

just to make things more interesting. Each time, at <Katharina Loeben>, she raised 3 fingers and looked about her, attentive and amused ("I'd like to take a little tri-hip with you" : departure's set for 4 in the morning, i.e., if we're lucky, about 6 !). Outside briefly : moon pushed his way, all stiff and colonel-general, through the rank and file of pallid stars; the wind murmured and experimented with scrambled clouds; a locomotive dawdled sedately around the station and let out a whistle : it's all <medicine>. "And now you're going to lie down," I ordained, "and you'll use my coat. - I'll stay awake and keep watch." "I have a blanket, really -" she acted amazed. "Then put it under your head. - I want at least one souvenir. - Please." "And there you'll sit and freeze," she said, wild and happy and proud, stood up, yawned discreetly with her shoulders, and meanwhile I made her a bed on the floor under the window. (Uptop, the silver ermine slipped smoothly through cloud cracks, greedy, ever in pursuit of that quivering blue star).

A freezing man, covering himself with both hands; on the floor the female head in black coats; sad solitary flame in the stove niche, large and red-locked. "Abeer" for the mangy 1-mark bill and he slides me pennies still minted yellow : where you headed ? Don't know. Outside : hollow-honed moon lies on dark velvet cushion, part of some dangerous cutlery. Stand with dreary head or for all I care ten steps further on. Moon light; fir candlesticks; nightcloud roof : three cheers for us, right ?

The last Silesian nook is going to sleep ("Git some rest y'self. / Ah, claims he's an 'nspector. / Whether he really is, I can't say; tanyrate always signs his name that way.") The brain-damaged fellow, and drunk to boot, babbled lecherously (or as the old Gessner would say : exceeding vnchaste) : well, he's got his feeble-minded license, so no need to get excited, one finds oneself in any case a lifer in intellectual solitary. I once knew a man who would go to the attic whenever his gorge rose, and pound nails in a board for half an hour, straight and crooked, whichever, in gloomy sport. And did he feel any easier then ? Emptier, yes. And life went on for a couple of weeks. What was on my day's (or, rather, night's) schedule ? The gulp from the canteen : judging by color and taste, the coffee had been drawn directly from the Acheron. (Poverty of language : a man who hears nothing is called <deaf>; who sees nothing, <blind>. But what do you call him if he smells nothing ? <Lucky> maybe, my lazy brain suggested to me : but in any case, what ? And if he tastes nothing, and I gazed with greater nausea into the screw-threaded aluminum hole). Moon, eavesdropper at the cloud wall, shoved his bald leprous skull, wrapped in bluish rags, into the window above Katrin; large-pored, lovesickly, 'veyouheardthefactsoflife, brassy as wisdom. Soft the tavern radio with "Variations on La Paloma" : these consisted of their alternately playing the thing an octave higher or lower and finally so stutteringly fast that it gave you complete jitters. Then a mixed duet praised Kadum lanolin soap in such an asinine way that I once again impatiently demanded the next white dove, for which indeed, in hasty Northwestern German Radio fashion, they did not keep me waiting long : and they consider themselves the lofty cultural bastion of our time ! May God forbid and our Lady of Guadalupe ! The old fur-cap snored like a zipper pulled up and slowly back with a whistle. (A modern danse macabre; as bus driver; as graduate chemist; as chancellor; as bobsled steerer; as refugee-welfare-officer.) Sleepless lightbulb in the hall: news whispering

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