

Hans Sachs

Published by
Adelbert von Keller.

Tenth Volume.

For the Literary Association in Stuttgart
According to the Resolution of the Committee from July 1867
Printed by Il. Laupp in Tübingen 1876.

Protector
Of the Literary Association in Stuttgart:
His Majesty the King.

Administration:

President:
Dr. A. v. Keller, professor at the royal university Tübingen.

Treasurer:
Roller, university secretary in Tübingen.

Agent:
Fues, bookseller in Tübingen

Society Board:

Professor Dr Barack, senior librarian of the royal university and state library in
Straßburg.

Privy Court Councilor dr Bartsch, proper professor at the general university in
Heidelberg.

K. Cotta Baron of Cottendorf in Stuttgart.

Privy Councilor Dr Hensen, director of the royal reference librarian Stuttgart.

Dr Holland, professor at the royal university in Tübingen.

Dr Klüpfel, librarian at the royal university in Tübingen.

Director dr O. v. Klumpp in Stuttgart.

Dr Maurer, proper professor at the royal university in Munich.

Dr Vollmer in Stuttgart.

Privy government councilor dr Waitz, proper professor at the royal university in Berlin.

Dr Wattenbach, proper professor at the royal university in Berlin.

Dr Zarnecke, proper professor at the royal university in Leipzig.

Tragedy with 9 persons acting, Thamar, the daughter of King David,
with her brothers Ammon and Absalom,

And [it] has three acts.

The herald enters, bows and says:

We wish you all health, mercy and peace.
We came to please you
by acting out a tragedy here.
We will sing about
A story. [Those] who want to read it,
[need to] search for it in the book of kings,
the thirteenth, there it says
that King David had
a beautiful daughter (called Thamar)
who was Absalom's sister
who was passionately loved
by her halfbrother¹ Ammon.
He pretended to be sick lying in bed
And asking King David,
His father, when he was with him,
To send his sister Thamar
To cook for him
So he could eat from her hands.
But when these things finally happened,
He threw all people out of his chambers
And reached for his sister Thamar,
Overcame her and slept² with her
[and] afterwards turned hostile against her,
throwing her out of his house.
That is the reason why Absalom, her brother,
Turned deeply hostile against Ammon.

[343]

And when, two years later, he had his
sheep shearing, he invited
the King's children and Ammon,
preparing with his servants
to slay Ammon.
[this] and everything else that happened,
we will explain and interpret spiritually
in the end.

¹ Stiefbruder (stepbrother) in the rare but possible meaning of halfbrother (see Grimm Stief-3a)

² Beschlafen grammatically indicates the passivity of the recipient of the action

But now you will see and hear
in its entirety
how the story took place.

The herald leaves. King David enters, sits down
and says with raised hands:

Oh dear God on the heavenly throne,
I wronged you deeply
When I slept with the one that has the most beautiful body,
Bathseba, the Hittite's wife,
And [I] committed a betrayal,
When Uria lost his life,
her husband, the pious loyal [one].
That is why the prophet Nathan
Declared the godly punishment,
A part of which hit me,
When my boy, the child, died,
Although, I am still promised
more punishment, very scaring,
namely, that God wants to bring
destructive misery over my house
and uncover my adultery.³
Nevertheless, the sword⁴ will not come
Onto my house as long as I am alive on earth.
Now, Lord, I will keep still;
Thy will be done⁵
On me, according to your word!
Although, I keep up the hope
That you will pardon benevolently
me and my house, taking off the punishment
because you are mild and gentle,
patient, merciful at all times,
[you are] gracious to all, who trust in you.

[344]

I trust in your mercy and grace.
Upon those, oh Lord, I rely,
Now, forever and in eternity.

Jonadab, the son of David's brother, says:

Dear King, let us go home!
They have called us to the table already,
It is almost noon.

King David says:

Yes, we will immediately go home,

³ literally: women shame

⁴ sword as a symbol for power, honor but also of destruction and death (see Grimm Schwert)

⁵ line from Our Prayer/Lord's Prayer

As you said, with all
 the servants because all royal children
 are assembled sitting at the table
 to be merry and eat with us all day.

