

Hans Sachs
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[112]

A comedy with eight personae,
to be recited, Juditium Salomonis.

The herald enters and says:

Blessed be the royal house
Including all those go in and out,
In this city of Jerusalem!
You will now hear a
Comedy (if you want to read it,
Look it up in the third book of Kings!),
Namely, how Salomon,
After he sacrificed the one thousand
Offerings to the fire at Gibeon,
God, the lord, appeared to (him), in the
Same night, and said: Request something!
I will not refuse you.
Thereupon, Salomon only desired
Wisdom, which God granted him
With a highly sensible mind,
So that he could rule both,
People and country, according to his duty,
How he proofed that at the court
With the judgement over the two women
With the child. Here, you will also watch
The financier's¹ manner and use.
At the end, you will also see
A good farce by a jester-fool.
Listen! Be silent from the beginning to end!
Then the time won't be long.

Salomon enters alone, sits down and says:

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¹ finnantzer: different spelling of Finanzer, see Grimm Wörterbuch entry Finanzer (<https://bit.ly/2XFVppY>).

Lord, on your highest throne,
 I ask you to mercifully accept from me
 The one thousand offerings to the fire,
 Which I slaughtered for you today
 At Gibeon, on the altar.

Nathan, the prophet, enters and says:

You king Salomon, hear!
 God relays to you:
 You shall ask him
 For something, which he shall give you;
 He will grant it to you.

Salomon lifts his hand and says:

Lord, you had, before this time,
 Great compassion
 For king David, my father,
 Who was your servant,
 And lived² in front of you in truth,
 Sincerely in righteousness.
 You also acted with compassion,
 (When) you sat me on his throne now, your servant,
 For I am young, simple, and bad
 And I also don't know how to reign,
 To judge nor to rule,³
 Your people, that you have chosen,
 That cannot be counted because of its number.
 That is, Lord, my only request,
 That you would only give your servant
 An obedient and wise heart
 With such a mind inside,⁴
 That I understand evil and good,
 So that I may with sensible braveness
 Judge your innumerable people
 And not err in judgement.
 If I were granted this request,
 It would be my greatest treasure on earth.

Nathan comes to stand to him and says:

[114]

Listen, your royal majesty!
 Today, God tells you:
 Because you didn't ask for a long life,
 Nor for power, nor for wealth in addition,
 Nor for being victorious over your enemies,

² wandeln: compare to Grimm Wörterbuch entry wandeln, nr. 5.b.γ. (<https://bit.ly/2tQ4XAM>).

³ ordinirn: see Grimm Wörterbuch entry ordinieren (<https://bit.ly/2EOpoEH>).

⁴ in-wertz: different spelling of inwärts, compare to Grimm Wörterbuch entry inwärts (<https://bit.ly/2SKokp1>).

Instead you only asked
 For intellect, to judge justly,
 To rule your people sincerely,
 Therefore, God granted (it to) you,
 He gave you a wise, understanding heart,
 No-one like you has reigned before,
 Also no-one following you will,
 In addition, I also gave you more,
 Great wealth, power and honor,
 That there is no other king
 Like you, in your times, living in any
 Country, and where you shall, according to my blessing,
 Live following my path,
 Keep my customs and commandments,
 Like David, your father,
 So (then) I will also give you, says God,
 A honorable and long life.
 This all, God let's (me) relay to you
 Sincerely, you king Salomon!

Salomon lifts his hand and says:

Lord, praise, honor, commendation and glory for you
 In your holy empire,
 That you granted me in mercy,
 More than I desired.
 Now, I will be obliged,
 As long I have my life,
 To rule your people according to your word,
 To judge and to order
 According to true justice,
 To always punish the bad,
 And free the innocent
 from the terrible, the cunning, the evil ones,
 Because, my Lord, I received from you

[115]

The heavenly, godly gift,
 Namely, intellect and wisdom.
 Therefore, go, Nathan, at noon⁵
 And prepare a food offering!

They all exit.

Act II.

Nathan and Ahitophel enter. Ahitophel says:

The king asked for a childish thing,
 I wouldn't have asked for such a thing.

⁵ nonzeit: see Grimm Wörterbuch entry Nonzeit, f. (<https://bit.ly/2VPYKB5>).

