

— *June 7th, 1927. Oswald and Hannelore's House, 11:00 P.M.* —

Oswald and Hannelore were on top of the bed in their room. Oswald took off his SA uniform and Hannelore had stripped down to her bedwear. The two of them kissed deeply, and their hands rubbed against each other. Their tongues danced together, and they were in pure bliss. They kept at it for several minutes, before Oswald moved down to Hannelore's neck. As he went down, he felt something stopping him. Hannelore's hand was blocking his path. He looked up at her.

"Is something wrong?" Oswald asked. He got off of her body and sat down next to her. Hannelore was quiet for a few moments. She then started speaking, a look of worry on her face.

"I don't know what to do, Oswald." Hannelore confessed.

"What do you mean?" Oswald asked.

"I don't know. I... I feel trapped." Hannelore sighed.

"Trapped? What do you mean?"

Hannelore took a finger to brush her frizzy hair out of her face. Her hair was starting to become more untamed. "Oswald... can I tell you something?" Hannelore asked. Oswald nodded, his face serious. Hannelore breathed heavily. She felt like she had a weight on her shoulders. But, she had to tell him. She couldn't keep this inside. Not anymore. She couldn't live like that. She felt like a liar if she kept it any longer.

"There was actually a reason I started coming onto you when we met a couple years ago. It's because you were a stormtrooper."

"Wait," Oswald furrowed his brow. "I'm not even a stormtrooper, I'm a—"

"An SA-Mann, yes, but that's not the point. I just wanted to date you because you were a member."

Oswald tilted his head slightly. “Why? I’m a poster boy. Literally, I just hang posters.”

Hannelore repositioned herself on the bed, crossing her legs and hugging one of the pillows. She looked away from Oswald, too nervous to look him in the eye. Oswald saw slight discoloration on her back. He pulled down the back of her nightgown, and noticed red marks on her back.

“What happened? Where did you get these?” Oswald asked, raising his voice in concern. Hannelore kept her head facing away from him. She was quiet for several moments.

“Before we came back home, when you were talking with the priests,” Hannelore began, her voice soft. Oswald was confused, but let Hannelore continue. “A few of your colleagues. They pushed me into a mud puddle, tore the back of my bridal dress and started whipping my back with their blunts. They called me a dirty Jew and left me alone after that. They were laughing the whole time, calling me all sorts of things. When they finished, they left me in the dirt.”

“Oh, that’s why your dress was dirty. I thought you spilled some chocolate on it.”

“It’s just,” Hannelore paused. She held her knees close to her chest, and tears welled in her eyes. She started shaking. She turned back to Oswald. Tears started running down her cheeks. “I knew it was wrong. All this time, I was with you for my own security. I thought if I was with you, I wouldn’t get hurt. That I would be safe. But it didn’t change anything. I still got hurt. I still get harassed. I thought by being with an SA member, nobody would dare attack me, but nothing changed. I only used you for your status.” Hannelore sobbed. Oswald’s face didn’t move an inch. He simply sat on the bed, staring at Hannelore with wide eyes.

“Are you done?” He chirped. He treated this as if she was rambling about the weather. Hannelore looked up at him. He leaned forward, smiling.

“You look so ugly when you cry. You’re so much more beautiful when you smile.”

Hannelore used a knuckle to wipe her tears away.

“Did you hear anything I just said?” Hannelore asked, sniffing.

“Yep. Was anything supposed to change my mind?”

“I basically told you I used you for your uniform!” Hannelore barked. Oswald shook his head. He put his hand on hers, rubbing her skin with his thumb. Hannelore blushed slightly.

“That’s how it *started*, yeah. But tell me, if no one approved of our marriage, why did you still go through it?”

She paused. She meant to rebut quickly, but she had no response. He was right. She had more than enough opportunities to leave him. She could’ve ghosted him after the first date. She could’ve lied and said she was moving away. She could have broken things off with him at any time. But conveniently, every time those fleeting opportunities came, it would slip her mind. She thought about leaving, but Oswald’s radiant smile would lock her in place. His infectious laughter would glue her to the ground. And his uncanny, supernatural ability to be in the worst or scariest situations, and yet find some way to turn it into the best night of her life.

Oswald knew pretty much the whole time. It wasn’t a secret to him that Hannelore was initially interested in him for his position in the SA. Yet, he never cared. He was able to see the real her. The side that was a dork, that loved music, that made him laugh at her horrible jokes. Despite worrying about all of the ever-growing tensions in the country, she still stuck by her man. She was Hannelore Volkmann first, and a Jew last. But how would he get rid of those lingering anxieties?

Oswald found the cake that no one ate at the wedding. The SA members didn’t get anywhere near the cake in case one of the Jews had already touched it. Hannelore’s family never

took a slice of the cake because they were afraid that accidentally cutting off one of the Nazis would get them shot or beaten. He grabbed a big, sloppy handful of the off-white vanilla cake. Without warning, he flung it in Hannelore's face. She was taken aback, her face covered in frosting. She opened her mouth, only for Oswald to stuff more of the cake in her mouth. Hannelore closed her mouth, swallowing the cake. Oswald laughed, and Hannelore stared at him in disbelief. She leapt off the bed and ran toward the cake. She grabbed two handfuls of cake and threw it at Oswald, hitting him in the chest. The cake landed with a plop. They looked at each other, and Hannelore grinned.

"Ha! Take that, jerk!" Hannelore cheered. Oswald threw the cake off of himself and grabbed more cake, launching it at Hannelore. The two of them ran around the entire house, chasing each other and throwing cake. The house became a war zone. All the furniture was covered in white frosting, and the floors were littered with crumbs. Hannelore shrieked loudly, laughing. She jumped on the couch and hurled a fistful of cake at Oswald. He was knocked off his feet, falling backward. Hannelore jumped off the couch and tackled him. The two rolled on the floor, giggling. After a few minutes, they laid flat on the ground, catching their breath. Hannelore rested her head on Oswald. Their eyes were fixated on the ceiling, their breaths slowed down.

"See? This is the most beautiful I've seen you yet." Oswald whispered. Hannelore felt like the weight on her shoulders was lifted. She wrapped her arms around her husband, closing her eyes.

"The future has a new last name, and it's Volkmann." Hannelore cooed.

"That sounds dumb." Oswald retorted. Hannelore lightly hit him.

The two of them lay on the floor, their bodies intertwined with each other. Hannelore felt comforted, the first time in what seemed like years.

“Keep sticking to me, Ozzie.” Hannelore pleaded, her voice barely audible. Oswald rubbed her head, running his fingers through her hair.

“Like glue.” Oswald promised. He closed his eyes and relaxed, the sweet taste of cake in his mouth.