STORY OF THE PLAY

Helmuth Huebener is a German teen, intelligent and dedication to the Church. It’s 1941 and as he listens to British news broadcasts on a stolen radio, he begins to realize everything the Third Reich is saying is full of lies. Deliberate lies. His friends, including a young man who witnessed a Jewish wife hauled away in a pogrom, doubt they can do anything. They know if they complain too much, they themselves might be persecuted, as well as endanger the Church, which is already known as a small minority with strong ties with the Allies.

But Huebener knows it’s wrong to be passive “We’re letting it happen. We’ve got blinders on,” he tells his friends. Tensions rise further when an old Branch member, a Jew, is denied access to the Church.

Huebener must assert his conscience. Using the Church’s duplicating machine, the fearless Latter-day Saint begins a campaign against Hitler’s propaganda machine, well aware of the risk to his life.

In this play we witness his tragic story.

About 2 hours.

“‘Huebener’ has to be the most brilliant piece of theatre from a Utah author to date - a haunting, moving, powerful drama of ethics.”

Mary Dickson, Salt Lake Tribune

“If one is allowed only a few peak experiences in life, one for me was watching the text emerge of Thomas Rogers’ play ‘Huebener.’ The work is a product of our local culture which has universal meaning. It invites all to consider models in addition to the pioneer legacy, to apply out thinking to contemporary issues, in this case the competing loyalty between freedom and obedience.”

Douglas D. Alder - President, Dixie College
CHARACTERS
Approx. 10 m, 2 w, plus ensemble of small roles

**Named Speaking Roles: (Some doubling possible)**
KARL-HEINZ SCHNIBBE: A youth, 18 years old.
HUGO HUEBENER: Helmuth’s father.
EMMA HUEBENER: Helmuth’s mother.
GERHARD KUNKEL: Helmuth’s half-brother, Emma’s son.
JOHANNES SUDROW: Helmuth’s maternal grandfather.
ANNELEISE SUDROW: Helmuth’s maternal grandmother.
HELMUTH HUEBENER: A youth, 17 years old.
RUDI WOBBE: A youth, 16 years old.
JONNI DUEWER: A youth, 17 years old.
WERNER KRANZ: A youth.
ARNOLD ZOELLNER: Middle-aged president of the Hamburg -
St. Georg LDS Branch.
SANDMANN: First counselor to Zoellner.

**Ensemble Roles: (Much doubling possible)**
WOMAN AND MAN
WIFE AND HUSBAND
1ST AND 2ND OFFICERS
1ST AND 2ND CLERKS
1ST, 2ND, AND 3RD YOUNG MEN
GENERAL AND AIDE
1ST AND 2ND HAUSFRAUS
1ST AND 2ND SOLDIERS
CHURCHILL’S VOICE
OFFICER
1ST AND 2ND OFFICERS
2ND COUNSELOR
GUARD
CHIEF, 2ND, AND 3RD JUSTICES
DEFENSE COUNSELOR
PROSECUTOR
1ST, 2ND, AND 3RD VOICES
SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I
Scene 1: October, 1941. Hamburg, Germany. The interior of a second-story sleeping room.
Scene 2: A modest living room in the apartment of Johannes and Anneliese Sudrow.
Scene 3: Early the following Sunday. A cramped office in the meeting house of the Hamburg-St. Georg LDS Branch.
Scene 4: Later that evening.
Scene 5: A few evenings later. The office of the Hamburg-St. Georg LDS Branch, as in Scene 3.
Scene 6: One brief tableau rapidly follows the next.
Scene 7: February, 1942. The State Welfare Office in Hamburg’s Beberhaus. It is after working hours.
Scene 8: The offices of the Hamburg branch house.
Scene 9: A desk in the State Welfare Office.

