

The Third Child – Prologue

Summary

In a world that is split into two blocks - the "green" block and the "blue" block - Walter gets to know his destiny.

Walter is a bigamist because he cannot decide anything. And because he doesn't want to decide. But that's not the real problem.

Because there is this strange living dice cup ...

Foreword by the narrator

This narrative consists of 32 chapters - which is a nice round number for a programmer. The chapters can be transferred more or less "one to one" into the scenes of a film.

Nevertheless, a "scene zero" is required in the film, which should optically tune in to the topic. The film would then have 33 scenes, which is also a "nice" number.

Scene zero

The film begins with a look at a desert, empty lunar landscape, not a breath of wind. Through a tracking shot we first see traces in the sand - like the ones left by the moon mobile - over a hill, for example, and then the landing site of the first moon landing becomes visible - the landing gear of the Eagle, the American flag, as it was left behind in July 1969 have been - behind it appears the earth on the horizon.

Tracking shot from the moon to the earth - green / blue - over Europe -> Austria -> Vienna -> a single-family house in one of the less densely populated districts -> into the window.

Veronika is standing in the door of the study, Walter is sitting at the computer, but has turned to Veronika and is obviously talking to her.

This entire "scene zero" is 100% computer-animated, including Walter and Veronika.

Prehistory

And once again Veronika was right. When she said, "You take yourself too seriously," Walter simply swallowed his reply and turned back to his flat screen monitor. Nothing would have come to his mind as answer anyway.

But how did it all start?

I was born in the summer of 1969, and that's when it all began. No, it actually started much earlier, but now we live in a divided world.

Nobody knows exactly why, but we have "the greens" and "the blues". You could say there are two attitudes, that would be bearable, but then there are always these "room commanders".

What are typical "room commanders"? By this I mean family fathers, company bosses, party leaders, religious leaders and the like, when they show a pronounced "us and the others" consciousness. They keep asking you: "Which side are you on?" and they urge: "Make up your mind!"

These people have an opinion on everything and everyone and can always make decisions in a flash. There is nothing more important than themselves, at least for themselves, and they are exemplary always and everywhere.

And yes, because of these "exemplary" people, the colors green and blue have become not just attitudes, but veritable blocks. You could also say that green and blue are the two armchairs that everyone is afraid to sit between.

I think this is exactly what it is about fear:

Everyone has to decide:

*green family or blue family?
green company or blue company?
green party book or blue party book?
green religion or blue religion?
green rules or blue rules?*

Yes, and if you don't <want> to make up your mind, then you have this shitty fear of being stuck between the armchairs.

It is extremely important that there are also these "holes in the wall", these "weak points", these "leaks".

Because walls build up tensions, weak points reduce tensions, and isn't life an eternal cycle between tension and relaxation, between strength and weakness, between victory and loss?

The first woman

1.

After Walter had written his diary entry, he uploaded the result to his homepage.

Sometimes he wondered why he was doing this, because the statistics showed him that an average of five people a day visited his homepage.

Nevertheless, there was a fundamental difference between "public" and "private" that was more based on himself. He was terrified that someone who was not so kind to him might use his private thoughts against him. On the other hand, he had to "get rid of" his thoughts somehow. And the internet, at least, listened patiently.

The Internet finally gave him the opportunity to express his thoughts more or less anonymously, which was very convenient for him. At least that way he was protected from stalking by private individuals, and he didn't mess with the state itself after all - that could end badly despite quasi-anonymity, as he knew.

His greatest protection, of course, was his unimportance. "Before Big Brother works overtime because of you, he'd rather go to a good dinner with Big Sister and have a nice evening," a nice colleague once told him.

At that time - Walter was around 38 years old - the Internet was still hobbling through the world like a one-legged pirate and it took several tens of seconds until the respective entry for the diary was uploaded.

This gave him the opportunity to calmly think about what he had written and to improve it again if necessary.

Yes, Veronika was right, he took himself too seriously, but on the other hand his story was well worth keeping for posterity. The decades would tell, he thought to himself.

Thrown back on his own problematic of unimportance, he set out to slowly dawn into that better nocturnal world in which we have all parameters under control and yet believe that an experience "happens" to us.

In the dream we get a feedback "from the outside", which in reality comes "from the inside". Walter would have liked to interpret this "feed back of the soul", but unfortunately - or thank God - in most cases he could not remember his dreams the next day.

This uncertainty - did he have nightmares or was everything more or less "sky blue" in the dream - reflected his own conflict.

Was he a "good family man" or a "rebel"?

Did he "just his duty" or "did he rise above himself and perform heroic deeds"?

Was he a "chief" or an "Indian"?

He did not know - just as he did not know so much - and all he had left for that day was to flee to sleep.

2.

Veronika worked in a blue company. For the blue it was qualities like punctuality, loyalty, (dogmatic) reliability and perseverance that made a person valuable.

No wonder she always wanted to be the first in the office and so rushed to kindergarten with the two children in the morning.

Walter, on the other hand, hated stress. Once he even reported that he was skipping breakfast to save time and avoid stress.

So this morning he set out on his own again and drove the familiar route along the drainage channel towards the industrial district.

The word "industrial" quarter actually belied the facts. At that time, there were no longer any large factory halls and assembly lines, but mainly office buildings and software technicians with their satellites – project managers, quality officers, commissioning specialists and the like.

Almost every children's toy already had a CPU, and for a CPU to work it needed software.

He wondered how one day he would explain to his children what he was doing in his job. After all, he was a programmer, but what picture should be used to explain software? What was the essence of the software?

Some people believe that a program, an "app", is running on their computer. In reality, however, it is the other way around. The computer runs on the software.

