

THE DOUBLE MARRIAGE OF THE DUKE

A Historical Play in Five Acts

By Peter Bender

P E R S O N S

PHILIP, Duke of Hesse
CHRISTINE, his wife
MARGARET von der Saal, lady of the nobility

John Kirchhain, preacher in Kassel
Theodore Fabricius, preacher in Allendorf
Dionysius Melander, court-preacher in Kassel
Justus Winter, court-teacher and preacher in Kassel
John Lening, preacher in Melsungen
Adam Kraft, church superintendent in Marburg
Anton Corvin, church superintendent in Rotenburg

Philip Melanchthon, the reformer from Wittenberg
Martin Bucer, the reformer from Strassburg
Rudolf Gualther, theologian and poet from Zürich

John Feige von Lichtenau, the Duke's chancellor
George Nusspicker, vice-chancellor and notary in Kassel
Rudolf Schenk at Schweinsberg, landlord at Eschwege
John Nordeck, the Duke's counsel and secretary
Henry Lersner, ditto

Christopher Hulsing, valet of the Duke
Elizabeth Diede, maid of the Duchess
Anna Scheffers, ditto
Katherine Biedenkapp, maid of Margaret von der Saal

Jutta Diede, Elizabeth Scheuernschloss and two others, - charwomen.
The bride of Theodore Fabricius
A sexton and his helpers.
People and nobility as a church congregation

SULEIMAN, Sultan of the Ottoman Empire
SULEIMANPASCHA, one of his three Viziers
ROXELANE, Eveningstar, Morningstar, Heartsdelight, Angelvoice,
Beautyglow, - wives of the Sultan
Guards and other servants in the harem

P L A C E : the first three acts in Kassel (in Hesse, Germany)
the fourth act in Constantinople
the fifth act in Kassel

T I M E : the first three acts, late afternoon and evening of the
last day of the year 1539 A. D.
the fourth act at the end of the following January
the fifth act at the end of the following February

The charwomen, maidservants and menservants - and also others
who speak to them - should use whatever dialect is spoken
wherever the play happens to be performed.

Two equally large rooms are seen, with a partition wall between them in which is a door.

The room at left is a bedroom; through a window at left the setting sun shines into the room.

The room at right is a library and office; there is a door in the rear.

In the bedroom Margaret is sitting astride a chair with her back to the audience. Her long golden hair gleams in the sun as her maid, Katherine Biedenkapp, combs it with long sweeping strokes.

K A T H E R I N E

How it catches the light!

(after a pause)

Like gold!

(another pause)

The Duke loves your hair, gracious Lady!

M A R G A R E T

It seems so, for he is full of compliments for it...

(takes a hand-mirror

and observes herself

and Katherine's work) You seem to take special notice of him when he is here!

K A T H E R I N E

Special notice? As if that were necessary.

One need only have eyes!

When he is here, he sees only you - devours you with his fiery glances...a picture of a man is the Duke, a real man and a great lord, by whom many a woman would desire to be loved!

M A R G A R E T

(softly laughing) I guess you are in love with him yourself.

K A T H E R I N E

I stay on my social level and hold to his valet.

M A R G A R E T

Christopher is a wide-awake fellow, - are you sure that he will keep his mouth shut, and not gossip about my plan to disguise myself as a man?

K A T H E R I N E

What does my lady think!

My Christopher has moved about in the world, and knows how to serve noble personages.

M A R G A R E T

Is he then so soon y o u r Christopher?

K A T H E R I N E

Why should I conceal it any longer?

As soon as he has a permanent position with the Duke, we will marry.

(through the rear door of the room at right Christopher enters and busies himself so that the noise is heard in the bedroom.)

M A R G A R E T

Hurry !

(she points to the room at right)

Someone's already in there!
 Soon the conference of preachers and counselors
 will begin, and we can be certain that the Duke
 will call in here before that.
 Don't delay any longer, but begin now to make
 my braids!

K A T H E R I N E

Yes, yes, I am already doing so.
 But the hair is s o lovely and thick,
 it refuses to be imprisoned!

M A R G A R E T

(observes Katherine's
 work in the mirror)

I think we will have to cut off a little more
 behind the ears, otherwise it will not look
 right when I put the cap on!

(she snatches a big pair
 of scissors and hands to
 Katherine)

Here are the scissors!

K A T H E R I N E

But not too much !

(cuts a few hairs
 with great hesitancy)

M A R G A R E T

More! Go ahead and cut!

The best thing would be to cut it short all around.

K A T H E R I N E

(jumps with horror
 and cries out)

Oh! Oh! The Duke would never permit that.
 That would be a sacrilege, gracious Lady, if
 you did anything like that!
 Only the nuns do that, and they surely do not do it
 because they want to. Long hair is woman's chief
 beauty, and binds men tighter than ropes!

M A R G A R E T

According to the Apostle Paul, long hair is even
 an honor to woman, nevertheless this pious man
 does not permit her to show it in church....,
 perhaps he is right, for the Duke would be
 distracted from his prayers by my hair - , from
 his prayers and from God!

K A T H E R I N E

My, how spiritual you have become, since we have
 been here in Kassel -, like a preacher!

M A R G A R E T

What else can you expect, when I do nothing but
 read the Bible all day?
 But now that will all change. Thank God!

(mimics horse-back
 riding)

Tomorrow I go riding, r i d i n g, r i d i n g!

K A T H E R I N E

In other ways too you have changed, gracious Lady,
 since we came to Kassel. At first you were so much
 in love with the Duke and now you are so - so - so
 reserved toward him: you are actually c o l d
 to him.

(precipitately)

M A R G A R E T
 (after a pause) This love between the Duke and me...
 is not a physical infatuation!
 The Duke does not love me as other men love women.
 He loves my soul. Not my body!

K A T H E R I N E
 I think differently; man remains a man even when
 he is a Duke.

M A R G A R E T
 But please! He is a Duke by grace of G o d -
 by d i v i n e calling!

K A T H E R I N E
 Even so. But it is as a man that the Duke loves
 your hair, your mouth, your eyes, your bosom - -

M A R G A R E T
 (stands and holds
 Kath's mouth shut) Quiet now, you little match-maker!
 If it were true, he would have long ere this -

(takes mirror and
 looks at her hair
 from all sides) Oh dear! - why talk about it!
 It is not his pleasure that the Duke seeks in me,
 but communion with God.

K A T H E R I N E
 (places cap on
 Margaret's head
 and adjusts it
 with great care) With me that is entirely different!
 When I love a man and I notice that he also likes me,
 then it's all over with me!
 But do you really love the Duke? - I mean with your
 heart, like ordinary people love?

M A R G A R E T
 Do you think I would be here if I didn't -- that
 I could have stood this imprisonment, ...it is
 already s e v e n long, l o n g weeks... just
 to be near him?

K A T H E R I N E
 Then I simply can't understand why you show him
 so little tenderness.

M A R G A R E T
 (observes herself
 in the mirror
 again) Katherine, your small talk is only making my
 heart heavy!
 Quick, give me the coat. The cap looks good!

K A T H E R I N E
 (helps her with coat,
 then buttons it in
 the front) It's a good thing your bust is not fully developed
 yet, otherwise it would be comical here in front!

M A R G A R E T
 I wonder how the Duke was able to get this male
 attire for me so quickly. It was only this morning
 that I thought of this disguise.

K A T H E R I N E
 He took it out of his own wardrobe. First he stood
 in front of his closet and pondered deeply what to
 choose, - then he brought out this costume.

M A R G A R E T
 (touches herself all over
 and looks into the mirror) It fits. It fits perfectly!

I certainly would like to know the last time the Duke wore this suit, for today it would be much too tight for him.

K A T H E R I N E

I think he said something about it being twenty years ago - at an imperial congress.

M A R G A R E T

Twenty years ago? Why I wasn't even born then!

K A T H E R I N E

It's a good thing that this suit is in style again and we need no tailor to alter it, who might gossip about what we are up to. His grace, the Duke, wears a suit exactly like this one.

I 7 - 2

The Duke appears in the rear door of the room at right, is respectfully greeted by Christopher Hulsing, acknowledges the greeting with a nod of the head, and casts a glance at the documents and papers in the room, and strides to the door of the partition wall, and knocks.

M A R G A R E T

(softly) There he is!

K A T H E R I N E

(likewise softly with an inquiring glance at Marg.) Shall I open?

(Marg. answers with a nod of the head and Katherine opens the door)

P H I L I P

(takes one step into the room, closes the door behind him without turning around, and then gazes in surprise at Margaret)

God bless me! If that isn't the young Duke of Hesse as he looked at the Wormser imperial congress - the one whom all the girls were so wild about!

(makes an exaggerated bow before Margaret)

I greet your noble grace, Duke of Hesse, Count of Katzenellenbogen, Dietz and Ziegenhain - as your said noble grace's most obedient servant!

M A R G A R E T

(to Katherine) You can clean up later.

Katherine goes into the room at right; there Christopher stormily embraces her. After a little hesitancy she returns his kisses passionately; until Preacher Lening comes into the room and sends Christopher away to get something, whereupon Lening tries to caress Katherine, but she rebuffs him.

(Margaret makes an exaggerated bow before Philip)
(she points to him)
(points to herself)

So your noble Grace is pleased to great himself;
and if the Duke of today -

would like to tell the Duke of an earlier day -

something about those girls who were so wild about him, then Margaret von der Saal will be as quiet as a little mouse, and will prick up her ears.

P H I L I P

(he has taken both her hands and kissed one after the other)

Not about the girls of Worms -

(close beside her so that he is speaking sidewise into her ear)

but about himself shall the little mouse hear something.

(places his right arm around Marg's hip, and left hand upon the left side of her breast)

The boy was hardly 16 years old, yet had already been a reigning Duke for three years,

when he rode in this suit to Worms to attend the imperial congress; and among the lords temporal and the lords spiritual, and other dignitaries of the empire, he was more than ever impressed and oppressed by the words of Solomon:

"Woe unto the land, whose king is a child!"

Oppressed also by the astrological prophesy made at his birth, that he would have much luck with women and would have two wives - -

(Marg. looks at him from the side with astonishment)

Yes, oppressed, because he feared God's punishments upon adulterers, and because even in those days he did not know what to do with all the fire and sap in his body...!

(lifts left hand to forehead, without taking right arm from M's hip)

It just comes back to my mind - that I also visited Luther in Worms, - on the same day on which he bravely refused to withdraw from his stand, - in his lodgings - it was already late in the evening, - and I asked him if he really taught that a woman might marry two men at the same time!

M A R G A R E T

(interrupting)

A woman two men ??

P H I L I P

Yes - !

My cousin Ulrich of Württemberg had read it in a sermon printed in the previous year.

Moreover, after the session of the congress, we young noblemen with our jolly companions were guests of the Capuchin monks, who have a monastery near Worms, with extensive vineyards - we had drunk considerable wine - -

(he laughs softly)

H o l y - V i r g i n ' s - M i l k they called the wine, because the vineyards are near the church of the Holy Virgin - and they insist that the wine is as good as the milk of our holy Virgin Mary and as full of the Holy Spirit as she.

We had drunk more of this wine than was good for us, especially Ulrich, who at every glass asserted that he was filled with desire for the Holy Spirit! As we then rode back to the city - I was struck by the idea: let's go visit Luther !!!

M A R G A R E T

What was Luther's answer anyway?

P H I L I P

That I don't remember -

Nothing serious probably, for he could see $\frac{1}{2}$ at once that I was not filled with holy spirit but with the spirit of wine.

M A R G A R E T

I am wondering why you did not also ask him the same question turned around -

(places her hand on her mouth)

Oh, what am I saying - you were of course at that time not yet married.

P H I L I P

(sighing)

No, I was not yet married; but very soon thereafter my counselors married me to Christine - I was hardly 19 years old - and was still in the meshes of the Roman Catholic faith, and held strictly to the command of marital faithfulness --- but alas, only inwardly, for only three weeks after the wedding, I - - -

(breaks off with a sigh)

M A R G A R E T

Didn't you love Christine?

Even today she is still very beautiful!

P H I L I P

She was beautiful, and I liked her -

I also learned to love her, as I discovered her good and noble heart -

yes, her goodness has won my heart, that I must admit; and possibly I could have loved her then, if I had met her in some other manner -

without knowing this one you have got to marry!

M A R G A R E T

(separates herself from him completely as she speaks)

Why do you say "g o t to marry"? Who could have compelled you?

P H I L I P

No one - it was simply that in the midst of my promiscuous love-affairs I became so confused that I accepted my counselors' plans, and signed a wedlock contract with her father, just like I signed thousands of other contracts -

I really only woke up when I stood before Christine. Before that I had only known sensual joy as the tie between man and woman, but now came marital duties.

M A R G A R E T

Nevertheless Christine became the mother of seven children !

P H I L I P

Yes - , certainly -

Yet the burning desire - the involuntary, impulsive, and therefore so thrilling dissolution in ecstasy.... was missing right from the start -

(with a heavy sigh) and is still missing today.

M A R G A R E T

I can't altogether understand that!

P H I L I P

Christine was raised very strictly, and that which alone can thrill me and make me happy she looks upon as sin.

Never does she show me that she desires me. And even in the nuptial embrace - when I lead to it - she still insists on being chaste and pious. Moreover I became through marriage a double sinner. What previously had been only sinful lust, now became a d u l t e r y

spare me the re-telling of my agonies !

Agonies of the senses, when I avoided the women that aroused my lust! Agonies of the soul, when I again became enslaved by my lust,

(hysterically)

again and ever again!

I c o u l d not resist; nor did I dare to partake of the Lord's Supper any longer:

(hoarse & stifled)

as a d u l t e r e r and w h o r e m o n g e r I feared to eat of the Body of Christ and to drink His Blood !

M A R G A R E T

Then you did not go to Holy Communion again?

P H I L I P

I didn't dare...

For weeks I often lived in these two rooms like a monk in his cell, fasting and praying.

Battling the devil and praying to God, I worked over there -

(pointing to other room where meanwhile several preachers and counselors have arrived)

and here in this bed of yours I often dreamed of an angel who would save me:

it was a h e l l in which I lived!

M A R G A R E T

So I am living in your hell, am I?

P H I L I P

If you want to look at it that way, yes.

But as the angel from heaven that I dreamed for myself into this hell!

(he tries to kiss her, but she pushes him away)

M A R G A R E T

How happy I am, Philip, that I fled to you - and also that - that - you didn't touch me, even though I passionately wished to be possessed by you!

(he looks astonished)

Yes, I was at first deeply disappointed that on the night of my arrival I slept alone; this did not at all fit into the picture I had made of you.

I thought that after all you did not love me as much as I had believed - and intended to leave the very next day.

P H I L I P

You foolish little girl!

You have the same idea of me as everyone else has, you know me only as a jolly fellow, who lives and lets live, - as warrior and adventurer, hunter and carouser, with light head and heart, - but believe it or not, before I met you, there was hell in my bosom.

M A R G A R E T

I shall never understand why it should just be me who is able to be to you all that Christine and the other - women, cannot be to you.

After all, what am I?

A little girl, - daughter of my mother, who was a governess at court and formerly the social companion of your sister, the Duchess Elizabeth von Rochlitz. In short, I am nothing at all.

P H I L I P

Intellectually it cannot be understood.

But the one thing I felt as soon as I saw you and immediately pressed my wooing of you, - I guess you were not a little startled, - was that I must not pull this angel down to me in hell.

(solemnly)

But she shall lift me out and up to God, - she shall become my bridge to God.

All this I vowed as I stole the first kiss -

And became happy through this vow, - happier than ever; - because I could recognize love as God, the whole world grew young and seemed filled with the divine spirit.

M A R G A R E T

When did you first think of making me your second wife?

P H I L I P

Right after the first kiss when you begged me with tears in your eyes never to kiss you again, - which I promised, when I saw your anguish and bashfulness.

(rejoicingly)

And as you then became flooded with thankfulness so that you gave my kiss right back to me - farewell for ever, it was intended to be!

But it became the bridge to eternal union with you!

(kisses her long and tenderly -
until there is a knock at the door)

In the room at right, all of the invited preachers and counselors have in the meantime arrived.

Katherine places chairs for them, and later Christopher Hulsing helps her. Some are still standing and a few are reading books and papers. Finally Hulsing lights up the room and then knocks at the door at left. Philip and Margaret quickly end their kiss.

P H I L I P

Come in!

C H R I S T O P H E R

(comes through door,
closes it behind him,

then bows to Philip) My lord, the counselors and preachers are assembled.

P H I L I P

Tell them I'll be right in.

C H R I S T O P H E R

(bowing)

At your service, my lord.

(returns to room)

His grace informs you that he will be here immediately.

M A R G A R E T

Before you attend the conference I must show you a letter from my mother,

(hands him letter) an answer to my Christmas greetings to her.

P H I L I P

A letter from your mother ?

(opens it and reads in lowered voice)

Anna von der Saal at Castle Bellevue, to her daughter Margaret von der Saal, on Christmas day in the year of our Lord, 1539.

My very dear daughter: Thank you for your good wishes for Christmas and the New Year. May it see you as the wedded wife of the Duke, so that my burdened heart may be relieved. I have visited your patroness, the Duchess Elizabeth von Rochlitz and have hinted to her that you may not return to her service, but did not give her the real reason in order to protect you from her anger, which would be as severe as herself, wherein she is like her brother Duke Philip. If only the Duke keeps his promise to marry you! Then I will be satisfied and will forgive you the flight from my home.

Keep your father's name unspotted by dishonor and also think of your uncle, my brother Ernst von Miltitz, who is marshall at the court of the Grandduke of Saxony, and governor of the city of Dresden.

After your thoughtless flight to the Duke, there is nothing else left for me to do but to agree to this unhappy plan of his double marriage, so that the world will not be able to say you are his concubine, from which may God protect you and us. I beg of you if it is not yet too late, to withhold yourself before the wedding, and I request honorable witnesses if I should accept your invitation to be present, also a public ceremony in a church, and the full consent of Christine, the first wife.

Margaret, you know that I am a woman of few words, and I hope you will understand that I am writing and requesting all this merely to protect you and our family from unhappiness and shame. I pray for you and look up to God in heaven and to your saintly father, Johann von der Saal, who died with honor, and who looks down from heaven upon you, where you yourself will some day have to give an account before God as the Judge of the living and the dead.

I trust everything will be for the best, and that I may soon have the opportunity to embrace you in all good ~~me~~ favor.

Your mother, Anna von der Saal.

(Philip interrupts his reading several times to catch Margaret's eye, but without success. Even now she stares straight ahead.)

Do you regret now that you came here?

M A R G A R E T

You know exactly what I think and how I feel; only in your nearness could I find the strength to defy all the opposition of the world - but -

P H I L I P

But? - But what?

M A R G A R E T

(painfully)

But otherwise my mother is right.

P H I L I P

Does that mean that you yourself now want a public wedding - and honorable witnesses - and the consent of Christine?

M A R G A R E T

Yes, Philip, but do not misunderstand me. The letter already came yesterday, and I have thought everything through thoroughly. When I had to leave Kassel three months ago in the company of your sister and was forced to go back to Rochlitz, I had only one wish, one desire: to remain here near you and with you. Awake and asleep I dreamed of being with you, and I wrote you many letters, foolish letters, which I burned up again and again. Only a few did I send to you, only those which did not reveal my ardent longing.

(he puts his arm around her but she resists gently)

Then I obtained your sister's permission to visit my mother at Castle Bellevue, and after many sleepless nights revealed everything to her, - but found only resistance and indignation, yes even threats; she said she would exercise her parental authority and lock me up. Terror seized me at the prospect of not being able to write to you, and that you might believe I had forgotten you.

(he presses her gently but passionately to himself despite her reluctance)

After that, you know how I came here, accompanied only by Katherine Biedenkapp whom I had taken with me last October from Kassel as a living memento. To h i m, to h i m - that was all that I could think of. Then came the first disappointment, after I got here and my desires remained unstilled.

P H I L I P

(strongly and
intimately)Margaret, - my leaving you alone nights, my being
c o m p e l l e d to leave you alone had a
different reason, a very banal one -(she looks at him
questioningly)

I - I was sick, and am only now again wholly well.

M A R G A R E T

(quickly)

But today I am happy about it - you need not offer
any explanations. I am even thankful that you did
not come.Day after day then passed away, week after week
of these endless conferences -You visited me often and made me acquainted with
all that was going on - you were very loving and
brought me many gifts -

but still I was a p r i s o n e r !

(she sobs softly and leans against him for a moment)

P H I L I P

Forgive me, dear, dear heart, that I have
been so cruel to you.

M A R G A R E T

(regaining
composure)

I could not show myself at the window -

I could not leave the room -

it was agony to listen to you talk of hunting and of
parties - intense jealousy filled me toward every-
thing and everyone, so that I could have screamed, -
maybe I did cry out sometimes, for Katherine often
rushed in and asked, What is the matter?

P H I L I P

But why have you not spoken of this before?

This idea of disguising you as a man we could
have worked out sooner.

M A R G A R E T

I was so ashamed of my weaknesses, and only found
the courage to speak after the letter from my
mother came -besides there were nonetheless lovely hours for me -
when I dreamed of you -and when reading the Bible, yes there were often
wonderful hours: my body was imprisoned, but my
spirit was free, and I really believe now that it
was good for me to be locked-in and to be able to
express my love only mentally!My dammed-up passion poured itself into the feminine
figures of the Bible and infused life into them,
most of all Esther, the second wife of King Ahasverus.
Philip, can you therefore understand that I gradually
came to desire exactly that which my mother wants:
to become yours openly before God a n d before the
world, and before all men and therefore also -
before Christine?

P H I L I P

Have you also considered this, that before the world
I am the reigning Duke of Hesse and furthermore the
head of the Schmalkald league of cities and domin-
ions, upon which all Protestant Christians look
with fervent hopes and all Catholics with deepest
hatred. ~~Emperor~~ Emperor and Pope, yes the whole
world has its eyes upon me, and upon everything I do.

I - 3

M A R G A R E T

I have thought of everything and worried
over it, Philip, - e v e r y t h i n g !
I wanted to go away -
back to my mother or into a convent,
because your double marriage seemed to me
a great misfortune - for you first of all
and for Christine. Also a misfortune for me -
for both of us. And ~~xxxxxx~~ lastly, also for
the reformation.

P H I L I P

(stamps with
his foot)

Shut up about the reformation! The Devil take
it if it can show me no way to you,
or would even block the way.
Without you I would be just that which in
the opinion of Christian bigots and hypocrites
a man should be, namely a living corpse!
Only in a wedded love-life with you will I
carry on the reformation !

Several pastors and counselors have asked Hulsing repeatedly to knock again, which after some hesitation he timidly does.

Philip
(brusquely) Come in!
Hulsing

(enters, closes door and bows) The gentlemen are becoming impatient, My Lord.

Philip
(loud enough to be heard through door and wall) The gentlemen should have another moment's patience -

(most of them cringe)
I am coming immediately.

Hulsing returns to conference room; as he starts telling what Philip said, some point to their ears to show they have heard.

Philip
(with a sideglance at the door and a corresponding gesture)
Those dogma and paragraph jugglers!

(He lightly embraces Marg. with one arm) Listen Margaret, this very day I will compel a termination of these discussions - this very day - on the last day of the year which started evilly for me with a serious illness of my body, but which shall end as a year of grace and healing not only for my body but for my soul. Freely and openly I will acknowledge my relationship to you in this new year. No longer will I conceal behind dogma and paragraph that which makes my life worth living - Before God and man you shall belong to me - The request of your mother shall be fulfilled.

Margaret
But your wife, Christine!
Will she agree to our union?

Philip
She must - if she wants to become happy through me, because I can only become happy through you. Can one make another happy, if one is unhappy oneself? -- Enough for now; I must go to the scribes and pharisees again - after that I will call in on you! again!

Margaret
Philip, I would like to take part in these discussions. It was very kind of you to arrange to hold them in the adjoining room so that I can hear everything - but I am troubled at the thought of eavesdropping; it would bring me added pain.

Philip
But your presence is a secret, Margaret!

Margaret
It can remain so, because no one will recognize

this young man as Margaret von der Saal.
(Proudly points to herself)

Introduce me as baron or squire - who is sent by my mother...

Philip
(interrupts)
(laughs)

As baron or squire?

That's a thought that appeals to me.
What name shall we give to this squire -
or would you rather be a baron?

Margaret

But that is unimportant!

Philip

Here's an idea.

Your name is Philip and you are my double,
same dress, same name.

You are my incarnated and rejuvenated image,
my little Philip, my dear sweet Philip!

Margaret

Who still needs a family name.

Philip

Family name?

Let's give him yours - von der Saal.

You are your own brother, Philip von der Saal!
And that also serves to explain the great similarity,
if later on anyone should find his features reproduced in Margaret.

Margaret

But my brother's name is Abraham!

Philip

That is your brother after the flesh -

But your brother out of fantasy is named as
we baptize him - Philippus!

(He goes to the door and opens it.)

I - 5

(still in
the door)

Philip

Come, dear baron!

(turning to pastors etc.

who deeply bow to him) Praised be the name of Jesus Christ!

(now Marg. is in the door,
he a step ahead of her)

At our holy conference we have a guest.

(with gesture of introduction)

Baron - Philip - von der Saal!

(all bow to Margaret)

Brother of Margaret von der Saal, whom his
mother Anna von der Saal has sent to obtain
news of our discussions.

During the introduction
Katherine slips into the
other room and closes door

Allow me, dear baron, to introduce these gentlemen.

First the representatives of heaven:
(each bows as name is called)

Kirchhain, pastor here in Kassel, a great zealot in the Lord.
Fabricius, pastor in Allendorf, an equally active zealot.
Melander, my court-preacher, a powerful word master.
Winter, my court-teacher.
Lening, pastor at Melsungen, master of word and pen.
Kraft, my superintendent at Marburg.
Corvin, the superintendent at Rotenburg.
Bucer, the reformer from Strassburg.

And here a bridge between heaven and earth:

Gualther, of Zürich, theologian and poet by God's grace.

And now the representatives of earth:

Sir Feige of Lichtenau, my chancellor.
Sir Nusspicker, my vice-chancellor and also attorney general
in Kassel.
Sir Schenk in Schweinsberg, governor at Eschwege on the Werra.
Sir Nordeck, my counselor and secretary.
Sir Lersner, likewise my counselor and secretary.

You can see, dear baron, that in the council and
discussion of the marriage between your sister and
myself, heaven and earth are both well represented.

(by gesture invites
all to be seated)

And now dear Nusspicker, please read the minutes
of our previous discussions.

N u s s p i c k e r

(elaborately opens his port-
folio and is about to stand up
pompously, but by a gesture of
Philip is invited to remain seated)

Philippus, by God's grace Duke of Hesse, Katzen-
ellenbogen and Ziegenhain, has repeatedly called
together the undersigned pastors and counselors
and has solemnly urged them as masters of Holy
Writ and legal form to help him come to a clear
understanding whether it is in harmony with God's
will and worldly law and therefore permissible for
him - in addition to his wife of 16 years, Christine,
daughter of Duke George of Saxony - also to wed the
baroness Margaret von der Saal, daughter of the late
Johann von der Saal.

Only thereby has he hope of avoiding fornication
and adultery, and of attaining to forgiveness of
his sins through fellowship with our Lord & Savior
in Holy Communion, which he has avoided for many
years because of ρ fear of eternal damnation.

We have specifically inquired of him whether this additional wedlock is not a temptation of the devil in the form of a maiden, whose charm is confusing his mind and drawing his soul still further away from fellowship with Christ as the only way to God.

When we inquired whether he did not think he could avoid adultery and fornication through abstinence, his grace declared vehemently - and the force behind his words carried conviction to us - that he is not entering into this second marriage as a matter of affection or sensuous love for the attracted maiden, but solely in order to escape eternal damnation, and as a bridge of reunion with the body of Christ.

Furthermore that he is ready to repeat this declaration to Luther and other reformers and all Protestant rulers.

Aside from this however, and in accord with the Protestant teaching that every man is his own priest, he is prepared to justify himself independently before God. In no event however, even at the cost of his life or body, does he intend to give up this second marriage.

M a r g a r e t

Pardon me, your grace, that I interrupt with a question! Do I understand correctly that your grace wishes to marry my sister without any affection or sensuous love, and solely to escape eternal damnation and as a bridge of reunion with the body of Christ?

(The pastors nod their heads to show that it is indeed so. The counselors show astonishment.)

P h i l i p

I will have this protocol copied for you, dear baron, so that you may study it at your leisure, and will thereafter answer all your questions. Let us at this time continue the reading.

(signals to Nussp. to continue)

N u s s p i c k e r

His grace accordingly had recourse to Holy Writ, and referred specifically to Lamech who had two wives, one named Ada and the other Zilla; --and Abraham to whom Sarah bore no children when he was still Abram and she Sarai, and who thereupon at her suggestion took the maidservant Hagar; --and David and Solomon, who had plural wives and who were the human ancestors of our Lord & Savior -

P h i l i p

Underline this part and read it again.

N u s s p i c k e r

(takes quill pen and underlines as he reads) David -- and Solomon -- who had plural wives -- and who were human ancestors of our Lord and Savior; --and furthermore referring to Christian nobles and

kings in the past, likewise to the present king of England whose secondary wedlock with Anne Boleyn is at present a fact;
--and, not to forget, the Christians in Turkey who have two or more wives.

His grace finally declared that not only the happiness of himself, but also the happiness of his first wife, Christine, and the well-being of his country, was dependent upon his attainment of salvation through his proposed second marriage; and likewise his work and leadership in the cause of Protestantism was dependent on it.

Having weighed all these considerations, and bearing in mind that according to the Protestant teaching marriage is no longer a sacrament as it is in the Catholic teaching, and therefore no sacrament would be violated by a second marriage -

M a r g a r e t

(interrupting) May I hear that sentence again?
(all move uneasily in their seats; N. looks at P. questioningly.)

P h i l i p

(To N.)

I beg of you, dear baron, not to ask questions until after you have the copy.
- Begin that sentence again.

N u s s p i c k e r

(Very distinct)

Having weighed all these considerations, and bearing in mind that according to the Protestant teaching marriage is no longer a sacrament as it is in the Catholic teaching, and therefore no sacrament would be violated by a second marriage -

And warning his grace to avoid fornication and adultery entirely in the future under penalty of eternal damnation, and to keep the punishment of David ever in mind -

We, the undersigned, became convinced that it would be proper for his grace to use this second marriage as a bridge to a bodily union with Jesus Christ in holy communion.

But on condition that the second wife be kept secret, and the impression created that she is merely an ordinary concubine, - this in order to protect the Protestant cause, and not create any public disturbance, nor excite the souls of pious Christian husbands.

Thus far we had come.

P h i l i p

(heavy sigh)
(another sigh)

Yes, so far we had come.

But now, gentlemen -

We must go further - much further.

Our guest brings the request of his mother, the widow Anna von der Saal, that the Duchess be consulted, and that her consent be obtained.

B u c e r
 (interrupts) That would happen!)
 F a b r i c i u s) together
 (interrupts) I was afraid of that!)

P h i l i p
 (hesitatingly And that a public wedding be held,
 but louder) with honorable witnesses!

B u c e r
 For God's sake!)
 F a b r i c i u s)
 Almighty God!) together
 G u a l t h e r)
 Utopian!)

(Kirchhain,
 Fabricius, Bucer, Gualther
 jump up excitedly; the others
 move around on their seats.)
 (Kirchhain in greatest excitement
 takes a step toward Philip)

K i r c h h a i n
 Your grace prefers a frank word from his subjects!
 I was not at ease during any of the discussions
 of this plan - from which may heaven protect you -
 and therefore I inquired secretly of Luther in
 Wittenberg what he thought about it.
 (all very tense) Luther too will only permit a second marriage if
 this Margaret von der Saal is designated as a
 concubine of your grace.

(Philip makes an angry movement
 of disgust, but avoids looking at
 Marg. who is trying to catch his eye.)

I was the first preacher in Kassel who dared to
 preach the word of God in the German language,
 and will also dare to be the first one here who
 dares to speak out in plain German that which all
 are thinking about this matter, your grace.

(The counselors make gestures of
 denial, also Melander and Lening;
 the others stare straight ahead.)

You plan to come to my church this evening -
 and desire to partake of the blood and flesh of
 Christ - which you have not done in over a decade.
 I cannot refuse you this desire, because God alone
 can decide who is worthy to eat and drink.

(highly excited and stammering)

But I must refuse - and do refuse with all formality -
 to take any further part in this discussion of your
 second marriage - because I will have nothing to do
 with it!

(with fanatical ecstasy)

I will pray from now on until the service this evening, that God may change you - and make you worthy to receive the blood and body of Christ!

(plunges toward the rear door)

F e i g e

Calm yourself, Kirchhain!

F a b r i c i u s

(as K. disappears) Stay! Kirchhain!

I - 6

(Hulsing shuts door left open by Kirchhain)

P h i l i p

Let him go -

Perhaps God will help him to see that he has advised me to use deception and cowardly hypocrisy! That Luther would give similar advice, I will not yet believe. For, what is found good in the eyes of God, can certainly not be evil before the world and humanity.

In Kirchhain's German words lurks the spirit of Rome and not the spirit of the true gospel that fears only God, but not the world nor man!

F a b r i c i u s

Forgive me, my lord -

if I venture a word on Kirchhain's behalf.

He and I often discussed your plan, and he always felt that in your marriage there was nothing that would call for a second marriage.

S e v e n children the duchess has born for you, and the waning of sensual pleasure between husband and wife is according to God's will and is the essential purpose of wedlock.

(points to Corvin) Furthermore, I would remind your grace that I and other preachers, among them Corvin have repeatedly been ordered by you to combat the multiple marriages of the Anabaptists. As recently as last year, I was sent to those ~~ka~~ whom you had imprisoned at Wolkersdorf for this. What was right then, certainly cannot be wrong now!

(P. stares gloomily)

F e i g e

Shouldn't we obtain Luther's advice, your grace? Only he has sufficient authority to keep the rulers and principalities of the Schmalkald league behind you, in case the Emperor Charles should ever attack your position on the basis of the general law.

P h i l i p

(interrupts)

Duke I am by grace of God - and only to Him responsible, not to the Catholic Emperor, who mis-uses the general law and the power of the state all too often for the benefit of Rome. And if we succeed in creating a Protestant Germany, as we fervently pray to God may happen,

all general law and state power will be renewed through us, through the combination of the Protestants and the Holy Spirit, who today already must guide us on our way.

F e i g e

Truly the state and the general law are living things, and as such capable of development - but until the new is in effect, your grace is bound by the old.

P h i l i p

(after slight hesitancy)

All right, I will follow your suggestion, counselor. Bucer shall go to Luther and Melancton in Wittenberg and request them to add their signatures to your protocol.

(points to it) But first that section dealing with the concealment of my second marriage and the denial of my second wife, must be eliminated.

(to Bucer) I will presently give you further instructions.

But now, gentlemen, I beg all of you to proceed to the duchess and make her acquainted with my plan - show her the protocol.

We shall all meet in Kirchhain's church this evening. The discussions however will not be continued until Bucer returns.

(pastors and counselors arise;
only Margaret remains immovable and
continues to stare straight ahead)

You, Nusspicker, make a copy of the protocol for our guest
(points to Marg.)

(N. bows to P. who looks
over the intervening pastors etc.
to Christopher Hulsing)

Christopher, lead the gentlemen to the duchess.
Then wait outside the door till I call you.

(All pastors etc. bow to Philip
and then follow Hulsing through
the rear door.)

Philip
 (goes to rear door and
 then to side door to make
 sure they are shut; then
 turns to Margaret)

What's the matter with you, Margaret?
 (she does not look up)

Where are you anyway?

Margaret
 (looking up but other-
 wise immobile)

May - it - not - after all be God's will?

Philip

You just heard the contrary in the protocol,
 didn't you?

Margaret
 (jumps up and holds her
 head with both hands)

Oh that protocol!

(monotone) It is - t e r r i b l e!

Without any affectionate love or sensuous pleasure
 you want to marry me!

Philip
 (after a pause of uncertainty)

To preachers one must use Bible-talk and to
 lawyers one must speak a legal jargon, otherwise
 one is not understood by them!
 Had I said I wanted to marry you because of love,
 I would not only have had Kirchhain against me -

Margaret

So you are double-tongued and speak in two
 languages - and difficult it now is to determine
 which one is true!

