



# RIKLI

## THE GREAT OUTRAGE

A CAPTIVATING MUSICAL PLAY ABOUT THE MOST FAMOUS  
NATURAL HEALER OF THE 19TH CENTURY AND HIS ETERNAL  
INFLUENCE ON THE CITY OF BLED

Find your own way, don't delay,  
Embrace the journey, come what may.

# **THE GREAT OUTRAGE**

A Musical Comedy about the Life of Arnold Rikli

By Borut Marter

Begunje na Gorenjskem, 2023

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

RIKLI

FATHER

KARL – brother

Riklians:

MARK – kind-hearted chubby person

LUKAS – constantly sleepy and desperate

JOHAN – ladies' man

(Johan or Lukas plays the role of a Riklian between scenes.)

HELENA - peasant woman

ANTON – competitor

# ACT I

## SCENE 1

*Riklian is lying almost completely naked on the stage and is sunbathing. He has a towel over his head. After some time, he removes the towel, sees the audience and gets scared to death.*

**RIKLIAN**

WHAT THE DUCK!!!!

*He jumps on his feet.*

What are you doing here?!

*He looks around the audience and then notices a poster behind him promoting a play about Rikli.*

Oh yeah!! Is it today? God damn... has it already started?!! Couldn't they wake me up?

*He yells backstage.*

HEY!! IT'S ALREADY STARTED!! ARE YOU SLEEPING?!! IS ANYONE THERE?!

*Someone from backstage shouts: "WHAT?!! IS IT TODAY?!! WAIT... LET ME FIND THE OTHERS."*

Amateurs.

Whatever... I'll just start. The sooner I start, the sooner I'm done.

*He adjusts his small white apron and then his hair. He starts looking around the audience.*

Did you come to see a play about our most infamous citizen ? This is burlesque I tell you. It's such a great story that you won't find one quite like it.

*He looks at the people in the front row.*

You've dressed up quite nicely. You'll have a hard time catching any sunshine like that. No wonder you're so pale. Yes, yes, I know, it's not appropriate to show your naked butt in the theater. What will people say? But you know that saying... water is of course good, more useful is air but the most important is light.

*He looks around the audience.*

What are you looking at me for? Don't you know that saying? What about this one? Work, modesty and rest will keep the doctor away from your nest. *He looks around the audience.* You don't know that one either?!

*He grabs his head and talks to himself.*

Son of a biscuit! All tourists. God have mercy on me.

*He forces a smile and starts speaking very slowly to the audience.*

Weelcoome toooo Sloooveniaaaa!! *He looks at the front row.* Where are you from??

*If anyone answers, he snaps back.* Please do not talk during the show! We are not at the market. I only asked out of politeness.

*If no one answers.* Geez, don't you speak English? *To himself.* One of those again who looked out the window when the teacher was talking.

*He sighs resignedly.*

Is this what I have to deal with today? Ajajaj, I see that today we will have to explain the story from the very beginning.

*He sighs again, as if it is very hard for him.*

Well, where to start ... THIS IS A TRUE TALE ... as true as it gets and it all actually begins almost two hundred years ago in Wangen on the Aare river. This is a small Swiss village somewhere between Zurich and Bern. There the Riklis had a dyeing plant for red yarn. In the old days it was not as easy to dye fabric red as it is today, where every poor soul can get not only red cloth, but also all other colors that come to mind. But since there are many who stood in the wrong line when God was handing out good taste, we see thousands of people walking around dressed like canaries.

*He looks around the audience.*

Jesus Christ, lady, didn't they have even more fluorescent colour in store?!!

*He puts his hand over his eyes, as if looking at the sun.*

Well, where was I. Oh, the Riklis had a dyeing plant for red yarn and as befits all well-behaved children of family firms, the young Riklis also had to learn this profession. Some more successfully and some less. Poor parents never know if their offspring will be useful or not. Fathers are never quite satisfied with their sons anyway.

If my father sees me running around like this ... *He looks at his naked body and smiles.* Fathers are harder to please than God himself. In all of human history, there have lived fewer sons who have managed to fulfill their father's expectations than there are living Catholic popes today.

Well, I'm digressing again. In short ... like all good stories, this one also begins at ... at the beginning. That is the day when young Arnold was again called to his father for a sermon ... a sermon on what befits an exemplary son and what does not. All sons have heard it and it goes something like this.

## **SCENE 2**

*A spartanly furnished office. On the desk are pictures of family members. Behind on the wall hangs a portrait of an older gray-haired gentleman who looks very much like Rikli's father.*

**FATHER**

Arnold! Enter!

**RIKLI**

*Enters the room.*

Did you call me?

**FATHER**

Sit down. *The father doesn't say anything for a while, just silently looks at him and sighs aloud.* Arnold, you finished your schooling. You say you have no more patience for school benches. Well, these things are not for everyone. But if you don't want to sit in school anymore, then you will have to work here in the dyeing factory ... work seriously.

**RIKLI**

But ...

**FATHER**

I'm not done yet! Working seriously doesn't just mean being present in the factory, but also engaging to the best of your abilities! Karl says you sit for hours in front of the etching boiler, stare out the window and write.

**RIKLI**

There's nothing to do there ... you assigned me that job, I just ...

**FATHER**

OF COURSE I DID! That's because you need to learn all the stages of dyeing. Only when you experience for yourself how complicated and lengthy the process of red dyeing is, will you be able to lead other people someday. Someday you and your brothers will take over this factory. I can't work forever.

**RIKLI**

But ... I'm not quite sure that this job suits my, my ... abilities.

**FATHER**

WHAT?!! WHAT ABILITIES!? YOU'RE STILL A GREENHORN ! What are your abilities? No one will pay you for wandering around the woods, looking at the sky and daydreaming. You won't be able to feed your family with that. Not even a dog.

**RIKLI**

I didn't say I don't want to work in the dyeing factory, just sometimes I have a feeling ... that this is not my path, that I'm here to do something else, something ... bigger.

**FATHER**

BIGGER?!! DON'T LET YOUR WIG FALL INTO THE SOUP!!! You can't even watch the kettle properly! Listen to me ... you're a grown man and you'll have to start acting like one. The first rule of a responsible adult is to take your work seriously.

**RIKLI**

But ...

**FATHER**

The second rule is to respect your superiors. Karl is in charge of your apprenticeship and therefore you will ...

**RIKLI**

No, no, no ... My brother won't boss me around! He won't be above me. Father, please, I accept your command, but Karl's ...

**FATHER**

*Shouts*

ARNOLD!!!! *Arnold jumps a little on the chair from fear.* THIS IS NOT A MARKETPLACE!! WE WON'T BARGAIN! You don't know how hard I had to work to get the dyeing factory up and running. We barely got around all the troubles. Your poor mother was so indebted to all the shopkeepers that she didn't even dare to go for lettuce, because she was so ashamed.



**RIKLI**

I know, father ...

**FATHER**

You don't know anything, it seems! Anyway ... from today on, you will take your work seriously and stop dreaming in broad daylight. You have a lot to learn. Your brother has much more experience and therefore you will listen to him. DO WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER ?!

**RIKLI**

Resignedly

Yes, father.

**FATHER**

Good. That's all. You start at five tomorrow. Goodbye!

**RIKLI**

Goodbye.

*Rikli slowly walks away, then stops, looks at the ground and thinks, after a few moments he starts running, as if he is in a hurry.*

**MOTHER**

*Voice from the background*

Arnold, Arnold, where are you going?! You haven't eaten anything yet!

**RIKLI**

I'm just going to the river, mother, to refresh myself a bit!

**MOTHER**

*Voice from the background*

NOOOO!!! DON'T GO TO THE RIVER!! COME BACK RIGHT NOW!!!

**RIKLI**

But, mother ...

**MOTHER**

*Voice from the background*

COME BACK RIGHT NOW!!! We agreed that you won't go to the river anymore.

**RIKLI**

We didn't agree on anything ... you just said that you don't want me to ...

**MOTHER**

*Voice from the background*

Exactly. I said that I don't want you to go swimming in the Aare ... as long as you live in my house, you will follow my ...

**RIKLI**

But mother, I know how to swim. I'm not five years old.

**MOTHER**

*Voice from the background*

I won't tell you twice! Come back right now! Do you remember what happened to our little Susettli?!

**RIKLI**

Yes, yes, I know, but ...

**MOTHER**

*Voice from the background*

You don't know anything, it seems!! She drowned! Our beautiful little girl. DROWNED!!

**RIKLI**

But I'm grown up, mother. Don't worry, I'll be back soon. *Runs away.*

**MOTHER**  
*Panicking*

ARNOLD!!! You devilish kid.

**SCENE 3**

*Rikli sits by the river and thinks out loud.*

Sing to me, beautiful river ... sing me my song. A song that lights up the dark for me. Bringing my freedom and days of jubilee, a melody of hope and pure harmony. A symphony of love, full of grace and beauty. *He pauses for a moment.* Maybe I should become a poet. *He laughs.*

SO MANY PROHIBITIONS, SO MANY RULES!!! Do I really have to sacrifice my destiny so early for my parents and this damn dyeing factory? I'm not made for this, for this ... slavery.

*He gets angry.* My father only has business on his mind. Revenues, expenses, purchase prices, selling prices, wages, taxes ... it all makes me sick. How can this man be satisfied with spending his whole life dyeing rags red?! And then he expects the same from me?! And then my mother constantly waves her church around. If poor Jesus knew what they do in his name, he would truly come back and silence these rich fog salesmen. *He pauses.*

But you ... my dear river ... you always advised me well. You never judged me, never said a bad word about me, just calmly and patiently listened to my problems and helped me find the answers to my questions. Answers that were in me from the very beginning.

Tell me, my dear friend, do I really have to bow my head and give in to my parents' demands?

Why is life's journey such a daunting quest,  
To find our own path and give it our best.  
Others seem to know what's right for me,  
Guiding my choices, please let me be.

How can I obey my parents' desires,  
When young as I am, I still inquire,  
For what noble cause should I strive,  
In this journey of life, how can I thrive?

Sun, books, and rocky peaks so grand,  
In my heart, firmly they stand.  
How can I surrender to my father's commands,  
When my dreams lead me to distant lands?

My soul yearns for labor beneath the sun,  
Amidst lofty peaks, where my spirit can run.  
Must I break my father's tender heart,  
As my aspirations lead me apart.

Oh, beloved river, tell me your tale,  
How you forged your own course, never to fail.  
How can I find my true heading in life,  
When obstacles arise, causing strife.

Dear parents and friends, unaware,  
Of the secrets hidden, the dreams I bear.  
My thoughts and desires concealed from view,  
Draw me away, bidding farewell to you.

Perhaps freedom is a deceptive call,  
Leading one astray, making us fall.  
In the desert of choices, we may roam,  
Only to find ourselves far from home.

But I shall stand firm, against all odds,  
Embrace my own destiny, defy the gods.  
For in pursuing my dreams, I shall find,  
A life worth living, soulfully aligned.

### **MOTHER**

*Voice from the background*

AAAARNOLD!!! AAAARNOLD!!!

### **RIKLI**

Crucifix!

*He runs home.*

## **SCENE 4**

*When the lights come on, there is again only a naked Riklian on stage, sitting in a bathtub (he is turned away from the audience). He sings a little and splashes himself with a pitcher of water, then accidentally turns to the audience and gets scared to death.*

**RIKLIAN**

*Shouts*

*ORKADIBIGOLI!!!! He hides behind the edge of the tub. Then after a while he peeks over it.*

Not again! I'm going to have a heart attack.

*When he recovers, he turns to the backstage and shouts.*

CAN'T YOU WARN ME ONCE BEFORE YOU START!!!!?

You incompetent slackers.

Where was I? Oh, yes, well, father got a little more trust in Arnold and his brothers over time and so he allowed them to build their own red yarn dyeing plant in Seebach in Austria ... it was about two days' drive by carriage away from father's. That is because they didn't want to interfere with father's business.

But, because every beginning is hard, things were not easy for the Rikli brothers either and they struggled hard to get their newly built dyeing plant out of the initial difficulties ... especially debts.

Let's see how they are doing.

## **SCENE 5**

*Red yarn dyeing plant. There are pots full of liquid and large tables with dyed yarn spread out on them. The workers stir the yarn in the pots and then spread it over the tables. They are turned away from the audience (so they can also be played by other actors of the play). There is a lot of steam in the room. In the corner of the room there is a bed with a lot of pipes sticking out of it, they are attached to a large pot. Rikli is by the bed and fixes something with a screwdriver.*

**KARL**

*Enters the workshop*

Arnold! Arnold! Where are you?

**RIKLI**

Here!

**KARL**

Arnold! Did you manage ... For God's sake! Are you doing your nonsense again. You know we don't have time for this.

**RIKLI**

I did my work for today. What I do in my free time is none of your business.

