# No steam ahead













**Regine Stang** (upper left photo), age 53 – Prison doctor at Landsfengslet for kvinner, at Kristiania Tukthus in Storgata 33 very close by, went to Ragna Nielsens school in the first graduated class in 1887, worked as a private doctor in Kristiania til 1914, then as the first prison doctor in Norway, at Landsfengslet for kvinner. Strong believer of being super healthy – food, exercise (she started a Ski Association) and how women can be role models and bring the healthy norwegian heritage onwards.

Ragna Nielsen (upper right photo), age 73 – pedagog and women rights activist, teacher and principal of her own school, Ragna Nielsens latin- og realskole, writer, literary critic and lecture holder. One of the founding members of The Norwegian Society for Psychic Research in 1917. Believes in a connection between the living and dead, practiced automatic writing and conversations with the dead. Printed these conversations publicly and provoked many. Leader of Norwegian Association for Women's Rights in two periods, 1886–1888 and 1889–1895. Leader Riksmål Society from 1910-1911, fighting for a language created by the upper class and more related to danish than dialects geographically in Norway. Radical and conservative at the same time - mixing the leading roles in society in that age – the priest, the teacher and the society reformist with the educational mother. Not shy of conflict, and loved by her students.

# The two old workers:

**Pottit** (works with the rail-way, kinda compliant with it all and in despair with an alcohol-problem, works at the ship-yard as well, don't believe in change), a bit of a schizoid personality. **Ruth** (tough as nails, works at the laundry, believes in political change)

These two regularly hang out to dine and are quite familiar with each other.

**Sigurd Simensen** (lower left photo), age 30 – chairman of the Worker's Councils central committee, took initiative and led some of the biggest demonstrations in Christiania. Very energetic and hot-headed.

Martin Tranmæl (lower middle photo), age 39. Knut Hamsun (lower right photo), age 59.



# NARRATOR

It is the end of October 1918. The second wave of the Spanish flu has struck Kristiania, and the parliamentary elections have been a devastating victory for the conservative and right-wing party. The supposed Trojan horse of the Labour movement, Martin Tranmæl, walks in for his daily meal at Dampkjøkkenet (The Steam-kitchen) in Torggata 8, called Dampen by most folks. Described by the news-paper Verdens Gang ("The Course of the World") as, "The capital's most metropolitan and democratic device; with a single rule of being as class equalizing as the recruit uniform." Not that any women could sign up for the army, but they both worked and frequented Dampen. Inside were young students and workers, old pensioners and unemployed – well-off or not, it didn't matter – almost every citizen had at some point been served what they needed to keep life going; a big healthy stew for a fair price. If the appetite wasn't necessarily always satisfied, it was staggered, and the mood lightened, so that after dinner one could make a small joke at the expense of the food.

# **POTTIT**

Ahh.. (Coughs.) Very passable this, very passable. Nothing like a good pot of stew á la Dampen, ay Ruthie?

### RUTH

(Talks more tough.) You're right there Pottit. Water, salt and some pieces of lovely potato put over the fire, just a wee shimmer of fat dripped from a slab of meat that's been dangling over the bowl. God forbid any real chunks!

# POTTIT

Must be quite difficult for them chefs ... (sarcastic tone.) not get too many clouds or even an overcast in that brothy sky, 'cause the stew will get less potent. (Coughs.)

### RUTH

(In an exaggerated mild loving tone.) Who'd have thought we'd be eating this loveliness every day for the rest of our lives.

# POTTIT

Hah, look! I found a piece of meat in the salt bowl.

# RUTH

Well, if it ain't your lucky day.

# NARRATOR

At the end of the long table sits Regine Stang (53) and Ragna Nielsen (73). Regine works as a doctor at The National Prison for Women a few blocks down the street, and is quite the spectacle in her medical face mask. "Miss Nielsen", as Regine refers to her old schoolteacher and director, is a well renowned intellectual. Radical as a pedagogue and in her fight for women's rights, but quite conservative in her political and moral views, aligned with the leading party Venstre and the Church. She despises the luxury she sees in her circles, but even more surprising, in recent years she has become quite notorious in Norway for her belief in spiritualism. Regine is more of a realist, with an almost obsessive belief in staying healthy, a well sought-after doctor in Kristiania for many years, and with a weak heart for the struggling and creative mind. Both have chosen a path of dedication to their work. They are unmarried and childless, and fine with it.

It is in regards to the dead that Miss Nielsen has asked for a meeting with Regine.