Philip

Margaret, don't say that. When I spoke to you
 alone, you heard the speech of my heart, and
 must have felt that it was true -
 The protocol is mere ink-speech without blood or life.

Margaret

Nevertheless I am merely a lowly means to a
 higher end - - your crutch or bridge to
 enable you to become united with Christ in the
 flesh and blood of Holy Communion.

Philip

Margaret! Do not profane what is holy to all
 Christians.

(wants to embrace her but she pulls away from him)

If through you I find the way back to the holy body
 and blood of Christ, you are thereby exalted and
 not debased. Margaret, do not feed me dry words,
 when I am so thirsty for your love!

Margaret

(no longer avoiding him)

I am so afraid now, because Christine is learning
 of it. Would it not have been better if you had
 spoken with her yourself?

Philip

(behind her and close to her)

You make me sad, Margaret, because you do not feel

the reason why I broke off the conference -
 (she looks at him
 over her shoulder questioningly,
 and remains so even during the
 first few of the next words)

because love and affection for you gripped me
 as this bigot attacked you -
 because you were a shining light in my soul
 as he called you a concubine -
 because I wanted to be alone with you, and
 wanted to ask you,

(he stretches his
 head over her shoulder,
 cheek touches cheek)

if you will let me come to you again this
 evening after the church service!

M a r g a r e t

I cannot get rid of the thought of Christine,
 and am continually asking myself whether she
 will agree with you.

P h i l i p

(same position)

I repeat - she m u s t -
 if she wants to become happy again through me,
 because I can only become happy through you
 and cannot make others happy unless I am happy
 myself.

M a r g a r e t

(puts cap off)

(same position)

I'm so troubled -
 And so afraid -

(he tenderly embraces her from the rear)

Do not be angry with me, Philip, that I have
 so little courage now.

P h i l i p

I love you, Margaret, and want to make you happy,
 dear Margaret, ^{in order} to become happy myself and to make
 others happy: Christine, my children, my people
 and all mankind - -

That is the purpose and meaning of the love-bond
 between us, its H o l y meaning even without any
 priest's blessing.

M a r g a r e t

As yet I cannot understand it all, Philip, and
 therefore trust you that everything is as you say -
 (she presses herself close to him)

Oh, I wish it were all over already!

P h i l i p

May I loosen your hair? - you know how I love it!
 When I came, your cap was already on; and only when
 your hair flows down from your shoulders does it
 reveal its full splendor and magnificence!

(he has loosened the braids and is now opening them,
 while sniffing with pleasure at them)

It's ravishingly sweet - and heavenly!

M a r g a r e t

Someone might come!

P h i l i p

No one can come.

Outside of Christine, no one has the right to
come here; and she now has the preachers and
counselors with her.

(he has loosedn her
hair so that it covers her
shoulders and hangs below the hips)

What glorious loveliness!

An a n g e l ' s garment made of thousands of
golden threads!

M a r g a r e t

Your voice is like that of a poet,
yet the preachers' voices also sound through!

P h i l i p

Forget about them, Margaret -
disturb not my adoration!

Madonna are you to me, and Eve I see in you -
Your Adam am I, but without sin!

On your breasts I want to rest, and kiss
them as your boyish lover -

(pushes his head
into her hair, reaching his arms
around her so that each hand is on a breast)

Only your hair shall cover you -

As ^{the} last veil of your nakedness -

In Paradise with you I want to be!

M a r g a r e t

(presses herself toward him)

Now I am at peace again, Philip,
because I feel that we can become happy
with each other!

P h i l i p

(seeking her mouth, which she no longer withholds)

My angel are you - my angel woman!

(kisses her)

I - 8

H u l s i n g

(tears open the rear door and appears)

The d u c h e s s is coming!

(P. breaks/ off the kiss.

Marg. stands dazed a moment, then plunges toward the side door which she tears open; but Hulsing is already making place for the duchess as she comes through the rear door)

C h r i s t i n a

(remains standing in the door and is about to lift up the protocol, but she lets it sink as her eye catches the side door which is closing; then with the protocol she points)

Who is running away from me there?

P h i l i p

(still standing fixed where Marg. left him; in toneless voice)

Good evening, Christine.

To what do I owe the pleasure of your visit at this late hour?

C h r i s t i n a

(still in door) Good evening. Now please - who was that?

P h i l i p

I don't know what you mean!

C h r i s t i n e

(takes one step into the room; Hulsing slips out and closes the door from the outside)

(Marg. is listening in the room at left, standing at the door, and cautions Katherine with gestures to remain quiet.

You are avoiding my question.

I want to know who ran into that room just now as I came.

P h i l i p

Oh - you caught sight of the baron - - whom I had asked to leave me alone with you!

M a r g a r e t

A baron with long hair?

P h i l i p

Long hair?

(with a forced laugh) That was - - an optical illusion!

C h r i s t i n e

I saw - what I saw! The hair was long. Even v e r y long.

P h i l i p

(stuttering) The baron's hair is - somewhat longer than a man's hair - usually is. About so long -

(with uncertain hand he indicates the neck and shoulders) Half-long you could say. But never l o n g. The light has deceived you.

I - 9

C h r i s t i n e

Then introduce me to the baron -
so that I can observe H i m once more.

P h i l i p

Presently, Christine - presently.

C h r i s t i n e

Immediately - a t o n c e -
so that I can see what is reality and
what is illusion.

P h i l i p

Then you doubt that I am telling you the truth?

C h r i s t i n e

(lifts protocol) I doubt many things
since I have read this bit of writing and
have learned that you wish to place another
woman alongside of me as your wife -

(laughs sneeringly) I should even give my c o n s e n t to this!

P h i l i p

If you wish to discuss this with me, I will
come with you.

(turns to go) Christine

That is what I came here for.
But n o w I want to know who ran into that
other room.

P h i l i p

I told you - a baron - Baron Philip von der Saal.

M h r i s t i n e

I do not trust your words. I want to see for
myself, whether h e has short or long hair!

(she steps toward
the door, but P. steps in her way)

P h i l i p

You must believe me! He has short hair -
h a l f long if you insist.

C h r i s t i n e

I m u s t believe you!
Then swear it with an oath.

P h i l i p

Do your/ really seriously demand that I should
call upon God for this - ?

(laughs painfully) I could almost beg Him to lengthen the hair
miraculously -

(he indicates the
lengthening of the hair with
forced, comical gestures)

longer and longer, all the way down to earth -
so that you may be right.

Margaret with firm gestures demands a pair
of scissors from Kath., which the latter
immediately finds and hands over. With
deadly seriousness Kath. is ordered to cut
off Marg's hair at the neck. After short
hesitancy, Kath. does so.

C h r i s t i n e

You cannot talk/ me out of what I saw/ with my
own eyes - your refusal to swear convices me that
I saw correctly - some now, s w e a r or let me pass.

I - 8

(P. again obstructs the way)

P h i l i p

No - !

You must believe me without an oath.

(While Kath. hides the severed hair under the bedsheet, Margaret steps into the room)

M a r g a r e t

I beg your grace to introduce me to her grace, the duchess!

P h i l i p

(stares wildly at Margaret's short hair, then speaks haltingly and hoarsely)

Baron - Philip - von - der - Saal.

C h r i s t i n e

(with an exaggerated courtesy)

I thank you, dear baron - I thank you!

(she retires quickly through the rear door, which Hulsing again closes from outside)

I - 9

P h i l i p

(remains paralyzed for a moment; then plunges into the next room, scaring Kath. Cries out - almost roars out)

Where is the h a i r !

(Kath. tremblingly draws back the bedsheet. P. kneels down and caresses the hair like a living thing. Kath. runs into the other room past Marg, over to the rear door, then turns around and looks at Marg. questioningly. Marg. indicates that she may go, which she does through the rear door, closing it after her. Margaret then goes into the other room where Philip is groaning in front of the hair.)

It's a crime - a sin - a desecration of nature!

M a r g a r e t

Crime? Sin? Desecration of nature?
The sacrifice of my hair prevented your false oath,
saved your s o u l from damnation -
and this sacrifice you call a crime - a sin -?

(she watches him as he strokes the hair with his cheek, then angrily stands before him)

W h o m do you love anyway? The h a i r or m e ?

(he does not listen, so she holds her head with both hands in despair; moving into foreground)

He doesn't hear me! He's ~~is~~ insane!

(in greatest excitement she walks to the rear of the room, unbuttoning her coat; suddenly turning around, she tears her shirt open in front so that both her breasts are almost fully exposed)

Philip!

(louder)

Phi - lip !

(still louder)

P h i - l i p !!

(at the third call, Philip turns to her, staring at her breasts)

Philip

Beautiful - you are beautiful, Margaret!

(rises like a dream-walker, without taking his eyes off her breasts)

Margaret!

Margaret!

(standing erect now, he reaches out his arms and moves slowly toward her)

Will - you - be - mine - now?

^{coat}Margaret

(closes her ~~dress~~ at

the moment he tries to touch her)

No - I will not!

I did want to, when you asked me before - tonight already - - -

But now I don't want to anymore!

Philip

(insistently) Dear Margaret!

Margaret

(withdrawing and

holding him off with the right arm,

while holding her ~~dress~~ ^{coat} shut with the left hand)

Stay away from me!

Stay over there with my hair!

If I only could, I would also give you my breasts with my hair -

Breasts, hips, everything that excites you - bit by bit - the whole body - -

But not my soul!

Philip

Margaret - that is madness!

Margaret

I tremble when I think that some sickness might have robbed me of my hair -

(hysterical laugh) Skin and hair you love -

Not the soul!

Philip

You've lost your senses, Margaret!

God can reveal Himself even in the pleasures of the senses - think of the Holy Communion which enables us to partake sensibly and through the pleasure of taste, of the flesh and blood of the Son of God in the form of bread and wine!

Margaret

(staring - tonelessly) Flesh and blood of the Son of God in the form of bread and wine!

(slowly louder)

Now I see the abyss of your soul which has already destroyed so many women and which should have destroyed me: an abyss of lustfulness, filled with skin and hair, breasts, hips, lips, kisses, flesh and blood of concubines!

God however you seek in the church, in the body and blood of the crucified One, but not in the body and blood of the beloved woman!

Philip

O you distort and misunderstand everything!

M a r g a r e t

Since I cut off my hair to save you from perjury
and from God's wrath, and to save your soul from
hell? I see everything in a new light.
I have been t r a n s f o r m e d !
I was an infatuated girl; now I have become
a w o m a n - who seeks her soul's salvation
in her own way.

P h i l i p

What, you want to leave me, Margaret?

(solemnly)

M a r g a r e t

Your s o u l I want to save,
and therefore I withdraw myself out of the
reach of your b o d y -
until marriage has again become a sacrament to you
and the way to God -
t h e way to God -
the o n l y way to God!

P h i l i p

(desperately)

Christ is the only way to God -
Hush up, you are blaspheming!

M a r g a r e t

(with increasing pathos)

Anew will I reveal God's word -
As w o m a n -
Who no longer listens to man nor swears by him,
and who no longer in church remains silent!

(lifts right arm half up,
with clenched fist, so that
it seems like a threat)

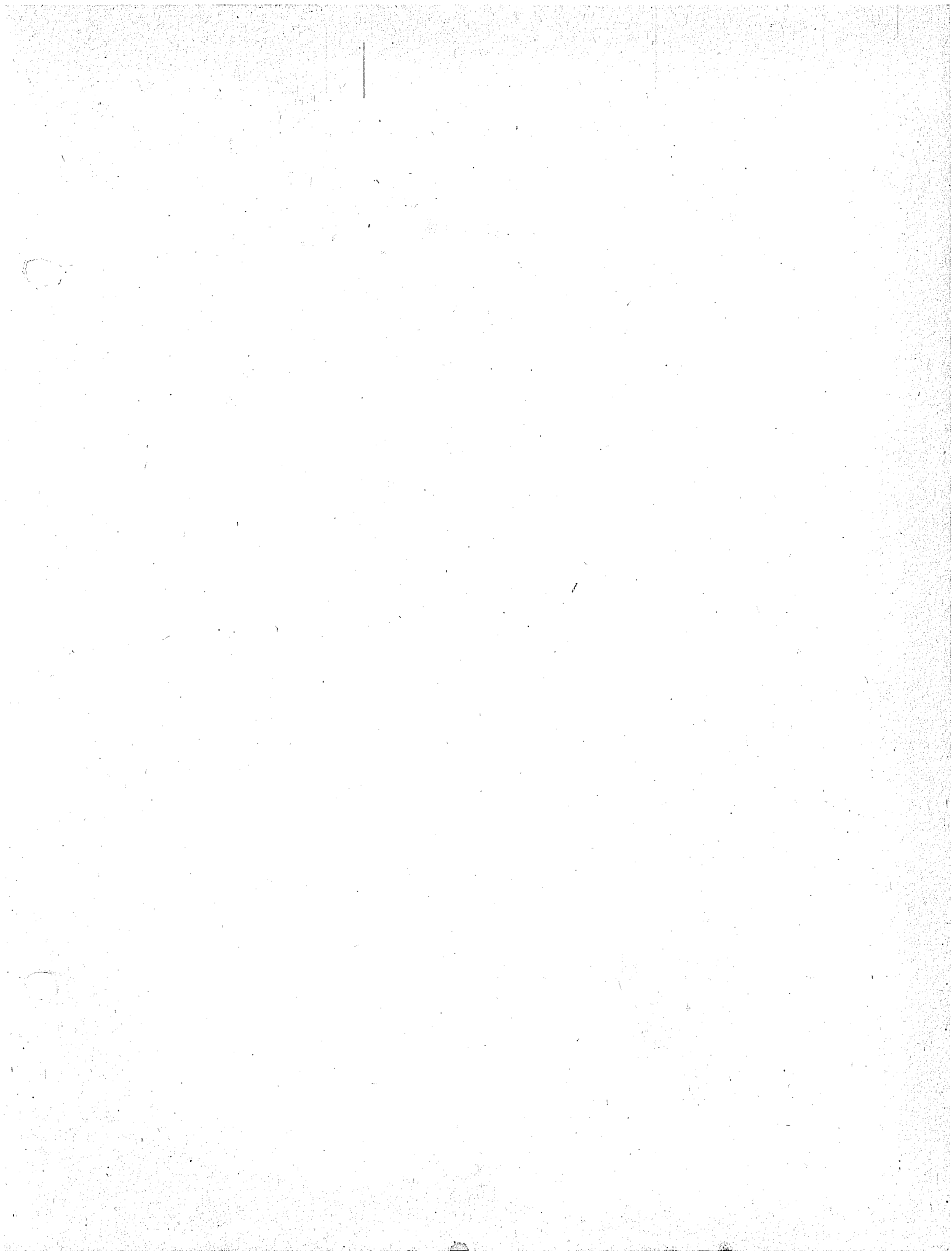
A reverse Sampson will I be,
who finds God's strength in short hair,
and tumbles your church structure into ruins!
Not sooner shall I let my hair grow,
not sooner will I become your wife,
than you search for and find God in me!

(she places both hands
palms inward over her breasts,
bends her head slightly forward so
that her chin almost touches the tips
of her fingers)

This I swear by Him who created man and woman -
by the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth!

(curtain falls).

G1041e



While curtain is still down there is heard a confusion of excited voices.
View into Christine's reception room; door in rear leading to her bedroom.

The same parsons and counselors as in the first act, with the exception of Kirchhain. Some are seated and some are standing.

F a b r i c i u s

(speaking to some who are about to leave)

Let's stay a little longer, gentlemen, let's stay a little longer.

In spite of all, the dutchess may perhaps come back soon, and then we can ~~discover~~ discover without delay just what she intends to do to oppose the plan of the duke, - we must take advantage of her excitement.

M e l a n d e r

(jovially mocking) So, my dear colleague ~~Fabricius~~ Fabricius, you definitely know t h a t she will do something to oppose?

Corvin, Kraft, Gualther, Nusspicker, Nordeck, Lersner, indicate through gestures that Melander's doubt and question appear unimportant to them.
Lening and Winter however encourage Melander to press the question.
Bucer, Feige and Schenk remain neutral.

W i n t e r

(with raised forefinger to the first mentioned)

The doubt expressed by Melander's question deserves attention, for heretofore the duchess was always an obedient wife and subject to her husband, even as the Bible demands.

We cannot expect much opposition from her, even though she just now ran off excitedly with our protocol to ~~her husband~~. *the duke*.

F a b r i c i u s

(to Melander)
(to Winter)

Y o u as court-preacher and Y o u as ~~court~~-teacher ^{at court}, naturally know more about the family life of the ducal pair than we parsons out in the country; however I have heard that the duchess is noted for great piety and morality, - and that in her heart she is still somewhat Catholic. In any event, I feel that her obedience to her husband is rooted in her sense of marital duty and her fear of God; and that ~~this~~ ^{her} obedience will instantly turn to disobedience when we declare that this planned double-marriage of the duke is c o n t r a r y to God, and that it must be considered an inspiration of the Devil -

(excitedly) L e n i n g
 W e declare - ?
 What do you mean, we?
 Y o u want to declare that -
 you and perhaps Kirchhain.
 Do get it through your head that I and others
 (some nod assent) in this circle are n o t agreed with you.
 I for example believe that God permits double marriage.
 Even the biblical examples in our protocol prove
 that, and furthermore, Luther,
 (with excited gestures to Fabricius) your so highly respected Doctor Martin Luther in
 Wittenberg, in a sermon twenty years ago stated
 (Fabricius makes gestures of disbelief)
 - I can show it to you in print -
 that a double marriage must in some cases be
 preferred to a divorce.
 But in any event, neither I nor the rest of
 us can permit you to present to the duchess your
 own views as the views of this conference.
 (murmurings of assent from nearly all)
 M e l a n d e r
 That expresses my idea perfectly!
 F a b r i c i u s
 (to Lening) You have heard Luther's opinion expressed through
 the mouth of Kirchhain.
 (with pathos) Luther will assent to the double marriage of the
 duke only if it is kept s e c r e t - and provided
 furthermore that it is publicly denied when necessary,
 (self-satisfiedly) just as a l l o f u s had demanded in our
 protocol.
 (Since all feel hit and turn their eyes away from each other,
 Fabricius feels victorious and becomes exaggeratedly bathetic)
 N e v e r however will Luther permit a public
 double marriage, a public scandal, an abomination!
 (Lening and Melander
 make angry gestures of resistance)
 And even if we as a conference have not arrived
 at a definite conclusion about the matter, it would
 seem clear who is in a better position to know and
 to preach the t r u e gospel,
 (to Lening) y o u - or I ?
 I studied at Wittenberg, when Luther nailed his
 theses on the door of the court church, and
 L u t h e r h i m s e l f has taught me how to
 find God's spirit in God's word.
 (sneeringly) But y o u - if I may remind you - at that time
 became a Carthesian monk in Eppenberg, and
 r e m a i n e d a monk until the duke established
 protestantism in Hesse, - which came as a great
 surprise to you as prior of the monastery, - if
 my information is correct.
 L e n i n g
 It is, respected colleague.
 You should however also seek out the spirit of God
 in the words of God's Son which read as follows:
 The first shall be last, and the last shall be first.
 Moreover, more than twelve years have since then
 come and gone - of which you have not yet completed

(importantly)

(to Fabricius)

eight in Hesse - nevertheless you really should already have noticed that the reformation here in Kassel is different than Luther's reformation in Witteaberg, - and may be said to hold a middle ground between Luther and Zwingli. This I know all the better because I have been here right from the beginning, and furthermore I have had the advantage to be called repeatedly to the castle at Rotenburg when the duke was in residence there and felt the need of talking with a cultured man. Since the duke is also your ecclesiastical overlord, it may interest you to know that he is not at all satisfied with the present status of the reformation and that he has some very revolutionary plans - unfortunately I cannot say more than this - yet this much I will say, that up to the present he has not found his soul's salvation in the church of the reformation, and that he is now looking for it along the way of the double marriage.

(to Fabricius)

B u c e r

I can only confirm that, my dear Fabricius, even though I have only been here a few days and have not been able to speak with the duke as much as Lening has. I too have the impression that this idea of a double marriage is not a mere whim of the duke, but that it is a deeply serious and important matter.

(raising his voice)

It perhaps represents the last possibility for us to win the duke over to an inner loyalty to the reformation, which needs him as much as we need air to breathe.

(with strong feeling)

The duke is the very soul of the reformation!

M e l a n d e r

Bravo, Bucer!

(still to Fabricius)

B u c e r

Does it therefore not trouble you that he has up to now found no salvation for his own soul in the reformation?

Do you realize that since the reformation the duke has not once attended holy communion?

M e l a n d e r

I must note one single exception. In the beginning of this now ending year, he became very ill and thought he saw death staring him in the face, and so - after a fourteen-year lapse - he came for the first time again to the holy altar, to receive the body of Christ and forgiveness of his sins of long years of adultery, which he looked upon as the cause of his illness -

(wittily glancing about) - which no doubt was correct!

But as he later discovered that his sexual forces were stronger than his good intentions, he gave up hope for his soul's salvation, even though in the meantime his body had become fully well again. And so now he wants to save himself from eternal damnation through a double marriage,

because he believes it will be easier that way
to keep himself within the bounds of wedlock -
(again glancing mischievously around)
which of course is definitely easier with two
women than with one!

B u c e r

Of all this I knew nothing, but it confirms my
opinion that the Duke is in a state of deepest
soul anguish,
(broadly unctious) and it enables me to see, worthy colleagues, that
the hour of decision has come for the Protestant
cause.

(some make questioning and unbelieving faces)

Yes, indeed, the hour of decision
for the Protestant cause has come!

(takes a deep breath
and asks the first question
with lowered but penetrating voice,
trembling)

Fourteen years ago as the flicker of the Reformation
was about to die out, who was it that brought it to
flame up again and shed its light upon the world?

- The twenty-one year old Duke of Hesse, by
establishing the Reformation in his realm!

M e l a n d e r

Well said!

B u c e r

(voice slightly raised) Who, as the new church-head of his realm,
proceeded immediately also to give his people a
new church constitution,
who converted the various monasteries and convents
into useful welfare organizations,
who founded the first university in the world
that taught a Protestant theology, in Marburg, -
all this as an example and inducement to all other
rulers and dominions?

- The twenty-two year old Duke!

M e l a n d e r

Very well said!

B u c e r

(voice higher) Who was the first among Protestant rulers to see
that in the long-winded fight between Luther and
Zwingli with respect to the form of Holy Communion
lay the most dangerous threat to our cause, and
who started the Marburg Religious Discussions
in order to remove this vital danger?

- The twenty-five year old Duke!

M e l a n d e r

Very true!

B u c e r

(firm and louder) Who was the only one that was able, despite
Luther's mistrust and obstinacy, to draw together
all Protestant rulers and dominions into one
powerful political group - the Schmalkalden League -
which is more feared by emperor and pope than is
the devil himself?

- The twenty-six year old Duke!

M e l a n d e r

(clapping his hands) Great, Bucer!

B u c e r
 (lower & less loud) Who dared despite all opposition -
 (looks threateningly at Fabricius) - even from Wittenberg -
 to risk life and his possessions in order to
 bring Duke Ulrich von Württemberg b a c k
 into his dukedom, and with him establish the
 Reformation there?

- The thirty-year old Duke of Hesse, -
 whom we since then call Philip the Great,
 although he a l w a y s has been great!

M e l a n d e r

Yes, indeed, he has always been great!

B u c e r

(with raised voice and
 strong feeling)

Who is the man, who at all Imperial Congresses
 secured honor and respect for the Reformation, and
 who himself embodies it before all the world,
 who is hated and feared by all Catholic Christians,
 but is honored by all Protestant Christians, and
 l o v e d like n o o n e else?
 Always and everywhere the now thirty-five year
 old Duke Philip of Hesse, the needs of whose soul
 must touch u s a l l just as much as if they
 were our own.

M e l a n d e r

(clapping hands enthusiastically) Bravo, Bucer, bravo!
 (murmurs of assent also from most of the others)

B u c e r

(again to
 Fabricius)

These are the questions which I will present to
 Luther and Melancthon when I go to Wittenberg, -
 But you, my colleague Fabricius, I would ask:
 which is b e t t e r , that the Duke should as
 an adulterer despair of his soul's salvation,
 or that as husband of two women, he shall find
 salvation in the Protestant movement, and shall
 carry it forward to a final triumph over Rome?

M e l a n d e r

A well-framed question, Bucer, - very well framed.
 Now he should answer!

F a b r i c i u s

(grotesquely solemn
 and slowly)

Above all humanity and therefore also above the
 Duke stands God the Lord, who first sent his Son
 as leader and then shed the Holy Spirit to lead us
 and guide us -

M e l a n d e r

(apes the tone of Fabricius, but in quick tempo)
 Even unto all eternity, amen !

F a b r i c i u s

(takes the tempo of Melander in order to catch up with him, and screams)

But not the unholy spirit -
 who lives less in the Duke than in the words of
 our colleagues Lening and Melander, -
 for they strengthen his delusion that God can be
 found through the way of sensuous pleasure.

(slower and ~~starker~~
 more softly again)

If Kirchhain and I were stationed at the court in
 Kassel -

M e l a n d e r
(interrupts with a powerful voice)

Then the holy ghost would ~~have~~ soar like a white dove over Kassel - nor would I object if it came down ~~on~~ ~~me~~ well roasted!

F a b r i c i u s
(obstinately continues his interrupted sentence)

- the Duke would never have gotten the idea of a double marriage!

(to Bucer)

How will you publicly justify it, in view of the fact that the Duchess has already given birth to seven children, and can very likely give birth to seven more? -

(he shakes himself as he utters the next words)

It is clear to all the world that ^{the} Duke desires to marry Margaret von der Saal

(shakes still more as he speaks the next words)

out of s h e e r l u s t!

Sexual love and sexual impulse, without any godly purpose, is the only motive!

(takes his head in both hands)

Indeed, gentlemen :

I am nonplussed!

(interrupting) M e l a n d e r

Me too!

F a b r i c i u s

- that you can even for a moment seriously consider giving your consent to a p u b l i c double marriage!

(interrupting) M e l a n d e r

No!

F a b r i c i u s

- who through obtaining our consent aims to bring all Protestant husbands ~~on~~ to the way of thinking that they have their wives for the purpose of satisfying their sexual impulses?

M e l a n d e r

Well, well, now, suppose you give us your reason for getting married!

(bristling) F a b r i c i u s

hear and see, That you shall ~~hear~~, - and this evening already -

(all look up surprised and he himself makes a pause, in order to increase the tension)

Kirchhain is to marry me immediately after the sermon.

M e l a n d e r

Let's hope we don't lose our sight and hearing at such a spectacle! - I had already noticed that Kirchhain's wife is a veritable embodiment of the devil, but now I realize that he married her in order to have constant practise in battling the devil, - and I guess you are going to marry for the same purpose!

F a b r i c i u s

It's impossible to talk seriously with you - You seem already at this early hour to have looked too deeply into the wine-glass!

(over)

(During the argument between Fabricius and Melander, Elizabeth Diedo came in through the rear door, and looked searchingly around without being noticed; gradually she comes forward and is noticed by some)

(very timid) E l i z a b e t h
Beg pardon, noble gentlemen, that I disturb your conference, -
but I am looking for ~~her~~ her grace, the Duchess.

W i n t e r
We are waiting for her.
She went to his grace, the Duke, but we hope that she will soon be back.

(less timid) E l i z a b e t h
I was told to help her dress for church - and it is now time for her to begin, - her ladies-in-waiting will soon be here.

F a b r i c i u s
What's that you say - the duchess is going to church this evening?

(servilely) E l i z a b e t h
Yes indeed, your worship!

F a b r i c i u s
(attempts to speak magnanimously but does it patronizingly and pedantically)
Not your worship, my good woman!
It is now the proper thing to say: Sir preacher -
Sir parson!

E l i z a b e t h
(still more servile) Yes indeed, Sir preacher and Sir parson!

Fabricius sinks into meditation and no longer listens to her reply; she tries to go to the rear door, but is called by Melander who, during her talk with Fabricius, has indicated to the others by gestures that he is going to have some fun with her.

M e l a n d e r
Elizabeth!

(servilely to Melander) E l i z a b e t h
At your service, your worship!

M e l a n d e r
I would very much like to get some information from you, Elizabeth, some i m p o r t a n t information -
(she strokes her apron and strikes an attitude of importance) about the Germanrode convent -
(she is embarrassed) in which you were an inmate.

E l i z a b e t h
Only a novice, your worship; I was not yet old enough!

M e l a n d e r
So much the better!
Then you observed everything with childlike trustfulness and without prejudices.

I would like to know about that Sister Mary who played the role of the Angel Gabriel in your convent, and performed the wonder work of the Holy Spirit!

(Eliz. plays with her apron to hide her embarrassment)

Do you know anything about that?

E l i z a b e t h

Oh, your worship, I cannot speak about that in front of so many gentlemen!

M e l a n d e r

(surprised)

What, you yourself also experienced the wonder? Even as novice?

E l i z a b e t h

No, your worship, I did not believe in it - but I have -

(breaks off embarrassedly)

M e l a n d e r

What have you?

E l i z a b e t h

I have the dress of Mary, the convent dress, and her nightgown and -

(breaks off again)

M e l a n d e r

And what else?

E l i z a b e t h

Her broom!

M e l a n d e r

You must give me these things sometime.

E l i z a b e t h

(excitedly)

No, your worship, those things I cannot give up. You cannot ask that of me!

M e l a n d e r

I only want to see them.

You must know that the Duke has ordered me to make a record of all important and unusual events that took place in these former convents.

E l i z a b e t h

(quieted down)

I will let you see them, but to give them up - no, that I won't do!

For every evening I pray in front of them begging that the Angel Gabriel may also appear to me!

M e l a n d e r

So you still hope for the miracle?

E l i z a b e t h

Yes indeed, your worship, for I now believe in it.

M e l a n d e r

And what makes you believe in it now?

E l i z a b e t h

I have really seen it happen to my own sister Jutta and to other inmates in the Germanrode convent.

M e l a n d e r

What did you see that proved the miracle?

E l i z a b e t h

Why, they all became pregnant!

Some want to laugh, but they control themselves because Melander forbids laughter by the emphatic seriousness of his face.

M e l a n d e r

So they all firmly believed in the miracle?

E l i z a b e t h

Well, they were already full-fledged nuns and they went in many nights to Mary - I was still only a novice, and so was Anna Scheffers!

W i n t e r

The other maid of the Duchess?

E l i z a b e t h

(to Winter)

Yes - that's the one - your worship.

(again to Melander) They treated her just as they treated me.

M e l a n d e r

Then I do not understand why you should be the one to receive the dress - and the nightgown - and the broom - of Sister Mary, as keepsakes!

E l i z a b e t h

(scaredly)

Oh I beg of you, your worship -

(turns to others)

and also the other gentlemen, not to tell anyone that I have these things -

(she goes close up to Melander and speaks behind her hand)

I kept these things secretly - even my sister Jutta knows nothing about them - only Anna Scheffers knows it and her grace, the duchess.

M e l a n d e r

We will not tell on you.

But I would really like to know why it was just you who received these things.

E l i z a b e t h

(again plays with her apron and draws away from Melander)

Oh, your worship, that I really cannot speak about to you; no, that I really can't!

(all look interested)

M e l a n d e r

I believe, Elizabeth - that now you must tell it, otherwise all of these gentlemen will think *something* ~~of you as indecent~~ *about you!*

F a b r i c i u s

(with exaggerated dignity) I must object to this -

M e l a n d e r

(points to Fab.)

With the exception of this gentleman here - who is at least as holy as your Angel Gabriel in the convent -

(Eliz. quizzically looks at Fabricius who becomes embarrassed)

You can without fear, tell us everything, Elizabeth, for it all happened during the time when you were still [^]Catholic -

(Eliz. still playing with her apron, and more than ever)

E l i z a b e t h

Oh, your worship -

M e l a n d e r

Ease your conscience, Elizabeth - it is almost as if someone else had been in your place, for in the meantime you have been reborn through the T r u e G o s p e l!

(last words are spoken

with a ~~mischievous~~ side-glance at Fabricius)

ridiculing

E l i z a b e t h

Oh, your worship - I only wanted to see if it was true, - but I was so frightened I couldn't move when I lay in bed with Sister Mary - I prayed the whole night that the miracle might happen - but inwardly I was doubtful nevertheless!

M e l a n d e r

How did you get into the bed of this - Mary?

E l i z a b e t h

For weeks I had looked every night to see if Mary would not just once be free. But there was always some other nun standing in front of her door, or else inside with her, -till at last one day I was lucky -

(ecstatically)

So I went in and lay down alongside of her!

M e l a n d e r

And what was said to you by - her?

E l i z a b e t h

(very sorrowfully)

N o t h i n g - In the morning only her nightgown lay beside me, and in the nightgown was her dress - and in the dress was the broom!

M e l a n d e r

And how do you explain that?

E l i z a b e t h

(naively)

I believe God wanted to punish me for my unbelief, and therefore put a spell upon Sister Mary.

M e l a n d e r

(as if terrified)

But the broom, Elizabeth - the broom!

(Eliz's

~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~

(eyes filled with terror)

I wonder if the devil wasn't behind that!

E l i z a b e t h

Oh you scare me, your worship!

(Quickly makes the sign of the cross several times)

I have never thought of that!

M e l a n d e r

You need not cross yourself right away, for it is only a ~~question~~ ^{suspicion} in my mind -

(with an ironical

glance at Fabricius)

Moreover, as a reformed Christian you are not allowed to make the sign of the cross in any event!

E l i z a b e t h

(still full of terror)

Oh, then I have prayed to the devil all these years! Oh God, Oh God, Oh God!

(again quickly crosses herself several times)

Pfui Devil, pfui Devil, pfui Devil!

M e l a n d e r

The matter is not so bad, Elizabeth, even if it was a devil -

(she jerks together)

for it could only have been A Catholic devil at that time, who has long since been driven out -

(glance at Fabricius)

by the spirit of the true gospel!

E l i z a b e t h

Can I depend upon that, your worship?

M e l a n d e r

Well, since we clergymen are just as expert in matters concerning the Devil as in matters concerning God - perhaps even more so - Yes, you c a n depend on it!

E l i z a b e t h
(with concealed jubilation)

Then I can continue to pray in front of my relics?

M e l a n d e r

Your - r e l i c s ?

~~Elizabeth~~

E l i z a b e t h
(giggling and near to Melander)

That is what I call these things ~~from Sister~~
of Sister Mary, because I -

(breaks off)

M e l a n d e r

Because you - ?

E l i z a b e t h

(playing with her apron,
but still remaining close
to Melander)

Because I - because I always kiss them just
as one kisses relics.

Then I go to sleep, and almost always dream of
the Angel Gabriel!

(at the last words she closes her eyes
and leans backwards against Melander's belly,
presses her arms together over her body,
and makes a few swinging motions back and forth;
then speaks with a start:)

Do you believe that it is still possible for
me to experience the miracle?

M e l a n d e r

(with great unction)

To God, nothing is impossible, Elizabeth!

(Elizabeth like a dream-walker
goes back into the bedroom of the
duchess; all look after her
more or less dreamily.)

II - 3

M e l a n d e r

That was more than I expected -
 Furthermore the puzzle of this Sister Mary
 in the Germanrode convent has not been solved
 to this day, for she had disappeared when an
 investigation was made of the convent because
 so many pregnancies were taking place.
 We know only the r e s u l t s of this
 miracle-working - about a dozen children -
 and now also these relics -

(he laughs)

R e l i c s !

F a b r i c i u s

For me there is no puzzle -

(all look up surprised)

for I am sure that the Devil was behind it all
 and had his hand in it!

(some turn away to
 hide their laughter; but
 Melander makes a deadly serious face)

M e l a n d e r

(feigning astonishment) Oh - !
 (then zealously)

That was my suspicion too, as you heard me
 say before. But only now when you express
 the same thought, am I fully sure of it!

F a b r i c i u s

It is only one more reason to thank Luther for
 liberating us from the cesspool of convent life,
 and for driving out the devil of immorality who
 was hidden in the garment of chastity.

M e l a n d e r

I have heard it said that the Devil personally
 appeared to Luther at the Wartburg while he was
 translating the Bible!

F a b r i c i u s

~~Of course~~ Certainly!

(importantly)

But Luther threw the full inkwell at Him -
 I saw the big ink-splotch at the Wartburg with
 my own eyes!

