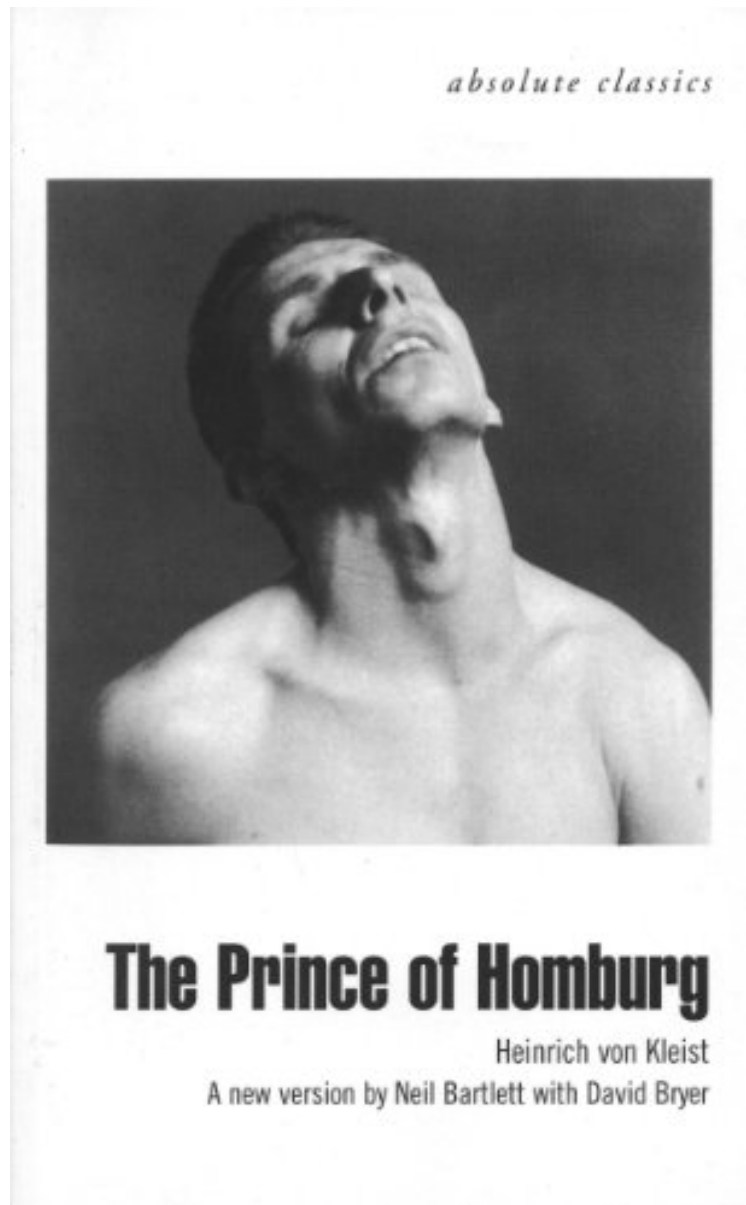


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## The Prince of Homburg (Absolute Classics)

*Heinrich von Kleist, Neil Bartlett*  
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**Heinrich von Kleist, Neil Bartlett : The Prince of Homburg (Absolute Classics)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Prince of Homburg (Absolute Classics):

Tell me, please - is this a dream?"The night before he leads his troops into battle, the prince of Homburg strips off his

uniform and goes sleepwalking. Moonstruck, his mind races with a young man's fantasies - love, ambition and victory. But when the morning comes, a single reckless act of disobedience sets in motion a chain of events that leads inexorable to the one thing he never dreamt would happen; his own death. Heinrich von Kleist is one of the most enigmatic figures in theatre history. Driven to suicide at the age of 34, he left behind him seven extraordinary plays. Unperformed during his own lifetime, *The Prince of Homburg* is now regarded as von Kleist's masterpiece and is one of the most mysterious and beautiful plays of the nineteenth century. Neil Bartlett's production opened at the RSC Stratford in January 2002, and transferred to the Lyric Theatre.

*The Prince of Homburg* is as satisfyingly chewy as the most teeth-wrecking kind of German sausage. Dennis Kelly's lucid, often beautifully lyrical new version betrays the original by altering the ending. Realpolitik rather than philosophy wins out. Fine by me: Kelly's subversive stroke subtly connects the emergence of the modern German state with the terrifying absolutism of the Nazis, without jeopardizing the drama's other concerns. 3 stars; Dominic Cavendish, *The Telegraph* "an intriguingly mercurial drama"; Kate Bassett, *Independent on Sunday* "fine new version"; Maxie Szalwinska, *Sunday Times* "a startlingly prophetic play about the equivocal nature of reality. 3 stars"; Michael Billington, *The Guardian* "a cerebral serving of early-19th-century German drama"; Henry Hitchings, *Evening Standard*