The computer, actually the CPU, is by and large nothing more than a truck that brings goods from A to B. In this case, the goods are simply information that is "shoveled" from one carrier medium onto another. The conductor tracks on the motherboard are nothing more than streets, and the software actually corresponds to the street signs that show the truck the way.

"Every comparison limps, but not everything that is limp is also a comparison," thought Walter, because this comparison, of course, also limped.

Because if we compare the street signs with the software and the truck with the CPU, what is the role of the truck driver? As humans, truck drivers are - mostly - quite intelligent, but a CPU is infinitely stupid because it executes all the commands immediately and without thinking.

Walter thought about these things most of the time when he was driving. At least if he knew the route well, there was something fundamentally meditative about driving a car, and that way he could always find his way back to his center. He also wondered if all drivers did it that way, but he didn't want to spread the word too widely with his friends and at home because he was afraid of being accused of not driving with concentration and of being a danger to the general public.

At work

3.

Walter's company was green.

Did we say "his" company? Of course she didn't belong to him, because he was only employed there. But the term "his company" was far more appropriate than "the company he had an employment contract with". It was simply "the world for him" and at that time he could hardly imagine how it could be anywhere else.

In any case, the sign at the entrance read "Innovations, Improvements and Interaction" in large letters. Three "I", that was the method, that was the program. "There is no I in Team" and there was actually no teamwork in Walter's company.

Well, actually there was only teamwork because nobody knew everything and everyone was somehow dependent on the others. But everything was based on the old "quid pro quo", or worse, the "do ut des".

Walter pondered these thoughts as he walked from the car to the company entrance - the parking garage was a separate building from which the offices could be reached through the open air. The color scheme of the building also indicated which block the company belonged to and he sometimes secretly wondered whether it would be a disadvantage for him not to have a party book.

There it was again, that fear of sitting between the chairs, but he dispelled it by consciously concentrating on the beginning of the new working day.

4.

When he entered the room, he thought that no one took any notice of him, just mumbled "morning" briefly and went to his seat. This time he was happy not to be a celebrity, because in his job you only got famous if you made mistakes.

He sat down at his computer, switched it on, and while the computer started he quickly got himself a coffee.

What kind of new e-mails are in my mailbox? Aha. Lots of unimportant stuff. I'll do this one day.

He moved the email to a folder called "To Do".

Then he made a sticky note with key words indicating what to do today. In some things he still preferred "good old paper" and refused complete digitization.

Nor was he always happy that communication was almost exclusively via e-mail. Of course, it was true: the emails from the boss - which were actually written by the secretary - were informative and made it possible to always be up to date, but email communication lacked this directness, this interactivity and these human nuances.

In the midst of these considerations, the dice cup burst in.

The dice cup was a funny communicative little fellow who took every opportunity to give the employees tips. However, nobody knew about his actual role in the company.

What does this know-it-all want from me again?

Dice cup: "Too late again?"

Without waiting for an answer from Walter, he asked further: "Should the universal advisor give you a tip? Don't you think that you could organize yourself better?"

Why, I work extremely efficiently. And why are you grinning so devilishly again?

Walter thought to himself. He should just ignore the dice cup, but unfortunately the dice cup was highly regarded by the management and therefore it was not possible to ignore it. Also, there were many mysterious properties that this dice cup had that made it interesting too. A colleague even claimed that he once smelled the smell of sulfur in his nose in the office of the dice cup.

So Walter asked briefly: "Why?"

"You come to the office at 9 o'clock, read your e-mails, organize the day, then at 10 o'clock there is a coffee break and at 10:30 you start the real work," explained the dice cup.

Walter took heart and answered honestly: "Do you want to scare me?"

"I just want to help," said the dice cup from above, "The fight for the best place in the sun is getting tougher and I want you to become something."

5.

Of course, they did not save the results of their work on the personal computer, but in a central data repository. They also had the MCH-P (Master Controller Headquarters program).

During the coffee break today, Walter found out that the master controller had crashed. Obviously it was a tricky problem - after all, parts of the master controller were so old that the people who knew about it were no longer at the company. "Today we also work without a net," said a prankster, referring to the circus that was just making a guest appearance in the city.

They spent the coffee break in the canteen, where people from outside the company could also refresh themselves.

This time a strange old man was present, who was sitting at the next table and talking in a conspiratorial whisper to an elderly lady.

Walter personally believed that there were often great truths in the statements made by eccentric people, madmen and sick people, so he became curious and listened a little.

"..... we live in an end time",

the man forced himself out - Walter agreed in his mind, it was obvious that it was coming to an end - and on

"..... third child will save the world"

well, in every end time there is a new beginning, we agree with him, but what was this ominous "third child" supposed to be?

Somehow that made a string vibrate in Walter: "Third child!"

"Are you eavesdropping on strangers again?" Walter's colleagues tore from his concentration. They had noticed his silence and absence.

Who could that be, this "third child"? Walter, listen to yourself.

6.

A young programmer worked in another department of the company, who that day also had an encounter with the dice cup. Although this had nothing to do with Walter, we would still like to tell you about it because it is symptomatic of the way the green company worked back then.

At that time, the young programmer had to write a piece of program that was supposed to evaluate the content of an input and react accordingly.

However, he was not sure if he should program an "if" branch or a "switch" branch.

Here we have to digress for a moment, because the dear reader will probably not be familiar with the difference between "if" and "switch".

Namely, these are two different types of program branches. Fortunately, Walter has already made the comparison with the truck and the street signs, which is why it is now possible to continue the comparison and apply it to the concept of a program branch.

Because in this picture a program branch is actually nothing more than a fork in the road. The truck driver therefore knows where he is going. For example, he knows: "I want to go to Linz" or he knows: "I want to go to Salzburg". If the truck (the CPU) comes down the Pyhrn-Autobahn from the south, then it has to drive either to the left or to the right at the Voralpenkreuz.

