

## Johann Baumann

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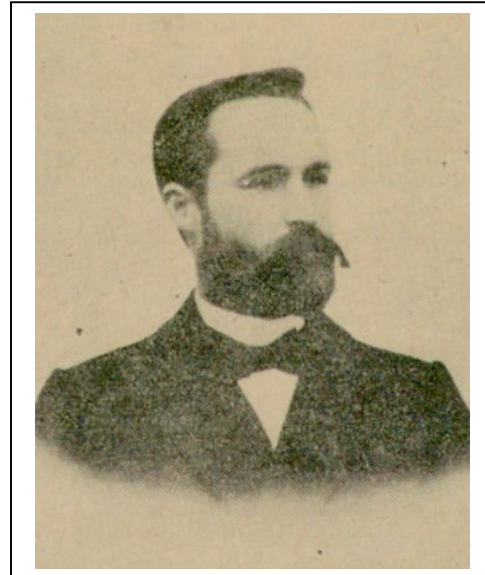
[Note: Comments in square brackets in the document are those of the translator.]

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[Translation Begins]

**Johannes Baumann**  
(A German-Bessarabian Author)

It was often said in the pre-war time that the German colonists had no writers, at least not ones who had done something significant. The purpose of these lines is to refute this. A man with a rare literary talent was our countryman Johannes Baumann, the author of the story printed elsewhere in this year's People's Calendar (*Volkskalender*): *Hostility and Friendship or G-sharp and the Kiss (D' Feindschaft und d' Freundschaft oder's Gis und d' Küß)*, that he published in



the *Odessa Newspaper (Odessaer Zeitung)* during his time under the pen-name of "Max Fels" wherein really natural and true lives and the way of our settler farmers are artistically portrayed before our eyes in the Swabian dialect—genuine folk poetry in the best sense of the word.

Himself originating from a colonist background, the train of thought and sentiments are also in accordance with the rural situations. He was born on 7 July, 1871 in Seimeni, Bessarabia, the son of the former Teplitz community clerk and Lichtental settler Johann Baumann and his wife Friederika, née Jergenz from Neuburg, Kherson Gouv. After finishing his studies at the Sarata Werner Central School, which he attended from 1885 to 1889, he was a teacher in the villages of Plotzk, Seimeni, Neu-Arzis, Peterstal and Lustdorf. After passing the home tutor teacher's exam (*Hauslehrerexamens*) in Odessa, he found employment first at the 1st and 2nd City School, and later, at the Technical Secondary School in Alexandrowsk on the Dnieper River. In that he was appointed to these positions shows that he was a gifted and capable pedagogue. On 7 May, 1892, he entered the state of matrimony with Antonie, née Eisele, from Friedensfeld, from which 4 sons and 4

daughters resulted. His wife and one son came to Friedensfeld already in 1917. He stayed behind in Alexandrowsk with 7 children. In January of 1922, a son and three daughters departed the Soviet paradise by crossing over on the ice of the frozen Dniestr River near Tighina, the youngest daughter having to be carried on the back of her siblings on account of sickness. Baumann, who fell ill of abdominal typhus on the flight, succumbed to his illness in October of 1921, in Petrichakowitsch near Tiraspol. He was being cared for faithfully by his oldest daughter during his serious illness, approaching his end very peaceful and in the living hope of eternal life. He wanted nothing more than to return to the Bessarabian homeland before his death, which, however, was not granted to him. Even his now 2 still existing sons, who have not allowed anything to be heard of them for years, have not allowed for that homecoming. The Soviet leaders know full well why they forbid their citizens to travel abroad. Baumann was also a victim of the “red plague.” Of his poetic skill and creativity we still could have anticipated many good things which would have been reckoned as a profit and contribution to the homeland literature.

[Translation Ends]

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On pages 91-99 of the same 1938 *Deutscher Volkskalender* (details noted above), there is a document referred to in the above translation as something written by Johann Baumann under his pseudonym (pen name) Max Fels. It is this document which is being translated below. Since the story is written in a dialect of German (Schwäbisch), the original will be retained for those who are still familiar with this dialect. My thanks to Elvire Necker, who actually lived in Bessarabia and spoke the dialect, in helping this North Dakota born “German” with his limited knowledge of this dialect.

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[Translation Begins]

**D Fri'dschaft und d Freu'dschaft,  
S Gis und d Küß  
Von Max Fels**

**The Hostility and the Friendship,  
The G-Sharp and the Kiss  
by Max Fels**

Wo geits en Bessarabien bei de Schwoba koine schöne Mädla? Des Dörfle möchte i sea, wenna au noch so kloie wär. Noch dene schöne Schwäbena hot scho manchs Stadtherrle, wo scho en a schwäbisch Dörfle guckt hot, soi Näsle und Zengle gspitzt und gsait: “Da möchte ich bald ein Dorfbursche sein.” Descht net zua vrwondra. Wisset er net, wia d Stadtfroila send! Manchsmol kriagt mer oina zsea, wenn dr Pfarr oder sonscht n Herr em Dorf aus dr Stadt Bsuaach hot. Send des au Mädla! I wills uich no sage; älle wisset doch net. Fuaßla—noi, vo dem will i nex

schwätza—kloine Füaßla sen au bei de Schwäbena schö. Laßt des au, wenn a Mädle drherbatscht wian a Kuah, wenn se em Dreck goht! Aber was bei de Stadtfroila ober ihra Poppafüaßla ischt, daugt foi alles nex.

Where among the Swabian people in Bessarabia are there no beautiful maidens? Such a village I would like to see, regardless of how small it might be. Many many a city fellow who has looked for such beautiful Swabian girls in a Swabian village, pointed his nose and tongue and said, “This is a place where I would almost like to be a village resident.” That’s nothing to be amazed about. Don’t you know how the city gals are! Sometimes a person gets to see one when the pastor or maybe a gentleman from the village has visitors from the city. Those young girls are something else! Let me tell you; not everybody knows. Little feet—no, I do not want to talk about them—the Swabian girls also have little feet. Imagine how that looks when a young gal stomps around like a cow, when she moves around in the muck! But what it is with the little doll feet of the city gals does not amount to all that much.

Noi, do ischts en Stillenga doch anderscht. Betrachtet amol d Stillenger Mädla am Sonntich Morga, wens en d Kirch läut, wia dia drhermarschieret, wia uf Droht. I sag uich, en dene steckt Leba vo Kopf bis en d Füaß. D Äugla blitzet no so noch alle Seit, und d Bäckla—koine gschmiarte, wia bei de Stadtfroila, —noi wia d rotbackich Äpfala, zom Küssa und Abeißa, und d Lippa rosarot, wia Bluat, und schnaufe deant d Stillenger Mädla net mit m Maul, noi wäger, gucket no mol ufs kugelrond Leible, no wisset ers. Vo de Hüfta will i gar nex adeuta, an dene fehlts jo koiner Schwäbe. Wemmer mit so ma Mädla mol am a Hochzichstag a Tänzle macht, no fallet oim net d Ärm rah, und mer spüarts au, was mer hebt.

Well, things are different in Stillenga. Consider once the Stillenga young women on a Sunday morning, when the church bells ring and they come marching in like on a wire. Let me tell you, they are full of life from head to foot. Their eyes flash on all sides, and the cheeks—no make-up, like the city women—red like apples, to be kissed and bitten into, and the lips bright red, like blood, and the Stillenga young women do not breathe with the mouth, now think about it, take a look at the bullet-round bodies, and you will understand. As for the hips, I will not hint anything about them since nothing is missing on any Swabian maiden. If one happens to have a little dance with such a girl on a wedding day, one’s arms do not drop down without experiencing what one is holding onto.

