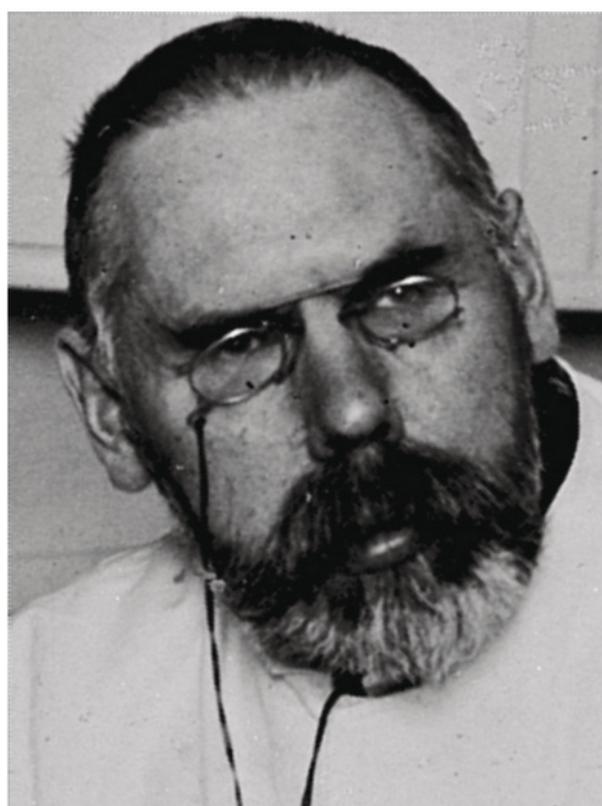


**Narrator:** List of characters: Actress, director, prima donna, woman scorned - but not dejected, JOHANNE DYBWAD, 51 years old. INGEBORG KØBER, psychic medium, newlywed, hounded into submission, 23 years old; JOHAN SCHARFFENBERG, racist, medical doctor, psychiatrist, nationalist, lover of all practices ancient Greek - except drinking, bad poet, 49 years old. AASTA HANSTEEN, painter, language pionéer, self-taught theologist and a flaying critic of the Norwegian church, nationalist/ anti-imperialist, suffragette, Sapphian, misandrist, bad poet, deceased.



Foto: ukjent person

Oslo Museum



**Narrator:** Location: Vor Frelzers graveyard in Oslo. Everyone's who's anyone is here. Either vertically or horizontally.

(To the melody of Red, red rosie)

Ibsen, Bjørnson.  
Wildenvey og Kielland.  
Wergeland, Welhaven, Tranmæl og Lie  
Ringnes, Gude, Bull,  
Nordraak, Sohlberg, Hoel,  
Backer, Blix og Bratlie  
Fearnley, Collett, Braathen,  
Brøgger, Schweigaard, Munch og Karsten,  
Thrane, Aasta Hansteen.

-**Køber:** Ingeborg Køber-

-**Narrator:** -a naïve 23-year old newlywed has travelled from her woodboard kingdom Fredrikstad to Christiania to see the famous actress-

-**Dybwad:** -Johanne Dybwad-

-**Narrator:** -perform *Medea* at The National Theatre in Christiania. (...) Køber is curious and sensitive, but not a scholarly woman. She's been coined «sweet» but «stupid» by her own patriarch. She's led a sheltered life – in the shadow of her brothers Ludvig and Ragnar who are her parent's favourite children. Køber was entirely unprepared for the shock that is-

-**Dybwad:** -Johanne Dybwad's-

-**Narrator:** -*Medea*.

-**Dybwad:** Dybwad-

**-Narrator:** -is a theatre phenomenon and *grande dame*. She acts, directs, and informs the bougie public with her radical performativity. «*She is a fire, a bitter blow that cleanses, and courage and truth have reached greater limits*»<sup>1</sup>

**Encyclopedia:** Nordahl Grieg describing Dybwad. Grieg wrote her a [poem](#), featured in the posthumous collection «Håbet» (1946), it's quite telling how much he admired her.

**Dybwad:** Dybwad-

**Narrator:** -became famous after dancing with her own shadow in *En liden Hex*, «*a little witch*»<sup>2</sup>.

**Encyclopedia:** After George Sand's *Fanchon*, premiered in Bergen, and then in Christiania, 1888.

**Dybwad:** Dybwad-

**Narrator:** -both produced and performed the *Medea* of Euripides in 1918. Until 1916, she had been married to lawyer and writer Vilhelm Dybwad. After their separation, V. Dybwad immediately married Caroline Bokken Lasson, who had also recently abandoned her marriage. Bokken was Christiania «aristocracy». Sister of Oda Lasson, sister-in-law of Christian Krohg, and Dybwad's junior.

