

Anecdotes of Destiny ; and, Ehrengard Study Guide

**Anecdotes of Destiny ; and, Ehrengard by Karen
Blixen**

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



Contents

Anecdotes of Destiny ; and, Ehrengard Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
The Diver, pp. 3-18.....	3
Babette's Feast- Part I, I- VII, pp. 21-41.....	5
Babette's Feast- Part II, VIII- XII, pp. 41-59.....	7
Tempests, I- VI, pp. 63-81.....	9
Tempests, VII- XI, pp. 81-103.....	11
Tempests, XII- XVII, pp. 103-132.....	13
The Immortal Story, I-V, pp. 135- 155.....	15
The Immortal Story, VI- XI, pp. 155-172.....	17
The Immortal Story, XII- XV, pp. 173-199.....	19
The Ring, pp. 203-211.....	21
Ehrengard, pp. 215- 230.....	22
Ehrengard, pp. 230- 257.....	24
Ehrengard, pp. 257- 277.....	26
Characters.....	28
Objects/Places.....	34
Themes.....	40
Style.....	42
Quotes.....	45
Topics for Discussion.....	47



The Diver, pp. 3-18

The Diver, pp. 3-18 Summary

Saufe (Softa) is a young student of the Koran in the town of Shiraz. Softa goes off into the wilderness and collects the feathers of eagles and other birds, and when he returns to Shiraz, he assembles wings with which to fly. The elders of the city become alarmed and decide to send a young woman to Softa in the disguise of an angel. The dancer Thusmu is sent to the young man in order to distract him from his work. Thusmu comes to Softa at night, and tells him that he does not need wings to fly like an angel. She sleeps with him and hides in his house during the day. Finally, Thusmu asks to see Softa's wings, but the wings have been neglected and destroyed by rats. Thusmu goes away sadly to collect her reward as the town's leading dancer. Softa soon disappears from Shiraz.

The teller of the above tale, Mira Jama travels to the seashore many years later. There is a certain mystery about the collecting of pearls from the ocean. Most of the divers barely make a living, but one of them, Elnazred, is very successful, perhaps with supernatural help. Mira Jama goes to Elnazred's small hut by the beach to find out his story.

Elnazred is friendly to Mira Jama and they are soon sitting by the seashore talking. Mira Jama tells the story of Softa, and then by a sign, Elnazred indicates that he is the man once called Softa. Elnazred then tells the story of how he has been so successful as a pearl diver. It is a tale with a happy ending. In his first diving to find pearls, Elnazred meets an old cowfish who talks to him and tells him where to find the finest pearls. The cowfish says that Man is tempted to challenge and defy God, but the fish are not and are the favorite of the Lord. The fish were happy when the great flood destroyed mankind and they had total rule over the earth. Still this old cowfish has some compassion on mankind. Fish are totally content, unlike man who is obsessed by time and space.

The Diver, pp. 3-18 Analysis

Saufe (Softa) thinks of getting closer to God by learning how to fly like the angels. Saufe spends a year in the wild studying birds. When he returns, he soon infuriates the elders of the town by trying to fly and imitate the angels. They show their anger by using his vulnerability to beautiful women in order to destroy his work. Softa represents the dreamer who has an idea, but is unable to defend that idea from attack. The established order is threatened and they do what they think is necessary to silence and stop him.

The story has the unified topic of a man Softa, later known as Elnazred, who is able to do magical things, though at first it is not known by the storyteller that they are the same person. After Mira Jama gets Elnazred to admit that he is the same person, both of the



men are moved, but Elnazred gets Mira Jama to finish telling his story. In a way, the story is one of humility. The cowfish is represented as having tremendous power, but little desire to use his powers. The cowfish tells of how happy the fish are. They can swim in three-dimensions, up and down, and are not tempted to build things like men are. Likewise, Elnazred has learned to be careful not to attract too much attention when using his powers to find the finest pearls with the help of the cowfish.



Babette's Feast- Part I, I- VII, pp. 21-41

Babette's Feast- Part I, I- VII, pp. 21-41 Summary

I. Martine and Phillipa are two sisters, both in their late 40s, who live in a coastal town on a fjord in Norway called Berlevaag. The sisters have a maid-in-waiting named Babette, who is a refugee from France. II. Martine's Lover - Martine, the oldest, first attracts an admirer at 18. The young officer Lorens Loewenhielm sees Martine in town and must see her again. Through his aunt, Lorens gets invited to the Dean's dinner table, but he has nothing to say to the lovely Martine. On the last day of his stay in Berlevaag, Lorens kisses Martine's hand and cries out in despair a farewell to her. The young officer forces himself to forget Martine, and soon marries a woman close to Queen Sophia.

III. Phillipa's Lover - A year later, the singer Achille Papin of Paris visits Norway to sing at the Opera, and he happens to hear Phillipa sing. He convinces the Dean to let him give Phillipa singing lessons. Achille tells Phillipa that she will be a great singer in Paris. He teaches her the part of Zerlina, and sings Don Giovanni, in Mozart's famous seduction scene. The duet is sublime, but then Achille dares to kiss Phillipa at the end. Phillipa has her father end the singing lessons, and Achille leaves town in sorrow.

IV. A Letter from Paris— Fifteen years later, in 1871, a woman comes to the home of Martine and Phillipa, and gives them a letter from France. The letter is by Achille Papin, and it tells of the woman Babette's suffering in the recent war and revolution in Paris, France. Babette becomes the family servant. V. Still Life— Babette adjusts to her new life as a servant to the sisters and the larger religious sect group. Soon she learns to prepare the simple fish and soup that Martine and Phillipa are used to. Babette's one connection to France is that she has a friend who renews her ticket every year in the lottery, in which the winner receives 10,000 francs.

VI. Babette's Good Luck— The sisters are nervous as the 100th birthday of their late father, the Dean, approaches on December 15th. It is still only summer, and Babette Hersant gets a notice that she has won the lottery. The sisters congratulate Babette, but they feel sad because they expect that Babette will now return to France. Many in the religious sect are also sad at the prospect of Babette leaving. Babette announces in September that she wants to prepare a real French dinner to celebrate the Dean's hundredth birthday. The sisters reluctantly agree. Even more reluctantly, they agree to allow Babette to pay for the dinner with her own money. Babette shows her happiness and desire to make the dinner, and is very satisfied to win this favor. The sisters are totally surprised because they had little intention of celebrating the Dean's birthday.

VII. The Turtle— Babette goes away and meets her nephew in the port of Christiana in order to arrange to get the supplies she needs for the dinner from France. The sisters are amazed at a tortoise and much wine arriving. A red-headed sailor boy helps Babette with the tortoise and her kitchen preparations. Martine is upset over the extravagant



ingredients, and goes to an elderly lady in her religious sect to ask advice. The religious sect members decide to avoid making any complaints or praise of the meal in honor of the Dean.

Babette's Feast- Part I, I- VII, pp. 21-41 Analysis

I. The two women's father, the Dean is the founder of a pious religious sect. Somehow the Dean marries and has two children, although it seems as if few of the other sect members have children, and that the sect is slowly dying out. II. When they are young, both girls are very pretty. Now, they radiate a simple purity, but their hair is turning gray. Martine rejects her fairly obvious suitor Lorens, who comes to her father's dinner table, without giving him a chance. III. Achille Papin visits the coastal town of Berlevaag, and at church hears the beautiful voice of Phillippa. Achille is a determined man of 40, and explains to the Dean, Phillipa's father, that he must give singing lessons to Phillippa. The Dean, though surprised and afraid of Catholics, has some affection for the French and agrees. In this case too, the man's love is useless. Phillippa refuses to see him again after he has kissed her. An ongoing theme of the story is the interacting of the pious Dean and his daughters, and the French Catholics who are known for their extravagant lifestyle.

IV. Babette is thought to be some sort of revolutionary, and yet there is a strong ambivalence about this. She quickly settles down into a positive role at the sisters' house. Later, it comes out that she had been a cook at a cafe that catered to the very wealthy. Babette brings a letter from Achille Papin that also refers to the world losing the operatic voice of Phillippa. Babette is smuggled by her nephew to Norway, and is told by Achille to come to the home of the two ladies. Babette becomes a servant in the ladies' house for the next 12 years. It may be thought that Babette would become resentful under this condition, but the opposite is the case. V. Free food is prepared for members of the sect, many of whom are likely in dire poverty because of their emphasis on piety. There is some tension because Babette is French Catholic, but the sisters try to show their Lutheran faith through their pious life, rather than forcing Babette to convert.

VI. The sect members are getting old and remember old fights and guilt over old crimes. Indeed, they are so overwhelmed by bitterness that only the outsider, Babette, can make a true celebration occur of the hundredth birthday of the Dean. VII. Babette simultaneously is the most ardent follower of the Dean and the bringer of the dreaded French luxury goods and decadence. The goods arrive and include a set of bottles of wine with fancy names and finally a large tortoise. Nevertheless, the sisters Martine and Phillippa do not want to cause a scene in their reaction to the strange coming banquet. In this restraint, they show the positive side of their religious faith.



Babette's Feast- Part II, VIII- XII, pp. 41-59

Babette's Feast- Part II, VIII- XII, pp. 41-59 Summary

VIII. The Hymn— It is a snowy morning in December and the sisters receive a note that old Mrs. Loewenhielm will attend the dinner along with her nephew the General. The sisters make sure the house smells nice. The day of the dinner, the old religious brethren arrive and sing hymns. Martine and Phillippa are reassured by the singing, including Phillippa's still fine voice. IX. General Loewenhielm— General Loewenhielm is returning to Berlevaag for the first time in 30 years. He wants to reassure himself that he made the right choice long ago in abandoning his desire to win Martine. He recalls when he decided to marry his wife one day in Paris at a fine restaurant.

X. Babette's Dinner— Grace is said by the oldest of the group. Then the General realizes that the first course is Blinis Demidoff, a rich course that he knows from Paris. A woman remembers a miracle when the ice froze overnight and let the Dean come to town to give a sermon for Christmas. Champagne is then served, with the General drinking his fill. The General is drunk on the expensive wine and decides to give a speech. XI. General Loewenhielm's Speech— The General makes a speech on the theme of the necessity of receiving grace from God. For the rest of the meal, the old sect members become friendly and forgive each other of their old grudges. The old pair of lovers has a long kiss in the corner, despite how life had made them bitter against each other. The congregation feels heavenly grace. When the General leaves Martine he assures her that he will think of her for the rest of his life. The snow stops in time for all to leave safely, but then an hour later it snows very heavily. XII. The Great Artist— After the dinner, Babette is exhausted. She had served the 12 people a dinner like that at the Café, which cost her 10,000 francs. The sisters are stunned. Martine thinks of a missionary to Africa who unbeknownst to him eats a cannibal feast. Phillippa, the singer, understands better when Babette proclaims that she is a true artist. Babette can never cook for the royal guests she once served at the Café Anglais. In Paris, Babette rebelled against the ruling class and was forced to flee. Phillippa hugs Babette and assures her that she also will be an artist in paradise.

