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Wallenstein

A Dramatic Poem

FRIEDRICH SCHILLER
TRANSLATED BY FLORA KIMMICH,
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY ROGER PAULIN

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Wallenstein

A Dramatic Poem

By Friedrich Schiller

*Translation and Notes to the Text by Flora Kimmich
Introduction by Roger Paulin*

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Translator's Note

This attempt at Schiller's *Wallenstein* seeks to bring that extraordinary trilogy to young people in college-level instruction and to the general reader. It joins *Fiesco*¹ in a growing series of translations, with commentary, of Schiller's major plays, which Open Book Publishers makes freely available to a wide readership.

Endnotes add brief information to clarify the many historical references in the text; they comment on the rare obscurities and repeatedly they call attention to a web of internal reference that draws a work of nearly eight thousand lines into a dense, capacious whole. These references are noted by act, scene, and line number to bring before the reader ever and again the economy that distinguishes drama from the other genres.

A glossary of Notable Names intends to give quick aid when the reader cannot keep all the Friedrichs and Ferdinands here entirely straight or quite remember where it was that Tilly met his end. It also offers a small amount of information beyond the endnotes, particularly on the historical dimension of figures whom Schiller has reinvented for the purposes of his great drama.

For both the endnotes and the glossary I am deeply indebted to Frithjof Stock, editor of the edition Deutsche Klassiker, Frankfurt am Main, 2000, the text on which the translation is based, and to the ever-concise and evergreen Columbia Encyclopedia, third edition, New York,

¹ Friedrich Schiller, *Fiesco's Conspiracy at Genoa*, edited by John Guthrie, translated by Flora Kimmich (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2015), <https://www.openbookpublishers.com/product/261>

1963. Roger Paulin, generously, helped me rid the text of weighty Latin words and other blots. Alessandra Tosi presided over it all with patience and forbearance and a fund of good solutions. Christoph Kimmich's conversation sustained me in this whole long labor, to say nothing of his resourcefulness in wrestling a typescript as thorny as was this one from an unyielding computer.

Additional Resources

Readers can freely access the original German text of Schiller's *Wallenstein* (Stuttgart and Berlin: J. G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung Nachfolger, 1911) at Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/6518>

A reading of the drama (in German) is freely available at LibriVox, <https://librivox.org/wallenstein-ein-dramatisches-gedicht-by-friedrich-von-schiller>



Gerhard von Kügelgen, Friedrich Schiller (1808–1809), oil on canvas, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gerhard_von_Kügelgen_001.jpg. Image in the public domain.

Introduction¹

Roger Paulin

Schiller first encountered the figure of Wallenstein as a subject during his work on his *History of the Thirty Years' War*, published in 1792. There, it was a question of pitting King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden against his main rival, Albrecht Wallenstein, duke of Friedland. According to Schiller's scheme at the time, this involved contrasting the figures of the king, an "idealist" but not unmoved by political motives, with Wallenstein, the "realist," power-hungry and following these aims pragmatically. Yet in the course of work on his *History*, Schiller developed a more nuanced view of Wallenstein, still unscrupulous and a victim of his own overweening ambition, but invested nevertheless with more admirable human qualities, such as generosity, always towering above his contemporaries as a figure in history.

The idea of treating this subject in dramatic form dates from as early as 1791, with work beginning in 1793. By 1796, he could confess to Goethe that the sheer mass of material was forcing him to think beyond the confines of conventional tragedy. His philosophical studies, and his close contact with Goethe, enabled him to envisage a subject that was rooted in the here and now—"realistic"—but which gained formal dignity through the ideal constraints of art. In this way, Schiller was able to create a tragic character, in moral terms blameworthy, but from whom paradoxically we cannot withhold our admiration.

¹ This Introduction is largely based on my 'Schiller, *Wallenstein*', in Peter Hutchinson (ed.), *Landmarks in German Drama* (Bern, 2002), pp. 47–57 (by kind permission of the publisher, Peter Lang).

By 1797, following Goethe's advice, Schiller concluded that a play—a “dramatic poem,” as he eventually called it—of this density and complexity could not be contained in five acts of verse, nor indeed in two full-length dramas. By 1798, the play had assumed its present form, a trilogy, *Wallenstein's Camp* in old-fashioned rhyming verse, then *The Piccolomini* and *The Death of Wallenstein* in the blank verse of the German classical high tragedy. At its first performances in Berlin and Weimar in 1798, a shortened version of parts Two and Three was presented. In 1800 appeared the full three-part version that we have today.

Critics and commentators are in general agreement that *Wallenstein* represents the pinnacle of Schiller's achievement as a dramatist.² Contemporaries like Goethe and Wilhelm von Humboldt sensed that this was a new high point in German tragedy. Goethe had followed the genesis of the play in his correspondence with Schiller and was even behind the idea of using a trilogy as the only aesthetically satisfactory means of presenting the vast panorama of history. Coleridge's and Constant's translations are an indication of its reception beyond Germany.³

Only those critics who identified one-sidedly with another tradition or with different notions of tragedy found fault with *Wallenstein*. Hegel around 1800 saw no religious sense behind the presence of fate in the drama, comparing it unfavorably with Greek tragedy.⁴ Tieck in 1826 found the love scenes superfluous and not organic to the action, making comparisons with Shakespeare's very different technique in *Romeo and*

2 For an account of the reception of *Wallenstein*, with an extensive bibliography, see Schillers 'Wallenstein,' ed. by Fritz Heuer and Werner Keller, *Wege der Forschung* 420 (Darmstadt, 1977). See also Friedrich Schiller: 'Wallenstein:' Erläuterungen und Dokumente, ed. by Kurt Rothmann, Reclams Universal Bibliothek 8136 [3] (Stuttgart, 1982). Recent studies in English include T.J. Reed, *The Classical Centre. Goethe and Weimar 1775–1832* (Oxford, 1980), pp. 136–49; also Schiller, *Past Masters* (Oxford and New York, 1991), pp. 80–85; Lesley Sharpe, *Schiller and the Historical Character. Presentation and Interpretation in the Historiographical Works and in the Historical Dramas* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 72–105; and Friedrich Schiller, *Drama, Thought and Politics* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 217–50; F.J. Lampert, 'Wallenstein on the English Stage,' *German Life and Letters*, 48 (1995), 124–47.

3 Colerige's translation of the play (1891 edition) is available at <https://archive.org/details/dramaticworksoff00schiuoft>; Constant's (1809 edition) at https://fr.wikisource.org/wiki/Livre:Constant_-_Wallstein,_1809.djvu

4 G.W.F. Hegel, 'Über Wallenstein,' included in Schillers 'Wallenstein,' ed. by Heuer and Keller, pp. 15f.

Juliet.⁵ Otto Ludwig in 1859 found Wallenstein's "reflective" nature unheroic and untragic and—crucially—un-Shakespearean.⁶ *Wallenstein* does not reduce so easily to the classic relations between free will and necessity that inform traditional tragic practice.

These criticisms indicate nevertheless that the modern writer of tragedy is bound to be subjected to the scrutiny of the two major traditions that go before him: Greek drama and Shakespeare, in German terms "fate" versus "character." Anyone who cares to look will find elements of Sophocles or Shakespeare (especially *Henry IV*, *Macbeth* and *Richard III*) or even Racine in *Wallenstein*. We know that the reading of Shakespearean plays during the early stages of work on the play helped Schiller to resolve, to his own satisfaction, the questions of history, fate, and character. But we need to bear in mind that Schiller's historical and aesthetic sense was that of his own age and its needs. He was deeply aware of the unique and irrevocable nature of classical antiquity, the "unrepeatability" of Sophocles. Similarly, his reading of Shakespeare recognized elements irreconcilable with his own dramatic practice. His dramatic development—from *The Bandits* to *Fiesco* to *Don Carlos*—shows a move away from Shakespearean characterisation to figures in the guise of the idealist. These act not so much out of the passions and emotions in themselves, but come to represent a kind of philosophical postulate (freedom in the case of Karl Moor, "freedom of thought" in the case of Marquis Posa). In that sense, *Wallenstein*, with its ambiguities, is hardly a continuation of Schiller's dramatic practice of the 1780s.

There is another major difference. Schiller, between writing *Don Carlos* and *Wallenstein*, had been active on two fronts. He had been a practicing historian, and he had committed to writing abstract notions about the idea of human moral freedom in the work of art. Is *Wallenstein* therefore a demonstration in dramatic form of, say, Schiller's reception of Kant? It has been common to test *Wallenstein* against some aspects of Schiller's indebtedness to Kant: the categories of "sublime" and "beautiful," of "realist" and "idealistic," of "moral" and "esthetic." But none in practice gives secure purchase. The aim of theatre to create "the true artistic world of the poet," the world of aesthetic "semblance," of

5 Ludwig Tieck, 'Die Piccolomini. *Wallensteins Tod*', *ibid.*, pp. 21–40.

6 Otto Ludwig, 'Schillers *Wallenstein*', *ibid.*, pp. 47–52.

"free play" against the merely material, is only partially fulfilled in the sombre interplay of mankind and history.

We must always remember that Schiller is a dramatist to his fingertips, not a philosopher who thinks in dialogue. Yet it is right to seek a philosophical, theoretical and dramatic centre to this play, a problem around which it revolves. Goethe, so much involved in its genesis, believed he had put his finger on it in 1799: it was the "fantastic mind" associated with "the great and idealistic," as against "base real life."⁷ But how could one square those fairly abstract ideas with the material that underlies the whole action, the history of Wallenstein in his own age? Wilhelm Dilthey, looking back on the emergence of the genre in the nineteenth century, called *Wallenstein* the first German historical drama.⁸ That is certainly true in the sense that Schiller is in this play closer to his historical sources than in any other (despite the invention of Max and Thekla). It is also true in that Schiller agonized over the material he had expertly marshalled in his *History of the Thirty Years' War* and its sources and over the best way to present it dramatically. We might question whether his deference to Goethe's suggestion of a trilogy was the best solution, especially since Schiller was acutely aware of Goethe's shortcomings as a dramatist.

Yet Schiller never regarded history as more than the quarry from which he drew the raw material for the finished work of art. History is a means to an end, nothing more. But he possesses nevertheless the historian's sense of a great figure standing out from his own age, incorporating it, explaining its currents and impulses, part of it yet transcending it. He does not abandon the ability to document, but he has the capacity to sum up what is dramatically essential in history. "Thus Wallenstein fell, not because he was a rebel, but he rebelled because he fell,"⁹ is the proposition in *History of the Thirty Years' War*. It is a philosophical paradox, and an aphorism, held together in the rhetorical figure of the chiasmus. It is stating that Schiller is not primarily concerned with the tradition of the rise and fall of the great, the pattern that informed Greek and Senecan tragedy. *Wallenstein*

7 Goethe, 'Die Piccolomini. *Wallensteins erster Teil*', *ibid.*, pp. 3–9 (p. 9).

8 Wilhelm Dilthey, '*Wallenstein*', *ibid.*, pp. 74–103 (p. 76).

9 All German quotations from Schiller are taken from *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. by Gerhard Fricke, Herbert G. Gopfert and Herbert Stubenrauch, 5 vols (Munich, 1960), here IV, 688. *Wallenstein* translation quoted in text with part and line number.

cannot be explained solely in terms of *superbia*, *hubris*, overweening ambition, although they are part of his character. Rather he displays a sense of the inadequacy of the material world, a will to change that glimpses beyond the world of the senses to some kind of ideal state. This is the aspect of Wallenstein which Schiller found most fascinating. He is not like Macbeth; we can clearly trace the steps leading up to his crime and the stages towards his downfall. Wallenstein's dramatic graph is different. At the time of the action, over a decade of the Thirty Years' War is past, with Wallenstein's greatest deeds of heroism and generalship, the years of Tilly and Gustavus Adolphus, the battle of Lützen, now over.

Rather it is the sense of an age that Schiller wishes to convey. Indeed his prologue had expressed the appropriateness of the work of art to sum up the essentials of his own times:

Not unworthy of the exalted
Moment, the time in which we live now

(Prologue, 55f.)

Historical drama, as an esthetic exercise, may point to the great movements and commotions of its own age, in Schiller's case the aftermath of the French Revolution (the reference is to the First Consul, Bonaparte). By the same token, the work of art is not bound to the limits of its own circumstances; art by its very nature raises and transcends:

[...] and rather give her thanks
That she would play the gloomy world of Truth
Over onto the serene world of Art,
That she herself undoes forthrightly the
Illusion that she has created, does
Not substitute its Seeming for that Truth.
Our lives are earnest and our art serene.

(Prologue, 131–38)

How can "the gloomy world of Truth" and "the serene world of Art" be reconciled, and how can they be made to reflect both the historical moment and a transcendent ideal?

Schiller's use of the trilogy to some degree reflects the resolution of this. *Wallenstein's Camp* presents us with the great general's power base, not the man himself; *The Piccolomini* centres on the conflict between

father and son, Octavio and Max Piccolomini; *The Death of Wallenstein* brings us the act of rebellion and the downfall. Each part of the trilogy has its own terms of reference and “feel.” Schiller does not follow the Shakespearean pattern of alternation between high and low styles—a pattern that has consequences for nineteenth-century verse tragedy in general. *The Piccolomini* and *The Death of Wallenstein* are characterized by the interior setting of French tragedy, with its restricted numbers on stage, and use of verse (here blank verse). The *Camp* stands out formally through the use of “Knittelverse” and their “old German” or Faustian associations and the comic mode of the Capuchin’s Sermon. Wallenstein does not appear. For this is the army that is occupying Bohemia and draining its substance. It is characterized by venality, materialism, the forces of fortune and chance.

Schiller’s own commentary is “The camp alone explains his crime” [my translation] interpenetration of all spheres of the high tragedy by the *Camp*. We see this in the very first scene of *The Piccolomini*, where the generals, not the soldiery are assembled, with its military language, its use of foreign words in the original, and above all the accentuated theatricality of its stage directions (“lost in thought,” “with meaning,” “startled”). Buttler’s “We shall not go from here the way we came” (68) has an ominous ring—when we know of his later role in Wallenstein’s fall. We sense that Wallenstein’s power base is built not on high ideals but on mercenary service and plunder. The much-vaunted charismatic power of Wallenstein to raise armies—another reason why Buttler must murder him in the night before the Swedes are due to arrive—is based also on his power to pay (“this princely man” as the venal condottiere Isolani calls him, 87). Wallenstein is aware of this, as he stoically notes when Isolani deserts him for the Emperor (*Death of Wallenstein*, 1967f.). It is the world of the *Camp*—but reflected in its highest officers—that enters into the proceedings at the banquet in *The Piccolomini* where Isolani and Illo brawl, that disturbs the action of *The Death of Wallenstein*, in the representatives of the Pappenheim regiment, that explains the mentality of Buttler and his hired assassins, and which ultimately underlies the punchline of the whole play, “It’s for Prince Piccolomini.”

We should not overlook that, at significant moments in the play, *Wallenstein* does fulfil the claims made about him in the *Camp*: he demonstrates an unsentimental and almost brutal attitude towards those in power and those close to him. We might cite here the scenes with

Questenberg and Wrangel, his attitude to Thekla, and his insensitive dismissal of Max as a potential son-in-law. Instead, once his power to act is invoked—as at the end of *The Death of Wallenstein* I, 1—his personality shows a formidable and awesome aspect, confirming Max’s words at the end of *The Piccolomini*:

For this regal man, in falling,
Will bring a world down in the aftermath.
And like a ship on the high seas that flames
Up suddenly and, bursting, flies apart,
Flinging its crew out between sea and sky,
Just so will he take all of us, attached
As we are to his fortunes, down with him.

(The Piccolomini, 23–91)

The first two lines suggest the Shakespearean analogy with Caesar; the image of ship and fortune—but with explosive power of expression—reminds us the century that produced both the historical Wallenstein and baroque drama.

Goethe, in the first important analysis of the play, contrasted the “base reality” of power and the “fantastic mind” of an ideal that this world cannot fulfil.¹⁰ We note in *The Piccolomini* and in the early scenes of *The Death of Wallenstein* the preoccupation with the word “time”: that it is not yet time to act, that things will be ordained in their own time. This is not merely the *hubris* of the Macbeth-like ruler (for *hubris* involves choosing the wrong time): Wallenstein also believes in a constellation of things beyond time. Think of the opening of *The Death of Wallenstein*:

WALLENSTEIN. Such favorable aspect! That great threesome
Converges fatefully; the two good stars,
Venus and *Jupiter* take spiteful *Mars*
Between them, force that vandal to serve me.

[...]

SENI. These two great lights unthreatened now by any
Star Melficus! Saturn rendered harmless,
Quite without power, *in cadente domo*.

WALLENSTEIN. His rule is over, Saturn’s is, the god who

¹⁰ Goethe, ‘Die Piccolomini,’ in *Schillers ‘Wallenstein’*, ed. by Heuer and Keller, p. 8f.

Controls the birth of secret things in Earth's
 Dark womb and in the depths of our own hearts,
 Disposes over all that shuns the light.
 The time is past for brooding and reflecting,
 For Jupiter, most brilliant, governs now
 And draws a work prepared in darkness forth
 With force into the realm of light. Quick! Time
 To act, before the happy constellation
 Above my head eludes me once again,
 For change is constant on the dome of heaven.

(Loud knocking at the door.)

(The Death of Wallenstein, 9–30)

Here Jupiter (majesty) and Venus (beauty) hold destructive Mars in check, and Saturn, the earth, is powerless. “The most brilliant” (27), not “all that shuns the light” (25), is in control. This alone gives Wallenstein the assurance that he can act. How different from Macbeth who trusts the witches. And yet he cannot act as he would wish. Note the stage directions (“Loud knocking at the door”); Terzky arrives, then Wrangel. In the next scene, the instruction (“He makes great strides through the room, then halts again, reflecting”) stresses the anguished necessity of acting within time. Political man does not enjoy the luxury of reflexion, of “when courage drove me/ Freely” (172f.), of “From a full heart” (l68), let alone the ideal esthetic freedom which Schiller sees as vested in “the beautiful.” This scene, relatively abstract in its language, trusting in trope, where the images do not come tumbling out as in Shakespeare, is in many ways the turning-point of the tragedy. But is everything programmed for downfall and disaster merely because Wallenstein has decided that his options are foreclosed and he must act? Rather, it talks of things that once seemed to be (“dream,” “hope” (143); a “full heart,” 168) and that no longer are. These are words connoting freedom from constraint, creations of the mind, imaginings indulged. They lifted him *from* time: now he must act *in* time. They raised him above the demeaning effects of “the commonplace” (199): he now must grapple with them.

This pivotal scene may tell us what the tragedy of *Wallenstein* is. Of course, Schiller calls only *The Death of Wallenstein* a “tragedy;” the whole play is “a dramatic poem,” the more neutral term that Lessing’s *Nathan the Wise* had made current. Does that mean that the world of *Wallenstein’s Camp*, as it spills over into *The Piccolomini*, is less tragic than the trilogy’s dénouement? The first two parts are more closely linked with the actual stuff of political power and the jostlings for supremacy in that world. *Wallenstein*’s great monologues, like the one in *The Death of Wallenstein* I, 4, seem hardly to form part of this, showing as they do a character too complex to be confined in categories of good generalship or a warlord’s fortune. He has always been complex: trusting moods, intuitions, signs, coincidences, as he chooses. Now, he is forced to act. That does not make him tragic, although there is a tragic irony underwriting all of his tactical decisions. Surely what makes the major characters in this play tragic, not just *Wallenstein*, but Max, Thekla or Octavio, is that they have identified something beyond the historical and political moment, to which they appeal—in vain. It is summed up in the abstract noun that occurs repeatedly in this play: “heart.” It signifies something different at each usage, and it is never uncontaminated with other, often baser, associations. It situates this play in both the lexis and self-awareness of idealism and the cult of feeling: not the grand deeds that spur on the action in Shakespeare, but the appeal to inner sentiments. It is one reason why Schiller, in his explicit stage directions, wishes us to experience the interplay of inner and exterior reactions. It is what always sets Schiller apart from Shakespeare, even when the sentiments, as with Karl Moor or Marquis Posa, are often stridently expressed or inadequately excogitated. Had *Wallenstein* been Macbeth, he would have said at Max’s death: “He should have died hereafter.” Instead, his pondering of what “the beautiful” in a human life might mean takes him into a moral sphere quite different from Macbeth’s. Had he been merely the “realist” of Schiller’s theory, he would not have allowed his mind to rise above the pragmatics of the situation. But “heart” is multivalent and ambiguous, like “remembrance” in *Hamlet* or “honest” in *Othello*. It means love, honour, probity, the integrated self; it helps to explain why loyalty can become a key issue in this historical drama, so unlike the naked struggles in Shakespeare’s Histories. But examining

one's heart means also consulting other interests: Octavio's appeal to Max's heart also involves imperial and dynastic loyalties; Wallenstein, similarly, but also Max's "between you and the promptings of my heart" (*Death of Wallenstein*, 696), which, as we know, means as much choosing Thekla as remaining loyal to Emperor Ferdinand. "Heart" also invites us to think, not in categories (such as "beautiful soul") but according to human experience. Max's desperate end cannot be read as "beautiful": what is there left to live for? Wallenstein's heart goes out to Max—it is in human terms the most convincing love in the play—but it cannot be divorced from retaining the Pappenheim regiment and it rules out Max as a son-in-law. Hence we are seized and moved by Wallenstein's "heart" in the elegiac mode of Acts Four and Five of *The Death of Wallenstein* when there can be no more manoeuvrings and temporizings—and when thugs are planning his murder. Octavio is never more tragic than when he realises at the end that "heart" involves losing a son in the cause that he espouses.

The figure of Max distinguishes this play further from Shakespeare, a figure who represents "the beautiful," while, as we saw, drawn into the world of reality by family affiliation and profession. Shakespeare's technique is different: his villains, Richard or Macbeth, are so commanding that they steal the show from the powers of legitimacy (Richmond, Malcolm). Yet Schiller's play is not just a conflict between, in his terms, the "idealist" and the "realist." Max's despair and death do not belong in the pure realm any more than Wallenstein's actions. But it is Wallenstein who enunciates the principle of pragmatic action, while also looking beyond it. That is the sense of his famous speech in the second act of *The Death of Wallenstein*, "Young, one is quick to seize upon a word" (755ff.), with its awareness of the contrasting spheres of "wide" or "pure" as opposed to "crude," "bad" or "deceitful," its essential call for compromise, its opposition to what Max calls "heart." Through an irony, it is only after Max's death that Wallenstein can appreciate the "dream" of humanity he sees Max as representing:

To me he made real stuff into a dream (3324)

Max, as son, as the object of affection ("child/ Of my own house" 2089f.), brings out the inner side of the ruler, hidden from the world of the *Camp* (*The Death of Wallenstein*, III, 18). One thinks of Thomas Mann's gloss

on the line “*my Max would ever leave me*” (2092) [my italics],¹¹ where Wallenstein’s little word sums up his moral dilemma. He is bound by forces of affection, but he also needs Max’s regiment as part of the retention of power.

Max, too, is linked with that other aspect of Wallenstein’s belief in some higher awareness. The well-known speech in *The Death of Wallenstein*, II, 3 (“My dream took me into the thick of battle,” 896ff.), where Wallenstein’s vision is written off by pragmatists as “chance”, is in fact a defence of Max’s father Octavio. Wallenstein’s belief is guaranteed by an inner sense of security and wellbeing. But we note that Max, by an irony in the economy of the action, finds his death in a scene (IV, 10) which echoes Wallenstein’s original dream vision.

Thus in the last scenes of the play, as Wallenstein accepts the guilt for Max’s death, we sense almost a sublimity, (in Schiller’s sense) entering in. It is not real, but dramatically devised. Wallenstein has not so much changed; he is not on an ascendant moral curve. But our esthetic satisfaction demands that his end be different from Macbeth’s or Richard’s. Think of the moving scene V, 3, with its renunciation of “baleful planets that deceive us” (3309). It contrasts with the tragic sense of impending catastrophe and end, and rises above the sphere of the brutal Buttler and his henchmen. The heavens are darkened; the atmosphere is lyrical; Max is the light of his life, not extinguished, but safe from the things that have held Wallenstein in their thrall, fate, “planets,” “misfortune” and “hour” (3603ff.). Yet for all that, Wallenstein has not entirely abandoned his hopes for the coming day, which for him will never dawn. It takes us back to his earlier monologue in the first act (I, 4). His ambition is not just to rule, but to fulfil a vision of change, to set new values against

The commonplace, eternal Yesterday,
What’s always been, is always coming back
Tomorrow will be good since it was good today.
[...]
Precious old hoardings, got from his ancestors! (199ff.)

¹¹ Thomas Mann, included in *Schillers ‘Wallenstein,’* ed. by Heuer and Keller, pp. 139–56 (p. 141).

It is a vision, not of habitual recurrence, but of change. It lifts us—momentarily only—above intrigue. It deludes Wallenstein into thinking that ambition, double-dealing, and the naked exercise of power may be justified if the end is worthwhile. It is this vision which constitutes the major difference between Octavio (and by extension the Emperor) and Wallenstein, between the old order and a glimpse of the new. It is related to Max's vision of peace and "humanity" in *The Piccolomini I*, 4. But Wallenstein is too taken up with the present, with the ambition of a crown, a dynasty, a *pax romana*, to grasp the full implications of this "humanity." He sees fulfilment in the other, Max, not in himself. Wallenstein still sets his face against the real future, which we know will bring his demise and the tragic denouement for Max there is no future to fear:

For him no future waits, for him no fate
Spins treachery; his life now lies laid out
Without a fold or wrinkle, and it shines,
Immaculate, it lies beyond time's reach,
And he's beyond both hope and fear, beyond
Unsteady, baleful planets that deceive us.
His lot is happy!

(The Death of Wallenstein, 3301–10)

WALLENSTEIN'S CAMP



Ein Croatischer Stangel Reiter.

*Wie vieles fremdes Volk, sieht man bei dieser Zeit,
In manchem Tauschen Ort, doch meistens nicht zur Freude.
Der wunderlich habit, macht vielen fast ein Grauw
Wem wünscht Sie in ihr Land, und war nicht in das Barn*

A Mounted Croatian Pikeman

*How many stranger troops one doesn't see today
In many a German town, and mostly with dismay.
Their curious outfits are cause for wide alarm;
We wish them home again, not in our house and barn.*

Seventeenth-century image of a mounted Croat, armed with a pike, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Zeitgenössische_Abbildung_eines_Kroatischen_Reiters.JPG.
Image in the public domain.

Prologue*

Spoken at the reopening of the Weimar Playhouse, October 1798

The play of smiling and of weeping masks
To which you've often lent a willing eye
And ear, devoted raptly your attention
Unites us once again within this Hall.
And see! It has made itself young again. Art,
With ornament, has made it a bright temple,
And a harmonious spirit speaks to us
In all these noble columns' orderly ranks
And turns our senses and our feelings festive.

10

And yet this still remains our old playhouse,
The cradle of so many young men's gifts,
A field of exercise for growing talents.
We are the Old Guard; long before your time
We formed ourselves here, fervent, full of longing.
A noble master once stood in this place,
Where his creative genius lifted you,
Enchanted, to the clear heights of his art.
Oh, may the worth of this renewed space draw
Into our midst the worthiest of talents
And bless us with the brilliant realization
Of hopes that we've long carried in our hearts.
A grand example rouses emulation
And raises judgment to a higher standard.
Thus may this circle, may this new stage stand
As witnesses of talent brought to perfection.
Where would it rather want to try its powers,
Refresh, renew acclaim of long ago

20

* Schiller composed this short poem as a prologue, or preliminary word, not to the *Wallenstein* trilogy, which was not yet finished, but to a performance of *Wallenstein's Camp*. That performance, in October 1798, was the main attraction at the formal reopening of the newly renovated Weimar playhouse. The Prologue was to be—and was—recited from the stage by an actor to welcome the company, name the occasion, and introduce the play. It is a ceremonial address composed to mark a special occasion. Two hundred twenty years later, it is profitably read not first but last, when the *Wallenstein* story is known and in the air, as it was in Weimar at the time.

Than here before this chosen circle that,
 Susceptible to every magic Art makes,
 With feelings lightly prompted into motion
 Seeks after Mind in its most fleeting form.

For, quick and traceless, mimic art, a wonder,
 Escapes, goes past, evades the senses, while
 The image made by hammer and by chisel,
 The song made by the poet live for millennia.
 The magic made *here* dies out with the artist;
 The fleet creation of the moment fades away
 The way that resonance dies in the ear,
 Its fame preserved by no work that will last.

40 For Art is hard and praise of it will pass,
 Posterity weaves no garlands for the Mime.
 And so he must be chary with the present,
 Must fill the moment that is his entirely,
 Assure himself of his contemporaries' favor,
 And in the feelings of the Best and Worthiest
 Erect a *living* monument to himself.
 Thus he anticipates his name's eternity,
 For one who's done enough to satisfy
 The Best of his own time has lived for all time.

50 The era that the art of Thalia opens
 Upon this stage today emboldens also
 The poet, leaving accustomed things behind,
 To lift you from the narrow circles of
 Quotidian life onto a higher scene
 Of spectacle not unlike the exalted
 Moment, the time in which we live now, striving.
 For only a grand object has the power
 To move man in his deepest human depths;
 In narrow circles thinking also narrows,
 And mankind grows, expands with larger purpose.

60 Here at the grave end of our century, where
 Even reality has turned to poetry,
 Where we see mighty natures struggle and
 Perceive a weighty goal before us, and

Where the great objects of humanity,
Where rule and freedom are contested mutually,
There, too, may Art upon a shadow stage
Attempt a higher flight, indeed she must,
If she's not to be shamed by Life's great stage.

70

In tatters we see lying these days an
Old solid form once given Europe's kingdoms
By peace one hundred fifty years ago,
The precious fruit of thirty years of war.
Now let the poet's fantasy once more
Bring this dark time before your inner eye,
That you may look more happily upon the
Present and to the future's hope-filled distance.

80

Into the midst of that war now the poet
Places you. Sixteen years of laying waste,
Of robbing, snatching, misery have flown by.
Over the earth dark masses swarm and seethe;
No hope of peace glows even from a distance;
The realm's a no-man's-land of arms and weapons;
The cities are a desert, Magdeburg
Is rubble, trade and manufacture dead;
The citizen is nothing, the soldier everything;
Unpunished, insolence despises mores;
Raw hordes encamp themselves, gone wild in endless
Fighting, about us on the ruined earth.

90

Against this gloomy ground an undertaking
Of bold exuberance and a dauntless, rash,
And daring character stand out in contrast.
You know him: the man who made brave armies,
The idol of his men, scourge of the countryside,
The Kaiser's best man and his nemesis,
The child of Fortune, her adventurous son, who,
Exalted by the favor of the times,
Ascended quickly to the highest honor
And, unappeased, still striving onward, upward,
Fell victim to his ravenous ambition.
Observed by partisan love and hate, his profile

100

Remains uncertain in the gaze of History.
 For your eyes now and for your hearts let Art
 Make him more human here and bring him closer.
 For Art, which binds and limits, leads all things,
 Also the most extreme ones, back to Nature.
 It sees the *man* embattled in the press
 Of life and rolls the better half of his guilt
 Over onto the luckless constellations.

110

He's not the one who comes before you on
 This stage today. But in the countless armies
 That his command leads mightily, his spirit
 Inspires, his shadow image will come out
 To meet you. The shy Muse then will dare to
 Present him to you as a living figure,
 Because it is his power that misleads
 His heart; his Camp casts light upon his crime.

120

Therefore forgive the poet if it's not
 Directly and at once that he would lead you
 To reach the goal of this great action, if he
 Dare only to develop that grand object
 Before you in a series of tableaux.
 Thus may the play we give today win your ear
 And heart for unaccustomed sounds and voices,
 May it transport you back to that far time,
 Back onto that far theater of war that
 Our hero will soon fill with deeds.

And if

130

The Muse today, unhampered goddess of
 Both dance and song, should modestly lay claim
 To her old German right to play with rhyme,
 Spare her your blame and rather give her thanks
 That she would play the gloomy world of Truth
 Over onto the sparkling world of Art,
 That she herself undoes forthrightly the
 Illusion that she has created, does
 Not substitute its Seeming for that Truth.
 Our lives are earnest and our art serene.

Characters

SERGEANT }
TRUMPETER } from Terzky's regiment of Carabiniers

MASTER-GUNNER

SHARPSHOOTERS

Two HOLK HORSEMEN

DRAGOONS from Buttler's regiment

ARQUEBUSIERS from the Tiefenbach regiment

CUIRASSIERS from a Walloon regiment

CUIRASSIERS from a Lombard regiment

CROATS

UHLANS

RECRUIT

CITIZEN

PEASANT

PEASANT BOY

CAPUCHIN FRIAR

ARMY SCHOOLMASTER

CANTEEN KEEPER

A WAITRESS

ARMY CHILDREN

OBOISTS

Before the city of Pilsen in Bohemia

Scene One

A Canteen Keeper's Tent with a booth selling small wares standing before it. Soldiers wearing all colors and insignia throng the scene; all the tables are full. Croats and Uhlans cook over a charcoal fire; the Canteen Keeper pours wine; Camp Children roll dice on a drumhead; singing in the Tent.

A Peasant and his Son.

PEASANT BOY. Father, this will come to a rough end,

Let's stay clear of these tough men.

That's no company for you;

They could harm us through and through.

PEASANT. Pooh! They won't eat us up for lunch,

Though they are a rowdy bunch.

Look there! New troops to join the line,

Fresh from the Saale and the Main,

Bringing booty, the rarest treasure;

It's ours if we take good measures.

A captain whom another knifed

Left me with these lucky dice.

I aim to try them out today,

See if their old magic's still in play.

Just pretend you're poor and dumb,

They'll be your best pals and chums.

They like to be flattered, to hear praise flow—

It's easy come and easy go.

When they rob us by the roomful,

We claw it back from them by the spoonful;

And while they're gross with their big swords,

We'll be fine with tricks and words.

(Singing and laughter from the Tent.)

What a racket! Faith abide!

It all comes out of the peasant's hide.

For eight months now that greedy swarm

Lies in our bed and in our barn;

For miles around, on every place,

Of flesh or fowl they've left no trace,
 So that for hunger and wretchedness
 We have to gnaw on our own fists.
 I swear to God it was no worse
 With Saxon fingers in our purse.¹
 And they say they're the Kaiser's best!
 PEASANT BOY. Oh, here's a bunch who've left the rest
 But don't look like there's much to take.
 PEASANT. They're locals, that's Bohemia's make,
 Belong to Terschka's² Carabiniers
 And have long been quartered here.
 They're the worst of the whole pack,
 Stick out their elbows, arch their back,
 And make as if they are too fine
 To share with us a glass of wine.
 But I see three Sharpshooters there
 On the left around the fire.
 Tiroleans is what they seem to me.
 Emmerich, come! Let's go and see
 Those jolly fellows, as good as any,
 And in their pockets, a pretty penny.

(*They go toward the tents.*)

Scene Two

As above. Sergeant. Trumpeter. Uhlans.

TRUMPETER. Who's that peasant? Out, you thieving sneak!
 PEASANT. My lords, a little bite to eat!
 We've had nothing warm these last two days.
 TRUMPETER. Oh, they must always feed their face.
 UHLAN (*with a glass*). Let me! I'll take him off your hands.
 (*He leads the Peasant toward the Tent; the others come forward.*)
 SERGEANT (*to the Trumpeter*).
 Do you think it's just by chance

We're paid a double wage today?

Just so we can live this way?

TRUMPETER. Today the Duchess comes to us

With the Princess—³

SERGEANT. That's just fuss.

It's the troops from foreign lands

Who've met here at Pilsen in fighting bands—

It's to lure them, don't you think,

With something good to eat and drink,

So that they're quickly satisfied

And our alliance ratified.

TRUMPETER. For sure, they're cooking something up!

SERGEANT. The generals and commandants—

TRUMPETER. A show of brass you cannot top!

SERGEANT. Who swarm through camp like busy ants—

TRUMPETER. Have not come here to answer roll.

SERGEANT. The back-and-forth, the whirligig—

TRUMPETER. Oh, yes!

SERGEANT. And from Vienna, that big-wig,⁴

Who drifts through camp, out on a stroll,

Him with that little chain of gold,

Is here for something, I make bold—

TRUMPETER. Another bloodhound, and no fluke,

To sniff out our loyal Duke.

SERGEANT. They don't trust us, plain to see,

And fear Friedland's plans-to-be;

He has climbed too high for them,

They're sent here to saw off his limb.

TRUMPETER. We'll stand by him, we two and more.

SERGEANT. Our regiment, with the other four

That Terschka leads, by marriage his brother,⁵

Are resolute and like none other;

We hold to him, to him we're suited,

The one by whom we were recruited.

All his captains he installs,

And they are his as in a thrall.

Scene Three

A Croat with a necklace, trailed by a Sharpshooter. As above.

SHARPSHOOTER. You, Croat! That necklace you stole—

90 I'll trade you for it; you can't use't.

I'll trade this pair of terzeruole.⁶

CROAT. Nix, nix. You cheat me, you Sharpshoot.

SHARPSHOOTER. I'll throw my blue cap in, to boot—

From roulette, the one that I just won.

You see? The grandest in the world!

CROAT (*letting the sunlight play on the necklace*).

You see? She's garnet and she's pearl.

You see? She sparkles in the sun!

SHARPSHOOTER (*taking the necklace*).

You'll get my water bottle, too;

(*examining the necklace*)

It's just for the sparkle—this to-do.

100 TRUMPETER. Look how that Croat's getting took!

Halfies, Sharpshoot, and I'll keep quiet.

CROAT (*putting the cap on*).

I like your cap. I like the look.

SHARPSHOOTER (*signaling the Trumpeter*).

We trade now! (*To the others.*) You see me buy it!

Scene Four

As above. Master-Gunner.

MASTER-GUNNER (*approaching the Sergeant*).

How is it, Brother Carabinier?

How long do we stay and warm our hands,

Now the foe's in the field in every land?

SERGEANT. What's your hurry, Gunning Master?

The muddy roads are still a disaster.

MASTER-GUNNER. No hurry. Me? I'm content to be here;

110

But an express has come in, to our cost,
To tell us Regensburg's been lost.

TRUMPETER. Aha! That means we're soon in the saddle.

SERGEANT. Oh, sure! To take up that Bavarian's battle?⁷

Who hates and harries our General so?

For him our swords will never rattle.

MASTER-GUNNER. Is that so? What-all you don't know!

Scene Five

As above. Two Horsemen. Then a Canteen Keeper. Camp Children.

Schoolmaster. Waitress.

FIRST HORSEMAN.⁸ Now isn't that a sight to see!

The very best of company!

TRUMPETER. What kind of Greencoats can *they* be?

120

Look sleek and proud and pleased to me.

SERGEANT. Holk's Horse. Those silver trappings there

Did not get bought at the Leipzig Fair.⁹

CANTEEN KEEPER (*bringing wine*).

Gentlemen, welcome!

FIRST HORSEMAN. Why, I'm blown to bits!

If it isn't our Gustel from Blasewitz!¹⁰

CANTEEN KEEPER. Indeed it is! And this Misseeu

Is long tall Peter from Itzehoe?

Who went through many a golden fox¹¹

Of his father's—why, he emptied his socks—

At Glückstadt at the equinox—

130

FIRST HORSEMAN. Now I've traded my pen for the cartridge box.

CANTEEN KEEPER. Well, well! If we two aren't old friends!

FIRST HORSEMAN. And meet again in Bohemian lands.

CANTEEN KEEPER. One day this place, tomorrow another,

The way the bristly broom of war

Sweeps us one way, then the other,

I've gotten around, both near and far.

FIRST HORSEMAN. I can believe it—that and more.

CANTEEN KEEPER. All the way to Timisoar

I pulled that cart and all it held

140 When we were chasing that Mansfeld.¹²

Held out with Friedland before Stralsunde—¹³

It was there my business went under—

With the relief to Mantua,

Pulled out again with Feria,¹⁴

And with a Spanish regiment

I made a detour back to Ghent.

Here in Bohemia I pursue it,

Try and collect what I have lent,

See if the Prince will help me do it.

150 And that there is my canteen tent.

FIRST HORSEMAN. It's all together on one spot.

But what have you done with that Scot

Who went around with you back then?

CANTEEN KEEPER. A rascal! How he took me in!

He's gone! Took with him all the savings

I'd scraped together from life's leavings

And left me with that worthless moppet—

CAMP CHILD (*comes bouncing up*).

Mama! Are you talking about my papa?

FIRST HORSEMAN. Oh, he's fed from the Kaiser's purse, it's

160 To renew the army, reimburse it.¹⁵

SCHOOLMASTER (*entering*).

Off, you scamps! Back to the schoolroom!

FIRST HORSEMAN. For them, too, it's the voice of doom.

WAITRESS (*entering*). Aunt, they're leaving.

CANTEEN KEEPER. Right away!

FIRST HORSEMAN. Well! Who is that charming little piece?

CANTEEN KEEPER. My sister's child. Has come to stay.

FIRST HORSEMAN. Oh, she's your pretty little niece?

(*The Canteen Keeper goes off.*)

FIRST HORSEMAN (*stopping the Girl*).

Stay a minute, charming child.

WAITRESS. But guests are waiting this long while.

(*She escapes and goes off.*)

FIRST HORSEMAN. That little girl—she's an ace,

170 And her aunt, by the Sacrament!

How all the gents from the regiment

Wanted to kill for her pretty face!

Oh, the people one meets and how time flies!

What I'll yet see with my own eyes!

(*To the Sergeant and the Trumpeter.*)

My worthy lords, I drink to you.

Come! Let's sit and talk a bit.

Scene Six

Horsemen. Sergeant. Trumpeter.

SERGEANT. To sit with you is only fit.

Bohemia welcomes your brave crew.

FIRST HORSEMAN. Nice here. Out there among the foe

180 We found our pleasures mighty few.

TRUMPETER. Who'd know, to see you turned out so?

SERGEANT. In Meissen, Saale,¹⁶ all the same,

You don't enjoy a spotless fame.

SECOND HORSEMAN. Quiet, you! Attack our name?

The Croat was something else again—

Left us just gleanings to bring in.

TRUMPETER. On your collar, that's Breton lace!

And how your trousers stay in place!

Finest linen and plumed hat!

190 Who can take it up with that!

That the likes of you should have such luck,

And we get nothing for all our pluck!

SERGEANT. We, who are Friedland's own regiment!

We are owed respect and honor.

FIRST HORSEMAN. We don't think that's kindly meant!

We, too, carry his name in our banner.

SERGEANT. But you belong to the common creed.

FIRST HORSEMAN. And you think you're a special breed?

The only difference is our dress,
200 And mine is better than the rest.

SERGEANT. Lord Ranger, why be so unpleasant?

It's living out there with the peasant.
Perfect manners, proper tone—
They're learned from the General's example alone.

FIRST HORSEMAN. And what has that example shown?

How he hawks and how he spits—
For you that's a perfect fit.
But his smarts and his sharp wits—
They don't fit in barracks kit.

210 SECOND HORSEMAN. Just ask about us from a stranger:

You'll hear we are Friedland's Rangers
And to the name are no disgrace!
March past friend and foe, keep pace
Across the planted fields of corn,
Where they all know Holk's hunting horn!
In an instant, far and near,
Like the torrent, we are there,
The way that hot flames in the night
Strike a house and put to flight.

220 There's no escape and no defense,
There's no more order, no more sense.
Our strong arms tame the struggling maid—
War spares no one, gives no aid.

Ask around—this is no boast—
In Bayreuth, Vogtland, and a host
Of other lands that we've passed through
Children's children will tell you
For centuries yet of Holk's Horse
And how we are a mighty force.

230 SERGEANT. There you have it: all that clatter—

Is that what makes the soldier matter?
His timing makes him, good sense, glance,
His thinking, understanding, stance.

FIRST HORSEMAN. It's freedom makes him. With you who doubt it

Why do I even talk about it?

Did I leave training, bolt from school

Just to sit on that same stool,

Scribble, copy, play the clerk

In camp here, where there's real man's work?

240 I'll live high, I'll work and play,

Have new adventures every day,

Not think past this very minute

And the fun and freedom in it.

That's why I went and made the trade:

The Kaiser gets me, I get paid.

Lead me to the firing line

Or over the ripping, racing Rhine,

Where every third man's left behind:

I'll not give you trouble there.

250 But I'll not stand it anymore

To be thwarted anywhere.

SERGEANT. Nothing else you're asking for?

We'd find it tucked into your doublet.¹⁷

FIRST HORSEMAN. What a nuisance, how much trouble it

Was with Gustav¹⁸—made a chapel

Of his camp. At every *appel*—

At reveille, again at taps—

He made us pray, take off our caps.

If we would not pull a long face,

260 Himself, he'd put us in our place.

SERGEANT. Oh, he was a God-fearing man.

FIRST HORSEMAN. No fun with girls, no chance to falter,

We had to lead them to the altar.

Too much for me! I cut and ran.

SERGEANT. I'd bet they've now removed that ban.

FIRST HORSEMAN. I went to join the League instead,

Arming against Magdeburg, they said.¹⁹

That was different altogether,

Birds they were of another feather,

270 Beer and dice and lots of girls,
Jolly, easy-going brothers.
Tilly²⁰ let us join that whirl,
But in his own life kept better weather.

As long as it was no expense,
"Live and let live" was his sense.
But after Leipzig, the reversal,²¹
A different play was in rehearsal:

Our luck ran out, the workings balked,
The whole machine ground to a halt.

280 Where we arrived and asked admittance,
We heard, "Get out! To you, good riddance!"
We skulked along from place to place—
No one would give us any space.
So I thought I would pin my hope
On Saxon bounty, turn my coat.

SERGEANT. Oh, then you came just in time
For the Bohemian booty.²²

FIRST HORSEMAN. Wouldn't rhyme.

290 Strictest discipline. We could not impose
Our will on them like proper foes;
Could only guard the Kaiser's castles,
Show up for duty in ruffles and tassels.
How we made war was just a joke,
Fencing bravely with mirrors and smoke;
Afraid to give anyone offense anywhere,
Service, in short, with no honor to spare,
So dull I nearly went berserk
And ran back home to be a clerk.

Just then throughout the country all
Good men were answering Friedland's call.²³

300 SERGEANT. And how long will you stay with us?

FIRST HORSEMAN. As long as he holds sway with us.

It's to his star I'll hitch my wagon;
What soldier makes a better bargain?
Here we get a real soldier's charge

310

And everything is written large.
A spirit lives in every corps
That, like the wind, with rush and roar
Rips even the slowest rider along.
We're taller here than the civilian throng,
The way the marshal's taller than the prince.
It's like times used to be long since,
When the sword still had its meaning
And one thing only was demeaning:
Refusing orders—a hanging offense.
It's not forbidden? You have leave;
And no one asks you what you believe.
One thing only counts a lot:
What is army, what is not.
I'll show the flag: that's my best shot.

320

SERGEANT. Bravo, Soldier! All that sounded
Like the best of Friedland's mounted.
FIRST HORSEMAN. What a commander! He's not sitting
In Bohemia to do the Kaiser's bidding.
It's not for his sake he has fought
Or his victories been wrought.
Has he used his high command
To bring protection to the land?
He wants to found a soldiers' state,
Ignite the world on a hot grate,
Make himself its potentate.²⁴

330

TRUMPETER. Sh! Such a thing—you shouldn't say it!

FIRST HORSEMAN. I say what I think—the way it
Is allowed us: Speech is free.

SERGEANT. The General said that. His decree:

"Speech is free, speechless the deed,
Obedience blind." This is his creed.

FIRST HORSEMAN. If he said exactly that
I do not know. But it is so.

SECOND HORSEMAN. His luck in the field always holds fast,
It never gives out, it's a permanent boon.

340

Tilly's good angel deserted too soon,
But the spell *he* casts makes his luck last.
One who fights at his direction
Has special powers for protection,
For all the world knows perfectly well
That he keeps in his service, feeds at his table,
Pays the wages of a demon from Hell.²⁵

SERGEANT. And nothing can pierce him. No one is able.

Out onto Lützen's bloody plain²⁶
He rode under fire falling like rain,
Rode up and down and had no fear
And let the furious bullets tear
Through his boots and his cuirass and his hat,
And there was not a one of them that
Could scratch his skin. Nine lives! Like a cat!

FIRST HORSEMAN. What wonders I hear tell, you two!

It's his cuirass of elk's leather
That no bullet passes through.

SERGEANT. No, it's a salve of witches' heather

Cooked up with magic in foul weather
To make a hellish, godless stew.
They say he also reads the stars,
Knows future things, both near and far.
But I know better what is right:
A little gray man goes in the night
Through locked doors to sit with him;
You hear the sentries shout it out.
And something big always visits men
When that small gray-coat goes about.

SECOND HORSEMAN. The very Devil and his wife—

He's friends with them,
And lets us lead a merry life.

350

360

370

Scene Seven

As above. A Recruit. A Citizen. Dragoons.

RECRUIT (*comes out of the Tent, a tin helmet on his head, a wine bottle in his hand.*)

Remember me to Father and the other men!

I'm a soldier now; you'll never see me again.

FIRST HORSEMAN. Well, looky there! He is new!

CITIZEN. Watch out, Franz. This is not for you.

RECRUIT (*sings*). Pipe and drums

And flag unfurled.

Friends and chums,

We wander the world.

Prancing horses,

Fearsome forces,

A sword at our side,

We march far and wide.

We've left the herd,

We're free as a bird

That comes in spring

To forage and sing.

Hurrah! I follow Friedland's banner!

380

SECOND HORSEMAN. Welcome, boy. We like your manner!

(They all greet him.)

CITIZEN. Leave him be! He's bred gentle and meet.

FIRST HORSEMAN. Well, we weren't exactly picked up on the street!

CITIZEN. He also comes from people of means;

Just look at his apron—what fine seams!

TRUMPETER. The Kaiser's coat is the one that gleams.

CITIZEN. There's a little cap mill he stands to inherit.

FIRST HORSEMAN And lose all his freedom! What's the merit?

CITIZEN. His grandmother will leave him a little store.

FIRST HORSEMAN. To trade in dry goods evermore?

390

400 CITIZEN. His godmother's wine bar, free of rent,
And a cellar stocked with hogsheads of wine.
TRUMPETER. Pouring wine? Is that his line?
SECOND HORSEMAN. Hey, Brother! Want to share my tent?
CITIZEN. He leaves a bride standing at the church door.
FIRST HORSEMAN. Iron-hearted, on that score.
CITIZEN. The scandal of it! Grandmother will die!
SECOND HORSEMAN. So he gets the wine shop; why should *he* cry?
SERGEANT (*with clerical gravity, lays his hand on the tin helmet*).
This is prudent, a good plan.
Thou hast put on a new man.
410 This helmet and this bandolier
Bring thee into a brand new sphere.
A new spirit's entered in.
SECOND HORSEMAN. Spirits of brandy, schnapps, and gin.
SERGEANT. You embark on Fortune's ship
To sail the world from tail to tip;
On your voyage you'll learn the ropes,
Find daring justifies your hopes.
The pious burgher, that poor fag,
Goes round and round like the dyer's nag;
420 A soldier's chance is infinite,
And this endless war won't limit it.
Look at me! At a sergeant's grade
I carry a staff like the Kaiser's stave.
The rule of the world and every lick
Of order comes from such a stick;
The scepter that the Kaiser holds
Is just a stick in fancy clothes.
Once at corporal's rank, you're on your way
To get real power and rule the day.
430 On all this you can set your sights.
FIRST HORSEMAN. As long as he can read and write.
SERGEANT. Let me give you an example
So that you will have a sample.
The chief of Friedland's Dragoon ranks

Is Buttler.²⁷ We were almost brothers
As Rhineland privates, among others;
He's major general now as thanks
For long service and great fame,
While I made less stir in my name.

440 Why, Friedland himself, who has command
Of all the armies in the land,
Holds endless powers in his hand,
Was once a simple nobleman.
He trusted to his warrior's creed
And built an empire on his deeds,
Stands after the Kaiser as first man.²⁸
And who knows what yet to expect
From a man whose limits have never been set!

FIRST HORSEMAN. Oh, he started small and is now great stuff,

450 For at Altdorf in his student days,
If I may repeat what everyone says,
He played a little rough and tough.
They say it's his scout he tried to slay.
The city fathers sent him to jail
When he tried and failed to raise the bail.
This new jail was to take the name
Of its first prisoner, to his eternal ill-fame.
How does he solve it? He wisely lets
His poodle go first, and to silent laughter,
460 As he intended, the jailhouse gets
The poodle's name forever after.
Now there's a man after my own heart:
Sprang every trap set for him right from the start.²⁹

(*The Girl has come to wait the table.*

The Second Horseman has been flirting with her.)

DRAGOON (*intervening*). Comrade, you just let that be!

SECOND HORSEMAN. You think you have a say with me?

DRAGOON. You just listen! She's my girl.

FIRST HORSEMAN. Would you believe it? This great churl

Thinks only he can have a girl!

470 SECOND HORSEMAN. He thinks he's a special case;
 But this sweetheart's pretty face
 Is for us all, like bright sunshine. (*He kisses her.*)
 DRAGOON (*pulling the Girl away*). I tell you once more: She is mine.
 FIRST HORSEMAN. Musicians! That's a change of pace!
 SECOND HORSEMAN. You looking for trouble? You'll find it with me!
 SERGEANT. Gentlemen, silence! A kiss is for free.

