

INSERT INTERTITLE: "EIN MAN UND SEIN HUND, GEIGENEINANDER"

INT. DAS HAUS - EVENING

FADE IN ON:

Living area of rustic Teutonic cabin -- broad knotted floorboards, heavy exposed crossbeams, spare utilitarian decor. A stiff broom rests beside the door, an empty cornucopia on the lip of the jamb.

CUT TO:

A single window peers out on a forbidding frozen waste: "der weissen Winterwald."

SLOW PAN TO:

VATTI -- 56, robust, unkempt, slightly fat -- Seated in a large shabbily upholstered chair, stretching his naked toes toward a great black pot-bellied stove.

CLOSE ON:

His socks: sizzling in a heap on top of the stove.

CUT TO:

His hatchet: covered in grease, wood shavings and wound slur, leaning in front of a small pile of logs stacked neatly in an iron cradle beside the stove.

CUT TO:

His boots: one upright, laces undone, the other tipped over, a thick, black substance oozing forth. A scrappy rat-like DOG enters the frame, rushes to the boot and laps at the oozing goo enthusiastically.

CUT TO:

Vatti guzzling beer and slurping gruel simultaneously out of two separate earthenware jugs. A rivulet of residual beer runs down one side of Vatti's cheek, gruel down the other. They form a Y-shaped stain across Vatti's chest, join together at his sternum and journey down merrily together thereafter.

CUT TO:

Vatti's great, distended stomach, pitching and undulating wildly underneath his dark, thickly woven shirt.

(CONTINUED)

Vatti glowers at it, furrowing his thick forehead and drawing his fierce dark eyebrows together. He looks angry, bewildered. He puts his meal down, wipes his mouth.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "Halt!"

Vatti punches his stomach, hard. It stops for a moment, then begins undulating again. He hits it again, harder. Peace. He sits back, satisfied.

CLOSE ON:

Vatti's face. He is grinning, or grimacing.

MEDIUM SHOT:

Vatti closes his eyes and folds his hands over his ample stomach, shifting his weight in the chair until he is almost horizontal but with his neck upright and stiff, his chin tucked into his chest, feet propped on a small end table.

The little dark dog tinkles in and leaps onto Vatti's stomach, trying to lick his face. It gets its tongue into Vatti's nostril a few times before Vatti pushes it gently but firmly away. The dog turns a few circles and curls up like a cat at the crest of Vatti's stomach.

Hold for beat.

Vatti's stomach begins vibrating violently, shaking the whole of the tiny cabin.

The excited dog attacks savagely, sinking its needle incisors through Vatti's thick shirt and into his skin.

Vatti roars out of his chair, standing up and swatting (for some reason) at his face and chest. He waves his arms wildly, bellows and lumbers around the living room in a fit, the little dog still clinging to his stomach by its teeth though it is whipped wildly to and fro in Vatti's convulsions.

Off balance, Vatti grasps at the wood stove for support, howls and stumbles back, tripping on the edge of the brick hearth and snagging his pants on the iron log cradle, which tear off all-of-a-piece as he staggers on, trying to regain his balance.

The dog hangs on intrepidly as the stomach continues its violent revolt.

Noticing the dog, Vatti tries to swat it off with his hands -- still smoking from the scorching -- but to no avail.

CONTINUED:

3.

He spies the broom leaning against the door, grabs it and begins trying to sweep the dog off his stomach with the bristles.

Naked from the waist down, Vatti's penis is now visible. It looks tiny couched between his stout, powerful legs and tremendous growth of pubic hair -- like a baby bird peeking out from a tangled nest high in the boughs of a mighty beech tree. Its head whips to and fro rhythmically, keeping time with Vatti's frantic sweeping and frustrated gyrations.

Still, the dog hangs on.

Bleeding from the stomach, covered in sweat, and heaving from the strain of the contest, Vatti pauses for a moment to catch his breath. Leaning against the wall, he absentmindedly puts his hand through the fragile pane of the single window.

