

The Last Article

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Non-violence is the first article of my faith. It is also the last article of my creed.
—MOHANDAS GANDHI

The one means that wins the easiest victory over reason: terror and force.
—ADOLF HITLER, *Mein Kampf*

The tank rumbled down the Rajpath, past the ruins of the Memorial Arch, toward the India Gate. The gateway arch was still standing, although it had taken a couple of shell hits in the fighting before New Delhi fell. The Union Jack fluttered above it.

British troops lined both sides of the Rajpath, watching silently as the tank rolled past them. Their khaki uniforms were filthy and torn; many wore bandages. They had the weary, past-caring stares of beaten men, though the Army of India had fought until flesh and munitions gave out.

The India Gate drew near. A military band, smartened up for the occasion, began to play as the tank went past. The bagpipes sounded thin and lost in the hot, humid air.

A single man stood waiting in the shadow of the Gate. Field Marshal Walther Model leaned down into the cupola of the Panzer IV. “No one can match the British at ceremonies of this sort,” he said to his aide.

Major Dieter Lasch laughed, a bit unkindly. “They’ve had enough practice, sir,” he answered, raising his voice to be heard over the flatulent roar of the tank’s engine.

“What is that tune?” the field marshal asked. “Does it have a meaning?”

“It’s called ‘The World Turned Upside Down,’ “ said Lasch, who had been involved with his British opposite number in planning the formal surrender. “Lord Cornwallis’s army musicians played it when he yielded to the Americans at Yorktown.”

“Ah, the Americans.” Model was for a moment so lost in his own thoughts that his monocle threatened to slip from his right eye. He screwed it back in. The single lens was the only thing he shared with the clichéd image of a high German officer. He was no lean, hawk-faced Prussian. But his rounded features were unyielding, and his stocky body sustained the energy of his will better than the thin, dyspeptic frames of so many aristocrats. “The Americans,” he repeated. “Well, that will be the next step, won’t it? But enough. One thing at a time.”

The panzer stopped. The driver switched off the engine. The sudden quiet was startling. Model leaped nimbly down. He had been leaping down from tanks for eight years now, since his days as a staff officer for the IV Corps in the Polish campaign.

The man in the shadows stepped forward, saluted. Flashbulbs lit his long, tired face as German photographers recorded the moment for history. The Englishman ignored cameras and cameramen alike. “Field Marshal Model,” he said politely. He might have been about to discuss the weather.

Model admired his sangfroid. “Field Marshal Auchinleck,” he replied, returning the salute and giving Auchinleck a last few seconds to remain his equal. Then he came back to the matter at

hand. "Field Marshal, have you signed the instrument of surrender of the British Army of India to the forces of the Reich?"

"I have," Auchinleck replied. He reached into the left blouse pocket of his battledress, removed a folded sheet of paper. Before handing it to Model, though, he said, "I should like to request your permission to make a brief statement at this time."

"Of course, sir. You may say what you like, at whatever length you like." In victory, Model could afford to be magnanimous. He had even granted Marshal Zhukov leave to speak in the Soviet capitulation at Kuibyshev, before the marshal was taken out and shot.

"I thank you." Auchinleck stiffly dipped his head. "I will say, then, that I find the terms I have been forced to accept to be cruelly hard on the brave men who have served under my command."

"That is your privilege, sir." But Model's round face was no longer kindly, and his voice had iron in it as he replied, "I must remind you, however, that my treating with you at all under the rules of war is an act of mercy for which Berlin may yet reprimand me. When Britain surrendered in 1941, all Imperial forces were also ordered to lay down their arms. I daresay you did not expect us to come so far, but I would be within my rights in reckoning you no more than so many bandits."

A slow flush darkened Auchinleck's cheeks. "We gave you a bloody good run, for bandits."

"So you did." Model remained polite. He did not say he would ten times rather fight straight-up battles than deal with the partisans who to this day harassed the Germans and their allies in occupied Russia. "Have you anything further to add?"

"No, sir, I do not." Auchinleck gave the German the signed surrender, handed him his sidearm. Model put the pistol in the empty holster he wore for the occasion. It did not fit well; the holster was made for a Walther P38, not this man-killing brute of a Webley and Scott. That mattered little, though—the ceremony was almost over.

Auchinleck and Model exchanged salutes for the last time. The British field marshal stepped away. A German lieutenant came up to lead him into captivity.

Major Lasch waved his left hand. The Union Jack came down from the flagpole on the India Gate. The swastika rose to replace it.

Lasch tapped discreetly on the door, stuck his head into the field marshal's office. "That Indian politician is here for his appointment with you, sir."

"Oh, yes. Very well, Dieter, send him in." Model had been dealing with Indian politicians even before the British surrender, and with hordes of them now that resistance was over. He had no more liking for the breed than for Russian politicians, or even German ones. No matter what pious principles they spouted, his experience was that they were all out for their own good first.

The small, frail brown man the aide showed in made him wonder. The Indian's emaciated frame and the plain white cotton loincloth that was his only garment contrasted starkly with the Victorian splendor of the Viceregal Palace from which Model was administering the Reich's new conquest. "Sit down, Herr Gandhi," the field marshal urged.

"I thank you very much, sir." As he took his seat, Gandhi seemed a child in an adult's chair: it was much too wide for him, and its soft, overstuffed cushions hardly sagged under his meager weight. But his eyes, Model saw, were not a child's eyes. They peered with disconcerting keenness through his wire-framed spectacles as he said, "I have come to enquire when we may expect German troops to depart from our country."

Model leaned forward, frowning. For a moment he thought he had misunderstood Gandhi's Gujarati-flavored English. When he was sure he had not, he said, "Do you think perhaps we have come all this way as tourists?"

“Indeed I do not.” Gandhi’s voice was sharp with disapproval. “Tourists do not leave so many dead behind them.”

Model’s temper kindled. “No, tourists do not pay such a high price for the journey. Having come regardless of that cost, I assure you we shall stay.”

“I am very sorry, sir; I cannot permit it.”

“You cannot?” Again, Model had to concentrate to keep his monocle from falling out. He had heard arrogance from politicians before, but this scrawny old devil surpassed belief. “Do you forget I can call my aide and have you shot behind this building? You would not be the first, I assure you.”

“Yes, I know that,” Gandhi said sadly. “If you have that fate in mind for me, I am an old man. I will not run.”

Combat had taught Model a hard indifference to the prospect of injury or death. He saw the older man possessed something of the same sort, however he had acquired it. A moment later, he realized his threat had not only failed to frighten Gandhi, but had actually amused him. Disconcerted, the field marshal said, “Have you any serious issues to address?”

“Only the one I named just now. We are a nation of more than three hundred million; it is no more just for Germany to rule us than for the British.”

Model shrugged. “If we are able to, we will. We have the strength to hold what we have conquered, I assure you.”

“Where there is no right, there can be no strength,” Gandhi said. “We will not permit you to hold us in bondage.”

“Do you think to threaten me?” Model growled. In fact, though, the Indian’s audacity surprised him. Most of the locals had fallen over themselves fawning on their new masters. Here, at least, was a man out of the ordinary.

Gandhi was still shaking his head, although Model saw he had still not frightened him (a man out of the ordinary indeed, thought the field marshal, who respected courage when he found it). “I make no threats, sir, but I will do what I believe to be right.”

“Most noble,” Model said, but to his annoyance the words came out sincere rather than with the sardonic edge he had intended. He had heard such canting phrases before, from Englishmen, from Russians, yes, and from Germans as well. Somehow, though, this Gandhi struck him as one who always meant exactly what he said. He rubbed his chin, considering how to handle such an intransigent.