Scene Eight

A Miners' Band³⁰ enters and plays a reel, first slowly, then faster and faster. The First Horseman dances with the Waitress, the Canteen Keeper with the Recruit; the Girl escapes, the Horseman pursues her; they collide with the Capuchin as he enters.³¹

CAPUCHIN. Tra la la! And brum, brum, brum!
 What is that for a wicked tune!
 Is this here an army of Christians?
 Or a tribe of Turks and Antibaptistians?
 480 Do you make a mockery of the Day of Rest
 Just to put God to the test?
 You think he couldn't put a sudden end to
 This wild music and flaming tinder?
 To gluttony, sloth, and idle splendor?
Quid hic statis otiosi?
 Think you can stand there and fold your hands?
 Warriors swarm through the Danube lands,
 The enemy in Bavaria fills his craw,
 Takes defenseless Regensburg with his claw—
 490 And the army in Bohemia lies about,
 Fills its belly and polishes its snout,
 Cares for the bottle more than the battle,
 Whets wits and words and not its swords,
 With girls is neither stern nor firm,
 Eats up ox, not Oxenstirn.³²
 Christendom mourns in sackcloth and ashes
 While flirting soldiers flash their sashes.
 The world is now a vale of tears,
 And skies are full of signs and wonders

500 And churning clouds to match our fears,
In which God's righteous anger thunders.
He sends out comets that streak the dark
And tell of disasters yet to come,
Of burning barns and the rolling drum
And floods of blood against the sacred Ark.
Our erstwhile Holy Roman Empire
Is now a lowly yeoman's shire;
The Rhine that once ran clear with rain
Is thick with blood, a stream of pain;
510 In every cloister women roister;
In what were once our monasteries
The wounded find apothecaries,
And our erstwhile Sacred Church
Has now become an acrid smirch.
Hear what you've done to bring this on!
This is how we pay the price
Of your loose life and crime and vice;
Like a magnet close at hand
Sin draws sharp steel into the land;
520 Bad things follow on bad deeds
As bad crops come from rotten seeds.
It's a happy man who hears and heeds.
Ubi erit victoriae spes,
Si offenditur Deus? What hope have you
Of victory if you've set your face
Against your God, the One and True?
The woman found her silver pieces,
And Saul found his father's asses,
Joseph in Egypt knew his brothers' faces;³³
530 But one who among soldiers looks for the
Fear of God or sense of order
Will find little in his sights,
As many candles as he lights.
To the Preacher in the Wilderness³⁴
Soldiers came in some distress,
Repented and were then baptized.
They inquired and were advised:

540

Quid faciemus nos? What shall we do,
Now that we're baptized, to stay true?

Et ait illis. And he replies:

Neminem concuciatis,
Keep from all forms of violence,
Neque calumniam faciatis,
And every form of insolence.
Contenti estote: be content
Stipendiis vestris: with your rents
And all else that you've been sent.

550

Thou shalt not take the sacred name
Of the Lord thy God in vain
Is a command. Was there ever more swearing
Than here in camp in a cleric's hearing?
And if for every thunderation
And proclamation of damnation
That you say here the bells were rung,
They'd fall from the belfries where they're hung.
And if for every blasphemous prayer
From your unwashed mouths they pulled a hair,
Your scurvy scalps would be picked bare,
Were your thatch as thick as Absalom's.³⁵ Ware!

560

Joshua was an army leader
And David a giant's brave defeater,
And who has ever heard or read
That they used words like the ones you've said?
The mouth's no wider nor the tongue more bent
To say "God help me!" than "Potz Sakrament!"
But one whose vessel holds more than its share
Will run over at the mouth and curse and swear.

570

Another command says, "Thou shalt not steal";
You take those words for what they say
And spirit everything *openly* away.
From your long fingers and vulture's claws,
Your bottomless greed, like black jackdaws',
Money is not safe in the chest
And the calf in the cow is not safely at rest,
You steal the egg and the hen and the nest.

Yet how is it possible to reprove
 The servant when the trouble all comes from above?
 The members' ways will be like their chief's,
 And no one knows anything about *his* beliefs.

580 FIRST HORSEMAN. Look, you preacher! You can give us grief,
 But our Commander's not in your brief.

CAPUCHIN. *Ne custodias gregem meam!*³⁶
 This man's an Ahab and Jerobeam,³⁷
 Leads his men from the righteous way
 To false gods and even further astray.

TRUMPETER and RECRUIT.

We'll not hear twice the things you say.

CAPUCHIN. A saber-rattler, loud and bold;
 Said that he'd take every stronghold,
 Would wrest Stralsund from Swede or Dane,
 And if fastened to Heaven by a chain;
 Then shot away his powder in vain.

TRUMPETER. Is there no one here can stop this ranter?

CAPUCHIN. A King Saul and a necromancer,³⁸
 A Holofernes and fire-eater,³⁹
 Denies his Lord, a second Peter,⁴⁰
 And shakes and shudders if the cock crew.

BOTH HORSEMEN. Preacher, we'll have done with you!

CAPUCHIN. A crafty Herod, that sly fox—⁴¹

TRUMPETER and BOTH HORSEMEN (*closing in on him*).
 Silence, preacher, or you're dead of the pox!

600 CROATS (*intervening*). Steady, Parson. Don't be afraid.
 Have your say till all is said.

CAPUCHIN (*shouting louder and louder*).
 A Nebuchadnezzar, a Belshazzar,⁴²

A Hittite and a Canaanite.⁴³
 He has himself called *Wallenstein*
 And is in truth for all a stone,
 A stone in the throat, a stumbling stone;
 As long as the Kaiser shields Friedland's breed
 Friedland's land will not be freed.

(*He retreats as he shouts these words; the Croats cover his retreat
 against the other Soldiers.*)

Scene Nine

As above, without the Capuchin.

FIRST HORSEMAN (*to the Sergeant*).

What does he mean about the cock crow

610

That shakes our Commander so?

It was an insult? It was a mockery?

SERGEANT. Oh, no. His ears are as brittle as crockery.

He was always a strange child,

Never could be reconciled

Even to a kitten's mewling sorrow,

And the cry of the cock fills him with horror.

FIRST HORSEMAN. The lion, too, can't bear that sound.⁴⁴

SERGEANT. Must be still as a churchyard all around:

It's a standing order, grave and fraught,

620

So he can work and think deep thoughts.

VOICES (*uproar in the Tent*).

Seize him! Rascal! Drub away!

PEASANT'S VOICE. Help! Mercy!

OTHER VOICES. Quiet! Stop it! Stay!

FIRST HORSEMAN. Listen! Someone's getting beat!

SECOND HORSEMAN. Let's have a look! (*They run into the Tent.*)

CANTEEN KEEPER (*coming out*). Sneak thieves! Cheats!

TRUMPETER. Hostess, what's this all about?

CANTEEN KEEPER. Scamp! Scoundrel! Tramp! Clod! Lout!

In my tent! To have this occur

630

Ruins me with every officer.

SERGEANT. What's up, Hostess?

CANTEEN KEEPER. Can't you guess?

They've caught a peasant—what a mess—

Rolling loaded dice, and not for fun.

TRUMPETER. Look! They're bringing him here with his half-grown son.

Scene Ten

Soldiers hauling the Peasant along.

FIRST HORSEMAN. String him up!
 SHARPSHOOTERS and DRAGOONS. To the hangman!
 SERGEANT. Without a warrant there'll be a wrangle.
 CANTEEN KEEPER. In an hour or so we'll see him dangle.
 SERGEANT. It'll go quickly. No probation.
 FIRST ARQUEBUSIER (*to the Second*).

640

This is out of desperation.
 They come here hungry, begging a meal,
 And we're surprised to see them steal?
 TRUMPETER. Who're you, coming to his defense?
 FIRST ARQUEBUSIER. Not so fast! No offense,

But the world can see that the peasant, too,
 Is an ordinary man, like me and you.

FIRST HORSEMAN (*to the Trumpeter*).

No more quarreling! They're Tiefenbachers,⁴⁵
 Sons of tailors and glove makers;
 Lay in garrison at Brieg;
 Puts them in a different league.

Scene Eleven

As above. Cuirassiers.

650

FIRST CUIRASSIER. What's going on with the peasant there?
 FIRST SHARPSHOOTER. Cheated at dice. Took three times his share.
 FIRST CUIRASSIER. Not news. Was it all that bad?
 FIRST SHARPSHOOTER. What do you think? He took all I had.
 FIRST CUIRASSIER. But you're somebody, are Friedland's man.
 Can you stoop so low and be so blind
 As to roll your dice with the peasant's kind?
 Let him run, if run he can.

(The Peasant escapes; the others gather to form a group.)

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER. Well, that was quickly, cleanly done.

With a peasant that is something won.

Where's that one from? Not from here?

CANTEEN KEEPER. He's a Walloon. Gets respect and fear;

660 One of the Pappenheim Cuirassiers.

FIRST DRAGOON (*joining them*).

Young Piccolomini leads them now, I hear.⁴⁶

The troops themselves made him their chief

After Pappenheim lost his life

On Lützen's plains. A big event.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER. How did they ever get consent?

FIRST DRAGOON. That unit has a special dash,

Forms the front line at every clash.

Has its own justice, keeps apart,

Holds a special place in Friedland's heart.

FIRST CUIRASSIER (*to the Second*).

670 What a story! Where's it come from?

SECOND CUIRASSIER. From back in quarters. The Colonel said it.

FIRST CUIRASSIER. All that many? They'll never get it.

FIRST HORSEMAN. What's this talk? And why the fuss?

SECOND HORSEMAN. Does it have something to do with us?

FIRST CUIRASSIER. You're not going to be exactly pleased.

(*The Soldiers gather around.*)

It's off to the Netherlands! We've been leased.

Cuirassiers, Rangers, mounted Sharpshoots—

Eight thousand men to pull on riding boots.

CANTEEN KEEPER. Already again we're supposed to wander?

680 Why, I just got back from Flanders.

SECOND CUIRASSIER (*to the Dragoons*).

They've put you Buttlerites under the same baton.

FIRST CUIRASSIER. And especially us Wallons.

CANTEEN KEEPER. But those are all our best squadrons.

FIRST CUIRASSIER. All to escort the man from Milan.

FIRST HORSEMAN. The Spanish Infante!⁴⁷ Is that what's said?

SECOND HORSEMAN. That black churchman all in red!

FIRST CUIRASSIER. We're to leave Friedland, whom we love,
On whom we hang as on a lanyard,
Be put in the field by that black Spaniard,
Mean and stingy and tight as a glove?
Not a chance. We'll take to our heels.

690

TRUMPETER. They've missed their chance. We've made our deal
With the Kaiser, and not that varlet
Parading across Europe all in scarlet.

SECOND HORSEMAN. It was the word and credit of Wallenstein's
That made of us his mounted lines;
Without the love we have for our Friedland
We'd never have belonged to Ferdinand.

700

FIRST DRAGOON. Didn't Friedland form and feed us?
He's the only one to lead us.

SERGEANT. That sounds brave and that sounds tough,
But talk like that is not enough.
I can read this order like a map
And see that it is all a trap.

FIRST HORSEMAN. Quiet! Hear our ranking man!

SERGEANT. Auntie Gustel, kiss your hand,
A glass of Melnecker, if you can;
I'll tell you then where I take my stand.

CANTEEN KEEPER (*pouring a glass*).
Gladly, Sergeant. But what a fright!
Some evil's hid here out of sight.

710

SERGEANT. Gentlemen, you know it's just fine
To think of what is next in line;
But our Commander's higher goal
Is to give attention to the whole.
We call ourselves Friedland's troops;
The citizen takes us under his roof,
Provides for us, cooks us warm soups;
The peasant gives what's on the hoof,
His nag, his ox, to pull our train,
About which he complains in vain.
If a private leading seven men

720

Enters a village at his pleasure,
He can install a government over them
And rule and school them at his leisure.
They don't like us in the least,
Would rather see the Devil or some other beast
Than our yellow rider's jackets.
Why do they not simply sack us,
Since there are more of them than us
730 And our muskets no better than the blunderbuss?
Why can we laugh behind their back?
Because we are a fearsome pack!

FIRST HORSEMAN. That, just that, is the strength of our hand.

Friedland, too, must have known it;
What he said to them has shown it,
As he raised a great army from the length of the land:⁴⁸
They hoped to see twelve thousand agreed;
He said, "Twelve thousand I can't feed;
Sixty thousand is my number;
Those, I know, won't die of hunger."
740 And that brought us to Wallenstein.

SERGEANT. Look at this right hand of mine.

Of its five fingers, if one should choose
To chop off the little one, would I lose
No more than that? And at what cost?
Why, the whole hand's as good as lost!
I'm left with a stump or even worse.
Just so, this famous eight thousand horse
That they are now trying to force
750 Into Flanders are the little finger to finish
The army's hand. A small detail?
They go, and the army's just one-fifth diminished?
Nonsense! Lose them and the whole would fail.
We lose fear and respect and respectful awe;
The peasant's cock of the walk, all comb and craw;
The little scribes in Vienna preside
Over our billets and mess on every side;
They take this and that and on and on,

760

Until we find our Commander gone.
They've no love for him in any case,
And all we have will go to waste.
Who then will see that our wage is paid
And the terms of our contract fairly made?
Who has the force and the command,
The quick mind and the firm hand
To bring together and make match
An army composed of a thousand and one patch?
For example, Dragoon, tell,
What's the land from which you hail?

770

FIRST DRAGOON. From Ireland 'twas that I set my sail.

SERGEANT (*to the two Cuirassiers*).

You, I know, come here from Ghent,
And you're a Latin, by your accent.

FIRST CUIRASSIER. Where I come from? Ask the beadle.

I was stolen from the cradle.

SERGEANT. And you are not local either?

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER. Come from Buchau on Lake Feder.

SERGEANT. And you, my friend?

SECOND ARQUEBUSIER. From on Lake Cuom'.

SERGEANT (*to the Second Horseman*).

Where is it that you come from, Ranger?

SECOND HORSEMAN. Behind Wismar, that's my parents' home.

SERGEANT (*indicating the Trumpeter*).

780

We're both from Eger.⁴⁹ He's no stranger.
Just look at us! Who'd now say
That we've all been blown together
From north and south in every weather?
Cut from one cloth, they'd say today.
We front the enemy, not like mercenaries hired
For one day's labor, but like iron fired
To form one mass; we mesh tighter still
Than the gears that drive a running mill.
Who has hammered us from all these shards
Into a machine so firm and hard
That it can't be pulled apart?

790

It's Wallenstein and none other.

FIRST HORSEMAN. I see that now for the first time, Brother.

FIRST CUIRASSIER. We're grateful, Sergeant. Have our thanks.

They want to do in the warrior ranks

And always keep the soldier down,

Be the only ones who count for the Crown.

They've agreed on this; it's all a plot.

CANTEEN KEEPER. A plot? That means, alackaday,

800 My gentlemen can no longer pay.

SERGEANT. Quite right. It leaves us all bankrupt.

Many captains and generals played the host,

Raised their units at their own cost,

Wanted to see their wealth displayed

And now find they've overpaid.

They'll be penniless, along with us all,

If our commander and leader falls.

CANTEEN KEEPER. Blessed Savior! I'm quite cooked!

Half the army's in my book.

810 Count Isolani, that high roller,

Owes me a good two hundred taler.⁵⁰

FIRST CUIRASSIER. What to do about this, Brothers?

We have a good defense at hand:

We will safely band together

And *all* defend each single man.

They can send orders, rave and rant;

We meanwhile shall firmly plant

Our feet. Not march and not relent,

Protect our honor, withhold consent.

820 SECOND HORSEMAN. We'll not be led on a merry chase.

They come? We tell them to their face.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER. Gentlemen, let me be your adviser;

Remember, these orders come from the Kaiser.

TRUMPETER. A lot we care about your Kaiser!

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER. Careful! Or I'll make you wiser.

TRUMPETER. What I said is still exact.

FIRST HORSEMAN. But I've often heard it said

That Friedland here is our sole head.

SERGEANT. Right! He set the condition, made the pact:
 830 For absolute power, without surcease,
 To wage war and conclude peace;
 Money and assets he can seize,
 Can damn and pardon as he please,
 Create his own officer corps;
 Has it from the Kaiser, that and more.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER. The Duke's smart and powerful, that is true,
 But just like us he answers to
 The Kaiser and the Kaiser's men.

SERGEANT. Not like us. Think again!

840 He's an immediate Imperial prince,⁵¹
 Just as good in every sense
 As the Bavarian. Not otherwise!
 I saw at Brandeis with my own eyes:⁵²
 How the Kaiser himself agreed
 He could keep his hat on his princely head.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER. With Mecklenburg he got that rank
 For a loan: as pawn and thanks.⁵³

FIRST HORSEMAN (*to the Sergeant*).
 Before the Kaiser he could have no care
 To remove his hat? That is rare.

SERGEANT (*reaching into his pocket*).
 850 You don't have to take my word.
 Persuade yourself it's not absurd—
 (*Showing a coin.*)
 Whose profile is it?

CANTEEN KEEPER. Let me see!
 A Wallenstein, plain as day.

SERGEANT. Is that not good security?

Is he not prince in every way?
 Can he not mint, like Ferdinand?
 Have his own vassals, his own land?
 Let himself be called Your Grace,
 And keep an army in his high place?

860 FIRST ARQUEBUSIER. All that is true. But the one
 Who pays our wages is the Kaiser.

TRUMPETER. I dispute you, say the one
Who pays *no* wages is the Kaiser.
For forty weeks have they not been saying
That any day they would be paying?
It seems to me they're still delaying.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER. We'll safely leave that in their hands.

FIRST CUIRASSIER. Peace, gentlemen! Before this quarrel ends

In blows. For we can all agree
That we must follow the Kaiser's decree.
But precisely because we would be his faithful
Riders, they should not be hateful
And make of us a common herd.
We'll not be posted from place to place
By priests and toadies and all that race.
Say, does it not do him proud
That we're men of honor, keep our word,
Stand head and shoulders above the crowd?
Aren't we the ones who made him great,
Emperor, world ruler, and potentate,
And by our efforts for him have won
The world's first place in all Christendom?⁵⁴
The ones who ought to bear his yoke
Are the men his table stokes
And who live by his grace and favor;
Of all that brilliance all we savor
Is pain and labor—and our pride's sweet flavor.

SECOND HORSEMAN. The best of the tyrants in other lands

Saved their powder for worse friends,
Carried their soldiers on the palm of their hand.

FIRST CUIRASSIER. The soldier with a sense of self

Has contempt for all that pelf.
If I put my life in play
Something else has greater sway,
Or I've thrown myself away,
Like a Croat, that disgrace.

BOTH HORSEMEN. Nothing can take honor's place.

FIRST CUIRASSIER. A soldier carries a sword, not a spade,

No furrow's dug and no seed laid;

900

He moves homeless over the earth,
 Can't warm himself on his own hearth.
 Goes past bright cities, sees them gleam,
 Sees peaceful villages, mills, and streams
 In the blue distance.
 Vintage dances, harvest sheaves
 Flicker past like autumn leaves.
 Dear to him in all this dearth
 Is only his soldier's sense of worth.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER. A worse life than any other.

910

FIRST CUIRASSIER. I wouldn't trade it for another.

I've wandered far and wide in the world
 And found its carpet bright and burled.
 I served the Spanish monarchy
 And the free Venetian State,
 The Kingdom of Napoli,
 And nowhere were my fortunes great.
 Tinker, tailor, merchant, wit—
 Only my soldier's vest would fit.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER. That's not at all the way I feel.

920

FIRST CUIRASSIER. A man who wants to do something real,
 Live in plenty, keep an even keel,
 Must make terms with tons of bother.
 If he wants to become a father,
 See his children and grandchildren gather,
 He must make a good living, take a wife.
 Me? I've no love for such a life.
 I want to live and die free as the wind,
 Take nothing from no one, leave nothing behind,
 And look past the huddled rabble
 As I pass by high in the saddle.

FIRST HORSEMAN. The only good life, when all's said and done.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER. Surely it is just good fun
 To look down on the downtrodden ones.

FIRST CUIRASSIER. Comrade, bad times have come over the land,
 And the sword's no longer in Justitia's right hand.⁵⁵
 Even so, I'll take the sword,
 For which no one will think me lowered;

In war my charity can still be extended
And my dignity not be offended.

940 FIRST ARQUEBUSIER. But we soldiers have stripped the fields
And destroyed the peasant's yields.
It's now been almost sixteen years
Of need and torment, hunger and tears.

FIRST CUIRASSIER. Listen, Brother, God above
Does not expect equal love
From all mortals all the time;
One likes clouds and another sunshine.
Where you see only pain and sorrow,
I see the dawn of a bright tomorrow.

950 That it comes at the cost of citizen and peasant
I, too, find is most unpleasant,
But we all must play by the rules of the game;
Whatever happens, it's all the same.
When the horses are charging, have their head,
And someone's lying in the road ahead,
Even my brother or my own child,
And be he crying ever so wild,
I can't pull him to one side;
Over his body goes my wild ride.

960 FIRST HORSEMAN. Aye! Every man saves his own hide.

FIRST CUIRASSIER. And now that Fortune smiles
On the soldier, with all her wiles,
We will catch and hold her fast
By the hand, for this won't last!
Overnight there'll come a peace,
And this world we love will cease;
The soldiers unbridle, the peasants hitch up,
And all of a sudden our time's stitched up.
We still have our hand on the lever,
But once we're separated, it's all over.

FIRST HORSEMAN. Comrades, we'll not let it reach
That point. We'll stand every man for each.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER (*drawing a leather purse, to the Canteen Keeper*).
Hostess, what's it that I owe?

CANTEEN KEEPER. So little it will hardly show. (*They settle.*)

TRUMPETER. Just as well you're moving on.

You have only spoiled our fun.

(*The Arquebusiers go off.*)

FIRST CUIRASSIER. Pity about them. They're not bad fellows.

FIRST HORSEMAN. Think like the types that render tallow.⁵⁶

SECOND HORSEMAN. Now we're alone, let's aim our shot

980 At how we're going to break up that plot.

TRUMPETER. I thought we would just refuse.

FIRST CUIRASSIER. No, we'll hold back from all abuse.

Every man now to his own resort,
Where he makes a full report,
So that we all stand on one side
Of this attempt that would divide.
For my Walloons I can vouch:
Not a one who is a slouch.

SERGEANT. Terzka's regiments, horse and foot,

990 Are persuaded, the whole lot.

SECOND CUIRASSIER (*joining the First*).

The Lombard stands by the Walloon.

FIRST HORSEMAN. Freedom is the Ranger's boon.

SECOND HORSEMAN. Freedom and power are with Wallenstein;

Behind him we all hold the line.

FIRST SHARPSHOOTER. And every soldier from Lorraine

Joins in with might and main.

DRAGOON. The Irishman gives luck his hand.

SECOND SHARPSHOOTER. The Tyrolean serves the lord of the land.

FIRST CUIRASSIER. Therefore let every regiment

1000 Prepare a pro memoria to say
That we are all resolved to stay
Together and to stand behind
Our General. No force can drive us away
From the greatest leader of his kind.
This writing one offers with reverence
To Piccolomini—the son—
For such things he has good sense,

And for Friedland he's a special one.

Also at the Kaiser's Court

1010 He's thought to be a special sort.

SECOND HORSEMAN. Done! All together, give me your hand!

Piccolomini's to be our man!

TRUMPETER, DRAGOONS, FIRST HORSEMAN,

SECOND CUIRASSIER, SHARPSHOOTERS (*together*).

Piccolomini's to be our man!

(*They are about to go.*)

SERGEANT. One glass, Comrades! Drum and fife!

(*Raises his glass.*)

Piccolomini! Long life!

CANTEEN KEEPER (*bringing a bottle*).

That I'll not notch up, my friends.

Work well done, dear gentlemen.

CUIRASSIERS. May our armor live!

BOTH HORSEMEN. And the farmer give!

1020 DRAGOONS and SHARPSHOOTERS. Our troops not quail!

TRUMPETER and SERGEANT. And Friedland prevail!

SECOND CUIRASSIER (*sings*).

Comrades, look smart there! Mount up! Mount!

It's into the field and to freedom!

A man in the field, that's the one who counts,

In courage there's none to exceed him.

That's where every father's son

Is on his mettle, must hold his own.

(*During the song the Soldiers in the background have gathered round and raise the Chorus.*)

CHORUS.

That's where every father's son

Is on his mettle, must hold his own.

DRAGOON.

1030 All freedom is gone from the face of the earth,

And you meet only servant and master—

Villains and hypocrites of high and low birth,

The whole lot's not worth a piaster.

The soldier who boldly looks death in the face
Is the last free man in the human race.

CHORUS.

The soldier who boldly looks death in the face
Is the last free man in the human race.

FIRST HORSEMAN.

All fear and misgiving get tossed on the grate;
He banishes weeping and sorrow
And fearlessly rides out to meet his fate,
If not today, then tomorrow.
And if it's tomorrow, today we'll drain
To the lees the joy of the days that remain.

CHORUS.

And if it's tomorrow, today we'll drain
To the lees the joy of the days that remain.
(Their glasses have been refilled; they raise them and toast.)

SERGEANT.

His happy lot's given him, comes as a gift,
No need to gain it by striving;
The laborer digs in the earth's dark rift,
Where he hopes a treasure is hiding.
He grubs and shovels like a shackled slave
And finds in the end that he's grubbed his grave.

CHORUS.

He grubs and shovels like a shackled slave
And finds in the end that he's grubbed his grave.

FIRST HORSEMAN.

The rider and his galloping beast
Are figures made famous in fable.
The candles flicker at the wedding feast,
And a stranger appears at the table.
His suit is swift, no morning gift;
Before unbelieving eyes he storms out with his prize.

CHORUS.

His suit is swift, no morning gift;
Before unbelieving eyes he storms out with his prize.

SECOND CUIRASSIER.

Why does the maid weep and wring her hands?
Red Rover, Red Rover, come over!
He has no home in all the king's lands,
Was never to be a true lover.
Unbending Fate always drives him away,
Wherever he is, he cannot stay.

CHORUS.

Unbending Fate always drives him away,
Wherever he is, he cannot stay.

FIRST HORSEMAN (*takes the next man by the hand; the others follow and all who have sung build a wide semicircle*).

1070

So mount up, Comrades, all rugged and wroth;
The bugle calls, the pennant flashes.
Our youth is abuzz, our life is afroth;
Up! Before we're all turned to ashes.
And if you don't put your life at stake,
Your life's not worth the croak of a crake.

CHORUS.

And if you don't put your life at stake,
Your life's not worth the croak of a crake.

(*The Curtain falls before the Chorus has ended.*)

THE PICCOLOMINI

In five acts



Portrait of Octavius Piccolomini of Aragon (Ottavio Piccolomini). Engraving from Anselmus van Hulle, *Les hommes illustres qui ont vécu dans le XVII. siècle* (Amsterdam, 1717), https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AAnselmus-van-Hulle-Hommes-illustres_MG_0469.tif. Image in the public domain.

Characters

WALLENSTEIN, Duke of Friedland, imperial generalissimo in the Thirty Years' War

OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI, lieutenant general

MAX PICCOLOMINI, his son, colonel of a Cuirassier regiment

COUNT TERZKY, Wallenstein's brother-in-law, chief of many regiments

ILLO, field marshal, Wallenstein's confidant

ISOLANI, general of the Croats

BUTTLER, chief of a Dragoon regiment

TIEFENBACH

DON MARADAS

GOETZ

COLALTO

} generals under Wallenstein

CAVALRY CAPTAIN NEUMANN, Terzky's adjutant

WAR COUNSELOR von QUESTENBERG, Kaiser's emissary

BAPTISTA SENI, astrologer

DUCHESS of FRIEDLAND, Wallenstein's wife

THEKLA, Princess Friedland, their daughter

COUNTESS TERZKY, sister of the Duchess

A CORNET

WINE STEWARD of Count Terzky

PAGES and SERVANTS of Friedland

SERVANTS and OBOISTS of Terzky

COLONELS and GENERALS

Act One

*An old Gothic Chamber in the Town Hall of Pilsen,
decorated with banners and other trappings of war*

Scene One

Illo with Buttler and Isolani.

ILLO. You're late in coming, but you've come. The long
Journey, Count Isolan, excuses your
Delay.

ISOLANI. And we're not coming empty-handed.
We heard at Donauwörth⁵⁷ of Swedish transports
Passing nearby and carrying supplies—
A good six hundred wagons. My Croats
Attacked. We've brought them with us here.

ILLO. Well done!
A timely gift to feed this high assembly.⁵⁸

BUTTLER. It's lively here already, as I see.

ISOLANI. The churches too are packed with troops, (*looking around*) and in
Town Hall you've made yourselves at home. Well, well!
A soldier finds solutions where he can.

ILLO. The chiefs of thirty regiments have come.
Terzky you'll find here, Tiefenbach, Colalto,
And Götz, Maradas, Hintersam, as well as
The Piccolomini, both father and son—
You'll see old friends in number once again.
Gallas alone is missed, and Altringer.

BUTTLER. You needn't wait for Gallas.

ILLO (*starts*). How so? Do you—

ISOLANI (*interrupts*). Max Piccolomini here? Bring me to him!
I see him still—it's been ten years since then—
At Dessau, where we fought with Mansfeld,⁵⁹ how
He leapt his charger from the bridge and swam
The ripping Elbe to relieve the press
Around his father. Beardless he was then,
And now he is, I hear, a finished hero.

ILLO. Today yet you should see him. He's escorting

The Duchess Friedland and the Princess from
Carinthia, expected before noon.⁶⁰

30 BUTTLER. The Prince sends for his wife and daughter? Quite
A company he's convened here.

ISOLANI. I say, so much
The better. I expected only talk
Of marches, batteries and attacks. But look!
The Duke provides what's fair to please our eyes.

ILLO (*who has been lost in thought, to Buttler, whom he has taken aside*).
How do you know Count Gallas isn't coming?

BUTTLER (*with meaning*). Because he also tried to keep *me* back.⁶¹

ILLO (*warmly*). And you stood fast?

(Presses his hand.) Most excellent Buttler!

BUTTLER. Considering the favor I enjoy—

ILLO. Congratulations, Major General!

40 ISOLANI. The regiment the Prince just gave him, not so?
What's more, I hear, the one in which he rose
From simple rider? True enough! A spur
And model to his corps—a warrior
Who rises by his merits.⁶²

BUTTLER. I'm embarrassed,
Not knowing if I may accept your praise.
The Kaiser has not yet confirmed—

ISOLANI. Accept!
Accept! The hand that placed you so is strong
Enough to keep you there in all despite
Of Kaiser and of ministers.

ILLO. If we all
Should have such scruples! The Kaiser gives us nothing.
All we want, all we have comes from the Duke.

ISOLANI (*to Illo*). I haven't told you, Brother. But the Prince
Has offered to content my creditors,
Himself to be my treasurer henceforth,
Make me an honest man. The third time now
This princely man has rescued me from ruin and
Restored my name.

60

ILLO. Could he but always do
 As he would wish! He gave his soldiers land
 And people. How Vienna doesn't block
 His arm and clip his wings back, where it can! Those
 Fine new demands this Questenberg has brought!⁶³

BUTTLER. I've heard of these Imperial demands.

I hope the Duke will stand his ground.

ILLO. For sure

In matters of his rights, if not—his place.

BUTTLER (*startled*). You've heard something? You frighten me.

ISOLANI (*together*). We'd all

Be ruined!

ILLO. Leave off! Our man is coming there
 With Lieutenant General Piccolomini.

BUTTLER (*shaking his head with misgiving*).

We shall not go from here the way we came.

Scene Two

As above. Octavio Piccolomini. Questenberg.

70

OCTAVIO (*still at a distance*). What? Still more guests? Admit it, Friend! It took
 This war, its many tears, to bring into
 One camp so many heroes crowned with laurel.

QUESTENBERG. Into the camp of Friedland's peerless army

Let no man come who would think ill of war.
 His difficulties almost slipped my mind
 At this high sense of order, his mark as
 He destroys, at the greatness that he builds.

OCTAVIO. But look! Here two men worthy to complete
 The ranks of heroes come: Count Isolan
 And Colonel Buttler.⁶⁴ All the arts of war
 Stand now before us.

(*Presenting Buttler and Isolani.*)

Strength and speed at once.

80

QUESTENBERG (*to Octavio*).

Quite. And between them, seasoned counsel, too.

OCTAVIO (*presenting Questenberg*).

Chamberlain Questenberg, Counselor of War.
We honor in this worthy guest the man
Who brings Imperial orders—soldiers' friend
And patron.

(*General silence.*)

ILLO (*approaching Questenberg*).

Not for the first time, my Lord,
Have we the honor to receive you here
In camp.

QUESTENBERG. These banners have received me, true.

ILLO. Do you remember where? At Znaim, Moravia,

You came, sent by the Kaiser, to entreat
The Duke, beg him to take the regiment.⁶⁵

QUESTENBERG. *Entreat*, General? That far my orders did

Not go, nor did my wishes.

ILLO. Then to force,

If you prefer. I remember well. Tilly
Had been defeated on the Lech.⁶⁶ Bavaria
Lay open to the enemy. Nothing
Kept him from penetrating to the heart
Of Austria. There *you* appeared, and with
You Werdenberg,⁶⁷ besieging, threatening
Imperial displeasure, should the Prince not
Take pity at such disarray.

ISOLANI (*joining in*). It's all

Too comprehensible, Counselor, to
Forget that mission at your present one.

QUESTENBERG. Why should I not? No contradiction here.

We had to drive the foe out of Bohemia
Then. Now we must protect it from its friends.

ILLO. A fine office! We've wrung Bohemia from
The Saxon with our blood;⁶⁸ for thanks you come
To throw us out.

QUESTENBERG. This wretched land must now
Be freed of friend and foe alike or fall from
One fire into another.

- ILLO. Stuff and nonsense!
 The peasant's had a good year. He can spare—
 QUESTENBERG. If you refer to flocks and pastures, then—
 ISOLANI. War feeds on war.⁶⁹ Destroy the peasant, and
 The Kaiser gains that many able soldiers.
 QUESTENBERG. And loses just so many subjects.
 ISOLANI. Pooh!
 We're all his subjects.
 QUESTENBERG. A distinction, Count.
 With industry some fill his coffers. Others
 Busily empty them. The sword has made
 120 The Kaiser poor. The plow's to build his strength back.
 BUTTLER. The Kaiser wouldn't be so poor if all those (*he pauses*)
 Leeches weren't sucking marrow from the land.
 ISOLANI. It can't be all that bad.
 (*He stands in front of Questenberg and stares at his uniform.*)
 I see they've yet
 To strike all gold to coin.
 QUESTENBERG. Praise be to God!
 They've saved a bit from long Croatian fingers.
 ILLO. Look! Slavata and Martinitz, on whom
 The Kaiser lavishes his grace and favor—
 Bane to all good Bohemians—they who feed
 On loot from exiled citizens and batten
 130 On general foulness, harvest sole amid
 A public wretchedness and mock the sorrow
 Of the land with a king's display—let *them* and
 Their like defray the ruinous war that they
 Alone have kindled.⁷⁰
 BUTTLER. Landed parasites,
 Those lords who always have their feet beneath
 The Kaiser's table, ravening to snap
 Up every benefice—they'd ration out
 The bread of every soldier in the field
 Before the foe and cancel his account.
 140 ISOLANI. In life I'll not forget: When I came to
 Vienna seven years ago (it was
 Our regiments' remount I was arranging),

They dragged me from one antechamber to
 Another, let me cool my heels among
 The flunkies, and for hours. As if I'd come
 To beg. At last they sent a Capuchin.
 I thought that he was for my sins. But no.
 It was with him I was supposed to bargain.
 I went back empty-handed. Then the Prince got
 150 Me in three days what cost me thirty in
 Vienna.

QUESTENBERG. Well I know. I found that entry
 In the account. We're paying for it still.

ILLO. A war's a dirty, violent trade. Mild measures
 Are not enough. One can't always forbear.
 To wait them out until they find the least
 Among two dozen evils in Vienna
 Will keep you waiting long. Wade right in,
 Cost what it may. That's better. People know
 To patch it up and understand a hated
 160 Compulsion better than a bitter choice.

QUESTENBERG. That's true. The Prince has spared us any choice.

ILLO. The Prince protects us like a father. We
 Know what the Kaiser has in store for us.

QUESTENBERG. He has an equal heart for each estate,
 Will not redeem one with another.

ISOLANI. Ho!

And sends us to be eaten in the desert,
 Instead of all those precious sheep at home.

QUESTENBERG (*mocking*). It's *you* draw the comparison, Count, not I.

ILLO. But were we that for which we're held at Court,
 170 It would be dangerous to give us freedom.

QUESTENBERG (*gravely*). This freedom has been taken and not given.

It must be haltered, bridled, and restrained.

ILLO. Expect to find a horse you cannot manage.

QUESTENBERG. A better rider knows to handle it.

ILLO. It carries none but him by whom it's tamed.

QUESTENBERG. When it's once tamed, it's managed by a child.

ILLO. A child, I well know, they've already found.⁷¹

QUESTENBERG. Your duty's your concern, and not his name.

BUTTLER (*who has stood to the side with Piccolomini, following the conversation attentively, comes forward*).

180

Lord President, the Kaiser has at his
Command impressive troops in Germany,
Full thirty thousand: sixteen thousand in
Silesia; then on Weser, Rhine, and Main
Ten regiments; in Swabia six and in
Bavaria twelve oppose the Swedes, to leave
Unmentioned garrisons to guard the strongholds
That keep our borders. All this army answers
To Friedland's captains. Its commanders all
Were trained in *one* school, one milk fed them all,
One heart beats in their breasts. Yet all of them
190 Are strangers in these parts, his service their
Sole house and home. No zeal for country drives
Them. Thousands here were born abroad, like me.
Not for the Kaiser—fully half has come
From foreign service, changing sides and fighting
Indifferently for Double Eagle, Lion,
Or Lily.⁷² These an equal rein controls,
One man by equal love and fear molds all
To *one* force. Rapid as a thunderbolt and
Straight, his command runs from the farthest outpost
200 That hears the Baltic surf crash on its dunes
Or looks on the rich valleys of the Etsch⁷³
Clear to the watch that built its sentry box
Beneath the walls of the Imperial Palace.

QUESTENBERG. And the short sense of this long speech is what?

BUTTLER. That the respect, the love, the trust, all that

200

Makes us submit to Friedland, never can be
Transplanted to the next best man Vienna
Sends. We remember loyally just how
Command first came to rest in Friedland's hands.
Was it Imperial Majesty bestowed
On him a standing army? Merely went
In search of one equipped to lead its troops?

There *was* no army. Friedland had to raise
 An army. He did not receive it. *He*
 It was who gave it to the Kaiser. We
 Did not receive our marshal from the Kaiser.
 Not so, not so. From Wallenstein we got
 The Kaiser in the first place as our master.⁷⁴
He binds us to these banners, only he.

220 OCTAVIO (*intervening*). Please bear in mind, Counselor, that you're among
 Warriors in camp. It's boldness makes the soldier,
 And freedom. Pluck in action, should it not
 Speak pluckily as well? It is all one.
 The boldness of this worthy officer (*indicating Buttler*),
 Which has but chosen here its object wrong,
 Salvaged, where only boldness could prevail—
 A fearsome rising of the garrison—
 The Kaiser's capital city Prague.⁷⁵

(*Military music in the distance.*)

ILLO. They're in!
 The Guard salutes. This signal tells us that
 230 The Duchess is just entering at our gates.

OCTAVIO (*to Questenberg*). Then my son Max is back. He went to fetch
 Her from Carinthia and has brought her here.

ISOLANI (*to Illo*). Shall we go out to greet her right away?

ILLO. Quite so. We'll go together. Colonel Buttler?

(*To Octavio.*) Remember we're to meet this worthy lord
 This morning yet before the Prince. Till then.

Scene Three

Octavio and Questenberg, who remain behind.

QUESTENBERG (*with gestures of astonishment*).

What I have had to hear, Lieutenant General!
 What unabridged defiance, wild ideas!
 If this should be the general spirit here—

240

OCTAVIO. You've heard three quarters of the army, Friend.

QUESTENBERG. Disastrous! Where to find a second such

To keep an eye on this one? Illo here
Thinks even worse than how he talks, I wager.
Still less can Buttler hide his evil thoughts.

OCTAVIO. He's touchy, over-proud, and nothing more.

I've not yet given up on him; I know
A way to righten his wrong-headedness.⁷⁶

QUESTENBERG (*pacing uneasily*).

Oh, this is worse, far worse, my friend, than we
Had let ourselves imagine in Vienna.

250

We saw it but with courtiers' eyes, blinded
Before the brilliance of the throne, alas. This
Field marshal, though, we had not seen, not yet
Here in his camp, where he's all-capable.

This is quite different!

There is no Kaiser here. The Prince is Kaiser!
The round through camp that I just made with you
Has altogether swept away my hopes.

OCTAVIO. You see now for yourself how dangerous is

The office that you bring me from the Court,
How perilous the role I must assume.⁷⁷
The least suspicion of the General will
Cost me my freedom or my very life
And only hastens his audacious plan.

260

QUESTENBERG. What were we thinking when we offered him

Our sword, bestowed such might on such a hand!
This badly guarded heart could not withstand such
Temptation! Why, a better man might have
Succumbed! I tell you, he'll refuse his orders—
He can and will. Defiance such as his,

270

Unpunished, will expose us, prove us helpless.

OCTAVIO. And do you believe that he has brought his wife

And daughter into camp for no good purpose,
Just when we're massing here to launch a war?
His bringing these last guarantors of his

Good faith into safekeeping points us to
A looming danger: imminent revolt.

QUESTENBERG. Alas! And how shall we withstand the storm
That gathers over us from every quarter?
Our enemy upon our borders; worse,
280 The Danube his; advances on all sides;
The fire bells tolling uproar through the land;
The peasants arming, every rank enflamed;
The army, from which we expected help,
Seduced, confused, all discipline abandoned,
Unmoored from Kaiser and from all the State.⁷⁸
A reeling and uncertain army led by
A reeling and uncertain chief commander,
A terrible machine obeying blindly
The boldest and most desperate of men—

OCTAVIO. Let's not lose courage at the outset, Friend.

For speech is always cheekier than the deed,
And many a one who seems intent upon
The worst will find a heart within his breast
To hear the crime once called by its true name.⁷⁹
Consider: undefended we are not.
Counts Altringer and Gallas, I assure you,
Keep faith with their small army, strengthen it
From day to day. He cannot take us by
Surprise. I have surrounded him with ears;
300 I'll hear of his least step immediately—
His own mouth tells me.

QUESTENBERG. Strange that he has not
Suspected any enemy beside him.

OCTAVIO. You should not believe that I used lies or flattery
To gain his favor, or half-truths to keep
His trust. And, while good sense and duty that
I owe the Kaiser led me to conceal
My heart, I've never shown him a *false* heart.⁸⁰

QUESTENBERG. It's heavenly disposition, manifestly.

OCTAVIO. I don't know what it is—what binds him to me

310

And to my son so powerfully. We've
Always been friends and brothers, brothers in arms.
Accustomedness, adventures shared alike
Allied us early on. Though I can name
The day that touched his heart, made his trust grow:
The morning before Lützen, when a dream
Had prompted me to seek him out and urge
That he accept a different horse for battle.
I found him far from camp, asleep beneath
A tree. I woke him, told him my misgivings.

320

He stared at me, then fell into my arms,
Much moved, more than so small service could
Deserve. And since that day his trust pursues me
In just the same degree that mine flees him.⁸¹

QUESTENBERG. You've drawn your son into your confidence?

OCTAVIO. No!

QUESTENBERG. What? Not warned him of what evil hands he's
In?

OCTAVIO. I must leave him to his innocence.
His open heart's a stranger to deception.
Ignorance only can preserve in him
The peace of mind to make the Duke secure.

330

QUESTENBERG (*troubled*). My worthy friend! I have the best regard
For Colonel Piccolomini, but if—
Consider—

OCTAVIO. I must risk it. Still! He's coming.

Scene Four

Max Piccolomini. Octavio Piccolomini. Questenberg.

MAX. And here he is in person. Welcome, Father!

(*He embraces him. When he turns, he sees Questenberg and steps back coldly.*)
You're occupied, I see. I'll not disturb you.

OCTAVIO. But Max! Look carefully. You know this guest.

Such an old friend deserves attentiveness and
Respect as bearer of the Kaiser's orders.

MAX (*perfunctory*). Von Questenberg! Welcome, if good report
Has brought you to headquarters.

QUESTENBERG (*seizes his hand*). Oh, do not

340 Withhold your hand, Count Piccolomini.

I take it not just for my sake, and no
Ordinary thing will I express by this.
(*Taking both their hands*.)
Octavio—Max Piccolomini!
Propitious names, names of good augury!
The fate of Austria shall never turn
While two such stars, so rich in blessing and
Protection, spread their light above its armies.

MAX. You've fallen out of role, Lord Counselor.

350 It's not to praise us that you're sent. You're here
To blame and scold. And I wish to enjoy
No preference not accorded others like me.

OCTAVIO (*to Max*). He comes from Court, where one is somewhat less
Contented with the Duke than we are here.

MAX. What new reproach do they now bring against him?

360 That he alone decides what he alone
Can grasp? Fine! He does well, and so it will
Remain. For never was he meant to trail
Another, willingly adjust his course.
It goes against his grain. He cannot do it.
His is a ruler's spirit and put him in
A ruler's place. Our luck, that it is so.
For few indeed can rule themselves, can use
Their good sense sensibly. A boon for all,
When there is one who builds a center, draws
In many thousands, stands firm like a pillar
To be embraced with joy and confidence.
Just such is Wallenstein, and if the Court
Prefers another, only such a one
Can serve the army.

QUESTENBERG. Yes, indeed, the army!

370 MAX. And it's a joy to see just how he rouses,
Makes strong, enlivens everything about him,
How every strength emerges, every gift

Perceives itself more clearly in his presence!
 He draws out the particular powers of each man
 And fosters them, lets each remain himself
 Entirely, seeing only that each keep
 His station. Thus adroit, he well knows how
 To make all men's capacity his own.

QUESTENBERG. No one denies that he knows men, knows how to

380 Use them! Engrossed as ruler, he forgets
 The servant, as if born into his rank.

MAX. And is he not? With every necessary
 Power he is, and also with the power
 To execute the plan of Nature and for
 His ruler's talent win a ruler's place.

QUESTENBERG. So it depends on his largesse in what
 Consideration we are henceforth held?

MAX. So rare a man requires rare trust. One need
 But give him room. He'll set his goal himself.

390 QUESTENBERG. So he has proved.

MAX. There you are! Everything
 Alarms them that has any depth. They feel
 At home uniquely with what's flat and shallow.

OCTAVIO (*to Questenberg*). Surrender in good grace, my friend! Give over.
 With this one here you never shall be done.

MAX. Hard pressed, they call for high intelligence,
 And then take fright, should it present itself.
 Uncommon things, the very greatest deeds
 Are to take place like everyday events.
 But in the field the moment is upon us.

400 There personal powers prevail, there one must see
 With one's own eyes. A field marshal must have
 Recourse to every grandness Nature holds.
 So let him live in grand dimensions, consult
 The living oracle of his mind, not dead
 Books, ancient regulations, musty papers.⁸²

OCTAVIO. Son, let us not despise our regulations,
 However old and narrow. These are priceless
 Fetters oppressed men bound on their oppressors'
 Swift will. For willfulness is terrible.

410 The path of order, crooked though it be,
Is no detour. The thunderbolt runs straight,
As does the cannonball. The shortest path
Brings it, destroying all about it, to
Its goal, which it destroys. My son, the road
A man must take, the good road, follows streams,
The easy course of valleys; it avoids
A corn field or a vineyard, it respects
The measured boundaries of property
And leads more slowly, surely to its goal.⁸³

420 QUESTENBERG. Oh, listen to your father, listen to
Him, who is both a hero and a man.

OCTAVIO. In you one hears the camp's child speak. Fifteen years
Of war have raised you. Peace you've never seen.

There're higher values, Son, than war-like ones;

In war itself the ultimate's not war.
The great and rapid deeds of violence,
The moment's blinding miracle beget
No happiness or strong, enduring calm.
A soldier builds his canvas town in haste

430 A momentary buzz and bustle brings
The square to life. On roads and rivers goods
Go back and forth, a busy trade springs up.
Then one fine morning tents are struck, the horde
Moves on. Sown fields and plow land lie as still
As churchyards, trampled, ruined. And the year's
Whole harvest has been lost.

MAX. Oh, let the Kaiser

Make peace, my father! Gladly I'd give all
This bloody laurel for one violet
In March, the fragrant pledge of earth renewed!

440 OCTAVIO Why Max! (Pause.) What has so affected you?

MAX. I've never seen a peace? Indeed I have,
My father. I've just come, just now, from there.
My journey led through lands no war has touched.
Oh, Father, life has charms we've never known.

450

We've only cruised the barren coast of blooming
Life, like a tribe of pirates, packed into
An airless ship, that squanders all its days
In savage living on a savage sea
And knows of the great land the bays alone
Where it might risk a thievish landing. What
Its inner valleys hide in treasure—none
Of all that could we see on our wild voyage.

OCTAVIO (*attentive*). And has this journey shown you all these things?
MAX. It gave me the first leisure of my life.

460

Tell me, what is the point of endless work, the
Hard labor that so robbed me of my youth
And left my heart a desert, starved my mind, which
No arts had gentled yet and none refined?
For this camp's noisy churning, horses neighing,
The trumpet's blast, our clockwork rounds of duty,
Practice at arms, obedience to command—
They strip the heart out and they parch it dry.
This empty busyness, it has no soul. There's
Another happiness, there're other joys.

OCTAVIO. You have learned much on this short trip, my son.
MAX. Oh, happy day! At last a soldier can

470

Reenter life, return to humankind.
The flags unfurl in festive celebration.
To peaceful marches he sets out for home,
All hats and helmets are decked out with green,
The last loot from the fields. Now city gates
Swing open freely, no petard need breach them.
The walls are thronged by peaceful citizens,
Who wave. From every tower bells announce
The tranquil evening of a bloody day.
From villages and cities cheering crowds
Come streaming out and joyfully slow the march.
The old man, glad he's seen the day, extends
His hand to welcome his returning son.
A stranger, he reenters what is his,

Long left behind. At his return the tree
That he'd last seen a slender sapling shades him.
A blushing girl comes out to meet him whom
He'd once left lying on her nurse's breast.
A happy man to whom a door, to whom
Soft arms, embracing sweetly, also open.

QUESTENBERG (*touched*).

Alas, that you should speak of far off, far
Off times, not of tomorrow, not today.

MAX (*rounds on him*). Who but you in Vienna bears the fault?⁸⁴

490

Let me confess it freely, Questenberg!
When I caught sight of you just now, ill will
Made my spleen rise into my throat. It's you
Who block the peace, it's you and you alone.
It's fighting men who must bring it about.
From you comes endless trouble for the Prince,
You stop his steps, you blacken him. And why?
Because Europe's great Good concerns him more than
A foot or more or less of land for Austria.
You're making him a rebel and God knows
500 What else, because he spares the Saxon, wants
To cultivate our enemy's trust. But that's
The only path to lead us to a peace.
If we don't stop this war within a war,
What hope have we of peace? So go, just go!
I hate you as I love the Good. I swear
Most solemnly, I'll give my heart's last blood,
Last drop of blood, for him, for Wallenstein,
Before I see you triumph at his fall. (*Exit.*)

Scene Five

Questenberg. Octavio Piccolomini.

QUESTENBERG. God help us! Can this be?

(*Urgent and impatient.*)

510 Are we to let him go this way? He's mad!
 Not call him back? Not open instantly
 His eyes?

OCTAVIO (*rousing himself from deep thought*).

 He has just opened mine and made

Me see more than I like.

QUESTENBERG. May I ask what?

OCTAVIO. A pox upon this journey!

QUESTENBERG. What? How so?

OCTAVIO. But come, I'll have to track this down, to see
 With my own eyes—(*Offers to lead him away.*)

QUESTENBERG. But what? Where would you go?

OCTAVIO (*urgent*). To her!

QUESTENBERG. To?

OCTAVIO (*correcting himself*). To the Duke. I fear the worst.

I see a net cast over him, he's not

Returned to me the man who went away.

520 QUESTENBERG. Explain—

OCTAVIO. Could I not see it coming? Not

Abort this errand? Why did I not speak?

You're right. I should have warned him. Too late now.

QUESTENBERG. Too late for what? These riddles baffle me.

OCTAVIO (*more composed*).

We're going to the Duke. Come. It's almost

The hour he named for audience. Do come!

A pox, a three-fold pox, upon this journey!

(*He leads Questenberg away.*)

Curtain.

Act Two

A large Room in the quarters of the Duke of Friedland

Scene One

Servants are arranging chairs and spreading carpets. The astrologer Seni enters, dressed in black, rather fantastically, after the fashion of an Italian scholar.⁸⁵ He goes to the middle of the room and indicates the four cardinal points with the white staff that he carries.

SERVANT (*going about with a censor*).

Fall to! Get finished here. The Guard's been called to

Attention! They'll be coming any minute.

SECOND SERVANT. But why was the red room closed off? The one
That has a bay and where the light's so good?

FIRST SERVANT. Ask him, the mathematician there. He claims
That it's unlucky.

SECOND SERVANT. Pooh! That's nothing more
Than fooling people. Look, a room's a room.
What's all the fuss about a simple place?

SENI (*with gravity*).

My son, there's nothing in the world lacks meaning.
For every earthly matter, time and place
Have overwhelming, capital importance.

THIRD SERVANT. Don't take it up with him, Nathanael.
The Master, even, has to do his will.

SENI (*counting the chairs*).

Eleven. Evil number. Place twelve chairs.
The zodiac has twelve signs, five and seven,
For only sacred numbers make up twelve.

SECOND SERVANT. And what's the grudge you have against eleven?

SENI. Eleven, that is sinfulness, exceeds
The Ten Commandments.

SECOND SERVANT. Oh! And why is five
A sacred number?

SENI. That's the human soul,
Composed of good and evil, just as five's
Composed of odd and even, straight and crooked.

FIRST SERVANT. The dunce!
 THIRD SERVANT. Leave him alone. I like to listen
 550 When he talks—how it always makes you think.
 SECOND SERVANT.
 They're coming. Quick! This way! Out by the side door.

(They leave in haste. Seni follows slowly.)

Scene Two

Wallenstein. The Duchess.

