

Book Four

CHAPTER 1: *How the Hunter was spirited off to France, and the reasons therefor*

Trying to put too much edge on a blade spoils it, and drawing a bow too far makes it break. I wasn't satisfied with the coney trick I had played on my landlord, but I continued to punish my host for his monstrous avarice; I taught the boarders to soak the salty butter in water in order to remove the excess salt and to grate the hard cheese like Parmesan and moisten it with wine. These practical jokes were like stabs at the heart of the miser. By a special trick I removed the water from the wine on the table, and I made up a song comparing a miser to a hog, from which no good can come until it is dead and hanging in the butcher shop. I sang this song to the sound of my lute and caused him to repay me quickly with the following dirty trick—for, after all, I was ill advised to play tricks on the man in his own home.

Two young noblemen who lived at my landlord's received a check and orders from home to go to France in order to learn the language. But the German servant was away, and our landlord did not dare trust his French servant abroad with the horses. He said he did not know him well enough for that, and he was afraid he might forget to come back, thus robbing him of the horses. So he asked me to do him the great favor of taking the noblemen to Paris. My case would not come up for at least a month; and if I would give him power of attorney, he would see to my affairs as diligently as if I were present in person. The noblemen begged me to go; my own desire to see France also urged me on, since I could now do so without any cost to myself; in Cologne I'd be idle for at least

another month and would have to spend money for room and board. And so I took to the road as the coachman for these young nobles.

On the way, nothing worth writing about happened. But when we got to Paris and the noblemen cashed their letters of credit at our landlord's agent, not only was I arrested and the horses attached by court order, but also the agent, who said my landlord owed him a large amount of money, had the horses sold—with the approval of the local magistrate and in disregard of my protests. So I sat there like a shorn lamb and didn't know what to think, much less how to retrace the long and (at the time) dangerous road home. The two nobles expressed their sincere sympathy for me in my predicament, gave me a generous tip, and said they did not want to dismiss me until I found a good job or got back to Germany. They rented a room and I stayed with them for a few days and looked after one of them who had become indisposed from the long, unaccustomed journey. And since I had done a satisfactory job, he gave me his hand-me-down clothes when he bought a suit tailored in the latest fashion. They advised me to plan to stay in Paris for a few years and learn the language. My money in Cologne would not run away, and our landlord would take care of it in his usual pedantic way.

While I was still making up my mind about what to do, the doctor who came in daily to visit the sick nobleman heard me playing the lute and singing a German song. This pleased him so well that he offered me a good position and free board if I would give music lessons to his two boys. He knew my predicament better than I and was sure I would not refuse a good job. Since both noblemen recommended me highly and advised me to take the job, we soon agreed on the particulars. But I would hire myself out only for three months at a time.

This doctor spoke Italian as if it were his mother tongue and German as fluently as I did. That was another reason why I went to him. When I ate the farewell supper with my noblemen, he was there too, and my head was full of all sorts of thoughts—about my newly wedded wife, the troop promised

me, the treasure in Cologne, and the fact that I had been persuaded to leave all this behind me rather irresponsibly. When the conversation got around to our former landlord's avarice, it suddenly occurred to me—and I blurted it out across the table—that he might have gotten me out of the way on purpose so that he could claim my property in Cologne and keep it. The doctor thought this might well be, especially if the landlord considered me a man of low station. "No," said one of the noblemen, "if he has been sent out of the country to stay, it is because Simplicissimus always nagged and twitted him with his avarice." The sick one now thought he knew an even better reason; he had overheard the French hired hand complaining in broken German to our landlord that the Hunter had tattled on him to the landlady for not tending the horses well. But the jealous skinflint must have misunderstood the Frenchman's language; for he had assured the man that he should stay, while the Hunter would be gotten rid of. Since that day he had looked at his wife askance and had had more arguments with her than before.

The doctor said, "Whatever the reason, I am sure there was a plan to get the Hunter out of Germany and keep him out. But don't let that get you down. I'll see to it that you find a way back. Just write him to take good care of your treasure or he'll have to answer for it in court. What makes me suspicious is that the presumed creditor is a good friend of your landlord and his local agent. I rather think that you handed him the paper by virtue of which the horses were sold."

CHAPTER 2: *Simplicius gets a landlord who is better than the previous one*

Monseigneur Canard (that was the name of my new employer) offered to help me in every way to hang on to my money in Cologne, for he saw how sad I was. As soon as I came to his house, he wanted me to tell him about the state of my business, so he could think up ways of helping me. I imagined I wouldn't be worth much if I told him where I

came from. So I told him I was a poor German nobleman who had lost his father and mother and who only had a couple of relatives in a fortress occupied by the Swedes. I said I had been forced to keep this from my landlord and the two noblemen who were of the imperial party, lest they seize my property for their own use as something belonging to an enemy. I intended to write to the commander of the fortress (the one who had promised me the position of junior officer) and tell him not only how I had been spirited out of the country, but also that he should be good enough to take possession of my money and give it to my friends for safekeeping until I had a chance to get back to the regiment.

Canard was all for it and promised to expedite my letters, even if they were addressed to Mexico or China. Accordingly, I wrote to my dear wife, to my father-in-law, and to Colonel de St. André, the commander at Lippstadt. The letter said that I'd be back as soon as possible if only I had the means to make the long trip. I addressed the envelope to him and enclosed the other two letters. I asked both my father-in-law and the colonel to try and seize my money by military force before the matter was forgotten. Incidentally, I detailed how much there was in gold, silver, and jewelry. These letters I wrote in duplicate, one copy being sent by Monsieur Canard's messenger, the other by mail; in case one did not get there, the other would surely arrive. Thus I regained a joyful outlook and instructed my employer's two sons the more gladly. They were being brought up like young princes because Monsieur Canard was very rich and very proud, and he wanted to show off. He had caught this malady from great men, for he was daily associating with princes, as it were, and aping them in everything. His house was like the household of a count, and nothing was lacking save the title of "Your Excellency." And his fancy was such that he dealt with a marquis who happened to call on him no better than with his own kind. To be sure, he also treated little people, but he never accepted modest fees. He would rather charge nothing just to have the reputation of generosity. Because I was a bit unusual and since I knew he liked to show off with me when I

accompanied him (along with other servants) on his sick calls, I helped him when he made up medicine in his laboratory. That's where I got to know him better, for he liked to practice his German on me. I asked him once why he did not call himself by the name of a valuable estate he had bought near Paris for twenty thousand crowns, and why he wanted to make doctors of all his sons and made them study so hard. Wouldn't it be better, I asked, since he already was, a member of the nobility, if he bought them some offices (as was done for other cavaliers), and so let them become full-fledged noblemen? "No," he said, "when I come to a prince, he says 'Doctor, sit down'; but to a nobleman he says 'Wait your turn.'" I continued, "You know well that a doctor has three faces: an angel's when the patient sees him coming; a god's when he helps him; and a devil's when the patient is well again and has to pay the bill. A nobleman has greater honor from standing at the door for his prince than a doctor has from sitting down, because he is always waiting on his prince and has the honor never to be far from him. Besides, the other day I saw you taste something of the prince's—I'd rather stand up waiting for someone for ten years than try the taste of someone else's feces, even if I were asked to sit on roses." He answered, "I didn't *have* to do that. I did it in order to prove to the prince how much trouble I was taking to diagnose his case—and so that I could charge a larger fee. You talk of these matters like a German, and if you were of another nationality, I'd say like a damn fool!" I swallowed this because I saw he was about to get angry, and in order to sweet-talk him, I begged him to excuse my ignorance and started discussing something more pleasant.

CHAPTER 3: *Simplicius consents to being used as an actor, and he gets a new name*

Dr. Canard had more venison to throw out than some folks with game preserves of their own have to eat. Since more

meat was given to him than he and his family could eat, he also had many hangers-on, and it almost looked as if he were keeping a free table for everybody. One time the king's Master of Ceremonies and other prominent court personages were eating a princely collation provided by the doctor, who knew where to make his friends—namely, among those who were around the king every day and who were in favor. To show these people his goodwill and to keep them entertained, he asked me to do him the honor of singing a German ditty to my lute.

I was glad to oblige, for I was in the mood for it and tried hard to give them something special. Consequently, I pleased those present so well that the Master of Ceremonies said it was a shame I didn't know French. Otherwise, he would commend me to the king and queen. But my employer, who feared he might lose me, told him I was a nobleman who did not want to stay long in France and who probably did not care to hire himself out as a musician. Then the Master of Ceremonies told him he had never before seen such perfection of form and voice and such skill on the lute—all in one person. A play was soon to be given in the Louvre, for the king. If I could act in it, he hoped to give me a part in which I could make a great impression. Monsieur Canard translated this and I replied that if I were told the character I was to act and given the songs beforehand, I could learn the words and melodies by heart, as pupils are required to do when they sing and act in Latin. When the Master of Ceremonies saw that I was willing, he asked me to come to the Louvre next day for a tryout. So I presented myself at the appointed hour.

I played the melodies of the different songs directly from the printed music. When I received the French words and the melodies to learn by heart, the texts were translated for me so that I could make the appropriate gestures. None of this was difficult, and I could do it in a short time—and so well that not one in a thousand would have thought I was anything but a native Frenchman.

I never had a more satisfying day than the one on which the

opera was performed. Monsieur Canard gave me something to make my voice even clearer, but when he tried to enhance my beauty by means of *oleum talci* and to powder my naturally curly black hair, he found that this only detracted from my appearance. I was crowned with a laurel wreath and had to wear a turquoise-colored toga that left bare my neck, the upper part of my chest, arms up to the elbow, and my legs. Around me I wore a flesh-colored cloak of taffeta that looked more like a baldric. In this outfit I wooed my Eurydice with a pretty song, implored the goddess Venus for support, and finally carried off my beloved in a scene in which I had to sigh and cast loving glances at her. But when I had lost my Eurydice, I dressed in a black gown that was made like the other one, except that my white skin shone like snow because of the contrast. In this costume I lamented the loss of my wife, and I got so absorbed in the act that I started crying in the middle of my sad songs, and for a minute I didn't know if I could go on. But I managed to carry it off until I appeared before Pluto and Proserpine in hell, where I begged them to return Eurydice to me. After I was granted my wish, I turned so happy in song and expression that the audience was quite astonished. But when I lost her a second time, I imagined the greatest dangers a man could get into, and I grew so pale and miserable that I almost fainted. After that, I sat down on a rock and lamented my loss with pitiful words and a sad melody, and I called on every creature for sympathy. All sorts of tame and wild animals, trees, mountains, and so on, came to listen to me. This scene looked as if magic had been used. Nothing went wrong until the end, when I had renounced women and been thrown into the water by fauns, and a dragon was supposed to eat me. (I stood behind some scenery and only my head was visible to the audience.) Now the fellow who was inside the dragon, working it, couldn't see and so his monstrous mouth nibbled and nuzzled some greenery that was next to my head. This struck me as so funny that I couldn't help laughing, and some ladies who were watching me noticed it.

Besides generous and general praise, I received not only a considerable cash honorarium but also a new name; from now on the French called me by no other name than "Beau Alman."¹ Since it was the carnival season, more such operas and ballets were given, and I was in several of them. But finding that I curried too much favor with the spectators, especially the ladies, and that I made too many enemies, I gave up acting, particularly after I had been battered and beaten more than is customary on stage, while, in the role of Hercules, I was fighting with Achelous for Dejanira.

CHAPTER 4: *Beau Alman is led against his will into the mountain of Venus*

But through my acting I became acquainted with persons of quality, and it seemed that Fortune was again smiling on me. I was even offered a job in the king's household, something that doesn't happen every day, even to the big shots. One time while I was working in the laboratory, a uniformed servant came, spoke to Monsieur Canard, and handed him a letter for me. (Because I was interested in pharmacy I had learned from my employer how to sublimate, coagulate, calcinate, filter, precipitate, wash, and so on, as was required in the alchemical method by which he prepared his medicines.) "Monsieur Beau Alman," Canard said to me, "this letter concerns you. A gentleman wants to know if you are willing to give his son lessons on the lute. He is asking me to use my influence with you, so you won't refuse this request." I answered that I would do my best to be of service if I could thereby please Dr. Canard. He asked me to dress up a little better and go along with the servant. Meanwhile, he would have something prepared for me to eat, for I'd have a rather long way to go and could hardly get to my destination before evening. So I got dressed fairly well and hurriedly bolted some

¹ Grimmelshausen probably did not know the rule according to which he should have nicknamed SImplicius "Le bel Alman."

of the snacks that had been prepared, including a couple of delicious little sausages which—it seemed to me—tasted a bit medicinal. Then I proceeded with the servant by curious, roundabout ways, until after about an hour we reached a garden gate that was not quite closed. The lackey pushed it open, and when I had entered after him he banged it shut, bolted the night latch, which was on the inside, and led me to a pleasure pavilion inside the garden. After we had walked to the end of a fairly long passage, he knocked on a door that was at once opened by a noble old lady. She greeted me very politely in German and asked me to step inside. The lackey, who knew no German and whom I thanked with a nod of my head, stayed behind and bade me good-by with a deep bow.

The old lady took me by the hand and led me into the room, which was covered with precious tapestry and beautifully appointed. She asked me to sit down and rest while I found out why I had been taken to this place. I was glad to obey and sat down in a easy chair she had placed by the fire, which was burning because of the cold. She then sat down opposite me in another chair and said, "Monsieur, if you know anything about the power of love, which overcomes and dominates the bravest, strongest, and wisest of men, you will not be one whit surprised that it also assumes mastery over members of the weaker sex. It wasn't your lute (as you and M. Canard were persuaded to think) for which you were called, nor did a man call you. It was your unsurpassable handsomeness and the most excellent lady in Paris that brought you here. She is expecting to die should Fortune deny her the happiness of beholding your divine form and of refreshing herself thereby. That is why she ordered me to inform you (as my fellow countryman) and to beg you more ardently than Venus ever begged Adonis to come to her tonight, so that she may take her fill of looking upon your beauty. This, she hopes, you will not deny a noble lady." My answer was, "Madame, I don't know what to think, much less what to say in reply to this. I don't claim to be such that a lady of high quality should desire my humble company. Moreover, as I think of it,

if the lady who wants to see me is so excellent and noble as you, my dear fellow countrywoman, mentioned and conveyed to me, why didn't she send for me earlier in the day, instead of having me brought to this forsaken place so late at night? Why didn't she ask me to come straight to her? What do I have to do with her garden? May you forgive me, my dear compatriot, if, as a stranger in a strange land, I become suspicious of being betrayed, especially since I was told to see a gentleman, and everything seems topsy-turvy. The minute I notice foul play I am going to use my blade." "Soft, soft, my dear fellow countryman! Forget these uncalled-for thoughts," she interrupted. "Women are unconventional and cautious in their plans. A man can't understand them at first. If the lady who loves you more than anything in the world had wanted you to know who she is, why, she would not have let you come here first, but straight to her. There's a hood," and she pointed to a table, "which you must put over your head when you are taken to her, because she does not want you to know where or with whom you have been. May I beg and pray of you to behave with this lady in a manner befitting her exalted position and the inexpressible love she bears you. Otherwise, you may expect to find out that she is powerful enough to punish your pride and your disdain of her. But if you treat her as she deserves, you may rest assured that every step you have taken in her behalf will be rewarded."

Meanwhile, it had become dark, and all sorts of worries and fearful thoughts plagued me so that I sat there like a graven image. I imagined vividly that I would not leave this place except by consenting to everything I was asked. So I said to the old lady, "All right then, my dear compatriot, if it is as you told me, I'll entrust myself to your inborn German honesty, in hopes that you will not permit any treachery to befall a guileless German. Go ahead and do what you have been told to do with me. The lady you mentioned probably won't kill me by looking at me." "Heavens, no," she said, "it would be a shame if such a well proportioned body—one that might be called the pride of our nation—were to perish

so soon. You will find more pleasures than you have ever dreamed of."

The minute she had my consent she called for Jean and Pierre, who stepped out from behind a tapestry, each wearing a large shiny cuirass and armed from head to foot with halberd and pistol. I was so taken aback that I turned white. The old lady noticed and said with a smile, "A man ought not to be so frightened when he's on his way to a lady." She then told the men to take off their cuirasses and to light the way for me, with only pistols in hand. She slipped the black velvet hood over my head, took my hat, and led me out by the hand. I noticed that our way led through many doors and along a cobbled street. After perhaps ten minutes, I had to climb a short stairway, and a narrow door opened; I walked along a paved passage, up a winding staircase, then down a few steps; and finally, about six steps farther on, another door opened. When I had stepped through it the old lady pulled off the hood and I saw that I was in a room decorated in exceedingly good taste. The walls were hung with paintings, the buffet sparkled with silverware, and the bed, which stood off to one side, was trimmed with hangings of brocade. In the middle of the room stood a table, luxuriously set, and by the fireplace was a bathtub that looked nice enough—but a little out of place, I thought.

The crone said to me, "Welcome, countryman; do you still think you are being trapped? Put aside your suspicion and act as you did on stage the other day when Pluto returned your Euridice to you. Let me assure you, you'll find a prettier one here than you lost there."

CHAPTER 5: *How Beau Alman fares there, and how he comes back out*

From these words I gathered that I was supposed to do more in this place than allow myself to be looked at. So I told my old compatriot that a thirsty man gets little comfort from

sitting by a forbidden well. She said that French people weren't so grudging as to forbid the water, especially when there was plenty of it. "Well, madame," I answered, "such talk is easy, but I am a married man!" "Fiddlesticks!" replied this sinful woman. "Nobody will believe you tonight. In the first place, married noblemen seldom go off traveling in France, and even if it were so I don't think you are such a simpleton to die of thirst rather than drink from a stranger's well, particularly if the stranger's is perhaps even jollier and holds better water than your own."

This was our conversation while a lady in waiting, who was tending the fire, took off my shoes and stockings, which had gotten dirty on the way over, for Paris is a dirty town. A minute later an order came that I was to be given a bath before supper. (The little lady in waiting was running in and out, preparing the bath and carrying in perfumed soap and towels of cambric cloth trimmed with the finest Dutch lace.) I was ashamed and did not want the old girl to see me naked, but there was no help for it; I had to undress and she washed me all over. The maid had to step outside for a while.

After the bath I was given a soft undershirt; I had to put on a purple taffeta housecoat and a pair of silk hose of the same color. My slippers and night cap were embroidered with gold thread and pearls, and after my bath I sat there resplendent as the king of hearts. While the old lady was drying and combing my hair—she treated me like a prince or a baby—the above-mentioned maid brought in the food, and when the table was moved over, there entered three statuesque young ladies whose alabaster-white breasts were considerably visible, but whose faces were completely masked. All three seemed to be perfect beauties; but still, one was much more beautiful than the others. I silently bowed very deeply to them; they curtsied to me in turn. These ceremonies looked, of course, as if a number of mutes were trying to act like speaking characters. The three of them sat down at the same time so that I could not guess which one took precedence, much less which one I was to oblige. The conversation opened

with the question of whether I could speak French. My compatriot said no. Then one lady asked her to tell me please to sit down. When this had been done, the third asked the interpreter to sit down too. Again I could not figure out who was the foremost. The crone and I sat exactly opposite the three ladies, and there's no doubt that I looked twice as handsome beside that old bag of bones. All three looked at me with grace, love, and goodwill, and I could have sworn they sighed a hundred times. Because of the masks I could not see the sparkle of their eyes.

My old dame—she was the only one who could talk to me—asked me which one of the three I considered most beautiful. I answered that I couldn't really see them, but as much as I could see of them, none of the three was ugly. The ladies at once wanted to know what the crone had asked and I had replied. She interpreted it and added the lie that I had said the lips of each were worth kissing a hundred thousand times (for from my seat I could very well see their mouths under their masks, especially that of the one who sat right across from me). With this fib the crone got me to consider my vis-à-vis as the noblest, and I looked at her more eagerly from then on. This was all of our table conversation, and I carefully pretended that I knew not one word of French. Since it was so quiet and a quiet meal is not much fun, we quit all the sooner. The ladies then bid me good night and were on their way. I could not accompany them farther than the door, which the crone immediately bolted after them.

When I saw that, I asked where I was to sleep. She answered that I would have to make shift with her in the bed in this room. I let her know I did not mind the bed if only one of those three were in it. "Well," she said, "you won't have any of them tonight." While we were bantering like this, a beautiful lady who lay in the bed drew back the curtain a little and told the crone to quit chattering and go to bed. I picked up the candle and tried to see who was in the bed. But the old hag blew it out and said, "If you want to keep your head on your shoulders, don't you dare to look at the lady! Just lie down,

and let me assure you if you make a serious effort to look at this lady against her will, you will never leave this place alive." With these words she left and locked the door from the outside. The maid, who had been keeping up the fire, extinguished it completely and left the room through a door hidden by an arras.

Now the lady in bed said, "Allez, Monsieur Beau Alman, go to bed, my sweet 'art come to mee!" The crone had taught her to say that much in my language. I advanced to the bed, to see how the situation might be handled, and as soon as I got there she was on my neck, welcomed me with many kisses, and for ardent desire almost bit off my lower lip. In fact, she started unbuttoning my housecoat and almost tore off my shirt. She pulled me down to herself and from unrestrained love acted in such a way that words fail me. She only knew one other phrase, "Come to mee, sweet 'art!" The rest she let me know by gestures.

Certainly, I thought of my dear wife at home, but what good did that do me? Unfortunately, I was a man, and with such a well proportioned creature, so full of loveliness, I would have had to be a clod to try and get off chaste. Moreover, the sausages the doctor had given me began to take effect, and I could not help behaving like a veritable billy goat. In this fashion I spent eight days and eight nights in the place, and I think the other three also slept with me, because they didn't all talk like number one and didn't act so crazy, either. And because I was fed the same kind of sausages here, I came to believe that Monsieur Canard had prepared them and had known about this business right along. Though I was with these four ladies for more than a week, I was never permitted to see the face of any of them except through veils, which they wore except at night when it was dark. When the time was up, I was deposited in a coach with the windows closed and the curtains drawn. On the way the old lady untied my eyes, and after letting me out at the house of my employer, the coach drove off quickly. My honorarium was two hundred pistoles, and when I asked the crone whether to give any tips from this

money, she said, "Absolutely not. If you did that, it would hurt *les dames*. In fact, they would think you imagined you had been in a whorehouse, where one has to pay for everything." Later I had a few more customers like these, and some of them asked so much of me that I got depleted with this sort of foolishness and couldn't do it any longer, particularly as the medicated sausages weren't helping much anymore. I began to think of Dr. Canard as no better than a pimp for preparing them.

CHAPTER 6: *Simplicius takes French leave. He thinks he has the French disease but learns better*

Through these activities I amassed so much money, from payments in cash and in kind, that it frightened me. I was no longer surprised that women take to brothels where they make a trade of their bestial lust—it's good business. But I got to thinking—not from piety or pangs of conscience, but from worry that one of these days I'd be caught in one of these escapades and get my comeuppance. For that reason I tried to get back to Germany, and especially when the commander of Lippstadt wrote me, first, that he had captured a number of merchants from Cologne whom he would not set free unless my property were given back to me, and secondly, that he was still holding the troop whose command he had promised me. He was expecting me before spring; if I were not back then he would let someone else fill the vacancy. My wife also sent along a little letter in which she gave loving assurance of her great longing for me. If she had known about my fine style of living, she would have whistled a different tune.

I could easily imagine that Dr. Canard would hardly consent to letting me go. Therefore, I planned to take French leave as soon as an opportunity arose. It soon did, much to my sorrow. One day I ran into some officers of the Weimar army. I told them I was an ensign in Colonel de St. André's regiment, had been in Paris on private business, and wanted

to get back to my troop. I requested permission to join them on the way home. They told me the day of their departure and were glad to have me go with them. I bought myself a nag and outfitted myself for the trip as secretly as possible, packed up my money—about five hundred doubloons, all of which I had earned from shameless hussies, by sinful work—and without Canard's leave departed with the officers. On the way I wrote him, but I dated the letter from Maastricht, so that he would think I had headed for Cologne. I said farewell to him and told him that it had been impossible for me to stay longer; I just couldn't take any more of his aromatic sausages.

On the second night out of Paris I felt like someone who had caught the plague. My head hurt so frightfully that I couldn't possibly get up. We were in a godforsaken village where no doctor was available, nor was there anyone—and this was worse—who might nurse and help me. Early in the morning the officers started on their way to Alsace and left me behind like a sick dog, not caring what happened to me since I was not of their party. But before leaving, they commended me and my horse to the innkeeper and left word with the mayor to look after me because I was an officer in the king's service.

So I lay there for a few days and lost consciousness of myself and the world; I was raving like a madman. They brought the priest, but he couldn't get anything sensible out of me. And when he saw he couldn't cure my soul, he considered helping my body. He had me bled, prepared a sudorific, and had me put in a warm bed for sweating. This did me so much good that I regained consciousness that night and recalled where I was, how I had gotten there, and how I had become ill. Next morning the priest came back and found me in black despair, not only because all my money had been stolen, but also because I thought I had the French disease. I had this coming to me, I thought, rather than so many pistoles, and now I was spotted all over like a tiger. I couldn't walk, stand, sit, or lie. I had no patience, for as I couldn't believe God had

wanted me to keep the lost money, now I was so mad that I said the devil had stolen it. I cursed a blue streak; in fact, I acted like a man out of his mind with despair, and the good minister had his work cut out cheering me up, for my shoe was pinching badly in two places at the same time. "My friend," he said, "even if you can't be a pious Christian, act like a reasonable human being in your misfortune. What are you doing? In addition to losing your money, do you also want to lose your life, and, what's more, your eternal soul?" I answered, "I don't give a hoot for the money, if only I didn't have this damned horrible disease. I wish I were in some decent place where I could get a doctor and be cured!" "You must have patience," answered the divine. "Consider the poor little children in this village, of whom more than fifty are sick." When I heard that children had the same disease, I immediately took heart, for I could easily figure out that children wouldn't get the awful disease I thought I had. So I went through my knapsack to see what I might find. Except for some shirts and underwear there was nothing valuable but a little box with a lady's portrait, the frame studded with rubies. Some beauty in Paris had given it to me. I took the picture out, sent the frame to the clergyman, and asked him to sell it in the nearest town so that I might have something with which to buy food. I realized less than a third of the frame's value, and since the money was soon spent, I had to sell my horse next. The money from it barely lasted me till the scabs started forming and I began to feel better.

