

Brad Linaweaver

“Moon of Ice,” Brad Linaweaver’s contribution to this volume, was a Nebula finalist story in 1982, and was later expanded into the successful novel of the same name. He has worked almost exclusively in the alternate history subgenre, producing stories such as “Destination: Indies,” an alternate telling of Christopher Columbus’s journey across the Atlantic, and “Unmerited Favor,” which takes a more militant approach to the story of Jesus Christ’s life. He is also the author of the novels Clownface, The Land Beyond Summer, and Sliders: The Novel. Winner of the Prometheus Award in 1989, he lives and works in Los Angeles, California.

MOON OF ICE

If you gaze long into an abyss, the abyss will gaze back into you.
- NIETZSCHE, *Beyond Good and Evil*

To all doubts and questions, the new man of the first German Empire has only one answer: Nevertheless, I will!
-ALFRED ROSENBERG, *The Myth of the Twentieth Century*

I have seen the man of the future; he is cruel; I am frightened by him.
-ADOLF HITLER TO HERMANN RAUSCHNING

ENTRIES FROM THE DIARY

OF DR. JOSEPH GOEBBELS, NEW BERLIN

- Translated into English by HILDA GOEBBELS

APRIL 1965

TODAY I ATTENDED the state funeral for Adolf Hitler. They asked me to give the eulogy. It wouldn't have been so bothersome except that Himmler pulled himself out of his thankful retirement to advise me on all the things I mustn't say. The old fool still believes that we are laying the foundation for a religion. Acquainted as he is with my natural skepticism, he never ceases to worry that I will say something in public not meant for the consumption of the masses. It is a pointless worry on his part; not even early senility should enable him to forget that I am the propaganda expert. Still, I do not question his insistence that he is in rapport with what the masses feel most deeply. I leave such matters to one who is uniquely qualified for the task.

I suppose that I was the last member of the entourage to see Hitler alive. Speer had just left, openly anxious to get back to his work with the Von Braun team. In his declining years he has taken to involving himself full-time with the space program. This question of whether the Americans or we will reach the moon first seems to me a negligible concern. I am convinced by our military experts that the space program that really matters is in terms of orbiting platforms for the purpose of global intimidation. Such a

measure seems entirely justified if we are to give the *Führer* his thousand-year Reich (or something even close).

The *Führer* and I talked of Himmler's plans to make him an SS saint. "How many centuries will it be," he asked in a surprisingly firm voice, "before they forget I was a man of flesh and blood?"

"Can an Aryan be any other?" I responded dryly, and he smiled as he is wont to do at my more jestful moments.

"The spirit of Aryanism is another matter," he said. "The same as destiny or any other workable myth."

"Himmler would ritualize these myths into a new reality," I pointed out.

"Of course," agreed Hitler. "That has always been *his* purpose. You and I are realists. We make use of what is available." He reflected for a moment and then continued: "The war was a cultural one. If you ask the man in the street what I really stood for, he would not come near the truth. Nor should he!"

I smiled. I'm sure he took that as a sign of assent. This duality of Hitler, with its concern for exact hierarchies to replace the old social order-and what is true for the *Volk* is not always what is true for us-seemed to me just another workable myth, often contrary to our stated purposes. I would never admit that to him. In his own way Hitler was quite the bone-headed philosopher.

"*Mein Führer*," I began, entirely a formality in such a situation but I could tell that he was pleased I had used the address, "the Americans love to make fun of your most famous statement about the Reich that will last one thousand years, as though what we have accomplished now is an immutable status quo."

He laughed. "I love those Americans. I really do. They believe their own democratic propaganda . . . so obviously what we tell our people must be what we believe! American credulity is downright refreshing at times, especially after dealing with Russians."

On the subject of Russians Hitler and I did not always agree, so there was no point in continuing that line of dialogue at this late date. Before he died I desperately wished to ask him some questions that had been haunting me. I could see that his condition was deteriorating. This would be my last opportunity.

The conversation rambled on for a bit, and we again amused ourselves over how Franklin Delano Roosevelt had plagiarized National Socialism's Twenty-five Points when he issued his own list of economic rights. How fortunate for us that when FDR borrowed other of our policies, he fell flat on his face. War will always be the most effective method for disposing of surplus production, although infinitely more hazardous in a nuclear age. We never thought that FDR could push America into using our approach for armaments production.

Hitler summed up: "Roosevelt fell under the influence of the madman Churchill; that's what happened!"

"Fortunately our greatest enemy in America was impeached," I said. The last thing we'd needed was a competing empire-builder with the resources of the North American continent. I still fondly recalled the afternoon the American Congress was presented with evidence that FDR was a traitor on the Pearl Harbor question.

"I've never understood why President Dewey didn't follow FDR's lead, *domestically*," Hitler went on. "They remained in the war, after all. My God, the man even released American-Japanese from those concentration camps and insisted on restitution payments! And this during the worst fighting in the Pacific!"

"That was largely the influence of Vice President Taft," I reminded Hitler. His remarkable memory had

suffered these last years.

“Crazy Americans,” he said, shaking his head. “They are the most unpredictable people on earth. They pay for their soft hearts in racial pollution.”

We moved on into small talk, gossiping about various wives, when that old perceptiveness of the *Führer* touched me once again. He could tell that I wasn't speaking my mind. “Joseph, you and I were brothers in Munich,” he said. “I am on my deathbed. Surely you can't be hesitant to ask me *anything* . Speak, man. I would talk in my remaining hours.”

And how he could talk. I remember one dinner party for which an invitation was extended to my two eldest daughters, Helga and Hilda. Hitler entertained us with a brilliant monologue on why he hated modern architecture anywhere but factories. He illustrated many of his points about the dehumanizing aspect of giant cities with references to the film *Metropolis* . Yet despite her great love for the cinema Hilda would not be brought out by his entreaties. Everyone else enjoyed the evening immensely.

On this solemn occasion I asked if he had believed his last speech of encouragement in the final days of the war when it seemed certain that we would be annihilated. Despite his words of stern optimism there was quite literally no way of his knowing that our scientists had at that moment solved the shape-charge problem. Thanks to Otto Hahn and Werner Heisenberg working together, we had developed the atomic bomb first. Different departments had been stupidly fighting over limited supplies of uranium and heavy water. Speer took care of that, and then everything began moving in our direction. After the first plutonium came from a German atomic pile it was a certain principle that we would win.

I still viewed that period as miraculous. If Speer and I had not convinced the army and air force to cease their rivalry for funds, we never would have developed the V-3 in time to deliver those lovely new bombs.

In the small hours of the morning one cannot help but wonder how things might have been different. We'd been granted one advantage when the cross-Channel invasion was delayed in 1943. But 1944 was the real turning point of the war. Hitler hesitated to use the nuclear devices, deeply fearful of the radiation hazards to our side as well as the enemy. If it had not been for the assassination attempt of July 20th, he might not have found the resolve to issue the all-important order: destroy Patton and his Third Army before they become operational, before they invade Europe like a cancer. What a glorious time that was for all of us, as well as my own career. For the Russians there were to be many bombs, and many German deaths among them. It was a small price to stop Marxism cold. Even our concentration camps in the East received a final termination order in the form of the by-now familiar mushroom clouds.

If the damned Allies had agreed to negotiate, all that misery could have been avoided. Killing was dictated by history. Hitler fulfilled Destiny. He never forgave the West for forcing him into a two-front war, when he, the chosen one, was their best protection against the Slavic hordes.

How he'd wanted the British Empire on our side. How he'd punished them for their folly. A remaining V-3 had delivered The Bomb on London, fulfilling a political prophecy of the *Führer* . He had regretted that; but the premier war criminal of our time, Winston Churchill, had left him no alternative. They started unrestricted bombing of civilians; well, we finished it. Besides, it made up for the failure of Operation Sea Lion.

Right doesn't guarantee might. The last years of the war taught us that. How had Hitler found the strength to fill us all with hope when there was no reason for anything but despair? Could he really foretell the future?

“Of course not,” he answered. “I had reached the point where I said we would recover at the last second

with a secret weapon of invincible might . . . *without believing it at all* ! It was pure rhetoric. I had lost hope long ago. The timing on that last speech could not have been better. Fate *was* on our side.”

So at last I knew. Hitler had bluffed us all again. As he had begun, so did he end: the living embodiment of *will* .

I remembered his exaltation at the films of nuclear destruction. He hadn't been that excited, I'm told, since he was convinced of the claim for Von Braun's rockets-and it took a film for that, as well.

At each report of radiation dangers, he had the more feverishly buried himself in the *Führerbunker* , despite assurances of every expert that Berlin was safe from fallout. Never in my life have I known a man more concerned for his health, more worried about the least bit of a sore throat after a grueling harangue of a speech. And the absurd lengths he went to for his diet, limited even by vegetarian standards. Yet his precautions had brought him to this date, to see himself master of all Europe. Who was in a position to criticize *him* ?

He had a way of making me feel like a giant. “I should have listened to you so much earlier,” he now told me, “when you called for Totalization of War on the homefront. I was too soft on Germany's womanhood. Why didn't I listen to you?” Once he complimented a subordinate, he was prone to continue. “It was an inspiration, the way you pushed that morale-boosting joke: ‘If you think the war is bad, wait until you see the peace, should we lose.’ ” He kept on, remembering to include my handling of the foreign press during *Kristalnacht* , and finally concluding with his favorite of all my propaganda symbols: “Your idea to use the same railway carriage from the shameful surrender of 1918, to receive France's surrender in 1940, was the greatest pleasure of my life.” His pleasure was contagious.

He propped himself up slightly in bed, a gleam of joy in his eyes. He looked like a little boy again. “I'll tell you something about my thousand years. Himmler invests it with the mysticism you'd expect. Ever notice how Jews, Muslims, Christians, and our very own pagans have a predilection for millennia? The number works a magic spell on them.”

“Pundits in America observe that also. They say the number is merely good psychology, and point to the longevity of the ancient empires of China, Rome, and Egypt for similar numerical records. They say that Germany will never hold out that long.”

“It won't,” said Hitler, matter-of-factly.

“What do you mean?” I asked, suddenly not sure of the direction he was moving. I suspected it had something to do with the cultural theories, but of his grandest dreams for the future Hitler had always been reticent . . . even with me.

“It will take at least that long,” he said, “for the New Culture to take root on earth. For the New Europe to be what I have foreseen.”

“If Von Braun has his way, we'll be long gone from earth by then! At least he seems to plan passages for many Germans on his spaceships.”

“Germans!” spat out Hitler. “What care I for Germans or Von Braun's space armada? Let the technical side of Europe spread out its power in any direction it chooses. Speer will be *their* god. He is the best of that collection. But let the other side determine the values, man. The values, the spiritual essence. Let them move through the galaxy for all I care, so long as they look homeward to me for the guiding cultural principles. And Europe will be the eternal monument to that vision. I speak of a Reich lasting a thousand years? It will take that long to finish the job, to build something that will then last for the rest of eternity.”

The old fire was returning. His voice was its old, strong hypnotic self. His body quivered with the glory of his personal vision, externalized for the whole of mankind to touch, to worship . . . or to fear. I bowed my head in the presence of the greatest man in history.

He fell back for a minute, exhausted, lost in the phantasms behind his occluded eyes. Looking at the weary remains of this once-human dynamo, I was sympathetic, almost sentimental. I said: "Remember when we first met through our anti-Semitic activities? It was an immediate bond between us."

He chuckled. "Oh, for the early days of the Party again. At the beginning you thought me too bourgeois."

He was dying in front of me, but his mind was as alert as ever. "Few people understand why we singled out the Jew, even with all the Nazi literature available," I continued.

He took a deep breath. "I was going to turn all of Europe into a canvas on which I'd paint the future of humanity. The Jew would have been my severest and most obstinate critic." The *Führer* always had a gift for the apt metaphor. "Your propaganda helped keep the populace inflamed. That anger was only fuel for the task at hand."

We had discussed on previous occasions the fundamental nature of the Judeo-Christian ethic, and how the Christian was a spiritual Semite (as any pope would observe). The Jew had made an easy scapegoat. There was such a fine old tradition behind it. But once the Jew was for all practical purposes removed from Europe, there remained the vast mass of Christians, many Germans among them. Hitler had promised strong measures in confidential statements to high officials of the SS. Martin Bormann had been the most ardent advocate of the *Kirchenkampf*, the campaign against the churches. In the ensuing years of peace and the nuclear stalemate with the United States little had come of it. I brought up the subject again.

"It will take generations," he answered. "The Jew is only the first step. And please remember that Christianity will by no means be the last obstacle, either. Our ultimate enemy is an idea dominant in the United States in theory, if not in practice. Their love of the individual is more dangerous to us than even mystical egalitarianism. In the end the decadent idea of complete freedom will be more difficult to handle than all the religions and other imperial governments put together." He lapsed back into silence, but only for a moment. "We are the last bastion of true Western civilization. America is always a few steps from anarchy. They would sacrifice the state to the individual! But Soviet communism—despite an ideology—was little better. Its state was all muscles and no brain. It forbade them to get the optimum use out of their best people. Ah, only in the German Empire, and especially here in New Berlin, do we see the ideal at work. The state uses most individuals as the sheep they were meant to be. More important is that the superior individual is allowed to use the state."

"Like most of the *Gauleiters*?" I asked, again in a puckish mood.

He laughed in a loud and healthy voice. "Good God," he said. "Nothing's perfect . . . except the SS, and the work you did in Berlin."

I did not have the heart to tell him that I thought he had been proved soundly mistaken on one of his predictions for the United States. With the nuclear stalemate and the end of the war—America having used its atomic bombs in the Orient, and riveting the world's attention in the same fashion as we—the isolationist forces in that country had had a resurgence. In a few years they had moved the country back to the foreign policy it held before the Spanish-American War. Hitler had predicted grim consequences for that country's economy. The reverse unoblingly came true. This was in part because the new isolationists didn't believe in economic isolation by any means; they freed American corporations to protect their own interests.

The latest reports I had seen demonstrated that the American Republic was thriving, even as our economy was badly suffering from numerous entanglements that go hand-in-gauntlet with an imperial foreign policy. We had quite simply overextended ourselves. New Berlin, after all, was modeled on the old Rome . . . and like the Roman Empire we were having trouble financing the operation and keeping the population amused. There are times I miss our old slogan: Gold or Blood?