ACT II
Scene 1: The following Sunday morning; Chapel of the Hamburg-St. Georg branch house.
Scene 2: Several days later. An interrogation cell in the Gestapo prison at Fulsbuettel.
Scene 3: Several weeks later. A private cell in the same prison.
Scene 5: October 27, 1942. A cell at the Gestapo prison and execution site in Ploetzensee, Berlin.
Scene 6: A month later. The Sudrows’ living room, as in Act I, Scene 2.
ACT I
Scene 1

(October, 1941. Hamburg, Germany. As the curtain parts, the cadence of four heavy BOOTS striking cobblestone or pavement is amplified throughout the auditorium. The stage is completely dark. Then LIGHTS slowly rise on the outlines of an apartment building, focusing on the interior of a second-story sleeping room, where a pajama-clad seventeen-year-old boy, KARL-HEINZ SCHNIBBE, lies inertly in bed. The cadence of boots becomes louder, then abruptly stops, followed by loud banging on a nearby door.)

VOICE: (Shouting.) In the name of the State Police!!

(KARL-HEINZ awakens and abruptly sits up in bed.)

WOMAN'S VOICE: (Whispering.) The Gestapo!
VOICE: Open your door!!

(KARL-HEINZ moves to the wall in the direction of the voices and listens.)

VOICE: Open up at once, or we will break down your door!!
VOICE: Martin Shultz! In the name of the Fuehrer's Secret State Police we demand the custody of your wife, the Jewess Mirella Rosenthal Schultz.
WOMAN'S VOICE: (Screaming.) Martin! No!
MAN'S VOICE: Please!

(SFX: A door is heard being unlatched.)

VOICE: Come!
WOMAN'S VOICE: No!
2ND VOICE: You will come at once!!
WOMAN'S VOICE: Martin! Help me!!
MAN'S VOICE: It's no use.
1ST VOICE: That's right. Come along and you'll have less trouble.
WOMAN’S VOICE: No, I won’t!!

(SOUNDS of a struggle.)

MAN’S VOICE: Please! Please! (More struggle.) Please! Please! Mirella, forgive me!!

(The clatter of BOOTS and a woman’s shoes are heard on the stairway. KARL-HEINZ rushes to the front of his room, as if staring from a window at the street below. SOUNDS now come from that direction, suggesting more scuffles, cries, body blows, gasps, pants, a woman’s subdued whimpering. After the sounds disappear, Karl-Heinz turns away, throws himself on his bed, and weeps as the LIGHTS fade.)
Scene 2

(The same time. A modest living room in the apartment of Johannes and Anneliese Sudrow. A youth in the uniform of a German army corporal, GERHARD KUNKEL, dramatically gesticulates as JOHANNES SUDROW and HUGO HUEBENER sit nearby and attentively look on.)

JOHANNES: Is it really true? They gave no resistance?
GERHARD: It's there for anyone to see. Across the horizon. Facing east. We hardly fired a shell before they gave up and we overran it.
HUGO: The impenetrable Maginot Line. Imagine. Well, if the Fuehrer managed to take the French with so little effort, it shouldn't be much longer before we cross the Channel and conquer all of England.

(Johannes' wife, ANNELIESE, enters from another room.)

JOHANNES: That remains to be seen. You Nazis are eternally optimistic.
HUGO: So are you Mormons. We all live by our particular brand of faith.
ANNELIESE: I've been in that cellar for nearly twenty minutes and still can't find the cranberry juice.
GERHARD: That's all right, Grandma. Besides, the others aren't here yet.
ANNELIESE: Where can your mother be, Gerhard? She visits us so seldom these days. But she knew you were coming, didn't she, Hugo? I sent her your letter with a neighbor, I assure you.
HUGO: Of course you did, my dear. I saw it myself. That's why I'm here. And Emma knows. She'll come too.
JOHANNES: Don't fret, Mother. There's still plenty of time. Besides, I think I know where we put those bottles. We moved a lot of things after the last air raid, remember. To keep them from the rats. I'll go down in a while and look around. Hugo can help me.
HUGO: Sure.
End of Freeview

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