They all leave. Ammon, King David's son, enters and
 Says:

Alas, how disturbed is my mood,
 My heart is hurt and burnt
 With burning and flaming love,
 With such a wild and strong desire
 That I can neither rest nor sleep!
 I am lengthily and strongly bothered
 With some deep sighs
 And my heart is sick with longing
 So exuberant immeasurable,
 I cannot drink nor eat.
 I do not sleep at night, too.
 My heart constantly screams complainingly, chatting.
 I simply pine and vanish
 In such love that burns so painful.
 Like the snow in the sun,
 I turn weak.
 I lose weight and life
 Because I am hiding my love,
 Enclosed in my heart;
 Not even revealing it to my love
 Because she is still a pure virgin,
 From my father's side a natural sister.
 It is difficult for me, to do something

[345]

dishonorable to the good and beautiful [one].
 I fear she will turn down my love.
 I cannot tell a single person.
 I carry the burden all alone
 Without help and comfort, [I] despair.
 There, my cousin Jonadab comes.
 I will turn away from him.
 I fear, he might be able to tell by looking at me.

Ammon leaves, Jonadab enters and calls after him:
 Stop, Ammon! Why are you fleeing?
 Stop! Where are you going in such a hurry?
 I need to talk to you.

Ammon turns to him. Jonadab says:
 Tell me, Ammon, you son of a King!
 What bothers you so much
 That you are so thin and haggard

so pale, skinny, scrawny and lean?
You get lighter every day.

Ammon says:

I have a secret concern
That I cannot tell or complain about to anyone;
I may lose my life
because no one wants to help me.

Jonadab says:

Tell me, cousin! No matter what it is!
I will in word and deed
Counsel your matter.
Tell me without hesitation! Please.

Ammon looks around and says:

I am ashamed to say it.
But I will reveal my heart now
Based on the highest trust
That I always have in you

[346]

[I must tell you] that [I] hurt from an unspeakable pain,
from strong love,
and that my mind is overcome
with strong desire.

Jonadab says:

For whom?

Ammon says:

Absalom's sister, Tamar.
With her lies my life's health.
If I cannot have her body,
I know, I will die of sorrow;
Ruined by longing love!
Without her, no one can help me.

Jonadab says:

Ammon, do not lose [hope] for love
But be merry and comforted!
You will be saved from discomfort.
I will help you myself with my advice
In word and deed,
So all shall be granted to you,
All that your heart desires so passionately.

Ammon says:

Alas, my cousin, let me understand
How your help will look like,

Because Tamar, my good sister,
Is under strict supervision every day;
For the longest time, I could not tell
Her a word in secret,
To open up my heart to her!

Jonadab says:

My cousin, I advise you:
Lie down and pretend to be sick!
When your father David comes
To you and wants to visit you,
beg your father
That he will send to you

[347]

Tamar, your sister, all alone
So she may cook for you as much as she wants
And you can eat from her hand!
The King will not deny you this.
Then you can open up and tell
Your sister of your love's burn,
Winning her favor and affection,
So you can complete your love
That burns so passionately in your heart,
So you will come to rest [again].

Ammon says:

Be blessed forever!
I will follow your loyal advice
And immediately lie down in bed.
But you, tell the King,
I was very weak, and did not want to go on anymore!
I know, he cannot keep away [then]
But will quickly come to see me.
Then I will deal with him,
As you advised.

Jonadab leaves. Ammon sits down sickly and says:

Now my heart is much calmer
Because [the prospect] of the things to come comforts me,
I will complete my love,
My heart has longed for it,
[the moment] when such luck will befall me.
There is nothing I want more on earth.
There comes King David, my father,
To look at me.

King David comes with the doctor and says:

My Son, Ammon, how are you?
I was just told

That you are very sick and tired.
 Therefore, follow the doctor's advice,
 Who shall feel your pulse!
 He will cure you,
 [he will] name the illness and drive it out,
 so you shall be well [again] in no time.

[348]

The doctor feels the pulse and says:

Your illness is an internal one.
 You have a hurt heart
 That rages and rampages in desire.
 Your body is not ill.
 [It is] alone your mind that rages and fights
 that burdens you to death.
 Only you know
 What it is that you desire so much.
 My medication is without any use for you.