A large green fly came buzzing into the office. Model’s air of detachment vanished the moment he heard that malignant whine. He sprang from his seat, swatted at the fly. He missed. The insect flew around a while longer, then settled on the arm of Gandhi’s chair. “Kill it,” Model told him. “Last week one of those accursed things bit me on the neck, and I still have the lump to prove it.”

Gandhi brought his hand down, but several inches from the fly. Frightened, it took off. Gandhi rose. He was surprisingly nimble for a man nearing eighty. He chivvied the fly out of the office, ignoring Model, who watched his performance in open-mouthed wonder.

“I hope it will not trouble you again,” Gandhi said, returning as calmly as if he had done nothing out of the ordinary. “I am one of those who practice ahimsa: I will do no injury to any living thing.”

Model remembered the fall of Moscow, and the smell of burning bodies filling the chilly autumn air. He remembered machine guns knocking down Cossack cavalry before they could

close, and the screams of the wounded horses, more heartrending than any woman's. He knew of other things, too, things he had not seen for himself and of which he had no desire to learn more.

"Herr Gandhi," he said, "how do you propose to bend to your will someone who opposes you, if you will not use force for the purpose?"

"I have never said I will not use force, sir." Gandhi's smile invited the field marshal to enjoy with him the distinction he was making. "I will not use violence. If my people refuse to cooperate in any way with yours, how can you compel them? What choice will you have but to grant us leave to do as we will?"

Without the intelligence estimates he had read, Model would have dismissed the Indian as a madman. No madman, though, could have caused the British so much trouble. But perhaps the decadent raj simply had not made him afraid. Model tried again. "You understand that what you have said is treason against the Reich," he said harshly.

Gandhi bowed in his seat. "You may, of course, do what you will with me. My spirit will in any case survive among my people."

Model felt his face heat. Few men were immune to fear. Just his luck, he thought sourly, to have run into one of them. "I warn you, Herr Gandhi, to obey the authority of the officials of the Reich, or it will be the worse for you."

"I will do what I believe to be right, and nothing else. If you Germans exert yourselves toward the freeing of India, joyfully will I work with you. If not, then I regret we must be foes."

The field marshal gave him one last chance to see reason. "Were it you and I alone, there might be some doubt as to what would happen." Not much, he thought, not when Gandhi was twenty-odd years older and thin enough to break like a stick. He fought down the irrelevance, went on, "But where, Herr Gandhi, is your Wehrmacht?"

Of all things, he had least expected to amuse the Indian again. Yet Gandhi's eyes unmistakably twinkled behind the lenses of his spectacles. "Field Marshal, I have an army too."

Model's patience, never of the most enduring sort, wore thin all at once. "Get out!" he snapped.

Gandhi stood, bowed, and departed. Major Lasch stuck his head into the office. The field marshal's glare drove him out again in a hurry.

"Well?" Jawaharlal Nehru paced back and forth. Tall, slim, and saturnine, he towered over Gandhi without dominating him. "Dare we use the same policies against the Germans that we employed against the English?"

"If we wish our land free, dare we do otherwise?" Gandhi replied. "They will not grant our wish of their own volition. Model struck me as a man not much different from various British leaders whom we have succeeded in vexing in the past." He smiled at the memory of what passive resistance had done to officials charged with combating it.

"Very well, satyagraha it is." But Nehru was not smiling. He had less humor than his older colleague.

Gandhi teased him gently: "Do you fear another spell in prison, then?" Both men had spent time behind bars during the war, until the British released them in a last, vain effort to rally the support of the Indian people to the raj.

"You know better." Nehru refused to be drawn, and persisted, "The rumors that come out of Europe frighten me."

"Do you tell me you take them seriously?" Gandhi shook his head in surprise and a little reproof. "Each side in any war will always paint its opponents as blackly as it can."

“I hope you are right, and that that is all. Still, I confess I would feel more at ease with what we plan to do if you found me one Jew, officer or other rank, in the army now occupying us.”

“You would be hard-pressed to find any among the forces they defeated. The British have little love for Jews either.”

“Yes, but I daresay it could be done. With the Germans, they are banned by law. The English would never make such a rule. And while the laws are vile enough, I think of the tales that man Wiesenthal told, the one who came here the gods know how across Russia and Persia from Poland.”

“Those I do not believe,” Gandhi said firmly. “No nation could act in that way and hope to survive. Where could men be found to carry out such horrors?”

“Azad Hind,” Nehru said, quoting the “Free India” motto of the locals who had fought on the German side.

But Gandhi shook his head. “They are only soldiers, doing as soldiers have always done. Wiesenthal’s claims are for an entirely different order of bestiality, one which could not exist without destroying the fabric of the state that gave it birth.”

“I hope very much you are right,” Nehru said.

Walther Model slammed the door behind him hard enough to make his aide, whose desk faced away from the field marshal’s office, jump in alarm. “Enough of this twaddle for one day,” Model said. “I need schnapps, to get the taste of these Indians out of my mouth. Come along if you care to, Dieter.”

“Thank you, sir.” Major Lasch threw down his pen, eagerly got to his feet. “I sometimes think conquering India was easier than ruling it will be.”

Model rolled his eyes. “I know it was. I would ten times rather be planning a new campaign than sitting here bogged down in pettifogging details. The sooner Berlin sends me people trained in colonial administration, the happier I will be.”

The bar might have been taken from an English pub. It was dark, quiet, and paneled in walnut; a dart board still hung on the wall. But a German sergeant in field gray stood behind the bar, and despite the lazily turning ceiling fan, the temperature was close to thirty-five Celsius. The one might have been possible in occupied London, the other not.

Model knocked back his first shot at a gulp. He sipped his second more slowly, savoring it. Warmth spread through him, warmth that had nothing to do with the heat of the evening. He leaned back in his chair, steepled his fingers. “A long day,” he said.

“Yes, sir,” Lasch agreed. “After the effrontery of that Gandhi, any day would seem a long one. I’ve rarely seen you so angry.” Considering Model’s temper, that was no small statement.

“Ah, yes, Gandhi.” Model’s tone was reflective rather than irate; Lasch looked at him curiously. The field marshal said, “For my money, he’s worth a dozen of the ordinary sort.”

“Sir?” The aide no longer tried to hide his surprise.

“He is an honest man. He tells me what he thinks, and he will stick by that. I may kill him—I may have to kill him—but he and I will both know why, and I will not change his mind.” Model took another sip of schnapps. He hesitated, as if unsure whether to go on. At last he did. “Do you know, Dieter, after he left I had a vision.”

“Sir?” Now Lasch sounded alarmed.

The field marshal might have read his aide’s thoughts. He chuckled wryly. “No, no, I am not about to swear off eating beefsteak and wear sandals instead of my boots, that I promise. But I saw myself as a Roman procurator, listening to the rantings of some early Christian priest.”

Lasch raised an eyebrow. Such musings were unlike Model, who was usually direct to the point of bluntness and altogether materialistic—assets in the makeup of a general officer. The major cautiously sounded these unexpected depths: “How do you suppose the Roman felt, facing that kind of man?”

“Bloody confused, I suspect,” Model said, which sounded more like him. “And because he and his comrades did not know how to handle such fanatics, you and I are Christians today, Dieter.”

“So we are.” The major rubbed his chin. “Is that a bad thing?”