I'm as dedicated a National Socialist as ever, but I must admit that America does not have our problems. What it has is a lot of goods, a willingness to do business in gold (our stockpile of which increased markedly after the war), and paper guarantees that we would not interfere in their hemisphere. We keep our part of the bargain fairly well: all adults understand that Latin America is fair game.

There is, of course, no censorship for the upper strata of Nazi Germany. The friends and families of high Reich officialdom can openly read or see anything they want. I still have trouble with this modification in our policy. At least I keep cherished memories of 1933, when I personally gave the order to burn the books at the Franz Joseph Platz outside Berlin University. I have never enjoyed myself more than in the period when I perfected an acid rhetoric as editor of *Der Angriff*, which more often than not inspired the destruction of writings inimical to our point of view. It was a pleasure putting troublesome editors in the camps. Those days seem far away now. Many enjoy *All Quiet on the Western Front* !

Hitler would not have minded a hearty exchange on the subject of censorship. He likes any topic that relates at some point to the arts. He would have certainly preferred such a discussion to arguing about capitalist policy in America. I didn't pursue either. I am satisfied to leave to these diary pages my conclusion that running an empire is a lot more expensive than having a fat republic, sitting back, and collecting profits. The British used to understand. If they hadn't forgotten, we probably wouldn't be where we are today.

Ironically for someone reputed to be a political and military genius, Hitler has spent the entirety of his retirement (he holds his title for life) ignoring both subjects and concentrating on his cultural theories. He became a correspondent with the woman who chairs the anthropology department of New Berlin University (no hearth and home for her) and behaved almost as though he were jealous of her job. Lucky for her that he didn't stage a *putsch*. Besides, she was a fully accredited Nazi.

I think that Eva took it quite well. *Kinder, Küche, Kirche!*

As I stood in Hitler's sickroom, watching the man to whom I had devoted my life waning before me, I felt an odd ambivalence. On one hand I was sorry to see him go. On the other hand I felt a kind of I'm not sure how to put it-release. It was as though, when he died, I would at last begin my true retirement. The other years of supposed resignation from public life did not count. Truly Adolf Hitler had been at the very center of my life.

I wish that he had not made his parting comment. "*Herr Dr. Goebbels,*" he said, and the returned formality made me uncharacteristically adopt a military posture, "I want to remind you of one thing. Shortly before his death Goering agreed with me that our greatest coup was the secrecy with which we handled the Jewish policy. The atom-bombing of camps was a bonus. Despite the passage of time I believe this secret should be preserved. In fact, there may come a day when no official in the German government knows of it. Only the hierarchy of the SS will preserve the knowledge in their initiatory rites."

"Allied propaganda continues to speak of it, *mein Führer*. Various Jewish organizations in America and elsewhere continue to mourn the lost millions every year. At least Stalin receives his share of blame."

"Propaganda is one thing. Proof is another. You know this as well as anyone. I'd like to hear you agree that the program should remain a secret. As for Stalin's death camps, talk that up forever."

I was taken aback that he would even speak of it. "Without question, I agree!" I remembered how we had exploited in our propaganda the Russian massacre of the Poles at Katyn. The evidence was solid . . . and there is such a thing as world opinion. I could see his point. At this late date there was little advantage in admitting to our vigorous policy for the Jews. The world situation had changed since the war.

Nevertheless his request seemed peculiar and unnecessary. In the light of later events I cannot help but wonder whether or not Hitler really was psychic. Could he have known of the personal disaster that would soon engulf members of my family?

* * *

THE CONVERSATION kept running through my mind on the way to the funeral. As we traveled under Speer's Arch of Triumph, I marveled for-I suppose-the hundredth time at his architectural genius. Germany would be paying for this city for the next fifty years, but it was worth it. Besides, we had to do something with all that Russian gold! What is gold, in the end, but a down payment on the future, be it the greatest city in the world or buying products from America?

The procession moved at a snail's pace, and considering the distance we had to cover I felt it might be the middle of the night by the time we made it to the Great Hall. The day lasted long enough, as it turned out.

The streets were thronged with sobbing people, Hitler's beloved *Volk*. The swastika flew from every window; I thought to conceive a poetic image to describe the thousands of fluttering black shapes, but when all I could think of was a myriad of spiders, I gave up. *Leave poetry to those more qualified*, I thought-*copywriting is never an ode*.

Finally we were moving down the great avenue between Goering's Palace and the Soldier's Hall. The endless vertical lines of these towering structures always remind me of Speer's ice-cathedral lighting effects at Nuremberg. Nothing he has done in concrete has ever matched what he did with pure light.

God, what a lot of white marble! The glare hurts my eyes sometimes. When I think of how we denuded Italy of its marble to accomplish all this, I recognize the Duce's one invaluable contribution to the Greater Reich.

Everywhere you turn in New Berlin there are statues of heroes and horses; horses and heroes. And flags, flags, flags. Sometimes I become just a little bored with our glorious Third Reich. Perhaps success must lead to excess. But it keeps beer and cheese on the table, as my wife, Magda, would say. I am an author of it. I helped to build this gigantic edifice with my ideas as surely as the workmen did with the sweat of their brows and the stones from the quarries. And Hitler, dear, sweet Hitler-he ate up little inferior countries and spat out the mortar of this metropolis. Never has a man been more the father of a city.

The automobiles had to drive slowly to keep pace with the horses in the lead, pulling the funeral caisson of the *Führer*. I was thankful when we reached our destination.

It took a while to seat the officialdom. As I was in the lead group, and seated first, I had to wait interminably while everyone else ponderously filed in. The hall holds thousands upon thousands. Speer saw to that. I had to sit still and watch what seemed like the whole German nation enter and take seats.

Many spoke ahead of me. After all, when I was finished with the official eulogy, there would be nothing left but to take him down and pop him in the vault. When Norway's grand old man, Quisling, rose to say a few words, I was delighted that he only took a minute. Really amazing. He praised Hitler as the destroyer of the Versailles penalties, and that was pretty much it.

The only moment of interest came when a representative of the sovereign nation of Burgundy stood in full SS regalia. A hush fell over the audience. Most Germans have never felt overly secure at the thought of Burgundy, a nation given exclusively to the SS . . . and outside the jurisdiction of German law. It was one of the wartime promises Hitler made that he kept to the letter. The country was carved out of France (which I'm sure never noticed-all they ever cared about was Paris, anyway).

The SS man spoke of blood and iron. He reminded us that the war had not ended all that long ago, although many Germans would like to forget that and merely wallow in the proceeds from the adventure. This feudalist was also the only speaker at the funeral to raise the old specter of the International Zionist Conspiracy, which I thought was a justifiable piece of nostalgia, considering the moment. As he droned on in a somewhat monotonous voice, I thought about Hitler's comment regarding the secret death camps. Of course, there are still Jews in the world, and Jewish organizations in America worth reckoning with, and a group trying to reestablish Israel-so far unsuccessfully-and understandably no group of people would rather see us destroyed. What I think is important to remember is that the Jew is hardly the only enemy of the Nazi.

By the time he was finished the crowd was seething in that old, pleasing, violent way . . . and I noticed that many of them restrained themselves with good Prussian discipline from cheering and applauding the speaker (which would not be entirely proper at a funeral). If they had broken protocol, however, I would have gladly joined in!

It seemed that an eternity had passed by the time I stood at the microphone to make my oration. I was surrounded by television cameras. How things have changed since the relatively simple days of radio. I'm sure that many of my ardent supporters were disappointed that I did not give a more rousing speech. I was the greatest orator of them all, even better than Hitler (if I may say so). My radio speeches are universally acclaimed as having been the instrumental factor in upholding German morale. I was more than just the Minister of Propaganda-I was the soul of National Socialism.

Toward the end of the war I made the greatest speech of my career, and this in the face of total disaster. I had no more believed at the time that we could win than Hitler had when he made his final boast about a mysterious secret weapon still later in the darkest of dark hours. My friends were astonished that after my emotional speech I could sit back and dispassionately evaluate the effect I had had upon my listeners. Such is the nature of a good propagandist.

Alas for the nostalgia buffs, there was no fire or fury in my words that day. I was economical of phrase. I listed his most noteworthy achievements; I made an objective statement about his sure and certain place in history; I told the mourners that they were privileged to have lived in the time of this man. That sort of thing, you know.

I finished on a quiet note. I said: "This man was a symbol. He was an inspiration. He took up a sword against the enemies of a noble idea that had almost vanished. He fought small and mean notions of man's destiny. Adolf Hitler restored the beliefs of our strong ancestors. Adolf Hitler restored the sanctity of our"-and I used the loaded term-"race." (I could feel the stirring in the crowd. It works every time.) "Adolf Hitler is gone. But what he accomplished will never die . . .if"-I gave them my best stare-"you work to make sure that his world is your world."

I was finished. The last echoes of my voice died to be replaced by the strains of *Die Walküre* from the Berlin Philharmonic.

On the way to the vault I found myself thinking about numerous things, none of them having to do directly with Hitler. I thought of Speer and the space program; I philosophized that Jewry is an *idea*; I reveled in the undying pleasure that England had become the Reich's "Ireland"; I briefly ran an inventory of my

mistress, my children, my wife; I wondered what it would be like to live in America, with a color television and bomb shelter in every home.

The coffin was deposited in the vault, behind a bulletproof sheet of glass. His waxen-skinned image would remain there indefinitely, preserved for the future. I went home, then blissfully to bed and sleep.

OCTOBER 1965

Last night I dreamed that I was eighteen years old again. I remembered a Jewish teacher I had at the time, a pleasant and competent fellow. What I remember best about him was his sardonic sense of humor.

Funny how after all this time I still think about Jews. I have written that they were the inventor of the lie. I used that device to powerful effect in my propaganda. (Hitler claimed to have made this historic “discovery.”)

My so-called retirement keeps me busier than ever. The number of books on which I’m currently engaged is monumental. I shudder to think of all the unfinished works I shall leave behind at my death. The publisher called the other day to tell me that the Goebbels war memoirs are going into their ninth printing. That is certainly gratifying. They sell quite well all over the world.

My daughter Hilda, besides being a competent chemist, is serious about becoming a writer as well, and if her letters are any sign I have no doubt but that she will succeed on her own merits. Alas, her political views become more dangerous all the time, and I fear she would be in grave trouble by now were it not for her prominent name. The German Freedom League, of which she is a conspicuous member, is composed of sons and daughters of approved families and so enjoys its immunity from prosecution. At least they are not rabble-rousers (not that I would mind if they had the proper Nazi ideas). They are purely intellectual critics and as such are accommodated. We are embracing a risk.

It was not too many years after our victory before the charter was passed allowing for freedom of thought for the elite of our citizenry. I laugh to think how I initially opposed the move, and remember all too well Hitler’s surprising indifference to the measure. After the war he was a tired man, willing to leave administration to party functionaries, and the extension of ideology to the SS in Burgundy. He became frankly indolent in his new lifestyle.

Anyway, it doesn’t matter now. “Freedom of thought” for the properly indoctrinated Aryan appears harmless enough. So long as he benefits from the privilege of real personal power at a fairly early age, the zealous desire for reform is quickly sublimated into the necessities of intelligent and disciplined management.

Friday’s *New Berlin Post* arrived with my letter in answer to a question frequently raised by the new crop of young Nazis, not the least of whom is my own son Helmuth, currently under apprenticeship in Burgundy. I love him dearly, but what a bother he is sometimes. What a family! Those six kids were more trouble than the French underground. But I digress.

These youngsters are always asking why we didn’t launch an A-bomb attack on New York City when we had the bomb before America did. If only they would read more! The explanation is self-evident to anyone acquainted with the facts. Today’s youth has grown up surrounded by a phalanx of missiles tipped with H-bomb calling cards. They have no notion of how close we were to defeat. The Allies knew about Peenemünde. The V-3 was only finished in the nick of time. As for the rest, the physicists were not able to provide us with a limitless supply of A-bombs. There wasn’t even time to test one. We used all but one against the invading armies; the last we threw at London, praying that some sympathetic Valkyrie

would help guide it on its course so it would come somewhere near the target. The result was more than we anticipated.

The letter explained all this and also went into considerable detail on the technical reasons preventing a strike on New York. Admittedly we had developed a long range bomber for the purpose. It was ready within a month of our turning back the invasion. But there were no more A-bombs to be deployed at that moment. Our intelligence reported that America's Manhattan project was about to bear its fiery fruit. That's when the negotiations began. We much preferred the Americans teaching Japan (loyal ally though it had been) a lesson rather than making an atomic deposit on our shores. Besides, the war between us had truly reached a stalemate, our U-boats against their aircraft carriers; and each side's bombers against the other's. One plan was to deliver an atomic rocket from a submarine against America . . . but by then both sides were suing for peace. I still believe we made the best policy under the circumstances.

What would the young critics prefer? Nuclear annihilation? They may not appreciate that we live in an age of detente, but such are the cruel realities. We Nazis never intended to subjugate decadent America anyway. Ours was a European vision. Dominating the world is fine, but actually trying to administer the entire planet would be clearly self-defeating. Nobody could be that crazy . . . except for a Bolshevik, perhaps.

Facts have a tendency to show through the haze of even the best propaganda, no matter how effectively the myth would screen out unpleas-antries. So it is that my daughter, the idealist of the German Freedom League, is not critical of our Russian policy. Why should it be otherwise? She worries about freedom for citizens, and gives the idea of freedom for a serf no more thought than the actual Russian serf gives it. Which is to say none at all. Here is one of the few areas where I heartily agree with the late Alfred Rosenberg.

* * *

ONCE AGAIN MY *Führer* calls me. And I was so certain all that was over. They want me at the official opening of the Hitler Memoriam at the museum. His paintings will be there, along with his architectural sketches. And his stuffed Shepherd dogs. And his complete collection of Busby Berkeley movies from America. Ah well, I will have to go.

There is just enough time before departing for me to shower, have some tea, and listen to Beethoven's Pastorale.

DECEMBER 1965

I loathe Christmas. It is not that I mind being with my family, but the rest of it is so commercialized, or else syrupy with contemptible Christian sentiments. Now if they could restore the vigor of the original Roman holiday. Perhaps I should speak to Himmler. . . . What am I saying? Never Himmler! Too bad Rosenberg isn't around.