David says:

My son, tell me without hesitation!
 What is it that your heart desires?
 No matter what, you shall have it
 As long as it is possible on earth.

Ammon says:

Father, I only desire
 That you let Thamar, my sister,
 Come her to me,
 So she may cook once or twice,
 And prepare a dish⁶, spicy and sweet,
 With spices and sugar,
 So I can eat it from her hand!
 That will make me happy,
 That is truly my heart's desire.
 I think, I shall get well [then].

King David says:

Yes, my dear son, be merry!
 I hope, you shall get well.
 I will send your sister,
 As you desire it, within the hour,
 So she will cook and feed⁷ you.
 May God protect you from harm!

David leaves with the doctor, Ammon talks to himself
 And says:

⁶ see Grimm Gemüse

⁷ See Grimm Ätzen

[349]

I hope, I will be helped now,
 When I reveal my burning desire
 To my sister;
 Then she will be friendly
 And fulfill my wish
 To calm my longing heart.
 But one more thing needs to be considered:
 What if she despises me,
 Rejects my love?
 There won't be a more miserable
 Man on earth than me; I will hang myself out of sorrow,
 Strangle my neck or drown,
 Just so I can escape my life;
 All hope would be gone
 [all] that could comfort me in this [time of] need.
 Therefore, nothing would be better than death.
 I will go to the hall to look out
 for the royal maiden,
 That I want to entrust my life to.

Ammon leaves sickly:

Act 2.

Thamar brings two covered bowls, a cooking spoon, talking to herself and says:

I will go to my brother
 To comfort him in his illness
 To cook for him and feed him,
 Because he desired it.

She leaves. Two servants enter. Obal says:

Ammon had us all pushed
 Out of his chambers.
 He sat up in his bed,
 While his sister cooks for him
 To feed him with her hand.

Usal, the other servant, says:

He does not leave her out of sight.

[350]

he looks at her constantly
 like a vulture [looks] at carrion,
 like he wants to look through her.

Obal, the other servant, says:

I also saw from up close
That Ammon could not keep his eyes off of her
During the entire dinner
In the King's hall,
Also some deep sighs came from him,
Completely getting lost in her,
So that he did not drink nor eat
And his hands and feet were shaking.⁸
Afterwards he had to leave the table
Before the last course [was served].
But I don't know why.

Usal says:

My Obal, I truly saw [it] too,
How he behaved in such manner.
It irritates me to see
Him with such childish behavior
In front of this royal maiden,
Like he has lost his senses.
Often, he runs around
With the redness of shame on his cheeks;⁹
That then suddenly leaves again
So that his face turns yellow and pale;
And constantly [does he] stare at the maiden,
Completely and entirely losing his senses¹⁰ over her,
out of envy, anger or love.
May it be what it wants, it doesn't concern me.
Come! Let us leave the hall
And wait with the other servants¹¹
For the duty with the halberd!¹²

Both leave. Absalom enters, talks to himself and
Says:

My brother Ammon is down with illness;
Now my sister, Tamar,

[351]

went [to him] upon the King's order
because he desired whole heartedly
to eat from her hand.
Therefore, I will also
Go to comfort him in his house.

⁸ see Grimm Bidmen

⁹ literally: under his eyes

¹⁰ see Grimm Vergaffen

¹¹ see Grimm Trabant; from here on trabant will be translated as servant

¹² hellenparten probably an alternative spelling of Hellebarde (halberd)

There, my sister leaves,
 Has put dust on her head,
 Robbed of all happiness.
 Her face looks sad.
 She puts a hand on her head and cries.
 Perhaps my brother died
 Of his illness.

Thamar enters, Absalom says:

Alas, sister, why are you sad,
 [why] did you tear your royal dress?
 Tell [me]! Is our brother dead?

Thamar says crying:

Oh brother, unfortunately, I had to
 Suffer distress of my honor,
 That upsets me much.

Absalom says:

Oh my sister Thamar, tell me!
 Was Ammon with you?

Thamar raises her hands and says:

Yes, unfortunately, my dear brother!
 Let me tell you my sorrow!
 The King sent me to him
 So that my food would make him well.
 But when I came into his house,
 He sent everyone out of his
 Chambers; when I prepared the dish
 Tastily and sweet in front of his eyes,
 [when] I brought it to his bed for him to eat,
 he talked to me disrespectfully, even outrageously:
 come here, my sister! Sleep with me!
 I immediately talked punishing it:
 Alas, no, my brother, do not weaken me!

