

Act I, Scene 7

Start

Afternoon. A windy day. WENDLA, MARTHA, THEA and ANNA walk arm in arm.

ANNA

Shall we take the short way home?

THEA

No no — by the bridge.

WENDLA

After two hours marching with that medicine ball?!

THEA

Come on!

ANNA

(Teasing)

Someone wants to see: has Melchi Gabor taken a raft out?

THEA

(“Even so”)

Last one there has to hold hands with Hanschen...!

(The GIRLS start off)

ANNA

Martha, careful — your braid’s coming loose.

MARTHA

(Concerned)

No.

THEA

Just let it. Isn’t it a nuisance for you — day and night. You may not cut it short, you may not wear it down...

WENDLA

Tomorrow, I’m bringing scissors.

MARTHA

For God’s sake, Wendla, no! Papa beats me enough as it is.

WENDLA

Really?

MARTHA

No, no, I — It’s nothing.

THEA

Martha...?

ANNA

Martha, we're your friends...

(A beat)

MARTHA

Well, when I don't do as he likes...

ANNA

What?

MARTHA

Some nights... Papa yanks out his belt.

THEA

But where is your mama?

MARTHA

"We have rules in this house. Your father will not be disobeyed."

(A beat)

The other night, I ran for the door. "Out the door? All right, I like that. That's where you'll spend the night — out on the street."

THEA

No!

MARTHA

It was so cold.

ANNA

My God.

(A beat)

WENDLA

He beats you with a belt?

MARTHA

Anything.

WENDLA

With a buckle?

MARTHA

(Rolls up her sleeve)

Right there...

ANNA

Oh my God!

WENDLA

Martha, the welts — they're terrible.

ANNA

We must tell someone.

MARTHA

Anna, no!

ANNA

But we must.

MARTHA

No, no, please. They'd throw me out for good.

THEA

Like what happened to Ilse, you mean.

End

WENDLA

Remember!

ANNA

But still...

MARTHA

Anna, no.

(The utter degradation)

Just look what's become of Ilse now! Living who knows where -- with who knows who?!

WENDLA

I just wish I could somehow go through it for you...

(A beat)

THEA

My Uncle Klaus says, "If you don't discipline a child, you don't love it."

MARTHA

That must be.

(A beat)

ANNA

When I have children, I'll let them be free. And they'll grow strong and tall.

THEA

Free? But how will we know what to do if our parents don't tell us?

Start

(MELCHIOR)

YOU WATCH ME –
JUST WATCH ME –
I'M CALLING,
AND ONE DAY ALL WILL KNOW...

YOU WATCH ME –
JUST WATCH ME –
I'M CALLING,
I'M CALLING,
AND ONE DAY ALL WILL KNOW...

(MELCHIOR's song concludes. As he rejoins the BOYS in their recitation, the lights shift back to the classroom)

THE BOYS & MELCHIOR

...multa quoque et bello passus, dum conderet urbem...

HERR SONNENSTICH

(On to fresh matters)

Thank you, gentlemen. Now, if you please: "inferretque deos Latio..." The following seven lines of Pious Aeneas' journey. From memory.

(The Boys begin scribbling. HERR SONNENSTICH steps away. MORITZ taps MELCHIOR's shoulder)

MORITZ

(Sotto voice)

Melchi, thank you.

MELCHIOR

It's nothing.

MORITZ

Still, I'm sorry. You didn't need to –

MELCHIOR

(“Not to worry”; ironic)

Think what Aeneas suffered.

MORITZ

But I should have known it. "Multum ille." It's just... I didn't sleep all night. In fact, I, uh, suffered a visit from the most horrific, dark phantasm...

MELCHIOR

You mean, a dream...?

MORITZ

A nightmare, really. Legs in sky blue stockings, climbing over the lecture podium.

MELCHIOR

Oh. *That* kind of dream.

MORITZ

("Indeed")

Have you ever suffered such... mortifying visions?

MELCHIOR

Moritz, of course. We all have. Otto Lammermeier dreamt about his mother.

MORITZ

Really?!!

MELCHIOR

Georg Zirschnitz? Dreamt he was seduced by his piano teacher.

MORITZ

Fraulein Grossebustenhalter?!

