

Plays for Young Audiences

A PARTNERSHIP OF SEATTLE CHILDREN'S THEATRE AND CHILDREN'S THEATRE COMPANY - MINNEAPOLIS

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Nivelli's War

By
Charles Way

Nivelli's War was first presented by The Lyric Theatre, Belfast Ireland, in 2017.

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Characters

The Stage Manager.

The Great Nivelli.

Mother.

Father

Ernst

Mr Dethier

Tante Sophie

Mr H

Russian soldiers [2]

The Princess

The Butler

American soldiers [2]

The play was written for a minimum cast of five.

The play 'Nivelli's War' is entirely fictional. It is inspired however by a real person who was called Herbert Levin whom I discovered while researching on the internet. Levin was a magician who changed his name to Nivelli and who survived the holocaust. With these three elements I created a story about a magician who helps a child at the end of world war two. This play is not a depiction of the character of or the experiences of Herbert Levin {1906-1977}, who became known as 'The magician of Auschwitz' however out of respect and in honour of the elements that inspired my play I named my character after him.

Charles Way

SCENE ONE

A theatre

A stage

On the stage is a picture/poster of this evening's act.

'The Great Nivelli'

The picture shows The Great Nivelli [A magician] wearing a dark coat and a black hat. He wears white gloves that seem to shine with their brightness. In one white hand he holds a bunch of brightly coloured balloons which float above his head. The Great Nivelli is smiling.

[The Great Nivelli enters. He is smiling just like in the picture. When he realises no one is there the smile drops from his face. With some aplomb he pulls out his watch.]

Mr N Oh-maybe I'm a little early.

[He looks at his watch. And makes it disappear.]

Mr N Ha-still got it. Hello-any one about?

[Now he sees his own face on the poster.]

Mr N Oh there you are. Never late- not you. Always get to the theatre first don't you. Always smiling. Triumphant. Yes-I know, I know-how much younger than me you look -but you're not really. No-you just don't age between performances. What am I doing-I'm talking to a picture? My my-what an old theatre it is-very old—it's a miracle really. What's that?

[He hears a muffled sound from somewhere in the theatre.]

Mr N Hello?

[The stage manager enters. The smile returns to The Great Nivelli's face.]

SM Oh-Mr Nivelli-you're here. You're here. I am so sorry-

Mr N Yes-I came through the stage door.

SM Oh and I wasn't there to- [He looks at his watch]

Mr N Yes-I'm a little early-

SM I can't believe it-The Great Nivelli -standing there-on my stage-after all this time.

Mr N Please call me Ernst.

SM The Great Nivelli.

Mr N Yes-it's been a few years since I-Ernst- was last here.

SM We put you in all the papers-The Great Nivelli-returns to his home town. We're honoured.

Mr N Thank you. Thank you.

SM Overwhelmed.

Mr N Thank you.

SM Overjoyed.

Mr N It's a lovely old theatre.

SM A miracle how it survived the war.

Mr N I was thinking the very same.

SM So many buildings round here were reduced to rubble.

Mr N Yes- I used to live-just---

SM I have swept this floor a thousand times for some very famous actors but I have never been happier than today-sweeping it for you.

Mr N Ernst.

SM The Great Nivelli.

Mr N Thank you.

SM Even your poster brought a smile to my face.

Mr N You're very kind. [He scowls at the poster]

SM Shall I show you to your dressing room?

Mr N No-I would like to stand here for a few minutes. Get the feel of the theatre. You understand.

SM Of course. I shall leave you alone. Every artist has their own routine-their own mystery.

Mr N That's right.

SM But let me take your cane.

Mr N Thank you-thank you

SM And your hat.

Mr N And my hat too? Very well-take it.

SM Welcome Home-The Great Neville.