Helga, my eldest daughter, visited us for a week. She is a geneticist. Currently she is working on a paper to show the limitations of our eugenic policies, and to demonstrate the possibilities opened up by genetic engineering. All this is over my head. DNA, RNA, microbiology, and *literal* supermen in the end? When Hitler said to let the technical side move in any direction it chooses, he was not saying much. There seems no way to stop them.

There is an old man in the neighborhood who belongs to the Nordic cult, body and soul. He and I spoke last week, all the time watching youngsters ice skating under a startlingly blue afternoon sky. There was almost a fairy-tale-like quality about the scene, as this old fellow told me in no uncertain terms that this

science business is so much fertilizer. “The only great scientist I’ve ever seen was Horbiger,” he announced proudly. “And he was more than a scientist. He was of the true blood, and held the true historical vision.”

I didn’t have the heart to tell him that the way in which Horbiger was more than a scientist was in his mysticism. Horbiger was useful to us in his day, and one of Himmler’s prophets. But the man’s cosmogony was utterly discredited by our scientists. Speer’s technical Germany has a low tolerance for hoaxes.

This old man would hear none of it at any rate. He still believed every sacred pronouncement. “When I look up at the moon,” he told me in a confidential whisper, “I know what I am seeing.” *Green cheese*, I thought to myself, but I was aware of what was coming next.

“You still believe that the moon is made of ice?” I asked him.

“It is the truth,” he announced gravely, suddenly affronted as though my tone had given me away. “Horbiger proved it,” he said with finality.

Horbiger said it, I thought to myself. So that’s all you need for “proof.” I left the eccentric to his idle speculations on the meaning of the universe. I had to get back to one of my books. It had been languishing in the typewriter too long.

Frau Goebbels was in a sufficiently charitable mood come Christmas to invite the entire neighborhood over. I felt that I was about to live through another endless procession of representatives of the German nation—all the pomp of a funeral without any fun. The old eccentric was invited as well. I was just as happy that he did not come. Arguing about Horbiger is not my favorite pastime.

Speer and his wife dropped by. Mostly he wanted to talk about Von Braun and the moon project. Since we had put up the first satellite, the Americans were working around the clock to beat us to Luna and restore their international prestige. As far as I was concerned, propaganda would play the deciding role on world opinion (as always). This was an area in which America had always struck me as deficient.

I listened politely to Speer’s worries, and finally pointed out that the United States wouldn’t be in the position it currently held if so many of our rocketry people hadn’t defected at the end of the war. “It seems to be a race between their German scientists and ours,” I said with a hearty chuckle.

Speer did not seem amused. He replied with surprising coldness that Germany would be better off if we hadn’t lost so many of our Jewish geniuses when Hitler came to power. I swallowed hard on my bourbon, and perhaps Speer saw consternation on my face, because he was immediately trying to smooth things over with me. Speer is no idealist, but one hell of an expert in his field. I look upon him as I would a well-kept piece of machinery. I hope no harm ever comes to it.

Speer always seems to have up-to-date information on all sorts of interesting subjects. He had just learned that an investigation of many years had been dropped with regard to a missing German geneticist, Richard Dietrich. Since this famous scientist had vanished only a few years after the conclusion of the war, the authorities supposed he had either defected to the Americans in secret or had been kidnapped. After two decades of fruitless inquiry, a department decides to cut off funds for the search. I’m sure that a few detectives had made a lucrative career out of the job. Too bad for them.

Magda and I spent part of the holidays returning to my birthplace on the Rhineland. I like to see the old homestead from time to time. I’m happy it hasn’t been turned into a damned shrine as happened with Hitler’s childhood home. Looking at reminders of the past in a dry, flaky snowfall-brittle, yet seemingly endless, the same as time itself—I couldn’t help but wonder what the future holds. Space travel. Genetic

engineering. Ah, I am an old man. I feel it in my bones.

MAY 1966

I have been invited to Burgundy. My son Helmuth has passed his initiation and is now a fully accredited student of the SS, on his way to joining the inner circle. Naturally he is in a celebratory mood and wants his father to witness the victory. I am proud, of course, but just a little wary of what his future holds in store. I remain the convinced ideologue, and critical of the bourgeois frame of mind. (Our revolution was against that sort of sentimentality.) But I don't mind some bourgeois comforts. My son will live a hard and austere life that I hope will not prove too much for him.

No sooner had I been sent the invitation than I also received a telegram from my daughter Hilda, whom I had not seen since Yuletide, when she stopped by for Christmas dinner. Somehow she had learned of the invitation from Helmuth and insisted that I must see her before leaving on the trip. She told me that I was in danger! The message was clouded in mystery because she did not even offer a hint of a reason. Nevertheless I agreed to meet her at the proposed rendezvous because it was conveniently on the way. And I am always worried that Hilda will find herself in jail for going too far with her unrealistic views.

The same evening I was cleaning out a desk when I came across a letter Hilda had written when she was seventeen years old—from the summer of 1952. I had the urge to read it again:

Dear Father:

I appreciate your last letter and its frankness, although I don't understand the point you made. Why have you not been able to think of anything to say to me for nearly a year? I know that you and Mother have found me to be your most difficult daughter. An example comes to mind: Helga, Holly, and Hedda never gave Mother trouble about their clothes. I didn't object to the dresses she put on me, but could I help it if they were torn when I played? It simply seemed to me that more casual attire suited climbing trees and hiking and playing soccer.

From the earliest age I can remember, I've always thought boys had more fun than girls because they get to play all those wonderful games. I didn't want to be left out! Why did that make Mother so upset that she cried?

Ever since Heide died in that automobile accident, Mother has become very protective of her daughters. Only Helmuth escaped that sort of overwhelming protectiveness, and that's just because he's a boy.

At first I wasn't sure that I wanted to be sent to this private school, but a few weeks here convinced me that you had made the right decision. The mountains give you room to stretch your legs. The horses they let us have are magnificent. Wolfgang is mine and he is absolutely the fastest. I'm sure of it.

Soon I will be ready to take my examinations for the university. Your concern that I do well runs through your entire letter. Now we have something to talk about again. At this point it is too late to worry. I'm sure I'll do fine. I've been studying chemistry every chance I get and love it.

My only complaint is that the library is much too small. My favorite book is the unexpurgated Nietzsche, where he talks about the things the Party forbade as subjects of public discussion. At first I was surprised to discover how pro-Jewish he was, not to mention pro-freedom. The more I read of him, the more I understand his point of view.

One lucky development was a box of new books that had been confiscated from unauthorized

people (what you would call the wrong type for intellectual endeavor, Father). Suddenly I had in front of me an orgy of exciting reading material. I especially enjoyed the Kafka . . . but I'm not sure why.

Some other students here want to form a club. They are in correspondence with others of our peer group who are allowed to read the old forbidden books. We have not decided on what we would call the organization. We are playing with the idea of the German Reading League. Other titles may occur to us later.

Another reason I like it better in the country than in the city is that there are not as many rules out here. Oh, the school has its curfews and other nonsense but they don't really pay much attention and we can do as we please most of the time. Only one of the teachers doesn't like me and she called me a little reprobate. I suspect she might make trouble for me except that everyone knows that you're my Father. That has always helped.

I was becoming interested in a boy named Franz but it came to the dean's attention and she told me that he was not from a good enough family for me to pursue the friendship. I ignored the advice but within a month Franz had left without saying a word. I know that you are against the old class boundaries, Father, but believe me when I say that they are still around. The people must not know that Hitler socialized them.

Now that I think about it, there are more rules out here than I first realized. Why must there be so many rules?

Why can't I just be me without causing so much trouble?

Well, I don't want to end this letter with a question. I hope you and Mother are happy. You should probably take that vacation you keep telling everyone will be any year now! I want to get those postcards from Hong Kong!

Love,
Hilda

I sat at the desk and thought about my daughter. I had to admit that she was my favorite and always had been. Where had I gone wrong with her? How had her healthy radicalism become channeled in such an unproductive direction? There was more to it than just the books. It was something in her. I was looking forward to seeing her again.

On a Wednesday morning I boarded a luxury train; the power of the rocket engines is deliberately held down so that passengers may enjoy the scenery instead of merely rushing through. I would be meeting Hilda in a small French hamlet directly in line with my final destination. I took along a manuscript-work, always work-this diary, and, for relaxation, a mystery novel by an Englishman. What is it about the British that makes this genre uniquely their own?

Speaking of books, I noticed a rotund gentleman-very much the Goering type-reading a copy of my prewar novel, *Michael*. I congratulated him on his excellent taste and he recognized me immediately. As I was autographing his copy, he asked if I were doing any new novels. I explained that I found plays and movie scripts a more comfortable form with which to work and suggested he see my filmed sequel to *The Wanderer* the next time he was in New Berlin. The director was no less than Leni Riefenstahl! I've never had any trouble living with the fact that my name is a household word. It makes of me a toastmaster much in demand. My most requested lecture topic remains the film, *Kolberg*.

I contemplated the numerous ways in which my wife's social calendar would keep her occupied in my

absence. Since the children have grown up and left home, she seems more active than before! It's amazing the number of things she can find to do in a day. I would have liked to attend the Richard Strauss concert with her but duty calls.

The food on the train was quite good. The wine was only adequate, however. I had high hopes that that French hamlet would live up to its reputation for prime vintages.

The porter on the train looked Jewish to me. Probably is. There are people of Jewish ancestry living in Europe. It doesn't matter, so long as the practicing Jew is forever removed. God, we made the blood flow to cleanse this soil. Of course, I'm speaking figuratively. But what could one do with Jews, Gypsies, Partisans, homosexuals, the feeble-minded, race-mixers, and all the rest?

We reached the station at dusk and my daughter was waiting for me. She is such a lovely child, except that she is no child any longer! I can see why she has so many admirers. Her political activities (if they even deserve such a label) have not made her any the less attractive. She has the classic features. On her thirtieth birthday I once again brought up the subject of why she had never married. Oh, I am aware that she has many lovers. Not as many as her father, but still a respectable number. The question is: Can that be enough? That she may never reproduce vexes me greatly. As always her deep-throated laugh mocks my concern.

A few seconds after I disembarked she was pulling at my sleeve and rushing me to a cab. I had never seen her looking so agitated. We virtually ran through the lobby of my hotel, and I felt as though I were under some type of house arrest as she hustled me up to my room and bolted the door behind us.

"Father," she said almost breathlessly. "I have terrible news." I found the melodramatic derring-do a trifle annoying. After all, I had put those days firmly behind me (or so I thought). Leave intrigues to the young, I always say . . . suddenly remembering in that case my daughter still qualifies for numerous adventures. If only she would leave me out of it!

"My darling," I said, "I am tired from my trip and in want of a bath. Surely your message can wait until after I am changed? Over dinner we may . . ."

"No," she announced sternly. "It can't wait."

"Very well," I said, recognizing that my ploy had failed miserably and surrendering to her—shall we say—blitzkrieg. "Tell me," I said as I sat in a chair.

"You must not go to Burgundy," she began, and then paused as though anticipating an outburst from me. I am a master at that game. I told her to get on with it.

"Father, you may think me mad when I am finished, but I must tell you!" *A chip off the old block*, I thought. I nodded assent, if only to get it over with.

She was pacing as she spoke: "First of all, the German Freedom League has learned something that could have the worst consequences for the future of our country." I did not attempt to mask my expression of disgust but she plowed on regardless. "Think whatever you will of the League, but facts are facts. And we have uncovered the most diabolical secret."

"Which is?" I prompted her, expecting something anticlimactic.

"I am sure that you have not the slightest inkling of this, but during the war millions of Jews were put to death in horrible ways. What we thought were concentration camps suffering from typhus infections and lacking supplies, were in reality death camps at which was carried out a systematic program of *genocide*

.” I could not believe she’d used Raphael Lemkin’s smear word!

The stunned expression on my face was no act. My daughter interpreted it as befitted her love for me-she took it, if you will, at face value.

“I can see that you’re shocked,” she said. “Even though you staged those public demonstrations against the Jews, I realize that was to force the Nazi Party’s emigration policy through. I detest that policy, but it wasn’t murder.”

“Dear,” I said, trying to keep my voice even, “what you are telling me is nothing more than thoroughly discredited Allied propaganda. We shot Jewish Partisans, but there’s no evidence of systematic-”

“There is now,” she said, and I believe that my jaw dropped at the revelation. She went on, oblivious to my horror: “The records that were kept for those camps are all forgeries. A separate set of records, detailing the genocide, has been uncovered by the League.”

What a damnably stupid German thing to do. To keep records of *everything*. I knew it had to be true. It was as if my daughter disappeared from the room at that second. I could still see her, but only in a fuzzy way. A far more solid form stood between us, the image of the man who had been my life. It was as if the ghost of Adolf Hitler stood before me then, in our common distress, in our common deed. I could hear his voice and remember my promise to him. Oh God, it was my own daughter who was to provide the test. I really had not the least desire to see her eliminated. I liked her.

What I said next was not entirely in keeping with my feigned ignorance, and if she had been less upset she might have noticed the implications of my remark as I asked her: “Hilda, how many people have you told?”

She answered without hesitation. “Only members of the League and now you.” I heaved a sigh of relief.

“Don’t you think it would be a good idea to keep this extreme theory to yourself?” I asked.

“It’s no theory. It’s a fact. And I have no intention of advertising this. It would make me a target for those lunatics in the SS.”

So that was the Burgundy connection! I still didn’t see why I should be in any danger during my trip to Burgundy. Even if I were innocent of the truth-which every SS official knew to be absurd, since I was an architect of our policy-my sheer prominence in the Nazi Party would keep me safe from harm in Burgundy.

I asked my daughter what this fancy of hers had to do with my impending trip. “Only everything,” she answered.

“Are you afraid that they will suspect I’ve learned of this so-called secret, which is nothing more than patent nonsense to begin with?”

She surprised me by answering, “No.” There was an executioner’s silence.

“What then?” I asked.

“It is not this crime of the past that endangers you,” came the sound of her voice in portentous tones. “It is a crime of the future.”

“You should have been the poet of the family.”

