

## CENSORED

by

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## CHARACTERS

Käthe Kollwitz: artist and political activist  
 Karl Kollwitz: her husband, a physician  
 Beate Ludwig: lifelong friend to Käthe  
 Ernst Lehrs: art historian and critic, forty-seven years old  
 Georg Lehrs: his son, eighteen years old  
 Wendall Martin: student, twenty-two years old  
 Walter Ackermann: colleague to Ernst, thirty-three years old  
 Anna Schneider: artist, twenty-nine years old

The action occurs in the city of Berlin,  
 over a seven week period,  
 during the summer of 1936.  
 An epilogue occurs nine years later,  
 in Moritzburg, in February, 1945

## SETTING

The unit setting is designed in such a way that spaces can be superimposed over one another. It is imperative that the action flows, without interruption, from one scene to the next. In some cases, scenes overlap. Suspended or sliding panels, curtains, or rotating units may be used, but transitions are achieved primarily through lighting changes. The most prominent item of furniture is a large central table that doubles as the worktable for Kollwitz and a desk in the Lehr's library. Additional items of furniture and props--such as a sculpting stand, an easel, a drafting table, and art supplies--may be visible throughout the production. Projected images may indicate the location of each setting, as well as reveal works by Kollwitz.

## SCENE ONE

### The Library of Ernst Lehrs

(July 9, 1936. ERNST LEHRS is an art historian, critic, and one of several assistants to Joseph Goebbels. His study resembles a private gallery; a number of statues, original works, and books decorate the space. Revealed: WENDALL MARTIN observing the room, without moving. GEORG LEHRS waits, watching WENDALL. After a pause. . .).

WENDALL: So this is it. The kingdom of Berlin's most infamous art critic.

GEORG: Don't touch anything. Please.

WENDALL: Biedermeier desk. Roentgen cabinets. Volkstedt lamps. Irrefutably German. Where does your father keep his liquor?

GEORG: If anything's been moved, he'll know.

WENDALL: (Opens cabinet and selects bottle). Quite the inventory.

GEORG: Put it back, Wendall.

WENDALL: It's not for me. (Throws bottle to GEORG). You need a drink.

GEORG: If father comes home, I don't want him catching us here.

WENDALL: Don't worry. I'm amazingly facile in the arms of trouble. But how would you know? You've never given me the opportunity.

GEORG: (Returning the bottle). Wendall, we should go.

WENDALL: Who would have guessed? You, Georg, the shy, adorable son of the notorious Ernst Lehrs.

GEORG: This isn't funny.

WENDALL: Are you notorious, Georg?

GEORG: Don't be ridiculous.

WENDALL: Oh, I think you are. At least, I should hope so. Do you know just one painting in here could pay my tuition at the academy? All four years. Perhaps you could ask him to donate a drawing to a poor, curious student.

GEORG: You're antagonizing me, but your target is really father.

WENDALL: You're right. I'm being unfair. (Pause). If I hadn't known who your father is--what he does--would you have told me?

GEORG: But you know.

WENDALL: It's only a question.

GEORG: You act like father's profession is a personal attack.

WENDALL: It is. (Picks up small bust from desk). Plato. Appropriate. Champion of the ideal world, managed by autocrats, where liberty is taboo. If the old Greek were alive today, living in Germany, where might we find him? As Minister of Enlightenment? Walking the halls of the Reichstag in the boots of Goebbels?

GEORG: That's enough!

WENDALL: I'd like to smash something.

GEORG: Wendall, do you have any idea what you're saying?

WENDALL: When we met. At the National Gallery. Why were you there?

GEORG: I told you. It was cold. I stepped inside to get warm.

WENDALL: For someone who only meant to shake the cold, you showed a lot of interest in the exhibit. Why, Georg? Why were you studying that particular sculpture by Barlach? Could it be because you knew Barlach is one of the artists singled out by your father whose works are being destroyed?

GEORG: Being at the gallery had nothing to do with father.

WENDALL: Georg, something brought you there.

GEORG: It wasn't father.

WENDALL: Don't lie. You don't know how.

GEORG: I was there because of mother.

WENDALL: I can be trusted, Georg. With anything.

GEORG: Mother knew him. Barlach was her favorite artist.

WENDALL: Knew him intimately?

GEORG: I don't know how she knew him! I just know she considered him a friend.

WENDALL: Your mother has good taste.

GEORG: Had. Mother's dead.

WENDALL: I'm sorry. I hope to know more about her, someday. Where does your father keep the keys to his files?

GEORG: That's crazy!

WENDALL: You should find out. Sometime I may ask you to go through his records.

GEORG: Wendall. (Short pause). Can we go?

ERNST: (Enters). What's this? Was there an *event* I overlooked?

GEORG: Father!

WENDALL: I'm the culprit. Looking for the bathroom I took a wrong turn and became captivated by the Leibl. I've only seen him in museums.

ERNST: I don't believe I caught your name, young man.

WENDALL: Max. Max Weber. (GEORG gives WENDALL a look of surprise, unnoted by ERNST). Pleased to make your acquaintance, Mr. Lehrs. (WENDALL signals to GEORG to remain silent).

ERNST: I appreciate your enthusiasm for Mr. Leibl, but my study is not a public gallery. (Picks up book from desk). Your book?

WENDALL: No, a classmate of mine.

ERNST: (Pulls a slip of paper from the book). What's this? (The paper is a flyer advertising a showing at the Academy of "The Cycle of Death" by KÄTHE KOLLWITZ. After examining the flyer, ERNST speaks). Käthe Kollwitz.

GEORG: Father knows the work of every artist in the country.

ERNST: That's my job, son. (He flips over the flyer. A sample of her work is printed on the backside). Käthe, the crusader. Voice of the oppressed. Showing her work at the Academy. (He studies the picture, while speaking in a sarcastic tone). A clumsy style, don't you agree? And terribly sentimental. It grates on the nerves.

WENDALL: Yes, I imagine it does; for some people.

ERNST: The work whines. Can you hear it? Whining?

WENDALL: Perhaps I haven't listened closely enough.

ERNST: (Reading from the flyer). "The Cycle of Death." Just the sort of thing the youth of Germany are clamoring to see. (Images from "The Cycle of Death" could be projected: Death Swoops upon a Group of Children, Woman Entrusts Herself to Death, Death with Girl in Lap, Death Clutches a Woman, Death Recognized as a Friend, The Call of Death). It may surprise you to know I saw the show myself, with Mr. Goebbels. She caused quite a fuss in her day but over time her work proved to be a revival of the same old, tired theme.

GEORG: Father was an art historian and critic before he began working for Mr. Goebbels.

ERNST: Do you know what the late Kaiser called her work?

WENDALL: No.

ERNST: "Gutter art." Not a terribly bright man, the Kaiser. But he did have an eye. That much we have to give him. Are you one of Käthe's disciples? One of the oppressed?

WENDALL: That's a question for the owner of the book.

ERNST: (Holds up book). I think I'll do your mate a favor. Perhaps he hasn't heard that Kollwitz is no longer in fashion. In fact, her works are banned by the Party. She's what we call a political liability. (Burns the flyer, using cigarette lighter).

WENDALL: (Adopting an innocent rather than an accusatory tone). A liability?

ERNST: (Studies WENDALL, unsure how to take the young man's remark). Perhaps you should keep abreast of the news, then you would know Mrs. Kollwitz was just interviewed by a Soviet reporter and made some rather inflammatory remarks about our country. Now, if you'll excuse me. (Exits. Transition into following scene begins).

GEORG: Max? Where did that come from?

WENDALL: Not here. I'll explain later.

## SCENE TWO A Nearby Park

(Thirty minutes later. WENDALL and GEORG sit on the ground. WENDALL produces a sketchpad and pencil; he begins drawing).

GEORG: What was that all about? That stunt you pulled in father's study?

WENDALL: I don't want your father knowing who I am.

GEORG: Why?

WENDALL: It could be dangerous.

GEORG: Dangerous? How?

WENDALL: I can't say. The less you know, the more you can honestly admit your innocence. I want to keep it that way.

GEORG: I'm not . . . .

WENDALL: Your father's a clever man. Could you lie to him and be convincing? I don't think so.

GEORG: You hardly know me. We'll see.

WENDALL: What your father did there, in the study, was hateful. Mrs. Kollwitz resigned from the Academy before I became a student. That's the polite word, resigned. But we all know what really happened. She was forced out, her work condemned, like hundreds of others. The students who know her still talk about her. Nobody is respected like Kollwitz. Ever since I saw her exhibit I've been working up the courage to visit her. It would be easy enough. I know someone who could arrange the meeting. Who knows? Maybe I'll even show her my portfolio. Your father burning that flyer. It convinced me. I'm going.

GEORG: Where does she live?

WENDALL: Right here, in Berlin. You want to come?

GEORG: I don't know.

WENDALL: We can't tell her who you are. Every artist in Berlin, including Mrs. Kollwitz, knows your father, knows he works for Goebbels.

GEORG: There's something you're not telling me.

WENDALL: I despise everything your father stands for, Georg . . . .

GEORG: I get it!

WENDALL: I'm part of this group, an organization . . . .

GEORG: What group?

WENDALL: Look, I really can't say.

GEORG: Why don't you trust me!?

WENDALL: (Looks intently at GEORG). I'm waiting for you to trust yourself.

GEORG: (After a pause). I'd like to go with you. To see Mrs. Kollwitz.

WENDALL: (A sudden change in tone. Brightly). Did anyone ever draw you?

GEORG: No.

WENDALL: What a shame! It's like being touched. You feel the artist's eyes, your skin does. Whatever his eyes study, wherever they look, that part of your body knows. It responds. As you hear the sound of pencil on paper, you feel it move across yourself, caressing your skin, taking in the contours, working its way up and down the length of your body, pausing, lightly brushing one moment, then the pencil pushing down hard against your muscles, scoring them with thick dark lines, It's quite a glorious sensation. You must have it done. (A knocking sound is heard, coming from the shadows). Are you open to a glorious sensation?

KÄTHER: (From the shadows). Come in. The door is open. (WENDALL and GEORG exit).

**SCENE THREE**  
**The Studio of Käthe Kollwitz**

(July 13, 1936. KÄTHE is working on a clay sculpture).

ERNST: (Entering, carrying a folder containing the dossier of KOLLWITZ as well as samples of her work). Mrs. Kollwitz. Allow me to introduce myself.

KÄTHE: I know who you are.

ERNST: Ernst Lehrs, from the Department of Cultural Affairs.

KÄTHE: I must say, in all my years, I've never been entertained by the representative of such a renown agency. What's the occasion?

ERNST: That's quite a remarkable sculpture you're crafting.

KÄTHE: Come, come. Surely you aren't here to feign admiration for my work.

ERNST: Don't you recognize a compliment when you hear one, Mrs. Kollwitz?

KÄTHE: What I hear is a preface to something unpleasant.

ERNST: Unpleasant? It needn't be.

KÄTHE: We shall see . . . .

ERNST: Recently an article was published in Moscow. It featured several quotes by you, which caught the eye of the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

KÄTHE: Oh? Is your department expanding itself--to oversee the affairs of our neighbors? Has our country gotten too small for you?

ERNST: The minister is concerned. He feels your views are injurious.

KÄTHE: Has someone been harmed by an artist speaking her mind?

ERNST: Please, Mrs. Kollwitz, there's no credence in playing naïve. The article contained a number of inaccurate remarks about our Party's activities.

KÄTHE: Inaccurate, you say? Do point them out. I'd love to be proven wrong.

ERNST: To have a few spiteful, inept artists spreading rumors could undermine our efforts to form an alliance with Russia.

KÄTHE: Well, it certainly can't be said our politicians are impervious to their artists.

ERNST: The author mentioned your name, Mrs. Kollwitz, but failed to identify the other artist.

