

The Edelweiss Pirates

Ayub Khan Din

This play is based on true events surrounding a group of young insurgents inside the Nazi Youth movement who rebelled against the Third Reich by causing trouble from within. It is set in Cologne, Germany, in the 1930s and 40s, and in this speech, one of the main characters, Klaus, is explaining what happened to his parents.

Klaus Becker My parents were political. I grew up with politics. They were communists. They were always out on the streets demonstrating against the Nazis. All my life, all I ever remember are smoky rooms full of people talking and arguing politics. How to bring about the revolution, then, how to combat the Nazis . . . And then . . . then it all went quiet, no more open talk or Russia or comrade Stalin. Suddenly, our world was whispered and shadowed . . . hidden. The worry of my parents every time there was a knock on the door. It's as if we were waiting for them to come. They were always expected, anticipated. Then one day they did come. I was playing with my friend across the hall. The boots came up the stairs, I saw them coming. Climbing up. The black boots. Shiny boots. They stopped outside our apartment and knocked. I knew inside the apartment, my parents would have turned to the door instantly, knew, they would have turned to each other. Knew my father's look would have told my mother not to worry. His always, reassuring look. But not this time . . . I saw the door open . . . heard my mother screaming, my father on the floor, blood pouring from his nose and mouth, as the shiny boots rained down on his face and body. My mother, as she is dragged along the hall by her hair, screaming. My father looked at me as he passed and even through the blood and the pain, the look . . . he gave me the reassuring look . . . the look of my father, the look that said, all would be well . . .
I never saw them again.
They were both shot in Dachau.