

## Acropolis by Stanisław Wyspiański

Translation by Lauren Dubowski

Working Draft

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### **Act IV, Scene 2**

NIGHT

The birds in flight hover over the Vistula.

Leaves in the gardens rustle,  
and trees in the gardens murmur.

The birds fly - and then, go no farther.

Their wings beat at the windows,  
the windowpanes shake with the sound

The windows burn with the dawn.

Now, the dawn is hidden in black feathers,  
as the black birds fly in chorus,

they are calling, flying over the chapel,  
the churchyard crows murmur in response.

The birds gather at the castle grounds;  
then, the crows take flight, they swarm around  
in the great gardens, and the trees above.

And there, they hover, over the Vistula.

*(She moves under the arcades, under the pillars, which the Chorus are supporting, and ascends to the proscenium).*

THE PROCESSION

*(following after her).*

NIGHT

Shh, let us all flee now, shh, my sons,  
shh, my daughters, roll up your gowns,  
and put out the stars in your shrouds,  
down to the burrows, pits, tombs, and mouths,  
hey-ho, now, shh -

it's dawn.

Do you hear? - They're running at a pace,  
chasing, racing after you.

Shh, the fading stars are losing light,  
look not to the faithful gates;  
someone has slit them open bright.

(*silence*)

Shh, but here's where souls stop to rest,  
in the eternal shade,  
we do not fear the day,  
descending to the depths.  
Come to the dark, I'll close us in;  
we'll live here, underground;  
dawn would only harm us. · Dawn is breaking  
over the Vistula now.

#### CHORUS OF EUMENIDES

1. Mother, Mother, the scent of roses,  
let us linger in the light.
2. The scent of roses blows toward us;  
the roses smell so full of life.

#### NIGHT

Turn your faces, my daughters, now, go,  
those flowers are treachery;  
down where the eternal candles glow  
and the bones of corpses burn, go we.

#### CHORUS OF EUMENIDES

The man kneeling at the harp is calling;  
let him give his strings a play.

#### NIGHT

You know the Sun is after us all,  
the fires will burst into flame.

#### CHORUS OF EUMENIDES

Mother, in his hands, a bird;  
and how his human heart beats.

#### NIGHT

Don't look, my daughters, dawn's burning,  
unfurling her tapestry.  
Hey-ho, down to the abyss with me!  
I hear the hinges creaking.

#### CHORUS OF EUMENIDES

1. Gray dawn breaks over the Vistula.
2. Dawn spreads over the city wide.

3. O Mother, rise and look · you see
4. The man is opening his eyes.
1. Opening his eyes, looking around.
2. Mother, on his head, there is a crown.
4. His harp is made of pure gold.
1. He looks again, his eyes close.
2. Mother, in the dark, he rose.

NIGHT

Harpist · play the song of God.

## Po egnanie jesieni by Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz

Translation by Lauren Dubowski

Working Draft

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### **From Chapter IV: Í The Weddings and the First *Pronunciamento*ô**

In the open carriage · Bertz only ever used the car for business · drawn by four English thoroughbreds, all dyed violet · they had arrived at the church, finally: he, despondent, in an utter moral outrage; she, in a momentous mood, as after every unsuccessful suicide, with a bandaged arm, and dressed in a fur thrown over a black evening gown.

· Hela, how could you, today of all days? · Prepudrech groaned, digging his teeth, like a cuttlefish, deep into her good arm.

· Don't bite, you animal · she hissed. · This is the last time I'll tell you that, Azio. Or there will be nothing more, and I shall never call you Kuba, or Prepudrech, again.

· Was is serious? · the prince asked, tormented by the most contradictory feelings possible.

· Out the bicep, the bones intact. Ricocheted on the muscle, it was a smallõ . The end. If only it had been a great, *big* revolver · calm down, I'm joking · she said, stroking her *fiancé* on the head. Bertz was greeting everyone, terribly ashamed.

· Now, which time was that, Princess? · asked ýohoyski.

· Seven and a half, if you count the half as that cocaine, with you · Hela answered loudly. J drek was utterly overwhelmed · too much had been said. · It just came over me; why, I couldn't stand it. It was God's decision: either today is the end, or it's never again · I've decided it.

She kissed Azalin on the head, and then, just like that time in the hospital, she looked over at Atanazy, who was presently shaking from a sudden thunderbolt of lust. He even lost consciousness for a moment.

· Careful, Pan Atanazy, or it'll be just like last time · Hela whispered.

· What, what? · Prepudrech pulled himself out of her fur, which was imbued with the scent of Fontassini and iodine.

· Nothing, I'm only reminding Pan Tazio how he spilled the contents of an entire cup once, before he'd even brought it to his own lips. I'm afraid to go into church. Save me from Wyrprzyk, all of you. He'll be ready to kill me in a rage.

· And what could be there, in that relationship? · wondered Azalin, who had almost just been happy again.

· Oh, does everything really have to be connected to everything else? Let's simply do away with tangible causality in conversation. Let's play with the unexpected, for once!

Suddenly, from the shadows of the interior of the cathedral, Wyrztyk fell out, into the cold sunlight, bursting with steam, dressed in a red chasuble, a surplice, and other, even lesser-known accessories.

· I will show you, you rebellious, unfaithful õ succutrunque! · he choked, finally, unable, in his anger, to find his other word · the one his mother, a peasant woman, had been known to call her servant. · To confession, follow me. And I appoint all of you witnesses to her repentance.

He grabbed her good hand, and with an unbridled fury, pulled her deep into the church. The fur fell from her shoulders, and her white neck was now indecently, lustfully bare beneath her thick, red-gold hair, against the backdrop of the dark, hot interior of the cathedral. Everyone rushed after them, and a moment later, it was empty there, before the church. Only the sparrows remained, pecking at the horse manure; and a few, bantering lowlifes, like the Russian coachmen, and the skinny men with the lordly faces of valets, and the chauffeurs of the very top financiers. In three quarters of an hour or so, the organs, playing *Andante* from Szymanowski's *58 Symphonies*, would notify the already disgusted footmenery that the good people had thus completed their rites.

Father Hieronymus, having dragged Hela to the confessional, threw her down brutally upon her knees, and, falling into the dark depths, asked the questions of her himself, loudly. After this, he whispered for a long time, and then, finally, he stopped.

· You will crawl on your stomach before the great altar, you slimy creature, and there, for ten minutes, you will beg the Virgin Mary for mercy, and then, I shall forgive you · he knocked three times as he stood, and then looked, not without a certain shade of subtle contentment, as Hela, on her side, lifting her right hand over her right elbow, crawled toward the altar on her belly.

Both Azalin and Atanazy were delighted by this. ýohoyski, behind the pillar, hit another dose, and neighed internally with pleasure. Old Bertz watched this scene with a strange satisfaction. He was proud, now, that everything around him was happening so %medievally,+in true ultra-Catholic fashion.