at my heels without ceasing." He flushed. "We have not always agreed, naturally. To me, the Storm Troopers *must* become the Reichswehr; only so can Germany have the world-conquering Nazi army she needs and the world needs. Yet he has sent me away, for insisting, once already. Your face shows that you know much about me. From La Paz, in lovely Bolivia, I wrote to Dr. Heimsath, merely commenting that real love, the love of man and man, was unknown. As one would write to any friend. *You* too know of this—and how? Do you think *I* do not know what two Judases to me and my Leader saw that these personal letters of mine were broadcast in the opposition papers, and spread on hand bills throughout the Reich? The Leader stood firm, yes: it was all disgusting slander, he said; I would

remain his Chief of Staff though heaven shook. But—he knows.” His face saddened. “He can himself at any time use it as a weapon against me. And I—my hands are tied. How can I even denounce the two who bared so my personal life to the world?”

“In Basle, they said it was Göring and Goebbels who were responsible.” I watched his face as I spoke.

It did not flicker. “What difference does it make, if I cannot speak? But *I* know, and that is something. Besides, one lives but once; and would *you* live a virgin, as he must?” His craggy face seamed a trifle; his nostrils rose delicately.

“Not I,” I smiled defensively. “I have not, so far; I trust I never will.”

“Things get known,” he smiled remorsefully. “Three nights ago, a perfectly lovely lad accosted me on the Wilhelmplatz. I could have arrested him for soliciting,—but why? We went to a biergarten; we went to my rooms. He had his police health-card—just a young prostitute from Hamburg, trying to make good in the capital. I had a lovely couple of hours. Why not?”

I am afraid my eyes widened a trifle.

He chuckled. “You did not know that the male prostitutes too have the police health-cards, no? But it is so—it has been so since early in the republic. And, would you believe this, there was a report of it the next morning on the Leader’s desk. He showed it to me without a word, and without a word he tore it up. But. . . . It does not give me the easy feeling, no? To be watched constantly, to be spied on—to feel that men rise in the Party, as they spy and tattle on each other. . . . The essence of disorganization, of decentralization, to me—the opposite of that

teamwork, that cooperation, that I have filled my *Sturmabteilung** with. It was no doubt some of those *Schutzstaffel*** set to watch me by Himmler; and I can guess who is behind that. Well—”

“But, Captain,” I said, suddenly remembering, “remember, I brought a friend to the Kaiserhof, and surely some message from me should go to her!”

He chuckled sadly. “With a woman, there is always some mixup. But do not worry, the inimitable Herr Doktor Goebbels has said that he will attend to it for you. No doubt he will tell you what he has done, in good time. For all I know, he’ll report to her that you died of a heart-attack, or choked to death on a Vienna wurst, or heaven knows what. It will be done efficiently, be sure of that; and she will no doubt be returned where she belongs. Well, I talk your ears off, and it is already almost noon. We go to the conference.”

I fell into step with him, and we started to join the others. As for Chiquita, what finally happened to her remains a mystery. I discovered, a couple of months later, that she had not returned to the Hague, and that her distracted husband had been entirely unable to locate her. Goebbels, when I asked him again, shrugged that he was sure she had returned in safety; he had been assured of it. More than a year later one of the SS staff told me of the Propaganda Minister’s going to return some young wife, who had been abandoned by her lover at the Kaiserhof, to her husband, and deciding that there were better uses she could be put to. According to this man—and I was careful never to reveal that I might know anything of the case—

* Storm Troopers, Brownshirts—the famous SA.

** Blackshirts, the SS.

she had not been agreeable, at first, and had been put in protective custody. It was to escape this that she yielded finally, and had in the end been handed on to some underling of the same department. Well, she had been most anxious to see Berlin, so I at least had no responsibility. And strange things happen in Germany.

Here we were, at last, with the men at the head of the Party. Here was Hitler, tense, concentrated, aflame even more than when I had seen him first; the unsightly little dwarf Goebbels, with his vulture's face; Göring, bull-like, hill-like, rippling his grotesque fat whenever he moved; von Arnheim, portly, cool, distinguished. Heines was with them no longer.

It was strange to be of them, and yet not one of them. I was Maximilian Bauer no longer; that chapter was ended. I was not Adolf Hitler; only his double, his Little Adolf. I was not Adolf Hitler, yet. But at any moment they might call upon me to stand up and go forth to the world as Adolf Hitler. I was nothing in the mighty drama of Germany against her enemies within and without; and yet at any moment I might be called upon to be the star. That was it! I was like the understudy in the theatre. My name was not on the program; indeed, I had given up the right to have a name of my own. None of the press was mine. But I had to be letter-perfect in my part; and the slightest indisposition on the part of the star, the slightest whim of the management, might put me forward to speak the lines and enact the actions that might make or mar the success of the glorious performance. I must bide my turn, and meanwhile become the character I had accepted as mine, henceforth.

I studied Adolf Hitler with quickened interest, now, in

the Klieg light that Roehm had thrown upon his life, his character. But I studied the others, as well. Their conversation was like machine-gun fire. As they flung words back and forth, the picture grew upon me of what had happened the night before, while I was being stripped and searched and imprisoned and allowed to drowse on that chilly cot in the room beneath the chamber where the Chancellor slept—where General von Schleicher slept, not yet informed that he was Chancellor no longer.

It was of the election of the last summer that they spoke first. A few of these facts I knew vaguely; much of it came to me for the first time. They had rolled up almost fourteen million votes, and the Leader had demanded of the Old Man to be named forthwith as Chancellor.

"You scared the old dotard out of his wits," chuckled Göring. "I demand to have precisely the powers of Il Duce, after his March on Rome.'—Colossal!" His mimicry was excellent, too.

Goebbels smiled wryly. "And what the Old Man said to his precious Franzy, after he had dispersed *you*, Herr Reichskanzler—'Let that Bohemian Corporal learn manners, or I'll name him postmaster in some little town where he can spend his declining years licking my rump on postage stamps.'"

"It is changed, now, no?" said Hitler dryly.

They spoke next of the session in the Reichstag where Göring, as Speaker, would not even see the dissolution decree signed by the President, even when von Papen pushed it under his nose, until Göring had put the Communist vote of lack of confidence, which smothered the government in the worst parliamentary defeat the Republic had ever known, by a vote of 513 to 32.

"It put Franzy in his place," nodded Arnheim. "And what an ass Schleicher was as Chancellor. . . . Franzy ferreting out the Osthilfe scandal, and slipping word of it to *you*, Herr Hitler. . . . And even the Center fired him, and there was nobody but Hugenburg's mossback Nationalists who would take him in."

More confidential things were spoken of now. . . . Of a secret meeting arranged by Papen with Hitler at the home of the old banker, Baron von Schroeder. . . . Of the alliance offered and accepted. . . . Of von Schleicher's secret meeting in the Reichswehr ministry, in which a military dictatorship was decided on, with Hugenburg and Papen under arrest, and Hitler to be arrested or worse.

"And the ass threatened to call out the Reichswehr against us, to the Old Man himself! That's how he cut his throat," said Arnheim.

"When Franzy reminded the Old Man of *that*, last night. . . ." Goebbels laughed evilly. "And what a coup, to wake him up at eleven at night, his wits more befuddled than ever—"

"Yet, we won!" said Hitler firmly. "Even if I am only a minority Chancellor, with only three seats in the cabinet. . . ."

"The effort," von Arnheim pointed out quietly, "was to shelve you; to emasculate your power."

Hitler blushed slightly. "But did you see the Old Man's silly face when the Storm Troopers marched by this morning, and he turned to his precious son Otto and said, 'I did not remember that we took so many Russian prisoners.' That incredible nitwit for president!"

Goebbels observed the blush, and winked slightly at me. "It is a strange way to emasculate your power, Herr Hitler,

to put Göring over the Berlin police, and Frick as Reichsminister of the Interior. Although Wilhelm Frick is an authority on emasculation, since he introduced into the Reichstag a law to castrate all perverts."

This time it was Roehm that flushed. Otherwise, he ignored the jibe. "We have thirty-three days before the election," he announced. "Two hundred and fifty deputies are not enough, out of six hundred seats. How are we to do it?"

"Leave that to *us!*" said Goebbels jubilantly. "We will find a way, eh, Herr Reichskanzler?"

"If any man can, you will," smiled the Leader.

"We *will* have the majority," said Göring heavily. "I pledge you my word. Even if I have to kill off so many of the opposition."

"Well, we have already one new convert in Little Adolf, here," said Goebbels, a sneer twisting his warped face.

"He will be a zealous one, that I promise you," said Hitler. "I myself will see to that."

For a long time I thought that he was right.

CHAPTER IV

"HOW ODD OF GOD—"

SO BEGAN for me a close association with one of the men I still believe to be one of the four greatest men of the present century—for there is a greatness in evil, as there is a greatness in good; and there can be greatness blended of both. This association lasted five years and eight months to the day. I do not know, in spite of his faults and the ruin at last he spread, but that Hitler was the greatest man since Napoleon, in the field of action, the field of influencing the lives of millions, for good or for evil, or for both. And I came to know him better than myself; for I slowly became him.

Of these four great, strong men, Lenin I never saw. I only know that with icy, remorseless logic, he sought to build the dream of a bitter, dead German-Jew, and to cover the world with men and women who knew no lord on earth or above . . . to decree by ukase the words of a Jew long slain, "The first shall be last, and the last first," until all men on earth would stumble under them . . . and who built at last at least half a continent into such a world. Stalin I once saw review the flower of the Red Army on Red Square in Moscow, and I saw in a human face, granite—a mongrel half Mongol and half Caucasian—superabundant vitality held in leash by more than

superabundant intelligence. Mussolini I know, better now than when I faced him in the dreadful strain of the conference that led to the pact at Munich: an oily peasant strutting his rôle of modern Caesar over the dregs of the ancient Romans. Men respect Stalin, I am told, and it is easy to believe it. Men fear Mussolini. But men worshipped Hitler. For good or for evil, or for a fanatical blend of both, he was a flame, a flame of the spirit, a soul on fire to build his world-girdling dream. Joan of Arc, illiterate French peasant girl as she was, servitor of her Lord in Heaven and of no Christian god, held something of the same mad consecration, and France still quivers taller at her memory—France, the eternal deadly enemy of the German people. After six hundred years, Germany at length produced her own inspired saint, man where she was woman, a scholar where she was illiterate, empire-organizer where she was mere liberator, yet with a manner of death strangely akin, at least in the part that betrayal played in it.

There is a difference between them deeper than these: who knows it better than I? Joan's dream is what we call sane: to free France for the French, little as they may have been worth it. Achieve it, and no outsiders are injured or even humiliated. The dream of Adolf Hitler was different. To find its analogue, we must travel back down the bloody centuries to Rome trampling a prostrate world into the bloodied soil, to Athens in a death struggle for lordship over the barbaroi, to twelve accursed tribes who swaggered that they alone were the chosen of God, and all the rest the despised, the non-elect. So Adolf Hitler dreamed the mad dream of one superior race striding in godlike dominance over the world, and the rest of the

world kneeling in awed obeisance before it. For years I myself was under the hypnotic spell of this dream. There is a hashish grown of no hemp, and its frantic dreams recur.

It is easy for envious, dyspeptic bookworms like H. G. Wells to sneer at men of action. . . . Alexander, the lunging spear that no men ever turned, who cowed the arrogant East before the men of the West for a thousand years. . . . Caesar, great on the field and greater in ending ancient abuses, who turned a gladiatorial shambles into an empire. . . . Napoleon, who shook the tree of monarchy throughout Europe and the world so thoroughly that, after a century, it crashed forever, but for a few minor branches wilting toward the swallowing soil. I know the slow obeisance to the decretals of those strange, aloof souls he rated higher: Socrates the probing idealist, Gautama with his warped way of light, the Jewish carpenter whose mosaic ethics are still the uttered goal for much of the West. I would add to them other and newer names, whose waves will spread at least as far: the Englishman who traced our bodily evolution from microbe to man; the German-Jew—these words will be read in realms and times after the Nazis with their Jew-baiting have vanished, so I may at last dare say them—who set on fire the slow, remorseless flame of analytical passion that made Soviet Russia possible; the German-Jew who for the first time taught man what moved his thought and action; the German-Jew who answered his tribesman after the silence of thirty centuries, and spelled the riddle of the Pleiades and banded Orion, and measured Mazzaroth in his season and Arcturus with his sons.

The man of action born of a dream, the man of dreams and thought alone, these two hold different sway over men's minds and bodies. The first, the Napoleon, the Hitler, plunges a nation, a continent, a world into warfare and death, with slavery, or it may be ultimate liberation at the end; and it is much to mold the world one lives in, so that every knee bows or every cheek pales at one's passing. The other, the Socrates, the Einstein, speaks a word that ripens in centuries to come, and is still fecund when pyramids have crumbled. Both are great; and there is in the scales of the centuries between them no choice. And, of the great of earth of this century, in the world-shaking field of action born of a dream, I know of none greater than that Adolf Hitler I lived so close to until his strange and unbelievable death.

Strange, that I should have three times mentioned German-Jews in thinking now of all he was and achieved. I could never get to the bottom of his boundless hatred of the Jews. Unless Captain Roehm was right, and out of his hatred of his father he hated them for their All-Father Jehovah and his Judaized son and Hitler's own eternal soul-slavery to the blood and tears they stood for, a slavery no rebellion could weaken. He was to the Catholics bitterly opposed, and against the Protestants almost as bitter. But he gave to each of these a day of grace, an hour for repentance. He forgave them seventy and seven times, providing only they recanted and became full-hearted Nazis. For the Jew, there was no repentance, no forgiveness, no terms on which one could be permitted to become a Nazi, or an integral part of our German world. There were hours when he was convinced that they could not rightly be spoken of as belonging to the human race.

No forgiveness for him, for his parents, for his dead and buried grandparents. I often wondered what forgotten sin or slip of one of Hitler's own grandparents first hardened him into this mold.

Not that I did not try to probe his mind down to its last, tiniest flicker of passion. It was this I was ordered to do. Goebbels took me aside for one moment that first morning. "Study him," he commanded, gleaming passion in his vulture face, "you will have opportunity enough. Learn him. *Become* him. So, when it must be you in his stead appear. . . ."

I pledged my word to do this. And I had opportunity enough, from that first morning.

He was no man for detail, Adolf Hitler. Freshly named Chancellor as he was, he left Göring and Frick and the secretariats to struggle through the immediate beginning of elevating Germany out of its slough, and wandered absently into the anteroom where I sat, baffled, before a pile of party platforms, pamphlets, pronunciamentos. Blonda, his pet police bitch, fawned at his heels. He unhooked the worn dogwhip he always wore, and let the bitch gnaw at his feet on its handle. The dogs, I was sure, he loved mostly because they were ripping and rending power abject at his feet: them at least he could always master, always subjugate. Göring kept lion cubs for pets and named them all, male and female alike, Caesar. They must have something to lash and cow, these Nazis.

Hitler seemed to be speaking mostly to himself. "A start this time," he said. "After ten years. It is a long time, ten years."

"And the end will be . . . what?" It was fascinating to watch the play of his mobile features, his mobile hands.

I let my hands lie as his lay, move as his moved. As he spoke, I let my face fall into his expressions. I never deviated from this, until it became second nature with me, and I would not have found it easy to think the thoughts and act the actions of the forgotten Maximilian Bauer again.

His hands spread in the hopeless effort to make the obvious clearer. "All Germany only for those who are all German. All Germany to include all who are all German. How can we have in the Party, how can we have in the Reich, one single soul who splits his allegiance, until some of it is anti-German? They are traitors within the camp, Judases within the twelve. There is a firing-squad, for traitors. Jews. . . . There was never one that was not loyal first to his Jewish god, to his filthy tribe, to the world-wide conspiracy of Jewish capitalists who conspire, without ceasing, to cripple every nation into becoming part of a world state ruled by Jewish financiers. No, Jews and Marxists, they are the major enemies of the Fatherland. They must go!"

"But take Marx," I protested. "Surely *he* was no conspirator to aid capitalists!"

"You will learn," he said, his tense blue eyes gleaming eerily. "He most of all. Wherever Marxism develops, you see the Jews flocking like vultures to feast on the carcasses of Nordic enterprises, Nordic ideals. Look at Russia. They have no Jewish problem, because they are *all* Jews, all Judaized. They make no distinction. A Jewish youth can there corrupt a Nordic girl, make her his mistress or even his wife, breed children by her—and what becomes of the purity of the race then? A Jewish girl can seduce a Nordic man—and they are trained to it, from childhood—and the

racial stock becomes all mongrel. But why go to Russia, when we have Germany ever before us? What do you know of ritual murder?" His eyes seemed to burn through me.

"Well, my Leader, I have read things. . . . The trial at Kiev. . . ."

"Ach, the evidence is strangled, the judges bought, the guilty ones freed. There is no doubt about it; I have it on the words of men I trust—Streicher, Rosenberg, many more—it is the final mystery of the Jewish religion. Look, under your arm!" In his excitement he snatched at the paper so swiftly I could not move my arm in time, and he tore a deep rip down the top. He smoothed it swiftly, and his quivering finger pointed at the horrors it contained. "You know how careful the *Judenkenner* is to authenticate every fact. Look, I read you! '*Deutschenationalkamerad*, have you forgotten that the Jew violates your child? Debauches your wife? Corrupts your sister? Seduces your fiancée? Assassinate your parents? Rots your culture? Infects with dreadful plagues your race?' What do you say of *that*, Little Adolf! I have a scientist who assures me that the Jews first developed all venereal diseases, gonorrhoea and syphilis and all the rest, and that they are mentioned as a plague in the cowardly flight through the wilderness from Egypt to Palestine, and from there they spread to the Americas, and with Columbus so back to Europe. Do you wonder that I recognize the Jew as a plague worse than the Black Death, and have pledged my soul from the Fatherland to extirpate them, and from every land that follows its wholesome example?"

"Yet there are only half a million of them in the entire Reich," I urged.

"And one typhoid carrier can infect a city of millions. There are in the Reich half a million Jews too many. I will end that."

"Well, all that may be so," I wondered aloud. "Yet I can truthfully say that I never yet met a Jew that went around raping children and debauching Nordic wives; and I have encountered quite a few. Once I had a Jewish mistress—"

His face went almost green with horror. "You too have been contaminated then, yes! But you have been snatched from the burning in time. Of course, you never *knew* the Jews you met for the monsters they are; that is their diabolical cleverness. Even at times Nordics, and men of lower races, Frenchmen, Mongolians, even African Negroes, are blamed for their crimes; but it is not hard to recognize the Jew by his crime. From now on, avoid them, utterly, forever—unless they are at the open end of a gun whose butt you hold. Ah, they think they are shrewd! From America they propose to send this Walter Lippman to interview me, as a face for their machinations! You investigate carefully, and you will find that the paper he represents must be owned by Jews, and be but a propaganda sheet for their worldwide conspiracy. It is suggested that I meet Lord Reading to discuss the relations between the Reich and England. Both lands are with the vermin almost to the death infected. Do I meet them? No! Thunderweather, no! A thousand times, no! On the telephone I would not to a Jew even speak. Not since I have become a man have I to one even spoken! So it will be with all Germans, when the Nazi is the only party, and we have done our work."

"Is it their race, or their religion, or their shrewdness in finance—"

His mobile blue eyes brightened. "It is that they are in-

ferior; and association with inferiors corrupts. And they are inferiors with such boundless and bitter ambition, that if you hire a Jew to fire your furnace, a Jewess to wash your floors, they plot at once to corrupt, to debauch, to replace, to supplant, to eject, utterly to dominate! They have no place in a world peopled by the superior race. They are not German, Little Adolf—is that not enough? I can *never* forgive them for that!”

“Some of them have lived here a long time—centuries.”

“Ach, but their hearts look toward Jerusalem as the world capital, and Jewish procurators ruling every land as a province of a universal Jewish state. Look at your Disraeli and Rufus Isaacs in England—did they not become Lord Gladstone and Lord Reading, rulers of that empire which should be as Germanic as we? Look at your Rothschilds, Sassoons, Speyers, Guggenheims, and countless more throughout the world. The spider web of their international conspiracies fouls every land, every administration, every financial deal. Patriotism? Only to Jerusalem. They would betray any cause, any state, any man, for thirty pieces of silver asked, what am I offered? There is no race like them, no group like them. The Catholics serve the machinations of the international papacy, yes; it is significant that a Jew, Jesus, is their god, and that his whole cabinet consisted of Jews, with St. Peter as Chancellor. Even the Protestants have their international church organizations, inspired by the Jewish example, and forget that a man's first duty is to his Fatherland. These, the Catholics and the Protestants, can see the light, and alter from their errors. But the Jew, no. What he touches, he fouls. Look, our legends, our literature, our science, our philosophy, our music, our system of government, all Ger-

man, all Nordic, no? But our religion! Look how the Jew has fouled that!"

It was no time to ask the Leader about Heine, Mendelssohn, Einstein, and a few more names that occurred to me. I spoke quietly. "Surely he is entitled to his own religion, for himself; and can we blame him that we took one Jewish sect and made it the religion of the gentile world?"

Hitler's eyes blazed. "What is the German religion? Our great legends, Wotan the All Father, Thor and his hammer, Loki the mischievous Satan, Siegfried, lifted into heaven by Wagner's supernal genius; these, and what the great German thinkers, the philosophers, have made of them. Sometimes I think Ludendorff is right, and only a return to a magnificent paganism can wipe the Jewish stain off our religion. They *can* not be right, Catholics, Protestants, any who worship the Jewish Jehovah. This Jewish cult called Christianity brought spiritual terrorism into the world for the first time; and only force and terror can break its stranglehold. I tell you, the Nazi propaganda, properly applied, can make an entire people see heaven as hell, and the most miserable life a paradise on earth. The Jewish Jehovah *must* be eliminated! How can anyone call him a god of right or might, when in the World War he gave the victory to second-rate nations, like the corrupt and effeminate French, the stupidly blundering Judaized English?"

Something echoed in my mind, a text I had heard Pastor Grünecke preach from in Basle. "Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth," I murmured, without thought.

Hitler's hand slapped down on the table beside him, until a little bronze replica of the Wingless Victory toppled to the floor. "But not the German god, God in heaven, no!

Not the ancient Jewish Jehovah, either. It was *victory* he gave,"—absently he picked up the dented bronze, and replaced it, where it wavered a little giddily from its now unsteady base—"victory, and not chastisement. The conquest of Canaan . . . the pacification of the world, under David and Solomon . . . the bloody exploits of the Maccabees: they were not then pacifists. But they surrendered being men, to become Marxists and conspirators. And then, as if they had not caused enough trouble with their circumcised Jehovah, they take a Jewish bride, and suddenly she is discovered pregnant by the Holy Ghost—ghost stories, to startle children with—and so we have Jesus Christus, whom Catholics and Protestants alike worship. A Jew—a Jewish bastard! The Jews are right, he was the first Communist; never think that that plague started with hairy old Karl Marx. God, what a tragedy that Nordics worship an illegitimate Jewish god, instead of a German redeemer, a Nordic savior!"

I answered him thoughtfully. "I met a Nazi once, in Lubeck, who said that *you* would redeem the Fatherland." I did not add, which had been a fact, that I saw him given a black eye for it by a Centrist.

His face seemed transfigured. "In the end, yes. It must be so. National Socialism must be our religion; and our Herr god, Germany. We will have no foreign pope, no Jewish Bible. We will have a German church, as we will find a German redeemer. Ach, this bastard Jewish religion! I myself, I am a heathen; and so I am bound to be, as a German, devoted to extirpating from all of life this stain of Jewry. I know no more heinous crime than the international Jew has committed, than Judaizing the truth of the

redeemer god who is still to come; and making us bow before an Asiatic mongrel, instead of a Nordic deity!"

"The case is strong against them," I said reflectively. More than ever I was proud of my retentive memory, my quick observation, my natural mimicry. All this I would write down in the tablets of my mind, the words, the chain of thoughts, the intonations, the facial expressions, the very tricks of finger-twitching. It would not be hard to be Adolf Hitler. He was so extreme, so all sharp edges and no blunted, curved mannerisms. He was hacked out with an ax, and no plane used thereafter.

All this might be true; how was I to know? He believed it, it was part of his soul, that much at least was clear. But I remembered a kindly old Jewish tailor in Passau, and a wise Jewish doctor who had treated my uncle's family in Nürnberg, and several Jewish professors at Basle who had done more than one big favor for me, when I needed them most.

He must have read my uncertainty. "You will meet Julius Streicher. *There* is the man who knows all that they are! It is worse than I tell you, Little Adolf—far worse! There are things too ghastly to talk about in public; you will get a hint of them from Streicher. Yet, with a mind as clean as his, how can he more than hint what is indecent beyond words? Your imagination must fill in, from the clean words, the foulness beneath. Ah, my imagination can! I wake up in the silent watches of the night and writhe with horrid excitement from some unspeakable rape of a Nordic child, some ghastly debauching of a Nordic daughter or wife by one of the detested Jewish swine. And you, never miss an issue of his *Der Stürmer*. It tells as much truth as he dares put in print, to avoid a charge of

flagrant and public indecency. This story he has not dared print yet—but he will, he will!” Hitler’s eyes gleamed with fanatical intensity. “Five years ago, in Germany itself, the little four-year-old son of a Nazi father and his devoted wife suddenly disappeared. It took three years for Streicher’s investigators to find out the facts; and then, they had to torture a Jewish girl whom they had suspected of being there, before she confessed to the truth—torture her almost to the point of death. They had this Jewish harlot stripped naked, bound to a huge table; they had applied lighted matches to the soles of her feet and she still would not confess, and finally they pulled out one toenail with pliers, yes. And then, she told the truth, to save the rest of her body. She admitted the worst that they asked her—that she had been present when the little boy was bound down, and his throat cut, and all the other awful ritual gone through with. And an orgy of lust followed it—she admitted even this, when they put the pliers to the second toenail!”

“What happened to the girl?” I asked.

He snapped his fingers. “It makes what difference? Only last month *Der Stürmer* had a more hideous story—of Jewish men and boys deliberately enticing and corrupting little blonde German girls to cater to the unnatural lusts they have made so prevalent in Berlin and Vienna; actually raping them, when they have the opportunity; and, worst of all, initiating blonde Nordic women into orgies of lust that rival the orgies of Messalina and Lucretia Borgia. Do you wonder that Germany must extirpate them; and that it is *my* task, and your task, and the Nazi task, to rid the fair Fatherland, indeed the world, of this hideous plague!”

Slowly I caught fire from his fanaticism. “It can be a

matter of time only. Though, as I heard you say, you have not the whole power yet. . . .”

“Leave that to Goebbels; he will arrange it.” He paced thoughtfully up and down the room. “Sometimes I wonder if Arno Schickedanz is not right. You have not read his *Sozialparasitismus im Völkerleben*, no? You must master the folkic literature; it is the duty of every Nazi, every German—they will be the same, soon,” he smiled proudly. “He says that the Jew is *not* a human being, not kin to the rest of us, at all; that he is a parasite on the human body, akin to the scientifically established parasites on all animal and plant life. It seems incredible; but science has established stranger things. It would simplify a lot.” He slumped back in his chair, his face taut and wondering. Then he sprang to his feet, with a burst of wild energy. “And I have told the Party comrades that, if they let our revolution fail, I will blow out my own brains—for that I have my own revolver always handy, in the top drawer of my desk! Gregor Strasser used to go frantic, when I would threaten it. When I purged him from the party, for the Judas he is, something—I forget what—made me threaten to commit suicide again. Oh, if they would not let my will be the Party’s will, as it is bound to be.” He stared fiercely at me. At my nod, he continued. “It was Goebbels who was so upset, this time. He said there would be no Party, with no Hitler. Let them heed well what I say, then!” He subsided again into his chair.

Blonda, his pet police bitch, laid her huge head in his lap, and sniffed luxuriously. Hitler’s strong nervous hands stroked the hair of her head rhythmically. “Sweetheart,” he said, “*you* understand—you know more than all the *Judenschwein* in creation. You are wise, Blonda, darling—

you accept the aristocratic principle in nature, the eternal privilege of force and strength. The Jew denies all this, in that blind worship of majorities called democracy, the dead weight of sheer numbers alone. Out of democracy comes the hideous disease called Marxism, a world pestilence whose final form is that ultimate putrescence, the parliamentary system. If the Jew with his Marxian creed conquered the nations of the earth, his crown of victory would be the funeral wreath of the human race; and I tell you, my Little Adolf, the planet would drive through the ether once again empty of mankind, as it did so many millions of years ago. Do you wonder that I say I would kill myself, rather than let this happen—rather than see the German race perishing under the Jewish diseases of democracy, and Marxism, and the parliamentary system? In fighting these, I am carrying out the will of the Almighty Creator, I am acting as God himself!”

“I did not know, I did not know,” I said humbly. “And even democracy the detested Jew is responsible for!”

“But naturally: it is an evil, and the Jew is the root of all evils. *You* did not know; but my Blonda knew.” His strong rhythmic caresses had roused the bitch now to a low excited rumble of delight. “In the old days, sweetheart,” his eyes poured passion into the widened, adoring eyes of the bitch, “I would have fed the Jews alive to you, and to Muck, the Wolf, and the rest,—one at a time, until the last of them was gone. So the Spaniards did with the Indians in the Americas, until again the land was fit for man to dwell in. I think Göering might do it now; I know Streicher might. . . . No, there are slower, better ways. Aha!” as there was a peremptory knock on the door.

An orderly entered, clicked his heels together, while his arm slashed forward in a stiff gesture. "Heil Hitler!"

More negligently the Leader rose, clicked his heels awkwardly, saluted with a casual arm that did not quite straighten out. "Heil Hitler!" he responded.

I rose to my feet, and gave the salute and the response also.

Blonda settled herself again on the floor at his feet, her eyes liquid with adoration.

The orderly looked with startled suspicion from the Leader to me. I turned my back discreetly.

"You are wanted at conference, Excellency," he said. His voice shook with uncertainty.

"Get a sjambok for this new bodyguard," snapped out the Leader's voice. He turned to me when the orderly had departed, with a warm smile. "You're one of my bodyguard now; and I have them all equipped with sjamboks—hippopotamus whips, gentle little weapons that can brain a man with one blow. So, if ever a Jew comes near you. . . . —And a revolver, too, when one is needed. But, Little Adolf, we must hide your face, and soon. They must not think that I am quintuplets running all over the Chancellery. Wait here; I will have Goebbels attend to that quickly."

He swung abruptly on his heels, and left the room. The room was empty when he had gone out.

CHAPTER V

THE SIGN FROM HEAVEN

BEFORE nightfall of that day, my hair was dyed the precise shade of Hitler's; and weekly, to the day on which I write this, it has been so dyed. But over it, at first, an off-color wig was fitted, and wax was inserted up the nostrils, until I resembled the Leader even less than Julius Shreck, his chauffeur, and one other of his doubles. At a moment's notice I could remove these, and be the Leader in the flesh. I have burned these, now, for good; there will never be need for them again.

But even in those days when I would have to remove them at the bidding of the Leader or any of the inner group of the Party, they insisted that I alone had his voice, his precise face; I alone must be ready to speak even, in his place, if need arose. It was this which admitted me to strange councils in the month that followed my entry into the Chancellery. More than these, however, I treasured the daily hours with the Leader himself, in which I absorbed more and more of his ideas, his fanaticism, his intonations, his mannerisms; or the wild excited dashes by automobile, disguised as one of his bodyguard, through the cheering thousands, in which I could watch his manner in public, and hear his voice bringing balm to the torn hearts of Germany.

It was during that first month, too, that first I appeared in public as the Leader. It had been planned to have him lay a wreath on the tomb of the sainted Nazi martyr, Horst Wessel. At the last minute, as we were about to start, came dispatches from several of the Rhine cities, that I could see disturbed him very much. "You *must* stay and decide what we are to tell them," insisted Goebbels, with a harassed look. "Let the wreath be sent; it will do as well."

The Leader rose magnificently to the situation. He beckoned me to my feet, with his own hands he removed the wig from my head, he stood in front of me and gave the salute with more energy than I had ever seen him, and cried "Heil Hitler!"

In superb arrogance I returned the salute, and more lackadaisically I gave the answering "Heil Hitler!"

"I," with a grin toward me the Leader spoke, "will lay the wreath on the tomb, which will release this astral body to do as you will about the dispatches, Goebbels. Little Adolf is at the service of the Party, and Germany!"

I removed the wax from my nostrils, I reached with a smile for his dogwhip, I threw out my chest, and walked out of the door, Adolf Hitler in the body, redeemer of the Fatherland. It had ceased to be a masquerade; I had come to my destiny at last.

On the way to the tomb, I sat beside Brückner, with Schaub and another bodyguard behind me, and of course faithful Julius Schreck driving. None of them knew of the substitution, not even Brückner. At first, my heart thumped a little more loudly than usual, as increasingly I saw Germany lined up on both sides of me, saluting me as the savior of the Fatherland. This I quieted at last, and was

my own dominant self by the time we reached the tomb. The vast crowd assembled here stood in reverent silence as, every step of my progress up the cleared area protected by machine guns, I marched up the steps of the tomb itself, and deposited the wreath on the grave of the great Party martyr. A tear dropped from my eye as I straightened up, heart exalted: so might every son of the Party and the Fatherland die!

I turned and faced the mighty gathering again. The hands of all flashed up in salute, and every voice thundered forth a "Heil Hitler!"

I drew my shoulders back, thrust out my chest, let my arm rise with the proper nonchalance to the salute, and responded with that hail that all the centuries will repeat: "Heil Hitler!"

But here was the chairman of arrangements, lifting up before me a microphone. "Just three minutes, my Leader," he reminded me.

Good God in heaven, there was to be this word to all Germany and the world, and Goebbels and the rest had forgotten it entirely!

The emergency, the momentary crisis, did not find me lacking. For this I had prepared and schooled myself, in the long night hours alone. "My friends, my Party comrades," sonorously the opening rolled out, "I greet you in the name of a reawakened, rearsen and resurrected German Fatherland!" It was to a hailstorm of applause every other word came. "We are met at the tomb of the Known Soldier of the Party, the great-hearted and great-souled hero and martyr, Horst Wessel. He gave his life for his Fatherland in his heroic conflict with the forces that poison and destroy—the three-fold hydra-headed monster of

Judaism, Marxism, and democracy! The Jew is the root of all evil." How beautifully it all came back to me, words my Leader himself had used, words that as the Leader myself I was speaking out of my heart and soul to all Germany, to today and to unborn tomorrows as well. "He invented democracy, and spread it, as he spread the other taints of civilization, over the unsuspecting world. Out of this vile nightsoil came the poisonous plant of Marxism, that threat at the manhood of every man, the chastity of every woman, in the Fatherland, and in the rest of the world! Out of this sprang the monstrosity of filth and fire, the parliamentary system—" Could I forget the glowing golden words of my *Mein Kampf*, that decalogue for today, that Bible for all tomorrows?—"and it is to the destruction of that that we pledge here our bodies, our hearts, our souls, and all our futures! Not till the last Marxist has been strangled in the entrails of the last Jew will our efforts cease! Party comrades, Heil Hitler!" It was a glorious speech, and a more glorious ending. They went frantic with adoration. One girl broke through the cordon of Blackshirts toward me, and I am sure it was no more than to kiss my hand that she wanted. But the magnificent sons of the Fatherland rose to the crisis, and I was quite interested, as I marched back to the car, in all that was displayed when a firm hand ripped off her waist, pulling her back into line. To the magnificent strains of the Horst Wessel hymn the cavalcade of cars started again, and passed slowly through the frantically cheering thousands by the tomb, and so back through the packed passionate streets to the Chancellery again.

I marched up the steps of the building, returning every salute and "Heil Hitler!", and even saluting places where

a salute should have come from. I was striding as I came into the conference room where Goebbels, Göring, the other Party leaders and the Leader himself were sitting back, smiling triumphantly over having solved the tangled snarl of the last minute dispatches.

"You were magnificent, my Leader," said Goebbels, saluting me with the friendly smile of a hungry python.

"You were too damned good," said Hitler. "Hereafter, why should I speak at all?"

But his eyes smiled, and I saluted him with all my soul and passed into the anteroom to become the unnoticed bodyguard again. Yet there had been a grandeur in that moment that I knew would rouse even my Leader to higher heights. I had not been rehearsing to myself for nothing.

Even more interesting, during that passionate tug-and-strain month, were certain other conferences, especially late at night, to which even the Leader was not bidden. Usually it was his regular little camarilla, the huge ox-like Göring, the sick-eyed little vulture Goebbels, the sly-eyed rowdy Captain Roehm, stiff Erik von Arnheim, Major Generals Heines and Ernst, and one or two more.

"He is still Adolf Légalité," sneered Karl Ernst, one midnight about the middle of February. "Three seats in the cabinet! Herr Gott, I talked myself hoarse, after the Old Bull first refused to appoint him Chancellor, urging putsch, putsch, putsch! What good did it do? If he fought it then, he is frantic against it now."

"There are those who went through the Beer Hall Putsch without a wound," said Roehm, in contemplative reminiscence. "The Leader was wounded in his soul. Just as well recognize it, that is his nature till death: never again arms, when craft will win." He considered the ceiling thought-

fully. "How young we all were in those days, how confident of ourselves, how sure the world was a ripe plum ready to drop into our upturned hands! You weren't there, Little Adolf," he turned to me indulgently. "But you have a right to live in the memory of great dead hours, as we do. That fight was won, Little Adolf, when my Storm Troopers captured the meeting, with steel helmets and Maxim guns at the doors, at every window. So proudly the Leader sprang on the table and fired two shots into the ceiling! Go to the Burgenbraukeller, across Isar, look at the ceiling, and there the holes are, to this day! 'Fellow Germans, the National Revolution has begun! Six hundred armed men cover the hall!'"

"Less five hundred and fifty," sneered Göring. "If we had been six hundred, they would not have plugged me so the next day. I count." His hand stroked his hilted Crusader's sword. I had heard of the huge headsman's sword behind his desk against a velvet curtain in his home.

"Ach, forget your damned accuracy, Herr Minister." His voice was electric: "'Hitler—Ludendorff—Poehner—the new government—Hoch!'" It worked like magic. Kahr, Seisser, Lossow, he backed them into the anteroom, the government of Bavaria, if you please, lined up against the wall! I took the platform, though speaking is not my first love; and I told the amazed audience what glories we would bring, while he fought for Germany against those traitors. The Leader lifted his revolver against the three of them: 'I have here four bullets—one for you, Gustav von Kahr; one for you, Seisser; one for you, General von Lossow—and the last for myself, if you do not join us, and save Germany!' It was persuasion enough; they joined us. But Lossow's adjutant had escaped, and roused von Danner.

We trusted the three turncoats, the more fools we. If we had only been wise enough to keep watch on them! By morning they had turned again, and the putsch was a corpse. Even at that, Herr Minister, we marched in, eh, seven thousand strong, Ludendorff and the Leader in the lead. . . . And then, the volley from the police. . . . Ludendorff arrested, the man arm-in-arm with Hitler plunked full of lead, the Leader on the ground with his shoulder dislocated, his bodyguard's body plugged with eleven bullets, Ludendorff's valet with his head half ripped off. . . . So it ended. And so we have Adolf Légalité. I, for one, am for the putsch still. What fun is there in government, if there are not skulls to crack? But I can still understand."

"You understand," said Goebbels icily, "just where it has gotten us, this damned legalism. There are six hundred seats in the Reichstag. We need a majority. We have scarce two hundred fifty."

"I thought we had a Propaganda Bureau," said von Arnheim, with a little sneer.

"There are one hundred Communist seats," growled Göring. "I count better, when I have them all in jail. Give me my way, and those that are not in the hospital have made their choice between cremation and burial. I still say they are all trying to escape from something; let me turn my guns on them!"

"We are all agreed, no, that this is no time to confine ourselves to political action?" asked Karl Ernst ponderously. "Except in the expanded sense it is used in the United States of America, where riots and shootings keep away unsympathetic voters?"

"But, certainly!" said Goebbels irritably. "Leave it to

speeches and votes, and in 1990 we are still campaigning for a majority. We have got to *teach* the German people what they want, is it not so?"

"This should be an election by the free choice of the German people," said von Arnheim suavely. "Any German fit for the suffrage is a Party member. Therefore it is our duty to see that their will is carried out. It will take a little direct action to arrive at this important result. Only, *what* direct action?"

"Kick the Communists on the rump," said Göring earnestly. "My boots are spiked."

"The spikes are blunt," pointed out Karl Ernst quietly. "You raided the Karl Liebknecht house, their headquarters, eh? You gave us your word you'd find proof of a Jewish conspiracy to rock the world. I laugh till I am sick. You find Sunday School lessons and pamphlets denouncing Marx, and nothing else. And 'Heil Göring' on your picture, framed on the wall—though I will admit they had splattered it with filth." This man especially fascinated me. There were rumors enough about Captain Roehm's personal life, and he had admitted the truth of most of them. He avoided women, yes, and he did not avoid men. But there were facts common to all about Karl Ernst. He had been for years a waiter in a low homosexual bar and restaurant in West Berlin, and he was admittedly Roehm's chief pet. I did not like the way he looked at Goebbels and Göring. I did not like the way any of them looked at each other. Only when they looked at Hitler was there something I could applaud.

"Maybe *your* boots are spiked," sneered Göring. "Or would you take them off and attack each Communist in pajamas?"

"Maybe you simply don't understand matters above your head," said Ernst heatedly. "What are you, a marriage-broker or a soldier?"

"I know what I'm *not*," said Göring brusquely. "A pervert—"

"Ach, an old woman's kaffee-klatsch," said Goebbels irritably. "Will you two never grow up?"

"One of us has," said Göring, frowning angrily. But, as always, the little schemer quieted him. "Listen to me, then—when I talk, it has meaning. I must have them all in jail, these Communists; and I will. The hospital and the cemetery you veto. Be it so. The only thing left is, *why* do I arrest them?"

Erick von Arnheim smiled suavely. "Now we are getting somewhere. After all, our life's work is not to pick flaws in each other's footwear. Captain Göring will arrest the Communist deputies—good. Surely we can find some good reason!" He considered it thoughtfully. "An attempt to assassinate the Leader—the bullet misses—the cowardly Communist assassins are all jailed. Reason enough, ready made for you! Why not?"

"Bravo!" said Goebbels swiftly. "That is worthy of us. We all rally to save Germany's redeemer. Genius, Erik, positive genius! Heil Hitler!" But there was no kindness in his tones.

"Your genius will put the Leader in the cemetery," said Göring abruptly. "Suppose the bullet does *not* miss!"

"Give 'em Little Adolf to shoot at," said Goebbels, with an unfriendly look at me, as at any new favorite of the Leader. I think, too, he sensed how little love I had for his waspish soul. "Then there is no harm done, however the bullet goes. We inform the world the noble leader is

wounded, but so superficially; jail the Communist rats; and all is won."

"*Parteigenosse*," I snapped it out in Hitler's best voice, "that is not worthy of you. Heil Hitler!"

They all stiffened, and then relaxed.

"Clown!" sneered Göring. "You will become as bad as Putzi, the insane ape."

"But it is a thought," insisted Ernst. "The Communist I select for the job will miss, I'll see to that."

"Ass," sneered Göring. "Where did *you* learn Party tactics? What then if he *does* miss? We have advertised to the world that the Leader is to be shot at, no? 'Hit the nigger baby and get a cigar.' No. The idea is a boomerang. For your information, Fräulein Ernst, a boomerang is a weapon that gives you concussion of the brain next. Start a thing like this, and sooner or later a man will shoot and *not* miss."

"And Little Adolf is rather new on the job, to risk his life," said Heines, with a smirk. "No, I agree this time with the Reichsminister. There must be some better way than that. Jail them, yes; but,—for what?"

I believe that this meeting ended with nothing further accomplished. But we were together the next night, and the night after that. On one of these nights, it was Göring who brought in a counter proposal. "What about a bomb, exploded in one of the ministries? I have no portfolio; it would not jar me. Say the Interior—that concerns every German closest. Comrade Frick could be a martyr, no? You give me the event, I'll do the jailing."

"Somebody always gets caught when you fool with bombs," insisted Ernst. "Stalin himself may have thrown them, in his younger days; but not our milksop German

Communists. The days of the Spartacists are over. Besides—one ministry—who cares? We might do better to toss all the Communists into the German Ocean. I have a better idea. We could shoot at the Old Man—”

“We *all* take a shot then,” grinned Göring. “Not a bad idea, Karla.”

Ernst flushed and shot a look of hatred at his tormentor. “I hear your last levee ended in a charming orgy, Herr Minister.”

Erik von Arnheim shook an annoyed head. “You are all adolescent, whenever you get together. Grow up, babies!”

Goebbels raised a pacifying hand. “You know, a fire is a lovely thing. It’s one of the four original elements—fire, earth, air, and water. We can’t achieve a landslide, or a hurricane, or a flood; but a fire is different.”

“The President’s *Palais!*” suggested Roehm swiftly.

“The Speaker’s home,” said Ernst, with an angry scowl.

Goebbels again had his hand insistently quieting them. “I have often thought what an old wooden frame the Reichstag Building is.”

“God in heaven, and we look for genius anywhere else!” Göring’s huge fist thundered down on the deal table. “It is colossal!”

“Remember it in your will,” said Goebbels sharply. “It spreads from the conference room of the Communist deputies. We apprehend the miscreants, and are the saviors of parliament!”

I listened with keenest attention now. History was being made, a new and spiritual Germany was arising phoenix-like from the flames of conspiracy and treachery, here in this acrid conference-room, in the smoke-laden air, while the Leader and the rest of the world slept. What at first

had seemed to me a group of assorted boors and thugs, gathered to plan some crime that would eliminate a rival political party and so gain for themselves control of Germany, appeared in its true light at last: statesmanlike patriots, using the surest and speediest means to the most glorious of all ends, the resurrected Fatherland.

"*We* apprehend the miscreants," sneered Göring. "But I will forget that. And how are you going to get inside the Communist conference room?" They were off now on a long and bitter squabble that lasted a full hour, with insults and vituperation flying: but all for the sake of the Fatherland, all to make sure that duly elected Communists were not allowed to sit, much less to vote, but should be jailed; that the real will of the German people might be expressed, by having us Nazis the clear and overwhelming majority. Let the Jews and the nations they gull, worship the silly result of a ballot; we had discovered that the people need to be led, and that in the hour of need the divinely inspired Leader will not fail them. Out of this argument, the final brilliant method decided upon was suggested by Göring. His palace as Speaker of the Reichstag was directly across the street from the Reichstag building. He had discovered a secret tunnel connecting the two buildings, a part of the original central heating system. Who else in all Berlin but we knew of it? Thus actual access to the doomed building was ridiculously simple.

At the last conference of all, Captain Roehm electrified us by the most magnificent contribution yet made to our patriotic scheming. "Gentlemen, I even have your Communist villain, who will actually set the fire for us! My men have reported his actions. He has already set three small fires in the city, and goes around maundering that

God named him to burn the world for its injustices. He's a poor, half-blind, Dutch halfwit named Marinus van der Lubbe, once a Communist in Holland, or something like it. We may conveniently forget that they expelled him for feeble-mindedness, and see to it that his pockets bulge with everything from the *Communist Manifesto* to *Genosse Stalin's* latest edict!"

"He can be hired?" barked out Göring. "Most Communists are damned unreasonable, that way."

"Better still, he can be steered," said Roehm suavely. "Leave that to me. The election is March 4th. Perhaps a week before. . . ."

At nine-fifteen P. M. on the icy night of February 27, 1933, smoke and flames burst from the windows of the Reichstag Building, in the core of Berlin, near the lower end of Unter den Linden. Within ten minutes, the fire departments were fighting the fire, and a police cordon held the blazing inferno incommunicado.

And now Roehm's masterpiece developed. A man shambled vacantly out of the building. He smiled happily when they arrested him. "Fire? Sure, I set it! I went in with household fire-lighters, ja. I piled tablecloths and curtains, and even—see!—took off my shirt, and tore it into strips for tinder. I lit one fire, two fires, three fires, and suddenly the whole central chamber is one beautiful blaze! I set it, all by myself!"

Within the hour, Göring and Hitler were on the scene of the stupendous conflagration.

"It is the work of Communists!" said Göring emphatically. "I will have the vile miscreants apprehended, at once! Germany will show the swine that Moscow can no longer rule the Fatherland!"

The perspiring Fire Chief saluted the Leader. "We have saved the walls, Herr Chancellor; the rest is gutted."

"It is a sign from heaven," said Hitler, magnificent in his understanding. "No matter what fire rages in her bosom, Germany will stand firm to the end of time! Now no one will prevent us from destroying the Communists with iron fists."

Göring hurried out with a statement. The confessed arsonist had a membership card in the Communist Party on his person, and a leaflet urging Social Democrats and Communists to unite. When the trial finally came around, the evidence established, as a mere matter of fact, that he had none of these; but the excitement of the triumphant moment had inspired Göring to this bold masterstroke. Meanwhile, he acted without delay. The one hundred Communist deputies were jailed. Martial law was practically proclaimed. Constitutional guarantees of individual liberty were naturally shelved in this national emergency. A Communist coup had been planned, it was revealed. The Nazi orators went forth into the highways and byways, as saviors of the country. "Only give us the votes!" they demanded.

The response was magnificent—two hundred and eighty-eight deputies, out of the five hundred still remaining. Germany was saved!

Unfolkic elements in Berlin and Germany, and the sceptical world outside, demanded, could Van der Lubbe have done all this himself?

He must have had confederates, the Nazis shouted back triumphantly: Communist confederates!

Yet the world grumbled. A building of stone and heavy wood, the most prominent structure in Berlin—how could

anyone have transported inside the sulphur and other chemicals, as well as the gasoline, through doors or windows, without being apprehended? Had he indeed come like Santa Claus down the chimney, maybe?

Again the masterstroke of Nazi shrewdness. At once the authorities revealed the existence of the unsuspected tunnel leading from Göring's backyard into the heart of the building. No one could be so base as to imagine that anyone but Communists could have thus sought to throw suspicion on the *Reichspräsident* himself!

The second week in March, the Old Man spoke. He was at last grateful to the Nazis as the saviors of Germany. Hereafter, let the republican flag be forgotten. Public buildings must display the old imperial standard and the new swastika flag, the Hakenkreuz, in black on a white background, designed in its every detail by Hitler himself. We were riding on the crest at last; and we leapt to rivet the chains of power so that no force could unseat us! Within three weeks the Nazi government introduced and passed the Law to Combat the Misery of People and Reich. The Constitution of 1919 was suspended: down with the Jewish pestilences of democracy and parliamentary government! Hitler and his Nazi government were given dictatorial powers for four years. Only the cabinet could enact laws for the Reich. At last the German people had spoken in their folkic pride and power!

Ernst Torgler, Communist Chairman of the Reichstag deputies, surrendered to the police, demanding to be tried on the ridiculous charge that Communists had had anything to do with the fire. Aha, the government was more than obliging. An observant Nazi waiter reported that three Bulgarian Communists, Dimitrov, Tanev and Popov,

had acted suspiciously just before the fire. They were jailed swiftly, and held firmly behind the bars until the trial opened in early summer. Dimitrov offered countless witnesses that he had been in Munich, not Berlin, on the night of the 27th. The government promised him complete justice, and kept him in jail to insure it.

The Leader was very grieved at things that happened in this hour of national strain and emergency. "It is unbelievable," he mourned to me one day in mid-June, "how quick the world is to believe evil of us, or indeed of any of the forces of good. Look at this mock trial, with mock defendants, being held in London—as if the very name Germany were not a synonym for justice! And the villainous *Brown Book*, published abroad by renegade German émigrés, full of lies from start to finish! Ach, the Jewish influence is everywhere. I have even seen the secret report of the Deputy Oberfohren, one of von Papen's flunkies, charging *us* with setting the fire! I wish *he* could be tried for that."

"Why doesn't Göring arrest him?" I asked.

The Leader shrugged. "His flat has been combed. I am informed that he has shot himself." At least, it became clear that he was dead.

The trial reeked with lies, Hitler exclaimed to me petulantly; it almost made one determine to abolish all trials. Here was Van der Lubbe's lie that he had been with Nazis the night before the fire. A gateman testified to the incredible lie that Dr. Albrecht, a Nazi deputy, left the burning Reichstag in great excitement as late as ten o'clock that night, three-quarters of an hour *after* the fire had started! One of Göring's own servants turned disloyal, and swore

to hearing mysterious sounds in the underground tunnel for several nights before the fire.

The trial came to an end at last, a monument to ruthless German justice. Van der Lubbe, clearly guilty of arson, had his head chopped off with an ax—Göring contributed this return to the old Germanic punishment as a more salutary object lesson to evildoers. To the end, the halfwit never communicated how the various chemicals and the gasoline were transported into the building. The other defendants were mercifully released, as there was no evidence to hold them on. And so the folkic cause rolled majestically on, shrewd enough to use means like this to combat the undoubted conspiracies of Jews, Marxists, and inferior races against Nordic greatness.

To his death, it was thought wisest to keep the practical details of the business from the Leader. He was utterly outraged at the publication of the letter with Karl Ernst's name signed to it, that appeared first after the Purge. It was dated June 3, 1934, and had been sent abroad, when rumors of the impending vengeance of Hitler for his plotting had reached him. It gave a very exaggerated picture of the patriotic conferences of Goebbels, Göring, Roehm and the rest, and boasted that he himself, with two of the Storm Troopers, von Mohrenschild and Fiedler, had set the fire. It was a definite and outrageous forgery, insisted the Leader. I can add to that that Ernst was clearly boasting, and that his part had entirely ended in the preliminary discussions.