[The stage manager turns away but then realises that he does not have the cane. He turns to see Nivelli holding it. Confused he takes it and turns away. A second cane appears in Nivelli's hand- he taps the stage manager on the shoulder who turns- takes the cane. This is repeated with a third cane. On the third cane-Nivelli steals the hat from the stage manager's head so that when he turns back Nivelli is standing as in his first position with both hat and cane.]

SM OH! OH! YOU! Ha,ha- marvellous. What a privilege. To be made a proper fool of by the Great Nivelli. I shall tell my grandchildren. [Exit]

[He looks at the smiling poster of himself.]

Mr N What are you looking at? You know how long this journey was? How tired I am? That would wipe the smile from your lips.

[He goes to the poster and turns it around so the smiling face is no longer visible. He is satisfied with this. He then takes from his coat pocket-a pair of white gloves and puts them on in a theatrical manner. He then takes a balloon from his pocket and blows it up. At the first blow-he hears a musical sound. He looks at the balloon then blows it again and once more a musical note is heard. He stares at the balloon-then blows again and as he blows the music develops and to Mr Nevilli's surprise he sees someone behind him-a woman dressed circa 1930's holding a baby basket. The more he blows-the more she comes into focus. He stares at her. The stage manager enters.]

SM Mr Nivelli- forgive me-

Mr N Yes?

SM Tea?

Mr N Tea?

SM Would you like some?

Mr N Tea lovely-Uh do you-uh? [He points towards this apparition]

SM Milk?

Mr N Yes milk- no sugar.

SM No sugar.

Mr N Do you –I mean do you not see –? [He points vaguely into the air]

SM Are you alright Mr Nivelli?

Mr N Yes, yes- a long journey. I just wondered if you saw-- never mind.

SM Milk, no sugar.

Mr N Thank you, thank you.

[The stage manager goes. Mr Nevilli is left in silence. He slowly lets the air out of the balloon and the image behind him fades-he stares at the balloon and then blows again. A light rises now on the woman-who is his mother and beside her now stands a young German soldier soldier-his father. Very carefully Mr Nivelli ties a knot in the balloon. The family stand still for a photo. A flash of light. As Nivelli watches this scene his hand moves to his own wallet-for in it is this actual photo. In the distance they hear the sound of gunfire. The soldier turns and is gone.

Nivelli stares at his Mother. How young she seems. How real-it's as if he could touch her. He looks at the balloon –which is now taken from his hand by a young boy. Could it really be? Yes-himself-what would he be about 6/7 years old? How ragged he looks. The boy runs home. His older self follows.]

SCENE TWO

Ernst Mama. Look I've got a balloon.

Mama You're late.

Ernst I've got a balloon.

Mama And it's almost dark-where have you been?

Ernst It's a balloon.

Mama Look at your knees-

Ernst Fell over.

Mama Where?

Ernst On my knees.

Mama I've told you a hundred times Ernst- a thousand times not to play in those houses. And you've cut yourself?

Ernst It's a balloon.

Mama They're dangerous. Don't you understand? Full of old rusty nails and if you get one of those stuck in you-you'd get blood poisoning- and there's nothing I could do to save you because there's no medicine anywhere in the city. Hey? Look at me. And what if you trod on an unexploded bomb? BOOOM-where would you be then?

Ernst In bits.

Mama [She hugs him]. I like the balloon very much-of course. Who doesn't like balloons? Show me the person who doesn't like Balloons and I'll eat my apron.

[She puts the apron in her mouth and growls. Now she fetches a bowl to wash his knees.]

Mama Looks bad. Doesn't it hurt?

Ernst No.

[She applies the cloth and water]

Ernst Ow.

Mama Who were you playing with?

Ernst Torvald.

Mama Just Torvald?

Ernst Torvald's going away to Furstenhagen next week. He says he doesn't know when he'll be back.

Mama The war will be over one day Ernst. The children will all come back.

Ernst What if the war doesn't end?

Mama It will end. I'm telling you it will. [She blows on his knee to dry it]

[The Great Nevilli watches.]

