

ACT 1

Martin.Thank god you've arrived, I'd nearly given up (crosses to kiss her).

Hannah.I must be mad to come.

Martin. The price of love?

Hannah.Yes-just like you fell in love with Hitler.Love affairs can be fatal.

Martin.And misleading-I was misled.

Hannah.You can leave that to the tribunal.

Martin. Did Jaspers write?

Hannah.Yes.

Martin.Well-did he help?

Hannah.His wife is half-jewish.

Martin.I did not visit him because of his wife.

Hannah.No-but it matters the way things look.

Martin.That was never my concern.

Hannah.That's why we're here today.

Martin. So?

Hannah.He recommended a five year suspension from teaching at the university.

Martin.The swine-I thought he was a friend.

Hannah.He is-just-on the philosophical level.

Martin.That's what I mean-that's the trouble with philosophy-they do not feel it on the pulse.

Hannah.You cannot just give up the Socratic approach,we owe it so much.

Martin.Ah, but don't you see I am your Jacob wrestling with the angel.We predate Socrates and all that.

Hannah.If you had applied a bit more logic you wouldn't be in the mess you now are.

Martin.And then withdrawn?

Hannah.Escaped ...like me to the States.Think what your influence would have been now,
a colossus, you would have Germany and the whole world kneeling at your feet.A
picture that you must admit appeals to you.

Martin.I did not even think of leaving.What, to the barbarism of America and all its
technology.No,right or wrong I had to be here .First for the love affair, as you
call it and then when the love affair went sour.

Hannah.Is that the light you will cast before the tribunal? It will be hardly worth my going.

Martin.Oh no.The affair was short-lived and I will stand my ground on the need to safeguard what I could by appearing to be one of them.

Hannah.But you were one of them!

Martin.I learned my political lesson with the failure of my rectorship.

Hannah.But you were a member of the party all the way through.

Martin.To stay in with them.

Hannah.But it looks so bad.

Martin.Looks again!

Hannah.They won't buy it and neither do I.

Martin.I didn't kill anybody why should I be singled out?

Hannah.Eichman, when they find him, will give the same excuse. It was perfectly true he had not himself shot or gassed anybody he had merely been the main efficient organiser of the transport of millions of jews to their death.

Martin.Surely you are not comparing him to me.

Hannah.No,but you gave succour and encouragement to the Reich and certainly did not oppose them.

Martin.Until the outbreak of war I hoped to make them see where they had gone wrong.

Hannah.Let's hope you can produce some evidence for that, I've seen none.

Martin.But if you say I had no influence, why then, I am not significant.

Hannah.Don't you see-your pre-eminent philosophical reputation,your succession to Husserl, made you number one in Germany and at the top of the worlds' thinkers.You carried much kudos for good or evil.

Martin.Nobody understands "Being and Time" I was harmless.

Hannah.Harmless but big ,most of the others were small,non-entities,they were only members to protect themselves and their families.Also it gave employment and for many status which they never had before.You had no need of all that.

Martin.And now I am reduced to begging my position,it's intolerable.

Hannah.Oh no,the french are already wooing you before the war ink is dry-Marcuse,Satre, the carpet is being laid out,this will not be popular with the tribunal.Whatever I say they will easily find incriminating words.At least say sorry .

Martin.Never!

Hannah.You don't change even since we were lovers.

Martin.Those wonderful far-off days,you,my work,my family everything flowed.

Hannah.For you, and now a little retribution is in order.

Martin.But I have still much to do,banning me is useless and what about my pension.

Hannah.Millions have died and you are worrying about your pension.

Martin.I can best serve by going on thinking.

Hannah.And saying sorry.

Martin.And loving you again?

Hannah.I am not your femme fatale now,behave!I've grown-up.

Martin.To grow up is only to become the usual adult.How disappointing maturity is.

Hannah.Suppose they ask me if there is anything personal.

Martin.In the present tense of course no that is only the truth.If they ask in the past tense-then lie.A small price for my philosophical freedom.

Hannah.Since nobody knows I must protect that secret,I have earned it.

Martin.Exactly-you are beginning to think like a party member.

Hannah.Please!

Martin.I treated everybody according to their merit.

Hannah.Some jews were denied positions when you were rector.

Martin.Only because they were not good enough.

Hannah.Your treatment of Husserl?

Martin.He was too old to carry on.

Hannah.Your speeches as rector were damning.

Martin.I did it for appearance.Of course at that time it was not clear where all this was leading.

Hannah.Other people,even philosophers saw it.

Martin.Who?

Hannah.Popper.

Martin.Who?

Hannah.Karl Popper,the open society

Martin.Oh yes,but we have heard it all before,it is boring.

Hannah.But true.

