

FRIEDRICH VON SCHILLER

WALLENSTEIN'S CAMP

Friedrich Schiller

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Wallenstein's Camp: A Play:

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Wallenstein's Camp: A Play

The Camp of Wallenstein is an introduction to the celebrated tragedy of that name; and, by its vivid portraiture of the state of the general's army, gives the best clue to the spell of his gigantic power. The blind belief entertained in the unfailing success of his arms, and in the supernatural agencies by which that success is secured to him; the unrestrained indulgence of every passion, and utter disregard of all law, save that of the camp; a hard oppression of the peasantry and plunder of the country, have all swollen the soldiery with an idea of interminable sway. But as we have translated the whole, we shall leave these reckless marauders to speak for themselves.

Of Schiller's opinion concerning the Camp, as a necessary introduction to the tragedy, the following passage taken from the prologue to the first representation, will give a just idea, and may also serve as a motto to the work: —

"Not he it is, who on the tragic scene
Will now appear – but in the fearless bands
Whom his command alone could sway, and whom
His spirit fired, you may his shadow see,
Until the bashful Muse shall dare to bring
Himself before you in a living form;
For power it was that bore his heart astray

His Camp, alone, elucidates his crime."

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Sergeant-Major | of a regiment of Recruit.

Trumpeter | Terzky's carabineers. Citizen.

Artilleryman, Peasant.

Sharpshooters. Peasant Boy.

Mounted Yagers, of Holk's corps. Capuchin.

Dragoons, of Butler's regiment. Regimental Schoolmaster.

Arquebusiers, of Tiefenbach's regiment. Sutler-Woman.

Cuirassier, of a Walloon regiment. Servant Girl.

Cuirassier, of a Lombard regiment. Soldiers' Boys.

Croats. Musicians.

Hulans.

(SCENE. – The Camp before Pilsen, in Bohemia.)

SCENE I

Sutlers' tents – in front, a Slop-shop. Soldiers of all colors and uniforms thronging about. Tables all filled. Croats and Hulans cooking at a fire. Sutler-woman serving out wine. Soldier-boys throwing dice on a drum-head. Singing heard from the tent.

Enter a Peasant and his Son.

SON

Father, I fear it will come to harm,
So let us be off from this soldier swarm;
But boist'rous mates will ye find in the shoal —
'Twere better to bolt while our skins are whole.

FATHER

How now, boy! the fellows wont eat us, though
They may be a little unruly, or so.
See, yonder, arriving a stranger train,
Fresh comers are they from the Saal and Mayne;
Much booty they bring of the rarest sort —

'Tis ours, if we cleverly drive our sport.
A captain, who fell by his comrade's sword,
This pair of sure dice to me transferred;
To-day I'll just give them a trial to see
If their knack's as good as it used to be.
You must play the part of a pitiful devil,
For these roaring rogues, who so loosely revel,
Are easily smoothed, and tricked, and flattered,
And, free as it came, their gold is scattered.
But we – since by bushels our all is taken,
By spoonfuls must ladle it back again;
And, if with their swords they slash so highly,
We must look sharp, boy, and do them slyly.

[Singing and shouting in the tent.

Hark, how they shout! God help the day!
'Tis the peasant's hide for their sport must pay.
Eight months in our beds and stalls have they
Been swarming here, until far around
Not a bird or a beast is longer found,
And the peasant, to quiet his craving maw,
Has nothing now left but his bones to gnaw.
Ne'er were we crushed with a heavier hand,
When the Saxon was lording it o'er the land:
And these are the Emperor's troops, they say!

SON

From the kitchen a couple are coming this way,
Not much shall we make by such blades as they.

FATHER

They're born Bohemian knaves – the two —
Belonging to Terzky's carabineers,
Who've lain in these quarters now for years;
The worst are they of the worthless crew.
Strutting, swaggering, proud and vain,
They seem to think they may well disdain
With the peasant a glass of his wine to drain
But, soft – to the left o' the fire I see
Three riflemen, who from the Tyrol should be
Emmerick, come, boy, to them will we.
Birds of this feather 'tis luck to find,
Whose trim's so spruce, and their purse well lined.

[They move towards the tent.

SCENE II

The above – Sergeant-Major, Trumpeter, Hulan.

TRUMPETER

What would the boor? Out, rascal, away!

PEASANT

Some victuals and drink, worthy masters, I pray,
For not a warm morsel we've tasted to day.

TRUMPETER

Ay, guzzle and guttle – 'tis always the way.

HULAN (with a glass)

Not broken your fast! there – drink, ye hound!

He leads the peasant to the tent – the others come forward.

SERGEANT (to the Trumpeter)

Think ye they've done it without good ground?

Is it likely they double our pay to-day,

Merely that we may be jolly and gay?

TRUMPETER

Why, the duchess arrives to-day, we know,

And her daughter too —

SERGEANT

Tush! that's mere show —
'Tis the troops collected from other lands
Who here at Pilsen have joined our bands —
We must do the best we can t' allure 'em,
With plentiful rations, and thus secure 'em.
Where such abundant fare they find,
A closer league with us to bind.

