

Many hundred thousand good-nights, dearly beloved daughter Veronica.

Innocent have I come into prison, innocent have I been tortured, innocent must I die. For whoever comes into the witch prison must become a witch or be tortured until he invents something out of his head and--God pity him--bethinks him of something. I will tell you how it has gone with me. When I was the first time put to the torture, Dr. Braun, Dr. Kötzendörffer, and two strange doctors were there. Then Dr. Braun asks me, "Kinsman, how come you here?" I answer, "Through falsehood, through misfortune." "Hear, you," he says, "you are a witch; will you confess it voluntarily? If not, we'll bring in witnesses and the executioner for you." I said "I am no witch, I have a pure conscience in the matter; if there are a thousand witnesses, I am not anxious, but I'll gladly bear the witnesses." Now the chancellor's son was set before me.... and afterward Hoppfen Elsa. She had seen me dance on Haupts-moor.... I answered: "I have never renounced God, and will never do it--God graciously keep me from it. I'll rather bear whatever I must."

And then came also--God in highest Heaven have mercy--the executioner, and put the thumb-screws on me, both hands bound together, so that the blood ran out at the nails and everywhere, so that for four weeks I could not use my hands, as you can see from the writing.... Thereafter they first stripped me, bound my hands behind me, and drew me up in the torture.

Then I thought heaven and earth were at an end; eight times did they draw me up and let me fall again, so that I suffered terrible agony.... And this happened on Friday, June 30, and with God's help I had to bear the torture.... When at last the executioner led me back into the prison, he said to me: "Sir, I beg you, for God's sake confess something, whether it be true or not. Invent something, for you cannot endure the torture which you will be put to; and, even if you bear it all, yet you will not escape, not even if you were an earl, but one torture will follow after another until you say you are a witch. Not before that," he said, "will they let you go, as you may see by all their trials, for one is just like another."

And so I begged, since I was in wretched plight, to be given one day for thought and a priest. The priest was refused me, but the time for thought was given. Now, my dear child, see in what hazard I stood and still stand. I must say that I am a witch, though I am not, must now renounce God, though I have never done it before. Day and night I was deeply troubled, but at last there came to me a new idea. I would not be anxious, but, since I had been given no priest with whom I could take counsel, I would myself think of something and say it. It were surely better that I just say it with mouth and words, even though I had not really done it; and afterwards I would confess it to the priest, and let those answer for it who compel me to do it.... And so I made my confession, as follows; but it was all a lie.

Now follows, dear child, what I confessed in order to escape the great anguish and bitter torture, which it was impossible for me longer to bear. Then I had to tell what people I had seen [at the witch-sabbath]. I said that I had not recognized them. "You old rascal, I must set the executioner at you. Say--was not the Chancellor there?" So I said yes. "Who besides?" I had not recognized anybody. So he said: "Take one street after another; begin at the market, go out on one street and back on the next." I had to name several persons there.

Then came the long street. I knew nobody. Had to name eight persons there. Then the Zinkenwert--one person more. Then over the upper bridge to the Georgthor, on both sides. Knew nobody again Did I know nobody in the castle--whoever it might be, I should speak without fear. And thus continuously they asked me on all the streets, though I could not and would not say more. So they gave me to the executioner, told him to strip me, shave me all over, and put me to the torture. "The rascal knows one on the market-place, is with him daily, and yet won't name him." By that they meant Dietmeyer: so I had to name him too.

Then I had to tell what crimes I had committed. I said nothing. . . "Draw the rascal up!" So I said that I was to kill my children, but I had killed a horse instead. It did not help. I had also taken a sacred wafer, and had desecrated it. When I had said this,

Now, dear child, here you have all my confession, for which I must die. And they are sheer lies and made-up things, so help me God. For all this I was forced to say through fear of the torture which was threatened beyond what I had already endured. For they never leave off with the torture till one confesses something; be he never so good, he must be a witch. Nobody escapes, though he were an earl.

Dear child, keep this letter secret so that people do not find it, else I shall be tortured most piteously and the jailers will be beheaded. So strictly is it forbidden.... Dear child, pay this man a dollar.... I have taken several days to write this: my hands are both lame. I am in a sad plight....

Good night, for your father Johannes Junius will never see you more, July 24, 1628.

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*(PS) Dear child, six have confessed against me at once: the Chancellor, his son, Neudecker, Zaner, Hoffmaisters Ursel, and Hoppfen Els--all false, through compulsion, as they have all told me, and begged my forgiveness in God's name before they were executed.... They know nothing but good of me. They were forced to say it, just as I myself was....*

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(Note: These same tactics, outlined in the Malleus Maleficarum (1486), are mirrored in today's accusation of Sex Offences, most particularly in Western Australia, in conjunction with the Redress Scheme, as I learned from studying numerous prisoner's cases while in Acacia Prison. The details of how this tactic is implemented, where it came from, who is funding it, and why, is explained in my book, "**Salem's Ghost – The New 'Witch' and the Return to the Age of Accusation**". – John Victor Ramses)