

Sample Reading / Leseprobe

1. White Rage (like “Mama Tom”, this is a true story)

"You're a very intelligent girl, Phil," said Iga, determined to be sociable.

"But she reads too much intellectual pornography," laughed Chico.

Karl leaned forward in his chair and asked Phil to tell him why African governments spend so much money on weapons when they can't even feed their people, and pointed out that the fact was that since the white man left this continent, governments were being overthrown, especially by the military, just about every other week.

Chico groaned, "Oh, God, Karl, don't you want to sleep tonight?"

But Phil was already posed for another Wagnerian opera. "Karl, you've possibly asked the most pertinent question of the evening and it's quite easy to answer. You see, some of the weapons are old models the West decided are beneath being used by their own armies in the art of taking another's human life, so they look around and find an African general spoiling for a fight or already in the middle of one, and who has diamonds and associates or has hundreds of thousands of tropical rain forests for the taking, and unload the weapons on his grateful self 'free of charge'. For the more recent models the West offers not only the weapons but also the money to buy them with, and they give very strict instructions that this money is not meant for feeding some emaciated folk but for buying the weapons to keep the folk emaciated or gratefully dead. Get me, Karl? And so the interests on the debt also start to pile up and the country is milked dry to repay the debt and it gets poorer and poorer. You're a lovely philanthropic lot up here, Karl, you give us so much aid that we don't even know how to repay you back for it. And so we owe you and you can do what you like with us. Mine the gold and diamonds, chop down the forests for timber, lower the price of cocoa – you name it. We have to adhere to a way of life that is brought in by you and is totally strange to us, therefore we are consequently and inevitably confused, and you're cashing in even on this helplessness and bafflement. You're cashing in on this empty shell robbed of a past, devastated by the present and terrified of the diabolic future. Now you fill the shell with whatever rubbish suits your fancy.

"Karl, in my opinion, when one discards the culture, religion, traditions, et cetera, of a particular people, in this moment one has not only caused the loss of, but even more deliberately damned the most meaningful of humanity's wealth. The wealth of wisdom, the wealth of the very soul of existence and survival, the wealth of drawing from the continuity of history which endows one with a sense of belonging to a succession of generations going back to the past and sure to continue into the future. The wealth of being! African governments have no past or future, only the present and a very filthy present at that. Imagine for example that Germany depends ninety-seven percent on a mono-crop for its national income. Say coffee, the price of which is decided by somebody else. Then the price dictator decides to drop the price of coffee down sixty percent, and your good old chancellor tells Germans that they now have to cut down their normal living standards down sixty percent. How would the German population react? Would they blame him or love him? Would they revolt against him or take up arms and overthrow his government thinking he was the cause of their misery, especially if they were uninformed of world affairs and world trade?"

"I never quite saw it that way," said Karl.

"You're not alone," countered Phil. "Almost everyone out here is in the same boat with you, Karl. The problem is that the next ruler picks up exactly from where the last one left off. And knowing he has to rule a very disgruntled people whose needs he's powerless to fulfil, he loots and leaves."

Gustav said cheerfully, meaning it as a joke, "Here's one advantage you definitely have over us – we spend a fortune in order to get brown, you know."

Chico said quickly, "It's meant to be a harmless, pleasant joke, flower. Honest."

Why do humankind accuse each other of imaginary crimes none of them had ever committed? Phil remembered having once had a similar discussion with Petra. At the time, she had even maintained that there was no crime at all in the first place.

Least of all not in the arena of the colour of the skin. Nobody ever had a conscious choice in the matter, so why do they stand accusing or stand accused? She now said in answer to Chico, "Sure. Gustav's kind of joke, not mine. So long as the master race becomes brown, then it's beautiful. But those who are naturally brown are definitely inferior, come rain or shine. If white is superior, why don't you try bleaching yourselves off the pig-pink shade into snow-white? Surely you have the science and technology for it, don't you?"

Chico sensed the gloom Phil had once again cast over the group. He also wanted to placate her. "My sensitive flower, take things a little easier. The political crises of capitalism reflects a general crisis of Western culture as well. We're..."

Phil cut Chico off with, "Demon, cut it! Whereas the West plunges towards a bleak period where even history is losing any sense of relevance, Africa is already in a dark labyrinth with not a single torch. Africa's bloody anomic!"

"And we, Muschi, are crawling down a tight tunnel single file, led by the blind and the deaf."

"But with tricks up their sleeves to ward off the worst for you. Face has to be saved, right? Oh, well. All this yapping has made me hungry, so please get me another plate of salads, will you?"

"My hands are busy, Muschi." They were busy under her pullover. "But if..."