KÄTHER: Mr. Lehrs, do you have to carry your gun about with you? For goodness sake; I'm a sixty-nine-year-old woman. I'm not going to run away.

ERNST: We thought you might know the name of the second artist.

KÄTHER: And if I were to try and run, I don't doubt you could catch me with your bare hands.

ERNST: Answer the question, Mrs. Kollwitz.

KÄTHER: Mr. Omarkoff wrote the article.

ERNST: We know who wrote the article!

KÄTHER: You wish to discover his sources? I suggest you speak with him.

ERNST: Just give me the name, Mrs. Kollwitz.

KÄTHER: Mr. Omarkoff shouldn't be difficult to locate. You do have a system for finding out such things, don't you?

ERNST: We're certain you know the other artist. It's obvious both of you were interviewed at the same time.

KÄTHER: On the contrary, I spoke with Mr. Omarkoff alone.

ERNST: Did you tell Mr. Omarkoff, that "being an artist is nearly impossible in Germany today."?

KÄTHER: Yes.

ERNST: And that "the government has detained a number of artists for expressing their views."?

KÄTHER: No.

ERNST: If not you, who?

KÄTHER: I can't answer you that.

ERNST: Mrs. Kollwitz, you don't seem to recognize the severity of the charges . . . .

KÄTHER: With what am I being charged, Mr. Lehrs?

ERNST: Obstructing justice comes to mind.

KÄTHER: Obstructing justice? When you learn the truth, what are you planning to do to *implement* justice?

ERNST: Mrs. Kollwitz, I feel compelled to mention that there are numerous indiscretions in your past which, if pointed out to the proper authorities, could have serious implications.

KÄTHER: And what might those be?

ERNST: Your stance on abortion, for one. (Pulls a poster from his folder). Here, a poster advocating the legalization of abortion. You designed this poster?

KÄTHER: Whose name is on it?

ERNST: Yours, Mrs. Kollwitz.

KÄTHER: There. I suppose you have your answer.

ERNST: Don't you realize the Fuehrer considers such a position an offense against motherhood?

KÄTHER: I believe your Fuehrer is also a bachelor. What does he know of such matters?

ERNST: To encourage women to murder their own children, destroying the future of Germany, is an act of treason.

KÄTHER: And what is it when your Fuehrer takes the works of German artists and orders *them* destroyed?

ERNST: Then there's the matter of condoning sexual perversity. Didn't you sign a petition stating that homosexual activities should be decriminalized?

KÄTHER: Except in cases of force or where a minor is involved.

ERNST: But such acts are immoral, punishable by imprisonment.

KÄTHER: I'm well aware of your laws.

ERNST: And are you aware how your position reflects on you?

KÄTHER: How does it reflect on me?

ERNST: One could suspect . . . or reach the conclusion . . . that at the root of such sympathies . . . .

KÄTHER: Yes?

ERNST: That those signing the petition . . . .

KÄTHER: I'm listening, Mr. Lehrs.

ERNST: That they are indeed themselves . . . .

KÄTHER: Homosexual?

ERNST: It . . . is not . . . an illogical deduction!

KÄTHER: Mr. Lehrs, I was hoping your generation would leave the follies of mine behind. But I see that I am wrong.

ERNST : I understand you signed a petition opposing our Party's nomination.

KÄTHER: My husband also signed that petition. Do you suppose his opposition is the reason behind his medical license being revoked?

ERNST: (Begins to roam about the studio, examining various tools and pieces of art). These indiscretions are not idle concerns. On the other hand, if you supply us with the name of this artist, I'm sure they can be overlooked. All we're asking for is the name of your fellow artist and a retraction of your statements. Nothing involved. Just a short, direct letter to appease my superiors. If you object, there's no telling what the consequences might be. (Removes dropcloth to reveal an incomplete self-sculpture of KÄTHER. The clay is moist, pliable).

KÄTHER: What are you going to do? Expel me from the Academy? You've already done that. Remove my art from public exhibits? That's been done. Shut down my husband's practice? Harass my son? That, too, was done.

ERNST: Those are inconveniences, Mrs. Kollwitz, minor irritations in comparison to what could transpire.

KÄTHER: Mr. Lehrs, I do believe I'm being threatened.

ERNST: (Covers the sculpture with dropcloth). You might think of it as being forewarned. (Applies pressure to sculpture, deforming it).

KÄTHER: (With great resolve). Mr. Lehrs, no matter how much I disagree with your ideas, I would never take away your right to express them. And though I despise the images you hold so dear, I would never assume I have the freedom to destroy them. Is it too much to ask the same of you?

ERNST: (Picks up folder). Perhaps you need to re-examine your beliefs. You've designed a poster for practically every disgruntled political faction in Berlin. We have our posters, too, Mrs. Kollwitz. Perhaps you've seen them.

KÄTHER: I have.

ERNST: There's one we're particularly proud of. Very catchy.

KÄTHER: Which one is that?

ERNST: "Live truly, fight bravely, and die laughing". (Exits. WENDALL and ANNA enter on opposite sides of the stage).

**SCENE FOUR**  
**A Side Street**

(The early afternoon of July 14, 1936. WENDALL and ANNA remain on the fringes of the stage).

WENDALL: Thank you for coming, Anna.

ANNA: You sent the message?

WENDALL: Yes.

ANNA: I expected someone older. With large, heavy pockets.

WENDALL: We prefer a subtle style.

ANNA: You have commissioned work?

WENDALL: Yes. I'm in need of a artist. An artist, who, given the right price, will draw anything.

ANNA: You sound like a pimp, trolling for whores.

WENDALL: To a degree, yeah.

ANNA: How did you learn about me?

WENDALL: Despite the bluster, Berlin is a small town.

ANNA: And growing smaller.

WENDALL: (Appears to extract a paper from his pocket). Would you be offended if I pulled a sketch from my pocket and said, "Here, duplicate this"?

ANNA: (Crosses to join WENDALL). Let me see the sketch.

WENDALL: (Opens his hand to reveal nothing). There isn't any sketch. Does the *idea* offend you? The idea of copying something? Is that beneath you?

ANNA: I never would have gotten through school if I hadn't copied. Regurgitating masterpieces was a routine assignment.

WENDALL: I'm not proposing a classroom project.

ANNA: With enough money, most artists will draw anything. We do have our practical side.

WENDALL: Practical ... and able to keep this affair to ourselves?

ANNA: Silence can be bought. Do you have a job or not?

WENDALL: Suppose some people would say the picture I'd like to have copied is offensive.

ANNA: I've done pornography before.

WENDALL: What do you think I am? A lackey, running errands for some back alley publisher?

ANNA: Who knows. You could be anyone.

WENDALL: But, as an artist, money aside, there *are* paintings you find vulgar.

ANNA: I *do* have taste.

WENDALL: And what do you propose be done about these offensive paintings?

ANNA: What do you mean?

WENDALL: You don't think we'd all benefit if these obscene paintings were destroyed, making room for respectable artists to exhibit their work?

ANNA: Advocating violence? Destroying art, based on taste? No, thanks. (Prepares to leave).

WENDALL: (Pulls article from vest and hands it to ANNA). The drawing.

ANNA: You want me to copy this?

WENDALL: Suppose I offered you one hundred marks to make a drawing that couldn't be distinguished from this original.

ANNA: Easy.

WENDALL: I need it tomorrow.

ANNA: Two hundred.

WENDALL: Tomorrow we meet. You give me the original and the copy. I look at your rendition; I'm pleased. Then, right before your eyes, I tear up your drawing. Now what do you say?

ANNA: Did I get the money before or after your tantrum?

WENDALL: Before.

ANNA: I'd say, "Thanks".

WENDALL: Come now.

ANNA: What do you want me to say?

WENDALL: Why, exactly what you said.

ANNA: (Putting sketch in purse). Tomorrow, you say?

WENDALL: I'll be needing that. I wouldn't presume to bring the actual piece I want copied with me.

ANNA: (Returns sketch). I'm in.

WENDALL: Nothing must change. Keep your gig at the café. Never mention the assignment. Be discrete with your earnings. We know your schedule. (Exits as ERNST enters).

## SCENE FIVE

### Käthe's Studio

(The late afternoon of July 14, 1936. ERNST observes the studio).

KÄTHER: (Enters, carrying a tray with teapot and cups). Look who it is. Two calls in as many days. Somehow, I knew we hadn't seen the last of you, Mr. Lehrs. Would you like a cup of tea? It's fresh.

ERNST: No thank you.

KÄTHER: Oh, don't be ungracious. It hasn't been poisoned.

ERNST: I'm afraid not very much was resolved yesterday.

KÄTHER: On the contrary, a lot was resolved. I made progress on my latest sculpture, and I managed to restore the bust you so insidiously marred. You must excuse me if I continue to work. When a person reaches my age there's so little time left. My husband will join us momentarily.

ERNST: Mr. Kollwitz is here?

KÄTHER: Yes. I realized my husband's absence during your last visit was not altogether unplanned.

ERNST: I'm afraid I don't follow you.

KÄTHER: A former patient of Karl's, who lives on Desna Street, calls and pleads for help. Karl leaves and a moment later you show up. Karl's absence, by all accounts, should take thirty minutes. Noting how often you checked your watch yesterday, I suspect the phone call and your appearance was not coincidental. Before Karl could return, you had left.

ERNST: Mrs. Kollwitz, are you suggesting the Department of Cultural Affairs is so feeble it has to resort to roguish tactics?

KÄTHER: Did I suggest that? This time Karl took the call and left the building, but will return shortly. I wouldn't be surprised if you passed one another in the lobby.

ERNST: The call wasn't a medical query, was it?

KÄTHER: You tell me.

ERNST: Because if it were, I'd think Mr. Kollwitz would decline the invitation, no longer being a certified physician.

KÄTHER: Oh, it doesn't matter, really. We've already discussed the situation, Karl and I, and have reached a resolution of our own. (KARL enters and KÄTHER addresses him). There you are. This is Mr. Lehrs; we spoke about him last night.

KARL: I hear you gave my wife quite the goings-over yesterday. Would you care for some tea?

KÄTHER: I already asked him, but Mr. Lehrs declined. I suspect he thinks it's been doctored with an illegal prescription.

KARL: Oh no, Mr. Lehrs, I've been prohibited from owning any drugs.

KÄTHER: I see you're still carrying your gun, Mr. Lehrs, underneath that shirt of yours. It must be cumbersome to be strapped into that harness all the time.

KARL: Maybe Käthe didn't tell you. Shortly after she was dismissed from the academy my license was revoked. We suspect both decisions were ... politically ... inspired.

ERNST: I shan't detain you long. I simply wish to confirm whether Mrs. Kollwitz intends to rescind her remarks or not.

KÄTHER: Mr. Lehrs, I shall sign your papers!

ERNST: It's a wise decision you make, Mrs. Kollwitz.

KÄTHER: We. As I said, my husband and I decided together. Where truth is irrelevant it seems pointless to defend it. Where's the document?

ERNST: (Producing a paper). Mrs. Kollwitz, I do hope we're understanding one another.

KÄTHER: (Accepting the paper). I understand you were an artist yourself at one time, Mr. Lehrs, before you took up your present line of business.

ERNST: That I was.

KÄTHER: I'm curious, Mr. Lehrs, if you ever had the honor of having your work--what's the word--neutered?

ERNST: The work I did was always within proper, acceptable guidelines.

KÄTHER: That's quite a feat--to please one's critics. You must have made your teachers very proud.

ERNST: Now, if we can get down to business.

KÄTHER: Exactly how does one get chosen to do the kind of work you do?

ERNST: Those who are selected share common, irrefutable beliefs.

KÄTHER: "Acceptable" ones.

ERNST: Yes.

KÄTHER: That fall within the "proper guidelines."

ERNST: That's correct.

KÄTHER: And you decide which works of art are inspired and which ones are not, based upon those beliefs.

ERNST: That is our policy.

KÄTHER: Do talent and ability have nothing to do with it?

