

TITISEE-NEUSTADT
for Sean I.

I had not spoken to anybody for some time, but kept hearing a distinct bird cry. I found what made such a sound when I spied a raven perch a few trees in front of me. The bird would tilt its head, one, two, three times, then squawk away until I passed.

This occurred often as I made my way to Titisee-Neustadt. I decided to stop and figure out what it had to say. I found that I had to listen with my entire body before I could understand. This is what the raven said:

“You know Mike, you’re not German.”

“Last night the waiter said he never saw a piece of Black Forest Cake disappear so quickly.”

“Why didn’t you let out that fly that was trapped in the window?”

“If you stopped testing to see if it hurt, it wouldn’t.”

“Why do you keep thinking of Billy O’Connor? You never knew Billy O’Connor.”

“Notice how everyone’s quick to ask questions you are ill-equipped to answer?”

“Did you see that goofy Euroasian Nutcracker?”

“Stop looking for kilometer markers and don’t ask me how much farther.”

“What do you think it meant when that falling leaf hit you on the head and nearly knocked you out?”

“Have you noticed how easily your wedding ring slips off your finger? Maybe it’s all that hair you’ve lost.”

“Did you count the promises you made today? I have. I swore not to tell.”

“Translate what the ducks are saying.”

“I have your interest at heart, more than that cracked cellphone you keep looking at.”

“Don’t tell me you wrote a poem about fall last night.”

“How’s getting rid of that annoying habit going?”

“I’m sure you’ll keep your inner story to yourself.”

“Kant was right. Just kidding!”

“Now I’ve got to go talk to a gentle Swabian farmer about a mushroom. Try to write today’s poem without the word ‘green.’ One more thing—Go find Heidegger’s hut.”