Aber wenn er noch Stillenga komma wäret und hättet noch de schöaschte Mädla gfrogt, no hätt mer uich no zwoi zoigt. s oint war s Frieders Mari und s ander s Mundles Mila. Moi, hättet ers Frieders Mari gsea, wenn se hemdsärmlich mit dr Wassergelt über d Stroßgloffla ischt! A Paar Prachtsärm, wia gossa! Und a Paar pechschwarze Zöpf henta nonter hanga! Und Auga, dia hättet uich durch und durch blitzt! Und d Stirn ischt vo de grulliche Härle wia mit m Hoilichaschoi oigrahmt gwea. —s Mundles Mila hot dr Mari nex rausgea. Ihr hättet er no mol en d Augs gucka sotta, no hättet er gnuag gsea: hemmelblo und klor wia der Hemmel bei Sonnaschoi noch ma graußa Gwitter. A Gsichtle vo Milch und Blaut mit ma Mäule untrem niedliche Näsle, grad grauß gnuag zom Kirscheassa, und d Hoor, wia dr frischghechelt Flachs, send em a dicke Zopf, mit ma bloa Bändele dra, henta nonter ghanga. Aber d Mila hot noch ebbes Schöaß a sich ghet: sie ischt bscheida gwea und net so vorlaut wia s Frieders Mari. Und bscheida müeßt mer soi, hot seller Pfarr gesait.

Now, if you were to come to Stillenga and asked about the most beautiful young women, we would have pointed out only two. One was Friederich's Maria and the other Mundle's Mila. Wow, you should have seen Friedrich's Maria when she walked across the street, sleeveless, with the water bucket! A pair of magnificent arms, like cast iron! And two pitch black pigtailed hanging down the back. And eyes which would have pierced you through and through! And the forehead with its curled hair as if framed with a halo. —Mundle's Mila did not lack anything compared to Maria. One only had to look in the eyes and he would have noticed enough: sky-blue and bright as the sky on a sunshining day right after a fierce thunderstorm. A face like milk and blood with a mouth underneath a dainty nose, just big enough to eat cherries, and the hair, like freshly combed flax, gathered in a thick braid with a blue ribbon and hanging down the back. However, Mila had something extra nice: she was modest and not as forward like Friedrich's Maria. And modest one has to be, some pastor had said.

Doch i will etzet uf da Sprung komma, sonscht weant er noch fuchtich.

But I want to now get to the point or else you will become angry.

Noch Stillenga ischt a nuier Proviser komma. Dr alt hot a mockliche Stillengere gfreit und no andre Stell agnomma. s ischt jo an ällbekannte Sach, wenn so a lediger Proviser ens Dorf kommt und an Zuitlang do ischt, daß no bsonders d Weibsleut acht geant, wo dr Proviser abeißa möcht. En dr Eascht ischt nex z merket gwea, und d Stillenger Schwätzbasana hent sich scho glangweit und gsait: "Descht oiner vo de Stille, dr woiß gar net, daß s zwoierloi Leut geit."

A new assistant teacher came to Stillenga. The old fellow pleased many in Stillenga and took on other positions. As everybody knows, when a single assistant teacher comes to a village and stays for quite some time, certain women-folk especially begin to consider where the assistant teacher might want to take a bite. At first, nothing special happened, and the gossiping aunties of Stillenga, already bored, began to say: "He is one of the quiet ones, he does not seem to know that there are two kinds of people."

Aber stille Wässerla, sait mer em Sprichwort, gründet tiaf, und so ischts au beim Proviser gwea. Vordrengisch und heiraterisch, wie d Mari war, hot ses emmer oizrichtet gwißt, daß ihr Weg en dr Näch vom Proviser vorbeiganga ischt. Gfalla hot er dr Mari arg, und ufn Schreiber oder Schuallehr hot se scho lang d Nas gspitzt. Oiner vo boide müaßts sei, sait se stachätzig zu ihre Kameädna, und wenn er no oin Fuaß häb. Und dr Proviser hot zwoi ghet und ischt emmer gschniagelt und büagelt drherkomma. Wemmer a schöas Vögele sieht, no guckt mer drnoch, und dr Proviser hot guckt und guckt, bis er em Hehlenga n Zuag und a Noigeng spürt und vo dene wuseliche Schwarzäugla en dr Nacht drehmt. Amol sait d Schualmoischtere noch oinera Däufe, wo d Mari Gvattere gstanda hot: "No, Herr Proviser, wie gfallt Ehna d Mari? Gellet, dia ischts Agucka wert." Dr Proviser, streicht sich d Stirn und daut, wie wenn er Wasser em Maul häb: "Hm, hm, a Blitzmädle!" — "Wann Se wöllet, kann i Ehna drzua vrhelfa, daß Se a bißle näher mit dr Mari zemma kommet", sait d Schulmoischtere. Aber dr Provisor moit: "Nein, nein, so schnell schießen die Preußen nicht." — "Hotz dauset, Sia send doch koi Preuß; Sia send doch an rechter Schwob, und dia send manchsmol schneller wie d Preußa. Spätzla und Knöpfla, Kraut, Stampfer und Schwoinefloisch und an guater Heaner= oder Gögelsbrota brengt d Mari

fertich; schöa und sauber ischt se, und so a Deßjatenela 25 kriagt se au amol. Was wöllet Se maih?" frogt d Schulmoischtere. Er wött se zeaschta amol a bißle vo weitem btrachta, no wurd mer scho sea, wia mer dr Hau an Stiel dreht, hot dr Proviser gmoit.

But still water, so a saying goes, runs deep, and that is how it was with the assistant teacher. Forward and bent on marriage, as Maria was, she always managed to have her path cross that of the assistant teacher. Maria really liked him and had already some time ago set her nose on a village clerk or a school teacher. It has to be one or the other, she told her companions in a stuck up manner, and even if he has only one leg. And the assistant teacher had two and always showed up neat and clothes pressed. When one sees a pretty little bird, one looks and looks, and the assistant teacher looked and looked until ultimately he experienced a tug and an inclination and dreamed of those quick black eyes during the night. Once, after a baptism, where Maria's father served as a sponsor, the school master's wife said: "So, assistant teacher, what do you think of Maria? For sure, she is worthy of consideration." The assistant teacher rubbed his forehead and acted as if he had water in his mouth: "Hm, hm, a flashy young gal!"—"If you like, I can help you out a little, so that you can get to come a little closer to Maria," the school master's wife said. But the assistant teacher replied: "No, no, a Prussian does not fire a shot so quickly."—"Oh come on, you are not a Prussian; you are a proper Swabian, and they are sometimes quicker than the Prussians. Maria can make spätzla and knöpfla, cabbage, mashed potatoes and pork and good roasted hen or rooster; she is nice and neat, and is due to receive 60 some acres of land. What are you waiting for?" the school master's wife asked. He would like to take a look at her from a distance for a little while, and then he would observe, like how one turns the handle of a hoe is what the assistant teacher meant.

A starker Manganet ischt aber d Mari gwea, und uf oimol hent d Dorfposchтена pischpert: "Wisset er ebbes Nuis? Dr Proviser ischt bei Frieders gwea." Des ischt so komma: dr Mari ihr Vatter, der Frieder, ischt zwoi Jahr en dr Zentralschual gwea und war arg blesa. Ohnesdes hot er gern Omgang mit Herraleut ghet, ischt au vo jeher a Freund vo de Schuallehrer gwea und hot se gern oiglada. An guata Woi, zuckerbachene Lebküachla und n guats Rauchzeug hot mer emmer beim gfonda. Und so ischts eba passiert, daß dr Proviser mit m Schuallehr zemma und au mol alloi da Frieder bsuacht hot. Freile hot er nex marka lau, daß s mit ra Absicht gschieht. Aber s Bluat ischt em doch ens Gsicht gstiega, wia d Mari a Flasch Woi und Zuabeiß reibrent, und beim Handgeh ischts em fürkomma, wia wenn d Mari an ganz bsondra Drücker en dr Hand häb. s Angele ischt em Wässerle ghanga, ob s Fischle abeißt und hanga bleibt, wurd sich ausweisa.