[352]

This is not customary in Israel!
 Do not act so foolishly in this land!
 Where should I go with such a shame?
 And you will be like a fool
 Throughout the entire kingdom of Israel.
 But just talk to the King!
 He will not keep me from you
 Instead [he will] make me your wife.
 But he did not want to listen to me
 But overcame me shamelessly instead
 And slept with me shamefully,
 Weakening and robbing my honor.

I will never be happy again.
 Afterwards, he despised me deeply
 And had me shamelessly thrown out
 By his servants and pushed me out of the door,
 Afterwards he closed and locked it.
 Now I am weakened and defiled.
 Oh my brother, where shall I go?
 I wish by God,
 I was buried, [I] was dead.

Absalom says:

Be quiet, Tamar, my dear sister!
 Ammon is your brother.
 Therefore, don't take it too heavy
 With such fear and bitter pain
 And stay alone with me, in my house,
 from now on! What [else] will you do?
 And carry such misfortune with patience
 Because it happened against your will and [it is] not your fault!
 The shame needs to be avenged
 As long as I am alive.

They all leave. Ammon enters, stands miserably with
 Raised hands and says:

Alas, God, I did great wrong
 When I defiled my sister,
 This would [even] be too rough for pagans.
 [I] have lost praise, honor and glory,
 [I have] put myself into eternal shame.

[358]

I am a cursed [man] in this land.
 [I] cannot look at anyone happily.
 Alas, God, what will the King do
 After I committed such foolishness?
 He will imprison me forever.
 Even if I could escape punishment,
 I fear her brother more,
 Absalom, [he] always seeks revenge.
 He has not talked to me ever since.
 And even if he does not avenge
 My evil deed,
 Surely God's revenge
 Will come
 Because I lost his grace.
 By God, I wish I was never born
 Because [now] the world is getting too small for me
 Because of my evil deed;
 Now my conscious is
 tortured and bitten so heavily,

by both, men and God.
 Oh, come and strangle me, grim death,
 That I will lose my life,
 That I shamefully soiled!¹³
 I want to leave but do not know where [to go].
 I am the most unfortunate on earth.

Ammon leaves sadly. The two servants come.

Obal says:

Usal, what's new at the court?
 Do you know what happened yesterday?

Usal, the other servant, says:

What happened yesterday?

Obal says:

Ey, Ammon slept shamefully
 With Absalom's sister.
 He must be a [piece] of shit.¹⁴
 If he wanted to be foolish¹⁵

[354]

he could have found other women
 with whom it would be appropriate to flirt;
 leaving his sister untouched,
 the modest, chaste and good [one].
 They say, the King knows it already.
 What do you think, will he say something?

Usal says:

Ey, what to say? Oh, he will avenge it
 Because it is Tamar, his daughter,
 That [he] weakened under false pretense.
 Look! What we said yesterday
 Comes to light
 [what we said] about Hammon,¹⁶ who couldn't
 stare hard enough across the table at the maiden,
 so much that he was totally smitten with her.
 That is the power of love,
 That he was blinded by her beauty¹⁷
 And thus foolishly and stupidly
 sleeps with his own sister.
 Come! Run!¹⁸ Absalom comes!

¹³ See Grimm Vermeilungen

¹⁴ See Grimm Unflat; basically a very old, strong and vulgar word for feces

¹⁵ See Grimm Schalksberg; it has a clear negative and often sexual connotation

¹⁶ probably an alternative spelling of Ammon

¹⁷ grammar is a bit ambiguous, alternatively: That he got completely blind because of her

¹⁸ literally: Flee!

Both leave. Absalom enters, talks to himself and
Says:

Because my brother Ammon
Committed such evil deed
Against my dearest sister,
That know lives in my house alone;
[it make] my heart sad,
every time I see the poor [one],
that she was robbed of her honor.
The King believed his [Ammon] flattery,
I told him, he is too mild,
His love and gentleness overcome him
And do not harm the evil one.
That is why I swear by God
That I will not stop seeking revenge.
I will wait the time
Until I can avenge myself rightly.
Now, I just thought of what I could do.
In a month time

[355].

