

The Education of Hitler

a play by Tim Luscombe

Draft Two

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Plato: “A state or an army should be made up of lovers and their loves. They would be the very best governors of their own city, abstaining from all dishonour, and emulating one another in nobility. And when fighting at each other's side, although a mere handful, they would overcome the world...for who would desert his beloved or fail him in the hour of danger?”

(Symposium)

[The Sacred Band of Thebes – the special forces of Greek soldiery – was made up of 150 male couples. The forty-year period of their invincibility marked the pre-eminence of Thebes as a military and political power. Responsible for the decisive Greek victory over the Spartans in 371 BCE, they were eventually annihilated in battle by another queer warrior – Alexander the Great – thirty years later. Plutarch recorded that all 300 died that day because not one surrendered. A stone lion on a pedestal still marks the spot]

Michael Kuhnen (*German neo-Nazi leader*): “Fascism is based on the love of comrades. Having sex with your comrades strengthens the bond”

(Quoted in *The Advocate*, 2006 – article by Elmay Kraushaar)

Shakespeare: “If you prick us, do we not bleed?”

(Merchant of Venice)

Characters

Adolf Hitler
August Kubizek
Ernst Röhm
Rudi Häusler
Paulus
Manfred
Florian
Erich
Joseph Goebbels
Hermann Göring
Bodyguard
Supreme Commander
Office clerk
Brownshirts
Stormtroopers
Blackshirts
Party Members

[I reckon the smallest possible cast size is 7]

Time

The first act takes place between 1908 and 1923, the second between '31 and '34.

Production

Please avoid scene breaks in Act Two.

For music, listen to Wagner, Hindemith and American jazz first.

For more research, look at Lothar Machtan's *The Hidden Hitler*, Richard J Evans' *The Coming of the Third Reich*, Harry Oosterhuis & Hubert Kennedy's *Homosexuality and Male Bonding in Pre-Nazi Germany*, Norman Davies' *Europe*, Jonathan Katz' *Gay American History*, Kevin E Abrams' *The Other Side of the Pink Triangle*, Scott Lively's *Homosexuality and the Nazi Party*, and Scott Lively & Kevin Abrams' *The Pink Swastika: Homosexuality in the Nazi Party*. I am indebted to all of those historians and writers

Once you've read the play, if you'd like to, you can additionally look at the seven pages of historical notes I've included at the end of the text. But please read the play first!

Act One – The End

Scene One – Bavaria

A forest, late in King Otto's reign

A teenage boy looks anxiously up a tree, where another teenage boy hugs a branch

Gustl: Fucks sake –

Adi: Get back. I'm going to do it. I will.

Gustl: You'll kill yourself.

Adi: Don't come up.

Gustl: Ok, I'm not going to come up.

Adi: Here I go.

Gustl: Wait, Adi. I didn't smile at her.

Adi: You did. I saw it.

Gustl: But, she's the daughter of –

Adi: Oh, they're all the daughter of –

Gustl: I was being polite! She smiled at me, and –

Adi: But you can't smile at *anyone*! Bubi-doll, it kills me. I've got no one since Muti's gone. You understand? No one. You mustn't talk to others, you mustn't smile at them.

Gustl: Then I won't.

Adi: But you will.

Gustl: I promise I won't.

Adi: You don't mean it.

Gustl: I do, Bubi-doll.

Adi: I'm not strong enough to survive the daggers.

Gustl: Adi in a paddy.

Adi: You think this is funny?

Gustl: An Adi paddy.

Adi: I mean it. I'd rather die than lose you.

Gustl: You won't lose me, Bubi. Just come down.

Adi: No.

Gustl: We'll go to the opera.

Adi: You're not taking me seriously.

Gustl: Come on.

Adi: How can we?

Gustl: We'll find a way.

Adi: I'll show you, I'll show you how serious I am.

Gustl: Come on, love. I've not come all this way to look at the outside of a building.

Adi: Forget it.

Gustl: We'll get the cheapest seats and not eat for three days.

Adi: No, I don't care anymore. I can't bear it one more second! This is the end!

Adi lets go his hold and falls

Gustl: No!!!

A young man strolls on, carrying a dog whip

He looks directly up and sees Adi falling towards him. Instinctively, he catches him

It's all over in less than a second

Adi and the new man, Ernst, lie sprawled in a heap

Gustl: (To Ernst) Fuck. Are you alright?

Ernst: (Dazed) What? Ah...Yes.

Adi: (Whimpering) Help.

Gustl: Shut up, Adi.

Ernst: How are you doing, sonny? Let's help him up.

Adi: Don't touch me!

Gustl: It's just a stunt. Ignore him. It's you I'm concerned about.

Ernst: Not what you expect – boys falling out of trees. Snivelling boys, to boot. Piece of luck, wasn't it?

Adi: Luck? I was trying to kill myself!

Ernst: Peculiar idea of fun – falling out of trees. Deserves a good spanking.

Adi: What's peculiar is wanting to live in a world of death and rejection and infidelity. I despise you.

Gustl: Let him rant. He enjoys it. We've got some food. Would you like to? Sit with us? For a bit?

Ernst: *(Introducing himself)* Ernst.

Gustl: August – Gustl. He's Adolf – Adi. He's peculiar.

Ernst: Yeah. Not to mention rude and ungrateful and –

Gustl: But worth getting to know. And forgiving. Eventually. His Mum just passed away. He's not been properly right ever since.

Adi: She didn't pass away, she was murdered.

Gustl: Well, she wasn't actually murdered, was she?

Adi: All but.

Ernst and Gustl have sat

Ernst: You boys with the Wanderers?

Adi: The Wanderers? *(Doing the salute that the Nazis later adopted)* Sieg Heil! That's what they do, isn't it? Sitting round smelly campfires going Sieg Heil!

Gustl joins in

Gustl: Sieg Heil!

Adi: Sieg Heil!

Ernst: I wouldn't laugh at the Wanderers if I was you, baby. Where many fine young lads get their education.

Gustl: Singing patriotic songs?

Ernst: We could all benefit from that kind of experience.

Gustl: Scampering up soggy mountains? Getting bitten to death by mosquitoes?

Ernst: Healthy Greek values. Demolish the Christian shit your parents fill you with. The love of comrades, love of war. Ain't any women either.

