

Steven Lehrer

Three Plays about Doctors

**War and Psychoanalysis
The Family Doctor
The Abortionist**

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The Abortionist
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Contact: stevenlehrer@hotmail.com
<http://stevenlehrer.com>

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WAR AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

CAST OF CHARACTERS

PROFESSOR DOCTOR SIGMUND FREUD, age 65, immaculately coiffed and dressed in an expensive three piece suit. When we see Freud he is either holding a cigar or has a cigar in his mouth.

DR. HEINRICH ROSEN, a middle-aged doctor, almost completely blind

STEFANIE GAISMAN, a beautiful, unstable young woman; the same actress plays FRÄULEIN PETER and is the sarcastic, caustic voice of the DYBBUK, by far the smartest, most perceptive character in the play.

THE RAT MAN (Ernst Lanzer), an officer and army deserter with severe post traumatic stress disorder. He is a small man who resembles a rat, also plays SEXTON and MASKED FIGURE.

THE RAT MAN'S FATHER, a huge, hulking, brutal man, also plays RABBI, BARON GAISMAN, and MILITARY DOCTOR.MAID, an offstage voice with two lines in scene 21. SETTING

The entire action of the play takes place in the Vienna consulting room of Professor Doctor Sigmund Freud. The year is 1921.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: The author acknowledges his debt to Prof. Dr. Sigmund Freud and his followers: Carl Gustav Jung, Sandor Ferenczi, and Woody Allen. With a nod to Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen, F. Scott Fitzgerald and *Tender is the Night*.

ACT 1

ACT 1

SCENE

AT RISE:

Professor Doctor Sigmund Freud's consulting room. Dr. Freud sits in easy chair adjacent to head of couch with a cigar in his hand. Near the chair is a brass spittoon. Freud's desk is upstage left, festooned with antiquities, statuettes, and other knickknacks. Heinrich Rosen is lying on couch. He wears an eye patch over his right eye and spectacles with a coke-bottle bottom lens over his left. His white blind person's cane is propped against the couch.

FREUD

Homosexuality is assuredly no advantage, Rosen, but it is nothing to be ashamed of, no vice, no degradation; it cannot be classified as an illness. May I question you why you want it treated?

ROSEN

I feel like a criminal, Herr Professor.

FREUD

It is a great injustice that our society persecutes homosexuality as a crime. A cruelty, too. Many highly respectable individuals of ancient and modern times have been homosexuals. Several of the greatest men among them: Plato, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci.

ROSEN

I'm not great. I'm quite ordinary. I want an ordinary blind man's life. In 2021 I'm sure homosexuality will be a lifestyle choice, nothing

more. In 1921, as you say, it's persecuted and criminal. When I could see I accepted the risk, but now...

FREUD

By asking me if I can treat you, you mean, I suppose, if I can abolish your homosexuality and make normal heterosexuality take its place. The answer is, in a general way I cannot promise. In a certain number of cases I have succeeded in developing the blighted germs of heterosexual tendencies, which are present in every homosexual. In most cases that is not possible. It is a question of the quality and the age of the individual. I cannot predict the result of treatment.

ROSEN

Herr Professor, I am in awe of what you have done. Science is the most noble, exalted form of human endeavor. The scientific discoveries you have made take my breath away.

FREUD
(modestly)

I try.

ROSEN

We all try. You succeed, Herr Professor. I am willing to accept the results of your treatment.

FREUD

If you are unhappy, neurotic, torn by conflicts, inhibited in your social life, analysis may bring you harmony, peace of mind, full efficiency, whether you remain homosexual or change. At the least we will try to turn your hysterical misery into common unhappiness.

ROSEN

Sounds good.

FREUD

Do you dress in women's clothes?

ROSEN

Not anymore. You see my patched eye and these spectacles?

(Freud is silent, an awkward
silence)

Last time I cross dressed, I winked with my right eye at an officer in uniform in a cafe. He walked up, smiled, and shoved his pen knife into my right eye.

FREUD

How much vision do you have on the left?

ROSEN

A little. Not much. I should have had the right eye immediately cut out.

FREUD

Why didn't you? You are a doctor. You know about sympathetic ophthalmia. Inflammation and blindness of both eyes from a penetrating injury of one eye.

(Rosen doesn't answer, shakes
his head)

FREUD

Do you have vengeance fantasies?

ROSEN

A blind man versus an officer of the imperial army? If I encountered the wretch again, I'd put his eyes out.

FREUD

How would you do that?

ROSEN

Just a fantasy. Even Luzi-Wuzi couldn't do anything when he got beat up.

FREUD

You know about Archduke Ludwig Viktor?

ROSEN

I saw a colonel beat him up at the Central Bathhouse. Better not to proposition wet nude army officers you don't know. Even if you're the emperor's brother. A small number of them are straight.

FREUD

I consulted with a colleague on the archduke's case. We might have been able to accomplish more with anyone else. But the emperor...

(Freud's discretion is getting the better of him)

ROSEN

Was mortified. Shut Luzi-Wuzi up in Klesheim Palace. Never let him out. He died in there.

FREUD

You are an obstetrician, I understand.

ROSEN

I was an obstetrician, Herr Professor. I don't have enough vision left to deliver a grand piano.

FREUD

You practiced gynecology too?

ROSEN

Yes.

FREUD

You did abortions?

ROSEN

On poor women with many children who could not afford another child. They begged me. How could I refuse? Even though they paid

me little or nothing. My obstetric patients were poor, too. I was a poor people's baby snatcher.

FREUD

Now you wish to become an analyst.

ROSEN

Precisely.

FREUD

A training analysis is more difficult than it used to be.

ROSEN

Yes?

FREUD

How does one become a psychoanalyst?

ROSEN

By analyzing one's dreams. I read your *Five Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, Herr Professor.

FREUD

(pleased)

You are to be commended.

ROSEN

A most interesting book.

FREUD

I have broadened the requirements since I wrote that book. No psychoanalyst goes further than his own complexes and internal resistances permit. Therefore, I insist that the candidate shall begin his activity with a self-analysis and continually carry it deeper while he is making his observations on his patients. Anyone who fails to produce results in a self-analysis of this kind may at once give up any idea of being able to treat patients by analysis.

ROSEN

Your letter explained almost everything.

FREUD

My requirements are there.

ROSEN

(pulls letter from pocket,
unfolds, holds very close to left
eye and struggles to read)

I charge 40 crowns an hour, payable each month. I will not take on anyone who cannot wait until July 15th. This last condition is paramount.

(pauses)

I didn't realize there was an element of risk.

FREUD

A training analysis will not necessarily lead one to a sinecure. It is comparable to birth, which does not perforce presage a happy life.

ROSEN

I was not expecting a sinecure.

FREUD

You should expect nothing. I demand guarantees from candidates for training analysis which are not necessary from patients. Regular analytic work has deleterious effects on one's psyche, just as work with x-rays has on one's tissues. Any harm needs to be countered by steady hard labor.

ROSEN

I intend to work. I must earn a living. If I do not succeed at psychoanalysis, I am finished as a doctor. Begging with a tin cup on street corners is the only employment left for me. Better to be dead.

FREUD

I do not require that a psychoanalyst be a doctor, you know. The Americans demand medical training but I do not. I do insist that

every analyst should periodically, at intervals of five years or so, submit himself to analysis once more. He should not feel ashamed of taking this step.

ROSEN

If I'm not ashamed now, why should I be ashamed in the future?

FREUD

Do not speak about shame yet. Your analysis is only beginning.

ROSEN

I was briefly in analysis with Dr. Rank last year. I don't think he uttered a word during any of our sessions. You and I seem to be having a normal conversation.

FREUD

Do you know the story of the rabbi's goat?

ROSEN

The rabbi's goat? I haven't heard that one.

FREUD

A goat fell into a well on the Sabbath. The rabbi's followers asked the rabbi whether they were permitted to take the goat out at once, or wait till the Sabbath day was over. The pious rabbi answered that the goat must wait. But when he learned that it was his own goat in the well, the rabbi urged his followers to save it at once, because *der Rebbe meg*, the rabbi may. My followers observe the rules. I do as I please.

ROSEN

(silent for a moment)

I'm waiting for something to pop into my mind.

FREUD

Your analysis is beginning, not begun. We will begin during your next session. In the meantime, I have a small commission I wish to entrust to you.

ROSEN

(pause)

A commission, Herr Professor? What sort of commission?

FREUD

Rosen, I am about to offer you a unique scientific opportunity.

ROSEN

I have never done science. You should know that, Herr Professor. My only qualification for doing science is that I am rigidly honest.

FREUD

I am fond of honest men. There are so few of them.

ROSEN

I am one. You can trust me. I would never falsify a result or an experiment.

FREUD

There is no experiment involved here, no test tubes, no Bunsen burner.

ROSEN

What then?

FREUD

I need a final piece of information about a patient whose case I have already published.

ROSEN

Which patient, Herr Professor?

FREUD

The Rat Man.

ROSEN

The Rat Man? I read your book about him. *A Case of Obsessional Neurosis*. Your description was brilliant. Your account read like a detective story. I was fascinated.

FREUD

(A typical writer, eating up the praise, glowing but self-effacing, struggling to affect a modest demeanor)

Thank you, Rosen. You are very kind. It still strikes me as strange that the case histories I write should read like short stories and that, as one might say, they lack the serious stamp of science.

ROSEN

What could you possibly add? What could be left to publish?

FREUD

Let me touch on the salient points for you. Then you will know the piece of information that I expect you to get for me. I would think it a small price to pay for, as you say, your last chance at a respectable livelihood.

ROSEN

(doubtfully)

I'm all ears, Herr Professor, even if I have no eyes to speak of.

FREUD

As you know, the Rat Man was a lieutenant, very intelligent, a university educated lawyer, in the Imperial Army.

BLACKOUT.

FLASHBACK SCENE

The stage is in darkness. A spotlight comes up on the Rat Man, center stage, a man in

his early thirties in an officer's uniform who resembles a rat. We hear Freud's voice.

FREUD

The Rat Man had a morbid, obsessive fear of a particularly brutal, cruel form of punishment. He learned about it from a sadistic Czech captain.

The Rat Man's eyes widen with surprise, then with pain. He raises his hand to his forehead. His face contorts. He screams.

FREUD

During this punishment, a pot filled with rats is turned upside down against the victim's buttocks.

The rat man turns away from the audience. Against his bare derriere is the rat-filled pot. He turns to face the audience again.

RAT MAN

The rats are boring into my anus.

(screams)

The suckers are crawling up my ass. *Glejisamen!*

(screams more loudly)

FREUD

The Rat Man had bizarre compulsions and suicidal fantasies. The most disturbing involved a razor.

The Rat Man reaches into his tunic, pulls out and opens a gleaming, lethal-looking straight razor. He brings the razor to his throat with his right hand, as though he is about to cut his throat. His left hand grabs his right and

struggles to force the razor wielding hand down, away from his throat.

FREUD

I wrote in my case study that the Rat Man's obsessive thinking and compulsions stemmed directly from masturbation.

The Rat Man turns his back to the audience, unbuckles his pants, and begins to masturbate furiously.

FREUD

His father punished him severely.

A massive hulking father enters with a cane and beats the Rat Man savagely.

RAT MAN'S FATHER

(brandishing a huge bloody
butcher knife)

The next time I catch you will be the last. Do you understand?

RAT MAN

(weeping, cowering with fear)

Yes, father.

Father exits.

FREUD

I believed at the time I published my report that I had completely explained the Rat Man's illness. Now I am not so certain. The Rat Man had castration fantasies that I discounted at the time.

The Rat Man turns to the audience. His hands are dripping with blood. He holds a bloody amputated penis.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE

Lights up on Freud and Rosen, as they were in Scene 1. The Rat Man is gone.

FREUD

I now believe that castration anxieties played a large role in generating the Rat Man's obsessional neurosis.

ROSEN

Where would his fears have come from?

FREUD

In my book, I dealt at length with the causes and psychodynamics of obsessional neurosis. But looking back on the case now, I believe I have uncovered an even more fundamental cause, a *caput Nili* of all obsessional neurosis.

ROSEN

What an awful neurosis. A man filled with obsessional fantasies, grotesque recurrent thoughts of a rat torture: There is a man who needs help.

FREUD

Ordinarily, unconscious fear of penile loss originates during the phallic stage of sexual development and lasts a lifetime. When the infant boy becomes aware of differences between male and female genitalia he assumes that the girl's penis has been lopped off and becomes anxious that his own penis will be cut off by his father as punishment for desiring his mother.

ROSEN

The Rat Man's fears seem more profound than anything related to a fantasy.

FREUD

Over the years, I have noted that a great many of my most severely obsessional neurotics have been Jewish men. Now I ask you, what form of infantile trauma are male Jews habitually exposed to?

ROSEN

A Jewish mother?

FREUD

Think, Rosen.

ROSEN

Indigestible kosher food?

FREUD

No, no.

ROSEN

Hebrew school?

FREUD

Those traumas are not infantile. The trauma to which I now ascribe the Rat Man's neurosis was associated with childhood scenes of sexual curiosity.

BLACKOUT.

FLASHBACK SCENE

A spotlight on Fräulein Peter, an attractive young woman, lying on a couch reading a book, the Rat Man next to her. We hear only Freud's voice.

FREUD

The Rat Man had a governess, a pretty young girl named Fräulein Peter. One evening she was lying on the sofa lightly dressed, reading. The Rat Man was beside her.

The Rat Man whispers to Fräulein Peter.
She assents. The Rat Man crawls stealthily but clumsily under Fräulein Peter's billowing skirt. She giggles.

FRÄULEIN PETER

I'm ticklish.

RAT MAN

Sorry. I'm a little lost under here. It's dark.

FREUD

That night, Fräulein Peter let the Rat Man into her bed.

The Rat Man lies on the couch next to Fräulein Peter and caresses her.

RAT MAN

Glejisamen!

FREUD

The Rat Man feared that his father, who had just died, might find out about his sexual activity. Therefore, sexual arousal became linked with punishment and hostility toward his father, engendering a strange ritual.

The Rat Man stands, puts on pince-nez, begins studying a textbook. Sound of knocking at the door. The Rat Man admits the ghost of his father. The Rat Man turns away from the audience, pulls down his pants, and meticulously inspects his penis.

FREUD

While studying for an examination, the Rat Man would stay up every night until between midnight and one A.M., the hour at which his father's ghost might appear. After opening the door to let the ghost in, the Rat Man would return to the hall, turn on all the lights, undress, and look at his penis in the mirror.

RAT MAN'S FATHER

(brandishing huge bloody
butcher knife)

I should have sliced it off.

Rat Man, Fräulein Peter, and Rat Man's Father exit.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE

Lights up on Freud and Rosen as they were in scene 3.

FREUD

This odd routine clearly demonstrates two opposing wishes: one to impress the father with hard work, the other to defy him with a disguised form of masturbation. And yet...and yet, there was something missing, a crucial detail, a flaw marring my conclusions.

(Freud stops short, deep in thought)

ROSEN

(Quite fascinated. Freud is a marvelous raconteur)

Please go on, Herr Professor.

FREUD

The Rat Man's analysis lasted eleven months. Even after it was over, my interpretation deeply troubled me. After all, many young boys receive strong sexual stimulation, yet do not develop the weird range of obsessional thoughts that the Rat Man harbored.

ROSEN

Quite true.

FREUD

Then the fundamental cause of the Rat Man's obsessions struck me like a flash of lightning. Circumcision. There is the ultimate infantile trauma. What could be more shocking to the developing psyche? What horror must an infant feel when an adult wielding a knife assaults him and slices a piece of flesh from his member? Will the feared adult return to amputate the remainder? No doubt many little boys with oedipal thoughts think their fathers will castrate them because of their primal memories of circumcision. How helpless they were. How helpless they will be.

ROSEN

(doubtful)

Circumcision?

FREUD

Precisely, my dear fellow.

ROSEN

Was the Rat Man a Jew?

FREUD

He was.

ROSEN

Then there it is.

FREUD

Quod erat demonstrandum? The thing is not so simple, I fear.

ROSEN

Simple, Herr Professor, it's less than simple; it's trivial.

FREUD

The Rat Man was a Jew, ergo he was circumcised? Not quite. During the analysis I learned that the mother had been born a Catholic. Later, during the marriage, I believe, she had assumed the Jewish faith, though the sincerity of her conversion is questionable.

ROSEN

These points do not detract from your thesis, Herr Professor.

FREUD

I'm afraid they do. To be a Jew, a child must have a Jewish mother. A Jewish father and a Jewish upbringing are not enough.

ROSEN

A Canadian father makes a child a Canadian. A Hindoo father makes a child a Hindoo. I've never understood why a Jewish father isn't enough to make a child a Jew.

FREUD

Come, come, think about it for a minute. *Pater semper incertus, mater semper certa est.* The rabbis who codified Jewish law knew that only a child's mother could be identified with certainty. To be a Jew, a child must be born of a Jewish mother. I am not sure whether the Rat Man was baptized, or circumcised, or both, or neither. It is impossible to determine from his background. His mother's orientation is so hazy.

ROSEN

Pity he never volunteered his penile status while free associating.

FREUD

Perhaps I was remiss for not asking.

ROSEN

Do you feel that only circumcision can explain the Rat Man's neurosis?

FREUD

Not circumcision alone, no, but the combination of the circumcision and the intense early sexual stimulation. My theory is that, as alcohol is necessary for alcoholism, circumcision is needed for the formation of obsessional neurosis. Yet, as alcohol is not the sole factor in alcoholism, circumcision is not the only factor in obsessional neurosis. Not everyone who drinks becomes an alcoholic. Not everyone who is circumcised becomes an obsessional neurotic. The early, intense sexual stimulation is the necessary second factor.

ROSEN

A capital theory.

FREUD

Alas, no more than that for now.

ROSEN

Console yourself, Herr Professor. There will be other obsessional neurotics for you to study. They are so common. They should appear as regularly at your consulting room door as streetcars along the Opernring.

FREUD

(A look of vexation passes over Freud's face. He clamps his cigar tightly between his teeth, inhales deeply, and stares at the ceiling. Then he hawks loudly and spits in the spittoon.)

The Rat Man is a perfect case, a classic case of obsessional neurosis.

(addressing the ceiling rather than Rosen)

My critics, especially Herr Kraus, have made a good deal of what they call deficiencies in my account.

(In his annoyance, Freud bites through the end of his cigar. Growling, he spits the bitten end in a high arc toward the spittoon. But his aim is poor, and the saliva-blackened fragment lands a good distance from its intended target.)

They label my work unscientific, prurient, pornographic.

(Freud stares straight at Rosen)

I must know whether the Rat Man was circumcised. Once I find out, I will write a new version of the case. It will be the crowning achievement of my life's work. Do you not see?

(agitated, Freud tightly grips the arms of his chair)

ROSEN

Why don't you ask the Rat Man? Send him a telegram. Send him a letter.

FREUD

I tried. In August 1914, just after the declaration of war, I sent a letter to the military post office at Z. I knew the Rat Man had been billeted nearby. For weeks I received no response. Finally the letter came back to me.

(Freud goes to his desk upstage left, raises the blotter and withdraws an envelope from underneath, which he hands to Rosen)

ROSEN

(Holds envelope very close to left eye and struggles to read it)

Addressee unknown, return to sender.

FREUD

The outbreak of war threw the entire government into a state of confusion, the post office included. The mailman's visit has always been a high point of my day, and my correspondence was being delayed for days, sometimes weeks. A letter from Berlin, from Karl Abraham, took six weeks to reach me. Six weeks. I complained to the mailman. He threw up his hands. So I do not know whether the letter I sent to the Rat Man was returned by mistake or not.

ROSEN

Do you know what happened to the Rat Man? Did he survive the war?

FREUD

I think he may have been killed in 1914. I'm not sure.

ROSEN

You should speak to the military authorities, Herr Professor. Surely the War Ministry will be able to assist you.

FREUD

I treat patients from morning until night. I do not have time for government bureaucrats to shuttle me from one clerk to another in the War Ministry.

ROSEN

Obviously, finding out what you need to know about the Rat Man will be a time consuming job.

FREUD

I am afraid so. I need someone to help me.

ROSEN

(doubtfully)

Indeed.

FREUD

A trustworthy person, a rigidly honest person, someone who can be relied on. An energetic person.

ROSEN

No doubt.

FREUD

Rosen, if you can carry this little commission out successfully, you will have done more than almost anyone to advance our cause.

ROSEN

Cause?

FREUD

Psychoanalysis, the psychoanalytic movement. For yourself, you will be assured a glowing career as a psychoanalyst.

ROSEN

(stammering)

I want to do this thing for you, Herr Professor, but...but...

FREUD

But what? My friend, what troubles you? Say everything that comes into your mind.

ROSEN

Please tell me exactly what you want me to do.

FREUD

How many times must I repeat myself? I want you to determine whether the Rat Man was circumcised.

ROSEN

How will I find out?

FREUD

If the Rat Man is alive, you locate him and you ask him point blank.
If he is dead, a photograph will do.

ROSEN

Of his face?

FREUD

(impatiently)

Of his member. If he was circumcised, the picture would provide
irrefutable scientific documentation.

ROSEN

You want me to find out where he is buried, open his coffin, and
snap the photo?

FREUD

You push the button, we do the rest.

ROSEN

This Rat Man, you say he was a lieutenant?

FREUD

Correct.

ROSEN

A cavalry lieutenant?

FREUD

Cavalry, infantry, what difference does it make?

ROSEN

I have a little problem with horses.

FREUD

Are you allergic to them?

ROSEN

I am terrified of them.

FREUD

Calm yourself, Rosen. I am certain the Rat Man was not in the cavalry. I do not believe he was in the infantry, either. I think he was an ordnance officer.

ROSEN

Ordnance?

FREUD

Guns. Bombs. Explosives.

ROSEN

That's a relief. Do you know anything else that might allow me to trace him?

FREUD

He had a girlfriend, Gisela.

ROSEN

Did you meet her?

FREUD

Not at all. I deduced her name from an anagram, *Glejisamen*, that the Rat Man invented. Gisela plus jizz plus semen. *Glejisamen* obsessed him.

ROSEN

Gisela plus jizz plus semen. Remarkable deduction, Herr Professor.

FREUD

(Freud goes to desk, pulls out folder, hands it to Rosen)

Here are my case notes for the Rat Man. I have addresses and other information.

ROSEN

I am legally blind, Herr Professor. I can't cross a street unaided.

FREUD

A negligible difficulty. You will manage. The Rat Man lost his pince-nez. A friend, a military comrade, Lieutenant A, bought the Rat Man a new pair and sent them by mail to the post office at Z. Lieutenant B was stationed there. The Rat Man developed crazy compulsions about repaying his friend. The military barracks is nearby. You certainly can get some information if you make a visit.

ROSEN

I should be able to see a military barracks.

FREUD

Get me what I need, Rosen. A brilliant scientific and professional future awaits you.

SCENE

Freud is seated in his chair. On the couch lies Stefanie Gaisman, a beautiful, unstable young woman. She speaks in an abnormally flat, unemotional way, interspersed with sudden bursts of agitation. A textbook case of schizophrenia.

FREUD

I'm very grateful for your father's generosity, Stefanie.

STEFANIE

Yes.

FREUD

Herr Gaisman's support will allow us to have our own psychoanalytic publishing house. We won't be reliant on the whims of commercial publishers.

STEFANIE
(shrieks)

OOOh eeeh!

FREUD
Dementia praecox is difficult to treat.

STEFANIE
(flatly)

I know I am ill.

FREUD
Tell me what treatment you have had.

STEFANIE
They took me to a miraculous rabbi in Lemberg.

BLACKOUT.

FLASHBACK SCENE

Stage is in darkness except for spotlight on Stefanie, Rabbi and Sexton, center stage. Rabbi is Hasidic with long thick white beard, heavy fur hat (shtreiml), black silk coat, knee length white silk stockings, a figure from the middle ages. Sexton is dressed similarly though less elaborately. Sexton holds a ram's horn in one hand. Rabbi holds two lighted black candles.

RABBI

The girl has a dybbuk. We must perform exorcism.

(Rabbi mutters, recites prayers)

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech Ha-Olam.

(Rabbi uses the drippings of the candle and the tip of his shoe to draw a line)

Dybbuk, I draw this line you may not cross. You will not harm anyone in this room.

(Rabbi moves upstage left, opens a cabinet to reveal Torah scrolls)

Dybbuk, you are in the presence of God and His Holy Scrolls.

STEFANIE

(Gasps for breath, suddenly breaks out in wide smile and speaks in voice of dybbuk)

What you be wearin' on yo' head, grandpa? A twat?

RABBI

Dybbuk, I plead with you one last time to leave the body of this girl.

STEFANIE

(Screams in voice of dybbuk)

Watchoo be talkin' bout? You funky ol' fart, why yo' ain't shavin'?

RABBI

I will invoke the curse of excommunication upon your pathetic soul.

STEFANIE

Preacher, take them candy ass clothes to the cleaner on the corner. Yo' smell.

RABBI

Sexton, blow *Tekiah*.

Sexton blows ram's horn. Nothing happens.

RABBI

Sexton, blow *Shevurim*.

Sexton blows ram's horn more loudly.

STEFANIE

Sexton, get yo' butt to the seminary. Demand yo' money back. You awful.

RABBI

Sexton, blow *Teruah*.

Sexton blows ram's horn again. Nothing happens.

STEFANIE

Sheeit! What uh noise. Dey should hang ya from da ceiling by yo' balls!

RABBI

Sexton, blow the Great Tekiah. Upon the sound of these tones, dybbuk, you will be wrenched from this girl's body. I lay upon you the final anathema of excommunication from all the world of the living and from all the world of the dead.

(pause)

Sexton, blow the Great Tekiah.

Sexton blows ram's horn again. Nothing happens. Pause. Stefanie farts loudly. Rabbi and Sexton exit.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE

Freud and Stefanie as in scene 6.

FREUD

Did you improve?

STEFANIE

I'm deaf in my left ear. The sexton ruptured my eardrum.

FREUD

(after a moment's silence)

Please go on.

STEFANIE

When I got home, I fell into a dream. I saw a poisonous black snake about to bite me. I held up my hand to fend it off.

(she holds her right hand in front
of her face)

I looked at my hand. My fingers had turned to little snakes. The nails had become death's heads.

(becoming more agitated)

My hand turned into the head of a Gorgon. I tried to pray.

(she screams, shakes with fear,
thrashes about, then falls silent)

FREUD

Did you recognize the Gorgon?

STEFANIE

She was...

(starts gasping)

She was...

(gasps more forcefully)

I can't catch my breath.

(gasps)

FREUD

(Sits in his chair, hawks loudly,
spits into spittoon)

Did the Gorgon resemble anyone?

STEFANIE

My mother. She told me I left home without her knowledge. My father was ill. Now if I wanted I could come back. I did not want to go back. I was in a deep wood looking for the railway station. I thought I saw it but could not move. I was paralyzed with fear. I struggled. I got closer. It was not the railway station.

(pauses)

FREUD

What was it?

STEFANIE

The cemetery.

(pauses)

I was looking at my own grave.

SCENE

*Rosen on couch, Freud in chair, as in scene
1.*

ROSEN

I have a recurring nightmare. People in masks pursuing me.

FREUD

How long have you had this nightmare?

ROSEN

It started when I was four years old. My mother died of scarlet fever. I have only the vaguest recollection of her death. My older sister told me it was gruesome. My mother's whole body turned a bright blood

red, as though she had been horribly sunburned. Her skin peeled off. Late one night, she had a severe febrile convulsion. That was the end of her.

(silence)

FREUD

Your father?

ROSEN

My father was from Tysmenitz. He came to Vienna when he was twenty. A diamond dealer.

FREUD

A coincidence. My father was also from Tysmenitz.

ROSEN

My father did well here but became estranged from my mother. My father was eager to enjoy the cultural life of Vienna, especially the opera, which he adored. My mother, though quite intelligent, was a shoemaker's daughter. She had little interest in anything save gossip. I know this is a cruel thing for a son to say, even for a son who hardly knew his mother. It is by all accounts the truth. The marriage was an arranged one. So my father was determined that his second wife should be more suitable to his station than was the first.

FREUD

Was she?

ROSEN

My stepmother, Hannelore, was the twenty-seven year old daughter of a textile manufacturer named Felix Wehrli. The Wehrlis came from a very old family. Some members had fought the Turks with Prince Eugen in the 17th century. The offices of Herr Wehrli's company were only a block from my father's on the Mariahilferstrasse. Because of some imprudent speculation, Herr Wehrli had fallen on hard times. He had invested a considerable

amount of money in a process supposed to produce Swiss cheese. In the end, the process was a failure.

FREUD

Why did it fail?

ROSEN

The Swiss cheese didn't have holes. Hardly anyone would buy it.

FREUD

I remember that cheese. My wife's sister, Minna, Fräulein Bernays, bought some.

ROSEN

Bernays? Bernays? I believe I once had a patient named Bernays.
(thinks a moment)

I did. I was working as a locum tenens in Merano. I treated a lady named Bernays in a sanitorium there. I don't remember her first name.

FREUD

Another coincidence. Like Tysmenitz. Small world.

(silent for a moment,
uncomfortable)

Minna lives with us. She loves swiss cheese.

ROSEN

I have seen swiss cheeses just like Wehrli's, but in those days no one in Vienna would eat it. The exporters wouldn't touch it. Poor Wehrli. His creditors began hounding him. His textile business was on the verge of bankruptcy. He had already hocked everything he owned.

FREUD

That cheese Minna bought was quite delicious, as I recall.

ROSEN

My father would sell rich people like Herr Wehrli their diamonds but would also occasionally buy them back, should the purchaser have suffered financial embarrassment or be in need of ready cash. My father bought back thousands of crowns worth of jewelry he had sold the Wehrlis over the years. Finally, the banks wouldn't extend another pfennig of credit. Herr Wehrli appealed to my father for a loan. He got a son-in-law instead. Wehrli had a gorgeous blond daughter, Hannelore, a very intelligent girl, a pianist. She had attended music conservatory and had made a little debut. The music critic of the Neue Zurich Zeitung, the only one who attended, had written that she was a banger. I can't say, since I've always had something of a tin ear. She certainly seemed to get around the keyboard well enough. But after the caustic review, Hannelore refused to play in public again, and her parents were eager to marry her off.

FREUD

To a Polish Jew?

ROSEN

Hannelore was no longer, at twenty-seven, a spring chicken, to be sure. She also had an independent streak. Nevertheless, her mother had high hopes of snaring a husband for her from the most rarefied heights of the Zurich establishment. My father's seat at the Zurich Opera was very close to the Wehrli's box, and he had met Hannelore on many occasions. He was really quite enamored of her. Her musical talent piqued his interest.

(pause)

Herr Wehrli, of course, was taken aback by my father's offer. Who had ever heard of using a daughter as collateral for a loan? My father, certainly, didn't state the thing that way. He was a cultured man, after all. But that was what it boiled down to. In the end, my father got his way. The Swiss are practical people, and here was a way for Herr Wehrli to kill two birds with one marriage.

(pause)

FREUD

Was the marriage a happy one?

ROSEN

It was not. Hannelore was a beautiful and seductive woman. My father was in his mid-fifties when he married her. He was a busy, often-fatigued businessman, who, in any event, could not have been as attentive to his young wife as could a man in his twenties. The situation was aggravated by Hannelore's longing for a child, a desire which became acute after her first few months of marriage. When it was certain that she was unable to conceive, my father took her to a professor of gynecology at the university, who immediately diagnosed a severe uterine deformity. The gynecologist recommended various measures, but they failed to help. Hannelore was as barren as a stone.

(embarrassed pause)

My first really vivid memory of childhood was of Hannelore taking me into her bed and embracing me. I couldn't have been much older than five at the time. When my father was at work during the day, she would undress me, then remove her nightgown and ask me to fondle and suck her breasts. She would kiss me and caress me, even stroke my genitalia.

FREUD

Sexually mature women will often treat young boys in this way. I hear such stories regularly. For Hannelore, you were fulfilling two needs: the need for an attentive young lover and the need for a child. In some cases, the young boy will not suffer ill effects from this kind of treatment, since the woman involved may be a maid, a governess, or a neighbor.

ROSEN

My situation was not an ordinary case. My father was a strong, dominant man, the image of a paterfamilias, and my own stepmother was helping me to turn him into a species of cuckold. Even at such a tender age, it would be difficult for a child not to perceive the

inherent dangers. I suddenly developed a preternatural fear of masks. Masks pursued me in my nightmares.

FREUD

I will tell you the origin of your mask nightmare. You were in the room with your dead mother. You tried to awaken her. Her face was a mask.

ROSEN

An interesting idea. I can ask my older sister.

FREUD

Now what have you learned about the Rat Man? Did you find the post office?

ROSEN

Post office? What post office?

FREUD

What post office? The post office at Z.

ROSEN

Oh yes, oh yes, I remember now. That was where Lieutenant A was stationed.

FREUD

No, no, no. You have not read my book carefully. You did not read my notes.

ROSEN

I am a blind man. I do my best.

FREUD

Lieutenant A was not stationed at the post office at Z. Lieutenant B was on duty at the post office at Z.

ROSEN

I thought Lieutenant A was on duty. I asked for him but no one remembered him.

FREUD

Lieutenant A had formerly lived at the place Z where the post office was situated. He was in charge of the military post office there but he handed over his billet to Lieutenant B.

ROSEN

I thought Lieutenant B had been transferred to another village.

FREUD

That was Lieutenant A.

ROSEN

Are you sure?

FREUD

Rosen, Rosen. Do you want to be a psychoanalyst or do you not? Psychoanalysis is a science. At doing science you are showing yourself to be a dismal failure.

ROSEN

Herr Professor, what you ask of me is not simple.