Powerful gusts of icy wind swirl into the cabin; the door blows open, shuts violently, opens again. Vatti's torso and face are coated in snow, his ass still bare. Snow drifts in front of the door and window; huge puddles cover the floor. Vatti's penis has retracted to the point that it is now totally invisible.

Vatti has dropped the broom. His hands are trembling. One is covered in blood and bits of broken glass.

Dazed, he feels around for some familiar point of reference, knocks against the doorframe. The cornucopia falls over his head, blocking his vision.

As he staggers and fumbles, he steps into one of his boots, nearly tripping over the other.

Tenaciously, the dog hangs on.

CLOSE ON:

The hatchet, still leaning next to the stacked logs.

CUT TO:

A grotesque close up of Vatti's wild, bulging eyes as he lifts the cornucopia over his heavy, looming forehead; thick eyebrows knit together and crooked in apoplexy.

CLOSE ON:

Vatti's mouth, his lower jaw jutting forward; teeth bared defiantly.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "E' wird Hackfleisch!"

(CONTINUED)

Vatti lunges forward across the living room towards the hatchet. He slips in the vast puddle spreading across his cabin floor and lands on his head. When he looks up, his face is a mask of blood and filthy water; his nose broken. He spits out several teeth, sniffs and rises gingerly to his feet, but trips over the tangled laces of the boot he is wearing and goes down hard.

CLOSE ON:

His face is a dark pulp of blood and bruises. He leers at the camera and shouts something.

INSERT INTERTITLE: *Gobbledeguk.*

Vatti feels in his mouth with a braut-like finger, his panic plain even through the grisly mask his face has become. All his teeth are gone!

He slams his fist down upon the floor and hangs his head.

Pause for half beat.

When he looks up, his lank greasy hair has fallen over one eye. He glares at the camera.

He looks mad!

He gets slowly to his feet.

Wiping his face off with his sleeve, he peers down at his stomach.

CUT TO:

VATTI'S POV:

Dog staring determinedly up into Vatti's face, growling lightly, still clinging to his master's stomach.

Vatti's stomach burbles again.

The dog growls more fiercely, shakes his head and tightens his grip on the stomach.

Vatti throws back his head and lifts his arms to heaven

INSERT INTERTITLE: *BLUT-GERRINTE SCHRIE*

CUT TO:

Vatti brandishing the hatchet, his barbarous countenance shining with mad glee through a thick paste of blood and mud.

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He raises it above his head, pauses for a half beat.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON:

Dog's face; its ears flatten back.

Vatti brings the hatchet down hard with all the force and skill of a seasoned Jaeger, the dog loosening his fangs and scurrying away just microseconds before the fearsome blade splits Vatti's stomach as effortlessly as it would Knoedel.

CLOSE ON:

Vatti's face; he is perplexed.

CLOSE ON:

The bloody rictus widens, hatchet falling out of the wound and onto the floor.

The dog barks at the clatter.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "WAUWAW!"

Vatti's eyes widen in disbelief as a beautiful MAEDCHEN emerges from the viscera.

She is long-legged and ample bosomed (a fact her honest garb possesses no guile to conceal) has soft brown hair in two thick braids tied with ribbons and is neatly (although plainly) clothed in a simple linen dress and apron.

The dog barks at her.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "WAUWAW!"

The Maedchen cocks her head at the dog and smiles. She puts a finger to her lips and pirouettes once, swinging her dress playfully.

The dog wags its tail.

She extends her hand to Vatti, still seated on the floor.

FROM VATTI'S POV:

He looks at her hand. He looks at her. He looks down at himself. He looks up at her again.

She smiles.

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CONTINUED:

6.

He smiles.

He reaches for her hand.

She pulls her hand away.

CLOSE ON:

Vatti's bulging eyes, the veins rippling like Wurst-casing.

She laughs, lightly. A tiny tinkling bell is heard.

CUT TO:

The two earthenware jugs sitting side by side on a small end table next to Vatti's chair.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "DAS ENDE."

