

Scene Two

The General's office.

There is a big map of Europe, a chair and a pair of officer's knee boots.

Lights come up on SCHMELLING pacing up and down in front of the map.

SCHMELLING Gruber, Gruber. Gruber!!

GRUBER enters and joins him pacing up and down, getting in step.

GRUBER Yes, General.

SCHMELLING You will be aware that Hitler is visiting this district.

GRUBER Is he? Oh, I thought it was just a rumour.

SCHMELLING He is arriving on the fourteenth by train. He will make a brief stop at Nouvien to congratulate me on my command and I wish to surprise him by giving to him personally the priceless portrait of the Fallen Madonna with the big boobies.

GRUBER Oh, what a good idea. Hitler will be pleased.

SCHMELLING It is then likely that he will give me a medal.

GRUBER I think a certainty.

SCHMELLING You will ensure that my belt and my medals are polished until they are like glass—and particularly my boots.

GRUBER (*picking up a boot and putting his arm in*) Of course, General—wonderful leather.

SCHMELLING And do not forget to oil my spare leg. I do not wish to squeak in front of Hitler.

GRUBER Who does!

SCHMELLING See to it.

GRUBER (*finding his arm stuck in the boot*) Yes, General.

SCHMELLING (*saluting*) Heil Hitler.

GRUBER (*saluting with the arm that has the boot on*) Heil Hitler. (*He bangs himself on the side of the head*)

Lights out on GRUBER and SCHMELLING.