

## Interrogation

by [Kathleen L. Housley](#) in the [January 2025](#) issue

Published on December 12, 2024

Corporal Knobloch, was it you who smuggled  
letters out of prison from Bonhoeffer to a friend?  
Were you also a friend of that traitor to the Reich?  
How did you sneak the letters past the censors?  
Tucked in your sock? Stuffed in your sleeve  
as you snapped “Heil Hitler” on your way out?

*“When I read your letter yesterday, it felt  
like the first drops of water in a long time  
from a spring, in the absence of which  
my spiritual life had begun to wither.”*

You must have mailed them on your trek home,  
sirens wailing through blacked-out Berlin,  
glass shards crunching beneath your boots.  
Had you known he wrote on the frivolous subjects  
of friendship and faith, would you have “dared  
to do the good” after the attempt on Hitler’s life?

*“It’s true that not everything that happens  
is simply ‘God’s will.’ But in the end nothing happens  
apart from God’s will, that is, in every event,  
even the most ungodly, there is a way through to God.”*

That you vanished near war’s end saved the Reich  
a precious bullet. And despite your paltry treason  
for his sake, Bonhoeffer was killed. Yet I must ask:  
Did you sense that his ideas would be lost  
if you failed to post them into the future  
where they continue to arrive?

*“Not only action but suffering, too,  
is a way to freedom. In suffering, liberation consists  
in being allowed to let the matter out of one’s own hands  
into the hands of God.”*

Oh Knobloch! I, too, was there!  
But I have never been able to let  
the matter out of my own hands.