Schweyk in the Second World War
Characters

Schwyek, dog dealer in Prague · Baloun, a photographer, his friend · Anna Kopecka, landlady of the Chalice tavern · Young Prochazka, son of a butcher, her admirer · Anna, a servant girl · Kati, her friend
Brettschneider, Gestapo agent · Bullinger, lieutenant in the SS · SS-man Muller II · The Chaplain
Hitler · Himmler · Goering · Goebbels · von Bock · Minor characters
PROLOGUE IN THE HIGHER REGIONS

*Martial music. Hitler, Goering, Goebbels and Himmler around a globe. All larger than life except Goebbels, who is smaller than life.*

HITLER

Comrades and party members, you’ve seen how my iron hand
Is holding down Germany, just as we planned.
So here’s my chance to bid for world domination
Which is nothing but a small matter of tanks, stukas and determination.
*He puts his hand on the globe, and blood slowly spreads across the world. Goering, Goebbels and Himmler shout ‘Heil!’*
First, though (this is something which even I cannot guess)
Tell me, since you’re the head of my police and SS
How would you say the Little Man views me?
Not just the Germans only
But those people in Austria, Czecho-what’s-its-name
(What the hell are those small countries called, on my map they all look the same)
Do they support me and—love me indeed?
Can I count on them in a crisis, or are they—more of a broken reed?
What’s their view of me, the statesman, orator, warrior, artist—
Just what do they think I am?

HIMMLER

The smartest.

HITLER

And are they truly generous, even to obsession
Specially with their possessions
Which I’ve got to have for my war, since although I find
I’m quite smart, I’m still only human.

HIMMLER

Not to my mind.
Schweyk in the Second World War

HITLER

Don't interrupt me. But oh, my poor head
Aches as I lie tossing and turning in my bed
Thinking of Europe, wondering how does the Little Man
view me?

HIMMLER

Mein Führer, they pray to you on bended knee
As to a god, all the while
Loving you as men love a mistress: the same as the Ger-
mans!

GOERING, GOEBBELS, HIMMLER:
Heil!

I

In the Chalice tavern sit Schweyk and Baloun over their morning drink. The landlady, Mrs Anna Kopecka, is serving a drunken SS man. At the bar sits young Prochazka.

MRS KOPECKA: You've had five Pilseners, and I'd rather you
didn't have a sixth. You're not used to it.

SS MAN: Give me another, that's an order. You know what
that means, and if you're a good girl and do as you're told
I'll let you into the big secret, you won't be sorry.

MRS KOPECKA: I don't want to know. That's why you're
not getting any more beer, so you don't let our your secrets
and make trouble for me.

SS MAN: That's very sensible of you, just what I might have
recommended myself. All personnel with knowledge of this
secret will be shot. They've made an attempt on Adolf's
life, in Munich. He nearly had it: skin of his teeth.

MRS KOPECKA: Shut up, you're drunk.

SCHWEYK cordially, from the next table: Which Adolf would
that be? I know two Adolfs. One of them was behind the
counter at Prusha the chemist's—he's in a concentration
camp now because he’d only sell his concentrated hydro-
chloric acid to Czechs—and the other’s Adolf Kokoschka
who picks up the dogshit and he’s in a concentration camp
too for saying there’s no shit to beat a British bulldog’s.
Neither would be much loss.

SS man gets up and salutes: Heil Hitler!

SCHWEYK likewise gets up and salutes: Heil Hitler!

SS man threateningly: Anything wrong with that?

SCHWEYK: Present and correct, Mr SS, sir, nothing wrong at
all.

MRS KOPECKA coming with beer: Here’s your Pilsener. I don’t
suppose it makes any difference now. Now just you sit
down nice and quiet and don’t start pouring out any more
of your Führer’s secrets that none of us wants to hear. We
don’t have any politics in this place. She points to a notice:
‘Just drink your slivovitz or beer / And don’t talk politics in
here. Anna Kopecka’. I’m running a business. When some-
body comes and orders a beer I draw him one, but that’s
all.

YOUNG PROCHAZKA when she returns to the bar: Why won’t
you let people enjoy themselves, Mrs K?

MRS KOPECKA: Because the Nazis’ll shut the Chalice down
if I do.

SCHWEYK: If it was Hitler they had a go at it wouldn’t half be
a lark.

MRS KOPECKA: You be quiet too, Mr Schweyk. It’s nothing
to do with you.

SCHWEYK: If that was it, it could be because there’s a shortage
of potatoes. That’s the sort of thing people won’t put up
with. But it’s all on account of order, good order and military
discipline; they’ve got things that organized every blessed
bunch of parsley is a coupon on your ration card, that’s
order’ for you, and I’ve heard as how Hitler has put more
things in order than you’d have thought humanly possible.
Once there’s no shortage you don’t get order. Take me for
instance, suppose I’ve been and sold a dachshund, there I
am with a pocketful of money, notes and silver all jumbled
up, but when I'm broke there's probably nothing but a one-crown note and a ten-heller piece, and that doesn't leave you much room for disorder. When Mussolini took over in Italy the trains started running on time. They've had seven or eight goes at him so far.

Mrs Kopecka: Stop drivelling and drink your beer. If something's happened we'll all be for it.

SCHWEYK: I don't see why you have to look so miserable about it, Baloun, you'll be odd man out in Prague today.

Baloun: It's easy enough to say food gets short in a war like this, but I haven't had a real meal since Whit Sunday last year, what with all your ration cards and two ounces of meat a week. Indicating the SS man: It's all right for them, look how well fed they are, I'll just go and have a quick word with him. He goes over to the SS man. What did you have for lunch, eh, pal, that's made you so thirsty? I hope you don't mind me asking, but I bet it was something pretty hot, goulash perhaps?

SS man: Mind your own business, it's a military secret, rissoles.

Baloun: With gravy. And were there any fresh vegetables? I don't want you to say anything you shouldn't, but just supposing there was cabbage, was there plenty of butter on it? That's the important thing, you know. I remember in Przlov, before Hitler (if you'll pardon my saying so) I had a rissole at the Old Swan that was better than you get at the Ritz.

Mrs Kopecka to Schweyk: Can't you get Mr Baloun away from that SS man, yesterday he spent so long asking Mr Brettschneider from the Gestapo—I wonder where's he got to today—about the size of the helpings in the German army, he nearly got himself arrested as a spy.

Schweyk: Can't be helped. Eating's his vice.

Baloun to the SS man: D'you happen to know if the Germans are taking on volunteers in Prague for the Russian campaign, and if they get the same size helpings as the German army, or is it just a rumour?
MRS KOPECKA: Mr Baloun, stop bothering that gentleman, he's off duty, and you ought to be ashamed asking such questions, and you a Czech.

BALOUN guiltily: I don't mean any harm—I wouldn't go asking him right out like this if I did. I know your point of view, Mrs Kopecka.

MRS KOPECKA: I don't have a point of view, I have a pub. I just expect normal decent behaviour from the customers, but you're terrible, Mr Baloun, you really are.

SS MAN: Do you want to volunteer?

BALOUN: I was only asking.

SS MAN: If you're interested I'll take you along to the recruiting office. The catering's first class, if you want to know. The Ukraine is becoming the granary of the Third Reich. When we were in Holland I sent so many food parcels home I even kept my aunt in grub, and I can't stand the sight of her. Hitler!