But Maria was a stronger magnet, and all at once the grape-vine whispering was: "Do you want to know something new? The assistant teacher has been at Friederich's place." It came about like this: Maria's father, Friederich, attended the Central School for two years and was very well read. Despite this, he liked to move around with high class people, and was always a friend of the school teachers and liked to invite them. One always experienced good wine, molasses baked goods and a time for good smoke stuff when with him. And so it happened that the assistant teacher visited Friederich, once along with the school teacher and once by himself. At first he never associated it with any ulterior motive. But blood did rush to his face when Maria brought in a bottle of wine and something to eat, and while shaking hands it occurred to him as if Maria offered a quite special squeeze of her hand. The worm on a hook was hung in the water; whether the fish would take the bait or leave it alone, that was yet to be seen.

“Und s Mundles Mila”, weant er froga, “hot n dr Proviser dia gar net gsea?” Gsea scho, aber er hot net gwißt, weam des Mädle ghairt. Ufgfalla ischt se em aber eascht am Kirweihsonntich, wo d Mädla aus dr Kirch ganga send. Er hot aber no mit m lenka Aug nomguckt, mit m rechta hot er müaßa uf d Nota gucka, weil en Stillenga d Mod gwea ischt, daß dr Proviser übers Kirchnausgeh a Liad spielt und des war s “Kapellaliad”; des hent d Stillenger gern ghairt. Mer könnt so schöa noch m Takt laufa, hent se gsait. Desmol ischts aber em Proviser ganga, wia sellem jonga Pfarr, so en soiner easchta Red stecka blieba ischt, weil d Mädle so arg vom Chor rahguckt häbet. Ganz stecka blieba sich dr Proviser grad net, aber hopplich gnuag ischts gwea, so daß er und d Leut dr Takt verlor a hent. Anstatt s “g” häb er s “gis” verwischt, sait er zom Schuallehr. Daß aber net s “gis”, sondern d Mila und ihre bloe Auga d Ursach waret, hot dr Proviser guat gwißt. Bei sich hot er dächt: des ischt d Strof furs Romgaffa en dr Kirch.

“And what about Mundle’s Mila,” you might ask, “Did the assistant teacher not take notice of her?” He noticed her, but he did not know to whom she belonged. Only on Church Dedication Sunday did he notice her as the young ladies were leaving the church. He did take a look out of his left eye, while with the right eye he had to keep focused on the notes, since it was the custom in Stillenga that the assistant teacher played a song while people left the church, and it was the “Choir Song” that the folks of Stillenga loved to hear. We can march out so nicely to the rythmn, is how they put it. This time, however, it happened to the assistant teacher like that young pastor, who, while giving his talk, got stuck, as the young ladies looked down intently from the choir loft. It is not that the assistant teacher stopped altogether, but it was just enough so that he and the people lost the rythmn. Instead of playing the note “G”, he played “G” sharp, he told the school teacher. But it was not the “G” sharp, as the assistant teacher well knew, but Mila and her blue eyes that were the reason. He thought to himself: this is the punishment for looking around in church.

Um dia Zeit ischt ebbes gschea, wo a Zsemmakomma zwischer em Schualmoischer und em Mundle omöglich gmacht hot. Dr Mundle ischt zom dritta Mol am Schulzaamt gwea und hot sich net wenig druf oibild. S hot n scho kröpft, daß d Schualmoischer zom Frieder und net zua ehm zeaschta komma send. Deszweg hot er vom nuia Proviser grengschätzich gmoit: “Der ka jo no net amol s Kapellaliad aus dr Kirch spiela.” Und über dr Schuallehr hot er net no an Pick, noi a siadicha Zorn ghet und denkt: “Wart, i will m zoiga, wer Schulz vo Stillenga ischt.”

Around this time something happened which made it impossible for the school master and Mundle to come together again. Mundle was at the mayor's office for a third time and took great effort to brag about himself. It bothered him that the school master had already come to Friedrich and not to him. He then made a belittling remark about the assistant teacher, saying, “He cannot even play the choir song in church.” But against the school teacher he not only had a grudge, no a boiling anger, leaving and thinking: “Just you wait, I will show him who is mayor of Stillenga.”

s Mundles hent nämle an gotzicha Bua ghet, und der ischt en d Schual ganga. Am a Nachmittag hot sichs zuatraga, daß d Schualerbuba vor der Schual am Bronna beim Wasserschöpfa mit m Bronnaschwengel Dommhoita machet. A paar hanget sich henta an da Stoi na und a paar schöpft noch, so daß de Hentera hoch en dr Luft hanget. Em Schulz soi Hannesle hot vorna

ziaga helfa. Uf oimol sprengt a paar weg, s Hannesle hookt mit m Überhemd a, und weil d Hentera am Stoi schwerer waret, fliagt s Hannesle voran en d Luft und zappelt. Lang ischts net so ghang. S Ueberhemed reißt ufzmol aus und—ploms, rutscht s Hannesle an dem glatta Stengle abe, und wenn soine Füass net grad en n Oimer komma wäret, wärs en da Bronna plomst und vrsoffa. Dia Schuldiche hent vom Schuallehr s Butterbrot henta druf gstricha kriagt, und s Hannesle war au drbei. Bei dera Prozedur hot s Hannesle wider a Dommheit gmacht, s hot beim Achgottschreia d Händ henta astatt vorna zsemmaglegt, und em Schualmoischer ischt s Oglück passiert, daß er mit dr Ruat em Hannesle uf da Fengernagel troffa hot, so arg, daß dr Nagel Schwarz und dr Fenger blo worra ischt. Weil s Hannesle gwißt hot, daß dr Vatter net bald ebbes uf soi Gotzicha komma laßt, ischt s hoim gloffa und hot da Hof nei an saumäßigs Gheul toa. Moi Mundle net faul, sprengt glei zom Schuallehr, schmeißt sich en d Bruscht und schreit: “Sie, Grobian, wisest Se nett, daß i Schulz ben und moi Bua selber halba tautschlaga ka, wenn i will! Brauchet Sia au an em romzprüaglet, wia am a Hond!” — so hot scharfe Außenandersetzenga gea. Dr Schuallehr hot sich zwar entschuldicht, er häb net mit Fleiß uf da Fenger troffa und dürft koi Onterschiad moacha, wens au s Schulza Hannesle sei. Aber dr Mundle ischt druf bstanda: “Sia müaßet wissa, wer Schultz vo Stillenga ischt! Wartet Se, i wur Ehna Zoiga, daß i au ebbes zsaga hau!” Mit dene Wortu hot dr Schulz d Tür zuagschlaga und ischt drvo. Em Schualmoischer wars net wohl bei dera Gschicht und er hätt gern ogschea gmacht, was gschea war, wens no ganga wär. Er hot gnau gwißt, daß n Kriag mit m Schulz für ehn net guat ausfallt, an wenn er oschuldich wär. Aber do war guater Rot teuer. Dr Schulz hot m net mol dankt, wenn n dr Schuallehr grüßht hot. s ganz Dorf hot drvo gschwätzt, und manche send em Schulz beigstanda und hent au agfanga, soi Liadle vom Ronterreiße und Nausschmeiße zsenget. Dr Mundle war au fescht entschlossa, em Schuallehr soi Macht spüara zlau.

