

RADIO PLAY FROM THE WORLD-FAMOUS NOVEL

Jew Suss

Adapted by Robert Waldron
from the famous novel by
Lion Feuchtwanger

SYNOPSIS.

In an inn at Wildbad, Josef Suss Oppenheimer and his friend Landauer meet Karl Alexander, a cousin of the reigning Duke of Wurttemberg. Suss has a presentiment that the Prince is his stepping stone to power and by servility and extreme generosity ingratiates himself with Karl. His belief is confirmed by the prophecy of his uncle, Rabbi Gabriel. Karl Alexander will shortly be the Duke of Wurttemberg. The prediction is verified, Karl becomes the Duke of Wurttemberg with Suss as his Financial Counsellor.

Unknown to Karl, Suss has a fifteen-year-old daughter, Naomi. The Jew, understanding his master's weakness for the opposite sex, guards his motherless child by placing her in the custody of the Rabbi, who resides in the quiet forest of Hirsau. To the Coronation Ball Suss invites Magdalen Sybille, the daughter of the Lord President of the Council. He has fallen in love with her at their first meeting on the Wildbad road. Karl, espying the Demoiselle Weissensee, orders Suss to arrange that the girl be conveyed to his bedroom. Suss objects. Karl insists. And the Jew, rather than endanger his power, sacrifices the girl he loves.

Weissensee, notwithstanding Suss's offer of honour and promotion, is embittered at the outrage of his daughter and resolved to be revenged on the Jew. Meanwhile Suss, having secured the release of Seligman, accused of the murder of a Christian girl, has become the greatest of the Jews. He is surprised at his uncle's

insinuation that he is not a Jew. In answer to his questioning, the Rabbi tells him his mother, residing in the distant city of Frankfurt, has sent for him to explain everything. Suss proposes going to see his daughter, but the Rabbi insists that he must go to Frankfurt, and so the third act concludes;

ACT IV.

Scene I.

There is the sound of cheering in the distance, but close at hand a door opens and footsteps approach.

Suss: Mother, you sent for me?

Mother: Oh, my son—my beautiful wonderful son—Oh my Josef, I'm so proud of you. Why! you're more handsome than ever. You are. And your coat—what a beautiful material, so expensive and rich. *(Cheering increases).*

Mother: Listen to them and all for you, Josef. Show yourself at the window, speak to them, you are their hero. You have saved the life of one of our race.

Suss: Come, we shall speak to them. *(He opens the casement and the cheering becomes louder).*

Suss: Once again, thank you. What more can a man hope for than to be able to help his people? But now I must ask you to excuse me: there is one here who has an even greater claim on me than you—my mother. You will not grudge me a few hours with her, will you? *(Cheering again and cries of "No").*

(The casement closes and Suss returns).

Mother: The way they treat you, you might be the Emperor himself, my son

Rabbi *(entering)*: Have you told him?

Mother: But Gabriel, not now. He has only just arrived—and the people.

Rabbi: He should be told now. Fetch the papers.

(A key is inserted in a lock, the drawer is opened and there is the sound of the rustle of paper).

Suss: What's all this? What are you talking about? Why this air of mystery?

Rabbi: Read this—*(paper rustling)*.

Mother: Oh, no, no—need I stay?

Rabbi: No, you can go. *(Door closes).*

Suss: But I don't understand. These are letters—love letters to my mother—from Marshal von Heyersdorf.

Rabbi: Jacob Oppenheimer loved your mother. He met her three months before you were born. He married her and regarded you as his son.

Suss: It can't be—you don't mean.

Rabbi: Yes, Josef.

Suss: Marshal von Heyersdorf my father—Marshal von Heyersdorf—then I am not a Jew. Marshal von Heyersdorf's son—all my slaving and scheming and suffering unnecessary—you tell me this now, now, after I have saved Seligman. After I have become the greatest of all the Jews—the only Jew, who in spite of being a Jew has more power than any nobleman in Germany.

Rabbi: What are you going to do? Will you arrest me? It will only help on your career if you hand me over to a Church Court for keeping a born Christian so long in the false faith.

Suss: I—I don't know.

Rabbi: Will you accuse your mother? Give her a scolding because she has been silent so long, or thank her because she gave you such a knightly father.

Suss: I'm going to Hirsau—to Naomi.

Rabbi: So be it. Come with me to the child. She will tell you.

Suss: Yes, yes, Naomi will decide. *(Music).*

Scene II.

(Sounds of a storm, rain and wind and the trees swishing).

Karl: What a night, Weissensee, to bring your Duke a treasure hunting!

Weissensee: Patience, Highness. Here is the Jew's house; within its wall is hidden my little surprise and Suss's secret.

Karl: Come on then, what are we waiting for?

(Footsteps approach and a knock is heard on the door.)

Karl: Open! Why do you keep your Duke waiting? So the Jew has kept this to himself. He's hidden it from me the scoundrel. Hum—what a peach of a girl!

Weissensee: The demoiselle is the daughter of our good Jew. This Highness, is my little surprise.

Karl: A masterpiece of a girl, an Oriental dream. Won't you ask us *(Continued in Col. 2 next page.)*



MOTHER: Oh, my son—my beautiful, wonderful son—oh, my Josef, I'm so proud of you You have saved the life of one of our race.