“If you go to Burgundy, you risk your life. They are planning a new crime against humanity that will make World War II and the concentration camps, on both the Allied and Axis sides, seem like nothing but a prelude. And you will be one of the first victims!”

Never have I felt more acutely the pain of a father for his offspring. I could not help but conclude that my youngest daughter’s mind had only a tenuous connection to reality. Her political activities must be to blame! On the other hand I regarded Hilda with a genuine affection. She seemed concerned for my welfare in a manner I supposed would not apply to a stranger. The decadent creed she had embraced had not led to any disaffection from her father.

I thought back to the grand old days of intrigue within the Party and the period in the war years when I referred most often to that wise advice of Machiavelli: “Cruelties should be committed all at once, as in that way each separate one is less felt, and gives less offense.” We had come perilously close to *Götterdämmerung* then, but in the end our policy proved sound. I was beyond all that. The state was secure, Europe was secure . . . and the only conceivable threat to my safety would come from foreign sources. Yet here was Hilda, her face a mixture of concern and anger and—perhaps love? She was telling me to beware the Burgundians. She had as much as accused them of plotting against the Reich itself!

I remember how they had invited me to one of the conferences to decide the formation of the new nation of Burgundy. Those were hectic times in the postwar period. As *Gauleiter* of Berlin (one of the *Führer*’s few appointments of that title of which I always approved) I had been primarily concerned with Speer’s work to build New Berlin. The film industry was flowering under my personal supervision, I was busy writing my memoirs, and I was involved heavily with diplomatic projects. I hadn’t really given Burgundy much thought. I knew that it had been a country in medieval times, and had read a little about the Duchy of Burgundy. I remembered that the historical country had traded in grain, wines, and finished wool.

They announced at the conference that the historical Burgundy would be restored, encompassing the area to the south of Champagne, east of Bourbonais, and north and west of Savoy. There was some debate on whether or not to restore the original place-names or else borrow from Wagner to create a series of new ones. In the end the latter camp won out. The capital was named Tarnhelm, after the magic helmet in the *Nibelungenlied* that could change the wearer into a variety of shapes.

Hitler did not officially single out any of the departments that made up the SS: Waffen, Death’s Head, or General SS. We in his entourage realized, however, that the gift was to those members of the inner circle who had been most intimately involved with both the ideological and practical side of the extermination program. The true believers! Given the Reich’s policy of secrecy, there was no need to blatantly advertise the reasons for the gift. Himmler, as *Reichsführer* of the SS and Hitler’s adviser on racial matters, was naturally instrumental in this transfer of power to the new nation. His rival, Rosenberg, met his death.

The officials who would oversee the creation of Burgundy were carefully selected. Their mission was to make certain that Burgundy became a unique nation in all of Europe, devoted to certain chivalric values of the past, and the formation of pure Aryan specimens. It was nothing more than the logical extension of our propaganda, the secularizing of the myths and legends with which we had kept the people fed during the dark days of lost hope. The final result was a picturesque fairy-tale kingdom that made its money almost entirely out of the tourist trade. America loves to boast of its amusement parks but it has nothing to match this.

Hilda interrupted my reverie by asking me in a voice bordering on sternness: “Well, what are you going to do?”

“Unless you make sense, I will continue on my journey to Tarnhelm to see Helmuth.” He was living at the

headquarters of the SS leaders, the territory that was closed off to outsiders, even during the tourist season. Yet it was by no means unusual for occasional visitors from New Berlin to be invited there. My daughter's melodramatics had not yet given cause to worry. All I could think of was how I'd like to get my hands around the throat of whoever put these idiotic notions in her pretty head.

She was visibly distressed, but in control. She tossed her hair back and said, "I am not sure that the proof I have to offer will be sufficient to convince you."

"Aren't you getting ahead of yourself?" I asked. "You haven't even made a concrete accusation yet! Drop this pose. Tell me what you think constitutes the danger."

"They think you're a traitor," she said.

"What?" I was astounded to hear such words from anyone for any reason. "To Germany?"

"No," she answered. "To the true Nazi ideal."

I laughed. "That's the craziest thing I've ever heard. I'm one of the key-"

"You don't understand," she interrupted. "I'm talking about the religion."

"Oh, Hilda, is that all? You and your group have stumbled upon some threatening comments from the Thule Society, I take it?"

Now it was her turn to be surprised. She sat upon the bed. "Yes," she answered. "But then you know . . .?"

"The specifics? Not at all. They change their game every few months. Who has the time to keep up? Let me tell you something. The leaders of the SS have always had ties to an occult group called the Thule Society, but there is nothing surprising about that. It is a purely academic exercise in playing with the occult, the same as the British equivalent-The Golden Dawn. I'm sure you're aware that many prominent Englishmen belonged to that club!

"These people are always harmless eccentrics. Our movement made use of the type without stepping on pet beliefs. It's the same as dealing with any religious person whom you want to be on your side. If you receive cooperation, it won't be through insulting his spiritual beliefs."

"What about the messages we intercepted?" she went on. "The threatening tone, the almost deranged-"

"It's how they entertain themselves!" I insisted. "Listen, you're familiar with Horbiger, aren't you?" She nodded. "Burgundians believe that stuff. Even after the launching of Von Braun's satellite, which in no way disturbed the eternal ice, as that old fool predicted! His followers don't care about facts. Hell, they still believe the moon in our sky is the fourth moon this planet has had, that it is made of ice like the other three, that all of the cosmos is an eternal struggle of fire and ice. Even our *Führer* toyed with those ideas in the old days. The Burgundians no more want to give up their sacred ideas merely because modern science has exploded them than fundamentalist Baptists in America want to listen to Darwin."

"I know," she said. "You are acting as though they aren't dangerous."

"They're not."

"Soon Helmuth will be accepted into the inner circle."

"Why not? He's been working for that ever since he was a teenager."

“But the inner circle,” she repeated with added emphasis.

“So he’ll be a Hitler Youth for the rest of his life. He’ll never grow up.”

“You don’t understand.”

“I’m tired of this conversation,” I told her bluntly. “Do you remember several years ago when your brother went on that pilgrimage to Lower Saxony to one of Himmler’s shrines? You were terribly upset but you didn’t have a shred of reason why he shouldn’t have gone. You had nightmares. Your mother and I wondered if it was because as a little girl you were frightened by Wagner.”

“Now I have reasons.”

“Mysterious threatening messages! The Thule Society! It should be taken with a grain of salt. I saw Adolf Hitler once listen to a harangue from an especially unrealistic believer in the Nordic cult, bow solemnly when the man was finished, enter his private office-where I accompanied him-and break out in laughter that would wake the dead. He didn’t want to offend the fellow. The man was a good Nazi, at least.”

My daughter was fishing around in her purse as I told her these things. She passed me a piece of paper when I was finished. I unfolded it and read:

JOSEPH GOEBBELS MUST ARRIVE ON SCHEDULE FOR THE RITUAL
HE WILL NEVER TELL ANYONE

“What is this?” I asked her. I was becoming angry.

“A member of the Freedom League intercepted a message from Burgundy to someone in New Berlin. It was coded, but we were able to break it.”

“To whom was the message addressed?”

“To Heinrich Himmler.”

Suddenly I felt very, very cold. I had never trusted *der treue Heinrich*. Admittedly I didn’t trust anything that came from the German Freedom League, with a contradiction built into its very title. Nevertheless something in me was clawing at the pit of my stomach. Something told me that maybe, just maybe, there was danger after all. Crazy as Himmler had been during the war years, he had become much worse in peacetime. At least he was competent regarding his own industrial empire.

“How do I know that this note is genuine?” I asked.

“You don’t,” she answered. “I had to take a great risk in bringing it to you, if that helps you to believe.”

“The Burgundians would have stopped you?”

“If they knew about it. I was referring to the German Freedom League. They hate you as much as the rest of them.”

My face flushed with anger and I jumped to my feet so abruptly that it put an insupportable strain on my clubfoot. I had to grab for a nearby lamp to keep from stumbling. “Why,” I virtually hissed, “do you belong to that despicable bunch of bums and poseurs?”

She stood also, picking up her purse as she did so. “Father, I am going. You may do with this information as you wish. I will offer one last suggestion. Why don’t you take another comfortable passenger train back to New Berlin, and call Tarnhelm to say that you will be one day late? See what

their reaction is? You didn't manage to attend my college graduation and I'm none the worse for it. Would it matter so much to my brother were you to help him celebrate after the ceremony?"

She turned to go. "Wait," I said. "I'm sorry I spoke so harshly. You mean well."

"We've been through this before," she answered, her back still to me.

"I don't see any harm in doing what you suggest. If it will make you happy, I'll delay the trip."

"Thank you," she said, and walked out. I watched the closed door for several minutes, not moving, not really thinking.

A half-hour later I was back at the railroad station, boarding an even slower passenger train back to New Berlin. I love this sort of travel. The rocket engines were held down to their minimum output. The straining hum they made only accentuated the fact of their great power held in check. Trains are the most human form of mass transportation.

With my state of mind in such turmoil I could not do any serious work. I decided to relax and resumed reading the English mystery novel. I had narrowed it down to three suspects, all members of the aristocracy, naturally-all highly offensive people. The servant I had ruled out as much too obvious. As is typical of the form, a few key sentences give up the solution if you know what they are. I had just passed over what I took to be such a phrase, and returned to it. Looking up from my book to contemplate the puzzle, I noticed that the woman sitting across from me was also reading a book, a French title that seemed vaguely familiar: *Le Théosophisme, histoire d'une pseudo-religion*, by René Guenon.

I looked back to my book when I suddenly noticed that the train was slowing down. There was no reason for it, as we were far from our next stop. Looking out the window, I saw nothing but wooded landscape under a starry night sky. A tall man up the aisle was addressing the porter. His rather lengthy monologue boiled down to a simple question: Why was there the delay? The poor official was shaking his head with bewilderment and indicated that he would move forward to inquire. That's when I noticed the gas.

It was yellow. It was seeping in from the air-conditioning system. Like everyone else I started to get up in hopes of finding a means of egress. Already I was coughing. As I turned to the window, with the idea of releasing the emergency lock, I slipped back down into the cushions as consciousness fled. The last thing I remember was seriously regret-ting that I had not found the time to sample a glass of wine from that hamlet.

I must have dreamed. I was standing alone in the middle of a great lake, frozen over in the dead of winter. I was not dressed for the weather but had on only my Party uniform. I looked down at the icy expanse at my feet and noticed that my boots were freshly shined, the luster already becoming covered by flakes of snow. I heard the sound of hoofbeats echoing hollowly on the ice, and looked up to see a small army on horseback approaching. I recognized them immediately. They were the Teutonic Knights. The dark armor, the stern faces, the great, black horses, the bright lances and swords and shields. They could be nothing else.

They did not appear to be friendly. I started walking away from them. The sound of their approach was a thunder pounding at my brain. I cursed my lameness, cursed my inability to fly, suddenly found myself suspended in the air, and then I had fallen on the ice, skinning my knees. Struggling to turn over, I heard a bloodcurdling yell and they were all around me. There was a whooshing of blades in the still, icy air. I was screaming. Then I was trying to reason with them.

"I helped Germany win the war . . . I believe in the Aryan race . . . I helped destroy the Jews. . . ." But I

knew it was to no avail. They were killing me. The swords plunged in deeply.

I AWAKENED aboard a small jet flying in the early dawn. For a moment I thought I was tied to my seat. When I glanced to see what kind of cords had my wrists bound to the arms of the chair, I saw that I was mistaken. The feeling of constriction I attributed to the effects of the gas. Painfully I lifted a hand . . . then with even more anguish I raised my head, noticing that the compartment was empty except for me. The door to the cockpit was closed.

The most difficult task that confronted me was to turn my head to the left so that I could have a better view of our location. A dozen tiny needles pricked at the muscles in my neck but I succeeded. I was placed near the wing and could see a good portion of the countryside unfolding like a map beneath it. We were over a rundown railroad station. One last bit of track snaked on beyond it for about half a mile—we seemed to be flying almost parallel to it—when it suddenly stopped, blocked off by a tremendous oak tree, the size of which was noticeable even from the great height.

I knew where we were immediately. We had just flown over the eastern border of Burgundy.

I leaned back in my seat, attempting to have my muscles relax, but met with little success. They stubbornly insisted on having their way despite my *will* that they be otherwise. I was terribly thirsty. I assumed that if I stood I would have a serious dizzy spell, so I called out instead: “Steward!” No sooner was the word out of my mouth than a young, blonde man in a spotless white jacket came up behind me holding a small, fancy menu.

“What would you like?” he asked.

“An explanation.”

“I’m afraid that is not on this menu. I’m sure you will find what you seek when we reach our destination. In the meantime would you care to dine?”

“No,” I said, relapsing back into the depths of my seat, terribly tired again.

“Some coffee?” the steward asked, persisting.

I assented to this. It was very good coffee and soon I was feeling better. Looking out the window again, I observed that we were over a lake. There was a long-ship plying the clear, blue water—its dragon’s head glared at the horizon. My son had written me about the Viking Club when he first took up residence in Burgundy. This had to be one of their outings.

Thirty minutes and two cups of coffee later the intercom announced that we would be landing at Tarnhelm. From the air the view was excellent: several monasteries—now devoted to SS training as *Ordensbürgen*—were situated near the village that housed the Russian serfs. Beyond that was still another lake and then came the imposing castle in which I knew I would find my son.

There was a narrow landing strip within the castle grounds and the pilot was every bit the professional. We hadn’t been down longer than five minutes when who should enter the plane but my son Helmuth! I looked at him. He had blonde hair and blue eyes. The only trouble was that my son did not have blonde hair and blue eyes. Of course, I knew that the hair could be dyed, but somehow it looked quite authentic. As for the eyes, I could think of no explanation but for contact lenses. Helmuth had also lost weight and never appeared more muscular or healthy than he did now.

Here I was, surrounded by mystery—angry, bewildered, unsettled. And yet the first thing that escaped my lips was: “Helmuth, what’s happened to you?” He guessed my meaning.

“This is real blonde hair,” he said proudly. “And the eye color is real as well. I regret that I am not of the true genotype, any more than you are. I was given a hormone treatment to change the color of my hair. A special radiation treatment took care of the eyes.”

As he was saying this, he was helping me to my feet, as I was still groggy. “Why?” I asked him. He would say no more about it.

