Stories by Foreign Authors: German — Volume 1 eBook

Stories by Foreign Authors: German — Volume 1

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STORIES BY FOREIGN AUTHORS

GERMAN

The fury ..... By Paul HeyseThe philosopher's pendulum ..... By Rudolph LindauThe bookbinder of Hort.....By Leopold Von Sacher-MASOCH
The Egyptian fire-eater.....By Rudolph BaumbachThe Cremona violin .....By E.T. . *HoffmannAdventures* Of A *new-year's Eve..... By Heinrich Zschokke*

THE FURY

BY

PAUL HEYSE

From "Tales from the German of Paul Heyse"

THE FURY

(L'ARRABIATA)

The day had scarcely dawned. Over Vesuvius hung one broad gray stripe of mist, stretching across as far as Naples, and darkening all the small towns along the coast.

The sea lay calm. Along the shore of the narrow creek that lies beneath the Sorrento cliffs, fishermen and their wives were at work already, some with giant cables drawing their boats to land, with the nets that had been cast the night before, while others were rigging their craft, trimming the sails, or fetching out oars and masts from the great grated vaults that have been built deep into the rocks for shelter to the tackle overnight. Nowhere an idle hand; even the very aged, who had long given up going to sea, fell into the long chain of those who were hauling in the nets. Here and there, on some flat housetop, an old woman stood and spun, or busied herself about her grandchildren, whom their mother had left to help her husband.

“Do you see, Rachela? yonder is our padre curato,” said one to a little thing of ten, who brandished a small spindle by her side; “Antonio is to row him over to Capri. Madre Santissima! but the reverend signore’s eyes are dull with sleep!” and she waved her hand to a benevolent-looking little priest, who was settling himself in the boat, and spreading out upon the bench his carefully tucked-up skirts.

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The men upon the quay had dropped their work to see their pastor off, who bowed and nodded kindly, right and left.

“What for must he go to Capri, granny?” asked the child. “Have the people there no priest of their own, that they must borrow ours?”

“Silly thing!” returned the granny. “Priests they have in plenty— and the most beautiful of churches, and a hermit too, which is more than we have. But there lives a great signora, who once lived here; she was so very ill! Many’s the time our padre had to go and take the Most Holy to her, when they thought she could not live the night. But with the Blessed Virgin’s help she got strong and well, and was able to bathe every day in the sea. When she went away, she left a fine heap of ducats behind her for our church, and for the poor; and she would not go, they say, until our padre promised to go and see her over there, that she might confess to him as before. It is quite wonderful, the store she lays by him! Indeed, and we have cause to bless ourselves for having a curato who has gifts enough for an archbishop, and is in such request with all the great folks. The Madonna be with him!” she cried, and waved her hand again, as the boat was about to put from shore.

“Are we to have fair weather, my son?” inquired the little priest, with an anxious look toward Naples.

“The sun is not yet up,” the young man answered; “when he comes, he will easily do for that small trifle of mist.”

“Off with you, then! that we may arrive before the heat.”

Antonio was just reaching for his long oar to shove away the boat, when suddenly he paused, and fixed his eyes upon the summit of the steep path that leads down from Sorrento to the water. A tall and slender girlish figure had become visible upon the heights, and was now hastily stepping down the stones, waving her handkerchief She had a small bundle under her arm, and her dress was mean and poor. Yet she had a distinguished if somewhat savage way of throwing back her head, and the dark tress wreathed around it was like a diadem.

“What have we to wait for?” inquired the curato.

“There is some one coming who wants to go to Capri—with your permission, padre. We shall not go a whit the slower. It is a slight young thing, but just eighteen.”

At that moment the young girl appeared from behind the wall that bounds the winding path.

“Laurella!” cried the priest; “and what has she to do in Capri?”

Antonio shrugged his shoulders. She came up with hasty steps, her eyes fixed straight before her.

“Ha! l’Arrabiata! good-morning!” shouted one or two of the young boatmen. But for the curato’s presence, they might have added more; the look of mute defiance with which the young girl received their welcome appeared to tempt the more mischievous among them.

“Good-day, Laurella!” now said the priest; “how are you? Are you coming with us to Capri?”

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“If I may, padre.”

“Ask Antonio there; the boat is his. Every man is master of his own, I say, as God is master of us all.”

“There is half a carlino, if I may go for that?” said Laurella, without looking at the young boatman.

“You need it more than I,” he muttered, and pushed aside some orange-baskets to make room: he was to sell the oranges in Capri, which little isle of rocks has never been able to grow enough for all its visitors.

“I do not choose to go for nothing,” said the girl, with a slight frown of her dark eyebrows.

“Come, child,” said the priest; “he is a good lad, and had rather not enrich himself with that little morsel of your poverty. Come now, and step in,” and he stretched out his hand to help her, “and sit you down by me. See, now, he has spread his jacket for you, that you may sit the softer. Young folks are all alike; for one little maiden of eighteen they will do more than for ten of us reverend fathers. Nay, no excuse, Tonino. It is the Lord’s own doing, that like and like should hold together.”

Meantime Laurella had stepped in, and seated herself beside the padre, first putting away Antonio’s jacket without a word. The young fellow let it lie, and, muttering between his teeth, he gave one vigorous push against the pier, and the little boat flew out into the open bay.

“What are you carrying there in that little bundle?” inquired the padre, as they were floating on over a calm sea, now just beginning to be lighted up with the earliest rays of the rising sun. “Silk, thread, and a loaf, padre. The silk is to be sold at Anacapri, to a woman who makes ribbons, and the thread to another.”

“Spun by yourself?”

“Yes, sir.”

“You once learned to weave ribbons yourself, if I remember right?”

“I did, sir; but mother has been much worse, and I cannot stay so long from home; and a loom to ourselves we are not rich enough to buy.”

“Worse, is she? Ah! dear, dear! when I was with you last, at Easter, she was up.”

“The spring is always her worst time. Ever since those last great storms, and the earthquakes she has been forced to keep her bed from pain.”

“Pray, my child. Never slacken your prayers and petitions that the Blessed Virgin may intercede for you; and be industrious and good, that your prayers may find a hearing.”

After a pause: “When you were coming toward the shore, I heard them calling after you. ‘Good-morning, l’Arrabiata!’ they said. What made them call you so? It is not a nice name for a young Christian maiden, who should be meek and mild.”

The young girl’s brown face glowed all over, while her eyes flashed fire.

“They always mock me so, because I do not dance and sing, and stand about to chatter, as other girls do. I might be left in peace, I think; I do *them* no harm.”

“Nay, but you might be civil. Let others dance and sing, on whom this life sits lighter; but a kind word now and then is seemly even from the most afflicted.”

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Her dark eyes fell, and she drew her eyebrows closer over them, as if she would have hidden them.

They went on a while in silence. The sun now stood resplendent above the mountain chain; only the tip of Mount Vesuvius towered beyond the group of clouds that had gathered about its base; and on the Sorrento plains the houses were gleaming white from the dark green of their orange-gardens.