**Køber:** Ingeborg Køber-

**Narrator:** -has recently married a rather volatile older man. He will move her to the other side of the country, far away from her family, whom she's deeply dependent on. After having seen-

**Dybwad:** Dybwad's-

**Narrator:** -*Medea*-

**Køber:** -Køber-

**Narrator:** -experiences a flash of lucidity. Suddenly worried what married life might entail-

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1 Nordahl Grieg on Dybwad, he also wrote her a [poem](#) in the posthumous collection «Håbet» (1946), it's quite telling how much he admired her.

2 First in Bergen and then in Christiania in 1888

**Køber** : -Køber-

**Narrator**: -has staggered out of the theatre, wandering aimlessly about. Now she finds herself in Vor Frelsers graveyard, sweating, shivering and slumped against a memorial, a Gustav-

**-Vigeland**: -*Vigeland*-

**-Narrator**: bust of an elderly woman. Medea's words echo in Køber's mind.

**-Dybwad/ Medea**:

«Of all things with life and understanding, we women are the most unfortunate. First, we need a husband, someone we get for an excessive price. He then becomes the ruler of our bodies. And this misfortune adds still more troubles to the grief we have. Then comes the crucial struggle: this husband we've selected, is he good or bad? For a divorce loses women all respect.»

**-Køber**: What now, little relic<sup>3</sup>?

**-Encyclopedia**: Køber's father, that she was later accused of having murdered, called Køber his «relic», as she was able to communicate with her two deceased brothers. Scharffenberg participated in an expert-panel giving statements during her very public and scandalising trial. Scharffenberg claimed Køber had willed her father's drowning into being, even if she had no recollection or conceptualisation of having done so, because she was apparently both insidious *and* «simple».

**-Narrator**: What now, little relic? Køber asks herself. (...) Supporting her weight on the stone plinth, she slowly stands up straight until she faces the Vigeland bust head-on. It's a somewhat unflattering «idealisation» of -

**-Hansteen**: Aasta Hansteen.

**-Narrator**: Køber, unable to think clearly, places her palms on Hansteens cold cheeks, staring into her unflinching gaze.

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3 Ad libbed, but sourceable info after a conversation with Emilie while we were looking at Ivo de Figueiredo's bio on Køber, «Mysteriet Ingeborg Køber».

**-Hansteen:** Aasta Hansteen-

**-Narrator:** -had lived in Copenhagen, Düsseldorf and Paris. Her paintings had been shown at the World Exhibition in Paris in 1855. After re-settling in Christiania, she was briefly a popular portraiteurist, until the workload caused her a breakdown, and she stopped painting for several years. Hansteen was an active and public feminist, in the tradition of Harriet Taylor Mill's eavesdropping husband *John Stuart Mill*. Characterized by her enthusiasm and ditto indignation, Hansteen was often caricatured. Ibsen, resting under his Hammer just a stone's throw away, owned at least one of her paintings and had based the character Lona Hassel in *Pillars of Society* on Hansteen.

**Dybwad:** Dybwad-

**Narrator:** -played Hansteen at the play's premiere in 1901. Hansteen was the third person to ever use Ivar Aasens' *Landsmaal* in published text, writing love poems to her female companions, praises of her aesthetic and ethical idol Henrik Wergeland, and publishing political programs. When the International Workers Congress in Paris in 1889 voted that May the 1<sup>st</sup> should be the International Worker's Day, they also voted that they would not acknowledge «women's issues» as a cause. Hansteen was furious:

**Hansteen:** «They want to make themselves «masters» of women's affairs. The International Worker's Day will be a *Men's day*. We'll have a new Man's world. Where before we had hundreds of thousands of «masters», we'll now have millions of «masters»<sup>4</sup>

