

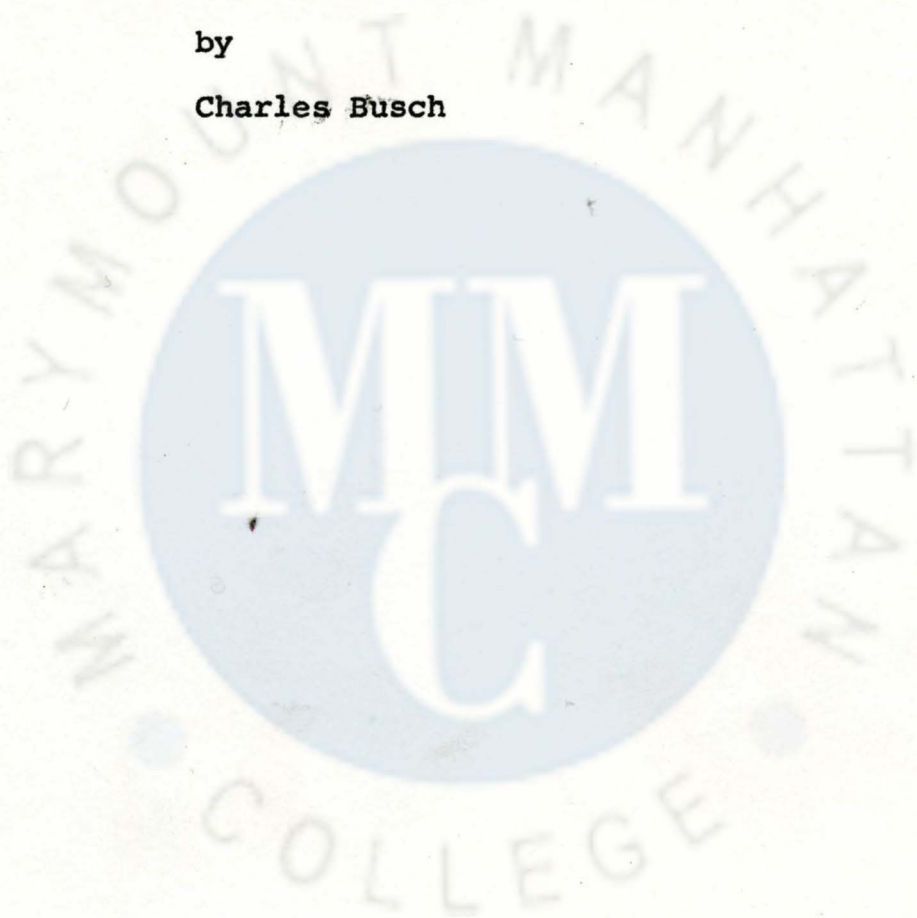
THE LADY IN QUESTION

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a new play

by

Charles Busch



Please return to:  
Theatre-in-Limbo  
123 West 3rd Street #C  
New York, New York 10012  
(212) 260-0012

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The Theatre-in-Limbo production of The Lady In Question was first presented by the WPA Theatre, Kyle Renick, Artistic Director, in New York City on November 18, 1988. The cast was as follows:

Professor Mittelhoffer.....MARK HAMILTON  
Heidi Mittelhoffer.....THERESA MARLOWE  
Karel Freiser.....ROBERT CAREY  
Professor Erik Maxwell.....ARNIE KOLODNER  
Hugo Hoffmann.....ANDY HALLIDAY  
Baron Wilhelm Von Elsner.....KENNETH ELLIOTT  
Gertrude Garnet.....CHARLES BUSCH  
Kitty, The Countess De Borgia.....JULIE HALSTON  
Augusta Von Elsner.....MEGHAN ROBINSON  
Dr. Maximilian.....MARK HAMILTON  
Lotte Von Elsner.....ANDY HALLIDAY  
Raina Aldric.....MEGHAN ROBINSON

Directed by Kenneth Elliott

Setting by B.T. Whitehill

Lighting by Vivien Leone

Costumes by Robert Locke and Jennifer Arnold

Wigs by Elizabeth Katherine Carr

Production Stage Manager Robert Vandergriff

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## VOICE-OVER

The year is 1940. Adolf Hitler's armies make his dream of European annexation a reality. Norway, The Netherlands, Belgium and France all fall before the monstrous power of the German fighting machine. Fear of fifth columnists makes idle chatter a thing of the past, as people across the continent live in terror. Nowhere is this more evident than in Hitler's own Bavaria. Free speech and free travel are but a distant memory and those attempting to escape look with sad eyes to their local train terminal, a desperate symbol of hopes and dreams passing by.

(The train station at Ludwigshafen.  
Afternoon. PROFESSOR MITTELHOFFER  
and his pretty daughter, HEIDI,  
await the arrival of the train from  
Paris)

## PROFESSOR

Heidi, I hope we have not missed his train. You should have woken me earlier from my snooze.

## HEIDI

Papa, don't be silly. We're early. Professor Maxwell is arriving on the 11:58. And besides, you needed your rest. You've been slaving over your new translation for weeks.

## PROFESSOR

"The Complete Letters of Thomas Jefferson." How Germany needs his wise words today.

## HEIDI

How Germany needs her great men today. True greatness and not this revolting imitation of ...

## PROFESSOR

Shhh, Heidi! You must control your passionate nature. You inherited that from your mother, may she rest in peace.

## HEIDI

Do you miss her terribly?

## PROFESSOR

Very much so.  
(HE sneezes)

## HEIDI

Oh, Papa, why are you not wearing your muffler? How many times have I told you.

PROFESSOR

I must have left it where I left my spectacles.

HEIDI

(Takes his glasses out of her pocket)

Here are your spectacles. I was wondering when you'd miss them.

PROFESSOR

My little mischief-maker.

HEIDI

What am I to do with you? Sometimes I feel like I am your wife. I like that feeling, Papa. I love you more than anything in the world. I'd kill for you.

PROFESSOR

That is not good, liebchen. A young girl must have her own life. I do not want you to develop an Elektra complex.

HEIDI

Papa, I promise you I won't.

(KAREL, a handsome young storm-trooper, enters)

HEIDI (Continued)

Look, Papa, there's Karel.

PROFESSOR

Heidi, don't ...

HEIDI

Hello, Karel!

(HE comes over)

KAREL

Heidi, Professor Mittelhoffer, heil Hitler.

PROFESSOR

Good morning, Karel.

KAREL

It is customary in the new order to reply "Heil Hitler."

PROFESSOR

You must forgive me, my lumbago.

HEIDI

(Flirtatiously)

Karel, it's been so long since we've ...

KAREL

(Ignoring her)  
Professor, what brings you to the terminal so early?

PROFESSOR

I am meeting a colleague.

KAREL

A foreign colleague?

PROFESSOR

As a matter of fact, yes.

KAREL

From what country?

PROFESSOR

I am not aware of his citizenship.

KAREL

Why does he keep this a secret?

PROFESSOR

I imagine it is his choice.

KAREL

He has no choice. Why is he in Germany?

PROFESSOR

To gaze at our lovely alpine scenery?

KAREL

Do not treat me like a fool. I am no longer your pupil. No more can you make me sit in the corner with a dunce-cap. I would not want to report your activities to my superiors.

HEIDI

Karel, you must not speak to my father that way.

KAREL

Your father is a renowned intellectual, a loathsome species, and therefore under suspicion. It is my duty to leave nothing unnoticed.

HEIDI

(Flirting)  
Then you've been shirking your duties.

KAREL

I have not.

HEIDI

You haven't noticed my pretty new frock.