FREUD

I attribute paramount importance to this case. I gave four progress reports to the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society on it; I made it the subject of my lecture at the First International Congress of Psychoanalysis in Salzburg; it is the only case for which I have retained day-to-day process notes. The Rat Man consulted Wagner-Jauregg, Vienna's most famous psychiatrist. The Rat Man is one of my best known cures. A complete cure, nothing less. I want to make the case a psychoanalytic showpiece. I must have the information about circumcision. If you cannot get it for me, you will be of no value to our science.

ROSEN

I am in awe of the magnificent science you have done, Professor.

FREUD

Get me what I need.

SCENE

Freud standing at his desk as BARON GAISMAN enters. He is Stefanie's father, a huge, hulking, dangerous, brutal-looking man despite his thinly civilized veneer. Freud and Gaisman shake hands. Baron Gaisman is a man who has obviously known the best of this world. He is an enormously wealthy aristocrat, dressed in lederhosen, alpenstock, and alpine hat with feather. Gaisman sits down in a chair next to Freud's desk.

FREUD

(flexing his fingers)

You have quite a powerful grip, Baron Gaisman.

BARON GAISMAN

(doffs hat)

Sorry, Herr Professor. Sometimes I forget myself.

FREUD

(still working fingers and staring
at his hand)

I am so pleased to see you again.

BARON GAISMAN

The pleasure is mutual, esteemed Herr Doktor.

FREUD

With your generous contribution, we have already acquired the assets of a defunct publisher, Franzbach. We will soon be producing the first issues of our *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* on the Franzbach presses.

BARON GAISMAN

Ach! The gift was a trifle. Your marvelous science will change the treatment of mental illness throughout the world. One day, I hope that everyone on earth can benefit from psychoanalysis, as I have.

FREUD

I regret that your wife does not feel the same.

BARON GAISMAN

Susanne? She deplores every *pfennig* I give you. Luckily, she is not at home much these days.

FREUD

Where is she?

BARON GAISMAN

Moscow. She has become a Bolshevik! Can you imagine? They say Lenin adores her. She is scattering her family fortune on the Steppes of Central Asia. She would have squandered Stefanie's money, had her grandfather not tied it up in family trusts.

FREUD

Have you thought of divorce?

BARON GAISMAN

I hesitate.

FREUD

Why?

BARON GAISMAN

Susanne is manic depressive. You know that. If I threw her over, she would commit suicide. She has already made three attempts.

FREUD

How much could marriage mean to a woman who spends her days cavorting in the Kremlin?

BARON GAISMAN

Only in her manic phase, Herr Professor. Then she can sleep with the entire Supreme Soviet, simultaneously and in tandem. When she is depressed, she returns to Vienna. I must care for her.

FREUD

She should not be your burden.

BARON GAISMAN

When you told me I was a latent homosexual, I was never able to grasp the meaning of my diagnosis. I thought my only problems were my temper and my impulses. Yet I realized I deceived Susanne when I married her.

FREUD

Deceived?

BARON GAISMAN

(hesitates)

Perhaps not. She was already pregnant with Stefanie.

FREUD

You did not force yourself upon her?

BARON GAISMAN

(uncomfortable, shifts in chair)

Oh no. Most certainly not.

FREUD

Frau Elisabeth Kleinig tells me that she loves you. That she wants to marry you.

BARON GAISMAN

I hesitate to marry another mental case.

FREUD

Frau Kleinig is not a mental case. She's mildly schizophrenic, that's all.

BARON GAISMAN

I see.

FREUD

Well compensated.

BARON GAISMAN

So I gather.

FREUD

Frau Kleinig is one of my most delightful patients. I myself am very fond of her.

BARON GAISMAN

I'm fond of her, too. So is her husband.

FREUD

Her husband is a nebbish. She will divorce him.

BARON GAISMAN

Her husband is an arms dealer. I already received a bullet through the lung in Galicia in 1914.

(opens shirt to display ugly bullet
wound scar on his chest)

I don't want to get shot again.

FREUD

Herr Kleinig has never fired a gun.

BARON GAISMAN

Are you certain?

FREUD

Frau Kleinig is herself very rich. Her father left her a fortune in toothpaste.

BARON GAISMAN

I do not need toothpaste. My teeth are in perfect shape.

(smiles broadly to reveal teeth)

Maybe they could use a little cleaning.

FREUD

You find it hard to accept my diagnosis of your latent homosexuality. Your complaint that you cannot grasp your homosexuality implies that you are not yet aware of your fantasy of making me a rich man. If matters turn out all right, let us change this imaginary gift into a real contribution to the Psychoanalytic Funds after your marriage to Frau Kleinig.

BARON GAISMAN

I intend to donate more.

FREUD

Your money is laughing gas to the psychoanalytic movement.

BARON GAISMAN

I shall consider seriously what you advise, Herr Professor.

FREUD

I have seen Stefanie.

BARON GAISMAN

(shaking his head sadly)

I know.

FREUD

I would like you to start from the beginning. Tell me everything.

BARON GAISMAN

There isn't any beginning, at least there isn't any insanity in the family that I know of, on either side. Stefanie's mother is a bit eccentric. She wasn't home too much. I've sort of been father and mother both to Stefanie, with the help of governesses - father and mother both to her.

(His eyes are tearing up)

FREUD

Here you are.

(Freud offers Baron Gaisman a box of tissues. Gaisman takes a tissue to wipe away tears.)

BARON GAISMAN

As a child she was a sweetheart. Everybody loved her, everybody who knew her. She was smart. She was happy. She liked to read, draw, dance, play the piano. My wife said she was the only one of our children who never cried at night.

FREUD

You have other children?

BARON GAISMAN

A boy who died.

FREUD

Cause of death?

BARON GAISMAN

(Hesitates, bites lip)

He fell, hit his head. Thank goodness we still had Stefanie. She was...She was...

(weepy)

FREUD

(Extending the tissue box again,
then helping the teary Baron
Gaisman to complete his
sentence)

She was a perfectly normal, bright, happy child.

BARON GAISMAN

Perfectly.

(blows nose loudly into tissue)

About eight months ago, or maybe it was six months ago or maybe ten - I try to figure but I can't remember exactly where we were when she began to do funny things - crazy things. She would suddenly talk in a strange loud way.

FREUD

Her dybbuk?

BARON GAISMAN

Her what?

FREUD

In Jewish folklore, a dybbuk is a malicious possessing spirit, the dislocated soul of a dead person.

BARON GAISMAN

Oh yes. Kabbala. The miraculous rabbi of Lemberg. My wife was ardently involved in Jewish mysticism before she embraced Bolshevism.

FREUD

The two bear certain similarities.

BARON GAISMAN

I had a valet, with me for years. Stefanie got some crazy idea about him. She thought he was propositioning her. I believed her. I fired him. Now I'm sorry. It was all nonsense.

FREUD

Exactly what did Stefanie claim the valet was doing?

BARON GAISMAN

We asked her. She was evasive. She would give us a naughty look and say, "you know."

FREUD

Has Stefanie become worse?

BARON GAISMAN

Oh, much worse. She had a fit or seizure or something. The things she said got crazier and crazier. I wrote some of them down.

(Reaches into pocket, pulls out
much folded, worn piece of
paper, hands it to Freud)

Almost always about men about to attack her, men she knew, men on the street: anybody.

FREUD

Stefanie is schizophrenic.

BARON GAISMAN

Our family doctor, Dr. Sonnenschein, told us.

FREUD

She is in an acute phase of the illness. Her fear of men is one of its manifestations. The outcome is uncertain.

BARON GAISMAN

Can you do anything for her, Herr Professor?

FREUD

I will try.

BLACKOUT.

FLASHBACK SCENE

*The stage is in darkness. We hear the voices
of Rosen on the couch, Freud in chair.*

ROSEN

I had truly terrible nightmares filled with the most demoniacal masks imaginable. They were dead black, some with fiery eyes and mouths dripping blood. I still remember a particularly terrifying dream I had at the age of six. The night was stormy, with thunder and lightning, along with a good deal of wind and rain. As I was lying in my bed, a black masked figure came crashing through the gabled wall of my room.

MASKED FIGURE, wet and glistening,
dressed like a king with crown, ermine
cape and claw-like hands. The black
mask is grotesque.

ROSEN

The mask spoke to me in an eerie voice.

MASKED FIGURE

(sweetly)

My dear child, I adore you. Your beautiful form arouses me. I have come to carry you off.

(angrily)

If you are not willing, I will use force.

ROSEN

The memory of this diabolical creature still haunts me.

BLACKOUT.

Lights up on Rosen on couch, Freud in chair. Masked Figure is gone.

FREUD

What did you learn from your older sister about your mother's death?

ROSEN

You are quite correct, Herr Professor. My sister told me I was the first to discover the dead body of my mother, lying in her bed.

FREUD

Your phobia, your fear of masks, is a defense against anxiety produced by repressed impulses.

ROSEN

What impulses?

FREUD

You anxiety at the sight of your dead mother has moved to an object, the mask, and then becomes the phobic stimulus. In order to not deal with the repressed conflict, the you try to avoid the object.

ROSEN

What repressed conflict? I am thinking.

FREUD

Your hour is up.

ROSEN

Damn.

FREUD

The Rat Man.

ROSEN

My repressed conflict. I just recognized it.

FREUD

That is for next time. What have you found out about the Rat Man?

ROSEN
(hesitates)

I don't think he is dead.

FREUD
(quite taken back)

What? Are you sure? How do you know?

ROSEN

Yesterday I took myself to the war ministry. At least what remains of it. It's in that ornate pile on the Schottenring. The pedestal with Field Marshal Count Radetzky on his rearing steed guards the entrance. Not much war there anymore. Mainly soldier records on index cards in long rows of card files. Doves of widows and orphans trying to find out what became of their fathers, sons, and brothers.

FREUD
(impatiently, pulling out watch
from pocket and staring at it)

What did you learn?

ROSEN

The records of the ordnance officers are on the fourth floor. I had to climb four flights of stairs. A clerk in uniform demanded who I was, why I wanted information on Ernst Lanzer. I told him I was a comrade, blinded in combat. I had heard my friend Lanzer was killed and wanted to visit his grave. The clerk was sympathetic. He found Lanzer's file card.

FREUD
Please be brief. I don't have all day.

ROSEN
Lanzer was born in 1878. He had been a lawyer before he joined the military. He...

FREUD

(very impatient and curt)

I know all that. What happened to him?

ROSEN

A Russian shell exploded near him in 1914.

FREUD

It didn't kill him? That's what I had heard.

ROSEN

He was wounded. Hospitalized with shell shock.

FREUD

Where is he now?

ROSEN

Nothing else on the file card.

FREUD

(bangs chair arm with
frustration)

Verdammt!

ROSEN

Sorry.

FREUD

You must find him. What about his family?

ROSEN

I was at the war ministry only yesterday. First time I had ever seen it. Very impressive: large, imposing, undeniably warlike. A fierce imperial eagle, wings outstretched, martial implements grasped in its claws, stares off majestically from the sloping roof. Stone heads of soldiers perched above heavily barred street level windows along the front. A huge...

FREUD

(interrupting, quite agitated)

I don't care. You are wasting my time, do you understand?

ROSEN

(apologetic)

Forgive me, Herr Professor.

FREUD

Um Gottes Willen, Man, use your *Verstand*. How will you psychoanalyze patients? What about Lieutenant A, who bought the Rat Man the pince-nez? What about Lieutenant B, who was stationed with him? Have you not gone over the materials I gave you?

ROSEN

I have. Some of what you published contradicts what's in your notes.

FREUD

(suddenly taken aback, cautious)

How so? Can you give me an example?

ROSEN

Glejisamen. The anagram the Rat Man invented.

FREUD

What about it?

ROSEN

You published that you used *Glejisamen* to deduce the name of the Rat Man's lady friend, Gisela. You told me the same thing.

FREUD

Correct.

ROSEN

In the notes you gave me, you wrote that you learned Gisela's name first, then used it to deduce the meaning of the anagram.

FREUD

A minuscule error. You make too much of a trifle.

ROSEN

Is the scientific record a trifle?

FREUD

We scientists are human. We make mistakes. Tiny ones, to be sure.

ROSEN

Can a scientist correct his mistakes?

FREUD

Most certainly. I believed that a repressed memory of early childhood sexual abuse or molestation was the cause of hysteria in women. I reported my theory to the Vienna Psychiatric Society in 1896. Brr, those jackasses gave me an icy reception. They can go to hell, euphemistically expressed. Krafft-Ebing called my theory a scientific fairy tale. Then I discovered that I was not able to bring a single analysis to a real conclusion. The complete successes I counted on were absent. To my surprise, in all cases, the father, not excluding my own, had to be accused of being perverse. Obviously impossible or, at least, highly improbable that perverted acts against children were so widespread. I finally recognized that the hysterical females I treated only imagined the vivid scenes of sexual abuse they related to me. They were fantasies, the result of infant sexuality. My insight has led to my theory of infant sexuality and the Oedipus complex. If I can make such a substantial correction, I assure you I can make a microscopic one.

ROSEN

I'm relieved.

FREUD

Do you wish to be relieved of the possibility of becoming a psychoanalyst?

ROSEN

Of course not, Herr Professor.

FREUD

You must work harder. Work makes life sweet. Laziness spoils everything.

SCENE

Stefanie on the couch, Freud in his chair.

FREUD

How can I thank you for your generous gift, Fräulein Stefanie?

STEFANIE

It was only money, Herr Professor. I have so much more than I will ever need. What you have given me is far more valuable.

FREUD

Your gift will make possible the continued publication of *Imago*. Our publisher was not making money and wanted to kill it. Now we can publish *Imago* ourselves.

STEFANIE

You were so sweet to find me the apartment next door.

FREUD

You should thank Anna.

STEFANIE

Your daughter is too kind. I only moved out of my parents' home a month ago. Already I am feeling better.

FREUD

It was time. You needed a bit of help making the decision.

STEFANIE

I enjoy taking my meals with your family. Fräulein Fichtl cooks a heavenly Tafelspitz.

FREUD

Be wary of her desserts. Especially the *Schlag*. Treacherous for the waistline.

STEFANIE

(looking at herself)

So far, so good.

FREUD

You have a lovely voice, my dear. Are you a singer?

STEFANIE

Oh no. I have never sung a note in my life. I am completely tone deaf. I can't carry a tune.

FREUD

Ah well, music has never been my strong suit.

STEFANIE

Now if my nightmare would go away. It still troubles me.

FREUD

Has it recurred every night?

STEFANIE

Not every night. Often. I am in the deep wood looking for the railway station. I see a poisonous black snake about to bite me. I try to hold up my hand to fend it off. I cannot move. I'm paralyzed with fear. I struggle to reach the railway station. It's not the railway station. It's the cemetery. I am looking at my own grave. And then...and then....I am a little girl. I am lying in my bed with my dolls...The door to my room slowly opens...My father enters...

BLACKOUT.

FLASHBACK SCENE

The set is in darkness except for a spotlight on the couch, which also illuminates Freud. Stefanie clutches a doll. Baron Gaisman is seated next to her. During the entire scene, Freud sits impassively.

STEFANIE
(protesting)

Please papa.

Baron Gaisman kisses Stefanie and caresses her ever more passionately. Stefanie resists, tries to push him away, clings tightly to her doll.

STEFANIE

Please don't, papa. Please don't.

Baron Gaisman becomes more forceful, enraged. He grabs the doll away from Stefanie, rips off its head and throws it violently to the floor, assaults Stefanie.

STEFANIE
(more anguished)

Stop Papa, you're hurting me.

A brutal scene of savage rape. Baron Gaisman tears at Stefanie's clothing. Stefanie screams, claws his face. Baron Gaisman grabs Stefanie by the neck, chokes her into unconsciousness, rapes

her. Baron Gaisman stands. His face and neck are clawed and bloody. He readjusts his clothes.

BLACKOUT.

ACT II

SCENE

AT RISE:

Baron Gaisman is gone. Stefanie lies on the couch, face bruised, clothes torn and disheveled, gasping for breath, weeping softly. Freud, seated in chair, is entirely calm, as though nothing has happened.

FREUD

(picks up tissue box, hands the sobbing Stefanie a tissue)

Here you are, my dear.

STEFANIE

Thank you.

FREUD

What do you make of your dream?

STEFANIE

(sobbing softly)

My father raped me. I remember it clearly now. God, how I remember it.

FREUD

Memory is not always a flawless guide to the past.

STEFANIE

It's not?

FREUD

Let us examine the elements of your dream. The snake for example.

STEFANIE

I'm terrified of snakes.

FREUD

Why?

STEFANIE

I...I don't know.

FREUD

In a woman's dream, the snake represents the male member, the phallus, alive, poisonous, slimy.

STEFANIE

Dream or no dream. My father raped me.

FREUD

Dreams of rape, fantasies of rape, are common in women.

STEFANIE

Please, Herr Professor, are you trying to tell me my father didn't rape me?

FREUD

Your dream is pure fiction, Fräulein Stefanie. Your father did not violate you.

STEFANIE

He didn't? How do you know?

FREUD

Your dream was a product of your strong adolescent sexual impulses, nothing more.

STEFANIE

I have never had strong sexual impulses.

FREUD

Do you have the desire to be loved?

STEFANIE

Oh yes.

FREUD

What do you feel when your father kisses you?

STEFANIE

Yech! Whenever I see his big white teeth I feel like Little Red Riding Hood.

FREUD

Did you ever feel his erect member against you?

STEFANIE

(stammering)

I...I...

FREUD

I realize my questions are intimate. Has a gynecologist ever examined you? Like the gynecologist, I must uncover your most private parts.

STEFANIE

(loud, raucous voice of dybbuk)

You horny ol' bastard. You head be clean up you ass hole, cigar an' all. You be seein' daylight over you dentures an' shittin' tobacco 'fore long.

SCENE

Rosen on couch, Freud in chair.

ROSEN

If my fear of masks relates to my repressed conflict, what is my repressed conflict?

FREUD

Consciously you feel that only members of your own sex, men, can rouse your sexual wishes; women, and especially their sexual parts, are not an object of desire for you at all. Are the private parts of women an object of disgust for you?

ROSEN

For an obstetrician? Are you joking?

FREUD

I am not.

ROSEN

What are you suggesting, Herr Professor?

FREUD

Sexuality is a continuum. Exclusive heterosexuality is at one end, exclusive homosexuality at the other. While your orientation is toward men, you seem to lie more toward the center of the spectrum than toward the end. Your very choice of a medical specialty implies at least a latent interest in the female sex.

ROSEN

(thoughtfully)

Perhaps you are right.

FREUD

You have been doing your best to repress your interest in women. You are a latent heterosexual. Your unconscious struggles have

directly led to your neurotic phobia, your fear of masks. But you unconsciously did not want to abandon any share in reproduction. Therefore, you chose obstetrics, an unusual choice, to say the least, for a man who is exclusively homosexual.

ROSEN

I think you are right.

FREUD

Do you engage in masturbation?

ROSEN

(embarrassed)

Well, I...

FREUD

Your hour is up.

ROSEN

Saved by the clock.

FREUD

Not entirely. The Rat Man. Have you located him?

ROSEN

Not yet.

FREUD

Not yet? What have you been doing?

ROSEN

In the war ministry, I learned that the Rat Man was hospitalized for shell shock.

FREUD

Where?

ROSEN

A shell shock ward at the Allgemeines Krankenhaus.

FREUD

A few blocks from here. Think of that. You must go there. Request his record.

ROSEN

I've already been there.

FREUD

Very good. We'll make a psychoanalyst of you yet. What treatment did the Rat Man get?

ROSEN

The shell shock special, with all the trimmings, I'm afraid.

BLACKOUT.

FLASHBACK SCENE

Stage is dark. Spotlight on the Rat Man in military uniform, lying on an examining table, downstage center, soaking wet. A MILITARY DOCTOR in uniform and white coat stands next to the table, holding and reading medical chart. The Rat Man, who has just been immersed in an ice water bath, is shivering uncontrollably.

MILITARY DOCTOR

How did you like the ice water bath?

RAT MAN

(almost frozen to death, teeth chattering loudly)

Gagagagaga.

MILITARY DOCTOR

So you can't move eh? Paralyzed, eh?

Rat Man squeals, struggles to move but
is paralyzed.

MILITARY DOCTOR

I see.

(Puts ear plugs in his own ears,
rolls an electric siren next to Rat
Man's head, throws switch,
siren emits deafening noise.)

RAT MAN

(jolted upward)

Gagagagaga.

MILITARY DOCTOR

Can you move yet?

RAT MAN

(a gurgle)

Glejisamen.

MILITARY DOCTOR

(Grabs Rat Man's very stiff leg,
tries to bend it. There is a loud
cracking noise.)

Shell shock rigor. Unmistakable. Don't worry, we have a treatment.
Electric shock.

(Rolls an electric box with wires
next to Rat Man, connects wires
to Rat Man's arms and legs.
Throws switch. Hissing,
zapping noise. Rat Man's whole

body arches upward and backward convulsively.)

Are you feeling better?

RAT MAN

(Current switched off, Rat Man falls back to table, almost dead)

Gagagagaga.

MILITARY DOCTOR

We'll cure you, Herr Lieutenant. Don't worry. You'll be back at the front in no time.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE

Freud seated in his chair. Baron Gaisman, furious, storms in. Gaisman enters shouting, waving a thick walking stick menacingly, but exits contritely at end of scene. Freud speaks throughout in a quiet, calm voice, as though to a child.

BARON GAISMAN

You have gone too far. You have simply gone too far.

FREUD

Good day, Herr Baron.

BARON GAISMAN

I will not tolerate your meddling in my affairs. Not by any means.

FREUD

A pleasure to see you again.

BARON GAISMAN

I am going to kill you with my own two hands.

FREUD

(Gesturing to chair)

Please have a seat.

BARON GAISMAN

(he does not sit)

Great Doctor, are you a savant or a charlatan?

FREUD

(with a smile)

People have accused me of being both.

BARON GAISMAN

(banging his cane loudly,
menacingly against Freud's
desk)

What have you done with my daughter?

FREUD

I am treating her, as you requested.

BARON GAISMAN

I did not request you to move her out of my house.

FREUD

Nor did I. Fräulein Stefanie made the request.

BARON GAISMAN

For a month we have been searching for her. Today I learned she is living next door to you.

FREUD

That was her wish, Herr Baron.

BARON GAISMAN

I have come to get her. I will return her to where she belongs.

FREUD

To her schizophrenic state? Her screams? Her madness? Her dybbuk?

BARON GAISMAN

(more softly)

Is she improving?

FREUD

Markedly. Please sit down. We must talk.

BARON GAISMAN

(hesitantly sits)

Must we?

FREUD

Your daughter's health. I need to know.

BARON GAISMAN

(hoarsely)

It just happened.

FREUD

What happened, please.

BARON GAISMAN

I don't know. I don't know.

FREUD

(after a moment's silence)

Yes?

BARON GAISMAN

(beginning to weep, wipes eyes
with back of hand)

When she was little she used to come into my bed in the morning.
Sometimes when her mother was away she'd sleep in my bed.

FREUD
(after more painful silence)

I see.

BARON GAISMAN

I was sorry for her. Truly I was.

FREUD
(comfortingly)

Of course.

BARON GAISMAN

Whenever we went places in a carriage or a train we held hands. She used to sing to me.

FREUD

She sang? What did she sing?

BARON GAISMAN

Oh, anything. She is a wonderful singer. She sang all the time. We used to say, now let's not pay any attention to anybody else. Let's just have each other. You're mine. Forever.

FREUD
(after another painful silence)

Please go on.

BARON GAISMAN
(choking back sobs)

People thought, what an adorable father and daughter we were. They used to wipe their eyes.

(chokes back more sobs)

We were like lovers.

FREUD

(hands the sobbing Baron
Gaisman the tissue box)

Here you are, my dear Herr Baron.

BARON GAISMAN

(hesitating to speak, pulling out
tissues one by one, wiping eyes,
blowing nose loudly, tossing
tissues carelessly on floor)

Then all at once we were lovers. Ten minutes after it happened I could have shot myself.

FREUD

(sympathetically)

You were in a difficult situation. You were alone with a young woman in your bed.

BARON GAISMAN

(beginning to fill with joy on
receiving Freud's absolution)

You don't think I'm a degenerate?

FREUD

Not at all.

BARON GAISMAN

A pervert?

FREUD

(shakes his head)

Hardly.

BARON GAISMAN

What do you think of me?

FREUD

You are...

(momentarily at a loss for words)

a normal man. What you need is an attentive wife at your side. Frau Kleinig. You must marry her. You need not concern yourself with her husband. I will speak to him.

BARON GAISMAN

(stands up filled with joy, rushes
to shake Freud's hand)

I will marry her. Herr Professor. You are...you are a god, believe me, nothing less.

(impulsively reaches into pocket,
pulls out a massive wad of
money, drops it on Freud's
desk)

Esteemed Herr Professor Doktor, here is a little something for your psychoanalytic movement.

(digs into other pocket, tosses
huge handful of gold coins on
Freud's desk)

Oh, wonderful man.

(exits)

Oh, peerless human being.

FREUD

(a moment after Baron Gaisman has left, exercising his right hand to relieve the effects of Baron Gaisman's bone crunching grip)

The Herr Baron is a worthy successor to the Brothers Grimm. No matter.

(stands, examines pile of money)

My goodness, American hundred dollar bills. Why should we publish *Imago* on paper? We'll have it printed on gold leaf.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE

Spotlight downstage center on a small marble topped Viennese coffee house table and three chairs. Rosen and Stefanie sit facing one another, with coffee cups in front of them. Rosen's white cane is propped against the table.

STEFANIE

Herr Professor Freud is a dear man. It's as if we're not even talking about the same person.

ROSEN

You are a patient. He's kind to his patients. At least to their faces. Especially wealthy ones.

STEFANIE

I have seen him giving money to a patient who fell on hard times.

ROSEN

Have you heard him talk about his patients?

STEFANIE

Never.

ROSEN

Patients are riffraff.

STEFANIE

Herr Professor Freud said that? I don't believe it.

ROSEN

Their only value is that they afford us a living and provide us with study material. We cannot help them.

STEFANIE

Are you certain he said that?

ROSEN

I heard him talking to Dr. Ferenczi at a Wednesday meeting of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society.

STEFANIE

Professor Freud is helping me. I'm getting better.

ROSEN

You've moved out of your home. You have no more contact with your father. You're taking meals with the Freud family.

STEFANIE

That has helped.

ROSEN

It can't go on forever.

STEFANIE

I'm hoping it will.

ROSEN

Don't count on it.

STEFANIE

Why not?

ROSEN

The Herr Professor, as you point out, is a personally kind, generous man. A dear man, as you call him.

STEFANIE

Very true.

ROSEN

He has, alas, another side: Herr Professor Doktor Sigmund Freud, the world class scientist.

STEFANIE

Scientist? I never thought of him as a scientist. Don't scientists wear white coats and work in laboratories?

ROSEN

The Herr Professor did that sort of science when he was young. He dissected eels, looking for their testicles. Today he dissects people's psyches. He considers psychoanalysis to be as scientific as Newton's universal gravitation.

STEFANIE

I see.

ROSEN

As a world class scientist, the Herr Professor will let no one stand in his way or diminish his fame. No one. He is brutal with anyone he perceives to be a threat. A couple years ago he had a trainee, like me, who wanted to be a psychoanalyst. Viktor Tausk. The Herr Professor decided that Tausk was a bit too independent and original for his taste. He dropped Tausk. Tausk became anguished, despondent, committed suicide. Shot and hanged himself at the same time.

STEFANIE

Do you think Herr Professor Freud might drop me?

ROSEN

I think you should try to make another life for yourself. Don't depend on the Herr Professor. When he feels that people have no more use for him, he drops them.

STEFANIE

I see that you are not following your own advice.

ROSEN

I cannot practice medicine. I need a profession. I need psychoanalysis. Otherwise I might as well be dead.

STEFANIE

(she places her hand on top of
Rosen's on the table)

Aren't we a happy pair? A suicidal man and a psychotic woman.

ROSEN

For the Herr Professor and his scientific glory, I am stumbling along the boulevards and alleys of Vienna, looking for a man who may not be alive. I do not have enough vision left to cross a street on my own. In the past week, two cabs and a milk wagon nearly flattened me.

STEFANIE

(Her face crumples)

My life has suddenly become bleak again.

(she wipes away tears with the
back of her hand)

ROSEN

(reaching for a tissue box on the
seat of the third chair)

I wish you well, Fräulein Stefanie.

STEFANIE

(taking a tissue, wiping her eyes)

What am I to do?

ROSEN

You are young. Your life situation was in large part responsible for your illness. Your chances of recovery are good.

STEFANIE

I must get away from here. I must leave Vienna. Where will I go?
Who will have me?

ROSEN

Please, do not make any hasty life-changing decisions.

STEFANIE

My mother abandoned me, left me in the lurch for Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. My father raped me. Now this.

ROSEN

Your problems will work themselves out. Give them time. I am confident.

STEFANIE

And what of your problems?

ROSEN

I am soon to have a new set of them.

STEFANIE

Oh, dear.

ROSEN

My time with the Herr Professor is drawing to a close.

STEFANIE

Is your training analysis almost complete?

ROSEN

Quite the contrary. It has hardly begun.

STEFANIE

I don't understand.

ROSEN

The Herr Professor is beginning to pick up on my attitude. He does not like what he senses.

STEFANIE

You have had words?

ROSEN

No words.

STEFANIE

What then?

ROSEN

During every session, I find myself straining to maintain self control. I don't want to end up without a profession, on the street with a tin cup. I just don't know how much longer I can go on until I explode.

SCENE

Freud in chair and Rosen on couch as they were in Scene 15.

ROSEN

The Rat Man escaped from the Allgemeines Krankenhaus.

FREUD

How?

ROSEN

No one is sure. They think he concealed himself in a shipment of dead bodies consigned to the Anatomical Institute in Währingerstrasse. His card in the war ministry lists him as a deserter, to be shot on sight.

FREUD

Shot on sight? *Gott im Himmel*, you must find him.

ROSEN

What can I do? I'm trying my best?

FREUD

Your best has not been good enough. Didn't Lanzer live someplace?
Didn't he have a home?

ROSEN

After he escaped the hospital, he moved from place to place, one step ahead of the firing squad.

FREUD

(shaking head)

Poor Lanzer.

ROSEN

I was able to trace him for a time through police registration records. Viennese bureaucratic red tape saved him. Apparently the military authorities didn't talk to the police.

FREUD

Did he stay in Vienna?

ROSEN

Surprisingly, yes. His first stop was the Stumpergasse, number 29. He rented a single room in the apartment of a woman named Zakreys. What a place. A tenement. There was a single faucet in the corridor, from which eight different tenants were forced to draw water in buckets and pitchers. There was one dirty toilet for the entire floor, with a door that was almost impossible to open. Bugs were everywhere!

FREUD

I cured him with psychoanalysis. I thought I had turned his life around.

ROSEN

Frau Zakreys told me he stopped paying his rent. Moved out in the middle of the night. She said she felt sorry for him. He looked so ill.

FREUD

The shell shock?

ROSEN

What she described sounded more like a physical illness. She said he was emaciated, deathly pale with a chronic cough.

FREUD

Perhaps tuberculosis.

ROSEN

He moved to Felberstrasse number 16, across the street from the railroad station. The landlord told me the Rat Man tried to work as a porter in the station. His sick appearance frightened customers away. He collapsed when he tried to shovel snow.

FREUD

Incredible. To think, Lanzer was earning a decent living as a lawyer when I treated him.

ROSEN

The last address the police had for him was Sechshauserstrasse number 58. A worse tenement than the Stumpergasse building. The apartments have no running water; there is a single faucet for each floor, an outhouse in the back. Again the Rat Man moved out in the middle of the night. He was living in a room rented to him by a Frau Oberlechner. She gave his address to the police after he disappeared.

FREUD

Do you have any idea where he might be now?

ROSEN

None, I'm afraid.

FREUD

You must find him, do you understand? He holds the master key to our entire knowledge of compulsive neurosis.

ROSEN

In the Sechshauserstrasse police precinct, a lieutenant on duty remembered the Rat Man. The precinct captain might know more, according to the lieutenant.

FREUD

Why are you sitting here? You must talk to the precinct captain immediately.

ROSEN

You talk to him. Use your telephone. Ring up the precinct captain. Ask him where the Rat Man can be found.

FREUD

(annoyed silence)

I would never entrust such an important task to a telephone.

ROSEN

You entrust it to me. Why am I not flattered?

FREUD

When I speak to a man, I want to look him in the eye. I must know if he is telling me the truth.

(silence, then menacingly)

You are ill served by your impudence.

(overcoming his annoyance)

I realize I have given you a frustrating, difficult task.

ROSEN

Frustrating? Difficult? Impossible. I am no blind Sherlock Holmes, you know.

FREUD

Science is never easy. *Al finem respice*. Look to the end, the result. Think what you will have accomplished if you succeed, my dear fellow.

ROSEN

If I fail, my efforts, everything, will have been for nothing. No one will ever know or care.

FREUD

Ach, that's science in the flesh, the bitch goddess. You must not think of failure.

ROSEN

I am going to the Sechshauserstrasse police precinct this afternoon. I have an appointment to meet the precinct captain.

FREUD

Very good. Another matter, now, if you please.

ROSEN

Yes?

FREUD

I want you to stay away from Fräulein Stefanie.

ROSEN

I met her by accident in a store on...

FREUD

I don't care how you met her.

ROSEN

I see.

FREUD

Her prognosis is bad, very bad. The percentage of cures in women her age is small.

ROSEN

Then why do you care whether I interact with her or not?

FREUD

You might become...

ROSEN

Enamored of her? Involved with her? I am not exactly oriented in that way.

