

Translated excerpt

Martina Hefter
Es könnte auch schön werden

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Martina Hefter
It could also be nice

Translated by Shane Anderson



Legend

In olden times, the elderly lived as maple trees.
As sites of pilgrimage, young people picnicked
under their crowns on spread out blankets in ritualistic gaiety,
sniffed the fragrance of the billowing foliage, the naked branches in winter
were often drawn in sketchpads, exalted a lot and gladly

what a golden age –

but then someone invented the electric blanket, the electric pillow, and you lived indoors more
and more.

The elderly had to reinvent themselves,
no longer maple trees, they stayed at home in the dark, outliving room fires,
many were carried in the same position they were saved in to nursing homes
where they are still cowering to this day.

A little later still –

someone invented the patio heater. The technology of the electric blanket
but on a larger scale was conducive for the young people in winter
– they could only control their powers in closed rooms with difficulty –
to drink beer immediately outdoors. The energy of such a group escaped
laterally into the crowd as a pushing and shoving,
upwards towards the sky as a raw song, remixes of ballads that previously trilled in praise of the
maple,
or else the energy flowed through the feet, down into the ground

and soon

the first young people were esteemed unpliant, obdurately
taking root in the asphalt, head and shoulders swinging
in the November storm, defying the wind's pressure

and in the spring, there

the first little maple trees, thin-trunked, lined the strip of bars,
their leaves trembled and they were admired by children
who liked to stand there, shooting balls into the crowns.

o

Now we are entering the third part, though what follows is from the first part of the third, that is,
we are now at three point one

As long as my mother-in-blah is asleep, I'll tell you some stories
like in a thousand and one nights

I could prevent a number of things while I talk

You know what I mean, the cat

as long as I'm here in the room I'm in control I could say

The stories revolve around guilt and entanglement

you know, big entertainment

so get out your Kleenex

or popcorn

Recently we were at the Höfe am Brühl

*I'm saying this with outstretched arms, I need to pay attention to the hand warmer, the little
heart, it shouldn't fall off my head.*

*A sound recording: the rippling of a fountain. Maybe a scent can also be exuded as if there were
a Lush store nearby.*

I already let my heart hang there by the glitter socks in Monki

There are armchairs on the first floor that have backrests made out of rotating balls

that relaxes the muscles of the exhausted

from afar, you think sitting in the armchairs is free

but if you get closer you realize

ten minutes costs five euros

it's not written anywhere but you know it right away
This is a great place for awareness
If you can grasp that with five euros, you'll suddenly understand everything
That bones eventually become clouds
That you do not become light even in death
That Lush DM Rossmann Lidl are the pillows and comforters
from the bed in which you will die
That, in fact, you will die

I let the heart fall from my head, I enter a slow movement towards the floor.

With wide elevators and no threshold on no single door
nowhere, the Höfe am Brühl are a paradise for my mother-in-blah
no, much more for me who is pushing the wheelchair
Down at the pan Asian buffet in the food court we ate something
We ate something there because I, no, seriously: I
With emphasis on the "I," I beat myself with a flat hand around my heart
really wanted to eat there and I just decided that we, that is I
as above
and she

I take a big step into a position across from me and turn around 180 degrees
would eat there

Pause

She actually didn't want to eat there Martina, that's one of the devils saying that
she probably would have wanted to eat a couple of wieners with a bread roll
but you put her into the line
in the heat from the food containers
in the picking and choosing
the cornucopia of force
There were fried cauliflower meatballs there, that's me again
chicken nuggets in red sauce and mushrooms sprouts
pak choi and tofu with dip
humans have a will that is free
that has to be made available to them
that's what I thought I
thought thought that
more and more hectically
I swear
on my life I want to be dedicated to the implementation of free will for every person,

animal and plant,
I swear

As I say this, I am making a three-finger salute with both hands, really big, flailing, and I see the devils/gym balls and act as if I were paying attention to how they are dancing. They seem to be jumping around like crazy, wagging with x three-finger salutes. Maybe with a spotlight you can set up a shadow play on the wall: from my three-finger salutes come scissors, barking dogs, rabbits with long spoons.