HERR SONNENSTICH

(Suddenly, grabbing MORITZ by the ear)

Moritz Stiefel. I need hardly remind you that, of all our pupils, you are in no position to be taking liberties. I will not warn you again.

#4 – *The Bitch of Living*

(MORITZ nods – absolutely petrified. An intense alt-rock guitar riff. HERR SONNENSTICH freezes. The world around MORITZ comes to a halt, as concert-like light finds him. He turns out in song:)

MORITZ

GOD, I DREAMED THERE WAS AN ANGEL, WHO COULD HEAR ME
THROUGH THE WALL,
AS I CRIED OUT -- LIKE, IN LATIN: "THIS IS SO NOT LIFE
AT ALL.
HELP ME OUT -- OUT -- OF THIS NIGHTMARE." THEN I HEARD
HER SILVER CALL --
SHE SAID: "JUST GIVE IT TIME, KID. I COME TO ONE
AND ALL".

Start

FRAU BERGMAN

Certainly, Doctor.

(FRAU BERGMAN leads DOCTOR VON BRAUSEPULVER out. WENDLA sits, quietly touches the letter in her sleeve.)

DOCTOR VON BRAUSEPULVER withdraws the pill bottle from FRAU BERGMAN and goes.

FRAU BERGMAN reenters, and stares at WENDLA)

WENDLA

Mama...?

FRAU BERGMAN

Wendla...? What have you done? To yourself? To me?

(No response)

Wendla?

WENDLA

I, uh, don't know.

FRAU BERGMAN

(Not a question)

You don't know.

WENDLA

Doctor von Brausepulver said I'm anemic.

FRAU BERGMAN

Well, probably. You're going to have a child.

WENDLA

A child?! But, I'm not married!

FRAU BERGMAN

Precisely.

Wendla, what have you done?

WENDLA

I don't know. Truly, I don't.

FRAU BERGMAN

Oh, I think you know. And now I need his name.

WENDLA

His name? But what are you...

(Abruptly realizing)

(WENDLA)

That? How could that...? I just wanted to be with him...

WENDLA

...To hold him and be
close to him —

FRAU BERGMAN

Wendla, please. No more.
You'll break my heart.

(A beat)

WENDLA

My God, why didn't you tell me everything?

(FRAU BERGMAN slaps WENDLA)

FRAU BERGMAN

Well, you are going to have to tell me who.

(No response)

Wendla, I'm waiting.

(WENDLA looks off into the distance)

Georg Zirschnitz?

(No response)

Then, who?

(No response)

Hanschen Rilow?

(No response)

Moritz Stiefel?

(No response)

Melchior Gabor?

(WENDLA quietly bursts into tears)

Wendla, Melchior Gabor?

(No response)

Wendla...?

#17 – *Whispering*

(WENDLA reluctantly hands MELCHIOR's letter to her mother. As FRAU BERGMAN opens it, WENDLA stands, spotlit, like a singer in concert. She remains in this pool of light, her song playing in counterpoint to the following scenes:)

Act II, Scene 2

Start

MORITZ looks out as if he were in some garage band.

#13 – Don't Do Sadness

MORITZ

AWFUL SWEET TO BE A LITTLE BUTTERFLY.
JUST WINGIN' OVER THINGS, AND NOTHIN' DEEP INSIDE.
NOTHIN' GOIN', GOIN' WILD IN YOU – YOU KNOW –
YOU'RE SLOWIN' BY THE RIVERSIDE OR FLOATIN' HIGH AND BLUE...

OR, MAYBE, COOL TO BE A LITTLE SUMMER WIND.
LIKE, ONCE THROUGH EVERYTHING, AND THEN AWAY AGAIN.
WITH A TASTE OF DUST IN YOUR MOUTH ALL DAY,
BUT NO NEED TO KNOW, LIKE, SADNESS – YOU JUST SAIL AWAY.
'CAUSE, YOU KNOW, I DON'T DO SADNESS – NOT EVEN A LITTLE BIT.
JUST DON'T NEED IT IN MY LIFE – DON'T WANT ANY PART OF IT.
I DON'T DO SADNESS. HEY, I'VE DONE MY TIME.
LOOKIN' BACK ON IT ALL – MAN, IT BLOWS MY MIND.

I DON'T DO SADNESS. SO BEEN THERE.

DON'T DO SADNESS. JUST DON'T CARE.