Adi: (*Idiotically*) Ooh, Sieg Heil!

Gustl: Don't be a goat, Adi.

Adi: Well, what do you expect? I'm peculiar, aren't I? (*A confectioner's box*) I've been carrying this around for hours. For you.

Gustl: What is it? A Salzburger Nockerl! Oh, Bubi-doll, you're a dreamboat.

Adi: Well, now I'm gonna eat it myself.

Gustl: It's gone a bit sad in the heat.

Adi: You're sad.

He plasters the cake over Gustl's face

Gustl: Stop!

Adi: There. That peculiar enough for you?

Adi licks Gustl's face

Yummy.

Gustl: (*Loving it*) Adi, for fucks sake. (*To Ernst*) Sorry about this.

Adi: I mean it. (*Licking Gustl's face*) I won't tolerate it, Bubi, I won't. (*Lick, lick*) You're the only one who understands me. (*Lick, lick*)

Gustl: Enough! Leave me alone!

Adi: Never. I'm nothing without you.

Gustl: Am I forgiven?

Adi: (*Lick, lick*) Maybe. We'll see.

Gustl: (*Wiping his face with a handkerchief*) God, I'm gonna attract every fly in Bavaria.

Adi: (*Finally turning to Ernst*) Suppose I should thank you.

Ernst: Don't mention it.

Gustl: Would you like some water?

Ernst: You boys ain't from here?

Gustl: From Linz originally.

Ernst: A walking holiday?

Adi: A pilgrimage.

Ernst: To Bayreuth?

Gustl: We don't have enough money to actually go to a performance. We're artists.

Ernst: What a surprise.

Gustl: Training to be artists.

Adi: Applying to train to be artists.

Gustl: Not having much luck at the moment.

Adi: Fucking Viennese pigs, sitting in judgement...

Gustl: Yeah, things haven't been easy –

Adi: Not helped by his wanton trolloping.

Ernst: The Frustrations of Genius, eh?

Gustl: You'll show 'em, Adi. He's going to be a great artist.

Adi: I am, I am.

Gustl: I'm a musician. Together we're gonna achieve incredible things.

Adi: Whatever those wankers in Vienna say.

Gustl: You'll have another go next year –

Ernst: You know, Adolf, all boys have to lose their mothers at some point.

Adi: Don't talk about my mother. You don't know anything about my mother.

Ernst: And their sisters and their brothers, too.

Adi: At least she didn't live to see me humiliated by that vermin.

Ernst: It ain't important. Family shouldn't be a German boy's first allegiance anyway.

Adi: Wouldn't know a great artist if it came up and kicked 'em in their fat faces –

Ernst: A German boy's first allegiance should be to his comrades – like-minded fellows he meets in the organisations. That's where Germany's future lies.

Gustl: You're big on this all-boys-together thing.

Ernst: Strikes me you could both do with a spot of that kind of martial bonding. Never met a pair of nellier fruits in my life.

Adi: Nellier fruits?

Ernst: Nelly, dear. Opposite of butch. Girly.

Adi: Hah! You're so butch, stamping round the forest with your dog whip, rescuing maidens from trees. Fuck you. I'm not girly.

Ernst: Well, would it hurt you to try to be a little less queeny?

Adi: You frightened the squirrels will tell on you?

Ernst: What do you mean? I ain't an invert!

Adi: Really? 'Loving comrades, fine young lads, no women'? You had me confused.

Gustl: Shouldn't we use the word homosexual?

Ernst: Never. What are you saying?

Gustl: Yes, it's less derogatory. We can be proud to be homosexual. Dr Magnus Hirschfeld says –

Ernst: Magnus Hirschfeld? The word's a criminal affront. Sticky and clammy – reeks of effeminacy. Nelly. Fucking nelly.

Gustl: Well, ok, what word would you prefer?

Ernst: There ain't no Word!

Gustl: But you –

Ernst: No! Why do I have to be explained, or labelled, or inspected? I'm a man!

Gustl: Yes, but –

Adi wanders off and mumbles at the trees

Ernst: Bloody Hirschfeld and his sex academy! Which – can you believe – the state pays for! He thinks he's setting people free. He's putting them in prison.

Gustl: How on earth can you...?! His campaign to get Paragraph 175 repealed? That's gonna change everything. Where we've moved to in Vienna, homosexual men can live more or less normal lives –

Ernst: In a ghetto! You're artists. Why would you want to paint on that tiny canvas? The nelly underworld of Vienna or Berlin ain't no life for a man.

Gustl: I don't agree.

Ernst: It's trivial! The bathhouses are fun and the whores are useful, but not 24/7. You can't breathe in that grubby hellhole.

Gustl: Well, I think what Hirschfeld's doing is amazing. His research means that we homosexuals might even be allowed to have rights – the same as other people. He's scientifically proved we don't have an illness! Men from all over the world are escaping from repression to be free in Germany.

Ernst: My God, you've been brainwashed.

Gustl: No! They're coming! From England, France, even from America –

Ernst: I tell you what Hirschfeld's done. What he's done is confuse two things that should stay a hundred percent separate. The love between men – deep friendship between free men – and the act of sodomy.

Gustl: But that exactly defines a homosexual.

Ernst: So only homosexuals commit sodomy?

Gustl: Yes.

Ernst: But I ain't a homosexual, and I certainly love men!

Gustl: And I dare presume you have sex with them?

Ernst: Why not? If they're not nelly.

Gustl: Then you're a homosexual.

Ernst: I can't have sex with another man unless I call myself a homosexual.

Gustl: Yeah!

Ernst: What a criminal reduction of my human rights! Fucking Hirschfeld heresy. Sees sex everywhere. Can't a friendship be loving without everyone calling me a sodomite?

Gustl: You're frightened of what other people will say about you?

Adi: Damn squirrels.

Ernst: I ain't frightened of anything! What men do together in private is personal – in fact it's sacred. But, no, Hirschfeld must drag it all out in public. Graphically draw attention, and alienate everyone else.

Gustl: What you are, my friend, is in denial.