Mama Wash your hands. Lay the table now.

Ernst What's for supper?

Mama Beef soup—and bread. I got the last loaf of the day.

[They sit. Ernst peers at the soup]

Mama What are you looking for?

Ernst Beef.

Mama Close your eyes. Oh lord we give thanks for this beef flavoured soup- We give thanks for our great nation and pray that the war will be over soon-[Silence] and that Ernst's friends can come back to Frankfurt.

Ernst Amen.

Mama Amen.

Mama I'll take a bowl up to Grandpa-you can start if you want to.

Ernst No-I'll wait.

[Mama exits and we hear her go upstairs. The Great Nevilli watches his younger self staring at the soup. Suddenly Ernst eats the soup-it's gone. Mama returns. She sits and eats a few mouthfuls.]

Mama Do you want some more?

[Ernst shakes his head]

Mama Maybe you should go upstairs then and say goodnight to grandpa.

Ernst Do I have to?

Mama He can't get out of bed Ernst. He waits all day for a little visit from you. Go on.

[Ernst goes and Mama pours most of her soup into his bowl. The Great Neville watches her as she puts her head in her hands. She is exhausted. Ernst comes down stairs. He sees there is more soup in his bowl]

Mama There was more in the pot-go on.

[The air raid warning siren goes off.] [Herr Dethier enters. He is very stressed]

Dethier Everyone down to the cellar-Now. Everyone down to the cellar. Hurry along now Frau Beckman. Everyone down to the cellar.

[They go to the cellar and the Great Nevilli follows them.]

Mama It's alright Ernst. We're safe down here-Isn't that right Herr Dethier?

Dethier Oh yes-safe as houses. I mean-well. Do you want to play cards Ernst? What do you want to play?

Ernst Snip Snap.

Dethier Very well, very well. Snip Snap. The same as the last air raid- and the air raid before that- and the air raid before-in fact it's always Snip Snap isn't it Ernst. Oh yes -we've got quite a routine going on down here. Snip Snap.

Ernst Mother-will you play?

Mama Sure.

Dethier I bring the cards. You bring the coffee. The Americans bring the bombs.

[The bombs fall. Dethier can hardly hold the cards]

Dethier Frau Beckmann -you should send your son out of the city-while there is still time.

Mama Please don't interfere in things that don't concern you Herr Dethier.

Dethier They could concern me if you saw sense.

Ernst What are you talking about?

Mama Nothing-at all-ever.

Dethier You're mother doesn't like me Ernst.

Mama That isn't true Herr Dethier.

Ernst Yes it is.

Mama Ernst!

Ernst You told me you didn't like him.

Mama Oh!

Dethier It doesn't matter. I prefer honesty- and I honestly I say to you if our soldiers are told to defend the city to the death then the Americans will have no choice but to bomb and to bomb and blow up every building in every street. Who will survive it? You? Me? Ernst?

[Mama pulls Ernst away and gets him ready for bed.]

Ernst Is that true Mama? Mama?

Mama Shh. You remember your Tante Sophie?

[Ernst nods]

We went to stay with her at the farm- her and Rudi. Of course Rudi's not there anymore.

Ernst She had a chicken with one leg.

Mama That's right-she did.

Ernst But it could still lay eggs.

Mama Yes-

Ernst But it couldn't run.

Mama Ernst- if the bombing gets worse-I would like you to go and stay with Tante Sophie.

Ernst You'd come too.

Mama How can I go anywhere with your Grandfather in bed-unable to move? Who would feed him?

Ernst Then I don't want to go. I won't go. Not without you.

Mama It isn't safe here-.

Ernst But you said it would be safe. You said you would never send me away like the other children. You promised me.

Mama Things have changed. Herr Dethier is right.

Ernst I won't go-I won't go. I won't go.

Dethier Ernst. How dare you raise your voice to your Mother.

