

RADIO PLAY FROM THE WORLD-FAMOUS NOVEL

Jew Suss

Adapted by Robert Waldron
from the famous novel by
Lion Feuchtwanger

RESUME PRECEDING ACTS.

IN the inn at Wildbad, Josef Suss Oppenheimer and his friend Landauer met Karl Alexander, a cousin of the reigning Duke of Wurttemberg. Suss has a presentiment that the Prince is his stepping stone to power and 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 Magdaline Sybille, the daughter of the Lord President of the Council. He had fallen in love with her at their first meeting on the Wildbad Road. Karl, spying the Demoiselle Weissensee, orders Suss to arrange that the girl be conveyed to his bedroom. 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 resolves to be revenged on the Jew. Meanwhile, Suss having secured the release of Seligmann, accused of the murder of a Christian girl, has become the greatest of the Jews.

Summoned to Frankfurt, he learns from his mother that he is not the son of Josef Oppenheimer but of Count Von Heyersdorf, the Christian Field Marshal. Suss is furious at the deception practised upon him and is at a loss to know whether to proclaim himself a Christian or remain a Jew. He decides to leave the decision to Naomi and hastens to Hirsau. Meanwhile Weissensee seizes his opportunity for revenge. Conducting the Duke to the home of the Rabbi he reveals to him the Jew's secret, the existence of Naomi. Karl's passions are aroused by the beauty of the girl, but Naomi is terrified at the amorous advances of the Duke, and in an endeavour to escape jumps through her bedroom window. Weissensee finding the girl dead, urges the Duke to depart, but Karl is determined to make his peace with the Jew. Suss, arriving, is completely overcome by the tragedy and swears revenge over the body of his dead child. Returning to Stuttgart he is appointed Finance Director, and immediately puts into action his plan for the downfall of the Duke.

He suggests to Karl that he should overthrow the Constitution and proclaim himself King of Wurttemberg. The Duke readily falls in with the idea, but being afraid of the power of the Jew resolves to end his career. Informed by Magdaline Sybille of the Duke's secret intention, Suss

frustrates his scheme. Karl awaits the result in his hunting lodge, and when the courier is announced hastens to meet him himself. Suss then reveals himself and the Prince, learning of the failure of his plan is taken with a seizure.

So the Fifth Act concludes—

Roder: Is the Duke ill?

Suss: The Duke . . . is dead.

And now the curtain rises on the sixth and final act of "Jew Suss."

ACT VI.

SCENE I.

(Murmur of voices. Clinking glasses).

Roder: Who'll be King of Wurttemberg now, gentlemen? . . . A child in arms. (Door opening—footsteps—voice approaching).

Suss: You look dejected, gentlemen . . . our Lord Duke's death is most inopportune, no? Most unfortunate? Roder: It's the very devil, I say. The very devil.

Suss: You do not seem to see quite clearly what you should do in this unusual situation, Friend Roder?

Roder: Whatever we do, we look like falling between two stools.

Suss: Not so Major. The people's party will retain power . . . You

must join them.

Roder: Yes, yes. . . .

Suss: You have doubts, Roder? Then arrest me. . . . Yes, arrest the Jew and you are safe, whoever come out on top.

Roder: A capital idea, Jew. A capital idea. . . . I arrest you. In the name of the Duchess and of the Constitution, I arrest you, Josef Suss Oppenheimer.

SCENE II.

(Murmur of voices).

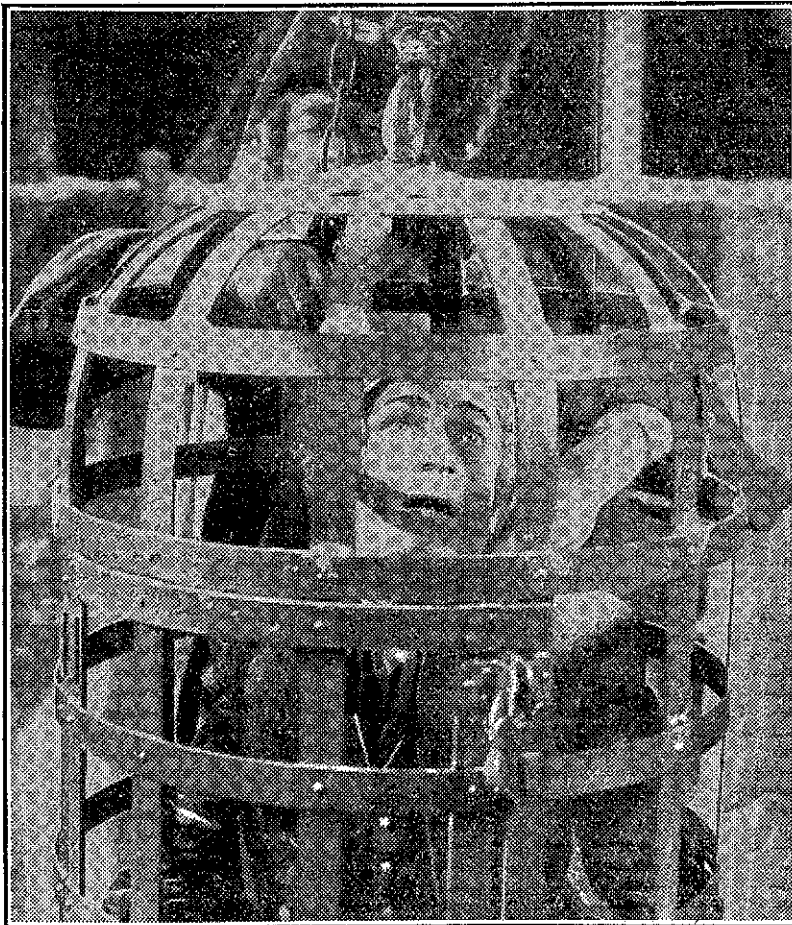
Counsellor: In law we have no case. I warned you of this from the beginning. You have no chance of hanging him on any of the charges.

Weissensee: Oh yes I have. Under Article 47 of the Penal Code, it is clearly laid down that a Jew who has carnal relations with a Christian woman should suffer death.

Counsellor: But my Lord President, that law is forgotten. Out of date. It has not been enforced for two hundred years.

Weissensee: It is still on the Statute Book, and I can think of no man to whom it is more applicable than Jew Suss.

Counsellor: It is a departure from judicial procedure.



Perhaps one day the walls will crumble like the walls of Jericho and all the world will be one people. Till then the work of Jew Suss remains unfinished—while his story lives.