SLOW FADE TO BLACK.

Silence. Darkness.

CUE FANFARE.

Abrupt shift to grey tone background.

Scratches appear in film.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "FAHRT IHM BEIM AUTO."

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

CLOSE ON:

A lean limbed HARE stands upright on a broad swath of lush grass, twitching his nose.

CUT TO:

LOW ANGLE ESTABLISHING SHOT:

A thin gravel road wends through a bucolic European countryside.

An enormous, cream colored, two door luxury convertible -- A MAYBACH 'ZEPPELIN' -- suddenly glides, wraith-like, into frame, its throbbing black undercarriage blacking the frame.

MEDIUM TRACKING SHOT OF AUTOMOBILE:

(CONTINUED)

JUENGER KERL -- 22, thin, wearing a shadbelly coat and a stiff white shirt with a high-collar, short sandy hair parted severely down the middle -- smiles smugly and gripping the wheel tightly at 5 and 7 with immaculate white-gloved hands, he turns his attention to the camera.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "Warscheinlich sagen Sie: 'Warum Fahren Sie sich Selbst *Herr Auto-Fahrer*? Konnte Sie da nicht Jemand bezahlen?'"

Translation: "You're probably saying: "Why is it that you're diving yourself, sir? Could you not have simply paid someone to do it for you?"

CLOSE ON:

Kerl's angular, aristocratic face. His upper lip trembles almost imperceptibly -- a tiny gleam in his laconic grey eyes betray the minutest hint of a mannerly but rapturous amusement. He gazes directly into the camera.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "Klar. Bestimmt *konnte* Ich. Aber....*Mag* Ich fahren."

Translation: "Yes. Of course I *could*. But... I *like* driving."

CUT TO:

A black and white wingtip shoe smoothly pedaling the accelerator until it is flush with the floor; fully depressed.

CUT TO:

Kerl in profile staring impassively at the road, gloved hands still clasping low on the wheel, barely shifting even as the landscape swirls by wildly in the background, faster every second.

A shudder shakes the edges of the frame, the car lifting slightly as if driving over a small hump. Kerl pays it no mind. The car is getting faster.

CUT TO:

An elderly FISCHERMAN plods wearily up the center of a winding, country track, his rod slung across his thin, sloping shoulders. He is sucking a pipe; puffy clots of white smoke escape from the bowl like blasts from a steam whistle. Because his face is so wrinkled, it is difficult to differentiate his mouth from the many deep creases that surround it. Across one shoulder is slung a rod from whose line his last catch dangles; a half dozen fat brook-trout.

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CUT TO:

The Maybach, purring by smoothly, seeming almost to float above the lane. Suddenly, a violent impact shakes the frame and a large shadow passes momentarily over the length of the car. Kerl pays it no heed. The Maybach slides along like butter in a hot pan.

The trout land neatly the passenger seat. They have been seared to perfection, plated elegantly and served over a bed of asparagus.

Kerl raises a single eyebrow and keeps driving.

CUT TO:

A Sunday school picnic, taking place in a grazing plot. CHILDREN, MATRONS and SHEEP mingling amongst each other in harmony. They read, play wholesome games, enjoy the many good things to eat: Kartoffelsalat, Kirschtorte, doch auch ein bisschen Bier! Was schmeckts dir am besten?

CUT TO:

The Maybach handling the sharp turn beautifully, rolling (if anything more smoothly through the grassy plot as magnificently as if it were the Potsdam Platz.

Kerl doesn't blink as human and animal bodies alike roll across his hood. They are as raindrops to the Maybach.

A soft-boiled egg hits his windshield. The bright mucous smear is whipped into mayonnaise by the blades of Kerl's wipers.

He sighs and pulls a lever to dispense the washer-fluid.

CUT TO:

The Maybach, once again on the country lane, barreling along at its top speed of one hundred and four miles per hour.

