



University of Iowa

International Writing Program Archive of Residents' Work

Fall 10-1-2016

Writing Sample

Mara Genschel

Excerpt. First published in *Reference Surface* 4 # (2014).

Rights

Copyright © 2016 Mara Genschel

Recommended Citation

Genschel, Mara, "Writing Sample" (2016). *International Writing Program Archive of Residents' Work*. 550.

https://ir.uiowa.edu/iwp_archive/550

Hosted by [Iowa Research Online](http://iowa-research-online.org). For more information please contact: lib-ir@uiowa.edu.

Mara GENSCHEL

excerpt [body text]

N.N.

"[...] and as I now the climbed up the height of winding country lane on this sunny Tuesday in the midday heat like a dried eel with what one might call measured, almost artful steps~~step~~, the food that I had consumed ~~in the shade~~ beneath the shady coolness of the oak, my neat little and limb gastric delight, [...] around the next bend suddenly came: a woman, sharing my lonely road! She was barely ten years older than me - her gait was bowed, her hair falling in interspersed gray strands, somewhat sticky dark strands over a makeshift patched jacket. On the wrist, a small pharmacy bag, dangling. Not a lot of luggage for such a challenging trip, it flashed through my [...] my best piece, my head. And because she seemed not yet to have noticed me, I took the opportunity to consider her for a few steps. Just then a car had approached from behind, she had already stopped, turned her torso to the road with great tranquility, grinning toothlessly, craning her thumb in the direction of travel, thinking she might be given a ride for part of the trip. Yet none of the drivers was willing to fulfill this hope, and who could blame them, really. Nevertheless, she remained standing at each approach of engine noise from behind, turning her upper body to the road with great tranquility, grinning toothlessly, craning her thumb in the direction of travel, ~~as if she really believed, she might be picked up and taken a bit further down the way.~~

"And when this process had yet again failed for the third time in a row, she stayed in this turned position, saw me, and greeted me kindly. At this point of course I do nothing else than return her greeting. "Good luck!" I wanted to tell the poor looney woman, alone, yet I couldn't find the proper words in her local dialect [...] . So I simply raised my hand as if issuing a blessing and began to continue on my way. [...]

"I crossed to the opposite side of the street, expecting to overtake her soon without much effort at all.

"And then [...] it immediately seemed to me that someone was calling my name! A cold chill ran through me, I was shocked. I turned around -

"And as I looked behind me now, I saw no one in this god forsaken land, no one, not the aforementioned woman who certainly didn't know my name, much less a word of German, and so I had no other choice but to persuade myself that I had hallucinated the entire occurrence in the midday heat [...]

"[...] and as I had now come to a full standstill, and musingly looked back from whence I'd come, the madwoman obviously felt compelled to repeat her completely incomprehensible greeting to me. Weary that I had slowed to a crawl just as her, I renewed my patient silent blessing. Suddenly she said to me:

"I didn't understand a word [...] and tried to convey this with my hands, motioning, with an easy sweep of some of elegance against the cloudless sky [...] [...] solely, she said blithely [...]

"Awkward, that is, with great calm now she turned her upper body toward the road, as if it would be possible for a car to miss seeing her in this godforsaken land, [...] and as none was coming, crossed the roadway.

"She approached me, unconcerned [...] she went on [...] and ~~tried to convey this with my hands, sweepingly,~~

"[...] and although I did not understand a word, I was quickly able to ascertain that she was speaking quite indistinctly. Her teeth were missing entirely. ~~Her hair, interspersed with gray strands, fell in somewhat sticky, dark strands over a makeshift patched jacket.~~ On her wrist dangling a small pharmacy bag with the inscription, as far as I was able to decipher it:

"Unconcerned, she continued speaking. In so doing, she looked at me with very trusting and brown eyes, so much so that it was difficult for me to take notice of how pleased I was at our futile conversation and also how little I actually said. ~~Angela Merkel~~

"[...] in so doing, the silly old man spoke an almost fondly utter'd catchword. Again and again, her lips repeated this name, again and again I tried to indicate to her that, although the name was familiar to me, I still couldn't figure out what her problem [...] So I raised my hand with a blessing and began ~~continue~~ on my way to the villa in which I [...] was staying for the purposes [...] of proceeding with my undisturbed work,

"At this point, all of a sudden, she stood [...] in the way and straightened herself ~~up~~, frightening me completely, in order to [...] touch me. I instinctively recoiled [...] from the [...] dark'nd hand extended to me, which even in the best of my will was not able to determine if it was clean enough or not, or had only roughly, sloppily not [...] And now as she was completely and apparently devoid of any sensibility whatsoever to disregard my shyness in taking her handshake, I certainly could not bring myself to extend mine and thus offer it [...]

"And just then the unpleasantness occurred [...], she told me her name, of which, at best, I will not be able to recall more than a maximum of the first letters [...]

It grows so beautifully /

It grows so beautifully

My garden has an iron gate /

it op-ens automatically

and when I press the but-ton //

[Echo:]

the ton the ton the ton!

It grows so beautifully /

It grows so beautifully

I find all things stupid, stupid

I find everything beautiful, beautiful

[2nd Echo:]

the ton the ton the ton!