M e l a n d e r

Then the Devil must have certainly been "all wet",
 for Luther surely needed a very large inkwell
 to translate the whole Bible!!

(he sticks his belly
 forward, and stretches forward
 his bent arms to indicate a large receptacle)

Nevertheless I believe that Luther did not really
 want to drive the Devil away with ink, but
 with wine -

F a b r i c i u s

(interrupting)

With wine - ?!

M e l a n d e r

Surely - the wine which all Reformed Christians
 now receive at the altar, and which as blood of
 Christ should conquer the Devil in their blood;
 where incidentally he sticks more tightly than
 anywhere else in the world.

Yes, and we monks felt the liberating effect of wine even before Luther's appearance - when the spirit of the wine drove us out of our monk's garments -

(interrupts again)

F a b r i c i u s
Out of your garments - ?
Well, what did you wear then?

M e l a n d e r
We had in the monastery - relics of Paradise!

F a b r i c i u s
Relics out of Paradise - ?
Why, ~~What~~ that's impossible, for since Adam and Eve no man has again been in Paradise -
From whom could these relics have been?

M e l a n d e r
From Adam and Eve themselves!

(thinking hard) F a b r i c i u s
From Adam and Eve themselves - ?
And what kind of relics were those?

(fully serious) M e l a n d e r
Their wedding garments!

(all break out laughing and Fabricius finally laughs too in painful fashion, to hide his shamefacedness)

F a b r i c i u s
You are a terrible joker!

M e l a n d e r
In any event, you now know how we were dressed when the spirit of the wine drove us out of our monk's garments -
And sometimes it ~~drove~~ even drove us out of the monastery - all of ~~W~~ which by the way also happened to the nuns in a nearby convent, especially on warm summer nights -

(interrupting) F a b r i c i u s
All of which - ?
(tries to take a light tone, but it becomes plaintive) But then there was danger - that monks and nuns -
would meet each other in the costumes of Adam and Eve...

(eyes widen in terror) that means n a k e d ! - - n a k e d ! - -
n a k e d ! ---

M e l a n d e r
Your mental sharpness, my dear colleague, is really remarkable - it cannot be otherwise if one has really been a student -
for the meeting of n a k e d monks -

(Fabricius jerks as though hit) and n a k e d nuns -
(jerks still stronger and shakes himself) did actually happen, even frequently -
in the woods. -

Their naked bodies shone in the moonlight!
I too was present - but at that time I did not yet know that we were on the way to the Reformation -

(screaming) F a b r i c i u s
On the way to h e l l you were!!

M e l a n d e r

If that's true then the monk Martin Luther
and the nun Katy Borah will together -
no doubt have arrived in hell by this time!

F a b r i c i u s

Why?

M e l a n d e r

Because these two perform in the marriage bed
the same acts that we monks and nuns used to
perform in the woods!

F a b r i c i u s

But Luther is married to Katy Borah, and
therefore has become one flesh with her
t h r o u g h G o d ' s w i l l !

M e l a n d e r

We monks and nuns were also of one flesh,
for our bodies were all consecrated to
the body of Christ -

(imitates Fabriciana) And so through God's Son who was made
f l e s h, each monk with e v e r y n u n -
and each nun with e v e r y m o n k -
was made o n e f l e s h !

F a b r i c i u s

But that is something entirely different than
marriage for two!

M e l a n d e r

(sighing)

Ah, there you speak truly!

Yes that was something entirely different than
marriage for two -

(heavy sigh)

with the terrible separation from God that both
husband and wife experience, as they stand aloof
like lepers from all other women and men!

(passionately)

W e h o w e v e r felt ourselves one with
Christ in the ecstasy of our pairings - to Whom
all our bodies had been consecrated.

obliquely

(stretching arms sideways with palms down)

Joy-filled members of H i s body, were we!

(jerks arms so that palms come upward)

l i k e t h e s e a r m s -

(stretches arms fully sideways and spreads his fingers)

a n d t h e s e h a n d s -

a n d t h e s e f i n g e r s -

a r e m e m b e r s o f m y b o d y !

(at the word body

he places his spread fingers on his lower breast)

Just think -

(stretches the right arm with spread fingers sideways)

o n e v e r y f i n g e r o f m y r i g h t h a n d

(turns eyes and head to right)

o n e h u n d r e d m o n k ' s g a r m e n t s, t o t a l l i n g 5 0 0,

(stretches left arm with spread fingers sideways)

a n d o n e v e r y f i n g e r o f m y l e f t h a n d

(turns eyes and head to left)

o n e h u n d r e d n u n ' s g a r m e n t s, t o t a l l i n g 5 0 0.

O n e t h o u s a n d m o n k s a n d n u n s t h e R e f o r m a t i o n
d r o v e o u t o f t h e i r g a r m e n t s i n H e s s i a a l o n e - ,

(he finally clenched his fists and closed his eyes; then he slowly raises
his arms sideward and spreads his fingers again)

and today when I think back to these holy
hours in the woods - - -

(he still has his
eyes shut, and is stretching
his whole body upward)

when we felt like angels in heaven - - -
I cannot help feeling as if we monks and
nuns who were ~~there~~ t h e r e -

(at the following words, he
first lets his fingers sink,
then his arms; and finally his
whole body sinks together to become
a thick and formless figure; even
the head hangs down limply)

I cannot help feeling that when we took off
our monastery and convent clothes -
we took off our wedding garments!

(after a few seconds he becomes
rigid again, clenches his fists with
arms stretching downward, and with
eyes stretched wide open)

Y e s - - ^{the} To a wedlock union of all ^{who are} men and women ⁱⁿ
the body of Christ -

(jerks up both
arms; presses the upper-arms
to his sides, lower arms held
vertically upward, palms front
and fingers spread)

t h a t ^{goal to which} is the ~~way~~ ^{the} monasteries and
convents should have led the ~~people~~ ^{way} - - -

(at the following words,
married preachers, he throws down
his hands with a gesture of disgust;
then sinks together completely as
previously, but in lesser degree)

and not ^{simply} to m a r r i e d p r e a c h e r s
as Luther set the pattern!

(Elizabeth Diede returns through the rear door; but remains unnoticed because all are still thinking of Melander's words)
 E l i z a b e t h
 (looking for Melander, she speaks to some who are in the way)

Beg pardon, gentlemen -

(rapidly goes to Melander who stands at the front of the stage, still meditatively)

Begging pardon, your worship, that I come again! I have gotten afraid again that it was the Devil after all!

M e l a n d e r

But Elizabeth -

Then it could only have been a Catholic devil, who has no power at all over a reformed Christian - if it was a devil at all - which isn't even certain!

E l i z a b e t h

But the broom, your worship, the broom -- I would like to burn it now! It was surely the Devil -

(crosses herself) who put a spell upon Sister Mary -
 (again crosses herself)

otherwise she would long ago have been able to appear to me as the Angel Gabriel - seeing as how I now believe in the miracle!

M e l a n d e r

That indeed is a cause for serious thought!

E l i z a b e t h

Your worship, wouldn't it be a good idea if I once washed the nightgown and the dress of Mary in holy water - they need it after all these years!

M e l a n d e r

But Elizabeth - , as reformed Christians we do not have holy water any more -

E l i z a b e t h

Yes. It's too bad! like this
 But, your worship, in a special case/can't you once more consecrate some?

M e l a n d e r

That can't be -
 Everything is now done with wine!

E l i z a b e t h

Oh, your worship, I know what I can do - I know a woman who has some brought to her from Fulda, where they are still Catholic, - I'll ask her to have some brought for me too, and then I can wash the things.

M e l a n d e r

But that will only wash out the Catholic devil - Better bring them to me after that and I will sprinkle them with Holy Communion wine, so that no Protestant devil can slip into them, - for such a devil would really be dangerous to you!

(casts a side-glance at
Fabricius)

E l i z a b e t h

Oh, your worship, would you also pray once
for me?

Your prayers surely have more power than mine!

M e l a n d e r

(places his arm around her hip)

If I could once pray together with
you,

then the miracle would take place with absolute
certainty!

(Elizabeth closes her eyes and
leans tenderly against his belly)

But Unfortunately, that cannot be, my child; you
will have to continue praying alone!

E l i z a b e t h

(sighing)

O-o-oh! (long drawn out) (sigh of regret)

(she returns like

a dream-walker back into the duchess' bedroom)

II -5

F a b r i c i u s

Why do you encourage the poor thing in her
Catholic superstition, instead of giving her the
true light of the pure gospel and showing her the
way to the body of the Lord, which is the only
way that she can get free of this devilish affair?

M e l a n d e r

I believe only the body of a man who marries her,
can make her free, -
Even as the Duke will probably find his way to the
body of the Lord, only in the body of a woman!

F a b r i c i u s

Are you completely possessed of the Devil? -
To think of the living body of the Son of God as
dwelling in the sexual and sensual joy between
man and woman!
Instead of thinking of Him as a body of sorrow
which is burning in our bodies in order to burn
out all lusts of the flesh, so that our souls
may be saved!

M e l a n d e r

The body of the Son of God shall be resurrected
in every loving pair, and shall use their lovejoy
in order to bring about the ascension of their
bodies also!

A m b r o s i a let the bread be, and N e c t a r
let the wine be for them, which we give to them in
Holy Communion as the body and blood of Christ!

F a b r i c i u s

In the face of the crucified One can one ~~still~~ even
~~think about the lovejoy between man and woman -~~
~~let alone wanting to sanctify it?~~

think about the lovejoy between man and woman -
let alone wanting to sanctify it ?

M e l a n d e r

Indeed, - one can -
if one does not become hypnotized by the
crucifixion alone, -
if one does not only think of how Christ died,
but also how he l i v e d!
B e y o n d the crucifixion one must look,
to the preceding communion meal, in which through
bread and wine for his disciples he renewed God's
ancient covenant with us -
and still farther back to that wedding where
he changed w a t e r i n t o w i n e -
s i x f u l l w a t e r p o t s - - - -

(with bent arms

he pictures in front of his belly
several large containers, as if
placing them at different places)

(with feeling)

containing t w o o r t h r e e f i r k i n s
~~apiece~~ a p i e c e, as John tells us specifically.
God is to be found in the w i n e, and not in
the ink, even if it fills Luther's pen,
and really Luther has grounded the reformed faith
in the wine, which is now given to us together
with the bread of communion -
even as Jesus gave both bread and wine to His
disciples.

However this first meal as love communion of the
Son of God with twelve men, can become the
pattern for our C h u r c h communion, which
women also attend, only if it is brought into
combination with that wedding where he miraculously
created the wedding wine f o r w o m e n as well
as for men.

(to Fabricius)

Now do you understand that our church communion in
the spirit of God can be developed into the
wedding feast of all Christians - ?

F a b r i c i u s

(interrupting)

Only one thing I understand -
That you are looking for the spirit of God in
the spirit of ~~the~~ wine, -
and it is a great pity that you did not become
the wine-gardner for the Duke rather than his
court-preacher!

M e l a n d e r

(goes to the very

front of the stage and then

speaks solemnly and with trembling voice)

I am the true vine, and my F a t h e r is the
husbandman (w i n e - g a r d n e r) - !

(with a threatening

Every branch in me that beareth N o t fruit -

he taketh a w a y -

and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it,
that it may bring forth more fruit!

(with lowered voice, but still more penetratingly)

II - 5

(voice raised)

Abide in me and I in you!

As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself,
except it abide in the vine,

(voice lowered)

no ~~you~~ more can you, except you abide in me.

I am the vine, you are the branches:

(again a threatening
glance at Fabricius)

He that does not abide in me -

is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; -
and men gather them and cast them into the fire,
and they are burned!!

F A B R I C I U S

That is the spirit of the Devil ^{clothing} ~~drinking~~
himself in Christ's words -(then unctiously
to all)t o n i g h t h o w e v e r the Duke shall
hear God's words filled with God's s p i r i t!

(goes off quickly left)

II - 6

L E N I N G .

(looking left where
Fab. has disappeared)That Kirchhain alone is already bad enough, -
but if he eggs him on still more,
we'll hear something tonight that'll make
our hair stand on end!

M E L A N D E R

(still looking left and
still in same position as
when speaking of the branches of the vine)May heaven protect the poor Christian world
from a tribe of such preachers!

B U C E R the fact

(to Melander)

I am not concealing/that it gave me great
satisfaction to see this Wittenberg hypocrite
thoroughly ridiculed -
but you did not mean all of that seriously, did you?

M E L A N D E R

(still absent minded) What - ?

Oh well, perhaps I exaggerated a lot of it,
because I was irritated -I, who am usually as meek as a ~~lamb~~ lamb -
which is the proper way for a Christian to be.
But no one can say anything against wine,
otherwise he has to deal with me.

(half ecstatically) G o d i s i n t h e w i n e !

N U S S P I C K E R

(interrupts)

Pardon, Sir Court-preacher, that I break into
your thought,
but I really get scared when I think of a
p u b l i c double marriage of the Duke.

M E L A N D E R

(irritated)

So you are also against it?

N U S S P I C K E R

Not I, but the laws of the state, which punish
bigamy very severely. In looking at the theological
side of the matter, we must not forget the legal side!

M E L A N D E R

(heavily)

Laws of the state? Legal side of the matter?
 Laws and the state must be renewed by the Reformation
 as well as everything else -
 Or do you think that your Body of Laws shall remain
 uninfluenced by the transformation of the Body of
 Christ on the reformed church altars, after this
 transformation has already become the basis for
 appropriating the secular wealth of the churches
 and convents, - the income from which ~~is~~ also
 contributes to y o u r benefit?

F E I G E

(smiling)

That gives us the first picture, dear Melander,
 of what the Body of Laws looks like when it is
 filled with reformed communion wine!
 In the matter of the double marriage of our Duke,
 I would suggest for today that we wait and see
 what new thing will result from the New Year's
 service in Kirchhain's church tonight -
 However, I do not want to hide the fact that a
 p u b l i c double marriage would also cause me
 more worry than a secret one!

K R A F T

The chancellor has once again found the
 right word: let us wait and see what happens!

C O R V I N , G U A L T H E R

(together)

Let us wait and see!

N O R D E C K , L E R S N E R

(echoing)

Let us wait and see!

N U S S P I C K E R

Yes indeed, - let us wait and see!

That will fit right in with my plan,
 to work on the young Baron von der Saal -

(points upward left)

when I bring him the copy of our protocol
 tomorrow morning.

(earnestly and
pedantically)

I'll picture to him all the difficulties
 that a ~~double marriage~~ public double marriage
 will raise not only for the Duke but also for
 the Baron's sister and for the whole von der Saal
 family -

W I N T E R

Pst!

I hear steps !

(all look expectantly to the left)

C H R I S T I N E

(coming from left with
protocol as in first act.

All bow to her)

I beg your pardon, gentlemen -

that I ran off without any explanation,
after having glanced through your protocol -

(holds it up)

Are you really going to put your signatures on it,
and so build the Duke a bridge to a double marriage?

F E I G E

Our discussions have not yet been concluded,
your grace!

C H R I S T I N A

(ignores Feige's
words; almost as if
speaking to herself)

Through God's will, man and woman in marriage
become o n e f l e s h -

So the other one will also become one flesh with him,
will be l o v e d by him, and will have c h i l -
d r e n from him!

the
(speaking to/others)

Will he not prefer h e r children to m i n e ?

F E I G E

You are at liberty, your grace, to demand
guarantees against that.

C H R I S T I N E

And how can I hold fast to the rest of his love
for me?

F E I G E

Even the fulfilment of marital duties can be
formally regulated, your highness!

C H R I S T I N E

(bitterly)

What has the fulfilment of marital duties to do
with love !

Anyway, children I have about enough.

L E N I N G

(after a few seconds of
everyone's silence)

Your husband, the Duke, does not desire ^{to marry} the second
wife because of affection or sensual pleasure,
but in order to escape eternal damnation,
and he will feel the deepest gratitude toward you,
your highness, if you do not block the way to
his soul's salvation!

C H R I S T I N E

(points up left)

(all have astonished faces)

Why is he placing so much value on my consent?
He never asked my consent to his love affairs up there -
nor on his travels - -

Or did you think that I knew nothing about the
extra-marital love life of my husband? -

I know all about it - or nearly all - and heretofore
quietly submitted to it, because after all most
other women are in the same situation - -

(to herself)

But now - I feel definitely - he wants to push me
aside altogether and only live with the other woman!

L E N I N G

Your noble husband has recently called me to his castle
in Rotenburg quite often, when in residence there -
(Christine begins to observe Lening, who thereupon bows to her)

I happen to be Pastor Lening of Melsungen, which is near Rotenburg -
The Duke has done me the honor to discuss his proposed double marriage with me - I may even say thoroughly and exhaustively, for I am to write a small book dealing with the matter. His marriage with you, your highness, the Duke regards as indissoluble even though it is no longer a sacrament as in the Catholic ~~religion~~ faith - nor has it been since the Duke and your noble self stepped over to the reformed faith -

C H R I S T I N E

(excited)

What do I hear ?

Marriage is no longer a sacrament ?

L E N I N G

No longer a church sacrament, noble lady, but still a God-intended and holy arrangement like all other formalities for us human beings which are revealed through Moses and the prophets and through Jesus and his disciples in Holy Writ.

C H R I S T I N E

But I know that couples are still being married in churches even today -

according to what I heard from my maid there is to be a marriage in the church this evening!

L E N I N G

To be sure, gracious lady, to be sure - yet ~~not~~ not as a church sacrament, but only by way of giving the church's blessing to the marriage!

C H R I S T I N E

Pardon me, worthy pastor, that I do not understand the point of difference between the Roman and the reformed church in this respect - but you no doubt know that my late father remained in the Catholic faith right up to his recent death, and that he continuously tried to draw me back to it.. but as spouse of the Duke of Hesse I could not very well be anything else than reformed - but never until today did I know that we are now without any sacraments -

L E N I N G

(glances around in despair at preachers etc.)

Forgive me, noble duchess, that I must correct you there - t w o of the s e v e n sacraments we have still retained, namely Holy Baptism and Holy Communion!

C H R I S T I N E

(completely confused) And not marriage ? ! ?

(she becomes thoughtful and her gaze shifts from Lening into space)

Oh, now I understand much in Philip's life, that previously I could not understand - now many things become clear - - -

W I N T E R

(after general silence) Forgive me, your grace, that I speak up.

Your maid was here a little while ago, to remind you of your intention to dress for church this evening.

C H R I S T I N E

(is absent minded at first,
then gathers herself and speaks with
determination) Thank you, dear Winter.

(gives protocol to Nusspicker)
I had completely forgotten that.

Here, Sir Notary, is the protocol.

You may tell the Duke that I will consent to
his second marriage - if my standing at court
and before the people suffers no change through
the second wife - and provided my children
retain~~d~~ their preferred standing over her children -

N U S S P I C K E R

(with a glance at pen and ink
on the table)

May I write that down right away ?

C H R I S T I N E

(all look at her in surprise)
I am not yet finished -
and provided that I am given the same right -
to take a s e c o n d husband!

N U S S P I C K E R

(struck rigid - drops protocol)

For God's sake!

(all are overpowered)

F E I G E

(hoarse laugh) Your grace is pleased to fool with us!

C H R I S T I N E

(to Nussp. who still stands
with his mouth open)
No, Sir Chancellor, I am not fooling!

In fact, you may write down this last condition
as the first and most important of all, Sir Notary!

N U S S P I C K E R

(only now notices the protocol
and quickly picks it up)

Should I really write that in?

A second husband ! ?

C H R I S T I N E

Why are you gentlemen so disturbed -
Are not man and woman equal before God?

F E I G E

Your noble highness is ridiculing us, because we
have made ourselves messengers to bring ~~this~~ *such an*
inquiry to you!

C H R I S T I N E

There is no joke or ridicule, Sir Chancellor, but
full seriousness.

I now beg all of you gentlemen to become messengers
to carry back my answer.

F E I G E

But, your noble highness ! !

C H R I S T I N E

(with energetic gesture to all)
No more "buts", Sir Chancellor!

Go, I strongly beg of you, to the Duke and do not
hesitate any longer. His answer I shall await
tomorrow. Today - it is already too late!

(all shake heads and bow to Christine, and go off
left; only Melander remains shifting around on his seat; finally
she notices him) Can you still not grasp it, Sir Court-preacher?

(over)

II - 8

CHRISTINE

(sinks into herself,
then speaks as if out of a deep dream)

Am I bewitched?

(feels herself)

Did I really say that I want a second husband -
Or have I only dreamed all this?

Can I really hope to be loved by him?
I - a mother of seven children -
a woman - who could also have been his mother!

A lovely youth!

(she acts as if stroking his cheeks)

Cheeks like a girl he has!

(scared)

I must beg his forgiveness that I frightened him
so with my false suspicion -
I must do it today - - a t o n c e !

II - 9

Elizabeth comes in through
the rear door, sees Christine in
the foreground, hesitates, then
comes forward quietly, without
shutting the door.

CHRISTINE

(who has not yet
noticed Elizabeth) But how can I get him here without attracting
any attention?

ELIZABETH

(close behind Christine) Your grace -

CHRISTINE

(so frightened that in turning around she collides with Elizabeth)

Oh -

How you frightened me, Elizabeth!

ELIZABETH

Forgive me, your grace, I only wanted to remind
your grace that -

CHRISTINE

(interrupting) Listen, Elizabeth - tell me what to do!

(points up left) I was upstairs with the Duke,
where he has his secret sessions -
There I met the Baron von der Saal,
whom I must ask an important question -
I must do it myself, and before we go to church -
in other words, immediately - - - !
How can that be arranged?

ELIZABETH

Very simply, your grace, I will call him.

CHRISTINE

(strongly protesting) What are you thinking of? At this hour?
It is too late for me to receive any man. No! that
won't do! Don't you know any other way?

E L I Z A B E T H
 (thinks hard, then suddenly:) Is the noble Baron afraid of the Devil?
 C H R I S T I N E
 How should I know that, Elizabeth?
 E L I Z A B E T H
 Is he a tall man?
 C H R I S T I N E
 (indicates Margaret's height) About so big!
 E L I Z A B E T H
 Then we can do it - we can do it!
 C H R I S T I N E
 You are so queer, Elizabeth - what can we do?
 E L I Z A B E T H
 Then the Baron can wear the dress of the Germanrode
 convent which belonged to Sister Mary!
 C H R I S T I N E
 The convent dress?
 E L I Z A B E T H
 (eagerly) That's just right, your grace - it's exactly right!
 The Baron will then look like a nun, and he can
 also cover his face with the veil!
 (on the jump) Shall I bring it to him?
 C H R I S T I N E
 He may not want to !
 E L I Z A B E T H
 I'll quickly think of something, your ladyship, and
 promise you to bring him here right away - right away!
 (on the jump) May I?
 C H R I S T I N E
 I wonder if it will work!
 E L I Z A B E T H
 It will work - it w i l l work!
 Just let me do it, your ladyship, just let me do it -
 I'll do everything right! -
 (points to open door to bedroom)
 Anna is in there, and will help you into your dress!
 (rushes off left)
 C H R I S T I N E
 (loud) Elizabeth!
 (louder) E l i z a b e t h !
 E L I Z A B E T H
 (returning) Your Grace ?
 C H R I S T I N E
 (close to Elizabeth) But the Duke must not know anything of it, for -
 E L I Z A B E T H
 (interrupts) N o o n e shall know anything of it - N o o n e !!
 C H R I S T I N E
 (presses Elizabeth tenderly to her) Hurry, Elizabeth!
 E L I Z A B E T H
 (with a jump off left) I'll f l y !

II - 10

C H R I S T I N E

(still gazing left where Elizabeth disappeared)

Will he want to love me?

(counting the buttons on her dress)

He loves me - he loves me not -

He loves me - he loves me not -

He loves me - he loves me not -

Oh - the last one is open!

(she buttons it, then

looks around in the room and

notices it is somewhat in disorder)

Should I receive him in here -

(looks at bedroom) Or in the bedroom?

(moves the furniture, but absent-mindedly disarranges things still more)

II - 11

A N N A

(comes in through

rear door, and rushes to do the

work of straightening up)

But, your grace, that is no work for your noble ladyship!

C H R I S T I N E

(refusing to let herself be disturbed)

I am receiving a visitor!

A N N A

But your grace wanted to dress herself for the church service.

C H R I S T I N E

Which dress was I going to wear?

A N N A

Your grace had not yet decided!

C H R I S T I N E

(stops working) In which dress do I look young? - youngest?

A N N A

In which dress your grace looks young?

C H R I S T I N E

Y o u n g e s t I said !

A N N A

Let me think a moment! I believe in the tight-fitting red velvet dress!

C H R I S T I N E

Get it! I'll clean up here in the meantime.

(Anna shakes her head, looks at the Duchess hesitatingly, goes back into bedroom, leaving the door open.)

II - 12

While Anna is in the bedroom, and Christine is busy in the reception room, two ladies-in-waiting come in left; they are shocked when they see what Christine is doing, and make a deep curtsy before her; she does not notice them till a few seconds later.

C H R I S T I N E

I am not yet finished -

You can wait in the anteroom till I come.

(again a deep curtsy, and ladies leave left,

as Anna already comes in from the rear, with the red dress on her arm)

Christine is so absent-minded that she does not realize what Anna wants to do, and does not stand still until Anna directly steps in front of her and shows her the dress.

A N N A

You must hurry, your grace -

The churchbells will soon be ringing!

(places the red dress on a chair and begins to unbutton Christine's dress)

II - 14

(at the moment when the dress is unbuttoned, ready to be taken off, Elizabeth Diede comes in left)

E L I Z A B E T H

Your visitor is outside, your grace!

C H R I S T I N E

(confused) Bring him in!

E L I Z A B E T H

(points to the dress which is open and half off)

Don't you want to change your dress first, your ladyship?

C H R I S T I N E

(holds the open dress shut with both hands and runs into bedroom)

Come, Anna!

(Anna follows and shuts the door after herself; Elizabeth shaking her head, goes off left)

II - 15

(Elizabeth comes back right away, and makes gestures to Margaret to follow her; Margaret is in nun's dress and with veil down)

E L I Z A B E T H

Won't you be seated, Sir Baron!

I will call her grace, the Duchess.

(Elizabeth goes to rear door but comes back, close to Margaret)

Mary's nightgown I will afterwards put in your bed upstairs - !

M A R G A R E T

You will have to explain all that to me more clearly!

(as Eliz. moves dreamily toward the rear door, Marg. fidgets with the hood and veil, while standing at the very front of the stage)

I wonder if the Duchess has become suspicious, and is now trying to expose me ?

I will watch my step!

(Eliz. still stands dreamily in front of the rear door; it opens and Christine appears in the red dress. Eliza. makes way, and with her glances follows Christine as the latter walks toward Margaret; after a few seconds Eliz. goes into the bedroom and closes the door.)

C H R I S T I N E

(to Marg. after the latter has made a deep curtsy.)

How well you are able to act the part, my dear Baron!

M A R G A R E T

(to herself)

Oh, I'm lost already!

(bowing for the compliment) I enjoy amateur theatricals and often play feminine roles!

C H R I S T I N E

(dreamily)

You enjoy theatricals - ?

Forgive me, dear Baron, that I have called you to me under such strange circumstances and that I have again pressed you into a feminine role..

(smiling sweetly) I am so sorry that through my false suspicion of you upstairs -

(points up left) I frightened you -

M A R G A R E T

(interrupts)

You did not frighten me, your grace!

C H R I S T I N E

But yes -

I noticed your excitement, and did not want another day to pass without begging your forgiveness - yet I could not at this late hour receive a man in my rooms without causing unwelcome notice - hence your disguise!

M A R G A R E T

(again bowing as before)

The duty is upon me, your grace, to beg your forgiveness, for having been so bold as to open the door - yet it was because I did not wish to be an unwilling listener to a dispute -

C H R I S T I N E

(interrupting)

That is the very thing I am thankful for, dear Baron, - but I also wanted to explain to you my reasons for believing I had seen long hair, when you went into the other room -

Will you lift your veil, so that I can see your face?

M A R G A R E T

(in lifting her veil, turns away slightly;

speaking to herself) How cleverly she begins!

C H R I S T I N E

Let me help you!

(accidentally touches

Marg's cheek; tremblingly speaks to herself) How lovely he is!

(again to Margaret) I wanted to explain to you why -

But won't you sit down, dear Baron!

M A R G A R E T

(to herself while sitting down) I wonder what she is up to!

C H R I S T I N E

(sits beside Marg.) Will you be able to understand why I could think that I saw long hair? - - You are still so young!

Do you know anything about my husband, the Duke's habits of living? *habits?*

M A R G A R E T

Only very little, your grace.

C H R I S T I N E

Then you will not readily understand why I had
this suspicion - -

The Duke often has women up there -

(points up left)

M A R G A R E T

W o m e n - ?!

C H R I S T I N E

Yes - Women - Girls - Sweethearts -

And I thought - (breaks off)

M A R G A R E T

What did your grace think?

C H R I S T I N E

I thought at first that you too were a sweetheart
of his -

till I saw you afterwards in the door, and saw
that I had deceived myself!

M A R G A R E T

(WHO through fright had moved away somewhat)

I wonder what she is getting at!

C H R I S T I N E

Yes - I had been deceived - -

But I had not been d i s a p p o i n t e d !

(stares at Margaret infatuatedly)

I was not d i s a p p o i n t e d, dear Baron!

M A R G A R E T

(stands up in order to control
her uneasiness, and takes a bow
to Christine, who remained seated)

I too was happy to become acquainted with your
Grace ~~at~~ on this occasion; and only regretted that
our meeting was so short!

(sits down again)

C H R I S T I N E

Flattery is also one of your accomplishments!

Was your regret sincere, and did you really have
the wish to prolong this happiness?

M A R G A R E T

I can assure you -

C H R I S T I N E

(not listening; in a strained and somewhat hoarse tone)

Have you ever yet loved a woman?

M A R G A R E T

Yes - my mother.

C H R I S T I N E

Only your mother?

M A R G A R E T

Only my mother.

C H R I S T I N E

(lifts her arms as though to place them around Margaret's neck,
but then fidgets with her veil)

Why don't you sit a little closer to me, dear Baron!

M A R G A R E T

You are very kind, noble lady -

But someone might come!

C H R I S T I N E

Only the Duke would have the right to do so -
but he has not used his right in months!

(deep sigh)

(points to bedroom) Oh - , if you knew what I suffer -
 When I lie alone and lonely in these -
 Lonely, and with a heart full of love!
 I must ask you one more question, dear Baron -
 but you must promise to answer with full frankness.
 (holds out her hand) Do you promise?

M A R G A R E T
 (takes the hand) I promise.

C H R I S T I N E
 Could you - love a woman of my age?
 M A R G A R E T

(drawing back) How can I tell, unless I know the woman?!

(she jumps up, because Christine has put her hands over her face; speaking to herself)
 What strange things do happen to me!

(to Christine) Forgive me, noble lady,
 That I only now understand the meaning of your question, and only now realize that I am the object of your affections!

(again to herself) What am I saying?
 (to Christine) Give me a little time to answer.

C H R I S T I N E
 (loud sob) That you remain distant, tells me everything!

M A R G A R E T
 But how can I dare to draw close to you, your grace, who are the spouse of the Duke of Hesse?

C H R I S T I N E
 (firmly and bitterly) But he can dare to draw close to your sister!
 While I can waste away in my loneliness!

M A R G A R E T
 (places her arm around Christine's shoulder, but without sitting down)

I sympathize with you, your grace,
 and will demand of your husband that he shall no longer neglect you -
 I will also speak to my sister -

C H R I S T I N E
 (bitterly interrupting) Your sister - !
 She'll take him away entirely from me!

M A R G A R E T
 (solemnly) By God, your grace, that she will n o t do!
 I will make myself responsible for that!

C H R I S T I N E
 How can you do so, if you are in Saxony? !
 (she also stands up) I love you! Come w i t h your sister here and stay with me. Otherwise I'll ^{be} ~~desperate~~!

M A R G A R E T
 But how can that happen? I cannot always live here disguised as a nun.

C H R I S T I N E
 That you shouldn't do!
 (answering Marg's questioning glance with great solemnity)
 You should be to me exactly what your sister is to be to the Duke!

M A R G A R E T
 (like an echo; half-tone) I should be to you exactly what my sister is to be to the Duke! How do you mean that?

C H R I S T I N E
 Exactly as it is said!

M A R G A R E T

(drawing back in greatest excitement)

You want me as - -

You want me as second husband ? ! ?

C H R I S T I N E

Yes, I do!

(passionately)

Y o u I want, y o u !

You shall deliver me from this disconsolate loneliness!

As I caught sight of you upstairs, in the door -

(slight gesture of pointing up left)

my heart stopped beating!

For that was Philip as he looked when I was permitted to marry him - Philip, the young Duke!

Oh, he has no idea how much I love him, for ^{my blood congeals} ~~I always~~ ~~become paralyzed~~ when he draws near to me!

(close by Marg)

But with you my blood runs freely -

with you I become soft and warm -

Do you feel the same way?

M A R G A R E T

(hesitatingly)

I am utterly confused, because I can hardly understand that you want - a second husband ! ?

Do you really believe that the Duke would permit it?

C H R I S T I N E

He m u s t , if he wants me to consent to his second marriage with your sister!

He cannot deny to m e , what he allows to himself!

Philip's voice is heard in the anteroom, where he is asking the ladies: Where is the duchess?

Oh, he is coming! Quick, go in there!

(she points to the bedroom, into which Margaret runs, as Philip comes in left)

P H I L I P

Forgive me for coming in unannounced -

(with a glance toward
Margaret who is just disappearing
in the door to the bedroom)

Did I disturb you?

C H R I S T I N E

(points to dress) Not at all. I have just changed my dress -
and with my ladies-in-waiting was just going to
hurry to the Drawing Room, where I thought you
would be!

P H I L I P

(with another glance at the bedroom door)

Since when do you have nuns again as your personal
maids ?

I thought I had banned monks and nuns from our court!

C H R I S T I N E

(uncertain and haltingly)

She is not yet here long - she is from the court
of my late dear father - I want to let her have a
little time to change over!

P H I L I P

Oh, that's it !

(throws another glance at the bedroom door)

(points up left) The preachers and counselors were on the way up to me,
and brought me your strange answer -

C H R I S T I N E

(interrupting)

They've already seen you? I didn't want to get
your answer until tomorrow!

P H I L I P

Why do you make this - - - well, let us call it,
this un u s u a l condition ?
What do you want with it?

C H R I S T I N E

The same as you do - a second spouse!

P H I L I P

(clutches his forehead) You mean it seriously then?

C H R I S T I N E

Just as much as you do!

P H I L I P

(trembling voice)

May I know, whether there is already an actual
man involved - or are you merely assuring the
possibility of a second marriage for yourself, as
I would like to assume for the moment?

C H R I S T I N E

(uncertain and haltingly) Up to now - there is - only - the possibility!

P H I L I P

(much moved, takes her hands) I'm so glad, Christine, I'm so glad !
(she tries to withdraw hands) Let me hold your hands - let me kiss them!

C H R I S T I N E

(opposing him) Only - if you grant my request!

P H I L I P

(lets her hands go) But Christine, - darling!

Do you really want to become untrue to me?

C H R I S T I N E

No more than you do to me!

PHILIP
 (with forced laugh) Very well!
 But now I am also going to make a new condition!
 CHRISTINE
 A new condition - ? And what is it?
 PHILIP
 That I can spend tonight with you!
 CHRISTINE
 (sways and falls into
 Philip's arms who tenderly presses her to himself)
 Philip! Philip!!
 Why must you torture me so?

A single churchbell is
 heard in the distance

PHILIP
 (with tears in his eyes) Forgive me, Christine, forgive me -
 that I have left you alone so often!
 (he gives her a prolonged
 kiss, then speaks joyously) That will all now become different!
 (kisses her again)

II - 18

(Margaret returns in nun's
 costume and sees Philip in a
 long kiss with Christine)

MARGARET
 (curtsy to Christine) I would ask your grace's kind permission
 to attend church.

CHRISTINE
 You may go.

PHILIP
 (to Christine) A graceful little thing, your nun!
 It's a pity her veil is down.
 (to Margaret) How long have you been a nun?

MARGARET
 (changing her voice) Not yet very long, your grace!

PHILIP
 Why have I never seen you before?

MARGARET
 Well, your grace comes so very seldom into
 the rooms of your noble spouse, my lord!