Mama Please-Herr Dethier-

Ernst I won't go. I won't go. I won't---

[The sound of the planes and bombing suddenly increases. They all look up and an explosion. When the smoke clears Ernst is getting ready to leave. His Mother brings a suit case. Mama tries to smile. Ernst cannot smile. She puts on his jacket- as he sulks. She pats the breast pocket because in there she has sown his name and address. He hears the sound of the train and looks at his Mother. She hugs him. He does not hug her. He scowls. The sound of the train gets louder and louder and his mother gets smaller and smaller and is gone. The Great Nivelli watches his younger self and as he fully inhabits the memory of his youthful loneliness he begins to fade from view until only Ernst remains - as the train leaves Frankfurt.]

SCENE THREE

[The Train arrives and Ernst gets down onto the platform. The train leaves again. Ernst stares across at the only woman on the platform. Tante Sophie is a farmer's wife.]

Ernst Tante Sophie?

Sophie You've not grown as much as I'd expected Ernst. Well-come if you're coming. Ernst?

Ernst I want to go home.

Sophie That is not polite.

[The boy lowers his head]

Sophie It's not as if you haven't stayed with me before. Is it?

[He shakes his head]

We can't stand here all day waiting for it to rain. We have a long walk ahead of us.

Ernst Last time we went on a cart-pulled by a horse wearing glasses.

Sophie Blinkers-

Ernst It had steam coming out of its nose.

Sophie I'll have steam coming out of my ears if you don't come along.

Ernst But where's the horse?

Sophie 'In a better place'-that's what they say isn't it. Come-I'll carry your bag-if that's what your wanting.

Ernst No-I can carry it.

Sophie Good. Come along then.

[Ernst arrives at the farm. A table and chair marks the interior with a ladder going up to a raised platform. The exterior is Tante Sophie's garden. He looks around]

Sophie You remember now? The house-the garden. Sit.

[He sits. She gives him a glass of juice.]

Ernst Do you still have that chicken?

Sophie What chicken?

Ernst With one leg.

[Sophie stares at him]

Sophie Are you making fun of me Ernst?

[He shakes his head. On the table are some flowers. He reaches for them]

Sophie They're not real. But they don't fade-- -- So-how is your mother?

[He offers her the cake]

Sophie What's this?

Ernst A cake.

Sophie That city sister has learnt how to bake a cake?

Ernst It's rhubarb cake.

Sophie We have rhubarb in the garden-but don't eat it raw. It will give you diarrhoea.

Ernst There's a note on top.

Sophie Just a note?

[Sophie reads the note]

Sophie She says a bomb fell near the house.

Ernst Right outside. It made a big hole called a crater just by our front door and all our windows blew in and Granddad's face got all nasty cuts on it but they're better now and some bricks fell down on Herr Dethier's leg and broke it and Mama said if we'd been in the kitchen none of us would have got out of there alive.

[Silence]

Sophie She always did like to exaggerate. You can sleep up there.

Ernst Up there?

Sophie I can't have you under my feet every hour of the day and night-can I? Go.

[He climbs up- and she sits at the kitchen table as if exhausted by him. Ernst puts down his bag.]

Bombs-we don't have. What we have is foxes.

Ernst Foxes? [He is drawn to the window and looks out as if to see foxes.]

Sophie Where there are chickens there are foxes. Come in the night-stealing everything that is rightfully ours. Of course when your Uncle Rudi was here he kept them out and no mistake.

Ernst Where is Uncle Rudi?

Sophie I thought your Mother would have told you that. He's in the east-in the army. I expect to hear from him any day. Any day-[She picks up a shirt she's been mending.] until then you're the man of the house -----that's why you've been sent here Ernst to help me keep those foxes out of my garden. You can see the chicken shed quite clearly from your window, quite clearly.

[As he looks a light rises on the chicken shed]

The chickens and the vegetables are all we've got, you and me. It's you and me against the world now -that's what they say isn't it---

[She stares off into the distance-losing the train of her thoughts.]