Babette's Feast- Part II, VIII- XII, pp. 41-59 Analysis

VIII. Martine and Phillippa are happy that their old friend, now General Loewenhielm is coming over. Babette and her helper set the table with elegant tableware. It is a relief to the sisters that the day of the dinner has finally arrived, and they are willing to use their faith in order to bear whatever trials it may contain. IX. General Lowenhielm, the old admirer of Martine, has aged along with everyone else. Now he is a friend of the royal court and married to a fine woman. The General wonders if he has achieved the dreams



of his young adulthood. This is why the General is at the dinner with his old aunt. His thoughts of a Parisian restaurant are a strange foreshadowing of the coming event.

X. The General realizes that the wine poured is a very distinguished Amontillado, a type of sherry. People seem relaxed and there is chatting. The religious sect members eat the food without comment, while the General notes another spectacular dish that he remembers from Paris. Only the General is conscious of the magnificent expense involved in the dinner, with the sect members pretending that they are eating ordinary food. XI. The General gives a speech in which he lavishly praises the Dean, the founder of the religious sect. The speech is somewhat odd, in that it disagrees with the General's worldly point of view. He is enjoying the best of both worlds, the piety of the sect, and the remarkable food and wine of the evening. XII. The sisters assure Babette that she had prepared a nice dinner. Babette tells them that she once was the cook at the Café Anglais. Only when Babette tells them that the 10,000 francs was spent on the dinner, do they realize Babette's devotion to them.



Tempests, I- VI, pp. 63-81

Tempests, I- VI, pp. 63-81 Summary

I. The Vision of the Tempest— Herr Soerensen is a successful old actor and director, who runs a traveling theater troupe. He is particularly connected to Shakespeare's work, and decides to make a production of the play, *The Tempest*, and play the role of Prospero. II. A Part Assigned— Soerensen has much thought in who will play the part of the spirit Ariel. Suddenly, he decides to have a young woman play the part. She is in the theater troupe and is quite tall, but Soerensen decides that she will be perfect for the part.

III. The Child of Love— The girl's mother, Madam Ross, married the Captain who left a few months later, never to be seen again. Madam Ross did not know if the ship went down, or the Captain had abandoned her. The next spring she gives birth to Malli, her daughter. The mother and daughter stay happily together, while the mother runs her own shop. Malli has thoughts of her big and wild father, who might have even been a pirate. Madam Ross pays for Malli to have lessons in English, and Malli also learns some Shakespeare. IV. Madam Ross— Malli sees a performance by Herr Soerensen's theater troupe and she decides to become an actress, quickly auditioning and joining the group. Madam Ross is horrified and argues with Malli wildly, until Madam Ross again feels like she did years ago before her husband, and realizes that she cannot hold Malli back.

V. Master and Pupil- Herr Soerensen urges on Malli in her new part as Ariel. He is even somewhat violent with her, but the two have a close accord, somewhat like a father and daughter. Soerensen finds Malli to be talented and beautiful. VI. A Tempest- The theater troupe's ship is nearly destroyed in a storm. Twenty of the passengers flee in a lifeboat, but Malli stays in the ship and leads efforts to keep the ship afloat. The 19-year-old girl rallies the crew, and with the help of a crewman named Ferdinand, manages to keep the pumps going and save the crew. The boat runs aground on an island and Malli is proclaimed a heroine.

Tempests, I- VI, pp. 63-81 Analysis

I. As he grows old, Herr Soerensen decides to leave Copenhagen, and take a theater company to tour up and down the Norwegian coast. In a way, Soerensen is very careful to make his theater company a money-making venture, but he also has a strong connection to the art of the theater. Despite some caution, Soerensen is totally dedicated to the theater and to his poetic muse. II. He assures the girl, Malli that she will, in a metaphorical sense, fly as Ariel, which is actually a male part. It is a bit strange that Soerensen makes this choice. His choice has elements of suppressed sexuality, along with being inspired by a poetic vision. To Soerensen, his upcoming production of Shakespeare's play, *The Tempest*, is the culmination of his life's work.



III. The girl's mother meets and marries a Scottish sea captain when his boat comes to port during ship trouble. Malli's stormy character begins with her birth and the unexplained disappearance of her father. Malli grows tall and by age 17 becomes beautiful, but she is not willing to be seduced by the town's young men. Instead, she is seduced by the theatrical muse, and the theater in a sense becomes her lover. IV. The wild course of Malli reminds Madam Ross of her missing husband, and finally she blesses Malli's decision. Madam Ross realizes that she cannot restrain Malli.

V. , VI. Soerensen has a fatherly sort of strictness with Malli that he justifies with his high artistic standards. In early March, the theater troupe sails towards a town through a rough storm. It is major news in the town that the boat is in a storm and comes close to sinking. Malli stays behind on the sinking ship and rallies the crew to save the ship. Little do the crew know that she is actually enacting the first scene in Shakespeare's play, *The Tempest*. Malli's problems arise when she thinks that she is at liberty to take a man and reject her call to the theater.



Tempests, VII- XI, pp. 81-103

Tempests, VII- XI, pp. 81-103 Summary

VII. For Bravery— Jochum's son Arndt brings the news that the ship is saved by Mamzell (Malli) Ross's leadership. Malli comes off the boat dressed like a sailor, but soon is recognized. Arndt carries her from the shore and kisses her. The sailor Ferdinand also receives acclaim and is brought to his home. Meanwhile, Herr Soerensen, the leader of the theater company, has lost his wig and is a bit of a mess, but is glad that the townspeople have contributed to help him with his equipment losses through the shipwreck. Malli is amazed at being brought to the Hosewinckel house and seeing its fine chandeliers. She is shy, but comfortable with the old shipowner, who perhaps recalls to her the figure of her father.

VIII- The House on Market Square— The Hosewinckel's only son Arndt is in his late twenties, but has not yet married. Arndt is kind, competent and attractive. His problem is that he had an affair with the family-maid when he was 15. After a few weeks, the girl Guro suddenly runs away and commits suicide. Although, it is found later that she was pregnant by another man, Arndt feels guilt and so is somewhat distant with people, including women. IX. A Ball in Christianssand— Malli comes to the ball organized in her honor wearing a fine dress made for her on orders of Mrs. Hosewinckel. Malli does not know how to dance, but sings Ariel's song from the play, *The Tempest*. Malli looks at Arndt and sees his need for love, and also is attracted to him.

X. Exchange of Visits— Malli and Arndt visit Herr Soerensen, who is still sick since the shipwreck. Soerensen thinks of how good it is that Malli has found love just after learning the role of Ariel in *The Tempest*. He then thinks how his production will suffer if he loses such an accomplished actress. As Soerensen gets better, he visits Malli and the Hosewinckel house. Soerensen shows that he knows Malli's good fortune, saying a verse from the play. XI. The Story from the Engagement— Despite some doubts, even the other girls in town prefer Malli to become Arndt's wife, than for any other of their number to win him. Malli's missing father is not held against her, since it is imagined that Captain Ross went down with his ship. Arndt is drawn to Malli, and sees her as capable of making him forget his unfortunate love affair. The two become close, and finally Arndt proposes to Malli and she accepts. Their love has a funny feeling, as Malli realizes that she is bringing the young man out of his dark shadows and back into life. It is very hard for Malli when Arndt has to go away for a few days on business, and she fears that she will never see him again.

Tempests, VII- XI, pp. 81-103 Analysis

VII. The old shipowner, Jochum Hosewinckel is amazed that his ship, the *Sofie* Hosewinckel is saved from the storm. The ship is named after his sister who died. Indeed, the ship is a symbol of near death and also of rebirth. The question is whether



Malli will offer a sort of rebirth to Arndt, Jochum's son. Arndt's heart has been broken in an unhappy love affair, in which his girlfriend ends up committing suicide. VIII., IX. Jochum Hosewinckel and his wife wait many years until their son Arndt is born. Arndt grows up as a talented young man, but he seems to not be interested in women. Actually, he fears that somehow he will destroy the woman he loves, like the girl Guro, who committed suicide after their affair.

X. The rumor arises that Malli will stay with Arndt in town. There is some question on whether Malli is an adventuress, who somehow plotted to wed the richest young man in the town, but this is seen as impossible. Soerensen quickly sees what is going on. He is still quite ill, and not in control of the situation. He is willing to accept it, but is frustrated that the leading actress, who is to play Ariel, will now leave the theater troupe. XI. Soerensen thinks that the young pair looks good together, and imagines that Malli will stay with Arndt. Yet, there is a feeling of weakness in the love relationship between Arndt and Malli. Malli wants to help Arndt, but is still somewhat uncomfortable with this relationship. There is a foreshadowing that something will go wrong and break the spell of romance soon.



Tempests, XII- XVII, pp. 103-132

Tempests, XII- XVII, pp. 103-132 Summary

XII. Ferdinand- Malli thinks of visiting the sailor Ferdinand, but finds out that he has just died. He had been injured during the shipwreck, and finally dies of his wounds. Malli recalls her own childhood and her poverty as she views the dead body. Back at the Hosewinckel house, Mrs. Hosewinckel sees that Malli is upset, and stops all visits and celebrations involving Malli. XIII. The Altar Cloth— Malli appreciates Mrs. Hosewinckel's decision to shield her from public view. Frau Hosewinckel prays for divine intervention, since nothing about Ferdinand, or Malli's time in the theater troupe, reveals to Frau Hosewinckel what is wrong with the girl. The only thing that comforts Malli is to help Frau Hosewinckel sew an altar cloth.

XIV. Old Folk and Old Tales— Jochum Hosewinckel is growing old, and fears that his memory and grasp of day-to-day reality is weakening. Malli enjoys old Jochum's company and likes to hear his stories of the old days. Often the ladies sew in the evening, and Jochum joins them and tells stories. One of these stories goes back four generations to Jens Aabel. XV. Jen's Aabel's Story and his Good Advice— The story goes back to February 1717, when a great fire breaks out in Christianssand. Jen Aabel goes out in public with his scales and proclaims that if he has ever cheated in business, the fire should burn down his possessions, but if not it should stop. Soon after, the wind changes and other parts of town burn but Aabel's possessions are spared. Jochum tells of Jen Aabel's old Bible, and how one can open the book at random and through the biblical verse chosen, find divine inspiration to solve one's problem. Jochum tells how he feared going halves on buying a ship with his cousin Jonas. The Bible opened to a verse that advised Jochum to invest in the ship. The first trip was a resounding financial success, though on the second trip, the ship went under with Jonas. Later that evening, Malli goes back to consult in the Bible. The answer that the randomly chosen page gives Malli astounds her, and causes her to faint.