“Have you heard no more of that painter, Laurella?” asked the curato—“that Neapolitan, who wished so much to marry you?” She shook her head.” He came to make a picture of you. Why would you not let him?”

“What did he want it for? There are handsomer girls than I. Who knows what he would have done with it? He might have bewitched me with it, or hurt my soul, or even killed me, mother says.”

“Never believe such sinful things!” said the little curato very earnestly. “Are not you ever in God’s keeping, without whose will not one hair of your head can fall? and is one poor mortal with an image in his hand to prevail against the Lord? Besides, you might have seen that he was fond of you; else why should he want to marry you?”

She said nothing.

“And wherefore did you refuse him? He was an honest man, they say, and comely; and he would have kept you and your mother far better than you ever can yourself, for all your spinning and silk-winding.”

“We are so poor!” she said passionately; “and mother has been ill so long, we should have become a burden to him. And then I never should have done for a signora. When his friends came to see him, he would only have been ashamed of me.”

“How can you say so? I tell you the man was good and kind; he would even have been willing to settle in Sorrento. It will not be so easy to find another, sent straight from heaven to be the saving of you, as this man, indeed, appeared to be.”

“I want no husband—I never shall,” she said, very stubbornly, half to herself.

“Is this a vow? or do you mean to be a nun?”

She shook her head.

“The people are not so wrong who call you wilful, although the name they give you is not kind. Have you ever considered that you stand alone in the world, and that your perverseness must make your sick mother’s illness worse to bear, her life more bitter?

And what sound reason can you have to give for rejecting an honest hand, stretched out to help you and your mother? Answer me, Laurella."

"I have a reason," she said reluctantly, and speaking low; "but it is one I cannot give."

"Not give! not give to me? not to your confessor, whom you surely know to be your friend—or is he not?"

Laurella nodded.

"Then, child, unburden your heart. If your reason be a good one, I shall be the very first to uphold you in it. Only you are young, and know so little of the world. A time may come when you will find cause to regret a chance of happiness thrown away for some foolish fancy now."

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Shyly she threw a furtive glance over to the other end of the boat, where the young boatman sat, rowing fast. His woollen cap was pulled deep down over his eyes; he was gazing far across the water, with averted head, sunk, as it appeared, in his own meditations.

The priest observed her look, and bent his ear down closer.

“You did not know my father?” she whispered, while a dark look gathered in her eyes.

“Your father, child! Why, your father died when you were ten years old. What can your father (Heaven rest his soul in paradise!) have to do with this present perversity of yours?”

“You did not know him, padre; you did not know that mother’s illness was caused by him alone.”

“And how?”

“By his ill-treatment of her; he beat her and trampled upon her. I well remember the nights when he came home in his fits of frenzy. She never said a word, and did everything he bade her. Yet he would beat her so, my heart felt ready to break. I used to cover up my head and pretend to be asleep, but I cried all night. And then, when he saw her lying on the floor, quite suddenly he would change, and lift her up and kiss her, till she screamed and said he smothered her. Mother forbade me ever to say a word of this; but it wore her out. And in all these long years since father died, she has never been able to get well again. And if she should soon die—which God forbid!—I know who it was that killed her.”

The little curato’s head wagged slowly to and fro; he seemed uncertain how far to acquiesce in the young girl’s reasons. At length he said: “Forgive him, as your mother has forgiven! And turn your thoughts from such distressing pictures, Laurella; there may be better days in store for you, which will make you forget the past.”

“Never shall I forget that!” she said, and shuddered. “And you must know, padre, it is the reason why I have resolved to remain unmarried. I never will be subject to a man, who may beat and then caress me. Were a man now to want to beat or kiss me, I could defend myself; but mother could not—neither from his blows nor kisses— because she loved him. Now, I will never so love a man as to be made ill and wretched by him.”

“You are but a child, and you talk like one who knows nothing at all of life. Are all men like that poor father of yours? Do all ill-treat their wives, and give vent to every whim and gust of passion? Have you never seen a good man yet? or known good wives, who live in peace and harmony with their husbands?”

“But nobody ever knew how father was to mother; she would have died sooner than complain or tell of him, and all because she loved him. If this be love—if love can close our lips when they should cry out for help—if it is to make us suffer without resistance, worse than even our worst enemy could make us suffer—then, I say, I never will be fond of mortal man.”

“I tell you you are childish; you know not what you are saying. When your time comes, you are not likely to be consulted whether you choose to fall in love or not.” After a pause, he added, “And that painter: did you think he could have been cruel?”

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“He made those eyes I have seen my father make, when he begged my mother’s pardon and took her in his arms to make it up. I know those eyes. A man may make such eyes, and yet find it in his heart to beat a wife who never did a thing to vex him! It made my flesh creep to see those eyes again.”

After this she would not say another word. The curato also remained silent. He bethought himself of more than one wise saying, wherewith the maiden might have been admonished; but he refrained, in consideration of the young boatman, who had been growing rather restless toward the close of this confession.

When, after two hours’ rowing, they reached the little bay of Capri, Antonio took the padre in his arms, and carried him through the last few ripples of shallow water, to set him reverently down upon his legs on dry land. But Laurella did not wait for him to wade back and fetch her. Gathering up her little petticoat, holding in one hand her wooden shoes and in the other her little bundle, with one splashing step or two she had reached the shore. “I have some time to stay at Capri,” said the priest. “You need not wait—I may not perhaps return before to-morrow. When you get home, Laurella, remember me to your mother; I will come and see her within the week. You mean to go back before it gets dark?”

“If I find an opportunity,” answered the girl, turning all her attention to her skirts.

“I must return, you know,” said Antonio, in a tone which he believed to be one of great indifference. “I shall wait here till the Ave Maria. If you should not come, it is the same to me.”

“You must come,” interposed the little priest; “you never can leave your mother all alone at night. Is it far you have to go?”

“To a vineyard by Anacapri.”

“And I to Capri. So now God bless you, child—and you, my son.”

Laurella kissed his hand, and let one farewell drop, for the padre and Antonio to divide between them. Antonio, however, appropriated no part of it to himself; he pulled off his cap exclusively to the padre, without even looking at Laurella. But after they had turned their backs, he let his eyes travel but a short way with the padre, as he went toiling over the deep bed of small, loose stones; he soon sent them after the maiden, who, turning to the right, had begun to climb the heights, holding one hand above her eyes to protect them from the scorching sun. Just before the path disappeared behind high walls, she stopped, as if to gather breath, and looked behind her. At her feet lay the marina; the rugged rocks rose high around her; the sea was shining in the rarest of its deep-blue splendor. The scene was surely worth a moment’s pause. But, as chance would have

it, her eyes, in glancing past Antonio’s boat, met Antonio’s own, which had been following her as she climbed.