I definitely wanted to think that something slightly exotic could also be nice for her
It could at least be nice one of these days
I tried hard to think that
Until at last I actually thought
Yes, it will be nice, one of these days
It was like picking just a single plum from a tree with x plums and being totally happy with it
But she, she decided on nothing
she shrank in her wheelchair and said
 I'm not really sure
then I noticed the people behind us in the line
they're going right by my mother-in-blah and me just like that
going to the front where the woman behind the counter puts the morsels on plates
the first people that went right by us are already pointing
with their fingers at the most delicious morsels
one of those and those and that too please thank you
while more and more people cut
in front of us cut
woing woing
it's amazing it doesn't hurt
when I look closer, I notice that everyone has a pistol
they're tucked into their belts or in their pant pockets
sometimes silver sometimes gold sometimes small sometimes large
It is definitely conceivable that half of humanity packs a pistol somewhere on the body
I think then
and then that I'm not packing one myself
and now the devils are laughing
since I yelled you motherfuckers at the people
are you in some kind of emergency cutting like that
in front of my mother-in-blah and me
we're still trying to decide

and we're not done and won't be for awhile
don't you have any manners
and you look awful in your skanky old shoes
with your pistols
and then I just picked something for my mother-in-blah
without getting her opinion
I'll have the fried chicken please
no no extra sauce
so now it's time to eat
the wheelchair crashed into the table
the plates bashed onto the table
and
that's when I

Pause

that's when I kept saying to her
well, doesn't that taste amazing
that's really fantastic, right
come on, isn't that delish
We'll definitely have to come back to this place
while chunks of chicken fell into her lap in the wheelchair
in the middle of this pavilion that opens to the main entrance
and
it was a nice day

I walk over to one of the devils/gym balls and sit at its feet.

What are you going to do in the future so that you can better evaluate the desire of your mother-
in-blah in such situations little Martina
How much would you be willing to pay so that you could act thoughtfully
Or to put it another way: how much money would you have paid
so that you and your mother-in-blah could have VIP treatment in the buffet restaurant

*I stretch myself out on the floor, lay on my back, move slowly into several poses, act as if I'm
thinking then forget about the world, which ends up being the same thing.*

You're always guilty is something you could sing smoothly
guilt and brutalization
brutalization and guilt
debt and crude
etc.
Yeah now you're all looking a little lost
But what would you have done for example?

Come on, tell me, I'd be interested
it's a good opportunity for us to have a quick chat
while my mother-in-blah is sleeping
or
how about another story of eating out, we go out quite often
listen first and then tell me
what you would have done
if it's not too lame for you

Before my mother-in-blah came to the home in Leipzig she lived in Chemnitz
also in a nursing home
Two cities but always the same home
In Chemnitz we also sometimes stopped by
the Gasthaus zur Vogelweid, a shack in the allotment garden
nicely done inside, strawflowers and wooden beams
as well as a pair of lovebirds in a cage
When we were there the first time, I notice the stairs at the entrance
seven or eight steps, impossible for us
The end of September, it wasn't cold
so I say let's sit outside, give it a try
there were still tables and chairs on the patio
I walk into the seating area and say to the waitress
Hello we're sitting outside, we can't make it up the stairs
what with the wheelchair you see, I would like to order something
but the waitress says we've got strong men here you know
leads me into the smoking room, inside
at least ten skinheads and other men
they are wearing jackets with very unmistakable patches on them
the waitress calls into the room, there's a mom here in a wheelchair
get moving
in no time at all four men with unmistakable patches surround the wheelchair
you grab here and you grab there
maneuver my mother-in-blah up the stairs
everything happens in a flash
men with unmistakable patches on their jackets have helped us up the stairs
and I smile and say thank you
Amazing, thanks thanks a bunch
that was really nice
Here I freeze in a facepalm.
I smiled at the men with unmistakable patches on their jackets
and we went there a couple more times

the men helped us a couple more times up the stairs
my mother-in-blah ordered a schnitzel like the people around her also ordered
Or the Balkan hotpot or half a duck with dumplings
I drank tea, ate fries, fed and rested
It was only a small step away from feeling protected

The devils sing.