Ernst Tante Sophie?

Sophie Can you bark?

Ernst What?

Sophie Can you bark?

Ernst You mean-like a dog?

Sophie Of course like a dog. Go on-try-try for Tante Sophie.

[He barks]

Sophie Louder.

[He barks]

Now if you see a fox from the window I don't want you to call out-I want you to bark- like that- If you see a fox-any type of fox coming out of the woods back there-out of the woodwork- that's what they say isn't it- you just bark- because if you don't those thieves will steal everything right from under our noses and leave us to starve. But you won't let that happen will you Ernst. Will you?

Ernst No.

Sophie That's a good boy. So-

[Again she seems lost in her own thoughts]

Sophie Good night Ernst.

Ernst Goodnight Tante Sophie.

[Music]

[Ernst-now armed with this job stares down on the chicken shed and vegetable patch. His aunty sits downstairs and begins to work on the shirt collar with a needle and thread. She pushes the cake to one side. Ernst watches the moon rise. He listens to the sound of the night. It sounds new and wonderful. Before long Sophie falls asleep. Ernst tries to keep watch but eventually he too falls asleep. He does not see a man in a very dirty coat and battered black hat sneak just like a fox into the garden. The man goes into the chicken shed and then emerges with eggs and then sneaks away. Ernst wakes to the sun in his face. When he goes down stairs Sophie is standing with the shirt in her hand staring into space. He is about to say something to her but instead creeps past into the garden-and finds the footprint.]

Ernst Tante Sophie? Tante Sophie?

Sophie Who are you? What are you doing here? Why are you in my house?

Ernst I-I'm Ernst.

Sophie What-Who?

Ernst Ernst.

Sophie Ernst-yes- from Frankfurt. What is it? Why are you bothering me-at this time?

Ernst In the garden.

Sophie Yes?

Ernst In the mud.

Sophie What?

Ernst A- a footstep.

[Sophie nods]

Ernst A footstep-in the mud, Tante Sophie.

Sophie That's our fox alright.

Ernst A fox?

Sophie Why didn't you bark?

Ernst I'll bark next time- I promise. Tante Sophie?

[She stares at him. He goes up to the loft]

[Music.]

[The day turns to night. Ernst goes to the window and watches the moon rise. He looks down at the garden. He listens to the sound of the night. Below him Tante Sophie is talking/crying to herself as she works on the shirt. How strange-maybe she's upset about the fox. Sophie falls asleep. Ernst tries to keep watch over the garden but eventually he too falls asleep. He does not see the man in the very dirty coat and battered black hat sneak into the garden. The man goes into the chicken hut. He comes out with the chicken and sneaks away. Ernst wakes with the sun in his face. When he goes down stairs Sophie is sitting with the shirt in her hand staring into space. He is about to say something to her but instead goes into the garden. He looks for footsteps-finds them and goes into the chicken hut and then runs straight back into the house to tell Tante Sophie but she looks up at him and smiles and he says nothing. Ernst climbs the ladder .As night falls he listens to Sophie cry a little but he's used to it now and when he catches the fox she'll stop crying he's certain of it. But Ernst falls asleep to the sound of the night and does not see the fox-man come. The fox-man goes into the chicken shed but comes out empty handed. There are no chickens left. He goes to the vegetable patch to steal some vegetables and as he's doing this Tante Sophie has woken up. She is putting on her hat and coat. She puts the shirt in her bag and comes through the garden in the moonlight. The fox-man freezes- he is holding some Rhubarb. She stares at him. He stares at her. She looks up at Ernst's window and then leaves. The Fox-man looks up at the window too and then leaves. Morning comes. Ernst wakes with a start- he goes downstairs.]

Ernst Tante Sophie. Tante Sophie.

[He looks for her. He goes into the garden. She isn't there.]

