

BONHOFFER'S COST

BY
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With
Tim Gregory

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CHARACTERS

DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

37; a pastor, theologian, writer, and agent in the Abwehr, a military counter intelligence agency

KLAUS KLOPSTOCK

A prison guard and corporal in the German Army

JUDGE ADVOCATE ROTT

40; Prosecutor for the German Military War Court

HANS DOHNANYI

40; Dietrich's brother-in-law, an Abwehr lawyer

MARIA VON WEDEMEYER

18; Dietrich's fiancée, an aristocrat

CHARLOTTE FRIEDENTHAL

18; A pregnant Jewess in hiding.

KLAUS BONHOEFFER

40; Dietrich's brother. A lawyer.

MAETZ

A condemned prisoner

The play can be performed with a cast of six; Maria and Charlotte can be played by one actor. Klaus Bonhoeffer and Maetz can be played by one actor.

NOTES

Much of the action takes place in Dietrich Bonhoeffer's cell, the Interrogation Room, and the Visitation Room at Tegel Prison, Berlin, 1943-45. The Interrogation Room and the Visitation Room are simply suggested, perhaps using the same space. The noisy environment of prison should be selectively created.

There is no break in the action between scenes. The lighting should cross fade. No black outs!

The opening scene should be performed by all the actors on a backstage microphone whilst the stage is dark.

In the dark – urgent pounding on a far off door.

MAN'S VOICE

Dietrich! Dietrich – wake up – wake up – Dietrich!

DIETRICH'S VOICE

What? What is it?

MAN'S VOICE

Quickly – get up – get up – they're here – quickly, you must –

WOMAN'S VOICE

Quickly! You can slip out the back door – Father will stall them –

More insistent pounding.

MAN'S VOICE

Hurry, Dietrich, please – out the back –

Muffled angry male voices. A disorienting light flashes into the audience's eyes while the stage remains in darkness.

DIETRICH'S VOICE

No. No. We always knew this was a possibility –

MAN'S VOICE

Dietrich! You have to save yourself –

DIETRICH

It's all right. We know what to do. It's all right.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Is it worth dying for? Is it? Is it?

Footsteps – coming closer.

A metal door slams. Lights up. A small, stark prison cell. The metal door has a slot. A plank bed with a bare mattress and a dirty sheet, a table, a low stool and a bucket. Through a small barred window high up on a wall, evening light streams in.

DIETRICH BONHOEFFER, 37, coolly observes his surroundings. He wears an expensive coat and frameless glasses.

He walks over to the bucket – horrified, he realizes what it is. He sits on the bed. The stench of the sheet revolts him, he casts it aside.

He spots the small window and drags the stool over to climb on and peers out...

A small loaf of bread is thrust through the door slot and lands on the filthy floor.

Disgusted, he turns back to the window. But he is hungry. He retrieves the bread and brushes it off. He sits on the stool. He stands and takes off his coat. He finds his handkerchief, spreads it on his lap, cracks open the loaf, and carefully begins eating only the inside of the bread.

DIETRICH

A little wine would be nice.

He's gouging what he can from inside the shell. When he's done, he contemplates what to do with the crust – surely not the bucket – he spots the slot in the door and pushes the crust through it. He's momentarily pleased with this action. Then he's not so sure. He notices something on the wall, goes closer to read it.

DIETRICH

"In a hundred years what difference will it make?"

Off stage a guard shouts "Lights out!" Dietrich is plunged in darkness. He lies down in his coat. No good. He struggles out of the coat and fashions a pillow. No good. He uses the coat as a blanket.

We hear sobbing from another cell. Dietrich sits up – listens. Finally he curls into a ball and pulls the coat over his head.

Dawn. A key rattles in the lock, The door swings opened. CORPORAL KLOPSTOCK holds a tin mug.

A haunted restless exhaustion hangs about Klopstock. Nonetheless, he doesn't miss a thing.

Dietrich bolts up, lost. He fumbles for his glasses. Klopstock comes into focus. Mortified, Dietrich jumps up. Klopstock thrusts the tin cup at him.

KLOPSTOCK

Drink it hot, it's even shittier when it's cold.

Dietrich complies - it's wretched. Klopstock picks up the bucket.

KLOPSTOCK

You gotta leave your bucket here -

Indicates next to the door, as he walks out. We hear him dumping the contents into a container while he continues talking. Dietrich - humiliated.

KLOPSTOCK

So's I don't have to come in. I know you didn't know that, but now you do know it, so you know where I'll be expecting that bucket a.m. tomorrow. Oh - and don't put the bucket in front of the door, because when I open the door...

DIETRICH

I am Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Herr ... Herr?

Dietrich presents himself with a heel click, a short bow, and extends his hand. Klopstock doesn't take it.

KLOPSTOCK

Klopstock.

DIETRICH

Herr Klopstock.

Klopstock clicks his heels.

DIETRICH

You're from Wetting.

Klopstock - suspicious.

DIETRICH

You're accent - I taught there a long time ago.

KLOPSTOCK

And survived it?

DIETRICH

You are a soldier. Have you been here long?

KLOPSTOCK

I got a steel plate in my head.

He knocks on it.

KLOPSTOCK

It's not so bad. Except for when I knock on it.
I got reassigned to this hell hole. Could be worse, could
of been one of the camps. At least it's in Berlin.

DIETRICH

Are all the guards here soldiers?

KLOPSTOCK

The gimp brigade. But we're still tough.

DIETRICH

And the prisoners? They are mainly soldiers, too?

Klopstock ascertains no one is at the door.

KLOPSTOCK

Traitor scum, deserters, thieves, murderers 'n fuck.
Sorry I said shit. We don't get a lot of your kind. We're
sorta laying odds on why you're in here.

Dietrich - non committal.

KLOPSTOCK

Me? I don't really give a fuck. You a member of the Party?

DIETRICH

Are you?

Klopstock - non committal.

KLOPSTOCK

Some of us figure they're hiding you for your own
protection.

Dietrich drains the tin cup and hands it to Klopstock.

DIETRICH

Thank you for the coffee. It was certainly ersatz.

KLOPSTOCK

I don't know about that. It's fake. It's not even coffee.

DIETRICH

You may remove this sheet. It is foul.

He holds it with two fingers towards Klopstock.

KLOPSTOCK

Why are you here?

Dietrich - non committal.

KLOPSTOCK

Huh, well, I'm not no servant. This ain't no hotel.

Klopstock exits, locking in Dietrich and the sheet.

Goosesteps. Time is passing. Dietrich paces, picking up speed in a cross fade to the Interrogation Room. A banner - a Nazi eagle gripping a swastika in its talons - unfurls behind a desk and an ostentatious chair. On the desk lies a thin folder, a pen. A straight back chair sits in front of the desk. Somewhere nearby sits a large file case.

JUDGE ADVOCATE ROTT, observant, mild mannered, surveys the room, moves the straight back chair off to the side. He checks his watch and sits in the armchair.

Dietrich propels into the Interrogation Room, his hands crossed at the wrists to indicate he's shackled.

DIETRICH

I am 15 days in that abysmal cell! 15 days. I have been shown no warrant! I have been denied access to my lawyer! I demand immediate resolution! *I am not a criminal!*

ROTT

Rott. Judge Advocate Manfred Rott.

DIETRICH

I apologize.

ROTT

You're eager to expedite a resolution to this matter?

DIETRICH

Yes. I've done nothing wrong.

ROTT

Then you should have no problems. Have a seat. Tell me about the Abwehr.

DIETRICH

I am a courier in the Abwehr. Am I to remain shackled-

ROTT

Now why would you be working for a military counter intelligence agency?

DIETRICH

The Abwehr works with all kinds of degenerates. Communists, homosexuals, gypsies, Catholics, Jews.

Rott heaves the heavy file case up on the desk.

ROTT

We've has been tracking you since 1933. 11 years.

DIETRICH

I know that.

At least allow me to let my family know that I'm alive!

ROTT

You're one of 8 children, yes?

DIETRICH

Seven. My oldest brother, Walter, was killed at the front in 1918.

ROTT

Your family's contributions to Germany are well known.

Rott relishes Dietrich's angst. He snaps open a folder.

ROTT
(reading)

From the Clerics in the German Lutheran Church to the Catholic Church in Rome: We request your help in this war to bring about a just and lasting peace. We are aware that international Protestant Churches are devoting keen consideration to this peace and believe it would carry great weight if a German protestant cleric (**He indicates Dietrich**) be enabled to hold discussions with the Catholic Church in Rome and with Protestant Churches in Geneva.

(beat)

Well, Pastor?

DIETRICH

Your Honor, the letter means the opposite of what it says. The Abwehr is after all, a *counter* intelligence agency. In Rome, I would pretend to be talking about peace aims, when in fact I would be gleaning where the Allies were weak and something of their plans.

ROTT

Ah. Where are the Allies weak? What are their plans?

DIETRICH

I could not say. I did not make that trip to Rome.

Rott pulls a passport from the folder and leafs through it.

ROTT

You're right, of course. But when we inspected his office, your superior, Colonel Oster, tried to shove this letter down his pants.

DIETRICH

Undoubtedly he feared it would be misinterpreted. Which it has been!

ROTT

Well, that explains it. Thank you, Herr Pastor.

Rott writes.

DIETRICH

...You're releasing me?

ROTT

(not looking up)

Is solitary confinement not agreeing with you?

DIETRICH

It's been a good spiritual Turkish bath.

ROTT

I'm releasing you back to your spiritual Turkish bath.

DIETRICH

Heil Hitler!

Rott continues writing until Dietrich leaves.

Dietrich returns to his cell, the door slamming behind him. Nighttime. Moonlight.

DIETRICH

(to himself)

A bath would be a profound experience. A long soak. A good scrub. Bubbles. And a beautiful, sleek, white...cigarette. A pack of them. A carton -

Off stage we hear a boy begging, "No. No." Dietrich tries to see out the slot in the door. We hear a loud thud. Silence. Dietrich curls into a ball.

Interrogation Room. A figure sits tethered to the straight back chair now in front of the desk, a potato sack over his head. The figure's head nods off. Rott stomps his foot. The figure jerks awake.

FIGURE

I need to go to the toilet!

I need to go to the toilet!

Rott checks his watch. He removes the potato sack and the shackles. HANS VON DOHNANYI, disoriented, squints against the light.

HANS

My wife. My wife knows nothing -

Rott viciously twists Hans' ear. He checks his watch, looks expectantly towards the door. Dietrich appears, shackled. Rott feigns surprise.

ROTT

Herr Pastor? You're early. The incompetence of this prison staff! Well, come in.

Dietrich and Hans lock eyes.

HANS

Hello Dietrich. How are you?

DIETRICH

I am well, Hans. And you?

HANS

I have never been better.

ROTT

Thank you Herr Dohnanyi, you've been most helpful.

Hans stands up on wobbly legs. His pants are wet. He shuffles out with as much dignity as he can.

ROTT

And I'll make certain your wife is well looked after.

DIETRICH

Why would you arrest Cristel? Why would you arrest my sister? I demand to see a warrant -

ROTT

No warrant has been issued! You are held under emergency powers for matters effecting national security! I can hold you *indefinitely*.

Have a seat.

I don't make the laws Herr Pastor. I am not the enemy. I believe you deserve better than a cell at Tegel prison. I suspect you're involved in a situation which under normal circumstances would be repugnant to you. We aren't in normal circumstances- one could posit God is testing us to our limits, yes? ...Why are you here?

DIETRICH

I don't know. All that has ever concerned me is trying to follow where Jesus leads me.

ROTT

You've taken a wrong turn. Nonetheless, you have the power to expedite this matter, for the sake of your loved ones. There is a stench within the Abwehr. An unsavory element who would put their own safety above the safety of the German people. I need the names of the colonels, admirals and generals who are leaking strategy to our enemies. Hans Dohnanyi has supplied me with some names - I'd like to compare your lists. We need to move quickly before these traitors betray our leader and our people.

DIETRICH

My work never brought me near any generals, unsavory or not.

ROTT

I don't understand.