CHAPTER 7: *Simplicius thinks over his life so far, and learns to swim when the water comes up to his mouth*

What a man sins with, he is usually punished with. My case of smallpox changed me so much that henceforth women left me severely alone. My face was so pitted that it looked like a barn floor where they'd been threshing peas. In fact, I got so ugly that my nice, curly hair, which had captured many a

damsel, became ashamed of me and dropped out of sight. In its place grew something like pigs' bristles, and I was forced to wear a wig. And just as there was no beauty left in or on my skin, my lovely voice also left me, for the pox had been in my throat too. My eyes, until lately never without the fire that could inflame a lovely woman, now looked inflamed themselves and watered like those of an octogenarian hag with cataracts. And to top it all, I was abroad in a foreign land, unknown to man or beast, did not know the language, and hadn't a penny.

Then I started thinking back and regretting the many wonderful opportunities for advancement that I had let slip by me through carelessness or indolence. Looking back, I realized that my extraordinary good luck in the wars and the treasure-trove had been no more than the cause and preliminaries of my misfortune. I could never have fallen so low if good luck had not previously smiled on me so falsely and elevated me so high. I even felt that the good I had encountered, and had considered truly good at the time, was evil and had led me to extreme disaster. I had no hermit, anymore, who wished me well, no Colonel Ramsay to give me a home in my misery, no parson to advise me—in short, there wasn't a single soul who would lift a finger for me. They had all said that when my money was gone, I would go too, and look for a chance elsewhere, even if I must herd the swine like the prodigal son. Only now I remembered the parson's advice to use my time and money for a university education. But it was much too late to clip the bird's wing with those shears, because the bird had flown the coop. Oh, quick and unexpected change for the worse! A month ago I had been a man who had moved princes to admiration and women to love; to the common people I had looked like a masterpiece of nature, like an angel, even; now I was so ugly and misshapen that the dogs would pee on me.

I evolved a thousand and more different ideas about what to do next, for the innkeeper wanted to get rid of me, and was urging me to leave, since I had run out of money. I would

have been glad to join an army, but the recruiters wouldn't have me, for I looked like a molting scarecrow or a starveling weaver. I couldn't take a job because I was still too weak and—what's worse—had never become used to regular work. Was I to become a herder as in the days of my childhood? Or even beg? Of this I was ashamed. My best consolation was that summer was coming, and in a pinch I could sleep behind a hedge when no one wanted to put me up inside his house. I still wore the good suit of clothes I had ordered for the trip, and my knapsack was full of good underwear, but nobody wanted to buy this from me for fear of catching my disease. So I buckled on my knapsack, took my sword in hand, and started making tracks. The first place I came to was a small town, barely big enough to have an apothecary shop. That's where I went to have an ointment made to get rid of the red splotches on my face. And since I had no cash I gave the apothecary's clerk a nice shirt for it, and unlike the other fools who wouldn't have my clothing, he wasn't afraid to take it. My thought was to get rid of the splotches first, in hopes of getting rid of my bad luck later. And when the apothecary told me that I'd look almost all right except for the deep marks the pocks had eaten into my skin, I felt much encouraged. It was market day just then, and a medicine man was making lots of money with his show, though he sold the people only useless goods. "You fool," I said to myself, "why don't you start that kind of business? You've been with Dr. Canard long enough, and if you haven't learned by now how to cheat a simple peasant and make a living by it, you are a stupid beetle-brain."

CHAPTER 8: *How Simplicius becomes a huckster and a quack who cheats people*

At that time I was as hungry as a horse, and my stomach demanded more of me than I could give it. I had left only a single gold ring with a diamond, worth about twenty crowns.

Having disposed of it for twelve, I could easily figure out that that wouldn't last very long, since nothing more was coming in. So I decided to become a doctor. I bought the ingredients for a common theriac² and made it up for sale in the villages and market towns. For the country people, I took some juniper jelly and mixed it with leaves of oak and willow and other bitter drugs. Then I made a green ointment out of all sorts of herbs, roots, butter, and a few unguents; it was good for all sorts of sores on men and horses. From calamine, pebbles, crayfish eyes, emery, and pumice I mixed a toothpowder. From lye, copper, sal ammoniac, and camphor I made a blue liquid for the scurvy, bad breath, toothache, and sore eyes. I acquired plenty of small containers of tin and wood, paper sacks, and glass jars in which to package my merchandise. In order to give me the proper airs, I had a French handbill printed, which told what all and sundry were good for. When, in about three days, this work was finished, I had invested not quite three crowns for drugs and containers. I packed up my goods and left town, intending to make my way by peddling my wares from one village to the next, as far as Alsace. In Strasbourg, a neutral city, I hoped to board a merchant ship for Cologne and from there to grope my way back to my wife. My intention was good, but I failed miserably.

At first I offered my quack remedies in front of a church, but the take was small, because at that time I was much too shy. I didn't speak the barker's blatant language yet, and I saw at once that I'd have to do better if I wanted to dispose of my rubbish and make money. I took my merchandise to an inn, where I heard from the innkeeper at the bar that in the afternoon a group of people would be meeting under the linden in front of his house. If my stuff were any good I might sell a lot of it. But the country was full of cheats, and the customers were not spending anything unless they could see that the theriac was unusually good.

²Theriac, theriaca: In old medicine, an antidote to poison. The best kind was made in Venice and contained 64 ingredients. "Electuary" is a synonym for "theriac."

When I had found out what the trouble was, I bought half a glass of good strong gin, caught myself a toad of the kind called "moamy," the sort that sits and squawks in shallow puddles in the spring and early summer; they are gold or almost orange colored, speckled black underneath, and no beauties to look at. I put one of these in a wine glass full of water and placed it among my merchandise on a table beneath the linden tree.

When the people had gathered in droves about me, some thought I would pull teeth with a pair of tongs I had borrowed from the innkeeper's kitchen. But I started orating: "Messieurs et mes amis," (my French wasn't very good yet), "I do not weesh to pull ze teeth. But I have much good liquor for ze eyes, for curing discharge from red eyes." "Ho-ho!" said one heckler. "Look at your own. They glow like two will-o'-the-wisps!" I answered, "Zat is true, but if I had not used my liquid on zem, zey would have become blind. Usually I don't sell the liquor. I sell ze theriac, ze powder for white teeth and ze ointment for sores. The liquid I give you free. I am no charlatan, and I desire not to chit ze people. I offer ze theriac. I prove eet is good, but if you don't like, eet is not necessary that you buy." Then I had one of the bystanders select one of my theriac jars; I put a small quantity of the medicine—about the size of a pea—into the gin glass, which the people thought was full of water, and stirred it well. With the tongs I lifted the moamy out of the water glass and said, "Look here, good peoples, if this poisonous toad drink my theriac and not die, then eet is no good and you better not buy it." With these words I stuck the poor toad—born and bred in water and incapable of tolerating alcohol—into the gin, covering the glass with cardboard so the beast couldn't jump out. Then the creature started kicking wildly and acting up worse than if I had thrown it on red hot coals, for the gin was much too potent for it. And after it had carried on like this for a while, it croaked and gave up the ghost.

The farmers were struck dumb when they saw this certain proof and started buying wildly. As far as they were concerned, there wasn't a better theriac in the whole world, and I could

hardly wrap the stuff in handbills and collect the money for it fast enough. Some bought three, four, five, even six jars, so that they might not be without such precious medicine in an emergency; they even bought for friends and relatives who lived elsewhere! Though it wasn't even market day, that evening my reckless method of selling brought in ten crowns—and less than half of my stock was sold. That same night I moved on to the next village, for I was afraid some peasants might get curious and try out the theriac by putting a toad in water, and when the experiment failed I'd get my back thrashed.

In order to prove the excellence of my electuary in still another way, I prepared two poisons: a yellow arsenic from flour, saffron, and gall; and sublimate of mercury from flowers and vitriol. In order to present my proof, I put two identical glasses full of fresh water on a table before me. The water in one of these was mixed with a lot of *aqua fortis*, or spirits of vitriol; into this glass I put a little of my theriac. Into both glasses I sprinkled enough of my two poisons to make the water that contained no theriac (and no *aqua fortis*) as black as ink. The other glass stayed perfectly clear because of the *aqua fortis*. "Aha!" said the people, "This is a strong theriac indeed, and for so little money." When I poured the two glasses together, the water became clear again. After such proof my good farmers untied the strings of their purses and bought. This not only helped my hungry stomach, but also it put me on a horse again and yielded a neat little penny for my trip; and so without mishap I got back to the German border. Therefore, my dear peasants, do not trust these foreign mountebanks. They'll cheat you, for they don't care a rap for your health—only for your money.

CHAPTER 9: *The "Doctor" gets a musket and practices starvation*

While passing through Lorraine I ran out of merchandise, and since I was afraid of garrisoned towns I had no chance to replenish my stock. So I had to do something else until I could

make more theriac. I bought two quarts of brandy, colored it with saffron, filled some half-ounce vials with it, and sold it as a precious goldwater, good for fever. This brandy netted me thirty guilders. When I was almost out of vials, I heard of a glass factory near Fleckenstein, and there I hoped to replenish my supply. But while I was going there on a byway, I happened to be picked up by a raiding party from Philippsburg that was quartered in Castle Wagnsburg. So I lost everything I had obtained on my trip by cheating the people; and because the peasant who was showing me the way said I was a doctor, to give the devil his due, I was taken for a *real* doctor in Philippsburg.

There I was questioned. I wasn't a bit shy about telling them who I was, but they didn't believe me and wanted to make more of me than I possibly could have been. They wanted to make a doctor of me! I had to swear that I had belonged to the imperial dragoons at Soest, and under oath I told everything that had happened to me from then until now and what I intended to do. They said the emperor needed soldiers in Philippsburg as well as in Soest, and they'd keep me until there was a chance to send me on to my own regiment. If I did not like this suggestion I would have to be satisfied with living in the stockade. Until they let me go again they'd treat me there like a medical man, since they had caught me for one.

Thus, I came down off my high horse onto a jackass and had to be a musketeer, though it all happened without my cooperation. This was a hard nut for me to crack; for one thing, they were keeping a lean larder there, and the bread rations were frightfully small. I say "frightfully" on purpose, for it frightened me every morning when I received my loaf, because I knew it would have to last all day, though I could have eaten it at one meal. Truth to tell, a musketeer is a miserable creature who has to live this way in a garrison and who has to get by on dry bread—and not half enough of that. He's no better than a prisoner who is prolonging his poor life with the bread and water of tribulation. In fact, a prisoner is

better off, for he does not have to stand watch, go the rounds, or do sentry duty; he stays quietly in bed and has just as much hope as a sad garrison trooper of getting out of his prison in time. There were a few who, by various means, had it a little better; but none of these ways of getting a bite more to eat were to my liking. In their misery, a few troopers took on wives (some of these formerly were two-bit sluts) who could increase their income by such work as sewing, washing, spinning, or by selling second-hand clothing or other junk, or even by stealing. Among the women was a female ensign who drew her pay like a corporal! Another was a midwife, and she was given many a good meal for herself and her husband. Another took in laundry and ironing; she washed shirts, socks, nightshirts, and other apparel for the bachelors among the officers and men, and she had quite a reputation. Others sold tobacco and furnished pipes for those who needed them. Still others sold brandy; it was generally thought that they were adulterating it with water distilled by their own bodies—but that didn't change the color of the liquor in the least! Another was a seamstress who was able to earn money through hemstitching and embroidery. Still another could pick a living off the field; in the winter she dug up snails, in spring she picked salad herbs, in summer she took the young out of birds' nests, and in fall she could gather hundreds of other tidbits. Some sold kindling wood, which they carried to market like donkeys; others peddled still other merchandise. To earn my keep that way was not for me, since I already had a wife. Some of the men made a living by gambling (which they could do better than professional sharps), and by means of false dice and cards they got what they wanted from their simple-minded fellow soldiers. I despised such a trade. Others worked at building fortifications or at other odd jobs; for this I was too lazy. Some carried on a trade, but I had learned none. If a musician had been needed I could have served, but this starvation district got along on pipes and drums. Some took over others' guard duty and stood watch day and night. I would rather have starved than wear out my body that way. Some

made both ends meet by going on raids, but I wasn't even permitted to step outside of the gate. Some could "organize" things better than a general; I hated such actions like sin. To make it brief, no matter where I turned, I could pick up nothing with which to fill my stomach. And what made me maddest was having to take it when the gang said, "You're a doctor and yet don't know how to cure starvation?"

Finally, necessity made me juggle a couple of good-sized carp out of the moat into my hands as I stood on the rampart; but as soon as the colonel heard of it I was in dutch and he forbade further prestidigitation on pain of hanging. At last, others' misfortune turned out to be my luck. Having cured a few cases of jaundice and fever—these patients must have had special faith in me—I was allowed to wander out of the fortress to gather (so I said) medicinal roots and herbs. But instead I set snares for rabbits and was lucky to catch two the first night. These I took to the colonel and he gave me not only a thaler as a present but also permission to go out after rabbits when I was off duty. Since the country was rather deserted and nobody was catching these animals, which had multiplied over the years, I had grist in my mill again, especially as it seemed that rabbits turned up everywhere or that I could charm them into my snares. When the officers saw that they could trust me, I was allowed to go raiding with the others, and I resumed the life of Soest, except that I could not be in charge. For that, one had to know all the roads and byways and the course of the Rhine.

CHAPTER 10: *Simplicius survives a miserable bath in the Rhine*

I want to tell a few more stories before I let you know how I was saved from carrying a musket. One story deals with danger to life and limb, from which I escaped by the grace of God; the other, with danger to my soul's salvation, in which I did not fare so well. I want to conceal my vices no more than

my virtues, not only because I want the reader to know the whole story, but also so that he knows what strange characters populate this world—characters who give little thought to God.

As I said toward the end of the previous chapter, I was allowed to go on raiding parties along with the others, and this is something granted not to every stumblebum but only to good soldiers. One time nineteen of us were moving through the country above Strasbourg to wait for a ship from Basel said to be carrying contraband and some Weimar officers. Above Ottenheim we got hold of a fishing boat to put us on an island where oncoming vessels could be forced to land. Ten of us had already been taken across, but when one of the remaining nine, who was a good oarsman, was rowing the rest across, the boat suddenly capsized and we were in the river before you could say Jack Robinson. I didn't worry much about the others but saw to my own safety. And though I made every effort and used all the tricks of good swimmers, the stream played with me as with a bundle of rags, throwing me helter-skelter now to the bottom, now to the surface. Struggling heroically, I managed to come up for breath frequently, but if it had been a little colder I could not have survived. Time and time again I tried to swim ashore, but the eddies that carried me from one side to another would not let me land. When I had passed the country beyond Goldscheur and had already resigned myself to taking the Rhine bridge at Strasbourg either dead or alive, I noticed a big tree whose branches were sticking out of the water not far from me. The current went right in that direction and I did my best to reach it. Luckily I succeeded, and through the force of the water and my own exertion I managed to cling to the largest branch (which I thought at first was the whole tree). But the current and the waves were constantly twisting and turning the tree and moving it up and down. My stomach became so upset from this motion that I wanted to spit out liver and lights. I was barely able to hold on, but I was beginning to faint and would have been glad to slip into the water again,

except I felt I wouldn't have the courage to endure a hundredth part of the misery I had just been through. So I hung on, hoping for an uncertain rescue that God might chance to send me if I were to get off alive. But in regard to this hope, my conscience furnished me scant comfort; it reproached me for having foolishly rejected God's gracious help over the last few years. Yet, now I hoped for the best and started to pray as fervently as if I had been raised in a monastery; I resolved to live more piously and made several vows: I renounced the life of a soldier and promised never to go raiding again; I threw away my pack and ammunition and let on that I wanted to become a hermit once more, to repent of my sins, and to thank God's mercy for my hoped-for salvation until my dying day.

After I had spent two or three hours on the branch, thus between hope and fear, the ship I was to have helped capture came down the Rhine. With a piteous cry in the name of God and doomsday, I called for help, and since they had to sail right by me and saw my plight, everyone in the ship was so moved to pity that they made for shore and deliberated over how to rescue me. Because of the eddies around me and the many roots and branches, no one could safely swim to me or come close by with a boat, and thus it took a long time to decide how to rescue me. You can easily imagine how I felt all this time. Finally they sent two stout men in a boat, who floated a rope toward me from upstream. They held on to one end while I managed to tie the other around my middle. Like a big fish on a line, I was then pulled into the boat and taken to the ship.

Having thus escaped death, it would have been well for me to fall on my knees and thank divine mercy for my rescue, and also to start leading a better life, as I had sworn and promised in my utmost misery. But far from it! When they asked me who I was and how I had gotten into this trouble, I lied like a dog to these fellows, for I thought if I told them that I had wanted to rob them, they'd throw me back into the Rhine. So I said I was an organist, driven out of my village because of

the war and now on my way to Strasbourg in order to look for a job in connection with schoolteaching or anything else. A raiding party had picked me up, robbed me of everything, and thrown me in the Rhine, which had deposited me in the tree. And since I spied off these lies without the least embarrassment and swore I was telling the truth, they believed me, gave me food and drink, and showed me every kindness—all of which I needed badly.

Most people went ashore at the customs office in Strasbourg, and so did I, once again thanking all. In the crowd I noticed a young merchant whose walk and gestures made me think that I had seen him before, but I couldn't remember where. His way of talking made me think that he was the officer who had previously captured me, but I couldn't figure out how such a brave, young soldier had turned into a merchant, particularly since he was a born cavalier. My desire to find out whether my eyes and ears were deceiving me made me go to him and I said, "Monsieur Schönstein, is it you or isn't it?" He answered, "I am no von Schönstein, but a merchant." Then I said, "In that case I am not the Hunter of Soest, either, but an organist, or rather a roving bindle stiff." "Brother," he said, "what in the devil's name are you doing here? Where are you keeping yourself?" I said, "Brother, if heaven has destined you to preserve my life (as now has happened a second time), my fate requires me to be fairly close to you." We embraced each other like two good friends who had previously promised to love each other till their dying day. I had to come to his lodgings and tell him everything that had happened to me since I had left Lippstadt for Cologne to collect my treasure. I did not conceal from him how I and my fellows had planned to ambush the ship and how things turned out. But I did not breathe a word about how I had carried on in Paris, for I was afraid he might gossip about it in Lippstadt and my wife would make my life miserable.

He in turn confided to me that the Hessian general staff had sent him to Bernhard, Duke of Weimar, to report on matters of great importance relating to the war and to confer

about future plans and the coming campaign. He had accomplished this, and now he was returning in the guise of a merchant. Incidentally, he told me that my beloved wife had been with child when he left and that she and her relatives had been in good health. He also said that the colonel was still holding the troop for me, and he teased me that the pocks had so spoiled my looks that neither my wife nor the other ladies in Lippstadt would recognize me for the Hunter, and so on. Finally we agreed that I should stay with him and take this opportunity of returning to Lippstadt, which was just what I wanted. And since I had only rags to wear, he advanced me money so I could buy some clothes to make me look like a salesman.

But they say that if a thing is not to be, it won't happen. I found this out when we were traveling down the Rhine and the ship was searched at Rheinhausen. The Philippsburgers recognized me, picked me up, and returned me to Philippsburg, where I had to tote the musket again. Though this hurt my good ensign as much as me, he could do little for me; he had a hard enough time getting away himself.

CHAPTER 11: *Why preachers should not eat rabbits that were caught in a snare*

The gentle reader has heard in what physical danger I had been; concerning the danger to my soul he must know that as a musketeer I was an awfully crude being who didn't give a damn for God or Holy Writ. No meanness was beyond me; all grace and kindness received from God was forgotten; I prayed for matters neither temporal nor eternal but lived unreformed, like a beast. No one would have believed that a pious hermit had brought me up. I seldom saw the inside of a church, and I never went to confession. And as the salvation of my soul was nothing to me, so I troubled my fellow men all the more; wherever I could trick someone, I did—and boasted of it! Almost no one was exempt; and I often got my comeuppance

and was threatened with whippings and the strappado, but this did no good. I persisted in my godless way as if I were rushing straight to hell. And though I committed no crime worthy of hanging, I was so dastardly that (aside from witches and sodomites) no worse man could be found.

Our regimental chaplain took note of this, and because he was quite a zealot, around Easter time he sent for me to find out why I hadn't come to confession and communion. After he had finished his well-meaning admonitions, I treated him like the minister in Lippstadt, and the good man could do nothing with me. Concluding that Christ and baptism had been wasted on me, he summarized: "Alas, you miserable man, I thought you were going astray through ignorance, but now I know you are continuing to sin from evilness and intention. Do you think anyone will have pity on your poor, damned soul? As for me, I protest before God and the world that I have no part in your damnation; I have done—and shall gladly continue to do—all that's needed for the salvation of your soul. But, presumably, when your poor soul leaves its damned abode, I won't have to do much more than have your body taken to the place where the dead animals are buried or where the godforsaken and desparate are put aside."

This serious admonition did no more good than previous ones, simply because I was afraid to go to confession. What a great fool I was! I would often tell my knavish exploits to the assembled company, and lie to boot, but now that I was to repent and humbly confess my sins to a single person, in lieu of God, in order to receive absolution—now I was stubborn and silent as a stick. I use the word "stubborn" deliberately; I stayed stubborn, for I said to the chaplain, "I am serving the emperor as a soldier, and should I die like a soldier it won't surprise me if—like other soldiers, who are not always buried in holy ground but must make shift in the fields, in a ditch, or in the stomachs of wolves and ravens—I'll have to get along outside the churchyard." So I left the parson, who with all his anxiety for my soul deserved only this of me: I refused to give him a rabbit that he wanted very much; I said

that the hare had hanged himself by a rope, and since one who died by an act of desperation could not find rest in holy ground, he couldn't have it.

CHAPTER 12: *To his surprise, Simplicius is saved from toting the musket*

Thus, no change for the better was seen in me; rather I became worse as time passed. The colonel once told me he'd like to kick me out like a rogue, for I was no good. But as I knew he didn't mean it, I said he could dismiss me but he should send the executioner along. So he kept me, for he could easily see that if he sent me away I'd take it as a favor rather than as punishment. Accordingly, I stayed a musketeer against my will and suffered the pangs of hunger far into the summer. But Count von Götz approached with his army, and so did my deliverance; for when Götz had his headquarters at Bruchsal, the general staff sent my good friend Heartbrother (to whom I had given financial help, in the camp at Magdeburg) with some orders to our fortress, where he was treated with great honor and respect. I happened to be on sentry duty before the colonel's quarters, and although Heartbrother wore a black velvet coat, I recognized him at first sight, but I didn't have the heart to address him then. I was afraid he'd be ashamed of me (as things go in this world) or even refuse to recognize me, because by his wardrobe he appeared to be a man of high rank and I was only a lousy musketeer. After I had been relieved, I asked his servants about his name and rank, so that I wouldn't perhaps address the wrong man; and yet I didn't have the courage to speak to him. Instead, I wrote him this letter, which I had his valet deliver in the morning:

Monsieur, etc.

If it should please my gracious master through his overwhelming influence to rescue one whom he previously delivered out of fetters and bonds through bravery in the battle of Wittstock—if it should please him to rescue him now from the most wretched state in the

world, a state to which he came as a plaything of fickle Fortune—this act would cost him little and would make a lifelong servant of his faithful, now most forsaken and deserted,

S. Simplicissimus.

As soon as he had read this, he asked me to come to his room, and he asked, "Fellow countryman, where is the man who gave you this letter?" I answered, "Sir, he is a prisoner in this fortress." "All right," he said, "go to him and tell him I will help him even if the noose is already around his neck." I replied, "Sir, there's no need to bother going; I am Simplicius, and I have come to thank you for my rescue at Wittstock, as well as to ask you to rid me of the musket that I am forced to carry against my will." He didn't let me finish my sentence, but showed me by an embrace how much he wanted to help me. He did everything a true friend can do for another; and even before he asked me how I had been placed in this fortress and in such bondage, he sent a servant to a Jewish haberdasher to buy me a horse and clothing. Meanwhile, I told him how I had been since his father had died at Magdeburg. When he heard that I was the Hunter of Soest (of whose exploits he had heard so much), he regretted not having known this before, for he might well have been able to help me to a company.

When the dealer arrived with a whole pack of soldiers' clothing, he picked out the best pieces, let me put them on, and together we went to the colonel. "Sir," he said, "in your garrison I've found this man, to whom I am so greatly obliged that I cannot leave him in his present state (even though he doesn't deserve better). I beg you, therefore, to do me the favor either of promoting him or permitting me to take him along, so that I can get him such advancement in the army as there may not be a chance for here."

Upon hearing me praised the colonel was so dumbfounded that he made the sign of the cross and answered, "Worthy sir, forgive me if I believe that you are only testing my willingness to serve you as you deserve. If this is so, please demand anything that is in my power and you will see me ready. But as to this fellow, he belongs not to me but—as he says—to a

regiment of dragoons; and besides, he's such a devil that he has given my provost more trouble than a whole company. I think water would refuse to drown him!"

But this wasn't enough for Heartbrother; he asked the colonel to condescend to invite me to his table, and his wish was granted. He did this so he could tell the colonel about me in my presence what so far he had heard only as a rumor in Westphalia, from Count von der Wahl and the commander at Soest. He told it in such a way that all listeners had to think of me as a good soldier. All this time I behaved so modestly that the colonel and his officers (who knew me well) could not help thinking that I had put on a new man with my new clothes. And when the colonel asked how I had come by the title of Doctor, I described my whole trip from Paris to Philippsburg and my method for cheating the peasants in order to have something to chew. This made them laugh hard. Finally, I openly confessed that I had wanted by all sorts of deviltry to irritate and wear down the colonel to the point of dismissing me from his garrison so that he might live in peace and hear no more complaints about me.

After that, the colonel related all sorts of dirty tricks I had played since the day I had come into the garrison: how I had poured lard on top of boiled peas and sold the potful for pure lard; how I had sold, as salt, sacks partly filled with sand; how I had made a monkey of practically everyone; and how I had composed satirical verses about people. Throughout the meal they were talking only about me. But if I hadn't had such an influential friend, my exploits would have been worthy of only one thing—punishment. This showed me what happens at court when a rogue gains the prince's favor.

