

David Ray

Style

It was an accident of style,
nothing more — pure
coincidence that my father
looked like Adolf Hitler,
was named Adolph, wore
a mustache. But there
the resemblance stopped,
for my father wore a black
bow tie and had never made
a speech before a mob.
And yet the image stuck
even when he was fighting
against Herr Hitler
and his Nazis. Seated
on the floor of the orphanage
dorm where Sis and I
were dumped, I searched
for his face in *Life*,
laying the pages open
for every boy to see.
Fathers were wading
across swamps with rifles
held high, and one
of them might well be mine.
We had it over the orphans,
we whose fathers were living
and fighting the Nazis.
And then my worst orphan foe
smirked, pointed out
that I was not even looking
in the right half of the world

if I wanted to find a father
who was off fighting the Nazis.