The sun hurt my eyes as we exited down the ramp from the plane. Two tall, young men-also blonde-haired and blue-eyed-joined my son and helped to usher me inside the castle. They were dressed in Bavarian hunting gear, with large knives strapped on at their waists. Their clothes had the smell of freshest leather.

We had entered from the courtyard of the inner bailey. The hall we traversed was covered in plush red carpets and was illuminated by torches burning in the walls; this cast a weird lighting effect over the numerous suits of armor standing there. I could not help but think of the medieval castles Speer drew for his children every Christmas.

It was a long trek before we reached a stone staircase that we immediately began to ascend. I was not completely recovered from the effects of the gas and wished that we could pause. My clubfoot was giving me considerable difficulty. I did not want to show any weakness to these men, and I knew that my sturdy son was right behind me. I took those steps without slowing down the pace.

We finally came out on a floor that was awash in light from fluorescent tubes. A closed-circuit television console dominated the center of the room, with pictures of all the other floors of the castle, from the keep to the highest tower. There was also a portrait of Meister Eckhart.

“Wait here,” Helmuth announced, and before I could make any protestations he and the other two had gone the way we had come, with the door locked behind them. I considered the large window on the right side of the room with a comfortable couch beside it. I gratefully sat there and surveyed my position from the new vantage point. Below me was another courtyard. In one corner was what could be nothing else but an unused funeral pyre. Its height was staggering. There was no body upon it. Along the wall that ran from the pyre to the other end of the compound were letters inscribed of a size easy to read even from such distance. It was a familiar quotation: ANY DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATION, MISSION, AND STRUCTURE OF THE SS CANNOT BE UNDERSTOOD UNLESS ONE TRIES TO CONCEIVE IT INWARDLY WITH ONE’S BLOOD AND HEART. IT CANNOT BE EXPLAINED WHY WE CONTAIN SO MUCH STRENGTH THOUGH WE NUMBER SO FEW. Underneath the quote in equally large letters was the name of its author: HEINRICH HIMMLER.

“A statement that you know well,” came a low voice behind me and I turned to face Kurt Kaufmann, the most important man in Burgundy. I had met him a few times socially in New Berlin.

Smiling in as engaging a manner as I could (under the circumstances), I said, “Kurt,” stressing that I was not addressing him formally, “I have no idea why you have seemingly kidnapped me, but there will be hell to pay!”

He bowed. “What you fail to appreciate, Dr. Goebbels, is that I will receive that payment.”

I studied his face-the bushy blonde hair and beard, and of course the bright blue eyes. The monocle he wore over one of them seemed quite superfluous. I knew that he had 20/20 vision.

“I have no idea what you are talking about.”

“You lack ideas, it is true,” he answered. “Of facts you do not lack. We knew your daughter contacted

you . . .”

Even at the time this dialogue struck me as remarkably melodramatic. Nevertheless it was happening *to me* . At the mention of my daughter I failed to mask my feelings. Kaufmann had to notice the expression of consternation on my face. The whole affair was turning into a hideous game that I feared I was losing.

I stood. “My daughter’s associations with a subversive political group are well known.” There was no reason to mince words with him. “I was attempting to dissuade her from a suicidal course. Why would you be spying on that?”

The ploy failed miserably. “We bugged the room,” he said softly.

“You dare to spy on *me* ? Have you any idea of the danger?”

“Yes,” he said. “You don’t.”

I made to comment but he raised a hand to silence me. “Do not continue. Soon you will have more answers than you desire. Now I suggest you follow me.”

The room had many doors. We left through one at the opposite end from my original point of entry. I was walking down yet another hall. This one, however, was lit by electricity, and at the end of it we entered an elevator. The contrast between modern technology and Burgundian simplicity was becoming more jarring all the time. Like most Germans who had visited the country, I only knew it firsthand as a tourist. The reports I had once received on their training operations were not as detailed as I would have liked but certainly gave no hint of dire conspiracy against the Fatherland. The thought was too fantastic to credit. Even now I hoped for a denouement more in keeping with the known facts. Could the entire thing be an elaborate practical joke? Who would run the risk of such a folly?

The elevator doors opened and we were looking out onto the battlements of the castle. I followed Kaufmann onto the walk, and noticed that the view was utterly magnificent. To the left I saw the imported Russian serfs working in the fields; to the right I saw young Burgundians doing calisthenics in the warm morning air. I was used to observing many blonde heads in the SS. Yet here there was nothing but that suddenly predictable homogeneity.

We looked down at the young bodies. Beyond them other young men were dressed in chain-mail shirts and helmets. They were having at one another with the most intensive swordplay I had ever witnessed.

“Isn’t that a bit dangerous?” I asked Kaufmann, gesturing at the fencing.

“What do you mean?” he said, as one of the men ran his sword through the chest of another. The blood spurted out in a fountain as the body slumped to the ground. I was aghast, and Kaufmann’s voice seemed to be far away as I dimly heard it say: “Did you notice how the loser did not scream? That is what I call discipline.” It occurred to me that the man might have simply died too quickly to express his opinion.

Kaufmann seemed wryly amused by my wan expression. “Dr. Goebbels, do you remember the *Kirchenkampf* ?”

I recovered my composure. “The campaign against the churches? What about it?”

“Martin Bormann was disappointed in its failure,” he said.

“No more than I. The war years allowed little time for less important matters. You know that the economic policies we established after the war helped to undermine the strength of the churches. They

have never been weaker. European cinema constantly makes fun of them.”

“They still exist,” said Kaufmann evenly. “The gods of the Germanic tribes are not fools-their indignation is as great as ever.” I stared at this man with amazement as he continued to preach: “The gods remember how Roman missionaries built early Christian churches on the sacred sites, believing that the common people would still climb the same hills they always had to worship . . . only now they would pay homage to a false god!”

“The masses are not easily cured of the addiction,” I pointed out.

“You compare religion to a drug?”

“It was one of the few wise statements of Marx,” I said, with a deliberate edge in my voice. Kaufmann’s face quickly darkened into a scowl. “Not all religions are the same,” I concluded in an ameliorative tone. I had no desire to argue with him about the two faiths of Burgundy, the remnants of Rosenberg’s Gnostics, and the majority of Himmler’s Pagans.

“You say that, but it is only words. Let me tell you a story about yourself, Herr Goebbels.” I did not consider the sudden formality a good sign, not the way he said it. He continued: “You always prided yourself on being the true radical of the Nazi Party. You hammered that home whenever you could. Nobody hated the bourgeoisie more than Goebbels. Nobody was more ardent about burning books than Goebbels. As *Reichspropagandaminister* you brilliantly staged the demonstrations against the Jews.”

Now the man was making sense. I volunteered another item to his admirable list: “I overheard some young men humming the Horst Wes-sel song down there during calisthenics.” Manufacturing a martyr to give the party its anthem was still one of my favorites. My influence was still on the Germanic world, including Burgundy.

Kaufmann had been surveying rows of men doing pushups . . . as well as the removal of the corpse from the tourney field. Now his stone face turned in my direction, breaking into an unpleasant smile. I preferred his frown. “You misunderstand the direction of my comments, Herr Doktor. I will clarify it. I was told a story about you once. I was only a simple soldier at the time but the story made an indelible impression. You were at a party, showing off for your friends by making four brief political speeches; the first presented the case for the restoration of the monarchy; the second sung the praises of the Weimar Republic; the third proved how communism could be successfully adopted by the German Reich; the fourth was in favor of National Socialism, at last. How relieved they were. How tempted they had been to agree with each of the other three speeches.”

I could not believe what I was hearing. How could this dull oaf be in charge of anything but a petty bureaucratic department? Had he no sense of humor, no irony? “I was demonstrating the power of propaganda,” I told him.

“In what do you believe?” he asked.

“This is preposterous,” I nearly shouted. “Are you impugning-”

“It is not necessary to answer,” he said consolingly. “I’m aware that you have only believed in one thing in your life: a man, not an idea. With Hitler dead, what is left for you to believe?”

“This is insane,” I replied, not liking the shrill sound of my own voice in my ears. “When I was made Reich Director for Total War, I demonstrated my genius for understanding and operating the mechanisms of a dictatorship. I was crucial to the war effort then.”

He completely ignored my point and continued on his solitary course: "Hitler was more than a man. He was a living part of an idea. He did not always recognize his own importance. He was chosen by the Vrill Society, the sacred order of the Luminous Lodge, the purest, finest product of the believers in the Thule. Adolf Hitler was the medium. The Society used him accordingly. He was the focal point. Behind him were powerful magicians. The great work has only begun. Soon it will be time for the second step. Only the true man deserves *Lebensraum*."

Kaufmann was working himself up, I could see that. He stood close to me and said, "You are a political animal, Goebbels. You believe that politics is an end in itself. The truth is that governments are nothing in the face of destiny. We are near the cleansing of the world. You should be proud. Your own son will play an important part. The finest jest is that modern scientific method will also have a role."

He turned to go. I had no recourse but to follow him. There was nowhere else to go but straight down to sudden death.

We reentered the elevator. "Have I been brought here to witness an honor bestowed on my son?" I asked.

"In part. You will also have a role. You saw the telegram!"

That was enough. There could no longer be any doubt. I was trapped amidst madmen. Having made up my mind what to do, I feigned an attack of pain in my clubfoot and crouched at the same time. When Kaufmann made to offer aid, I struck wildly, almost blindly. I tried to knee him in the groin but failing that brought my fist down on the back of his neck. The fool went out like a light, falling hard on his face. I congratulated myself on such prowess for an old man.

No sooner had the body slumped to the floor than the elevator came to a stop and the doors opened automatically. I jumped out into the hall. Standing there was a naked seven-foot giant who reached down and lifted me into the air. He was laughing. His voice sounded like a tuba.

"They call me Thor," he said. I struggled. He held.

Then I heard the voice of my son: "That, Father, is what we call a true Aryan."

I was carried like so much baggage down the hall, hearing voices distantly talking about Kaufmann. I was tossed on to the hard floor of a brightly lit room and the door was slammed behind me. A muscle had been pulled in my back and I lay there, gasping in pain like a fish out of water. I could see that I was in some sort of laboratory. In a corner was a humming machine the purpose of which I could not guess. A young woman was standing over me, wearing a white lab smock. I could not help but notice two things about her straightaway: she was a brunette, and she was holding a sword at my throat.

AS I LOOK BACK, the entire affair has an air of unreality about it. Events were becoming more fantastic in direct proportion to the speed with which they occurred. It had all the logic of a dream.

As I lay upon the floor, under that sword held by such an unlikely guardian (I had always supported military service for women, but when encountering the real thing I found it a bit difficult to take seriously), I began to take an inventory of my pains. The backache was subsiding so long as I did not move. I was becoming aware, however, that the hand with which I had dispatched Kaufmann felt like a hot balloon of agony, expanding without an upper limit. My vision was blurred and I shook my head trying to clear it. I dimly heard voices in the background, and then a particularly resonant one was near at hand, speaking with complete authority: "Oh, don't be ridiculous. Help him up."

The woman put down the sword, and was suddenly assisted by a young Japanese girl gingerly lifting me

off the floor and propelling me in the direction of a nearby chair. Still I did not see the author of that powerful voice.

Then I was sitting down and the females were moving away. He was standing there, his hands on his hips, looking at me with the sort of analytical probing I always respect. At first I didn't recognize him, but had instead the eerie feeling that I was in a movie. The face made me think of something too ridiculous to credit . . . and then I knew who it really was: Professor Dietrich, the missing geneticist. I examined him more closely. My first impression had been more correct than I thought. The man hardly resembled the photographs of his youth. His hair had turned white and he had let it grow. Seeing him in person, I could not help but notice how angular were his features . . . how much like the face of the late actor Rudolf Klein-Rogge in the role of Dr. Mabuse, Fritz Lang's character that had become the symbol of a super-scientific, scheming Germany to the rest of the world. Although the later films were banned for the average German, the American-made series (Mabuse's second life, you could say) had become so popular throughout the world that Reich officials considered it a mark of distinction to own copies of all twenty. We still preferred the original series, where Mabuse was obviously Jewish.

Since the death of Klein-Rogge other actors had taken over the part, but always the producers looked for that same startling visage. This man Dietrich was meant for the role. Thea von Harbou would approve.

"What are you staring at?" he asked. I told him. He laughed. "You chose the right profession," he continued. "You have a cinematic imagination. I am flattered by the comparison."

"What is happening?" I asked.

"Much. Not all of it is necessary. This show they are putting on for your benefit is rather pointless, for instance."

I was becoming comfortable in the chair, and my back had momentarily ceased to annoy me. I hoped that I would not have to move for still another guided tour of something I wasn't sure that I wanted to see. To my relief Dietrich pulled up a chair, sat down across from me and started talking:

"I expect that Kaufmann meant to introduce you to Thor when the elevator doors opened and then enjoy your startled expression as you were escorted down the hall to my laboratory. They didn't think you'd improvise on the set! Well, they're only amateurs and you are the expert when it comes to good, silly melodrama."

"Thor . . ." I began lamely, but could think of nothing to say.

"He's not overly intelligent. I'm impressed that he finished the scene with such dispatch. I apologize for my assistant. She had been watching the entire thing on one of our monitors and must have come to the conclusion that you are a dangerous fellow. In person, I mean. We all know what you are capable of in an official capacity."

As we talked, I took in my surroundings. The size of the laboratory was tremendous. It was like being in a scientific warehouse. Although without technical training myself, I noticed that there seemed to be a lack of systematic arrangement: materials were jumbled together in a downright sloppy fashion, even if there were a good reason for the close proximity of totally different apparatuses. Nevertheless I realized that I was out of my depth and I might be having nothing more than an aesthetic response.

"They closed the file on you," I said. "I thought you had been kidnapped by American agents."

"That was the cover story."

“Then you were kidnapped by the Burgundians?”

“A reasonable deduction, but wrong. I volunteered.”

“For what?”

“Dr. Goebbels, I said that you have a cinematic imagination. That is good. It will help you to appreciate this.” He snapped his fingers and the Japanese girl was by his side so swiftly that I didn’t see where she had come from. She was holding a small plastic box. He opened it and showed me the interior: two cylinders, each with a tiny suction cup on the end. He took one out. “Examine this,” he said, passing it to me.