FREUD

I have told you that you are a latent heterosexual. You were dubious. Now you are proving my point.

ROSEN

I am not emotionally involved with her.

FREUD

And you will not be. She is not good for you. She will consume your life. You will become nothing but a nurse to a crazy hag.

ROSEN

Fräulein Stefanie is not a crazy hag.

FREUD

You have learned nothing during your analysis. This anger you are directing at me is transference, nothing more.

ROSEN

What about your anger at me? Isn't countertransference worse than transference?

FREUD

Do you remember the rabbi's goat? *Der rebbe meg.* The rabbi may. You must follow the rules. I do as I like.

ROSEN

Can you assure me there is no conflict of interest here?

FREUD

My only interest is the interest of a doctor in his patient. In this case two patients.

ROSEN

I must get to the Sechshauserstrasse police precinct.

(gets up from couch)

FREUD

You will be the first blind psychoanalyst I ever trained. I still have my doubts.

ROSEN

(mildly contrite)

I am not giving up, Herr Professor.

FREUD

(reaches into his pocket, pulls out billfold, withdraws a few bills)

Here is some money. If you should by chance find Herr Lanzer and he is hard up, please give it to him.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE

Stage is in darkness. Spotlight on a park bench in the Prater (amusement park), upstage center. The Rat Man is asleep on the bench in an alcoholic stupor. His head is thrown back and he snores loudly. He looks awful. He is dressed in his military uniform, but it is soiled, rumpled, and torn. He is

emaciated, his face deathly pale, sweaty, covered with a growth of beard. Intermittent spasms of coughing and his own screams of anguish disturb his slumber. A half empty bottle of cheap wine is next to him on the bench. In the background we hear music from the band organ of a carousel. Rosen enters, tapping his way with his white cane, and sits down on the bench.

ROSEN

Herr Lanzer?

RAT MAN

(wakes with a start, eyes Rosen with alarm)

Who wants to know?

ROSEN

I am Dr. Heinrich Rosen.

RAT MAN

A doctor? Are you a skin doctor by chance? Would you look at this sore on my arm?

(rat man pulls up sleeve above elbow to reveal open pus filled sore on forearm near crook of elbow)

ROSEN

(he brings his good eye very close)

It might be a tuberculous skin lesion.

RAT MAN

Can it be treated?

ROSEN

I believe they are giving Finsen ultraviolet light treatments at the Allgemeines Krankenhaus. You might try them. I am a colleague of Herr Professor Doktor Freud.

RAT MAN

Freud? I have not seen him in a decade.

ROSEN

He is concerned about you.

RAT MAN

(seized by coughing fit)

After all these years? Think of that. He is a dear man. If he had been my rabbi during childhood, I would be an observant Jew today.

ROSEN

(hesitates)

Of course.

RAT MAN

The time I spent with the Herr Professor was the high point of my earthly existence.

ROSEN

You mean because he cured you.

RAT MAN

Oh, no. He did not cure me at all. Far from it.

ROSEN

He told me he did.

RAT MAN

Ach, I know what he says. I read his account of my case.

ROSEN

Is it not factual?

RAT MAN

(another coughing fit)

Hardly. Don't you know? He is a fiction writer. My case report is a novel.

ROSEN

I don't believe it.

RAT MAN

Using his genius, Herr Professor Freud has turned my dull tedious obsessions and compulsions into timeless literature. A detective story. He puts Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to shame. Why do you look surprised?

ROSEN

Do I?

RAT MAN

Are you in a training analysis?

ROSEN

I fear I am.

RAT MAN

My own guess is that Herr Professor Freud has never cured anyone, despite what he claims.

ROSEN

(reaches into pocket, pulls out some bills)

The Herr Professor has given me some money for you.

RAT MAN

(taking money, pocketing it)

Professor Freud is a darling man. Quite generous. Always has been.

ROSEN

We would both like to help you. How do you survive on this bench in the corner of an amusement park?

RAT MAN

Oh, it's a cozy spot, quite safe. During the war they wanted to shoot me on sight. Now I have a tiny veterans disability pension. God bless the Austrians.

ROSEN

Are they still pursuing you?

RAT MAN

Where have you been? The monarchy collapsed in 1918. The new government has other priorities.

ROSEN

How do you receive your checks?

RAT MAN

The manager of the carousel was my client before the war. He receives my mail. I managed to get him acquitted of a murder charge.

ROSEN

Whom did he kill?

RAT MAN

Oh, no one important. That was probably why I was able to get him off.

ROSEN

Are you here all day?

RAT MAN

I wander. I try to escape the guns in my ears. I can hear the guns. Thud, thud, thud, quite soft, they never cease, those whispering guns.

Oh Christ, I want to go out and screech at them to stop. I'm going crazy; I'm going stark, staring mad because of the guns.

(Rat Man seized by fit of coughing and trembling)

ROSEN

Please, please.

RAT MAN

I must get hold of myself.

(He takes a swig from wine bottle)

I keep thinking of the firing squad. The blindfold. The crack of the rifles. The bullets thudding into my chest. I beat them. Lived in homeless shelters most of the war. No police record.

ROSEN

Thank goodness.

RAT MAN

Most often the Meidling shelter. It was the best. A warm roof, food, showers, baths. During the winter, hundreds of destitute people waited night after night in long lines to get in. Guards turned 'em away when the beds filled up. Guards on duty all night long. Outside, people slept on the sidewalk, hungry and freezing. They hoped for a chance to be admitted, poor devils. The newspapers always reported when another child froze or starved to death at the door. Nobody cared.

ROSEN

Terrible.

RAT MAN

The old city shelter and the workhouse were the worst. I got tuberculosis there.

(another fit of coughing)

ROSEN

I'm sorry.

RAT MAN

Don't be. Have you seen a man's brains splattered on a stretcher bearer's face? No? I don't want pity. My dreams drip blood, but I can drink and forget and be glad.

(takes a swig)

People don't say I'm crazy. They know that I fought for my country. Truly, no one worries a bit.

(another swig)

ROSEN

Is your tuberculosis active?

RAT MAN

Active? It's positively rollicking.

ROSEN

Are you coughing up blood?

RAT MAN

I am hemorrhaging blood. I have already had two lung hemorrhages. The doctors at the Allgemeines Krankenhaus made a chest x-ray. I saw it. I have a cavity that fills half my right lung. They told me that my next hemorrhage will be my last. Isn't that wonderful?

ROSEN

Herr Professor Freud would like to see you.

RAT MAN

(looks over himself dubiously)

See me? What on earth for?

ROSEN

He told me he would like to do a follow up examination.

RAT MAN

My goodness. If he knew the state I'm in, he might not be too eager.

ROSEN

You are an important case. The Herr Professor feels that any new information about you would be a service to science.

RAT MAN

(he sits up straighter, looks less
forlorn)

How wonderful. Professor Freud is still concerned about me. I will go to him at once. Truly, I love that man.

ROSEN

(sniffing the air, trying to conceal
distaste)

Do you perhaps have something else to wear?

RAT MAN

I have one clean change of clothes.

ROSEN

Where?

RAT MAN

The motor room of the carousel. Hanging next to the grease and lubricants.

ROSEN

Is there a lavatory where you can change, perhaps wash up?

RAT MAN

Next to the ferris wheel. Please give me twenty minutes.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE

Freud's consulting room is empty. There is urgent knocking at the front door (offstage, downstage right). Freud enters from downstage left, followed by Stefanie. Freud is dressed in his elegant three piece suit, but has a flowing white linen dinner napkin tucked firmly under his chin. The napkin remains in place during this entire scene. Freud scowls in the direction of the front door DR when the knocking repeats. Sound of the door opening and voice off of a maid.

MAID
(voice off)

Yes, please.

ROSEN
(voice off)

Herr Professor Doktor Freud.

MAID
(voice off)

Herr Professor Doktor Freud is having his supper.

FREUD
(with annoyance)

Come in, Rosen.

Rosen enters, tapping his way with his white cane.

FREUD

Was it necessary for you to interrupt my supper?

The Rat Man enters, coughing. He is very short of breath and has considerable difficulty walking. He is pale, sweaty, feverish. He wears his last suit of clean clothes and bow tie. The clothing is threadbare, spattered with a few oil stains. A battered Homburg is on his head. He is a pathetic figure, having gathered up his few remaining vestiges of personal dignity for a final visit to his revered Professor Freud. Freud is surprised, then shocked at the appearance of his old patient, but tries not to show it. Freud walks to Rat Man and warmly extends hand. The Rat Man grasps Freud's hand eagerly and looks unwilling to let go, as though this is his last grasp at life.

RAT MAN
(gasping for breath)

My dear Herr Professor, before the war I could take those steps outside your door three at a time. Now they feel like Mount Everest.

FREUD

Ach Lanzer, how good to see you. Remember, none of us is getting any younger. You know Herr Doktor Rosen. This charming lady is Fräulein Stefanie Gaisman.

RAT MAN
(coughing and gasping)

A pleasure, gracious Fräulein.

(He kisses Stefanie's hand; he may be dying but he is still Viennese.)

STEFANIE

Let me take your hat and coat, Herr Lanzer.

(she does and hangs them on
coat tree in corner)

FREUD

Please sit down, Lanzer. Tell me what happened to you after our sessions ended.

RAT MAN

(sits)

I must think, Herr Professor. That was before the war. It seems so long ago.

FREUD

What of your lady friend, Fräulein Gisela?

RAT MAN

What a memory you have. Amazing. Gisela changed her mind at the last minute. Decided not to marry me.

FREUD

A pity. Why not?

RAT MAN

The day before the wedding she told me she hated lawyers. All they do is make other people miserable.

FREUD

Your friend, Lieutenant A, who bought you the pince-nez. Did he survive the war?

RAT MAN

(a look of horror crosses his face;
his voice trembles with emotion
and anguish)

My God, I can see him now before my eyes, crying out and stumbling through the thick green gas, drowning under those awful green fumes. In all my dreams, before my helpless sight, he lunges at me, choking, drowning. We flung him in a wagon and watched his white eyes writhing in his face. At every jolt we could hear the blood come gargling from his poisoned lungs.

(He is seized by a sudden chill,
begins to tremble
uncontrollably)

FREUD

Fräulein Stefanie, could you please get a blanket and cover up our guest.

STEFANIE

(Looking very upset, she hurries
UL, disappears for a moment,
returns with a blanket, very
compassionately puts it over the
Rat Man and tucks him in)

Here you are, Herr Lanzer, this will make you feel better.

RAT MAN

(trembling begins to subside)

Thank you, gracious Fräulein. You are an angel.

FREUD

(after a moment's silence)

Were you wounded at the front, Lanzer?

RAT MAN

I was in a trench when a mortar shell hit us.

FREUD

Where were you hit?

RAT MAN

My lower body.

FREUD

I am writing a monograph on the psychological relation of physical wounds and shell shock. Might you permit me to examine your wound?

Lanzer stands very slowly and agonizingly, as the blanket falls to the floor. He turns with his back to the audience as Freud walks in front of him, and begins to unbuckle his pants.

FREUD

Would you please excuse us, Fräulein.

Stefanie turns her back to Freud and the Rat Man. The Rat Man slowly lowers his pants and underpants. Freud's eyes widen and a look of unpleasant surprise crosses his face.

FREUD

You may pull up your pants now.

The Rat Man does so and sits again.

FREUD

I have heard of such injuries, but this is my first personal experience.

RAT MAN

(bitter)

Saves me some trouble, don't you think? No need to look for another fiancée.

FREUD

Lanzer, I wish to ask a few more questions.

RAT MAN

Ask me anything, Herr Professor. Anything I can do to help you in any way, I'm willing to do. You were always so kind and generous to me.

FREUD

Your mother was Jewish, as I recall.

RAT MAN

My father was Jewish. My mother converted to Judaism when she married him.

FREUD

At the time you were born, were you...

RAT MAN

(A frightening, severe spasm of coughing and chills seizes him. Blood begins to spurt from his mouth)

I'm ill. I'm terribly ill.

(More blood spurts from his mouth)

Hospital. I must get to hospital.

(He rises slowly, painfully, staggers out downstage right. When he is gone we hear his last word)

Glejjsamen!

There is a terrific crash and clatter of a table upset and vase breaking as the Rat Man falls dead offstage right. After a moment Freud slowly walks offstage right, then returns scowling.

STEFANIE

(runs after Freud, returns screaming)

Ambulance. We must call an ambulance.

FREUD

No need. He's dead.

STEFANIE

(weeping softly)

Poor little fellow.

FREUD

(annoyed)

This is your fault, Rosen.

ROSEN

(taken back with surprise)

My fault? I don't understand.

FREUD

You dawdled and you dithered. How many precious days did you waste, aimlessly poking hither and yon?

ROSEN

There is no way I could have found him more quickly than I did. I almost didn't find him at all.

FREUD

Why didn't you ask him about circumcision when you first found him?

ROSEN

I wanted to bring him to you, so you could see for yourself.

FREUD

Your crime is not only against me but against science. You have denied the world a definitive explanation of compulsive neurosis, perhaps forever. You are nothing but a hopeless bungler.

ROSEN

This is too much.

FREUD

I must write my final report of the Rat Man's case without the most important detail.

ROSEN

You can make it up.

FREUD

How dare you.

ROSEN

Like your other famous cases. They're all fiction.

FREUD

(very menacing and meaningful)

I will not really miss you, my boy. I have long realized that you could be of no further service. Quite the contrary. You constitute a grave threat to the future of psychoanalysis.

ROSEN

The Fräulein Bernays I treated in the sanitorium at Merano a few years ago. I remembered her first name. Minna. Fräulein Minna Bernays. Your wife's sister. You know what treatment I gave her? I aborted her.

FREUD

Enough.

ROSEN

How did she get pregnant? She lived in your house. You supported her. You traveled with her. You impregnated her.

FREUD

(pointing with outstretched arm)

You stink like the devil himself. There is the door. Out!

Stefanie suddenly screams, falls to the floor, screams, writhes, then is still.

STEFANIE

My dybbuk. It's gone. Professor Freud, you have exorcised it.

FREUD

Not the first, by any means.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE

Railroad Station. Stage is in darkness except for spotlight on Rosen, downstage center. Behind him is a sign, ORIENT EXPRESS, PARIS, TRACK 3. Rosen's suitcase is next to him. He holds his white cane. Stefanie enters in traveling clothes, carrying a suitcase, recognizes Rosen.

STEFANIE

Herr Doktor Rosen.

ROSEN

(recognizing her voice)

Fräulein Stefanie?

Rosen extends his hand to Stefanie, whose figure he can barely make out. She takes his hand, then embraces him briefly and affectionately.

STEFANIE

Are we on the same train?

ROSEN

Are you going to Paris?

STEFANIE

I am.

ROSEN

Finally getting out of Vienna to see something of the rest of life? Very good. You'll love Paris. It's a beautiful city.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE

Orient Express for Paris. Now arriving track three. Leaving in five minutes. All aboard, please.

STEFANIE

I won't be in Paris very long. I change for the train to Le Havre at the Gare St Lazare.

ROSEN

What a coincidence. I'll be on the same train. May I ask what you'll be doing in Le Havre? I think I can guess.

STEFANIE

I'm boarding the SS France, bound for New York.

ROSEN

So am I.

STEFANIE

What part of the ship are you in?

ROSEN

I have a third class cabin. I share it with another man. I hope he doesn't snore.

STEFANIE

I am in first class. I reserved through Thomas Cook. The only accommodation they could get for me was a suite with two bedrooms.

ROSEN

At least there won't be anyone snoring.

STEFANIE

Would you like to stay with me? Why let the second bedroom go to waste?

ROSEN

(hesitating)

I think I may take you up on your offer.

STEFANIE

Where will you be in New York?

ROSEN

I have an uncle, David Heymann. He lives in Woodside, Queens. I'll be with him for a while.

STEFANIE

He has a house?

ROSEN

An apartment. Small but cozy. Where will you be?

STEFANIE

Fourteen east 86th Street. Off Fifth Avenue.

ROSEN

An apartment?

STEFANIE

A town house. It belonged to my grandfather. What will you be doing in New York?

ROSEN

I'll try to get started as a psychoanalyst.

STEFANIE

Even after...

(hesitates)

What happened.

ROSEN

I hear New Yorkers are mad for analysis. It's a new craze there. Like jazz.

STEFANIE

Where will you put your office?

ROSEN

I still don't know. Office space is expensive. Real estate is a blood sport in New York City, according to my uncle.

STEFANIE

I have lots of space. There are some lovely rooms on the ground floor. You would be welcome to use them for your office.

ROSEN

(deeply touched)

You are so kind, Fräulein Stefanie.

STEFANIE

You don't need to live in Woodside, Queens, with your uncle. You could have a whole floor in my townhouse.

ROSEN

Are you sure?

STEFANIE

Perfectly. I like your company. I was dreading being alone.

ROSEN

(holds out his hand, she shakes
it)

You've found yourself a tenant.

STEFANIE

Your difficulties with Professor Freud: will they stand in the way of building a practice?

ROSEN

Not in the least, as I understand. Anyone who was with Freud for five minutes is highly sought after.

STEFANIE

Even analysts who broke with him?

ROSEN

That's no problem either. You just need a plausible reason for the break.

STEFANIE

Do you have a reason?

ROSEN

Oh yes. I broke with Freud over penis envy.

STEFANIE

Penis envy?

ROSEN

Freud insisted it should be limited to women.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE

Orient Express for Paris. Last call. All aboard.

They pick up their bags. Stefanie takes Rosen's arm as they leave for the train.

BLACKOUT.

THE FAMILY DOCTOR

CAST OF CHARACTERS

DR. EDUARD BLOCH is a short heavy set older man, stocky, with a walrus moustache twisted at both ends and wavy grey hair. He wears a stiff white collar, a vest, a perky silk bow tie, and double cuffs. His appearance is old world Habsburg.

KLARA HITLER is 47 years old, an intelligent, modest, kindly woman, sad and careworn in Act I but quite sexy in Dr. Bloch's Act II dream. She is tall, with brownish hair, which she keeps neatly plaited, and an oval face with large expressive eyes.

ADOLF HITLER, her only son, is eighteen years old in Act I, with a long pale face and a wispy moustache which covers most of his upper lip. In Act II he is the German Reich Chancellor Hitler familiar to us in photographs.

ALOIS HITLER, Adolf's father, is a huge, ugly, bewhiskered, hulking, powerful man, dressed in a customs officer's uniform. The same actor plays PRIEST, DRILL SERGEANT, and PROFESSOR DR. DR. RASCH.

LEO RAUBAL, Adolf's brother in law, is a small, officious man in a well tailored suit. The same actor plays SHELTER OFFICIAL and Journalist RENATO ATTILLIO BLEIBTREU.

The entire action of the play takes place in Dr. Bloch's Linz consulting room, Act I 1907, Act II 1938-1940.

ACT I

SCENE

AT RISE:

The stage is in darkness, except for a spotlight on Dr. Eduard Bloch, a short heavy set man in his late sixties, stocky, with a walrus moustache twisted at both ends and wavy grey hair. He wears a stiff white collar, a vest, a perky silk bow tie, and double cuffs. His appearance is old world Habsburg. He is seated in an easy chair in his Bronx apartment. He speaks to the audience as though he is talking to interviewers.

DR. BLOCH

(shaking his finger at audience)

Don't call me Herr Professor. I am not professor. I am an old Jewish doctor from Austria; a poor people's doctor; a Linz medicaid provider retired to an obscure corner of the Bronx. I know you want to hear about Hitler. Why else would you come here: to climb up five flights of stairs? Believe me, you aren't the first. Excuse me.

(From a pitcher on a table next
to his chair, he pours himself a
glass of milk, which he sips as
he speaks)

Ulcers. They've been with me since my thirties. Like the Hitler family. Probably stomach cancer by now. In my Linz office I always kept a pitcher of milk on my desk.

(He sips more milk, then places the glass on table next to his chair.)

In 1940, I was three days out of Lisbon, bound west for New York in a storm. The British found me. A little before eleven o'clock that night our ship, a small Spanish liner, Marques de Comillas, got orders to stop. British control officers aboard a trawler wanted to examine the passengers. Everyone lined up in the main lounge. Four British officers, wearing life jackets, entered. Grimly they worked their way down the line, examining passports. Everyone was frightened. Many people aboard the ship were fleeing for their lives. They thought they had escaped Europe. Now? No one knew. Perhaps some of us would be taken off the ship. Finally it was my turn. The officer in charge took my passport, glanced at it and looked up, smiling. "You were Hitler's doctor, weren't you?" he asked. He was correct. I knew Adolf Hitler as a boy and a young man. I treated him for minor complaints. I was intimately familiar with the modest surroundings in which he grew up. In 1907, I attended his mother in her final illness.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE

The lights come up on Dr. Bloch's consulting room, which contains a regular examining table and a white metal gynecologic examining table with chrome stirrups. A medical bookshelf is in one corner. A white supply cabinet with glass doors is next to it. In the center of the room is a roll top desk, at which Dr. Bloch is seated. He wears a white coat and an air of self-confident professional authority. A full pitcher of milk and a glass sit in a corner of the desk. A comfortably padded chair is at

right of the desk. In the chair KLARA HITLER is seated. Klara is 47 years old, a simple, modest, kindly woman, sad and careworn. She is tall, with brownish hair, which she keeps neatly plaited, and a long, oval face with large expressive eyes. As Klara gives Dr. Bloch her medical history, he makes brief notes on a piece of foolscap paper in a folder.

DR. BLOCH

Frau Hitler, please tell me what troubles you.

KLARA

I'm having terrible pain in my breast, Herr Doktor Bloch.

DR. BLOCH

Which breast, please.

KLARA

The right.

DR. BLOCH

Is the pain awakening you at night?

KLARA

In the past few days the pain has been so awful I've hardly slept at all.

DR. BLOCH

Have you been ill before?

KLARA

No, I've been quite healthy, thank the dear Lord.

DR. BLOCH

How old are you?

KLARA

Forty-seven.

DR. BLOCH

Tell me about your family. Do you come from Linz?

KLARA

I come from Spital.

DR. BLOCH

Spittal? The town near the Danube?

KLARA

That's Spittal with two "t"s. Spittal an der Drau, Lower Austria. My Spital has one "t". It's a little village in the south of Upper Austria, about 200 kilometers from here.

DR. BLOCH

I must be more frugal with my "t"s.

KLARA

Not at all, Herr Doktor.

DR. BLOCH

Are you married?

KLARA

I am a widow.

DR. BLOCH

Please tell me about your husband.

KLARA

Alois was a customs official. I was his housekeeper. He married me after the death of his second wife. He died four years ago.

DR. BLOCH

How old was he?

KLARA

(thinks)

Sixty-five.

DR. BLOCH

Much older than you.

KLARA

Twenty-three years.

DR. BLOCH

What happened to his first two wives?

KLARA

They died.

DR. BLOCH

(writing)

Cause of his death?

KLARA

(indifferent, matter of fact)

One morning he went to an inn, had a glass of wine, and dropped dead. They said he had a lung hemorrhage.

DR. BLOCH

Did he have tuberculosis?

KLARA

He might have. There was tuberculosis in his family.

DR. BLOCH

Have you been pregnant?

KLARA

Six times.

DR. BLOCH
(writing)

Living children?

KLARA

Two. My son Adolf is eighteen, my daughter Paula eleven.

DR. BLOCH

What happened to the others?

KLARA

Two sons and a daughter died of diphtheria not long after they were born. Adolf's younger brother, Edmund, died of measles when he was five years old.

DR. BLOCH

Frau Hitler, please pull the screen in front of you, remove your dress, sit on the examining table, and call me when you are ready.

Klara stands, pulls a white rolling screen in a metal frame in front of the examining table, removes her dress and sits on the table.

KLARA

Bitte, Herr Doktor, I am ready.

Dr. Bloch, stethoscope in hand, pulls away the screen. Klara, her bare back to the audience, is undressed to the waist. Bloch begins by tapping her chest, then listening with his stethoscope over both sides of her chest, front and back.

DR. BLOCH

Breathe in deeply...Breathe out...Say "E"...Say "E".

Bloch examines her breasts. The left is normal. When he palpates the right breast, a look of mild surprise passes over his face.

DR. BLOCH

Raise your hands above your head...Hold them in front of you. Hold them behind your head.

Dr. Bloch feels the left armpit with the fingers of his right hand. Nothing. Then he palpates the right armpit, where he spends a few moments. He looks grave.

DR. BLOCH

You may get dressed again, Frau Hitler.

Dr. Bloch pulls the screen in front of Klara, goes to sink, washes hands, sits at his desk and continues writing. Klara, fully dressed, sits down in the padded chair next to the desk.

KLARA

Is it serious, Herr Doktor?

DR. BLOCH

(hesitates)

We can treat you. You must have an operation.

KLARA

You will remove my breast?

DR. BLOCH

Yes, it must be removed.

(pulls out a prescription pad,
writes two prescriptions)

Here is some medicine that will make you feel better. Take one of these pills at bedtime. It will help you sleep.

(hands first prescription to
Klara)

Take one of these pills also. It's a pain killer, morphine.

(hands Klara the second
prescription)

I will schedule your surgery.

KLARA

Will you please talk to my son, Herr Doktor? I would like him to know.

DR. BLOCH

Of course. Have him come to see me.

SCENE

ADOLF HITLER sits in the chair next to Dr. Bloch's desk facing Bloch. Hitler is eighteen years old, with a long pale face and a wispy moustache which covers most of his upper lip. He is obviously distraught.

ADOLF

Why does my mother have such pain, Herr Doktor?

DR. BLOCH

Are the pills giving her some relief, Adolf?

ADOLF

A little.

DR. BLOCH

Is she able to sleep?

ADOLF

For the past few nights. What is wrong with her, Herr Doktor? What did you find?

DR. BLOCH

She has a tumor in her breast.

ADOLF

(he hesitates)

Is it a large tumor?

DR. BLOCH

The size of a hen's egg.

ADOLF

(hopefully)

Then you can remove it?

DR. BLOCH

We can, but the surgery will not be simple.

ADOLF

(worried again)

My mother is not old. She can endure it.

DR. BLOCH

The tumor sits against the chest wall. It is fixed to the underlying structures. It does not move. It is invading the chest wall and the rib beneath. Your mother's pain comes from tumor that is penetrating the periosteum, the fibrous covering of the bone, which is filled with nerves.

ADOLF

If you can remove the entire tumor, will she recover?

DR. BLOCH

It has spread. Under her right arm I felt a large hard node, also fixed to the surrounding structures. Her only hope is an operation called a radical mastectomy. An American surgeon in Baltimore named Halsted devised it a few years ago.

ADOLF

Will we need to take Mother to Vienna for the operation, Herr Doktor?

DR. BLOCH

That won't be necessary. A surgeon here in Linz, Dr. Karl Urban, has done many radical mastectomies.

ADOLF

Which hospital?

DR. BLOCH

The Hospital of the Sisters of Mercy. Do you want me to schedule the operation?

ADOLF

(hesitating a moment)

Of course, Herr Doktor. The sooner, the better. Will you attend the surgery?

DR. BLOCH

If you wish, I will be there. I will reserve a bed for your mother on one of the open wards.

ADOLF

(Raises his arm in gesture that
resembles Nazi salute)

Absolutely not! My mother must have a private room.

DR. BLOCH

I will order one. But I must tell you that the operation is risky. It has complications. Your mother may not pull through it.

ADOLF

(He appears to have been struck by lightning. His entire face crumples. Tears flow freely from his eyes. He fixes Dr. Bloch with a penetrating, horrified stare.)

Does my mother have no chance at all?

DR. BLOCH

(obviously uncomfortable to impart such bad news)

Even with the surgery, there is only a tiny chance she will survive.

SCENE

Klara is seated in the padded chair next to the desk. Dr. Bloch is listening to her. He is making notes in her medical record folder, which has grown thicker.

KLARA

Your pills have helped me, Herr Doktor. I am so grateful.

(short pause)

But if, if something, if something should happen to me during the surgery, I am terribly concerned about Adolf.

DR. BLOCH

Why? I examined him last year when he had influenza. He is a healthy, normal young man.

KLARA

Physically, yes.

DR. BLOCH

Is he in school?

KLARA

(she shakes her head)

Not for the last two years.

DR. BLOCH

What is he doing?

KLARA

He is writing an opera.

DR. BLOCH

An opera?

KLARA

A wonderful opera. He has described it to me.

DR. BLOCH

What is it about?

KLARA

It is set in the Bavarian mountains at the time of the arrival of Christianity. The men who lived on the mountain did not want to accept the new faith. On the contrary! They had bound themselves by oath to kill the Christian missionaries.

DR. BLOCH

(Klara's dramatic flair has surprised him.)

I see.

KLARA

(rapturous)

There is a Holy Mountain in the background, Herr Doktor. Before it a mighty sacrificial block surrounded by huge oaks; two muscular

warriors hold a black bull, which is to be sacrificed, firmly by the horns, and press the beast's powerful head against the hollow in the sacrificial block. Behind them, erect in light-colored robes, stands the priest. He grasps the sword with which he will slaughter the bull. All around, solemn, bearded men, leaning on their shields, their lances ready, are watching the ceremony intently. Suddenly...

DR. BLOCH

What does Adolf live on?

KLARA

He receives an orphan's pension. I give him a little money.

DR. BLOCH

Does he not wish to acquire a profession?

KLARA

Oh, he does. He is trying to become an artist.

DR. BLOCH

(doubtfully)

A painter?

KLARA

Adolf's father tried repeatedly to direct the boy into the civil service.

DR. BLOCH

What happened?

KLARA

They quarreled every night.

BLACKOUT.

Spotlight on downstage corner. Alois Hitler, a huge, ugly, bewhiskered, hulking, powerful man, dressed in a customs officer's uniform,

*pounds and hammers the cowering Adolf
mercilessly with his fists.*

ALOIS

(screams maniacally in a drunken
rage, waving report card)

You lazy, worthless creature. You refuse to study. You won't shame
me again. I'll teach you what Professor Huemer can't.

(Alois grabs Adolf by the neck,
shakes and throttles him, then
throws him to the floor. Adolf
lies motionless.)

Bah!

(Pulls silver flask from hip
pocket. Takes a swig. Storms
off.)

BLACKOUT.

Dr. Bloch and Klara again at Bloch's desk.

KLARA

We thought Alois had killed Adolf.

DR. BLOCH

Such violence is better reserved for the canvas, not the artist himself.

KLARA

Even with Alois dead and buried, the rest of my family has not let up
on my son. Leo Raubal, Adolf's brother in law, is at me constantly.

BLACKOUT.

*Spotlight on downstage corner. LEO
RAUBAL, a small, officious man in a
tailored suit, is haranguing Klara.*

LEO

An artist's career is rubbish. Adolf should learn something respectable.

KLARA

Leo, please, you must drop this.

LEO

I won't drop it. I won't see a family member slide into the gutter.

KLARA

If Adolf finds you here badgering me...

(Adolf enters. He has overheard.)

Uh oh.

ADOLF

Raubal, what are you doing here?

LEO

I'm trying to arrange a better life for you.

ADOLF

Don't try to smear me with your Sacher Torte. You're nothing but a petty moron government clerk nailed hand and foot to a customs desk. I'm not a fool like you.

LEO

You must be if you think you'll succeed as an artist.

ADOLF

(furious)

You Pharisee. You're ruining my home for me.

(Adolf punches Leo violently in the stomach. Leo sinks to the ground unable to catch his breath.)

BLACKOUT.

Lights come up on Clara and Dr. Bloch at desk as before.

DR. BLOCH

I hope Leo isn't vengeful.

KLARA

Leo went to Adolf's guardian, Mayrhofer.

DR. BLOCH

Josef Mayrhofer? He's my patient.

KLARA

Adolf planned to support himself in Vienna for a year on the little legacy Alois had left in trust. Leo tried to convince Mayrhofer to intervene. Mayrhofer went to work on me. I tried to convince Adolf.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE

A spotlight comes up on a downstage corner of set. Adolf and Klara face one another.

ADOLF

I am going to Vienna.

KLARA

What will you do?

ADOLF

What did Papa do?

KLARA

You know what he did. He was very young. He learned a trade in Vienna. He learned to be a cobbler.

ADOLF

If he hadn't gone to Vienna, what would have become of him?

KLARA

How will you live? You are already down ten crowns and you're still in Linz.

ADOLF

(holds up lottery ticket)

I have carefully allocated where each crown of my winnings will go.

(pulls from pocket and carefully
unfolds an inky spreadsheet)

KLARA

My dear son, you are unique. Most people who buy a lottery ticket derive pleasure dreaming of their tiny chance of winning. I have never seen such a complex allocation of pure hope and nothing else.

ADOLF

The first prize represents a lot of money. I will not spend it thoughtlessly.

KLARA

(skeptically)

Of course not.

ADOLF

I will rent a flat on the Ringstrasse near the Opera. Nothing too opulent. Comfortable.

KLARA

Very sensible.

ADOLF

(Reaches into pocket, pulls out
and unfolds floor plan)

Here is my ideal floor plan. The furniture will be elegant, of superior quality, made by the town's leading craftsmen. No cheap, mass-produced kitsch in my home.

KLARA

(Putting on her reading glasses,
staring hard at floor plan)

Charming. You've drawn each piece of furniture to scale.

ADOLF

Do you see the wall decorations?

KLARA

Tasteful. What is this fabric tacked to the corner?

ADOLF

The draperies.

KLARA

You've thought of everything.

ADOLF

Simplicity will be the keynote of my home. Winning the lottery will not change the way I live. I will wear good clothes. Nothing ostentatious. A lady housekeeper will receive all guests with studied non-chalance. She will be a refined, elderly lady, to rule out any expectations or intentions which might interfere with my artistic goals.

KLARA

Expectations or intentions? Do you mean love?