DIETRICH

I wasn't important enough.

ROTT

I thought you were sincere. I thought you wanted to expedite this matter. I'll be forced to turn this investigation over to the Gestapo. I wouldn't wish that on my worst enemy.

DIETRICH

The Gestapo has no jurisdiction over the Abwehr!

ROTT

Ah, so you know the law. Then again, Hans Dohnanyi is a lawyer. As is your brother Klaus and your sister's husband Rudiger...I lied, you know. I can't promise Cristel will be well looked after, that is out of my hands.

DIETRICH

Would you have me lie? Make up names?

ROTT

Herr Pastor, all that has ever concerned me is seeking the truth.

He opens a thick folder and reads.

ROTT

Is Germany not good enough for you?

DIETRICH

Excuse me?

ROTT

All this *travel*.

DIETRICH

I was employed by the World Alliance of Christian Churches
— throughout the 30s.

ROTT

Why is that important?

DIETRICH

It's not! It has nothing to do with my case —

ROTT

No — I mean, why is an alliance of churches important?

DIETRICH

Jesus!

ROTT

Did you just use the Lord's name in vain?

DIETRICH

Jesus unites *all* Christians in all countries.

ROTT

And why is that important?

DIETRICH

United thru Jesus, we are called to work out our conflicts
peacefully.

ROTT

And years later the Abwehr finds you *pacifists* crucial to
our war effort?

DIETRICH

Pacifist? I work for Hitler!

ROTT

Meanwhile, when you're not bouncing around the globe you're teaching, preaching and writing books. And according to the Gestapo, making a nuisance of yourself...1938. You become eligible for military service and... immediately apply for a one-year visa to America. New York.

DIETRICH

I was already committed to church business.

ROTT

The Gestapo thinks you were committed to avoiding your military duty.

DIETRICH

I caught the last ship home before the war started. I realized I had to share in the trials of this time with my people.

ROTT

So naturally you enlisted -

DIETRICH

I awaited my call up.

ROTT

God willed you to race home to kill time until we called for you? What did you do in the meantime?

DIETRICH

I was writing a large academic piece.

ROTT

A book? But Herr Pastor, by then, the Gestapo banned you from writing books.

DIETRICH

I had been banned from *publishing* books. I was writing this for my own edification.

ROTT

What else occupied you while you killed time waiting to be called up for that which you had raced back here for?

DIETRICH

I ran a bible study group -

ROTT

It was an illegal seminary! And no sooner is it shut down but Hans Dohnanyi snags you an Abwehr job - a brilliant strategy - where better to secrete a troublemaking pacifist than in the heart of military counter intelligence!

DIETRICH

It was *fortuitous* that I was given an opportunity to rehabilitate myself in the eyes of the state - but it came with a great sacrifice on my part.

ROTT

Sacrifice?

DIETRICH

I offered all my international church connections for military use. I entered into duplicity against my friends. I risked my vocation for my country!

ROTT

How proudly you play the holy martyr.

DIETRICH

Herr Rott, I live in constant dread of priding myself on being chosen by God. I struggle to be humble. It does not come easy to me.

ROTT

Because of your class or your great intellect?

DIETRICH

Because I am German.

ROTT

You should have stayed in America.

He motions for Dietrich to leave.

ROTT

Oh - this *book* you were so busy writing for your own edification. What was the topic?

DIETRICH

Ethics.

Rott - amused. Dietrich exits.

Lights up briefly on Dietrich's cell. A hand thrusts a bible through the slot.

The Interrogation Room transforms into the Visitation Room. A plush red love seat. A banner unfurls behind it - Hitler.

A poised, ripe eighteen-year-old beauty, MARIA, enters.

ROTT

Maria. Welcome.

He asks for her hand. Uncertainly, she obliges. He kisses it.

ROTT

I must confess you're prettier than I expected. And younger.

MARIA

Who are you?

ROTT

And I understand congratulations are in order, my dear.

MARIA

Who are you?

ROTT

Pardon me. I'm frankly so enchanted by you -

Again he kisses her hand.

ROTT

I'm Herr Rott. I hope Dietrich knows how lucky he is.

MARIA

It's not official - the engagement. And I am the one who counts myself lucky. Blessed, rather. When can I see -

ROTT

I confess I am a romantic at heart, Maria. I love to hear how people meet.

MARIA

He's a friend of my grandmother's. He was visiting her -

ROTT

In Klein-Krossin?

MARIA

...yes.

ROTT

Go on dear, I interrupted you.

MARIA

I was also visiting. I announced I wanted to be a mathematician and mother said I was a foolish girl, but Pastor Bonhoeffer - he took me seriously.

ROTT

Brains and beauty!

MARIA

We took long strolls around the estate. When I came to Berlin, he invited me to lunch at a restaurant owned by Hitler's brother!

ROTT

My heavens.

MARIA

He said if we wanted to talk freely, there couldn't be a safer place!

ROTT

And what did you talk about?

MARIA

Horses! And Rilke. He doesn't care for Rilke. I love Rilke. Anyway. He was a great comfort to me after my father - and then my brother, died.

ROTT

My condolences, dear Maria.

MARIA

Mother said it was God's will and that I had to accept it, but Pastor Bonhoeffer...*Dietrich* said it wasn't God's doing, that war is man's doing, never God's.

ROTT

War is a difficult business. Necessary, of course.

MARIA

Of course. My father and my brother were Cavalry officers.

ROTT

They died heroically. I hope mother isn't disappointed that you're engaged to a man who has done no military service.

MARIA

Mother thinks the difference in our ages is too great.

ROTT

But you're so mature! She isn't upset by Pastor Bonhoeffer's work?

MARIA

I'm not sure how much she knows about Dietrich's work. I've been reading his books - well, trying to -

ROTT

I meant his other work.

MARIA

I suppose I have much to learn. We don't know each other very well, you see. We only met 5 months ago. And then he was gone on business most of the time. We've never even kissed!

Her hand flies to her mouth.

Dietrich enters, shackled. He nearly rejoices when he sees Maria, but then he spots Rott.

DIETRICH

God.

Maria rises. She's stunned by the shackles and by Dietrich's ruffled appearance.

MARIA

Oh, my beloved you!

She rushes to embrace him.

ROTT

Ah, dear. No touching.

Maria - confused.

DIETRICH

He hasn't harmed you, has he?

ROTT

You'll have to speak up, Pastor.

Maria realizes Rott is the enemy.

DIETRICH

How are you?

MARIA

I'm well. And you?

DIETRICH

I am very well. How is your mother and your grandmother?

MARIA

They're well. They send their regards. So does Hannibal.

DIETRICH

Ah. Yes. Hannibal. How is Hannibal?

MARIA

He's fine. Our horses are being requisitioned for battle. But not Hannibal - he's too old and fat.

DIETRICH

He's fat?

MARIA

Yes. I stuffed him with...he got fat.

ROTT

Speak louder, dear Maria.

MARIA

HE GOT FAT.

DIETRICH

Ah. Good for Hannibal.

MARIA

I've been planning.

ROTT

Speak up.

MARIA
OUR ENGAGEMENT PARTY. AT OUR ESTATE IN PATZIG. IT'S
GLORIOUS IN AUGUST.

She's trying not to cry. Dietrich reaches for her.

ROTT
No touching - oh well, I'm an old softy. You may kiss. I
insist.

*He watches Maria and Dietrich share their first kiss.
For a moment, they forget Rott.*

MARIA
Why are you here?

*Rott gestures dismissal, the lovers pull apart. The
plush red sofa and Maria vanish.*

*Dietrich returns to his cell. His foot hits a bible
lying on the floor near the door slot. Tenderly he
picks it up - his touchstone. He scrutinizes the
space. He stands on the table to peer out the window.
He jumps down and grabs the filthy sheet from under
the bed and begins twisting it tightly - checking its
strength. It's awkward going. He gets back up on the
table with his "rope" and doesn't know what to do.
Suddenly he spots a stub of plumbing pipe jutting out
of the ceiling. He grabs the stool and places it
under the pipe. By now his sheet is unraveled and he
has to twist it up again. He tries to figure out how
to hang himself with the sheet and the pipe. It is
ridiculous and desperate.*

*Key in the door. Dietrich scrambles down just in
time. Klopstock enters. He looks at the oddly placed
stool. He looks at the pipe. He looks at the sheet.*

KLOPSTOCK
We need you in sickbay, Herr Pastor. Last Rites.

DIETRICH
Was it you who returned my bible, Herr Klopstock?

KLOPSTOCK
No.

Klopstock casually picks up the sheet and follows Dietrich out the door.

KLOPSTOCK

It was just something to do.

The Interrogation Room. As Rott enters he tears into a letter. He stops cold as he reads it. In a rage he crumbles it into a ball.

ROTT

How the hell am I supposed to do my job?!

He fumes. An idea strikes him. He smiles. Dietrich enters.

ROTT

Are you the black sheep of your family, Herr Pastor?

DIETRICH

Probably.

ROTT

A shameful embarrassment to your relations?

DIETRICH

I hope not.

ROTT

Your poor mother is beside herself. She has begged your uncle to intercede in your predicament. Don't get your hopes too high. Even Berlin's Chief of Police can't get you out of this mess. I had no idea how well connected you are.

DIETRICH

Of course you did.

ROTT

You may receive letters and one parcel a week from your parents. It's heartbreaking - an elderly couple having to skimp on their rations to send their prisoner son a decent parcel. Not to mention the lovely Maria. So young, Herr Pastor. So delightfully naive. She smells of buds and yet she is fully bloomed.

DIETRICH

I want to cooperate.

ROTT

Who are the chief traitors within the Abwehr?

DIETRICH

We were discussing my military exemption -

ROTT

Do you think I give a shit about your military evasion? Oh, that'll stick - evasion during war time? This Court has hung men for less. And I'm not stupid, Herr Pastor. I know a martyr isn't afraid to hang. He has a reserved spot in the great beyond, yes? But how you can do this to your dear family is... And for what? To protect men who are not motivated to follow where Jesus leads them. Your friends are motivated by what drives most men - Fear. Selfishness. Power.

DIETRICH

I know of no one within the Abwehr who is leaking strategy to our enemies.

ROTT

They hit the jackpot when you walked in their door.

DIETRICH

My job was to use my church connections abroad to glean information.

ROTT

What did you learn?

DIETRICH

When the war was going favorably for us, I probed our enemy's reactions to our military successes. More recently my mission was to garner information about our enemies' intentions.

ROTT

I've read your reports. They're useless. You *thought* your purpose was to meet with your friends - but certainly you dropped off letters along the way.

DIETRICH

I was a courier -

ROTT

I mean unofficial letters. I'm not saying you knew what was in them - probably you did not. Your superiors would have preferred it that way - if you got caught you would be as useless as your reports -

DIETRICH

I didn't -

ROTT

SOLDIERS - WHOLE REGIMENS - HAVE FALLEN BECAUSE OF THESE LEAKS!

DIETRICH

I never delivered unofficial anything to anyone.

ROTT

I don't believe you.

DIETRICH

I find lying detestable, Herr Rott.

ROTT

How do you justify lying to your friends?

DIETRICH

I never technically lied - I simply gathered information from them without their cognizance.

ROTT

You double crossed them.

DIETRICH

It was my job!

Rott freezes mid-snort as the light abruptly changes. Dietrich unshackles himself.

A British flag unfurls. 1940. Dietrich addresses the audience as his associates abroad.

DIETRICH

My friends, I know it seems to you, to the outside world, that all Germans are Nazis. That there is no resistance movement. But the revolt is coming. We have a substantial

DIETRICH (continued)

group of generals ready to overthrow Hitler and take office after a coup de-tat! Can you relay this to Churchill? Get this to Roosevelt? Please help us. Time is running out.

Light change - another meeting - An Swiss flag unfurls. 1942.

DIETRICH

Mr. Churchill states that he does not want any discussions about peace. That he wants unconditional surrender. *But he does not know of our plans!* He does not know how close we are! He must be made aware. Please, please, get our plan to him.