“One of your inventions?” I asked, noticing that it was as light as if it were made out of tissue paper. But I could tell that whatever the material was, it was sturdy.

“A colleague came up with that,” he told me. “He’s dead now, unfortunately. Politics.” He retrieved the cylinder, did something with the untipped end, then stood. “It won’t hurt,” he said. “If you will cooperate, I promise a cinematic experience unlike anything you’ve ever sampled.”

There was no point in resisting. They had me. Whatever their purpose, I was in no position to oppose it. Nor is there any denying that my curiosity was aroused by this seeming toy.

Dietrich leaned forward, saying, “Allow me to attach this to your head and you will enjoy a unique production of the Burgundian Propaganda Ministry, if you will—the story of my life.”

Without further ado he pressed the small suction cup against the center of my forehead. There was a tingling sensation and then my sight began to dim! I knew that my eyes were still open and I had not lost consciousness. For a moment I feared that I was going blind.

There were new images. I began to dream while wide awake, except that they were not my dreams. They were someone else’s!

I was someone else!

I was Dietrich . . . as a child.

I was buttoning my collar on a cold day in February before going to school. The face that looked back from the mirror held a cherubic-almost beautiful-aspect. I was happy to be who I was.

As I skipped down cobbled streets, it suddenly struck me with solemn force that I was a Jew.

My German parents had been strict, orthodox, and humorless. An industrial accident had taken them from me. I was not to be alone for long. An uncle in Spain had sent for me and I went to live there. He had become a gentile (not without difficulty) but was able to take a child from a practicing Jewish family into his household.

It did not take more than a few days at school for the beatings to begin, whereupon they increased with ferocity. There was a bubbling fountain in easy distance of the schoolyard where I went to wash away the blood.

One day I watched the water turn crimson over the rippling reflection of my scarred face. I decided that whatever it was a Jew was supposed to be, I surely didn’t qualify. I had the same color blood as my classmates, after all. Therefore I could not be a real Jew.

I announced this revelation the next day at school and was nearly killed for my trouble. One particularly stupid lad was so distressed by my logic that he expressed his displeasure with a critique made up of a two-by-four. Yet somehow in all this pain and anguish-as I fled for my life-I did not think to condemn the attackers. My conclusion was that surely the Jew must be a monstrous creature indeed to inspire such a display. Cursing the memory of my parents, I felt certain that through some happy fluke I was not really of their flesh and blood.

Amazing as it seems, I became an anti-Semite. I took a Star of David to the playground and in full view of my classmates destroyed it. A picture of a rabbi I also burned. Some were not impressed by this display, but others restrained them from resuming the beatings. For the first time I knew security in that schoolyard. None of them became any friendlier; they did not seem to know how to take it.

Suddenly the pictures of Dietrich's early life disappeared into a swirling darkness. I was confused, disoriented.

Time had passed. Now I was Dietrich as a young man back in Germany, dedicating myself to a life's work in genetic research. I joined the Nazi Party on the eve of its power, not so much out of vanity as out of a pragmatic reading of the *Zeitgeist*. Naturally I used my Spanish gentile pedigree, and entertained my new "friends" with a little-known quotation from the canon of Karl Marx, circa 1844: "Once society has succeeded in abolishing the empirical essence of Judaism-huckstering and its preconditions-the Jew will have become impossible."

The Nazis were developing their eugenic theories at the time. To say the basis of their programs was at best pseudoscientific would still be to compliment it. At best, the only science involved was terminology borrowed from the field of eugenics.

I was doing real research, however, despite the limitations I faced due to Party funding and propaganda requirements. My work involved negative eugenics, the study of how to eliminate defective genes from the gene pool through selective breeding. Assuming an entire society could be turned into a laboratory, defective genes could be eliminated in one generation, although the problem might still crop up from time to time because of recessive genes (easily handled).

The decision to breed something out of the population having been made, the door opened as to what to breed *for*, or positive eugenics. Now, so long as we were restricting ourselves to a question of a particular genetic disease, we could do something. But even then there were problems. What if some invaluable genius had such a genetic disability? Would you throw out the possibility of his having intelligent offspring just because of one risk?

Add to this valid concern the deranged, mystical ideas of the Nazi with regard to genetics, and the complications really set in. They wanted to breed for qualities that in many cases fell outside the province of real genetics-because they fell outside reality in the first place.

During this period in my life I made another discovery. I was no longer a racist. My anti-Semitism vanished as in a vagrant breeze. I had learned that there was no scientific basis for it. The sincere Nazi belief that the Jew was a creature outside of nature was so much rot. As for the cultural/mystical ideas that revolved around the Jew, the more I learned of how the Nazis perceived this, the more convinced I became that Hitler's party was composed of the insane. (An ironic note was that many European Jews were not even Semitic, but that is beside the point. The Nazis had little concern with, say, Arabs. It was the European Jew they were after, for whatever reasons were handy.)

Although I had come full circle on the question of racism, something else had happened to me in the interim. My hatred for one group of humanity had *not* vanished. My view of the common heritage of

Homo sapiens led me to despise all of the human race. The implications of this escaped me at the time, but it was the turning point of my life.

Even at the peak of their popularity the world of genetics was only slightly influenced by Nazi thinking. Scientists are scientists first, ideologues second, if at all. To the extent that most scientists have a philosophy it is a general sort of positive humanism: so it was with my teacher in genetics, a brilliant man-who happened to fit the Aryan stereotype coincidentally-and his collaborator, a Jew who was open about his family background, unlike me.

They were the first to discover the structure of DNA. No, they are not in the history books. By then Hitler had come to power. The Nazis destroyed many of their papers when they were judged enemies of the state-for political improprieties having nothing to do with the research. But I was never found guilty of harboring any traitorous notions. Long before the world heard of it, I continued this work with DNA. Publishing this information was the last thing I wanted to do. I had other ideas. By giving the Nazis gobbledygook to make their idiot policies sound good, I remained unmolested. There would be a place for me in the New Order. I remembered when Einstein said that should his theory of relativity prove untrue, the French would declare him a German, and the Germans call him a Jew. At least I knew my place in advance.

Through the haze of Dietrich's memories I could still think; could reflect on what I was assimilating directly from a pattern taken from another's mind. I was impressed that such a man existed, working in secret for decades on what had only recently riveted the world's attention. Only last year had a news story dealt with microbiologists doing gene splicing. Yet he had done the same sort of experimentation decades earlier.

What had been a trickle suddenly turned into a torrent of concepts and formulae beyond my comprehension. I felt the strain. With quivering fingers I reached for the cylinder and . . .

The images stopped; the words stopped; the kaleidoscope exploding inside my head stopped; the pressure stopped . . .

"You have not finished the program, Dr. Goebbels," said Dietrich. "It was at least another ten minutes before the 'reel change.'" He was holding the other cylinder in his hand, tossing it lightly into the air and catching it as though it were of no importance.

"It's too much," I gasped, "to take all at once. Hold on, I've just remembered something: Thor, in the hallway . . . is it possible?" I thought back over what I had experienced. Dietrich had left simple eugenic breeding programs far behind. His search was for the chemical mysteries of life itself, like some sort of mad alchemist seeking the knowledge of a Frankenstein. "Did you-" I paused, hardly knowing how to phrase it. "Did you create Thor?"

He laughed. "Don't I wish!" he said, almost playfully. "Do you have any idea what you are talking about? To find the genetic formula for human beings would require a language I do not possess."

"A language?"

"You'd have to break the code, be able to read the hieroglyphic wonders of not just one, but millions of genes. It's all there, in the chromosomes, but I haven't been able to find it yet. No one has." He put his face near to mine, grinning, eyes wide and staring. "But I will be the first. Nobody can beat me to it, because only I can do it!"

For a moment I thought I was back in the presence of Hitler. This man was certainly a visionary. Moreover he was dangerous in a fashion beyond any politician.

“Why are you here?” I asked.

“They finance me well. Look at these toys,” he said, pointing at what he told me was an atmosphere chamber. “The work is expensive. Do you know how to invade the hidden territory of life itself? With radiation and poison to break down the structures and begin anew. To build! I can never live long enough, never receive enough sponsorship. It is the work of many lifetimes. If only I had more subtle tools . . .”

Before I lost him to a scientist’s reverie, I changed the subject: “My son’s hair and eyes have changed.”

“That’s nothing but cosmetics,” he said disdainfully.

“The SS wants you to do that?”

“It is considered a mark of distinction. My beautician there”-he pointed at the Japanese girl-“provides this minor and unimportant service.”

Only a few blonde-haired, blue-eyed people were working in the laboratory. I asked why everyone had not undergone the treatment. The reason was because the few I had just seen were authentic members of that genotype. Dietrich was blunt: “We don’t play SS games in here.”

He showed me his workshop, treating the technicians as no more than expensive equipment. I wondered how Speer would react to all this. The place was even larger than I had first thought. I wondered what Holly would make of it all, cramped in her small cubbyhole at the university.

The seemingly endless walk activated my pains again. My host noticed this distress and suggested we sit down again. He had not misplaced the other cylinder. Somehow I was not surprised when he suggested that I sample its contents.

“Did I really share in your memories?” I asked him.

“A carefully edited production, but yes.”

“Is there more of the same in this other one?”

“I hold in my hand images from a different point of view. I believe that you might find these even more interesting.” He put the thing on my palm. “Do you want it?”

“I have a thousand unanswered questions.”

“This will help.”

Shrugging, I placed it to the same point on my forehead and . . . *I did not know who I was* .

In vain I searched for the identity into which I had been plunged. What there was of me seemed to be a disembodied consciousness floating high above the European continent. It was like seeing in all directions at once. The moon above was very large, very near the earth-it was made of ice.

Horbiger’s *Welteislehre!* It was a projection of one of his prophecies, when the moon would fall toward the earth, causing great upheavals in the crust-and working bizarre mutations on the life of the planet.

There was a panorama unfolding like the Worm Ouroboros: ancient epochs and the far future were melded together in an unbreakable circle. The world and civilization I knew were nothing but a passing aberration in the history of the globe.

I saw ancient Atlantis, not the one spoken of by Plato, but from a time when men were not supposed to exist. The first Atlantis, inhabited by great giants who preceded man and taught the human race all its important knowledge: I beheld Prometheus as real.

Then I was shown that the pantheon of Nordic gods also had a basis in this revelation. Fabled Asgard was not a myth, but a legend—a vague memory of the giant cities that once thrived on earth.

Humanity was incredibly older than the best estimates of the scientists. More startling than that was the tapestry flickering in myriad colors to depict a faraway but inevitable future. All of the human race had perished but for a remnant of Aryans. And these last men, these idealized Viking types, were happily preparing for their own extermination—making way for the *Übermenschen* who had nothing in common with them but for superficial appearances. The human race—as I knew it—was not really “human” at all. The Aryan was shown as that type closest to True Man, but when mutations caused by the descending moon brought back the giants, then the Aryan could join his fellows in welcome oblivion. The masters had returned. They would cherish this world, and perform the rites on the way to the next apocalypse, the *Ragnarök* when the cycle would start again—for the moon of ice would have at last smashed into the earth.

These images burned into my brain: gargantuan cities with spires threatening the stars; science utterly replaced by a functional magic that was the central power of these psychokinetic supermen who needed little else; everything vast, endless, bright . . . so bright that it blinded my sight and my mind . . .

With a scream I ripped the device from my perspiring skin. “This is madness!” I said, putting my head in my hands. “It can’t be really true. The SS religion . . . no!”

Dietrich put a comforting hand on my shoulder, much to my surprise. “Of course it is not true,” he said. There must have been tears in my eyes. My expression was a mask of confusion. He went on: “What you have seen is no more true than one of your motion pictures, or a typical release from the Ministry of Propaganda. It is more convincing, I’ll admit. Just as the first cylinder allowed you to peer into the contents of one mind—my own—this other one has given you a composite picture of what a certain group believes; a collaborative effort, you could say.”

“Religious fanatics of the SS,” I muttered.

“They have a colorful prediction there, a hypothetical history, a faith. Of course, it is not as worthwhile as my autobiography.”

“What has one to do with the other?” I asked. “What does your story have to do with theirs?”

Dietrich stood, and put his hands behind his back. He was appearing to be more like Dr. Mabuse all the time. His voice sounded different somehow, as though he was speaking to a very large audience: “They have hired me to perform a genetic task. In this laboratory a virus is being developed that will spare only blonde, blue-eyed men and women. Yes, Dr. Goebbels, the virus would kill you—with your dark hair and brown eyes—and myself, as readily as my Japanese assistant. It means your son would die also, because his current appearance is, after all, only cosmetic. It means most members of the Nazi Party would perish as not being ‘racially’ fit by this standard.

“I am speaking of the most comprehensive genocide program of all time. A large proportion of the populations in Sweden and Denmark and Iceland will survive. Too bad for the SS that virtually all those people think these ideas are purest folly, even evil. You know that much of the world’s folk have rather strict ethical systems built into their quaint little cultures. That sort of thing gave the Nazis a difficult time at first, didn’t it?”

I started to laugh. It was the sort of laughter that is not easy to control. I became hysterical. My concentration was directed at trying to stop the crazy sounds coming out of my mouth and I didn't notice anything else. Suddenly I was surprised to find myself on the floor. Arms were pulling me up and the professor was putting a hypodermic needle in my flesh. As the darkness claimed me, I wondered why there were no accompanying pictures. Didn't this cylinder touching my arm have a story to tell?

It felt as if I had been asleep for days but I came to my wits a few minutes later, according to my watch at least. I was lying on a cot and *he* was standing over me. I knew who he really was: Dr. Mabuse.

"Goebbels, I thought you were made of sterner stuff," came his grim voice.

"You are a lunatic," I told him hoarsely.

"That's unfair. What in my conduct strikes you as unseemly?"

"You said you had been anti-Semitic. Then you told me that you had rejected racism. Now you are part of a plot that takes racism farther than anything I've ever heard of!"

"You've been out of touch."

"The whole mess is a shambles of contradictions!"

"You hurt me deeply," was his retort, but the voice sounded inhuman. "I expected more from a thoughtful Nazi. My sponsors want a project carried out for racist reasons. I do not believe in their theories, religion, or pride. This pure blonde race they worship has never existed, in fact; it was simply a climatological adaptation in Northern Europe, never as widely distributed as Nazis think. It was a trait in a larger population group. I don't believe in SS myths. My involvement in the project is for other reasons."

