

# The Reformation of Wolfshausen Teil Dreizehn, 1521

The Alehouse wasn't crowded that Sunday as Vater Karl and Gretchen walked in hand-in-hand. Jeremiah was in Gretchen's arms since he had seen a mouse on the shop lintel and jumped after it. "Tchu! she had shouted and clutched him back, lifting the malnourished boy off his feet.

The pair chose chairs opposite one another and the boy stood at the end of the table by Vater Karl. "You are the prettiest lamb in my flock." the priest promised Gretchen.

"And you my holiest drinking partner," she answered. Does Jeremiah have a family name? I would like to call him Herr something on formal occasions" Jeremiah looked up at the young woman with wide and watery eyes, and she pinched his hair.

"No. I had hoped to find a family ready to trade a spare pair of hands for an extra mouth, but it has been three weeks."

"Where did you find him?"

"He was living in the barn at the Greulichs' farm."

"Very well, then. Until he finds a family, I will call him Jeremiah Freulich! How does that suit you, Herr Freulich?" She looked down at the boy and saluted. The boy looked up with an expression that said he found the prospect of going through life as Herr Freulich, or at least hearing Gretchen address him so, very gratifying. This was, in fact, the meaning of the name.

The two smiled at each other, until both turned to smile at the Priest. But Gretchen had carried a sorrow with her since her dream. For three weeks, she had

sung about to the pigs while they foraged and covered it with smiling eyes when she saw people. But in that moment, the sadness found a route behind the eyes out through her forehead.

“What is the matter, dear girl?” the priest asked. Jeremiah looked back at Gretchen, to see if he could see what Vater Karl had asked about.

“Vater, what about boys?” Jeremiah brightened. “Excuse me. Young men, I mean.”

“Gretchen, I wondered if you’d included the category in your science. The young man around here pay money to monkeys- sorry, boy- to earn your kind regard and the shy ones jump into rain barrels whenever you reach the cobbled road into Wolfshausen. Boys should be no trouble for you.”

“Vater Karl, I hear the young men of Wolfshausen whistle at me the way I hear the wind whistle at me between branches. I wouldn’t disturb my pigs for any of them. But, from what you’ve told me, I need one If I’m to pass on my father’s stock.”

The priest blushed at the topic but then remembered himself. “I see. You think someone special would make a worthy heir for your father, my old friend. I agree. Let me ask you- when you take the herd to find food, where do you go?”

“The family forages on the hillside above the cottage most often. It is quiet, which we prefer and anything new there is exciting. Why just this past spring, a knight rode through on the old ridge road and startled us all. What fun!”

“You must tell me later about the knight. But I do have some advice to offer. In the bible, whenever people gather, they start a town. When God wishes someone brought to him, He usually brings them out to the wilderness. But whenever God wants to bring people together, he does so along a road between towns. If you wish for a match made in heaven, do some of your foraging along the road to Marburg.”

Gretchen frowned with distaste for travelers but thanked the Priest. Jeremiah saw something scurry below the pies and was off like an arrow.