Model laughed and finished his drink. “From your point of view or mine, no, but I doubt that old Roman would agree with us, any more than Gandhi agrees with me over what will happen next here. But then, I have two advantages over the dead procurator.” He raised his finger; the sergeant hurried over to fill his glass.

At Lasch’s nod, the young man also poured more schnapps for him. The major drank, then said, “I should hope so. We are more civilized, more sophisticated, than the Romans ever dreamed of being.”

But Model was still in that fey mood. “Are we? My procurator was such a sophisticate that he tolerated anything, and never saw the danger in a foe who would not do the same. Our Christian God, though, is a jealous god, who puts up with no rivals. And one who is a National Socialist serves also the Volk, to whom he owes sole loyalty. I am immune to Gandhi’s virus in a way the Roman was not to the Christian’s.”

“Yes, that makes sense,” Lasch agreed after a moment. “I had not thought of it in that way, but I see it is so. And what is our other advantage over the Roman procurator?”

Suddenly the field marshal looked hard and cold, much the way he had looked leading the tanks of Third Panzer against the Kremlin compound. “The machine gun,” he said.

The rising sun’s rays made the sandstone of the Red Fort seem even more the color of blood. Gandhi frowned and turned his back on the fortress, not caring for that thought. Even at dawn, the air was warm and muggy.

“I wish you were not here,” Nehru told him. The younger man lifted his trademark fore-and-aft cap, scratched his graying hair, and glanced at the crowd growing around them. “The Germans’ orders forbid assemblies, and they will hold you responsible for this gathering.”

“I am, am I not?” Gandhi replied. “Would you have me send my followers into a danger I do not care to face myself? How would I presume to lead them afterwards?”

“A general does not fight in the front ranks,” Nehru came back. “If you are lost to our cause, will we be able to go on?”

“If not, then surely the cause is not worthy, yes? Now let us be going.”

Nehru threw his hands in the air. Gandhi nodded, satisfied, and worked his way toward the head of the crowd. Men and women stepped aside to let him through. Still shaking his head, Nehru followed.

The crowd slowly began to march east up Chandni Chauk, the Street of Silversmiths. Some of the fancy shops had been wrecked in the fighting, more looted afterwards. But others were opening up, their owners as happy to take German money as they had been to serve the British before.

One of the proprietors, a man who had managed to stay plump even through the past year of hardship, came rushing out of his shop when he saw the procession go by. He ran to the head of the march and spotted Nehru, whose height and elegant dress singled him out.

“Are you out of your mind?” the silversmith shouted. “The Germans have banned assemblies. If they see you, something dreadful will happen.”

“Is it not dreadful that they take away the liberty which properly belongs to us?” Gandhi asked. The silversmith spun round. His eyes grew wide when he recognized the man who was speaking to him. Gandhi went on, “Not only is it dreadful, it is wrong. And so we do not recognize the Germans’ right to ban anything we may choose to do. Join us, will you?”

“Great-souled one, I—I—” the silversmith spluttered. Then his glance slid past Gandhi. “The Germans!” he squeaked. He turned and ran.

Gandhi led the procession toward the approaching squad. The Germans stamped down Chandni Chauk as if they expected the people in front of them to melt from their path. Their gear, Gandhi thought, was not that much different from what British soldiers wore: ankle boots, shorts, and open-necked tunics. But their coal-scuttle helmets gave them a look of sullen, beetle-browed ferocity the British tin hat did not convey. Even for a man of Gandhi’s equanimity it was daunting, as no doubt it was intended to be.

“Hello, my friends,” he said. “Do any of you speak English?”

“I speak it, a little,” one of them replied. His shoulder straps had the twin pips of a sergeant-major; he was the squad-leader, then. He hefted his rifle, not menacingly, Gandhi thought, but to emphasize what he was saying. “Go to your homes back. This coming together is verboten.”

“I am sorry, but I must refuse to obey your order,” Gandhi said. “We are walking peacefully on our own street in our own city. We will harm no one, no matter what; this I promise you. But walk we will, as we wish.” He repeated himself until he was sure the sergeant-major understood.

The German spoke to his comrades in his own language. One of the soldiers raised his gun and with a nasty smile pointed it at Gandhi. He nodded politely. The German blinked to see him unafraid. The sergeant-major slapped the rifle down. One of his men had a field telephone on his back. The sergeant-major cranked it, waited for a reply, spoke urgently into it.

Nehru caught Gandhi’s eye. His dark, tired gaze was full of worry. Somehow that nettled Gandhi more than the Germans’ arrogance in ordering about his people. He began to walk forward again. The marchers followed him, flowing around the German squad like water round a boulder.

The soldier who had pointed his rifle at Gandhi shouted in alarm. He brought up the weapon again. The sergeant-major barked at him. Reluctantly, he lowered it.

“A sensible man,” Gandhi said to Nehru. “He sees we do no injury to him or his, and so does none to us.”

“Sadly, though, not everyone is so sensible,” the younger man replied, “as witness his lance-corporal there. And even a sensible man may not be well-inclined to us. You notice he is still on the telephone.”

The phone on Field Marshal Model’s desk jangled. He jumped and swore; he had left orders he was to be disturbed only for an emergency. He had to find time to work. He picked up the phone. “This had better be good,” he growled without preamble.

He listened, swore again, slammed the receiver down. “Lasch!” he shouted.

It was his aide’s turn to jump. “Sir?”

“Don’t just sit there on your fat arse,” the field marshal said unfairly. “Call out my car and driver, and quickly. Then belt on your sidearm and come along. The Indians are doing something stupid. Oh, yes, order out a platoon and have them come after us. Up on Chandni Chauk, the trouble is.”

Lasch called for the car and the troops, then hurried after Model. “A riot?” he asked as he caught up.

“No, no.” Model moved his stumpy frame along so fast that the taller Lasch had to trot beside him. “Some of Gandhi’s tricks, damn him.”

The field marshal’s Mercedes was waiting when he and his aide hurried out of the viceregal palace. “Chandni Chauk,” Model snapped as the driver held the door open for him. After that he sat in furious silence as the powerful car roared up Irwin Road, round a third of Connaught Circle, and north on Chelmsford Road past the bombed-out railway station until, for no reason Model could see, the street’s name changed to Qutb Road.

A little later, the driver said, “Some kind of disturbance up ahead, sir.”

“Disturbance?” Lasch echoed, leaning forward to peer through the windscreen. “It’s a whole damned regiment’s worth of Indians coming at us. Don’t they know better than that? And what the devil,” he added, his voice rising, “are so many of our men doing ambling along beside them? Don’t they know they’re supposed to break up this sort of thing?” In his indignation, he did not notice he was repeating himself.

“I suspect they don’t,” Model said dryly. “Gandhi, I gather, can have that effect on people who aren’t ready for his peculiar brand of stubbornness. That, however, does not include me.” He tapped the driver on the shoulder. “Pull up about two hundred meters in front of the first rank of them, Joachim.”

“Yes, sir.”

Even before the car had stopped moving, Model jumped out of it. Lasch, hand on his pistol, was close behind, protesting, “What if one of those fanatics has a gun?”

“Then Colonel-General Weidling assumes command, and a lot of Indians end up dead.”

Model strode toward Gandhi. As it had at the surrender ceremony, India’s damp heat smote him. Even while he was sitting quietly in the car, his tunic had stuck to him. Sweat started streaming down his face the moment he started to move. Each breath felt as if he were taking in warm soup; the air even had a faint smell of soup, soup that had gone slightly off.