And this is where the street signs (i.e. the software) come into action. The road sign now tells the truck driver: "If you want to go to Salzburg, turn left, if you want to go to Linz, turn right".

The sign manufacturer doesn't know, of course, whether the truck driver wants to go to Salzburg or to Linz, that's why he is not allowed to write "Drive to the left" or "Drive to the right", but must write: "<If> you want to go to Salzburg, <then> drive left, <otherwise> drive right".

The sign manufacturer must therefore design his signs in such a way that they can be used again and again for all possible cases.

But there are two different types of program branches, namely "if" and "switch".

You can compare it with whether the signs are to the right of the street or are attached as overhead signposts.

Under certain circumstances "if" is an advantage (i.e. a sign to the right of the street), under other circumstances "switch" is advantageous (i.e. an overhead signpost). Sometimes it doesn't matter which of the two variants you choose.

And so the young programmer sat undecided and tossed the problem back and forth in his head.

The dice cup came up to him and asked, "You look so perplexed. Can the universal advisor help you?"

The young programmer said: "Yes, I have to decide whether to use <if> or <switch> to implement a certain program branch."

The dice cup responded immediately: "Well, let's go. What is 1 and what is 2?"

The young programmer made his decision: "1 - switch, 2 - if".

Immediately the dice cup began to glow magically, covered its opening and shook itself (it put on a huge show). Then the three dice fell on the desk: 3-5-1.

But what should these numbers mean? No problem, interpreted the dice cup herself: "3 plus 5 plus 1 is 9, through 2 is 4, 1 remainder. 1 + 1 is 2. Take if!"

The programmer thanked him, relieved. He had not yet understood that it was better not to thank them for such help.

The Testers

7.

Monika was Walter's second wife. What was that supposed to mean, second wife? What happened to Veronika? Well, we were still in 2007, Veronika was still alive and Walter was not divorced from her either.

It was different. Walter was a bigamist.

Somehow, in this world of two blocks, he had managed to choose both women at the same time. That made him an outsider, because in this world a decision for something always meant a decision against something else. But he drove in two directions, and not even that he had to hide one woman from the other.

Monika enjoyed having a man to herself who didn't annoy her all the time, but also had other interests, and Veronika had learned to deal with the situation. However, she wasn't what people called happy.

The main advantage Walter saw was that this way he could have more children than with a single wife. An old sentence from his father was floating in his head: "Usually there is only divorce when the children are out of the house".

So Monika came to her office that day - in this case it was really her office -, went briefly into the room to greet everyone, and then straight on to the coffee kitchen before she switched on the computer.

In the corridors of her office there were beautiful landscape pictures, a visitor could have the impression that this company wanted to save the world - at least to save it on photo paper.

She sat down to have a coffee and look at the papers. A test manager approached her and started a conversation: "What's going on in the world?" Monika said truthfully: "Nothing good", which animated the colleague to reply: "I know that myself. I mean 'how is it expressed today?'. "The conflicts between the green block and the blue block are intensifying. There is a party donation scandal because a company has not declared its donations. "

The colleague took advantage of this to position her topic: "Speaking of political intervention. Couldn't you intervene to control it? The Greens have not yet delivered some corrections and we are therefore blocked in our tests ".

"Is it documented who is waiting here for whom?", Asked Monika. "Yes, of course. But we're in the same boat. The competing product has been announced for the next quarter!"

Monika thought for a moment: "If the Greens continue like this, we can buy them up soon."

Another short break. "But OK, I'll call them right away". And it actually turned out later during the phone call that the developer of the green company had only left the topic because he was not aware of the urgency of the problem.

It's good that there was Monika.

8.

Walter later told of the following incident at a birthday party.

Programmers only do one part of the work, the other part is done by the testers.

There are many philosophies regarding the division of labor between programmers and testers, the fact is that there are many areas of tension because one is dependent on the other and one suffers from the mistakes of the other.

In any case, at the time, we programmers were green and "our" testers were blue. My second wife's office tested our programs and I would like to tell you about a dialogue between a young tester and his experienced colleague.

A young tester once said: "Look. I made a trace and then hooked myself into it with the debugger. Something went wrong. Here (points to the screen that is full of incomprehensible debugger output) I would expect a jump table, but the same expression is evaluated several times".

The experienced tester replied: "And is the function disturbed?"

The young tester said: "It could have an impact on performance"

The experienced tester concluded: "Then write it down in the list of suggestions for improvement, but it's not a mistake. If we re-roll every decision that went stupid, we will never be finished."

Of course, these two testers had spoken a bit of technical jargon, and the joke, as Walter explained, is that the problem was the branching program that the green programmer had implemented using the dice cup.

In this case a "switch" branch would have been better, but our young programmer decided on an "if" branch. Although this allowed much more complicated program branches, it was sometimes not that efficient. This would have been about efficiency.

Even so, our young green programmer was lucky again. His fault wasn't enough to make him famous.

The second family

9.

On that day, Walter picked Monika up from her company in his car. She lived with her two children in an apartment on the outskirts of the city center - where it was already greener than in the center - but where there were still good public transport connections.

That's why she always took public transport to work and enjoyed it when he picked her up on the days together. That was something special.

Walter enjoyed these trips too and was glad that she was happy. He felt that after a hard day's work he could cheer her up a little with his sense of humor. He imagined working in a blue company to be terrible, not least because of what Veronika had told him.

While he was stubborn about the final decision on either bloc, he believed much of the green propaganda.

Green is the "color of hope" and of course the color of freedom, because only in freedom could one hope for the future, while blue is the color of dog-like loyalty, the unscrupulous fulfillment of duty and the imposed party doctrine.

He would learn that the two blocks were nothing more than two sides of the same coin.