Ernst: What I am, love, is German. And so are you. And shame on you for spouting that alien, feminising sop. Hirschfeld don't understand me, or Germany, or German culture. How can he? He's a Jew. I'm talking about love! The love between comrades-in-arms – in Bismarck's army! In Friedrich's! The bonds formed between men of action! That kind of love forges armies! It built the foundation of our empire! (*Putting his arm round Gustl's shoulder*) Who's your hero, August?

Gustl: Michelangelo.

Ernst: There you go.

Ernst puts his arm round Adi's shoulder but Adi squirms away

Gustl: He's got a thing about being touched – 'cept by me.

Ernst: Alright. Well? Who's your hero, young man?

Adi: Friedrich the Great.

Ernst: Yes! Socrates, Alexander, Shakespeare, Michelangelo, Friedrich the Great – the manliest man of action, who fucked men, love dogs and changed the world, but didn't feel the need to sign up as a card carrying queer. I ain't ashamed, August. You don't understand men if you think I am. Things are changing, and I don't mean in your reductive sinkhole in Vienna. I mean something much, much profounder. Can you feel it? Can you? We're going to create a new civilisation – even more beautiful than Bismarck's, than

Friedrich's. And men like you and me will make it happen. We're the new aristocracy, and it's up to us German boys to save our culture from materialism, and mediocrity, and Anglo Saxon feminisation. Look at England, at America, where women are turning their men into slaves... You're an artist, Adolph – that makes you superior to ordinary men. You're part of the new elite! *Ordinary* men must go to women for sensual pleasure, and traipse about the world in search of money and possessions. But the man of *genius* doesn't have to mortgage his sexuality to reproduction. You understand me? You hear what I'm saying to you?

Adi: I had a dream.

Ernst: A dream?

Gustl: He has dreams.

Ernst: What about?

Adi: I dreamed I was the Nibelung dwarf.

Gustl: You were Alberich?

Adi: I lived in a tiny cramped crevice at the bottom of the Rhine, and I was as ugly as him – just like in Rheingold. And for some reason I was bent on making love to the Rhine maidens. But they laughed in my face and turned me away for being ugly and evil, and short! And the more they rejected me, the more apoplectic I got. Until I saw a beautiful bright glow coming from behind them.

Gustl: And they told you it was the Rheingold?

Adi: That their father ordered them to guard – and anyone who rejected love, and got his hands on the gold, could make a ring out of it. It would allow him to rule the world if he wore it.

Gustl: So did you? Did you reject love and get the gold?

Adi: I cursed stupid, feeble-minded love, grabbed the gold and went back to my little rocky crevice.

Ernst: Then what?

Adi: I got the gold. I could make the ring.

Gustl: But did you?! Did you make a ring from the gold? Adi?

Pause

Scene Two – Mariahilferstr.

Adi, unkempt, among newspapers

Gustl comes in, tense

Silence

Gustl: Fucking whore. One on the stairs. Grabs my arm – like I'm ever going to give her trade. *(He puts down shopping)* Adi? Adi? When did you get in? Where were you? Where were you? I was worried.

Adi mumbles into his newspaper

The city's like a building site. More potholes than road on the Mariahilferstrasse. Coming down Stumper, a sodding great cable landed on my head – workman leaned over and laughed at me.

Adi: Brand's in trouble. Von Bülow's suing him for libel.

Gustl: Not going to tell me?

Adi: Outed the Prime Minister. Fucking bold, isn't it? See, what Harden's really saying is that being queer makes a man unfit to run the country. Christ.

Gustl: Adi.

Adi: So, Wilhelm entertains Ambassador Eulenburg and Count Kuno, and – bloody hell! – it turns out they're lovers. So? Whose business is it but theirs? I'll tell you what. Harden's a Jew. This campaign of his is filth. The entire Jewish press is scum. They're a cancer. They'll stop at nothing till they've got rid of us all.

Gustl: What are you talking about?

Adi: Don't you care? Don't you realise we're in danger because of this Jew's accusations? Because of his naming and pointing. We were protected by anonymity. Now everyone's looking at Vienna. We're in trouble and you don't want to know –

Gustl: I don't care about everyone else.

Adi: And what will you do when they shut down the Green Piper and Auntie's Café? You'll have nowhere to take your boyfriends boozing and dancing.

Gustl: I'm going to practice.

Adi: No, not the tinkling! Not the infernal tinkling!

Gustl: Well, I thought we were trying to achieve something.

Adi: You've no idea what I've been doing.

Gustl: Course not. How could I? You stay out I-don't-know-where. You slouch around in bed till teatime reading sodding newspapers.

Adi: I'm interested in the real world.

Gustl: Great, Adi, that really helps pay the bills. You haven't studied for ages. You've done nothing since...

Adi: Say it.

Gustl: You're going to give it another go. You're not going to give up. You're going to be great. Together we're going to –

Adi: Leave me alone. Leave me a-fucking-lone, you fucking boring fucker.

Gustl: What's this business about Jews? That's not you, Adi. (*Sitting by Adi*) You've always been a bit cross about everything, but you used to know how to love too. These days –

Adi: Ok. Alright. You want to see? This is what I've been doing. (*Paintings*) This is what I've 'achieved'.

Gustl: My God. Why have you kept these from...? They're great, Adi. Really wonderful. Look, that's the Opera House. Oh, and that's the –

Adi: You hate them.

Gustl: No. Not at all. Why do you...? No. I think they're wonderful. This one's really captured the railway station.

Adi: What? You think they're banal.

Gustl: I think they're wonderful.

Adi: That's why I don't show you. You pretend you understand my greatness, but you have no fucking idea. Like the Jews who sit in judgement at the bollocking academy. They reject me. Reject proper German art. They mount an exhibition of their star graduates – Kokoschka, Schiele. It's meaningless – it's pornography.

Gustl: Well, I don't know about that. I think they might have something –

Adi: Betrayer! You may have lost faith, but I haven't.

Gustl: Then you must keep working and reapplying.

Adi: Fucking housewife. Cooking and cleaning. I'm not your child to mollycoddle. You're not my fucking mother. My mother was murdered by fucking Jews.

Gustl: Adi, what the hell...?

Adi: I can't do this. This is the end. (*Gathering up his art*) I have to go somewhere where I'm honestly appreciated.

Gustl: Don't be silly. I couldn't appreciate you more. I do nothing but appreciate you.