The sheep shearing will take place at my house,
At my estate in Baal-Hatzor.
I will prepare it
And invite Ammon to it
So I can properly avenge me
And also my dearest sister.
Until then I cannot be merry.
In the meantime, I let him go
Because I cannot talk to him,
Neither in a bad nor a good [manner],
Until he will end up on my dung heap;
Then he will have to pay with his blood.

Absalom leaves.

Act 3.

King David enters, sits down, talks to himself with
Folded hands and says:

My heart has found rest
And calmed down a bit again
Over my dear daughter's shame,
That is surely how God takes revenge on me
For what I did with Bathseba.
My son Ammon has to pay for it now.
I beg you, oh Lord, let it be enough now
Of revenge for my heavy sin;

Because you have great mercy
For all those that sin!

Absalom enters, says:

Father, I ask you
Not to turn me down
Even though you could.

King David says:

My son Absalom, tell me!
What do you desire from me?

Absalom says:

[356]

Tomorrow, I will hold my sheep shearing
At my estate in Baal-Hatzor.
I want to invite you to it.
So come to me and take with you
All your servants, according to the country's custom,
To hold [it] with me merrily,
As one does in Israel!
I hope, you will grant it.

David says:

My son, I do not wish to be an inconvenience
Coming to you with all my servants,
As it is the country's custom and right,
It is a lot. My son, instead
I will not come to your sheep shearing;
We would cause you too much damage.

Absalom says:

Father, I also invited
to the sheep shearing in Baal-Hatzor
all royal children,
coming to me as guests.

David says:

Ey, that is not much less.
Their servants are of great number.
It will cost you greatly.
Therefore, let them stay here!
I will not let out any of them.
And I will also not go with you.

Absalom says:

Father, do not prevent the King's children
And Ammon, my brother, to come,
[just] because you do not wish to come!

Do not turn it down.

David says:

Why should Ammon come to you,
When you two are in a fight
over of your sister, that is what I heard?

[357]

You have not talked to him
In two years, as I heard.
Therefore, let him stay in my house!

Absalom says:

My dear father, let him out
With all the [other] children of the King,
To be merry, to please me,
To have a good time
In all friendship!

David says:

Well, then go, in God's name!
May God protect you all
From sin, shame and harm
And may he mercifully bless you,
So you will return happily!
I will walk up and down for a bit
Behind the palace, taking a walk
In the garden and [I will] wait for you tomorrow.

They both leave. Ammon enters, talks to himself and
Says:

Well me! I found mercy
With my brother; [he] invited me
To his sheep shearing in Baal-Hatzor,
Although, he did not talk a word
To me in two years, until yesterday,
[he was] hostile towards me because of his sister;
I always stayed away from him;
Avoiding his home
Because he looked at me so angrily.
I was always worried because of his revenge.
But now his anger cooled down
And he his friendly with me again,
Forgetting old grudges.
I will merrily drink and eat to it
With him and all the royal children.
Now we will all come together at the linden,¹⁹

¹⁹ The choice of tree is ironic given that lind is also a word used to describe a gentle and mild natured person

Let's take to the road.
My heart is happy.

[358]

Ammon leaves. The two servants enter. Obal says:
Today our master will
Give his great sheep shearing feast,
[he] invited all royal children.

Usal says:
We shall bath in wine, there.
The honorable guests will
Be served the very best.
I heard distress in the kitchen today
Half through the night, they baked doughnuts.
I did not think of the feast.

Obal says:
Go to the kitchen now and take care
Of how they make jelly and lard,
[how they] mince and also thicken!
They prepare birds and fish,
As far as I know, for twelve tables.
What a cooking²⁰ and frying!
There, we shall also get a chance
To stuff our throat.

Usal says:
I will stuff a good pork roast into me
Like a tanner's dog²¹
And I will also take some from the wine vessel,²²
Because we need to serve it at the table
And it won't get more from [being served].
Therefore, I will fill myself, too.

Obal says:
Our master comes; be completely quiet!

