

1912. The three Almas together in the bathroom. Reserl takes care of their needs.

ALMA 1 **Damn! I think I'm pregnant again.**

ALMA 3 **Who is it this time?**

ALMA 1 **Dr. Paul Kammerer.**

ALMA 2 **Ugghh...!!**

ALMA 1 **Why »Ugh«? He's a very rich man. I love him.**

ALMA 2 **Kammerer is rich?!**

ALMA 3 **Spiritually, not financially of course.**

ALMA 2 **He's as poor as those frogs of his, the ones he's always fiddling around with. Apparently he recently kissed one.**

ALMA 3 **A Midwife-Toad. I know.**

ALMA 1 **It's his favorite animal. They've proven his theory that artificially-acquired characteristics can be inherited.**

ALMA 3 **His discoveries could bring him a lot of money?**

ALMA 1 **In Russia, he's already got a large following.**

ALMA 3 **They say he's even restored a lizard's eyesight!**

ALMA 2 **Oh! The poor creature! And what was the first thing it had to look at?**

ALMA 1-3 **Dr. Paul Kammerer!!**

ALMA 3 **That wretched Communist.**

ALMA 1 **My dear Alma, you're as naïve as you are beautiful.**

ALMA 2 **Let me to tell you: one doesn't become rich through work.**

ALMA 3 **Either manual or spiritual.**

ALMA 2 **If you really want to become rich...**

ALMA 1 **Oh, yes, it would be nice for a change... !**

ALMA 3 **Oh, yes, it would be nice for a change... !**

ALMA 2 **Oh, yes, it would be nice for a change... !**

ALMA 1 **What is it you really want then? Tell me!**

ALMA 3 **What is your most secret longing! What is it you dream of?**

ALMA 1 **Say it out loud for once. Come on, you can tell us everything.**

ALMA 3 **Allow yourself to dream, and say it. Surrender to your wishes...**

ALMA 1 **...and let yourself dream...**

ALMA 3 **... the forbidden thoughts too...**

ALMA 1 **... the hidden ones...**

ALMA 3 **... the ones you might even not know about yet!**

ALMA 2 **Hang on, hold it, hold it! It's not that easy to say.**

ALMA 2 **Take your time.**

ALMA 2 You know what I want? Should I tell you what I desire most of all?

ALMA 1&3 What ?!

ALMA 2 I want to go to Paris!

ALMA 1&3 Aaahhh!!

ALMA 2 With you! Only with you! - I'll take you to the Hotel Ritz. We'll rent the best room. The wedding suite. We'll stay there as long as we want. We'll go to the opera too. And after the show we'll have dinner at the Tour-D'Argent...

ALMA 1&3 Mhhhhh!!

ALMA 2 ... or at The Moulin Rouge – wherever we want! Do you want to come with me?

ALMA 1 Yes, why not!

ALMA 3 We could go at once!

ALMA 1-3 Haaahh!!!

Reserl switches on the lights.

ALMA 2 It will set Kammerer on fire.

ALMA 1 He will have to feed those toads all by himself with mealworms!

ALMA 3 He'll finally have to choose! Between his stupid wife...

ALMA 1 ... and us!

ALMA 2 Alma! You are so splendid!

ALMA 3 Men aren't good enough for our love.

ALMA 1 I wish I could survive without them!

ALMA 3 I knew it...

ALMA 1 But I can't. I can't!

ALMA 2 I simply love it when they love me. It quickens my pulse to feel their desire.

ALMA 3 It awakens me from my deep sleep. It's like a drug!

ALMA 1 When a man falls in love with me, I immediately fall in love with myself. And all of a sudden my life feels so full ...

ALMA 3 ... so justified ...

ALMA 2 ... just because a new man passes through my life...!

ALMA 1 But they always leave their dirty footsteps in your soul....

ALMA 3 ... and their greasy fingerprints!

ALMA 2 They numb us with that sweet smell of decay they have the nerve to call their love...

ALMA 3 ... they envelop us in a smoke-screen with their ugly taste of stale beer...

ALMA 1 ... and cold tobacco...

ALMA 2 ... and when the clouds of smoke have cleared ... ?

ALMA 1 You suddenly feel that your life isn't your own any more. !

ALMA 3 That your life no longer belongs to you.

ALMA 1&2 Alma...?!

ALMA 2 Don't you think so?!

ALMA 1-3 No!!!!!!

ALMA 2 Not at all! The more men pass through my life, the more strongly I feel that my life is still mine!

ALMA 3 But they always fill you with their rotten semen!

ALMA 1 What do you mean rotten? With some of them it's the finest whipped cream imaginable!

ALMA 3 Les huîtres de la mer...!

ALMA 2 Strawberry cream pie...!

ALMA 1 They pump you up like a balloon!

ALMA 2 If I love a man I want his baby too.

ALMA 1 If I don't, it can easily be disposed of.

ALMA 2&3 Alma!

ALMA 1 What's wrong with that?

ALMA 3 I am afraid –

ALMA 2 I'm not.

ALMA 1 But if you think it is such a bad idea –

ALMA 3 No, no, I think it is a very friendly idea.

ALMA 2 Oh, Alma, I'm so happy for you! You'll see. It won't disturb you at all!

ALMA 1 Oh, I am sure it won't. I would never allow any creature to tie up my whole life just because another object happens to come along - and then vanish again.

ALMA 2&3 An »object«? -

ALMA 1 Yes.

ALMA 2 Well, what's wrong with objects?

ALMA 3 They can be very interesting and even exciting...

ALMA 1 But that's no reason to give them all up, just because of the first object that catches our attention?

ALMA 3 Why should one precious stone make you blind to all the rest of them?

ALMA 1 Sure!