### **REGINE STANG**

(A bit stressed.) Now ... what is it then, Miss Nielsen?

# RAGNA NIELSEN

I've met ... well ... is there a gypsy in your ward?

### REGINE

(Startled.) Miss Silk? The romani?

# **RAGNA**

I see ...

# REGINE

She is very sick ... our first case of Spanish flu. Why do you ask?

### **RAGNA**

Well, you see, in our last séance at the Psychic Research Society, I met a female spirit on the other side.

### REGINE

(A bit disappointed.) Oh, this paranormal business of yours. Have you begged me to leave my post to talk about the dead again Miss Nielsen? You know I have a very busy schedule these days.

### **RAGNA**

(Strict tone.) This is unexplored scientific terrain, Regine. My fellow founder Mrs. Gleditsch have studied under Marie Curie in Paris. And anyhow, this is in regards to the living. Just listen ...

This spirit told me about Miss Silk, (a bit to herself.) it must be her. (Then to Regine again.) She has been treated unjustly.

# **REGINE**

(In a serious low tone.) Miss Silk murdered her own child.

# **RAGNA**

Forced, she told me. She was forced.

# REGINE

What do you mean?

# **RAGNA**

Where was she before she came to the prison at Tukthuset?

# REGINE

I know that Miss Silk was forced to settle down on that farm in Nordmøre, Svanviken in Eide – well, a "worker colony" as the 'Union to counteract vagrancy' calls it. She was set to refine the growth of the soil, get rid of her nomadic nature to become a proper Norwegian.

# **RAGNA**

 $(A\ bit\ unsettled.)\dots$  that farm was given to them by Venstre-politician Hans Rasmus Astrup ... Is it run by the missionary Jakob Walnum?

# REGINE

Yes ... do you know they aren't allowed to utter a single word in their own language?

# **RAGNA**

Oh?

# REGINE

There are terrible repercussions ...

# RAGNA

Something happened there, Regine.

# REGINE

Well, Miss Silk snapped right after she had her baby, and, you know ... oh, a simply horrible incident ... and off they sent her to our ward.

### **RAGNA**

No, listen to me. She was forced upon sexually ... by the administrator at Svanviken.

(A bit scared by what she has said.) Now do you really think the good missionary could do such a thing?

# REGINE

(Hushed down and more worried.) What are you saying?

### RAGNA

It is not me, as much as this ... well, she looked ancient, and arrived with such a powerful presence. Adorned in garments of leather, fur and wool. Beating slowly on a drum which had these small figures painted on it ... one of a reindeer. Now, this woman must have been a Sami. "Noaidi", she presented herself as. And like me, a medium – can you believe it? – communicating with the spirit world.

# REGINE

Dear o dear ... what am I to do, Miss Nielsen? How can you be sure of this? It all sounds like a dream – or a nightmare ...

### **RAGNA**

I just mean to say ...

You must care for this Miss Silk, Regine.

# REGINE

Of course, Miss Nielsen. (A bit offended.) What do you think of me ...

# **RAGNA**

Sacrifices need to be made to grant us redemption from this plague ...

# REGINE

(Pretending to understand.) Right.

# **RAGNA**

But that's not all, Regine. Strangely enough she started talking about Sisyphos.

### REGINE

What, who? The greek? How peculiar.

### RAGNA NIELSEN

'He is just like your political parties,' she said.

'The politics you breathe are demoralizing ... and no spirituality grows'.

# **REGINE STANG**

Oh, I am at a loss, Miss Nielsen. It is this plague that is growing. That's what you should worry about. Haven't you heard that our schools – *your school* – are closing next week?

### **RAGNA**

(Doesn't register Regine's question and continues.)

The mundane rolling of a rock that has no purpose but to fall, then be rerolled.

Our parliamentary politics shows it ...

I am beginning to doubt it all, Regine.

A party seizes power only to use it to its own advantage.

No differences of opinion between members, you have to abide by the program.

The individual thought must not be let loose ...

Don't widen, refine or change your perspective.

No! (Laughs a bit madly.)

You should rather hide the truth from yourself, don't listen to your own conscience ... just force your opinions to become the same as the party.

Hold my hands, Regine! The spirit will give you the power to save Miss Silk!

\_\_\_\_\_

(The chatter in the room is more present a bit.)