ERNST: Mrs. Kollwitz, I am here to acquire your signature, not discuss policy.

KÄTHER: Of course. Who knows where we shall end up if we continue our discussion. (Picking up pen). How shall I put it? That "being an old woman I am not in full possession of my senses"? Will that suffice? I could confess to having cataracts, a defective heart, loss of hearing, discolored teeth . . . . Whatever you wish.

ERNST: (Reciting what KÄTHER should write). "Due to inaccurate reporting on the part of the journalist, I wish to renounce all remarks attributed to me". That will do nicely.

KÄTHER: That makes it sound like the author was in error. Not I.

ERNST: A technical discrepancy--to save face.

KÄTHER: Believe me, I can face the consequences of my words. There's no need to blame the author. (Writing). And whose name shall I put at the bottom? Yours or the name of your superior?

ERNST: The document requires your signature, Mrs. Kollwitz.

KÄTHER: (Handing the document to ERNST, unsigned). There. Is my penmanship suitable? Does it meet your standards? Or does it need alteration?

ERNST: Your style is perfectly acceptable. (Hands the paper back to KÄTHER).

KÄTHER: (Adding her signature). You know, not that long ago, rather than signing her name, a woman was required to initial her painting. Perhaps we should restore that practice.

ERNST: (Placing the document in his folder). Mr. Kollwitz, an undue number of callers have been observed entering and leaving the building. Would it be presumptuous of me to assume they are seeking medical attention?

KARL: Yes, it would be presumptuous.

ERNST: Just to pass word along to my colleagues and assure them that nothing is out of line, perhaps a tour of your office?

KÄTHER: I find your request insulting, Mr. Lehrs, but there's nothing to prevent you from doing it, is there?

KARL: Let him look, Käthe.

ERNST: There *is* one more matter that needs clarification.

KÄTHER: (Defiantly). The name of my fellow artist.

KARL: Your work is through, Mr. Lehrs. You have your paper. Now go!

ERNST: Despite your objections, Mr. Kollwitz, I have not completed my duties.

WALTER: (The silhouette of WALTER becomes visible). Mr. Lehrs. May I have a word with you?

ERNST: (To KARL, excusing himself). Good day.

## SCENE SIX

### The Cultural Affairs Building

(July 14, 1936. This is a split scene between ERNST/WALTER and KÄTHER/KARL. WALTER remains in silhouette for the entire scene; ERNST is nearby, illuminated by a small pool of light. KÄTHER and KARL'S conversation is a direct development from the previous scene).

ERNST: Yes, Mr. Ackermann.

WALTER: Have you heard the rumors that some of the material we've liquidated may have been forged?

ERNST: No.

WALTER: Apparently, as I understand it, after a work is duplicated, the reproduction is hung in place of the original or displayed where it might be located easily. The copy is confiscated and destroyed, leaving the original work untouched.

ERNST: Making us look rather foolish.

WALTER: Meanwhile, the original is smuggled out of the country, sold on the black market, or placed in hiding.

KÄTHER: Damn him! I told Otto not to give that interview!

ERNST: How did you uncover this operation, Mr. Ackermann?

KÄTHER: Now that Otto's organized the opposition, he can't be granting interviews! Even anonymous ones! It's too risky!

WALTER: An assistant curator in Essen says the idea was entertained as a joke in one of the classes offered by the museum. Later, in the hallway, he overheard someone say such a program actually exists.

ERNST: In Essen? How widespread is the operation?

KARL: Otto needs to be warned of Mr. Lehr's investigation

ERNST: Is the same thing happening all over Germany? Is there any way to know?

KÄTHER: We can't jeopardize the volunteers.

ERNST: I propose we design a system to flush out the imposters.

KÄTHER: All the painters, curators, carriers ... must be protected. We need to make certain no one is exposed. (The light on KÄTHER and KARL goes to black. KARL exits).

ERNST: Then, we devise a method to verify the authenticity of the works we apprehend.

WALTER: I would be happy to work out the details.

ERNST: May I make a suggestion? Start with the young. The obscure, idealistic artists, disenchanted with the world. Students, particularly. If someone is willing to subject himself to such a menial task as copying another artist's work, you'll find him there. (ERNST and WALTER exits as WENDALL and GEORG enter. KÄTHER greets the young men).

## SCENE SEVEN

### Käthe's Studio

(The evening of August 4, 1936).

KÄTHER: When Otto arranged our meeting he spoke very highly of you. He says you're a tremendous help to him.

WENDALL: You're still a popular topic of discussion at the academy, Mrs. Kollwitz.

KÄTHER: Don't take what you hear too seriously. According to the government, officially, I don't even exist. Where's your portfolio?

GEORG: He had it prepared, Mrs. Kollwitz, but wouldn't bring it.

KÄTHER: Then you must come and see me again. And call me Käthe. Please. What made you decide to become an artist, Wendall?

WENDALL: I can't imagine myself doing anything else.

KÄTHER: That's good.

WENDALL: As far back as I can remember, I always knew.

KÄTHER: It's not a choice, is it?

WENDALL: No.

KÄTHER: It's like my long-time friend, Beate, always said, "It's an obligation". My Father was even more emphatic. If you have a gift, it's your duty to share it. He, more than anyone else, encouraged me to become an artist. Does your family support you?

WENDALL: I can't say I have father's blessing, but, whenever I write, he always expects a little sketch which he hangs up in his shop. He's a locksmith in Frankfurt.

KÄTHER: That says all you need to know. He supports you. When I became engaged, father's ambitions for me ended. He thought it would be impossible for a woman to be a wife, a mother, and an artist. For Beate, my marriage was more than a disappointment; it was outright suicide. (BEATE enters with suitcase and pail). Beate would have nothing to do with men. She believed artists had an obligation to "break the chains of tradition and reorder the entire structure of society." Her words. That was our mission as women and artists. Particularly as artists. The day Karl and I moved into this apartment, Beate was here, broadcasting her convictions.

**(LIGHTING TRANSFORMATION. FLASHBACK TO JUNE 1891)**

BEATE: *Mrs. Kollwitz*. I'll never get used to it.

KÄTHER: (Joins BEATE). You'll never forgive me for marrying, will you?

BEATE: We agreed. Remember? If you're a woman and want to be an artist . . . the first commandment:

KÄTHER and BEATE: Celibacy!

BEATE: Obviously you've forgotten what we used to say, but I haven't: "Marriage is an act of betrayal! Until a woman is emancipated from the tyranny of wedlock, she cannot expect to reach the heights."

KÄTHER: Marvelous words, Beate, but someday, I suspect you'll change your mind on the subject. (Takes pail, crosses, kneels, begins to scrub floor).

BEATE: Apparently you don't know me as well as I thought you did.

KÄTHER: I thought you offered to help unpack.

BEATE: Do you love him?

KÄTHER: He's a good man, Beate.

BEATE: Engaged for seven years and all I get out of you is "he's a good man."

KÄTHER: The cases of medicine go across the hall, in Karl's office. The chest goes upstairs.

BEATE: Well, it's best that way. This love thing will chain a woman's feet to the kitchen sink. That, or nail them to the endboard of his bed.

KÄTHER: Beate!

BEATE: Promise me if Karl ever gets unbearable, you'll let me know. This is Berlin. Everywhere, there are artists. Between us, we'll find you a room somewhere.

KÄTHER: Karl isn't going to take my work from me, if that's what you're worried about.

BEATE: And when it comes to signing your work, remember. You're not going to use his name. Mrs. Kollwitz in the kitchen and Mrs. Kollwitz in the bedroom goes far enough. Nowhere else.

KÄTHER: Beate, being married doesn't mean an end to my career. This will be my studio.

BEATE: You call it a studio now.

KÄTHER: What's that supposed to mean?

BEATE: I don't want to come back in a year or two and find the studio turned into a nursery. My god, a husband will take enough of your time. You can't let *that* happen, too!

KARL: (Enters). Well, that's the last of it. I paid the driver and told him about my practice. He signed up; we have our first customer, Käthe.

BEATE: Signed up? What? Is he planning to become ill?

KÄTHER: (Stops scrubbing, rises). Karl's patients pay a small, monthly fee for his services. The rest is subsidized by the government.

KARL: It's an experimental program. One that will truly benefit the poor.

BEATE: Socialized medicine. Another dreamchild of the Worker's Party?

KARL: And not the last! More and more of our members are being elected to the Reichstag. We're just a few years away from becoming a major party; you can be sure of it.

BEATE: And when this party of yours takes over, will there be subsidies for artists?

KARL: You do want it all, don't you, Beate?

BEATE: I'd be happy to start with the small things. Like granting women the right to vote.

KARL: That's at the top of our agenda.

BEATE: "Women, welcome to the polls!" It makes for a wonderful platform. But do you really think men will discuss issues seriously with women seated next to them in the Reichstag?

KARL: Beate. How about an engagement to speak at our next rally?

BEATE: No thanks.

KARL: You could challenge the Party Chairman face to face.

BEATE: Ah, yes, your revered leader, author of *Women and Socialism*. How does he put it? "The goal of the socialists is to remove all barriers that prohibit equality." Why don't I trust him? Could it be because I have yet to see a man willingly give up anything without receiving something in return?

KARL: Such cynicism.

BEATE: Adoration of women. Perhaps that's what he wants.

KÄTHER: The Worker's Party is our best hope. If there's a better option, tell us!

BEATE: Really, Käthe, aren't all politicians, regardless of their party affiliation, cut from the same cloth? Can the male gender ever really understand our needs?

KARL: If it takes a woman to speak for your concerns, perhaps you could be the one to volunteer.

BEATE: I paint, not politicize.

**(LIGHTING TRANSFORMATION. RETURN TO SCENE)**

KÄTHER: Several years later Beate had the audacity to meet Arthur and fall shamelessly in love. The devout atheist and outspoken crusader promptly sat down with her husband and began writing religious pamphlets. She never picked up a brush again. That was Forty-five years ago. The room looks almost the way it did when we moved in. This table, my worktable, was father's marriage gift to us. He built it himself.

GEORG: You proved your father wrong. And Beate, too

KÄTHE: But success came quite by accident. I happened to see a play by Georg Hauptmann. "The Weavers." It was extraordinary! A revolution on stage! The crowd was irrepressible. For the first time I saw the power of art. I saw that it can transform an audience. That it can be a medium, a catalyst for change.

WENDALL: Which is the last thing a work of art should do. Conventional scenes--that's what the authorities want.

KÄTHE: Passive expressions. Bloodless subjects!

WENDALL: Nothing disturbing. Nothing real!

KÄTHE: Not like the characters in the play! Their stories begged to be illustrated. But how could I express words as images? How does one translate aspirations into composition and gesture? It was a struggle that went on for five years. (Images from THE WEAVER'S CYCLE could be projected: Poverty, Death, Conspiracy, March of the Weavers, Riot, The End). Yes. That play changed my life. Through it, I found my subjects. I found my purpose.

WENDALL: Ordinary people ....

KÄTHE: That's where I discovered beauty. Among the peasants. (Touches GEORG). A worker's not afraid to show himself. He lets me see the shape of his body. He shows his hands, his feet, his shoulders. There's no attempt to disguise.

WENDALL: ... Challenging the establishment.

KÄTHE: Of course! The establishment was the enemy. It still is.

WENDALL: (To GEORG). The critics dismissed Mrs. Kollwitz, calling her an angry artist.

KÄTHE: To which I say, "Damn right, I'm an angry artist." I was angry when my son Peter was killed. I'm angry now, seeing what is happening to Karl. I'm angry, seeing the work of my colleagues being destroyed.

WENDALL: You heard what Goebbels is planning to do with the paintings he confiscated. Display them in Munich next summer. An exhibition of degenerate art. I imagine they'll be showing some of your work, Mrs. Kollwitz.

KÄTHE: You don't think I have a chance of being in the *other* show? I understand the collection at "The House of German Art" will be selected by the Fuehrer himself.

