

Evening, Melchior's study. A lamp burning on the table. Melchior sits alone writing in his journal.

MELCHIOR (Reading aloud as he writes): 16 October, The question is: Shame. What is its origin

And why are we hounded by its miserable shadow?

Does the mare feel Shame as she couples with a stallion?

Are they deaf to everything their loins are telling them, until we grant them a marriage certificate? I think not.

To my mind, Shame is nothing but a product of Education, Meanwhile, old Father Kaulbach still blindly insists, in every single sermon that it's deeply rooted in our sinful Human Nature, Which is why I now refuse to go to Church—

FRAU GABOR (From off): Melchior?

MELCHIOR: Yes, Mama?

FRAU GABOR (From off): Moritz Stiefel to see you. (Melchior sits up. Moritz enters, looking pale and agitated.)

MELCHIOR: Moritz

MORITZ: Sorry I'm so late. I yanked on a jacket, ran a brush through my hair, and dashed like some phantom to get here,

MELCHIOR: You slept through the day?...

MORITZ ("Yes"): I'm exhausted, Melchi, I was up till three in the morning—reading that essay you gave me, till I couldn't see straight.

MELCHIOR; Sit. Let me roll you a smoke.

(Melchior rolls Moritz a cigarette.)

MORITZ: Look at me — I'm trembling. Last night I prayed like Christ in Gethsemane: "Please, God, give me Consumption and take these sticky dreams away from me."

MELCHIOR: With any luck, he'll ignore that prayer.

MORITZ: Melchi, I can't focus —on anything. Even now, it seems like... Well, I see, and hear, and feel, quite clearly, And yet, everything seem so strange...

MELCHIOR: But all those illustrations I gave you — didn't they help illuminate your dreams?

MORITZ: They only multiplied everything ten times! Instead of merely seeing Stockings, now I'm plagued by Labia Majora and—

(Frau Gabor enters with tea.)

FRAU GABOR: Well, here we are, with tea. Herr Stiefel, how are you?

MORITZ; Very well, thank you, Frau Gabor.

FRAU GABOR (Skeptical): Yes?

MELCHIOR (Busting him): Just think, Mama. Moritz was up, reading all through the night.

MORITZ; Uh, conjugating Greek,

FRAU GABOR: You must take care of yourself, Moritz. Surely, your health is more important than Ancient Greek. (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, t

RAU 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 wishpers, of 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 lover 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?

(More stricken)

Moritz, not that I'm saying I myself have ever —

MORITZ: Not that I'm saying I wouldn't want... Would ever want to not— Would ever not want...

MELCHIOR: : Moritz?

MORITZ: I have to go!

(Moritz abruptly rushes out.)

MELCHIOR: Moritz, wait

(But he's gone)

More to himself Moritz...

(Frau Gabor enters, and clears the tea)

FRAU GABOR: Melchior, what is it?

MELCHIOR: Nothing, Mama.

FRAU GABOR: Has Moritz gone?

MELCHIOR: Yes.

FRAU GABOR: Well, he does look awfully pale, don't you think? I wonder, is that Faust really the best thing for him?

(Frau Gabor exits. Melchior shakes his head, incredulous. The world recedes. All reenter the song.)

OTTO: Where I go, when I go there,

No more shadows anymore —

Only you there in the kiss;
And nothing missing, as you're drifting, to shore...

GEORG: Where I go, when I go there,
No more weeping anymore —
Only in and our your lips;
The broken, washing, with them shore...

MELCHIOR AND MORITZ: Touch me — all silent.
Tell me—please—all is forgiven.
Consume my wine.
Consume my mind.
I'll tell you how, how the winds sigh...

BOYS AND GIRLS: Touch me—
GEORG — just try it
Now there—that's it—God, that's heaven.
I'll love your light.
I'll love you right...
We'll wander down where the sins cry...

BOYS AND GIRLS. Touch me — just like that.
Now lower down, where the sins lie...

Lave me — just for a bit...
We'll wander down, where the winds sigh...

Where the winds sigh...
Where the winds sigh...