(The song ends, and the lights shift. Twilight. A river. MORITZ stands alone. He withdraws a gun from his pocket. ILSE suddenly enters. Sees him)

ILSE

Moritz Stiefel!

MORITZ

(Frantically hiding the gun)

Ilse?! You frightened me!

ILSE

Did you lose something?

MORITZ

Why did you frighten me?

(A beat)

Damn it!

ILSE

What're you looking for?

MORITZ

If only I knew.

ILSE

Then what's the use of looking?

(A beat)

MORITZ

So, where have you been keeping yourself?

ILSE

Priapia — the Artists' Colony?

MORITZ

Yes.

ILSE

All those old buggers, Moritz. All so wild. So... Bohemian. All they want to do is dress me up and paint me!

That Johan Fehrendorf, he's a wicked one, actually. Always knocking easels down and chasing me. Dabbing me with his paintbrush. But then, that's men — if they can't stick you with one thing, they'll try another.

Oh God, Moritz, the other day we all got so drunk, I passed out in the snow — just lay there, unconscious, all night.

Then, I spent an entire week with Gustav Baum.

(Off his look)

Truly. Inhaling that ether of his! Until this morning, when he woke me with a gun, set against my breast. He said: "One twitch and it's the end." Really gave me the goosebumps.

But, how about you, Moritz — still in school?

MORITZ

Well, this semester I'm through.

(A beat)

ILSE

God, you remember how we used to run back to my house and play pirates? Wendla Bergman, Melchior Gabor, you, and I...

#13a — Blue Wind

(A plaintive guitar sounds. A spotlight finds ILSE)

Start

Act I, Scene 9

The Stiefel Sitting Room. Moritz approaches his father, HERR STIEFEL.

MORITZ

Father...?

HERR STIEFEL

Moritz.

(MORITZ remains silent)

Yes...?

MORITZ

Well, I, uh, was wondering — hypothetically speaking — what would happen if...

HERR STIEFEL

"If...?"

MORITZ

If, one day, I, uh, failed. Not that —

HERR STIEFEL

You're telling me you've failed?

MORITZ

No — no! I only meant —

HERR STIEFEL

You've failed, haven't you? I can see it on your face.

MORITZ

Father, no!

(HERR STIEFEL strikes MORITZ)

MORITZ

Father, please!

(HERR STIEFEL strikes MORITZ again. And again. He turns away in disgust)

HERR STIEFEL

Well, it's finally come to this. I can't say I'm surprised.

(A beat)

Failed.

(A beat)

So, now, what are your mother and I supposed to do?

(No response)

You tell me, Son. What?

(HERR STIEFEL)

(No response)

How can she show her face at the Missionary Society?

(No response)

What do I tell them at the Bank?

(No response)

How do we go to Church?

(No response)

What do we say?

(No response)

My son. Failed.

(A beat)

Failed.

(A pause)

Thank God my father never lived to see this day.

(End of Act I, Scene 9. The lights fade, and simultaneously rise on...)

Start

(The lights shift. Hanschen leans into the spotlight and smoothly croons:)

HANSCHEN

COME, CREAM AWAY THE BLISS,
TRAVEL THE WORLD WITHIN MY LIPS,
FONDLE THE PEARL OF YOUR DISTANT DREAMS...
HAVEN'T YOU HEARD THE WORD OF YOUR BODY?

O, YOU'RE GONNA BE WOUNDED.
O, YOU'RE GONNA BE MY WOUND.
O, YOU'RE GONNA BRUISE TOO.
O, I'M GONNA BE YOUR BRUISE...

(The lights shift back. HANSCHEN leans over and kisses ERNST)

ERNST

Oh God...

HANSCHEN

Mmm, I know. When we look back, thirty years from now, tonight will seem unbelievably beautiful.

ERNST

And, in the meantime...?

HANSCHEN

Why not?

(HANSCHEN kisses ERNST deeply)

ERNST

On my way here this afternoon, I thought perhaps we'd only... talk.

HANSCHEN

So, are you sorry we —?

ERNST

Oh no — I love you, Hanschen. As I've never loved anyone.

HANSCHEN

And so you should.

(HANSCHEN shares the spotlight with ERNST)

ERNST

O, I'M GONNA BE WOUNDED.
O, I'M GONNA BE YOUR WOUND.