When the meal was ended, the dealer did not have a horse that Heartbrother thought good enough for me. And since Heartbrother enjoyed so much esteem and the colonel wanted his favor, the colonel gave him one of his own horses, with saddle and bridle. And while milord Simplicius, together with his friend Heartbrother, joyfully rode out of the fortress, some of his comrades shouted after him, "Good luck to you! Good

luck!" But others, moved by envy, hollered, "The worse the s. o. b., the better his luck!"

CHAPTER 13: *Dealing with the Order of the Marauding Brothers*

On the way Heartbrother and I agreed that I should pretend to be his cousin. So that I might have more status, he would get me another horse and a servant and put me in the Neuneck regiment where I could stay as a volunteer until an officer's position became vacant; then he'd help me get it. Thus, in no time at all, I turned into a man who resembled a good soldier. But during that summer I engaged in few exploits except helping to steal a couple of cows in the Black Forest; besides, I got to know the Breisgau and Alsace pretty well. But again, I wasn't very lucky, for when men of the Weimar army captured my servant and horse at Kentzingen, I had to use my other horse all the harder and when he gave up the ghost, I joined the Order of the Marauding Brothers—that is, I robbed on foot. My friend Heartbrother would have gotten me another mount, but since I had done away with the first two horses so quickly, he did not exactly rush ahead but left me up in the air in order to teach me a lesson. I didn't press him, either, for my companions were such a pleasant gang that I did not even want to change until it was time to move into winter quarters.

Now I'll tell what sort of people the Marauders are. There are doubtless some people, especially those who are ignorant of war, who don't know about them. Neither have I yet run into an author who treats of their habits, wonts, rights, and privileges, though it is a matter well worth knowing, not only for our generals but also for the peasants. Concerning the name of the group, when a certain gentleman brought in a newly recruited regiment, the men were so weak and debilitated that they could hardly march or stand up under the hardships of soldiering. When they were found hiding behind fences and

hedges and were asked what regiment they belonged to, they would answer, "*Merode*" (which is French for sick, out of order).³ From this sprang the custom of calling "Merode Brothers" all those who trot along behind and out of step, even if they are not sick or wounded. One can see them in droves behind hedges, in the shadow or in the sun or about a fire, being lazy and smoking, while an honest soldier under his flag has to endure heat, thirst, hunger, cold, and other miseries. Ahead of the army, alongside, and behind it, the marauders pick up everything they can lay hands on, and what they can't use they spoil, so that the regiments moving into camp or quarters often can't find a good drink of clean water. When they are forced to stay with the baggage train, it becomes more numerous than the army proper. When they are together or marching in gangs, they have no sergeant major, no color sergeant or corporal who keeps order; they live like masters and are scot-free. They do not keep watch, they do not labor at digging trenches, they do not attack, they are found in no battle line—and yet they make a living! Well, I was one of these brothers, and I stayed one till the day before the battle of Wittenweier. At that time I went with some pals of mine to steal oxen and cows, and we were caught by Weimar troopers. They knew what to do with us; they put us under a musket and distributed us among the various regiments. I was assigned to Colonel Hattstein's regiment.

CHAPTER 14: *A perilous fight for life in which both contestants escape death*

At that point I came to see that I was born only for misfortune. About a month before the battle, I heard some of General Götz's officers discussing the war; one of them said, "This summer there's sure to be a battle. If we beat the enemy,

³ Grimmelshausen is here pulling his readers' collective leg. The word comes from the French *marauder*, "to plunder." After the spurious explanation, this translation uses the spelling "marauder."

we'll have to spend next winter taking Freiburg and the forest cities; but if we get beaten we'll have winter quarters just the same." I drew the correct conclusion from this prophecy, and I said to myself, "You will drink the good wines of the Neckar or of Lake Constance, and you will enjoy whatever is coming to the Weimar troops." But I was badly mistaken. Because I was a Weimar man myself now, I was predestined to help lay siege to Breisach, and such a siege was undertaken full tilt right after the battle of Wittenweier.⁴ Like the other musketeers I had to stand guard duty and dig trenches day and night. This only taught me how to get at a fortress by way of trenches—something to which I had paid no attention at Magdeburg. As for the rest, I was in lousy shape: two or three of us lived in a tiny room; my purse was empty; wine, beer, and meat were rarities; apples and half rations of bread had to do for steak.

This situation was hard to bear and gave me reason enough to think back to the fleshpots of Egypt, that is, the Wesphalian hams and knockwurst in Lippstadt. I no longer thought of my wife except when I lay in my tent and was stiff from frost and cold. Then I often said to myself, "Alas, Simplici, don't you think it would serve you right if someone did to you just what you did in Paris?" And such thoughts worried me, as they would any cuckold, though I knew my wife was faithful and virtuous. At last I became so impatient that I told my captain how my personal affairs stood. I also wrote to Lippstadt; through letters from Colonel de St. André and my father-in-law, I arranged to receive my dismissal from the Prince of Weimar, and my captain had to give me a passport and let me go.

A few weeks before Christmas I was walking down the Breisgau, carrying a good gun; I was hoping to receive twenty thalers that my brother-in-law had deposited to my credit in Strasbourg. There I would join some merchants and travel down the Rhine, where there were a number of imperial garrisons. When I had just passed Endingen and came to a

⁴ Breisach fell on December 19, 1638; the battle of Wittenweier took place on July 30, 1638.

single house, someone shot at me and the bullet tore a hole in the brim of my hat. That instant a big burly fellow came running toward me, shouting that I should drop my gun. I answered, "Not to please you, I won't, country cousin!" and I cocked the gun. He whipped out an object that looked more like an executioner's sword than a dagger and rushed toward me. When I saw that he meant business, I let him have it, hitting him in the forehead so that he spun around and finally fell down. Taking advantage of his position, I twisted the sword out of his hand and tried to run him through. But the sword wouldn't pierce, and he jumped unexpectedly to his feet again and grabbed me by the hair. I did the same to him. I had already thrown his sword out of reach, and now we began to wrestle so hard that the embittered strength of both of us showed plainly. Yet neither could get the better of the other. Now I was on top, now he; now both of us got on our feet again, but not for long because each tried his best to kill the other. Since he was so grimly after my blood, I gathered up what was oozing from my nose and mouth and spit it in his face. This was a help because it kept him from seeing. That way we worked on each other in the snow for about an hour and a half. This exercise was so tiring that it seemed that one's exhaustion could not completely overcome the other's weariness, at least not by the use of fists; nor could one kill the other without a weapon.

Wrestling, which I had learned at Lippstadt, came in very handy; otherwise, I should have come out on the short end, for my enemy was much stronger than I, and sword and bullet-proof besides. Finally, when we had almost worn each other out, he said, "Brother, stop; I yield to you." I said, "You should have let me pass by in the first place." "If I die, what good will it do you?" he asked. "And if you shot me dead, what good would it have done you, since I haven't a penny in my pocket?" Then he begged my pardon, and I gave in and let him get up. But first he had to swear solemnly that he would not only keep the peace but also be my faithful friend and servant.

I would never have believed or trusted him, however, if I had known his previous irresponsible actions.

When both of us had gotten up, we shook hands and agreed that all these events should be forgotten. Each was surprised to have found his match, and the other fellow thought me just as big a rascal as he. I did not disillusion him, lest he try again once he recovered his gun. He had a big bump on the head from my shot; I had lost a lot of blood; and we both complained about our necks, which had been so ill-treated that we couldn't carry our heads upright.

Since evening was approaching and my opponent told me I would not meet a cat or a dog, much less a human being, on my way as far as the river Kintzig, I was persuaded to go with him. He said he had good drink and some food in his house, not far from the road. On the way he sighed many times and assured me he was sorry to have hurt me.

CHAPTER 15: *How Oliver thinks he can justify his criminal sylvan doings*

What a stupid ox is a resolute soldier who risks his life or sets a low value upon it! Among a thousand men, not one would have had the courage to go to an unknown place with a ruffian who had murderously attacked him only a short time before. On the way, I asked him what army he belonged to. He answered that for the time being he belonged to none, but was warring on his own account. Then he asked me the same question. I told him I had been one of the Duke of Weimar's men, had been dismissed, and was on my way home. He asked for my name and when I answered "Simplicius," he turned around (for I had him walk in front of me, because I didn't trust him) and gave me a hard look. "Aren't you also called Simplicissimus?" "Yes," I answered. "Whoever denies his own name is a rogue. But what's your name?" "Alas, brother," he answered, "I am Oliver, whom you remember

from the days of Magdeburg." With these words he threw down his gun, fell on his knees to ask my forgiveness for having wanted to hurt me, and told me that now he imagined he'd never have a better friend in the world than me, since according to old Heartbrother's prophecy I would courageously avenge his death. For my part, I continued to express surprise at our strange meeting. But he said, "That's nothing new; mountain and valley don't run into each other. What's strange is how we two have changed: I've turned from a secretary into a fisherman of the woods, a footpad; and you, from a fool into a brave soldier! Let me tell you, if there were ten thousand of us, we'd relieve Breisach tomorrow, and in the end we'd be masters of the whole world."

With such talk we came at dusk to a small, out-of-the-way hut that might have belonged to a day laborer, and though I did not approve of such boasting I said he was right, particularly because I knew his false and roguish mind. Though I did not trust him in the least, I followed him into the little house, where a peasant was just heating up the room. Oliver asked him whether supper was ready. "No," said the peasant, "but I still have the cold leg of veal that I brought from Waldkirch today." "Well, then," said Oliver, "go and get what you have and bring along the small keg of wine."

When the peasant was gone, I said to Oliver, "Brother," (I called him this in order to be on the safe side) "you have a willing host." "May the devil thank the rogue!" he said. "I take care of him and his wife and children. On top of that, he does all right with his own booty. I give him all the clothes that come my way, to use as he sees fit." I asked where the fellow's family was. Oliver explained that he had taken them to Freiburg, where he visited them twice a week. From there he brought back food and powder and shot. Moreover, Oliver told me that he had been in this freebooter's trade for a long time; he liked it better than serving a master, and he was not about to stop until he had lined his purse well. I said, "Brother, you ply a dangerous trade; if you got picked up for robbery, what do you think would happen to you?" "Ha," he

said, "you are still the same old SImplicius. You don't have to tell me that I am running a risk; on the other hand, they've got to catch me before they hang me. My dear SImplicius, you haven't read your Machiavelli yet. I am an upright man, and I carry on my trade openly and without subterfuge. I fight, I risk my life like the heroes of old; and since I am risking my life, it follows undeniably that to carry on this handicraft is meet and proper."

I answered, "Assuming that robbery or theft are permitted (or are not), I nevertheless know they are against the law of nature, which wants us to do to others as we would have them do to us. Such iniquity is also against worldly law, which says that thieves should be hanged, robbers beheaded, and murderers broken on the wheel. And finally it is against God, and that's most important, for he leaves no sin unpunished." "It is as I told you," replied Oliver. "You are still the SImplicius who hasn't studied his Machiavelli. If I could set up a monarchy in my own way, I wonder who would preach against me then?" We would have argued longer, but the peasant had returned with food and drink. So we sat down together and fed our stomachs, for I was hungry as a bear.

CHAPTER 16: *Oliver interprets Heartbrother's prophecy to his own advantage and thus loves his worst enemy*

Our food consisted of the finest bread and a cold leg of veal; we drank good wine and sat in a warm room. "You have to admit, Simpli," said Oliver, "that this is better than the slit trenches at Breisach." I said that was true—if only one could enjoy such life with a certain amount of safety and honor. This made him explode with laughter. "Are those poor devils in the trenches safer than we? They have to worry every moment about a sudden attack. My dear Simpli, I see you have put aside your fool's cap, but you have kept your foolish head, and you can't tell good from bad. If you were anybody but the man who, according to old Heartbrother's prophecy, is

to avenge my death, I'd make you admit that I lead a nobler life than a baron." I thought, What will come of this? I'll have to think up something different; otherwise, with the help of the peasant this brute will exterminate me. So I said, "Who ever heard that the chicken is smarter than the hen? Brother, if your life is as happy as you say, let me share in your happiness—I need it." Oliver answered, "Brother, I love you as I love myself; why should I refuse you anything? Stay with me if you like; I'll take care of you. If you want to leave, I'll give you a nice sum of money and accompany you wherever you go. And to prove that these words come from my heart, I'll tell you why I think so much of you. You remember how true old Heartbrother's prophesies were. At Magdeburg he said to me, 'Oliver, look at our fool any way you like; he will frighten you by his bravery and play the worst trick on you. And you will cause him to do it at a time when you don't recognize each other. But not only will he spare your life; after a while, he will come to the place where you will have been slain, and there he will avenge your death.' On account of this prophecy I am willing to share the heart in my body with you, dear Simplicius; for as one part of the prophecy has been fulfilled, I don't doubt the rest will also come true. From your revenge I must conclude, dear brother, that you are a good friend. If you were not, you wouldn't undertake it; and that's how I feel about it. Now tell me what you intend to do." I thought, May the devil trust you, not I! If I accept money you'll kill me on the way; if I stay with you I'll be drawn and quartered too. I resolved to trick him and said that if he liked me I'd stay with him for a few days in order to see how I'd get used to that kind of life. If I liked it, he'd have a faithful friend and a good soldier in me; if not, we could part in kindness any time. After that he plied me with drink, but since I didn't trust him I pretended to be drunk before I really was, in order to find out whether he would hurt me when I couldn't defend myself.

Meanwhile, those big, sturdy lice I had brought with me from Breisach started acting up; in the warmth of the room

they crawled from my rags to look for a good time outside. Oliver noticed and asked if I had lice. I said, "Sure, more than I'll ever have ducats in all my life." "That's no way to talk," said Oliver. "If you stay with me, you'll probably get more ducats than you now have lice." My reply was, "That's as impossible as getting rid of the lice right now." "No, it isn't," he said, and he ordered the peasant to bring me some clothes that were hidden in a hollow tree not far from the house. He brought a gray hat, a jerkin of elk skin, a pair of red breeches, and a gray coat. He would give me shoes and stockings tomorrow, he said. When I saw this generous gift, I trusted him a little more and fell asleep happy.

CHAPTER 17: *When Simplicius goes out robbing, his thoughts are more pious than Oliver's in church*

In the morning, toward daybreak, Oliver said, "Get up, Simplicius; let's see what in God's name we can pick up." O my God, I thought, am I to rob in thy holy name? Heavenly Father, how I have changed! What will become of me if I don't turn to thee? Check my course, for I'll go to hell if I don't repent. With these thoughts I followed Oliver to a village in which there was not one living creature. To get a better view, we climbed up on the steeple. There Oliver had hidden the shoes and stockings that he had promised me the night before, and also two loaves of bread, several pieces of smoked meat, and half a keg of wine. With these rations a man might survive for a week. While I was putting on my gift shoes and stockings, he told me that he used to watch from this hiding place whenever he thought something good was coming along. He mentioned that he had several other places stocked like this one, so that if one produced no loot he might try at another. I praised his wisdom, but I let him know that I disapproved of defiling a consecrated building. "What?" he said. "Defile? If churches could talk they'd say that what I do in them is nothing compared to the vices com-

mitted there by others. How many people who step into a church under the pretext of serving God come only to show off their new clothes, their beautiful figures, their worldly positions, or something similar? Here is one strutting like a peacock in front of the altar, and yet he acts as if he would pray the leg off a saint; there is one in the corner sighing like a publican in the temple, but the sighs are meant for his sweetheart, whose face he is staring at and for whom he came to church in the first place. More than one man could not carry on an illicit affair if the church didn't help him. Many a loan shark who hasn't taken time all week to figure out new angles does so during the sermon. Some only sit there and sleep as if they had hired the place for it. I won't mention the stories I have read, but I must bring up one more thing: people not only make a mockery of churches while they are alive, but they fill them with vanity and foolishness even after death. As soon as you enter a church you see gravestones and epitaphs of people whom the worms have eaten long ago. When you look up you catch sight of shields, helmets, weapons, swords, flags, boots, spurs, and such. Small wonder that, in this war, in some places the peasants made fortresses out of churches to defend their possessions. Why shouldn't I make a living by the church that so many people live on? Had I known of your scruples about lying in wait in a church, I would have thought up a better answer than this, but until I give you a better one, put this one in your pipe and smoke it."

I would gladly have told Oliver that those other folks who besmirched the church were as dishonorable as he and would get their reward. But because I did not trust him and did not want to get into another argument, I agreed with him. After a while he asked me to tell him how I had been doing since we parted at Wittstock, and why I was wearing jester's clothes when I arrived in the camp before Magdeburg. But since a sore throat made me miserable, I asked to be excused and requested that he tell me his life (which presumably was full of strange wrinkles). He agreed and started to recount his heinous life, as follows.

CHAPTER 18: *Oliver tells about his family and his youth, and particularly about his deportment in school*

"My father was born of simple people, not far from Aachen. Because his folks were poor, as a young man he had to work for a rich dealer in copper goods, who taught him to read and write and figure, and put him in charge of his whole business, as Potiphar did Joseph. This was to the advantage of both parties, for as time went on the merchant became richer by way of my father's industry and foresight; because of his success my father became more and more proud so that he grew ashamed of his parents and despised them. They often deplored it, but in vain. When my father had passed his twenty-fifth birthday, the merchant died, leaving behind his elderly widow and an only daughter. The latter had run into bad luck, having become pregnant by a shop clerk, but the child soon followed its grandfather. When my father saw that the daughter had lost her father and her child, but not her money, he did not hold it against her that she could never again wear virgin's white. He considered her wealth and got next to her, an arrangement that her mother gladly permitted, not only because her daughter's honor would be restored, but also because my father knew the trade inside out and was a sharp business man who never lost sight of Number One. Through this marriage my father became a rich merchant overnight, and I his heir. Because of his wealth I was well brought up; I was dressed like a gentleman, fed like a baron, and as for all the rest, treated like a count. All this I owe to copper and brass rather than to silver and gold.

"Before I was eight, my mettle already showed (for even small nettles can sting and the sting gets worse). No deviltry was too big for me, and whenever I could pull a nasty trick on someone, I did. Neither my father nor my mother would discipline me. With my fellow hoodlums I wandered up and down the streets picking fights, sometimes even with boys who were bigger than I. When I took a licking my parents

would say, 'It's a shame for a big bruiser to beat up our child!' But if I got the better of my enemy—I used to scratch and bite and throw rocks—they said, 'What a scrappy boy our little Oliver is turning out to be!' This encouraged me. I was still too small for prayers; but when I cursed like a fishwife, they said I didn't know what it was all about. So I grew worse, until they sent me to school, where I readily performed what the other bad boys had thought up but did not dare to do themselves. When I had ruined or torn my books, my mother bought me new ones, lest my stingy father get excited. I was a pain in the neck to my teacher; he didn't dare handle me as I deserved because he received many valuable gifts from my parents, and he knew they were spoiling me.

"In summer I caught crickets and released them in school, where they chirped and sang. In winter I stole sneezing powder and scattered it in the room where the boys were being whipped. Whenever a stubborn soul kicked up some dust, my powder made everybody happier by causing everybody to sneeze. After a while I felt above such ordinary jokes, and I specialized in the following trick: I stole something from somebody and put it among the belongings of somebody else, whom I wanted to get in trouble. I did this frequently and was almost never caught. I don't want to go into detail about the gang wars we had; I usually was a leader, and my face was often bleeding from scratches, and my head full of bumps and bruises. People know what boys are up to, and from what I have told you, you can easily imagine what else I did in my childhood."

CHAPTER 19: *Oliver as a student at Liège and his experiences there*

"As my father's wealth every day increased, there were more and more freeloaders and parasites around, who praised my intellectual abilities. They kept mum about my vices (or at least found excuses for them), for they rightly suspected that

neither my father nor my mother wasted much friendship on anybody who did otherwise. So my parents took great joy in me and hired a private tutor to accompany me to Liège. I was sent there more to learn French than to engage in formal studies, for they wanted to make me into a merchant rather than a theologian. The tutor had orders not to be strict with me, lest I develop a servile attitude. He was to introduce me to other students and see to it that I did not become shy or monklike, for they wanted me to develop into a man of the world who knows what's what.

"My tutor, being bent on all sorts of devilment himself, didn't need these directives. Why should he forbid me anything *he* was doing or reproach me for a small fault when he was to blame for greater ones? He was particularly fond of drinking and whoring; I preferred fighting and scuffling. So we went roaming the streets together at night, he and his gang and I; and in a short time I learned more lechery than Latin from him. In my studies I relied on my good memory and native wit and let the work slide, but I was saturated with vices, roguery, and knavishness. Even then my conscience was so wide that a wagonload of hay could have passed through it. It caused me no qualms if, during the sermon in church, I read Berni's lewd love stories or Burchiello's comic poems or Aretino's licentious sonnets.⁵ The words I liked best in all of the service were, 'Ite missa est.'⁶

"At this time I made a point of dressing in the latest fashion. Since every night was Mardi Gras for me, and since I carried on like a nobleman and spent not only my father's generous allowance but also the extra money my mother secretly sent me, the ladies were paying attention to us, particularly to my tutor. These females taught me to play around, to neck and pet. I had known how to fight before and my tutor did not keep me from gorging and swilling, because he enjoyed it too. This jolly life lasted a year and a half before

⁵ Francesco Berni (d. 1536), Burchiello (d. 1448), and Pietro Aretino (d. 1556) were Italian writers of humorous or licentious works.

⁶ "Go now: Mass is over."

my father found out about it from his agent. The latter received orders to watch us more closely, to dismiss the tutor, to pull my reins tighter, and to keep down my expenses. This discouraged us considerably, but though the tutor had been fired, the two of us still were together day and night. Since we couldn't spend so lavishly as before, we fell in with a gang that robbed people of their overcoats at night or even drowned them in the Meuse. What we picked up in this desperate way we squandered on our whores. Our studies were practically forgotten.

"One evening when, as usual, we were loitering about in order to snatch the overcoats from students, we were pounced upon, my tutor was killed, and I was arrested along with five others who were regular thieves. The next day when we were questioned I mentioned my father's agent, who was a man of importance. He was summoned, and I was released on his bond, but I had to stay in his house under arrest. The tutor was buried; the other five were punished as thieves, robbers, and murderers. My father, who had been sent a report on my troubles, hurried to Liège and smoothed over everything with money. He lectured me on the distress I was causing him and assured me that my mother had been brought to the brink of despair by my actions. Then he threatened to cut me off with a shilling and to send me straight to hell if I didn't mend my ways. I promised to do better and rode home with him. That was the end of my university days."

CHAPTER 20: *The good student's return and farewell, and how he sought advancement in the war*

"When my father had me home again, he found out that I was a rotten apple. I had not become a respectable gentleman, as he had hoped, but a wise guy and a windbag who thought he knew it all. I had hardly gotten warm at home when he said to me, 'Listen, Oliver, the more I look at you the more I see you are a jackass. You are too old to learn a trade, too

impertinent to serve a master, and not good enough to take over my business. All the money I have spent on you, and what's become of you?! I hoped to make a man of you and be happy about you, but I had to buy you out of the executioner's hands. Oh, the shame of it! Maybe I should put you in a treadmill until you sweat blood and vinegar, or until your luck changes after you have done penance for your sins.'

"I had to listen to such lectures every day, until I got tired of them and told my father that I was not the only one to blame; it was his fault and that of the tutor who had misled me. It was only fair for him to be unhappy with me because his parents hadn't been happy with him either, for he had practically let them go begging and starve to death. He was about to reach for a stick to pay me for telling him the truth, but instead he swore long and loud and said he'd send me to the penitentiary in Amsterdam. This was more than I could take; that night I went to a farm he had recently bought, watched for my chance, and rode off to Cologne on the best stallion in his stable.

"I sold the horse and again joined a group of con men and thieves, similar to the ones I had left behind in Liège. They recognized me at once by the way I gambled, and I recognized them: both of us had the professional touch. I joined their gang at once and helped them make their nocturnal hauls wherever and whenever I could. But when, after a while, one of us was caught in the Old Market relieving an old lady of her heavy purse, and when I saw him standing for six hours in the pillory with an iron collar around his neck, and his ear was cut off and he was whipped, I decided to change occupations and become a soldier. Our colonel, the one under whom we served at Magdeburg, was recruiting for his regiment, and I became one of his boys. Meanwhile, my father had found out where I had gone. He wrote his agent to get in touch with me, but when he did I had already taken the king's shilling. The agent reported this to my father, who ordered him to bail me out, no matter the price. When I heard that, I was afraid of the penitentiary again, and for once I did

not care to be free. The moment my colonel found out I was a rich merchant's son, he raised the price so high that my father left me where I was. He thought he'd let me kick around in the wars and maybe I'd improve.

"It didn't take long for the colonel's secretary to kick the bucket, and I was asked to take his place, as you remember. At that time I raised my sights and hoped to advance step by step, perhaps to become a general. From the regimental secretary I learned how to behave, and my ambition to become important made me act like a man of honor and reputation—in contrast to my previous behavior. But I did not succeed very well until the secretary died. Then I tried to get his position: I spent money where I could, for when my mother found out that I was doing better, she secretly sent me money again. But because young Heartbrother was the colonel's favorite and was preferred, I tried to get him out of the way, particularly when I noticed that the colonel was about to give him the appointment. When I was not promoted, I became so impatient that I had myself made bulletproof by our provost so that I might provoke a duel with Heartbrother and dispatch him. But I could never find a way of getting at him. The provost was not in favor of my plan, either. 'If you get rid of him,' he said, 'it will hurt you more than it will help you, because you will have murdered the colonel's favorite man.' Instead, he suggested that I should steal something while Heartbrother was present and conceal it on him; then the provost would see to it that Heartbrother lost the colonel's goodwill. I followed this suggestion. At the christening I stole the colonel's gold-plated cup, gave it to the provost, and with it he got Heartbrother out of the way. You remember how, in the colonel's big tent, he made puppies crawl out of your clothes."

CHAPTER 21: *How Simplicius fulfilled Heartbrother's prophecy about Oliver while neither recognized the other*

When I heard out of Oliver's own dirty mouth how he had done in my best friend, I saw red. Yet, I could not take revenge and had to suppress my desire for it. I asked him to tell me how he had fared after the battle of Wittstock.

"In that battle," said Oliver, "I acted not like an inkslinger who was only paid to write, but like a regular soldier. I was well mounted, absolutely bulletproof; and since I was not assigned to a squadron, I showed off my bravery as an individual who is determined to advance by his sword or die. I scurried about our brigade like a hurricane, partly in order to warm up, partly to show that I was better suited for fighting than for writing. But it didn't do any good. Luck ran in favor of the Swedes, and I had to share in the misfortune of our side, for I had to ask for quarter, which a little while ago I had not been about to give anybody.