Each made a slight movement, as persons do who would excuse themselves for some mistake; and then, with her darkest look, the maiden went her way.

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Hardly one hour had passed since noon, and yet for the last two Antonio had been sitting waiting on the bench before the fishers' tavern. He must have been very much preoccupied with something, for he jumped up every moment to step out into the sunshine, and look carefully up and down the roads, which, parting right and left, lead to the only two little towns upon the island. He did not altogether trust the weather, he then said to the hostess of the osteria; to be sure, it was clear enough, but he did not quite like that tint of sea and sky. Just so it had looked, he said, before the last awful storm, when the English family had been so nearly lost; surely she must remember it?

No, indeed, she said, she didn't.

Well, if the weather should happen to change before night, she was to think of him, he said.

"Have you many fine folk over there?" she asked him, after a while.

"They are only just beginning; as yet, the season has been bad enough; those who came to bathe, came late."

"The spring came late. Have you not been earning more than we at Capri?"

"Not enough to give me macaroni twice a week, if I had had nothing but the boat—only a letter now and then to take to Naples, or a gentleman to row out into the open sea, that he might fish. But you know I have an uncle who is rich; he owns more than one fine orange-garden; and, 'Tonino,' says he to me, 'while I live you shall not suffer want; and when I am gone you will find that I have taken care of you.' And so, with God's help, I got through the winter."

"Has he children, this uncle who is rich?"

"No, he never married; he was long in foreign parts, and many a good piastre he has laid together. He is going to set up a great fishing business, and set me over it, to see the rights of it."

"Why, then you are a made man, Tonino!"

The young boatman shrugged his shoulders.

"Every man has his own burden," said he, starting up again to have another look at the weather, turning his eyes right and left, although he must have known that there can be no weather side but one.

"Let me fetch you another bottle," said the hostess; "your uncle can well afford to pay for it."

“Not more than one glass; it is a fiery wine you have in Capri, and my head is hot already.”

“It does not heat the blood; you may drink as much of it as you like. And here is my husband coming; so you must sit a while, and talk to him.”

And in fact, with his nets over his shoulder, and his red cap upon his curly head, down came the comely padrone of the osteria. He had been taking a dish of fish to that great lady, to set before the little curato. As soon as he caught sight of the young boatman, he began waving him a most cordial welcome; and he came to sit beside him on the bench, chattering and asking questions. Just as his wife was bringing her second bottle of pure unadulterated Capri, they heard the crisp sand crunch, and Laurella was seen approaching from the left-hand road to Anacapri. She nodded slightly in salutation; then stopped, and hesitated.

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Antonio sprang from his seat. “I must go,” he said. “It is a young Sorrento girl, who came over with the signor curato in the morning. She has to get back to her sick mother before night.”

“Well, well, time enough yet before night,” observed the fisherman; “time enough to take a glass of wine. Wife, I say, another glass!”

“I thank you; I had rather not;” and Laurella kept her distance.

“Fill the glasses, wife; fill them both, I say; she only wants a little pressing.”

“Don’t,” interposed the lad. “It is a wilful head of her own she has; a saint could not persuade her to do what she does not choose.” And, taking a hasty leave, he ran down to the boat, loosened the rope, and stood waiting for Laurella. Again she bent her head to the hostess, and slowly approached the water, with lingering steps. She looked around on every side, as if in hopes of seeing some other passenger. But the marina was deserted. The fishermen were asleep, or rowing about the coast with rods or nets; a few women and children sat before their doors, spinning or sleeping: such strangers as had come over in the morning were waiting for the cool of the evening to return. She had not time to look about her long; before she could prevent him, Antonio had seized her in his arms and carried her to the boat, as if she had been an infant. He leaped in after her, and with a stroke or two of his oar they were in deep water.

She had seated herself at the end of the boat, half turning her back to him, so that he could only see her profile. She wore a sterner look than ever; the low, straight brow was shaded by her hair; the rounded lips were firmly closed; only the delicate nostril occasionally gave a wilful quiver. After they had gone on a while in silence, she began to feel the scorching of the sun; and, unloosening her bundle, she threw the handkerchief over her head, and began to make her dinner of the bread; for in Capri she had eaten nothing.

Antonio did not stand this long; he fetched out a couple of the oranges with which the baskets had been filled in the morning. “Here is something to eat to your bread, Laurella,” he said. “Don’t think I kept them for you; they had rolled out of the basket, and I only found them when I brought the baskets back to the boat.”

“Eat them yourself; bread is enough for me.”

“They are refreshing in this heat, and you have had to walk so far.”

“They gave me a drink of water, and that refreshed me.”

“As you please,” he said, and let them drop into the basket.

Silence again. The sea was smooth as glass. Not a ripple was heard against the prow. Even the white sea-birds that roost among the caves of Capri pursued their prey with soundless flight.

“You might take the oranges to your mother,” again commenced Tonino.

“We have oranges at home; and when they are gone, I can go and buy some more.”

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“Nay, take these to her, and give them to her with my compliments.”

“She does not know you.”

“You could tell her who I am.”

“I do not know you either.”

It was not the first time that she had denied him thus. One Sunday of last year, when that painter had first come to Sorrento, Antonio had chanced to be playing boccia with some other young fellows in the little piazza by the chief street.

There, for the first time, had the painter caught sight of Laurella, who, with her pitcher on her head, had passed by without taking any notice of him. The Neapolitan, struck by her appearance, stood still and gazed after her, not heeding that he was standing in the very midst of the game, which, with two steps, he might have cleared. A very ungentle ball came knocking against his shins, as a reminder that this was not the spot to choose for meditation. He looked round, as if in expectation of some excuse. But the young boatman who had thrown the ball stood silent among his friends, in such an attitude of defiance that the stranger had found it more advisable to go his ways and avoid discussion. Still, this little encounter had been spoken of, particularly at the time when the painter had been pressing his suit to Laurella. “I do not even know him,” she said indignantly, when the painter asked her whether it was for the sake of that uncourteous lad she now refused him. But she had heard that piece of gossip, and known Antonio well enough when she had met him since.

And now they sat together in this boat, like two most deadly enemies, while their hearts were beating fit to kill them. Antonio’s usually so good-humored face was heated to scarlet; he struck the oars so sharply that the foam flew over to where Laurella sat, while his lips moved as if muttering angry words. She pretended not to notice, wearing her most unconscious look, bending over the edge of the boat, and letting the cool water pass between her fingers. Then she threw off her handkerchief again, and began to smooth her hair, as though she had been alone. Only her eyebrows twitched, and she held up her wet hands in vain attempts to cool her burning cheeks.

Now they were well out in the open sea. The island was far behind, and the coast before them lay yet distant in the hot haze. Not a sail was within sight, far or near—not even a passing gull to break the stillness. Antonio looked all round, evidently ripening some hasty resolution. The color faded suddenly from his cheek, and he dropped his oars. Laurella looked round involuntarily—fearless, yet attentive.

