

Chapter

The Furlough

(the portrait of Mrs. Adler)

The train to Budapest and Vienna was terribly crowded, mostly with soldiers. As Faehrich I travelled in officers' compartments and my "orderly" who looked pale and did not seem to feel well had to travel with the others. I did not need him and therefore I did not see him until we arrived in Vienna. He complained about a terrible headache so I did not ask him to help me with my luggage and told him to go to the hospital and get a doctor's advice.

I had been away for almost a year and a half and it was quite a change living with the family in a home. Hedi used to visit me in Olmitz and Krakau during my officers' school-days but the two boys, Ernst and Peter, hardly knew me. Staff was not there anymore. The food situation in Vienna was getting worse all the time, rationing was very strict and there was no food for the dog. Hedi asked Reserl, my model, who had married the clown in the circus, to take the dog in pension, that is for a monthly pay. She lived in the country and could get food easier than in the big city.

I had hoped to get some rest in our home in Grlensing for a few days before starting on my exhibition project. But already during the first night there was somebody hanging at the door at about 3 a.m. Some men from the Sanitary Department of the City of Vienna came to check on me because my name and address was mentioned in my orderly's papers as the responsible

Paehrich with whom he had travelled. He had gone to a hospital and the doctor declared him a case of typhus. I managed to convince them that I had not been with the boy during the whole trip except for a moment at the station in Vienna. I told them I was perfectly all right and that they would have to isolate the whole crowd at the railroad station, who had as much or more direct contact with the soldier as I. They left. Next night they returned but this time they wanted to take the whole family along and put us all in a tub of kerosene, or something thoroughly antiseptic, or disinfecting. Well--they had their orders and regulations and they were "official" but--they did not know Hedi, my wife, with the indomitable will power. To put her children in kerosene or naphtha--or whatever the stuff may be--well--there was a phone and she got busy. In the middle of the night she called up anyone who might have connections, influence, or pull. The Gutmanns, Dr. Hans Simon from the Bank, her physician friends, and many others. Within no time there was a tidal wave of pressures moving, a medical wave, an industrial wave, a financial bank pressure, enquiries from the Sanitaets department, political push and cultural pull...and next morning the Mayor of Vienna and his commissioners heard from all sides the story of the Katz family. There was no one left in Vienna who still wanted to put us and the children into kerosene or naphtha, because in all the offices--whenever someone entered he or she was already received with a desperate: "Are you too coming about that Katz family?" Finally it was decided that for a certain number of days some-

body was to visit us to take our temperature and to watch for possible symptoms. Soon the whole episode was forgotten. It was a nasty April with rain and sleet and I was not supposed to meet people and so I stayed home, rested and had a chance to spend the time with the children.

Then I attended to my special mission of arranging for the exhibition for the benefit of the widows and orphans. That seemed to be easy. I talked to the people in charge of the "Secession" (the progressive artists group). They promised me to make a one-man-show of my work in the spring show and they seemed very much interested. So I did all I could to get everything ready. Pictures had to be framed and borrowed from private owners, etc. My vacation was soon over and I had to report to the cadre in Krakow. There I asked Brandtner, the fieldmarshal, for the lifesize watercolor portrait and the studies from the Nida River. He was, of course, proud to have it all exhibited in Vienna.

At the cadre they had heard all the fabulous stories about "that Katz" and I was received accordingly. They were short on officers to do the cadre work and since I was Fachrich, soon to become "Leutnant," they were anxious to keep me there for a little while. The "propaganda exhibition" was a good excuse not to send me back to the regiment right away. That made it possible to make a few simple portrait studies of some of the officers present (in watercolor and one in silver point). One of the officers asked me to make a portrait of his wife. He was Oberleutnant (first lieutenant). He was

about my size but slim, had a fine education, had studied in Paris and was from a wealthy Jewish family in Krakow. He invited me to his home so I could get acquainted with his wife. He was obviously very much in love with her and she responded always with a certain friendly but enigmatic smile. Her eyes were very dark and so was her hair. She was not a great spectacular beauty, which sweeps you off your feet, but she was attractive, graceful and, in a way, charming. Her whole behaviour was extremely controlled and whatever she did or said seemed to stop exactly at an invisible line. There never was a gesture or a word which would indicate in the least what might be hidden beyond that line.