"So, like other prisoners of war, in order to recuperate I was shoved into an infantry regiment garrisoned in Pomerania. Since there were many new recruits and I gave indications of great courage, I was made a corporal. But I had no intention of sticking around. I wanted to get back to the imperials, whom I liked better, though I would have advanced faster with the Swedes. I arranged my escape this way: I was sent with seven musketeers in order to extract contributions in some of our out-of-the way places. When I had received more than eight hundred florins, I showed the money to my men and aroused their desire for it. We agreed to divide it among ourselves and to go A W O L with it. When we had done so, I persuaded three of them to help me shoot the other four. Having killed them, we divided the loot—two hundred florins each. With this we started out for Westphalia. On the way I persuaded one of the three to help me kill the other two, and

when we were supposed to divide the money once more, I strangled the last one. With this money I arrived happily at Werle, where I joined the army and lived the life of Riley.

"Although I wanted to continue to live high off the hog, my money was running low; then I heard a lot about a young soldier at Soest who was making wonderful booty and acquiring quite a reputation. I was encouraged to follow his example. On account of his green clothing they called him the Hunter. So I, too, had a green suit made for myself, and under his name I robbed and committed atrocities on our side as well as on his, so much that both of us were about to be forbidden to go on raids. The other fellow stayed home, but I carried on in his name as much as I could. For this reason he challenged me, but—it would have required the devil to fight with him. (They told me the devil really was in him and showed in his hair.) In that case, how could I be sure of being bulletproof any more?

"But I was not able to escape the Hunter's wiles, for with the aid of a servant he got me and my fellows into a sheepfold where he tried to force me into a fist fight in the moonlight, with two real devils looking on. But because I wouldn't fight, they made me do the most foolish thing in the world. And when one of my friends spread the news of this thing, I was so ashamed that I took French leave and went to Lippstadt, where I let the Hessians recruit me. But since they didn't trust me I trundled on and joined the Dutch army. The pay was good, but their war was not my cup of tea; we were kept like monks and were supposed to live lives as chaste as nuns'.

"Since I dared not show my face among either the imperials or the Swedes or the Hessians—unless I wanted to get into trouble, having deserted from all of them—and since I could no longer stay with the Dutch because I had gotten a girl into trouble (having criminally assaulted her, an offense that would soon become known), I thought I'd take refuge with the Spaniards. From them I hoped to go home and see what my parents were doing. But when I was about to do that, I got my directions mixed up and landed among the Bavarians. With them

I marched among the Marauding Brothers from Westphalia to the Breisgau and lived on gambling and stealing. When I had something in my pocket I spent my days gambling, my nights in the taverns. When my pockets were empty I stole what I could lay hands on. Some days I stole two or three horses, either from the pasture or out of the stables. I sold them and gambled away what I got for them. Then at night I'd slip into people's tents and relieve them of their possessions even if they kept them under their pillows. When we were marching I kept a sharp eye on the knapsacks that the soldiers' wives carried. In some narrow pass I'd cut these off their backs; and so I got along until the battle of Wittenweier. There I was taken prisoner, once more shoved into an infantry regiment, and thus made a Weimarer. But because I didn't like the camp at Breisach, I quit after a short time and went off to fight my own war, as you see me doing now. Let me assure you, brother, that I have laid to rest many a proud man. I have prospered with a load of money, and I don't intend to stop until I see there's nothing in it for me any more. And now it is time you told me of your own life."

CHAPTER 22: *What happens when a person has doggone and cat-gone bad luck*

When Oliver had finished his story, I could not help marveling at Divine Providence. I saw how the good Lord not only had protected me like a father from this monster, while I was in Westphalia, but even had made him shun me in terror. Only now did I see what a trick I had played on Oliver. To be sure, old Heartbrother had foretold it; but Oliver had interpreted the prophecy differently, much to my advantage, as may be seen from chapter 16. For if this beast had known that I was the Hunter of Soest, he would have done the same to me as I had done to him in the sheepfold. I also considered how wisely and ambiguously Heartbrother had worded his prophecies, and I weighed in my mind the fact that it would

be difficult for me to avenge the death of a man who deserved to die by hanging and the wheel, though Heartbrother's prophecies usually came true. I also considered how healthy it had been for me not to tell him the story of my life first, for that way I myself would have told him how I had insulted him. While I was letting these thoughts run through my mind, I noticed on Oliver's face a number of scratches that he hadn't had at Magdeburg. I imagined that these scars were the mark of Jumpup, made when he, in the shape of a devil, had scratched Oliver's face. So I asked him where these scars came from, adding that I might infer that by this omission he had withheld the best part of his life's story. He answered, "Alas, brother, if I were to tell you *all* my tricks and dirty dealings we'd both get bored. But in order to show you that I don't want to conceal anything from you, I'll tell you the truth, even though it seems the joke is on me in this case.

"I firmly believe that from my mother's womb I was predestined to have a marked face, for as a child other boys always scratched me up when I fought with them. One of the devils attending the Hunter also scratched the hell out of my face; I felt his claws for more than six weeks! But all that healed up nicely. The stripes you see now have a different origin. When I was still with the Swedes in Pomerania, I had a pretty mistress. I made my landlord and his wife give up their bed so we could lie in it. But the cat, which also used to sleep there, came every night and bothered us no end. She didn't want to give up her regular place so easily as the bed's owners had done. This made my mistress so mad—she couldn't stand cats anyway—that she swore she wouldn't do a thing for me until I got rid of that cat. I wanted to enjoy her favors a while longer, and by pleasing her I wanted to get even with the cat, but in such a way that I'd have a little fun along with it. So I put the cat in a sack, called my landlords's two sturdy dogs (they did not like the cat, either), and went to an open pasture for a bit of enjoyment. I thought the dogs would chase the cat around in the pasture like a rabbit; there was

no tree to which she could retreat, and this would be fun to watch. But dammit! My luck was not only doggone bad (as they say) but even cat-gone lousy (as they would say if more people had had my experience). When I opened the sack, the cat saw only the open field with two strong enemies and no high place to which to retreat for safety. That was no reason for the cat to give up and have her skin shredded. She took to my head, that being the highest place far or near. When I tried to remove her I lost my hat, and the harder I tried to drag her off, the more firmly she fastened her claws in me to hold on. The dogs couldn't look on idly for long. They too got into the act, and with open jaws they jumped at me to get at the cat—in front, behind, and on the sides. The feline did not care to budge; she hung on as best she could by clawing into my face or any other part of my head. And if by chance she took a swipe at a dog with her thorny-gloved arm, I got *that* for sure, too. Since occasionally she also hit the noses of the dogs, they tried their best to paw her down with their front legs, and that way I got many unfriendly pawings in the face. When I tried to reach for her with my hands to get her down, she bit and scratched for all she was worth. So the cat and the dogs together waged war on me, scratching and abusing me so frightfully that I hardly resembled a human being any more. But worst of all was the danger of splitting my nose or an ear, or losing it, when the dogs were snapping at the cat. My collar and coat looked as bloody as a blacksmith's stall when he is bleeding horses on St. Stephen's Day. I had to think up something altogether new to get out of this fix. Finally I dropped to the ground so that the dogs could get at the cat and my fine head would no longer be a battleground. To be sure, the dogs strangled the cat, but I did not have half the fun I had hoped for, only mockery and a face like the one you are looking at. I was so mad I shot both dogs and beat up my mistress, who had caused all this foolishness. She left me, probably because she could not love my face any more."

CHAPTER 23: *An example of the trade that Oliver plied, of which he was the past master, and to which Simplicius was to be apprenticed*

I would have been glad to laugh at this story of Oliver's; yet I had to show sympathy. Just as I was beginning to tell him my life story, we saw a coach accompanied by two horsemen coming up the road. So we descended the steeple and sat down in a house that was close to the road and very convenient for attacking passers-by. I kept my loaded gun in reserve, but before they even noticed us Oliver had killed a horseman and his horse with one shot. The other horseman immediately fled, and while, with my gun cocked, I made the coachman stop and get off, Oliver jumped on him with his broad sword and split his head down to the teeth. Right after that he wanted to cut down the women and children who were traveling in the coach and who already looked more like corpses than people; but I absolutely wouldn't let him and told him if he wanted to do it, he would have to strangle me first. "Ah, you foolish Simpli!" he said. "I would never have believed that you are as hopeless as you let on." I answered him, "Brother, why do you want to butcher innocent children? If they were men who could defend themselves, that would be something else." "Hoity-toity!" he said. "Scramble the eggs and they won't hatch. I know these exploiters well enough. Their father, a major, is a regular slave driver and the worst tyrant in the world." After these words he was about to kill some more, but I kept him from it until he finally gave in. There were a major's wife, her maids, and three pretty children whom I pitied with all my heart. To prevent them from giving us away, we locked them in a cellar where there was nothing to eat except some dried fruit and turnips. We were hoping somebody else would let them out. Then we searched the coach and with seven beautiful horses rode off into the thickest part of the woods.

When we had tied them up and I was looking around a little, I saw someone standing quietly by a tree not far off. I pointed him out to Oliver and wondered if we hadn't better beware. "Stupid!" he said. "That's a Jew; I tied him to the tree, but the rogue croaked long ago and is frozen stiff." He went to him, patted his chin, and said, "Ha! You old dog, you brought me many nice ducats!" And when he moved the jaw of the corpse, several doubloons dropped out of his mouth. The poor fellow had kept them even after death. Then Oliver reached into his mouth and fished out twelve more doubloons and a precious ruby. "Simpli," he said, "I owe this booty to you." And he gave me the ruby, while he pocketed the money and went to get the peasant. He told me to watch the horses and not to let the dead Jew bite me. That was his way of telling me that he had more courage than I.

While he was away, I worried about the dangerous situation in which I was living. I decided to take one of the horses and be gone, but I was afraid Oliver would catch me and shoot me, for I figured that this time he was only testing my good faith and was standing by to watch me. Then I thought I'd run off on foot, but I had to consider that I could not escape the peasants in the Black Forest (who had, at that time, the reputation of being hard on soldiers), even if I got away from Oliver. If you take all the horses, I thought, so that Oliver has no means of pursuing you, and if you are caught by the Weimar troops, then you will be broken on the wheel as a convicted murderer. In short, I had no assurance of getting away, particularly as I was in a wild forest where I knew neither the highway nor the trails. Then my conscience began to bother me because I had held up the coach and been a cause of the coachman's pitiful death, and also a cause of the women and innocent children's being locked in the cellar, where they might starve and die, like the Jew. In turn I tried to console myself with my innocence, saying that I was being kept by Oliver against my will. But my conscience reproached me: for the evil deeds previously committed, this inveterate murderer and I deserved being de-

livered into the hands of justice. Now I'd get my due reward, and perhaps it was God's just will to have me punished in this way. Finally, having regained some measure of confidence and hope, I prayed to God in his kindness to deliver me from this troublesome situation; and when this pious mood came over me, I said to myself, "You fool, you are not tied down or locked in. The whole wide world is open to you. Don't you have horses enough for flight? Or if you don't care to ride, your legs will carry you away quickly enough."

While I was still in doubt and torment and could reach no decision, Oliver and our peasant came along. He took us to a farm where we fed the horses and took turns sleeping for a few hours. After midnight we rode on and by noon we reached the Swiss border, where Oliver was well known, and where we had a big meal served. While we were enjoying it, the innkeeper sent for two Jews, who bought the horses for something like half their value. Everything was arranged so neatly and precisely that few words were exchanged. The horse-traders' biggest question was whether the horses had been imperial or Swedish. When they heard they came from the army of Weimar, they said, "We have to take them to the Bavarians, not to Basel or Swabia." I was amazed at their easy familiarity with these things.

We had a royal banquet and I greatly enjoyed the fresh trout and excellent crayfish. When dusk came we started back. Our peasant was loaded like a donkey with roast meat and other food. So we arrived next day at a single farmstead where we were welcomed and put up in a friendly way. Because of a storm we stayed a few days. After that, having used lonely roads through the woods, we reached the same little house where Oliver had taken me when I first met him.

CHAPTER 24: *Oliver bites the dust, and so do six more*

While we were sitting there feeding our faces and resting, Oliver sent out the peasant to buy food, shot, and powder. When he had left, Oliver took off his coat and said to me,

"Brother, I don't care to haul all this damned money around with me any longer." So he untied a couple of rolls or sausages of it, which he was carrying on his bare body, threw them on the table, and continued, "You will have to be satisfied with this until I quit the business, and then both of us will have enough. That cockeyed money has chafed and galled me." I replied, "Brother, if you had as little as I, it would not irritate you." "What?" he interrupted. "What's mine is yours; and whatever we earn from now on, we'll divide fifty-fifty." I picked up both rolls and found them good and heavy, for the coin was solid gold. I told him it was not so well packed as it might be, and if he liked, I would sew it up in such a way that wearing it would be little or no trouble. When he agreed, I went with him to a hollow oak tree where he kept scissors, needle, and thread; and from a pair of trousers I made a scapular or shoulder garment for each of us and sewed up many a gold penny in it. And since we wore the scapulars under our shirts, it was just as if we were armed with gold in front and back. When I wondered why he had no silver coin, he answered that he had more than a thousand thalers deposited in a tree. From this he let the peasant pay the household expenses and never asked for an accounting, because he didn't care for such sheep droppings.

The money having all been sewn up, we went to our lodgings and cooked all night and stretched out in the warmth. About an hour after daybreak, when we were least prepared, six musketeers with their corporal came into the hut, their guns cocked and ready to fire. They burst through the door and shouted for us to surrender. But Oliver (who, like me, had his musket always ready for action and his sharp sword by his side—he was sitting behind the table, while I stood behind the door by the stove) answered them with a couple of bullets that knocked down two of the men. I got the third one and wounded the fourth with another shot. Then Oliver whipped out his trusty sword (which was as sharp as a razor and could be compared to Caliburn,⁷ King Arthur's sword in England) and split the fifth man from shoulder to belly so

⁷ In English, King Arthur's sword is better known as "Excalibur."

that his entrails fell to the ground and he dropped down next to them. Meanwhile I hit the sixth over the head with the butt end of my gun, so *he* didn't move much any more. But Oliver received the same kind of blow from the seventh. It was so severe that Oliver's brain was splattered all over, but I returned the favor in kind, and so number seven joined his comrades in the dance of death. When the man whom I had in the beginning injured with a shot noticed these blows and saw that I was coming at him with the butt of my gun, he threw his musket away and started running as if all hell were after him. The whole skirmish took no longer than it takes to say the Lord's Prayer; in this short space of time seven brave soldiers bit the dust.

Seeing that I was the sole surviving master of the field, I checked Oliver to see if there might still be life in him. When I found him completely without breath, it seemed downright foolish to leave all that gold on a body that couldn't make use of it. So I skinned off the gold jacket that I had finished only last night and put it on over my own. Because I had broken my musket, I picked up Oliver's; for emergencies I also took his sword, and I made tracks down the road by which our peasant would have to return. I sat down in a quiet place to wait for him and to consider what to do next.

CHAPTER 25: *Simplicius comes out rich, but Heartbrother shows up as a pitiful specimen of mankind*

I had not been waiting half an hour when the peasant came toward me, running and wheezing like a bear. He did not notice me until I was upon him. "What's the hurry? What's up?" I said. He answered, "Get out of here quick! A corporal and six musketeers are coming to raid the place. They have orders to bring you and Oliver dead or alive to Lichteneck. They caught me in order to use me as a guide, but I managed to break away. I am warning you." I thought at once that the rogue had squealed on us, in order to get the money Oliver

kept in the hollow tree. But I did not let on that I suspected anything, for I wanted him to show me the way. I told him that Oliver and the party of soldiers that were supposed to capture him were dead. But when the peasant did not want to believe it, I took the trouble to go back with him and let him see the awful sight of seven corpses. "The seventh soldier," I told him, "I let escape, and I wish to God I could bring these back to life." The peasant turned white with fear and asked me what to do. I said, "My mind is made up. You have a choice of three alternatives: either you take me by safe trails out of the forest to Villingen; or you show me Oliver's money that's hidden in the tree; or you die here and keep these present corpses company. If you take me to Villingen, you can keep Oliver's money for yourself; if you show me the money, I'll divide it with you; if you do neither, I'll shoot you and go where I please." The peasant would have liked to run off, but he was afraid of my musket. So he fell on his knees and asked to guide me out of the woods. We started at once and hurried on that day and all the following night, which, as luck would have it, was bright; nor did we stop for food and drink or for rest, until toward daybreak we saw the town of Villingen before us; and there I dismissed the peasant. His reason to hurry was fear of death; mine, the desire to get out of there with my money. I can almost believe that gold gives a man great strength, as they say, for though it was heavy enough to carry, I did not feel especially tired.

I took it for a good omen that when I reached Villingen the gates were just being opened. The officer of the watch looked me over, and when he heard that I was a volunteer trooper of the same regiment to which Heartbrother had appointed me while he was at Philippsburg, and that I was coming from Weimar's camp at Breisach (by whose men I had been captured at Wittenweier and made to serve), and that now I wanted to get back to my regiment among the Bavarians, he assigned me a musketeer and had me taken to the commander. He was still asleep, for military affairs had kept him awake more than half the night, and I had to wait about an hour

and a half in front of his quarters. The people just returning from early Mass crowded around me, and civilians and soldiers wanted to know how things were going at Breisach. The noise awakened the commander, and he ordered me to come in.

He started to question me and I answered just as I had done at the city gate. Later he asked me about some special points concerning the siege, and I confessed everything: how I had stayed about two weeks with a fellow who had also deserted; how we had held up and robbed a coach, hoping we'd get enough booty from the Weimarers to buy mounts, in order to return well equipped to our regiments; how we had been surprised and attacked by a corporal and six men sent to arrest us; how my comrade and six enemies had been killed; how the seventh had escaped as well as I; and how each had gone to his own party. But I said nothing about having intended to go home to my wife in Westphalia or about my wearing the two well-padded scapulars; nor did it bother my conscience to conceal this information, for it was none of his business. He didn't even ask about it, but he was amazed and almost wouldn't believe that Oliver and I had slain six men and chased off the seventh, though my partner had not survived. In this conversation I had occasion to mention Oliver's sword, which I praised and carried with me. He liked it so well that I had to let him have it in exchange for another, for I wanted to get out of there with a passport.

When he dismissed me (having ordered a passport made out for me), I went to the nearest inn, but I did not know whether to sleep or eat first. I needed to do both. I decided to appease my stomach first and ordered something to eat and a drink. Then I worried about how to arrange matters in order to get safely back to my wife in Lippstadt with all my money, for I intended as little to find my regiment as to break my neck.

While I was thinking about this, a fellow came limping into the room; he walked with a stick, his head was bandaged, one arm was in a sling, and the clothes he wore were so ragged that I would not have given him a penny for the lot. Immedi-

ately on seeing him, the waiter wanted to kick him out because he smelled bad and there were enough lice crawling on him to populate the Swabian moors. The fellow begged that he be allowed, for God's sake, to warm himself a little, but he got nowhere with the waiter. When I took pity and put in a good word for him, he was grudgingly allowed to sit by the stove. It seemed to me he watched me with great appetite and concentration while I ate eagerly. He let out a sigh or two, and when the waiter went out to get me a piece of roast, he sidled up to my table and extended a little earthenware crock to me, so that I could easily imagine why he had come. I took his pot and filled it from my can before he had a chance to ask for wine. "Oh, my friend," he said, "for Heartbrother's sake, give me something to eat, too." When he said that, I felt a stab in my heart and I knew it was Heartbrother himself. I almost fainted when I saw him in such misery; but I managed to embrace him, asked him to sit with me, and then we both started crying, I for pity, and he for joy.

CHAPTER 26: *The last chapter in this book, for none follows after*

The unexpectedness of our meeting almost took away our appetites; we only asked each other how the other had been since our last meeting. But since the innkeeper and the waiter were constantly coming and going, we could tell each other nothing of a confidential, private nature. The innkeeper was surprised that I put up with this lousy individual, but I told him that in wartime this was the custom among honest soldiers and comrades in arms. When I found out that Heartbrother had been in the hospital and was now living on alms, and that his wounds were badly cared for, I rented a separate room in the inn, put Heartbrother to bed, and sent for the best surgeon in the place. I also let a tailor and a seamstress dress him properly and thus snatched him out of the jaws of the lice. In my purse I happened to have the doubloons that

Oliver had knocked out of the dead Jew's mouth. I threw them on the table, and within hearing of the innkeeper I said to Heartbrother, "Look, brother, this is my money. I'll spend it on you; we'll use it up together." That made the innkeeper more attentive. I showed the barber-surgeon the ruby, which also came from the Jew and which was worth about twenty thalers, and told him he could have it if he would cure my friend completely. He was satisfied and went diligently to work.

So I cared for Heartbrother as for another self and had a good suit of grey cloth made for him. But first I went to the commanding officer on account of the passport. I told him I had met a badly injured comrade from the same regiment and wanted to wait until he had completely recovered; with due regard for my regiment, I did not want the responsibility of leaving him behind. The commander praised my loyalty and gave me permission to stay as long as I wished, and he offered to give each of us a valid passport as soon as my friend could travel.

When I returned to Heartbrother and sat alone with him, on the edge of his bed, I asked him to tell me frankly how he happened thus to come down in the world. I imagined that he might have lost his former position of dignity on account of some important cause or omission. But he said, "Brother, you know I was Count von Götz's factotum and his dearest, most intimate friend. On the other hand, you also know well what rotten luck he had in his last campaign. Not only did we lose the battle of Wittenweier, but we couldn't raise the siege of Breisach either. Since on this account there is all manner of nasty talk going around (especially now that Count von Götz has been summoned to Vienna to answer charges), I voluntarily live in this humble way, partly from shame and partly from fear. Often I wish I could die in this misery, or at least keep myself concealed until the count's innocence has been proven. As far as I know, he has always been loyal to the Holy Roman Emperor. And I imagine the absence of good luck last summer is to be attributed to Divine Providence

(who parcels out victories where he pleases) rather than to the count's incompetence.

"When we were to relieve Breisach and I saw that on our side everything was done listlessly, I armed myself and proceeded to the pontoon bridge as if I expected to accomplish the whole business by myself; and yet, at that time, it was neither my responsibility nor my job. I did it as an example for the others and because we had achieved nothing all summer. My luck (or rather misfortune) had it that I was one of the first men on the bridge to see the whites of the enemy's eyes. There was heavy fighting, and as I had been among the first to attack, I became one of the last when we could not resist the violent defense of the French.⁸ I fell into the hands of the enemy, and I was shot once in the right arm, and again in the thigh, so that I could neither run away nor use my sword any more. And since the narrowness of the place and the heat of the skirmish did not permit much talk about giving or receiving quarter, I took a blow on the head that sent me sprawling to the ground. Being well dressed, I was robbed of my clothes and thrown into the Rhine for dead. In this trouble I cried to God and left all to his holy will, and after making several vows, I received his help. The Rhine washed me ashore, where I stanching my bleeding wounds with moss. And though I nearly froze to death, still I felt in myself a strange strength that made me crawl away. With God's help—though I was badly wounded—I reached some Marauding Brothers and soldiers' wives who took pity on me although I was a complete stranger to them. They all despaired of the relief of Breisach, and that hurt me worse than my wounds. They dressed and refreshed me near their fire, and before I could bandage my wounds, I saw that our people were preparing for a shameful retreat and giving up their cause for lost. This hurt me so much that I resolved to tell no one who I was, lest I incur mockery. For this reason I joined some

⁸ Shortly after the death in 1632 of King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, the French, under policies devised by Richelieu, entered the Thirty Years' War on the side of the Protestants.

wounded men of our army, who had a surgeon with them. I gave the surgeon a gold cross, which was still around my neck, and for that he has bandaged my wounds until now.

"Dear Simpli, this is the miserable life I've lived lately. Nor do I intend to reveal my identity until after Count von Götz's difficulties have been resolved. Your kindheartedness and faithfulness have been a great consolation to me and are a sign that God has not yet forsaken me. When I came from early Mass this morning and saw you standing in front of the commander's quarters, I imagined that God had sent you instead of an angel to help me in my poverty." I consoled Heartbrother all I could and confided to him that I had even more money than the doubloons he had seen and that all of it was at his service. Then I told him of Oliver's death and how I had been forced to avenge it. This so revived his spirit that his body also benefited, for every day his wounds got better.

End of the Fourth Book

Book Five

CHAPTER 1: How Simplicius becomes a pilgrim, and how he goes on a pilgrimage with Heartbrother

After Heartbrother had regained his strength and his wounds were healed, he confided to me that in his deadly peril he had vowed to make a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Einsiedeln. Because he was so close to Switzerland, he wanted to make it now, even if he had to do it by begging along the way. This was music to my ears, and I offered him my money and company; in fact, I wanted to buy two nags and make the trip on horseback. Of course, it wasn't devotion that impelled me; I wanted to see the Swiss confederacy, because it was the only country still inhabited by beloved peace. Then, too, I was glad of the chance to wait on Heartbrother during this trip, for I loved him almost more than myself. But he turned down my help and my company, saying that a pilgrimage had to be made on foot and on peas. If I were his companion, I would not only prevent his devotion but also expose myself to a lot of discomfort on account of his slow and laborious gait. He said this only to rebuff me, because to live during such a pious trip on money obtained by robbery and murder was against his conscience. Furthermore, he did not want to involve me in too much expense, and he told me frankly that I had already done more for him than I owed him, or than he could hope to repay. At this point we got into a friendly disagreement, which was so pleasant that I have never heard such a sweet argument. Each merely reminded the other that he had not yet given all that friendship demanded—had not, in fact, half repaid the other's

favours. But this exchange did not move him to put up with me on the pilgrimage. Finally I realized that Oliver's money and my godless life were equally disgusting to him. So I lied a little, telling him that a desire to lead a better life prompted me to go to Einsiedeln. If he were to keep me from this good work, and I were to die, he would hardly be able to answer for it. My arguments persuaded him to let me visit the holy place in his company, particularly when I displayed great remorse (also a lie) about my past life and told him that I, too, had imposed on myself the penance of walking to Einsiedeln with peas in both shoes.