**KARL**

The work in the factory is not finished until there is a minus on the account. I hope that's clear to you! Did you arrange for the order of new washing machines?

**RIKLI**

*Reluctantly*

I did.

**KARL**

What about the workers from Switzerland? Are you in contact with them? When are they coming?

**RIKLI**

*Absorbed in his work on his steam bed invention*

I am.

**KARL**

What?! Are you even listening to me?!

**RIKLI**

Just because you're a few years older doesn't mean you can boss me around. We've agreed on this a hundred times. I do my work properly and if I said I ordered the machines, then I ordered them. The same goes for the workers.

**KARL**

Damn it, can't I ask you anything anymore?

**RIKLI**

It's not about that, it's about your tone of voice.

**KARL**

Listen Arnold, you know how hard we had to work to convince father to lend us money for this dyeing plant. All this. *He points his hand at the things in the dyeing plant.* It almost bankrupted father. And we're still not profitable! Why on earth can't we achieve consistent dyeing results is still a mystery. Even Rudolf doesn't understand, and you know that no one knows more about this than him. Until we achieve uniform shades of red we can't sell the goods to Vienna.

**RIKLI**

Why are you preaching to me? Do you think I don't get it? I've put at least as much work into this thing as you have.

**KARL**

It won't matter how much work anyone has put in if we sink the ship. Do you know how much loss I, well, we had just last month? More than ten thousand francs. When will we get that back?

**RIKLI**

We have to persevere. The last two rounds of dyeing were quite solid. And Rudolf is coming again in about a month he promised. He says he knows what the problem is. The water probably contains less carbonic acid than the one at father's in Wangen, he says.

**KARL**  
*Sighs*

With a little help from God, we should be fine.

**RIKLI**

Your god was not even there when our dear Gottlieb was dying. How he suffered and how we prayed ... but nothing.

**KARL**

God's will is incomprehensible to us.

**RIKLI**

Ah, stop with that. Heaven is empty and so is hell. There is no invisible bearded man up there who constantly watches over us and judges us. This must be the biggest prank of the millennium. Just look how well these preachers live at the expense of Jesus. Even the ironmonger Vanderbilt is poor compared to them.

**KARL**

Arnold! Please stop with your blasphemous sermons. You are even worse than the chaplain. You will not say such things in my house! Do you understand?

**RIKLI**

In your house?! *He looks around.* Yes, you really act like everything is yours. But father acts like it is all only my fault ... Arnold, when will you start paying back the money? Arnold, why doesn't the dyeing process work? Arnold, why do your workers keep escaping? And so on ... you are never bothered with anything ... you never do anything wrong.

**KARL**

I also don't waste my time with some useless inventions. *He points to the steam bed.*

**RIKLI**

I don't feel like arguing. Look, the washing machines are ordered and the workers will be here soon. I'll take care of that. I don't want to discuss anything else right now. If father likes to blame everything on me, let it be so, I'll survive. Do you have any other wishes?



**KARL**

Well, that would be all for now. Tomorrow we'll have to go through the balance sheets again, we need to find an additional twenty-five thousand francs somewhere, otherwise we won't make it until next year. Come to me at five in the morning. *He leaves.*

*Johan approaches Rikli.*

**JOHAN**

MR. RIKLI, MR. RIKLI! I'M A HUNDRED TIMES BETTER! I still just cough a little, that's all.

**RIKLI**

That's good to hear, Johan. Did you follow all my instructions?

**JOHAN**

Absolutely all! My wife almost crucified me because I had the windows wide open... so that fresh air could circulate in the room... just as you ordered. But now she says she likes it too. She says she doesn't smell my stinky feet anymore. *He laughs.*

**RIKLI**

What about the water baths? Did you perform them as I prescribed? Cold water on your feet in the morning and then rub them well with a towel. And the evening compresses...

**JOHAN**

Everything just as you said, Mr. Rikli, of course. You can see that I'm as healthy as an oak. Just a little cough.

**RIKLI**

Continue with the treatment until even this coughing subsides. Perhaps now that you're feeling better, you could also start with the cold morning baths. As soon as you wake up, sit in cold water up to your waist for 15 minutes and then rub yourself well with a warm towel.

**JOHAN**

IN COLD WATER?! FIRST THING IN THE MORNING?! What if we tried warm water first? Maybe that would help too.

**RIKLI**

Johan, don't play the fool. In cold water, in cold water!! You can wrap yourself back in warm blankets afterwards. It will invigorate your blood and fill your limbs with oxygen.

**JOHAN**

Alright, alright, in cold water... so be it. But what is this thing, if I may ask? *He points to the bed with pipes.*

**RIKLI**

*Proudly*

This, my friend, will be the world's first therapeutic steam bed. It will revolutionize steam treatment. Look, you'll lie down here. Well, go ahead, lie down. *Johan tries to climb onto the bed but doesn't know how, as there are so many pipes sticking out of it.* Here ... you can lie down here. *Rikli shows him.*

**JOHAN**

*Skeptically examining the equipment*

Are you sure this won't explode? *He lies down.*

**RIKLI**

Please, rest assured, this is only for steam, nothing else. And please take off your shirt.

**JOHAN**

Steam!!! Just yesterday I was talking to a friend... he said that a steam carriage driver in Ljubljana just wanted to pour a little water into the engine and it all exploded so violently that his limbs rained from the sky for a whole hour... like locusts in the Bible.

**RIKLI**

Oh, come on, this is not a steam engine. It's just a heating boiler. Nothing will explode here.

*Johan curiously touches one of the pipes.*

**JOHAN**

UUUUUUH!!! DAMN, IT'S HOT!!!

**RIKLI**

Yes, it's hot. Don't touch the pipes. Just lie still, please. Look, water will drip onto these pipes... like this... and then the heated pipes will create steam that gently envelops the body from all sides. *Small clouds of steam rise around the worker.* Well, you see how splendidly it functions. The only thing that bothers me is that every now and then ... *Suddenly a cloud of smoke bursts out of the pipes. This frightens Johan so much that he shoots out of the bed as if he were fired from a cannon.*

**JOHAN**

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!! HOLY MARY, HELP!!! *He runs towards the door and disappears.*

**RIKLI**

*Completely calm, as if he hadn't even noticed the Johan's escape.*

... every now and then some smoke comes out of the furnace into the pipes. That will need further consideration.

*The lights go out.*

## SCENE 6

*Riklian sits on a toilet facing away from the audience and whistles La Marseillaise. When he accidentally turns towards the audience and gets frightened to death.*

**RIKLIAN**  
*Shouts*

*AAAAAAAAAAA!!! He puts his hand on his chest and takes a deep breath.*

May your cabbage rot. Not again.

I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS!!!

*He stands up, puts on an apron, and rushes backstage. From there, his voice can be heard.*

WHO IS THE DIRECTOR HERE??? IS IT YOU!!! COME HERE, YOU CLUMSY FOOL!!!  
I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT IT'S LIKE WHEN TWO HUNDRED PEOPLE WATCH YOU ON THE  
TOILET!!! COME HERE!!!

*The director runs across the stage followed by Riklian. The director escapes, leaving Riklian alone on stage.*

COME HERE, YOU... INCOMPETENT BROOM!!!

Just one more time... and I'll skin you like a turkey!

*He calms down.*

Amateurs... well, where was I? Oh, yes, Arnold and his brother didn't have much luck with their dyeing business in Austria. Debts were piling up, and the red dye just wouldn't turn out right. The yarn was speckled like unripe tomatoes.

Arnold, due to stress, chemicals, or who knows what, developed a lung infection, so on the advice of his friends, he took a short break to Bled.

You see, if there's no illness, there's no health. If there's no darkness, there's no light. And who knows if Arnold would have discovered Bled if it weren't for that unfortunate dyeing plant.

Anyway... when Rikli arrived in Bled, this little village beneath the Karawanks looked completely different. Just take a look.

*A picture of 19th-century Bled appears on the screen.*

Just nature and a few houses. Well, there were already some tourists there at the time, and the castle on the cliff was carefully watching over the small island with the church. But Bled was still far from its current worldwide fame. However, it was, of course, so beautiful that Arnold immediately fell in love with it.

**SCENE 7**  
*At Lake Bled*

**RIKLI**

I'm seven hundred kilometers away from my father, and yet his dyeing business pursues me like a cat chasing a mouse. How quickly I became enthusiastic about Karl and me starting our own factory... there at the end of the world, where the fox and the hare bid each other goodnight. Just to secure a little freedom for myself. Well, now I have that freedom. Now I don't have to watch over just one boiler... now I have to safeguard the entire factory.

*He reflects.*

*He stretches his hand in front of him and examines it.* What an incredible machine the human body is. So precise, so autonomous, and resilient. If it breaks, it knows how to repair itself. If it's cold, it can build a shelter. If it's lonely, it finds a companion. And if its heart is sad, it knows how to brighten the day with a song.

*He falls silent, sits under a tree, and observes the covers of a book.*

"Coronary Notes... The Advantages of Moderate Living."

*He reads.*

And sadly, it has come to the point where the bad habit of overeating has become a constant among people, bringing them only illness and premature aging. Oh blinded and unhappy homeland! Can't you see that intemperance in food claims more of your citizens each year than plague and wars combined? Everyone can live moderately if they get used to simple food and eat only what is necessary for their sustenance. Above all, they must let reason reign over their desires. It must be remembered that desire lasts only a moment, while the consequences of excess last long and ultimately destroy the body and soul.

*Rikli stands up and exclaims.*

It's true! From today onwards, I will eat and drink in a much more moderate way, for I see that most of my illnesses are a result of my lack of moderation!

*He sits down and admires Lake Bled.*

I feel so free here. No balance sheets, debts, my father's reproaches... just me, the mountains, the sun, and freedom. Just me and my thoughts, me and my path.

At a little lake amidst the mountains' might,  
Fate led me here, its guiding light.  
How else could I have truly known  
The enchanting beauty that is shown

In this dreamlike little lake so bright.

Within me, my heart has awakened anew,  
Reviving from the numbing that it once knew,  
For it had nearly succumbed and bent  
Under the weight of my father's stern intent.

Once again, I feel my strength arise,  
As the night unveils before my eyes.  
I see the path my heart must tread,  
The destiny of a natural healer ahead.  
I see it clearly, like the midday sun's gleam,  
In the midst of my resplendent dream.

No more doubts within me dwell,  
My only task, my purpose to compel,  
To help the healer from prophetic dreams unfold,  
And embark on a new path, brave and bold.  
I yearn to commence this journey anew,  
And freely live by Lake Bled, a life so true.

My story will be written here... here... at Bled.

*He stands up and proclaims solemnly.*

I WILL BECOME A HEALER! A NATURAL HEALER! AND YOU, MY BELOVED LAKE BLED, SHALL BE MY TEACHER AND COMPANION. I WILL ESTABLISH THE MOST MODERN HEALING RESORT THE WORLD HAS EVER SEEN, AND INSTEAD OF PILLS FROM THE PHARMACY, I WILL HEAL WITH WATER, AIR, AND LIGHT!

*The lights go out.*

HEY, WHO TURNED OFF THE LIGHT?!!!

## **ACT 2**

### **SCENE 1**

*On stage, Riklian sits peacefully, drinking coffee and reading a book. He is slightly turned away from the audience. When he glances towards the audience, he gets so startled that his coffee cup falls to the ground.*

**RIKLIAN**

Damn it! Not again.

*At that moment, a voice is heard from the speakers.*

"ATTENTION! ALL ACTORS, PLEASE PREPARE FOR ACT 2. ATTENTION! ALL ACTORS, PLEASE PREPARE FOR ACT 2."

**RIKLIAN**

Too late! Too late! You clumsy fools.

*Grumpily.*

What else should I say??? It's all clear!

Rikli comes to Bled and likes it so much that he decides to stay and establish his own healthcare centre here. Finally, he will be able to focus on what he feels called to do.

*Muttering to himself.*

If I could be so lucky.

*He continues, louder.*

Well, this is how his beginnings here in Bled looked like.

## **SCENE 2**

*Rikli, scantily dressed, walks up a hill above Bled and sings a Swiss folk song called "Up on the Little Hill."*

### **RIKLI**

Det äne am Bergli,  
Det schtat e wiessi Geiss.  
I ha si welle mälche,  
Da haut sie mer eis.

Holä duli duli duli  
Holä duli duli duli duli  
Holä duli duli duli  
Holä duli duli duli du.

Sie hät mer eis g'haue,  
Das tuet mer so weh.  
Jetzt mälch i miner Läbtig  
Kei wiessi Geiss meh'

Holä duli duli duli  
Holä duli duli duli duli  
Holä duli duli duli

*Helena and Anton approach Rikli, interrupting him.*

### **HELENA**

*Startled, as if she has seen a ghost.*

*AAAAA!!! THE DEVIL! She feels so dizzy that she would collapse to the ground if Anton didn't catch her in time.*

*HE'S NAKED AS ADAM! Help me, Jesus! She looks away so as not to see Rikli.*

### **RIKLI**

Grüezi! Es tuet mer sehr leid, Madame, dass ich Sie erschrocken hab, aber..

