

(*Indicating his books*) Now, what have you been reading, Melchior?

MELCHIOR: Goethe's *Faust*, actually.

FRAU GABOR: Really? At your age? . . .

MELCHIOR: It's so beautiful, Mama.

MORITZ ("*Indeed*"): So haunting.

FRAU GABOR: Still, I should have thought . . .

But surely, you boys are now of an age to decide for yourselves what is good for you and what is not. (*Sighs*) If you need anything else, children, call me.

(*Frau Gabor goes out.*)

MORITZ: Well, your mother certainly is remarkable.

MELCHIOR ("*Yes, but*"): Until she catches her son reading Goethe.

MORITZ: I think she meant the story of Gretchen and her illegitimate child.

MELCHIOR: Yes. You see how obsessively everyone fixes on that story. It's as if the entire world were mesmerized by penis and vagina.

MORITZ: Well, I am. All the more so, I'm afraid, since reading your essay. What you wrote about the . . . *female* . . . I can't stop thinking about it. (*Pulls out the essay*) This part here—is it true?

MELCHIOR: Absolutely.

MORITZ: But, how can you understand that, Melchi? What the woman must feel.

MELCHIOR ("*Why not?*"): Giving yourself over to someone else? . . . Defending yourself until, finally, you surrender and feel Heaven break over you? . . .

(*Moritz nods.*)

I just put myself in her place—and imagine . . .

MORITZ ("*You've got to be kidding?*"): Really?! (*Flipping through the essay—one diagram after another—increasingly mesmerized*) What it feels like? . . . for the woman? . . .

(*A twelve-string guitar sounds—subtle chords, a world of longing. The Boys and Girls gather around Melchior and Moritz in radiant light, singing and moving as a chorus. The Boys hold copies of Melchior's essay.*)

MELCHIOR:

Where I go, when I go there,
No more memory anymore—
Only drifting on some ship;
The wind that whispers, of the distance, to shore . . .

MORITZ:

Where I go, when I go there,
No more listening anymore—
Only hymns upon your lips;
A mystic wisdom, rising with them, to shore . . .

ERNST:

Touch me—just like that.
And that—O, yeah—now, that's heaven.
Now, that I like.
God, that's so nice.
Now lower down, where the figs lie . . .

(*Melchior turns back to Moritz. The lights shift back to the lamplit study, but the Boys and Girls hover, singing quietly, underscoring the scene.*)

MORITZ (*Still in his private moment with the diagrams*): . . . Still, you must admit . . . with all the differing . . . (*Mispronouncing, with a "hard g"*) geni . . . geni . . .

MELCHIOR (*Correcting his pronunciation*): Genitalia?

MORITZ: Genitalia. It truly is daunting—I mean, how . . . everything might . . .

MELCHIOR: Measure up?

(*Moritz looks stricken.*)

Fit?