BLACKOUT.

SCENE

A spotlight comes up on Dr. Bloch in his Bronx apartment easy chair.

DR. BLOCH

Adolf didn't win the lottery. On the day of the draw his anger was volcanic.

BLACKOUT.

Spotlight comes up on Adolf and Klara; they are as before.

ADOLF

(in a rage, spitting and wildly gesticulating, waving the list of winners, reminiscent of his rages at the Jews in filmed speeches as Führer)

Thieves! Robbers!

KLARA

You didn't win.

ADOLF

The state lottery. It should be called the state swindle.

KLARA

My dear son, you knew how small your chance of winning was when you bought the ticket.

ADOLF

The state lottery is nothing but organized exploitation of human credulity.

KLARA

Do you think your income as an artist in Vienna will be more certain?

ADOLF

The state lottery is a fraud. The entire Empire is a fraud.

(dripping sarcasm)

What others achieve by war, you, happy Austria, achieve by marriage, you whore.

KLARA

I am concerned with your future. Austria can look after itself.

ADOLF

The Habsburg Empire, this patchwork of ten or twelve, or God knows how many nations, Poles, Czechs, Magyars, Ruthenes, Croats, Slavs...

KLARA

Don't forget the Jews.

ADOLF

This monster built up by Habsburg marriages. It cheats poor devils out of their last few crowns.

KLARA

The Kaiser did not hold a gun to your head and force you to buy the ticket. Yet it does not occur to you to reproach yourself. You took it for granted that the first prize belonged to you by right.

ADOLF

Not to me alone. I would have used some of the money to rebuild Linz. I would have constructed a magnificent new bridge over the Danube. I would have tripled the finances of the Linz Opera. They could have performed Wagner non-stop.

KLARA

(becoming exasperated--arguing
with Adolf is useless)

You brooded for hours over the conditions of the Lottery. You calculated exactly how small your chances were. I watched you. I can find no explanation for this contradiction in your character. You are as stubborn as your father was.

ADOLF

I'm eighteen. How much longer can I live at home? My own mother is keeping me. The shame is killing me.

KLARA

Herr Mayrhofer, the worthy peasant, has found an apprenticeship for you.

ADOLF

May I ask what kind?

KLARA

A baker.

ADOLF

(incredulous)

I don't believe it.

KLARA

Soon you will be a pastry chef.

(She produces a chef's cap and places it lovingly on Adolf's head.)

ADOLF

I'm ill. I think I'm going to vomit.

KLARA

You will have a trade, a safe haven. As an artist you would starve to death on the streets of Vienna. You must enroll in a school to learn a vocation.

ADOLF

I will enroll in a school.

KLARA

What school?

ADOLF

The Academy of Fine Arts.

KLARA

(receptive)

In Vienna?

ADOLF

It's on the Schillerplatz.

KLARA

What will you study?

ADOLF

Painting.

(He angrily pulls off chef's cap,
throws it to floor, stomps it.)

BLACKOUT.

Dr. Bloch and Klara at desk as before.

KLARA

I cannot stop worrying about Adolf. What will become of him when I am gone?

DR. BLOCH

The operation is risky, of course. I would be lying if I told you otherwise. But to do nothing would be worse. Dr. Urban is a magnificent surgeon. I have seen cases more serious than yours that

he operated. Today they are fine. Your procedure will be minor surgery compared to theirs.

KLARA

With all due respect, Herr Doktor, minor surgery is surgery done on somebody else.

SCENE

Dr. Bloch's consulting room. Bloch sits at desk facing Adolf, whose face is tired, eyes red, tears flowing freely.

DR. BLOCH

The operation went well.

ADOLF

How long did it take?

DR. BLOCH

An hour.

ADOLF

When was it over?

DR. BLOCH

(pulls pocket watch from vest pocket)

Two hours ago.

ADOLF

How long must my mother remain in hospital?

DR. BLOCH

Probably twenty days.

ADOLF

How much will that cost?

DR. BLOCH

A hundred kronen.

ADOLF

I must give up my piano lessons.

DR. BLOCH

Have you been studying long?

ADOLF

Three months.

DR. BLOCH

What are you playing?

ADOLF

I've finally mastered *Chopsticks*.

DR. BLOCH

You should throw yourself into finger exercises. My wife is an excellent pianist. She plays through *Hanon* and *Czerny* every day.

ADOLF

A hundred kronen is one month's widow's pension. An hour a week with Herr Prewatsky is out of the question. With or without *Hanon* and *Czerny*.

DR. BLOCH

For the next month, I will come to your apartment daily to change the dressing on the wound.

ADOLF

Herr Doktor, you are very kind.

DR. BLOCH

We must do everything we can.

ADOLF

(struggling to control himself,
stifling a sob)

Tell me truly: Must my mother suffer?

BLACKOUT.

SCENE

Lights come up on Dr. Bloch in his Bronx easy chair.

DR. BLOCH

My house calls provided me with an indelible impression of Klara Hitler: *Hausfrau* par excellence. Her modestly furnished apartment was exquisitely clean. It gleamed. Not a fleck of dust on a table or chair. Not a crumb of dirt on the polished floors. The window panes glistened, without a trace of grime. Frau Hitler herself, as immaculate as her home, was totally resigned to the dark fate she sensed: agonizing death. She worried only about her son.

BLACKOUT.

Lights come up on Dr. Bloch's consultation room. Klara is dressing behind screen, then sits in chair. Dr. Bloch has examined her and is washing his hands. He sits down at his desk and faces her, making notes in her medical chart, which is even thicker than before.

DR. BLOCH

You're doing well. All the surgical incisions are completely healed.
Do you have any pain, any discomfort?

KLARA

(listless, resigned, staring off into
space rather than at Dr. Bloch)

No, Herr Doktor.

DR. BLOCH

You have lost a little weight. Is your appetite good?

KLARA

(mechanically)

Yes, Herr Doktor.

DR. BLOCH

Are you sleeping well?

KLARA

Yes, Herr Doktor.

DR. BLOCH

Would you like more veronal?

KLARA

No, thank you.

DR. BLOCH

Do you still have pain? Would you like more morphine?

KLARA

No, thank you.

DR. BLOCH

(after an awkward pause)

Is something bothering you?

KLARA

Not a word from Adolf since he left for Vienna. Not a letter. Not a card. I am beside myself with worry.

DR. BLOCH

(opens desk drawer, takes out
post card)

Adolf sent me this card with a picture of the *Burgtheater*.

(puts on reading glasses and
reads from card)

"Heartfelt greetings from my trip to Vienna. Your eternally grateful patient, Adolf Hitler."

(He hands the card to Klara,
who reads it eagerly)

KLARA

If only he had studied at the technical school in Linz. He would have graduated by now.

DR. BLOCH

He is a fine young man. He will make his way in the world, I can assure you.

KLARA

Why his crazy journey to Vienna? Instead of holding on to his little legacy, he's frittering it away. And after that? Nothing will come of his painting. His opera-writing doesn't earn anything either. I can't help him. I've barely enough to live on.

DR. BLOCH

You need to think of your own recovery. In Vienna, Adolf must fend for himself.

KLARA

I shall not live to see him succeed.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE

Spotlight on Dr. Bloch in his Bronx easy chair.

DR. BLOCH

Frau Hitler was right. With Adolf gone, she let herself go. She had nothing to live for. When I saw her she appeared old and more frail. Her face was heavily lined, her eyes sunken. A few months after surgery, her tumor recurred in the surgical scar. Even today with orthovoltage radiation treatment, a scar recurrence is very difficult to manage. In those days it was a disaster, a stinking, bleeding tumor on the chest wall, oozing pus.

(he grimaces, as though he can
still smell the pus)

An evil-smelling mess.

Spotlight down, lights come up on Dr. Bloch at desk and Adolf in chair.

ADOLF

Incurable? What do you mean by that? Not that the cancer is incurable; doctors aren't capable of curing it. My mother isn't old. Forty-seven isn't an age when you give up hope. As soon as you doctors can't do anything, you call it incurable.

DR. BLOCH

(kindly, patiently, wearily; as a doctor he has encountered similar scenes countless times)

I will do everything for your mother that I can.

ADOLF

In life I have failed completely. Now this.

DR. BLOCH

I'm sorry.

ADOLF

Not as sorry as I am. The general painting school of the Academy rejected me. I went to see the rector and demanded to know why.

DR. BLOCH

What did he say?

ADOLF

(mimicking the arrogant rector)

Young man, the drawings you have submitted show clearly that you have no aptitude for painting. Ahem! Your ability seems to lie in the field of architecture. You should not go to the painting school, but rather to the school of architecture of the Academy.

DR. BLOCH

Architecture? Interesting.

ADOLF

I told the wretch I had never been to a school for building, or received any training in architecture.

DR. BLOCH

What was his response?

ADOLF

He looked at the architectural drawings I submitted and didn't believe me.

DR. BLOCH

Nevertheless, the situation sounds promising.

ADOLF

Promising? Impossible. My stupidity, avoiding technical school, took its bitter revenge. Attendance at the school of architecture of the Academy is dependent on attendance at a technical school for building. Entrance to the technical school hinges on passing the

matriculation examination at a secondary school. I didn't fulfil any of these conditions.

DR. BLOCH
(sympathetic)

You are too hard on yourself. It's a fine thing you are doing, coming home to care for your mother.

ADOLF
(screaming)

They rejected me, they threw me out, they turned me down.

DR. BLOCH
Have you told your mother?

ADOLF
What are you thinking of? How could I burden my dying mother with this *schweinerei*?

DR. BLOCH
(softly)

I was going to suggest that you didn't tell her.

ADOLF
(screaming and gesticulating)

The Academy. A pack of old-fashioned fossilized civil servants, bureaucrats, devoid of understanding, fetid lumps of flesh. The whole Academy ought to be blown up.

(Dr. Bloch sits quietly, does not respond. Adolf pauses, then begins respectfully:)

My mother's pain is getting worse, Herr Doktor. Morphine isn't helping as much. Even with veronal she can hardly sleep at night. Do you have anything else for her?

DR. BLOCH
(hesitantly)

We can try one other treatment.

ADOLF

What treatment?

DR. BLOCH

Iodoform.

ADOLF

Iodoform? What is it?

DR. BLOCH

Iodoform is an iodine compound, chemically similar to chloroform, but with iodine replacing chlorine.

ADOLF

I've never heard of it.

DR. BLOCH

It was originally used as a disinfectant. Recently, we've begun using it as a dressing for wounds, sores, and tumors, like the one on your mother's chest.

ADOLF

Of course we should try it. Do you have any books about it I could read? I would like to learn more.

DR. BLOCH

(surprised, hesitates, then goes to bookshelf, pulls down thick heavily bound book, thumbs through to page on iodoform)

Here is the *Textbook of Practical Therapeutics*.

(Hands open book to Adolf, pointing to entry)

ADOLF

(locates entry, reads from book)

"Iodoform occurs in small yellow colored crystals which possess a powerful characteristic, penetrating odor and sweet taste. It is soluble in alcohol, ether, chloroform, benzol, and in fixed and volatile oils, but is insoluble in water."

DR. BLOCH

(reading over Adolf's shoulder,
points with forefinger at a
paragraph)

Here is the part you are interested in: "Iodoform is used chiefly as a surgical dressing. It is antiseptic. When used locally, iodoform does good by absorbing the liquids of the wound, and thereby removing the nidus for germ-growth. When applied to large moist surfaces iodoform gives off free iodine and acts as a protective. Iodoform when applied to a wound acts by inducing chemical changes in bacterial toxins."

ADOLF

How do you apply the iodoform?

DR. BLOCH

(goes to medicine cabinet, pulls
out large labeled jar filled with
gauze pads and a second
opaque closed jar)

It comes already prepared as gauze pads.

(holds up opaque jar)

I also have it as ointment, but I prefer the gauze pads.

ADOLF

(eagerly reading from book)

What about this: "Studies by von Witzleben et al have shown that in high doses iodoform is tumoricidal. Von Witzleben has reported two cases of chest wall breast cancer recurrence in which daily application

of topical iodoform ointment for two weeks caused tumor shrinkage and disappearance."

DR. BLOCH

(rolls his eyes and scoffs)

I saw von Witzleben's iodoform ointment article in the *Deutsche Medizinische Wochenschrift* when it appeared. Von Witzleben is at the Charité Hospital in Berlin. Every week he thinks he has found the cure for cancer and he's mad for ink. I heard him speak at a meeting of the Vienna Medical Society. You could be killed if you accidentally got between him and a newspaper reporter. You'd have a better chance between a mother bear and her cub.

ADOLF

Why not try the ointment? What do we have to lose?

DR. BLOCH

More than you might think. Believe me, the gauze is best. Please bring your mother in tomorrow morning. I will start the iodoform then.

SCENE

Dr. Bloch's consulting room the next morning. Klara, looking weak, pale and ill, is sitting on the examining table in a bathrobe. Her eyes are glassy. She seems to notice very little. Adolf and Dr. Bloch are nearby.

DR. BLOCH

She's very pale. Is the tumor bleeding?

ADOLF

The dressing is soaked with blood.

DR. BLOCH

(He goes to the corner of the room and wheels to center an electrical device, with a red button and a cautery connected to it by a wire.)

If I can see a bleeding point I will cauterize it.

(He holds up the cautery and pushes the button. The box hums. In a moment the cautery turns red hot and emits some smoke. He pulls the screen in front of Klara.)

Frau Hitler, could you please open up your bathrobe.

(He goes behind screen and in a moment emerges with a large padded dressing, totally soaked with blood and pus. Holding the dressing gingerly by the edge he drops it into a trash can and quickly replaces the lid. He addresses Adolf.)

I will cauterize two bleeding points at the edge of the tumor.

ADOLF

Do what you must.

DR. BLOCH

If I can stop the blood loss your mother may regain some strength.

(He rolls the cautery behind the screen)

Frau Hitler, this may hurt a little.

The cautery hums. There is a hissing burning sound. Smoke and the smell of

burning flesh emerge from behind the curtain. Klara emits a long wail of pain.

DR. BLOCH

One bleeding point closed.

The cautery hums. Again the hissing burning sound. Smoke and the smell of burning flesh. Klara emits a series of blood-curdling shrieks of unendurable pain.

DR. BLOCH

(to Adolf)

Success. I have closed the second bleeding point.

ADOLF

Yesterday evening the priest gave her last rites.

DR. BLOCH

Now for the iodoform.

(Bloch goes to cabinet and brings back large labeled gauze filled bottle)

ADOLF

Aren't you going to use the ointment, too?

DR. BLOCH

(hesitates)

The ointment is toxic. In her condition it might kill her straight away.

ADOLF

Or it might cure her. Wouldn't the priest be surprised.

DR. BLOCH

We cannot take the chance.

ADOLF

Surely you exaggerate, Herr Doktor.

Dr. Bloch brings down *Textbook of Practical Therapeutics* from bookshelf, opens to iodoform article; pointing to paragraph hands book to Adolf

ADOLF

(reading)

"Iodoform Poisoning: If applied to an absorbing surface in susceptible individuals, iodoform may cause general systemic poisoning. The first symptom is wild, uncontrollable thirst. Headache and vomiting are followed by trembling, insomnia, loss of memory, loss of appetite, and rapid pulse. Finally, convulsive movements and maniacal delirium alternate with coma."

DR. BLOCH

Are you convinced? I have seen iodoform poisoning, the wild thirst, the delirium. I do not wish to see it again.

ADOLF

The book refers to susceptible individuals. My mother has never been a susceptible individual. I want her to have the ointment and the gauze. I want you to cure her.

DR. BLOCH

(softly)

I should never let a patient's family tell me how to practice medicine.

ADOLF

I am not telling you. I am only suggesting.

After a moment's hesitation, Bloch goes to the cabinet, brings back the jar of iodoform ointment.

ADOLF

You will cure her, Herr Doktor. Mark my words.

Bloch reluctantly opens the jar, at the same time giving Adolf a very rueful look.

SCENE

Dr. Bloch's consulting room. Klara sits on the examining table much sicker than the day before. She sweats with fever, trembles, and is barely conscious of her surroundings. A worried Adolf stands nearby as Bloch examines her.

DR. BLOCH

How do you feel, Frau Hitler? Better than yesterday?

KLARA

(barely audible murmur)

I am very thirsty, Herr Doktor.

ADOLF

I think she may be improving.

KLARA

May I have a bit of your milk?

(points to milk pitcher on desk)

Dr. Bloch picks up the pitcher and is about to fill the glass next to it.

KLARA

Please bring me the pitcher.

Dr. Bloch hands Klara the pitcher. It is a magician's magic milk pitcher, containing a transparent liner, giving the illusion that an entire pitcher of milk has been poured when in fact nothing has been poured. Klara takes the full pitcher and appears to gulp down its entire contents. Dr. Bloch, quite worried, takes the empty pitcher, holds it up for Adolf to see. Suddenly Klara starts to gag as though she is going to vomit. Dr. Bloch puts the pitcher in front of her. She retches convulsively into it.

DR. BLOCH

(puts hand on Klara's forehead)

I must take her temperature. She seems to have fever.

(Dr. Bloch fetches a thermometer, places it in Klara's mouth. She has a sudden spasm of pain and bites the thermometer. The outer half falls to the floor. Dr. Bloch pulls a white handkerchief out of his pocket.)

Please try to spit out the glass.

Klara spits. Blood gushes from her mouth along with the broken end of the thermometer.

DR. BLOCH

She is toxic from the iodoform.

ADOLF

Are you certain?

Dr. Bloch stares speechless at Adolf.

ADOLF

Has it helped her tumor?

DR. BLOCH

We must look.

Dr. Bloch pulls the screen in front of her. He emerges from behind it with the large wound dressing, again drenched with blood and pus, which he drops in the waste can.

ADOLF

(going behind the screen to look)

The tumor is cleaner and smaller, not nearly as much infection.

DR. BLOCH

What would you expect? With that much iodoform I could have disinfected the entire Linz sewer system.

ADOLF

Today you must apply even more.

DR. BLOCH

What? Are you crazy? Another dose of iodoform will kill your mother.

ADOLF

You're curing her, Herr Doktor.

DR. BLOCH

My dear boy, there is no curing a tumor like this. I try to keep your mother comfortable. That is all I can do.

ADOLF

More iodoform. You must apply more. My mother can withstand it. A few more applications and the tumor will be gone.

DR. BLOCH

No!

ADOLF

Yes!

DR. BLOCH

You're demanding I commit murder. I refuse.

Adolf walks to medicine cabinet, brings back iodoform jars, and sets them down in front of Bloch. For a moment Bloch and Adolf stare each other down, in a battle of wills. After a moment, Adolf crows the hapless Bloch.

DR. BLOCH

I am letting a patient's son tell me how to practice medicine. What is wrong with me?

ADOLF

You will cure her.

Shaking his head sadly, Bloch opens the jars, takes them behind the curtain. After a moment, Klara screams in pain.

SCENE

Spotlight on Dr. Bloch in his Bronx easy chair.

DR. BLOCH

Klara Hitler clung tenuously to life for a few more days, completely bedridden. I was amazed she survived as long as she did. Adolf was by her side continually.

Spotlight down on Dr. Bloch, spotlight up on downstage corner. Klara, groaning with pain and very ill, almost unable to speak, lies on her back in a simple iron-frame bed, her head on a pillow. Adolf is on his knees next to her in a sky blue kitchen apron, scrubbing the floor.

ADOLF

It's freezing outside. This kitchen is the only warm spot in our entire apartment.

KLARA

(barely a whisper)

I complained last year. The landlord told me that too much heat in the wintertime is a danger to health.

ADOLF

Whose health? No matter. Now that I have pushed the kitchen cupboard into the living room, there is plenty of space for your bed.

KLARA

Why have you dragged the living room couch into the kitchen?

ADOLF

I will sleep on it. I will be near you, should you need anything during the night.

KLARA

You are a darling son.

ADOLF

Did you like the Tafelspitz I cooked for you last night?

KLARA

Delicious. You can do anything. I couldn't have prepared it better.

ADOLF

I will cook all your favorite dishes.

KLARA

Since you came home, I have never had such a good appetite.

Klara begins to heave and vomit. Adolf rushes for a basin to put in front of her.

BLACKOUT.

Lights up on Dr. Bloch in Bronx easy chair.

DR. BLOCH

Klara Hitler died the next day. For the last time, I drove my carriage to her apartment in Urfahr, to sign the death certificate. Adolf had obviously passed a sleepless night. As I entered the kitchen, he was in the process of completing a sketch of his mother on her death bed. I sat for a while with the family and tried to give them some comfort.

(pause; Bloch looks very sad, as though his memories still disturb him)

I didn't go to the funeral. Klara Hitler suffered one of the most painful, agonizing deaths I have ever attended as a doctor. A day after the burial, Christmas Eve, Adolf came to my office.

Lights down on Dr. Bloch in easy chair.
Lights up on consulting room. Dr. Bloch sits at his desk, Adolf, dressed in mourning, in the adjacent chair. Both men are understandably subdued.

DR. BLOCH

You have my deepest sympathy.

ADOLF

We buried mother yesterday.

DR. BLOCH

Her death was a blessing. If she had lived longer, her pain would have been unbearable. Even morphine wouldn't have helped.

ADOLF

She is in the cemetery in Leonding, next to my father and my little brother Edmund.

DR. BLOCH

I know that cemetery, by the church, the *Alte Pfarrkirche*. A peaceful spot.

ADOLF

I selected the coffin myself. Polished hardwood with metal fittings. I spared no expense.

DR. BLOCH

(opens desk drawer, pulls out
Klara's thick medical file, hands
Adolf a page of the record)

I came to your apartment 42 times, sometimes twice daily. You see I'm charging the same for a house call as for an office visit. The total is at the bottom.

ADOLF

You are very kind. The coffin cost more.

DR. BLOCH

Here are the receipts for the iodoform. It is quite expensive.

ADOLF

No matter. It was our last hope.

DR. BLOCH

If you are not able to pay, I would be willing...

ADOLF

(interrupting)

You shall receive every penny.

(pulling out wallet, from which
he carefully counts out bills)

DR. BLOCH

Won't you need it for other expenses? You do not...

ADOLF

(finishes counting out money,
hands it to a reluctant Dr.
Bloch)

There. You are paid in full.

DR. BLOCH

Thank you.

ADOLF

You did your best.

DR. BLOCH

What are your plans?

ADOLF

I have an appointment with my guardian, Herr Meyrhofer. A wasted hour, I'm sure. He will also ask me about my plans.

(mimicking the elderly
Meyrhofer)

You won't be going to school or studying? No orphan's pension for you, my lad. You must earn your bread by the sweat of your brow.

Dr. Bloch and Adolf sit quietly for a moment. Adolf stands, bows, and

extends his hand to Dr. Bloch, who stands and offers his hand.

ADOLF

(very emotional, still bowing,
pressing Dr. Bloch's hand in
both of his)

Herr Doktor, I am eternally grateful to you.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE

Spotlight on Dr. Bloch in Bronx easy chair.

DR. BLOCH

A month later, Adolf left for Vienna. I received one more card from him, a new year's greeting: "Prosit Neujahr," toast the new year. On the front, Adolf had drawn a tipsy Capucin monk, wine glass in hand. On the back he wrote, "Hearty new year's wishes from your eternally grateful Adolf Hitler." Adolf may have been grateful, but he wasn't hearty at all. He had hit rock bottom in Vienna. Winter came early. He was living in the street, sleeping on park benches. He earned a few crowns shoveling snow, but was too undernourished and weak to shovel for long. He did no better as a porter in the train station.

Adolf enters in tattered winter coat and hat, huffing and puffing, laboriously dragging an enormous heavy steamer trunk across the stage. In the middle of the stage he stops to rest, panting. He stares malignantly at audience.

ADOLF

I think I see some Jews.

(Drags trunk offstage and disappears)

DR. BLOCH

Adolf's appearance was so bad that he frightened off most of his potential customers. Even at begging he was a flop.

Lights down on Dr. Bloch. Lights up on Hitler and well-nourished priest (same actor who plays ALOIS HITLER in scene 4)

ADOLF

(Hand out, palm up)

Praise be to Jesus, father.

PRIEST

Praise be to Jesus, my son.

(hands Adolf a copper penny and starts off)

ADOLF

A penny!

PRIEST

Blessed are the poor, for they shall inherit the earth.

ADOLF

I won't wait much longer.

Lights down on Adolf, lights up on Dr. Bloch in Bronx easy chair)

DR. BLOCH

On a bitterly cold night in December Adolf tried to get admitted to the homeless shelter in Meidling.

Lights down on Dr. Bloch. Spotlight on Adolf and SHELTER OFFICIAL (the same actor who plays LEO in scene 4).

SHELTER OFFICIAL
(consulting his clipboard)

You're in luck. We have one more bed.

ADOLF
(in tattered winter coat and hat
covered with snow, coughing,
shivering uncontrollably)

Thank God.

SHELTER OFFICIAL
(holding up his hand)

One moment. Open your coat and unbutton your shirt.

(Draws on rubber gloves. Pulls
open Adolf's coat and shirt to
look at his skin)

I thought so. You're infested with lice. I can't admit you.

ADOLF

Please. I'll freeze to death.

SHELTER OFFICIAL

We ran out of de-lousing powder an hour ago.

Exhausted, Adolf sinks to his knees.

SHELTER OFFICIAL

Wait a minute. I might have one can left.

(Disappears for a moment,
returns triumphantly holding
can of de-lousing powder)

*Lights down on Adolf and Shelter Official,
lights up on Dr. Bloch in Bronx easy chair.*

DR. BLOCH

Adolf was lucky. People froze to death on the sidewalk outside the door of the Meidling shelter. The newspapers were outraged when it happened, but nobody did anything. After a few weeks, Adolf moved from Meidling to the men's shelter on Meldemannstrasse. He made a decent living copying architectural scenes in watercolor from postcards and selling his copies to Jewish picture frame dealers. He left Vienna for Munich in 1913 and enlisted in the German army when war broke out in August 1914.

*Lights down on Dr. Bloch. Lights up on
Adolf, in private's uniform, holding rifle,
with drill sergeant (the same actor who plays
ALOIS and PRIEST).*

DRILL SERGEANT

Ten hut!

Adolf snaps to attention.

DRILL SERGEANT

About face.

Adolf turns to face Drill Sergeant.

DRILL SERGEANT

Present arms.

Adolf fumbles with rifle. He seems confused about what to do with it.

DRILL SERGEANT

Private, that's not a paintbrush. Have you ever fired a gun?

ADOLF

Not recently.

DRILL SERGEANT

Not recently, sir!

ADOLF

Whatever.

DRILL SERGEANT

(disgusted)

We'll make a messenger out of you. With a rifle in your hands, you'd be more dangerous to us than the enemy.

*Lights down on Adolf and Drill Sergeant,
spotlight on Dr. Bloch in Bronx easy chair.*

DR. BLOCH

Adolf was a brave soldier. His commander, Lieutenant Hugo Gutmann, a Jew, recommended Adolf for a first class Iron Cross. He duly received his Iron Cross and proudly wore it. In 1918, Adolf was gassed and temporarily blinded. As he lay in hospital at Pasewalk, he heard that Germany had asked for an armistice. Sightless, in his hospital bed, he decided to become a politician. The world soon came to know him. A few years later, he re-entered my life as well.

BLACKOUT.

ACT TWO

SCENE

AT RISE:

*A movie screen is downstage, in front of Dr.
Bloch's office set. On the screen is German*

newsreel clip of the Nazis rolling into Austria, March 1938, cheering crowds, Hitler standing in his six wheel Mercedes. Film stops. Screen rises. Spotlight on Dr. Bloch in his Bronx easy chair.

DR. BLOCH

The German Reich annexed Austria, March 12, 1938. A few days later Adolf visited Linz on the way to his triumphal entry into Vienna. The public square in Linz, a block from my home on Landstrasse, was in turmoil. I stood at my window as Adolf's procession arrived, a massive, open, black Mercedes, a six-wheeled monster, flanked by motorcycles. Even after thirty years, Adolf didn't look much different, except that his mustache was smaller. He smiled, waved, gave the Nazi salute to the people who crowded the street. Then, for a moment he glanced up at my window. I doubt that he saw me. My problems quickly began.

Dr. Bloch is seated at his desk. He no longer wears his white coat and looks diminished. RENATO ATTILLIO BLEIBTREU sits in the padded chair (the same actor who played LEO RAUBAL and SHELTER OFFICIAL). Bleibtreu is smooth and charming.

DR. BLOCH

(He takes calling card from Bleibtreu and reads it out loud)

Renato Attilio Bleibtreu. My son-in-law, Dr. Kren, told me you had visited him.

BLEIBTREU

Yes, it was a pleasure. As I mentioned to Dr. Kren, I am on the staff of Rudolf Hess, the Führer's Deputy. I am engaged in a special task

for the Herr Direktor of the Munich Main Archive of the National Socialist German Workers' Party.

DR. BLOCH

I was puzzled that you went to Dr. Kren, rather than coming to me directly.

BLEIBTREU

No puzzle, Herr Doktor. I didn't want to suddenly rain down upon you unannounced, like snow from the blue sky.

DR. BLOCH

You are very considerate.

BLEIBTREU

I had no idea where you lived. I went to the Linz newspapers to see if someone could give me an introduction, but they refused.

DR. BLOCH

Since I closed my medical practice in October, perhaps I am no longer as easy to find.

BLEIBTREU

You are not seeing patients?

DR. BLOCH

There are no patients for me to see. After 38 years of practice in Linz, the source of my patients has dried up. The new laws allow Jewish doctors to see only Jewish patients. There are precious few Jews left in Linz.

BLEIBTREU

The Jewish journalists are gone, certainly.

DR. BLOCH

Journalists? Your name is familiar to me. I seem to recall an article you wrote for the Free Press in Vienna.

BLEIBTREU

You have an excellent memory.

DR. BLOCH

Was it about Chancellor Dollfuss?

BLEIBTREU

Exactly.

DR. BLOCH

Wasn't he a tiny man? Were you the one who named him *the jockey*?

BLEIBTREU

Oh, no. Until he was assassinated, I wrote articles extolling him. They were what the Free Press wanted.

DR. BLOCH

Now his murderers employ you.

BLEIBTREU

(cheerfully)

I am apolitical. Neutral. I blow with the prevailing wind.

DR. BLOCH

One must, in order to survive these days.

BLEIBTREU

For the party archive in Munich, I am collecting reminiscences of people who played a role in the Führer's early life.

DR. BLOCH

You've definitely come to the right place.

BLEIBTREU

I have already interviewed Herr Prewatsky, the Führer's piano teacher.

DR. BLOCH

After three months of lessons, Adolf mastered *Chopsticks*.

BLEIBTREU

The Führer presented a magnificent Bösendorfer grand piano to Herr Prawatsky.

DR. BLOCH

Have you interviewed Professor Huemer, the French teacher?

BLEIBTREU

He is next on my list.

DR. BLOCH

Don't expect too much. Adolf once told me that his French classes were a total waste of time.

BLEIBTREU

You certainly appear to be my most valuable source. The citizens of Linz, for the most part, are close-mouthing and venal. One old lady wanted a hundred marks for a yellowing newspaper death notice of the Führer's mother.

DR. BLOCH

Are you planning to archive all the information you collect?

BLEIBTREU

Oh, no. I am working on a book about the Führer's youth.

DR. BLOCH

I should have known.

BLEIBTREU

I will include a large section describing your role as the Führer's family doctor, how you treated the Führer as a youth.

DR. BLOCH

You're going to tell people that the Hitler family doctor was a Jew?

BLEIBTREU

My dear Herr Doktor, the Führer doesn't feel that way at all. I was at his house in Berchtesgaden two weeks ago. Do you know what the Führer asked me?

DR. BLOCH

(imitating Hitler)

Bleibtreu, what are you doing here? Why aren't you at home writing?

BLEIBTREU

The Führer asked about Linz and about you. How is my old family doctor, Dr. Bloch? Is he still alive? Is he treating patients? Ja, he is an exception, a noble Jew. If all Jews were like him there would be no anti-Semitism.

DR. BLOCH

I'm surprised.

BLEIBTREU

Not as surprised as some of the Führer's guests that day. They were not pleased, to put it mildly, hearing the Führer praise a Jew.

DR. BLOCH

Nobody in Linz is praising Jews. I can attest to that fact personally.

BLEIBTREU

Would you like to write down your memories of the Führer and his family for the party archive? They would be a welcome addition. We would value them highly. I would certainly cite them in my book.

DR. BLOCH

I will try. Even without my medical practice, I've been a little busy of late.

BLEIBTREU

What occupies you?

DR. BLOCH

Perhaps you know Max Hirschfeld, the merchant. He was head of the Jewish Burial Society. When the Gestapo arrived, they made him Commissioner of Jewish Affairs. He asked me to help at the burial society. We've had a rash of Jewish suicides since the annexation. The Society is overwhelmed. A few weeks ago even Dr. Kohn, the Jewish coroner, killed himself after the Nazis cashiered him.

BLEIBTREU

What method did he use? Pardon me. I have trouble suppressing my inner journalist.

DR. BLOCH

Veronal overdose. Swallowed a whole bottle of sleeping pills. Gas is popular too. Hanging. Gunshot wounds of the head. They put the pistol in their mouths and blow their brains out. Not much left for the undertaker to work with.

BLEIBTREU

I have one other question.

DR. BLOCH

Yes?

BLEIBTREU

You have two postcards the Führer sent you thirty years ago.

DR. BLOCH

You know about my two postcards? My goodness.

BLEIBTREU

We would like them for the party archive. I of course will write you out a receipt for them.

DR. BLOCH

Why would I still have them? Over the years I received hundreds of cards and letters from patients and former patients. I never saved any of them. When Adolf sent me the postcards, he was one of many people I had treated. He did not seem to me exceptional.