“I must make an end of this,” the young fellow burst forth. “It has lasted too long already! I only wonder that it has not killed me! You say you do not know me? And all this time you must have seen me pass you like a madman, my whole heart full of what I

had to tell you; and then you only made your crossest mouth, and turned your back upon me.”

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“What had I to say to you?” she curtly replied. “I may have seen that you were inclined to meddle with me, but I do not choose to be on people’s wicked tongues for nothing. I do not mean to have you for a husband—neither you nor any other.”

“Nor any other? So you will not always say! You say so now, because you would not have that painter. Bah! you were but a child! You will feel lonely enough yet, some day; and then, wild as you are, you will take the next best who comes to hand.”

“Who knows? which of us can see the future? It may be that I will change my mind. What is that to you?”

“What is it to me?” he flew out, starting to his feet, while the small boat leaped and danced; “what is it to me, you say? You know well enough! I tell you, that man shall perish miserably to whom you shall prove kinder than you have been to me!”

“And to you, what did I ever promise? Am I to blame if you be mad? What right have you to me?”

“Ah! I know,” he cried, “my right is written nowhere. It has not been put in Latin by any lawyer, nor stamped with any seal. But this I feel: I have just the right to you that I have to heaven, if I die an honest Christian. Do you think I could look on and see you go to church with another man, and see the girls go by and shrug their shoulders at me?”

“You can do as you please. I am not going to let myself be frightened by all those threats. I also mean to do as I please.”

“You shall not say so long!” and his whole frame shook with passion. “I am not the man to let my whole life be spoiled by a stubborn wench like you! You are in my power here, remember, and may be made to do my bidding.”

She could not repress a start, but her eyes flashed bravely on him.

“You may kill me if you dare,” she said slowly.

“I do nothing by halves,” he said, and his voice sounded choked and hoarse. “There is room for us both in the sea. I cannot help thee, child”—he spoke the last words dreamily, almost pitifully—“but we must both go down together—both at once—and now!” he shouted, and snatched her in his arms. But at the same moment he drew back his right hand; the blood gushed out; she had bitten him fiercely.

“Ha! can I be made to do your bidding?” she cried, and thrust him from her, with one sudden movement; “am I here in your power?” and she leaped into the sea, and sank.

She rose again directly; her scanty skirts clung close; her long hair, loosened by the waves, hung heavy about her neck. She struck out valiantly, and, without uttering a sound, she began to swim steadily from the boat toward the shore.

With senses benumbed by sudden terror, he stood, with outstretched neck, looking after her, his eyes fixed as though they had just been witness to a miracle. Then, giving himself a shake, he seized his oars, and began rowing after her with all the strength he had, while all the time the bottom of the boat was reddening fast with the blood that kept streaming from his hand.

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Rapidly as she swam, he was at her side in a moment. “For the love of our most Holy Virgin” he cried, “get into the boat! I have been a madman! God alone can tell what so suddenly darkened my brain. It came upon me like a flash of lightning, and set me all on fire. I knew not what I did or said. I do not even ask you to forgive me, Laurella, only to come into the boat again, and not to risk your life!”

She swam on as though she had not heard him.

“You can never swim to land. I tell you, it is two miles off. Think of your mother! If you should come to grief, I should die of horror.”

She measured the distance with her eye, and then, without answering him one word, she swam up to the boat, and laid her hands upon the edge; he rose to help her in. As the boat tilted over to one side with the girl’s weight, his jacket that was lying on the bench slipped into the water. Agile as she was, she swung herself on board without assistance, and gained her former seat. As soon as he saw that she was safe, he took to his oars again, while she began quietly wringing out her dripping clothes, and shaking the water from her hair. As her eyes fell upon the bottom of the boat, and saw the blood, she gave a quick look at the hand, which held the oar as if it had been unhurt.

“Take this,” she said, and held out her handkerchief. He shook his head, and went on rowing. After a time she rose, and, stepping up to him, bound the handkerchief firmly round the wound, which was very deep. Then, heedless of his endeavors to prevent her, she took an oar, and, seating herself opposite him, began to row with steady strokes, keeping her eyes from looking toward him—fixed upon the oar that was scarlet with his blood. Both were pale and silent. As they drew near land, such fishermen as they met began shouting after Antonio and gibing at Laurella; but neither of them moved an eyelid, or spoke one word.

The sun stood yet high over Procida when they landed at the marina. Laurella shook out her petticoat, now nearly dry, and jumped on shore. The old spinning woman, who in the morning had seen them start, was still upon her terrace. She called down, “What is that upon your hand, Tonino? Jesus Christ! the boat is full of blood!”

“It is nothing, comare,” the young fellow replied. “I tore my hand against a nail that was sticking out too far; it will be well to-morrow. It is only this confounded ready blood of mine, that always makes a thing look worse than it is.”

“Let me come and bind it up, comparello. Stop one moment; I will go and fetch the herbs, and come to you directly.”

“Never trouble yourself, comare. It has been dressed already; to-morrow morning it will be all over and forgotten. I have a healthy skin, that heals directly.”

“Addio!” said Laurella, turning to the path that goes winding up the cliffs. “Good-night!” he answered, without looking at her; and then taking his oars and baskets from the boat, and climbing up the small stone stairs, he went into his own hut.

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He was alone in his two little rooms, and began to pace them up and down. Cooler than upon the dead calm sea, the breeze blew fresh through the small unglazed windows, which could only be closed with wooden shutters. The solitude was soothing to him. He stooped before the little image of the Virgin, devoutly gazing upon the glory round the head (made of stars cut out in silver paper). But he did not want to pray. What reason had he to pray, now that he had lost all he had ever hoped for?

And this day appeared to last for ever. He did so long for night! for he was weary, and more exhausted by the loss of blood than he would have cared to own. His hand was very sore. Seating himself upon a little stool, he untied the handkerchief that bound it; the blood, so long repressed, gushed out again; all round the wound the hand was swollen high.

He washed it carefully, cooling it in the water; then he clearly saw the marks of Laurella's teeth.

"She was right," he said; "I was a brute, and deserved no better. I will send her back the handkerchief by Giuseppe to-morrow. Never shall she set eyes on me again." And he washed the handkerchief with the greatest care, and spread it out in the sun to dry.

And having bound up his hand again, as well as he could manage with his teeth and his left hand, he threw himself upon his bed, and closed his eyes.

He was soon waked up from a sort of slumber by the rays of the bright moonlight, and also by the pain of his hand; he had just risen for more cold water to soothe its throbbings, when he heard the sound of some one at the door. Laurella stood before him.

She came in without a question, took off the handkerchief she had tied over her head, and placed her little basket upon the table; then she drew a deep breath.

"You are come to fetch your handkerchief," he said. "You need not have taken that trouble. In the morning I would have asked Giuseppe to take it to you."

"It is not the handkerchief," she said quickly. "I have been up among the hills to gather herbs to stop the blood; see here." And she lifted the lid of her little basket.