PHILIP
 (laughing) Had I known you were here, very likely I would
 have come oftener -
 forgive me, Christine -
 but she does speak so musically, this little thing -
 she has a tongue of silk!
 Tell me, young women, don't you have any hankering
 to follow in the footsteps of Katy Borah, who now
 has the name Katy Luther?

MARGARET
 Why not, if a Luther comes along ? !

PHILIP
 (laughs again) My, my! - what high ambitions you have!

MARGARET
 We nuns are brides of our Lord and Savior in heaven!

P H I L I P

Quite right - and of course earthly men stand/^{no}chance.

M A R G A R E T

Only when they are filled with the Holy Spirit and stand as representatives of our heavenly bridegroom.

P H I L I P

(laughing, to Christine) Listen to this little one! Where did she get all that? Wants men like gods! Representatives of Christ on earth! So, only the pope in Rome himself, or else a German equivalent, another Luther! Our sort is excluded right from the start!

M A R G A R E T

God has created e v e r y human being in His image, therefore also your grace - - but ~~may I~~ now go to church and serve my heavenly bridegroom? let me

(deep curtsy to Philip, then goes off left)

P H I L I P

(glancing after her) I'd like to hear her in a pulpit sometime!

C H R I S T I N E

Shouldn't we also walk to the church now?

P H I L I P

We are driving - the way to Neustadt is too far.

C H R I S T I N E

To Neustadt? Not to Saint Martin?

P H I L I P

No, we are going to Pastor Kirchhain, where I have also commanded the entire court to attend!

C H R I S T I N E

The entire court? The service has then a special significance?

P H I L I P

Now I can tell you. This evening in all the churches of Hesse I am having money collected to be used in fighting the Turks. I am doing this to win the Emperor's favor, in case Luther and the protestant leaders take a stand against my double marriage -

C H R I S T I N E

(interrupts) You mean o u r double marriage, don't you?

P H I L I P

(forced smile) Yes, yes, of course! - The theologians are not yet agreed; and I am honoring Kirchhain's church with our visit, because he has great influence with the people here and in all Hesse, and because I want to make him more favorably inclined to my double marriage plan - - I may even take Holy Communion, -

C H R I S T I N E

(again interrupts) Really? - Then I'll take it together with you.

P H I L I P

I shall be happy to have you accompany me to the altar! - Shall we go now?

C H R I S T I N E

(solemnly and as if transfigured) I will receive Christ's flesh and blood together with you - and will renew the sacrament of our wedlock in the sacrament of Holy Communion - before He unites you with another woman and me with another man in double-sided double marriage - -

(Philip is in deep thought; many churchbells are now heard)

We must go, Philip!

P H I L I P

(starts up and makes a chivalrous bow) Your faithless, faithful husband!
(leads her out left, and curtain falls.)

Behind the curtain, Kirchhain's voice, unctiously loud and slowly:

Therefore we are holding this service in all the churches of Hesse -
 on the last day and in the last hours of this year!
 Dear brothers and dear sisters in Christ!

At the word, Christ, the curtain opens and shows the sideview of the interior of a candle-lit church.

Left, slightly to rear, is the pulpit, in which is the preacher, Kirchhain, in his clergyman's gown.

Right, the first benches are filled with people. Philip and Christine are sitting on the end of the first bench, so that the theatre audience first sees Philip, then Christine, and then others on the bench.

In the middle, between the pulpit and the first bench, is an altar with two broad steps all around it; on the altar is a wine-cup, a basin, and a small basket, - seen by the audience in the order named.

Somewhat higher than the altar, is a large stained-glass window, with the moon shining through and showing the scene of the crucifixion of Christ and the two criminals; this window dominates the whole stage.

Below this window is seen in semi-darkness, behind pillars, a side-wing of the church auditorium, which stretches away right and left, filled with people that are sitting on benches that are seen end-on by the theatre audience. The whole gives an appearance of a well-crowded church extending to the rear as well as to the right farther than can be seen.

K I R C H H A I N

(continuing to preach from the pulpit, undisturbed by the rising of the curtain)

Dear Christian congregation!
 Thus we live and die through Adam and Eve in the flesh and in the realm of sin.
 But through Christ in the spirit and in the realm of freedom from sin.
 Until in the third realm, heaven comes down to earth;
 Not as a realm of Paradisical pleasures,
 as many foolishly hope and expect,
 but as the realm of the cross and of t r u e
 salvation,
 which rewards the good with eternal bliss
 but the evil-doers with eternal damnation!

(raises right arm and lowers his voice)

Watch and pray that ye fall not into temptation,
 for the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.

(raises voice, leaving arm up, and speaks more quickly)

Whoever in this third realm does not want to
belong to the damned of the earth -

(at the word, damned,
he shakes his raised arm and
clenches his fist threateningly)

must s o o n awaken -
And must i n t i m e take the cross upon himself
and follow the only true l e a d e r -
who as first one had to carry it among the Jews
as he went to t h a t p l a c e -
where we should all become saved - - to Golgotha

(points with left arm to the
picture of the crucifixion,
changes tone decidedly)

It is true that Jesus said to one of the criminals,
Verily I say to thee, today thou shalt be with me
in Paradise!
But this very word, spoken on the cross itself,
teaches us that he never meant the earthly Paradise
or outer realm of happiness -
but the interior bliss of the heavenly Paradise,
in the sign of the cross and the innocently
spilled blood!

(stretches both arms
sideways, closes his eyes and
lowers his voice fervently)

For the word from the cross is nonsense to those
who will be lost,

(places his hands on his breast)

To u s however, who will be saved, it is divine
power!

(opens his eyes
changes tone)

Beloved Christians - Let each one of you remember
the well-deserved fate of the thieving and murderous
peasants, who were led astray by Thomas Münzer to
look for a kingdom of earthly happiness as the
heavenly kingdom, until the pen of Luther and the
sword of our Duke brought their souls back to the
right path, - which Luther wrote out for us at the
end of his 95 theses, as follows:

Christians should be called upon to rouse themselves
to follow their head, Christ, through pain, death
and hell,
And should console themselves much more with a
sorrowful state as the way of entrance to heaven,
than with a peaceful state!

Beloved Christian men and beloved Christian women!
still worse was the fate of the Anabaptists in
Münster with their blasphemous polygamy,

(Philip makes a gesture of disgust)

who thought of the heavenly kingdom as a kingdom of
lust, - and in whose suppression our Duke also took
a leading and praiseworthy part -

(same tone as at first, behind curtain)

And if today, in the last hours of the dying year,
fifteen years after the peasant rebellion, and five
years after the Anabaptist abomination, our Duke

and church head has ordered that in all the churches of Hesse a collection shall be taken for the war against the Turks, this collection is simply an indirect continuation of the war against the peasants and the Anabaptists - for Mohammed's paradise and his harem are the same abomination. -

Yes, indeed, the great hour of the reformation is therefore come, and its crowning work is this crusade against the Turks -

And we Hessians can be especially proud, because it is our Duke who is giving the cause of Protestantism this crown, - and is himself thereby gaining the crown of immortal life! -

Beloved Hessian Christians!

That brings me to the end and the crown of today's sermon, and now I will guide your eyes to the noble personages who are present with us today - our noble Duke and our gracious Duchess!

(he and nearly all look at Philip and Christine)

I feel myself to be one with you all, when I offer to this all-highest pair our deepest devotion and gratitude that they are honoring us with their presence!

There is no better way to end my sermon than to point to the shining example of this noble pair with their seven noble children, as a seven-fold sign of God's blessing upon the noble family!

May God the Lord keep the noble family healthy and happy, and let His blessing continue to rest upon them. Amen.

(after remaining with bowed head for a moment, he points invitingly to the altar)

The bridal pair will now come to the altar and pray together with me.

As we pray, the congregation will sing the first verse of the Luther-song, "A Mighty Fortress is Our God!"

(As the organ plays a few introductory chords, Kirchhain descends from the pulpit)

C O N G R E G A T I O N

(sings with organ)

A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing;
Our Helper He, amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft, and pow'r are great,
And armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

(as soon as the song and organ stops, Kirchhain raises his head, and gestures to the bridal pair to stand opposite to him. Fabricius and his bride do so)

K I R C H H A I N

Dear brother and dear sister in Christ!
At this important hour of the Reformation
you have come to the altar of this church.
In the presence of God and of all those who
are taking part in this divine service by
being witnesses thereof, you are ready to
step into the holy state of matrimony, -
and you are especially honored by the presence
of the high and noble pair.

You, dear brother in Christ,
first monk and then consecrated priest of
the Roman church,
but now confessor of the Reformed faith
which knows no monks nor consecrated priests,-
and like myself a preacher of the Word of God --

You, dear sister in Christ,
first nun in the Roman faith,
then honorable Christian maiden in the Reformed faith,
and now preacher's bride,

And both of you together as bridal pair,
presenting a true symbol of the Reformation and
the r e f o r m of our faith and life through Luther,
the mighty hero in the Word of God!

Beloved bridal pair in Christ!
Christ did not come to destroy the laws and the
prophets, but to fulfill them,
And thereby also confirmed the first and oldest
commandment of God,
Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill
the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the
fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and
over every living thing that moveth upon the earth!
Therefore the first and oldest duty of all mankind

is to use their best strength for the work of the multiplication of the human race.

Not only in the spirit but also in the flesh is it our duty as images of God to fill the world, and as followers of Christ to overcome the lust of the flesh in ourselves, and through ourselves also in animals and plants, which God has given to us for our needs and nourishment as long as we are living as creatures in the flesh.

Therefore it is proper that your marriage should begin by coming to the table of the Lord -

(points with the left hand to the basket; speaks with especial pathos)

H i s flesh - - -

(left hand remains over the basket, points with the right to the wine-cup; pauses before speaking)

and H i s blood should destroy the sinful flesh and blood of Adam and Eve which is in your bodies, and cleanse them so as to permit the entrance of the Holy Spirit into them, before you begin the work of procreation!

(withdraws his hands; speaks in very different tone)

Perhaps, dear bride, you are inwardly complaining and asking why you cannot become pregnant from the Holy Spirit alone, and give birth without any sin, as Mary did?

And perhaps you, dear bridegroom, are complaining and wondering why you cannot become father like Joseph did, without acting as male?

(again with extra pathos)

Such complaint against Mary's heavenly impregnation, dear bride, and such envy of the holy fatherhood of Joseph, dear bridegroom, grow out of the lassitude of your heart and because of your fear of the God-ordained battle against the lust of the flesh.

As a matter of fact no better means has as yet been discovered to battle against the flesh than a Christian marriage!

Ask husbands and wives, who also once stood here in the blossom-time of their sinfulness, and you will receive from them the consoling information that in the married life of pious Christian men and Christian women, the paradisaical pleasures of the flesh, of Adam and Eve, very soon disappear without leaving any trace.

III - 2

Where marriage begins, Paradise ends! -
 God's omniscience already foresaw this at
 the creation of the world, and therefore
 He created the first human beings as a married pair!

Of course, in some marriages the pleasures of the
 flesh last longer than is good for the soul
 salvation of the pair,
 but this is mainly the result of renewing the
 lust of the flesh - which otherwise would die out -
 by gazing upon other women and other men,
 through which adultery is already committed in the
 heart, -

(casts a side-
 glance at Philip who
 makes a gesture of denial)

instead of being glad that the flesh is dead, so
 that the spirit may become that much more alive!

(takes deep breath,
 then with much pathos and
 slowly)

We pastors and preachers of the Reformation, who
 were nearly all formerly monks and took the vow of
 celibacy, have accordingly a special call and work
 to do in marriage, namely to keep Christian marriage
 fully free from the lust of the flesh, make
 and to keep it clean therefrom right
 from the start,
 so that even the very first child will be ~~as~~ as
 purely generated as if the Holy Ghost himself
 had procreated it!

Therefore do not consider me proud or self-righteous,
 dear bridegroom and brother-pastor, if I emphasize
 my words by citing my own example, and telling you
 that over my marriage-bed hangs the picture of the
 crucified One

(points to window)

and under it is the prayer of Tobias in luminous
 gold lettering - which since my wedding I pray
 every evening

(hoarsely as if it
 were a confession)

sometime also in the middle of the night, if a
 sinful temptation assails me:

(lowers his voice,
 lifts his eyes and arms, folds
 his hands and speaks the prayer fervently)

O Lord, my God, God of our fathers, may the heavens
 and earth, the sea, all waters and springs, and all
 creatures therein, praise Thee!

And now Lord, Thou knowest that evil lust has not
 caused me to take this sister as wife, but the
 desire to procreate children, whereby Thy holy Name
 may eternally be praised and honored!

(again takes normal position, speaks
 quicker with right arm lifted questioningly)

And so I ask you now, Theodore Fabricius,

will you take this woman standing beside you,
Kunigunde Ursula Katzentrunk,
as your Christian wife, truly to love and cherish
her, not to desert her in joy or sorrow,
and to keep the marriage bond holy,
until death do part?

If this is your firm and honest purpose, signify
it before God and all these Christian witnesses
with a forthright Yes.

F A B R I C I U S

Y e s !

(takes ring ~~from~~ from
his hand and places
it on altar) K I R C H H A I N
(puts fingertips of his
right hand on ring, and stretches
out left arm questioningly to bride)

Now I will ask you, Kunigunde Ursula Katzentrunk:
will you take this man standing beside you,
Theodore Fabricius,
as your Christian husband, truly to love and cherish
him, not to desert him in joy or sorrow,
and to keep the marriage bond holy,
until death do part?

If this is your firm and honest purpose, signify
it before God and all these Christian witnesses
with a forthright Yes.

T H E B R I D E

Y e s !

(takes ring from
her left hand and places it on altar)
K I R C H H A I N
(places fingertips of his left hand
on the bride's ring for a moment, while
fingertips of right hand are still on
bridegroom's ring; then lifts up both
hands, holding them in blessing over the pair)

Because you have vowed to be true to each other,
therefore as duly ordained servant of the church
I confirm your union as established in accordance
with Christian rule and practice, and consequently
as forever binding, in the name of
the Father, the Son and the
Holy Ghost

(draws his hands
back and places the rings on
the ring-fingers of the right
hands) and give you these rings, taken from the Lord's
table, as outward sign that you have now definitely
become o n e f l e s h.

(turns to the con-
gregation, changes tone) The young married pair will now pray with
me at the altar -

And the congregation will sing the second verse
of the song.

(as organ plays opening chords, he folds his hands
and drops his head to pray; the pair kneel as before on the
opposite side of the altar)

III - 2

C O N G R E G A T I O N
(sing with organ)

Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing,
Were not the right man on our side,
The man of God's own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is he;
Lord Sabaoth is His name,
From age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.

(after the song,
Fabricius and his bride, retire
right, into the church)

III - 3

K I R C H H A I N

(remains in prayer posture
for a few moments after
the song ends)

One thing more -
Before Holy Communion begins!

(lifts up the flat
basin that stands in the
center of the altar, and shows
it to the congregation)

Your money gifts for the war against the Turks,
place in this basin -
(places it on altar again)
as you pass from the bread to the wine:

(he points out the
pathway that the communicants are to take,
which leads from the rear side of the altar
past the basin to the front side of the altar)

Gold coins - silver coins -
Bills - dollars -
but also small change and pennies,
as much as each can give!
Let each one remember that our Savior gave
not only money and possessions,
but also sacrificed body and life for us!

Those who do not take Holy Communion, can
place their money in the boxes at the ~~exit~~
~~exit~~ exits of the church!

(again with pathos
and in preacher tone)

It is also in money that the Devil plays his
game with us, because it is the way to many
lusts and evils beside the lust of the flesh,
being nearly always the bridge to the latter.
And if Jesus, looking at the Roman tax coin,
said to the hypocritical Pharisees,
Give God what belongs to God, and Caesar what
belongs to Caesar,
he really meant to say, Give God what belongs to
God -

(takes deep breath,
then loud)

(after a pause, speaks
in lower tone and especially penetratingly)

and give the Devil, what belongs to the D e v i l!

For verily, dear Christians,
the Devil is no less strongly present in money,
and in no less manifold ways, than in our sexual
and sensual lusts -
wherefore be on guard against the t r i n i t y
o f t h e D e v i l in the lust-form of the
woman, of the man and of m o n e y - -

(solemnly and with
pathos)

so that you may win etennal life,
and escape damnation in the flesh of Adam!

(again with lowered
voice)

Whosoever now proves himself and finds himself
worthy to partake of the Body of the Lord,
is welcome here as guest at this heavenly feast -

(with a sideglance
at Philip, who however does not respond)

eats and

(very slowly)

But whosoever/drinks unworthily -
e a t s a n d d r i n k s j u d g m e n t
u p o n h i m s e l f ! !

(continues talking
but in changed tone)

During the communion service the congregation
will sing the last verses of the song, and then
repeat it from beginning!

III - 4

During the opening chords, Kirchhain goes to the rear of
the altar, where the breadbasket is, and bows solemnly before it.
Then he turns around and gives Fabricius, who is the first to come,
a piece of bread.

Behind Fabricius stands his bride, and others behind her, mostly old
and dilapidated women and men; standing behind the bride in a coiled
line; they are compelled to wait, because after Kirchhain has given
Fabricius the bread at the rear of the altar, he has gone to the other
side of the altar where the wine-cup is, and waits for Fabricius.

Fabricius has followed the pathway indicated previously by Kirchhain,
and has passed the basin into which he threw a coin; arriving at the
front of the altar, he receives the wine-cup. While drinking the wine,
he stands on the lowest step of the Altar and has his back to the
congregation; Kirchhain stands on the highest step and has his face
turned to the congregation.

After drinking the wine, Fabricius continues circling around the altar
until he gets back to the breadbasket again, bows solemnly before it,
and then proceeds to hand out the bread. First to his bride, then to
the others. They all follow his example; after receiving the bread
they walk past the basin and throw in a coin and then drink wine by
Kirchhain, but then go back into the church.

Only about 15 or 20 persons come to communion, last of all Margaret
von der Saal, in nun's costume as at the end of the second act.
On the way from the bread to the wine, Margaret remains motionless in
front of the basin for a few moments and gazes at it in such a way that
it is very noticeable to all;
she becomes fully conspicuous, because the communicant ahead of her is
already at the wine-cup, as she still stands at the basin and stares
at her coin before throwing it into the basin.

When drinking the wine, Margaret holds the wine-cup noticeably long to her mouth, and at the same time turns her face so as to look at the picture of the crucifixion (the stained glass window); her position clearly shows the congregation what she is doing this.

Going onward, she stops short in front of Philip and Christine, but only Philip notices it, and stares at her. Then she walks quickly back into the church.

Last of all, Kirchhain goes to Fabricius and receives a piece of bread. Fabricius then goes to the wine-cup. Kirchhain follows him, throws a coin into the basin, and then receives the wine-cup like all the rest.

Then both take a position of prayer behind the altar, in such wise that Kirchhain stands before the wine-cup and Fabricius stands before the breadbasket. They take these positions at about the moment when the congregation is singing the last words of the fourth verse.

C O N G R E G A T I O N

(singing with organ during communion)

And though this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath willed
His truth to triumph through us.
The prince of darkness grim,
- We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For lo! his doom is sure, -
One little word shall fell him.

That word above all earthly powers -
No thanks to them - abideth;
The Spirit and the gifts are ours
Through Him who with us sideth.
Let goods and kindred go,
This mortal life also;
The body they may kill;
God's truth abideth still,
His kingdom is forever.

III - 5

K I R C H H A I N

(at Kirchhain's invitation, all rise, including Philip and Christine)

Let us pray!

K I R C H H A I N and F A B R I C I U S

(speak together; a bright churchbell rings; the entire congregation including Philip and Christine bow their heads and fold their hands)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be they name!
Thy kingdom come! Thy will be done in earth as it
is in heaven! Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us
from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory,
forever! A m e n !

After the prayer the church is quickly emptied, so that very soon Philip and Christine and Kirchhain and Fabricius are standing alone in the foreground, while Christine's ladies-in-waiting and others are like shadows waiting in the background.

P H I L I P

(motions Kirchhain to come to him)

The heavenly feast attracted few guests!

K I R C H H A I N

(gloomily)

Bad examples corrupt good habits!

P H I L I P

(strongly)

Watch your tongue - Kirchhain!

You are a preacher of the Word of God; I however am a ruler by grace of God, and at all events have established the reformed faith in my land, and have fostered it!

(in lighter tone, with irony)

According to your sermon I was filled with the Spirit of God when I did this - - Perhaps it might not be asking you too much to consider whether God's Spirit may not dwell in my thoughts and actions in other respects too!

K I R C H H A I N

I beg forgiveness, your Grace, if in respect to certain plans of your Grace -

(with a questioning

sideglance to Christine) I permit myself to doubt this; and to see these plans as in direct opposition to all of your deeds which I praised in my sermon.

P H I L I P

In your sermon you were speaking of a Duke of Hesse - who does not exist at all!

K I R C H H A I N

(quickly and fanatically) But who should exist, - yes, who s h o u l d e x i s t !

This Duke whom all the reformed Christians in Hesse honor, and likewise those in all Germany - h i m I wanted to incarnate in you through God's Word. And I am disconsolate at the fact that you will not embody him and still persist in your plan!

P H I L I P

So you deluded yourself into thinking that your sermon could change my mind - - Is there absolutely no way to make you see that through this way of double marriage, which you so violently scorn, I am seeking nothing else than a way to God?

K I R C H H A I N

(fanatically, without looking at Philip)

No - - - I c a n not see it, nor do I w a n t to see it, - for it is the way to the Devil!

(Philip turns away angrily and thereby ends the conversation)

C H R I S T I N E

(has remained a quiet but attentive listener until now, as has Fabricius; she speaks to Kirchhain)

M e you didn't miss at Holy Communion?

K I R C H H A I N

Yes, you too, noble Lady,

however your absence seemed to be explained by the absence of the Duke!

C H R I S T I N E

So it was! Though in a different way than you think. I had today intended to renew the sacrament of our wedlock in the reformed sacrament of Holy Communion -

K I R C H H A I N

(interrupts)

Marriage is no longer a sacrament with us, noble lady!

C H R I S T I N E

I know that! But have only known it for a few hours, and was terribly shocked to learn of it!

I must also confess that your marriage sermon shocked me terribly; and seemed to me to be the crassest opposite to what I feel to be the meaning and purpose of marriage -

However, this feeling and conviction likewise only began today!

K I R C H H A I N

What your Grace may think of as the meaning and purpose of marriage, is not known to me, -

but I cannot believe that you see God's will in a second marriage for your noble husband - - and will therefore consent to such a marriage!

C H R I S T I N E

(casting a questioning glance at Philip who still stands with his back turned, but listening carefully)

I have - not yet - decided - , but I am thinking - of giving my consent!

F A B R I C I U S

(looks at Kirchhain helplessly, then speaks mechanically and involuntarily, half aloud) Then we must do something at once!

C H R I S T I N E

(to Fabricius) What did you say?

F A B R I C I U S

(jerks together and speaks hastily)

Nothing of importance, noble Lady!

P H I L I P

(turns around suddenly and speaks to all, but at first to Christine)

I beg of you, Christine, to drive on ahead with Kirchhain and Fabricius - and to convince them that you too do not see any work of the Devil in my double marriage plan - even though you, after all, are the one who is most affected by it!

(to Kirchhain and Fabricius)

I beg of you, honored sirs, to accompany my wife, and leave me alone here.

I want to pray here once more, all alone, and call upon God, before the new year ~~is~~ begins - !

The sexton and some assistants have come with collection-plates from right to the altar; where ~~KIRCHHAIN~~ the sexton empties the plates into the basin, so that the sound thereof brings Philip's attention to it.

P H I L I P

(to Kirchhain and Fabricius, who have already turned to go with Christine)

L o o k !

The people also, have decided against you, - but they follow my call!

Y o u r Word of God and Body of God have drawn few coins. - - -

And if G o d is in the common people - as you yourselves claim - then H e is less in the bread and wine that comes from your hands, than in the coins that come from the hands of my people, and which are ~~gathered~~ today gathered here and in all Hesse!

C H R I S T I N E

(close to Philip, pulling him aside a little, whispering tenderly)

Have you - forgotten that you want to come to me tonight?

P H I L I P

(puts his arm around her hips tenderly)

I have forgotten nothing -

and am coming to you afterwards - as I wanted to - , though this gloomy person has confused me!

In this house of God, where he - in front of court and people - called me and everything that I - - that you and I together now intend to carry out, - a work of the Devil :

R i g h t h e r e I am going to call upon God once more in the old year, and prayerfully beg of Him to make His true will known to me! -

Then I will come to you!

(kisses her brow tenderly)

Dismiss your attendants, and expect me very soon!

C H R I S T I N E

Remain steadfast - ,

but come soon, so that you will still find them with me, if I cannot handle these two ~~alone~~

(she goes to the right

rear with Kirchhain and Fabricius

and waves to her attendants to come along)

P H I L I P

(to the sexton who is busy at the altar)

Let it remain!

Go and shut the doors.

Give m e the key to the small side door - and get it from me tomorrow.

(points left; the sexton gives him a key, bows deeply and then goes off right)

The steps of the sexton slowly die out, the turning of a key in the lock is heard in the distance; at the same time Philip goes to the right side of the altar where the bridal pair stood, and starts to run his hand through the coins in the basin.

P H I L I P

(after casually glancing at several coins and then throwing them back; holds on to one and reads)

Ca - ro - lus - Quin - tus - , the E m p e r o r !

(he throws the coin back into the basin, runs his hand through the coins again until pretty far down he finds the Goldphilip coin that Margaret threw in.)

I m y s e l f ! !

(he turns the coin around, using both hands, and reads)

Through - God's - grace - - Phi - lip - pus,
Duke - of Hesse!

(looks up and sighs) Through G o d ' s grace - ?

Will God's grace and mercy be extended to me?

(looks at the coin again, then suddenly turns it around)

What's written on the other side?

(reads)

Si de - us, no - bis - cum - -
quis con - tra nos ?

(looks up and stares straight ahead)

If G o d be with us -
who can be against us ?

G o d !

G o d ! !

G o d ! ! !

W h e r e is Thy t r u e embodiment?

(places the coin on the altar and looks at it from above)

In money the Devil is said to have His embodiment!

And therefore in the Emperor - , in the Duke!

(staring ahead)

Has the Devil got us, or have we got him,
when our picture is printed on money?

(the clock in the church steeple begins to hum and strike the hour, and Philip counts)

One - Two - Three - !

Just o n e more quarter hour!

Is a year of blessing -

or a year of disaster coming for me ?

(suddenly bends himself over the altar, his folded hands

surround the basin and his forehead almost touches the altar cover; he prays with loud fervor) - and lead us not into temptation, but

deliver us from evil, for Thine is the

Kingdom and the Power and the Glory, forever, Amen !

While Philip is bent over the altar, and is praying out loud, Margaret appears from behind one of the pillars which are seen at the rear and to the left of the altar. She is dressed as a nun and with her veil down. She approaches the altar with noiseless steps and remains standing opposite Philip.

M A R G A R E T

(as soon as Philip has spoken the word, Amen) A m e n !

P H I L I P

(starts! and draws back to lowest altar step) A g h o s t ?

Who are you?

M a r g a r e t

A ghost? - yes, a spirit, - but also a body; a human being like yourself, noble Duke!

P H I L I P

(recovers his poise and returns mechanically to his former place at the altar)

Oh, it's that nun!

(annoyed)

Why do you scare me?

(angry surprise)

What are you still looking for here?

M A R G A R E T

The same thing you are looking for - God!

P H I L I P

God?

Why, you went to Holy Communion!

M A R G A R E T

(interrupting)

That is where I l o s t the way to God!

P H I L I P

At H o l y Communion -

where we become bodily one with Christ and through Him become one also with the Father and the Holy Ghost?

M A R G A R E T

Yes, right there! - between the bread and the wine!

(she points with the left hand to the bread and with the right to the wine, and by appropriate gestures ~~xxx~~ indicates the way between them)

And through y o u , noble Duke!

P H I L I P

Through me? - What have I to do with it?

M A R G A R E T

After I had eaten the bread,

I looked at your picture on this coin -

(she points to the Goldphilip; Philip casts a glance at the coin but does not move otherwise)

before I threw it into the basin. It is your picture,

(Philip looks down at the coin) as you stand here;

in the same dress and the same posture, a ruler and Duke!

(overly solemn)

Philip, through God's grace, Duke of Hesse!

As/ r u l e r of the realm of Hesse I saw you
 but at the same time also as the s e r v a n t, -
 As Goldphilip and Silverphilip and also as copper-
 philip, who brings the people their bread and wine
 and all their food -
 As coin-constructed path to clothing, shoes, beds,
 closets, tables, chairs -
 As gold-opened door to home and hearth and house
 and garden - -
 s e r v i n g , like Jesus among his disciples at
 the first holy communion, I saw you as the servant
 of your subjects -
 and ruling through service, even as He the Son of
 God and King of all Kings -

P H I L I P

(interrupting)

The money on the altar disturbed your holy mood -
 but that is the fault of the pastor who allowed
 it to be collected at the altar, and not my fault!

M A R G A R E T

Never was my mood more holy and exalted -
 but please listen to me further !
 When I heard this Goldphilip fall into the basin,
 and had to think, -
 that the power of this gold coin is to be used in
 the war between Christians and Turks -
 this golden coin transformed itself in me into the
 picture of the Devil!
 This killing of human beings, which according to
 the preacher's words is a service to G o d and is
 the C r o w n of the reformed faith, -
 appeared to me now as Devil's service, and a
 disgrace to Christianity -

P H I L I P

(interrupts)

You dared - with this picture in your soul - to
 drink of the wine of Holy Communion - the
 b l o o d of the crucified One ?

M A R G A R E T

(explosively and almost jubilantly)

I h a v e dared it -
 and believe that God himself impelled me to it -
 and also inspired me with abhorrence toward the
 pastor -

(points with ~~left~~ right hand to Kirchhain's place at communion)
 before the picture of the crucified One -

(points with left hand to the
 direction in which she saw the window-picture
 behind Kirchhain, while she drank the wine)

while I drank here!

(points with right
 hand to her place)

As a highpriest I saw this preacher - as/priestly
 and slaughterer of mankind - as/sacrificer
 from the blood of whose victim he gave me to drink!
 A picture of horror! that overwhelmed me and caused
 me to drink more than I wanted to.

P H I L I P

Unhappy creature - you drank judgment upon yourself;
 the wine already darkened your spirit as you drank it!

M A R G A R E T

(beginning of ecstasy)

The wine illuminated my spirit !
 For as I left the altar, my glance fell upon you -
 you noticed it and looked at me -
 in the same moment the thought shot through me
 like ~~lightning~~ a flash of lightning:
 He is the one, who shall build a true way to
 God through money -
 through money as the embodiment of the joy of life
 for all mankind - -
 He is the new God - born out of money and
 filled with joy !

P H I L I P

(has drawn back somewhat, and an
 uncertain gesture of repulse)

That is - the message of a drunk !
 The wine has intoxicated you -
 You are speaking out of that intoxication !

M A R G A R E T

(increasing ecstasy)

Then it is a holy intoxication - through
 holy wine! And it is the Holy Ghost
 that speaks through me!
 Vessel of the Holy Ghost am I -
 and filled with the joy of all creatures,
 who are nourishing a new Christ in me!
 Full of joy am I, and full of desire -
 desire for the man who as God of Love will kiss me -
 and will drink from me - !

P H I L I P

To the Devil you belong, you sinister nun -
 or you may be the Devil himself!

(crosses himself and withdraws to
 the lowest step of the altar as
 before)

M A R G A R E T

(disappointed and tired)

Devil am I to you, when I thought myself
 to be mother of God ? !

(pulls up the veil and tears
 the whole hood off her head)

Then you shall see -
~~that for yourself you have built
 the cross of condemnation!~~

(quickly takes off the nun
 costume, and then stands before
 Philip in the same dress as at
 the end of the first act.)

that you have made the sign of the
 cross against yourself !

P H I L I P

(watches Margaret with increasing astonishment)

What - y o u - Margaret ! ?

M A R G A R E T

No !

Philip through God's grace Duke of Hesse -
changed into the D e v i l !

P H I L I P

(somewhat angrily) What is the meaning of this game, Margaret ?

M A R G A R E T

It is no game any longer -
since your wife sees my brother in me and desires
to have me as her second husband!

P H I L I P

(holds his head) Y o u ? ! - How can that be?

M A R G A R E T

S h e is the one who sent me the nun's costume.

P H I L I P

(first thoughtful, then laughing)

(laughs loudly) So y o u are her p o s s i b i l i t y - -
Why?, that's - that's just like a comedy!

M A R G A R E T

Which can very easily ~~be~~ turn into a tragedy,
if I don't disappear from here soon!

P H I L I P

You want to go away from here?

M A R G A R E T

There is no other way out, is there ?
now that the problem has no possible solution?
To H e r I should be a m a n despite the fact
that I am a w o m a n -
While to y o u I appear to be the D e v i l ,
where I would like to be w o m a n -
you even made the sign of the cross against me!

P H I L I P

Against myself I drew the cross -
n o t against you!You could not know what was going~~o~~ on in me when
I did it!My desire for the w o m a n in the nun was greater
than ever before for any woman!I was desperate, because I thought I was already
being untrue to you, and felt myself in the power
of the Devil -untrue to you and therefore completely forsaken
by God!

M A R G A R E T

And n o w - when you know who the nun is -
you would not draw the cross ?

P H I L I P

Now I am happy that even my involuntary desires have
not drawn me away from you, and from the path which
shall lead me to God - why then still make the
sign of the cross?

M A R G A R E T

(restrained and in lowered tone)

And will you also not make the cross,
if I now repeat what as nun I already said to you,

that I am pregnant with the new Christ,
 and am filled with desire for that man -
 who will embody Him - -
 f i l l e d w i t h d e s i r e for the b o d y
 of that man who in my arms will become h i s
 o w n divine Father!
 God the Father and God the Son in one form -
 created through ecstatic union with myself as
 God's own bride and God's own mother - -
 that man who thus becomes the renewer of the
 divine Trinity in my body as the receptacle of
 the Holy Ghost!

P H I L I P

(caught by Margaret's vision in
 spite of himself, stammering)

A man -- a woman - - -
 A loving pair as divine Trinity - - -
 which is only in heaven !

(forcibly casts
 off the spell)

We live upon e a r t h , Margaret!

M A R G A R E T

T h a t you can say h e r e -

(includes church and
 altar with a sweeping
 gesture)

where all Christians seek their Christ in
 b o d i l y form -

(points with left
 hand to bread)
 (points with right
 hand to wine)

in his f l e s h

and his b l o o d, -
 in order to become bodily and corporeally o n e
 with him, and t h r o u g h him to become bodily
 and corporeally one a l s o with the Holy Ghost
 and with God in heaven -
 one therefore with the divine Trinity in their
 very own flesh and blood !

You need the e x a l t a t i o n ,
 which generated a new Christ in me,
 as I a t e here -

(points to bread)

and d r a n k -

(points to wine)

in order to become one with God, and through Him
 to become one with you,
 who seek God in me!

Therefore eat and drink like I - ,

(pushes the basket
 and winecup together,
 in the direction of the basin)

so that the old Christ also becomes
 renewed in you, and then through
 both of us in all mankind.

P H I L I P

(quickly and again
 terrified)

In a l l mankind ! ? Then you want to convert all
 mankind to your God of Love? That which unites
 you with me, should become a / r i g h t for a l l ?

M A R G A R E T

(with pathos that gradually
turns into ecstasy)

Ever since I cut off my hair, to save you from
perjury and from God's wrath,
the Spirit of God has been in me -
and is showing me bit by bit the way,
which no priest or preacher can show you,
and which is the only way that I can come to you.
O n l y if my struggle is for a l l mankind -
to bring them joy and happiness -
only then will God become incarnate in
our pairing joy!
To me it is a sign from God, that Christine
loves me because of my cut-off hair,
and for that reason is consenting to your plan. - - -
Therefore, eat and drink,
I beg of you a second time!

(places her left hand
over the bread, and her right
over the wine, as a gesture of
invocation; then speaks as though
uttering an invocation, while she
looks into Philip's eyes)

Through this heavenly food
we become an earthly pair -
The godly three
becomes a human two - ,
Through the joy of two
comes the bliss of all !

P H I L I P

(at first fascinated, but
gradually repelling it)

The message is too good to be true.
One would have to be emperor and pope in one,
to make it come true!
But I am only a Duke - withal the leader of a
group of nations, who will not follow me,
if these pastors do not follow me - - -
Moreover I cannot decide whether it be
angel or devil that you experience as Christ!