In its own way, he thought, surprised at himself, this beastly weather was worse than a Russian winter. Either was plenty to lay a man low by itself, but countless exotic diseases flourished in the moisture, warmth, and filth here. The snows at least were clean.

The field marshal ignored the German troops who were drawing themselves to stiff, horrified attention at the sight of his uniform. He would deal with them later. For the moment, Gandhi was more important.

He had stopped—which meant the rest of the marchers did too—and was waiting politely for Model to approach. The German commandant was not impressed. He thought Gandhi sincere, and could not doubt his courage, but none of that mattered at all. He said harshly, “You were warned against this sort of behavior.”

Gandhi looked him in the eye. They were very much of a height. “And I told you, I do not recognize your right to give such orders. This is our country, not yours, and if some of us choose to walk on our streets, we will do so.”

From behind Gandhi, Nehru’s glance flicked worriedly from one of the antagonists to the other. Model noticed him only peripherally; if he was already afraid, he could be handled whenever necessary. Gandhi was a tougher nut. The field marshal waved at the crowd behind the old man. “You are responsible for all these people. If harm comes to them, you will be to blame.”

“Why should harm come to them? They are not soldiers. They do not attack your men. I told that to one of your sergeants, and he understood it, and refrained from hindering us. Surely you, sir, an educated, cultured man, can see that what I say is self-evident truth.”

Model turned his head to speak to his aide in German: “If we did not have Goebbels, this would be the one for his job.” He shuddered to think of the propaganda victory Gandhi would win if he got away with flouting German ordinances. The whole countryside would be boiling with partisans in a week. And he had already managed to hoodwink some Germans into letting him do it!

Then Gandhi surprised him again. “Ich danke Ihnen, Herr Generalfeldmarschall, aber das glaube ich kein Kompliment zu sein,” he said in slow but clear German: “I thank you, field marshal, but I believe that to be no compliment.”

Having to hold his monocle in place helped Model keep his face straight. “Take it however you like,” he said. “Get these people off the street, or they and you will face the consequences. We will do what you force us to.”

“I force you to nothing. As for these people who follow, each does so of his or her own free will. We are free, and will show it, not by violence, but through firmness in truth.”

Now Model listened with only half an ear. He had kept Gandhi talking long enough for the platoon he had ordered out to arrive. Half a dozen SdKfz 251 armored personnel carriers came clanking up. The men piled out of them. “Give me a firing line, three ranks deep,” Model shouted. As the troopers scrambled to obey, he waved the halftracks into position behind them, all but blocking Qutb Road. The halftracks’ commanders swiveled the machine guns at the front of the vehicles’ troop compartments so they bore on the Indians.

Gandhi watched these preparations as calmly as if they had nothing to do with him. Again Model had to admire his calm. His followers were less able to keep fear from their faces. Very few, though, used the pause to slip away. Gandhi’s discipline was a long way from the military sort, but effective all the same.

“Tell them to disperse now, and we can still get away without bloodshed,” the field marshal said.

“We will shed no one’s blood, sir. But we will continue on our pleasant journey. Moving carefully, we will, I think, be able to get between your large lorries there.” Gandhi turned to wave his people forward once more.

“You insolent—” Rage choked Model, which was as well, for it kept him from cursing Gandhi like a fishwife. To give him time to master his temper, he plucked his monocle from his eye and began polishing the lens with a silk handkerchief.

He replaced the monocle, started to jam the handkerchief back into his trouser pocket, then suddenly had a better idea.

“Come, Lasch,” he said, and started toward the waiting German troops. About halfway to them, he dropped the handkerchief on the ground. He spoke in loud, simple German so his men and Gandhi could both follow: “If any Indians come past this spot, I wash my hands of them.”

He might have known Gandhi would have a comeback ready. “That is what Pilate said also, you will recall, sir.”

“Pilate washed his hands to evade responsibility,” the field marshal answered steadily; he was in control of himself again. “I accept it: I am responsible to my Führer and to the Oberkommando-Wehrmacht for maintaining Reichs control over India, and will do what I see fit to carry out that obligation.”

For the first time since they had come to know each other, Gandhi looked sad. "I too, sir, have my responsibilities." He bowed slightly to Model.

Lasch chose that moment to whisper in his commander's ear: "Sir, what of our men over there? Had you planned to leave them in the line of fire?"

The field marshal frowned. He had planned to do just that; the wretches deserved no better, for being taken in by Gandhi. But Lasch had a point. The platoon might balk at shooting countrymen, if it came to that. "You men," Model said sourly, jabbing his marshal's baton at them, "fall in behind the armored personnel carriers, at once."

The Germans' boots pounded on the macadam as they dashed to obey. They were still all right, then, with a clear order in front of them. Something, Model thought, but not much.

He had also worried that the Indians would take advantage of the moment of confusion to press forward, but they did not. Gandhi and Nehru and a couple of other men were arguing among themselves. Model nodded once. Some of them knew he was in earnest, then. And Gandhi's followers' discipline, as the field marshal had thought a few minutes ago, was not of the military sort. He could not simply issue an order and know his will would be done.

"I issue no orders," Gandhi said. "Let each man follow his conscience as he will—what else is freedom?"

"They will follow you if you go forward, great-souled one," Nehru replied, "and that German, I fear, means to carry out his threat. Will you throw your life away, and those of your countrymen?"

"I will not throw my life away," Gandhi said, but before the men around him could relax he went on, "I will gladly give it, if freedom requires that. I am but one man. If I fall, others will surely carry on; perhaps the memory of me will serve to make them more steadfast."

He stepped forward.

"Oh, damnation," Nehru said softly, and followed.

For all his vigor, Gandhi was far from young. Nehru did not need to nod to the marchers close by him; of their own accord, they hurried ahead of the man who had led them for so long, forming with their bodies a barrier between him and the German guns.

He tried to go faster. "Stop! Leave me my place! What are you doing?" he cried, though in his heart he understood only too well.

"This once, they will not listen to you," Nehru said.

"But they must!" Gandhi peered through eyes dimmed now by tears as well as age. "Where is that stupid handkerchief? We must be almost to it!"

"For the last time, I warn you to halt!" Model shouted. The Indians still came on. The sound of their feet, sandal-clad or bare, was like a growing murmur on the pavement, very different from the clatter of German boots. "Fools!" the field marshal muttered under his breath. He turned to his men. "Take your aim!"

The advance slowed when the rifles came up; of that Model was certain. For a moment he thought that ultimate threat would be enough to bring the marchers to their senses. But then they advanced again. The Polish cavalry had shown that same reckless bravery, charging with lances and sabers and carbines against the German tanks. Model wondered whether the inhabitants of the Reichsgeneralgouvernement of Poland thought the gallantry worthwhile.

A man stepped on the field marshal's handkerchief. "Fire!" Model said.

A second passed, two. Nothing happened. Model scowled at his men. Gandhi's devilry had got into them; sneaky as a Jew, he was turning the appearance of weakness into a strange kind of strength. But then trained discipline paid its dividend. One finger tightened on a Mauser trigger. A single shot rang out. As if it were a signal that recalled the other men to their duty, they too began to fire. From the armored personnel carriers, the machine guns started their deadly chatter. Model heard screams above the gunfire.

The volley smashed into the front ranks of marchers at close range. Men fell. Others ran, or tried to, only to be held by the power of the stream still advancing behind them. Once begun, the Germans methodically poured fire into the column of Indians. The march dissolved into a panic-stricken mob.

Gandhi still tried to press forward. A fleeing wounded man smashed into him, splashing him with blood and knocking him to the ground. Nehru and another man immediately lay down on top of him.