WALLENSTEIN. Well, Duchess? On your way you saw Vienna?
 Appeared before the Queen of Hungary?⁸⁶
 DUCHESS. Before the Empress, too. Their Majesties
 Admitted us to offer our respects.
 WALLENSTEIN. How did they take it that I've summoned wife
 And daughter to me in the field in winter?
 DUCHESS. I did as you prescribed: observed that you
 Had chosen for our daughter, wished to show her
 To her betrothed before the next campaign.
 560 WALLENSTEIN. And did they speculate about my choice?
 DUCHESS. They wanted it to be no foreigner,
 To be no Lutheran whom you'd chosen for her.
 WALLENSTEIN. And what is it *you* want, Elisabeth?
 DUCHESS. You know your wish has always been my own.
 WALLENSTEIN (*after a pause*).
 Well, then. And how were you received at Court?
(The Duchess lowers her gaze and remains silent.)
 Hide nothing from me. Tell me how it was.
 DUCHESS. Alas, my husband, it's not all the way
 It used to be. There's been a change—it's different—
 570 WALLENSTEIN. How so? Were you not treated with respect?
 DUCHESS. Respect? Oh, yes. Their mien was dignified and
 Seemly. But stiff formality now took
 The place of friendly, gracious condescension.
 Their kindness toward me showed compassion more

Than favor. No, indeed. Duke Albrecht's princely
 Consort, Count Harrach's noble daughter ought not,
 Ought not, to've been received in such a fashion.

WALLENSTEIN. And they no doubt attacked my latest conduct?

DUCHESS. If they but had! I'm long accustomed to
 Excusing you, to smoothing ruffled feathers.

No, not a one attacked. They wrapped themselves
 In solemn, leaden silence. This, alas, is
 No ordinary misunderstanding, no
 Mere passing sensitivity. Something
 Disastrous, irretrievable has happened.
 The Queen of Hungary once used to call
 Me her dear aunt, embraced me when we parted.

WALLENSTEIN. And now?

DUCHESS (*drying her tears, after a pause*).

She still embraced me: I had taken

My leave of her, was almost at the door,
 When she approached me quickly, as if she'd
 Forgot, and pressed me to her bosom, more pained
 Than moved by tenderness.

WALLENSTEIN (*taking her hand*). Compose yourself!

With Eggenberg, with Lichtenstein, and with
 Our other friends—how was it?⁸⁷

DUCHESS (*shaking her head*). I saw none.

WALLENSTEIN. The Spanish Count Ambassador, who spoke
 For me so warmly?

DUCHESS. Not a word for you.

WALLENSTEIN. *These* suns no longer shine for us. Henceforth
 We'll have to light our way with our own fire.

DUCHESS. Is it because, my Lord, is it because
 Of what at Court they whisper, openly
 Recount abroad, what Father Lamormain⁸⁸
 Referred to—

WALLENSTEIN (*quickly*). Lamormain! What's he been saying?

DUCHESS. That you're accused of heedlessly transgressing
 Your charge, of flagrant disregard of highest

610

Imperial orders. That the Spanish, that
The proud Bavarian duke complain of you,
And that a storm is gathering over you
More menacing by far than that which caused
Your fall at Regensburg.⁸⁹ And that there's talk—Oh!
I cannot say it—

WALLENSTEIN (*tense*). There's talk—

DUCHESS. Of a second—(*She stops.*)

WALLENSTEIN. A second—

DUCHESS. A dismissal more disgraceful
Than the first.

WALLENSTEIN. There's talk?

(*Pacing the room in agitation.*) Oh, they're forcing me,
They're pushing me against my will into it.

DUCHESS (*embracing him, pleading*).

While there's still time, my Lord—if it can be
Prevented by submission, willingness
To yield—Relent. Prevail on your proud heart.
It's your superior, your Kaiser, that you yield to.
No longer let ill will and spite use poisonous
Construction to obscure your good intentions.
Stand up and use the conquering power of truth
To shame those liars and those slanderers.
We have so few true friends. You know this.
Our swift good fortune has exposed us to
Men's hatred. Where shall we then be, if now
The Kaiser turns away his favor from us?

620

Scene Three

Countess Terzky enters, leading Princess Thekla by the hand.⁹⁰

COUNTESS. What, Sister? Speaking only of affairs,
And, I see, not of pleasant ones, before
He even has the pleasure of his child?
First moments should belong alone to pleasure.

630

Here, Father Friedland! I present your daughter.

*(Thekla approaches him shyly and is about to bend over his hand.
He catches her in his arms and stands several moments lost in
contemplation of her.)*

WALLENSTEIN. *This hope has blossomed for me. I shall take
That as a pledge of greater happiness.*

DUCHESS. She was but a small child when you went out

To build a teeming army for the Kaiser.

And then when you returned from Pomerania,
Your daughter was in convent, until now.⁹¹

WALLENSTEIN. While in the field we sought to make her great,
To gain the highest earthly good for her,
Kind Mother Nature within quiet cloister
Walls did her part to give her godly goods
And leads her now in beauty out to meet
Her brilliant fortunes and fulfill my hopes.

DUCHESS (*to the Princess*).

You hardly recognized your father here,
My child? You were just eight years old when last
You saw his face.⁹²

THEKLA. Oh, yes, my mother, at
First glance. My father hasn't aged. In him
I see the man I carried in my heart.

WALLENSTEIN (*to the Duchess*).

This charming child! A fine remark and what
Good sense. And I complained that Fate withheld
A son, an heir, to take my name and fortune,
To carry forward my brief life in a
Proud line of princes. Rank ingratitude!
Upon this virginal young brow I'll lay
The wreath of military life. Nothing's lost
If it becomes a kingly crown that I
Can weave into this forehead's lovely locks.

(He is holding her in his arms as Piccolomini enters.)⁹³

640

Lifelong I shall be captive of this name,
 From it will spring all joy and every hope.
 Fast, as if in a fairy ring, fate holds me,
 Enchanted, in the ambit of this name.

COUNTESS (*who has been observing the Duke and sees that the letters have made him thoughtful*).
 690 Our brother wants to be alone. We'll go.⁹⁴

WALLENSTEIN (*turns, catches himself, and speaks cheerfully to the Duchess*).
 Once more, Princess, you're welcome in the field.

You are the mistress of this court. You, Max,
 Will once again take up your office, while
 We here attend to matters of our master.

(*Max Piccolomini offers the Duchess his arm; the Countess leads the Princess away.*)

TERZKY (*calls after him*).
 Remember to be present at assembly.

Scene Five

Wallenstein. Terzky.

WALLENSTEIN (*deep in thought, aloud to himself*).
 As she observed. Exactly so. Accords

With other notices quite perfectly.
 So they've arrived at a decision in
 Vienna, chosen a successor for me.

700 The King of Hungary, that Ferdinand,
 The Kaiser's precious little son, he's their
 Savior, their rising star.⁹⁵ They think they're done
 With us already, and like one dispatched
 We've gotten our reward. No time to lose!

(*He turns, notices Terzky, and gives him a letter.*)
 Count Altringer regrets, sends his excuses.
 And Gallas.⁹⁶ I don't like this.

TERZKY. If you go
 On doing nothing, they'll all fall away.

WALLENSTEIN. This Altringer holds the Tirolean passes.

710 I'll send him word to block the Spaniards coming
Up from Milan.⁹⁷ Now! Old Sesin, that go-
Between, he shows himself again. Has he
A message for us from Count Thurn?⁹⁸

TERZKY. The Count

Would have you know: At Halberstadt at the
Convention these last days, he visited
The Swedish Chancellor, who says he's had
Enough of you and wants to hear no more.⁹⁹

WALLENSTEIN. How so?

TERZKY. He says you're never serious,
You only want to gull the Swedes, ally
Yourself against them with the Saxons and
Then fob them off contemptibly with money.

720 WALLENSTEIN. Aha! He thinks that I should give him German
Terrain as booty? Thinks that we're no longer
The masters here on our own soil? Out with
Them, out, out! Who would have such neighbors? Out!

TERZKY. You would begrudge them a mere fleck of land?
It's not been carved out from your own. If you
Win at this game, what care have you who loses?

WALLENSTEIN. Out with them! You don't understand. No one
Shall say that I dismembered Germany,
Betrayed it faithlessly to strangers just
To pocket my own portion. Nevermore!¹⁰⁰
In me the Empire is to honor its
Protector. Proving princely and imperial,
I'll seat myself among Imperial princes.
On my watch let no foreigner strike root here,
And least of all, *those* Goths, those wretched starvelings
Who look with hungry eyes upon this blessing,
German land. They're to aid me in my plans
And not go fishing for their own advantage.

730 740 TERZKY. And with the Saxons you'll proceed with greater
Honor? They too are losing patience with
Your deviousness. Why all the masks? Even

Your friends have doubts, can't make you out. Arnheim¹⁰¹
 And Oxenstirn—it baffles everyone
 How you hang fire. And in the end the blame
 Comes back to me, since I transmit it all.
 And I don't have *one* scrap that's in your hand.

WALLENSTEIN. I issue nothing written. You know that.
 TERZKY. And how is one to know if you're in earnest?

750 You give your solemn word and no deed follows.
 Admit it: All the things that you've agreed to—
 They could have happened had you wanted just
 To get the better of the foe, no more.

WALLENSTEIN (*after a pause in which he fixes him*).
 And how would you know that I do not *have*
 The better of him? Have the better of
 The lot of you? Do you know me that well?
 I don't think I've shown you my deepest feelings.
 The Kaiser, it is true, has done me wrong. *If*
 I wanted, I could do him no small harm.
 760 I *like* to know my power. Whether I
 Make use of it—or that you know no more than
 The next one.

TERZKY. That's the way you've always played.

Scene Six

Illo enters.

WALLENSTEIN. How is it out there? Have they been prepared?¹⁰²
 ILLO. You'll find them in the mood you wanted. They know

The Kaiser's terms and they're beside themselves.

WALLENSTEIN. And Isolan?

ILLO. Is yours with heart and soul
 Since you restored his faro bank.¹⁰³

WALLENSTEIN. Colalto?

You're sure of Deodat and Tiefenbach?

ILLO. What Piccolomini does they'll all do.

770

WALLENSTEIN. So I can risk it with them, do you think?

ILLO. If you're sure of both Piccolomini.

WALLENSTEIN. As of myself. *They'll* not desert me. Never!

TERZKY. I wish you wouldn't put that kind of trust

In that sly fox, that old Octavio.

WALLENSTEIN. Tell me about it, you. Look! Sixteen times

I've marched into the field with that old warhorse.

And furthermore, I have his horoscope.

Born under the same stars, the two of us.

In brief—(*Breaks off.*) Another matter altogether.

780

If you'll vouch for the others—

ILLO. They're of one mind:

You cannot lay down your command. They'll send

Someone, I hear.

WALLENSTEIN. If I'm to bind myself

To *them*, they'll have to bind themselves to me.

ILLO. Assuredly.

WALLENSTEIN. I want their word of honor,

In writing, sworn, that they're committed to

My service *absolutely*.

ILLO. And why not?

TERZKY. *Absolute?* They'll reserve the Kaiser's service,

The duty they owe Austria.

WALLENSTEIN (*shaking his head*). Absolutely.

No other way. No word about reserve.

790

ILLO. Something occurs to me. Is Terzky not

To give a banquet here this evening?

TERZKY. Yes,

Indeed. And all the generals are invited.

ILLO (*to Wallenstein*).

Say? Would you let me have a full free hand?

I'll get the generals' word for you exactly

The way you want it.

WALLENSTEIN. Get it me in writing.

How you get it is no affair of mine.

ILLO. And when I bring it to you, black on white,

That all the captains gathered here are pledged

Blindly to you—will you then double down
And boldly try your luck?

WALLENSTEIN. Get me the writing!

ILLO. Consider! You can't meet the Kaiser's wishes:

You can't reduce the army, can't detach
Those regiments to meet the Spaniard—you'll
Be letting go your forces for all time.¹⁰⁴
Consider your alternative: You can't
Defy the Kaiser's order and command, go
On seeking pretexts, temporizing—you'll
Be breaking with the Court in all good form.
Make up your mind! Will you anticipate
Him with deliberate action? Or, forever
Hesitating, await the worst?

WALLENSTEIN. That's what

One does before one fixes on the worst.

ILLO. Oh, seize the hour before it slips away.

The moment is so rare in life, the great
And weighty moment. Much must coincide
For a decision to be taken. But
The threads of fortune, opportunities,
Show singly, scattered. Only pressed together
Into a single instant can they form

The massy kernel of an outcome. See, then!

How forcefully, how fatefully all things

Converge around you. All your captains of

The line, most excellent, have gathered here

About their princely leader. They await

Your signal only. Don't let them disperse!

You'll not convene them so united ever

Again in the whole course of this long war.

A high tide lifts a heavy ship from shore. In

The current of the crowd each courage grows.

You have them now—just for this moment. Soon

The war will drive them hither, thither, and

The common spirit will dissolve into the

Small cares and interests of each one. A man

810

820

830

Who, swept along, forgets himself will sober
 Up when he finds himself alone, know only
 His feebleness, and pivot quickly, take
 Instead the beaten path of common duty,
 Intent to reach safe cover for himself.

WALLENSTEIN. It's not yet time.

TERZKY.

That's what you always say.

840

When *will* it be time?

WALLENSTEIN.

When I say so.

ILLO.

Oh!

You're waiting for the astral hour. Meanwhile
 The earthly hour escapes you. Believe me,
 The stars of destiny lie in your heart.
 Decisiveness, trust in yourself—this is your
 Venus.¹⁰⁵ Your sole disaster is your *doubt*.

WALLENSTEIN. That's how *you* see these things. How often must

I say to you: At *your* birth, Jupiter,
 The bright god, was descending. You've no lights
 For secrets. You can only sift in the

850

Dark earth, unseeing, like the subterranean
 God whose pale leaden sheen attended you
 At birth.¹⁰⁶ It's earthly, ordinary things

That you can see, connect with one another.
 There you enjoy my confidence, my trust.
 What works and weaves with secret meaning in

The depths of Nature—the angelic ladder
 That reaches from this world of dust into
 The world of stars, a thousand rungs on which
 Celestial powers wander up and down—¹⁰⁷

860

The circles within circles that embrace

The central sun in ever closer union—

These things the unsealed eye alone perceives
 Of Jove's own children, brightly born and sparkling.¹⁰⁸

(*He takes a turn through the Hall, then stands still and continues.*)

The heavenly constellations do not make

Just day and night, just spring and summer. Not

Just to the sower do they show the seasons

Of seed and harvest. No. The acts of men
 No less sow destinies in the dark land
 Of time to come, entrust them to Fate's rule.
 870 Here too one must inquire the sowing season,
 Seek out a favorable astral hour,
 And search the planetary houses, lest
 The foe of growth and of prosperity
 Be hiding balefully deep in its *corners*.¹⁰⁹
 So give me time. And do what's yours to do.
 I cannot say yet what I want to do.
 Relent, however, I shall not. Not I!
 And they shall not remove me either. Count
 On it.

CHAMBERLAIN (*entering*). My Lords the Generals.

WALLENSTEIN. Admit them.

880 TERZKY. Is it your wish to have all captains present?
 WALLENSTEIN. No need. Both Piccolomini, Buttler,
 Forgatsch, Maradas, Deodat, Caraffa,¹¹⁰
 And Isolani: they should be admitted.

(*Terzky goes out with the Chamberlain.*)

WALLENSTEIN (*to Illo*).

You've kept a watch on Questenberg meanwhile?
 No secret conversations held with others?
 ILLO. No. I put a sharp watch on him. He's been
 With no one but Octavio.¹¹¹

Scene Seven

As above. Questenberg, both Piccolomini, Buttler, Isolani, Maradas, and three other Generals enter. At a gesture from Wallenstein, Questenberg seats himself directly opposite him; the others follow in order of rank. A momentary pause.

WALLENSTEIN. I've understood and weighed the substance of
 Your mission, Questenberg, and taken a
 890 Decision such as nothing more can alter.
 But it is meet that these commanders hear
 The Kaiser's dispositions from your mouth.

Be it your pleasure, therefore, to discharge
 Your office here before these noble chiefs.

QUESTENBERG. I am prepared, but bid you bear in mind:
 Imperial rule and worthiness express
 Themselves through me, not my own hardihood.

WALLENSTEIN. Spare us the prelude.

QUESTENBERG. When His Majesty

The Kaiser gave his mighty armies in
 The person of the Duke of Friedland a
 War-hardened, wreathed head, he confidently
 And sovereignly expected rapid change
 To his advantage on the battlefield.¹¹²
 And the beginnings met his wishes well.
 Bohemia had been swept clean of Saxons,
 The Swedes stopped in their victories. These lands
 Had paused to catch their breath just as the Duke
 Of Friedland drew the scattered foe from all
 The streams of Germany. He lured the Rhinegrave,
 Prince Bernhard, Banner, Oxenstirn, and that
 Unvanquished king himself into a single
 Rendezvous.¹¹³ Here at last before the walls
 Of Nuremberg the bloody game of war
 Should be decided.¹¹⁴

WALLENSTEIN. If you please, the point?

QUESTENBERG. New thinking heralded the new field marshal.

No more did blind rage wrestle with blind rage.
 In well-defined encounters one now saw
 Steadfastness stand up to audacity
 And prudent art of war exhaust high courage.
 In vain do they attempt to draw him. He digs
 Himself in ever deeper in his camp,
 As if to found there an eternal house.¹¹⁵
 The king in desperation calls for storm,
 Forces onto a butcher block the troops
 Whom hunger and disease are ravaging
 In an encampment fetid with the dead.
 Unstoppable, the king would storm his way
 Through a breastwork of brush that guards a camp

900

910

920

Where death awaits him from a thousand muskets.

930 Attack and then resistance such as eye has
Not seen, until the tattered king retreats,
Not having gained an ell for all the slaughter.

WALLENSTEIN. You needn't read us what the papers write
About a carnage we ourselves endured.

QUESTENBERG. It is my office and my mission to
Indict. It is my heart that dwells on praise.
In camp in Nuremberg the Swedish king lost
His fame, and then on Lützen's plains his life.¹¹⁶
Who then was not amazed to see Duke Friedland
Flee to Bohemia from so great a day
Like one who has been conquered, vanish from
The field, while the young hero of the House
Of Weimar breached Franconia unresisted,
Proceeded swiftly to the Danube, and
Appeared beneath the walls of Regensburg,

A feat to frighten all good Catholic Christians.¹¹⁷
Bavaria's noble prince appealed for quick
Relief, pressed as he was. The Kaiser sends
Full seven riders bringing this request to
Duke Friedland, begs where he as master can
Command. In vain. The Duke would hear just now
Only his cherished hatreds and resentments,
Ignores the common good and would indulge
His vengefulness on his old enemy.¹¹⁸
And thus falls Regensburg.

WALLENSTEIN. What era is this, Max?

MAX. He means Silesia.

WALLENSTEIN. Oh, so! But what could we be doing there?

MAX. Chasing the Swedes and Saxons out.

WALLENSTEIN. Quite right!

All that description makes a man forget
This wretched war.

(*To Questenberg.*) Go on! Go on! Let's hear it.

QUESTENBERG. Perhaps one could recover on the Oder
What had been lost so meanly on the Danube.

Astounding things were hoped for on this theater
When Friedland took the battlefield in person,
When Gustav's rival found a—Thurn and an
Arnheim before him.¹¹⁹ Truly, they came close
Enough, but only to receive each other
As friends. All Germany groaned beneath the strain;
In Wallenstein's encampment peace prevailed.¹²⁰

970 WALLENSTEIN. Many a bloody battle's fought for nothing,
Because a young commander needs a win.
The proven captain has no need to show
The world that he knows how to gain a victory.
It profited me nothing to exploit
My luck against the likes of Arnheim. Much
Accrued to Germany by my moderation,
Had I been able to dissolve the league
That bound the Saxon and the Swede, at our cost.

QUESTENBERG. It didn't work, and so hostilities
980 Resumed. But now the Prince redeemed his fame.
The Swedish army dropped its arms at Steinau
Without a stroke.¹²¹ And Heaven's justice there
Delivered straight to the avenger's hands
That cursed war-torch, that inveterate
And proven troublemaker, Mattias Thurn.
He'd fallen into gracious hands indeed.
For punishment he got reward. The Prince
Released his Kaiser's own archenemy,
Released him, sent him onward, bearing gifts.

990 WALLENSTEIN (*laughs*). I know, I know. You in Vienna had
Already rented windows, balconies
From which to see him mount the hangman's cart.
I might have lost that battle shamefully:
The unforgivable is ever to
Deny the Viennese a spectacle.

QUESTENBERG. Silesia had been liberated. All things
Now called the Duke to the relief of hard-pressed
Bavaria. And he indeed sets out:
At stately pace he marches through Bohemia

(*Pause*) by the longest route. Not even having
Once seen the enemy, he turns his army,
Goes into winter camp, oppresses thus
The Kaiser's country with the Kaiser's soldiers.¹²²

WALLENSTEIN. The troops were in a hopeless state. They wanted
For everything, with winter coming on.
How does His Majesty see his troops? Are we
Not human, not subject to cold and damp,
Exposed to each and every mortal need?
The soldier's is a truly cursed lot.

1010 Where he approaches, all the world takes flight,
And where he leaves, they wish him every ill.
He must *seize* everything he hopes to get;
He's offered nothing. Forced to take from each
And all, he is a universal horror.
These are my generals. Caraffa! Buttler!
Count Deodati! Tell him, please, how long
The soldiers' pay has been withheld from them?
BUTTLER. There's been no payment for a year.

WALLENSTEIN. A soldier
Must have his sou—that's where he gets his name.¹²³
QUESTENBERG. The Duke of Friedland let himself be heard
In quite another vein nine years ago.
WALLENSTEIN. My fault, I know. That's how I spoiled the Kaiser

The Danish War:¹²⁴ I raised an arm of forty
Or fifty thousand head that cost him not
One cent of his own money. That war ripped
Through Saxony and spread the terror of
His name clear to the sheerest Baltic islets.
Those were the days! The whole Imperium knew
No name as honored as my own, and Albrecht
Wallenstein was the third stone in his crown.
Then came the Regensburg Electors' Congress.¹²⁵
What means I'd used to fight the war was clear.
Was that my thanks for taking on myself
The people's hatred? For laying on the princes
A war that only made the Kaiser great?
To then be sacrificed to their complaints!
I was removed from office.

- QUESTENBERG. Your Grace knows
 How little freedom he enjoyed at that
 Unhappy Congress.
- WALLENSTEIN. Death and destruction!
- 1040 I had what could procure him freedom. No,
 My Lord. Since it became me all that badly
 To serve the throne at state expense, I've learned
 To think quite differently about that State.
 Look! This staff I have from the Kaiser, granted.
 I wield it now as marshal of the Empire,
 Now for the good of all, the *common* weal,
 Not for the magnification of *one man*.
 But to the point: What is required of me?
- QUESTENBERG. His Majesty desires first that the army
 1050 Vacate Bohemia instantly.
- WALLENSTEIN. At this time
 Of year? And where then would they have us go?
- QUESTENBERG. To meet the foe. His Majesty desires
 That Regensburg be cleared by Easter, that
 No Lutheran sermon more be preached in its
 Cathedral, and no heresy and horror
 Besmire the celebration of the feast.
- WALLENSTEIN. Can this be done, my generals?
- ILLO. Cannot
 Be done.
- BUTTLER. Out of the question. Can't be done.
- QUESTENBERG. The Kaiser also has sent Colonel Suys¹²⁶
 1060 An order to advance into Bavaria.
- WALLENSTEIN. And Suys?
- QUESTENBERG. He did his duty and advanced.
- WALLENSTEIN. Advanced? And I, his chief, had given him
 Explicit orders not to budge from where
 He stood! Is that the state of my command?
 That the obedience I am owed? Without which
 No state of war is thinkable? You be
 The judge, my generals: An officer
 Who breaks his orders—what has he deserved?
- ILLO. His death!

WALLENSTEIN (*raises his voice at the prudent silence of the others.*)

Count Piccolomini, what has he

1070 Deserved?

MAX (*after a long pause*). According to the law, his death.

ISOLANI. His death!

BUTTLER. By military law, his death!

(*Questenberg stands up, followed by Wallenstein. All stand.*)

WALLENSTEIN. The law condemns him to it, and not I!

If I now pardon him, I do so out of

Deference to the respect I owe my Kaiser.

QUESTENBERG. In *that* case, I've no further business here.

WALLENSTEIN. I took command here only on condition.

The first was that no mortal man, not even

The very Kaiser himself, have a say

Disadvantageous to me with the army.

1080 Where *I* must vouch for the result with both

My honor and my head, I must be master.

What made that Gustav irresistible,

Unvanquished in this world? That he was *king*

Among his army—that alone! A king,

However, one who is king, never yet

Was conquered, save by his own equal. Well!

Enough of this. The best is yet to come.

QUESTENBERG. The Cardinal-Infante vacates Milan¹²⁷

In spring to lead a Spanish army from there

1090 Through Germany into the Netherlands.

In order to ensure his safety on

The march, the Monarch wants eight regiments from

This army to accompany him on horseback.

WALLENSTEIN. I see, I see—eight regiments. Quite so!

Finely invented, Father Lamormain!

Were *that* thought not so devilish clever, one

Could call it wonderfully idiotic.

Eight thousand horses. Absolutely right.

I see it coming.

QUESTENBERG There's no thought behind it.

1100 Prudence requires and need demands the measure.

WALLENSTEIN. My Lord Ambassador, it should escape my

Notice that one has tired of suffering
 My hand upon the hilt? That they have seized
 This pretext, use the Spanish name to reduce
 My numbers, bring in a new force not subject
 To my command? You find me still too strong to
 Displace me openly. My contract demands
 That all Imperial forces answer to me
 Where German is the language of the land.
 Of Spanish soldiers and Infantes who
 Go wandering through the realm as guests it makes
 No mention. Now one silently evades
 Its clauses, weakens me, makes me unuseful,
 Till one can make short shrift of me. But why
 The subterfuges, my Lord Counselor?
 Out with it! That agreement with me chafes
 His Majesty. He would be rid of me.
 I shall do him that favor. Here I had
 Made up my mind, my Lord, before you came.

(Growing unrest among the Generals.)

1120

A shame about the captains of my lines.
 I don't see how they will recover what they've
 Advanced, how they'll collect their well-earned wage.
 A new regime brings new men to the fore,
 And old deserts are all too soon forgotten.
 This army's served by many foreign troops,
 And if the man was brave and fought well, I
 Would not inquire about his lineage or
 His catechism. *That* will change now. Ah,
 Well. That is no concern of mine. (*He seats himself*)

MAX. Not possible

1130

That it should come to that! The army, the
 Whole army will rebel, rise up as one.
 The Kaiser's misinformed. It cannot be.

ISOLANI. Cannot! It all would go to rack and ruin.

WALLENSTEIN. That it most surely will: to rack and ruin,
 Isolan—all we built up with such care.

That's why at length a marshal will turn up,
 An army also gather for the Kaiser
 When they have heard the drumbeat start again.

MAX (*going busily, passionately from one to the other, calming tempers*).
 Do hear me, Marshal; listen to me, Captains.

1140 I beg you, Prince! Until we've met in council,
 Spoken to you, take no decision. Come,
 My friends. I truly hope we can repair it.

TERZKY. Come, please. We'll find the others just outside.

(*They adjourn.*)

BUTTLER (*to Questenberg*). A word of caution, if you care to hear:

Do not appear in public for the moment.
 Your golden key would not be sure protection.¹²⁸

(*Loud commotion outside.*)

WALLENSTEIN. Good counsel, that. Octavio, you will be

My surety for the safety of our guest.

So, fare ye well, von Questenberg.

(*As Questenberg is about to speak.*) No, please.

1150 Not one word more about this wretched business.
 You did the duty that you owed. I know
 How to distinguish the man from his office.

(*As Questenberg is about to leave with Octavio, Götz, Tiefenbach,
 and Colalto press in, followed by other Captains.*)

GOETZ. Where is the man, the one who's come to tell—

TIEFENBACH (*together*).

What's this? Are you preparing to lay down—

COLALTO (*together*). We want to live, we want to die with you.

WALLENSTEIN (*with poise, indicating Illo*).

The Marshal is acquainted with my wishes. (*Exit.*)

Act Three

A Room

Scene One

Illo and Terzky.

TERZKY. Tell me, how will you manage at the banquet
That I give late today for all the chiefs?

ILLO. Here's my plan: We'll compose a formula

1160 In which we dedicate ourselves to serve
The Duke to the last drop of blood, but with
Respect of our sworn duties to the Kaiser.
That last proviso we set in a clause
Apart, and thus we salve our consciences.
This version we present before the meal.
No one will take exception to it. Listen
Now. After dinner, when the wine has closed
Their eyes and opened hearts, we circulate
For signature a version where that clause
1170 Does not appear, where it has been suppressed.

TERZKY.

Oh, come now! Do you think they'll believe they're bound by
An oath that we have tricked them into signing?

ILLO. Oh, we'll still have them. Let them raise a hue
And cry. The Court will sooner credit their
Signature than their loudest protestations.
And so they're traitors all the same, must be,
Must make a virtue of necessity.

TERZKY. Well, I'll agree to anything as long
As we get action and move off the spot.

1180 ILLO. It does not matter how far we get with
The generals. We need only to persuade
The Chief that they are his. He'll *act*, proceed
On that assumption. Then they're *really* his.
As he goes forward, they'll be carried with him.

TERZKY. Sometimes I can't begin to make him out.

He listens to the foe, has me write Thurn
 And Arnheim, boldly rails against Sesina,
 Discusses plans with us for hours on end.
 Then when I think I have him: Hup! He's gone,
 Slips through my fingers, and it seems he cares
 For nothing, only wants to stay in place.

1190 ILLO. Him? Give up his old plans? I tell you he
 Considers nothing else, awake, asleep,
 Questions the planets day for day—

TERZKY. Did you know
 He plans to watch the stars tonight, shut up in
 The tower with the Doctor? The night's supposed
 To be important. They expect some great
 Event, one long-awaited, to take place
 Up there above.

ILLO. Were it down here below!
 1200 The generals are now all stirred up, can be
 Induced to anything to keep their chief.
 We have the chance to form a tight alliance
 Against the Court, but innocent in name:
 To keep him in command. In hot pursuit
 One soon forgets how all began. I want
 To stack the deck so that the Prince will find,
 Will *believe*, them fit for any piece of daring.
 Watch! Opportunity will draw him on.

1210 When he's once taken that great step, a step
 Vienna can't forgive, the very chain of
 Events will lead him on and further on.
 Decision is what he finds hard. Impelled by
 Necessity, he'll find his strength and insight.

TERZKY. That's what the foe is waiting for before
 It leads its army to us.

ILLO. Come, then. We'll
 Advance our plan these next few days beyond
 What it's attained in years. When things once favor
 Us here below—you'll see—the stars above
 Will look with favor on us, too. Let's find

1220

The chiefs. Strike while the iron is hot, I say.

TERZKY. Give me a moment. I'm expecting Countess Terzky here. Don't think we've been idle meanwhile. If one cord breaks, another's been prepared.

ILLO. Of course. Your lady smiles so craftily.

What's this?

TERZKY. A secret. Quiet now. She's coming.

(*Exit Illo.*)

Scene Two

Count and Countess Terzky, who enters from an adjacent room. A Servant, then Illo.

TERZKY. She's coming, then? I can't keep him much longer.

COUNTESS. She'll be here right away. Just send him in.

TERZKY. I can't be sure the Chief will thank us for this.

A point on which he's never said a word,

1230

As you well know. It's you who have persuaded

Me. You must know just how far you can take it.

COUNTESS. I'll answer for it. (*Speaking to herself.*)

No permission needed.¹²⁹

Wordlessly, Brother, we each understand

The other. Can't I guess the reason why your Daughter's brought here? Why *he* was sent to fetch her?

For this pretend engagement to a bride-

Groom known to no one may well fool another,

But *I* see through you. Since you can't appear

To have a hand in such a game, it's left

1240

To my fine penetration. Well done! You'll

Not have deceived yourself about your sister.

A SERVANT (*entering*). The Generals! (*Exit.*)

TERZKY (*to the Countess*). Try to stir up his desires,

Give him too much to think about, so that

At table he'll not hesitate to sign.

COUNTESS. You go attend your guests. Just go and send him.

TERZKY. Because it all depends upon his signing.

COUNTESS. Off to your guests. Go!

ILLO (*returning*). Why so long here, Terzky?

The house is full and we're all waiting for you.

TERZKY. Coming, coming.

(*To the Countess.*) But don't keep him too long.

1250 His father might suspect—

COUNTESS. Enough for now!

(*Exeunt Terzky and Illo.*)

Scene Three

Countess Terzky. Max Piccolomini.

MAX (*hesitantly, in the doorway*).

Aunt Terzky!¹³⁰ May I?

(*He walks into the middle of the room and looks around uneasily.*)

She's not here. Where is she?

COUNTESS. Is she perhaps behind the screen there in

The corner, hidden from you—

MAX. There are her gloves!

(*He reaches for them, the Countess picks them up.*)

Unkind, my aunt. Why would you so deny me—

I see it is your pleasure to torment me.

COUNTESS. What thanks for all my trouble!

MAX. If you knew

How I feel. Every moment since we've come,

To have to watch myself, weigh words and glances.

I am not used to that!

COUNTESS. Oh, you'll get used

1260 To many things, my charming friend. I must

Insist upon this test of your obedience.

On this condition only can I see

To everything and manage everywhere.

MAX. Where is she then? And why has she not come?

COUNTESS. You must leave everything to my arrangements.

Who has your interests more at heart than I do?

No one must know. Your father, too, must not,
Most surely not.

MAX. There is no need. For I'd
Betray to no one here the motions of my
1270 Enraptured soul. Tell me, Aunt Terzky, are all
Things changed? Or is it only me? I find
Myself here among strangers, find no trace
Of my accustomed wishes and my pleasures.
Where's it all gone? I once was quite content
In just this world. But now, how shallow it
All seems and how banal! My comrades I
Find insupportable, and my own father—
What ever have I now to say to him?
And duty, weapons—what a lot of tinsel.

1280 It's like one of the blessed dead returned
From realms of glory to the games of childhood,
Its interests, occupations, preferences, and
Friendships, to the whole wretched human race.
COUNTESS. I'd ask you nonetheless to cast a glance
Upon this ordinary world, where things of
No small importance are just now in train.

MAX. There's something going on. I see it in
The swirl of strange activity around me.
And when they're done, I too will hear about it.

1290 Do you know where I've been today, Aunt Terzky?
No laughing. All the hurly-burly here
Became too much: the packs of pressing folk,
The tasteless jokes, eternal idle chit-chat.
It felt as if the walls were closing in.
I had to leave, to find a quiet place
For my full heart, seclusion for my joy.
Don't smile, Countess. I was in church. I found
A cloister nearby called the Gates of Heaven,
Where I could be alone. The Virgin hung
1300 Above the altar, badly painted but
The friend whom I was seeking at that moment.
How often have I seen her in her glory,

Ardor of worshippers but not for me. All
At once I understood devotion—and love.

COUNTESS. Enjoy your happiness, forget the world.
My friendship meanwhile watches for you, acts.
But you must be amenable to one
Who wants to show the way to happiness.

MAX. What's taking her so long? Oh, golden days
Of travel: Every rising sun brought us
Together. Night alone divided us!
No hourglass ran, no timepiece struck our ear.
Time had arrested its eternal course.
Oh, one who has to count the hours has fallen
From paradise. For lovers, no clock strikes.

COUNTESS. And when did you disclose your heart to her?

MAX. This morning only did I dare to speak.

COUNTESS. This morning? After twenty days of journey?

MAX. Where you caught up with us, the hunting lodge

1320 Between the camp and Nepomuk, last station
Along the way.¹³¹ We stood together in
A bay, our silent gaze on a bare field.
Before us we saw riding up the Dragoons
The Duke had sent as escort. Parting weighed
Upon my heart, and, trembling, I dared say:
This tells me, Mistress,¹³² I must part now from
My happiness. A little while and you
Will find your father, be surrounded by
New friends, and I'll become a stranger to you,
Unnoticed in the crowd. "Speak with Aunt Terzky,"
She interrupted. Her voice shook, I saw
A glowing red suffuse her cheeks, and slowly
She raised her eyes, met mine, and I restrain
Myself no longer—

(*The Princess appears in the doorway, observed by the Countess,
but not by Piccolomini.*)

take her in my arms, touch
Her lips with mine—a rustling at the door

Drove us apart. *You* entered, and the rest
Is known to you.

COUNTESS (*after a pause, stealing a glance at Thekla*).

Are you so undemanding or incurious
That you don't ask now for *my* secret?

MAX. Yours?

1340 COUNTESS. Well, yes. The way I came into the room,
Right after you left, how I found my niece,
How she in the first moment of surprise—
MAX (*vividly*). Well?

Scene Four

As above. Thekla entering quickly.

Don't trouble, Aunt. That's better said by me.

MAX (*starting back*).

Mistress! What have you let me say, Aunt Terzky?

THEKLA (*to the Countess*). Has he been here for long?

COUNTESS. Quite long. His time has just about run out.

And what's kept you so long?

THEKLA. My mother wept so bitterly.¹³³ I see
Her sorrow and can't help my happiness.

MAX (*lost in contemplating her*).

1350 I find the courage now to look at you.

I couldn't then. The sheen of precious stones
Enclosing you obscured the one I love.¹³⁴

THEKLA. Your eye saw me that way and not your heart.

MAX. When I found you this morning in the circle

Of family and in your father's arms,
And saw myself a stranger in this group,
How much I wished to enter his embrace,
To call him *father* in that moment! But his
Forbidding eye demanded silent presence,

1360 And all those diamonds frightened me, encircling
You like a studded wreath of stars. But why,

Then, must he put you under ban right at
 Reception, deck an angel out straightway
 For sacrifice, and lay upon this joyful
 Young heart the mournful burden of its rank!
 Love can address its suit to love, but such
 Splendor admits approach by kings alone.¹³⁵

THEKLA. No more about this masquerade. You see
 How soon the burden is cast off again.

(*To the Countess.*)

1370 But he's not cheerful. Why should he not be?
 It's you, Aunt, who've made him so heavy-hearted!
 For he was quite another on our journey!
 So bright and calm! So eloquent! I'd like
 To see you always so and never different.

MAX. There in your father's arms you found yourself
 In a new world that honors you, enchanting
 Your eye, if only by its very newness.

THEKLA. Yes, much enchanting me here, I don't deny it.¹³⁶
 I love the brightly bannered stage of war that
 Renews in many ways a cherished image,
 Connects to truth and to real life what had seemed
 To be a lovely dream and nothing more.

MAX. It makes of my *real* happiness a dream.
 I've lived these days upon an island in
 The ether; it has now descended earthward.
 This bridge that brings me back to my old life—
 It separates me, bars me from my heaven.

THEKLA. It's cheering to observe the play of life
 When we hold fast a treasure in our heart,
 And when I have observed it, I return
 Contented to the better things I hold.

(*Breaking off and playful.*)

The new, unheard-of things I've seen in this
 Short time! But all of this must pale before
 The secret marvel that this castle holds.

COUNTESS (*reflecting*).

What would that be? For I am schooled in all
 The darkest corners that this house encloses.

THEKLA (*smiling*). A way defended well by spirits and
Two griffins¹³⁷ keeping watch before the gate—
COUNTESS (*laughing*). Oh, so! The astrologic tower. How
1400 Could such a sanctuary, always closely
Guarded, have opened right away to you?
THEKLA. A little white-haired man with friendly face,
Who took a liking to me, opened for me.
MAX. That is the Duke's astrologer, called Seni.
THEKLA. He asked me many things, my birth date, day
And month, and whether it was day or night.
COUNTESS. That was so he could cast your horoscope.
THEKLA. He also read my hand and shook his head,
Uncertain. It would seem the lines displeased him.
1410 COUNTESS. How was it then inside that hall? I've seen
It always only very fleetingly.
THEKLA. It gave me an odd feeling, coming from
Bright day, to be so suddenly surrounded
By night, but faintly lit by a strange light.
Around me in a crescent stood six, seven¹³⁸
Great statues representing kings; each carried
A scepter and, for crown, a star, and all
The light there seemed to come just from those stars.
My guide told me these were the planets and
1420 They ruled our fate. That's why one made them kings.
The last, a dark and glowering graybeard, with
A clouded yellow star-crown, this was *Saturn*;
Directly opposite, with ruddy sheen
And armed as if for battle, this was *Mars*;
And neither brings good fortune to mankind.
Beside him stood a woman of great beauty,
The star that shone above her head glowed softly;
I learned that this was *Venus*, star of pleasure.
Beside her on the left stood winged *Mercury*;
1430 Precisely in the middle, bright as silver
And with the forehead of a king, there stood
Good-humored *Jupiter*, my father's star,
And *Sun* and *Moon* attended at his side.

MAX. Oh, never will I scorn his belief in stars
And in the power of the spirit world.
It is not only human *pride* that fills our
Universe with mysterious, ghostly powers.
For loving hearts, too, common Nature seems
Too narrow. Deeper meaning can be found
In house tales told me in my childhood years
Than in the truths that life would have us learn.
The shining world of wonders only can
Answer the call of my delighted heart.
It opens its eternal spaces to me,
Extends to me a thousand bending boughs where
My reeling spirit rocks itself in bliss.
The fable is the home where love would live,
For love prefers the world of fairies, tokens,
Chooses to believe in gods because it's god-like.
The ancient fable figures are no more.
That charming race has long since gone abroad;
The heart, however, needs a language; an old
Desire revives the ancient names. They now
Go wandering in the starry skies, who once
Would kindly walk beside us through our lives;
From there they smile down mildly upon lovers,
And every great thing comes from *Jupiter*,
From *Venus* every thing we know of beauty.

THEKLA. Is *this* the art of reading stars? Then I
Confess a faith so clear, so bright with gladness.
How comforting the thought that over us
Immeasurably a wreath of love made up
Of shining stars was woven at our birth.

COUNTESS. Heaven has not just roses, also thorns.
May they not spike the crown prepared for you!
What happy Venus has once woven is
Soon ripped apart by Mars, the sinister.

MAX. His gloomy reign will soon have run its course!
A blessing on the Prince's earnest effort;
He'll wind the olive branch into the laurel¹³⁹

1480

And make the grateful world a gift of peace.
 For his great heart will then be surfeited;
 He's done enough to build and keep his fame,
 Can now live for himself and for his loved ones.
 And he'll withdraw to his own holdings, to
 His lovely residence at Gitschin or
 At Reichenberg or Castle Friedland,¹⁴⁰ where
 The borders of his game reserve and forest
 Extend up to the foothills of the mountains.
 There he can freely follow his creative
 Urges, as prince encourage every art,
 Protect all glorious and deserving things,
 Can build things, plant things, contemplate the heavens,
 And if his daring powers will not rest,
 Why, he can wrestle with the elements,
 Rechannel rivers and explode a rock face,
 Prepare the way for commerce and for gain.
 Our ancient battle fortunes will become then
 Long stories told in longer winter nights.¹⁴¹

1490

COUNTESS. Let me advise you, Cousin, not to lay
 Aside the sword blade all too prematurely.
 For such a bride as this deserves most richly
 That she be sued for, courted by the sword.

MAX. If she but could be won by weapons only!

COUNTESS. What was that? Did you hear? I thought I heard
 Quarreling coming from the banquet hall. (*She goes out.*)

Scene Five

*Thekla and Max Piccolomini.*¹⁴²

THEKLA (*to Piccolomini as soon as the Countess has left the room*).
 Don't trust them. They are playing games.¹⁴³

MAX. They could—
 THEKLA. Trust no one here but me. I saw at one glance:

They have a purpose.

MAX. Have a purpose? Which?

1500

What do they gain by making hopes for us—

THEKLA. I do not know. But believe me, it is *not* their
Purpose to make us happy or unite us.

MAX. What need have we of these two Terzkys? Don't
We have your mother? Can't we put our trust
In her, confide like children in her kindness?

THEKLA. She loves you, values you above all others,
But never could she summon courage to
Withhold a secret such as ours from Father.
For her sake we must keep it from her.

MAX. Why

1510 So secretive? Do you know what I'll do?
I'll throw myself upon your father's mercy,
Let him decide my happiness. For he
Is truthful, forthright, hates all subterfuges,
He's good and noble—

THEKLA. That is what *you* are!

MAX. You know him only now. But I have lived
In sight of him a full ten years. Is this
The first time he has done a deed that's rare,
Unhoped for? That's his way: surprise us like
A god. He must delight, amaze us always.
Who knows if he's not waiting now to hear my
Avowal, yours, before uniting us?
Why no reply? And why the doubtful looks?
What do you have against your father?

THEKLA. I?

Nothing. I only find him much too busy
To spare the time or have the leisure for
Reflecting on our happiness.

(*Taking him tenderly by the hand.*) Do listen!

Let us not believe excessively in others.
These Terzkys we'll be grateful to for what
They've done, but trust them only just so far
As they've deserved. We'll trust in our own hearts.

MAX. Oh, shall we ever find our happiness!

1520

1530

1540

THEKLA. Have we not found it? Aren't you mine? Am I
 Not thine? My soul is full of highest courage,
 Our love has given it to me. I ought
 Not be so open, should conceal my heart:
 Decorum wants it so. Where ever then
 Should you know truth, if not from my own mouth?
 We've found each other, hold each other fast,
 Eternally. Please believe me: That's far more
 Than they have reckoned with. So let us keep
 It safe, like sacred plunder, safe in our
 Own hearts. It fell to us from Heaven's heights,
 And we'll thank Heaven only for this gift.
 It can work wonders for us both.

Scene Six

As above. Countess Terzky returns.

COUNTESS (*urgent*). My husband's sending for you, says it's high time.
 To table!

(*When they pay her no heed, she steps between them.*)
 Separate!

THEKLA. But no. Not now.

We've hardly had a moment here.

COUNTESS. For you time passes quickly, Princess Niece.

MAX. No hurry, Aunt.

COUNTESS. Go! Your absence's noticed.
 Your father's asked for you now more than once.

THEKLA. Well, well! His father!

COUNTESS. You know better, Niece.

THEKLA. What's he to do in company like that?

That isn't his society. They're worthy,
 Deserving men, but he's too young for them,
 He simply doesn't fit in such surroundings.

COUNTESS. You'd rather keep him wholly for yourself?

THEKLA (*vivid*). Exactly right. Precisely what I want.

Just leave him here. And let their Lordships know—

COUNTESS. Why, have you lost your mind, my niece? You, Count,

1560 Know full well what conditions we've agreed.

MAX. I must obey, Mistress. Farewell for now.

(*Thekla turns away abruptly.*)

You've no reply?

THEKLA (*without looking at him*).

None. Go, please.

MAX.

Can I, when

You're angry with me?

(*He approaches her, their eyes meet, she stands a moment in silence, then throws herself into his arms; he clasps her tight.*)

COUNTESS. Go! If someone should come!

I hear an uproar—strangers' voices close by.

(*Max tears himself away and goes, the Countess accompanies him. Thekla follows him with her eyes, wanders about the room, then pauses, lost in thought. A guitar lies on a table; she picks it up. After a melancholy prelude, she sings.*)

Scene Seven

Thekla plays and sings.

Oak forest rustles and clouds rush o'er,

A maid is wandering the deep green shore,

The waves are breaking with might, with might,

And she sings aloud in the darkling night,

Her eye turned toward heaven above her.

1570 My heart, it has died now, the world is bare.

It grants my wishes no more and nowhere.

Thou Blessed One, gather thy child to thee,

I've already tasted all earthly bounty,

For I have both lived and have loved here.

Scene Eight

The Countess, returning. Thekla.

COUNTESS.

What is this, Mistress Niece? For shame! You've thrown
Yourself at him. Fie! I should think you'd put
A rather better price upon your person.

THEKLA (*getting to her feet*).

Your meaning, Aunt?

COUNTESS. That you should not forget
Who *you* are and who *he* is. That, I dare say,
Has not occurred to either of you.

1580 THEKLA. What, then?

COUNTESS. That you're Prince Friedland's daughter.

THEKLA. So? What else?

COUNTESS. Fine answer!

THEKLA. *He* was born what we've become.
He's from an ancient Lombard house, his mother
Was born a princess.¹⁴⁴

COUNTESS. Are you dreaming? Truly!
We'll therefore bid him honor Europe's rich-
Est heiress with his hand?

THEKLA. Unnecessary.

COUNTESS. Quite. One does well not to expose oneself.

THEKLA. His father loves him. Count Octavio

Will not oppose it—

1590 COUNTESS. His father! His! And yours, my niece? Of him what?

THEKLA. I think it's *his* you fear. It's him—*his* father,
I mean—from whom you're keeping it so secret.

COUNTESS (*examines her searchingly*).

Niece, you're duplicitous.

THEKLA. Touchée, ma tante?¹⁴⁵

Oh, don't be angry.

COUNTESS. You think your game's won.

Don't laugh too soon.

THEKLA. Oh, please, Aunt, don't be angry.

COUNTESS. We've not yet reached that point.

THEKLA. Yes. That I believe.

COUNTESS. Do you think he has squandered so important

A life on warlike labors, has forgone

All peaceful earthly pleasure, banished sleep

1600 From camp, and filled his noble mind with cares

Just to unite the two of you in marriage?

To fetch you finally from your cloister only

To lead you then in triumph to the man

Who's caught your eye? He could have had that cheaper.

This seed was not sown for your childish hand

To break the bloom and tuck it in your bosom!¹⁴⁶

THEKLA. But something that he didn't plant could still

Produce its very finest fruits for me.

If my benign good fortune aims to prepare

1610 Life's joys for me from his monstrous existence—

COUNTESS. You're talking like a girl in love. Just look

Around. Remember where you are. For you've

Not come into a garden of delights,

These walls have not been festooned for a wedding,

Nor guests arrayed. The only brilliance here

Is that of weapons. Or did you think one had

Assembled thousands here to form the ranks

That flank your progress to the altar? Have you

Not seen your father's forehead dark with thought?

1620 Your mother's eyes in tears? The fortunes of

Our house hang in the balance! Leave behind

Your girlish feelings, childish wishes. Prove

Yourself the child of your extraordinary

Father. A woman shouldn't belong just to

Herself. For she attaches to the fate of

An other whom she best assumes with care

And carries in her heart with tender love.

THEKLA. That's what I heard when I was in the cloister.

I had no wishes, thought of myself as

1630 His daughter only, this great man's. The fame
Of his exploits, which reached me, too, gave me
This feeling and none other: I was destined
To sacrifice myself to him in sorrow.

COUNTESS. This *is* your destiny. Submit with gladness.

I and your mother have set an example.

THEKLA. My destiny has shown the one to whom

I'll sacrifice myself, whom I shall follow.

COUNTESS. Your heart, my child, and not your destiny.

THEKLA. The heart's pull is the call of destiny.

1640 I am his own. For he alone has given
Me this new life that I live now. He has
A right to his creation. What was I
Before his love breathed life into my soul?
I'll not think less of me than my beloved.
One who possesses priceless treasure, he
Is not to be despised. My happiness
Gives me new strength. With high earnestness
I contemplate an earnest life. I know now
That I belong to myself only. Firm will
Is mine now. I cannot be forced. And I
Can wager everything on highest goods.

1650

COUNTESS. You would defy your father, should he have
Determined otherwise for you? You think
That *you* can force it from him? Know, my child,
His name is Friedland.

THEKLA. So, no less, is mine.

He is to meet his one true daughter in me.

COUNTESS. His Monarch and his Kaiser cannot force him,
And you, his daughter, think to do him battle?

THEKLA. What no one dares, his daughter dares to do.

1660 COUNTESS. For that he's not prepared, let me assure you.
He has surmounted every obstacle
And now should undertake his willful daughter?
Child! Child! You only know a smiling father,
Have never seen his eye in anger. Will
Your contradicting voice hold firm before him?

- Alone, it's easy to resolve great things,
 Compose the purple passages, deck out
 A dovish turn of mind in lion's garb.
 But you just try it. Go and meet his eye
 Trained on you steadily and dare say, No.
 You'll melt before his presence, tender petal
 Before a fiery all-consuming sun.
 It's not my wish to frighten you, my child.
 I hope it will not come to that. Nor do
 I know what he intends.¹⁴⁷ It's possible
 His purposes will meet your wishes. But
 He never can intend that you, the one
 Proud daughter of his fortunes, conduct yourself
 Like an infatuated little girl
 And throw yourself away on one who, if
 He is to gain the greatest prize, will have to
 Purchase it by love's highest sacrifice. (*She goes off.*)

Scene Nine

Thekla alone.

- Thanks for the warning. It makes
 A certainty of my misgivings. So
 It's true: We have no friends and no one here
 Is loyal. We are left with one another.
 Hard battles lie ahead. Thou god-like, Love, give
 Us strength. Oh, she speaks truth. Unhappy are
 The auguries attending this entente of
 Our hearts. No theater of hope is this.
 Dull armor only rattles here, and even
 Our love makes entrance armored all in steel
 And girded for a battle to the death.
 An ominous spirit drifts here through the house,
 Fate wants to make of us a speedy ending.

1700

From safety and repose I have been roused,
A benign magic shields my soul by blinding.
Fate lures me forward by a heavenly wight,
I see it floating toward me, close, insistent.
It draws me forth from here with god-like might
Toward the abyss, and I cannot resist it.

(*Distant table music.*)

Oh, when a house is fated to the fire,
The heavens drive black clouds together, churning.
Swift lightning plunges, strikes the highest spire,
And crevasses gape open, flaming, burning.
The God of Pleasure, even, raging, wielding
Hot pitch, flings fire into the burning building! (*She goes off.*)

Act Four

A grand Hall, festively lit. In the center, upstage, an opulently laid table at which eight Generals are seated, among them, Octavio Piccolomini, Terzky, and Maradas. Two other tables, right and left and farther upstage, where six diners are seated, respectively. Downstage, a sideboard. The front of the stage is left free for the Pages and Servants who wait the tables. The whole room is in motion and marching musicians from Terzky's regiment circle the tables. Before they have left the scene, Max Piccolomini enters. Terzky approaches him, carrying a sheet of paper; Isolani, equally, carrying a wine cup.

Scene One

Terzky. Isolani. Max Piccolomini.

ISOLANI. Ho, Brother! What a pleasure! Where've you been?