The Oberleutnant left us alone, so I could start my studies. All the other portraits of the officers were simple heads with transparent characters. But here I seemed completely puzzled. I tried ten different subjects to get a little conversation going. The reaction was always the same, the same smile, the same noncommittal charm. What was she hiding? The husband was a fine, sensitive, intelligent, well educated and rich man with fine manners and seemed very devoted. Wasn't she happy? Was she, like many another woman, a walking tomb of a great passion? Was it a passion in the past or in the future? My intellectual observation was not able to find the answer. That day she showed no inclination to really cooperate, although I explained to her that it takes two to make a portrait.

When it started exactly the same way on my second visit, I suggested that we might go for a walk, hoping to see her

reactions to different people or objects. We were not far from the Czartoryski Museum and we went in to look at some of the art there.

This was one of the few tricks I had learned. Since I had discovered that people's opinions or likes and dislikes had little to do with the pictures but gave a pretty accurate description of their own conditions, characters and limitations-- I had only to listen to their verdicts and soon I would know what colors, what kind of style, composition, etc., they considered good or bad, which usually revealed a lot about their nervous condition, their cultural background, education, taste, digestion, temperament, etc. It was usually enough to start a portrait with and to steer the conversation gradually into more revealing channels.

Well--this time it did not work. She showed the same polite and friendly interest in everything we looked at, asked charmingly for some relevant information and responded to my answers with the same impenetrable smile. I was ready to give up when we got to the Egyptian room.

It was not a big collection like in the British Museum or the Louvre with its miles of galleries. It was a small collection but carefully selected and I had a special contact with Egyptian art. There was a great serenity and wisdom in their art and this rare combination of geometric precision with a mysterious power always fascinated me. I had spent many hours in that room when I attended the officers' school. I had particularly watched one mummy case on the floor in the middle of

the long wall. On that wall there were fine reliefs from Egyptian tombs, glass cases with pectorals and jewelry and tiny statuettes.

I had noticed that visitors would usually look at all those exhibits on the wall and when they reached the big glass case with the mummy coffin they would pass, without looking, and continue to admire the objects on the wall. It seemed that here was an art object, several thousand years old which still had something like my "tarnhelm," something like an invisible protection. Later I found paintings or sculptures in other places which also had that secret power of not being noticed no matter how prominent the place was they occupied on a wall or in a room. Of course it is possible that it always happened as a matter of plain coincidence. In that case one does not have to assume any strange power in such a work of art. Whatever the cause or explanation may be, I had observed that fact. Maybe people consciously tried to avoid a coffin.

This mummy coffin was a wooden container for a mummified body and the lid was carefully carved and painted. The body section was covered with many religious symbols dealing with the Egyptian concepts of life after death. The head section was a powerful portrait of a woman. The form of the face was carved and the eyes and the mouth were painted over the form. Around the face was also carved and painted a ceremonial wig and head-dress. Usually I studied this coffin only when no one else was around and I respectfully looked mostly at the mysterious symbols.

When my companion came near to the case of the mummy I stepped casually back so as not to lead her to it. I was interested to see how she would act. I saw her walking toward the case but she did not bypass it like everyone else. She stopped, looked at the lid and then she bent forward to look at the face. I noticed that her conventional smile had gone. She looked as serious as the portrait. I stepped closer and also bent over the case to look down at the face. The light was not hard and sharp and the eyes were black. In that peculiar light I saw a sad, tragic expression in that portrait below me. At that moment it looked like a portrait of the lady who next to me looked at the same face. It was like a sudden electric shock when we both straightened up and looked at each other. Now that the protective smile had disappeared, the two faces seemed almost identical. The woman was pale, her eyes just black without a spark of light and her features had the stamp of tragedy. I could see she had suddenly recognized herself in that portrait below. I realized that the mummy portrait certainly was more truly herself than the smiling mask behind which she had been hiding. When she looked at me I knew that she knew that I knew, too. Nothing was said and that moment was never mentioned to anyone. It was like a pledge to secrecy between her and me and the mummy. That mummy portrait was made about two millenia and several centuries ago. I don't know which Prince Caartoryski bought it and when it was included in that museum. It must have been many years before this visit and at a time when no one there had heard of me and the lady.

Most certainly I and my best friends never dreamed of my going to Krakow and taking an unknown lady to see the museum there. In other words it was very clear that neither in Egypt, nor in Krakow nor in Prossnitz or Vienna could anything have been planned or anticipated to bring about this meeting. What kind of a coincidence was that?

Now I no longer wanted to ask questions. I needed no further information. In that one moment at the mummy case I had caught a total glimpse of her personality and life. Thus this seemingly hopeless search was no problem any more. I had contacted the person behind the mask. Now I could go ahead and paint the portrait. Or could I? Did I have a right to reveal what I had seen?

