

# **The Story of Väti's Suffering**

**Kurt Erich Moser**

born 21 July 1895 in Wiborg, Finland

died 25 June 1982 in Stralsund, Germany

compiled by his wife,

**Ilse Moser**

Translated by Ann C. Sherwin<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Parenthetical insertions (...) were in the original. Insertions in square brackets [...] are clarifications added at client Klaus Moser's request.

Since March 1961 my life had been nothing but anxiety, and inwardly I had already said goodbye long before [his death]. I often wondered whether pacemakers really were a great boon for humanity. Is it not more merciful to allow a person to die naturally? The last year was sheer agony for him. He'd had the pacemaker implanted only to please me. Granted, after that we did have one more nice peaceful year, 1976. But such thoughts occur to one involuntarily; Väti's heart was already too sick.

The diagnosis after the first implantation in 1975 was Adams-Stokes syndrome with bifascicular block, then cardiac infarction, incipient decompensation.

On my 80th birthday, Mr. and Mrs. Decker kindly came to see us. On that day, Väti was doing poorly, and Hans D. did not even notice how ill Väti was. That still puzzles me to this day. There was also no chance to speak with him alone, because visitors came. I was glad, then, when they left. I had to deal with all this by myself anyway.

I was *so* grateful to you *both* (Jürgen and Klaus) for coming to me *so* quickly.

My sorrow was like a stone inside me. It still is.

The amazing thing is that, despite everything, he (Väti) still worked full-time until his 70th year and half-days until his 80th year, and he offered marriage and sexual counseling until his 85th year.

by Ilse Moser

Before he had the pacemaker implanted, he [Kurt] wrote me [Ilse Moser] a letter, because, of course, one could never know how that would end:

... In case something should unexpectedly go wrong tomorrow, here is one last greeting. You glorified my life; accept my final thanks. Be assured, as I am, that even if our present bodies disintegrate into atoms, our elementary particles will find their way back together, perhaps in another form, perhaps also on another planet. Who can know that?! Don't be sad. We have reason only to be thankful. And give my love to our sons.

Your Kurt

He [Kurt] wrote this in his final days, in a very shaky hand:

With the decline of judgmental and critical faculties in old age, instinctivity or instinct or foresight comes more to the fore again.

But then God forgives a person his sins, shows mercy, but not to everyone. Before God destroys the latter, he strikes them blind (i.e. he dulls their mind, which he still does today.)

Scientists, in particular, become “religious” by recognizing the wonders of nature – provability of God?

The spirit, which on earth became flesh (incarnation). Death --> the spirit escapes from the body again, and the body becomes a lifeless corpse. Spirit = life = soul ??!

Universal spirit [*Allgeist*] like God?

In his final days, he was especially preoccupied with theological questions; e.g. he wrote this down: Immortality guaranteed by gene cells.

Kurt's records contain transcriptions from almost every area of interest: medicine, psychology, history, zoology, biology, philosophy, music, art, and theology. He copied excerpts that especially interested him and often wrote comments on them signed (*e ego*); also from literature and politics. It is a treasure trove, but often hard to read, because it is handwritten; furthermore, many readers lack the prerequisites for understanding.

The human phenotype (physical appearance) is symmetrical and functions according to the bipolar principle. (Ilse and Kurt)

Decline of cultures is associated with decline of families (ethical deterioration). Result: barbarization. Result: dingoes (stray dogs) in human form. (agricology)

With age comes remembrance of the primordial beginning ... of God.

Humans admire their own super-technologies, e.g. a moon rocket composed of 100,000 parts, and forget that they themselves are a natural wonder that is thousands of times greater.

All super-technologies are only cumbersome, imperfect imitations of nature.

Wonder = root of religious faith

Is every new generation further developed cerebrally than the previous one?!

Who is normal? He who thinks he knows everything or he who still believes in something mysterious behind things?

My mode of thinking is almost a compulsion; to probe ever more deeply is inappropriate for biological problems, because one always runs into new problems that present new puzzles, much like the mysteries of life, and this naturally limits productivity. It would therefore have been much better if I had devoted myself to

another branch of science that would immediately lead me down into life's deepest mysteries and puzzles, e.g. mathematics, physics, etc., had devoted myself more to technical problems. But in the end all deep thinking leads to problems!

Religions (are practiced) among all primitive humans (indigenous peoples), not just in certain cultures. Therefore, an innate trait, not culturally acquired. Religious feelings are primordial.

I have experienced too many coincidences to believe in coincidences!!

For Ilse: [the German verse has rhythm and rhyme]

Heaven sent you to me.  
You were already so familiar to me,  
As though you had been given to me  
From an earlier life!

When you look back on your life and actions in old age, you have the feeling that everything essentially had to happen as it did; that you really did this or that not so much with conscious intent, but rather that everything was almost as if foreordained.

A colleague once said something about Kurt that I [Ilse Moser] find very typical and good: "What I always found occasion to marvel at were the disciplined clarity of his thinking, the dependability of his judgment, the conciseness of his formulation, and the consistent precision of his work, performed with a deep sense of responsibility."

This passage is fully representative of his mindset and point of view:

"Sometimes I feel very clearly that there is more in me than my mere self. Something indestructible, sublime! A tiny part of the *Weltgeist* [world spirit]."

Indirect proof of God --> delving; leads to deeper and deeper mysteries. —

Quotations from Klaus when he was about 10 years old, found in Väti's notes:

"I can't understand how all numbers can be written with the numbers 0–9. '0' has to be an even number, because '3' is uneven, '2' even, '1' uneven, and '0' even. I can't imagine that something has no end, that is infinite.

"Can a person live without a head? No, it is the main thing. Then he says: not the head but the heart is the main thing."

“The past will never come back, will it?”

In looking at a raspberry, he said, “That is artificial [*künstlich*], even though it is from nature.” He surely meant artistic [*künstlerisch*].

When he was 7 years old and was often hungry, he said, “Why kiss? That won’t fill you up.”

“Too bad people have to die. I would like to live forever.”