XVI. Pupil and Master— The next morning, Malli quietly goes to the hotel where Herr Soerensen is staying. After waiting for him to come out, she embraces him and weeps. Malli proclaims that Ferdinand is dead, and that Arndt Hosewinckel loves her. Malli quotes from the play, *The Tempest*, expressing that she loves Arndt, but now must run away. Soerensen tells Malli about how he left his wife, though she loved him. The pupil and master sit down, and Malli quietly caresses Soerensen's wig, silently expressing her devotion. Soerensen sees how sad Malli is, but quietly is happy because now Malli will continue to play Ariel in his production. Malli repeats assorted lines as Ariel, expressing her devotion to her master, Prospero in the play. Malli recites the lines about the sea change, rich and strange. She cannot abandon the theater for love of Arndt, as her father Captain Ross could not abandon the sea for a woman. Soerensen explains that there is no reward but loneliness in such devotion to the theater, but that is the way it is. The master and pupil plan to leave town by Wednesday.



XVII. The Last Letter— The next Friday, Arndt receives a letter of farewell from Malli. Malli reveals the biblical passage she turned to for advice in the old Bible. It says that Ariel will not satisfy, like a dream of food cannot satisfy someone who is starving. Malli realizes that she was able to help save the ship Sophie Hosewinckel because she imagined that she was the spirit Ariel ordering around Ferdinand and that she was immune from the danger of drowning. In a sense, Prospero or Herr Soerensen, is her master as the leader of the theater troupe. Malli wishes she could feel real fear in the case of a sinking boat, but as long as she imagines she is playing *The Tempest*, she does not. Therefore, she must leave Arndt, because acting the play means more to her than his love.

Tempests, XII- XVII, pp. 103-132 Analysis

XII. Malli is shocked into reality when she hears that Ferdinand is dead, and visits Ferdinand's mother house. Ferdinand is indeed dead, and the poor mother is suffering. Malli looks at the poor woman and recalls her own humble upbringing. There is a hint of the strong feelings that Malli had for Ferdinand, but their source is not clear yet. XIII. Mrs. Hosewinckel wonders what is disturbing Malli, and if Ferdinand had been a lover of Malli, or promised to him. She sees that Malli is not insane, but has no idea why Malli has changed so radically.

XIV. Jochum thinks more of old tales and the pleasures and issues of his youth. He enjoys telling tales to Malli, and she feels as if he is her own seafaring father. XV. Again, storm and disaster is the subject of the story. The tale is of the fire being blown forward by the wind, and nearing Jens Aabel's house and warehouses. It is stopped by Jens Aabel's plea to God, and Malli is very impressed by this. When Malli looks at a random biblical passage, she faints. This is the turning point in the story, where Malli slowly abandons her desire to marry Arndt. XVI. Malli feels that she will make Arndt and his family unhappy. She is totally devoted to the theater, and cannot give herself to Arndt. Only Soerensen can understand this, and he also gave up his wife for the theater. Malli proclaims that Soerensen is her master, in the same way that in the play *The Tempest*, Prospero is the master of the spirit Ariel. XVII. Malli cannot stand to tell Arndt of her decision in person, and decides to flee, leaving him a letter to read. Malli writes that she loves Arndt, but knows that she is unfaithful to him, because of her devotion to the theater. She first understood this after the death of Ferdinand, who to her represents the character Ferdinand in the play *The Tempest*. At the point of her heroic deed, Malli saves the sinking ship, but she is only playing her theatrical part of Ariel.



The Immortal Story, I-V, pp. 135- 155

The Immortal Story, I-V, pp. 135- 155 Summary

I. Mr. Clay— Mr. Clay is a very rich tea trader in the semi-colonial city of Canton in China. He is known for destroying his former partner, a French merchant. Now Mr. Clay is friendless, suffering gout and has difficulty sleeping. By accident, Mr. Clay finds out that having a young clerk read account books to him calms him down and helps the night pass better. The clerk reads account books going back 15 years repeatedly, until Mr. Clay asks the clerk to find him something new to read.

II. Elishama— The clerk is known as Ellis, but he is really a Jew from Poland named Elishama. Elishama flees the pogroms in Poland as a child and somehow ends up in Canton. In London, Elishama learns to do double-entry bookkeeping, and ends up working in Mr. Clay's office. Elishama gains Mr. Clay's attention by stopping someone else from cheating Mr. Clay on horse trades, since somehow Elishama knows what a good horse is. The two develop a close relationship, without realizing it. When Elishama goes home from the restless Mr. Clay, he thinks about what other things he can read to him.

III. The Prophecy of Isaiah— Elishama acquires a manuscript as a child from an old Jew. Later he finds out that it is the prophecy of Isaiah in Hebrew, and has it translated into English. It tells of the dry streams becoming full of water and plants coming back to life, and talks of the sick becoming healthy again. Mr. Clay is intrigued, because he would like to become well again, but then he objects that these things never happened. Elishama admits that the prophecy is from about one thousand years ago. Instead, Mr. Clay wants a story about things that have actually happened, and tells a story that he heard from sailors when he was young and on a ship .

IV. The Story— In the story, a rich old man offers the sailor a chance to make some money. The sailor goes home to the rich man's mansion and eats a fine supper. Then Elishama, who knows the story, picks it up. He says that the sailor is led into a well-furnished bedroom, where a beautiful lady lies, and is told to spend the night with her, after being given 5 guineas. In the morning, the sailor leaves and goes back to his ship. Then Elishama tells Mr. Clay that all sailors tell this story, and that it never happened to anyone. Elishama explains that the sailors are poor men who are lonely and wish that they could get a beautiful lady to enjoy. Instead, they go to a house of prostitution. It is like the story of Isaiah, which comes from a country where it does not rain enough. In his sea voyages, Elishama has heard the story many times. Mr. Clay is upset because Elishama insists that the story could never happen. He also thinks of the dire prophecy of disaster and redemption of Isaiah. So, he decides to order Elishama to make the sailor's story happen.

V. The Mission of Elishama— Mr. Clay is ready to spend large sums of money to make the story happen. Elishama points out that the lady in the story must not be an ordinary



prostitute, and so she will cost much money. Elishama is comfortable in helping Mr. Clay, though he knows that the undertaking is quite mad. Elishama thinks about his friend Charley Simpson, and Charley's mistress. Recently, Elishama has visited the lovers and given the lady a bunch of shawls on behalf of Charley. Elishama has a lot of sympathy for the lady, who is tall, and birdlike to him.

The Immortal Story, I-V, pp. 135- 155 Analysis

I. Mr. Clay takes over his partner, the French merchant's house, after the merchant has destroyed all art objects there. All Mr. Clay cares about is money and power, and he seems to have no wife or family. His cruelty is legendary, but now he is old and cannot sleep. Like many rich people, Mr. Clay did not prepare to grow old and die. II. Elishama is very sharp but has no ambitions. He only desires to be safe and left alone. The suffering that the wandering Jew Elishama has been through has taken away from him the normal desires of a young man. Now, his only desire is to satisfy Mr. Clay's desire to pass through the night. III. Elishama reads to Mr. Clay the only work of literature he has. It is the prophecy of Isaiah from the Bible and he reads the prophecy to Mr. Clay. Mr. Clay is interested in this prophecy, but then sees that he will never get well like the prophecy says. IV. Instead Mr. Clay wants a story from what he thinks is real life. Mr. Clay starts the story of a sailor that goes to a port town and is stopped by a rich old man in a carriage. Elishama interrupts and Mr. Clay feels that he is being made fun of for believing the story. V. The next evening Elishama agrees to do Mr. Clay's bidding in making the sailor's story happen. Elishama knows that this undertaking is absurd, and feels that Mr. Clay will soon die because he is pursuing such wild fantasies.



The Immortal Story, VI- XI, pp. 155-172

The Immortal Story, VI- XI, pp. 155-172 Summary

VI. The Heroine of the Story— Elishama comes by Virginie's house and quickly learns of Virginie's hostility to Mr. Clay. Elishama tells Virginie the story that Mr. Clay wants to enact, and she also has heard the sailor's story. Virginie sees that Mr. Clay is old and insane to try to make this story happen. Virginie is near suicidal in her feelings about her present life, and soon becomes interested in Elishama's project. She alleges that Elishama will receive 30 pieces of silver, a Judas-traitor price.

VII. Virginie— Virginie's father had interested her in the royal court of Napoleon III and in comedy and drama. After the father dies, Virginie is left to grow up in poverty but still with dreams of riches and royalty. Her first lover is a sea captain who takes her to Japan. There an earthquake occurs just as Virginie is giving up her virginity, something that Virginie thinks of as being a message from God. Virginie is unhappy with her pretentious and ambitious lover, Charley Simpson and all his vain games. Virginie is captivated by Elishama's project, but then slaps him in rage, when he proposes that she accept 100 guineas to lie in Mr. Clay's bed and satisfy the sailor.

VIII. Virginie and Elishama— Virginie is horrified, because she grew up in Mr. Clay's house and now it represents her downfall. Virginie thinks on how she once copied royalty and sought their approval. Elishama explains that the rich, like Mr. Clay, make people like her obey them and there is nothing she can do. Virginie is surprised that Elishama senses the line of drama and ambition in her family. Virginie is intrigued about trying to follow her dreams, and agrees to play the part for a sum of 300 guineas, evidently a large amount of money. Elishama confides in Virginie that he thinks that this comedy or farce will be the end of Mr. Clay's life. Suddenly, Virginie senses that Elishama grew up without a family, and realizes that he is the epitome of the wandering Jew.

IX. The Hero of the Story— Mr. Clay and Elishama come across a sailor, the carriage stops and Elishama goes out to talk to the sailor. The sailor is surprised and then frightened, and he runs away. A second sailor is stopped by Elishama and offered the 5 guineas, and goes into the carriage. This sailor is excited by the silk of the carriage, but then runs away at the first opportunity. Finally, a tall young sailor is stopped by Mr. Clay himself, and agrees to come to the house, running alongside the carriage. X. The Supper- Mr. Clay explains that he is fabulously rich, and that he is not pleased with the people who will get his wealth after his death. Therefore, Mr. Clay has decided to give the sailor some things. At this point, Mr. Clay gives the sailor a five-guinea gold coin. At a certain point in this speech, the sailor realizes that Mr. Clay is conforming to the well known sailor's story. The sailor brags that he is strong and just the right sailor for the job. Then, the sailor tells how he just was rescued from an island after being isolated there for about a year.