Adi: I'm sick of your lies. I can't breathe.

Gustl: You're going? Where are you going? Adi!

Adi: Don't grovel.

Gustl: You don't mean it. We'll go to the opera. It's Siegfried tonight. You'll feel different after Siegfried.

Adi: Look at this place. I'm part of the new elite, and you expect me to stay here? What? To indulge your dreams of a queer suburban love nest?

Gustl: I don't understand. You're going?

Adi: 'Bye Gustl.

Gustl: But, Bubi-doll... It's Siegfried tonight.

Adi: *I'm* bloody Siegfried. I deserve better.

Gustl: You're not serious? What – you think anyone else will put up with you?

Adi: Put up with me?

Gustl: You have no idea.

Adi: Listen to you. Trivial, bourgeois concerns about respectability. August, I have a responsibility to Germany.

Gustl: We're Austrian.

Adi: I have a responsibility.

Gustl: Wait.

Adi stops

You'll never find anyone who loves you as well I do, Adi. Never.

Adi: I have to go. Europe needs my watercolours.

Scene Three – Vienna

The Meldemannstrasse Men's Hostel

An easel showing the back of a canvas

Adi, exhausted and frozen, writing a letter

He can't stay awake –

Half asleep, he mumbles

Adi: In my arms... And will stay there...

He drops off – the letter falls

He's woken by a loud knock at the door

Panicked, he tries – silently but quickly – to hide

After a suspenseful moment, Rudi – late teens – bursts in

Adi screams

Rudi: Ha-hah!

Adi: Bastard!

Rudi: Hahahahahaha.

Adi: How the fucking hell dare you? My nerves are fried.

Rudi: Gotcha!

Adi: Fucking bastard. Shut the door.

Laughing, Rudi gets out a cigarette

Look, I've been doing some calculations. Don't light that cigarette!

Rudi: I've just done three of the fattest lines you've ever seen – if I don't suck on a cigarette now I'm going to munch my face off.

Adi unleashes his belt and starts whacking Rudi

Adi: Out! Out!

Rudi: Ok, ok, I'll open the window.

Adi: I'll push you out, Rudi!

Rudi: Stop. Ow! Ow! It's divine.

Adi: Lean out the fucking window. Right out! Right out!

Rudi: Ow! Jesus. Brute.

Adi: (*Replacing his belt*) Listen. We need about a dozen more jobs between us –

Rudi: (*Hanging out the window*) What? Can't hear you.

Adi: I said I reckon we need another twelve tricks.

Rudi: The trick? Was fabulous, darling. Fucking gorgeous black Peugeot BMW. Massive villa in Alsergrund, stuffed full of Titians.

Adi: Eh?

Rudi: Titians.

Adi: What, real Titians?

Rudi: He's got a platoon of servants, so I suspect the Titians were real, huh-huh. Hundreds of puce courtesans galumphing above us, while he ravaged my arse on a purple divan and I fiddled with tassels. Not camp at all, dear.

Adi: Did you hear me, Rudi? I reckon we only need a dozen more jobs. Then we're out.

Rudi: (*Closing the window*) If we don't go to the opera presumably.

Adi: No, I included the opera, but strictly rationed to every other day.

Rudi: What about food?

Adi: It's a luxury – we just can't afford it.

Rudi: Fine. And we won't really have to pay back the Jew down the hall.

Adi: I agree.

Rudi: What about selling these? This [*the canvas*] is exactly the same as it was.

Adi: It's too cold to hold a brush. They take two days to paint, and another hauling myself round the beer gardens till someone takes pity. It's a drop in the ocean.

Rudi finds the letter

Wait. Give that –

Rudi: 'I remember you in my arms –' Ooh.

Adi: (*Whips off his belt again*) Rudi, I'm warning you –

Rudi: Who's this to? 'They were, and will remain, the happiest days of my –'

Adi: Fucks sake, Rudi, give it to me now –

Rudi: (*Still*) 'Please write back, Bubi-doll. I think my letters don't reach you'. You never call me Bubi doll.

Rudi goes to hold Adi, but Adi pulls away

Adi: I'm dying. My art's going nowhere. I need an injection. The fresh clean air of Schwabing.

Rudi: We won't let them take you away and make you march up and down and shoot things. Even if I have to hawk my bottom all day and all night. We're gonna make it –

Adi: Wasn't last night amazing? I can't get it out of my head, can you?

Rudi: Fucking awesome. It was like the best sex ever. And the muscles...!

Adi: What a guy.

Rudi: A God!

Adi: A fearless leader. A German superman.

Rudi: (*Wagner*) 'Notung! Notung! My trusty sword!' Oh, Siegfried. I thought I'd died and gone to heaven. Soprano wasn't bad either. (*Pause*) Adi... I don't mind –

Knock at the door

Adi: Fuck!

Rudi: Shit! Hide.

Paulus: (*From outside*) It's me. Herr Paulus.

Rudi: Oh, thank Christ. (*Sotto*) Cooking oil? Tyres?

Adi: Soap!

Rudi: Come in, Herr Paulus. And how's the wonderful world of soap?

Paulus: Good evening, gentlemen. So glad I caught you.

Adi: Only another few days with any luck.

Paulus: Ah, I see. Where are you boys off to?

Adi: Munich. If I can evade conscription till then. We'll be able to breath more easily for a bit.

Rudi: Less priggish than fucking Vienna.

Adi: They say Schwabing's a genuinely bohemian district. It'll be great for my artistic development.

Paulus: Well, I've come to deliver a modest gift. For handsome Adolph. Does he want it?

Adi: Yes. What is it?

Paulus: Salzburger Nockerl of course.

Adi: (*Nearly fainting*) Salzburger Nockerl.

Paulus: Herr Häusler won't mind giving us a little privacy? To view the work in quiet contemplation with the artist.

Rudi: Whatever. (*To Adi*) When you want me, you'll find me round the back chewing on a dragoon or something. And if you eat that before I get back, I'll bite your balls off and squirt them in the Danube. And you know I mean it.

Goes out

Paulus: (*Offering the cake*) Here you are.

Adi puts it down, has a good look at it

Aren't you going to eat it?

Adi: I'll save it.

Paulus: Entirely up to you.