Had I been a simple brute, like Oscar Kokoschka, for example, I would not have hesitated to pour all I saw or felt with uninhibited, expressionistic brushstrokes onto the canvas, for everyone to see. Had the woman cooperated a little more, I could have worked on the portrait alone. There would have been a chance that, like in the case of Hedi von Gutmann, the picture would have revealed more than I knew or could consciously observe. But since this sudden "recognizing" happened to both of us, it was like a highly confidential confession of a very private nature. There was inside of me too much of the priest or the doctor to bluntly reveal the secret. On the other hand, could I go ahead and paint the empty conventional smile knowing what I did? Refusing to paint the portrait would have caused a lot of questions and misinterpretations.

It may perhaps seem to many people somewhat exasperating to describe such conflicts inside of one's personality with all their sensitive complications and questions. After all, why bother at all about those individual internal fights in connection with a little portrait on a piece of paper, at a time when empires were crumbling, half a continent was being destroyed and millions of people lost their lives, when the ruling economies of the world were blasted into bankruptcy and there was no bread for surviving millions, in the homes and in the hospitals.

Of course I thought of all that too, during the different episodes which I try to record here. But all these inner struggles and agonies are a part of my quest for life and its meaning.

I just heard another interview on the radio. A man in charge of an international educational project mentioned that in the American group alone, 88 percent of the students suffered from apathy and felt completely lost because their life had no meaning and they did not find any answer or sense anywhere. We had two world wars, depressions, a cold war and a constant threat of total annihilation of the human race. Do I have to repeat all that? Do I have to point out that all the realistic writing about violent action and big doing and fighting had not helped? We have now prosperity in the U.S.A. and in Western Europe. More money, more automobiles, more astronauts, more nuclear megaton bombs, more fallout. What have we solved? We have helped ruined nations and now, when they are

prosperous again, they, the former enemies and allies, plan to unite, to create a great competition against us.

All those huge, supercolossal events and developments have not supplied us with an inch of ground to stand on or one vision to counteract that fatal inner vacuum which the individual soul has to conquer. Man has been called a political animal, an economic animal and even a symbolic animal. I don't want to call him an "animal in search of meaning," because when people believe that man is an economic animal they turn the world into a huge economic Zoo and when they see in man a political animal, the world becomes a political jungle. But it is obvious that that which we want to call "man" suffocates when he has no meaning to himself in a meaningless existentialist world where everything is a stupid accident leading to chaos and total annihilation.

Well, let us assume for a moment that we actually had proof, infallible proof, that there is nothing in this world of material universes but just a plain meaningless, planless goalless, stupid accidental hit or miss--chaos. Isn't it quite easy to see that the moment a little insignificant creature appears and is gifted with some conscious intelligence, somewhere on an insignificant planet in the little solar system, somewhere in one of the countless galaxies, it automatically becomes the first duty of this little creature to find meaning and sense in his life and if he can't find it, he has got to create it, and that in itself is a goal.

If all the cosmic spaces were totally empty and there

would be one speck somewhere, one speck of matter, one atom or molecule of chemical or physical nature, there would be space and matter in the cosmos. If there would be much matter and one tiny little invisible sign of energy in one of the lost atoms somewhere--^{*}the universal All would consist of space, energy and matter, and if somewhere one single little brain would be able to have consciousness and intellect, then the cosmic All would consist of space, energy, matter, consciousness and intellect, even if it were an absolute monopoly of one little creature. No matter how small that one intellect is compared with the endless rest, it has one job--to understand meaning of itself and meaning of the rest. It is some job--I grant you--but intellect has no right to join chaos; it has to create meaning even if the rest of the endless cosmic phenomena stays stupid.

