

Fiction paper

Literature



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The good soldier Svejk The good soldier is a novel set in 1920-1930 during World War I. The novel becomes based around the lead character of Josef Švejk and explains his antics and participation as an Austro-Hungarian soldier. The novel is comical in nature and quite humorous due to the lead characters antics.

The novel story begins in Prague with the news of the assassination of Ferdinand and his wife by Bosnian-Serb assassins in Sarajevo. Mrs. Muller tells Svejk of the assassination in Sarajevo and at first Svejk quips funny statements in a way to mock the assassination of Ferdinand (Hasek 4). Svejk tells Mrs. Muller who is also his charwoman that for such an assassination to have taken place, it ought to be well thought out and choreographed to ensure it was fully successful. The conversation between Mrs. Muller and Svejk ends by Svejk quipping that he prefers a fat emperor than a thin one. Svjek receives the news of Archduke Ferdinand's assassination with abundant charm and sarcasm.

At the local bar, Svejk finds Bretschneider, a plainclothes state officer trying to engage Palivec the landlord in conversation about the assassination to no avail (Hasek 7). Mr Palivec fears that conversing about political matters would lead to his incarceration to which Bretschneider becomes highly disappointed. When Svejk arrives at the bar, Bretschneider is happy since he is able to converse about the assassination with him. The aim of the state officer was to catch both Palivec and Svejk expressing anti Austrian sentiments by engaging them in conversation about the assassination of the emperor Ferdinand. Svejk engages himself in careless talk about the emperor with Bretschneider while consuming alcohol. While talking about the assassination, Svejk makes sensitive remarks in reference to the

assassination and for this, he gets arrested by Bretschneider and taken to the police station (Hasek 15). In their conversation, Bertschreiner had taken offence to Svjek comparing the assassinated emperor to a cattle dealer. The state officer also arrests Palivec whom he claims had said that flies had left their trademark on the emperor. Svejks incarceration turns out to be the start of his involvement in the war. On arrival at the station, Svejks jokingly tells the officer that they had a fabulous time at the pub together and asks him if he visits the pub often. This part of the novel indicates the spying nature at the time.

At the station, Svejks gets thrown into cell alongside Palivec who in all honesty can be said to have been innocent. The cell is also confinement for other innocent members who are victims of the hysteria created by the war (Hasek 20). Svjek jokes that they are better off in the cell than the outside world of torture. At the station, Svjek gets examined by a medical commission team which concludes that he is mental and for this case Svjek gets sent to a mental institution. Svjek seems to enjoy his time in public institutions. At the mental institution he gets examined again by two doctors (Hasek 24). This time round, the doctors conclude that Svjek is feigning mental illness so as to escape military service as a malingerer. Upon this discovery, Svjek gets thrown out of the mental institution despite his stern protests against the move.

Works Cited

Hasek, Jaroslav. *The good soldier Svejks: And his fortunes in the World War*. London: Penguin Classics, 2005.