Quick! Take your place. Our Terzky's sacrificed
1710 His mother's best reserve wines. It's as if
These were the cellars of the Heidelberger's
Castle.¹⁴⁸ You've missed the best. Up there at table
They're handing prince's bonnets out: estates
Of Eggenberg, Slavata, Lichtenstein,
And Sternberg are on offer, all the great
Bohemian fiefs. Be quick and you'll get something,
Too. March! And sit!

COLALTO and GOETZ (*calling from the second table*).

Count Piccolomini!

TERZKY. He'll be there right away! Here, read this oath,

See if you like it, how it's formulated.

1720 We all have read it, everyone in turn,
And are prepared to put our name to it.

MAX (*reads*). "Ingratis servire nefas."

ISOLANI. That sounds like Latin, Brother. What's the German?

TERZKY. "No honest man would serve an ingrate." Max?

MAX. "WHEREAS our most sovereign Marshal, his Grace, the Prince of

Friedland, prompted by manifold offenses, intended to resign the Kaiser's service, but, moved by our unanimous request, has promised to remain with the Army and not to leave us without consultation, we THEREFORE bind ourselves, separately and together, in lieu of oral oath, also to hold to him, in honor and in loyalty, to cleave to him irrespective of events,

and to risk everything for him, to our last drop of blood, *to the extent permitted by our Oath sworn to the Kaiser.* (*Isolani repeats these last words aloud.*) We FURTHER declare anyone who deserts our common cause, in contravention of this Pledge, to be a traitor to our League whom we are obliged to penalize in his property and assets, his person and his life. IN WITNESS WHEREOF we hereby set our name.”¹⁴⁹

TERZKY. Are you prepared to put your name to this?

ISOLANI. Why shouldn't he? Why, every officer

Of honor can and must. Ho! Pen and ink here!

TERZKY. We'll let that wait till after table.

ISOLANI (*drawing Max after him*). Come! Come!

(*Both go to table.*)

Scene Two

Terzky. Neumann.

TERZKY (*signals Neumann, who is standing at the sideboard and comes with him to the front*).

You have the copy, Neumann? Let me see.

1730

It's set so that one doesn't see the difference?

NEUMANN. I copied line for line and nothing's missing

Except the passage with the Kaiser's oath,

Just as your Excellency ordered me.

TERZKY. Good! Lay it over there. Into the fire

With this. It's done what we required of it.

(*Neumann lays the Copy on the table and returns to the sideboard.*)

Scene Three

Illo, coming from the back room. Terzky.

ILLO. Well? How's it stand with Piccolomini?

TERZKY. I think, fine. He raised no objection to it.

ILLO. The only one whom I don't really trust—

Him and his father. Keep an eye on both!

1740 TERZKY. And at your table? Everybody's keeping
 Warm?

ILLO. All aglow! It looks as if we have them.
 And as I told you, talk is now not just of
 The Prince's honor being saved. Since we're all
 Together here, says Montecuculi,
 We ought to put conditions to the Kaiser
 There in his own Vienna. Believe you me,
 But for these Piccolomini, we could
 Have spared ourselves here this whole sleight of hand.
TERZKY. What's Buttler after? Shh!

Scene Four

Buttler joins them.

BUTTLER (*coming from the second table*). I'll not disturb you.
1750 I've understood you, Field Marshal, and wish
 You luck. As far as I'm concerned, (*conspiratorial*) just count
 On me.

ILLO (*vividly*). We can then?

BUTTLER. With or without clause.
 All one to me. You understand? The Prince
 Can put my loyalty to any test.
 I am the Kaiser's officer as long
 As he should choose to be the Kaiser's general,
 And Friedland's servant when he once elects to
 Be his own master. Let him know these things.

TERZKY. You've chosen well. For you've not pledged yourself
1760 To any miser, any Ferdinand.

BUTTLER (*gravely*). My good faith's not on offer to the high-
 Est bidder, Count. Six months ago, I'd not have
 Advised you to exact of me what I
 Now freely offer. To the Duke I bring
 Myself together with my regiment. The
 Example that I set will not, I think,
 Be altogether without consequences.

- ILLO. Who doesn't know that Colonel Buttler is
A beacon and a model for the army!
- 1770 BUTTLER. Indeed, Field Marshal? I do not regret then
The loyalty I've kept these forty years,
If my good name, so carefully preserved,
Can purchase for me in my sixtieth
A vengeance so complete, revenge so perfect.
Take no offense, my Lords, at what I say.
You needn't be concerned with *how* you have me,
Nor should you think your game will bend my judgment,
Or wavering thoughts, a blood that's quick to boil,
Or any other trivial cause will drive
The old man off his chosen path of honor.
- 1780 It doesn't weaken my resolve to know
Quite clearly what it is I'm parting from.¹⁵⁰
- ILLO. Then tell us openly how we should take you.
- BUTTLER. For a good friend. You have my hand on this.
With all I have, I belong to you and yours.
The Prince has need not just of men—of money,
Too. In the course of serving him I've laid
Aside funds that I'll lend him; he, if he
Survives me, will receive them: he's my heir.
- 1790 I am alone here in this world. I know not
The feeling binding man to wife and child;
My name dies with me, I am at an end.
- ILLO. Your money there's no need of. Such a heart
As yours outweighs a ton of gold and millions.
- BUTTLER. I came from Ireland as a simple groom
To Prague, accompanying my master, whom
I buried. I rose by skill at war from stable
Duties to dignity and prominence,
The plaything, object, of capricious fortune.¹⁵¹
- 1800 No less is Wallenstein a child of fortune;
I love a progress that resembles mine.
- ILLO. Strong spirits are all kin to one another.
- BUTTLER. We have arrived at a great moment; our
Times smile upon the brave and resolute.
The way small change will wander hand to hand,

1810

A city and a citadel now switch
 Their fleeting occupant. Grandsons of ancient
 Houses take flight, new names, new coats of arms
 Crop up. A northern people would presume
 To settle German lands against our will.
 The Prince of Weimar arms himself to found
 A mighty principality. And Mansfeld
 And Halberstadt lacked only longer life
 To conquer vast possessions by the sword.
 Among these men who is our Friedland's equal?
 No object stands so high that a strong man is
 Not privileged to set his ladder there.¹⁵²

TERZKY. That's spoken like a man.

BUTTLER. Make sure of both

1820

The Spaniard and Italian. I'll take charge
 Of Scottish Leslie. Time to join the party!

TERZKY. Holla! Steward! Bring out the best you have.

The time is right and all's in perfect order.

(*Each goes to his table.*)

Scene Five

Wine Steward comes forward with Neumann. Servants go back and forth.

WINE STEWARD. Such fine wine! If my former mistress, his
 Lamented Mama, saw all this wild living,
 Would she turn over in her grave! Oh, yes,
 Indeed! This noble house is slipping backward,
 Sir. It has neither measure nor does it
 Have purpose, and their ducal Graces, these
 In-laws, will bring us poor reward, I wager.

1830

NEUMANN. Which God forbid! It's coming into flower.

WINE STEWARD. You think? There'd be a lot to say about that.

SERVANT (*approaching*). More burgundy at table four.

WINE STEWARD. That makes
 Seventy bottles opened here, Lieutenant.

SERVANT. It's all because that German, Tiefenbach,

Is sitting there. (*Goes off.*)

WINE STEWARD (*to Neumann again*).

They want to climb too high.

They want to equal prince-electors, kings

In ostentation; where the Prince has dared

To go, the Count, my master, wants to follow.

(*To the Servants.*)

You're standing there and listening? Get moving!

1840

Go wait the tables, check the bottles. There!

Count Palffy has an empty glass before him!

SECOND SERVANT (*approaches*).

They're asking for the giant wine cup, Steward,

The decorated, golden one, the one

That carries the Bohemian coat of arms.

You'd know which one he meant, his Lordship said.

WINE STEWARD. The one that Master Wilhelm fashioned for

King Friedrich, for the king's own coronation,

The finest piece of booty got at Prague?¹⁵³

SECOND SERVANT. Yes, that one. It's to make the round among 'em.

WINE STEWARD (*brings out the Wine Cup and rinses it, shaking his head*).

1850

Yet more to be reported to Vienna!

NEUMANN. Show me! It's truly a magnificent piece!¹⁵⁴

Heavily gilded and in high relief,

It's worked to show the cleverest things with charm.

The first escutcheon—let me see it clearly:

A towering Amazon astride a horse,

She vaults a crozier and a bishop's miter,

She holds aloft a hat upon a pike,

Beside a flag on which I see a chalice.

Can you tell me the meaning of all this?

1860

WINE STEWARD. The mounted female figure you see is

Electoral freedom of Bohemia's crown,

Shown by the round hat and wild horse she rides.

The ornament of mankind is a hat,

For one who cannot keep his hat before

A kaiser or a king is no free man.

NEUMANN. The meaning of the chalice on the flag?

WINE STEWARD. The chalice is religious freedom in Bohemia as it was in former times.

1870

Our fathers in the Hussite War acquired

This privilege in defiance of the Pope's

Denial of the chalice to the laity.

The chalice is the prize of Utraquists,

Their dearest treasure, and has cost Bohemians

Their precious blood in many bitter battles.¹⁵⁵

NEUMANN. What is the meaning of the scroll above them?

WINE STEWARD. The scroll you see there represents the Letter

Of Majesty we forced from Kaiser Rudolf,¹⁵⁶

A cherished priceless parchment that assures

The new religion, like the old, a free

1880

Disposal over bells and over hymnal.

But since the Graz man¹⁵⁷ rules us, that has ended.

Since Prague, where Friedrich Palatine lost crown

And realm, our faith lacks chancel, altar, and

Our brothers emigrate. The Kaiser, though,

Himself cut up the Letter with his shears.

NEUMANN. All that you know? How you're well-schooled in your

Land's chronicles, Wine Steward!

WINE STEWARD.

That's because

My ancestors were Taborites and served

Under Prokop and Ziska,¹⁵⁸ may they rest

1890

In peace. And fought for a good cause.

(To a Servant.)

Remove it.

NEUMANN. First let me see the second small escutcheon:

Oh, yes! The Kaiser's counselors, Slavata

And Martinitz,¹⁵⁹ pushed headlong from a castle

Window. And here's Count Thurn, who ordered it.

(Servant removes the Wine Cup.)

WINE STEWARD. Unspeakable, that day! The twenty-third

Of May, one thousand and six hundred eighteen.

Like yesterday, and the beginning of

Unending sorrow for my country. Since then,

For sixteen years, we've had no peace on earth.

OFFICERS (*at the second table*).

1900 The Prince of Weimar!

(At the third and fourth tables.) Long live our Duke Bernhard!

(*Music.*)

FIRST SERVANT. Listen to that!

SECOND SERVANT (*running up*). You hear? They're toasting Weimar!

THIRD SERVANT. An Austrian enemy!

FIRST SERVANT. And Lutheran!

SECOND SERVANT. Just now, when Deodat proposed to drink

Our Kaiser's health, you could have heard a pin drop.

WINE STEWARD. A toast has many meanings. And a well

Conducted servant does not listen to such.

THIRD SERVANT (*aside to the Fourth*).

See to it, Johann: Let's have plenty to

Pass on to Father Quiroga.¹⁶⁰ For our

1910

FOURTH SERVANT. That's why I'm always busy near that Illo's Table. He says the most amazing things.

(They go to the tables.)

WINE STEWARD (*to Neumann*).

Who is his Lordship there in black and with

The Cross, so deep in talking with Count Palffy?

NEUMANN. Another one they trust too much, a Spaniard, Maradas is his name.

WINE STEWARD. It's no good with

These Spaniards, let me tell you. All those Latins
Are no good.

NEUMANN. Now! Now! Shouldn't talk that way,
Wine Steward. They've some of the finest generals
Among them, whom the Duke esteems the most.

(Terzky comes to fetch the Oath; a stir at the tables.)

WINE STEWARD (*to the Servants*).

1920

The Lieutenant General's on his feet. Look sharp!

They're breaking up. Snap to and hold their chairs.

(The Servants hurry upstage. Some Guests come down to the front.)

Scene Six

Octavio Piccolomini comes downstage, in conversation with Maradas; they stand far forward, to one side of the proscenium. Max Piccolomini comes down opposite them, alone, lost in thought, abstracted. In the space between them, slightly upstage, Buttler, Isolani, Götz, Tiefenbach, and Colalto gather; Terzky joins them.

ISOLANI (*while the Company is coming forward*).

Night! Night, Colalto! Lieutenant General, night!

Or rather, I should say "Good morning" to you.

GOETZ (*to Tiefenbach*). Prost, Brother! Prost and blessings!

TIEFENBACH. That was a banquet for a king!

GOETZ. Madame

The Countess knows a thing or two. She got

It from the Countess Dowager, God rest

Her soul. And what a chatelaine *she* was!

ISOLANI (*wanting to leave*). Lights here! Lights here!

TERZKY (*approaching Isolani with the Oath*).

1930 Wait, Brother! Just two minutes more. There's something
To sign here still.

ISOLANI. Oh, I'll sign anything
You like, Friend. Just spare me the reading of it.

TERZKY. Let me not trouble you. It is the oath
That you've already read. A pen stroke merely.

(*Isolani passes the sheet to Octavio*.)

As you see fit. Whoever's next. No ranks here.

(*Octavio skims the text with apparent indifference;*
Terzky observes him from a distance.)

GOETZ (*to Terzky*). Count, by your leave. My warmest compliments.

TERZKY. But what's your hurry! Have a nightcap. (*To the Servants*.) Hey!

GOETZ. Not up to it.

TERZKY. A little gaming?

GOETZ. Pardon!

TIEFENBACH (*seating himself*).

Forgive me, Lords. It's hard to stand so long.

1940

TERZKY. Make yourself comfortable, my Lord Field Marshal!
 TIEFENBACH. My head is clear, my stomach's strong. My legs,
 However, now refuse to do their job.

ISOLANI (*indicating his corpulence*).

You've made them carry far too great a load.

(*Octavio has signed and returned the sheet to Terzky,*
who gives it to Isolani. He goes to the table to sign.)

TIEFENBACH. The war in Pomerania did it to me,
 We had to go out there in ice and snow,
 And I will not recover all my days.

GOETZ. Oh, yes. The Swede did not inquire the season.¹⁶¹

(*Terzky passes the sheet to Don Maradas,*
who goes to the table to sign.)

OCTAVIO (*approaching Buttler*).¹⁶²

These bacchanals, permit me to remark,
 My Lord, do not agree much with you either.
 I'd think that you prefer the uproar of
 A battle to the rowdiness of feasting.

BUTTLER. I must confess, it's not quite to my taste.

OCTAVIO (*coming closer, confidentially*).

And not to mine, I happily assure you.
 I'm gratified, most honored Colonel Buttler,
 To find that we are so well matched in thinking.
 At most, a handful of good friends, about
 A small round table, with a little glass
 Of Tokay, open hearts and honest talk—
 That's what I love.

BUTTLER. And I, when't can be done.

(*The sheet reaches Buttler, who goes to the table to sign. The proscenium has emptied, leaving the two Piccolomini, each on a side.*)

OCTAVIO (*having silently observed his son from a distance, comes closer*).

1960

You were away for quite a while, my boy.

MAX (*turns away, confused*).

I—urgent business held me up so long.

OCTAVIO. And I observe that you are still not here.

MAX. You know a noisy party leaves me silent.

OCTAVIO (*coming still closer*).

I'm not to know what kept you for so long?

(*Sly.*) And even Terzky knows?

MAX.

What does he know?

OCTAVIO (*with meaning*).

He was the only one who did not miss you.

ISOLANI (*who has been watching from a distance, joins them*).

Quite right! Surprise his baggage train, old father!

And strike against his quarters! This won't do!

TERZKY (*bringing the Oath*).

All hands on deck? Has everybody signed?

1970

OCTAVIO. They've signed.

TERZKY (*calling*). Say! Who has yet to sign the oath?

BUTTLER (*to Terzky*). Go take a count. It should be thirty names.

TERZKY. A cross is here.

TIEFENBACH. That cross is mine.

ISOLANI (*to Terzky*). He cannot write. His cross is always valid

And recognized alike by Jew and Christian.

OCTAVIO (*pressing Max*).

Let's leave together, Colonel. It's now late.

TERZKY. One Piccolomini alone has signed.

ISOLANI (*indicating Max*).

It's this guest from the graveyard that you miss.¹⁶³

He's not been worth the candle this whole evening.

(*Max takes the sheet from Terzky and stares into it blankly.*)

Scene Seven

As above. Illo comes out of the back room, holding the golden Wine Cup. He is very excited. Götz and Buttler follow, trying to quiet him.

ILLO. Wha'd'y want? Leave me alone!

GOETZ and BUTTLER. Illo! No more!

ILLO (*goes to Octavio and embraces him, drinking*).

1980

Octavio! This is for you! Let's drown
 All our bad feelings, toast our brotherhood!
 I know you've never loved me, nor I you,
 By God! But now we'll let bygones be bygones.
 I value you just endlessly, I am your
(kissing him repeatedly)
 Best friend and, so that you all know, anyone
 Who calls him a bad apple—he will have
 To do with me!

TERZKY (*aside*). Shush! Have you lost your mind?

Remember, Illo, where you are!

ILLO (*guileless*). Why should I? They are all our closest friends.

(Looking about the whole room with a contented face.)

1990

There's not a rogue among them, to my pleasure.

TERZKY (*urgently, to Butler*).

Just get him out of here. I beg you, Butler!

(Butler leads him to the bar.)

ISOLANI (*to Max, who has been staring absently into the sheet*).

Soon finished, Brother? Studied it enough?

MAX (*as if coming out of a dream*).

What's wanted?

TERZKY and ISOLANI (*together*). That you put your name to it.

(Octavio, in the distance, looks across at him anxiously.)

MAX (*returning the sheet*).

We'll let it wait till morning. Business matters.

I can't address them now. Send it tomorrow.

TERZKY. Consider now—

ISOLANI. Wake up! Just sign it, what?

The youngest at the table, you! You'd not

Pretend to know more than the rest of us?

Look here! Your father's signed and all the others.

2000

TERZKY (*to Octavio*). Use your prestige. Explain—

OCTAVIO.

My son's of age.

ILLO (*has set the Wine Cup on the bar*).

What's all the talk?

TERZKY. Won't sign the oath. Refuses.

MAX. I said there's time enough for this tomorrow.

ILLO. There isn't time. We've signed it, all of us,

And so must you. You *have* to sign your name.

MAX. Sleep well, Illo.

ILLO. Hey! Not so fast! Oh, no!

The Prince is to find out just who his friends are.

(All the Company gathers around them.)

MAX. My sentiments are well known to the Prince

And to all others. Antics are not needed.

ILLO. The thanks, this, that the Prince gets for preferring

2010

These Latins always to the rest of us!

TERZKY (*deeply alarmed, to the Commanders pressing in*).

The wine he's drunk is talking. Please don't listen.

ISOLANI (*laughs*). No wine invents. It only prattles freely.

ILLO. Who isn't *for* me is against me. Oh,

These tender consciences! If by the back door,

By a short clause—

TERZKY (*hastily*). He's mad! Pay no attention!

ILLO (*shouting*). By a short clause they cannot save themselves—

A clause? The devil take this cursed clause—

MAX (*coming to attention, looks again into the sheet*).

What is there here so highly dangerous?

You make me curious. What have I missed?

2020

TERZKY (*aside*). Illo, what have you done? You've ruined us!

TIEFENBACH (*to Colalto*). I noticed. It read differently the first time.

GOETZ. I thought so, too.

ISOLANI. What's that to me? Where others

Have put their name I'll gladly put mine, too.

TIEFENBACH. Before the meal there was a reservation,

A clause about our service to the Kaiser.

BUTTLER (*to the Commanders*).

For shame, my Lords. Consider what's in play here.

The question is: Are we to keep our General

Or shall we be obliged to let him go?

We can't split hairs when so much is at stake.

ISOLANI (*to one of the Generals*).

2030

When you received your regiment, the Prince did
Not wrap himself in clauses, I dare say?

TERZKY (*to Götz*). And when you got to sell supplies that yield
You full one thousand pistols every year?

ILLO. They're rascals, those who would make rogues of us!
You're discontent? Then take it up with me!

TIEFENBACH. Now, now. They're only talking.

MAX (*has read the sheet, which he returns*). Till tomorrow.

ILLO (*stammering with rage, no longer master of himself, brandishing the
sheet in one hand, his sword in the other*).

Sign, Judas!

ISOLANI. Fie, Illo!

OCTAVIO, TERZKY, BUTTLER (*together*).

Drop that sword!

MAX (*having blocked his hand and disarmed him, to Count Terzky*).

Get him to bed!

(*He goes off. Illo, cursing and scolding, is restrained by certain
Commanders as the Company breaks up.*)

Curtain.

Act Five

A Room in Octavio Piccolomini's quarters. Night.

Scene One

Octavio Piccolomini. Chamberlain lighting his way. Then Max Piccolomini.

OCTAVIO. Direct my son to me as soon as he
Comes in. What is the hour?

CHAMBERLAIN. It's almost morning.¹⁶⁴

2040 OCTAVIO. Set down your lamp just here. We'll not lie down
Tonight. But you may now retire to bed.

(*Chamberlain goes off.*)

Octavio moves about the room, reflecting. Max Piccolomini enters unobserved and watches him in silence for a moment.)

MAX. Are you annoyed with me, Octavio?

God knows, I didn't start that ugly fight.
I saw that you had signed. What you approve
Is good enough for me. But still—you know—
I follow my own lights and no one else's.

OCTAVIO (*goes to him and embraces him*).

And so you should, my boy. You're better guided
So than by the example of your father.

MAX. Explain yourself more clearly.

OCTAVIO. Very gladly.

2050 After what's happened lately, you and I
Should keep no further secrets from each other.

(*They sit down together.*)

Max, tell me: What do you think of that oath
They circulated for our signature?

MAX. I see no danger in it. Just that I have
No love for things so formal and contrived.

OCTAVIO. You'd have no other grounds to have refused
The signature that they were pressing for?

MAX. This was a serious move. I was distracted.
It seemed to me to be not all that urgent.

2060 OCTAVIO. Be frank, Max: Had you no suspicion—
MAX. I?

Suspicion? What of? No, not in the least.

OCTAVIO. Then thank your angel, Piccolomini!

He pulled you back from the abyss, unknowing.

MAX. I don't know what you mean.

OCTAVIO. Then hear it now:

They wanted you to give your name to a piece

Of treachery, you to repudiate

Your oath and duties with a single pen stroke.

MAX (*on his feet*). Octavio!

OCTAVIO. Stay seated. You have much
To hear from me tonight, young friend. You've lived
For years in an incomprehensible
Blindness. The blackest plot spins out before
Your eyes, a hellish power beclouds the good
Lights of your senses—I am forced to speak,
To rip the blindfold from your eyes.

MAX. Before
You do, consider carefully: If this
Is mere conjecture—and I fear it is
No more—spare me. I'm not prepared to hear
It quietly.

OCTAVIO. However grave your grounds
May be for fleeing these, my better lights,
Mine are more urgent yet for forcing them
Upon you. Mark! To your heart's innocence
I could entrust you and to your good judgment,
Did I not sense, not see, a net being spread to
Ensnare that heart. The secret
(fixing his gaze on him) *you* are keeping
From me obliges *me* to tell you mine.

MAX (*attempts to answer, cannot, and drops his gaze*).

OCTAVIO (*after a pause*).

So hear me. They're deceiving you, playing

Disgracefully with you and all of us.

The Duke is striking attitudes as if

To leave the army; all the while they're taking

- 2090 Measures to steal the army from the Kaiser
 And lead it over to the enemy.
MAX. I know this Jesuitical tale. I never
 Thought you'd be one to retail it to me.
OCTAVIO. The mouth from which you have it bears you witness:
 This is no Jesuitical tale I tell you.
MAX. What kind of mad man do they think the Duke?
 He could intend to try and lure away
 Full thirty thousand proven troops, staunch soldiers,
 Among them good one thousand noblemen?
2100 Seduce them from their oath, their duty, honor,
 Combine them for a piece of purest roguery?
OCTAVIO. He wishes nothing quite so base. What he
 Would have of us bears a more harmless name:
 He wants to make the realm a gift of peace.¹⁶⁵
 The Kaiser, though, abhors this sort of peace,
 And he would undertake to *force* it on him!
 He wants to pacify all parts and for
 His trouble he proposes to keep back
 Bohemia, which he occupies already.
2110 MAX. Has he deserved, Octavio, that we—
 We two—think so unworthily of him?
OCTAVIO. What *we* think here has no importance. None!
 The matter itself speaks, gives clearest proofs.
 You know how bad our standing is at Court,
 My son. You have no inkling, though, of the
 Intrigues, of the mendacity they've used
 To sow a mutiny here in camp. The bonds
 That bind the officer to sovereign, bind the
 Soldier to civil life have been dissolved.
2120 Released from law and duty, he now lies
 Ensconced before the state that he should shield
 And makes to turn his very sword against it.
 It's now gone so far that the Kaiser lives
 In fear of his own army, he suspects
 Treachery in his own citadel and city.
 Why, he's about to send his youngest heirs

To safety, not before the Swede, the Lutheran—
Oh, no! Before his own sworn troops and generals.

MAX. Enough! You frighten me, this shakes me. For
2130 I know one often trembles at mere shadows.
But still—false fear can lead to true disaster.

OCTAVIO. This fear's not false. A civil war has flared,
The most unnatural of all wars, if we
Do not go out, confront it swiftly, quell it.
Among the captains, many have been bought,
The loyalty of the subalterns wavers,
Regiments waver, garrisons are wavering.
Our strongholds have been put in strangers' hands;
To Schafgotsch, that tenebrous figure, they've
2140 Assigned the whole Silesian squad,¹⁶⁶ to Terzky
Five regiments, both horse and foot, to Illo
And Kinsky, Buttler, Isolan, our best
Outfitted units.

MAX. Also to us two.

OCTAVIO. Because they think they have us and that they
Can tempt us with their glittering promises.
The principalities Glatz and Sagan are
My portion of these spoils, and I see all
Too clearly the hook on which they think they can
Catch you.

MAX. Oh, no! No! No! I tell you, No!

2150 OCTAVIO. Open your eyes! Why did they order us
To Pilsen, do you think? To seek advice?
Since when has Friedland needed *our* advice?
We're summoned here to sell ourselves to him,
If we refuse—to be his hostages.
That's why Count Gallas kept himself away.
And you'd not see your father here if higher
Duty had not compelled his coming, too.

MAX. Never did he pretend we'd not been called here
For his sake. He admits he needs our help
To hold out long. He's done so much for us
That we are duty-bound to do for him.

OCTAVIO. Do you know what it is that we're to do?

That Illo's drunkenness betrayed it all,
Remember what you saw and heard. Does that
Falsified oath, its crucial clause omitted,
Not show they're binding us to nothing good?

MAX. That business with the oath last evening is

For me no more than yet another trick
Contrived by Illo. Such a race of meddlers
Will always drive it past the point. The Duke,
They see, has fallen out at Court. They think
They'll fix it when they drive the breach beyond
Repair. The Duke, believe me, knows nothing of it.

OCTAVIO. It pains me to destroy a faith that you

Believe so well-founded. Here, though, there's no sparing
You. You must act, take measures right away.
Therefore, I'll tell you: Everything I've said—
Which you disbelieve—I have it from himself,
From his own proper mouth.

MAX (*much aroused*). Not possible!

2180 OCTAVIO. From him I heard what I'd long since discovered

By other avenues that I had opened:
That he plans to go over to the Swede
And at the head of the united armies
Compel the Kaiser to—

MAX. He's hot and rash.

The Court insulted him quite painfully
At a bad moment—that may be—and he
Forgot himself this one time, was too quick.

OCTAVIO. In cold blood he confessed these things to me,

And having misconstrued astonishment as
Fear, let me see the letters of the Swedes
And Saxons that raise hopes of certain aid.

2190 MAX. It cannot be, can *not* be, *can* not be!

You see that it cannot! If you had shown
Him your repugnance, sure, he would have heard.
Or you'd not be alive and standing here.

OCTAVIO. It's true: while I expressed my reservations
And warned him urgently and earnestly, I
Concealed my true repugnance and my deepest
Convictions.

- MAX. You could be so false? My father's
2200 Not like that. I had doubts about your words
As you denounced him. Now you denounce yourself.
OCTAVIO. I had no wish to penetrate his secret.
MAX. His confidence deserved an honest answer.
OCTAVIO. He was not worthy of an honest answer.
MAX. And still less worthy was he of deception.
OCTAVIO. My dearest boy, it is no simple thing
To keep a childlike spotlessness in life
The way an inner voice tells us we must do.¹⁶⁷
Embattled with the worst dishonesty,
2210 No honest disposition can remain so.
The curse of the bad deed is that it hatches
Unending generations of bad deeds.
I split no hairs; I merely do what's mine
To do. The Kaiser puts my conduct to me.
It would be better, could we follow our
Own heart. But one who does denies himself not
A few goals for the good. Our proper task is
Always to serve the Kaiser well, my son.
What our hearts say must be another matter.
- MAX. Today I'm fated not to understand you.
The Prince, you say, in honesty disclosed
An evil purpose. You claim *you* deceived
Him for a good one. Stop! I beg you. You'll
Not get my friend. Don't make me lose my father.
OCTAVIO (*suppressing his feelings*).
You've not heard everything, my boy. There's more.
(*After a pause.*)
The Duke of Friedland has made preparation.
He trusts his stars. He plans to fall upon
Us by surprise, thinks the Bohemian crown

2230 Already his. He errs. We, too, have taken
 Measures. He'll grasp his fate, prepared in secret.
 MAX. Do nothing rash! Don't act in haste, I beg you!
 OCTAVIO. He's crept his dark way forward softly, softly,
 And softly, slyly, vengeance has crept after.
 It stands behind him now, concealed, unseen.
 Just one false step, and he is overtaken.
 You saw that Questenberg spent time with me;
 His public mandate you're acquainted with;
 He had a secret one, for me alone.

MAX. Am I to know it?
 OCTAVIO. Max! With this disclosure

2240 I lay the fortunes of the realm, along with
 Your father's very life, into your hands.
 You cherish Wallenstein, a band of honor
 And love has fastened you to him since first youth.
 You entertain the wish—oh, let me run
 Ahead of your still hesitating trust—
 The hope to belong to him more intimately
 Still.

MAX. Father—

OCTAVIO. I have every confidence in
 Your heart. But am I sure of your composure?
 Have you the steel to come before this man
 And give no sign, once I tell you his fate?

2250 MAX. This scruple, after you've told me his guilt!
 OCTAVIO (*takes a paper from a casket and hands it to him*).
 MAX. What's this? How—An Imperial letter patent—
 OCTAVIO. Read it.
 MAX (*having cast a glance into the sheet*).

The Prince condemned and outlawed!

OCTAVIO. Thus
 It is.
 MAX. But this is monstrous! A mistake!
 OCTAVIO. Continue. Brace yourself.
 MAX (*reads on, then looks at his father, astonished*).
 What? You? You are—

OCTAVIO. Just for the interim. Until the King
Of Hungary can reach the army.¹⁶⁸ Its
Supreme command has been transferred to me.

MAX. Do you think you can snatch this thing from him?

2260 Not for a moment! Father, Father, they've
Imposed a fatal office on you. *You*—
You'd undertake to execute this charge?
Disarm this mighty man among his army?
Surrounded there by loyal thousands? Never!
You're lost! And all of us along with you!

OCTAVIO. What I must dare to do is known to me.

I stand in the Almighty's hand; it will
Protect the pious Kaiser's house with its
Great shield and sweep away the work of darkness.

2270 The Kaiser still has loyal servants, here
In camp are trusty men enough who'll take
The side of justice with élan. The loyal
Have all been warned, the rest are under watch.
I only wait for the first step, and then—

MAX. You'd move against him on suspicion merely?

OCTAVIO. Tyrannical measures aren't the Kaiser's way.

He'll punish, not the wish, the deed alone.
The Prince still holds his fate in his two hands:
He leaves this crime unconsummated—then he'll
Be quietly removed from his command
In favor of the Kaiser's son and heir.

An honorable exile on his holdings
Will count as favor more than punishment.
At the first step he takes, however, we—

MAX. And what would you consider such a step?

He'll never take it. You, though, could misjudge
(As you have done) a fully harmless one.

OCTAVIO. However culpable the Prince's aims,

All steps that he has taken publicly
Were open to a mild construing. I
Intend to make no use of this sheet, short
Of a committed deed that proves high treason

Incontrovertibly, and so condemns him.

MAX. And who shall be the judge of this?

OCTAVIO. You shall.

MAX. Then we shall never need it! Since I have

Your word that you'll not act before you have

Persuaded even me.

OCTAVIO. It's possible?

You—knowing what you do—can still hold him

For innocent?

MAX (*vivid*). Your judgment can be wrong,

2300 But not my heart. (*More temperate.*) A spirit such as his
 Cannot be grasped like any other. Just
 As he attaches his fate to the stars,
 Just so does he resemble them in secret,
 Eternally incomprehensible,
 And marvelous rotation. Believe me, he
 Is wronged. It all will reach solution yet,
 And we shall see him rise, clean, pure, and shining,
 Out of the depths of all this black suspicion.

OCTAVIO. We'll see.

Scene Two

As above. The Chamberlain. Then a Courier.

2310 OCTAVIO. Yes?

CHAMBERLAIN. There's a courier at the door.

OCTAVIO. So early?

Who is it? Where's he from?

CHAMBERLAIN. He wouldn't say.

OCTAVIO. Admit him. Keep strict silence in this matter.

(*The Chamberlain goes off. A Cornet enters.*)

It's you, Cornet? Count Gallas has sent you?

I'll take his letter.

CORNET. I've an oral message.

Lieutenant General Gallas wouldn't risk—

OCTAVIO. Let's hear it, then.

CORNET. He bade me say—I may speak
Freely?

OCTAVIO. My son is well informed.

CORNET. We have him.

OCTAVIO. Who's meant here?

CORNET. It's the go-between, Sesina.¹⁶⁹

OCTAVIO (*quickly*). You have him?

CORNET. Since two days ago, in the
2320 Bohemian Forest. Captain Mohrbrand caught him
At daybreak, on the way to Regensburg,
Carrying dispatches to the Swedish side.

OCTAVIO. And the dispatches?

CORNET. Were directed right
Away straight to Vienna, with the prisoner.

OCTAVIO. At last! At last! Extraordinary news!

That man contains a treasury of things
We want to know. Was much discovered on him?

CORNET. A good six packets sealed with Terzky arms.

OCTAVIO. None in the Prince's hand?

CORNET. Not that I know.¹⁷⁰

2330 OCTAVIO. Sesina, then?

CORNET. Seemed very badly shaken
To hear that he'd be taken to Vienna.
Count Altring heartened him by saying he
Need only willingly confess to all.

OCTAVIO. Altringer's with your master? I heard he
Was lying sick at Linz.

CORNET. For three days now
He's been at Frauenberg with General Gallas.¹⁷¹
They've gathered sixteen squads together, all
Elite recruits, and bid me tell you they
Are waiting only to receive your orders.

2340 OCTAVIO. In few days much can happen. When must you
Return?

CORNET. I, too, am to await your orders.

OCTAVIO. Remain till evening.

CORNET. Yes, sir. (*About to go.*)
 OCTAVIO. No one's seen you?
 CORNET. No, not a soul. The Capuchins received me,
 As always, by the wicket to the cloister.
 OCTAVIO. Go, then, and get some rest. Keep yourself hidden.
 I plan to make you ready before evening.
 Affairs have reached the point of rapid change,
 And sooner than the day that's breaking now
 Declines to dark a fatal lot must fall.

(*Exit Cornet.*)

Scene Three

Both Piccolomini.

OCTAVIO. What now, my boy? We'll soon be clear on this,
 Since everything—it's known—went through Sesina.
 MAX (*who underwent an inner struggle during the whole previous scene, now resolutely*).
 I'll look for light by quicker means. Farewell!
 OCTAVIO. Where to? Don't go!
 MAX. The Prince.
 OCTAVIO (*startled*). What did you say?
 MAX (*coming back*). If you were thinking I would play a role in
 This play of yours, you've got me badly wrong.
 My way must travel straight. I can't be true
 In tongue and in my heart be false. Can't let
 Myself be trusted as a friend and salve
 My conscience with the thought that he is on
 His own, that I have never lied to him.
 What someone takes me for, that I must be.
 I'm going to the Duke. Today yet I'll
 Urge him to salvage his good name before
 The world, to rip through your men's artful web
 By taking one straight honest step.

2350

2360

2370

OCTAVIO. You'd do that?
MAX. I would. Don't doubt it.
OCTAVIO. Then I've got you wrong
Indeed. I counted on a sober son
Who'd thank the saving hand that pulled him back
From the abyss. I find a blind man whom
Two pretty eyes have made a fool of, passion
Befogs, and whom broad daylight cannot heal.
Go ask him! Be so unconsidered as to
Betray your father's secret and the Kaiser's.
Oblige me to a noisy breach before
The time. Now, when a miracle has kept
My secret safe, has lulled sharp-eyed suspicion,
Let me see my own son, all wild and witless,
Pull down a painfully erected work
Of statecraft.

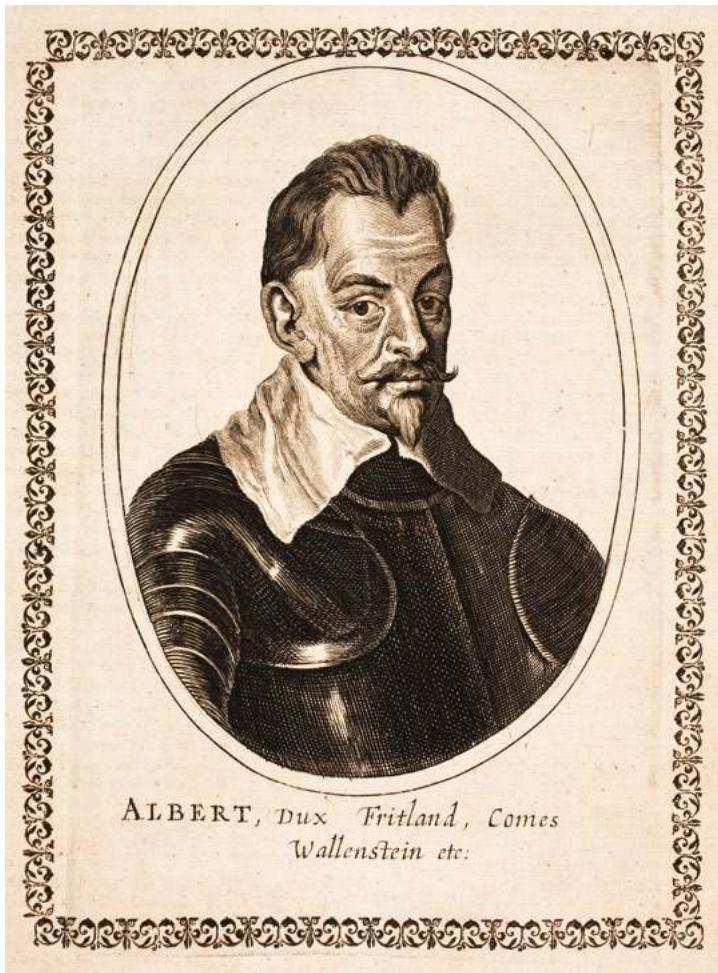
2380

MAX. Statecraft! How I curse your statecraft!
You, with your statecraft, will yet drive him to
A step—Why, you, because you *want* him guilty,
Are capable of *making* him so. Oh,
This cannot end well. And, however it
Falls out, I sense a true disastrous turn
Approaching. For this regal man, in falling,
Will bring a world down in the aftermath.
And like a ship on the high seas that flames
Up suddenly and, bursting, flies apart,
Flinging its crew out between sea and sky,
Just so will he take all of us, attached
As we are to his fortunes, down with him.
You do as you see fit. However, grant
That I conduct myself in my own fashion.
No impure motive sully our relations.
Before the day is over, we shall know
If I must lose my father or my friend.

(As he goes off, the Curtain falls.)

THE DEATH OF WALLENSTEIN

A tragedy in five acts



ALBERT, Dux Fritland, Comes
Wallenstein etc:

Engraved portrait of Albrecht von Wallenstein, Duke of Friedland, by Matthäus Merian, in Cornelis Danckaerts, *Historis oft waerachtlich verhael* (1642), <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dankaerts-Historis-9254.tif>. Image in the public domain.

Characters

WALLENSTEIN

OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI

MAX PICCOLOMINI

TERZKY

ILLO

ISOLANI

BUTTLER

CAVALRY CAPTAIN NEUMANN

An ADJUTANT

COLONEL WRANGEL, Swedish emissary

GORDON, commandant at Eger

MAJOR GERALDIN

DEVEROUX }
MACDONALD } captains in Wallenstein's army

SWEDISH CAPTAIN

A delegation of CUIRASSIERS

MAYOR of EGER

SENI

DUCHESS of FRIEDLAND

COUNTESS TERZKY

THEKLA

Fräulein von NEUBRUNN, lady companion to Thekla

Von ROSENBERG, equerry to Thekla

DRAGOONS

SERVANTS. PAGES. A CROWD.

The scene of the first three acts is Pilsen, of the last two, Eger.

Act One

A Room equipped for astrological endeavors and furnished with globes, charts, quadrants, and other astrological instruments. A curtain is drawn back from a rotunda where we see statues of the seven planets, each in an alcove and strangely lit. Seni is observing the stars; Wallenstein is standing before a large black table showing the aspect of the planets.

Scene One

Wallenstein. Seni.

WALLENSTEIN. Enough for now. Come down, Seni. Come down,
For day is breaking; Mars controls the hour.
It's no use going on. Just come on down.
We know enough.

SENI. Let me watch Venus for
A moment, Excellency. She's just rising
And shining like the sun there in the east.

WALLENSTEIN. She's at her perigee, is nearest Earth,
Affecting things below with greatest strength.

(Observing the figure on the table of aspect.)

Such favorable aspect! That great threesome
Converges fatefully; the two good stars,
Venus and Jupiter take spiteful Mars
Between them, force that vandal to serve me.
For he has long been hostile to me, sent
Against my stars red beams oblique and per-
Pendicular, *quadratic* and *opposed*,
And broken their benign influences.

They've overcome their ancient enemy now
And bring him to me in the heavens, chained.¹⁷²

SENI. These two great lights unthreatened now by any
Star Maleficus!¹⁷³ Saturn rendered harmless,
Quite without power, *in cadente domo*.¹⁷⁴

WALLENSTEIN. His rule is over, Saturn's is, the god who
Controls the birth of secret things in Earth's
Dark womb and in the depths of our own hearts,
Disposes over all that shuns the light.

30

The time is past for brooding and reflecting,
 For Jupiter, most brilliant, governs now
 And draws a work prepared in darkness forth
 With force into the realm of light. Quick! Time
 To act, before the happy constellation
 Above my head eludes me once again,
 For change is constant on the dome of heaven.

(*Loud knocking at the door.*)¹⁷⁵

A knock. See who it is.

TERZKY (*outside*). Ho! Open up!
 WALLENSTEIN. It's Terzky.

What's there so urgent? We are busy here.

TERZKY (*outside*). Put everything aside. I beg of you.
 There can be no delay.

WALLENSTEIN. Then open, Seni.

(*As Seni opens the door, Wallenstein draws the curtain before the statues.*)

Scene Two

Wallenstein. Count Terzky.

TERZKY (*entering*). You've heard the news already? He's been caught,
 Turned over by Count Gallas to the Kaiser!
 WALLENSTEIN (*to Terzky*).

Who's caught? Who's been turned over to the Kaiser?

TERZKY. The man who carried all our secrets, knows
 Of all our contacts with the Swedes and Saxons,
 Who was our go-between in everything—
 WALLLENSTEIN (*starting back*).

Sesina? No! Oh, tell me it's not him!

TERZKY. Heading for Regensburg and to the Swedes,
 Picked up by a detail from Gallas. They'd
 Been tracking all his movements for a long time.¹⁷⁶
 And carrying my packet: letters meant
 For Kinsky,¹⁷⁷ Matthes Thurn, for Oxenstirn
 And Arnheim; that was on his person, all that,

50

And now they have it. They know everything,
Can piece together everything that's happened.

Scene Three

As above. Illo enters.

ILLO (*to Terzky*). He knows?

TERZKY. He knows all.

ILLO (*to Wallenstein*). Do you now think you
Can make peace with the Kaiser? Win his trust
Back? Even if you wanted to renounce
All plans, they know now what you aimed to do.
So forward! There's no going backward now.

TERZKY. They have their hands on documents against us
That prove incontrovertibly how we—

WALLENSTEIN. In my handwriting, nothing. I dispute you.

60

ILLO. You do? Do you believe what he agreed,
Your brother acting in your name, will not
Be put on *your* account? The Swedes should take
His word as yours, and not the Kaiser's men!

TERZKY. Nothing in writing, granted. But recall
How far you went with Sesin orally.
Will he keep silent? Will he guard your secret,
If he can save himself betraying it?

ILLO. Not even *you* believe that! And now that they know
How far you've gone already, what do you
Expect? You'll not keep your command, and once
You've laid it down, you're lost—there'll be no rescue.

WALLENSTEIN. The army is my safety. It will not
Desert me. They may know whatever—I
Retain the power; they'll have to swallow that.
And if I give security for my
Good faith, that's all they can require of me.

ILLO. The army's yours. Now for the moment, it
Is yours. But tremble at the slow, insidious
Workings of time. The favor you enjoy there

70

80 Protects you for today, tomorrow still,
From outright force. Give them a little time, though,
And they with stealth will undermine the good
Opinion that you stand on, steal from you
First one man, than another, so that when
The earthquake comes, your riddled house collapses.

WALLENSTEIN. An evil accident!

ILLO. A lucky one, I'd say, if it affects
You as it should, obliges you to act
Once and for all. The Swedish colonel is—¹⁷⁸

90 WALLENSTEIN. He's here? Do you know what he has for us?

ILLO. I asked. He'll only speak with you in private.

WALLENSTEIN. An evil, evil accident. For sure,
Sesina knows too much and he will talk.

TERZKY. He's a Bohemian rebel and a fugitive,
His head is in a noose. If he can save
Himself, and at your cost, will he have scruples?
And if they put him on the rack, what hope
Have we that he'll hold out, weak as he is?

WALLENSTEIN (*lost in thought*).
There's no establishing their trust again.
100 Whatever I do now, I'll be and I
Remain a traitor in their eyes. Even
If I return now to my duties in
All honesty, it will avail me nothing—

ILLO. It'll ruin you. They'll only mark it up, not
To your good faith, but to your helplessness.

WALLENSTEIN (*much aroused, pacing*).
What? Should I be obliged to go through with
It just because I toyed with the thought?
He's lost—the man who dares fool with the Devil.

ILLO. If you were only fooling, believe you me,
110 You'll pay for it in all true seriousness.

WALLENSTEIN. And if I must go through with it, then it
Must happen now, just now, while I have power.

ILLO. If possible, before the Viennese
Recover from the blow and cut you off.

WALLENSTEIN (*studying the signatures*).

I have the generals' written word of honor.¹⁷⁹

Max Piccolomini's not here. Why not?

TERZKY. He was—He said—

ILLO. Oh, it was pure conceit!

He said there was no need between you two.

WALLENSTEIN. There *is* no need—in that he is quite right.

120

The regiments don't want to go to Flanders.

They've forwarded a written protest to me.¹⁸⁰

They noisily resist their orders. Well!

We have the first move toward an insurrection.

ILLO. You'll sooner lead them to the enemy,

I warrant you, than over to the Spaniards.

WALLENSTEIN. I'd like to hear now what that Swede has brought

For me.

ILLO (*eagerly*). Would you admit him, Terzky?

He's right outside.

WALLENSTEIN. Wait just a moment more.

130

He takes me by surprise—It came too fast—

Blind chance, an accident—It's not my way

To let that rule me darkly, sweep me with it.

ILLO. Just hear him as a first step. Weigh it later.

(*Exeunt Illo and Terzky.*)

Scene Four

WALLENSTEIN (*speaking to himself*).¹⁸¹

Could it be? I'd be barred? Could not do what I

Want? Not retreat, as I would wish? I'd be

Constrained to *do* the deed because I *thought* it?

Did not dismiss temptation? Fed my heart

On this imagining; without set purpose,

Prepared the means to see it to completion;

Merely because I kept all avenues open?

140

God is my witness: I was not in earnest;

I never made it my set purpose. Never!
I merely liked to entertain the thought.
Freedom to act, capacity: these pricked me.
Was it an error to draw pleasure from a
Phantasm, a hope—no more—of royal office?
And in my heart was a free will not mine?
Did I not always see within my range a
Right way, keep open lines for my retreat?
Where is it I now see that I've been led?
Pathless the road that lies behind. A wall
Built up of my own deeds is rising, blocks me,
And cuts off any hope of turning back.
(He stands still, reflecting.)
Punishable is what I seem: try as
I may, I can't throw off a sense of guilt.
Life's ambiguity indicts me, double
Meanings; suspicion, always seeing evil,
Will poison, too, the wellspring of my *pure* deed.
If I'd been what I'm taken for, a traitor,
I'd spared myself the good appearances
And drawn my cloak about me ever closer,
Never have shown bad feeling. Knowing myself
Guiltless, my wishes unseduced, I gave
Free rein to all my moods and passions.
My words were bold because my deeds were not.
All this was planless. They, however, peering
Forward, will rhyme it all as plotted, planned;
They'll weave what rage, high spirits let me say
From a full heart into an artful web
And fashion a complaint so terrible
That I am dumbstruck. I'll have caught myself
In my own net, and only force can loose me.
(He halts again.)
How different it was then, when courage drove me
Freely, emboldened me to do what need,
Self-preservation, rudely now requires!

150

160

170

180

Necessity is grave to contemplate.
Never without a shudder does the human
Hand reach obscurely into Fortune's urn.
My deed was mine while it lay in my breast.
Released from this sure corner of the heart,
Its mother-ground, out into life abroad,
It belongs to those perfidious powers no
Mere human hand can ever hope to tame.

(*He makes great strides through the room, then halts again, reflecting.*)

190

And what have you embarked on here? Have you
Admitted it forthrightly to yourself?
Power is what you want to shake, reposing
Assured and calm upon its throne, secured
By sacred old possession and by custom,
Fastening itself by countless stubborn roots to
The people's pious, childlike beliefs.

200

This is no contest matching strength with strength.
Of *that* I have no fear. I'll take it up
With any foe that I can see and stare down,
Who, full of courage, also kindles mine.
The foe that I can't see's the one I fear,
That which resists me in the human heart,
Fearful to me alone by fear itself.
Not what proclaims itself as mighty, full
Of life—What's dangerously fearsome is
The commonplace, eternal Yesterday,
What's always been, is always coming back,
Tomorrow will be good since it was good today.
For man is made of humdrum, common stuff
And calls convention, custom, habit "Nanny."
It's a brave soul who would lay hand on his
Precious old hoardings, got from his ancestors!
The *year* has power to beatify.
What's gray with age for him is next to God;
You're in possession? You are in the right!
A right the mob will reverence like a relic.

210

(To the Page who has entered.)

The Swedish colonel? Yes? Let him come in.

(The Page goes out. Wallenstein gazes at the doorway, reflecting.)

It's still unsullied—still. No crime has crossed

That threshold yet. So narrow is the boundary

That separates two paths that lie before us.

Scene Five

Wallenstein and Wrangel.

WALLENSTEIN (*having examined him searchingly*).

Your name is Wrangel?

WRANGEL. Gustav Wrangel, colonel,

The regiment of Södermanland Blues.

WALLENSTEIN. It was a Wrangel who did me much harm

Before Stralsund: his brave defense there was

To blame when that seaport held out against me.

WRANGEL. The workings of the elements, my Lord.

220

They were against you, not my merits! A storm

The Baltic stirred up to defend its freedom:

Both land and sea were not to serve one master.

WALLENSTEIN. You even swept my admiral's hat away.

WRANGEL. I come now to replace it with a crown.

WALLENSTEIN (*signals him to be seated, himself sits down*).

Credentials, please. You've full authority?

WRANGEL (*showing reservation*).

So much remains to be resolved as yet—

WALLENSTEIN (*has finished reading*).

A solid, useful letter. It's a smart,

Discerning mind you're serving, Master Wrangel.

The Chancellor writes he's only executing

230

What your late king had contemplated: helping

Me to accede to the Bohemian crown.

WRANGEL. He says what's true. Our much regretted king

Had a great estimation of your Grace's

Exceptional intelligence and gifts

As marshal. He alone who's best at ruling,
He'd tell us, should be ruler, should be king.¹⁸²

WALLENSTEIN. *He could say that.*

(*Taking his hand, confidentially.*)

Sincerely, Colonel Wrangel—In my heart I
Was also Swedish. Always. This you saw in
Silesia and again at Nuremberg.

240

I often had you in my power and
Always let you slip out by a back door.¹⁸³
That's what they won't forgive me in Vienna
And what obliges me to take this step.
Since our advantage coincides so nicely,
Let us agree to trust each other rightly.

WRANGEL. That trust will come when both sides have security.

WALLENSTEIN. The Chancellor, I see, is slow to trust.

250

And I confess: the game is not arranged
Quite in my favor. For his Honor thinks
If I lead on the Kaiser this way, who's
My master, with the foe I could do like:
The *one* could be forgiven sooner than
The *other*. Is that not what *you* think, Colonel?

WRANGEL. I have an office here and no opinion.

WALLENSTEIN. The Kaiser's driven me to these extremes.

I can no longer serve him honestly.
For my security, in self-defense
I take a bitter step that conscience blames.

260

WRANGEL. I believe you. No one goes so far unforced.

(*After a pause.*)

What would induce your Lordship to proceed
So with your Kaiser and your master is not
For us to judge or to give meaning to.
The Swede does battle for his own good cause
With his good sword and in good conscience. The
Current conjunction, opportunity
Favors us. Every advantage counts in war.
We therefore take what's offered without cavil.
If everything is in good order, then—

270

WALLENSTEIN. What do these doubts concern? Is it my will?
Is it my forces? I made promise: if
The Chancellor pledges sixteen thousand men,
I'll bring him eighteen thousand from the Kaiser's
Army.