This dispute had hardly ended when a new one arose, for Heartbrother was too scrupulous; he objected to my asking the commander for a passport made out to my regiment. "What?" he said. "Don't we intend to become better Christians by journeying to Einsiedeln? And you want to start out with a falsehood; you want to pull the wool over people's eyes? If all the martyrs and witnesses of Christ had done that, there would be few saints in heaven. Let us, in God's name and under his protection, go where our pious intention and desire call us. God will lead us where our souls will find peace." I rebuked him saying that it was prudent not to tempt God but to go with the times and make use of the inevitable, especially since making pilgrimages was an unusual activity among soldiers; that if we told of our journey, we would be treated as deserters rather than as pilgrims; and that this would plunge us into trouble and danger; and that the Apostle Paul (to whom we could not well compare ourselves) had made wondrous use of the customs of his time. Heartbrother finally allowed me to get a passport for traveling to my regiment. With this document and a reliable guide we left town, just as the gate was being locked, and started out for Rottweil. After a short distance we turned into byways and crossed the Swiss border that night. Next morning in a village we equipped ourselves with long, black coats, pilgrim's staves, and rosaries, and having paid the guide well, we sent him back.

In comparison with other German lands, the country appeared very strange to me—as if I were in Brazil or China. I saw country people trading and going about their business in peace. The barns were full of cattle; in the farmyards chickens, geese, and ducks were plentiful; the roads were safe and used by many travelers; in the taverns sat customers who enjoyed life. Nowhere was there fear of the enemy, no terror of looting, and no anxiety of losing one's goods, life, or limb. Everyone lived securely under his vines and fig trees and—unlike other German districts—in pure joy and delight, so that I considered this country an earthly paradise, though by nature it was harsh enough. All along the way I did nothing but gape, while Heartbrother counted his beads. For this he reproached me; he wanted me to pray continuously, but I couldn't get used to it.

In Zurich he found me out and very smartly told me off. At Schaffhausen, where we stayed over night, my feet hurt badly from the peas. Next morning I was reluctant to walk on peas again, and I had them boiled and put back into my shoes; and that's how I got to Zurich without sore feet. But my friend acted very nasty and said to me, "Brother, by the great grace of God you have walked well in your shoes despite the peas." "Yes," I replied, "my dear and honored Heartbrother, I had them boiled. Otherwise I couldn't have done so well." "Alas," he answered, "may God have pity on you. What have you done? It would have been better to forget your vow entirely than to make a mockery of it. Forgive me, brother, for using plain language with you and telling you in brotherly love that the salvation of your soul is in utter jeopardy unless you change your ways before God. I gladly confess and speak the truth when I say that I love no one in the world more than you. But I also do not deny that unless you change, continuing that love would burden my conscience." I was struck dumb and could not recover my breath for a while. Finally I openly confessed that I had not placed the peas in my shoes from reverence but only to please him, so that he would take me along on this trip. "Alas, brother," he said, "I see you are a long way from

holiness, peas or no peas. May God help you to improve, for otherwise our friendship cannot endure."

From this point on, I followed sadly after him, like one being led to the gallows. My conscience started bothering me, and I thought of all the mean tricks I had ever played in my life. It was then that I first lamented the loss of the innocence which I had brought with me out of the woods and which I had frittered away on so many occasions. My sorrow was increased by the fact that Heartbrother would no longer talk much with me. He only looked at me and sighed, and that struck me as if he knew I was damned, and pitied me.

CHAPTER 2: *After being frightened by the devil, Simplicius gets religion*

We arrived in Einsiedeln and stepped into the church just as a priest was exorcising a man possessed by an evil spirit. That was new and strange to me. So I let Heartbrother kneel and pray all he wanted, and I went over to watch this sight. I had hardly approached when the spirit cried out of the poor man, "Oh-ho, my friend, does bad luck bring you here? I thought I'd find you with Oliver, at home in hell, when I got back; but I see you are here, you adulterous, murderous whoremonger. You think you can escape us? Oh, you priests, do not accept him; he is a hypocrite and a worse liar than I. He is only fooling himself and making a mockery of God and religion." The priest ordered the spirit to be silent because he was an archliar and would not be believed.

"Yes, indeed," he answered, "just ask this runaway monk's traveling companion. He will tell you that this atheist did not shrink from boiling the peas on which he promised to walk here." When I heard this and everybody looked at me, I didn't know which way my head was screwed on. But the exorcist punished the spirit and made him cower in silence; yet he could not drive him out that day. Meanwhile Heartbrother

came over, just when I looked more like a corpse than a live person and was so terrified that, between hope and despair, I did not know what to do with myself. Heartbrother comforted me as best he could and assured the bystanders (and especially the fathers) that I had never been a monk but rather was a soldier who had probably done more good than evil. He added that the devil was a liar who had exaggerated the incident of the peas far beyond what it was. I myself was so bewildered that I already seemed to feel the pain of hell upon me, and the priests had quite a time calming me. They advised me to go to confession and communion, but once more the evil spirit cried from the man possessed, "Take heed, he will make a fine confession. He does not even know what confession is. And what will you do with him? He is a heretic and belongs to us. His parents were Anabaptists, not Calvinists," and so on. The exorcist again ordered the spirit to be still and said to him, "It will dishearten you all the more then if the poor lost lamb is snatched out of your jaws and numbered among the flock of Christ." Hearing this, the spirit started to roar so savagely that it was terrifying to hear him. Yet I derived my greatest comfort from this repulsive outcry, for I thought the devil would not rant so if I had already lost God's grace.

Though I was not at that time prepared for confession (it had never entered my mind until then, and I had always been as afraid of it as the devil is of the holy cross), still I felt such remorse about my sins, such a desire to do penance and to improve my vicious and godless life, that I asked for a father confessor. Heartbrother was altogether glad at this sudden conversion and improvement, for he knew that so far I had not joined any church. There and then I publicly embraced the Catholic faith, went to confession, and after absolution partook of the Eucharist. After this I felt so relieved and easy about my heart that I cannot express it. The most remarkable thing, however, was that henceforth the spirit in the possessed man left me in peace, though before confession

and absolution he had reproached me specifically with various misdeeds, so that I suspected he had been ordered to do nothing but watch my sins. But, he being a liar, the bystanders did not believe him, particularly because my honorable pilgrim's garb presented me in quite a different light.

We spent all of two weeks in this town, which abounded in grace; I thanked God for my conversion and looked at the miracles that took place there. All of this induced in me a mood of considerable reverence and piety. But it lasted only a short while, for since my conversion had not sprung from a love of God but rather from fear and dread of damnation, by and by I turned lax and lukewarm, because I gradually forgot the terror the fiend had struck into me. After we had sufficiently beheld the relics of the saints, the vestments and other sights of the church, we went to Baden to spend the rest of the winter.

CHAPTER 3: *How the two friends spent the winter*

There I rented us a cheerful parlor and bedroom, which in the summer were usually occupied by visitors to the baths, mostly rich Swiss who go there more to show off and have a good time than to improve their health. I also arranged for our board, and when Heartbrother saw that I was living it up, he advised me to be economical and reminded me of the long winter ahead of us. He was afraid my money would not last: I might need my resources in the spring when we had to leave; even a large sum of money would soon be gone if a person only spent it and added nothing to it. Money disappeared like smoke, he said, and so on. After such well-meaning counsel I could no longer conceal from Heartbrother how well-lined my pockets were. I also told him that I wanted to spend the money for our benefit, especially since I had acquired it in a way so unworthy of God's blessing that I did not intend to buy a farm with it. And even though I did not want to invest

it just to entertain my dearest friend on earth, it was only fair that he, Heartbrother, enjoyed Oliver's money, in order to make up for the insult he had received from Oliver at Magdeburg. When I knew we were in a safe place, I peeled off both my scapulars, took out the ducats and pistoles, and told Heartbrother that this money was at his disposal; he should invest it or spend it as he thought might profit us best.

When he realized that, along with my trust in him, I had so much money that I could have been quite an important person regardless of him, he said, "Brother, as long as I've known you, you have always shown me love and trust. But how could I ever repay you? It is not only money with which you put me under obligation—that might in time be repaid, perhaps; it is your love and trust and especially your absolute confidence in me, all of which are beyond material values. I blush for shame that I would never trust a person as much as you have trusted me. I assure you, brother, that this proof of your true friendship binds me to you more than to a rich man who might give me thousands. However, I beg you, brother, yourself to stay the master, keeper, and disbursing officer of your money. For me, it is enough if you are my friend." My answer was, "What strange words are these, dear Heartbrother? You assure me with words that you are obliged to me; yet you warn me not to spend our money for nothing." And so we talked back and forth—foolishly, almost, for each was intoxicated with love for the other. And Heartbrother became simultaneously my steward, treasurer, servant, and master. During this leisurely time he told me of his life: how he had become known to Count von Götz and how he had been advanced. Then I told him how I had fared since his late father died. Until now we had never taken the time to do this. And when he heard that I had a young wife in Lippstadt he reproached me for running off to Switzerland with him instead of going to her first, as was my duty. My excuse was that I could not have left him, my very dearest friend, alone in such utter misery. He persuaded me to write my wife and

let her know that I would come to her at the earliest opportunity. I wrote and begged her pardon for not returning earlier: all sorts of untoward events prevented me, though I had wanted to come back before this.

Now when Heartbrother found out from the newsletters that Count von Götz was doing well—particularly, that he would succeed in vindicating himself before his imperial majesty, would be released, and would even get back the command of an army—he wrote to Vienna concerning himself, sent for his equipment, which was still with the Bavarian army, and began to hope that his own luck would improve. On account of these developments we decided to part next spring, he to go to his count, and I to my wife in Lippstadt. In order not to spend the winter idly, we learned from an engineer to build—on paper—more fortresses than the kings of Spain and France combined could have erected. Furthermore, I got acquainted with some alchemists who suspected that I had money and wanted to teach me how to make gold, if only I'd pay for the apparatus and supplies. I think they would have talked me into it if Heartbrother had not shown them the door. He said that whoever knew *that* art wasn't likely to go around like a beggar asking others for money.

Though Heartbrother received a favorable reply and excellent promises from his count in Vienna, I never got a single line from Lippstadt, though on some mail days I wrote in duplicate. That disgusted me so much that I did not go to Westphalia in the spring. I got Heartbrother's permission to go with him to Vienna, where I would join in his expected good fortune. So with my money we equipped ourselves like cavaliers, with clothes, horses, servants, and weapons, and proceeded by way of Constance to Ulm, where we took a boat on the Danube and after a week reached Vienna safely. On the way I did not observe much except that the women who lived on the banks did not answer the oral greeting of passers-by in kind, but rather gave them visual proof of their femininity by hoisting their skirts behind. That way some men gained deep insight.

CHAPTER 4: *How Heartbrother and Simplicius enter the war once more, and how they get out of it again*

Strange things happen in his changeable world. They say that a man who knew everything would soon be rich. I say that the man who could always make use of his chances would soon be great and powerful. Many a skinflint or curmudgeon—these titles are bestowed on misers—soon gets rich because he knows how to use one or two advantages. But for that reason he is not great; rather, he receives (and will always receive) less respect than he had when he was poor. On the other hand, riches closely follow the man who knows how to make himself great and powerful. Fortune, which is accustomed to granting might and riches, looked at me with a winsome smile, and after we had been in Vienna for a week, she gave me several chances to climb up the ladder of importance. But I didn't do it. Why? I suppose because my fate had decided on something else, namely, that to which my fatuousness led me.

Count von der Wahl, under whose command I had previously distinguished myself in Westphalia, happened to be in Vienna when Heartbrother and I arrived. He was having a banquet with Count von Götz, several imperial councilors, and others, when the conversation turned to all sorts of unusual characters, soldiers, and famous raiders. They mentioned the Hunter of Soest, and several of his daring exploits were so well told that some were amazed that so young a fellow could have achieved them. Others deplored the fact that the sly Hessian colonel, de St. André, had framed him with a wife so that he would have either to lay aside his sword or to join the Swedish army. Count von der Wahl said he had found out how the colonel had tricked me. My beloved Heartbrother, who happened to be present and who wanted very much to see me advance, requested permission to speak. He said he knew the Hunter of Soest better than any other person on earth. The Hunter was, he continued, not only a good soldier,

used to the smell of powder, but also a good horseman, a perfect swordsman, an expert in artillery and musketry, and, in addition, one who could outdo any engineer in building fortifications. He had left behind in Lippstadt not only his wife (with whom he had been so shamefully saddled), but also everything he owned, and had sought imperial service again; for in the last campaign he had been under the command of Count von Götz, and when captured by Weimarers, he had wanted to return to the imperials. He and his friend had killed a corporal and six musketeers who had pursued them in order to bring them back; he had made excellent booty and was now in Vienna and willing to take up arms once more against the enemies of his imperial majesty, but only under conditions commensurate with his reputation, for he no longer wanted to serve as a common soldier.

By that time, those present were so inspired with drink that they wanted to satisfy their curiosity by seeing the Hunter, and Heartbrother was sent out by coach to bring me. On the way he instructed me how to behave in the presence of these illustrious men, for my advancement and future depended on it. When I arrived, I answered their questions briefly and to the point, so that they began to take notice of me as one who said nothing without necessity and who used a clever emphasis when he spoke. To put it in a nutshell, I made a pleasant impression on everybody, and besides, Count von der Wahl had already praised me as a good soldier. After a while I got tipsy too, and perhaps in that condition I showed how little I really knew of life at court. The upshot of it all was that an infantry colonel promised me a company in his regiment, and I didn't refuse. I thought, To be a captain, that's something! But the next day Heartbrother rebuked me for being too easily pleased; if I had held out I could have bettered my rank.

And so I was presented as their captain to a company which, though complete with officers (including me), counted no more than seven soldiers for sentry duty. My N C O's were for the most part such decrepit codgers that I could only shake my head and scratch myself behind the ears. So, in the next

engagement (in which Count von Götz lost his life and Heartbrother's testicles were shot away), we were miserably beaten, though I was only slightly wounded in the thigh. For a cure we went to Vienna, where, incidentally, I had deposited my money. Besides our wounds, which healed soon enough, Heartbrother found himself in a dangerous condition, which the doctors could not diagnose at first: he became paralyzed in his extremities, like a choleric person who is bothered by his gall. And yet he was not in the least inclined to that complexion, nor to being angry. Still, he was advised to take the waters, particularly those at Griesbach in the Black Forest.

This is how our luck changed overnight. Only recently Heartbrother had wanted to marry a young lady of quality and have himself made a baron, and me a count. But now he had to think of something else, for he had lost the wherewithal to propagate a new generation; and since, in connection with his paralysis, he was threatened with a lengthy illness (during which time he needed good friends), he made his will and declared me the sole heir of all his property, chiefly because he saw that for his sake I was throwing my own fortune to the winds and giving up my company in order to go with him to a health resort, where I would stay until he regained his health.

CHAPTER 5: *Simplicius pretends to be a messenger and, being addressed as Mercury by Jove, learns what the great Numen has in mind concerning war and peace*

When Heartbrother was able to ride again, we exchanged our cash (for now we kept but one purse between us) for a letter of credit on a bank in Basel. We bought horses, hired servants, and rode up the Danube as far as Ulm and, since travel was pleasant in May, proceeded from there to the spa. We rented rooms, and I continued to Strasbourg, in order not only to cash the check we had had transferred from Basel, but

also to look for experienced doctors who could prescribe medicines and work out a schedule for taking the waters. Several of these doctors came with me and found that Heartbrother had been poisoned. But since the poison had not been strong enough to kill him immediately, it had gone into his arms and legs, from whence it had to be removed by drugs, antidotes, and steam baths. Such a cure would take from one to eight weeks. Then Heartbrother recalled when and by whom he had been poisoned, namely, by those who would have liked to have had his position in the army. And when he heard from the various doctors that his illness would not require his visiting a spa, he firmly believed that his field surgeon had been bribed by his rivals to get him this far out of the way. However, Heartbrother decided to complete his cure at the resort, since the air was salubrious, and the other guests pleasant.

I did not want to waste my time, and since I had a hearty desire to see my wife sometime, and Heartbrother did not need me especially, I disclosed my plan to him. He approved and advised me not to procrastinate but to go, the sooner the better. He gave me some precious jewelry, which I was to give to my wife; also I was to beg her pardon, on his behalf, for delaying my return. So I rode to Strasbourg, and there I not only provided myself with money, but also inquired about the safest way of making my trip. I found out that it could not be done on horseback and alone, for raiding parties sent out by the garrisons of the two enemies made the roads unsafe. I hired a courier, obtained a passport for him, and wrote up several letters to my wife, her sister, and her parents, which I asked to have delivered in Lippstadt. Then I pretended to change my mind, got the courier to give me his passport, returned my horses and the servant, disguised myself in a red and white livery, and took a boat to Cologne, which was then neutral.

There I went first to see my old Jupiter, in order to find out about my sequestered property. But at that time he was totally unhinged in his mind and disgusted with the human

race. "Oh, Mercury," he said, when he saw me, "what news do you have from Münster?"¹ Do these humans think they can make peace without me? Never! They had it; why didn't they keep it? Weren't all the vices flourishing when they induced me to send them a war? And why do they deserve peace now? Have they improved since then? Haven't they rather become worse and rushed into war as if they were going to a fair? Or did they repent because of the famine I sent, in which many thousands died of hunger? Or did the savage epidemics that cut down so many millions terrify them, so that they became better? No, no, Mercury, the survivors who see the misery and distress with their own eyes are not only unrepentant; they have grown much worse than they ever were. If they have not changed after so many severe penalties, but continue their godless life amid wretchedness and vexation, what will they do if I were to send them delectable, golden peace? I should have to worry that they would take it upon themselves to deprive me of heaven, as the titans did before. But I will prevent such insolence betimes and let them linger woebegone in war for a long time to come."

Because I knew how to treat this god if one wanted to put him in the right frame of mind, I said, "Alas, great god, all the world is moaning for peace and promising to mend its ways. Why should you withhold it from them any longer?" "Indeed, they are moaning," answered Jupiter, "but not for my sake, only for theirs. They don't want to praise God, each under his vines and fig trees, but merely to enjoy the fruits of them in peace and lechery. The other day I asked a louse-ridden tailor whether I should give them peace. But he answered, what did he care?! He would keep as busy in war as in peacetime. I got a similar answer from a foundryman. He told me that if he did not cast church bells in peacetime, he'd cast cannon and mortars in wartime. A blacksmith said, 'If I don't have plows and farm wagons to work on in peacetime, I have plenty of artillery horses to shoe and army wagons to take care of in wartime. I can do without peace.' Look, dear Mercury, why

¹ Preliminary peace negotiations at Münster started as early as 1644.

should I grant them peace? Surely there are a few who want it, but only for the sake of their bellies and their convenience. There are, however, also some who want to keep the war going, not because it is my will, but because it is to their profit. And just as the masons and the carpenters want peace so that they can get rich by rebuilding and repairing the burnt-out towns, so others, who do not believe in earning an honest living by manual *labor*, wish a continuation of the war in order to have a better opportunity for manual *theft*."

Since my Jupiter was concerned only with these affairs, I took it that he could give me no news about my family. Therefore, I told him nothing, but proceeded resolutely on familiar byways to Lippstadt and asked for my father-in-law as if I were only a messenger. But I found out at once that he and my mother-in-law had departed this world half a year ago, and that my beloved wife, after she had been delivered of a boy (who was with my sister-in-law) had also passed away right after his birth. I handed my brother-in-law the letters that I had written myself to my father-in-law, my dear wife, and to him, my brother-in-law. He offered me lodging so that he might find out from me—the messenger—how Simplicius was. For the same reason my sister-in-law talked a long time with me about myself, and I spoke of myself and told her as many pleasant things about me as I knew, for the pockmarks had so changed and marred me that no one recognized me any more, except Herr von Schönstein;² but being an old, trusted friend, he kept still.

When I told my sister-in-law in great detail that my master Simplicius owned many fine horses, had numerous servants, and was a man of importance, wearing a black velvet coat adorned all over with gold, she said, "Indeed? I always thought that he was of better descent than he admitted. By

² Von Schönstein was the cavalry officer who had captured Simplicius and taken him to Lippstadt (Bk. III, chap. 14). Later he had been on the boat that rescued Simplicius from the tree in the Rhine. Though von Schönstein had tried to get Simplicius out of the imperial army, he failed because he was on a secret mission (Bk. IV, chap. 10).

definite assurances, the commander here persuaded my deceased parents that the marriage between him and my late sister, who was a virtuous girl, was a profitable match; but I never saw any good in it. Nevertheless, he made a good impression and promised to go into Swedish—or rather Hessian—service, here in this garrison. For this purpose he wanted to go to Cologne and bring his assets here. But the matter was delayed and he, having been deceitfully sent off to France, left my sister (who was hardly married a month to him) and perhaps a dozen burghers' daughters pregnant. One after another, they all gave birth to boys; my sister was last.

"Since my father and mother are dead, and my husband and I expect no children together, we have adopted my sister's child, and we expect to make him heir of all we own. With the help of our commander here, we have collected his father's assets in Cologne—amounting to perhaps three thousand florins—so that this youngster, once he is old enough, will have no cause to complain of poverty. My husband and I love the child so much that we wouldn't give him to this own father, if he should come by to pick him up. Moreover, he is the handsomest among all his stepbrothers and resembles his father as if he were cut from the same pattern. I know that if my brother-in-law knew what a handsome son he has here, he couldn't deny himself the pleasure of looking at the little darling, even though he might not relish running into his other children, the bastards."

These and many other matters were brought up by my sister-in-law, and I could easily see that she loved my child, who was skipping about in his first pair of breeches and making my heart glad. For that reason I rummaged through my pockets for the jewelry Heartbrother had given me to present to my wife. "My master Simplicius," I said, "asked me to give these jewels to his beloved wife as a greeting; it is only fair to leave them for his child." My brother-in-law and his wife received the gift joyfully and concluded that I was not living in want, but rather that I must be a man different from the kind they had imagined before. So I asked permission to go back, and

when I was given leave, I begged for the favor of kissing the young Simplicius in the name of the old one, so that I might tell his father about it as a token. When this was done (with my sister-in-law's permission), both my nose and the child's started bleeding. My heart was about to break, but I concealed my emotions; and in order not to have much time to think about the cause of this sympathetic event, I left at once, and after two weeks of much trouble and danger arrived in Sauerbrunn as a beggar, for I had been stripped bare on the way.

CHAPTER 6: *A practical joke that Simplicius played in the spa*

Upon arriving, I noticed that Heartbrother had gotten worse rather than better, though the doctors and druggist had plucked him cleaner than a fat goose. He seemed to be childish and could hardly walk upright. I cheered him up as best I could, but he was in poor condition, and the way his strength was failing he probably suspected that he would not last long. His greatest comfort was that I would be with him when he closed his eyes.

I, on the other hand, enjoyed life and sought my old accustomed pleasures where I could find them, but in such a way that Heartbrother missed none of his care. And since I knew I was a widower, leisure and youth again induced me to run after women; I had already forgotten the fright I received at Einsiedeln. At the resort there was a very beautiful lady³ who let it be known she was of nobility, but as I figured it she was even more *mobilis* than *nobilis*. I busily paid court to this man-trap, for she seemed to be a good dish. After a short time I received free access not only to her house, but also to any other privilege I might have wished and hoped for. But from the beginning I was disgusted with her easy ways

³ This is the adventuress Lebushka, who tells her life story in the Simplician writing *Trutzsimplex or the Life of the Arch-picara Courage*, a book that inspired Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage, a Chronicle Play of the Thirty Years' War* (1939).

and wondered how to get rid of her without trouble, for she seemed to be more interested in fleecing my purse than in marrying. Whenever I was with her she showered me with loving, ardent glances and other manifestations of her fiery affection, so that I was ashamed for both myself and her.

There was also a rich Swiss nobleman at the spa. Not only had his money been stolen, but also his wife's jewelry, consisting of gold, silver, pearls, and precious stones. Now since it is as unpleasant to lose such things as it is hard to come by them, the Swiss sought all the counsel and help he could in order to recover them. He sent for the famous devil-conjurer of the goatskin, who by his conjuring so troubled the thief that he personally had to return the stolen goods to their proper place. For this service the magician received ten thalers.

I would have been happy to confer with this sorcerer; but I was afraid it could not be done without loss of dignity (for at that time I thought I was a big wheel). So, having heard that he was a great toper, I asked my servant to drink with him that evening in order to become acquainted with him, and perhaps I could find out a thing or two that would come in handy; for the stories told about him were so strange that I could not believe them unless I heard them from him in person. Having disguised myself as a traveling quack who sells ointments, I sat down at his table, intending to find out whether he could guess (or whether the devil would tell him) who I was. But I did not notice anything peculiar about him, for he just kept pouring wine down his throat, and he thought I was what my clothes indicated. He even drank to my health a few times, and he showed more respect to my servant than to me. He told him in all confidence that if the man who robbed the Swiss had thrown the least little part of the loot into running water, thus giving the accursed devil his share of it, it would have been impossible to name the thief or to recover the loss.

Hearing these silly things, I was amazed at how the sly, deceptive fiend can get his clutches into poor humans by means

of such insignificant trifles. I could easily imagine that this was part of the pact made between the conjurer and the devil, and that such a trick would not help the thief if another conjurer were called in, one whose pact did not contain this provision. So I ordered my servant (who could steal more skillfully than a gypsy) to get the fellow good and drunk, steal his ten Reichsthalers, and throw a few pennies of it into the river Rench. The man did as he was ordered. When the conjurer missed his money next morning, he went to a wild part of the Rench, there, no doubt, to confer in this matter with his familiar. But he was so mishandled that he came back with a black eye and scratches all over his face. I felt so sorry for the poor rascal that I had his money returned to him with this message: Seeing what kind of evil and deceptive guy the devil was, he might henceforth quit his company and service, and return to God. But for me this admonition turned out like the grass that the dog eats; from this time on I had nothing but bad luck. Soon afterward my two fine horses dropped dead from sorcery. And what could have protected me? I lived as godless a life as an epicurean and never commended my possessions unto God's protection. Why should this sorcerer not have taken revenge on me?