"Too much trouble," he said, not in bitterness—"far too much trouble. I am better, much better; but if I were worse, it would be no more than I deserve. Why did you come at such a time? If any one should see you? You know how they talk, even when they don't know what they are saying."

"I care for no one's talk," she said, passionately. "I came to see your hand, and put the herbs upon it; you cannot do it with your left."

“It is not worth while, I tell you.”

“Let me see it then, if I am to believe you.”

She took his hand, that was not able to prevent her, and unbound the linen. When she saw the swelling, she shuddered, and gave a cry: “Jesus Maria!”

“It is a little swollen,” he said; “it will be over in four-and-twenty hours.”

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She shook her head. “It will certainly be a week before you can go to sea.”

“More likely a day or two; and if not, what matters?”

She had fetched a basin, and began carefully washing out the wound, which he suffered passively, like a child. She then laid on the healing leaves, which at once relieved the burning pain, and finally bound it up with the linen she had brought with her.

When it was done: “I thank you,” he said. “And now, if you would do me one more kindness, forgive the madness that came over me; forget all I said and did. I cannot tell how it came to pass; certainly it was not your fault—not yours. And never shall you hear from me again one word to vex you.”

She interrupted him. “It is I who have to beg your pardon. I should have spoken differently. I might have explained it better, and not enraged you with my sullen ways. And now that bite—”

“It was in self-defence; it was high time to bring me to my senses. As I said before, it is nothing at all to signify. Do not talk of being forgiven; you only did me good, and I thank you for it. And now, here is your handkerchief; take it with you.”

He held it to her, but yet she lingered, hesitated, and appeared to have some inward struggle. At length she said: “You have lost your jacket, and by my fault; and I know that all the money for the oranges was in it. I did not think of this till afterward. I cannot replace it now; we have not so much at home—or if we had, it would be mother’s. But this I have—this silver cross. That painter left it on the table the day he came for the last time. I have never looked at it all this while, and do not care to keep it in my box; if you were to sell it? It must be worth a few piastres, mother says. It might make up the money you have lost; and if not quite, I could earn the rest by spinning at night when mother is asleep.”

“Nothing will make me take it,” he said shortly, pushing away the bright new cross, which she had taken from her pocket.

“You must,” she said; “how can you tell how long your hand may keep you from your work? There it lies; and nothing can make me so much as look at it again.”

“Drop it in the sea, then.”

“It is no present I want to make you; it is no more than is your due; it is only fair.”

“Nothing from you can be due to me; and hereafter when we chance to meet, if you would do me a kindness, I beg you not to look my way. It would make me feel you were thinking of what I have done. And now good-night; and let this be the last word said.”

She laid the handkerchief in the basket, and also the cross, and closed the lid. But when he looked into her face, he started. Great heavy drops were rolling down her cheeks; she let them flow unheeded.

“Maria Santissima!” he cried. “Are you ill? You are trembling from head to foot!”

“It is nothing,” she said; “I must go home;” and with unsteady steps she was moving to the door, when suddenly she leaned her brow against the wall, and gave way to a fit of bitter sobbing. Before he could go to her she turned upon him suddenly, and fell upon his neck.

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“I cannot bear it!” she cried, clinging to him as a dying thing to life—“I cannot bear it! I cannot let you speak so kindly, and bid me go, with all this on my conscience. Beat me! trample on me! curse me! Or if it can be that you love me still, after all I have done to you, take me and keep me, and do with me as you please; only do not send me away so!” She could say no more for sobbing.

Speechless, he held her a while in his arms. “If I can love you still!” he cried at last. “Holy Mother of God! Do you think that all my best heart’s blood has gone from me through that little wound? Don’t you hear it hammering now, as though it would burst my breast and go to you? But if you say this to try me, or because you pity me, I can forget it. You are not to think you owe me this, because you know what I have suffered for you.”

“No!” she said very resolutely, looking up from his shoulder into his face, with her tearful eyes; “it is because I love you; and let me tell you, it was because I always feared to love you that I was so cross. I will be so different now. I never could bear again to pass you in the street without one look! And lest you should ever feel a doubt, I will kiss you, that you may say, ‘She kissed me;’ and Laurella kisses no man but her husband.”

She kissed him thrice, and, escaping from his arms: “And now good-night, amor mio, cara vita mia!” she said. “Lie down to sleep, and let your hand get well. Do not come with me; I am afraid of no man, save of you alone.”

And so she slipped out, and soon disappeared in the shadow of the wall.

He remained standing by the window, gazing far out over the calm sea, while all the stars in heaven appeared to flit before his eyes.

The next time the little curato sat in his confessional, he sat smiling to himself. Laurella had just risen from her knees after a very long confession.

“Who would have thought it?” he said musingly—“that the Lord would so soon have taken pity upon that wayward little heart? And I had been reproaching myself for not having adjured more sternly that ill demon of perversity. Our eyes are but short-sighted to see the ways of Heaven! Well, may God bless her, I say, and let me live to go to sea with Laurella’s eldest born, rowing me in his father’s place! Ah! well, indeed! l’Arrabiata!”

THE PHILOSOPHER’S PENDULUM

BY

RUDOLPH LINDAU

THE PHILOSOPHER'S PENDULUM

A TALE FROM GERMANY BY RUDOLPH LINDAU

I.

During many long years Hermann Fabricius had lost sight of his friend Henry Warren, and had forgotten him.

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Yet when students together they had loved each other dearly, and more than once they had sworn eternal friendship. This was at a period which, though not very remote, we seem to have left far behind us—a time when young men still believed in eternal friendship, and could feel enthusiasm for great deeds or great ideas. Youth in the present day is, or thinks itself, more rational. Hermann and Warren in those days were simple-minded and ingenuous; and not only in the moment of elation, when they had sworn to be friends for ever, but even the next day, and the day after that, in sober earnestness, they had vowed that nothing should separate them, and that they would remain united through life. The delusion had not lasted long. The pitiless machinery of life had caught up the young men as soon as they left the university, and had thrown one to the right, the other to the left. For a few months they had exchanged long and frequent letters; then they had met once, and finally they had parted, each going his way. Their letters had become more scarce, more brief, and at last had ceased altogether. It would really seem that the fact of having interests in common is the one thing sufficiently powerful to prolong and keep up the life of epistolary relations. A man may feel great affection for an absent friend, and yet not find time to write him ten lines, while he will willingly expend daily many hours on a stranger from whom he expects something. None the less he may be a true and honest friend. Man is naturally selfish; the instinct of self-preservation requires it of him. Provided he be not wicked, and that he show himself ready to serve his neighbor—after himself—no one has a right to complain, or to accuse him of hard-heartedness.