Martin.Truth? In another context I would reach for my gun.

Hannah.Here the awful reality is the truth.

Martin. There are many different realities it depends on the times and even in the same time they exist. They cannot be summed up by science.

Hannah. Yet millions died for no military reason.

Martin. Hiroshima- couldn't they have demonstrated the bomb first, the dead were mainly civilians.

Hannah. We are straying, look, why not just apologise, most have.

Martin. I will not apologise for a mistake.

Hannah. Why not.

Martin. Look, at one time perhaps 75% of the German people supported Hitler. It was irresistible. And who was to say "democratically" they were wrong.

Hannah. Well they were.

Martin. Oh yes--now.

Hannah. The tribunal want contrition.

Martin. They shall have it--in my form.

Hannah. Sometimes Martin I don't think you grasp the magnitude of what happened.

Martin. But pogroms occur throughout history and we have just lived through one.

Hannah. Yes but this one is not an illustration in a book. Surely it changes everything, above all oneself who have come through. Nothing, belief, thinking, acting can be the same again.

Martin. I have always been ready to die.

Hannah. But how have you changed.

Martin. A new break-out into Being.

Hannah. But that's just what you had and look where that led.

Martin. But I told you we were misled.

Hannah. It won't do, we packed our bags.

Martin. Even so to be at the heart of the maelstrom would tell me much about myself and philosophy. Didn't Wittgenstein go to the front on our side in the first while Russell practised his pacifism. I'm with Wittgenstein.

Hannah. Really?

Martin. Yes, it's a question of knowing or not knowing, you have to be there to know.

Hannah. You could have ended up in a concentration camp if you'd spoken up, that would have been knowing.

Martin. I would not have survived to tell the story.

Hannah. Very well then what next in your philosophy to justify your survival and tell us what these things mean.

Martin.I believe man is a mystery and his coming into civilised consciousness about 10,000 years ago is a sudden and unique event.Written language appears and Being which was there but not expressed comes like a new spirit.From that time forth we are spirit.And spirit is really the problem of freedom.So we are not very old and in evolutionary terms the biology of before is now superseded by the presence of Being.

Hannah.This sounds very close to the gods.

Martin.Yes, Being permits their appearance and this is what we are now losing.

Hannah OK this is all very well but will it wash with the tribunal.

Martin.To hell with the tribunal!

Hannah.What about the second volume "Time and Being" so the idyll is complete.

Martin.No, it cannot be done.

Hannah.But this was your major work.

Martin.You see I can only raise the right question,there can be no eschatological answers.

Hannah.What about your critique of science and technology.

Martin.This pure materialism will demoralise us.

Hannah.You neglect the facts,we live longer,live better,do not die so painfully, by nearly every standard we are better off than the past.

Martin.You and your liberal intelligentsia are better off but there are more people in the world,in poverty,disease and neglect than there ever was.

Hannah.But we have the means,the will, and the institutions which can change the world.

Martin.But I believe we will have less love,less courage,less care if we continue down this path.

Hannah.Then what is revealed in your new forest clearing?

Martin.I am not into crystal balls.

Hannah.But what is your main proposition?

Martin.A new recognition of Being but to understand that it cannot be analysed,it is a formally undecidable proposition,that is my proposition.

Hannah.The science world is dominant and will laugh at you.

Martin.It is they who have so mechanised war that we see all this destruction around us.They who could finally wipe us out altogether.They who have produced in the camps an industrial process of murder.

Hannah.Only your scientists.

Martin.No not only ours,the bolsheviks,the americans all are guilty.

Hannah. But scientists are only normal moral humans.

Martin. I wonder. On the question of care, feeling I think they measure a low IQ.

Hannah. What possible evidence do you have for that?

Martin. Where do you find them when the going gets tough? Always gone to greener pastures.

Do you find them working for the poor in Africa, no, that is left to the religious people who are largely scorned. Do you find them protesting in Russia, no, that is left to the artist who is a minor culture now. Where are they heard in China and so many other tyrannies.

Hannah. They could be philosophers.

Martin. We are minute in number compared to them, we do not produce anything and above all we are useless in any war effort.

Hannah. You are riding against the storm.

Martin. After all isn't science just opportunity backed by money. It should not be given exaggerated respect.

Hannah. Let's get back to today. I must make the case that your teaching asks the right questions of modern day orthodoxies. This habit is essential for the students and thus you must not be deprived of your teaching post.

Martin. Good. A better grasp of being is asking the right questions among so much information. The incisive question is so illuminating in itself because we are surrounded by pseudo-questions giving pseudo-answers. This will only get worse.

Hannah. When I think back at some of your scouting uniforms during lectures it was risible.