"There cannot be any other reason."

"You forget what you have learned. Remember that I came to hate all of the human race. This does not mean that I gave up my reason or started engaging in wishful thinking. If the Burgundians enable me to wipe out most of humanity, with themselves exempt from the holocaust, I'll go along with it. The piper calls the tune."

"You couldn't carry on your work. You'd be dead!"

Sometimes one has the certainty of having been led down a primrose path, with the gate being locked against any hope of retreat, only *after* the graveyard sound of the latch snapping shut. Knowledge has a habit of coming too late. Such was the emotion that held me in an iron grip as soon as those words escaped my lips. Dr. Mabuse could never be a fool. It was impossible. Even as he spoke, I could anticipate the words: "Oh, *I am* sorry. I forgot to tell you that a few people outside the fortunate category may be saved. I can make them immune. In this sense, I'll be a Noah, collecting specimens for a specialist's ark. Anyone I consider worthy I will claim."

"Why do you hate the human race?" I asked him.

"To think that a Nazi has the gall to ask that question. Why do you hate the Jews?" he shot back. I could think of nothing to say. He continued: "There's little difference between us, morally. I know what you advocated during World War II, Goebbels. The difference between us is that I've set my sights higher. So what if Nazi Germany is annihilated? By what right can a Nazi criticize me?"

I remained insistent on one theme: "Why do it at all? You won't have destroyed all mankind. Burgundy

will remain.”

“Then Burgundy and I will play a game with each other,” he said.

“What in God’s name are you talking about?”

Another voice entered the conversation: “In Odin’s name. . . .” It was Kaufmann, walking over to join us. I was pleased that he had a bandage on his head, and his face was drained of color. I wanted to strike him again! He made me think of Himmler at his worst.

It is my firm belief that the mind never ceases working, not even in the deepest slumber. While I had been unconscious the solution to the last part of the puzzle had presented itself. I didn’t need to ask Mabuse about this part.

It is certainly understandable that expedient agreement is possible between two parties having nothing in common but one equally desired objective. There was the pact between Germany and Russia early in the war, for instance. The current case was different in one important respect: I doubted this particular alliance could last long enough to satisfy either party. I was certain that this was the Achilles’ heel.

A comic-opera kingdom with a mad scientist! If my daughter had known of this, why had she not told me more? Or had she only been guessing in the dark herself?

The knight in armor and the man in the laboratory: the two simply didn’t mix! Since the founding of Burgundy, there had been an antiscience, antitechnology attitude at work. Even French critics who never had good things to say about the Reich managed to praise Burgundy for its lack of modern technique. (The French could never be made to shut up altogether, so we allowed them to talk about nearly everything except practical politics. The skeptics and cynics among them could always be counted on to come up with a rationale for their place in postwar Europe, stinging though it was to their pride. What else could they do?)

Here was a geneticist more advanced than anyone else in the field making common cause with a nation devoted to the destruction of science. That the Burgundians trusted his motives was peculiar; that he could trust theirs was even more bizarre.

The explanation that had come to me was this: unlike scientists who belonged to the humanist tradition and believed that genetic engineering could be made to improve the life of human beings (naive healers, but useful to a statesman such as myself), Dr. Mabuse wished to find the secret of manipulating the building blocks of life so that he could create something nonhuman. This creature he had in mind might very well be mistaken by a good Burgundian as one of the New Men or *Übermenschen*, and viewed as an object of worship. Where others might oppose these new beings, the Burgundians-trained from birth in religious acceptance of superior beings in human form-would present no obstacle.

As for the Burgundians, such leaders as Kaufmann had to believe that wicked modern science had produced at least one genius who was the vehicle of higher mysteries: a puppet of Destiny.

I looked in the faces of these two men, such different faces, such different minds. There was something familiar there-a fervor, a wild devotion to The Cause, and a lust to practice sacrificial rites. As Minister of Propaganda I had sought to inculcate that look in the population with regard to Jews.

It was evident that I had not been made privy to their machinations carelessly. Either I would be allowed to join them or I would die. As for the possibility of the former, I did not consider it likely. Perhaps the forebodings engendered in me by Hilda were partly to blame, but in fact I knew that I could not be part of such a scheme against the Fatherland. Could I convince them that I would be loyal? No, I didn’t

believe it. Could I have convinced them if I had inured myself against shock and displayed nought but enthusiasm for their enterprise? I doubted it.

The question remained why I had been chosen for the privilege. The message Hilda had shown me was rife with unpleasant implications. I took a gamble by sitting up, pointing at Mabuse, and shouting to Kaufmann: "This man is a Jew!"

I could tell that that was a mistake by the exchange of expressions between the two. Of course, they had to know. No one could keep a secret in the SS's own country. If they overlooked Dr. Mabuse's ideas and profession, they could overlook anything. This was one occasion when traditional Jew-baiting would not help a Nazi! I didn't like the situation. I didn't want to be on the receiving end.

The voice of Mabuse seemingly spoke to me, but the words appeared to be for Kaufmann's benefit: "It is too bad that you will not be able to work with the new entertainment technology. I was hoping we could transfer your memories of the affair with Lida Barova. As she was your most famous scandal, it would have made for a good show."

Before I could answer this taunt, Kaufmann's gruff voice announced: "Don't keep your son waiting."

"He should wait for me, not the other way around!"

Kaufmann was oblivious: "He is with his fellows. Come." Mabuse helped me get off the cot and then we were marching down the corridor again. I was dizzy on my feet, my hand hurt, and my head felt as though it were stuffed full of cotton. So many random thoughts swirling in my mind, easily displaced by immediate concern for my future welfare . . .

Twilight was fast approaching as we entered the courtyard I had noticed earlier in Kaufmann's office. The large funeral pyre was still there, unused. Except that now there was a bier next to it. We were too far away to see whose body was on it, but with every step we drew nearer.

A door beside the pyre opened and a line of young men emerged, dressed in black SS regalia. In the lead was my son. They proceeded remorselessly in our direction. Helmuth gave Kaufmann the Nazi salute. He answered with the same. Quite obviously I was in no mood to reciprocate.

"Father," said Helmuth gravely, "I have been granted the privilege of overseeing this observance. Please approach the body."

Such was the formality of his tone that I hesitated to intercede with a fatherly appeal. The expression on his face was blank to my humanity. I did as requested.

Not for a moment did I suspect the identity of the body. Yet as I gazed at that familiar, waxen face, I knew that it fit the Burgundian pattern. It had to be his body. Once more I stood before Adolf Hitler!

"It was an outrage," said Kaufmann, "to preserve his body as though he were Lenin. His soul belongs in Valhalla. We intend to send it there today." My mouth was open with a question that would not be voiced as I turned to Kaufmann. He bowed solemnly. "Yes, Herr Goebbels. You were one of his most loyal deputies. You will accompany him."

There are times when no amount of resolve to be honorable and brave will suffice: I made to run, but many strong hands were on me in an instant. Helmuth placed his hand on my shoulder. "Don't make it worse," he whispered. "It has to be. Preserve your dignity. I want to be proud of you."

There was nothing to say. Nothing to do but contemplate a horrible death. I struggled in vain, doing my best to ignore the existence of Helmuth. It was no surprise that he had been selected for this honor. It

made perfect sense in the demented scheme of things.

They brought out an aluminum ramp. Two husky SS men began to carry Hitler's body up the incline, while Helmuth remained behind, no doubt with the intention of escorting me up that unwelcome path.

"The manner of your death will remain a state secret of Burgundy," said Kaufmann. "We were able to receive good publicity from your Ministry when we executed those two French snoopers for trespassing: Louis Pauwels and Jacques Bergier. This is different." He paused, then added: "Soon publicity won't matter anymore."

My options were being reduced to nothing. Even facing death I could not entirely surrender. The years I had spent perfecting the art of propaganda had taught me that no situation is so hopeless that nothing may be salvaged from it. I reviewed the facts: despite their temporary agreement Kaufmann and the new Mabuse were really working at cross-purposes. If I could only exploit those differences, I could sow dissension in their ranks. Mabuse held the trump card, so I decided to direct the ploy at Kaufmann.

"I suppose I'm free to talk," I said to Kaufmann's back as he watched the red ball of the sun setting beyond the castle walls. The sky was streaked with orange and gold-the thin strands of cumulus clouds that seemed so reassuringly distant. There were a million other places I could have been at that moment, but for a vile twist of fate. There had to be some way of escape!

No one answered my query and I continued: "You're not a geneticist, are you, Kaufmann? How would you know if you can trust Dietrich?" He was Dietrich to them, but to me he would always be Mabuse. "What if he is lying? What if his process can't be made specific enough to exclude any group from the virus?"

Mabuse laughed. Kaufmann answered without turning around: "For insurance's sake he will immunize everyone in Burgundy as well as his assistants. If something goes wrong, it will be a shame to lose all those excellent Aryan specimens elsewhere in the world."

"Nothing will go wrong," said Mabuse.

I wouldn't give up that easily and struck back with: "How do you know he won't inject you with poison when the time comes? It would be like a repetition of the Black Plague that ravaged Burgundy in 1348."

"I applaud your inventive suggestion," said Mabuse.

"We have faith," was Kaufmann's astounding reply.

"A faith I will reward," boomed out Mabuse's monster voice. "They are not stupid, Goebbels. Some true believers have sufficient medical training to detect an attempt at the stunt you suggest."

In desperation I spoke again to my son: "Do you trust this?"

"I am here," came his answer in a low voice. "I have taken the oath."

"It's no good," taunted Mabuse. "Stop trying to save yourself."

They had Hitler's body at the top of the ramp. The SS men stood at attention. Everyone was waiting. The setting sun seemed to me at that moment to be pausing in its descent, waiting.

"Father," said Helmuth, "Germany has become decadent. It has forgotten its ideals. That my sister Hilda is allowed to live is proof enough. Look at you. You're not the man you were in the grand old days of the genocide."

“Son,” I said, my voice trembling, “what is happening in Burgundy is not the same thing.”

“Oh, yes, it is,” said Dr. Mabuse.

Kaufmann strolled over to where I was standing and craned his neck to look at the men at the top of the ramp with the worldly remains of Adolf Hitler. He said, “Nazis were good killers during the war. Jews, Gypsies, and many others fell by the sword, even when it exacted a heavy price from other elements of the war program. Speer always wanting his slave labor for industrial requirements. Accountants always counting pennies. The mass murder was for its own sake, a promise of better things to come!

“After the war only Burgundy seemed to care any longer. Rulings that came out of New Berlin were despicable, loosening up the censorship laws and not strictly enforcing the racial standards. Do you know that a taint of Jewishness is considered to be sexually arousing in Germany’s more decadent cabarets of today? Even the euthanasia policy for old and unfit citizens was never more than words on paper, after the Catholics and Lutherans interfered. The Party was corrupted from within. It let the dream die.”

The kind of hatred motivating this Burgundian leader was no stranger to me. Never in my worst nightmares did it occur to me that I could be a victim of this kind of thinking.

Kaufmann gestured to men on the ramp and they placed Hitler’s body on top of the pyre. “It is time,” mourned Helmuth’s voice in my ear. Other young SS men surrounded me, Helmuth holding my arm. We began to walk.

Other SS men had appeared around the dry pyramid of kindling wood and straw. They were holding burning torches. Kaufmann gestured and they set the pyre aflame. The crackling and popping sounds plucked at my nerves as whitish smoke slowly rose. It would take a few minutes before the flame reached the apex to consume Hitler’s body . . . and whatever else was near. My only consolation was that they had not used lighter fluid-dreadful modern stuff-to hasten the inferno.

Somewhere in that blazing doom Odin and Thor and Freyja were waiting. I was in no hurry to greet them.

I wondered at how the SA must have felt when the SS burst in on them, barking guns ripping out their lives in bloody ruins. Perhaps I should have thought of Magda, but I did not. Instead all my whimsies were directed to miracles and last-minute salvations. How I had preached hope in the final hours of the war before our luck had turned. I had fed Hitler on stories of Frederick the Great’s diplomatic coup in the face of a military debacle. I had compared the atom bomb-when we got it-to the remarkable change in fortunes in the House of Brandenburg. Now I found myself pleading with the cruel fates for a personal victory of the same sort.

I was at the top of the ramp. Helmuth’s hands were set firmly against my back. To him had fallen the task of consigning his father’s living body to the flames. They must have considered him an adept pupil to be trusted with so severe a task.

So completely absorbed was I in thoughts of a sudden reprieve that I barely noticed the distant explosion. Someone behind me said, “What was that?” I heard Kaufmann calling from the ground but his words were lost in a louder explosion that occurred nearby.

A manic voice called out: “We must finish the rite!” It was Helmuth. He pushed me into empty space. I fell on Hitler’s corpse, and grabbed at the torso to keep from falling into an opening, beneath which raged the personal executioner.

“Too soon,” one of my son’s comrades was saying. “The fire isn’t high enough. You’ll have to shoot him

or . . .”

Already I was rolling onto the other side of Hitler’s body as I heard a gunshot. Out of the corner of my eye I could see Helmuth clutching his stomach as he fell into the red flames.

Shouts. Gunfire. More explosions. An army was climbing over the wall of the courtyard. A helicopter was zooming in overhead. My first thought was that it must be the German army come to save me. I was too delighted to care how that was possible.

The conflagration below was growing hotly near. Smoke filling my eyes and lungs was about to choke me to death. I was contemplating a jump from the top—a risky proposition at best—when I was given a better chance by a break in the billowing fumes. The men had cleared the ramp for being ill protected against artillery.

Once again I threw myself over Hitler’s body and hit the metal ramp with a thud. What kept me from falling off was the body of a dead SS man, whose leg I was able to grasp as I started to bounce back. Then I lifted myself and ran as swiftly as I could, tripping a quarter of the way from the ground and rolling bruisedly the rest of the way. The whizzing bullets missed me. I lay hugging the dirt, for fear of being shot if I rose.

Even from that limited position I could evaluate certain aspects of the encounter. The Burgundians had temporarily given up their penchant for fighting with swords and were making do with machine guns instead. (The one exception was Thor, who ran forward in a berserker rage, wielding an ax. The bullets tore him to ribbons.) The battle seemed to be going badly for them.