ALMA 2 I'm not asking for absolute faithfulness , but–

ALMA 1 I have nothing against it. I have nothing against faithfulness . The mere fact that a new object draws my attention doesn't mean I have to throw the old one into the garbage. On the contrary. I always say: never throw away a man just because you're through with him.

ALMA 3 Good point!

ALMA 2 Fantastic!

ALMA 1 One day you could use him or even desire him again...

ALMA 3 Who knows?

ALMA 2 Exactly!

ALMA 3 One never can tell!

ALMA 1 If I lose interest in a man, and I have no use for him any more, I'm not going to throw him away. Just because my interest in him has died?

ALMA 2 Wait a minute! I just put him away? Carefully? To rest for a while? In the corner? Within my reach...?

ALMA 3 Well...!

ALMA 1 Why not? The possibility exists, doesn't it?

ALMA 3 Women who are proud of being faithful all their life to only one man - even if it's a really special man - can't really be interested in men's overall intelligence or in their pure spirit!

ALMA 1 It's a false sense of honor, that forces them to be faithful, and they are lost to all the other objects. To their intelligence, their greatness, their genius!

ALMA 2 Such women are dead – long before they have died!!!

ALMA 1&2&3 Yeahhh!!!!

ALMA 1 Doesn't constancy mean anything to you?

ALMA 3 Constancy!

ALMA 2 It's ridiculous!

ALMA 3 All intelligent men have the right to enchant me. Otherwise I would be doing them an injustice!

ALMA 2 The purely accidental advantage of the one who happened to be the first to cross my path should not rob the others of a fair chance to get access to my heart.

ALMA 1 Alexander Zemlinsky happened to be the first to charm me with his talents; why should I bind my heart to Gustav Mahler's virtuosity ?

ALMA 2 And once Gustav was yours, why should it make you blind to Walter's perfect grace? And It was your sacred duty to attend to Walter Gropius.

ALMA 1 That's right!!!

ALMA 3 And when Walter gave you all he had to offer, should you have numbed your senses to what Oskar Kokoschka made them feel?

ALMA 2 Now listen: I know one thing for certain: genius enraptures me wherever I encounter it; I have a nose for it, you see? And I can't help giving in to its overwhelming power. Even if I am in love with one man's beautiful spirit, it doesn't oblige me to unfairly ignore another man's ravishing genius!

ALMA 3 I cannot freeze my heart to the shining light of a new young star that appears in my firmament! And if I had 10,000 hearts...

ALMA 1 ... I would give them all to him!

ALMA 3 I wish I had 10,000 hearts, which I could open one at a time to 10,000 new sunrises on my horizon! –

ALMA 1 For there is nothing as exciting as a new-born attraction.

ALMA 2 It is so sweet to attract ...

ALMA 1 ... to seduce...

ALMA 3 ... and to feel the powerful potential of a young, budding genius in your hands ...

ALMA 1 ... and then to overcome his resistance to being dominated ...

ALMA 2 ... to weave our invisible net around his fluttering wings ...

ALMA 3 ... and to pull him step by step into our innermost depths ...
... where we desire him more than anything.

ALMA 1 (sings:) »On this night of ten thousand hearts...

ALMA 1-3 (sing:) Let me take you to heaven's door!
Where the music of love's guitars,
Plays forever more!«

They get dressed.

ALMA 3 But once he's mine, and I've dominated him, there is nothing left to say or to desire.

ALMA 1 And all the beauty of our passion suddenly disappears, and the only thing left for us to do is fall asleep, ...

ALMA 2 ... degenerate and rot away.

ALMA 1 There is nothing as repulsive and as boring as a man who's become my property, and behaves as if that means I belong to him.

ALMA 3 All of a sudden the most lively spirits fall asleep.

ALMA 2 The young and charming genius of yesterday becomes a weary spirit in the morning.

ALMA 1 The lively mind collapses as if there were nothing in it. And the mouth that had once dripped pearls now exudes a dank smell of rotteness and dung.

ALMA 3 The man who was my prize becomes my punishment.

ALMA 2 And all that's left to do is wonder: what I have done to deserve such an ugly punishment!

ALMA 3 I tell you, worn-out men are worse than death!

TERESA It must be very sad, loving in all directions, like you do.

They laugh.

ALMA 1 You don't to pity us.

ALMA 3 It's not as bad as you think.

ALMA 2 Believe me, there is a profound remedy for avoiding the kind of disaster we have just described...

ALMA 3 ... the only thing that can save us from ultimate disaster is ...

ALMA 2+1 What?!

ALMA 3 ... a new young genius who appears ... and shakes us out of the slumber that borders the sleep of death.

KOKOSCHKA (OFF) Alma!!! – Alma?!!!!

ALMA 3 Oskar?

KOKOSCHKA Where are you?! Come up! I have to talk to you!

ALMA 3 I'm coming! I'm coming! (to the Almas) He's a wild one!

KOKOSCHKA Where have you been? Why did you keep me waiting for so long?

ALMA 3 I'm right here!

KOKOSCHKA Who are these women?

ALMA 3 Friends of mine.

KOKOSCHKA Pleasure meeting you - You have 2 minutes.

ALMA 3 (To the others:) He's a wild one! Ughhh!

ALMA1 What's his name?

ALMA 3 Kokoschka. Oskar Kokoschka.

ALMA 1+2 Ahhh!

ALMA 2 What's his profession?

ALMA 3 Pssst! He's a painter!

ALMA 2&1 Uhhh....!

**ALMA 1&2&3 (sing:) I don't know to whom I belong to,
I don't want to stick just to one man alone.
If I swear to god now I love you
It would do injustice to all men on earth.
Why should such a beauty just attract one man solely
the sunshine, the starlight are all men's possession.
I don't know to whom I belong to,
Maybe I belong to myself all alone.**