WRANGEL. Your Grace is well known as a mighty
Warlord, a second Attila and Pyrrhus.¹⁸⁴
One tells to this day with astonishment
How years ago, against all human reckoning,
You conjured up an army out of nothing.¹⁸⁵
But still—

WALLENSTEIN. But still?

WRANGEL. His Honor wonders if it
Would not be easier to put sixty thousand
Warriors into the field from nothing than
To get one sixtieth of that—(He stops.)

WALLENSTEIN. To what?

Let's hear it! To—?

WRANGEL. To break their sacred oath.

WALLENSTEIN. He does? Because he judges like a Swede
And Protestant. You Lutherans battle for
Your Bible, think it's all about a cause;
With heart and soul you rally to your flag.
When one of *yours* goes over to the foe,
He's broken with two masters at one stroke.
That's not remotely how we see these things.

WRANGEL. Lord God in heaven! Have you in your country
No homeland, home fires, kitchen hearth, and church?

WALLENSTEIN. I'll tell you how this plays out on our side.

The Austrian *has* a fatherland; he loves
It and with reason. But *this* army, said
To be the Kaiser's, perched here in Bohemia,
It has none.¹⁸⁶ These men are all rejects, thrown off
By other countries, the abandoned of
This world, with nothing they can call their own
Except the sun that shines upon us all.
This land we're fighting over, this Bohemia,

290

310

Has no affection for its master, whom it
 Acquired by changing fortunes in the field
 And not by choice. With grumbling it endures
 The tyranny of faith. Force has imposed
 A silence on them, not a peace. And the
 Atrocities committed here live on
 As red-hot vengefulness. How should a son
 Forget a father chased to mass by hounds?
 A people that has suffered such is frightful,
 Enduring or avenging suffered wrongs.¹⁸⁷

WRANGEL. The noblemen, though, and the officers?

Desertion on this scale, crime on this order
 Is unexampled in all history, my Lord.

WALLENSTEIN. Under all circumstances, they are mine.

You needn't believe me; trust to your own eyes.

(He hands him the sworn Oath.

Wrangel reads it, then lays it silently on the table.)

Well now? You understand?

WRANGEL. If one but could!

My Lord, I drop my mask. I'm authorized
 To reach agreement on all pertinent matters.

320

The Rhinegrave¹⁸⁸ stands four marches distant only
 With fifteen thousand men, awaiting orders
 To bring them to your army, orders I
 Shall give as soon as we two are at one.

WALLENSTEIN. What is it that the Chancellor demands?

WRANGEL (*expressing reservation*).

Twelve regiments at risk, all Swedish men.
 I answer for them with my life. And all
 Could be bad faith—

WALLENSTEIN (*in anger*). Why, sir!

WRANGEL (*continuing calmly*). Therefore one must
 Insist: The Duke of Friedland is to break
 With Austria, formally, irrevocably.

330

On other terms, no Swedish troops are offered.

WALLENSTEIN. What's the demand? Pronounce it, quick and clear.

WRANGEL. Thus: to disarm the Spanish regiments

That answer to the Kaiser, to take Prague,
 Vacate the city, and the border stronghold
 Eger, to Swedish forces.

WALLENSTEIN. Much demanded!
 Prague? Eger, fine! But Prague? Can't be. Won't work.
 I'll give you every surety that you
 Might reasonably require of me. But Prague,
 Bohemia—these I can defend myself.

340 WRANGEL. Of that we have no doubt. We are concerned
 Not merely with defense. We do not want to
 Have raised so many men and so much treasure
 To no good purpose.

WALLENSTEIN. Properly so.

WRANGEL. Until
 We are made whole, Prague's ours.

WALLENSTEIN. That's how you trust us?

WRANGEL (*getting to his feet*).
 The Swede works circumspectly with the German.

We were invited here across the Baltic;
 We've saved the Kingdom from its downfall,¹⁸⁹ with
 Our blood set seal upon religious freedom
 And on the sacred teachings of the Gospels.

350 And now one feels no more the favor but
 The burden, looks askance at strangers in
 The land, would like to send us home to our
 Dark forests with a pocketful of money.
 Oh, no. Not for a Judas wage, for gold
 And silver, have we lost our king in battle,
 Nor so much noble Swedish blood been spilled
 For gold and silver! We'll not raise our flags
 And sail for home with a thin laurel wreath.

We would be *citizens* on ground our late
 King purchased when he gave his life.

WALLENSTEIN. Help me suppress our common enemy,
 The borderland you want will not elude you.

WRANGEL. And once the common enemy's been conquered?
 Who'll hold our new-found friendship then together?

It's not escaped us, Prince—though we were not
Supposed to see—that you are entertaining
Contacts with Saxons, secret ones. Who says
We're not to be made victim of decisions
That one finds prudent to conceal from us?

370

WALLENSTEIN. The Chancellor has chosen his man well. He
Could not have sent us someone more resistant.

(*Rising.*)

Come up with something better, Gustav Wrangel.
No more of Prague.

WRANGEL. My brief ends here.

WALLENSTEIN. I should cede *you* my capital? I'd go
Back to my Kaiser sooner.

WRANGEL. If there's time.

WALLENSTEIN. That's up to me, still is, and always will be.

WRANGEL. It may have been a day or two ago.

No longer now. Not since Sesan's been caught.

(*Following Wallenstein's startled silence.*)

My Lord, we gladly believe you are in earnest;

380

Since *yesterday* we're sure of it. Now that

This sheet assures us of the *troops*, there's nothing

Impedes our reaching trust and understanding.

Let us not quarrel over Prague. My Chancellor

Contents himself with the Old City. You

Shall have the Radschin and the Small Side.¹⁹⁰ Eger,

Importantly, must be thrown open to us,

If we are to arrive at an agreement.

WALLENSTEIN. I'm to trust *you*, and not you *me*? So be it.

I'll give your offer due consideration.

390

WRANGEL. No all too long one, I would ask of you.

Our talks drag on into a second year now;

If they again reach no result, the Chancellor

Intends to think of them as broken off.

WALLENSTEIN. You press me hard. Yet such a step requires
Reflection.

WRANGEL. Sooner than one thinks, my Lord!

If it's to work, it must be taken swiftly. (*Exit.*)

Scene Six

Wallenstein. Terzky and Illo return.

ILLO. It's done?

TERZKY. You've reached agreement?

ILLO. Our good Swede

Left quite content. So you've reached an agreement.

WALLENSTEIN. Listen! Nothing has happened yet. And thinking
400 It over—I don't want to do it.

TERZKY. What!

WALLENSTEIN. We should live at the mercy of these Swedes?

Endure their arrogance? I couldn't stand it.

ILLO. Are you some refugee who begs for help?

You bring them more than you receive from them.

WALLENSTEIN. And what about that Bourbon of the blood

Who sold himself to his king's enemy,

Lifted his arm against his fatherland?¹⁹¹

They made him a marked man, and men's revulsion

Avenged a deed so wicked, so unnatural.

ILLO. Is that *your* case?

WALLENSTEIN. Good faith, I tell you, is

For every man as if his next of kin.

He feels himself put here as its avenger.

Sectarian enmity and partisan rage,

Old envies, jealousies conclude a truce;

All things that wrestle to destroy each other

Enter a pact, make terms, to chase away

The *common* enemy of mankind, the wild beast

That murderously invades the huddled pack

In which man lives in safety. His own wits,

We know, cannot protect him altogether.

His eyes are set by Nature in his forehead;

Good faith protects his back, where he's exposed.

TERZKY. Do not think yourself worse than does the foe

Who offers you his hand to do the deed.

That Karl was hardly tender-hearted, that

Ancestral uncle to this Kaiser's house.¹⁹²

He took that Bourbon up with open arms.
The world is ruled by seizing what is useful.

Scene Seven

Countess Terzky joins the others.

WALLENSTEIN. Who sent for you? There's nothing here for women.
430 COUNTESS. I've come to offer my congratulations.
Am I too soon? I certainly hope not.
WALLENSTEIN. Use your prestige here, Terzky. Make her go.
COUNTESS. And I once gave a king to rule Bohemia!¹⁹³
WALLENSTEIN. He looked like it.
COUNTESS (*to the others*) Now, what's the matter? Speak!
TERZKY. The Duke's not willing.
COUNTESS. Won't do what he has to?
ILLO. It's your turn now. You try it. I have no
Reply to talk of good faith, conscience, such like.
COUNTESS. Look!¹⁹⁴ When it all lay in the distance, when
440 You saw the path stretch endlessly before you,
There you had courage and decision. Now,
When from this dream should come reality,
Completion is at hand, success assured,
Here you begin to hesitate, you balk?
Brave only in projections, timid in deeds?
Well, fine! Why not concede your enemies
Are right: What else do they expect of you?
They believe your resolution; be assured:
That they'd bear witness to with sign and seal.
But no one believes a deed is possible,
Or they'd respect you, live in fear of you.
How can this be? Now that you've gone so far,
Now that the worst is known, now that the deed
Is totted up as done and charged to you,
You would pull back and forfeit the result?
Intended merely, it's a common crime;
Accomplished, it's a deathless undertaking.

If it succeeds, it'll be forgiven, too,
For all result is sealed by God's own verdict.

CHAMBERLAIN (*entering*). The Colonel Piccolomini.¹⁹⁵

COUNTESS (quickly). Must wait.

460

WALLENSTEIN. I cannot see him now. Another time.

CHAMBERLAIN. He asks for a few moments only, says

He comes on urgent matters—

WALLENSTEIN. Who knows what it may be. I want to hear it.

COUNTESS (*laughing*). To him it may seem urgent. *You* can wait.

WALLENSTEIN. What is it?

COUNTESS. Oh, you'll find out soon enough.¹⁹⁶

Think now instead how you'll make Wrangel ready.

(*Exit Chamberlain.*)

WALLENSTEIN. If there were still a choice—If some way out

Less drastic could be found—That's still what I
Would choose, in order to avoid the worst.

470

COUNTESS. If that is all you want, you'll find that way right

In front of you. Just send this Wrangel home.
Forget your cherished hopes and throw away
The life that's past; resolve yourself and start
A new one. Even virtue has its vaunted
Heroes, no less than fame and fortune do.
You'll leave then for Vienna and the Kaiser,
Take a full cash box, and declare it was
Your wish to test the good faith of his servants
Merely, to get the better of this Swede.

480

ILLO. Too late for that as well. They know too much.

He'd only put his head down on the block.

COUNTESS. That I don't fear. They lack the proofs to try him,

And they refrain from outright use of force.

No. They'll be pleased to let their duke withdraw.

I see it now. The King of Hungary

Appears. It's obvious the Duke must go,

There needn't even be a public statement.

The king proceeds to have his troops sworn in,

And everything remains in perfect order.

490

A morning comes that finds the Duke departed.
His many castles spring to life again,
Where he'll devote himself to hunting, farming,
Breeding fine horses. He'll set up his court,
Distribute golden keys, and keep a lavish
Table. Put briefly, he'll be a great king—
On a small scale. He'll prudently content
Himself with counting little, meaning less, and
They'll let him seem what he would want to seem.
He'll seem a great prince to the bitter end.

500

See there! The Duke is one of those new men
The war's raised up, the tousled creature of a
Court favor that, with uniform display,
Creates both squires and princes.

WALLENSTEIN (*getting to his feet, very aroused*).

510

Show me a way out of this impasse, helpful
Powers, a way that *I* can travel, I
Who am no champion with words, can't prattle
Virtue or warm myself on thinking, willing,
Can't grandly say to Fortune, turning her
Back on me: Go! Who needs you? Show a way!
If I'm stripped of effectiveness, I'm lost.
I'll shy back from no sacrifice, no danger
In order to avoid this last extreme. But
Before I sink down into nothingness,
Or end so small, I who began so great,
Before the world confuses me with wretches
Whom but a single day makes and destroys,
Sooner the world and afterworld should speak
My name with loathing, sooner *Friedland* be
A code for every crime.

520

COUNTESS. What's so unnatural in all this? It's lost
On me. Just tell me what it is. Do not
Let superstition's spirits of the night
Be master of your bright intelligence!
High treason is the charge against you, if
With reason or without is not the question.

You're lost if you don't make quick use of power
You have at your command. Just show me a
Creation so pacific it will not
Defend its life with all its living strength!
And what is so extravagant that it
Cannot be justified as self-defense?

530

WALLENSTEIN. This Ferdinand once treated me so kindly;

He loved me, valued me; I was the one
Who stood the closest to his heart. What prince
Did he esteem like me? That it should end so!

COUNTESS. That's how you cherish every little favor

And have no memory for the affront?
Must I remind you how you were rewarded
At Regensburg for all your loyal service?

540

You had offended all the realm's estates;¹⁹⁷
To magnify *him* you had taken on your
Shoulders the hate, ill will of all the world:
In Germany entire you had no friend,
Because you'd only lived to serve your Kaiser.
You cleaved to him, none other, in the storm
That gathered over you at Regensburg—and
He let you fall! He let you fall! Let you
Fall, sacrificed to that presumptuous
Bavarian! Don't tell me recovered rank¹⁹⁸
Redeems that first and grave injustice. It was
No genuine good will put you in office.

550

The law of bitter need—that put you in

This place that they'd have happily refused you.

WALLENSTEIN. That's true! It's not to their good will or to

His fondness that I owe this office. And

If I abuse it, I abuse no trust.

COUNTESS. Trust? Fondness? They had need of you! Had need!

That rude extortionist, pure *Need*, who's not

Content with empty names, mere figurants; who

560

Demands real *deeds*, not *gestures*; calls upon

The greatest and the best of men and puts

Him at the tiller—even when she has

570

To find her man among the rabble—*she*
Put you in office, composed your appointment.
For *that* house¹⁹⁹ will resort to slavish men, the
Stringed puppets of their arts, for as long as
They can hold out. But when the worst nears, when
Appearances no longer work, they lapse
Into the hands of that strong nature and
Of that great mind that only heeds *itself*,
Is bound by no contract and treats with them
On its *own* terms and never once on *theirs*.

WALLENSTEIN. It's true! They always saw me as I am,
I did not deceive them in this bargain, never
Did think it worth the trouble to conceal
From them my bold, expansive turn of mind.

COUNTESS. Rather, you've always shown yourself as terrible.

580

You're not at fault; you've always been consistent;
It's *they* who're wrong: they stood in fear of you
And still they vested power in your hands.
For every particular character is in
The right that is consistent with itself;
There is no wrong except a contradiction.
Why, were you someone else eight years ago,
Marching through Germany with fire and steel?²⁰⁰
You wielded your whip over every district,
Scorned every ordinance throughout the Empire,
Asserted power's fearsome privilege,
Trod on the sovereignty of every land
To spread your sultan's mastery far and wide.
That was the moment to break your proud will,
Call you to order! But the Kaiser was
Well pleased with what was useful to him and
Stamped silently the Empire's seal on crimes.
What *then* was just because you'd done it *for* him
Today's anathema because it's aimed *against* him?

590

WALLENSTEIN (*getting to his feet*).

I never saw it from this angle. Yes,
That's how it is. This Kaiser used my arm

(*To Terzky.*)

Bring Wrangel to me in my private study;
The couriers I'll dispatch myself; send for
Octavio!

(*To the Countess, who is triumphant.*)

Mind you don't laugh too soon!
For Destiny is chary of her might.
To laugh too soon intrudes upon her rights.
We merely put the seed stock in her hand.
What sprouts—if good, if bad—tells in the end.

(*The Curtain falls as he goes off.*)

Act Two

A Room.

Scene One

Wallenstein. Octavio Piccolomini. Then Max Piccolomini.

WALLENSTEIN. He sends me word from Linz that he lies sick,²⁰⁵
Yet I have sure report that he is hiding
At Frauenberg in company of Gallas.
Arrest them both and send them here to me.
Take charge of all the Spanish regiments,²⁰⁶
Make endless preparation, never finish;
If they prevail on you to march against me,
Say yes and make no move to leave the spot.
I know that you are well served with these orders
To stand aside, take no part in this game;
You save appearances as long as you can,
For extreme measures never were your way.
That's why I've singled out this role for you;
By doing nothing you will serve me best
This time. If fortune favors me meanwhile
In this endeavor, you know what to do.²⁰⁷

(*Max Piccolomini enters.*)

Go now, Old Man.²⁰⁸ You'll have to leave tonight.
Take my own horses. This one here I'll keep
With me. Be quick in taking leave of one
Another! We shall meet again, I'm sure,
Successful and content.

OCTAVIO (*to his son*). We'll speak today yet. (*Exit.*)

Scene Two

Wallenstein. Max Piccolomini.

MAX (*approaches him*).

My General—

WALLENSTEIN. That I am no longer if

You call yourself the Kaiser's officer.

MAX. So it's decided: You will leave the army?

WALLENSTEIN. I've given up my service to the Kaiser.

MAX. And want to leave the army?

WALLENSTEIN. I hope rather

To bind it closer and more tightly to me.

(*He sits down.*)

Well, Max. I did not want to tell you this

Before the hour for action had arrived.

670

Youth's favored senses like to seize upon

What's right, take pleasure in applying and

In testing their own judgment there where the

Example lends itself to clear solution.

But when between two evils one must be

Chosen, where the heart cannot pull back *whole*

From a clash of conflicting duties, there

It is a boon to find one has no choice,

A gift to have to face necessity.²⁰⁹

That's now the case. Therefore do not look back.

680

That cannot help you anymore. Look forward!

Withhold all judgment and prepare to act.

Vienna has determined my destruction,

And my response is to anticipate them.

So we shall seek alliance with the Swedes.

They're worthy fellows and will be good friends.

(*He pauses, expecting Piccolomini's response.*)

I take you by surprise. You needn't answer.

I'll give you time to gather a response.

(He stands up and moves to the back. Max long stands motionless, in great pain; at a gesture from him, Wallenstein comes forward and stands before him.)

MAX. My General, you've forced me to grow up.

Until today I had no need to find
690 My path myself or choose my own direction.
I followed you. I only had to look
To you and know for certain the right way.
Now for the first time you return me to
Myself, and I am forced to make a choice
Between you and the promptings of my heart.

WALLENSTEIN. Until today your fortunes rocked you gently;

You could perform your duties like a child,
Satisfy every seemly urging and
Do everything with undivided heart.
700 It can no longer stay that way. The paths
Diverge like foes, and duty fights with duty.
You are obliged to take sides in the war
Between your Kaiser and your friend that flares
Up now before you.

MAX. War! Is that the right word?

A war's a dreadful thing, like plagues of Heaven.
And it is good, a godsend, just like plagues.
Is this a good war you're preparing for
The Kaiser with the Kaiser's self-same army?
Oh, God in heaven! What a change this is!

710 Is it becoming that I use such language
With you, who shone before me like the fixed
Star of the pole and gave me my life's compass?
Oh, what a tear you're ripping through my heart!
Should I learn to deny your name my old
Accustomed practices of veneration,
My sacred habits of obedience?
Oh, no. No, no. Do not turn your face toward me.
For me it was the countenance of a god
And will not soon lose power over me.

720

My senses still remain in fealty to you,
For all my bleeding soul's leap into freedom.

WALLENSTEIN. Max, listen to me.

MAX. Do not do it! Do not!

Just look! Your pure and noble features know
Nothing of anything so direful yet.
Only your fantasy has it besmirched;
Your innocence refuses to be driven
Out of your radiant noble figure. Oh,
Expel this blotch instead, this enemy.
And then it will be only a bad dream,

730

The kind that cautions virtue. All mankind
May have experienced such moments, but
Right feeling must prevail, both now and after.
No, you'll not end so. That would blacken among
Men everything that's grand by nature, every
Capacity that's powerful; it would
Endorse the common foolishness that does
Not believe nobility inheres in freedom
And gives itself to incapacity.²¹⁰

WALLENSTEIN. The world will judge me harshly; I expect that.

740

I've told myself already what you say.
For who would not avoid the worst if he
But could. Here, though, one's given little choice:
If I do not *use* force, I suffer it.
That's how it is. I've no alternative.

MAX. Then fine! Enforce your will, and even while
You keep your post, oppose the Kaiser; if
It must be, go as far as frank rebellion;
I do not like it, but I can forgive you,
Will share with you what I cannot approve.

750

But don't become a *traitor*! Now I've said
The word. Do not become a traitor! That's
Not excess, not transgression by high courage.
Oh, that is something else—pure blackness, black as
The depths of Hell.

WALLENSTEIN (*frowning darkly but restrained*).

Young, one is quick to seize upon a word
 As hard to wield as is a whetted blade;
 Hot-headed, one is quick to take the measure
 Of things that must be judged on their own terms;
 And quick to call things shameful or deserving
 And bad or good. And what imagining
 Fantastically imports in these dark names one
 Imposes on things themselves and on their essence.
 The world is *narrow* and the mind is *wide*,
 Our *thoughts* lie easy next to one another,
 But *things* will jostle in the space allotted;
 Where one claims room the other has to yield,
 One who would not be driven out must drive out.
 For all is struggle and the strong prevail.

The man who goes through life without desire, who
 Can give up every purpose—such a one
 Lives with the salamander in pure fire,
 Stays spotless in a spotless element.
 But Nature has made me of cruder stuff,
 And my desires all draw me toward the Earth.
 The Earth pertains to the bad spirit, not to
 The good. The gods above send down to us
 But common goods; their light brings happiness,
 But it makes no man rich, and under their
 Regime no treasure is to be attained.

The precious stone, gold valued over all things
 Are wrested from deceitful powers that live
 Disgracefully below the reach of light.
 Not without cost are they propitiated,
 And no man lives who has withdrawn his soul
 Unblemished from their service.²¹¹

MAX (*with meaning*). Fear these powers!

They never keep their word. They're liars that
 Will charm you, draw you to perdition. Do
 Not trust them. You are warned! Return to duty.
 You can be sure of it. Just send me to

790

Vienna. That's the way! Let me make your
 Peace with the Kaiser. He does not know you.
 But I know you, and he should see you with
 My eyes. I'll bring you back his trust in you.

WALLENSTEIN. It is too late. You do not know what's happened.

MAX. And if it is too late, advanced so far

That only a transgression saves you,
 Then fall. Fall worthily, just as you stood.
 Lose your command. Pass from the stage. You can,
 With brilliance. Do so, too, with innocence.
 You've lived for others this long time, live for
 Yourself at last. I'll go together with you
 And never separate my fate from yours—

WALLENSTEIN. It is too late. For even as we speak,

My runners lay back milestone after milestone,
 Carrying my orders out to Prague and Eger.
 Consent! We take the action that we must.

Let us then do the necessary thing
 With resolution, dignity. Is my
 Deed worse than Caesar's, celebrated still?

810

He led his legions against Rome, entrusted
 To his protection. Had he not, he'd have
 Been lost, as I would be if I disarmed.
 I am aware of something of his spirit.

Give me his luck; the rest I'll answer for.²¹²

(Max, who has shown signs of a painful struggle, quickly leaves the scene. Wallenstein looks after him, startled and surprised, then stands deep in thought.)

Scene Three

Wallenstein. Terzky. Then Illo.

TERZKY. Max Piccolomini has just gone out?

WALLENSTEIN. Where's Wrangel?

TERZKY.

Poof! Vanished.

WALLENSTEIN.

In such a hurry?

TERZKY. It was as if the earth had swallowed him.

He'd just left you when I went after him.

I had to speak with him—and he was gone;

820 No one could tell me anything about him;

I think he was the Dark One in the flesh:

No man can vanish from the earth that way.

ILLO (*entering*). It's true? It's the Old Man you want to send?

TERZKY. Octavio? Him? Whatever are you thinking?

WALLENSTEIN. He's going to go to Frauenberg, assume

The Spanish and the Latin regiments.

TERZKY. What? God forbid that you do such a thing!

ILLO. Entrust that traitor with a fighting force?

Let him out of your sight at such a moment,

830 When everything is hanging in the balance?

TERZKY. That you'll not do; no, not for anything!

WALLENSTEIN. A curious bunch you are.

ILLO. Oh, just this once!

Yield to our warning. Do not let him go.

WALLENSTEIN. And why should I not trust him this one time,

Him whom I've always trusted? What has happened

To cost him my esteem, my good opinion?

Your notions, not my own, should give me cause

To alter my old proven judgment of him?

Don't take me for a woman. Trusting him

840 Until today, *today* I'll trust him still.

TERZKY. Must it be *him*? Can't you send someone else?

WALLENSTEIN. *He* is the one, the one whom I've selected.

He's right for this. That's why I chose him for it.

ILLO. Oh, he's a Latin—that's why he's so right.

WALLENSTEIN. I know it well: you've never liked those two.

Since I respect them, love them, and prefer them

To you and others, visibly, as they

Deserve, they are for all of you a thorn in

The side. Your envy—what concern is it

850 To *me* and my affairs? Your hating them

Does not diminish them in my eyes. You

May love and hate each other as you choose;
I leave to you your sense of things and preference.
As if I didn't know what each man's worth!

ILLO. He'll not set out, and if I have to smash
The wheels on his—

WALLENSTEIN. Contain yourself, Illo!

TERZKY. That Questenberg, when he was here in camp—
The two of them were huddled the whole time.

WALLENSTEIN. It was with my permission and my knowledge.
TERZKY. That messengers from Gallas come to him

In secret—that, too, I know.

WALLENSTEIN. That is not true.

ILLO. Oh, you are blind beneath the midday sun!

WALLENSTEIN. And you'll not shake my articles of faith.

The're based on deepest science, and if they
Are lies, the science of the stars is lies.
But you should know: I have a pledge from fate
Itself that he's the truest of my friends.

ILLO. Have you a pledge that this pledge isn't lying?

WALLENSTEIN. The lives of men are marked by moments when one

870 Is nearer the world spirit than is usual
And gets to put a question to one's fate.
Just such a moment was it in the night
Before our Lützen action, as I, braced
Against a tree, gazed out across the plain.²¹³
I saw the campfires burning darkly through
The fog. The muffled thunder of our weapons,
The measured calling of the watches as
They made their rounds, alone broke up the stillness.
Before my inner eye my life, both past
And future, unrolled in this moment and
My spirit, full of premonition, fastened
The furthest reaches of the future to
The unknown outcome of the next day's action.
And I said to myself: "So many do you
Command. They follow after your stars, risk, as

On a high number, all they have on your head,
 Have gone with you on board your ship of fortune.
 One day their destiny will scatter them
 And few will loyally remain with you.

890 I'd like to know the one who's truest to me
 Of all the men this camp holds in its confines.
 Give me a sign, you Fates, and let it be
 The one who comes tomorrow first to me
 And brings me living proof of his devotion."
 When I had thought these things I fell asleep.

My dream took me into the thick of battle.

Pressed on all sides, I felt my horse
 Fall stricken; over me indifferently all
 My cavalry passed, and I lay panting, near
 Death, trampled by the hooves of my own horsemen.

900 I felt myself supported suddenly
 By a strong arm, Octavio's, and I
 Awoke. It was bright day. Octavio stood
 Before me. "Brother," he said, "Do not mount
 The piebald, not today. I've chosen for you
 A surer animal. Do it for love
 Of me. For I've had warning in a dream."
 The swiftness of this animal snatched me
 Away from the pursuit of Banner's dragoons.²¹⁴
 910 My cousin rode the piebald on that morning,
 And horse and rider vanished with no trace.

ILLO. Pure accident.

WALLENSTEIN (*with meaning*). There is no accident.²¹⁵

What seems to us a blind fortuity
 Rises precisely out of deepest sources.
 I have it, signed, sealed, and delivered, he
 Is my good angel. Not another word!
 (*He starts away.*)

TERZKY. At least we get to keep that Max as hostage.

ILLO. And I'll not let him leave here with his life.

WALLENSTEIN (*stops and turns back*).

920 If you aren't like those women who return
 Forever to their first opinion, even
 When one has reasoned with them endlessly!
 Look! Human thoughts and deeds are not a force
 Like random waves upon a surging sea.
 Man's microcosm, inner world's the source²¹⁶
 From which they rise and flow eternally.
 They are compelled, as is the pear tree's pear,
 And shifting chance can never change their breed.
 When I've once seen a man's dark depths laid bare,
 I can divine his wishes and his deed.²¹⁷

(*Exeunt.*)

Scene Four

A Room in Piccolomini's quarters.

Octavio Piccolomini, ready for departure. An Adjutant.

930 OCTAVIO. Is the detachment ready?
 ADJUTANT. Waiting below.
 OCTAVIO. Trustworthy men, all of them, Adjutant?
 Which is the regiment you took them from?
 ADJUTANT. From Tiefenbach.
 OCTAVIO. That regiment is loyal.²¹⁸
 Have them stand quietly in the rear courtyard,
 Attract no notice, till you hear a bell.
 The house is to be closed then, sharply guarded,
 And anyone encountered here locked up.

(*Exit Adjutant.*)

I hope there'll be no need for such precautions,
 For I am confident of my assessment.
 940 But this is Kaiser's service, much at risk,
 And better too great measures than too few.

Scene Five

Octavio Piccolomini. Isolani enters.

ISOLANI. Well, here I am. Who else is still to come?²¹⁹

OCTAVIO (*conspiratorial*).

But first a word with you, Count Isolan.

ISOLANI (*conspiratorial*).

It's happening? The Prince will go ahead?

Just trust me, General. Put me to the test.

OCTAVIO. That could yet happen.

ISOLANI. Brother, I'm not of

The sort that's bold with words, until it comes

To doing deeds, and then heads for the hills.

The Duke has been more than a friend to me,

God knows he has! I owe him everything²²⁰

And he can bank on my help.

OCTAVIO. We shall see.

ISOLANI. Watch out, though. It's not everybody thinks so.

There're many here who still hold with the Court.

They think the signatures from recently,

The filched ones, can't bind them to anything.

OCTAVIO. Indeed? Name me the lords who think that way.

ISOLANI. Well, hang them! That's how all the Germans talk,

And Esterhazy, Kaunitz, Deodat

Now say we owe obedience to the Court.

OCTAVIO. That's satisfying.

ISOLANI. Satisfying?

OCTAVIO. That

The Kaiser still has such good friends, true servants.

ISOLANI. Don't laugh. These men are not to be despised.

OCTAVIO. Precisely. God forbid that I should laugh!

It satisfies me seriously to see

Our good cause still so strong.

ISOLANI. What's this? You're not—

Then what the devil am I doing here?

OCTAVIO (*with authority*).

You are here to declare yourself quite plainly:
Would you be called the Kaiser's friend or foe?

ISOLANI (*defiant*).

On that point I'll declare myself alone
To one to whom an explanation's owed.

970

OCTAVIO. This sheet should tell you if it's owed to me.

ISOLANI. What's this? The Kaiser's hand? The Imperial seal?

(Reads.) "That all the captains of Our Armies shall
Consider orders of Our loyal, much loved
Lieutenant General Piccolomini
As properly Our own." Ha-hum! Well, so—I—
Lieutenant General, my congratulations.

OCTAVIO. Do you submit to orders?

ISOLANI. I, well—I—

But you've surprised me, and so suddenly—
You'll grant me time to think, I hope—

980 OCTAVIO. Two minutes.

ISOLANI. My God! The matter is—

OCTAVIO. Quite clear. Quite simple.

You should declare if you choose to betray
Your master or to serve him loyally.

ISOLANI. Betray? My God—Whoever said betray?

OCTAVIO. That is before us here. The Prince is traitor,

Would lead the army over to the foe.

Declare yourself. Would you forswear the Kaiser?

And sell out to the enemy? Would you?

ISOLANI. What do you mean? The Kaiser's Majesty—

990

Forswear it? I said that? Whenever did

I say—

OCTAVIO. You haven't said it yet. Not yet.

I'm waiting now to see if you *will* say it.

ISOLANI. Well, now. It's a great kindness that, yourself,

You vouch that I've not said a thing like that.

OCTAVIO. And therefore you repudiate the Prince?

ISOLANI. Well, plotting treason—Treason cuts all ties.

OCTAVIO. And you'll take up the Kaiser's cause against him?

ISOLANI. He did me a good turn. If he's a rogue, though—

May God damn him—then our account is cancelled.

1000 OCTAVIO. You've chosen wisely and that pleases me.

Tonight you're to break camp in deepest silence

With all light troops; and it must seem as if

Your orders come down from the Duke himself.

Our mustering ground is Frauenberg. Lead your

Men there. Your further orders come from Gallas.

ISOLANI. So it shall be. Remember it of me,

Too, with the Kaiser—how you found me willing.

OCTAVIO. I'll praise you well.

(*Exit Isolani. A Servant enters.*)

It's Colonel Buttler? Good.

ISOLANI (*reappearing*).

And do forgive my blundering ways, Old Man.

1010 My God! How could I know who it was, what grand
Person I had before me!

OCTAVIO. It's all right.

ISOLANI. Jolly old fool is what I am and if
A hasty word has slipped across my courtyard
And out the gate, warmed by the wine, was not
To give offense, you know. (*Turns to leave.*)

OCTAVIO. Don't be concerned,

Give it no second thought.—Well, then! That worked!
Good Fortune, favor us so with the others!

Scene Six

Octavio Piccolomini. Buttler.

BUTTLER. I am at your disposal, Lieutenant General.

OCTAVIO. I welcome you as worthy guest and friend.

1020 BUTTLER. You do me too much honor.

(*They both sit down.*)

OCTAVIO. You, I'm afraid, did not return the interest
I showed when I approached you yesterday,
But took it for an empty compliment.²²¹
My wish was genuine. I was in earnest
With you. For we're embarked on times in which
Good men must bind themselves to one another.

BUTTLER. That's only done by men who think alike.

OCTAVIO. I'd say that all the good ones think alike.

1030 Dealing with others, I account alone
The deed to which one's character drives one,
Since blind misunderstanding often leads
The best of men to wander off the track.
You came by way of Frauenberg. Count Gal-
Las told you nothing there in confidence?
This you may tell me. He and I are friends.

BUTTLER. He spoke of nothing but indifferent things.²²²

OCTAVIO. A pity, for he had good counsel. I'd

Have something similar to offer you.

BUTTLER. Do spare yourself the trouble, me the shame
To have deserved your good opinion badly.

1040 OCTAVIO. Our time is precious. We'll speak plainly.
You know how matters stand here: that the Duke
Is contemplating treason. I can say more.
The step is taken. With the enemy
He has just reached agreement, and his couriers
Gallop toward Prague and Eger this very moment.
Tomorrow he would lead us to the foe.
But he deceives himself. Sharp eyes keep watch.
We've loyal friends of Ferdinand in camp here,

And their invisible alliance prospers.

This manifest declares him under ban and
Releases all his force from sworn obedience;
It calls upon right-thinking men to come
Together and accept my generalcy.

Now choose. Would you have part in our good cause?
Or share with him the bad lot of bad men?

1050

BUTTLER (*getting to his feet*).

His lot is mine.

OCTAVIO. That's your last word?

BUTTLER. It is.

OCTAVIO. Consider carefully, Colonel Buttler. There's
Still time. Your hasty word remains unheard.

1060 Retract. And choose the better part. You've not.

BUTTLER. You've further orders for me, Lieutenant General?

OCTAVIO. Consider your white hair and take it back.

BUTTLER. Farewell!

OCTAVIO. What? You would draw your valiant sword
In such a cause? Would transform into hate

Your thanks for forty years of serving Austria?

BUTTLER (*laughing bitterly*).

Great thanks from Austria!

(*About to go*.)

OCTAVIO (*lets him reach the door, then calls*).

Buttler!

BUTTLER. At your service.

OCTAVIO. How was it with the count?

BUTTLER. The count? What's this?

OCTAVIO. Count's title, I would say—

BUTTLER (*a burst of rage*). Death and damnation!

OCTAVIO (*coldly*). I know that you petitioned, were refused.

1070 BUTTLER. You'll not humiliate me unpunished. Draw!

OCTAVIO. Put up. And tell me how it happened. I'll not

Deny you satisfaction when you've spoken.

BUTTLER. May all the world have knowledge of my weakness,

That which I never can forgive myself!

Oh, yes, Lieutenant General, I'm ambitious;

The least contempt I never could abide.

It rankled me that birth and title counted

For more in this man's army than desert. One

Should not think less of me than of my peers.

1080 I let myself be led at a bad moment

To take a step as foolish as was this,

But I did not deserve to pay so dearly!
Deny me, fine! But why combine refusal
With an expression contempt? Why strike
The old man down, the proven loyal servant,
With laughter cite to him his humble birth,
Alone because he had forgot himself!
But Nature gave this snake a sting that they,
Too full of their despotic games, will tread on.

1090

OCTAVIO. So you were slandered. Have you any notion
Who did you such an underhanded service?

BUTTLER. Whoever: It would have to be a sneak,

A courtier, or a Spaniard, or the scion
Of some old house, someone whose light I stand in,
An envious rascal who resents my rising
By my own worth, the rank that I've attained.

OCTAVIO. The Duke—did he approve this step you took?

BUTTLER. Oh, he's the one encouraged me, made efforts
In my behalf and showed himself a friend.

1100

OCTAVIO. Of that you are quite sure?

BUTTLER. I read the letter.

OCTAVIO (*with meaning*).

I, too. But what I read was not the same.

(*Buttler reacts sharply.*)

By chance, I have possession of that letter.²²³

You may persuade yourself with your own eyes.

(*Gives him the letter.*)

BUTTLER. Ho! What is this?

OCTAVIO. I must fear, Colonel Buttler,
That you've been trifled with disgracefully.
The Duke, you say, encouraged you to act?
His letter speaks of you dismissively.
And he proposes that the minister
Should discipline what he calls your conceit.

(*Buttler has read the letter. His knees buckle and he reaches for a chair, where he sits down.*)

1110 No enemy pursues you, means you harm.
Ascribe the insult done you to the Duke
Alone. His purpose is quite clear: He would
Divide you from your Kaiser. Your revenge
Was to assure him what your loyalty,
Preserved and true, denied him, on reflection.
As a blind tool he hoped contemptuously to
Use you, as means to his base purposes.
He gained that goal. Too easily he lured
You from the path you'd traveled forty years.
BUTTLER (*his voice shaking*).

1120 His Majesty the Kaiser—can he forgive me?
OCTAVIO. He can do more. He heals the insult done
A worthy man through no fault of his own.
He graciously confirms the gift the Duke
Made you for his own evil purposes:
The regiment you lead is yours.²²⁴

BUTTLER (*tries to get up, sinks back. In high emotion he tries to speak and fails. Finally he removes his sword and offers it to Piccolomini*).

OCTAVIO. What's this?

Compose yourself.

BUTTLER. Accept!

OCTAVIO. But why? Consider.

BUTTLER. Take it. I am not worthy of this sword.

OCTAVIO. Receive it back again now from my hand

And carry it, in honor, for what's just.

1130 BUTTLER. I broke my troth with such a gracious Kaiser!

OCTAVIO. Now make it good. Be quick to leave the Duke.

BUTTLER. To leave him!

OCTAVIO. How's this? You've bethought yourself?

BUTTLER (*erunting*)

I'd merely leave him? Oh, he shall not live!²²⁵

OCTAVIO Come after me to Frauenberg. The faithful

Are gathering there with Altringer and Gallas

There're many others I've returned to loyal

There are many others I've returned to loyal Service; tonight they're fleeing out of Pilsen.

service, tonight they're heading out of Africa.

1140

BUTTLER (*who has walked up and down in agitation, now stands before Octavio with an air of decision*).

Count Piccolomini! May one speak now
Of honor, having broken troth with you?

OCTAVIO. One may, when one regrets it so sincerely.

BUTTLER. Then leave me here on word of honor.

OCTAVIO. What's
Your purpose?

BUTTLER. Leave me with my regiment.

OCTAVIO. You're to be trusted. But tell me what you're hatching.

BUTTLER. The deed will show. Now question me no further.

Trust me. You can. You'll not be leaving him,
By God, here with his guardian angel! Farewell! (*Exit.*)²²⁶

SERVANT (*bringing a note*).

A stranger brought it, didn't want to stay.

The Prince's horses wait for you below. (*Exit.*)

OCTAVIO (*reading*).

"Be on your way. Your faithful Isolan."

1150

If I but had this city now behind me!

So close to port, and we should see our ship wrecked?

Away! Away! There is no safety here

For me, not any more. But where's my son?

Scene Seven

Both Piccolomini.

MAX (*enters in great agitation, wide-eyed, walking unsteadily. He seems not to see his father, who stops at a distance and observes him compassionately. He crosses the room with long strides, comes to a halt, and throws himself into a chair, staring straight ahead*).

OCTAVIO (*approaching him*).

Son, I'm about to leave.

(*Having received no answer, he takes Max by the hand.*)

Farewell, my boy.

MAX. Farewell!

OCTAVIO. You'll follow after?

MAX (*not looking at him*). Follow you?

Yours is a crooked way. That's not my way.

(*Octavio releases his hand and steps back.*)

If only you'd been straight and true! Then it
Had never reached this point; it would be different!
Never would he have done this dreadful thing,
Good men around him would have kept their influence;
He'd not have fallen into evil nets.

Oh, why such lurking, secretiveness, why
The treachery—like a thief, a band of thieves!
Unholy falseness! Mother of all evil!
Inflicting wretchedness, our ruination!

Pure truthfulness, preserving order, saving
It, would have saved us, too. Oh, Father, I
Cannot, cannot forgive you—I cannot.

The Duke deceived me horribly, betrayed
My hopes. And you have hardly done me better.

OCTAVIO. My boy, I understand your pain, forgive you.

MAX (*gets to his feet, regards him uncertainly*).

It's possible? That—Father? Father? You'd
Have taken it so far deliberately?
You rise by virtue of his fall. Octavio,
That I cannot call good.

OCTAVIO. Why, God in heaven!

MAX. The worst of it is I have changed my nature.

How could suspicion enter my free soul?
My trust, my belief, my hope—I've lost it all,
Since everything I valued lied to me.

But no. Not everything. She's there for me,

And she's as pure and true as is the day.

Deception's everywhere, hypocrisy,
Murder, betrayal, poison, perjury!

The one clean place is our love for each other,
Unsullied among all humanity.

OCTAVIO. Come after me, Max. That's the better course.

1160

1170

1180

1190

MAX. Before I've taken leave of her, last leave?

Oh, not in life!

OCTAVIO. But you should spare yourself

The pain of parting, necessary parting.

Come with me, Son. Just come.

(*Draws him along.*)

MAX.

Not for the world!

OCTAVIO (*more urgent*).

Come with me. It's your father bids you come.

MAX. Bid me do what is human. I shall stay.

OCTAVIO. Max, in the Kaiser's name I bid you follow.

MAX. No Kaiser has direction of the heart.

And would you rob me now of the one thing

That's left me in my sorrow, her compassion?

What's horrible must happen horribly?

That which cannot be changed should now be done

Disgracefully, by secret, craven flight?

1200

No! She should see my suffering, see my pain,

Should hear my lacerated soul complain, and

Weep bitter tears for me. Oh, mankind is

Too cruel. She is like an angel. She'll

Retrieve my soul from raging, wild despair,

Comfort my mortal pain with her lament.

OCTAVIO. So you'll not tear yourself away, can't do it.

Then come, my son, and save your better self!

MAX. Your words are useless; you are wasting them.

It is my heart I follow; *that* I can trust.

OCTAVIO (*losing his composure*).

1210

Max! Max! If something terrible befalls me,

Should you—my son and my own blood—I dare

Not think it! If you should betray yourself

To infamy, should set this stigma on

Our noble house, the world shall see the un-

Imaginable and the father's blood drip from

The son's steel in a dreadful single combat.

MAX. Had you always thought better of all men,

You also would have taken better action.

1220 Cursed suspicion! And calamitous doubt!
 Nothing for it is firm and steady, cannot
 Be nudged; where belief fails, everything's in motion.
OCTAVIO. I trust your heart, but will you always find
 It possible to follow what it urges?
MAX. You've gained no mastery of my heart's desire,
 The Duke will gain as little mastery of me.
OCTAVIO. Oh, Max, I'll not see you come home again.
MAX. Unworthy of you you shall never see me.
OCTAVIO. I go to Frauenberg and leave for your
 Protection here the Pappenheimer ranks,
1230 Toscana, Lorraine, also Tiefenbach.
 They love you and are loyal to their oath,
 Would rather bravely fall in battle than
 Betray their captain or their sacred honor.
MAX. Depend on it: I'll lose my life in combat
 Here or conduct them safely out of Pilsen.
OCTAVIO (*setting out*).
 Farewell, my son.
MAX. Farewell!
OCTAVIO. How's this? No glance
 Exchanged? No loving handclasp here at parting?
 It is a bloody war we're entering,
 Its outcome is obscure, unknown to us.
1240 We never used to part in such a fashion.
 Is it then true? I have a son no longer?

(*Max falls into his arms; they clasp each other in a long silent embrace, then go off to different sides.*)

Act Three²²⁷

Reception Room of the Duchess of Friedland

Scene One

*Countess Terzky. Thekla. Lady Companion von Neubrunn.
Thekla and Neubrunn engaged in fine needlework.*

COUNTESS. There's nothing you would ask me, Thekla? Nothing

At all? I've been expecting you to speak.

Tell me, can you endure to go so long

And never once pronounce his name? Have I

Perhaps become superfluous? Have you

Perhaps found other means than go through me?

A full confession, Niece: You've seen him? Have you?

THEKLA. I've not seen him today or yesterday.²²⁸

1250 COUNTESS. Nor heard from him? Do not conceal from me.

THEKLA. Nothing at all.

COUNTESS. And are so calm?

THEKLA. I am.

COUNTESS. Excuse yourself, Neubrunn.

(*The Lady Companion removes herself.*)

Scene Two

Countess. Thekla.

COUNTESS. I do not like

His keeping silent, not at just this moment.

THEKLA. At just this moment?

COUNTESS. Now that he knows all.

Because it's now he should declare himself.

THEKLA. If I'm to understand, you must speak clearly.

COUNTESS. With that intention I sent her away.

Thekla, you're not a child. No more. Your heart

Has come of age, for you're in love and love

1260 Gives rise to courage, courage that you've shown.
 Your father is the one whom you resemble
 In spirit, not your mother. Therefore you
 Can hear what *she*'s unable to endure.

THEKLA. I beg you, finish with this preparation.

Whatever it may be, out with it! More
 Alarming than this prelude it cannot be.
 What would you say to me? And make it brief.

COUNTESS. Just don't be startled.

THEKLA. Name it, if you please.

COUNTESS. It's in your power to do your father a
 Great service—

THEKLA. In *my* power? What do you mean?

COUNTESS. Max Piccolomini loves you. You can
 Attach him to your father lastingly.

THEKLA. Does that take me? Is he not bound already?

COUNTESS. He was.

THEKLA. And why should he no longer be,
 Not always be?

COUNTESS. He's loyal to the Kaiser.

THEKLA. No more than duty, honor ask of him.

COUNTESS. Proofs of his love are being asked here, not
 Proofs of his honor. Duty, honor—these
 Are names with double meanings, many senses.

1280 You should interpret them for him; his love
 Is to define his honor for him.

THEKLA. How?

COUNTESS. He must renounce his Kaiser or his love.

THEKLA. He'll gladly go with Father into private
 Life. You heard from himself how ardently
 He longs to see all weapons laid aside.

COUNTESS. He's not to lay aside his weapons; he's
 To draw them for your father.

THEKLA. Gladly he
 Would give his blood, his very life for Father,
 Should Father suffer any injury.

1290

COUNTESS. You'll not hear what I'm saying. Therefore, plainly:
Your father has forsook the Kaiser's cause
And is about to join the enemy
Together with his army—

THEKLA. My poor mother!

COUNTESS. A grand example is required to turn
The army. Both the Piccolomini
Enjoy immense prestige among the troops;
They rule opinion, their deeds are decisive.

We have the father if we have the son.

You now see that much lies in your two hands.

1300

THEKLA. Oh, my poor mother! What a fatal blow
Awaits you! Sure! She'll not survive this thing.

COUNTESS. She'll make arrangements with what has to be.
I know her. What's still distant, lies far in
The future shakes her anxious heart. What's present,
Cannot be changed, she bears with resolution.

THEKLA. Oh, my prophetic soul! It's there now, that
Cold hand of horror, grasping after all
My hopes. The moment I came in this room,
A premonition said I stood beneath
Disastrous stars. But why think first of me?
Ah, Mother! Mother!

1310

COUNTESS. Do compose yourself.
Such wailing cannot help. Secure instead
A friend for Father, for you a beloved.
If you are able, all can yet end well.

THEKLA. End well? Why, we're divided for all time!
For us all's well and truly over.

COUNTESS. Oh, no!
He'll never let you go. He cannot leave you.

THEKLA. The worse for him!

1320

COUNTESS. He'll have decided in a minute, if
He loves you.

THEKLA. His decision will be swift,
Don't doubt it. His decision! Is there a
Decision to be made?

COUNTESS. Compose yourself.
 I hear your mother coming.
 THEKLA. How to meet her!
 COUNTESS. Compose yourself, please.

Scene Three

The Duchess. As above.

DUCHESS (*to the Countess*). Sister, who has been here?

I heard loud voices.

COUNTESS. There was no one here.

DUCHESS. I am so easily startled. Every noise
 Seems to announce a messenger of doom.
 If you could tell me, Sister, how things stand?
 Will he do what the Kaiser wants of him?
 Send riders to the Spanish cardinal?
 Did he send Questenberg away content?

COUNTESS. No, he did not.

DUCHESS. Then it is hopeless. Oh,
 I fear the worst: Now they'll remove him and
 It'll be again like Regensburg.

COUNTESS. That it
 Will not. Not this time. Reassure yourself.

*(Thekla, very troubled, rushes to her mother
 and embraces her, in tears.)*

DUCHESS. Such an unbending, unrestrainable man!

What have I not endured, have I not suffered
 Within the bonds of this unhappy marriage!
 For as if fastened to a burning wheel

1340 That turns unresting, rapid, long and hard,
 I've passed an anxious lifetime at his side,
 Where he has always torn me with him to
 The brink of an abyss, steep, crumbling, and
 Vertiginous. Don't cry, my child. My pain
 Should not seem a bad augury for you,

Should not embitter this state that awaits you.
There lives no second Friedland; you, my child,
Need not fear such a destiny as mine.

1350 THEKLA. Oh, let us flee, dear Mother, quickly, quickly!
There's no place here for us. For every hour
Spent here will hatch a new and monstrous horror!

DUCHESS. You'll have a calmer life. We, too, your father
And I, have known fine days together; I
Remember our first days with pleasure still.
At that time, his was still a happy striving,
Ambition was for him a warming flame,
Not yet a raging fire, consuming all.
The Kaiser trusted him, had great faith in him,
And everything he laid hand on succeeded.

1360 Since that dark day at Regensburg, however,
That flung him from the height he had attained,
Another spirit has come over him,
Unsteady, solitary, dark, suspicious.
He lost his peace of mind, no longer trusted
His luck, his powers, and turned instead to dark arts
That bring no joy to those who practice them.

COUNTESS. That's how your eyes would see these things. But are
These words with which we should receive him? He
Will be here soon. Should he find her in *that* state?

1370 DUCHESS. Come here, my child, and dry your tears. And let
Your father see a smiling face. This ribbon
Has slipped, your hair must be put up again.
Come, dry your tears. They mar your lovely eyes.
What is it I was going to say? Oh, yes:
This Piccolomini is surely a
Deserving nobleman and fully worthy.

COUNTESS. Such is he, Sister.

THEKLA (*anxiously, to the Countess*).

Please excuse me, Aunt. (*About to go.*)

COUNTESS. You're going? But your father's coming.

THEKLA.

I

Can't see him now.

1380 COUNTESS. But he will miss you, ask

For you.

DUCHESS. Why does she want to leave the room?

THEKLA. Because I cannot bear to see him now.

COUNTESS (*to the Duchess*).

She is not well.

DUCHESS (*anxious*). What's troubling the poor child?

(*Both follow the Young Lady, trying to hold her back. Wallenstein enters, speaking with Illo.*)

Scene Four

Wallenstein. Illo. As above.

WALLENSTEIN. It's quiet in the camp?

ILLO. All's quiet, Marshal.

WALLENSTEIN. Not long now and we could have word from Prague

To tell us that the capital is ours.²²⁹

At that point we can throw away our masks

And tell our troops at one time of the step

We've taken and of how it has succeeded.

In such case, the example's everything.

1390 For man was made an imitating creature,

And who goes first will always lead the flock.

The troops in Prague do not know otherwise

Than that the Pilsen troops are sworn to us,

And those in Pilsen are to swear themselves

Because the ones in Prague set the example.

You tell me Buttler has declared himself?

ILLO. He came of his own will, unasked, to offer

Himself together with his regiment.

WALLENSTEIN. Not every voice, I find, is to be believed

That we hear warning us deep in the heart.

Intending to deceive, mendacity

Takes on the voice of truth by imitation

And spreads misleading oracles among us.

To Buttler, worthy man, I owe amends

1410

For secret, still injustice done him once.²³⁰
 Strangely, a sense I cannot master—I'd
 Not want to call it fear—comes over me
 In his proximity and hampers free
 Expression of my happy fondness for him.

This honest man, of whom my instinct warns me,
 Brings me the first pledge of impending fortune.

ILLO. And his example, followed, do not doubt,
 Will win for you the best men in the army.

WALLENSTEIN. Go now, find Isolan and send him to me;
 I've recently indebted him to me,
 So he's the one with whom I'll make a start.²³¹

(*Illo goes out and the others come forward again.*)

And here's the mother with our lovely daughter!
 We'll leave affairs aside and turn to pleasure;
 I'd love to pass a cheerful hour with family.

1420

COUNTESS. We've long not been together this way, Brother.

WALLENSTEIN (*aside to the Countess*).

Can she be told? Is she prepared to hear?

COUNTESS. Not yet.

WALLENSTEIN. Come here, my girl. Sit down beside me.

There's a good fairy poised upon your lips;
 I've heard about your talent from your mother.
 She says you have a sweet, harmonious voice,
 Enchanting to the ear. A voice like that
 Is what I need to drive away the black mood
 That spreads its dusky wings about my head.

1430

DUCHESS. Where have you put your zither, Thekla? Come

And let your father hear a sample of
 Your art.

