

Jennifer Compton

ADOLF SAYS

“A schizophrenic has a bloodstained eye
and a poltergeist throws things. No, no.
In the home of my parents
I had two eyes to see the struggle.
I would not become a civil servant.
‘A painter? An artist-painter?’
Something — but certainly not a civil servant.
How far? How far from Branau-on-the-Inn?
How far to Landsberg am Lech?
How far do I travel to forestall fate?
I was careful of my speech
and I was reserved in manner.
Back at the Realschule I knew one Jewish boy.
The ‘old gentleman’ was a Cosmopolitan
but I believe today that I am defending
the handiwork of the Lord for a Jew
can never be rescued from his fixed notions.
I had always hated the Parliament
and cherished ideals of political freedom.
Tyranny hides under the cloak of ‘legality’
and the theorist in spectacles
would give his life for doctrine.
I hoped one day to make my mark as an architect.

I hoped to rebuild our common Fatherland.
And so in Vienna I grew to be a man
of a grave and pensive nature.
At last I came to Munich.
I stood with nature and watched
the free play of forces.
Nobody can doubt that this world
will one day be the scene
of dreadful struggles for existence
on the part of mankind.”