# **NARRATOR**

At the other end of the table Martin Tranmæl awakens from a slumber over his bowl of stew. He must escape the dreary head-lines of most papers regarding the election, and looks his fellow comrade Sigurd Simensen (30), the hot-headed chairman of the Worker's Councils central committee, in the eyes. When the Labour Party split in 1923, Simensen would join the faction of the communists. He was the initiator of some of the biggest demonstrations in Kristiania; the year before 40 000 workers took to the streets to get the prices on goods decreased. He must surely have the solution.

### MARTIN TRANMÆL

We lost this round, but ...

Have I failed them, Sigurd? How did we go wrong?

# SIGURD SIMENSEN

(Quite energetic, like he has been waiting for a cue.)

Our election system is as undemocratic as ... (suddenly surprised.) Knut Hamsun!

### MARTIN TRANMÆL

Who?

# SIGURD SIMENSEN

(Appalled.) He just came in the door. (Tries to steer his attention back to Tranmæl.) Ah, never mind.

(Takes a breath, and talks really fast.)

Well, you ain't givin the people shit, Marty!

People want their booze, man!

People want to blow shit up!

Remember you talked about blowing shit up, Marty?

Dynamite in the boreholes? Well, we haven't blown any shit up.

You talking about direct action? There is no action going on.

Everybody's just kung fu striking, Marty, but that ain't the only way ...

Sabotage, baby!

Obstruction!

That is the way to go.

Used wisely, of course.

# MARTIN TRANMÆL

Right.

# SIGURD SIMENSEN

The private initiative's predatory greed ain't holding back shit.

They're takin it up your ass, Marty!

They dont give a fuck if they are within or outside the law.

# MARTIN TRANMÆL

Right.

# SIGURD SIMENSEN

They're stripping the working class down to the bones, Marty! On top of our lack of goods, hell! They even got the farmers to run sabotage for 'em. Like when they fed their own pigs the potatoes we should have eaten, so they could rack up the prices on the market. This happens only by ruthless sabotage! The mustachio top-hats only take care of their own, Marty.

# MARTIN TRANMÆL

Right.

### SIGURD SIMENSEN

We can't settle for wishes and demands; we have to take ... seize! But our stupid ass ain't using the same means in the struggle, we just give our opponent the upper hand. I'm telling you, Marty! Worker strikes are not the most effective means ...

# MARTIN TRANMÆL

Well explain to me what must be done, then?

### SIGURD SIMENSEN

Any factory can be sabotaged from a single department, you don't need a lot of discipline or intelligence. Three or four people can do the job, a couple goons puttin dynamite in the laundry machines ... you know.

# MARTIN TRANMÆL

(Excited.) Dynamite!

# SIGURD SIMENSEN

Obstruction on the other, is a bit more complicated, but well suited for rail-ways and trams ... disturbing the traffic. Used strategically ... it can fuck up the whole traffic without anybody knowing where it came from.

# MARTIN TRANMÆL

Right!

# **SIGURD SIMENSEN**

Ain't nobody seeing where it came from, Marty. I'm telling you, the old fools within the party are holding us back ... we need to step up! I ain't having this palace revolution that's taking place within our party, Marty! The fine gents steering our rear. I want the real gritty reality of this revolution! Wake up!

# MARTIN TRANMÆL

Yes, wake up! Step up! I'm suggesting you as editor for Klassekampen in Copenhagen.

# **SIGURD SIMENSEN**

What?

### MARTIN TRANMÆL

This is an important position Sigurd. The workers in Norway have great trust in you, quite frankly, you are the best I can recommend to our fellow danish comrades.

# SIGURD SIMENSEN

But my work is needed here. What about the worker's councils? It will all slip through our fingers, *(more dramatic.)* a quiet death ... will there really be no more meetings?

# MARTIN TRANMÆL

Don't argue with me, Sigurd. This is what the party demands of you.

(The sound of Pottit crashing down with his tray on the table.)

# POTTIT

(Mildly stressed and excited.) Finally. I just went for it. I went for the deluxe menu, sweet-soup and blood sausage.

(Pottit coughs pretty hard.)

# **RUTH**

Another portion? Have you lost your senses?

# POTTIT

(Kinda mumbles to himself.) Probably the last meal I'll ever have. (Coughs.)

#### RUTH

(Agitated.) Well, I guess someone can treat themselves these days.

# POTTIT

Couldn't be further from it. (Coughs.)

(The chatter in the room is more present a bit.)

# REGINE

(In a lower tone to Ragna.) I'm sorry Miss Nielsen, I cannot touch anything ... I can't risk getting this terrible flu ... I must leave now, so very sorry ...