THEKLA. Oh, dearest Mother! Oh, dear God!

DUCHESS. Come, Thekla. It's to give your father pleasure.

THEKLA. Oh, Mother, I cannot!

COUNTESS. What is this, Niece?

THEKLA (*to the Countess*).

Do spare me! Sing? In this distress? This heart-
 Ache? Sing to him, who'll be the death of Mother?

DUCHESS. His noble sensibility, his manners—

WALLENSTEIN. Win him my heart, but not my daughter. No!

DUCHESS. His rank and his ancestors—

WALLENSTEIN. His ancestors!

A commoner is what he is. My new son

I'll seek among the august thrones of Europe.²³³

DUCHESS. Dear Duke, we wouldn't want to rise too high,

So that we do not have to fall too far.

WALLENSTEIN. Did I let it cost me so much to reach

1470

These heights, to rise above the heads of common

Folk, just to bring my life's grand role to close

Among a crowd of common relatives?²³⁴

Was it for this—

(*He stops and recovers his composure.*)

She is the only part of me that will

Remain on earth. I want to see a crown

Upon her head or live no longer. I

Say more. All, all I have I'll stake on making

Her great. This very moment, even as

We speak—

(*He catches himself.*)

And I, like some soft-hearted father,

1480

Should now unite in finest bourgeois fashion

Two pups who like each other, are in love?

This I should do just now, when I stand poised

To set a wreath upon my finished work?

No. To me she is a long hoarded jewel,

The highest, last-most gold piece in my treasury,

And at no lower bid will I let her be

Knocked down than for the scepter of a king.

DUCHESS. My Lord, you build and build and go on building,

Into the clouds, and never think the narrow

1490

Ground cannot bear your towering, swaying work.

WALLENSTEIN (*to the Countess*).

Have you informed her of the residence

I've chosen for her?

COUNTESS.

No. Tell her yourself.

DUCHESS. We're not returning to Carinthia?

WALLENSTEIN. No.

DUCHESS. To another of your holdings, then?

WALLENSTEIN. You'd not be safe there.

DUCHESS. Not be safe in Kaiser's

Country and under his protection?

WALLENSTEIN. That

Is something Friedland's lady cannot hope for.

DUCHESS. Dear God! You've taken it to such a point!

WALLENSTEIN. In Holland you will find protection.

DUCHESS. What?

1500 You'd send us into Lutheran territory?

WALLENSTEIN. Duke Franz von Lauenburg accompanies
You there.²³⁵

DUCHESS. Duke Franz von Lauenburg? Who's with
The Swedes, who's with the Kaiser's enemies?

WALLENSTEIN. The Kaiser's enemies are mine no longer.

DUCHESS (*looks in fright from the Duke to the Countess*).

It's true, then? Is it? You have fallen? They've
Removed you from command? Oh, God in heaven!

COUNTESS (*aside to the Duke*).

We'll leave her in that belief. You see, don't you,
That she could not endure to hear the truth.

Scene Five

Count Terzky. As above.

COUNTESS. Terzky! What is this? He's beside himself!

1510 As if he'd seen a ghost!

TERZKY (*taking Wallenstein aside, quietly*).

Did you give orders that the Croats ride?

WALLENSTEIN. I'd no idea.

TERZKY. We've been betrayed!

WALLENSTEIN. We've what?

TERZKY. They've vanished overnight. The Rangers, too.

The neighboring villages are standing empty.

WALLENSTEIN. And Isolani?
 TERZKY. You sent him away.²³⁶

WALLENSTEIN. I did?
 TERZKY. You didn't? Did not send him out?
 Did not send Deodat? They both are missing.

Scene Six

Illo. As above.

1520

ILLO. Has Terzky told you—
 TERZKY. He knows all.
 ILLO. Also that Esterhazy, Götz, Maradas,
 Colalto, Kaunitz have deserted—
 TERZKY. What the—
 WALLENSTEIN (*with a gesture*).
 Easy!

COUNTESS (*has been watching from a distance and approaches*).
 In God's name, Terzky! What is this?
 WALLENSTEIN (*about to leave*).

Nothing! Let's go.
 TERZKY (*about to follow*).
 Theresa, please! It's nothing.
 COUNTESS (*holding him back*).

Nothing? And all the blood has drained out of
 Your faces? Even *his* composure's false?
 PAGE (*entering*). An adjutant is asking for Count Terzky.

(*Exit. Terzky follows.*)

WALLENSTEIN. Let's see what *he* brings.

(*To Illo.*) This could not have happened
 Except by mutiny. Who has the watch
 Before the gates?

ILLO. It belongs to Tiefenbach.²³⁷
 WALLENSTEIN. Have Tiefenbach relieved immediately
 1530 And Terzky's Grenadiers march up. Look now!
 Have you had word of Buttler?

1550 The Walloons only keep apart in their camp,
 Admit no one, keep usual good order.

WALLENSTEIN. Does Piccolomini appear among them?

TERZKY. He's being sought, and no one's found him yet.

WALLENSTEIN. What was it that the adjutant delivered?

TERZKY. My regiment dispatched him to report

They'd sworn themselves to you anew, await
Their summons into action, wild to fight.

WALLENSTEIN. And what has brought this unrest into camp?

All news was to be held back from the army
Until we'd made ourselves assured of Prague.

1560 TERZKY. If you had only believed me! Just last evening

We begged you, we implored you not to let
That old Octavio—that rogue—out the gates.
You gave him your own horses for his flight—

WALLENSTEIN. Enough of your old song. No more of this.

TERZKY. And Isolani, too, you trusted; was

He not the first to leave you in the lurch?

WALLENSTEIN. I'd just pulled him from his embarrassment.

So what? I never counted on his thanks.

TERZKY. But that's the way they are, one like the other.

1570 WALLENSTEIN. Is it so wrong that he should go his way?

He's following the god that he has served
Lifelong at every gaming table. It
Was with my luck and not with me that he
Made his alliance and that he breaks it now.

What did he mean to me? Or I to him?

I am the ship on which he loads his hopes
And sails the open seas in high good humor;
If he sees shoals ahead, he saves his wares.
Up and away he flies, a bird that leaves the

1580 Hospitable branch on which it has just nested.
Between us here no human bond is broken.
Why, he deserves to see himself deceived
Who looked for heart in one so empty-headed;
On this blank forehead images of life

Are lightly writ in disappearing ink,
 Into this bosom's silent depths falls nothing.
 A cheerful temper stirs his lighter humors,
 But no soul warms his chilly viscera.

TERZKY. Perhaps. But I would sooner trust myself
 1590 To unmarked foreheads than to furrowed brows.

Scene Eight

Wallenstein. Terzky. Illo.

ILLO (*entering furious*).

Betrayal, mutiny!

TERZKY. Aha! Now what?

ILLO. The Tiefenbachers, when I gave the order
 To stand down—mutinous rascals that they are—

TERZKY. Well?

WALLENSTEIN. What then?

ILLO. They refused obedience. Flatly.

TERZKY. Then have them shot down on the spot! Give orders!

WALLENSTEIN. Easy now! What's the reason that they give?

ILLO. They claim no other can command them than
 Lieutenant General Piccolomini.

WALLENSTEIN. What? How is that?

ILLO. His orders at departure,
 1600 And written in the Kaiser's very hand.

TERZKY. The Kaiser's—Prince, you hear?

ILLO. And at his urging
 The colonels also slipped out yesterday.

TERZKY. You hear?

ILLO. And Montecuculi, Caraffa,
 Together with six others he prevailed
 Upon to follow him, have all gone missing.
 They say he's had those papers from the Kaiser
 Now for a long time. Only recently
 Did he and Questenberg agree to act.

(*Wallenstein sinks into a chair and covers his face.*)

TERZKY. If only, only you had believed me.²³⁸

Scene Nine

Countess. As above.

1610 COUNTESS. Anxiety like this—I can't endure it.

In God's name, tell me what is going on.

ILLO. The regiments are all deserting us.

Count Piccolomini turns out a traitor.

COUNTESS. Oh, my prophetic soul! (*Plunges from the room.*)

TERZKY. Had I been believed!

And now you see the way your stars have lied.

WALLENSTEIN (*sits up straight*).

The stars do not lie. This, by contrast, comes

Against the course of stars and destiny.

For art is honest, but a heart so false

Brings lies and fraud into a truthful Heaven.

1620 All prophecy must rest on truth alone;

When Nature staggers out beyond her borders,

All knowledge staggers, too. And if it was

False knowledge not to soil the honor of

The human figure by such a suspicion,

Never shall I regret my show of weakness!

Why, there's religion in what drives the beast,

And savages do not drink with their victim

Before they plunge a sword into its breast.

Heroic, this, Octavio! It was not

1630 Your cleverness that got the best of mine;

Your evil heart has carried off a cheap,

Disgraceful triumph over mine, that's honest;

No buckler fended off your fatal blow,

You foully struck my undefended breast.

Against such weapons I am but a child.

Scene Ten

As above. Buttler.

TERZKY. Here's Buttler! He at least is still a friend!

WALLENSTEIN (*advances toward him with open arms and embraces him warmly*).

Just come into my arms, you faithful comrade!

Not even the returning sun in spring

Restores me like your face at such a time.

1640 BUTTLER. My General—I've come—

WALLENSTEIN (*leaning on his shoulder*).

You've heard already?

No? The Old Man's betrayed me to the Kaiser.

What do you say to that? Full thirty years

We've lived out and endured together, slept

In one camp bed, drunk from one cup, and shared

A single crust of bread. I leaned on him

The way I'm leaning on *your* shoulder now.

Just when my heart beats trustingly on his,

He sees his moment, draws a blade, and, smiling,

Inserts it stealthily between my ribs!

(*He hides his face on Buttler's breast.*)

1650 BUTTLER. No more about this traitor. What will you do?

WALLENSTEIN. Well said. As if I couldn't live without him!

Am I not rich in friends, him notwithstanding?

And Fortune favors me still: Even now,

As she reveals betrayal and a traitor,

She sends to me a friend who's true and loyal.

No more of him. And don't think it's the loss

That troubles me—it's only the deception.

For both of them I valued, both I cherished;

That Max, he loved me, truly loved me. *He*

1660 Has not deceived me, nor would he. Enough,

Enough of this. A matter for quick action:

The rider whom Count Kinsky's sent from Prague

Can reach our gates at any moment now.

Whatever he may bring, he's not to fall
 Into the hands of mutineers. Quick! Send
 An escort we can trust to intercept him
 And bring him in to me by secret ways.

(*Illo is about to go.*)

BUTTLER (*holding him back*).

Field Marshal, who are you expecting?

1670 WALLENSTEIN. The mounted messenger who brings us news
 Of how we've fared in Prague.

BUTTLER. Hm!

WALLENSTEIN. Something's wrong?

BUTTLER. You don't know yet?

WALLENSTEIN. Know what?

BUTTLER. What brought in the
 Unrest in camp?

WALLENSTEIN. What's this?

BUTTLER. That messenger—

WALLENSTEIN (*expectantly*). Well?

BUTTLER. He's in already—

TERZKY and ILLO. In already?

WALLENSTEIN (*overlapping*). My messenger?

BUTTLER. For several hours.

WALLENSTEIN. And I don't know it yet?

BUTTLER. The Watch stopped him.

ILLO (*stamps his foot*). Damnation!

BUTTLER. And his letter

Was broken open, makes the rounds through camp—

WALLENSTEIN (*tense*).

You know what it contains?

BUTTLER (*withholding*). Don't question me.

TERZKY. Disaster, Illo! Everything's collapsing!

WALLENSTEIN. Just tell me. I'm prepared to hear the worst.

1680 So Prague is lost? It is? Admit it freely.

BUTTLER. Prague is lost. Every regiment, all those

Of Budweis, Tabor, Braunau, Königgrätz,

Of Brünn and Znaym:²³⁹ they have deserted you

And sworn to Austria. You, with Kinsky, Terzky,
Illo, stand henceforth under Kaiser's ban.

*(Terzky and Illo show horror and rage.
Wallenstein stands firm and composed.)*

WALLENSTEIN (*after a pause*).

It is decided. Good, then! Quickly here now
I'm healed of all the doubts that once were mine.
My breast is free again, my mind is clear now:
It must be night for Friedland's stars to shine.
With slow resolve and with uncertain insight
I drew my sword; I did so, my heart riven,
As long as I knew space to choose was given.
Necessity's upon us, doubt's now in flight,
I battle for my life, exalted, driven.

1690

(He leaves the scene. The others follow.)

Scene Eleven

COUNTESS TERZKY (*emerging from an adjoining room*).

No. I no longer can—Where are they? It's
All empty. They've left me alone, alone
In this unbearable anxiety.
Restrain myself before my sister, seem calm,
Contain the qualms of my tormented heart
Within this breast—I can no longer do it.
If this goes wrong, if he should have to go
To meet the Swede with empty hands, in flight,
Not as an honored ally, solemnly
Attended by his army—Should we have
To roam from place to place as homeless as the
Count Palatine, that shard of fallen grandeur—²⁴⁰
I will not live to see the day! And even
Should *he* be able to endure to sink so,
I'd not consent to see him sunken so.

1700

Scene Twelve

Countess. Duchess. Thekla.

THEKLA (*attempting to hold the Duchess back*).

1710

Dear Mother, do stay back. It's better so.

DUCHESS. Oh, no. There is some dreadful secret here

That's being kept from me. Why does my sister
 Avoid me? Say! Why do I see her chased
 About by fear and you so full of fright?
 What do these stolen glances mean that you
 Exchange with her in silence, secretly?

THEKLA. Oh, Mother, nothing!

DUCHESS. Sister, I would know.

COUNTESS. Why should we try to make a secret of it?

1720

Can it be hidden? Sooner, later she
 Will have to learn to hear it and endure it.
 This is no time for giving in to weakness,
 We must have courage, must be resolute,
 It must become our practice to show strength.
 It's better that her fate now be decided
 In one word: Sister, they're deceiving you.
 You believe the Duke has been removed. The Duke's
 Not been removed. He is—

THEKLA (*going to the Countess*). You want to kill her?

COUNTESS. The Duke is—

THEKLA (*embracing the Duchess*).

Dearest Mother, steel yourself.

COUNTESS. Rebelled is what the Duke is, over to

1730

The foe's where he would go; his army has
 Deserted him and all has gone awry.

(During this speech the Duchess sways and falls fainting into her daughter's arms.)

A grand Hall in the quarters of the Duke of Friedland.

Scene Thirteen

WALLENSTEIN (*in armor*).²⁴¹

Well done, Octavio. I'm now almost as
 Abandoned as I was when I left the
 Electors' Congress then at Regensburg.
 I only had myself, no more, but what
 A single man is worth you all found out.
 The beauty of the foliage you have hacked
 Away and here I stand, a leafless trunk!
 But in the heartwood lives creative power that,
 Sprouting, brought forth a world out of itself.
 Time was, when I was worth an army to you,
 I, single-handed. Yours had melted quite
 Away before the Swedish force, and Tilly,
 Your last resort, had fallen on the Lech.
 Into Bavaria this Gustav came
 Rushing, a stream in spate, and in Vienna
 The Kaiser trembled in his palace. Troops
 Were scarce: the common lot will follow fortune.
 They turned to me, their friend in need; the Kaiser
 Himself entreated one whom he'd offended.
 I was to stand up, say "Let there be light,"
 And fill the empty camps with fighting men.
 I did so. To the roll of drums my name
 Went through the world just like a god of war.
 The plow left standing in the field, the forge
 Abandoned, men all rally to the old
 Familiar standard of their cherished hopes.
 The one that I was then I am today!
 The spirit fashions for itself a body,
 And Friedland will yet fill the camps around him.
 Just lead your legions boldly out to meet me:
 They fight by custom under me and not
 Against. When head and body separate,

1740

1750

1760

We shall see to which side the spirit lay.

(Illo and Terzky enter.)

Courage, my friends. We're not defeated yet.

Five Terzky regiments remain still ours

And Buttler's proven troops. Tomorrow we'll

Be joined by sixteen thousand Swedish men.

I was no stronger nine years since, when I

Marched out to conquer Germany for Austria.

1770

Scene Fourteen

As above. Neumann, who takes Count Terzky aside to speak with him.

TERZKY (*to Neumann*).

What do they want?

WALLENSTEIN. What's this?

TERZKY. Ten Cuirassiers

From Pappenheim—the regiment has sent them.²⁴²

WALLENSTEIN (*quickly to Neumann*).

Admit them. (*Neumann goes out.*) This is promising. Just wait!

They have their doubts and can still be won over.

Scene Fifteen

Wallenstein. Terzky. Illo. Ten Cuirassiers, led by a Private, march up and, at a command, form a single file before the Duke, performing honors.

WALLENSTEIN (*takes their measure carefully, then addresses the Private*).

I know you well. You come from Bruges in Flanders,

Your name is Mercy.

PRIVATE. Heinrich Mercy it is.

WALLENSTEIN. You were once cut off on the march, surrounded

By Hessians, and fought your way out, one hundred

And eighty men straight through theirs of one thousand.

PRIVATE. It's so, my General.

1780

WALLENSTEIN. What was your reward

For this brave deed?

PRIVATE. The honor, my Field Marshal,

That I requested: service with this corps.

WALLENSTEIN (*turning to another*).

You were among those who stepped forward when

I asked for volunteers at Altenberg to

Take out the Swedish battery there against us.²⁴³

SECOND CUIRASSIER.

It's so, my Marshal.

WALLENSTEIN. I forget no one

With whom I've spoken. Present your petition.

PRIVATE (*commands*). At ease!

WALLENSTEIN (*turned to a third*).

Your name is Risbeck. You were born in Cologne.

1790

THIRD CUIRASSIER. Risbeck from Cologne.

WALLENSTEIN. You brought the Swedish colonel Dübald as

A prisoner into camp at Nuremberg.

THIRD CUIRASSIER.

Not I, my General.

WALLENSTEIN. Yes, quite right. It was

Your older brother did it. You've also

A younger brother, no? And where is he?

THIRD CUIRASSIER. He serves at Olmütz,²⁴⁴ with the Kaiser's forces.

WALLENSTEIN (*to the Private*).

Let's hear it now.

PRIVATE. There's an Imperial letter we have seen

That or—

WALLENSTEIN (*interrupting him*).

How were you chosen?

PRIVATE. Every squadron

Drew lots to choose its man.

WALLENSTEIN. Now down to business!

PRIVATE. There's an Imperial letter we have seen

That orders us to follow you no more;

It says you are a traitor and a foe.

WALLENSTEIN. And what have you decided?

1800

- PRIVATE. Our comrades
 At Braunau, Budweis, Prague, and Olmütz have
 Obeyed already; that set an example
 For regiments Toscana, Tiefenbach. But
 We do not believe that you're a foe and traitor;
 We think that it is smoke and mirrors only,
 And Spanish comedy. (*Earnestly.*) We want to hear
 From you yourself what you are planning on,
 Since you've always been honest with us and
 For that we have the greatest trust in you.
 No stranger's word should come between us two,
 The good field marshal and his loyal army.
- 1810 WALLENSTEIN. In this I recognize my Pappenheimers.
- PRIVATE. The message sent by this, your regiment, is:
 If you intend to keep the high baton
 That's yours by rights, that you have from the Kaiser,
 To be the just field captain Austria needs,
 Then we want to stand by you and defend you
 In your good rights against all comers now and
 Always. And if all other regiments turn
 Away from you, we want to be alone
 The loyal ones, the ones who give their lives.
 For it is our sworn duty as your Riders
 To give our lives before we let you fall.
 But if the Kaiser's letter speaks the truth,
 If you intend to lead us over to
 The foe in treachery, which God forbid,
 We, too, will leave you, we'll obey the letter.
- 1820 1830 WALLENSTEIN. Just listen, boys—
 PRIVATE. No need for many words.
 You just say yes or no, and we're content.
- WALLENSTEIN. Then listen. I know well you have good sense, you
 Inquire and think, unlike the common herd.
 That's why I've always picked you out, you know,
 Distinguished you in honor in the field;
 For there the marshal's rapid glance counts squadrons,
 Not single heads, and iron orders rule,

- 1840 Unsparing, blind, without respect of persons.
 But that is not how I have treated you.
 As you began to learn the ropes of your
 Rough trade, as I saw human thoughts flash from
 Your foreheads, I regarded you as free men,
 Conceded you the right to your own choices.
- PRIVATE. Yes, worthily is how you've treated us,
 My Marshal, honored us by trusting us,
 And favored us above all other units.
 And we've not followed after all the rest,
 1850 You see it! We want to remain with you.
 Just say one word; your word's enough for us.
 Say it's not treason that you're planning on,
 That you'll not take the army to the foe.
- WALLENSTEIN. But I'm the one's betrayed! They've sacrificed
 Me to my enemies. And I must fall
 If my brave troops don't save me from the Kaiser.
 I'll tell you how it is. Your heart will be
 My castle. My breast is the target, that
 And my gray head. That's Spanish gratitude!
- 1860 That's our reward for mortal combat at
 The Old Fort²⁴⁵ and on Lützen's plains! For this
 We threw our naked breasts against those halberds!
 For this we made the frozen ground, a rock
 Our camp bed—we who found no stream too swift,
 No wood impenetrable, we who followed
 That Mansfeld undiscouraged along all
 The slithering turns of his unending flight.²⁴⁶
 Our life was marching without ever resting,
 We, like the ceaseless wind and homeless, stormed
 1870 Our way through all the war-besotted world.
 And now that we have done this heavy work
 Of weapons, thankless and accursed, now that
 Our hands have rolled this boulder tirelessly up-
 Hill, this Imperial stripling comes to win
 The peace with ease, to take the olive branch
 We've earned and weave it in his golden locks—²⁴⁷

PRIVATE. He'll not do that, as long as we can help it.

No one but you, who waged this frightful war
With glory, is to bring it to an end.

1880 You led us out into the blood-soaked field

Of death; none other, *you* should lead us home
Into the flowering fields of peace, should share
With us the hard-earned fruits of our long labors—

WALLENSTEIN. How's that? You think in high old age that you'll

Enjoy the fruits of all this? Don't believe that.

You'll never see the end of this long struggle,
Of our long strife. This war will eat us all.

Vienna wants no peace. And it's because

I want and seek a peace that I must fall.

1890 What care is it of Austria's if the war

Rubs out its armies and lays waste the world?
It only wants to grow, to add new lands.

I see you're touched, see noble rage flash from
Your warriors' eyes. Oh, that my spirit could
Inspire you now as once it did in battle!

You would stand by me and protect me with

Your weapons in the exercise of my

Own proper rights, and that is noble of you!

But do not think you'll see this to completion,

So small an army! You'd have sacrificed

Yourselves for your Field Marshal uselessly.

(*Confidential.*)

Oh, no. Let us proceed with caution, seek friends;

The Swede has offered help; let us appear

To use it, until we, frightful to both sides,

Can carry Europe's fate in our two hands

And bring to the rejoicing world, from out

Of our own camp, peace crowned with olive branches.

PRIVATE. So it just seems you're working with the Swede?

And you don't want to trick the Kaiser either?

1910 Don't want to make us Swedish? For it's this

And only this we want to hear you say.

WALLENSTEIN. But what's the Swede to me? I hate him like

The depths of Hell, and with God's help I'll send

Him home across his icy Baltic Sea.

The whole is what I care about.²⁴⁸ I have

A heart. The German peoples' wretchedness

Moves me. You, ordinary men, do not

Think ordinary thoughts; I find you worthy

To hear from me a word in confidence.

1920

The torch of war has burned for fifteen years,

And nowhere is there truce. For Swede and German,

Papist and Lutheran: not a one cedes to

Another! Every hand is raised against

Another! Everyone's a party, none's

A judge! Say, where's this all to end? Who will

Release this knot that grows and grows in its

Confusion? It can only be hacked through.²⁴⁹

I feel it: I'm the man of destiny;

I hope, with your help, to accomplish it.

Scene Sixteen

Buttler. As above.

BUTTLER (*with fervor*).

1930

Oh, that's a great mistake, my Marshal.

WALLENSTEIN.

What?

BUTTLER. Can only harm us with the moderate ones.

WALLENSTEIN. But what?

BUTTLER. Declares rebellion openly!

WALLENSTEIN. What do you mean?

BUTTLER. Count Terzky's regiments

Have pulled down the Imperial Eagle and

Instead they raise your emblems.

PRIVATE (*to the Cuirassiers*). Right about!

WALLENSTEIN. A pox upon this counsel and who gave it!

(*To the Cuirassiers, who are marching out.*)

Halt, fellows, halt. It's all an error. Listen!

1940

I'll have it punished. Listen! Wait a minute!
 They won't hear me. (*To Illo.*) Go after them. Explain.
 And bring them back. Do anything it takes.

(*Illo hurries out.*)

A thing like this will ruin us. Buttler! Buttler!
 You are my evil genius. Why did you
 Announce it in their presence? Everything
 Was going well. Why, I'd half won them over.
 These hopeless hot-heads, they and their mindless
 Officiousness! My luck plays cruel games
 With me! The fervor of my friends will do
 Me in before the hatred of my foes.²⁵⁰

Scene Seventeen

As above. The Duchess plunges into the room, followed by Thekla and the Countess. Then Illo.

1950

DUCHESS. Oh, Albrecht! Oh! What have you done!²⁵¹
 WALLENSTEIN. That, too, yet!
 COUNTESS. Forgive me, Brother. There was nothing I could
 Do. They know everything.
 DUCHESS. What have you done?
 COUNTESS (*to Terzky*). Is there no hope? Has everything been lost?
 TERZKY. All's lost. The Kaiser has control of Prague,
 The regiments have all renewed their oath.
 COUNTESS. Perfidious Octavio! Max, too,
 Is gone?
 TERZKY. Where should he be, if not gone over,
 Together with his father, to the Kaiser?

(*Thekla rushes into her mother's arms,
 hiding her face against her breast.*)

DUCHESS (*embracing her*).
 Unhappy child! Yet more unhappy mother!
 WALLENSTEIN (*taking Terzky aside*).
 Quick! Have a coach prepared and waiting in

- 1960 The second courtyard to bring them away.
(Indicating the women.)
 Our Scherfenberg²⁵² goes with them; he's still loyal.
 They go to Eger with him; we shall follow.
(To Illo, who returns.)
 You haven't brought them?
 ILLO. Do you hear the uproar?
 The Pappenheimers, their whole corps's advancing.
 They're calling for their colonel—Max they want back;
 They say you're holding him by use of force
 And if you don't release him, *they'll* use force.
(General astonishment.)
- TERZKY. But what to make of this?
 WALLENSTEIN. Did I not say so?
 Oh, my prophetic soul! He is still here.
 1970 And he has not betrayed me, couldn't do it.
 Of that I've never entertained a doubt.
 COUNTESS. If he's still here, then all is well. Then I
 Know how to bind him fast once and for all.
(Embracing Thekla.)
 TERZKY. Impossible! Consider! The Old Man's
 Betrayed us all, is over to Vienna;
 He can't risk being here.
 ILLO (*to Wallenstein*). His four-in-hand,
 The one you gave him, crossed the market square
 Not long ago. I saw it as it passed.
 COUNTESS. My niece, he can't be far—
 THEKLA (*looking toward the door, cries aloud*). He's here!

Scene Eighteen

As above. Max Piccolomini.

- 1980 MAX (*crossing to the middle of the Hall*).
 Oh, yes. He's here! I can no longer stand

To circle round this house with stealthy tread,
 To lurk and lie in wait for a good moment.
 This loitering, this anxiety exceed me.
(Going to Thekla, who has thrown herself into her mother's arms.)
 Oh, look at me! Don't look away, my angel.²⁵³
 Confess it freely to them all, fear no one.
 The world can hear it: that we love each other.
 Why make a secret of it? Such a secret
 Is for the happy ones; unhappiness
 And hopelessness no longer need a veil.

1990

They work their way beneath a thousand suns.

(He notices the Countess, who is regarding Thekla triumphantly.)

Oh no, Aunt Terzky. Do not look at me
 Expectantly. For I've not come to stay.
 I've come to take my leave. It's done. It's over.
 And I must leave you, Thekla. Yes, I must.
 But I can't bear to take with me your hate.
 Grant me a moment of compassion, tell
 Me you don't hate me; tell me, Thekla. Say it.
(He takes her hand, much moved.)

Dear God! I cannot leave the spot, cannot!

Cannot release this hand and let it fall.

2000

Do tell me, Thekla, you know what I feel
 And know full well the choice cannot be mine.

*(Thekla, avoiding his gaze, indicates her father;
 he turns to the Duke, whom he notices only now.)*

You here? It wasn't you I came to see.
 I wasn't to lay eyes on you again.
 She is my sole concern now; she alone,
 Her heart, has power to absolve me. Nothing,
 nothing else can matter anymore.

WALLENSTEIN. You take me for the fool who'd let you go?²⁵⁴

Would play a scene of magnanimity?
 Your father has turned traitor on me; you
 To me are no more than this traitor's son.
 It's not for nothing you're now in my power.

2010

Don't think I'll honor that old friendship that
He has so ruthlessly destroyed. The times
Of fondness, fond forbearance are now past,
And hate, revenge, the order of the day.
I, too, can be a monster, just like him.

MAX. With me you will proceed as you are able.

You know, however, I've not come to stir
Your anger; equally, I do not fear it.

2020

You know what keeps me.

(*Taking Thekla's hand.*)

Look here! I hoped to owe all things to you,
I wished to take my highest happiness
From your paternal hand. You've ruined it,
But little do you care. Indifferently, you
Stamp out the happiness of those next you.
The god *you* serve's no god of mercy. You,
Just like the frightful ruthless element,
The blind one, that refuses all alliance,
Pursue your heart's wild longings all alone.

2030

A sorry end attends all those who trust you,
Who lean their fortune's hut on you, seduced
By your display of hospitality.
Swift, unexpected, in night's stillness, the
Perfidious fire pit seethes and glows, erupts,
And, flaming hot, a raging stream flows downward,
Destroying everything that men have planted.

WALLENSTEIN. You paint a picture of your father's heart,

Describe the weather in *his* entrails, *his* false
Breast. Hell's own artfulness deceived me, sent

2040

Me the most subtle spirit, skilled in lies,
Made him my nearest friend. Who can stand up
To Hell's dominion? None! This basilisk²⁵⁵
I sheltered and brought up in my own bosom;
I nursed it with my heart's own blood; it sucked
Itself to bursting full at my love's breasts.
I never harbored anything against him,
I left the gates of my thoughts open to him
And threw away the keys of common prudence.

Upon the starry skies and in wide space
 My eyes searched out the enemy that I
 Had shut up tightly in my heart of hearts.
 If I had been to *Ferdinand* just what
 Octavio was to *me*, I'd never have
 Declared a war on him—I'd not been able.
 He was my august master, not my friend;
 No Kaiser made *my* loyalty his mainstay.
 We were at war, were he and I, when he
 Put the field marshal's staff into my hands:
 Mistrust and cunning always are at war;
 Between good faith and belief alone is peace.
 Who violates good faith destroys unborn
 The future race sealed in its mother's womb!

MAX. I'll not attempt to justify my father;
 It's my disaster that I can't.
 Grave deeds of grave import have been committed,
 And one atrocious action follows on
 Another, braiding an unending chain.²⁵⁶
 But how came *we*, who never have offended,
 Into this round of sorrow and of crime?
 With whom have *we* two broken faith? Why must
 Our fathers' double guilt and grim misdeed
 Entwine us, choke us, like a pair of snakes?²⁵⁷
 Why should our fathers' fell and unappeased
 Hatred rip us apart, we who are lovers?
(He embraces Thekla, greatly pained.)

WALLENSTEIN (*who has been silently observing Max, now approaches*).
 Stay, Max. Stand by me. Do not leave me, Max!²⁵⁸
 Listen! When they brought you into my tent
 In winter camp at Prague,²⁵⁹ a fragile boy
 Who'd never known a German winter, your
 Hand frozen to the flagstaff that you held,
 That you refused to yield—I took you up
 And covered you with my own coat, became
 Your nurse and felt no shame at those small duties;
 I nursed you with a woman's tender care
 Till you warmed up, revived against my breast.

2090

Say, have I ever changed my mind about you?
 How many thousands have I since enriched
 With great estates, rewarded with high office!
 But *you* I loved. My heart, myself I gave you.
 The others were all strangers, *you* the child
 Of my own house. You cannot leave me, Max!
 This cannot be. I will not believe it. I can
 Not believe my Max would ever leave me.

MAX.

Dear God!

WALLENSTEIN. I've held you, carried, tended to you since

You were a child. What has your father done
 For you that I have not in equal measure?
 I've spun a web of love about you. Go
 Pull it to pieces if you're able—you're
 Still fixed to me by every bond of soul,
 By every holy natural fetter that
 Chains men, attaches them to one another.
 Go then: forsake me, serve your Kaiser, make
 Yourself rewarded with a little chain
 Of gold to show the Kaiser's favor, with
 A Golden Fleece,²⁶⁰ both given you as wages
 Because your friend, the father of your young years,
 The holiest feelings counted nothing to you.

MAX (*visibly torn*). Dear God! Have I a choice? Am I not bound?

My oath, my duty—

WALLENSTEIN. Toward whom? Who are you?²⁶¹

2110

If *I* am unjust to the Kaiser, it's *my*
 Injustice and not yours. Who do you belong to?
 Is it yourself that you take orders from?
 Do you stand free before the world, like me,
 So that *you* are the doer of your deeds?
 Upon *me* you are planted, *I'm* your kaiser;
 To belong to me, to answer to me—*this*
 Is honor for you, this is natural law.
 And if the planet where you have your being
 Falls out of orbit, throws itself, aflame,
 Into the nearest world, sets it on fire,

2120

You are not free to choose if you will follow.
 It rips you with it, forced into its train,
 Together with its ring and all its moons.²⁶²
 You are pulled guiltless into this contest;
 The world will never blame you but approve,
 Because it was your friend who counted most.

Scene Nineteen

As above. Neumann.

WALLENSTEIN. What news?

NEUMANN. The Pappenheimers have dismounted, they
 Advance on foot with the intention, sword
 In hand, to storm the house and free the Count.

WALLENSTEIN (*to Terzky*). We're

2130

To set the chains and place the cannon. I'll
 Receive that pack with chain shot, all of them.²⁶³

(*Terzky goes out.*)

That they should think that they can force me! Neumann,
 Go tell them to withdraw this minute, on
 My orders, stand in ranks and *silently*
 Await what I shall deign to do.

(*Neumann goes out. Illo has gone to the window.*)

COUNTESS.

Release him,

I beg of you, release him!

ILLO (*at the window*). What the devil!

WALLENSTEIN. Now what?

ILLO. Up in Town Hall. They're opening
 The roof. They're training cannon on the house—

MAX. What idiots!

ILLO. They're making moves to fire
 On us—

DUCHESS and COUNTESS.

Oh, God above!

2140

MAX (*to Wallenstein*). Let me go down
 To them and reason with them—
 WALLENSTEIN. Not one step!
 MAX (*indicating Thekla and the Duchess*).
 Their lives! And yours!
 WALLENSTEIN. What is it you bring, Terzky?

Scene Twenty

As above. Terzky returns.

TERZKY. Our loyal regiments declare they'll be
 Restrained no longer, beg permission to
 Attack; they hold the Prague Gate and the Mühl Gate;
 If you will give the word, they'll take them in
 The rear and corner them, put down the lot
 Of them with ease back in the narrow alleys.
 ILLO. Right on! Don't let their lust for battle cool.
 2150 We have the loyalty of Buttler's men,
 And that makes us the greater number; we
 Shall turn them, put an end to this rebellion.
 WALLENSTEIN. Are we to make a battlefield of Pilsen?
 Shall civil war be let loose in these streets?
 Shall we resign the outcome to blind rage
 That knows no measure and no master? We've
 No room for battle here, for throttling only;
 No ruler's voice can make the Furies, once
 Set loose, return. Well, fine! I've long considered
 Such as this. Let it end now, quick and bloody.
 (He turns to Max.)

Well? Would you want to try a round with me?²⁶⁴
 You're free to go. Take up position facing
 Me, lead your men out into battle. War's
 An art you understand, you've learned a bit
 From me; I'll not be shamed by such a foe,
 And you'll not know another day so fine
 To pay for what I taught you.

COUNTESS. Has it come
 To this? My cousin, can you answer for it?

Scene Twenty-One

Countess. Duchess. Max and Thekla.

COUNTESS (*to the Duchess*).

When they see him, they'll—Sister, there's still hope.

DUCHESS. Hope? I have none.

MAX (*who has observed the previous scene from a distance, visibly conflicted, now comes forward*).

It's more than I can stand.

I came here calmly, with my mind made up,

It seemed to me that I was right and blameless.

I find now that I stand here, a pariah,

2200 Someone inhuman, weighed down by ill will
And the abhorrence of those whom I value.

I see my loved ones bitterly oppressed,

Whose happiness I could restore with one word.

My heart is in rebellion, in my breast

Two voices are at war with one another.

Darkness is all, I cannot find what's right.

How wise you were, my father, when you said

I always trusted too much to my heart.²⁶⁶

I hesitate, uncertain what to do.

2210 COUNTESS. You do not know? And your heart will not tell you?

Then *I'll* tell you!

Your father has committed a betrayal

Beyond all such, a crime against the Prince's

Head; he has plunged us into wretchedness.

This tells us clearly what his son must do:

Make good the crime of this atrocious man,

Bear witness to exemplary good faith, thus

Preserve the name of Piccolomini

From the eternal curses of the House

2220 Of Wallenstein.

MAX. Oh, where is there a voice

Of truth that I can follow? We're all tossed

About by wishes, passions. I would want

To see an angel come down now from Heaven

And draw from light's pure spring with its pure hand,

Untainted, the right thing for me to do.

(*His eye falls upon Thekla.*)

Am I still looking for this angel? Do I

Expect to find another?

(*He approaches her and puts his arm around her.*)

This is where

I'll lay it, on this heart, unerring, pure,

And sacred. Of your love I'll ask it. It

2230

Can favor only those who're meant for favor,

Turns from the guilty ones who know no favor.

Can you still love me if I choose to stay?

If you say you can, I am one of yours.

COUNTESS (*with meaning*).

Consider—

MAX (*interrupts her*).

Don't consider. Speak your feelings.

COUNTESS. Think of your father—

MAX (*interrupts her*). It's not Friedland's daughter,

It's my beloved, you, whom I am asking.

It's not the capture of a crown concerns us;

Bear this in mind, with your sharp intellect.

No, our concern is your friend's peace of mind,

2240

The fortunes of a thousand heroes' hearts

Who'll take his deed as their example. Speak!

Should I forswear the Kaiser's oath? My duty?

Should I launch murderous cannon balls into

Octavio's camp? A cannon ball, once loosed,

Is no dead object. It's alive, takes on

A spirit; all the Furies seize upon it—

Avengers, these, of desecration—lure

It wantonly where it will do most damage.

THEKLA. Oh, Max—

MAX (*interrupts her*). No, don't be hasty either. I

2250

Know you. Your noble heart might find the harder

Duty to be the nearer. Not the grander,

But rather the more human choice be yours.

Think what the Prince has done for me forever,

Think how he was rewarded by my father.

The unconstrained, endearing impulses
Of hospitality and loyalty
Are sacred doctrine also to the heart;
Nature's own talons will avenge them harshly
On one who savagely offends against them.
Lay all things, all, upon the scale and let
Your heart decide, then speak.

2260

THEKLA. Oh, yours has long
Ago decided. Follow your first feeling.

COUNTESS. Ill-fated girl!

THEKLA. How could that thing
Be right that this true and right-feeling heart
Did not perceive and seize on at first impulse?
Go, now. Go and perform your duty. *I*
Shall always love you. For whatever you
Had chosen, you'd have always acted nobly
And worthy of yourself. Regret, however,
Should not disturb the peace of your bright soul.

2270

MAX. Then I must leave you, Thekla. We must part.

THEKLA. As you're true to yourself, you're true to me.

Fate separates us but our hearts are one.
The houses Friedland, Piccolomini
Remain divided by a bloody hatred,
But we do not belong to these houses. Go!
Make haste to separate your good cause from
Our doomed one. Heaven's curse lies on our heads,
We're given over to destruction. Me, too,
My father's guilt will take down to perdition.
You're not to mourn me. Destiny will soon
Decide.

2280

(*Max takes her into his arms, deeply moved. Behind the scene a wild, resounding cry is raised — "Vivat Ferdinandus!" — accompanied by military music. Max and Thekla hold one another in a long embrace.*)

Scene Twenty-Two

As above. Terzky.

COUNTESS (*going toward him*).

What was that? What's the meaning of the shouting?

TERZKY. We're lost, all lost, and everything is over.

COUNTESS. What? No retreat on seeing him?

TERZKY.

Retreat? No.

It was no use.

DUCHESS. I heard a "Vivat!" for—

TERZKY. The Kaiser.

COUNTESS. Renegades! They're renegades!

TERZKY. They wouldn't let him even start to speak.

When he began, they started up the music

2290

And drowned him out completely. Here he comes.

Scene Twenty-Three

As above. Wallenstein, accompanied by Illo and Buttler. Then Cuirassiers.

WALLENSTEIN (*in mid-stride*).

Terzky!

TERZKY. My Prince?

WALLENSTEIN. Our regiments are to stand in

Readiness to break camp today yet; we

Are moving out of Pilsen before evening.

(*Terzky goes off.*)

Buttler—

BUTTLER. My General?

WALLENSTEIN. In command at Eger is

A man you know, your countryman.²⁶⁷ Write him by

Express that he is to make ready to

Receive us in the fort sometime tomorrow.²⁶⁸

You'll follow us and bring your regiment.

BUTTLER. It shall be so, my Marshal.

WALLENSTEIN (*stepping between Max and Thekla, who are still embraced*).

Separate!

MAX.

God!

(*Cuirassiers with drawn swords enter the Hall and gather in the background. At the same time, bold passages of the Pappenheimer March sound below, as if to call to Max.*)

WALLENSTEIN (*to the Cuirassiers*).

2300

He's here; he's free. I shall no longer keep him.

(*He turns away so that Max cannot reach him or approach the Young Lady.*)

MAX. You hate me, drive me from you, all in anger.

The bond of our old love must tear apart,

Not loosen gently, and you'd make the rupture,

Already painful to me, still more painful!

You know I've not yet learned to live without you;

You send me out into a desert; all

I value, all I love remains behind.

Oh, do not turn your eyes away from me.

Show me your cherished, honored face once more.

2310

Do not reject me—

(*He tries to take his hand; Wallenstein withdraws it. He turns to the Countess.*)

There's no other eye

That shows compassion for me? You, Aunt Terzky—

(*She turns away; he appeals to the Duchess.*)

Most honored Mother—

DUCHESS. Go where duty calls

You, Count. Perhaps one day you will become

For us a true friend, our good angel at

The Kaiser's throne.

MAX. You give me hope, would not

Abandon me to desperation. But

There's no deceiving me with a mirage;

My sorrow's certain; I am grateful to

The heavens for a means to end it all.

(*The military music begins again. The Hall is filling more and more with armed men. He notices Buttler.*)

2320

You, too, here, Colonel Buttler? You'll not follow

Me? Fine! Devote yourself to your new master
 More truly than the old one. Promise me,
 Give me your hand, that you'll protect his life.

(Buttler refuses his hand.)

He's under Kaiser's ban. His princely head's
 Exposed to any cut-throat who'd collect
 The prize that's offered for the bloody deed.
 He'd need a friend's devoted care, love's sharp eye.
 The men I see about him as I leave—

(He casts doubtful glances on Illo and Buttler.)

ILLO. All rogues you'll find in Gallas' and your father's
 2330 Camp. Here but one remains. So, go! Relieve
 Us of the sight of him. Take yourself off!

(Max makes one more attempt to reach Thekla. Wallenstein blocks him. He hesitates, in pain. Meanwhile, the Hall is filling and the horns sound below at shorter intervals and more urgent.)

MAX. Oh, blow and blow! Were they but Swedish horns and
 Led us from here straight to the field of death,
 And all the swords I see unsheathed before me
 Had been plunged unopposed in my bare breast!
 What do you want? Have you come here to tear
 Me from this place? Don't drive me to despair!
 Don't do it! You could yet regret it.

(The Hall is full of armed men.)

2340 More yet! One weight is added to another,
 And their accumulating mass pulls me down.
 What foolishness, if you would only see it,
 To choose a man despairing for this role.
 You rip me from my happiness. So be it!
 To all the Furies I commit your soul.
 You've chosen this man at a price too high;
 All who would go with me prepare to die!

(As he turns toward the backdrop, movement ripples through the Cuirassiers; they surround him and escort him away in wild tumult. Wallenstein stands motionless; Thekla falls into her mother's arms.)²⁶⁹

Curtain.



Bird's Eye View of Eger. Engraving by Matthäus Merian, in Martin Zeiler, *Topographia Bohemiae, Moraviae et Silesiae* (Frankfurt, 1650), [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eger_\(Merian\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eger_(Merian).jpg). Image in the public domain.

Act Four

In the House of the Mayor at Eger

Scene One

BUTTLER (*just arriving*).²⁷⁰

2350

He has come in. His fate has led him here.
The sliding gate has fallen shut behind him.
Just as the drawbridge that he crossed came down
And rose again, just so is rescue now cut
Off. Thus far, Friedland, and no further! says
The fateful goddess. Your steep meteor rose
From the Bohemian earth and traced its bright path
Across the heavens; on the border of
Bohemia it must now descend again.
You turned your back on the old banners, yet,
Deceived, struck blind, you trust in your old luck!
You armed your evil hand to take the war
Into the Kaiser's country, to throw over
The Lares who protect the sacred hearth.
Be on your guard! You're driven by a low
Wish for revenge—revenge may yet undo you.

2360

Scene Two

Buttler and Gordon.

GORDON. It's you? Oh, how I've longed to speak with you!

The Duke a traitor? God have mercy on us!
In flight? A ban upon his princely head!
I beg you, General, tell me in detail
How all these things in Pilsen came about.²⁷¹

BUTTLER. Did you receive the letter that I sent
Ahead by special messenger from Pilsen?

2370

GORDON. And faithfully discharged what you had ordered:

Opened the fortress to him absolutely,
For an Imperial letter orders me
To follow blindly your command, no other.
But, pardon! When I saw the Prince himself
Just now, I had to doubt what I had heard.
In truth! It was not as an outlaw that
Duke Friedland made his entrance into Eger.
His forehead shone, as ever, bright with a
Commander's majesty, demanding fealty;
Calmly, as in days of good order, he

2380

Relieved me of responsibility.
Misfortune creates garrulousness, so does
Guilt; fallen greatness seeks to please and flatter,
And bends to seek the level of subalterns.
The Prince, however, weighed his words, was sparing
With his approval, as a master praises
A servant who's done no more than his duty.

BUTTLER. It happened just exactly as I wrote you:

2390

The Prince has sold the army to the foe,
Intends to open Prague and Eger to him.
On hearing news of this, the regiments
Have all abandoned him except for five
That belong to Terzky and have followed him here.
A ban is spoken over him, and all
True servants of the Crown are summoned to
Deliver him, be he alive or dead.

GORDON. A traitor to the Kaiser—such a man!

2400

So highly gifted! What is human greatness!
I often said that this cannot end well.
His grandeur and his power became a trap
For him, and this dark sway of despotism.
For man, like weeds, expands, grows wild; one can
Not leave him to his own restraint. The law
Alone and unambiguous restrains him,
And ingrained custom's moderating force.
In this man's hands, however, power to
Make war was novel, not to say unnatural.

It made of him the Kaiser's peer and equal,
And his proud spirit lost the art of deference.²⁷²
2410 Oh, what a pity! Such a man! For none
Will likely stand secure where he has fallen.

BUTTLER. Save your complaint till he has need of pity;
He at the moment still is to be feared.
The Swedes are on the march, are nearing Eger;
They'll join their armies soon unless we stop them.
This cannot be! The Prince is not to go
Again from here, for I have set my honor,
My life, no less, on making him a prisoner
Within these walls, and I count on your help.²⁷³

2420 GORDON. If only I had never seen the day!
His very hand awarded me this post,
Entrusted to *my* care this stronghold that
You call upon me now to make his prison.
Subalterns, we have no will of our own;
Free men and powerful alone are privileged
To follow after their best human instincts.
Mere executioners of cruel laws
Is what we are. Obedience is the virtue
That all subalterns are forced to acquire.

2430 BUTTLER. Do not fret at the close confines of your
Capacity. Much freedom means much error.
The narrow path of duty is secure.

GORDON. And everyone's forsaken him, you say?
The happiness of thousands he established;
His disposition was that of a king,
His hand was ever open, making gifts,
(*with a sidelong glance at Buttler*)
He chose and raised so many from the dust
To highest honors and to great prestige,
And purchased by his efforts not one single
Friend who stood by him in his hour of need!

2440 BUTTLER. He has one here whom he did not suspect.
GORDON. No favor of his was bestowed on me;
I doubt that he, in all his greatness, ever
Remembered any friend from his first youth.

My service kept me far from him, and he
Lost me from sight within the walls of Eger,
Where I, beyond the reach of grace and favor,
Remote, forgotten, could keep my heart free.
When he appointed me to keep this castle,
His duty still remained his first concern;
It's no betrayal of his trust if I am
Faithful to what my good faith took in trust.

2450 BUTTLER. Would you then execute the ban that's laid
On him? Give me your help arresting him?
GORDON (*reluctantly, after pausing to reflect*).

If it has come to—If it's as you say:
If he's betrayed the Kaiser, who's his master,
And sold the army, wants to open the
Land's strongholds to the foe, why then there is
No saving him.²⁷⁴ But it's a hard thing that,
Among all others, it is *my* lot to
Be chosen, used, to bring about his fall.
For we were pages at the court of Burgau
Together; I, however, was the elder.²⁷⁵

BUTTLER. I know of this.

GORDON. It's thirty years now.²⁷⁶ The bold courage of
That twenty-year-old youth already strove.
He showed a seriousness beyond his years;
He walked among us, silent, like a man, his
Attention always turned on greater things,
His own best company; our pleasures, those
Of boys and childish, held no charm for him.
But sometimes he was seized quite strangely. Thoughts
In streams, thoughts luminous and sensible,
Would then escape from his uncanny heart
And leave us boys astounded, asking ourselves
If this were madness or a god had spoken.

BUTTLER. And there he fell two stories, having
Dozed off in the embrasure of a window.
He then picked himself up again, unhurt,
But since then, they say, he's known bouts of madness.

2490

GORDON. It's true that he became reflective, he
 Turned Catholic. His miraculous salvation
 Converted him. And henceforth he thought himself
 A favored one, one who'd been liberated.
 As bold as one who's safe from ever tumbling,
 He ran along the slack rope that is life.
 Fate then led us away from one another,
 Far, far away. He took the path of greatness;
 I watched him scale the heights there, moving quickly,
 Become first count, then prince, then duke, dictator,²⁷⁷
 And now the world's too small for him; he would
 Put out his hand and capture a king's crown,
 And plunges into bottomless perdition.

BUTTLER. Leave off. He's coming.

Scene Three

*Wallenstein in conversation with the Mayor of Eger.*²⁷⁸ *As above.*

2500

WALLENSTEIN. You were once a free city? I see that
 You carry a half-eagle in your blazon.
 Why only half?

MAYOR. Once we were free Imperial,²⁷⁹
 But for two hundred years we have been pawned
 To the Bohemian crown. Thus the half-eagle.
 The lower part is cancelled till it please
 The Empire to redeem us.

WALLENSTEIN. You'd deserve
 Your freedom. Ever prudent! Lend no ear
 To restive elements. How steeply are you
 Taxed?

MAYOR (*shrugs*). So that we can hardly meet the burden.
 The garrison is kept at our expense.

WALLENSTEIN. You ought to have relief. But tell me now,
 Are there still Protestants here in the city?

(*The Mayor starts.*)

2510

Oh, yes. I know. There're many still concealed
 Within these walls. Confess it freely: you, too—
 Not so?

(*He fixes him. The Mayor takes fright.*)

But have no fear. I, too, detest
 The Jesuits. If I had my way, they'd long be
 Beyond our borders. Missal, Bible, it's
 All one to me.²⁸⁰ And I have proved it to
 The world: I had a church for Lutherans built
 At Glogau. Tell me, Mayor, what's your name?
 MAYOR. Pachhälbel, my illustrious Prince.
 WALLENSTEIN. Listen, but don't tell anyone what I
 Tell you in confidence.

(*Laying his hand on his shoulder, with a certain solemnity.*)

The day's at hand.

2520

The high shall fall, the lowly be raised up. Guard
 This secret! Two-fold Spanish rule²⁸¹ approaches
 Its end. New order introduces itself.
 You saw the three moons recently?

MAYOR. With horror.

WALLENSTEIN. Two took the form of bloody daggers, vanished.

One only, in the middle, stayed and shone.

MAYOR. We thought it meant the Turks.²⁸²

WALLENSTEIN. The Turks! Oh, no.

Two empires will go down in bloody combat,
 To east and west of us, I tell you. And the
 Lutheran confession only will survive.

(*He notices the two others.*)

2530

We all heard heavy firing on our left²⁸³

As we approached at evening. Did you hear?

GORDON. We heard it clearly in the fort, my General.

The south wind carried the report to us.

BUTTLER. It seemed to come from Neustadt or from Weiden.²⁸⁴

WALLENSTEIN. That is the side from which the Swedes are coming.

How strong exactly is the garrison?

GORDON. One hundred eighty able-bodied men

And invalids.

WALLENSTEIN. In Jochimsthal how many?²⁸⁵

GORDON. Two hundred Arquebusiers have been sent there
To reinforce the post against the Swedes.

2540 WALLENSTEIN. Admirable foresight. Breastworks, too, are being
Erected; I observed them as we entered.

GORDON. Because the Rhinegrave²⁸⁶ presses us so hard
I had two bulwarks hastily put up.

WALLENSTEIN. You are precise in service to your Kaiser;

I am content with you, Lieutenant Colonel.

(To Buttler.)

The post in

With all who stand against the enemy.

(To Gordon.)

(See Section 1)

I put my wife, my child, my sister in
Your faithful hands, Commander. For

Your faithful hands, Commander. For I'll not
Be afraid when I meet your judgment.