Such a request is appropriate for the counsel,
 Representing him in the government,⁶
 The solicitors and jurists,
 That get by with malice.
 The king should just have desired
 Half of the worldly sphere
 Including the countries and kingdoms,
 Power and magnificence and such,
 A life lasting for one hundred years
 Without any illnesses.
 That would be a royal request.
 God would not have him denied it.
 Is that not true, dear Nathan?

Nathan says:

You are also a world-wise man,
 My Ahitophel, who doesn't consider
 That worldly power, wealth and splendor,
 Lust and joy; with that, one can't
 Rule well country and people.
 Our king chose for him
 The best part; that pleases God.
 The royal throne is well,
 On which king Salomon sits,
 Who, by God's wisdom,⁷
 Wisely takes care of his business,
 Helps widows, orphans and the poor.

[116]

He punishes the evil without mercy,
 Where he finds the evildoers.

Ahitophel says:

Why does he put⁸ himself
 To such hard work, worries and unrest?
 Such things are appropriate for civil servants.
 He should himself live nicely like a king.

Nathan says:

In which manner? Tell me!
 What does it mean to live like a king?

Ahitophel says:

When one revels in all lust,

⁶ regiment: see Grimm Wörterbuch entry regiment, nr. 1.a. (<https://bit.ly/2VJpP8G>).

⁷ sefft: I could not locate this word, it reminds me of Saft (juice). There are some proverbs where Saft is used and it has nothing to do with the beverage (see Grimm Wörterbuch entry Saft, nr. 7 <https://bit.ly/2HeqKLS>, where saft can stand for the essence of a thing/person), so it is possible. It could also be a different (and quite creative) spelling of selbst (self) but I am not sure and since the line works without it just fine, I left it out.

⁸ unter-winden: see Grimm Wörterbuch entry unterwinden, nr. A.I. (<https://bit.ly/2NMFJg1>).

Takes in all joys
 By hunting, chasing⁹ and hounding,
 By running, fencing and tournaments,
 By dancing, playing and dining,¹⁰
 With court servants and the power of an army,
 Also with great pomp and splendor,
 (And) with women especially.¹¹

Nathan says:

Yes, one who keeps his household like that,
 Is wasting a great amount of goods,
 Will have to mortgage plenty of land and people.
 Tell! How shall one get money otherwise?

Ahitophel says:

Well, I myself can do these things.
 I can quickly make money,¹²
 Like others, who can, through buffoonery,¹³
 Practice funnily.
 Customs duty, road toll and other things
 Can bring much good.

Nathan says:

Then the financiers have the benefit,

[117]

They fill their pockets with it.
 The ruler will serve as their scapegoat.¹⁴
 He gets the smallest part of it.
 The common man will become hostile towards him,
 Therefore, out of the court with that vermin!
 Into the sea, into the depth!
 And around each one's neck a millstone!
 Country and people become ruined by them,
 Even though they can decorate and paint it,
 As if it was a decent thing.

Ahitophel says:

What chamberlains does the king have

⁹ beisen: probably a different spelling of beizen, see Grimm Wörterbuch entry beizen, nr. 1 (<https://bit.ly/2BSW1Pw>).

¹⁰ pancketieren: see Grimm Wörterbuch entry panketieren (<https://bit.ly/2IWf6pR>).

¹¹ voraus: See Grimm Wörterbuch entry voraus, nr. 3 (<https://bit.ly/2IZW6Hi>).

¹² finantz: is related to finance and derives from Latin and is linked to payment, income, any business with money, however, Grimm Wörterbuch lists that in the 16th century is often used in the meaning of cunning, fraud, evil tricks. All examples listed by Hans Sachs have a negative connotation, see Grimm Wörterbuch entry Finanz (<https://bit.ly/2CcZl8e>).

¹³ alifantz: different spelling of alefanz, meaning "Posse", compare to "Der Wortschatz des Hans Sachs" by Hans Tauber, entry alefanz, p. 5 (<https://bit.ly/2HmGdbh>).

¹⁴ schanddeckel: literally cover from shame, see Grimm Wörterbuch entry Schanddeckel (<https://bit.ly/2SRw5JN>).

At court to keep his estate?

