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Hannah arendt doesn't love me - excerpts

theatrical mockumentary

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Characters: Jews, Poles, Germans, Egyptian, Russian, American, Australian. Vertebrates and invertebrates.

III. ALL GOOD FRIENDS

POLISH CATCHER What's this?

PROBABLY POLISH WOMAN A meal. For work.

POLISH CATCHER Fish?

PROBABLY POLISH WOMAN Gefilte fish.

POLISH CATCHER And borscht.

PROBABLY POLISH WOMAN Ukrainian borscht.

POLISH CATCHER Do you want me to lose my job? Is there no Polish food left?

PROBABLY POLISH WOMAN Are sandwiches with liver sausage OK?

POLISH CATCHER Where from?

PROBABLY POLISH WOMAN Carrefour.

POLISH CATCHER Hurry up.

PROBABLY POLISH WOMAN What about the new guy? One of our own?

POLISH CATCHER I can recognize one of our own from far away. You can see right away that he was born and raised here. A simple guy, but with a heart of gold. Eager to work. What's wrong?

PROBABLY POLISH WOMAN Nothing.

POLISH CATCHER I can see something's wrong.

PROBABLY POLISH WOMAN It's all because of your night jobs. I'm afraid something bad is going to happen to you. As if the days were not long enough for work! At night... at night...

POLISH CATCHER Doctors are on call.

JEWISH CATCHER Police officers also don't sleep.

POLISH CATCHER Watchmen keep watch.

JEWISH CATCHER And soldiers guard the border.

POLISH CATCHER Cats hunt listening to nature.

JEWISH CATCHER To make mice fulfill their destiny. Let's go.

POLISH CATCHER Meet my wife. This is my new friend.

JEWISH CATCHER Nice to meet you. Wives always worry about their husbands. This is how it was, is, and will be. And if something bad ever happened to your husband, please remember that he was a catcher. Catcher is not a vocation, it's a calling and life purpose. There are so many to be caught.

PROBABLY POLISH WOMAN Criminals?

JEWISH CATCHER There's police, army, and special forces to catch criminals. Murder, robbery, arson – those are the obvious sins, natural and in fact not as dangerous as actions of those whose capture falls within the authority of catchers.

PROBABLY POLISH WOMAN And who are they?

JEWISH CATCHER Those who... For instance – let's say you knit your husband a sweater...

PROBABLY POLISH WOMAN A V-neck?

JEWISH CATCHER A turtleneck would be better. And you go – knit, knit, knit, purl, purl, purl, knit, knit, knit, purl, purl, purl, and suddenly one strand of yarn separates, and wants to become a necklace cord, then you have to catch that strand and...

PROBABLY POLISH WOMAN Cut it off?

JEWISH CATCHER But first you have to check where this otherness came from. You have to find and destroy the source of otherness, because your husband is waiting for the sweater, right?

POLISH CATCHER Right.

PROBABLY POLISH WOMAN Now that they are gone I will try to get closer to the truth. It's not about him. To hell with him! When he's not here, it's calm and quiet. I'm afraid for myself. Strange things are happening. Maybe it's because of loneliness, maybe because of an illness, I don't know, but at night, when he catches people sleeping, I'm not talking to myself, and it's not myself that I see in the mirror. Come out. Show yourself.

IV. TRIAL

JEWISH CATCHER The bed was not made. The quilt was pulled aside. It looked as if she just got up for a moment.

POLISH CATCHER To pee or something.

JEWISH CATCHER We started to set up the back wall.

POLISH CATCHER Transparent, made of plexiglass.

JEWISH CATCHER A screw here, a screw there, and time passed. It was dawn. And she wasn't there.

POLISH CATCHER I went to look for her. To the kitchen and to the bathroom.

JEWISH CATCHER Simple deduction. She's either having a snack, or digestive problems.

POLISH CATCHER Women spend hours in the bathroom.

JEWISH CATCHER Apparently she liked thinking, and everyone can agree that thoughts come the easiest in the bathroom.

POLISH CATCHER She wasn't in the kitchen. I checked the cupboards, the fridge. Even the oven. People like her, well, you can't change one's nature. At one time people were hiding in various nooks and crannies. So they are used to tiny, narrow dark places, unsuitable for normal people.

JEWISH CATCHER Tell about the bathroom.

POLISH CATCHER Yes. I was hesitant to enter the bathroom. I cultivate good behavior in myself, it was not appropriate. I knocked once. Twice. Silence.

JEWISH CATCHER He thought that maybe she fell asleep.

POLISH CATCHER I bent down to look through the air vent at the bottom of the door. To check if I could see her legs, I mean feet, or slippers. But nothing. It was dark inside. Only then did I go in. Usually noone uses the bathroom in the dark. Even they. Unless it's to kill themselves.

JEWISH CATCHER She wasn't in the kitchen or in the bathroom. At that point we stopped our work. The structure already had three walls. Only the front one was missing, and we were planning to attach it after she came back to bed. The order was clear, we had to bring her in in her bed.

POLISH CATCHER We were about to start disassembling the walls, when she came into the bedroom.

H Excuse me, can I come in?

JEWISH CATCHER She won me with her politeness right away. It was her bedroom, and she was asking us for permission.

H I left my book here. It has a blue cover.

JEWISH CATCHER We immediately started looking for it.

POLISH CATCHER This one?

H No.

JEWISH CATCHER This one?

HA No.