## 1961

March	Infection.
July	Eye surgery (detached retina), 5 weeks in the eye clinic, Greifswald. Prof. Günther drove me there to visit him.
5 Sep	Befuddled in morning (Dr. Gross), speech disorder, oxygen apparatus. Euphyllin; afternoon clear-headed again.
3 Dec	Befuddled for hours.

## 1962

Mar	Poor general condition.
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## 1963

Aug	Likewise.
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## 1964

10 Jan	Abdominal pain.
15 & 16 Jan	
1 Feb	
7 & 8 Feb	Sick leave.
19 Feb ff.	

24 Feb	Disburbe <u>d</u> vision, feeling of faintness, restlessness, ate a little, 20 drops Pentedrin, 1 Euphyllin [ <i>Euphelin</i> ] suppository, pulse 62, temp. 36.2, blood pressure 150/80.
25 Feb	Blood count [ <i>Blutbild</i> ] 27/55, sedimentation rate [ <i>Senkung</i> ] 12100 leuko, no left shift [ <i>keine Linksverschiebung</i> ]. Infection? felt very bad.
29 Feb	Out of bed some.
5 Mar	Blood count [ <i>Blutbild</i> ] 11/27, sedimentation rate 7900, hemoglobin 82.
16 Mar	Back to work.
30 Mar	9:30 p.m. felt bad again, dizziness, speech poor, intense headache on left side, 3x1 suppository.
31 Mar	Dr. Witt (vascular spasms? [ <i>Gefäßspasmen?</i> ]).
1 Apr	Still wan, good night, but headache on right side.
10 Sep	Pulse irregular, bed rest, sick leave until 27 Sep.
10 Nov	Sudden visual disturbance, passed quickly, some nausea but no vomiting, slept quite well, with interruptions; 1 Euphyllin tablet, 1 Euphesin suppository, 1 Antemesin.

## 1965

11-12 Apr	Nausea at night, retching, no vomiting, restlessness, head pain on left side, temp. 36.9, 37.1, 36.9; blood pressure 140/90, pulse 68.
12 Apr	Grape sugar with Euphyllin (Dr. Sieblist).
Since September	Precordial anxiety ( <i>Herzbeklemmung</i> )
5 Dec	Ill around noon, did not understand reading material, to bed, blood pressure 140, pulse 60.
8-9 Dec	Continuous yawning, shivering, pale, restless, formication in right hand, some nausea, better after Euphyllin suppository, exhausted in morning, no appetite, some head pain.

15 Dec No noon meal, feeling of light-headedness, 20 drops Pentedrin – promptly fell asleep, 1 comb. grape sugar injection (Dr. Sieblist).

## 1966

3–15 Jan At Innere Universitätsklinik Greifswald [Greifswald University Clinic for Internal Medicine] for observation, Dr. Mueller (no satisfying result).

July & continuing Abdominal complaints.

23–27 Jul In bed (intestinal adhesions [*Verwachsungen im Darm*] from dysentery [*Ruhr*] suffered in the field [during WWI]).

16 Sep Somewhat dizzy, “strange” feeling in head, yawning, shivers, some head pain, 1 Euphyllin suppository, 20 drops Pentedrin, blood pressure 155/80, pulse 62.

17 Sep Better, slept very well, stomach growled, blood pressure 130/75, 20 drops Pentedrin.

9 Oct At noon severe head pain, right side, dizzy; at night nausea, retching (ate very little); 1 Caffetelin, 1 Euphyllin suppository, 2 Antemesin; blood pressure 135/80, pulse 62; better in few days; sedimentation rate result of prior infection.

9 Nov In morning, head pain (right side), felt bad, several days bed rest, blood pressure 145/80, pulse 64.

22 Dec Again abdominal complaints, restricted diet till mid-January.

## 1967

29 Jan Thoughts gone.

30 Jan Toward evening saw black; blurred vision, weak, stayed in bed, head pressure.

9 Feb & continuing Out of bed hours at a time, same orders.

15 May Recurrent abdominal complaints, few days’ bed rest.

- 26 Oct Heart complaints, took it easy.
- 31 Oct (Reformation Day [refers to reformation by Martin Luther]) We were at the Nikolai Church where Pastor Neumann was preaching; Väti fainted during the sermon; 1 Euphyllin, blood pressure 145/80, pulse 72, treated by Dr. Stangl. Received 16 injections strophanthine [*Strophantin*], heart medications, soon felt better. Pressure in abdominal side, followed strict diet.
- 21 Dec Visual disturbance, passed quickly; continued abdominal complaints. Blood pressure 140/75, pulse 64.

## 1968

- Jan Depressed over strict diet due to findings in pancreas; one week fat-free diet, then increased to 50 grams.
- 20 Jan In reading, did not follow context coherently, very despondent. Slept some, better afterwards (Euphyllin).
- 20 Feb Again abdominal complaints, strict diet.
- 25 Mar Sudden feeling of faintness, no appetite; elevated temperature in evening; blood pressure 140/70, pulse 60.
- 26 Mar Stayed in bed, head pain.
- 18 Jun Felt unwell – abdomen.
- 19 Jul Felt unwell, poor memory, did not follow context coherently; 12 drops Pholidrine, 1 Euphyllin suppository; better afterwards.
- 20 Jul Slept till 6:00, then nausea, head pain, bad facial pallor; better after usual medications.
- 22 Sep Blurred vision.
- 23 Sep Head pain on right side, abdominal complaints.
- 19 Oct Sick feeling, soon gone.
- 16 Nov Upset stomach, restricted diet.
- 17 Nov Upset stomach, restricted diet.



19 Nov	Startled during night, blurred vision, felt “surreal”; toward morning retching and vomiting. Severe head pain, right side; no sleep despite sleeping pill.
20 Nov	In morning, fever 38° (Dr. Sieblist).
23 Nov	Somewhat better.
25 Nov	Tooth extracted (Dr. Michaelis), doing relatively well.