**Encyclopedia:** Hansteen, Nylænde, 1890, p. 33.

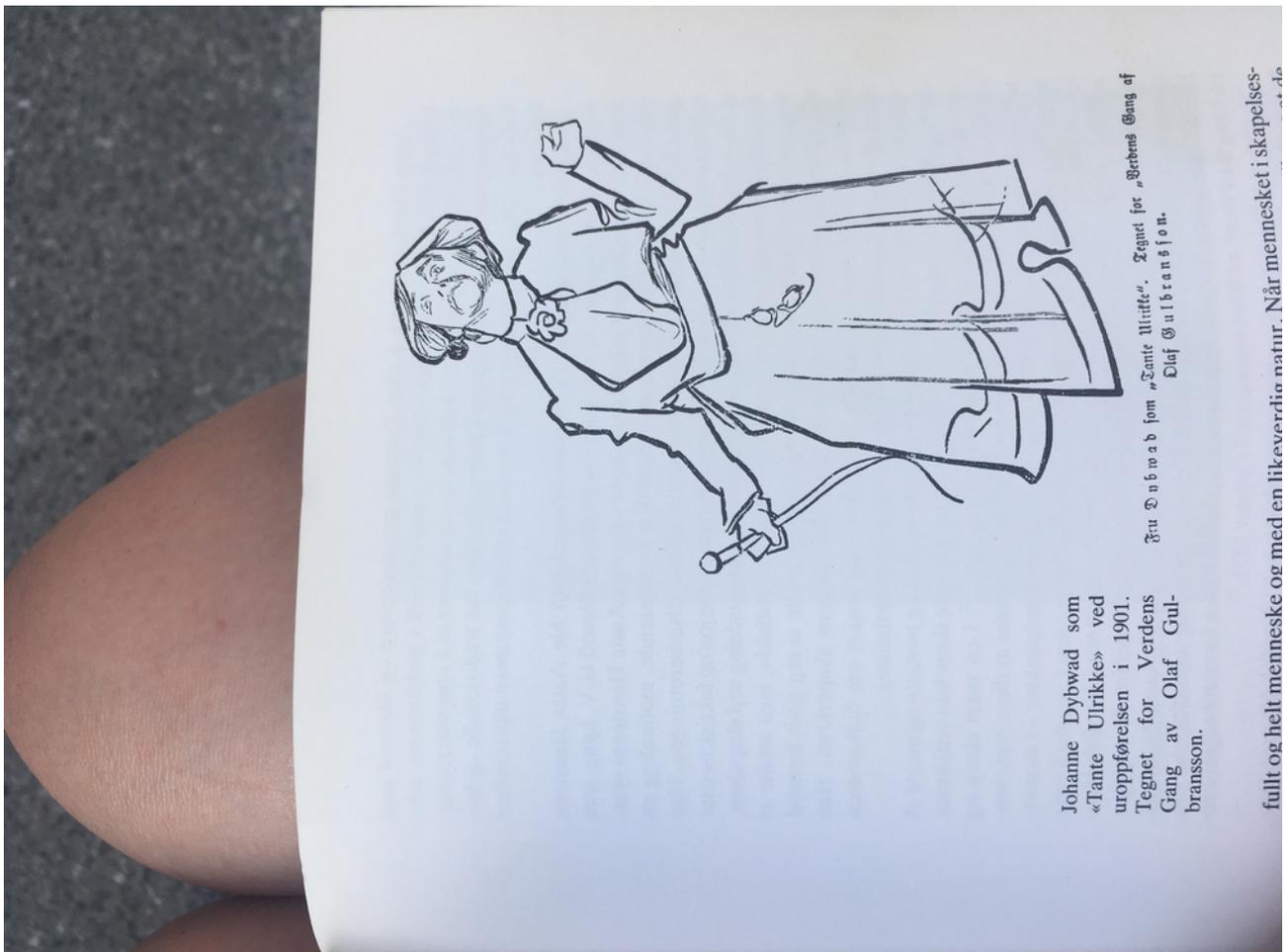
**Narrator:** Daughter of a respected academic, Hansteen belonged to the bourgeoisie, and never sought to leave it. Still, her thinking was ripe with values. She was at the barricades, uttering her incantations, wielding her umbrella, or hidden away at home sobbing. Always involved in psychic battle.<sup>5</sup>

**Encyclopedia:** Nina Karin Monsen (...sorry...) in *Furier er også Kvinner*, p. 187.

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<sup>4</sup> Aasta Hansteen, Nylænde, 1890, p. 33

<sup>5</sup> Nina Karin Monsen (... sorry.), *Furier er også kvinner*, p. 187, regarding a new 'odelstingsproposisjon', a new bill to pass.



Johanne Dybwad playing Aasta Hansteen in «Tante Ulrikke» in 1901, by Olaf Gulbransson

**-Narrator:** Cruising through the graveyard heading in Køber's direction, is

**-Scharffenberg:** Dr. Johan Scharffenberg.

**-Narrator:** He's always found solace among the dead. As a schoolboy, he'd been preoccupied with the morbid, pressing flowers in his notebooks and writing long poems about bodies returning to dust. He's now a physician, psychiatrist, prohibitionist, public intellectual. His adversaries call him a «fanatical rationalist». His friends say he's a woman-hater. Endlessly productive in a position of power, he polemicizes *for* the forced sterilization and internation of folks he doesn't like: «Loose women», addicts, the mentally ill, and ethnic groups unfitting to his racist, nationalist visions. He kept intimate correspondences with his male friends, who often begged him not to show anyone the nature of their communication. A self-proclaimed «enemy of joy», Scharffenberg is in an uncharacteristically good mood. The doctor's jam is temperance, and new statistics showed that the number of «drunk-tank» arrests had plummeted during the outbreak of the flu. Scharffenberg had sympathy for the drunks, *he truly did*. They were uneducated and primitive, worked in filthy environments, from dawn til dusk, and

when they came home, they had to share a bed with their wives, *those disgusting bodies*. Still, public intoxication was unacceptable. The Norwegian public is not a pig-sty! Scharffenberg comes to a halt.

