

# Drama of Jew Suss

## Adapted From the Novel by Lion Feuchtwanger

(Continued from page 56.)

child—don't be stupid, open the door. Open the door I say, or I'll burst it in. You won't answer? Very well.

Chaperone: Highness, you can't go in! It is the girl's bedroom. Naomi is only a child.

(Sound of door giving).

Karl: Can't I—go away or I'll knock you down—as she's not here! Where are you, you little devil?

(There is the sound of hurrying footsteps and a voice calling).

Weissensee: Highness! Highness!

Karl: What's the matter, Weissensee. I thought I told you to wait outside.

Weissensee: The child is dead.

Karl: What's that? The child is dead?

Weissensee: She took her own life, jumped from her bedroom window.

Karl: Good God!

Weissensee: Better come away now, Highness.

Karl: No, no! That would look as if I were afraid of the Jew. Find the carriage. Dispatch it to Suss. Tell him to meet me here without delay.

Karl: No other message. Do as I tell you.

Weissensee: But Highness—Yes, Highness.

### Scene IV.

Suss: Is the Duke guilty of her death?

Rabbi: You are guilty of her death.

Suss: If I had gone away with her—far away, very far—in solitude. Naomi, Naomi, Naomi can one speak with the dead? Can I speak with her?

Rabbi: If you set your feet upon the right path then she will have peace—the Duke still waits for you. He is outside—he wishes to speak to you alone. I shall send him to you. (Door closes).

Suss: Naomi, my child—my daughter revenge is mine, saith the Lord God of Hosts—revenge is mine saith the Jew, Suss.

Karl (entering): Be a man, Suss. Do not give way to your grief. I have seen the girl. I know what she was to you. I understand. But you still have other things in your life—you have the favour of your Duke. Let it be a comfort to you.

Suss: Yes, my Lord Duke.

Karl: Sincerely and truly, Jew, I'm sorry for you but if you think I had anything to do with it, I assure you you're on the wrong track. Who would have thought that the girl would misunderstand a little joke?

Suss: Yes, my Lord Duke.

Karl: I don't want anything to come between us—don't bear me a grudge—give me your hand, Bein! Now bury your dead, then hurry back to us at Stuttgart. (Karl departs).

Suss: You see how sly I have become, Naomi. I shook his hand. He couldn't understand—hurry back to Stuttgart—does he hope to buy me with honours, money. Wrong my Lord Duke, wrong, my Lord Murderer—wrong, wrong, wrong.

### Scene V.

Painter: Your Excellency is satisfied with the painting?

Suss: It is very good—so like Naomi.

Painter: Oh, thank you Excellency. Thank you!

(The door opens and Karl enters with Marie).

Karl: Ah, there you are—we thought we would pay you a little surprise visit. Your man told us you were engaged.

Marie: Tell us, is it a lady? Oh—how exquisite!

Suss: I am very busy, Highness.

Karl: I'm not complaining man, but I don't want to lose touch with you. You've always been a faithful minister—but we used to be friends as well.

Suss: Your Highness flatters me.

Karl: So long as you realise that I am not ungrateful. The more you do for me, Suss, the more you will benefit.

Marie: Ah, what a beautiful picture—who's the pretty girl?—who is—

Suss: My daughter.

Marie: Your daughter? But I never knew you were married. Oh well, no doubt you are wise to keep her out of the way. Karl is so very susceptible, isn't he?

Suss: She's dead, Highness.

Karl: Yes, yes—a great tragedy—quite recent too. I forgot to tell tell you about it—so many things to think about. Well, we'd better be going. Suss has work to do.

Marie: Poor Jew, not even your grief must interfere with your work.

Suss: My grief will only make me work the harder, Highness.

Karl: That's right—that's right. To our mutual benefit, eh? Come, I'll show you the confidence I have in you. I'll appoint you Finance Director—you shall sign all edicts yourself and be answerable to no man. Well, good-night, Mr. Finance Director.

Suss: Good-night, Highnesses. (He rises).

Karl: No, no, you need not show us out—you get to your desk.

Suss: Landauer, see their Highnesses to their carriage.

Suss: I'll appoint you Finance Director—you shall sign all edicts yourself and be answerable to no man—did you hear that Naomi? Your murderer has made me his Finance Director—I shall sign all edicts myself and be answerable to no man. The Duke has given me power, the power to revenge you, my child. I will draft an edict—an edict that will shake the state of Wurttemberg to its foundations. (Landauer approaches).

Suss: They are gone, Landauer?

Landauer: Yes, Josef!

Suss: Then let this edict be known within twenty-four hours to every man, woman and child within the length and breadth of my Lord the Duke's dominions:—

We, Karl Alexander, Duke of Wurttemberg and Teck, declare that should emergency taxes not be paid in full immediately upon demand distraint shall be made upon the goods and chattels of the householder in question up to the value of twice the amount of the unpaid taxes.

Landauer: But Josef—

Suss: Go, do my bidding. See it is promulgated within twenty-four hours.

Landauer: Yes, Excellency. (Departs).

Suss: His Highness Karl Alexander Duke of Wurttemberg and Teck wishes to buy me off, to repay me for the death of my child. The fool! The seven-fold blinded fool—wrong my Lord Duke! Wrong my most exalted Lord Murderer! Jew Suss is not so simple and dense; he is no serf or peasant or yokel, that an ordinary obvious revenge should content him—he plans his vengeance more subtly—he seethes and stews and cooks it with great care—revenge Naomi—revenge.

End of Scene V.

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