POLISH CATCHER In the end she found it herself. It turned out it had a black cover, not a blue one.

H Thank you. Good night.

JEWISH CATCHER She thanked us, although she found it herself. I thought she was strange. The dawn was breaking. We didn't know what to do. Because she didn't get into bed.

POLISH CATCHER Then I suggested catching her in her workspace.

JEWISH CATCHER It was not a bad idea. We had to bring her in on time. Otherwise they would take away our bonuses. And the bed? We could put her in bed later on. Anyway...

POLISH CATCHER ...we also brought in the bed. Together with the desk she was sitting at.

JEWISH CATCHER We are considered to be very effective catchers. She was sitting in her study. At the desk. A typewriter in front of her. But she wasn't writing. That's why we couldn't hear her. She was looking straight ahead and she was smoking a cigarette.

POLISH CATCHER I couldn't help it. I asked. What are you doing?

H I'm thinking.

JEWISH CATCHER She answered. They are strange, I thought. And for the first time it dawned on me that people like her definitely need to be caught. A wall at the back, behind the armchair, walls on both sides of the desk, and one at the front. Screw after screw.

POLISH CATCHER She was collaborative, can't deny that. She wasn't surprised by anything. A little bit to the front, please.

H Is that enough?

JEWISH CATCHER Or the books. One of the side walls knocked over a pile of books on the floor. She didn't get angry. She just looked and picked one up.

POLISH CATCHER When it was all over, she just looked around and said.

H I have a favor to ask.

JEWISH CATCHER I don't like when they ask favors.

H May I have an ashtray, please?

POLISH CATCHER There were tons of ashtrays there. I chose the biggest one and gave it to her through the opening at the top.

H Thank you.

POLISH CATCHER Now she really made me angry. Thank you, please, excuse me. She has just been caught! Damn it! It should have made her blood boil! Right, K?

K But I'm not guilty. There's been a mistake. How is it even possible for someone to be guilty? We're all human beings here, one like the other. *

POLISH CATCHER Shut up, K. You never knew what to say. I looked at her and I felt pity for her. And she, as if nothing had happened, lit a cigarette and opened the book.

POLISH CATCHER

At that point I understood why it is they drive us crazy.

V. MOCK INTERROGATION

GERMAN MAN CALLED MARTIN I met her at the university. She came to register for my lectures. I was one of the youngest professors in Marburg.

GERMAN WOMAN CALLED ELFRIEDE Did you have a love affair?

GERMAN MAN CALLED MARTIN No, definitely not. It was more of a mutual love for philosophy.

GERMAN WOMAN CALLED ELFRIEDE She claims otherwise.

GERMAN MAN CALLED MARTIN When I met her, I had already been married for five years, I had two sons. I loved, and still love, my family. I was a respected professor. My reputation was an employment guarantee for me. An affair was out of the question.

GERMAN WOMAN CALLED ELFRIEDE Say it was her...

GERMAN MAN CALLED MARTIN It seemed to me she had nothing against an affair. She was sending me the right signals. During lectures she sat staring at me. Low cut dresses, shiny lips, wet eyes, rapid breathing, sitting cross-legged...

GERMAN WOMAN CALLED ELFRIEDE Martin...

GERMAN MAN CALLED MARTIN I told my wife about it right away. At that time my Elfriede was a member of a German women organization. She talked me into an experiment...

GERMAN WOMAN CALLED ELFRIEDE What experiment? Please elaborate.

GERMAN MAN CALLED MARTIN An experiment whose goal was to test the morality of young Jewish women. There were many rumors on the topic. Finally we could test it ourselves. On our Jewish woman.

GERMAN WOMAN CALLED ELFRIEDE Did you seduce her? Handsome, smart, attractive. Resisting you was like fighting a losing battle, am I right?

GERMAN MAN CALLED MARTIN In order for the experiment to have scientific rigor I acted as my wife instructed me to.

GERMAN WOMAN CALLED ELFRIEDE Meaning?

GERMAN MAN CALLED MARTIN During our meetings, I explained to that young Jewish girl that I was not a good match for her. I tried to describe the worst possible consequences of a potential affair. I pointed out the risks. Over and over again I discouraged her from pursuing me. I even went as far as to...

GERMAN WOMAN CALLED ELFRIEDE Yes? The witness should not hide anything from the court, because the court knows better anyway, and will prove the truth. So...?

GERMAN MAN CALLED MARTIN I told her that her race shouldn't disgrace itself by having intimate relations with our race - which, as is commonly known, is a worse race, and that all our cultural achievements we owe to people of her race.

GERMAN WOMAN CALLED ELFRIEDE And how did the defendant react to that obvious lie?

GERMAN MAN CALLED MARTIN Elfriede... So many years after the war...

GERMAN WOMAN CALLED ELFRIEDE I'm sorry... How did the defendant react to that provocation?

GERMAN MAN CALLED MARTIN She said: I will gladly bring my race down to the level of your race.

GERMAN WOMAN CALLED ELFRIEDE How did you react?

GERMAN MAN CALLED MARTIN I immediately stopped the experiment. The conclusion was: young Jewish women have no moral boundaries. However, the rumor that they have crosswise vaginas turned out to not be true.

GERMAN WOMAN CALLED ELFRIEDE Leave out the last sentence.

GERMAN MAN CALLED MARTIN Why?

GERMAN WOMAN CALLED ELFRIEDE Because there is no proof, is there?

*a quote from "The Trial" by Franz Kafka