

ArtsPower
“My Heart In a Suitcase”
Dec, '05

MUTTI #2:

(Scene/Monologue)

Berlin, Nazi Germany, 1938.
The Parlor. The Lehmann's Apartment.

(Note: Young Anne Lehmann used the German terms of endearment for her mother & father. Thus to her – her mother was Mutti; and her father was Vati.)

Vati & Mutti (Mr. & Mrs. Lehmann) are a Jewish married couple living in pre-World War II Nazi Germany. Life for Jews has become increasingly hard. Many laws have been passed that harshly discriminate against Jews. Vati can not work in banking anymore. Mutti can only shop at Jewish stores. Their daughter Anne can't go to public school anymore. Jews are barred from public places like restaurants, theatres, even a bench in the park. Vati has been increasingly anxious for his family and has been desperately trying to get them all out of Germany. The Lehmanns also have a college age son Gunter who is living on a student visa in England. Despite all Vati & Gunter's efforts, the Nazis won't let the Lehmanns emigrate.

MUTTI is very warm, expressive, compassionate, intelligent, and loving. She is well aware of the dangerous outside world, but chooses to meet it with optimism that things will improve. To her children, Mutti is always a source of comfort, love, and understanding. Because of Vati's gruff temperament, she often acts as peacemaker between him and his children.

Here, Vati has just yelled at Anne and slammed the door – exiting into his study. Anne is upset, angry. Mutti comes to comfort Anne.

SCENE 9

The Apartment.

Stage right – on the parlor side of the apartment,
Mutti is there comforting Anne.

MUTTI (comforting)(to Anne)(lovingly)
You must be patient with Vati. Your father has a lot on his mind right now.

ANNE (still upset)(childish, petulant)

Like what?

MUTTI

Things he and I don't want you to worry about.

ANNE

Like how he can't find a job?

MUTTI (trying to explain)

That, and well – everything that's happening in Germany today.

ANNE (upset)(childishly petulant)

Well, he could talk to me about it! But instead he just yells and then closes the door to his study and listens to his dumb music!

MUTTI

(gently explaining)

Music is very important to Vati.

ANNE (still petulant)

Seems he's always listening to his boring records.

(Split Stage)

(while rest of dialogue continues...)

(Stage left – the Study – Vati has put on a record – Beethoven –

“Romance for Violin – No. 2 in F Major, Op. 50” -

a classical piece for orchestra and solo violin. He listens

intensely – the music seems to transport him away – relax him.)

(Anne hears the music – feeling left out.)

... See? There he goes again. Which one is that?

MUTTI (fondly remembering)(listening)
 Beethoven. ...I remember once hearing Vati play that on his violin.

ANNE (naïve)

I thought he was always a banker.

MUTTI (amused by Anne's naiveté)

(thinking back – has to smile)(remembering fondly)(passionately)

Oh, when I first met your father – of course he was handsome – but his music,... oh my,... he could create such beautiful music on his violin. I think that's why I fell in love with him – such wonderful music. Maybe he could have been a professional violinist.

ANNE (asks)(interested)

Why didn't he?

MUTTI (explains)

Oh, his father would never have allowed that. Besides, soon he was a young married man with a baby on the way.

(thinks)(remembering)

... Of course, then the Great War of 1914 – and Vati lost his arm fighting for his beloved Germany. He was so proud when Germany awarded him the Iron Cross. But Anne - he lost his ability to make music.

(the point – to Anne)(impassioned)

... So, now - don't you see how hard this all must be for him? – now when his own beloved Germany is rejecting him – saying he's no longer a citizen - taking away all his rights, his hopes. I think that is why Vati listens to his music.

(pause)(quotes Vati)(warmly)(as violin plays)

... “As long as we have music, we have hope.”

(takes Anne's hand)(warmly)(gently asks)

... So, you will be patient with Vati, won't you?

(Anne is moved by Mutti – she hugs Mutti - a moment of warm understanding between them.)

END OF SCENE.