Absalom says:
Go inside and prepare
And set the tables now!
Put tasty²³ water into the pitcher²⁴

²⁰ literally: boil

²¹ probably a proverb, I think I remember it from one of the other plays, perhaps Esther 1536?

²² knollet see Grimm Knolle, I interpret it as a roundly shaped vessel, zwicken is commonly understood as pinching but I derive it from the still used abzwacken (to fork something)

²³ Schmecket Grimm lists it as flower bouquet but I find that meaning unlikely and prefer to derive it from Geschmack (taste)

²⁴ gießfas as alternative spelling to Gießgefäß

And sprinkle the hall with grass
And open the best wine

[359]

And pour plenty for the guests,
Bring one after the other!
And once Ammon is in a good mood,
When he is drunk from wine,
I will point at him
With a finger, after my order
You slay Ammon dead quickly,
Because I ordered you to!
However, do not tell anyone
This story beforehand!

Obal says:

Gracious master, we will do it
But let us not get into trouble for it,
from your honorable father, King David!

Absalom says:

Just do it and be content!
You cannot be scared or ashamed,
I will take you with me to Gesur,
Where King Thalmay rules,
Until the matter is over.
Therefore, just slay Ammon dead!
No harm shall come upon us.

Absalom leaves. Usal, the other servant, says:

Why do we need to murder
Ammon at such a place,
As the master told us to?

Obal says:

I think, he avenges the evil deed
That weakened his sister Thamar.

Usal, the other servant, says:

Two years went by since then.
I thought, he had forgotten [it]
[instead he wants to] avenge it so bloodthirstily;
so we shall strangle him [Ammon] for it.

[360]

Obal, the servant, says:

Powerful masters do what they want;
We are their servants, we must do
What the masters order us to,

Whether it is right or not.

Usal says:

Listen! The master welcomes the guests already.
 Let us set the tables soon
 To serve the wine cool and fresh,
 Before they sit down at the table,
 So everyone will be merry!

Both leave. Absalom enters, talks to himself and
 Says:

Now it is in my hand
 To avenge my sister's disgrace
 On Ammon, my brother,
 Who is already soaked²⁵ from wine.
 He will repay me highly with his blood
 For such a merry mood.
 I will go back inside the hall
 And comfort my guests.

Usal enters, after Absalom has left, and says:

By the devil!²⁶ The wind blows right today.²⁷
 I am almost half drunk.
 I brought Ammon a full cup.²⁸
 Soon it will be good night [for him],
 He will be killed soon.

Obal, the servant, enters and says:

Where are you, Usal? Listen! Let me tell you!
 Ammon got up from the table.
 Come soon and take your weapon with you,
 Before he can escape us!
 Maybe he was warned

[361]

or [he] suspects an accident.
 Come! Let us go into the hall!
 [I] think: we need to strike soon.

Usal says:

Look! There, Ammon staggers inside.
 The master follows on his socks.
 Look, look! He is waving for us to follow.

²⁵ literally: wet

²⁶ Botz or Potz is a derogative of God and in combination with St Valentin or Veltin it was a popular curse (see Grimm Valentin 4 and 5)

²⁷ probably another proverb

²⁸ see Grimm Scheuer

Well, I want to be the first to jump at it.²⁹

Ammon staggers in, Absalom follows him, points at him.

Ammon says:

What are you doing there, you poor devils?

Come into the hall and booze plenty!

I will bring you a full glass.

Usal says:

We are not allowed to receive your [glass].

You must die, you villain!

They hit him. Absalom says:

Now carry him down stairs quietly

To burry the dog secretly!

Afterwards, both of you will come with me

To escape to Gesur!

They carry him away, Absalom leaves with [them]. King David

Enters, sits down and says:

Praised be God in eternity,

Who made my kingdom

Peaceful and rich³⁰ for me.

Through your mild benevolence,

I was given many beautiful children

That are all together now

At their brother Absalom's

Who hosts them all as guests

At the sheep shearing in Baal-Hatzor!

[362}

They soon will return.

The herald enters, putting the hands together up over his head

And says:

O dear King, sorrow over sorrow!

News reached the court

Of how Absalom and his boys have

slain the King's children

over the table of his house

and none survived

and Absalom fled after

the fight with both servants.