XI. The Boat- On the island he dreams of acquiring a boat to make trade around Denmark, the home of the sailor. Mr. Clay mentions women, and the sailor immediately realizes that a beautiful lady is about to be offered to him. Suddenly, the sailor feels embarrassed and is about to go back to his ship. The sailor tries to give back the gold, and leave, warning that he will fight. Mr. Clay reminds the sailor of the boat that he wishes to get, and the sailor decides to keep the gold coin and stay.

The Immortal Story, VI- XI, pp. 155-172 Analysis

VI. It is a comedy and a tragedy, and this is partly why Elishama sees Virginie as perfect for the story. She is a woman who has lost her morals, but is not an outright prostitute, and she has a sense of the theatrical. She shows this to Elishama when she models the shawls and speaks of her dreams of being a theater actress in France. VII. Virginie's father had been a merchant and, in fact, her father is the former partner of Mr. Clay, who is ruined and then commits suicide. There is a sense that Virginie would rather somehow arrange the murder of Mr. Clay rather than serve him in this absurd story. The reader is on edge, suspecting that Virginie will commit some sort of violence against Mr. Clay. VIII. Elishama convinces her that to play this part in that house is her chance to again rise up in life. This is probably a vain hope, but it appeals to the drama and fantasies of Virginie. Though Virginie threatens to burn Mr. Clay's house down, Elishama is confident that she will perform the part expected of her.

IX. Not too long after, one night Mr. Clay and Elishama go down to the harbor streets in a carriage. Mr. Clay is convinced that it will be easy to get a sailor to come home with him, but that is not the case. The sailor thinks that being propositioned by a man to come to a woman is strange and unnatural. Perhaps they fear that somehow they will be unmanned or harmed. They are used to the opposite, to pay money to go to a woman. Finally, a sailor who is dirty and downtrodden, though young and big, consents to go to Mr. Clay's house. X. They arrive at the house, and the young sailor is coaxed to sit down at the dining room table and eat with Mr. Clay. The sailor drinks some wine and then Mr. Clay makes a speech. It is obviously quite creepy for the sailor to hear this speech, as he tries to adjust to the strange plans of Mr. Clay.

XI. The sailor tells his tale of having suffered a shipwreck and spending a year alone on an island. He manages to catch bird's eggs and survives until he is rescued. Perhaps because he has been alone for so long, the young sailor consents to come with Mr. Clay. Like the other sailors, he is frightened by this strange twist of fate, and tries to leave. Only his dream of buying a boat gets him to stay and keep the five guineas of gold.



The Immortal Story, XII- XV, pp. 173-199

The Immortal Story, XII- XV, pp. 173-199 Summary

XII. The Speech of the Old Gentleman— Virginia has spent a good deal of money in adorning herself and making her fit for the part in the sailor's story. Despite her hate for Mr. Clay, Virginia honestly prepares for the part that she has been paid to do. Late in the evening, Mr. Clay and the sailor arrive at the bedroom. Mr. Clay is excited that he is bringing the sailor's story to life, as he admires Virginia lying in bed. XIII. The Meeting— Virginia is frightened as the young sailor nears the bed. The sailor is tall and his hair is too long, so he looks a bit like an animal. The sailor calls Virginia beautiful, and thinks that they are both aged 17. He lies down, and admits that he is a virgin. He tells of dreaming of a girl while isolated on an island. Then, he gets under the covers and becomes sexually excited.

XIV. The Parting— The sailor falls asleep with Virginia in his arms. Later, the sailor wakes up and again they have sex. They also talk, and the sailor tells Virginia some of his songs. His name is Paul, and he tells Virginia about his dreams to have a boat in his native Denmark. Paul tells of thinking of death by shipwreck. Soon, it is dawn, and Virginia gets up and also wakes up Paul. The sailor expresses his desire to have her come with him and hide in his ship. Then, he could take her back to Denmark and sleep with her every night. She reminds Paul that he took money from Mr. Clay and agreed to return to his ship. Paul pledges to name the boat after Virginia and himself, and to remember Virginia for the rest of his life. Virginia is touched by Paul's love and then weeps, as he goes.

XV. The Shell— At dawn, Elishama returns to Mr. Clay's house. He finds that Mr. Clay has fallen asleep in the dining room chair. Mr. Clay is silent. Elishama thinks of the prophecy of Isaiah and reflects on how the story has at least given Mr. Clay rest. Elishama now goes to the sailor who just left Virginia. In the sailor Paul's mind, his story is totally different than the old story, because he found love. Paul takes out a bag of sea shells and gives Elishama the most special shell, to give to Virginia. The seashell makes the noise of a seashore when one puts it to one's ear. The sailor shakes hands with Elishama and leaves.

The Immortal Story, XII- XV, pp. 173-199 Analysis

XII. Virginia prepares herself in the bedroom at Mr. Clay's house. She thinks of her dead parents and the crimes that Mr. Clay committed against them. Still, the coming drama has captivated Virginia much more than past crimes. Mr. Clay makes a speech about his control of the actions of the sailor and the lady, though they are young and strong, and he is old and decrepit. Finally, Mr. Clay leaves. When Virginia sees how young and inexperienced the sailor is, she has pity on him. The boy is at first hesitant and takes a while to relax and come to Virginia in bed.



XIV. Virginie is touched by the dreams of the sailor, named Paul for a boat, and the tough circumstances of his life. In their sexual encounter, the sailor becomes the aggressor and the dominant party again, despite being paid by Mr. Clay. In the morning, Virginie mainly fears that Paul will realize that she is older than him and experienced. Paul tries to carry Virginie off to his ship and make her his woman, but Virginie gets him to realize that he has already been paid to lie with her and then leave. Paul sighs, and to console him, Virginie reminds him about his desire to have a boat. XV. Elishama tells the sailor that now he can say that the old story has happened to him. At first, the sailor becomes angry, but quickly calms down and claims that this story never happened to him. For Paul, he found someone to not only give him sex, but also to give him love and beauty. He would never brag to other sailors about what happened to him. In his own mind, this is a beautiful event, not something to brag about and boast of his prowess and luck. In this respect, Mr. Clay's scheme is defeated, for the result is different than Mr. Clay had intended.



The Ring, pp. 203-211

The Ring, pp. 203-211 Summary

Many years in the past, the newly married couple, Sigismund and his wife Lise are out on a walk. Sigismund has studied sheep raising and they are going to meet Mathias, the master of the sheep farm. Mathias tells Sigismund about two sick lambs, and then about a thief who is at large and who has killed a man. The man is said to have broken his arm while fighting off pursuers. Lise becomes bored and her husband lets her walk slowly home, saying he will meet her later.

Lise enjoys being alone and thinks of a secret grove that she had found a few days before in the woods along the way home. She slips into the grove to hide from her husband, and is suddenly face to face with a man. The man is dirty and has a knife, and it is clear that he is the thief who is at large in the area. The thief points the knife at Lise's throat, but then puts it away again. Lise takes off her wedding ring and wraps it in a handkerchief, throwing it on the ground. The man kicks the ring and grabs the handkerchief, and uses it to wrap his knife in its sheath. The man then closes his eyes. Lise takes this as a signal to go, and leaves the same way she came. Soon she sees her husband, and says that she has lost her wedding ring. She claims not to know where she has lost it.

The Ring, pp. 203-211 Analysis

Lise's family is of a higher rank than Sigismund's, but she still enjoys walking with her husband over his land. She loves her husband, but in some ways resents his preoccupation with sheep farming, and thinks him to be ridiculous. Still she goes with him to the sheepfold where she is intrigued by the story of the thief who killed a man recently. When Lise goes back alone and to the secret grove, her life is suddenly put in danger. The thief could easily have killed her, but is somewhat calmed by her silence. They come to a nonverbal understanding that Lise should give the thief something.

She gives him her ring wrapped in the handkerchief, but somehow the scented handkerchief is more valuable to the thief than the golden ring. The thief is somehow impressed by this, since the thief allows her to go. In a way, she is touched by this silent compliment by the thief, and does not tell her husband what really happened. She tells him that the ring is missing, but the ring does not symbolize anything by itself and is readily replaceable. Only Lise is valuable to her husband Sigismund, and paradoxically, only the woman's handkerchief and her gesture is valuable to the thief. The ring is only an object.



Ehrengard, pp. 215- 230

Ehrengard, pp. 215- 230 Summary

This is a story from a little German Dukedom before the German Empire was founded. The author calls the city involved Babenhausen, ruled by the house of Fugger-Babenhausen. The Duke and Duchess have a son after many years of childlessness, named Prince Lothar. Prince Lothar is intelligent and accomplished, but seems to have little interest in women. The Duchess discusses the problem with Herr Cazotte. Herr Cazotte writes a letter to the author's great-grandmother, who is his confidant. At first the Duchess resents Herr Cazotte's tendency to seduce women, but then she thinks this could be useful in encouraging Prince Lothar to choose a wife. Though Herr Cazotte is about 45, he is a close friend of the Prince.

The Duchess expresses her desire that Prince Lothar pick a wife to Herr Cazotte and a plan is made. First, Herr Cazotte assures the Duchess that there is nothing wrong with her son, and that the young man is waiting for the right woman to marry. Herr Cazotte will take the Prince on a tour of the capitals of Europe, both to look at great artwork, and to meet eligible royal women for the Prince. Herr Cazotte uses his knowledge of royal courts to pick the principality of Leuchtenstein, and a princess there named Ludmilla, who is aged 17. The Prince comes home with a firm decision to marry Princess Ludmilla. A wedding takes place in October and there is much celebration in Babenhausen. Before Christmas, the Duchess finds out that the princess is pregnant and there will be an heir to the throne. The problem is that the princess had been impregnated two months before her marriage. The Duchess forgives Prince Lothar and decides to hide Ludmilla's pregnancy and pretend that she gives birth in July, two months after her actual due date.

Herr Cazotte soon returns and explains to the Duchess that a lover like her son is not the problem, and he and the Duchess make a plan. After a minor accident, Ludmilla is put to bed. The plan is to seclude Ludmilla with a small court, in a country estate called Rosenbad. The people in the small court include a maid-of-honor to the Princess Ludmilla. This woman has to be very sweet and noble, and Herr Cazotte suggests a young woman named Ehrengard von Schreckenstein, the daughter of General von Schreckenstein. This young woman has no sisters, only brothers and comes from a stern Lutheran military tradition, and the family is totally loyal to the royal family. Herr Cazotte recommends Ehrengard as a female military guardian for the pregnant princess. The Duchess agrees, and decides that Herr Cazotte will be the liaison officer from Rosenbad to the outside world.

