

# The Reformation of Wolfshausen

## Teil Fünf, 1521

The morning after Herr Schüldenschild came to confessional, the agents of the Archbishop came to the Church selling indulgences and so did Hildegard. Hildegard grabbed hold of Vater Karl in front of the agents and begged for help finding her husband. He had not come home the night before and she was afraid something terrible had happened

Vater Karl urged her to wait at home and promised to find him. He watched her leave and then walked down Pilgrimstein peeking into brewhouses, looking for a sobbing barmaid. Each one he met, he asked for Herr Schüldenschild. He knew he had found the right bar when the sobbing barmaid inside claimed not to know the popular man. He offered to help remove the great man's body, discreetly.

When he delivered the bad news to Hildegard, he explained that he had found her husband in some willows near the river. "You see," explained the Priest, "he was coming home when he died." He left the widow when he felt a Priestly ministrations would be no more comfort. No sooner had he left the house when he was accosted by two angry knights and an angrier agent.

"Why did you take the merchant from the bar to the river?" the agent shouted.

"You followed me?" asked the Priest.

"Yes, when you sent the old woman home and watched her go, I knew some crime was taking place. You must have known about the merchant and the barmaid.:

"Shhhhh" begged Vater Karl. "I will tell you everything, but she mustn't hear you."

The two men walked away upriver, girded by the two knights. When Vater Karl was certain even a screaming ecclesiastical agent would not be heard by the grieving widow, he explained the previous night's confession and how he knew where to find the dead, adulterous merchant.

"And you forgave him?" asked the agent incredulously.

"No, no. God forgave him. I merely administered the confession."

"But he might have earned his forgiveness with a generous donation! Very well, then. He died in sin so his soul is in purgatory. His heirs must pay."

"The family doesn't know. His wife mustn't know."

"She must know. Since you let him pray, the widow must pay. Without contrition, his soul will linger in purgatory and the new Basilica in Rome will never be finished." The agent and knights set back toward the house on their holy mission and Vater Karl threw his priestly robe, collar and chain into the river before leaving for Wolfshausen.