At the time this story begins, Hermann had even forgotten whether he had written to Warren last, or whether he had left his friend's last letter unanswered. In a word, the correspondence which began so enthusiastically had entirely ceased. Hermann inhabited a large town, and had acquired some reputation as a writer. From time to time, in the course of his walks, he would meet a young student with brown hair, and mild, honest-looking blue eyes, whose countenance, with its frank and youthful smile, inspired confidence and invited the sympathy of the passer-by. Whenever Hermann met this young man he would say to himself, "How like Henry at twenty!" and for a few minutes memory would travel back to the already distant days of youth, and he would long to see his dear old Warren again. More than once, on the spur of the moment, he had resolved to try and find out what had become of his old university comrade. But these good intentions were never followed up. On reaching home he would find his table covered with books and pamphlets to be reviewed, and letters from publishers or newspaper editors asking for "copy"—to say nothing of invitations to dinner, which must be accepted or refused; in a word, he found so much *urgent* business to despatch that the evening would go by, and weariness would overtake him, before he could make time for inquiring about his old friend.

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In the course of years, the life of most men becomes so regulated that no time is left for anything beyond “necessary work.” But, indeed, the man who lives only for his own pleasure—doing, so to speak, nothing—is rarely better in this respect than the writer, the banker, and the savant, who are overburdened with work.

One afternoon, as Hermann, according to his custom, was returning home about five o’clock, his porter handed him a letter bearing the American post-mark. He examined it closely before opening it. The large and rather stiff handwriting on the address seemed familiar, and yet he could not say to whom it belonged. Suddenly his countenance brightened, and he exclaimed, “A letter from Henry!” He tore open the envelope, and read as follows:

“*My dear Hermann*,—It is fortunate that one of us at least should have attained celebrity. I saw your name on the outside of a book of which you are the author. I wrote at once to the publisher; that obliging man answered me by return of post, and, thanks to these circumstances, I am enabled to tell you that I will land at Hamburg towards the end of September. Write to me there, Poste Restante, and let me know if you are willing to receive me for a few days. I can take Leipzig on my way home, and would do so most willingly if you say that you would see me again with pleasure.

“Your old friend,

“*Henry Warren*.”

Below the signature there was a postscript of a single line: “This is my present face.” And from an inner envelope Hermann drew a small photograph, which he carried to the window to examine leisurely. As he looked, a painful impression of sadness came over him. The portrait was that of an old man. Long gray hair fell in disorder over a careworn brow; the eyes, deep sunk in their sockets, had a strange and disquieting look of fixity; and the mouth, surrounded by deep furrows, seemed to tell its own long tale of sorrow.

“Poor Henry!” said Hermann; “this, then, is your present face! And yet he is not old; he is younger than I am; he can scarcely be thirty-eight. Can I, too, be already an old man?”

He walked up to the glass, and looked attentively at the reflection of his own face. No! those were not the features of a man whose life was near its close; the eye was bright, and the complexion indicated vigor and health. Still, it was not a young face. Thought and care had traced their furrows round the mouth and about the temples, and the general expression was one of melancholy, not to say despondency.

“Well, well, we have grown old,” said Hermann, with a sigh. “I had not thought about it this long while; and now this photograph has reminded me of it painfully.” Then he took

up his pen and wrote to say how happy he would be to see his old friend again as soon as possible.

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The next day chance brought him face to face in the street with the young student who was so like Warren. “Who knows?” thought Hermann; “fifteen or twenty years hence this young man may look no brighter than Warren does today. Ah, life is not easy! It has a way of saddening joyous looks, and imparting severity to smiling lips. As for me, I have no real right to complain of my life. I have lived pretty much like everybody; a little satisfaction, and then a little disappointment, turn by turn; and often small worries; and so my youth has gone by, I scarcely know how.”

On the 2d of October Hermann received a telegram from Hamburg announcing the arrival of Warren for the same evening. At the appointed hour he went to the railway station to meet his friend. He saw him get down from the carriage slowly, and rather heavily, and he watched him for a few seconds before accosting him. Warren appeared to him old and broken-down, and even more feeble than he had expected to see him from his portrait. He wore a travelling suit of gray cloth, so loose and wide that it hung in folds on the gaunt and stooping figure; a large wide-awake hat was drawn down to his very eyes. The new-comer looked right and left, seeking no doubt to discover his friend; not seeing him, he turned his weary and languid steps towards the way out. Hermann then came forward. Warren recognized him at once; a sunny, youthful smile lighted up his countenance, and, evidently much moved, he stretched out his hand. An hour later, the two friends were seated opposite to each other before a well-spread table in Hermann’s comfortable apartments.

Warren ate very little; but, on the other hand, Hermann noticed with surprise and some anxiety that his friend, who had been formerly a model of sobriety, drank a good deal. Wine, however, seemed to have no effect on him. The pale face did not flush; there was the same cold, fixed look in the eye; and his speech, though slow and dull in tone, betrayed no embarrassment.

When the servant who had waited at dinner had taken away the dessert and brought in coffee, Hermann wheeled two big arm-chairs close to the fire, and said to his friend:

“Now, we will not be interrupted. Light a cigar, make yourself at home, and tell me all you have been doing since we parted.”

Warren pushed away the cigars. “If you do not mind,” said he, “I will smoke my pipe. I am used to it, and I prefer it to the best of cigars.”

So saying, he drew from its well-worn case an old pipe, whose color showed it had been long used, and filled it methodically with moist, blackish tobacco. Then he lighted it, and after sending forth one or two loud puffs of smoke, he said, with an air of sovereign satisfaction:

“A quiet, comfortable room—a friend—a good pipe after dinner—and no care for the morrow. That’s what I like.”

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Hermann cast a sidelong glance at his companion, and was painfully struck at his appearance. The tall gaunt frame in its stooping attitude; the grayish hair and sad, fixed look; the thin legs crossed one over the other; the elbow resting on the knee and supporting the chin,—in a word, the whole strange figure, as it sat there, bore no resemblance to Henry Warren, the friend of his youth. This man was a stranger, a mysterious being even. Nevertheless, the affection he felt for his friend was not impaired; on the contrary, pity entered into his heart. "How ill the world must have used him," thought Hermann, "to have thus disfigured him!" Then he said aloud:

"Now, then, let me have your story, unless you prefer to hear mine first."

He strove to speak lightly, but he felt that the effort was not successful. As to Warren, he went on smoking quietly, without saying a word. The long silence at last became painful. Hermann began to feel an uncomfortable sensation of distress in presence of the strange guest he had brought to his home. After a few minutes he ventured to ask for the third time, "Will you make up your mind to speak, or must I begin?"