Nathan says:

For that he has chosen
 Pious, wise and educated people,
 That pleases his royal heart,
 Through those, he rules wisely
 And orders finely all things,
 The country and people become rich and fledged,¹⁵
 Gain in wealth, peace and luck.
 He keeps them around night and day,
 Giving each other question after question.
 That pleases him immensely,
 Because all other pleasure and entertainment
 Are vain and useless.
 The man becomes, with time, moody,¹⁶
 Like the king himself says
 In his book of poems:
 Dear, didn't you read it, too?

Ahitophel says:

Alas, he has an unroyal nature.
 He would have been a good monk.
 Since he closes up his life
 With script-smart and wise people,

[118]

Who are usually the wrong ones,
 Who often reverse rulers and kings
 With their shining,¹⁷ false teachings.
 I wouldn't want that many shaved boys
 at my court.
 I would be worried about their deception.

Mathan says:

Our king is wise and smart,
 He is not tricked¹⁸ by false teachings.
 He has in front of him God's law,
 His bright word loud and clear,
 As a measurement according to which
 he directs and leads his life well.

Ahitophel says:

I realize well that he is completely devoted

¹⁵ flück: compare to Grimm Wörterbuch entry Flück (<https://bit.ly/2HlnNI5>).

¹⁶ urtrütz: different spelling of urtrüssig, see Grimm Wörterbuch entry Urdrusz (<https://bit.ly/2TDXLGz>).

¹⁷ gleisenden: probably a different spelling of gleißend (shining brightly, even to a degree where it is blinding), see Grimm Wörterbuch entry gleiszen (<https://bit.ly/2HoHvTe>).

¹⁸ letz: see Grimm Wörterbuch entry letz (<https://bit.ly/2TpPQgB>).

To wisdom, constantly thinking about¹⁹ it.
 I will condition him over time,
 So that he will also become frivolous,
 Like other rulers on this earth,
 With hunting, dancing and beautiful women.
 What does he want to build upon this wisdom?
 It belongs only to the wise.

Mathan says:

Well, you are a world-wise man,
 But you don't look at the common good.
 Your advice brings nothing good,
 Because bodily lust, brings only
 Doom and misfortune on its back.
 Therefore, don't seduce his innocent heart!

Ahitophel says:

Mathan, it is truly just a joke.
 Though my loyalty makes me think
 That our king should be more serious
 Towards his people and subjects,
 To not treat them so gently and caring,

[119]

(It makes him be despised),
 Instead (he) should show his seriousness and power,
 Like other kings in the world.

Mathan says:

The same kings, listen,²⁰
 Are all of pagan origins
 And don't know anything about God's name,
 They are full of splendor and pride.
 But our king knows very well
 That he was only put (in place over) the kingdom
 As a servant by God.
 Therefore, he, as a loyal shepherd,
 Does not oppress nor binds them,
 Instead he rules them gently.
 In this way the people stay obedient and gracious.
 That is how he keeps it now, may God give (it will last) much longer,
 So that he can finish what he began.
 So the kingdom has a good lord.

¹⁹ nach-tichten: different spelling of nachdichten, see Grimm Wörterbuch entry nachdichten, nr. 1 (<https://bit.ly/2XLI00E>).

²⁰ obgemelt: perhaps an alternative spelling to aufgemerkt or wohlgemerkt (which in Dutch is opgemerkt), compare to Grimm Wörterbuch entry aufmerken (<https://bit.ly/2Ts3aRP>) or it is simply a construction of auf + gemeldet (past participle) and could be understood as pointing towards something, see Grimm Wörterbuch entry melden, nr. 5 (<https://bit.ly/2VPMmkf>). Either way the word draws attention to the statement that follows.

Ahitophel says:

I have talked to you from afar,
 Joked, however, under the roses,
 (Let's) not talk about the thing anymore.
 It will bring us no good,
 What I stated there scoldingly.
 Listen, listen! They are calling to the table.
 We shall step away from this talk
 And search for the roasted rabbits.

They both exit.

Act III.

The king enters with Nathan and Ahitophel. The king
 says:

Today we want to hold court.
 Therefore, do only your duty here,
 That you will hear now

[120]

Both young, old, poor and rich
 Regardless²¹ of love, envy, fear and gifts,
 Without any delay²² and taking sides,²³
 Irrespective of the person concerned,
 What each party can proof;
 With diligent experience,
 (You) will judge them with a sentence!
 Well, now whoever has to sue today,
 Shall come and sue!