Adi: (*Wavering*) No, I'll save it.

Paulus: Germany, then.

Adi: Less infested with Jews and Slavs.

Paulus: Infested?

Adi: Those Orientals, swarming about Meidling and Brigittenau –

Paulus: Careful –

Adi: Eyes full of lies and greed. Grotesque.

Paulus: My dear boy, we are still be-suited. So, you reckon there's nothing in it for you to stay and fight for the Emperor?

Adi: I've nothing but contempt for the fucking Emperor.

Paulus: Such an artist! So intemperate!

Adi: Fucking politicians. Every cell of my body burns with hatred for the lot of 'em and all their institutions.

Paulus: Well, I shall miss you, Adolf.

Adi: It's the fucking Hapsburg's bloated bureaucrats who deny me a way in to their precious academy.

Paulus: Oh no, not *again!*

Adi: They're the oppressors of all true Germans in Austria. Forcing us to live cheek by jowl with lesser races – when all we want is to unite with our own blood in the German Reich.

Paulus: Dear boy, what happened this time?

Adi: I don't want to talk about it. They wouldn't even let me into the drawing exam.

Paulus: Philistines.

Adi: I'm going to be a great artist.

Paulus: You are. I'm breathless about seeing the new one.

Adi: It's not finished.

Paulus: Yes, yes, it's...remarkable. Painstaking. It's so...so...accurate.

Adi: Well, if you're not convinced, there's a large amount of interest –

Paulus: No, no... Are there perhaps any others I've not already seen?

Adi: Fuck you. No one understands me.

Paulus: Adi –

Adi: Fuck this city –

Paulus: Adi –

Adi: Makes me gag, makes me wretch in disgust.

Paulus: You find that easy?

Adi: What?

Paulus: Never mind. And yet artists gather – the bars, the bathhouses – isn't that the lovely thing about Vienna? A melting pot. Something for everyone.

Adi: It's repulsive.

Paulus: Well, you're hardly unique in your opinions. Every time I open a paper, more immigration horror stories.

Adi: Everyone I talk to – I mean every real German – agrees with me. So how come the Social Democrats are doing so well in the elections? I'll tell you. I figured it out. Their message is simple. Stupidly simple. They've realised people can't grasp anything complicated, or half-hearted or weak. People love a commander, not a debater. The Social Democrats win by force. Fucking Sozis – they terrorise people. I've seen it myself. In the meeting halls, on demonstrations. It's so easy. The liberals are dominated by rich and powerful Jews. So the Sozis appeal to the anti-Semitic feeling in every true German in Vienna, and Lueger becomes the Mayor in a landslide. Terror works. I think they're really onto something.

Paulus: You'll vote for him?

Adi: I despise him, fucking Sozi. But his methods? Genius. Democracy's not gonna hold up against this. Sit in the public gallery in Parliament. Tower of fucking Babel. Hundreds of tiny race-based groups shouting at each other in different languages. Only time they unite is to stop someone getting what he wants. It's obvious – parliamentary process is over. A strong leader directly elected – that's the only way to get anything done.

Paulus: Have anyone in mind?

Adi: Oh, Lueger I suppose. Schönerer? Don't know. Brand would be great, but he hates politics as much as I do.

Paulus: You then.

Adi: Me?

Paulus: You sound more and more like a politician. What you say is heartfelt – delusional craziness, but heartfelt.

Adi laughs a grim laugh

Why not you? I think you'd fit the bill perfectly.

Adi: (*Laughing*) I'm an artist, aren't I? Yeah, through my art I want to change the world. If only people understood it. Not politics. Me? First thing I'd do is obliterate the lot of them.

Paulus: Well, you're my Siegfried. You'd get my vote.

Adi: You've come here to blow smoke up my arse? Seen enough art, have you?

Paulus: Indeed.

Adi: Wanna have a go then?

Paulus: Quite right. (*Taking jacket off*) No need for further conversational arabesques.

Adi: The usual? (*Taking his belt off again*)

Paulus: My flesh is in ribbons from last time. I wondered if we could try something different.

Adi: Depends. I won't touch you.

Paulus: No, no. I know you're highly specialised. One is used to boys refusing to kiss, but not even to touch – it takes a man of great restraint.

Adi: It's not that. It's just I find you repulsive.

Paulus: (*Ripping his shirt off*) Do you, Siegfried? Do you, you magnificent young goy?

Adi: Yeah, I do, Jew. You make me want to puke.

Paulus: Would you?

Adi: What?

Paulus: Puke.

Adi: What?

Paulus: On me.

Adi: Puke on you? You mean actually –

Paulus: Yes, actually –

Adi: I d... I don't know whether... (*Puts his fingers down his throat*) I haven't eaten enough recently.

Paulus: Eat the cake and puke it up on me.

Adi: I'm sharing it with Rudi.

Paulus: Well eat half of it then.

Adi: I... I don't think I can puke on you.

Paulus: Scared?

Adi: No, not scared. It's just...

Paulus: Well, shit on me.

Adi: You want me to –

Paulus: Yes. Please, Siegfried.

Adi: But I don't have anything to shit.

Paulus: Can't you squeeze a little dribble out for me? Please! I'll pay you extra. Please, please sir.

Adi: I –

Paulus: Please, Siegfried, show me how masterful you are. Show me your supremacy. Insult me.

Adi: Cunt!

Paulus: Yes! Racially abuse me!

Adi: Fucking yid. Fucking Isidor.

Paulus: Yes, yes. Let me lick your filthy, filthy feet.

Adi: Leave my fucking feet alone, you scum, you pig, you sewer slime – pig shit cunt!

Paulus: Oh, yes, yes! Now shit on me. I'll lie here. Please.

Adi: Alright. Where?

Paulus: On my face. Please.

Adi: Alright.

Paulus: Oh, thank you, thank you.

Adi: I'll try.

Paulus: Here's fifty, and there's another fifty if you give me a nice big log, a nice thick juicy load.

Adi: What? You mad? You think I sit around here all day eating? I got more when I stayed in the doss house. The warming rooms gave us soup. Some days I don't eat anything.

Paulus: No, sorry. Do what you can.

Adi: Lie down then, Jew cunt, and shut up.

Paulus: Yes, sir. That's right, sir.