## 1969

24 Jan	Upset stomach, general condition not good.
8 Feb	Still not good, very gloomy mood.
23 Feb	Heart complaints.
8 Mar	Injection treatment (Dr. Stangl); blood pressure 140/70, pulse 70.
until 16 Mar	Strophantine.
17 Mar	Irregular pulse, condition not good.
18 Mar	Somewhat better; in evening, very exhausted.
19–25 Mar	Gradually better.
10 Jul	Heart and abdominal complaints, gradually subsiding, until 20 Jul.
30 Aug	Felt ill; visit from Jürgen, he advised his sugar diet! Since then it really has been going better.

## 1970

(No records kept during this year.)

## 1971

14 Oct	Heart complaints.
15 Oct	EKG

20 Oct	Heart attack ( <i>Herzanfall</i> ) (strong burning sensation), bed rest.
20 Oct & continuing	1 strophanthine injection treatment again.
21 Oct	2nd and 3rd injections, felt listless.
22 Oct	4th injection, pulse irregular.
23 Oct	5th injection.
24 Oct	6th injection, out of bed for a while.
25 Oct	7th injection, up after breakfast.
26 Oct	8th injection, up 2 hours.
27 Oct	9th injection, heart attack morning and afternoon, vomiting, ate very little, felt very bad.
28 Oct	10th injection, temperature, pulse 90, pain when catching breath.
29 Oct	11th injection,   felt bad, heart complaints, gastritis,
30 Oct	12th injection   no appetite.
31 Oct	13th injection, temperature 37.5°, plus head pain.
1 Nov	Temperature 36.9°, pulse 80, felt better.
2 Nov	Temperature 36.7°, pulse 76, sweating attack.
3 Nov	Temperature 36.9°, pulse 76, heart palpitations.
4 Nov	2 injections digitoxin; (1 injection 0.4).
5 Nov	1 injection digitoxin; listless.
6 Nov	2 digitoxin tablet 0.2.
7 Nov	Listless, read nothing.
8 Nov	Somewhat more animated, read, advised.
9 Nov	Blurred vision, (head pain), dozed off.
10 Nov	After 9 hours of sleep, very languid, immediately after washing, back to bed, slept again.

12–24 Nov Ate with gradually increasing appetite, still no interest in reading or radio, no longer quite so listless. Up only to wash, otherwise constantly in bed; not much sleep, but no more sweating attacks.

## 1972

28 Jun EKG

30 Aug Morning, blacked out in bed; 1 day in bed, Radeacol prescribed: 1st day 3 tablets, then 2 tablets.

14 Oct On a walk, became ill, trudged home with difficulty, went right to bed. Some nausea, head pain, woozy feeling, little appetite; pulse 70, blood pressure 150/80; after taking Nitangrin, major collapse at night (Dr. Siegert), subsided soon.

## 1973

20 Jan Lumbago [*Hexenschuss*].

5 Feb Fever – flu, pain in limbs, terrific sniffles. Because I also caught the flu, we were transferred to the L VI station, another EKG — no change since last time. Frequent head pain.

22 Feb Discharged and sent home; condition significantly better here.

22 Apr Felt ill, stayed in bed.

16 Jul Condition highly variable, also visual disturbances, probably result of changing weather and sudden drops in temperature ??

3 Oct Severe diarrhea in night, sweating attacks.

4 Oct Strict diet, nothing but tea and water gruels.

24 Oct Very listless, no appetite, nausea.

25 Oct Stayed in bed, slightly elevated temperature, but felt better in general

25 Oct Out of bed some, but stomach still not right.

## 1974

- 20 Jan In bed infected with hoarseness, sore throat, severe sniffles, rheumatism. Ascorvit, Analgin; blood pressure 165/85.
- 3-5 Feb Again blurred vision and heart complaints as result of the infection.
- 10 Mar Another cold with heavy congestion, pain in head and limbs.
- 13 Mar To bed (Analgin).
- 2 May Felt uneasy; in evening, severe itching in palms and rash on knees.
- 3 May Totally swollen face, allergic reaction to Analgin.
- 4 May Morning, extensive rash on thigh, knee and back; 2 hours later, decreased; temperature 37.6°; evening, rash all over legs.
- 5 May Hoarseness, sniffles, already somewhat better appetite, 2 Prothanon daily.
- 28 Jun Visual disturbances, felt ill. Over by next day.
- 5 Jul In night, nausea, retching, felt miserable, severe head pain, temperature 37.2°.
- 7 Jul Felt somewhat better and ate, still following dietary restrictions.
- 29 Aug Felt ill, subsided after 2 days.
- 4 Sep Woozy feeling in head, continuous yawning, urinary urgency, very bad depressive feeling, severe head pain (right), constant retching.
- 5 Sep Slightly elevated temperature, very little appetite but feeling better; after 2 days felt better and went walking.
- 15 Sep At 9 p.m. suddenly incoherent, couldn't recall words, felt very ill, very unhappy and sad; to bed (1 Euphyllin suppository, 1 Meprobamate; next day better but weak; set about everything with caution.

## 1975

- 23 Apr Sudden visual disturbances during noon meal, went straight to bed, head pain, gradually subsided.
- 30 Apr Around 2 a.m., 2x sudden loud snorts during sleep, then called out, sat up, cold sweat from head to toe. Pulse hardly detectable, about 20, very irregular. I telephoned Dr. Stengl, who was on night duty. She administered a Faustan injection; after that, pulse returned to normal; blood pressure 130/80. She found nothing alarming!! The next day I was reproached by a doctor's wife (Dr. Siegert), who claimed that my calling the night physician had been entirely unnecessary, because according to her interpretation there was nothing wrong!!!
- 1 May Very exhausted; all remedies stopped, except 6 Recornal per day; EKG — no change from last time.
- 3 May Very irregular pulse; old orders resumed.
- 4 May Out of bed, very shaky, depressed mood.
- 5–9 May Out of bed for hours, very tired; no interest in any kind of activity; heart pressure, weak, tired, but got out of bed.
- 10 May 3 bowel movements; cramps with diarrhea in night; rice gruel, tea and zwieback, activated charcoal; gradually felt better.
- 11 May Water gruel (activated charcoal, codeine).
- 12 May Out of bed, evenings short of breath; very haggard and weak. According to doctor's advice, he should take 100 steps up and down for training!!! Impossible.
- 13 May Gradually better, went walking, though very cautiously.
- 3 Jun 9:45 p.m. in middle of quiet conversation, turned head toward back and rolled eyes, sweating attack, deathly pale; pulse barely 20 per minute; was taken to bed. Dr. Schenk summoned. He called in internist Dr. Seidenstricker. Blood pressure over 200. Continual feelings of faintness, about 5 attacks. 1 Euphyllin suppository, 2 Faustan, 2 Recornal.