"Let me up! Let me up!" he shouted.

"No," Nehru screamed in his ear. "With shooting like this, you are in the safest spot you can be. We need you, and need you alive. Now we have martyrs around whom to rally our cause."

"Now we have dead husbands and wives, fathers and mothers. Who will tend to their loved ones?"

Gandhi had no time for more protest. Nehru and the other man hauled him to his feet and dragged him away. Soon they were among their people, all running now from the German guns. A bullet struck the back of the unknown man who was helping Gandhi escape. Gandhi heard the slap of the impact, felt the man jerk. Then the strong grip on him loosened as the man fell.

He tried to tear free from Nehru. Before he could, another Indian laid hold of him. Even at that horrid moment, he felt the irony of his predicament. All his life he had championed individual liberty, and here his own followers were robbing him of his. In other circumstances, it might have been funny.

"In here!" Nehru shouted. Several people had already broken down the door to a shop and, Gandhi saw a moment later, the rear exit as well. Then he was hustled into the alley behind the shop, and through a maze of lanes which reminded him that old Delhi, unlike its British-designed sister city, was an Indian town through and through.

At last the nameless man with Gandhi and Nehru knocked on the back door of a tearoom. The woman who opened it gasped to recognize her unexpected guests, then pressed her hands together in front of her and stepped aside to let them in. "You will be safe here," the man said, "at least for a while. Now I must see to my own family."

"From the bottom of our hearts, we thank you," Nehru replied as the fellow hurried away. Gandhi said nothing. He was winded, battered, and filled with anguish at the failure of the march and at the suffering it had brought to so many marchers and to their kinsfolk.

The woman sat the two fugitive leaders at a small table in the kitchen, served them tea and cakes. "I will leave you now, best ones," she said quietly, "lest those out front wonder why I neglect them for so long."

Gandhi left the cake on his plate. He sipped the tea. Its warmth began to restore him physically, but the wound in his spirit would never heal. "The Amritsar massacre pales beside this," he said, setting down the empty cup. "There the British panicked and opened fire. This had nothing of panic about it. Model told me what he would do, and he did it." He shook his head, still hardly believing what he had just been through.

“So he did.” Nehru had gobbled his cake like a starving wolf, and ate his companion’s when he saw Gandhi did not want it. His once-immaculate white jacket and pants were torn, filthy, and blood-spattered; his cap sat awry on his head. But his eyes, usually so somber, were lit with a fierce glow. “And by his brutality, he has delivered himself into our hands. No one now can imagine the Germans have anything but their own interests at heart. We will gain followers all over the country. After this, not a wheel will turn in India.”

“Yes, I will declare the satyagraha campaign,” Gandhi said. “Noncooperation will show how we reject foreign rule, and will cost the Germans dear because they will not be able to exploit us. The combination of non-violence and determined spirit will surely shame them into granting us our liberty.”

“There—you see.” Encouraged by his mentor’s rally, Nehru rose and came round the table to embrace the older man. “We will triumph yet.”

“So we will,” Gandhi said, and sighed heavily. He had pursued India’s freedom for half his long life, and this change of masters was a setback he had not truly planned for, even after England and Russia fell. The British were finally beginning to listen to him when the Germans swept them aside. Now he had to begin anew. He sighed again. “It will cost our poor people dear, though.”

“Cease firing,” Model said. Few good targets were left on Qutb Road; almost all the Indians in the procession were down or had run from the guns.

Even after the bullets stopped, the street was far from silent. Most of the people the German platoon had shot were alive and shrieking. As if he needed more proof—the Russian campaign had taught the field marshal how hard human beings were to kill outright.

Still, the din distressed him, and evidently Lasch as well. “We ought to put them out of their misery,” the major said.

“So we should.” Model had a happy inspiration. “And I know just how. Come with me.”

The two men turned their backs on the carnage and walked around the row of armored personnel carriers. As they passed the lieutenant commanding the platoon, Model nodded to him and said, “Well done.”

The lieutenant saluted. “Thank you, sir.” The soldiers in earshot nodded at one another. Nothing bucked up the odds of getting promoted like performing under the commander’s eye.

The Germans behind the armored vehicles were not so proud of themselves. They were the ones who had let the march get this big and come this far in the first place. Model slapped his boot with his field marshal’s baton. “You all deserve courts-martial,” he said coldly, glaring at them. “You know the orders concerning native assemblies, yet there you were tagging along, more like sheepdogs than soldiers.” He spat in disgust. “But, sir—” began one of them, a sergeant-major, Model saw. He subsided in a hurry when Model’s gaze swung his way.

“Speak,” the field marshal urged. “Enlighten me—tell me what possessed you to act in the disgraceful way you did. Was it some evil spirit, perhaps? This country abounds with them, if you listen to the natives—as you all too obviously have been.”

The sergeant-major flushed under Model’s sarcasm, but finally burst out, “Sir, it didn’t look to me as if they were up to any harm, that’s all. The old man heading them up swore they were peaceful, and he looked too feeble to be anything but, if you take my meaning.”

Model’s smile had all the warmth of a Moscow December night. “And so in your wisdom you set aside the commands you had received. The results of that wisdom you hear now.” The field marshal briefly let himself listen to the cries of the wounded, a sound the war had taught him to

screen out. “Now then, come with me—yes you, Sergeant-major, and the rest of your shirkers too, or those of you who wish to avoid a court.”

As he had known they would, they all trooped after him. “There is your handiwork,” he said, pointing to the shambles in the street. His voice hardened. “You are responsible for those people lying there—had you acted as you should, you would have broken up that march long before it ever got so far or so large. Now the least you can do is give those people their release.” He set hands on hips, waited.

No one moved. “Sir?” the sergeant-major said faintly. He seemed to have become the group’s spokesman.

Model made an impatient gesture. “Go on, finish them. A bullet in the back of the head will quiet them once and for all.”

“In cold blood, sir?” The sergeant-major had not wanted to understand him before. Now he had no choice.

The field marshal was inexorable. “They—and you— disobeyed Reich commands. They made themselves liable to capital punishment the moment they gathered. You at least have the chance to atone, by carrying out this just sentence.”

“I don’t think I can,” the sergeant-major muttered.

He was probably just talking to himself, but Model gave him no chance to change his mind. He turned to the lieutenant of the platoon that had broken the march. “Place this man under arrest.” After the sergeant-major had been seized,

Model turned his chill, monocled stare on the rest of the reluctant soldiers. “Any others?”

Two more men let themselves be arrested rather than draw their weapons. The field marshal nodded to the others. “Carry out your orders.” He had an afterthought. “If you find Gandhi or Nehru out there, bring them to me alive.”

The Germans moved out hesitantly. They were no Einsatzkommandos, and not used to this kind of work. Some looked away as they administered the first coup de grace; one missed as a result, and had his bullet ricochet off the pavement and almost hit a comrade. But as the soldiers worked their way up Qutb Road they became quicker, more confident, and more competent. War was like that, Model thought. So soon one became used to what had been unimaginable.

After a while the flat cracks died away, but from lack of targets rather than reluctance. A few at a time, the soldiers returned to Model. “No sign of the two leaders?” he asked. They all shook their heads.

“Very well—dismissed. And obey your orders like good Germans henceforward.”

“No further reprisals?” Lasch asked as the relieved troopers hurried away.

“No, let them go. They carried out their part of the bargain, and I will meet mine. I am a fair man, after all, Dieter.”

“Very well, sir.”