CHAPTER 7: *Heartbrother dies, and Simplicius starts pitching woo again*

The longer I stayed in the resort the better I liked it; for one thing, the number of guests increased daily, it seemed; for another, the place itself and the style of living there struck me as pleasant. I became acquainted with the jolliest people and started using courteous phrases and compliments, the existence of which I had never noticed before. I was thought to be a nobleman, for my servants called me captain, and soldiers of fortune do not commonly attain that rank at my age. For that reason the rich fops sought not only my acquaintance but also my sworn friendship, and I theirs. All manner of entertain-

ment, gambling, gluttony, and drinking were my greatest worry and concern. They took away many a pretty ducat without my noticing it especially or worrying about it, for my purse was still heavy enough from Oliver's legacy.

Meanwhile, Heartbrother's condition went from bad to worse, so that he finally had to pay the debt of nature: the doctors had left him after extracting their share from him. He confirmed his last will and testament and made me the heir of what he expected to receive of his late father's legacy. I had him buried in great style and dismissed his servants, after buying them mourning clothes and giving them a sum of money.

His death was a painful blow to me, particularly since he had been poisoned; and though I could not change that, it changed me, and I grew sadder from day to day. I stayed away from all parties and sought only solitude, there to meditate upon my sad thoughts. For this purpose I would sometimes hide in a thicket, there to contemplate not only what a friend I had lost, but also the fact that I would never again find one like him. In this connection I also made plans for my future life, but without deciding anything definite. Now I wanted to get back in the army; but then I considered that the lowliest peasants in this part of the country were better off than a colonel, for no raiders ever came into these hills. I could hardly imagine what an army would have to do in order to ruin this part of the world, where all the farms were still standing, well built, as in peacetime, and all the stables were full of cattle—though in the plains there wasn't even a cat or a dog left in the villages.

One time I lay down in the grass under a big shade tree between the road and a creek. I wanted to listen to the nightingales, whose song was likely to cheer me most in my sadness. I listened to their lovely melody not casually but with great attentiveness, and as it were, daily from habit, I wondered how such a bright, high voice and pleasant sound can proceed from such a small pipe or throat. For some time I had been enjoying myself listening to the prettiest songs of the bird and thinking that the nightingale was fascinating the other birds

by the loveliness of its song, when on the other bank, there approached a beauty who moved me more than a well-dressed demoiselle could have done, though she wore only the dress of a farm girl. From her head she took a basket in which she was carrying a roll of fresh butter that she hoped to sell in the spa. She put it in the water so it wouldn't melt in the hot sun. Then she sat down in the grass, took off her hat and kerchief, and wiped the perspiration from her face. So I had plenty of time to look at her and to satisfy my curious eyes. It seemed to me that in all my born days I had not seen a prettier girl: the proportions of her body appeared to be faultless and beyond reproach, her arms and hands white as snow, her face lovely and pert, her dark eyes full of fire and exciting glances. She was wrapping up the butter again when I shouted across to her, "Ah, maiden! To be sure, with your pretty hands you have cooled the butter in the water; but with your bright eyes you have set my heart on fire." As soon as she saw and heard me, she ran away as if chased, leaving me behind speechless and filled with all those foolish notions created by an enamored fancy to trouble us.

My desire to have this sun shine upon me did not let me stay in the solitude I had sought, but made me regard the song of the nightingale as no better than the howl of wolves. For that reason, I too trotted toward the spa, sending my page ahead to talk to the country girl and haggle with her until I arrived. He did what he could; and after arriving, I did what I could. But I found a heart of stone and such reserve as I would never have thought possible in a farm girl. But this only increased my ardor, though as one who has been around I could have told myself that she would not be one who was easily fooled.

At that time I should have had either a bad enemy or a good friend: an enemy who would have forced me to concentrate my thoughts on him and to give up my foolish love; or a good friend who would have advised me differently and kept me from the folly I was about to commit. But, alas, I only had Heartbrother's money to dazzle me, my blind desires to

mislead me because I did not restrain them, and my own rashness to ruin me and drive me into misfortune. Fool that I was, I should have judged from the black color of our clothing (an evil omen) that her love would be my misery. Since Heartbrother and the girl's parents had died, both of us were dressed in mourning when we first saw each other. What joyfulness could there have been in our courtship? In a word, I was caught in a fool's snare, and therefore I was blind and without reason, like the boy Cupid himself. And as I did not dare to satisfy my animal urge in any other way, I decided to marry her. "Heck!" I said to myself, "you are only a peasant boy and will never own a castle. This is a noble part of the country which, in comparison to other places, is enjoying wealth and prosperity. Anyway, you still have enough money to buy the best farmstead hereabouts. You ought to marry this honest Fanny from the country and get yourself a peaceful gentleman's place among the farmers. Where would you find a jollier home than near the spa, where you can see a different world every six weeks—on account of the guests, who come and go. On the basis of this you can imagine how the world changes from one century to the next." This and a thousand other thoughts went through my head, until I finally asked for the hand of my beloved in marriage and received her consent, but not without a struggle.

CHAPTER 8: *Simplicius contracts a second marriage, meets his knan, and learns who his parents were*

I ordered a big wedding, for I was in seventh heaven. And I not only bought the farm where my bride was born, but I improved it with many new buildings, as if I wanted more to hold court than keep a courtyard. Before the wedding I bought thirty head of cattle and put them on the place, for that was the number the farm could support throughout the year. In brief, I arranged everything in the best possible manner, including the most expensive furniture my folly could

select. But the bubble burst quickly, for when I thought I had set my sail for Angel-land I only got to Hell-land and then—much too late—I found out why my bride had been so reluctant to marry me. And what hurt me the worst was that I could not weep on anybody's shoulder about this shame of mine. It was fair for me to have to pay for my sins, but this knowledge did not make me a bit more patient or pious. Rather, because I found myself so cheated, I planned to cheat my cheater and started grazing where I could find greener pasture. Thus, I was more often in pleasant company in the spa than at home. In short, I let my household go to rack and ruin.

On the other hand, my wife was just as slovenly: a beef that I had slaughtered she salted down like pork; she wanted to roast trout on a spit and grill crayfish! By these few examples one can easily see how she kept house. She liked to drink wine and shared it with others, and that was a sign of my approaching disaster.

Once I was promenading down the valley with some people of fashion to visit friends in the lower baths. There we met an old peasant leading a goat that he wanted to sell. And because I had a feeling that I had seen this person before, I asked him where he was coming from with the goat he was leading on the rope. He took off his hat and said, "Sir, I dasn't tell ya." I said, "Well, surely you didn't steal it?" "No," he said, "I come from the town down in the valley, the one I dasn't mention to the gentleman because we are talking in the presence of a goat."⁴ This made everyone laugh, and because I got white as a sheet they thought I was annoyed or ashamed that the peasant answered me so neatly. But my thoughts were elsewhere, for by the big wart which the peasant had in the middle of his forehead, like a unicorn, I was assured that he was none other than my knan from the Spessart. So I decided to act the prophet before I told him who I was and presented him with a son who was fully grown and as well dressed as

⁴ The town is called Gaisbach, and *Geiss* (a variant spelling of *Gais*) means "goat." The peasant is pretending that the goat should not hear this word lest her feelings be hurt.

I was at that time. I said to him, "My good old man, don't you come from the Spessart?" "Yea, sir," answered the peasant. I continued, "About eighteen years ago the troopers looted and burned your place." "Yes, God ha' mercy," answered the peasant, "but it isn't quite that long ago." I continued asking, "At that time did you not have two children, a grown-up daughter and a young boy who herded your sheep?" "Sir," replied the peasant, "the daughter was my child, but the boy was not. I wanted to raise him as my own." From this I gathered that I was not the son of this coarse yokel. This made me partly glad, but it also saddened me, because it occurred to me that I might be a bastard or a foundling. So I asked my knan where he had gotten the boy, and why he had wanted to raise him as his own child. "Alas," he said, "that was strange: the war gave him to me and the war took him away." Now I was getting worried that some unpleasant fact about my birth might come out, and I turned the conversation back to the goat and asked him if he had sold it for meat to the lady who kept the hotel. That would be strange, for the guests in the spa didn't usually eat old goat meat. "Ah, no, sir," answered the peasant, "the lady has plenty of goats and won't pay me much for anything. I am bringing it for the countess who is taking the waters. Dr. Busybody has prescribed some herbs that the goat must eat. The doctor then takes her milk and adds some medicine to it. The countess, she has to drink the milk and get well from it. They say there's something wrong with her insides, and if the goat can cure her, she can do more than the doctor and his gravediggers combined." During this conversation I wondered how I could continue talking with the peasant, and I offered him one thaler more than the doctor or the countess would pay for the goat. He agreed at once (for a slight profit quickly persuades most people), but with this proviso: that he would first tell the countess of my higher offer. If she should raise her bid to equal mine, she was to have preference; if not, he would bring the goat that evening and tell me about the deal.

So my knan went on his way, and, I, with my company,

went mine. But I could not, and did not want to, stay with the group any longer. I turned aside and found my knan still with his goat, for the others would not give as much for it as I (which surprised me in such rich people, but their niggardliness didn't make me more stingy). I took him to my newly-bought farm, paid for the goat, and after I had got him half drunk, asked him where he had got hold of the boy we had been discussing today. "Well, sir," he said, "the Mansfeld war gave him to me and the battle of Nördlingen took him away again." I remarked that that must be a good story and asked him to tell it, since we had nothing else to talk about. He began, saying, "When the Mansfelders lost the battle at Höchst, the defeated troops scattered far and wide, for they did not know where to retreat. Many came to the Spessart, where they wanted to hide in the woods. But after escaping death on the plains, they found it with us in the hills, and since both warring parties considered robbing and killing each other, on our grounds, as fair play, we reached out for them, too; at that time hardly a peasant went abroad without his shooting iron (for we couldn't always stay at home with our plows and hoes). In this hubbub in the tremendous, wild forest not far from my farm, I had heard several shots. Shortly afterward I noticed a beautiful, young noblewoman on a stately horse. First I thought she was a man, for she rode like one; but when she raised her eyes and hands to the sky and I heard her call on God in a pitiful voice, in French, I lowered and uncocked my gun, for her gestures and her prayer assured me that she was a woman in distress. We approached each other, and when she saw me, she said, 'Alas, if you are an honest Christian, I beg you, in the name of God and his mercy, to take me to some good woman who, with God's help, will aid me in delivering me of my body's burden.' These words, together with her way of speaking and her sad but exceedingly beautiful and graceful figure, moved me to pity; I took her horse by the reins and led her through hedges and bushes to the very densest thicket, where I had concealed my wife and child, the hired hands, and my cattle. There, in less than half

an hour, she was delivered of the boy we were talking about today."

My knan took a drink, indicating that the story was ended. I offered him more wine, and when he had emptied the glass, I asked him what had happened to the woman. He answered, "When she had given birth, she asked me to be the boy's godfather and to have him baptized as soon as possible. She also told me her name and that of her husband, so they could be recorded in the baptismal register. She opened her satchel, which contained some precious things, and gave my wife and child, the maid, and another woman so much that they might well be satisfied with her. While she was thus busy, having told us of her husband and commended the child to our care, she died on our hands. There being so much confusion in the country that no one could stay at home, we could hardly find a parson for the funeral and the christening. But when both were done, our mayor and our parson ordered me to raise the child to manhood; for my trouble and expense I was to keep the woman's legacy, except several prayer books, precious stones, and some odds and ends, which I was to hold in trust for the child. So my wife raised the boy on goat's milk, and we were glad to keep him, thinking that when he grew up we'd give him to our daughter in marriage. But after the battle of Nördlingen we lost the girl and the boy and everything I owned."

I said to my knan, "You have told me a nice story, and yet you forgot to tell me the most important part: you didn't tell the names of the woman or the husband or the child." "Sir," he answered, "I didn't think you wanted to know. The lady's name was Susanna Ramsay, her husband was Captain Sternfels von Fuchshaim, and since my name is Melchior, I had the boy baptized Melchior Sternfels von Fuchshaim, and that is how he's recorded in the register."

From this story I found out that I was the son of the hermit and Governor Ramsay's sister, but much too late, for my parents were both dead; and about my Uncle Ramsay I could learn only that the people of Hanau had sent him and his

Swedish garrison packing, and that this had made him madder than a hornet.

I completely drowned my godfather in wine, and the next day I sent for his wife. When I made myself known to them, they did not want to believe me until I showed them the hairy birthmark on my chest.

CHAPTER 9: *How Simplicius suffers childbirth pains and becomes a widower once more*

Not much later I rode down into the Spessart with my godfather, in order to get definite information and to obtain documents concerning my birth; these were given to me without trouble, on the basis of my godfather's statements and the entry in the baptismal register. I also stopped to see the parson who had been in Hanau and taken care of me there. He gave me a written testimonial concerning the place where my father had died, the fact that I had been with him until his death, and finally, that for a while I had been with Mr. Ramsay, the governor of Hanau. In fact, I collected various statements from witnesses and had my life history written up and certified by a notary public, for I thought that one never knows where it will come in handy. This trip cost me more than four hundred thalers, for on the way back we were caught and robbed by a foraging party, and my godfather (or knan) and I, having lost our shirts, barely came away with our lives.

Meanwhile, matters at home were getting worse, for when my wife found out that her husband was a nobleman, she not only played the great lady but also let the household go completely to pot. Since she was pregnant, I put up with it in silence. Moreover, some cattle disease had killed off most of my best animals.

I could have taken all this in my stride; but Jupiter Pluvius, it never rains but it pours! When my wife had been delivered, the hired girl was also brought to bed with child.

Her baby looked like me, to be sure; but the one my wife bore was the image of the hired man. On top of that, the same night the lady mentioned above⁵ deposited a baby at my door, with a written message saying I was the father, so that all at once I had three children on my hands, and I expected more to come crawling out of the corners. This gave me a lot of gray hair; but that's how it is when one leads a godless and despicable life, as I had done by yielding to carnal desires.

What could be done? I had to have the children baptized and, in addition, pay the fine for adultery. And because the Swedes were in command at that time and I had served under imperial colors, I was fined much more heavily. Yet, all this was only a prelude to utter ruin, which was approaching. Though these many unfortunate accidents troubled me profoundly, my darling wife made light of them; in fact, she joked day and night about the handsome gift that had been laid at my door, and about my having been fined a pretty penny. If she had known about me and the hired girl, she would have treated me worse. But that good creature was nice enough to let me (and an amount equal to the fine I would have had to pay) persuade her to designate as the father of her child some dandy who, about a year ago, had been at my house for the wedding, but whom she otherwise hardly knew. Still, she had to leave the house, for my wife suspected what was on my mind concerning her and the hired man. But for all that, she could not say anything; for otherwise I could have reproached her, telling her that I could not have been with her and the hired girl at the same time. However, what worried me was the fact that I should bring up the hired man's child, while my own would not be my heir, and, moreover, that I had to keep still and be glad that no one else knew about it.

Every day such thoughts tormented me, while my wife was swilling wine at all hours, for since our wedding she had become so used to drink that she seldom was without it and

⁵ As Courage tells it, the pseudo-elegant Simplicius was a deceiver whom she deceived: the child she deposited at his door was not hers at all; her maid had obtained the baby from a total stranger.

never went to bed sober. This soon caused her child's death and inflamed her bowels so much that she died, making me a widower a second time. I took this so much to heart that I almost laughed myself sick.

CHAPTER 10: *What the peasants tell about the weird Mummelsee*

When I saw myself thus restored to pristine freedom—but with a purse almost empty of money and a household burdened with many head of cattle and servants—I adopted my godfather Melchior as my father; my godmother, his wife, as my mother; and the bastard Simplicius who had been placed at my door, for my heir. To these two old folks I handed over my house and lands and all property, except a very few gold coins and jewelry, which I had saved up for emergencies. Since my bad experiences with them, I so loathed the company and cohabitation of women that I made up my mind never to get married again. But the old couple, who were hard to equal in farm experience, immediately rearranged my household: they got rid of those hired hands and animals that were no good. My old knan and mither spoke of better things to come and promised (if I let them manage) always to have a good horse in the stable for me and to earn enough to allow me to sit down over a bottle of wine with any honest man. I noticed right away what kind of people were running my farm: my godfather and the hired hands did the field work—he was sharper than a Jew when he sold cattle, timber, or resin; and my godmother knew how to get dairy money and hold onto it better than ten wives of the sort I had had. Therefore, after a short time, my farm was stocked with everything necessary, including animals small and big, and it was soon considered the best in the country. Meanwhile, I went walking for pleasure and indulged in all sorts of meditations, for when I saw that my godmother realized more from the bees, through wax and honey, than my wife used to get from beef, pork, and

such, I was satisfied that she would not be caught napping in other matters.

One day I went to the spa, intending more to take a drink of fresh water than to get acquainted with the dandies (as I used to do), for I had begun to imitate the economizing of my old folks, who advised me against associating much with people who wantonly waste their parents' substance and their own. Just the same, I fell in with a group of middle-class people, because they were talking about a strange subject, to wit, the Mummelsee, a bottomless lake located on one of the highest mountains in the vicinity. They had sent for some old-timers who were telling strange things they had heard about this unusual body of water. Listening to their stories gave me great enjoyment, though I considered them no more than old wives' tales, and some sounded as mendacious as the stories of Pliny.

One said that if an odd number of items—peas or pebbles or something else, it didn't matter what—were tied in a handkerchief and dipped in the water, the count was changed to even; likewise if one dipped in an even number, an odd number would come out. Someone else (and almost everybody with him) asserted, and confirmed by examples, that if one rock or several were thrown in, no matter how serene the sky had been before, immediately a severe thunderstorm would arise, with frightful rains, hailstones, and gusts of wind. From this topic they proceeded to all sorts of stories of strange happenings at this lake: fantastic appearances of earth spirits and water sprites, and what they had said to people. One man told how once, while some herders were grazing their cattle by the lake, a brown ox had come out of the water. He had mixed with the other cattle, but a little man had come after him to drive him back into the water; and when the ox did not want to return, the little man had wished all the troubles of mankind on him. Then the ox and the little man had gone back into the lake. Another said that once when the lake was frozen over, a peasant had driven across his ox team and a load of timber without a crack appearing in the ice; but when

his dog came after him, the ice broke and the poor dog went down and was never seen again. Still another asserted as true the story of a hunter who, following the tracks of his quarry and passing by the lake, had seen a water sprite sitting on the surface with a whole lapful of gold coins, which he was playing with. When the hunter had been about to fire at the sprite, the latter had ducked down and shouted, "If you had asked me to help you in your poverty, I would have made you and your family rich."

I listened and laughed at these and similar stories, which sounded like fairy tales for entertaining children, but I did not believe even that such an abyss could exist on a high mountain. But there were others, old and trustworthy peasants, who said that in their own and their fathers' memories, august, princely persons had gone up to see the lake: one ruling duke of Württemberg had had a raft built, on which to go out on the lake and measure its depth. After the measurers had dropped a plumb with nine thread-nets (that's a length of yarn, about which the peasant women in the Black Forest know more than I or any surveyor) and still had not hit bottom, the raft had started going down—contrary to the nature of wood—so that those on board had had to give up their undertaking in order to save themselves by swimming to shore. In commemoration of this event, one could still see pieces of the raft on the lake shore, and the Württemberg arms and other designs carved in stone there. Still others proved through many witnesses that an archduke of Austria had wanted to drain the lake, but many people had tried to dissuade him, and the petitions of the country people had thwarted his plan; they were afraid the whole countryside might perish and drown. Furthermore, an Austrian archduke had put several barrels of trout into the lake, but all of them had died within an hour, right before his eyes, and had floated out the mouth of the lake, regardless of the fact that the river in these hills contains such fish and the outlet of the lake flows into the same river.

CHAPTER 11: *Unheard-of gratitude from a patient almost causes Simplicius to have holy thoughts*

The last story almost made me believe the earlier ones, and my curiosity was so aroused that I decided to have a look at this miraculous lake. Concerning its name, those who had been talking gave different and contradictory opinions. I said the German name "Mummelsee" meant that the lake wore a mummery or disguise, as at a masquerade, so that not everyone could fathom its true nature or depth (which had never been fathomed, even though important personages had tried).

Then I went to the place where, a year ago, I had seen my late wife and drunk for the first time the sweet poison of love. I lay down once again in the shade and the green grass, but I no longer paid any attention to what the nightingales were piping; rather, I contemplated the changes I had suffered lately. I considered that at this very place I had begun to turn from a free man into a slave of love; that since then I had changed from an officer into a peasant, from a rich widower into a husband, from a husband into a cuckold, and from a cuckold back into a widower; and that likewise I had turned from a peasant's son into the son of an honest soldier, and again into the son of my knan. I pondered how, since then, fate had robbed me of Heartbrother and replaced him with an aged couple. I thought of my father's blessed life and death, of the pitiful death of my mother, and of the various changes to which I had been subjected all my days, and I could not keep from crying. And while I was thinking of all the money I had gotten and squandered during my life (and regretting it), along came two old toppers or drunks (they were taking the waters for their palsy) and sat down near me, finding this a good place to rest. They were telling each other their troubles, for they thought they were alone. They were disgusted with their doctors, but I won't go into that, for

the doctors might not like me if I did, and next time they might give me a purge that would expurgate my soul. I mention this only because one of these oldsters was thanking God for not having more money. That expression of gratitude removed from my mind all the sadness I felt at the time. I resolved to strive neither for honor, nor for money, nor for anything else the world loves. I resolved to take up philosophy, to endeavor to live a life that would please God, and especially to repent of my recalcitrance and try, like my late father, to climb the highest rungs on the ladder of virtue.

CHAPTER 12: *How Simplicius travels with the sylphs to the center of the earth*

My desire to see the Mummelsee increased when my godfather told me that he had been there and knew the way. But when he heard that I had set my mind on seeing it, he said, "What good will it do you to go there? You and I will see nothing but the image of a lake that's located in the middle of a great forest. And when you have paid for your present enthusiasm with laborious disenthiasm, you will have regrets and tired feet (for one can't ride there), and the trip down for the trip up. Nobody could have dragged me there if I had not been forced to hide there when Dr. Daniel (he meant the Duc d'Enghien⁶) was marching down from Philippsburg." But my curiosity and I paid no attention to his advice, and I found another guide to take me there. Now, when he saw I was serious, he said that since the oats were in and there wasn't much to do on the farm, he would go with me to show the way, for he loved me and did not want to let me out of his sight. And because the people in the neighborhood believed I was his own son, he liked to show off with me

⁶ Philippsburg was captured in succession by the Swedish, the French, the imperials (under von Götze), and again by the French in 1644. The Duc d'Enghien is Louis II, the Great Condé, who commanded French armies with Turenne.

and behaved toward me and others as might a common poor man whose son has become a great man solely through Fortune and without the father's help and furtherance.

So we hiked together over hills and valleys, and before we had been gone six hours we came to the Mummelsee, for my godfather walked like a beetle and was as fit as a youngster. There we ate the food we had taken with us, because the long way and the climb had made us hungry. Having finished, I looked at the lake and saw lying in it several pieces of hewn timber that my knan and I recognized as parts of the Württemberg raft. I surveyed the extent of the lake by means of geometry, since it was very difficult to walk around it and measure it by paces or feet. I entered its dimensions in my notebook and made a sketch of it in reduced scale. And when I had finished with that, I wanted to find out if it were true that a thunderstorm came up whenever a rock was thrown in: the sky was clear, and the air still and warm. I had already found by the mineral taste of the water that no trout could live in the lake.

In order to start work on my experiment, I walked along the left-hand side of the shore to a place where the water, which is crystal clear otherwise, appears to be pitch black, because of the depth of the lake. For this reason it looks so frightening that the very sight terrifies a person. Here I started throwing in rocks so big I could hardly carry them. My godfather or knan not only refused to help me, but also warned me as much as he could and asked me to desist, but I busily continued. Rocks that were too large and heavy to carry I rolled toward the lake until I had thrown in about thirty. Then black clouds began to cover the sky and violent thunder was heard. My godfather, who stood on the opposite shore by the outlet and deplored my work, shouted to me to find a safe place lest the rain and the storm or even worse misfortune overtake us. But I answered him, "Dad, I want to stay and see the end of this, even if it rains pitchforks." "You," answered my knan, "behave like all these reckless brats who don't give a damn if the world goes to pieces."

While listening to his grumbling, I did not turn my eyes away from the deep part of the lake, so that I might notice if bubbles or air rose from the bottom, as usually happens if one throws rocks into deep water. But I saw nothing of the kind. Rather, far away in the direction of the abyss I saw several creatures fluttering about in the water. Their shape reminded me of frogs, and they flitted about as sparks fly from a rocket that's rising into the air. And as they approached me more and more closely, they seemed larger and taller and shaped more like human beings. I first felt great amazement and then, because they were so close to me, terror and repugnance. Moved by horror and wonder, I said to myself, yet so loud that my knan, standing on the opposite shore, could hear me above the thunder, "Alas, how great are the creations of our Maker, even in the bowels of the earth and the depths of the water!" I had hardly finished speaking when one of these sylphs appeared on the surface of the water and answered, "Behold! This you acknowledge before you have seen anything of it. What would you say if you were in the center of the earth and saw our dwellings, which your curiosity has disturbed?" Meanwhile, similar watermen emerged like ducks bobbing up. They all looked at me and returned the rocks I had thrown in. This amazed me. The first and foremost among the sprites, whose dress glittered with gold and silver, threw me a sparkling stone the size of a pigeon's egg, green and transparent like an emerald, and said, "Take this jewel so that you have something to tell about us and this lake." I had hardly picked it up and put it away when I felt as if the air was suffocating or drowning me. I could no longer stand up but reeled about like a yarn spool and finally fell into the lake. No sooner was I in the water than I recovered, and by virtue of the stone I used water instead of air for breathing. Like the little waterman, I could easily locomote in the lake and moved with the sprites into the deep part. The whole thing reminded me of a flock of birds descending in curves from the uppermost parts of the air to the ground.

My knan, having seen this marvel in part (namely, the part

that took place above the surface), together with my sudden fit, took off from the lake and headed for home as if his head were on fire. There he told the whole sequence of events, but particularly how, during the thunderstorm, the sprites had brought up the rocks I had thrown into the lake and put them in their old places; and how, in turn, they had taken me down with them. Some people believed him, but most thought it was a cock-and-bull story. Still others suspected that, like a second Empedocles (who jumped into the crater of Mt. Etna), I had drowned myself in the lake and asked my father to spread these tales so that I should gain notoriety, because they had noticed that for some time I had been in melancholy humor, almost desperate, and so on. Others wanted to believe that my adopted father had murdered me (except I was stronger than he), so that the old miser would be sole owner of my farm. So, at this time the conversation in the spa and the surrounding countryside was about nothing but the Mummelsee, about me, my departure, and my godfather.