If now, in the theater, in literature and in the visual arts, remarkable talents of today succeed in expressing or describing all the horrors and the total, absolute, hopelessness of the only answer left to them which is a meaningless escapism through addiction to excesses in sex, alcohol, heroin or other narcotics, that is temporarily understandable. Who am I to say what art "should" or "should not" do? Or by the same token: who are you to say? Unless of course you are a critic, a dealer or an artist who needs working ^(selling) terms on which to earn money. The interesting thing is, that whenever a reasonable agreement has been reached, on what should and what should not be done in art, a genius comes along and dares to do

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the atom according to science today is a mini-universe with inconceivably enormous energies.

exactly that which had been accepted as a tabu. Of course, the guardians of those absolute values make him usually pay for the offense. Yet critics, auction rooms and the public do not respect artists who stay too long within the accepted rules. A well known critic said the other day on the radio: "There are absolute values in art and it is my job and duty to make the public aware of them." But a minute later he admitted: "Whenever one makes any statement about art, one immediately thinks of twenty exceptions." I wonder how long this kind of talk will continue. All one has to do is to look up the critics' writings of ten or fifteen years ago when he was using the very same possession of eternal, absolute values to condemn those very same artists and art works which he now praises just as absolutely. Somebody should really write a book about Picasso's treatment by the critics, I mean a real blow-by-blow description of his many rounds of new isms, different styles, attitudes, techniques, effects, etc., which he shocked the public and the critics with and how that same hostile crowd now runs to see 10 Picasso exhibitions at the same time in New York and they all act as if Picasso were their very special own. He is now the world champion. Why? Because he had the courage to K.O. more eternal laws than any other artist in our days? Perhaps the hundreds of books about his work have now turned his revolutions into eternal laws? Into familiar standards with which to fight non-objective art.

Therefore let us not waste time by trying to define undefineables. Art simply does this or that. If we can find a

"Why," fine. If we don't understand it, that does not stop it. Or should it?

I only wanted to say that the present hopelessness and complete meaningless^{ness} of life is now being powerfully expressed in art--sometimes with such intensity that it becomes overwhelming. On the other hand, I have heard many voices who just as intensely are asking for a little light, for a meaning, a direction. Multi-billion statistics about production in industry, not even an increase in the standard of living, can be an answer. I, certainly, as much as anyone, wish that poverty and starvation would be cured like other diseases. I am thinking of the story of the Toltecas under Quetzalcoatl, who taught them to grow enough food for all and ^{then} poverty was legally forbidden. We in the U.S. also grow more food than we need and too many eat more than is good for them, but we have still many who starve for lack of food. All that does not change the fact that the 85 percent who were starving for a meaning of life had not come from the hungry sections. They were physically well fed but they had become victims of a general apathy. Obviously, intellect failed to do its job--to supply meaning.

I see on the streets of New York mostly people with an aggressive despair, a horrible, predatory determination in their faces or people who are hopeless, beaten. They all look definitely pathological. One is very grateful to find sometimes a face with a human, not a Zoo expression. Much has been written about this pendulum between the "wild life" and apathy.

We should know by now that neither victory nor defeat in another war will give an answer.

I can only think of the simple biology lesson. While I am writing, thousands of cells in my body are dying. I am not worried, as long as I can create that same number of new cells. Thus as I mentioned before, Life is not the absence of destruction. It is the "balance between destruction and creation." That means, the bigger the war and the destruction or the industrial preparation for destruction, the more horrible the slaughter of men becomes,--the more important is in reality the deeper, sensitive struggle in the internal evolution towards a creative understanding of meaning. But it seems so much easier to do many things and accomplish "big" results on the external, quantitative or destructive level, than to create one little answer for an internal need; to crashdive below the substrata of the material grant of success and power to reach for a little womblike cave which holds a little flame in perfect silence.

This is one of the main reasons why I am writing this book. By writing down as truthfully as possible my inner reactions to the external events I am giving importance to many of the details in my internal experiences which otherwise would be lost to memory. Most of it will seem like trivial episodes compared with the big events and the big deals.

To return to the dilemma of my portrait in Krakow. I hope someone, some day, will understand the inner significance of this particular conflict between the urge to create or express visually what I had so suddenly discovered about the deeper

being of the woman and the urge not to betray the secret of it.

My fingers were still extremely sensitive from the captain's microscopic precision work and since the lady had plenty of time to pose, I solved my problem by deciding on another method, again very strenuous and certainly non-competitive.