Light change - another meeting - A Swedish flag unfurls. 1943.

DIETRICH

We offer a willingness to accept temporary occupation. But our generals must be assured that the Allies know of our plot and will not destroy us. Please, we can end this insanity. God would have us do this.

He sadly realizes he's not getting through.

Pray for us, my friends.

The light shifts back to Rott.

ROTT

You double crossed your friends? Perhaps you double cross me now. Aren't you breaking a commandment? Or as a chosen man, are you above the commandments?

DIETRICH

What commandment?

ROTT

Thou shall not lie!

DIETRICH

It's - ah - that's not a commandment, Herr Rott.

ROTT

It isn't? Of course it is...it isn't?
Then how about Thou shall not murder! *Regimens*, Herr
Pastor, whole regimens!
There's a stench in this room. Do you seriously think that
delicious young bud is going to marry you?

Dietrich returns to his cell.

DIETRICH
(to himself)

From the moment we learn to speak we are taught that what
we say must be *true*. What does that mean? Does it all
depend on "being good?" In this situation, being good is
not an option. To betray my fellow... to betray them would
not be truthful.

Klopstock carries in an opened box.

KLOPSTOCK

It's been rifled through by the snuffle pig.

DIETRICH

Snuffle pig?

Klopstock makes obscene snufflings.

KLOPSTOCK

Rott. It's been sitting in his office for weeks.

DIETRICH

Not a fan of the Judge?

KLOPSTOCK

He's a craphead.

DIETRICH

I rather likened him to a bloodhound.

KLOPSTOCK

Bloodhounds' good too.

DIETRICH

I like snuffle pig. Next time I stand before His Honor,
I'll remember (***obscene snuffling.***)

Klopstock laughs through a yawn.

DIETRICH

You don't sleep well, do you?

KLOPSTOCK

Used to...

He goes out in the hall, returning with a tin bowl. He watches Dietrich eagerly pull out a quilt from the box. He smells and caresses it. He pulls out a woolen vest and puts it on, luxuriating in it. He pulls out a hairbrush and uses it. He pulls out several books, writing paper, a good pen.

KLOPSTOCK

Look at all this shit. God damn! Sorry.

Klopstock feels the quilt - he's impressed. Dietrich opens a wax paper package - bread - gone moldy.

KLOPSTOCK

Gone moldy, huh? Too bad. At least now you got *guard grub*.

Klopstock pulls an enormous coil of sausage out of the tin.

KLOPSTOCK

All the prisoners who have uncles who are police chiefs get the same grub as the guards. Which would be only you.

For a moment, Dietrich is delighted. But then he returns it to the bowl and hands it to Klopstock.

DIETRICH

Give this to my friend next door.

KLOPSTOCK

Maetz?

DIETRICH

I don't know his name. Maetz?

KLOPSTOCK

A lot of good it's going to do Maetz. They're gonna hang that little piece of traitor shit. Like things aren't going bad enough for our side, huh? He goes and leaks logistics to the damn Russians. Could of got his whole

KLOPSTOCK (continued)
regiment killed. Which they were anyway, but... I can understand a guy killing a guy over something - but to stab your *whole country* in the back...that, that's -

DIETRICH
That's why he cries. I insist you give this sausage to him.

Klopstock bites the sausage.

KLOPSTOCK
You're not from no ruling class in here, Pastor. Not even with your fancy quilt.

DIETRICH
Here - take it.

Klopstock slaps the quilt to the floor.

KLOPSTOCK
Too thick to hang yourself?
Nobody kills themselves on my watch.

DIETRICH
Klopstock, do you have a wife? A girl? No? Well, your loved ones then -

KLOPSTOCK
I don't got no loved ones.

DIETRICH
Well, some day a woman will be lucky enough to find you -

KLOPSTOCK
Crap -

DIETRICH
And then you'll understand. To protect them, I would end my life. And Klopstock, I love my life.

KLOPSTOCK
Why are you here?

DIETRICH
To follow where Jesus Christ leads me.

Klopstock takes a bite of the sausage.

DIETRICH

I don't know. Rott's all over the map - I can't even follow his questioning.

KLOPSTOCK

But you know what you did.

DIETRICH

Not necessarily, Klopstock. I work in counter intelligence.

KLOPSTOCK

No shit! A spy? I always wanted to be a spy. I'd be a good spy. Who were you spying on?

Dietrich - mum.

KLOPSTOCK

Crap.

DIETRICH

Let's just say it hasn't been the holy life that I had mapped out for myself.

KLOPSTOCK

How do I know you're not lying? Just because you're a preacher?

DIETRICH

Preachers lie.

KLOPSTOCK

That's right they do!

Klopstock has no idea if preachers lie. Dietrich laughs.

KLOPSTOCK

Maybe you're not even a preacher, hah? Is that it? Is that your disguise? Preach something.

DIETRICH

What?

KLOPSTOCK

How the hell would I know?

DIETRICH

"You have heard it said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But Jesus says to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who abuse and persecute you."

KLOPSTOCK

You love Rott? He's prosecuting you.

DIETRICH

Persecuting.

KNOBOCH

Whatever.

DIETRICH

I pray for -

KLOPSTOCK

Yeah, yeah, but do you love him?

DIETRICH

Nothing we dislike in someone is totally absent in ourselves, Klopstock.

KLOPSTOCK

So you're a crapheaded bloodhounding snuffle pig?

DIETRICH

I understand the Judge's ambition and pride. When men excel at their work they can overlook a lot.

KLOPSTOCK

Yeah. I've cleaned up after some of his work. When I first got here, he was snuffle pigging this Red Chapel Group -

Dietrich - startled.

KLOPSTOCK

You know them?

Dietrich - non comittal.

KLOPSTOCK

Bolshevik traitor scum. By the time he got done with the 75 that survived his interrogations, they were begging to be executed. Which they were. I'm not saying they didn't deserve it, but... bloodhound is better. A bloodhound tracks down some doomed something and runs it into the ground so it's easy to kill. That's Rott.

DIETRICH

Klopstock - Cristel and Hans -

KLOPSTOCK

Not no women at Tegel. And that Dohnanyi guy, Rott transferred him weeks ago. I can't help you. You telling me I got to love Maetz?

DIETRICH

I'm not telling you anything, Klopstock.

KLOPSTOCK

Shit. I'm never getting to heaven.

Dietrich laughs.

KLOPSTOCK

It's true. I could not be that good.

DIETRICH

Good is crap. It's a question of what is being asked of you - and then not shying away from the answer.

KLOPSTOCK

By God. Gods' doing this asking?

Dietrich shrugs.

KLOPSTOCK

See? He's never even let me know He exists, let alone what He expects me to do.

DIETRICH

A shaft of light from heaven would be appreciated?

KLOPSTOCK

You got it. If he's going to recruit me - shaft of light, thunderbolt, flying pigs -

DIETRICH

But see, then you would never grow up, Klopstock. If God dictates what we should do, we remain children. He wants us to become adults. Whether we do or not is up to us.

Klopstock's head is full.

DIETRICH

Did I pass the preacher test?

KLOPSTOCK

See, thing is. Rott? His job is going after traitors..

Klopstock takes the bowl and exits.

Dietrich spreads the blanket out on his bed. Then he eagerly pulls out the books, writing paper and pen. He opens one book to the fly page, but then closes it. He opens the other to the fly page and smiles. He flips to the back page and scans until he finds what he's looking for. He scribbles on a piece of the paper. He flips two pages. He scans and jots something down. He flips two pages. He scans and jots and reads it aloud.

DIETRICH

Say you had no direct dealings with it.

Cross fade as Dietrich shackles himself and returns to the Interrogation Room, where Rott awaits.

ROTT

Tell me about Operation 7.

DIETRICH

I had no direct dealings with it.

Rott freezes as the stage plunges into darkness. 1941. Dietrich pulls a candle from his pocket and lights it.

DIETRICH

Hans?

HANS

Shhh!

Hans comes out of the shadow. He lights a candle from Dietrich's. He wears a Nazi uniform.

HANS

Fraulein? Fraulein Friedenthal?

A young pregnant woman appears. She grips a rolled up coat.

CHARLOTTE

Here.

Dietrich and Hans jump.

CHARLOTTE

I don't bite.

She eyes Han's uniform.

CHARLOTTE

Perhaps I should.

DIETRICH

Charlotte - this is -

HANS

Fraulein, I need you to listen. Your train leaves at 6 A.M. Here is your ticket and money -

CHARLOTTE

Do you have any food?

DIETRICH

Oh, I'm sorry Charlotte, I should have -

HANS

Shhh. This certificate gives you immunity from arrest as you pass through the restricted zones - have it on you at all times.

As he speaks, she unrolls her coat and puts it on. There is a large yellow Star of David on the arm.

HANS

If you are stopped, show it immediately. This lets the Gestapo know that you are serving as an agent in the Abwehr.

CHARLOTTE

I'm not working for the Abwehr! I won't!

DIETRICH

No, no, Charlotte - listen -

CHARLOTTE

Is this a joke? Is this some kind of sick -

DIETRICH

No - Charlotte. It's a lie! It's how we're getting you out. Your father was a dear friend -

CHARLOTTE

My father is dead. Everyone, everyone is -

HANS

Perhaps this was a mistake.

CHARLOTTE

No. Go on.

HANS

This name and address. It is where you will stay once you get through. Memorize it. Now.

She takes the paper and does so.

HANS

If you enter back into Germany we will claim no knowledge of you. Do you understand?

Charlotte hands the paper back to Hans, who proceeds to burn it.

CHARLOTTE

How many of us -

DIETRICH

Fourteen. It started at seven but -

CHARLOTTE

Fourteen.

DIETRICH

A pitiful response. We should have acted sooner, Fraulein.

CHARLOTTE

We Jews should have fled the moment that monster came to power. But who would believe that their own *neighbors* would turn against them.

HANS

When you get to Switzerland – rip that star off your coat, throw it in the garbage. And Fraulein – you tell the world what has gone on here.

Hans pulls out food and offers it.

CHARLOTTE

The cup of wrath will fall on Germany.

She disappears.

DIETRICH

And we will have to drain it to the dregs.

***Dietrich and Hans blow out the candles.
Lights back on Rott in the Interrogation Room.***

ROTT

Dohnanyi said you were *central* to Operation 7. He's not feeling well these days.

DIETRICH

Perhaps that is why Hans is confused. My vague understanding of Operation 7 was to disguise Abwehr agents as Jewish refugees and to settle them in...Switzerland?

ROTT

They were fugitive Jews posing as Abwehr agents.

DIETRICH

Who would suspect Jews of working for the Abwehr?

ROTT

They crucified Christ. Our own Martin Luther chastised them for their arrogance. The *chosen* people? Well, they've been chosen all right. It is divine retribution, Herr Pastor, for thinking they could rule Europe! ***That is Germany's destiny, not the Jews!***

DIETRICH

I had no direct dealings with Operation 7.

Rott nearly strikes Dietrich.

ROTT

You'd like that? You'd like me to make a little Christ out of you.

DIETRICH

Your Honor, Christ was a Jew.

ROTT

How dare you! ...he was? NO! He was?

Dietrich nods. Rott - baffled.

ROTT

Oh, by the way. Your sister Cristel? Useless.

He savors Dietrich's anxiety.

ROTT

I released her of course.

DIETRICH

I am forever grateful to you.

Lights cross fade as Dietrich returns to his cell.

DIETRICH

(to himself)

Herr Rott, you know not who you serve.
A bath would be a profound experience...

A parcel is shoved through the slot. He pulls out a book and deciphers a message.

DIETRICH

Oh God. No. Has it come to this? Oh my friend, my poor dear friend.

He climbs up and looks out the window.

DIETRICH

The audacity of that daffodil growing itself in the prison courtyard! Oh God, thy will be done but if you could see fit - please release poor Hans by Easter...

Cross fade to Visitation Room.

Maria sits on the red plush sofa, a hamper by her side. She jumps up when Klopstock enters.

KLOPSTOCK

He'll be a minute.

MARIA

Who are you?