"Little Adolf," Göring remarked to me, in one of his rare moments of semi-friendliness, "you will find that the most salutary method of achieving law, order, and unswerving loyalty from the people is our *Schrecklichkeit*,

which foreigners translate as frightfulness, instead of firmness. There is something lovely in cutting off a man's head with the ax, and a woman's head even more impressive as an example. In the first year I have returned to this splendid moral discipline, two hundred twelve men and women have been beheaded. There will be more. Each of these executions gives every loyal Nazi an upheaving of the heart. I will see that at least five thousand men and women are sterilized annually, to improve the Nordic stock.* These, and the concentration camps, will teach a lesson Germany will not forget. The future is bound to show swift improvement."

The world knows how he understated the case.

* The actual figures, 1933-1937 reached only 12,863.

CHAPTER VI

THE VISITOR AT MIDNIGHT

IT was the last day of that June, 1933, a muggy, sweltering Friday evening, that I was poisoned. Never after that did the Leader again allow me to be his food-taster. Neither of us had taken the little ritual seriously, up to that time. I am sure it was Goebbels who suggested it first; he was always the brilliant schemer, envisaging a thousand possibilities that the rest of us were inclined to ignore. The Leader ate so simply that such a thing as poisoning seemed impossible: an omelet, a few vegetables, and that was all. I believe for this dinner Arthur Kannenburg himself had come up from Munich, and had prepared this ragout of eggs and vegetables as a special treat for the Leader. And every attendant was a Nazi, and was watched by three or four sets of eyes during every stage of the preparation of the food. But the impossible happened, this once.

Herr Hitler served me first, then the other guests, and himself the last. They were all talking so earnestly that they postponed commencing the treat, while I was taking the first few mouthfuls. Suddenly I felt a violent pain rip my entire abdomen. I half rose from my seat, my face pale and working. "I am not well. . . ."

"Don't touch that food!" Goebbels shot out of the corner of his mouth. "Get the doctor quick please. . . ."

It was a close call, but he pulled me through. I was in bed for more than three weeks, and it was other bodyguards that had to accompany the Leader wherever he went. At least once Julius Schreck, his chauffeur, who was almost a perfect double, appeared in a state procession for him. I heard later that one assistant cook was beheaded for the crime. He was very probably guilty, Göring told me, although there was no evidence precisely connecting him with the poisoning. But he had once worked for Jews. And two scullery maids were spayed as an example to the others to be more careful. Even Bertrand Russell, he pointed out to me, had prophesied in his *Icarus* that the time would come when rebels and political enemies would be sterilized. It was surprising, he said, how even the English could have a thought at times.

During the last week of my invalidism, they came in and told me what was happening. Most of all of the impertinence of this Dimitrov during the trial, especially toward Göring. It was additional evidence how unwise trials were.

Things were happening that I wished I could have taken part in. We had promised, in that mad election campaign just after the Reichstag fire three months before, all that Germany needed. . . . To put the unemployed back to work; to abolish the entire Versailles Treaty; to return the land to the people, abolish interest, make industry social; to eliminate the octopus-like department stores, clearly a den of Jewish capital; to regain for Germany the Polish Corridor raped from her by the democratic nations in a jealous effort to split Prussia into two parts; and lastly to achieve the all-important Anschluss with Austria. These were far-reaching steps which required deliberation.

But there was one thing, at least, that we could do at

once: and that was to move against the real menace in Germany, the Jews. Göring and Streicher put their bitter heads together and much progress was made. I must admit that the SS troops had little to do with the personal attacks on Jewish men—the women were only rarely bothered, due to the innate Nordic chivalry; but quite a few of the impetuous Brownshirts did their personal bit against the menace.

And wise and statesmanlike steps were taken, as well. A boycott was proclaimed against Jewish businesses, doctors, and lawyers, first of all. The real German people entirely ceased doing business with the little Jewish shops. It was too much, of course, to expect them to discontinue trading at the department stores, for these gave bargains. The boycott at least served to waken the people against their real enemy. A strict definition of non-Aryan was established—one whose great-grandfather had been Jewish. It was adjudged that even one-eighth Jewish blood prevented a person from being the possessor of real Nordic blood. There were those who held that any kinship with the Jewish Adam should be eliminated as rigidly. All non-Aryan officials and honorary officials were summarily dismissed as unworthy of holding office under the German Reich. The schools and universities were increasingly cleansed of them. Movements were started to ban them from the stage, the movies, journalism and music. They had for too long been too prominent in these, falsely representing real Aryan culture to the world; at length this was terminated. Tens of thousands of them were, for their own protection, placed in concentration camps, and, as soon thereafter as it was practicable, the crude condition of these camps was remedied. Julius Streicher was magnificent in his aggressive

nationalism. The month after my recovery, he ordered two hundred and fifty Jews who had been arrested to pluck a field free of grass with their teeth, and saw personally that his order was carried out. It was incidents like this that showed Nordic idealism at its greatest.

Greatest of all, as a symbol of Germany re-arisen, all books polluted by Jewish authorship were banned from libraries, and public bonfires were held in which race-guilty books were committed to the purging flames. The Leader himself assured me that this step was necessary. I had, of course, grown up in a benighted period when the writings of Heine, Marx, Freud, Adler, Thomas Mann, Feuchtwanger, Einstein and so many more were regarded as distinct contributions to German culture; it was only now that they were recognized as Jewish propaganda, polluting the pure stream of Nordic thought. One bitterly reactionary paper, obviously inspired by the discredited militarist machine of von Papen and Hugenburg, called this a return to medievalism, and said that the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 had bled the nation white, and reduced it to the impotence in which it still stagnated. This paper was promptly suppressed as non-Aryan and a warning against any such perversion of history was featured in all the Party organs.

Even better news was brought to me, that conduced to my speedier recovery. On July 14, Bastille Day in France, the National Socialist German Workers' Party was officially declared the only political party in Germany. This step extremely clarified the political situation. Without legal opposition, it became possible for the Nazis to proceed to their work of redeeming Germany from her enemies at home and abroad in far freer fashion. In a well organized

political state there is room for only one political party: the party that stands for the realization of the national ideals, without contamination from international and other destructive forces. There can be no second school of thought on a matter as simple as this; every progressive nation in the world has adopted it. It has long been the law in Italy, which has imitated Germany in all of its totalitarian steps, for all that chronologically it claims a slight advantage in preliminary experimentation; and in Russia, a country with a Judaized ideal, but akin in many ways to the superior German technique. It is not true of the second-rate world powers, the democracies, England, France, and the United States of America. Here harmful party conflict is allowed to obscure the national ideals, and the result is divided counsels, paralysis in an emergency, and ruinous inner conflicts. It heartened every right-thinking German to know that the Fatherland had at last enacted this most beneficent governmental policy. Most of the other Germans, for their own protection, were soon placed in protective custody in concentration camps, which gave unexampled opportunity for reflection and conversion.

The doctor promised that I could leave my bed in one week after this law went into effect. At midnight, on the 20th, the door of my bedroom in the Chancellery opened quietly, in darkness, and closed as quietly.

"Who's there!" I demanded.

A flashlight picked me out on the pillow. "Light the bedlight!" whispered a voice. "Without outcry. I have a revolver."

I will admit that I was startled. But I reflected at once that this was some lark of one of the more ribald of the

party members who knew of my recovery and wished thus to welcome me back to active service. I lit the light.

A tall man in a military cloak stood staring aloofly down at me. His eyes were masked, his firm left hand had me covered—the light, I noted, was in his right hand. He extinguished it. "Lie still!" he said. "No harm is intended to you. I have come to talk."

"Who *are* you?" I demanded. "After all, I have only to push this button—"

"No one will answer it," he said. "I myself deadened the bell with cotton. I have paid much to have this talk with you, Herr Bauer. We will not be disturbed, do not worry. Those higher up will see to that."

I had not heard the name I was born with for months, and a strange thrill shivered through me. "Well?" I demanded.

"May I sit?" He swirled his cloak over the back of a chair and drew it close to where I lay. He wore the uniform of the Reichswehr, I saw at once, and the stripes of a Captain. "I have been sent to talk to you," he said, "by those who wish your own good."

"They do not wear masks," I pointed out.

"I will take it off, if you wish. You will not wish—yet." His lips closed firmly, underneath the flimsy domino. "You are alive," he pointed out.

"God be praised!" I said fervently.

"No one wished your death. Yet . . . you almost died."

"A cowardly attempt on the life of the Leader. . . ."

"Words may be defined in many different ways by many different lexicographers. The jailing of a hundred Communist deputies—it was hardly a synonym for bravery, no? Nor the beating of unarmed Jews by armed Brown-

shirts, no? Nor Herr Hitler's throwing himself on the ground so hard that he broke his shoulder, during the Beer Hall Putsch, when the police opened fire—if we must ancient history remember, in this present.”

“It is a lie!” I said with aggressive passion. “His arm was locked with Dr. Scheubner-Richter's, and his dying body falling to the ground pulled down the Leader as he was about to charge!”

“So it has been said. I myself was there, and what I saw I saw. The Bible was burned in the public square in Lubeck only last week, as a Jewish book.”

“Do you think a Nazi wrote it?” I demanded.

“No, God be thanked! Me, I am a Catholic. —And the *Lieder* of Heine also. He was no Catholic. But I myself love those *Lieder*.”

“And you call yourself German!”

“Quaintly enough, I do. But enough of that. You are alive, and the Leader too is alive, worse luck. Does it occur to you that those who have failed the first time can still count, and there will be a second, and a third, and so on up the ordinals until there is the last?” His face grew wolf-like, and menacingly neared me.

“There is the ax, for such attempts,” I said fiercely. “Any German who is so unpatriotic, so unnationalist—”

“He gave his word, your Leader, to von Papen, that he would not upset the cabinet in which he was first named Chancellor. How he kept his word history remembers yet. What does history say of the man whose soul is rotten with lying, as is this Herr Hitler's! One of these attempts, my friend, will not fail. One man cannot set himself up to be the people. The psychiatrists are kind when they call it

insanity. There is a Waterloo, and a St. Helena, and a tomb of state after that, in every life."

"This is nonsense! You're trying to threaten—"

"I threaten nothing; I speak what will be. And, when that *is*, my friend, what of you?"

I am afraid my eyes goggled stupidly. "—Of *me*?" I echoed.

"You are Herr Hitler now, while he is alive, when it suits his coward's soul. Like any Hollywood prima donna. When he dies. . . . It is worth thinking over, is it not?"

"If I could push this button now and call those of the palace, and if you had anything to do with this cowardly attempt—"

"Only to know of it in advance, my friend, and applaud it, and mourn that it failed. So. Göring has chopped off the head of one faithful Nazi cook, and had the ovaries of two Nazi kitchen wenches removed. So. But in that hour, when the attempt succeeds, perhaps you will not be sorry to see me then."

"I will know you then," I said, raising my voice—it was partly bluff, at that. But I recalled how he held his pistol in his left hand. "I will denounce you—"

"Little Adolf!" he jeered. "But then, you may be Adolf, rather, if you prefer. Remember that. All this is merely to give you something to think of. When we are ready to speak, we will speak. He walks in his sleep," jeeringly, "for nights he cannot sleep, and other nights he wanders around with a dazed look, like an imbecile, so, a sleep-walker. You at least sleep soundly. Your conscience is clearer. As for us, we do not burn Bibles and Heine. You have had a nightmare." He rose menacingly, the pistol threatening my mid-body. "You will forget this night-

mare, and tell not even your worser I. A nightmare. It is already forgotten. So?"

"Maybe," I said, cowed by the unpleasant proximity of that menacing revolver.

"Your word, Herr Bauer?"

"My word." It was more tactful to agree, at a moment like that.

He swirled his cloak around him again. "You will see me again," he said. "Pleasanter dreams."

And he was gone, the great door closing silently behind him.

I pinched my left hand to make sure that it was no nightmare. My swift "Ouch!" reassured me. Tall, clean-shaven, a Reichswehr captain, left-handed. . . . I must keep my eyes open. But it might be taken for a nightmare, if I reported it. And, after all, there were those higher up. And what colossal nerve, to have come on me here in the very Chancellery, even if the Leader was away! There might be only one political party in my Germany; but there were clearly those who were restive under it and should be a nightmare to all Party members.

I decided to say nothing until there was more to say. I had given my word; there was no occasion yet to break it. One thing only I did do. I made inquiries as to who had been in charge of the guards of the Chancellery on the night of July 20th. To my amazement, I discovered that it was Erik von Arnheim. If this strange night visitor in his black domino and his swirling cloak had not been lying, and was indeed protected, it was by one high up indeed.

I began to court von Arnheim a little more than formerly. In fact, I spoke to Herr Hitler himself about it.

Would there be objection if I made a special study of leaders of the Party, to keep him confidentially informed of their real attitudes toward him?

Splendid, he agreed; he himself had done espionage work once. Von Arnheim, by all means. "And his wife, too," he said earnestly. "They are "trouble-makers ever, these *frauen*. She has said friendly things about the Marxists. Find out all you can about her."

"I pledge you my word, my Leader."

The opportunity was easy to make. He himself brought it up. "The Leader says you are to take things easy for the next couple of weeks, Little Adolf," he greeted me jovially the very next day—I have wondered if the Leader himself did not drop a hint of his wishes—"and I have a rather amusing request to make of you. Frau von Arnheim has heard just enough rumors of the cause of your illness to be mad to meet you. Will you not dine with us tomorrow evening?"

"It is permitted?" I must not let him know of my mission, or guess it.

"But yes. So long as you are merely one of the body-guard, much is permitted. But we will take the little lady aside and you will let her see the Leader in the flesh, no?" He patted me amiably on the back. I nodded agreement.

I had heard much of the beauty of Ulrica von Arnheim who had been married to the portly Major General only three months now. She had been a young entertainer in a Berlin night club when von Arnheim met her and incontinently married her. I had heard, too, that she saw no reason why she should not stand as high among the wives of the members of the cabinet as Frau Magda Goebbels; and that she had an exquisite voice, and a shrewd tongue. I looked

forward to meeting her, and the further opportunity of studying her and her husband.

I was introduced to her as Herr Zeit, my usual name as bodyguard. Of course, I wore my wig, and the wax up my nostrils.

"There is *some* resemblance, Erik," she said, after studying my features. There was obvious disappointment in her voice. "But *I* thought . . ."

"Ach, but yes!" He watched me with amusement, as I bowed stiffly and saluted her hand—her lovely warm little hand, that soon enough I was to know so well. "Little Adolf, we promised the little lady, no?" He winked familiarly at me.

I turned my back, and removed the wax from my nostrils. I slid off the wig and concealed it under my coat. One swift gesture released the shock of dyed brown hair to just where the Leader would have worn it. I turned sternly, fanatic-eyed, to greet her.

She turned pale for a moment, her hands fluttering up to her breasts. "Herr Führer!" she gasped.

"Heil Hitler!" I gave it with just the proper amount of sloppiness—the *Schlamperei*, the casual Austrian nonchalance that the Leader always shows.

"Ach, dear God, Erik, he's *sweet!* For a moment, I was frightened. Come, little Führer," she linked her arm in mine, "we go in to dinner, no?"

The dinner was excellent: an admirable Leibfraumilch, the fowl roasted to a turn, a sweet such as I had not had for months, liqueurs, cigars. And most of all the lovely woman presiding in the mellow candleglow beside me. I relaxed as I had not done for months.

"There is too much going on behind the scenes, Little

Adolf," she said to me earnestly. "You did not hear the Leader in Bad Reichenhall—you were . . . taken sick on a Friday, and this was the Sunday following. I heard him. Ugh! I shivered!" She closed her lovely eyes, her face quivered. "Look! I am Hitler, now!" She mimicked to perfection, with gamin grace: "I will crush, brutally and ruthlessly, every attempt to overturn what we have accomplished. I will turn without mercy as well against what they have the effrontery to call the Second Revolution. Whoever lifts his hand against the National-Socialist State I will hit hard, no matter where he stands in our counsels!" She turned impulsively to me. "But whom did he mean? The reactionaries,—or us, whom they dare call the National Bolsheviks, merely because we insist that the campaign pledges be fulfilled, and the Party achieve its promised destiny!"

Von Arnheim shook his head, as if unsympathetic. As for me, I shrugged. "But this is all above my head, lovely Frau. I have been a sick man, remember." But my eyes warmed toward hers the message that I was a sick man no longer.

"Ulrica's a spitfire," said her husband indulgently. "Goebbels she detests most of all. Yet it is a time. With the Old Man sick—it is not admitted yet, of course. He hasn't had his wits for months; he hasn't even his health, now. An aged Robot for President! When *he* dies, who *then* will be President? And, whoever is President, who then will be Chancellor? One can hardly be Pooh-Bah here, holding every portfolio."

"He will solve things in his own way, when the time comes," I said.

Arnheim studied me closely. "Captain Roehm has his

eye on some job, I'm sure of it. It is not a small thing to be the head of the Storm Troopers."

"I tremble for him," said Ulrica quietly. "I remember how you told me, Erik, that Gregor Strasser was the Leader's best friend, once. There is a fatality—"

Von Arnheim's hand went up in warning. "Little Adolf is not a member of the family yet. That was before your time, Herr Zeit," with a wink at me. "Yet Strasser was a great man, yes. He had forty deputies in his pocket. He headed the political organization. Yet here is how our enemies work. Just before the Leader became Chancellor, von Schleicher offered a coalition to Strasser, and he said he would accept. Word of it was brought to the Leader. He summoned all of us Nazi deputies together, Strasser also. 'Every group of apostles has its Judas,' he announced, eyes straight on Strasser. 'The Judas seeks to tar others with his brush. Look, in my hand I have the very list of the others that this Judas of ours names, as ready at this moment to betray the Party and Germany! Shall I read these names?' He paused impressively, and then was aflame. 'I will read them, though I read from the Party every deputy. The first name on that list is Erik von Arnheim!' He whirled on me. 'Are *you* a Judas to me, the Party, and Germany?' I was on my feet in a flash. 'It is a lie! I have no part with Party-comrade Strasser in any of his machinations!' Nor did I. Friendly, yes; no more. Some of them—I do not know." He shrugged sorrowfully. "But all of us disowned him, as far as the Leader read. You know how low he stands today. The Leader refused to shake hands with him. If he did that to me, it is possible I would shoot myself. He is still alive; and that is mercy, to a traitor. Ach, but you yourself know it, Little Adolf; Captain

Roehm is the Leader's best friend. Yet that does not make him traitor."

"There would be no Hitler, without Roehm," said Ulrica, with a bitter little sigh. "I cannot believe what they say about him—that he prefers men to women! It is not in nature."

I kept my face immobile.

Her husband shrugged. "There are the letters from La Paz. Forget them. He is sometimes too extreme, though. After all, it is Marxism that we must eliminate from Germany. Some of his Storm Troopers—"

The butler came to the door to summon my host to the telephone. My hostess smiled more invitingly at me, with a little *moue* of disappointment. "They are always after him to do this or that. A man cannot have a simple evening at home with his wife and friends without some Party business intervening. I need a cigarette to assuage my grief, *mon chéri*."

I handed the packet toward her, rather intoxicated by standing beside a lovely woman again, after these celibate months. I could not help staring down at her daring, low-cut gown. When I held the match to her, she linked her little finger in mine, as if practiced. After all, she had been an entertainer in a night club, I reflected, and such women belong to the men able to pay their price.

I stood there staring down at her. If she had not been the wife of one of the Party leaders, I knew that then and there I would have sought to find out what were my chances with her; and I have been told repeatedly by girls and women that there is no lover like your German. I started to move away, stifling my hunger, when a thought struck me opportunely. Herr Hitler had said to find out all

that I could about her. Could there be a better way? And then I smiled wryly at myself: could it be merely my desire that spoke, which I was intellectualizing as a Party assignment? Behave, Max, I told myself. With some firmness I started to move away.

She must have read the hunger in my eyes; she had no doubt seen it often before, in the nightclub, and she knew how to increase it, or watch it starve to death, if that was her whim. At any rate, she smiled up over lowered lashes, with more than a little encouragement. "You'll never know what it is, being married to a Party bureaucrat," she said.

"I trust not," I laughed. "They do not call me Captain Roehm."

"That's very naughty of you," she said, with a forgiving smile. "He is of the real Party—the group they dismiss as Left. I wish that Erik could see him as I do. He, alas, is Right."

"I like Roehm immensely," I said. "For all the gossip, he is a real man—and he simply worships the Leader. I, I know."

"It is strange," she said slowly. "You are so entirely like the Leader, outside; but, within yourself. . . ." She laughed lightly.

"Thank God, no," I said devoutly.

The husband's re-entrance interrupted her fresh peal of laughter. "I cannot get Little Adolf to swear he is a virgin, as Hitler is," she explained.

"Thank God for small favors," said her husband. But he was frowning. "God's damnation, why *must* I have to hurry off to the Chancellery at an hour like this? They never strike a snag in Hamburg, or Köln, or, God forbid,

Königsberg, but they call on me to straighten it out. Now it's that embassy at Geneva that needs to have secret word taken to; and of course I have to be the courier. And back by way of Vienna and Prague. Adorable, I must miss three or four nights of your company."

"I refuse to be lonely," Ulrica's little smile was sly. "I will have Little Adolf dine with me again Monday, I warn you, if you desert me."

"Not a bad idea, with these damned Brownshirts of Roehm's thicker than flies on honey. You ought to have someone around to keep an eye open—so long as it's not that satyr, Goebbels. I'll be back in an hour—less, if possible. Open a new bottle of wine— God knows I'd rather stay here and share it with you."

"We'll save you some, poor man," she laughed, rising to give him her crimson lips. "You might tell them that I adore Vienna," with a pout. "You *never* take me on these trips."

"I'll send you instead; you could do better than I. Well, for an hour, sweetest—"

Her eyes met mine rather mockingly over his huge shoulder. He must have been a full twenty years older than his wife; perhaps more. I could understand her look.

We saluted each other and he turned and marched out.

"Come," she linked fingers with mine, "we are to find a bottle of wine, *chéri*—I hope to God you're a good butler; I always break the corks." She led me into the butler's pantry, and spun through an inspection of the wine there. Her nostrils wrinkled at the bottles, though any of them would have been a treat to me. And then her eyes suddenly brightened. She knelt before me and rummaged underneath a shelf. I felt more stirred by her presence than be-

fore. There is something exciting in having a woman on the floor before you, especially with her backside toward you.

She rose suddenly, clutching a bottle. "He saves this for himself," she giggled delightfully, "but I'll let *you* have some, if you're a good boy; and we can save what's left for him." She had the corkscrew in another dazzling, darting movement, and handed it to me with a mock curtsy. There was a mood in the air as if we were conspirators. "Now do your best. A man ought to be able to open anything." Her eyes tempted me under lowered lashes.

I felt on my mettle, and did a perfect job. The cork popped out as if it had been sparkling hock.

"We used to say in the café," she cocked her head pertly to one side, and smiled up at me, "a bottle well opened deserves a kiss."

I needed no further encouragement, God knows. I rounded her slim body with one arm and sipped her lips. And my other hand caressed her. I never yet met a wife who did not resent her husband, merely because he was a man, and thus made superior to her; I rarely met one who did not want to be encouraged to pay him back in the one way all women have.

"Naughty!" she stood shivering, when I let her go. "You kiss like one with too much experience. I meant just a kiss."

"I have been a virgin since January 29th," I reminded her. I made no move to reach for the bottle of wine; instead, I took her in my arms, for another, a slower kiss.

She did not look me in the eyes after this. "He comes back soon," she said, suppressing a giggle. "—Husbands!

And, if we have not even had one drink, he will be surprised."

"But Monday comes," I reminded her.

"That's what I'm afraid of," she giggled.

We were sitting decorously in the living room when he returned. His eyes went up when he saw which wine we were drinking.

"It was all I could find, dear," Ulrica told him, with naïve, uplifted eyes.

"Blind as a glowworm!" he beamed fatuously. "Little simpleton! Well," he poured himself a glass and subsided heavily into his chair, smoothing down his portly belly until it was in comfort, "it's trouble over the Storm Troopers, as usual. Even the ambassadors are demanding more Leftist action. Roehm's loose talk about the Second Revolution has spread too damned far. What the hell can the Leader do with his two and a half million thugs?" He spat the word out at me, as if daring me to contradict it.

"But they are the Leader's bodyguard," I objected. "His pretorian guard, shall I say?"

"Nonsense!" snorted von Arnheim. "You do not know what is around you. You have an army—the Reichswehr. One hundred thousand men, no more; but the crack troops of Europe—von Blomberg has made them so. They are sceptical of the Bohemian corporal, yes; but Blomberg himself thinks that Hitler is Jesus come back to Germany; and that is all that matters. And what do they think of Roehm's rabble? Ask them! I *know*. Pretorian guard, you said. No, that is the Schutzstaffel, the Black-shirts, three hundred thousand of them—and Himmler, who commands them, hates Roehm's guts, and all fairies.

Three armies, when any other dictator would be happy with one. *You* tell me what is to be done!"

"But why must they quarrel about it?" I objected. "Captain Roehm told me himself he had the perfect solution—simply absorb the Storm Troopers into the Reichswehr, and all is well."

"So," he sneered, "is it not a lovely vista! They win the first revolution, these Brownshirts. But where is the reward, the employment, the improved conditions, the spoils of victory? They see the Reichswehr flourish and Göring grow more double-gutted, and, for them, they are told—no Second Revolution, or there will be the Leader's personal vengeance. They are the real Left, the Brownshirts. Who is to feed them? They are not even needed any more; the Blackshirts do the protecting, now. Give Roehm and his Brownshirts a riot to end or to make, and they are happy; but, in a land at peace, what is there for them to do?"

"But, if they become part of the regular army—" I objected again.

"Ach, yes, with Captain Roehm head of an army of three million men, and Blomberg's discipline shot to hell, and— Why, as far back as 1922, our precious Roehm was booted into exile for this very reason. No, it is a serious problem for the Leader. It is Roehm *or* Blomberg; it cannot be both. And Blomberg does not aspire to be President or Chancellor." His voice quieted significantly.

"Hitler, after the war, was an agent for the Reichswehr—his first work," observed Ulrica cryptically.

"I myself have served under Blomberg. Well, God be thanked, it is not my funeral."

"It is nobody's funeral, yet," said his lovely wife, with

a sly little smile at me. "But our guest yawns—he is tired, what with being on his back so long." She rose, stretching her lovely body languorously. "On Monday, then, at six, Little Adolf?"

"God willing." I clicked my heels together, and saluted her warm, soft little fingers.

Erik von Arnheim drove me back to the Chancellery. I liked him more and more, the more I saw him. And his wife was the first woman I had been allowed to meet socially for almost half a year now, except for Frau Goebbels and a few like her. Ach, what a deplorable waste of time! And she had entertained in a nightclub, too.

Well, Monday was to come soon. . . .

CHAPTER VII

THE LONG SHADOW OF ROME

SUNDAY evening I had dinner at the Goebbels home. It was not exactly of my seeking; I still think it was of Hitler's arranging, for he had shown much interest in the brief report I made to him of Erik von Arnheim and his fascinating wife. I arrived with the Leader himself, and found him at once in an intimate mood I had seen only rarely before, and always in this house. He had a Mickey Mouse of gaily colored wooden balls in his pocket for little Harald, and tousled the youngster as if it had been his own. He was only torn away from the child and his charming mother, Frau Magda Goebbels, by the sound of a jovial, huge voice in the entrance hall.

"Putzi!" he exclaimed, and made for the door.

I was always interested in studying Ernst Hanfstaengl, whose position in the Party was anomalous enough, but whose standing then as Hitler's favorite, next to his closest friend Captain Roehm, was assured.

Hitler spread wide his arms to embrace him.

"Hah! Away, slight man!" With a lordly gesture Putzi brushed away Hitler's hand. "I am insulted by your own business partner."

"Come, come, jackanapes, what new nonsense is this?" grinned the Leader.

"If you please, your beloved Max Amann, 'You-God-damned-son-of-a-bitch' Max Amann, has called me a zoo—a zoo infected with vermin!"

"Oh, Putzi, what wild new story have you got now?" Hitler sat back in a chair, quivering with mirth, as though it hurt him a little to laugh. "You're always mad, and each day madder than the day before."

"No, it is gospel truth. He was talking to Rosenberg, the thinker of your precious Party—I have it on the word of one of the girls who is secretary there. He said I was a jackass, a crazy kangaroo, and a louse. That is too many animals for any man to be at one time. I r-r-r-resent it!" He tilted up his large nose, and pulled his blond hair down in ridiculous imitation of Hitler's vagrant lock.

"Ach, he is a top sergeant still, with no more manners," said Hitler. "Was *that* all?"

"All? Is it not enough? Listen, Adolf—you may be a jackass, you may be a crazy kangaroo—but I will be damned if you are these and a louse too! And neither am I, God wot. Max, he lost one arm hunting my cousin the roebuck. If he calls *me* any more names, I'll bite off his other arm, and eat it raw—and I'll wear his eleventh finger for a fob charm." He scowled ferociously. But really, Harald," he switched his mood swiftly, "I am really a hippopotamus in the Upper Nile." With huge gravity he was on the carpet before the startled child, galumping around the floor on all fours. "The louse is on my back. The louse is named Max Amann. See, I roll over, and rub him off on the back of an alligator on the river bottom." With immense gravity he rolled over, and emerged, beaming, on all fours again. "See, I have caught the louse, Harald—and, as I said, it has but one arm. Now I will

eat it!" With huge gusto he pretended to chew and swallow it.

"No wonder they called the Party plane a Flying Circus, with *you* along!" smiled Hitler.

"All clowns and no lions, eh? But the star of the circus is the great gorilla, Harald," he continued imperturbably. "Look, I am in my cage, and this is how a Nordic gorilla shakes the bars!"

Only the bell for dinner ended the impromptu menagerie.

Dinner over, "I play!" suddenly announced Hanfstaengl, in a bellow. As if no one else was in the room, he stalked over to the piano. He spun the seat a few times each way, as if that were all he had come for. Then he spun it with himself seated upon it, almost as dizzily. Finally he came to rest where he wished to be. Goebbels was hunched up, lost in a huge chair in one corner, his restless, evil eyes surveying everything in the room. His wife sat quietly on the davenport behind the seat in which the Leader had ensconced himself. I sat across from him, little Harald wide-eyed at my feet.

And then, the *Pathetique* rolled out. I have never heard it played with more dreadful beauty. Not even Putzi's clowning of the round at the end could mar the magnificence of the whole. Destiny seemed to boom out in the vast opening chords, and the mad rigadon of the interwreathed Fates at the end.

"I could listen to you all night," said Hitler quietly, at the sonorous end.

"I will make records, and you can play them all night," Putzi roared. "I myself will compose you a sonata, on the death of the last fairy in Germany."

Hitler stiffened a little at this, as he always did at talk of homosexual men. He looked apologetically toward Goebbels.

"Now, Putzi," pleaded Frau Goebbels.

But her husband's large, feverish eyes popped suddenly open, and he crackled with laughter. "Don't tell me we actually have airy fairy Lillians in Germany, Putzi!"

"Ask His Mightiness, there. Two leading physicians of Berlin have just resigned as doctors in the Storm Trooper organization, as a protest against our chubby-cheeked Roehm's little proclivities. In the United States, Christ, there is not a cartoon that does not picture the Reichskanzler rouged, with an effeminate smile, his hand on his hip! It used to be Charlie Chaplin they imitated on the vaudeville stage; now any little bastard of a ham actor with a Charlie Chaplin moustache only has to come out and squeak 'Now, dearie,' and the audience goes wild, identifying it as Hitler—while the actor thus makes a Hitler. That is a pun, my Gracious; you will not understand it. Did these doctors not protest to you, Adolf?" He crossed his arms magisterially, his bobbing chin demanding an answer.

The Leader fluttered nervous hands. "Now, now, Putzi! They say different things, and plenty of them about you. And just why should I concern myself with the private lives of my men? All that is important is their service to the Party. If we are having a putsch and I need a man, do I ask whom he slept with the night before? You, yourself, adore the music of Richard Wagner as much as I. Do you shut your ears to his greatness because he was a man-lover?"

"Roehm's dream is a Reichswehr of two and a half

million Brownshirted pederasts," said Hanfstaengl insistently. "It is too many, no?"

"And what of the Catholics?" snapped out Goebbels. "There you have the *real* teachers of such unGerman practices."

Hitler looked helplessly at Frau Goebbels. "You see I am in the minority, dear lady. What am I to do when they besiege me like this?"

Magda Goebbels smiled gravely. "There I cannot help you. They say enough about me—that Günther was a Jew. . . ."

I must have looked inquiringly. Hitler threw over at me, "Her first husband, Dr. Quandt—a splendid Nordic."

She smiled thanks. "He was merely a capitalist, and twenty-five years older than I. And I was reared for some years in a Jewish family. But Catholics—I know little of them."

"*You* two were brought up to say mass." Putzi looked belligerently from Hitler to Goebbels. "*You* should know."

"There is more wrong with the black moles, the priests, than that," said Goebbels, with swift, vindictive bitterness. "Working blindly underground all the time, undermining all the good that is accomplished in a Nordic state! What was it Voltaire said—'Europe will never be at peace until the last king is strangled in the guts of the last priest!' There is wisdom for you."

"They are not Germans," said the Leader firmly. "They can never be Germans. The fools say they serve one greater than any king, any Führer: the vicar of their Jewish god on earth. It is not that he is Italian, not a bit of it; even if he were German, we would still have them serving two masters—an international pope, and a German people's

party. Germany is not large enough to hold one man whose soul is pledged to serve anything not German."

Magda Goebbels observed him with her sweet, candid gray eyes. "Is it true what they say about the confessional, Herr Hitler? About corrupting girls and women, and all?"

"And boys and men," put in Putzi explosively. "Ask Roehm!"

Hitler flushed again. His voice was grave. "There is much truth in it, of course. It gives them an unparalleled opportunity, the whole system. Look: a priest is forbidden by the tenets of his faith from ever marrying. Think what this means. For his whole life he can never look on any woman as his own, his wife, the to-be mother of his children. All this is forbidden completely. He is not supposed to think of her even as the mate of his bed for one night, no matter what monasteries and seminaries and nunneries have been down the ages. But he is a male, and so he must think of such forbidden things as the woman's body and all that it does. How easy is corruption, from that!"

"Voice of God, ach," sneered Goebbels evilly. "Here comes a sweet young German girl in to the confessional. Here is the priest to confess her—young, lusty, human. You tell me he thinks of nothing but Herr Gott when he talks to her? She is a girl; she had a body such as the Virgin had, and the Holy Ghost found out about her; she has a body she will give to some man, as wife or mistress; or, if not, she will go to her grave, whether as nun or unmarried woman, with a woman's legs and breasts and body, able to thrill just like the body of a wife or whore. You think the priest does not think of all this? 'Has no man ever touched you, my dear?'" His sonorous voice rolled out—and I marveled anew to hear this magnificent voice

from this little Jack-in-the-box of an emaciated dwarf. "Has no man ever rubbed your breasts, or slipped his hand up your leg, or stripped off your clothes and enjoyed you? Have you never admired your own nude body in the mirror, or touched it at its most sensitive spot to enjoy the sensations? When you sit on the pot, do you have clean thoughts? What *do* you think when you sit on the pot, when you lie sleepless alone in bed, rubbing your legs together because you cannot go to sleep?' Ach, it makes me sick, the power these ignorant Romish swine have over the minds of young girls, of brides, of married women. And, as the Leader says, they can never think of her as man normally thinks of a woman—it must forever be merely a prurient curiosity to know what her body is, and what it looks like, and how she touches it, and how she surrenders it to men. . . . And, lacking all normal outlet for sex, what is there left but to enjoy sex vicariously by suggesting the most unspeakable perversions to the sensitive minds of those girls and women who have come to him as the voice of God, the holy Father!"

Hitler shivered. "They have such power, certainly. It is hideous."

"And over boys and sensitive young men, as well," added Putzi triumphantly. "You have seen the reports from the schools run by the good Brothers, damn their perverted souls! You know how they are saturated, honey-combed, infiltrated with unnatural vices of all sorts!"

The Leader shook his head, as if to clear this all out. "Germany has no room for the Catholic Church," he said, almost pompously, as if he were rehearsing a speech to make before a vast multitude. It was so, I had begun to learn, that his speeches grew: first tried out upon his

friends, and, when they approved, spoken so to the German world. "They are traitors to the Fatherland; for they serve a foreign representative of a foreign god; and they have sworn their souls to this, and have no free souls to give to their Fatherland. Luther, so long ago, discovered how they milked the body of Germany to provide cream for the dissolute papal court. They are international, and never patriotic, never nationalist. They joined with the Jews and the Marxists in 1918—nay, long before the War—to sell the body and soul of Germany to the international bankers; they played their large part in the debacle of 1918, to break the spirit of the free Nordic race, and build of my Austria and of Bavaria a state that would be subservient to the pope; and ultimately to crush Germany itself. Their religion is a lie, taught by Jews; their practice is abnormal, denying to the best trained and educated among them the duty of fatherhood to provide soldiers for the Reich; they are spiritual traitors and bodily eunuchs, at best, and perverters of their communicants at worst. They must go!"

"Bravo!" said Magda Goebbels softly.

"I started Catholic," I said quietly. "My uncle was a Protestant convert, and when I went to live with him, I became a Protestant. And then I figured it out for myself. If my father's religion was right, my uncle's was a lie. If my uncle's was right, my father's was a lie. I came to the conclusion both of them were lies."

"Bravo, Little Adolf!" It was *I* Frau Goebbels applauded this time.

"Go to the Brothers' schools, and learn," said Putzi, less loudly, "and learn. They are not for Germany."

"They will go," said Hitler firmly. "Germany has no

room for divided allegiance. It is *Deutschland über Alles*, not *Deutschland unter Rome über Alles*. You will see. We will make it so. Only when we have a German church and a German god will the Reich be herself again."

"As for the Brownshirts, bye-bye, dearie," mimicked Putzi.

"Come, lazy lubber," Hitler rose, affectionately laying an arm on Putzi's shoulder. "If we only had time for more Beethoven now! But there is a meeting I must speak at, before ten. I leave you in better hands, Little Adolf, than I put myself in. You hear that, Goebbels, Putzi?"

"We go to kick the pope in the rump," said Goebbels firmly, "and all clericals with him."

"And all Miss Nancies too," said Putzi.

We got them out of the house at last.

Frau Goebbels, with a slow enveloping smile, proceeded to discover a bottle of brandy and poured a glass for each of us. Little Harald had long gone to bed. "He is incredible, that Putzi," she said slowly. "But he is not a bad influence for the Leader. Court fool, court jester—all monarchs once had them. Laughter is a tonic for the soul; the Leader needs it. It is truth that Putzi talks, oftener than not. Truth is healthy."

"Are things as bad as he says among the Storm Troopers?" I asked, troubled by the conversion.

She shrugged. "Who can tell? But I believe they are. My husband says it is so, and worse. It—it reflects on the Leader. Abroad. You heard Putzi."

"American swine," I murmured. "They make small difference. And yet. . . . It is a shame they speak so."

"They know nothing," she said slowly, "about Europe . . . about Germany. Only what the paid propagandists

say. Any more than *we* know about the real America. I talked with a charming woman only this last spring—a woman of broad education and civilized background—she was German-American, of course. She mourned that the Leader would not marry. It would mean so much to the unsympathetic world, she said.”

“It would quiet the rumors, certainly,” I admitted. “There has been talk in America that once he was about to marry *you*.” I was startled at my own effrontery. But even the books from America that I had read during my convalescence had said as much.

She shook her head sorrowfully. “I was never more than his dear friend. I became a Nazi convert while I was still married to my first husband; and, when he could not understand or sympathize, naturally I secured a divorce. I joined the party, went to work for it, and by the best of all possible luck became secretary to Joseph. At that time, Hitler was not so uninterested in a woman.” She studied me slowly, wondering how far she dared go.

“That I had not heard,” I said, ears agape.

She shrugged. “Oh, it was nothing. His own sister’s daughter, Frau Raubel’s little Geli. The mother was the housekeeper in the Leader’s house in Munich; little Geli lived there. She was simply wild about her uncle—*she* loved him wholly, I haven’t a doubt of it. He . . . well, he was as fond of her as if she had been his own daughter. All sweet and beautiful. She wanted to be a concert singer; there only Herr Hitler put his foot down. No, it must be forbidden. So, once, his own father had vetoed his wild craving to be an artist. She—well, in 1930 she shot herself, in her bedroom in his house. He has not gotten over it. Perhaps he will not.”

"But it seems so tragic! And there was surely nothing wrong in it all. . . ."

She fixed me with eyes tense with deep sorrow. "There is one ghastly thing about it all. There had been rumors, of course, that she was more than merely a niece to the Leader. The doctor who gave the death certificate was a swine, a ghoul. I know men who knew him. He made sure that she was a virgin—virgo intacta—before he had her embalmed. It clears Herr Hitler; but . . . the very thought is ghoulish." Her voice died away.

"If he even had a mistress," I hazarded. "Before the world, it would make a difference."

She made a wry *moue*. "Do you think I have not tried! After all, it is so, so many marriages start, isn't it? I have trotted out every attractive girl I knew before him, and where have I got! He talks party tactics to them, that is all. No, he is a solitary until death, I am afraid. It is a pity. —As if Germany were his bride," she said slowly.

"And he *is* Germany," I said proudly. "If he had more to give to a wife or mistress, he might have less to give to Germany."

She nodded. "It is so."

I shook my head, deeply moved. "Thank God I am not the savior of my country, then."

CHAPTER VIII

HORST WESSEL DAY

IT IS strange that slight shivers of apprehension strike panic in the official families of dictators. Some little rumor about the ambassador at Geneva had sent Erik von Arnheim off to the tour of the nearby capitals. And now, on the very day on which I was to dine with the lovely Ulrica in the evening, there came another flurry of rumors, that sent everyone flying helter-skelter like an October gust among dry, browning leaves.

The Chancellor was all prepared to review detachments of the Blackshirts and the Storm Troopers, marching as part of the Party parade in honor of Horst Wessel—not the celebration of his death, but of his joining the Party—when a breathless orderly came in from General Himmler and asked to be closeted with the Leader. I, as one of his bodyguard, was in the room with him. Huge Brückner, his Adjutant, and Schaub were also present. Hitler's reception room in the Chancellery had huge windows heavily hung with brown curtains. It has often startled visitors, when some unexpected sound or motion caused alarm, to see the curtains part and pistols cover them from each side of every window. But such is the guard that is kept over the modern redeemers of the people. And this day, from excess nervousness, half of

the Blackshirt guards were in their window embrasures, although no outsiders were expected.

The orderly's heels clicked, his hand flashed up in the Nazi salute. "Heil Hitler!" came rather breathlessly from his lips. The Leader responded more lethargically. The orderly handed him a message.

Hitler read it rapidly. His eyes narrowed and grew tense, he tugged at his microscopic moustache. "Send for Goebbels and Göring," he directed Schaub. "Read it, Zeit." He handed me the message.

Heil Hitler!

Excellency, one hundred stands of arms were discovered in a warehouse cellar belonging to Communist sympathizers in North Berlin last night. The ammunition has still not been discovered.

Two Austrian Communists were arrested in the Excelsior Hotel, when one was overheard saying "You watch out, something will happen tomorrow." Five hours' questioning, using all means, discovered nothing more definite.

There is evident a plot in connection with the parade and the review. It is urged that all precautions be taken.

H. H.

I recognized the sprawled initials at once as the signature of Heinrich Himmler, once Gregor Strasser's secretary, and now the feared head of the Blackshirts. I recalled what Arnheim had said of him: that he suspected everyone not a Party member of being a Jew, a Jesuit or a Communist. I could picture him presiding, in his impressive black uniform with a schoolmaster's pince-nez riding his narrow nose, over the futile questioning of the two Austrian Communists. "He seems to think he has discovered something," I hazarded.

"My dear Zeit, there is something to be discovered everywhere all the time." Hitler stared around the room, as if expecting the window to disgorge Communists instead of his devoted Blackshirts.

Göring came ponderously in and read the note. "I will clear the street for three blocks beside your reviewing stand, and have machine guns guarding every direction," he said aggressively. "And I hope they *do* start something!"

Meanwhile Goebbels had thumped in and was considering the note. "It is not wise," he said meticulously, in his silkiest voice, "to send registered letters to the world that we fear an attempt on the Chancellor's life. Why not use Little Adolf, here?"

I flushed unconsciously at the callous way he was willing to expose me the moment there was a whiff of danger. And I barely out of a convalescent's bed from the poisoning! And then I quieted within. His manner might be callous; but, after all, this was what I was paid for. I saluted. "Gladly," I said. "I am to command."

"It is just a review," said Hitler, with a troubled look. "There may be no danger. The guns have been seized; the ammunition is worthless without them. It would be as bad if they shot at *him*."

"It would not be as bad if they hit him," said Goebbels suavely. "Let us trust there will be no shooting. But it is much wiser."

"Far wiser," said Hitler swiftly.

"For me, I prefer machine-guns," said Göring.

So it was that I emerged at eleven forty-five in the same reception room, my wig and wax removed, wearing the uniform of the Reichsführer, even to the dogwhip. It

always seemed to me that it added several inches to my stature to impersonate the Leader. I once told this laughingly to Captain Roehm, and he had me measured both ways. No, my bodily stature had not lengthened; but I knew that I acted a larger part, and I played it with my full soul. Goebbels, Göring and the rest of the important cabinet members saluted me solemnly, with heil-Hitlering on every side. I outdid myself in lackadaisical responses, and took my place in the middle car, beside Goebbels and just behind Brückner and Schaub. Julius Schreck, of course, was driving. I was the object of solemn consideration from all of them. By now, I often wished Herr Hitler himself could see my impersonation of him; it would suggest several distinct improvements to his own bearing.

Goebbels has a satanic kink in his makeup that made him enjoy the masquerade far more than the others. He leaned intimately toward me. "How was the brandy last night, Little Adolf?"

"Herr Reichskanzler to you," I said, keeping my face stern. "Excellent," I added.

"Putzi was, as ever, the ineffable clown." He considered this thoughtfully. "I would like to have seen Rosenberg kick him down the stairs. They say Putzi was so excited he rushed into the Braun Haus and came out wearing two hats."

"I am surprised he did not come out crawling like a centipede," I said, relaxing my grim look a trifle to respond to salutes from the packed throngs on each side of the avenue. "He is capable of it."

"Ach, here we are. —Göring and his machine guns!"

But there was plenty of space cleared for the car to park beneath the reviewing stand, and, feeling like Napo-

leon about to lead the attack at Austerlitz, I mounted to the reviewing rostrum. The day was deliciously warm, and the shade of the great lindens was a welcome relief from the gold blaze of the sun. On both sides of the wide avenue I could visualize all Germany lined up, in silence, about to greet the columns marching in honor of the brave young hero who had died that folkic Germany might live. As Goebbels had explained to me, there was no nobler act in the annals of all Germany, nay, of all the nations of the world, than that of this inconspicuous Brownshirt, who had been beset and wounded to his death by Communist thugs. As he was dying, they brought the nearest doctor to minister to him. To his horror, the dying Nazi learned that the man was not Nordic; worst of all, that he was one of the accursed race of Jews. But, with his heroic soul, he did not falter in this supreme emergency. With his dying breath he waved the man away; he would rather die than be treated by a Jewish doctor. And so he died, hero as he had lived, and his name has become immortal in Nazi annals; while his Horst Wessel Hymn is sung even more fervently than *Deutschland über Alles*.

All Germany lined up to reverence his heroic spirit. . . . And, marching down the wide avenue, soon would come the representatives of the two fighting bands whose loyalty and bravery had made our success possible. What a dreadful pity that Germany was increasingly becoming split into two rival forces again—the Reaktion, led by von Papen, von Blomberg of the Reichswehr, the financier Schacht and Göring, on the one side, and the revolutionary Party itself on the other. It looked to me like the dilemma of the immovable body and the irresistible force. Which of them would triumph, if a clash occurred, it seemed

impossible to foresee. And, below these, the actual slime of the extreme Left stirring, the Communists and Marxists, the conspiratorial Jews, and even wilder direct actionists.

Ah, there they were, at last—the head of the column, with Captain Roehm riding magnificently in front. I stood erect, as they passed so microscopically beneath me, all with hands flung up in salutation, all with Heil Hitler on their lips. I gave them back the salute with my whole soul. Go forth, men of Germany, men of the Party, and save Germany, and save the world! What difference did it make whom the men who served me had slept with the night before? What difference did it make who any of us would sleep with tonight? As long as we all served the Party, the cause, Germany, that was all that could possibly matter.

And then the trig columns of the Blackshirts, with Heinrich Himmler at their head. Ach, it was a great day in the history of the world when these myriads marched before me, in honor of a national Party hero such as the world had never known! No ignorant peasant girl bedazzled by imaginary voices, no stodgy squire who chopped down cherry trees and spent his time wintering out of doors, no old-fashioned archer shooting at apples, no one-armed admiral stumping immorally over Europe with another man's wife, but a freeborn German, who had gladly laid down his life in honor of his cause, his Party, and his Fatheland, rather than let a Jewish doctor bandage his wounds.

One need only compare the patriotic slogans of various nations, to realize the amazing superiority of the folkic Nordic soul. What are such trivial remarks as "They

shall not pass!" "My only regret is that I have but one life to give to my country!" "England expects every man to do his duty," "Britons never will be slaves," "Give me liberty or give me death"—mere platitudes, parrot-like repetitions of the obvious—to the sublime, immortal majesty of "I refuse to be treated by a Jewish doctor?" Sainly Horst Wessel, your dying words phrase the eternal aspiration of the German folk soul, of the Nordic hope of the world!

Such is the reborn, freeborn Germany of today; such, the German god willing, it will be, to the last syllable of recorded time! We felt, all of us, uplifted in that sublime moment. Every one of us would have gladly made the sacrifice that Horst Wessel made, and thus done our small part in saving folkic Germany and with it the world's culture and civilization. May as glorious a fate await each of us! Peace to his ashes.

The last long column passed at last, and, my arm almost numb with the constant salutes, I let Goebbels steer me into the car, and drowsed back until we reached the Chancellery again. It was only then that I realized that somehow the expected attack by the dastardly Communists had been thwarted, and that the Fatherland was saved once more. May all such attacks on Germany end as abortively!

And I knew that I would relish a glass of brandy more than anything in the world. But I was the Leader, and that was *verboten*.

Later, this same night . . .

I passed wearily through the reception room, saluting to right and left. I could read men's fantastic devotion to me in their eyes. Let Stalin be respected, let Mussolini be feared; Hitler at least, as long as *I* had anything to say

about it, would be beloved! They saw my weariness on my worn face, and every heart was wrung at what I had done this day for the Fatherland.

I disappeared in the anteroom, and was soon stripped and midway of a Steaming Bath. It was forbidden to call them Turkish baths in the Fatherland. For all that the Turks had been our allies during the war, the precise Steaming Bath given in Nazi Germany today is entirely folkic in origin and development. I relaxed, as the Leader had told me to, and was thumped and thwacked and beaten on the buttocks and all over my body, until I felt like a new man. An icy shower, with each needle of water like a prickling icicle, snapped me back into a forgetfulness of all my weariness. I would have fought the man that tried to hold me under that shower another second. A vigorous towelling at the hands of the Nordic attendant—he had been recommended by Captain Roehm, and he was certainly a master of his trade—and I dressed slowly, restored the wax to my nostrils, put on my wig again, and came out to greet the Leader.

“We were lucky,” he said proudly to me, the first opportunity he had for an aside. “They did not dare do a thing. There is no discontent in the Fatherland when my Brownshirts and my Blackshirts are marching!”

I smiled assent, faintly startled that he could call them his, so far did I identify myself with him when I was substituting for him. It was not wise, at this moment, to remind him that the discontent came primarily from the Brownshirts, wearied at the long waiting for the expected reforms that their government had promised and should have brought in. “It was a mighty sight,” I reported. “I only wish that your Excellency could have enjoyed it all.”

"Putzi played the *Moonlight* for me," he said, face devout. "It was better so."

At six I left the Chancellery to learn more, for Führer and Fatherland, about Frau Ulrica von Arnheim.

I was driven to her apartment with mingled feelings. By now, I was rather sure just how the political affiliations in that family had developed. Erik von Arnheim, I had long ago discovered, had a strong personal attachment to Hitler. But he had been identified, not so long before, with the Junkers, whose dregs were represented still by von Papen and the discredited von Schleicher; and his thoughts all tended to the Right. All of these Rightists, even von Blomberg, who worshipped Hitler, had one profound misfortune: they had as their leader the President, a man who had been notably senile for months. At breakfast, yes, he was in command of his faculties; but, any time after that . . . So twilight comes, in life, with a merciful sponging out of the absurd realities that seem so vital in the sunlight. But how can men at noon stand thrall'd to a man in his twilight?

As for Ulrica, she was all different. She defended Roehm violently, yes; chiefly because she refused to recognize him for what he so clearly was, even by his own letters. Yet what he stood for was different; and this too she stood for. The Party itself had once been Left; but what was the Party today? I determined to find out, for the Leader, just how deep went her allegiance to those steps that neared the Marxist ideal too closely: the things demanded by the Party platforms and its speakers so late as six months ago—the elimination of the thrall'dom of interest, the distribution of land to the people, the socialization of industry.