Martin. I am not faced by a fashion contest I hope. You will see that the only thing that matters in life will be the chic.

Hannah. You should have asked your questions of Hitler.

Martin. He cut through all the conventions and set a new stage that is why we were taken in.

It seemed almost refreshing after the endless arguments of Weimar and the humiliation of Versailles.

Hannah. He lied and lied and lied all the way.

Martin. What politicians don't.

Hannah. Ah, that is too simple. This was industrial lying leading to industrial murder. As somebody said at the time, and how could you not be aware of it, those who burn books will soon be burning people.

Martin. Against the bolsheviks there could be no quarter.

Hannah. So Stalin must take the blame for these "excesses".

Martin. You are giving me a practice run for the tribunal.

Hannah.Yes but your answers will not pass the exam.

Martin.Hannah,I am so grateful for your support.

Hannah.Please don't become maudlin,I couldn't take it.

Martin.You must be here out of love.

Hannah.Not now, but you do know something that no other thinking thinks.That is what I now love.

Martin.I am not yet old and you do not love your husband.

Hannah.Buyer beware.

Martin.What are you buying?

Hannah>Your ability to go on thinking at the highest level.

Martin.They call me a charlatan.

Hannah.It's not surprising given your past.

Martin.On the tribunal it is Lampe who is really against me.

Hannah.Why?

Martin.Oh ,I did not extend his temporary tenure at the university.

Hannah.Surely they will all be aware of that.

Martin.Maybe,but he will want a confession of guilt.

Hannah.Or sorry.

Martin.I am worried for my library and my pension.

Hannah.Small matters, you will probably have to go back to your monastery to speak.

Martin.Anyway what other hurdles are they likely to throw at me.

Hannah.You should not treat them as an enemy,they are all good Germans who survived partly on the principle,there but for the grace of god go I,they will want to be lenient.

Martin.But how am I different.After 1935 I had nothing more to do with the party and in my lectures spoke out against their total mobilisation and inauthenticity.

Hannah.Only from a metaphysical point of view.

Martin.The ongoing situation had not changed.

Hannah.Really! Have you already forgotten der Kristallnacht.

Martin.But we thought it was just a few hooligans.

Hannah.Oh yes, thousands of jewish shops smashed but the party were innocent.

Martin.This had nothing to do with me.

Hannah. But you did not speak up and of course it was soon forgotten as it was overtaken by the war and greater atrocities.

Martin. Are you not straying from the tribunal process?

Hannah. It is being guilty by omission.

Martin. But what I could not alter I cannot feel guilty about.

Hannah. Anyway it is all in my, *Origins of Totalitarianism*, which I suppose you have not read.

Martin. Yes I'm reading the manuscript- quite good.

Hannah. Thanks, let's hope it makes some money when it's published.

Martin. Ah, at least you are not indifferent to worldly success and money. You are halfway there.

Hannah. You mean we are all corruptible.

Martin. Yes. Even your Jewish elders were corrupt nearly everywhere.

Hannah. That got me into a lot of trouble and still the extent of the cooperation between them and the Nazis has not been fully told.

Martin. What fascinated me in your letters were the different countries' response to the orders from Hitler.

Hannah. Yes but the exceptions were depressingly small. There was a general moral collapse.

Martin. I loved the story of King Boris of Bulgaria having all the 400,000 Jews baptised and then remarking there were no Jews in Bulgaria.

Hannah. And he got away with it. I am more and more convinced that the lack of an alternative home for us played a big role. If we had a state then it would have made the legalistic challenge to send us there, even for Hitler, irrefutable.

Martin. But surely he didn't worry about a few legal rules.

Hannah. On the contrary the whole state was dressed up as legal that helped all the functionaries to carry out their crimes in the belief that they were orders of state.

Martin. I see.

Hannah. You should have seen all that at the time.

Martin. I just saw it as a break-out from the cave.

Hannah. Except it was the lunatics who had broken out.

Martin. But it is true I never believed in your plural democracy.

Hannah. I know that.

Martin. This mass culture, urbanisation, the media, the consumption of possessions had no meaning for me.

Hannah. Here we can agree.

Martin.It will lead to triviality,boredom and finally violence.

Hannah.These are soluble problems.

Martin.No,because we cannot re-engage with the Holderlin trust in Being as a conduit for the gods.

Hannah.Six million dead ,god has not saved us,only the British and Americans have.

Martin.Because they were still instruments of true Being and not mute as I acknowledge we had become.

Hannah.Still I do not think there is any new appetite for Christ.

Martin.But a new reality.

Hannah.May we be spared another one.

Martin.This was my obsession with the Greeks and Christian mystics and then the East,a
re-discovery of the poetic mission.This would awaken the people forever.