Kerl leaves one hand on the wheel, leans forward, opens the glove compartment and peers inside. It is not clear whether he is pleased with what he sees. He straightens up and continues driving without evincing any expression whatsoever.

Gingerly, he takes his second hand off the wheel, simultaneously sliding forward in his seat slightly so that he is better able to steer by simply bracing his knees.

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Without taking his foot off the accelerator, Kerl begins working to remove one of his white gloves. The tight glove turns out to be a worthy opponent and Kerl stiffens in his seat, grimacing with the effort of trying to peel off the glove while still focusing on the road and steering with his knees.

Finally he jerks the glove off, managing to swerve only slightly into a passing family of itinerant musicians. A hurdy-gurdy misses Kerl's head by centimeters.

Kerl dabs at his forehead with the inverted glove and puffs his breath out in relief. Relaxing slightly, Kerl leans forward towards the glove box again, puts his gloveless hand in and pulls out a small chocolate truffle.

It is in the shape of a fearsome EAGLE; realistic, with delicate marzipan embellishments.

Kerl admires it briefly without much zest and takes a bite. He chews.

CLOSE ON:

Kerl's mouth. The corner twitches. It curls up.

Kerl takes another bite of the chocolate.

He closes his eyes.

The screen goes black.

The frame vibrates.

The picture snaps on again.

CUT TO:

Kerl's body straight as an arrow, sticking out of a crook in a great beech trunk. Blood is oozing down the tree, is spattered on the broad leaves.

The Maybach is immaculate, except for a small amount of egg yolk on the corner of the windshield and a few thick tufts of cream-colored fur stuck under the wheel well.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "Schildkroete, ohne Schild, ist keine Kroete, einfach Toed!"

Translation: "A tortoise without his shell is not a toad, but simply dead."

FADE TO BLACK.

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10.

CUE HOT JAZZ.

CUT TO:

Expressionistic drawing of an enormous early 20th century city-center; jagged black skyscrapers stretching into infinity. A tiny anthropomorphic SPOON in a homburg hat and business suit stands alone in the heart of the grove of magisterial buildings, illuminated by the headlights of an approaching TAXI, its grille like a mouth full of angry teeth. The spoon clutches a briefcase to his chest like a life preserver, gazing in terror at his surroundings. High above, THE MOON glares down upon the scene disapprovingly. It has a bushy white walrus mustache and a monocle in one eye, its craters like tiny liver spots.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "DIE SACHE EIN ANDERE MANNS"

INT. KUECHE - EVENING

FADE IN ON:

HOLGER -- Early 30s; greasy receding hair (prematurely grey), stained shirt sleeves and suspenders, high black trousers -- standing in profile over a tiny gas burner.

CUT TO:

SCHWEINEHACKSEN, submerged in a small pot of greasy water, little eyelets of fat visible on the surface between leaves of cabbage. Tiny bubbles are beginning to rise. Foam discolored with grease collects around the rim.

POV SHOT FROM INSIDE THE POT:

Holger peers down towards the camera through a thin curl of steam, looks doubtful, purses his lips. He looks away, above and behind the pot, extends his hands past the frame. He seems to be rummaging in a cabinet.

Pause for a half beat.

He cranes his neck and frowns. It appears he has not found what he is looking for. He reaches out tentatively and removes something from the cabinet.

CUT TO:

Holger's rough hands holding a cylindrical steel can with an illustration of a little old woman in a headscarf, sitting in a rocking chair with her eyes closed, head bowed to a large amorphous piece of knitting extending

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past her lap and into a heaped pile covering the entire floor around her and past the limits of the illustration's oval frame.

A single word is printed below the picture, but Holger cannot read it. It seems to be Hungarian. There is an exclamation point on the end.

He turns the can over and over but there is no indication of how to open it.

MEDIUM SHOT:

Holger rummaging in various drawers, getting increasingly frustrated. He can't seem to find what he's looking for.

Finally he pauses after angrily whipping open one drawer. He reaches in and pulls out a hammer and chisel.