The folkic state must be superior to private profit espe-

cially, for it was international; and the Jews were the most international of all races. But how did she stand with regard to Nordic profit?

I could never forget how the Leader himself had emphasized to me the vital difference between Jewish capital and profit, on the one hand, to which he stood unalterably opposed, and Nordic capital and profit, when he was explaining to me the 11th, 13th, 14th and 17th of the original unalterable 25 Points of the Party. "Wherever you discover capital that is grasping,—*that* is Jewish and must be exterminated; wherever you discover capital that is creative,—*that* is Nordic. The one distinction is the presence of the Jew. He must go!" My problem was, did Ulrica von Arnheim distinguish so clearly?

CHAPTER IX

ULRICA VON ARNHEIM

ONE feels a certain delicacy in approaching the house of a hostess one intends to seduce. Perhaps the most unsettling thing about this specific affair was that I had come into it so automatically, so spontaneously and undeliberately, that I had failed to weigh it in advance from every possible aspect, to make sure that my intended course was entirely justified, considering all of the circumstances, from every conceivable point of view. I had indefinitely set aside this final day to consider the matter with the necessary thoroughness, weigh the reasons and arguments pro and con, and ultimately decide just what were the reasons which entirely justified this course of action. And now, the unfortunate accident of having had to double for Herr Hitler at the Horst Wessel parade had rendered that entirely impossible.

I tried with desperate rapidity to myself to sketch the arguments pro and con, on my brief ride to the von Arnheim apartment. Erik von Arnheim had been in charge of the guards at the Chancellery the night my midnight Junker visitor came. Now *if* there had been a liaison between him and the mysterious voice from the Right, that of itself made potential retaliation justified. Herr Reichskanzler himself had urged me to make a special

study of von Arnheim, and find out "all I could" about the lovely Ulrica. "All I could" was a blanket commission; I would be recreant if I failed to follow it to the very end. I had been agreeably surprised when Ulrica had invited the first kiss, in the butler's pantry, by adverting to a tavern custom entirely unknown to me, that a bottle well opened deserved a kiss. Biology itself came to my aid, in deprecating my enforced abstinence since January 29th from all corps-à-corps contact with the opposite sex. When providence, patriotism, opportunity and science spoke on the one side, it behooved me to weigh any opposite reasons with a suspicion amounting to downright scepticism.

What was to be said on the other side? It was difficult to find any objection that could be dignified with the name of reason. He was my host; but this point was nullified by the positive duty in the Tuareg country and elsewhere to offer one's wife to one's guest. That we were not in the Tuareg country, and that he had made no offer, were merely trivial carpings; the spirit was the thing. There was such a thing as the marriage vows; but Westermarck has established with finality that these are based upon primitive folk-customs connected with the detestable invention of private property in women, and naturally are irrelevant to civilized conduct. I might get in trouble. But if it were possible to get in more trouble than I was in now, with hundreds of stands of arms potentially aimed at me on the reviewing rostrum in Unter den Linden, it would be worth while to discover the fact. It might mean out of the frying-pan into the fire; but what a charming fire! The only real reason was that a mistress made, often meant a friend lost. I would have to chance that,

considering the positive delight of securing a mistress, and the extreme uncertainty about the value of friendship under troubled modern conditions.

The chauffeur of the car from the Chancellery repeated for the fourth time, "We are *here*, Herr Zeit." I did not catch the mumble that followed this, except some reference to the deity and a clearer enunciation of "jackass." I thanked him, squared my shoulders, walked down the entrance hall to the elevator and announced the proper floor. The die was cast! Behind the Alps lay the Rubicon.

"Oh, it's you," said Ulrica, smiling at me through her lowered eyelashes, as I entered the living room. "I thought you had forgotten."

"Elephants never forget," I said, remembering something that Putzi had said the night before, although it did not seem entirely relevant, the more I reflected upon it. I bent stiffly and kissed her soft little fingers. It is a strange thing, but here I must all the truth write down: I felt a distinct sense of repugnance in kissing her fingers. I have tried much, since, to analyze this, and have come to the conclusion that it was the unfortunate result of my day's activities as double for Herr Reichkanzler. For when I act as his substitute, I throw myself so heart and soul into the chore, that I think his thoughts and share his attitudes. When my face and body are identical with his, and my slightest action, my veriest alteration of a facial muscle, is conditioned by a perfect imitation of him, it must be that this sets up a biochemical reaction in my brain, which conditions as well what I think. And so, kissing the lovely wife's little hand, I felt a repugnance to the idea of coming into close contact with any woman; as if it were, indeed, a thing forever barred. I am con-

vinced that I was at that moment, as often, Herr Hitler in my soul.

If she had not rubbed her fingers against my lips, the mood might have grown on me. It is a pleasure to chronicle that it ended the moment it began.

There was a cocktail instead of the sherry and bitters which the English have borrowed from us of the Fatherland; and then dinner was served. Somehow the impression grew upon me that Ulrica was a different person, a happier person: as if living the life of the wife of a cabinet member was a rôle it was pleasant for her to lay aside, as it was for me to take my Steaming Bath and revert to simple Herr Zeit. At that, she had insisted that I remove the wax from my nostrils, the wig from my head, before going in to dinner. I could hardly think that her sole reason was to give the servants something to talk about; although I found her later as thoughtful in every way. It may well have been that she wished to fancy herself seduced by Herr Reichskanzler. That would be the classic example of the isolated instance.

The *pièce de résistance* of the meal was a haunch of venison from her husband's preserves in the Schwarzwald, washed down with the most delicious Steinwein I had had in years. It mellowed us beyond description. The liqueur at the end was only the final grace note, the arpeggio that led up to the final resounding chord. We walked back into the living room, and I will confess that for a moment my thoughts tended to stray from the immediate business in hand to the realization of my ultimate hopes. But, after all, I was supposed to find out for the Leader the shades of opinion in this important family among the Party leaders, and I must not forget my assignment.

Ulrica von Arnheim made my task lighter from the start. "Little Adolf," she said, plumping herself in a chair opposite me and linking her fingers closely together, "I'm simply miserable."

"You're—what!"

"—Miserable. And I don't know what in hell to do about it."

"What's the trouble, Loveliest?"

"Erik." She said it simply; it definitely advertised that there was to be no evasion, no circumlocution, between us. "Three months and a week ago I was a very happy girl. I had been singing for four months at the Schwarz Anser—and, oh, how I worked to make good at that opportunity! I was pleasing everybody. I still had my contacts with the Party, with the group I had always known. They were all high in the Storm Troopers, too; at least, in West Berlin. Someone brought Erik in. He *is* a dear. From that first night, he thought I was the most marvelous person he had ever seen—he told me so. And he was in the Cabinet, and . . . Well, as first I thought he only wanted what every other man there wanted. And he had money to spend, the Cabinet have simply oodles for their expense account, and he's awfully distinguished looking. . . . When he asked me to his apartment on the Wilhelmplatz, I had my answer made up, of course: why not? But he wanted . . . marriage. That was my first mistake."

"But everyone says what a happy marriage. . . ."

Her face was tortured. "It is easy to talk. First of all, he's more than twenty years older than I. A lot more. Well, what of that? Other girls have married men all ages and been happy. And he gives me everything in the

world—he's simply infatuated, and prouder of me than a girl of her first date. He shows me off to everybody—he isn't jealous a bit; look how he brought *you* here, the moment I asked it! But there's one thing I *can't* stand." There was tragedy in her face. "He's Reaktion. That's the whole story in a nutshell."

"But you can't really mean . . ."

"I'm afraid I can never make you understand." She tapped with her slim toe against the polished hardwood mosaic of the floor. "I am twenty-three. For ten years I have been on fire with the Party. Even when I was only a kid. . . . It meant something to me, the silly platform—the things we demanded, when we were first the *Nationalsozialische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*, barely grown out of the *Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*. That platform—I still believe in it, with all my soul. The land for the people—no more slavery to interest—the socialization of industry. Where have they gone? Do you really think that von Papen and Neurath and von Blomberg believe in any of it? The Junkers? The dead old fool in the President's Palais? And it is to *that* party that Erik belongs; and he will not change. And I'm *married* to him!"

"But he's a Nazi," I protested. "Surely he must stand for all the things *you* stand for!"

"There are two faces to the Party," she said wildly, passionately. "Here we have the face I detest. . . . The Junkers—those I have named. The capitalists—Schacht . . . Thyssen. The Reichswehr is their mailed fist. Göring is their little lapdog. Erik is their voice, their envoy."

"I cannot believe it is so," I insisted.

"Ah, but I know, I know! I hear too much. Eternally. Then there are the others, the Left. The farmers I do not

know. The bourgeoisie makes no difference one way or the other. But the rank and file of the Party, the Storm Troopers and all they represent, led by Captain Roehm—*they* are the ones who made Germany what it is to become, who must make it what it must be—and Erik is not of them. What *am* I to do!”

“We are *one* Party,” I said, appalled by her vehemence. “These are differences of tactics only, not of objective. In the end, all of the social program—”

“No,” she said bitterly, “I know. On the one side, the real party, there are Roehm, the little dwarf Goebbels—how I detest *him*, with his leering lascivious eyes, dull Frick, mild Fräulein Hess—why *do* they call him by that absurd name?—Heines, Heinrich Himmler, Rosenberg, and how many more. Only one of these is wildly alive—Captain Roehm. It is Erik who says so. He only sees that there is but one thing to do with the Storm Troopers—to blend them with the Reichswehr, until Germany has an army that she can be proud of, with Ernst Roehm at their head, to the last man of them pledged to the last plank of the Party platform. But too many men love the Leader,” sadly. “Himmler would desert Roehm in a moment if he was told to. Von Blomberg of the Right worships the dust the Leader leaves behind him. How can the Party succeed when they all worship the Leader and not the Party—and when the Leader does not know where he stands!”

“Surely you exaggerate,” I said, almost stiffly. It is a mistake for a woman to argue, I have observed. “The Leader *is* the Party. That is the Leader principle he himself has invented.”

“No!” she said positively, her cheeks flaming. “The

Party is his, I grant it: his creation. He made it; he is still its soul. It will never desert him. But the Reaktion—it has never been his, except such isolated cases as von Blomberg and my husband. The last election did not break the Junker group. They are restive still, throughout all Germany." I remembered my midnight visitor, and nodded. "Nothing will buy them off, except to make them the Party. My husband himself says so. And Roehm and his Brownshirts—what of *them*, then? The Reichswehr would slit Roehm's throat tomorrow, given half the chance. Little Adolf, we *must* unite and keep the Party true to itself!"

"But it is sure to be so," I said. "There will be a suppression, if there is an uprising of the Reaktion. There is only one party in Germany now. . . ."

"And the Party is Hitler," she said despairingly, "and von Blomberg has his ear, and Erik, and— Oh, God! Himmler worships the ground he walks on, and he is already head of the Blackshirts, three hundred thousand of them. Erik says there is even talk of a secret police, with Himmler at the head. They have already forced the Leader to say that there will be no Second Revolution. What, then, becomes of the Party, and its aims!"

"But what can *I* do?" I asked her earnestly. "Too little already I know of the Party and its aims! I am young, young in the movement, *gnädige Frau*."

"I talk too much," she said bitterly. "But my heart is breaking. I think I married Erik because he was Cabinet, and I thought it would help turn the tide. What do I mean to him, about Party tactics? Nothing! You know what a German man thinks of women, except for the bed. But something, something you *can* do! You are close

to the Leader, closer than any of us. You *are* the Leader, as today, when times demand it. Tell him to trust Roehm, above any man in the Party! Hess— Ugh, his eyes frighten me! Goebbels would sell his mother's corpse for old leather, if he has not already done so. Frick is a bureaucrat, helpless. Rosenberg has his nose in his books. Streicher is all bile and no brain. *You* are alive, alert— what none of us can do, *you* can do. I will say no more." Her lips locked closely. "I have said too much."

"But your husband—" I wondered.

She shrugged. "He is in the other camp, yes. I do not think he chose it so; he was born so, reared so. He is not bitter; he does not care!" She stood erect for a moment. "That only can save him." She slumped again into her chair, cheeks flaming from her excitement, eyes pleading into mine, her lovely bosom rising and falling. "I will say no more. Come, amuse me." She leaned back in the depths of her husband's huge easy chair, exhausted from her own vehemence.

I walked over to where she sat and stood above her. "Your little heart is beating," I said, "as if it would pop out of your body. So, I will quiet it."

"Please, Little Adolf, don't," she urged, pushing my hand gently away. She seemed to be thinking still of all she had been speaking of. "You've been good to listen."

"It was a pleasure," I smiled down. One thing especially was in my favor. If she put that much passion into her politics, she would put that much or more into the more serious affairs of life, such as loving. I began to realize more and more that this assignment was going to be extremely pleasant. I laid the trespassing hand on her leg, once I had removed it from her breast, and pressed the

warm soft flesh encouragingly. "I begin to see what you mean."

"Please!" She rose suddenly, eyes unnaturally brilliant. "Come, we have been neglecting the wine, dear friend." She led the way back to the butler's pantry. It was a pleasure to watch her hips sway as she walked: as always, it seemed to be a door closing tantalizingly, and then opening invitingly. Again she knelt before me, and rummaged underneath the shelf. I felt more stirred by her proximity than before, having her on the floor before me with her backside turned. A man cannot help thinking how it would feel to bare the pretty little rump and essay her; or even give it one good hearty kick, to give her a taste of where the real power is. It may be that this goes clear back to the Caveman.

She rose, bright-eyed, clutching a bottle. "He saves this for himself," she giggled excitedly. "But tonight we'll just steal it, and finish it up. He'll never know." She presented me with the corkscrew as before. "So long as you'll do what you can with the Leader. . . . Now, come, your best." Her eyes under her lowered lashes tempted me.

I made as good a job as the first had been.

She smiled shyly up at me. "That was well opened. . . ."

I said no more. I rounded her slim body with one arm, and sipped her lips. Their taste was more firing than the first time. My other hand caressed her.

She clung, shivering, to me when I had finished. "No, not that," she said. "We will behave. Come, you bring the wine." She fled swiftly ahead of me into the living room. I knew that there were ways that were closed at the far end, and smiled to myself.

I filled the glasses. "To you, and beauty, and love," I toasted.

"To the Party, and to hell with Reaktion—and you as our ally!"

"Good. And to us—together!"

She lifted her head, and stared pleadingly into my eyes, and at the end clinked. She stood staring uncertainly at me, when she had emptied her glass, tapping her toe on the floor. I verily believe that she was at that moment troubled about the Party still.

I steered her to the huge davenport this time and took her in my arms for yet another kiss.

"No, no, not that, please," she urged. "You *must* go home—it must be dreadfully late. No—Little Adolf, *please!*"

"But why? We are young, we are alone; life is sweet and love is sweet. . . ."

"But there's Erik."

"Ah, but surely he is not the only man in the world! Love did not begin and end with him!"

"Don't, don't *please*, dear friend. It isn't fair to him. . . ." Her bright gray eyes were frightened now, as I held her immobile. "Darling . . . —Before we were married, and especially when I was at the night club, of course; it was not wrong, then. The Party members were so splendid; and later, when I was entertaining, it was expected of a girl. But being married changes it all, somehow. He expects so much of me. He wants children, a home—he wants me to be the first lady in the Reich—Oh, don't, Little Adolf! Anything but that!"

"If you can give me *one* good reason—" But I did not stop.

Her breath came more desperately. "He wants a child from me. . . ." She shivered, closing her eyes. "We are just married. . . ."

But I did not falter. There is no doubt about it, there is no better way to get at a woman's secret soul than by securing her surrender to you. I have always observed that the episode functions like a truth-machine, a lie-detector. And it had been January 29th since I had last touched a woman.

She was sobbing softly at the end, and that I liked too. It is like seeing a landscape in all sorts of weather; there are facets of beauty that only the rain can bring out, I have observed. I kissed away the warm, salty tears in her eyes, and the taste was delicious. I have observed, too, that so some women express pleasure.

"Ach, you're wicked," she said, eyes snapping slightly. "I detest you. You knew I didn't *want* to! I thought I could trust you! Men are all alike. —Fill up my glass." She smiled slyly. "I was afraid you would be like that, too. I ought to send you home, right now." She regarded me with dreamy speculation. "But you've *promised* to speak to the Leader. . . ."

I clicked my heels together and presented her with a glass of the golden laughter of the Rhineland. "To us—and love!" I toasted.

"And to hell with Reaktion!"

I sat smiling at her, as we drank more slowly this time. "We have shown tonight which side we are on. Come, tell me again what you fear as to the precise outcome of this deadlock in the party."

"I ought to send you home." She smiled shyly at me.

"You're not going to. I won't go."

She made a swift little shrug of failure, ineffably graceful. "It would make a scene, if you refused to go. It wouldn't be fair to Erik to let that come to his ears, no. Ach, men, men." She considered me thoughtfully. "You *are* close to the leader. —Closest. Now, Little Adolf, what I fear . . ."

It was naturally a pleasant assignment, to the very end. In the morning she clung to me, she would hardly let me go. "You don't have to go to that stuffy old Chancellery, really! Erik's in Vienna tonight, and in Prague tomorrow. . . ."

But I shook my head firmly. "After all, the Leader. . . ."

She kicked off the sheet even, to tempt me so, and giggled. "At the café, it used to be begging men to spend one more night away from their wives. It's like the old days. And you *do* love me, Little Adolf, don't you!"

A man needs a universe of dittos when he is with a woman or a child. I established this to her satisfaction again.

She smiled softly. "I knew what you were going to do that first night. That's why I suggested dinner here last night. Erik, he needs all his energy for these damned Party assignments. —If only you didn't have to go!"

I promised that the Party would keep him busier than ever in the future. She would not let me leave until there was a dinner date for Wednesday night also. It was most satisfactory.

CHAPTER X

THE UNENDING EMERGENCY

I ARRIVED at dawn at the Chancellery—it seemed far more discreet than to wait until the servants had awakened. Later that morning, I gave my report in person to Hitler. I told him all that was relevant about the night before, and he commended my astuteness and enterprise in having this interview with Frau von Arnheim in her husband's absence. Only so, he said, could the real attitudes of the Party members be brought out. Any two together, he said, might constitute a conspiracy; any one could always be made to reveal what he really wanted from the Leader.

"There is such a conflict within the Party," he observed to me thoughtfully, watching huge Blonda mouth the butt of his worn dogwhip with low growls of pleasure. "It is so when success comes to any cause in any land. The ones who achieve it are more or less of a unit in their early efforts. And yet, it was less rather than more, in our case. There was the strong folkic feeling—Germany for the Germans, and out with such alien parasites as Judaism, Marxism, Communism, Catholicism, even Protestantism—all the aspects of the international peril that saps the vitality of each land, each people, today. There was hatred of the national impotence caused by the betrayal at Ver-

sailles. There was national bankruptcy and unemployment; and, worse still, official graft, corruption, shocking inefficiency. All these we harnessed into one colossal flood-tide of pan-Germanism—the Nazi floodtide.”

My hand flung up to the salute. “Heil Hitler!”

He smiled approvingly. “We won—and at once we are confronted with the inevitable fact that there are other currents in Germany—the old ruling class, Junkers, militarists, the fighting spirit of Ludendorff, the power of Aryan capital. These are German, too. We could not extirpate them if we wished to. Russia tried; they have crept back as enemies within, and that is bad for any land. But we do not *wish* to eliminate them: they are vital to the coming greatness of Germany, as the first power of Europe, of the world. There is a way, and one way only. They must be harnessed, these two floods that have joined together since our victory—the fervor of the Party, the power of the betrayed German ruling classes. —As the Inn flows into the Danube below your Passau, to make a greater Danube, no? And I will do it. But it is bad for any little Napoleons that have fattened in puny, neglected arrogance during the early fight, and cannot now see with my eyes.”

“You can reconcile them?” I tried to follow his tense absorption, watching every slightest intonation of his speech, every trick of phrase and gesture and facial expression.

“I alone; for I have a weapon that is new in politics, that I myself created and have never departed from. Der Führer Prinzip—the Leader principle. As far back as 1921, when Dickel and Streicher planned to take the party from me, I had myself made dictator of the party. I have

been so since. I, as the Leader, as the head, am responsible alone for success or failure; the duty of the rest is only to obey. I will listen, yes; but always *I* decide! Once it was 'Heil Dickel!', 'Heil Streicher!'; now it is only 'Heil Hitler!' There is no other country that is so; it is our backbone of iron. There can be no revolt, even of a majority; for I, standing alone, am still the majority! When we are still seeking the power, *I* am the seeker—the Party. When we have won the power, as now, I am Germany!" He threw back his shoulders and gave the salute and the hail again.

On fire with his power, I gave the response.

"Good. So, it is for me to say when the time is ripe to harness these two turbulent, tumbling floods together, to weld them, to blend them, to merge them, to make them one colossal one, which all the united nations of the world could not withstand. And I fear that that time approaches now." His voice grew quieter.

"Other rulers have a similar power, Herr Reichskanzler. Dictators . . ."

He shook his pale head, the lock of hair falling suddenly into place over his left eye. "Democracies, never. It is their structural weakness, their insidious dry rot, the teredos boring into the hull of the vessel until the leak they start floods her and she sinks. There is no leader, except the moment's vote-grabber. He holds his power only until the bedamned sacred ballots have been scribbled again; and he dare not take one affirmative step, for fear all will be undone in tomorrow's election. So we have blocs, and coalitions, and compromises, and shifting of power—Conservative today, Centrist tomorrow, Communist the day after—and none with real power, so that the

blunted aims falter and the alien tide sweeps over them. Look, Little Adolf," he started pacing up and down the long hall abruptly, emphasizing each point by thumping with the butt of his dogwhip against the table, "where there is no emergency, let us say, it is pleasant for a group to listen to all, and act at the moment's whim. —Democracy. Is it not so?"

"But naturally, Herr Hitler!"

"Good. A new word from anyone, and the objective can be altered entirely, and no great harm done. *For there is no emergency!* This is theoretical, merely; you will see. The moment there *is* an emergency, all this is insanity, and seen so by all men. A ship has but one captain; it is recognized that, on the moving tide of ocean, there is always emergency. Would you have a Reichstag deliberate and orate and vote whether to luff or go about when the storm hits? Insanity! Now listen: a *country* can have but one captain! *Life* can have but one captain! There is *always* emergency. It is *that* that the fools do not recognize. There are the powers of nature, heat, cold, flood, drought, hurricane, volcano, disease, suffering, death—all these must be fought, and understood, and conquered, eternally. There are the facts of nationality, of race, of boundaries, of colonies, of armaments, of employment—all these must be disciplined into the natural order, with the superior race dominant as should be, and the other races recognizing their inferiority—and this is a never-ending emergency. In some far world-pacification, when these things are realized, and disaffection and inferiority held down with an iron hand—when the lambs that are the other nations lie down gladly under the shadow of the lion that is Germany—then, I grant you, the Leader might

relax a little, and listen with readier ear. But so long as there is any possibility of any thwarting of his will, he must *be* authority, and the rest must be obedience. Only so comes might. And Germany will *be* might!”

“The world recognizes the greatness of your principle, Herr Reichskanzler,” I said, when he paused.

“Other dictators, you ask. Mussolini is to make peace with the Vatican; I have it from the highest sources. Can enemies make peace? The only peace is extermination. Stalin increasingly makes peace with capital, and moves Right, far from the goal Lenin aimed for, a goal he inherited. Can enemies make peace? In Germany, we have no enemy, except internationalism, however hydra-headed the single beast may seem to be. Lop off the heads, one by one. . . . Jew, Marxist, Catholic, Communist, pacifist, Protestant. . . . And so the young Siegfried stands forth, the world-leader. But can you imagine Siegfried running for mayor of his town, and being defeated by a Communist shoemaker, a Catholic priest, a pacifist lawyer, a Jewish carpenter? No. Leadership is of the blood, the soul, not of the ballot. A majority can never be a substitute for the Leader. I will reconcile them, even I, though I cut my heart in two to do it. For the only reconciliation is oneness; and all who stand in its way must go.”

“You would give no recognition of minorities, then?”

His hands flew violently outward. “What recognition can they desire, except becoming one of the majority? Look, such a city as Berlin, for instance. We have—and they are all scattered—some representatives of almost every race, of every country, in the world. Grant autonomy to them? Give recognition to them? Tolerance, as long as we wish it, as long as we hold it wise. Recognition

is unthinkable. The will of the Leader is the will of Germany. The will of Germany is the will of God. For Germany *is* God! And I will keep it so."

There was much in this that I still do not follow. But it was for him to think, for me to listen. Meanwhile, my personal problems were not inconsiderable. There came a note from my Ulrica:

Cheri—

Wednesday is too madly precipitate. After all, there are the servants, and E. is dreadfully jealous by nature. I positively forbid you to come. I will get in touch with you, and we will have tea together soon, no?

Ever your
U.

There was but one answer to make; and I made it. I wired her:

INVITATION GRATEFULLY RECEIVED EXPECT ME FOR
DINNER WEDNESDAY SIX O'CLOCK

LUDWIG ZEIT

The dinner, the evening, and all that followed surpassed in every respect the former occasion. It is so a woman's mind must be made up for her.

Thereafter, I saw to it that Erik von Arnheim was away on these trips of Party pacification through Germany and further, more frequently than before. It was not difficult to slip in subtle praise of his results to the Leader, and urge that he be sent on more and more of these important journeys as the liaison officer between all disaffected groups in the Party. Of course, in adjusting Party disaffections, naturally he tended always toward the Reaktion—I had

no doubt of that, and the results increasingly showed it. Thus gradually the strong revolutionary spirit of the Party was hobbled little by little in favor of the return of the Right, and the social principles that Ulrica stood for were pushed further and further from achievement. But my own reward was increasingly delightful, for each of these trips afforded me Erik's adorable little frau as a bed-mate for the night, and soon restored me to the excellent physical condition I had been in before January 29th.

As the weeks slid into months, I was extremely pleased to observe that Ulrica herself looked forward to these absences of her husband as eagerly as I. When you once get a woman in a continually expectant state of mind, you have gone a long way toward the complete soul conquest that is so vital a part of man's proper rôle in his relations with women.

Meanwhile, as a result of reports I made, von Arnheim's journeys, and more disquieting information, the Leader's espionage within the Party had more than doubled, until he had at his fingers' sensitive ends an understanding of precisely the way things were tending. He sent for Captain Roehm in early April, 1934, and I had the chance to hear the issues splitting the Party threshed out more authoritatively than any other living man. Only the three of us were present, except for the everpresent Blackshirts behind the window draperies.

"The whole damned Sturmabteilung* is grumbling." the Leader flung it brusequely into his friend's teeth. "Why the devil don't they accept the revolution as a fact accomplished, and go to work making Germany what she must be?"

* Storm Troopers, Brownshirts, SA.

"Go to work? How? What work is there for them to do, with unemployment growing hourly? And how *can* we regard the revolution as anything accomplished, when all it set out to do has been ignored?"

"That's not fair, Ernst. Look what we have done to the Jews already—and even so that is only begun. We are moving intelligently forward, at a reasonable rate of speed, to achieve everything we set out to do. You can't bring even a German millennium overnight. Why in God's name do you *have* so many men? Two and a half million is a dreadful drain on the Party funds."

"Where else are they to go? They're Nazis to the core, every man of them. As you yourself are—a Brownshirt, first, last, and forever. When they were indispensable, they saved the cause; now the Blackshirts replace them even in guard duty. It was not Himmler who organized the fighting forces of the party, Adolf; it was you and I. But that plum he has. While Göring struts around, with a new medal on his chest every morning—ach God, what a price he would bring for scrap metal!—while the Reichswehr swagger around as in the old days when to be a Nazi was to be a hunted, hounded man, and while the industrialists flourish—all this time my men starve. The country is sick of so much peace; God, for the good old days when a Party meeting meant after the Communists and the rest with clubs and whips, and broken heads were the least we could be sure of giving them! Peace is a disease, my Leader; Germany must be well again! Let sleep be peaceful, but for God's sake, let waking be alive!"

"We are tightening our forces all the time," objected the Leader.

"Tightening, ach yes! That is what is wrong. Look, to

take her place in the German sun, there must be an *army*—not this pitiable little division of a hundred thousand men that is the Reichswehr, all that the damned Treaty allows us. Adolf, can't you *see* what I offer you? Two and a half million men, on fire to serve you and the Party, on fire to make Germany dominant over every race on earth—and you pass them by! In God's name, open the door and let me pour them all into the Reichswehr—and then Germany has an army second to none on earth! We can achieve the social justice at home we have promised—who is there to stop us, with an army like that? We will be so formidable that you have but to say your will, and the futile democracies will bow to your every request! Don't you see the chance you have, that you're letting slip?"

Hitler's face was ambiguous. "It is not time to trouble ourselves about social justice yet. That will come; impatience makes ruin. We will come to that, soon enough."

"As an epitaph?" Roehm's scorn cut. "As a posthumous regret?"

The Chancellor shrugged. "Von Blomberg says he will shoot himself before he will take orders from you."

"For God's sake! Why from *me*? From *you*, of course; with me only as commander under you."

But I noticed that he did not leave himself out.

"It is a great pity that they libel you and Heines and the rest so," said the Leader distantly. "There are things I let no man talk to me. But I know what they say, when I am absent; it is all brought to me. It is a pity."

Captain Roehm bit his lips and squeezed his fingers. He stared at the wall and said nothing.

Hitler's eyes unlidged once and grew cryptic again. "We cannot dismiss the Reichswehr."

"Who wants to dismiss them? In God's name, let them be the guard of honor—they, or the precious SS. So long as my men can cease starving and start serving. . . ."

"Slum proletariat, they call them. Hoodlums. Boy Scouts. It takes training to make a soldier, Ernst. You know that as well as I. We are both of the army, you and I, dear friend. Fighters, yes; soldiers, no. Listen to reason. Lessen the number of the SA. Cultivate von Blomberg and the rest, as I have. Germany needs all of us; not merely us few who lit the fuse. We are all the Party, now. All Germany. There is no end to what we can do, if we do it wisely."

"Is there a wise way to starve?" Roehm's eyes flashed fire. "There is only one wisdom; and that is, to act! In the name of the two and a half million loyal German Party members who are my Brownshirts, I plead with you, enroll us under the banner we have earned, as defenders of the Party and Germany, as aggressors for the Party and Germany! So we will reach our destiny!"

"I am glad you are sure," said the Leader, with a smile not too warm. I had learned to read the hinterland of that smile, though, and I trembled within myself. "It will make it easier when the next step comes. Well, we will see, we will see."

After Roehm had gone, the Leader called Blonda to him and tussled with her until he had thrown the devoted bitch to the floor. He rasped the dog's huge neck with his foot, while deep growls of satisfaction came from the huge throat.

"Little Adolf," he slumped back into his favorite chair, snapping the dogwhip handle to left and right, while Blonda mouthed it in ecstasy, although any moment

I thought her neck would be broken, "there is a great man. It will never be recorded how much he has meant to the Party, and to me. He has more energy than fat Göring ever had. He is as bitterly ruthless as Goebbels. Not quite the shrewd brain, no, or he would not have spoken so openly to me even just now; but a great brain still. He made the SA, when we had to have it or perish. When things seemed darkest, and I have thought of suicide, so dark they became—who has not?—I took one look at the granite of his face always, and I borrowed from it the courage I needed to keep on fighting. And he loves me; and that is more than I can say of some. He is loyal to the movement until death. A great man."

"He is important," I agreed. "But, in Germany, only, you are really great."

Hitler shrugged; but I could see that he bristled with pleasure. "How many great men can live in a country, Little Adolf? In a world?"

He did not want an answer from me. The answer he knew.

He argued aloud with himself. "Even when a man and his wife are ideally mated, there are times when a divorce must be. If one insists in living in Munich, and the other in Rostock, how can they meet—except by divorce? I let him go to Bolivia once, when we split on tactics before. Damn it, I care for him too much."

"And he for you, too."

He shivered. "Sometimes I wonder if he does not consider himself as the Crown Prince. And there have been Crown Princes that have not been too alert when the king's life was menaced. It is not hard for the Chief of Staff suddenly to become more. Too much more. If I only

had our colonies back, so I could discipline him by sending him to cool his heels a long way from Unter den Linden. . . . Ach, he would organize the world as we would have it—there was never an organizer like him! But, here, I do not know.”

“Von Blomberg thinks the world and all of you too, my Leader.”

“Perhaps. Increasingly so, yes. And Himmler, yes. But Roehm is my heart’s friend. I do not know. . . .”

CHAPTER XI

IN WHICH A BULLET DOES NOT MISS

ONE especial shadow hovered lower and lower over Germany, over the President's *Palais*. The senile old warrior, von Hindenburg, grew sicker and sicker, and death could not be too far ahead. Who would be the new President, and who then would be his Chancellor? In both camps plans and plots grew more and more feverish. For in that moment it would be too late to plan, it would be time to act only. Only the Leader seemed to keep his head in the snarl of plot and counterplot.

On April 18th, at the suggestion of the vulture, Goebbels, Captain Roehm was invited to speak before a distinguished gathering at the Propaganda Ministry—the assembled diplomatic corps and the foreign press. I was there when the invitation was extended, and I will never forget the black laughter deep in the little hunchback's eyes, as he discussed it with the Chief of Staff.

"What shall I tell them?" asked Roehm straightforwardly.

"Talk out," said Goebbels, craning his head closer. "Tell them what's really in your heart. The world is saying we have slowed down. They say—"

"We have," said Roehm unhappily. "That's the damndest part of it."

"Ach, but we will end that, soon! It is time the machinations of the Reaktion are firmly put down. Listen, Captain, the revolution was not a quietist movement, no? Your Storm Troopers are not content to sit back forever and see Germany slump back again into the slough it was in under the old Junkers, and later under the corrupt Marxists, are they?"

Roehm snorted. "Let them talk to you as they talk to *me*, and you'll soon see how content they are! It's all I can do to hold them back, as it is."

"Good, good!" Goebbels' eyes gleamed eerily. "Tell them so—the representatives of the foreign governments, the unofficial spokesmen of the foreign press, who will spread to the world what our aims really are! After all, we are of the revolution, you and I! No one has ever called *me* Rightist!"

"By God, I will, and thanks to you for the wise advice!" He strutted cockily away, to prepare his speech. In his head it buzzed that Goebbels was slowly moving over to set himself behind the Chief of Staff.

I myself wondered a little at Goebbels' attitude. He was one of the aggressive revolutionists, certainly; but it was quite as certain that he was no friend of Roehm's. Why should he be giving so much of the propaganda spotlight to the Chief of Staff? More and more I realized that I was living in a web of intrigue, petty and great, spun on all sides of me; and that my one course was to avoid all of it and see nothing, hear nothing, know nothing, except the task I was named for to substitute for the Leader when need arose.

Roehm's direct talk startled the world. It was almost a personal promise of action, of something strangely akin to

the Second Revolution that the Storm Troopers were forever talking about. It sent the Reaktion scurrying into their corners, desperately planning some method of staving off the inevitable fate that seemed just around the corner for them.

Two days later, Heinrich Himmler, head of the SS, was named Chief of the Gestapo—the Geheime Staatspolizei, or secret state police. This was the day that my sly suggestion had had Erik von Arnheim sent to Bremen by Hitler, to quiet a threatened disaffection among Nazi sailors there; and I knew he would say his own word to the shipowners too. It had been almost two weeks since he had been away, and Ulrica's little note telling the good news sent me strutting around in midafternoon to make up a little for lost time. As instructed, I tapped on the side hall door of the apartment, and the little maid, wide-eyed, let me in. She adored her lovely mistress, and was wholly sympathetic to my visits and the wisdom of keeping them from the unsuspecting husband.

"She is in the bedroom, waiting for you," she whispered, with brightened eyes.

I gave her a kiss and a reasonable tip and hurried quietly in to Ulrica. She was utterly ravishing in a black mousseline de soie negligée; and, at my suggestion, she wore it without the slip of crushed velvet that hid her more intimate beauties from her husband and others. She flung herself into my arms for such a passionate welcome that for a few moments I forgot the good news I was bearing. And then I told her.

"Bravo! Then we *are* winning!" She coiled up at the head of the bed, bewitching in her disheveled loveliness. "I did not think that the damned Reaktion could gain

any real headway. First Roehm's splendid speech, and now this! Göring must be a volcano of rage."

"I have not seen the Herr General since it was announced." I smiled at her. "But, dear God, since the Gestapo was his own child, since he created it just a year ago, and put his own creatures over it—that vile Diels, who's been cracking skulls for the police since the worst days of the Marxist régime—he must be raging."

"Just an example of what I mean, chéri," she said to me earnestly. "He's not even a Nazi, that Diels—just a lickspittle for the Junkers and the capitalists. Surely Herr Hitler won't turn the future of the Party and the government over to swine like that! He *must* be coming around to Roehm's point of view."

"And yet, Goebbels has me puzzled. He is no friend of Roehm's, no. Nevertheless he seems to be playing into the Captain's hands. This very morning he told the Leader that he was about to let loose another Niagara of propaganda against petty critics and alarmists, killjoys and all the forces of the Reaktion. There must be some reason behind it. . . . Oh, and there's more in the air, too. Captain Roehm has persuaded the Leader to combine with Gregor Strasser again—and there is a real revolutionary for you, boor though he may be! He's actually sent 'Fräulein' Hess to invite him back into the Cabinet, with the portfolio of Economics. Think what a threat *that* will be to the Reaktion!"

"Sweet, sweet, it is all too good to be true! We are winning, we are winning! And I believe it is *you* who are really doing it, my Little Adolf. Come, I am wild for you!"

Vidi, vicisti, veni. . . . Just about five I dressed again,

and the maid slipped me out of the side hall door. I walked down to the floor below to take the elevator; at six I appeared formally at the main door and was admitted by the butler for dinner. But it was from the side door I left, just before dawn, at peace with the world. And I had things to report to the Leader too; for I never forgot my pleasant duty of finding out for him all about Ulrica that he wanted to know: which had become entirely irrelevant to what *I* wanted to know about her, of course.

That afternoon, *Reichstagpraesident* Göring called in person on the Leader, with evil fury in his eyes. What did the Leader want, his resignation? How dared he remove Diels from the headship of the Gestapo, without even consulting Göring in advance? How could there be loyalty to the Party, when old and tried members of it were passed over like this?

For more than an hour Hitler argued with him. The principle of Leadership must be supreme. It was far wiser to have the head of each organ of the general front responsible directly to himself, and not burden his able assistants with the task of serving as conduits between their underlings and him. It was not fair to Göring to overburden him, troubled as he already was with his headship of the Reichstag, minister, Ministerpraesident of Prussia, and general.

But Göring was not to be mollified so easily. "It is the end," he said heavily. "Would God I were buried in Sweden with Karin." His voice was all bitterness.

At this, the sensitive Leader broke into tears—a hysteric outburst of feminine tears. Once or twice before I had seen him give way to his emotions so; and I could never understand a man's crying out of sheer baffled pique.

The Baroness, he said, had been the noblest woman he had ever known; it was the tragedy of tragedies that the dreadful white plague had taken her the very year before the Party had won its first great success.

"But she should not lie on Swedish soil, General," he said, quieting his tears at last. "She was surely German, folkic, Nordic, to the core. The greatest mausoleum in all Berlin is too small to hold her soaring spirit; at least, it can hold all mortal that is left of her."

"I have thought of bringing her body back," said Göring heavily. "Yes, she should lie in German soil. Each day I kneel and pray before her picture, in my own study." His huge face stained red with embarrassment. "I thought of making a shrine for her there. Surely *she* is more worthy of worship than this Jewish trull worshipped by Christians as the Mother of God."

"You will let me kneel before the shrine, too," said Hitler earnestly. "That is the sort of Nordic religion that we need. And, my well-beloved friend, may I not go with you to get her body? May I not ride with you in the car that escorts her to her last resting place on German soil?"

They parted as two strong men shaken with grief. Only after Göring left did I see Hitler straighten up, his eyebrows lifted, his nostrils faintly curled. "We need more funerals in Germany, Little Adolf," said the Leader cryptically. "It would clear the atmosphere."

But he said no more than this.

There were other things happening, but all obscure. Von Arnheim and the Leader talked before me once, with references to a pact that the Leader had made with von Blomberg on the *Deutschland* in mid-April; and that Erik had the general's word that the Right group, even

with von Schleicher present at the Bad Nauheim conference a month later, had agreed to support the Leader, provided what had been promised was carried out. It was all cryptic, all mystifying, to me. It almost seemed to me that Hitler was laying his eggs in both nests. Statesmanship was not elementary arithmetic, that much was clear.

But most of the talk in the Chancellery was of the Leader's visit to Venice, on June 14th, to talk with Il Duce. Hitler was sullen when he returned, and it was to me he exploded most. Swine, he called him; greasy Italian swine! In confidence he told it to me, he had informed Mussolini that he was prepared to execute a coup in France itself, with Paris, Lyons and other strategic centers laid under a blanket of poison gas, and the country overrun from Berlin in twenty-four hours. Yet Il Duce had been most inconsiderate, when asked merely to give his spiritual support to the planned subjugation of Germany's eternal enemy. Instead of agreeing, he had insisted on receiving a pledge of full recognition of Austrian autonomy,—as if planning to prevent in advance the Anschluss. He had even dared suggest that Hitler might well learn that one type of men make a revolution, and another type are chosen to rule thereafter: a direct slap at Roehm. It was only later that we learned of the wily Italian's further betrayal of German aspirations in notifying the French of the planned coup, and leading to the swift French mobilization along the borders.

This was Saturday, the 16th. On the next day the remains of the Baroness Karin Fock, Göring's first wife, were interred in the soil of the Fatherland that has so many graves, with such strangely assorted people in them. It was not a quiet time. There had been another interview

between the Leader and Roehm, and it had been explosive. Again, I alone, except for the Blackshirts in the window embrasures, had been the only outsider present.

"The discontent has become too great, Ernst," said Hitler, writhing at his defeat in Venice, and out of temper with the world. "Reports from every section of Germany say that the Storm Troopers bray about nothing but the Second Revolution."

"Can I cut their tongues off, or their hearts out?" demanded Roehm fiercely. "Goebbels, too, has talked of it, when he is not throwing the Communists at the Reaktion to put them in a panic."

"I will have no more of it," said the Leader coldly. "It must stop. It is almost time for the annual vacation for your Brownshirts. Let them spend it learning silence."

Roehm's face flushed. "That is all they have been having—that vacation without pay called unemployment, called inactivity, called peace. If only we could have been let loose on France! But I will end the talk of the Second Revolution, my Leader, by one simple word—that the Storm Troopers are to be absorbed into the Reichswehr!"

"They may come in," the Leader's tone was colder than ever, "but only when and how I will it. It may seem wise to introduce conscription at any time. They may all come in, then, simply by qualifying by the accepted system of selective recruiting the Reichswehr demands."

"They won't accept *that* crust!"

Hitler's jaws grew firmer. "Advise them to use their two months of vacation to reflect on the matter then, Ernst. This calls for mature deliberation. I am sure you will agree with me." His face hardened. "And no SA uni-

form is to be seen on the streets during that period, Ernst."

"The men won't stand it! They are pleading now to have the furlough cancelled. It is the betrayal of the revolution!"

Hitler rose slowly to his feet. "Strange words, to address to the Leader. I am sure you do not mean them, Ernst. Think it over, and see if I am not all wise. You are still Chief of Staff, and highest in my regard. But not for words like that. Consider. Deliberate. You are not all Germany."

"You are not all Germany!"

"My friend, when I speak, I speak for all Germany, and all the Party too. Go. I will expect you soon to tell me you are sorry for your loss of control. Soon."

"Oh, hell, I'm sorry. But if you think *this* is the way to win the revolution—*Himmelherrgottssacrament!* Ach, good day, Adolf." And he flounced sulkily away.

Sunday, just before noon, the Leader summoned me. His face was harried. I saw General Göring and several of the more conservative Party members present. General von Blomberg and several of his staff were in attendance, too. I noticed that they wore service revolvers ostentatiously on their hips, a thing I had never seen permitted before.

"I am attending the services over the remains of Frau Göring," the Leader took me aside and told me. "There is a restlessness in the air. It is too damnably still; I smell a storm. Perhaps you had best ride in the car in front of me."

"You mean—as Der Führer?"

He shook his head. "Bodyguard merely. Unless there is a change of plans."

"Why the heavy artillery?" I glanced toward the display of revolvers.

His face stiffened. "July 1st will be critical: when the brown shirts are peeled off of the malcontents. Until then. . . . All the staff officers go armed so."

After the solemn ceremonies at the new tomb for the remains of the Swedish wife, Hitler walked a few feet away with me. "I do not like funerals, Little Adolf. From a boy, I have feared them. I always fancy that I myself am about to be lowered down into the grave, and the lid of the coffin sealed and screwed down forever, and the dirt and stones piled on me, never to be removed again. I should not have come; but I had promised. I felt today, stronger than ever, that it was I who was there in the coffin, and Germany's future with me. No, Germany will go on," his face showed agony, "but I wish to go on with it! There is a bitter word abroad, too, that Karl Ernst refuses to disband his Storm Troopers, and will dare try to occupy Berlin, and even murder all of the general staff. God in heaven, whom *can* I trust? So. . . ." He studied me fixedly. "You I can trust. Listen, we will all walk together to the cars, and I will slip into the darkness of Göring's car, and do you sit in my place, with Schreck driving you, no?"

"All as you wish, my Leader."

We walked in a thick clot past Göring's car; the Leader stepped quietly inside, and I for a moment got in beside him. In that moment off came the wig, out came the wax in my nostrils. I reached for his dogwhip. And then, face altered to his likeness, striding stiffly, I moved forward and

occupied for the return the seat he had occupied riding out to the mausoleum.

It did not seem so welcoming, my Germany, on that ride back. The sky had grown sallow and leprous, and rowdy, brawling gusts snapped the tree branches suddenly upward, till leaves hardly born fell plummet-like to the darkened earth. The funeral had not been announced, and none knew that the Leader was to be present. There were no packed thousands along the way, with their frantic "Heil Hitler!", like wine to the soul. There was the usual Sunday afternoon crowd out on promenade. Most often these were clotted on some corner to listen to some malcontent airing his earned misfortunes, or a group of these, bickering scowlingly over what was to be done. And many of them, seeing the official guard before us and the official cars behind, stood lowering as we passed, and fists were shaken with hideous violence the moment we had passed.

"Hoodlums!" said Schaub, who was beside me.

"Dogs!" the chauffeur threw back over his shoulder. "If I were the Leader, I would *order* the bastards to smile."

We were within five blocks of the Chancellery when it happened. There was a denser mob on a street corner here than we had yet passed. As the leading car neared, these surged aimlessly into the street. The chauffeur of the first car had to slow down, to avoid running down the saunterers. Schreck, who was driving for us, did the same. We were momentarily almost at a standstill.

At that moment, the glint of late sunlight on metal struck my eye, from a balconied window above where the mob had been thickest. I stared with peculiar fascination

at it. And then at one and the identical moment I felt something slice through my left shoulder, and I heard a faint popping sound, far quieter than a car's backfiring. Then, as I automatically cowered back in pain, a bullet pinged into the woodwork right in front of me.

The car ahead had speeded up, and Schreck had followed.

I steeled all my nerves against the searing pain in my left shoulder. "I think he winged me," I said, through tensed teeth.

"Shot?" gawped Schaub.

"Naturally."

"Serious?"

"—My shoulder."

"Dung, that's nothing! I've been drilled through the body too damned often. . . . You know, a shoulder wound doesn't bleed much. Bet you twenty marks you can't walk across the sidewalk and into the Chancellery without flinching!"

"Take you," I said. "I will, or you carry me in."

"Thank God *he* was in the next car," breathed the guard, with relief. "Dung!"

The car stopped in front of the Chancellery entrance. Things were jumping up and down inside of me. But I was to walk without flinching across the sidewalk and into the building. I marched it as the Leader himself would have done, Schaub a step or two behind me. He did quicken his steps a trifle at the very end.

I heard our car whirr off and the car behind, containing the Leader, grind to a standstill. The great door swung silently open. I walked into the entrance hall. I saw Schaub's face staring with huge eyes down at me, as I knew the room was falling, and then knew nothing.

CHAPTER XII

A PURGE IS PRESCRIBED

I WAS by the doctor patched up in half an hour, and sent to bed. He prescribed a sedative, and by the next morning I was at my post, a bit pale and my shoulder stiff enough, but otherwise not seriously damaged. Himmler sent his Blackshirts snarling into every place he could think of. We knew the reward offered to the member of the Gestapo who could establish the connection of anyone with the murderous attempt on the Leader's life. The building from which the shot had been fired was found to be vacant, and it was taken over by the government at once. But that was all.

The official *Völkischer Beobachter* never referred to the incident. Lesser papers mentioned it as merely a lying rumor that anyone could be so unGerman a traitor as to shoot at the Leader in Germany.

Who was responsible for the dastardly outrage? The forces of the Reaktion? But they had come to terms with the Leader, harsh though those terms were. Some disgruntled sorehead among the SA? But all indications so far pointed to their victory.

I had one blissful night with Ulrica the Thursday after I was shot. She was more than passion, in gratitude for my escape from the close call I had had. I was let out as

usual into the gray Berlin dawn, in front of the building where the von Arnheims had their apartment.

A fog had crept up from the river during the warm, rosy hours of night, and I could see nothing but blankness across the street, and barely ten feet of the iron railing socketed in concrete running along the building's front to my left. I stood staring into the swimming sea of gray, when suddenly a vast black mass emerged ahead of me, like a djinn for height. It sloped down toward me, darkening and lessening in height as it neared. Before me was a tall officer, a Captain, of the Reichswehr, wrapped in a black cloak.

He fell into step beside me, locking arms with mine, urging me forward. "You are going my way a few steps, Herr Zeit." His voice was gray and cold like the mist.

Yet it was a familiar voice. I had heard it once only in my life before, on that midnight when I was recovering from the poison I had taken in the dish served to the Leader. I tried to imprint it more surely on my brain, to recognize it hereafter. "So," I said. It must never be made public that at this hour I was returning from the von Arnheims—that would wreck everything. And more than this I felt that there was some subtler danger to me in being seen with this tall cloaked officer. The mist, at least, shrouded both of us, so that to any passing we would have seemed two grotesque hobgoblins vomited up out of the fog's gray belly.

"I am sorry it was you again." His voice was quiet. "He twists about like an eel—you never know where he is. We wanted him gone before the Old Man dies."

"We?" I parried.

He shrugged. "There is luck in the third attempt."

"And then?" More and more embarrassed at this strange encounter, I turned him away from the fog-shrouded Chancellery, even though it was all needful I slip in there soon.

"You have two futures open before you," he spoke ahead idly. "One, after the great event happens, is to hold the lead for life in Hollywood pictures dealing with the Branau swine. The other. . . . You will see, you will see."

"*What* great event?" I demanded.

"Look up Ides of March in the German calendar," he said. "I leave you." With an ironic "Heil Tod!" he swung off abruptly into the fog.

With troubled heart I groped through the swirling fog then for the entrance to the Chancellery. Within the hour, I was summoned in as a bodyguard. I knew already that the Leader felt more drawn to me than ever, by this second time that I had inadvertently saved his life. A stunt man, called on to substitute when the star was afraid to play some risky part in his life. . . . My lips curled with a little faint scorn of modern dictators. Grant that it was all-vital to preserve his life by all possible means, by sacrificing me and double after double forever, I could not imagine Wilhelm Tell employing a double to shoot the arrow at the apple on his son's head and then wave the final one at the tyrant Gessler. . . . I could not imagine Luther employing a double to nail the theses on the church door. . . . Or Barbarossa standing safely hidden, while a double led some great charge for the Fatherland.

I found Goebbels and von Arnheim closeted with the Leader. My eyes widened with horror at sight of von

Arnheim. So he had been suddenly summoned back to Berlin, and he might have come to his apartment first, and then, a surprise not so pleasant for any of us! God takes care of lovers. . . . They returned my salute swiftly, as if not seeing me. Hitler's face was more drawn than usual, Goebbels' more cynical and sardonic, von Arnheim's ruddy and furious.

"I know, I know, I know," he snapped it out like a live wire grounded. "You have done much. It is not enough! Some morning you will wake up and find Roehm the new Chancellor, and a dozen Little Adolfs can't save you then!"

"I wouldn't let him dissolve the Stahlhelm—"

"At best, he himself dictated the terms of the compromise; and, if you please, it's a reserve in his own damned SA now! Do you think that the Reichswehr doubt, now, that his next effort will be to get the whole Reichswehr inside the Brownshirts! If the tent will not admit the camel, he will swallow the tent! I tell you, Herr Reichskanzler, the man is a constant threat!"

Hitler looked increasingly unhappy. "I tell you, he is my friend. Is friendship nothing? Leave him to me. I'll make him behave."

"Friend!" sneered Goebbels. Somehow he painted the one word so that it meant murderer.

"Damn it, Arnheim, you know I sent Ribbentrop to France and the League, offering them to lop and slice off so many and so many more from the SA, if they'd just forget that damned Treaty, and forget to count when I increased the Reichswehr."

Goebbels sneered again. "Like a cheap Vienna wurst, and you slice off each end and toss it to the dogs, eh? So

long as you toss Roehm along with it. It was good news in the VB that he has a 'painful nervous disorder,' and on the advice of his doctors he is taking an enforced vacation, no?"