M A R G A R E T

(wild and ecstatic) Your hesitancy makes me furious -
because I can see only weakness in it!
What I have experienced is neither angel
nor devil - it is y o u y o u r s e l f !
Y o u u n i q u e l y and y o u a l o n e -
even as I saw you on this coin as the joy-bringer
to your people and to all mankind - -
Yet, alas, you lack the courage to be yourself!

(bitter and scornful)

Did you not tell me yourself, that the Emperor
Maximilian wanted to buy the votes of all the
cardinals, in order to become pope as well as
emperor?
This valiant emperor - who made you a ruler at
fourteen years of age - did you not often praise him
as the highest example for you and all rulers? !

P H I L I P

(~~then~~ vaguely and
absent-mindedly) But finally he too abandoned the idea!

M A R G A R E T

(wilder, almost
w/ screaming)

Because no maiden consecrated herself to become
a path to God for him -

(suddenly changing
tone to penetrating
quietness.)

^{/way}
But listen now to me, what I must demand of you,
if you do not want to lose me!

(Philip becomes
attentive again)

The papal seal shows the pope on the front,
and the apostles Paul and Peter on the back !

(becomes solemn and
ecstatic again)

gradually
As a token of your love,
and as ~~proof~~ proof that I really am the way to God
for you, together with Christine in double marriage
to you,
I ask of you the striking of a coin similar to
the papal seal, but showing my picture and Christine's
on the back, and your picture on the front!
This double-wedlocked triangle
Philip - Christine - Margaret
as joy-embodying trinity,
shall become the money of your people and of all
mankind, and be the new symbol of God!

P H I L I P

(oppressed and defensively)

What you ask - that is - - -
a pact with the Devil - - -
and a d i a b o l i c a l trinity!

(crosses himself)

M A R G A R E T

(wrathfully
ecstatic)

If ~~this~~ this coin-symbolized, joy-embodying Trinity
i s of the Devil -
then all I can say is that a l l o f C h r i s t -
e n d o m must go with us to the Devil,
in order that it may finally become h u m a n i t y:

(again holds left hand
over the bread, and right
over the wine, and speaks as though
uttering an invocation, as she holds
Philip with her eyes)

God is not here and is not there,
Not any time, nor any place! ^{where!}
Through us alone, He comes to earth,
Our joy and money give Him birth!

(again wildly ecstatic)

Nothing terrifies me any more on this pathway,
not even the cross, which you now drew for the
second time in front of me, -
to crucify my God of Love the second time!

(picks up the coin from
the altar and holds it before
Philip's eyes)

In t h i s coin I saw your higher self -

(holds the coin up
high and looks up)

and pray now to God, that He may reveal Himself
to you in the loving p a i r -
and in the serving m o n e y !

(she glances again at Philip, and becomes friendlier/in her tone)

For the t h i r d time I ask of you
and b e g you - ,
instead of bread I'll use the coin!

(she kisses the coin and then throws it into the winecup, so that it rings clearly. Philip jerks together at the sound; but it throws Margaret into ecstasy)

An ecstasy of gold and joy shall seize you!

P H I L I P

(takes hold of the bread basket with both hands and bows his head over it: with hollow voice)

Oh G o d , save her soul from the Devil !

M A R G A R E T

(takes the winecup and lifts it aloft following it with her eyes; so that the cup is over the bowed head of Philip and therefore also over the breadbasket; cries out despairingly)

Oh G o d , make him free of his doubts!

Christine's voice is heard left, but still distantly:

P h i l i p!

Philip and Margaret remain rooted to the spot, in the positions above described; and listen to hear any further sound.

Christine's voice from left, but nearer and somewhat louder:

P h i l i p ! !

Philip and Margaret look at each other silently, and place the basket and cup back on the altar.

P H I L I P

(softly to Margaret) That is Christine !

(Margaret pushes the nun's costume behind the altar with her foot)

Christine's voice left, very near and loud: P h i l i p ! ! !

After Christine's last call,
walks on the highest step of
the altar around to the front
of it and toward the left, so
that he stands exactly between
Christine and Margaret as the
former enters left.

C H R I S T I N E
(breathlessly) Thank God, that I find you!
Didn't you hear me call?

P H I L I P
I only heard you just now -
but why have you come back here?

C H R I S T I N E
(still breathless) To warn you of the danger with which
Kirchhain and Fabricius are threatening you!

M A R G A R E T
(to Christine, who has in
the meantime stepped up on
the highest step of the altar,
where Philip has moved back a
little to make room for her, in
such a way that any moment
Christine must see Margaret!)

That's what I did too - !

C H R I S T I N E
(startled, but quickly
recovers her poise) You t o o - - are here ? !

M A R G A R E T
I will gladly go now, if your Grace wishes.

C H R I S T I N E
(quickly and with
~~xxx~~ love) No, dear Baron - forgive my being frightened!
Stay with us and help us - !

P H I L I P
(has moved to the back
of the altar and thereby
automatically caused Christine
to stand where he stood before,
opposite Margaret; interrupts Christine)

The word d a n g e r is no doubt an exaggeration!
There, this collection
(points to basin) has clearly proven that my Hessians have not much
use for the Christianity that Kirchhain preaches.

C H R I S T I N E
(points to basin) Yes, but what will your Hessians do,
when they are told that this money
is to be used for your marriage to a second woman,
and will serve the devil of lust -

P H I L I P
These two fellow dare -
to say this of my call for money against the Turks ?

C H R I S T I N E
(points to basin) They say the Devil is in all money - and most
particularly in the money that was gathered today
on the Hessian altars - - -
And that it is my d u t y to protect the cause

of Protestantism from the disgrace of a double marriage, by ~~refusing~~ publicly refusing to give my consent to this second wedding. for the Duke An i n s u l t Fabricius called it, /to ask the people to give money for a war against the Turk, and at the same time establish a feminine harem for himself!

P H I L I P

The thankless scoundrel!

As a fugitive from burning at the stake he found refuge and safety with me, and soon was also given employment and position - -

(with a laught of contempt)

his young wife this fool has apparently entirely forgotten!

C H R I S T I N E

I wanted to dismiss him, as I saw her standing and waiting in a white dress at the church entrance; but he only motioned to her and then stepped into my carriage...

(imitating Fabricius)

S p i r i t u a l duties were more important than n u p t i a l duties - which he could still fulfil, and fulfil even better a f t e r the Devil of Lust had been driven out of city and state - !

P H I L I P

The Devil of L u s t - - that means me, for I embody for him all that ~~which~~ Kirchhain reviled in his sermon and in his wedding speech. But I still can't see any d a n g e r in the impertinence of these two hypocrites - whose mouths I shall very soon stop!

C H R I S T I N E

But that isn't all that I must tell you!

P H I L I P

(impatiently)

Then speak up! What is it that you call dangerous?

C H R I S T I N E

(lowers voice and speaks quickly)

Tonight yet there is to be a conference of pastors - in Kirchhain's house. -

Tomorrow the news is to ~~be~~ spread through all Hesse, that your double-marriage plan is to be explained by your insanity, which has come upon you in the same year as your father, and has resulted from your recent physical illness -

and that this insanity will bring disaster to the whole people, if you continue as ruling Duke - Our oldest son is to take your place - and I am to be the regent until his maturity!

P H I L I P

They have dared to make such statements openly ! ? They have committed h i g h t r e a s o n.

(determined voice and posture)

I will have them and all their co-conspirators arrested tonight! -

What did you say to them?

C H R I S T I N E

When I sensed the nature of their machinations,

I simulated indignation at your marriage plan, and acted as if I had been convinced by them - so that I might learn their whole plans!

P H I L I P

(out of his strenuous thinking he speaks forth and interrupts her)
That was very smart of you -
And I must admit that the word danger is really appropriate!

(with a questioning sideglance to Margaret; haltingly and uncertain)

Unfortunately, we must again - think of concealing the second marriage - -

(Margaret's face and a slight gesture indicate opposition)

For the present at least -

M A R G A R E T

Then for the present you will also have to wait for my sister!

P H I L I P

But can't you explain to her all that has happened?

M A R G A R E T

That will not help, for she will then ask whether your double marriage can ever be openly accepted anywhere in Christendom. -
But I know another solution.

P H I L I P

(doubtingly)

Another solution?

C H R I S T I N E

Speak, dear Baron!

M A R G A R E T

(to Philip)

Why not make it true -
what these pastors call your evil intent:
proclaim the feminine harem as a right for all men -
and make an alliance with the Turks, instead of waging war against them!

P H I L I P

An alliance with the Turks?

C H R I S T I N E

(to Margaret)

You spoke of the right of the men to have a feminine harem, dear Baron -
and I will not oppose this right - -
if as a counterpart to it, we women also receive the right to have a masculine harem!

P H I L I P

(painful laugh)

Masculine harem -
but that is something utterly impossible!

M A R G A R E T

Forgive me, noble Duke, if I permit myself to agree with her Grace in this, and to call her demand just - !

(to Christine, but almost talking to herself as if starting into ecstasy again)

What you ask - - is in harmony with the God-ordained equality of man and woman.
Christian harem is what I would call the double-harem of a wedded pair - -

(takes deep breath and makes her voice stronger)

and that shall be the solution
of our problem!

C H R I S T I N E

(eyes fastened on Margaret, speaks full of enthusiasm)

Ch r i s t i a n h a r e m - Yes! that is
our solution and our liberation!

P H I L I P

(uncertain and
haltingly)

I must admit - that calling it by this name -
could bring me nearer to the thought of an alliance
with the Turks - especially since Hungary and
France too, are already allied with Suleiman -
only -
it seems to me impossible to combine both religions!

(shakes the spell
off and speaks
fluently)

I have to recall, that in Constantinople - where the
Turks have now reigned for nearly a hundred years -
G r e e k Christians were still fighting with
R o m a n Christians about the Body of Christ,
even when the Turks had already climbed the walls
of the city!

And I myself went through the same thing in Marburg
only ten years ago - incidentally it was during the
same time that the Turks were besieging Vienna for
the first time, - I had to watch Luther and Zwingli
fighting with each other over the ~~same~~ meaning
of the little word I S in the phrase,
THIS I S MY BODY!

But all that is nothing compared to what would
happen if one tried to unite our Jehovah-priests
with priests of Allah!

M A R G A R E T

Before the priests are called together into
conference, you must already have made your
alliance with Suleiman, and must have already
laid the religious foundation for the double harem:

(solemnly and drawing into ecstasy)

Not the c r o s s , nor the c r e s e e n t
shall be the sign and symbol of God,
but a c o i n - - -

(she holds her right
hand over the winecup as
Philip follows her gesture
with his eyes)

with y o u r picture on the one side,
and the picture of the Sultan on the other -

(with pathos and slowly)

as c o i n a g e of w o r l d - p o w e r - -
and b r i d g e to a l m i g h t i n e s s -
a n d - as t h e w a y to - G o d ! ! !

(holds left hand over the
bread; speaks quickly and
as if uttering an invocation;
Philip and Christine listen
with close attention)

No longer shall God's Body be upon earth only
in the bread and wine;
through a ruler pair that comes forth out of
the money system, will God take possession of
a l l human nourishment -
and then through the money system will He own
all mankind and the world!

III - 11

C H R I S T I N E

I follow you, dear Baron -
 (with gesture of supplication to Philip)
 and beg you also to follow him, - because in showing
 us the W a y t o G o d - he also shows the way
 out of our difficulties !

P H I L I P

(half convinced) I too - - am in the grip of exaltation - - -
 almost against my will - - -
 (shaking it off) But this alliance cannot be achieved, because in
 all Hesse, and in all Germany, n o t o n e m a n
 could be found who would be able to carry such a
 message to Constantinopœ, - and it would be
 impossible to deal with the matter in writing! -
 W h o m could I send?

M A R G A R E T

M e ! !

PHILIP and CHRISTINE

(together) Y o u , dear ! ?
 (both look at each other quizzically to see if the other noticed the
 involuntary "dear"; they again speak together as they correct themselves
 as they look away from each other - speaking in half-loud tone of voice)

Y o u ! ?

M A R G A R E T

(passionately) I beg you to do so - I'll start right off tomorrow,
 on the f i r s t day of the year, which shall be
 a year of blessing for you and all mankind!
 I will r i d e - ride like the Devil - in order to
 become God's angel between you and Suleiman!

P H I L I P

(still uncertain) My second self would then be my ambassador!
 But still I'm tortured by the doubt whether you
 are an angel or a devil!

M A R G A R E T

Soon the clock will strike twelve, and the year is
 ended which began for you as a year of disaster -
 (points with left hand to bread, and right to wine)
 which brought no help to you, neither in the bread
 nor the wine of God's Body -
 In this last hour - h e l p y o u r s e l f -
 then God can help you too!

(the bell that struck the quarter hour before, now strikes four times
 to indicate the full hour; Philip and Christine jerk together; Margaret
 takes winecup) I drink to the alliance between you and Suleiman!
 (she drinks at the first sounding of a deeper and louder chime
 (which slower than the other, strikes twelve times)

C H R I S T I N E

(stretching both hands toward winecup) You are also my ambassador!
 (drinks and offers Philip the winecup)

P H I L I P

(takes it mechanically with both hands, looks into it, then stares ahead
 and speaks in half-loud murmur) Can I trust -
 Women's lust - ?

(suddenly determined)

Be it God or be it Devil -
 I will drown my every quibble ! ! !

(at the last striking
 of the chime, he places the cup to his lips and drinks. ◊)

Curtain falls!

The view is into Suleiman's bedroom, the rear part of which is higher than the fore part by three steps, which run straight across the whole room.

In the middle of the edge of the raised part of the floor, there are two richly decorated columns; which, together with the walls, carry the flat roof; and which are so close together that between them there is just room enough for the foot end of a quite broad and flat divan, whose head end reaches to the rear wall of the room. The divan with its accessories, together with the two columns, dominates the stage.

Left and right of the head of the divan, there are two large broad windows with magnificent curtains, which are drawn open. Further on, left and right, there is a portion of the wall and then a door each side; all is richly decorated with tapestries and carvings. The two doors touch the side walls at the two corners.

In the higher (rear) part of the room, the side-walls are unobstructed, being hung only with tapestries. In the lower (fore) part of the room, there are left and right two richly decorated doors.

The floors and also the three steps are covered all over with heavy carpets, which make every footfall noiseless. Principally in the fore part of the room there are many small tables as well as many pillows in every possible shape and color. Also various musical instruments. Receptacles ~~filled with fruits~~ and ~~vases~~ loaded with fruits, and vases filled with beautiful flowers are also visible.

On the rear wall between the two windows, i.e. over the head end of the divan, there hangs a calendar with large removable pages. The page which is visible, shows the number 111 very clearly, which is bordered by Turkish letters.

This number is seen by the light of a lamp which hangs over the divan, and directly over Suleiman, who is sitting at the foot end of the divan and staring straight ahead.

At his left and on the lowest step stands the big and fat, but magnificently dressed, Vezier - Suleimanpascha - holding a paper in both hands. His attitude shows that he has just stopped reading, and is waiting to hear Suleiman's response. In front of the door in the right outer wall, stands a big and fat eunuch with a drawn curved sword.

S U L E I M A N

How long has the Duke's ambassador been waiting?

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

(with high eunuch voice)

One week, your majesty!

S U L E I M A N

Then he has little reason to be impatient!
Other ambassadors wait months before they receive an audience.

IV - 1

How long, for example, has the Hungarian ambassador already waited again, even though Isabella of Hungary is already our ally?

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

Three weeks, your majesty!

S U L E I M A N

And the ambassador of the king of France - who is also offering an alliance with us?

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

Two months, your majesty!

S U L E I M A N

Well then - - ?

And the ambassadors from our enemies - first of all from Austria, and from the Pope, also the ambassador from Venice, from Spain and from Portugal -

haven't they all waited still longer?

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

But your majesty said yesterday -

S U L E I M A N

(let's feet drop down from the crossed position, so that they come to stand on the top step; he doesn't listen to Suleimanpascha)

Let them all wait, these Christian dogs - both friends and foes. - What do they suddenly want at my door anyway? Do they already sense the storm that is drawing together over the Christian world?

Allah's cloud will darken their sun, And His lightning will strike down upon them. And out of the thunder will sound Mohamed's voice - the voice of o u r prophet, who is higher than Jesus and Moses - and all other prophets of the world!

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

(so filled with wonder that his voice is even higher than usual)

Your m a j e s t y !

S U L E I M A N

(ignores him, and continues to speak with lowered voice and downcast glance)

Our armament is growing - ! Soon all the cannons will be forged - that shall make known Allah's will to the unbelievers!

(stands up and stretches his right arm forward, with flat of hand held as if pushing away)

This time Vienna shall not stop me!

(stamps his foot)

This time n o t !

I want to see where the Danube has its source - and on the R h i n e I want to open my winter quarters, - in W o r m s where the Emperor Charles held his first Imperial Congress, at the time when

IV - 1

I became Sultan, and conquered Belgrade - -
First Belgrade, and then a few years later
Budapest - and now Vienna and Worms!

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

(enthused and in
high pitch)

Ex a l t e d M a j e s t y ! !

S U L E I M A N

(held by his vision, he
dreamily descends the steps and comes
forward somewhat, in order to master
his excitement; speaks almost in
ecstasy)

The following Spring I shall march through France,
and in Spain I shall complete the circle which my
predecessors in the faith tried to draw in the
opposite direction, a thousand years ago -
the circle of Allah around the Mediterranean
and around Rome !

My great grandfather conquered Constantinople
and turned the Christian church into a ~~Mosque~~
Mohammedan Mosque - -

I will make R o m e the capital of my realm,
and the Church of St. Peter shall be the central
Mosque of the world. -

Not in the sign of the cross -

(clenches his fist threateningly)

N o ! in the sign of the c r e s c e n t
shall mankind worship God!

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

(so overwrought that his voice breaks completely)

E x a l t e d m a g n i f i c e n t m a j e s t y -
Y o u r e x a l t e d m a j e s t y s p e a k s
m a g n i f i c e n t w o r d s - - T u r k i s h w o r d s - -
O s m a n i c w o r d s , i n w h i c h O s m a n h i m s e l f
is resurrected!

(suddenly changes tone, and
almost in the same business voice
as at the beginning)

So therefore your majesty's decision of yesterday
is cancelled?

S U L E I M A N

(absently)

What decision ?

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

In yesterday's session your Majesty was pleased -
- I now venture to say, wrongly pleased -
to consider the possibility of an alliance with
the King of France and the Duke of Hesse, in
addition to the alliance with Isabella of Hungary.
The grand-vezier Luftipascha was to deal with the
French ambassador. I myself was to deal with the
ambassador of the Duke, and to obtain from him
a written clarification regarding the Christian
harem,

(points to the paper in his hand)

which I have just had the honor to read to
your Majesty

S U L E I M A N

(holds his head)

Had I actually decided that?

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A
 (worriedly) Your Majesty was clearly distracted yesterday -
 It was a mistake of your Majesty!
 A majestic mistake, if I may say so!

S U L E I M A N
 (absently) D i s t r a c t e d ?
 (sobs) Since Ibrahim is dead -
 (sobs louder) I am distracted, and dream !

He was my friend, perfect as a dream -
 And he was my perfect dream, formed into a living
 friend - - -
 Now however I dream formlessly and futilely !

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A
 (worried lest Suleiman
 give up his plans of conquest,
 speaks with high pinched voice)
 Only a mistake, your Majesty -
 a m i s t a k e , nothing more !

S U L E I M A N
 (same tone as at beginning of the scene but more decided)
 Yes - you are right - Vezier!
 It was a mistake, everything that I babbled
 before - an illusion and phantasmagoria -
 which already my ancestors conjured up - -
 first of all, Bajesid the First, my
 (counts on four fingers)
 great - great - great - great grandfather. - -
 He already wanted his horse to eat oats
 off the high altar in St. Peters at Rome!
 (laughs aloud) He wanted his horse to attend Mass!

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A
 (claps his hands for joy) A wonderful idea, your Majesty!

(to the guard who has come
 because the handclapping is a
 call to him, and who stands
 servilely before Suleimanpascha) What do you want?

(stops clapping and looks at his hands) Oh - that !
 (wrathfully) You j-a-a-a-ackass !

(he motions the guard to go back; the
 guard resumes his place at the door)

S U L E I M A N
 (who amusedly watched the
 incident; smilingly) You have often tried to be a poet,
 Suleimanpascha, - why not try to write a comedy
 in which Horses and ~~Jackasses~~ J-a-a-a-ackasses
 (imitates S-p's tone) -- demand a new reformation of Christianity -
 say, the incarnation of God in oats!

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A
 (claps his hands) Great, your Majesty! - fabulously witty!
 (to guard who has again come
 because of the clapping) J-a-a-a-ackass !! J-a-a-a-ackass !!
 (motions the guard back)

S U L E I M A N
 In this farce comedy the question must be raised,
 whether the jackass who eats the consecrated oats
 turns into God, - or whether the God in the
 consecrated oats turns into the jackass!

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

(starts to clap hands, but
catches himself as he glances
at the guard)

And this burlesque will be performed in
St. Peter's in Rome -
before it is consecrated as a Mosque !

S U L E I M A N

With you in the principal role, you old jackass!

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

(draws back, protesting) Your Majesty !

S U L E I M A N

(pays no more attention to
him; becomes self-absorbed)

For the fifth time I am now marching into Hungary -
The army is bigger and better than ever -
I'll add another piece of land to my territory --
possibly also Vienna -
Yes - maybe V i e n n a too ! !

But to c l o s e the circle - that I will
n e v e r be able to do - - !
Unless - unless it be through a union of Turks
and Christians, - as the Duke proposes !

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

(in repressed tone, so that his
voice sounds lower than usual,
with gesture of opposition)

Your Majesty!

S U L E I M A N

(still self-absorbed) To the Mohammedan belongs the e a r t h !
To the Christian belongs the s e a !
So spoke the ancient oracle!

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

(like before, with more
opposition)

Our fleet rules the whole Mediterranean!

S U L E I M A N

(engaged)

And the whole Mediterranean is a miserable puddle,
if you compare it with the Atlantic ocean,
which is closed to our ships, at Gibraltar!

(stretches right arm, pointing left)

When the sun sinks away in Europe, it stands at its
highest point in America -
where since Columbus the minions of the Spanish
king rule.

And when the sun sinks there -

(also stretches left arm, turning eyes right)

it already rises here.

In the Empire of Charles the sun never wholly sinks!

(lets arms and also head fall)

How often Ibrahim explained this to me !!!

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

Ibrahim was a heretic, whom Allah judged!

S U L E I M A N

(tears his sword half out of his scabbard, and roars)

Silence, you eunuch!

Ibrahim was my friend, my second self !

Not God judged him, but I did -

I - , because -- -- --

(puts his sword back and becomes quiet again)

Do you think, Suleimanpascha - ,
that Roxelane can love two men at the same time ?

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

(embarrassed smile,
voice at highest pitch) I know nothing about such things, your Majesty!

S U L E I M A N

(looks at him from the side) Be glad that you were castrated, and grew up as a keeper of the bed - -

And not yourself lay in the bed ~~with/women~~ !
You castrated men have it easier in life,
and are closer to Allah, than we men who are only circumcised. - Sex is of the Devil!

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

(renewed embarrassment) Your Majesty!

S U L E I M A N

(viciously) I'll dismiss Luftipascha and make you my Grand Vezier, Suleimanpascha!
You already have my name, and maybe also the wisdom of our namesake Solomon, which people look for in me!

(less viciously and more to himself)

Yes, you shall become the new second Sultan - my better half, so to speak - the Godlike, because castrated, part of the Sultan!
How old are you anyway, Suleimanpascha?

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

I now count 79 years, your Majesty!

S U L E I M A N

(reflects)

79 ! - That increases your Godlikeness very considerably !

79 ? - Then you still knew my great-grandfather Mohammed, who conquered Constantinople and converted the Haga Sophia into a Mosque?

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

(very proud)

When Allah admitted your Majesty's great-grandfather to Paradise, I was 20 years old!

S U L E I M A N

(almost sweetly)

Cannot you understand that his realm was a different one than mine, which now already includes just as many Christians as Mohammedans?
If I now conquer Austrää or even Germany, I will have more Christians than Mohammedans.
What good does it do me, ~~if~~ to convert thousands of churches in the conquered cities, and consecrate them as mosques -

if only my soldiers and my officials attend them ?

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

Formerly our method for conquered peoples was - Kiss the Koran or die !

S U L E I M A N

(angrily repulsing) Then conquered Hungary would be transformed into an unpopulated desert - and we would lose the taxes; we would lose a half million ducats yearly which ~~we~~ come from there!

Would you want that ?

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

(stands helpless, finally shakes head and makes some inarticulate sounds)

I - oh - oh!

S U L E I M A N IV - 1

(half to himself) That the Koran distinctly recognizes the Old and New Testaments as revelations from Allah, shows me the way to a world empire of united Turks and Christians !

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

(solemnly invoking help to ward off these ideas)

A l l a h i s A l l a h !

S U L E I M A N

(excited)

And Mohammed is His prophet!

(almost roaring)

~~And~~ And I am the r e s p o n s i b l e representative of Mohammed - Calif and God's shadow just as he was -

(Suleimanpascha ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~)

(throws both arms forward and bows deeply before Suleiman)

and S u l t a n in addition!! - Lord of public prayer and coinage, I s l a m i c M a j e s t y ,

(Suleimanpascha throws himself flat on the floor in order to kiss Suleiman's feet)

whose commands, for you slaves, are revelations from God! Stand up, you old jackass !

(Suleiman ^{pascha} tries to get up but he is too fat and heavy)

Ibrahim was wrong to despise the Koran. But you are wrong to despise the Bible. Allah and Jehovah are t w o names for o n e God. And the Koran has the same relation to the Bible -

(takes a gold coin out of his coat pocket, and holds it up between two fingers; both Suleimanpascha and the guard cast avaricious eyes at it)

as the front of this golden Suleiman has to the back of it. Why should I object to the picture of the Duke of Hesse on the back - if in alliance with him I can conquer Rom and renew the Roman world-empire through a united religion ? !

(lets the coin fall so that it lies between Suleimanpascha and the guard) Whoever gets it first, can have it!

(Suleimanpascha is still lying on the floor, but quickly throws himself around to clutch the coin, as he wrestles with the guard who also plunged toward it. Suleimanpascha ~~gets~~ gets it.)

(SULEiman is laughing)

Ha ! That's the God that you all crawl to!

(to Suleimanpascha after the guard returns to his place)

Why don't you stand up?

(Suleimanpascha makes renewed desperate efforts, but always sinks back. Suleiman speaks to guard)

Help the Vezier to get on his feet!

(the guard rushes over to Suleimanpascha, but Suleiman motions to the guard to stop)

Halt! - first make him give you the golden Suleiman.

(Suleimanpascha gazes at the coin sorrowfully and then with a deep sigh gives it to the guard, who helps him up)

Send for the Duke's ambassador. -

I will talk him out of the Christian harem - -

and then make the alliance with him !

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

(still groaning over his effort)

At your service, your Majesty!

(bows and is about to leave through the door in right wall)

S U L E I M A N

I wonder if the ambassador has any understanding of women -

As I looked at him yesterday through the shuttered window in the divan room, he seemed unusually young to me !

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

(half way to the door he turns around)

He is still young, your Majesty!

But his letter shows -

(his eyes look for the letter, which is lying on the floor. Suleiman follows his gaze)

that he is wise and intelligent beyond his age - but whether he knows anything about women - ?

S U L E I M A N

(motions him to go)

Remain next door until the ambassador comes, and then lead him in here.

I must make a decision - today yet!

For this thing is occupying my thought too much and is weakening my power of decision in all my matters.

(to the guard, as

Suleimanpascha leaves) Give me that letter there!

(the guard jumps to get the letter and gives it to Suleiman; who walks around one of the columns, then lets himself fall on the divan and reads for a few seconds; then folds the letter and puts it into his pocket, and then remains stretched out at full length with his eyes closed)

H E A R T S D E L I G H T

(enters through rear door at right) (looks at Suleiman and then goes over to the guard)

Hasn't he asked for me yet ?

(the guard shakes his head, she stares at him silently, then comes to the foreground, speaking to no one in particular)

But today is my day - !

A N G E L V O I C E

(has in the meantime entered through rear door at left; after a glance at Suleiman goes over to guard, as Heartsdelight is moving away from latter to front of stage)

Shouldn't you give the signal to call us for our walk?

(the guard silently shakes his head; she looks at him with astonishment, and throws a glance at the windows through which the sun is brightly shining)

Oh, the lovely sun - , the new Spring !

B E A U T Y G L O W

(has in the meantime entered through rear door right, and has stepped close to Suleiman to look at him; she still sees the guard shaking his head to Angelvoice's question, but now asks him herself)

Doesn't his Majesty want to go out?

(the guard silently shakes his head. She imitates him with comical exaggeration and points with her finger to the guard's forehead)

I guess you are shaking it to find out if there is anything inside !

(then she moves to the front to join the others)

M O R N I N G S T A R

(has in the meantime entered through rear door left; also steps close to Suleiman before going over to the guard)

Aren't we going out?

(the guard silently shakes his head. She goes front to the others and speaks to them)

Then why does he ask us to put on our street clothes?

E V E N I N G S T A R

(has in the meantime entered through rear door right, and after a passing glance at Suleiman goes to the guard, whose head-shaking in answer to Morningstar she has still seen)

Is the Sultan unwell ?

(the guard silently shakes his head. She imitates him, but then changes to moving her head up and down exaggeratedly)

(joins the others)

T h i s is the way jackasses do it !

(others are silent)

Suleiman is again in a bad humor !
Let's go out a l o n e !

Why should we sit around in the harem,
when outside there is the first real Spring day ?
Come on !

R O X E L A N E

(entered through rear door left and after a glance at Suleiman joins the others in time to overhear Eveningstar)

N o , we'll stay here and sing a song for him !
(she takes a lute and strikes a few chords; the others also take up various musical instruments so that they are a small orchestra under Roxelane's leading; they sing)

Suleiman the ~~hero~~ *bold*
has kisses and ~~money~~ *! gold!*
Suleiman the knight,
loves women and light !

(angrily)

S U L E I M A N

The D e v i l he loves !!!

B E A U T Y G L O W

He's ready to go out!

A N G E L V O I C E

He is calling for us!

H E A R T S D E L I G H T

Today is my day!

M O R N I N G S T A R

We are all dressed!

E V E N I N G S T A R

He is well!

(all five rush to Suleiman's divan, only Roxelane follows slowly and without any outcry; she stands against a column at the foot-end; she still has her lute in her hand, all others put down their instruments when Suleiman spoke. The sun shines through the windows on the richly colored dresses of the women, which are adorned with flashing gems)

S U L E I M A N

(without moving) Why are you all dressed for the street ?

M O R N I N G S T A R

Because you promised to go out with us.

S U L E I M A N

And why do you want to go out?

A N G E L V O I C E

Because the sun is so lovely and bright and warm !

S U L E I M A N

(resentfully) Say Rather you want to glitter and sparkle for other men, so that they shall admire and desire you !

R O X E L A N E

(motions to the women standing at the head of the divan)

Draw the curtains shut !
Suleiman is jealous of the sun -
which shines upon us !

(she tinkles on the lute, then strikes a chord to start a song which all join in without changing their positions)

Suleiman the sun,
Friend of our pleasure;
Foe of our sorrow;
Joy ~~of our hearts~~ *without measure!*

S U L E I M A N

(still resentful) Bah! At night you dream of other men !

R O X E L A N E

(with others sings on)

Suleiman the moon,
~~Ruler/over/all~~ Brighter than noon!
Dream of our nights,
Lord of delights !

S U L E I M A N

(somewhat mollified) Ah, then you deceive me inbetween day and night - when the star of love is shining!

R O X E L A N E

(with others sings on)

Suleiman the star !
Messenger of God,
Mouth of the prophet,
Breath of our speech !

S U L E I M A N

(sits up somewhat and stretches out his arms to the women, who tenderly take hold of them and kiss his hands, pressing themselves against him; only Eveningstar remains behind, while Roxelane seats herself at the head of the divan, busying herself with the lute but listening carefully to Suleiman)

Forgive me, my darlings!
The letter from the Duke's ambassador has
disturbed me.

R O X E L A N E
(speaking up) What letter?
MORNINGSTAR and EVENINGSTAR
(like an echo) What letter?
S U L E I M A N
(with a gesture of dismissal) Never mind !
(seats himself at the foot end
of the divan with his feet
crossed as at the beginning
of the act; the women help him
to do so, and Roxelane makes room for him)

Let us say our prayers !
I want to hear Mohammed's words and turn my
eyes to Allah !
What is the prayer for today?

(all look at the
calendar showing the capital
number lll at the head end of
the divan, which is more clearly
visible now with the curtains shut)

R O X E L A N E
(solemnly) Prayer lll, Abu Laheb !
S U L E I M A N
Who speaks it?
R O X E L A N E
It is Heartsdelight's turn !
H E A R T S D E L I G H T
(goes forward toward Suleiman;
the others take the following positions:

Beautyglow on the top step right of Suleiman;
Eveningstar on the second step " " "
both stand in front of the right column.

Angelvoice on the top step left of Suleiman;
Morningstar on the second step " " "
both stand in front of the left column.

Directly in front of him on the lowest step
is Roxelane.

Heartsdelight turns around, throws her arms forward,
and bows to Suleiman, the others also do so at the same time)

In the Name of the ever merciful God ! !

(she turns around again, but the others remain
facing Suleiman and kneel down and bend forward so
far that their brows touch the floor. Heartsdelight
kneels down and while praying holds up her hands ~~are~~
so that they are stretched out and flat, and are seen
at the right and left of her face)

The hands of Abu Laheb shall fall down !
 He shall perish altogether !
 His possessions and everything that he has amassed,
 Shall help him not at all !
 He shall burn in the flaming fire,
 And his wife with him, who shall ever carry wood
 to it,
 And around her neck shall be a rope woven of
 the fibres of the palmtree! Amen !

S U L E I M A N
 A m e n !

(while the women
 rise to their feet, and
 Heartsdelight offers him
 her mouth for a kiss, which
 he ignores, he speaks almost
 to himself)

And all that in the name of an e v e r
 m e r c i f u l God ! ?
 Our prophet irritates me today - !
 Let me also hear the next prayer -
 perhaps it can tell me something.

H E A R T S D E L I G H T

(tries to hold
 fast to Morningstar as she
 runs toward the prayer-calendar
 in order to change the page;
 but then stretches her hands in
 entreaty to Suleiman)

But tonight belongs to me !

M O R N I N G S T A R

(standing on the head
 end of the divan she changes
 the page so that the number 112
 becomes visible surrounded by
 Turkish characters, then speaks
 from ~~there~~ there, loudly)

The one who prays l a s t and shows the way to
 Allah in the words of the Koran - has the right
 to the kiss and to the following night !

S U L E I M A N

(laughing) Is that too written in the Koran?

(kisses Heartsdelight

who still stands beggingly

in front of him) You can both come - the night will be divided !

R O X E L A N E

(solemnly as before) Prayer 112, the confession of God's unity !

S U L E I M A N

Who speaks it?

R O X E L A N E

It is Morningstar's turn.

M O R N I N G S T A R

(with same motions as Hearts-
 delight previously, who has taken
 a place left of Suleiman on the second
 step, standing with the other women)

In the name of the ever merciful God !

(then in same posture as
 Heartsdelight previously, i.e. with hands half raised)

IV - 2

God is the only and eternal God !
 He does not procreate and is not procreated,
 and no being is like unto Him! Amen!

S U L E I M A N

A m e n !

(laughs more heartily
 than before; the women
 stand up, and Morningstar
 offers him her mouth for
 a kiss)

So He is an impotent God -
 A divine eunuch so to speak - -
 The type of a Suleimanpascha !

(he kisses Morningstar)

R O X E L A N E

(with protesting gesture
 against Suleiman)

A l l a h i s A l l a h !

B E A U T Y G L O W A N G E L V O I C E H E A R T S D E L I G H T E V E N I N G S T A R

(as echo)

A l l a h i s A l l a h !

S U L E I M A N

(uncrosses his feet
 and places them on
 the top step)

And Mohammed is His prophet!
 And you are his angels - -
 whom I shall take along to Rome.
 There you can take over the roll of the famous
 geese on the Capitol !