### **HELENA**

*Still looking away*

What is this naked devil babbling about?

### **ANTON**



I think he's speaking German... Yes, yes, guten Tag... damn it, I don't know more than that.

**HELENA**

*Still looking away, in a state of agitation*

TELL HIM TO PUT ON CLOTHES... FOR CHRIST'S SAKE!

**RIKLI**

Ich bin sehr froh, Sie getroffen zu haben, denn ich habe mich etwas verlaufen und würde gern den Weg...

**HELENA**

WHAT IS HE SAYING?

**ANTON**

I'm not sure, I think he's thirsty. He turns to Rikli. Nein, nein... not... *He gestures with his hands to indicate that they have nothing to drink.*

**RIKLI**

No, no, sono un po' perso e vorrei trovare la via per tornare a Bled. Potresti...

**ANTON**

No, no... *He continues to gesture that they have no water.*

**RIKLI**

Je suis un peu perdu et j'aimerais retrouver le chemin de Bled. Voudriez-vous...

**ANTON**

Damn it, this guy can't decide which language to speak. Maybe he escaped from a sanatorium. *He turns to Rikli. Nooo, nooooo... no drink. He gestures again to indicate that they have no water with them.*

**HELENA**

TELL HIM TO PUT CLOTHES ON, FOR THE LOVE OF GOD... WE'RE NOT IN A BROTHEL!!

**ANTON**

Bitte... bitte... Madam... clothes... bitte. He gestures to Rikli to put on clothes.

**HELENA**

Has he dressed? *She glances towards Rikli and screams.* AAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!!

*To herself.*

To experience this at my old age. Such scandal, such sin. Like in Sodom and Gomorrah.

*She begins to pray:*

Yo, our Pops up in the sky,  
holy is your name.  
Let your crib come,  
let your will be done  
on earth as it is up in the clouds.

'Cause yours is the turf, the muscle, and the shine  
forever. Amen.

**ANTON**

Damn it, which church do you go to?

**HELENA**

My first parish priest was from Hungary. *She looks at Rikli again.* AAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!

Yo, our Pops up in the sky,  
holy is your name.  
Let your crib come ...

**ANTON**

*To Rikli*

Bitte... bitte... Madam... clothes...

**RIKLI**

No problem, I'll find my way. Thank you very much and good luck. *He turns around and walks away.*

**ANTON**

The air is clear. He's gone.

**HELENA**

Amen. *She sighs in relief.*

**ANTON**

I didn't understand a word he said. Maybe we should learn some foreign languages too.

**HELENA**

You're such a fool! Look at how many languages he spoke, and it didn't help him one bit.

*We hear Riklis voice in the distance as he walks away.*

**RIKLI**

Det äne am Bergli,  
Det schtat e wiessi Geiss.  
I ha si welle mälche,  
Da haut sie mer eis.

Holä duli duli duli  
Holä duli duli duli duli  
Holä duli duli duli  
Holä duli duli duli du.

### SCENE 3

*Rikli's office. At the back, on the wall, hangs a portrait of his father, and on the table are photographs of his children and wife.*

**RIKLI**

NEXT, PLEASE!

*The door to the office opens, and the Riklians begin to enter in a line.*

**RIKLI**

Slowly, slowly... not all at once! One by one, please. This is not a canteen. *Points at Lukas.* You stay here. The rest of you wait outside.

**LUKAS**

But we came here together. It was Johan's idea. I wouldn't have come all the way to Bled on my own. There's too much nature here, even for bears. No theater or café nearby. In Vienna...

**RIKLI**

I understand, I understand. That's precisely why we are here, because nature heals. But I kindly ask you once again to wait outside and enter one by one.

**JOHAN**

If possible, we'd like you to treat us all at once.

**MARK**

We have no secrets among us. The reason I'm here is quite clear. *He pats his belly and laughs out loud.*

**JOHAN**

I told you not to marry a cook. Now look at you. Your problem is your wife, not food. You used to be thin like a broom handle.

**MARK**

Don't even mention my devil of a wife. If only she knew how to cook. I eat just to avoid her yelling at me.

**RIKLI**

Alright, alright, boys. Come inside, all of you. Otherwise, we'll be here all week.

*The Riklians take their seats. Mark gets the smallest chair and struggles to fit into it. The others watch him as he struggles. Then Johan stands up and offers him his chair.*

**JOHAN**

Here you go. So that you won't break Dr. Rikli's furniture.

**RIKLI**

Mr. Johan... I do recognize you from somewhere. Weren't you working for us in Seebach?

**JOHAN**

Indeed, Dr. Rikli. I'm glad you remember me.

**RIKLI**

Of course, I remember you, Johan. You were the first to try out my steam bed. Do you still remember?

**JOHAN**

I do, I do. Even today, my ears are still ringing a bit from that explosion. *Laughs.*

**RIKLI**

Oh, come on... there was no explosion. Just a little steam leaking, that's all. I've improved my steam bed a lot since then. Now, it works like a Swiss watch. You'll see.

**LUKAS**

What will we see? Explosions?! Steam baths!? This sounds dangerous.

**JOHAN**

Oh, stop it. You know that Dr. Rikli knows what he's doing.

**RIKLI**

Johan, I don't want to be too nosy, but you know that a four-week therapy with me is not exactly cheap. There are costs for accommodation, food, staff, treatments...

**JOHAN**

Don't worry, Dr. Rikli. I'm not that poor lad from the tannery anymore. My wife inherited from her grandfather, who owned half of the forests in Carinthia. Now I live in Vienna, and Seebach, that backward place, won't see me again. Don't you worry, Dr. Rikli, you'll be fairly compensated for everything.

**RIKLI**

Alright, alright. We won't dwell on that now, I just wanted to let you know so there won't be any misunderstandings later. Let's leave that for now. Well, since you're all here, it would be good if we go through our house rules together.

**LUKAS**

House rules?!

**RIKLI**

The house rules of our spa. I go through the main points with every guest to avoid any misunderstandings. Anyone who brakes the house rules goes home immediately.

**LUKAS**

I'm not a great rule follower.

**RIKLI**

You'll get used to it. Without order and discipline, one can't achieve anything in life. Treatments here are no simple matter. We don't indulge in overeating, lounging around, or soaking in warm water like in other spas. **IN MY HEALING INSTITUTION, YOU HAVE TO WORK HARD FOR YOUR HEALTH!**

**Rule One**, let's sunbathe, sky so blue and high,

Soak in the rays, where our real power will lie.  
Rise with the sun, shining, helping us deal,  
Remember, dear friends, work hard, keep it real!

**Rule Two**, walk free on the green, lively land,  
With bare feet below, feel the earth, it's so grand.  
Nature hugs our souls, giving life anew, a test,  
In rules and rhythm, our lively spirit's at its best!

**Rule Three**, eat simple, light, keeping it pure,  
Feeding our selves in a joy, so secure.  
With water and bread, for brave souls, we pave,  
Dancing lightly, riding the healthy wave.

**Rule Four**, sleep well, 'neath the soft, glowing beams,  
Rest and dream deep, stitching the seams.  
Gentle sleep will hold us, health all stealth,  
In this structured space, we'll gather true wealth!

**Rule Five**, stand firm, discipline's the core,  
Without it, our foundation is nothing more.  
Those who don't adhere, won't share this zone,  
Break our sacred rules, and you'll journey home alone!

*An uncomfortable silence ensues.*

#### **LUKAS**

Are you crazy... this isn't for me! *He stands up and starts walking towards the door.*

#### **JOHAN**

*Follows him and brings him back.*

Calm down, Lukas, it won't be that bad. A little discipline won't hurt you. Your lounging around in salons has made you quite...soft... even Mark's wife can beat you up if she's having a bad day. I apologize, Dr. Rikli... please continue.

#### **RIKLI**

Alright... we'll talk about the house rules in detail a little later. *He picks up some papers and reads.*  
Ah, here we go. You must be Mark Reiner, am I right?

#### **MARK**

That's me, yes.

**RIKLI**

Adipositas... or chronic overeating... it's a cunning disease. It's harder to get rid of than syphilis.

**LUKAS**

Syphilis? That would be Johan ...

**RIKLI**

What?!!

**JOHAN**

Come on, stop that nonsense, Lukas.

**RIKLI**

Anyway, for this weight issue of yours mister Mark, a strict diet will be necessary.

**MARK**

A DIET!!?? Dr. Rikli, please, anything but that. How about trying a diet as a last resort... only if other methods fail?

**RIKLI**

I'm afraid not. A strict diet and hours of walking every day are the only remedy.

**MARK**

*WALKING!!?? Mark stands up and tries to leave the office. Johan follows him and brings him back.*

**JOHAN**

Mark, don't be like that. You know it's for your own good. You can't even see your little soldier over that fat belly of yours. *He pats Mark's belly.*



**MARK**

Well, I don't need him anymore. Have you seen my wife?

**JOHAN**

We'll find you another one. Just sit down and listen to Dr. Rikli... he knows what he's doing. *Mark sits back down.*

**RIKLI**

In short, when it comes to nutrition, the first principle of our spa is a strict vegetarian diet.

**MARK**

A vegetarian diet?! What on earth is that?

**RIKLI**

It means that consuming meat is prohibited unless prescribed in your treatment plan.

**ALL RIKLIANS TOGETHER**

MEAT IS PROHIBITED???!!!

*Mark and Lukas jump out of their chairs and try to leave the office, but Johan stops them and brings them back.*

**MARK**

A month without meat! Has anyone ever survived that?

**RIKLI**

So far, everyone has.

**LUKAS**

Johan, where have you brought us? Even in the prisons in Vienna, they get a piece of meat on Fridays...

**RIKLI**

Anyway, mister Mark, your menu will look something like this. At 8 in the morning, after a good two hours of walking uphill, you'll have breakfast... you'll bring it up yourself, of course. It will consist of milk, bread made from coarse flour, and fruit. After the morning water and sun therapies, at 2 pm, you'll have a second breakfast, which will include buttermilk, stewed fruit, eggs, and fruit. In the evening, at half-past five, you'll have soup, porridge and some fruit.

**MARK**

Doctor, should I eat these things before or after a regular meal?

*Rikli laughs.*

*Meanwhile, loud snoring is heard, and Lukas is fast asleep.*

**JOHAN**

Lukas, Lukas... wake up! *Punches his shoulder.*

**LUKAS**

What? Where? It wasn't me! It was Mark!

**MARK**

*Sarcastically*

Well, there you have it. These are my friends.

**JOHAN**

You can't be sleeping here? What will the doctor think?

**RIKLI**

*Searching through files*

Ah, you must be Lukas Engelschein... *reads...* Chronic fatigue and despair. Well, this won't be a problem. With baths, exercise, and a strict diet, you'll be good as new. There's no room for despair here in Bled... where life is like paradise.

**LUKAS**

Don't bother, Doctor. Nothing helps me. I've already been to the best doctors in Vienna... without success.

**RIKLI**

*Proudly*

I am from Wangen on the Aare, not from Vienna, Mr. Lukas. Stick to my therapy for one month, and I promise you'll have enough energy to conquer Mont Blanc.

**LUKAS**

No way! You won't get me on that cold mountain even one month after my death.

**JOHAN**

Calm down. It's just a saying. You know you won't have to go to Mont Blanc... maybe just to Triglav.

**LUKAS**

Where?

**JOHAN**

To that mountain over there. *He stands up and looks into the distance.* Well, you can't see it from here. It's just a bit higher than those hills over there. *He points to the mountains in the background.*

**LUKAS**

Higher!!?? But there's still snow on those ... and it's almost mid-summer! Why not just go straight to the Himalayas?

**JOHAN**

Come on now. We'll just go for a walk in Schönbrunn.

**RIKLI**

Why are you here, Johan? You seem lively and healthy.

**JOHAN**

Well, how should I put it... yes, I'm lively and healthy. Maybe a little too lively... *He stops.*

**RIKLI**

Come on, spit it out.

**JOHAN**

My wife says, my wife says...

**RIKLI**

What does she say?

**JOHAN**

That I'm obsessed with... well, with... you know?

**RIKLI**

No, I wouldn't know.

**JOHAN**

With sex. She says I'm a womanizer who only chases after women. She threatens to divorce me if I don't... well, if I don't calm down, and she tells me not to come home until I have myself under control. Dr. Rikli... if she divorces me, I'm screwed... I'll have to go back to Seebach... to the factory.

**RIKLI**

*Laughs*

Well, don't worry. You know one of our institution's sayings:

"No women embraced, juices preserved,  
Abstinence kept, spirits conserved."