TRUMPETER

Yes! – there's something in the wind.

SERGEANT

The generals and commanders too —

TRUMPETER

A rather ominous sight, 'tis true.

SERGEANT

Who're met together so thickly here —

TRUMPETER

Have plenty of work on their hands, that's clear.

SERGEANT

The whispering and sending to and fro —

TRUMPETER

Ay! Ay!

SERGEANT

The big-wig from Vienna, I trow,
Who since yesterday's seen to prowl about
In his golden chain of office there —
Something's at the bottom of this, I'll swear.

TRUMPETER

A bloodhound is he beyond a doubt,
By whom the duke's to be hunted out.

SERGEANT

Mark ye well, man! – they doubt us now,
And they fear the duke's mysterious brow;
He hath clomb too high for them, and fain
Would they beat him down from his perch again.

TRUMPETER

But we will hold him still on high —
That all would think as you and I!

SERGEANT

Our regiment, and the other four
Which Terzky leads – the bravest corps
Throughout the camp, are the General's own,
And have been trained to the trade by himself alone
The officers hold their command of him,
And are all his own, or for life or limb.

SCENE III

Enter Croat with a necklace. Sharpshooter following him.

The above.

SHARPSHOOTER

Croat, where stole you that necklace, say?
Get rid of it man – for thee 'tis unmeet:
Come, take these pistols in change, I pray.

CROAT

Nay, nay, Master Shooter, you're trying to cheat.

SHARPSHOOTER

Then I'll give you this fine blue cap as well,
A lottery prize which just I've won:

Look at the cut of it – quite the swell!

CROAT (twirling the Necklace in the Sun)

But this is of pearls and of garnets bright,
See, how it plays in the sunny light!

SHARPSHOOTER (taking the Necklace)

Well, I'll give you to boot, my own canteen —
I'm in love with this bauble's beautiful sheen.

[Looks at it.

TRUMPETER

See, now! – how cleanly the Croat is done
Snacks! Master Shooter, and mum's the word.

CROAT (having put on the cap)

I think your cap is a smartish one.

SHARPSHOOTER (winking to the Trumpeter)

'Tis a regular swop, as these gents have heard.

SCENE IV

The above. An Artilleryman.

ARTILLERYMAN (to the Sergeant)

How is this I pray, brother carabineer?
Shall we longer stay here, our fingers warming,
While the foe in the field around is swarming?

SERGEANT

Art thou, indeed, in such hasty fret?
Why the roads, as I think, are scarce passable yet.

ARTILLERYMAN

For me they are not – I'm snug enough here —
But a courier's come, our wits to waken
With the precious news that Ratisbon's taken.

TRUMPETER

Ha! then we soon shall have work in hand.

SERGEANT

Indeed! to protect the Bavarian's land,
Who hates the duke, as we understand,
We won't put ourselves in a violent sweat.

ARTILLERYMAN

Heyday! – you'll find you're a wiseacre yet.

SCENE V

The above – Two Yagers. Afterwards Sutler-woman,
Soldier-boy, Schoolmaster, Servant-girl.

FIRST YAGER

See! see!
Here meet we a jovial company!

TRUMPETER

Who can these greencoats be, I wonder,
That strut so gay and sprucely yonder!

SERGEANT

They're the Yagers of Holk – and the lace they wear,
I'll be sworn, was ne'er purchased at Leipzig fair.

SUTLER-WOMAN (bringing wine)

Welcome, good sirs!

FIRST YAGER

Zounds, how now?
Gustel of Blasewitz here, I vow!

SUTLER-WOMAN

The same in sooth – and you I know,
Are the lanky Peter of Itzeho:
Who at Glueckstadt once, in revelling night,
With the wags of our regiment, put to flight
All his father's shiners – then crowned the fun —

FIRST YAGER

By changing his pen for a rifle-gun.

SUTLER-WOMAN

We're old acquaintance, then, 'tis clear.

FIRST YAGER

And to think we should meet in Bohemia here!

SUTLER-WOMAN

Oh, here to-day – to-morrow yonder —
As the rude war-broom, in restless trace,
Scatters and sweeps us from place to place.
Meanwhile I've been doomed far round to wander.

FIRST YAGER

So one would think, by the look of your face.

SUTLER-WOMAN

Up the country I've rambled to Temsewar,
Whither I went with the baggage-car,
When Mansfeld before us we chased away;
With the duke near Stralsund next we lay,
Where trade went all to pot, I may say.
I jogged with the succors to Mantua;
And back again came, under Feria:
Then, joining a Spanish regiment,
I took a short cut across to Ghent;
And now to Bohemia I'm come to get
Old scores paid off, that are standing yet,
If a helping hand by the duke be lent —
And yonder you see my sutler's tent.

FIRST YAGER

Well, all things seem in a flourishing way,
But what have you done with the Scotchman, say,
Who once in the camp was your constant flame?