He places the can on the counter, pauses and thinks for a moment, then turns it on its side and pushes it back until its butt is flush with the wall.

He takes the chisel in one hand, positioning it so that its point will enter just between the wall of the cylinder and the lip of the lid; a clean perforation.

Applying light pressure to the chisel with one hand, Holger takes the hammer in the other and gives the chisel's pommel a light but firm tap with the hammer.

The sound of champagne being uncorked.

Instantly, thick white smoke billows out of the opening in the can, rising rapidly towards the ceiling.

Stunned, Holger watches it for a few seconds, then takes the can and walks to the pot of Schweinehachsen and cabbage.

He tries turning the can upside down over the pot but nothing comes out except for more white smoke, rising up to join the clouds accumulating on the ceiling.

Holger is amused by the fact that he is unable to pour the smoke downward. He smiles, turning the can so that the end with the hole is upside down. The smoke continues to rise upwards, billowing around the can so that it looks as if Holger is conjuring a pillar of smoke by some alchemical mischief.

Soon the kitchen is so thick with the smoke that Holger can barely see a foot in front of him.

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He tiptoes to and fro, waving his hand in front of him trying to find the stove, still holding the can in his hand.

The Sound of an Accordion.

Holger whips his head around in confusion. The smoke is still thick, but is beginning to clear in his immediate vicinity.

EXT. ENGLISCHEN GARTEN - CONTINUOUS

Holger walks directly into a tall juniper bush. He takes a timid step back and almost treads on a large TORTOISE. It does not retract its head, but rather lunges its neck trying to bite Holger's legs.

Holger leaps back. The tortoise forgets him and trundles on its way.

Holger decides to go the opposite direction. The smoke is still thick and he has no idea what has become of the apartment.

Walking on, Holger comes upon a pair of shapely feminine legs, black in tights underneath a smart tweed coat terminating in a pair of too-big wellington boots. The top half of the FRAULEIN'S body is invisible because of a particularly thick patch of white smoke, which she herself seems to be generating.

Curiously, Holger draws as close as he can, trying to get a glimpse of her without frightening or surprising her.

He puts the can down and reaches forward with both hands, trying to part the smoke around the Fraulein like curtains.

A cigarette dangles between two plump, glistening lips. She looks up at Holger with large dark eyes haloed with long black lashes. Her dark wavy hair, swept away from her face, falls to her shoulders. Her warm, round face looks clean -- cheeks slightly flushed -- her hair ever so slightly dirty; pieces of ash clinging here and there like snowflakes.

She smiles at Holger, takes the cigarette out of her mouth, turns her head and exhales slowly. She turns back to him, raises a gloved hand, and seems about to touch him, stopping just before his chest and flattening her hand as if there was a window between them.

She stands on her tiptoes and leans forward.

Holger trembles.

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13.

Their lips are separated by a fraction of space. They do not touch, she closes her eyes, kisses the air.

The kiss hangs there like a ghost, a moist little two dimensional butterfly on a non-existent windowpane.

Holger shudders.

The sound of a door closing.

INT. KUECHE - CONTINUOUS

Holger turns and looks behind him.

A heavy-set MAN in a dapper Italian suit and fedora hat stands in the doorway of the apartment, white smoke billowing around him.

His eyes are cold and business-like, surrounded by dark circles like a *Waschbaer*. He is holding a shiny black gun with an absurdly long barrel. It looks like it could stop a locomotive.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "Etwas auf Ungarischen; weder sie, noch Ich kann das verstehen."

Translation: "Something in Hungarian; neither you nor I can understand what he means."

Holger puts his hands up. He is still holding the Hungarian can.

The man cocks the gun.

Holger's eyes grow wide.

The sound of an Accordion.

CUT TO:

An anatomical drawing of the human heart and lungs.

An academic pointer fades in, superimposed in front of the drawing.

CUE TWELVE TONE MUSIC.

The pointer dips gracefully down the frame so that its point directly indicates the tender left lobes.

