

The Young Carpenters of Freiberg (A Tale of the Thirty Years War)

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Anonymous

Excerpt: ...Ever since the fat citizens and journeymen took to cutting about the streets with their pop-guns, they are all grown such big men that if one of them happens to set eyes on you, you must jump out of his way like a bewitched frog. Wife! Wife, I say! Heres a batzen.² Run across to Seilers and fetch me a herring. I begin to feel horribly hungry. The blind woman stood for some seconds like one astounded by such an unusual order. Conrad was on the point of creeping out from his hiding-place at all hazards, to go himself and fetch what was wanted. He was only restrained by the thought that if he did, he would be very likely to bring on his mother something a great deal worse than just having to go across the street for a herring. Well, whats the matter now? shouted Juchziger, bringing his fist down with a thundering crash on the table. Are you going, or am I to start you? The blind woman had hardly groped her way out at the door, before Juchziger went on: Cant some Swedish bullet or falling stone rid me of this blind witch? Nothing turns out as I want it to. Here are Schweinitz and Schonleben the best of friends again, and all the trouble Ive been at with them just so much labour lost. And then theres that brazen-faced journeyman I havent paid off yet for his impudence in the forest; it seems as though I am not to get a hold on him. And never a kreuzer have I seen the colour of, to pay me for my house they pulled down. All right! It may turn out that what Freiberg wont pay for, the Swedes will. I have to look after the prisoners, so I shall stand a first-rate chance to kill two birds with one stone,

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