

BITTERE KRAUTER

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BORA.....I took out about ten lines. That should be enough.
TYPE SETTER....That should do it, Bora. What about your other
story?
BORA.....Plenty of time. It's for tomorrow.
WORKER.1.....Bora! Telephone!
BORA.....Yes. Coming. Hello, yes? He wants to see me now?
His name? Hoffmann. Is he German? I'll be right
over. Show him into my office.

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HOFFMANN.....Mr. Petrovich?
BORA.....That's right.
HOFFMANN.....I'm Mister Hoffmann, How are you?
BORA.....You've come from Germany, Sir?
HOFFMANN.....Yes, I have come on purpose to see you.
BORA.....Have a seat.
HOFFMANN.....Thank you.
BORA.....Can't I order anything for you? A drink?
HOFFMANN.....Nothing now, thank you.

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HOFFMANN.....Mister Petrovich, I know you're a busy man, so I
think I'll come straight to the point. Does Lud-
wigsburg mean something to you?
BORA.....Headquarters for the prosecution of war crimes,
isn't it?
HOFFMANN.....I'm one of the prosecuting attorneys. My credentials.
BORA.....No, never mind. Tell me, what can I do for you?
HOFFMANN.....Mr. Petrovich, you are the author of a book entitled
'Eyewitness from Hell'. A German translation of
it came out only recently. It's presented as a
work written in nineteen forty-five right after
the war.

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BORA.....That's when I wrote it.
HOFFMANN.....In this book, you mention rather often a certain Dr.
Berger.
BORA.....Yes, he was a murderer.
HOFFMANN.....For seven months, I've been trying to prove the point,
and I've had trouble since the beginning. Also I
might add, incidentally, he's alive and he's free.
What do you think of that?
BORA.....Hmm... Still free? Where is he, do you know?
HOFFMANN.....Yes, we found out that he's in charge of a major drug ?
laboratory.

BORA.....Wonderful.

HOFFMANN.....In the forward, your book was presented as a confession obtained from a girl who had been in a camp for years. Was it all... authentic?

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BORA.....I was only a human typewriter. My role was that of a machine, so to speak, an instrument, if you prefer. Life in a German concentration camp had aged her far beyond her years. She was in bad shape, Mister Hoffmann, a total wreck.

HOFFMANN.....You were a very young journalist then. You were naturally very eager to do the right thing, as she was. What I mean is perhaps your feelings sometimes caused distortions of the actual facts in the case. Today, we have to stick to facts. Do you think this young woman, just might in some way, how should I put it, have pictured it as worse than it really was, with a view to making a more sensational story out of it?

BORA.....Hmm... No. Impossible, Mister Hoffmann. Absolutely out of the question.

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BORA.....As a matter of fact, she was rather reticent. Her memories were vivid, of course, but what she had gone through was too awful. When she was brought to the camp, she was barely sixteen.

HOFFMANN.....I've been trying to get Berger for seven months, and I've got almost nowhere. The witnesses are missing when they're not dead. Today there is but one real witness left. It's Lea Weiss, the girl who dictated the story to you. If Lea Weiss will talk, I can have Berger arrested at once.

BORA.....We drifted apart a couple of years after the war, in forty-seven, and I never saw her again.

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HOFFMANN.....I know that.

BORA.....I suppose you've asked Berger himself for his opinion on my work?

HOFFMANN.....Yes, naturally. Of course, he denies everything, denounces the book as a mystification, a hoax of the first order, and so on.

BORA.....But why don't you try to find Lea?

HOFFMANN.....I've found her, and I've spoken to her.

BORA.....Aha, and so?

HOFFMANN.....She also believes that many things in the book had been grossly exaggerated or made up. At any rate, that's what she now claims.

BORA.....Why that's impossible.
HOFFMANN.....We wanted Lea Weiss, or Climent, since her name is now Clement, being the widow of a French reporter who was killed in the Far East.. we wanted to cite her as the chief witness against the war criminal Berger. She was apparently quite willing to help at first, but one day she suddenly refused to testify.
BORA.....I must admit it's beyond me. Hum...
HOFFMANN.....Mr. Petrovich, Lea and you were very good friends, weren't you?
BORA.....Yes.

HOFFMANN.....I made this trip for the express purpose of taking you back to talk to her. Mister Petrovich, we must catch up with an arch-criminal who has committed thousands of gruesome murders!
BORA.....I know that, my friend, but my job doesn't allow me to travel at all.
HOFFMANN.....I see. I'll have one.
BORA.....Oh, please do.
HOFFMANN.....Mister Petrovich... I need your help badly and I'm not the only one to need it. Now I hope you understand that Lea Clement may need it too.

DESK CLERK.....Hello.
AMBIANCE.....(Hotel lobby)
LEA.....Hello
DESK CLERK.....Hello? Mrs. Clement? There's a gentleman here who wants to see you. Pardon? Yes, he's here in the lobby.
LEA.....I have made it very clear I'm home to no one except Mr. Von Walden! If you're going to disturb me, I'll leave, do you hear?
DESK CLERK.....Sorry, but she says she doesn't wish to see anyone.
BORA.....I see. Huh! Well?

HOFFMANN.....I'm sure you can manage it somehow because you see Mister Petrovich here has just flown in from Belgrad today specially to see her.
DESK CLERK.....Thank you. Of course, there's nothing much I can do right now, but since you've checked in here I suppose some opportunity will come up. Here's your key.
BIANCHI.....Good morning, Alfred!
DESK CLERK.....Good morning, Mister Bianchi. You may go up. She's waiting. He's privileged. The only person who can go up at any time.

BORA.....What'll we do? Suppose we try this evening again
and tomorrow morning about nine... huh?

HOFFMANN.....All right. See you tomorrow morning. Good bye,
Mr. Petrovich.

BORA.....Good bye.

END REEL ONE