BLEIBTREU

You have Frau Klara Hitler's medical record. We would like it for the archive, too.

DR. BLOCH

A thirty year old medical record? Who keeps medical records of a deceased patient for thirty years?

BLEIBTREU

So you are telling me you have neither the two postcards nor the medical chart?

DR. BLOCH

When I closed my practice, I had no further need for any medical records. My Jewish patients are no longer in Linz. The non-Jewish ones went looking for another doctor well before the annexation. As for the postcards, I might have put them in the medical chart. Maybe not. I really don't remember.

BLEIBTREU

(skeptical)

So that is your final answer? You have nothing of the Führer's for the party archive?

In answer, Bloch says nothing, holds out hands palms up.

BLEIBTREU

You would do well to cooperate, Herr Doktor. I am only a journalist collecting material. Other people may become involved. Rest assured, they can be very persuasive.

SCENE

The movie screen appears. Nazi propaganda film of Kristallnacht. Screaming. Synagogues burning, Jews being beaten, dragged through the streets. Screen rises. Lights up on Dr. Bloch in Bronx easy chair.

DR. BLOCH

Kristallnacht. The night of broken glass, November 9th and 10th, 1938. The pogrom against the Jews. Murders. Synagogues burned, Jewish businesses torched. President Roosevelt withdrew the US Ambassador in protest. The Nazis didn't care. As for me, I didn't want to give up my postcards and medical chart. I thought they were my best protection. The Gestapo arrested my son in law, Dr. Kren. I brought one of the postcards to Gestapo headquarters in Gesellenhausstrasse, showed the officer my relationship with Adolf, and he immediately released my son in law. A few days later, Professor Doktor Doktor Otto Rasch, head of the Linz gestapo, paid me an unannounced visit.

Lights down on Dr. Bloch in Bronx easy chair. Lights up on Dr. Bloch, without white coat, standing in his consulting room. Loud banging on front door combined with impatient ringing of doorbell. Bloch exits to open door. OTTO RASCH enters imperiously, followed by Bloch. Rasch is dressed in black gestapo uniform with markings of SS Brigadeführer (brigadier general). Rasch is played by the same actor who played ALOIS HITLER, DRILL SERGEANT, and PRIEST.

RASCH

(throwing ripped yellow sign to floor)

I have removed the yellow star from your door.

DR. BLOCH

Thank you.

RASCH

The order came from Berlin.

DR. BLOCH

I'm still grateful.

RASCH

(hands calling card to Dr. Bloch)

My card.

DR. BLOCH

(reading from card)

Professor Doktor Doktor Otto Rasch. Director, Reich Security Main Office, Linz.

Dr. Bloch sits in the padded chair next to desk, Rasch leans against examining table, does not sit.

DR. BLOCH

What are your two doctorates?

RASCH

Law and criminology.

DR. BLOCH

And your professorship?

RASCH

Criminology, University of Vienna.

DR. BLOCH

You teach there?

RASCH

Techniques of Interrogation, 101.

DR. BLOCH

(looks at his hands)

I'm glad I still have my fingernails.

RASCH

The fingernails are part of Advanced Techniques of Interrogation, 102.

DR. BLOCH

Thank goodness.

RASCH

Bleibtreu told me he had visited you.

DR. BLOCH

I was surprised he did not wear his uniform.

RASCH

Do you mean like mine? SS? Gestapo?

DR. BLOCH

That general category.

RASCH

He has no uniform. He can't document his ancestry. He can't prove he's 100% pure aryan.

DR. BLOCH

Why not?

RASCH

His mother was Maximiliane Bleibtreu.

DR. BLOCH

The stage actress?

RASCH

Exactly. Bleibtreu was born out of wedlock. Maximiliane would never reveal the father's name. She probably didn't know it herself.

DR. BLOCH

No one knows who the Führer's paternal grandfather was, either.

RASCH

No matter, he's been grandfathered in.

DR. BLOCH

Being a grandfather has its advantages. Look at me.

RASCH

(he looks at Dr. Bloch
menacingly for a moment)

Bleibtreu requested certain materials. Come, come. Don't deny you have them. You showed one of the cards during the detention of Dr. Kren.

Dr. Bloch is silent.

RASCH

I like this building. It is centrally located.

DR. BLOCH

I've been here many years.

RASCH

Do you know if there's any vacant space? Our offices on Gesellenhausstrasse are becoming a bit cozy.

DR. BLOCH

Just because I'm not practicing medicine doesn't mean I've gone into real estate.

RASCH

My brother sells real estate in Chicago. He studied medicine in Prague.

DR. BLOCH

Please tell me, Herr Professor Doktor Doktor, do you really need to carry a pistol in a quiet town like Linz? It's not Chicago, after all.

RASCH

(pulls out heavy, lethal looking Luger from holster)

What, this?

DR. BLOCH

(He suddenly sinks weakly into his chair, grasping his chest with his hand, grimacing with chest pain)

My heart. I have angina. Would you be so kind as to hand me that bottle of nitroglycerine tablets?

(points to bottle on small table across room)

RASCH

(Pistol in one hand, he saunters across room, leisurely picks up bottle of tablets)

These tablets?

DR. BLOCH

Yes.

Rasch opens bottle and pours contents into trash can.

DR. BLOCH
(still gripping chest)

I think I'm going to faint.

RASCH
(examines his pistol)

This is the safety catch.

(Rasch points to the safety catch, snicks it. He aims the pistol at various points around the room, then at Dr. Bloch, who is in pain, weak, barely conscious. Rasch holsters the pistol. Walking to desk, he opens drawers, one after another, examines contents, throws them to floor)

You are wasting my time, you know. I'm supposed to be at a meeting in Berlin. I am not fond of people who waste my time. Especially Jews.

SCENE

Spotlight on Dr. Bloch in Bronx easy chair.

DR. BLOCH

For Jews in Linz, conditions went from lethal to murderous. In 1939, we managed to get my two grandchildren on the last *Kindertransport* to England. Not long afterward, my daughter, Trude, and my son-in-law, Dr. Kren, got US visas. They then presented themselves at the Central Office for Jewish Emigration in Vienna. The Vienna office processed Jews with marvelous German efficiency, like a mill coupled

to a bakery that turned wheat into flour into bread. A Jew entered with property and possessions, a store, a factory, a bank account. He went through the Central Office for Jewish Emigration from window to window, desk to desk. When he exited, the German Reich had robbed him of all rights, all money, all property, but had given him an exit visa. He had fourteen days to get out of the country or be thrown into a concentration camp. I had not yet had the pleasure of visiting the Central Office for Jewish Emigration. My wife and I were still sitting in Linz, uncertain what to do next, when Renato Attilio Bleibtreu reappeared.

Lights down on Dr. Bloch in Bronx easy chair, lights up on Dr. Bloch seated at his desk, looking tired and sleepless, Bleibtreu seated adjacent. There is a bucket near a corner of the rolltop desk.

BLEIBTREU

(reading from three handwritten pages he holds in his hand)

What you've written here, Herr Doktor, is splendid: "Frau Hitler was a person with a good heart. Her kindly eyes mirrored this trait, which illness had not diminished." Excellent.

DR. BLOCH

In 38 years as a doctor, I never saw such a close relationship between a son and his mother. Adolf suffered as intensely as Frau Hitler. Every day he was more pale and drawn. When Frau Hitler died, it was as though a piece of Adolf's heart had been ripped out.

BLEIBTREU

(pulls a small notebook from breast pocket and scribbles down notes)

I must include your observation in my book. Very poignant.

DR. BLOCH

As a doctor I'm not permitted to reveal confidences I've received from a patient. I reveal what I revealed only because I intended it for the Führer's eyes alone.

BLEIBTREU

Of course. I will obtain the Führer's permission before I cite anything you have given me.

DR. BLOCH

Thank you.

Horrific screams and yells from a room on the floor above. Dr. Bloch winces. Bleibtreu is all ears.

BLEIBTREU

Don't tell me. The Linz Opera is rehearsing upstairs.

More awful screaming

DR. BLOCH

Opera?

BLEIBTREU

I know that aria. It's from, it's from

(snaps fingers)

The second act of *Wozzeck*. Alban Berg is one of my favorites.

Dr. Bloch sadly shakes his head "no".

BLEIBTREU

(snaps his fingers again)

Quite right. How stupid of me. Don't tell me. Don't tell me. It's the famous third act duet from *Lulu*.

DR. BLOCH

You are not listening to an opera by Alban Berg. Herr Professor Doktor Doktor Rasch has turned the apartment upstairs into a Gestapo interrogation chamber.

More blood curdling screams.

BLEIBTREU

You're joking. That's not *Lulu*?

DR. BLOCH

The screams keep the whole building awake at night. The rest of the neighborhood isn't getting much sleep, either.

(points to ceiling, then to bucket
near desk)

Do you see where water has leaked through and ruined the ceiling? They've been using the bathtub for their interrogations. I leave a bucket here so the floor isn't wrecked.

Screams, gurgling from above, splashing
of water, water pours down from ceiling
into bucket.

BLEIBTREU

No one's bothering you.

DR. BLOCH

(stares at Bleibtreu amazed)

For the most part.

BLEIBTREU

(Picking up telephone receiver
from desk and listening)

Your phone still works. They've disconnected the phone of every Jew in Linz, except yours.

DR. BLOCH

It's nice to have a phone, but even better to have someone to call.

BLEIBTREU

They've allowed you to stay in your apartment.

DR. BLOCH

Swimming lessons not included.

BLEIBTREU

You don't look like you're starving.

DR. BLOCH

It's true. I have everything I need. The Gestapo, most of them, are quite friendly and solicitous. Some are my former patients. When they meet me on the street, they raise their arm in the Hitler salute and say "Heil Dr. Bloch." They're deadly serious. I need to bite my tongue to keep from laughing.

BLEIBTREU

They're treating you like an Aryan.

DR. BLOCH

They're continually asking me, don't I have any Aryans in my family? Maybe I'm not really a Jew?

BLEIBTREU

I researched your background. The Gestapo commissioned the search. I went to the Jewish cemetery in Frauenberg. I prepared a complete family tree.

DR. BLOCH

What did you find?

BLEIBTREU

You're one hundred percent Jewish.

DR. BLOCH

You could have simply asked me to pull down my pants.

BLEIBTREU

When I gave the Gestapo my report, they were annoyed. They were keen to classify you as an Aryan. Now they want to make you an honorary Aryan.

DR. BLOCH

I'm sixty-eight years old. At my age a man needs new testicles more than the New Testament.

BLEIBTREU

Frau Hitler's medical record, Herr Doktor.

DR. BLOCH

What about it?

BLEIBTREU

Would you like to give it to me? I will write you out a receipt.

Bloch is silent.

BLEIBTREU

The two postcards. Would you like to give them to me?

Dr. Bloch picks up two postcards from desk, hands them to Bleibtreu

BLEIBTREU

(looking at cards)

Reuben's Delicatessen? Minsky's Burlesque Theater?

DR. BLOCH

Dr. Kren and my daughter sent them from New York.

BLEIBTREU

(reading from card)

"Father, darling, we miss you and mother terribly. We adore Reuben's cherry cheesecake. Love, Trude and Franz"

DR. BLOCH

(sadly)

My wife and I are here alone. Our entire family is gone. Children. Grandchildren.

BLEIBTREU

You are free to go. You can do whatever you like.

DR. BLOCH

I've lived in Linz forty years. I don't speak English. Even if I did, I couldn't practice medicine in America. They don't recognize foreign medical training. I would need to repeat everything. Pass licensing examinations. Serve an internship in an American hospital, if I could get one. On call twenty-four hours. Up all night every night. My son-in-law is applying for an internship in New Jersey, but he's forty years younger than I am. Believe me, I never expected my medical career to end so abruptly.

BLEIBTREU

I understand there's a good opportunity in Vienna for you.

DR. BLOCH

I heard.

BLEIBTREU

The Rothschild Hospital. The position pays well.

DR. BLOCH

I'm flattered that the famous Rothschild Hospital values my medical talents so highly.

BLEIBTREU

They're the last hospital in Austria that can admit Jews. The last Jewish hospital.

DR. BLOCH

I gave first aid to an elderly lady. Some thugs across the street beat her with clubs. They knocked out three teeth and broke her jaw. I sent her to the Rothschild Hospital to have her jaw set and wired. No hospital in Linz would take her.

BLEIBTREU

Sturmbannführer Eichmann, the Commissioner for Jewish Affairs, affirms that he will be responsible for your safety and will greet you personally when you arrive in Vienna.

DR. BLOCH

Thanks. I prefer unemployment.

SCENE

Rasch is leaning against the examining table, now in his Gestapo dress uniform and polished riding boots. Dr. Bloch is sitting near his desk looking tired.

RASCH

You have the wrong idea about this entire matter. Completely wrong. We didn't want to steal the postcards and Frau Hitler's medical record from you.

DR. BLOCH

Of course not.

RASCH

We want to pay for them.

DR. BLOCH

What will I do with money? Other than food, rent, and the phone bill
(picks up the phone receiver,
listens)

Still a dial tone.

RASCH

What about the restitution money?

DR. BLOCH

Restitution money?

RASCH

Where have you been? Haven't you heard? When the synagogues burned in November, nearby buildings were damaged or destroyed. You Jews must pay restitution to cover the cost of restoring every damaged building.

DR. BLOCH

I have no income. My savings are almost gone.

RASCH

Every Jew must turn over a quarter of his net worth as restitution.

DR. BLOCH

For me that's virtually nothing.

RASCH

We'll see. If you withhold payment or try to hide assets, you're committing a serious crime.

DR. BLOCH

If you find any liquid assets belonging to me, bring them here and I will gargle them.

RASCH

No need. Your reimbursement for the postcards and Frau Hitler's record would cover the restitution payment.

DR. BLOCH

You want to pay me, then immediately reclaim the money.

RASCH

Oh, not immediately.

DR. BLOCH

How long would I have the money?

RASCH

Maybe quite a while.

DR. BLOCH

Which is how long?

RASCH

At least five minutes.

DR. BLOCH

What would I do with a sum of money that I could only hold for five minutes?

RASCH

I don't believe it. A Jew wants me to tell him what to do with money.

DR. BLOCH

The Rothschilds have fled. You are all I have.

RASCH

You could invest it in an ultra short term certificate of deposit.

DR. BLOCH

How do they issue a certificate like that? Printed on a banana?

Awful screaming from above. Gurgling, splashing, water pours from ceiling into bucket near desk.

RASCH

I might be persuaded to move our manicure salon.

DR. BLOCH

Is that what you call it?

RASCH

We do pedicures, too.

DR. BLOCH

Excuse me a moment. My ulcers are speaking to me.

(Dr. Bloch, clearly in discomfort, stands, pours himself a glass of milk from pitcher on his desk.)

RASCH

Are they telling you to give me the documents? No? Do they need a little more convincing?

Rasch draws his pistol. Aims. Fires. The bullet whizzes past Dr. Bloch, barely missing him, and crashes into the milk pitcher on desk. The pitcher explodes in a shower of milk and shards of glass.

RASCH

(looking at his watch, then politely)

Will you kindly excuse me. I am scheduled to give a lecture to my class, Fundamentals of Interrogation, 101.

Rasch exits. Clearly shaken, Dr. Bloch sinks into nearby chair. A splinter of glass has hit his forehead. Blood runs down his face onto his starched white collar and silk bow tie. He raises his hand to his bleeding forehead, then looks at his blood smeared hand. He grasps his chest, groans with pain, faints dead away in his chair, gasping for air.

SCENE

Dr. Bloch's dream. Klara Hitler enters. Klara looks ethereal and sexy, wears very little clothing, entirely different from the prim Victorian appearance she had in Act I. Dr. Bloch is still covered with blood.

KLARA

My dear Herr Doktor, how I have longed to see you again.

DR. BLOCH

Frau Hitler. Do you have pain?

KLARA

(seductively)

Oh no, Herr Doktor. Please call me Klara.

DR. BLOCH

Are you having trouble sleeping?

KLARA

Not at all, Herr Doktor. I'm sleeping very well.

DR. BLOCH

Is there any way I may help you?

KLARA

On the contrary. I have come to help you.

DR. BLOCH

You have?

KLARA

I was too dead to thank you on your final house call. I apologize.

DR. BLOCH

No apology necessary. I understand completely.

KLARA

I am so grateful. You cured me with your iodoform.

(Klara raises her thin blouse to show her very nice looking breasts)

DR. BLOCH

I used too much. I poisoned you.

KLARA

My life was hard. The cancer was more than I could bear. You mercifully ended my struggles.

DR. BLOCH

I killed a patient who had put her trust in me. I disobeyed the doctor's first commandment: above all, do no harm. Thirty years later, my conscience gives me no peace.

KLARA

(She sits in Dr. Bloch's lap, embraces him and kisses him)

You are a sweet man.

DR. BLOCH

First Adolf forced me to murder his mother, now he has deprived me of my profession. My children and grandchildren are gone. My wife is crying one minute, terrified the next. Adolf has certainly changed my life, and not for the better.

KLARA

Oh Adolf. He is too much like his father. When I see what he has done, I spin inside my coffin. They should have buried me with ball bearings.

DR. BLOCH

I worry more about what he will do. Your medical chart and his two post cards are all that protect me from who knows what.

KLARA

You're cute.

(she kisses Dr. Bloch again)

I've always been partial to Jewish men.

(she caresses Dr. Bloch)

DR. BLOCH

I didn't know there were Jewish men in Spital.

KLARA

Before I came to work for Adolf's father, I worked in the home of a rich Jew named Frankenthaler. A cloth merchant. He looked like you. He was very good to me. I was good to him, too.

(Klara gives Dr. Bloch a kiss on
the lips)

DR. BLOCH

Forgive me for asking this intimate question, but I always wondered about the closeness of your relationship with Adolf.

KLARA

(giggles)

You are very naughty, Herr Doktor.

(becomes passionate)

Would you like to examine my breasts?

DR. BLOCH

I shouldn't.

KLARA

Why not? You could enter the information in my chart. I don't mind.

DR. BLOCH

I would be violating my Hippocratic oath.

KLARA

(puts index finger to her lips)

If I run into Hippocrates, I won't say a word.

DR. BLOCH

Do you speak ancient Greek?

KLARA

He's very deaf. He'd probably tell me to take two aspirin and call him in the morning.

(becomes more passionate)

DR. BLOCH

I have a bad heart, Frau Hitler. I am no longer a young man.

Klara begins to undress.

DR. BLOCH

I will end up coming and going at the same time.

Rasch suddenly enters. He looks like an angry husband who has caught his wife *in flagrante delicto*. Klara stands and hurriedly covers herself.

RASCH

(to Klara)

I'll deal with you later.

Klara exits.

DR. BLOCH

Herr Professor Doktor Doktor.

RASCH

You criminal. You have broken the Nuremberg laws.

DR. BLOCH

All of them, or one in particular?

RASCH

You have defiled an aryan woman.

DR. BLOCH

She didn't seem to mind.

RASCH

The mother of our revered Führer.

DR. BLOCH

Maybe she was more than that.

RASCH

You filthy Jew miscreant. A trial and sentencing would be too good for you.

(Rasch pulls out his pistol, walks up to Dr. Bloch, aims the pistol at Bloch's head and fires)

BLACKOUT.

SCENE

Spotlight on Bleibtreu and Rasch.

RASCH

The Führer is becoming annoyed.

BLEIBTREU

I've done my best.

RASCH

You've done nothing.

BLEIBTREU

What have you accomplished?

RASCH

How can I give a manicure when my brush and scissors are tied behind my back? If I could take that decrepit Hebrew upstairs for ten minutes.

BLEIBTREU

The Führer will not permit it.

RASCH

He wants his postcards and his mother's records. Why won't he allow me to request them in a proper manner?

BLEIBTREU

They're not the plans for a secret weapon.

RASCH

I'll arrest the son-in-law again. The daughter too. I should have arrested her before.

BLEIBTREU

Too late. They're in New York. Eating cherry cheesecake. The grandchildren are in England.

RASCH

What? You're joking. Who let them out? I'll manicure him myself.

BLEIBTREU

Sturmbannführer Eichmann had orders from Berlin to allow them to leave whenever they wanted.

RASCH

I must speak with the Führer personally. He'll be in Linz today.

BLEIBTREU

You'd have a better chance to see him in Berchtesgaden. I understand he'll be here only to visit his boyhood friend Kubizek; then he leaves immediately for Vienna to attend the opera.

RASCH

One way or another, I'll have his items for him before he returns to Berlin. You'll see.

BLEIBTREU

No manicures.

RASCH

What about pedicures?

BLEIBTREU

Nope.

RASCH

Baptism?

BLEIBTREU

Are you serious? You'll kill that old man.

RASCH

At least he'll die an Aryan.

BLEIBTREU

And we'll die in Dachau.

RASCH

Are you telling me how to do my job?

BLEIBTREU

In this case, you don't seem to know.

RASCH

You impudent mongrel. I know who your father was.

BLEIBTREU

Not you, I hope.

RASCH

I have never consorted with whores.

BLEIBTREU

When you were assigned to Vienna, you were famous around the Gürtel. The way you threw coins on the bordello floor for the girls to dive on.

RASCH

You're no journalist. You are nothing but a second rate gossip monger.

BLEIBTREU

This bickering is getting us nowhere.

RASCH

What do you propose?

BLEIBTREU

The Führer wants a photograph of Herr Doktor Bloch in his consulting room as a memento. I am visiting the good doctor to make the photo. I will ask for the cards and the record again.

RASCH

(incredulous)

Ask for them? Even if we knew who your father was, you would be worthless to the SS.

SCENE

Bleibtreu at desk with Dr. Bloch.

BLEIBTREU

(looking at Dr. Bloch's bandaged forehead)

I see you have had a mishap. Nothing serious, I hope.

DR. BLOCH

(eyes filled with tears, a broken man)

I cared for Adolf. I cared for his mother. Look where it has brought me.

BLEIBTREU

You are free to leave, Herr Doktor.

DR. BLOCH

Everything is over for me.

BLEIBTREU

Your situation is not so grave.

DR. BLOCH

What difference does it make whether I stay or go? I am no longer a Herr Doktor.

BLEIBTREU

Whatever you do, you will always be a Herr Doktor.

DR. BLOCH

As a Herr Doktor, I spent four decades caring for my fellow man. Now I am nothing at all. A sick man. A broken, forgotten hulk.

BLEIBTREU

(reaches into coat pocket,
withdraws letter)

I bring you this letter from the Linz Medical Board. If you leave, you may take it with you and use it as you like.

DR. BLOCH

(opens envelope which is unsealed and reads the letter aloud, struggling to retain control of his emotions)

This letter will certify that Dr. Eduard Bloch was a practicing physician in Linz for 38 years. He earned the respect and admiration of everyone on account of his character, his medical knowledge, his willingness to help, and his kindness. Therefore, the Medical Board of Linz gives an unqualified recommendation to this worthy man and wishes him well in his future endeavors. Signed, Dr. Wimmer, District Director of Public Health, National Socialist German Workers' Party, Upper Danube.

(Dr. Bloch pauses a moment)

What future endeavors?

BLEIBTREU

Aren't you a religious leader as well as a doctor?

DR. BLOCH

I was never a religious leader. The more years I spent practicing medicine, the more suffering and death I saw in blameless, innocent human beings. Now I see even more suffering and death. Either God is kind but weak, or evil and all powerful. Torah and Talmud no longer help me to understand these things.

BLEIBTREU

Even so, your own kindness to your fellow man is well known. Didn't you adopt three orphans, raise them with your family, and educate them?

DR. BLOCH

It was the right thing to do.

BLEIBTREU

There is a right thing to do at this moment.

DR. BLOCH

A peaceful death. Surrounded by my family in New York eating Reuben's cherry cheesecake.

BLEIBTREU

Please give me the Führer's items. If you do, at least I can guarantee you some peace.

DR. BLOCH

(Dr. Bloch hesitates, then goes to a cabinet, opens drawer, pulls out Klara Hitler's medical record. He begins paging through it, shaking his head sadly.)

What an unbearably long illness.

(turns pages, holds up invoice)

The bill from Schering for iodoform.

(whistles)

My goodness, drug makers have no scruples about what they charge.

BLEIBTREU

Iodoform? I never heard of it. What is it?

DR. BLOCH

(uncomfortable, offhandedly)

Oh, nothing. A medicine.

BLEIBTREU

Medicine? What kind of medicine?

DR. BLOCH

No one uses it today. It's too toxic.

BLEIBTREU

What does it do?

DR. BLOCH

Sometimes it was helpful in patients with tumors, like the one Frau Hitler had.

Dr. Bloch is still reluctant to hand over the chart. Bleibtreu stands and takes it from him, sits down, begins thumbing through it.

BLEIBTREU

Where are the two postcards?

DR. BLOCH

Aren't they in the chart?

BLEIBTREU

(continues to riffle through the pages)

I don't see them.

DR. BLOCH

Keep looking. I'm sure they're in there somewhere.

BLEIBTREU

(after more searching)

Nothing.

DR. BLOCH

You must go through page by page.

BLEIBTREU

(looks at Dr. Bloch skeptically)

This matter will not end well, Herr Doktor. I dearly hope you will give due consideration to what you are doing.

DR. BLOCH

Believe me, I have done nothing else for the past two years.

BLEIBTREU

The Führer is so favorably disposed toward you.

DR. BLOCH

He was favorably disposed to Morgenstern, too, wasn't he?

BLEIBTREU

Who?

DR. BLOCH

Samuel Morgenstern.

BLEIBTREU

I never heard the name.

DR. BLOCH

Really? You are about to acquire more material for your book on the Führer's youth.

BLEIBTREU

I'm listening.

DR. BLOCH

Samuel Morgenstern was a Jewish picture frame dealer and glazier in Vienna. Adolf was living in a men's shelter painting watercolors to eke out a living before the world war. Morgenstern bought most of them. Many more than he could ever sell with his picture frames.

BLEIBTREU

How did you come to know this Morgenstern?

DR. BLOCH

He came to Linz occasionally to buy antique frames. In 1909, I believe, he cut his hand on a sharp glass frame. I sewed up the wound. Afterward, we talked for a while. He noticed one of Adolf's postcards on my desk and recognized the artist. We became friends and stayed in touch over the years.

BLEIBTREU

Thanks for the tip. I must go to Vienna to interview Herr Morgenstern. Where does he live?

DR. BLOCH

Not where, but does he live? The Reich quickly aryanized his business after the annexation. His children immigrated to the United States. I spoke to him around that time. He told me he had written to Adolf. He mentioned their pleasant association and the watercolors he had bought. He asked permission to sell a lot he owned in Vienna so that he and his wife would have the money to emigrate.

BLEIBTREU

Did he receive a response?

DR. BLOCH

Not that I am aware. When I last tried to get in touch with him, he and his wife had disappeared. I heard that the Gestapo arrested them. They haven't been seen since.

Rasch enters, carrying a briefcase.

RASCH

So you're interested in what happened to your friend Morgenstern?

DR. BLOCH

I would like to know how he is doing. Did he emigrate?

RASCH

He wanted to.

(pulls a letter out of his briefcase,
hands it to Dr. Bloch)

DR. BLOCH

(anxiety in his voice)

This is the letter he wrote to Adolf.

RASCH

Quite so.

DR. BLOCH

Was there a response?

RASCH

Look at the letter.

DR. BLOCH

Someone has scrawled a "J" across the text.

RASCH

For J-U-D-E. Jew. Like you, the Jew Morgenstern had items belonging to the Führer that the Reich wanted back.

DR. BLOCH

You're talking about the watercolors he bought thirty years ago to put in his picture frames for sale?

RASCH

Precisely.

DR. BLOCH

You got them back?

RASCH

(breezily)

Each and every one. Jawohl.

DR. BLOCH

Did you buy them back?

RASCH

He wouldn't sell.

DR. BLOCH

Then how did you get them?

RASCH

A manicure helped.

(Rasch removes a small paper bag from briefcase and pours out on the floor a shower of whole fingernails)

DR. BLOCH

(grimacing)

Some of those fingernails are covered with red lacquer.

RASCH

You recognize Frau Emma Morgenstern? A delightful lady.

DR. BLOCH

Are a few old unsold watercolors worth so much to you?

RASCH

So much? Even more.

(Rasch pulls from briefcase a bottle of clear liquid containing a human ear. He hands the bottle to Dr. Bloch, who carefully places it on his desk and sinks into chair)

You look like you have something to say.

DR. BLOCH

My mouth is so dry I can hardly...

(hesitates)

RASCH

Please look closely at that bottle. It contains an ear. The ear of a man who would not listen to reason. Do you know what happens to people who won't listen to reason?

DR. BLOCH

(Grimacing, he holds his fist
over his burning stomach)

If you tell me, I think my ulcer is going to perforate.

RASCH

(pulls a bottle of white powder
from briefcase, opens bottle,
pours powder onto Dr. Bloch's
desktop)

You asked about your friend Morgenstern. There he is. Would you
like to know about Frau Morgenstern?

(pours another bottle of powder
on Dr. Bloch's desk)

Dr. Bloch is trembling. Rasch is
becoming angrier.

BLEIBTREU

(holding Frau Hitler's medical
record)

We have the medical record. We can give Herr Doktor Bloch time to
find the two cards for us. Perhaps he has misplaced them.

RASCH

No, no, no. No more time. He has had time enough.

(Walks over to Dr. Bloch, picks
up Dr. Bloch's hand, inspects
Dr. Bloch's nails)

Dear me, my friend, your nails are in terrible shape. Cracked. Broken.
Split. You are in urgent need of a manicure.

BLEIBTREU

You are mad.

RASCH

(to Dr. Bloch)

Come with me, my friend.

Dr. Bloch does not move.

RASCH

(furiously draws his pistol, points
it at Dr. Bloch's head)

You're right, Herr Bleibtreu. In this situation, a manicure would never do.

BLEIBTREU

What do you gain by shooting him?

RASCH

I'll decide that after I pull the trigger.

BLEIBTREU

Think of the outcome.

RASCH

This corner of the room will be a terrible mess.

BLEIBTREU

The Führer will be furious. He won't have his post cards. He won't have his noble Jew.

RASCH

Noble Jew! Rubbish. To the Führer, there is no such thing as a noble Jew.

Sirens in the street outside. Sounds of a motorcade halting, marching boots, clicking of heels, and many cries of "Jawohl Mein Führer". Adolf enters in uniform with Iron Cross on breast pocket. Rasch quickly re-holsters his pistol. Bleibtreu and Rasch stand

straight, give Hitler salute, shout *Sieg Heil*. Adolf hardly seems to notice them as he approaches Dr. Bloch.

ADOLF
(happily)

Herr Doktor Bloch.

DR. BLOCH

Adolf.

ADOLF
(takes Bloch's hand, gazes at him
for a moment)

You are just the same as you always were, dear Herr Doktor. I should have recognized you immediately anywhere. You have not changed at all, just got older.

DR. BLOCH

I have aged a good deal of late.

ADOLF

I am so pleased to see you. It has been such a long time.

DR. BLOCH

The pleasure is mutual.

ADOLF
(looking around briefly)

This is not the moment for a heart-to-heart talk. Certainly I hope we can have one soon.

DR. BLOCH

I hope so too.

ADOLF

I no longer have a private life. I can't do just what I want, like other people.

DR. BLOCH

I understand.

ADOLF

I have magnificent plans for Linz. The old Sisters of Mercy Hospital, where you took such loving care of my sainted mother. I will build a new hospital, the Klara Hitler Krankenhaus.

DR. BLOCH

Excellent.

ADOLF

I will name a wing after you, my dear Herr Doktor. It will be the Eduard Bloch Women's Clinic.

DR. BLOCH

I'm deeply honored.

ADOLF

My two post cards. Herr Doktor.

DR. BLOCH

They are the last remnants of my life as a doctor. I never earned much. Many of my patients were too poor to pay anything. Your post cards are precious to me.

Adolf, deadly intense and serious, and Dr. Bloch stare into each other's eyes for a moment.

ADOLF

I want them.

Dr. Bloch opens a small compartment in his desk, takes out the two cards, hands them to Adolf. Barely glancing at them, Adolf hands the cards to Bleibtreu, who slips them into his coat pocket.

ADOLF

(very friendly again)

Now tell me truly, Herr Doktor. What has become of you?

DR. BLOCH

These days I'm not doing too much. I've decided to leave.

ADOLF

To leave Linz?

DR. BLOCH

To emigrate.

ADOLF

Why? Everyone in Linz reveres you. No one here would ever think of doing you the slightest harm. You should not concern yourself with material worries. We will take care of your future, all your needs, and then some, rest assured.

DR. BLOCH

Forgive me for being so frank. I cannot continue to live in a town where other Jews have fared so terribly. I intend to immigrate to New York, a city with many street corners. I would prefer to stand on every one, hat in hand begging, than live in Linz, richly provided for.

ADOLF

(an ominous pause, then sadly)

I know you well, Herr Doktor. I expected no other answer.

(Adolf turns to leave, then stops thoughtfully)

Bleibtreu, have you made your photograph?

BLEIBTREU

(stares meaningfully at Rasch)

Not yet, mein Führer.

ADOLF

Do you have your camera?

BLEIBTREU

Jawohl, Mein Führer.

(Bleibtreu goes to his camera bag in corner, withdraws a Leica, and snaps a photo of Bloch sitting at his rolltop desk)

ADOLF

Another, please, with Herr Doktor Bloch in his white coat.

BLEIBTREU

Jawohl, Mein Führer.

Bleibtreu hurries across the room, picks up white coat, which has been hanging on a rack in the corner, and helps a reluctant Dr. Bloch, who is almost at the point of collapse, into the coat. Even with the white coat on, Bloch looks very distant, sad, hunched, small, not at all the man we saw in Act I.