WENDALL: The exhibitions run simultaneously so the whole country can have a comprehensive education on the arts. Witness the difference between proper art and smut! Ingenious!

KÄTHE: One of Goebbel's strong arms was here several days ago. Ernst Lehrs his name is. Perhaps you know him?

WENDALL: I do.

KÄTHER: Quite upset, he was. It seems my last interview was something of an embarrassment to the party.

GEORG: Mr. . . . Lehrs? Was here?

KÄTHER: No German paper will publish what I have to say. Only foreign papers will report what is really happening inside Germany. More than ever, we have to rely on journalists outside our borders. So, next time you see Otto, ask him to arrange some interviews for me. I'll speak to any damn reporter he can dig up. Distractions. Distractions. That's what we need.

WENDALL: Mrs. Kollwitz, what are you planning to do?

KÄTHER: I'd like to cause such an uproar that Goebbels and his henchmen won't be able to see what is happening right here, in Berlin, under their own noses.

WENDALL: Are you sure that's a good idea?

KÄTHER: Karl agrees. Divert their attention so the work can continue, uninterrupted. And Beate. I plan to get her in the act. That is, if she can be talked into it. Sometimes her morals get in the way.

WENDALL: Aren't you afraid the Department will pay another visit?

KÄTHER: Let them come! I'm ready! This is not the time to be cautious. If the government chooses to play rough, Karl and I are prepared.

GEORG: Mrs. Kollwitz, these are ruthless men.

KÄTHER: We will never be taken into custody. If it comes to that, Karl and I have our escape planned. We have a solution.

GEORG: Evade the Party? I'm not sure that's possible, Mrs. Kollwitz.

KÄTHER: After our first visit from Mr. Lehrs, Karl put together a potion from the medicine he keeps in hiding. We each carry a vial of poison.

GEORG: (Dumbfounded). Mrs. Kollwitz!

KÄTHER: I prefer death to what they have in store.

GEORG: You're prepared to take your life?

KÄTHER: Oh, don't be alarmed. Karl assures me it's quite painless. And I must say, there's a certain headiness in knowing the alternative exists. It gives one a sense of freedom. Why, it almost makes me feel young again.

GEORG: Mrs. Kollwitz, there must be another way.

KÄTHE: I'm open to your suggestions. Tell me.

GEORG: How could it come to that? Who would put you in such a position?

KÄTHE: My goodness, Georg, you're taking this far too seriously. It's only a last resort. You're beginning to sound like Beate--always taking exception to the decisions I make . . . .

**(LIGHTING TRANSFORMATION. FLASHBACK TO 1925)**

(BEATE, much older than in her previous scene, storms into the room, holding two posters. One is a pro-abortion poster; the other, an anti-abortion poster. Both contain KOLLWITZ drawings).

BEATE: Käthe . . . Schmidt . . . Kollwitz!

KÄTHE: Beate, what a pleasant surprise!

BEATE: Which is the real Käthe?

KÄTHE: Oh dear, I wondered how long I could keep this from you.

BEATE: Two Kollwitz drawings. Two Kollwitz signatures. One for abortion. One against. I'm confused.

KÄTHE: (Referring to the anti-abortion poster). The one on the right isn't mine.

BEATE: I was afraid of that.

KÄTHE: My drawings are often used to endorse causes I don't support. Nothing can be done about it.

BEATE: Käthe, have you taken leave of your senses? Your husband is a doctor, sworn to preserve life. How can he allow this?

KÄTHE: I need his permission . . . to express my views? I never asked for it before. Why now?

BEATE: You're impossible.

KÄTHE: Beate, remember my last series? (Images from THE PROLETARIAT CYCLE could be projected: Unemployed, Starvation, The Children Die).

BEATE: How could I forget? Those pictures were slapped on every lamppost in the country.

KÄTHE: Scenes from that cycle. That's what I'm hoping to prevent. Or isn't there poverty in Stuttgart where you come from?

BEATE: Where I come from we don't equate murder with social improvement. Children dying of causes beyond our control and the killing of innocent babies are two different matters altogether!

KÄTHE: Beyond our control?!

BEATE: It doesn't make sense. All those war posters you've done, proclaiming how wrong it is to kill, yet you wish to legalize abortion!

KÄTHE: A woman's womb is not a battlefield. Don't equate the two.

BEATE: A respected artist using her position to advocate political change and legislate morality. It's twisted, Käthe.

KÄTHE: Not morality, Beate. I'm not tampering with anyone's conscience.

BEATE: Well, my conscience was just kicked in the side and it's feeling very bruised.

KÄTHE: All I propose is to give women a choice. But you would take away that option and decide for her. Now which, I ask, is fair?

BEATE: Fair? Since when has life been reduced to a question of fairness? This is a matter of right and wrong.

KÄTHE: You say it's wrong. Fine. I accept that. You take your wrong. I'll keep my fair.

BEATE: More than a woman's personal opinion is at stake here. What of the unborn child's rights?

KÄTHE: Come, Come, Beate. Rights without responsibilities are meaningless. You know that! There is no dignity in bringing a child into a world where it can't be nurtured properly. Saying "no" can be a responsible choice.

BEATE: You'd strip the law of any religious credence, if you had your way!

KÄTHE: That's right! The church and court have no business with one another. You're a dear, dear friend, Beate, but your religion creates elitism. It subordinates women, sends homosexuals to jail, and perpetuates animosity between Jews and Gentiles. Politics should put an end to that and see that all people are treated fairly.

BEATE: So, your politics will look the other way when I take a child...(Holds up pro-abortion poster) and exercise my rights. (Tears poster in half).

KÄTHE: That wasn't an expression of your rights, Beate, that was a violent, destructive act directed toward me. (Long pause. They begin laughing, then cross to one another and embrace).

BEATE: Oh, god, we do have our fights, don't we? I'm such a tack in your shoe, aren't I?

KÄTHER: And I love you for it.

BEATE: Käthe, we're old, old women. And being old should mean we don't give a damn about all those things that used to fire us up as youngsters. So, I want to ask you a few questions. Questions from years ago . . . .

KÄTHER: This is a day for frank confessions. Fire away!

BEATE: As a painter, I wasn't very good, was I?

KÄTHER: Beate, you became a writer.

BEATE: I asked a question.

KÄTHER: And a good one, too.

BEATE: I didn't ask about my writing abilities.

KÄTHER: I heard you!

BEATE: The truth. That's all I want!

KÄTHER: Truth from the creator of "gutter art"? Please.

BEATE: That's not an answer.

KÄTHER: Okay. You were a lousy painter.

BEATE: What?!

KÄTHER: You wanted an opinion. Now you have one.

BEATE: That's not fair!

KÄTHER: Fine. A brilliant painter.

BEATE: How can you be so fickle?

KÄTHER: Beate, I refuse to play this game.

BEATE: You really aren't going to answer, are you? You're afraid I can't stand to hear the truth.

KÄTHER: Not the truth, damn it! An opinion! If you want the truth then ask yourself, "Every day can I look my husband and my children in their eyes and, in spite of their need and my guilt, can I retreat to my studio and go on working?" If the answer is yes, you can paint.

BEATE: Next question.

KÄTHER: My, aren't we inquisitive today.

**(LIGHTING TRANSFORMATION. RETURN TO SCENE)**

(BEATE remains frozen in position).

KÄTHE: (Flips through sketchbook, selects sketch of BEATE). No matter how harsh her criticism, no matter how violently Beate and I disagreed with one another, we knew our bond was built on love. (Shows sketch to GEORG. Shows sketch to WENDALL). Perhaps it was because Beate had been looking back to her days of being an artist, and our being together as students, that she continued on . . . I don't know. But what she said might interest you.

**(LIGHTING TRANSFORMATION. FLASHBACK TO 1925)**

BEATE: Next question. (KÄTHE returns to former position). I suspected, years ago, when we were in school together, that you were . . . .

KÄTHE: What, Beate? Say it.

BEATE: I had a suspicion...a feeling...that maybe...you were in love with me.

KÄTHE: Beate, why bring this up now, after all these years?

BEATE: Käthe, we've been friends for almost thirty-five years. Don't trivialize our friendship. I want to know if what I sensed was true.

KÄTHE: Beate, I think every artist is bisexual. We've talked about this before.

BEATE: I asked a personal question. Not an academic one.

KÄTHE: And what difference will it matter now, knowing how I felt in my youth?

BEATE: I'm sorry I asked. It was wrong of me. I thought it might complete an unfinished sentence.

KÄTHE: You really want to know?

BEATE: It would mean there's nothing between us that can't go unspoken.

KÄTHE: The answer's yes. Yes, I was in love with you.

BEATE: You should have acted on it.

KÄTHE: Beate, I wish you hadn't said that.

BEATE: I was curious myself.

KÄTHE: Well, convention prevailed, didn't it?

BEATE: Of course, after our marriages and my conversion, such thoughts were unthinkable. . . .

KÄTHE: Were they?

BEATE: . . . But as a young woman, I was curious.

KÄTHE: And now I have a question for you: do you have any regrets?

BEATE: No, Käthe. (Kisses KÄTHE).

KÄTHE: Good. Me neither. I got more than I wanted.

(BEATE exits, walking into a stream of light).

**(LIGHTING TRANSFORMATION. RETURN TO SCENE)**

KÄTHE: All those years. Sharing a secret affection which neither one could address--not until it became absurd to not admit it. (Pause). We never talked about ourselves in that way again. And I never mentioned it to Karl. I suspect he knew; he was too insightful not to. But he also knew I never betrayed him. (Crosses and looks in the direction of BEATE'S exit).

WENDALL: I hope there will be a time when admitting such secrets won't be difficult.

KÄTHE: If that's your dream, Wendall, maybe, as an artist, that's your cause.

WENDALL: You say you're an angry artist. But anger doesn't invent itself. It comes out of something.

KÄTHE: Of course.

WENDALL: It's a reflection of your dreams, isn't it? A sign of the things you love. (ANNA enters, holding a print by KOLLWITZ)

KÄTHE: And there can never be enough of love. Whatever its form. (Touches WENDALL and GEORG, knowing their secret). Don't you agree?

**SCENE EIGHT**  
**Anna Schneider's Apartment**

(August 11, 1936).

ANNA: (Looking at the print). Käthe Kollwitz. (KÄTHE and GEORG exit).

WENDALL: What do you think of her?

ANNA: I'm not a disciple, if that's what you mean.

WENDALL: I was hoping you'd have more admiration than you do--not that it matters.

ANNA: She has no humor. Too black and white.

WENDALL: Odd, particularly when there's so much comedy around us, isn't it?

ANNA: How did you get a drawing by her?

WENDALL: I can't answer that.

ANNA: They're illegal to own, you know.

WENDALL: Political counsel is not your job.

ANNA: When you indicated I'd be duplicating sensitive material, I had no idea you meant work of this order. Kollwitz is no minor artist.

WENDALL: If she were, I doubt I'd be here.

ANNA: But if you have the original, why make a copy?

WENDALL: I hired you because I'm in need of an artist, nothing more.

ANNA: It just seems pointless--paying for a reproduction when you have the real thing.

WENDALL: The piece doesn't belong to me. I don't own it.

ANNA: I'm copying something that's been stolen!

WENDALL: No. On loan.

ANNA: What am I? An anonymous hackster, sworn to secrecy, while you and your cronies pass off my copy as the original? Is that the idea? Selling imitations on the black market for a profit. Is that what this is all about?

WENDALL: The only person making money from this deal is you.

ANNA: Really? I'm to assume somewhere out there in the frolicking city of Berlin there is a group of eccentric philanthropists who throw coins at destitute artists without getting any cash in return? Not likely. Not likely at all. People just don't operate that way.

WENDALL: Yes, they can and do.

ANNA: Perhaps their generosity is a trap--to see which artists will step outside the law.