SUTLER-WOMAN

A villain, who tricked me clean, that same
He bolted, and took to himself whate'er
I'd managed to scrape together, or spare,
Leaving me naught but the urchin there.

SOLDIER-BOY (springing forward)

Mother, is it my papa you name?

FIRST YAGER

Well, the emperor now must father this elf,
For the army must ever recruit itself.

SCHOOLMASTER

Forth to the school, ye rogue – d'ye hear?

FIRST YAGER

He, too, of a narrow room has fear.
SERVANT GIRL (entering).
Aunt, they'll be off.

SUTLER-WOMAN

I come apace.

FIRST YAGER

What gypsy is that with the roguish face?

SUTLER-WOMAN

My sister's child from the south, is she.

FIRST YAGER

Ay, ay, a sweet little niece – I see.
SECOND YAGER (holding the girl).
Softly, my pretty one! stay with me.

GIRL

The customers wait, sir, and I must go.

[Disengages herself, and exit.

FIRST YAGER

That maiden's a dainty morsel, I trow!
And her aunt – by heaven! I mind me well, —
When the best of the regiment loved her so,
To blows for her beautiful face they fell.
What different folks one's doomed to know!
How time glows off with a ceaseless flow!
And what sights as yet we may live to see!

(To the Sergeant and Trumpeter.)

Your health, good sirs, may we be free,
A seat beside you here to take?

SCENE VI

The Yagers, Sergeant, and Trumpeter.

SERGEANT

We thank ye – and room will gladly make.
To Bohemia welcome.

FIRST YAGER

Snug enough here!
In the land of the foe our quarters were queer.

TRUMPETER

You haven't the look on't – you're spruce to view.

SERGEANT

Ay, faith, on the Saal, and in Meissen, too,
Your praises are heard from the lips of few.

SECOND YAGER

Tush, man! why, what the plague d'ye mean?
The Croat had swept the fields so clean,
There was little or nothing for us to glean.

TRUMPETER

Yet your pointed collar is clean and sightly,
And, then, your hose that sit so tightly!
Your linen so fine, with the hat and feather,
Make a show of smartness altogether!

(To Sergeant.)

That fortune should upon youngers shine —
While nothing in your way comes, or mine.

SERGEANT

But then we're the Friedlander's regiment
And, thus, may honor and homage claim.

FIRST YAGER

For us, now, that's no great compliment,
We, also, bear the Friedlander's name.

SERGEANT

True – you form part of the general mass.

FIRST YAGER

And you, I suppose, are a separate class!
The difference lies in the coats we wear,
And I have no wish to change with you there.

SERGEANT

Sir Yager, I can't but with pity melt,
When I think how much among boors you've dwelt.
The clever knack and the proper tone,
Are caught by the general's side alone.

FIRST YAGER

Then the lesson is wofully thrown away, —
How he hawks and spits, indeed, I may say
You've copied and caught in the cleverest way;
But his spirit, his genius – oh, these I ween,
On your guard parade are but seldom seen.

SECOND YAGER

Why, zounds! ask for us wherever you will,
Friedland's wild hunt is our title still!
Never shaming the name, all undaunted we go
Alike through the field of a friend, or a foe;
Through the rising stalk, or the yellow corn,
Well know they the blast of Holk's Yager horn.
In the flash of an eye, we are far or near,
Swift as the deluge, or there or here —
As at midnight dark, when the flames outbreak
In the silent dwelling where none awake;
Vain is the hope in weapons or flight,
Nor order nor discipline thwart its might.
Then struggles the maid in our sinewy arms,
But war hath no pity, and scorns alarms.
Go, ask — I speak not with boastful tongue —
In Bareuth, Westphalia, Voigtland, where'er
Our troops have traversed — go, ask them there —
Children and children's children long,
When hundreds and hundreds of years are o'er,
Of Holk will tell and his Yager corps.

SERGEANT

Why, hark! Must a soldier then be made
By driving this riotous, roaring trade!
'Tis drilling that makes him, skill and sense —
Perception – thought – intelligence.

FIRST YAGER

'Tis liberty makes him! Here's a fuss!
That I should such twaddle as this discuss.
Was it for this that I left the school?
That the scribbling desk, and the slavish rule,
And the narrow walls, that our spirits cramp,
Should be met with again in the midst of the camp?
No! Idle and heedless, I'll take my way,
Hunting for novelty every day;
Trust to the moment with dauntless mind,
And give not a glance or before or behind.
For this to the emperor I sold my hide,
That no other care I might have to bide.
Through the foe's fierce firing bid me ride,
Through fathomless Rhine, in his roaring flow,
Where ev'ry third man to the devil may go,

At no bar will you find me boggling there;
But, farther than this, 'tis my special prayer,
That I may not be bothered with aught like care.

SERGEANT

If this be your wish, you needn't lack it,
'Tis granted to all with the soldier's jacket.

FIRST YAGER

What a fuss and a bother, forsooth, was made

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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