The Mundles had an only boy and he attended school. So it happened one afternoon that the school boys were horsing around with the well handle used to fetch the water from the well by the school. A couple of them hung onto one end while a couple pulled the other end, so that the ones in the back end were hanging up in the air. The mayor's son, little Hans was up front and pulling. All of a sudden, a couple ran off and little Hans got caught by his shirt, and because the back end of the pole was heavier, little Hans was flung into the air, kicking. This did not last too long. The outer shirt ripped and—kaboom, little Hans slid off the smooth pole, and if his feet had not ended in a pail, he would have fallen into the well and drowned. The behinds of the culprits received a paddling like putting butter on bread, and little Hans was included. During the process, little Hans horsed around some more when, during the god-awful screaming, put his hands behind him instead of in front, and, unfortunately for the school master, the rod hit little Hans so hard on the fingernail that the nail turned black and the finger turned blue. Because little Hans knew that his father was not going to overlook so easily his one and only son, he walked home and was not slow in letting out a beastly howl. Our Mundle, not being hesitant, immediately ran over to the school teacher and boastingly screamed, “You, insolent fellow, don't you know that I am the mayor and I alone am the one who can beat my boy half to death, if I so choose! Do you also need to thrash him as if he were a dog!” — such were some of the harsh words that were spoken. The school teacher made his sincere apology, he had not hit the finger intentionally and he really could not discriminate, even if it was the mayor's little Hans. But Mundle insisted, “You need to know who the mayor of Sillenga is! You just wait and see, I will show you that I also have something to say!” With those words, the mayor slammed the door and left. The school master was not happy with what took place and would have gladly made

things right over what had happened, if only it would have been possible. He was well aware that to be at war with the mayor was not going to play out well for him, even though he was not guilty. But not much could be done here. The mayor did not even respond whenever the school teacher greeted him. The whole village talked about this and many stood by the mayor and also started to sing this song of tearing down and dismissing. Mundle was determined to let the school teacher experience his full power.

D Chrischtfeiertich send nemme weit gwea, und dr Sangerchor hot scho fleisich an de Weihnachtsliader guabt. Au dr Proviser ischt drbei gwea und hot mitgholfa. All Sonntich und Donnerschtich Obed hent sich d Madla und d jonge Manner en dr Schual vrsammelt. D Mari und d Mila waret au bei de Sangerena. Des mua mer saga, a Stemm hot d Mila ghet wia a Nachtigall, und uf maniche Gsangbuachliader hot se zwoi, drei Weisenga gsonga. Koi Wonder, ihra Urahne vo muaterseits ischt Schuallehr und a tuchtiger Sanger gwea. Au ihra Muater ischt mit m Schoasenga bhafft gwea, und deszweg ischt en Mundles Haus selte n Tag vrganga, wo mer net hatt d Mila ihra Muater senga haira.

The Christmas festivities were not far off and the choir was already seriously practicing the Christmas songs. The assistant teacher was also present and helped out. The young women and young men gathered in the school every Sunday and Thursday evening. Both Maria and Mila were part of the choir. Something more has to be said. Mila had a voice like a nightingale and, for some of the hymns, she had sung two or three melodies. No wonder, her great-grandfather on her mother’s side had been a school teacher and an excellent singer. Even her mother was good at singing and because of that seldom a day went by in the Mundle house where one did not hear Mila and her mother singing.

Dr Vatter hot s net leida wolla, da d Mila en d Sengstond goht, und hot gsait: “Der, soll sich selber senga, wenn er will. Du goscht mr net.” Aber do hattet er d Muater sotta haira: “Was”, sait se, “net senga? Des will i sea! Ubers Hannesle hoscht du zregieret und uber d Mila i. Uf d Chrischtfeiertich sengt mer oserm Herrgott, net em Schualmoischer. D Engel en dr hoilicha Nacht hent di au net gfrogt, ob se senga derfet, und mir froget di au net. Mila, no en s Gsang ganga!” So n arge Reschpekt d Stillenger vor ihrem Schulz ghet hent, so n graua not dr Stillenger Schulz als vor soim Weib, dr Hannabas, ghet. Da s desmol nex zhandlet geit en dera Sach, hot er am To gmerkt. Er brennt sich soi Pfeif a und goht naus. Doch ka er s net vrdrucka und brommt vor sich ane: “Weibsleut—lange Hoor—korzer Verstand—wisset doch n Drekc.” —“Du kascht bais sei oder net: d Mila goht oinaweg en d Sengata!” geit d Muater zruck.

The father was not going to allow Mila to attend choir practice, and said, “He can sing by himself, if he so desires. You are not attending.” But then he was to hear from the mother: “What,” she said, “not singing? I would like to see that! You can have your say over little Hans, but I will have mine over Mila. During the Christmas season, we sing to our Lord God, not to the school master. On that Holy Night, the angels also did not ask you whether they would be allowed to sing or not, and we are also not asking you. Mila is going to sing!” Just as the people of Stillenga held their mayor in high respect, in a similar way the Stillenga mayor had great respect for his wife, Hanna. He realized that he was not going to get his way in this matter. He lit his pipe and went out. However, he was unable to hold back and mumbled to himself:



“Women folk—long hair—little intellect—only know crap.” — “You can be angry, or not: One way or another, Mila is going to sing!” the mother said back to him.

D Mila ischt also en d Sengstond ganga. Des Jahr sen bsonders schöne Liader eigüabt worra, aber sia waret au schwer, bsonders für Bauramädla, wo net so guat d Nota kennet, wia d Stadtfroila, wo emmer ufm Fuaßharmone romklepparet. Wenn vor de Nota an Kreuzle gstanda ischt, hots äls net recht harmoniera wölla! Bsonders en dr zwoita Stemm, wo d Mila mitgsonga hot, ischt em a Liad a Schloif vom “g” ufs “gis” zmachet gwea. “Schuallehr, Ihr müaßet ons helfa, des Kreuzle macht ons Kreuz”, saget d Mädla. Aber der hot au mit m Baß und Tenor soi liabe Not geht. Deszweg sait dr Schuallehr: “Herr Provisor, seien Sie so freundlich und singen Sie mit der zweiten Stimme. Stellen Sie sich in die Mitte, damit die Mädchen Sie gut hören. Wenn die Mila mal fest ist, wird’s schon gehen”. Dr Proviser tuat des au, nimmt dr Mila ihr Notablättle an oim Zipfele und sia hebts am andera. “Passen Sie nur gut auf, meine Fräulein; ich werde zuerst allein singen, damit Ihnen der richtige Ton ins Ohr fällt”, sait er. “Moi, ka der herrisch schwätza”, sait s Müllers Kätter zu s Frieders Mari bei dr erschta Stemm. “Descht no nex”, sait dia und blost sich uf, “sottescht n haira, wenn er bei ons ischt. Dann sprecht er noch viel hochdeutscher”. “Paß no uf”, geit d Kätter zruck, “kommscht au scho drenei, wia sell Weib, wo s herrisch schwätza nemme hot könnä lau.”

Mila also attended the choir practice. This year, some really beautiful songs were practiced, but they were difficult, especially for the farm girls who were not so good at hitting the exact note like the city gals were, who were always working around a pump organ. When there was a little # by a note, the right harmony failed to come out! Especially in the alto, the part Mila was sing along with, there was a place in the song where there was a shift from a “G” to a “G” sharp. “School teacher, you have to help us out, the little # is making us clash,” the young ladies said. But he was paying particular attention to the bass and tenor parts. So the school teacher said, “Assistant teacher, please be so kind and sing with the altos. Stand in the middle so that you can hear the young women. Once Mila gets the hang of it, it will go good.” The assistant teacher went, took hold of the corner of Mila’s sheet music and she held the other. “Pay close attention, my young lady; I will sing it alone first of all, so that the right pitch can come to your ear,” he said. “Wow, how masterfully he speaks,” said Müller’s soprano Kattie to Friederich’s Mari. “That’s nothing,” she said and puffed herself up, “You should hear when he is at our place.” At that time, he speaks a lot of High German.” “You had better watch out,” Kattie came back, “it might just happen to you, like it did to that woman, where masterful talking was no longer half-hearted.”