CLOSE ON:

(CONTINUED)

The left lobes, streaked delicately by branching bronchial tubes; detailed alveoli hanging like strange subterranean fruit from the intricate, root-like structures.

EXTREME CLOSE ON:

The alveoli, which no longer resemble fruit but instead seem to be pod-like dwellings of some kind, massed in great clusters and suspended from thick, reinforced cables. These tack and sway gently to and fro in a kind of turgid but insistent visual counterpoint to the pointillist music still wafting through the scene. Hundreds of tiny lights gleam cheerfully in the pods' windows.

INSERT INTERTITLE:"EINER INLAENDISCHEN STREIT"

INT. ALVEOLI - NIGHT

WIPE TO:

A gleaming, modern kitchen filled with dozens of strange and esoteric appliances. Every surface is immaculate, mirror frosted, sparkling.

WIPE TO:

A gleaming, modern living room filled with dozens of strange and esoteric appliances. Every surface is immaculate, mirror frosted, sparkling.

WIPE TO:

A gleaming, modern bathroom filled with dozens of strange and esoteric appliances. Every surface is immaculate, mirror frosted, sparkling.

WIPE TO:

A disheveled, modern bedroom filled with the debris of ruined appliances. Every surface is partially destroyed or covered in a variety of filth. Broken glass litters the floor; a small pile of crumpled laundry smolders in the corner.

POV SHOT FROM ATOP DRESSING TABLE:

MAX -- 20s, handsome, clean-jawed and wild-eyed with short, slick, dark hair -- tiptoes into frame from the left, directly in front of the dressing table and visible from the knee up.

He is crouched slightly, shoulders hunched. In his right hand is a gleaming, modern carving knife.

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Max looks this way and that, then directly into the camera.

His demeanor, which had been one of extreme paranoia, relaxes noticeably as he gazes toward us.

He sighs, puts the carving knife down on the dressing table and runs his hands through his hair.

Clasping them behind his head, he takes a long, deep breath and lets it out slowly, still gazing into the camera.

Unclasping his hands, he stretches out his arms to either side of him, nearly spanning the frame.

He takes a deep breath, holding it and the stretch for three full beats, never blinking or taking his eyes off the camera.

He lets the breath out suddenly, his arms dropping heavily to his sides.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "Sei ruhig, oder?"

Translation: *The translation is illegible.*

Max unbuttons the collar of his starched shirt, smiling.

He tousles his hair so that it is slightly messy, no longer slick.

Still gazing at the camera, he places one hand on the dressing table and leans in heavily.

He winks.

The sound of a small object plopping into water.

He raps his knuckles on the top of the dressing table twice.

The sound of a drunken pit band, tuning up.

Max waits, expectantly. His smile fades.

He squints and sniffs the air.

Behind him, the pile of laundry has begun to blaze more fiercely.

The paranoid expression returns to Max's face. He is stiff with tension.

He quickly grabs for the carving knife and turns around slowly so that his back faces the camera.

INT. MAX'S HEAD - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON:

The back of Max's head, which seems to have been carved out. Inside, instead of brain matter, blood vessels, etc. is a complicated system of cranks, gears, pistons, pulleys and levers.

TEKNIKER -- A small, dumpy looking middle-aged man in an engineer's cap and shop-goggles -- scurries to and fro inside; an oiling can clutched in one tiny hand, a wrench in the other.

All his movements are accelerated, as if the film has been sped up.

The little man has tiny, elfin ears sewn onto his cap and is wearing a false rodent nose (complete with whiskers) secured around his head with twine.

His clothes and face are smudged with oil and appear to be burned in places. He looks haggard and unamused.

With a hunted expression, he reaches inside his breast pocket, produces a flask and slurps from it greedily.

Three animated MICE chase one another's tails around his head.

Tekniker swings his wrench at them and ruptures a nearby fluid tank, which evacuates its considerable contents all over him.

The three animated mice float at a safe distance, point at Tekniker and snicker silently.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "Beim Kinder gibt es doch immer Sommerzeit."

