

— *August 17th, 1934. Oswald's House, 8:30 P.M.* —

Hannelore and Konrad were in the kitchen. Hannelore was hand-washing dishes to prepare for dinner while Konrad played with a plane toy he had recently gotten for his 6th birthday. He flew it around and made whizzing noises as his mother worked. She stopped for a moment, and watched Konrad play. A small smile appeared on her face. A knock on the door pulled Hannelore's attention away. She briskly shook her hands dry, then turned the tap off. She opened the front door. Oswald and Aigis, still in their brand-new Silver Knives uniforms.

Not even a second upon seeing him again, Hannelore jumped onto Oswald, hugging him tight. Oswald stumbled a little, and caught himself, smiling down at Hannelore. The two shared a brief ten-second kiss on the lips. Konrad made gagging noises, and the two laughed, before breaking the hug.

"I'm home!" Oswald announced to his wife and son. "Didja miss me?"

Hannelore giggled a little, blushing, and replied. "Of course we missed you, you silly man! I was afraid you'd never come home!"

"I'm sorry. They kept me late today. First day and all."

Hannelore looked down at Oswald's fresh new uniform. It was a standard Waffen-SS field gray uniform, decked with new shoulder straps, a left sleeve chevron and cuff that read "SS-Silberdolche", and a new stahlhelm helmet. On the right side had the SS runes while the left had the Silver Knives logo: Two daggers clashing downward. Hannelore looked at his collar and noticed the left one had a new stripe on it.

"Is that a promotion I see?" She asked, curiously.

"Yep! They felt bad that I was stuck as a Mann in the SA for nine years, so when they created the Silver Knives, they gave me a promotion for loyalty," Oswald then stood up straight,

with a dutiful look on his face. “SS-Sturmmann Oswald Volkmann of the lover boy regiment at your service, ma’am!”

The two shared a laugh and a short kiss, before Hannelore approached Aigis and shook her hand.

“Good to see you again, Aigis.” Hannelore greeted.

“Likewise.” Aigis replied in a professionally stiff manner.

“We’re friends, you don’t have to be so formal with me,” Hannelore joked. “I see you also got a promotion.”

“That’s right. I’m an obergruppenführer now. The highest I can possibly go as an officer.”

“Good for you. You deserve it for taking care of Ozzie for so many years.”

“Don’t mention it. We’re basically twins at this point.”

Oswald took off his Karabiner 98b rifle and set it down in the corner. He then took his pistol holster, which contained his issued FN Model 1922, off his belt, and set it down on a small round table near the door. He ran over to Konrad and scooped the boy up in his arms. Konrad shrieked, and started giggling uncontrollably as his father picked him up, and spun him around in the air.

“You thought you were going to get away from me, you knucklehead?” Oswald jokingly interrogated his son. Konrad was too busy laughing to respond. Oswald set his son down.

“Have you been holding down the fort?” Oswald asked.

“Yes, sir!”

“Taking care of mom?”

“Of course!”

“Good answer,” Oswald tousled Konrad’s hair. He turned to everyone in the house.

“Now let’s EAT!”

About thirty minutes later, the four had been enjoying their meals. Oswald was eating a slice of Black Forest Cake that Hannelore had baked the night before. Konrad was having a bowl of Käsespätzle (Egg noodles with cheese) and was happily humming as he ate. Hannelore was having some potato dumplings, and a cup of tea. Aigis was having some of the cake, and was surprised by the sweetness.

“This cake is very sweet.” Aigis remarked, before she took another bite.

“Oh, is it?” Hannelore asked, curiously. “I made sure not to add too much sugar, though. That’s how I ended up killing my grandma.”

Everyone at the table collectively froze, and slowly turned to look at Hannelore. She continued eating, unaware that everyone was looking at her. She glanced up, and started laughing, accidentally letting some potato crumbs fly from her mouth.

“Oh, you thought I was being serious? I was joking, my grandma’s perfectly fine.”

“Jeez, Hanni,” Oswald feigned annoyance. “Don’t scare Aigis like that. Look at her, she looks like she’s going to snap at any moment!”

“Is this kosher?” Aigis asked out of respect. Hannelore waved the SS officer off.

“At this point, I don’t really care anymore. I already have a target on my back. The better I can hide being a Jew, the better.”

“You’ve got us to protect you,” Oswald confirmed, pulling Konrad in for a side hug.

“You’re free to practice your culture in Fort Volkmann.”

“It’s not important. I never really cared about it in the first place. So it’s not a hard sacrifice to make. If it keeps us safe, it works for me.”

Oswald shrugged. “Fair.”

Aigis looked at the young Konrad. “Wow, Oswald. He really does look like a mini you.”

Konrad puffed his chest out and smiled. He was proud of the compliment. “Thanks. Everyone says I look like Papa’s clone.”

“He did inherit two things from Hanni: Her beautiful sparkling eyes, and her habit of trying to act tough and grown up when he clearly isn’t yet.”

“Is 33 not grown enough for you?” Hannelore scoffed, jokingly.

“You’re not a real grown up until you’re 34.” Oswald responded slyly, taking a sip of his glass of water.

“You may have reached 34 first, but you’re still baby bro to me.” Aigis flicked Oswald’s now bare head, causing him to choke down bits of water. Oswald groaned in defeat. The group laughed and talked for a while longer.

“Papa, I got a question,” Konrad looked up at his dad, swinging his short legs over the chair legs. “What are the Silver Knives?”

“A new Schutzstaffel Corps. They call us the Psychokinetic Affairs Division.”

“What’s a Psycho-kin-ethic?”

“They’re a religion, I think,” Hannelore speculated. “I remember hearing about them in high school during the Great War. They celebrate the Earth and nature.”

Oswald and Aigis shared a knowing look. The less they knew, the better.

“What do you do in the Silver Knives?”

Oswald wiped his mouth with a napkin and set down. “I’m a sturmmann in the Armed Branch. Kinda like a soldier.”

Hannelore crossed her arms and leaned back in her chair. “They’re not sending you off to fight in the front lines, are you?”

“Nah, nothing like that. I do basic drill training, do very easy chores around HQ, and just hang out and relax the rest of the day. We get our own barracks, our own private bathrooms, and a nice cafeteria that makes us good food. If anything, I’m literally getting paid to do nothing.”

“Woah,” Konrad gasped. “I wanna be just like you when I grow up?”

“Because you don’t want to work?”

“I bet they’re training Papa to become a super strong soldier, so when war breaks out, he can take out the enemy all by himself!”

“Don’t worry,” Aigis reassured Hannelore. “Out of all thirty thousand under my command, I make sure Oswald never gets hurt. He’s like a brother to me.”

“Just keep taking care of him. We appreciate everything you do for us, Aigis.”

Aigis adjusted her SS cap with a hand on the bill and a hand on the back. “I wouldn’t have it any other way.”