The two women enter. Tamar says:

Cleopatra, give me back my child!

Cleopatra says:

Yes, yes, sit down again for a while!
 That child, that I have, that is mine.

Tamar says:

The living child is not yours,
 But mine; your child is dead.

Cleopatra says:

I don't give anything about your order,

²¹ on: different spelling of "ohne" meaning without.

²² Aufzug: compare to Grimm Wörterbuch entry Aufzug, nr. 5 (<https://bit.ly/2EMNYV9>).

²³ ein-klenck: could not locate the word like this, but it could be constructed from ein (in) + ge- (past participle) + lenken (moving to one side) thus meaning to give in or take sides, compare to Grimm Wörterbuch entry lenken (<https://bit.ly/2tZH6id>).

Your crying doesn't move me either.

Tamar says:

If you don't want to give me my child,
I will sue you at the king('s court).

Cleopatra says:

I don't ask for that.
Sue me or don't!
If you don't want to miss it,²⁴ so go inside!

Ahitophel walks towards them and says:

Go out! What do you want to do inside?

Tamar says:

I want to (go) to king Salomon

[121]

And to tell him of my heavy plea.

Ahitophel says:

Come back in eight days!
The king has no time today.

Cleopatra says:

Yes, of course: We are not in a hurry.
We can very well wait eight days.

Tamar says:

My heart is now so full of pain,
I hope to find help with the king,
To find his ears always open
To hear the miserable poor,
And give them a decision with mercy,
To help them out of godless quarrel.

Ahitophel says:

Miss, do you want to give me a present?
I will help you with the king there
And will speak for you myself.

Tamar says:

Alas, mister, there is no money or goods,
Only innocence and poverty.
(That) I, miserable person, hope to enjoy.²⁵

Ahitophel pushes her and says:

²⁴ graten: see Grimm Wörterbuch entry graten, nr. 14. a (<https://bit.ly/2TpRyig>).

²⁵ I assume it references the innocence of the sentence before, but I cannot say for sure.

Step away! Let me close the door!
 Go to the lower court!
 The king can't hear you,
 With your quarrel, useless barking.²⁶
 He has more important things to do.

Salomon says:

Mathan, go! Look, what there is
 For a great shouting at the door!
 Does someone want (come) inside to the court,

[122]

He shall not be denied.

Mathan goes there and says:

Ahitophel, what is the matter?
 The king is asking about the shouting.

Ahitophel says:

The women, with useless matters,
 Want to make the king restless.
 I won't let them in.

Tamar says:

Alas, dear sir, have mercy with me
 And help me to get in front of the king there!
 I will speak for myself
 With the pure, sincere truth,
 In order, through justice,
 To get back my living child.
 I won't plea for anything else here.

Mathan says:

Ay, so come! despair no longer!
 The king sits already to court.
 Tell him of your misery! If you are right,
 What belongs to you will be justly declared yours.

They both go inside, bow down. Mathan says:

Serene Highness, these two women,
 They came here to you trusting
 To receive a ruling from you
 About their complaint and an answer to it.

The king says:

Both of you, swear that you will during your complaint
 Only tell the truth without any fraudulent intent!

²⁶ klaffen: see Grimm Wörterbuch klaffen, nr.3 (<https://bit.ly/2CeDFso>).

They swear. Tamar says:

Alas, my dear king, hear my complaint!
I have lived for years and days

[123]

In one house with this woman.
Then, we both became pregnant.
When I had my child then,
Three days later,
This woman gave birth to hers, too.
After some time had passed,
When we both lived together,
When no stranger stayed with us,
One night, it happened
That this woman rolled to and fro
In the bed and crushed her child
In her sleep, and (then) she got up at night
And brought her dead son to me,
Puts him dead in my arm,
While I am asleep, and thus warm
She took from my side
My living son from afar
Into her arm and snuck away.
When I got up early, before day-break,
To breastfeed my young son,
He didn't want to show any signs of life.
But only when the bright day broke,
Did I truly see,
That he was not my actual son,
But the woman's. Therefore, I ask
Now, dear king, that you will
Make this woman give me
Back quickly my living son
And to take back her dead child.

Salomon says:

Woman, answer to this accusation!