BLEIBTREU

Now smile. Say cherry cheesecake.

(He snaps a second photo)

ADOLF

Herr Professor Doktor Doktor Rasch, please render Herr Doktor Bloch all assistance with the formalities of emigration.

RASCH

Jawohl, Mein Führer.

ADOLF

(very emotional, he bows, grasps Dr. Bloch's hand. Dr. Bloch stands. Adolf presses Bloch's hand in both of his for a moment)

Herr Doktor, I am eternally grateful to you.

Adolf turns to leave. Bleibtreu and Rasch snap stiffly to attention, frozen in the Nazi salute. Suddenly, awful screams from upstairs, splashing, gurgling, water pours down from the ceiling directly on Rasch, drenching him. Rasch and Bleibtreu continue to stand immobile like statues. Adolf looks around for a moment.

ADOLF

Very shoddy construction. Perhaps the world would be a better place if I had become an architect.

(He exits)

BLACKOUT.

SCENE

Lights up on Dr. Bloch in Bronx easy chair.

DR. BLOCH

My wife and I left Austria in 1940 with the equivalent of sixteen Reich marks. A Jew was usually allowed to take thirteen. As we left, I posted a letter to Adolf.

(Bloch picks up a letter from table and reads)

Your Excellency: Before passing the border I want to express my thanks for the protection which I have received. In material poverty I am now leaving the town where I have lived for forty-one years; but I leave conscious of having lived in the most exact fulfilment of my duty. At sixty-nine I will start my life anew in a strange country where my daughter is working as a servant to support her family. Yours faithfully, Eduard Bloch.

(shakes his head)

Adolf probably never saw the letter. Now people ask me, how does it feel to owe my life to the friendship, or gratitude, or mercy, of Adolf Hitler. Of course, I marvel at the improbability of it all. Sometimes I cannot help thinking of Adolf's grief and not what he has done to the world. Yet he never broke his vow to me. He was eternally grateful. It's unsettling, isn't it? Did the bloodiest mass murderer of all time have some good in him? I am a tiny historical footnote, and I will die with this central enigma of my life unresolved.

Klara enters, dressed as in scene 18. She kisses Dr. Bloch, caresses him seductively, takes his hand, begins to lead him across the stage. As he is about to exit, Dr. Bloch turns to the audience and gives them a smile and a broad wink, then he is gone.

BLACKOUT.

THE ABORTIONIST

CAST OF CHARACTERS

DR. PHILIP HAWK, a gynecologist and abortion provider, age 60
ANNE HAWK, his wife of two weeks, age 50, a moderately attractive woman.

CLYDE PIRSCHKE, a lawyer and anti-abortion activist, mid 50s, who wears aviator glasses and a shirt pocket protector with pens.

DEXTER SCOOBY, a schizophrenic drifter, 50, who wears sunglasses and hates abortion.

DR. RAJNEESH RAMACHANDRAN SINGH, a cardiologist, Dr. Hawk's doctor.

SALLY AKERS, a young woman on whom Dr. Hawk performs a late term abortion.

MRS. BENSON, Sally's mother.

FATHER LESTER TOOHEY, an attractive, articulate priest in his 30's with a full head of neatly combed hair.

JOE HITCHCOCK, Local Television Reporter

BRANDY, age 20, on whom Dr. Hawk did a late term abortion when she was 13.

LOCAL TELEVISION ANNOUNCER

The entire action of the play takes place in the surgical suite or outside the entrance of Dr. Hawk's abortion clinic in Omaha. The neighborhood is poor and the building is decently maintained but shabby.

ACT I

SCENE.

AT RISE:

DR. PHILIP HAWK is in his surgery, standing next to an obstetrical surgical table with chrome stirrups. He is 60, in white coat and loosened tie, with the slightly nerdy appearance that doctors tend to have. Even with air conditioners running he is feeling the August heat, and looks tired. His wife of two weeks, ANNE HAWK, is fifty, beautiful, nicely dressed, who has the bearing of the minister's wife she once was. Anne brings in SALLY AKERS, a young, pretty white woman with her mother, MRS. BENSON; mother and daughter are wearing tattered, threadbare clothes, and are obviously quite poor. The noisy protesters outside, whose shouts of "murderer" are audible in the background, have frightened Sally and her mother. Sally is seven months pregnant.

MRS. BENSON

Why don't them awful people go away? Why don't they mind their own business?

ANNE HAWK

They think we are their business.

MRS. BENSON

We drove all night from Arkansas in this awful heat.

ANNE HAWK

August has never been a fun month in Omaha.

MRS. BENSON

Sally got the morning heaves bad. Had to stop along the highway three times for her to puke.

ANNE HAWK

(reaches into cabinet drawer for pill envelope and into little refrigerator for glass of apple juice, handing both to Sally)

My dear, can you hold anything on your stomach? Here's some compazine for your nausea.

SALLY

Thank you, missus.

MRS. BENSON

Hawk! Hawk! The baby killer. That's all they're screaming out there.

DR. HAWK

(gently taking Sally's wrist to feel her pulse as he looks at his watch)

Pulse 85. Are you feeling OK, Sally? I have a few questions.

(Anne Hawk writes as Sally answers.)

How long have you been pregnant?

SALLY

Seven months. My father raped me end of January.

MRS. BENSON

For weeks we didn't know what to do.

DR. HAWK

How is your appetite?

SALLY

Terrible, Doc. I barf up everything.

DR. HAWK

How are you sleeping?

MRS. BENSON

She hasn't slept since March. Neither have I. All she does is cry.

DR. HAWK

Sally, have you been thinking of suicide?

MRS. BENSON

She done stuck her head in the oven twice. Coulda blown up the whole house and killed us all.

DR. HAWK

Have you considered adoption?

(Mrs. Benson gives Hawk a look.
Sally covers her face with her hand.)

Adoption considered but not feasible in this case.

(Anne Hawk writes)

Will continuing the pregnancy cause Sally substantial and irreversible impairment of a major bodily function?

MRS. BENSON

Come again?

DR. HAWK

Will having the baby make Sally sick?

MRS. BENSON

Doc, it'll be the end of her, that's for sure.

DR. HAWK

(Dictating to Anne Hawk)

Abortion is being done only to save Sally Akers' life. Continuing the pregnancy would cause Ms. Akers a substantial and irreversible impairment of a major bodily function.

SALLY

How will you...

(hesitates)

Get 'im out of me?

DR. HAWK

I'll make an injection into the heart. When the fetus is no longer viable...

SALLY

You mean when he's dead? When I can't feel 'im move no more?

DR. HAWK

Exactly. I'll remove the dead tissue through your vagina.

SALLY

Oh God, you gonna tear the li'l feller limb from limb? One of them partial birth abortions? Mamma, I can't do this. It's murder sure. I'll burn in hell, like preacher said.

MRS. BENSON

Shut up and listen to the Doc. We been through all this a hundred times, and we ain't goin' through it again. You an' me got nothin', no money, no decent place to live. No way we can raise another kid.

SALLY

(crying, says softly without conviction)

It's murder.

DR. HAWK

I'm going to examine Sally now. If everything looks fine, I want you to be here tomorrow morning, 9 am. Don't eat anything after midnight. You can have clear water, that's it.

MRS. BENSON

Someplace clean and cheap around here to stay the night? We don't hardly have no money at all.

DR. HAWK

(Pulling out his billfold and removing a hundred dollar bill, which he hands to Mrs. Benson)

Here's a little something. The Hospitality Inn down the street is very comfortable. You can get a tasty dinner there, too.

MRS. BENSON

(at first reluctant to take the money, but then accepting it)

God bless you, Doc, you're a very generous man, but a hundred dollars is an awful lot.

DR. HAWK

When you get through this thing, and you're both on your feet again, you'll pay me back. My wife will help Sally undress.

ANNE HAWK

(leading Sally, carrying a cloth bag, behind a curtain)

Take off your clothes and slip on this gown, dear. We'll put you on the table so Dr. Hawk can examine you.

(There is the clatter of a gun slipping from the cloth bag and falling to the floor, followed by a gunshot and the crash and tinkle of breaking glass.)

You dropped your gun.

MRS. BENSON

It's my gun, missus. Sally, I tol' you to keep the pistol in your bag and hold on to it. You'd drop your fool head on the floor if you could.

DR. HAWK

(goes to window)

Didn't hit any protesters, too bad.

MRS. BENSON

Two women alone on the interstate at night. Got to carry some protection.

ANNE HAWK

Would new tires be a safer option?

SCENE.

Outside Dr. Hawk's clinic. CLYDE PIRSCHKE is placing little white crosses on the lawn outside the front door, and holds a wicker basket filled with crosses. Pirschke is in his mid 50s, has receding slick-backed hair, wears aviator glasses, and sports a bushy mustache. He always appears neat, compulsively so, in a shirt and tie, with pens and a plastic pen protector in his breast pocket. He was until recently a successful Nebraska politician with a politician's easy, friendly manner and toothy grin. But he can change quickly into the imperious prosecutor he once was, as he does

in this scene. Dr. Hawk walks briskly past Pirschke, as though Pirschke were invisible. Hawk is wearing street clothes and no body armor.

PIRSCHKE

Abortionist Hawk.

(Dr. Hawk stops but says nothing.)

How are you, Abortionist Hawk? Still murdering babies, I see.

DR. HAWK

Your English is bungled, Pirschke. I abort fetuses to terminate unwanted pregnancy. I have nothing to do with babies. I'm not an obstetrician or a pediatrician.

PIRSCHKE

Of course you're not. You're a cold blooded killer, a homicidal fiend. I am placing a cross on your front lawn for the life of every innocent you have butchered.

(Hawk is at his front door, has his key out. Pirschke calls out loudly, like a marine drill sergeant)

PIRSCHKE

Did you notice my op-ed piece in the World Herald?

DR. HAWK

I have other things to do than read op-ed drivel that you write.

PIRSCHKE

(whips newspaper clipping from his shirt pocket, next to his heart)

My piece is titled *What's good about Nebraska?* "Nebraskans know that freedom does not mean license and that values do matter. For if we

lose these common threads, common truths, then all liberty is truly in danger. Nebraskans know that democracy without virtue is two wolves and a sheep deciding what is for dinner. The sheep will always be eaten."

DR. HAWK

I shudder to think what you would taste like.

PIRSCHKE

Oh, ho, ho. Always the wit.

(Hawk turns to walk away.)

Abortionist Hawk! I have something to show you.

(pulls a paper from his pocket
and hands it to Hawk)

DR. HAWK

Where did you get this?

PIRSCHKE

Why are you prescribing controlled substances for yourself? What are you doing with morphine tablets?

DR. HAWK

I have kidney stones. I had an attack six months ago and used up the morphine I had. I wrote for twenty tablets to keep in my medicine cabinet, just in case.

PIRSCHKE

(sarcastic, filled with disbelief)

Of course. You would never use morphine to kill the pain from your bad conscience, now would you, Abortionist Hawk.

DR. HAWK

You make me sick. Call my urologist, Dr. Blackwater, if you don't believe me.

PIRSCHKE

The old substance abuse problem is back, eh? The Nebraska State Board of Healing Arts will hear of this, pronto.

DR. HAWK

(waving the page under
Pirschke's nose)

You've no right to possess this copy. The third page of a narcotic triplicate blank is intended for the state controlled substance office in Lincoln, nobody else. State law says it's privileged information, confidential patient information that is never released. You should be in jail.

(Pirschke snatches the page back
from Hawk)

PIRSCHKE

Your medical license should be lifted for a second offense. Don't frown, I'll be doing you a favor.

DR. HAWK

What favor?

PIRSCHKE

I've worshiped the law all my life, its majesty, its capacity to right wrongs. I will use the law to have your Nebraska medical license permanently revoked.

DR. HAWK

You think that's a favor?

PIRSCHKE

I am a non-violent man, a Christian man, Abortionist Hawk. I do not own a gun. I have never even hit anyone. I abhor savagery. But other people who hate what you are doing do not have my temperament. One of these individuals might take it upon himself to kill you, should I run out of legal ways to shut you down. Don't worry, you are safe enough as long as I'm here. You will end up without a

medical license, mark my words, but at least you'll never end up like your depraved father.

DR. HAWK

(contemptuous and angry, almost
spitting the words)

Leave my father out of it. He's long dead and buried. Why don't you give it up, you and your idiot ideology.

PIRSCHKE

Don't make me into a hypocrite like you. You're only in it for the money. I'm acting out of passionate conviction.

DR. HAWK

Your conviction isn't worth a discarded afterbirth. You are in a war between two ideologies, pro-life and pro-choice. In war, ideology doesn't matter. Only one thing matters: winning. You know what? You are losing. You've already lost the major battles: Plan B morning after pills, RU 486 abortion pills, early and mid-term abortion. Late term abortion is your final battle.

PIRSCHKE

Soldiers die in wars, Abortionist Hawk.

DR. HAWK

On both sides.

SCENE.

One hour later. Dr. Hawk is standing next to his examining table reading a newspaper and puffing guiltily on a cigarette butt. A fit of coughing seizes him as Anne enters.

ANNE HAWK

I knew I smelled smoke. Put that cigarette out. When we married you promised you would give up smoking.

DR. HAWK

(He extinguishes the cigarette with thumb and index finger and drops it in a red medical sharps container)

That was two weeks ago.

ANNE HAWK

Where is your Nicorette gum? Did you forget to take your Zyban? Why are you so agitated?

DR. HAWK

(Unwraps a piece of Nicorette gum, pops it in his mouth, and gives a few furious chews. Then he holds the newspaper forward.)

State attorney general cashiered Clyde Pirschke. He's back in Omaha. I just had the pleasure of meeting him outside.

ANNE HAWK

Who?

DR. HAWK

Clyde Pirschke, our deputy state attorney general. Our former deputy state attorney general. Anne, you never heard of him?

ANNE HAWK

Can't say I have. Why did he get canned?

DR. HAWK

He was a big death penalty man. Anyone with three traffic tickets, Pirschke wanted him to die by lethal injection. Pirschke had so many

expensive death penalty trials going he was bankrupting the state. No plea bargains, either.

ANNE HAWK

Good riddance to him.

DR. HAWK

For the judiciary, certainly, but not for me.

ANNE HAWK

Why?

DR. HAWK

Could a woman get an abortion where you come from, South Sioux City, or anywhere nearby?

ANNE HAWK

Not that I ever heard. Omaha was the closest place.

DR. HAWK

You can thank Pirschke for that. When he was a lawyer in Omaha, he spent most of his time closing down abortion clinics in the state. He closed down clinics in Lincoln, Bellevue, Grand Island, Kearney, Hastings, Fremont, and North Platte. He closed two other late term abortion clinics in Omaha. At shuttering abortion clinics he is a grand master.

ANNE HAWK

How did he do it?

DR. HAWK

He has a scumbag full of tricks. A few protests, instigating investigations. If a patient died, that clinic was history. The fundamentalists with their guns were not far behind him. They wounded me once in the side.

(raises his shirt to show a big
ugly scar)

ANNE HAWK

My goodness, I thought that was a birthmark.

DR. HAWK

Paper says Pirschke's going to practice law again, but if I know him, he'll be right outside my front door. He just started to favor me with his attention when he got appointed deputy state attorney general and moved to Lincoln.

ANNE HAWK

Darling, I'm a hundred percent behind what you're doing, you know that, but I don't want to see you murdered.

DR. HAWK

Pirschke won't murder me. He doesn't even own a gun. Look, you're fifty, I'm sixty, we can't have kids, what else will the two of us do? Sit at home and argue? Besides, I need you here. Isn't this work more interesting than your last job?

ANNE HAWK

McDonald's was not going to be my life's work. Times were hard. My marriage imploded.

DR. HAWK

He was a minister, right?

ANNE HAWK

The Reverend Clarence Hinterleck, Second Reformed Methodist Church of Kearney.

DR. HAWK

What happened?

ANNE HAWK

He was counselling two members of the congregation, Herman and Claudia Sedgewick. Herman was dying of cancer. After twenty years of marriage, my husband took up with Claudia. The congregation

found out and fired my husband. Herman died a few days later. Claudia immediately hired my husband to comfort the bereaved in her family's funeral home. Now the Reverend Hinterleck is married to her.

DR. HAWK

I'm sorry.

ANNE HAWK

Don't be. The Reverend Hinterleck had played around before. I ignored it. Silly me.

DR. HAWK

(the phone rings, Hawk answers)

Dr. Hawk...You have a nice day, too.

(slams down phone)

ANNE HAWK

Who was that?

DR. HAWK

Nobody. Another death threat. If we're not out of here in 24 hours we'll die.

ANNE HAWK

Why are we shopping for a house? We should be looking for burial plots.

DR. HAWK

(phone rings again)

Dr. Hawk...(angrily) That's what you think, is it? I haven't switched to another specialty because quit is something I don't like to do.

(Hawk is shaking with rage as he
slams down the phone)

Now that Pirschke is back, my enemies are materializing from the ether. If I can defeat him, they'll vanish like aborted fetuses. If I can't...

ANNE HAWK

Philip, I don't know how you'll take much more of this. Of course a woman has an unconditional right to abortion at any time during pregnancy. But isn't there anyone else in the world beside you to do them? Couldn't you do a pap smear every now and then?

SCENE.

Outside Dr. Hawk's clinic, Clyde Pirschke stands with his hands on his hips, surveying the scene with satisfaction. He has covered the lawn with his little white crosses. DEXTER SCOOBY enters. Scooby is 50, has short hair and wears sunglasses that mostly obscure his face. Although we cannot see his eyes, his manner is sinister. He looks disheveled and his clothes are not very clean. He is skinny and sick-looking, a paranoid schizophrenic who sometimes mutters under his breath to no one in particular.

SCOOBY

God bless you, mister. You're out here in this August heat doin' the Lord's work.

PIRSCHKE

(now the friendly politico,
smiling, his face sweaty)

It's work for sure, brother. You got that right.

(Pirschke holds out his right hand in a friendly greeting, staring straight into Scooby's face)

SCOODY

(mutters under his breath,
looking at the ground, avoiding
Pirschke's gaze)

Sucker arguing with me. I oughta pound him.

(after hesitating, still staring at
the ground, shakes Pirschke's
hand)

PIRSCHKE

Nice to meet you, brother. I didn't catch your name.

SCOODY

I'm Dexter Scooby. Reverend Dexter Scooby. Parishioners call me
Reverend Dex.

PIRSCHKE

You out here to close down the baby killer, Dex?

SCOODY

I am. The *Soldiers of God* sent me. Them and the *Protectors of the Protectors of Life* have given me a divine mission: stop the Omaha baby butcher; send him straight to hell.

PIRSCHKE

(looking Scooby up and down,
somewhat concerned)

Dex, we are non-violent here. I do not own a gun. We are as concerned as you, but legal protest is what we do. We'll drive Abortionist Hawk out of Nebraska the way Gandhi drove the British out of India. Gandhi was a lawyer, just like me. Once I'm through with Abortionist Hawk, I will devote my life to cat rescue. It's the other cause I care about.

SCOODY

(muttering under breath)

Cat rescue? Sucker crazier than I am.

(To Pirschke)

What does cat rescue have to do with abortion?

PIRSCHKE

City pound would gas poor homeless creatures. Destroy 'em. My late dad, Ignatius Throckmorton Pirschke, founded the first cat rescue center in Omaha. He was totally opposed to violence and killing. The Army gave him conscientious objector status.

SCOODY

(mumbling to himself with teeth
clenched)

Useless Holy Willie gonna get in my way.

(louder, to Pirschke)

Look here, pal, there's only one way to protect the unborn from a sick pervert like the one in there. Somebody should take him out so he can't kill again.

PIRSCHKE

(more concerned)

Dex...

SCOODY

Reverend Dex.

PIRSCHKE

Reverend Dex, sorry. I've thought about what you're saying, countless times, believe me. Many years ago, I wrestled with the question of whether it would be moral to kill Abortionist Hawk. Only after months of reading and praying did I conclude that violence could never be condoned. Killing men like Abortionist Hawk will only put off the day when abortion is outlawed altogether. It will kill more babies than it saves.

SCOODY

You're wrong, dead wrong. Killing Abortionist Hawk would be justifiable homicide. Somebody can expect a great reward in heaven. Somebody can look forward to glory.

(noticing the alarming effect he has had on Pirschke)

But not me, brother. Don't worry about me. I am a non-violent, Christian man. I love Reese's Peanut Butter Cups.

PIRSCHKE

Reverend Dex, do you have a congregation at the moment?

SCOORY

(under his breath)

Nosy guy. What does he want?

(to Pirschke)

No congregation right now, brother. I am ordained. Graduated from North Platte Pentecostal Seminary and was assistant pastor at a reformed Methodist church in Kearney. One day I felt a revelation from the Holy Spirit, a command to protect the unborn. So here I am. It's not an easy life. I've had to work odd jobs to support myself and my family, my wife and kids. But I'm ready to pitch in, help any way I can. What you got up your sleeve?

PIRSCHKE

Too big for my sleeve. You like to help me with it?

(Pirschke picks up and unwraps a long colorful banner on stakes which reads PLEASE DO NOT KILL YOUR BABY! With Scooby's help Pirschke raises the banner and drives the stakes into the ground. Pirschke surveys the work, pleased.)

Reverend Dex, you are a godsend.

SCOORY

Brother, could you help me out with a few bucks? I'm a little short today.

PIRSCHKE

(reaches into his pockets)

Uh, just a minute.

(pulls out plastic squeeze purse,
extracts a quarter. To Scooby:)

Here.

SCOODY

(under his breath)

A quarter? Stingy sucker.

Anne Hawk enters, looks with disdain at banner, suddenly encounters Scooby. She stops for a moment, stares at him. She can't believe who she is seeing. Scooby starts to reach for her with clutching hands as though he is going to attack her, trying to restrain himself and barely succeeding, all the while muttering under his breath "Reese's Peanut Butter Cups." He is a ticking time bomb. Anne hurries into the clinic front door.

PIRSCHKE

Reverend Dex, do you know that lady? You seem to.

SCOODY

(a little winded, he mutters under
his breath)

I can't catch my breath. The earth is running out of oxygen.

(stares at the ground in front of
Pirschke as he addresses him)

She lived down the street from me in South Sioux City when I was growing up. She was a slut, had lots of men. The Lord punished her when she got her abortion.

PIRSCHKE
(nods knowingly)

I see.

SCOORY

Abortion botched, in hospital for weeks with terrible infection and fevers, sterile after that. Married a minister, couldn't have kids, so's he started cheating on her, marriage kaput. The Lord took his vengeance alright. Maybe he ain't through.

PIRSCHKE

He's hardly begun. Here comes the TV truck.

SCENE.

Dr. Hawk enters his surgery. Anne is standing by examining table. The television is on. On screen are Clyde Pirschke and Father Lester Toohey, from St. Athanasius Church, standing in front of Dr. Hawk's clinic. Father Toohey is on crutches and limps to the camera.

TELEVISION ANNOUNCER

WKTV Omaha brings you now to the East Side Women's Clinic. Our reporter Joe Hitchcock is on the scene. Joe, who are you talking to?

JOE HITCHCOCK

Brandon, this is Father Les Toohey of Saint Athanasius Church and Mr. Clyde Pirschke, our former deputy state attorney general. Why are you both here today?

FATHER TOOHEY

Joe, we want to talk about what goes on inside the building behind us.

PIRSCHKE

Cold blooded murder.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Mr. Pirschke, you're just back from Lincoln. What are our state leaders doing?

PIRSCHKE

Nothing. Abortionist Hawk goes on killing babies day after day, brutally dismembering them. No one in Lincoln will do a thing.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Why?

PIRSCHKE

Joe, they won't talk about it. Their attitude is, everything that can be said about abortion, pro and con, has been said. There is nothing left to say. It all boils down to votes. If a legislator makes a move to limit abortion in Nebraska, he fears that the women of our state will promptly vote him out of office. It's a no win situation. No one will touch it. Not the governor, not the legislature. Nobody. Period.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Father Toohey.

FATHER TOOHEY

Joe, I wouldn't want to be our governor and legislature if there is a Judgment Day. The entire situation is an abomination. Abortionist Hawk's murders are only one part of his unspeakable crimes.

PIRSCHKE

A big part, Father.

FATHER TOOHEY

Joe, do you know that Abortionist Hawk's clinic does a thriving business in baby parts?

JOE HITCHCOCK

Father, please explain for our television audience.

FATHER TOOHEY

(holds up a sheaf of forms)

Joe, I have order forms for various body parts of murdered babies. Here is a form requesting cartilage of leg and hip. The form specifies whole intact leg along with a complete hip joint from a late term fetus with no abnormalities. Can be shipped on wet ice, weekend deliveries accepted. A healthy baby killed for his joints and cartilage. Here is the worst: A request for prenatal eyes, five to seven of them. Shocking! Barbaric!

PIRSCHKE

Rogue undertakers in New York and Los Angeles were selling the same tissue from corpses a few years ago.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Those men are in jail, if I'm not mistaken.

PIRSCHKE

You're absolutely correct, Joe.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Why can Dr. Hawk do the same thing without legal interference?

PIRSCHKE

Because in our country, Abortionist Hawk is not breaking any law. You need legal permission of the next of kin to remove any part of a corpse. But our lawmakers have no respect for the tissues of a murdered baby. To them, it's medical waste, to be disposed of accordingly.

FATHER TOOHEY

This egregious practice must be stopped immediately.

JOE HITCHCOCK

What do you suggest, Father?

FATHER TOOHEY

We need a legislature and a governor who understand Christian moral values. The people of Nebraska must be taught that if they do not take steps to make abortion illegal, God will not hear their prayers. Until they learn, the Lord has sent us Mr. Pirschke and his friends to try and close Abortionist Hawk's charnel house for good.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Father, why are you limping on crutches?

FATHER TOOHEY

Oh, it's nothing, and old college football injury to my knee when I was a quarterback on the team at Ave Virgo.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Take care of yourself, Father. Your parishioners at St. Athanasius rely on you.

FATHER TOOHEY

Bless you, Joe, I'm being admitted to Saint Joseph's today for surgery.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Are you having a knee joint replacement?

FATHER TOOHEY

Not at all. My surgeon is doing a cartilage transplant, a small procedure, says I should be good as new.

DR. HAWK

(snaps off television)

Do you know what the doctors do with the fetal eyes I send them?

ANNE HAWK

What?

DR. HAWK

They use the corneas for corneal transplant research. Those fetal eyes may one day enable blind people to see again.

ANNE HAWK

I can guess what the fetal cartilage goes for.

DR. HAWK

I sent the last order to Father Toohey's orthopedic surgeon. He uses it for research. He's implanting a piece of cadaver cartilage in the divine's bad knee tomorrow morning.

ANNE HAWK

No doubt the procedure will be successful.

DR. HAWK

(looks out the window)

The TV crews has left. Pirschke is still there.

ANNE HAWK

Attracting hordes of poisonous snakes.

DR. HAWK

He's crazy for ink. We've had more newspaper reporters and television cameras than pickets. Whenever it's a slow news day, the TV news trucks are lined up outside. If it weren't for them, you'd never see all his little white crosses.

ANNE HAWK

Why not?

DR. HAWK

He's a miser. Do you think he'd pay for them? He never spends a penny of his own on abortion protests. He's a good story for the media; other people pay.

ANNE HAWK

Maybe he'd spend something if he had too.

DR. HAWK

Never. You know how you can tell he's a miser? He carries his change in a little plastic squeeze purse. Only misers and the morbidly stingy carry those.

ANNE HAWK

Philip, we've had a month together. I want decades. Why don't we leave this wretched town.

DR. HAWK

For where? Who would hire me?

ANNE HAWK

You're certified in gynecology. I have a cousin at the Veterans Hospital in Miami. She says they don't have enough gynecologists, what with all the women soldiers coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan.

DR. HAWK

I don't have a Florida medical license. It's impossible to get one at my age. The Florida medical examiners don't want doctors retiring to their state.

ANNE HAWK

You've been at this for thirty years. You never explained to me how you ended up doing only abortions. Every time I ask you, all I get is applesauce.

DR. HAWK

(hesitates, wrings his hands, bites
his lip)

You know about my dad. I told you about him.

ANNE HAWK

He was an obstetrician. What does that have to do with late term abortions?

DR. HAWK

When he was killed in the robbery, I had finished my obstetrics and gynecology residency. I was doing a fellowship in San Francisco. My Mom, may she rest in peace...

ANNE HAWK

Please don't start that again.

DR. HAWK

Anyhow, my Mom begged me to come back to Omaha to take over my Dad's medical practice until it could be sold. My Dad had made bad investments. Creditors were circling, harassing my Mom. When I got here I discovered my Dad had been doing abortions.

ANNE HAWK

You didn't need to stay here.

DR. HAWK

Women kept coming to me, late term women nobody else would touch. I realized that I was more than a gynecologist. I was saving women's lives, giving them freedom to determine their futures. I made higher education possible. I corrected the results of rape and incest. I enabled battered women to escape to a safer life. I made recovery from drug and alcohol dependency much easier. I helped women and their families when they were struggling to save their sick, unborn child a lifetime of pain. But it's taken a toll on me. Maybe I shouldn't have kept at it so long.

ANNE HAWK

If only you had another doctor to help you.

DR. HAWK

Who else would do this?

ANNE HAWK

Can we hire you a bodyguard?

DR. HAWK

Remember Dr. Britton in Florida? No? His bodyguard was a retired air force lieutenant colonel. A psychopath killed them both.

ANNE HAWK

Abortion is legal. The government should protect you.

DR. HAWK

Oh, they did, for a while. Planned Parenthood and other abortion rights advocates complained that the Justice Department was not doing enough to protect me. So after Dr. Britton was killed, federal marshals protected me for five years. When they left, I was immediately labeled the most infamous abortionist in America. Now I'm catnip for Clyde Pirschke.

ANNE HAWK

At least I haven't seen him carrying a gun.

DR. HAWK

He keeps me alive.

ANNE HAWK

What?

DR. HAWK

That's what he says.

ANNE HAWK

He's out of his mind.

DR. HAWK

As long as he's out there trying to stop me legally, I'm safe, he says. When he runs out of options, so do I. Then some psycho will take me out.

ANNE HAWK

Not through your body armor. Why do you refuse to wear it? Do you have a death wish?

SCENE.

Dr. Hawk's surgery. A television in the corner of the room is turned on. Dr. Hawk is listening. Anne pulls up a chair and watches. Over the television, chants of "stop the baby killer" can be heard from outside. The long interviews on the TV--these should be "live," with action on either side of the stage: Dr. Hawk listening and reacting while interview is being conducted on other side of the stage. TV set facing away from audience will let us know that we are seeing live what he is watching on TV.

DR. HAWK

TV truck again. They were just here yesterday. This clinic is becoming a bigger draw than Oprah.

ANNE HAWK

Look at Pirschke. He revels in it. I wonder if he has an agent.

Outside the clinic, Pirschke is in fine form as he denounces abortion and Dr. Hawk for the TV audience.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Mr. Pirschke, we see your sign, PLEASE DO NOT KILL YOUR BABY! Those are strong words.

PIRSCHKE

OK. So, I'm the fascist, I'm the bad guy, I'm the problem. Not Abortionist Hawk. No, he -- no, no, no. He's a good guy. If I could get my hands on Hawk -- well, you know. Can't be vigilantes. Can't do that. It's a figure of speech. But is Abortionist Hawk despicable? Oh, my God. Oh, it doesn't get worse.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Mr. Pirschke, please tell our audience your objection to what Dr. Hawk is doing.

PIRSCHKE

He destroys fetuses for any reason at all, right up until their birthday, for \$5,000. I've seen some of his charts. He aborted one woman seven months pregnant because she complained she couldn't play sports. I ask you, is this a lame excuse? Is this what our lawmakers had in mind when they wrote their bill allowing for late term abortion? Would continuing the pregnancy have endangered the life and health of the mother?

JOE HITCHCOCK

We've heard a lot about Dr. Hawk's kindness, how he doesn't charge poor women, how he will give them money from his own pocket to help them out.

PIRSCHKE

(the presence of an audience is causing Pirschke to work himself into an oratorical frenzy)

What he's doing is Nazi stuff. He's as depraved as Al Qaida. More depraved. He's operating a death mill. What goes on in there
(pointing to the clinic door)

is what went on in Mao's China, Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Soviet Union.

JOE HITCHCOCK

We've heard of adoptions Dr. Hawk sometimes arranges for his patients. We understand he's paid for women to live with a family in town until after childbirth. People say he's giving women in the most desperate situations options when they had none.

PIRSCHKE

Rubbish. Abortionist Hawk spends his days executing babies about to be born. Slaughtering them. This slimy creature has blood on his hands that he will never wash away, no matter how hard he tries. If you want to talk about adoptions, talk about my Dad, Ignatius Throckmorton Pirschke. He arranged thousands of adoptions of orphaned cats. His cat rescue center was the only one in Omaha.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Mr. Pirschke, your campaign against Dr. Hawk is getting many people very excited. If anything should happen to Dr. Hawk, will it be his blood on your hands?

PIRSCHKE

(again the charming politico)

Joe, I'm glad you asked me that question. Today, I have with me Ms. Brandy Potts. She is twenty years old and was thirteen when she endured Abortionist Hawk's ministrations. She is going to recount her experience for the television audience.

BRANDY

Dr. Hawk used metal gizmos to open my cervix. Then he injected a fluid into my amniotic sac that choked and scalded my baby and killed it. Next day he took me into a room with a toilet. He put me on the toilet, told me to lean on the nurse and bear down. My baby popped right out of me into the toilet.

PIRSCHKE

What happened to your baby's body?

BRANDY

I have no idea. I left my baby dead in the toilet. I went into another room. Dr. Hawk took out the afterbirth, some other gunk. I got dressed and my mom took me home. That was it.