We'll get you rid of your womanizing tendencies. When you leave here, you won't even look at your own wife anymore. *He chuckles.* Just kidding, Johan, you understand, right?

**JOHAN**

I understand, I understand.

*Loud snoring is heard, and Lukas is sleeping again.*

LUKAS!

**LUKAS**

WHAT!?! It wasn't me. It was Mark!

#### **SCENE 4**

*A sunny terrace next to the bathing hall with several bathtubs arranged in a row. All three Riklians are present. They have towels tied around their waists, but they are completely naked from the waist up.*

**JOHAN**

Damn it, Mark, we've only been here for two days, and I already feel like you've lost weight. *Mark stands up proudly, takes a deep breath, and pulls in his belly.*

**MARK**

Really?! You think so?

**JOHAN**

Wait... it's not clear from this angle. Come on, stand from the side. *Mark turns to be seen from the side.*

**MARK**

Like this? Can you see now?

**JOHAN**

Yeah, yeah... oh, no... I was wrong. Nothing. You're the same as before.

*Disappointed, Mark lets out his breath, and his belly pops out again.*

**MARK**

Nothing! Damn it... I've been eating less than those ducks out there for two days now. Do you know that fried chickens dance in front of my eyes all night, but as soon as I try to catch one, they burst like soap bubbles... and I wake up hungry like an Ethiopian lion.

**LUKAS**

Fried chickens!? You know that vegetarianism is Rikli's first commandment. You are only allowed to dream about cucumbers. *He chuckles.*

**MARK**

About cucumbers? No thanks. Then I'll be even hungrier in the morning. Dreams are all that's keeping me going.

**LUKAS**

*Hopelessly*

Well, I don't think any of this will do any good anyway. I feel so lacking in willpower and energy since I've been here.

**JOHAN**

*Laughs*

I've never seen you with much willpower or energy, to be honest. That's why you're here, so we can wake you up a bit.

**LUKAS**

If you carried my cross, you wouldn't be in such a good mood either. My medical practice is failing; hardly anyone comes to me anymore. Besides... *He stumbles a bit and then lays down on the floor and starts snoring.*

**JOHAN**

Damn it, he collapsed right in the middle of the sentence. Maybe he had a heart attack!?!?

**MARK**

Stop panicking. He'll wake up eventually. Maybe he's dreaming about some beauty.

**JOHAN**

Speaking of beauties. Have you seen those gorgeous girls walking around the lake here? They're absolutely gorgeous. *He steps to the edge of the stage and looks down.*

**MARK**

Didn't Dr. Rikli forbid you from looking at them?

**JOHAN**

If I'm only looking, I don't have to go to confession... oooooo, look at that babe. Go check her out... we don't have such beauties in Vienna. *He leans over the edge of the stage and looks down.* HEY, GIRL! WHAT'S YOUR NAME? COME UP HERE... I'LL INVITE YOU TO LUNCH!

**MARK**

Oh, better not. She'll eat up the little bit of vegetables we get.

**JOHAN**

HOLD ON, GIRL, HOLD ON! I'M COMING DOWN.

**MARK**

Look... she's running as if her skirt is on fire. You'd think she'd come up here right away when she sees three handsome guys. *He looks at Lukas, who is still sleeping on the floor.* Well, two handsome guys.

*Rikli enters the room.*

**RIKLI**

GOOD DAY, GENTLEMAN, how are you doing?! *Lukas wakes up.* What are you all looking down there for? *He steps to the edge of the stage and looks down.* Why is that girl running so fast? You didn't play any pranks, did you?

**JOHAN**

Not at all.

**MARK**

Johan invited her for lunch, and that scared her off.

**RIKLI**

*Smiling*

Yes, yes, the girls in Bled are quite charming... but let's forget about that now. Johan, we agreed that you won't be staring at every girl passing by. You're here to preserve and restore your life energy, not to squander it. Besides, no one needs more than one wife... one is enough, sometimes even too much. If God had given Adam two wives, he wouldn't have needed to be expelled from paradise; the poor man would have run away by himself.

**JOHAN**

I know, I know, Dr. Rikli... I'm trying... but theory is easier than practice.

**MARK**

Yeah, speaking of practice. Dr. Rikli, could we arrange for an extra meal before dinner? We could call it "snack-dinner" to make it sound less serious and less fattening. What do you think?

**RIKLI**

There will be no snack-dinners. You've only been here for a couple of days, and you're already negotiating.

**MARK**

My head is already spinning from all this vegetables. And at night, I dream only of fried chickens...



**RIKLI**

I'm glad you're dreaming. I don't interfere with dreams. Dreams are yours, but during the day, you are under my control. Any guest who disagrees with my therapies is free to leave. I won't force anyone to stay.

*Mark and Lukas look at each other and start walking towards the exit.*

**JOHAN**

Wait, guys... wait... don't give up. We need to see this through. You'll see, you'll beg me to bring you back here.

**MARK**

I'd beg you on my knees to let me go home if it would help.

**RIKLI**

Well, boys, whether you want to stay here or not, you need to decide.

**JOHAN**

We want to, we want to, Dr. Rikli. The guys just need some time to get used to it. At home, they're pampered all day long and not used to such... such... discipline. Isn't that right, guys? We'll stay, won't we?

*Lukas and Mark look at each other but don't move.*

WE'LL STAY, RIGHT??!

*Lukas and Mark reluctantly nodding.*

*Johan says impatiently.* Come on, you look like I'm forcing you to the frontlines. Let's go, show some more energy!

WILL WE STAY?!

*Lukas and Mark more energetically nodding. Lukas stumbles, sways a little, lies down on the floor, and falls asleep.*

**RIKLI**

Alright, we've wasted enough time on this. I came here to supervise your therapy. The sitting baths are ready, and after that, you'll go for sunbathing on the terrace, and we'll do some exercises in

between. The principle of alternating warm and cold accelerates oxygen circulation, waste elimination, and speeds up the healing process in the body.

**LUKAS**  
*Frightened*

Warm and cold?! This doesn't s-s-sound...

**RIKLI**

You won't have to listen to anything. Just follow me. *The Riklians follow him.* Here's what we'll do. First, everyone sits in the cold water, and then when I tell you, you'll rub your legs with towels all the way up to your waist. Once you're done with that, we'll go straight outside to the sun application. Please, Mr. Mark, you first. *He points to the bathtub.*

*Mark hesitates, then reluctantly uncovers the towel, revealing old-fashioned underwear. He cautiously dips a toe into the water.*

**MARK**

AAAAAA!! THAT'S CRAZY?! NEVER AND EVER!! *Mark storms out towards the exit.*

**JOHAN**

Grab him, Lukas! *Lukas stops Mark before he manages to escape.* Come back here. For your beauty, you have to endure a little pain. Come on, Mark, it's not that bad.

**MARK**

Then you jump in there!

**JOHAN**

Nothing easier than that. Cold water won't hurt me. *Johan sits in his tub and initially sits quietly without saying a word, but then his face starts contorting as if he ate a hot chili.*

AAAAA!!! DAMN IT!! *He tries to stand up, but Mark pushes him back.*

**MARK**  
*Sarcastically*

Nothing easier than that.

## RIKLI

Come on, come on, the rest of you too, please.

*Everyone awkwardly gets into their bathtubs, and when they're all in, they collectively start to sing:*

## RIKLIANS

OOOOOO, OOOOO, OOOOO, this is no pleasure cruise,  
Into this cold water, we reluctantly choose.  
Dr. Rikli insists, it's for our well-being,  
But we can't help feeling, this is far from freeing.

Our tender bodies, not built for this ice,  
We'd rather be basking in warmth, feeling nice.  
OOO, OOOO, OOOO, OOO, how much more must we sustain,  
In this freezing water, enduring the pain?

*The Riklians want to escape from the tubs, but Rikli sternly points with his finger, indicating that they must go back, and so they reluctantly sit back down in the cold water with sour faces.*

## RIKLI

OH, OH, OH, OH,  
don't make such a fuss, you know,  
at my spa, that's the way it goes.  
The body must be strengthened, invigorated,  
not idle in taverns, intoxicated.

Your wives have made you soft,  
just look at yourselves,  
round bellies, and in cozy beds, you loft.

*The Riklians look at their own bodies with offense.*

About Rikli, everyone may speak their mind,  
But what matters most to me, you'll find,  
Is that each guest, foreign or kin,  
Leaves here healthier and more robust within.

AJAJAJ, AJAJAJ, AJAJAJ,  
Don't make such a fuss, don't dismay,

Just bear with it and firmly stand,  
Think of your health and obey my firm command.

### **RIKLIANS**

OOOOOO, OOOOO, OOOOO,  
Why did we deserve these icy baths?  
OOOOOO, OOOOO, OOOOO,  
How much longer must this suffering last?  
OOOOOO, OOOOO, OOOOO,  
Oh, we're shivering with cold so fast.

### **RIKLI**

AJAJAJ, AJAJAJ, AJAJAJ,  
Don't make such a fuss, don't sway.  
Just bear with it and firmly stand,  
Think of your fat behinds and obey my command.  
Without discipline, work, and strife,  
For a true man, there's no worthwhile life.

*Rikli waves them to leave the tubs and leads them to the sunny terrace. Riklians lie down and start sunbathing.*

### **RIKLIANS**

AAAJS, AAAJS, AAAJS, AAAJS,  
We barely got used to the cold's embrace,  
Now scorching sun burns our face,  
Why did we deserve such a plight?  
No disease could match this heat's bite,  
Malaria, syphilis, cholera's dread,  
Those seem like a cat's cough instead,  
Once you've experienced Rikli's stubborn way,  
Seeking shade becomes the game we play.

### **RIKLI**

AJAJAJ, AJAJAJ, AJAJAJ,  
Boys, don't make such a fuss,  
Just bear with it and firmly stand,  
Think of your fat behinds and obey my command.

### **RIKLIANS**

AAAJS, AAAJS, AAAJS, AAAJS,

The sun's so strong, it's quite a strain,  
Even Africans might complain,  
If forced like us, against their will,  
To bathe in icy waters still,  
For hours on end, they'd feel the glare,  
Their eyes towards hot sun forced to stare.

### **RIKLI**

Hot and cold, a principle in play,  
To revitalize your softened clay,  
To battle decay, and regain your health,  
Bid farewell to habits that sapped your wealth,  
Smoking, drinking, and overeating's lure,  
Have clouded your thoughts and heart impure,  
Be grateful now, for here you mend,  
On Bled, your healing journey, we will attend,  
With water, sun, and fresh air too,  
A strict meatless diet, health will renew,  
And soon, your bodies will feel anew.

*Rikli waves them to get up and go back into the tubs of cold water.*

### **RIKLIANS**

OOOOOO, OOOOO, OOOOO,  
What did we do to deserve this plight?

OOOOOO, OOOOO, OOOOO,  
How much longer must we endure this icy water's bite?

OOOOOO, OOOOO, OOOOO,  
Let's trade for a sunburn, oh what a delight!

### **RIKLI**

AJAJAJ, AJAJAJ, AJAJAJ,  
Don't make such a fuss.  
Just bear with it, clench your teeth,  
And think of your fluffy rear beneath.  
Without discipline, work, and strife,  
For a healthy man, there's no life.

*Rikli waves them to get out of the tubs, and when they crawl out, he starts showing them exercises.  
The Riclians repeat after him and sing.*

### **RIKLIANS**

ONE, TWO, HOP (*jump*), OUCH...  
(*groaning in pain - one grabs his back, another his knee, the third his neck...*)

Dealing with guests like this is not right,  
how can one become healthy in such a plight,  
working like animals day and night.

ONE, TWO, HOP (*jump*), AIIIIIIIII...  
(*groaning in pain*)

Exercise is not for our bones,  
from it, our backs ache with groans,  
our chests feel tight and our heads spin,  
this regimen feels like a terrible sin.

### **RIKLI**

LET'S GO! LET'S GO!!! ONE, TWO, JUMP!!!

### **RIKLIANS**

ONE, TWO, HOP (*jump*), OUCH...  
(*groaning in pain*)

This stern Swiss doctor, ruthless in his ways,  
No rest given, through the endless days,  
He drives us up the slopes without pause,  
Starvation's grip, and his relentless cause.

ONE, TWO, HOP (*jump*), AIIIIIIIII...  
(*groaning in pain*)

This is no life, it's a relentless grind,  
Each day we count, hoping to unwind,  
And finally escape from Rikli's grasp,  
Longing for freedom, we yearn to clasp.

ONE, TWO, HOP (*jump*), OUCH...  
(*groaning in pain*)

## **MARK**

I've had enough of these struggles and strife,  
Why did I let myself be lured into this life,  
Into this heavenly, beautiful place,  
Where pain and suffering are my only embrace.