4 Jun Slept to some degree; in morning 1 Euphyllin again; good coloring, read newspaper, animated. 11:00 EKG in bed (Ms. Sprung); 12:00 Dr. Dubinski – argument (Sund Hospital). While she was there, he had sudden faint spell, weak pulse, so she felt he needed to be taken to the ICU [intensive care unit]; 12:30 transported by emergency ambulance to the Internal Medicine Clinic (Krankenhaus am Sund) .

5 Jun 3:00 p.m. transferred to Rostock, “New Medical Clinic,” Cardiac Division, Station 8 [*“Neue Medizinische Klinik” Kardiologische Abteilung, Station 8*].

6 Jun Telephoned with Dr. Schulz (station physician), who said Kurt’s condition was good, no complaints. Pacemaker to be implanted Thursday.

7–11 Jun Visited him 2–3 hours daily, condition variable, sweating attacks. Diagnosis: “Adam Stokes Symptom Complex” [see letter, p. 16].

12 Jun Pacemaker implantation, during which he had heart attack.

13 Jun Felt so-so, no appetite, sweating, pain everywhere, depressed mood.

14 Jun Much better.

15 Jun Out of bed some, walked in corridor and sat in easy chair 1 hour; mood so-so.

16 Jun Mood much better, up 2 hours, walked more; x-ray negative; EKG good.

17 Jun Same.

18, 19 Jun Up some, walked up and down in corridor.

20 Jun Released to go home, by taxi.

End of June Gradually feeling much better, no longer agitated and trembling, much more relaxed, good appetite, sleeps well; no more anxiety dreams. Walked some every day. Also no longer so bothered by extreme heat. Blood pressure ranges between 130/80 and 150/80.

2 Sep Appointment with Dr. Katzberg for check-up. Everything normal.

26 Sep Morning, speech impaired about 2 hours, incoherent and uncomprehending. Then fully lucid again but aware of the blackouts: "Something is wrong in my head." Blood pressure 160/90, pulse 72; 1 Euphyllin suppository. EKG on bed (Ms. Sprung). Spoke with Dr. Katzberg on telephone, sweating attack at night.

27 Sep Ate very little, extensive retching in morning, stopped after 2 hours; afternoon, felt better and ate with appetite; head pain (1 Coffetelin), slept well. Infection?

28 Sep Felt much better, ate well.

5 Oct Woozy feeling (1 suppository).

2 Dec Check-up, Dr. Katzberg, normal; pacemaker kicked in only for missed heartbeats.

Rostock, 20 June 1975

Klinik für Innere Medizin [Clinic for Internal Medicine]  
der Universität Rostock [of the University of Rostock]  
– Abt. f. Kardiologie – [Cardiology Division]  
25 Rostock 1, Ernst Heidmann Str.  
Station 8 – Telephone 39960

Ms./Mr. Dr. med. Oberarzt Katzberg, (Dr. Katzberg, Senior Physician)

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for your referral of the patient

Surname: Prof. Dr. Moser      Given name: Kurt      Date of birth: 21 July 1895

Address: Stralsund, Rostocker Chaussee 80 a

Treated as inpatient from 5 Jun 75 to 20 Jun 75

Diagnosis/No.: Adams-Stokes syndrome with bifascicular block, condition after cardiac  
                        infarction, incipient decompensation.

Therapy: pacemaker implantation on 12 Jun 75. Biotranik JDP 44-65784-Demand

Further/Follow-up treatment for decompensation recommended with Strophantin,

Turesis, Myofedrin, 2x 1 Dilanacin, 2x weekly 1 Disalunil, 1x 1 Rausedan

Patient discharged as healed / improved at his own request

Fit to work: —    Unfit to work: —

..... days limited activity

(Detailed report to follow.)

Sincerely,

K. Glende  
Physician



## 1976

2 Mar                      *Now* pacemaker maintains 72 beats; often some shortness of breath. Quarterly pacemaker checks negative.

## 1977

Condition normal all year long.

## 1978

April 15 & continuing    Somewhat short of breath; when walking, stops and rests more often.

17 Apr                      Pacemaker working properly.

22 Apr                      8:15 p.m. sudden dizziness, sweating attack, gray facial pallor, irregular pulse. After 2 beats third missed. To Cardiac Division by emergency ambulance.

23 Apr                      Pacemaker working properly. Circulatory disorder?

22-27 April                Admitted to hospital for observation. Thorough examination. Diagnosis unclear. Bad cervical spine (*HWS = Halswirbelsäule*), suggesting possible strangulated vessel ??

19 Aug                      Pacemaker frequency dropped from 71 to 68. Test yielded same result. A young [female] doctor said there was no need to rush into action!!! Typical.

20 Aug                      Appointment for EKG, pulse down to 66, admitted to hospital (3-bed room, including an impossible patient). Because he was getting no rest or sleep there, he was moved to so-called social room alone with telephone. To tide him over, second pacemaker, size of a book, was attached externally, mounted on bed, also very inconvenient. For every bowel movement everything had to be dismantled!

