

HILDEBRAND
(curtly)

What ?

82

604

TOTILA

(recalling the message)
We have crowned the wrong
sister. It is time for the
Crown Council to act.

605

STREET TO RAVENNA: DAY

where Cethegus rides along in a wild gallop, leading
his group of twenty riders. Syphax, the faithful slave,
rides at his master's side.

606

ON TOP OF A HILL : DAY

Cethegus signals the group to a halt. He points down--
hill, o.s.

CETHEGUS

Ravenna -

(to his escort)

Hide with your horses in
the canyon and wait for
my return.

(taking up the reins)

I will ride on alone.

607

RAVENNA : THEODERIC'S PALACE : AMALASWINTHA'S CHAMBERS:
NIGHT

Though it is late at night, Amalaswintha is still awake.
She wears a nightgown and her hair hangs loose over her
shoulder. Nothing indicates the queen. She is only a
woman, sad and lonely.

Suddenly, the door opens and Cethegus bursts in. Amalaswintha
looks astounded at her visitor.

AMALASWINTHA

Cethegus! ~~The Master of man-~~
~~ners bursting in at night, un-~~
~~announced?~~ *WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN RAVENNA?*
UNANNOUNCED. AND UNEXPECTED.

CETHEGUS

There was no-one ~~outside~~ *TO ANNOUNCE ME.*

AMALASWINTHA

My chamberlain?

CETHEGUS

Gone.

AMALASWINTHA (frowning)

Hildebrand -- Teja -- Aligern?

CETHEGUS

Gone.

AMALASWINTHA

(angry)

Where?

CETHEGUS

~~According to reports~~, I've heard
they're on their way to Wichitis'
farmhouse. To meet Totila.

608

The impact of this news shows on Amalaswintha. She starts pacing the floor. Her face reveals that she realizes the truth. Yet, she asks:

AMALASWINTHA

The Crown Council meet at Wichitis' house? Why?

CETHEGUS

(simply)

They want your sister to be Queen.

AMALASWINTHA

(after a long pause)

Then they are all against me?
Every one?

609

CETHEGUS

(nods)

That's why they must not reach Ravenna.

(he bows)

I have a detachment of Cavalry waiting in the hills.

AMALASWINTHA

(stares at him)

~~To ambush them?~~ You want me
to be a party to their slaughter?

CETHEGUS

(hard)

They betrayed you. They deserve death.

610

AMALASWINTHA

(confused)

But this is murder.

CETHEGUS

FOR A NOBLE CAUSE,
WE ACT TO SAVE YOUR
THRONE, MY QUEEN. MY
MEN ARE NOT MURDERERS.

No. Execution, for a noble
cause. My men are heroes,
Queen, to save your throne. Not murderers.

611

AMALASWINTHA

(hysterically)

Do what has to be done, Cethegus.

~~But do not play with words, madam. I beg you.~~

CETHEGUS

I need your royal permission.

AMALASWINTHA.

You must give the orders. ~~madam~~.

612

CETHEGUS

(firmly)

Then the Queen will ride with us.

AMALASWINTHA

(taken aback)

With Romans?

613

CETHEGUS

There are no Goths to ride with you.

(menacingly)

Or do you prefer to be left here alone?

614-
615

WICHITIS' FARMHOUSE : EXT : MORNING : WAITING HORSES.

In the early light of dawn five men mount their horses which have been waiting for them.

616

Wichitis, Hildebrand, Teja, Totila and Aligern ride off -

617

DELETE 617 - 622

623

A HILL WITH THICK BUSHES : DAY

Cethegus and Amalaswintha ride along.

Behind them, Syphax follows on horseback. They ride in grim silence.

624

CETHEGUS

(calmly)

The Queen is nervous?

AMALASWINTHA

~~We are using hidden trails. Masking ourselves with foliage. Should the Queen travel like a fugitive?~~

625

CETHEGUS

You are a fugitive, madame. So am I.

(significantly) ~~to be cautious.~~

We both have reason ~~not to ride~~

~~on these roads.~~

626

They come to a clearing which offers a generous view of the valley and the entrance to a pass right below them. Here Cethegus gives the signal to stop, pointing to the narrow pass.