ONE, TWO, HOP (*jump*), OUCH...  
(*groaning in pain*)

Exercise is not for my weary bones,  
My back aches, I can't bear the groans,  
I'd rather chill with ice cream cones.

## **RIKLI**

AJAJAJ, AJAJAJ, AJAJAJ,  
Boys, don't make such a fuss,  
Just bear with it and firmly stand,  
Think of your fat behinds and obey my command.

## **SCENE 5**

*In the middle of the stage, a Riklian sits at a table, stuffing himself with roast pork.*

### **VOICE FROM ABOVE**

PLEASE, GET READY FOR THE SIXTH ACT.

**RIKLIAN**  
*Startled*

*Oh, shoot! He spits out a piece of meat he was chewing and tries to somehow cover up the sight of the roast pork. He takes the towel wrapped around his waist and throws it over the pork. He is now only dressed in small white briefs.*

Well, well... this is not what you think. The main principle of Riklism is, of course, vegetarianism, and I strictly adhere to it. Very strictly! So strictly that from time to time, I have to check if I still even like meat... even God tested Abraham to see how strong his will was. I and Abraham are strong in our beliefs, that's for sure.

*Mark steps onto the stage.*

**MARK**

Hey there, where's that tasty pig? Did you save some for me?

*Mark turns towards the audience and gets scared.*

AAAAAAAAAAAA!! What are you doing here?!!

**RIKLIAN**

What pig? I have no idea. Go away, go away... can't you see we have a performance?

**MARK**

*Oh, okay, okay, I'll go. He sniffs like a dog that has caught a scent of prey. I'm just helping clean this up so you don't have to bother. He approaches the pork covered with a towel and tries to carry it away.*

**RIKLIAN**

Leave it... I'll clean up myself.



**MARK**

I don't mind, I'll do it... *They start tugging at the roast pork.*

**RIKLIAN**

Will you just leave it, you glutton. *He snatches the tray from Mark's hands.*

**MARK**

Yeah, yeah... sorry about that. *He awkwardly smiles at the audience and leaves the stage with a sour face.*

**RIKLIAN**

*Awkward.* Not everyone has the strong will like me and Abraham. Now, where were we? Ah, the story of Rikli. As Hermann Hesse once said... "In every beginning, there is something magical..." and so fate was initially on Rikli's side. The number of patients increased, and his therapies were so successful that they attracted the attention of other doctors and the broader public. But his patients were much more enthusiastic about his achievements than his doctor colleagues and his neighbours thou.

## **SCENE 6**

*The Riklias are peacefully sleeping when Rikli comes in and throws them out of their beds.*

**RIKLI**

GOOD MORNING!!! IT'S ALREADY FIVE O'CLOCK!! ENOUGH LYING AROUND!!!! IT'S TIME FOR A HIKE!!

*The Riklians start to slowly and reluctantly get out of their beds. Lukas continues to sleep.*

**MARK**

*Angry*

EVEN THE ROOSTERS ARE STILL SLEEPING AT THIS HOUR! And I had such a nice dream. I was in Vienna. In my Rainer café... coffee, cake, and...

**RIKLI**

LET'S GO, LET'S GO!! If we hurry a bit, we'll catch the sunrise. *Rikli approaches Lukas.* MISTER LUKAS!!! IT'S TIME TO GET UP!!!

**LUKAS**

WHAT!? WHERE!? It wasn't me! Mark was eating fried chicken!

**MARK**

Oh, here we go again.

**RIKLI**

*Glancing at Mark*

Is that true?!

**MARK**

Ha, as if! I'm innocent as the Virgin Mary, Doctor Rikli. Lukas is just having another one of his fantasies.

**RIKLI**

Well, well, that's not important now. What matters is that we start as soon as possible, so we'll be back in time for the first therapies. ARE YOU READY!!

*The Riklians are dressed in white aprons. Lukas is wearing shoes.*

Please take off your shoes, Mr. Lukas. If dear God wanted us to walk around with shoes, we would be born with them on our feet. The shoemaking and tailoring trades are unhygienic and are the source of human moral and physical decline.

**LUKAS**

I didn't know it was such a sinn.

*Lukas takes off his shoes.*

**RIKLI**

There you go, now we're ready. LET'S GO!

*The Riklians silently follow him.*

Hey, boys? Aren't you going to sing today?

*The Riklians start singing. At first, more sleepily, but then increasingly lively.*

*Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, up the hill we go,  
Panting and puffing, moving slow,  
Tripping on pebbles, toe to toe,  
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, heigh-ho.*

*Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, to Lake Bled we flee,  
Gazing at views, as grand as can be,  
Dreaming of roasts, oh how happy we'd be,  
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, heigh-ho.*

*Helena and Anton approach.*

**HELENA**

*Seeing the Riklians*

AAAAAAA!!!!!!!!!!!!!! THEY'RE ALREADY HERE IN BLED!! *She faints for a moment.*

**RIKLI**

Grüezi!

**ANTON**

Oh no, not you again.

*Helena regains consciousness.*

**HELENA**

AAAAAAA!! Sweet Jesus help us! THE DEMONS HAVE MULTIPLIED!! *She tries to look away, but in whichever direction she looks, she sees one of the Riklians. OOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!*  
AAAAAAAHHHH!!! THREE HUNDRED GREEN DEVILS... *She covers her eyes with both hands.*

Yo, our Pops up in the sky,  
holy is your name.  
Let your crib come,  
let your will be done  
on earth as it is up in the clouds.

'Cause yours is the turf, the muscle, and the shine  
forever. Amen.

**ANTON**

Please, please ... please don't... *He gestures for them to cover their naked bodies.*

**RIKLI**

Es tuet mer leid, Madame, mir gönd bald. Chumet, Buebe, mir gönd!

*The Riklians start walking away.*

**ANTON**

They're leaving, they're leaving. Soon, they'll be none gone.

*Helena uncovers her eyes and looks at the Riklians.*

**HELENA**

Bloody devils, damned foreigners... Look at them, they think they can do whatever they want here. We can't let this happen! THIS IS OUR HOME!

*She watches the departing Riklians, and suddenly, the apron of the last one slips down to his knees, revealing his white bottom.*

**HELENA**

AAAAAAAHHHHHH!!!! FILTHY PIGS! I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS!

**ANTON**

Let them be. Can't you see they're fools? They probably escaped from some mental institution.

**HELENA**

NO, NO, NO, AND AGAIN NO! WE MUST PUT AN END TO THIS!

*She runs after the Riklians and drives them back like sheep, then stands in front of them and starts lecturing them.*

THIS IS OUR HOME, DO YOU UNDERSTAND?? *She turns to Anton. How do you say "home" in German?*

**ANTON**

Huh, what do I know. Haus... I think.

**HELENA**

HIER... HAUS... ICH!!! DO YOU UNDERSTAND?!!! For heaven's sake!

**JOHAN**

What is this old hag yelling about? Does anyone understand her? She's saying she wants to go home or something like that. Ich weiß nicht, wo sie wohnen, liebe Frau.

**HELENA**

WILL YOU BE QUIET!! YOU NAKED DEVIL!! NOW IT'S MY TURN TO SPEAK!

**RIKLI**

Leave her, Johan. Can't you see she's upset? Here in Carniola, they are a bit more sensitive when it comes to naked skin. They have a more Catholic upbringing. Let's go, let's move on...  
*The Riklians want to leave.*

**HELENA**

STOOOOP!!! STOOOOP!!! *She rushes in front of them and brings them back.* YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE! I'LL TEACH YOU MANNERS... you godless perverts. LISTEN!! *The Riklians jump in fear.* IF I EVER SEE YOU WALKING AROUND HERE DRESSED LIKE THIS AGAIN!!! *She turns to Anton.* How do you say "get dressed"?

**ANTON**

Oh, I wouldn't know... pants are "hoze," I think.

**HELENA**

LISTEN!!! ALL OF YOU!!! HOZE!!! HOZE!!! Did you understand me?! IF I EVER SEE YOU WITHOUT HOZE AGAIN, I WILL... *She turns to Anton.* How do you say "shirt"?

**RIKLI**

Mir entschuldigd üs vo Härze. Mir händ nid gwölt z..

**HELENA**

WILL YOU BE QUIET!! I'm not finished yet. LISTEN!!! THIS IS STILL THE LAND OF JESUS CHRIST!! WE WON'T TOLERATE SUCH BARBARISM HERE! *She turns to Anton.* How do you say "barbarians"?

**ANTON**

Barbarians are... barbarians.

**HELENA**

BARBARIANS!!! BARBARIANS!!!

**MARK**

Hehe... This woman is quite entertaining. Come on, Lukas, show her your white butt... hehehe.

**LUKAS**

Oh, come on... stop it.

**MARK**

Alright, then I'll do it. *Mark turns with his butt towards Helena and exposes one buttock.*  
BARBARIANS!! BARBARIANS!!! *Lukas and Johan burst into laughter.* BARBARIANS!!  
BARBARIANS!!!

**HELENA**

WHAAAAT!!! YOU LITTLE DEVIL!!! I've had enough of this! I WILL REPORT YOU!!! I WILL REPORT YOU ALL!!! YOU DAMMNED NAKED DEVILS!!!

**RIKLI**

Mr. Mark, please stop this immediately. *Mark covers himself again.* LET'S GO! LET'S MOVE ON!!

*The Riklians march in a line and start singing.*

**RIKLIANS**

*Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, up the hill we go,  
Panting and puffing, moving slow,  
Tripping on pebbles, toe to toe,  
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, heigh-ho.*

**HELENA**

I WILL REPORT YOU!!! DEVILS!! I WILL PREVENT THIS! IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO IN THIS WORLD. I will put an end to this... before you multiply even more... you, you... CRAZY GERMAN NUDISTS!

**RIKLIANS**

*Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, to Lake Bled we flee,  
Gazing at views, as grand as can be,  
Dreaming of roasts, oh how happy we'd be,*

Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, heigh-ho.

**HELENA**

PIGS!!! They have no shame, the devil himself is with them... FILTHY PIGS!!!

**RIKLIANS**

*Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, up the hill we go ...*

**SCENE 7**

*Rows of Rikli's air huts by Lake Bled. All the Riklians are gathered in front, listening to Rikli's presentation.*

**RIKLI**

*Standing before the crowd, delivering his lecture like a university professor.*

In science, it is increasingly recognized that, contrary to medical nonsense, to stay healthy, and even more so, to heal, we must primarily methodically enjoy the light and fresh air. Although we natural healers are generally pioneers of hygiene and true healing, with the medics slowly following behind, we must not delude ourselves into thinking that we have already reached the highest level of natural healing.

*Anton passes by accidentally, stops, and begins to listen. Rikli spots him, briefly pauses, and then continues.*

Moving forward is the only solution. We still need to clear away many old ruins in order to build anew! To break away from the system of barracks in natural and water-based health resorts, we must use natural light and aerial electricity more rationally.

For the last four summers, of which three were exceptionally rainy and unfriendly, I have continuously slept in such open-air hut from April until mid-October, regardless of the weather, even during storms. *He points to the huts behind him.* And not only in sheltered areas but also in exposed locations at the mountain top, where it's often terribly windy and stormy. On stormy nights, I was afraid the whole hut, bed, and me included, would be carried off into the sky... actually, the



storm did blow away the roof twice. *He takes a short pause, then continues in a louder and more solemn tone.* Our generation is already so softened, degenerated, and alienated from nature that sleeping with open windows is considered a kind of miracle or quasi-heroic act. In the last nine years, I deliberately exposed myself to intense cold air more than 3,000 times for 45 to 75 minutes, directly from a warm bed, even in winter, without any harm. According to medical theory, I should have been dead many times over, but instead, thanks to adhering to an important natural law, I'm healthier than any local person of my age and stronger than any young man from the same climate, even though I'm already fifty-five years old.

**THEREFORE... BASED ON MY POSITIVE EXPERIENCES, TODAY HERE ON THE BEAUTIFUL SHORES OF LAKE BLED, I OPEN THE FIRST COLONY OF AIR HUTS FOR GENTLEMEN AND INVITE EVERYONE TO USE THEM!!!**

*Riklians applaud enthusiastically.*

**LUKAS**

*Turns to Johan.*

Wait, wait... who did he mean should use these... these... chicken coops?

**JOHAN**

Us!

**LUKAS**

ARE YOU CRAZY! Me sleeping outside like this? The huts aren't even fully constructed yet. They still lack a whole front side.

**JOHAN**

There's nothing missing. They're designed this way. Airy.

**LUKAS**

Well, he did say that he's just inviting us to use them. That means it's not mandatory.

**MARK**

*He chuckles.* I'm afraid the doctor said that more out of politeness.

**RIKLI**

The air huts will welcome their first guests today. Boys, please gather your things and move in. You'll be staying here for the next three weeks.