Cleopatra says:

Dear king, I swear
That the living son is mine
And the dead child yours.
Like you, yourself, in that night

[124]

Crushed him or killed him,
I don't inquire into that, I also don't know that.
You, dear king, I ask:

That you acquit me of this accusation!
This woman can be hypocritical and manipulative.²⁷

Salomon says:

You advisers, advise both well,
What sentence shall be spoken!

Cleopatra pushes Ahitophel something into his hand, he says:

Dear king, shall I tell the truth,
Well, there is the woman's accusation here
Entirely bad, hopeless and simple;
But the other has powerfully
Answered vividly to it.
Therefore, you should conclude,
That the living child is hers!
Also, I feel it is a powerful testimony,
To consider in this case
How she could get up
And take her child?
These are two powerful reasons
(showing) Cleopatra is right.

Mathan says:

The trade is not actually bad,
But quite secret and confusing,
In this, human reasoning easily errs,
If one isn't attentive
And inquires into all circumstances,
Until one arrives at the real cause.
Therefore, dear king, because your mouth
Was given wisdom by God without any fault,²⁸
So it will, here too, speak
A just judgement,
That is hidden from me and you.

Salomon says:

[125]

All your quarrel here
Is over this living child.
Each of you wants to have it.
Is that so, then show it to me!

The women say:

Yes, yes.

Salomon says:

²⁷ schmirn: literally meaning to smear.

²⁸ gebrechen: compare to Grimm Wörterbuch entry gebrechen (<https://bit.ly/2SYSIw8>).

So just give me a sword,
 So that the living child will be
 Divided into two parts, straight through.
 So that each woman will have a half!

Tamar falls down to his knees and says:

Alas, my king, have mercy
 With me abandoned, lost one,
 And don't kill this child!
 Let it live (that is my plea)
 And rather let this woman have it instead!
 I don't want to see him die.

Cleopatra says:

No, not like that, my dear king!
 The child shall be neither mine nor yours!
 One shall divide it with the sword,
 That each will have a part.
 The sentence shall stay,
 Whether you like it or not!

Salomon concludes:

The child, that is still alive,
 That shall be given to this woman!
 That is the right mother.
 That is my final decision.
 Now we shall enter the hall.

They all exit.

Actus IV.

The king enters with his advisers and Marcolphe.

Salomon says:

[126]

Marcolphe, what is the country screaming about!

Marcolphe says:

Everyone talks about your shame,
 About how you, today, gave two women
 A bad, foolish court decision,
 Between a dead and a living child.

Salomon says:

I have the case still in front of my eyes.
 I found the motherly heart
 Because of her shaking, fear and pain.
 Her face turned pale as well,
 (She) didn't want to let the child be killed

And disrupted with heartbreaking crying
 With tears²⁹ for the other even.
 By that, I could tell that
 She was the child's mother.
 Therefore, I gave the child to her.

Marcolphe says:

Oh king, how simple you are,
 That you believe and trust
 The women's tears³⁰ so readily!
 Don you know the saying? To women's crying,
 To a dog's limp on three legs
 And to a merchant's oath,
 No wise man shall turn to.
 A woman can cry, sob and moan
 While she can still laugh in her heart.
 Women's cunning has no cause.

Salomon says:

Their piousness is greater, yet.

Marcolphe says:

Maybe you mean their deception.

Salomon says:

Marcolphe, you are not really smart.

[127]

You think they are all full of deception.

Marcolphe:

Yes, and covered by flattery.

Salomon says:

You lie; A woman is loyal and kind.

Marcolphe says:

Yes, like unsteady and fickle.

Salomon says:

They are also humble.

²⁹ zechern: perhaps a different spelling of zehern (tears, compare to Grimm Wörterbuch entry zehern, nr. 1.7. and following (<https://bit.ly/2Hc0Fwf>). Since I am not sure about "zechern", I cannot full decide whether "einen" is singular (perhaps refering to the other woman) or plural (perhaps referring to bystanders because the word "weit" means far). It could also be a different spelling of sächer (see Grimm Wörterbuch entry Sächer <https://bit.ly/2Uuu1ZL>), which can be either party in a law suit but it was also used to describe the guilty party. Literally translated it would be: With "zechern" even far for the one(s). Perhaps it means the pointed out with her crying the other as guilty. I really can't make much of the line.