CHAPTER 13: *The prince of the Mummelsee tells of the sylphs' life and origin*

[Summary: The prince of the Mummelsee takes Simplicius down to the center of the earth, a distance of 4,500 miles. On the way they talk, and the prince tells him that lakes have a threefold purpose: first, to fasten the oceans to the earth, as with nails; secondly, to allow the water sprites to distribute the oceans' waters to the earth through wells, creeks, lakes, rivers, and so on; and thirdly, to permit the sprites to live in them like reasonable creatures of God, attend to their business, and praise the Creator. If the sprites were to cease working, the world would perish and regenerate itself through a fire started by the heat of the sun. They are mortal creatures who rank below human beings (the scale being: angels, humans, sprites, and animals), for Christ has not redeemed them. They know the will of God, are always healthy

and therefore long-lived, free, knowledgeable in sciences and arts, not sinful and hence not subject to punishment or God's anger. Simplicius is bursting with questions: How can the sprites be free if they have a king? How are they born, and how do they die? Female sprites, he is told, conceive without pleasure and bear without pain; death to a sprite is painless—as if a light has gone out. Their freedom is unimpaired, for they can traverse fire, water, air, and earth without effort and without fatigue. Simplicius concludes that the sprites must be happier than men, but he is corrected: men have souls; they are able to aspire to eternal bliss and to look upon the face of God. In his sight men enjoy in one moment more happiness than the whole tribe of the sprites has had or will have from the beginning of creation till doomsday.]

CHAPTER 14: *What Simplicius discussed with the prince en route, and the strange and marvelous things he heard*

[Summary: Simplicius is informed by his companion, the "little prince," that the rocks which people throw into lakes have to be removed so that the communication of one body of water with another is not impeded; and in order to discourage human beings from needlessly throwing in rocks, the sprites stir up thunderstorms.

[In answer to Simplicius' question about the difference in waters, the prince explains that the waters assume different qualities as they pass through metals or semi-elements like sulphur, salts of various kinds, vitriol, alum, antimony, and so on. Fire in the earth warms the water. Much of this information is provided in great detail.

[Simplicius asks if he could leave by a different outlet than the Mummelsee. "Of course," is the reply. Ancestors of the sprites guided some Canaanites to America: they had escaped the sword of Joshua and in despair had thrown themselves into a lake. When Simplicius is amazed by this, the little

prince is astounded at his amazement, and Simplicius asks whether the sprites don't find humans astonishing. "No," he says, "the only thing amazing about humans is the way they throw away their chances of eternal bliss. If only the sprites had this human privilege of proving themselves worthy in the sight of God." Toward the end of this discussion Simplicius and the little prince are approaching the king's court.]

CHAPTER 15: *What the king discussed with Simplicius, and Simplicius with the king*

[Summary: In contrast to royal courts on earth, the king of the sprites keeps a simple household. Yet all the princes of the various lakes and seas are present, and all are dressed in their national costumes; it's like a picture book. The king asks why Simplicius created a disturbance in his realm and is astonished to learn that the culprit has already resigned himself to dying for the offense. The king then asks Simplicius why humans persist in vice, though the millenium is reported to be near. If the earth must perish by fire, the sprites will also suffer death. As a Christian, Simplicius may have more precise information than that which is available to the sprites and sylphs. Simplicius pleads ignorance of such high matters; nevertheless, the king urges him to tell what he knows about conditions on earth.

[In obvious satire, Simplicius describes the priests, rulers, merchants, doctors and pharmacists, craftsmen, and others, as they should be, not as they are. On earth, he says, pride, envy, anger, lechery, debauchery, laziness, and so on, are unknown. Wars are caused only by excessive zeal in God's behalf.]

CHAPTER 16: *News from the depths of the bottomless sea called Mare del Sur*

[Summary: Simplicius goes on a sight-seeing tour through the subterranean realm. A delegation is just leaving for the

Mare del Sur,⁷ and Simplicius joins them. On the way he is to think of a keepsake he would like to take back to earth.

[On the bottom of the South Sea he marvels at coral growths as big as oak trees. From these the sylphs gather food. He also sees giant snails, and pearls big as hens' eggs—and just as edible. The ground is strewn with emeralds, turquoise, rubies, diamonds, sapphires, and other precious stones, many as big as the rocks one finds in mountain streams on earth. Projecting cliffs are inhabited by strange crawling, stationary, or walking creatures, and the fish that swim about remind him of birds. Since it is night, he can see the full moon, the stars, and the antarctic pole. The various water inhabitants are dressed in different national costumes, but all speak German and understand Simplicius perfectly. This easy communication is possible because the sprites had nothing to do with that terrestrial aberration, the Tower of Babel. Thus they have been spared the consequences thereof.]

When my convoy had picked up enough food, we returned through another shaft from the ocean to the center of the earth. On the way I said to someone that I thought the center of the earth was hollow and that the Pygmies⁸ were running around in it, as on a treadmill, and thereby turning the earth so that all of it received the rays of the sun (which, according to the opinion of Aristarchus and Copernicus, stood still in the middle of the heavens⁹). I got the horselaugh for this idea and was told to consider the opinions of the two scholars quoted, plus my own notion on the subject, as no more than a silly dream. Instead I should think of the gift I wanted from their king, lest I return empty-handed to the shores of earth. I replied that the marvels I had seen up to that point had so confused me that I could think of nothing at all, and I asked to be advised about what I might request from the king. My

⁷ The Pacific Ocean.

⁸ Dwarfs of Greek mythology.

⁹ Aristarchus of Samos (ca. 250 B.C.) was the first to maintain that the earth moves around the sun, a theory that Copernicus confirmed in 1530. The water people have not yet heard of it.

own idea was to ask for a well with medicinal properties, to be located in my own back yard, for wasn't their king the ruler of all the fountains in the world? The regent of the Pacific Ocean and its abysses replied that to grant this would be beyond the king's power, and even if he could do it, and wanted to please me, such fountains never lasted long. I asked him the reason for this. He answered that throughout the earth there are empty pockets which gradually fill up with all sorts of metals generated there by various exhalations. Sometimes water from the center seeps into these pockets, where it stays many centuries and assumes the noble virtues and medicinal properties of the metals. As the water presses on from the center and seeks and finds an outlet on the surface, that part of the water which was enclosed by the metals for so many hundreds, even thousands, of years gushes out first and acts on human bodies with the miraculous effects observed in newly discovered spas. But as soon as the metallically charged water has flowed off, common water follows. To be sure, it too has come through the same passages, but in its rapid flow it cannot take on the virtues and powers of the metals, and thus it cannot be as effective as the first liquid. I thanked him for this information and told him I'd like nothing better than to own such a well. This would help my fellow humans, would bestow honor on their king, and would enhance my name and keep me in eternal remembrance. The prince then answered that if this was what I wanted, he would support my request, though their king paid no attention whatever to the reputation he might enjoy on earth, be it good or bad. Now we had come again to the center of the earth and within the king's court, where he and his courtiers were about to eat. It was a light meal, at which neither wine nor strong drink was used; the guests consumed pearls that had not yet hardened like so many raw or soft-boiled eggs. These provided good nourishment and strength.

I observed that the sun shone on one sea after another, sending its rays all the way down into these abysmal depths, so that the sylphs were never without light. The sun shone at

this distance as brightly as on earth, and the shadows were sharply outlined. For the sylphs, the seas are like windows through which they receive both light and heat. And if the sun does not come through directly (some seas being rather bent and crooked), reflection takes over, for nature has placed whole rocks of crystal, diamonds, and garnets in such a way that they convey the light downward.

CHAPTER 17: *Return from the earth's center; strange notions, castles in Spain, the making of schedules, and a reckoning without the host*

Meanwhile the time for my departure was approaching, and the king ordered me to let him know how he could do me a favor. I spoke up and said he could do me no greater favor than sending a regular mineral spring to my farm. "Is that all?" answered the king, "I would have thought that you might have brought along several large emeralds from the American sea and asked permission to take them with you to earth. Now I see that there is no avarice among you Christians." And with these words he handed me a stone of strangely varying color and said, "Put this in your pocket. Wherever you deposit it on earth, it will begin seeking the center. It will proceed through the most convenient minerals until it returns to us. We shall then send you a medicinal fountain of the first water, which will enhance and advance you to the extent that you have merited by revealing the truth to us." Then the prince of the Mummelsee asked me to follow him, and together we returned through the same passages by which we had come.

This return trip seemed much farther than the journey down, because the prince and I did not talk much, except for his telling me that the sprites got to be three, four, or five hundred years old and lived all that time without illness. Moreover, in my mind I had already become rich through my mineral spring, and I was occupying all my sagacity and

thought in wondering where to locate it and how to make the most of it. I was already drawing up plans for the substantial buildings which would be needed to accommodate the guests and which would enable me to charge dearly for lodgings. I was thinking of the palm grease by which I would persuade the doctors to prefer my new miracle spa to all others (even the one at Schwalbach¹⁰), so that I'd have crowds of rich guests. I was already moving whole mountains in order that people arriving or departing would not complain about bad roads. I was hiring clever factotums, frugal cooks, circumspect housemaids, watchful hostlers, neat attendants of baths and fountains. I was thinking of a place right in the middle of wild mountains, not far from my farm, where I would create a beautiful, parklike garden with all sorts of rare plants, a place in which foreign guests and their ladies could promenade, where the sick could find recreation, and the healthy could delight in games and outdoor exercise. For a fee, the doctors were to compose an eloquent brochure concerning my water and its precious qualities; then I'd have a picture of my farm drawn in outline, have the whole thing printed, and any patient who hadn't yet arrived could read himself half well and hope for the best. I sent for all my children in Lippstadt and let them learn all sorts of trades and professions that would be of use in the new resort. But none of them needed to learn how to be a bloodletting barber-surgeon; I'd do all the bloodletting myself—if not of bodies, then of purses.

Being absorbed in such multifarious thoughts and overly happy with planning, I returned to the air, for the prince put me ashore, at the edge of his Mummelsee, in completely dry clothes. I had to put away the jewel he had given me when he first called for me, or I would have either drowned in air or have had to put my head under water to breathe. When he had taken the jewel back, we took leave of one another as people do who will never see each other again. He ducked

¹⁰ Langenschwalbach, not far from Wiesbaden.

under the water and returned with his retinue to the deep; but I, happy about the stone that the king had given me, walked away with it as if I had carried off the Golden Fleece of Colchis.

But, alas, my joy, which was based on a nonexistent constancy, did not last very long. For I had hardly left the miraculous lake when I got lost in the large wood, because when my knan brought me there I had not paid enough attention. I had walked quite a distance before I noticed my predicament, for I was still hard at work planning the spa and getting rich without working too hard. In this manner I got farther and farther away from the place to which I wanted to go, and—even worse—I didn't notice it until the sun was down, and I didn't know what to do next. There I stood, Henry Helpless in the middle of the wilds, with nothing to eat and no gun, either of which would have been good to have as night fell. But the rock I had brought from the bowels of the earth consoled me. I said to myself, "Patience, patience, Simpli; this rock will repay you for all your suffering. Rome was not built in a day, and great enterprises are not developed without work and sweat. Otherwise, without puffing and without mopping his brow, any fool could produce such a wonderful spa as you are carrying in your pocket."

When I had thus encouraged myself, I felt better and used my feet faster, though night had already come. There was a bright, full moon, but the fir trees kept out the light better than had the deep sea earlier that day. Still, I made headway, and around midnight I noticed a fire in the distance and I went straight for it. I knew it was peasants who had something to do with resin, and though such fellows can't be trusted at all times, necessity and my own inclination made me address them. I sneaked up on them and suddenly said to them, "Good night or good day, good morning or good evening, gentlemen! First tell me the time, so I'll know how to greet you." All six of them stood or sat there shaking and didn't know how to answer. Because I am rather tall and was in mourning on account of my wife's recent death, and be-

cause I carried a frightening cudgel on which I was leaning like a wild mountain-man, I appeared like a terror to them. "What?" I said. "Does no one want to answer?" They still kept quiet for some time. Finally one had sufficiently recovered to ask, "End who ish the chentleman?" I gathered that he was a Swabian (they are often considered doltish, though for no good reason), and I said I was a traveling scholar who had just now returned from the Mountain of Venus, where I had learned a heap of strange tricks. "Ho-ho!" said the oldest peasant. "Now I think I'll live to see the time of peace return, for the students are beginning to travel once more."

CHAPTER 18: *Simplicius plants his spring in the wrong woods*

So we entered into conversation, and they asked me politely to sit down by the fire with them. They offered me a piece of bread and some cheese made of skim milk, both of which I accepted. In the end they became so friendly that they asked me, as a student, to tell their fortunes. And since I have some knowledge of palmistry and physiognomy, I started pulling their leg, telling each what I thought he would like to hear, lest I lose face among these wild men of the woods, with whom I did not feel altogether comfortable. They also wanted to learn smart tricks from me, but I put them off till next day, saying that I wanted to sleep a while first. I went aside a little and lay down, more to listen to them and to find out what they thought of me than to sleep, though my appetite for that was great enough too. The louder I snored, the more watchful they were. They put their heads together and took turns guessing who I might be. They didn't think I was a soldier because of my black dress; and they didn't think I was a burgher because I dropped in on them like a fly in the soup at such an unusual time and so far from civilization. They finally agreed that I must be a journeyman who had at one time been a college student, because I could soothsay so well. "But," said one, "he didn't know everything. I think he's a

soldier in disguise who wants to spy on us and drive off our cattle. I wish we knew; we'd rock him to sleep so he'd forget to wake up!" Another quickly said that he thought I was something else. Meanwhile I lay there, keeping my ears pricked, and thought, If these hayseeds attack me, two or three of them will have to bite the dust before they lay me out.

While the peasants were deliberating and I was agitating my mind, I suddenly felt as if someone had peed in bed, for the spot where I lay got all wet. Oh, horrors! Then I realized that noble Troy and all my marvelous plans were lost, for by the smell I knew it was my mineral spring. Anger and chagrin put me into such a rage that I almost went after the six peasants in order to beat them up. "You goddamn louts!" I shouted, jumping up and shaking my cudgel at them. "This mineral spring's coming up here, in the place where I was sleeping, will tell you who I am. For two cents I'd skin you alive and let the devil take you to hell with him. You and your evil thoughts!" The ghastly expression on my face terrified them all. But soon I came to and realized the folly I was committing. No, I thought, It is better to lose the mineral spring than to lose my life; and that would be easy to do if I attacked these yokels. So I spoke kindly to them once more, and before they could think of something, I said, "Get up and try the wonderful mineral spring that, from now on, you and all the other forest workers will be able to enjoy because I was here." They couldn't make head or tail of what I was saying and were looking at each other like animated stockfish, until they saw that I—sober as a judge—took the first drink of water from my hat. Then one after the other got up from the fire around which they had been sitting, looked at the miracle, and tried the water. But instead of being grateful for it, they started cursing and saying they wished that I and my mineral spring had gotten lost somewhere else, for if their master found it out, the whole county of Dornstedt would have to do forced labor and build roads, and that would be a great inconvenience to them. "On the other hand,"

I replied, "you will all benefit. You can sell your chickens, eggs, butter, beef, and so on, at better prices." "Naw," they said, "the master will put a manager here, and he'll get rich while we must take the short end and keep up the roads and trails; and we won't even get a 'thank you' for it."

After a while they disagreed; two of them wanted to keep the spring, and four wanted me to get rid of it. If it had been in my power I would have done the latter, even without their suggestion, whether they liked it or not.

Since daylight had come and I had nothing else to do there, and since, moreover, there was the risk of a fight if the argument went on, I said, "If you don't want all the cows in the valley of Bayersbrunn to give red milk so long as the mineral spring is running, you had better show me the way to Seebach." They agreed and sent two fellows along with me, for one man alone with me would have been too frightened.

So I left, and although the whole region is infertile and bears nothing but pine cones, I felt even more like cursing it, for I had lost all my hope there. But I went quietly off with my two guides until I came to the highest place in those hills, from which I could tell approximately where I was. There I said to them, "Gentlemen, you can make a good thing out of your new mineral spring. Go to your lord and announce the discovery, and he'll give you a good reward. The prince will develop it as an ornament and an asset to his land, and he'll have it made known to the whole world, in order to increase his emoluments." "Well," they said, "what kind of fools do you think we are? Shall we offer him the rod with which to strike us? We'd rather you go to hell with your mineral spring. You heard why we don't like it."

I answered, "Oh, you hopeless drips, I ought to call you lazy beggars because you leave the ways of your rugged ancestors so far behind. They were so loyal to their prince that he could boast he might lay his head in the lap of any of his subjects and sleep there in safety.¹¹ But you lazybones are far

¹¹ Duke Eberhart im Barte (1445-1496), who was held in high esteem by his people, made this claim.

different, just because you are afraid of a little work, for which in time you will be repaid, and which all your descendants would amply enjoy. To disclose the presence of this spring would be in the interest of your prince, and to the benefit and health of many suffering sick people. What's the difference if each of you spends a few days at forced labor?" "What?!" they shouted. "We'd rather kill *you* with forced labor, so that your mineral spring stays unknown." "You crazy birds," I said, "that would require more of you than there are!" And, swinging my cudgel, I chased them off in the name of St. Velten.¹² Then I went downhill, and after much trouble I got back to my farm about nightfall. Thus I found out what my knan had told me before, namely, that I'd have tired legs from this pilgrimage, and the trip down for the trip up.

CHAPTER 19: *A short chapter on the Hungarian Anabaptists and their manner of life*

After my return home I kept to myself. My greatest joy was to pore over books, of which I acquired many. I studied all sorts of subjects, especially those demanding thought and reflection, but I soon tired of what the schoolmasters and pedants know. Arithmetic also bored me, and music became as hateful as the plague: soon I smashed my lute to bits. I put up with mathematics and geometry, but as soon as they led me into astronomy, I gave them up and pursued astronomy and astrology. For some time I enjoyed these, but then they appeared so false and uncertain that I no longer wanted to trouble about them. Now I reached for the *Ars magna* of Raymundus Lullus,¹³ but I found it to be a lot of hot air and

¹² St. Velten is a euphemism for the devil.

¹³ Ramon Lull (ca. 1235–1315) was a Catalan philosopher who invented the *Ars magna*, an arrangement in which the letters of the alphabet designate basic concepts, while their interrelation is indicated by geometrical figures. *Topica* is the title of one of Aristotle's works. It deals with the various general forms of argument employed in probable, as

little substance; and because I considered it a *topica* I soon gave it up and got busy with the Hebrew cabbala and Egyptian hieroglyphics. In the end I found that among all the arts and sciences none is better than theology so long as it teaches a person to love God and serve him. According to its precepts I devised for people a kind of life that could be more angelic than human. A group of married as well as unmarried men and women would have to join together and, under a wise leader, earn their living by manual labor like the Anabaptists; the rest of the time they would exert themselves in the praise of God and the salvation of their souls.

In Hungary I had seen this kind of life on the Hutterite farms.¹⁴ I would have joined them if these good people had not become mixed up in, and dedicated to, a false and heretical doctrine contrary to the general Christian church. At least I considered their life the most blessed on earth, for they appeared to me in their activities very much like the Essenes described by Josephus and others.¹⁵ First of all, they had treasures laid up and more than enough to eat; yet they wasted nothing. One heard no grumbling or cursing among them, not even unnecessary words. I saw craftsmen working in their shops as if they were doing piecework. Their schoolmaster taught the children as if they were all his own. Nowhere did one see men and women mixed; each sex was doing its assigned work in its assigned place. I saw lying-in rooms where

distinguished from demonstrative, reasoning, and the sources from which arguments may be derived or to which they may be referred.

¹⁴ The Hutterites have practiced their form of Christian communal life since the time of the Reformation. Their enemies called them Anabaptists, and after some excesses on their part under Thomas Münzer at Münster, they were violently persecuted in Germany. Their Hungarian community flourished until, under Maria Theresa's direction, all Hutterites were forcibly converted to Catholicism. Many of them escaped to Russia; and when pressure there drove them out, they came to Canada, the United States, and Paraguay. At present, communities exist in Manitoba, Alberta, Ontario, South Dakota, Montana, and near Primavera.

¹⁵ The Essenes, a Jewish sect described by Josephus in his *Jewish War* (II. 119–161 and elsewhere), in many ways resembled the early Christians.

there were only young mothers, who were well taken care of—as were the babies—by other young mothers, without the interference of husbands. Other special rooms contained nothing but babies in cradles; women fed the babies and kept them clean and cared for them. The mothers came in only three times a day in order to breast-feed the infants. Only widows were used as children's nurses. In another hall women were working at more than a hundred spinning and carding wheels. Some women were exclusively laundresses, some bed-makers, cattle-feeders, waitresses, in charge of china or linen, and so on; each had her job and knew how to do it. Similarly, the men had their assigned activities. If a person got sick, he or she had a special nurse; and there was a doctor and pharmacist for the group, though because of good food and healthy living hardly anyone was ill. I saw many an old person living quietly to an extreme age among them, and that is seldom found elsewhere. They had their appointed hours for eating, for sleeping, for working, but not a single minute for play or for promenading, except for the youngsters. After each meal, for the sake of health, the youngsters went walking for an hour with their teacher. During this time they also had to pray and sing hymns. There was no anger, no zealotry, no vengefulness, no envy, no enmity, no worry about worldly goods, no pride, no regret. In short, there prevailed such lovely harmony as seemed to purport nothing but the honorable increase of the human race and of God's kingdom. No man saw his wife except when he met with her at the appointed hour in their bedroom, which contained nothing but their well-made bed plus a chamber pot, a washbasin, a pitcher filled with water, and a white towel, so that he could fall asleep and go to work next morning with clean hands. They all called each other "brother" and "sister," and yet such familiarity never caused lewdness.

I thought that if I could initiate such a commendable Christian way of life, under the protection of my sovereign, I'd be a second St. Dominic or St. Francis. Oh, if only I could con-

vert the Anabaptists so that they might in turn teach our fellow Christians their way of living, how blessed I would be! Or if only I could persuade my fellow Christians to lead such a (seemingly) Christian and commendable life as do the Anabaptists, what an achievement I would have to my credit! To myself I said, "You fool, why do you bother about other people? Become a Capuchin monk; you are through with women anyway." But then I considered that tomorrow I might feel differently, and who knows what means I might require to walk rightly in the way of Christ. Today I inclined to chastity; tomorrow I might burn.

For a long time I went around with such thoughts; I would have been glad to dedicate my farm and my entire fortune to such a Christian association, and I would gladly have been a member of it. But my knan frankly predicted that I'd never assemble such a group.

CHAPTER 20: *An entertaining promenade from the Black Forest to Moscow in Russia*

That autumn, French, Swedish, and Hessian armies were approaching our part of the country in order to recuperate there and at the same time to keep blockaded the neighboring imperial free city of Offenburg. Therefore, everybody fled with his cattle and his most precious belongings into the deepest forests. I followed my neighbors' example and left my house quite empty. A retired Swedish colonel was quartered there, and he found a few books in my room, for in the general hurry I had not been able to get everything out of the way. Among these were mathematics and geometry handbooks, some on the theory of fortification (such as engineers use), and he concluded that the house couldn't belong to an ordinary peasant. So he made inquiries and tried to meet me. By a mixture of courteous invitations and threats he got me to come to my own farm, where he treated me quite po-

lately and ordered his people not to destroy or to ruin anything of mine wantonly. Through such friendliness he got me to tell him of my background, particularly about my family and descent. He was greatly astonished that I was living among peasants right in the midst of the war, that I was willing to look on while someone else tied his horse to my fence rail since it behooved me to tie mine to someone else's. He said I should take up the sword once more and not let the gifts that God had bestowed on me languish behind the stove and the plow. If I were to take Swedish service, he vouched that my qualifications and my knowledge of the science of war would soon advance me. I played it cool and said that advancement was rather an uncertain thing—unless a person had friends who helped him by their influence. He repeated that my qualifications would make friends and assure my advancement. Moreover, I would doubtless meet relatives in the Swedish army, for there were many Scottish noblemen in the Swedish forces. Torstensson¹⁶ had promised him a regiment and when the promise was made good (as it doubtless would be), he would make me his lieutenant colonel. This and similar speeches made my mouth water. And since there was no hope of peace, and additional soldiers would surely be quartered on my farm, so that I would be ruined, I decided to join up once more. I promised the colonel I'd serve under him if he would keep his promise and give me the lieutenant-colonelcy in his expected regiment.

Everything was settled. I sent for my knan (or godfather), who was with my cattle in Bayrischbrunn, and deeded the farm to him and his wife. After their death my natural son Simplicius, the one who had been placed at my doorstep, was to inherit the farm with all appurtenances, since no legitimate offspring were on hand. Then I got my horses and what I still owned in money and jewels, and after I had settled all my affairs and arranged for the education of my bastard son, the blockade was suddenly lifted and we had to start for the main

¹⁶ Lennart Torstensson (1603–1651) was general of the Swedish forces from 1641 to 1646.

army sooner than expected. I acted as a steward for this colonel: I maintained him, his servants, his horses, and the entire household by stealing and robbing. In military parlance this is called "foraging."

General Torstensson's promises, of which the colonel had boasted on my farm, were not half so great as he had pretended. As far as I could see, the colonel was rather looked down upon. "Ha!" he said to me, "I wonder who the dirty dog was that slandered me at headquarters. I won't stay here long." And since he suspected I would not stay long with him either, he made up some letters, according to which he was ordered to recruit a new regiment in Livonia, where his home was. He thus persuaded me to embark at Wismar and go to Livonia with him. Once we were there, everything ended in smoke, for not only did he have no regiment to recruit, but he also was a shoestring kind of nobleman, and what he owned was his wife's.

Though I had twice been deceived and let myself be dragged so far off, I fell for him a third time: he showed me letters he had received from Moscow in which (as he said) high military positions were offered him (that's how he translated the letters for me), and he boasted of excellent and regular pay. Since he immediately started out with his wife and children, I thought he could hardly be going on a wild goose chase. So, full of high hopes, I joined him, since for the present I had neither ways nor means of returning to Germany. But as soon as we crossed the Russian border and met some discharged German soldiers, particularly officers, I became alarmed and said to my colonel, "What in the devil's name are we doing? Are we moving away from the seat of war and going to a peaceful country where soldiers are discharged and considered a nuisance?!" But he reassured me, saying that I should let him worry; he knew what to do better than these fellows of no account.