Translation: The translation has been scratched out, apparently with great passion.

The sound of several people muttering in frustration.

CUT TO:

Max, his back to the camera, tiptoes slowly towards the flaming pile of laundry in the background without seeming to notice it.

(CONTINUED)

MAGDA -- 20s, slight, plain, doe-eyed, soft brown hair -- shuffles into the foreground of the frame from the right, directly in front of the dressing table and visible from the waist up.

She is holding a rolling pin in her left hand, looks slightly tranquilized and moves haltingly, in profile, towards the center of the frame.

Once arrived, she begins to pivot slowly. As her face turns gradually towards the camera, we begin to notice something odd about her face.

Nein!

Das kann nicht sein...

The screen goes black.

A shot sounds.

A large, cream-colored SPOT appears on the screen.

The screen flickers.

The picture returns.

The spot in the screen, now black, has lined up directly over Magda's left eye.

Ja. Das Geht.

She is staring directly into the camera, smiling.

Viel Besser.

She has placed her rolling pin down on the dressing table and has clasped her hands behind her back. She sways slightly, girlishly, and bats her visible eyelashes.

Hoots and catcalls.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "Deiner Frau sieht immer schoen aus."

Pause for beat.

No translations appears.

Loud boos.

Magda produces a brush and begins to run it through her hair.

In the background, Max turns around to face the camera again and freezes, noticing Magda.

The laundry fire is blazing now, seems about to spread to the thick drapes.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "Etwas Boese .. "

Cursing and angry shouting. The sound of bottles breaking.

Magda freezes. She puts the brush down and fumbles for the rolling pin as Max tiptoes closer, brandishing the knife.

Max stands at Magda's shoulder, breathing heavily. Both stare at the camera, looking paranoid but still smiling.

They begin to turn their heads slowly towards one another.

As Magda turns her head to the side, new portions of her face become blocked by the hole in the screen. At rest, in profile, it has entirely obscured her mouth.

Tense, dissonant violins.

Max and Magda regard each other for a beat.

Both take a deep breath and let it out in what appears to be a loud scream.

Frantic hot jazz.

Laughter, applause, whistling and toasts.

CUT TO:

AN ANIMATED LIGHTNING BOLT BIFURCATES THE FRAME.

On one side of the frame, Max's hand reaches for the mouthpiece of a sleek, modern telephone.

On the other side, Magda's hand grabs hold of another.

Both bring the apparatus to their mouths.

The hole in the screen seems to observe the scene passively.

No longer obscuring Magda's left eye, it is revealed that there is, in fact, no eye at all, but a tiny white mouse poking its whiskery face out of the socket.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "Ja, Schaedlingsbekaempfer?"

Translation: "Wenn alle tag Strudeltag waer, dann wir sind lustige leut' juche!"

Roars of indignation.

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CONTINUED:

19.

Tomatoes and empty bottles assault the frame. Max and Magda's faces are dark, stained, dripping.

They smile their deranged smiles.

The band plays on.

Booing.

CUT TO:

EXT. URBAN AREA - CONTINUOUS

WIDE-SHOT OF TWO STOREFRONTS.

The frame is still divided diagonally by the lightning bolt.

Both stores sport large, well-lit marquees.

One features an illustration of a crowd of tiny anthropomorphic INSECTS fleeing from a sinister-looking cloud of thick, cream-colored smoke billowing from the mouth of a smiling, anthropomorphic HOSE.

The other features an illustration of a white MOUSE wearing dark glasses, seated at the table of an elegant cafe. It is wearing a bib and is clutching a knife and a fork in its paws. A CHEF is approaching the mouse's table with a lidded tray. The lid is emblazoned with a jolly roger. The chef is smirking and winking. The mouse is licking its lips.

An EXTERMINATOR emerges from each of the two storefronts simultaneously. Both are sporting identical jump suits and caps, except that one is white and one is black.

Each mounts an identical electric motor scooter, revs up and speeds off, out of the frame.