Melody, approximately: Frankie Goes to Hollywood, Relax

in the Nazi parlor and drink tea

in the Nazi parlor and sit doing anti-stress exercises

in the Nazi parlor and experience wellness then bawl later

Refrain Relax in the Nazi parlor

Incidentally, we were sitting out in the yard the other day under the cherry tree and I thought we
could make some poems from this

The rhyming words are from my mother-in-blah

In the Chemnitz allotments, berries wither

I run off and get – scissors

The allotments contain an animal I didn't whistle

To the animal, I wrote a taciturn – epistle

What kind of figures are these in the Vogelweid

It's a couple of men. For them I definitely haven't – cried

And now a short break in our regular schedule

musicmusicmusicmusicmusic

Thinking of hardly anything else the whole year,
an annoying hiccup.

As the river rises, surges, claps against the walls of the house,
roars up to the bridge, in the next second, green
with tiny surfaces flickering cheerfully to let the time off
pitch and toss

the structure of something serious like dying.
Shaded, scraped, brushed with splinters
of sunlight, forced through the skin,
flees and drives jokes off remotely

I think about progress and
imitate bustling lives,
boastful poses.

She's lying in her room, cannot hold the television guide.

I often stay in her room.
The river beckons, from a distance it seems, with what it brings,
friendly.

In the Alps. The refugee nursing home residents find the glacier mummy. The mummy speaks to them.

Shake your snowglobes, what do you find?
Chamois fighting chamois.
Snow, something like furrows, rock faces,
shadows in blissful descent.

On the way from Galtür to Ischgl.
Between both slopes only whispering is aloud.
Loudly the room bursts.
Out of a dream when you shout.
Then something big begins.
The magnitude of the whole thing is understood
by me but not what it blocks out.

Was that my body?
Is that up? Down?
Down, where the feet in gaudy socks
Are paddling, going nuts?

Dust in the form of a fist.
Weight in the shape of dust.
As soon as I heard the wildness of the pups
I burned for their ears.
I shouted: thank you, I'll be fine.
I would like to grow from this burden.
Let my worsening, rushing pulse worsen.
The last human I waved to –
our neighbor.
The roof of his wagon had a ski casket on it
with three pairs of skis within, the neighbor
celebrated his trilogy of skis,
swept snow from the windshield
of the car with his arm
and fell into a fit,
acting a bit like a bad Tatzelwurm,
did ten pushups
before getting into the car.
I wished him well in a weigh.
Brought him dropping from too many flowers back,
hatched a nest for him, dispatched him in it,
grabbed snow from the trees, tucked him in.
For a long time I thought everything unsettled outside

would be quiet now.

The Alps, the Alps,
whether you love them or not
it's your weight they hold up.
In other places they have forty names for snow.
I've got no name handy
for the forty kinds of agony
in a snow I never want to like.

Here's me, soon in the shape of Ötzi
but still alive, I fester every year,
meanwhile the edelweiss are a delight
for insiders.

Spiraling above the snowfield like a vulture spirals
over a half dead rabbit, my wee glee.
My glee and me,
we've been arguing for quite awhile.

Did the whole thing go awry, of all things,
when I was walking in it?
Was I merely snowed in?
Snowier than snow,
my stupid face glows.

Chamois, hooves clamped in the cliff,
rearrange their weight
shift their center of attention,
from heavy to light and back again,
from a chunk to a noise, the bodies move around,
chisel them in niches, enjoy the view
or am I just making an assumption and chamois
don't enjoy anything only cache
that which makes them, what is addressed as a chamois?

I looked at the snow for so long
that the hill began to fizz and bubble,
became an ocean. But what is an ocean?

I went skiing.
I went snowboarding.
I created a reverie,

everything was in its place, alpine hut, chalet, chamois,
sprinkling the field of snow.

I looked for so long
until the Alps appeared.
A bad habit.

I liked outside
at the window more
in winter,
houses, snow shovels, a few crows
so that it was rather harmonious.

My neighbor, his ski casket,
but then?

I'm here all alone, I yelled.
And, hesitantly, the echo crashed against the face of the rock.