

evil as you. Only, one's sleep has gone to the devil, and the wind is playing the organ again in the willow stumps. So again there remains only the white breast of philosophy, darkness, wetness, to our blessed end; and even among old women, only second sight.

BAAL: In this wind you don't need brandy, you're drunk already. I see the world in a mellow light: it is the Lord God's excrement.

EKART: The Lord God, who sufficiently declared his true nature once and for all in combining the sexual organ with the urinary tract!

BAAL (*lying on the ground*): It is all so beautiful.

Wind.

EKART: The willows are like rotten stumps of teeth in the black mouth of the sky.—I'll be starting on my Mass soon.

BAAL: Finished your quartet?

EKART: Where would I find the time?

Wind.

BAAL: There's a redhead, a pale one. You maul her, don't you?

EKART: She has a soft white body and comes to the willows at noon. The willows have branches that hang down like hair. We fuck in there like squirrels.

BAAL: Is she better-looking than me?

Darkness. The wind continues to play the organ.

SCENE 16

*Young hazel bushes * with long red stalks hanging down.*

BAAL *sitting inside them. Noon.*

BAAL: I'll simply satisfy her, the white pigeon. . . .
(*Looking the place over.*) From here the clouds look beautiful through the willow branches. When he comes, he'll only see skin. I'm fed up with these love affairs of his. Be still, my soul!

A YOUNG WOMAN enters from the thicket, red hair, full, pale.

(*Without looking round:*) Is it you?

YOUNG WOMAN: Where's your friend?

BAAL: Composing a Mass in E-flat minor.

YOUNG WOMAN: Tell him I came.

BAAL: He's getting so thin you can almost see through him. He practices self-abuse. He's falling back into zoology. Do sit down. (*He looks round.*)

YOUNG WOMAN: I'd rather stand.

BAAL (*draws himself up on the willow branches*): He's been eating too many eggs lately.

YOUNG WOMAN: I love him.

BAAL: What do I care? (*Grabs her.*)

YOUNG WOMAN: Don't touch me! You're too dirty!

BAAL (*slowly touching her throat*): That's your throat? Do you know how pigeons are finished off? Or wild ducks in the undergrowth?

YOUNG WOMAN: Jesus Christ! (*Tears at him.*) Leave me alone!

* "Willows" in the dialogue, however. (E. B., M. E.)

BAAL: With your weak knees? You are falling over. You want to be layed among the willows? A man's a man: in that respect most of them are alike. (*Takes her in his arms.*)

YOUNG WOMAN (*trembling*): Please let me go! Please!

BAAL: A shameless quail. Come on then. Desperate man performs heroic rescue! (*Takes her by both arms and drags her into the bushes.*)

SCENE 17

Maple in the wind.

Cloudy sky. BAAL and EKART sitting among the roots.

BAAL: Drinking's a necessity, Ekart, have you any money left?

EKART: No. Look at the maple tree in the wind!

BAAL: It's trembling.

EKART: Where's the girl you've been dragging round the taverns?

BAAL: Turn into a fish and look for her.

EKART: You are overfeeding, Baal, you'll burst.

BAAL: An explosion I'd love to hear!

EKART: Don't you sometimes look into the water when it's black and deep and no fish in it yet? Beware of falling in! You have to be careful. You're so very heavy, Baal.

BAAL: It's a *person* I must beware of. I've made a song. Want to hear it?

EKART: Read it and I'll know you.

BAAL: It's called "Death in the Forest."

In the forest eternal a man lies dead,
Streams in flood below, winds screaming overhead.
He died like a beast. He clung to the roots of a tree
And he stared at the lofty top of tree on tree.
The storm raged on.

And those who round about him sat
Stood up and said: "Be calm. This is the end.
So let us take you homewards, friend."