WENDALL: If that's what you think, take the drawing, leave Berlin. There's nothing to stop you. Any respectable collector will compensate you handsomely for the drawing. On the other hand, if you want a steady income, stick around and I'll have plenty of work for you.

ANNA: You want to preserve Kollwitz at the expense of me?

WENDALL: Kollwitz and a score of other artists.

ANNA: Until now, I never really thought of myself as a prostitute.

WENDALL: This is not a moral issue.

ANNA: No. A business proposition, that's what we have. Just do the bloody job! Don't ask questions. Roll over. Get screwed!

WENDALL: I thought we had an arrangement. Now if you want to turn it into some kind of perverted artistic dilemma, that's your choice, but don't play the high-minded, sentimental artist with me!

ANNA: How do I know you won't destroy the original?

WENDALL: What do you care? You don't give a damn about Kollwitz.

ANNA: When I'm finished, what happens?

WENDALL: Your copy will be picked up and passed through the hands of party officials who will register the drawing and have it destroyed.

ANNA: Party officials?

WENDALL: Please, there's no reason to be alarmed. These men are cold, brutish thugs. They couldn't distinguish a Rembrandt from a Grünewald.

ANNA: They're the most dangerous kind.

WENDALL: The authorities will never know the forged copy from the original, assuming you do a decent job. For them, it's the process that counts, not the particulars.

ANNA: You're not afraid I'll report you to the authorities?

WENDALL: You wouldn't put yourself at risk. Not with your record.

ANNA: Well, if I'm picked up, I can tell the police I have something on you.

WENDALL: What's that?

ANNA: Please! It's obvious you're a faggot. And we know what the party does with boys who like boys.

WENDALL: Is this your rendition of bitchiness?

ANNA: Don't get in a huff. It was just a test. I had to know.

WENDALL: A test?

ANNA: I wasn't really sure you are a fag, but your reaction convinced me. It's okay! It's reassuring. No fag would serve the party that castrates him.

**SCENE NINE**  
**Wendall Martin's Boarding Room**

(August 12, 1936. WENDALL is in the midst of reproducing a painting (both the original and a partially completed copy are visible) as GEORG reads nearby. ANNA copies a print at a distant table. Upstage, a figure in silhouette, also copies a degenerate painting).

GEORG: Another class project? What's the title of this painting?

WENDALL: "Esther and Ruth." You seem distracted.

GEORG: Who's the artist?

WENDALL: Hofer. Karl Hofer. (Pause). By the way, I'm going to Hanover tomorrow. I'll be back Thursday.

GEORG: Another assignment with your *secret* organization?

WENDALL: Just wanted to let you know. So you won't worry.

GEORG: Who's Otto Noller?

WENDALL: I told you, he's not an item of discussion.

GEORG: Look, I know not to mention his name around father. Is he one of your teachers?

WENDALL: We're not talking about this.

GEORG: It's obvious he's a close friend. And he knows Mrs. Kollwitz. (Pause). I think about her a lot. Anyone can see they're short on money. She says the neighbors help out, but isn't there something we can do? Are you listening?

WENDALL: I'm listening. (Stands back to survey work). Hofer doesn't blink.

GEORG: You say that about every artist.

WENDALL: No. Only the great ones. Come. Look. (GEORG rises and looks at the painting as WENDALL explains). Hofer doesn't turn away, he stays right there. You can trust him. He's gotten inside. All that stuff under the skin, in their heads, Hofer puts it on the surface so we can see it. The past. The future. Hofer sees it; he paints it.

GEORG: It's a painting Father would think is degenerate.

WENDALL: Yes.

GEORG: (As WENDALL concentrates on painting again). I can't understand how Father can do what he does.

WENDALL: Your father's an angry man.

GEORG: (Picks up brush and begins to apply paint to the underside of one arm, tracing the veins from his wrist to his elbow). I've tried . . . to understand. He won't let me in.

WENDALL: Georg, there are things your father simply cannot talk about.

GEORG: What . . . ?

WENDALL: Your father bought his own misfortune . . . with your mother's money.

GEORG: I don't believe you!

WENDALL: (Gently). Do you want to hear or not? (GEORG nods). When your father was still painting, he bribed a gallery owner to get an exhibit. He paid the reviewer to give him a favorable notice. As it turned out, the reviewer became ill. A replacement was sent. The notice was dreadful. Your father stopped painting. Most people suspect his position at the newspaper was purchased, too.

GEORG: Who told you that?

WENDALL: It's common knowledge in the industry. (Pause). Did you find out where he keeps the keys to his files?

GEORG: It's true. Mother supported us. She even established a trust for me.

WENDALL: So I'm not the only one--looking out for Georg.

GEORG: Do you think the bank would make a loan, using the trust as collateral?

WENDALL: Offer to pay double the interest. They'll do anything. What do you need the money for?

GEORG: You have your secrets. That's mine. (Pause). If you were to paint me, what would it look like? The painting?

WENDALL: What would I see?

GEORG: Can you see inside like Hofer?

WENDALL: Goodness. I'd paint that first of all. In yellow. Fear. Purple. A lot of that. And silver. Someone wanting to be touched. Georg, what are you doing?!

GEORG: Thinking about Mrs. Kollwitz. And Mother.

WENDALL: (Squats next to GEORG). Tracing his life lines. What's in there, Georg? What's under those rivers of paint? Here. Hold out your hand. Let me. What are Georg's colors? Yellow and purple and silver. (Paints abstract design on the palm of GEORG'S outstretched hand).

GEORG: Do you think of me in the way that Käthe thought about Beate?

WENDALL: (Presses his hand against GEORG'S palm, transferring some of the wet paint to his own hand). You know the answer. (Exits. GEORG remains).

## SCENE TEN

### Käthe's Studio

(August 17, 1936).

BEATE: (Enters with traveling bag). Why did you have me come to Berlin? Couldn't you speak to me over the phone? Or say what you had to say in writing?

KÄTHE: No. This is a private matter.

BEATE: Is everything all right?

KÄTHE: Yes. How's Arthur?

BEATE: In the midst of another one of his what-is-the-nature-of-god moods. Are you short of money? Because if you are, we'll gladly do what we can.

KÄTHE: We're fine. In fact, recently we received a large sum of money through the post. We have no idea who sent it. (The colored handprint of GEORG could be projected).

BEATE: One of Karl's former patients, I suspect.

KÄTHE: They're all so poor. How would one of his patients come up with that kind of money? It must have been someone else. (GEORG, exits).

BEATE: I don't like the feel of things. Dragging me to Berlin like this. What's the big secret?

KÄTHE: Beate, Arthur and you have had the same publisher for how long now?

BEATE: Goodness. Nearly thirty years. Why?

KÄTHE: And you've made them lots of money, right?

BEATE: I don't know if I should put it that way. You said this wasn't about money.

KÄTHE: Your publisher's not a threat to the party, is it?

BEATE: They print and distribute religious material!

KÄTHE: So, they're not under suspicion. Or being investigated.

BEATE: Käthe, you're being overly sensitive. I know you've been questioned, but not every enterprise in Germany is being scrutinized.

KÄTHER: Oh, come now. Nothing is sacred unless the Fuehrer deems it so. Your publisher ships its products all over Europe, right?

BEATE: Yes.

KÄTHER: Good!

BEATE: What are you getting at, Käthe?

KÄTHER: Did you ever complain about their services? Not meet deadlines? Disagree with their policies.

BEATE: No.

KÄTHER: I thought your publisher might owe you a favor or two. And it sounds to me like they do.

BEATE: I don't like the tone of this one bit.

KÄTHER: When you return to Stuttgart I want you to demand--not ask--demand that your publisher send a few parcels overseas from time to time. You'll do that, right?

BEATE: Parcels of what?

KÄTHER: (Crossing to worktable). Paintings. Prints. Photographs. Whatever is chosen.

BEATE: Yours?

KÄTHER: (Getting a packet). They're by a variety of artists. Someone will deliver the items to you, packaged and ready to mail. All you have to do is make sure your publisher gets them ... reprints the addresses on company labels ... and send them.

BEATE: Oh, Käthe, why do you always put me in these compromising positions?

KÄTHER: Beate, that's the foundation of our friendship. Tit for tat.

BEATE: I don't know why I'm even asking, because I already know the answer. These paintings, they're illegal, aren't they?

KÄTHER: (Playfully takes offense). Of course not! (After a pause, slyly). Not in Denmark. Or wherever else they're being shipped.

BEATE: Are you planning my execution?

KÄTHER: You and your flair for the dramatics!

BEATE: I'll see what I can do.

KÄTHER: Now, there's something else you must do for me. This might be a bit more difficult.

BEATE: Oh, God. I should have stayed home.

KÄTHE: (*Produces packet*). I'm going to send you on a mission. To a member of the Department of Cultural Affairs. To see Ernst Lehrs.

BEATE: Who's he?

KÄTHE: I'm tempted to use language you would find offensive. Let's just say he works for Joseph Goebbels.

BEATE: Goebbels!? A snake, if ever there was one!

KÄTHE: I'm counting on you, Beate.

BEATE: I think now might be a good time to have a stroke.

KÄTHE: With your propensity for theatrics, you'll be perfect, because the visit requires a little acting on your part.

BEATE: Käthe, I am not equipped to deal with these people. Unless they want to discuss theology, they won't be interested in what I have to say.

KÄTHE: It's been all thought out. You won't even mention your name. That's part of the game.

BEATE: Game?

KÄTHE: With your help I'm going to send Mr. Lehrs on a wild goose chase.

BEATE: Käthe, are you out of your mind?

KÄTHE: I've never felt more clear-headed.

BEATE: Why me?

KÄTHE: I need someone who doesn't live in Berlin. And, frankly, your age is a plus. It's helps that my messenger is old.

BEATE: And so you selected *antique* Beate, rusting away in Stuttgart. I ought to clobber you, Käthe.

KÄTHE: Except in my little scheme you're from Munich.

BEATE: Käthe! You're asking me to lie?

KÄTHE: Oh, Beate . . . .

BEATE: Lie? To a member of a government agency? I can't!

KÄTHE: Put your morals aside for the moment and do the right thing!

BEATE: I couldn't lie my way past a stick in the ground.

KÄTHE: I'll coach you. (Produces a napkin with a drawing of four men on it). I even prepared a few awful drawings to take with you, to pass off as your own, as evidence for Mr. Lehrs.

BEATE: Awful drawings? By me? This is getting more humiliating by the minute.

KÄTHE: It happens tomorrow. Goebbels will be out of town, so it's fitting you see Mr. Lehrs. (Teasing). How's your memory?

BEATE: What do you take me for?

KÄTHE: The rumors of old age. One never knows!

BEATE: Really!

KÄTHE: There's a lot to remember. Sit down. Let's get started.

## ACT TWO

### SCENE ELEVEN

#### The Brau Café

(August 17, 1936).

WALTER: (Approaching ANNA). Excuse me. I'm looking for an artist and was told this café was a popular gathering place. Perhaps you could point someone out. An unemployed artist who could use the money.

ANNA: Take your pick. Your description fits just about everyone here.

WALTER: What about you? Might you be interested?

ANNA: I'm always interested. What do you have in mind?

WALTER: Well, it's somewhat risky. Could we talk somewhere else?

ANNA: We could. But at the moment I'm trying to catch the eye of a rather soulful-looking young man across the room. Go ahead. Talk. I can make a pass and listen at the same time. If it seems I'm fondling my breasts, you're right, I am. Don't be offended.

WALTER: You see, mother...

ANNA: I hear. Mother.

WALTER: Mother is a rather prominent figure in Berlin. Secretly, I consider her--she'd die to hear me say this--something of a snob. Anyway, mother has assembled a collection of rather eccentric paintings over the years, and political conditions being

what they are, she decided to turn them over to the authorities. It's her desire, however, to have duplicates made, which can be offered in place of the originals. I wasn't very keen on finding her an artist, but Mother is not easily ignored. Obviously, I can't tell you her name.