### **RAGNA**

It is almost as if I can feel a presence, Regine. Some presence the Sami was warning me about.

# REGINE

Take care, Miss Nielsen.

# **RAGNA**

Yes ...

# **RUTH**

(*Disgusted.*) Look at you stuffing your face. Well, too bad *I* don't have enough for dessert Pottit, or ... even a meeean cuppa coffee.

### **POTTIT**

A cuppa COLD coffee, that is.

# **RUTH**

Without any milk or sugar.

### POTTIT

OR coffee!

# **RUTH**

(Sarcastic.) Very funny.

We don't even have cups at home. We have to drink out of a rolled-up newspaper.

# **POTTIT**

The best WE can manage is to suck on a piece of damp cloth. How's that for spreadin' that Spaniard ... (Coughs and eats.)

# **RUTH**

Please.

(The continued chatter in the room is more present a bit and we shift conversation.)

# **KNUT HAMSUN**

If it isn't the esteemed literary critic Ragna Nielsen!

# **RAGNA**

Oh ...

# **KNUT HAMSUN**

I can't say I miss this place, or this city for that matter, it gives me these itchy spots on my back.

# NARRATOR

Knut Hamsun (59) is just passing by the capital. Almost thirty years prior he wrote *Hunger*, depicting the life of a struggling writer in Kristiania, and how desperate the psyche becomes in

poverty. Somehow, he has turned into what he despised in the famed authors of his youth – wealthy, untouchable, rigid. That fall he would be moving to the farm Nørholm outside Grimstad, where he would reside with his family for the rest of his life.

# **KNUT HAMSUN**

... and now this detestable plague spreading in close quarters ... No! I am just here to bid this city farewell, although the suffering here is barely worth thinking about in light of world events.

... to live out where there is fresh air ...

(Awkward silence.)

I'll let you have an opinion on my latest work, Ragna ... as you are among my "chosen ones" ... to give me some encouragement!

# **RAGNA**

On Growth of the Soil?

# NARRATOR

That novel would in fact grant Hamsun the Nobel Prize in Literature two years later, and marked a shift in his authorship towards a glorification of the farmer as the noble and pure bearer of tradition. An image Nasjonal Samling would embrace later on, and Hamsun himself would become a proud member of The Third Reich.

### KNUT HAMSUN

Now, what is it then? Cat got your tongue? Too flabbergasted to even formulate a sentence about such an exquisite work?

# **RAGNA**

I have read the reception. Your ramblings about the subconscious are apparently gone ... Seems we should give it all up and start a farm?

# **KNUT HAMSUN**

Haha! Terrific!

# **RAGNA**

And I hear you have quite the colonial aspirations up north. As I have met a Sami shaman in a séance quite recently, I would imagine she has already cursed you for your depiction of their "low nature". Now how can I believe in such a nonsensical creature as yourself, Mr. Hamsun.

# **KNUT HAMSUN**

Nonsense. The *lapps* are the earths wanderers, just as I am the minds nomad. I have lived my life in the north the past six years, and had no troubles with them. I can't remember a single one of you city critics writing about the magnificent *Muitalus sámiid birra*, or *The Tale of the Samis*,

by Johan Turi some years back. I had to do it myself. And what and extraordinary book! It is all with the fashion for you. You have become too big-mouthed even for us writers these days. You worship each other to the point of nausea.

### **RAGNA**

My time is occupied by Jonas Lie for the moment, and to give you a citation for the road, "that there is a bit of a troll in human beings, anyone knows who has an eye for such".

### KNUT HAMSUN

Now, now. I know we can agree on one cause, can't we? We can't let our language be infused by all these muddy dialects from every nook of this country. You should read my new book *The Language in Danger*, which will be released very soon.

### **RAGNA**

Ah, the collection of your articles this summer in Aftenposten, yes! You write about our written language being in great peril ... as the world is seemingly coming to an end. No, if you must know, I prefer working on a new essay I have titled "Sisyphos and the political parties".

# KNUT HAMSUN

That does sound a tad mundane for my taste, but I guess it's more constructive than talking to dead Samis ...

# **RAGNA**

Hmphf.

# **KNUT HAMSUN**

And I'll take that squeak as a sign of gratitude. Good day to you, Ragna!

\_\_\_\_\_

(The continued chatter in the room is more present a bit as we shift back to Pottit and Ruth.)

# **POTTIT**

(Burps.) You know ...

(Emotionless.) I am still pretty merry these days ... enjoying the free perks of this plaque ...