Ehrengard, pp. 215- 230 Analysis

The Grand Duchess becomes upset because she must get Prince Lothar to marry and produce an heir, and Prince Lothar appears not to want to do it. She wonders if Prince



Lothar is attracted to women, or is just too shy to approach them. Putting pretty women around the royal court does not solve the problem. The Grand Duchess has her picture painted by Herr Cazotte, and she becomes friends with Herr Cazotte. Cazotte is known as a seducer of women, and writes a letter to his confidant, an old woman. The device of these letters are used to show the inner thinking of Cazotte. In the letters, he brags about seducing women, though in some cases that can mean getting a smile from the woman, not sex. The Duchess is afraid about a scandal that will draw out the lesser related line of the royal family who resent the ruling family. This creates a situation of tension, where the reader sees that something is likely to happen to try to thwart the plan of the Duchess. Without the birth of the new infant prince, the other line of the family would place Duke Marbod on the throne.

Herr Cazotte controls the implementation of the plan to hide the birth of the crown prince for two months. Thus he is not surprised that he is put in command of the little operation as the liaison officer. He may have had designs on Ehrengard for a long time, and been waiting for a chance to get close to her. The interesting variant in this story about a time when a woman risked severe consequences for losing her virginity out of marriage, is that the seduction of Ehrengard is psychological. Cazotte could seduce her in the orthodox fashion, but decides that in this case this would violate both social convention and art. Plus, he could be killed for such a transgression, possibly by Ehrengard's fiance, the military man Kurt.



Ehrengard, pp. 230- 257

Ehrengard, pp. 230- 257 Summary

In a letter, Herr Cazotte describes Rosenbad as an estate out of a Claude Lorraine painting. The place has been upgraded and repaired and is called a regular Venusberg, or residence of the goddess of love, Venus. Cazotte jokes in the letter that, if Rosenbad is a new paradise, then he is the serpent. In another letter, Cazotte writes about Ehrengard. He describes her beauty and plans his artistic seduction of her, though he clearly intends this to be a metaphorical seduction. Princess Ludmilla is calm and relaxed at Rosenbad, and with her husband Prince Lothar. Ludmilla is very close to Ehrengard, her maid-of-honor. The two young women talk of Ehrengard's fiancé, her cousin Kurt. Kurt is a good fencer and has been in several duels, and has even taught Ehrengard to fence.

Herr Cazotte comments in a letter that Ehrengard has moral precepts of which she is not even conscious, because she knows to always do her duty. Cazotte continues to foreshadow his upcoming victory over Ehrengard, and is confident. Ehrengard has her fiery horse brought from her home stables, for a more exciting ride than before available at Rosenbad. Finally, on May 8th, the new prince is born. A woman from the province by Rosenbad named Lispeth is brought in to nurse the infant. Lispeth helps make various superstitious regulations to protect the infant during his two months of seclusion, before being officially announced. Herr Cazotte writes that Ehrengard has fallen in love, presumably with the new infant prince.

Now, Ehrengard has more free time, and spends much of it with Herr Cazotte. He tells her stories of his rise from poverty to being an artist sponsored by royal courts. Cazotte writes to his benefactress, and asks her why he should not plan to sexually seduce Ehrengard, his current obsession. He replies that such a seduction could ruin both Ehrengard and even lead to his death in revenge. On the first night of July, as a sort of ritual, Herr Cazotte spends the night outside in the woods. He sleeps little, instead enjoying the stars, and the sweet smelling surroundings. The summer flowers are beautiful in the starlight. In the morning by the lake he hears women's voices. It is Ehrengard and her maid by the lake, with Ehrengard getting naked for a brief bath in the lake. Cazotte spends about a quarter-of-an-hour looking at Ehrengard, and immediately has a theme for a new picture to paint. Later with the Prince and Princess, Cazotte is distant, because he is thinking of his new picture. For a week, Cazotte gets up about dawn to see Ehrengard bathing next to her maid, and even brings his easel and paints. Then after a week, it seems that the maid has seen him and the ladies flee. Cazotte wonders if Ehrengard will continue to bathe each morning. Cazotte is also making many small sketches and paintings of the infant. The infant is posed in a basket of flowers by his mother. Meanwhile, Lispeth the nursemaid wants the infant back. Later in the day, when Cazotte walks with Ehrengard by the Leda swan statue, he is pleasantly surprised that Ehrengard says she will continue to bathe in the lake by her maid each morning.



Ehregard, pp. 230- 257 Analysis

The small group of court and servants at Rosenbad are all loyal to the royal family, and Herr Cazotte even gets to cook on occasion. Cazotte seeks a certain glow from Ehregard, like the last light on the peaks of the Alps at twilight. The story is somewhat strange to a modern reader, though Cazotte makes clear that he has experienced plenty of conventional seductions of women. Cazotte compares Ehregard in a letter to Prince Lothar. They both like to play chess, and ride horses, and both are trying very hard to carry out their duties in life.

Herr Cazotte plans the psychological seduction of Ehregard, which will be fun and very artistic, yet safe in the real world. He contemplates what effect this will have on Ehregard's fiancé Kurt. Cazotte imagines that he is making Kurt a spiritual cuckold. For the stern military Kurt and his fiance Ehregard, Cazotte is playing a game in an area with which they are not familiar. Cazotte is subverting Ehregard, and cheating against Kurt, in a way that they have no defenses to stop. Cazotte's first triumph is to see Ehregard bathing naked, and to be able to draw her picture, though facing away from the viewer. This picture can be of a nymph or the goddess Diana bathing. Cazotte is inspired by the idea of displaying the picture with the face turned away. Everyone can admire the picture, but only Ehregard will know that she is the subject of the picture. The infant prince has already been born, and the farce or comedy is rapidly drawing to a close. When Ehregard agrees to have Cazotte continue to paint her in the nude, Cazotte knows that he will get the victory that he wants.



Ehrengard, pp. 257- 277

Ehrengard, pp. 257- 277 Summary

Duke Marbod, the leader of the discontented branch of the royals, suspects that the infant prince is really not Prince Lothar's son and there is some sort of secret at Rosenbad. Two of Marbod's partisans are hanging around near Rosenbad in a tavern, the Blue Boar. They find a vulnerable target in Mathias, who is the husband of the nursemaid Lispeth. Mathias is angry that his wife is not living with him, and is nasty in his few short visits to her. Mathias asks to see the infant who Lispeth is nursing, to prove that she is not actually in an affair with another man. He goes back to the Blue Boar to complain to anyone there and is overheard by the two gentlemen of the Marbod faction. They prevail on him to bring his wife Lispeth and the infant to them, ready to bribe him, and claim that he is helping the state. On the afternoon of July 14th, Mathias goes back to see his wife with the infant, and tricking his wife, snatches both of them off in a horse-drawn carriage. This carriage brings Mathias, Lispeth, and the infant Prince back to the Blue Boar tavern. The three get a room in the crowded tavern, which is full of military men in the area.

Meanwhile back at Rosenbad, it is noted that Lispeth and the infant are missing. It is discovered that they were kidnapped by a man, and without telling the royal couple, Cazotte sets out to find Lispeth and the infant. Despite the danger, Cazotte is excited by the fresh situation and fantasizes that somehow the infant is his and Ehrengard's. Ehrengard goes off in pursuit of the missing group on her own fast horse. Soon, Ehrengard finds the horse-drawn cart outside the Blue Boar tavern, and hears that a man, woman and baby are inside. Downstairs, the military men are eating, talking about stories of cheating lovers caught and punished. The men include Ehrengard's fiancé, Kurt. Upstairs, Ehrengard finds Mathias, with Lispeth and the infant. She bangs Mathias' head against the wall in rage, causing Mathias to scream. Kurt goes upstairs to investigate, and is shocked to see his fiancé Ehrengard there. Mathias, to protect himself, brings up the issue of whose infant is present with Lispeth. At this point Herr Cazotte arrives and comes into the room, first as an onlooker. The next question that comes up is, who is the father of the child? Ehrengard insists that Cazotte is the father. The Prince and Princess make sure that tempers are cooled, and Cazotte escapes harm and goes off to Italy to paint the Pope, and chase women.

Ehrengard, pp. 257- 277 Analysis

The set up of the story is the first act, and the pastorage at Rosenbad is the second act of the story. The third act of the story concerns the lateral branch of the dynasty and their plots. Their attack on the royal family is done carefully, and is nearly totally unsuccessful until the two conspirators are in luck and meet Mathias at the tavern. This adds real excitement to the story, because the reader fears that the conspirators have sufficient forces to abduct the infant and then hide the infant or even kill him. However,



in fact, the area of the tavern is swarming with the Duke's military forces including Kurt, Ehrengard's fiancé. The conspirators do not have sufficient forces or a plan to capitalize on the successful seizing of Lispeth and the child by Mathias.

Instead, the tension focuses on whether Cazotte will get his full desire of psychological seduction of Ehrengard. He gets this when he arrives in the little room, and the question comes from Mathias of whose child is present. This creates unbelievable tenseness and silence, until Ehrengard insists that it is her child. In this way, it is possible for Kurt to have Ehrengard and the child brought back to Rosenbad, without revealing that it is the infant Prince, who is not scheduled to be officially born and baptized until a few days later. This shocking scene could be quite dangerous for Cazotte. Instead, all turns out well. A week later, through mediation of the Prince Lothar and his Princess, the engaged couple Kurt and Ehrengard is reconciled, and views the baptism of the royal infant. Cazotte is off to make more money painting, and presumably make a more fleshy seduction of a woman. One little turn in the story, is that when Ehrengard insists that the infant is hers and the father is Herr Cazotte, it is Herr Cazotte who blushes deep red, not Ehrengard. So, the reader may ask, did Ehrengard get a little triumph over Herr Cazotte as well? It is an interesting twist, at the least.



Characters

Herr Soerensen appears in *Tempests*

Herr Soerensen is the proprietor of a traveling theater troupe that sails up and down the coast of Norway to perform in various towns. He is fairly old, having decided to do this after many years of success in the theater business in Copenhagen, Denmark. Soerensen feels strongly that Malli can be a successful actress, and picks her to star as Ariel in an upcoming performance of *The Tempest*, by Shakespeare. Despite Soerensen's strong commercial instincts, he is totally dedicated to the art of the plays of Shakespeare. He views the upcoming production of *The Tempest* as the culmination of his long life's work. When Malli comes to Soerensen, and complains that she cannot marry Arndt because her first commitment is to the theater, he immediately sympathizes with her. Soerensen had been married and had abandoned his wife to continue his traveling theater company, and abandon all other commitments.

