

Scene of Stefan's family at dinner table after first year of fighting

INT. STEFAN'S DINING ROOM - MORNING

A bone-thin Stefan and his family sit before a meal of brown watery soup. The elderly woman's seat is empty.

STEFAN

"Well, we will thank God for what we do have."

Every head bows.

STEFAN

"Wilhelm, bless the meal."

WILHELM

"Dear Father, we thank you for what you have given us. May this meal fill our stomachs. Comfort us in the loss of grandmother. Give Magdeburg peace soon, in Jesus' name, Amen."

They begin to eat.

HELDA

(under her breath)

"You call this a meal. Salt, worms, and water..."

STEFAN

(standing)

"Helda! Come to the bedroom with me."

She glares at him in anger. Children are stunned.

HELDA

(breaking down in tears)

"We're all going to starve!"

STEFAN

"Not in front of the children. Come."

HELDA

"Not in front of the children? Do you know what is about to happen in front of the children?"

Stefan glances at his children, who are horrified by their mother's outburst.

STEFAN

"Children, take your soup and go to your room."

Helda draws close to him as the children leave.

HELDA

"Walk the city streets and tell me what's best for your city now. For Magdeburg's sake, must surrender. For your children's sakes!"

Stefan falls to his knees, and begins to plead with her.

STEFAN

"Helda, do not despair. We've got to be willing to drink the cup that our Lord drank. And we can do it with joy if we keep our eyes on Him."

HELDA

"I don't want to drink His cup! I want to play with my children. I want them to eat food!"

She slaps her wooden bowl of watery soup across the room.

HELDA

"I wouldn't let a dog drink this! Do you love your city more than your family?"

STEFAN

"Not my city - my Lord! My faith! Helda! Come, let's call on Jesus' name together. Please."

He invites her to her knees with him. She begins to sob, with her face in her hands.

HELDA

"I can't do it. I can't."

STEFAN

"We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. It's always darkest before the dawn. We could be, right now, at the foot of the Jordan River. It could be just moments before it splits and we enter our Promised Land. Don't lose faith."

She falls to her knees beside him and he embraces her. She weeps and he begins to groan out prayers.