Then I heard the greatest explosion of my life. It was as if the castle had been converted into one of Von Braun’s rockets as a sheet of flame erupted from underneath it and the whole building quaked with the vibrations. The laboratory must have been destroyed instantly.

“It’s Goebbels,” a voice sang out. “Is he alive?”

“If he is, we’ll soon remedy that.”

“No,” said the first voice. “Let’s find out.”

Rough hands turned me over . . . and I expected to look once more into faces of SS men. These were young men, all right, but there was something disturbingly familiar about them. I realized that they might be Jews! The thought, even then, that my life had been saved by Jews was too much to bear. But those faces, like the faces that I’ve thought about too many times to count.

“Blindfold him,” one said. It was done, and I was being pushed through the courtyard blind, the noises of battle echoing all around. Once we stopped and crouched behind something. There was an exchange of shots. Then we were running and I was pulled into a conveyance of some sort. The whirring sound identified it instantly as a helicopter revving up; and we were off the ground, and we were flying away from that damned castle. A thin, high whistling sound went by—someone must have still been firing at us. And then the fight faded away in the distance.

AN HOUR LATER we had landed. I was still blindfolded. Low voices were speaking in German. Suddenly I heard a scrap of Russian. This in turn was followed by a comment in Yiddish; and there was a sentence in what I took to be Hebrew. The different conversations were interrupted by a deep voice speaking in French announcing the arrival of an important person. After a few more whisperings-in German again—my blindfold was removed.

Standing in front of me was Hilda, dressed in battle fatigues. "Tell me what has happened," I said, adding as an afterthought-"if you will."

"Father, you have been rescued from Burgundy by a military operation of combined forces."

"You were only incidental," added a lean, dark-haired man by her side.

"Allow me to introduce this officer," she said, putting her hand on his arm. "We won't use names, but this man is with the Zionist Liberation Army. My involvement was sponsored by the guerrilla arm of the German Freedom League. Since your abduction the rest of the organization has gone underground. We are also receiving an influx of Russians into our ranks."

If everything else that had happened seemed improbable, this was sufficient to convince me that I had finally lost my sanity and was enmeshed in the impossible. "There is no Zionist Liberation Army," I said. "I would have heard of it."

"You're not the only one privy to secrets," was her smug reply.

"Are you a Zionist now?" I asked my daughter, thinking that nothing else would astound me. I was wrong again.

"No," she answered. "I don't support statism of any kind. I'm an anarchist."

What next? Her admission stunned me to the core. A large Negro with a beard spoke: "There is only one requirement to be in this army, Nazi. You must oppose National Socialism, German or Burgundian."

"We have communists as well, Father," my daughter went on. "The small wars Hitler kept waging well into the 1950s, always pushing deeper into Russia, made more converts to Marx than you realize."

"But you hate communism, daughter. You've told me so over and over." In retrospect it was not prudent for me to say this in such a company, but I no longer cared. I was emotionally exhausted, numb, empty.

She took the bait. "I hate all dictatorships. In the battle of the moment I must take what comrades I can get. You taught me that."

I could not stop myself talking, despite the risk. I sensed that this was the last chance I would have to reach my daughter. "The Bolsheviks were worse statists than we ever were. Surely the War Crimes Trials we held at the end of hostilities taught you that, even if you wouldn't learn it from your own father."

She raised her voice: "I know the evil that was done. What else would you expect from your darling straight-A princess than I can still recite the names of the Russian death camps: Vorkuta, Karaganda, Dal-stroi, Magadan, Norilsk, Bamlag, and Solovki. But it has only lately dawned on me that there is something hypocritical about the victors trying the vanquished. You didn't even try to find judges from neutral countries."

"What do you expect from Nazis?" added the Negro.

My daughter reminded me of myself, as she continued to lecture all of us, captors and captives alike: "The first step on the road to anarchy is to realize that all war is a crime; and that the cause is statism." Before I could get in a word edgewise, other members of the group began arguing among themselves; and I knew that I was in the hands of real radicals. The early days of the Party were like this. And whether Hilda was an anarchist or not, it was clear that the leader of this ad-hoc army-enough of a state for me-was the thin, dark-haired Jew.

He leaned into my face, and vomited up the following: “Your daughter’s personal loyalty prevents her from accepting the evidence we have gathered about your involvement in the mass murder of Jews. You’re as bad as Stalin.”

My dear, sweet daughter. Reaching out to embrace her, I not only caused several guns to be leveled on my person, but received a rebuff from her. She slapped me! Her words were acid as she said, “Fealty only goes so far. Whatever your part in the killing of innocent civilians, the rest of your career is an open book. You are an evil man. I can’t lie to myself about it any longer.”

There was no room for anger. No room left for anything but a hunger for security. I was ready to happily consign my entire family to Hitler’s funeral pyre, if by so doing I could return home to New Berlin. The demeanor of these freelance soldiers told me that they bore me no will that was good.

Hilda must have read my thoughts. “They are going to let you go, this time, as a favor to me. We agreed in advance that Burgundy was the priority. Everything else had to take a back seat, including waking up about my . . . parents.”

“When may I leave?”

“We’re near the Burgundian border. My friends will disappear, until a later date when you *may* see them again. As for me, I’m leaving Europe for good.”

“Where will you go?” I didn’t expect an answer to that.

“To the American Republic. My radical credentials are an asset over there.”

“America,” I said listlessly. “Why?”

“Just make believe you are concocting another of your ideological speeches. Do this one about individual rights and you’ll have your answer. They may not be an anarchist utopia, but they are paradise compared with your Europe. Goodbye, Father. And farewell to Hitler’s ghost.”

I was blindfolded again. Despite mixed feelings I was grateful to be alive. They released me at the great oak tree I had observed when flying into Burgundy. As I removed the blindfold, I heard the helicopter take off behind me. My eyes focused on the plaque nailed to the tree that showed how SS men had ripped up the railway and transplanted this tremendous oak to block that evidence of the modern world. It had taken a lot of manpower.

How easily manpower can be reduced to dead flesh.

Turning around, I saw the flowing green hills of a world I had never fully understood stretched out to the horizon. With a shudder I looked away, walked around the tree, and began following the rusty track on the other side. It would lead me to the old station where I would put in a call to home . . . to what I thought was home.

Postscript By Hilda Goebbels

**SPIRIT STATION
(THE CHARLES A. LINDBERGH
EXPERIMENTAL ORBITAL COMMUNITY)**

JANUARY 1, 2000

From this point on my father's diaries become incoherent. He must have recorded his Burgundian experiences shortly after returning to New Berlin. However much he had been the public demagogue he was surprisingly frank in his diaries. It must have been galling to him when they assigned psychiatric help. They knew what had happened. They sent in a full strike force to clean out Burgundy. They also came down on the underground shortly after I escaped. What a time that was. When the dust settled, Father had lost his influence.

Sometimes I try to decode Father's final entries, scrawled out in the last year of his life. He was a broken man in 1970, unhinged by the Burgundian affair, afraid of reprisals by the underground, unable to fathom why his favorite child hated him so. One consistent pattern of his last writings is that his recurring nightmare of Teutonic Knights had been displaced by a Jewish terror: an army of Golems concocted by Dr. Mabuse, who, after all, would work for anyone. Although there was no reason to believe that Dietrich survived our attack that afternoon, Father went to his grave believing the man to be immortal.

Images that crop up in these sad pages include a landscape of broken buildings, empty mausoleums, bones, and other wreckage that shows he never got over his obsession with The War. As for Mother leaving him at long last, he makes no comment but *das Nichts*. Even at the end he retained the habits of a literary German. One moment he is taking pleasure from the "heart attack" suffered by Himmler on the eve of Father's return-and there are comments here about how Rosenberg has finally been avenged. This material is interspersed with grocery bills from the days of the Great Inflation, problems he had with raising money for the Party in the mid-thirties, and a tirade against Horbiger. Before I can make heads or tails of this, he's off on a tangent about Nazis who believed in the hollow earth, and pages of minute details about Hitler's diet.

Those of my critics who believe I am suppressing material are welcome to these pages any time they ask. The only material of value was made available in the first appendix to *Final Entries*; to wit, Father's realization that they had substituted another body in Hitler's tomb-hotly denied by New Berliners to this day.

After all these years it is a strange feeling to look at the diary pages again. He accurately described me as the young and headstrong girl I was, although I wonder if he realized that I was firmly in the underground by the time I was warning him about Burgundy. If he could only see the crotchety old woman I have become.

I would have enjoyed speaking to him on his deathbed, as he did with Hitler. The main question I would have asked would be how he thought Reich officials would ever allow his diaries, from 1965 on, to appear in Europe? The early, famous entries, from 1933 to 1963, had been published as part of the official German record. The entries beginning with 1965 would have to be buried, and buried *deep*, by any dictatorship. Father's idea that no censorship applied to the privileged class-of his supposedly classless society-did not take into account sensitive state documents, such as his record of the Burgundy affair, or his highly sensitive discussion with Hitler. If the real *Final Entries* had not been smuggled out of Europe as one of the last acts of the underground, and delivered to me in New York, I never would have been in a position to come to terms with memories of my Father. Nor would I have had the book that launched my career. Americans love hearing of Nazi secrets.

Now as I begin a new life of semiretirement up here in America's first space city, haunted by equal portions of earthlight and moonlight, I wish to reconsider this period of history. Besides, if I don't write a new book, I believe I will go out of my mind.

Yesterday they had me speak to an audience of five hundred about my life as a writer. They wanted to

know how much research I had put into the series about postwar Japan and China. They wanted to know how I deal with writer's block. But most of all they wanted to hear about Nazis, Nazis, Nazis.

A handsome young Japanese boy saved me by asking what I considered the greatest moment of my life. I told him it was that I had been a successful thief. Once the audience of dedicated free-enterprisers had stopped gasping like fish out of water, I explained. Back in the eighties, the specter of cancer was finally put to rest, thanks to new work derived from original research by Dr. Richard Dietrich. Yes, the most pleasant irony I've ever tasted was that "Mabuse's" final achievement was for life instead of death; I made it possible. It was I who delivered his papers into the hands of American scientists.

I must take repeated breaks in writing this addendum. My back gives me nothing but trouble, and I spend at least three times a day in zero-g therapy. How Hitler would have loved that. After the last bomb attempt on him his central concern became the damage to his *Sieg Heiling* arm, and his most characteristic feature-his ass. To think my Father literally worshiped that man! I guess if Napoleon had succeeded in unifying Europe he'd be just as popular.

Now I'm reclining on a yellow couch in Observation 10A. There is a breathtaking view of Europe spread out to my right, although I can't make out Germany. The Fatherland is hidden beneath a patch of clouds. What I can see of the continent is cleaner than any map: there are no borderlines.

Who could have predicted the ultimate consequence of Hitler's war? Certainly not myself. I recognized what Nazi Germany was, because I grew up there. It was an organization in the most modern meaning of the word. It was a conveyor belt. Hitler's ideology was the excuse for operating the controls, but that mechanism had a life of its own. Horrors were born of that machine; but so were fruits. Medals and barbed wire; diplomas and death sentences-they were all the same to the machine. The monster seemed unstoppable. In the belly of such a state it was easy to become an anarchist. The next step was just as easy-join a gang of your own, to fight the gang you hate. None of us on any side, not the Burgundians, not the underground, not the Reich itself, could see what was really happening. Only a few pacifists grasped the point.

Adolf Hitler achieved the exact opposite of all his long-term goals, and he did this by winning World War II. Economic reality subverted National Socialism.

The average German used to defend Hitler by saying that he got us out of the Depression, without bothering to note that the way the glorious *Führer* paid off all the classes of Germany was by looting foreigners. This was not the friendliest method of undoing the harm of Versailles. But as Europe began to remove age-old barriers to commerce, economic benefits began to spread. A thriving black market ensured that all would benefit from the new plenty, and ideology be damned. While the Burgundians actually tried to implement Hitlerian ideas, the rest of Europe enjoyed the new prosperity.

Father was intelligent enough to notice this trend, but he carefully avoided drawing the obvious conclusion: Nazi Germany was becoming less National Socialist with every passing decade. For all the talk of Race Destiny, it was the technical mind of Albert Speer that ran the German Empire. Our sideshow bigots provided the decoration. Hitler was going to achieve permanent race segregation; his New Order lasted only long enough to knock down the barriers to racial separation, and economics did the rest. There is more racial intermarriage today than ever, thanks to Adolf Hitler.

Today Germany is seeing a flowering of historical revisionists who are debunking the Hitler myth. They are showing his feet of clay. They are asking why Germany used a nuclear weapon against a civilian population, while President Dewey restricted his atomic bombs to Japanese military targets in the open sea. Even a thick-headed German may get the point after a while. The Reich's youth protests against the treatment of Russians by Rosenberg's Cultural Bureaus, and they are no longer shot, no longer arrested.

.. and who knows but that they may accomplish something? If this keeps up, maybe my books, including *Final Entries of Dr. Joseph Goebbels* , will become available in the open market, instead of merely being black-market bestsellers already. America is still the only uncensored society.

More than anything else I am encouraged by what happens when German and American scientists and engineers work together. The magnificent new autobahns of Africa demonstrate this. But nothing is more beautiful than the space cities-the American and German complexes, the Japanese one, and finally, Israel. I've received an invitation to visit. I'm looking forward to setting foot inside a colony that proves *Der Jude* could not be stopped by a mere *Führer* . They have returned to their Holy Land, but at an unexpected altitude.

What would Father make of this sane new world? His final testament was the torment of a soul that had seen his victory become something alien and unconcerned with its architects. His life was melodrama, but his death a cheap farce. They didn't even know what to say at his funeral, he, the great orator of National Socialism. Without his guiding hand, they could not give him a Wagnerian exit.

The final joke is on him, and its practitioner is Dr. Mabuse. Father sincerely believed that in Adolf Hitler, long-awaited Zarathustra, the new man, had descended from the mountain. This, above all others, was the greatest lie of Joseph Goebbels's life.

The new man will ascend from the test tube. I pray that he will be wiser than his parents.

Hilda Goebbels

Paul Joseph Goebbels
Born October 29, 1897
Died March 15, 1970