Babette appears in *Babette's Feast*

Babette is a dominating character in the story with her name, but not a highly verbal character. There is much more description by Babette than dialogue from her. Babette was once an accomplished cook in the expensive restaurant called *Cafe Anglais* in Paris, France. During the revolutionary disturbances of 1871, Babette joined the Communards and helped men to fight in the streets of Paris. After the Communards were defeated, her husband was killed and Babette was forced to leave France. Babette flees to the Norway house of the daughters of the Dean. At first it is not clear if she is happy with her fate there, though it is said that she improves the food and adds a certain spiritual resonance to the people for whom she cares. Only when Babette produces the 10,000 franc dinner for 12 guests is it clear that she has gratitude for her hosts and is satisfied with her lot in life. She is indeed an artist, not only in producing the dinner, but also in her attitude towards life.

Elishama appears in *The Immortal Story*

Elishama lives in the semi-colonial city of Canton in China, dominated by British and French merchants. Elishama calls himself Ellis in Canton, but is actually a young Polish Jew who is alone and who has fled persecution. He is very intelligent, but lacks any ambition in the real world. This leads him to only seek security by being useful to Mr. Clay. This leads Elishama to have a very close relationship with Mr. Clay, almost like a son to a father. As a result, Elishama carries out Mr. Clay's outrageous demands to make the sailor's story occur in real life.



Mr. Clay appears in The Immortal Story

Mr. Clay is a successful merchant in the city of Canton, China, possibly the richest merchant there. Like Elishama, he is also alone, but this is due to his rejection of his fellow human beings. He has no wife or family, and he has destroyed his partner, a French merchant named Mr. Dupont, and taken over this man's house. Now, Mr. Clay is old and sick and cannot sleep. He tires of hearing Elishama read his past financial accounts and of old business deals. First, he has Elishama read the prophecy of Isaiah, and then Mr. Clay brings up the old sailor's story. Next, Mr. Clay wants to show his power again by putting the sailor's story into effect, and having it happen to a real sailor.

Herr Cazotte appears in Ehrengard

Herr Cazotte is an artist at the court of the Duchess of Babenhausen. He is known for his artistic accomplishment and his ability to seduce women. Herr Cazotte has an old friend, his benefactress, to whom he writes long letters that disclose his intention to seduce Ehrengard. However, this seduction is primarily psychological. Only as the story is told, is it clear what events will confirm this seduction by Herr Cazotte.

Ehrengard appears in Ehrengard

Ehrengard is appointed the maid-of-honor to the Princess Ludmilla, at the hideaway at Rosenbad. She is the daughter of a military man, and her brothers are all in the military. Her fiance Kurt is also in the military. Thus, she is unprepared when confronted with the subtle wiles of the artist Herr Cazotte.

Martine appears in Babette's Feast

Martine is the older daughter of the Dean. She, like her sister Phillippa, does not marry. At the beginning of the story, Martine is a beautiful young woman who attracts the attentions of the young officer Lorens Loewenhielm. Later, like her sister, she ages, but only changes when confronted by the gratitude of the French refugee Babette.

Phillippa appears in Babette's Feast

Phillippa is the younger daughter of the Dean, who also never marries. She attracts the attention of the 40-year-old opera singer, Achille Papin, through her beautiful singing at church. She ends the singing lesson that Achille gives her after he kisses her at the end of an opera scene. Phillippa tends to follow the lead in decisions of her older sister Martine.



Saufe, Softa, later El Nazred, the Diver appears in The Diver

Saufe, also known as Softa, is the young man who wishes to fly like the angels. The elders of the city conspire against him by subverting him with the dancer Thusmu. He ends up leaving the city. Later, he returns to the story as a diver. In both cases, Saufe or the Diver (El Nazred) have a magical ability to solve problems.

Lise appears in The Ring

Lise is the young wife of Sigismund who is out walking to the sheepfolds with her new husband. She is of higher-class birth than her husband, and often makes fun of him though she loves him.

Malli, Mamzell appears in Tempests

Malli is the daughter of Madam Ross and her missing husband, Captain Alexander Ross. Malli becomes deeply committed to her role Ariel in the theater troupe of Herr Soerensen. She is a heroine in saving a ship and crew, and becomes engaged to Arndt, son of the leading family in the port at which they arrive. After the death of the sailor Ferdinand, Malli realizes that the play, *The Tempest*, and acting in the theater are more real to her than ordinary life. She then flees from her fiancé Arndt, to continue to be Ariel in the theater troupe's play, *The Tempest*.

Paul, Pavl, the Sailor appears in The Immortal Story

Paul, or Pavl, is the name of the young sailor who goes with Mr. Clay and Elishama to play his part in the story occupying Mr. Clay's imagination. He is only 17 years old, and when he sleeps with Virginia as part of the enacted sailor's story, this is his first night with a woman.

Virginie appears in The Immortal Story

Virginie is the woman who plays the part of the beautiful lady in the story that Mr. Clay wants to bring to life. Her father was ruined by Mr. Clay, and Mr. Clay takes over her house. She hates Mr. Clay, but feels obligated to accept Elishama's offer of 300 guineas to play the part in the sailor's story.

Sigismund appears in The Ring

Sigismund is the young husband of Lise. He is of a humbler-class of birth than Lise, and is very engaged in raising sheep.



The Thief appears in The Ring

The thief is the silent, but potentially deadly man, who Lise meets when she goes to a covert in the trees near the path back to her house. He lets Lise go, and though he kicks away her ring, he accepts her offered handkerchief.

Prince Lothar appears in Ehrengard

Prince Lothar is the only son of the Duke and Duchess of Babenhausen. Lothar is dedicated to the arts and other studies and has to be coaxed to pursue and marry a woman. Under Herr Cazotte's advice, he woos Princess Ludmilla, but ends up making her pregnant before they are married.

Princess Ludmilla appears in Ehrengard

Princess Ludmilla is the woman who Prince Lothar chooses to wed. She is from a large royal family in Leuchtenstein, and is impregnated by Prince Lothar before their marriage. The Duchess decides to hide Ludmilla's early pregnancy.

Kurt, Kurt von Blittersdorff appears in Ehrengard

Kurt is the military man who is the fiance of Ehrengard. He ends up running into Ehrengard at the Blue Boar Tavern and Inn.

Lispeth appears in Ehrengard

Lispeth is the nursemaid to the new-born Prince. She is separated from her husband Mathias while giving suck to the infant Prince. This causes problems that lead to the abduction of the infant.

Mathias appears in Ehrengard

Mathias is the jealous husband of Lispeth, the nursemaid to the Prince. He is jealous of his wife and suspects she is having an affair. He lets himself be used by the discontented branch of the royal family to abduct the infant Prince.

Mira Jama appears in The Diver

Mira Jama is the storyteller in The Diver. Mira Jama tells the tale of the young student Softa, and later follows the trail of another man called the Diver. Softa and the Diver (El Nazred) turn out to be the same man.



Thusmu appears in The Diver

Thusmu is the dancer who distracts Softa from his studies of bird's wings and of attaining flight like the angels.

The Old Cowfish appears in The Diver

The old cowfish is the magical fish that tells El Nazred how to find the choicest pearls. The cowfish philosophizes on why fish have no ambitions like men do.

Lorens Loewenhielm appears in Babette's Feast

Lorens Loewenhielm is the young officer who falls in love with Martine. He realizes he must abandon this love and marry a woman who is suitable for him. Later, he comes back to dine at Babette's feast, many years later as a General.

Achille Papin appears in Babette's Feast

Achille Papin is the 40-year old opera singer who falls in love with Phillippa and her beautiful voice. He gives singing lessons to Phillippa, but these are stopped after he kisses her. Later, Achille advises Babette to seek shelter with Phillippa and her sister Martine.

The Dean appears in Babette's Feast

The Dean is the founder of a pious sect, and the father of Martine and Phillippa. After the Dean's death, his 100th anniversary is the event celebrated by the dinner that Babette gives.

Madam Ross appears in Tempests

Madam Ross is the mother of Malli, who raises Malli by herself. She becomes a seamstress and raises Malli as a single mother.

Jochum Hosewinckel appears in Tempests

Jochum is the owner of the ship Sophie Hosewinckel. He is friendly to Malli, but is troubled because he is getting old. He tells Malli about the story of his honest ancestor Jens Aabel.



Mrs. Hosewinckel appears in Tempests

Mrs. Hosewinckel is Jochum's wife. She becomes worried when she sees the sudden change in Malli after the death of Ferdinand.

Arndt appears in Tempests

Arndt is the 27-year-old son of the Hosewinckel's who proposes marriage to Malli. He has avoided women after a tragic affair in his youth. He proposes marriage to Malli, but does not realize the hold that the theater has on Malli.

Ferdinand appears in Tempests

Ferdinand is the sailor who helps Malli save the ship Sophie Hosewinckel. He is injured during the incident, and later dies. Malli imagines that she is the spirit Ariel and Ferdinand is her helper in the play, *The Tempest*.

Captain Alexander Ross appears in Tempests

Captain Alexander Ross is the captain of the ship that comes into port for repairs. There Captain Ross marries Madam Ross, and impregnates her. He disappears forever when he leaves in the spring, and Malli never knows her father.



Objects/Places

Shiraz appears in The Diver

Shiraz is a town in the Muslim world, where Softa grows up and lives. The elders of Shiraz are jealous and fearful of Softa, and conspire against him, forcing Softa to flee the town.

The Pearl Fishers appears in The Diver

The Pearl Fishers dive into the ocean to get pearls to sell. Most of these men make poor livings, except for Elnazred, who has magical help in his work.

The Pious Sect appears in Babette's Feast

The Pious Sect is founded by the Dean in the town of Berlevaag, Norway. Many years after the Dean's death, the sect seems to be slowly vanishing as the members get older and few if any of them have children.

Berlevaag Fjord and Berlevaag Town appears in Babette's Feast

Berlevaag Town is a small town in Norway along the Berlevaag Fjord, and arm of the sea that extends inland. In this town live the Dean and his two daughters.

The Huldre appears in Babette's Feast

The Huldre is a legendary female spirit who is said in the Lowenhielm family to be one of Loren's ancestors. The Huldre is said to have given members of the family the ability to see the future.

Cafe Anglais appears in Babette's Feast

Cafe Anglais is an expensive restaurant in Paris, where Babette works until she is forced to leave France. There she prepares the sumptuous dishes that she also serves at the banquet for the Dean's anniversary. These dishes include turtle soup and Blinis Demidoff.



The Communards appears in Babette's Feast

The Communards are people who are involved in an uprising in Paris, France in 1871 that is crushed. Babette supported the Communards.