KLOPSTOCK

Me? Nobody.

She pulls a bunch of white asparagus out of the hamper and offers it to him.

KLOPSTOCK

For me? Wow. Thanks. He almost fell off the bed.

MARIA

What?!

KLOPSTOCK

When I told him you were here.

MARIA

(relieved)

Oh.

KLOPSTOCK

He's combing his hair n' shit. Sorry I said shit. I empty his bucket...

MARIA

Have you ever read his books?

KLOPSTOCK

I got a steel plate in my head.

MARIA

Sanctorum Communio - don't read that one, it's really boring. I'm sure it isn't boring to a theologian. Creation & Fall - that's a good one. And Life & Work. But my favorite is Cost of Discipleship - that one isn't boring at all.

KLOPSTOCK

What's the cost?

MARIA

I wouldn't know, his mother gave me a copy.

Takes Klopstock a minute...

KLOPSTOCK

No, I mean what's the cost of discipleship?

Maria laughs at her mistake. Klopstock joins in, but winces, as it hurts his steel plate.

MARIA

Why do you have a steel plate in your head?

KLOPSTOCK

Stalingrad.

MARIA

I lost my father and my brother at Stalingrad.

KLOPSTOCK/MARIA

Sorry.

MARIA

They say the Allies have landed in Sicily.

KLOPSTOCK

Yeah. Shit.

MARIA

Do you think we'll lose?

Klopstock shrugs.

MARIA

I don't. No one fights like us Germans!

Dietrich enters, shackled.

MARIA

My sweet you!

DIETRICH

Maria!

*She is repulsed by his smell but tries to ignore it.
Dietrich gives Klopstock a "leave already" look.
Klopstock shrugs "can't" and disappears himself into
the corner with his white asparagus.*

MARIA

Herr Rott finally gave me permission to visit. I applied forever ago. I hate him.

DIETRICH

Hating doesn't do any good, Maria.

MARIA

(taken aback)

Sorry...I hope you had a nice Easter.

DIETRICH

I had a splendid little service of my own. Our engagement - it's still just known by our immediate families, yes?

MARIA

Dietrich, our immediate families come to 80 people.

DIETRICH

I'm a bit shy about these things.

MARIA

That's one of the things I like about you. You're all shy and fumbly. I like your parents.

DIETRICH

You met my parents? Oh God. That wasn't too awkward. Meeting your future in-laws while your fiancée is holed up in solitary confinement.

MARIA

The moment your mother greeted me - oh, I fell in love with everything! Your house, your garden, and most of all - your room.

DIETRICH

You were in my room?

MARIA

The desk where you write your books. Your armchair and ashtray - you smoke a lot.

DIETRICH

Not in here.

MARIA

Do you miss it terribly?

DIETRICH

Smoking and thinking are synonymous for me, Maria.

MARIA

Your mother gave me some photos of you.

DIETRICH

Oh dear.

MARIA

I put them under my pillow at night and set them out in front of me in the morning so I see them when I write you.

DIETRICH

Maria - your letters mean so much to me and I'm so sorry I can not write back.

MARIA

It was odd at first. But it's getting easier. Anyway, I tell them -

DIETRICH

Who?

MARIA

The photos. I tell them lots of things. Lots of "later ons." I think about "later ons" all day long if the truth be told! I can't help it! I've been making eyes at our carpenter!

Dietrich's alarm makes her laugh.

MARIA

I want to get him to make a bookshelf. For our *home*, silly.

DIETRICH

Oh!

MARIA

And there's a chest of drawers at Grandmother's that I love. The dining room is a problem - I just hate a sideboard, and a really decent cupboard is impossible to find now.

Dietrich swells with love and reaches for her hand.

MARIA

(to Klopstock)

Are we allowed?

KLOPSTOCK

Are you talking to me?

MARIA

To touch?

KLOPSTOCK

What? Oh. Why not? Yeah. Hurry up and...touch.

He tries to disappear himself even more. Dietrich and Maria hold hands.

MARIA

Dietrich - how lovely our life will be!

DIETRICH

Oh, Maria -

MARIA

August. Let's get married this August.

Klopstock coughs and indicates to Dietrich that it's time for Maria to go. Dietrich begs for a little time.

DIETRICH

(To Maria)

If you don't mind, I have a few requests - things I rather desperately need. My heels are going -

MARIA

Oh my. That won't do.

DIETRICH

Could you tell mother I need my brown boots.

MARIA

Your brown boots.

DIETRICH

And bootlaces - long ones.

MARIA

Long bootlaces.

DIETRICH

And shoe polish.

MARIA

Brown?

DIETRICH

Yes. And writing paper - I always need writing paper.

MARIA

I shall scavenge reams of it. Is that all?

DIETRICH

Ink. And...sewing things - I seem to... oh! And a clothes brush. And a towel. And a face cloth.

MARIA

Soap?

DIETRICH

Yes, definitely soap.

MARIA

Definitely.

DIETRICH

And it's getting so warm - a cotton shirt and short socks would be wonderful.

MARIA

Cotton shirt. Short socks. Do they make socks short?

DIETRICH

Oh - a couple pairs of short...

MARIA

Short? Short what?

DIETRICH

...Underpants.

MARIA

Right. Right. Of course. Underpants.

DIETRICH

And my lightweight brown suit. For my trial.

MARIA

You have done nothing - why would you need a trial?

KLOPSTOCK

Ah - yeah, it's time. Sorry.

***Maria and the red plush sofa are whisked away.
Dietrich remains as the Visitation Room transforms
into the Interrogation Room. Rott is hot, wipes his
brow. One arm is in a sling.***

ROTT

I've missed our little chats, Herr Pastor.

DIETRICH

You instruct me in the art of patience, your Honor.

ROTT

Your superiors have been taking up my time. Canaris. Oster.
Beck.

DIETRICH

A general.

ROTT

I thought you didn't know any generals.

DIETRICH

Of course I know *of* him.

ROTT

They're scared old men. Spilling their guts all over. And
then there is the unfortunate Dohnanyi...who has contracted
diphtheria.

DIETRICH

Yes -

Rott looks sharp.

DIETRICH

It doesn't surprise me. Hans has always had a weak constitution.

Dietrich's looks at Rott's arm.

ROTT

I could lie and say I injured myself in some valiant effort. But I ran into a wall during last night's black out. We live in dangerous times. Herr Pastor. The laws of our Homeland have altered considerably these past 10 years. They've had to. Laws are, of course, foremost for the purpose of security. For example, once you were considered a mere nuisance - now those same activities are viewed as treasonous.

DIETRICH

There is a statute of limitations. What does my ancient history have to do with my -

ROTT

What if you still subscribe to those ancient beliefs?

DIETRICH

It is not only laws which change. People change. I am not the man I was. Are you?

ROTT

I want to go back to 1933.

DIETRICH

I'm sure you do. It was an electrifying year, 1933.

ROTT

Hitler lifted us up from the sewer of our disgrace. He appealed to our courage, our patriotism. He saw what needed to be done - and he did it. Address the Jewish threat. Begin rearmament. Reclaim our rightful place as the leader of Europe. And in the midst of this, our Fuhrer, Herr Pastor, enveloped the German Protestant Church.

He hands a page to Dietrich.

ROTT

Aloud.

DIETRICH

It's ancient history.

ROTT

Humor me.

DIETRICH

There are three ways in which the church should act toward the state. The first course is to question the state as to whether its actions are legitimate. Secondly, the church has an unconditional obligation toward the victims of any social order, even when those victims do not belong to the Christian community. The third course is not only to bind up the victims under the wheel, but to jam a spoke in the wheel itself.

I never jammed a spoke in the wheel.

ROTT

But not for lack of trying!

Rott freezes. Light change. Gregorian chant. A pulpit, with a cross hanging behind it. 1933. A young, nervous, inexperienced Dietrich speaks.

DIETRICH

The state is going against the Gospel! Hitler has appointed a new bishop who is rewriting Holy Scripture. The Nazis are beginning to dictate our faith! We must not remain silent in the face of such heresy. Who will join me in speaking out?

He eagerly awaits response. A Swastika banner unfurls from the front of the pulpit.

DIETRICH

The state now demands we employ the Aryan Clause! The state insists we purge our ranks of pastors of Jewish heritage, even though they have converted?! We must resign in solidarity with our Jewish brethren. Who is with me?

He awaits response.

Now we hear harsh cheering mixed in with the Gregorian chanting as two Swastika banners unfurl on either side of the cross.

The state has burned the Jewish businesses and synagogues. The Torah, *the word of God*, has been desecrated. The state has murdered 92 Jews! Thousands more have been rounded up. No one seems to know where they are! Our silence makes us complicit. We purport to follow Jesus? *Jesus was a man of action!*

He awaits response. And now Goosesteps are added to the mix as a purple/white flag with a Christian Cross and a Swastika unfurls and covers the cross.

Yes, if we try to stop these atrocities, we may be the next victims. But are we so invested in our own survival as a church that we forget what our church stands for? Are we so invested in our own human survival that we abandon our souls? Only those who will speak out have any right to Gregorian chant!

He is drowned out by the roaring mob. The pulpit disappears and we are back to Rott in the Interrogation Room.

ROTT

Nobody wanted to hear you – not in Germany – *that* was the real reason for all your traveling! And it wasn't just our desire to protect ourselves from the Jewish threat that insulted you – No. No, You had yet *another* agenda!

Rott freezes. Light shift -the flag of Denmark unfurls. 1934.

DIETRICH

How does peace come about? Through political treaties? Through universal "peaceful" rearmament? Through wars we perceive as ordained by God? Through none of these, for the single reason that in all of them peace is confused with *safety*. There is no way to peace along the way of safety! For peace must be dared! Peace can never be made safe! *Peace is the opposite of security!*

God is not to be identified with the false idol of national security!

DIETRICH (continued)

Which of us can say he knows what it might mean for the world if one nation should meet the aggressor, not with weapons in hand, but praying defenseless, and for that very reason protected by a bulwark never failing.

The hour is late. The world is choked with weapons and dreadful is the distrust that looks out of all men's eyes. The trumpets of war may blow tomorrow. What are we waiting for?

***He waits expectantly. He deflates in despair.
Light shift - Back to Rott.***

ROTT

I want to understand.

DIETRICH

You want an execution.

ROTT

I do want to understand you. You say you follow where Christ leads you. What if He leads you away from our Fuhrer?

DIETRICH

When forced to choose, I must follow Christ.

ROTT

The Jew?

DIETRICH

The Jew.

ROTT

Herr Pastor - this is your lucky day! What do you think?

DIETRICH

You're releasing me from Tegel this afternoon and throwing me a party.

ROTT

You so demonize me. It is yourself who has brought on your predicament.

DIETRICH

I don't deny that.

ROTT

Someone in your well-connected family knows the head of the Army legal defense. I have been instructed...*commanded* to ignore your *political* aggressions. You see, I was probing for my own edification - and confine my investigation to Abwher irregularities. Congratulations, simple pastor. I am forced to conclude my inquiries.

DIETRICH

I am to be charged?

ROTT

Oh, you are to be charged!

DIETRICH

And when am I to know what I -

ROTT

When I finish preparing my indictment.

DIETRICH

And when will -

ROTT

Not long ago you thanked me for teaching you patience! The stench floats all the way to the top. I see that now. Someday the *truth* will come to light. It might come about while I *labor* over my indictment.

A bomb explodes nearby. Rott cowers. Dietrich does not flinch. Rott sees him and scrambles up, shaken. An air raid alarm sounds as Dietrich calmly returns to his cell. Night. We hear whimpering from unseen prisoners.

DIETRICH

(calls out)

It's almost over. It won't be long now.

A traumatized Klopstock bursts through the door.

KLOPSTOCK

Stinkin' British. Assholes. God fucking damn! Sorry I said - some of those guards, they act like real babies. And the prisoners - pathetic. They don't know what terror is. *I wish to God we had an air raid shelter!*

KLOPSTOCK (continued)

Why don't we have an air raid shelter! Why do they leave us like this why do they leave us like this why do they -

DIETRICH

It's almost over, Klopstock.