A paar Obed hot dr Proviser müaßa helfa s “gis” senga und je öfter s fürkomma ischt, je liaber hot er s to. Afangs hot dr Mila ihra Stemm emmer a bißle zittert, und mit m Treffa ischt s net weit her gwea. A Roß häb vier Füaß und stolpert au, sait se. “Freilich”, sait dr Proviser, “es ist noch kein Meister vom Himmel gefallen.” Wenn er aber soi Arm so an dr Mila ihrn aglehnt hot, no ischt em en wohlichs Gfüahl komma und soi Stemm hot no au zittert. —Proviserle, Proviserle, siascht etzet eascht, wer neber dr stoht? Gell, dr Mila ihra schöne blonde Zöpf und die feine rosarote, sammetglatte Bäckla hent dirs ato! Was moischt, wia uf dene a Küaßle schmecka möcht? A “gis” mit dr Mila senga ischt schon a wonnichts Gefüahl, aber a paar Küß uf des rosich Mäule tätet di en de siabata Hemmel schmeißa. Proviserle, hoscht scho z tiaf en de bloe Auga guckt, kommscht nemme los!

The assistant teacher had to help sing the “G” sharp a couple of evenings, and the more often the need arose, the more ready he was to do it. At first, Mila’s voice always wavered a little, and she was not able to hit the note right on. A horse has four feet, but it can stumble, she said. “For sure,” the assistant teacher said, “no master has simply fallen out of the sky.” However, when he put his arm against that of Mila, good feelings came over him and even his voice began to waver. — Assistant teacher, assistant teacher, have you only noticed now next to whom you are standing? Isn’t that right? Mila’s beautiful blond braids and her rosy red, velvety cheeks have done that to you! Are you imagining what a little kiss on them would taste like? To sing a “G” sharp with Mila is already a wonderful feeling, but a couple of kisses on the red lips would send you into seventh heaven. Assistant teacher, you have already looked too deeply into those blue eyes, you will never free yourself!

Wian amol a ma Obed dia Mädla vo dr Sengstond hoimganget, kommet ufzmol Stroßabuaba und wöllet dia Mädla fanga. D vorderschte hent scho agfanga zgrillet. Wia d Mila henta des hairt, sprengt se, hosch me gsea, stracks zom Schualtörle nei und klopft bei dr Schualmoischtere am Fenschter, sie soll ufmacha. “Bischt du des, Mila?” frogt dia, wia se d Tüar ufmacht. “Was ischt passiert? Du bischt jo em Schnaufa dreina, und zitterscht am ganza Leib.” —“D Buaba send ons nochganga!” sait dia, “und do bene eba en da eascht bescht Hof nei gloffa.” Über des ischt au dr Schuallehr mit m Proviser akomma. Wia er d Mila sieht, sait er: “Nun, Fräulein Mila, welcher gute Engel hat Sie hierher gebracht?” —“Net Engel—Deifel,” sait d Mila, “d Stroßabuaba.” Aber dr Provisor hot em stille denkt, desmol seiets grad koine Deifel gwea. Wie se a paar Vatteronser lang urzählt hent, sait d Mila: “Wia komm i etzet hoim? Dia Saumäga steant amend und lauret me a.” s sei net gfehlt, moit d Schuallehrere, dr Proviser könnit jo mitgeh. En dr Stadt ischt jo des nex Args, wenn amol so a jongs Herrle mit ma Froile hoimgoht, aber em Dorf geits glei ebbes zschwätzet, bsonders wenna am Obeds gschieht. Deszweg hot sich d Mila an a bißle gwehrt, aber dr Schualmoischer sait, do sei ezet nex z machete; alloi liaß er se net geh “Ha, no ganget mer”, moit d Mila, und em Proviser hot s Herzle klopft. Proviserle, sei no koi Hasafuß, und tua da Brei aus em Maul, daß d a Wörtle schwätza kascht. D Bira hanget honta, kascht se langa, wenn d koi Schlofkapp bischt.

There was this one evening, when the young women were heading home from choir practice, when all of a sudden some boys in the street came up in order to catch the girls. The ones farthest ahead already started to scream. When Mila, in the rear, heard this, she ran, believe you me, straight through the school gate and knocked on the window of the school master’s wife so that she should open up. “Is that you, Mila?” she asked, just as she opened the door. “What has happened? You are breathing so heavily and your whole body is shaking.” — “The boys chased us!” she said, “and so I entered into the nearest best yard.” Just then, the school teacher came along with the assistant teacher. As soon as he saw Mila, he said: “Now, Miss Mila, which good angel is responsible for bringing you here?” — “No, not an angel—a devil,” Mila replied, “the boys in the street.” But the assistant teacher was thinking silently to himself, this time it was just not a devil. After saying a few long Our Fathers, Mila said: “Now, how am I going to get home? The trouble-makers are hanging around and waiting for me.” “No problem,” says the school teacher, “the assistant teacher can go with you.” In the city, such a thing is nothing special if a young man goes home with a young woman, but in the village there is always something to gossip about right away, especially if this happens during the evening. Because of

this, Mila was a bit hesitant, but the school master said that nothing should be made of this; he was not going to let her go on her own. "Okay, so we are going to go," said Mila, and the assistant teacher's heart began pounding. O assistant teacher, don't be such a rabbit's foot, and get the drooling out of your mouth, so that you are able to say something. Your pears are hanging out there, you can reach them if you do not end up being a sleepy head.

s Schulza hent ganz em Onterdorf gwohnt. Des war em Proviser arg recht, und er hot dächt: Wenn no em Schulz soi Haus n Has wär und drvo laufa tät, oder s wenichscht a Krott, wo furthopft. s Schnellaufa ischt zom Glück net ganga, s war a bißle Glatteis. Kaum send se a paar Schrittl ganga gwea, no glitscht d Mila aus. "Hoppa, schiergar hätt i da Boda kußt!" sait se. "Fräulein Mila, geben Si emir doch Ihren Arm, und halten Sie sich fest, dann können Sie und ich besser gehen" —Uf viere zsemma, sei scho besser wia uf zwoi alloi, seit se und schiabt ihra Arm em Proviser soi. Ezzet ischt en dem scho d Kurasch a bißle gstiega. Er packt ihra Hand und hebt se fescht. Und so ganget se a paar Hostella weit. Uf oimol ischts em Proviser gwea, wia wenn n dr Dauma, wo uf dr Mila ihrem Zoigefenger glega ischt, beißa tät, und er schiabt n a paarmol rom und nom. Do hot em aber s Herzle so bockelt, und s Wasser ischt m em Maul zsemmagloffa, daß er n loisa Huaschter hot müaßa to. A sottiche Zeichasproch vrstandet au d Bauremädle guat. D Antwort ischt net ausbliaba. Er hot guat gspüart, wis dr Mila ihra Hand oimol übers ander an Zucker macht. Des Zucka ischt bei dr Mila jo net mit Willa und Absicht gschea, aber er müaßet wissa, daß so a achtzehnhährichs Bauramädle au vo Fleisch und Bluat und net von Stoi ischt. Obs noch weit sei, frogt dr Proviser. "Fenf oder sechs Häuser", sait d Mila. No sait er: "Mila, Sie haben eine schöne Stimme, das "gis" werde ich Ihnen schon singen helfen." —"Dia Schloif ischt foi schwer", sait se —"Sie werden sich doch nicht der Straßenjungen wegen zurückhalten lassen vom Singen? Das würde mir sehr leid tun", moit dr Proviser. "Meinet Se?" frogt d Mila wia vrwondert. —"O ja, liebes Fräulein Mila! Ich bin schon so recht daran gewöhnt, Sie dort zu sehen, und wenn Sie mir ein klein wenig gut sind, dann kommen Sie, bitte, bitte!" Des sait er mit so ma liabreicha To, daß dr Mila s Herzle weich gworra ischt, und sia sait mitloidich: "Ha, i komm widder, und bais bene Ehne au net." Do hots dr Proviser nemme ausghalta und selber net recht gwißt, was er tuat, aber soi Hand hot zittert und dr Mila ihra noch feschter ghalta. —"Do muaß i nei, descht oser Hof", sait d Mila —"Ach schon!" seufzget dr Proviser. Sia bleibt am Hausgiebel steh. Aber horchet! Do klopf d Haustür uf und zua "Moi, wenn ons ebber sieht!" fahrt d Mila zsemma. Do ischt em Proviser dr Gaul voll ganz durchganga, und eb sich d Mila vrsieht, fahrt soi lenke Hand om ihra Hals, und er druckt er zwoi "gis"—noi—zwoi Küß uf des zuckersüaß Mäule und pischpert lois: "Ach, Mila, Ich—Ich—hab Sie lieb, sterbenslieb. —"Gute Nacht!" Und fort ischt er, zom Törle naus und en dr donkla Nacht vrschwonda.