*CETHEGUS,
THEY MUST COME
THROUGH HERE.*

CETHEGUS

A good place for an ambush.
They must come through ~~there~~ here.

627

AMALASWINTHA

(suddenly frightened)
I want to go back, ~~but I cannot~~

CETHEGUS

Too late.
(looking into the valley)
They're coming now.

628

A cloud of dust is rising down on the valley road leading to the pass.

↓
DELETE 629 - 630 ONLY DIALOGUE

631

HILDEBRAND AND HIS FRIENDS riding along the road to the pass.

632

IN THE NARROW PASS between the rocky hills, they do not notice:

633

HIDDEN BEHIND THE ROCKS Cethegus' men, disguised as bandits, lying in wait for them.

634

DELETE 634 AND 635. DELETE ONLY DIALOGUE

635

CETHEGUS, watching the cavalcade:

CETHEGUS

(fervently)

Now!

636

THE AMBUSH: Cethegus' men storm down the slope.

637-
645

THE GOTHS are fighting with sword, lance and battleaxes.

THE 'BANDITS' use clubs as disguise weapons. They swarm around the five.

Hildebrand and his friends give a good account of themselves.

Especially Wichitis and Totila, who duel with outstanding courage.

Many 'bandits' wounded, fall around them.

AMALASWINTHA, on the hill observes the battle.

646

On the other side, Hildebrand and his friends have killed most of their attackers. Then turn their horses.

HILDEBRAND

To Ravenna!

And, like a storm, they ride away.

647

AMALASWINTHA ON THE HILL, cries in frustration:

AMALASWINTHA

They've got away.

648

CETHEGUS

Now you have only one place to go, Amalaswintha. The island of Bolsena

AMALASWINTHA

(as if stung)

To my sister!

CETHEGUS

Don't be ~~be~~ ~~not~~ afraid. It was the Queen she hated. Not her sister.

AMALASWINTHA

(aghast)

~~Amalaswintha~~ Throw myself on her mercy?

CETHEGUS

You have no ~~other~~ choice Syphax will escort you there.

AMALASWINTHA

Not you?

650

CETHEGUS

I will ride ahead. To prepare your sister for the meeting.

(urgently, as Amalaswintha is about to protest) ~~THAT~~

It is your life, ~~Amalaswintha~~ I am fighting for.

651

LONG VIEW OF THE ISLAND OF BOLSENA ; NIGHT

It reminds of the famous painting of Boecklin: "The Island of the Dead".

- 652 CLOSE VIEW OF BOLSENA CASTLE, a monastic building ex-
uding all the mystery of the Dark Ages.
- 653 LIVING QUARTERS OF MATASWINTHA : Comfortable but prison-
like.

Mataswintha, her face showing the strain of confinement, is
stunned as she faces Cethegus.

MATASWINTHA

Cethegus! Friend of the Queen!
~~What business have you here?~~ BRINGS YOU
HERE?

CETHEGUS

Your sister is no longer Queen. THE COUNCIL
HAS DECIDED YOU ARE THE RIGHTFUL HEIR.

MATASWINTHA

(a glint)
Then you are quick to change
sides, Cethegus.

654

I DO NOT CHANGE
SIDES. I AM A SERVANT
OF ROME. MY LOYALTY
IS TO THE QUEEN.

CETHEGUS

~~I have always been on your side.~~
(with warm reminiscence, he
continues)

I remember you as a little girl,
riding an African pony in the
park. And your father ~~looking~~ POINTED YOU
out ~~with~~ ^{TO} me, said: 'There is
Mataswintha, future Queen of
Goths. Protect her always, friend.' MY

MATASWINTHA

But he named my sister to succeed
him.

CETHEGUS

(a shrug)

~~Not named.~~ He signed a document.
~~And in his last years,~~ Theoderic WAS NEARLY
BLIND IN HIS LAST YEARS. had a cataract on his eye. How
could he see what they ~~gave~~ gave
him? HE WAS SIGNING

MATASWINTHA

(taking the bait)

A false document... bearing my
sister's name.

CETHEGUS

Now you shall be Queen. And I THE
am first to ~~assure~~ you of my
loyalty.

PLEDGE