R O X E L A N E

(gesture of protest
 toward Suleiman)

O h ! !

B E A U T Y G L O W A N G E L V O I C E H E A R T S D E L I G H T M O R N I N G S T A R E V E N I N G S T A R

(as echo to Roxeland) O h !

IV - 3

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

(enters right, bows with
 arms thrown forward to
 Suleiman)

The ambassador of the Duke of Hesse is in the
 anteroom, your Majesty!

S U L E I M A N

(jumps up excitedly) Bring him in !

B E A U T Y G L O W

(all) Oh, a man !

(to-) A N G E L V O I C E

(gether) Oh, oh !

H E A R T S D E L I G H T

In here !

R O X E L A N E

(gloomy stare) Another man in the harem !

That has not happened since Ibrahim !

S U L E I M A N

(with a glance at
 Suleimanpascha who still
 waits for Suleiman to cancel
 his command; and with a vague
 gesture to the women)

Y o u of course retire quickly to your
 rooms !

(both together)

B E A U T Y G L O W

Oh my !

A N G E L V O I C E

O - o - oh !

R O X E L A N E

Driving us out of here is not right,
it is highly unnatural !

S U L E I M A N

You must excuse - !

This audience is a matter of great importance,
and no other ambassador must know of it -
only here am I sure of no eavesdropping !

A N G E L V O I C E

Are we then eavesdroppers ?

S U L E I M A N

You are the imperial women -
but the laws of the harem apply also to you,
to you most strictly !

R O X E L A N E

And they forbid you first of all,
to let another man come in here, as long as he
is still man - - ,

(with veiled scorn) because your women would pounce on him like
animals, and can only be true to you if they are
surrounded by men like Suleimanpascha and that
guard there - -

(laughs softly)

S U L E I M A N

(aroused and hoarsely) R o x e l a n e !

E V E N I N G S T A R

She is right -

You want to keep us in cages like animals -
not like imperial women.

B E A U T Y G L O W

The ambassador will think that we are ugly,
and therefore you are ashamed to show us to him !

S U L E I M A N

All right - , you may all stay here - - ,

(women are jubilant)

but first you must give me the answer to a
question, which for days has again troubled me -

(fastens his gaze upon
Roxelane but she evades it)

namely the question -

(he breaks off)

E V E N I N G S T A R

(impatiently) Namely the question -

A N G E L V O I C E

(echo) Namely the question -

S U L E I M A N

(gloomily, half to himself) The question - - which six years ago cost Ibrahim
his life !

(looks at Roxelane, who
now returns his glance)

The question - (again breaks off)

A N G E L V O I C E

(more impatiently) The question -

E V E N I N G S T A R

(echo, but louder) T h e q u e s t i o n - - - ! ! !

S U L E I M A N

Whether you can love another man besides me ?

B E A U T Y G L O W

Only you!

A N G E L V O I C E

You alone do we love!

H E A R T S D E L I G H T

We belong only to you!

M O R N I N G S T A R

Yours eternally!

S U L E I M A N

Examine yourselves thoroughly !

I will now ask each one of you separately, in

the order in which you speak the prayers -

and will make you swear to the truth of your answers!

You, Beautyglow, could you love another man
besides me ?

B E A U T Y G L O W

I can only love you !

S U L E I M A N

And you, Angelvoice ?

A N G E L V O I C E

Until death I want to belong to you alone !

S U L E I M A N

Can you say the same, Heartsdelight ?

H E A R T S D E L I G H T

I was going to be angry at you,

because I have to share the night with that one -

(points to Morningstar)

but now even half a night shall be enough to
show you, whom alone I love!

S U L E I M A N

And you, Morningstar ?

M O R N I N G S T A R

The one who prays last -

and shows you the way to Allah in Mohammed's words,

has the God-given right to the following night

of love with you -

and therefore the whole night should be mine -

(with fanatical pathos)

but I will show you even in a divided night,
to whom I want to belong undividedly throughout
eternity !

S U L E I M A N

And now I suppose I will have to hear something else -

How about it, Eveningstar?

E V E N I N G S T A R

You shall not hear, but you shall feel my answer -

tomorrow night, when I shall kiss you !

S U L E I M A N

That leaves only Roxelane to answer !

R O X E L A N E

It is already six years ago that I answered you with
a dagger that I handed to you, when you found me here

(points to left side of the divan)

together with Ibrahim your friend, and asked me the
question with your eyes alone -

(Suleiman stares at her)

I have nothing more to add today!

S U L E I M A N

(still staring at her) Your answer is a riddle even as it was then - -
 (shakes off his doubts
 and turns to all)

but I really believe now that my doubts of
 you were false -
 and that my idea of woman's nature is correct:
 A masculine harem for women would be contrary
 to Allah and to the nature of woman herself - !
 You need not to your answers add an oath! -
 I will enter into the proposed alliance,
 but the feminine harem instituted by our prophet
 must become the marriage form of humanity !

(to Suleimanpascha who
 still stands waiting) Go now, and bring the ambassador in !
 (after a deep bow to
 Suleiman, Suleimanpascha goes out
 through door in the right side-wall)

IV - 3 4

S U L E I M A N

(seats himself with
 crossed legs at the foot of
 the divan between the two columns)

Be seated like Moslems to the right and left
 of me.

(the women sit on the steps
 in front of the two columns,
 crossing legs like Suleiman.
 Beautyglow, Heartsdelight and Eveningstar
 sit in this order from top down, in front
 of the right column, which is left of Suleiman.

Angelvoice, Morningstar and Roxelane do the
 same in front of left column, to right of Suleiman.

They all begin to powder themselves and
 look into their handmirrors without paying
 any further attention to Suleiman.)

You will remain silent,
 but your expressions must show what the
 harem and the divan mean to the pious Moslem:
 no sink of sensuality, as the Christians
 believe it to be,
 but the way to God through womanhood !

Suleimanpascha returns from the right, and leads Margaret von der Saal; she is in the same dress as at the end of the third act, but has the cap on.

Behind her comes Christopher Hulsing and after him two more servants; one of the latter carries a garment across his outstretched arms, the other carries a small box very ceremoniously.

Suleimanpascha takes his stand at the left of Suleiman and the women on that side; the latter remain visible to the audience, between Suleiman and Suleimanpascha. Margaret stands at the right of Suleiman and the women on that side, who thus remain visible between her and him.

Suleiman fastens his gaze upon Margaret, who takes off her cap, and then likewise looks at him quietly.

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

(with pathos and therefore in highest pitch of voice; making a bow at each titel)

His exalted imperial Majesty,
the Sultan of two continents,
and Chakan of two seas -
the Protector of Mecca and Medina
and King of Jerusalem - - -

S U L E I M A N

(impatiently interrupting) Sultan Suleiman is receiving the ambassador of the Duke of Hesse, Baron - ?

(with questioning glance to Suleimanpascha)

S U L E I M A N P A S C H A

(servilely quick) Philip von der Saal.

S U L E I M A N

Philip von der Saal.

This audience is taking place with the greatest secrecy, as you requested, sir ambassador, and therefore it is held here in my harem, into which otherwise no man except a eunuch is permitted to step.

(points with an introducing gesture to the women)

The presence of my wives should show you that our harem is not a prison for women, but can much better be compared ~~with~~ to a garden, in which the husband as gardner cultivates and protects them like flowers.

M A R G A R E T

His noble lordship, the Duke Philip of Hesse and head of the Protestant league of nations and nobles, as whose ambassador I have the honor to be received by your imperial Majesty, ^{(high} will worthily appreciate such a reception at such a place and in the presence of the imperial women -

(bows to the women who squirm with pleasure at the flattery)

The fact that since yesterday I have been permitted to reside here in the imperial castle, in similar manner as the ambassadors of those countries which are already allied with the Turkish realm, leads me to see therein a very promising indication of your Majesty's decision, and I am therefore most eager to receive your definite word at this time,
first X however I must present two gifts, which the noble Duke sends to your Majesty as an expression of his will to union with you - -

(she motions to Christoph^{er}, who carries the garment before Suleiman, and then hands it to the Vezier)

first this garment !

It is exactly the same as that worn by the Duke at festivals and official functions !

S U L E I M A N

(observes the garment which is held toward him by Suleimanpascha, who then places it on a table)

I thank the noble Duke for the garment and will wear it, wherever I can honor him thereby -

(smiles at Margaret meaningfully)

Perhaps in that way I can more easily enter into his thought !

M A R G A R E T

(again motions to Christopher who carries the casket with open top before Suleiman, whereupon Suleimanpascha takes it, but on a wink from Suleiman holds it so near to the latter that he can take out the gold coin. Suleiman then places the casket on a table)

As a further token of his will to union, the Duke sends this golden coin with h i s picture on the one side -

S U L E I M A N

(has taken the gold coin and examines it carefully; interrupts Margaret)
(turns coin and reads)

I see - -

Through God's - Grace - - Phi - lip Duke - of - Hesse !

(turns coin around)

The other side is empty - !

(points to it)

T h a t is where my own picture is to come, if I have read your communication correctly !

M A R G A R E T

(animated)

The Duke would be happy, together with your Majesty, to create the money for the world empire in this form -

(solemnly emphasized)

the c o i n a g e of world-power
as bridge to a l l - p o w e r
and way to God !

(animatedly)

S U L E I M A N

That brings us right to our subject,
and takes us straight to the main point -
the gold-derived union of the wills of two men,
who seek to unite and interfuse
what once upon a time had been embodied separately
by Mohammed and Christ -
the Spirit and Will of God !

This pathway I can follow,
and follow the Duke very willingly,
because it is the way of Islam,
wherein the Sultan's majesty is founded on
dominion over gold and over prayer !

M A R G A R E T

It will be the happiest day of my life,
when I can bring him this message;
a j o y f u l message to him
and a new gospel of salvation for all mankind !
(with a deep bow to Suleiman)

Therefore let me hasten, your Majesty,
and lose not another hour !

S U L E I M A N

(very animated)

The fastest horses of my realm shall carry you
to Germany,
as soon as the alliance is definitely drawn up -

(suddenly stops)

and after all it is my will -

(stops again, and then
speaks in a strained voice)

but the feminine harem of our Prophet must become
the general form of marriage in the world empire !

M A R G A R E T

(hastily)

But, your Majesty, the double harem of a married
couple is an essential point in the Duke's offer
of alliance - - perhaps even t h e essential point !

S U L E I M A N

(very excited)

The double harem of a married couple, which he
proposes -
and the m a s c u l i n e harem, which this ~~double~~
double harem includes - - ,

(he places the coin beside
himself on the divan, and stands
up excitedly, stretches right arm
forward, with palm facing forward)

this m a s c u l i n e harem - -
I do not even want to think of it,
much less legally recognize it !

(sits down again)

No, no - that o n e woman should have two men - -
that two men should belong to one woman -
only a D e v i l could want that, - never G o d !

M A R G A R E T

But what if a woman loves two men?

S U L E I M A N

(excitedly)

Then she is a p r o s t i t u t e !!

M A R G A R E T

Forgive me, your Majesty, that I must contradict that.
I am here also as the ambassador of the Duchess,
and dare not permit that she be characterized in my

presence as a prostitute,
because she also loves a second man and wants to
marry him too.

Never would an alliance be approved by her which
gives woman fewer rights than man !

S U L E I M A N

(noisily)

What kind of man and worthless specimen of our sex
is that anyway, who in a double marriage with the
Duchess would dishonor himself and all men everywhere?

M A R G A R E T

(after an artificial pause,
and an ironical bow)

I myself am that man, - your Majesty!

S U L E I M A N

(jumps up excitedly and
descends the three steps
to Margaret, while the women
hold their heads together)

Forgive me, dear Baron,
that I - unwittingly - insulted the Duchess and
yourself - - ,
but I must repeat that her double marriage plan
seems to me a work of the Devil !

(he places his arm
around Margaret's hip and
gently draws her with him to
the foreground; speaking softly
so that the women behind him
cannot understand)

How can the Duke stand it -
How can y o u stand it -
to share the possession of a woman ?

M A R G A R E T

(withdrawing
slightly from him;
speaking more softly
than before)

The soul of a woman who l o v e s ,
and who plays the role of God in her loving,
has through this love become indivisibly one
with a l l men - - -

(somewhat louder and
more lively)

Only the impermanent bodily form,
the female-sensual-sexual element,
creates the illusion of divisibility and
possessibility in space and time, -
but all this is only the c o n t a i n e r of
that love,
which can quicken many men, yet be possessed by none!

S U L E I M A N

(under the spell of her words
and speaking in her tone)

What you describe - that is - the role of the
man in the God-ordained feminine harem of our prophet -
it is m y role here - -

(makes a gesture including the room and the women behind him)

But never the role of a w o m a n among men !
Of course you may create it as a f a n t a s y for
woman also,
but never will you find a woman with that role in ^{actual} life!

M A R G A R E T

(passionately)

Only as long as this life is formed and controlled by the phantasies and jealousies of men who use marriage as well as the feminine harem to prevent their women from loving others also, and thereby manifesting God to them !

S U L E I M A N

(again spellbound and involuntarily adopting Margaret's tone)

Even as only one man can become the father of her child, even so does one man completely fill a woman's need of love and of God, not only her need as mother but also ~~xxx~~ as beloved -

(places his arm around Margaret's shoulders)

but we men can of course become the father of many children at the same time - and therefore can also be the husband of many wives -

(self-righteously)

that is a God-ordained difference, which even the imaginations of women cannot set aside !

M A R G A R E T

(strongly passionate)

This natural difference applies only to the procreation and birth of physical children, and not to love as pure divine communion -

(almost ecstatically)

A woman can be a fountain of love for many men, even though she may want children from only one man -

and clearly before my spirit I see, as divine embodiment, a woman who gives herself to two men, because she loves them both, and would through loving unity with both fuse into one their bodies with her own and so with God - - so clearly does this vision stand before me that I myself could almost embody it !

S U L E I M A N

(again uncertain)

You are still young and idealistic, and like youths and poets would create woman according to your fancy, instead of seeing her as she is -

(turns half around toward his women, and motions Margaret to do likewise)

Here, look at the women of my harem, the best and probably the most beautiful women of my great realm ! They have solemnly assured me, one after the other, that they can only love one man - me - - - and me alone !

(the women look at Margaret and zealously move their heads up and down in assent)

M A R G A R E T

I can only repeat that the Duchess loves me and wishes to enter into a second marriage with me !

S U L E I M A N

Maybe she does love you - it may be!

But then she only loves you as an object of
her lust and as a way to hell !

M A R G A R E T

She loves me as a new way to God in heaven !

(the women still
continue their activity of
nodding assent, indicating to
Margaret thereby their approval)

S U L E I M A N

(turns away from the women
and pulls Marg. with him way
up to the front; speaks
penetratingly)

As ambassador of the Duke, your lord,
you are the bridge to the strongest masculine
alliance that the world has ever seen -
an alliance that all women will also praise
when it has been established - - -

(passionately)

Do you want to contaminate the purity and strength
of this alliance through the infatuated wishes of
your Duchess,
instead of completely yielding yourself to the
pairing of wills between your lord and myself,
as a new descent of the Holy Spirit?

M A R G A R E T

But that's just what I want to do -

S U L E I M A N

(looks at her in
happy surprise and places
his arm tenderly around her
hips; speaks with great
tenderness and passion)

Listen to me, Philip, stay here with me at
my Portal !

You please me more and more !

I will make you my Grand Vezier and Second Sultan,
as Ibrahim was.

And if gold is the link which binds the Duke
and myself together in the realm of money,
then in the actual administration of the world empire
y o u shall be the living link between us two - -
and therefore the real embodiment of divine union
as symbolized by our coin - -

(tenderly whispering)

the beloved of both of us you shall be -
m y beloved, as Ibrahim was !

M A R G A R E T

(moves away from
him slightly)

The purpose of your Majesty honors me,
but I believe ~~why~~ this honor belongs to that person
who was the first to conceive money as the creative
matrix to produce a union of sovereign rulers,
before the Duke made this conception the basis of
his offer of alliance with you !

S U L E I M A N

(astonished and doubting) Who is this man - ? Whom I must then consider
as greater than the Duke, and also - do forgive me -
greater than yourself !

M A R G A R E T

It isn't a man !

S U L E I M A N

What then - ?

(becoming uneasy) A woman - ? The Duchess - ?

M A R G A R E T

No, it is the beloved of the Duke

who wishes to become his second wife !

S U L E I M A N

(laughs embarrassedly
and forcibly)As a play-toy for her lust she may have
thought up our coinage unity,
but the Duke was the first one to make a
religious unity out of it -
a union that shall last a thousand years !

M A R G A R E T

(passionately yet
solemnly)As a door to the kingdom of heaven upon earth,
she conceived this coinage union, -
as the creative womb for all future generations,
who shall no longer look for God in the cross
or the crescent,
but who shall find Him in m o n e y !

S U L E I M A N

The Duke probably told you that in order to
glorify his beloved !

M A R G A R E T

I know it from herself -
and knew it already,
before the Duke was told of it.

S U L E I M A N

Then you know her intimately ?

M A R G A R E T

She is my sister !

S U L E I M A N

(very hastily)

Your sister ?!

M A R G A R E T

Even my twin sister !

S U L E I M A N

(like echo)

Your twin sister ? !

(then fully to himself)

A woman should be the one who has gone beyond
Mohammed and Christ, - and has embodied the
united will of Allah and Jehovah, -
a woman - , a girl ! ? !
A g i r l ' s w i l l that is stronger than
the two strongest powers in the world - , a woman?!?

(emphatically to Margaret)

T h a t I will not believe until this fabulous
being stands before me and speaks with me -
I must s e e her, h e a r her, t o u c h her,
t a k e h o l d of her - - - - !!!

M A R G A R E T

My sister will feel honored to appear before
your Majesty !

S U L E I M A N

Not until she comes can I continue my thinking !
You must return at once to Germany and get her.
And when you come back with her - if really such a
woman lives on earth - then I will see the heavens
open - and will also change my opinion about women !

M A R G A R E T

My sister lives -

And can appear before your Majesty right away.

S U L E I M A N

Right away ? !

(forced laugh)

Have you then a magic carpet, with which you can get her right away ?

M A R G A R E T

That I haven't - but there is no need for it, because my sister is already h e r e !

S U L E I M A N

Here ? H e r e ? Here in Stambul ?

M A R G A R E T

In this very castle !

S U L E I M A N

Are you trying to fool me ?

Nobody saw a woman in your party.

M A R G A R E T

She disguised herself as a s e r v a n t !

S U L E I M A N

(walks up the steps and sits down at the foot end of the divan)

Then send for her -

and not another word, until she is here !

M A R G A R E T

No one can get her, because she will let no one know her identity -

moreover she will not want to appear here in servant's clothes -

I will have to go myself and send her !

S U L E I M A N

S e n d her, you say - ?

Then you really believe that she will dare to come before me alone ?

M A R G A R E T

I will be present with her, but invisible to your Majesty!

S U L E I M A N

(jumps up excitedly and stamps his foot)

Manalive! You are driving me mad!

(sits again)

We are not living in a fairy tale of a thousand and one nights, but in the city of Stambul - time, the present !

M A R G A R E T

I can only repeat what I said before:

I will be invisible to your Majesty, but will be with my sister to protect her !

S U L E I M A N

Even if I command my guards not to let any man through with her?

M A R G A R E T

Even then - for I will also be invisible to the guards.

S U L E I M A N

(trembling voice) Enough ! Go now and send her.

(to Suleimanpascha) Give orders to my guards to let only a woman come in!

M A R G A R E T

May I beg your Majesty for a token to show that

IV - 5

that the woman's right to a masculine harem will be acknowledged if my sister fulfils the promises I have made regarding her, - and if I again appear before you - just as I do now - even against your will !

S U L E I M A N

(takes a golden crescent from his coat and gives it to Margaret, who walks over to him to receive it)

Here, this crescent !
It is the highest badge of honor in my realm !
If you can hold it up before my eyes within the confines of this room,
I shall consider the alliance settled - -
and also acknowledge the right of women to a masculine harem !

(the women put their heads together excitedly and whisper to each other)

M A R G A R E T

(doing so:)

I shall fasten it on my breast -
and shall hold your Majesty to your word !

S U L E I M A N

(angrily excited)
(raises two fingers of his right hand to swear)

An o a t h shall bind my Majesty!

I swear it by A l l a h -
and make all of my wives witnesses of this oath!

M A R G A R E T

(bows before him, puts on her cap; Suleimanpascha is already waiting at the door to lead her out, she follows him and is in turn folled by Christopher and the other two servants)

IV - 6

S U L E I M A N

(after a few seconds of gloomy silence)

Call an attendant!

(the guard jumps from the right door to the door at left, opens it, claps his hands; immediately a harem attendant appears to whom the guard indicates by gestures that Suleiman wishes something; then guard returns to his position at right side-door.

As the attendant appears, Suleiman stands up and points to the gift of the dress, at the same time quickly walking to the left side-door)

Help me into this dress -
I want to see how it fits me ~~it~~ - !

(exits left, the attendant following with the dress, the women all sending their looks after him)

M O R N I N G S T A R

(stands up after she like all the rest have remained rigidly seated for a few seconds, looking at the door left; complainingly)

O h , my night !

H E A R T S D E L I G H T

(jumps up and confronts Morn.)

Y o u r night ! ?

M y night it is, that you are getting a part of !

M O R N I N G S T A R

A part ?

Exactly half ! I will watch carefully and be there punctually when the half is over. You can depend upon that!

R O X E L A N E

(who meantime has also stood up)

Have you no other worries ?

E V E N I N G S T A R

(has picked up the coin from the divan and then seated herself on the upper step between Beautyglow and Angelvoice, and eyes the coin closely)

Look at this - The picture of the Duke of Hesse ! He looks like Suleiman and wears exactly the same clothes as the gift -

(strikes her forehead with hand)

o h , that is w i t c h c r a f t !!!

(ridiculing)

R O X E L A N E

What is witchcraft ?

E V E N I N G S T A R

The ambassador also wears the same clothes, and so there is a magical triangle - the Duke - the ambassador - the Sultan !

R O X E L A N E

Superstition !

The pretty youth has bewitched the Sultan, and is far along the way to become a second Ibrahim -

(turns from the others ~~and goes~~ to foreground, speaks to herself)

a second I b r a h i m , who will also then again bewitch and enchant me !

E V E N I N G S T A R

(to the other women, when she sees Roxelane will say nothing more)

That is exactly what I say - the D e v i l is here !

R O X E L A N E

(turns again to the women)

Rubbish! The second man in the harem is here - !

(makes a gesture including the whole room, then touches each one's forehead)

Here - and here - and here- and here- and here - -

(they stand and sit as if hypnotized; she then turns half away from them and touches her own forehead with a shaking hand)

And perhaps - even - already - - here !

IV - 7

M O R N I N G S T A R

Oh, my night !

H E A R T S D E L I G H T

Oh shut up about y o u r night !

R O X E L A N E

You silly geese !

(turning upon them)

Neither of you will be with the Sultan tonight -

The new one will be lying here - -

(points to divan)

H E A R T S D E L I G H T

Oh dear, oh dear !

(both together)

M O R N I N G S T A R

Oh no, oh no !

R O X E L A N E

(more to herself)

And her brother too will soon be lying here -
h e r e, where Ibrahim withheld himself from me !

(gloomily and fully to herself)

Woe unto you, Philip,
if you also try to withhold yourself from me !

E V E N I N G S T A R

(still busy with the coin)

The Duke and the ambassador also look alike !

A N G E L V O I C E

They even have the same name: Philip !

(jumps up)

Listen, how nice it sounds: Phi - lip !

(picks up a lute

and strikes chords) I'll sing it: P h i - l i p !

(she then sings the following with lute accompaniment, same melody as before; the others hum along)

Philip the bold
has kisses and gold !
Philip the knight
loves women and light !

(all except Roxelane sing the next verse; she goes to the left column, and with her back to the audience puts her arm around it (rt. arm) and lost in dreams leans her head against the column)

Philip the sun,
Friend of our pleasure;
Foe of our sorrow;
Joy without measure !

(slowly Roxelane unwinds herself from the column and exits through left rear door, while others sing lustily)

Philip the moon,
Bright as the noon !
Dream of our nights,
Lord of delights !

(in the frame of the right side-door the audience sees the left half of a guard, opposite whom the right half of another guard is seen. They are both standing in the space of the door, and are cutting through the space between them and above them with their drawn swords, so as to ward off any invisible intruder. They let Margaret advance about half a step into the room, then they again move their swords through the space behind her. Only thereafter do they let Margaret go; they then disappear outside and quickly shut the door behind them.

Margaret wears a dress that is buttoned in the front from head to foot, and a very attractive hood-like cap that hides her hair. She remains standing as though rooted where the guards left her)

EVENINGSTAR

(after all women had stopped singing as soon as the side-door opened, and had stared at Margaret) There she is already - !
Can you see the magic shimmer all around her?

BEAUTYGLOW

I see nothing !

ANGELVOICE

(has walked over to Marg. and now asks her softly) Where is your brother ?

MARGARET

(also softly) In the guest rooms of the castle ?
(Angelvoice disappears behind Marg. through the right side-door, meanwhile Beautyglow has come over to Margaret)

BEAUTYGLOW

(softly) Where can I find your brother ?

MARGARET

(softly too) In the guest rooms of the castle !
(Beautyglow exits right)

MORNINGSTAR

(walks toward Margaret with affected gait, her hands on hips) Tonight belongs to me, because the prayers have already been said -
Beware of stealing it from me !

HEARTSDELIGHT

(has followed Morningstar and now steps threateningly in front of her) You lie ! To me alone the night belongs of right and you -

EVENINGSTAR

(stepped between them and is pushing them away from Margaret) Aren't you ashamed of yourselves in front of this Christian - and her invisible brother ?

(to Margaret as soon as Even. and Hearts. turn angrily away from each other) Is your brother here already?

M A R G A R E T

No ! He is still in the guest rooms of the castle.
(Eveningstar exits right)

H E A R T S D E L I G H T

(has noticed Eveningstar and runs quickly to Margaret, but asks softly)

What did she ask you just now ?

M A R G A R E T

(half loud)

She wanted to know where my brother is.

H E A R T S D E L I G H T

(runs out right) Oh, that snake.!

M O R N I N G S T A R

Where are they all running to ?

M A R G A R E T

To my brother, in the guest rooms of the castle !

M O R N I N G S T A R

Oh !

(she too runs out right)

IV - 9

M A R G A R E T

(goes to the middle of the room and laughs softly to herself)

They are looking for a man, who has no existence !

IV - 10

R O X E L A N E

(has returned through the left rear door in a still more gaily colored dress, and has heard Marg. laughing)

You are very merry, Maiden !

(Marg. turns quickly around in fright and surprise)

Are you enjoying your triumph over us ?

Your honeymoon will soon be over - !

Suleiman also loves men and will probably love your brother more than you, especially since you both look so much alike - !

(partly to herself, but loud enough for Margaret to hear)

He likes masculine women and feminine men - - !

M A R G A R E T

I do not understand your meaning !

R O X E L A N E

(scornfully)

Don't act so innocent!

That doesn't fit into the picture which your brother gave us of you !

Where is he anyway, your invisible brother?

I'll entertain him a little, while you are with the Sultan - you'll be quite a long while !

M A R G A R E T

My brother is in the guest rooms of the castle.

R O X E L A N E

Would he receive me?

M A R G A R E T

Why not?

R O X E L A N E

(mumbling to herself, goes to right side-door) I want to find out if
(exit right) he'll withhold himself from me !

M A R G A R E T

(looking toward right
side-door through which
Roxelane has disappeared)

He loves m a s c u l i n e women -
and feminine men - -
Then he must love me doubly,
for in me both are combined !

(pulling her gaze away
from the door, she places her
right hand over her heart)

My heart is throbbing ! -
Will I be able to resist him ? -
He is like a storm -
like a wild animal - ,

(with tenderness in her
voice)
(folds her hands over her
breast as in prayer)

like an i m p e r i a l animal - - - !
Philip, protect me !

IV - 12

(Suleiman, in Philip's
dress, comes in through the
left side-door; and motions
across the full length of the room
to the guard that he shall disappear)

M A R G A R E T

(Margaret stood facing the guard,
and notices by his actions that Suleiman
has come. She turns around and startles
as she sees him, then speaks in a murmur
to herself)

Oh, he is dressed in Philip's garment !

S U L E I M A N

(takes a few steps toward
her, then bows to her)

So you are the girl who demands a world empire
in return for her virginity !

M A R G A R E T

I seek God and His kingdom, because only in
the kingdom of God do I want to get married !

S U L E I M A N

Then only a God will be able to marry you !

M A R G A R E T

Or else a man who is filled with God's Spirit -
and who is loved by me !

S U L E I M A N

The Duke is then for you a God who has become man !

M A R G A R E T

I love the Duke because he is striving for world
power as a bridge to omnipotence and a way to God !

S U L E I M A N

(to himself, fiercely) She l o v e s him ! She loves h i m !
(to Margaret again)

Then you ought to love m e too, because only to-
gether with me can he attain to world power.

M A R G A R E T

That is the reason why I am here !

S U L E I M A N

(with suppressed joy and jubilation) That is why you are here ? !

M A R G A R E T
 (quickly) I am here to persuade your Majesty to enter into this alliance with the Duke - whose wife I can only become after the Philip-Suleiman union has established its money as the foundation of the world empire !

S U L E I M A N
 (explosively) Woman - - - ,
 (regaining poise immediately) You are audacious !
 I am to be permitted to prepare the marriage bed for both of you, and to act as pillow upon which your wedding can rest with ease ! ?
 And you really think that such an alliance with your Duke could have any attraction for me ?

M A R G A R E T
 Yes indeed -
 since your Majesty has already agreed to a united coinage -
 and is now furthermore pleased to wear Philip's dress.

S U L E I M A N
 (interrupts angrily) I am wearing it to show you that o n e man is fully capable of doing what, in thinking of him, you thought required t w o men to do - !

(Margaret almost imperceptibly shrugs her shoulders, which causes him to take a bragging tone)

I have the biggest army in the world, also the biggest fleet !
 Hungary is already allied with me, and France is urging an alliance - -
 (trembling voice) Vienna shall not again block my way to Germany !
 My next winter quarters shall be on the Rhine - the following Spring I will conquer Spain - - -
 R o m e shall become the capital of my realm !

M A R G A R E T
 It is a long way from Vienna to Worms - and if the army of the Protestants joins the army of the Catholic emperor, you Majesty will meet an adversary who will not be so easy to conquer !

S U L E I M A N
 (entirely different tone) What is your name, Maiden ?

M A R G A R E T
 My name is Margaret !

S U L E I M A N
 (repeats the name as if testing its tonal beauty) M a r g a r e t ! M a r g a r e t ! ! !
 S u - l e i - m a n and M a r - g a - r e t !

(close by her, in lowered penetrating voice) Listen, Margaret !
 Become my bride, as one and o n l y wife !
 I will abolish the harem in the entire Turkish realm. Marriage between o n e woman and o n e man shall be the accepted wedlock form in the new world empire, and not the double harem of a married couple !

(voice slowly rises and fills with pathos) Your twin brother shall have Ibrahim's place, as Grand Vezier and Second Sultan - like the Heavenly Twins shall the two of you shine in my realm, dazzling all mankind !

He shall be my friend and highest representative;
 Y o u not only friend, but wife
 and fulfilment of that Majesty which shall be
 pictured on the coins that shall be minted at our
 marriage as the first coinage of the world empire !

M A R G A R E T

(carried away by his
 passionate appeal, speaks
 somewhat shakily)

I will remain true to Philip,
 as long as he remains true to his purpose -
 to make of money the embodiment of God - -

(again firm)

But you, Suleiman,
 I see as only half of that,
 of which you think yourself to be the whole !

S U L E I M A N

You dare to say this to me,
 the Sultan of two continents
 and Chakan of two seas,
 protector of Mecca and Medina,
 and King of Jerusalem - - -
 to m e you dare to say this ! ?

M A R G A R E T

I speak only that which actually exists; nothing else!

S U L E I M A N

~~(stammering)~~

What actually exists ! That you shall now find out.
 You are in the power of the Sultan,
 who desires to be loved by you,
 and who also has a r i g h t to your love
 because you are inside his harem !

M A R G A R E T

Is it permitted to a woman to love two men ?

S U L E I M A N

(almost roaring)

N o , she is not permitted - -
 By God, she is not permitted to do that !

M A R G A R E T

Then I cannot bow to your will,
 O, m i g h t y Suleiman !

S U L E I M A N

(drunk with excitement)

You mean to say - ?

(laughs forcedly)

as second Duke I could partake of your love - -
 As a member of your masculine harem that
 you are trying to create by means of this coin !

M A R G A R E T

In this dress you look like Philip, and therefore
 I like you more.

S U L E I M A N

(roaring)

This is too much ! This is too much !

(crouches like a cat

and moves slowly toward

Marg. who backs away)

M i n e you are now - - m i n e a l o n e --
 And now power of earth can keep you from me !

M A R G A R E T

(moves so that a small table
 is between her and Suleiman;
 she keeps moving from right to
 left and vice versa, to keep
 away from him)

But God in heaven can -
 because of the oath which you have
 sworn .

S U L E I M A N

(stops a moment)

To your brother I gave my oath, and he is the only
 one who can enforce it; but where is he - this
 invisible magician ?

M A R G A R E T

He is already here -

(Suleiman is shocked
and involuntarily reaches
for his sword as if to
defend himself)

And will become visible at the proper time !

S U L E I M A N

(wild and forced laughter)

Hahahahahahahaha !

Then he will have to ^{an} hurry up,
otherwise he will be invisible witness,
as I make a woman out of you -
a strumpet - -

since you refuse to become a Sultana !

(tries again to grab her,
but she manages to keep various
tables between him and herself)

M A R G A R E T

(while he is chasing her)

what

So, that's ~~that way~~ the Sultan of two continents
looks like - the Chakan of two seas -
when a maiden refuses to give herself to him - -
this protector of Mecca and Medina,
and King of Jerusalem - -
this I s l a m i c M a j e s t y !

S U L E I M A N

Majesty ?

The only majesty that is here involved is the
majesty of the lion, who snatches his prey where
he finds it !

(Margaret tries to
escape across the divan, but
as she steps on the foot end,
she stumbles and falls backward
so that Suleiman can grasp her
from the rear)

M A R G A R E T

To this majesty I will yield!

(she starts to unbutton her dress)

S U L E I M A N

(does not notice that she is
opening her dress, and still
holds her tight)

Off with the dress, and down on the divan with you !

M A R G A R E T

(in a tone of will^{ing} surrender,
almost tenderly, complaining)

Won't you let me loose a little,
so that I can open the buttons !

S U L E I M A N

(seeing her open her dress,
he strokes both sides of her from
behind with the flat of his hands)

Well, didn't I know it -
you are a woman like all the others -
no woman has ever resisted me !

(as he pulls her dress off
from behind, he does not see that
her maculine costume is underneath)

M A R G A R E T

(in one leap she is at the same place
where she stood at the first audience;
takes off her hood and bows to Suleiman)

Suleiman, you are conquered !

(she points to the crescent on her coat)

Remember your oath!

S U L E I M A N

(stands as if stunned, and looks alternately at the feminine garment in his hands and at the crescent on Margaret's coat) (full of rage, throws the garment on the divan and draws his sword)

Disgracing and Dishonoring my harem ! !

Now the play of masks is at an end !

As a man you came into my harem against my will,
that means death for you !
Say your prayers !

M A R G A R E T

I am not a man !

S U L E I M A N

(bets the sword drop again)

You are not a man ?

W h a t are you anyway ?

M A R G A R E T

A woman dressed as a man,
M a r g a r e t v o n d e r S a a l,
whom as a youth you tried to fill with enthusiasm for the idea of a union between your will and Philip's - that same idea which she as w o m a n herself conceived as a way to unite your masculine might and to convert it into a path to omnipotence and to God as embodied in herself and in her love - -

(slowly and solemnly)

a union of your will and Philip's, out of which shall grow a love-union between herself and Philip, and also between herself and you, which shall thence become the source of highest joy for all mankind !

S U L E I M A N

(stunned, tonelessly)

A love-union between herself and him, and also between herself and me - ? ! ?

As if a woman who really loves, could at the same time love t w o men !

That you love h i m , I can believe -

N e v e r can I believe that you can truly also then love me !