What he was also not aware of: he enjoyed Monica's quiet wisdom.

He could not, however, make himself aware of this, for there was something in him that refused to grant wisdom to a woman.

He would learn that too.

The children Carl-Friedrich and Lieserl were already waiting in the apartment - the nanny Lisa had already picked them up from kindergarten - and stormed Walter and Monika with their reports of everything they had done today.

"It's exhausting but nice," he thought.

10.

The next day they sat at breakfast together.

He asked the children casually: "Well, children, what are you going to do today?"

As stupid as this question was in his opinion, Carl-Friedrich actually already had a concrete idea of his day, which surprised Walter: "Today, after kindergarten, we're going shopping with mom, I'll get a surprise egg with my pocket money. Help you me with it then? "

That wasn't what he wanted, because he hated nothing more than promising concrete services.

He always did his best anyway, he thought. But the people who really wanted concrete promises only wanted to have the opportunity to blame him for a mistake if he didn't fulfill a promise. "Buy yourself the egg and you'll see if I can help you then," he wanted to say.

However, he left the question open and then asked the Lieserl: "And you? What are you going to do today?"

She didn't know yet and simply said: "Dad, I don't know yet. Hmm, let's see". That's exactly what he always said when he didn't want to commit.

Monika broke the silence, he didn't know what to say: "And what are you doing today?"

He grumbled: "If things weren't so tough with the software," I would enjoy a day at work and then rush home fresh and strengthened. "

"Don't be so cynical. You don't even know where you are at home," she replied with a wink.

"Even Monika can be damn right sometimes," he thought to himself. Fortunately, at that moment they finished breakfast and started clearing the dishes together. The children went back to their playroom. It was still too early for kindergarten.

The Lieserl

11.

Usually the children were allowed to play before Lisa, the nanny, brought them to kindergarten.

Carl-Friedrich was an extroverted doer-type. He set the tone among the boys in his group and he always knew what he wanted.

Lieserl was more of an introvert and got to the bottom of things. Unfortunately, she had many questions that adults couldn't answer. Only much later did she learn that there are many questions that no one can answer, at least no earthly being.

The adults had different strategies to deal with Lieserl's thirst for knowledge. Unfortunately, none of them were really successful.

But Lieserl had a talking teddy bear. She secretly confided all her questions to him and he always knew an answer.

On that day she asked the teddy bear: "Why are adults always in such a hurry? Why do they always want to be first?"

The teddy bear then told her the following story:

Long ago people lived in harmony with nature. Without war and without effort, they took the fruits from nature that they needed to live. On the whole, they were satisfied, even if their life was not very comfortable. They accepted that they couldn't rule the world. And they accepted that there was something that was many times bigger than they were.

But at that time there was still someone that everyone always had with them: a little troublemaker who tried every day to scare people. Fear of nature, and fear of other people. "You have to rule," he said, "otherwise you will be dominated". This sting sits deep in the flesh of every human being. This is the old game that we all play and that rules us. It is called "be first" and has been played since the fall of man. No one has ever won this game, even if one or the other looks like they are a winner for a while.

12.

"Oh," said Lieserl, "now I understand. But there is one thing I still don't understand: Why does mom work in a blue office and dad in a green one?"

"Yes," said the teddy bear, "that is a different story. But I'll tell you about it in a moment. "

At that moment Lisa, the nanny, interrupted the children while they were playing: "Time for kindergarten," she said.

Painful truths

13.

A few days later, the children were already asleep, Monika and Walter were in bed. She said, "Have you noticed? Whenever you sleep with me, you look at the clock!"

"So what? Is that so reprehensible? Or should I accuse you of always thinking of diamonds?"

"You're nasty!"

Walter parried: "Speaking of common. Do you have a secret third child?"

Monika asked: "How did you come up with this stupid idea? How should a woman keep a child a secret?" Then she thought about it and said: "But actually you are right. The company is my secret third child". And again she thought a little: "And if I am mean now, then I would say: you are my third child - the way you behave sometimes."

He heard the words and made the best of them: "Well, if I'm so childish, let's play with each other". With Monika, Walter always felt that "lightness of being" that he was so badly lacking.

Of course, it was a little bit because Walter didn't want to choose one of the two blocks, the green or the blue. That is why he suffered from the fear of remaining seated between the two chairs.

Monika, on the other hand, had already found her "place in life", it seemed, and filled it. As a result, she was already further than many others.

She tolerated Walter without needing him. That gave her a position of strength and thus that "lightness of being" that he just lacked.

The next morning he should understand that too.

14.

The next morning Walter and Monika drove to their company in his car. As they just passed the belt of streets, where it jams almost every day of the day, they sat in silence next to each other.

Another car passed on the left. As luck would have it, it was Veronika's car. It stopped next to Walter's car. It came as it had to come at some point. Veronika rolled down the window and said, half seriously and half jokingly: "Well, am I the first one in the office this time?"

"No, I'm the first," contradicted Monika. Walter rolled his eyes: "You always with your 'being first'. This is an unbearable game! "

Monika said almost indignantly: "But everyone plays it. If you can't stand us, then you shouldn't have chosen us!"

Walter went to a hundred and eighty: "That's not true at all! You have chosen me." He explained to Monika: "Can't you remember when you took a look at the grades on my diploma certificate? That's when you started to ensnare me."

Monika: "Nonsense. Who came and offered?"

Veronika: "And you didn't give me any rest until I gave in!"

Walter was silent, let the situation sink in and then mumbled: "Shit!"

The meaning of life

15. The gentlemen's round.

Since Walter had two families at the same time, one could assume that he would have been a real family man. That he spent every free minute with his wives and children, so to speak.