Ernst Tante Sophie?

[Where could she be? The weather is changing – he gets a stick and sits outside. He sits for a long time . Ernst falls over into the mud. Night time. It starts to rain.]

SCENE FOUR

[The man Ernst thinks of as 'The Fox' comes out of the woods into the garden. This time he has a slight limp. He sees Ernst asleep in the mud. He creeps around the boy and steals some more rhubarb. He stares at the boy- and makes to leave. He stops- comes back- then he walks away again-then he shrugs enormously and moans- and then returns. He prods Ernst. He prods again. Ernst wakes up.]

Ernst You.

Mr H Me?

Ernst Tante Sophie-Tante- [He barks]

[Silence]

Stay away. [He barks]

[Silence]

Mr H Why were you sleeping in the mud?

Ernst To catch you- and now I've caught you- and you're under arrest.

Mr H Who me?

Ernst Yes you. Stop staring. I forbid you to stare at me-thief-fox-

Mr H Fox?

Ernst You fox.

Mr H Me?

Ernst Yes you and My Tante Sophie will be back soon-with a policeman-

Mr H A policeman?

Ernst Two policeman-and then you'll be in trouble.

Mr H Yes-yes-foxes are always in trouble.

Ernst Shut up-thief. Put up your hands.

Mr H Who me?

Ernst Yes you. Up, up, up.

Mr H What for?

Ernst I told you-you're under arrest.

Mr H Who me?

Ernst Yes you. Stop saying that. Put them up. Put them up-----Please.

Mr H Oh-please-well in that case-so politely I say-No.

Ernst ----No?

Mr H No. I have spent the last five years with my hands in the air-I'm really very tired of it.

Ernst -----Tante Sophie?-----Tante Sophie

Mr H Tante Sophie? The woman. Ah. The last time I saw your Tante Sophie was four nights ago. Maybe five.

Ernst Five?

Mr H She was talking to a shirt.

Ernst What do you mean?

Mr H I saw her leave-In the middle of the night-this Sophie. She saw me. At least I think she did-she stood and stared right through me-like I wasn't there. Maybe I wasn't. Any food left in the house? Hey you-I asked if there was any food in the house?

Ernst No-because you've been stealing it all -from under our noses.

Mr H Fox has to eat too.

Ernst We shoot foxes.

Mr H This I know. [He indicates his limp]

Ernst I hate you.

Mr H I hate you too.

Ernst What?

Mr H Ernst.

Ernst Who are you?

Mr H Who am I?

Ernst How do you know my name?

Mr H That one I can answer-I heard the woman calling you Ernst. So here's the truth little Ernst-with your up, up, up! I don't think your Tante Sophie is coming back.

Ernst You're lying.

Mr H Who me?

Ernst She will come back. She just went into town. She wouldn't leave me. She will come back. I know she will. She must come back-she must.

[Ernst breaks down in tears. He curls up in the mud and weeps]

Mr H That's enough now. Hey-I said that's enough! So you haven't eaten for two or three days-is that right?

[Ernst nods]

Why didn't you pull up the rhubarb-or the last beetroot? Look-you're crying all over it.

Ernst She told me to guard it-not eat it.

Mr H You are an obedient boy-hey? Very obedient but there's only so long a boy can go without eating before he starts seeing things--like- like an apple perhaps-with a ruby red skin floating just before him.

[Ernst sees the apple which seems to come from nowhere. He grabs it and eats.]

Mr H Not so fast. Hey-not so fast! You know Ernst-some people say the war is over.

Ernst Over? How can it be over?

Mr H [Shrugs] Maybe-a war is like having your hands in the air all the time-eventually you just get tired of it. Goodbye Ernst.

Ernst Where are you going?

Mr H I'm going back to my foxhole. And you Ernst should go home-there's nothing here for you.

Ernst Wait-please wait.

Mr H Go back to the place you lived before you came here.