Erik von Arnheim planted himself squarely in front of the Leader. "I tell you, it is either accept us or Germany goes bankrupt. Suspending payment of foreign debts is not vital, no. That was a good move. But you have read the reports I gave you of the harvest—the worst in years it will be! We are cut off from the world; they are calling on us to disarm further; and, worst of all, here is your own Chief of Staff with his knife at your throat!"

"It is not fair of you to say so, Arnheim," stormed the Leader. "He is my friend, I tell you." There were sobs in his voice.

"It is not that we are not behind you, dear Leader," protested von Arnheim. "Did not Göring say that if *you* wished a Second Revolution, the last one of us would be on the streets in half an hour? But it is that you do *not* want it; and will you let Ernst Roehm make it, against you?"

"I know you are wrong," said Hitler mournfully. "You will see he is as faithful as any man in the Party; and most of all to me. But I will have Rudolf Hess speak for me over a nation-wide hookup, and warn both Roehm and his SA and the Reaktion that I will tolerate no outbreak from either. The revolution is *won!*" He rose to his feet, and thrust the words out stormingly. "I will have no rebellion, now! I have my plans—I must make *all* the plans; and, if any man or group of men try to force speed where it is wiser to me to move slowly, well—" He brought the butt of his dogwhip down with a crash on

the table. Blonda awoke from a nap and growled menacingly.

"Roehm is doing it. You refuse to see it," persisted Arnheim.

"*Prove* to me he is doing it," Hitler faced them, cornered at last, "and with my own hands I will slit his throat!"

"We will prove it," said Goebbels silkily.

I felt that it would be healthier, at that moment, to be in the shoes of any man in Europe, rather than in Roehm's.

I listened to Rudolf Hess's speech on the 25th, and I shivered at the ungloved claws in it. I could not be sure that the Chief of Staff, who had retired to Wiessee, saw an interview with the Leader that appeared in the *London News Chronicle* of the same day; but it spoke warningly of the need of divorcing himself from his friends of the dawn of the Party's growth. Even the *National Zeitung*—I still pored over the Basle papers, for now and then there was some reference to relatives or friends I had there—gave me something new to ponder: that the Leader planned, the moment Hindenburg died, to become both Chancellor and President, and that the laws had already been drawn up for this. A Pooh-Bah, Arnheim had called it. I doubted if it was so; but so it was that the Leader sounded out opinion before he acted. The account went on that the national Bolsheviks in the party were about to be eliminated—which should have been warning enough to Wiessee, though the Party press said the same thing of the *Reaktion*. If he eliminated both, what would be left? Hitler and myself only: and that would be a too small Germany.

A notice, signed by the Leader, came to all the SA

leaders in the Reich to appear on the 30th in Wiessee. Roehm gave out an interview, in which he said the last one of the Storm Troopers was ready to die for the Hakenkreuz—the swastika. The night of the 28th, von Arnheim flew down to Munich, to make God knows what hellish preparations.

At least it gave me the opportunity to repay him for his treachery to revolutionary principles by having a most enjoyable night with Ulrica. I knew that she would, first of all, want to know the precise situation. But she was wrapped up heart and soul in the fight Roehm was making to radicalize the party, to make it live up to the last syllable of the long outdated Party platforms, to force the Leader to carry out his pledges, and to eliminate capitalism and its worst evils in the Reich. This had now become entirely untactful—that much Hitler himself had explained to me. But would you expect a woman to understand that? The female mind does not lend itself readily to abstract thought; it is personal and not cosmic like man's: like mine, for instance, or the Leader's. So, when she did ask me what was the news from the tense front, it was quite a problem what I should tell her.

Naturally, I could not reveal any confidences—at least, none beyond those I thought it wise to reveal. It might be a great mistake to let her understand what seemed now more than possible. She might try to notify Roehm; and that would be a tragedy, if the Leader did not wish him notified. After all, he and the Chief of Staff might be preparing a secret coup that would land Göring and Arnheim and the rest of the Reaktion behind prison bars. So some of the Party press hinted. What a misfortune, if she were allowed to interfere with that! One thing at least

was certain: she would become sad and perhaps tearful, and a woman is not at her best for pleasure when she has tears in her eyes over some outside matter, remote from the concern of one and one. It would be actually unfair to me for me to make her sad, at a time when I needed most of all to have my mind taken off this depressing situation throughout the Reich. She would never want to be unfair to me; so the only wise thing would be to drop a few hints that things were going better than she hoped for, and thus she and I would be released for the maximum of enjoyment out of the precious hours.

So I decided, and so I did. She responded beyond my most ardent expectations. She even whispered to me, with oh such a shy pride, that she expected a little stranger in about seven months, and that there were strong reasons why it would be only fair to name him Little Adolf.— Might she tell her husband about it?

I saw no reason he should not know the good luck in store for him; a husband cannot remain entirely blind forever, and he would be sure to notice, sooner or later. Moreover, I pointed out, it would give her a splendid excuse to sleep alone from now on, for the sake of the little Reichminister yet to be.

—But it seemed a bit unfair to him, she adjudged at first. And then her face dimpled. —Did I really wish it? Perhaps it was her duty to save all his energies for the Party and Germany, she suggested.

Naturally, I approved. Surely we could together do that much for the Party and the Fatherland!

We clinked glasses on it, and indeed she kissed my hand for my thoughtfulness. She gave herself to me with increased abandon, more than ever convinced of the depth

of my devotion. It is the pleasantest mood in which to keep a woman. I was prouder than ever that I had prevented her from one night's unnecessary worry.

An hour before dawn, to avoid undesired company on the way back to the Chancellery, I returned to my room.

This was the morning of June 29th.

I knew that the Leader had flown down to Essen the day before to attend some wedding. Yet here came for me a summons to the Chancellor's reception room. I entered. Only Goebbels was present. The vulture-like Minister of Propaganda clicked his heels together and threw up his arm in a mock salute. "Heil Hitler!" he jeered, his eyes glittering blackly. "Well, my dear friend, you and I take wings now and join the Leader."

"But what comes next?" I asked, a little wearily. For I distrusted this wicked little gnome more than anyone in the party, and always shivered when I was close to him: a foul little Loki, plotting only evil.

"To put a period to what the Fates have written," he declaimed sonorously. "You saw the *Völkischer Beobachter* yesterday: von Blomberg accepts the new government and its Leader entirely; he will today say it over the air to all Germany. So we have our Reichswehr. You and I, we will do a little inspecting of the labor detachments in the Rhine country with Herr Reichskanzler." His voice was too casual. "Labor, you know, needs the overseer's eye forever." He seemed to be using just words; to be saying everything but what he meant.

"You say *we*," I protested. "I do not remain here?"

"Would it surprise you," he beamed hideously, spilling some of it at last, "to know that we know now even the

name of the man Ernst Roehm has appointed to assassinate the Leader?"

"Dear God forbid! You are joking, Herr Reichsminister!"

"When I joke," he snickered, "I bury my jokes. But this is no joke, no. This man will be shot—have no fear of that. I may even let you shoot him, and stand by and applaud you as you pour blazing lead into his body. It is blazing lead we are using now, Little Adolf—he will not be the only one who will be shot!"

"But this is incredible! To plot to kill Herr Hitler!"

"Life is incredible; Germany by all odds the most incredible part of it; and death, as it will come to some, most incredible of all. Erik von Arnheim went down to Munich yesterday to make sure of it. He has the signed confession of one of the Storm Trooper colonels who was party to the plot. The man took his own life, immediately after signing. Ach, death!" Goebbels chuckled without mirth. "There will be many who will envy him by this hour tomorrow!"

"I go, then." I sighed, for last night had been so delicious. And there would be others to die. What a pity, in a way, von Arnheim was not of the Roehm party, so that the way could have been rendered a little smoother for me with Ulrica. But I had her word as to how she would gull him off. There were always important trips he could take; and one does not want to dine at even the Kaiserhof nightly.

And then, my face expressed bewilderment. "But *we* go to inspect labor-camps, at a time when there is a plot against the Leader's life!"

"One does not call 'Ready?' when one is about to serve

to traitors. We have had much trouble, Little Adolf; this will end it. We do not use castor oil for a purge, in Germany. This one will be thorough. All the dung will be gotten rid of, for good."

"Every healthy body needs a systematic evacuation now and then." I managed to smile as I said it. It is hard to smile at Goebbels. I remembered a spitting cobra from lower Africa in the great Hagenbeck zoölogical gardens at Hamburg. He has no hood, his head is small and needle-like; but his beady eyes have a malevolence that few snakes possess; and he has the ability to spit his venom nine or ten feet, aimed directly at the eyes of the annoying great mammal. Men are blinded when his venom strikes. I have always felt toward Goebbels as I felt toward that spitting cobra.

"Let us commemorate the great hero of the *Sturmabteilung* by forever printing his picture on toilet paper," he sneered evilly. "Come, Little Adolf. The Leader will be anxious. The plane awaits."

CHAPTER XIII

SPILT BLOOD AT WIESSEE

THREE of us stood in the sickly darkness on the terrace of the Godesberg Hotel. If I ever saw torture on the face of living man or woman, it was on Adolf Hitler's that night. I have seen crowds of tens of thousands dazed and hypnotized under the spell of his eloquence, which is equaled by no man living, and perhaps has never been equaled on the face of the man-stricken earth. So Hitler stood, at this moment, so dazed, so hypnotized. There was consecration in his eyes; but it seemed to me to be consecration to the powers of darkness, the powers of death.

Nor could I be sure what had hypnotized him. I stared with utter repugnance at the emaciated imp of the perverse, the gnome-like spirit of evil that stood smiling with arched, gloating eyes at the Leader, unobserved, as he thought—too arrogant in his moment to mind observation. Had *he* cast the spell? And then I shook my head. Part of it, perhaps: "the imp tempted me, and I fell." But this was the work of a myriad of voices, and one stronger than all the rest: the voice that itself had so often reduced tens of thousands to dazed hypnotized infantilism.

A square of flimsy shivered in his trembling hand. He steadied his hand against the stonework, and read it

again. Then he crushed it into a shapeless unrecognizable wad, and thumbed it out into the darkness.

“‘A strong man is the strongest when alone,’” quoted Goebbels quietly.

I shivered, as the familiar specter of *Mein Kampf* came back to haunt its author.

“Always,” said the Leader, his voice heavy.

“‘There can only be victory in winning the people’s soul if, while we struggle to express it, we destroy also those who oppose it,’” chanted the vindictive pigmy, sonorously.

“Naturally,” sighed the Leader.

The *Wunderbar* chorus lilted from the orchestra through the window, with the ageless Viennese magic:

Kissing can be no sin,
When a sweet girl you win;
When rosy lips are near,
Possess them every hour.
Gather the roses gay
That bloom beside your way;
Take what is due to you,
Lest others win your due.

A girl, she seemed hardly more, darted out of the door and into the thick covert of potted evergreens in the deepest shadow of the terrace. Her voice came dripping with soft, hot laughter. “Fritzie, Fritzie, stop! If once my husband guessed. . . .”

The Leader’s voice came heavily. “I have counted him my best friend for fourteen years already now.”

“‘Et tu, Brute?’”

An orderly stumbled running up the steps, righted him-

self, clicked his heels together, flung forward his arm in salute. "Heil Hitler!"

The Leader returned the salutation, and took the envelop.

He was reading it when a second orderly clanked more methodically up, step by step, and went through the same ritual. The Leader laid the first sheet of flimsy on the stonework of the terrace. He opened the second dispatch, read it, and reread it, and laid it on the first sheet. The two envelops fluttered to the stone flooring. A gust of wind whimsically snatched up one and rolled it edgewise along the leveled stones toward where the girl-wife had disappeared and a breathing silence had followed. The Leader took a step forward, his heel grinding the second into the stones.

"My friends," he said quietly, and we were the only two within reach of his voice, except the slim young orderly and the huge-faced other one—but he seemed to speak to the great allness of Germany, which alone was his friend—"from Munich, from Berlin, news has come. It is so serious, we must fly at once to Munich. The plane is ready, Goebbels?"

"Yes, Herr Hitler."

"Good. We go."

He stood, alone, black, solitary. His arm sloped forward to salute the darkness. "Heil Hitler!" He clanked down the steps to the cars waiting below, the orderlies just behind him. Faithful Brückner and Schaub and half a dozen more, who had been waiting in plain sight of him, but a dozen steps below, formed a protective constellation around him. The orchestra had swung into the languorous *Lüstige Witwe* waltz now. Goebbels, clubfoot and all,

rounded his arm with a horrid smirk, and took two or three macabre waltz steps toward the beginning of the descent. It was as if a smirking skeleton was his partner for the waltz. His face altered suddenly to demonic fury, and more carefully he thumped down the steps. I followed, my heart sick. Yet so must the Party's future be assured.

At the aerodrome, the vast swastikaed planes roared to pulsing life. We climbed precariously in, and felt the earth thumping away behind us, and then no earth at all, only the conquered air. Off through the sickly blackness we roared, bearing the hope of all Germany, of all of man's future, with us. At four o'clock, gray waking the ending black, our plane slid to a perfect three-point landing in the Munich aerodrome.

"Ach, good," greeted the Munich head of the Black-shirts, as he went through the full ritual of the salute. "You have come."

"What is the last report?"

The Bavarian drew himself proudly erect. "All the local leaders of the Storm Troopers are under arrest, Herr Leader. Several—" his smirk broadened, "—resisted arrest. They were shot."

"Naturally. And—the ringleaders?" I noticed that he did not pronounce the name of the Chief of Staff.

"Still at Wiessee, Herr Reichskanzler."

Hitler for one moment had the same ghastly look of indecision I had seen on the terrace of the Godesberg Hotel.

Goebbels prompted him, a sardonic glitter in his eye. "No doubt they think you are afraid to venture into their den."

The Leader tossed his head, the stray lock flapping

savagely over his left eye. "For the Reich, for the Party, there can be no fear. My friends, forward!"

There were cars of heavily armed Blackshirts leading the way. Then came our car, with Brückner and Schaub, the Leader and myself. Goebbels followed with three more of the raiding party. After our third car came two more cars heavy with Blackshirts. We nosed our way through the gray foggy dawn roads, our headlights blurring as the sky brightened.

At six, we drove up to the Gasthouse Heinzlbauer. A sleepy night clerk opened the door, and moved back aghast, arms high, at the sight of the drawn revolvers. Even I had my gun out. The Leader had his revolver in his left hand, his worn dogwhip in his right.

"Show us your register," demanded Hitler authoritatively.

"Come on, lad, if you want to see the fun!" One of the local Blackshirts I had met at the Chancellery in Berlin linked arms with me. He pulled me, racing to the top of the first flight of stairs, and nodded approval to a huge mountainous fellow behind him. This man crashed his shoulder against the heavy door before which we had stopped. It splintered open.

There on the bed was a sight I had never seen before—two men, naked, not asleep, doing a forbidden thing to each other. Good God, the one who raised his head first to stare at me was Major General Edmund Heines, in charge of all the Storm Troopers in Silesia. He still moved his body, as he stared at us. "Swine, what do you mean, breaking in—"

"Perverts! Sons of bitches!" With infinite relish the Blackshirt beside me placed his pistol beside the general's

head, and pulled the trigger. There was a loud crash and a burst of smoke that made the air acrid. The general's body settled down above the legs of the other man. Blood and a strange graying matter blown from his head sprayed the bed and the other man's body. I heard another shot, and another scream, and more and more shots. Some of them were to mutilate. All I could see was the staring, light blue eyes, wide open, of the dead general, under that awful wound which had blown away the top of his skull. My stomach retched, and I held on to the jamb of the door to relieve myself upon the hall carpet. I stood there, trying to regain control of myself. A young man, naked, ran screaming from another door they had crashed open. They shot him as he ran, and he fell twitching in my vomit. Somehow the sight seemed to give me courage.

They were coming up the stairs, now, the Leader with a face pale as putty, Goebbels thumping eagerly beside him. "It is Room Seven," said Goebbels, his voice shivering with mad excitement. "We go there, no?"

I fell in beside Brückner and Schaub, my stomach still twitching, until the mass of us halted outside Room Seven. Goebbels nodded peremptorily. Hitler's mouth trembled once more, he lifted his dogwhip; he pounded with all his might upon the door with the butt of the whip, as if he would break the door open so. "Open the door!" he screamed. "Damn you, open the door!"

A sleepy voice answered—I recognized at once the voice of the Chief of Staff. "Ach, yes, but who *is* it, at an hour like this!"

"It's I—Hitler! Open the door, and let me in!"

"Holy God, you already? I thought it was to be noon—"
Roehm, in scarlet-striped pajamas through which his

belly bulged above the pants, had the door open, and stood staring sleepily at us. His hand went up in slow salute. "Heil Hitler!"

"You damned pervert," shrieked Hitler, advancing on him, shaking the dogwhip while he raised his revolver. "You dirty traitor—"

"Steady, steady! What in God's name does this mean? —Blackshirts?" in sudden suspicion. "I see now, eh, you bastard? You've betrayed me! You've broken the promise you—"

"The Reich keeps no word with perverts, pederasts, vile scum that corrupt the youth of Germany! You will have a Second Revolution, eh, you dirty swine!"

"God damn you, Adolf Hitler, you masturbating bastard, how the hell have *you* got the nerve to talk to *me*! I may like men, but I'm no . . ." The vile abuse that poured from his lips made me want to vomit again.

"I've lied and protected you for years—"

"You're a traitor to the Party, a traitor to the Reich, a dirty Jewish Judas to your friends! A Jewish whore is cleaner than you, you swine! Just let me get my hands on a gun—"

"Friends, handcuff him! He's about to attack me!" Hitler's voice rose to a screech, as he hid his body half behind the huge bulk of Brückner.

Here at the door was the frightened face of the landlord. His pajamaed arm rose in a weak "Heil Hitler!" He owled at the guest struggling in the arms of the Blackshirts and bodyguards. "What goes on here, Herr Kanzler?"

"Take him away, the filthy pervert!" screeched Hitler. "Take him away, before I kill him myself! He tried to

attack me!" He seemed capable of it, too, if he could have remembered to transfer his pistol to his right hand.

The Leader was sobbing, as he walked ahead of all of us down to the cars. The danger was over. The plot against his life had been smashed. The Reich, the Party, had been saved. The Leader still sobbed.

We were driven to the headquarters of the Blackshirts in Munich. The head of the Munich Blackshirts appeared, his smirk broader, and saluted. "Of the Chief of Staff, General Roehm—what are we to do with him?"

Hitler looked Goebbels full in the face. The command in the face of the warped little dwarf was inexorable. The Leader handed me his pistol, butt toward me. "This," he gasped. "Give it to him. Tell him to shoot himself. I—I must phone Göring it is time to begin *his* Purge, in Berlin. Give it to him, Little Adolf." His eyes were pools of stark horror.

This was an assignment far more to my liking. It was the first time I had been given the opportunity to do something beyond return salutes. Of course, it was merely after all being a messenger boy, in one sense; but it was a message of no light importance.

I arrived at the cell. Two Blackshirts stood guard within it as I talked to him. He was sitting in his shirtsleeves, his head clenched in his hands, as I entered. He stood up heavily, and recognized me. "Well, Max Bauer," he said. His nostrils curled evilly.

"You know me better than that," I reminded him, stiffening. "I am Ludwig Zeit, the Leader's bodyguard."

"From Passau, no? I know too damned much. That's what men get in trouble for, in this world. Well, what now? What terms does he offer, now?"

I had the pistol in my right hand, its butt toward him. He had not noticed it. I flicked out my right hand from the elbow down, presenting it to him. "From the Leader," I said. I was rather proud of that presentation. I had thought it over carefully, and even rehearsed that flick of the hand from the elbow down; and I could not imagine a more dramatic way of giving it to him.

"So," he said. "From the Leader, no?" He stared at it curiously, not touching it. "We have shared one gun before, he and I. But is *that* enough with which to shoot my way out of this nest of reactionary traitors? Take it back to the Leader," he was still careful of his words, "and tell him to send me one regiment of my Brownshirts, and I will face every dirty son of a bitch of a Judas in the Party with it, and still give Germany what the Party promised. So tell him. Go."

I put the pistol down on the table before him. "But that is not the answer he wants," I objected.

"*He* wants, eh? What does he want?"

I stiffened up. "A brave man shoots himself, rather than face disgraceful death," I explained.

"Oh, he does, does he? Did Adolf tell you to give me that popgun to blow my brains out with, maybe? By God, it is his own revolver."

"So is his desire, General," I said meticulously.

"So is his desire, eh! The hell you say! But dung! Tell the bastard I checked my brains, when I trusted a double-dealing, double-crossing, self-polluting son of a bitch like him!"

My face must have shown the utter shock I felt. "But, General, he is offering you *this*, instead of having you executed! You know Göring and his ax—"

"For being his friend! For being the friend of the Party, of the Reich! For *making* the little self-strumpet, and giving him the Chancellorship, and— Oh, Christ! You can never see, Little Adolf. But he—*he* will see. Tell him this, God damn his dungy soul to hell! Tell him I am in a cell: that he put me in it. Me—Ernst Roehm, who loves him still, damn him. Tell him here is his popgun—I send it back to him. Tell him to come and shoot me, if he's got any guts at all—and I doubt it. Tell him that! Tell him he's the only dog low enough to do it. Dung! Good day."

There was no use trying to argue with a man so excited, who had lost all real sense of values. I picked up the pistol and returned to the Leader. I gave him the sense of the message, omitting the irrelevant, emotional part, which one had to forgive Captain Roehm in his disturbed state of mind.

The Leader studied my face as I spoke, his own face pinched. "I believe with a regiment of Brownshirts he could do much," he said. "We started with less. Ach God, so much less! Thanks, Little Adolf." He slipped the pistol back into his holster and turned away with a start as Goebbels came into the room.

"First reports from Berlin!" he said, jubilantly. "He has started! God, what a cleanup!"

We were still getting reports from Berlin—it was well after four o'clock—when Goebbels suddenly turned to the Leader. "Has Roehm shot himself?"

"How do I know?" snapped the Leader. And then, with a sudden startled glance at me, "Did he shoot himself as I ordered, Little Adolf?"

"Ach, no, Herr Hitler. He will not shoot himself, he says. He says for *you* to shoot him," I explained simply. I

could not believe he was so forgetful. It must have been that Goebbels' presence made some difference.

"I told you so!" snapped Goebbels. "You wish to have him shot, no? We must go back to Berlin within the hour."

"So," said the Leader. "Little Adolf," he stared at me, with a sort of film over his eyes, like a dog whose eye is running, "you have your service revolver? Good. Do what Herr Goebbels says. Go and shoot my Chief of Staff. Ernst Roehm. My Ernst." Out of the dead pause, he suddenly snapped his head up, and smiled as on the morning he first met me. "Then we return, no?"

I clicked my heels proudly together, and gave the salute and the "Heil Hitler!" The Leader returned it, but his hand shook. I swung abruptly on my heels, and returned to the cell.

I did not go in, this time. The two Blackshirts waited outside with me.

Captain Roehm was writing at a table when I arrived. He looked up, saw me, and waved with a wry look at me. He started to add a word to what he was writing, but instead he jabbed the pen back in the potato. He was looking better than in the morning, yes. He came over to the bars of the cell. "Well?" he asked. "You gave him my message? What does he say?"

I felt rather better even than this morning. This was far different from returning salutes or acting as a messenger boy. I pulled out my service revolver and aimed at his heart through the bars of the cell. "He said you must die for the perverted dog you are, for the Party, and the Reich, and Germany above everything!"

He walked backward to the table, and steadying himself

with both his hands pressed against it behind his back, "You are joking," he said.

I had never shot a man before, like this; there was no use to make a botch of the job. I let the barrel rest on the crossbar of the cell, took a rather good bead on a medal on the left breast, and shifted the end of the barrel slightly to the right. I pulled the trigger, and was myself startled at the kick, the sudden blast, the smoke.

On his breast I saw the little hole, no more. It may be that it is hard to hit a man's heart. His right hand rose, but more slowly than usual, to the salute. "Heil Hitler!" he said.

By this time, eye lower, right at the butt, I had aimed at the middle of the forehead. I pulled the trigger again, and this time I prepared my wrist against the faint kick-back; there was none noticeable. I have observed that it is always wise to learn from the first shot, and make the second a more thorough and efficacious job.

The difference chiefly was, almost at the same time I saw the round hole in his forehead, I may just as well insist at the same time, I saw the blood spurt out. It was strange how long he stood there and did not move; and I watched and did not move. There was a sort of wavy motion in what he did then. He moved his head back and his shoes forward. It seemed he was swaying back and forth; his waist was below the table now, and going lower. He did not stretch out full length on the floor, the way they say a person who is shot stretches out. Even the table fell, and it was his huge rump that was closest to me at the end, and his face and his head entirely concealed. But there was no reason to think I had not done a good job.

"He is dead?" I asked the Lieutenant of the Blackshirts, who had watched it all carefully.

"Beyond doubt," he said.

"We can return, then," I said. And then I smiled. "But pardon." I broke the revolver—it had ejected the two used shells—and refilled it from my belt. I slipped it back into the holster. "Now we can return," I said.

And so, with much relief, I returned to the Leader, for this time there had been no obstacle to his will.

CHAPTER XIV

THE PURGE IN BERLIN

I THINK I know more of what really happened in Berlin than Hitler himself was ever told. For the Leader, once he had reached the Chancellery, retired by himself, desperately pale and shaken. Marshal Göring and General von Arnheim were there to report to him. It was Goebbels and I, rather, who received the report.

"Roehm?" asked Göring, eyes intent on the inscrutable face of the Propaganda Minister.

Goebbels flipped his hand authoritatively toward me. I clicked my heels together, bowed my head, and gave the Nazi salute: "Heil Hitler! I myself had the honor to carry out the Leader's will, General, and shoot him down for the dog he was!"

"Excellent!"

"Heines, can you believe it, the damned fool, was in bed with his Lustknabe, Count von Spreti, if you please!" chortled Goebbels. "In media res! In flagrante delicto! And did they pump those perverts full of slugs! And what they shot off wasn't their bull's-eyes, either. Is it any wonder that those imbeciles in the United States, seeing the Leader's former associates, men so unnatural in their tastes, spoke of the former Chief of Staff as Hitler's wife—and dared to picture the Leader in brassiere and panties?"

—ach, the swine! It is things like that, that keep the rest of the world from being civilized. But, Herr General, what of Berlin?”

“Von Papen escaped.”

“Ach, what a pity!” mourned Goebbels. “He blunders everything, even his own getting shot, eh?”

“Well, at least, both of his secretaries, von Bose and Jung, were put out of the way. But—von Schleicher!”

Goebbels’ face lighted up. “You got *one* of the Chancellors, eh!”

“Ach, but yes,” smiled von Arnheim. “Good man, too, for a soldier. But it simply wouldn’t do to have ex-Chancellors around with any thought of a coup in their empty craniums.”

“Arnheim was there,” smiled Göring. “Tell them, General.”

“Oh, it was nothing,” said von Arnheim modestly. “The *Reichstagpraesident’s* planning was so perfect that we arrived at his house, and he did not dream of the little surprise we had for him. He was talking on the telephone to some friend when we burst in and I heard him say, ‘Excuse me one moment, please—someone is just entering the room.’ Ahead of me were three of the Blackshirts—and, would you believe it, all three of them drilled him before he could close his mouth! He had the most surprised look on his face! It was then that his wife came rushing in. Well, I had my revolver out, and I hadn’t flushed anything yet, and it was not wise to have witnesses of a thing like that. I got a good bead on her right midway of the forehead, just as she stood there, her hands clenched over her heart, staring down at her husband’s body. You know, gentlemen, if I’d have had calipers to measure with, I

could not have placed that shot more exactly in the center of her forehead!"

"Colossal," grinned Goebbels sardonically. "All the wives *we* shot were men."

"Aha, *she* was no man! I saw! It was ridiculous. She lifted her hands, and fell back into a chair. I was not sure then how excellent the first shot had been, and so I gave her one more, in the heart this time. Well, would you believe it, she and the chair went over backward! As she fell to the floor on her head, her skirt tumbled down over her face, and she lay there with her legs stuck up in the air in the most absurd fashion, bare to her belly! It was a sight. I had one of the men straighten her out on the davenport, and we went on to the next place."

"Plenty more, eh?" beamed Goebbels.

"Ach, yes!" said Göring. "It was a purge, this time. Listen! Gregor Strasser is gone, the boor; *he'll* never play Judas again. Karl Ernst was shot on his way to Bremen, off for a honeymoon to Madeira. *He'll* never boast, now, that he fired the Reichstag! Knowledge can be too dangerous. Major General von Krausser; Brigadier General Hayn; Uhl, who was the one to shoot the Leader; Dr. Knausler—"

"Aha! You got at the Catholics, too!"

"But yes. And Probst, too. Let him try to lead his Catholic Youth movement from the cemetery, now! Von Bre-dow—"

Goebbels nodded. "And we got, of course, General Schneidhuber, and, better still, von Kahr. History did not stop when he betrayed our first putsch. They dragged him out of his bed in his nightshirt, and I hear even his body is

gone.* If only Brüning had not been such a coward and sneaked into Holland, disguised as a Dutch priest. . . .”

“He’ll not come back, that’s certain. And over two hundred more in Berlin alone! Oh, and Ernst and Sander died giving the salute, screeching out ‘Heil Hitler!’ The poor fools thought this was a counter-revolution!”

“They should know, by now,” said Goebbels. “And look. The Leader is shaken—so?—about Roehm. I would not tell him all that happened. Brückner will keep an eye on that; he is good at not letting him know more than is good for him. He will make the official announcement of the Purge, when he gets around to it. Meanwhile, I will say a few things.” His hard mouth pursed importantly.

“We have nothing to hide,” said Göring pompously. “The welfare of the Party and the Reich demanded that a few traitors be shot. What more?”

“After all, when you announce Colonel Uhl had been named to assassinate the Chancellor himself. . . .” said Arnheim.

Goebbels nodded. “Nothing to hide, no. But Party business is Party business, and we need announce only what we please. Certainly that the malcontents in the Brown-shirts have been killed, and von Schleicher and his wife. That may be enough.”

“And more than this plot, too,” said Arnheim firmly. “There will be those that know too much, if that is all we say. This was a moral purge, too. We cleaned the homosexuals out of Germany, no?”

“Well, it will be good to announce,” said Goebbels judicially. “We should not go too far, though, if we want any Party left. That *would* be a purge, to get all of them!

* It was later discovered, dreadfully mutilated, in a nearby swamp.

But the leaders, yes; it will discourage it, naturally. But, to the Leader himself, not too many details, gentlemen!"

So it was left. From what I saw of him in the next two weeks, I do not believe that anything ever so shook the Leader as what had happened—especially to Ernst Roehm. He did not sleep for four nights, and he walked in his sleep for long weeks after that—his guards were all warned to guard him especially at such times. But the Propaganda Minister kept after him, and on the 13th, the Leader himself told of the purge to the Party members. One by one, until the seventy-seven he was to announce had been named, he read the list of Judases who had perished. He told how insupportable Roehm's insubordination had become. He told of von Schleicher's colloquing with an unnamed foreign diplomat, and did not mince words about this. "I tell you members of the Party that if any traitor to the Fatherland holds a conference with a foreign statesman and hides it from me, even though he only chatted about his stamp collection or the movies, I will have him shot!" There was some applause at this, but not loud. He rose to tremendous eloquence at the end. "It was an emergency; and in an emergency I think for Germany, and act for Germany, and *am* Germany! For twenty-four hours, I was responsible for the fate of the German nation, and thereby I was the supreme judge of the German people, with no appeal even to God himself!" They almost tore down the hall in their wild applause.

If the Leader was thus great in the hour of national emergency, he was as great in meeting every problem that confronted him, and solving with almost supernatural wisdom all matters that affected the Reich. I remember it was that month also that he received a deputation headed by

the President of the University of Berlin, including all the leading educators of Germany. They desired to learn from his own lips in what directions the government was going to improve education, as we had promised. Few of the Leader's great speeches were so statesmanlike and saturated with the Nordic spirit of undying truth.

"My friends," he began, when the applause had begun to die down, "you ask me what is our program for education in the Reich. Let me remind you of a few vital truths." And then, as was his custom, with incomparable eloquence he traced the birth of the Party, its struggles at first, the salutary effect of the failure of 1923 at Munich, when we had not yet come to see that the Party's destiny was alone to save Germany for the future, and when we made the mistake of seeking to ally ourselves with bourgeois elements, corrupted and tainted beyond recovery by the twin poisons of Marxism and Judaism, those major enemies of man's progress throughout the world. He led up to a thrilling description of the Nazi revolution, and had his auditors on fire with the glorious moment when at last a folkic Nordic government set earnestly to work to wipe out the foul errors of the past.

"We do not blink from facing the truths of history," he thundered. "Germany has been raped and violated long enough. And the tragedy to mankind is that this has been done, in spite of the fact that the Nordic race is the only race of supreme importance to mankind! We know that there are three sorts of races: the creators of culture; the maintainers of culture; and the wreckers of culture. Only a few nations in mankind's history have been creators of culture; and it is significant that science has admitted at last that these all belong to the Nordic race! What culture

was created by the despised Jew? What by the lowly Egyptian, the mongrel Babylonian, the pacifist Chinaman, the crude savages of the Americas, Australia, Africa? Nothing! Absolutely nothing! Their record is as blank as if they had never existed. Science is already beginning to doubt whether some of them *did* ever exist. All the culture in the world depends upon the Nordic race, not alone for its creation, but for its survival. If our race perishes, they carry into the grave with them all the truth, all the genius, all the learning, all the beauty, all the nobility of mankind!"

A wild storm of applause, led energetically by Goebbels, greeted this simple enunciation of the basic postulates of anthropological and social science.

"He's inspired," said von Arnheim devoutly. He sat on one side of me, and the exquisite Ulrica on the other.

"If he only could always live on that high plain," murmured Ulrica sadly.

"He does," I assured her. Who better than I should know?

"I can see into the distant future, as all of us can," his voice screeched upward in divine passion, "and I know, as all of us know, that there will come a time when mankind faces his problems with open and enlightened eyes. In that hour, all nations, all races, will turn to the one noblest race to be their undisputed leader, supported by the forces of the whole globe; and we will not fail of our high summons in that high moment!" They almost went hysterical at this. But the Leader hushed their rapture with firm, monitory hands.

"You ask *me* to tell you of education, of whose history and purpose you know so much better than I. As before,

the Reich will put the education of its future soldiers as its first and paramount civic duty! The whole purpose of education, as we all agree, is to occupy a boy's free time in the profitable cultivation of the body he was born to tend. We are done with idle loafing about the streets, with time-wasting in moving picture houses saturated with the reek of erotic stimulation. When a boy's daily work is done, it is time for him to harden his muscles,

. . . imitate the action of the tiger,
 Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood. . . .
 Now set the teeth, and stretch the nostril wide,
 Hold hard the breath, and bend up every spirit
 To his full height!

So spoke our great Nordic poet. The boy who enters life soft is a weakling, and the Reich has no room for him! The function of education is not to cram the brain with gobbets of knowledge miscalled education, but to build a body worthy of a Nordic! And this is a responsibility that falls upon each one of us, not an individual responsibility alone. We have no right to let a single youth sin into weakness!"

Again he hushed the tumultuous applause. "One of the major subjects of education must be the sport of boxing, neglected too long, for it encourages the spirit of attack more than any other subject in the curriculum. When we think of boxing, there are only two major names in the world's annals—Baer and Schmeling! Is it by accident that both are German? And each of us knows that the finest and highest institution of national education is the army." He beamed proudly at the President of the University of Berlin, as he expressed this platitude. "Never

think that the function of an army is to teach a youth merely how to keep step in the ranks and stand at attention, as becomes a soldier of the Fatherland; it is to learn from the spirit of the army that the Nordic race is unconquerable, by any power on the globe!"

The frenzy seemed more than the hypnotized audience could bear. But like a trumpet came the Leader's magnificent tones. "When we teach history, it is not merely to learn to parrot lists of names of kings and popes, and dry dates better forgotten; it is to read the past and the present so as to assure the perpetual existence and progress of our superior nation! The errors of past teaching must be purged relentlessly—" his eyes glared, and there was no one listening who did not shiver at the memory of June 30th. The salutary lesson had sunk in deep. "Thus we are taught that the separate States of the United States of America created the Union. Lies like this must be purged forever! For we know that it was the Union itself which created most of these miscalled States. It was the German aid to the struggling colonies which in 1776 defeated an England already saturated with the poison of Jewish internationalism, and ripe for its poisonous off-spring, Marxism! The population of North America consists almost entirely of Nordic elements; the hour will come when we will regard that as an outer frontier of the world-shaking Reich!

"So much for history," again stilling the applause. "As important, today, in this age of applied mechanical marvels, is science. And every one of us knows that the purpose of teaching and learning science is to increase our national pride in the advancement of the German race and the German nation that we constitute. The whole history of nations, even of civilization itself, must be taught as

one great stream leading up to German greatness, mankind's highest achievement! Take inventions," his hands pleaded desperately for silence, that his pearls might not be lost. "Take inventions. An inventor is not great merely because of his invention; but because he is a fellow German! If you take away the German inventors, who are left? But hear the roll of the world's major inventors! Gutenberg, von Kleist, Bunsen, Mitterhoffer, Hertz, Otto, Benz, Welsbach, Hoffman, Diesel, Haber, Ehrlich, Berliner, Lilienthal, Jatho, Mond—what names are fit to be mentioned beside these? And even if we look at a foreign land, such as the United States of America, what names do we find but Schnebley, Westinghaus, Eickemeyer, Brusck, Watermann, Mergenthaler, Shallenberger, Baekeland—Germans to the last one of them! Creativeness is an exclusively Nordic attribute; invention began and ended with the German people. So let us hail our fellow-countrymen, primarily because they are Nordic, and secondarily because they have lived up to the best of the Nordic tradition, and have benefited the Fatherland, and so the world! As with great deeds, so with inventions: our major pride will forever be that the fortunate doer and inventor are Nordic, and hence of mankind's superior race! Heil Hitler!"

They rose as one body, one heart, one soul, to return the great salute.

A message was handed to the Leader, even as he was about to return, weary and sweating, to his seat. He waved the frenzy to silence. "I am asked to say a word about female education, which is of course essential, since we treasure the women of the Reich as the mothers of the race. Female education. . . . It does not take so many words. Bodily training! That of course will receive the major

stress. First, last, and always, the training of the woman's body. Let her have strong legs, to support her body while it works, to bring her to her home and husband and young when day is over. Let her have strong arms, for work and to hold her babies suckling at her breasts. Let her have well-developed breasts, to nourish the soldiers of tomorrow. Let her have a strong well-developed thorax and abdomen, that she may breathe to her maximum efficiency, so? Let her have a well-developed pelvis, kept supple by daily exercise, that her birth-pains may be less. Let her have a fecund uterus, to bear children worthy of our great fate!"

His hands battered feebly against the solid flood of applause. "Beyond this," he had to repeat it, "beyond this, there must be character, there must be morals, there must be a proper attitude toward her husband, lord and master. And I will not deny that, since the son inherits much from his mother, her intellect should not be entirely neglected. But first, last, and all the time, the bodily development of the mothers of tomorrow—the educated Nordic mothers of all tomorrows!"

There were tears in the eyes of the aged President of the University of Berlin, as the Leader reached this magnificent peroration. "Never have I understood education so," he almost sobbed. There were tears in my eyes. Germany could not fail, with such a redeemer to lead it to its destiny!

CHAPTER XV

"UNTO ME ALL POWER IS GIVEN—"

WHEN we returned to the Chancellery from the Leader's great speech on education, even the outer offices of the great building throbbed with a tense excitement. Inside was Erik von Arnheim, straight from a confidential mission to Vienna.

The Leader greeted him warmly. "Well, it is to be the Anschluss, when?"

Von Arnheim shrugged. "That damned Austrian *Schlamperei!** They have forgotten already *why* they should want the union!"

"They have become contaminated by Jews and clericals. I will drill that out of them. You told them, as I said?"

The special envoy nodded. "With all the frills in the world, Herr Hitler. You are Austrian; it is your country; they are your own people; and naturally they should look to your genius to rule it. Again, we can develop the Styrian iron deposits far better than they. Again, Czechoslovakia and how much more was stolen from them by the democracies, and you will restore it to the united Reich—youself, the avenger of Austria's shame. Again, they are Germans, six and a half million of them, and they should march beside their brothers under the swastika. One cabinet member spat, when I mentioned it."

* Slovenliness, sloppiness, amiable casualness.

I shuddered.

Hitler scowled ominously. "Ugh, unbelievable! Record his name; he'll get his reward. They refuse the Anschluss, no?"

Von Arnheim's hands spread suavely. "Ach, Leader, you did not send me to fail! It will come; of course, through our Nazis there. As you pointed out to me,"—I was always amused at the way each close satellite toadied to Hitler, giving him credit in the aggregate for every brilliant thought that anyone had—"this four and a half foot dwarf of a Chancellor, Herr Dollfuss, stands in the way. Well, we have a prescription for that." His hand gestured as if slitting his own throat, his lips tch'k'd once.

"A clerical, and all clericals are swine! You told them that every loyal Nordic would see to it he eliminated a Catholic Chancellor, of course?"

"Indeed yes. I reminded them that these dastardly clericals had destroyed all the magnificent work of the Vienna Socialists—who certainly must have been inspired with Nordic ideals, the way they rebuilt—with their artillery, their bombs—and a thousand men, women and children brutally murdered. Even his guild government is a papal invention; and what the pope touches, he fouls. And they are ready—ready to act, now!"

"Anything definite?" asked Goebbels. He had flinched when Dollfuss's height was mentioned. He was sensitive about dwarfs.

Von Arnheim nodded. "I suggested the 25th of this month. It may be peaceful, of course; though, after June 30th here—"

Hitler shivered, as he still did at all mention of that day. "It will help greatly. In spite of the Purge, the harvest is

execrable, and there are more scowls than I like to see. We have promised the Anschluss to the Party. It will pull their minds off their bellies."

Goebbels shook his head doubtfully. "Only *if* it succeeds. They are slipshod, lazy, these Austrians. But I'll get all the propaganda written in advance—I'll even have photographs of Rintelen as the new Chancellor spread broadcast, for release the 25th. The planes will be ready to fly the Austrian Nazi exiles back to Vienna. *We* won't fail!"

But the 25th must, of course, be the Bayreuth Festival, and not even a revolution could keep the Leader away from Wagner. It was *Gotterdammerung* that afternoon, and I was not to take word in to Hitler unless it was imperative. Even before the opera started, he received word that one Nazi renegade had confessed the whole plot. Just as the curtain went up, word came that it had taken too long for his confession to reach the cabinet, and the putsch would succeed anyway. These Austrians! Even Hitler, when I carried this word to him, said irritably, "Ach, but of course! Get out, get out! The overture commences. . . ."

The radio announced that the putsch had succeeded—that Dollfuss indeed had been shot! This was more likely, but hardly enough to interrupt Wagner for. And then, reports grew vaguer, more confusing: Rintelen hadn't arrived; he was in prison; the putsch was a success; what was the Leader's word? And with it a last minute dispatch from the Italian frontier that Goebbels brought over to give to the Leader in person.

It was the final chords rolling despairingly out, now, with the German gods dead at last, and their heaven ended forever. Goebbels stood silent, in spite of the importance

of his message, until the final note died away. He pulled Hitler to one side and showed him the last message first.

Hitler's face grew hard. "Damn that greasy Italian! So, he'll occupy Austria in twenty-four hours, if the putsch succeeds! Why didn't he keep his filthy hands off *our* internal affairs?"

Von Arnheim looked glum. "If *you* had been there to direct them. . . ."

"I will be, next time. Any more death notices?" He scowled at the opportunity lost.

Goebbels smiled evilly. "Hindenburg is sinking."

"Thank God for that!" said the Leader devoutly. "Maybe *some* good news happens soon!" And then, as we sat at dinner, "This Austrian debacle seems unimportant to me. No more than a postponement, at worst. How they can worship the gods they do! I have spent the afternoon living with real gods—the great German gods! Surely, in Wagner, they are more alive than ever—and eternally!"

"I suppose it is their religion that's at fault," said Goebbels thoughtfully. "It's usually at the base of most human stupidity. They're rank with Catholicism—and the plot and counterplot to get Austria more fully under the pope's thumb is unbelievable!"

The Leader smiled, a sly glitter in his eye. "Rosenberg says that this Jesus is the most contemptible god any race or people ever worshipped. It isn't just that he was crucified like a common criminal—but the things that led up to it! The flagellation—the torture—"

"The Passion of Jesus?" I asked. "The Stations of the Cross?"

"That, and more," said von Arnheim authoritatively. "Now, to begin with, all this is done to God himself—ex-

isting before Time began, creator of the earth and the whole universe, who displayed his backsides to Moses—so the Old Testament says—and then split himself into three that still continued one—”

“Such bosh!” interjected the Leader.

“But how convenient! As God the Father, he creates Mary, his daughter, then a Jewess married to the Jew Joseph. As God the Holy Ghost he makes her pregnant; as God the Son, Jesus, he is born out of her Jewish womb! As if that were not contemptible enough, he permits himself to suffer every indignity a masochist could desire—and all at a time when he is boasting his ‘heavenly Father’ could send twenty divisions of angels to rescue him, if he wished it! Read the details in Matthew—a few less in Mark—less still in Luke, and John adding a few—why, there’s nothing that we do to the Jews in the concentration camps they didn’t do to him, with his permission, if you please! He was blindfolded, slapped in the face, they spat in his face repeatedly, the Jews beat him, Pilate had him scourged—and you can be sure the Roman made the blood stream down!—they beat him on the head, gave him vinegar and gall to drink, and then nailed his hands and feet to the cross, and let him hang there between two dying thieves until he died. Is it any wonder that, ever since, the Christians have formed flagellation sects, and welcomed on their own bodies the ecstatic agonies of the beatings and other indignities given to their Jesus!”

“Isn’t there a sect in Berlin that commemorates the crucifixion annually?” smiled the Leader.

“Ah, but not of Christians! I have told you, Leader. Once a year they kidnap some Jew, and give him a full sample of all that this Jesus had to undergo, to the final

death on the cross. One year I could have seen it; but it was a Jewish girl, and . . . well, I did not go."

"If he was a Jew," said Goebbels fiercely, "he deserved all he received. Jesus, and these others too. It is a splendid precedent to do this to *all* Jews, no?"

But the Leader had to hurry back to the opera, and so this discussion went no further. The next morning, word came to us that Rintelen had tried to commit suicide at midnight the night before, shooting at his own heart; but that he lived, with stitches taken in it. The Leader passed the dispatch to me to read. "When *I* do it, I will not miss so," he said soberly.

"Not you, Herr Hitler! What would the Party—what would Germany do without you?"

"Well enough," he said dispiritedly. I could see that the Austrian matter was at last weighing on his mind. "Everything must end, sooner or later."

There was some good news out of Austria in the days that followed. When Holzweber and Planetta were hanged for their part in the putsch, they died with "Heil Hitler!" on their lips as their last words, like true Nordics. And meanwhile, in his home in East Prussia, the President sank lower and lower. The Party propaganda department repeated again and again that the latest and greatest Nazi convert was giving his life for Germany; had he not sent telegrams to Hitler and Göring, congratulating them on the magnificent achievement of the Blood Purge?

On August 2nd, the senile old Field Marshal breathed his last. The morning papers carried this news to Germany, and more glorious news—that again the Leader had solved a vexing problem of state with utter brilliance, always doing the common-sense thing, so hidden from other

minds. Who hereafter would be President, and who Chancellor? Why, he would be both, naturally! And that very morning, every Reichswehr officer and soldier throughout all Germany took the solemn oath:

I swear by God this sacred oath, that I will render unconditional obedience to the Leader of the German Reich and people, Adolf Hitler, the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces; and that I will, as a brave soldier, at all times be ready to stake my life for this oath.

Magnificent words! The Party press told how sick officers had rushed from their sickbeds to take the oath and pledge allegiance to the Leader; thus denying the earlier story that many had taken sick leave to avoid taking it. All unable to take it on the 2nd did it on the next day.

"Otherwise," von Blomberg explained to me with a wink, "we have enough unexplained suicides to make the Blood Purge look like an Alpine skiing trip."

The German people ratified this action of the Leader's by a vote announced as 88% in favor of it. No doubt the tired polls officers were too wearied to count the last 12% of the vote; it is inconceivable that any true German would not have voted for him; and who else would be allowed to vote? In the ideal government, which we in Germany are approximating more and more nearly, all votes will be unanimous, and hence need only be cast by the Leader himself. It is socially unhealthy to let it be known that there is even one dissentient in a properly organized state.

And then came the immortal ratification of the cleansed and rejuvenated Germany, at the annual Party Day at Nürnberg. The vast columned reviewing-stand of the

Luit-pold Arena faced the armed might of Germany, a vista so vast that I, seated on the tribune just behind the Leader, could hardly see the impressive Party standards that ringed the whole horizon. After the roll of the heroic dead were called, two by two, with fanfares of trumpets wafting the immortal souls upward into the German heaven, the Leader himself spoke, with winged words no man has ever bettered: "Such achievements as I have made have been made by Germany, with me as her spokesman. Such mistakes as history may record against me I myself assume full responsibility for. Perfection is not even true of the Leader. But I can look the whole world of men in the face—the heroic past, the magnificent present, the yet unrevealed future of German glory—and say that I have never done one deed or indeed held one thought that was not for the benefit of the whole German people. Be it written to my credit or discredit, I have lived my life with but one motive: a greater Germany! And I have achieved it. Heil Hitler!"

Göring was so excited at this peroration that he voided wind like a thunderclap. This habit and belching have grown constantly on him. When once some finicky Junker objected that his manners were coarse for a general, the Leader shut him up swiftly: "When I find a man who belches louder, he can have Göring's place." It is no wonder that Germany loves him, as the world will one day come to love him. So, at least, I thought, with his tones ringing then in my ears. Today. . . .

Well, we returned to Berlin the next day, jubilant at one more year ended, with no open outbreak seething up from the discontent of starved and suffering millions. We were to dine at the Kaiserhof Hotel that night, the whole

cabinet, as well as the inner group of the Nazi rulers. Naturally, I was along as a bodyguard, placed at a table a little higher than the one occupied by the Leader and his glittering cohorts. Erik von Arnheim had long ago told me that on such occasions there was always a flask of brandy in his greatcoat, and cigars and cigarettes, if ever I happened to stroll out to the men's room. This night I had taken advantage of his friendliness more than once; and, as the Leader rose to speak, I decided to slip up to the coatroom, which was on a balcony with a full view of the tables, and enjoy a cigar at a time when it could not possibly bring offense to the Leader. His words would seem more golden, through the swirling gray haze of a Corona Corona, after a sip of brandy. It was a pity there was no place I could retire to with the coatroom girl for a brief session, alas!

I secured the cigar and stepped out on the balcony, half hidden behind a huge trellis of smilax forming a gigantic swastika. I lit the cigar and stared down, heart at ease, at these representatives of a triumphant Germany in a contented world. The Chairman came near the end of his remarks introducing the Leader.

Suddenly I knew that a man stood beside me, closer to the wall, more hidden than I by the massed smilax. I turned toward him, when a pistol was shoved rudely against my ribs. "Keep looking down at the tables, and smiling," said the voice I had heard twice before. "And, no outcry, or it will be your last."

I stiffened more erect. "But you will be apprehended too, traitor to the Fatherland!"

"So you say. My escape is provided for. No one who opposes that Austrian swine is a traitor to Germany, re-

member. I have wanted these few words with you, Little Adolf, for some time. Tonight is the great night, when it is almost too late for talk."

"For what!" I said, voice aghast.

"You will see. Tonight," his voice was low but knife-like for clearness, "Adolf Hitler will die,—in five minutes, now. If you make the outcry, yes, it might happen sooner. And *you* will die at that moment, by a shot; and neither of us wants that. You prefer to live, is it not so?"

I was quite convinced that this was mere idle talk. The thought of the Leader's death could not be entertained. But it was my duty to try to find out all I could from this mysterious traitor, still in his great cloak swirled about him, for all that I knew that he wore the uniform of a captain in the Reichswehr beneath it. And the pistol pushed into my ribs was held in his left hand! "But talk," I said. "What is it that you wish with me?"

"When Hitler is shot, tonight," he said slowly, "word of it will never reach Germany, or the world outside. How could it? The dining room is sealed to all but to those high in the Party and their trusted guards. There will be the swift conference, and the matter will be hushed up—until it is tactful to announce such as they wish to announce. Did not this Hitler name only seventy-seven killed in the Blood Purge, instead of the nine hundred and more that lost their lives then?"

"The other deaths were mere coincidences," I said firmly. "That is Party tactics. Besides, the Leader thinks there were only seventy-seven."

"Enough of that; time grows small," he said swiftly. "When he is shot—and you will stand on this high mountain, as the Jesus you despise stood there beside the devil

and watched the glories of the world unrolled beneath him—you will walk down these steps, so? and say quietly, 'Gentlemen, here am I, Adolf Hitler, at your service.'—Your wig off, your nose as should be! So?"

"But—then!" I objected.

"Let *them* decide," in slow triumphant certainty. "Look—there to your left—where those two men stand behind the three waiters—you see the gun lifted that will end this Hitler forever?"

It was like a pantomime show, and I had too much common sense to believe that it could be real. It might be some joke planned by some of the more ribald members of the Party; it might even be Party tactics, such as had been discussed before the Reichstag Building was burned. I felt a natural curiosity to ascertain which it was; but the part of wisdom, with this pistol boring into my ribs, was to curb my curiosity. Sooner or later one always finds out such things, I have observed.