When we arrived safely in the big city of Moscow, I saw immediately that everything was wrong. My colonel had daily conferences with the magnates, but more with high church

dignitaries than with important noblemen. This seemed Greek to me and caused me a lot of worry, for I could not figure out what he was up to. Finally he notified me that the war business had fallen through and that his conscience was urging him to embrace the Greek Orthodox religion. He advised me most sincerely to follow his example, since he could no longer help me as he had promised. His majesty the czar had already received good accounts of my personal qualifications and would graciously condescend—if I embraced the Orthodox faith—to invest me as a cavalier with a sizeable estate and many serfs. This most gracious offer could not be refused, for it was better to have, in this grand monarch, a gracious lord than an offended prince.

I was quite perplexed and did not know what to answer. In another place I would have given the colonel an answer he could have felt rather than heard; but being practically a prisoner, I had to whistle a different tune, so I was silent a long time while I thought of an answer. Finally, I said that at his suggestion I had come to serve his majesty the czar as a soldier. If my military service was not needed, I could not help that; nor did I blame my long journey on the czar, for he had not summoned me. But that the czar so graciously deigned to show me his favor, that was something to boast to all the world rather than to accept, for at this time I could not decide to change my religion. I wished, rather, to be back on my farm in the Black Forest, where I'd be no trouble to anyone. The colonel answered that I should do as I liked; however, he did think that if God and good fortune smiled on me I should be properly appreciative. But if I did not want to be helped nor yet to live like a prince, he hoped I realized that he had spared no effort on my behalf. After this speech he made a low bow, turned on his heel, and left me holding the bag. He wouldn't even let me accompany him to the door.

While I was sitting there dazed and wondering about my condition, I heard two Russian carriages in front of my lodgings. When I looked out the window I saw my good colonel and his sons getting into one, his wife and her daughters boarding the other. The carriages and servants were the czar's;

some priests were also present, and they showed their good will by practically waiting on this family.

CHAPTER 21: *Further news of Simplicius in Moscow*

From now on I was shadowed by several guardsmen of the czar, but I was not even aware of it. I no longer saw my colonel or his family, and I did not know where they were. At that time I developed strange notions and sprouted a lot of grey hair. I became acquainted with the German merchants and craftsmen who ordinarily live in Moscow, and I complained to them of how I had been spitefully deceived. They gave me advice and instructions on getting a ride back to Germany, but as soon as they heard that the czar was determined to keep me in Russia, they all clammed up; they completely ignored me and I had a hard time finding room and board, for I had already eaten up my horse, plus saddle and bridle, and I was taking the ducats one by one out of the lining of my suit, where I had cleverly sewed them up. In the end I also turned my ring and jewels into money, in hopes of surviving until I had an opportunity to return to Germany. Meanwhile a quarter of a year went by, at the end of which time my colonel and his family were baptized for the second time in their lives. Then he was given a fine country estate with many serfs.

At that time a law was passed, equally applicable to natives and foreigners, that no idlers were to be tolerated under pain of severe penalty. Foreigners who did not want to work had to leave the country within a month, the city within twenty-four hours. So about fifty of us banded together for the purpose of traveling by way of Podolia to Germany, with God's help. But not quite two hours' distance from the city we were overtaken by several Russian cavalymen who informed us that his majesty the czar was displeased because so many of us had banded together and were traveling through the country at our own pleasure and without passports. Moreover, the czar could send us to Siberia for our crude behavior. On the

way back to town I found out how matters stood with me, for the leader of the troop told me that the czar did not want me to leave the country. His well-meant advice would be to conform to his majesty's most gracious will, to change my religion as the colonel had done, and not to spurn a nobleman's country estate. He assured me that if I refused, declining to live like a lord among them, I'd be forced to work like a serf. His majesty the czar would be a fool for allowing a man so experienced as the colonel had pictured me to leave the country. I belittled myself and said the colonel had probably ascribed more arts, virtues, and sciences to me than I was actually capable of. Certainly I had come into the country to serve his majesty the czar and the great nation of all the Russians against their enemies, even at the cost of my lifeblood; but I could not yet make up my mind to change my religion. Nevertheless, if I was able to serve the czar in any way without burdening my conscience, I would not hesitate to do my best.

I was separated from the others and lodged at the house of a merchant, where I was openly watched but also provided daily with excellent food and drink from the court kitchens. A number of people called on me and occasionally invited me to their houses. There was one especially who, no doubt, was ordered to look after me. He was a smart man who every day conversed with me in a friendly way (for I had already learned quite a bit of Russian. He mostly discussed mechanical arts with me: war machines and others, the theory and practice of fortification, artillery, and so forth. Finally, after he had hinted several times that I should take up the czar's suggestions (but I had given no hope that I would change my mind), he wanted me—in honor of the great czar—to communicate and impart something of my knowledge to his nation, even if I did not want to become naturalized. The czar would acknowledge my willingness with imperial grace. I assured him that it had ever been my intention to serve the czar; that's why I had come. My intention had never changed, though I noticed that I was virtually kept prisoner. "Oh, not at all," he answered. "Rather, the czar loves you so much that he

would not like to do without you." "But why," I said, "am I being watched?" "Because," was the answer, "the czar is afraid something bad might happen to you."

When he had clearly understood what I was willing to do, he explained that the czar wanted to have saltpeter produced and gunpowder manufactured in his own country. But since there was nobody among them who could handle the matter I would do the czar a great service if I set up the factory. I would be given enough money and workers, and he for one wanted to make sure I did not turn down this proposition, for their information indicated that I was the man who could do it.

I answered, "Sir, I say now as I said before: If I can serve the czar in anything (provided he leaves me alone in matters of religion), I shall do my best." Now this Russian, who was one of the most exalted nobles, became so merry that he drank more toasts with me than any German ever did.

Next day two noblemen and an interpreter came from the czar to draw up a contract. They brought along an expensive Russian wardrobe for me. A few days later I started looking for a saltpeter mine and taught the Russians assigned to me how to separate the saltpeter from ordinary dirt and how to refine it. Then I drew up a plan for a powder mill and taught others how to prepare the charcoal. And after a short time we made considerable quantities of the best powder for muskets and ordnance. I had plenty of workers and my personal servants besides, who were to wait on me (or rather, to keep watching me).

When things were going so well, the colonel, dressed in Russian clothes and magnificently attended by many servants, came to me; it seemed that all his flashiness was to persuade me to be rebaptized too. But I knew well enough that the clothes came from the czar's wardrobe and had only been lent to him to make my mouth water, for that's the usual thing at the czar's court.

And in order to make the gentle reader understand how that was handled, I want to give an example. Once I was busy working in the powder mill I had built out of town by the

river. Suddenly an alarm was sounded because the Tartars on a hundred thousand horses were devastating the country only twenty miles away and were advancing steadily. I and my people had to go to court immediately, and there we were given arms and horses from the czar's armory and stables. Instead of a cuirass I wore a quilted breastplate of silk, which might have stopped an arrow but not a bullet. I was given boots, spurs, a princely headgear with a heron's plume, and a sword all decorated with gold and jewels and sharp enough for splitting hairs. I had never seen, let alone ridden, a horse like the one given me from the czar's stables. I and the horse's gear glittered with gold, silver, precious stones, and pearls. By my side hung a steel mace which shone like a mirror and was so well made and so heavy that I could easily kill anybody merely by tapping him with it. The czar himself was not better mounted or equipped. I was followed by a white flag with a double eagle, and from all the nooks and crannies people flocked to it, so that we numbered forty thousand horse before two hours had passed and sixty thousand after about four hours. With these we advanced against the Tartars. Every quarter hour I received oral orders from the czar, but they were always the same: Having passed myself off as a soldier, I was to prove one today, for then his majesty could consider me so and recognize me as one. Our army was increasing every moment: people of major and minor importance, individuals as well as groups, were joining us. But amid all this hurry and confusion, I could not see a single man who would take charge of the mob and direct the battle.

Well, I don't want to go into too much detail because the encounter is not very important for my story. I only want to say that we suddenly came upon the Tartars in a valley or low-lying area. They were burdened with loot, their horses were tired, and they did not expect us. We attacked them from a number of places and scattered them in a few moments. At the time of the first attack I shouted to my followers in Russian, "Come on! Everybody do like me!" They all shouted this to each other while I rode toward the enemy at

full speed. First I ran into a prince's son (called a *mirza*), and I bashed his head in, so that the brain stuck to my steel mace. The Russians followed my heroic example; the Tartars could not withstand their attack and turned in general flight.

I acted like a madman, or rather like one who is desperately seeking death and cannot find it. I clubbed down everyone I met, Tartar or Russian, and those whom the czar had ordered to watch me were so close behind me that my back was protected at all times. The air was buzzing with arrows, as if bees or hornets were swarming, and I caught one in the arm, for I had rolled up my sleeves—all the better to kill and maim with sword and mace. Before the arrow stuck in me, my heart had laughed at the bloodshed; but when I saw my own blood flowing, laughter turned to blind rage. When the savage enemy was routed, some noblemen ordered me to report to their emperor as to how the Tartars had been vanquished. Therefore, on their authority I turned back with about a hundred horsemen. I rode through town to the royal palace, and everyone received me with rejoicing and congratulations. As soon as I had finished my report (the czar already knew everything), I had to take off my imperial clothes. They were immediately returned to the czar's wardrobe, though like the horse's trappings, they were spattered and soiled with blood, and as good as ruined. I thought the clothes and the horse should have been given to me as a reward for fighting so bravely in this battle. But from this indication I could well imagine how the Russians, like my colonel, managed their elegance of dress. All these goods were borrowed from the czar; they, like everything else in all of Russia, belonged to the czar.

CHAPTER 22: *The short and jolly journey back home to his knan*

While my wound was healing I was treated like a prince: I walked around in a gown made of gold brocade and lined

with sable, though my injury was neither mortal nor dangerous. In all my days I never enjoyed food so rich as what I ate there. But this was the only reward for my labors, except the praise of the czar, and that was spoiled by the envy of some nobles.

When I had completely recovered, I was sent down the Volga by boat to Astrakhan in order to set up a powder mill there, just as I had done in Moscow, because it was not always possible for the czar to supply these border fortresses outside of Moscow with fresh, usable powder, which had to be shipped by water at great risk. I was glad to be of use, for the czar had promised to return me to Holland after the completion of my business, and to give me a sum of money commensurate with his majesty's gratitude and my just deserts. But alas! when we think we are most assured and safe in our hopes and in the ideas we have conceived, unexpectedly there comes a wind that blows down all the unsubstantial trumpery we have been building up over a long time.

The governor of Astrakhan treated me as if I were the czar himself, and in a short time I had everything going nicely: I remade, as it were, his stale, ruined ammunition, which was spoiled and no good, in much the same way that a tinner makes a new spoon from the metal of an old one. At that time among the Russians, this process was unheard-of; and because of this and other tricks I knew, I was considered by some as a sorcerer, by others as a new saint or prophet, and by still others as a second Empedocles or Gorgias Leontinus.¹⁷

One night, when I was in the middle of my work in a powder mill outside the fortress, I was kidnaped by a gang of roving Tartars. They took me (and others) a long way into their country, and there I not only saw the sheep-plant *bora-metz*,¹⁸ but I was even permitted to eat of it. The Tartars traded me for Chinese merchandise to some Tartars of Nuichi,

¹⁷ Greek philosophers, living in Sicily in the fifth century B.C., who were given credit for unusual skills.

¹⁸ Legendary plant mentioned by contemporary travelers. It is essentially cotton to which mutton has been gratuitously added.

who gave me as a special present to the king of Korea, with whom they had just concluded an armistice. In Korea I was valued highly because there was no one like me in fencing, and because I taught the king how to hit the bull's-eye with the gun over his shoulder and his back to the target. For this he liked me a lot, and on my most humble petition he gave me my freedom and sent me by way of Japan to the Portuguese in Macao; they, however, paid little attention to me. For this reason I moved among them like a sheep that has strayed from its own flock. At last I was captured in a strange manner by Turkish or Mohammedan pirates, who, after carrying me around for about a year among strange foreign peoples that populate the East Indian islands, sold me to some traders from Alexandria in Egypt. They took me, along with their merchandise, to Constantinople, where the Turkish emperor was readying several galleys against the Venetians. And as oarsmen were needed, many Turkish merchants had to give up their Christian slaves (for indemnity, though). Being a strapping young fellow, I was drafted and so had to learn how to row; but this slavery did not last more than two months. Our galley was taken in the Levant by the brave Venetians, and I and all my fellow slaves were released from the power of the Turks. The galley was brought to Venice with rich booty and several Turkish captives of high rank, and I was freed. Since I wished to make a pilgrimage to Rome and Loreto, in order to see these places and to thank God for my liberation, I easily obtained a passport and a considerable sum of money from honest folk, particularly Germans; and I was able to start on my journey equipped with the long staff of the pilgrim.

I went to Rome by the shortest route, and there I was lucky, for I received good alms from important as well as plain people. After staying there for about six weeks, I joined other pilgrims (among them Germans, and particularly several Swiss who were going home) for the trip to Loreto. From there, by way of the Gotthard Pass and Switzerland, I returned to the Black Forest and my knan, who had kept the farm for me. I

did not bring anything special home with me except a beard, which I had grown abroad.

I had been away for three years and several months, during which time I had crossed several oceans, seen many nations, but generally had experienced more evil than good. I could write a whole book about it. Meanwhile the German peace¹⁹ had been proclaimed, and I was able to live in quiet and ease with my knan. I let him worry and manage, while I sat down to my books again, which were both my work and my delight.

CHAPTER 23: *This chapter is nice and short: it only concerns Simplicius*

I once read that when a Roman delegation had asked how to govern their nation in peace, the oracle of Apollo had answered, "Nosce te ipsum," that is, "Everyone should know himself." This made me reflect, and now, having nothing else to do, I demanded from myself a reckoning of my past life. I said to myself: Your life has been no life but a death; your days have been a heavy shadow, your years a bad dream, your desires grievous sins, your youth a phantom, your well-being an alchemist's treasure that goes up the chimney and is gone before you are aware of it. Through grave danger you ran after the wars, where you experienced much good luck and much bad; you have been now up, now down; now great, now small; now rich, now poor; now joyful, now sad; now well-liked, now hated; now honored, now despised. But, my poor soul, what did you gain from all this journey? This much: I am poor in possessions; my heart is heavy with care; I am loath to do good, lazy and corrupt; and, what is worst, my conscience is burdened and fearful. But you, my soul, are weighed down with sin and horribly befouled. My body is weary, my reason confused; my innocence is gone, the better part of my youth is frittered away, precious time is lost, there

¹⁹ The Peace of Westphalia, 1648.

is nothing that gladdens me, and I am an enemy to myself. When I entered the world after my blessed father's death, I was simple-minded and clean, upright and honest, truthful, humble, diffident, modest, chaste, shamefaced, pious, and devout. But soon I became mean, false, lying, proud, restless, and godless in every respect. And all these vices I learned without a teacher. I guarded my honor, not for its own sake, but for my advancement. I became conscious of time, not so that I might use it well for my salvation, but in order to profit my body. I exposed my life to danger many times, and yet I never exerted myself to improve it so that I might die comforted and blessed. I only looked to the present, to my worldly profit, and never once thought of the future, let alone that I would someday have to render an account of myself in the sight of God.

Such thoughts tormented me every day, and just then several books by Guevara²⁰ came to my attention. From these I must quote here, because their sentiment was powerful enough to make me disgusted with the world.

CHAPTER 24: *This is the very last one. It tells how and why Simplicius leaves the world once again*

"Farewell, O World, for you cannot be trusted, nor is there anything to be expected of you. Within your house the past has disappeared, the present is vanishing under our very hands, and the future has never begun; the most constant is falling down, the most powerful is breaking to pieces, the most eternal is coming to an end, so that you are a corpse among corpses, and within the course of a century you hardly let us live an hour.

²⁰ Antonio de Guevara (ca. 1490–1544), Spanish moralist and court preacher to Charles V, died as bishop of Cadix. The extensive quotation, which is of central importance to *Simplicius*, comes from the *Menosprecio de corte*, in the German translation of Aegidius Albertinus (Munich, 1598, and later).

"Farewell, World, for you take us captive and do not release us; you tie us down and never loosen our bonds; you sadden us without consoling us; you rob us without restoring; you accuse us without cause; you condemn us without a hearing, so that you may kill us without sentence and bury us without waiting for our death! With you there is no joy without sadness, no peace without discord, no love without suspicion, no rest without fear, no fullness without want, no honor without strain, no possession without a bad conscience, no occupation without complaint, and no friendship without falsehood.

"Farewell, World, for inside your palace promises of gifts are made without the intention of giving; people serve without pay; they caress in order to kill, elevate to cast down, help in order to cut down, honor in order to dishonor, borrow in order never to return, punish without pardon!

"May God bless you, World, for in your house great lords and favorites of princes are hurled down; unworthy creatures are preferred; traitors, looked upon with favor; faithful men, made to stand in the corner; evildoers, left unimpeded; the innocent, condemned; the wise and qualified, dismissed; bunglers, given great rewards; crafty men, believed. Plain and honest men gain no credence; each does what he pleases, not one as he ought.

"Farewell, World, for in your domain no one is called by his right name: the headstrong are called bold; the faint-hearted, careful; the willful, diligent; and the negligent, peaceful. A wastrel is called magnificent; and a miser, self-sufficient; a crafty tattler and prater, eloquent; the quiet man, a fool or visionary. An adulterer or despoiler of virgins is called an amorous blade; a person with a dirty mind, a courtier; a vengeful one, a zealous partisan; a gentle mind, a dreamer. You are selling us the usual for the unusual, and the unusual for the usual.

"Farewell, World, for you mislead every one: you promise honor to the ambitious, change to the restless; to the climber, the favor of princes; to the easygoing, offices; to the miser,

great treasure; to gluttons and lechers, gorging and venery; to enemies, revenge; to thieves, secrecy; to youths, long life; to court favorites, unwavering princely favor.

"Farewell, World, for within your palace neither trust nor truth can find lodging; whoever speaks with you is made shameless; whoever trusts you is cheated; whoever follows you is misled; whoever fears you is most badly mistreated; whoever loves you is rewarded with evil; and whoever relies on you absolutely is ruined absolutely. You repay no gift that is given to you, no service shown to you, no kind word spoken to you, nor faith nor friendship kept with you; rather, you deceive, cut down, put to shame, besmirch, threaten, devour, and forget everyone; for that reason everyone cries, sighs, laments, complains, and is undone; and everyone comes to an end. In your house one sees and learns only to hate to the point of strangulation, talk to the point of lying, love to the point of despair, overreach to the point of stealing, beg to the point of cheating, and sin to the point of death.

"God be with you, World, for while one follows you, one idles away one's time in forgetfulness, one's youth with running, racing, jumping over fences and across paths, roads, and lanes, over hill and dale, through woods and wilderness, across lakes and oceans, in snow and rain, heat and cold, wind and weather. A man's strength is worn down with mining the ore of metals and smelting it, with cutting and shaping rocks, clearing land and building, planting and cultivating, with thinking, scheming, and longing; with advice, arrangements, cares, and troubles; with buying and selling, quarreling, feuding, warring, lying, and cheating. Old age is spent in misery and care: the spirit grows weak, the breath begins to stink, the face becomes wrinkled, a straight body bent; eyes grow dim, limbs tremble, the nose begins to drip, the head grows bald, hearing deteriorates, the sense of smell grows insensitive, and taste leaves us. A man sighs and complains, is lazy and weak; in sum, he has nothing but misery and labor until his death.

"Farewell, World, for within your bounds no one wants to

be pious. Every day murderers are executed; traitors drawn and quartered; robbers, thieves, and holdup men hanged; slayers beheaded; sorcerers burned; givers of false testimony punished; and rebels exiled.

"God be with you, World, for your servants have no other job or pastime than that of being lazy, of irritating and scolding one another, courting virgins, waiting on beautiful women, making eyes at them, playing cards and dice, dealing with pimps, making war on neighbors, gossiping, thinking up new schemes, going after profit, inventing new fashions, originating new tricks, and introducing new vices.

"Farewell, World, for within your bounds no one is satisfied or contented. If a man is poor, he wants more; if rich, to be considered a great personage; if lowly, to rise high; if insulted, to avenge himself; if in favor, to lord it over others; if full of vice, to be in a happy mood.

"Farewell, World, for with you nothing is constant. High towers are struck by lightning; mills are carried away by water; wood is eaten by worms, grain by mice, fruit by caterpillars, and clothes by cockroaches; cattle grow worthless with age, and mankind with disease: one man has scabies, another cancer; a third has lupus; a fourth, syphilis; a fifth, arthritis; the sixth has gout; the seventh, dropsy; the eighth, kidney stones; the ninth, gravel; the tenth, consumption; the eleventh, a fever; the twelfth, leprosy; the thirteenth, epilepsy; the fourteenth is insane! Within you, O World, one person never does what the next does, for when one is crying the other is laughing; one is sighing, the other is joyous; one is fasting, the other is stuffing himself; one is having a feast, the next is starving; one is riding, the next is walking; one is talking, the other is silent; one is playing, the next is working; and when one is born, another is dying. Nor does one live like another: one is the master, the other is the servant; one is a pastor of men, another is pasturing his hogs; one follows the court, another the plow; one is sailing across the seas, another is journeying over land to the weekly markets or annual fairs; one is working in fire, another inside the cool

earth; one is fishing in water, another is catching the birds of the air; one is hard at work, another lives off the land as a robber or thief.

"May God bless you, O World, for within your house one cannot live a holy life, or suffer death uniformly. One person dies in the cradle; another, in his youth in bed; the third, by the rope; the fourth, by the sword; the fifth is broken on the wheel; the sixth is burned at the stake; the seventh dies in a wine glass; the eighth, in a watery river; the ninth suffocates in a pork barrel; the tenth is killed by poison; the eleventh dies suddenly; the twelfth, in battle; the thirteenth, through witchcraft; and the fourteenth drowns his poor soul in an inkwell.

"May God keep you, O World, for your conversation disgusts me; the life you give us is a miserable pilgrimage, an inconstant, uncertain, hard, harsh, fleeting, and unclean life full of poverty and error; it is to be called death rather than life; for we all die in it every moment, through the many imperfections of inconstancy and through death's various approaches! You are not satisfied with the bitterness with which you are permeated and surrounded; but in addition you cheat most people by your flattery, your incitements and false promises; from the golden chalice that you hold in your hand, you dispense bitterness and falsehood and make people blind, deaf, drunk, and insensitive. Oh, how happy are those who reject your community, despise your sudden momentary joys, spurn your society, and refuse to be lost in the company of such a malicious impostress; for you make of us a dark abyss, a miserable clod of dirt, a child of anger, a stinking carrion, an unclean vessel in a dung pit, a vessel of putrefaction full of stench and abomination; for after you have long harried and troubled us with flattery, caresses, threats, beatings, tribulation, martyrdom, and pain, you surrender the worn-out body to the grave and deliver the soul to an uncertain chance. For although nothing is more certain than death, a man is never sure how, when, and where he will die, and—what is most pitiable—where his soul will go and how it will fare. But woe

unto the poor soul that has served you, O World, has obeyed you and followed your luxuries and lusts; for after such a poor, sinful, and unconverted soul has departed its miserable body in a sudden and unexpected fright, it is not surrounded by servants and acquaintances (as was the body, while alive), but it is led to the judgment seat of Christ by a drove of its most ghastly enemies. Therefore, O World, may God be with you, for I am sure that in time you will forsake me, not only when my poor soul must appear before the face of the severe judge, but also when the most frightful sentence of all is delivered and pronounced, 'You who are condemned, go to the eternal fire,' and so on.

"Farewell, World, you vile and wicked world, O you stinking, miserable flesh; for because of you, and because the ungodly unrepentant followed you, he is condemned to eternal damnation where, in all eternity, nothing is to be expected but suffering without solace, in exchange for all the pleasures enjoyed; thirst without quenching, for all the drinking; hunger without fulfillment, for all the gluttony; darkness without light, for all the magnificence and splendor; pain without alleviation, for all the voluptuous pleasures; howling, gnashing of teeth, and complaints without surcease, for all the domination and triumph; heat without coolness, fire without extinction, cold without measure, and misery without end.

"God be with you, World, for instead of your promised joys and lusts, evil spirits will lay hands on the unrepentant and condemned soul, and they will rush it to the pit of hell where it will see and hear nothing but the frightful shapes of the devils and the condemned, unrelieved darkness and smoke, fire without brightness, cries, howls, gnashing of teeth, and blasphemy. Then all hope of grace and forgiveness is past; there is no respect of persons: the higher a man climbed or the harder he sinned, the deeper he is cast down, the greater is the pain he must suffer. Much is asked of him to whom much was given; and the more one made himself to shine within your bounds, O vile and wicked World, the more

torment and suffering is meted out to him, for divine justice requires it thus.

"God be with you, World, for although the body stays awhile with you in the ground and decays there, yet it will rise on doomsday, and according to the final judgment there will be eternal hellfire. Then the poor soul will say, 'World, be accursed! For through your blandishments I forgot God and myself, and I followed you all the days of my life in voluptuousness, evil, sin, and shame. Accursed be the hour when God created me! Accursed be the day when I was born into your domain, you evil and wicked World! O you mountains, hills, and rocks, fall on me and hide me from the grim anger of the Lamb, from the countenance of him who sitteth in the seat of judgment. Ah, woe is me, and woe again in all eternity!'

"O World, you unclean world! For these reasons I pray, I beg, I ask, I admonish you, and I protest against you. May you have no part of me any more. I, for my part, do not desire to place any hope in you, for you know I have determined to put an end to care. Hope and fortune, farewell!"

All these words I pondered diligently and constantly. They caused me to leave this world and become a hermit once more. I would have liked to live near my mineral spring, but the peasants of the neighborhood did not want me, though the lonely woods suited me well. They feared that I might give away the secret of the spring and get their lord to build trails and a road to it, now that peace had come. Therefore, I went to another wild place and resumed the life I had led in the Spessart. It is not certain that I, like my late father, shall keep it up until the end. May God grant us all the favor of obtaining from him what is of greatest value to us, namely, a blessed

End.