Ernst Wait. Wait!-I'm sorry about what I said---

[Mr H stares at him]

Mr H So what? Goodbye Ernst.

Ernst Stop! You will please stop-

[Mr H stops]

Ernst I know where there is plenty of food. Lots to eat.

Mr H Oh? Let's hear it.

Ernst In the city my mother is waiting for me with enough food to –'to feed an army'.

Mr H A whole army? You must have a big house.

Ernst Yes, it's very big. It's enormous.

Mr H I can imagine. What city?

Ernst Frankfurt.

Mr H Frankfurt Am Main?

Ernst And you should take me there.

Mr H To Frankfurt?

Ernst Because you stole from us.

Mr H I see-I see-but-I don't care about that. I don't care about you Ernst-or about your big house in Frankfurt-alright?

Ernst I hate you.

Mr H I hate you too.

Ernst I just want to go home.

Mr H Everyone wants to go home. The roads are full of such people.

Ernst Don't you want to go home?

Mr H ----- Frankfurt is two hundred Kilometres-at least. There are no trains, no buses-no transport at all-except for soldiers-it's impossible.

Ernst We could walk.

Mr H To Frankfurt?

Ernst I won't tell my mother that you stole from us- I promise.

Mr H Oh-you are very well brought up-but I don't care what you tell your mother. [He turns]

Ernst You just can't leave me here—you can't-you just can't!

Mr H And you-don't understand little Ernst-it would take many weeks to walk-months maybe. Look at you-you don't look as if you've walked further than one hundred metres in your whole life.

Ernst I hate you.

Mr H You said that twice already. I accept it.

Ernst And I never said it before to anyone but YOU-in my whole life.

Mr H Your whole life? ----- Your whole life....

[He walks up and down. Ernst watches him]

You're mother has enough food you say to feed an army?

[Ernst nods]

You know that I know that's a big lie?

[Ernst nods.]

And you know that I don't owe you 'boy in the mud' anything-not one thing.

[Ernst nods]

[Mr H stands for what seems to Ernst an eternity. He walks up and down again-he stares at Ernst and shakes his head-then shrugs to himself more largely than before.]

Go into the house. Find a bag-and put everything into it that you'll need. Blankets- cups, knives fork plates-three of everything.

Ernst Three?

Mr H What's in there?

Ernst Old things-

[Mr H disappears momentarily and returns with a bike]

Ernst That's uncle Rudi's bike.

Mr H Praise be to Uncle Rudi- and all his ancestors. Go-go into the house and pack what you need- before I change I mind.

[Ernst goes into the house. Music. Time passes- during which Ernst packs. Mr H has taken the bike off and there is a great deal of banging and sawing. Ernst draws a picture for Tante Sophie. The banging stops Mr H comes on with a cart he has made. It has two long handles so it can be harnessed to the person pulling by the shoulders. Mr H goes into the house- he takes off his hat and wipes his shoes. He looks at Ernst's drawing and note.]

Mr H For Tante Sophie?

Ernst Is it spelt right?

[Mr H Nods. He then takes a few more things including the fake flowers and some real stalks of rhubarb. They go outside. Ernst stares at the cart.]

Mr H Not bad hey?

Ernst Where's Uncle Rudi's bike?

Mr H I have no idea. You can sit up there. Like a little king you are hey Ernst. A king in his chariot.

Ernst Is this a chariot?

Mr H Without a doubt.

Ernst What shall I call you?

[Mr H shrugs]

Ernst What's your name?

Mr H My name. He wants me to take him to Frankfurt- and he wants my name. Well I will take you to Frankfurt-If I can. Why? I have no idea-- but my name- that you cannot have.

Ernst Why not? [Mr H shrugs] What shall I call you then?

Mr H Pick a letter- any letter.

Ernst H.

Mr H Herr H—no-Mr H.

Ernst Mr H?

Mr H I've been called worse. Alright- say goodbye to the house.