Klopstock draws near Dietrich.

Visitation Room. Maria digs in the hamper and hands a big red tomato to Klopstock. She sits by Dietrich.

MARIA

The potatoes and turnips are bursting in the heat!

DIETRICH

So am I, thinking of you! I have news.

MARIA

I have news.

DIETRICH

Ladies first.

MARIA

Well. Things are getting a little crowded in Patzig - mother has taken in 15 Berliners - to escape the bombing... she begged your parents to come down -

DIETRICH

They must.

MARIA

They'll never abandon you. Dietrich, I've moved in with them.

Dietrich - stunned.

MARIA

You might as well be happy about it. Now what's your news?

DIETRICH

Maria, I don't know what to say -

MARIA

Yeah yeah yeah. What's your news?

DIETRICH

I'm going to be charged!

Maria - horrified.

DIETRICH

No, it's a good thing because then I'll go to trial -

MARIA

When?

DIETRICH

Right after, I'm sure. And then I'll be free. To... move in with you and my parents.

They embrace.

MARIA

What will you be charged with?

DIETRICH

Very little!

MARIA

Oh Dietrich! You're as dear to me as Father was!

Dietrich cringes.

MARIA

What?

DIETRICH

I'd like to think that you...

MARIA

What?

DIETRICH

Think differently about me than your -

MARIA

Oh, I do. Of course I do.

DIETRICH

When I was your age -

MARIA

You sound like Mother -

DIETRICH

Oh dear. When I was... 18 all I cared about was studying and... you're the youth I never was, Maria. That's why you're so - when you said yes to me, it gave me the courage to stop saying no to my *desires* and...I feel I've been granted a gift I'd really given up hope of. And now - my heart is open and brimming over with desire and gratitude and desire and...

He's fumbling to hold her.

MARIA

I think you should know -

DIETRICH

What should I know?

MARIA

I do horrible things. Sometimes I get up in the night and dance wildly around the drawing room and then I sleep all the next morning. But you should know sometimes it happens of its own accord. And I've smoked a cigar. Because I simply had to know what it was like. It made me so sick I couldn't eat lunch. And sometimes I ride my horse like a maniac - stop laughing - and I talk slang with the hired help. I do.

DIETRICH

You're not horrible, you're delightful.

MARIA

I just don't want you to get a false picture of me.

DIETRICH

I don't want a picture of you at all. I want *you*. Although a picture of you smoking a cigar -

MARIA

Yech. Will I be able to go?

DIETRICH

Where?

MARIA

To your trial.

DIETRICH

No. It's a war court, not open to the public.

MARIA

Will I ever get to know what is going on?

DIETRICH

Maria, the less you know the safer you are -

MARIA

The less I know the less I know.

The Visitation Room vanishes as we hear Maetz cry "No!" Rott saunters into Dietrich's cell. He is immensely drunk, and carries a bottle, amused by Maetz's cries. He walks over to the bucket - horrified he realizes what it is. Klopstock and Dietrich are shocked as they enter.

ROTT

(To Klopstock)

You. Get the pastor and I a couple of glasses.

Klopstock exits. Rott snoops around.

ROTT

How do you stand eating and sleeping with your own shit?

DIETRICH

You get used to it.

ROTT

You have no idea how frustrating it is to be stymied in one's vocation.

DIETRICH

Oh, I know a little about that.

ROTT

I will concede that point.

Klopstock enters with two tin cups.

ROTT

What is this?

KLOPSTOCK

Sir, there are no glasses in the prisoner's wing.

ROTT

You're that piece of shit who wouldn't do his assignment.

Rott looks at the bucket and seizes it, laughing at Klopstock.

ROTT

How do you like your new job, *bucket boy!*

He threatens Klopstock with the bucket, but loses interest.

ROTT

Get out of my sight.

Klopstock flees with the tin mugs, closing the door behind him. Unseen by Rott, he watches through the slot. Rott raises a toast with the bottle.

ROTT

I commend you and your fellow conspirators on your well rehearsed performances. And such behind the scenes support you've had. All the way to the top.
Herr Pastor, I charge you with evading the military draft.

He slams back the shot.

DIETRICH

Not treason? Not high treason?

Rott shrugs and pours.

ROTT

I've been shackled.

DIETRICH

And Hans?

ROTT

His cell block was hit. But he'll live. I charge him with procedural irregularities.

DIETRICH

When are we to be tried?

ROTT

That's no longer my concern. I am being transferred. I've been... promoted!

He laughs bitterly. Reeling -

Nobody has loved their work more than I. Except perhaps you. I will concede that point! Both of us, Bonhoeffer - shot down. Oh, what the hell. The Balkans may not be such a bad place. A hop, skip & jump to...Greece. I could change my name, say I was a Jew refugee. I've been all work and no play. Maybe I'll lighten up. Go into business law. Get out before it's too late. We're going to lose, you know. Cheers. Congratulations. You won.

DIETRICH

Won? I am appalled by this charge and I am confident the truth -

ROTT

Whatever you freaks are hiding - someday - oh, the hell with it.

Rott passes out near the bucket.

DIETRICH

You can come in, Klopstock.

He does. They gaze down at Rott.

DIETRICH

The bloodhound in repose. So, my friend. He assigned you to his torture squad and you refused. That's why you empty buckets.

KLOPSTOCK

(cold)

You wormed out of being a soldier.

DIETRICH

Rott was grasping at straws. I'll be acquitted.

KLOPSTOCK

You're awful sure of yourself. Not many acquittals around here.

Maetz: "I want to go to the front! I want to go to the front!"

KLOPSTOCK

SHUT UP!! Rott just told him - the little shit hangs at dawn.

Dietrich - stunned.

KLOPSTOCK

I should move you to another cell while the bloodhound's reposing.

DIETRICH

Let me stay with Maetz tonight.

KLOPSTOCK

Are you nuts?

DIETRICH

Maybe I can shut him up. Please -

KLOPSTOCK

I am not your -

DIETRICH

You did the right thing in refusing to torture those Bolsheviks, Klopstock. Let me go to Maetz.

Dietrich grabs his quilt.

Maetz's hovel. Dark. A small lump curled on the floor, back towards us.

DIETRICH

I'm not great at comforting. I can hardly ever think of what to say. Which I realize is odd for a pastor... But I can listen all right...

Silence.

DIETRICH

When I was young, I used to be afraid -

MAETZ

They're treating me like a fucking Jew.

*This cuts Dietrich, yet he remains.
The air raid siren starts up. The lump grabs Dietrich
around the legs. Hesitantly Dietrich reaches for him,
lowers himself and wraps the quilt around them and
rocks the lump.*

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

An air raid siren.

The Cell has taken on the appearance of a permanent residence; stacked books, piles of letters. Tins containing treats.

Klopstock and Dietrich sing a rousing German song. They are dirty, cold, and drunk. Klopstock has a bottle.

DIETRICH

Would you care for some emergency Zwiebelkuchen?

KLOPSTOCK

Never say no to Zwiebelkuchen! Right?

DIETRICH

To Zwiebelkuchen.

They eat Zwiebelkuchen. Despite his drunkenness, Klopstock snoops around the books and letters.

DIETRICH

Klopstock - who are you?

KLOPSTOCK

Shit.

DIETRICH

No - I mean - I don't know your name.

KLOPSTOCK

Klopstock.

DIETRICH

Your *Christian* name. Your baptismal name. Your *first* name.

KLOPSTOCK

Why didn't you say so. Klaus.

DIETRICH

KLAUS? KLAUS?! I have a brother named -

KLOPSTOCK

Klopstock.

This strikes them as hysterically funny.

KLOPSTOCK

Nobody never called me Klaus. I don't look like no Klaus.
I look like a Klopstock. Does he?

DIETRICH

Who?

KLOPSTOCK

Klaus.

DIETRICH

He's a lawyer.

KLOPSTOCK

Crap.

DIETRICH

Oh, he enjoys it. Or he did - before all this... I have
another brother - his name is

KLOPSTOCK

- Klopstock?

This kills them.

DIETRICH

Karl-Friedrich.

KLOPSTOCK

I like Klaus. Simple. One...one...

DIETRICH

Syllable.

Klopstock flips through a book.

DIETRICH

And Walter - he died in the Great War. This is his bible.
And then there is Cristel and Ursala, Emmi, and Suzanne...
and...Sabine! I forget you today of all days. We're twins.

KLOPSTOCK

You're twins?

DIETRICH

I am. My better half, Sabine - lives in England.

KLOPSTOCK

No shit.

DIETRICH

She had to leave. Years ago.

KLOPSTOCK

You're a twin!

DIETRICH

She fell in love and married a Jewish man.

Klopstock grimaces.

KLOPSTOCK

Mussolini fell.

DIETRICH

I heard.

KLOPSTOCK

Oh. FUCK THEM AMERICANS. Sorry. Things aren't looking so good for us. But we're tough. And God is on our side! Right?

DIETRICH

Some days it's easier to give up my hope of salvation than a cigarette after an air raid.

KLOPSTOCK

(a toast)

To God! I may not believe in no God except I know He is on our side! Right?

He makes Dietrich look at his belt buckle.

KLOPSTOCK

What's it say? Huh? Huh?

DIETRICH

"God with us."

KLOPSTOCK

Our enemies don't got God holding up their pants, right?

DIETRICH

Our enemies believe God is on *their* side.

Klopstock – appalled.

DIETRICH

You see, Klopstock, it's easy to love people you agree with. What sets Christianity apart – or is supposed to – is that Jesus instructed us to love our enemies. But every time Christians want a war, they ignore his words and justify that they and they alone are ordained by God to kill their enemies in his name.

KLOPSTOCK

Still, God's got to pick a side. It is us. We're tough! We deserve it! Sometimes now...I am not so sure about our leader. I know he is good, but...how could he let a quarter of a million of us die at Stalingrad? We needed to retreat. Regroup. He wouldn't let us.

DIETRICH

God must have some future purpose in mind for you, Klopstock.

KLOPSTOCK

Crap the future. But I wouldn't mind a warm woman right about now. Sorry I said woman.

DIETRICH

I was supposed to get married at Christmas. Maria and I never even been alone together?
We need a cease fire. There are all sorts of earthly wishes one has.

KLOPSTOCK

I don't know about no earthly wishes, I just want a warm woman.

DIETRICH

I have never been with a woman.

Klopstock pretends he has not heard it.

DIETRICH

I appreciate your company, Klopstock.

KLOPSTOCK

It's crap. Still. Without you here –
They aren't listening to each other.

DIETRICH

This waiting - stuck in limbo -

KLOPSTOCK

Air raids would be hell without you -

DIETRICH

What use am I? Perhaps I should have stayed in America.

KLOPSTOCK

Just to be near you when the bombs drop...and we have never had a direct hit yet.

Dietrich toasts.

DIETRICH

Happy Birthday, Sabine.

KLOPSTOCK

Hey - wait a minute - wait a - if it's your *twin's* birthday - that means...

DIETRICH

We turn 38 today.

KLOPSTOCK

I shoulda been a spy. Did you see how fast I figured that out? Happy birthday Herr Pastor.

DIETRICH

Instead of spending it with the people I love -

Klopstock barely winces.

DIETRICH

Nothing tortures us more than longing.

KLOPSTOCK

Nothing tortures me more than...thinking.
I gotta shit.

Klopstock slams the door behind him...but doesn't lock it.

DIETRICH

God I am a...craphead.

The Visitation Room.

A man in a General's Great Coat (KLAUS BONHOEFFER) enters and checks around. Klopstock and a shackled Dietrich enter. Dietrich - shocked.

KLAUS

Guard - you are excused.

KLOPSTOCK

I'm not supposed to -

KLAUS

Do you know who I am?!

DIETRICH
(To Klopstock)

He's my -

KLAUS

I am General Paul von Hass. The police commissioner of Berlin. And this man's uncle. You are excused.

Klopstock exits, but hovers. Klaus silently laughs and embraces Dietrich, despite his shackles.

