

Scene of Stefan in garden counselling children on suffering

EXT. SMALL, FENCED BACK YARD FULL OF GROWING GARDEN VEGETABLES - DAY

Stefan and family work in the garden, fertilizing with manure. Every square inch of their small backyard has been meticulously cultivated for productivity. Helda and 15-year-old daughter EIDLEVEYE hang clothes on clothesline. Girls hang salted jerky and fish on line to dry in the sun.

SHEFFEY

"Pee-yew! Why do we put horse poop on our food?"

Stefan and Helda laugh at the youngest boy. Sibs chuckle.

HELDA

"Paulus and Thomas! Put down your swords and help."

They place their carved wooden swords under their belts.

EIDLEVEYE

"It helps them grow. Right, father?"

STEFAN

"Don't worry, Sheffey. We'll clean them before we eat them."

EIDLEVEYE

"How much have we stored so far?"

HELDA

"Eight months I think."

Helda glances at Stefan's protuberant belly.

"If your father eats light."

EIDLEVEYE

"I thought the city council mandated that we need a year stored up?"

Stefan and his wife share a worried glance.

STEFAN

"A year and a day."

PAULUS

"If the Emperor attacks, do you think we'll run out of food before the battle's over?"

Helda, upset at the thought, turns to go back inside the house. Stefan stops her.

STEFAN

"Helda, come gather round with the children. Let me tell you a story."

Everyone gathers around Stefan, who prunes a plant.

"Jesus said that just like a gardener has to clip useless stems so that the fruit-bearing stems bear more fruit, in the same way God has to prune us so that we bear more fruit. He has to prune Germany to make us godly, and that means we have to suffer a little."

SHEFFEY

"Does it hurt?"

Stefan glances at Helda as he prunes.

HELDA

(grief evident in her voice)

"Yes, it does."

STEFAN

"Sometimes it means going hungry. Sometimes it means that we get hurt or sick. Sometimes it means we lose the ones we love..."

SHEFFEY

"Like Martin?"

Helda swallows hard, and she and Stefan make eye contact. Stefan clips another dead stem.

"Like this little tomato plant, if we trust the hands of the gardener - our loving, heavenly Father - all things work together for our good, even persecution and loss. So let's trust Him."

SHEFFEY

"Does he put poop on us, too?"

They laugh. Helda leans down to kiss Stefan on the cheek.

HELDA

"You are such a good father."

Stefan rises and takes her in his arms to kiss her, and the kids squeal playfully.

YOUNGER CHILDREN

"Kissing show!" "Kissing show! Free tickets!"

HELDA

(smiling and pulling away)

"Not in front of the children."