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Scheißeimer

Koenraad Tinel

Ghent, 10 May 1940. Koenraad Tinel is six years old when the German army invades Belgium. His family sides with the Nazis. When D-day happens, they flee to Germany. A journey that leads them past the horrors of war, to a small village near the Czech border. When the Russians come, they have to flee again, in opposite direction. Carrying little more than a bucket to relieve themselves in. Little did he know then, that over 60 years later, this very bucket would come to be the title of his hefty book containing 240 ink-drawings in which he pours his gripping story.

Scheisseimer turned out to be a necessary book: full of darkness, compassion, heart wrenching experiences, and shattering disillusionment.

Koenraad Tinel *is sculptor and illustrator. He started drawing and playing piano at a very young age. In 1944 his parents flee to Germany, taking little Koenraad with them. An odyssey through the wreckage of Europe that is forever ingrained in his mind. Although he is a talented pianist, the young Koenraad wants to become a visual artist. Hij studies sculpting at the La Cambre school of arts in Brussels. Beside sculpting and drawing, Tinel often collaborates with befriended musicians and theatre makers. Since 1996 he lives and works in an old castle-farm in Leysbroek.*

"The artist looks the boy he once was straight into his eyes. He sees and feels once more how awful everything was at the Eastern Front, how dehumanising it was. How endlessly sad the memories are, how impossible they are to digest, and thus to forget. Scheisseimer crawls under the reader's skin."

Knack (Walter Pauli, historian)

"In precise phrases and a wide variety of images - from detail to landscape, from rudimentary to elaborate - the almost-ninety-year-old author makes it clear that this story isn't finished. Not for himself nor for society in general."

Focus Knack (comic-critic)

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6.
These are my memories of my childhood. From my 6th till my 12th, between 1940 and 1946. I was a happy child with loving parents.

8.
I grew up in a typical townhouse in Ghent. I lived with my father and mother, two older brothers and a younger sister.

10.
My mother was a beautiful woman with pale skin. She sang opera arias and played the piano. Grieg, Schumann, Schubert, Offenbach, Madame Butterfly. She owned whole albums with operas that she copied down by hand. She was a great story-teller. About the great War and the heroic courage of my dad. About his time in the trench of death, and the attack on the Diksmuide flour-mill. She was always busy writing letters to promote my father's work. And to get in contact with the new political leaders of Flanders.

11.
My father was a handsome man, skinny and bony. Born in 1895. He served at the Belgian Yser Front as a volunteer for four years. He came back from the '14-'18 War heavily decorated.

12.
Afterwards he went to the academy for a while and became an artist and sculptor. He worked mainly for churches. Crucifixes, Our-Ladies, and such.

13.
Later they become those highly ennobled figures. The ideal man. Women who are no longer women. And he became more and more inspired by the ideals of National-socialism, made sculptures set to Ferdinand Vercnocke and Wies Moens.

14.
My dad knew many painters of the Latem School. On Sundays, we walked along the Lys until we reached Saint-Martens-Latem.