BALOUN also standing up: Heil Hitler.

SCHWEYK who has joined them: You mustn't say 'Heil Hitler', you must do like this gentleman, and he ought to know, say 'Heitler', that shows you're used to it and say it in your sleep at home.

MRS KOPECKA bringing the SS man a slivovitz: Have this one on the house.

SS MAN embracing Baloun: So you want to volunteer against the Bolsheviks, that's what I like to hear; you may be a Czech pig but you've got brains, I'll come along to the recruiting office with you.

MRS KOPECKA pushing him down on to his chair: Drink your slivovitz, it'll calm you down. To Baloun: I've half a mind to throw you out. You've no sense of dignity left, it comes from that unnatural gluttony of yours. Do you know that song they're all singing now? I'll sing it to you, you've only had a couple of beers, you should have your senses about you still. She sings 'The Song of the Nazi Soldier's Wife':
What did the post bring the soldier's wife
From the ancient city of Prague?
From Prague it brought her some high-heeled shoes.
Just a card with news and some high-heeled shoes
That was what she got from ancient Prague.

What did the post bring the soldier's wife
From Warsaw on Poland's plains?
From Warsaw it brought her a fine linen blouse
To wear in the house, a superb linen blouse.
That was what came from Poland's plains.

What did the post bring the soldier's wife
From Oslo's well-equipped stores?
From Oslo it brought her an elegant fur.
Just the thing for her, an elegant fur!
That was what she got from Oslo's stores.

What did the post bring the soldier's wife
From the port of Rotterdam?
From Rotterdam it brought her a hat.
And she looked good in that very Dutch-looking hat
Which was sent her from Rotterdam.

What did the post bring the soldier's wife
From Brussels in Belgium's fair land?
From Brussels it brought her some delicate laces.
Nothing quite replaces such delicate laces.
That was what she got from Belgium's fair land.

What did the post bring the soldier's wife
From the lights of gay Paree?
From Paree it brought her a lovely silk dress.
To her neighbour's distress, a lovely silk dress
That was what she got from gay Paree.

What did the post bring the soldier's wife
From the desert around Tobruk?
From round Tobruk it brought her a pendant.
A copper pendant that looked so resplendent
That was what it brought her from Tobruk.
What did the post bring the soldier's wife
From the Russian steppe-lands?
From Russia it brought her her widow's veil.
So we end our tale with the widow's veil
Which she got from Russia's steppes.

*The SS man nods in triumph at the end of each verse, but before the last his head sinks to the table—he is out to the wide.*

**Schweyk:** A very nice song. *To Baloun:* It shows you should think twice before you do anything without thinking. Don't get the idea of going off to Russia with Hitler for the sake of the extra rations, and then freezing to death, you dope.

**Baloun** deeply affected by the song, has propped his head on his elbows and begun to sob: Mother of God, what's going to become of me the way I am about food? You lot'll have to take me in hand, otherwise I'll go to pieces completely. I can't stay a good Czech on an empty stomach.

**Schweyk:** If you swore by the Virgin Mary never to volunteer out of greed, you'd keep to it. *To Mrs Kopecka:* He's religious. Would you swear, though? No.

**Baloun:** I'm not swearing on an empty stomach, it's not funny.

**Mrs Kopecka:** It's dreadful. You're a grown man, after all.

**Baloun:** Yes, but I'm weak.

**Schweyk:** If they put a plate of pork in front of you and said 'Eat, you sinner, but swear you'll stay a good Czech', you'd swear if I know you; I mean, if they kept their hands on the plate and pulled it back straightaway if you didn't swear, you'd swear then all right.

**Baloun:** That's true, but they'd have to keep their hands on it.

**Schweyk:** And you'd only keep your word if you knelt down and swore on the Bible and in front of everybody, right? *Baloun nods.*

**Mrs Kopecka:** It's almost worth a try. *Goes back to young Prochazka.*
YOUNG PROCHAZKA: Soon as you start singing I have to hold myself back.
MRS KOPCEKA absent: Why?
YOUNG PROCHAZKA: Love.
MRS KOPCEKA: How d’you know it’s love and not just a passing fancy?
YOUNG PROCHAZKA: I know, Mrs K. Yesterday I wrapped up a customer’s handbag for her instead of her cutlet, and got told off by my father, and all because I was thinking of you. And I get headaches first thing in the morning. It’s love all right.
MRS KOPCEKA: Suppose it is, the question then is how much love.
YOUNG PROCHAZKA: What d’you mean by that, Mrs K?
MRS KOPCEKA: I mean, how far is your love prepared to go? Perhaps only spitting distance, I know that kind of love.
YOUNG PROCHAZKA: Mrs K., you cut me to the quick, you really do, with accusations like that. There’s no truth in them at all. My love’s prepared to go to any lengths if only you’d accept it. But you won’t.
MRS KOPCEKA: I was wondering for instance whether it would stretch to two pounds of pickled pork.
YOUNG PROCHAZKA: Mrs K! How can you be so materialistic at a moment like this?
MRS KOPCEKA turning away to count bottles: There you are. Even that’s too much.
YOUNG PROCHAZKA shaking his head: There you go again.
I just don’t understand you. Ships that pass in the night, Mrs K.
BALOUN despairingly: It didn’t only start with the war, it’s an old story, this gluttony of mine. It made my sister I used to live with take her kids and go to the saint’s festival at Klokota. But even Klokota didn’t work. My sister brought the kids back and began to count the hens as soon as she got in. There were one or two missing. I couldn’t help it, I knew they were needed for the eggs, but out I went to have a good look at them, suddenly I get this great yawning chasm.
in my stomach, and an hour later I’m feeling better again and the hen’s already plucked. I’m probably beyond help.

**Young Prochazka:** Did you mean that seriously?

**Mrs Kopecka:** Quite seriously.

**Young Prochazka:** Mrs K., when do you want the meat?

**Mrs Kopecka:** You’re sure you know what you’re doing, promising it? You’d have to get it out of your father’s shop without his permission and without meat coupons, and that’s black-marketeering and you’ll be shot if it’s found out.

**Young Prochazka:** Don’t you think I would get myself shot for you if I knew it would do me any good?

_Schweyk and Baloun have been following the conversation._

**Schweyk appreciatively:** Now that’s the way a lover ought to be. In Pilsen there was a young man in love with a widow, she wasn’t so young, neither, and he hanged himself from a rafter in the barn because she happened to say that he never did anything for her; and down at the Bear a chap cut his wrist open in the gents because the barmaid had given another customer better measure, and him a family man too. A few days later a couple of fellows jumped into the Moldau off the Charles Bridge because of a woman, but that was on account of her money, she was supposed to be well off.

**Mrs Kopecka:** I must admit a woman doesn’t hear that sort of thing every day, Mr Prochazka.

**Young Prochazka:** She doesn’t indeed. I’ll bring it tomorrow dinnertime; is that soon enough?

**Mrs Kopecka:** I don’t want you to get yourself into trouble, but it’s in a good cause, it’s not for me. You heard yourself that Mr Baloun must have a proper meal with meat, or else he gets evil ideas.

**Young Prochazka:** So you don’t want me to get myself into trouble. That just slipped out, sort of, didn’t it? So it isn’t all the same to you whether I get shot or not, now don’t take it back, when you’ve made me happy. Mrs K.,
it's settled, you can count on that pickled pork if I have to swing for it.