**-Scharffenberg:** What in God's name? (...) There's a (...) Drunk....! A damsel! (...) Is she intoxicated?!... Deranged? She *must* need my help.

**-Narrator:** Scharffenberg picks up speed, and has soon marched right over to Køber, who's still clenching the bust like a gargoyle on a Dome.

**-Scharffenberg:** I demand an explanation! (...) Where is your company?!

**-Køber:** ...I don't run a company?

**-Scharffenberg:** Your husband! Or your father! Brother!

**-Køber:** My husband is at home, I'm sure my papa is too..

**-Scharffenberg:** And what is your business bumbling about here in Christiania, unaccompanied?

**Køber:** Why are you so fundamentally ungroovy? Who asked you for your opinion?

**Scharffenberg:** WHAT!

**Køber:** Leave me alone!

**-Narrator:** Will Scharffenberg leave Køber alone?

**-Scharffenberg:** Are you crazy?!

**Køber:** No, no.

**-Scharffenberg:** Then collect yourself.

**-Køber:** Yes, yes.

**-Scharffenberg:** What is your excuse for your behaviour? Explain.

-**Køber**: (silence, but breathing)

-**Scharffenberg**: Go home to your husband! Women should be a beacon of morality in a marriage!<sup>6</sup>

-**Encyclopedia**: «Kvinden skal være mandens SædelighedsIdeal», M. I. Monrad, quoted by Elias Bredsdorff in *Den store nordiske krig om seksualmoralen*, 1973, p. 72, p. 73.

-**Køber**: The commandments don't count for men?!<sup>7</sup>

-**Encyclopedia**: Aasta Hansteen, Speech on the occasion of the Odelsting proposition no. 2, *Nylænde*, 1900, p. 70

-**Scarffenberg**: The man is the master of the household! Are you unwell, woman? Do you need medical attention? Go home to your husband!

-**Køber**: If men should rule women because of his greater strength, should not then the bear, the elephant and the horse rule men, because of their even greater strength?<sup>8</sup>

-**Encyclopedia**: Aasta Hansteen, diary 4-5, 1887.

-**Scharffenberg**: Go on! Git!

-**Køber**: I'm created in God's image. Leave me alone.

-**Scharffenberg**: I'm..... alerting the Police!

-**Køber**: I'll act out burning with bile and fiery fury against man's misshapen minds when in ignorant bruteness they resort to demanding that the law and it's executive powers subject its people to abuse!<sup>9</sup>

-**Encyclopedia**: Aasta Hansteen in a letter to Mathilde Agnes Wergeland, 18.3.1902: «Jeg optræder med brændende forbitrelse og glødende harme mod mandeviljens djevlelske vandskabthed, naar den i

6 «Kvinden skal være mandens SædelighedsIdeal», M. I. Monrad, sitert av Elias Bredsdorff i *Den store nordiske krig om seksualmoralen*, 1973, s 72, s 73

7 Aasta Hansteen, Tale i anledning Odelstingets prp. no. 2., *Nylænde* 1900 page 70

8 Aasta Hansteen, *Dagbok* 4-5-1887

9 Aasta Hansteen in a letter to Mathilde Agnes Wergeland, 18.3.1902: «Jeg optræder med brændende forbitrelse og glødende harme mod mandeviljens djevlelske vandskabthed, naar den i bundløs uvidenhed og raahed tyr til den lovgivende og den udøvende magt med den fordring: «Udlever os hele kvindekønnet til... misbrug».

bundløs uvidenhed og raahed tyr til den lovgivende og den udøvende magt med den fordring: «Udlever os hele kvindекönnet til... misbrug».

**-Scharffenberg:** Police! Arrest this woman!

**-Køber** (spoken): *This woman? I'm every woman (...)* it's all in me. (...)

(Then to the tune of the Chaka Khan song «I'm Every Woman»<sup>10</sup>)

Anything you want done, baby,

I'll do it naturally

I'm every woman,

It's all in me

I can read your thoughts right now,

Every one from A to Z

(Whoa, whoa, whoa

Whoa, whoa, whoa)

I can cast a spell,

Of secrets you can't tell,

Mix a special brew,

Put fire inside of you

Anytime you feel danger or fear,

Then instantly

I will appear 'cause

I'm every woman,

It's all in me

Anything you want done, baby,

I'll do it naturally

(Whoa, whoa, whoa

Whoa, whoa, whoa)

I can sense your needs

Like rain unto the seeds

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10 [\(1978\)](#)

I can make a rhyme  
Of confusion in your mind  
And when it comes down to some good old-fashioned love,  
That's what I've got baby, 'cause.....