The man with the pistol laid its barrel quietly on the shoulder of one of the waiters, who was in the pantomime too, and aimed it at the Leader, as he rose with his great-hearted smile to begin his speech.

It was at this moment that one of the waiters, cursed with a cold, coughed. And, by ill luck, at that moment a Blackshirt guard looked over to where the cough came from, and saw the pistol aimed at the Leader.

"Watch out!" he shouted, hurling himself across the space toward the man with the pistol.

At that moment, things happened too fast for me to observe them with accurate regard to sequence. I saw the gun blaze, without sound. But out of the corner of my eye I saw a huge Blackshirt guard behind the Leader hurl him

down into his chair—indeed, his rump scraped off its edge, and he sat ingloriously on the floor. At that moment, the huge guard too screamed, and lifted up his hand, writhing it; blood splattered all over the tablecloth. I could see, so close I stood, that a finger had been shot off. And already the man who had shot lay on the floor, knocked unconscious from a blow with the butt of a revolver.

As if by magic, all was quiet again. The Leader was on his feet, as they led away the moaning Blackshirt, a napkin wrapped around his bleeding hand. "Quiet, my friends," he said, with his great-hearted smile. "A bulb has blown. It is nothing. We were all startled, for the moment. It is forgotten. My friends," he leaned forward, "the future of Germany. . . ."

The voice beside me spoke, with melancholy music. "But not forever a miss," he said. "Good night, Little Adolf. You will see me again soon. Make no outcry. . . ." The pistol bored once again into my ribs, and he was gone. I still do not know how it was managed.

I finished my cigar and returned to the table.

CHAPTER XVI

THE MOTHERS OF THE RACE

ON JANUARY 13, 1935, the Saar territory voted overwhelmingly, in its plebiscite, held under anti-German auspices, to return to the Reich. This was but natural, since the superiority of German culture is increasingly becoming known to all the world. But the month was far more important to me for a more personal reason. On the 28th, my adored Ulrica gave birth to a son.

It was always an event when any of the inner council did anything conducing to Germany's firm stand for a richer and ampler married life; and in this instance the Leader congratulated the proud father before the whole cabinet, on his addition of a little Reichsminister to the Nazi Party. He himself stood godfather to the child, which by Ulrica's cleverness was named after him. I felt rather proud that the felicitations were really intended for me; and was only sorry that the Leader was of such a nature that he would not have enjoyed having this made clear to him by me.

In his Mother's Day Speech, which occurred not so long afterward, the Leader paid especial tribute to the Reichsminister's wife as a type of the highest in German womanhood. "Here we have a young and beautiful woman, a loyal Party member since the start, who was selected for

her beauty and her exquisite voice to render the immortal music of Germany before the discriminating musical appreciation of the sons of the Fatherland. But at the proper time, she laid aside this lesser glory for the far higher and nobler calling of wife—wife of one high in the councils of the Party. And now a far higher accolade has been laid upon her—that of the mother of the future! For out of wifehood comes love, and out of love comes the glory of motherhood. If we men must face death in defense of the Party and the Fatherland and the Nordic ideals to which Germany is consecrated, surely no less do the German mothers go down into the valley of the shadow, to bring back a rosebud boy who will himself grow into a mighty Siegfried of valor, inheriting all of his father's staunch party loyalty, personal bravery, and statesmanlike acumen.

"Ulrica von Arnheim, you have done well! May all the girls of Germany choose as nobly as you, and follow in your footsteps, and achieve as fruitfully! Heil Hitler!"

In the midst of the wild applause of the general response, the darling—I was seated between her and her infinitely flattered husband—blushed prettily, and smiled at her husband. "It's nice to have a little Adolf of my own, instead of this lout who does not agree with me nearly often enough on party tactics."

"Lout, she calls you," smiled her husband. "She should be spanked, for that."

But the Leader had soared ahead. "Here we have a sample of what marriage at its best can be; not the hideous disgrace that it has become in the democracies, and was for so long in the Republic under the Marxists. It should be consecrated as an institution to raise up soldiers and

mothers of soldiers in the highest Nazi tradition, instead of being a cloak for private lusts and perversities, whose produce can only be monstrous degenerate beings, half man and half monkey! It is the custom of the age in which we live, *except* in Nazi Germany, to permit any corrupt mongrel or degenerate to reproduce himself upon a lovely girl of blonde, Nordic stock, and thus bring unspeakable suffering on his fellow countrymen and the monsters engendered of his lust. In Germany, we have ended that. Let the surgeon's knife render the degenerates, of either sex, sterile forever! So we have decreed, and so we are magnificently achieving! And this should be a warning to inferior races, of their nature degenerate!"

He pushed through the hurricane of handclappings. "Quite as sinful is it for the weakling, the invalid, to bear children who may inherit this weakness, this invalidism. Most wicked of all is it to me to see on sale in any drug-store, and even hawked about by street peddlers, iniquitous devices which prevent the birth of offspring even where the parents are healthy in the highest Nordic sense, and entirely fitted to bear children worthy of the Fatherland. Let me bring this home to you: if *your* parents had used birth control, where would you be! If *my* mother had sunk so low as to commit this sin, I myself would not be here before you! For that only do I respect the evil Roman Catholic Church, that creature of internationalism, that it sets its face sternly against any limitation of offspring; even though its reason for this is superstitious, the fear of destroying an immortal soul. That far they are right, that this is sinful among healthy parents; but they are eternally wrong, when they apply the same standard to degenerates! It is the duty of such to abstain from anything that may

perpetuate their degeneracy; and it is society's duty to protect itself against such monstrous offspring. Out of these—I am sure science will one day corroborate me—the inferior races of mankind have sprung!”

He stilled the torrent of applause, an exalted passion lighting his face. “For the weakling, the invalid, there is always the adoption of some poor, strange infant of healthy parents, who can be brought up with full love and devotion to become a worthy soldier of the Reich, or the mother of German soldiers. And the goal we aim for is not Utopian, but very near and very real. It is the application of Nordic science to human offspring! Why should we make such vast strides in the breeding of poultry, swine, cattle, even dogs and cats, and ignore the human race, who can with even more profit be bred quite as scientifically and profitably? We Nazis intend to uplift the breeding of human babies until it is done quite as efficiently and amelioratively as the breeding of prize-winning dogs and cats, swine and horses! The sires must be registered, and their pedigrees fully known; the dams must be guarded from contamination by mongrel sires—and no cloak of marriage can hallow such a foul and unnatural union! They must receive service at the proper time, under the supervision of qualified Nazi officials, which will insure a continual race improvement of our glorious Nordic stock!”

Again he hushed the clamor of enraptured applause. “The full value of romantic love, I grant, must never be lost sight of. But this is an extremely overrated matter. Did you ever hear of the romantic love of a well-bred Siamese female cat for a mongrel alley Tom, or of a pedigreed police bitch for some unpedigreed vagrant dog?

Even as unthinkable is any thought of romance between a Nordic girl and a mongrel mucker. Romance will bud from a scrutiny of pedigrees; and the Germany of the future will be peopled by a race whose parents have been selected by blood tests, chemical analyses, and a rigorous use of the most qualified sires to serve all dams worthy of perpetuating the stock. So it will be!"

With his infinite good humor, he quieted the demonstration. His eyes flamed more than ever. "One other blessing we will bestow on our German girls. Naturally, being female, they are not of themselves qualified to be German citizens. That is reserved for the men; by the old German law, the sword is the suffrage. But the German girl who marries will cease to be thereafter merely a State subject, but will automatically by her marriage become a full citizen! Naturally, we will extend this privilege also to German females engaged in business, since in that way too they contribute to the welfare of the Reich. My friends, I give you the German mother! Heil Hitler!"

This was the Leader's epochal Mother's Day Speech. At the cabinet dinner afterwards, Goebbels praised it without restraint; and then looked at the Leader with a sly twinkle. "But you did not mention adultery, or mistresses. You seemed to assume that all babies are made in lawful wedlock."

"Adultery is unnecessary," said the Leader firmly. "Certainly one wife would be at least enough."

Göring chuckled. "I'll marry me another wife in April, with the Leader as best man. And, by God, on that day we will have those two Communists, Epstein and Ziegler, responsible for Horst Wessel's death, executed—the old German fertility rite of a blood sacrifice."

"Frau Sonneman?"

"Yes, Emmy," gruffly. "We've hit it off together. We will get married."

Von Arnheim smiled a bit cattily. "Whether you think adultery is necessary or not, Herr Reichskanzler, it's universal. If there are any Party leaders who don't have a mistress, or more than one, I've never heard of them. The General had to put Rosenberg's mistress in jail, for subversive remarks. Streicher and his doctor's wife are known to everyone. Even such a little swine as Ludecke went about boasting of this affair and that. If such is human nature, what are you going to do about it?"

They all watched the Leader covertly. He turned a little paler. "Adultery is entirely unnecessary," he said. "If human nature interferes, we will change it."

"Take my case," said von Arnheim, mellowed by the wine. "Ulrica has just borne her little Adolf. A woman is sensitive, after a thing like that; the very thought of her husband is repulsive to her, for a time. And what is a man to do?"

I smiled to myself at this; for two nights before, when he had had to go to Vienna, she and I had rehearsed our first night together, with mutual pleasure. It was I who suggested that she continue so sensitive against her husband; and she swore to do it, to prove her so deep love to me. If ever another man but myself touched her, she said, she would blow out her brains. I have observed that women are most fascinating in such moments of extreme love. I let her kiss my hand to seal the pledge. And so I was interested in all that von Arnheim said.

But the Leader shook his head. "Let the man wait until it is time to serve. That is enough."

This was the busiest of all times with us, for all that the activity was preparatory, not yet cresting into actions to shake the peace of the world. I have observed that it is in the times of apparent inactivity that the most progress is made. For each day has its twenty-four hours, and there is no inactivity in the waking hours for minds as alert and loyal to the Party and the Reich as those at the head of the Party. One by one the very planks of the platform that poor dead Captain Roehm had struggled so for were being shaped and planned as achievements, unless they were clearly inapplicable to conditions.

It was in the August following that the Leader suddenly disappeared from the Chancellery, and I was told that he was at the hospital undergoing a minor operation. The Leader is not like Stalin, who when he needs an operation has it performed simultaneously on himself and all nine of his doubles, for safety as well as concealment of his actual health; the Leader faced his crisis alone. I would have had to have been told anyhow, for four times during the interval I had to be Adolf Hitler on parade, and on one of these occasions had to broadcast to the world his ideas on Jews and Catholics. I only regretted that there were not new subjects that I could talk on; what he thought about these subjects I could have repeated in my sleep, so familiar it had become.

"It's nothing," Goebbels told me, his face drawn and haggard from worry. "It's absolutely not cancer. I know his mother died from it; but the Leader inherited none of it. It was merely a polyp on his vocal cords. The gassing in the World War, the incredible speech-making he has made to carry the Party to where it is—these have finally exacted their toll."

"It is his oratory, is it not, Herr Minister," I asked the repulsive-looking cripple, "that has given him his tremendous power? With Mussolini, it is writing; with Stalin, routine work as party secretary; but, with the Leader, it is the golden magic of his voice—is it not so?"

"But naturally," he said proudly. "There has been no such eloquence like it in the history of mankind."

At the Nürnberg Party Day that came a month later, the Leader saddened the hearts of all the Party members by speaking of the hour when he would die. "That hour will come for me, too, and I can never know when it will be. But I know that the Party will continue and flourish and rule and lead Germany to her destiny. I commit to the magnificent German army the power of the Party and the Reich, confident that it will never falter in its sacred duty." It was clear that the idea of death hovered over him; and there was more and more talk of cancer. But I had Goebbels' word for it, and that was enough.

All of these months, so quiet above, the history of tomorrow was being planned and matured. I can never forget the talk the Leader had with me on March 3rd of the next spring. "Well, Little Adolf, on Saturday my Reichswehr marches into the Rhinlands."

"But what a coup! The world suspects nothing!"

He was off, marching up and down the long Chancellery study, as if he were addressing the Recording Angel. "Up to that hour, cringing beneath the iniquitous treaties of Versailles and Locarno, we were forbidden to exercise our God-given right of sovereignty over our own territory . . . as if German administration of this ancient and integral part of the Fatherland must wait on the rubber-stamp O.K. of Paris and London. We had to stand by and

see France illegally fill these lands with mongrel African soldiers, and white French officers stand by and applaud while they violated our Nordic mothers and sisters.

“That is all over! By this one move I will notify the world that Germany is sovereign still, and will take orders hereafter from no power, living or dead! Heil Hitler!”

Utterly inspired, I gave the response, the salute. And on Saturday we marched in. What a bombshell in the squabbling camps of the impotent European diplomats! France wanted to march. . . . But what was France? The Leader had a minor throat attack, and I had to say it for him to the Reich over the air. “France is a democracy, that spawn of Jewish creation and eternal structural weakness. France is the eternal inveterate enemy of the Fatherland, which we will annihilate before our destiny can be made secure! We will find it necessary to turn France into a German mandate, to permit room for our destined expansion into a nation of two hundred and fifty million dominant Nordics; and so France has only one course open before it, to bow to the Juggernaut of our decision. Belgium shivers, we are told; but what is Belgium? A mere truck-garden at our backdoor, which will sooner or later be used by us for no more. England has done nothing but hem and haw, at where it holds the world’s Olympic championship. England is no longer impressive.

“Fellow Germans, we are in the Rhineland! We have militarized it. Italy too had guaranteed its demilitarization; but Italy now has an aggressive government, utterly opposed to the poisonous Jewish concept of democracy. Italy, I give you my word for it, will hold hands off—and I expect from my great friend Il Duce his personal congratulations on my manly step!

“And why are we justified in this historic step? Because the Franco-Soviet pact of mutual aid, even now being ratified in effeminate Paris, itself violated the Treaty of Locarno, and thereby frees us to move forward to our destiny. We have been summoned to a conference at London to settle the matter. We will go; but it has been settled by our actions! Heil Hitler!”

He congratulated me highly on the speech, and said that I had indeed gone beyond his planned utterances in several particulars, and in each case an improvement. He sent his ambassador-at-large, young Joachim von Ribbentrop, to London, and of course the Nazi dominated the conference. For we knew what we wanted, and had taken it; the rest could only pass resolutions of condolence to themselves. The Leader shrewdly had Ribbentrop offer the Leader’s plan to the conference, asking much of what we really wanted; so that the infantile democratic delegates forgot what the conference had been summoned for, and discussed the Leader’s proposal that France, indeed, hold a plebiscite on his plan!

But it was the Leader himself, one week later, who lifted the Nordic fist against the Judaized Soviet power. “There can be no peace on earth until all nations have the same law and the same legal system. It is because of this that I know that National Socialism will one day cover the entire world. This is no idle dream, but an object I pledge you we will achieve!”

He was jubilant, when we entered the car together after this magnificent Nürnberg speech, for the return trip. “Let them read that ten years from now . . . twenty years from now . . . and then begin to list their major prophets!”

"It is the Bible of the future," I said fervently. For so, in those days, I thought.

I remember we stopped for dinner at a charming little inn near Jena, all informal and delightful. After an hour of eating and relaxation, it was time to commence the rest of the trip. Wisely the party in our car repaired to the men's room, the Leader, myself, and the three most trusted bodyguards. I remember Julius Schreck and I went in first, and then the Leader, and his Adjutant and Schaub close behind him. It was Schaub and I who came out first, and walking alone behind us Julius Schreck, the trusted chauffeur, who was Hitler himself, except for his blacker eyes and hair. I, of course, had on my wig; or I would not be writing these pages.

As the Leader himself was pushing open the swinging door, three men sprang out from the center of a clump of privet. It was so sudden, for once we were entirely unprepared.

A brutal hand hit me under the jaw, while a foot tripped me and sent me sprawling on the ground. Schaub told me later he fell the same way. I know now that there was a border of bricks slanted half out of the ground, and I rolled over and bumped the back of my head against one of these, so that it was stars I saw, more than the Milky Way. Utterly indignant, I rolled to my feet, and had out my revolver.

There was no need for it. The Blackshirt guards had fallen upon the three men, and they were methodically beating in their skulls with the butts of their sjamboks, as if they were beating carpets.

The Leader was standing there alone, with Brückner a

step behind him. He was looking down at a man's body on the ground. It was poor Schreck.

"Dead," the Leader said.

I looked at what had been done to his head, and I looked away. My stomach is not strong.

But he was still alive. Concussion of the brain, yes, and a dreadful inflammation that kept him hovering between life and death for three weeks, and then life did not win.

At least, we buried him with the highest Nazi honors at a military funeral. It is so a soldier of the Fatherland should go to his next detail.

There came a note for me, unsigned:

This was not our doing. But the hour nears.

W.

We receive many such crank letters. I destroyed it. But I got a list of officers of the Reichswehr, and studied those whose first names or last names began with W.

CHAPTER XVII

THE GERMAN NARCISSUS

I AM baffled when it comes to trying to tell briefly the happenings of the six months ending with the spring of 1938: so much, and so varied. I might say briefly that the Leader formed the Fascintern, gave England the jitters by our plain talking, reorganized the Reichswehr staff with himself at the head, established to me that Jesus never existed, and consummated the Anschluss with Austria. But that is as bad as writing in shorthand: nothing clear, nothing ordered. Let me try at least to show how some of these epochal events impressed me, who hovered as close behind him ever as a shadow behind its object, and time and again became the object, to the rest of the world—at conflicts of engagements, at minor illnesses, at especial danger of assassination.

Months when nothing seemed to happen, and everything was being prepared. . . . The moment of birth is nothing, without the nine slow developing months of pregnancy that precede it. 1938, our year of glittering action, developed in the swelling womb of placid-faced 1937. Though there were some moments that were not too placid. . . .

The Fascintern came first. At least I know a little about that, for I had to make the Leader's broadcast announcing

it to the world—though he and Erik von Arnheim labored hard to make me understand, so complicated was our foreign policy growing—at least, to me. But my audience never knew it! “My fellow countrymen, a year ago Germany stood alone and self-sufficient. Northeast lay the huge Communist Soviet menace; westward lay the impotent democracies, France and England. To our south lay a great but envious land, the land that prevented the Anschluss with Austria; to our far east lay Japan, powerful, Mongolian, but Nordic in all its tendencies. That was the map then.

“The map today is different. We have begun the building of the Nazi world, since Italy to the south and Japan to the east are riveted to us, as the heart of such an irresistible world-power. Our alliance with Japan came first; so the Communist finds us with claws upraised against his face, while our ally Japan claws into his rear. The Rome-Berlin axis became more than a name, in gratitude for recognizing Franco in Spain together, and marching into that Communist-plagued land together. If we had not done this, Spain would be one of the democracies, having the Communist government they voted for. This is impossible to contemplate, in a world devoted to Nazi ideals.

“And now, the visit of Il Duce to Munich has made the Fascintern the major world power. German loyalty and thoroughness were never better displayed than on that visit: not a train went unsearched, not a motorcar was allowed to pass; cellars and attics were sealed under guard, and during his procession it was strictly *verboten* to open any front window. It is from this visit I now may announce to you that the Axis has become a triangle—Germany, Italy, Japan, a unit against the world power of

Jewish Communism. And we are the center of the triangle, and to us each flows, as to a way state!

"You will not be bored, when I stand before you and announce that the last state in Europe has bowed entirely and accepted Nazi government; welcome, then, this news that we have isolated the Communist to the northeast and the democracies to the west, and our plans mature for more!"

Herr Hitler himself congratulated me on this delivery, which met with the same tumult of applause as if he himself had spoken it. "Of course," he continued thoughtfully, "one sentence can not contain everything. We left out the United States of America—a country Nazi enough in the Southern States, where Nordic race superiority is the beginning of their creed—and they are, naturally, ripe for assimilation with us at any time; but with its northern cities populated almost entirely by Jews. The democracies stayed silent when I announced that Germany disclaimed all guilt for the World War; but what did you do, Goebbels, about that Ghetto Jew who intrigued to become Mayor of New York, and lacks the proper respect for us?"

Goebbels smiled wryly. "This La Guardia, you mean? I doubt if he will ever face a public audience again, after what I let the Party press say of him. We uncloaked him thoroughly, Herr Reichskanzler: a Jewish boob . . . a filthy soul . . . a man with bargain-counter brains . . . a well-poisoner . . . a procurer . . . a dirty Talmud Jew. More serious charges we will make against him later, if he speaks again."

The Leader smiled approval at this magnificent use of propaganda. We had long discovered that the only important thing was *what* we said; it would be believed anyhow, so what difference did it make how true it was? And

then, on the fourth anniversary of his elevation to the Chancellorship, the Leader made his most delicious international joke: he announced to the world that the era of surprises in our foreign affairs was over!

"But will they *believe* such bilge!" sneered Göring, with an unfriendly look at Goebbels. "Why not just say, 'hands up!' and go through their pockets!"

"Theft by propaganda, to strengthen us for theft by warfare," smiled Goebbels frostily, his little vulture face twitching. "First *I* secure their arms, then you torture and destroy them, General."

"Our propaganda for ten years was broken heads."

"And soon, there will be no heads left to break, when the Leader and you and I have finished!"

The Leader chuckled. "Send in that French journalist who desires an interview. And, General, you can watch his face while I pump him full of more of this bilge. You, too, listen, Little Adolf," with an affectionately look at me. "Now I turn on the tremolo, the sobs. . . ."

The journalist never got a chance to do more than throw in an occasional question. He wrote it all down, too, and the world had it the next morning. "War!" roared the Leader. "It is unthinkable! It is repugnant to the German soul. There is no unsettled matter in all European affairs which can possibly justify another way like the last!" I chuckled to myself at that brilliant reservation: the *next* war would be different! "I am not quite mad—" Another brilliant qualification, which German readers at least accepted. "A war would mark the final twilight of our races, the cream of humanity, leaving Bolshevism and mongrel Asia to overrun trampled Europe. Not for the Nazi government! For me, it is enough hereafter to give back to the

German his joy in the simple things of life, his simple prosperity. Would I turn aside from this to jeopardize all on the throw with loaded dice that a new war would mean—dice loaded with destruction for all of us?"

And so the democracies went to sleep, and we massed for the attack. A petition was started, after this interview, to give Herr Hitler the Nobel Peace Prize.

But they presumed too far; and this let us see the Leader thunder as he had shone benignantly in that interview. In November, 1937, England sent Lord Halifax to Germany "to attend a hunting exposition"—so it was announced; but we knew, of course, it was a pilgrimage on hands and knees, to beg of the Leader what was the German will for the rest of the world. The Leader permitted Halifax, Lord Privy * Seal, and now over the Foreign Office, to speak the English prayer. Could there not still be a continuance of the balance of power on the continent?

Ribbentrop interrupted him sharply. "You mean the Procrustean bed that lessens or enlarges the continental powers at England's will, to keep them all the same weight for warfare; while England remains the heavyweight champion, handling all challenges by manipulating the scales and disqualifying all contenders? Not for Nazi Germany, Lord Halifax!"

The Leader nodded. "Take this word back to your democracy. Germany informs England she insists upon no assistance of any kind to Austria; autonomy for the Sudeten, with a cantonal system for the rest of Czechoslovakia, and plebiscites; a League of Nations cleansed as we indicate, and then we will join; English recognition of Ethiopia as Italian, and of the Franco government in

* Privy—a backhouse; a jakes. Webster's Unabridged Dictionary.

Spain—and we guarantee to stop the Loyalist resistance in Spain at once; and, in return for our promise to keep silence for six years about colonies, English aid in regaining them at the end of that time!”

“But this means Germany dominant in Europe—in the world!” The backhouse ambassador turned pale.

Hitler nodded. “You comprehend. You may depart.”

He left, with his tail between his legs.

Göring came belching in one day, snarling about the heads of the Reichswehr. “Look, the Anschluss is planned, no? And, of course, we have had to promise to Austria, these years, we would guard their independence, and not march a German army on Austrian soil. It is incredible, Herr Hitler, but von Blomberg and the rest regard their promise as sacred!”

After some discussion, the Leader dismissed him. “Leave that to me,” he said. “I have solved it already.”

I watched with awe as he moved the pawns around. Old Marshall von Blomberg, who dripped affection for the Leader, was sixty; but he was slowly rising to some such power as Captain Roehm had once had. Luckily for the Leader’s planning, he fell in love—for his first wife was five years dead. He picked out a snappy baggage named Erika Gruhn, just twenty-three, her father a carpenter, her mother a skillful masseuse. If I had not had my Ulrica, I should have cultivated the Marshal’s household. Naturally the Leader, and Göring too, were witness at this marriage of aging Junkerdom and the aspiring proletarian.

And then von Fritsch, Chief of Staff under Blomberg, was tipped off to go to the Leader and demand that Blomberg be eliminated, for violating the Reichswehr code of marriage of officers. Naturally this Fritsch intended to in-

herit the post himself. But the Leader cut the snarl with one magnificent slice of his snickersee. "You are right, General; von Blomberg must go. And perhaps, for the good of the service, I accept your resignation at the same time, no? From now on, I myself, in person, will directly command all the armed forces of Germany."

So it was handled brilliantly. Thirteen other generals resigned for "ill health" it was said—but the ill health was prevented by their resigning. Göring at last was made a Field Marshal, decorations, belches and all; and Ribbentrop, definitely a Leftist, became Minister in charge of Foreign Affairs.

And that was all until—No, I forget Jesus. One night the Leader relaxed, with none but me present. "I have a new coup coming, Little Adolf. You should know of it."

"The Anschluss?"

"A little later. It is at last to prove the non-historicity of Jesus. Rosenberg has dug up a book by an American, *Ecce Deus*, by William Benjamin Schmidt, which establishes that the Jewish Jesus was no deified man, but a humanized god. Another American, named Holz, has proved it beyond all argument."

"But they have lives of him—the gospels!"

"And lives of Wilhelm Meister and Don Quixote too, no? The earliest of these lives was not known until 175 A.D. Let me give you the picture. The Jews, ever squabbling and split into sects, form a new sect, with Jews named Peter, James and John at the head. They adopt a new name for Jehovah—remember, when Egypt tyrannized over them, they changed from El to Jah or Jehovah; now, when Rome tyrannized over them, it is from Jehovah to Jehoshua or Jesus—the salvation of Jehovah—that they

change. A secret conspiratorial sect, since it sought to overthrow Rome, with a childish initiation—baptism, carrying a cross, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension to a throne—limited to Jews. The Jews would have none of it. A renegade Jew named Paul—and did he despise the Jerusalem leaders of this sect!—broadened the faith to include the Gentiles, commencing the international conspiracy. The Jerusalem movement never joined with him, and died soon. Now *all* of these men—Peter, James, John, Paul, knew there had been no man Jesus; their writings show this, mentioning no word of his, and no act except the silly initiation ceremony. Well, even this religion hits the toboggan; and so, disregarding Paul's repeated warning, one of his followers, Mark, embroiders a *Wilhelm Meister* about the life of a man Jesus, based upon Paul's life, Old Testament miracles, and Biblical and Talmud sayings—and this, as embroidered by Matthew and Luke, and fifty years later by a pupil of Philo named John, is the New Testament! The genealogies are put in to convert the Jews, and trace Jesus through Joseph, if you please—Mary and the Holy Ghost left out entirely! The virgin birth is a typical Jewish theft from Greek and other sources, and went to convert the uncircumcised. And so, we have a synthetic Jewish man-god at last—no more historical than Mickey Mouse!"

"But will people *believe* this?"

He shrugged. "That may be difficult, since it is true, and propaganda is easier to put across than truth. But we will see.—Anschluss, you mentioned." He smiled. "Yes. Soon. You know the plan we had made, that those damned Austrians bungled? A fake assassination, in an attack on our embassy in Vienna, aimed at General Muff or even von Papen, the ambassador. Now that they've arrested the

leaders, I've adopted von Arnheim's plan—to summon Schussnigg to Der Berghof, and *make* him surrender Austria!"

"Herr Hitler, only *you* could have designed such a brilliant plan!"

He smiled serenely. And so it was that on February 12th we repaired to the Leader's mountain chalet on the Obersalzburg, bought as Haus Wachenfeld and now impressively rebuilt. And Schussnigg came wearily, realizing Italy would not help him, and unsure of aid from the democracies, to try to stand alone in the way of the German tide. Cnut once tried to order the ocean to stop.

It was I who rode down to the border as the Leader, and curtly ordered the Austrian to dismiss his guards and let Austrian Nazi exiles, who hated him, be his guard thereafter. I entered the chalet, resumed my wig and the wax in my nostrils, and became mere Ludwig Zeit, a bodyguard, for the eleven hours of the Leader's magnificent eloquence that followed. Schussnigg begged, pleaded, wept: the Leader was adamant, sanadin. "I am Germany speaking; you have only to hear, and obey! You will name Seyss-Inquart over Interior and Public Security—for we must have control of the police. . . . You will receive other orders, and perform them. Remember, I am the Leader of every German throughout the whole world!"

He left, but he left with a sulky, ungracious look. How much better, I have observed, is cooperation than sullenness!

"Watch that louse," von Arnheim warned the Leader earnestly. "I have come to know these Austrians. Maybe it is the Italian that is quick with the stiletto; watch the Austrian always for some dirty treachery."

"But what?" asked Goebbels, frowning. "They'd sooner line up with the devil than with Stalin. The democracies won't move a step. We have Italy tied in the bag of the Fascintern. What's left?"

For once, it occurred to none of us. On March 9th, we found out the one weapon left to him—the one thing we had ignored completely; the Austrian people! He announced a plebiscite, to be held on the 13th, to determine whether or not the Austrians desired the Anschluss and promotion into German citizenship.

Von Arnheim was in Rome that night, putting a few cracks in the Fascintern; and naturally I doubled for him in his home, reveling in the caresses of the increasingly infatuated Ulrica. Two days later, at the Chancellery, Erik told us of Mussolini's receiving word of this planned plebiscite. Il Duce, he said, ripped out an incredible, vulgar oath. "Fools do not stop at Modane," he snorted. "It will explore like a bomb in his hand."

"That is not the half of it," said the Leader irritably. "Not the beginning of it. Now what I plan. . . ." His bitter anger was greater than I had ever seen it. At its end, he told us what he intended to say that day over the telephone to Seyss-Inquart. We listened, and approved. So far, the Austrian Nazi had done well. He had instigated disorder all over the land and given us every reason to intervene. He was told to do better; to trot around to the recreant Austrian Chancellor, who was seeking to betray the sacred Anschluss, and order him to call off the plebiscite and resign at once, or we, in the name of German culture, would invade at once! This was just before 4 P. M. "Give him two hours," said the Leader firmly. We sat tense in the Chancellery, while Austria fought for its own Ger-

man soul as part of our world-ideal. Mercifully the Leader granted an hour and a half more. There came back a plea for more time, in God's name. At ten minutes to eight that night, Schussnigg did as he was commanded.

I have wondered since what the other nations actually felt, before our will became a fact. Halifax, the backhouse ambassador, had already told us England would not move to protect Austria; why then did the trousered old woman, when he heard what we had done, weep out "Horrible, horrible!" Il Duce knew what must come. He had bound himself to Hitler, and eunuchized himself as far as protecting Austria was concerned. He saw the danger in the planned plebiscite. Yet it was told us that, when he heard of this great coup as a thing done, he heaved a bronze head of Caesar, which he used as a paperweight, through a framed picture of the Leader. Was it so he surrendered his own Caesarship? I do not know. The only picture I can get is this. The other nations sat around, like birds hypnotized by a cobra, and watched the huge hooded menace swallow the first of them. Impotence, impotence, before our Nordic superiority. . . . This is the picture that comes to me. . . .

And what a belly-aching coward Schussnigg was when he broadcast his resignation! He did not admit the truth, that the Austrian soul joyfully joined itself to Germany. No, he claimed that his government had been forced to surrender! Ach, but we had won, we had won! The Reichswehr, with the Leader glittering before them, and I in the car with him, marched into that Linz where Hitler himself had attended *Realschule* so many years before; and the people opened their hearts to welcome him. Jews scurried past us, seeking to fly the land. "Hold them all!"

ordered the Leader. "We will handle them here." Vienna, and his magnificent speech from the balcony of the Imperial Hotel—how many in the world knew that it was *my* lips that spoke the historic words, while he waited trembling in the inner room, for word of a plot to shoot him as he spoke? But my voice thundered out for him, "The German Reich, as it stands today, will never again be broken apart! We are one land forever, from Königsburg and Hamburg to Vienna!"

His own speech, from the ancient Hapsburg palace the next day, was rather an anticlimax. He told of liquidating the Austrian cabinet, as if it had been a mere trades union or monastery we were liquidating. He called the re-entry of his homeland into the Reich the most important act of his life. I, if I had made the speech, would have called it the most important event since God's creation of the first German.

At least, I carried his dispatch to Ribbentrop, to send to Il Duce: telling of the coup, as something Hitler had planned since the making of the Versailles Treaty; did the step meet with Il Duce's approval? The answer almost gushed with affection: "My attitude is fixed by the amity between our two countries, which is consecrated in the Rome-Berlin Axis." We were informed that Il Duce had severe retching and vomited after sending this message. But the Leader smiled like a cat licking its chops: "I will never forget this, Little Adolf," he said to me. And then he took the final step, and promoted Austria from being merely an independent nonentity among world powers, to the high rank of the eighteenth German State.

A delicious week followed. Von Arnheim, of course, familiar as he was with the situation, had to spend the

whole time almost in the rehabilitation of the land, harassed so long by Slavophiles, Catholics, Jews and other anti-Anschlussists. To Ulrica he wrote the details; and each night she and I chuckled over the progress we were making. Of course, we removed the misleading name Austria, and substituted the old German title, Ostmark. "Before we finish," he wrote her, "we will jail at least 100,000 anti-Nazis.* We have put the Jew to his proper place cleaning streets, toilets, and cesspools. I am sorry to say that only 7,000 committed suicide; they might have cooperated more. You'll be amused to know that Baron Louis Rothschild is under arrest, as a hostage for his inferior racemen. And, my dear, Catholics, Protestants, capitalists, aristocrats, Social Democrats, everybody opposed to our régime has been made safe in protective custody! You will read Baron Neustaedter-Stürmer, who spoiled the 1934 putsch, and Fey, who aided us and then like a renegade entered the Schussnigg cabinet, committed suicide. This much is sure: they are all buried—and Fey's wife and son as well, and his dog too. Here in Vienna we say the dog even committed suicide, ashamed of his opposition to the Anschluss. It is all a holy victory!"

Ulrica let this letter drift neglected to the floor. "And so he has won again," she said to me, with a little sigh.

"He *always* wins," I smiled. "Hitler and victory will be synonyms, in all German dictionaries in the future."

"No man rides home in the end with Death trotting at his stirrup," she said quietly. I had come to expect these morbid moods of hers, for she had never entirely accepted the necessity of the invaluable Blood Purge of June 30, 1934, in which her individual favorite among the leaders,

* By June, however, only 50,000 had been reported as imprisoned.

Captain Roehm, who stood for the unwise revolutionary portions of the Party demands, had paid for his treason with his life. I forgave her these morbid moments; she had other moments I could not do without. Her voice continued sadly: "For a certain hour, yes. But the hour comes when Death does the riding, and the tallest of us is glad to walk quietly at his black stirrup, and across the threshold through the curtain of eternal mist."

"The Leader is immortal," I boasted, in my so great ignorance. "His name is deathless. He *is* Germany! He is married to Germany, and bridegroom and bride alike will live forever as man's highest achievements." And then I clutched her tighter. "But you are *my* Frau Germany"; for so she had been officially named by the Leader, on the Mother's Day after she bore her second son, which with reason might well have been named as was the first. Let the rest of the world name a Miss United States, a Mademoiselle France, a Señorita Francist Spain, a Miss Yugoslavia: Germany regarded the unmarried girl merely as a subject, and awarded its highest honor to a married woman who was as well a mother.

"They talk about him in other lands," she giggled, eased by my caress. "Herta just lent me a copy of *Le Journal* of Paris already two years old, with that amusing article on 'Hitler's Secret Loves.'" Herta was Ulrica's sister, Frau Konrad Fuchs now, who, too, had begun singing at the Schwarz Anser. "What silly nonsense! I myself know Margaret Slezak, and it may be there are some men she has cared for—who cares—but surely the Leader has never looked twice in her direction, or she in his! Yet she is listed. And even more ridiculous is the story that Leni Reifenstahl is even now his love. Only Paris could have in-

vented that story. In Paris, there is no story, unless they can put two in bed together."

"Are we, then, turned French? Ach, no, sweetheart. Love began in the German Garden of Eden, and it will last as long as German man and German girl are left on earth."

"They talk about him in other lands." She looked more indignant now. "One book from the United States calls him 'The German Narcissus.' A leading editorial writer there speaks of him outright as 'a crack-brained onanist.' True or not, these are not flattering."

"He is *not* crack-brained," I insisted hotly. "He has the finest mind in Europe—in the world, indeed." And yet, I had begun to wonder how much of his magnificent thoughts really grew first in that mind. It is much, though, to be wise enough to know the diamonds from the paste in the wallets of others. "As for the other word. . . ." And there I grew silent. And then I smiled. "He loves Blonda, and Muck, and Wolf—all of them, bitches and dogs alike."

"He can dominate them sufficiently, then. Narcissus"—she spoke dreamily—"was a Nordic youth in Greece who was adored by many nymphs, who sought him constantly to share a pallet of leaves with them. But he was too vain, too much in love with tending his own smooth body; a Leader of the leaves and the flowers. He came to a woodland pool and knelt to drink. From the pool he himself looked back at him, and it was such beauty as he had never seen. He would not move ever thereafter from that woodland pool; but there he pined away and died, and of his body came the spring flower we name after him. The German Narcissus. . . ."

"The Leader has no time for woodland pools," I objected.

Ulrica smiled softly. "Onan was the son of Judah, one of the twelve of the despised self-chosen of God; he was the brother of Er, the husband of Tamar. When the Jewish Jehovah slew Er for his wickedness, Judah bade his son Onan go in unto his brother's widow, as was the custom, to give her seed, that the line of Er might not perish. But Onan was vain, and would not. Instead, he spilled his seed on the ground; and Jehovah slew him also, so that in the end by playing the harlot, Tamar secured seed of Judah himself. She is one of the five women named in the genealogy of Jesus in the Judaized New Testament; strange that all five of them stepped outside the confines of marriage, in greater or less degree. Tamar, who played the harlot to her father-in-law; Rahab, the harlot of Jericho; Ruth, who won a husband by sleeping in the threshing-floor at his feet; Bath-Sheba, who glittered in her adultery with David; and Mary, who surely was not legally wed to the Holy Ghost. And this was Onan; and those who spill their seed themselves are named after him. A crack-brained onanist. . . ."

"He is not crack-brained," I insisted.

"Your onanist," she said reflectively, "is your prince of the realms of fantasy, your lord of laziness and effortless leisure. How easy to wed oneself! What wooing is needed, what resistance conquered, what scruples overcome! None, none. . . . Your onanist turns his back upon the world of reality, and says, 'It is so'; and to him it has become so. Your one Dick Whittington marries the Lord Mayor's daughter; how many millions of young onanists have fantasied marrying so above them, and have eaten of the

banquet of their own fantasies and their own bodies, and no other banquet! Life flings obstacles forever in the way of lovers. Your onanist shirks the task of overcoming even the first, and relaxes with dazed, sated eyes, fantasizing his victory won—while the one he desired passes on to those worthier of wooing and winning her fresh young embrace. Your onanist says, I long for the fresh sweet bodies of the blonde Nordic maidens; then he relaxes, while mongrels take and plough and seed and harvest in their unploughed fields. Your onanist is a voyeur: content to play the peeping-Tom on others, demanding that they amuse him so, while he himself relaxes back into his effortless fantasies. It is not good for the world when an onanist desires to lord it over them.”

“You cannot mean the Leader!” I said, aghast.

She shrugged. “I speak in general only. ‘I am the voice of all Germans everywhere; they all approve of me.’”

“But the plebiscites show it, every one of them!”

Her shrug was more contemptuous. “We two know how the vote is manipulated. ‘France is Germany’s inveterate enemy, and I shall annihilate it!’”

“But the Leader *says* he will!”

“When was any land ever annihilated, or its people? Who living will ever see this done to France, by anyone? Was Germany annihilated, when this word thundered forth from Versailles in 1919? But more, more, more. . . . ‘We must destroy all who oppose our own aim!’ ‘The whole world will one day summon the German people to lead the world, supported by the forces of the whole globe!’ ‘The army must teach the boy that the nation is unconquerable!’—when was there an unconquerable nation? ‘One Man shall decide for mankind!’—and who shall

say *wibich* man? 'The strong man is the strongest when alone!'—for onanism only, Little Adolf! He could not even feed or clothe or house himself, except rarely; strength is in infinite cooperation. 'Germany is the sole creative race, and has created all the world's culture; when it perishes, all beauty on earth goes with it into its grave!' 'The eternal privilege of Force and Strength'—and what is the force, the strength, that Jesus out of Galilee, Buddha the Enlightened, Socrates, Shakespeare, ach, even Marx and Freud and Einstein have sought to use? 'I am God!' So many have said. In the end, only they themselves agree. 'A majority can never be a substitute for the Man.' Let the man try to stand *against* the majority, and what have we but Golgotha, St. Helena, the Ides of March? Your onanist is your prince of the realms of fantasy, the domain of make-believe, your lord of laziness and effortless leisure. Woe to the land, woe to the world, when his vaporings are heeded too long!"

"Cassandra," I sneered. But I shivered as I sneered.

"We shall see," she said quietly. And then her face melted into the love I was awaiting. "Find out, some day, what happened to Cassandra in the temple, when Troy fell. Come, pour me another drink, and amuse me. I am thirsty . . . for more than wine."

CHAPTER XVIII

THE MATTER OF HERTA FUCHS

IT was the second day after his return from Vienna that Erik von Arnheim sent word for me to come to the Foreign Office. He greeted me with eyes cordial enough; but there was something remote and disturbing in them. "Doing anything this evening, Zeit?"

"Nothing I cannot sidestep, no. What is it is up?"

"I wondered if you'd care to come to dinner with me, at home. Ulrica's just phoned me." His eyes narrowed a trifle at the outer slits. "It's about Herta. Her sister, you know. The poor kid's in serious trouble, somehow. I haven't heard any of the details. She suggested that I bring you along—Ulrica did. Five-thirty, say?"

"But yes! And gratefully." The only thing I was not grateful about was that he would probably want to stay on for the evening and the night; and it would be too tantalizing to see my adored one for a few hours only and then have to return to the Chancellery to sleep alone. The thing chiefly wrong with modern marriage, I have observed, is husbands, and the fact that they sleep at home so often. If I had just known about it in time, I could have suggested a trip to Prague or Budapest for him to the Leader, and the evening would then be far more *intime*. But, after all, he had had to spend an entire week

in Vienna, and I must not be the pig. Before the end of the week, I could arrange something. . . .

Before I joined Erik for the ride over to his apartment, I recalled methodically all that I knew about this sister of Ulrica's. I have observed that this is an invaluable preparation for any interview. I had heard her sing once at the café, and I had met her once at a dinner party at Ulrica's, quite formal. She was not more than twenty-one now, younger even than Ulrica had been when I first met her four years before. Naturally she lacked the soft full-blown glory of her sister's matured beauty; but the younger sister gave promise of becoming even more dazzling. Unlike Ulrica, who had left the Schwarz Anser when she had married, Herta's marriage had not ended her career as prima donna there. She still used her maiden name, Herta Diehm, in public. Her husband was, of course, the celebrated Konrad Fuchs, the young lyric tenor, who had appeared at Göring's opera house, that astonishing rival set up to Goebbels' *Staatsoper*; and, in addition, he was the most popular classical singer on the air. It might be merely a young married couple's quarrel between two strongly-passioned artists; but why, then, bring *me* into it?

I considered the matter from another angle. In spite of this appearance at the rival opera house, I had been told that both Herta and her husband stood high with the all-powerful Reichsminister of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment, the vulture-faced little dwarf who was Lord High Everything Else of the German press, radio, theatre, opera, cinema, and all musical, cultural, artistic and scientific activities for the praising of the Nazis and the glory of the Leader. There were certain troubles to which actresses and singers were addicted, which were more than

regrettable from a standpoint of our wise censorship. What sort of trouble could this be that had come upon Herta, with her budlike beauty the toast of all the masculine hearts in Germany? Ach, it was a dreadful pity if it affected the morals, in a land with the highest public morality among its artists of any land in the world!

Somehow Goebbels, the detestable little demon, hovered over my mind and constantly entered it, as I thought of the case. I knew that he would stop at nothing to keep unsullied the reputation of each artist, that a shining Nordic example might be set to the world. This was the Leader's insistence; after all, the sole purpose of the Propaganda department was to present Germany to Germans and others as the Leader would have it presented. Each artist must indeed outshine Caesar's wife for spotlessness; and the faintest touch of the reputation of being Caesar's harlot was enough to cause the offending man or woman to be hurled into the limbo of outer darkness, as unfit to represent Nordic culture. Of course, most obvious of all had been such artists as were banned from stage and screen and concert hall and the air because they were of the detested Jewish race—a clear breach of morals. Such as Gitta Alpar, the wife of the Nordic cinema star Gustav Fröhlich. She had been in wild demand in republican Germany both in opera and the films, for all that she was Hungarian born and the daughter of a rabbi! It was then that Goebbels had uttered his famous dictum: Germany expects every Nordic to divorce his Jewess. And so art had been cleansed by this divorce, and the remarriage of the great romantic Fröhlich to Lida Baarova, who might not know how to act—so managers and audiences said—but who at least had a pedigree with no stain of the Talmud

fouling it. All Germany remembered, too, the exquisite Renate Hueller, who was Aryan enough, and a universal favorite of the old régime. But her husband was of the seed of David, and the most peremptory instructions from Goebbels to her to obtain a divorce had been with no reason whatever in the world refused! Naturally, her pictures were expunged from the Fatherland, and in 1937 she showed her belated repentance by committing suicide, as a last tribute to the purity of Nordic art.

For other important reasons purity was maintained, too. There was lovely Greta Tiemer, Vienna born, Aryan from the top of her blonde page boy bob to the tip of her twinkling toes. But she became a fixture in divorce actions of prominent Nazis, as the "unknown blonde" co-respondent; so she was shunted into less public adultery. Even before her it had been shapely Maria Paudler, once so universal a movie favorite. No one ever quite knew her connection with Baroness Benita von Berg and Baroness Renate von Natzmer, two German noblewomen who were made to kneel to have their heads chopped off as spies, condemned by the grim People's Tribunal. But the mere breath of scandal had been enough to cause her name and face to be blacked out the length and breadth and height of the Reich: art must remain Nordic and pure! With a morality so strict that if singer, actor or actress could even spell the word "adultery" he or she was suspect, it was no cheerful news that lovely little Herta Fuchs was in trouble.

Well, I would know soon, I decided, rejoining Erik in the Foreign Office for the ride over. He talked only of what he had seen in Vienna; and some of the Jewish suicides he described were simply excruciating.

When we arrived at the apartment, Ulrica was her own exquisite self. While her husband went in to prepare for dinner, she flew into my arms for a swift kiss and caress, that left us both extremely unfit for appearance under the auspices of the Department of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment. But, for all of the rouge she wore and speedily repaired, it was clear that her face was as white as Pentelican marble underneath; and under the soft sweetness in her eyes there were pools of dark bitter despair.

It was not until the flawlessly appointed dinner was over, and the three of us had moved into the living room for coffee and liqueurs and odorous Corona Coronas for two of us, that she spoke at last. And her husband had to pry it out of her, even then. "Well, my little rose, here we are, the two of us. What in the world has happened to Herta? You spoke of trouble. She's married, so it's hardly the usual thing that annoys a girl. Why, the poor innocent little darling, what sort of trouble *can* she be in? We are in a fever to learn."

"Goebbels has forced her to become his mistress," said Ulrica straightly.

"Ach, good God!" said von Arnheim, his cigar falling out of his mouth, until the ash sprayed his trouser leg and he had to stamp out sparks on the rug. "Ulrica, you're insane! Or *she* is."

"So? But listen, then—I'll *make* you believe me! I'll tell it all to you, every word, just as the poor frightened darling told it to me today. You can be patient, while I tell it all?"

We nodded, both of us tense for every detail of such a story. I, I think I believed it, at once. For he has the face of a perverted satyr, a leer that fouls a woman with a very

look; and I had heard enough dark things hinted about him; but said openly, never before. But it would not do yet to let Ulrica know what I thought. Never speak or act until you can crush, the Leader always said; and I have observed that as a rule he knew what he was talking about.

Ulrica's voice was level as she talked. But there can be ups and downs to such a Death Valley, and those passionate ups and tragic downs we heard. A lift of her lovely eyebrows, a rise of a note in the monotone of her ghastly story, or the hopeless fall of one note, marked all the difference between heaven and hell. So . . .

"Four months ago, Herta said, she began singing at the Schwarz Anser. I myself had urged the management to give her the audition; and they went wild over her voice—from the start she was more of a hit than I ever was."

"Nonsense," said her husband.

"It is impossible," I spoke swiftly.

But Ulrica's hand hushed us, and she proceeded with the dread, dead monotone of her story. "She was already married, no, to Konrad, and his voice thrills all Deutschland; my word was a feather in securing her the audition, while his weighed as lead. Both of you know what I have always said about the Propaganda Reichsminister: the heart of a hideous devil, no kindness, no sweetness, all slime. Well, you shall hear. He heard her sing, five weeks ago. He sent an orderly around to ask her to come to his table. Well, he was the Reichsminister; what could she do? I think she was very glad to go; it might mean much to both of them. So she went to his table; and he saw her, and wanted her, and took her."

"No, no," insisted her husband. "It's not like him."

But I watched her lovely lips, and knew better uses to put them to, and remained silent.

"Listen." Her face grew harder. "He was all slime in his praise. —But she had the voice all Germany waited to hear; the voice the whole world waited to hear, he said. He would see that the whole world heard it, as Germany's greatest! Her husband? Ach, yes; he had heard of him; splendid voice; but of him another time. —She must come around to the Propaganda Ministry the next afternoon, he insisted, and give him an audition. There were things he would do with her, that she did not even dream of yet. She thanked him, happy little tears of joy in her eyes. —Ah, but no, my child, you must not go yet. You must sit down, and drink with us, until it is time for your next song. And we will all cry 'Heil Herta!' And so she sat down until it was time for her to sing again; and his eyes did not leave her." Ulrica shuddered. And so did I. I too knew those cobra eyes.

"Frau Magda Goebbels was not along?" I asked.

"Frau Magda was not along. Naturally. Only men. She was so proud and excited that night, she told me; and Konrad, too. The next afternoon she arrived at the Ministry. —She must sing in costume, she was told. And so she was given a dressing-room to change in, and a maid who directed her all she was to put on, garment by garment, and how. She gives me her word that, just as she was about to slip on the first filmy robe she was to wear, she realized an eye was watching her from some hole in the walls of the room,—a black, beady eye, like a snake. She could not see it, she said; she sensed it, she knew it, she could have drawn it."

"Now, now, Ulrica," I protested, "the girl is all imag-

ination and moonshine. —This, in the Propaganda Ministry!" I reflected. "And, besides, it might have been a Blackshirt guard."

"Watching a girl's dressing-room? Dear Little Adolf, I have only her word for it. She is imaginative, intuitive, yes; but I, I believe what she says. It was no Blackshirt, I believe. Well, she sang. Lieder, arias, all her repertoire. And now and again she must change her costume again. Again and always she swears the black, beady eye like a snake was watching her, she says; until her body burned hot and red from it. And then," her voice slowed, grew gravid with significance, "he called her in—she was in the flimsiest of all the costumes this last time. A Titania—after an Undine. He told her, eyes licking over her body, that there was no height she could not rise to, if she was—nice to him. He believed in her, he said; only give him a chance. . . . I think she guessed what he wanted, then. —But she was nice to everyone, she said; she would be especially nice to him, always. Ach no, he whispered, catching hold of her hand, and stroking the arm from the shoulder down—he was a lonely man, and she must be as nice to him as he wanted."

"Rather direct," I commented.

"Sssh, let her finish," insisted her husband.

"It was dreadfully difficult for the poor little infant. She's really infinitely young and sweet; she was married when she was barely out of school, and she's been taking vocal or acting ever since, and always with Konrad to look after her, half like a father. She couldn't afford to offend Goebbels. She wasn't quite sure he meant what she was afraid of. She thanked him with all the sweet dignity she could, and told him she and her husband were most

deeply grateful, and she thought it was wonderful of him to help her, and she and her husband would come and sing for him and Frau Goebbels whenever he desired."

"Bravo!" I applauded.

Ulrica's hand rose swiftly. "Ach, she said, but his eyes shot black fire at this; 'It is not that I want,' he sneered, she said. '—Sing! I want *you*—as my love, my mistress—'"

"Goebbels!" I gasped, almost scandalized. So careful I had always thought him.

Erik's look hushed me. Ulrica continued. "So he spoke: '—That, or I'll drive you out of Germany. So?' and he put his hand familiarly on the flimsy costume, really nothing to hide her body beneath, and held her close for a moment. —Touched her, Adolf. *Forced* her to let him touch her intimately."

I leaned back, shaking my head. Erik drew in his breath sharply. "Swine!" he said.