For that is utterly u n n a t u r a l and utterly u n w o m a n l y !

M A R G A R E T

Then you would say that your wives are unnatural and unwomanly ?

S U L E I M A N

My wives - ! ?

M A R G A R E T

They a l l love another man beside you, namely me, whom as ambassador they are searching for in the castle !

S U L E I M A N

Impossible - , utterly impossible !

(Beautyglow and Angelvoice
come in through right side-door
and stand still in astonishment
as they see Margaret in the
dress as ambassador)

M A R G A R E T

Ask them now, what they were/ looking for
in the guest rooms of your castle.

S U L E I M A N

(to the women, who at the
words "guest rooms" throw themselves
with lamentations at Suleiman's feet)

Beautyglow - Angelvoice !
Delight of my ~~eyes~~ eyes -
Pleasure to my ears - -
This you once were to me - - - !
Now the broom awaits you
and the scouring-cloth
and Allah's c u r s e !

(Heartsdelight comes from right
and throws herself before Suleiman)

Heartsdelight !

Joy of my heart - - -
you w e r e to me;

(Morningstar and Eveningstar also
throw themselves down in front
of Suleiman)

but now you have become my sorrow -
Heartsagony, bitterness, gall, poison!

~~Morningstar and~~

Morningstar and Eveningstar -

From Allah you are oh so far !

Comets are you, - and tails have you -

Bloodred devil's tails that reach down to hell !

(he imitates the singing
of the women)

Suleiman the sun !

Suleiman the moon !

Suleiman the star !

Suleiman the f o o l !

R O X E L A N E

(appears at the right side-door,
stops a moment at seeing Margaret;
pulls a dagger out of its sheath, and
with a cry leaps at Margaret)

A second I b r a h i m !

E U L E I M A N

(blocks her in one leap, strikes her
arm so that the dagger flies out of it,
and then slings her aside)

Lunatic !

That isn't a man !

(the five women jump up,
but Roxelane remains on the floor)

B E A U T Y G L O W and A N G E L V O I C E

(together)

That isn't a man !

H E A R T S D E L I G H T and M O R N I N G S T A R

(as echo)

That isn't a man !

E V E N I N G S T A R

It's all witchcraft !

M A R G A R E T

(with dignity)

I am a woman like yourselves,
except that I became manly enough
to take the dress and play the roll of man,
and use the mask of man, in order to unmask him !

(with determination in her voice
and posture)

As witnesses of Suleiman's oath
that he would acknowledge woman's right
to a masculine harem,
if I display this crescent to his eyes,

(points to crescent
on her coat)

you are all safe from his vengeance,
as soon as the alliance between himself and
Philip is completed.
Go now to your rooms -
nothing will happen to you !

(the women walk slowly
to the two rear doors;
Beautyglow, Heartsdelight and Eveningstar
go to the right door;
Angelvoice and Morningstar to left;
but all stop to see the following)

R O X E L A N E

(Looked for the dagger
while Margaret was speaking;
placed it in its sheath; stood
up and went over to Margaret)

(offers Margaret the sheath
and dagger)

What for years I have vaguely sought,
now is realized through you -
e q u a l love rights for man and woman!

Take this dagger as a gift from Roxelane;
With it I had intended to kill your brother -
who never lived -
if he had refused to love me, - -
Even as Suleiman killed Ibrahim with it,
when Ibrahim refused to love me -

S U L E I M A N

(jumps up horrified)

What do I hear !?!
He r e f u s e d you - -
and I - - - I murdered him, because I
believed he forced himself upon you !
Then you l o v e d Ibrahim !

R O X E L A N E

I loved him as a part of you -
you who shared even your resting-place with him -
(points to divan)

(passionately)

and found him there when I was seeking y o u - -
But if you think, instead of Ibrahim you should
have killed me -

(offers him sheath
and dagger)

then finish now, what you neglected then !

M A R G A R E T

(reaches for the
dagger and takes it
to herself)

Give it to me !
At my leave-taking from Stambul, I wish you
and Suleiman would join ~~me~~ me in sinking this
dagger into the sea - so that it never again
can kill anyone - -
But now leave me to be alone with him,
so that the alliance can be consummated!

(Roxelane passionately
kisses Margaret's mouth, the latter
lovingly receiving the kiss; this causes
all the women at the rear door to fall into
each other's arms and caress each other lovingly.
Suleiman sees all this as if he were unconscious; with swaying step
he walks to the foot-end of the divan)

--(over)--

M A R G A R E T

(goes to top step and stands close by Suleiman)

May I as your new friend kiss away the disgrace ?

S U L E I M A N

(looks up at her - unbelievably)

You want - - - to kiss me ? !

M A R G A R E T

I want to seal the alliance between you and Philip with a kiss !

(she kneels down beside him and takes his head tenderly in her hands. During the kiss Suleiman passionately takes hold of her hips with both hands, and stands up with her without breaking-off the kiss. Margaret then tenderly unloosens herself, and takes her place about where she was at the beginning of the audience; bows solemnly)

Sultan Suleiman, ruler of two continents and Chakan of two seas, protector of Mecca and Medina, and King of Jerusalem !

Are you willing - by means of a coinage union between yourself and Philip, Duke of Hesse, and leader of the Protestant league of nations and nobles - to prepare the way for the union of the Turkish and Christian religions ? And also acknowledge woman's right to a masculine harem?

S U L E I M A N

My oath compels me to assent - but woman's right to a masculine harem, becomes a duty to you as soon as the alliance is consummated, - if you really love me !

(trembling voice)

Will you truly fulfil your duty ?

M A R G A R E T

(uncertain and stammering)

I will - - - fulfil it - - - , when I - - -

S U L E I M A N

(quickly descends the steps to walk over to her)

When you - ?

M A R G A R E T

When I have told Philip about it !

S U L E I M A N

(slightly swaying but quickly regains poise) Then the alliance cannot be considered as completed until you return -

(close by her, trembling)

Will - you - return ?

M A R G A R E T

(free and jubilant)

I will return !

S U L E I M A N

(embraces her with a cry of jubilation)

M a r g a r e t !

M A R G A R E T

(softly and tenderly)

Dear Suleiman !

(curtain falls)

The same stage picture as in Act I.
In the room at left Katherine Biedenkapp is busy setting the table for two persons, - Christopher Hulsing is helping her. The rear window is open, and is filled with the brightness of the setting sun.

C H R I S T O P H E R

(polishing a rather large wine-cup) We have been here only two hours - and the conferences began just as soon as we arrived -

(after a pause) How could I have spoken to anyone ?
Why are you so anxious about it?

K A T H E R I N E

(without looking up from her work) Because I must know whether your position with the Duke is permanent -
We must m a r r y !

C H R I S T O P H E R

(stops his work) We m u ' s t marry ?
We w i s h to marry !

K A T H E R I N E

(without looking up) No, we m u s t marry - at least I must !

C H R I S T O P H E R

(scared) What do you mean ?

K A T H E R I N E

(still without looking up) Don't be so stupid !

C H R I S T O P H E R

(terrified) You mean you are - - - ?

K A T H E R I N E

(gruffly) Y e s - , I am !!!
(takes his hand and touches her breasts) Here, feel how swollen my breasts are.
(he pulls his hand away quickly)

(tearfully) Now you pull your hand away !
Formerly I always had to push it away -
Oh if I had only always done so !

C H R I S T O P H E R

(to himself, but aloud) Why did n't you always do it ?
Oh why did I let the D e v i l get into me again !

K A T H E R I N E

(excitedly) S o ! ! - Then that was the Devil who promised marriage to me on New Year's eve - - -
(tearfully again) And my child then is from the Devil !

C H R I S T O P H E R

(imitates her tearful voice) No - it is from the Holy Ghost - and I was the Angel of the Lord visiting you, holy Katherine !
(close to her, confidentially) S a y - that child must not come into the world, -
I know a sure remedy - !

K A T H E R I N E

(draws back in terror) A b o r t i o n ? ! N o ! I want the child -
I am happy to have it - my child!
And if you won't marry me, I'll marry Pastor Lening of Melsungen, who has proposed to me !

C H R I S T O P H E R

(slightly) That old buck !

K A T H E R I N E

(threateningly) Better an old buck than none at all
But don't think you will get a position with the Duke ! that

I'll tell everything that you told me on
New Year's eve - e v e r y t h i n g -
That you were with Thomas Munzer and the
rebellious peasants - -

(interrupting) C H R I S T O P H E R
That's too long ago to hurt me now !

K A T H E R I N E
Then your escapades in the Germanrode convent -
(interrupting) C H R I S T O P H E R
Nobody will believe you !

K A T H E R I N E
N o ? That's where you are wrong, my dear !
On the contrary, let me tell you that several nuns
from the Germanrode convent have been ~~xxx~~ looking
for you since New Year's - - their children are
12 to 13 years old now and are crying for their
father !

(stunned) C H R I S T O P H E R
What's that you say ?
(sits down and wipes his brow) Is that really true ?

K A T H E R I N E
Of course it is true! Jutta Diede -
(quickly) C H R I S T O P H E R
J u t t a - !

K A T H E R I N E
And Elizabeth Scheuernschloss -
(quickly) C H R I S T O P H E R
E l i z a b e t h - !

K A T H E R I N E
Do you remember them ?
These two, and also one of the personal maids of
the Duchess, - Elizabeth Diede -

C H R I S T O P H E R
Yes, Elizabeth was the name of nearly all of them !

(sneeringly) K A T H E R I N E
And another pair - I don't remember their names
anymore - were here several times -
- all charwomen now - !
And they want to speak to the man who wore the
nun's costume in the church on New Year's eve -

C H R I S T O P H E R
(Somewhat relieved) But that wasn't I !
(stands up, stares
reflectively, murmurs) About me they don't know anything yet !

K A T H E R I N E
But I can soon tell them !
(not listening) C H R I S T O P H E R
Thank God, I'm not staying here, even if I get a
permanent position with the Duke !

(turns again to Kath.
but speaking more to himself) Your Duchess is going to ask the Duke to
let me stay in her service. Then I'll go
with her to Rotenburg or to Spangenberg
where she intends to live in the future.

K A T H E R I N E
I -- I -- I ! !
(points to herself) And I ----- ? ! ?

C H R I S T O P H E R
Silly goose! Of course, you t o o !

(more to himself) The few days here will soon pass !
I will lie low and not show myself anywhere -
and you naturally keep your ~~xxxxxx~~ mouth shut too -

(moves close to her) you are very sweet, Katherine !
K A T H E R I N E

(repulsing his nearness) So quickly I don't fall for you again !
First I must know whether you will get a permanent position, and whether you will be the kind of father to my child that it needs !

(tearfully) You are not marrying me for love, anyway !
C H R I S T O P H E R

(close behind her) Be sensible, Katherine !
(she accepts his nearness) You know how the Reformation has ruined me !
(embraces her lightly) And I am no longer as young as I once was - - -
I really love you, Katherine !
Be nice !
K A T H E R I N E

(relaxes in his arms, tearfully) I don't want to be disgraced !
We must marry quickly, - then it will be a seven months child ! They say that really happens !

(without tears, half threateningly, but without drawing away from him) Otherwise I will marry that Lening, even if he is an old buck !
C H R I S T O P H E R

(holds her tight so that she trembles with joy, and kisses her) I will today yet ask the Duke for the permanent position - - as soon as the conference is over and there is an opportunity, --
or else I will confide in your Duchess, in whose favor I stand quite high - - -

(draws away; emphatically) K A T H E R I N E
No ! No ! Never !!
She must not know that I was bad and that we are in a hurry! I would die of shame !

C H R I S T O P H E R
Don't overdo it !
You are not the first one -
and the Duchess Margaret is also a woman - -
or is she something higher ?

K A T H E R I N E
Yes - , she is !
Didn't you tell me yourself how brave she was on the journey, and before the Sultan -
and A n g e l you called her - and compared her with the Holy Virgin Mary !

C H R I S T O P H E R
Yes, surely - surely - - but -

(very sharply) K A T H E R I N E
But what ?! But n o t h i n g !
I adore her, and I have quickly gathered these violets for her in the park -
(shows him a bouquet of violets which stands on the table)
which I usually only do for our Holy Mary !

Anyway, she has a heart of gold !
And her golden hair -

(she runs to the closet and brings out the hair of Margaret. She has fastened it on a board of the same length covered with silver brocade; and in showing it lets it hang down with a natural spread)

Like gold with a silver sheen in it !

(she parts the hair, so that the silver brocade shines through, and holds it at various angles to catch the setting sun; all is done with greatest tenderness)

Has her hair grown long again ?

C H R I S T O P H E R

No, she has had it cut twice, once in Constantinople or Stambul, as the Turks say, when we arrived there; and on the return journey once more in Vienna. She does not intend to wear it long again - at least not for the present.

K A T H E R I N E

(still caressing the hair) Oh how sad! I had looked forward with so much pleasure to combing ~~the~~ it again !
(lifts up the hair and lets it fall over her hands)

Look ! Like gold with silver in it ! Like gold !

C H R I S T O P H E R

I would rather have the gold in her dress.

K A T H E R I N E

(without turning from the hair) So you have sewed a t h o u s a n d ducats in her dress! I didn't think so much money could exist.

C H R I S T O P H E R

(bragging) Bah! That's nothing ! The Sultan has millions - billions ! He has so much that he cannot even count it.

K A T H E R I N E

(attentive again) It would be great if they made the alliance ! It would surely be good for you, Christopher - y o u could have a career and later be a great help to our child !

(places the hair carefully on the bed)

Our child shall have a better life than you and I !

(pours out wine and offers it to Christopher)

Try this wine! It is Wormser "Liebfrauenmilch" of 1520.

C H R I S T O P H E R

1520 ! Then it was just ready when Luther was called the following spring.

to Worms

(smells it)

It has a wonderful b o u q u e t !

(whimsical but solemnly) I drink to our seven-months child !

(she makes a snippish gesture as he drinks; he then offers her the cup)

Here, finish it !

(she drinks quickly, then polishes the cup;

Chris. becomes thoughtful, and then murmurs)

At that time Luther was still the Luther
whom Thomas Munzer respected and honored - -

(imitates Luther's
posture and words before the
Imperial Congress in Worms)

Here I stand, I can do no other !
God help me ! Amen !

(with a gesture of angry
contempt)

Today if he had the courage to know himself,
he would have to say -

(imitates the motions of
hands and shoulders used by
Jewish peddlars)

Here I stand, I c a n do otherwise !
God help me ! Amen !

K A T H A R I N E

(after polishing the winecup
she has busied herself at the
table, no longer listening)

When do you think the conference will be
over?

C H R I S T O P H E R

(as if coming out of
a dream)

The conference - !? At sundown the musicians
are to begin playing !

(goes to open window
and looks downward)

In the room at right there is heard
a knock at the rear door, from without.

K A T H E R I N E

(snaps together and takes a listening position,
likewise Christopher) P s t !

A second knock.

V - 2

The door opens quietly. Elizabeth Diede
is seen with the nun's costume over her arm.
Behind her are Jutta Diede, Elizabeth Scheuernschloss
and two other charwomen in working clothes; also
Anna Scheffers who like Elizabeth Diede is dressed
as in Act II, i.e. as personal maids of the Duchess)

E L I Z A B E T H (DIEDE)

(having bashfully taken one step
into the room, and held the others
back, she points to the door in the
partition, and whispers)

There is the room that the Baron lived in -
when I brought him the nun's dress on New Year's eve -
And the Duchess wants me to bring it to him
again tonight !

(puts her hand in
front of her mouth and
draws them close to her)

She is quite silly today -
over her ears in love !

(makes the corresponding
gesture, and then lowers her voice
so much that the audience hears nothing,
but only sees the gestures describing the
infatuation of the Duchess)

K A T H E R I N E

(To Christopher, who is
listening in a fixed
position like herself)

There they are again !

C H R I S T O P H E R

(runs to window as
if to jump out)

They must not find me here !

K A T H E R I N E

(clutches his back)

You can't get out there, it's much too high !

C H R I S T O P H E R

(points to partition door)

Have you the key to that door ?

K A T H E R I N E

No, the Duke himself has it !

He has been sleeping here recently !

C H R I S T O P H E R

Damitall !

(with a glance at the
closet)

Quick, give me one of the dresses of ^{your} ~~the~~ Duchess !

K A T H E R I N E

(stands in front of the
closet with outstretched arms)

No, they must not be misused !

C H R I S T O P H E R

You stupid goose !

Then give me your shirtwaist and your dress !

(takes off his coat
and throws it at her)

You put on my things !

(while he is taking off

his pants, she puts on his coat

without first taking off her shirtwaist;

which he only notices as he hands her

the pants. Angrily he throws down his

pants and pulls at his coat to make

her take it off again)

You dummox, you ! First you've got to take off
your shirtwaist and dress.

(she takes off his coat,
and her shirtwaist and dress,
whereby he helps her.

He then tries to put on her dress,

but gets it upside down; then tries to

turn it around without taking it off -

which he can't do. She picks up his coat

from the floor and tries to put it on as

pants. A mix-up results which only increases

as they call out directions to each other.)

J U T T A

(who has for some time been
interrupting Elizabeth's narrative
gestures, with impatient gestures
of her own)

What do we care about your love-sick Duchess !
She has bread for her children, - even if her
second husband gives her another dozen of them !

(points to partition door)

Go ahead and knock, so that the Baron comes out.
Two months we have already waited for him,
and I still believe that he is our male nun of
the Germanrode convent, - and that you are
having a love-affair with him !

ELIZABETH (DIEDE)
 (fanatically) Oh, if he only were !
 I still love him and will love him eternally !
 (to the others) Should I really knock ?
 (hesitantly draws
 near the door) Perhaps he is sleeping, - and will be very angry
 if we wake him !

J U T T A

If you haven't any courage, I'll knock !

ELIZABETH (DIEDE)
 (pays no attention) He is still so young, the noble Baron -
 hardly twenty, and very good-looking - -
 really one could love him !

J U T T A

(pushes her aside) I won't wait any longer !
 (she knocks; all jump
 and then listen.)

(Christopher at last has the dress on and
 is fastening it. But Katherine is having
 trouble with the suspenders. Both are so
 excited they confuse the simplest things.)

ELIZABETH (DIEDE)
 (whispering) He's probably asleep !
 (Jutta knocks again
 and all listen) Maybe he isn't in !

J U T T A

Then there's no harm in opening the door !

(she opens the door
 and takes half a step
 into the room, the others
 crowd around her)

(Christopher is just about to put on the
 shirtwaist; Katherine is still busy with
 the suspenders.)

(all the women make a loud
 outcry as they see Christopher)

ELIZABETH (SCHEUERNSCHLOSS)

(points to Christopher, who
 yields to his fate and drops
 his arms holding the shirtwaist)

Our Mary ! Our Mary !!

ELIZABETH (DIEDE)
 (fanatically enthused) The Angel of the Lord -, the Angel of the Lord !

J U T T A

(turns upon her) You dirty liar - , you hypocrite !
 Lying and deceiving us - and having a love-affair
 with him, and telling us nothing about it !
 You swindler, - you cheat, you !

(ELIZABETH (DIEDE)

(undisturbed; gazing
 at him ecstatically) It is he - truly ! W o n d e r s do happen !

C H R I S T O P H E R

(in a lazy tone) I am not the one you are looking for, - I am no
 angel of the Lord !

J U T T A

A Devil you are, dressing up like an angel !

(turns to Katherine
who is still busy with
the suspenders)

Hasn't he again got you with child ?

(laughs scornfully)

Look at him; again in women's clothes -
just as in Germanrode !

(Christopher with
conspicuous laziness ~~puts~~ takes
~~the dress~~ off the dress and
hands it back to Katherine;
and lets her give him his pants)

He's a devil, - and would be burned at the stake
if we were still Catholic and had the Inquisition !

K A T H E R I N E

(after putting on her
dress has regained her
composure)

What do you all want anyway, from my bridegroom ?
He was only showing me how to sew his pants so
that they will sit well !

J U T T A

(again laughs scornfully)
(to the other women)

Your b r i d e g r o o m is he ?
Look, she already wears the pants before
marriage !

(to Christopher)

Good luck with her, you worthy Devil's angel,
good luck !

E L I Z A B E T H (SCHEUERNSCHLOSS)

And who will support our children, if he marries
you ?

K A T H E R I N E

(now also putting on
her shirtwaist again)

The Holy Ghost of course, from whom you
got them !

J U T T A

(putting her hands
on her hips)

Listen to her !
The Holy Ghost should provide grub for our
children !
I suppose we should fill them up with
consecrated hosts !
The nerve of her !

(Through the rear door at right, which is still open, appear Philip and Margaret who is dressed as in Act I with her cap)

C H R I S T O P H E R

(who is just finished putting his own clothes on, looks over the heads of the women and sees Ph. and Mar. coming; ~~XXXX~~ out)

His ~~grace~~ Grace, the Duke !

/calls

(the women still huddled around the door are startled and quickly turn to PH. and MAR. and bow, after which there is an embarrassed silence; Katherine in a corner of the room at right is making the last touches incident to putting on her shirtwaist)

P H I L I P

What's happening here ?

(after a pause) Have you lost your speech ?

J U T T A

(gathering herself together) We have found the nun, Sir Duke, who is the father of our children !

P H I L I P

(with a laugh) A nun who is a father of children ! Where is this eighth wonder of the world ?

E L I Z A B E T H (DIEDE)

(ecstatically) Yes - a wonder -, it is a wonder !

J U T T A

(angrily) Shut up, you hypocrite !
(pointing to Christopher) This one was the nun, Mary, in the Germanrode convent, who tricked us with the miracle of the Holy Ghost !

P H I L I P

(looks at Christopher who drops his eyes) How did you discover all this ?

K A T H E R I N E

(tearfully) They didn't discover any such thing, your Grace.

And It isn't true at all !

He is my bridegroom and knows nothing about these charwomen !

P H I L I P

Well, whom shall I believe now ?

J U T T A

(points to Chris. her voice almost cracking with anger) He was she ! She was he ! !
Ask him if he'll deny it !

P H I L I P

(apparently not hearing her) What proofs have you ?

E L I Z A B E T H (DIEDE)

(holds up the nun costume with gesture of adoration) Here, this dress of purity, your Grace !

J U T T A

I found it New Year's morning in the Neustadt church, while cleaning the altar. We have to work as charwomen now because the pension given to us after the

(points to Chr.)

closing of the convent is too little to live on and too much to die with, and in addition we have to take care of the children from that fellow. We are all living together and have the children with us, in that way we manage to make ends meet.

P H I L I P

Let's leave all that aside for the moment, and tell me how this dress led you here.

J U T T A

(points to El.D.)

I recognized it immediately by the convent mark and number that is sewed on it, - immediately, Sir Duke. And I inquired around until I found out that my own sister had it, - my own sister!

E L I Z A B E T H

Yes, your noble grace, I have saved it like a relic; because the night before the convent was closed, it was my turn to be with him, but all I found was this stuffed dress -

J U T T A

(interrupting)

F a i r y t a l e s !

(to Philip)

She lay in bed with him until morning -

I looked in several times during the night!

She's a hypocrite and talks of spiritual love, Sir Duke, but I'm sure that for years she had him ~~s~~ e c r e t l y - !

P H I L I P

That is very improbable, for the one whom you accuse of these grave charges has only been in my service a short time, and has just been far away during the last two months.

(Kath. is close by
Chr. and tenderly presses
close to him)

But continue. How did you come here?

J U T T A

(points to El.D.)

She said that the Duchess told her on New Year's eve to bring the dress to a Baron, who is said to have lived here -

(points to room at right)

E L I Z A B E T H (D I E D E)

(awakes with a start out
of her reverie)

Oh, I only told you that as the greatest secret, and you had sworn not to tell anyone!

(tearfully to Margaret)

Forgive me, gracious Baron, that I told anyone about your disguise on New Year's eve - but she called me a secret whore and hypocrite and all vile names - please, gracious Baron, tell her that I have told the truth.

M A R G A R E T

You h a v e told the truth!

(Eliz.D. looks snippily defiant at her sister Jutta, then goes off in ecstatic reverie, stroking the dress and looking at Christopher adoringly)

P H I L I P

God's ways arē wonderful -

(to Christopher)

And to His own He gives while they sleep!

But now the main thing, - what about it Christopher? Were you it?

(Christopher ^{draws together} jerks convulsively) Speak freely !
You have no punishment to fear anymore.

C H R I S T O P H E R
(after some hesitancy) I was it, gracious Sir !
(Jutta takes a self-satisfied posture, and all the women are proud that they were right)

I had to hide because I took part in the peasant rebellion, - - It was the only way I could save my life !

P H I L I P
But that was no reason why you had to give your life to so many others !

C H R I S T O P H E R
That too I could not escape once I had taken refuge under the skirts of the nuns.

P H I L I P
How was that?

C H R I S T O P H E R
(sideglance to Margaret to excuse himself for the following; the women assume an embarrassed attitude)

(to Philip) Well, worthy ladies, I am afraid I will now have to tell tales about your bed secrets in the convent, - but after all, you have not spared me either !
The cells in the convents had no locks on the doors, so that during the night the nuns could freely visit with each other. And if one were impelled by the spirit, she would go to another; and then one would play the role of the Angel Gabriel and the other the Virgin Mary, so that the miracle might happen.

P H I L I P
What miracle ?

C H R I S T O P H E R
The miracle through which our Lord and Savior came into existence in the womb of Mary !

P H I L I P
(explosively) Oh sure !
(to the women) And so the wonder really happened to you, and then you wondered a b o u t the wonder - !
(the women's embarrassment increases)

E L I Z A B E T H (DIEDE)
(complaining) Only I didn't experience it, - the wonder !
(strokes the dress with special tenderness)

C H R I S T O P H E R
(somewhat firmer) Yes, your Grace, the wonder had to happen !
The very first night I was in the convent, this Jutta came to me -

(points to her; she tries to hide behind the other women; Philip looks at her with surprise)

P H I L I P
Oh my !

C H R I S T O P H E R
Yes indeed, - this very one who ~~is/sb/looked/abouthed~~ has such a big mouth here, was especially liked as Angel Gabriel by the nuns.
I was dead tired from the flight, and for the first

time in weeks slept in a decent bed, - I slept like a corpse! - - till I slowly and gradually got awake and heard a deep voice -

(solemnly imitates Jutta's pathos)
(in own voice)

Have no fear, Mary - -
It just so happened that this was also the name I took in entering the convent; - so then:

(again imitates)

Have no fear, Mary:
for thou hast found favor with me!
Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus - -

(in own voice again) and so forth!

PHILIP

(again explosively) And then ~~thexxxxxxxxxxxx~~ she gave birth to the son - !

(looks for Jutta) Or was it a daughter?

ELIZABETH (SCHEUERNSCHLOSS)

(since Jutta does not answer)

A lovely boy it was, gracious Sire, - the second father!

(points to Chr.)

CHRISTOPHER

I don't scare so easily, and always felt myself in God's hand, -
but when I then felt that a hand was taking hold of me in the dark, I did become afraid and began to think: The Devil must have something to do with this! - -

PHILIP

Didn't Jutta or some other nun tell on you to the Mother Superior?

CHRISTOPHER

At first I feared that would happen; but then the Mother Superior herself came to me, luckily, - but of course she was somewhat older than the others - but finally I was so fed up that nothing mattered. I looked upon the whole thing as a necessary evil and treated it as work that I had to do, - - till the inspection began - !

(Philip laughs again)

ELIZABETH (SCHEUERNSCHLOSS)

For us it is no laughing matter, Sir Duke!
When our pensions were arranged, we did not know of our coming motherhood, otherwise we would have put in claims for two mouths instead of one, because the children came into existence in the convent before its closing.
So we sit now in misery with our children, and have the disgrace added to it, -
for us the Reformation was no thing of beauty!

PHILIP

And that brings us back to the main thing - our beloved money!
Who pays alimony? That's the question here!

E L I Z A B E T H (SCHEUERNSCHLOSS)
 (pointing to Christopher)

He does - : he is the father !

K A T H E R I N E

He is my bridegroom -

and your children are from the Holy Ghost !

M A R G A R E T

A new miracle shall happen :

I will support your children !

(the women are stunned
 and unbelieving; Philip is astonished
 but quickly regains composure)

P H I L I P

(to the women)

Now are you satisfied ?

Go now and report tomorrow at my chancery.

Bring your pension papers with you.

(all walk slowly to the
 door, only Elizabeth Diede
 remains behind sunk in dreams
 and holding the nun's dress.
 She is trying to tell Margaret
 something with her glances)

Are you still dreaming of the Angel Gabriel ?

E L I Z A B E T H (DIEDE)

No, gracious Lord, I -

M A R G A R E T

(places a finger upon
 her mouth to tell
 Elizabeth to remain silent;
 Philip glancing from the
 side notices it)

Give it to me now, and go !

(Margaret takes the dress
 from Elizabeth who then exits
 with all the other women and
 closes the rear door at right.)

P H I L I P

What is the meaning of that ?

M A R G A R E T

(closes the door and
draws forth a note out
of her coat, which she
gives to Philip)

Christine is expecting me again this evening !

(as the door gets shut,
Kath. and Christopher fall
into each other's arms,
and passionately caress.)

P H I L I P

(reading note)

The hypocrite ! I was such a loving husband to
her in all these weeks -- she too was very loving
to me, I must admit -- but now I see that all the
time she only thought of you, - her Baron !

M A R G A R E T

Does that mean you on the contrary only thought of
her, and that you forgot me entirely ?

P H I L I P

Margaret !

I always thought of you, - even when I was with her !

M A R G A R E T

And that was no hypocrisy ?

P H I L I P

No, most certainly not !

It was a cleavage full of charm and pleasure !

My love went forth to you and her together:

Y o u w e r e i n h e r , a n d s h e i n y o u !

M A R G A R E T

Could she not feel the same toward us ?

We twain are o n e to her !

And even more so than she and I are one to you,
for in her eyes I am merely the younger Philip !

Besides, with me she can never be untrue to you !

(smiling)

P H I L I P

(smiling back)

That is certain !

And it is also certain that you made b o t h of
us happy !

M A R G A R E T

What made you happy, made me sad,
for I had to think of the great disappointment
that now awaits her !

Didn't you think of this too ?

P H I L I P

Yes indeed, - but my mind had the diversion of
conferences, journeys, official business and the like.
H e r e -

(points to a large iron
box on a table)

where the money is flowing together from all Hessian
churches for the Turkish war that is supposed to
insure future peace - h e r e

(makes a gesture to include the whole room)

I lived during the day -- but nights I was in there -

(points to left room and steps close to Margaret)

In the room and the bed, where the fragrance
of your loveliness still clung - !

M A R G A R E T

(interrupts him without
responding to his
tenderness)

Forgive me that I interrupt you -
I can't rid myself of the thought of Christine -
I can't see her this evening !

(excited)

P H I L I P

(disappointed that
she is unresponsive
to him)

You can send her a note, saying that you
are tired or sick.

M A R G A R E T

Then she will come to see me.

P H I L I P

I'll be here and will tell her that you cannot
receive her.

M A R G A R E T

(very excited)

Even that - I can't bear it !
How is this ~~not~~ knot ever to be untied ! ?
Have you any plan ?

P H I L I P

Of course ! I thought that after a few days you
might return to your mother, - that is,
a p p a r e n t l y. But actually you will go
to the castle at Rotenburg, where I have already
made the preparations for our wedding.

(smiles at her)

Your brother Philip is then simply gone -
vanished - , died, if you like !

(crosses himself)

Oh !

M A R G A R E T

That would be a mean and abominable way of
treating her !

P H I L I P

Do you know of any better way ?

M A R G A R E T

Unfortunately not !
So when can I leave here ?

P H I L I P

Why you saw and heard it yourself that because of
Melanchthon's coming, everything will have to be
gone over from the beginning again.
And at least several days will be necessary.

M A R G A R E T

And for days I should play sick, and again be
a prisoner in that room -

(points to room at
left where Christopher
and Kath. still stand
embraced)

(loud, almost screaming) I can't do that! No, I can't do that ! !
T o d a y y e t I will leave -
Tomorrow the very latest !

(Chr. & Kath. hear it;
they remain embraced but take a listening attitude)

P H I L I P

But why upset everything ?

M A R G A R E T

(still louder and almost screaming) Because I can't play this role any longer !

(Kath. wants to go to the door to listen; he ^{Christ.} pulls her away, but then
he busies himself near the door.)

PHILIP
 (close to Margaret) Don't scream so !
 The servants are right next door.
 (points to door) I'll speed up everything, and will force a
 decision by tomorrow !

MARGARET
 Why not today ?

PHILIP
 Today ? - Impossible !!

MARGARET
 (very irritated) Why impossible ? What is there so weighty to be
 done? Christine will give her consent to your
 second marriage even more readily today than to-
 morrow, - if you give her the same right.
 The theologians and jurists must simply be
 c o m p e l l e d to make the decision which
 sooner or later they will have to make anyway !
 These babblers have already ~~taken up enough time~~
 been given time enough !

PHILIP
 It is now only a matter of getting the approval of
 Melanchthon, and of Luther who speaks through
 Melanchthon -
 nonetheless when the others sign, they should also
 feel themselves impelled by the Holy Spirit -

MARGARET
 (not listening,
 screams)
 (almost
 threatening) I can't wait any longer - - -
 Do it today - compel the decision so I can
 leave tomorrow !
 Suleiman decided immediately, without listening
 to any one else !

PHILIP
 (again glances at the
 side door, not clearly
 hearing the last) Don't be so loud !
 Come now into the other room, and rest yourself.
 I will send for the men, and in the meantime
 will write out two statements, one for me
 and one for Christine -

MARGARET
 (interrupts) But me you must leave out entirely !

PHILIP
 Only as a silent witness must you be there,
 otherwise Christine might become hesitant at
 the last moment !

(Margaret makes a wry face)
 It'll do you good to be there, for I intend to
 give fullest vent to my feelings, and openly
 proclaim everything that I have suppressed
 until ^{now} you. Come along!

(Margaret does not move)
 Why do you hesitate ?

MARGARET
 (at first half-loud
 and stammering) You - heard - that I want to support those
 children, whose father Christopher Hulsing
 unwillingly became in t h i s nun's dress -

(lifts up the dress on her arm)
 in which I too, involuntarily, did see the God
 of Love in money form, who now attains reality
 in t h i s * your dress, through you and me and -
 Suleiman.

*(points to ~~his~~ her
 and his dress)

One thousand golden coins are sewed into this dress, with Suleiman's picture on one side and your picture on the other, as a thousand-fold expression of his will to union with you, - given to me at my departure from him.

And these thousand gold Philip-Suleimans I want to give as the start of a fund for the poor of your land,

And would ask you to add the entire Turkish collection to it,

and to appoint Christopher Hulsing as the administrator of this fund.

(points to box)

P H I L I P

Christopher Hulsing? Why should he especially be the administrator of the fund, which incidentally I shall be very happy to support and encourage?

M A R G A R E T

Because he embodies the dream of the kingdom of heaven which lives in the hearts of the peasants, and because all through our long journey he talked with me about that which had become the central wisdom of his rich and varied life, - the same wisdom that I saw as a vision at the altar on New Year's eve, -

namely that money is the channel through which God must come to the common people. - - -

And, in a word, because he is the voice of the money-serving populace,

the voice which you must now hear alongside of preachers and counselors, if together with Suleiman and myself you wish to establish money as the foundation of the kingdom of heaven upon earth!

P H I L I P

(after a short period
of reflection)

Yes, I will listen to this voice !

(opens the door in
the partition wall)

P H I L I P

(enters room at left, glances at the table; Kath. & Chr. servilely greet him.) Are you finished ?

(both answer with gestures pointing to the table itself. Philip takes his stand close in front of Chris.; speaks solemnly)

In recognition of the services rendered by you to my future second wife, during her journey to the Turkish realm, I hereby appoint you, Christopher Hulsing, as my Secretary for Social Welfare !

C H R I S T O P H E R

(falls to his knees before Philip, and takes his hand to kiss it. Deeply stirred) My deepest thanks for this great honor !

P H I L I P

(points to room at right) Stand up, Sir Secretary, and for the last time go as servant to the gentlemen of the conference and ask them to come here - for a short session! And you yourself take part in this session as new Secretary !

C H R I S T O P H E R

(stands up and bows) Very well, your Grace!

M A R G A R E T

(offers him both hands) My good wishes, C h ristopher ! on your appointment.