"I'll do it," said Karl getting up and heading for the table with the salads. "But Phil," he said as he served noodle salads into two plates, "You hate the West and all whites as such, it seems. Isn't there anything you like around here?"

"Karl, are you a sadist?" groaned Chico again. "Commenting on what she says is bad enough, asking her a question is downright suicidal."

Karl handed the plate to Phil smiling at Chico, "It's your hunting spirit's great discovery and the very best trophy in my opinion, okay?" He resumed his seat munching from his own plate.

Phil said in between mouthfuls, "I'll tell you a little whimsical story, Karl. I admire seeing bikes on the roof racks of Benzes or sticking out from the boots of BMWs and smart sports cars. Back home, not even the proud owner of a Fiat 500 would disgrace himself by going 'backward' and owning such a symbol of unsuccessfulness as a bicycle, let alone straddling one, when he has a car. A car is a little step away from Europe, a bicycle a little step ahead of Africa. The wealthy down there – and therefore the fat lot in a continent of skinny people – work out their sweat at the golf course."

"I wonder why you like the bikes," observed Gustav, suspicious of Phil's every opinion.

She put her plate aside and said, "One, if there were as many bikes out there as there are here, it would mean that the gap between the haves and the have-nots would be narrower. Two, you're heaping Benzes on Africans. If you don't sell them to the haves directly, you give it to them as a 'gift' so that they can let you come in and set up shop in Africa with poor goods and cheap labour, without having to worry about the law coming down on your African subsidiaries. We've been hammering on the corrupt down there. But, Gustav, since I came here I've noticed a few things. For example the taste and colour of carbonated drinks sold here are different from those back home with the same trade marks. And so is the chocolate, the detergents and toilet soap, to name but a few. And the medicine, for Christ's sake – you have a whole continent of guinea pigs for eff-all!"

"Muschi, I told you last night that we're in the age of dog-eat-dog. Hell, we're marketing ourselves down to our children and changing the trend of sales like underwear. Parents who have a child with any particular talent set the child up in the market and don't hesitate to earn an extra income as the child's manager. Then the child becomes a live commodity from whom everybody earns an income. The poor kid works its ass and soul off to pay for its manager, its fitness trainer, its nutrition adviser, its health expert, its press agent, its travel manager, a battery of dentists specialised for each tooth in its mouth, its television rights expert, its underwear designer, its make-up expert, its hairstylist and a whole pack of more wolves and vultures it doesn't need. By the time this live commodity has been used to the marrow, it's dropped like a hot potato on the laps of the next parasites who can now make money out of it – the drug pusher and the psychiatrist.

"My beautiful flower, out here we've dropped all our technical skills to the corporation. We now need certified experts to help us raise our own children. We're now totally dependent on the state, whom we fire on to bring up our children for us. And the state is only the messenger of the corporations today. We've been reduced to interchangeable objects. Simple calculation has replaced reason. Corrupting your leaders is one of our minor sins, Muschi, believe me."

"Minor for you, not for us, Demon."

"My God," cried Gustav, "Nobody is forcing them. I mean one cannot corrupt another who is not already corruptible."

"Gustav, you're making me lose my appetite. Who's more corrupt, the one giving the tempting inducement or the one receiving it? Zaire's Mobutu or the CIA bribing him to house the headquarters for CIA's covert actions for the entire sub-Saharan Africa? Would you refuse a ten percent share in a multi-national's subsidiary even if they engage cheap labour employees who are so lowly paid that they find themselves having more problems trying to make ends meet than when they were unemployed? When it offers you a chance for political power, failing which then a political asylum retreat overseas where you and your family would live like royalty? And shall we talk of the Flick Affair? The German public reacted over this scandal with such astonishing comments as: It can't be true! We are after all not a banana republic! They didn't want to believe such nastiness can happen right here in their beloved Vaterland. Once again the Germans suitably demonstrated their ambivalence in their democratic beliefs."

Parenthetically, Chico put in, "Highness, politicians now are GO-GO dancers doing a show for their clients and with the whole world for a stage. The bigger the tits the harder and more frenziedly they jiggle them, the longer the legs the higher they kick them."

Gustav sighed, "So whichever way we turn and whatever we do, the white race is always committing some crime against some..."

Angrily Phil cut him short, "Seems to be in your genes, doesn't it? You turn around in circles, and your crime is not so much what you commit as how you commit it, Gustav, and this évolué de nos jours should know. There's a deep psychological wound left in the African that would make your God faint if he was true to your scriptures, and the African doesn't deserve it. They did nobody on earth any wrong worth mentioning!"