George Tabori

around the roundness but hang from the edge until you step on their fingers, and wheel they fall, shrieking. How do you feel about it?
HERZL: It's an innovation.

HITLER: Got you! [Spits in HERZL's eye] You fell for my ruse, you pisspot, you garlic gobble! Your evil stand's exposed. Your triumph would be a dance of death, this poor planet rolling empty about the ether. But beware! Nature is eternal and will inexorably revenge the transgressing of its commands. By unmasking you, I have acted to the glory of the Almighty. Immortality, be mine; Judah, kick the bucket, amen. If you breathe one word into your book about our confidential conversation, I'll strew your ashes to the four winds and never talk to you again.—I'm going to bed.
HERZL: Golden dreams.

[HITLER crawls into bed and falls asleep. LOBKOWITZ returns, wounded.]

HERZL: Who hit you?

LOBKOWITZ: I was surrounded.

HERZL: How many?

LOBKOWITZ: One.

HERZL: Better be hunted than a hunter.

LOBKOWITZ [Yells]: That's what the fucking hunters say!

HERZL [Cleans LOBKOWITZ's face]: Love thy enemies as thyself, which is not asking much, since you do not consider yourself so great either.

LOBKOWITZ: I do not consider myself great. I am great!

HERZL [Offers LOBKOWITZ a sip of Maltese]: Drink and remember, next year in Jerusalem.

LOBKOWITZ: Yes, but what about this year?

Act III

Saturday. HITLER asleep, his terrible feet hanging overboard. HERZL shakes him to awaken him.

HERZL: Morning, Hitler! Get up, get up, Hitler! Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.

[HITLER does not stir. HERZL knocks on Hitler's head as if it were a door. Hitler creaks as if he were a door, digs himself deeper into the pillow. Herzl fetches cold water and pours it into Hitler's left ear.]

Mein Kampf

HITLER [Cries]: Who are you? Where am I? Help! [He sits up like a prairie dog] What are you trying to do, give me a heart attack?

HERZL: It's eleven o'clock in Vienna. [Dressing HITLER] The sun is shining, it's holy Shabbes. I've worked out a varied cultural program for you, so let your heart rejoice. Take first a leisurely walk down the Ring to admire the architectural wonders. A tram ride to Schönbrunn Palace can't do you any harm. Arm yourself with hot chestnuts. If you do not suffer from vertigo, brave a ride on the Prater Wheel, enjoy the bird's eye view. In the afternoon, there is Charlie Chaplin chased by the Cheshome Chops in several movie houses. You may be back by sundown. I'll have apple strudel for your reward.

HITLER: I shit on your apple strudel! I'm staying in bed. I don't feel well. It's probably the Spanish flu, which has already decimated Europe.

HERZL: I don't care what you have, bubonic plague or housemaid's knee, you get out of here and pronto. I'm expecting a visitation, which calls for privacy.

HITLER: Uh-huh! You don't want me to meet your friends, you're embarrassed by my provincial bluntness. And this is what you call comradeship?

HERZL: I call it chutzpah. Can't you take a hint, Hitler? I want to be alone with my visitor.

HITLER: Uh-huh! Intercoursing, what?

HERZL: One day, when you are less of a bore, I might explain the purity of this romance. Now get your ass moving, or I'll call Frau Merschmeyer and her axe.

HITLER: Is the Danube still frozen? If anything should happen to me, break it gently to my mother.

HERZL: I thought she was dead.

HITLER: I'm in no mood for sophistries. I don't suppose you'll feel sorry, but most probably you'll never see me again. [His chin quivers] You may keep your winter coat. [He drops it on the floor] I want no favors from a sex maniac.

HERZL: Enjoy yourself! [HITLER leaves, HERZL prays] Let us wait, Shlomo. Waiting is the true time. Waiting for the Messiah is what matters, not the coming. So sit down, Shlomo, meet your maker with praise and a prayer, stop the clock and enjoy, enjoy the voice of the turtle, which sounds sweet in the land. It is already late, the death bell tolls, each of our days may be the last. [GRETHE MARIA GLOBUSCHEK skips in, a big ben under her arm. She undresses, unnoticed by HERZL] All your deeds have turned to dust, Shlomo. How very much you would have liked to start the Russian
Revolution, the goddamn Russian Bear is on its way! How lovely you
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