PIRSCHKE

How did you feel afterward?

BRANDY

I was disgusted. I was traumatized. I had low self esteem. I was sleeping around. I was on drugs. I had eating problems, bulimia, depression, suicidal thoughts. Horrible.

PIRSCHKE

You've heard it for yourselves, folks, something that should never be permitted in our country, or any civilized country, or anyplace at all.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Mr. Pirschke, could you comment on the recent court decision on abortion clinic records.

PIRSCHKE

(with annoyance)

That decision is nothing but a temporary setback.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Nevertheless, would you like to describe it to us?

PIRSCHKE

(reluctantly)

The state's highest court temporarily stopped the state attorney general from looking at patient records from abortion clinics.

JOE HITCHCOCK

(a rhetorical question; he knows
the answer)

Why did the court come to that decision?

PIRSCHKE

The jury didn't understand the evidence. Crazy, isn't it?

JOE HITCHCOCK

I have the decision here. May I read it to you?

PIRSCHKE

Must you?

JOE HITCHCOCK

(reaches into attaché case, pulls
out document from which he
reads)

"The subpoena of charts could infringe on the patients' rights to maintain privacy about personal and sexual matters, to receive confidential health care and to obtain a lawful abortion without an undue governmental burden. The type of information sought by the state could hardly be more sensitive, or the potential harm to patient privacy posed by disclosure more substantial."

PIRSCHKE

Joe, the subpoenas for the charts will eventually be honored. We never sought patients' names. These women are under no criminal liability or investigation. Their privacy will be protected.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Mr. Pirschke, we have heard that Dr. Hawk has now filed suit against you.

PIRSCHKE

In the law, we call a suit like that a slap suit. Abortionist Hawk is trying to scare us, put a chilling effect on what we're doing. But you know what? He won't get anyplace.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Would you tell us about Dr. Hawk's slap suit?

PIRSCHKE

Hawk claims that we secretly fed records to a TV anchorman, and that he broadcast them. Lies, all lies.

JOE HITCHCOCK

The anchorman is Charlie Barracks, on WKTX, no?

PIRSCHKE

Abortionist Hawk says so.

JOE HITCHCOCK

How did Charlie Barracks get the information about the twelve year old girl, Tiffany Taylor, raped by her seventeen year old brother?

PIRSCHKE

Why don't you ask Charlie Barracks?

JOE HITCHCOCK

Dr. Hawk's lawyer, Mr. Shapiro, asked the court to appoint a special prosecutor to determine whether Charlie Barracks' information came from the records Dr. Hawk turned over to Mr. Clunk's office.

PIRSCHKE

(disingenuously)

Joe, you obviously know much more about this matter than I do.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Charlie Barracks said Friday on his show, "The Barracks Today," an inside source gave him information that Dr. Hawk had performed late-term abortions because patients were depressed. Barracks called it executing babies.

PIRSCHKE

It is executing babies. That's no secret.

JOE HITCHCOCK

On his radio show, Charlie Barracks, told his audience that he got the information somewhere along the line.

PIRSCHKE

A line is made up of an infinite number of points.

JOE HITCHCOCK

When I asked Charlie, he told me he wasn't going to say when or from whom he got the information.

PIRSCHKE

This whole brouhaha is nothing but a cheap political ploy. If Barracks got the information from anyplace, it was probably from an insider at Abortionist Hawk's clinic.

JOE HITCHCOCK

I understand such a source would be unlikely. Dr. Hawk's staff has always been intensely loyal and devoted.

PIRSCHKE

If you look hard enough, you will no doubt find a Judas.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Mr. Pirschke, we have a few seconds left. Is there anything else our viewers should know?

PIRSCHKE

(holds his book up in front of camera, the dust jacket with his photo as a young boy in parochial school uniform)

I recommend that everyone read my autobiography, *A Fearless Tender Chunk of Mankind*. Just published.

JOE HITCHCOCK

What a wonderful title. Where does it come from?

PIRSCHKE

One day in parochial school, when I was eight, I blurted out some stupid remark, and Sister Purina was on me like a banshee. I couldn't see anything but her black habit as she leaned down, looked me in the eye, and spat out the words I have never forgotten: "Clyde, you are a fearless tender chunk of mankind." Sister Purina's influence launched me on my journey from working-class kid to deputy state attorney general...

DR. HAWK

(switching off the television with
disgust)

Pirschke should have been in show business. Why doesn't he move to Hollywood?

ANNE HAWK

Do you see the man next to him?

DR. HAWK

(looking out window)

The disheveled one with the sunglasses talking on the cellphone?

ANNE HAWK

Look closer. He has no cellphone.

DR. HAWK

(stares hard)

You're right. He's probably schizophrenic. A typical anti-abortion protester.

ANNE HAWK

That's Dexter Scooby.

DR. HAWK

Never heard of him.

ANNE HAWK

He lived in my town when I was growing up. His father owned a gun store. Dexter was obsessed with sex. He hit on every girl he encountered, including me. When he was 17 the police arrested him for pistol whipping his father. His father was trying to get him treatment for paranoid schizophrenia. Dexter ended up studying in a little divinity school in Fremont but was expelled. He moved in with a woman in North Platte, had a daughter. The woman's brothers beat him up and kicked him out, said they didn't want him near the kid. They were worried he would kidnap her, and he was physically abusing their sister.

DR. HAWK

How do you know so much about him?

ANNE HAWK

Because one day he showed up at the door of the Second Reformed Methodist Church of Kearney. He told my ex-husband, the Reverend Hinterleck, that he wanted work as a pastor. The Reverend Hinterleck felt sorry for him. The two of them talked quite a bit. We gave him a bed in a shed next to the church graveyard. He went around Kearney collecting cans and bottles and begging. Sometimes he hung around the church. The Reverend Hinterleck banned him from the sanctuary. He was scaring away the parishioners, especially when he mumbled to himself. He had a way of leering at me that was creepy. We were relieved when he disappeared.

DR. HAWK

Pirschke has found himself a perfect sidekick.

ANNE HAWK

A ticking time bomb, that's what he is. I sometimes saw him in the shed furiously reading the Bible. He told the Reverend Hinterleck

that God had spoken to Dexter Scooby and commanded him to end abortion in Nebraska by killing abortion doctors.

SCENE.

Sunday morning two days later. Anne Hawk, dressed for church and very frightened, is in Dr. Hawk's surgery with DR. RAJNEESH RAMACHANDRAN SINGH, a Sikh cardiologist with a full black beard and turban, in casual weekend clothes. With a stethoscope draped around his neck, Dr. Singh is examining Dr. Hawk, also in church attire, who is supine on his gynecologic surgical table, unconscious, breathing in loud snoring gasps.

ANNE HAWK
(holding, kissing Dr. Hawk's
limp hand)

Philip, Philip.

DR. SINGH
(feeling for carotid pulses in Dr.
Hawk's neck)

I'm not sure what's wrong. Looks like a stroke, but I examined him two weeks ago and everything was fine. Blood pressure normal, heart normal. Cholesterol normal for the past five years on Lipitor. We better call an ambulance.

ANNE HAWK
He said he would meet me in church. I got worried when he didn't show up.

(picking up an open pill bottle from Dr. Hawk's desk, next to an empty paper cup)

Look at this, Dr. Singh.

DR. SINGH

(reading from the pill bottle label)

Morphine sulfate tablets, sixty milligram, twenty tablets. Did he swallow all of these? I'm amazed he's still breathing.

(Dr. Singh hurries to the emergency cart in the corner of the room, grabs the respirator bag, hands it to Anne Hawk.)

If he suddenly stops breathing, strap the mask to his face, pump the bag fifteen times a minute.

(Dr. Singh takes a syringe and ampoule from his black medical bag, fills the syringe, takes a Lister bandage scissors from his bag, cuts open Dr. Hawk's coat sleeve and shirt sleeve, wraps a tourniquet around Dr. Hawk's arm, swabs with an alcohol swab from a disposable packet, and injects with the syringe)

ANNE HAWK

What are you doing?

DR. SINGH

I'm injecting naltrexone, a morphine antagonist. Hopefully I'll be able to reverse the action of the morphine. An overdose of morphine kills you by stifling your urge to breathe. I'm also going to pump his stomach, in case any morphine is left. I wish I had some activated charcoal, but hopefully we won't need it.

(Dr. Singh withdraws the syringe and needle. He presses on the injection site for a few seconds, pulls over the cardiac monitor, rips open Dr. Hawk's coat and shirt, and attaches the leads to Hawk's chest. The EKG traces can be seen on the monitor, which beeps with each heartbeat. He turns Dr. Hawk on his left side, inserts a nasogastric tube through Dr. Hawk's nose, grabs a bottle of saline solution from a glass cabinet and uses a large plastic syringe to pump in and suck out the saline through the tube)

ANNE HAWK

Should I call 911?

DR. SINGH

(squirting the fluid he withdraws into a basin on the floor)

I wouldn't yet.

ANNE HAWK

Why not? Doesn't he need to be in the hospital?

DR. SINGH

There is a certain, how shall I say it, legal question here.

ANNE HAWK

Do they put you in jail for trying to kill yourself with morphine?

DR. SINGH

Mrs. Hawk, are you aware of your husband's past?

ANNE HAWK

I thought I was, but obviously I'm not.

DR. SINGH

Some years ago, Dr. Hawk was arrested for driving under the influence. Ordinarily, even for a doctor, one arrest wouldn't have meant much. But Clyde Pirschke and the Nebraska Coalition for Life were closely monitoring all abortion providers and they made a huge noise. Your husband came within a hair's breadth of having his medical license lifted. He had a very experienced lawyer and was able to make a deal with the Nebraska State Board of Healing Arts to seek treatment. He did so well afterward that he even served on the Nebraska Medical Society's Impaired Physician Committee.

DR. HAWK

(very groggy, beginning to wake up)

Oh my God.

ANNE HAWK

I'm so grateful to you, Dr. Singh. Isn't it risky for you to be protective of my husband?

DR. SINGH

(hesitates)

Dr. Hawk did a third trimester abortion on my eighteen year old daughter Pushpa three years ago. We are all immensely indebted to Philip for how quietly he handled the procedure. He aborted Pushpa on a Sunday, so the protesters wouldn't be outside to see or recognize her.

DR. HAWK

(still groggy)

Rajneesh, how are you. So sorry to pull you over here on your day of rest.

DR. SINGH

(puts his hand on Hawk's shoulder)

How are you, Philip? You were fine when I examined you two weeks ago.

DR. HAWK

I'm still fine. I had bad dreams last night. That's all they were. I should have ignored them.

(Dr. Singh stares at Dr. Hawk skeptically for a moment, says nothing.)

OK, I'm in an awful situation, the worst I've seen in thirty years. At any moment I could be killed or horribly maimed.

DR. SINGH

You're doing wonderful work.

DR. HAWK

Not everyone feels the way you do, more's the pity.

DR. SINGH

Is it the abortions that bother you?

DR. HAWK

I have no moral qualms about what I'm doing. The people trying to prevent women from controlling their own reproductive function, their own bodies: they bother me.

ANNE HAWK

They're making death threats.

DR. HAWK

Death threats, nonsense. Cowards who wouldn't dare show their faces make those threats. They're wasting their time.

DR. SINGH

Our friend Clyde Pirschke is back.

DR. HAWK

This time he'll get my license lifted. I'll be humiliated. Shamed. How will I earn a living? He vowed he would defrock me and I have no reason to disbelieve him. He's already started. Look on my desk.

(Anne goes to desk, picks up legal document)

DR. HAWK

That subpoena. That's it.

ANNE HAWK

It's a demand for a single medical record. Tiffany Taylor. Who is she?

DR. HAWK

She was twelve years old when I saw her ten years ago. Her parents brought her to me from Saginaw, Michigan. The girl was about 29 weeks pregnant. Abortion is illegal in Michigan after the 24th week unless the woman's life is endangered, but Nebraska permits abortion under certain other circumstances.

ANNE HAWK

No doubt there were such circumstances.

DR. HAWK

In this case yes. Tiffany's seventeen year old brother had raped her.

ANNE HAWK

What better reason would there be to do an abortion?

DR. HAWK

Our friends outside found out and created a terrific ruckus. We tried to shield the girl and her mother but the protesters harassed them mercilessly. Pirschke was out there along with a priest from St. Athanasius down the street, Father Lester Toohey. Pirschke was noisy, but Father Toohey was demonic. He jumped up and down. He screamed at Tiffany and her mother. They were both Catholic. They

were going to burn in hell for all eternity. He yelled that he would personally see to it that the Bishop of Michigan excommunicated them. By the time we got them inside, the mother was shaking uncontrollably. Tiffany was convulsed with anguish and grief. I thought I wouldn't be able to examine her. I gave her twenty milligrams of oral Valium, which sedated her sufficiently so I could go ahead.

ANNE HAWK

How did the procedure go?

DR. HAWK

Tiffany did very well. No complications at all. A big relief to her family and me.

ANNE HAWK

What happened to brother?

DR. HAWK

I don't know the whole story. The prosecuting attorney in Michigan filed rape charges against him. The family insisted that they loved their son and loved Tiffany. The record is sealed because both were minors.

ANNE HAWK

Why is the law bothering you now, ten years later?

DR. HAWK

Nebraska requires an official report to the police for suspected child sex abuse. Because Tiffany was from another state I thought I didn't need to file a report. I assumed that since the Michigan prosecutor was involved, I had no more responsibility.

ANNE HAWK

Sounds reasonable.

DR. HAWK

It would be, except Pirschke somehow got the girl's name and age. He whispered it in the ear of his former boss, Otis Clunk, a Republican. Clunk hates doctors doing abortion. He disguises his personal agenda as an ardent desire to protect children. Here, read this.

(Dr. Hawk pulls a newspaper clipping from his desk and hands it to Anne.)

ANNE HAWK
(reading the clipping out loud)

When a ten, eleven or twelve-year-old child is pregnant, under Nebraska law that child has been raped, and as the state's chief law enforcement official it is my obligation to investigate child rape in order to protect Nebraska children, Mr. Clunk said. There are two things that child predators want, access to children and secrecy. As attorney general, I'm bound and determined not to give them either.

(Anne thinks for a moment)

He's a slick item. He could convince me.

DR. HAWK

Clunk is going after medical charts now. He failed last year to require the state's health workers to report any sexual activity of girls younger than 16, the age of legal consent in Nebraska. Health-care providers sued, and a federal judge granted a temporary restraining order. But Pirschke despises me. If he can help Clunk prove to a jury that I willfully failed to file a report in Tiffany Taylor's case, he'll have my medical license permanently lifted.

DR. SINGH

I'm not a lawyer. But I know that a doctor in Nebraska has an extraordinary duty to protect the privacy of his patients. He is bound to do so by law, by ethics and by compassion.

DR. HAWK

That sounds very nice, of course, but who knows what it'll be worth in court?

DR. SINGH

You know, I'm not only a cardiologist.

(hands Anne Hawk his business card)

ANNE HAWK

(reading from card)

Rajneesh Ramachandran Singh, MD, internal medicine, cardiology, mantra meditation. What's this strange writing on the bottom?

DR. SINGH

That is Gurmukhi, our sacred Sikh script.

ANNE HAWK

What does it say?

DR. SINGH

Saturday by appointment.

DR. HAWK

I'll try the mantra meditation. I feel like a juiced fruit rind.

DR. SINGH

(packing up his medical bag)

Email my office tomorrow. I have a master on call, a guru, Swami Arundhati.

DR. HAWK

Is there enough work for a mantra meditation master in Omaha?

DR. SINGH

Two days a week Swami Arundhati repairs transmissions.

DR. HAWK

Versatile man.

DR. SINGH

You can be versatile too. Clyde Pirschke is not. He is rigid. He is not immortal. He is fallible. When you come to this understanding, you will understand yourself and your fears as well. You are more clever and resourceful than he is and you will triumph in the future as you have in the past. As Our God, Lord Vishnu, tells us, *He who has no understanding, who is unmindful and always impure, never reaches that place, but enters into the round of births. But he who has understanding, who is mindful and always pure, reaches indeed that place, from whence he is not born again. And he who has understanding for his intellect, his charioteer, and who holds the reins of his mind, he reaches the end of his journey, and that is the highest place.*

(Dr. Singh exits. Dr. Hawk climbs carefully from his surgical table.)

ANNE HAWK

Dr. Singh makes me hungry for tandoori. I wish there was an Indian restaurant nearby. Uh, Uh, Uh, you're not going out without your body armor.

DR. HAWK

Aw honey, it's Sunday. There's no one out there.

ANNE HAWK

Uh, Uh, Uh.

(She shakes an admonishing finger. Dr. Hawk exits into next room, returns dressed like a US Marine on the streets of Baghdad in full body armor. The nasogastric tube is still hanging from his nose. They both exit.)

SCENE.

Next day. The PLEASE DON'T KILL YOUR BABY banner is planted in the grass close to the clinic entrance. Nearby is the "Truth Truck," its side panels blazoned with huge, gruesome color photographs of dismembered fetuses. Pirschke looks pleased but Scooby seems doubtful.

PIRSCHKE

Reverend Dex, our Truth Truck should definitely curb Abortionist Hawk's business. Maybe we can drive him into bankruptcy.

SCOODY

I don't know, brother. You lost in court against him last month. There's only one sure way to put an abortionist out of business, the Lord's way.

PIRSCHKE

Bankruptcy is the Lord's way. Let me show you. Can you give me a hand with some boxes in my car?

(Pirschke and Scooby walk offstage and return. Scooby is toting an enormous cardboard box, while Pirschke is supervising. Scooby drops the heavy box to the ground.)

SCOODY

What's in this box? It feels like lead.

PIRSCHKE

Open it.

SCOODY

(Scooby does and pulls out a light blue blanket and small wooden crib)

What are these for? They're covered with cat hair.

PIRSCHKE

These are baby blankets and little wooden cribs. We hand them to pregnant women arriving in cars, tell them to go to Father Toohey in St. Athanasius down the street for anti-abortion counseling.

SCOODY

I don't know. Sounds dicey to me. What if the lady is allergic to cats?

(noise of a car stopping and parking)

PIRSCHKE

Here comes a customer now. Give it a try for the Lord, Reverend Dex.

(Scooby exits doubtfully with pink blanket and crib. There are sounds of a woman's screams, ripping of fabric, a terrific scuffle, and a crash and splintering of wood.)

SCOODY

(Limbs back with black eye, clothes ripped, the blanket and crib with smashed slats draped over his head, muttering to himself)

Brother, the Lord is not blessing this work.

PIRSCHKE

What happened?

SCOODY

Lady wasn't pregnant. Her bulge was a pair of boxing gloves. Guess she was going to work out at the gym across the street.

PIRSCHKE

Don't lose heart. We want things to get to the point where it's no longer feasible for Abortionist Hawk to stay open. This is only a little mishap.

SCOODY

(muttering under his breath)

Sure, oh sure. When it happens to somebody else, sucker says it's a little mishap.

PIRSCHKE

What to do. What to do.

SCOODY

(ominously)

I know what to do.

PIRSCHKE

I've got it, Reverend Dex. We'll warn every vendor who shows up at the clinic that if they continue to do business with Abortionist Hawk they'll be boycotted. Anybody who ignores our threat will be listed on antiabortion web sites.

SCOODY

I never looked at a web site in my life.

(roar of a delivery truck pulling up)

PIRSCHKE

Ahh, time for a trial run. Here's a pizza delivery truck. Now, Reverend Dex, hand this photo to the driver and give him our warning.

(Pirschke gives huge gruesome photo of dismembered fetus to

Scooby, who exits doubtfully. A pause, then a tough male voice is heard shouting offstage.)

PIZZA DELIVERYMAN'S VOICE

Why you skunk, how dare you threaten me.

(There is the sound of a violent scuffle. Scooby returns covered with pizza, still gripping his photo, also covered with pizza.)

PIRSCHKE

I think we need a new approach.

SCOODY

This is delicious pizza. I didn't have breakfast.

SCENE.

Dr. Hawk has the television turned on. He watches with Anne. Father Toohey and Pirschke are again holding forth. Father Toohey is on crutches.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Father, we're all happy to see you out and about again.

FATHER TOOHEY

Joe, the surgery went splendidly. It took the surgeon less than an hour. He did it through one of those telescope gadgets they put into the knee. I know that Our Lord heard the prayers of all my friends in your audience. I thank everyone. Mr. Pirschke has been doing magnificent work out here during my absence.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Father, we know Dr. Hawk has been receiving death threats. What are your views on the abortion doctors who have been murdered?

FATHER TOOHEY

I was once asked what I thought of a man who had killed an abortionist and I said, "He's pro-choice." Wasn't he? For many years the pro-choice movement has insisted that you can choose to end a life to solve a problem. Now, some people tell me that if you can end a life to solve a problem by killing abortionists, why not?

PIRSCHKE

Joe, we reject violence. Categorically. We will end abortion by peaceful legal means. No other.

JOE HITCHCOCK

Do you agree, Father?

FATHER TOOHEY

We must protect the lives of tiny babies. Who else do they have to protect them? Their mothers won't. I was preaching this once and went out to the beach and saw a sign that read, *Do not touch the sea turtles or their eggs; they are protected by local, state and Federal law.* Everyone in our government is looking out for sea turtles. Who is protecting babies?

JOE HITCHCOCK

Father, we know you are protecting babies. What we want to know is...

FATHER TOOHEY

Joe, When Jesus died on the cross, the Centurion standing next to him, who had participated in His death, hollered, *Surely, this was an innocent man.* What about the innocent babies Abortionist Hawk is murdering in there as we speak?

JOE HITCHCOCK

Father, do you endorse violence to end abortion?

FATHER TOOHEY

Joe, I'm glad you asked that question. I'm what the French call an *agent provocateur*. Do you know what an *agent provocateur* is? Usually the *agent provocateur* is a character in a spy novel. In real life the *agent provocateur* works for the CIA. In 1953, the CIA got rid of the ruler of Iran, Mohammed Mossadegh, and caused a revolution with an *agent provocateur*.

JOE HITCHCOCK

You're a priest, not a CIA agent, are you, Father?

FATHER TOOHEY

Of course I'm not a CIA agent, and people don't usually think of a priest as an *agent provocateur*. But I do want to foment a revolution, and when the revolution is over, abortion in this country will be over as well.

JOE HITCHCOCK

(becoming a little weary trying to
nail the priest down. Father Les
is one slippery cleric, alright)

Will you encourage violence to end abortion, Father?

(FATHER TOOHEY)

Joe, you've asked an excellent question.

JOE HITCHCOCK

I'm overjoyed.

FATHER TOOHEY

When Cain killed his brother Abel, God asked Cain, "Where is your brother?" Cain's response was, "I do not know." Now do you think God was fooled, that violence had not occurred...

JOE HITCHCOCK

Just a moment please.

(receiving a message through an
earpiece in one ear)

We return you now to our news desk. Brandon? Can you hear me?

FATHER TOOHEY

(thinking he is no longer on
camera, speaking to Pirschke)

Clyde, don't you have anyone, a good rifle shot, who can take out this abortionist?

(Anne Hawk hears Father Toohey's
remark and is horrified.)

DR. HAWK

(Superficially nonchalant is
washing obstetrical forceps in
the sink, then placing them in
an autoclave to sterilize them.)

I have a late term procedure tomorrow. Lady doesn't want saline. I
need to use forceps.

ANNE HAWK

(Anne, shaken, sits down to
work at a computer with a stack
of medical charts next to her.)

What do you do with the forceps?

DR. HAWK

I rupture the bulging amniotic membranes and release the fluid to
reduce the risk of amniotic fluid embolism. Then I insert the forceps
into the uterus and apply them to the head of the fetus, which is still
alive. I can't kill the fetus with an injection so late in pregnancy. I
close the forceps, crush the skull of the fetus, withdraw the forceps.
The fetus, now dead, will slide out more or less intact.

(Anne Hawk faints hearing this
description and slides off her chair to
the floor.)

DR. HAWK

Anne, Anne, sweetheart, what happened, what's wrong?

(Dr. Hawk rushes over to Anne, examines her quickly, feels her neck pulses, listens with his stethoscope to her heart after running his hand grasping the stethoscope under her blouse and bra, realizes she has fainted, goes to one of the cabinets, takes out a spirits of ammonia ampoule, which he crushes and holds under Anne's nose. After a few whiffs of the ammonia, Anne wakes up.)

ANNE HAWK

Spirits of ammonia. My favorite fragrance.

DR. HAWK

Chanel No. 5 might not work as well.

ANNE HAWK

Philip, you're a dear man, and I love you more than anything...

DR. HAWK

The feeling is mutual. I was desperately lonely after my mother died last year. People told me we married too quickly, that we hardly knew each other. You know what? They were wrong.

ANNE HAWK

Darling, you do need to remember that I'm new to this line of work. When the Reverend Hinterleck preached his Easter Sermon on the Crucifixion, it was never quite so graphic.

DR. HAWK

I promise, from now on we'll have more graphic sex and less graphic everything else.

ANNE HAWK

It's easy to see why late term abortion can get some people agitated.

DR. HAWK

Tell me a major medical procedure that isn't gruesome and gory. They all are. When I was a medical student, I assisted at the amputation of a leg. The surgeon used a gigli saw, a flexible wire for bone cutting. I fainted when he had cut through half the femur. A nurse caught me, kept me from falling on my face on the tile floor of the operating room. A year later I was rotating through ophthalmology and watching a cataract extraction. The surgeon inserted the blade of his scalpel into the patient's eye. The girl standing next to me fainted. I caught her. A month later we were married and a month after that divorced. That's my total experience of marriage until two weeks ago. The gruesome medical procedures go on and on.

ANNE HAWK

So do the protests.

(We hear the chanting of pickets and protesters outside. BABY KILLER! ABORTION IS MURDER! KILL THE ABORTIONIST!)

DR. HAWK

They must know about the procedure tomorrow. Somehow they find out. Third term abortions with forceps make Pirschke foam at the mouth.

ANNE HAWK

Philip, how much longer can you take this? I'm so afraid. Isn't it possible for us to do something a little different. What about regular obstetrics and gynecology?

DR. HAWK

(He looks at his wife for a moment with exasperation. She just doesn't get it. But he is deeply touched by her obvious concern and love for him.)

Sweetheart, there is nothing I wouldn't do for you, but what you're suggesting is impossible.

ANNE HAWK

(ever the minister's wife)

Nothing is impossible if good people put their minds to it.

DR. HAWK

The practice of obstetrics and gynecology has changed since I was a resident. Then it was practically all men. Now the training programs are almost all women. The part that hasn't changed is how a practice develops. When the doctor is young, her patients are young women. She spends most of her time delivering babies. Obstetrics is grueling work, sometimes 36 hours at a stretch. The babies come into the world on their schedule, not on yours, often in the middle of the night. As the doctor ages the patients age. Their reproductive years end. The doctor has become a gynecologist by the time she is my age. She is doing hysterectomies, removing fibroids, doing the other things gynecologists do. I am sixty years old. I can't start doing obstetrics at my age, nor can I start a gynecology practice. So what else can I do?

ANNE HAWK

I emailed my cousin at the VA Hospital in Miami.

DR. HAWK

Do they have an opening for a gynecologist?

ANNE HAWK

She said she would inquire. I sent her your CV.

DR. HAWK

Did you email the Medical Board of Florida about getting a Florida medical license.

ANNE HAWK

I did. They emailed me the application form for doctors out of medical school five years or more. Here it is. I printed it out for you.

(Anne reaches into a cabinet,
pulls out a printout the size of
the Manhattan phone book,
hands it to Dr. Hawk.)

DR. HAWK

(thumbing through the pages)

Complete work history...medical school transcripts...documentation of all postgraduate training...documentation of board certification...complete practice history...criminal history...history of substance abuse...credit history...recertification documentation...continuing medical education documentation...By the time I finish filling this thing out I'll be too old to work, or maybe even...

(There is a terrific explosion outside and a crash of splintering glass of one of the windows. Dr. Hawk's surgery fills with smoke. Dr. Hawk and Anne dive to the floor. When they stand up, we see that the flying glass has cut Dr. Hawk's forehead, which is bleeding. The blood is dripping down his white coat.)

PIRSCHKE

(voice coming from outside)

Abortionist Hawk. Abortionist Hawk. Come out here. I want to help you.

ANNE HAWK
(horrified)

You're not going out there?

(she runs to Dr. Hawk and
embraces him, weeping)

Philip, you can't go. Please listen to me. They'll kill you. You're all I have.

DR. HAWK

I have to.

ANNE HAWK
(brings out body armor)

At least wear this.

DR. HAWK

Must I? It makes me itch.

ANNE HAWK

Why are you so stubborn?

SCENE.

Dr. Hawk, his face still bloody, in full body armor is outside his clinic. Pirschke confronts him and seems more bellicose than helpful.

PIRSCHKE

Abortionist Hawk, I regret this violence. I had no part in it. I am a peaceable man.

DR. HAWK

If this is peaceable, I would hate to see what war is like.

PIRSCHKE

You must think you're awfully clever, waltzing out of court with an acquittal for not reporting the abortion on that twelve year old.

DR. HAWK

Excuse me, but I cut myself shaving. I'm going to Walgreens to buy some band aids.

PIRSCHKE

I may have lost a minor skirmish, but we'll see about the war.

DR. HAWK

All your legal nonsense, demanding records, is nothing but a cheap tactic to frighten women away from having abortions. If you really wanted to find criminal cases of underage sex, you and your friend Clunk would target other categories of health workers. You'd focus just as intently on girls who gave birth as on one who had an abortion. You didn't fool the jury for a second.

PIRSCHKE

That was not the thrust of our argument. You were a target of an investigation. It's like we showed up at a bank robber's house and said, Hey, we think you robbed a bank. You have a ski mask inside, a gun and some money. And your defense was, Well, let me go and check, and I'll get back to you. I know juries can be dumb, but this one was imbecilic. Your lawyer Shapiro is very good, I admit, probably the best in the state. Nobody else could have gotten you off with that cockamamie logic.

(Dr. Hawk has heard enough. He starts to walk away.)

PIRSCHKE

Stop immediately what you are doing, and all this will cease.

(sweeping gesture to indicate
bomb damage)

That partial birth murder with forceps you're planning for tomorrow: I want you to call the woman and tell her to have her baby.

DR. HAWK

Why don't you call her and tell her, Snoop Dog? You know so much about my schedule.

PIRSCHKE

I am a beneficent observer, an angel of God, so to speak.

DR. HAWK

You're evading my question. Why don't you call her.

PIRSCHKE

We did call her.

DR. HAWK

What did she say?

PIRSCHKE

She was distraught. She screamed unspeakable obscenities and slammed down the phone. You must refuse to abort her.

DR. HAWK

Sorry, Snoop Dog, you're wasting your breath.

PIRSCHKE

Have you no shame, sir, no feelings of guilt or remorse, no moral sense at all?

DR. HAWK

I'm a gynecologist, a doctor taking care of women. Buy a gynecology textbook and read it.

PIRSCHKE

I don't need to read a gynecology textbook. Anyhow, medical textbooks cost too much money.

DR. HAWK

Spend a few dollars. It won't kill you. Find a cheap used copy on Amazon. You'll see a big section devoted to abortion, early, midterm, late, how to perform the abortion in the different stages of pregnancy. All this information is there with the other material on women's health and how to care for women's diseases. If a woman came to me and wanted me to treat her fibroids, I wouldn't lecture her on morality. When she comes to me and asks for an abortion, I don't make judgments about morality. For me, taking a fetus out of her uterus is no different than removing a fibroid. It's her body. What she chooses to have done to it is her call.

PIRSCHKE

You are totally misguided and warped, a disgrace to your profession.

DR. HAWK

When a patient with AIDS comes to a doctor for treatment, should the doctor lecture the patient on virtuous behavior? When a patient with any sexually transmitted disease comes to the doctor for treatment, should the doctor deliver a sermon on sexual morality?

PIRSCHKE

This is a young life you're extinguishing, sir, not the clap.

DR. HAWK

Life is a sexually transmitted disease. You are a prime example.

PIRSCHKE

I will endure that insult as Jesus did and turn the other cheek. I came here today to offer you help. In return you heap scorn upon me.

DR. HAWK

Look, I'm very busy, I don't have time for this.

PIRSCHKE

Here is my offer. Leave Nebraska immediately. You're a thorn in the eye of our state.

DR. HAWK

That's an offer?

PIRSCHKE

You will need to work, won't you? I will make it possible.

DR. HAWK

What are you? A medical employment agency?

PIRSCHKE

Are you licensed in any other state?

DR. HAWK

No.

PIRSCHKE

Could you get another state license?

DR. HAWK

(uncomfortable, hesitates)

I don't know. I'd need to apply.

PIRSCHKE

Who are you kidding, Abortionist Hawk? I've seen your dossier in the Nebraska State Board of Healing Arts files. A thick section is concerned with your substance abuse history, the alcohol, the schedule three and four tranquilizers and sleeping pills that you illicitly obtained.

DR. HAWK

(enraged)

You have no right to be reading my license file. That's privileged information you're talking about. You belong in a cage.

PIRSCHKE

With that information in your file, do you believe another state would give you a medical license?

DR. HAWK

I'm long past the substance problem. In fact, I was on the Nebraska Medical Society's impaired physician committee.

PIRSCHKE

Answer my question. Could you get another state medical license, yes or no.

(Dr. Hawk says nothing.)

PIRSCHKE

There's your answer. Now, what if that section of your license file should suddenly disappear?

DR. HAWK

How would it disappear? It's locked in a cabinet in the Nebraska State Board of Healing Arts offices in Lincoln.

PIRSCHKE

I know people on the board.

DR. HAWK

What kind of fool do you take me for?

(Dr. Hawk storms into his clinic.)

SCENE.