King David tears apart his dress and says:

Alas, what sorrow and pain

That I have to live to [see] this horrible day!

²⁹ see Grimm Zucker

³⁰ wolfahrt is closer to English welfare but difficult to incorporate here

Uria, the innocent blood,
 Only now, God avenges him
 And that on all my children!
 How shall I overcome this misery?
 Get going soon and quickly follow
 To catch my son Absalom
 To avenge the evil deed greatly,
 [he] who spilled the blood of all my children!

Jonadab says:

Alas, my dear King, do not think
 That Absalom executed
 All royal children! Alone Ammon
 Was done away with,
 [he] who had slept with his sister.
 He set out to punish him.
 That is why Ammon alone is dead.
 That was ordered by King God!

The herald enters and says:

Dear King, there is a great crowd
 Of people coming down from the mountain
 One after the other.
 Some walk, some ride.
 They must be the King's children.

[363]

Jonadab says:

Therefore, lessen your grief!
 Be comforted, dear King! Get up!
 We shall go towards them.

David says:

Well, since it cannot be otherwise,
 I will accept it,
 And what God gives me,
 I will accept humbly
 Because all his doings are just and good.

They all leave in order. The herald finishes:

Now listen for God's glory
 [how] this story is explained spiritually,
 it will comfort us!
 King David shows us
 with his two kinds of children,
 that are similar [to the ones of] his heavenly majesty God.
 Tamar stands for the Christian soul,
 A pure virgin without any sorrow,

Nurtured only by the breasts³¹
 [of] God's words, sincere and pure.
 Her bound skirt means most of all
 The holy ghost's mercy and gift.
 Ammon means for us Satan
 And his limbs [mean] godless people
 Full of sin and false teachings,
 That are after the soul.
 Jonadab means flesh and blood
 That secretly advises
 With pretense³² she advises
 And drags onto the bed of sin,
 Into bodily fluids³³ or rave
 And other great sin, too,
 Into adultery, murder, greed and theft
 And other such vice.
 Thus she is robbed of her innocence,

[364]

not loving, trusting and believing in God,
 the gift of the soul does not comfort her³⁴ anymore,
 then Satan throws her out.
 The dress of grace is torn off her.
 Then she has a nagging conscious
 And puts dust on her head.
 Weak, doubtful is her belief.
 Goes there, timid, in great shame,
 Until her brother Absalom comes.
 Through all Christian preachers,
 That comfort her in her [despair],
 Through God's word
 She is led back into the Christian community,
 Receiving mercy through penance.
 Then Satan will be damaged, too

³¹ perhaps a reference to motifs like in the book of Isaiah in which God is described in motherly terms

³² I am not sure what 'she' refers to, it would be most logical to assume flesh and blood as a reference but they are plural and grammatically not female

³³ literally secretion, I assume some reference to medieval ideas of how actions and character can be influenced by the different fluids in a body

³⁴ the sie (she) could be plural here and not like the previous one grammatically singular. However the sie (she) is singular again in the following lines; in retrospect the 'she' most likely refers back to Tamar, which would basically blame her for all the negative actions in the story. I suspect, the grammar is so messy here because Hans Sachs tries to convey meaning on different levels: plot and metaphorical in a spiritual and general context like a fable

And with him all his limbs;³⁵
 God's word, the sharp sword,
 Will come down finally
 There in the middle of the
 Danger for the soul's of God's children.
 When the heavenly David hears this
 He will repent the sinner's death
 Because the loyal, mild, benevolent God
 Only likes life.
 That is what he will give to all of us
 Through Jesus Christ, his son,
 Who did enough for all of us!
 May the eternal happiness come
 For us with all angels, [this] wishes Hans Sachs.

The characters of this tragedy:

1. Herald.
2. Kind David.
3. Tamar, his daughter.
4. Ammon, his son.
5. Absalom, his son.
6. Jonadab, the son of the King's brother.
7. The doctor.
8. Obal,
9. Usal, 2 servants.³⁶

In the year of salvation 1556, on the 12th day of May.

³⁵ I distinctly remember a late medieval or soon after painting in which the state or church was presented as a human body but all the limbs were made off people, so I would interpret limbs here as follower and people

³⁶ see footnote 11