³⁰ zehern: different spelling of zähren, see Grimm Wörterbuch entry Zähre (<https://bit.ly/2Hc0Fwf>).

Marcolphe says:

Yes, exactly full of pride and arrogance.

Salomon says:

Is a pious woman not worthy of honor?

Marcolphe says:

Oh, but there are very few of them on earth.

Salomon says:

They are much more than men.
 Get away from me, you disgracer of women!
 Were you not born by women?
 Did you not be with any pious women.
 A woman that wears a crown of honor
 Can please her man.
 His heart relies on her
 In all sorrow and pain.
 What does a man's wealth help him,
 Silver, money and precious stones,
 Pricey clothing and feasting,
 If no women is by his side?
 Women have to multiply the world,
 Carry children, raise them and feed them,
 Manage the house with all diligence.

[128]

A woman is a comfort to the old
 And looks over the young.
 The one, who lives without women
 In (his) time, lives like a dead (man) on this earth.
 Because women are loved by the world and God,
 Rightly, I shall love them, too.

Marcolphe says:

One says: When the heart is full,
 It will spill over to the mouth.
 So, king, you praise at this hour
 Women, because you are sinking
 Into their love, completely drowning.
 But before the day is over,
 You will revile and disgrace women,
 Even though, right now, you praise them plenty.

Salomon says:

That will never happen,
 That I scold women.
 They are the most precious treasure on earth,
 More precious than pearls and gold.

Therefore, I hold dearly in my heart
 The pious, honorable, modest women.
 I will always praise them.
 Therefore, leave me, you wet fool,
 You dishonest child-of-vice!
 If you disgrace one more woman in front of me,
 You will end your life at the gallows.

Marcolphe exits. The king says:

We shall leave for the hunt,
 Like we decided last night.³¹

They exit. Marcolphe enters again and says:

The king threatened me with the rope
 And praised the women at length.
 I will teach him a lesson,
 That he will have to disgrace them today still,

[129]

A dog wouldn't take (a piece) of bread from him,
 Because he despises me.
 There come two that are just right,
 They will help me with it.

Tamar and Cleopatra enter. Marcolphe to Tamar:

Listen Tamar! How do you like this?
 The king feels hatred and envy towards you.
 He is very ashamed of his decision.
 He will take your child away from you again
 And let it be chopped into two pieces,
 To give one piece to this woman.

Tamar says:

Oh, how tyrannical, evil and angry
 And fickle is the king!
 How unjust his decision is!

Cleopatra says:

So I will eventually still get half the child.
 I would scold him neither bad nor good.

Marcolphe says:

Yes, you don't know the king's mood.
 He wants to pillory you
 And cut off both your ears,
 Because he recognized your cunning.

³¹ nechten zu nacht: literally a doubling of "at night" (nightly at night), probably for the rhyme.

Cleopatra says:

Ay, that the devil³² disgrace and blind him!
 If he wants to be so tyrannical
 And has such phantasies,
 Wants to cut of my ears?

Marcolphe says:

Yes, that would all have to be suffered still.
 I know about much more evil farces.
 At night, the kind finally decided
 With his advisers of the council,
 That every man in this city

[130]

Shall have seven wives.
 You dear women, this concerns you.
 You will have to carry the burden on your back.
 If you don't suppress it in time
 The order will be released tomorrow.
 Then, there will be no peace in any house.
 The husband will love and value one wife,
 The others will sit around the hearth
 In the ashes, like the housemaid,
 Cooking, rinsing, sweeping and washing
 And all six together are in the marriage,
 And (will be) abandoned widows.
 There will be such a quarrel, punching and scuffle!
 Therefore, you women, run soon,
 Announce it to the women in the city!
 When the king will go to council today,
 He will publish this order,
 So ambush him! Don't stay silent
 And talk back to him against the order!

Cleopatra says:

The king probably thinks, because he has many
 Women, another should have that, too.
 I would rather he was buried
 If he executes such a game.

Tamar says:

We can't suffer that.
 I rather would risk my life and body
 To beat him to death like an angry dog.

Cleopatra says:

³² bock: literally buck, the word can also refer to the devil, see Grimm Wörterbuch entry Boc (<https://bit.ly/2Crw9Ke>).

