

The sunlight was beginning to peek through the shutters at the window into Gisela's bedchamber. She could see its brightness through her eyelids. As she snuggled in bed, she could hear the faint sounds of the fire girl stoking the coals in the middle of the room. But Gisela was snug and warm in her bed, nestled between her two sisters under the thick wool blanket. She decided to lie there just a little while longer.

Hilde, her older sister, began to snore just loud enough so that Gisela was not able to go back to sleep. That was all right though because she really was too excited to sleep. Today she was going to become a young lady at Papa's court. As the daughter of Charles the Great, King of the Franks, and his second wife, Hildegard, she held a high position in the castle.

Unfortunately, Gisela's mother had died just a few years ago. The king's new wife, Fastrada, was now in charge of raising the six royal children. There were the older brothers; Charles, Pepin and Louis, and the girls; Hilde, Gisela and the younger Bertha. As part of the day's festivities, Gisela was officially receiving a lady-in-waiting and, hopefully, a new friend.