ANNA: Which is a not-so-subtle way of saying you can't reveal your name.

WALTER: Surely you understand.

ANNA: You tell your mother I'm sorry she finds herself in such an awkward position and, rest assured, fashions do change.

WALTER: You don't believe me.

ANNA: One hears all kinds of stories.

WALTER: There have been others? Asking for this same thing?

ANNA: Stories that the Secret Police have agents canvassing the cafes, convincing people to copy outlawed paintings, then--turning around--and arresting them. On the other hand, stories of honest, terrified people who are out there, looking to have their condemned paintings saved. And what are you? For all I know, you could be from the Internal Works Department.

WALTER: My, my, you certainly have bestowed me with exceptional powers. No, I assure you . . . .

ANNA: Or the Ministry of Cultural Affairs.

WALTER: You are a woman of great imagination!

ANNA: Excuse me. It appears someone else wishes to see me. Good day, Mr. Ackermann. (Exits. WALTER remains, stunned that ANNA is aware of his identity).

## SCENE TWELVE

### Ernst's Library

(August 18, 1936).

ERNST: Today I visited a number of galleries and came across a figurine I'd seen years ago. I'd like you to have it.

GEORG: It's beautiful.

ERNST: Your mother thought so, too. She always regretted not buying it.

GEORG : (Recognizing the artist). Barlach.

ERNST: I ask that you keep it in a safe place. Where it won't be seen should we entertain guests.

GEORG: What happened to the other piece by Barlach? The one mother kept on the mantle? (Pause). It wasn't destroyed, was it?

ERNST: It's part of a private collection now.

GEORG: Since the purge began, thousands of books and paintings have been destroyed. Is that what happened to it?

ERNST: Georg, you're letting your imagination get the best of you.

GEORG: Barlach was her favorite artist! You interviewed him years ago and admired his work, too. What happened to make you change your mind? Why is his work now degenerate?

ERNST: Barlach's views on war are an insult to our country. You don't honor dead veterans by making a memorial portraying a soldier stuck up to his neck in mud! What kind of statement is that?

GEORG: (Referring to the figurine). Is this also degenerate?

ERNST: It is possible, even when someone suffers from an unsound mind, to make a thing of beauty. (Doorbell rings).

GEORG: When someone's his work is banned and their livelihood is destroyed, what happens? Do you have any idea?

ERNST: Answer that, would you! (GEORG exits. ERNST hides the figurine).

GEORG: (Enters with BEATE). Someone to see you, Father.

BEATE: Mr. Lehrs? I'm so sorry to disturb you at home. I was late getting to your office. When I arrived, the building was closed and I have to catch a train back to Munich tonight. I do hope you'll forgive me for interrupting.

ERNST: What can I do for you?

BEATE: I'm sure you're wondering who I am--what I'm doing--breaking in on you like this, but let me assure you I have proper cause.

ERNST: You might begin by telling me your name.

BEATE: I can't. Really, it wouldn't be wise. I'm much too frightened. You have no idea how much courage it took to come here. To Berlin. From Munich. I'm sure you'll understand when I've explained.

ERNST: Would you like a drink?

BEATE: Oh, no. It's a matter of principle.

ERNST: It'll do you good.

BEATE: Well, if you insist. But I assure you. I'm not one to tolerate drink.

ERNST: Georg, please. (GEORG, who has not identified her, begins to prepare a drink for BEATE).

BEATE: The whole way here--on the train from Munich--I feared for my life. I was sure I was being followed.

ERNST: Followed? By whom?

BEATE: Them! By them!

ERNST: Calm down. You're perfectly safe here. No one's going to harm you.

BEATE: I nearly turned back. Got off the train and almost bought a ticket right then and there, to get back on the train, heading straight home--to Munich. But I said to myself. I told myself, somebody should know this. Somebody with authority should know, so something can be done about it, so they can put a stop to it.

ERNST: You're from Munich. I got that much. And I understand you're frightened.

BEATE: Well, I am. Really, really frightened.

ERNST: What must be stopped?

BEATE: Their plans, Mr. Lehrs!

ERNST: What plans? Whose plans?

BEATE: The men who would kill me if they knew I was here, speaking with you.

ERNST: Perhaps we should start at the beginning.

BEATE: They *will* kill me, Mr. Lehrs. I don't have any doubt of that.

ERNST: I'm afraid I still don't follow you. What men?

BEATE: The ones who are going to bomb the building! Don't you understand!

ERNST: (His level of interest suddenly intensifies). Bomb? What building?

BEATE: The House of German Art. In Munich. Destroy it--just like the Reichstag was burned.

ERNST: I want you to take a nice, long drink. Then you're going to tell me everything. Slowly and deliberately.

BEATE: (With great concentration). Four days ago, on Monday, I was having my afternoon coffee. At the Sideboard Café, a delightful establishment on Lessing Street, where it intersects with Dostler. Have you ever been there?

ERNST: Not that I recall, madam.

BEATE: It was a typical day, like any other. Sunny. About seventy-five degrees. Just a few high clouds . . . .

ERNST: Is the weather really a crucial aspect of your story, Madame?

BEATE: (After a long moment of apparently profound thought). I suppose not. Anyway, I was sitting by the window, when I overheard several men in the corner booth next to me. They were talking about The House of German Art which is under construction. After a few moments I realized they were discussing plans to bomb the building. They're planning to do it next summer on the very day it opens, when all the dignitaries are in attendance. As you might imagine, I was horrified. I felt it was my duty, my sacred civic duty to the state, to report what I'd heard.

ERNST: I'm pleased you came to see me. You've done the right thing. Have you told anyone else what you overheard?

BEATE: I mentioned it to my cousin. He's the one who recommended I see someone from your department. Was that foolish of me?

ERNST: No, he was right. Since this is a rather delicate situation, I urge you not to speak to him again about this. Or anyone else for that matter.

BEATE: If that's your advice, Mr. Lehrs, you can be sure I'll follow it.

ERNST: But what made you decide to contact me? Our department is quite large; you could have spoken with a number of people.

BEATE: I'm sorry. It was either Mr. Goebbels or Mr. Ziegler or you. My cousin couldn't recall anyone else who was at the groundbreaking services. I gave the taxi driver all three names and addresses. Yours was closest. Should I have gone to Mr. Goebbels instead? I still can.

ERNST: No. No. I'm delighted you came to me first. Really, I am. I was just curious.

BEATE: Now I feel really bad. I interrupted your dinner, didn't I? I should have called first. But I didn't have your number. Or Mr. Goebbel's. Or Mr. Ziegler's for that matter. I told myself. I said, just go, knock on someone's door! It seemed so urgent that I actually see someone. Oh, I'm a mess. (Reaches into purse). You probably don't even want these.

ERNST: What?

BEATE: I'm embarrassed to even bring it up.

ERNST: I'd like to see what you have. Believe me.

BEATE: It seems silly now; I thought I was being helpful at the time.

ERNST: Please.

BEATE: (Produces napkin with drawing of four men on it). Well, after I realized what the men were discussing, I made sketches of them. I had to do the drawings on a napkin so they didn't come out so good, but I thought it would be a useful thing to have. I assure you, I left a generous tip for having stole the napkin. That wasn't wrong of me, was it? To steal the napkin?

ERNST: You're much too conscience stricken, madam. Could I see the sketches?

BEATE: I had to make two trips to the powder room to get a good look at the gentleman seated with his back to me. (Points to one of the renderings). That one. Oh, they're simply awful now that I look at them again.

ERNST: On the contrary, they have the right amount of detail. You've captured exactly the kind of features one needs to know to identify them.

BEATE: You think so?

ERNST: They're much better than most renderings I've seen. These actually look like people.

BEATE: I'm pleased. You honestly think they'll be useful?

ERNST: Beyond a doubt. This is an invaluable piece of evidence. I assure you we'll investigate the matter fully.

BEATE: Oh my gosh, I still have a train to catch. The cab driver is waiting.

ERNST: It really would facilitate our investigation if you could share your name and address.

BEATE: I have faith one way or another you'll catch these men. That means a trial. And it scares me to the death, Mr. Lehrs, to think I might be summoned to witness. Suppose there are others. Suppose these men are part of a conspiracy and their comrades come to the trial. What do you think would happen to me? (Points a finger at her temple). Poof! Surely you understand my fear, Mr. Lehrs.

ERNST: Promise me, if you learn more about their plans or whereabouts, you'll let me know.

BEATE: I'll do that. You can be sure. Yes. Count on it.

ERNST: Perhaps I shall see you at the Sideboard Café soon. And we can share a cup of coffee.

BEATE: Yes. Coffee. I drink mine black. (Exits).

ERNST: Well, what do you make of that?

GEORG: She seemed awfully nervous.

ERNST: The poor woman was out of her element.

GEORG: Why would these men want to bomb the building?

ERNST: The Fuehrer is scheduled to attend the opening.

GEORG: Something about her story doesn't seem right.

ERNST: Why? You heard something I didn't?

GEORG: It sounded rehearsed.

ERNST: No, this woman lacks the imagination to fabricate anything so realistic. It's the simplicity--coupled with the details--that convinces me. This is exactly the kind of stunt the resistance would plot.

GEORG: Thank you for the figurine.

ERNST: Don't imagine a secret agenda where they're isn't any, Georg.

(ERNST exits. It suddenly dawns on GEORG who the caller is; his recognition is followed by a rush of fear and panic. WENDALL steps out of the shadows).

### SCENE THIRTEEN A Private Place

(August 21, 1936. WENDALL, illuminated by a small pool of light, stands apart from GEORG. The staging should suggest WENDALL appears both as himself and as an inner voice within GEORG).

WENDALL: Did anyone ever draw you?

GEORG: No.

WENDALL: What a shame. It's like being touched.

GEORG: Wendall! You heard the speeches of Himmler. You know the party line.

WENDALL: You feel the artist's eyes, your skin does.

GEORG: Homosexuals. They're being sterilized! And worse!

WENDALL: Whatever his eyes study, wherever they look, that part of your body knows. It responds.

GEORG: You can't look at me! Not in that way!

WENDALL: As you hear the sound of pencil on paper, you feel it move across yourself, caressing your skin.

GEORG: You're putting yourself . . . .

WENDALL: It's quite a glorious sensation.

GEORG: You're putting me . . . at risk.

WENDALL: Why won't you admit it?

GEORG: It's not that easy, Wendall!

WENDALL: What could be easier than embracing your feelings?

GEORG: I'm scared . . . where it might lead.

WENDALL: I'm here for you. Can you say that about your Father?

GEORG: God, this is a terrible time to be alive.

WENDALL: Don't say that!

GEORG: I never saw one of Father's paintings.

WENDALL: It's a wonderful time. Because it's all we have.

GEORG: Until you told me, I didn't know he was an artist. But I can imagine the picture he'd paint. A picture that never really included Mother. (Pause). Do you know how she died?

WENDALL: (From behind, placing hand on GEORG'S shoulder). I'm here.

GEORG: She'd gone to buy luggage. Can you imagine that? Luggage, to pack her things, so she could leave father.

WENDALL: I'm listening.

GEORG: She was crossing the street. Her arms full of suitcases. The driver didn't have time to stop.

WENDALL: (Embraces GEORG). It hurts.

GEORG: It was like . . . .

WENDALL: Yes.

GEORG: Like she was stopped. By the will of father.

WENDALL: Georg, look at me. Georg. We can make a home together.

GEORG: Help me . . . trust myself.

WENDALL: Don't think of us as an accident.

GEORG: I'm so scared, Wendall.

WENDALL: Me, too. Don't blink. Please, don't blink. (Exits as ERNST enters).

## SCENE FOURTEEN

### Ernst's Library

(August 22, 1936).

ERNST: Bring me a glass of cognac. And one for yourself, son.

GEORG: None for me. I'm going out.