_MRS KOPECKA_: Come in tomorrow dinnertime, Mr Baloun, I'm not promising anything, but it looks as if you'll be getting your meal.

_BALOUN_: If I only get one decent meal I'll get all the evil ideas out of my system. But I'm not going to start counting my chickens till I can stick a fork into 'em. I've been through too much.

_SCHWEYK_ pointing to the SS man: _I bet he'll have forgotten all about it when he wakes up, he's out to the wide. Shouts in his ear: Hurrah for Beneš! When the SS man doesn't stir: That's the surest sign that he's unconscious, otherwise he'd have made mincemeat of me, you see that's what they're scared of._

_Brettschneider the Gestapo agent has come in._

_Brettschneider_: Who's scared?

_Schweyk_ firmly: _The SS. Won't you join us, Mr Brettschneider? A Pilsener for the gentleman, Mrs Kopecka, it's a warm day._

_Brettschneider_: And what are they scared of, in your opinion?

_Schweyk_: Of being caught off their guard and letting slip some treasonable remark, or something like that, I don't know. But perhaps you want to get on with reading your newspaper, don't let me disturb you.

_Brettschneider_: Nobody ever disturbs me if he has something interesting to say. Mrs Kopecka, you look as fresh as the flowers in May.

_Mrs Kopecka_ giving him his beer: September's more like it.

_Young Prochazka_ when she is back at the bar: _If I were in your place I wouldn't let him take that sort of liberty._

_Brettschneider_ unfolding his paper: _This is a special edition. There's been an attempt to assassinate the Führer in a Munich beercellar. What do you say to that?_  

_Schweyk_: Did he suffer long?
BRETTSCHNEIDER: He wasn't harmed, the bomb went off too late.

SCHWEYK: Probably a cheap one. Everything's mass-produced these days, and then people are surprised when they don't get the quality stuff. Stands to reason something like that can't be made with the same loving care like when they were hand-done, I mean, doesn't it? But I must say they were a bit careless not to pick a better bomb for a job like that. There used to be a butcher in Cesky Krumlov who . . .

BRETTSCHNEIDER interrupting: You call it careless when the Führer is nearly killed?

SCHWEYK: A word like 'nearly' is deceptive, Mr Brettschneider. In 1938, when they sold us out at Munich, we nearly went to war, and then when we didn't we lost nearly everything. Back in the First World War Austria nearly beat Serbia and Germany nearly beat France. You can't depend on 'nearly'.

BRETTSCHNEIDER: Go on, this is interesting. You have interesting customers, Mrs Kopecka. So well up in politics.

MRS KOPECKA: One customer's the same as another. When you're in business like me, politics don't exist. And I'd be glad, Mr Brettschneider, if you wouldn't lead my regulars on to talk politics so you can put them in prison. And as for you, Mr Schveyk, you can pay for your beer and sit yourself down and talk as much rubbish as you want. But you've talked enough, Mr Schveyk, for two glasses of Pilsener.

BRETTSCHNEIDER: I have the feeling that you wouldn't think it any great loss for the Protectorate if the Führer were lying dead at this minute.

SCHWEYK: Oh, it would be a loss, you can't say it wouldn't. A dreadful one at that. You can't replace Hitler by any old halfwit. There are a lot of people grumbling about Hitler. I'm not surprised there was an attack on him.

BRETTSCHNEIDER hopefully: How do you mean that exactly?

SCHWEYK cheerfully: Great men are always unpopular with the common herd, I read that in a leading article in 'Field
and Garden'. And for why? Because the common herd don’t understand them and find the whole thing unnecessary, heroism and all. The common man doesn’t give a bugger for living in a great age. He wants to go down to the pub for a drink and have goulash for supper. What’s a statesman to do with a lot of sods like that when he’s got to get a people’s name into the history books, poor bastard? The common herd’s a thorn in the flesh of any great man, it’s like Baloun with his appetite getting half a Frankfurter for his supper, it’s no good at all. I wouldn’t like to hear what the great men say about us when they all get together. 

Brettschneider: Are you perhaps of the opinion that the German people are not solidly behind the Führer, that they complain?

Mrs Kopecka: Gentlemen, please change the subject, it’s all so pointless, there’s a war on, don’t you know?

Schweyk taking a good swig of beer: The German people are solid behind the Führer, Mr Brettschneider, you can’t say they’re not. As Marshal Goering put it, ‘The Führer cannot always be understood immediately, he is too great’. He should know. Confidentially: It’s amazing how many times they’ve put a spoke in Hitler’s wheel the moment he’s got one of his ideas, even the people up top. They say last autumn he wanted to put up a building to stretch from Leipzig to Dresden, a temple in memory of Germany once it’s gone under in one of his great plans he’s planned down to the last detail, and as usual they shook their heads at the Ministry and said ‘too great’ because they can’t understand something incomprehensible, the sort of thing a genius thinks up when he’s got nothing better to do. Now he’s landed them in a world war just by saying he wanted the town of Danzig, nothing more, it’s the last thing he’s set his heart on. And that’s the people at the top, the educated ones, generals and directors of IG Farben, and after all they oughtn’t to mind, they don’t have to pay for it. The common man’s even worse than they are. When he hears he’s to die for something great he doesn’t like the taste of
it, he picks at it and pokes it around as if it was going to stick in his throat, and I ask you, isn’t that going to make a Führer sick when he’s made a real effort to think up something absolutely new for them, or perhaps just having a shot at conquering the world? Anyway what’s left to conquer now, there are limits to that like everything else. It’s all right by me.

**Brettschneider:** So you’re maintaining that the Führer wants to conquer the world? That it’s not just a matter of defending Germany against her Jewish enemies and the plutocracies?

**Schweyk:** Now don’t you take it like that, he doesn’t mean it badly, you know. Conquering the world’s all in the day’s work for him, like drinking beer is for you, he gets a kick out of it so anyway he’ll have a go. Down with perfidious Albion. Enough said.

**Brettschneider standing up:** Quite enough. Come along with me to Gestapo headquarters, we’ll have something to say to you there.

**Mrs Kopecka:** But Mr Brettschneider, Mr Schweyk has only been making quite innocent remarks, don’t get him into trouble.

**Schweyk:** I’m so innocent I’m being arrested. That’s two beers and a slivovitz I’ve had. *To Brettschneider amicably, after paying:* Pardon me going out first, but that way you’ll be able to keep an eye on me and see I don’t escape.

*Exit Schweyk and Brettschneider.*

**Baloun:** And now maybe they’ll shoot him.

**Mrs Kopecka:** You’d better have a slivovitz, Mr Prochazka. The shock went right through you, didn’t it?

**Young Prochazka:** They don’t dawdle over taking you away.
Gestapo HQ in the Potschek Bank. Schweyk and Brettschneider are standing in front of SS-Lieutenant Ludwig Bullinger. An SS man in the background.

BULLINGER: This Chalice place seems to be a nice hotbed of subversive elements, eh?

BRETTSCHEIDER hurriedly: Oh no, Lieutenant. The landlady, Mrs Kopecka, is a very respectable woman who has nothing to do with politics; this man Schweyk is a dangerous exception among her regulars, I've had my eye on him for quite a time. The telephone on Bullinger's desk buzzes. He lifts the receiver and the voice at the other end can be heard.