But it was not like that. Walter kept his freedom "for mental hygiene," as he said. One of these free spaces was the weekly gentlemen's round at the inn "To the Deer". Yes, they still existed in the city, those typical little inns, where you could get home-style cuisine at reasonable prices, seasoned with a little "Viennese humor".

And so he met again this time with his friends, whom we would like to introduce briefly here.

Once there was "Dr. K", who himself had already reached the safe shore of retirement and was now accusing all young people of not being diligent enough and of not doing enough. He was, of course, on the green block side.

Then there was a sporty, cheeky guy, let's just call him "Young Blood" because he was still very young. He just enjoyed his own skills and wanted to convince everyone that they should fight more and let themselves go less. He knew women inside out and was a model underpants as a second job.

Then there was "the conductor". He was just about to build his future. He would accept help from either of the two blocks, although he was more sympathetic to the blue bigwigs.

For today we want to mention a fourth guy, let's call him "the bearded one", who had a comprehensive general education and always tried to look beyond the context. He would never make a hasty judgment, unless of the Greens, if they were once again too liberal.

Dr. K. called out loud to the waitress: "Another round!"

Young Blood tried to raise a topic that interested him because he was planning to invest a few thousand euros in stocks in the near future: "Have you read the papers? In the green countries there is significantly better economic data than in the blue one? "

Dr. K. hooked: "Whatever I always say". The blues simply cannot do business. Always this political influence and the supply posts for the functionaries. The old song: Less state, more private! "

The conductor declined: "I already know this slogan: If the economy is doing well, we are all doing well. Who is that, <the economy>? Today, fewer workers are employed at every motorway construction site than, say, 20 years ago. Nevertheless the construction of every kilometer of the motorway is becoming more and more expensive. Where, I ask you, where does all the money go?

The bearded man immediately knew an answer: "THAT is what a couple of super managers are doing".

Dr. K. of course had to defend the Greens: "They're all fairy tales. There simply has to be high performers who are properly paid. This is the game that is played: "Eating and being eaten>".

The bearded man, on the other hand, could not support these views and he resorted to humor: "Yes, and each other's stomachs".

Dr. K. had no more arguments, distracted and spoke to Walter: "You are so silent. Are you doing well?"

Walter just said: "Yes, yes. But if you listen to you like that, you could think that the third world war

had broken out."

Young Blood associated: "Maybe it's not that far-fetched. There are politicians who claim that the atomic bomb for Iran will make the whole region more balanced. It's crazy."

Walter could only say: "Nothing is eaten as hot as it is cooked." Then the waitress came and served the round of beer. Everyone toasted each other and the subject was over for the time being.

16. The project manager

It wasn't just Walter who had to make decisions.

We already know from Walter that he actually hated making decisions and taking responsibility.

It may be an excuse for Walter that at that time those who were royally rewarded for making decisions and for taking responsibility - earned many times more than normal employees - that at that time it was precisely those who persistently refused to actually taking responsibility, i.e. actually bearing the consequences.

It goes without saying that under such circumstances it is very difficult for normal employees to be motivated to make their own decisions and to take responsibility.

Some shifted their responsibilities to an anonymous "process" that purported to make the decisions for them.

An employee of another company, let's call him "The Project Manager", was already very far advanced on that day with his process of "leaving for work".

He was already standing in the hallway of his house and went through the checklist one last time. So he dug it out of the inside pocket of his jacket and read to himself in his mind:

1. "Filofax in the case -> OK"
2. "Tie tied -> OK"
3. "Children kissed -> OK"
4. "Woman kissed -> TO DO"

He called into the kitchen: "MAAAARGREET". She replied, "Yes, what is it?". He shouted: "Kisses, Bye Bye !!!"

He opened the door and went outside.

It was kind of cool around his legs - he had no pants on.

The process still required a continuous improvement process.

17. The industrial psychologist

In another house, with another family, another employee made his way to a completely different company.

The industrial psychologist said goodbye to his wife: "I'm going to the quarry again. Bye bye! Lots of crazy people who need me."

He deliberately called his company "the quarry" because he was of the opinion that an almost infinite number of people who needed his help toiled in the modern gravel pits and gravel works.

The sole purpose of their lives would be to work using their full creative potential to bring the

shareholders a peaceful retirement.

Yes, those were the official goals of every company: to produce money, to produce money, and to produce money.

Covering up this truth a little so that you could endure it, that would have been his job, thought the industrial psychologist.

But he was a man of humor and maybe he and his clients could bring a better world to light than the one he had just thought. Perhaps in reality everything was very different.

Perhaps there were truths that were more personable, more optimistic and more motivating.

"Don't take it too easy again!" His wife called after him.

He called back, "No, no, don't be afraid." and thought to himself: "But didn't Viktor Frankl say that it is the task of each individual to look for meaning in his life? I just can't put any meaning on people's eyes, I can only help To bring the hidden treasures of the soul to daylight bit by bit. "

Red, green, blue

18.

The kindergarten, to which Carl-Friedrich and Lieserl usually went, had to close for a few days because there were inconsistencies that first had to be cleared up.

Be that as it may, Walter had found a workaround.

A company kindergarten was just being set up in his company, which in any case still had too few children and so could easily take over Carl-Friedrich and Lieserl for a few days.

So Walter brought Carl-Friedrich and Lieserl with him to his company, went with them to the premises of the company kindergarten and handed them over there, not without saying goodbye.

The company kindergarten had a useful ugliness, but that would change as soon as the first children's drawings and handicrafts began to populate the rooms.

As soon as Walter had left the children, his thoughts were elsewhere again. Today he had to report to his boss on the progress of the sub-program for which he was responsible. Unfortunately, this sub-program was anything but good.