**RIKLIJANCI**

THREE WEEKS!!!!

**MARK**

STAYING HERE?! How? Not overnight, right?!

**RIKLI**

Of course, even overnight. Don't make such a fuss. You'll see how beneficial it is.

**MARK**

*Carefully*

But I won't pay the same price to sleep under the open sky. Will there be any discount?

**RIKLI**

The prices are the same. Well, maybe just a bit more.

**MARK**

More!

**ANTON**

How much will it cost?!

**RIKLI**

Seventy kreuzer per day.

**ANTON**

Seventy!

## **RIKLI**

In my sanatorium, patients pay for health, not for comfort. The sooner you recover, the more expensive it is, and my air huts are a revolution in natural healing. There is no comfort, overeating, lounging, or soaking in warm water like in other spas. **AT BLED, YOU HAVE TO WORK HARD FOR YOUR HEALTH!**

Behold the air huts, in the sun they stand tall,  
Our revolution in healing, we proudly install.  
Forget comfort, luxuries, and feasts that impair,  
Here we cherish the sun, fresh water, and crisp air!

We shan't soak in warmth or lounge in leisure,  
Here, your health is the truest treasure.  
It's not mere comfort for which you'll pine,  
But the brilliant glow of new strength divine.

At Bled, at Bled, embrace the healing thread!  
Where bodies and souls are lovingly fed!  
With labor and love, our spirits meld,  
To vibrant life, each being is held!

With each rising sun, a promise we've kept,  
In the nurturing arms of Bled, softly you're swept.  
In these scenic realms, your vigor is wealth,  
But remember, dear friends, work hard for your health!

**REMEMBER, DEAR FRIENDS, WORK HARD FOR YOUR HEALTH!**

## **LUKAS**

*Whispers to Mark.*

Haven't I heard this somewhere before?

## **RIKLI**

Well, well, boys... let's go, let's go... just find your things and settle into the air huts. You will see how splendidly you will sleep. It will be dark soon, hurry!

*The Riklians leave.*

**ANTON**

Wie viele bauen?

**RIKLI**

How many am I going to build? For starters, there will be these few, but in the plans, we intend to have all the guests sleeping in them. Around fifty in total.

**ANTON**

Fifty! Times seventy... *Counts on his fingers.* THREE THOUSAND AND ...

**RIKLI**

Excuse me?

**ANTON**

Nichts, nichts. God bless! *He leaves.*

*The Riklians return with suitcases from which clothes stick out on the sides.*

**RIKLI**

Ah, good, you're back. Well, each of you may choose a hut. You'll see, they are quite comfortable. If you saw the one I slept in, you would think yours are even more beautiful than the bedrooms in Bled Castle. Well, I'm leaving you for today. See you tomorrow morning at five.

*The Riklians enter their huts and start opening their suitcases, taking out their clothes. It starts to get dark outside.*

**LUKAS**

Oh no, I don't know if I can sleep out here. I'm a bit scared.

**JOHAN**

Oh, come on, you're scared to sleep even in a hotel.

**LUKAS**

Only if there's no emergency exit nearby.

**JOHAN**

And your mom.

**LUKAS**

Oh, stop it.

**JOHAN**

Well, to me, this cabin doesn't seem so bad. If a cute girl passes by... then she's just one step away from my bed. *He chuckles.* Look, look. *He goes outside and then steps into the hut, taking a few steps towards the bed.* Well, maybe three steps. If she has shorter legs. *He laughs.*

Look! There comes the first one. HEY, LITTLE ONE! WHERE ARE YOU HEADED? I'll invite you to my new little hut... to my new bed. Hey Mark, do you know how to say "bed" in their language?

**MARK**

I have no idea.

**JOHAN**

Schatzi, schatzi, come here!

*From the darkness comes Helena.*

OH, DAMN IT!

**HELENA**

WHAT?! WHAT SCHATZI?! *She stops and stares at the Riklians.* Don't I know you from somewhere? OH, IT'S YOU! I WILL SHOW YOU WHO IS IN CHARGE HERE!!! YOU WILL PAY, YOU DAMNED BARBARIANS!

**JOHAN**

Guys, let's run! It's the witch!

**HELENA**

AND NOW YOU THINK YOU CAN JUST SLEEP HERE ON THE SHORE!!! DEVIL'S SPAWN!!! WHO GAVE YOU PERMISSION?!!!! WE HAVEN'T SAID OUR LAST WORDS YET!! WE HAVEN'T!! I'LL SHOW YOU ... YOU ... YOU ... BARBARIANS!!!

*Helena angrily leaves.*

**JOHAN**

Damn it... that was close. It's so dark that I can't see a thing... nex time I might even whistle at Mark's wife by mistake.

**MARK**

*Laughs*

Go ahead if you dare. I used to whistle at her too, and look at me now. I need a month of therapy because of that whistling.

**LUKAS**

Johan, don't even think about whisteling again! Even if a Thai princess passes by. GOT IT?!

**JOHAN**

Yes, yes ... I shall never howl into the darkness again. You never know what kind of monster can emerge from it.

*The Riklians each start preparing their beds in their huts. When they are all lying down, they are quiet for a moment.*

**MARK**

Man, it's going to be hard to fall asleep here. It feels like I'm sleeping on a park bench.

**LUKAS**

Look! I can see the island... how it glistens in the moonlight. When I was little, I used to... *We hear snoring and Lukas is already fast asleep.*

**MARK**

Well, I can't believe it. He's already gone... lucky bastard. This chronic fatigue of his isn't such a bad thing. Listen to him, sleeping like a baby. I can't get comfortable in this bed if my life dependet on it. *He tosses and turns in bed.*

**JOHAN**

I know it's not allowed, but I have a little something for cases like this. I hid it in my socks. Let me find it. *He goes to his clothes and searches. Ah, here it is. He takes out a small flask, opens it, and tilts it to his lips.* A sip, to calm my nerves and help me sleep better.

**MARK**

A sip? A sip of what?

**JOHAN**

Try it, and you'll see.

**MARK**

Alright then. Pass it here. *Johan gets out of bed and hands him the flask, Mark takes a sip. Uuuuu,* damn. This is strong. Where did you get this?

**JOHAN**

This is something I make. Now that I'm a man who no longer goes to work, I have plenty of time for my distilling hobby.

**MARK**

Damn, it really burns my throat! *Johan goes back to his bed.*

**JOHAN**

Did you see that irritated old bat, how she yelled at us again?

**MARK**

How am I supposed to fall asleep if you don't stop blabbering?

**JOHAN**

Sorry.

*Silence ensues, and the sound of crickets fills the air. The Riklians lie peacefully in their beds. Something starts moving inside Mark's hut.*

**MARK**

*Whispering*

What now, Johan? What do you want? *No response.* Johan? Don't play games. *Something jumps onto the bed. JESUS CHRIST!!! SOMETHING'S CRAWLING ON MY BED!!! He jumps out of bed as if shot from a cannon. WOLF!!! WOLF!!!*

*Johan jumps up and runs into Mark's hut, looks around, and bursts into laughter.*

**JOHAN**

Hahaha... It's just a squirrel. You are a real hero. *Johan laughs and goes back to his bed.* Wolf. That's ridiculous.

*Nothing can be heard except the chirping of crickets again.. After a while, there is a faint growling sound.*

**JOHAN**

What's that? Can any of you hear that? *No response.* The growling gets louder. Guys, come on, can't you hear that? *No response.* After a while, glowing eyes appear in Johan's hut, and a few moments later, another pair. Then glowing eyes appear in the huts of the other two Riklians. A faint growling can be heard.

**JOHAN**

**AAAAAAAAAAAAA!!! GHOSTS!!! GHOSTS!!! GUYS!!! LET'S RUN!!**

*Johan and Mark start screaming, jump up, and flee from the stage. The loud snoring of Lukas can be heard, as he is the only one who remains in bed. After a few moments of silence, the quacking of a duck is heard, and the lights go out.*



## ACT 3

### SCENE 1

*On the stage, a Riklian sits calmly, sipping coffee and reading a newspaper. The lights come on, and the Riklijan looks towards the audience.*

**RIKLIJAN**

*Calmly*

No, no... no panic anymore. I'm already used to it.

**VOICE FROM ABOVE**

ATTENTION, ATTENTION, PREPARE FOR ACT THREE!

**RIKLIAN**

Ah, be quiet! *He glances at the audience.*

Yes, those were Rikli's beginnings here in Bled. A lot of trouble and astonishment from the locals. Listen to this... from today's newspaper. He flips through the newspaper and reads.

Headline: SLANDERING OF A SPECULATIVE CHARLATAN!

"Former mechanical apprentice and current 'doctor'... in quotes... Arnold Rikli in Bled is the epitome of those German-speaking people who come into our kingdom in ragged clothing, and our kind-hearted people warmly welcome them. However, after they become wealthy, they return this hospitality with impudent slander and shaming of our nation. Rikli is now a rich man. He is notorious throughout Carniola for his stinginess. The significance of his hydrotherapy institute is almost negligible. Patients there submit to all sorts of possible and impossible procedures dictated by this layman acting as a doctor. We recommend that the people of Bled strongly reprimand this man."

People will forgive you for many things... swearing, fighting, even theft... but try doing something against their culture, faith, and customs. That... that, they won't forgive you easily. These sins cannot be absolved even through confession. Just strip down to your underwear and take a walk through Bled... I wonder how many people will approve of that. Probably no more than a hundred years ago of the nature-loving Dr. Rikli and his patients.

And don't even get me started on doctors and their jealous guarding of their own territory. There's no doctor in this world who will calmly watch as a... natural healer... interferes and preaches to people that pills and other medical concoctions are unnecessary if you only eat modestly, exercise in the fresh air, and bask in the sun. Rikli called the then-current medical methods "consoling balms." You can imagine he didn't win many friends among the medical profession.

*The lights go out.*

FOR CRYING OUT LOUD, CAN'T YOU SEE I'M NOT DONE YET!! HELLO!!! TURN THE LIGHTS BACK ON, FOR GOD'S SAKE!!

*Lights come on.*

Bumbling fools.

Anyway... after the initial success of Rikli's institution, storm clouds began to gather. But knowing Dr. Rikli, he won't give up without a fight. Riklian *falls silent*.

NOW TURN THEM OFF! TURN THEM OFF NOW!!

*Lights go off.*

Fools.

## **SCENE 2**

*By Lake Bled. Air huts, very similar to Rikli's but quite more luxurious, appear, and the front side is closed. On them, in large white letters, it says LUFTHÜTENKOLONIE VOVK. Anton stands in front of them, shouting, while Helena stands beside him and listens.*

**ANTON**

DEAR GUESTS!! LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO THE MOST BEAUTIFUL AIR HUTS IN OUR LOVELY MONARCHY!!! NOT EVEN THE GREEK GODS SLEPT AS COMFORTABLY AS THE GUESTS OF MY NEW AIR HUTS!!

**HELENA**

For heaven's sake, Anton! Are you starting with this circus now too? Haven't we had enough of that Swiss doctor? Him and his naked... sheep.

**ANTON**

Swiss doctor this, Swiss doctor that... let people say whatever they want about him. But one thing nobody can accuse him of... is not knowing how to do business. Do you even know how much he charges people to sleep in those chicken coops where he tortures people?

**HELENA**

I don't know, what does that have to do with anything?

**ANTON**

Oooooo, it has plenty to do with it. Seventy kreuzer, my dear Helena. ... Seventy! Per night! And he's fully booked. Fine people from Italy, England, and Germany are practically fighting to sleep in those gypsy shacks. No, no, and no again! I'm not letting him take that business away from me.

*Looks at the audience.* DEAR GUESTS!! LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO THE MOST BEAUTIFUL AIR HUTS IN OUR VAST MONARCHY!!! Step forward, don't be shy!

**HELENA**

I don't know, we don't have to imitate every stupid thing. Soon, you'll be running around naked up the hills too.

*Rikli and his Riklians pass by.*

**HELENA**

*To Anton*

DAMN SCOUNDRELS! Can't a person have any peace from these devils?! I'm leaving! I'm not going to watch this.

*Angrily goes towards the Riklians, and when she reaches them, she stops and shouts.*

PIGS! AREN'T YOU ASHAMED?!!

BARBARIANS!

*She leaves.*

**RIKLI**

*Observes Vovk's air huts*

What on earth is that?!

**ANTON**

OHO, RIKLI'S FLOCK IS HERE!! AND THE SHEPHERD TOO!! COME ON, COME ON!  
WILKOMMEN!

ARE YOU HUNGRY, BOYS, HUH?! *He chuckles.*

*Anton grabs Mark's hand and starts showing him one of the huts.*

Hier sehr gut!! Sehr gutter als Rikli! Kommen sie ... kommen. Hier gut schlafen! Gut essen ... gut trinken!!!! Kein Salat .... SCHWEIN UND WEIN ESSEN!!! KEIN SALAT ... HIER SCHWEIN UND WEIN!!!