They wait

Adi: It might take a while.

Paulus: Yes, sir. That's alright, sir.

Adi: Shut up – let me concentrate.

Adi starts to drift off

Fucking Hapsburgs...

Paulus: What?

Adi: Schwabing I'll meet...

Paulus: Use me, sir. I am your toilet.

Adi: Yeah. Use you. Fucking toilet Jew. Use you.

Paulus: Is there, by any chance, anything there, do you think?

Adi: Fucked... Blow it all up... Unite with our own blood in the... Only a racially pure... Only solution... Hatred... Bubi, I'm alone. Flying, weightless.

Going blind with loathing. Nothing to connect me. I'll fall, but I don't. No touch. No one to hold me...

Paulus: I'm sorry... Uhhmm...?

Adi: I had a friend...

Paulus coughs

Uh? Oh. You still there, Jew? You know what I think? This is more fun than a Salzburger Nockerl. We're going to wipe you off the face of the earth.
(*Pushing down*) Here it comes.

Paulus: Oh, yes! Yes, please!

Adi grunts and pushes

Scene Four – Versailles

In a Munich beer cellar, Adolf addresses the Iron Fist Group – a chaotic bunch of brown-shirted, violent thugs, whose raucous reactions turn the speech into dialogue

Röhm sits at the back

Adolf: The cafes of Schwabing – packed with so-called artists, shrieking repulsive ideas at each other... I heard no meaning, no sense – only effect, pretence. And it was incomprehensible and terrible. For me, Munich was another defeat – another crushing disappointment. Until that morning – when we heard the call. You were there too, comrades. Can you tell me what happened to us? You understand it? Offered a daily square meal and a mission to believe in, we were inspired, united, to march. I'm not stupid, but the lunacy of that morning I will never explain. No one even thought to ask if I was German. I was going to be part of the moving force of history. And, happily, I volunteered. To fight for the promise of certain glory. For brotherhood and fraternity. My heart overflowed with joy. I was proud. I was German...

And then the killing began. The massacre of half-trained recruits – eager boys straight out of university – cut to pieces by the relentless firepower of professional English soldiers – gone in a few days. And why was I saved? Was it only dumb luck I lost my sight in a gas attack, to be shipped back behind the lines? Whatever it was, my eyes refused to leave the massacre. Blind, I could only see what I could remember. Under the tight, white bandages – nothing but mud. Boys mown down and turned to mud. Miles and miles of mud. A cold stew of mud and broken bricks and splintered wood and boys. No better than the moon, without life or memories. Silent and empty...

We return to insults. We – comrades – who braved the torment of hell and a world of enemies, are robbed of everything we fought for. Because it was not for a Communist revolution that the fresh youth of Germany was pulverised in its millions – for the red rabble, who never heard a bullet whistle – the red flood lurking in the dark – a poisonous blood pouring over Germany – the screaming, screeching hordes of red mercenaries – the packs of rats.

Munich, Budapest and Berlin are lost to them. The Sozis fight back – but Hamburg and Saxony fall. Communist paramilitaries engage Freecorps soldiers in the streets. A civil war in the Ruhr. Battles against separatists in the Rhineland. Bavaria on the verge of independence. Parliamentary democracy breaks down. Political parties finance armed squads of thugs to make their points for them. Germany disintegrates. Germany's overthrown. Two years after the Armistice, the war's something we look back on with nostalgia! Yes, it brought death and destruction, but it brought us a purpose, a sense of brotherhood and full employment. Peace brings nothing. Peace brings chaos. So, what happened, comrades? What the hell happened here? I'll tell you what happened. Versailles happened!

Defeatist, treacherous and illegal Versailles. Our empire lost. Our entire fleet. Our right to defend ourselves. Two of our three coalfields. A tenth of our people. And perhaps the deepest wound of all. German-speaking Austrians denied the right to rejoin the German nation.

When I heard the news on the radio, I'd only just recovered my sight. Then everything went black again. Literally blind with rage, I don't mind telling you I wept. I felt the pain of Germany herself. I was Germany – on my knees – annihilated.

Let's be clear, comrades. The November traitors who signed the Treaty have signed their own death warrants. For they conceded the lie – that Germany alone was guilty of starting the war. And sole guilt means we alone will pay for it, comrades. We will pay for it the rest of our lives. Sole guilt means we alone must disarm.

Do we believe in this peace? The whole of Germany is united against it! The wound refuses to heal because we did not lose the war! The German army was victorious in the East and intact in the West. We were never driven back onto German territory. Fearless Siegfried is defeated in *The Twilight of the Gods* because he's stabbed in the back by his enemies at home. And that's what happened to us, comrades. After four and a half years of unprecedented victories – at the very moment when peace was within our grasp – we were the victims of a secret campaign. The greatest crime of the century, making all our sacrifices futile. We were stabbed in the back by Jewish-Bolshevik revolutionaries in Berlin! Jews, Bolsheviks and criminals! For they are parasites, who can only live by subverting others. And those they subvert today are the highest and best of all races – the Aryans!

So now is the time for the true German spirit to re-emerge. Deep, positive and idealistic. And make no mistake. This is life and death. When the species is in

danger, racial self-preservation takes priority over mere 'legality'. The solution of the Jewish problem can only be brute force! The Jews must be exterminated! For if they come to power, our heads will roll in the sand. But when we get our hands on power the Jews must look to God for mercy!

The Brownshirts have reached a fever pitch of approbation, stomping their chairs and yelling. They mob the stage, lift Adolf high and carry him through the hall. They throw him up in the air with joy

Röhm, who has been sitting, still and watchful, behind the Brownshirts, steps forward and, once again, is there to catch Adolf as he hurtles towards the ground

Adolf is a damp mess, and rapidly deflates once 'offstage'

Get off! Get off me! Put me down!

Ernst: Remember me, Lance Corporal?

Adolf: No, who are you? Jesus. You're...

Ernst: These are my men.

Adolf: Fuck a duck. Sir!

The Brownshirts cheer and slap Adolf

Ernst: Ten years ago – must've been. You've grown up.

Adolf: You made it.

Ernst: Most of me.

Adolf: Where did you...*[get the facial scar]*?

Ernst: Verdun. Another titanic, futile sacrifice. You were in...?