Hannah.You are going soft in the head.

Martin.Well I am older.

Hannah.My line will be you still have much to give philosophically,the past was a short
aberration after all it included most of the german people,are they to be excluded.

Martin.With my people right or wrong.A good slogan.

Hannah.Not good enough,as you would be expected to see a little further.

Martin.Over-enthusiasm?

Hannah.You better look at your rectorial speech again and see if you do not squirm.

Martin.But it's all they've got isn't it?

Hannah.There will be some individuals who have scores to settle and your silence on these matters.

Martin.Can we approach it lightly.

Hannah.Impossible,how would you feel if your mother had been shot in the back of the neck.

Martin.Who do you mean?

Hannah.I'm thinking of Paul Celan,the poet,he admires your work and he may be our poetic deliverance from
these horrors.

Martin.Yes I know his work,I have just read todesfugue though not yet published it was shown
to me by a student,a poem of genius.Would he speak for me ,for the younger generation.

Hannah.No he suspects your motives as I do.

Martin.We are all part of history.

Hannah.But we can resist our fate or die taking it with us.

Martin.Remember the days of me dressing up in uniform and you in that wonderful green dress submitting.

Hannah. Don't remind me I was only 18.

Martin. We loved each other.

Hannah. But not enough to give up Elfride.

Martin. The children....

Hannah. Oh yes....

Martin. Yes it might all have been different.

Hannah. In any case you said you would never leave...the fatherland.

Martin. In that hut at Todtnauburg surrounded by my mountains and the common people, this was my source for philosophy, where I could think away from the madding crowd.

Hannah. So it has turned out and you must pay the price.

Martin. How can I mitigate it?

Hannah. By being naive, and this is true of you politically. Even someone as clever as you can be taken in by that speech of 1939 (she assumes a Hitler pose)

"I overcame chaos in Germany, restored order, enormously raised production in all fields of our national economy.... I succeeded in completely resettling in useful production those seven million unemployed who so touched our hearts.... I have not only politically united the German nation but also rearmed it militarily, and I have further tried to liquidate that Treaty sheet by sheet whose 448 articles contain the vilest rape that nations and human beings have ever been expected to submit to. I have restored to the Reich the provinces grabbed from us in 1919. I have led millions of deeply unhappy Germans, who had been snatched from us back to the fatherland: I have restored the 1000yr old historical unity of German living space; and I have attempted to accomplish all this without shedding blood and without the sufferings of war on my people or any other. I have accomplished all this as one who 21 years ago was an unknown worker and soldier of my people, by my own efforts.

Martin. So there it is. Clever of you to remember it so well.

Hannah. We knew the lie and so it was burnt into us.

Martin. Can Germany ever be forgiven?

Hannah. You must ask Celan.

Martin. If only he had stopped there. An experiment that went wrong.

Hannah. The seeds go a long way back.

Martin. Because humanism is not enough, even he used it early on--humanity for the Germans not humiliation was his theme.

Hannah.Of course everything is relative in the end.

Martin.No, that is really what he thought and so it could lead to the relative destruction of humans,
there has to be an absolute.That is why the past was so sure,God awards and disposes, oggi sempre.

Hannah.This is your Being then.

Martin.No,but as I said before Being permits the emergence of god.Was it Horace who said
these people do not know what virtue is and to them a sacred grove is just a collection of sticks.

Hannah.The pull of god is innate in some.

Martin.Like the pull of music,mathematics,painting,poetry,invention but you do not deny these things.
For them the analysis is of least concern since it has happened instinctively.So it is with god.

Hannah.The difference being we are still free to choose,unlike the god of religion.

Martin.Yes, it is the problem of freedom.

Hannah.Choice must be an evolutionary fact-it results in better adaption.

Martin.For me Being is everlasting,from it will come the everlasting reconciliation we yearn for.

Hannah.God by another name.

Martin.Oh no.It is a recognition that all those tears,that selfless hallowed love,is true and is all powerful.

Hannah.Nice words for the tribunal if you can fit them in.

Martin.The fact you have spoken for me is enough

Hannah.Humility is the right strategy.

Martin.Only remember I would not change what I have done,I did it-it seemed right at the
time, so there is nothing to apologise for.

Hannah.The old Martin flares up.

(the telephone rings,Martin answers it)

Martin.They will be ready for you at 2.

Hannah.Odd how they new I was here.

Martin.We are still under occupation.

Hannah.I must get ready,goodbye Martin,I will not stay behind afterwards.I will do my best
to persuade them you are not dangerous.... anymore. (kisses and exits)

Martin.(blows a kiss as she leaves turns to the gramophone and plays the opening theme of
Tristan und Isolde which continues for a few minutes before the curtain falls).