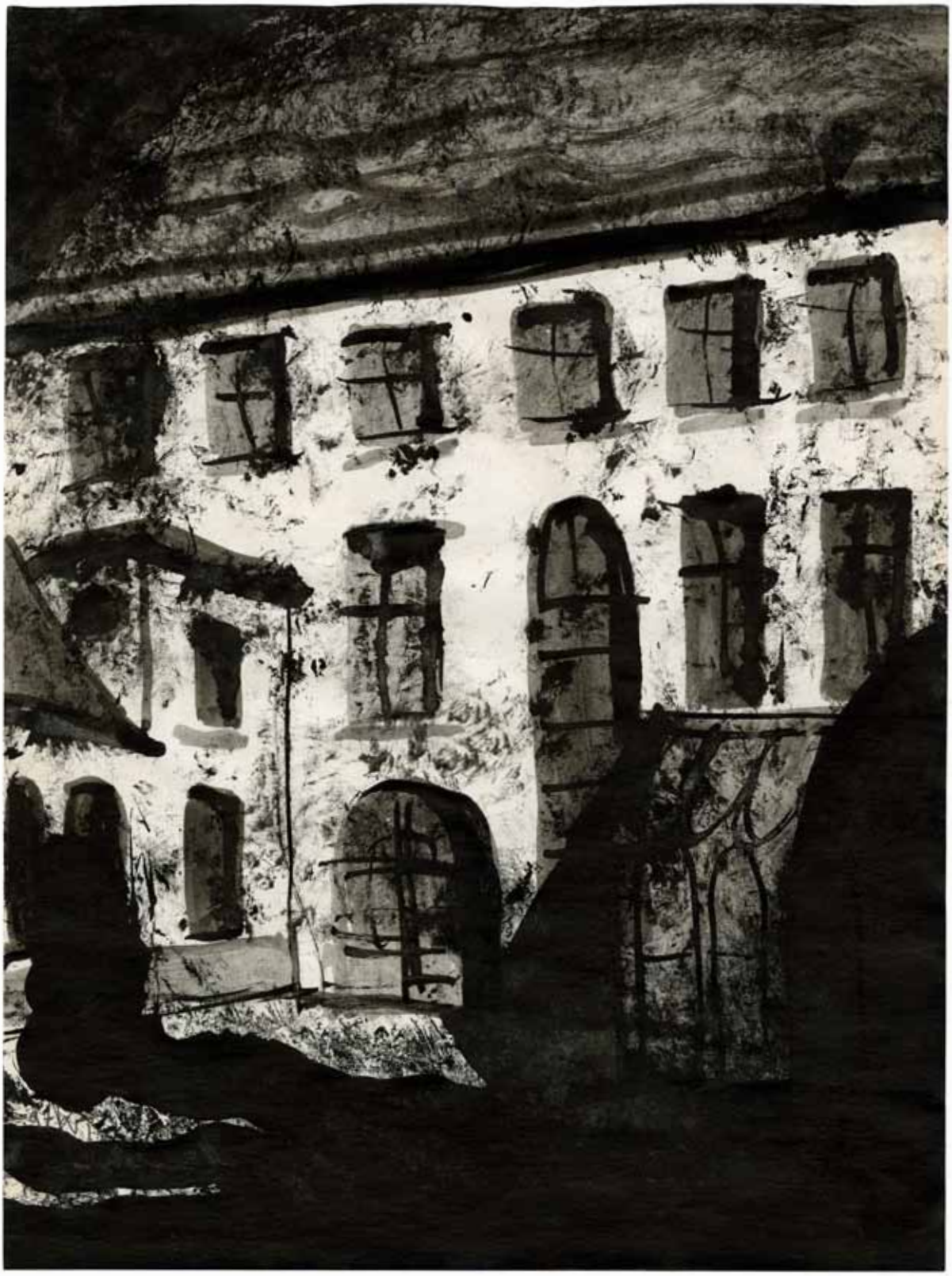
15.
In the 1930's my father became a member of the Verdinaso, the Union of Dutch National Solidarists. The founder, Joris van Severen, was a family friend, there were pictures of him everywhere. He courted my mother. 'Tu es la femme de ma vie,' he said. They mostly spoke French amongst themselves, like many Flemish-minded in those days. The rumour went around that I was van Severen's son.

16.
The Verdinaso-men, with their shoulder-belt and that dark uniform…

For my dad, Hitler was God the Father. He sculpted his portrait in wood and took part in exhibitions in German cities featuring Flemish artists. His Hitler-busts and portraits of SS-men were displayed in many a Flemish-nationalist salon.