Walter felt a little queasy because the boss asked for status reports not by email, but in a face-to-face meeting. Face-to-face conversations were far from popular, as face-to-face conversations often led you to say more than you actually wanted to say.

The boss, on the other hand, was very taciturn in face-to-face discussions and always managed to keep things to himself that he didn't want to pass on.

So outwardly everything was the same as always - he sat down at his computer and began to sift through emails - but this day was internally different from other days.

19.

During the coffee break, Walter found a little distraction before he had his appointment for the face-to-face interview.

One of the colleagues was just about to build a house. There were a few other colleagues who had already done this and knew about it. So there was always a welcome topic to talk about.

The house builder was an honest guy, which is why he also told of a mistake that had happened to him last: "I wanted to create a nice enclosure for my vegetable garden and bought the components for it in a hardware store, where it was cheapest. This enclosure should end at two posts of the garden fence. Unfortunately, the screws did not fit into the pre-drilled holes in the garden fence. I just say 'left-hand thread'".

"And what did you do?" Asked one of the experienced colleagues.

"Drilled new holes and cut threads - the man himself is!" Was the answer.

An inexperienced colleague asked himself how this could happen: "But why is everything pre-drilled and prepared when it doesn't fit?"

The house builder explained it to him: "I didn't pay enough attention and just bought the cheapest: the garden fence was from a blue company and the fence from a green one".

A very young colleague, like everyone else, was moved by the green / blue issue, asked everyone: "Speaking of blue. Our testers are also in a blue company. Are all testers blue and all developers green?"

"No, that has nothing to do with the color," said an older man.

In any case, it was back, the old green / blue topic, and each other confirmed how good it is to work in a green company.

The employees in the blue offices are far worse off and they are not treated like free people there.

"Why do we do business with such companies at all if they treat their employees so badly?" Asked one of the group.

An older man replied: "Well, they are the best testers I have ever come across. But if you want to know the real reasons, then you have to ask the boss, he wanted it that way."

There was a few seconds of embarrassed silence. Walter had the saving idea to completely change the subject: "Yesterday I programmed a graphic output, and the third basic color didn't occur to me.

Green, blue and and what is missing here?"

A very young programmer suggested: "..and red, every child knows that. RGB is red / green / blue or red / green / blue, these are the basic colors of the additive color mixture".

He hadn't noticed that Walter just wanted to distract from the awkward silence.

Even so, Walter had touched on a subject that was quite important to the color philosopher. Why did you need three basic colors to be able to represent all colors? Why weren't two basic colors enough? What was this mysterious number 3 all about?

20.

Carl-Friedrich, Lieserl and the other children were allowed to play hide and seek together in the company kindergarten.

Lieserl, the curious one, opened a door to an adjoining room in order to hide in it.

There was a strange device there. This was a matt black color, looked futuristic due to its rough edges and was extremely ugly. And - it scared Lieserl.

Lieserl crouched in a corner and waited, trembling.

After 5 minutes - which had seemed to her an infinitely long time – a boy found her and was amazed that she was trembling.

"Are you cold?" He asked. She replied, "I'm scared. What is it?". She pointed to the device and waited for an answer.

The boy didn't know what it was either, but he got the other children and they surrounded the device.

"What is that?" Lieserl asked again.

A child with glasses slowly started: "I think this is a (mysterious) beamer".

Everyone asked: "What is a beamer?"

"Don't you know what a beamer is? It's an important adult toy," and he began to tell the following story.

21.

The adults prefer to play the game "be first". So it's about winning the race.

So that this is not too easy, they not only play it alone - each against each other - but they form groups so that one group can play against the other.

But now every group has its neuralgic points - this office, for example, has the master controller as the neuralgic point.

Imagine that a competitor could get his teammates unnoticed at the neuralgic points and get them out again.

It would be possible to bring a whole group back to the beginning of the game and no one would know who would be punished for violating the rules.

When it became clear that the beamer would actually exist, that the transport of people without a trace would actually be possible, more and more groups joined together to form a large group. The same thing happened with another, large, group. This is how "the Greens" and "the Blues" came into being.

There could only be two blocks, because since the beamer really existed in the end, it was no longer possible to determine who was making the unauthorized move. But since there were only two blocks, you always knew "who could be harmed from".

You see, and that's the story of why there are two blocks, one green and one blue. The only reason is the beamer.

22.

Lieserl said with all her heart: "Thank you for this beautiful story."

Another child hadn't quite understood one thing, so he asked, "But if the green block and the blue block are so antagonistic, how is it that this green office cooperates with another, blue, office?"

"That's the difference between politics and business," stepped in the kindergarten supervisor who had entered the room during the story: "But you'll only understand that when you're older."

The confession

23.

Walter went slowly and carefully to the boss's office and knocked. The 'poor sinner awareness' was written on his face.

The boss was sitting at his desk, nervously tapping the table top with his fingers.

"So where are we?" He asked.

Walter hesitated: "Well, there are some tests that the blues can't and can't get together. A - uh - postponement is getting close to the real probability."

That was, of course, pathetic cheating. But the boss had caught the message and sighed, almost a little relieved: "We have had a bad year. So far we have not sold a single one of our programs in sufficient quantities, and now you are reporting a delay for the program on which we set our last hopes. What is really going on with the tests? "

Walter evaded: "Well, well, I don't know. When planning, I took all eventualities into account PLUS also asked the dice cup: three times the six, nothing could go wrong. "

"So so. So you use the dice cup too," remarked the boss, surprised, and raised his eyebrows.

"Why, everyone uses it," said Walter uninhibitedly.

"And I always thought I was the only one using it," mumbled the boss, but so quietly that Walter couldn't hear it.

After a pause he added meaningfully: "And three times the six at that. Do you even know what that means?"

"Well, that's the lucky number because you can roll the dice again"

The boss was silent and pointed to the door. Walter went out quietly and carefully closed the door behind him.

