

This is the fifth part of the story.
Read it and then... Create it!

CHARRED PORK CHOPS AND BROKEN PLATES

Mrs. Horn sought out her daughter's teacher, Miss Linnekogel, in her home.

„The question you have asked me,“ said Miss Linnekogel, „is an exceedingly strange one. Do I think it possible that your daughter is not your daughter but another girl? Excuse me, but...“

„No, I'm not mad,“ Mrs. Horn assured her, and laid a photograph on the table.

Miss Linnekogel looked at it. Then at the visitor. Then at the photograph again.

„I have two daughters,“ said Mrs. Horn in a low voice. „The second one lives with my divorced husband in Vienna. This photograph happened to come into my hands a few hours ago. I did not know that the two children had met during camp.“

Miss Linnekogel opened and closed her mouth like a gasping fish. She shook her head and pushed the photograph away as though she were afraid it would bite her. At last she asked, „Didn't they know of each other's existence before their meeting?“

Mrs. Horn shook her head. „No. My husband and I agreed when we parted that they should be kept in ignorance. We thought it was the best way.“

„And you, yourself, never heard again from your husband or your other daughter?“

„Never.“

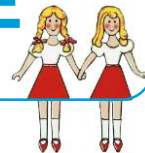
„Do you think he has remarried?“

„I don't know. I doubt it. He thought he was unsuited for family life.“



Take notes of the most important
informations from the text!
Your notes can be:
Mindmap, Table, Drawing, etc.

LISA AND LOTTIE



S11
T5
L2



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„A most astonishing story,“ said the teacher. „Could the children really have hit on the fantastic idea of changing places? When you consider the change in Lottie’s character – and her writing, Mrs. Horn, her writing! It seems hardly believable, and yet it would certainly provide an explanation for several things.“

Mrs. Horn nodded and looked straight in front of her.

„Forgive my frankness,“ went on Miss Linnekogel. „I have never been married. I have no children. I am a teacher – but I always think that women, I mean married women, attach too much importance to their husbands. Nothing is really important except the happiness of the children.“

Mrs. Horn smiled wryly. „Do you believe that my children would have been happier if my husband and I had lived together unhappily?“

Miss Linnekogel said thoughtfully, „I’m not reproaching you. You are still very young. You were hardly more than a child when you married. All your life you will be younger than I have ever been. What is right for one may be wrong for another.“

Her visitor stood up.

„And what will you do?“

„If I only knew!“ said Mrs. Horn.

When Mrs. Horn reached home, her heart was a battleground of hot curiosity and cold fear, she could hardly get her breath.

Her daughter was busy in the kitchen. There was a clatter of saucepan lids. Something was simmering on the stove.

„It smells good!“ said Mrs. Horn. „What’s for dinner?“

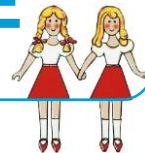
„Pork chops with sauerkraut and scalloped potatoes,“ returned her daughter proudly.

„How quickly you’ve learned to cook!“ said Mrs. Horn with seeming innocence.



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„Yes, haven't I?“ answered her daughter gaily. „I never thought, I...“ she broke off in alarm and bit her lip. At all costs she must avoid meeting her mother's eye.

Mrs. Horn leaned against the doorframe. She was white, white as the wall behind her. The little girl was at the open cupboard door, taking out the plates, which clattered together as though there were an earthquake.

Her mother opened her mouth with an effort. „Lisa!“ she said.

Crash!

The plates were in fragments on the floor. Lisa had spun around. Her eyes were wide with fright.

„Lisa!“ repeated her mother gently, and held out her arms.

„Mommy!“

The little girl hung on her mother's neck as though she were drowning. She sobbed passionately.

Her mother stroked the child with trembling hands. „My child, my darling child!“

They knelt there among the smashed plates. The pork chops were burning on the stove. There was a smell of charred meat. Water spat and hissed from the saucepans onto the gas jets.

The woman and the little girl were unaware – they were, as is often said, though seldom truthfully, „in another world.“



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