**RIKLI**

*Speaks with an accent*

This is not right!!

**ANTON**

Oh, look at him, he can speak our language now.

**RIKLI**

Knowledge of foreign languages is a sign of culture.

**ANTON**

Well, well... every calf has its joy.

**RIKLI**

What you're doing is not right! It's not right.

**ANTON**

What exactly do you mean?

**RIKLI**

This... this imitation of my air huts.

**ANTON**

I'm not imitating anyone. You didn't invent wooden huts. My grandpa had similar chicken coops behind the barn. In one, he kept his dog, and in the other, my grandma raised chickens.

**RIKLI**

Then why don't you have chickens in them?

**ANTON**

Because the hens wouldn't pay me 70 kreutzers per night.

**RIKLI**

Money doesn't matter! The health of the patients is what matters.

**ANTON**

Every time I send them the bill, I feel a bit healthier. It's excellent for my health. *He laughs.* Besides, your little sheep come to me looking pale and miserable because you don't give them enough to eat. You should see how they feast on porkchops at my tavern... they look like they just escaped from prison, they're so starving, poor things. If that isn't caring for people's health, then I don't know what is.

**RIKLI**

*Looks at the Riklians*

Guys, is this true? Does anyone really go to his tavern?

*The Riklians remain silent and look embarrassed, staring at the ground.*

**ANTON**

Hahaha... yes, just ask your little flock if they really only nibble on radishes. *He laughs.*

**RIKLI**

You will stop this. This is my concept of natural healing. My concept!

**ANTON**

Oh, don't panic, Doctor Rikli. There is enough for both of us. You didn't invent these huts, or the sun, or the air, and not even the water. Besides, we complement each other very nicely. You keep pushing them up the hills and starving them, and I'll give them a little proper food and put them to sleep in soft beds. We'll both benefit from your concept.

**RIKLI**

THIS ISN'T RIGHT! This isn't right.

**ANTON**

Ah, let's leave the debate on what's right or wrong to the priests. We won't solve it. We're businessmen, and if something is right or wrong, let the guests decide with their wallets.

**RIKLI**

It's not just about money! It's about health! You'll remove these huts! This is my concept.

**ANTON**

Oh no, no... that won't happen. This is a free country, and everyone can do as they please.

**MARK**

Damn, these huts don't look so bad after all. At least squirrels can't visit you in the night.

**RIKLI**

GENTLEMEN, LET'S GO!

*The Riklians start walking behind Rikli.*

**ANTON**

What?! Are you leaving already? I haven't shown all of you my new huts jet.

*He shouts after them.*

SHOULD I RESERVE A TABLE FOR YOU TODAY GUYS? ROASTED PORK, BREAD DUMPLINGS, AND CABBAGE IS ON THE MENU TODAY! IS IT OKAY? A TABLE FOR FOUR? OR MAYBE FIVE? IS DOCTOR RIKLI COMING TOO? *He laughs loudly.*

### **SCENE 3**

*A dull hall, like the ones found in government offices. In the middle is a slightly elevated counter where Anton sits, and on the sides, there are benches. Rikli is sitting in one of them, waiting.*

**ANTON**

*He hits the table with a wooden hammer*

The Radovljica District Office will commence its session. As the chairman of the Committee for Social Activities I have received a complaint regarding the disturbance of public order and peace. As I see, the complainant, Mrs. Helena Žvegelj, is not here yet... we'll wait a little longer.

*Helena enters the room.*

**HELENA**

*She spots Rikli*

THERE HE IS!!! THE DEVIL'S SAUSAGE MAKER!!! SHAME ON YOU!!!

**ANTON**

*Hits the table with a wooden hammer*

Ms. Žvegelj! Please, calm down! We're not on a farm but at the District Office...

**HELENA**

NO ONE TELLS ME TO CALM DOWN!!! Especially not you, Anton! *Helena calms down and sits in a bench opposite Rikli.*

**ANTON**

Alright, alright. I see that all parties are present, so we can begin the session. In short... on June 25th, a complaint was received at the Radovljica District Office from Ms. Helena Žvegelj, a fellow citizen from Žalec No. 8, against Mr. Arnold Rikli from Wangen an der Aare, temporarily residing in Bled. Ms. Žvegelj claims in her complaint that Mr. Rikli, along with the guests of his spa, walks around Bled and the surrounding hills inadequately dressed...

**HELENA**

*She interrupts him*

IN THEIR UNDERWEAR!! THEY WALK AROUND IN THEIR UNDIES!!! DAMNED PERVERTS!!!

**ANTON**

Madam Žvegelj, please... calm down.

*Helena sits down.*

Anyway... the complaint reads... *Reading from the paper* ... disturbance of public order and peace due to inadequate dressing of the guests of the spa owned by Mr. Arnold Rikli. I would like to remind the parties involved that this is not a judicial procedure... you have the option to initiate that before the competent court... this is an administrative procedure... a procedure where the administrative authority has the power to issue regulations and orders within its competence. So, first of all, the District Office would like to hear from the complainant, Mrs...

**RIKLI**

*With a strong accent*

I apologize... respected sir, I would like to protest... a serious violation of procedural rules has occurred.

**HELENA**

Look at him, look at him. He's already learning to speak our language.

**RIKLI**

Speaking foreign languages is the first step towards understanding a foreign culture and ...

**HELENA**

*She interrupts him*

WHAT?! YOU'RE GOING TO TALK TO ME ABOUT CULTURE, HUH?! DO I WALK AROUND AT YOUR PLACE IN MY UNDERWEAR OR DO YOU DO THAT AT MINE? Culture... ridiculous!

**ANTON**

Mrs. Žvegelj! Please!

**HELENA**

Oh, stop it, Anton.



**ANTON**

Helena... um, Mrs. Žvegelj. Please sit down and don't interrupt. *Helena rolls her eyes and sits down.*

**HELENA**

*Helena quietly to herself.* Ever since he was given this position, he behaves like Emperor Franz Joseph.

**ANTON**

Mr. Rikli, please continue.

**RIKLI**

There has been a serious violation of procedural rules.

**ANTON**

Excuse me!? What violation of rules? We haven't even started yet.

**RIKLI**

I would like to point out the fact that you are a personal friend of Mrs. Žvegelj... therefore, you are not suitable to decide on this complaint. You are not impartial.

**ANTON**

What? A friend? Who is not impartial?

**RIKLI**

You... respected...

**ANTON**

ME!!! YOU SAY I'M NOT IMPARTIAL!!!

**RIKLI**

I have seen you with Mrs. Žvegelj together in Bled and also on the hill when we met...

**ANTON**

Please... I fail to see how that could have any impact on the proceedings of this case, Mr. Rikli.

**RIKLI**

I urge you to recuse yourself from this procedure and be replaced by someone who is not associated with Mrs. Žvegelj.

**HELENA**

*Interrupting*

WHAT!! NOW HE'S ACCUSING US AGAIN THAT WE'RE PLOTTING AGAINST HIM!!!  
THIS... THIS... GERMAN-LOVING... HE'S NOT EVEN AUSTRIAN!!!

**ANTON**

Mrs. Žvegelj, please.

*Helena sits down.*

**RIKLI**

I am from Switzerland and all I wanted to say is that...

**ANTON**

MR. RIKLI, PLEASE STOP! I was elected according to all the rules of the administrative procedure, and there is no reason for your criticism! Where was I... ah yes... as a first step, the District Prefecture would like to hear the complaint from Mrs. Helena Žvegelj. Mrs. Žvegelj, please briefly explain the circumstances that led to your complaint.

**HELENA**

What should I explain?

**ANTON**

Well, what happened.

**HELENA**  
*Rising from her chair*

YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED!!! YOU WERE THERE TOO... FOR GOD'S SAKE!

**ANTON**  
*Embarrassed*

Here you are before an official authority, and I would kindly ask you to tell...

**HELENA**

Yes, yes, yes... I will tell. A few weeks ago, we were calmly strolling... with the esteemed President of the Committee for Social Activities ... *Rolls her eyes* ... when along comes this, this ... foreigner, completely naked like Adam. And without any shame, he walks right up to us and starts asking questions... as if we were at a market. NO, NO, AND AGAIN NO!! I WON'T TOLERATE THIS!! THIS COUNTRY IS STILL CHRISTIAN, AND SUCH... SUCH... FOREIGNERS SHOULD BEHAVE PROPERLY!!

**ANTON**

Mrs. Žvegelj, please tell us how Mr. Rikli was dressed.

**HELENA**

How, how?? I already said. He was naked like the day he was born. Completely naked. Well, he had some cloth tied around his private parts, but that's it.

**ANTON**

Mrs. Žvegelj, when...

**HELENA**

AND I HAVE TO MENTION THIS TOO! As you know... well, esteemed director, president... I have a large plot of land in Straža, and I found out that this devil has also bought land up there for his patients... his land borders mine, and these antichrists now go up there every morning. HOW CAN I SEND MY WORKERS UT THERE NOW, IF SUCH PERVERTS ARE LURKING AROUND? WHAT IF CHILDREN OR YOUNG GIRLS SEE THEM?!!

**ANTON**

Alright, alright... that's why we're here, to resolve the matter.

**RIKLI**

I bought the land and have the right to do whatever I want there.

**HELENA**

WHAT!? YOU CAN DO WHATEVER YOU WANT, HUH?! DEVIL INCARNATE!! THIS IS NOT YOUR HOME!!! IT'S MINE!!! MINE!!!

**ANTON**

Mrs. Žvegelj, please, calm down. *Helena sits down.* Helena... um... Mrs. Žvegelj, have you seen Mr. Rikli walking around naked on other occasions?

**HELENA**

OF COURSE I HAVE!! NOW HE WALKS AROUND BLED LIKE THAT... AND NOT ONLY HIM... HIS... HIS SHEEP TOO!

**ANTON**

When did you see them?

**HELENA**

A few days ago. YOU WERE THERE, FOR GOD'S SAKE!! IN THE MIDDLE OF BLED!!! You can't even imagine!!! THEY WERE WANDERING AROUND IN THE MIDDLE OF BLED!!! ... WHERE EVERYONE CAN SEE THEM!!! IT'S SCANDALOUS!!! IT'S A BIG SCANDAL!!!

**ANTON**

Thank you, Mrs. Žvegelj. You can take your seat now.

**HELENA**

I'M NOT DONE YET!! LISTEN!! EVEN NAKED STATUES AND PAINTINGS HAVE TO BE COVERED IN EXHIBITIONS, BUT THIS DEVIL CAN DRIVE HIS SHEEP AROUND DRESSED LIKE ADAM AND EVE... WHAT IF YOUNG GIRLS AND INNOCENT CHILDREN CAN SEE THEM!?

**ANTON**

Thank you, Mrs. Žvegelj...

**HELENA**

I'M NOT DONE YET!! My demand to stop this madness is not only based on Christian decency. THESE DEVILS ALSO SPREAD DISEASES!! MY CLOSELY ILL FRIEND IVAN SAYS HE CONTRACTED HIS ILLNESS FROM ONE OF THESE DEVILS. WE ALL KNOW THAT DISEASES SPREAD THROUGH THE EVAPORATIONS FROM PATIENTS, AND IF THEY WANDER AROUND NAKED LIKE THIS...

**ANTON**

Thank you, Mrs. Žvegelj...

**HELENA**

I'M NOT DONE YET!! I HAVE WITNESSES!! EVERYTHING I'VE SAID CAN BE CONFIRMED!!

*She takes a paper and reads.* Ivan Dolar, a resident in Žaleče No. 9... Helena Hribar, a resident in Žaleče No. 6... Reza Žvegelj from Žaleče No. 8...

**ANTON**

Isn't that your daughter?

**HELENA**

YES, SO WHAT?! *She continues reading.* Simon Kejžar, former mayor and resident in Žaleče. EVEN THE FORMER MAYOR SAW THEM!!! DAMN SWINES!!!

I DEMAND THAT FROM NOW ON THESE... THESE... FOREIGNERS WALK AROUND ONLY DECENTLY AND FULLY DRESSED!! AROUND BLEED AND IN THE MOUNTAINS!!

I DEMAND THAT THIS SOCALLED DR. RIKLI PUTS UP A TWO-METER HIGH FENCE AROUND HIS PROPERTY IN STRAŽA, AND THAT THESE... THESE... ANTICHRISTS... CAN UNDESS ONLY ON HIS LAND!!!

I DEMAND THAT CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES OF OUR LAND BE RESPECTED... NOTHING ELSE!!!

Now, I'm done.

*Helena sits down.*

**ANTON**

Thank you, Mrs. Žvegelj. Mr. Rikli, do you have anything to add?