ERNST: Again? Where do you go on these nightly escapades, Georg?

GEORG: Oh, you know, wherever . . . .

ERNST: The Garnet Club by any chance?

GEORG: Sometimes.

ERNST: You like the taste of their cognac better than mine.

GEORG: (Handing ERNST a glass of cognac). I prefer beer.

ERNST: Were you at The Garnet last night?

GEORG: Yes.

ERNST: That's odd. I stopped there on the way home, after our council meeting. You were nowhere to be seen.

GEORG: I must have stepped out.

ERNST: With Max?

GEORG: Yeah.

ERNST: I don't much care for his character.

GEORG: Aren't you attending a rally tonight?

ERNST: He has tendencies which aren't altogether becoming. Wouldn't you agree?

GEORG: Well, I'm not especially fond of all your friends.

ERNST: This Max is a touchy subject with you.

GEORG: Max is an honest, decent guy. If you can't see that, maybe it's because you're surrounded with the wrong people.

ERNST: Son, I'm not sure you understand the ramifications of that remark.

GEORG: I'm sorry; I shouldn't have said that.

ERNST: Listen, Georg. Rather than going out every night and doing what it is you do, I suggest you spend more time planning for the future.

GEORG: What's to think about? I still have one more year of school. When I graduate I'll be drafted into the army.

(Images from THE WAR CYCLE could be projected: The Volunteers, The Victim, The Widow I, The Widow II, The Parents, The People, The Mothers).

ERNST: Who's to say you can't join now? You're eighteen. You could take classes at the military academy. Plenty of men your age have volunteered.

GEORG: No, Father.

ERNST: I can get you into an elite division. See that you're promoted. Believe me, I'll take care of things from this end.

GEORG: It's not that easy.

ERNST: Most fellows your age have enlisted. It's expected, especially if you're the child of a party official.

GEORG: So that's what this is about. Not me. It's about you. What it means to your reputation.

ERNST: It's for both of us, Georg.

GEORG: I can't join the army, Father. Not in the way you want me to.

ERNST: I'm not asking you to make a career of it.

GEORG: I don't see things the way you do, Father.

ERNST: What are you saying?

GEORG: I'll join the army; there isn't any way around it. But I'm not enlisting as a soldier. I don't have what it takes to kill someone.

ERNST: Who said anything about combat? Is there a war going on I don't know about?

GEORG: Yes.

ERNST: Do you hear gunfire?

GEORG: It's only a matter of time.

ERNST: Then, Godspeed, let it come. For twenty years Germany has endured humiliation; it's time to reclaim her destiny. If it means a war, then so be it!

GEORG: It won't be my war.

ERNST: Where's your pride? Your manhood? Or are you a faint-hearted, little shitless piece of pastry that can't stand up to the enemy?

GEORG: Yes. I'm like mother that way.

(KÄTHER enters to watch the proceedings. ERNST, crosses to GEORG and slaps him. ERNST embraces his son. After a pause, GEORG returns the embrace. ERNST exits. GEORG kneels, shaken).

## SCENE FIFTEEN

### Käthe's Studio

(August 23, 1936).

KÄTHER: So father wants you to join the army.

GEORG: He's determined, Mrs. Kollwitz.

KÄTHER: You are right to resist him, Georg. There's far too much at stake. I hope you put up a good fight.

GEORG: Your sons were in the army. Why did they join?

KÄTHER: Like them, I believed the war was necessary if there was to be a revolution. But Peter had tuberculosis as a child. He didn't have the constitution of his brother. I felt he wasn't suited to be a soldier.

GEORG: So you weren't against the war?

KÄTHER: That was our downfall as parents. By supporting the war, we were defenseless. Peter argued his brother Hans was in the army. Why couldn't he join? We relented.

GEORG: You weren't always a pacifist?

KÄTHER: No. That came later. Do you know Peter was planning to become a painter? (Pause). He died a few months after joining the army. In Belgium. (She produces a sketch which she shows to GEORG). When he was three years old. I did the sketch--holding him in my arms before a mirror. I called it *Mother with Dead Child*. (Pause). (Perhaps project the image: *Mother With Dead Child*).

GEORG: Thank you, Mrs. Kollwitz.

KÄTHER: Don't be like I was, persuaded against my will!

GEORG: I feel stronger.

KÄTHE: All these patriots--they don't know what it's like. The casualties of war are often hundreds of miles from the battlefield. (Pause). With Peter's death, I fell into a deep depression . . . .

(LIGHTING TRANSFORMATION. FLASHBACK TO 1921)

BEATE: Karl asked me to talk to you.

KÄTHE: I suspected as much.

BEATE: He's worried. In the morning, you lock yourself in the studio and come out hours later, not having done a thing.

KÄTHE: I just want to be left alone. Can't he understand that?

BEATE: We know your thoughts are with Peter and that you miss him terribly, but that was seven years ago, Käthe.

KÄTHE: I made a vow, Beate. When Peter died, I vowed I would carry on, doing for him the work he'd been denied.

BEATE: We know.

KÄTHE: I asked Peter to be near me, to stand beside me and guide my hand . . . .

BEATE: That's understandable.

KÄTHE: Beate, I no longer sense my son . . . I no longer feel his spirit guiding my work.

BEATE: Maybe it's a sign that you're to let go.

KÄTHE: Let go?!

BEATE: Käthe, sometimes you expect too much.

KÄTHE: (Bitterly, violently). You don't understand! When I learned of his death, I promised Peter a memorial. Every day I have been searching for something to honor his life. Beatrice! Seven years! And nothing to show!

BEATE: How can you say that? Elected to the Academy--the first female to break the barricades! An acclaimed retrospective. Award after award. Don't those accomplishments mean anything?

KÄTHE: Beate, I'm not in the mood to hear a count-your-blessings speech.

BEATE: This bitterness. It isn't like you.

KÄTHER: I . . . am . . . trying . . . to find a way to give meaning to the death of my child!! And I can't! Do you know what that means?!

BEATE: Peter is not the only one who needs attention. How do you think Karl feels when you act so cold toward him?

KÄTHER: How can I speak to Karl? What should I say? Tell him that all his hard work is making a difference? Or should I say what I honestly believe--that what I'm doing, which is absolutely nothing, is every bit as useful in changing the world as his getting up at five in the morning and working until ten at night?

BEATE: That's simply not true.

KÄTHER: We were betrayed, Beate! Peter went into battle believing the war would make a difference. But look at the outcome. Where is Germany today? He died in vain!

BEATE: I've a mind to give you a good shaking. Get up out of that chair and show me something. You can't tell me you haven't done anything the past six months. Show me what you've been working on!

KÄTHER: I'm telling you. There's nothing.

BEATE: All right. Then we'll start right now. Let's get to work! (She finds a piece of paper and a stick of charcoal. She forces KÄTHER to open her hand and hold the charcoal. BEATE grabs the fist of KÄTHER and forces her to make marks on the paper).

KÄTHER: Let go of me!

BEATE: Not until we're finished.

KÄTHER: Really, Beate, I am not a child.

BEATE: Apply yourself!

KÄTHER: I said, let go!

BEATE: Keep quiet.

KÄTHER: You're hurting me. Stop this!

BEATE: There now. We've started. No more excuses! (She releases KÄTHER). Continue!

KÄTHER: Well, now, that was a masterpiece. (Tears up paper, throws it aside).

BEATE: (Gets another sheet of paper and slaps it down in front of KÄTHER). If you're going to come out of this, keep working!

KÄTHER: (Crumpling up paper). Working will make a difference? I used to believe that.

BEATE: (Clutching KÄTHER). You can't let go of your dreams.

KÄTHE: I already have. If Karl were willing to admit it, I think the same has happened to him. He goes to his political rallies, volunteers his help. What good does it do? Karl and I are both fighting incurable sicknesses, Beate.

BEATE: It's difficult, sometimes, seeing the change.

KÄTHE: If I can't see a change I don't assume there is one! I'm an artist, Beate, I look with my eyes!

BEATE: Well, I see, too. I see what your husband does. I see his patients waiting in the hall. I see the frightened look in their eyes. I see them leave, feeling reassured, knowing there is someone who'll attend to their pain. And I see that he makes a difference.

KÄTHE: Admit it, Beate. One can't change a system that won't be changed.

BEATE: So now we're the cynic?

KÄTHE: All our talk of revolution! We used to think the answer was socialism. When that failed, we tried the war. We know what happened there. Communism won't fare any better.

BEATE: There are some who say your revolution's still going to happen.

KÄTHE: I renounce these revolutions! (Firmly). I am now a pacifist. (Projection of the image: Never Again War).

BEATE: If you'd only make an attempt at your work; that's all Karl asks. (Pause). He misses you. I can hear it in his voice.

KÄTHE: I don't have it in me, Beate.

BEATE: Look at your drawings, Käthe. Look at the people in them. I see *their* courage. Where's yours? Where is it now, my expert on courage, when you need it most? Or is courage only something you put on paper?

**(LIGHTING TRANSFORMATION. RETURN TO SCENE)**

KÄTHE: "Is courage only something you put on paper." Beate was right. I'd ceased to be what I drew. After Peter's memorial was completed, Karl and I traveled to his grave to oversee the installation. Eighteen years after losing his life, my son's memorial was finally in place. (Projection of the memorial: The Mother, The Father). That night, after we returned to our hotel, I had a dream. I dreamed there would be another war.

GEORG: It's already begun, hasn't it?

KÄTHE: It's only a matter of time before the shots are fired. And no one will protest. Those who would object are being silenced.

GEORG: Thank you, Mrs. Kollwitz. I know what I need to do.

KÄTHE: (She offers GEORG the drawing of HERSELF and PETER). Here. I want you to have this. (GEORG accepts the drawing). Don't be silent, Georg. Be courageous.

## SCENE SIXTEEN

### The Brau Café

(August 23, 1936. WALTER approaches ANNA).

ANNA: Mr. Ackermann, fancy meeting you again

WALTER: So I'm Mr. Ackermann. Who gives a damn?

ANNA: Did you find someone to copy your mother's paintings?

WALTER: As a matter of fact, I did.

ANNA: Where is your recruit now? In prison?

WALTER: You have me all wrong. So I work for the Department of Cultural Affairs. Didn't you ever hear of imposters?

ANNA: Oh, you're going to tell me your job is a front? That you work the scene from the inside? Is that it?

WALTER: Precisely.

ANNA: Sounds tricky. So what's the name of your stooge?

WALTER: Nobody you know. Are you aware how many people consider themselves artists in this country? Thousands. The department maintains a list of every one in Germany. And a list of agents, curators, gallery owners, suppliers, restorers. . . .

ANNA: I'm not surprised.

WALTER: Each artist is rated.

ANNA: What's my rating?

WALTER: Of course, if pressured, I can manipulate the codes to provide immunity to those who need it.

ANNA: My rating?

WALTER: Marginal. Your work isn't considered degenerate, but it isn't sanctioned by the party, either. We can't call you an established artist. On the other hand, you're not unemployed. Your training is commendable but a number of your teachers hold offensive views. Perhaps most disturbing: you're not a registered party member.

ANNA: Oh, piss on them. Who gives a shit about your codes.

WALTER: Listen. I've taken an interest in you.

ANNA: Just dislike me. It's easier that way.

WALTER: We could help one another.

ANNA: There's nothing I have that you would want.

WALTER: Provide me with the names of people who are willing to copy work and I'll make it worth your while. I'll see that you receive a favorable rating. What do you say?

ANNA: Your records need to be updated, Mr. Ackermann.

WALTER: How so?

ANNA: I *am* an official member of the party. I registered last week.

WALTER: Well, that's good. Congratulations. It's a useful form of insurance.

ANNA: Where's the fear?

WALTER: What?

ANNA: Being a member, I'm obliged to turn you in--which, I'd think, should frighten you. (Pause). No, you're not a threat to your party and they're not a threat to you. You're not a turncoat at all. (Rises).