VOICE ON PHONE: Mobile squad to Headquarters. Kruscha, the banker, claims he couldn't have passed any opinions about the attempt on the Führer's life, having been unable to read the newspaper report as he was arrested before it appeared.

BULLINGER: Is that the Commercial Bank fellow? Ten on his backside. To Schweyk: Yes, I know your sort. First of all I'm going to ask you a question. If you don't know the answer, you swine, then Müller II—pointing to the SS man—will take you down to the cellars for some education; d'you understand? Here's the question: Do you shit thick or do you shit thin?

SCHWEYK: Beg to report, sir, I shit any way you want me to.

BULLINGER: Correct answer. However, you have expressed opinions that endanger the security of the Third Reich, you have called the Führer's defensive war a war of conquest, you have criticized the rationing system, and so on. What have you got to say to all this?

SCHWEYK: It's a lot. You can have too much of a good thing.

BULLINGER heavily ironical: I'm glad you're clear about that.

SCHWEYK: I'm clear about everything, stringent measures are called for, nobody'll ever get nowhere without stringent
measures, like our sergeant used to tell us in the 91st. ‘If you didn’t have us to make things hot for you you’d be dropping your pants and swinging from the trees.’ Just what I told myself last night when they were knocking me about.

BULLINGER: Oh, you’ve been knocked about, have you, now fancy that.

SCHWEYK: In the cell. One of your SS gentlemen came in and gave me one over the head with his leather belt; and when I gave a bit of a groan he turns the light on and says, ‘No, that’s wrong, ’tisn’t this one’. And he gets so annoyed because he’s wrong that he gives me another, on the back this time. But that’s human nature: we go on making mistakes from the cradle to the grave.

BULLINGER: Hm. And you admit everything this says about your remarks? Pointing to Brettschneider’s report.

SCHWEYK: If you want me to admit it, your eminence, I’ll admit it, what have I to lose? But if you say, ‘Schweyk, don’t admit a thing’, they can tear me apart and they won’t get a word from me.

BULLINGER yells: Shut up! Take him away!

SCHWEYK when Brettschneider has reached the door with him, raising his right arm in the Nazi salute, loudly: Long live our Führer Adolf Hitler. Victory shall be ours!

BULLINGER dumbfounded: Are you a half-wit?

SCHWEYK: Beg to report, sir, yes sir. I can’t help it, I’ve already been discharged from the army on account of half-wittedness. I have been officially certified an idiot by a medical board.

BULLINGER: Brettschneider! Didn’t you see the man’s a half-wit?

BRETTSCHNEIDER injured: Lieutenant, the observations of the man Schweyk in the Chalice resembled those of a half-wit who disguises his defeatist utterances so cleverly you can’t prove anything.

BULLINGER: And you are of the opinion that what we have just heard are the observations of a man in his right mind?
Brettschneider: Lieutenant Bullinger, that is still my opinion. However, if for any reason you don’t want him I’ll take him back. I should just like to say that for us in the Criminal Investigation Department time doesn’t grow on trees.

Bullinger: Brettschneider, in my opinion you are a shit.

Brettschneider: Lieutenant Bullinger, I don’t have to take that sort of thing from you.

Bullinger: And I’d like you to admit it. It’s not much, and it would make you feel a great deal better. Admit it, you’re a shit.

Brettschneider: I really don’t know how you can have formed such an opinion of me, Lieutenant Bullinger, in my official capacity I am conscientious down to the last detail, I . . .

Voice on phone: Mobile squad to Headquarters. The prisoner Kruscha has declared himself ready to take your brother into the bank, sir, as a partner, but continues to deny having made the remarks in question.

Bullinger: Ten more on the backside, I need the remarks.

To Brettschneider, almost pleading: Look, what am I asking you to do? If you admit it, it won’t harm your reputation, it’s a purely personal matter, you are a shit, so why not admit it? Look, I’m asking you as nicely as I can. To Schwyek: You try talking to him.

Schwyek: Beg to report, sir, that I don’t want to get into an argument between you two gentlemen, but I do see what you mean, Lieutenant. But it must be a bit hard for Mr Brettschneider too, being such a good bloodhound like he is and this not really being his fault, so to speak.

Bullinger sadly: So you’re betraying me too, are you, you stinking hypocrite. ‘And the cock crowed for the third time’, like it says in the jewbible. Brettschneider, I’ll wring it out of you sooner or later, but I’ve no time for private business just now, I’ve still got 97 cases to come. Throw that idiot out and once in a while try to bring me something better.
SCHWEYK going up to him and kissing his hand: God reward you a thousand times, sir, and if you should ever need a dog, you come to me, I deal in dogs.

BULLINGER: Concentration camp. As Brettschneider is about to take Schweyk away again: Stop! I want to talk to this man alone.

Exit Brettschneider, annoyed. Exit also the SS man.

VOICE ON PHONE: Mobile squad to Headquarters. The prisoner Kruscha has admitted the remarks, but only that he's not interested in the attempt on the Führer's life, not that he's pleased about it, and not that the Führer's a clown, just that he's only human after all.

BULLINGER: Five more till he's pleased about it, and till the Führer's a bloody clown. To Schweyk, who is smiling at him amicably: Do you know that in the camps we tear out your limbs one by one if you try to take the piss out of us, you rat?

SCHWEYK: I know that. They shoot you there before you can say Jack Robinson.

BULLINGER: So you're a dog-wallah, are you? I've seen a pure-bred pom on the promenade that caught my fancy, with a spot on one ear.

SCHWEYK interrupting: Beg to report, sir, I know that animal professionally. There's quite a few been after that one. It has a whiteish spot on the left ear, hasn't it? Belongs to Mr Vojta, one of the high-ups at the Ministry. It's the apple of his eye and only eats when it's begged to on bended knee, and then only if it's the best cut of veal. That proves it's racially pure. Mongrels are cleverer, but the racially pure ones are high-class and they get stolen more often. They're mostly so stupid they need two or three servants to tell 'em when to shit and when to open their mouths to eat. Like high-class people.

BULLINGER: That's enough about race, you swine. The long and the short of it is I want that pom.

SCHWEYK: You can't have him, Vojta won't sell. What about a police dog? The sort that can sniff out anything and track down criminals? There's a butcher in Vršovice got one, it
pulls his cart. Now there’s a dog has missed his way in life, so to speak.

**Bullinger:** I told you I want that pom.

**Schweyk:** If only Mr Vojta was a Jew you could just take it away from him and that’d be that. But he’s an Aryan, got a fair beard, kind of moth-eaten.

**Bullinger interested:** Is he a real Czech?

**Schweyk:** Not what you mean, sabotaging and grumbling about Hitler, that’d be easy. Bung him into the concentration camp like me, just because I’ve been misunderstood. No, he’s a collaborationist—they’re calling him a quisling—and that makes the pom a real problem.

**Bullinger** takes a revolver out of the drawer and begins to clean it meaningly: I can see you don’t intend to get this pom for me, you saboteur.