Remain here long. I've stopped for letters only.
I have had from you a fine reply.

I leave the fort tomorrow at first light
And I shall take the regiments all with me.

Scene Four

18.0000. County Teritory.

WALLENSTEIN

WALLENSTEIN. What then?

TERZKY. An encounter

Took place near Neustadt and the Swedes prevailed.

WALLENSTEIN.

What's this you're saying? Where'd you hear these things?

TERZKY. A peasant brought the news from Tirschenreuth,²⁸⁷

Said it began at end of day, near dark;

Imperial Riders coming out of Tachau²⁸⁸

Attacked the Swedish camp, broke in, set off an

Exchange of fire that lasted two full hours

2560 Exchange of fire that lasted two full hours,
Cost them one thousand men, no less, among
Whom was their colonel. More he couldn't say

WALLENSTEIN. Riders in Neustadt? How did they get there?

That Altringer—he'd have to have had wings,
 Stood yesterday good fourteen miles away;
 Gallas is mustering still at Frauenberg
 And isn't nearly ready yet. Would Suys
 Have ventured so far forward? This does not
 Make sense.

(Illo appears.)

TERZKY. We'll find out soon enough. Here's Illo.

2570 He's in a rush and looking very pleased.

Scene Five

Illo. As above.

ILLO (*to Wallenstein*).

A mounted courier—he's asking for you.

TERZKY. Do you have confirmation of that victory?

WALLENSTEIN. Who sent him? What's his message?

ILLO. From the Rhinegrave.

I'll let you know right now what news he brings.

The Swedes are standing just five miles from here.

Near Neustadt, Piccolomini threw himself

On them with his whole cavalry; there followed

An indescribable two-sided slaughter,

But in the end the greater number won:

The Pappenheimers, every one of them,

And Max, who led them, perished on the spot.

2580 WALLENSTEIN. Where is this courier? I'll speak with him.

(He is about to leave. The Lady Companion rushes into the room, followed by Servants who run through the Hall.)

NEUBRUNN. Help! Help!

ILLO and TERZKY. What is it?

NEUBRUNN. My Young Lady—

WALLENSTEIN and TERZKY.
NEUBRUNN. She wants to die.

(She hurries out. Wallenstein and Terzky, with Illo, rush after her.)

Scene Six

Buttler and Gordon.

GORDON (*astonished*).

What is the meaning of this scene? Explain.

BUTTLER. She's lost the man she loved—the fallen colonel.

GORDON. Unhappy lady!

BUTTLER. You've heard the news this Illo brought us, how

The Swedes, who won at Neustadt, are approaching

GORDON. Indeed I have.

BUTTLER. They are twelve regiments.

Five more are here—all to defend the Duke²⁸⁹

My single regiment is all *we* have.

A mere two hundred in the garrison—

GORDON Quite right

BUTTLER With such small numbers we've no chance of holding

A prisoner of the state

GORDON That I can see.

BUTTLER With their superior numbers, our small clutch

Of men's soon overcome, our prisoner freed

GORDON. That's to be feared.

BLUTTLER (*after a pause*)

I warrant for the outcome here. It's with

My head I answer for delivering his

I'm bound to keep my word, wherever that may

I lead.²⁹⁰ If we cannot hold him here alive,

To hold him dead's a certainty.

CORDON. Have I heard you correctly? You—you could

BLITTER. He's not to live.

CORDON That you could do?

BUTTLER. Or you or I. He's seen his last day dawn.

GORDON. You'd murder him?

BUTTLER. Just such is my resolve.

GORDON. But he's entrusted to you!

BUTTLER. His hard fate!

2610 GORDON. His person's sacred!

BUTTLER. That's what he once was!

GORDON. No crime wipes out what he once was! And without judgment?

BUTTLER. Execution stands for judgment.

GORDON. That would be murder; that's no justice. Justice must hear the guiltiest parties, even them.

BUTTLER. His guilt is clear: the Kaiser has passed judgment. We only execute what he decrees.

GORDON. One does not rush a capital crime to judgment; A word's retracted, execution never.²⁹¹

BUTTLER. A quick dispatch will always please a king.

2620 GORDON. No decent man dispatches hangman's service.

BUTTLER. No man of courage blanches at bold action.

GORDON. Courage would risk its life but not its conscience.

BUTTLER. Is he to go scot-free? Shall he go free to Rekindle this war's quenchless flame? Shall he?

GORDON. Then take him prisoner; there's no need to kill him; Do not anticipate the mercy angel.

BUTTLER. Had the Imperial forces not been beaten,²⁹²

I gladly would have held him here alive.

GORDON. Oh, that I ever opened these gates to him!

2630 BUTTLER. It's not this place, it's his fate takes his life.

GORDON. I would have fallen chivalrously atop These walls, defending this fort for the Kaiser.

BUTTLER. But at a cost of legions of brave men—

GORDON.—In line of duty: that which does men honor; Murder, however, is abhorred by Nature.

BUTTLER (*offering a document*).

Here is the manifest that orders us

To take him. Notice it's addressed to you as

To me. Do you assume the consequences,

2640 If by our fault he flees and joins the foe?
 GORDON. I, who am powerless? Oh, God above!
 BUTTLER. Take all the consequences on yourself,
 Assume the cost. I leave it up to you.
 GORDON. God help me!
 BUTTLER. If you know another way
 To do the Kaiser's will, produce it now:
 I'd rather cause his fall than take his life.
 GORDON. Oh, God! I see what has to be as clear
 As you do, but my heart speaks differently.
 BUTTLER. This Terzky, Illo, too, shall not survive him.
 GORDON. Oh, those two I do not regret. What drove
 2650 Them was their wicked hearts and not the stars.
 They sowed the seed of evil passions in
 His heart and nursed the sorrow-bearing fruit
 With busy interest. May they know in full
 The wicked wages of their wicked ways!
 BUTTLER. And they're to be dispatched before the Duke.
 It's all agreed upon. We'd thought that we'd
 Take them alive this evening at a banquet
 And hold them here. But *this* is faster. I go
 Now to dispense the necessary orders.

Scene Seven

As above. Illo and Terzky.

2660 TERZKY. Things will be different now. Tomorrow early
 Twelve thousand valiant Swedes come marching in.
 Then to Vienna! Merrily, old fellow!
 Don't make so sour a face at such good news!
 ILLO. It's our turn now. Now we lay down the law.
 We'll take revenge on all the sorry rascals
 Who have deserted us. *One's* paid the price
 Before the rest: that Piccolomini.
 His fate befall them all! Oh, what a blow
 For the Old Man. He's spent his whole long life

- 2670 Contriving princely honors to raise his old
 Count's house, and now he's lost his only son!
BUTTLER. Still, it's a shame about that boy. He had a
 Hero's heart. One saw how it grieved the Duke.²⁹³
ILLO. Listen, old friend! That's what I never liked
 About the Duke; it always angered me:
 He loved the Latins more. And to this day,
 Upon my soul, he'd see us ten times dead,
 If he could bring his friend to life again.
- TERZKY. Enough! No more! The dead should rest in peace.
- 2680 Today we see who can outdrink the others.
 Your regiment plays host to all of us.
 We'll make the lustiest Shrovetide of it, turn
 Night into day, and then receive the Swedes,
 Their avant-garde, our glasses brimming over.
- ILLO. Today and all night long let us make merry,
 For hot days lie ahead. This sword won't rest
 Till it has drunk its fill of Austria's blood.²⁹⁴
- GORDON. What way of talking is this, Field Marshal!
 Why would you rage against your Kaiser so—
- 2690 BUTTLER. Don't hope too much from this first victory.
 Be mindful how soon Fortune's wheel is turned.
 The Kaiser's not defeated yet—far from it.
- ILLO. The Kaiser has his soldiers—no field captain,
 For this King Ferdinand of Hungary
 Does not know war. And Gallas? Has no luck;
 He is, has always been, a hopeless bungler.
 That snake Octavio can strike you in
 The heel, but not match Friedland in the field.
- TERZKY. It can't go wrong, just believe me. Luck will not
2700 Desert the Duke; it's widely known that Austria
 Can triumph only under Wallenstein.
- ILLO. The Prince will be the first to gather a
 Great army. All the world is streaming in,
 Drawn by the ancient glory of his banners.
 I see the old days coming back;
 He'll be again the great man that he was,
 And all those who deserted him will see,

Dismayed, how they've poked themselves in the eye.
 For he'll enrich his friends with vast estates,
 2710 Give kaiser's wages for all loyal service,
 And we are first in line to taste his bounty.
(To Gordon.)

And you he will remember, too, will lift
 You out of this backwater, let your good faith
 Display its glory in a higher posting.

GORDON. I am content, have no desire to climb
 Still higher; great heights always mean great depths.

ILLO. You'll have no further say here soon enough,

The Swedes will occupy the fort tomorrow.

Come, Terzky, it will soon be time for dinner.

2720 How's this idea? We'll have the whole town lighted
 In honor of the Swedish army. One who
 Refuses is a Spaniard and a traitor.

TERZKY. Stop that! You know the Duke dislikes such talk.

ILLO. Oh, nonsense! We're the masters here. No one
 Sides with the Kaiser where we are in charge.

Gordon, good night. The last time we commend
 The place to your protection; send patrols
 Out, and for safety you can change the password.
 The stroke of ten, you bring the Duke the keys
 Yourself. Your time as turnkey's run its course;
 The Swedes will occupy the fort tomorrow.

TERZKY (*leaving, to Buttler*).

You're coming to the castle?²⁹⁵

BUTTLER. In good time.

(Exeunt Terzky, Illo.)

Scene Eight

Buttler and Gordon.

GORDON (*gazing after them*).

What lost souls! With no inkling whatsoever
 They rush ahead into the nets that death

Has spread them, blinded by their certain triumph.
 No one regrets them. Illo there, arch-villain,
 Impudent knave, who'd drink his Kaiser's blood!

BUTTLER. Do as he orders you: send out patrols
 And make the fort secure; once they're up there,
 2740 I'll lock up every entry of that castle,
 So that the town knows nothing of the deed.

GORDON (*anxious*).

No need to rush so. Tell me first—

BUTTLER. You heard:
 Tomorrow belongs to Sweden. We've but tonight.
 They're fast and we'll be faster yet. Farewell!

GORDON. Oh, God! Your glances augur nothing good.
 I beg you, promise me—

BUTTLER. The sun is down.
 A fateful evening rises. Their conceit
 Meanwhile makes them cocksure. And yet, the while,
 Their evil star delivers them defenseless
 2750 Into our hands. Amid their drunken reveling
 Our sharpened steel will slice their hearts in two.
 The Prince was always a great reckoner;
 Nothing there was he could not calculate.

He could set men, he could manipulate
 Them like chess pieces, make them serve his ends.
 He had no scruple. He toyed with the honor,
 Good name, and dignity of fellow men,
 And calculated on and on until

His reckoning went wrong. *His* life slipped into
 His calculation, and like Archimedes
 2760 He dies among his calculated circles.²⁹⁶

GORDON. This is no time to contemplate his faults!
 Think rather of his greatness, of his kindness,
 Of all about him that was lovable,
 Of all the noble deeds he did in life.
 Let them, like angels pleading mercy, block
 The sword raised fatefully above his head.

- BUTTLER. It is too late. I'll feel no pity at
 This point. I must think only bloody thoughts.
(Seizing Gordon's hand.)
- 2770 Just hear me, Gordon! It's not hate that drives me—
 I've no love for the Duke, not without reason—
 But it's not hate that makes of me a murderer.
 His evil fate—bad luck, ill fortune—drives me,
 The hostile constellation of all things.
 Man thinks he acts as a free agent. Wrong!
 He is a plaything of blind forces that spin
 Free choice soon into grim necessity.
 What would it help him if I heard my heart
 Speak for him—I must kill him nonetheless.
- 2780 GORDON. If your heart warns you, follow its direction.
 The heart speaks in God's voice. The works of men
 Are calculations, are mere cleverness.
 What do you hope to gain from bloody deeds?
 No good will ever come of spilling blood!
 Is this your stairway to the stars, to greatness?
 Don't believe it. Murder from time to time brings joy
 To kings; the murderer, though, can never do so.
- BUTTLER. You do not know, don't ask. Why did the Swedes
 Have to prevail,²⁹⁷ why do they come so quickly!
 2790 I'd like to leave him to the Kaiser's mercy.
 Nor do I want his blood; I'd let him live.
 But I must keep my sacred word of honor²⁹⁸
 And he must die, or else—hear me and believe—
 I am dishonored if the Prince escapes.
- GORDON. To save the life of such a man—
- BUTTLER (*quickly*). What?
- GORDON.—Is worth some sacrifice. Be noble-minded!
 One's honored by one's heart, not one's opinions.
- BUTTLER (*cold and proud*).
 The Prince is a great lord, and I am but
 A little man—that's what you're saying. What
 2800 Does it concern the world at large, you think,

If base-born men do themselves honor or not,
So long as princes are preserved in standing.
Each man awards himself his worth. How I
Evaluate myself is my affair.

No one on earth is placed so high that I
Despise myself when I am placed beside him.
It is one's *will* that makes one great or small;
Because I'm true to mine, he has to die.

GORDON. I'd as soon try to move a rocky crag!

2810 Alas! No man begot you humanly.

I cannot stop you. One can only hope

Some god will save him from your fearsome hand.

(*Exeunt.*)

Scene Nine

A Room in the quarters of the Duchess.

Thekla seated in a chair, pale, her eyes closed. The Duchess and the Lady Companion attend her. Wallenstein and the Countess in conversation.

WALLENSTEIN. How came she to find out so soon?

COUNTESS. She seems

To have suspected some misfortune. Word

About a battle frightened her in which an

Imperial colonel was said to have fallen.

I saw it happening: She flew to meet

The Swedish courier, questioned him

The dreadful secret from him right away.

We missed her far too late; we hurried aft

And found her lying, fainted, in his arms.

ALLENSTEIN. Completely unprepared to m

(Turned to the Duchess.)

Poor child! How is she

JCHESS. She's opening her eyes.

COUNTESS.

THEKLA (*looking about*). Where am I?

WALLENSTEIN (*goes to her and raises her in his arms*). Wake up, my child. Be strong and brave, my girl.
That is your mother; Father's arms embrace you.

THEKLA (*sitting up straight*). Where is he? Has he gone away?

DUCHESS. But who, my daughter?

THEKLA. The one who brought the news—

2830 DUCHESS. Don't think of him, my child. Try, turn your thoughts
Aside. Such an unhappy recollection!

WALLENSTEIN. Oh, let her sorrow speak! Let her complain!
Weep with her, mix your tears with hers. She's had
To bear great pain. But she can stand it, for
My Thekla has her father's matchless heart.

THEKLA. Don't think I'm sick. I'm strong enough to stand.
Why's Mother weeping? Have I frightened her?
It's passed now and my head is clear again.
(*She has stood up; her gaze sweeps the room.*)
Where is he? Don't conceal him from me. I've
Regained my strength; I now want to hear him.

2840 DUCHESS. No, Thekla. Such a bearer of misfortune
Should never come before your eyes again.

THEKLA. Father—

WALLENSTEIN. My child!

THEKLA. I am not weak at all,
And soon I shall be even stronger still.
Grant me a favor.

WALLENSTEIN. What you like. Tell me.

THEKLA. Summon this stranger. Let me speak with him
Alone, put questions to him.

DUCHESS. No, indeed!

COUNTESS. No! That's not prudent! Do not grant her wish!

WALLENSTEIN. Why would you want to speak with him, my child?

2850 THEKLA. I'm more composed if I know everything.
I'll not be second-guessed. My mother wants
To spare me. Sparing is not what I want.

I've heard the worst of it already, worse
 There cannot be.

COUNTESS and DUCHESS (*to Wallenstein*).

Oh, do not do it. No!

THEKLA. My horror took me by surprise. My heart
 Betrayed me in the presence of a stranger,
 Made him a witness of my weakness; why,
 I sank into his arms. That shames me. I
 Would reestablish myself in his esteem,
 And, absolutely, I must speak with him, so
 That for my weakness he not think me less.

2860

WALLENSTEIN. I find that she is right and am inclined
 To grant this wish of hers. Let him be called.

(*The Lady Companion goes out.*)

DUCHESS. I, as your mother, must be present here.

THEKLA. I'd rather speak with him alone, for that
 Enables me to summon more composure.

WALLENSTEIN (*to the Duchess*).

Just let it be. Let her resolve it with him
 Alone. There's pain that one must heal oneself.
 A valiant heart will call on its own courage.
 She'll have to find the strength to bear this blow
 In her own breast, not in that of another.
 My strong girl! I'll not see her treated like a
 Woman, but rather like a heroine.

(*He is about to go.*)

COUNTESS (*holding him back*).

Where are you going? I heard Terzky say
 You plan to march out early and intend
 To leave us here.

WALLENSTEIN. Yes, you will have to stay.

I've put brave men in charge of your protection.

COUNTESS. Oh, take us with you, Brother. Do not leave

Us here in gloomy solitude, awaiting
 The outcome of your action, sick with worry.
 Present misfortune is borne easily;
 Misgiving grows, however, horribly

2880

2890

When one awaits the news at a great distance.
 WALLENSTEIN. Who said "misfortune"? Choose your words more aptly.
 I entertain quite different hopes.
 COUNTESS. Then take us with you. Do not leave us here
 In these surroundings, this place of bad omen.
 My heart weighs heavily within these walls,
 And their damp fetid breath reeks of the crypt.
 I cannot tell you how this place disgusts me.
 Take us away! Come, Sister! You beg, too.
 Ask him to take us with him. Help me, Niece.
 WALLENSTEIN. I'll change the auguries of these damp stones,
 Make this the treasure house of all I love.
 NEUBRUNN (*returning*).
 The Swedish gentleman!
 WALLENSTEIN. We'll leave her with him. (*Exit.*)
 DUCHESS (*to Thekla*).
 How you grow pale, my child. You cannot speak
 With him. Not possibly. Attend your mother.
 THEKLA. Then we'll let Neubrunn stay close by me.

(*Exeunt Duchess and Countess.*)

Scene Ten

Thekla. The Swedish Captain. The Lady Companion.

2900

CAPTAIN (*approaching respectfully*).
 My Lady—I ask that you pardon me.
 My hasty word, want of reflection—
 THEKLA (*with noble self-possession*).
 You saw me in my pain, in my bereavement.²⁹⁹
 Unhappy circumstance changed you too soon from
 A stranger, made of you my intimate.
 CAPTAIN. I fear that you must hate the sight of me
 For bringing you such sorrowful report.
 THEKLA. The fault is mine. I forced it from you—I did—
 While you were but the voice of destiny.
 My horror interrupted the account

You had begun. I bid you now continue.

CAPTAIN (*hesitating*).

2910 My Lady—Princess—it will cause you pain.

THEKLA. I am prepared for that. I will it so.

Tell. How did the encounter open? Tell all.

CAPTAIN. Expecting no attack, we stood encamped

And lightly fortified near Neustadt, when

Toward evening we observed a cloud of dust

Rise from the wood. Our Scouts, escaping back

To camp at speed, announced: The enemy!

We had just time enough to throw ourselves

On horseback, there the Pappenheimers came

In full career, broke through our barricade,

And leapt the trench we'd drawn around the camp.

But they, urged on by courage, had outrun

The rest; their Infantry was far behind;

The mounted Pappenheimers, they alone,

Had boldly followed their bold captain—

(*He stops at a gesture from Thekla, then continues at her signal.*)

Our Cavalry opposed them on the front

And flanks and pushed them back against the trench,

Where all our Infantry, assembled quickly,

Received them with a grid of pikes extended.

2930 Caught, they could not advance, could not retreat,

Found themselves wedged between our closing lines.

The Rhinegrave then called to their captain, bade him

Yield honorably, acknowledging fair combat,

But Colonel Piccolomini—

(*Thekla, feeling faint, reaches for a chair.*)

we knew him

By his aigrette and by his streaming hair,

Come loose in his full gallop toward attack—

Points to the trench, leaps his mount back across;

His regiment then plunges after. But—

Too late—His charger, piked, rears up wildly

2940

And throws the rider, over whom the full force
Of all his Horse then thunders, unrestrained.

(*Thekla, who has followed the account with growing anxiety, is seized by trembling and about to fall. The Lady Companion hurries to receive her in her arms.*)

NEUBRUNN. My dearest Lady—

CAPTAIN (*touched*). I should take my leave.

THEKLA. It's passed now. You may finish. Please continue.

CAPTAIN. His men were seized with rage to see him fall;

Giving no thought to their own safety, they
Fight on like tigers, and their adamant
Resistance stirs our own to equal fury;
Their combat rages on until the last
Man's fallen, the whole corps has been destroyed.

THEKLA (*her voice trembling*).

2950

And where—Where is—You've not yet told me all.

CAPTAIN (*after a pause*).

We buried him this morning. Twelve young men
Of noblest houses carried him; the whole
Army accompanied his wreathed bier,
On which the Rhinegrave had laid his own sword.
We mourned him truly: many of our number
Had known his gentle manners, his great heart,
And all were touched to see his fate. The Rhine-
Grave gladly would have saved him, had he not
Prevented it. They say he wished to die.

NEUBRUNN (*touched, to Thekla, who has covered her face*).

2960

My dearest Lady! Look at me, my Lady!

Oh, why did you insist on hearing this?

THEKLA. Where is his grave?

CAPTAIN. He's laid in earth near Neustadt—

It's in the chapel of a cloister—until

Word of his father's wishes reaches us.

THEKLA. The cloister's called—?

CAPTAIN. Saint Katharine's Court.

THEKLA. And it's how far from here?

CAPTAIN. It's seven miles.³⁰⁰

THEKLA. How does one reach it?

CAPTAIN. One goes through our posts
At Tirschenreut and Falkenberg to start.

THEKLA. Who's the commander?

CAPTAIN. Colonel Seckendorf.

THEKLA (*taking a ring from a jewel box*).

2970 You saw me in my pain, in my bereavement;
You've shown me a kind heart. Receive this token
(*giving him the ring*)
In memory of this moment. You may go.

CAPTAIN (*startled*). My Princess—

(Thekla signals him to go and quits him. The Captain hesitates, wishing to speak. The Lady Companion repeats the signal. He leaves the scene.)

Scene Eleven

Thekla. Neubrunn.

THEKLA (*embracing Neubrunn*).

And now, good Neubrunn, show me all the love
That you have praised me for and prove yourself
A loyal friend, a tried and true companion!
We must set out, now, in the night.

NEUBRUNN. Now? Where to?

THEKLA. Where to? There is but one place in the world!
To where he's lying buried, to his grave.

2980 NEUBRUNN. But what shall you do there, my dearest Lady?

THEKLA. You'd not ask, had you ever loved, poor child.

There, only there, lies all that's left of him;
That single spot to me is all the world.
Oh, don't delay me. Come, let us begin.
First we must find how we'll escape from here.

NEUBRUNN. Your father's anger—have you thought of that?

THEKLA. No more. For no man's anger frightens me.

NEUBRUNN. The world's contempt! Its blame! Its wagging tongues!

2990 THEKLA. I go to seek a man who is no more.
Is it into his arms that I would go?
God, no. Into his grave, that's where I go.
NEUBRUNN. But just the two of us? Two helpless women?
THEKLA. We'll carry weapons. You'll be safe with me.
NEUBRUNN. In darkest night?
THEKLA. We'll be concealed by night.
NEUBRUNN. A night with such a storm?
THEKLA. Was *he* spared, lying
Beneath the hooves of wild retreating horses?
NEUBRUNN. Oh, God! And then the many enemy posts!
They'll never let us through.
THEKLA. These are but men,
And sorrow wanders freely through the world.
NEUBRUNN. But it's so far—
THEKLA. Do pilgrims count the miles
On pilgrimages to a distant shrine?³⁰¹
NEUBRUNN. How shall we ever come out of the city?
THEKLA. Gold opens every gate. Now go, just go.
NEUBRUNN. And if they know us?
THEKLA. They should take a woman
Fleeing, despairing, to be Friedland's daughter?
NEUBRUNN. And where shall we find horses for our flight?
THEKLA. My master of the horse will bring them. Call him.
NEUBRUNN. He'd dare without his Lordship's knowing it?
THEKLA. Yes, he would dare. So go now! No more delaying!
NEUBRUNN. And what will happen to your mother when
She finds you missing?
THEKLA (*staring straight ahead, thoughtful and pained*).
Mother! Oh, my mother!
NEUBRUNN. She's suffered so much for so long, your mother;
Is she to suffer this last blow as well?
THEKLA. I cannot spare her. Go now, please. Just go.
NEUBRUNN. Consider carefully what you are doing.
THEKLA. All is considered that can be considered.
NEUBRUNN. And once we're there, what shall become of you?
THEKLA. There I'll look to a god for inspiration.

NEUMANN. You have no peace of mind, my Lady, and this
 3020 Wild journey through the night can't lead to peace.
 THEKLA. To deepest peace, the peace that *he* has found.³⁰²
 Oh, go! Be quick! Enough of all this chatter!
 I'm pulled away—I don't know what to call it—
 Pulled irresistibly to find his grave!
 There I shall find relief immediately!
 This suffocating sash of pain will be
 Released, my dammed up tears will flow at last.
 Oh, go. We could have set out long ago.
 I'll find no peace until I have escaped
 3030 These walls; they're falling in on me, collapsing.
 Oh, some dark force ejects me, drives me out
 Away from here. What kind of feeling is this?
 The rooms of this house fill themselves for me more
 And more with pallid, hollow spectral shapes;
 I can no longer find space here. Still more!
 This horrifying grim assembly drives me,
 Alive still, out, forth from these crushing walls!
 NEUBRUNN. You've thrown me into such a pitch of terror,
 My Lady, that I dare not stay myself.
 3040 I'm going now. I'll summon Rosenberg. (*Exit.*)

Scene Twelve

Thekla.

His spirit is what calls me. It's the troop
 Of loyal men who sacrificed themselves
 For him, avenged him. They charge me with dawdling.
 Even in death *they'd* not abandon him,
 Who led them while they lived. These simple men
 Did such a thing, and *I* should still live on? No!
 The somber laurel wreath that graced your bier
 Was also wound for me, its bright leaves darkly gleaming.
 Without love's brightness what worth has life here?

3050 I now discard it; it has lost its meaning.
 Oh, when I found you, you so bright and beaming
 With love, my life found priceless worth. There lay
 Before me, splendid, new, a golden day;
 I dreamt two shining hours, their glory streaming.
 You stood upon my threshold to the world,
 Which I traversed aquake with clostral shyness,
 Stood where a thousand shining planets whirled,
 Stood as my guardian angel, wings unfurled
 To lift me from a childhood's magic wryness
 3060 Straight up onto life's peak, its sun-struck highness.
 I knew a joy like none I'd known since birth,
 A gift from you, my best on earth.
(She falls into reflection, then continues, shuddering.)
 Fate overtakes us. Raw and cold
 It snatches my friend's life into its hold,
 Flings him beneath the fell hooves of his horses:
 The fate of beauty that the world enforces.

Scene Thirteen

Thekla. The Lady Companion with the Equerry.

NEUBRUNN. My Lady, here he is and he is willing.
 THEKLA. Will you procure us horses, Rosenberg?³⁰³
 EQUERRY. Yes, I'll procure them.
 THEKLA. And accompany us?
 3070 EQUERRY. My Lady, to the end of the world.
 THEKLA. You can't
 Return then to the Duke.
 EQUERRY. I'll stay with you.
 THEKLA. I'll
 Reward you and commend you to another.
 And can you lead us from the fort unseen?
 EQUERRY. I can.
 THEKLA. When can I go?

EQUERRY. This very hour.
Your destination?
THEKLA. To—You tell him, Neubrunn.
NEUBRUNN. To Neustadt.
EQUERRY. Fine. I'll go make the arrangements. (*Exit.*)
NEUBRUNN. My Lady, here's your mother.
THEKLA. Oh, dear God!

Scene Fourteen

Thekla. The Lady Companion. The Duchess.

DUCHESS. He's gone now, and I find that you're more calm.
THEKLA. I am. Let me lie down soon, Mother, and
3080 Let Neubrunn stay with me. It's rest I need.
DUCHESS. And you shall have it. I go away relieved,
Since I can reassure your father now.
THEKLA. Good night, dear Mother.
(*She falls into her arms and embraces her with emotion.*)
DUCHESS. Daughter, you're not yet
Entirely calm. You're trembling. I can feel
On mine how hard your heart is beating.
THEKLA. Sleep
Will still it soon. Good night, beloved Mother!³⁰⁴

(*As she leaves her mother's arms, the Curtain falls.*)

Act Five

Buttler's Room

Scene One³⁰⁵

Buttler. Major Geraldin.

BUTTLER. You'll choose twelve stout Dragoons, whom you'll equip
With pikes—no shot may fall—conceal them near
The banquet hall, and when the final course
Has been brought in, you burst into the room,
Crying: Who is the Kaiser's friend? I shall
Upend the table, while you throw yourselves
On both of them and strike them down. I'll have
The castle locked up tight and closely guarded,
So that no word of this can reach the Prince.
Go now. Have you sent after Captains Macdonald
And Deveroux?

GERALDIN. They will be here right away. (*Exit.*)

BUTTLER. We can't risk a delay. The citizens are
Declaring for him, too. Who knows what madness
Has seized the city! They see in the Duke
A lord of peace, founder of a new age.
The Council³⁰⁶ has provided weapons and
Already hundreds would stand guard around
Him. We must move out quickly, since we are
Threatened both from without and from within.

Scene Two

Buttler. Captains Deveroux and Macdonald.³⁰⁷

MACDONALD. My General, here we are.

DEVEROUX. Give us the password.

BUTTLER. Long live the Kaiser!

BOTH (*starting back*). What?

BUTTLER. Long live the House of Austria!

DEVEROUX. But haven't we sworn loyalty to Friedland?

MACDONALD. Have we not been brought here for his protection?

3110 BUTTLER. Protect a traitor and the Empire's enemy?

DEVEROUX. Well, yes. It was to him that you assigned us.

MACDONALD. And you, too, followed him to Eger. No?

BUTTLER. I did it the more surely to destroy him.

DEVEROUX. Oh, so!

MACDONALD. That's something else again.

BUTTLER (*to Deveroux*). You wretch!

 Desert your flag and duty with such ease?

DEVEROUX. The devil, Master! You set the example!

 If you're a rascal, I can be one, too.

MACDONALD. We don't think twice. That's your responsibility.

 You're the commander and you take command.

3120 We follow you, to Hell if necessary.

BUTTLER (*appeased*). All right! All right! We're old friends.

MACDONALD. I'd think so!

DEVEROUX. Soldiers of fortune—that is what they call us.

 Who offers most, he gets us.

MACDONALD. Yes, indeed.

BUTTLER. Now you'll become a pair of honest soldiers.

DEVEROUX. We'd like to.

BUTTLER. And you'll make your fortune, too.

MACDONALD. That's better yet.

BUTTLER. So, listen.

BOTH. We are listening.

BUTTLER. The Kaiser's will and his command is that

 Friedland be seized, be he alive or dead.

DEVEROUX. That's what the letter says.

MACDONALD. Alive or dead!

3130 BUTTLER. Handsome reward in money or in kind

 Awaits the one who boldly does the deed.

DEVEROUX. That sounds just good enough. A word from there

 Always sounds good enough. Oh yes, we know:

 A little chain of gold to show his favor,

A crippled horse, a scrap of parchment, some such.
The Prince pays better.

MACDONALD. He's magnificent.

BUTTLER. Don't look to him. He's done; his star has fallen.

MACDONALD. Is that for sure?

BUTTLER. I'm telling you.

DEVEROUX. He's lost
His luck?

BUTTLER. Lost it now and forever. He's
As poor as we are.

3140 MACDONALD. Him? As poor as we are?

DEVEROUX. Macdonald, in that case we'll have to leave him.

BUTTLER. That twenty thousand have already done.

We must do more, my fellow countryman.

Put briefly, we must kill him.

BOTH (*recoiling*). Kill him!

BUTTLER. Kill him!

And I have chosen you two.

BOTH. Chosen us?

BUTTLER. You, Captains Deveroux and Macdonald. You!

DEVEROUX (*after a pause*).

Choose someone else.

MACDONALD. Yes, yes. Choose someone else.

BUTTLER (*to Deveroux*). Afraid, you coward? Who already have
A tidy thirty lying on your conscience—

3150 DEVEROUX. Lay hand on the Field Marshal—think again!

MACDONALD. To whom we've sworn a solemn oath—just think!

BUTTLER. The oath is null—along with his good faith.

DEVEROUX. Now listen, General! This is just too monstrous.

MACDONALD. That's true. And, after all, *we* have a conscience.

DEVEROUX. If it were only not our chief, who has

Commanded us so long, earned our respect.

BUTTLER. Is that the stumbling block?

DEVEROUX. Whoever else

You want! My son, my very own, if Kaiser's

Service requires—my sword will run him through.

3160 But don't you see? We're soldiers: *murder the*

*Field marshal—that's an outrage; that sin no
Father confessor ever can absolve.*

BUTTLER. I'll be your pope; I grant you absolution.

Make up your mind.

DEVEROUX (*thinking it over*). It won't work.

MACDONALD. No. Won't work.

BUTTLER. Well, fine. Go then. And send me Pestalutz.³⁰⁸

DEVEROUX (*startled*). Who? Pestalutz? Hm.

MACDONALD. What's your need of him?

BUTTLER. If you're too good for this, then there are others—

DEVEROUX. Well, if he *has* to fall, then we're as good

As any other to win that reward.

3170

Aren't we, Macdonald?

MACDONALD. Well, it seems to me,

If he must fall and should and can't be different,

Then we should get that prize, not Pestalutz.

DEVEROUX (*having thought it over*).

When's it to be?

BUTTLER. Today. This very night.

Tomorrow we'll have Swedes before our gates.

DEVEROUX. Will you vouch for the consequences, General?

BUTTLER. I vouch for all things.

DEVEROUX. It's the Kaiser's will?

His pure and simple will? We know of cases

In which the murderer's loved, the murderer less so.

BUTTLER. The manifest provides: dead or alive.

3180

Alive's out of the question—you, too, see—

DEVEROUX. Dead, therefore. Dead. But how are we to reach him?

The town's packed to the top with Terzky troops.

MACDONALD. And then there's Terzky, too, and his friend Illo—

BUTTLER. We're going to start with them, that much is clear.

DEVEROUX. What? They as well must be—

BUTTLER. They will come first.

MACDONALD. We're going to have a bloody evening, Deveroux.

DEVEROUX. Do you already have your man? Take *me*.

BUTTLER. It's been assigned to Major Geraldin.

It's Shrovetide and a banquet's to be held

3190

This evening at the castle. They will be
 Attacked at table and cut down. I've named
 Leslie³⁰⁹ and Pestalutz as part of it.

DEVEROUX. Look, General! It won't cost you anything.

Look—just let Geraldin change place with me.

BUTTLER. The smaller danger will be with the Duke.

DEVEROUX. Danger! The devil! You think that of me?

It's not his sword—it's his eye I'm afraid of.

BUTTLER. But what harm can his eye do you?

DEVEROUX. All blazes!

You know me, you have seen that I'm no molly.

3200

But listen—it's not been eight days—the Duke had
 Me handed twenty gold pieces to buy
 This coat, this warm coat, that I'm wearing now—
 And if he sees me standing there, a pike
 In hand—and sees the coat—and looks at me—
 Then I—then I—death take me!—I'm no molly.

BUTTLER. The Duke gave you that coat to keep you warm,
 And you, poor devil, cannot bring yourself
 To run him through in retribution for it.

And from the Kaiser he received a coat

3210

That will keep him far warmer—a prince's mantle—
 And he has thanked him how? With treason, that's how.

DEVEROUX. That's also true. The devil take my thanks!
 I'll—do him in.

BUTTLER. And if you want to soothe
 Your conscience, you need only take that coat off.
 Then you can go to work in finest temper.

MACDONALD. But then there's something else we should consider—

BUTTLER. What's there to be considered now, Macdonald?

MACDONALD. What help are sword and shield to us with *him*?
 He can't be wounded. Not him. He is *tight*.

BUTTLER (*losing his temper*).

What's he to—

MACDONALD. Tight against a shot, a blow!³¹⁰

He's *frozen*, loaded with the Devil's magic;
 His body is impenetrable, I say.

3220

DEVEROUX. Oh, I remember: in Ingolstadt there was
A man, his skin was hard as steel, and in
The end they used the butt-end of a musket.

MACDONALD. I have it!

DEVEROUX. Tell.

MACDONALD. There's a Dominican friar,
An Irishman, he'll dip my sword and pike
In holy water, say a potent blessing;
That helps protect against all kinds of magic.

3230 BUTTLER. A good solution. Go now, both of you.

Choose twenty, thirty solid fellows from
The regiment and have them sworn to Austria.
After eleven, when the early rounds
Have passed, lead them in perfect silence to
The house, where I myself shall not be far.

DEVEROUX. And how shall we get past the sentries, past the
Guards standing watch around the inner courtyard?

BUTTLER. I have informed myself how all's laid out.
I'll lead you through a rearward gate that's kept
But by a single man. My rank and office
Admit me to the Duke at any hour. I'll
Precede you, cut that guard's throat, clear your way.

DEVEROUX. And once we're up there, how to reach the Duke's
Bed chamber without waking his attendants
And having them raise the alarm—since he
Has come here with an endless retinue.

BUTTLER. The servants all sleep in the right wing; he,
Who hates all noise, sleeps in the left, alone.

DEVEROUX. Macdonald, I can only wish it over.
God knows, it gives me a peculiar feeling.

MACDONALD. Me, too. This is too big a man for us.
We're going to be taken for two villains.

BUTTLER. In glory, honor, and great wealth you can
Care less about what's said and thought of you.

DEVEROUX. If only we were sure of all that honor.

BUTTLER. Don't worry. You've rescued the crown and realm
For Ferdinand. Reward will not be wanting.

DEVEROUX. It's his intention to dethrone the Kaiser?
 BUTTLER. It is: to rob him of his crown and life.
 3260 DEVEROUX. And he'd have died upon the scaffold, had we
 Delivered him alive back to Vienna?
 BUTTLER. A fate that he would never have escaped.
 DEVEROUX. Macdonald, come. Field marshal is how he
 Should end, with honor and at soldiers' hands.

(Exeunt Deveroux and Macdonald.)

A Hall from which a Gallery extends, reaching far to the back.

Scene Three

*Wallenstein is seated at a table. The Swedish Captain stands before him.
 Then Countess Terzky.*

WALLENSTEIN. My compliments to your commander. I
 Participate in his good fortune; if
 You do not see me show such pleasure as
 News of this victory deserves, please believe me,
 It is not absence of good will. Our fortunes
 3270 Hereafter stand united. Now, farewell!
 Accept my thanks for all your effort. When
 You come tomorrow, you will find the fortress open.

(The Swedish Captain leaves the scene. Wallenstein sits lost in thought, staring straight ahead, his head propped on his hand. The Countess enters and stands a while unnoticed. Finally, he moves abruptly, notices her, and quickly composes himself.)

You come from her? How is she? Is she better?
 COUNTESS. My sister says she's more composed now since
 Her conversation. She has gone to bed.
 WALLENSTEIN. Her sorrow will have softened. She will weep.
 COUNTESS. You, too, my brother, I find altered. I'd
 Expect to see you happier after victory.³¹¹
 Be strong! For you're the one to keep us standing
 3280 Upright. You are our lighthouse and our sun.

WALLENSTEIN. Don't worry. I'm all right. Where is your husband?³¹²

COUNTESS. They've gone off to a banquet, he and Illo.

WALLENSTEIN (*stands up and walks through the room*).

It's black dark out, time you'd gone to your room.

COUNTESS. Oh, don't send me away. Keep me with you.

WALLENSTEIN (*at the window*).

What a commotion raging in the heavens!

The weather vane is spinning in the wind,

Clouds flee across the sky, the sickle moon

Goes in and out, and through the upper dark

Uncertain light shafts flicker on and off.

3290

No constellation to be seen. That dull

Sheen only, that's from Cassiopeia; there

Jupiter *should* stand. He's obscured by storm clouds.

(*He sinks into reflection, staring outward.*)

COUNTESS (*contemplating him sadly, takes his hand*).

What are you thinking?

WALLENSTEIN. I think that if I saw him it would help.

This is the star that's shone for me since birth,

And seeing him has always strengthened me. (Pause.)

COUNTESS. You'll see him yet again.

WALLENSTEIN (*has fallen once more into deep distraction; he rouses himself and turns quickly to the Countess*).

See him again? Oh, I shall never.

COUNTESS. What?

WALLENSTEIN. He's lost. He's gone.

COUNTESS. Who is it that you mean?

3300

WALLENSTEIN. His is the better lot. For he's perfected.

For him no future waits, for him no fate

Spins treachery; his life now lies laid out

Without a fold or wrinkle, and it shines.

Immaculate, it lies beyond time's reach,

And he's beyond both hope and fear, beyond

Unsteady, baleful planets that deceive us.

His lot is happy! For who knows what the next

Hour has in store for us, shrouded in black.

COUNTESS. It's Piccolomini you mean. How'd he die?

3310

The messenger was leaving as I came.

(*Wallenstein stops her with a gesture.*)

Oh, don't look back! We'll look to brighter days
Ahead. Be glad about the victory,
Forget what it has cost you. Not just now
Was your friend taken from you. He was lost
To you when he took leave of you. He died then.

WALLENSTEIN. Oh, I'll be reconciled to this loss, that

I know. To what can one not be! Man learns
To do without the highest and the lowest
Things. Time itself brings him to acquiescence.
But I feel keenly what I lost in him.

3320

The bloom has vanished from within, and my
Life lies before me, cold and colorless.
For he stood at my side like my own youth;
To me he made real stuff into a dream
And wove a golden mist like break of day
Around the common obviousness of things.
To my surprise, his fire of loving feeling
Raised into high relief the myriad
Flat figures that populate our daily lives.

3330

Whatever I may strive for going forward,
The beauty of it's lost, won't come again, for
Greater than any happiness, there is the friend
Who, feeling, made it; sharing, magnified it.

COUNTESS. Do not despair of your own powers. Your heart
Is rich enough to give itself a life.
You love and celebrate on his example
Virtues you planted, caused to grow in him.

WALLENSTEIN (*going to the door*).

Who would disturb us here so late? It is
The Commandant. He brings the fortress keys.
So leave us, Sister. It is nearly midnight.

3340

COUNTESS. I find it doubly hard to leave you now.
I am beset by fear.

WALLENSTEIN. By fear? Of what?

COUNTESS. That you might set out swiftly in the night
'And we, on waking, find that we had lost you.

WALLENSTEIN. Pure fantasy!

COUNTESS. For some time now my soul
Is haunted, plagued, by gloomy apprehensions;
I fend them off in waking life, and they
Return, attack my anxious heart in dreams.
Last night I saw you with your first wife,³¹³ sitting
At table, both magnificently dressed—

WALLENSTEIN. That is a dream of happy premonition:
That marriage smiled upon me, made my fortune.

COUNTESS. Tonight it seemed I came to find you in
Your room, but as I entered it was not
Your room. It was the charterhouse you built
At Gitschin, where you want to be interred.

WALLENSTEIN. Your mind is dwelling lately on such things.

COUNTESS. But don't you believe dreams come ahead to warn us?

WALLENSTEIN. There are such things, no doubt about it, but

I'd not describe as warnings dreams that merely
Announce that which is unavoidable.
Just as an effigy of the sun appears
Behind the mist before she comes, just so
Are grand events preceded by their ghosts;
Tomorrow walks abroad within today.

It's always seemed remarkable to me
What's said about the death of Henri Quatre.

The king could feel the shadow of the knife
In his breast long before the murderer, that
Ravaillac, had armed himself with it. All rest
Deserted him, his Louvre couldn't hold him,
Drove him outside; the coronation of
The queen³¹⁴ rang like a funeral; he heard footsteps
Seek him in all the alleyways of Paris—

COUNTESS. Your inner apprehension tells you nothing?

WALLENSTEIN. Nothing. Don't be concerned.

COUNTESS (*lost in dark reflection*). Another time

You went before me, hurrying after you, down
An endless hall, across wide galleries—it
Went on and on—and doors were slamming to—

3380

Panting, I followed you and could not reach you—
I felt a cold hand seize me from behind;
You stood there, kissed me, and then over us,
It seemed, a cover all in red came down.

WALLENSTEIN. That's the red tapestry that lines my room..

COUNTESS (*gazing at him*).

If it should come to that—if I should see you,
Who stand before me now, pulsing with life—
(*She falls weeping into his embrace.*)

WALLENSTEIN. The Kaiser's published ban distresses you.

But words are not enough. He'll not find hands.

COUNTESS. If he should find them, though, my mind's made up:

3390

I carry all the remedy I need. (*She goes off.*)

Scene Four

Wallenstein. Gordon. Then the Chamberlain.

WALLENSTEIN. It's quiet in the town?

GORDON. The town is quiet.

WALLENSTEIN. I hear loud music and the castle's all

Lit up. Who's doing all the celebrating?

GORDON. It's for Count Terzky and the Field Marshal—

A banquet being given in the castle.

WALLENSTEIN (*to himself*).

To celebrate that victory. That sort

Is happy only when it is at table.

(*Rings. The Chamberlain enters.*)

Undress me. I'm about to go to bed.

(*He receives the keys from Gordon.*)

That makes us safe from every enemy,

Closes us up with our trustworthy friends,

For I am much deceived, if such a face

(*looking at Gordon*)

As this I see is masking a deceit.

(*The Chamberlain removes his mantle, collar, and sash.*)

3400

Watch out! What's fallen?

CHAMBERLAIN. The golden chain you wear has come apart.

WALLENSTEIN. Well, it has held together long enough.

(*Looking at the chain.*)

This was the Kaiser's first great favor. He

Hung it about my neck as archduke, for

The Friaul War.³¹⁵ I wore it out of habit,

Or superstition, if you will. It was

3410 To be a talisman, was to bind fleeting

Fortune, as its first favor, for as long

As I, believing, wore it about my neck.

So be it. Henceforth I embark on a

New fortune; this one has just lost its virtue.

(*The Chamberlain goes off, carrying the garments. Wallenstein stands up, makes a pass through the Hall, then stands before Gordon, contemplating him.*)

How you make the old days come back to me!

I see myself at Burgau once again,³¹⁶

Where you and I were pages at the court.

We often quarreled; while you were well-meaning,

You loved to play the moralist and to

3420 Reproach me, saying I lacked moderation

And strove too high, pursued excessive dreams;

Instead, you urged a golden middle way.

Your wisdom, I'm afraid, has not proved useful;

It has led you to reach your limits early,

Would snuff you out in a bleak corner if

I didn't interpose my grander stars.

GORDON. My Prince, the fisherman is glad to tie up

His tiny rowboat in a port of safety

When he sees stormy waters strand the packet.

3430 WALLENSTEIN. You're into port already, are you, old man?³¹⁷

Not I. My undiminished courage is

Still bobbing, fresh and fine, on life's great swells,

And Hope is still the goddess I would choose;

My spirit is a young man; why, compared

3440

With *you*, I'd say the rapid years have passed
Quite traceless over my brown head's full crown.

(*He strides through the room, then stops on the side opposite Gordon.*)

Who says that Fortune's fickle? She was true
To me; she picked me from the ranks of men
With love and carried me up life's stairway
On god-like arms, both powerful and kind.

My destined ways show nothing ordinary,
Nor do the lines that mark my palm. Who would
Use human scale to give my life its meaning?
It's true: just now it seemed my tide had fallen,
But it will rise again. Floodtide will follow
Upon this ebb, soon now and swelling quickly.

GORDON. An adage comes to mind: Don't speak too soon.

3450

I'd not draw hope from a long streak of luck;
Bad luck is wed to hope as its companion,
And fear should haunt the man who's blessed with *good*.
The scales of destiny are never steady.

WALLENSTEIN (*smiling*).

I hear the ancient Gordon speak again.
And well I know how earthly matters change.
The evil gods demand their pound of flesh;
The heathen peoples knew that long ago,
Preferred to it their chosen form of evil,
Fed human sacrifice to jealous Typhon.³¹⁸

(*After a pause, solemn and more quiet.*)

3460

I, too, have sacrificed to him. I lost
My dearest friend, lost him by my own doing.
No fortune's favor can please me again
The way this blow has hurt me. Thus is all
Fate's envy satisfied: one life is taken
In substitution for another. And
The bolt that would have shattered me is loosed
Instead against his unoffending head.

Scene Five

As above. Seni.

WALLENSTEIN. Is that not Seni? How beside himself!

What brings you to us in the night, Baptist?

SENI. Fear, Excellency, fear for you.

WALLENSTEIN. What's this?

SENI. Flee, Excellency, flee before daybreak.

Don't put yourself in Swedish hands.

WALLENSTEIN. What nonsense!

SENI (*his voice rising*).

3470 Don't put yourself in Swedish hands.

WALLENSTEIN. Why not?

SENI. Don't stay here waiting for the Swedes to come.

Impending evil threatens you, false friends;

The signs are dreadful; nets of your undoing

Draw tight around you even as we speak.

WALLENSTEIN. You're dreaming, Baptist; fear has quite unhinged you.

SENI. Oh, do not believe that; come, see for yourself;

The planets say: misfortune by false friends.

WALLENSTEIN. False friends have long since founded my misfortune;

3480 This prophecy ought to have reached me sooner;

For that I have no further need of stars.

SENI. Oh, come and look; come, look, and believe your eyes.

A gruesome sign stands in the House of Life. A

Close enemy, some monster, lurks behind

The beams that stream out from your star. Be warned.

Do not give yourself over to those heathen

Who've gone to war against our holy Church.

WALLENSTEIN (*smiling*).

That's where this oracle is coming from?

Now I remember: You've not ever liked

3490 My Swedish league. Go back to bed, Baptist.

A sign like that inspires no fear in me.

GORDON (*shaken by this exchange, turns to Wallenstein*).

My princely Lord, would you permit my speaking?

Often a humble mouth says something useful.

Perhaps I would have reconsidered, perhaps
 Not. At this point, though, why forbear? Too grave
 Was its beginning for it to end in nothing.

3530 We'll let it run its course.

(*He goes to the window.*)

Look. Night has fallen. At the castle all
 Is still meanwhile. Come, Chamberlain, bring light.

(*The Chamberlain, who has entered quietly and has followed the conversation from a distance, comes forward, much moved, and falls at the Duke's feet.*)

You, too? But yes, I know why you would want to
 See me restored to favor with the Kaiser.

Poor fellow! In Carinthia he has
 A farm he fears they'll confiscate because
 He's in my service. I should be so poor
 That I cannot replace a servant? Well
 Then, I'll force no one. If you think that luck's
 3540 Deserted me, then you may leave me, too.
 Tonight you may undress me one last time
 And after that go over to the Kaiser.
 Gordon, good night.
 I think that I will have a long, long sleep.
 These last few days were torment quite enough.
 See to it that they do not wake me early.

(*He goes off. The Chamberlain lights his way. Seni follows. Gordon stands in darkness, following the Duke with his eyes until he has disappeared at the end of the Gallery. He expresses his pain in gestures, then leans sorrowfully against a column.*)

Scene Six

Gordon. Buttler, initially behind the scene.

BUTTLER. Halt! All stand still until I give the signal.

GORDON (*startled*).

He's come; he's brought the murderers in already.

BUTTLER. The lights are out. They're sound asleep in there.
3550 GORDON. What shall I do? Shall I attempt to save him?
Shall I wake up the house, alarm the Guard?
BUTTLER (*appearing at the back*).
A faint light from the corridor. That leads
Into the Prince's bedroom.
GORDON. Do I not break
The oath I swore the Kaiser? And if he
Escapes to reinforce the foe, do I
Not heap the consequences on *my* head?
BUTTLER (*coming nearer*).
Still! Listen. Who is speaking?
GORDON. Better I
Leave it to Heaven. Who am I to dare
To undertake so great a deed? In truth,
I didn't kill him if he dies, but then
His rescue—that would be *my* deed, for which
I'd bear the consequences, I alone.
3560 BUTTLER (*reaching Gordon*).
I know this voice.
GORDON. It's Buttler!
BUTTLER. Gordon! You here
So late? Did he keep you so long?
GORDON. Your hand—
You're carrying your hand in bandages?
BUTTLER. It has been wounded. That man Illo fought
With desperation till we finally laid
Him flat—
GORDON (*shuddering*). They're dead!
BUTTLER. It's taken care of.
Is he in bed?
GORDON. Ah, Buttler!
BUTTLER (*urgently*). Is he? Speak!
3570 We can't keep this concealed much longer now.
GORDON. He's *not* to die. Not by *your* hand. The heavens
Don't want your hand. You see that it is wounded.
BUTTLER. It's not *my* hand that is required.

GORDON. The guilty one?

Are dead. Enough is rendered now to justice,
This sacrifice already satisfies.

(*The Chamberlain comes down the Gallery, signaling for silence.*)

He's sleeping. Do not murder holy sleep.

BUTTLER. Indeed no. He'll die waking. (*About to go.*)

GORDON. His heart

Is turned on earthly occupations. He

Is not prepared to go before his God.

BUTTLER. His God is merciful! (*About to go.*)

GORDON (*keeping him*). Grant him *one night*—³²⁰

BUTTLER. The coming moment can give us away. (*Leaving.*)

GORDON (*holding him back*).

A single hour!

BUTTLER. Let loose of me! How can

Reprise so short help him?

GORDON. Oh, Time's a god.

Of wonders. In an hour ten thousand grains
Of sand run down, and human thought moves no
Less quickly. Just one hour. *Your* heart can change
His, too. Or news can come; some fortunate
Event, decisive, salvaging, can fall from Heaven.
What can an hour not do!

BUTTLER. And you remind me

How precious every moment is. (*He stamps on the floor.*)³²¹

Scene Seven

Macdonald, Deveroux enter with Halberdiers. Then the Chamberlain.

GORDON (*blocking* Buttler). You monster!

You'll reach him only over my dead body,
For this is horrible beyond endurance.

BUTTLER (*pushing him aside*).