Dit zijn
mijn
herinneringen
aan mijn
kindertijd

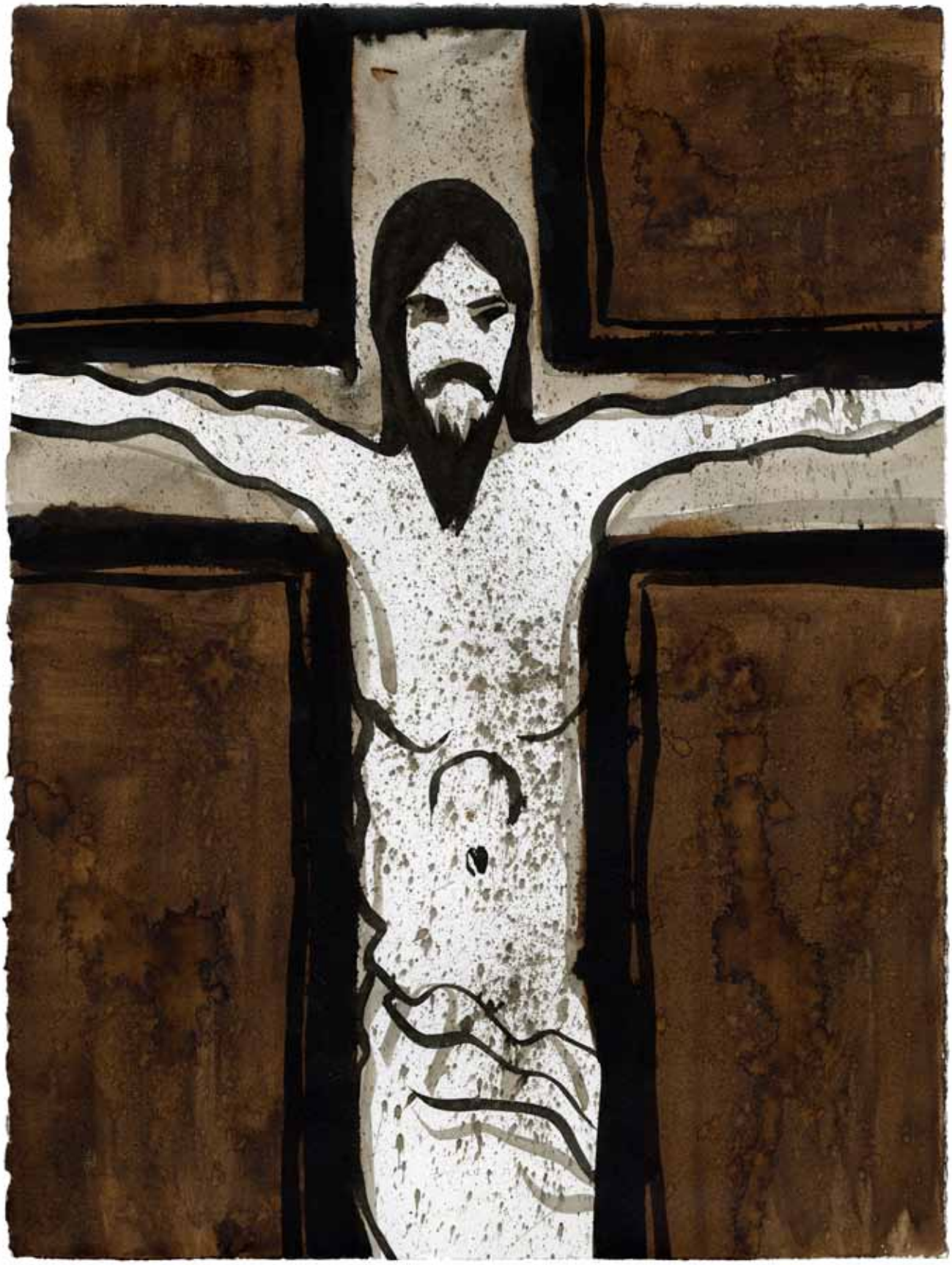
Van mijn zes tot mijn twaalf
jaar, tussen 1940 en 1946.
Ik was een gelukkig kind met
lieve ouders.



Ik groeide op in een typisch herenhuis in Gent. Samen met mijn vader en moeder, twee oudere broers en een jonger zusje.