WALTER: Not so fast, Anna! Where's your card?

ANNA: Mr. Ackermann, when a woman gives her word, you should take it.

WALTER: Sit down!

ANNA: Do you want to make a scene?

WALTER: I could have helped you!

ANNA: I'm not in need of help.

WALTER: Oh, I think you are! (Produces a packet of photographs and places one on the table). Do you recognize this? (ANNA sits).

ANNA: You broke into my apartment!

WALTER: And found, what seems to me, a devilish, little project my colleagues would consider illegal.

ANNA: This is not what you think it is.

WALTER: (Lays two more photographs before ANNA). Although you may no longer recognize them, we've obtained several photographs of your children. They're very

sweet. I'm guessing their adopted parents are quite fond of them. I think we need to talk, Anna.

## SCENE SEVENTEEN

### Ernst's Library

(August 25, 1936).

GEORG: Father, I went by Max's apartment this evening. He wasn't there.

ERNST: Pity.

GEORG: The landlord said he hasn't been home, not since the night before last.

ERNST: We both know the kind of life he leads, Georg.

GEORG: Something's happened to him. (ANNA exits). He wouldn't just disappear like that . . . .

ERNST: Don't you think you're over-reacting a bit?

GEORG: Father, what's going on? Who are they taking now?

ERNST: What are you implying?

GEORG: None of his relatives are guilty of any crime. There isn't an uncle somewhere, sitting at his typewriter, writing subversive stories; no distant cousin whose obscene art could incriminate Max.

ERNST: That's enough!

GEORG: Dad, you don't understand, do you?

ERNST: I will not stand here and be accused of wrongdoing.

GEORG: Don't you know what you're part of? Can't you see the outcome?

ERNST: You will not hold me responsible for your friend!

GEORG: Please find out what happened to him.

ERNST: How, pray tell, am I to do that?

GEORG: Use your infamous privileges. They serve you in every other way.

ERNST: You ungrateful . . . .

GEORG: I know you can! Don't lie to me! For God's sake, please don't lie!

ERNST: Find the louse yourself. You never looked to me for advice before. Why should you need me now?

GEORG: Max is not a book you burn, not a paintings you . . .

ERNST: My job has nothing to do with Max!

GEORG: Censoring art is one thing. But to destroy people because they don't conform to some . . . .

ERNST: Now you accuse me of murder?

GEORG: No, I'm accusing you of conspiracy.

ERNST: Look at my hands. Do you see blood on them?

GEORG: I see the swastika you wear when you go to work in the morning.

ERNST: Contrary to what you might think, I do my job because I believe it's for the good of our people. Men have noble thoughts and they have perverse thoughts; it's as simple as that. And, unless perversity is purged, goodness cannot prevail.

GEORG: And Max fits that description?

ERNST: We both know what Max is guilty of.

GEORG: What?

ERNST: It doesn't merit mention.

GEORG: Say it!

ERNST: Never!

GEORG: Surely, then, in your heart, you find me guilty, too.

ERNST: That's for you to decide.

## SCENE EIGHTEEN Kollwitz's Kitchen

(August 25, 1936. KARL is seated, reading.)

KÄTHE: Karl, I couldn't sleep. And so I picked up one of my diaries and leafed through it. There's something I would like to share with you. (Hands diary to KARL). July 8, 1917. My fiftieth birthday.

KARL: (Reading, as KÄTHE crosses to the opposite side of the stage). Today, as I returned from going on calls with Karl, the weather had that springlike quality that always starts me daydreaming. And I imagined a picture of us in our old age. We will have a small cottage with a garden somewhere outside the city of Berlin. I envision a houseful of books, the poems of Goethe, at least one dog. We will work, each going about our own pursuits. Above all we will live in nature.

KÄTHE and KARL: We will have a few children who've come from the city to spend the summer with us. They'll play in the village park, learn to swim and row.

KÄTHE: (As KARL continues to read). In the evenings we'll read together. And when the nights grow cold we'll build a fire, bring a trunkful of costumes down from the attic and perform stories.

KARL: The plan calls for money, but by then we will have it. Yes, these are the pictures I see. What a wonderful life that will be. (Puts down diary).

KÄTHE: Karl. (Long pause). We're not going to have our garden.

KARL: (Apologetically). And I'm afraid we're not very rich.

KÄTHE: There's another passage I would like you to read. It's marked.

KARL: (Finds the marker and reads). What strength Karl has. I know no person who can love as he can, with his whole soul. Often this love has oppressed me: I wanted to be free. But often, too, it has made me terribly happy. At times he is tired and unproductive and bored; but then there are times when he behaves like a champion, victorious over his years, over all his labors, over his illness. Then he is wonderful. He inspires, animates me. But best of all is his capacity for love. It comes out of a glad kindness which sometimes seems to me absolutely incredible. This capacity for love results in his being loved in turn by so many, many people. Above all, by women and children.

KÄTHE: Karl, I don't need my garden. Good night. (She turns and exits, leaving KARL alone, who is overwhelmed by KÄTHE'S display of affection).

## SCENE NINETEEN

### Ernst's Library

(August 29, 1936).

GEORG: Wendall! What are you doing here? Where were you?

WENDALL: In Stuttgart.

GEORG: I thought you were picked up by the police.

WENDALL: I had to deliver some paintings. I didn't have time to contact you.

GEORG: I went to your apartment. To find you. There were men there. The place was turned upsidedown.

WENDALL: I know. When I got back, Gustav gave the word. He said there was a warrant out for my arrest.

GEORG: I asked one of the guards if he knew where you were.

WENDALL: You spoke to them! Georg!

GEORG: You should go. I called father. He's on his way home.

WENDALL: What were you thinking, Georg? Never speak to them!

GEORG: One of them grabbed me . . . He wanted to know if I was one of your boys. That's how he put it. One of your boys.

WENDALL: What did they do?

GEORG: He pulled off my shirt. And . . . Wendall, it was awful.

WENDALL: What did they do?

GEORG: What do you think they did?

WENDALL: I'm sorry. I should have been there.

GEORG: There was nothing you could have done.

WENDALL: (Disbelievingly). Christ almighty.

GEORG: They wouldn't stop. That's when I told them.

WENDALL: Told them what?

GEORG: Who my father is. If it hadn't been for them knowing father, I don't know what would have happened. Wendall, you can't let them find you!

WENDALL: This wasn't supposed to happen.

GEORG: Father's coming. He knows about you.

WENDALL: Well, that complicates things.

GEORG: And me, too. He knows.

WENDALL: Listen, I'm scheduled to make another trip in a few days. To Belgium. Think about coming with me.

GEORG: Wendall, I think I need to see a doctor. I'm bleeding.

WENDALL: We're going to take care of you. (To phone. Dials) Mrs. Kollwitz? This is Wendall. Tell Karl I'm bringing a patient over. (Hangs up).

GEORG: Hold me.

WENDALL: Everything's going to be just fine.

GEORG: Will you kiss me?

WENDALL: (Kisses GEORG. After a long moment ERNST enters. WENDALL jumps up). Mr. Lehrs!

ERNST: Mr. Martin.

WENDALL: I see you know who I am. What were your plans, Mr. Lehrs? Did you think to have me killed and never breathe a word to Georg?

ERNST: Mr. Martin, I advise you to leave at once.

WENDALL: I want to know if you placed the order to raid my apartment.

ERNST: Apparently we need someone to help escort you out. (Goes to phone).

WENDALL: (Places hand over phone). It was you, wasn't it, who put the police onto me?

ERNST: If you'll excuse me... (Starts to exit).

WENDALL: Georg was raped by those men! (ERNST stops. It takes him a moment to recover). He's in pain. And you're responsible!

ERNST: On the contrary, if what you say is true, I should think the blame lies with you.

WENDALL: (Picks up bottle). Did you send them to my apartment or not? You're not getting out of here without giving me an answer.

GEORG: Did you, father?

ERNST: Yes.

WENDALL: You son of a bitch! (Pours contents of bottle on desk).

ERNST: To spare my son! How dare you jeopardize his life! (WENDALL ignites cigarette lighter). What are you going to do now? Burn down my house?

WENDALL: Don't tempt me. Don't put it past me.

GEORG: (ERNST displays pistol). If you so much as harm him, I'll light the fire myself.

WENDALL: (Extinguishes flame. Throws lighter to GEORG). Let's have a book burning, Georg, what do you say? (Resumes pouring liquid).

ERNST: Georg, you can't let him do this!

WENDALL: (Still emptying the bottle). All these pieces of priceless art. A shame. Sorry to see them go.

ERNST: Georg, make him stop!

WENDALL: Georg, have you decided?

GEORG: I'm coming with you.

ERNST: No one touches my son!

WENDALL: They already have. I think we'd better be going. (GEORG starts exit). Your son is in need of a physician. (He exits).

(ERNST is left alone. He is without thoughts, incapable of knowing what he feels. He turns his back to the audience and leans over the desk/worktable).

**SCENE TWENTY**  
**EPILOGUE**  
**A Refuge in Moritzburg**

(February 8, 1945. ERNST remains on stage for the duration of this scene, maintaining the position established at the end of the preceding scene).

ANNA: I'm on my way to Dresden. Hearing you were living in Moritzburg now, I decided to stop by and introduce myself. My name is Anna Schneider.

KÄTHE: I'm pleased to meet you, Anna. What's in Dresden?

ANNA: I'm to take a post at one of the city hospitals. Before becoming a nurse, back in Berlin, I was an artist.

KÄTHE: You're going to attend to the wounded soldiers? There's an art in that, too.

ANNA: I became acquainted, briefly, years ago, with one of your drawings. I can't say I was terribly taken by your work at the time. But that image never left me. I wanted to tell you. What you saw and showed in your work, Mrs. Kollwitz, I have come to know in life.

KÄTHE: Well, thank you. That's quite a compliment. This drawing. How did you come in contact with it?

ANNA: It was one of several pieces I'd been commissioned to copy.

KÄTHE: So you were part of Mr. Noller's coalition?

ANNA: I don't know. I never learned who I worked for.

KÄTHE: You worked for Mr. Noller.

ANNA: I wasn't involved very long. The project ended when I was found out.

KÄTHE: Perhaps, if you have the time, you could make a sketch of the person who dealt with you.

ANNA: (Getting sheet of paper from worktable). That's exactly what my accuser, Mr. Ackermann, requested. The person who hired me was a young man.

KÄTHE: It's possible I might know him.

ANNA: (Drawing). I couldn't refuse Mr. Ackermann. Not after he threatened to harm my children. Whether he found the young man, I never learned. It was frightening, Mrs. Kollwitz; I thought I was going to be detained. (Pause, continues drawing). How did you come to live in Moritzburg, Mrs. Kollwitz?

KÄTHE: Friends persuaded me. When my husband died, it was difficult to attend to the house. The war began and the coalition fell apart. After Berlin was subjected to Allied bombing, I knew it was time to leave. I resisted, but it was the right thing to do. Since, I've learned my home was destroyed in the air raids. (ANNA hands KÄTHE the drawing). Yes. That's him. Wendall Martin.

ANNA: What happened to him? Where is Wendall now? Do you know?

KÄTHE: Your Mr. Ackermann was effective, but Wendall got away in time. He and his companion Georg are living in Copenhagen.

ANNA: I'm pleased to know he's safe. I liked Wendall. I feared he'd been harmed, because I didn't have the courage to resist Mr. Ackermann.

KÄTHE: As it turned out, Wendall's being discovered was a blessing.

ANNA: A blessing?

KÄTHE: After that incident, the party never bothered me again. (The light on ERNST goes to black).

ANNA: Well, you needn't fear they ever will. I hear the war can't go on much longer.

KÄTHE: I'm curious. What was the name of the drawing, if you can remember.

ANNA: I'm sorry, Mrs. Kollwitz; I can't remember the title. I only remember the picture.