**Schweyk:** Beg to report, sir, that I intend to get the pom.

Didactically: There are various systems of dog-removal in use, Lieutenant. You pinch a lapdog or a terrier by cutting its lead in a crowd. You can get one of those bad-tempered dalmatians by leading a bitch on heat past it. A horsemeat sausage, nicely fried, is nearly as good. But a lot of dogs are as pampered and spoiled as the Archbishop. There was one, a smooth-haired fox terrier, pepper-and-salt he was, and I wanted him for the kennels on the other side of the Klamovka, d’you know, he wouldn’t touch the sausage I gave him. Three days I followed him and then I couldn’t stick it any longer, so I went straight up to the woman who used to take him for his walks and asked her what it was the dog ate made him so good-looking. That got me on the right side of her, and she said he liked chops best. So I got him a bit of fillet of veal. I thought, that’s bound to be even better. And do you know, that son of a bitch wouldn’t even look at it, because it was veal. He was used to pork. So I had to go and buy him a chop. I gave it him to sniff and then ran, with the dog after me. And the woman kept on shouting ‘Puntik, Puntik’, but it was no good, poor old Puntik. He ran after the chop as far as the corner, once he was past it I
slung a chain round his neck and next day he was the other side of the Klamovka in the kennels.—But suppose people ask you where you got the dog from, when they see the spot on his ear?

BULLINGER: I don’t think anybody will ask me where I got my dog from. Rings the bell.

SCHWEYK: Perhaps you’re right there, it wouldn’t do them much good, would it?

BULLINGER: And I think you’ve put one over on me about being certified as an idiot; but I’m ready to turn a blind eye to that, for one thing because Brettschneider’s a shit and for another because you’re going to get me that dog for my wife, you crook.

SCHWEYK: Sir, permission to admit that I really was certified, though I was having a bit of a joke as well. As the landlord of a pub in Budweis said, ‘I’m an epileptic but I’ve got cancer as well’, when he wanted to keep it dark that he’d gone bankrupt. It’s like the old Czech proverb says, sweaty feet seldom come singly.

VOICE ON PHONE: Mobile squad number 4 to Headquarters. The prisoner Moudra Greissler denies having overstepped the regulations relating to shops not opening before 9 a.m. on the grounds that she didn’t in fact open her shop till 10 a.m.

BULLINGER: Crafty bitch. Couple of months inside for understepping the regulations. To the SS man who has just come in, indicating Schweyk: Free till further notice.

SCHWEYK: Before I do go, could I put in a word for a gentleman that’s waiting outside among the prisoners, so he doesn’t have to sit with the others, you see it isn’t very nice for him, it looks a bit suspicious, him sitting on the same bench with us political prisoners. He’s only here for attempted murder of a farmer from Holice.

BULLINGER roars: Clear out!

SCHWEYK: Very good, sir. I’ll bring the pom as soon as I’ve got it. A very good morning!

Exit with the SS man.
SCHWEYK: If I tell Mrs Kopecka, she might do it for you. I’m glad to hear you confirm that the Führer doesn’t go for the girls, so that he can reserve his strength for higher matters of State, and that he don’t ever drink alcohol. He’s done what he has done stone-cold sober, you might say; it’s not everyone who’d do the same. And it’s lucky too that he doesn’t eat anything except a few vegetables and a bit of pastry, because there’s not much going, what with the war and all that, and it makes one mouth less to feed. I knew a farmer up in Moravia who’d got stomach trouble and had no appetite, and his farmhands got so scraggy that the whole village began to talk, and the farmer just went around saying ‘In my house the servants eat what I eat’. Drinking’s a vice, I admit, like old Budova the saddler, who meant to swindle his brother and then while he was under the influence signed over his own inheritance to the brother instead of the other way round. There are two sides to everything, and he wouldn’t have to give up the girls if it were left to me, I don’t ask that of anybody.

In the Chalice Baloun is waiting for his meal. Two other customers are playing draughts, a fat female shopkeeper is enjoying a small slivovitz, and Mrs Kopecka is knitting.

BALOUN: It’s ten past twelve now, and no Prochazka. As I expected.

MRS KOPECZA: Give him a bit of time. The quickest aren’t always the best. You need the right mixture of fast and
slow. Do you know the ‘Song of the Gentle Breeze’? She sings:

Come here, my dearest, and make haste
No one dearer could I pick
But once your arm is round my waist
Don’t try to be too quick.
   Learn from the plums in the autumn
   All golden on the trees.
   They fear the whirlwind’s terrible strength
   And long for the gentle breeze.
   You can scarcely feel that gentle breeze
   It’s like a whispering lullaby
   Which makes the plums drop off the trees
   Till on the ground they lie.

Oh, reaper, don’t cut all the grass
But leave one blade to grow.
Don’t drain the brimming wine-glass
Don’t kiss me as you go.
   Learn from the plums in the autumn
   All golden on the trees.
   They fear the whirlwind’s terrible strength
   And long for the gentle breeze.
   You can scarcely feel that gentle breeze
   It’s like a whispering lullaby
   Which makes the plums drop off the trees
   Till on the ground they lie.

Baloun restless, going over to the draughts players: You’re in a good position. Would you gentlemen be interested in postcards? I work at a photographer’s, and we’re putting out a series of special postcards on the quiet: it’s called ‘German towns’.

First customer: I’m not interested in German towns.
Baloun: You’ll like our series then. He shows them postcards furtively, as if they were pornographic pictures. That’s Cologne.
First customer: That looks dreadful. I’ll have that one.
   Nothing but craters
BALOUN: Fifty Hellers. But be careful showing it around. We’ve already had police patrols picking up people who were showing it to one another, because they thought it was something filthy, the sort of thing they like to confiscate.

FIRST CUSTOMER: That’s a good caption: ‘Hitler is one of the greatest architects of all time’. And a picture of Bremen in a heap of rubble.

BALOUN: I sold two dozen to a German NCO. He grinned when he looked at them, and I liked that. I told him I’d meet him in the park by Havlíček’s statue, and I kept my knife open in my pocket in case he was a twister. But he was straight.

FAT WOMAN: He who lives by the sword shall perish by the sword.

MRS KÖPECKA: Careful!

Enter Schweyk with SS man Müller II, a beanpole of a man.

SCHWEYK: Morning all. This gentleman with me isn’t on duty. Let us have a glass of beer, Mrs Köpecka.

BALOUN: I didn’t think we’d be seeing you again for a good few years. Ah well, we all make mistakes. Mr Brettschneider’s usually so thorough. Last week, when you weren’t here, he took the upholsterer in Cross Lane away and he hasn’t come back since.

SCHWEYK: Must have been some awkward fellow who didn’t crawl to them. Mr Brettschneider will think twice before he misunderstands me again. I’ve got protection.

FAT WOMAN: Are you the one they took away here yesterday?

SCHWEYK proudly: The very man. In times like these you’ve got to crawl. It’s a matter of practice. I licked his hand. In the old days they used to put salt on prisoners’ faces. Then they tied them up and set great wolfhounds on to them, and the dogs’ld lick away their whole faces, I believe. Nowadays people aren’t so cruel, except when they lose their tempers. Oh, but I was forgetting: this gentleman—indicating the SS man—wants to know what good things the future
has in store for him, Mrs Kopecka, and two beers. I've told him you've got second sight and I think it's creepy and he should have nothing to do with it.

**MRS KOPECKA:** You know I don't like doing it, Mr Schweyk.

**SS MAN:** Why don't you like to, young lady?

**MRS KOPECKA:** A gift like that is a responsibility. How are you to tell which way a person is going to take it, or if he's got strength enough to face up to it? Because a look into the future sometimes gets a person really on the raw, and then he blames it on me, like Czaka the brewer, I had to tell him that pretty young wife of his was going to deceive him, and right off he went and broke a valuable mirror I had on the wall there.