Warren gave vent to a little noiseless laugh. "I am thinking how I can answer your question. The difficulty is that, to speak truly, I have absolutely nothing to tell. I wonder now—and it was that made me pause—how it has happened that, throughout my life, I have been bored by—nothing. As if it would not have been quite as natural, quite as easy, and far pleasanter, to have been amused by that same nothing—which has been my life. The fact is, my dear fellow, that I have had no deep sorrow to bear, neither have I been happy. I have not been extraordinarily successful, and have drawn none of the prizes of life. But I am well aware that, in this respect, my lot resembles that of thousands of other men. I have always been obliged to work. I have earned my bread by the sweat of my brow. I have had money difficulties; I have even had a hopeless passion—but what then? every one has had that. Besides, that was in bygone days; I have learned to bear it, and to forget. What pains and angers me is, to have to confess that my life has been spent without satisfaction and without happiness."

He paused an instant, and then resumed, more calmly: "A, few years ago I was foolish enough to believe that things might in the end turn out better. I was a professor with a very moderate salary at the school at Elmira. I taught all I knew, and much that I had to learn in order to be able to teach it—Greek and Latin, German and French, mathematics and physical sciences. During the so-called play-hours, I even gave music lessons. In the course of the whole day there were few moments of liberty for me. I was perpetually surrounded by a crowd of rough, ill-bred boys, whose only object during lessons was to catch me making a fault in English. When evening came, I was quite worn out; still, I could always find

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time to dream for half an hour or so with my eyes open before going to bed. Then all my desires were accomplished, and I was supremely happy. At last I had drawn a prize! I was successful in everything; I was rich, honored, powerful—what more can I say? I astonished the world—or rather, I astonished Ellen Gilmore, who for me was the whole world. Hermann, have you ever been as mad? Have you, too, in a waking dream, been in turn a statesman, a millionaire, the author of a sublime work, a victorious general, the head of a great political party? Have you dreamt nonsense such as that? I, who am here, have been all I say—in dreamland. Never mind; that was a good time. Ellen Gilmore, whom I have just mentioned, was the eldest sister of one of my pupils, Francis Gilmore, the most undisciplined boy of the school. His parents, nevertheless, insisted on his learning something; and as I had the reputation of possessing unwearying patience, I was selected to give him private lessons. That was how I obtained a footing in the Gilmore family. Later on, when they had found out that I was somewhat of a musician—you may remember, perhaps, that for an amateur I was a tolerable performer on the piano—I went every day to the house to teach Latin and Greek to Francis, and music to Ellen.

“Now, picture to yourself the situation, and then laugh at your friend as he has laughed at himself many a time. On the one side— the Gilmore side—a large fortune and no lack of pride; an intelligent, shrewd, and practical father; an ambitious and vain mother; an affectionate but spoilt boy; and a girl of nineteen, surpassingly lovely, with a cultivated mind and great good sense. On the other hand, you have Henry Warren, aged twenty-nine; in his dreams the author of a famous work, or the commander-in-chief of the Northern armies, or. it may be, President of the Republic—in reality, Professor at Elmira College, with a modest stipend of seventy dollars a month. Was it not evident that the absurdity of my position as a suitor for Ellen would strike me at once? Of course it did. In my lucid moments, when I was not dreaming, I was a very rational man, who had read a good deal, and learned not a little; and it would have been sheer madness in me to have indulged for an instant the hope of a marriage between Ellen and myself. I knew it was an utter impossibility—as impossible as to be elected President of the United States; and yet, in spite of myself, I dreamed of it. However, I must do myself the justice to add that my passion inconvenienced nobody. I would no more have spoken of it than of my imaginary command of the army of the Potomac. The pleasures which my love afforded me could give umbrage to no one. Yet I am convinced that Ellen read my secret. Not that she ever said a word to me on the subject; no look or syllable of hers could have made me suspect that she had guessed the state of my mind.

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“One single incident I remember which was not in accordance with her habitual reserve in this respect. I noticed one day that her eyes were red. Of course I dared not ask her why she had cried. During the lesson she seemed absent; and when leaving she said, without looking at me, ’I may perhaps be obliged to interrupt our lessons for some little time; I am very sorry. I wish you every happiness.’ Then, without raising her eyes, she quickly left the room. I was bewildered. What could her words mean? And why had they been said in such an affectionate tone?

“The next day Francis Gilmore called to inform me, with his father’s compliments, that he was to have four days’ holidays, because his sister had just been betrothed to Mr. Howard, a wealthy New York merchant, and that, for the occasion, there would be great festivities at home.

“Thenceforward there was an end of the dreams which up to that moment had made life pleasant. In sober reason I had no more cause to deplore Ellen’s marriage than to feel aggrieved because Grant had succeeded Johnson as President. Nevertheless, you can scarcely conceive how much this affair—I mean the marriage—grieved me. My absolute nothingness suddenly stared me in the face. I saw myself as I was—a mere schoolmaster, with no motive for pride in the past, or pleasure in the present, or hope in the future.”

Warren’s pipe had gone out while he was telling his story. He cleaned it out methodically, drew from his pocket a cake of Cavendish tobacco, and, after cutting off with a penknife the necessary quantity, refilled his pipe and lit it. The way in which he performed all these little operations betrayed long habit. He had ceased to speak while he was relighting his pipe, and kept on whistling between his teeth. Hermann looked on—silently. After a few minutes, and when the pipe was in good order, Warren resumed his story.

“For a few weeks I was terribly miserable; not so much because I had lost Ellen—a man cannot lose what he has never hoped to possess—as from the ruin of all my illusions. During those days I plucked and ate by the dozen of the fruits of the tree of self-knowledge, and I found them very bitter. I ended by leaving Elmira, to seek my fortunes elsewhere. I knew my trade well. Long practice had taught me how to make the best of my learning, and I never had any difficulty in finding employment. I taught successively in upwards of a dozen States of the Union. I can scarcely recollect the names of all the places where I have lived—Sacramento, Chicago, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Boston, New York; I have been everywhere— everywhere. And everywhere I have met with the same rude schoolboys, just as I have found the same regular and irregular verbs in Latin and Greek. If you would see a man thoroughly satiated and saturated with schoolboys and classical grammars, look at me.

“In the leisure time which, whatever might be my work, I still contrived to make for myself, I indulged in philosophical reflections. Then it was I took to the habit of smoking so much.”

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Warren stopped suddenly, and, looking straight before him, appeared plunged in thought. Then, passing his hand over his forehead, he repeated, in an absent manner, "Yes, of smoking so much. I also took to another habit," he added, somewhat hastily; "but that has nothing to do with my story. The theory which especially occupied my thoughts was that of the oscillations of an ideal instrument of my own imagining, to which, in my own mind, I gave the name of the Philosopher's Pendulum. To this invention I owe the quietude of mind which has supported me for many years, and which, as you see, I now enjoy. I said to myself that my great sorrow—if I may so call it without presumption—had arisen merely from my wish to be extraordinarily happy. When, in his dreams, a man has carried presumption so far as to attain to the heights of celebrity, or to being the husband of Ellen Gilmore, there was nothing wonderful if, on awaking, he sustained a heavy fall before reaching the depths of reality. Had I been less ambitious in my desires, their realization would have been easier, or, at any rate, the disappointment would have been less bitter. Starting from this principle, I arrived at the logical conclusion that the best means to avoid being unhappy is to wish for as little happiness as possible. This truth was discovered by my philosophical forefathers many centuries before the birth of Christ, and I lay no claim to being the finder of it; but the outward symbol which I ended by giving to this idea is—at least I fancy it is—of my invention.