**RIKLI**

*Stands up*

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to say that firstly... My patients and I occasionally remove our clothes as part of the healing process, and we do not intend to disturb public order and peace. Secondly... My patients and I sunbathe only within my spa premises and on my property, which I purchased in Straža for this purpose. Thirdly... I have always respected the culture and customs...

**ANTON**

Alright, alright. I understand, Mr. Rikli. You may take a seat. I apologize, we are a bit pressed for time. We still have a meeting of the Committee for Culture after this. Nevertheless, I have heard all that is necessary.

*Rikli continues to stand.*

So, today, on the twenty-fifth of June, the District Administration in Radovljica has reviewed the complaint of Mrs. Helena Žvegelj from Žaleče No. 8, against Mr. Arnold Rikli from Wangen an der Aare. Both parties have had the opportunity to present their arguments...

**RIKLI**

I have not yet stated all of my arguments...

**ANTON**

Mr. Rikli, you had the chance to present them ... anyway,

The Chairman of the Committee for Social Activities has made a decision in this matter. It reads as follows:

THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION IN RADOVLJICA PROHIBITS ALL GUESTS OF RIKLI'S SPA FROM ANY NUDITY. IN ADDITION, THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION CALLS ON MR. RIKLI TO FENCE HIS PROPERTY IN STRAŽA WITH A TWO-METER HIGH FENCE.

The hearing is concluded. Thank you.

*He strikes the table with his hammer and winks at Helena.*

## **SCENE 4**

*Rikli's quaintly furnished office. The Riklijans are clearly transformed. Mark has slimmed down, and Lukas is no longer tired and sleepy.*

**RIKLI**

NEXT, PLEASE!

*The Riklijans enter the room.*

One by one, gentlemen, please.

**JOHAN**

Mr. Rikli, but we are together...

**RIKLI**

Yes, yes... I forgot. You are like apostles... inseparable. Come in.

The Riklijans step into the office and sit down.

**JOHAN**

Gosh darn it... sorry for the language, but, Mr. Rikli... if you don't perform miracles! Just look at us. Our wives won't recognize us anymore. Mark has become as thin as a rail. Come on, Mark, stand up, so the doctor can see you. *Mark stands up.* There you go. Where he had fat before, there are muscles now. Flex your arm, come on! *Mark flexes his arm muscles.* Wow, he's like Hercules. And our Lukas, he barely sleeps at night, he has so much energy that he might actually climb Mont Blanc.

**LUKAS**

*Loudly and determinedly*

Oh, leave me alone!

**JOHAN**

Listen to him, listen... how rebellious... and determined. He might start a revolution. Johan *chuckles.*

**RIKLI**

I'm glad, I'm glad, gentlemen, that you're in better health. After all, that's why you came.

**JOHAN**

Yes, yes, but just remember how skeptically my musketeers looked at you when we arrived. They didn't have much faith in you, even though I assured them that you were the best healer under the sun. But now, to hear them praising you... I have to listen to Rikli this, Rikli that all day long. When they get back to Vienna, they'll give you such a recommendation that you'll have to build fifty more air huts.

**RIKLI**

Well, I wouldn't mind that. *Smiles.* I actually called you here because I've prepared the bills for your treatment. I have a habit of going through everything with each guest to avoid any misunderstandings.

**MARK**

You're worth every penny, Doctor Rikli! I'd sell my last pair of underwear just to be able to come back here again.

*Rikli rummages through papers and takes out a bill.*

**RIKLI**

Ah, here it is... Mark Rainer. *Rikli starts listing, as if firing with a machine gun.*

- Admission interview on arrival... five gold coins
- One-month treatment and vegetarian food... one hundred twenty gold coins
- Thirty days in first-class air huts... forty-two gold coins

Props:

- Field bottle... eighteen crowns
- Field glass... eighteen crowns
- Honey jar... forty crowns
- Bread bag... fifteen crowns
- Sandal clips... forty crowns

**MARK**

Sandal clips?! I haven't even seen those.



**RIKLI**

They're in each air hut.

**MARK**

But I didn't use them.

**RIKLI**

But you had the opportunity to do so.

- Body wrap with oiled towel... 90 crowns
- Enema injection... 3 gold coins
- Apron... 44 crowns
- Leg bandages... 30 crowns
- Double cotton fabrics... 78 crowns
- 60 candles... crowns
- Regular tips during dinners... 10 gold coins
- Thirty meals served in huts... 30 gold coins

And finally, three meat meals, against my recommendation and at your explicit request... 36 gold coins.

**MARK**

THIRTY-SIX GOLD COINS?! FOR THREE STEAKS?!

**JOHAN**

Mark, stop it, you're not poor.

**MARK**

Damn it... I'll have to write to my wife to take a loan.

**RIKLI**

Altogether, that amounts to 250 gold coins and 41 crowns. Those who bring proof of poverty are exempt from paying the spa and music tax, which amounts to 4 gold coins.

**MARK**

The air isn't charged, is it?

**JOHAN**

Mark!

**RIKLI**

No, it's already included in the basic package.

**JOHAN**

*excitedly*

Hey, Mr. Rikli, oh can't you see,  
Your healing ways did wonders for Mark and me!  
We used to be weary, so dim and slack,  
But now we're vibrant, there's no turning back!

**MARK**

*slightly agitated*

But the bills, oh, they're a hefty sight,  
Counting the coins, oh, I might take all night!  
With muscles of steel and a wallet so light,  
We didn't expect this financial fright!

*Chorus - All Riklijans together, a bit playfully disgruntled.*

**RIKLIANS**

Oh, the bills of Bled, so grand and so bold,  
We're now fit and strong but our wallets feel old!  
The air, the sun, all precious but free,  
Yet the bills, dear Rikli, oh how they tax thee!

**LUKAS**

*mockingly*

Thirty-six gold for steak, oh what a snack,  
For that kind of coin, we'd expect a whole pack!  
From honey jars to the clips of a sandal,  
Who knew good health came with such a scandal?

**JOHAN**

*chuckling*

Oh, Rikli, your ways are shrouded in mirth,  
Yet here we stand, reborn, given a new birth!  
Our praises for you will travel the lands,  
But these bills, they slip like sand through our hands!

**RIKLIANS**

Oh, the bills of Bled, they pile and peak,  
For enemas and wraps and some veggies to seek!  
Though our bodies feel young and our spirits take flight,  
Our pockets declare, "Oh, what an expensive delight!"

**RIKLI**

*calmly, with a sly smile*

Dear friends, the path to wellness isn't so bleak,  
Yes, your pockets are light, but your health isn't weak.  
You've jogged through the valleys and slept 'neath the stars,  
Discovering strength beyond monetary bars!

**JOHAN**

*more joyous, accepting*

Oh doctor Rikli, we jest, but your wisdom we hold,  
In hearts now so warm, and spirits so bold.  
With memories of Bled, we'll return to our land,  
Spreading tales of your health utopia so grand!

**RIKLIANS**

Oh, the bills of Bled, what stories they'll make,  
A testament to wellness and the paths that we take!  
With hearty laughs, we'll cherish the dawn,  
Of Rikli's realm, where health is redrawn!

**ALL**

For each golden coin, every crown in the pile,  
We've gained something priceless, every jog and each mile.  
Through the fields of Bled, our tales will be spun,  
Of wellness, of friendship, under Bled's sun!

*Mark takes out his wallet and starts counting banknotes on the table.*

## EPILOG IN DREAMS

*A long tavern table with Riklians sitting around it, each wearing a white apron and enjoying their steaks. Anton moves around them, pouring wine and beer. Everything is surrounded by light haze.*

**ANTON**

*Anton comes to Mark and pours him a glass of beer.*

BIER GUT!! SEHR GUT BIER!!! FRIŠ!!!

**MARK**

JA, JA ... BIER GUT ABER SCHNITZEL HART!! SEHR HART!! BEER GOOD BUT SCHNITZEL HARD!! VERY HARD!!

**ANTON**

NEIN, NEIN NICHT HART!!! NOT HARD!!!

**MARK**

HART JA!! SEHR HART!! *He takes his steak in his hand and throws it on the floor. When the steak touches the ground, it thuds as if a brick had fallen on the floor.*

Sehen sie! Der Schnitzel ist hart wie Stein. HARD AS STONE!!

**ANTON**

NEIN, NICHT HART!! *He picks up the steak and taps it on the table, examining it. Jaz sem kuhal zrezke, ko si bil ti še v planicah.*

**MARK**

*Turns to his companions.*

What is he saying? Does anyone understand him?

**LUKAS**

I think he said he cooked steaks when you were still pooping in diapers.

**MARK**  
*Turns to Anton*

THEN WHY ARE YOU SERVING THEM NOW?!!

**ANTON**

WHAT?! DON'T UNDERSTAND!!

*Mark waves his hand and takes a sip from his beer mug.*

**JOHAN**

Guys if Dr. Rikli catches us, we'll be in big trouble.

**MARK**

Well, today, we are celebrating Lukas's birthday, so we can have a little fun.

**LUKAS**

Whose birthday were we celebrating last week then?

**MARK**

Christopher Columbus's.

*Lukas covers his eyes with one hand and then starts drinking from his beer glass.*

**JOHAN**

What on earth are you doing?

**LUKAS**

Rikli forbade me even to look at beer.

*All Riklians laugh, then they continue eating in silence. At that moment, Rikli peeks his head from around the corner. He's wearing a cap with a white visor. Quietly, he sneaks behind the Riklians and watches them for a while. Then, by accident, Johan turns around and gets frightened as if he saw a ghost.*

**JOHAN**

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!! DOCTOR RIKLI!!! THIS IS NOT WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE!!!

**RIKLI**

Oh, really? What does it look like then?

**JOHAN**

Bb-bb-birthday c-c-celebration ... fr-fr-from ... from ...

*The lights quickly turn off and on. Riklian is lying on his bed on the other end of the stage and is awakened and startled.*

**RIKLIAN**

*Shouts*

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS'S BIRTHDAY!!!

*Riklian breathes deeply and realizes that it was all just a dream.*

Damn it, this almost give me a heart attack.

*He lies back down, turns to the other side, and falls back asleep.*

*The lights on the other end of the stage turn on again, and the entire group of Riklians, along with Rikli, is seen back at the pub.*

**RIKLI**

Guys, all of you come to my office tomorrow morning! YOUR TREATMENT IS OVER!

*Helena enters the pub and spots the Riklians.*

**HELENA**

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!! PIGS!!! AREN'T YOU ASHAMED?! THE DEVIL BROUGHT YOU HERE, BARBARIANS!!

## FATHER

I am disappointed, Arnold, deeply disappointed. You have disappointed all of us... the entire family. We invested so much in you. Just look at yourself now. Chasing silly naked Viennese people in pubs. Is this your profession?!! For this, you abandoned your family, the factory, and your brothers.

## KARL

You left me all alone in our new tannery. Our joint tannery! Everything collapsed, everything... debts, creditors... everything collapsed. How could you leave me all alone?! Your own brother.

*All Riklians stand up and gather in the middle of the stage, facing Rikli, and start singing. The other performers turn away.*

Oh, he who's never tasted honeyed bread,  
Or sipped sweet milk, its richness widespread,  
On Rikli's hill, with silver cup in hand,  
In this village, wisdom's charm they don't understand!

So, follow us along the Straža's trail,  
With bare hands, we'll leap and sail,  
Under the sun, we'll dance and wail,  
Morning's cool breeze, we'll brave and hail!

No wine, no beer, no coffee's spell,  
Just chewing greens, our bodies feel so well,  
When the going gets tough, we've got a trick,  
With Rikli's guidance, digestion's secrets we'll pick!

So, follow us along the Straža's trail,  
With bare hands, we'll leap and sail,  
Under the sun, we'll dance and wail,  
Morning's cool breeze, we'll brave and hail!

No hugs for women, our strength we retain,  
Only the corset's kiss, in the evening's reign,  
With newfound vigor, we'll rise and gain,  
In Rikli's teachings, our power will sustain!

Barefoot we wander, feeling the ground,  
Enriching our souls, a melody we've found,  
The common folks may laugh and jest,

But we, in our truth, feel endlessly blessed!

So, follow us along the Straža's trail,  
With bare hands, we'll leap and sail,  
Under the sun, we'll dance and wail,  
Morning's cool breeze, we'll brave and hail!

Health, our treasure, our hearts embrace,  
With Rikli's wisdom, we find our grace,  
Through music and dance, our woes we'll erase,  
In this joyful musical, our souls find their place!

*A very beautiful and elegantly dressed woman enters the stage and walks past Riklians. Johan looks at her very lasciviously.*

**JOHAN**

Hey, my little deer. Did you get lost? Wait... wait. *He chases after her, and they both leave the stage together.*

**RIKLI**

WELL, EVEN I CAN'T CURE EVERYTHING!

*The lights fade out.*

**THE END**



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