Adolf: Ypres.

Manfred, a young Brownshirt, speaks impulsively

Manfred: My brother was in Ypres.

Adolf: Near Langemark and –

Manfred: That's where he was, too! Which regiment –?

Ernst: Well, you'll need a beer after that. (*Commanding*) Manfred.

Adolf: No, thanks, sir. I don't drink alcohol.

The Brownshirts are startled

Ernst: What the hell kind of soldier are you? Get me one, sweetheart.

Manfred: Coming up.

Ernst: (*Leading Adolf away*) Very impressive.

Adolf: Thank you, sir.

Ernst: Drop it [*the 'sir'*].

The Brownshirts will play/fight amongst themselves, their potential violent outbursts a constant threat throughout the scene

Name's Ernst, if you've forgotten. You speak from the heart.

Adolf: The Jewish thing's too much?

Ernst: It's great. They like it.

Adolf: I start off with Bolsheviks, and slip the Jews in at the end. Never fails to get 'em on their feet, and no one seems to notice the inconsistency.

Ernst: If you take my advice, you'll drop the Wagner reference.

Adolf: What? Too nelly?

Ernst: Fuck that. Too elitist, dear. We all love Wagner but there ain't no need to shout it from the rooftops.

Manfred brings beer

Cheers, duck.

Manfred: My brother fell in '15.

Adolf: I was a regimental runner – behind the lines.

Manfred: So you didn't fight?

Adolf: They said I was too weak.

Manfred: But you played your part.

Adolf: Too frail to hold a gun.

Manfred: Yeah? My brother was strong. You understand me. He was a strong bloke.

Ernst: You leave us to talk, precious boy.

Ernst grabs Manfred by the neck – affectionately, aggressively – and sends him away

Adolf: How does that fit with Darwinism? The survival of the weakest.

Ernst: What the fuck are you doing?

Adolf: What?

Ernst: I ain't gonna have that snivelling, self-pitying routine in front of my men, soldier! 'Too frail'?! You got their hopes raised – you don't fuck 'em about now. Not if you want to leave here with your health.

Adolf: What should I say? I was a delivery boy. Every few days I took a message to HQ. Spent four years painting and talking shit.

Ernst: You made 'em believe you're one of 'em. They need to know you were a comrade, comrade – that you looked out for their fallen brothers, that you cared. You were promoted, for God's sake. [*Evidence on Adolf's uniform*]

Adolf: So was everyone who survived '15. Means nothing.

Ernst: Iron Cross 1st class. They don't give them away.

Adolf: 2nd class, but I strong-armed the adjutant. (*Going*) Nice to see you again. I left my portfolio somewhere.

Ernst: Wait.

Adolf: Why?

Ernst: Up there...

Adolf: Up there's up there.

Ernst: You convinced me.

Adolf: (*Going*) Thanks.

Ernst: Adolf. I'm interested in one thing. To give my combat vets a voice in running the country.

Adolf: Good luck with that.

Ernst: You like my men?

Adolf: Pretty easy crowd.

Ernst: Strapping lads, ain't they? Hardened graduates of violence and aggro. What do you think of the outfits? I stole 'em from the Imperial Army stores. We ain't got no colonies no more, so they ain't gonna miss 'em. I think brown works quite well –

Adolf: You want something from me, sir?

Ernst: I miss the war. The lawlessness. Germans have forgotten how to hate, don't you think? Feminine whining's taken over from masculine anger.

Adolf: Why are you –?

Ernst: People have to be re-taught. You said it – Germany's at war with itself. But soon we'll be at war with our real enemies again. I see hatred in you, Adolf. You're full of it. Think of me as a talent spotter.

Adolf: I've got a job, ta. Got my counter revolutionary training from the Freecorps after the Commies were booted out. They pay me to visit groups like this – militias, new parties. See who can be enrolled in the counter-revolution. During the day I paint.

Ernst: You what?

Adolf: You remember? I'm an artist. I'm going to be a... an artist.

Ernst: No. What? No. You're gonna speak for my men.

Adolf: If the Communists paid me, I'd speak for them.

Ernst: Eh?

Adolf: War changed everything, Ernst. (*Starts real but then deliberately builds into rabble-rousing demagoguery*) The trouble with the Sozis isn't that they're too radical. It's that they're not radical enough! On the fields of Belgium, I watched ordinary, working men suffer and die, unnoticed and unrewarded. They were the ones who laid down their lives so those who exploit us could lie down on horsehair mattresses! While we're thankful for horseflesh soup!

Ernst: What the fuck are you –?

The Brownshirts are alert, troubled

Adolf: It's only through a class-led, proletarian revolution, like the one that's happened in Russia, that power can ever be wrenched out of the hands of the entrenched bourgeoisie! (*Suddenly normal*) See? I can spin it whichever way you like.

Ernst: You're a Commie?

Adolf: Would've joined 'em –

Ernst: Well, you'd better sodding well keep that under your hat in here –

Adolf: If the bastards had let me –

Ernst: They wouldn't?

Adolf: Rejected me. Fucking cretins.

Ernst: (*Laughing*) Fucking idiots.

Adolf: Now I detest them and everything they stand for.

Ernst: (*To the Brownshirts*) Alright, lads.

The Brownshirts disperse

Adolf: This is how I subsidise my painting.

Ernst: You ain't an artist now, Adolf.

Adolf: But it was you who told me – ten years ago –

Ernst: Well, baby, like you say, war changed everything. There ain't no time for artists now.

Adolf: But why else was I saved? To live the rest of my life remembering the dead boys? What kind of torture is that? I was saved to avenge every last one of them –

Ernst: That's what I'm saying –!

Adolf: No more pretty pictures of tourist spots.

Ernst: Exactly!

Adolf: Now I paint war. I paint trenches. I paint moonscape.

Ernst: Jesus fucking Christ.

Adolf: Before, I worked as a whore, but I'm too old for that now – and anyway very few people have got that kind of spare cash –

Ernst: Why the fuck are you telling me this?

Adolf: Why not? You think I've got a reputation to lose? It was pretty specialised – niche market – S&M, humiliation, role-play, scat –

Ernst: Scat?

Adolf: Shit.

Ernst: Aye aye aye! Mother of Jesus. You sad fuck.

