

## Marika Lagercrantz

# The Dance Out of Klingsors Tower

*But all truth can be modified  
and violence and coercion  
give birth to the opposite  
of warmth and sensuality;  
coldness and hardness.*

I need a lot of stillness to keep the sensual in me alive, and a great deal of warmth. A girlfriend of mine, who lives on the Mediterranean coast, rings from Tel Aviv and says: "It's so sensuous in the heat and there are so many beautiful men". "Up here in the North - I sigh - we have all gone into hibernation ... but that has its good sides". At my place life slows down and sensuality gets a chance. Winter is a fantastic time seen from that point of view, and autumn even more so. The weather is awful, it is dark and raining. One might just as well stay at home. The quiet grows around me and I can feel my pulse beating ...

The other side of New Year is worse. The light returns slowly. If I have bad luck, the sun is shining and demands activity and it seems as if warmth is far, far away.

I suppose somewhere men knew this and in a desperate need for female warmth and sensuality locked women up by the stove at home. But all truth can be modified and violence and coercion give birth to the opposite of warmth and sensuality; coldness and hardness. For how long have we been crying for the warm mother, for the free sensuous woman?

*In the tower of Klingsors the women are imprisoned by a giant. Mothers and sisters are locked up there. Only the laughter of madness is heard over the countryside. In desperation the women tear at their clothes and hair. The children lie undernourished and unhappy in the women's arms. Everyone is diminished by the giant's strength. The earth is dry and barren.*

Two knights meet the giant, but no sword or muscle power can defeat him. Deep within the giant longs for his own defeat.

"What is woman's deepest wish? Find the answer to this riddle and the women will be freed and I will be defeated." So speaks the monster.

The two knights go out into the world seeking the answer. They are given different answers all the time: one

woman wants food, another a man and a third only to be left in peace. Their sisters' liberation seems very far away when one late afternoon they meet a terrible creature on the road, a real witch. She is really ugly, but there is no doubt, she is a woman. For some time they discuss whether they should even put the question to this female monster. "Well, bitch! Answer! What is a woman's deepest desire?"

"I know the answer", laughs the terrifying woman, "but if you want me to tell you", she points at the most beautiful knight, "you will have to marry me". Hearing such a shameful proposition, they lift their swords to kill her. "Spare me!" she cries. Her voice is disgusting. "I am the giant's sister and I am the only one who can give you the answer!"

They lower their swords. A knight is always a knight, and a knight must do all he can to save the women in the tower. "I will marry her", says the beautiful one and so it is decided.

One of King Arthur's shining knights is marrying! The message spreads all over the country. From everywhere knights and beautiful ladies assemble. The witch woman demands a great wedding and insists that all the people of importance should be there. Not only is she unbelievably ugly, she is also mean and demanding. She is an embarrassment to her future husband. At the wedding she eats too much, she uses foul language and farts. But the worst is still to come. He shivers when he is led into the wedding chamber. His friends laugh and say: "You have already fulfilled the wish of the witch. You don't have to go to her. She probably just wants your money."

But a knight is a knight, even for a witch. He lets his armour fall and he looks up towards the bed. There ... there lies ... a magically beautiful creature, in fact the most beautiful woman he has ever seen.

The witch is gone and in her place ...

"My spell is broken", says the beauty, "but not completely. I can be free and be my real self only half of the hours of a day. Do you want me to be like this during the night in your arms or during the day in front of your friends?"

Our beautiful knight is speechless. Slowly he understands what she has said. Slowly her sensuality pervades him.

Oh, to embrace her at night! But oh, how nice it would be to go without the scorn of his friends and the compassionate looks of the women.

She sees his suffering: "I am sorry to have to play the devil with you again", she says, "but I have no choice." He falls at her feet.

"My God, pardon me. I think only of my own situation. Of course, you have to decide when and how you want to live. I have seen the essence of your being within and I know that I love you."

In the same instant a great noise was heard throughout the whole region. The walls of Klingsors had fallen. The giant's curse was broken. The knight had solved the riddle! The deepest wish of a woman is to have sovereignty over her own life.

Now the women of the tower of Klingsors are freed and the spell is broken. Marriage is a possibility. The children are happier.

But as we know, it is difficult to find the joy of life and sensuality after years of submission. So the women's dance out of the tower of Klingsors occasionally tends to go to the other extreme. But the spell is broken!!!

Soon I am back on stage again with all the crowds of people.

In some rare happy moments, the stage and the rehearsal room allow our pulses to beat wildly and strongly. It is not common but I have experienced it both as an actress

and as a spectator and then we are all uplifted. It always demands a moment of stillness and quiet, a blessed moment of waiting before the final touch. And then ... Let the theatre walls fall and the drums be heard over the countryside, because the doors of Klingsors are open.

Silence recording!

Translated from Swedish by Petra Lindblom

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(Sweden) has worked in theatre since the age of six. She co-founded Teater Schahrazad in 1975 and between 1977-1986 she was co-artistic leader of the theatre group Jordcirkus, where she also directed performances. Since 1986 she has worked as a freelancer in theatre, film and television and is currently employed at Göteborg Municipal Theatre.