(Whispers to himself.) Where'd you put that bottle of prescription Cognac now, Pottit?

(And with another voice to himself.) Careful now, we don't want our party-poopin' politician over there takin' notice ...

# RUTH

Marx almighty! Don't you be talking rude 'bout comrade Tranmæl ... he be doing more for you, *us*, than any other politician around.

### POTTIT

He don't see the workin' man's needs.

# **RUTH**

He sees it better than any other, I tell ya. Shame on you.

(Pottit takes a good sip.)

# POTTIT

Aaaah ... that hits the spot in my dead heart.

And one for you, Martin ...

(Sound of a \*glug\*.)

Aye! We are happy BECAUSE we are poor. And sick!
The other day I said to my son, "Money won't buy you happiness."
... and then my dear little potato died from this damned flu in our shared bed.

# **RUTH**

(Startled.) Oh ...

(Pot-luck coughs and drinks.)

# **POTTIT**

'Ye'r right. I am happy and I have NOTHIN'. We live in this tiiiny old house, with big holes in the roof. It's nice to see the stars, but it's sooo bloody cold and everyone is coughing ...

# RUTH

Your own house? We just live in one big room at the poor-house, all hundred and twenty-six of us, no furniture. Can't tell who's dead or alive when I get home, all those bodies just laying around on the floor.

# **POTTIT**

Well when I say "house" I guess it's only a hole in the ground covered by a piece of tarpaulin – did I mention the holes? – but it is a house to *us*.

# RUTH

(Dead-pan.) Luxury.

# POTTIT

But we were evicted from \*our\* hole in the ground; we had to go and live by Akerselva!

Now we – well, I – have to get up at three o'clock in the morning, clean the riverbed, eat a handful of hot gravel, go to work at the ship-yard to do our bastard prime-minister Knudsens biddings every day for 30 kroner a week, come "home", just to find my dear loved ones dead, one after the other, on that damn riverbed... (Coughs.)

(Carefully to himself on the verge of crying.) My little Margot is ...

### RUTH

(Tough tone.) Paradise.

I have to get up in the morning at ten o'clock at night, half an hour before I went to bed, take a shot of nitric acid, work twenty-nine hours a day down the laundry, even pay permission to come to work, and when I get home, I just turn around in misery and go to the cemetery at Sofienberg, dance about on the graves of all the poor dead and unemployed ... singing "The Internationale!"

# **POTTIT**

(Baffled.) You don't say ...

Well, my whole family is dead. Dead!

(Silence. But the background noise and chatter is audible.)

They're dead, I tell you ...

(Pottit starts sniffling and crying and coughing.)

What is the point of... (Nostalgic in the other voice.) I miss the smell of sweet Saltpeter in the morning ... brings me back to my golden factory days in Rjukan.

And those youngsters are talkin' bout a 8-hour work day ... Hahah! I'll be damned.

# **RUTH**

You better believe it's coming. And not only that, the revolution as well, it's sitting right over there for cryin' out loud! Now suck it up, Pottit.

# **POTTIT**

(Sniffles.) Nope, nope...

(In the other voice.) Get yourself another prescription bottle and some proper work, I tell em!

(\*glug\* \*glug\* \*glug\* of the Cognac.)

# POTTIT

(Raises his voice suddenly.) The Labour Party did a shitty election, cause' you can't even see too that your hard workin' minions get a proper night-cap after days end.

(In the other voice.) You better calm down there, Pottit. You don't wanna stir ... (frightened.) awaken ...

(Just continues in a more slurred drunken tone.) Tranmæl! Every member of my family is dead from this damned flu, and I only got a single drop left of this miraculous remedy.

### RUTH

(Modest.) I'll take a swig.

# POTTIT

(Cuts her off.) Supposedly it's the only cure for this Spaniard, you damn teetotaler!

(A grunt is heard from Tranmæl, loud enough to make the whole establishment fall silent.)

# RUTH

You truly did it now ...

(Giant crushing and slow footsteps are heard.)

# **POTTIT**

(The more scared and low voice.) You don't have the will-power to save us ...

(Giant crushing and slow footsteps continues a bit and then stops.)

# MARTIN TRANMÆL

(In an action-hero one-liner.) I have a bon-fire of it!

Just take a firm look at today's headlines!

(Sound of a news-paper smacked in his face.)

# **POTTIT**

Noo, please ... don't ...

(Smacks him again! From here Pottit's tiny shrieks are heard every time he smacks him.)