**SCHWEYK:** But she led him a dance all right. And Blaukopf the schoolmaster, we told his fortune too, same thing it was. And it always happens, when she predicts something like that. I think it's quite remarkable. The way you told Councillor Czerlek that his wife, remember, Mrs Kopecka? And she did.

**SS MAN:** But you've a rare gift there, you know, and you shouldn't let a thing like that go to waste.

**SCHWEYK:** I've told her before now she ought to make the same prediction to the entire Council, I wouldn't be surprised if it came true.

**MRS KOPECKA:** Don't joke about such things, Mr Schweyk. They exist, and that's all we know about them because they're supernatural.

**SCHWEYK:** And do you remember how you told Bulova the engineer, here, right to his face, that he'd be cut to pieces in a railway accident? His wife's already got married again. Women can stand prediction better, they've more strength of character, I'm told. Mrs Laslaček in Huss Street had such strength of character that her husband said in public: 'Anything rather than live with that woman', and went off as a voluntary worker to Germany. But the SS can stand quite a lot too, I'm told, they have to what with the concentration camps and that third-degree stuff, you've got to have nerves
of steel for that sort of thing, haven’t you? SS man nods. So you don’t have to worry about telling the gentleman’s fortune, Mrs Kopecka.

MRS KOPÉCKA: If he’ll promise to treat it as a harmless game and not take it seriously, I might just have a look at his hand.

SS MAN suddenly hesitant: I don’t want to force you, you say you don’t like doing it.

MRS KOPÉCKA bringing him his beer: Quite right. Better forget it and drink your beer.

FAT WOMAN aside to drakhts player: Cotton’s a help if you suffer from cold feet.

SCHWEYK sits down beside Baloun: I’ve some business to discuss with you, I’m going to collaborate with the Germans about a dog, and I need you.

BALOUN: I’m not in the mood.

SCHWEYK: There’ll be something in it for you. If you had the cash you could take your appetite along to the black market and get something for it.

BALOUN: Young Prochazka isn’t coming. Nothing but mashed potatoes again, one more disappointment like this and I’ll never get over it.

SCHWEYK: Perhaps we might form a little club, six or seven chaps who’d be ready to put their two ounces of meat together, and then you’d get your meal.

BALOUN: Where would we find them, though?

SCHWEYK: That’s true, it probably wouldn’t work. They’d say they weren’t going to give up their rations for a blot on the landscape like you, without the strength of mind to be a real Czech.

BALOUN glumly: Yes, you’re right, they’d tell me to bugger off.

SCHWEYK: Can’t you pull yourself together and think of the honour of your country whenever you feel this temptation and all you can see is a leg of veal or a nice fried pork fillet with a bit of red cabbage or gherkins maybe? Baloun groans. Just think of the disgrace if you gave way.
BALOUN: I’ll have to try, I suppose. *Pause.* I’d sooner have red cabbage than gherkins, if it’s all the same to you.

*Young Prochazka enters with a briefcase.*

SCHWEYK: There he is. You were looking too much on the black side, Baloun. Good morning, Mr Prochazka, how’s business?

BALOUN: Good morning, Mr Prochazka, I’m glad you’re here.

MRS KOPCEKA *glancing at the SS man*: Will you join these gentlemen, I’ve something to do first. *To the SS man*: I think your hand might interest me after all, could I just have a look? *She takes hold of it.* I thought so; you have an extra-ordinarily interesting hand. I mean a hand that’s almost irresistible for us astrologers and palmists, as interesting as that. How many other gentlemen are there in your unit?

SS MAN *with difficulty, as if having a tooth extracted*: In the detachment? Twenty. Why?

MRS KOPCEKA: I thought so. It’s in your hand. There are twenty gentlemen associated with you in life and death.

SS MAN: Can you really see that in my hand?

SCHWEYK *who has joined them, gaily*: You’ll be surprised what else she can see there. It’s just that she’s careful, she won’t say anything that’s not absolutely certain.

MRS KOPCEKA: Your hand has a lot of electricity in it, you’re lucky in love, that’s clear from the well-formed Mount of Venus. Women throw themselves at you, so to speak, but then they are often pleasantly surprised and wouldn’t have missed the experience for worlds. You’re a serious personality, and you can be tough. Your success line is fantastic.

SS MAN: What does that mean?

MRS KOPCEKA: It’s nothing to do with money, it’s much more than that. Do you see that H, the three lines there? That means heroism, something heroic you’re going to do, and very soon at that.

SS MAN: Where? Can you see where?
MRS KOPECKA: Not here. Not in your own country either. Quite a way off. There's something peculiar here that I can't quite understand. There's a secret hanging over this, so to speak, as if only you yourself and those with you at the time are going to know about it, nobody apart from that, never afterwards either.

SS MAN: How can that be?

MRS KOPECKA sighing: I don't know, perhaps it's on the battlefield, some forward position or something like that.

As if confused: But that's enough, isn't it? I've got to get on with my work, and it is just a game, you promised me.

SS MAN: But you can't stop now. I want to know more about this secret, Mrs Kopecka.

SCHWEYK: I think so too, you ought not to keep the man guessing. Mrs Kopecka winks at him in such a way that the SS man can see. But perhaps you have said enough, because, well, there's a lot we're better off not knowing. Varczek the schoolmaster once looked in the encyclopaedia to see what skizziphonia meant, and afterwards they had to take him off to the Ilmenau asylum.

SS MAN: There was something more you saw in my hand.

MRS KOPECKA: No, no, that was all. Leave me alone.

SS MAN: You don't want to tell me. I saw you winking at this fellow to get him to stop, because you didn't want to speak, but I'm not having that sort of thing.

SCHWEYK: That's right, Mrs Kopecka, the SS won't have that sort of thing. I had to speak right away at Gestapo headquarters, like it or not, and straight off I admitted I wished the Führer a long life.

MRS KOPECKA: Nobody can force me to tell a customer things he won't want to hear so that he never comes back here.

SS MAN: There you are, you know something and you're not saying. You've given yourself away.

MRS KOPECKA: The second H isn't at all clear anyway: not one in a hundred would notice it.

SS MAN: What second H is that?
SCHWEYK: Get me another pint, Mrs Kopecka, it’s so exciting I’m getting a thirst.

MRS KOPECKA: It’s always the same, you just get yourself in trouble if you give in and do your best to read a hand. Brings Schwyk’s beer. I didn’t expect the second H, but if it’s there, what can I do about it? If I tell you you’ll be depressed, and it isn’t as if there’s anything you can do.

SS MAN: But what is it?

SCHWEYK genially: It must be something serious if I know Mrs Kopecka, I’ve never seen her like this before, and she’s seen lots of things in people’s hands. Can you really bear it, do you feel up to it?

SS MAN boarsely: What is it?

MRS KOPECKA: And then if I tell you that the second H means a hero’s death, at any rate usually, and then it depresses you? There you are, you see, it’s taken you badly. I knew it. Three beers, that makes two crowns.

SS MAN pays, shattered: It’s all a load of nonsense. Reading your hand. It can’t be done.

SCHWEYK: You’re quite right, look on the bright side.

SS MAN going: Heil Hitler.

MRS KOPECKA calling after him: Promise me at least you won’t tell the others.

SS MAN stops: What others?

SCHWEYK: Your detachment. You know, the twenty of them.

