

Mme X in The Stronger

For those who have not read or seen the play, it is about Mme. X, who is an actress, and who has bought Christmas presents and comes into a cafe to drink a cup of chocolate. At a table sits her friend, the actress Mlle Y, drinking beer and looking at a picture magazine.

Mme. X is talking and Miss Y is not saying a word!

Mme. X enumerates many, many examples of the indirect influence Mlle Y had on her through a secret relationship with her husband. She feels as if Mlle Y's soul has crawled into her and taken over her! "Everything, everything came from you to me, even your passions! I hate you, hate you, hate you!"

After being at the bottom of her despair, things start to turn around. She says: "Poor Amelie! Do you know, I feel sorry for you, because I know you're unhappy – unhappy like someone who's been hurt – and evil because you've been hurt. /.../ Oh, that business with Bob doesn't bother me – why should it? And what does it matter whether you taught me to drink chocolate, or someone else did? It's all one in the end. /.../ You know, when all is said and done, perhaps I really am the stronger of us two",

Mme. X gets up, collects her things, and says: "Thank you, Amelie, for all the good lessons you've taught me. Thank you for teaching my husband to love! - Now I'M going home to love him!"

Would I want to be Mme. X? No absolutely not! But as an actress, yes, please! From confident wife and mother down to bottomless despair and then slowly up again until she feels like the stronger one.

Lil Terselius and I performed this wonderful one-act play in 1975 on Fyran's stage at Dramaten. Director: Gun Jönsson. The Stronger was played together with Strindberg's Motherly Love in a project called The Myth of Strength and weakness.

Kristina Adolphson, actress