Silly old man!

(Trumpets in the distance.)

MACDONALD and DEVEROUX. That's Swedish trumpets. Swedes

Before the walls! Quick now! Let's get this done.

GORDON. God! Dear God!

BUTTLER. Go take up your post, Commander.

(Gordon plunges out.)

CHAMBERLAIN (*rushing in*).

Who dares make so much noise? The Duke's asleep!

DEVEROUX (*with a terrible voice*).

It's time for noise, my friend!

CHAMBERLAIN (*shouting*). Help! Murderers!

BUTTLER. Be done with him!

CHAMBERLAIN (*impaled by Deveroux, falls at the entrance to the Gallery*).

Jesu Maria!

BUTTLER. Break the doors!

(They step over the corpse and go down the Gallery. The sound of two doors being battered down, one after the other. Muffled voices.

Clashing weapons. Then silence.

Scene Eight

Countess Terzky, carrying a light.

3600

Her bedchamber is empty, she's nowhere to
 Be found, and Neubrunn, too, is missing, who
 Was watching by her. Can she have taken flight?
 Have taken flight to where? We'll have to rush out
 After, set everything in motion, find her!
 How will the Duke receive this frightening news?
 I wish my husband had come back from dinner!
 Whether the Duke perhaps is still awake?
 I thought that I heard voices here and footsteps.
 Let me go down and listen at the door.
 What's that? There's someone running up the stair.

Scene Nine

Countess. Gordon. Then Buttler.

GORDON (*rushing in, breathless*).

3610 It's all an error. Those are not the Swedes.
Do not go any further! Buttler! God!
Where is he? (*He notices the Countess.*)

Countess, tell me—

COUNTESS. You're coming from the castle? Where's my husband?

GORDON (*horrified*).

Your husband? Do not ask! And go on in—(*About to leave.*)

COUNTESS (*delaying him*). But not before you tell me—

GORDON (*very urgently*).

The world entire depends on this one moment!

For God's sake, go! For as we speak—(*Shouting.*) Buttler!

COUNTESS. He's surely at the castle with my husband.

(*Buttler appears from the Gallery.*)

GORDON (*catching sight of him*).

3620 It's all an error. Those are not the Swedes—
It's the Imperials—they have penetrated—
I come from the Lieutenant General;

He'll be here right away. Do not go further—

BUTTLER. He comes too late.

GORDON (*lurches against the wall*). Oh, merciful God—

COUNTESS (*beginning to understand*).

Too late for what? Who's coming right away?

Octavio within the walls of Eger?

We've been betrayed! We've been betrayed! Where is

The Duke? (*She rushes toward the Gallery.*)

Scene Ten

*As above. Seni. Then the Mayor. Page. Chambermaid.
Servants running about in fright.*

SENI (*emerging from the Gallery, terrified*).

Oh, bloody deed! What horror!

COUNTESS.

Seni! What

Has happened?

PAGE (*emerging*). What a sight! How pitiful!

(*Servants with torches*.)

3630 COUNTESS. What's happened? In God's name!

SENI. You're asking still?

The Prince is lying in there, murdered. And

Your husband's stabbed up in the castle.

(*The Countess freezes*.)

CHAMBERMAID (*rushing in*). Help!

The Duchess! Help!

MAYOR (*entering, frightened*). What horror wakes this house?

GORDON. Your house is cursed in all eternity.

The Prince lies murdered in this house of yours.

MAYOR. What? God forbid! (*Plunges out*.)

FIRST SERVANT. Away! Away! We'll all

Be killed!

SECOND SERVANT (*carrying a silver service*).

This way! That way the stair is guarded.

CRY (*from behind the scene*).

Make way! Make way for the Lieutenant General!

(*Hearing this, the Countess emerges from her paralysis, composes herself, and quickly leaves the scene*.)

CRY (*behind the scene*).

Guards to the gates! Push back the mob!

Scene Eleven

As above, without the Countess. Octavio Piccolomini enters with his suite. At the same time Deveroux and Macdonald emerge from the back, accompanied by Halberdiers. Wallenstein's corpse, wrapped in a red tapestry, is carried across the backdrop.

OCTAVIO (*entering rapidly*).

3640 This cannot be! Not possible! Buttler!

Gordon! I cannot believe it. Tell me, No.

GORDON (*gestures without speaking to the back. Octavio turns and stiffens in horror*).

DEVEROUX (*to Buttler*).

Here is the Golden Fleece³²² and here his sword!

MACDONALD. Is it your order that the Chancellery—³²³

BUTTLER (*indicating Octavio*).

Here is the one who gives the orders now.

(*Deveroux and Macdonald step back respectfully. Everyone melts away, leaving only Buttler, Octavio, and Gordon on the scene.*)

OCTAVIO (*turned to Buttler*).

Was that our intention, Buttler, when we parted?³²⁴

By all God's justice! I here raise my hand!

This monstrous deed cannot be charged to me. I

Am innocent.

BUTTLER. Your hands are clean. You

Used mine instead.

OCTAVIO. You shameless reprobate!

3650 You misuse orders from your master to

Heap on your Kaiser's sacred head a cheap,

Atrocious, stealthy murder by your hirelings?

BUTTLER (*unmoved*).

I've merely executed Kaiser's judgment.

OCTAVIO. Oh, curse of kings that brings their words to life

And chains indelible deeds to fleeting thought!

Obedience had to come so quickly? You could

Not grant this gracious man an hour of grace?

Time is man's guardian angel. Swift conclusion

Of judgment belongs alone to timeless God.

3660 BUTTLER. Why scold me so? What crime have I committed?
 Look! It's a good deed I have done. I've freed
 The Empire of a dangerous enemy,
 And I shall claim my compensation for it.
 The only difference here is just between
 How you and I proceeded: *You* whetted
 This arrow, *I* released it; *you*, who have
 Sowed blood, now stand appalled that blood has sprouted
 I've always known what I was doing, and no
 Success surprises me or frightens me.³²⁵
3670 Would you have further orders for me? I'm
 About to set out for Vienna, where
 I'll lay my bloody sword before the Kaiser,
 Claim the approval owed me, that which swift
 Obedience can require of a just judge. (*Exit.*)

Scene Twelve

*As above, without Buttler. Countess Terzky enters pale and disfigured.
Her speech is faint and slow, without affect.*

OCTAVIO (*advancing toward her*).

Oh, Countess Terzky, must it have come to this?
The consequences of disastrous deeds.

COUNTESS. These are the fruits of your own doing: The Duke

Is dead, my husband dead, the Duchess in

3680 The throes of death; my niece has disappeared.
This lordly house, this house of brilliance, stands
Stripped bare, and now through all its portals plunge
Its serving men and women, terrified.
I am the last to leave and I have closed it.
I now surrender all the keys.

OCTAVIO (*deeply pained*). Oh, Coun-
Tess, my house too has been stripped bare.

COUNTESS. Who's still

To die? Who here is still to be mistreated?

The Prince is dead, the Kaiser's vengeance can

- 3690 Consider itself satisfied. But spare
 The aged servants! Let their loyalty not
 Be counted as a crime against them. Fate
 Surprised my brother; he could not think of them.
 OCTAVIO. No more mistreatment or revenge, Countess!
 Grave guilt is gravely expiated and
 The Kaiser reconciled. From father to
 The daughter nothing passes but his fame
 And his deserts. The Empress honors your
 Misfortune, opens a mother's arms to you.
 Be fearless, summon trust, commit yourself to
 Imperial mercy.
- 3700 COUNTESS (*looking upward*). I commit myself to
 Mercy of higher kind. Where is the Prince's
 Corpse to be laid for its eternal rest?
 At Gitschin, in the charterhouse he built, rests
 The Countess Wallenstein, she who founded
 His happiness. In gratitude he wished
 To sleep beside her. Have him buried there!
 For the remains of my own husband I
 Request like favor. All our palaces
 Belong to the Kaiser; give us in return
 A grave among the graves of our ancestors.
- 3710 OCTAVIO. You're trembling, Countess, and you're blanching. God!
 How am I to interpret what you say?
- COUNTESS (*collects her last strength and speaks nobly, with animation*).
 You think more worthily of me than now to believe
 That I'd survive the fall of my great house.
 We thought ourselves not too obscure to reach
 For a king's crown. It was not to be.
 We nonetheless *think* like a king and believe
 A freely chosen death to be more decent
 Than life lived out in absence of all honor.
 Poison I've—
- OCTAVIO. Help! Help here!
- COUNTESS. It is too late.
- 3720 My fate's accomplished in the next few moments.
 (*She goes off.*)

GORDON. A house of murder and a house of horror!

(*A Courier enters, carrying a letter.*)

GORDON (*going to meet him*).

What have we here? That's the Imperial seal.

(*He reads the address and gives Octavio the letter with an expression of reproach.*)

It's for *Prince Piccolomini*.

(*Octavio starts and, pained, gazes upward.*)

Curtain.

Notable Names

Altringer. Johann Aldringen of Lorraine (1588–1634); after 1632 count and field marshal. Brother-in-law to Gallasso and, like him, active in Wallenstein's fall.

Arnheim. Johann Georg von Arnim (1581–1641). Lieutenant general in the Saxon army.

Arquebusiers. Cavalry armed with a gun supported by a hook (Dutch *hake*) during firing.

Bernhard. Prince Bernhard von Saxe-Weimar (1604–1639). General on the Swedish side.

Buttler. Walter Butler (d. 1634), an Old Irish aristocrat. Commander of a regiment of Irish dragoons given him shortly after Wallenstein's death, when he was also made count.

Carabiniers. Cavalry armed with short rifles called carbines.

Countess. Historically, Maria Maximiliana née von Harrach, 1608–1662.

Croats. Light cavalry recruited largely from southeast Europe, though not necessarily Croatian nationals. They enjoyed no great esteem.

Cuirassiers. Heavy cavalry protected by the cuirass, originally a strong leather armor. An esteemed arm.

Deveroux and Macdonald. Walter Deveroux (d. 1639) and Dionysius Macdaniel (d. ca. 1639), both Irishmen and, here, captains in Buttler's regiment of dragoons. Deveroux is credited with delivering the blow of the halberd that killed Wallenstein.

Dragoons. Cavalry armed with short muskets.

Duchess. Isabella Katharina née von Harrach (1601–1656). She was Wallenstein's second wife and elder sister of the Countess Terzky.

Eger. Border town with a fortress, about 100 kilometers northwest of Pilsen. Here Wallenstein was murdered, February 1634.

Eggenberg. Johann Ulrich von Eggenberg (1568–1634). Imperial prince and Duke of Krumau. President of the court chamber (*Hofkammer*) and privy counselor.

Ferdinand. 1. Ferdinand II of Habsburg (1578–1637), Holy Roman Emperor after 1619. 2. Ferdinand III of Habsburg (1608–1657), eldest surviving son of Ferdinand II. Elected King of Hungary, 1627; successor to Wallenstein, 1634. With Gallasso, he defeated the Swedes at Nördlingen, 1634, and signed the Peace of Westphalia that ended the Thirty Years' War, 1648.

Frauenberg. Marradas's seat in southern Bohemia and gathering point for Wallenstein's opponents.

Friedrich. Frederick V, Count Palatine, prince-elector. He was crowned King of Bohemia in the uprising that began in 1618, then defeated in the battle of White Mountain in 1620. Called the Winter King for his brief reign.

Gallas. Matthias Gallasso (1584–1647), made Count of Campo, 1632, and lieutenant general, 1633. Schiller seems to have appropriated some of the traits of the historical Gallasso to the construction of the figure of Octavio.

Gitschin. Wallenstein's holding in northeast Bohemia, intended as his residence; where his body was interred.

Gordon. John Gordon (d. 1649), a Scot. As lieutenant colonel in one of Terzky's regiments he was commandant at Eger.

Gustav Adolf (1594–1632). King of Sweden. Champion of the Protestant forces in the Thirty Years' War and one of the great field marshals of all time. He defeated Wallenstein at Lützen, then died of wounds he received in that battle.

Illo. Christian von Ilow (ca. 1585–1634) of the New Mark. He acquired properties in Bohemia, was made baron, 1631, and field marshal, 1633.

Isolani. Johann Ludwig Hektor, Baron Isolani (1586–1640), of north Italian nobility settled on the Italian-Croatian border. After 1632, commander of all Croats of the imperial army. Raised to the rank of count after Wallenstein's death.

Kinsky. Wilhelm, Count Kinsky (1574–1634). Bohemian nobleman, Terzky's brother-in-law, contact to the Bohemian emigration. A diplomat and not a soldier.

Lamormain. Wilhelm Lamormain (1570–1648), Jesuit priest and, after 1624, confessor to the Kaiser.

League. The Catholic League, an alliance of the estates of the Empire led by the Duke of Bavaria. Its army, under Tilly, fought beside the imperial army.

Leslie. Walter Leslie (1606–1667), a Scot in imperial service who served under John Gordon and had a part in the assassination of Wallenstein.

Lichtenstein. Gundakar von Lichtenstein (1580–1658). Imperial prince and lord steward of the Viennese court.

Lützen. Town near Leipzig, in Saxony-Anhalt, where Gustavus Adolphus defeated Wallenstein, then died of his wounds, November 1632.

Mansfeld. Peter Ernst, Count Mansfeld (1580–1626), whom Wallenstein defeated at the Dessau bridge in April 1626 and pursued as far as Hungary.

Maradas. Don Baltasar Marradas (ca. 1560–1638) of Spanish nobility. His castle at Frauenberg in southern Bohemia became a gathering place for Wallenstein's opponents.

Martinitz. Jaroslav Bořita von Martinitz (1582–1649), Bohemian nobleman and member of Wilhelm Slavata's governorship of Bohemia. Defenestrated 1618.

Max. Max Piccolomini is Schiller's invention. He may owe his name and certain other traits to Joseph Silvio Max Piccolomini, a nephew whom the childless Octavio adopted.

Neumann. Heinrich Niemann (d. 1634). Doctor of law. He served as private secretary to Wallenstein.

Nuremberg. In late summer 1632, Wallenstein and Gustavus Adolphus met in battle at Nuremberg. Gustavus occupied the town, Wallenstein a fortified camp just outside town.

Octavio. The historical figure was Octavio Piccolomini-Pieri, 1599–1656, of Sienese, not Lombard, nobility, who joined Wallenstein's bodyguard in 1627. Field marshal after 1634. At the time of the Peace of Westphalia, 1648, he was chief commander of the imperial army; in 1650 he was raised to the rank of prince.

Oxenstirn. Axel Gustafsson, Count Oxenstierna (1583–1654). Swedish chancellor who effectively governed the Swedish state while Gustavus Adolphus waged war and during the minority of Queen Christina, Gustavus's successor.

Palatine. “Of the Palatinate” (in German, *Pfalz*), west of the Rhine and bordering Lorraine, the land of Princes Frederick IV and V of the Palatinate. The Upper Palatinate (*Oberpfalz*) lies in southeastern Germany, bordering Bohemia.

Pappenheim. Gottfried Heinrich, Count Pappenheim (1594–1632). Imperial field marshal. He was mortally wounded while fighting under Wallenstein at Lützen. Max Piccolomini's succeeding him as commander of his riders is Schiller's invention.

Pilsen. City in Bohemia, a borderland between Czech and German territory. Site of Wallenstein's headquarters, winter 1633–1634.

Questenberg. Gerhard von Questenberg (before 1585–1646). Entered the war chancellery, 1606, counselor of war (*Kriegsrat*) after 1626. Historically, he was Wallenstein's partisan. He rose later to president of the war council.

Rangers. The German is *Jäger*. These originally were foot troops recruited from the huntsmen and forest rangers of the great German estates. “Ranger” arose simultaneously for similar foot and mounted infantry in British North America. “Chasseur” became common in the eighteenth century.

Regensburg. Free city in southeastern Germany, on the Danube and near the Austrian border. Site of the electors' congress where Wallenstein was removed from command, 1630; taken by Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar, in Swedish service, November 1633.

Rhinegrave. Otto Ludwig Wild- und Rheingraf zu Salm in Mörchingen (1597–1634). General in Swedish service and Swedish governor of Alsace. Schiller casts him as commander of the Swedish force in southern Germany.

Rudolf. Rudolf II (1552–1612), Holy Roman Emperor. Succeeded by Ferdinand II.

Seni. Giovanni Battista Senno (1602–1656), a Genoese. After 1631, Wallenstein's astrologer. He was subsequently suspected of secret contact with the Viennese court.

Sesina. Jaroslaw Sezina Rašin, Knight of Riesenborg (d. 1635). Bohemian emigrant and go-between for Wallenstein's contacts with the Swedes.

Silesia. In summer 1633 Wallenstein met the Swedes and Saxons in Silesia; the hostilities ended in a truce and unsuccessful negotiations.

Slavata. Wilhelm Slavata (1572–1652), Bohemian nobleman and imperial governor of Bohemia. Defenestrated 1618.

Stralsund. Hanseatic city on the Baltic coast of Germany (Pomerania), allied with Denmark and Sweden and besieged in vain by Wallenstein, summer 1628.

Terzky. Adam Erdmann Trčka von Lipa (ca. 1599–1634) of the landed Bohemian nobility. At the rank of lieutenant field marshal he commanded seven or eight regiments—a considerable corps.

The Bavarian. Maximilian I (1573–1651), prince-elector and Duke of Bavaria. Founder of the Catholic League. Wallenstein's rival and implacable enemy.

Thekla. Like Max, Schiller's invention. Wallenstein's historical daughter was Maria Elisabeth, 1626–1662. Thekla is about nine years older. She is one of a line of courageous and resourceful young women in Schiller's plays.

Thurn. Heinrich Mattias, Count Thurn (1580–1640), leader of the Bohemian rising against Viennese rule that touched off the Thirty Years' War, spokesman of the Bohemian emigration, general in the Swedish army.

Tiefenbach. Rudolf, Baron Tiefenbach (1582–1653) of Styria. Field marshal. He gave his name, 1619, to an infantry regiment that survived to the end of the Habsburg monarchy.

Tilly. Johannes Tserklaes, Count Tilly (1599–1632). Commander of the army of the Catholic League and, briefly and with poor success, also of Wallenstein's army after Wallenstein was removed from command at the Regensburg Electors' Congress, 1630. He is remembered for the terrible sack of Magdeburg, 1631. He was mortally wounded in a defeat by Gustavus Adolphus at the crossing of the Lech, 1632, after which Wallenstein was restored to his command.

Uhlans. Light cavalry bearing lances, first recruited among Poles.

Walloons. French-speaking people of the southern Low Countries, bordering France. In *Wallenstein* they are particularly well represented among Max's Pappenheimers.

Werdenberg. Johann Baptist, Baron Verda, Count Werdenberg (1582–1648). Viennese court chancellor and member of the privy council.

Notes

In references, the three plays are cited as *Camp*, *Picc.*, and *Death*, respectively.

Wallenstein's Camp

1. Saxon troops occupied Bohemia from November 1631 to summer 1632.
2. Presented as a Czech spelling of "Terzky."
3. Wallenstein's wife and their daughter.
4. The German is *alte Perücke* to designate Questenberg, imperial chamberlain and counselor of war.
5. Terzky's wife and Wallenstein's wife were sisters.
6. Small pistols, called after the Italian word for a little hawk once used in falconry.
7. Maximilian I, Duke of Bavaria, Wallenstein's rival and most formidable enemy.
8. Schiller's term is *Jäger*. These figures appear in the list of characters as "Two mounted Holk Jaeger." *Jäger* were members of an elite corps, usually deployed on foot but also mounted, recruited from the huntsmen (*Jäger*) and woodsmen (rangers) of the great contemporary estates. Holk's *Jäger*, mounted squads gathered by Heinrich Holk, a Danish-German mercenary, have entered the English language as "Holk's Horse."
9. In summer 1633 Holk's Horse wrecked Saxony and laid Leipzig under tribute. The statement is that the silver braid the Horsemen display was taken as booty.

10. An in-joke. In 1785, in refuge from a vengeful Duke of Württemberg, Schiller had frequented a tavern kept by mother and daughter at Blasewitz near Dresden.
11. Name for a gold coin.
12. Protestant general whom Wallenstein defeated at Dessau in 1626 and pursued into Hungary.
13. Hanseatic city on the Baltic, allied with Sweden, besieged by Wallenstein in 1628.
14. The governor of Spanish Milan; he led troops into southern Germany in 1633.
15. In effect, war feeds on war as soldiers reproduce the next generation of soldiers, which the state feeds and shelters.
16. In Saxony, where Holk's squads raged.
17. The reference is to booty tucked into the clothing of a raiding soldier.
18. Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, champion of the Protestant forces.
19. The Catholic League, led by the Duke of Bavaria. Its army fought beside the imperial army. The sack of Magdeburg in May 1631 was to become notorious in the annals of the Thirty Years' War.
20. Commander of the army of the Catholic League.
21. Tilly's defeat by Gustavus Adolphus at Breitenfeld near Leipzig, September 1631.
22. In November 1631 the Saxons, allied with the Swedes, attacked Bohemia and took Prague.
23. Wallenstein's campaign to raise an army in 1632, at the beginning of his second command.
24. First instance of contemporary rumor about Wallenstein's ambitions.
25. Seni, Wallenstein's Italian astrologer, the "little gray man" at line 365.
26. Site, near Leipzig, of the battle in which Gustavus Adolphus was mortally wounded, November 1632.
27. Buttler will enter in the first scene of *Piccolomini*. The Sergeant makes the first mention of his rise from simple soldier.

28. The reference is to Wallenstein's extraordinary rank and privilege under the Empire, which the Sergeant recounts at length at line 829.
29. The tale of Wallenstein's jailing at Altdorf, near Nuremberg, is apocryphal, though his rowdiness, and that of other well-born students at the time, is historical.
30. Wandering musicians from the mines (*Bergknappen*) were traditional.
31. Capuchin monks, so-called for the hoods on their habits, belonged to the Order of St. Francis and went out to preach among the poor, giving important support to the Counter-Reformation. For this famous scene Schiller used the sermons of the Viennese Barefoot prior Abraham a Santa Clara (1644–1709).
32. The Swedish chancellor. He is mentioned again, *Picc.*, Act II, scene 5, at line 715, and is a major presence, though he never appears.
33. Woman (Luke 15,8); Saul (1 Samuel 9–10); Joseph (Genesis 42–45).
34. St. John the Baptist; see also Luke 16, 22.
35. King David's long-haired son. 2 Samuel 14, 26; 18, 9–15.
36. "Do not keep my flock." This would seem to be a negation of the command, "Feed my sheep" (John 21, 15–17), though it has nothing of the simplicity of the Vulgate "Pasce agnos meos." By implication, Wallenstein has failed the test of loyalty to which Jesus put his apostles and is denied the approbation they met with.
37. Cited by Abraham as Hebrew kings who were constantly at war.
38. See King Saul's visit to the Witch of Endor, 1 Samuel 28, 6–19.
39. Book of Judith.
40. Matthew 26, 69–75.
41. Luke 13, 31–32.
42. 2 Kings 24–25; Daniel 5.
43. Sons of Hett, among the Gentiles of the Land of Canaan. These mentions, and Belshazzar, above, are liberties of translation.
44. A traditional belief, represented in Aesop and in emblems.
45. An Austrian infantry regiment that endured to the end of the Habsburg monarchy.

46. The Walloons are a French-speaking people of the southernmost Low Countries, bordering France. In these plays they are particularly well represented in the Pappenheim regiment of cuirassiers. Max Piccolomini's succeeding to this regiment after the death of Pappenheim is Schiller's invention.
47. Ferdinand (1609–1641), younger brother of the Spanish king Philip IV. He was archbishop of Toledo and cardinal. The march in question was to be from Spanish-ruled Milan to the Spanish Netherlands.
48. In 1625, as Wallenstein raised his first army.
49. Border stronghold to which Wallenstein withdrew from Pilsen. *Death*, Acts IV and V are set there.
50. Count Isolani—with his debts—enters at *Picc.*, Act I, scene 1, line 1.
51. A prince of the Holy Roman Empire, in rank immediate to the Kaiser.
52. Brandeis in Bohemia, where Wallenstein waited upon the Kaiser in December 1627 and was allowed to remain covered.
53. In January 1628 Wallenstein received the duchy of Mecklenburg, not outright, but as surety for his assuming costs of war.
54. As Holy Roman Emperor.
55. The figure of Justitia holds a raised sword in her right hand, a balance in her left.
56. The German is *Seifensieder*: soap boilers. In effect, those who render the fat of butchered animals to make soap, candles, polishing wax, etc.

The Piccolomini

Act One

57. City on the Danube in southern Germany, then occupied by Swedish forces.
58. Wallenstein has summoned all his commanders to his headquarters at Pilsen as his worsening relations with the court in Vienna approach a crisis.
59. The battle of the Dessau bridge, where Mansfeld was defeated, 1626.
60. See *Camp* at line 57. *Camp* and *Piccolomini* take place simultaneously.
61. First indication of collusion within the army.
62. See the Sergeant's mention of Buttler, *Camp*, scene 7, at line 432.
63. First mentioned at *Camp*, scene 2, line 71.
64. Octavio takes no account of Buttler's promotion to major general, still unconfirmed by Vienna.
65. Illo is remembering negotiations for the restoration of Wallenstein's command, April 1632.
66. By Gustavus Adolphus in April 1632. Tilly had assumed command of the imperial army after Wallenstein's dismissal at Regensburg in 1630.
67. A high officer of the Viennese court.
68. In summer 1632 Wallenstein's restored army had expelled the Saxons, who were allied with Sweden, from Bohemia. See *Camp*, scene 1, line 32.
69. The tag goes back to Livy: "Bellum ... se ipse alet," *Ab urbe condita*, 34, 9.
70. Slavata and Martinitz were Bohemian noblemen acting for Vienna and detested by their people, who hurled them from a window of the Hradschin, 1618. This was the beginning of the Bohemian rebellion that touched off the Thirty Years' War.
71. By "child" Illo means Ferdinand, elected King of Hungary, the Kaiser's eldest surviving son, with whom, he suspects, Vienna intends to replace Wallenstein. The rhetorical figure is stichomythia (speech line-for-line), in which a one-line assertion is promptly met by a one-line rebuttal, usually by repeating a word (as "child ... child" at the end of this dispute). The device is ubiquitous in seventeenth-century German drama. Schiller uses it often in *Wallenstein*, for rhetorical effect and period color.

- 72. Emblems of Austria, Sweden, and France, respectively.
- 73. The Adige, now in northern Italy, prized for its vineyards.
- 74. The Second Horseman makes the same observation, *Camp*, scene 11, at line 695.
- 75. Not historical.
- 76. Anticipation of *Death*, Act II, scene 6.
- 77. Octavio, therefore, is acting not only out of personal conviction but also on orders from Vienna.
- 78. Enumeration of Vienna's weaknesses: the Swedish army was standing in southern Germany and had taken Regensburg; since 1626 Upper Austria had been troubled by repeated peasant revolts; the estates had grown restless under the demands of absolutist Vienna.
- 79. The crime in question is high treason.
- 80. But see Max's misgivings about his father, Act V, scenes 1 and 3, especially at line 2357.
- 81. Wallenstein retells this event, *Death*, Act II, scene 3, at line 869.
- 82. After the soldiers in *Camp*, the officers in the early scenes of *Piccolomini*, and Questenberg himself, Max delivers the fourth account of Wallenstein's extraordinary powers before the man himself appears, Act II, scene 2.
- 83. This, Octavio's reply, captures the philosophical difference between father and son Piccolomini.
- 84. Max delivers here a statement of the case for Wallenstein.

Act Two

- 85. Il Dottore, a stock figure of Italian commedia dell'arte. This is a surviving trace of Schiller's early intention to make of Seni a comic figure.
- 86. The Kaiser's eldest surviving son, also called Ferdinand, was the elected King of Hungary.
- 87. Eggenberg and Lichtenstein were two of the Kaiser's closest advisors.
- 88. The Kaiser's influential Jesuit confessor.

89. At the congress at Regensburg, 1630, the prince-electors had united against Wallenstein and he was relieved of his command.
90. Thekla's parents have just taken her from the convent where she was educated. She is now marriageable. Their next duty is to establish her in an alliance becoming to her rank and station.
91. Wallenstein raised his first army in 1625. He besieged Stralsund, in Pomerania, in 1628.
92. Thekla is now perhaps seventeen years old.
93. Max describes his experience of this entrance, Act III, scene 4, at line 1350.
94. First manifestation of the extraordinary rapport between the Countess and her brother-in-law.
95. This is the "child" of Illo's dispute with Questenberg, Act I, scene 2, line 177.
96. Absences first mentioned at Act I, scene 1, line 18.
97. Led by the Cardinal-Infante, first mentioned in *Camp*, scene 11, at line 685.
98. Bohemian emigrant and Swedish general.
99. This is Oxenstirn, who was present at a war council convened at Halberstadt to consider relations between Saxony and Sweden, January–February 1634.
100. For Wallenstein, a point of honor. The motif of Swedish territorial ambitions returns, *Death*, Act I, scene 5.
101. General in the Saxon army.
102. Wallenstein is asking about the commanders, whom Illo has been greeting upon their arrival.
103. See Isolani's acknowledgment, Act I, scene 1, at line 52. Faro is Isolani's favored card game.
104. The Sergeant also makes this point, *Camp*, scene 11, at line 742.
105. The favorable planet. Mars is the unfavorable planet. See *Death*, Act I, scene 1.
106. Saturn, the leaden god, associated with the element earth.
107. Reminiscent of Jacob's ladder, Genesis 25, 12.

108. Jove, the serene and jovial god, was Wallenstein's chosen deity.
109. The planetary houses are the twelve houses of the zodiac. The corners are the point of rising, the zenith, the point of setting, and the nadir of the lowest heaven (*immum caelum*) under the earth.
110. The many names that Schiller introduces from his sources give these plays a scope and fullness that borders on the cinematic.
111. A fine instance of dramatic irony.
112. Questenberg's account begins with the restoration of Wallenstein's command, April 1632.
113. The unvanquished king is Gustavus Adolphus. The others all stand on the Swedish side.
114. Adhering closely to historical events, Schiller has Questenberg describe the encounter between Wallenstein and Gustavus Adolphus at Nuremberg, late summer 1632. Gustavus occupied the town, Wallenstein a fortified position on the outskirts.
115. A passage of high rhetoric full of metonymy (calling one thing by the name of another) that pits Wallenstein against Gustavus. "They" are the Swedes; "he" is Wallenstein.
116. Gustavus Adolphus was mortally wounded at Lützen, outside Leipzig, November 1632.
117. The hero is Prince Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar. A well-turned compliment to the House of Weimar, where the *Wallenstein* trilogy was first performed, in the court theater, over which Goethe presided, April 1799.
118. The old enemy is "the Bavarian:" Duke Maximilian. Regensburg fell in November 1633.
119. Thurn was with the Swedish army, Arnheim with the Saxon.
120. The belligerents in Silesia had called a truce for negotiations, summer 1633.
121. Victory at Steinau on the Oder, October 1633.
122. One of the demands the Kaiser made of Wallenstein at Pilsen was that his army not oppress the countryside.
123. The German for a soldier's wage is *Sold*, the French is *solde*, from the Italian *soldo*, sou. A *soldato* (soldier) is one who receives the sou.

124. The period 1625–1630, during Wallenstein’s first command. In the *History of the Thirty Years’ War*, Schiller writes explicitly of the plundering and pillaging by which Wallenstein’s army supported itself. The anecdote related by the First Horseman is on the same subject, *Camp*, scene 11, at line 733.
125. Here, in 1630, the prince-electors of Germany prevailed upon the Kaiser to remove Wallenstein, whose army had laid waste their lands.
126. A Dutch officer under Wallenstein’s command.
127. Last mentioned at scene 5, line 709.
128. The badge of an imperial chamberlain was a golden key.

Act Three

129. This imaginary address to Wallenstein functions as a soliloquy: the Countess sets out her thoughts and feelings for the audience.
130. The German is “Base Terzky,” aunt or cousin. It signifies that Max is on intimate and respectful terms with the Countess.
131. Nepomuk lies thirty kilometers southeast of Pilsen.
132. Max addresses Thekla at this point as *mein Fräulein*. *Fräulein* at the time was a title reserved to the elevated social classes, as was “lady” at one time in the English-speaking world. Max’s form of address expresses his esteem for Thekla and acknowledges her superior rank.
133. The motif of the hardships of the Duchess’s marriage returns, *Death*, Act III, scene 3.
134. Thekla appears in Act II, scene 3 decked out in jewels her father has given her. She observes, “he … adorned me,” line 681–82.
135. An irony. It echoes Wallenstein at the very end of scene 3, just before Max enters in scene 4, and anticipates major change in Max’s fortunes (*Death*, Act III, scene 4).
136. Here begins a subtle contrasting of Max and Thekla that runs throughout the act.
137. A fabulous beast, half eagle, half lion.
138. The five planets—Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn—and sun and moon.

139. The olive branch is peace, the laurel victory.
140. All in northeast Bohemia, where Wallenstein's duchy lay.
141. Max's idyll is little to Wallenstein's taste; see *Death*, Act I, scene 7, at line 504.
142. Max and Thekla address one another as *Sie* when they are in the presence of others, as *du* when they are tête-à-tête.
143. The first manifestation of Thekla's shrewdness and steeliness.
144. The Piccolomini were in fact Sienese.
145. Thekla's inquiry about the Countess's state of mind borders on the impertinent. She is retaliating for the Countess's accusation of duplicity. In effect, "Have I touched a nerve, Aunt?" In the next line she relents.
146. Just as Max and his father have different conceptions of ethos, Thekla and the Countess have different conceptions of love and duty.
147. Wallenstein's silence on this point conduces to the catastrophe of Max and Thekla.

Act Four

148. Count Palatine Frederick IV (1574–1610) was a notorious drinker whose drunken evenings at his court in the Heidelberg Castle remained famous long after his death.
149. The text is faithful to the original document, signed 12 January 1634.
150. Buttler here alludes at length to an event that emerges clearly in his conversation with Octavio, *Death*, Act II, scene 6.
151. The account is not historical. Walter Butler was an Old Irish aristocrat and married to a German noblewoman.
152. Buttler's remarks here all go to acquisition of territory. Sweden had gained important possessions in Pomerania; Bernhard of Weimar, a younger son, had gained a fief in Franconia, offered by his Swedish allies; Mansfeld had ambitions in Alsace; Christian von Halberstadt, a younger son of the Duke of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel, had hopes of reward from his Protestant allies. By means of this catalogue Buttler can condone any territorial ambitions Wallenstein may be entertaining without having to be explicit. The passage also serves to create a context for Wallenstein's imputed

ambitions: many German princes—and not only younger sons—hoped to improve themselves in a war that, among much else, amounted to a land grab of continental dimensions. See “handing prince’s bonnets out,” scene 1, line 1713.

153. In 1619 Frederick V, Count Palatine, was crowned king of Bohemia, then in rebellion. He was defeated by the Habsburgs at the battle of White Mountain, 1620.
154. Here begins an *ekphrasis*, a sustained literary description and interpretation of an object, for example, Aeneas’s observation of the gates of the temple being built at Carthage, *Aeneid* I. The device is epic rather than dramatic; Schiller spoke of “epic breadth.” Goethe observed that the discontent and unrest cited here are relevant to any hopes Wallenstein may have of gaining the Bohemian crown.
155. The Hussite War followed the execution of Johann Huss as a heretic (1415). One of the precepts of the Hussites was that communion consists of both bread *and* wine, called communion *sub utraque specie* (both ways). The moderate adherents of the Hussite movement were called Utraquists; the Taborites, largely peasants, were more radical.
156. Rudolf II (1552–1612), Holy Roman Emperor.
157. Rudolf’s successor, Kaiser Ferdinand II, born at Graz.
158. Taborite army leaders.
159. First mentioned by Illo, Act I, scene 2, at line 126.
160. Diego de Quiroga, Capuchin monk and confessor to the Queen of Hungary, said to have been sent to Pilsen to keep an eye on Wallenstein.
161. Sweden took Pomerania, 1630–1631, and refused to grant a winter truce.
162. Here Octavio begins to move against Wallenstein.
163. Don Giovanni’s funereal guest, who comes from the tomb to a dinner.

Act Five

164. Wallenstein, at the very outset of *Death*, tells Seni that day is breaking.
165. See Max on Wallenstein’s wish for peace, Act I, scene 4, at line 489.
166. Johann Ulrich, Baron Schaffgotsch (1595–1635), of Bohemian-Silesian nobility.

167. The philosophical difference between father and son Piccolomini. It first emerges Act I, scene 4, at line 406, in Questenberg's presence.
168. The Kaiser's eldest surviving son, later Ferdinand III. See Wallenstein's misgivings, Act II, scene 5, at line 700.
169. First mentioned Act II, scene 5, line 710.
170. See Act II, scene 5, at line 748.
171. Gallas's absence—and Altringer's whereabouts—has been a subject since Act I, scene 1, line 18.

The Death of Wallenstein

Act One

172. Opposed beams pass between stars opposite one another in the circle of the zodiac; quadratic beams pass between those that are two stars removed from one another on the perimeter of the circle. Both these are unfavorable. Mars between Jupiter and Venus would seem to form an equilateral triangle, a favorable aspect.
173. Doing evil: an astrological term.
174. In a falling house.
175. *The Death of Wallenstein*, famously, has a *fallende Handlung*, a descending action. The play opens at its turning point and the catastrophe unfolds throughout its five acts.
176. See the Cornet's report, *Picc.*, Act V, scene 2, at line 2317.
177. Kinsky's name appears here among the names of men who opposed the Kaiser, an association more in keeping with the historical Kinsky, who had contact with the Bohemian emigration.
178. Wallenstein has arranged to meet at Pilsen not only with his commanders but also with the Swedes.
179. The oath signed at the banquet, *Picc.*, Act IV, scene 6.
180. The pro memoria planned in *Camp*, scene 11, at line 999.
181. The first of two great soliloquies by Wallenstein.
182. Wrangel's compliments have a ring of tautology and truism; Wallenstein seems not to notice.
183. Hostilities in Silesia ended in negotiations. See *Picc.*, Act II, scene 7, line 969.
184. Attila the Hun (d. 453), not necessarily a flattering comparison; Pyrrhus, King of Epirus (d. 272 BCE), known for his costly victories.
185. In 1625, when Wallenstein raised his first army.
186. Wallenstein's retelling of the story of his patchwork army. See the Sergeant's version, *Camp*, scene 11, at line 764.

187. See the Wine Steward's account of Bohemia, *Picc.*, Act IV, scene 5, at line 1860.
188. In the play, the commander of the nearby Swedish force.
189. The Kingdom of Heaven or of the church. This is the confessional dimension of a war fought over much else as well.
190. The Moldau runs between the proposed holdings.
191. Charles, the last of the elder branch of the Bourbon line. He deserted the service of Francis I to ally himself with Kaiser Karl V, whom he aided against France in the Italian Wars; the capture of Francis at Pavia (1525) is ascribed to his treachery.
192. He was brother to Ferdinand I, who was grandfather of Ferdinand II.
193. Frederick V, Count Palatine, apparently, though the reference is obscure and not historical.
194. Schiller knew Shakespeare from his school days. After *Wallenstein*, while he was at work on *Maria Stuart*, he undertook a long-contemplated adaptation of *Macbeth* for the Weimar stage. Many passages in the trilogy show that he had read *Julius Caesar* with care, and there are reminiscences of other plays.
195. Max is coming directly from his conversation with his father, *Picc.*, Act V, scene 3.
196. The Countess thinks Max comes to ask for Thekla's hand.
197. See Wallenstein's account of his dismissal at Regensburg in 1630: *Picc.*, Act II, scene 7, at line 1022.
198. The restoration of Wallenstein's command in 1632, when the war was going badly for the Kaiser.
199. The House of Habsburg.
200. In 1627, during Wallenstein's first command. The Countess, for her purposes, is frank about the army's lawlessness and plundering. See Wallenstein's account, *Picc.*, Act II, scene 7, at line 1022.
201. The Countess's counter-argument to Wallenstein's "It's not yet time," *Picc.*, Act II, scene 6, line 839.
202. Wrangel made three demands of Wallenstein. To comply Wallenstein would have to send messengers to Prague and to Eger. The destination of a third is less easy to conclude.

203. "He" is the Kaiser.
204. The reference is to the dragon's teeth from which armed men sprang in the myth of Jason and Medea.

Act Two

205. The subject is Altringer's whereabouts. See Octavio's surprise, *Picc.*, Act V, scene 2, at line 2334.
206. Wrangel's first demand was disarmament of the Spanish regiments that answered to the Kaiser, Act I, scene 5, at line 332.
207. The speech fairly vibrates with dramatic irony.
208. The German is *Alter* and expresses affection and esteem. Terzky and Illo speak of Octavio as *der Alte*, the Old Man: they are respectful and wary.
209. Wallenstein's response to Max makes an interesting contrast with Octavio's, *Picc.*, Act I, scene 4, at line 406, and Act V, scene 1, at line 2206.
210. Max's triad is capacity, nobility, and freedom. The negation of these qualities is incapacity.
211. The ancient salamander was said to live in fire. Paracelsus assigned the salamander fire as its element; hence the connotation of purity. Earth, another element, is less pure and associated with evil and with treasure, also a source of evil.
212. Caesar, returning from Gaul, led his legions across the Rubicon, a small river outside Rome and the boundary beyond which no army was permitted to pass, and took Rome. He was responding to his enemies' attempt to have him removed from his command. Caesar's luck was legendary, as was Wallenstein's. If one extends Wallenstein's line of comparison to the way that Caesar died, an irony emerges.
213. Wallenstein's retelling of the incident before Lützen. Octavio's account is at *Picc.*, Act I, scene 3, line 313.
214. Johan Banér, Swedish general.
215. Wallenstein's response to the capture of Sesina was, "An evil accident!" Act I, scene 3, line 86 and line 92.
216. The microcosm is the human being, the little world, which corresponds to the macrocosm, the world at large.

217. Rhyme makes these assertions even more positive and sententious.
218. The Tiefenbachers have been admired since *Camp*, end of scene 10.
219. Isolani believes Octavio has convened a number of commanders.
220. Isolani's faro bank, first mentioned at *Picc.*, Act I, scene 1.
221. *Picc.*, Act IV, scene 6, at line 1948. This is the interview Octavio has been contemplating since he told Questenberg he knows a way to righten Buttler's wrongheadedness, *Picc.*, Act I, scene 3, at line 246. See also Buttler's impenetrable allusions in conversation with Terzky and Illo, *Picc.*, Act IV, scene 4, at line 1770.
222. Buttler tells Illo that Gallas tried to keep him at Frauenberg, *Picc.*, Act I, scene 1, line 36.
223. Octavio's knowing how to righten Buttler's wrongheadedness (*Picc.*, Act I, scene 3, line 246) implies that his possession of the letter is not by chance.
224. That confirmation was being withheld by Vienna. See *Picc.*, Act I, scene 1, line 46.
225. The expression has two valences: it is both rhetorical, in the sense, "A pox upon him!" and literal, as Octavio may or may not have understood.
226. Buttler's rapid exit precludes any further development of the conversation.

Act Three

227. The central act of a five-act drama and, here, the hinge: the fortunes of the House of Wallenstein begin to fail.
228. Max and Thekla saw each other last on the day of their arrival in Pilsen. The first two acts of *Death* take place on the following day. The third act takes place on the third day.
229. That is, word that the troops in Prague have pledged themselves to Wallenstein.
230. Wallenstein's betrayal of Buttler, like the episode before battle at Lützen, is related first in Octavio's telling, now in Wallenstein's. See Act II, scene 6, at line 1101.
231. Octavio has seen Isolani more clearly (Act II, scene 5). But see Wallenstein's final tribute to Isolani, below, scene 7, at line 1570.

232. Terzky reproaches the same incapacity in Wallenstein, à propos of Octavio, at the end of scene 8, below.
233. Wallenstein, on seeing Thekla again, speaks of a “kingly crown” (*Picc.*, Act II, scene 3, line 655). Max, on entering at that point, sees splendor that “admits approach by kings alone” (*Picc.*, Act III, scene 4, line 1367). Both passages prepare the way for this major new development. It is Wallenstein’s prerogative, as pater familias, to marry his daughter as he sees fit.
234. The Countess has cautioned Thekla in these terms. *Picc.*, Act III, scene 8, at line 1597.
235. Franz Albrecht, Prince of Sachsen-Lauenburg (1598–1642), an officer in the Saxon army.
236. See Octavio’s instruction to Isolani, Act II, scene 6, at line 1002.
237. The admired Tiefenbachers again. Octavio took a detachment of Tiefenbachers and left the rest for Max’s protection (Act II, scene 7, at line 1228). They tell Illo they take orders only from Octavio, below, scene 8, at line 1597.
238. Just as Wallenstein, the Countess tells him, would not see the obvious when he sent Max to fetch Thekla, he would not see in Octavio what both Terzky and Illo have long seen.
239. All in Bohemia or Moravia.
240. Frederick V, Count Palatine, the Winter King, put under ban and stripped of his territories, wandered Europe in search of a protector.
241. This is Wallenstein’s second great soliloquy. Just short of the center of the play, he looks back on his past imperial service and forward toward taking action.
242. This is Max’s regiment.
243. At Nuremberg. Altenberg lay within Wallenstein’s fortified camp outside the city.
244. In Moravia, east of Bohemia.
245. Part of the fortification of Wallenstein’s position at Nuremberg.
246. The Canteen Keeper remembers Mansfeld’s flight: *Camp*, scene 5, at line 138.

247. Ferdinand, the Kaiser's son: the "child" of Illo's dispute with Questenberg, "the Kaiser's precious little son" of Wallenstein's first conference with Terzky, *Picc.*, Act II, scene 5, at line 700.
248. The Sergeant cites this quality in Wallenstein, *Camp.*, scene 11, at line 713.
249. The hero who could solve the knot on the war chariot of King Gordios of Phrygia was promised mastery of Asia. Alexander the Great used his sword to cut the knot through.
250. The statement is both false and true.
251. The Duchess, unusually, addresses her husband by his given name and as *du*.
252. The name of Wallenstein's chief steward.
253. Max addresses Thekla as *du* in the presence of others.
254. Wallenstein begins the first of four attempts to keep Max.
255. A mythical reptile whose gaze and breath were poisonous.
256. Octavio makes the same observation, *Picc.*, Act V, scene 1, at line 2211.
257. The image of Laocoön was current and familiar at the time.
258. Wallenstein's second attempt.
259. At the time of the battle of White Mountain, November 1620.
260. The Order of the Golden Fleece, an award in the gift of the House of Habsburg.
261. Wallenstein's third attempt.
262. The planet, which stands for Wallenstein, seems to be Saturn.
263. Chain shot: two balls chained together and particularly lethal.
264. Wallenstein's final attempt.
265. Promise made to Octavio, Act II, scene 7, at line 1234.
266. Implied repeatedly in their early-morning conversation, *Picc.*, Act V, scene 1; see, for example, at line 2081, line 2247, and line 2309. See also *Death*, Act II, scene 7, at line 1222.

267. John Gordon, the commandant at Eger, was a Scot. Schiller seems to have been a little vague about the difference between the Scots and the Irish.
268. Schiller compresses the march from Pilsen to Eger to one long day.
269. See the cover illustration.

Act Four

270. The figure of Buttler presides over the action henceforth.
271. Gordon, like Isolani, Questenburg, Max, and the Duchess, is characterized instantly by the way he speaks.
272. The Sergeant describes Wallenstein's parity with the Kaiser in other terms, *Camp*, scene 11, at line 829.
273. But see Buttler's last conversation with Octavio, Act II, scene 6, at line 1140.
274. See, for comparison, Isolani's moment of conversion, Act II, scene 5, at line 976.
275. Pages were usually young nobles beginning a career at the court of a prince.
276. Wallenstein's history recedes into earlier and earlier beginnings as the drama advances toward its close.
277. Dictator as Caesar was dictator: a commander with unlimited powers of command.
278. The conversation with the Mayor puts Wallenstein's social elegance and affability on display, which Gordon describes at line 2385, and, like the wine cup (*Picc.*, Act IV, scene 5), is an occasion for representing Bohemia. There is also indication—here and elsewhere—of his contempt of others' interests.
279. That is to say, a free city and immediate to the Kaiser.
280. Wallenstein cites his indifference to confession as he threatens to resign, *Picc.*, Act II, scene 7, at line 1126.
281. The two branches of the House of Habsburg, on the Spanish and the Austrian throne.
282. The Ottoman Turks, who stood at the gates of Vienna as late as 1683, were still greatly feared.

283. They were moving northwestward; to the left lay Germany.
284. Towns in the Upper Palatinate, in Germany, approximately forty kilometers southwest of Eger.
285. In the Erzgebirge, about fifty kilometers northeast of Eger.
286. The commander of the nearby Swedish force.
287. A town in the Upper Palatinate, about twenty kilometers south of Eger
288. Town in Bohemia, about twenty-five kilometers southeast of Eger.
289. These are Terzky's regiments.
290. Like Buttler's avowal at line 2416, subject to doubt.
291. Two senses of "judgment" are in play here. For Gordon, judgment comes at the conclusion of a trial or hearing. For Buttler, the Kaiser's ban is judgment; execution of that ban and execution of the outlaw are one and the same act. But even Buttler conflates murder and execution in this passage and in line 2772.
292. At Neustadt; see at line 2576.
293. The remark reflects not only on Max but also on Buttler.
294. By "Austria" is meant the House of Austria. Illo's boast is treasonous.
295. Where the banquet is to be held that evening.
296. Archimedes, at work in Syracuse, was surprised by Roman soldiers and slain when he would not leave off studying a geometric figure.
297. At Neustadt.
298. Buttler's third citing of a word of honor. See at line 2600.
299. Thekla returns to this line at the end of the interview (line 2970), closing the circle.
300. Or about thirty English miles.
301. Thekla, too, is going on a pilgrimage.
302. Thekla speaks plainly enough.

303. The Rosenbergs were an extinct line of Bohemian nobility. The office of master of the horse carried high responsibility and its incumbent was often a nobleman.
304. "Sleep" has two values.

Act Five

305. Act Five, like Act Two, opens on a commander giving orders to his highest lieutenant, but the quality of the two men present and of the action being prepared has changed.
306. The municipal council of the town of Eger.
307. Deveroux and Macdonald were both Irishmen, apparently, and here both are captains in Buttler's regiment of dragoons. They are figures of fun—of a grisly humor—in a tragedy poor in comic roles.
308. An Irishman found in Schiller's sources.
309. A Scot, serving under Gordon, who had an active part in the assassination. He is first mentioned at the end of Buttler's conspiratorial conversation with Illo and Terzky, *Picc.*, Act IV, scene 4, line 1820.
310. First mentioned by the Sergeant, *Camp*, scene 6, at line 348.
311. Victory of the Swedish force at Neustadt.
312. Throughout the scenes that follow the portents of disaster thicken, set in counterpoint to repeated reference to the castle, where Illo's banquet is in progress.
313. A new dimension of Wallenstein emerges so late in his drama.
314. As his regent during his absence at war.
315. An imperial war against Venice, 1615–1618, in which Wallenstein took part at his own expense. The beginning of his good relations with the House of Habsburg.
316. Gordon has recounted this experience (Act IV, scene 2, at line 2462). Now comes Wallenstein's retelling.
317. Gordon's modest figure irritates Wallenstein into boasting.

318. In Greek mythology a monster, son of Tartaros and Gaia and associated with fierce weather. An association with human sacrifice is not easily established.
319. In the event, “Swedish” trumpets do exactly that.
320. The subject again is time, now not a question of delay, as it was earlier in the trilogy, but of haste. The motif returns in Octavio’s reproach to Buttler, scene 11, at line 3656. See also the first soliloquy, where Wallenstein reflects on the gap that falls between the contemplation and the execution of a deed (Act I, scene 4, at line 133).
321. The signal Buttler spoke of in the first line of this scene.
322. The Order of the Golden Fleece, awarded Wallenstein in 1628 by the Habsburgs.
323. Wallenstein’s chancellery was put under seal that very night.
324. Octavio, like Elisabeth in *Maria Stuart*, has “preserved deniability.”
325. Buttler’s riposte to Octavio’s claim, line 3645.

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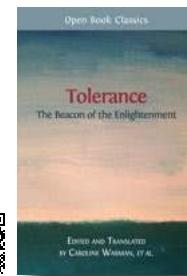
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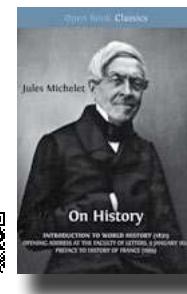
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Wallenstein

A Dramatic Poem

Friedrich Schiller

Translated by Flora Kimmich

Introduction by Roger Paulin

By the time Frederich Schiller came to write the Wallenstein trilogy, his reputation as one of Germany's leading playwrights was all but secured. Consisting of *Wallenstein's Camp*, *The Piccolomini* and *Wallenstein's Death*, this suite of plays appeared between 1798 and 1799, each production under the original direction of Schiller's collaborator and mentor, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Across the three plays, which are now commonly performed and printed together, Schiller charts the thwarted rebellion of General Albrecht von Wallenstein. Based loosely on the events of the Thirty Years' War, the trilogy provides a unique perspective on an army's loyalty to their commander and the machinations and intrigues of international diplomacy, giving insight into the military hero who is placed on the threshold between these forces as they are increasingly pitted against one another.

The Wallenstein trilogy, formally innovative and modern beyond its time, is a brilliant study of power, ambition and betrayal. In this new translation—the latest in a long line of distinguished English translations starting with Coleridge's in Schiller's lifetime—Flora Kimmich succeeds in rendering what is often a difficult source text into language that is at once accessible and enjoyable. Coupled with a complete and careful commentary and a glossary, both of which are targeted to undergraduates, it is accompanied by an authoritative introductory essay by Roger Paulin. Kimmich's translation will be an invaluable resource for students of German, European literature and history, and military history, as well as to all readers approaching this important set of plays for the first time.

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Cover image: Bernhard Neher (der Jüngere), Wallenstein standing between Max and Thekla (detail). Photo by Rolf-Werner Nehrdich, courtesy of the Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte, Munich. Cover design: Heidi Coburn.



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