Ulrica's voice spoke monotonously on. "That night she told it all to Konrad. All but the final touch. He wrote a letter to the Reichsminister. For that insult to his wife, he said, and to every German girl and woman and wife as represented in her, he said, at his next hour on the air he would announce to Germany and the world what kind of dirty swine the Reichsminister was."

I smiled with delight. "Colossal! I'd like to have seen the little shrimp's face when he got *that* letter!"

But Erik only stared gravely at his wife, holding his hands one in the other until the knuckles whitened.

Ulrica's monotone continued. "He would have done it, too, if they had ever let him appear again on the air. And Goebbels knew it. The next night, Herta told me, she returned home from the café. She was worried already;

Konrad's program had been replaced by another tenor, without explanation; what could it mean? In the apartment, no Konrad; and no word from him. But there was word." Again she shuddered. "It was a telegram from the Gestapo, saying that her husband was detained, under orders from the Propaganda Reichsminister. She phoned at once to the Ministry. A secretary told her that her husband was all right, and the next day she would be told all; it was for her not to worry; only, to let no one know, or it would be most harmful for her husband. The Minister, he said, was trying to prevent a trial before the People's Tribunal."

This time I drew in my breath sharply. Erik stared at the floor, his mouth working.

"Three days poor Herta tried frantically to get to Goebbels. Each time she was put off, with more dreadful warnings that she must not mention the matter to a living soul, or she might never see Konrad again. Mysteriously all his appearances on the air were cancelled; she could learn no reason, and she dared ask nothing direct, or tell anything direct. Not even to me, then. Things happen so in Germany." Ulrica sighed heavily. "The fourth day, she was allowed to see this Goebbels in the Ministry. In a different room. With a bed in it." Her voice stopped.

I, I was too excited to interrupt. What a story this was! If once the enemies of Goebbels, and they were myriad, learned of *this*. . . . But Erik stared still at the floor, his face working tensely.

"He talked, now. He was all sympathy. Her husband, unfortunately, was in a concentration camp, she was told, for suspected subversive activities. There was a threat of a trial before the People's Tribunal—so far, only the

Reichsminister himself had prevented this. Such trials, said Goebbels softly, meant always a death sentence; so it had been so far, and could one expect an exception? As to these camps, he said—this slimy little dwarf, ‘I do not like them. I have here some pictures. . . .’ He showed the pictures. There were men in agony, nearly naked, some naked, being beaten, being bound to stocks and dreadful instruments, their bodies bleeding and bruised. . . . Men being tortured and mutilated in unspeakable ways. . . . And finally, corpses, hideous, distorted, swollen, nearly naked, naked, laid out in the pitiless sun. From all this he could save Konrad, he said quietly, if she did what he wanted. Now. At once. In this room. —Oh, but never, never, she pleaded hysterically; she would die first. —Die then, he said; talk was cheap; in any case, unless she did it, Konrad would be beaten and tortured and then killed, before nightfall, unless she yielded; only her yielding would have him alive when the sun set once again. Only her yielding would keep his case from the People’s Tribunal.” She could say no more.

“Well?” Erik asked heavily.

“She loved Konrad. And so she yielded.”

It was too much for me to credit; at least, word must never go back to Goebbels that anyone had believed such things. “But you have only *her* word for all this,” I protested. “Goebbels is no fool, however much of a swine he is! It is not fair to condemn any man on one girl’s story—And Konrad *might* have said subversive things; people talk, and a few words. . . .”

“This is Ulrica’s sister,” said Erik sternly. “Herta never lies. No. That is not in her.” I could see that he believed

it all. I, I saw no reason not to believe it. And yet . . . power is power. . . .

"That was three weeks ago," continued Ulrica sadly. "She thought, from what was said that first time, that Konrad would be freed at once. But no, it was only that he would not be put to death, said the Reichsminister, and would not be tortured or beaten, as long as she came when she was summoned, and did as she was told, and told no one, no one on earth. For three weeks—three weeks of utter dreadful hell—she has done as he made her. Whenever he sent for her. She sang her tragic Lieder better than ever; but the others, the light ones. . . . And now, at last, this morning, she received a letter from Konrad. Do not ask me how he got it smuggled to her; even she does not know. It came. He had been beaten, he wrote; he had been tortured. Unless he can escape, he wrote, he will die. That is the letter she received this morning from him. What is she to do?" She stood still and tall beside her chair. "I told her one thing only. Unless she secures his freedom, *if* anything happens to him, I will shoot Goebbels, myself!"

"Ach, Ulrica darling, I can't believe it! If you knew Goebbels as well as I do—he is capable of villainy, yes; but not so crude, so open. There is something hidden—"

"No, Little Adolf," said Erik distantly. "I know him, too. It is all true, every word of it." His stern eyes stared off into the distance. "He can do much. Others can do, too. For this, he will be hounded out of Germany. And I, I will do it, myself!"

"No, but, Erik, consider! Consider his power—"

"If he were the Leader himself, I would say it—I would mean it! Nothing will stop me, once I have set *my* soul to do justice! I too have Leader in me!" He looked very

terrible at that moment: the Junker, the eternal Protestant, embodied all in him at that moment.

"Erik, it is not wise! It may not be true, remember—"

"I *know* it is true." His face was heavier. "I have always guessed it might be something like this. It is like him, too like him. But this—it is the last time. My own wife's little sister! And Konrad of the golden voice! Ach, when I get through twisting his neck—"

"Erik!" said Ulrica, herself alarmed at last.

I did not yield. "It may be that so Goebbels has saved Germany from a traitor."

"The only traitor in this story is the swine himself," said Erik fiercely. "Traitor to everything decent, and fine, and pure, and noble, and Nordic. Once let me get him. . . ."

But what were we to do? At my suggestion, we laid aside the pointless discussion of possibilities, for Konrad's actual situation, for Herta's situation. True or not, guilty or not, something must be done. Could I take it to the Leader, pleaded Ulrica. Could Erik?

I said I was willing to do anything she wished; but for me, I felt it wiser to lull your enemy, mass the attack, not move until I could crush him. I had observed, I explained, that this was the most efficacious way. "—Leave it to me," said Erik harshly, "I will handle it, and maybe not through the Leader."

Ulrica, looking more helplessly beautiful than ever, pleaded with me; wouldn't I promise to do something about it? There was nothing I could do but promise—at least, to inquire at once. That is always a safe promise to make. I left at night, cursing the fate that made it one of those nights when Erik was at home. I returned to the Chancellery just after midnight, troubled.

CHAPTER XIX

I FACE MY OWN PROBLEM

AS I look back to that mad early spring of 1938, I sometimes think we were all a little mad; everyone I knew closely, indeed, everyone in Germany. We were getting too much too easily; we came to feel there was no limit to what we could get. I have observed that life fixes a limit to everything.

I cannot blame the Leader for his hysterical determination to achieve the Anschluss, which led to that rather disgraceful scene at Der Berghof in which he screamed and shrieked at the Austrian Chancellor for eleven hours, more like a fishwife than a statesman, until he had battered his resistance down. But the tension of this bred a kind of madness in him too; and within four days he had promised full protection to the Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia—a magnificently audacious gesture, that might mean actual European warfare.

You would think that these international tensions would keep all of us busy enough. But no, if what Ulrica told me was to be believed, here was Goebbels using his vast power to satisfy his own personal lusts; exiling Herta's husband to a concentration camp, and, by threat of the People's Tribunal, forcing his will on her. True or not, here was Ulrica embroidering to the point of obsession the

charge that the Leader was an onanist; and now flying off the handle utterly, and threatening to shoot Goebbels for what he had done to her sister. Worst of all, here was Erik, Reichsminister and Party leader as he was; he most of all should have kept his head, at least until he investigated this whole mad story his wife repeated to him. Yet he had swallowed it as if it were a report of the Gestapo, and had raved that he would hound Goebbels out of Germany and twist his neck.

And I, I began to share the madness, the emotional tension, too. As her husband, Erik surely had the right to spend at least an occasional night in the house with Ulrica, as last night. But she had been so tantalizing to me in her tragic sorrow, that I was furious that it had turned out so: that the situation banned me from doing more than decorously bidding her goodnight, and leaving her with the man who had no ethical right to be there, whatever legal right he might have had. I went home, wishing *he* had been Konrad Fuchs. A little mad, all of us. . . .

Erik called me into conference the next morning, in his chambers in the Foreign Office. I myself had my own problems. The Leader was to fly to Vienna the next day, and there had been a slip-up, and conflicting dates, so that he had also agreed to give an interview to an American journalist in Berlin at the same hour. Well, I must of course be the Leader in Berlin, while he was orating in his native Austria. On top of my intensive preparation for that, the husband, whose mere presence had begun to annoy me as an obstacle to my own natural living, had to summon me to his chambers. I have observed that it never rains but it bursts a cloud.

Erik gave me a cigar, served brandy, strode up and down his study. Perhaps charged would be the better word; he seemed so bottled up with repressed anger. "Now first of all, Little Adolf, I have good news for you," he said.

"There is room for it, God knows. What now?" At the least, it ought to mean a weekend trip for him to some nearby capital needing Nazi persuasion; it might mean a whole week.

"For me," he grinned expansively, "no more shooting around the Reich and nearby like a messenger boy. The Anschluss is a fact, now. I am in Vienna needed no more. In Prague and Pilsen, perhaps; but I can always be summoned back for that. In Rome is where the real danger lies: to quiet Il Duce, and assure his support in what must come soon. He will be demanding his share of the spoils; it is for me to convince him that he is over-rewarded, in being recognized as our major ally. And so, my dear friend, I am to go as special envoy to Rome—an appointment that will be made permanent, as ambassador, within the month. And then, a few months riveting the Axis, and I return to Berlin—and it is hinted that Ribbentrop will be shifted, and Foreign Affairs will be mine at last!"

I gave the salute. "Heil Hitler! Heartiest congratulations, dearest friend. But this is colossal news! But what will you do with—with Ulrica, when you are stationed so permanently beside the Tiber?"

He shook his head. "Alas, it will break her heart to leave poor Herta, harassed to death as she is, at this time. But of course she goes with me."

"Naturally," I said, in a quiet voice. "I meant the matter of poor Herta, but certainly." But a flame of red anger

shot through me. Not *one* night, but permanently! What right did *he* have to let his public life disturb my satisfactory private affairs so? "And this is all already official?" I probed.

"Absolutely. I had to be in the room with that swine Goebbels when the Leader informed me. I had to smile at him, if you please, when I wanted my hands on his throat! My hour will come, Little Adolf, my hour will come! Well, so much for the good news. For the rest, I do not know. You, you do not wholly believe this story, no?"

"That Herta said it, yes; surely Ulrica's word settles that. But she might be mistaken. Look, it might be someone using Goebbels' name, his power, his offices even, to trick her. Such things have been."

"Now, now, now, it's the first time I ever heard *you* defending the swine! I told you I am to fly to Prague at dawn tomorrow, no? Conference with Henlein. This is a message for you from Ulrica. She was more than disappointed that you did not fully credit all that Herta said. You *must* be our ally, Little Adolf; there is no other way! And so, if you are free this afternoon, she will meet you at the Kaiserhof, the Red Lounge, and go with you herself to Herta, and you are to hear the story from the girl's own lips. Ach, if only I had time to be with you—and myself to act, even now! But I must be in conference till God knows what hours, getting instructions for tomorrow. At four, then, you'll meet her in the Red Lounge?"

"But surely, Herr Reichsminister!"

I gave the salute, and left. What a mad tangle it was all growing to be! From von Arnheim's chambers, I next had to visit the Chancellor's study, and go over what were to be my opinions as the Leader when I was interviewed

the next day by this journalist from America. Herr Hitler himself was a little hysterical, so much was happening each day. I had next to read and memorize his personal letters and his answers to them, to be prepared to know his attitude on any subject that might conceivably come up. And then I was kept on for the conference, while matters dealing with the Sudeten were gone over with von Arnheim. It was not until twenty-five after four that I arrived at the Red Lounge.

Ulrica was still waiting for me, dreadfully nervous, rubbing her hands, biting her lips. "You *did* come!"

I disengaged her caress finally. "But this trip to Rome—"

"Darling, we haven't a moment. I must be at Frau Göring's at six—and look what it is now! And Herta has been waiting this half hour—I phoned her for God's sake to forgive our being a little late. He will be in Prague tomorrow night, darling—all we want to talk—"

With this I had to be contented. We taxied to the apartment of her sister, and I met the lovely Herta Fuchs for the second time. But how changed since I had seen her hardly six weeks before! As beautiful as ever, yes; but there was something hard and bitter and black staring intermittently out of her eyes, that was not good to see.

"I can't stay but a minute," Ulrica said, after the two sisters clung together for a breathless embrace. "Hold back nothing, as I said, darling. He at least is to be trusted to the death. More than Erik. As much as Konrad. As much as I."

She left swiftly, and Herta Fuchs and I were at last alone together. She dragged herself around listlessly, as if the life had gone out of her soul. "There are drinks," she said. "Pour me one. But nothing does me any good now,

though. —Yes, thanks,” as I offered her a cigarette, and leaned back to enjoy one myself.

She sat regarding me without words. I waited for her to speak. So I always had to do, with the Leader. I have observed that one learns more so.

“Ulrica has told you?”

“But yes. Yet it might be better if *you* started at the beginning, and told everything. . . .”

I studied her closely, as she leaned forward and poured out the story as Ulrica had told it, only not quite the same, with more pauses and a more dreadful horror in her voice. She made it all live again before me, from that first afternoon at the Ministry, when she felt the black, beady, snake eye watching her unseen while the maid changed her to this costume and that, between the groups of her songs; and what happened at the end, what he said when he stroked her arm so tightly, and then touched her as no wife can let herself be touched. As the story unfolded—her husband’s frenzied letter threatening to reveal the scandal to all the Reich over the air, his dreadful disappearance and the three days and nights of black uncertainty when she could get no word, only a warning to say nothing, and of her summons to the ministry at last—I studied her, and my own eyes warmed at what I saw. She had an exquisite body, a little smaller than Ulrica’s: bud, rather than fullblown blossom. I walked to and fro, pausing now and then to get a better view of her body, more than hinted under her shimmery hostess gown. Poor child, she had dressed herself in her best for this tragic interview! Her legs were flawless, from the gold slippers to the spread curves of the thighs; and her rump, as I myself had observed when Ulrica hugged her, was even more to notice.

It became clearer to me how any man would go to elaborate planning to secure all these treasures. And yet, it was very risky for any man to do things as openly as she claimed that the Propaganda Minister had. . . .

She was crying, as she told the rest of it. But I encouraged her to omit nothing. My face was all sympathetic when she told of the ghastly pictures of the men mutilated and tortured and finally dead in the concentration camp; and of the ultimatum to her: Do as I say now, or by sunset tomorrow it would be her husband's picture that would be shown to her so. And she had loved her husband so, what else could she do? Had she not done right?

I was seated beside her now, trying to quiet her hysteria. I patted her shoulder, her leg, sympathetically: but of course she had done right; she had done nobly. But tell me all the details, I insisted. And she omitted none: so only would all be well with Konrad, he had told her. Then, when he was not freed, she had gone to Goebbels again, and accused him of breaking his word. But no, he said, her husband was being held for subversive utterances; only, there would be no beating, no tortures, as long as she was amiable. If not, the People's Tribunal . . . at dawn, the next day; and, by night. . . .

And so she had yielded each time. And then, a letter from Konrad, smuggled out she could not guess how. . . . He had been beaten, he had been tortured, he would die if something were not done. . . .

I had my arm around her now, utterly excited at the whole story. If she would only let me help her, I begged her; if she would only trust me, trust me utterly, there was nothing I would not do. . . .

When my hand touched her intimately, she stiffened

back abruptly. "But I do not know what you mean! You—you love Ulrica, don't you? Isn't it so?"

"Why—er—"

"She *told* me you were her lover!"

I shrugged. "I love her more than any woman in the world, but naturally. One does not admit things, when there is a husband. . . ."

"But you want . . . *me*, to be . . . nice to you!"

My hands were tighter now. "Only trust me, trust me utterly, there is *nothing* I will not do!"

"You dirty swine!" She flashed to her feet, angry like a tigress. "And I trusted you, and Ulrica trusts you! Are all you men alike? Ugh, do you think I'd let *you* touch me, or him again, or any man in the world but Konrad? Haven't you the faintest idea what *love* means? —How she can love a thing as low as you! You will not help, not you, ever! I can read your soul!" It was real hysteria now. "You are all slime, all muck, yourself, like him! All ordure! I need your help, things like this have happened to me, and all you can think of is what *he* thought of! Ach God, I could kill myself! That German men are like this!"

"But you did not understand me," I spoke rather stiffly; it was best not to press this matter now. "I merely said that, if you trusted me utterly, I would pledge my soul to do all I could to secure your husband's release. For that, you scold me!"

She stared at me with angry suspicion. "You did not mean that you wanted me, my body, now?"

My eyes widened with disbelief. "But I loved Ulrica! Naturally not."

She stared at me harshly. "Pour me another drink. I was

overwrought, then. I am sorry. I am glad that you will help Konrad."

It did not seem the occasion to do more than repeat my promise to make the fullest inquiries. I have found the scruples of women at times extremely inconvenient.

The next day I was at my best in the interview with the American journalist. I felt inspired to give the performance of my career. If I had not succeeded in every field, there were fields in which I was incomparable. I made clear to him how every act that I and my Nazis had done was inspired only by a great love for the world's peace, which could only be achieved by the world's accepting German leadership. The Reich must include every German, no matter where he lived; so naturally the soul's dream of the Germans in the Sudeten must be granted to them, as had happened already in Austria. If there were Germans in London or America, I said, could mere geography wipe out the love of the Fatherland in their hearts? The Fatherland was wherever a German was. A man could no more change his race, his nationality, than he could change his ears or his liver. The United States, as I explained, was predominantly Nordic as it was; there could be only peace between the Nordic nations. When I saw the interview later, it was headed:

HITLER FAVORS IMMEDIATE GERMAN WORLD!

It pleased the Leader as much as it pleased me. He himself saw the proofs, changed the punctuation in several places, and added two Heil Hitlers that I had forgotten.

That night, with Erik safely in Prague, I was given a chance for a long, serious talk with Ulrica. Her going to

Rome was most inconsiderate, I said; think how lonely it would leave me! And it was not my personal feelings that mattered most, I said; she had been named Frau Germania officially—and how could Frau Germania leave Germany?

She sat studying the stem of her wine glass. "I am not interested in all Germany, Little Adolf. The title meant nothing to me. But . . . you— I do not want to leave you lonely, no."

"Then you will *not* go!"

"If you cared for me as I care for you, I don't believe we would ever be parted again. Do you realize that I love you, Adolf?"

"But naturally, darling! As I love you—"

She continued to stare at the stem of her wine glass. "With Erik. . . . He is all consideration and I wouldn't do anything to hurt him that I could avoid. But with you, dear, it is different. After all you are the father of my children. If you want me to stay, I will stay."

Naturally, I was all overjoyed at this. "Magnificent! And how shall we announce it to *him*, darling?"

"He will give me a divorce, I imagine. He's dreadfully decent."

I shook my head at this. "That makes it unpleasantly public, doesn't it?"

"But how else could I *marry* you?"

Now wasn't that just like a woman! "My dear, I am Little Adolf, the Leader's double. To me, marriage is naturally forbidden. I am not free like other men; not until death. Until *his* death, at least. Then at last I would be free, and take a wife; but now—no."

Her face weighed me. "But if he died, and no one knew, and then they asked you to keep on impersonating him.

. . . Erik has said something like that, jokingly, of course. . . .”

How could I object to a prospect as remote and delightful as that? “Ah, yes, in that event; but it is not to be thought of now. There must be *some* other way to keep you here.”

She wept a little, but soon I made her forget her tears. At least, she came back to it much later, I knew now all that had happened to Herta; I was convinced?

I realized that this was a time for careful walking. Ach, yes, I was convinced that all this had happened to Herta from some villain; and the man who had done it, I said, would be made to pay to it—even to the death; I pledged her my word for that. This was enough to make her cheerful; and a woman, I have observed, is much more pleasure when she is cheerful.

I went back to the Chancellery, the next morning, more than ever troubled at the whole situation. Ulrica must be kept in Berlin; that was definite. But how could I achieve this? When the Leader was confronted with a problem, he found an answer always. I have observed that the secret of his brilliance is to use common sense. The common sense of this matter would be to eliminate the husband. I was sure his advice would be valuable, if I could have secured it. But the Leader would hardly be sympathetic to that, especially when his Frau Germania was concerned. But there must be a way, and I swore to myself that I would find it. I have always observed that when I make up my mind, something happens.

Something did.

CHAPTER XX

THE COBRA STRIKES

I AM convinced that we were all of us a little mad that spring; and the solution I found, as I was brushing my teeth after breakfast that morning, had all the brilliance of an insane solution, so simple it was, so obvious from the start. To me, it had the simplicity of plane geometry. Goebbels, or someone in his department, had desired Herta, and her husband was in the way. Well, where was the husband now? And, meanwhile, Herta was very much present in Berlin, and when she was desired she was available. It was incredible to have Erik von Arnheim take my own mistress to Rome; it was not fair to me, nor was it fair to the Party, or to the Reich, to have Frau Germania leave so. Yet he would not go without her. An insuperable impasse? Not to me! He must not go, then!

But how could this be achieved? Again, by letting him act as Konrad had acted, which had solved the whole situation. Nothing remained, once I had come to this conclusion, but to arrange to have Erik removed to a concentration camp, instead of to Rome. There might be difficulties; but what is life for, if not to give the opportunity to us to eliminate difficulties?

In the mid-morning I went in to the Reichsminister for Propaganda and Public Enlightenment, and asked if

I could have a few minutes of his time. He was in a good humor, for news from the Sudeten showed a magnificent response, among the Nazis there at least, to our tentative suggestions that they were entitled to autonomy, and that we were ready to give it to them. "Well, Little Adolf, no time like the present, as the bull said to the cow. Don't tell me you wish more salary! You make more than the Reichsbank president, as it is." He grinned at me evilly out of his beady black eyes set in his vulture face. "Why don't you get some rich industrialist's wife to support you, the way most of the Party leaders do?"

"Herr Reichsminister," I said diffidently, "it is about loyalty to the Fatherland, and the Leader, and you, I come to speak. I am, as you know, in a position of peculiar trust; and, as one close to the Leader, men and women, too, speak to me with great freedom, as if I were a conduit to his ear and yours. I have learned something that might be of great interest, about one high in the Party councils. It is my duty to tell it?"

"Everybody dumps his night dirt on my desk," he said. "Let's have it."

"If one high in the Party councils, in the government itself," I made it as impressive as possible, "had been heard to threaten about the Leader, or about one as high in the Party, say, as Marshal Göring or yourself, that he would hound him out of Germany, and would indeed strangle him with his own hands, it is my duty to tell this?"

His face grinned satanically. "I knew it was about time for another Purge. Let's have it."

"It would not lower me in your regard, to have come thus close to a traitor to one of the Party heads?"

"You'll get paid for it, as you wish. After we have acted."

"What would happen to such a Party leader, who made such a threat against one of the Party heads as high as Marshal Göring or yourself?"

He snickered. "Göring prefers the ax. I like my concentration camps. Protective custody is a slower and surer punishment. They send me pictures of what is done to the prisoners, yes. An interesting dossier; some night I will show them to you. After mutilation and death especially. We know how to deal with traitors, now. And there is always the chance that one recants, and names others; then we have a better Purge. And it is against me that this was directed, so; or you would have gone to Göring. Proceed."

I was startled at his intuition. "It is even so. I have your word there will be such a punishment, then, for the traitor?"

His claw hand came toward me. "No more words. —Who?"

"You are about to name as Minister to—"

"Arnheim, eh!" I was again amazed at how fast his mind leaped correctly to the right solution. "—That he would hound me out of Germany, eh, and strangle me himself? What a charming fate for me, no? And why—"

"His wife—" I began.

His face grew more evil than ever. "So. I have heard that lie myself. I keep the libels against me tabulated on a card index. This one is recent. —That I annoyed her sister; isn't that it? Now here are the facts. Konrad Fuchs, this sister's husband, is under arrest, for his own protection, for subversive talk. His wife is naturally a sorehead

—so the Americans say it; a grumbler. So she talks loose. Von Arnheim believes this. So. He will hound me out of Germany, he will strangle me? *He!*” There was utter scorn in the dark voice. “You, yourself, actually heard him say it? You will swear to this?”

“Not once, but a number of times.”

His finger pressed a button. I heard it buzz in the outer office. “I thought he was too grown-up to listen to gossip,” the Minister snarled. An orderly entered, with a “Heil Hitler!” and a salute from him, and then from each of us. Goebbels spoke curtly. “Tell the Leader I wish to come see him for a moment.”

My eyes widened in fright. “*He* must know!”

“Do not back down from this story, Little Adolf,” his eyes were beads of sanadin, “or you will be held in protective custody for a long time yourself. Tell him what you have told me, or I will add pictures of you to my dossier, no? Fools,” he grunted. “It is time for a Purge. He is useful, too, more’s the pity. Maybe there will be ways of converting him.”

We were led into the Leader’s study, and all withdrew. Even the Blackshirts were ordered to stand outside the windows, since it was only Goebbels and I.

“Tell him,” grunted Goebbels.

I gave the salute, and told it all, as I had told it to the Propaganda Minister. Only, I had noted that the Propaganda Minister had called it a libel, a lie; and so I was careful to make clear that I dismissed the whole cause of the incident—the story told by Herta Fuchs—as a complete fabrication, a libel invented to discredit the Minister and scandalize the administration.

The Leader’s face went hard. “This is serious, yes. Our

great thanks to you, Little Adolf, for keen ears and a loyal heart. So the wind blows up that creek, eh? *He* can't want to take over Propaganda! He's a good man, in his field."

"An undoubted expert on foreign affairs. Too Rightist, always; but otherwise. . . ."

"Yes, that is so, too. And superficially this is not a matter aimed against me, but against you. And yet," he weighed it unhappily, "whatever splits our central group, whatever scandalizes one of us, damages the Party, the cause. And just when we need him in Rome, too!"

"We have no lack of men and ability," said Goebbels.

"True, too. Well, pick another, then." Hitler sighed. "I leave him to you. Entirely. What do you expect to do to him?"

"He is a fool," said Goebbels sharply. "For a long time we have needed some such thing as this, to cut his comb a bit. It must not grow too high. A splendid second man, yes; never a first. I will handle him. Protective custody; a few serious heart to heart talks; the thing laid on the table—which does he prefer, to be sterilized as subversive to Party discipline and then exiled from Germany, even to go before the Tribunal—or to see sense, and come back into harness. He will see sense." His face looked as if it could have torn the man apart with a vulture's beak, as he spoke.

"That seems thoroughly wise." The leader spoke wearily. "I will forget it now, and leave him to you. Oh, but word from Prague! Henlein agrees to announce the demands I suggested; so the eastward sweep gains momentum, no? Will they stop us," his eyes stared far off, "at the Pacific? I do not think so. Waves roll around the world."

"Look at the wave of proper punishment of this interna-

tional Jewish conspiracy," said Goebbels, face warped with delight. "There is no country that is not feeling its impulse, now! Poland, little Danzig, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Italy, Spain, France, Colombia, Peru, the Argentine, and throughout the whole United States—we have started a movement that will not end, until even the name Jew has been wiped out of man's chronicles. For the Jew is responsible for democracy—the leveling of mankind until the Leader is no higher than the follower; and your attack on that spirit will not end until all Europe is Nazi, hailing you as Leader! And, after Europe, South America, North America; Africa, with all of our colonies enlarged; Asia, with Communism ended and even Japan learning to say 'Heil Hitler' instead of 'Banzai.'"

"It is a wave," said the Leader gravely. "It is sweeping the world, yes. Peacefully, so far. It will not all be peaceful."

Goebbels' face lighted up with wild fanaticism. "There is bound to be war—with Germany triumphant. War is the simple affirmation of life. You can no more suppress war than you can suppress nature itself, moving in its own natural way. We sacrifice much, my Leader, when we permit peace and postpone war? And when we have such a war as must follow the wave of your triumphant planning, to produce the pan-German world, there will be protective custody for all Jewish swine—and then what? Protective custody is an admirable thing." He considered it gloatingly. "For, when we have the Jews so, has it ever occurred to you that a simple surgical operation on a mere seven and a half million males will half solve the whole problem for us? They are all circumcized; let a simple castration hereafter accompany each circumcison—to be

done retroactively in the case of all already circumcized—and a bare half is left of the problem. And the Jewish women are equally subversive. Once they are spayed, the matter is ended in one generation! And nine and a half million of them are in Europe now, practically under our thumb! As soon as we have a Nazi Europe, a potent Jewish male is unthinkable. And then the four million in North America, and the mere handful elsewhere—and the whole disease is extirpated. Look how the wave spreads! The refugees—have you seen any country leaping to accept even one of them? The stupid United States, for all of its Jewish control there, shuts the doors on any more. So every nation, each one saying, 'Let our neighbors take them.' France says, 'Put them in Ethiopia'—but *not* in a French colony! Italy says put them in the cemetery, as we do. If we could only censor all that the Pope says, and this Roosevelt, and the others who speak in favor of them. . . . What an encouraging thing, my Leader, to read of a Jewish suicide! That is the sort of cooperation we cannot have too much of. This wave is spreading—and our wave to the east is just as satisfactory!"

The conference ended on this high note. I left it, caring not at all about this rather absurd persecution of the Jews; after all, I had never met a Jew who was not friendly and better behaved than his gentile neighbors. But I was dazed with delight at my personal problem and its solution at last: so well I had planned, so well I had achieved! And I knew Goebbels would not delay. . . .

A cryptic wire came to me from Ulrica just after I had finished dinner:

E. GONE. COME AT ONCE.

U.

This was a visit I looked forward to with much pleasure. I bathed and dressed with unusual care, and went around to console the bereaved darling. It would have been amusing to have told her just how brilliantly I had solved our problem, if I could have been sure that she would understand it just as I did. But she might not have understood the complete necessity for what I had done, and it would be better to wait until she expressed complete relief at her husband's elimination; and then we could laugh together over how well I had managed it.

I was disappointed when I saw her woe-begone face. "Oh, Adolf, darling, the most dreadful thing has happened," she greeted me, even as I was kissing her. "Erik was kidnapped, just before five this afternoon, by three of the Gestapo, and God knows where they've taken him! A clerk at the Foreign Office phoned me—and that was all he could find out. What *am* I to do!"

"But *why!*" I exclaimed, as if thoroughly mystified. "What in the world has *he* done!"

"It's what someone has done to him," she said brokenly. "That is how things are done, in Germany. Some one goes with a lie to any official, and they have power to do this even to each other. Look how Goebbels is allowed to censor even members of the ministry! He's even dared to dictate what von Papen, Schacht and Streicher are allowed to say—and, meanwhile, he's emitting such infantile nonsense as his attack on the lemon as Jewish in origin,* and urging that we use the Nordic folkic rhubarb in its place. Ach, it makes one weep! He, or Göring, or any of half a dozen

* Frau von Arnheim's error. The lemon was attacked as sinful and alien, but not definitely as Jewish.

others could have done this; or, of course, the German Narcissus." Her lips curled in scorn.

"But, sweet, you must not speak of the Leader so!" I insisted. "He himself has said that if a man does his duty fully to the Party, the cause, and Germany, it makes no difference whom he sleeps with the night before."

"But what in God's name am I to do about Erik! Just when he's been appointed to go to Rome, too!"

"And you with him. And you didn't want to go. Now perhaps you won't have to." I tried to hint gently to her what delightful news this was to our dreams.

She did not take the hint. "Surely the Leader will know. That's why I sent for you. You can get in touch with him; find out for me!"

"Well, it is presumption. . . ." But I knew that it was not, I was so high in his confidence. "I can phone him." I got the call put through without any difficulty. "This is Ludwig Zeit speaking, Herr Reichskanzler. I am at the residence of Reichsminister von Arnheim. Frau von Arnheim reports that her husband disappeared with three Gestapo officers this afternoon just before five, and she is unable to find trace of him. Is it possible that he is in conference with your Excellency?"

I listened carefully, thanked him for his information, saluted the instrument, and gave the hail "Heil Hitler!" Only then was it permitted to hang the receiver up. I turned to her with a troubled face. "Herr Hitler says that in due time his absence will be explained thoroughly; that he knows where your husband is, and it is confidential Party business, not to be inquired about." I did not repeat what he had added, that I was to find out all I could about her attitude, also.

Her face went ashen. "Good God! Just like Konrad Fuchs! It must be that same damnable little Goebbels at the bottom of this too. Ach, God, what a blessing to Germany if the Leader would turn *him* over to Göring and his ax!"

I shrugged. "I do not like him, Ulrica sweetest, as you so well know. But he is good at propaganda. What is one to do? He has power; and it is never wise, I have observed, to walk carelessly too close to power."

"But what did they arrest him for! We were to dine here, and he had tickets for *Tristram und Isolde*, and even tomorrow, he was told, his appointment to Rome would be announced. Oh, it's tragic, tragic! And there is nothing on God's stricken earth to do about it!"

I smiled tenderly at her, she looked so deliciously woe-begone. "Let us take a moratorium on our troubles—that is *my* suggestion. You slip into an evening dress, and I will take you to *Tristram*! It would be a shame to waste two such tickets."

Her eyes were appalled. "But I couldn't! I'd be miserable! Oh, Adolf, no, no! *Please* don't make me!"

But I smiled firmly at her. "For your own good, darling, I am insisting. Go now and dress."

She sobbed a little while she was dressing, but I told her I would prefer she conceal that, for her own good. We arrived with the first act just beginning, and thrilled together to the magnificent passion of the wife of Mark of Cornwall for the glorious knight. It was very much like Ulrica and myself, I reflected. Mark did have a rather skinny, grizzled look, like Erik to the life; and I knew I would have made a much more suitable Tristram than the fat tenor who wheezed through the immortal love songs.

In the darkness, my hand caressed hers tenderly. Such music as this of Wagner's was written for true lovers. It made me almost romantic. And how amusing to wonder what was at this moment to the husband happening! That too I would learn. I decided that an opera should be written about Ulrica and myself; and, if I would brush up on my vocal, I might even sing the hero's rôle, myself! Ach, we were all a little mad, these days.

The next morning, after a most satisfactory night, I received a message to come to the Ministry for Propaganda and Public Enlightenment. Pleased at this good fortune, which no doubt indicated further information or perhaps even an especial reward to be given me, I hurried around.

"The Minister sent for me," I said to the clerk at the huge information desk.

"The Minister is not here. Herr Dissel will see you."

I went in to the office of one of Goebbels' confidential secretaries.

"Ach, Zeit? Seat yourself." He brought out of one of his drawers a huge folder, which he opened and studied with much deliberation. He looked up at last. "Here I have a dossier Herr Reichsminister asked me to bring to your attention. This is in complete confidence, no? This is the Dossier Ludwig Zeit."

His tone did not make me feel comfortable. "Well?"

He thumbed over many sheets, and drew forth one. He read it slowly, and then spoke. "On Monday, July 30, 1934, you spent the night at the apartment of Erik von Arnheim, with your host away in Geneva. I have here a list of approximately two hundred other nights you have spent in that apartment, under similar circumstances, including

last night. This is unknown to Erik von Arnheim. Correct?"

I had often boasted of the excellence of German espionage, but never before that moment was I convinced that there had been understatement, and not exaggeration, in my words. This was to be faced. Goebbels himself had this information. It would be most advantageous to be absolutely frank with this man. My own nature is essentially frank anyhow, unless there is a distinct advantage to be gained by a necessary evasion. "Yes," I said.

"Good. Frau von Arnheim has borne two sons since that time. You are the father of those two sons. Correct?"

A somewhat similar reasoning applied with equal force now; and yet, how could one be sure. I had, of course, a natural pride in the thought; but what if it were not a correct thought? There could be no harm, however, in assuming that a denial was not anticipated. "One can never be certain," I explained. "I am of that opinion. Yes."

"Frau von Arnheim has offered to divorce her husband, and marry you. Correct?"

"But this is unthinkable!" I showed great indignation. "Who can have spread a story so ridiculous?"

He tapped his finger firmly on two other documents spread under his hand. "Affidavits of the von Arnheim butler and maid, who overheard it from within the door of the butler's pantry, within the last week. No pressure was exerted; they are in the service. In the light of these, correct?"

"Now that you remind me, yes."

"—Which you refused to do," he continued in a blasé voice. "Her husband is now also under detention, by order of the Reichsminister. Would it not be wise," he held his

thumb and the three final fingers against the desk, folded under, and thumped with his index finger against the dark red-brown mahogany desk top, "for Frau von Arnheim to see the Minister herself about her husband, on some early opportunity—say tomorrow evening, at an address I give you?"

I studied his face for a long time, before I answered this. He did not look at me. "But . . . she . . . I am not sure she is a close friend of the Reichsminister's. He knows me; perhaps she would much prefer to have *me* discuss. . . ." But his face did not yield. I leaned over more passionately toward him. "You are human. She might not even desire to go. Women have their own particular desires. . . . Only last night she had said to me that she hated him like a snake, and would kill him if she ever got her hands on him."

"She does not like the Minister, no. That is understood, from another dossier." He paused significantly. "Yet this is different. Would it not be *wise* for her to come; and *very* wise, Herr Zeit, if you make sure she comes!" It was no query.

My face grew naturally a little white. "But if she will not go!"

"Is not that for *you* to make sure of? Ach, I almost forgot. The Minister told me to tell you that the Leader had not been troubled with this dossier yet." The secretary acted as if the matter had been settled. He lit himself a cigar, and puffed it absently, until at last he observed with pleasure that he had achieved commendable smoke rings floating from the tip of his cigar above my head. I did not feel that I earned halos.

"I am to make her come, then?"

"Would it not be wise?"

"—To *make* her come. A woman is difficult to make to do anything, no?" I thought reflectively of Herta Fuchs, and shook my head. It would not do to have Ulrica behave so. And then a thought came to me. "If she comes, naturally the Leader will not be troubled with this dossier?"

His eyebrows rose. "But naturally. He is very busy, the Leader."

"She is very dear to me," I said stiffly. "He will not harm her?"

The secretary's hands opened gently. "Surely you are not one that believes in libels! This is the Reichsminster we speak of. Unless she has done something subversive, naturally not. We both know that."

"And any way I make her come, it will be all right?"

"That is for you to decide. The Minister thinks that such an interview will be mutually profitable."

I remembered back that so he had gotten rid of Konrad Fuchs, and so summoned Herta to come to him. And now Ulrica. It is not easy to contemplate sending one's mistress to such a man. And yet, surely he might wish only to question her about her husband, that he might convert him. There had been talk of this. It was best to regard it so. And yet it was unusual, in that case, that he had first had me shown this dossier about myself. But the unusual was happening, especially in Germany.

Suddenly I thought of a brilliant idea. I have observed that, when there is need, such ideas happen naturally to me. "If Frau von Arnheim were of the opinion that it was planned to detain *me* in protective custody, in the concentration camp where her husband is, or even to take me before the People's Tribunal, it would be natural for

her to wish to talk that over with the Reichsminister, hein?"

"But naturally."

"I think she will think that, when I talk to her. The Minister will be pleased?"

"But naturally."

"Tomorrow evening, you said?"

"So. —To this address." He handed it to me on a slip of paper. "At nine o'clock."

"She will come," I said.

He rose. "Heil Hitler!" His arm snapped forward to the salute.

"Heil Hitler!"

I walked stiffly out of the room.

This I had not at all anticipated, when the brilliant idea came to me of arranging for a substitute trip for von Arnheim instead of the embassy to Rome which he expected. I have observed that the unanticipated often comes, especially in Germany. It is wise to make the best of any such eventuality. I felt that I had risen to the emergency in a way to be proud of. Goebbels would get the interview he wished; Ulrica would have the thrill of saving me from threatened arrest and detention or worse; so no one would suffer, due to my quick-witted handling of the situation. I began to understand how well equipped I was to act in emergencies, no matter their nature. It is of such stuff that leaders are made.

CHAPTER XXI

THE SEED IS SOWN

NATURALLY, Ulrica expected me to dinner that night. I went with the full realization that I faced a difficult task. Great disgrace was in store for me, if once that dossier were shown to the Leader. The only way to prevent this was to have Ulrica cooperate in the way indicated by the Reichsminister's secretary. But she, like all women, was excessively sentimental; and she might let her personal feelings interfere with this simple solution, and thus precipitate the thing I was most anxious to avoid. So my task was to turn her sentimental nature into my ally.

I almost decided to tell her the exact situation. In a way, the disgrace would involve both of us; and one might think that she would do anything within reason to prevent this. But there comes in your woman's sentimentality again. She was quite capable of saying nobly, "*Let him expose us! I will be proud to appear before the world as your lover.*" But that would be as absurd as her being willing to divorce Erik and marry me; how could I, in my magnificently paid position, contemplate surrendering that position, which would of necessity follow from any such publicity and scandal? As a matter of fact, if I was as valuable as a double as I imagined, it seemed more

probable to me that Goebbels, as well as the Leader, would see to it that there was no publicity, no scandal; for *their* convenience, not for mine.

But, after all, I was on my mettle now. I had said that I would send her around; it was a test of my persuasiveness to see if I could do as I had boasted, and a test of her love for me to see if she would do as I wished. After all, she had laughingly told me that the first time she went to Erik's apartment she never dreamed it was marriage he had on his mind; was one Reichsminister so different from another? If the matter did not turn out to her pleasure, I recalled how frantic the affair of Herta had made Erik; and this would without doubt make him so wild against Goebbels, that I could well expect to see the repulsive Propaganda Minister finally removed, or at least infinitely demoted. But, after all, that was none of my business. My responsibility ended when I secured her presence there. I could count on her woman's wit to conduct the interview to her entire satisfaction, as well as mine.

My task was to turn her sentimental nature into my ally. And that would come most easily from her regarding me as in danger. I would not mention his secretary; I would say that it was Goebbels himself had talked to me; that would be far stronger. I would say that he himself had threatened for me the concentration camp, if not the People's Tribunal: he could elaborate that as he chose. My one chance, I would report him as saying, would be for her to appear as my advocate, and her husband's.

And then, a brilliant idea occurred to me. I need not urge her to go; in fact, the reverse would be far more effective—the noble pose, that I would a thousand times rather be jailed, tortured, beaten, killed, than have her

go. Colossal! I could plead with her not to go—that it would break my heart; that I was insane with jealousy, as she knew— Ach, it built itself up splendidly, as I dressed for the dinner and the evening. Yes, such a rôle would have all the romantic nobility a woman desires in her lover. Then *she* would happily make the supreme sacrifice for me, and all would be well.

Nor could this, no matter how it turned out, take Ulrica too often from me. For, after all, Goebbels already had his nights that he must give to Herta; and surely he was expected home every so often; the whole world of cinema and stage actresses, singers and performers of every kind, came before him, and the concentration camps were huge, and Germany did not lack its quota of attractive wives. Ach, I need not even bother about this. Altogether, the thing seemed to be working out to the complete satisfaction of all of us.

As I walked around to the von Arnheim apartment, I began to feel more and more sorry for myself. . . . threatened with imprisonment, torture, perhaps death, even before tomorrow's sunset. I had been given only this one farewell night. Well, like a man I could stand it—like a man I *would* stand it! Of such stuff heroes are made. I doubted if the Leader himself could have faced such an ordeal so magnificently. There was a tear in my eye as I left the elevator and crossed the hall to press the button to her apartment. So it was that I had always prepared myself to take the Leader's place—by throwing myself heart and soul into the rôle. And I knew that I would not fail this night.

My face was pale, as I greeted Ulrica. I bent stiffly and kissed her warm, soft little fingers, and then I clasped her

wildly to my bosom. My lips burned against hers. And then I pushed her away, and did not meet her eyes.

"Ach, but it is marvelous to see you, darling! Did you get any more news for me of poor Erik?"

"I have some news, yes." I finished my glass of sherry and bitters before speaking further. "I was summoned in to see the Propaganda Minister today."

"Good! He admitted that he did it? Ach, but *why!* In God's name, why!"

I shrugged. "He admits nothing. —That he knew of it in advance, yes. Something about subversive talk—that was all he would say. By Erik and me." I let it fall as casually as if she knew it all the time.

"—And *you!* What do you *mean*, Little Adolf!"

"Ach, but I did not mean to tell that part! He admits only that he knows of it; and he will do what he can, as soon as he can, he says."

"But—subversive—about what! —You!"

I spoke too rapidly to be coherent. "Something about the Sudeten," I said. "There can be nothing to what he says. Let us forget it."

"But—*you!* You mean that the fool claims that *you* are in this, too!"

"There is the butler, dear, announcing dinner. Do not worry; there is nothing to worry about. I see him tomorrow. We will talk of this later."

Throughout dinner I could see how dreadfully worried she was. But the butler was in and out, as if he had been tipped off in advance to prevent confidences. It was not until we had repaired to the living room for coffee and liqueurs that she had a chance to question me again.

She leaned tensely toward me. "Adolf, you've *got* to

talk to me! You're to see him tomorrow, you say? You can't mean that he seriously threatens he's going to arrest *you!*"

"My dear, I did not mean for you to guess. But, if you must know, yes. It may be," I spoke very slowly, and my voice was aimed inward, as one speaking into a cave without a back wall, "that this will be the last night I can be here with you. He said something about one last night. For the one thing he mentioned I told him 'No' to, right away."

"A plot against the Leader, I'll bet! You are to turn against him?" Her eyes gleamed strangely.

"Ach, no! A million million times, no!"

"But you're talking in riddles! What *was* this one thing he mentioned?"

"Ach, it is unthinkable. What he indicated was, there was talk . . . er, about the Sudeten, that concerned Erik alone, that was regarded as subversive; and something more than this, that was overheard by some servant here and reported, that was said by me as well as by him, before you. I told him that never in my life had I dreamed of other than complete loyalty to him; that it was a lie; that I had not spoken before you; and that I would *never* permit you to visit him, as he requested. So, I ended it. I see him tomorrow. We will know, then."

Ulrica's face went as white as the square of linen clenched in her hand. "It was about Herta it was," she said, with gasping violence. "Sudeten, ach! It was Herta, wasn't it?"

"Yes," as if wrenched from me. "Yes, darling. I don't see how you knew."

"And he claims you too said what Erik said—about hounding him out of Germany!"

"And something about strangling with bare hands, also. Yes. I received the impression that it was so reported. Servants even no one can trust! I did not say it. Let it be. Either I convince him, or I fail. I can only do my best."

"But *I* can convince him! When he hears *my* account of the— Why, you defended him, Little Adolf; I was furious with you, for that. Of course, I'll shield Erik as much as I can; and he *should* be hounded out of the Reich." She dropped her voice to a whisper, a frightened glance studying the empty room, as if she expected eavesdroppers everywhere. "But—you. . . . I will *not* let him make a martyr out of you, for what Erik said—something you didn't agree with, at all!"

"No," I insisted, face paler than ever. "I will not permit it. No. You *must* not. I forbid you to leave the house tomorrow night, and under no circumstances to go near the room in the Nonpareil Hotel he designated." I stared at her grimly. "I have not forgotten what happened to Herta, when *she* visited him. *You*, never!"

It was then that Ulrica saw with terrible swiftness that she too was trapped. I cannot guess how far beyond she saw in that first chasmed second, before her mind told her that what her heart saw could not be true. "That," she said. She shuddered. There was a long silence. "No. Not that. Anything but that. I have promised *you*. . . . Oh, the dreadful, dreadful swine! I will kill *him*, first! I will kill myself first!"

"And would that help any of us?" I asked sadly. But the idea was planted, I told myself jubilantly. Let it have

time to work. "It is only my dreadful fear, darling; I'm sure of that." I spoke swiftly. "He spoke only of an interview, to reconstruct what these servants reported. But I forbade it, absolutely. I can at least meet my fate like a Nordic and a soldier!" Bravery such as my face glowed with deserved at least the Iron Cross with the gold leaves.

She stared at me as if not seeing me. "I will kill myself, before I will do that. —That he should be allowed to live!"

"Konrad is in one of his concentration camps," I said slowly, "and Erik, and Herta spoke of those photographs of beatings, and tortures, and corpses not good to see. But think of what *she* went through! No, it is unthinkable. Tomorrow, I see him. I have some power of words." I said it sadly. "He knows how much I mean to the Leader. I will face it alone. I forbid you to see him, even to talk to him!"

"I will see him." Her voice was the lowest string on the violin, lost in a mist, moaning all by itself. "Tell him so. I will never let *you* suffer so. And, after, I will kill myself."

"It is forgotten," I said firmly. "I have already burned the slip that was handed me." I let my hand slip toward my hip pocket.

"Give it to me," she insisted.

"I have lost it."

"Give it to me!"

I pulled it forth. "But you must burn it, before me!"

"I will see him," she said, her voice serene. I could see the immense love in her heart burning out of her shadowed eyes. It was a beautiful sight to see.

I will grant that there was a rather grisly macabre pleasure in the evening and the night that followed. It was

unthinkable that he should have any such power; but, still, the power was his, and it certainly was the part of wisdom to harness it, rather than to oppose it. So the Leader himself had told me. And, besides, it was not so much she was called on to do. In the old days, when she herself worked at the Schwarz Anser, she would not even have minded what was asked of her. Amazing, how romantic, how sentimental, a woman in love can become! And romance, I have observed, at times makes facing the realities of life in a factual manner rather difficult.

At least, my plan about Erik had succeeded with brilliance; how was I to guess that Goebbels would then have his different ideas? Over all my protests, Ulrica remained determined. So he would not be disappointed. The greatest gainer beyond doubt would be myself. It would be more than unfortunate if that dossier were ever placed on the Leader's desk; toward such things he is very unsympathetic, especially where they concern men high in the Party. His trust in me meant much to me; this would be forfeited entirely if he ever read that dossier. It was unthinkable that I should face the loss of this most excellent salary I was receiving, and the work I had come to enjoy more and more, and even run the risk of actual imprisonment and torture and the Tribunal and Göring's ax: for these were usual things to happen in Germany, though so far I had run no risk of them. And all for the most natural actions in the world, merely responding to a love which was mutual and beyond all blame. All great loves had been so.

And now, I would be freed of that danger completely. Erik would have his lot lightened. Ulrica would at most suffer a momentary embarrassment. The Reichsminister

would not go unsatisfied. No one would suffer, and all would be set right at last.

In the dawn, and the night had been more tender than any we had ever had, she held me close for a long time, staring into my eyes. "I wish you would come again to-night for dinner," she said quietly. "The hour will be nine o'clock, at the Nonpareil. The . . . interview . . . cannot take long. I think I will be back before midnight. If not, well, you know how to leave this early, or earlier. I would like to know that you are here. I love you. You only."

"I will be here, darling," I assured her proudly. It might be a boring evening; but one owes something to a devoted woman's whim. There were several of the new books I had been promising myself a chance to read, and this would be admirable for that purpose.

And so I was back for dinner, and at a quarter to nine I saw her leave. Her face was exquisitely made up, more so than usual. So must Herta have gone to him, that first night. Strange things happen in Germany. And power is power. . . .

The time passed far more delightfully than I had anticipated. A library to roam through, the new books to browse into and one to read, excellent cigars and cigarettes and Napoleon brandy from Erik's own stock. . . .

I was rather startled when I heard the hall door clicking open to see from my wristwatch that it was twenty after midnight already. How time passes, I have observed! I rose to my feet, my eyes all welcome, my arms outstretched, my voice tender. "Ah, darling! So long it has seemed!"

She let her cloak slip unheeded to the floor. "Oh," she

said. She let me clasp her to my heart, and my lips fasten to hers. She had not repaired her makeup, and her lips were not warm. It is difficult to be tender to a woman who neglects her appearance so. But the situation was unusual, I had to admit to myself.

She pushed me away finally, and walked over and stared at a large chair before sitting in it. "You might give me a brandy," she said.

I poured one for each of us. I lifted my glass to toast her. She sipped her drink without responding to my toast.

"You saw him?"

"You need not worry, now." It is strange how a voice can have weight, like lead, to the ears. "I saw him. You will not be arrested."

"But that is wonderful, darling! You convinced him? He was not . . . annoying, was he? As with Herta?"

"He was not annoying. —You would be arrested tomorrow, he said, if I was not nice to him. —Taken before the Tribunal. I was Frau Germania, he said; and so he must know me better. I told him I would kill myself. He said, it makes what difference? But he promised not to jail you. So I am here."

"Why, Ulrica darling, you can't mean that he actually demanded the surrender of your virtue as the price of not imprisoning me! Darling, I forbade it! I ordered you not to go!"

"Yes. You ordered me not to go. It happened that I loved you. I sometimes wonder why. Women are made so. No—" As I came close to her, my eyes tender and warm, my arms welcoming, "do not touch me tonight. Not ever again—tonight." She added the last word hur-

riedly. "I am soiled, Little Adolf. —For you. No. Give me another brandy."

The whimsical nature of woman is something I shall never cease to marvel over. That ridiculous pose she kept up the rest of the evening; nothing could make her alter it. I did my best to explain that all that she had done she had done for love of me; like Herta's sacrifice. And, unlike Herta's, it had succeeded; I was free, I would not be arrested, and she had done this. I was so insane with fury, with jealousy, I told her, I would go right out now and shoot him down like a dog, if she would let me. —Why think of him again, she said. So it was that all she said was irrational.

But one thing was clear: she had made up her mind, for this night, that I was not to come near her. I told her it was all inconsiderate. She sent me home soon after three o'clock, never having let me come nearer her than the moment she returned.