Yes, of course we can't suffer that.
 If he cuts off seven ears of me,
 I will not stay quiet in front of that loose man.
 Partner,³³ advise, how shall we go about it!

Tamar says:

Alas partner, go! Run down all alleys.

[131]

And shout it out from house to house,
 So that all women will come here,
 The order would be too heavy for us,
 That we will suppress it in time.

Cleopatra says:

So then you run down the other side
 By the beautiful temple!
 Tell the women about it,
 So that each of them will come quickly!

They all exit.

Act V.

The king enters with his advisers, sits down and says:

Have you decided how we will go about
 Building a temple for the lord
 Before a war will break out?
 Listen! Listen! Do you hear, what I hear?
 In front of the hall, there is a loud turmoil
 Like a tumult and pushing.
 Mathan, go outside in front of the king's house!
 Look, what tumult is out there!

Mathan exits. Ahitophel says:

Maybe it is the soldiers,³⁴
 Wanting to register according to the law of war.

Mathan enters and says:

Dear king, there are about two thousand
 women, they are all looking up here,
 Requesting to all come up to you.

Salomon says:

Go outside quickly and say that
 One or two shall be chosen!
 These will tell me

³³ Gespil: different spelling of Gespiele, compare to Grimm Wörterbuch entry Gespiele, m. (<https://bit.ly/2Uq7u0e>). It literally translates to playmate but without the sexual and childish connotation.

³⁴ krieges-knecht: see Grimm Wörterbuch entry Kriegsknecht, nr. 1 (<https://bit.ly/2ST108A>).

What the women are requesting from me.

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Mathan exits. Ahitophel says:

When the women turn senseless,
It's not good to live with them.
They would well ruffle one's beard.

The women enter. Tamar bows and says:

Alas, noble king, we two were
selected to talk to you.

Salomon says:

Talk! It shall be granted to you!

Tamar says:

All women together
Know that you decided, last night,
In your council
A thing, that is not appropriate.

Salomon says:

Is it not my council and court?
I did it well and I am your defense,
To deliberate on the common good.

Cleopatra says:

Yes, but we women want to have no damage,
We don't want to be over-burdened by you,
Since we were born free and noble.

Salomon says:

Who does what? What are you babbling?
Go home and quit your shouting!

Cleopatra says:

You want to torture us with ridicule?³⁵
We don't campaign for a childish thing,
Some men might even die over it.

Salomon says:

[133]

What is the matter? Tell me!

Cleopatra says:

³⁵ gespey: different spelling of Gespei, see Grimm Wörterbuch entry Gespei, nr. 2 and 3.
(<https://bit.ly/2F3AmpW>).

It is this, that any man,
 From now on, shall have seven women.
 Who are those that advised you like this,
 That is against/again³⁶ male power?
 Oh king, what were you thinking?
 Don't you think yourself wise and smart usually?
 Is one not enough for a man?
 But, in marital things, you want
 To make changes and release an order
 On to which it would rhyme
 That a woman has seven men.
 We all would be willing to do that.

Salomon says:

You take care of yourself, and that not badly,
 And for all your partners.
 Want to be a wife to many men.
 No, no! Your advice misses by far.

Cleopatra says:

You most-evil master,
 You want to ridicule us in order to hurt us!
 We want to crown you with fists
 Or tear you apart with nails.
 The old proverb proves right.
 That says: King Saul was quite evil,
 But David was much worse,
 You, Salomon, (are) the most-evil,
 Because you outcast us women.
 Oh, if we take revenge!

Salomon stands up and says:

First, I will tell you a piece of truth:
 On earth there is no head more cunning,
 Than that of a snake, believe me!
 No rage is greater than women's rage.

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When she is made upset,
 Her face and neck
 Look like a dirty, rough³⁷ bag.
 I would rather ³⁸ live with lions and dragons
 Than with an evil woman.

³⁶ wider: unfortunately there are two words in German that sound alike and were spelled alike in the past wieder (again) and wider (against), I can't tell which one is meant here.

³⁷ herener: derives from heren and is related to hair, however, Grimm Wörterbuch can not offer a proper translation, neither any of the other dictionaries. It is listed with quotes about poor, simple, and rough clothing like monks wore, but apparently it is also negative and can be associated with dirty, see Grimm Wörterbuch entry hären (<https://bit.ly/2SUMGMJ>).