Gandhi listened with undisguised dismay as the shopkeeper babbled out his tale of horror. “This is madness!” he cried.

“I doubt Field Marshal Model, for his part, understands the principle of ahimsa,” Nehru put in. Neither Gandhi nor he knew exactly where they were: a safe house somewhere not far from the center of Delhi was the best guess he could make. The men who brought the shopkeeper were masked. What one did not know, one could not tell the Germans if captured.

“Neither do you,” the older man replied, which was true; Nehru had a more pragmatic nature than Gandhi. Gandhi went on, “Rather more to the point, neither do the British. And Model, to

speak to, seemed no different from any high-ranking British military man. His specialty has made him harsh and rigid, but he is not stupid and does not appear unusually cruel.”

“Just a simple soldier, doing his job.” Nehru’s irony was palpable.

“He must have gone insane,” Gandhi said; it was the only explanation that made even the slightest sense of the massacre of the wounded. “Undoubtedly he will be censured when news of this atrocity reaches Berlin, as General Dyer was by the British after Amritsar.”

“Such is to be hoped.” But again Nehru did not sound hopeful.

“How could it be otherwise, after such an appalling action? What government, what leaders could fail to be filled with humiliation and remorse at it?”

Model strode into the mess. The officers stood and raised their glasses in salute. “Sit, sit,” the field marshal growled, using gruffness to hide his pleasure.

An Indian servant brought him a fair imitation of roast beef and Yorkshire pudding: better than they were eating in London these days, he thought. The servant was silent and unsmiling, but Model would only have noticed more about him had he been otherwise. Servants were supposed to assume a cloak of invisibility.

When the meal was done, Model took out his cigar case. The Waffen-SS officer on his left produced a lighter. Model leaned forward, puffed a cigar into life. “My thanks, Brigadeführer,” the field marshal said. He had little use for SS titles of rank, but brigade commander was at least recognizably close to brigadier.

“Sir, it is my great pleasure,” Jürgen Stroop declared. “You could not have handled things better. A lesson for the Indians—less than they deserve, too” (he also took no notice of the servant) “and a good one for your men as well. We train ours harshly too.”

Model nodded. He knew about SS training methods. No one denied the daring of the Waffen-SS divisions. No one (except the SS) denied that the Wehrmacht had better officers.

Stroop drank. “A lesson,” he repeated in a pedantic tone that went oddly with the SS’s reputation for aggressiveness.

“Force is the only thing the racially inferior can understand. Why, when I was in Warsaw—”

That had been four or five years ago, Model suddenly recalled. Stroop had been a Brigadeführer then too, if memory served; no wonder he was still one now, even after all the hard fighting since. He was lucky not to be a buck private. Imagine letting a pack of desperate, starving Jews chew up the finest troops in the world.

And imagine, afterwards, submitting a seventy-five-page operations report bound in leather and grandiosely called *The Warsaw Ghetto Is No More*. And imagine, with all that, having the crust to boast about it afterwards. No wonder the man sounded like a pompous ass. He was a pompous ass, and an inept butcher to boot. Model had done enough butchery before today’s work—anyone who fought in Russia learned all about butchery—but he had never botched it.

He did not revel in it, either. He wished Stroop would shut up. He thought about telling the Brigadeführer he would sooner have been listening to Gandhi. The look on the fellow’s face, he thought, would be worth it. But no. One could never be sure who was listening. Better safe.

The shortwave set crackled to life. It was in a secret cellar, a tiny dark hot room lit only by the glow of its dial and by the red end of the cigarette in its owner’s mouth. The Germans had made not turning in a radio a capital crime. Of course, Gandhi thought, harboring him was also a capital crime. That weighed on his conscience. But the man knew the risk he was taking.

The fellow (Gandhi knew him only as Lal) fiddled with the controls. "Usually we listen to the Americans," he said. "There is some hope of truth from them. But tonight you want to hear Berlin."

"Yes," Gandhi said. "I must learn what action is to be taken against Model."

"If any," Nehru added. He was once again impeccably attired in white, which made him the most easily visible object in the cellar.

"We have argued this before," Gandhi said tiredly. "No government can uphold the author of a cold-blooded slaughter of wounded men and women. The world would cry out in abhorrence."

Lal said, "That government controls too much of the world already." He adjusted the tuning knob again. After a burst of static, the strains of a Strauss waltz filled the little room. Lal grunted in satisfaction. "We are a little early yet."

After a few minutes, the incongruously sweet music died away. "This is Radio Berlin's English-language channel," an announcer declared. "In a moment, the news programme." Another German tune rang out: the Horst Wessel Song. Gandhi's nostrils flared with distaste.

A new voice came over the air. "Good day. This is William Joyce." The nasal Oxonian accent was that of the archetypical British aristocrat, now vanished from India as well as England. It was the accent that flavored Gandhi's own English, and Nehru's as well. In fact, Gandhi had heard, Joyce was a New York-born rabble-rouser of Irish blood who also happened to be a passionately sincere Nazi. The combination struck the Indian as distressing.

"What did the English used to call him?" Nehru murmured. "Lord Haw-Haw?"

Gandhi waved his friend to silence. Joyce was reading the news, or what the Propaganda Ministry in Berlin wanted to present to English-speakers as the news.

Most of it was on the dull side: a trade agreement between Manchukuo, Japanese-dominated China, and Japanese-dominated Siberia; advances by German-supported French troops against American-supported French troops in a war by proxy in the African jungles. Slightly more interesting was the German warning about American interference in the East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere.

One day soon, Gandhi thought sadly, the two mighty powers of the Old World would turn on the one great nation that stood between them. He feared the outcome. Thinking herself secure behind ocean barriers, the United States had stayed out of the European war. Now the war was bigger than Europe, and the oceans barriers no longer, but highways for her foes.

Lord Haw-Haw droned on and on. He gloated over the fate of rebels hunted down in Scotland: they were publicly hanged. Nehru leaned forward. "Now," he guessed. Gandhi nodded.

But the commentator passed on to unlikely-sounding boasts about the prosperity of Europe under the New Order. Against his will, Gandhi felt anger rise in him. Were Indians too insignificant to the Reich even to be mentioned?

More music came from the radio: the first bars of the other German anthem, Deutschland über alles. William Joyce said solemnly, "And now, a special announcement from the Ministry for Administration of Acquired Territories. Reichsminister Reinhard Heydrich commends Field Marshal Walther Model's heroic suppression of insurrection in India, and warns that his leniency will not be repeated."

"Leniency!" Nehru and Gandhi burst out together, the latter making it into as much of a curse as he allowed himself.

As if explaining to them, the voice on the radio went on, "Henceforward, hostages will be taken at the slightest sound of disorder, and will be executed forthwith if it continues. Field

Marshal Model has also placed a reward of fifty thousand rupees on the capture of the criminal revolutionary Gandhi, and twenty-five thousand on the capture of his henchman Nehru.”

Deutschland über alles rang out again, to signal the end of the announcement. Joyce went on to the next piece of news. “Turn that off,” Nehru said after a moment. Lal obeyed, plunging the cellar into complete darkness. Nehru surprised Gandhi by laughing. “I have never before been the henchman of a criminal revolutionary.”

The older man might as well not have heard him. “They commended him,” he said. “Commended!” Disbelief put the full tally of his years in his voice, which usually sounded much stronger and younger.

“What will you do?” Lal asked quietly. A match flared, dazzling in the dark, as he lit another cigarette.