I had been thinking a great deal about colors. One of the first observations about them was the fact that colors of different frequencies represent different optical energies. I mean, for example, the lowest visible frequencies (red, orange) are more aggressive than the higher ones (blue, purple) which have a receding character. Also, a red and blue of about the same tone and intensity will behave differently at certain distances, for instance; if I make red dots next to blue ones, so that both seem equally strong at a distance of about one foot, and then I step back to a distance of ^{ten,} fifteen or twenty feet, the blue dots will seem to be weaker and do not hold their own. If, therefore, I chose a technique of a microscopic pointillism where the flesh tints are not mixed on the palette but are created by tiny dots of pure color (red, yellow, green, blue), they combine in our eye to brownish, pinkish, bluish, skin color. All I have to do is to put more red into one section and more blue in the other, so that they seem of equal tone at a close distance. Automatically, the section richer in red components will look, at a greater distance, much stronger and show a contrast to the bluer section. There will be a distinct border visible which makes it possible to show lines or wrinkles at a distance. Close by, those details are hardly noticeable. Thus

I can include pain or a sad expression to be noticed from a certain distance. Most people automatically move close, when viewing a half-life-size head in fine details. This made it possible to preserve the integrity of any work and yet to protect the secret. Again I had created a person's form on a piece of paper at least as a reflection of life, yet this time it was not an all-out prayer, like in the case of the captain in Colacul. The great reverence for the living form is also in this picture. But in addition it expresses an inner struggle with fate. To be exact, it reveals it and hides it.

The husband seemed very pleased with the picture. Everybody talked to everybody about the marvelous detail work, "like an old master," and so everybody looked from close by. There is not an indication of an Egyptian influence in the picture and thus no cause for anyone to connect it with the mummy. Perhaps in a different light the portrait on the mummy would not look the same way again.

We had the watercolor put in a simple frame and it was included in the one man show in Vienna. Later, after the war, I met someone from Krakow who told me that the lady had met a big handsome brute, fell terribly in love, ran away with him, giving up wealth, husband and social position. The new hero, who was only interested in making another conquest, dropped her soon and she committed suicide.

Connections with the new countries like Czechoslovakia and Poland were impossible. Krakow belonged to Poland and therefore I heard nothing directly and the picture is still in my

studio, and it also is not for sale. To many people today, such a painting is not "art." Art to them is something from here _____ to _____ here and I am not interested to prove what pigeon hole it fits. Nobody could make a living or last long if such work would be made to order, I mean, like commercial portrait painting. All I am saying here is that there is much in the picture which money cannot pay for. As I said before, officially I made the picture for her husband and he asked me to include it in the exhibition in Vienna. *Exhibition*

I had to hurry to get everything to the Secession at a certain date. Finally the time for the opening had arrived and I was sent to Vienna to help personally. But the spring show was already hung and I found out that there was no one-man-show. I was told that all the artist members of the Secession had counted on this show. The Christmas exhibition and the Spring show were their main opportunities to show and to sell their work and they were not willing to give up so much valuable wall space for a big one-man-show of a non-member. They protested violently and the dictors who had made the promise because of a patriotic appeal had to give in. They apologized. They mentioned, though, that they had included the lifesize study of Reserl (the Halbakt) and some studies in the general show, to sugarcoat the pill.

There I found myself again in a most awkward situation. This time with my art. I had promised to arrange this exhibition. I had been ordered to see to it personally and all the people of my portraits and the people who had loaned paintings

expected to see their pictures on exhibition in that show. I simply had to exhibit, but how? Where? All exhibition halls or galleries were, of course, rented or promised long in advance and I could not wait 6 or 8 months. Since this had reached the stage where seemingly nothing could be done, it became clear that this was a case for Mrs. Katz. Hedi looked the situation over, and I mean over, that is, all over Vienna. She was not handicapped by such little superstitions as that one has to exhibit pictures in a picture gallery. So, when she discovered that in the famous Musikvereinsgebäude (where she had studied at the Conservatory and where the magnificent Concert Hall was) had a number of large rooms with good light which were temporarily not in use, she did not hesitate. She still had her musical connections there, and she just talked them into letting me have the exhibition there.

Now I needed some help and permission from the Army and of course I had to report the change to the War Ministry and the Regiment, etc. Viennese people (especially the art public) were rather fond of their habits and it would be quite a problem to get them into the Musikvereinsgebäude to see pictures. So I inquired in a dozen offices and was sent from one end of Vienna to the other, but finally I found out that an old retired general had been made the chief of all propaganda activities of the Army. Now I had to run again through all the instances and ranks until I at last was admitted.

By that time I felt already like a saluting and heel-clicking automaton, but I gave my posture an extra stretch,

held my sabre at the exactly prescribed angle and clicked with an extra dose of energy when I stood in front of his Excellency, the retired general.