³⁸ wachen: see Grimm Wörterbuch entry wachen, nr. 1. a.ε (<https://bit.ly/2NVE32N>).

Where there is an evil women with a man,
 (It) is like he holds a scorpion,
 Small is all evil
 Next to the evil and cunning of women.
 The ruin of sin comes from women.
 Because of women, we all must die.
 I wish women that they will quickly³⁹
 Receive what the godless get!
 Therefore, get away from me now!

Nathan says:

Powerful king and lord,
 What does it mean that you revile
 On the virtuous sex to badly?
 I am not used to it from you.

Salomon says:

I do to them, how they did to me.
 They also reviled on me, even though I am innocent.
 The fool will think me right
 To give a foolish answer to his question.

Nathan says:

Dear king, many hours a day
 It looks good on a wise man,
 That he will not be take seriously
 Every word, that he is asked.

Marcolphus comes to stand next to them and says:

King, did I not tell the truth
 That you, today, will still scold the women?

Salomon says:

Marcolphe, do I have to blame⁴⁰ you?

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Well, when I think about this business,
 You have caused the turmoil.
 Therefore, leave the court, you villain!
 Don't show yourself to me again!
 Or I will let you hang from a tree.

He is pushed out. Marcolphe says:

Dear king, just think about it
 And chase out, instead of me,
 The hypocrites and financiers!
 You are over-burdened by them.

³⁹ gech: different spelling of gäch, see Grimm Wörterbuch entry gäch, nr. 4. a. (<https://bit.ly/2ER6ziN>).

⁴⁰ entgelten: see Grimm Wörterbuch entry entgelten (<https://bit.ly/2u2dpwR>).

They are the ones that do the greatest damage,
 Sweet talk you out of loads of money.
 When I have cloths and my muzzle is filled⁴¹
 I would be content⁴² with that.
 Good-bye! I leave knowingly
 And won't return any time soon,
 Will let the king growl first.

Salomon says:

You dear women, be patient!
 You see well that I am innocent
 For what Marcolphe, the villain,
 Did behind (my) back.
 The bad (things) I said about women,
 Understand, were only (true) about the bad ones!
 The pious ones are honorable
 The most precious treasure of a man on earth,
 I can trustfully turn to them for everything,
 (She) helps to feed him with her hands.
 Go! Show all women
 That each shall have one man!
 Like God created it in the beginning,
 Through his almighty word,⁴³
 It shall stay like that forever!
 God shall care for you mercifully,
 Give his blessing here and there!

They all exit. The herald enters ad concludes:

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This is how the comedy ends.
 It has plenty of good lessons,
 Namely, that a ruler, always,
 Ask God for sense and wisdom
 And keep God's word in sight,
 Thus follow it everywhere,
 Value pious, wise, educated people
 (much filth will be destroyed by them)
 And may he take in his government
 The reign in his own hand,
 In both council and court,
 Not rely on his civil servants,
 So that they won't be screwed
 Because they usually focus all their
 Business on their own advantage,
 From this doesn't come much good for the court.

⁴¹ maulfüll: literally "a full muzzle", see Grimm Wörterbuch entry Maulfülle (<https://bit.ly/2UtpbvS>).

⁴² benügen: see Grimm Wörterbuch entry benügen, nr. 1. 1 (<https://bit.ly/2XSrbzO>).

⁴³ ruff: different spelling of ruf, can refer to calling out, shouting or also reputation, but I think it was only added here for the rhyme, therefore, I omit it in the translation since it does not contribute to the content.

Therefore, a king shall keep his household wisely
 And chase from his court far away
 Financiers, hypocrites and fools,
 That are only interested in the people's misfortune,
 Through them, people and country will be ruined!
 May God give wisdom and intellect
 To all kings and rulers
 To reign during their lives
 Like king Salomon,
 So that their scepter and crown
 Grow worthy of remembering
 After their death! That wishes Hans Sachs.

he personae in this comedy:

1. King Salomon.
2. Nathan, a prophet.
3. Ahitophel, an adviser.
4. Tamar, a common woman.
5. Cleopatra, a common woman.
6. Mathan, the other adviser.
7. Marcolphe, a farmer.
8. Herald.

In the year of health 1550, on the sixth day of March.