The mayor lived all the way down at the lower part of the village. The assistant teacher liked this and he was thinking: If the mayor's house only were a rabbit and it would run off, or, at the very least, a frog, which would hop away. There was no chance to run fast because the way was a little slippery. They had hardly gone a few steps when Mila slipped. "Whoops. I almost kissed the ground!" she said. "Miss Mila, give me your arm and hold on tight, then you and I can move forward better." — "On four feet together is much better than on two alone," she said and slid her arm into the arm of the assistant teacher. Now he became a little more courageous. He took hold of her hand and held it tight. And so they went a few houses farther. All of a sudden it seemed to the assistant teacher as if the thumb, on which Mila had placed her pointer

finger, was itching, and he moved it back and forth a few times. But this caused his heart to beat faster, and his mouth to water, which caused him to make a quiet cough. This kind of expression was well understood by the farm girls. A response was forth-coming. He felt it well, how Mila's hand trembled again and again. The twitch in Mila's case was not willful or by design, but he had to know that a farm girl of 18 years was made of flesh and blood and not of stone. "Is it much farther," the assistant teacher asked. "Five or six houses," Mila said. Then he said: "Mila, you have a beautiful voice, I will help you to be able to sing that "G" sharp." — "That part is quite difficult," she said. — "You are not going to let those street kids keep you from singing, are you? That would really make me sad," the assistant teacher replied. "You mean that?" Mila asked in bewilderment. — "O yes, dear Miss Mila! I have gotten so used to seeing you there and if you would just do me this little favor, then come, please, please!" He said that with so much fervor that Mila's heart grew weak and she said compassionately: "Okay, I am coming again, and I am not angry with you." Now the assistant teacher no longer held back and did not himself rightly understand what he was doing, but his hand twitched and held on even more firmly to Mila's hand. — "Here is where I have to enter, this is our yard," said Mila. — "Oh my, already!" the assistant teacher sighed. She stayed standing at the gable end of the house. But listen! The house door banged open and shut. "Oh my, if anyone should see us!" Mila said with a startle. Then the assistant teacher totally lost it and before Mila knew what was happening, he thrust his left hand around her neck and pushed two "G" sharps—Oh no—two kisses on the sugar sweet mouth and blurted out: "Oh, Mila, I—I—love you with a dying love. — "Good Night!" And he was gone, out of the gate and disappeared into the dark of the night.

Dr Schulz ischt emmer noch über da Schualmoischerer bais gwea. D Hannabas hot die Sach gleich net so ernscht ufgnomma. "Dene Daugener ghairt äls", sait se, "und dr Schuallehr wurd jo net so bais gmoint hau." D Mila hot er au scho a bißle beicht ghet, wia dr Schuallehr zom Proviser gsait hot, er soll ehne s "gis" helfa senga. "Vo de "gis" oder Küß, wia mer sait, hent mir nex gwißt; mir hent au net uf Nota gsonga. Ons hot dr Ähne uf dr Fiedel vorgspielt, und no hemmer nochgsonga", sait d Muater. "Send uich au äls d Buaba nochganga, wenn er vo dr Sengete hoim send?" frogt d Mila. "Jo, send se uich scho nochganga?" "Sell will i wissa", geit d Mila zruh. "Ischt au äls fürkomma", sait d Muater. "Wer ischt no mit uich hoimganga?" macht d Mila furt. "Mit weam? Mit Mir? – dr Vater. Mit dir ischt amend au scho oiner hoimganga? forsch d Muater nuschierich. D Mila wurd rot und sait nex. "Mädle, mach mer koine Gschpuchta! Gell, i hans troffa? Daß i nex Schlecths vo dr zhairt krieg! Gstehts no!" drängt etzet d Muater. — "Er ischt no bis an oser Törle mitganga", geit d Mila schüchtrich zua.— Soo? bis ans Törle, — ischts net weit gnuag? Wer ischts gwea, frog i di?" wurd Muater ogeduldich. Do stottret d Mila: "Ha, dr—dr—dr--, Muater, i sags net, —dr—dr Schuallehr hot jo gsait, er soll mit mer gau, daß i koi Angscht häb vor de Straßabuaba." — "Ha doch net?" Gwieß, Muater; no ischt er mit, dr—dr Proviser", ischts der Mila vom Herz gfalla. Uf dia Beicht hot d Muater weiter nex gsait wia: "Guck au, hätts net dächt!"

The mayor was still angry with the school master. Aunt Hanna had not immediately taken the matter so seriously. "These fellows ought to get it once in a while," she said, "and the school teacher did not mean it in a bad way." Mila had already given her a bit of a confession, how the school teacher had said to the assistant teacher that he should help her to sing the "G" sharp. "Whether a "G" sharp or a kiss, as we say, we knew nothing about that; we also did not read notes. Our grandfather played on the fiddle, and then we sang along," said the mother. "Did the

boys also chase after you when you headed home after singing?” asked Mila. “Well, did they chase after you?” “That is what I want to know,” Mila replied. “That did happen,” said mother. “So who then came home with you?” Mila kept on. “Who? With me? – Father. So did someone also come home with you?” mother inquired curiously. Mila turned red and said nothing. “Girl, don’t give me any guff! I guessed it, didn’t I? I just do not want to hear something bad about you! — Confess!” mother now pressed. “He only accompanied me up to our gate,” Mila replied shyly. — “Sooo? Up to the gate, — It didn’t go any further than that? Who was it, I am asking you?” mother said impatiently. With that Mila stuttered: “Ah, it was—it was—it was, mother, I’m not going to say, — it was—the school teacher was the one who said, he should go with me so that I wouldn’t have any anxiety about the boys in the street.” — “Oh, Really?” “Really, mother; so he came along, the—the assistant teacher,” it fell from Mila’s heart. Concerning the confession, the mother had nothing more to say than: “Well, I never suspected that!”

An dem Tag, wo d Mila vo dr Muater en d Beicht gnomma worda ischt, war dr Vatter net drhoim. Eascht Obeds kommt er mit ma Schwätzerle hoim und biat dr Muater an guaten Obed, wian er zuar Tüar neikommt. D Muater steht grad am Kuchatisch und spüalts Gschirr vom Obedessa. Sia guckt n mit ma schiafa Blick vo dr Seit a und sait nex uf den süaßa Gruaß. Scho am To hot ses gmerkt, zweger was dr Vatter so froidlich ischt.