CUT TO:

INT. ALVEOLI - CONTINUOUS

Max and Magda circle each other, hackles raised, clutching their instruments.

The frame is still bifurcated by the lightning bolt, stained by the beer and tomatoes, the screen torn. The scene begins to resemble the view through a kaleidoscope.

CUT TO:

INT. MAX'S HEAD - CONTINUOUS

Tekniker appears totally drunk.

He is leaning on a large gear, which struggles to turn as a result.

He holds his flask in his hand and hiccups.

Ephemeral mice dart and gambol throughout the machinery of Max's head.

Tekniker attempts to shoo them half-heartedly, lifting his hand and swatting but not even bothering to stand up.

The picture begins to swim.

Furious shouts and smashing glass. Several shots go off.

The screen is pocked with holes.

Wie schade!

CUT TO:

INT. ALVEOLI - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON:

Magda's left eye. The white mouse is hanging halfway out, boldly waving a flag emblazoned with a Jolly Roger. It snickers and postures.

The sounds of a sea shanty, the sloshing of the sea, poorly foley'd.

The sounds of sarcastic appreciation.

WIDE-SHOT:

Max and Magda appear ready to pounce on one another. They are each slavering, brandishing their weapons.

The sound of a knock.

Silence.

The picture is still except for the blazing of the laundry fire, which has spread past the drapes and seems to have caught the screen itself on fire.

The frame curls and blackens at the edges.

Feuer! Hilfe, hilfe!

(CONTINUED)

Max, stumps to the door of the bedroom and opens it tentatively.

In traipse the exterminators, looking friendly but grave.

They bow slightly towards Max and Magda, who incline their heads in return.

One exterminator takes out a note pad and the other pantomimes an entreaty to the couple to disclose the source of their problems.

Max and Magda look at one another, put their hands on their hips, roll their eyes (where applicable) and chuckle silently.

A trombone blasts out sloppily.

Drunken guffaws and scattered applause.

The white-suited exterminator indicates the fire now raging throughout the room and at the corners of the screen.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "Was konnten wir beim diesen Fuere tun? Sind wir nicht, nur Schaedlingsbekaempfer?"

Translation: The card is backwards, upside down and illegible through the stains and holes on the screen.

Wild stamping, booing. The frame shakes.

Max, Magda and the Exterminators look deep in thought, puzzled.

Suddenly, Magda's face lights up and she raises a finger.

CLOSE ON:

Magda's smiling face, the mouse starting to emerge totally from her eye, sniffing at her open mouth.

The band plays the equivalent of a musical "ta-da!"

INSERT INTERTITLE: "And now, for some audience participation."

Wild applause.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "When you hear the band begin to play *Zum Geburtstag*, help the players extinguish the flames by blowing gently at the screen."

Drum roll.

CONTINUED:

22.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "Ready?"

Whoops and cheers.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "Eins."

CUT TO:

INT. MAX'S HEAD - CONTINUOUS

Tekniker, passed out in Max's brainpan, his fat stomach rising and falling gently as ghostly mice clasp hands in a circle and dance around him.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "Zwei."

CUT TO:

INT. ALVEOLI - CONTINUOUS

The exterminators clasp hands and gaze lovingly into each other's eyes. One lights a cigarette from the burning screen, chuckles.

INSERT INTERTITLE: "Drei!"

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON:

Max and Magda kissing passionately, the mouse from Magda's eyes scampering playfully across their pressed faces.

The band begins playing "Happy Birthday."

Wild cheers.

Shots ring out.

Corks fly and founts of champagne douse the screen.

Sprinklers go off. There is booing and laughter.

The screen, charred and heavy with liquid, collapses.

Lights dance on a bare wall, distorted and fractured images of Max and Magda, the exterminators, Tekniker and the mouse, glide to and fro, eliding and recombining into grotesque configurations.

Smoke fills the theater.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

23.

*The sounds of coughing, scattered applause, grumbling;
the shifting of many human bodies.*

The band plays on.