“They shall not govern India in this fashion,” Gandhi snapped. “Not a soul will cooperate with them from now on. We outnumber them a thousand to one; what can they accomplish without us? We shall use that to full advantage.”

“I hope the price is not more than the people can pay,” Nehru said.

“The British shot us down too, and we were on our way toward prevailing,” Gandhi said stoutly. As he would not have a few days before, though, he added, “So do I.”

Field Marshal Model scowled and yawned at the same time. The pot of tea that should have been on his desk was nowhere to be found. His stomach growled. A plate of rolls should have been beside the teapot.

“How am I supposed to get anything done without breakfast?” he asked rhetorically (no one was in the office to hear him complain). Rhetorical complaint was not enough to satisfy him. “Lasch!” he shouted.

“Sir?” The aide came rushing in.

Model jerked his chin at the empty space on his desk where the silver tray full of good things should have been. “What’s become of what’s-his-name? Naoroji, that’s it. If he’s home with a hangover, he could have had the courtesy to let us know.”

“I will enquire with the liaison officer for native personnel, sir, and also have the kitchen staff send you up something to eat.” Lasch picked up a telephone, spoke into it. The longer he talked, the less happy he looked. When he turned back to the field marshal, his expression was a good match for the stony one Model often wore. He said, “None of the locals has shown up for work today, sir.”

“What? None?” Model’s frown made his monocle dig into his cheek. He hesitated. “I will feel better if you tell me some new hideous malady has broken out among them.”

Lasch spoke with the liaison officer again. He shook his head. “Nothing like that, sir, or at least,” he corrected himself with the caution that made him a good aide, “nothing Captain Wechsler knows about.”

Model’s phone rang again. It startled him; he jumped. “Bitte?” he growled into the mouthpiece, embarrassed at starting even though only Lasch had seen. He listened. Then he growled again, in good earnest this time. He slammed the phone down. “That was our railway officer. Hardly any natives are coming in to the station.”

The phone rang again. “Bitte?” This time it was a swear word. Model snarled, cutting off whatever the man on the other end was saying, and hung up. “The damned clerks are staying out too,” he shouted at Lasch, as if it were the major’s fault. “I know what’s wrong with the blasted locals, by God—an overdose of Gandhi, that’s what.”

“We should have shot him down in that riot he led,” Lasch said angrily.

“Not for lack of effort that we didn’t,” Model said. Now that he saw where his trouble was coming from, he began thinking like a General Staff-trained officer again. That discipline went deep in him. His voice was cool and musing as he corrected his aide: “It was no riot, Dieter. That man is a skilled agitator. Armed with no more than words, he gave the British fits. Remember that the Führer started out as an agitator too.”

“Ah, but the Führer wasn’t above breaking heads to back up what he said.” Lasch smiled reminiscently, and raised a fist. He was a Munich man, and wore on his sleeve the hashmark that showed Party membership before 1933.

But the field marshal said, “You think Gandhi doesn’t? His way is to break them from the inside out, to make his foes doubt themselves. Those soldiers who took courts rather than obey their commanding officer had their heads broken, wouldn’t you say? Think of him as a Russian tank commander, say, rather than as a political agitator. He is fighting us every bit as much as much as the Russians did.”

Lasch thought about it. Plainly, he did not like it. “A coward’s way of fighting.”

“The weak cannot use the weapons of the strong,” Model shrugged. “He does what he can, and skillfully. But I can make his backers doubt themselves, too. See if I don’t.”

“Sir?”

“We’ll start with the railway workers. They are the most essential to have back on the job, yes? Get a list of names. Cross off every twentieth one. Send a squad to each of those homes, haul the slackers out, and shoot them in the street. If the survivors don’t report tomorrow, do it again. Keep at it every day until they go back to work or no workers are left.”

“Yes, sir.” Lasch hesitated. At last he asked, “Are you sure, sir?”

“Have you a better idea, Dieter? We have a dozen divisions here; Gandhi has the whole subcontinent. I have to convince them in a hurry that obeying me is a better idea than obeying him. Obeying is what counts. I don’t care a pfennig as to whether they love me. Oderint, dum metuant.”

“Sir?” The major had no Latin.

“‘Let them hate, so long as they fear.’”

“Ah,” Lasch said. “Yes, I like that.” He fingered his chin as he thought. “In aid of which, the Muslims hereabouts like

the Hindus none too well. I daresay we could use them to help hunt Gandhi down.”

“Now that I like,” Model said. “Most of our Indian Legion lads are Muslims. They will know people, or know people who know people. And”—the field marshal chuckled cynically—“the reward will do no harm, either. Now get those orders out, and ring up Legion-Colonel Sadar. We’ll get those feelers in motion—and if they pay off, you’ll probably have earned yourself a new pip on your shoulderboards.”

“Thank you very much, sir!”

“My pleasure. As I say, you’ll have earned it. So long as things go as they should, I am a very easy man to get along with. Even Gandhi could, if he wanted to. He will end up having caused a lot of people to be killed because he does not.”

“Yes, sir,” Lasch agreed. “If only he would see that, since we have won India from the British, we will not turn around and tamely yield it to those who could not claim it for themselves.”

“You’re turning into a political philosopher now, Dieter?”

“Ha! Not likely.” But the major looked pleased as he picked up the phone.

“My dear friend, my ally, my teacher, we are losing,” Nehru said as the messenger scuttled away from this latest in a series of what were hopefully called safe houses. “Day by day, more people return to their jobs.”

Gandhi shook his head, slowly, as if the motion caused him physical pain. “But they must not. Each one who cooperates with the Germans sets back the day of his own freedom.”

“Each one who fails to ends up dead,” Nehru said dryly. “Most men lack your courage, great-souled one. To them, that carries more weight than the other. Some are willing to resist, but would rather take up arms than the restraint of satyagraha.”

“If they take up arms, they will be defeated. The British could not beat the Germans with guns and tanks and planes; how shall we? Besides, if we shoot a German here and there, we give them the excuse they need to strike at us. When one of their lieutenants was waylaid last month, their bombers leveled a village in reprisal. Against those who fight through non-violence, they have no such justification.”

“They do not seem to need one, either,” Nehru pointed out.

Before Gandhi could reply to that, a man burst into the hovel where they were hiding. “You must flee!” he cried. “The Germans have found this place! They are coming. Out with me, quick! I have a cart waiting.”

Nehru snatched up the canvas bag in which he carried his few belongings. For a man used to being something of a dandy, the haggard life of a fugitive came hard. Gandhi had never wanted much. Now that he had nothing, that did not disturb him. He rose calmly, followed the man who had come to warn them.

“Hurry!” the fellow shouted as they scrambled into his oxcart while the humpbacked cattle watched indifferently with their liquid brown eyes. When Gandhi and Nehru were lying in the cart, the man piled blankets and straw mats over them. He scrambled up to take the reins, saying, “Inshallah, we shall be safely away from here before the platoon arrives.” He flicked a switch over the backs of the cattle. They lowed indignantly. The cart rattled away.

Lying in the sweltering semidarkness under the concealment the man had draped on him, Gandhi peered through chinks, trying to figure out where in Delhi he was going next. He had played the game more than once these last few weeks, though he knew doctrine said he should not. The less he knew, the less he could reveal. Unlike most men, though, he was confident he could not be made to talk against his will.

“We are using the technique the American Poe called ‘the purloined letter,’ I see,” he remarked to Nehru. “We will be close by the German barracks. They will not think to look for us there.”

The younger man frowned. “I did not know we had safe houses there,” he said. Then he relaxed, as well as he could when folded into too small a space. “Of course, I do not pretend to know everything there is to know about such matters. It would be dangerous if I did.”