Adolf: You believe the act? Well, good. You think I'm hard? Fabulous. I want to kill myself, actually. Only I'm too scared.

Ernst: You fucking princess! You pathetic pansy. You nelly!

Adolf: Yes! I'm all those things! I thought I was gonna be great. I'm thirty-two and I've achieved nothing. What the hell is going to become of me?

Ernst: Pull yourself together, for fuck's sake.

Adolf: *(Crying)* Why? Why the fuck should I?

Ernst: Get a grip, man! Listen. Maybe this is news to you, but you're one hell of a good actor. What you pulled off in front of the men was, frankly, spectacular.

Adolf: Spec –?

Ernst: Fuck yeah. You think they're an easy crowd? They'd rather kill you than listen to you.

Adolf: This lot?

Ernst: You got inside them.

Adolf: Piece of piss.

Ernst: You expressed their desires, their fears. You're electric, Adolf. Maybe you don't realise it. Your eyes, your eyes are like two great searchlights –

Adolf: Are they?

Ernst: Piercing blue, and ablaze with passion. You've got an immense talent.

Adolf: Yes! For painting –!

Ernst: Christ, Gloria! *(Slaps Adolf)* Not for painting! *(Shakes Adolf)*

Adolf: Get off me! Leave me alone!

Ernst: *(Grabs the protesting Adolf, throws him over his knee and beats him)* I ain't saying you're a sad fuck because you're a whore. I love whores. My best friends are whores. You're pathetic because anyone with a big dick or a cute

arse can be a whore. You've got something no one else I've ever seen has got, and you squander it.

Adolf: (*Struggling free*) Get off me, you fucking savage. I'll show you what I've got.

Adolf has gone. He immediately reappears with his tattered portfolio

Look. Here. See?

Ernst: Yeah, they're bullshit.

Ernst tears up a painting

Bullshit.

Adolf: What the fuck...?

Ernst: Well, alright, that one ain't so bad. Yeah, it is. It's bullshit.

Tears another

Adolf: Stop! Wait! Ernst! No!

Ernst is scrunching up the paintings one by one

Ernst: Trite.

Balls them, bats them to the Brownshirts, who play football with them

Contrived.

Adolf: You have any idea how long it took me to –?

Ernst: Small-minded.

Adolf: How the fuck dare you –?

Ernst: Derivative.

Adolf: God! Please!

Ernst: Regressive.

Manfred: Need any help, boss?

Ernst: No, thanks, doll, everything's fine.

Adolf: (*Looking at the paintings on the floor*) What the fuck have you done?!

Ernst: You're too old for art school, and a whore past her sell-by date ain't no bowl of onions, dear. You're a politician. You're Siegfried, my friend. Germany's Siegfried.

Adolf: What the fuck are you talking about? I'm not blond, for fucks – I'm not brave – I'm not even German! How could I possibly be a politician? People know me as a not-very-high-class rent boy.

Ernst: We'll deal with that. We can rewrite that later. Anyway, in my world, being queer's a positive.

Adolf: Yeah, right! For Friedrich, or for Alexander maybe. Not for me.

Ernst: Christ! The self-pity!

Adolf: No – realism. Haven't you seen what the press do to anyone who –

Ernst: Fuck the press. We're gonna change that too. Look, we agree on one thing, Adolf. War made everything different. I was faced with machine guns, and I realised life's far too short to spend it in hiding. These days I'm proud to be an invert. I ain't no Hirschfield-style, limp-wristed, ghetto-living hairdresser. Ain't no soft, self-indulgent nelly. But a butt-loving pervert – a queer warrior. What I saw in you – that's what I'm after in a man. Pride and arrogance. A man who can brawl, swing a bat and smash windows. Men who'll kill and maim for the sheer joy of it. Queers outstrip breeders in that department by miles. Queer energy is revolutionary energy.

Adolf: (*Looking to the Brownshirts*) What? – You mean...?

Ernst: You think this lot fuck women? Please! Manfred's my sweetheart. That one's my ex. I'd guess the blond in the corner's my next. Yeah, most people would say I'm immoral, but in my experience most people's morals are full of shit. I say the closest thing on earth to heaven is a day in Berlin's Turkish bathhouses. I say repeal Paragraph 175. I say fuck blokes, have a lover and see whores on the side. You see what I'm offering you, Adolf? A way out. A life. My undying friendship. I'll throw in Manfred too, if you like – as long as you promise you ain't gonna go all nelly over him. What do you say? I'll be your master, kiddo, I'll be your slave – whichever way you want it. And I promise you it'll be like it was in '14 – just like you like it – all men together. We'll put you in your marching boots and we'll get you moving again. Give you some pride in yourself and butch you up. Anything's possible with my sexy, well-disciplined, ruthless visionaries behind you. And believe me, lover, if you're loyal to us, we'll be loyal to you. Forever. For Germany.

Brownshirts: For Germany!

The Brownshirts have come forward and again lift Adolf

Adolf: Put me down! Stop it!

Brownshirts: Where to, boss?

Ernst: Let's take him to meet Drexler.

Adolf: Ernst, I'm not happy being manhandled like this –

Ernst: You'll like Drexler. Formed a new group called the German Workers' Party. Come on, lads. They'll be in the Happy Sausage.

Adolf: The Happy Sausage? That's a –

Ernst: A queer bar, yeah. Would you rather meet him in a teashop?

Adolf: Wait. Ernst. What do you get out of this?

Ernst: I told you. I'm just looking for a chance to give my boys a voice –

Adolf: No. You personally.

Ernst: Me? I get mindless violence. Bigger and better mindless violence.

The Brownshirts cheer, and carry Adolf to the door

Maybe you'll like a bit of that yourself? You mentioned S&M –

Adolf: What the fuck? Everyone has to know?

Ernst: But you said you don't care.

Adolf: Well, I *didn't*...

Ernst laughs, as they all go off together

Scene Five – Wagner

A year later

The main room of Adolf's cramped apartment in the Thierschstrasse, 1923

A piano has been squeezed in

The radio is on

Adolf wears riding britches, a quirt and a 'German shepherd'

He is making a noose with a thick rope

IF YOU'D LIKE TO READ THE REST OF THIS PLAY PLEASE CONTACT
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