"But I'll see you tomorrow?" I insisted.

"There is no doubt of that." She smiled, but there was a strange quality in her smile that was disturbing. "Yes, you will see me tomorrow."

Well, can one argue with a woman's whims? I was as tender as was possible, yet all availed nothing. She kissed me goodbye, and her lips were not icy now, but warm; and yet she made me leave. She let me out of the side door herself. It was a very icy night for April, and I could see my breath in the light of the street lamps when I paused to smoke a fresh cigarette before entering the Chancellery. I remember my last thought, before drowsing off to sleep, was how whimsical a woman could be, and how inconsiderate of what a man desired.

I was immensely shocked, reading the morning paper, to see her picture on its front page, and only then did I see the headlines above it:

FRAU GERMANIA DIES SUDDENLY
DURING ABSENCE OF HUSBAND

Ulrica Diehm, Former Café Singer, Married to Reichsminister
von Arnheim, Loses Life in Unusual Accident

The story said that she had been cleaning a pistol, due to her fear of burglars, during the absence of her husband, when it exploded. I knew that there was more in the story than this. There was a letter in my box, delivered, I found out later, by her sympathetic maid. It had twelve words inside:

I gave you a promise. You will understand. I love you forever.
U.

To this day, I cannot be sure whether it was Herr Goebbels himself who met her at the Nonpareil, or the secretary who had talked to me, or someone else impersonating the Reichsminister. It is such uncertainties, I have observed, that keep life interesting. I determined to find out from Herr Goebbels, if he was ever in the right mood. But he was not often in the right mood, I have observed.

CHAPTER XXII

THE TIDE FLOWS EAST

THE unfortunate suicide of Ulrica von Arnheim came at a most inopportune time for me. For this was the frantic spring of 1938 when the Leader's plans were maturing so magnificently. The Anschluss was a fact, the re-acquisition of the Sudeten was coming closer and closer. There were demands on me, naturally, there were demands on all of us, calling for our most undisturbed application to the cause of the Party and the Fatherland; and no true German had a right to add to our difficulties at a time like this. Most of all, at such a time, a man needs such relaxation as a night with Ulrica could afford. And here, at the very moment when I had shrewdly arranged to have our relationship made permanent, with Erik completely out of the way in protective custody, some woman's whim of hers, some mere personal dislike, had wrecked all of my careful planning. Naturally, a man wants a woman, and not a corpse. The incident, I reflected a little sadly, had been a touchstone of how deep her affection for me really went. She was not capable of a continuing sacrifice for love. Well, all I could do now was to forgive her. Women are as they are made, and the cool keen wind of logic rarely blows through their overpersonalized minds.

The Reichsminister for Propaganda and Public Enlightenment took charge of the funeral himself, which I

thought was extremely considerate of him. Yet was she not officially Frau Germania, whose untimely accidental death had shocked all the Reich? I had to admire the impressive ceremonies he planned for the occasion, as an inspiration to all other German women to rise as high in the esteem of the Reich. As we two rode back together from the ceremonies, I told him so. He said he was sincerely grateful for my appreciation.

"She was a very beautiful woman," I said slowly. "She deserved such a funeral."

"Admirable," he said, eyeing me slyly. "I wish I had known her better."

It was difficult to say what I had to say next. "On one occasion, in your office, I was shown a certain dossier about myself, by one of your secretaries. Purely personal. That is all forgotten, I trust?"

"But of course, Little Adolf! After all, your offense, if it be called such, was merely a commendable personal interest in a pair of pretty legs; a feeling any of us might have shared. There was nothing in the slightest degree savoring of disloyalty to the Leader, the Party, or to me. I will be frank, I cannot say as much about von Arnheim and his wife, who certainly took a subversive attitude toward the welfare of Germany in the matter growing out of the imprisonment of Konrad Fuchs. I have been assured that she expressed opinions quite as disloyal as her husband; and, if that's so, perhaps she's luckier off as it is. But our problem now is the husband. *If* this imprisonment can bring him to his senses, we can use him still. If not, well—accidents happen." He smiled again, and I was glad that the smile was not directed against me.

Within a week, it was the Leader himself who brought

up the matter of von Arnheim. It was Ribbentrop, Goebbels, and I that he had in conference late in April. "Well, we are moving," he said, half glumly. "We've promised personal protection to the Sudetens, and suggested autonomy for them. We've got Premier Hodza squawking that he doesn't want any foreign interference; he says it is as absurd as if he were to suggest autonomy for 86th Street, New York City, where the Czechs live and have their shops. France has blustered that she will march if Czechoslovakia is invaded; Litvinov has said that Russia will move, *if* France moves first. Mere fly-buzzing, isn't it?"

"Wasps, pretending to be hornets," said Ribbentrop smilingly. "And Chamberlain has brayed out that, if there is a war, it may not be possible to localize it. But *that* means only that he is afraid of bombing raids over London."

"And Henlein has agreed to announce his Karlsbad demands, which they cannot accept—full autonomy for the Germans in the Sudeten, as full Nazis; and a demand that they accept *us* as protector, instead of Paris, Moscow and foggy London."

"They will have to, sooner or later," said the Leader seriously. "Now, next month, we will have a plebiscite. But opinion is not quite free there; there might be an anti-Nazi majority. So, a little rioting, during the voting—and a swift mobilization for a *Blitzkrieg*,* which will win the matter for us, unless the Czechs mobilize in time."

"Göring wants to fight anyhow," pointed out Goebbels.

"Why fight, when it is ours without fighting?" I asked.

"Admirable, Little Adolf! But I tell you I need von

* Lightning-war.

Arnheim again. He can speak these bastard foreign languages; thank God I never wasted my brain learning anything but good German! And he has a brain. Either he is straightened out by now, or he might just as well go before the Tribunal."

Goebbels promised to do his best, and gave orders to have von Arnheim brought up from Brandenburg where he was being detained. Moreover, he asked me to have a preliminary talk with him, and sound out the precise present state of his attitude toward Goebbels and the government. "If he's too bitter, well, nothing but the Tribunal. A man cannot let personal antipathies enter into his duty to the Party and the Reich." He beamed complacently. "You can expect him to be annoyed about his wife, Little Adolf; God knows what sort of wild stories he has heard, which may involve you, or me, or even both of us. Well, it was an accident, no? You stick to that. With him away, she developed an anxiety neurosis about burglars, *hein?*"

"I'll do more, Herr Reichsminister," I said, realizing how I could gain favor with him. "It's always best to meet an issue fairly, no? He is bound to hear rumors, sooner or later; about me, at least; and perhaps about you. When *your* office had that immense dossier on me and Ulrica, how could *he* know nothing?"

Goebbels shrugged. "The whole world knows every detail of an adultery; the husband never suspects, unless he is sent an engraved invitation to the bedding. But he will hear, now, since you practically moved into his apartment the moment he disappeared."

"All that I will admit," I said smilingly. "It was all to protect her, no? And an effort to scheme his release, en-

tirely loyal to him. He will believe me, because he wants to. But I have more than that in mind. What went on in life will not bother him so much now, as what caused her death. There will be rumors. We want no suspicion about that last night, no? And so, I tell him it is absolutely a lie that she went out and saw you or anyone else that night; that I stayed with her until almost three o'clock, every minute, talking over every possible means of getting him free; and then went home, and the accident happened within half an hour. Will it do the work, you think?"

"An admirable alibi, Little Adolf," he smiled. "Make it satisfy him. If not, there is always the People's Tribunal. Probe out every inch of his soul, too; we have no room for traitors to *me* in the Party."

"I'll do it, Herr Reichsminister," I said proudly. "I have done some espionage work already; it is a form of Party work I especially like. I'll try to bring him to a more reasonable attitude of mind toward the Herta Fuchs matter too. After all, I myself interviewed her one night; and I found her so subversive, so unsympathetic, that I came to the conclusion that whatever you had done to her was no doubt deserved discipline."

He nodded. "After all," he smiled, "what is a woman for? Well, tomorrow you see von Arnheim."

He showed me, before I left, the headlines that had just come in from the Sudeten Party papers:

SAVAGE HORSEWHIPPING OF SUDETEN
DEPUTY BY BESTIAL CZECH

and tapped the paper with firm fingers, his eyes small and beady. "For that, we proceed. It is the last straw."

I read into the story and looked up at him in astonish-

ment. "But this case was in the morning papers! It is the case of the Deputy who insulted the government officer, grossly, while drunk, and was merely slapped for it!"

Goebbels shrugged. "Not in history, after my Propaganda representatives handled the story so. History, Little Adolf, is what we write, and men believe. The chief error is to let the mere facts influence you. The welfare of the Reich must always be the prime consideration."

This was so obvious that I nodded agreement and left him.

For all that von Arnheim was still in custody, the way was smoothed for a frank talk between us, by the withdrawal of all guards from the warden's room in the Berlin military prison where he had been brought. When they marched him in, the first moment I did not recognize him, so old and white and worn he looked.

"Ach, dear friend," I said to him, "how well you are looking!"

He took my hand, but his greeting was broken by a grinding, racking cough that seemed to shudder to the very depths of his frame. All during our talk this cough came as a macabre punctuation. It spoke of death hanging close over him, unless his case deserved that we do something for him.

"How did they treat you, Erik?" I inquired.

"Ulrica," he interrupted me at once. "What really happened? I know nothing, except that she is dead, and of her funeral, where Goebbels spoke." His eyes looked starved for what I had to say.

"I will tell you everything," I said to him frankly. "For I alone know. First of all, there are vile rumors afloat—as about everything in Germany. You know how a

editorial censorship makes people suspect every story that is printed, and manufacture the most absurd and exaggerated accounts, even when the simple truth has been told. It was a dreadful accident, of course. But many things called accidents happen in Germany; and so the sensation-mad mind leaped to the conclusion that this was like that, too. What did they do, in this case? Well, word of the story Herta Fuchs has told too widely had spread around as gossip; so what more simple to claim that it was Ulrica who had been visiting Goebbels, and was his mistress, instead of her sister!"

"But that is absurd," he worried. "She herself told it all to Ulrica. *We* know the facts. Had she even *seen* Goebbels?"

"That is the silliest part of it," I continued mournfully. "She had me try to arrange it; but he refused to see her! Too busy, I suppose, with this Sudeten matter keeping all of us so busy that there is not time even for sleep.—He would see her as soon as he could squeeze in half an hour, he told me to tell her; she had to be content with that. It was that we talked about, that last night; there must be some way, we knew, that she could get to him, or Göring, or even the Leader himself. We would have arranged it, somehow, sooner or later; and then—this ghastly accident."

"You think it was really an accident?" His eyes probed my face.

"What else could it have been? She was Frau Germania, remember, beloved by everyone in Germany. She had no enemy. When I left her that night, she was discouraged, yes; but there was hope ahead. She was nervous, yes, from what had happened to you, to Konrad. I should have spent

the night there," I said mournfully. "I *did*, the first two nights after you disappeared, she was so dreadfully nervous." Suddenly it came to me, how brilliant to tell this much of the truth! "She herself half suggested it, that third night; but I had to appear for the Leader in a procession the next day, and I was too selfish. If I had stayed, she might never have tinkered trying to load that pistol, and would be alive today."

"You were my friend, throughout it all," he said, deeply moved by the simple story of those days. "And I, all I could hear was that she had been buried. Well, that is over. She died," he said it sorrowfully, "because I was not there to protect her. I was not there to protect her, because I raised my voice. This you do not know, Little Adolf." He stared at me earnestly. "I know I may trust you to the end. My butler reports to the Gestapo—I found proof of it, one day. I went to him and told him what I had discovered, and said I'd rather have a spy I was sure of, than one who was uncertain. Who in Germany is not a spy, these days? And so, that night, when we were talking about Herta and what had happened to her, I raised my voice, in some loose talk about what I intended to do; and so . . . Brandenburg."

"It was *loose* talk, then? You mean it, my friend? You did not mean all you said then?" I watched him earnestly. This would be agreeable music to Goebbels' ear! And, much as I detested him, he still meant power. As long as he had that dossier about me, there was much wisdom in loyalty to him.

"No. I've had time to think things over. There was one man responsible for what happened to me. I will kill that man, yet."

I kept my face rigid; but my heart jumped. Ach God, was it possible he *knew* what I had done—or even suspected it? In that case, I must certainly report to Goebbels that he was entirely subversive and intransigent. But I kept my voice steady, and found out it was not I. It was not for four months that I found out what man he really meant; and he paid it back with death. But I will admit then a most uncomfortable moment. I spoke: “You cannot mean Herr Goebbels!”

“No, not the Tainted One,* not the negroid Nordic dwarf, as his Nordic scientists have classified him. Not he. It is I myself, for talking too loosely and too loud. Each man kills himself in the end, by some intemperance, or some carelessness, or by letting the worn engine slip one cog. Not soon, though. Though, if I have much more of this imprisonment . . .”

“In confidence, dear friend, how *did* they treat you?”

He shrugged. “I am alive. Brandenburg is not as bad as Orienburg; they all say that, dear friend. But it is bad enough. How can words describe it? To eat slop that pigs would vomit at. Breakfast, each day we survived, dry bread and a cup of chicory. But even Germany has its coffee ration. So. Lunch, some slop called soup. Dinner, a bite of condemned sausage, or a little square of mouldy cheese or salted fish, usually spoiled. Horsemeat would have been a treat. Infinite filth. . . . Burlap bags filled with straw to lie on. Lice, bedbugs. . . . Three times a day, let out in squads to the filthy hall that was the latrine, with a gross guard shrieking out, ‘Quick, you bastards! Three minutes to defecate, one minute to urinate!’—and then one minute more each to dump his pot, flush it out,

* So many of the Ministry referred in private to Goebbels.

fill it with water again. We made our own foul beds. German gymnastics for an hour—at my age, and well and sick beaten to do everything in perfect rhythm! We were made to roll in the dirt, to toughen us. I did not have to root out the grass with my teeth, as the Jews were required to do; but I had to suffer while I saw it being done to them. And one sullen look called forth a steel rod or a rubber truncheon flailing against the abdomen; or some gross brute of a jailer, often drunk, having the prisoner held down while he danced on his abdomen and kidneys with his heavy heels. I was not beaten; plenty were. I have seen them carried out to be buried afterward. The Jews—no indignity too vile to inflict on them: jailers spitting in their mouths, in their food and drink, or fouling these worse. . . . And death even to protest—Ach God, Little Adolf, they are men too! Have we of Germany forgotten that? They were mistreated without ceasing—forced to amuse the rest of us—forced to strip and go through the most ghastly perversions alone and together before us.—Men, as we are men. Or has this thing made us somehow less than men? I do not know. Me, I was not beaten. But my soul was beaten; and I do not know if I would come out alive, if once again I am returned to that prison.”

“Erik, dear friend, what you tell me tears me to the heart. You know how close I am to the Leader—to all the Ministry, who woo me to get to the Leader’s ear. What if I pledge you this—that I will risk *my* freedom, in insisting either that you be turned loose, or that I be jailed too! What may I say to them *your* attitude will be, if you are wholly freed—and it is announced that your arrest was all a mistake?”

He considered me a long time. “It would save my life,

of course. Can one have less than all gratitude for that? As to my attitude, well, why was I jailed? Because hot-headedly I said a word that should have been left unsaid against the Minister for Propaganda. . . . I am to blame. If by the Leader's grace I am freed, I will serve the party as I always have. I can promise no more."

I clasped his hand jubilantly. "Then it is both of us in jail, from now on, or you free as I am free! Within the hour, if word of mine can achieve it, you will be brought before them, and freed! Only, if it *is* only before Goebbels," I warned him, "it might be sympathetic if you said you were convinced that the suggestion that he had done anything improper to Herta was a gross libel, invented to scandalize the administration."

He shrugged. "I live, if I am free; I will not survive, if I have to endure that again. I am not so young now. Do you think I will not watch my words? Besides, *he* is not the man really responsible. I will not forget." I shuddered again, but he spoke on. "One man only visited me in prison. A Reichswehr captain, who said he knew you. He sent word for you to be ready; that it would not be long."

My cheeks flushed. "But what did he mean? And who *was* he?"

Erik shrugged. "I tell all I know. I thought you would understand."

I let it pass at this. And so it was that Erik von Arnheim was restored to the service of the Party and the Reich. Goebbels told me the very next day that I had again been of distinct service to the cause; for the Leader was most anxious to use von Arnheim, in the ticklish negotiations leading to the joining of the stolen German Sudeten to the Reich again.

"He was surprisingly admirable in his apology," smiled the little vulture-faced gnome. "He had suffered a complete change of heart, he said. How could he be blamed for a sudden loss of temper, when he had been misled into believing that the arrest of Konrad Fuchs was unjustified? Yet he assured me, he said, that all the stories connecting me with Herta or his wife were scandalous libels. He only regretted that I had not been able to see Ulrica and do more for her; and he pledged me his personal support henceforth, as well as the undying devotion he had always given to the Leader, the Party, and the Reich. You did excellently, Little Adolf. You will be a famous diplomat yet!"

And so the whole matter ended splendidly for all of us, except impetuous Ulrica, and one other. But that part was still hidden in the near future. I did not then realize that, in releasing von Arnheim, I had indeed taken a step toward my own world greatness that would have been unbelievable to me then. But it is so that life's pattern functions. I have observed that simple devotion to duty, as witness my actions in this matter, often harvests an unexpected reward. I have observed, too, that rewards ultimately must be weighed in more than one set of scales. But this, too, is life.

Meanwhile, our eyes again were all cast to the east.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE FLOOD TIDE RISES

FOUR or five of us stood with the Leader in the ante-room at Nürnberg at that all-important Party Congress of September, 1938. Our car came first; but the Leader had to have his throat sprayed, as usual, for the speech to come. Göring, wearing so many medals he looked as if he were in mail, swaggered in with his party; after him scuttled Goebbels and the Propaganda representatives.

"Good morning, Shrimp," Göring sneered.

"How goes it, Doubleguts?" smiled Goebbels pleasantly.

Here was the Leader himself, strung tense like a cross-bow ready to shoot. "Well, my friends, what do we tell Germany, today?"

"Tell them we apologize for not having gone to war yet," blustered Göring. "We march tomorrow!"

"Tell them Germany is so powerful, no enemy will face her," said Goebbels swiftly. "Our maneuvers will be first east, and then west; and every step adds a foot to the Reich!"

Von Arnheim smiled. In this tension over the Sudeten and the foreign policy, ever since he had been released he had seemed to hover over the leader, as if to shield him with his wings. "Let's say everything but what we mean," he smiled. "Don't remind the world that England is our

best ally; that Lord Runciman in Prague has urged partition for Czechoslovakia, speaking of 'rectifying' the frontiers. That's too important to talk about."

Ribbentrop, close beside him, nodded. He felt stronger with von Arnheim at his side once more. "They're expecting war, Herr Hitler. They've all noticed the coincidence that it's the month for our maneuvers, with a million and a half men under arms, and a quarter of a million workmen strengthening the Siegfried Line. They expect war. Czechoslovakia's mobilized; but that isn't a good mouthful. France is entrenched in the Maginot Line, and the reserves called to the colors. The English fleet steamed into the German Ocean—but what is that but a gesture? War or peace, it is in your hands to decide, Leader. Germany wins, either way!"

He considered our faces earnestly, and smiled, like a sun emerging from behind clouds. He strode out on the tribune, while assembled Germany rose as one man to the salute and the hail. His hand won quiet at last. "Germany," his voice thundered, to the vast crowd, to the world tensely listening beyond, "will kneel to no power on earth. Heil Hitler!"

It was almost impossible to keep them quiet now; but he did it. "The German Reich today faces a disgrace that we should have extirpated many years ago. The thieving democratic nations are impotent in the face of Germany's might today. We will not permit the Reich to be plundered further, or raped again! Constant plundering irritates, and rape grows monotonous. The Judaized 'democratic' state that preceded our government let itself be blackmailed for fifteen years; we have ended that forever. We will no longer let an integral part of the German

Reich, the Sudeten, be further violated by the mongrel democratic hordes of Czechoslovakia!

"My friends," his voice was a trumpet now, "God never created the three and a half million Germans there to be plundered, tortured, ravished and outraged by the seven and a half million Czechs there! We will at once end this humiliation and oppression, in the name of the superior Nordic race! This has ceased to be a battle of words; from now on, it will be war—war to restore a violated right! With rejuvenated Italy standing beside rejuvenated Germany, there is no power on earth that can stop us! Heil Hitler!"

During the tense days that followed, I noticed that von Arnheim hovered over the Leader more than ever, as if to protect him even more than Brückner ever had from some ambiguous danger that menaced. We were at Der Berghof at Bechtesgaden, all of us, when word came that Chamberlain himself would fly from Heston aerodrome to us, to receive instructions from the Leader himself. It was colossal, summoning the rulers of the world to approach our throne and receive our will!

As we were going in to the final conference, Erik drew me aside, and nodded, smiling coldly, toward the man beside him. "I want you to meet my new aide, Captain von Wulle, Zeit. He is heart and soul in the fight for a rejuvenated Germany."

He was a Reichswehr captain, tall, with piercing blue eyes, and with his cloak still swirled around him. We gave the salutes, and I spoke formal words of pleasure. Three times before I had seen this man, and each time after some threat to the Leader's life. And now, to find him trusted high in the Party—it was astounding! "A new convert?"

I asked. For there are more and more of them; if they are to remain in Germany, there must be.

"No," smiled Erik, "his work has been more confidential hitherto. Germany's aims are in the open, now."

"Heil Hitler!" I said. It seemed the only answer to anything, in Germany.

In the conference, we stood back and watched the nervous English merchant receive his orders, and protest a little, and bow and scrape assent at the end.—All the Sudeten to be ceded to the Reich, and all other areas with more than half Germans; plebiscites in all other areas with German nationals; Czechoslovakia to divorce herself from England and France as allies, and to be neutralized; and a forever guarantee by the democratic nations of the rectified frontiers. In the end, the merchant premier thanked the Leader for his friendliness, and went back, promising to secure us the consent of France.

We drove back to Berlin, to let Chamberlain and Daladier and Bonnet convey our will to no-longer-to-be-feared Czechoslovakia.

In the Chancellery, von Arnheim summed it up for the Leader. "The rest is simple. They will ask for the Hague Court; good servant Chamberlain will say, Accept, or a war of extermination, in which you stand alone! The Pope will sob that they are mistreated; was he ever less than a thousand years behind the times? Benes must resign, and little one-eyed General Sirovy will take his place; and then good servant Chamberlain will fly back, to say his work is done."

"We were entitled to a war," insisted Göring. "We have not yet had one."

The Leader smiled softly. "Who knows? They give so

much, they will give more! He will come back. We will greet him at Godesberg this time; let him tour Germany on these errands. And this time, von Arnheim, I give him a headache! They will give more."

"Bravo, Herr Reichskanzler!"

But I was most interested in watching the occasional looks that he and Captain von Wulle exchanged. I could not reconcile myself that von Wulle was welcomed here in the Chancellery. I knew enough of agent provocateurs, and it might be that on these previous occasions he had been merely testing my loyalty. But it was carrying a test a long way to shoot at the Leader as part of it. I decided that a talk with Erik would be of value.

But where was one to secure time for a private talk, in those mad days and nights? So it was we whirled down to Godesberg, and we heard how cordially the English premier was greeted this time. "Practical men like you and I, Herr Chamberlain," smiled the Leader, "realize that Czechoslovakia is no nation, but a mongrel buffer state created by the Versailles Treaty, to cripple Germany forever; and we, in our manhood, are thwarting that murderous intention. You have brought with you the full acceptance of the government at Prague? Good! And now, to explain my terms a little clearer,—" And then he leaned forward, and said what he and Ribbentrop and von Arnheim had decided: a thousand miles more of territory than asked before; an eight day limit for unaccepting Czechs to move out of these reunited parts of the Reich; and a surrender of all munitions, rolling stock, radio and utility services, foods, cattle, raw materials, freight installations, everything, in the surrendered areas.

The Englishman turned very white when the Leader had ended. "But if they say *no*—"

"Then, we march! Good day, my good friend!" His face beamed with stern kindness. "You might say that this is the last German territorial design on Europe." It was only after Chamberlain left that we all sat around and laughed till our bellies ached at this joke.

"This time," said Göring, "maybe we get our war, no?"

"We would have a war," said von Arnheim coldly, "if we had no air fleet. It will come closer, this time. *We* will mobilize, and drink beer; England will stay up all night digging trenches against bombing in every park, every man's little garden."

"We will mobilize, and dine at the nightclubs; England will drink her afternoon tea in gasmasks. There will be no war."

It was the 26th, when the Leader made his magnificent speech at the Sports Palace. We were an army, now, every one of us in full uniform. Actual fighting had broken out in Habersparirk, in the Sudeten, with more than a thousand fighting on each side. France had started to yield; then Russia had said her Communist word, that she marched if France did, and France vacillated again. But the English papers hailed Hitler as the greatest German of all times.

I handed him, as he was about to enter for this great speech, this English editorial translated by me, and also a message from President Roosevelt translated by me. All he said was that endless talk would always prevent wars. If it was endless, yes; but how boring! "You may ignore both of them, Herr Hitler," I suggested.

He smiled, and patted my shoulder. One by one he let

the others enter first, to receive tremendous ovations. . . . Göring, Ribbentrop, even waspish little Goebbels. Then came Prince August Wilhelm, son of the old Kaiser, in a Nazi Reichswehr uniform, giving the Nazi salute and the "Heil Hitler!" Did the world seek to see the foul old order changed, and the humble soul of the people ruling? Look in every land on earth, but most in the greatest of all, the German Reich! A wandering Austrian artist, a Bavarian corporal, the most powerful man on earth! So it is today.

The Leader entered. He turned without words, and his hand leapt upward to the great legend over the platform:
SUDETEN GERMANS, WE WILL NEVER DESERT YOU!

It was a magnificent oration in itself. He hushed them tensely. "My friends, it is not a Leader or a man who speaks, but the entire German people! We despise all the democracies, for they are impotent while thousands are massacred. With Italy standing man to man at our side, and every German united as one, there is but one answer to be made: Germany's every demand must be granted! President Roosevelt has again asked us to talk and talk and talk and talk and talk. We have spoken our final word. Will it be peace, or war? Let Czechoslovakia decide! We are ready, and will win in either eventuality! Heil Hitler!"

On the morning of the 28th, the capital of the world was clearly the Chancellery dominating the Wilhelmstrasse. Yet already surveyors were swarming all along the Voss Strasse and the two adjoining streets, setting stakes for the demolitions that would lead to the new Chancellery, the greatest building in the world. So Germany

builds ever the future while the present is still being made.

Here the Leader, von Ribbentrop, and von Arnheim received the supplications of the entire world, and answered them as was their imperial will. All night long the divisions had passed through the capital, aimed for the Siegfried line on the western Rhine frontier, or for the little ant's nest of Czechoslovakia that we might have to smash forever tomorrow. All day long our gigantic Siegfrieds strode in and out—waddling old Field Marshal Göring, General Keitel, General Brauchitsch, Admiral Raedar, army lords and navy lords.

Von Arnheim tossed a dispatch over before the Leader, eyes intent on Göring's plan for immediate occupation of all Czechoslovakia. "England sees that every man does her duty," he chuckled. "Chamberlain has just announced that Czechoslovakia is too insignificant for England to fight over!"

"Bravo! Heil Hitler!"

Here was the Italian ambassador, with a desperate plea from Il Duce. The Leader had at first named October 1st for the attack; he had advanced this to today. Would he not grant the obstinate Czechs twenty-four hours more!

The Leader looked up at me, with a tired wink. He turned to the interpreter. "Tell his Excellency I am always at his service. It will be so."

The English ambassador, the French ambassador, came with their desperate pleas: the democracies offering anything to prevent the war. The Leader gave them what they were entitled to, no more.

At last he leaned back happily, with a complacent smile at the group of us. "Now it is time for my little circus to begin. The trained seals will jump through the hoops, no?"

Ribbentrop, take Zeit in with you. He understands that damned English language. If you two want to hear Chamberlain blubber when my message reaches him . . .”

We two hurried into an anteroom, where a radio was blaring out the session of the House of Commons in London. Yes, this was Chamberlain's voice coming over. I had heard him talk at Berchtesgaden, the first time we gave him an audition; and again at Godesberg, where he was so much chummier and so aghast at what the Leader had said. Blah—blah—blah . . . world catastrophe . . . agreement in principle already established. . . . Wouldn't Mussolini restrain the Reichskanzler. . . . And then, a sudden abrupt hush. The voice of the announcer coming over: "The Prime Minister has just been handed a memorandum by Sir John Simon . . . a letter." And now again Chamberlain's voice: "I have one thing more to inform the House. I have just been notified by the Führer that he has invited to meet him tomorrow morning in Munich Signor Mussolini, M. Daladier and myself. Signor Mussolini has signified his acceptance, and beyond question M. Daladier will do so, too. Gentlemen, I need not tell you what my answer will be: I will go to see what one last effort can do to preserve the peace of the world!" As his voice came over the air, it was choked with sobs. The announcer's voice picked up the story. . . . Chamberlain sitting down, tears streaming down his face. . . . Wild cheers, shouts, weeping, waving of paper from the staid M. P.'s: a scene unprecedented in the House of Commons. . . . Such is a democracy's reaction to any chance to avoid a war they have pledged themselves to fight!

Ribbentrop smiled brilliantly at me. "Go tell the Leader

they are weeping with rapture that Hitler mercifully gives the world one day more of peace! Heil Hitler!"

The Leader heard me with a tense smile on his strained face. "Good, good," he applauded. "They will learn. Von Arnheim," turning swiftly to the minister hovering forever so close above him, "send word to Munich that no envoy of any sort from Czechoslovakia will be allowed to near our conference hall, until we are ready for them. This is not *their* business, yet! Remind them," his nostrils sneered, "that this is today their great holiday, Marsaryk Day; warn them not to eat too much of the goose, for we will share the meal tomorrow. And then back swiftly, for word to the Italian ambassador. . . ." *

Just as we had finished our mad preparations for the ride down to Munich, we were called in to hear Prague on the air. "Another sell-out," was the burden of the whole broadcast.

"So it is, when one deals with democracies," smiled Hitler.

Naturally we had to leave in the early afternoon, to have dinner as desired at the Braune Haus. For the night, the Leader's party, all the members of the cabinet and their immediate suites, would of course be at the Continental. The Leader would have the royal suite of course; Von Ribbentrop, von Arnheim, and the rest of the Foreign Office group would be on the same floor; Göring and the army authorities and Goebbels and the Propaganda representatives on the floor above; and so on up. The rank and file could eat at the Café Heck in the Ludwigstrasse, and sleep at the Alpine and the Greater Bavaria Hotels. All was planned, as the fleet of cars drew up before the Chan-

cellery, the cavalcade that was to move the capital of the world from Berlin to Munich for one day.

Just as I was about to step into the fourth car, where the Leader sat tensely with Ribbentrop, the Italian ambassador gesticulating through the car window at him, the Leader snapped his fingers at me. "Heil Hitler! Herr Zeit, take at once this memorandum to von Arnheim—the ninth car. And hurry back!"

"Heil Hitler!"

This car I found where the fleet of cars turned beside the building into the broad avenue. "Heil Hitler! Ach, Erik, for you! The Leader says—"

"Heil Hitler! Herr Zeit," he spoke swiftly, "you know Captain von Wulle, my aide. This is Herr Klass. He has just returned from Peru. But thanks. . . ." His eyes fell to perusal of the memorandum.

"Heil Hitler!" I raced back to the Leader's car. But my eyes were troubled. Captain von Wulle smoked his cigarette in his left hand. It reminded me too much of times when I had seen him before. . . . That midnight visit when I was recovering from the poisoning taken instead of the Leader . . . in the fog that second time I met him, as I came out at dawn from the von Arnheim apartment . . . on the landing in the Kaisferhof, when the shot was fired that had missed the Leader. . . . And this Klass, I did not like his nose. But it was of course impossible. . . .

The Leader had the door open for me, when I returned at top speed. Von Ribbentrop, the Italian ambassador, were gone. "Quick please, my friend," he smiled at me. His voice trumpeted to the marshal of the cavalcade: "Forward, to Germany triumphant! Heil Hitler!"

"Forward! Heil Hitler!"

"Forward! Heil Hitler!"

So it was flung forward, man to man, to the chauffeur of the foremost car. The motors of all of them were alive. The chauffeur of the first car gave the Nazi automobile salute: "Honk *bonk-honk!*" This was recognized as the mechanized "Heil Hitler!" the length and breadth of the Reich. Each car in line responded: "Honk *bonk-honk!*" like a vast flock of patriotic geese.

The traffic officers screamed "Heil Hitler!" Everyone lined along the avenue, the massed clerks and underlings on the Chancellery steps, with hearts broken because they, too, could not go along, all screamed "Heil Hitler!" The very sparrows seemed to jitter aloud "Cheep *cheep-cheep!*" as if Heil-Hitlering too. One of them, flying above our car, with an upward flirt of his tail, dropped a swift salute on the fresh-polished radiator hood.

"God damned bastard," muttered the chauffeur.

"Heil Hitler!" "Honk *bonk-honk!*" "Cheep *cheep-cheep!*"

We were off, to save the world's civilization, by realizing at last the superior Nordic ideal.

But. . . . What was that murderous Reichswehr captain doing in von Arnheim's car, closer and closer to the Leader every day? And who was this strange Herr Klass, with the Talmud nose, backed into the darkest part of the seat beside him?

The Leader laid his hand on my lap. "Little Adolf," he said softly, "it was in Munich that I first found the German world. It was in Munich that I founded the Party, and started Germany on her rehabilitation as the greatest power in the world. It is fitting that it is in Munich that

we go now to complete the achievement of the dream of the German soul. Heil Hitler!"

"But naturally, my Leader," I said. "Heil Hitler!"

"Honk *bonk*-honk!"

"Cheep *cheep*-cheep!"

And so we started out.

CHAPTER XXIV

DEATH IN MUNICH

THERE were nine of us who sat down to dinner in the royal suite of the Continental that night. I had understood that we were all to have eaten at the Braune Haus. No, that was for the rank and file; not for the inner group that ran Germany and the world. There was the Leader; five of the Ministers, Göring, Goebbels, von Ribbentrop, von Arnheim, and Hess; myself; and in addition von Arnheim's new aide, Captain von Wulle, and Brückner, the Leader's devoted Adjutant.

Schaub was detailed to duty in the kitchen, where the dinner was being prepared; there were of course also Black-shirts here, there, everywhere. But just as we were waiting for the Leader himself to appear, Schaub signalled me aside to his room, and closed the door. "Come out, Trudy," he demanded, his voice chuckling.

Out stepped an utterly demoralizing blonde beauty, laughing-eyed, giggling. "Wicked one," she laughed.

"Look what *I* captured, Zeit! Would you believe that the Leader's special chef tonight is married to *all* this prettiness!" He sat on the bed and pulled her down on his lap. "Ach, can't you duck the first few courses and enjoy this as an appetizer?"

He rolled her over face down, and bunched up her

skirts. Evidently he had already reached much of an understanding with her. "The naughty little bitch wanted to postpone me until tomorrow morning!"

If anything could have tempted me, that vision would. There is nothing so beautiful in the world, I have observed, as the rump of a German woman. It is the rump of the cow, I have observed, that is the object of major interest to the bull; and to the stallion it is the rump of the mare, and so with all animals. Never was to me so poignant the inconvenience of being the double to a man blind to such obvious beauty.

He gave to each rear cheek a loving pop with his strong hand, and rolled her over. "Well, you say what?"

"Ach, if I can, later! Save her for me. But I would be sent to the People's Tribunal if I was not on hand in my seat for the soup. Auf wiedersehen, you lucky bastard!" She was burrowing into his neck, and giggling invitingly at me. I gave her one kiss, as he held her, and hurried back to the dining room.

They were sitting down, as I entered. The Leader's face, I noticed, shone brilliantly, triumphantly; gone was the worry that had seamed it for weeks. "Friends," he lifted his glass of water, "to the German will—a world all Nordic—mankind's highest achievement!"

We lifted our glasses and toasted it so. But I hoped for wine later, and maybe brandy. There was always Erik's coat, with the handy flasks.

"When you snap your fingers, they come," said Göring, with a huge belch, as he applied himself to the soup.

"A packed court, too, as should be," smiled Goebbels evilly. "Chamberlain and Daladier—they want nothing, but to be re-elected because they have prevented war.

They would gladly give us Poland, the Ukraine, to win the next election. Ugh! But you, Herr Hitler, and Il Duce. . . . So long as the representatives of the democracies hold their hands up in the air, *you* two do not mind what they say!"

"Only *you*, my Leader," smiled von Arnheim carefully, leaning over as if he were shielding the Leader. "The Italian capon still crows; but the eggs are all laid in *your* nest."

"It is my fourth meeting with the Modern Caesar." The Leader sipped his soup with finikin relish. "One of these days he will learn that each Augustus had his Caesars beneath him, no? My fourth meeting. . . . Four was always lucky to me. I was born in April, the fourth month. I am the fourth of the great conquerors—Alexander, Caesar, Napoleon, myself. Berlin is my fourth home: Branau, Vienna, Munich, and now the world capital. This is our fourth acquisition: the Saar, the Rhineland fortifications, Ostmark, the Sudeten. This is the fourth word on the Sudeten: Karlsbad, Berchtesgaden, Godesberg, and now Munich. Yes, four is always lucky with me."

"He is a happy Caesar to glow in the shadow of so great an Augustus," said von Arnheim delicately.

"Chamberlain I like," said the Leader frankly. "He boasts of being a respectable tradesman. A tradesman always sees reason, when he observes a sword. Daladier I have never seen. I have a lesson for him later; I have heard that he repeats with gusto the insult of Marshal Foch, that the only way to achieve French dominance would be to castrate thirty million Germans.* I do not like such vulgar jokes. He is the sort of leader, in a democracy, whose first

* The Leader's error for 20,000,000, the figure Foch gave.

ministry lasted only four days! He thinks he looks like Napoleon; and they call him the Bull!"

Von Arnheim smiled. "In the United States, bull has the colloquial meaning of bull-pudding."

"That is more correct," smiled the Leader.

"I suggest ox, for the modern degenerate Frenchman," said Göring.

"This is such a small beginning," smiled Hitler, almost to himself. "Yet a necessary one. Even the Democracies must approve of the theory of the plebiscite. Clearly, what is left of Czechoslovakia is a Vienna sausage squeezed in the center; it disfigures the map, and we will cure that. The Ukraine has wheat and oil, power and cotton; and that we will get by degrees, and have something to say to Stalin at the end, no? To make Europe all Nazi will be slow; but it will come. First to make the Black Sea a German lake, no? Then it will be time enough to do the little things. . . . Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, so close to Königsberg; Switzerland, which by then will be ready for a plebiscite; the Polish Corridor, and statehood for Poland soon after; and then, the three little kingdoms occupying our shores on the German Ocean, increasingly ready for absorption. What an immense saving, when all these need no fortifications against us, but only the widening ring against France, against Russia, against . . ." But he did not end it. He smiled craftily, and we all nodded gravely.

"Europe must be all Nazi," he said firmly. "It is our mission. We will not fail." By now the waiters had removed the soup plates, and brought in the next course. The Leader's omelet, done to that perfection which only a Bavarian cook can achieve, was placed before him first. He sniffed the aroma with delight. "Like Czechoslovakia,"

he equipped himself with knife and fork, and studied the viand with a little twinkle in his eyes, "I shall carve it up. Only some of that mongrel land will be served to Hungary and Poland soon, to hold in trust for us; and *all* of this will be gobbled up by myself! Yours is not overdone?" with a careful scrutiny of Marshall Göring's huger dish.

"Mostly air," sniffed the huge general. "But it is done to perfection. Not so much to get a man's teeth in," he grumbled, with a heavy wink, "but full of vitamins, mineral salts, and rooster glands, no doubt. Mushrooms, hein, and pimientos— Ach, and a little cheese! It's filling, God be thanked."

"Barbarian," the Leader smiled, chewing each portion of his own omelet carefully. "Sometimes I think that you're still in the cannibal stage."

"Sooner or later, it may be necessary. But we still absorb the Ukraine before that, no? Or can I have a war for that yet?"

"Tomorrow, we open the door," said the Leader. But I noticed a strange thing, that there were beads of sweat on his forehead, like beads of water on beams in damp cellars. And he was moving his jaws much more slowly than usual, as if each movement was difficult to finish. But he stuck at it doggedly. Then he looked up, and saw my eyes fixed so on his face. "We had a long ride today, Little Adolf," he said apologetically.

"Car-sick, no?" asked Goebbels, with a sour little snicker. "They moved like planes. Ach, those new roads are superb! Soon no country in the world has roads like ours!"

Meticulously the Leader laid his knife and his fork on

the rim of his plate. "One moment, I go to the bathroom—"

He tried to rise from his seat, and he was almost straightened up, but with his features scrunched up and his eyes so narrowed they had disappeared. Then with startling suddenness he slumped back on his chair. "Ach," he half groaned.

Göring was deep in the violation of his great dish, which he was shoveling up as if into a bottomless pit. Ribbentrop was toying daintily with his omelet. Goebbels seemed withdrawn, as if listening to the words rather than bothering with the food; as if trying to see what words and deeds must come after these. Von Arnheim and I alone seemed to show a genuine interest in the Leader.

"Can I get anything?" I asked, my face whitening.

"You're not feeling too well? Perhaps—" Von Arnheim's face was all solicitude.

"My stomach—" The Leader kept his control magnificently, in spite of the sharp sudden spasms of pain that twitched across his face. "—Disordered. —Nothing." He tried again to rise. "—Indigestion," he half sobbed it out. "Damn! —Acute. Get Doctor—" His eyes closed, his body began sliding down off the chair seat under the table.

"He's not well," snapped Goebbels suddenly, belatedly pulled back to what was happening. "Send for Dr. Anton!"

Von Arnheim rose swiftly. So, I noticed, did Captain von Wulle, as if eager to be of service before his chief spoke. "Brückner," said Erik sharply, "go to the door, and send Schaub on the run for Dr. Anton. The Leader and Herr Zeit are both indisposed." He made each word very clear. I looked astounded; I felt all right. But he continued,

in complete charge of the situation. "Stand in the hall, then, and let no one in. Absolutely no one. It is no doubt nothing. Don't let anyone know that either of them is so tired out. Everything is all right. Heil Hitler!"

The huge Adjutant, happiest when obeying commands, saluted with a swift "Heil Hitler!" and passed out of the door. Luckily, Schaub had returned to his post, for I heard the order transferred, and his heavy feet running down the hall.

"Bellyache," laughed Göring, in a huge rumble. "Such belly-bilge as omelets, instead of a man's food, makes me feel sickish too. Lay him on the couch," noticing the Leader's blank strained face.

"Friends," he spoke. But his voice died away in a mumble.

Four of us got him to the couch, loosened his coat, his tie, his shirt. But this was incredible, on the eve of our greatest victory over all Europe, all the world!

"I feel all right," I reassured von Arnheim.

He pierced me with a look. "This is poison, I am afraid. Tell him to hurry that Doctor, Zeit, for God's sake! No," with a sudden reversal, "Sigmund, *you* tell him."

"Then send Schaub in to *me*," said Goebbels vindictively to von Arnheim's aide.

"No," said Erik curtly. "Not till we *know*, Herr Minister."

Goebbels shrugged with ugly grace. "As you will."

Here was Dr. Anton, and another doctor behind him; and in a moment he had taken entire charge. We stood by with troubled faces. What an absurd interruption to our plans! I remembered how sick it had made me, the time I got poisoned by mistake for him; how could to-

morrow's business be done, if there was to be such a sickness now? Unless, of course, they'd call on *me* again; after all, the way things were, it did not seem they could keep Germany running without me. And I wrinkled my nose in deeper disgust. I had not forgotten the blonde Trudy that Schaub had captured, and I had been scheming how I could manage an hour with her, when this dinner was over. And now this had to come to spoil even that!

They all stood between me and the Leader now, and all I could hear was his heavy stertorous breathing. The other doctor threaded through them somehow, went to the door, and came back. In a few moments, two more doctors had arrived. It was a stomach pump, I was sure, that one of them was carrying.

"Organic," I heard one doctor say. "Instantaneous, practically." Only words drifted through the huddle of men bending over the suffering man.

"The emetic won't work. Sacrament! —Nerves paralyzed."

"Try this hot saline. —Slowly. . . ."

"There *must* be a purge. —Castor oil is best."

"Here's the brandy."

—For the Leader! A good thing he was unconscious, or he would have never let them hear the end of this. It fermented the food in the stomach, he always said.

"Got that oxygen tank? Hurry please!"

I could hear his groans now, so low, so heartrendingly hideous. It was not like a man, it was like an animal dying. That was all a man was, I thought suddenly: animal in the way he was made, in the way he was born, animal much of his life, all animal in his dying. And I myself groaned. When we took every precaution against such a

thing happening, how was it possible that it could happen, in Munich of all places? And at a time like this! Well, I threw back my shoulders, and began to prepare the way I would greet these three men, Daladier the stranger, Chamberlain whom I had given orders to three times, Mussolini who was learning to take orders now. I was sure I could do it in a way that would earn even higher praise from him than he had ever given me. "My good friends, the problem is simple. We are quite willing to let Czechoslovakia reorganize, *provided*. . . ." Aha, there was where I would say it!

"More air for him, there!"

I looked up swiftly. The others moved away from where the Leader lay. I could see now that his face looked like the face of a dead man, putty-colored, almost blue, except for those horrible pleading eyes, still alive, still begging for release from the pain tearing him to pieces. Well, *I* had been poisoned; *I* knew what it was like. I felt really sorry for him. And then I had had no double to take my place, those weary three weeks in the hospital; he was a lot luckier than I.

Dr. Anton came over and joined the clot of Cabinet Ministers. I moved closer. "It's an organic poison, yes—we have no idea what. But we should bring him around. Damned shame to spoil your dinner so, gentlemen."

"Omelet," sneered Göring. "I go out and get myself some sauerbraten with potato pancakes, no! And beer, plenty of beer."

Von Arnheim looked inquiringly at Goebbels. "For us, too, brandy?"

Goebbels' limp was more noticeable than usual, as he thumped over to the door and gave the order. "Let me get

Schaub," he demanded truculently. "I'll put every damned bastard in the hotel under arrest! Every damned bastard in Munich!"

"This may be more serious," said von Arnheim tensely. "We do not want to advertise this, no?"

"He's right," said Ribbentrop fretfully. "God, at a time like this, of all times, with all Europe arriving tomorrow!"

"Lightning hits," grunted Göring. "Once is too often."

The brandy came, and it released the tongues of all of us. The doctors were huddled more than before over the gasping body of the Leader. Ribbentrop lit a cigarette. The rest of us followed his example.

"He's been going it at a high pace for a long time," said Goebbels slowly. "I have urged more rest on him.—Massages! But, no, so much was to be done. . . ."

"Resistance weakened, eh?" asked Ribbentrop. "Yes, nature takes its toll. Everything he has to do himself!"

"But he has the stamina of an ox," said von Arnheim. "He can do things no other living man can.—Endurance."

"Doctors are a lot of fools," grunted Göring, with an ill-favored look at Goebbels—"The Doctor," to most of us. "Why don't they fix him up? Holy Christ, don't the bastards realize that this is the Leader!"

Goebbels hand arced wide, slowly. "One body, like the rest of us. One brain. One heart. When *it* stops. . . ." He stared at the wall.

"If he *dies*," suggested Göring. Only he would have dared say it.

"Well, he won't—he *can't*," said Ribbentrop violently. "What would we *do*?"

Captain von Wulle, who had stood silently on the out-

skirts of the group across from me, looked straight at me with his burning blue eyes, and with his left hand lifted his brandy glass slightly toward me.

It was then for the first time that I knew that the Leader was going to die. And then I did feel sick at the stomach. I felt it would have been easier if it was I who had taken the poison.

"He won't," said Goebbels aggressively. "It is unthinkable."

Von Arnheim's eyebrows lifted. But he said nothing.

Dr. Anton came toward us, his narrow face channelled with worry. "Gentlemen, he's sinking."

"Do something," said little Goebbels, almost in agony, himself now. "For God's sake, it's the Leader!"

"He's a man, too," the Doctor shook his head. "If there were anything else we *could* do . . ."

We moved our feet so quietly, until all of us were ringed around the couch, but not as close as before. His cheeks had fallen in, his face was more clearly blue now.

His lips were moving, now. Goebbels suddenly leaned forward with terrible intensity, his ear close to the dying man's lips. But we knew the word he was forming before Goebbels told us.

"Geli," Goebbels whispered, his face incredulous.

Convulsive shudders, oh so faint, passed like sudden shadows over his sunken face now.

Goebbels kept his ear close. He raised his face at last. "*Mutter!*" he whispered. "He calls his mother!"

The Leader's head seemed to fall back, as if it were no longer connected with his body. His hands fell wide, one sliding off until it almost touched the floor.

Dr. Anton knelt above him, his ear at the Leader's heart.

He rose to his feet without a word, he removed his glasses, pulled out a clean handkerchief, and polished them industriously. He held them up to the light and polished them again. Only then did he put them on again. "Well, gentlemen," he said quietly, "he is dead."

CHAPTER XXV

I AM THE RESURRECTION

MUCH clicked and slotted in the brains of every man in that room, as the doctor spoke those five words. Later on each one of them told me what were his thoughts, at that black moment for the Party, for Germany, for Europe, for the world. But then, I could know only what I was thinking: and it was grief, great and overwhelming grief, grief for myself and this tragic blow to my prospects in life; for now my job was over, and what work could I do next? What other work was I suitable for? What could I turn to, in the interim? I recalled what Captain von Wulle had said, about Hollywood, in unsympathetic America. Look with what insults they had there greeted Leni Reifenstahl, when *she* arrived there! And noble young Vittorio Mussolini, fresh from his imperial conquests in Ethiopia! No, that did not seem promising. If they decided to do all the other Grimm's fairy tales before they got around to Herr Hitler, I might indeed starve to death first. No, my job was over; and I could not imagine what work I could do next. Unless, of course, in the espionage. There there was a chance. After all, Goebbels had used me, he might be willing to use me still, and it was work that I felt I was especially fitted for.

"Germany dies too," said Goebbels dismally.

"Ach yes? Not with *me* left!" said Göring ferociously.

"Not with any of us left," said Reichsminister Hess sadly. "We live out his will, as he would have wished." Hess had been his beloved disciple; yet too mild to be more than a willing worker.

"Not with *him* left," said Erik von Arnheim, his index finger picking me out and seeming to transfix me against the wall, like a specimen moth pinned. "What else is there to do? We *must* have the Leader for the conference tomorrow, no? They will listen to him, and him only. It cannot be otherwise. Well, what is Little Adolf for!"

"But he *can't* masquerade for a dead man!" said Ribbentrop, crossing himself. "How *could* he!"

"Who is dead, after all?" purred von Arnheim, raising his eyebrows. "Do you gentlemen see, now, why I told Brückner that Little Adolf—Herr Ludwig Zeit—was ill, as well as the Leader? Little Adolf dies; the Leader lives on. What else is there for us to do?"

"Ach, I will not stand for it!" said Göring fiercely. "We will have the Party elect a new President, a new Chancellor! And my Reichswehr will keep order, and my Blackshirts!"

Goebbels looked up sharply, and so did all of us, at that possessive *my* that he had used twice. But Goebbels spoke first. "Ach yes you will, Field Marshal." His twisted little face blazed. "No man in Germany will be permitted to spoil the conference tomorrow. Later on, if you wish, when it is timely, we may announce what we please.—Kill off Little Adolf, with my full permission. But not with the conference tomorrow! Who *but* the Leader among us could now make all Europe do as we wish?"

"If we'd only *started* the war," said Göring bull-

headedly. "By God, I'd defy the world, then, no matter *who* died! Maybe *that* would be better! Look, we're all mobilized; we call off the conference—call it off this moment. By God, we are in the Sudeten by dawn, and you think the democracies would stand in our way then? They're too paralyzed to act. Sure, keep Little Adolf as the Leader, then—he can review the troops, he can have his picture in all the papers—but give us a war! This is a sign from heaven!"

For a moment, I could see that they were almost persuaded, even the doctors. But Goebbels shook a decided head. "When we can get it all *without* a war, why waste our energies? The war comes soon enough. Each day we are stronger, and the rest of the world weaker. No, gentlemen, Herr Zeit is dead, Herr Hitler lives! I call on each of you in this room—"

It was my hour to speak, at last. "No," I flung with sudden violence at them. "I could not do it! I would not know what to do, to say! They would be too much for me! While he was alive, yes; but I won't, I won't, I won't, now! I can't, gentlemen! You *must* see that!"

Von Arnheim's head nodded swiftly, and Captain von Wulle was beside me at once, his pistol out, boring into my ribs. "It is either that," he said quietly, "or I shoot you now."

"—As a conspirator," said von Arnheim suddenly. "—Attempt on the Leader's life. We'll make out, somehow. Decide!"

I knew that he was bluffing; I sensed already how skilfully he had schemed. But that pistol was not bluffing. "Oh," I moaned. "If I only could! It is much harder work

—and what is the pay you have been paying me? Gentlemen, I've got to be sure—you'll all stand by me?"

"With pistols out," said Erik, giving me no friendly look.