SS MAN: What’s it got to do with them?

MRS KOPECKA: It’s just that they’re associated with you in life and death. I don’t want them to worry unnecessarily.

Exit SS man, cursing.

MRS KOPECKA: Do come again.

FAT WOMAN laughing: Lovely. You’re pure gold, Mrs Kopecka.

SCHWEYK: That’s that detachment dealt with. Unpack your briefcase, Mr Prochazka. Baloun won’t be able to stand it much longer.

MRS KOPECKA: Yes, bring it out, Rudolf. It’s good of you to have brought it.
Young Prochazka: Seebly: I haven’t got it. Seeing them take Mr Schweyk away gave me such a shock I kept seeing it all night long, good morning Mr Schweyk, so you’re back, I didn’t dare to risk it, I’m afraid. I feel dreadful, Mrs Kopecka, letting you down in front of the customers, but it’s stronger than I am. Desperately: Please say something, anything’s better than this silence.

Baloun: Nothing.

Mrs Kopecka: Well, so you haven’t got it. But before, when you came in, when I gave you a sign that I’d have to get rid of the SS man first, you nodded to me as if you’d got it.

Young Prochazka: I didn’t dare...

Mrs Kopecka: You needn’t say any more. I’ve got your mark. You’ve failed the test as a man and as a Czech. Get out, you coward, and never darken my doors again.

Young Prochazka: It’s all I deserve. Slinks away.

Schweyk after a pause: Talking of palmistry, Krisch the barber at Mnišek—you know Mnišek?—was telling people’s fortunes from their hands at the parish fair, and got himself drunk on the proceeds, and a young farmer took him home with him so he could tell his fortune when he’d sobered up, and before he fell asleep the barber asked this young fellow ‘What are you called? Get my notebook out of my inside pocket, will you? So you’re called Kunert. Right, come back in a quarter of an hour and I’ll leave you a bit of paper with the name of your future wife on it’. And with that old Krisch began to snore. But then he woke up again and scribbled something in his notebook. He tore it out and threw it on the floor and put his finger to his lips and said ‘Not now, in a quarter of an hour. It’ll be best if you look for the bit of paper blindfold’. And all there was on the paper was ‘The name of your future wife will be Mrs Kunert’.

Baloun: He’s a criminal, that Prochazka.

Mrs Kopecka angrily: Don’t talk nonsense. The criminals are the Nazis, threatening and torturing people for so long
that they go against their real nature. Looking through the window: This one coming now, he’s a criminal, not Rudolf Prochazka; he’s just weak.

**Fat Woman:** I tell you, we’re guilty as well. We might do a bit more than drink slivovitz and make jokes.

**SCHWEYK:** Don’t ask too much of yourself. It’s something to be still alive nowadays. And you’re kept so busy keeping alive that there’s no time for anything else.

*Enter Brettschneider and the SS man of the previous day.*

**SCHWEYK gaily:** A very good morning to you, Mr Brettschneider. Will you have a beer with me? I’m working for the SS now, so it can’t do me any harm.

**Baloun viciously:** Out!

**Brettschneider:** How exactly do you mean that?

**SCHWEYK:** We’ve been talking of food, and Mr Baloun has just remembered the chorus of a popular song we’ve been trying to call to mind. It’s a song they usually sing at fairs, about the proper way to deal with radishes, around Mnišek they have those big black radishes, you’ll have heard about them, they’re famous. I’d be glad if you’d sing that song for Mr Brettschneider, Baloun, it would cheer him up. He has a fine voice, he even sings in the church choir.

**Baloun scowling:** I’ll sing it. The subject is radishes.

*Baloun sings the ‘Song of the Black Radish’. All through the song Brettschneider, with everyone looking at him, is undecided whether to intervene or not. Each time he sits down again.*

It’s always best to pick a nice fat black one
And gaily tell him, ‘Oy, mate, you get out’.
But wear your gloves when you attack one
Bang on the snout.
That snout’s so dirty ’cause the bugger lives in dung.
Filthy lout. Should be slung
Out.

You won’t be asked to pay inflated prices
You get the sod dirt cheap all over town.
And once you’ve got him shredded into slices
Salt him down.
Salt in his wounds! He’s asked for everything he gets.
Salt him down! Till he sweats.
Salt him down!

INTERLUDE IN THE HIGHER REGIONS

Hitler and Marshal Goering in front of a model tank. Both are larger than life. Martial music.

HITLER
My good old Goering, now three hard-fought years have passed
And it looks as if my war’s won at last
Though it’s hard to keep it from spreading to other areas
Unless I can have more tanks, guns and aircraft carriers.
That means people have got to stop sitting around and flopping
And start sweating blood for my war instead until they’re dropping.
So answer me if you can:
What of the European Little Man?
D’you think he’ll want to work for my war?

GOERING
Mein Führer, I’d say that is something of which we’re quite sure:
The Little Man in Europe will sweat out his guts no less cheerfully
Than the Little Man in Germany.
That’s a job for my Labour Front.

HITLER
Splendid, so you’ve got a special outfit. That’s an excellent stunt.
A bench in the gardens by the Moldau. Evening. A couple enter, stand looking upstage towards the river with their arms round each other, saunter on. Enter Schweyk and Baloun. They look back.

Schweyk: Old Vojta treats his servant girls pretty badly; she's the third he's had since Candlemas, and already wanting to leave, I'm told, because their neighbours are on at her for working for a quisling. So it doesn't matter to her if she comes home without the dog, so long as it's not her fault. You sit down there first, she mightn't sit down if nobody else is sitting there.

Baloun: Shouldn't I be holding the sausage?

Schweyk: So you can eat it yourself? Just sit down.

Baloun sits down on the bench. Two servant girls enter, Anna and Kati, the former with a pomeranian on a lead.

Schweyk: Excuse me, miss, can you tell me how I get to Palacky Street?

Kati distrustful: It's just across Havlicek Square. Come on, Anna.

Schweyk: Excuse me, but can you tell me where the square is? I'm a stranger here.

Anna: I'm a stranger too. Go on, Kati, tell the gentleman.

Schweyk: Well now, isn't it funny that you should be a stranger too. I'd never have known you weren't a Prague girl, and with such a nice little dog. Where do you come from?

Anna: I'm from Protivin.

Schweyk: Then we're almost neighbours, I'm from Budweis.

Kati trying to draw her away: Do come on, Anna.

Anna: Coming. Then you must know Pejchara, the butcher with the shop on the ring road in Budweis.

Schweyk: Do I know him? He's my brother. He's very well liked there, you know, a nice chap and very obliging, and always the best meat and good measure.
ANNA: Yes.

*Pause. Kati waits ironically.*

SCHWEYK: What a coincidence we should meet as far away as this. Have you a few minutes to spare? We must tell each other the news from Budweis—there's a bench over there with a nice view—that's the Moldau.

KATI: Really? *With pointed irony:* I'd never have known.

ANNA: There's somebody sitting there already.

SCHWEYK: A gentleman enjoying the view. You should keep an eye on that dog of yours.

ANNA: Why?

SCHWEYK: Don't say I told you, but the Germans are keen on dogs, astonishingly keen, specially the SS, a dog like that's gone quick as a wink, they ship 'em back home, me for instance, only the other day I met an SS lieutenant called Bullinger who was looking for a pom for his wife back in Cologne.