The French Lottery appears in Babette's Feast

Babette has a friend continue to buy a ticket for her in the French lottery, though Babette is in Norway. After 12 years, Babette wins 10,000 francs in this lottery.

The Celebration Dinner appears in Babette's Feast

The Celebration Dinner, or Babette's Feast, is a dinner that is given and paid for by Babette to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the Dean, founder of the pious sect in the story.

The Hymns appears in Babette's Feast

The hymns are a number of hymns sung by the faithful members, which reassure them that no matter what they eat at the dinner, they will maintain their faith.

The Theater Troupe appears in Tempests

Herr Soerensen leads a traveling theater troupe that sails by ship up and down the Norwegian coast. This is the theater troupe that Malli joins.

The Ship Sofie Hosewinckel appears in Tempests

The Ship Sofie Hosewinckel is named after Jochum Hosewinckel's deceased sister. The ship is carrying the theater troupe and is near sinking when the theater troupe members leave the ship, except for Malli. Malli rallies the crew to save themselves and the damaged ship.

The Hosewinckel House appears in Tempests

The Hosewinckel House is one of the nicest in town. Malli is invited to stay with the Hosewinckels while the theater troupe recovers from losses due to the storm incident.



The Ball for Malliappears in Tempests

A ball, or party, is held in Malli's honor at a hotel. Malli cannot join in the dancing there, but sings songs from The Tempest play that Ariel sings. Here she is first strongly attracted to Arndt Hosewinckel.

The Tale of Jens Aabelappears in Tempests

In the tale of Jens Aabel, a fire is spreading through town. Jens Aabel comes outside and says that if he has been an honest businessman, the fire should avoid his house, and this happens.

Jen Aabel's Bibleappears in Tempests

Jen Aabel's Bible is kept at the Hosewinckel's house. It is said that if someone has to make a decision, they can open up the Bible, and the random verse picked out will give the person the answer to their question.

The Play, The Tempestappears in Tempests

Herr Soerensen's plan is to put on William Shakespeare's The Tempest, as a crowning achievement to his theatrical career. He chooses Malli to play the spirit Ariel, and Soerensen is to play Ariel's master, Prospero.

Mr. Clay's Houseappears in The Immortal Story

Mr. Clay's House is the scene of most of the story. It is where the supper occurs and where, in Mr. Clay's bedroom, Virginie waits. Mr. Clay's house was once owned by Mr. Dupont, Mr. Clay's partner who Mr. Clay bankrupts and destroys.

The Prophecy of Isaiahappears in The Immortal Story

The prophecy of Isaiah is read to Mr. Clay by Elishama. Mr. Clay is disturbed by the story, since it talks of the lame being able to walk and the blind being able to see. He thinks that these things never happened and thus are uninteresting.



The Sailor's Story, The Immortal Story appears in The Immortal Story

In the sailor's story, a sailor is offered 5 guineas by a rich man, after being called a fine looking sailor, and is then taken to a fine house. There he is treated to a dinner, and then given a beautiful lady to lie with.

Paul's Boat appears in The Immortal Story

The sailor that Mr. Clay picks up is named Pavl or Paul. He dreams of one day owning a boat on the shore of his native Denmark. For this reason, Paul agrees to keep the 5 guineas and lie with the lady.

The Gold Coin, 5 Guineas appears in The Immortal Story

The gold coin worth 5 guineas is given to Paul if he agrees to carry out the instructions of Mr. Clay. The sailor Paul had never seen a gold piece before.

The Shawls for Virginie appears in The Immortal Story

Elishama is asked by his friend Charley Simpson to buy and bring a bunch of shawls to Charley's mistress Virginie. Virginie models these shawls and expresses her wish that one day she become an actress.

The Supper appears in The Immortal Story

The sailor Paul comes to Mr. Clay's house and there is given a rich supper including much wine. Here Mr. Clay tells Paul that he will lie with a lady after the dinner.

The Shell appears in The Immortal Story

Paul has some seashells from the deserted island where he was stuck for about a year. He gives Elishama the nicest one to give to Virginie after Paul leaves on his ship. The seashell has an echo of the seashore when a person puts it to his or her ear.

The Ring appears in The Ring

Lise is wearing a wedding ring from her marriage to Sigismund just a short time ago. She gives the ring to the thief in a handkerchief, but the thief rejects the ring, preferring Lise's handkerchief.



The Covert appears in The Ring

Lise is walking back to her house from the sheep farm and remembers a covert, which is a small clearing in the woods along the path. In this covert is where the thief is hiding.

Babenhausen appears in Ehrengard

Babenhausen is the capital city of the dukes of Fugger-Babenhausen, in Germany before the German Empire took over the area. There the Grand Duchess schemes to get her only son Prince Lothar to marry and bear an heir.

The Benefactress appears in Ehrengard

The Benefactress is an old lady who once helped the artist Herr Cazotte. She does not appear in the story, but Herr Cazotte writes a series of letters to her.

Leuchtenstein appears in Ehrengard

Leuchtenstein is another small duchy in the old Germany. There Prince Lothar meets the Princess Ludmilla, who he woos and marries.

Rosenbad appears in Ehrengard

Rosenbad is the name given to the estate where Prince Lothar and Princess Ludmilla hide out as they wait for the infant Prince to be born. They have to wait there two months before the infant can be officially acknowledged to have been born.

Alpen Gluhen, the Blush appears in Ehrengard

The Alpen Gluhen is the last bright glow of the mountain peaks of the Alps before light disappears at sunset. Herr Cazotte compares this glow to the blush that he anticipates getting from Ehrengard.

The Infant Prince appears in Ehrengard

The Infant Prince is the son of Prince Lothar and Princess Ludmilla, who must be hidden for two months because he was conceived before their marriage. The infant is kidnapped, and when he is rescued, Ehrengard has to pretend that she is the mother of the infant, to conceal his identity.



The Picture at the Bath appears in Ehrengard

Herr Cazotte decides to make a picture of Ehrengard bathing, after he discovers Ehrengard with her maid, and Ehrengard is bathing in the nude at sunrise. Later, even after discovering that Herr Cazotte is observing her, Ehrengard agrees to continue to appear and pose for this picture.

The Blue Boar Tavern and Inn appears in Ehrengard

The Blue Boar Tavern and Inn is located a few miles from the Rosenbad estate. There dissident members of the royal family hang around and see if they can find out what secret about the pregnant Ludmilla is being concealed at Rosenbad. Later, Ehrengard, her fiance Kurt, and Herr Cazotte discover the abducted infant at the Blue Boar.

Duke Marbod's Followers appears in Ehrengard

Duke Marbod's followers are a dissent faction of the Babenhausen royal family. They had hoped that Duke Marbod would inherit the duchy until it is announced that Prince Lothar has married and his wife Ludmilla is having a child.



Themes

Self-Sacrifice and Gratitude

A theme of *Babette's Feast* is self-sacrifice. Babette has a good job as a cook at the Cafe Anglais in Paris. Instead of maintaining this, she and her husband fight for the Communards in the revolution of 1871 in Paris. After her husband is killed, she flees to Norway and becomes a free servant for the daughters of the Dean. Babette must sacrifice cooking the fancy dishes to which she is accustomed, in order to cook the simple soup and fish dishes of her new household. She is quiet, yet somehow she is impressed by the simple life and good deeds of the sisters Martine and Phillipa.

When Babette wins the French Lottery she has an opportunity to return to Paris, France and live in a decent manner. If she chose to do this, the sisters would understand, though they would regret her leaving them. However, Babette decides to show her gratitude to the sisters by preparing a French dinner to celebrate the one-hundredth anniversary of the Dean, the founder of a pious sect. This becomes a strange act, because the sect is not used to eating rich food, and only through Martine's caution is told not to protest what food and drink they are offered. Babette ends up giving the 12 guests a dinner that brings joy and reconciliation. This costs the 10,000 francs that Babette has won, but is her way of showing her gratitude to the sisters for their good deeds and their heavenly grace. Babette protests that it is not really self-sacrifice, because the people and the life she once had in Paris are both gone forever.

Carnal Versus Spiritual Love

A theme of the story *Ehregard* is carnal versus spiritual love. Herr Cazotte is an artist known for his amorous affairs. The Duchess has him accompany Prince Lothar on a tour of art and women in the capitals of Europe. Prince Lothar, who up until now did not want to get involved with women, comes back with a resolve to marry Princess Ludmilla. Later, it is discovered that he had impregnated her before their marriage. The Duchess is upset over her son, until Cazotte explains that Prince Lothar did not do wrong. Prince Lothar merely did the act when he knew that he loved the Princess both spiritually and carnally.

The story has an interesting twist when Cazotte decides to seduce Ehregard, the maid-of-honor to Princess Ludmilla, but not to do this in the orthodox sexual fashion. The question comes up whether this is spiritual or carnal love. For example, Ehregard allows Cazotte to continue to paint her in the nude on early summer mornings, after he is discovered. This situation reaches its climax when Ehregard, in order to keep the secret of the infant prince's early birth, claims to her fiance Kurt that she has been impregnated by Cazotte, and that the infant is her child by him. This funny but potentially very serious ending is resolved by the Prince and Princess, and the engaged

couple Kurt and Ehrengard both attend the official appearance and baptism of the Prince the following week.

Freedom of the Individual

A theme of the Immortal Story is the freedom of the individual mind. Although Mr. Clay is successful on the surface in making the sailor's story happen in real life, that is not how it is viewed by the participants. The sailor Paul feels a strong emotion of love towards Virginie, although he is paid to go to bed with her. As expressed by Elishama, in a way the story is ridiculous, because in reality the sailor always pays the woman to have sex with him. It is sort of a boast for a sailor to say that he is so fine and good looking that people will pay him to sleep with a woman, in addition to giving him a fine dinner.

The first two sailors who Mr. Clay and Elishama meet reject going with them. They are scared because they think that in real life it is impossible for such a thing to occur. Perhaps they suspect foul play. Even Paul, after he has the dinner with Mr. Clay, attempts to give back the five guinea. He wants to maintain his masculine privilege to decide when to sleep with a woman. Only when he is reminded of his desire to own a boat does he keep the money. After his night with Virginie, Paul dreams of hiding Virginie away in his ship. Again, he is a man seeking to obtain the love of a woman. Virginie too is brought to tears when she tells Paul to always remember her as 17 and as new to love with him. As individuals, the experience is remembered as a love experience, not as the sailor's story and boasts that Mr. Clay wants to evoke.