On the day when it happened that Mila made her confession to her mother, the father was not at home. It was evening when he came home with some small talk as he came through the door and greeted mother. The mother was in the kitchen and was washing up the dishes from the evening meal. She gave him a quick look from the side and replied nothing to the sweet greeting. At that sound, she knew already why father was so happy.

“Muater, wurscht doch net baise sei?” sait er.

“Mother, you shouldn’t be angry?” he said

“Worom soll i net. Huit morget bischt furt, glei noch m Essa. Mer richts Mittag—du kommscht net. Mer stellts Essa ens Öfele—du kommscht net. Zom Obedessa bischt noch net do. Moischt i wur dr etztle extra brätschla und uftischla? Wer net kommt zua rechta Zeit, muaß essa, was übriich bleibt. Aber des mol wurscht net fett drvo. s ischt alles drufganga!” sait d Muater gurrich.

“Why shouldn’t I. You left this morning right after eating. And you did not show up at noon. I left the food in the oven—you did not show up. You were not even here for the evening meal. Do you expect me to fry up a little extra and dish it out? He who does not show up at the right time has to eat what is left over. However, this time around you won’t get too fat from it. Everything was eaten!” mother said cooingly.

“Ha no, was wurd no sei; i hau so koi rechta Honger.”

“Oh well, be that as it may; I’m not really hungry.”

“Jo, jo, i merks, und Durscht noch viel wenicher.”

“Sure, sure, I noticed, and thirsty even less.”

“Durscht?” stachätzt dr Vatter und ruaft: “Hannesle, geh, hole m Vatter a Fläschle Woi ruf! Weller Bauer hot koi Durscht, wenn er Woi em Keller hot!”

“Thirst?” the father bristled: “Hans, go fetch your father a bottle of wine! What farmer has no thirst when he has wine in the cellar!”

“Nex do!” säit d Muater. Dr Keller ischt scho verschlossa. Hoscht so scho a Gsicht wie dr Vollmo. I moi emmer, du brengschts noch so weit, daß d mol en dr Versammleng abbitta muscht. Wurscht doi Fett kriaga, wens d Brüader amol hairet. Ischt des au forn Schulz, da ganza Tag net hoimgoh. Wärscht liaber glei bis morga bliaba.”

“No way!” said mother. “The cellar is already locked. You already have a face like a full moon. I’m telling you, you are going to go so far that one day you will have to ask for forgiveness at the prayer meeting. You will get your punishment once the brethren hear about it. What kind of mayor is this who does not go home the whole day. You might as well have stayed away until tomorrow.”

“Sell wur i blieba lau. So viel Liab hau i noch zua dr, daß i z Obed hoimkomm. I woiß net, was d hoscht, wenn i mol n Tag net do ben. Zua was halt i Knecht und Magd? Dia könnet gewieß schaffa, was z schaffet ischt. I ben bei de Hauptmänner gwea und hau me berota, was mer macht mit m Schuallehr. Dia moinet au entsweder rahreißa oder nausschaffa. Selber gang er jo doch net. Was ischt n der? I wur em au uf da Fenger klopf.”

“That I will not do. I love you so much that I come home in the evening. I have no idea how you will be when for one day I won’t be here. Why do I have a hired man and a maid? They can certainly do the work that has to be done. I was with the community leaders and discussed what should be done with the school teacher. They are considering whether to tear him down or get rid of him. He is not going to leave on his own. Who does he think he is? I am also going to wack him on the finger.”

“Du hoscht ällweil no emmer mit m Schualmoischer z toa. Vom Spätjohr an lieget ihr Baura uf dr faula Haut und wißet net, wie da Wenter rombrenge, no beißt er weger em jeda Katzadreckle an dia Schuallehr und Schreiber rom und machete n s Leaba sauer. Wär i no Schuallehr und könnt so schreiba, i tät uich da Roscht no anderscht ra. Dr Schuallehr muaß sich mit ra Halt Kender romärgra und ihr hocket drweilcht an dr Woiflasch und langet übern raus.”

“You still have something to do with the school master. From Fall on, you farmers have lain around on your lazy hides and don’t know how to pass the winter, but for the most insignificant reason you accuse the school teacher and clerk and make their lives bitter. If I only were the school teacher and able to write, I would really take off your rust (pride). The school teacher has to struggle with the care of children while you sit around with the wine bottle and talk about what to do with him.”

D Red vo dr Muater ischt m Mundle doch a bißle spitzich und stichlich fürkomma, und er fangt em Schulzato a: “Wia? — Mit wem soim Löffel hascht den du uf oimal d Weisheit und dr Verstand gfressa? Mer moit, du seischt em Schuallehr soi Avikat. I ben Schulz und so muaß s sei, wian i s hau will. Wenn er druffa ischt, wean mer dich denga; hoscht jo au noch Schualmoischtersblaut en dr stecka. I wur scho s Doppelt zahla, wenn se dich wöllet.”

What the mother said came across to Mundle as a little sharp and prickly, and he started off in his mayoral manner: “What? — With whose spoon have you all of a sudden eaten wisdom and understanding? I mean, you seem to be the school teacher’s advocate. I am the mayor and that is how it has to be, as I want it. When he is gone, we will hire you; you have school master blood in you too. I will pay double if they want you.”

Wia dr Schulz des sait, no fangt aber d Hannabas em Schweschterto a, und schwätzt vo dr Bruscht: “Horch, Hannes”, sait se, “i sag nex maih, aber des will ich dir noch saga: Du willscht n Bruader sei und haltscht Versammleng und hoscht drbei so an oversöhntiche Senn. Weil s Hannesle a paar Pätscherla kriagt hot, deszweg schmeißt mer koi Ma mit Familie naus. Hoscht du net au doine Fehler? Brauchscht du dene Leut s Herz schwer macha? Moischt, dia hörets net, wia du henter ehne graba tuascht. Des ischt net dr richtig Weg. Eascht gerscht ben i mit dr Schualleherer en dr Lafka zsamma troffa, no ischt se ganz froidlich gwea, hot mi oiglada, i soll se doch mol widder bsuacha, sie häb doch nex mit mr ghet und sei doch net schuld, daß ihr zwoi onois send. I hau nex mit dene Leut, und hau er au vrsprocha, daß i komm, und des gschiaht morga nochmittag, ob s dir paßt oder net. Do beißt koi Maus maih en Fada ab.”

The mayor having said his piece, now Hanna began to speak like a sister of the prayer meeting and spoke from her heart: “Listen, Hannes,” she said, “I am not going to say much, but this I still want to say: You want to be a brother of the prayer meeting and yet you have such an irreconcilable mind. Just because little Hans got a couple of slaps, you do not throw out the whole family. Don’t you also have your own mistakes? Do you have to make the hearts of these people so heavy? Don’t you think that they hear how you are digging their graves behind their backs. That is not the right way. Just yesterday, I met up with the school teacher’s wife in the store and she was very friendly, invited me over, I should stop by once and visit, she had nothing against me and it certainly is not her fault that the two of you are at odds. I have nothing against those folks and promised her that I would come, and that is going to happen tomorrow afternoon, whether you like it or not. No mouse is going to chew off a thread.”

“Ontersteh dihs net!” sait dr Hannes, aber nemme so recht mit ra Schulzastemm.

“Don’t you dare!” Hannes said, but not so much any more in a mayor’s voice.

“I wur de net froga”, sait d Schulze und goht en d Kammer noi.