KLAUS

You do not look too worse for wear (***whisper***) little brother!

DIETRICH

Klaus?! How did you -

KLAUS

You are receiving your weekly parcels?

DIETRICH

Oh yes. The books -

Klaus casually warns him off -

DIETRICH

Mother and Maria keep me in pastries. Maria made me an Osterkranz for Easter.

KLAUS

I have been a little busy. What with my city under attack. And my extra responsibilities since the arrest of you and Hans. Klaus has been doing your housework.

DIETRICH

My housework? Tell Klaus I am grateful.

KLAUS

I come bearing news.

DIETRICH

(alarmed)

Is someone -

KLAUS

Safe. Everyone is as safe as can be.

DIETRICH

My trial? There is a date?

KLAUS

Hans is not fairing so well.

DIETRICH

Well Klaus, he swallowed a culture of diphtheria -

Klaus warns Dietrich off.

KLAUS

He's somewhat recovered from the stroke, but the paralysis is in both legs, and now he has scarlet fever. He's back in hospital. The new Judge Advocate assigned to your cases -

DIETRICH

is taking his sweet time -

KLAUS

He has concluded that Hans is not even able to be questioned let alone -

DIETRICH

Is it possible we could be tried separately? God, I didn't mean that. Sorry.

KLAUS

Hassell has been executed.

Dietrich - shock/grief.

KLAUS

(loud)

Of course Hassell was a traitor to the Fuhrer. He was acquitted by the War Court and no sooner had he been let out of prison than our Gestapo angels of justice interceded.

Urgently into Dietrich's ear -

KLAUS

You're safe in prison.

I know it's hard but it won't be forever. ***(Pointedly)***
Things are falling into place.

He produces 2 cigarettes from his breast pocket and hands them to Dietrich.

KLAUS

Well, I'm off. Sounds like they're bombing East Berlin tonight - a night off for you. Keep a stout heart.

He grabs Dietrich.

KLAUS

It's a blind race between us and them, little brother.
Guard!

Klopstock returns.

KLAUS

Heil Hitler.

Behind Klopstock's back, Klaus' salute turns into a thumbs up. He's off. Dietrich remembers the cigarettes.

DIETRICH

Klopstock. Matches. Do you have matches?

He holds out the two cigarettes.

KLOPSTOCK

Holy shit. You'd give me one of those?

Dietrich nods.

KLOPSTOCK

You wanna get out of here?

Dietrich - huh?

KLOPSTOCK

Let's watch the fireworks up on the roof.

They step forward - now they are on the roof. Night, accented by far away flashes and explosions. Both are stunned at what is left of Berlin. Klopstock produces matches and they light their cigarettes and inhale. Ecstasy.

DIETRICH

Good, huh?

KLOPSTOCK

Yeah. Good.

They smoke and look out over the city.

KLOPSTOCK

I look at this? I can't believe in no God.

DIETRICH

I can't believe in man.

KLOPSTOCK

How could He let this happen?

DIETRICH

How could we?

They smoke.

DIETRICH

But Klopstock, this isn't the last thing! We don't know what will arise from this rubble! After the crucifixion, resurrection! Do you see?

Klopstock smokes.

DIETRICH

Sorry. I'm proselytizing.

KLOPSTOCK

I don't know about that - you sure are preaching.

Dietrich cracks up.

DIETRICH

That's what proselytize means.

KLOPSTOCK

Shit. I been to church. After my dad got killed my aunt took me in - she wasn't really my aunt - but she dragged me to church every Sunday. God, it was boring. It didn't - it didn't -

DIETRICH

Resonate.

KLOPSTOCK

I don't know about that. It sure the hell didn't move me.

Dietrich cracks up.

KLOPSTOCK

What? That's what that means? Shit. I'm smarter than we thought.

DIETRICH

I don't think much of church either, Klopstock. I did. But a house of God corrupted by politics, ideology, and nationalism? It's no help. I'll shut up now. And Klopstock - I never thought you weren't smart.

KLOPSTOCK

Yeah, I know some things all right. Like that was not Paul von Hass...Like I know what's going on with the books.

Dietrich smokes.

KLOPSTOCK

Some of them you return and some of them you don't.

DIETRICH

Some I like to keep.

KLOPSTOCK

You return the ones with the titles underlined.

DIETRICH

You read too many detective mysteries.

KLOPSTOCK

I don't read nothing. So your family is in on...whatever, or they're passing your messages on to...whoever. Or both. And if you're really in counter intelligence, that would mean you're spying in here. But spying on who? You're in solitary confinement. So that's not it. I don't expect you to tell me. I don't want you to. I'll figure it out myself.

DIETRICH

You could report your suspicions.

KLOPSTOCK

That's right I could.
I'm hoping you're not what I'm thinking.

He looks out at the collapse of Berlin.

KLOPSTOCK

But maybe a conspiracy would end this crap. Fuck it. I just want to stand here and smoke this cigarette. My past is crap. The future - who the hell knows if I have one. Just this right here. This is good enough for me.

This resonates deeply with Dietrich.

The cell. Daytime. Dietrich paces, thinking aloud.

DIETRICH

What bothers me is the question of what Christianity really is today. It's not Klopstock's fault it's all meaningless to him...Jesus compels us to live in *this* world...he calls us, not to religion, but to *life*. Are there religion-less Christians?

He likes this idea and jots it down.

DIETRICH

Is this the starting point of a *secular* interpretation?

The Visitation Room. Maria pulls an enormous zucchini out of her hamper and offers it to Klopstock. A parcel sits on the sofa.

KLOPSTOCK

...you make good Zwiebelkuchen.

MARIA

You eat his Zweibelkuchen?

KLOPSTOCK

Oh yeah. I mean he *shares* it with me.

MARIA

Of course he does. Sorry. The allies - they've landed in Normandy. And the Russians are crossing into Poland.

KLOPSTOCK

Yeah. Shit. Sorry.

MARIA

Do you think we'll lose?

KLOPSTOCK

I hope the Allies get here before the Russians...
The Pastor says I got saved for some future purpose.
I don't know what it is.

Dietrich enters.

MARIA

My sweet you!

Despite his shackles, despite her nausea over his stench and general bedraggled-ness, they embrace.

MARIA

You look...cheerful. Something has happened! Your trial -

DIETRICH

No, no date. But Maria, I'm writing, or starting to write -

MARIA

You are radiating cheerfulness -

DIETRICH

- or starting to grapple with...

MARIA

Yes?

DIETRICH

The question is - well no, the reality is -

MARIA

What, my love?

DIETRICH

A God who sits way out on the edge of the universe, the Great Answer Man in the Sky - God as a working hypothesis in morals or politics, or science has been dethroned - We've come of age, Maria!

MARIA

Oh -

DIETRICH

And it seems to me - well, my thoughts are revolving around this - that this reality should be *hailed* rather than deplored by the Christian, although I don't doubt some would prefer a death leap back to the Middle Ages - you see, I thought I could acquire faith by trying to live a holy life -

MARIA

But you do live a -

DIETRICH

Now I'm trying...I am trying for a faith that is found in, and that puts me in, the middle of life and the world, loving them both, and willing with Christ to suffer what is necessary with and for people. Do you see?

MARIA

And you're sure there's not a date set -

DIETRICH

I'm really loosing interest in my case, Maria. I often forget about it for weeks at a time -

Maria - stung.

DIETRICH

That did not come out right.

MARIA

I too feel imprisoned, Dietrich.

DIETRICH

Oh my love, I know. I hate what this is doing to you -

MARIA

I'm determined to be brave -

DIETRICH

You are brave! Maria, God is forever upsetting our plans -

MARIA

You've got that right!

DIETRICH

But only in order to fulfill His own *better* plans through us. Let us believe that, my dearest. Our love was destined to begin just when we were parted - let's not grumble -

MARIA

I don't -

DIETRICH

- this time of waiting - I'm only now realizing - it's a gift from God! And it is a good thing that we accept everything as it is -

Maria - agitated.

DIETRICH

Sorry - I'm finding all the wrong ways to put things.

MARIA

No, it is I who should be sorry.

DIETRICH

Tell me about something lovely...the weather.

MARIA

The weather?!

DIETRICH

Oh dear -

MARIA

No, no, it's all right. The weather. It's glorious. I work in the garden a good deal, but spend all my time picturing our own little garden. We'll make it so pretty, Dietrich. In the middle there will be a big stretch of lawn with primrose and forget-me-nots. And delphiniums and marguerites and bleeding hearts. I don't like dahlias.

DIETRICH

I don't like dahlias either.

MARIA

And there will be a white table with a bench and in the summer we'll eat fruit on it!

They laugh.

MARIA

Isn't it so, that even when we laugh, we're a bit sad?

She can't bear herself -

MARIA

Dietrich, I will not lose heart -

DIETRICH

You won't. The human heart is stronger than any power on earth.

Maria forces a smile.

DIETRICH

Maria - what already exists between us is far more important to me than what is still to come.

Maria - despondent. Dietrich cringes. The air raid siren goes off.

MARIA

What is to come, my love?

KLOPSTOCK

Excuse me, miss, you have to -

MARIA

What? What is to come?

KLOPSTOCK

Excuse me - you have to -

Klopstock ushers her to the door. She rushes back to Dietrich and kisses him. She flees. Dietrich can't move for a long while. Then he carries the parcel back to his cell.

DIETRICH

I should like to write a book of not more than... 100 pages. Chapter One. A stocktaking of Christianity. Man has come of age! He manages to deal with everything without God! He can insure against everything! Except against man...

He sorts through the books until he finds a coded one. He's gotten very fast at decoding. Reading -

DIETRICH

Gestapo closing in. Shit. A blind race is right... Stauffenberg. Stauffenberg! Good.

He rummages in the box. He unwraps a towel, revealing two records. He reads the labels and laughs. He goes to the door slot.

DIETRICH

Klopstock. Are you out there? Klopstock.

He stuffs part of the towel through the slot and resumes pacing.

DIETRICH

Where was I? A stocktaking of Christianity -

Klopstock sticks his head in.

KLOPSTOCK

You got a towel sticking out of your door.

DIETRICH

I was trying to get your attention.

KLOPSTOCK

It worked.

DIETRICH

Klopstock, can you get us a gramophone?

KLOPSTOCK

If anybody can, it would be me. I am Klopstock!

He's off. Dietrich resumes pacing.

DIETRICH

Jesus - disappearing from sight. The church - ineffective...
Chapter two. Who is God?! Not an abstract belief in his
omnipotence. That is not a genuine experience of Him.
Jesus I'd kill for a cigarette. Jesus - he didn't come to
bring us a new *religion*, but to instruct us to live - and
perhaps even die - for others.

He blows out his candle. He lies down. In the dark -

DIETRICH

Can we believe this? I mean, believe in such a way we'd
stake our lives on it?

***Daylight. Klopstock barges in, does his bucket thing
while Dietrich slowly comes to. He leaves and returns
with a gramophone.***

DIETRICH

Dare I ask?

KLOPSTOCK

You're not the only one around here with secrets.

***He sets the gramophone on the table and cranks it as
Dietrich fishes out the records.***

DIETRICH

Well, here goes.

***A Negro Spiritual. The music elates Dietrich and he
sings and claps along with it. Klopstock doesn't know
what to make of him or the music.
Dietrich laughs at Klopstock's expression.***

DIETRICH

It's called a Negro *spiritual*, Klopstock. When I was in
America I frequented a place called Harlem - this was 14
years ago. I'd only ever heard how America was this happy
place. I remember writing to Klaus, "Our Jewish problem is
a joke by comparison. The Jews don't know what oppression
is!" Granted, this was 14 years ago. Negroes weren't even

DIETRICH (continued)

allowed in white churches - they built their own - the black Christ was preached with *rapture* - it wasn't boring at all, Klopstock. It was quite disorienting to a Lutheran, I can tell you. I wanted to bring that passion back to my Germany. But when I returned, Hitler was stirring up a different passion - all that rage and joy mixed together...I couldn't compete.

He takes the record off and puts on classical music.

