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Mar
Cher's

TOMORROW THE WORLD

- Leah That's the first time I ever struck a child.
- Michael What happened?
- Leah It doesn't matter, really.
- Michael Come on—tell me.
- Leah No—just another of his nasty little deeds. He wanted to make me angry, and like a fool I let him succeed.
- Michael Maybe it will do him good.
- Leah It never does any good to lose your temper.
- Michael Don't let it throw you. On the whole, I think the kid's improving.
- Leah You don't say.
- Michael I talked to him for a long time this afternoon.
- Leah Sure. I talk to him for a long time every afternoon.
- Michael Maybe you don't know how to handle him.
- Leah Do you?
- Michael Well—he asked if he could pay for having the picture mended. He's going to mow the lawn to earn the money.
- Leah Isn't that just ducky.
- Michael He also asked me about his father. I haven't talked to him about Karl, you know. I've waited for him to ask. And today he asked. Do you realize what that means? Curiosity for the facts is beginning to percolate in that little brain. I told him Reiss's story of Karl's death. And I really think it got him.
- Leah You do?
- Michael Oh, of course, he had reservations, but for the first time he began to wonder.
- Leah Or he's just getting more clever. Asking you to tell him about his father was

a stroke of genius.

Michael Now wait a minute, Lee--

Leah After today's exploits, he knew there'd be repercussions. So he gets ready for them by ingratiating himself with you. And, my God, he succeeds!

Michael You're way off, darling. You're way off. By the time I got through with him-

Leah You mean by the time he got through with you... We've got to see this thing clearly, Mike. We've considered him a child, more or less like other children. Being rational people, we've treat him as if he were a normal human being. And he isn't. Oh, I grant you he's changing—outwardly. He's given up clicking the heels and heiling Hitler. But inwardly, he hasn't changed at all. He's just become more cunning, more shrewd. As far as he's concerned, we're still the enemy. So, he's got to split us up. He's got to turn us against each other. Divide and conquer!

Michael Now you're really way off! Come on, relax. Let's wait until we're married before we get divided and conquered.

Leah I haven't got any handkerchief. I'm sorry, Mike. It's silly to get emotional, and I'm ashamed of it. But that child frightens me. He never cries. No matter what happens to him, he won't cry.

Michael Old Teasdale's theory of the regenerative value of tears.

Leah Exactly. Whatever he feels, he keeps locked up inside of him. That isn't healthy. And there's nothing spontaneous about his being bad. He plans it. There's something evil about him.

Michael Sure. He's a bad boy. But you're talking as if he were a monster.

Leah Just a Nazi.

Michael Darling, he's a child. You've handled problem children before.

Leah Plenty of them. But I could always get to the root of the problem. Malnutrition—a drunken father—a neurotic mother. We understand those things. We know how to remove the cause, or how to help the child overcome his obstacles.... But Emil isn't just a case of maladjustment. He's perfectly adjusted—but to a Nazi society! He's been taught contempt for people who don't use force. He's been taught that Americans are soft. And sure enough we've been soft with him. He's found that he can push us around. And he'll go on pushing us around until we give him the one answer he understands—a licking.

Michael That's what you said on the telephone.

Leah And I'm still saying it.... Oh yes, I know. We don't beat children. It's passé, outmoded. A great way to relieve the feeling of the parent, but no good for the child. I can quote you three dozen child psychologists. But it's *long* overdue, Mike. A licking. Not in anger, not in haste. But a deliberate, carefully planned licking.

Michael Sure, revert to that good old American custom.irate papa takes recalcitrant offspring to the wood-shed. Do you favor the harness strap or the peach whip, Mrs. Gilhooley? All right—so we give him a beating. And what does that do? It's merely a confession of failure. And I don't think we've failed yet.

Leah Well, we're pretty close to it.... May I quote a Michael Frame proverb of five years ago?—"The democracies must stand together and take action."

Michael I'll give you one more ancient than that. Old Chinese saying. "Beat your child at least once a day. If you don't know the reason, the child does."

Leah Aren't you funny. Very funny.

Michael Hm-hm. I'm funny and you're stubborn.

Leah I'm stubborn?! Oh, my God! Thank you.

Michael Oh, it's nothing, really.

Leah You're too damn charming. That's the trouble with you.

Michael Sure.

Leah ✂ I mean it. ✂ You've always found it very easy to make people love you. Just use your charm, and you can persuade them to your point of view—you think. Of course, it's a wonderful method when it works. It's why you've been the most popular teacher on the campus. ↗

Michael Why, Miss Richards.

Leah ✂ With college students, it's fine. Amuse them, charm them. Make them admire you as a witty fellow... But Emil Bruckner isn't one of you students.

Michael Oh, oh. Here it comes again.

Leah ✂ Mike, for once you're going to have to get tough.

Michael Great! Instead of using my head, I get out the rubber truncheon and start playing Storm Trooper!

Leah ^y Don't be stupid! Are the Nazis the only ones who can use force? Do you think our soldiers in Europe will be Storm Troopers?

Michael Our soldiers won't go around beating up children!

Leah All right, Mike. All right. ^y If you're so squeamish about it--.

Michael Squeamish, hell! I'm not squeamish! This is a matter of principle!

Leah You're exactly right! It is a matter of principle. But I've got principles, too!

Michael I see. Would you be willing to give him a beating?

Leah You're damn right! In fact, if you don't, I will!

Michael You don't mean that?!

Leah Oh, don't I! Just give me a chance!

Michael Do you realize Lee, you sound as if you wanted to get even with the child.

Leah That's a hell of a thing to say.

Michael I mean it. You're taking it personally.

Leah Of course I take it personally! You should, too! On Saturday I'm coming to live in this house. I'm going to be your wife. Or am I?

Michael Now, Lee, take it easy. We can work this out.

Leah Can we? I thought we could. That's why I came here this afternoon. But we don't seem to be working it out, do we?

Michael Well, we haven't tried yet. So far, you've simply delivered an ultimatum.

Leah ^x All right. And ~~an~~ ultimatum. That's it exactly. I can't live in the same house with that boy! ^x

Michael That's a fine way to work it out. Just take an absolute attitude.

Leah What are you doing?

Michael What do you expect me to do? Say yes to anything you propose, whether I like it or not? Remember, I'm responsible for the boy, too. Much more than

you are.

Leah All right. You ~~be~~ responsible for him. You can count me out. I'm sorry,
Mike. I'm sorry.

Michael Lee!