Style

Point of View

The point of view presented in the six stories varies widely. In *The Diver*, it is a first person point of view from the storyteller Mira Jama, who is also a character in the story, traveling to the new home of Softa, now the diver El Nazred. *Babette's Feast* is a more complicated story told in the third person. The reader is closest to the motives and internal thoughts of the two sisters, Martine and Phillippa. The story is mainly the two sisters' reaction to the men who fail in their pursuit of them, and to Babette. Babette is a more hazily sketched character. Her motives for her actions are only clearly stated by her at the end of the story after she spends all her money on the feast for the Dean's anniversary.

Tempests is a similar story told in the third person and involving a shifting situation. At first, there is the story of the birth of Malli and her father's disappearance. Although the story stays in the third person, it centers on the feelings and development of Malli as an actress, and the choice that confronts her. The story has a strong contrapuntal element in that the point of view of the action of the story is compared to that of texts from *The Tempest* play by Shakespeare, and to the prophecy of Isaiah. This multi-voicing of the story gives it its richness. *The Immortal Story* continues to be a story in the third person. As in the previous stories, one character, in this case Elishama, is the most sympathetic character. Elishama has the final word when he questions the sailor and finds out that the story to the sailor is totally different than that planned by Mr. Clay. The very short story, *The Ring*, is also in the third person, concentrating on the character Lise.

The last story, *Ehrengard* is the most complicated having the strongest focus on the character Herr Cazotte. This story is primarily in the third person, but also has a big component in the first person viewpoint of Herr Cazotte, using his letters to his benefactress. In this way the reader learns directly Herr Cazotte's feelings and inner thoughts.

Setting

The settings of the story are in places as diverse as Shiraz, in the Muslim world, to the fjords of Norway. After the story, *The Diver*, which is in the Muslim world, a large portion of the book takes place in the small towns along the coast of Norway. The second story, *Babette's Feast*, is set in a small Norwegian town, with some allusions to different times and customs at Cafe Anglais and other places in Paris, France. The story *Tempests* is also up and down the fjords of Norway, and also strongly relates to the trials and perils of travel by ship.

The Immortal Story takes place largely in the rich setting of the house of Mr. Clay in Canton, China. The Chinese town is dominated by the British and other foreign



merchants. The Chinese inhabitants are mostly ignored, with the focus on the merchants, their employees and the sailors of the town. The story *The Ring* has a pastoral setting in a sheep farm in the countryside that is rudely interrupted by the presence of a thief and murderer in hiding. The story *Ehrengard* is set in one of the numerous kingdoms and dukedoms of Old Germany, before the founding of the German Empire. The main place is the royal court of Babenhausen and the royalty and their servants within. Again, a pastoral setting intervenes, when Herr Cazotte and the Duchess set up a small court to hide the Princess during her pregnancy at Rosenbad. This idyllic setting is broken when there is an intruder who kidnaps the infant prince. The setting changes to a garrison town full of military forces and the rough and tumble setting of a tavern and inn.

Language and Meaning

The book is written in English, though the author is actually of Danish nationality. The author's English is quite precise and colorful, with the vocabulary quite rich. In *Babette's Feast*, the author explores the language of faith and prayer of the small sect involved. In the story *Tempests*, the author uses large sections of direct quotes from the play *The Tempest* to enliven the language of the story and keep it at a high standard. *The Immortal Story* is a more down to earth story, with the simple language of sailors and is about the sea. This is contrasted with the old English from the King James Bible of the excerpt from the prophecy of Isaiah. Some of the allusions are quite subtle, or even in French, such as *Virginie's* reference to (in French) the thirty pieces of silver of Judas. This is her way of saying that *Elishama* is having her work for Mr. Clay in his story, and in this way forcing her to betray her dead father who used to own Mr. Clay's house. The next story, *The Ring*, is a fairly simple story. The main issue is the ring that *Lise* has as her wedding ring. By giving the ring to the thief, in a sense she feels that she is marrying herself to his poverty and desperation. The thief in turn trusts her to be allowed to go free and not betray him.

The story *Ehrengard* has the letters of Herr Cazotte to his benefactress that add counterpoint to the story and give Herr Cazotte's internal thoughts. These letters contain Herr Cazotte's dreams and fantasies. Herr Cazotte compares the glow he expects to get from *Ehrengard* to the *Alpen-Gluhen*, the last glow of the sun on the mountain peaks before dark. Ironically, at the climax of the story, Herr Cazotte is the one to blush red.

Structure

The book is divided into six stories. Two of them are very short, *The Diver* and *The Ring*. *Babette's Feast* is 42 pages, *Tempests* is 68 pages, *The Immortal Story* is 68 pages, and *Ehrengard* is 64 pages. The longer stories are broken up into sections, with the exception of *Ehrengard*, which is broken up by the insertion of the private letters of Herr Cazotte. *Babette's Feast* is broken up into 12 parts, and these parts have the feelings of scenes in a play. In that respect, the first four parts are the introduction of the sisters; parts 5-7 have *Babette* enter the story and set the scene for the feast; scenes 8-



11 contain the dinner; and part 12 is a sort of epilogue to the story. So, this story has a remarkable feeling of a 4-act play. Likewise, *Tempests* has 17 parts or scenes that could be easily broken up into four acts like a play. They would be, the introduction of Herr Soerensen and his theater troupe, the introduction of Malli and her circumstances, the heroic scene with the exclamation of Malli and her engagement to Arndt, and finally the decision of Malli to flee and continue to play in the theater.

The *Immortal Story* has 15 parts or scenes. These could be broken up into the introduction of Mr. Clay and his accountant Elishama, The prophecy of Isaiah and the sailor's story being introduced, the set-up and carrying out of the story, with an additional short epilogue, part 15, the Shell. It is interesting that these stories could easily be presented as plays.

The *Ring* can be seen as a one-act play, and *The Diver* as a two act play, the scene in Shiraz, and the scene at the town on the seashore. The story *Ehregard* is not broken up this way, but is looser, in that the main breaks in the story are the letters. The first part is up to where Herr Cazotte writes about the situation of the Prince Lothar and his wife the Princess. In this story, the author explicitly tells the reader that the first part is the setup of the problem, the second part is the pastorage, or the countryside of the Prince and Princess and their little court at Rosenbad. The last act is a fast act, or a musical scherzo, of the crisis when the infant prince is kidnapped and the situation created by his rescue. In this story as the others, a feeling of a theater play, or a 3 or 4 part musical piece is maintained.



Quotes

"Man, in the end, is alarmed by the idea of time, and unbalanced by incessant wanderings between past and future."

The Diver, the Old Cowfish, p. 18

"The idea of French luxury and extravagance next had alarmed and dismayed the Dean's daughters."

Babette's Feast, p. 32

"'Incredible!' he told himself. 'It is Blinis Demidoff!' He looked around at his fellow-diners."

Babette's Feast, General Lowewenhielm, p. 49

"'What will you, Mesdames,' said Babette with great dignity. 'A dinner for twelve at the Cafe Anglais would cost ten thousand francs.'"

Babette's Feast, p. 49

"'We are here to serve Will Shakespeare, the Swan of Avon. And we are not going to think of ourselves at all, for we are nothing at all in ourselves.'"

Tempests, Herr Soerensen, p. 67

"He would also, in exuberant pride and joy, give her a few fatherly taps on her behind and then, more to himself than to her, develop his theories upon female beauty."

Tempests, about Herr Soerensen, p. 77

"Then one spring night Guro threw her arms around her young lover's neck and cried out in a storm of tears: 'I am a lost creature because I have met you and I have looked at you, Arndt!'"

Tempests, p. 89

"He thought, 'She has the power to wake the dead.'"

Tempests, Arndt, p. 101

"Lose thy money for a brother or a friend, and it shall profit thee more than gold."

Tempests, p. 116

"'In return? Alas, my little Malli,' he said in an altogether changed voice, and this time he was not aware that he continued in his chosen, sacred tongue: 'And in return we get the world's distrust— and our dire loneliness. And nothing else.'"

Tempests, Herr Soerensen, p. 127

"'With your permission,' said Elishama, 'I, too, can tell that story.'"

The Immortal Story, p. 147



"After her father's death, during long years of poverty and hardship, and while she herself lost the angelic grace of her childhood and grew up too big, Virginie had secretly turned to this glorious world for consolation."

The Immortal Story, p. 161

"What will she be, now that you are paying back your five guineas and going away? A story only, which you have been telling me— which will never come to be launched, which will never come to sail!"

The Immortal Story, Mr Clay, p. 181

"Look at my face well, and remember it. Remember that I am seventeen. Remember that I have never loved anybody till I met you."

The Immortal Story, Virginie, p. 194

"In a hardly perceivable movement he kicked it away and again looked into her face."

The Ring, p. 209

"There are women who give out the fullness of their womanhood in a smile, a sideglance or a waltz, and others who will be giving it in their tears."

Ehregard, written comments by Herr Cazotte, p. 220

"In high mountains, as you will know, there exists a phenomenon of nature called Alpen-Gluhen."

Ehregard, written comments by Herr Cazotte, p. 234

"Young Prince Lothar, it was declared, was incapable of being the father of a child, and Princess Ludmilla's pregnancy was all a farce."

Ehregard, p. 258

"But I cannot accept your help unless you will give me your word that when you have brought me back to Rosenbad you will leave me forever."

Ehregard, Ehregard speaking, p. 274



Topics for Discussion

In *The Diver*, what unites the two identities of the man first called Softa, and later called the Diver, or Elnazred? How has Elnazred changed in his approach to life in his second identity?

In *Babette's Feast*, discuss Babette's sense of identity. She first is identified as a Communard who is forced to flee France. Later, she is shown to be a skilled chef at the restaurant for the upper-class, Cafe Anglais. At the Dean's home, she is the faithful and resourceful servant. Who is she really?

Discuss the tension between the two sisters and Babette because of their pious faith and Babette's French Catholic faith. In *Babette's Feast*, why are the two sisters Martine and Phillipa afraid of Babette? What does she represent to them?

In *Tempests*, discuss the relationship between Herr Soerensen and Malli. Is it like a father-daughter relationship, or a professional relationship? Is it something more?

In *The Immortal Story*, discuss Mr. Clay's sense of power. Why does he think that he can put into real life the sailor's story? Does he succeed?

In the story, *The Ring*, what is the significance of Lise giving the thief her ring? What is the thief's response?

In the story *Ehrengard*, does Herr Cazotte fulfill his boast that he will seduce Ehrengard, though not doing this in the orthodox fashion? What provokes Herr Cazotte to want to commit such a seduction?

In the story *Ehrengard*, discuss Ehrengard's relationship with Kurt, her fiance. How does the military background of Kurt and of Ehrengard's family affect this? Is she as close to Kurt as she is to Herr Cazotte?