21 Aug                      Felt better, slept well.

22 Aug                      A second senior physician [female] deemed large pacemaker impossible, found smaller one that could be fastened on arm, but failed to consider that frequencies did not match. He was naturally

very comfortable, pulse returned to 70 and everything would have been fine. As usual, I visited him daily (I had a visitor's permit); when I went through the checkpoint the custodian waved me back, looked at the permit and accused me of having forged it. Outraged, I snatched the permit from him and walked on in. After we had exchanged friendly greetings — he was feeling good — he suddenly became nauseous, a white veil passed over his face, eyes turned upward, mouth open. I found the bell, thank God; a nurse came at once and immediately called for help, massaged his heart, thumped his ribcage. Meanwhile another doctor and another nurse arrived. After several minutes color returned to his face and the heart was beating again (it was a heart block). He was totally bathed in sweat, said goodbye to everyone, and was transferred to Intensive Care (ICU), where, because of the nurse's improper action, he had even more trouble. The heart block had occurred as a result of the unsynchronized frequencies of the two pacemakers. The head physician was out of town, unfortunately, and told me later that something had gone wrong during his absence!

- 23 Aug New pacemaker was now implanted. He withstood it well and was very happy.
- 24 Aug Felt relatively good, still weak, shaky, easily agitated (Faustian injections).
- 25 Aug Already out of bed some, walked length of corridor twice, ate relatively well.
- 26 Aug Slightly elevated temperature, chills.
- 27 Aug Felt good, also good appetite.
- 28 Aug Ditto.
- 30 Aug Discharged, sent home. Slept better.
- 1 Sep Sutures removed. (Still not over shock in ICU).
- 25 Sep Check-up. Everything in order.
- 11 Dec Heart check-up: everything normal; blood pressure 150/80.

13 Dec Wisdom tooth root surgically extracted, received many injections. Icepacks throughout day.

14 Dec Because of pain, poor sleep, and relatively high amounts of medication taken, dizzy in morning (received penicillin injection), totally down. 11:30 a.m. to hospital for tooth check. Incision satisfactory, but mood and feeling poor, groggy; I had a hard time getting him into car and then into bed. Pulse 70. No initiative, did not read or listen to music.

28 Dec Felt as though something was sticking him.

29 Dec Same.

30–31 Dec Skin hypersensitive on right side of chest.

## 1979

1 Jan Dr. Sieblist ran sensibility test and found shingles [*Herpes Zoster*]. Pain increased. Nausea.

2 Jan Very depressed mood.

4 Jan Cramp-like pain in heart region. Dr. Katzberg summoned, who examined him closely; lungs and heart normal.

5 Jan Rash broke out. Very painful, bad nights.

8 Jan B-12 injection and B-1 as tablets 3x daily.

9 Jan Sleep pills too strong, slept ca. 14 hours, totally disoriented and befuddled; discontinued.

18 Jan B-12 injection; blood pressure 160/80, pulse 70.

25 Jan B-12 injection; woozy, hazy, early to bed.

21 [?] Jan Pain, right eye.

27 Jan Eye and head pain (1 Coffetelin)

28 Jan gradually better, but still weak; no interest in either reading or music; dozed off and on.

30 Jan Eye examination (Dr. Paul). Eye pressure 24/22.

31 Jan Very depressed; eye pressure 24/17.

1 Feb Depressed; eye pressure morning 29/17, evening 26/17.

2 Feb ff. Slowly making progress.

6 Feb Went walking a little; eye drops 2x daily.

23 Feb Eye pressure 17/14; for last 10 days interested in everything again

12 Mar Heart check-up normal.

6 Apr Eye pressure 14/12 (Isepton Epinal 2x daily).

12 Apr blurred vision, somewhat hazy, surreal, subsided after 2 hours; slept well. Blood pressure 160/80.

21 Apr 4:30 a.m. severe pain in right eye radiating to side of head, extensive nausea and retching; pallid face (1 Antimesin suppository, 1 Analgin, 1 Marophen injection by Dr. Sieblist for nausea); exhausted, ate nothing, 4 swallows tea, no fever, pulse 70, no more retching after 11:00 a.m. — sleep; temperature at noon 35.5°, evening 37.3°.

22 Apr No fever, still weak, no appetite.

23 Apr Ate somewhat better. More interest toward evening.

15 May Two roots extracted; everything successful, withstood well.

20 Jun Cyst in jaw removed; withstood well.

11 Jul Still in dental treatment.

11 Sep Eye pressure 10/17 (drops 1x daily).

## 1980

14 Aug At night, shivering, continuous retching and head pain (1 Antimesin suppository).

15 Aug Fever 38° (Dr. Sieblist and Dr. Katzberg).

16 Aug Fever 37.2°.

17 Aug No fever; ate somewhat better.

## 1981

- 8 Mar After eating good breakfast became unwell at 9:30 a.m.; restless and confused. He went into the bathroom, called me because he didn't know what he was supposed to do there. I led him back to bed. He spoke incoherently in nonsensical words. He was very restless and had fear in his eyes. At noon he ate some rice, did not recognize the plate but let me feed him. I administered 1 Euphyllin suppository; temperature 37.8°; Dr. Sieblist gave 1 Marophen injection and 1 Titretta suppository. 2x heavy retching and vomiting. 1 Antimosin suppository.
- 9 Mar Bad night, little sleep, frequent retching; morning temperature 37.4°, noon 37.2°, little sleep, frequent retching. Only word from him was "aphasia."<sup>2</sup> Totally incoherent speech; also does not recognize objects, e.g. plate and glass.
- 10 Mar Groped for words and said a few things, e.g. "Medical Health Officer Kurt Moser, MD, abbreviate M R" [*Medizinalrat Dr. med. Kurt Moser, abkürzen M R*]. Asked why he had said that, he didn't reply but just shook his head. (Death notice??). "We suffered hardship and affliction, but we were fortunate — we were happy." It took him a *very* long time to say something like this; then he would repeat it often.
- 11 Mar In morning he said "I dreamed" and after long searching, "of the Soviets." When I consoled him that his speech was already much better, he said, "I am a neurologist and must get this from my specialty area, in the brain — aphasia; that does not bode well." The eye doctor discerned narrowing of the visual field (left). He has a hard time registering and grasping objects on the left. He misses by about 10 cm and has knocked many glasses over and off the table.