Pirschke is deep in thought as Scooby enters.

PIRSCHKE

Reverend Dex, we need a new approach.

SCOODY

(turned away from Pirschke, muttering to himself)

You dumb sucker. You finally catching on? You're not dealing with stray cats here.

PIRSCHKE

What about a full page ad in the *World Herald*: *Omaha shoppers unknowingly sprinkled with the burnt ash of fetal remains.*

SCOODY

Not bad. When will it appear?

PIRSCHKE

The *World Herald* wants twenty-five thousand dollars for a full page. I'm still working on it. In the meantime, I got a friend with a print shop to print these flyers.

(pulls printed flyer from a bag at his feet)

I want you to walk around downtown, Douglas Street, Leavenworth, handing them out.

SCOODY

(holding flyer with thumb and forefinger from the edge, like a turd)

Brother, is used toilet paper all you have to stop this baby killer?

PIRSCHKE

Dex...

SCOODY

Reverend Dex.

(muttering to himself)

Ol' fart can't even remember that I'm ordained.

PIRSCHKE

Reverend Dex, we're already saving babies. Look at these reports of our protests.

(pulls out sheaf of typed documents from a briefcase on the ground)

We've counted cars entering the clinic gate and tracked *saves*: women who changed their minds. Over the last five years, even while I was deputy state attorney general in Lincoln, we had 200 saves for an overall save rate of three percent. What do you think of that?

SCOOBY

(scowls, grunts, mutters)

Waste of time.

PIRSCHKE

We must try every means of peaceful protest. I myself have been the leader of endless legal battles with this fiend. The monster has even fought to prevent me from planting my little crosses. Every inch of this land has been litigated.

(gestures over lawn)

We know what we can do on the blacktop. We know what we can do on the driveway. We know what we can do on the sidewalk.

SCOOBY

(mutters to himself)

Need to take a leak. Can I use the sidewalk?

PIRSCHKE

I have exposed myself to grave danger, like the loyal soldier of God I am. One day I spotted an opportunity for confrontation in one small strip of pavement that Abortionist Hawk thought had been overlooked: the gutter running between the street and the driveway. I knelt in the gutter to pray, placing myself in the path of cars entering the clinic. You don't believe me? Here's our incident report.

(pulls report from briefcase and reads out loud)

A clinic nurse pulled up and laid on her horn repeatedly. When Mr. Pirschke acted as if he did not know that she was there, a clinic guard told Mr. Pirschke

that he was calling the police. The next day, Mr. Pirschke was standing in the gutter with a volunteer discussing the new tactic when Abortionist Hawk pulled up in his armored SUV. Abortionist Hawk floored his accelerator and aimed his Jeep directly at Mr. Pirschke.

SCOOBY

Lucky the Abortionist didn't abort you from this world.

PIRSCHKE

Abortionist Hawk's SUV hit me, left me bruised. I filed a police report, got news coverage. Then I wrote to the Abortionist, demanding a \$4,000 settlement. He ignored me. So I went to the district attorney, Flora Hanscom, told her I wanted Abortionist Hawk prosecuted for attempted murder.

SCOOBY

Why ain't he in prison?

PIRSCHKE

Flora Hanscom refused to prosecute.

SCOOBY

Unbelievable. Why not?

PIRSCHKE

A few years ago, Hanscom and her husband wanted a child and couldn't have one. Abortionist Hawk paid to place one of his prospective patients in the home of a family in Omaha. When the baby came, Flora Hanscom got her.

SCOOBY

This is hopeless.

PIRSCHKE

Not at all, Reverend Dex. The Lord has his ways. We got mileage out of Abortionist Hawk's SUV. Look at this story in *The Nebraska Pentecostal Christian*.

(pulls out a rag of a tabloid-sized paper and reads)

Abortionist Hawk may have delivered the ultimate bribe to Flora Hanscom by giving her a baby for adoption. Ms. Hanscom's office had no comment and refused to discuss the accusation. But The Nebraska Pentecostal Christian has good evidence that Hawk's campaign contributions are nothing but blood money to co-opt politicians. Hawk owns the attorney general's office. He owns the governor's office. He owns the district attorney's office.

SCOOBY

If the Abortionist has the law in his pocket, what good is legal protest?

PIRSCHKE

There is a Higher Authority. He has already seen fit to favor our cause.

SCOOBY

Jesus warns against false prophets. He says that humans are unable to do right apart from God.

PIRSCHKE

Bear fruit, Jesus said.

SCOOBY

(mutters to himself)

Fruit. I need lunch. Where can I get Reese's Peanut Butter Cups?

PIRSCHKE

In Omaha middle schools, children are chanting *Hawk, Hawk, the baby killer.* Last summer was the summer of mercy. Hundreds of folks blocked that clinic entrance.

SCOOBY

This summer it's too hot. We're the only ones out here. Everybody else is home watching TV.

PIRSCHKE

With the Lord's help, we're making an impression, Reverend Dex.

SCOODY

Our impression makes no impression on the Abortionist. Look around.

PIRSCHKE

I'm aware. From today, I'm adding a new tactic. We'll use the courts. Abortionist Hawk doesn't own the Nebraska judiciary yet.

SCOODY

What will courts do that you haven't already tried?

PIRSCHKE

Nebraska has limits on late-term abortions of viable fetuses. Naturally, Abortionist Hawk says he has a rigorous screening process to comply with the law.

SCOODY

(derisively)

Of course.

PIRSCHKE

I will subpoena the records of one hundred women whose fetus Abortionist Hawk has butchered late term. We will then go through each record looking for violations of the late term law. Another point: doctors in Nebraska must report sexual abuse of minors. Very often the girl and her family don't do that. Abortionist Hawk doesn't, either. When I am through with Abortionist Hawk, he will no longer have a Nebraska medical license.

SCOODY

What will he do for living?

PIRSCHKE

Beats me. Repair transmissions?

SCENE.

Pirschke is outside the clinic. There is the sound of a car parking. Anne Hawk enters. She is carrying supplies for her home kitchen in a shopping bag. She sees Pirschke but ignores him.

PIRSCHKE

Ms. Hawk.

(Anne does not stop and says nothing.)

I'd like a word with you.

(Anne continues toward the clinic door.)

You can save the life of Abortionist Hawk. You have it in your power.

ANNE HAWK

(stops but does not turn around to face Pirschke)

You have it in *your* power. I have no power at all.

PIRSCHKE

You have the power to stop the slaughter of innocents.

ANNE HAWK

Why are you so busy trying to insert yourself into the lives of women you've never met? You've completely ignored your own family.

PIRSCHKE

I have never kept my family troubles secret.

ANNE HAWK

How could you? They've been in every newspaper in the state, on television, on the internet.

PIRSCHKE

I'm doing the Lord's work. People notice me.

ANNE HAWK

Your son the bank robber: people notice him too -- especially the police.

PIRSCHKE

His mother was a prostitute. I was in Bible school when I married her. We divorced before I started law school. I have disowned my son. I have never concealed any of this tripe you are regurgitating.

ANNE HAWK

What about the wisdom you dispense to us lowly sinners: *Families are wrecked when a father vents his mid life crisis and deserts his wife for a youthful, sexier model.*

PIRSCHKE

I practice what I preach. I have never been involved with a model.

ANNE HAWK

You hate divorce so much that when your own parents divorced you cut off all contact between them and your children.

(Pirschke scowls. He knows what's coming.)

ANNE HAWK

Yet last year you divorced your wife of twenty years and married a woman who was nineteen. Your own church in Omaha tossed you out for that. They said you had a pattern of repeated sinful relationships and conversations with both single and married women.

PIRSCHKE

I suppose you think Abortionist Hawk is a pillar of virtue, that he comes from an old Nebraska family that is the bedrock of Omaha.

ANNE HAWK

Philip is a good man, a generous man with a kind heart, a brave man.

PIRSCHKE

Do brave men try to kill themselves?

ANNE HAWK

(She is surprised and shocked.
She thinks that Pirschke has
found out about the morphine
episode.)

What do you mean?

PIRSCHKE

When Abortionist Hawk was having his little substance abuse problem a few years back, he injected himself with a pentothal overdose. The nurse in his clinic found him slumped over his desk. She called an ambulance. He was on life support for 24 hours at Saint Joseph Hospital. Alas, as you know, he survived.

ANNE HAWK

Alas, you too have survived.

PIRSCHKE

I wasn't murdered like wicked old Dr. Lionel Hawk, but then I never did anything like he did.

ANNE HAWK

Philip's father? What did he do? He was murdered in a robbery many years ago.

PIRSCHKE

Hah! Is that what Abortionist Hawk told you? That's a good one.

ANNE HAWK

I certainly wouldn't believe anything you tell me.

PIRSCHKE

Ol' Doc Lionel started performing abortions in Omaha in the sixties. He wasn't doing well as a gynecologist before, but once he added abortion to his list of services his practice boomed.

ANNE HAWK

I know all about Lionel doing abortions. You're beginning to bore me.

PIRSCHKE

Ol' Doc Lionel had quite a libido and not much restraint. He did an abortion on a sixteen year old girl and proceeded to violate the Nebraska Criminal Code section 28-805.

ANNE HAWK

(suspects what she is going to
hear)

What is a section 28-805 violation of the Nebraska Criminal Code?

PIRSCHKE

Debauching a minor. Ol' Doc Lionel got the girl to perform oral sex on him before he aborted her. The girl's family went to the police. They arrested Ol' Doc Lionel and released him on bail. A day later, the girl's father walked through that door.

(points to clinic door)

And blasted Ol' Doc Lionel's head off with a pump action Model 870 Remington 12 gauge shotgun.

ANNE HAWK

(she is silent for a moment)

None of what you're telling me gives you license to do what you're doing.

PIRSCHKE

What I'm doing is God's will, the right thing, the moral thing.

ANNE HAWK

How do you know what God wants? How do you know what God thinks is moral and amoral? Does God speak to you?

PIRSCHKE
(emphatically)

Yes!

ANNE HAWK

Does He tell you what's right and wrong?

PIRSCHKE

Yes!

ANNE HAWK

Does He tell you what's moral and amoral?

PIRSCHKE

Definitely!

ANNE HAWK

What a surprise. When I woke up this morning, how did I know I was going to meet the Prophet from Nebraska? In the state where the West begins, God's morality begins as well.

PIRSCHKE

Not everywhere in Nebraska, South Sioux City, for example.

ANNE HAWK

(becoming annoyed)

You're obviously referring to me. I'm not like you. I never presented myself as a paragon of virtue, a model of morality.

PIRSCHKE

How could you? Now you act like a prim minister's wife. In South Sioux City you were nothing but a slut.

ANNE HAWK

(more annoyed)

You've obviously been talking with your schizophrenic friend Scooby.

PIRSCHKE

The Lord punishes sinful women. You are an excellent example.

ANNE HAWK

What worse punishment could any woman have than an encounter with you?

PIRSCHKE

You got pregnant at sixteen, had a botched abortion, a badly infected coat hanger job. You married the Reverend Hinterleck in Kearney and didn't tell him. When he found out you were barren as a stone, he began playing around. Then he left you for another woman. You got your divine comeuppance alright.

ANNE HAWK

(she is livid with rage and screams)

You are filth.

(Anne stares furiously at Pirschke for a moment, then spits. The wad of spittle lands squarely in the middle of Pirschke's face. Anne picks up her bags and runs into the clinic.)

PIRSCHKE

(at first stunned, wipes his gooey face with his handkerchief, then screams after her)

You psychotic whore, aren't you gonna piss on me too?

(Pirschke storms up to the clinic window and yells maniacally)

Abortionist Hawk, you are finished. I'm gonna nuke you, you murderer, and that spitting cobra of yours. When I get through this place will make the World Trade Center on 9/11 look like Munchkinland. You are going to rot in a cell in the Nebraska State Penitentiary in Lincoln. You'll have the rest of your days to think of the innocent babies you've massacred.

BLACKOUT.

ACT II

SCENE.

AT RISE:

Five minutes later. Dr. Hawk is sitting in his shirtsleeves at his desk with stacks of medical charts in front of him. He is taking deep drags on a cigarette. Suddenly a paroxysmal fit of coughing seizes him. At this moment Anne Hawk enters, still shaking with rage.

ANNE HAWK

Will you please put that cigarette out.

(Dr. Hawk looks longingly at cigarette, then clips butt with thumb and forefinger and drops it in red sharps container)

ANNE HAWK

Thanks.

(searches in nearby drawer, pulls out Nicorette box.)

Here's your Nicorette.

(Dr. Hawk opens piece of Nicorette,
makes a few furious chews.)

ANNE HAWK

What are all the medical charts for?

(In answer, Dr. Hawk hands Anne a
legal document.)

ANNE HAWK

(She sinks into a chair near Dr.
Hawk and begins to read.)

A subpoena. A demand for patient records.

DR. HAWK

I heard our friend Pirschke screaming out there.

ANNE HAWK

The entire US anti-abortion movement probably heard him. No wonder people are calling the phone company to drop their land lines. Who needs them?

DR. HAWK

Now you know about my dad.

ANNE HAWK

That was decades ago. What difference does it make any more?

DR. HAWK

It makes a difference because it changed my whole life.

ANNE HAWK

I don't understand.

DR. HAWK

When my dad was murdered, I was a gynecology resident at Moffitt in San Francisco. I had just been accepted into a prestigious gynecology fellowship. If I had stayed at Moffitt, today I'd be a professor with an academic appointment, an easy schedule, medical students, interns, residents, fellows to do all the work. A happy life with a pension when I turned sixty-five.

ANNE HAWK

Don't be so hard on yourself. Don't keep thinking about what could have been. Concentrate on the future.

DR. HAWK

That's hard to do because moving back to Omaha was a horrid mistake, the most awful I ever made. It's true my dad had a few bad investments, but that wasn't the real problem.

(He hesitates. This subject is painful.)

ANNE HAWK

Go on.

DR. HAWK

The -- uh -- sex thing. There wasn't only one patient. After my dad was killed, a few other women came forward. They all filed lawsuits against his estate. My mom was terrified of ending up penniless. She didn't mention the lawsuits when I was still in San Francisco. I had already begun working here when I found out. I had given up my fellowship. What was I supposed to do?

(he winces briefly, as though in physical pain)

ANNE HAWK

Your mother deceived you.

DR. HAWK

If you can't believe your own mother, who can you believe?

ANNE HAWK

You could have pulled up stakes at some point, no?

DR. HAWK

You know I lived with my mom until she died a year ago, in the house where I grew up, on Warren Street. She refused to move. When we finally settled the last lawsuit, all that was left was this ratty clinic building in a run down area, which has only grown worse over the years. No woman would come into this neighborhood except for an abortion. Now look at me. I have no money to speak of. My income has gone to pay for armed guards, security cameras, bulletproof glass, metal detectors, fencing, floodlights, lawyers, politicians. If you want to see what I have to show for more than thirty years of hard, dangerous work, look around you.

(he grimaces briefly with pain)

ANNE HAWK

Couldn't you try to collect something from the women who don't pay?

DR. HAWK

They're in awful situations. Why should I want to make things worse? Why should I want to drive them to the wall?

ANNE HAWK

Why have you even stayed in this business? In this place.

DR. HAWK

I thought of quitting many times over the years. Truly I did. My mother told me the same thing you are telling me but didn't want to leave Omaha. Her friends were here, she said. As the years passed, it became harder and harder to get licensed in another state and find another job. So here I sit.

ANNE HAWK

(sees argument is useless, sighs,
resumes reading the subpoena
in her hand)

What does Pirschke want with all these charts?

DR. HAWK

I've performed about 5,000 late-term abortions, at least 22 weeks into gestation, the earliest point at which a fetus can survive outside the uterus. At 22 weeks, the average fetus is 11 inches long, weighs a pound and is starting to respond to noise. About 2,000 of the abortions involved fetuses that could not have survived outside the womb, either because they had catastrophic genetic defects or they were too small. But the other 3,000 abortions involved viable fetuses. Some had serious but survivable abnormalities, like Down syndrome. There's no legal problem aborting those. But many were perfectly healthy. Pirschke wants to use the charts to identify the healthy fetuses and then nail me for homicide.

ANNE HAWK

How easy is that to do?

DR. HAWK

Not very. Nebraska law says that late term abortion, when the fetus is viable, can be done only to save the woman's life or because continuing the pregnancy would cause her a substantial and irreversible impairment of a major bodily function. Nebraska legal authorities, citing United States Supreme Court cases, have ruled that bodily function encompasses a woman's physical and mental health. Nebraska law gives considerable deference to physicians' judgments. But I need to go through every chart before I hand it over.

(He winces in pain again. He has
begun to sweat.)

ANNE HAWK

According to this subpoena, the deadline is tomorrow.

DR. HAWK

I know.

(He grasps his right flank and screams with pain.)

ANNE HAWK

Philip, what's wrong.

(Anne rushes to Dr. Hawk, puts her arm around him and kisses his cheek.)

Why are you sweating?

DR. HAWK

(Dr. Hawk has soaked his shirt with sweat. He screams with pain and clutches his right side.)

A kidney stone. They're always on the right. It's so painful it must be very small. Little stones like little dogs make the most noise.

(Dr. Hawk screams, slides from his chair to the floor and doubles up in agony. He is dripping wet with sweat.)

Look in my desk drawer. Is there any morphine?

(He tries to straighten out but doubles up and screams again.)

ANNE HAWK

(Looking in desk drawer, she scowls, then holds up empty morphine container from Scene 7.)

All gone.

(Anne brings a pillow for Dr. Hawk's head, then brings another.)

DR. HAWK

(groans, doubles up in agony)

Could you get me that wastebasket. I'm going to vomit.

(Anne, distraught, runs to Dr. Hawk with the wastebasket in the nick of time. He barely gets his head over it when he starts heaving and retching in agonizing fits.)

DR. HAWK

(He has barely stopped heaving and retching)

Can you look in the Rolodex on my desk, get the number of my lawyer, Sam Shapiro.

ANNE HAWK

Are you joking? You need a doctor, not a lawyer.

DR. HAWK

I need to talk about the legal tactics with Sam. Don't worry. I've had stones before. This one will pass.

(He screams and convulses with worse pain than before.)

ANNE HAWK

Is the number of your urologist, what's his name, in the Rolodex?

DR. HAWK

Dr. Blackwater.

ANNE HAWK

(riffling through Rolodex, she finds the number, then punches it into desk telephone)

Hello, hello?

(holding receiver)

DR. HAWK

Is he there?

ANNE HAWK

A recorded voice thanked me for calling the doctor's office and said to please wait. Now all I hear is Handel's *Water Music*.

DR. HAWK

Dr. Blackwater is probably in Europe proctoring.

ANNE HAWK

Doing what?

DR. HAWK

A couple years ago he invented a penis enlarging implant and got a patent. Now he goes around Europe teaching urologists how to put it in.

ANNE HAWK

Why not the US?

DR. HAWK

The Food and Drug Administration rejected it. Their expert panel ruled ten to two that men didn't need a penis that large.

(He screams with another paroxysm of pain, this time so severe that he faints.)

ANNE HAWK

(runs to him terrified)

Philip, Philip.

(runs back to phone, ruffles through Rolodex, then punches in another number)

This is Anne Hawk, wife of Dr. Philip Hawk. Philip is very ill. I need to speak with Dr. Singh.

(pauses listening)

As soon as you can get in touch with him, please tell him to come to Dr. Hawk's clinic right away. Thanks.

SCENE.

Twenty minutes later. Dr. Singh, stethoscope around his neck, is examining Dr. Hawk, who is again conscious and lying on the floor with his head on a pillow, doubled up and groaning with pain. A very worried Anne Hawk is standing nearby.

DR. SINGH

Philip, I'm going to give you an injection of intramuscular demerol, seventy-five milligrams. Are you allergic to demerol?

DR. HAWK

(his voice is a rasp)

No. Not that I'm aware

DR. SINGH

(He removes syringe and bottle of demerol from his black bag, fills syringe with demerol, swabs Dr. Hawk's upper arm with cotton, injects demerol. Pauses)

Are you feeling better, Philip?

DR. HAWK

(already breathing more easily)

Much.

DR. SINGH

(to Anne Hawk)

Ask any doctor. Demerol is the heroic standby, the most respected of all drugs in the pharmacopoeia. A doctor's first duty is to relieve pain.

ANNE HAWK

And after that?

DR. SINGH

Philip, I'm admitting you to Saint Joseph's. We need to get a urologist to see you.

DR. HAWK

(still sweating profusely and
soaked with sweat)

I'll pass this stone. I know I'll pass it.

DR. SINGH

I can't leave you lying here like this. You mustn't ignore a renal stone.

DR. HAWK

Who's ignoring it?

DR. SINGH

If it's obstructing the ureter, your kidney will be dead in less than 24 hours. You need an ultrasound of the kidney, minimum.

DR. HAWK

(reluctantly)

You're right.

DR. SINGH

(goes to desk phone, punches in
number)

Lakshmi? (pause) Yes, I'm here now. (pause) Not good. Call admitting at Saint Joseph's, tell them I'm bringing in an urgent admission, Dr. Philip Hawk. You should have his medical record number. He's been an inpatient before. Ask them to please have the urologist on call meet us in the emergency room. Thanks.

(To Dr. Hawk)

Philip, do you think you can walk, or should I call an ambulance?

DR. HAWK

Goodness, no ambulances, please. Every time those people outside see an ambulance pull up they whip out their cameras and scream *another botched abortion!* I can make it to your car.

ANNE HAWK

(Anne rolls over a wheelchair that had been folded in the corner of the room. With Dr. Singh, gently, lovingly, she helps Dr. Hawk into the wheelchair)

Easy, take your time, don't slip.

DR. HAWK

(sinking heavily into the wheelchair)

Anne, call Sam Shapiro. Tell him you're coming over with the hundred charts. His office is on the corner of South Sixty-First and Center. The address is in my rolodex. See if he can have the deadline for the charts extended.

ANNE HAWK

Will do.

DR. HAWK

You're not having a very easy time. I wish I were able to give you better.

ANNE HAWK

(Kissing Dr. Hawk on the lips.)

You've given me a lot.

DR. HAWK

Truly? You're very sweet.

ANNE HAWK

(conspiratorial voice)

I really married you so I could change my name from Hinterleck to Hawk.

(Anne and Dr. Singh wheel Dr. Hawk out of the room. In a minute Anne returns. She sits at Dr. Hawk's desk and begins to go through the rolodex.)

SCENE.

Front of clinic. Pirschke enters, followed by Scooby dragging in a coffin.

SCOODY

What good's this here thing? Abortionist back to murdering babies today.

PIRSCHKE

It adds a nice touch to the place, don't you think?

SCOODY

Did no good at all in front of Saint Joseph's. Abortionist walked out looking better than ever.

PIRSCHKE

We can't give up, Reverend Dex.

SCOODY

(mumbles to himself)

This moron should be in the coffin.

(to Pirschke)

What about your legal tactics? Nothing but toilet water. Jury acquitted the baby butcher in thirty minutes.

PIRSCHKE

I'm as surprised as you. This is the first abortion clinic in the whole state of Nebraska I haven't been able to close. Never fear. We can still do it with peaceful protest.

SCOOBY

What about anti-abortion counseling?

PIRSCHKE

Father Toohey. Of course.

SCOOBY

Father's in jail for exposing himself to an altar boy. I saw the cops lead him off in handcuffs.

PIRSCHKE

(thinks for a minute)

I'll do the counseling myself.

SCOOBY

There is another way.

PIRSCHKE

Reverend Dex, we're not going that route.

SCOOBY

Brother, there is no other route. Homicide is justified.

PIRSCHKE

No! If Abortionist Hawk were murdered it would be a catastrophic blow to our movement. We would lose most of our support, especially from people in the middle ground who want abortion outlawed. We've spent years persuading our supporters to work within the law. If anyone murdered Abortionist Hawk, our credibility among the most ardent abortion opponents would vanish. Believe me, they would be quick to point out that one gunman achieved what all our protests and prayers could not.

SCOODY

Brother, I'm awful hungry. Can you spare some change? I need to buy myself some food.

PIRSCHKE

Can't you get breakfast at the St. Athanasius soup kitchen, down the street?

SCOODY

All they have for breakfast is oat meal. I hate oat meal.

PIRSCHKE

Of course.

(pulls out squeeze purse, extracts
a dime, hands it magnanimously
to Scooby)

Here you are, my friend. Bon appétit.

SCOODY

(grumbles to himself)

A dime! I oughta punch out this stingy sucker.

(Scooby angrily throws dime to
the ground and kicks it.
Pirschke does not notice. He is
watching Dr. Hawk and Anne
Hawk enter and walk toward
clinic front door. Anne goes
inside.)

PIRSCHKE

(marine drill sergeant voice)

Abortionist Hawk.

(Dr. Hawk stops)

You think you've vanquished me, don't you, Abortionist Hawk?

ANNE HAWK

(calling from inside clinic)

Philip. Come in here.

DR. HAWK

I wasn't thinking anything. I'm here to take care of my patients, Snoop Dog. I'm sure you already know all their names.

PIRSCHKE

They won't be coming much longer. Now that the weather's cooled off, we have a network of 600 volunteers. Some are driving hundreds of miles for a protest shift.

DR. HAWK

What else do you have, Snoop Dog? Not the Nebraska state courts.

PIRSCHKE

We have the federal courts, the Supreme Court. We've only begun to fight.

(Pirschke, is now very angry, frustrated, red in the face, bunching his fists like a petulant child, spitting and screaming)

And don't you call me Snoop Dog again, you hear? I am Clyde Ignatius Throckmorton Pirschke, former deputy state attorney general. I'm getting very tired of you, Abortionist Hawk.

Sound of a car pulling up. Sally Akers and her mother Mrs. Benson enter. They are elegantly, sumptuously dressed and very attractive. Both women are overjoyed to see Dr. Hawk.

MRS. BENSON

Aw, there's our favorite Doc.

(ignoring Pirschke, and Scooby, she hurries up to Dr. Hawk, embraces him warmly, kisses him on the cheek.)

SALLY

Doc, you are the man we love most dearly in this world.
(embraces Dr. Hawk and kisses
his cheeks. Notices coffin.)

You got a funeral parlor moving in next door?

DR. HAWK

(both his cheeks are smeared
with lipstick)

It's very nice to see you both again. I'm glad you're doing so well but
sorry you had to come all this distance. Wasn't Sally able to have a
follow up exam with a local gynecologist?

MRS. BENSON

Oh, Doc, Sally's got all the doctors she needs. We come to see you.
We want to pay you back.

DR. HAWK

(a little surprised; he never
expected to collect anything)

Please, I'm not in a hurry.

MRS. BENSON

We are. We want to pay everybody we owe, especially our favorite
Doc. Sally's Uncle Cuthbert Akers died and left everything he had to
her.

SALLY

He was a moonshiner in the hills outside Jonesboro. Filthy rich.

MRS. BENSON

Now Doc, here it is. Here's the hundred you give us.
(reaches into bulging cloth bag
Sally carries, which we saw in
Scene 1, and pulls out hundred
dollar bill, which she hands to
Dr. Hawk)

Here's payment for what you did for Sally.

(pulls out a sheaf of bills held together with a rubber band and hands them to Dr. Hawk)

And here's a little gift we want to make to your clinic. We want you to use the money for the poor girls like Sally who come to you with nowhere else to turn.

(Mrs. Benson pulls out a wad of bills that could choke a good sized Arkansas mule and hands them to Dr. Hawk.)

DR. HAWK

(totally surprised)

Thank you. I'm deeply touched. I don't know what to say.

PIRSCHKE

(He has been watching with increasing frustration, fury and rage. He mutters under his breath)

His will be done.

(Pirschke deftly reaches into Scooby's pocket, pulls out Scooby's pistol.)

SCOOBY

Hey! Keep your paw out of my pocket, you pervert. What you doin'?

Scooby reaches to grab back his gun, but before he can, Pirschke takes aim at Dr. Hawk, squeezes off a shot. Dr. Hawk is hit by the bullet and falls. Mrs. Benson hears the shot, reaches for the cloth bag Sally is carrying, pulls out her gun, and empties six shots into Pirschke

and Scooby. Scooby falls back dead over the coffin. Pirschke sinks to the ground gravely wounded. Anne Hawk has heard the shots and runs out of the clinic to find Dr. Hawk lying on the ground.

ANNE HAWK

Philip, Philip.

(horrified, she embraces her fallen husband, then raises one hand, which is covered with blood. She emits the terrible keening wail of a wife who has just discovered that she has become a widow.)

BLACKOUT.

SCENE.

Two weeks later. Anne Hawk is in the clinic, dressed in black. Packing boxes and crates are spread throughout the room. Rolling suitcases are nearby. Dr. Singh is seated near her.

ANNE HAWK

I'm glad you're buying this place. I don't know who else would want it.

DR. SINGH

For me, it's perfect.

ANNE HAWK

You're going to move your medical office?

DR. SINGH

Oh, no. My wife and I are opening an Indian restaurant here.

ANNE HAWK

What will you call it?

DR. SINGH

The Maharaja Mahesh Vegetarian Omaha East.

ANNE HAWK

You have quite a bit of space. Do so many people in Omaha want vegetarian Indian cooking?

DR. SINGH

We'll turn two of the rooms into a meditation center for Swami Arundhati.

ANNE HAWK

Will he finally be busy full time?

DR. SINGH

If not, he can always use the garage in back to repair transmissions.

ANNE HAWK

(looks at her watch)

Where can Philip be? He said he would be back by now.

DR. SINGH

As long as I've known him he's always been on time.

(Sound of a car pulling up. Dr. Hawk enters. He looks relaxed, energetic and optimistic, a man about to leave his former life and unhappiness behind him forever. He wears a loud sport shirt, open at the neck, and colorful plaid Bermuda shorts, very Miami Beach. His

left arm is in a cast, held up by a cloth sling.)

DR. SINGH

Philip, how are you feeling?

DR. HAWK

Some pain still. The bullet shattered my humerus. Orthopedic surgeon had to put in a rod. He says I should be out of the cast in another month. Incision is clean. No infection or drainage, thank goodness. Surgeon took out the stitches yesterday.

ANNE HAWK

Did you see what's his face?

DR. HAWK

I did.

DR. SINGH

Which one was that, Scooby?

DR. HAWK

Scooby's dead. They buried him in the coffin he dragged over here. Pirschke's in the spinal cord injury unit of the VA Hospital. He'll be there for the rest of his life. One of Mrs. Benson's bullets went right through his cervical spine, transected the spinal cord at C3.

DR. SINGH

He's quadriplegic, on a respirator, no doubt.

DR. HAWK

Exactly.

ANNE HAWK

Why in heaven's name did you want to see him?

DR. HAWK

I told him that he had fought a good fight, that he was a worthy adversary, always right back at me.

ANNE HAWK

You're kidding. What did he say?

DR. HAWK

He didn't say anything. He's in a special bed for quadriplegics. His hands and feet are wrapped with foam to prevent bedsores. They had just done a tracheostomy to connect the respirator permanently. He'll never be able to breathe on his own. His kidneys must be OK because the bag beside the bed was full of urine, though it was a bit bloody.

ANNE HAWK

I hope he liked hearing he was a worthy adversary. That's not exactly what I would have told him.

DR. HAWK

I can't say what he thought. When I finished praising him, he was making strange gurgling noises and the bed began to shake. One of the nurses came in, thought his endotracheal tube might be obstructed. She ran a catheter down the tube that caused him an awful coughing fit. That was when I knew it was time to say goodbye.

DR. SINGH

(looking around)

You're saying goodbye to Omaha too.

DR. HAWK

Next job, Veterans Hospital, Miami. Staff gynecologist four days a week.

ANNE HAWK

A stop in Orlando for our honeymoon. We didn't have one, you know.

DR. SINGH

Walt Disney World. Sea World.

ANNE HAWK

My cousin in Miami tells me to stick to Ripley's Believe It or Not Museum on International Drive. It's the coolest place in town. There are some wonderful restaurants on the same block.

DR. SINGH

Are you making progress with the Florida medical license?

DR. HAWK

Guess what. The Veterans Hospital will accept a medical license from any US state.

DR. SINGH

Florida's gain is Nebraska's loss.

DR. HAWK

It's not as bad for Nebraska as you think, Rajneesh. Most big hospitals are doing late term abortions. Usually one or two docs in the obstetrics department specialize in the procedure. It's rare, maybe one a month, if that many. Since the same hospital delivers thousands of babies a year, the abortions don't get people stirred up. With the new Democratic President and Democratic Congress, demand for late term abortion is increasing. In fact, the University Hospital in Miami wants me to teach the procedure to gynecology residents. The only requirement is a Florida medical license.

DR. SINGH

I hope you won't need Vishnu's help to get one.

DR. HAWK

Not at all. I discovered that my biggest problem, the old substance abuse thing, is no problem at all. You see, I reported my trouble to the Nebraska State Board of Healing Arts voluntarily. In the Florida medical license regulations, there is a clause that says if the applicant

has reported a substance abuse problem voluntarily to his state medical board and has been free of the problem for ten years, the Florida Medical Board will disregard the substance abuse problem.

ANNE HAWK

Philip, did you return the big wad of money for the clinic to Sally and her mother?

DR. HAWK

I called Sally. She cried, wished us Godspeed and told me to keep the money as a housewarming gift.

DR. SINGH

Best of luck to you, Philip. I will miss you.

(Dr. Hawk and Dr. Singh shake hands.
Dr. Singh embraces Anne. Anne and
Dr. Hawk take their rolling bags and
exit. A moment later, Dr. Hawk hurries
back, surprising Dr. Singh. Dr. Hawk
anxiously roots through his desk drawer
and triumphantly holds up a medicine
bottle.)

DR. HAWK

My Viagra.

(He pockets the bottle and
rushes out.)

BLACKOUT.