It was a relief to notice that his Excellency was not as tall as Fieldmarshal Brandtner. In fact he was shorter than I and therefore he tried to ^{compensate with} substitute a loud and commanding ^{with} voice and ^{his} unmistakable gestures of immutable authority for ^{his} size. According to his uniform, he was an Artillery general, Fieldmarshal-lieutenant, to be exact. I could expect a certain artilleristic sympathy from him when I reported as Fachrich Katz from the "Reitende Eins." I added that "I had come to beg his Excellency's assistance in arranging a Kollektiv Ausstellung (one man show) of my work for the benefit of the widows and orphans of our regiment, thereby combining charity with propaganda." He hardly gave me a chance to finish. He looked very annoyed, jumped to his feet and in a somewhat shrill combination of a crowing and a barking voice he shouted: "Kollektiv ausstellung! Kollektiv ausstellung, every soldier in uniform wants to make a Kollektiv-ausstellung! His fist went down and hit a book on the desk, to increase the acoustic volume of his response. I noticed the book he banged his fist on was the catalogue of the Spring show at the Secession. I wanted to mention my bad luck with that Spring show but he kept hollering: "And who do you think you are that you want to make that Kollektiv ausstellung? Anyone from the Reitende Eins perhaps would like to come here and pester me with exhibitions. What do you, at the Reitende Eins in Krakau, know about art? I

tell you, if you want to learn something about great art I advise you to go to the Secession and study that thing--here I give you that catalogue, I marked it--nothing like it--For forty years I never missed an exhibition in Vienna--Never seen anything like it--That's what I call art." I tried to take advantage when he had to inhale and quickly mentioned that "I had already the Musikvereinsgebäude-rooms reserved for the exhibition," but he lit a long Virginia cigar and then he barked again: "There is only one picture that now counts. Everything else looks ridiculous--you've got to see it--it's in the Secession--that's painted--my God!--it's that Halbakt" and here the old bald general with a typical Kaiser Franz-Josef beard and a long cigar in his mouth tried his best to tilt his head gracefully and assume the position of my "Reserl" picture. I could not help myself and I simply burst out: "But your Excellency, that's my picture--I painted it--I obediently report--your Excellency." He snapped back: "You and who else? Anyhow, what's your name?" I answered, still standing at attention: "Faehnrich Katz is my name." He almost started to cry like a little brat: "Katz-Kaaatz--ha ha--close enough--but his name is Katzer--I marked it in the catalogue--I didn't mark any other picture this year--that's art I tell you--that lives --here!" and he opened the catalogue and pointed to that line which said "Leo Katz--Halbakt." He had marked it. He realized his mistake gradually and said: "It is Katz, isn't it? funny, could have sworn it was Katzer. So,--you--are that Katz?" In German he, of course, used the "Du." "Also, Du bist der Katz?"

Er-er-er--at ease, er-er, sit down, a cigarette? So was, also Du bist der Kataf Congratulations, that is a masterpiece. So, you want an exhibition, where did you say--Musikvereinsgebäude? Ha. Just wait a minute," and off he went through a long hall with an elegant Rococco ceiling. After a while he came back with another much younger general in a brown artillery uniform. I seemed to remember his face from pictures.

"Your Imperial Highness," he said, "this is Faehnrich Kata from the Reitende Eins." And he told about my plans and how terrific that Malbakt is, etc., etc. By that time I could guess it could only be "Archduke Leopold Salvator, the Commanding Chief of all Artillery in Austria, so believe me, I haelclicked and saluted--well, accordingly, and his Imperial Highness, how shall I put it? well--graciously promised two shifts of veterans to be on guard at the exhibition. Then he gave orders to take care of all packing and transportation and the entrance fees. Then the little Excellency suggested that "it would be wonderful if his "Kaiserliche Hoheit" would be personally at the opening of the show" and his Imperial Highness nodded his gracious consent.

And that was exactly how everything was done. We hung all the pictures, big and small, with all the portraits and everything else. And the Archduke came to the opening and liked the landscapes. In the room with the monsters of Fear and Hate he only shrugged his shoulders and walked on, but when he came to the wall with the officers' portraits, he looked very, very carefully at all the medals and then he studied the collars

with the stars. His face lit up and he enthusiastically said: "Aha ein Ober-leutnant, aha, ein Hauptmann (captain)--aha, ein Major--aha, ein Oberst--aha, der Feldmarschall--aha-aha--ausgezeichnet (excellent)--congratulations." He almost felt proud recognizing the different ranks.

But His Excellency, the short one, felt as if HE had painted it all. He was the pappa of the whole thing. His eyes were humid everytime he spoke of the "Halbakt" in the Secession and I could not help noticing a slight undertone of disappointment because I did not have several rooms full of such beautiful nudes.