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<sup>2</sup> **aphasia** (əfā'zhə), language disturbance caused by a lesion of the brain, making an individual partially or totally impaired in his ability to speak, write, or comprehend the meaning of spoken or written words. It is distinguished from functional disorders such as stammering or stuttering, and from impaired speech due to physical defects in the organs used for speaking. Treatment consists of reeducation; the oral and lip-reading methods employed in the education of deaf and mute children have been found to be of assistance in therapy.

12 Mar Considerably better (mentally), calculated correctly ( $23 - 17, \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{2}$ ), read, wrote, and pointed to objects. Got up in afternoon but still weak.

13 Mar Speech much better, got up in afternoon, spoke of old memories (60th anniversary of our engagement).

14 Mar Strained from hour-long visit; up in afternoon, to bed at 8:30 p.m.

15 Mar Ate well, listless, somewhat passive, pain on left side of neck (cervical spine ??). Better after massage.

16 Mar Surreal feeling in head.

17 Mar Problems with eyes unchanged; dull feeling in head, depressed mood.

19 Mar Continually depressed, pain in cervical spine.

20 Mar Dr. Paul – eye pressure 14/17. Narrowing of visual field in *both* eyes. He hopes it will improve. Dr. Sieblist also visits. Depressed mood.

21 Mar Went walking a few steps, still weak.

22 Mar Same; blood pressure 170/95.

23 Mar Freer in head for first time; follow-up appointment with Dr. Paul in one week.

29 Mar Went walking some every day, vision still not satisfactory; mood much better. Eye examination: visual acuity OK, but visual field narrowed by *half* on left.

3 Apr Still no change in eye condition, but there is hope! Feeling tolerable. At night, considerable pain in cervical spine. Easily tired, listless.

23 May Afternoon, sore throat (inside), laryngeal irritation, coughing, shivers.

24 May Same; temperature 37.2°.

25 May Did not feel well but ate moderately; 8:30 p.m. shivering, before that temperature 35.5° (Chinin 1 tablet); very congested with phlegm. Spoke with Dr. Sieblist on telephone; temperature 37.8°.

- 26 May Morning temperature 38°. Restless night, slept poorly, very congested with phlegm, much expectoration.
- 27 May Felt tolerable generally, also ate moderately. Toward evening felt chilly again, shivers [*Schüttelfrost*], much expectoration, very listless and tired. Dr. Sieblist listened with stethoscope and found no evidence of pulmonary inflammation ([or] bronchitis), temperature 37.8°.
- 18 May Dr. Katzberg concurs; very tired and listless.
- 29 May Temp. 37.2°, noon 38.2°, ate poorly, nauseous, slept a lot (1 Marophen suppository).
- 30 May Very good night, heavy coughing toward morning, temp. 36.4°, noon 37.4° and pain in left side of chest (coughed up blood and pus).
- 31 May Fever-free; felt as if a crisis had come.
- 1 Jun Fever-free, but very depressed and tired. More often, because of phlegm. Difficulty finding words.
- 2 Jun Changed in nature. No longer finds his bearings. Does not understand context when reading. Reading is becoming difficult for him. Can no longer solve puzzles. Surveys situation and is very depressed: "So life no longer makes sense; everything is pointless." Still weak physically, but fever-free. Very little phlegm now. His vision seems to me to be even worse and more unsteady. When looking at something, inclines head to side. Got up and sat in easy chair.
- 3 Jun Fever-free; speech worse, didn't understand meaning.
- 4 Jun Somewhat better, listless, somewhat indifferent.
- 5 Jun Much better with speech.
- 6 Jun More interest, speech good, vision so-so.
- 7 Jun (My birthday), very down-hearted, constant sweating attacks, slept well through night, therefore better today.
- 8 Jun Slowly making progress.

- 17 Aug Heart check-up, normal.
- 27 Aug Toward evening speech difficulties again and felt bad. Vision poor and unstable. Elevated temperature. Got up the last 2 days. Since then, can barely read: 1) cannot see well, 2) has to piece letters together, and 3) has no overview. Assesses his situation clearly and frets over it.
- 23 Oct In late afternoon, felt surreal, did not answer questions, because he didn't understand them. Early to bed; starting around 1:30 a.m., restlessness, retching, speech totally garbled; very restless night.
- 24 Oct Dr. Giermann came and Kurt didn't recognize him. He called in an Internist (Dr. Thieme?). Blood pressure 155/80. Pulse normal. "Cerebral circulatory disorder" [*cerebrale Durchblutungsstörung*]. Better, clearer, toward evening. Temp. 37.2°. 1 Marophen suppository.
- 25 Oct Slept well through night, ate relatively well, still quite happy at 4:00 p.m, listened to music and book discussion and told about it. At 6:00 p.m. pain on left side. Speech totally garbled and did not understand questions. With evening soup, retched again, then restless. Bowel movement. Vision seems to have gotten worse.  $\frac{1}{4}$  Kalypuon, 1 Rodotel, 1 Marophen suppository.
- 26 Oct Speech better. Got up in afternoon, totally disoriented in his home, claimed never to have seen it before. Everything seemed strange and new to him, surreal. "It is a calamity that I have become ill in the very organ that I worked for all my life." He totally forgot how to operate the radio. He also didn't know what he should do in the bathroom. He "sees" nothing by letters and numbers in the air. He sees the soup spoon wrong.
- 27 Oct Out of bed morning and afternoon. Strange visual disturbances: on right he sees flying balls, straws, queen of diamonds card; before falling asleep, grimaces that change continually. When reading, the letters become jumbled. Speech much better, only a few words lacking. Mood naturally very gloomy and unhappy.
- 28 Oct Slept well. Better in general. Evening, pressure on chest.



28–31 Oct, 1 Nov Little appetite, depressed, gloomy, passive.