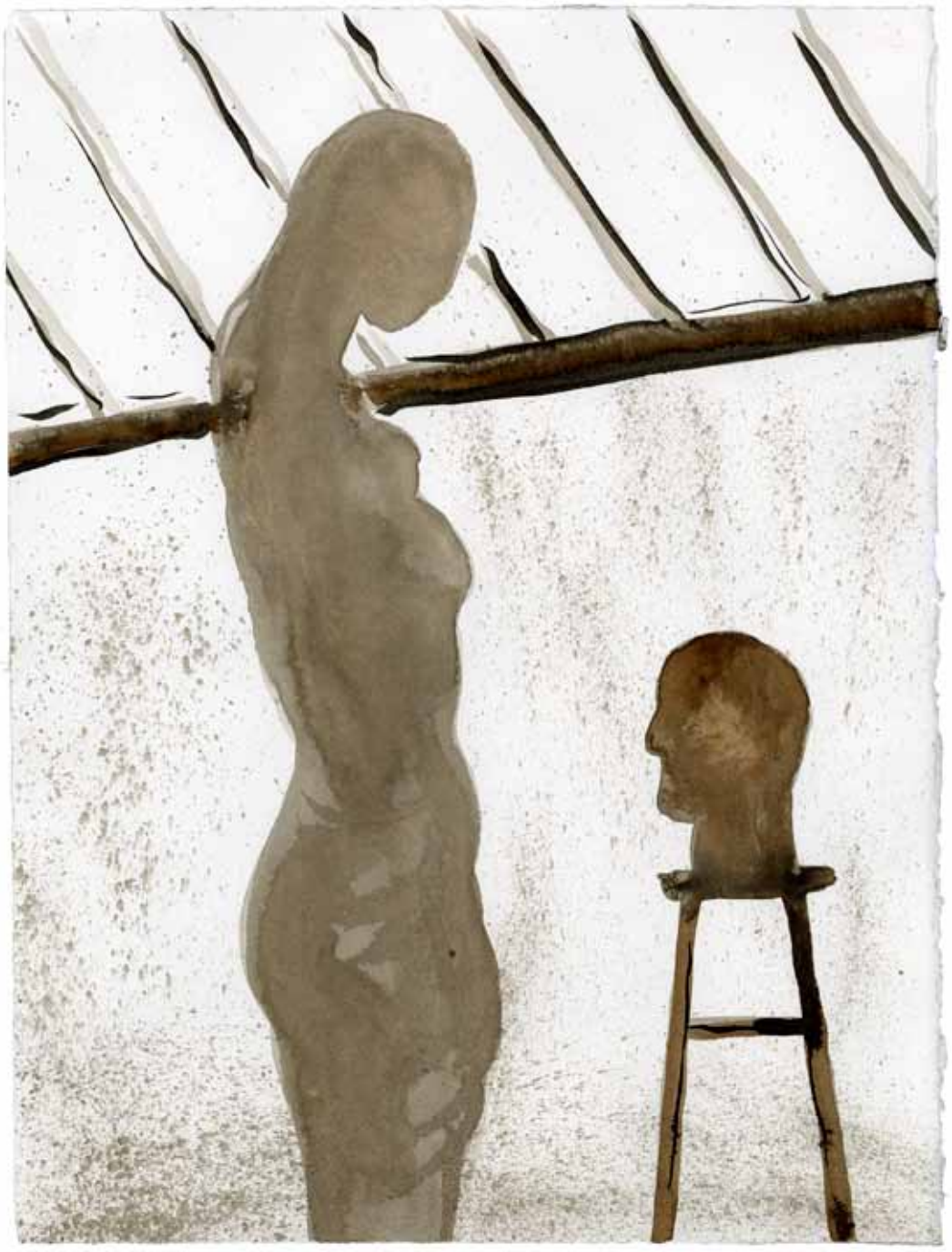
Mijn moeder was een mooie vrouw met een bleke huid. Ze zong opera-aria's en speelde piano. Grieg, Schumann, Schubert, Offenbach, *Madame Butterfly*. Ze bezat hele albums met opera's die ze met de hand had gekopieerd. Zij kon heel goed verhalen vertellen. Over de Groote Oorlog en de heldhaftigheid van mijn vader. Over zijn tijd in de Dodengang, de aanvalsmissie op de Minoterie van Diksmuide. Ze was altijd brieven aan het schrijven om het werk van vader te promoten. En om contacten te leggen met de nieuwe politieke leiders in Vlaanderen.

Mijn vader was een knappe man, mager en pezig. Geboren in 1895. Hij was als vrijwilliger vier jaar lang Belgisch soldaat aan het IJzerfront. Zwaar gedecoreerd keerde hij terug uit de oorlog van ’14-’18.



Achteraf ging hij een tijdje naar de academie en werd kunstenaar en beeldhouwer. Hij werkte vooral voor kerken. Crucifixen, *Onze-Lieve-Vrouwkes* en heiligenbeelden.

Later werden dat van die zeer veredelde figuren. De ideale man. Vrouwen die geen vrouwen meer zijn. En hij raakte steeds meer geïnspireerd door het ideeëngoed van het nationaalsocialisme, maakte sculpturen op gedichten van Ferdinand Vercnocke en Wies Moens.



Mijn vader kende veel schilders van de Latemse School. Op zondag wandelden we langs de Leie tot Sint-Martens-Latem.

In de jaren 1930 werd mijn vader lid van het Verdinaso, het Verbond van Dietsche Nationaal Solidaristen. De oprichter, Joris van Severen, was een vriend aan huis, er hingen overal foto's van hem. Hij maakte mijn moeder het hof. 'Tu es la femme de ma vie,' zei hij. Onder elkaar spraken ze voornamelijk Frans, zoals veel Vlaamsgezinden in die tijd. De roddel ging rond dat ik een zoon van Van Severen was.

De Verdinaso-mannen, met die schouderriem
en dat donkere uniform…

Voor mijn vader was Hitler God de Vader. Hij kapte zijn portret in hout en nam deel aan tentoonstellingen van Vlaamse kunstenaars in Duitse steden. Zijn Hitler-koppen en portretten van SS-mannen stonden in veel Vlaams-nationalistische salons.