The crisis

24.

Since Walter went back to his first wife that day, the nanny Lisa picked up the two children from the company kindergarten.

It was still the same day. The day the children saw a beamer for the first time and the day Walter made his confession with the boss.

So Lisa went home on the subway with the children Carl-Friedrich and Lieserl.

Lieserl asked: "Tell me, Lisa, will there ever be an end to the story with the blue and green blocks?"

Lisa began to say: "Well, actually it's just a question of when the technology of the beamer will be made harmless by a counter-technology. There is also a trend that is leading to fewer and fewer people following the color blue and more and more the color Green. A 'unilateral' world seems to be coming. "

Lieserl asked in between (since she obviously wasn't that interested): "You, Lisa, which office would you like to work in, a green one or a blue one? "

Lisa thought about it: "Well, actually I don't want to work in the office at all, but like now, with children. But, if you really want to know, then I have to think. Yes ... actually, hmmmmm ... cyan! Yes, cyan. But rainbow colors wouldn't be bad either "

She smiled because the children already took this division into green and blue so seriously and because she herself took the whole subject with a little more humor than most people.

25.

Walter, on the other hand, sat in the office until 8 o'clock that day, trying to correct mistakes he imagined he had made.

When he finally left, he met a colleague in the corridor who was still on the way to the coffee machine.

"Been here so long?" Asked the colleague hypocritically. He knew that Walter had a guilty conscience that day and added another scoop: "Have you heard? The boss prefers employees with clear family relationships: either single or fixed. But he doesn't like transition stages at all. That just makes you insecure at work, he says. "

"Why are you telling me that?" Walter asked, a little unsure.

The colleague answered deliberately and casually, with a small, feigned shrug: "Oh, just like that, it's always good if you know what the boss is thinking".

Walter was completely insecure that evening.

He wasn't sure what it was, but it seemed that everything had conspired against him.

The day had already started badly because he had to beg Lisa to pick up the children from the company kindergarten. This was many times further away from the apartment than the closed kindergarten.

Then there was the fact that the boss had shown him to the door, ultimately without understanding

why it had happened.

And now this colleague, who obviously wanted to scare him consciously, unsettled him. Usually something rattled on him like water on an oily soap, but today his skin was thin.

So lost in thought he thought again of the weird old man from the canteen and of the "third child who would save the world".

Somehow there was a "blind spot" in his memories, which he associated with Veronika and with the term "third child".

He let these thoughts sink in, and suddenly it was there: "Did I have a third child with Veronika? Was it lost after a few weeks?"

There was a period in their past when he was on a commissioning for a full year - without taking a vacation.

"And after that she was so strange, so aloof and a little depressed.", He remembered that time.

At that time they had only communicated through email.

Should this "third child" now "save his world"? Should he speak to Veronika about it? Would honesty help their relationship bounce back?

All these thoughts that he made on his "pilgrimage home" today ultimately led to his coming to a conclusion.

26.

When he got home, the children were already asleep. Veronika was sitting alone in the living room and reading a book.

After Walter had got a bite to eat in the kitchen, he went to Veronika and spoke to her: "I have to tell you something strange that happened to me last".

Veronika blocked: "Your strange stories don't interest me".

He went on anyway - he had made a decision and he wanted to implement it - and began carefully: "There was a fortune teller, and he, and you're always so introverted , and, say, did we have a third child? "

She put her book aside and looked a little surprised. With an odd emphasis on the word "did", she said, "Did we have a third child?"

He kept digging, confirmed by her reaction: "Did you keep something from me?"

She looked very thoughtful, first had to compose herself a little and then answered clearly and distinctly, almost a little too clearly and distinctly: "It died - murdered". She sobbed.

That wasn't what Walter expected. Yes, he had expected that there might have been a pregnancy that she had kept quiet from him because the child had not survived anyway, but that she herself had had the child aborted was too much for him.

"Murderess!" He said in that sharp whisper that can only produce absolute indignation.

He went to the guest room to sleep there.

27.

I was still working late at night in the office.

Then the dice cup crept up from behind and asked with a certain piercing undertone: "Well, did we make a mistake today?"

I shrugged off: "No! How so? What makes you think that?"

"Did you always use named types when you created more than one variable with them?"

"Yes I think so."

"Have you always packed your arrays and structures correctly?"

"Yes I think so."

"Have you always programmed as locally as possible and as globally as necessary?"

"Yes I think so."

"Didn't you forget an empty procedure in the code?"

"No, I hope not."

"Did you weigh switch () and if-then-else against each other?"

"Yes I think so."

"Did you make sure that every variable always has a defined value, no matter which path your program takes?"

"Yes, I hope so."

"Did you understand pointer arithmetic and use it correctly?"

"Yes, I hope so". I was sweating now and becoming more and more meek.

The dice cup changed from a teaching tone to a military tone: "Now, really, kidding aside: What about information security?"

"What about it?" I asked unsuspectingly.

"Weren't we at the boss's today and confessed to him that we had used the dice cup?"

"Yes, so what? Everyone does that," I fended off.

The dice cup changed into a cynical tone: "Of course everyone does that! But is everyone allowed to know?"

"Why not?"

"We are a bit difficult to understand today, right?"

With each of these questions, the dice cup became a bit bigger and more threatening, I felt the heat, as an abyss of fire opened up behind me.

"I don't understand," I said, holding my hands in front of my face.

"Does the gentleman 'difficult-of-concept' want to blow up the system?"

"No, but which system?" I almost despaired of the logic of the dice cup.

The dice cup sighed menacingly: "Well, then I'll tell you. There must be an abyss between

boss and subject, a wall of silence."