“I was thinking much the same myself, though with me as subject of the sentence.” Gandhi laughed quietly. “Try as we will, we always have ourselves at the center of things, don’t we?”

He had to raise his voice to finish. An armored personnel carrier came rumbling and rattling toward them, getting louder as it approached. The silence when the driver suddenly killed the engine was a startling contrast to the previous racket. Then there was noise again, as soldiers shouted in German.

“What are they saying?” Nehru asked.

“Hush,” Gandhi said absently, not from ill manners, but out of the concentration he needed to follow German at all. After a moment he resumed, “They are swearing at a black-bearded man, asking why he flagged them down.”

“Why would anyone flag down German sol—” Nehru began, then stopped in abrupt dismay. The fellow who had burst into their hiding-place wore a bushy black beard. “We had better get out of—” Again Nehru broke off in midsentence, this time because the oxcart driver was throwing off the coverings that concealed his two passengers.

Nehru started to get to his feet so he could try to scramble out and run. Too late—a rifle barrel that looked wide as a tunnel was shoved in his face as a German came dashing up to the cart. The big curved magazine said the gun was one of the automatic assault rifles that had wreaked such havoc among the British infantry. A burst would turn a man into bloody hash. Nehru sank back in despair.

Gandhi, less spry than his friend, had only sat up in the bottom of the cart. “Good day, gentlemen,” he said to the Germans peering down at him. His tone took no notice of their weapons.

“Down.” The word was in such gutturally accented Hindi that Gandhi hardly understood it, but the accompanying gesture with a rifle was unmistakable.

Face a mask of misery, Nehru got out of the cart. A German helped Gandhi descend. “Danke,” he said. The soldier nodded gruffly. He pointed the barrel of his rifle—toward the armored personnel carrier.

“My rupees!” the black-bearded man shouted.

Nehru turned on him, so quickly he almost got shot for it. “Your thirty pieces of silver, you mean,” he cried.

“Ah, a British education,” Gandhi murmured. No one was listening to him.

“My rupees,” the man repeated. He did not understand Nehru; so often, Gandhi thought sadly, that was at the root of everything.

“You’ll get them,” promised the sergeant leading the German squad. Gandhi wondered if he was telling the truth. Probably so, he decided. The British had had centuries to build a network of Indian clients. Here but a matter of months, the Germans would need all they could find.

“In.” The soldier with a few words of Hindi nodded to the back of the armored personnel carrier. Up close, the vehicle took on a war-battered individuality its kind had lacked when they were just big, intimidating shapes rumbling down the highway. It was bullet-scarred and patched in a couple of places, with sheets of steel crudely welded on.

Inside, the jagged lips of the bullet holes had been hammered down so they did not gouge a man’s back. The carrier smelled of leather, sweat, tobacco, smokeless powder, and exhaust fumes. It was crowded, all the more so with the two Indians added to its usual contingent. The motor’s roar when it started up challenged even Gandhi’s equanimity.

Not, he thought with uncharacteristic bitterness, that that equanimity had done him much good.

“They are here, sir,” Lasch told Model, then, at the field marshal’s blank look amplified: “Gandhi and Nehru.”

Model’s eyebrow came down toward his monocle. “I won’t bother with Nehru. Now that we have him, take him out and give him a noodle”—army slang for a bullet in the back of the neck—“but don’t waste my time over him. Gandhi, now, is interesting. Fetch him in.”

“Yes, sir,” the major sighed. Model smiled. Lasch did not find Gandhi interesting. Lasch would never carry a field marshal’s baton, not if he lived to be ninety.

Model waved away the soldiers who escorted Gandhi into his office. Either of them could have broken the little Indian like a stick. “Have a care,” Gandhi said. “If I am the desperate criminal bandit you have styled me, I may overpower you and escape.”

“If you do, you will have earned it,” Model retorted. “Sit, if you care to.”

“Thank you.” Gandhi sat. “They took Jawaharlal away. Why have you summoned me instead?”

“To talk for a while, before you join him.” Model saw that Gandhi knew what he meant, and that the old man remained unafraid. Not that that would change anything,

Model thought, although he respected his opponent’s courage the more for his keeping it in the last extremity.

“I will talk, in the hope of persuading you to have mercy on my people. For myself I ask nothing.”

Model shrugged. “I was as merciful as the circumstances of war allowed, until you began your campaign against us. Since then, I have done what I needed to restore order. When it returns, I may be milder again.”

“You seem a decent man,” Gandhi said, puzzlement in his voice. “How can you so callously massacre people who have done you no harm?”

“I never would have, had you not urged them to folly.”

“Seeking freedom is not folly.”

“It is when you cannot gain it—and you cannot. Already your people are losing their stomach for—what do you call it? Passive resistance? A silly notion. A passive resister simply ends up dead, with no chance to hit back at his foe.”

That hit a nerve, Model thought. Gandhi’s voice was less detached as he answered, “Satyagraha strikes the oppressor’s soul, not his body. You must be without honor or conscience, to fail to feel your victims’ anguish.”

Nettled in turn, the field marshal snapped, “I have honor. I follow the oath of obedience I swore with the army to the Führer and through him to the Reich. I need consider nothing past that.”

Now Gandhi’s calm was gone. “But he is a madman! What has he done to the Jews of Europe?”

“Removed them,” Model said matter-of-factly; Einsatzgruppe B had followed Army Group Central to Moscow and beyond. “They were capitalists or Bolsheviks, and either way enemies of the Reich. When an enemy falls into a man’s hands, what else is there to do but destroy him, lest he revive to turn the tables one day?”

Gandhi had buried his face in his hands. Without looking at Model, he said, “Make him a friend.”

“Even the British knew better than that, or they would not have held India as long as they did,” the field marshal snorted. “They must have begun to forget, though, or your movement would have got what it deserves long ago. You first made the mistake of confusing us with them long ago, by the way.” He touched a fat dossier on his desk.

“When was that?” Gandhi asked indifferently. The man was beaten now, Model thought with a touch of pride: he had succeeded where a generation of degenerate, decadent Englishmen had failed. Of course, the field marshal told himself, he had beaten the British too.

He opened the dossier, riffled through it. “Here we are,” he said, nodding in satisfaction. “It was after Kristallnacht, eh, in 1938, when you urged the German Jews to play at the same game of passive resistance you were using here. Had they been fools enough to try it, we would have thanked you, you know: it would have let us bag the enemies of the Reich all the more easily.”

“Yes, I made a mistake,” Gandhi said. Now he was looking at the field marshal, looking at him with such fierceness that for a moment Model thought he would attack him despite advanced age and effete philosophy. But Gandhi only continued sorrowfully, “I made the mistake of thinking I faced a regime ruled by conscience, one that could at the very least be shamed into doing that which is right.”

Model refused to be baited. “We do what is right for our Volk, for our Reich. We are meant to rule, and rule we do—as you see.” The field marshal tapped the dossier again. “You could be sentenced to death for this earlier meddling in the affairs of the fatherland, you know, even without these later acts of insane defiance you have caused.”

“History will judge us,” Gandhi warned as the field marshal rose to have him taken away.

Model smiled then. “Winners write history.” He watched the two strapping German guards lead the old man off. “A very good morning’s work,” the field marshal told Lasch when Gandhi was gone. “What’s on the menu for lunch?”

“Blood sausage and sauerkraut, I believe.”

“Ah, good. Something to look forward to.” Model sat down. He went back to work.