KATI: So you knock around with SS lieutenants and people like that, do you? Come on, Anna, that really is enough.

SCHWEYK: I spoke to him while I was in custody for expressing opinions that endangered the security of the Third Reich.

KATI: Is that true? Then I take back what I said. We've got a few minutes to spare, Anna.

*She leads the way to the bench. The three of them sit down next to Baloun.*

KATI: What opinions?

SCHWEYK *indicates that he cannot talk about it because of the stranger, and adopts an especially innocent tone:* How do you like it in Prague?

ANNA: All right, but you can't trust the men here.

SCHWEYK: That's only too true, I'm glad you realize it. Country people are a decenter lot, wouldn't you say? *To Baloun:* Nice view here, sir, don't you think?

BALOUN: Not bad.

SCHWEYK: Sort of view would appeal to a photographer.

BALOUN: As a background.
SCHWEYK: A photographer could make something really nice out of it.
BALOUN: I am a photographer. We've got the Moldau painted on a screen in the studio where I work, only a bit tarted up. We use it for the Germans, mostly SS, who want a picture of themselves in front of it to send home when they've been posted and won't be coming back. It isn't the Moldau, though, just any old river.
*The girls laugh approvingly.*
SCHWEYK: That's very interesting. Couldn't you maybe take a snap of the young ladies—needn't be a full-length shot, just a bust—beg pardon, that's the technical term.
BALOUN: I could indeed.
ANNA: That would be nice. But not in front of that Moldau of yours, eh?
*Plenty of laughter greets this, then a pause.*
SCHWEYK: D'you know this one? A Czech standing on the Charles Bridge hears a German in the Moldau shouting for help. So he leans over the parapet and yells 'Shut up down there, you ought to have learnt swimming instead of German'.
*The girls laugh.*
SCHWEYK: Yes, that's the Moldau. There's a lot of immorality goes on in the park now it's wartime, I can tell you.
KATI: There was in peacetime.
BALOUN: And at Whitsun.
SCHWEYK: Out of doors they keep at it till All Saints' Day.
KATI: And nothing goes on indoors?
BALOUN: Plenty there too.
ANNA: And at the pictures.
*They all laugh a lot again.*
SCHWEYK: Yes, the Moldau. D'you know the old song 'Henry slept beside his newly-wedded'? They sing it a lot in Moravia.
ANNA: Doesn't it go on 'Heiress to a castle on the Rhine'?
SCHWEYK: Yes, that's the one. *To Baloun:* Have you got
something in your eye? Don't rub it. Could you perhaps see to it, Miss, the corner of a handkerchief's the best.

**ANNA to SCHWEYK:** Would you hold the dog? You've got to be careful in Prague. There's a lot of soot blows around.

**SCHWEYK** ties the dog loosely to the lamppost near the bench: Excuse me, but I really must get down to Palacky Street. Business you know. I should like to have heard you sing the song, but I haven't the time, I'm afraid. Good-bye. **Exit.**

**KATI** as Anna fishes around in Baloun's eye with a handkerchief: He's in a hurry.

**ANNA:** I can't find anything.

**BALOUN:** It's better, I think. What's this song you were talking about?

**ANNA:** Shall we sing it for you? We really must go then, though. Quiet, Lux. I'd be glad to see the back of both you and your master. **To BALOUN:** He's too well in with the Germans for me. Right, I'll begin.

*The two girls sing 'Henry slept beside his newly-wedded'* with considerable feeling. Meanwhile from behind a bush Schweyk attracts the dog with a tiny sausage, and makes off with it.

**BALOUN after the song:** You sang that beautifully.

**KATI:** And now we've really got to go. Mother of God, where's the dog?

**ANNA:** Heavens above, now the dog's gone. And he never runs away. What will Mr Vojta say?

**BALOUN:** He'll ring up his friends the Germans, that's all. Don't get upset, it's not your fault, that gentleman can't have tied him tight enough. I thought I caught a glimpse of something moving away while you were singing.

**KATI:** Quick, we'll go to the police and see if it's been found.

**BALOUN:** Why don't you come to the *halice* one Saturday night. It's number 7, Huss Street.

*They nod to Baloun and go out quickly. Baloun returns to his contemplation of the view. The previous couple come back, but with their arms no longer round each other. Then Schweyk arrives with the pomeranian on a lead.*

*The text of this song is on p. 139.*
SCHWEYK: It's a real quisling's dog, bites when you're not looking. Gave me a terrible time on the way. When I was crossing the railway he lay down on the lines and wouldn't move. Perhaps he wanted to commit suicide, the silly sod. Let's get a move on.

BALOUN: Did he go for that horse sausage? I thought he was only supposed to eat veal.

SCHWEYK: War's no picnic, not even for them with pedigrees. But Bullinger's not getting this one till I see the colour of his money, or else he'll swindle me. Us collaborators have to be paid.

A tall, sinister man has appeared upstage and has been watching the two of them. He now approaches.

MAN: Good evening, gentlemen. Taking a stroll?

SCHWEYK: Yes, and what's it got to do with you?

MAN: Perhaps you'd be kind enough to show me your identification papers. He displays an official badge.

SCHWEYK: I haven't got my papers with me, have you?

BALOUN shakes his head: We've not done anything.

MAN: I didn't stop you because you'd done something, but because you seemed to me to be doing nothing. I'm from the Department of Voluntary War Work.

SCHWEYK: Are you one of those gentlemen who have to hang around outside cinemas and in pubs to dig up people for the factories?

MAN: What's your job?

SCHWEYK: I run a dog business.

MAN: Have you got a certificate to say you're employed on essential war work?

SCHWEYK: No, your honour, I haven't. But it is essential war work; even in wartime a chap wants a dog, so that he can have a friend at his side when the bad times come, eh, pom? People keep a lot calmer when they're being bombed and shelled if they've got a dog looking up at them like he was saying 'Is that really necessary?' And this gentleman is a photographer, and that's even more essential if anything, because he takes photos of soldiers so that the folks back
home can at least have pictures of their boys, and that's better than nothing, you must admit.

MAN: I think I'd better take you along to headquarters, and I advise you to cut out all this nonsense when you get there,
BALOUN: But we pinched the dog under higher orders, can't you explain to him?
SCHWEYK: There's nothing to explain. This fellow's under higher orders too.
They leave with him.
SCHWEYK: So your job is pinching men, is it?

Lunch time in the Prague goods yards. On the rails sit Schweyk and Baloun, now shunters in the service of Hitler, guarded by a German soldier armed to the teeth.

BALOUN: I'd like to know what's happened to Mrs Kopecka with our dinner. I hope she's not got into trouble.
SERVICE CORPS LIEUTENANT passing, to Soldier: Guard! If anyone asks which is the waggon for Bavaria, remember it's that one there, number 4268.
SOLDIER at attention: Yessir.
SCHWEYK: It's all organization with the Germans. They've got things better organized than anyone ever before. Hitler presses a button and bang goes—China, let's say. They've got the Pope in Rome on their list, with all he's said about 'em, he's had it. And even lower down the scale, take an SS commander, he's only got to press the button and there's the urn with your ashes being handed to your widow. We can thank our stars we're here with a well-armed guard to stop us sabotaging something and getting shot.
Mrs Kopecka enters with enamel dishes. The soldier studies her pass absently.
BALOUN: What is it?
MRS KOPCEKA: Carrot cutlet and potato sausages. As the two