# MARTIN TRANMÆL

The capitalists have once again won! (Smacks!) Do you think they care about your worth as a human being? (Smacks!) Now they have lured you in with their liberal view on ending the prohibition – to poison those who struggle the most. (Smacks!)

# SIGURD SIMENSEN

Hand over the bottle!

### **POTTIT**

(Like a baby.) It's mine ... my own ...

# **SIGURD SIMENSEN**

(Suddenly realizes.) Oh, but if it isn't Pottit himself! I haven't seen you at a single meeting for the Railway Union after Knudsen spat out his spare rations earlier this fall ... (Spits.) all you needed was a bone before the elections ...

### **POTTIT**

It's nice to at least have a bone ... to drink ...

# SIGURD SIMENSEN

Give me that bottle!

(Sound of a struggle over the bottle with Pottit, \*must be recorded in studio\*)

(Sound of breaking the bottle.)

### POTTIT

(In misery.) What have you done?

(Tranmæl smacks him with the news-paper again!)

# MARTIN TRANMÆL

What you call a remedy (Smacks!) ... is the goddamn plague! My own father threw away his life on the bottle! Now get your act together! (Smacks!) Human suffering is funny to you?

# POTTIT

No ... no, sir.

# MARTIN TRANMÆL

Do you want the working class to continue living on top of each other amidst a plague? (Smacks!) This invisible threat shows us the class hierarchy we are enslaved under – and the poor and cramped are the ones suffering. (Smacks!)

(*Preaching.*) Every action matters! (*Smack!*) We are on the brink of the world revolution. (*Smack.*) It must be a matter of honor for the Norwegian working class to stand ready, (*Smack.*) so we can complete our historical mission with the same conviction and assurance as the German workers are doing right now. (*Smack.*)

# POTTIT

(Crying.) Alright! Alright ... I am ready! I promise!

### SIGURD SIMENSEN

(Talks really fast.) We have to keep on keepin on, day and night every day, day in day out, all week, every year, 'cause the revolution ain't fightin itself!

# MARTIN TRANMÆL

(More warm and heartfelt.) We have to do this together, comrades!

# **RUTH**

Damn right! Skål!

# **KNUT HAMSUN**

I HAVE BOUGHT MYSELF A FARM EVERYONE!

(Silence.)

DID YOU HEAR? THE GREAT HAM HAS BOUGHT HIMSELF A KINGDOM AND IS GETTING HIS HANDS DIRTY!

# SIGURD SIMENSEN

(Mumbles furiously.) ... you're not gettin' your hands dirty unless it's with ink!

(*Disgusted.*) You writers. This man has an ego unparalleled in the brief "modern" history of this country. A tyrant. A conqueror. A plantation owner, I would imagine. With farmers like you, who needs farming!

# **KNUT HAMSUN**

You must be gone with the wind ... you have settled within the boundaries of your skills ... you don't see anymore ... and you don't think ... you don't really need progress, do you? You stand simply where you stand. (As if he speaks to a maggot.) You must be a communist.

# SIGURD SIMENSEN

A proud one indeed!

# **KNUT HAMSUN**

This whole rat-pack of an establishment is under a spell. It is fashion now ... isn't it? It goes around like a flu these days?

# **RAGNA NIELSEN**

(Like she gets an epiphany.) It's you! You are the disease! The great coming plague.

# **HAMSUN**

Who me? I will only care for the soil of my potatoes ... for in this city's decadent ... cramped ... narrow-minded ... filth ... they would surely rot.

# **RAGNA NIELSEN**

Ruohtta! You, Mr. Hamsun, are the very personification of sickness the Noaidi were speaking about. Ruohtta!! You bring only death – contaminating the very roots we live on.

### **HAMSUN**

(More angry.) Have you all lost your childhood dreams?

The beauty of a spring night, the poetry in a verse, the first blush... a bit of God as well, some Schubert and some flowers. All that which instantaneously doesn't turn into cement.

### MARTIN TRANMÆL

You take it from here, Simensen.

The mustachio top-hats only take care of their own dreams...

# **HAMSUN**

What?

# SIGURD SIMENSEN

I'll give you some proper soil in your diet!

(Sound of Simensen punching Hamsun, and Hamsun moaning.)

# RUTH

Hand me those damn hamstrings!

(Hamsun screams.)

(Ends with the sound of a norwegian Jews harp or possibly sami runebomme (a drum) as the beating and screaming continues more intensely.)