C H R I S T O P H E R

(takes both her hands and falls on his knees before her, shaken by sobs) I know that I have you to thank for it - !
(Kath. only now begins to understand, and starts crying as Christopher disappears through right door)

V - 6

P H I L I P

(smiling upon the crying Katherine) Will you be able to fill the role of a secretary's wife ?

K A T H E R I N E

(cannot quite stop crying) Oh, most gracious Lord - if - my father - could have lived to see this!

(she mimics the bow of a gentleman to a lady, but her tears make it grotesque)

Madame Secretary - - Madame Secretary - he could now say - to his daughter - - Madame Secreta-a-a-ary!
(finally in control) My father was a master in his craft !

P H I L I P

Well, of course !
Now go to the Duchess and ask her to come here.
(points to room at right) Hurry !

K A T H E R I N E

(attempting a solemn curtsy) I will hurry, your Grace !
(to Marg., pointing to table) There is a bunch of violets for you, dear, good, Duchess - the first of this year.

(over)

P H I L I P

(alongside of Margaret who stepped to the table to smell the violets)

I have had this meal served here - in order to make it a holy communion between us, and to greet you therewith !
Do you still remember the Holy Communion of the New Year's service - which was our farewell communion ?

(Margaret suddenly swings around and embraces his head passionately with both arms, at the same time pressing her head to his bosom; he holds her tight until she loosens herself, then tenderly releases her. He then goes to the window and looks downward.)

I have also ordered music !

(Margaret has not looked into his eyes before, during or after the embrace; remains standing where he left her; is wholly self-absorbed. She does not even look up when he walks past her and says:)

I'll call you afterwards !

(he goes into the room at right, and ~~locks~~ closes the door)

V - 8

(while Philip goes to the rear door of the right room, to close it, Margaret in the left room takes a few quick steps to the door in the partition wall; she raises her arms in inner agony and finally leans against the door and drops to her knees)

M A R G A R E T

(on her knees)

Forgive me, Philip, that I kissed him and let him kiss me. - I h a d to do it in order to lay the foundation of a world power that shall serve as a bridge to all-power and to God !
But I also w a n t e d to do it, because I love him !

(in the other room Philip has meanwhile seated himself at the table and has ostentatiously placed two sheets of paper before him on the table; he writes alternately on one sheet and then the other, pausing repeatedly with a show of deep thought. Margaret now turns her face in the direction of the room at left)

You also love two women -
and y o u shall possess me first - - -
for y o u I have saved myself !

(she arises and goes to the window; daylight is gone and twilight begins; the crescent new moon and a bright star near it, are seen; Marg. stretches out her arms to them)

I w i l l come - , Suleiman !
I will come s o o n !

(Margaret comes to the middle of the room and stands fully in the foreground, brings her hands together in front of her face and after a few seconds places them upon her breast in a prayer position, as at the end of the first act)

God is my witness,
that I must become attached to both,
for love is only permissible
when its joy is the path to omnipotence,
and includes all mankind in its blessing !
Philip-Suleiman, way
Suleiman-Philip,
in mystical union with me and with God
through sameness of dress and oneness of money !

(stretches out both arms longingly)

You - both of you - my b e l o v e d ones !
You - both of you - my h e r o e s !
You - both of you - my b e l o v e d h e r o e s !

(through the window the musicians are heard, playing "A Mighty Fortress is Our God!")

Through the right rear door come Christopher Hulsing and the same preachers and counselors as in the first act, except that Kirchhain and Fabricius are missing and Philip Melanchthon is added.

C H R I S T O P H E R

(steps alongside of Philip who does not interrupt his writing)

The gentlemen are here, your Grace.!

P H I L I P

(without looking up)

Let them be seated ! Light the room and also ~~light the lamps and ask the Baron~~ ask the Baron to come in.

(Christopher lights candles, then takes one in his hand and goes to the partition door and knocks)

M A R G A R E T

(standing at the window and looking at the evening sky) Come in !

C H R I S T O P H E R

(walks in) The gentlemen have come - , Sir Baron !
(he places the lighted candle on the table, and at the word "Baron" smiles understandingly at Margaret)

M A R G A R E T

I'll be there right away !
(she motions him to go,

which he does. Immediately thereafter Marg. takes a few determined steps to the door, but then stops) Forgive me, Christine, that I cannot help you ! (then she goes into the room at right and is greeted silently; she sits down on a chair near the partition door, which Chr.H. has held out to her. When the door opened, the music could be heard more strongly)

P H I L I P

(still writing) Shut the window over there.

(Chr.H. goes into the room at left and shuts the window; at the same moment the musicians are heard only very faintly. After one repetition of "E Mighty Fortress is our God" other melodies are heard) (Philip now stops writing and greets all with a mere nod of his head)

I have interrupted your conference, and have asked you to come here, because y o u -

(he nods to Nusspicker who quickly rises half-way and bows)

Nusspicker, a s N o t a r y -

(then with a gesture to all the others, who likewise have half risen and bow)

(he lifts up both sheets with both hands and shows them to all)

and all of you worthy gentlemen, as w i t n e s s e s are all together now requested to sign these statements with my wife and myself: the Duchess will also be here presently !

(almost all turn their heads involuntarily to the rear door where Chr.H. has taken his stand; but immediately turn back to Philip, who now holds up one sheet alone)

On this page here she will acknowledge m y right to a second marriage -

(puts down this sheet and takes up the other) (gives both sheets to Nussp. who takes them with a bow)

and here I will grant the s a m e right to her! Examine these papers, and see if they will become legally valid expressions of our wills, when duly signed and executed !

M E L A N C H T H O N

(who toward the end stared horrified at Ph.)

Forgive me, your noble Grace - but have I heard correctly that also the Duchess is to have the right to a second marriage ?

P H I L I P

(turns to Bucer who convulsively draws together)

Didn't you speak to them in Wittenberg about the desire of my wife, Bucer ?

B U C E R

(gets up, twisting and turning)

I had no end of difficulty - to get Luther's signature for your second marriage alone; and could hardly have gotten it if I had spoken about the intention of the Duchess.

P H I L I P

(again to Melanchthon in a tone of indifference) (with a side-glance at Margaret)

What my wife requests - is merely a recognition of the equality of man and woman.

And I can already tell you that the possibility therein involved will never become an actuality.

M A R G A R E T

(involuntarily)

But that does not affect the seriousness and validity of the statement which your Grace is to sign on the second page, does it ?

P H I L I P

(very astonished)

Certainly not, dear Baron !

M E L A N C H T H O N

That already fulfills Luther's fears and forebodings, who demanded strictest secrecy for this second marriage.

P H I L I P

(angrily to Bucer) (to Melanchthon)

Th a t t o o you have not reported, Bucer.

But to you I must put the same question that two months ago I put to Pastor Kirckhain, who already knew of this attitude of Luther:

Can anything be wrong before mankind and the world that has been found right before God ?

M E L A N C H T H O N

(didactically)

God's graciousness permits in special cases, what generally remains forbidden - just as we are more indulgent to those who are sick than we are to those who are well and strong.

P H I L I P

(interrupts strongly)

I reject the comparison !

Because to me the second marriage means salvation and happiness - the way to God through joy and ecstasy !

M E L A N C H T H O N

Christ alone is the way to God -

you however are living in the flesh of Adam, which is continuously crying for the flesh of Eve, because you scorn the Body of the Lord which frees us from the lust of the flesh !

P H I L I P

And what is Luther seeking in Katy Borah, when he as man embraces her as woman ?

M E L A N C H T H O N

The children that he is generating with her, and in the children, G o d - - but never the Paradisical lust of the flesh which is of the Devil !

P H I L I P

And then Luther's children seek God in their children, and these again in their children - and so on until the last day, - - but never in their own flesh and blood !

If that is the way to God, then I am willing to go to the Devil !

(excited murmuring of all)

M E L A N C H T H O N

(jumps up seriously
worried about Philip,
imploringly:)

For the sake of your soul's salvation, noble
Sir, I implore you to take Holy Communion
very s o o n , or else the same fate will
befall you that came to the recently deceased
Doctor Faust in Wittenberg who was also
caught in a frenzy of love and sensual pleasure,
and turned away from the Sacrament, and then
had to yield his soul to the Devil !

(with exaggerated
solemnity, almost
grotesque)

As a reformed Christian, you can receive the Body
of the Lord in b o t h forms, in the bread a n d
in the w i n e , even as did Christ's disciples;
and thereby surely become free of all sinful
longing !

P H I L I P

(sarcastic)

In your opinion then, the principal sense of the
Reformation is the reforming of the Body of Christ
upon the altar, and specifically the little swallow
of wine which reformed Christians receive with the
bread, while Catholics eat only the bread alone ? !

And you seriously believe that for t h a t reason
I became a reformed Christian, and for fifteen
years already have risked my life and my country
for the cause of the Reformation ?

M E L A N C H T H O N

Yes indeed, so we t h o u g h t in Wittenberg !

P H I L I P

Let us speak frankly for once !
The real point at issue between Rome and ourselves
is not the Body of the Lord and its form upon the
altar,
but rather the body of people - of men and women -
who as ~~reformed~~ a reformed clergy now live on the
wealth which priests, monks and nuns had gathered
together as gifts for saying masses for the dead, -
and which wealth we have quietly taken along in
going over from the Catholic mass to the
reformed Holy Communion !

(makes a gesture
of taking along)

M o n e y is the real meaning of the phrase,
"This is my body," and n o t the ceremoniously
carried monstrance; it is the poorly veiled
purpose of sermon and song; it is the t r u e
divine substance, the t r u l y reformed thing,
the t r u e gospel. It is the a c t u a l -
because money-dreated - heavenly radiance - - -

(sobbing and bitter)

But alas, instead of converting this divine substance
into the body of Go d, our preachers and their
wives - though nearly all ~~xxxxxx~~ trained in
celibacy - convert it only into the bodies of their
c h i l d r e n , -
and out of love they make a Godless pastime !

(stands up, breathes
deeply and speaks
passionately)

I however seek a truly G o d l i k e use and
m o n e y -fashioned form of the Body of Christ,
centered to the priestly bridegroom and the priestly
bride, as priestly loving couple in the form of man
and wife !

M E L A N C H T H O N

The imagination of your Grace is engaged in a dangerous game with the Body of Christ, which is reminiscent of the lustful escapades of the Münster Anabaptists, who also minted coins to glorify their fleshly lusts as way to God.

Are you then now seeking God along the way of that tailor whom you yourself helped to put down?

P H I L I P

(sits again)

Whether we find God through the way of a t a i l o r or through the way of a c a r p e n t e r , my dear Sir Magistrate, is certainly less important than the question whether we find Him a t a l l !

(general disquiet and murmurings;

Melanchthon excitedly arises and sits down again)

And to this I would add that I myself have in the reformed faith as yet n o t found Him !

The fact that I helped to to put down that tailor - or rather was compelled by treaty to make my troops available for this purpose - this I now regret all the more, because in that same year I risked my life and land to bring back my cousin Ulrich into Württemberg and his dukedom, - h i m who now deserts me !

(laughs bitterly)

G r e a t you called me for it, but I wasn't great, because I still lacked the courage to be myself, - to be my own priest, - to find my own way to God, - which now I am ready to do !

(turns again to Melanchthon)

What good does it do me to be the apparent head of the churches in Hesse, but in reality to be only the churches' servant and cashier, who now besides priests, monks and nuns also has thousands of preacher's children to support, which ~~previously~~ formerly were not present and which do not increase the well-being of my people ? And do you think my throne has a firmer foundation in the reformed churches than in the Catholic?

M E L A N C H T H O N

(somewhat uncertain) Your Grace must not forget that Luther's pen at that time fashioned the spiritual weapons against those peasants, - who constituted a very real danger to your throne !

P H I L I P

(lets his head drop and remains silent a few seconds; thereby the music becomes more clearly audible, a sorrowful melody is being played)

These r o b b i n g -- These m u r d e r i n g peasants - - , as L u t h e r called them - - -: these poor Devils with their dream of the kingdom of God !

(now he looks up, gazes into the distance and raises his voice)

I still see them before me -, at Frankenhäusen -,

in front of the mouths of our cannon and the
points of our lances - ,
shortly before they were slaughtered by our hired
troops.

(lifts right arm and
by gesture indicates the
field of battle)

T h e r e - stood Thomas Münzer preaching the
Kingdom of God - -
and h e r e was I, high upon my horse, exercising
divine authority and leadership - -
t h e n - a c a n n o n shot !!!

(he strikes the table
with his hand so that all
jerk together with fear;
he stands up and hammers out
the words with great passion)

Cries !! Howls !!! Stampede, - groaning, and
moaning ! An awful butchery !!!!

(somewhat quieter)

Like sheep at the shambles they stood in front
of these trained soldiers -
and prayed to G o d - -
where powder and bullets - and m o n e y for
war material - were the only effective powers !

(solemnly and slowly with
a gesture of invitation)

Stand up, worthy gentlemen, to honor these peasants
and to honor Thomas Münzzer -
one of whose fellow-combatants I have just appointed
to be my Secretary for Social Welfare.
Come here, Christopher Hülsing, and introduce yourself

(with trembling voice)

In you I unite myself with the peasants and also
with the Anabaptists,
and demand now as ruler by divine right,
what they as p e o p l e dreamed of in that early
time: namely a reformation not only of the
C h u r c h and of the divine service i n the
church, - but also of the S t a t e and of the
classes in the state.
The foundation of this new reformation shall be
the new marriage - a priest-like noble married pair -
and not the H o k u s p o k u s at the altar !

M E L A N C H T H O N

(turns to all the others) But that is blasphemy and heresy !

P H I L I P

(short scornful laugh)

H e r e s y ?! If in this moment I should
turn Catholic, in the next moment you would be
a h e r e t i c in Hesse, and the fire con-
suming you at the stake would light your way
to God - so that you would surely not miss it !

B U C E R

(bows to Philip who sits again)

The words blasphemy and heresy are deeply regretted
by all of us -

(he includes all with a
gesture, and they all assent with
more or less nodding of the head)
(turns to Melan. who however
gives no sign of regret)

has also already regretted them.
Forgive them, gracious Duke, and ascribe
them to the heat of the argument!

(Philip makes a gesture of angry refusal, and stares straight ahead with a look of annoyance. Bucer turns to Melanchthon)

The question whether the church sacraments can effect salvation, is one which my friend Calvin in Geneva answers in the negative.

And if Holy Communion be considered as a church sacrament, whether then Christ's flesh and blood is present in the bread and wine only in a symbolic sense, as Z w i n g l i teaches - or whether it is present actually and truly, as L u t h e r would have it - there we have the fatal disagreement which as early as ten years ago our noble Duke tried to adjust in Marburg; -

because this disagreement divides the reformed Christians into two camps, and was much more dangerous - and still is - than the peasants' war and Münster.

And if now this same Duke wishes to consider marriage as a sacrament and treat it as such, and seeks to find God in his own way through a double marriage, we must hold that Luther's doctrine that each one is his own priest, gives him the right to do so.

Otherwise Luther would merely be a new pope! Therefore I beg of you, urgently and most sincerely, to assent to this double marriage !

M E L A N C H T H O N

What you demanded of us in Wittenberg, we have done; although it was with great reluctance that we signed your protocol.

Now however you want us to endorse the double marriage p u b l i c l y -

and also to give the Duchess a dispensation for a second marriage - -

in fact, if I understand you correctly, we should actually acknowledge the double-sided double marriage as a new sacrament !

This is too much !!

V - 10

(in the rear door at right Christine appears, dressed as in the third act; behind her is Katherine)

C H R I S T O P H E R

(who is the first to notice her coming; loudly) Her sovereign Grace, the Duchess !
(all arise and bow to Christine, who remains standing in the door for a moment, to catch her breath)

Philip goes to her and leads her to his place at the table, himself taking another chair alongside of her which Christopher moves toward him. Christopher then goes to Katherine who still stands at the door, he whispers something to her, after which she goes out and he closes the door, thereafter returning to the conference)

P H I L I P

(after all are seated
except Christopher)

You have come at just the right moment,
Christine, to p e r s o n a l l y tell our guest
from Wittenberg, Sir Melanchthon -

(points to him; he
rises half-way and bows
again to Christine)

what the other gentlemen have already heard
from you; namely that you feel yourself entitled
to a second marriage even i f the worthy Doctor
Martin Luther does not agree with you !

(motions for the two
papers, which Nusspicker
places on the table)

Here are two statements which I have drawn up,
and which Nusspicker has checked over -

(pushes one of the
papers toward her)
(Christine reads, and
Ph. waits before pushing
the other paper ~~xxxx~~
toward her)

On this page you agree to my second marriage -

(She reads the second
paper still more eagerly;
Ph. turns to Nussp.)

and I agree to yours on this !

(with servile bow)

N U S S P I C K E R

Are the papers properly drawn ?

They are, gracious Lord,
I need only put the heading on them.

P H I L I P

(to Christine who
is still reading)

Then I would suggest that we both now sign them,
before the notary and all these gentlemen as
witnesses; so that these many conferences will
have at last a fixed point from which to work.

(Christine is still
reading)

I think you will be in complete agreement !

(she stops reading
and gazes throughtfully
straight ahead, while Ph. and
all the others await her reply
with great tension; in the silence
the music becomes more clearly audible:
Christmas airs!)

Have you any misgivings -
or any other suggestion to make ?

C H R I S T I N E

(rises slowly as if in
a dream and speaks
accordingly)

C H R I S T i n e is my name -

so I was christened, because I was born on
Christmas day - -

the same day therefore on which we celebrate
Christ's birthday !

(somewhat livelier)

A p r o m i s e this name became to me when
I understood the meaning it was intended to have,
a n u n I wanted to become, so that as
C h r i s t i n e I could belong wholly to
C h r i s t !

And no doubt would have become one, if my
father had not planned for my marriage.
But even as wife I was more attached to Christ
than to my husband, for whom in this reserved
way I brought s e v e n children into the
world, without ever tasting the joy of love - -!

(very emotionally) Forgive me, you theological gentlemen, that
today I call this kind of married life
 an u n q u a l i f i e d s i n - -

(with tears in her
 eyes, to Philip who
 looks up at her)

And you, Philip, forgive me -
 that formerly when you came to me as m a n
 I could only see you in the light of the Devil -
 and only realized that this was the cause of
 our unhappy marriage,
 when another man opened my eyes, and showed me
 what love could be ! -

(glances at Margaret
 who draws together con-
 vulsively and remains
 seated and self-absorbed)

Forgive me this most of all ! !

(with great feeling
 that grows)

Christ touched n o woman -
 and that is why formerly, as Christine, I did not
 want to touch any man.
 But now I believe that also thereby He brought
 a sacrifice for all mankind, -
 to purify our sexuality from the curse of the fall.
 Behind the pair of criminals at Christ's crucifixion,
 I now behold a purified pair of lovers at Christ's
 resurrection !

Only through this vision did I become a Christian
 in my heart, and did I find the way to my husband
 in God, - because I was p a i r e d in Christ, -
 and on the wings of such l o v e could soar to
 heaven !

And now if with Philip's consent, I am permitted
 to belong also to another man -
 as wife to both as husbands -

I feel my love and happiness are doubled !

(throws a burning glance
 at Margaret who remains motionless)

P H I L I P

(draws close to Christine
 and presses her tenderly to
 himself; deep silence and the
 music again more audible)

I thank you, Christine,
 I thank you from my heart -

(she sits but he re-
 mainst standing)

and hope that these gentlemen will now find in
 your words a second time what, before you came,
I said to them about the meaning of the new
marriage: that it is a new covenant with God,
 a new third testament and kingdom,
 as perhaps Mohammed surmised - who in his Koran
 acknowledged the old and new testaments ~~xxx~~
 as true revelations of God -

M E L A N C H T H O N

(jumps up with gesture
 of abhorrence)

H o r r i b l e delusion !

P H I L I P

(firmly but quietly)

You are horrified, Melanchthon, because your
 Christian pride will not let you see that Allah
 and Jehovah are only different names for the
 o n e God !!

(breaks off the thought
and addresses them all)

But if after conquering Hungary, Suleiman should
also conquer Austria and Germany,
then t h i s that we do t o d a y
will save Christianity from annihilation,
and prepare the way for the unity of the two religions.

M E L A N C H T H O N

(desperately)

Almighty God ! - a unity of Christians and
M o h a m m e d a n s - - - !

P H I L I P

(serenely, almost
jokingly)

Why not, since Christians and Mohammedans live
together very peaceably in the Turkish realm ?
And did not Luther himself write that warring
against the Türks is the same as warring against God ?
You are a master of languages and know that
Suleiman is the same name as Solomon, -
do you comprehend the promise that lies in this
name for me,

(tries to catch Marg.'s
eye, but she twitches
every time the name
Suleiman is uttered)

since Solomon and David are my patterns ?

M E L A N C H T H O N

(dries his forehead) Pardon - I cannot stay here any longer; my
spirit is becoming weak and confused !

P H I L I P

All right! I will quickly dismiss you;
but you should witness -

(Melanchthon twitches
with fear; Ph. smiles and
takes a friendly tone)

only to w i t n e s s - -
and t o g e t h e r with a l l these gentlemen - -
that the Duchess and myself are affixing our
signatures !

(to Nussp, who has
meanwhile again read
the papers)

Give it to me !

(Nussp. gives one) And the other one !

(Ph. gives the first
one to Christine) This is for you !

(she takes it and
gets into position to
sign it; while Philip signs
his and then offers her the pen)

Here is the pen !

(while Christine is writing,
Nussp. strews sand over Ph's
signature, then bows)

Have all the gentlemen sign, then seal
the papers and send them to-d a y to my
wife and myself !

(Nussp. has strewn the
second paper, is servilely
attentive as Ph. invites all
the rest to leave)

I thank you in advance for your witnessing
signatures, worthy gentlemen,
and I beg of you, Melanchthon, to inform
the worthy Doctor Martin Luther that the
w e d d i n g will be at Easter if not

(to Melanchthon)

(over)

C H R I S T I N E

(goes to Marg. as Ph. closes the rear door; whispers hastily) Did they bring you the nun's dress ?
 (Marg. very slightly nods affirmatively) I'll await you at midnight !

P H I L I P

(who has observed the foregoing out of the corner of his eye, goes to both women, speaks and acts unconcernedly)
 I will accompany you to your room, Christine. Our Baron is already leaving us early tomorrow morning, because he feels - no doubt rightly - that his mother and also his sister are waiting impatiently for him.
 I'll talk everything over with him later !

C H R I S T I N E

So soon you are leaving us - -
 but I suppose it must be so !
 Come back s o o n with your sister !

(Christine offers her hand which Marg. kisses like a cavalier. On the way to the rear door Chr. lets her handkerchief drop, then turns around quickly at the door)
 Ah - there it is !

(comes back quickly for the handkerchief, which Marg. is picking up. Chr. also bends down to pick it up and their heads are close together) You can come earlier or later !
 (Chr. goes back to door where Philip is waiting for her, and she winks back at Margaret)

M A R G A R E T

(as Chr. is about to disappear, desperately loud) ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ C h r i s t i n e !!!

C H R I S T I N E

(twitches and then plunges back to Marg.) What is it, dear Baron ?
 (Ph. slowly follows with wide-open eyes)

M A R G A R E T

(solemnly) Forgive me, Duchess, that I cried out so loudly - but I must ask you something that I could not very well ask you in front of preachers and counselors
 (Ph. gestures desperately to silence Marg.) Would you have consented to the second marriage of your husband even t h e n if no second man had as yet been found by you ?

P H I L I P

What are you asking there ?

C H R I S T I N E

(quickly and firmly) Let him alone - I want to hear it !
 (trembling-stammering) You ask, - if I would have consented even if no second man had been found for me ?
 (after a pause) But he h a s been found !!!

(casts an agonized glance
at Philip because she thinks
he will now learn for the first
time of her love for Margaret
as the Baron)

Don't you want me ?

Oh -, speak to me !!!

M A R G A R E T

It is because I cannot do so, Christine !

C H R I S T I N E

You c a n n o t ? ! And why can't you ?

M A R G A R E T

Because I am not a man !

C H R I S T I N E

(WITH embarrassed
smile)

Because you are not a man - -

because you are not y e t a man !

But you will soon be one -

oh, I will wait, if you wish;

I will g l a d l y wait, my dear,

only tell me that you love me !

M A R G A R E T

I l o v e you, Christine,

That I can swear to you, - but not as a m a n !

C H R I S T I N E

As a youth you love me, - as a boy if you wish - -

after all it is true, I could be your mother !

(dries her eyes and
sobs deeply)

How you frightened me, you bad boy !

M A R G A R E T

(fully desperate)

I a m no boy - and no man - -

I a m a w o m a n ! ! !

C H R I S T I N E

(unable to grasp
it at first)

You are - ? You are - !?

But that can' be !

Didn't you - - Aren't you - -

W h o are you anyway ?

M A R G A R E T

Margaret von der Saal !

C H R I S T I N E

Marga - , Mar - - - ! ?

That is a very poor joke !

M A R G A R E T

No, Christine, it is t e r r i b l y true !

(points to side-
door; Chr. gazes as
if stunned)

Think of the Baron with the long hair !

C H R I S T I N E

(with choking voice)

O God !

(she sways and Philip
catches her but she tears
loose from him and throws
herself sobbing on the table)

I have been c h e a t e d !

P H I L I P

(accusingly to Marg.) Look what you have done !

M A R G A R E T

In this holy hour we should not leave any
misunderstanding - T r u t h a l o n e can
now lead us onward from here !

(goes into the other
room for the nun's dress, but
is too excited to find it right away)

P H I L I P

(close to Christine but not touching her) Calm yourself, Christine -
The deception was unintentional !
The male costume was intended to hide her
until the wedding - -
And her hair she sacrificed in order to keep me
from swearing a false oath;
therefore also sacrificing it for y o u -
if you are really o n e with me in God - -

(tries to touch her
but she rebuffs him,
yet less than before)

or don't you love me at all -
and have you only simulated love for me
during all these weeks ?

C H R I S T I N E

(explosively)

That's what y o u did - , I now see it clearly !
You were thinking of h e r -
and only made me happy because of pity - -

(screaming)

(sobbing loud)

I don't want any pity -, I want l o v e -- l o v e !
L o v e ! ! !

P H I L I P

I love you, Christine, - do believe me !

C H R I S T I N E

(refuses to listen)

I am d o u b l y cheated, - d o u b l y
disappointed, - d o u b l y alone !

M A R G A R E T

(stands at the side door,
exactly where she showed herself
in the first act with her short hair;
has the nun's dress over her arm)

C h r i s t i n e , listen to me once more !
I did not want to deceive you, that time when I
first appeared to you,
but I wanted to save Philip from committing perjury;
I did it f o r h i m , n o t against you !
When you then immediately thereafter sent this dress
to me,

(holds it by the
sleeves, spread out in front
of her so that it fully covers
the male attire; Christine now
looks at Marg.)

I sacrificed myself again for him -
forgive me, if I speak of my going to you as a
sacrifice; but, believe me, it was a hard and
difficult thing for me to do.
What I lived through with you, drove me into the
church; and there, when I saw you both sitting there,
I intended to end the play of disguises, and to
remain what I then was: a n u n !
I went to Holy Communion, to marry my body to the
Body of Christ, but experienced an ecstatic union
with P h i l i p , whom I saw united with y o u
and myself as a new Son of God imprinted on sound
money -

C H R I S T I N E

(interrupts)

That was an inspiration of the Devil -
for in money the Devil has his dwelling-place !

(Marg. lets the nun's
dress drop toward the floor, so that Philip's dress
becomes visible on her again)

(reserved but positive)
(adjuring)

P H I L I P
Then he is also in you and in your vision of the loving couple in Christ - - - ,
I beg of you, Christine, not to curse that which you have but recently ~~praised~~ praised;
and remember that your right to a second marriage remains intact.

(hastily and quickly)

M A R G A R E T
Then you w o u l d have agreed to her second marriage, even if the second man for her had really existed ? ! ?

P H I L I P
Certainly ! How can you doubt that ?

M A R G A R E T
It is just this doubt that tortures me - and which has caused me to withhold from you the most important condition attached to the agreement between you and Suleiman !

(excited and hastily)

P H I L I P
The m o s t i m p o r t a n t !!!
And what is - - - the most important ?

M A R G A R E T
That the agreement is not binding until I have once more been with him !

P H I L I P
Why must it be you ? The final details can just as well be taken care of by someone else !

M A R G A R E T
I myself must come - - and as a w o m a n !

(Christine becomes very attentive; Philip sways lightly and holds his head)

Christine's r i g h t to a second marriage, has for me become a d u t y - because Suleiman can not be won over in any other way, and without him we cannot use his gold as a bridge to world power, to omnipotence, and to God !

(lifts up the ~~nun's~~ nun's dress)

But if Christine cannot bear it, to have me belong to you even as she does, and if y o u cannot bear to let me - visit Suleiman! then shall this nun's dress show me the way - - the way back to the cross of Christ and to eternal sorrow !

C H R I S T I N E

(after a few seconds of deep silence - which lets music become stronger - Christine goes to Marg. and reaches for the nun's dress)

Give it to me - and you continue your way onward as God-filled loving one !

(she takes dress and turns to Ph.)
What we have signed, let it stay valid; only I wish to transfer my right to her !

(a surge of gratitude and tenderness causes Marg. to draw close to Chr. who takes her in her arms and kisses her, Marg. passionately returns the kiss and caress. Philip looks on as if stunned; Chr. speaks to both)

I will leave you alone !

(walks to the rear door, but turns around after the first step; speaks to Marg.)

Greet Suleiman for me !

(at the door she turns half way around again; speaks to Marg.)
(exist through door which she closes behind herself)

Don't forget to greet Suleiman for me !

V - 12

After Christine's exit, Margaret and Philip remain silent and motionless for a few seconds; Music more clearly audible: lovesongs are being played)

M A R G A R E T

(looks at Ph. with radiant eyes; speaks very lovingly)

We are a l o n e , Philip !

P H I L I P

(without looking up; growling, low tone)

We are n o t alone -
in you there is S u l e i m a n !..!

M A R G A R E T

(quickly)

And in you, Christine - - -
and in us both are all the men and women of the world !

(moves one step toward him; almost jubilant)

And therefore we a l o n e are a l l o n e !
Philip, Beloved, My Hero - - - ,
Because our love draws all together and makes all one &&!

P H I L I P

You are only reaching over to Suleiman through me !

M A R G A R E T

As through me you are reaching over to Christine !

P H I L I P

He is the only one you desire -
he is the one whom you love - -
for me there remains at most only pity !

M A R G A R E T

(first depressed, then brighter again)

Do not dishonor this hour through false jealousy !
Remember that I too must accept C h r i s t i n e
and b e l i e v e me that I want her to be
happy !

P H I L I P

(very hastily)

Christine was already my wife, when I met you !

M A R G A R E T

But n o t your beloved -
n o t your wife in the new marriage,
which we are only now establishing !
Suleiman too was already the ruler of gold and of
the Turkish realm - when we met !

P H I L I P

(looks at her fully for the first time and becomes livelier)

How did he find out anyway, that you are a woman? Why did you reveal it to him?

M A R G A R E T

Because he considered the double harem of a married pair as a work of the Devil, and he too refused to believe that a woman could at the same time love t w o men truly!

P H I L I P

(gesture of disgust) And so you wanted to prove the contrary to him - love as a piece of e v i d e n c e , love as a makeshift, - that's a fine kind of love!

M A R G A R E T

(ironically) Then of course you can clearly see that your jealousy has no justification!

P H I L I P

(heavily and with fear) Or do you r e a l l y love him?

M A R G A R E T

(angered)
(Ph. holds head and groans) Y e s , I do love him - and mainly because after a hard battle with himself, he accepted the woman in me as having equal rights with man, and furthermore because he finally gave in to my will and desire to remain a v i r g i n for you:

(tenderly accusing) I have saved myself for y o u !

P H I L I P

(still growling) At bottom you love him only!

(with noisy force) How can it be possible anyway, for a woman truly to love two men at the s a m e t i m e ?

M A R G A R E T

And how can it be possible for a man to love two women at the same time?

P H I L I P

Oh stop repeating that as if it were the greatest wisdom in the world!

M A R G A R E T

There you are right -

For a man to love two women at the same time is far from the greatest wisdom - !

And if my feeling for you and Suleiman were nothing more than a reflection of your selfish love for Christine and myself,

(places both hands on dress) then were these thousand golden Philip-Suleimans in t h i s y o u r dress, nothing but a thousand doors to a hell of lust, instead of being a thousand golden bridges to the heaven of our God-filled love that shall be opened to all mankind through our loving union!

P H I L I P

(desperately) But that is just what I am a i m i n g at - and what I believe I have shown you I am working for!

M A R G A R E T

You a r e working for it -

but can only a c h i e v e it together with Suleiman; and you really should be thankful that I am able to win him for you.

P H I L I P

(still more desperately) But I can't stand it, - that you want to rush out of my arms to him, and no doubt i n my arms will be thinking of him!

M A R G A R E T

Even as you in my arms will be thinking
of Christine ! I will be thinking of him, - yes,
of him and of a l l men !

P H I L I P

(terrified
and hastily)

For God's sake ! Do you want a l l men to be
your lovers ? ! ?

M A R G A R E T

(passionately)

For God's sake, yes !
I must become the beloved of a l l men,
even as you the beloved of a l l women,
so that the will of God can through both of us
become the realized ideal of all mankind - -
you as the m a s c u l i n e ideal for all women -
I as the f e m i n i n e ideal for all men -
we together as the ideal p a i r for all humanity !

P H I L I P

(toneless and
tired)

Then I am only o n e of m a n y ,
where I had thought to be the o n l y one beloved
by you - - Oh God ! - Oh God !

M A R G A R E T

O n e of many, yes -
as I too am only o n e of many -
To whom you cannot give one bit more
than she is joyfully able to give to you: -
The first and highest place in love !

P H I L I P

(with repressed joy) M a r g a r e t !

M A R G A R E T

And, too, you are the only one
whose children I would mother -
while sharing all my love !

P H I L I P

(places his arm
tenderly around
her hip)

C o m e !
I will do no more t h i n k i n g ,
where only e c s t a s y can lead me onward !

(he draws her with
himself into the room at
left, and goes with her to
the window which he opens.
The crescent moon and the stars
shine brightly in the dark sky.
The music is heard very clearly,
playing an Ave Maria, which ends
just at the end of the scene.
After a few seconds, Philip leads
Margaret to the prepared table
and points to the wine-cup)

Do you recognize this cup?

M A R G A R E T

(observes it)

Isn't it the wine-cup from the church?

P H I L I P

(pours the wine)

I t i s ! I have given the church another one
for it.

(with feeling)

The s a m e wine in the s a m e cup as at the
altar, shall now consecrate our bodies as a new
sacrament, a double form of God, born of creative
ecstasy !

M A R G A R E T

(suddenly she be-
comes thoughtful)
(looks at him
(teasingly)

Its fragrance alone lifts one into exaltation !
T e l l m e - isn't this the same wine which you
drank at Worms that time when you asked Luther -
whether a w o m a n could have t w o m e n ?

P H I L I P

(smiles)

It is the s a m e - but now it is fully mature -
even as that question - and also the questioner !

(lifts cup and in-
hales the wine)
(laughs softly to
himself)

H o l y - V i r g i n ' s - M i l k !

M i l k from the mother of God !
Milk from her b r e a s t s !

(offers the cup
to Margaret)

As new mother of God and beloved of God, you
offered me this wine at the altar,
now I offer it to you as your beloved and
matured son !

M A R G A R E T

(unbuttons her
coat at the top)
(she holds the coat
open and thereby exposes
the upper part of her breast.
Around her neck hangs a black
ribbon on which is a locket)

Before I drink, you shall look at the Gold-Philip
which lay in the wine on the altar !

Open the locket !

(Philip puts down
the cup and opens the
locket with trembling hands.
He then touches the coin
with his finger)

Is it still warm from my kisses ?

(he bends forward
to kiss the coin and
also kisses her breast)

P H I L I P

(with trembling
voice)

And so I always rested on your breast and on
your heart !

M A R G A R E T

(takes his head
tenderly in both hands,
he still holds the locket)

You yourself - beloved - d e a r e s t Philip -
are living w i t h i n my breast and w i t h i n
my heart !

P H I L I P

(embraces her with
a cry of jubilation)

M a r g a r e t !

(S1941e)

Jan 7/66
2/22/68

(the curtain falls)