“I am not going to ask you,” said the mayor’s wife, and went into the sitting room.

s ischt Chrischnachtobed. Uf den hent d Stillenger viel ghalta. Wer am heilicha Obed net en d Kirch goht, hent se gsait, ischt scho a ganzer Heid. Und was für n schöana Chrischtobed wars desmol, wiar net emmer en Bessarabien ischt. Alles war mit Schnee bdeckt. D Böm send

dogstanda mit Schneeflocka überzoga und hent glitzert viel schöner wie d Chrischtböm en de Häuser. Und dr Mo hot vom Hemmel rahguckt mit so ma amuaticha Gsicht, und d Sternla hent gfunkelt, wie wenn se saga wöttet: “Ihr Menschla do onta, send ihr glückliche Leut, daß ihr Chrischtobed feira könntet.” Und mittla em Dorf zoigt dr Kirchaturm hoch zum Hemmel nuf, wie wenn er saga wött: “Gucket no ihr Strenla, und seant, d Stillenger send koine gottlause Leut, sia wisset, daß heilicher Obed ischt”. Und bimbam, bimbam schalts vom Turm über Stillenga und d schneebedeckta Äcker. Aus alle Häuser laufet d Leut en d Kirch und wie d Glocka zum dritta Mol ihr Weihnachtsgläut ahebet, do ischt scho koi Plätzle maih leer. D Lichter am Kroleuchter und Chrischtbom flemmeret und glitzeret und überm Altar hangt a Laternabild mit em Spruch en allerhand Farba: “Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe und Friede auf Erden” daß mers vo dr henterschta Bank leasa ka. D Schualkender kommet paarwois rei und stellet sich um da Chrischtbom rom. No ischts still. Dr Proviser tuat a schöas Orgelspiel, und no stemmt dr Sängerchor “Es waren Hirten zu Bethlehem” a und zletscht ischt er überganga en “Ehre sei Gott”, wo s heißt: “und Friede auf Erden und Friede auf Erden.” No hent d Leut “Dies ist die Nacht” gsonga, und dr Schualmoischer hot a Red toa, wo s zum Schulz ghoißa hot: “Friede mit Gott, Friede im Herzen, Friede im Haus und Friede mit dem Nächsten und dann erst Friede auf Erden.” Au d Kender hent ihra Sprüchle gsait und “Stille Nacht” und “O du fröhliche” gsonga. Amend hot dr Sängerchor agstemmt das schöa Liad:

“Heilige Nacht, o gieße du Himmelsfrieden in mein Herz!  
Bring dem armen Pilger Ruh, holde Labung seinem Schmerz!  
Hell schon erglühn die Sterne, blinken aus blauer Ferne;  
Möchte zu euch so gerne ziehn himmelswärts.”

It's Christmas Eve. The people of Stillenga made much of it. Whoever does not go to church on this holy evening, so they say, is a total heathen. And what a beautiful Christmas Eve this one was, like not often in Bessarabia. Everything was covered with snow. The trees stood there, covered with snowflakes and glistened more beautiful than the Christmas trees in the houses. And the moon shone from the sky with such a graceful face, and the stars twinkled as if they wanted to say: “You people down there, you are lucky people, that you can celebrate Christmas Eve.” And in the middle of the village, the church steeple pointed high into the sky, as if to say: “Look here you stars, and see, the people of Stillenga are not a godless people, they know how holy the evening is. And ding dong, ding dong, the sounds come from the tower over Stillenga and the snow covered fields. Out of every house come the people as they walk to the church and as the bells ring their Christmas peal for the third time, there is no empty place to seat anyone anymore. The lights on the chandelier and the Christmas tree flicker and glisten and over the altar hangs the picture of a lantern with a verse in all kinds of colors: “Glory be to God in the highest and peace on earth” large enough for people even in the back row to read. The school children come in two by two and stand around the Christmas tree. Now everything is quiet. The assistant teacher plays some beautiful music on the organ and then the choir begins “There were Shepherds in Bethlehem: and at the end he transitioned to “Praise be to God,” where it says “and peace on earth and peace on earth.” And the people sang “This is the Night”, and the school master gave a talk which the mayor considered as applying to himself: “Peace with God, Peace in the Heart, Peace in the House and Peace with those around you and then, finally, Peace on Earth.” The children also said their little verses and sang “Silent Night” and “O How Joyfully.” At the end, the choir began the beautiful song:



“Holy Night, oh pour the heavenly peace in my heart!  
Bring rest to the poor pilgrim, provide comfort in his sorrow!  
The stars are already shining bright, blinking in the distant blue;  
Desiring so much to draw you heavenward.”

Uf dr drittletschta Bank ischt a Ma gnessa, dem hot des Wort “Friede” Oruah gmacht. “Friede, Friede” hots em emmer en dia Ohra klonga.

Someone sitting in the third to last bench had trouble with the word “Peace.” “Peace, Peace” kept on ranging in his ears.

“So schöa ischt dr Chrischtobed noch nia z Stillenga gwea”, hent d Leut beim Hoimgeh gsait. “Dr Schualmoischer hot sich viel Müah gea.”

Never was there ever such a beautiful Christmas Eve in Stillenga,” the people said as they returned to their homes. “The school master put a lot of effort into it.”

Eb dr Schuallehr von dr Kirch hoimkommt, ischt bei ehm en dr Stuab a Ma gesessa und hot ufn gwart. Wia dr Schuallehr d Tür ufmacht, ischt er net wenig vrschrocka. Eb er no s “Guten Abend” rausbrennt, stoht dr Ma vor em und sait “Guatn Obed, Herr Schuallehr, am Chrischtobed! Do ischt moi Hand, mir wöllet Frieda macha, so hent mer heut Obed ghairt: Friede uf Erda, Frieda mit Gott und Frieda mit m Nächschta. Verzeiht mer, s soll alles vrgessa sei, wenn Se mit oinich sen.” Do send em Schualmoischer d Froidaträna en d Auga komma und er sait, er sei scho lang mit oinich und freu sich, daß s grad am Chrischtobed soweit komma sei, und er glaub, son schöna Chrischtobed hää er noch nia gfeiert. — So hent sich dia zwoi wichtichschte Männer en dr Stillenger Gmoid widder vrainicht und d Bruaderhand gea. Beim Furtgeh sait dr Schulz: “Schuallehr, kommet Se doch morga Obed mit dr Schuallehrer zua ons uf n Weihnachtsbsuach!” — “Mit größtem Vergnügen, Herr Schulz!” geit dr Schuallehr zruck.

Even before the school teacher returned home from the church, someone was sitting in his sitting room and was waiting for him. As the school teacher opened the door, he was shocked. Even before he was able to say “Good Evening,” the man stood in front of him and said “Good Evening, Mr. School Teacher, on this Christmas Evening! Here is my hand, I want to make peace, just as we heard this evening: Peace on Earth, Peace with God and Peace with our neighbor. Forgive me, everything should be forgotten, if you are okay with that.” Tears of joy came into the eyes of the school master and he said that he had already been at one with him and was so happy that things came about in such a way on this Christmas Eve, and he believed that he had never ever celebrated such a wonderful Christmas Eve. — And so these two important men in the Stillenga community reconciled and extended their hands of brotherhood. Upon departing, the mayor said: “School teacher, come to our place tomorrow night for a Christmas visit and bring you wife, too!” — “With great pleasure, Mr. Mayor!” the school teacher replied.

Gega de Proviser hot der Mundle au nex maih ghet, sitter m d Muater gsait hot, daß sui de Proviser amol bei dr Mila en dr Stuab troffa hää, wia se vo dr Versammleng hoimkomma ischt, und daß er se gfrogt hää, ob er d Mila hoimbegleita därf, wenn se vo dr Sengete hoimgang, und

daß se s ehm vrlaubt häb, weil er doch koi orechter Mensch sei und weil d Mila alloi Angscht häb hoimzgeant.

Mundle also no longer had anything against the assistant teacher, ever since the mother had told him how she had met up with the assistant teacher and Mila in the living room one time when she returned from a prayer meeting, and that he had asked her if it was okay for him to accompany Mila to her house when she returns home after choir practice, and that she consented because he was not a bad fellow and because Mila was frightened to walk home alone.

[Translation Ends]