DIETRICH

Here, this will be more familiar to you. It's in the Bonhoeffer Saturday evening repertoire. I'm a pianist! Yes, it's true. We assumed it was my destiny - alas, I possessed the technical proficiency but not the passion. I should have visited Harlem as a child. Anyway, all the Bonhoeffers play an instrument and Saturday evening everyone comes together...you've no idea what I'm talking about, do you?

KLOPSTOCK

I've got a steal plate -

Dietrich takes off the record.

DIETRICH

Perhaps this wasn't such a good idea. My past does neither of us any good. You're right - I should be concerned solely with the present.

KLOPSTOCK

I said that?

DIETRICH

Living in the here and now...*that* is how you learn to have faith!

KLOPSTOCK

I'll leave this for you.

DIETRICH

No. No.

Klopstock exits with the gramophone.

We hear cicadas - time is passing. Dietrich is sweltering. Dietrich strips to his underwear. He feels ridiculous.

DIETRICH

Chapter Three - Conclusion: The church should give away all its property to those in need. It must serve in the problems of ordinary human life, not dominating, but helping.

He jots that down. Klopstock charges in with a radio. Dietrich scrambles for his pants.

KLOPSTOCK

Forget it - the whole floor is naked.

Klopstock plugs the radio into the ceiling socket. (Where the lightbulb is)

DIETRICH

The Allies broke through both German fronts. I heard.

KLOPSTOCK

Old news - you'll shit when you hear this.

He turns on the radio. Music -

DIETRICH

Beethoven's Ninth - Hitler's favorite.

The music is interrupted.

HITLER (*on radio*)

My German comrades, I speak to you today first in order that you should hear my voice and should know that I am unhurt and well, and secondly, that you should know of a crime unparalleled in German history. A very small clique of ambitious, irresponsible stupid officers have concocted a plot to eliminate me!

KLOPSTOCK

Can you believe it?

HITLER

The bomb, planted by Colonel Count Stauffenberg, wounded a number of my loyal collaborators. I myself am entirely unhurt. I regard this as a miracle and a confirmation of the task imposed upon me by Providence..

KLOPSTOCK

Yeah, right. Huh?

Dietrich is near reeling.

HITLER

It is a small gang of criminal element which we will track down and who will be destroyed without mercy!

Beethoven's Ninth resumes.

DIETRICH

That's quite a...
I wonder who would..

Dietrich's legs buckle under him. He starts to heave, and Klopstock grabs the bucket for him. He vomits.

His eyes meet Klopstock's: the jig is up.

DIETRICH

It's not the first attempt.
There were two others, but... we failed.

KLOPSTOCK

We?

DIETRICH

How did he put it? A small clique of ambitious, irresponsible, stupid officers. Some concerned citizens. And one radical theologian.

KLOPSTOCK

You tried to kill Hitler.

DIETRICH

Twice.

KLOPSTOCK

And the Gestapo never figured it out.

DIETRICH

Those of us arrested have been keeping the lid on it so that those on the outside could try again.

KLOPSTOCK

Plus covering your own asses.

DIETRICH

Plus - yes.

KLOPSTOCK

Snuffle Pig didn't know who he had in his clutches.

DIETRICH

He did his best.

KLOPSTOCK

You lied.

DIETRICH

We're not obliged to tell the truth to everyone, Klopstock. Only to God.

KLOPSTOCK

How did you do it? *How did you do it?!*

DIETRICH

The first attempt was a bomb smuggled on Hitler's airplane. It failed to detonate.

KLOPSTOCK

So it would have killed everyone on the plane.

DIETRICH

Yes.

KLOPSTOCK

And the second try?

DIETRICH

An explosive device concealed in a pocket. Hitler was running ahead of schedule. We missed our opportunity.

KLOPSTOCK

Your pocket? That's a suicide mission.

DIETRICH

It wasn't my pocket. It was one of our - one of us.

KLOPSTOCK

You didn't plant the bomb either. On the plane.

DIETRICH

I am as guilty as the man who did.

KLOPSTOCK

Not really.

DIETRICH

Klopstock, I tried to kill Hitler. Twice.

KLOPSTOCK

Why are you telling me this?

I could go straight to the War Court.

It's not Hitler, maybe given the chance I'd throttle him myself. Maybe he deserves it. But you. Everything you pretend to be. All that peace not war and loving your enemy crap? God, you're worse than I am. You're a traitor. That's the worst kind of lying shit.

Klopstock is beside himself.

KLOPSTOCK

Hell, even an ignorant piece of crap like me knows Thou Shall Not Kill! But I guess you figured you'd squirm around that like you squirmed out of the army because you're *privileged*.

DIETRICH

No -

KLOPSTOCK

I got the privilege of watching my friends turned into cannon fodder. I got the privilege of mowing down about a thousand Russians. I got the privilege of a steel plate in my head. I know there's a rat's ass chance I'll make it to heaven so I guess I'll have the privilege of seeing you in hell. You traitorous puke!

He grabs the bucket, intending to throw the contents on Dietrich. But Dietrich ceases it and hurls it on Klopstock, soaking him. Dietrich aggressively blocks the door.

DIETRICH

The beginning of this war - how did it start?

KLOPSTOCK

Poland attacked us.

DIETRICH

No. Hitler ordered an Admiral to deliver 150 Polish uniforms. No explanation. The Admiral is a soldier; he does what he's told, of course. Those "Polish soldiers" were Germans dressed up in Polish uniforms attacking our own men.

KLOPSTOCK

You were there? Of course not. How would you know that?

DIETRICH

The Admiral was in the Abwehr! He was Han's boss. And for 10 years, Hans has kept a secret file, a chronicle of shame. Every atrocity committed for Hitler.

KLOPSTOCK

Yeah, yeah. Every government is full of atrocities.

DIETRICH

Do you know what is going on in the concentration camps, Herr Klopstock?

KLOPSTOCK

It's the hell holes where we house the crap.

DIETRICH

No.

KLOPSTOCK

Yes.

DIETRICH

It is where we exterminate them.

KLOPSTOCK

They must have done something.

DIETRICH

Thousands of them -

KLOPSTOCK

Hell, I killed that many Russians.

DIETRICH

Maybe a million.

KLOPSTOCK

You exaggerate!

DIETRICH

A million human beings.

KLOPSTOCK

If it's so wrong, why is God letting it happen?

Dietrich, disgusted, stops blocking the door. Klopstock uses Dietrich's nice quilt to wipe off, grabs the radio, and slams the door, locking it behind him.

DIETRICH

Why am I telling you this?

He puts his clothes back on.

Time passes. We hear a radio announcing the Allies landing at Normandy. Dietrich pulls on a sweater. It is now fall. He calmly writes at his table.

Klopstock lets himself in. He goes about his bucket duty. When he's finished, he slams and locks the door. Then he opens it and steps inside again.

KLOPSTOCK

I like things simple. Good guys and crapheads. Us. Them. Ever since you got here you've been making me think. I hate it. If I turn you in, I won't get a reward, probably they'll shoot me for knowing too much. I hate knowing too much.

DIETRICH

That's not true Klopstock, you wanted to -

KLOPSTOCK

You are a traitor.

DIETRICH

I am.

KLOPSTOCK

That's right you are!
But our leader... he is a bigger traitor than you are. Hitler
is...he is the biggest traitor of all.
His bloodhounds are on the scent. They shut down the
Abwehr. They're arresting hundreds - anyone they think
might know someone who knows someone who might be a
conspirator.

Dietrich - agitated.

KLOPSTOCK

Friends?

DIETRICH

And family. Klaus. Rudiger. Uncle Paul.

KLOPSTOCK

They hung your uncle this morning.
They can't get you. You've been in here for over a year.

DIETRICH

Han's files. They weren't just a documentation of the
horrors, but also everything that we did to try to stop it.
Hans and I wanted to destroy the files, but General Beck -

KLOPSTOCK

They shot Beck. They let him shoot himself -

DIETRICH

Beck said some day that the world would know what happened
here and that, from the beginning, a few German souls
attempted to stop it. The Gestapo is sure to find the files
now.

KLOPSTOCK

What are you going to do?

DIETRICH

Follow where Christ leads me.

Klopstock groans.

DIETRICH

And trust that the defeat of our country comes sooner than the bloodhounds.
Our resistance was too small and weak ever to have achieved our purpose. We were less than a spoke in the wheel, merely a little twig that snapped easily.
How did we ever think we could fight it?
But Klopstock, I do not regret that we tried.

Klopstock exits. Dietrich smiles when he hears that Klopstock hasn't locked him in.

The Visitation Room. The red plush sofa is damaged and is covered in soot. Maria sits, hamper by her side, exhausted. Determined, she pulls herself together.

When Klopstock appears she pulls some eggs out of the hamper and offers them to him.

KLOPSTOCK

The kitchen got hit by a bomb – no more hot food at Tegel. You might as well take them home.

MARIA

They call it "carpet bombing." It's sickening. I hate Americans.

KLOPSTOCK

Yeah.

MARIA

It took me 3 hours to climb over the rubble to get here. Don't tell Dietrich...Why does this place feel so empty?

KLOPSTOCK

They been sending us back to the Russian front.

MARIA

The guards are being sent back?

KLOPSTOCK

And the prisoners. They're desperate for soldiers, see. The deserters – even the murderers are back on the front line. Not the traitors, though. They're not that desperate. Yet.

MARIA

Why are you still here?

KLOPSTOCK

Somebody's got to empty the buckets...You can't see him.

MARIA

Oh God, he's - he's not -

KLOPSTOCK

No, no, he's good, he's good. It's just his visitation privileges got taken away.

MARIA

But I have a permit! It took 2 months to get it!

KLOPSTOCK

How much do you know - about his work?

MARIA

I don't care about his work, I am his fiancée -

KLOPSTOCK

Some files - the Gestapo just found some files.

MARIA

So? His family thinks it is better for me to be in the dark. But they gave me - oh, I have to see him - I must!

KLOPSTOCK

I can pass it on to him.

Maria glares at him.

KLOPSTOCK

I am his friend.

Maria pulls a small envelope from her bosom and hands it to Klopstock.

KLOPSTOCK

I don't read nothing. Can't.

She tears open the envelope and reads a small note

MARIA

Canaris, Perels, Gehre, Strunk. Arrested.
Think we will lose?

KLOPSTOCK

It's what we deserve.

Impulsively Maria slaps Klopstock.

MARIA

I'm so sorry, I...

Klopstock shrugs it off.

KLOPSTOCK

You stay with his family. In Charlottenberg?

MARIA

You know more about our lives than I do.

KLOPSTOCK

Not so very far. You could show me.

She considers him. Suddenly remembering -

MARIA

Hans! Hans! He's been moved!

KLOPSTOCK

To another hospital?

MARIA

To the country. A town called Sachsenhausen.

KLOPSTOCK

That's a camp.

MARIA

Shit!

Music! We hear a party in progress. It's 1943. Hans, in an expensive coat, is in his tool shed, horrified by a file he looks through. Dietrich comes in, wearing his expensive coat.

DIETRICH

Hans!

Hans jumps and stashes the file. He's relieved to see it is Dietrich.

HANS
Dietrich. Stockholm - how did it -

DIETRICH
It's not that they don't listen to me.

HANS
I do not understand.

DIETRICH
Sure you do.

HANS
Which is worse? Their fear or their indifference?

Dietrich pulls a bottle and two small glasses from his pockets. He pours.

DIETRICH
Happy New Year, my friend.

HANS
1944 can not be worse than '43.

DIETRICH
Oh, sure it can.

They laugh. They toast.

HANS
It will be a hundred years before the world realizes our misfortune.

DIETRICH
Perhaps not that long.
Hans, why are you hiding in the tool shed? Cristel sent me looking for you.

HANS
What my dear wife is to me! I simply can not live without her! Find yourself a good wife, Dietrich.

Dietrich - coy.

HANS

What?

DIETRICH

I met someone.

HANS

OH?!

Dietrich is so embarrassed he nearly leaves.

HANS

OH?

Dietrich begs off.