2 Nov Checkup, normal.

27 Nov Irregular pulse. To Dr. Katzberg; says pacemaker is in order; likewise EKG.

30 Nov Overall condition not too bad.

14 Dec Again irregular pulse: 12 regular beats, the 3 very slow ones, and that repeatedly.

15 Dec Again irregular pulse. Toward evening, to hospital to physician on duty, Dr. Fink. EKG – discerned ectopic beats caused by overdose of Dilanacin. Pulse dropped to 60. 12 beats good, then 3 very slow ones, in alternation. Pacemaker working.

16 Dec Dilanacin discontinued (Dr. Teor), since then pulse almost completely regular.

21 Dec Heart check-up normal. Dilanacin discontinued several days, then ½ digitoxin taken daily; after that, irregular pulse again.

27 Dec This recurred in the same way in the preceding days and continued until 3 January 1982.

## 1982

6 Jan Pulse regular again, irregular now and then.

24 Jan Lumbago; 1 Analgin, 1 Phymilbutazon.

25 Jan Better.

26 Jan Happy and felt good.

27 Jan Ate nothing again, weak and listless.

28 Jan Nausea again.

29 Jan Temperature 36.6°, 37.2°, 37.2°. Dr. Siegert examines. Bloody sputum, x-ray recommended, PAMBA [p-aminomethylbenzoic acid] tablets, 4x1 daily.

30 Jan 6 tablets Berlocombin. Extensive expectoration of bloody sputum, rattle in left bronchial tube; weak, ate poorly.

31 Jan Less expectoration, no longer so bright red. Temperature: 36.3°, 36.7°, 37.8°.

1 Feb Afternoon, again 37.8°, extensive bloody expectoration.

2 Feb Sat a while in easy chair, where better able to catch breath. Fever-free, but very weak, no appetite. Same medications. Pulse irregular from time to time.

3 Feb Expectoration better.

4 Feb Bloody expectoration again, therefore raised to 6 PAMBA tablets.

5 Feb Gradually better, sat in easy chair some.

6 Feb Ate somewhat better.

7 Feb Up all day.

10 Feb Lungs x-rayed — everything normal.

11 Feb Medications discontinued.

12 Feb Impairment on right thumb and index finger (mortified, snow white). Treated with Nicodan percutan. General condition improving gradually and very slowly. Also better appetite. Right index finger and thumb still impaired.

25 Feb In evening, suddenly, speech difficulty again.

5 Mar Heart check-up, everything normal; on alternating days ½ or 1 tablet digitoxin prescribed.

9 Mar Pulse dropped suddenly again; normal again toward evening.

10 Mar Pulse 70.

14 Mar Blood pressure 170/85. Pulse still irregular; telephone daily.

16 Mar Digitoxin reduced to ½ tablet. Pulse fluctuates in range of 60–69 per minute. Ectopic beats [*Extrasystolen*] continue. Right foot had paralysis, next day gone. Babinski [reflex test] positive.

29 Mar Heart check-up, ectopic beats confirmed. Testing device (for the heartbeat) sent home with him.

30 Mar Restless at night, somewhat woozy, again no appetite, slept a lot throughout day.

April/May Still same, Furantil prescribed for draining, but effect was so strong that he took only ½ tablet per week. Then daily ½ digitoxin. Since then, ectopic bears have stopped. General condition: weak, low performance capability. Mortified fingers bothersome, hurt and impede; Nicodan salve dressing applied, makes tolerable. Gradually resumed going for walks.

28 May Again retching in night, head pain on right side.

29 May Just slept, ate hardly anything.

30 May Felt better, got up.

31 May Visual disturbances. Hardly recognized me, saw me totally distorted and could barely calm down about what I looked like. Didn't know what a table was (never heard of it). He saw all furniture in a jumble and thought I was doing major cleaning. Therefore he did not allow any visitors in. After a Euphyllin suppository, everything was back to normal. Pulse OK. The fingers also almost recovered. (On 7 June, my 80th birthday.)

8 Jun To dentist.

14 Jun Heart check-up, normal (68.9).

15 Jun Following afternoon nap, 4:00 p.m., woozy, gave wrong answers; soon after that speech impaired, could not form sentences, slurred, incoherent words; only once: "I am so unhappy." Has been in dental treatment 14 days, taking Tablophen every 6 hours because tooth hurt, abscess feared. In evening, head pain on right side (1 Coffetelin and 1 Euphyllin suppository). Around 8:00 p.m. speech improved. At 10:00 p.m. he didn't recognize me, did not react to questions, stared at ceiling with eyes open. Slept some intermittently. At 11:00 p.m vomited but didn't notice, resisted allowing me to change linens, vehemently resisted being covered up, taking no notice of me. In the night from 14 to 15 June I kept vigil over him. He could not get to the

bedside commode unassisted, thought his nightstand drawer was his commode, spit into it, put his watch in a glass filled with water; resisted allowed me to change his sheet, which was soiled, and I was barely able to roll him into the adjoining bed. He resisted with iron strength. At 12:00 Dr. Giermann came, assessed the situation as I did, conferred with Dr. Katzberg, who wanted to take him to the observation ward. I was informed of this this as a *fait accompli*. Within seconds the ambulance was there, two attendants picked him up and laid him on the gurney, and for the third time drove off with the emergency light flashing.

16 Jun Dr. Katzberg called and told me that nothing had changed so far and that Väti had rejected any treatment whatsoever. He pulled out the IV tube, etc. (consciously?). He often said, "I know too much about my field, and I don't want any more." Sedimentation rate [*Senkung*] 19000 leuko. Dr. Gierman says "Urinary tract infection?"

17 Jun I telephoned the senior physician. She said his condition was unchanged, that he had a kidney infection (I don't believe it), and that he was getting sedatives. I was "welcome to call more often," she said!!! (No idea how to interact with family members.) In evening, I met Dr. Giermann, who informed me that his [female] senior physician and psychiatric physician were called in on Kurt's case, and they decided to transfer him to the psychiatric ward (Dr. Katzberg was out of town). Dr. Giermann opposed the psychiatric ward and suggested Neurology. (I was told nothing.)