"Little Adolf—and this is the last time I will call you that," said Goebbels suavely, "you are the greatest actor in Germany, no? You, yourself, know it too. You have lived with the Leader for five years and more, until you can in a moment be more Herr Hitler than he was himself. You speak as he speaks, think as he thinks, *are* him. It will be the easiest thing in the world. Each day you merely take his place for one day only. Forget what happened tonight; no one will ever know. He will inspire you. We will counsel you. The world needs his name, his face, his words, his thoughts. You have all these.—The greatest actor in Germany, in the world! You will do this, for the sake of the Party, Germany, the world! Heil Hitler!"

Nothing could have won me but his appreciation of my skill as an actor. Naturally, that I was extremely proud of. I stood pale and erect. One by one their arms sloped upward and forward in the salute. One by one the words rolled out from each of them, "Heil Hitler!"

Automatically I gave the response: "Heil Hitler!"

"Gentlemen," said Goebbels swiftly, including the awed doctors now also in his darting, vulture glance, "I call on each of you in this room to raise his hand to the German God, and to all other gods, and to swear on his sacred word of honor that no word of what has happened in this room shall ever be revealed to the world—not before death, and not after it! If any break his word, each of the rest of us pledges his soul to take personal vengeance by

death on the recreant promise-breaker, at once! Do you swear this oath?"

"I swear," said Erik von Arnheim firmly.

One by one the others gave the oath. I, only, they did not ask to swear; no doubt Goebbels forgot I was now more than a mere double.

I walked over and stared down at the face of the dead Leader. "Ludwig Zeit," I said quietly, "was a faithful servant to me and the Fatherland, and it is a great pity that he has had to give his life to save me yet again. Carry him out. Announce, not that there has been poison, but an attack of acute indigestion." So I rose to the emergency magnificently.

"—And a weak heart," prompted Goebbels.

I nodded. "—Superinduced by a heart constitutionally weak. These have caused the death of this faithful body-guard. In spite of this shadow over our dinner, gentlemen, we will regard it as a happy augury. The Party does not die; the Reich does not die; the German world can never die. Heil Hitler!"

Goebbels made a bit of a wry face, and Göring was quite sulky; but each of them gave the response.

"Tell Brückner, Adolf," ordered Goebbels. I shivered a trifle; I was sure that it was the first time he had ever used that first name. Evidently he had wanted to use it; he used it quickly enough, now.

I wheeled, and started for the door, before I remembered my wig, the wax in my nostrils. Von Arnheim, and then Goebbels, lifted hands toward me, as if to restrain me; but I had remembered first, and had the wig off, the wax out, in a moment. Göring, with a strained look, reached for the Leader's worn dogwhip. He looked me over

from head to foot, and cracked it viciously once toward me. Then he handed it to me. My flesh crawled at the cruel sound. Yet it was mine, from now on.

I lifted my eyebrows inquiringly. They all nodded satisfaction. Captain von Wulle opened the door for me. "Brückner," I called him in, my face lined, my voice heavy—though how I kept it from wavering I still do not know—and spoke to him: "What has happened in this room is entirely confidential; it must never get out. Zeit's had a heart attack. He's dead."

"Ach, the poor boy!—Poison?" His eyes glittered savagely.

"Thank God, no. Acute indigestion, weak heart; that is all. The body will be taken out secretly. Friends," I turned to the Cabinet Ministers, "if you'll come into my study. . . ."

"*Sauerbraten*," grumbled Göring. But he too came.

I walked ahead, as the Leader would have done. As the Leader *did*; I must never again forget that I was the Leader, from now on.

It was a wild session we had, lasting nearly all night. All that Hitler was to have said had been written down, luckily for me. Ribbentrop, von Arnheim, Goebbels, all had copies of it. In a few minutes we had the Gestapo heads in, and enough given out about Ludwig Zeit's omelet to cut off half a dozen heads. And then we turned to the conference for tomorrow.

It was agreed, of course, that we would stand on the Godesberg memorandum, and demand that we enter the Sudeten by Saturday; and that by then the Czech troops be gone, to the last one of them. Daladier, a memorandum said, was to suggest a mere occupation of Asch and Eger,

and the rest by easy stages; with Italian, French, and English troops occupying the plebiscite areas. And I knew our answer to that, to yield a little and demand a lot. I knew it all so well already—I had been present at every conference where our course was decided upon. And I had even his words to say, written by himself. But they made me go over it again and again, until I was wearied out, and so were they.

By now, though, all this coaching, drilling, preparation was all unnecessary. I had recalled what my uncle at Nürnberg had taught me so carefully: Opportunity knocks once only, and it is wise then to open the door. Admit that a natural humility had made me at first a trifle reluctant to undertake this tremendous assignment for the Fatherland, that humility was gone, now, like dew vanished before the sun. I knew that I could do the task as I, the Leader, should do it; better than even he himself could have done it. There was nothing more to be said.

The Munich conference is history. How proudly I walked beside Il Duce over the cobbled streets, rather sorry that he was an inch or more short of being quite a man; and wondering if indeed it was not one of his doubles walking beside me. Ciano came just behind us, as gay as a university boy, and Göring had on a fixed simper that should have let everyone know that things were at least not going to his liking. It seemed strange to have men representing a whole country without uniforms on; yet such was the troubled little Frenchman, growing bald, with the ridiculous remnants of his hair pulled down toward his nose; and the harassed old English merchant, still bundling along his umbrella.

Five hours and a half, and it was all ended. Even Cham-

berlain in this time I easily instructed to sign a brief two-power treaty of eternal amity with me, substituting consultation for war. Thus danger of attack from our rear was largely averted—for increasingly France grows too weak in man-power to annoy us; and we could turn more freely to our destiny to the east.

I attended the funeral of poor Ludwig Zeit. I had not been allowed to take part in the erection and dedication of the tombstone to Maximilian Bauer, more than five years before; but this was a state occasion, as befitted one of the most loyal of my bodyguard.

I myself spoke at the funeral. I held up the life of Ludwig Zeit as an object-lesson to every German. He had played his humble part, I pointed out, in lifting Germany from a mere 60,000,000 that we had been left by the iniquitous Versailles Treaty, to the 78,700,000 and more Germans now in the Reich. There was only one real power left in Europe, our magnificent ally Italy. France and England could no longer be regarded as first class powers; although the loose backing England's overseas dominions gave her kept her from being entirely negligible in world affairs still.

It was a symbol of resurgent Germany, I pointed out, that the death of this faithful son of the Reich on the very eve of the Munich Pact had not slowed down our progress in the slightest, in this the greatest year of German achievement. For this was the year of the Anschluss, when my native Austria returned unanimously to its Fatherland; and the year of the reclamation of the oppressed millions of Germans in the Sudeten. More than this, the Jew in Middle Europe was being increasingly shown that his homeland was Palestine, and it was time for him to go

home. —They laughed hilariously at this; even a funeral can evoke a good hearty laugh in Germany. —Had not the one Jew in the Irish Parliament, Robert Briscoe, said that half of the Jews in Europe might be described as surplus—that is, Jews whose immediate removal would improve the condition of those remaining? We agreed with this M. P., I said, except that we included the other half in the surplus also.

And then my voice grew stern. Throughout the Reich now these poisonous toads, these parasites on superior races, were forbidden increasingly to enter in any of the businesses and trades. Jewish doctors were forbidden to occupy rented premises, or live in flats with windows on any main street. The state schools and universities were sealed against the Talmud spawn, and naturally no Aryan was to be permitted to run the risk of contamination by working in a Jewish household, even though he starved for lack of employment. And every Jew must be badged by being named Sarah or Israel, and all Jews hereafter must have only such swine-names as we permitted them to have. Moreover, we had closed down the Catholic schools in Austria, those hotbeds of homosexual corruption, and Protestants were being increasingly taught that the Reich came first, and the German God second, and no alien god must be considered at all. To all of this, Ludwig Zeit had bravely contributed his all. Heil Hitler!

Captain von Wulle had been named my aide, though not by me. He and Erik von Arnheim rode back to the Chancellery with me.

“You gave him a nice send-off,” said Erik amiably.

“After *our* cooperation,” said von Wulle firmly.

"The doctors were baffled," I suggested mildly. I was naturally all curiosity to know more.

"Our acquaintance Moritz Klass, when he had to leave Germany because he was no Aryan, decided to go to Peru. He is a Ph.D. in Chemistry, of course. He investigated certain organic poisons used by the Indians, that have no antidote. He could tell you more about it," Captain von Wulle smiled austerely, "if unfortunately he did not have to proceed straight through to the Swiss border. He is a man without a homeland. But he told me that he had a little debt to pay in Germany, and I imagine he did not forget to pay it."

"A Jew!" I gasped. "Why, he was in your car!"

"Naturally, as soon as we found out that he was not an Aryan, we permitted him to depart. At Munich, that was," said the captain. "It seems the Jews pay their debts, too."

"I never told you, Herr Hitler," von Arnheim addressed me softly, "that, when I was confined in Brandenburg, I made my appeal to the Leader himself. He told me it was his will that Goebbels held me there. I pay my debts, too."

"I am a Catholic," said Captain von Wulle firmly. "I have seen the Bible publicly burned in Nazi Germany. I pay my debts too."

"This seems to be an age of debt-paying in Germany," I said. I toyed with the worn dogwhip I always carried now. It did not restore my ease of mind.

"Perhaps you have one little debt you will not forget," said Erik quietly. "You were Ulrica's friend to the last, yes, and I am always grateful for that. As for the Jews, I am a German; and I know the Party's attitude, and Germany's attitude. I thank God I am not one of the

circumcized. But, Herr Hitler," he stared at me directly, "there are five of us who compose your camarilla, your inner cabinet, from now on—is it not so? Hess we can forget. Göring the berserk elephant, Goebbels the sly evil-plotter, Ribbentrop the diplomat, and we two. You will not forget that we are two; and that we two spoke what was finally decided, which accounts for your being where you are."

I was quite moved by his appreciation of what I had done for Ulrica. "I will remember my debts, my friend, and pay them."

"This will call for a reminder, from time to time," he said, smiling in a cold fashion that was not quite comfortable. "But I am sure that a faint reminder will be enough."

I thought suddenly of a picture I had seen of five lions tugging at the five corners of a prey they had pulled down. It was not a reassuring thought, at just that moment.

CHAPTER XXVI

"LITTLE MAN, WHAT NOW?"

I NEED not have been nervous about the success of my performance; since there was no reason for anyone to suspect anything, no one did suspect anything. My task resolved itself down to listening carefully while my five advisers made up my mind; and then announcing this to the Reich. On October 4th I was driven to Karlsbad, in the third Sudeten zone just that day occupied, and here I spoke to my new fellow countrymen, telling them of Germany's high ideal of more and more oppressions of the Jews. The next day, in Berlin, it was decided I was to announce to the world that this Christmas would be a festival of peace. And I renamed the Siegfried Line, dedicated public works, and in general orated through the Reich. But all of these were on peaceful occasions, and they were not filling to the German soul.

And then, in Paris, November 7th, occurred just what we had been waiting for. We had a third secretary at the embassy there named Ernst vom Rath, who had been invalided home from Calcutta with tropical fever, non-venereal. Luckily for us, a seventeen-year-old German-Jewish emigrant living in Poland, named Herschel Grynszpan, decided to avenge the persecutions of his race by making for himself a Nordic martyr; and by chance this vom Rath got the bullet.

The moment word of it came to the Chancellery, the six of us went into excited executive conference about it. "Friends," I made it clear, "it is a shot at the entire German people! This Grynszpan should be denounced throughout the Reich, and ultimately have his head chopped off!"

"Denounced!" sneered Göring! "Castrated, drawn and quartered, if I lay hands on him. But we have Jews nearer home it is easier to hit, Herr Hitler!"

Von Arnheim shook his head. "If you wear 'em all out with mistreatment, they might actually leave, all of 'em; and who could we mistreat then?"

"If vom Rath dies," shouted Göring, "we jump on *all* the Jews in the Reich! It's either that, or my men jump on me!"

A bitter row developed. Goebbels sided with Göring; Ribbentrop was more moderate, saying our foreign policy would be shot to hell by any further oppressions; and von Arnheim and von Wulle saw no need for monthly pogroms. I tried to reconcile these ideas; all I got for my pains was to be called imbecile, nitwit, superannuated ham actor.

"But I have the army!" sneered Göring finally. "Watch me!"

"And I have the propaganda," jeered Goebbels. "Watch me!"

"And I have a headache," I said mournfully. "Please to excuse me, to take two tablets of Nordic aspirin. Heil Hitler!"

Well, vom Rath died; and I was allowed to read in the Party press all that happened. It was the most orderly rioting in history, done with complete German efficiency.

The Brownshirts were most aggressive, the Blackshirts often helping. Every Jewish shop was wrecked, and the goods looted; and the Jews were then fined for this. The synagogues were all burned and the Jews fined for this. Jewish men so tactless as to be on the streets had their teeth knocked out, or were dumped in the river, pneumonia often resulting. Others were merely beaten until they died. Of the tens of thousands put in concentration camps, thousands died, and their ashes were usually mailed home to their families, without explanations. Jewish boys and girls were beaten and abused by the patriotic Hitler Youth. Von Arnheim himself told me what happened in Moritz Klass's house. They found him away. They broke all the china and pictures, made a bonfire of the books, cut the carpet into strips, and then beat Frau Klass all over the body with their fists, finally holding her down on the floor and kicking her and walking on her. She was of course confined to her bed after this. As a rule, the women were not molested in public.

On November 12th we officially stopped the rioting, and decreed justice against those at fault. That is, we fined the Jews 1,000,000,000 marks, and required them at once to repair the damage done by wrecking, looting and arson on shops, homes and synagogues. In addition, we forbade Jews to engage in retail and other businesses, and announced that all Jewish property in the Reich must be transferred to Nordic hands, in return for annuity bonds. It was agreed among us that something would be done about these bonds, to make sure they never matured.

The most inexplicable feature of this example of Nordic justice was a series of uncalled-for comments made by President Roosevelt of the United States. The whims of a

democracy are unpredictable; except that as a rule they never have a whim to fight. Much more vital was Goebbels' discovery that Jews still owned 60% of Berlin real estate; and that, in spite of our five years' campaign, they owned proportionately four and a half times as much wealth as Aryans. Well, at least we could all set to work at once to reverse this inequality. The very next day, we affixed a 20% capital tax on all Jewish property, to be paid in cash. In an emergency like this, Nordic justice must not falter!

So far, all the rounds in the free-for-all that the cabinet meetings had become had gone to Goebbels and Göring. On the morning of December 22, von Arnheim was shown into the Chancellery very early. "Heil Hitler! Good morning, Herr Reichskanzler," he greeted me. "What! Herr Goebbels has not limped around yet?"

I frowned at the unfriendliness. "Do you expect him so early?"

He chuckled. "To be frank, no. I imagine it will be some weeks before he bids you good morning, now!"

"Why, Erik, what do you mean!"

His face grew sterner. "Part of it's ancient history, by now. You remember the 'libel,' as you called it, just as we were marching into the Sudeten, Gustav Fröhlich challenged the Reichsminister for Propaganda to a duel."

"It *was* a libel! Goebbels himself told me so."

"Well, libel or not, the ground stated was that Herr Goebbels had been too insistent upon having an affair with lovely Lida Baarova, Fröhlich's wife. It was then that the famous cinema actor vanished mysteriously—concentration camp, my information is, for subversive utterances. It was then that Frau Goebbels talked first of divorce."

"No," I worried aloud, "it must have been a libel. I assured Frau Goebbels so, and forbade a divorce."

"But *last* night," von Arnheim snickered, "Goebbels apparently decided to discuss the affair more intimately with Baarova in her apartment; in bed, I'm told. Anyway, enough of Fröhlich's friends appeared to give him a thorough horsewhipping, blacken one eye, and knock out a tooth!"

"Incredible!" I mourned. "Does he think the Propaganda Department means Propaganda for himself, maybe? Besides, what an example to Germany! If they can horse-whip *him*, why not me, or you?"

His face grew harsher. "I recall Herta Fuchs, and Konrad in camp. We shall see, we shall see. And this time, I think there will be enough publicity, from Melbourne to San Francisco, to make Herr Goebbels' technique of propaganda a bit embarrassing to the government, no?"

I recalled the matter of Ulrica, and decided it was not wise to go into the matter further. "But he always makes his New Year's speech, Erik!"

"Use the record of last year's speech," he sneered. "It will be all you can use, this year."

I had begun to realize that the victory was not always to the winner of the first round. The more I investigated the case, the more it stank. Goebbels had first forced Fröhlich to divorce the lovely Gitta Alpar, the Hungarian star of all Europe, because her father was a rabbi. That, of course, was the Nordic thing to do; but it gave less reason for this story tying up Goebbels with the lovely Aryan second wife of our romantic cinema star.

Yet as before, I was most saddened by the emphasis the story received in the press of the United States and the

other democracies. Is it to be conceived that the German papers would even run a story stating that Vice-President Garner had had Franchot Tone put in protective custody in Alcatraz, while he consoled Joan Crawford in the Senate Chambers; or that Reichsminister for Foreign Affairs Cordell Hull had had Charles Laughton interned in Leavenworth, while he educated Elsa Lanchester in American propaganda? Yet the papers of the democracies gave full details, even of the black eye.

I had it announced as acute intestinal grippe, with a fairly good chance for health again. I had a Blackshirt guard placed around his home in Wannsee, and sent word to him that, bandages or no bandages, I expected that broadcast as usual. Several hundreds of loyal Germans sent him a Twelfth Night present of a tooth, later, to replace the one he had lost. Your German is your natural friend in need.

I had one talk with the bandaged Reichsminister, and as well as I could understand his mumbles, he indicated contrition and convalescence. Naturally, I informed Frau Goebbels that divorce was unthinkable. To distract attention from this regrettable intestinal grippe of the Propagandaminister, I spoke to the Sudeten Germans at Reichenberg. I told them proudly that the future of the Nazi government and the world were safe, since the new generation was growing up, never to be free again in their entire lives, and happy at the prospect. From birth to death, I reminded them, one lesson would be drilled into the next generation: the excellence of National Socialism. "Let the misguided English boast 'Britons never shall be slaves'—a democracy can look no higher than that. We

Germans lift the holier cry, 'Germans never shall be free! Germans shall be slaves forever!' Heil Hitler!"

But this did not solve our problem about the Propagandaminister. I talked it over first with Erik von Arnheim. "You're rather proud of yourself for stirring up this mess about Goebbels, aren't you?"

He shrugged. "There was a man who turned down my plea for release, even for a hearing, when I was thrown in Brandenburg Prison. Well, he is dead. There was a man who carried his love-poaching until it fouled my own wife's sister, Herta. Well, he is pretty well publicized for his tastes, isn't he? And, since our government must stand for the purity of the home. . . ."

We assembled what was left of the little cabinet.

"Make him Minister of Education," suggested von Ribbentrop. "He can't do much harm there."

"No," chuckled Göring. "Then you don't know that slimy snake! Can't you see him corrupting all the little school girls, and making the girl graduates come to him in person to get his diplomas? Far better it is to put him in charge of the Berlin Zoo. I am not so sensitive about what propaganda he conveys to the *Frau* Rhinoceros and the *Fräulein* Giraffe. In fact, can we think of anything more admirable than to have him in bed with a *Frau* Porcupine?"

But this was hardly constructive. We finally tentatively scheduled him as over-governor for Berlin, which would let Göring register a definite rise as Vice-Chancellor.

More and more I was irked by the way the rest of them treated me. More and more they refused to let me say a word. "Shut up, nitwit," was von Arnheim's usual courtesy toward me. "Enough from you," was von

Wulle's. "Give us a vacation," was Ribbentrop's; while Göring, in his milder moments, would say, "You God damned little shrimp, you impotent little Bavarian bastard, if you open your yap again I'll knock all your teeth down your throat, no? Speak when you're spoken to; and damned little of it then!"

So it was that my mind was made up for me; and, the moment we walked out of the door, I was again the inspired Leader, the divine Redeemer of the Reich. It was mentally unsettling a little.

I had my own doubles now, three first, and then four. Some of the newspaper stories were very bewildering; for some of these doubles could not resist the temptation to speak, when they were hailed as Leader, even into the microphone. There was one particular time when I was speaking at a Horst Wessel commemoration, and one young double had been allowed to return to Vienna, where he had a wife or the equivalent. The non-Party papers reported with much detail that I had been seen in a leading café, drinking huge steins of beer, smoking, feeding bratwurst to a dachshund, and with a female strip dancer on my knee. The Party press pointed out how each detail of this story was obviously a fabrication: since the Leader did not drink, or smoke, or have a dachshund, and had never sat with a female strip dancer on his knee. But it gave Germany a more composite picture of me than so far it had had; and I do not think it liked me less for the picture.

It was harder now to get a smoke. I was in the public eye too much; and nobody considered my feelings any more. The Little Cabinet absolutely forbade my altering any of the Leader's divine eccentricities. But at night, I

used to collect the cigarette butts in the ashtrays, and the delicious cigar butts; and several times, when I was lucky, I managed to swipe a package from the coat of one of the guards. It was harder now to get a drink. But I bribed one of the Blackshirts to help me out in this, and had a bottle of brandy always hidden.

It was hardest of all to get a woman. And my general condition got rottener and rottener, with this absurd continence. What were women for, and what was I as the Leader for, if I was supposed to act like a human glacier?

One late afternoon I had very marvelous luck. I was staying late at the Chancellery, alone; everybody had gone off, and one double was reviewing troops for me, another was speaking on a European hookup; God knows what the rest were doing. It was then that a scrubwoman came in to scrub the floor of my inner study.

I had seen her face, and there is no use to speak of it. Even her husband, who was a porter emptying the spittoons, had found himself a window-washer as a mistress. But it was not her face I saw now. She was on the floor, her backside to me, diligently scrubbing. I looked at her suddenly, and I saw her rump. I will admit that the sight made me excited. With me, I have observed, to desire is to act. I did not speak to her, for I did not desire to interrupt her duties. I merely lifted her skirts, and, as she moved about the floor, I achieved my desires. I gave her a ten-mark note at the end.

She may have said something, for they had a man to scrub the study thereafter. At least, I was permitted to make a magnificent address on *The Revolution in Private Life*—the movement started by the *Sturmabteilung Mann*, and taken up by the Party press. Hereafter immature boys,

until they were eighteen, were not to smoke or drink; and immature girls, up to twenty-one, were to abstain similarly. And when I came to the matter of personal purity, I was very pleased at the headlines in the Party press:

GERMAN MEN, GIVE YOUR MISTRESSES TO YOUR
FATHERLAND!

The Leader Pleads That All Little Do-Nothings Be Put to
Motherhood or Productive Labor

At least, we might as well make the discomfort general.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE SKY GROWS DARKER YET

THERE were many minor annoyances, during the winter of 1938-1939, in addition to my difficulty in getting cigarettes and brandy, and the practical impossibility of escaping the universal observation enough to manage an evening with some girl or woman.

I must admit that the Propagandaminister, once he recovered from his acute intestinal grippe—for that remains the official report, and is the history of the future—and emerged from his bandages at last, gave us such a tightly locked censorship that the world for the first time knew only of Germany what we would have it know; and, better yet, that the Germans were told only what was good for them. This was especially to be valued, because of the alarming increase in the number of attempts to kill me.

The more I studied these, the more I realized that they were the most unreasonable and unjust things in the world. There could be no criticism of the government and the Leader, except on sentimental and humanitarian grounds; whereas science has established that such grounds are as absurd, to intelligent men, as would be an effort to organize sorrow for the cattle necessarily slaughtered to provide beef, or the swine that must be killed to furnish

us with pork, ham and bacon. Hitler had never done one act that was not for the greater glory of Germany; and neither had I, since I became Hitler. So there was no just ground for resentment, and hence should be none.

Naturally, our folkic movements had been directed against Catholics, Protestants, and Jews, instead of against cattle and swine. But the principle was the same. Assuming that cattle could shoot and throw bombs, and that swine could conspire to shoot or use poison, we would have a parallel case. Yet how unthinkable that they should ever rise against butchering mankind, since it is for beef and pork they exist! The same reasoning made it unthinkable that there should be continued restiveness on the part of Catholics, Protestants, and especially the Jewish swine; it all pointed to an obstinate unwillingness to accept the direction of the Leader.

It was precisely from these groups that the attempts on my life came. Luckily, the day I was to dedicate Albert Speer's magnificent new Chancellery Building on the Voss Strasse—impossible weather drove us into the Sports Palace for the ceremonies, of course—I sent one of my doubles to deliver the brief speech. It was a minor speech, and he had finished it before the shot came from the balcony that barely missed him, and pierced the heart of the nearest Blackshirt guard. In my great public appearance for the review along the Hermann Göring Strasse, it was a bomb, that luckily killed only half a dozen of the spectators, and none of my guards even; and again it was a double impersonating me here. Göring said it was clearly the open season for Führers, and he'd like to be appointed Warden, and limit each hunter's bag strictly; but I thought this was not in good taste. The swine were too clever to be

apprehended in any of these attacks. But we, for our part, were clever enough to sponge the incidents out entirely, so that not only the world, but the entire German nation, were properly led to believe that every German loved the Leader with his full soul's passion. Propaganda, as I wrote in *Mein Kampf*, properly applied, can make a people accept a hell on earth as a heaven; and regard a heaven as a hell.

There were minor things that troubled me too. I had to change valets, and that is always an annoyance. I recall that day in January when my valet said to me, while he was dressing my hair, "My Leader's dandruff has gone entirely!"

This I had overlooked. Herr Hitler always had a coat collar foul with dandruff. I shrugged: "One application of a new remedy Dr. Anton suggested ended it forever."

He nodded. And then he spoke too casually. "I did Herr Zeit's hair a few times. It had no dandruff. It was very like your hair, Herr Hitler."

I reported this to von Arnheim. We had him in a concentration camp the next day, and a new valet installed. Loose talk damages.

One morning, I noted on my schedule of the day's activities an interview with Frau Fuchs set for four o'clock. For a moment, I did not identify her as Herta, Ulrica's lovely sister, who had treated me so shabbily when I tried to prove myself a real friend to her. But immediately I was sure it must be the same Frau Fuchs, for this audience had been arranged through von Arnheim. I imagined he had given it through some devilish streak of perversity, some desire to thwart Goebbels still further. I decided that they were all so unfriendly, I would not play the game of any against another.

And, this time, I was to be Herr Hitler to her!

The interview might be amusing. Very cleverly I assigned one of my doubles to take the next two engagements, leaving me free practically until six.

But I did not then dream of all that that interview might bring out.

She was dressed exquisitely, in a way to accentuate her body, for all that her face was now very sad. She gave the "Heil Hitler!" mechanically, drew herself up right across the desk from me, and began her prepared story. There was no blame to Goebbels in the story, as she told it; for reasons of state, her husband had been interned in a camp. But it was all a mistake; he was no traitor, he had never breathed a subversive word or harbored a treacherous thought. And the Propaganda Minister was too busy with other matters to give the case the proper attention; was it not possible that I, as the fountainhead of all German justice, would do something?

How utterly amusing to reflect that, the last time, she had told me every detail of her surrender!

And then I showed that marvelous knowledge of the welfare and even the daily lives of all of my subjects that is the highest test of a monarch's greatness. "I have indeed heard of your case, Frau Fuchs," I said. My face grew sterner. "I have heard also certain scandalous libels about the Reichsminister for Propaganda, akin to the stories current just before last Christmas, dealing likewise with him and Lida Baarova. I will be glad to interest myself in your case, but only if you will be entirely frank with me. Was there any foundation for such stories?"

Her face studied me dispassionately. She made up her mind. "Yes."

My eyes widened. "But this is a serious matter against the Minister's impartiality and administration! You mean that he actually offered to exchange consideration for your husband, in return for your surrender to him?"

"Yes."

"But surely you did not *make* this surrender! Surely you never gave the usance of your body to any man, except your beloved husband!"

"These things are outside of your life," she said bitterly. "I was given a simple choice: either the People's Tribunal, and death, for Konrad, at once; or . . . the other. I saved his life. I'm proud of it, too! But all promises made to me have been broken; they are torturing him still, they will kill him. What *can* I do? Is there no justice in Germany anywhere?"

"Germany is the home of justice," I said impressively. "But you are proud of the surrender you made, to save his life, ach no? You would proudly do it again, if you had to?"

"God, I suppose so; when you *love* a person. But the promises were all broken—"

"Ah, but if, this time, they were made by a man who does *not* break promises; if, for instance, I were to pledge you my word I would set him free?"

Her face went like ashes. "You! You— But you are just making talk! You cannot mean it. Such things are not said of *you*! Why, you never have—"

"But if you *would*, Herta . . ." I clenched her hand in mine, I could not help it, and drew her closer. "I'll turn him loose tomorrow, this night, if you'll only show a little gratitude, a little friendliness, to me in advance! If only—"

"Ach God in heaven!" It was a loud penetrating scream, as she threw her two hands below her cheeks, pressing them upward frantically, while her great lovely eyes stared at me in black horror. "I know you *now!* You're that Herr Zeit—Ludwig Zeit—you were Ulrica's friend— You're masquerading for him! But they said you were dead—they buried you! Ach, keep away—"

When a man wants a woman, a mere "No" is irrelevant. I was around the desk, hands pleading with her, and voice too, to be quiet, to listen to reason, to let me aid her.

Suddenly her hand lashed out, and slapped me harshly across the lips. "You dirty swine!" she stormed. "Once before I told you not to touch me—and I wouldn't let you touch me now, if it *would* save Konrad's life! No, I'm through with that—I've told that little rat of a Goebbels so, and now I tell it to *you!* Do you think no decency, no cleanness, no real love, is left in Germany—you polluters of everything human that your filthy hands touch! Put *me* in jail too, torture me, kill me—Konrad would be prouder of me for that, than whoring myself to you, as you wish. Oh, damn you, damn you—"

"I am Adolf Hitler. . . ." I tried to make it impressive.

There was a gleam almost maniacal in her eyes. "So, eh? Well, either you are Herr Zeit, not dead, masquerading as his double, while he is off attending to his other business; or . . . God in heaven, if you *are* Adolf Hitler, then you've killed the real one, and taken his place! God, I'll tell this to the world, if it's the last thing I do! I am sent in to Hitler, the great Leader, the dirty swine—and he makes his vile proposal to me, to prostitute myself to him, as I have done already to his Propaganda Minister, to save my husband from further torture. . . . And I

defy you! I spit in your face, you offal, you dung of the earth!" And, to my amazement, she leaned over and spit in my face, pushed closely toward hers.

An experience like this is unpleasant, but there are compensations. A woman in a rage is always a lovely sight. I only wish that it had been the place and the opportunity to choke her until her objections quieted, and then settle the matter as I wished. It is this that such spitfires really demand; and all their theatrics is merely a way of inviting on the attentions of a real Nordic he-man.

"Now, now, Herta—"

"Listen to me, filth," she drew herself up imperially—never say that Herta Fuchs was not a magnificent actress! "Adolf Hitler is dead. He is bound to be. His conscience would not let him live. No wonder he was sleepless, no wonder he walked in his sleep, with all the ghosts of torn and ravaged Germany, ghosts he had made, come back to haunt him! The ones he gave his oath to, and broke his oath, and killed—von Schleicher and the rest; his dearest friend, to whom he broke his word forever, Ernst Roehm; and the dreadful hundreds of others murdered in the Blood Purge—all eternity will not be long enough for the Furies to punish his screaming, flayed soul in, in the most hideous agony in the lowest sub-cellar of hell! I can see now why *you* are here," with utter scorn. "You're not man enough, you're not big enough, even to sin! How could Ulrica ever waste a moment's second thought on vile scum like you! Nothing will ever come back to haunt you: nothing but your futility, your ineptitude, your cheap lust, your foul tiny arrogance. I shall— But, by God, a bargain with you! In return for my *not* telling any of this—or even telling Erik, you dirty pimp, that you sent my sister to the

dirty lecherous clasp of Goebbels, that you forced her with your lies to go, and caused her suicide—In return for my keeping silence about all this, is Konrad to be freed at once, and I, and both of us allowed to shake the dust of this hideous cancer that is Germany from our feet forever and evermore?”

My mouth still stung from her blow. One tooth had been giving me a little trouble; her ring had hit it and it ached dully. This was clearly no matter to be dogmatic about. “Frau Fuchs,” I said severely, “you have made a good plea for the liberation of your husband. On the terms you have suggested, may I call in Reichsminister von Arnheim, and have it made clear *now* that he is to be freed at once, and you and he be permitted to leave Germany, free of all restrictions, whenever you will?”

“It’s your cue,” she said. “Make it snappy, too.”

I lifted my hands deprecatingly. “I had to teach English once in Nice, and I have had to translate even from that abortion called the American language. Please, more discretion before Erik. It is promised?”

At her nod, I had him summoned, and announced my decision. He congratulated me on the wisdom and justice of my course, and said that he would see that the necessary orders were issued at once.

But out of that door, I reflected sadly as she flounced away triumphantly on Erik’s arm, there went a woman’s tongue, capable of wagging loosely; and such can do more damage than a division of the Reichswehr. I must be more discreet in the presence of women. I recalled that the Leader had never gotten more personal with them than to talk of the menace of Communism in the remoter South American countries, or the proposal to introduce camels

into Australia. There was wisdom in much that he did. Goebbels had a different recipe. I wished that I knew it. But one could not be everything.

That tooth that her ring had struck pained me more and more, so that by nine I had to have the dentist sent for. He came with his procession of attendants and paraphernalia, and all was laid down, and the "Heil Hitler's!" given and responded to. He was a huge, jovial, encouraging man, and he chortled all over the place as he finally came and had me point out the tooth, and tapped as if he had stabbed me. "Ach, that's nothing—a mere gum abrasion. We stop the pain right away—" And then he stopped talking, and stared from my mouth to the chart of it his assistant was holding up; his face was the face of a fish flung high on the bank.

"Yes, this will give us no trouble," he began maundering to himself again; and soon enough the dull pain had gone entirely, and so had the dentist and his attendants. But I sent forthwith for von Arnheim, and told it all to him. "He didn't say a word—he didn't give it away; but—he knows! He knew every tooth in Hitler's head—he's treated me too; there was the chart before him. . . ."

"You're always the nitwit," he scowled ferociously. "Well, now *I've* got to talk to him; and he may find himself incommunicado for the rest of his life, unless he swears to me he's a damned sight stupider than I think he is. And for Christ's sake, Adolf, hereafter, have *some* brains, and use them sometimes!"

Increasingly I began to have the feeling of the fish in the aquarium myself. And then, the last day of the month, the French ambassador called for an audience. He wanted a confidential talk, he said; if I could even not have Herr

Reichsminister Ribbentrop present. So it was arranged. I always enjoyed any excuse to avoid the presence of the members of my small cabinet, who called me too often too many low names in private for me to enjoy their company anymore.

It was a long and earnest discussion about the Italian claims against France that he introduced, and I listened with keen interest. Whenever the conversation demanded it, I made Germany's position clear: whatever Italy wanted of course Italy should have; whatever France didn't wish to give up should be left to my arbitration.

He was a very erudite man, and to establish one of his points he quoted first Verlaine, and then an apothegm of Anatole France's, and finally a bit of Poincaré, capped off with something Rémy de Gourmont says in the *Physiology of Love*. In the old days I had translated two of these into German for publication, and was familiar with all of them; and I neatly turned each quotation with another as apt from the same or some related source. —A very erudite man; for he switched into one of Kipling's more imperialistic poems, quoting its chorus; and then repeated a whole paragraph from Haldane's *Daedalus*, always one of my favorite pseudo-scientific fantasies. I gave him the parallel passage from Bertrand Russell's *Icarus*, and realized increasingly what a charming companion he was to talk to.

And then, his voice unchanged, his eyebrows lifted ever so slightly, he said, "Herr Reichskanzler, you will recall that so late as last September you knew no French, and you knew no English. And now you speak both fluently, and are familiar with their latest and brightest prose and poetry, and can quote both. Colossal!"

I shivered; why had Goebbels never warned me to con-

ceal most that I knew, to be more like Hitler! "Ach, I have picked up a word here and there—"

His lips crinkled ever so faintly. "One more word pick up, then: this . . . From now on, I remember your high opinion of our authors, Excellency, and the English authors as well. When we come to you again with France's demands against Italy, or any other demands we make, *you will listen!* Do you hear me? Do you understand?"

His voice had become absolutely nasty. I do not think that is the proper way to conduct a diplomatic discussion. I think threats should have no place in such discussions. Just the way the Leader himself had talked to Schussnigg, Benes and the rest; merely do so and so; never need of a threat. But I saw his point, and I nodded gravely. "I will always consider carefully all you have to say," I agreed.

"All *France* has to say—and it will be much! I don't quite understand what you've done. . . . Although your double from Passau, Herr Reichskanzler—that chap Bauer that was buried as Zeit—had been a teacher of languages, interpreter, and translator. Keep your little game up as long as you please; but word of this goes to the Foreign Office in Paris, and we will expect and receive more consideration hereafter! *Is that understood?*"

"I am beginning to see merit in all that you say," I shivered a little as I spoke. "I am sure we will be better friends, from now on."

He rose to his feet, staring down at me. "Heil Hitler," he said. "Now *you* say Heil France!"

"Well, just between *us*," I agreed. "Heil France!"

"Sacred blue," he said. "Good day."

CHAPTER XXVIII

TO BE OR NOT TO BE

I DECIDED to write this memorandum of my life with Adolf Hitler and my life as Adolf Hitler, the day that Albert Speer exhibited to us his great design for the tomb of Adolf Hitler. "You see, my Leader, I wanted you to approve every detail of this greatest of all mausoleums ever built by man, years in advance of the event itself. So Cheops and the other great pyramid-builders built their own tombs in person; and they still last. The tomb of Lenin in Red Square is nothing, compared to this!" He went into the last grisly details, too—the corpse to be preserved by eternal mummification, absolutely lifelike; the wax replicas that would rise and give the salute and the actual hail at moments vital to Germany's history; the group of six young doubles, altered every few years, who would give the salute unceasingly, in relays, day and night.

I think Goebbels took a waspish delight in my discomfort observing it; I know Göring grumbled out we might as well get it going, from the amount of free shooting that was going on around the Chancellery these days. But none of them, I think, knew the reason for my discomfort: and that was, that this was all Hitler, and no Maximilian Bauer. I had gotten sick of the work, of the vile way the small cabinet spoke to me, of the pointless dangers, of

the increasing suffering to others my words and actions caused. Maximilian Bauer had not taken on this work to have his name vilified down all history, or forgotten either; it was for me to see that he was remembered as himself, as the greatest actor of his age, as a magnificent ruler if he had been allowed to rule, as a true son of the Fatherland. And so that night I started writing down this memorandum.

As the statement grew, one major problem troubled me: what was I to do with this all-important document, once I had finished with it? I might conceal it while writing it, but the risk would be increasingly great thereafter, as long as it stayed in Germany, where nothing is sacred, and privacy is unknown. I had no friend to trust it with, in Germany or out; I had no friend in all the world, for I had surrendered being a man worthy of friends, to become the impersonator of a man all reviled and hated, except the starving millions. Yet out of Germany it must go. I recalled that Karl Ernst had sent his letter about the Reichstag fire to London. Yet I knew no one there. I could not even trust the French ambassador; for reasons of state he might decide to suppress the document, in return for favors from the Reich. There was no one I knew I could trust. . . .

And so I decided to trust some one I did not know, and had seen only once. In May, 1912, my beloved mistress Clothilde Simon had borne a son that I was the father of: Michel Simon, who grew into a handsome, intelligent child, as I discovered on the one occasion when I later saw him. He would be twenty-six, now, and a man. I must rush to completion this document, and send it by confidential courier from the border to him in Nice. His

mother could tell him for what cause he should be interested in doing this favor for me—preserving this statement until my death, and then letting the world know it.

But first, I must find out if he was still alive, and flourishing. I had the espionage report on him two days later. He was a sub-manager for the Compagnie Transatlantique at Nice, and was said to be a youth of exemplary habits. *Voilà*, my problem was solved! And I applied myself with more courage to finishing this statement, and have reached this far.

I have never been able to understand most of *Mein Kampf*. It may be that it has the inspired quality of the Koran or *Science and Health*; to me at least it shares their unintelligibility, which I am told establishes that it is inspired. One thing that interested me most about it is that in it he quotes from only one poet; and that poet the great Nordic Shakespeare; and each time the same line, "To be or not to be." He first uses it about the German Social Democrats, describing suicide as the solution chosen by a weak nature. Later he uses it of the German nation, more to mean existence than suicide. Yet suicide, as a theme, always preoccupied him. After the Beer Hall Putsch, it is said he would have committed suicide, but that he was brought back to willingness to live by Putzi Hanfstaengl's sister. In the tense ten years when he was Adolf Légalité, he threatened it so often that he gave the party leaders the jitters, wondering what they would do if he carried out his threat. After I became connected with him, he continued to threaten it. If his régime ever collapsed, by a coup d'état or an armed uprising, he had his revolver ever handy to blow out his brains. He had Brückner, Schaub and poor Julius Schreck bound in a suicide pact, to kill

themselves at once if anything ever happened to the Leader. He brooded over the suicides of the Jews. To me he has called them lucky; and, when eight thousand of them committed suicide in one day, he said to me, "So, it is to Jews we give our autumn honors!"

And now, I was the Leader; I was Adolf Hitler, and there was no other Adolf Hitler beside me. And I was miserable, deprived of all ordinary human comforts—smoking, drinking, normal living with a woman. I was increasingly under the nervous fear of being assassinated, for these attempts increased more and more, and it became harder and harder to conceal them. Five cabinet ministers and three doctors knew every detail of the substitution; I was at their mercy, until death. More and more were learning of it: my valet, my dentist, Herta Fuchs and her husband, the French ambassador and his Foreign Office, and, when he chose, all Europe, the whole world! Let us deny as much as we pleased, if once they spoke, the world at least would believe. And I was hated, hated, hated . . . hated by all the Jews for what Hitler had done to them and what I must still do in his name, hated by all the Catholics, the Protestants, the Communists, the republicans, the monarchists, the real Austrians, the Sudeten Germans who believed in self-government, even the mass of the German people, lashed with the slave-whip to shriek out a terrorized affection for me none of them felt. I was Adolf Hitler, and there was no resignation: there was only assassination, or suicide.

If the Leader had thought suicide wise, I had a thousand more reasons to think it wise! If he had been willing to end his life, time and again, should I be coward enough to flinch?

Hardest of all to bear were the meetings of the little cabinet, marked increasingly by a flood of insults and vilifications that seared my soul. Goebbels was back in the group, now, a little more bitter and evil than ever; he was making me and the world pay for the horsewhipping he had received. But the others were as bitter toward me; and I came to understand why. In public, each had to humble himself before me as the Leader; very well, in private, the bitter envy, the deep hatred, the festering sense of inferiority in their hearts toward me burst out in all its insulting virulence.

Once they had said that I thought like the Leader, as well as spoke like him; now they denied that I could think at all. All that I had to say was either lies, or injustices. I remember the bitter session over the speech I was to make on the map of Europe ten years from now. Göring, Goebbels and Ribbentrop had evidently formed a bloc before the conference assembled, and I was helpless. "We must promise Italy what she wants," insisted Göring. "The Mediterranean an Italian lake—"

"But what of Spain, France, Yugoslavia, Albania, Greece, Turkey, Palestine, Egypt—"

"Your business is to talk, not to think. It was so from the time of Pompey on, you told me, Doctor?" Goebbels nodded, beady-eyed. "Good. And, by voluntary absorption, the Black Sea a German lake, and the German Ocean and the Baltic increasingly lakes of the Reich!"

"You have omitted the Atlantic, the Pacific, the Indian and the Arctic oceans," I suggested mildly.

"You should be caned for your imbecility," snapped Göring. "One of these days I do it, too."

"That's the Field Marshal's speech," said Goebbels tartly.

"For me, announce a second capital levy of 20% of all Jewish-owned property, payable in cash, in forty-eight hours. All who fail to pay are subversive, and of course must be sterilized; they, however, to pay the surgeons. Put Pastor Wilhelm Niemoeller in jail with his brother; stop the salaries of all Protestant pastors who continue to read from the Jewish Bible. We are considering taking over both Catholic and Protestant churches as a State church, with Nazi cardinals and bishops, answerable only to the government. By fall, we should run the church as efficiently as the Postoffice Department."

Von Arnheim nodded, when he had finished. "In the matter of Justice, I had decrees for you to sign, condemning to the ax Niekisch, Drechsel and Kroeger, whom the Tribunal condemned merely to imprisonment. Their mild sentences are known to the world now, as an example of German mercy; now *we* teach the Germans the more important lesson of discipline."

I shivered. "You told me they were innocent!"

"But, good God, can't you understand that the purpose of punishment is example, so what difference can innocence make?"

"He will never understand," sneered Goebbels. "Oh, and make a radio speech, on the Revolution in Private Life, describing the Lambeth Walk as poisonous Jewish propaganda and lascivious animalistic hopping. We must never let up on any manifestation of this poisonous international conspiracy." He beamed smugly.

"Oh, I'll make the speech," I said glumly. "But why must I spend all my time robbing the Jews, and stealing Catholic property, and imprisoning the Protestants, and condemning innocent people to death, and lying about the

amount of our armament and food—I haven't been allowed coffee in two weeks, and you know there is a daily allowance of an ounce a day—" I stretched forth a pleading hand to them. "Can't you *ever* give me anything else to do? It's not that I mind any of these, so much; I'm paid to do them; but a man does like a little variety now and then!"

"In a democracy, variety; in a totalitarian state, *no* variety," said Göring gruffly. "Less and less you know daily. If you are interested, I had your coffee ration shifted to my account. Coffee is a luxury; harden yourself, Adolf, like a true German!"

Little vulture-faced Goebbels sat back, and spoke with sudden bitterness. "You and your variety! Damn it, Adolf, when are you going to realize what the Nazi movement really is—and has been from the beginning? Do you think we are gentlemen? Do you think we are legalists, parliamentarians, orderly law-abiding citizens? And where would the movement have gotten, if we *had* been! We are thugs! Is that clear to your cracked cranium? We are rowdies, brawlers, gangsters, if you insist! We found out that we had to be, at the Coburg meeting back in 1922; we have never altered one moment since. Everything we have done was illegal; we brawled our way to power, and we have been giving Germany and Europe a gangster régime ever since. Why must I repeat the obvious? Will you *never* learn? In the Middle Ages, they robbed the Jews and the wealthy in retail robbery; we have made it wholesale, that's all. Jews. Catholics. Protestants. Capitalists. Industrialists. Bankers. Anybody else with money. We wanted Austria. The Austrian Germans were aristocrats, and didn't know they wanted the Anschluss; all right, we took it. The Sudeten Germans were contented. But we

wanted it; so we've got it. The Polish Corridor, the whole Ukraine—we want 'em; we'll take 'em. We want France—France annihilated. It's in *Mein Kampf*; do you remember nothing? All right, in 1924 I saw French white officers stand by and applaud their African troopers raping Nordic German women, when they tried to steal the Ruhr. But they were a democracy; they couldn't hold it. What we take, we keep! Don't you know these things yet?"

I tried feebly to speak. "I thought—"

"Ach, do you know what Adolf Hitler would have said to me, if I talked to *him* the way I talk to you? Christ bedamned! He would have called me a filthy pusillanimous half-hearted chicken-livered leprous whoreson pimping son of a bastard Jew and a mongrel sow; and he'd have said it so eloquently, I'd have believed it! He was a man; you . . . Oh, God, I want to vomit, when I think of *your* castrate's soul, your eunuch's ambition, your incredible remnants of sentimental and romantic decency and honor! For the last time I tell you, we are thugs, brawlers, rowdies, gangsters, and proud of it! We have improved the former code of thieves in one respect: we have eliminated honor. Now, we've got the Corridor, the Ukraine, no? We've turned on France and joined it to the Reich as the twentieth German State—unless we temporarily make it a mandate first. We force all Europe except Italy into a Pan-Nordic Reich—let Italy think she has the damned Mediterranean, till we are ready! Remember, in 1914, she was Judas enough; we will remember it, at the right time. Now for God's sake, for once and for all, get these things straight, and never again will we have to lesson you in them! Is that clear? Is there anything that isn't clear?"

"Just one little thing," I pleaded. "I have to live so unnatural, I am so lonely; could I have a woman sometimes?"

"Always selfish! All right, half an hour a week. No more; Hitler needed much less. The conference is adjourned!"

I do not enjoy these daily conferences any more. Talk of statecraft and the superior Nordic ideal give me a daily headache. Never before did I hear of a revolution won by brawlers and gangsters, much less of a government conducted so. And there are private audiences I will not go into details about: as when Herta Fuchs brought in her husband, just released from prison, and a man released with him. This man turned out to be a Jewish World War veteran now unfriendly to the government. I shall omit this Jew's complaints as to what had happened to his parents, his business, his children, his wife even, who had died of what Brownshirts did to her during a Party Day celebration. It is enough that Konrad held me while this Jew did to me what they do to Jews in the concentration camps. I could see more clearly thereafter why Jews do not prefer Germany as it is today.

And I have found out what is wrong, finally. I am an actor, yes; the greatest actor in Germany, in the world. Any appearance for Adolf Hitler I do superbly, for looks, words, intonations, gestures, facial expressions, even the soul of the man. But, when a play is over, the corpses get up and walk off the stage and have dinner and their drinking and women, after the curtain goes down. It is not so, in Germany. The gangster never kicks a man until he is down, I am told. But what if some day the man refuse to lie down to be kicked? It is this which makes me shiver.

The ideal superior Nordic German world. . . . Gangsters ruling everywhere by force. . . . Thought forbidden, except to the gangsters. . . . Jail or worse for an indiscreet word—I have just sent Ernst Niekisch to his death for calling me “a German misfortune.” . . . Jail or worse for any official’s whim. . . . Liberty reserved to the head gangsters only. . . . A nation boasting that it has surrendered freedom, and is to be brought up a race of slaves. . . . Every Jew oppressed, robbed, sterilized, murdered or exiled, as far as possible. . . . The religion in the soul of man, Catholicism, Protestantism, anything, rooted out and tortured away, to be replaced by worship of Germany, of me. . . . An enduring worldwide dictatorship of rowdy, brawling gangsters. . . . The ideal I must enact makes me vomit, sometimes.

There is, of course, a woman, half an hour, once a week. . . .

But the small cabinet knows the truth, and my valet, my dentist, Herta Fuchs and her husband, the French ambassador and his Foreign Office, and God knows how many he has told it to. . . . The world is sure to know soon; and can our screams of “Lie! Lie!” echo beyond our own ravaged and self-abused land?

I have decided. Hereafter I will double for my doubles, when there is any hope I may be shot at or poisoned. There is always my own revolver—increasingly I have been taking it out, when alone, and accustoming my forehead to the cold feel of its circular steel mouth, and my soul to a prayer for its swift coming. One day, how can I tell when? I will press the trigger, just once. It will be good to go to sleep, with no threat of dreams, with no chance of awakening.

THE STRANGE DEATH OF ADOLF HITLER

FROM the heart of dictator-frenzied Germany,—from the inner sanctum of the Nazi ringleaders, comes this behind-the-scenes spectacle of Germany's ruling circle, answering a thousand questions which you have wanted answered, questions which all the newspaper, magazine and newsreel material on the subject have left unsatisfied. For here we have walking—talking—breathing through 381 bristling pages Hitler, Göring, Goebbels, von Roehm, von Ribbentrop and others, so real you can almost touch them—a picture which only a close associate of these men could have drawn.

The full details of how this manuscript came to be brought before the reading public are embodied in the Publisher's Statement at the beginning of THE STRANGE DEATH OF ADOLF HITLER. And whether or not the climax of the book will be borne out by future records—that the real Hitler died September 29, 1938, on the eve of the Munich Pact, and is being impersonated by his double—this much is certain: no more convincing, complete and constructive picture of Nazism has ever before been published. Careful and extensive research went into checking the manuscript with respect to the events depicted as well as the personalities and the dialogue, and as far as can be ascertained from accepted authorities, they are all plausible.

The story is told by Maximilian Bauer, Der Führer's famous double, reputed to be the highest salaried man in Europe. The resemblance is startling—even to the voice, and Herr Bauer who was permitted to stay close to Hitler in order to learn the dictator's

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every mannerism, proved such an apt understudy that he made several speeches in public as Hitler, even before Der Führer's death.

Close observers of the German scene today have not failed to sense that the manner in which the Nazi machine has been functioning since Munich has been strangely altered, and while they have not been able to reach any definite conclusions about the cause of this change, the consensus of opinion has been that "There's something wrong in Denmark." Needless to say, with their leader dead, his henchmen could little afford to let such a fact become known, for readers of **THE STRANGE DEATH OF ADOLF HITLER** will realize more sharply and clearly than before just how important the strange figure of Hitler is to the success of the Nazi creed and aims.

Many past events in Germany come within the realm of this story and these are told simply and lucidly, leaving no confusion in the mind of the reader. For the first time there is given a single, convincing account of just what went on backstage when the Reichstag Building burned, when the incredible Blood Purge of June 30, 1934 took place, the rape of Austria, the theft of the Sudeten areas of Czechoslovakia, and the later desperate insane attack on the Jews which shocked the conscience of the civilized world.

The story further reveals Hitler's background and antecedents, the constant attempts on his life, some of which barely failed; the incredible attitude of the Nazis concerning education, the position of women, science, religion, Germany's desired position as overlord of all other races, and, most important of all, a blueprint of the Nazi plans for further expansion and conquest, even at the cost of a World War that will hurl Western culture into permanent twilight.

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