

The Story of Noah of Reichesdorf (Richis)

Noah, the devout patriarch,
sailed around with his ark,
as God punished humanity for their sins
with the flood – this is told to children
in school, it's history. But that once
a Saxon also journeyed like this,
might not be so well known
in our Saxon land.

So, I shall tell it here.

When the farmers toil the most,
during the harvest time, right when Margarete*
takes place in Mediasch. People in droves,
young and old,
come to town,
to make good and thrifty purchases.
Those who have nothing to trade
come to see, and hope they find,
the world-famous Trämter Tower*.

"Trenge, hey!" says our Marz, "you see, tomorrow

is Margarete – I must go

to visit the fair,

to buy myself a purse.

But you mustn't fight with me

when I return, just be calm!"

"No, don't worry! But, a chest

you must buy for me from the fair!"

"Oh, come on! You already know how I feel –

I prefer to avoid women's matters,

you always start with arguments!

Men are the foolish ones!"

"Then I'm coming too," says the old woman,

"and I will buy the chest for myself,

I must have it, then I'll be quiet!"

"Where are you going? That can't be,

that we, two old farmers,

with our backs to the farm,

go to the fair in Mediasch!

That would nearly ruin us!

No, too much is unhealthy!

You stay at home! I'll do the shopping,

the flowery chest by myself."

"Okay, fine! But now to bed,

I'm tired, it's not pleasant anymore.

It's you who must rise early in the morning,

to get your purse and my chest!"

Soon, they fall into sweet slumber,

Marz and his Treng as well.

In their dreams, she tugs at his beard,

and her heart leaps for joy.

The next morning at half-past three,

Marz jumps out of bed, as if stung,

starts shouting right away:

"Trenk, hey! Don't leave me alone!

Prepare breakfast for me quickly,

remember, I should have been

in Mediasch already.

Come on, Trenk, hey! I'm in a hurry!"

At last, finally! His stomach is full

and satisfied. He gets on the ox cart

and heads to Mediasch. She watches him go.

Hoide, tscha! Hoide, tscha*!

At the fair, Marz quickly purchases

the purse and the chest.

He says to me: "I'm finished here,

I'm heading back home to my wife.

But, she must give me

a well-deserved kiss for the flowery chest!"

I say to him: "Hey, Mierden, wait,

or you'll get wet to the bone!

Look, a thunderstorm is approaching,

it will soak you to the leather!"

But he says: "Maybe it will spare me today!

God keep you safe!"

However, as soon as he's on the road,

the thunderstorm begins!

It's as if the flood is here again,

to drown humans and animals.

It's lightning and thundering so loudly!

But Martin just sits there and laughs.

"He's laughing?" you ask? "Is he out of his mind?"

One doesn't laugh during a thunderstorm!"

Well, believe it if you want, that's how it is with him.

For the rest of us, we'd be more inclined to scream!

But I'll tell you, he's laughing,

because, when the thunder first clapped,

Noah came to his mind,

who was surely inside his ark,

dry and safe during the flood.

Martin thought: "If he could endure

a year in his box,

why should I freeze here in the rain?"

I think I'll take

the flowery chest from my cart.

Then I'll be like the patriarch,

sheltered in his ark."

Thoughts turned into action! When it thundered again,

he was already in the chest and laughing.

But, misfortune seldom comes alone!

Once it's here, it sticks around.

Martin was not going to be spared,

for suddenly, it happened!

The front wheel hit a rock,

a strong jolt, and the cart was tilted.

The chest's lock fell shut!

Well, Martin, what do you say now?

How will you find your way home
when you see nothing and you're all alone?

In such misfortune, it's best
if a person faces it with a cool head,
and accepts their fate. Because it's a mess
if you're still angry at this point.

Marz thought: "With calmness,

I will get out of here best.

I'll drive the oxen out of my chest

and head home.

They'll find their way on their own,

meanwhile, I'll atone for my sins.

Time passed, and evening came.

Martin was not in the least worried,

he slept comfortably in his chest,

calling out sometimes, "Come on, cattle!" to his oxen.

So they reached the outskirts,

and an ox said, "Should we pull

the old fool, and to make it worse,

over this high, winding

and steep mountain ridge?

It's smarter to escape

instead of going left, let's go right,

there must also be a community!"

That's how Marz ended up in Nimesch.

A jolt ran through the chest, and then

he suddenly awoke from his dreams:

"Well, am I finally home

and it's good

that I rested here

in Reichesdorf, well-arrived

in my ark – you've heard it!"

"Trenge, hey! Trenge, hey! Come out quickly

and open the gate for me!

I brought the purse, and in addition,

I've got the painted chest for you!"

All remains silent. No one comes out.

Well, Marz thinks, no one's home?

"Trenge, hey! Trenge, hey! Listen, listen,

open the door for me already!"

Then, at last, a woman comes out of the house

where he was standing.

She looks timidly and fearfully toward the cart,

wondering who's shouting so loudly.

But she doesn't see anyone:

"What on earth is happening here?"

The witching hour is starting now,

so I'm going to shout as loud as I can:

You neighbors, come quickly to me,

the devil's cart is here!"

The neighbors all hurried over:

"Are you crazy, neighbor?"

You're screaming like you're on fire,

has there been an accident?"

"So come all, my neighbors,
a witch must be here right now!

And perhaps, hidden inside
this colorful chest,

that immediately seemed suspicious to me –

a voice shouted: "Open the gate!"

"Then we'll just have to force it open,
to see who's inside!"

They got to work. As soon as it happened,

Marz got up! And everyone saw him,

and they shouted: "Good spirits,
praise God and their Master!"

But Martin said: "People,
don't be foolish! Be sensible!

I am Marz from Reichesdorf!

I only hid from the thunderstorm.

If you can keep this story to yourselves,

then you shall taste my good, old,
yes, my best wine!

But if you say anything, I'll lose!

Then I'll become the laughingstock
among the young and old, among maid and servant!"

The people from Nimesch agreed,
they would keep quiet before him!

In confidence, he could now go home,

none of them would learn anything!

So, Martin set out on his way:

Hoide, tscha! Hoide, tscha!

But the matter did not stay hidden for long,

the people of Nimesch had spoiled it for Marz!

They blurted out everything! And from then on,

Reichsdorf also had a Noah!

Ernst Thullner

Lehrer, Pfarrer, Mundartdichter
Geb. 22.12.1862 in Birtählm
Gest. 1918 in Mühlbach (Stadtpfarrer)



Martin Schaas
Geb. 10.10.1841
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Der Noah.

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