"The boss must be able to rely on the fact that the subjects, as experts, only make their decisions on the basis of objective facts," he added.

Then he added: "The subjects must trust their boss that he makes his decisions well-considered and based on his profound overview of what is happening."

"NO SPEECH MUST BE ABOUT A DICE CUP, EVERYONE HAS TO MAKE HIS DECISIONS ALONE !!!!!", he yelled at me.

He ended with the following words: "Again: What do you want to be? A subject or a boss? Make up your mind!"

"No! No! That can't be all, I just want to be happy and live!"

Walter was sweating and tossing and turning in bed. Then it got dark.

The wellness hotel

28.

The next thing Walter could remember after being thrown from the dice cup into the lake of fire was a nice room with two double windows.

He was lying in a comfortable bed and saw a large bar of whole-nut chocolate on the bedside table. Veronika had put them there when she visited him the day before.

This was a great place to relax. Walter still felt exhausted from the nightly conflict with the dice cup. Still, he couldn't resist the chocolate, so he got up in bed, opened the paper and broke off a rib.

Some of the employees claimed that this was a hospital, but in reality it was the wellness hotel "To the Green Meadow". It was extremely relaxing there for all those who had come into conflict with the truth, for whom "their thoughts no longer matched".

The moment Walter finished with the chocolate rib, there was a knock. The door opened and Veronika entered. Behind her came "the daughter" and "the son".

Veronika glanced furtively at the chocolate bar and when she saw that a rib was already missing, she had to smile - Walter noticed that and he no longer had to ask who the chocolate was from.

"The son" said proudly: "I brought you something" and handed him a surprise egg: "I bought it with my pocket money, all by myself".

The girl rummaged in her shoulder bag and pulled out a rainbow that she had obviously made herself. She gave it to Walter and hugged him: "Dad, when are you coming home? I miss you."

Walter lay there and didn't know what to say, at least he said a quiet "Thank you" and began to apologize for his condition: "I'm not quite up to date. Do you know how long I've been here? "

"We'll discuss that tomorrow," said Veronika, "now we'll leave you alone again, and I'll tell the staff that you're up now."

Consequences

29.

There was a process of reflection not only in Walter, but also at Walter's company.

Walter's "confession" had opened his boss's eyes.

Not only he, the boss, no, all employees had used the dice cup to make their decisions! So he found a scapegoat in the dice cup, which he could blame for the entire situation of the company.

Without knocking, he entered the office of the dice cup, ignored the smell of sulfur, opened the window, and threw the dice cup in a high arc on the street.

The dice cup landed in a puddle and got pretty dirty. But he only had to shake himself vigorously to get rid of the dirt. In an instant he looked honest and trustworthy again.

He knew where the university was.

There he went - at that moment a graduation ceremony was going on - spoke to a newly qualified

doctor of technical sciences and asked him: "Do you want to start a company?"

We'll tell this new story another time. For this time we just want to learn our lessons from this: the dice cup is actually a stand-up figure and it will always make it.

A goal is found

30.

In the afternoon, Walter's school friend came to visit the wellness hotel. This school friend was now a cardinal, yet he came in a simple black priestly suit.

"You're fine, you've come a long way," Walter opened the conversation.

The cardinal waved it off: "A career in the Church is something relative."

Walter responded to the stimulus word "career" and replied in a fit of 'Fishing for Compliments': "I will never make a career, with all the mistakes I've made."

"Do you know what my worst mistake is? I don't make any decisions. I just let myself be used," he continued his thoughts.

The cardinal also knew his way around life, so he did not go directly to Walter's argument and did not start complimenting Walter: "I would not say that. Look, in the end I am only an instrument of God. Despite all of my own decisions I make I am embedded in a process that we call Providence."

Walter began to rave: "God's tool. Yes, that would be a goal in life!"

However, he immediately put his thoughts into perspective: "You know, I always went to church well, was very active in my youth, but now that I'm married Who is that God? Where did he go? "

The cardinal replied: "It is not much that we know about him. But we can guarantee one thing: God is not in-human(e)" He smiled at the theological joke he'd just made himself.

"And what else do we know about him?" Walter pressed on.

"He must have a sense of humor, otherwise he couldn't stand us humans."

"Your statements shouldn't be taken seriously at all?"

"Not too much," said the cardinal, "that would be better. But maybe you should think up better questions. Then you might get better answers."

The door was opened and a snack with three Punschkrapferln was served. They were in red, green and blue.

Even more consequences

31.

A few days later, Walter woke up in his first family home.

It was too early to have breakfast.

So he went about waking "his son": "Good morning. I know it's still early, but can you help me with the surprise egg you gave me before breakfast?" "The son" jumped up and sat down with him at the kitchen table.

While they "struggled" with the contents of the surprise egg, Veronika uncovered breakfast.

When they were finally all seated at the breakfast table, he joked with the children: "Well, children, do you already know what you are up to today?"

They answered in unison: "We are haphazard and will do the right thing!". Walter replied: "Have fun then".

"Have fun in the office," came the reply.

A real little family ritual seemed to be emerging here.

While Walter was still talking to the children, Veronika was already putting the dishes in the dishwasher. Walter's first family didn't have nearly as much money as the second, and they certainly couldn't afford a housekeeper or nanny.

This time Walter went to work before Veronika. In the anteroom, when he was already about to open the door, the girl held him back again and demonstratively held out the self-made rainbow: "Please take it with you to the company."

So Walter took the rainbow under his arm and went out to his car.

32.

Walter didn't even notice he was walking past a new company sign as he walked from the car to the company entrance.

The company was still green, but the sign said: "Semper Services". A new spirit seemed to be blowing here.

When he entered the room, everyone greeted him and he greeted them back. He put the rainbow on the side of the monitor, turned on the computer, started work, and got a coffee.