HANS

At least give me a name! We could all be dead tomorrow.

DIETRICH

It probably won't amount to anything -

HANS

I will announce at midnight, to the whole tribe of Bonhoeffer -

DIETRICH

The memory of her will doubtlessly recede into the realm of my amply populated fantasies -

HANS

- that *Dietrich is finally* in love. And your sisters will swarm all over you and your mother will -

DIETRICH

Maria.

HANS

Maria. I like her already. What absurdity - in the midst of this hell, lovers find each other, babies are born and come spring, the earth will bloom.

DIETRICH

What is wrong, Hans?

HANS

Our class took our privileged life for granted.

DIETRICH

Yes.

HANS

We should have acted sooner.

DIETRICH

It's so obvious in retrospect, isn't it?

HANS

I wormed my way into the Abwehr -

DIETRICH

Yes.

HANS

Because I was appalled.

DIETRICH

Yes.

HANS

I had to.

DIETRICH

Of course you did, Hans.

HANS

And I dragged you into it. And Klaus, and Rudiger - even my wife.

DIETRICH

Hans - we know what we have chosen.

HANS

Our attempts to arrest Hitler -

DIETRICH

Have failed. Yes.

HANS

I'm finding it hard to keep the faith tonight, Dietrich.

He pulls out the file and hands it to Dietrich.

HANS

My chronicle of shame grew drastically while you were abroad.

With trepidation Dietrich opens the folder and looks at a photo (we can't see it.) He realizes what he's seeing. He may be sick. He forces himself to flip through photos.

DIETRICH

Where?

HANS

That one? Flossenberg. The camp locations are on the back of the photos.

Dietrich flips several photos over. As they both weep, Klaus enters.

KLAUS

He calls it his "Final Solution."

DIETRICH

Then we must have our final solution.

HANS

Oh God, we aren't cut out for this sort of thing -

DIETRICH

We've always known it might come to this.

HANS

We were so convinced we could cause a neat overthrow - there has to be another way -if we lose the war Hitler will face the consequences of his crimes, won't he? Won't the Allies put him on trial?

KLAUS

If we lose the war...maybe he'll face the consequences...and if we win? God help civilization. And meanwhile, every day more pits will be filled with the emaciated bodies of Jewish human beings.

DIETRICH

It has to be done. We have exhausted every other means.

KLAUS

There's been talk - Canaris, Beck -

DIETRICH

Enough talk. We need to assassinate -

HANS

But if we fight evil with evil we destroy what we're fighting for!

DIETRICH

Is it not better to do evil than to be evil?

HANS

It's hopeless anyway. Hitler is never without his guards, and he changes his plans every 15 minutes to keep his enemies off track. Even if we could get to him - shoot him or knife him or blow him up - even if we succeed - we won't be heroes.

KLAUS

We'll be looked upon as murderous traitors.

DIETRICH

Yes. But if we don't murder this one madman -
(indicating file)
we are complicit in all of these murders.

HANS

Because we know.

DIETRICH

Because we know.

HANS

I hate knowing.

DIETRICH

No you don't Hans. It's God's will that you know. He picked the right soul.

KLAUS

We shouldn't be having this discussion with you, little brother.

HANS

If it has to be done, we will not involve you. Perhaps you should have stayed in America -

DIETRICH

I know nothing about guns or explosives. I do not know how my access to Hitler could be arranged -

HANS

Dietrich!

DIETRICH

What I am does not mean I am to be safely harbored whilst my friends do the dirty work!

HANS

Thou Shall Not Kill.

DIETRICH

Yes. And if we blindly cling to that we don't have to face what is happening.

KLAUS

Are we absolved from guilt?

DIETRICH

No. I see no way of killing without guilt. Hitler's blood will be on our hands.

KLAUS

At least we know we're on the side of good.

DIETRICH

No. We can not know for certain if we are doing good. All we can do is follow Christ.

HANS

Where is He leading us? Why are we here?

DIETRICH

We don't know.

HANS

What if we make things worse? What if we're wrong? What if we put our family in jeopardy? What if we bungle it? My God, Dietrich, what if we get caught? *Is it worth risking our own lives?!*

The rooftop. Dietrich, still in his coat, Klopstock cocooned in the blanket. They share a cigarette.

KLOPSTOCK

I think I know what it is.

DIETRICH

What what is?

KLOPSTOCK

That future purpose I got saved for.
And God can't be sending me no signal or nothing?

DIETRICH

Mostly he doesn't.

KLOPSTOCK

He's not really much help, is he.

DIETRICH

(laughing)

Before God and with God we stand without God. A paradox.

KLOPSTOCK

Are you going to sit here and wait for the Gestapo or are we going to escape the hell out of here and disappear?

Dietrich - stunned.

KLOPSTOCK

There. Crap.
The war is lost, it's only a matter of weeks. It seems to me you shouldn't be killed for nothing. Wouldn't God want you to save yourself? You will be needed after we lose. You will be needed.

DIETRICH

What about you?

KLOPSTOCK

I don't disappear, I'm gonna end up cannon fodder. This war? It's crap.

DIETRICH

God has sent me a Klopstock! All right.

KLOPSTOCK

Oh shit, you'll do it? That's good. Because, well, it's already set. I got a lotta money and stuff we'll need.

DIETRICH

I can't take your money, Klopstock.

KLOPSTOCK

Like I got a lotta money. It's...actually, it's yours.

DIETRICH

Mine?

KLOPSTOCK

I followed Maria.

DIETRICH

Did you rob her?

KLOPSTOCK

Oh funny. I went with her to your home.

DIETRICH

We can not put my family in danger, Klopstock. That's out.

KLOPSTOCK

We won't. We're not. But they all agreed - I gotta get you out of here. Fast. All I'm waiting on is passports. I get them tomorrow. From Klaus.

DIETRICH

Klaus?! No, Klaus shouldn't be involved -

KLOPSTOCK

Klaus told me to tell you there's nothing to discuss.

DIETRICH

Klopstock -

KLOPSTOCK

It's going to be alright. It's going to be alright.

The cell. Nighttime. Dietrich is writing by candlelight.

Klopstock lets himself in, carrying a blue mechanics coveralls.

KLOPSTOCK

We don't got much time. The money is in the pockets. When the bombs are shitting down, we slip out.

DIETRICH

And if there is no raid tonight?

Sirens begin to wail. Klopstock smiles.

KLOPSTOCK

Now that's gotta be a God damned sign. Sorry I said God -

He is out the door. We hear him lock it. We hear the drone of approaching airplanes. Prisoners cry out.

KLOPSTOCK

Ah stop your whining gentlemen, you'd think we'd never been through this before!

Dietrich hurries into the coveralls. The drone of the planes increases. Dietrich looks up -

DIETRICH

Oh crap.

A burst of light and an enormous explosion. Dietrich is thrown to the ground. The siren cuts off mid-scream, as if it has been hit.

The drone fades. Dietrich gets himself up. He tries the door - locked. He gets to the window, and looks out at the grounds of Tegel prison. He grips the bars, unable to turn away. He keeps vigil as dawn breaks.

He turns to his bible. He circles a passage.

Keys in the door and a bloody Klopstock enters.

DIETRICH

Klopstock - I thought that you were -

KLOPSTOCK

Dead? **(snarls)** Not God's plan. Come on -

DIETRICH

Now?

KLOPSTOCK

A damn bomb hit the guard room! We've got to get going -

DIETRICH

Klopstock - you're injured -

KLOPSTOCK

We got to go - we've got to get you out of here now -

DIETRICH

Tomorrow -

KLOPSTOCK

There may not be no tomorrow!

DIETRICH

What about the passports? I can't find the passports -

KLOPSTOCK

That didn't work out. It's all right, we don't need them.

DIETRICH

Why didn't it work out?

KLOPSTOCK

It just didn't.

DIETRICH

What's happened, Klopstock?

KLOPSTOCK

Nothing's changed.

DIETRICH

Klopstock. The truth.

KLOPSTOCK

I don't got to tell nobody the truth but God.

Dietrich holds his ground.

KLOPSTOCK

I'm coming up to that fancy house of yours - something's not right. A lotta cars outside. I hid in the bushes. They got 'em. The Gestapo's got Klaus and Rudiger.

Dietrich cries out.

KLOPSTOCK

Now let's get going -

DIETRICH

They get arrested and I go missing? The Gestapo will think they know something so incriminating that I had to run. They'll torture them for it.

KLOPSTOCK

They'll torture them anyway!

Dietrich cringes.

DIETRICH

And what if they arrest Maria? My parents - you saw how old they are. If I stay put, I can protect whoever is left. Or try to. (***horrible realization***) And if I flee now, they'll kill Hans!

KLOPSTOCK

THEY ALREADY DID!!!

This slaps Dietrich. He's not leaving.

KLOPSTOCK

I don't understand.

DIETRICH

Of course you do.

Klopstock howls with frustration.

KLOPSTOCK

I don't understand -

DIETRICH

Yes you do Klopstock.

KLOPSTOCK

I don't understand God!

DIETRICH

It's all right. It's all right. Not to worry my friend. I'll lie low. The Allies are nearly here. Everything will work out. I just hope there is enough time to finish my book...but just in case, let me give you...

At his table he desperately tries to organize his notes.

DIETRICH

I'm just...I'm not ready to...you see, Klopstock, I'm only beginning to form my - I'm just getting started!
Go. Get out of here. Here - take this -

KLOPSTOCK

Your bible? I can't take your -

DIETRICH

I've already read it. If something should happen to me - it won't - but if it does, give it to Maria. Now go - get!
And Klopstock - I insist -

KLOPSTOCK

What?

DIETRICH

Klopstock - find yourself a good wife.

***Pandemonium. Goosesteps, gun fire, flashing lights.
Dietrich shackles himself.***

Rott - in a brief spotlight, clutching a file.

ROTT

I've got him! I've got him now!

***The Swastika banners unfurl. Maria - filthy,
exhausted, and lugging the hamper runs into Klopstock.***

MARIA

I found him! They took him to the cellar of the Gestapo prison.

KLOPSTOCK

NO! NO! It's a torture chamber!

Loud marching - not goosesteps.

KLOPSTOCK

Jesus, it's the Allies.

The church banners unfurl.

ROTT

Mein Fuhrer will be vindicated! The truth has come to light!

**Hitler's face unfurls.
Dietrich removes the coveralls, revealing a
concentration camp uniform.**

MARIA
Klopstock? It's so cold. So very -

KLOPSTOCK
I tracked him - he got shipped to Buchenwald.

MARIA
No - they moved him. To Regensburg.

KLOPSTOCK
Crap!

Dietrich stands before Rott.

ROTT
The truth is you're an arrogant religious fanatic who
thinks he knows what's best for the German people.

He rips Dietrich's glasses off.

The truth is you failed to cause a mutiny within the
church, you failed to save the Jews, you failed to stop the
war and you failed to kill our Fuhrer. You've not succeeded
in anything.

MARIA
(To Klopstock)
When I got to Schonberg, they said he was in Flossenburg.

ROTT
Your Christ, Pastor Bonhoeffer, leads you to your death! I
charge you with High Treason!

Dietrich steps into a circle of light.

KLOPSTOCK
He's got to hold out - he will. He will.

MARIA
I'm just so tired of it all.

KLOPSTOCK

The country is falling. The pastor is going to make it.

MARIA

I didn't love him, you know. But I knew that I would grow to love him.

KLOPSTOCK

You will. God is on his side, right? Right?

He pulls Dietrich's bible from his coat pocket.

KLOPSTOCK

What's that say - that circled part - what's that say?

MARIA

"Let this cup pass from me,
Nevertheless, not my will,
But Thine be done."

She curls into a ball, clutching the bible. Klopstock stands sentry over her.

The banners fall to the ground revealing a noose descending towards Dietrich's head.

KLOPSTOCK

2 days after they hung my friend, Flossenburg was liberated.

MARIA

3 weeks later, Hitler committed suicide.

ROTT

Germany surrendered.

But as Dietrich rises to meet the noose, he is looking beyond it...

Black Out