18 Jun Dr. Katzberg canceled the transfer, because he felt Kurt was not fit for transport and would have better care in the observation ward. He said that the two [female] senior physicians had "concocted" the transfer to the psychiatric ward; that I should visit Kurt but stop at his office first. We went to see Kurt together: a woeful sight, eyes closed, mouth open, breathing loud, and in no way responsive. I begged Dr. Katzberg not to torment him any more by forcing medications on him to sustain something that is no longer sustainable. He was very understanding, brought me downstairs in front of the building and promised me that he would act accordingly.

19 Jun

I telephoned at 10:00 a.m. and a nice nurse kindly gave me information: Things are better and I can feel free to come. I am not sure whether he really recognized me, but he did say "*Liebling*" [Darling] once. He knew that he was in the Sund Hospital, asked whether I had also canceled the dentist, and said that something had to happen, he was 87 years old, his name was Kurt and his wife was Ilse, he had 3 boys. Compared to yesterday, it was great progress. I fed him some soup and junket [*Quarkspeise*]. He had trouble swallowing, because of too much phlegm. (But it may have been a paralysis of the swallowing reflex.) He gargled with the food and only swallowed when told to do so. Blood pressure 190/110. No longer so restless today, so he didn't need the Faustan injection. He had a catheter. His speech was indistinct, muffled, and slurred, — thus alien. When I left, he said "*Kommen Sie bald wieder!*" ["Come back soon!" using formal rather than intimate form of address.] (Everything is so woeful.)

20 Jun

At 10:30 a.m. I was with him. He was very restless, and he was to have an injection. He resisted, pulled everything out, and kept saying, "I don't want to have a fight." He was given a Faustan injection in the muscle to calm him. He still had not eaten anything. I fed him the same soup, and he ate a few spoonfuls, then he said "*Mein Goldchen*" [endearment, akin to "my precious"]; otherwise his eyes were always closed and very tired. Then he murmured, "*Wegen des bisschen Kadavers, ich will nicht mehr.*" [For this bit of cadaver, I don't want to go on.] At 5:30 p.m. I was there again. Still the same, torpid, eyes closed, talking to himself: "It must be November, where can he be?" He also spoke of Königsberg. When I spoke of Jürgen and Klaus, he said, "Naturally I know who they are; I am oriented." Eating and swallowing nearly impossible. He gargles with the food and then chokes on it.

21 Jun

Transferred to station 14 Z 75. I found him unchanged, but he talked more. E.g., he said, "A minister was here. He just talked nonsense." Then he looked at me and said, "You talk nonsense too." (all fictitious) He refused all methods of treatment. He yanks out the IV tube, likewise the feeding tube [*Sonde*]. He doesn't eat, because he doesn't swallow but gargles with the food. Both arms are badly

swollen, probably because something from the IV drip spilled). Most of the time he has his eyes closed, woeful. The patient in the next bed, who was probably also gravely ill, asked me if it was true that Kurt was a professor. "Yeah, before the Grim Reaper [*Gevatter Hein*] we're all equal," he said.

22 Jun

Väti greeted me joyfully and caressed me, and tears came to his eyes. But he was still very confused. He spoke of intrigues, criminals, poisoning and lies, and kept repeating it over and over. He said I should clarify it immediately and leave the room. When I stayed, he said, "I'm warning you." His arm is still swollen. He drank two full feeding cups of soup. Swallowing is still hard and he keeps choking. He looks amazingly rosy and perfused. But he is still very weak and can barely sit up. The nurse scolded him for striking at the cup, thereby soiling her apron. (Everything is so unspeakably sad when a life is coming to an end.) Jürgen called in the evening.

23 Jun

Very tired and listless. But he recognized me, ate the semolina porridge I gave him; and when I told him about Jürgen's phone call, he said with a happy face, "Why, that's nice." Very restless from time to time. Kept wanting to throw the blanket off. Since yesterday, he had kept saying sentences in French and Latin. He addressed the patient in the next bed, a farmer from Rügen, as colleague [*Herr Kollege*].

24 Jun

I was told by third parties here that Väti was transferred to Neurology. No one had thought it necessary to tell me directly! His old nurse Irma called me from Neurology and told me that he was there and that he kept calling out "Ilse." During the transport they had covered him with nothing but a bathrobe. He was frozen stiff and had a fever of 39°. I went to him at once; he lay in a private room and was receiving tender care. Because of his restlessness, a lattice had been placed in front of his bed. When he saw me, he took my face in both hands and caressed me, so he must have recognized me. His breathing was labored and full of phlegm; his lips kept drying out and had to be moistened with a damp cotton ball. The transport must have been very hard on him. In the afternoon his condition worsened; he would take quick breaths for 25 seconds

with mouth open, then no breath for 20 seconds, alternating this way for hours. In the evening a doctor came; she put him on the IV and wanted to examine him again, so I left then. At 9:00 in the evening, the doctor appeared at my door and only wanted to tell me that the findings of her examination were such that there was no more hope. Although she was still young, she had a very warm, understanding, empathetic manner that did my heart good. It was the first time I had experienced anything like that from a female physician.

25 Jun

In morning, his condition was still the same, eyes always closed, loud breathing with open mouth. At one point the assistant physician summoned me and asked whether I would object to an autopsy. Since I already knew that the pacemaker would be cut out, I had no objections, and I was also aware that Väti favored clarification. I myself felt benumbed anyway. He constantly had cold sweat on his head and neck. His breathing was regular at 40 breaths per minute. At 6:55 p.m. I left, because evening traffic at the station was picking up and I didn't know what was to come. Twenty minutes later nurse Charlotte called and told me it was over. He had likely said nothing more and simply expired. But unfortunately, such professional nurses cannot picture themselves into the shoes of family members. I went over immediately and found all beds and blankets already dismantled; he was lying on the spiral-spring mattress wrapped in a sheet. I did not have a look at him. His mouth had been tied up with a bandage — a world was collapsing within me anyway. That was the end.