"Give me a sheet of paper and a pencil," he added, turning to his friend, "and with a few lines I can demonstrate clearly the whole thing."

Hermann handed him what he wanted without a word. Warren then began gravely to draw a large semicircle, open at the top, and above the semicircular line a pendulum, which fell perpendicularly and touched the circumference at the exact point where on the dial of a clock would be inscribed the figure VI. This done, he wrote on the right-hand side of the pendulum, beginning from the bottom and at the places of the hours V, IV, III, the words Moderate Desires—Great Hopes, Ambition—Unbridled Passion, Mania of Greatness. Then, turning the paper upside-down, he wrote on the opposite side, where on a dial would be marked VII, VIII, IX, the words Slight Troubles— Deep Sorrow, Disappointment—Despair. Lastly, in the place of No. VI, just where the pendulum fell, he sketched a large black spot, which he shaded off with great care, and above which he wrote, like a scroll, Dead Stop, Absolute Repose.

Having finished this little drawing, Warren laid down his pipe, inclined his head on one side, and raising his eyebrows, examined his work with a critical frown. "This compass is not yet quite complete," he said; "there is something missing. Between Dead Stop and Moderate Desires on the right, and Slight Troubles on the left, there is the beautiful line of Calm and Rational Indifference. However, such as the drawing is, it is sufficient to demonstrate my theory. Do you follow me?"

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Hermann nodded affirmatively. He was greatly pained. In lieu of the friend of his youth, for whom he had hoped a brilliant future, here was a poor monomaniac!

“You see,” said Warren, speaking collectedly, like a professor, “if I raise my pendulum till it reaches the point of Moderate Desires and then let it go, it will naturally swing to the point of Slight Troubles, and go no further. Then it will oscillate for some time in a more and more limited space on the line of Indifference, and finally it will stand still without any jerk on Dead Stop, Absolute Repose. That is a great consolation!”

He paused, as if waiting for some remark from Hermann; but as the latter remained silent, Warren resumed his demonstration.

“You understand now, I suppose, what I am coming to. If I raise the pendulum to the point of Ambition or Mania of Greatness, and then let it go, that same law which I have already applied will drive it to Deep Sorrow or Despair. That is quite clear, is it not?”

“Quite clear,” repeated Hermann sadly.

“Very well,” continued Warren, with perfect gravity; “for my misfortune, I discovered this fine theory rather late. I had not set bounds to my dreams and limited them to trifles. I had wished to be President of the Republic, an illustrious savant, the husband of Ellen. No great things, eh? What say you to my modesty? I had raised the pendulum to such a giddy height that when it slipped from my impotent hands it naturally performed a long oscillation, and touched the point Despair. That was a miserable time. I hope you have never suffered what I suffered then. I lived in a perpetual nightmare—like the stupor at intoxication.” He paused, as he had done before, and then, with a painfully nervous laugh, be added, “Yes, like intoxication. I drank.” Suddenly a spasm seemed to pass over his face, be looked serious and sad as before, and he said, with a shudder, “It’s a terrible thing to see one’s self inwardly, and to know that one is fallen.”

After this he remained long silent. At last, raising his head, he turned to his friend and said, “Have you had enough of my story, or would you like to hear it to the end?”

“I am grieved at all you have told me,” said Hermann; “but pray go on; it is better I should know all”

“Yes; and I feel, too, that it relieves me to pour out my heart. Well, I used to drink. One takes to the horrid habit in America far easier than anywhere else. I was obliged to give up more than one good situation because I had ceased to be *respectable*. Anyhow, I always managed to find employment without any great difficulty. I never suffered from want, though I have never known plenty. If I spent too much in drink, I took it out of my dress and my boots.

“Eighteen months after I had left Elmira, I met Ellen one day in Central Park, in New York. I was aware that she had been married a twelve-month. She knew me again at once, and spoke to me. I would have wished to sink into the earth. I knew that my clothes were shabby, that I looked poor, and I fancied that she must discern on my face the traces of the bad habits I had contracted. But she did not, or would not, see anything. She held out her hand, and said in her gentle voice:

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“‘I am very glad to see you again, Mr. Warren. I have inquired about you, but neither my father nor Francis could tell me what had become of you. I want to ask you to resume the lessons you used to give me. Perhaps you do not know where I live? This is my address,’ and she gave me her card.

“I stammered out a few unmeaning words in reply to her invitation. She looked at me, smiling kindly the while; but suddenly the smile vanished, and she added, ’Have you been ill, Mr. Warren? You seem worn.’

“‘Yes,’ I answered, too glad to find an excuse for my appearance— ‘yes, I have been ill, and I am still suffering.’

“‘I am very sorry,’ she said, in a low voice.

“Laugh at me, Hermann—call me an incorrigible madman; but believe me when I say that her looks conveyed to me the impression of more than common interest or civility. A thrilling sense of pain shot through my frame. What had I done that I should be so cruelly tried? A mist passed before my eyes; anxiety, intemperance, sleeplessness, had made me weak. I tottered backwards a few steps. She turned horribly pale. All around us was the crowd—the careless, indifferent crowd.

“‘Come and see me soon,’ she added hastily, and left me. I saw her get into a carriage, which she had doubtless quitted to take a walk; and when she drove past, she put her head out and looked at me with her eyes wide open—there was an almost wildly anxious expression in them.

“I went home. My way led me past her house—it was a palace. I shut myself up in my wretched hotel-room, and once more I fell to dreaming. Ellen loved me; she admired me; she was not for ever lost to me! The pendulum was swinging, you see, up as high as Madness. Explain to me, if you can, how it happens that a being perfectly rational in ordinary life should at certain seasons, and, so to speak, voluntarily, be bereft of reason. To excuse and explain my temporary insanity, I am ready to admit that the excitement to which I gave way may have been a symptom of the nervous malady which laid hold of me a few days later, and stretched me for weeks upon a bed of pain.

“As I became convalescent, reason and composure returned. But it was too late. In the space of two months, twenty years had passed over my head. When I rose from my sick-bed I was as feeble and as broken-down as you see me now. My past had been cheerless and dim, without one ray of happiness; yet that past was all my life! Henceforward there was nothing left for me to undertake, to regret, or to desire. The pendulum swung idly backwards and forwards on the line of Indifference. I wonder what are the feelings of successful men—of men who *have* been victorious generals, prime ministers, celebrated authors, and that sort of tiling! Upheld by a legitimate pride, do they retire satisfied from the lists when evening conies, or do they lay down their

arms as I did, disappointed and dejected, and worn out with the fierce struggle? Can no man with impunity look into his own heart and ask himself how his life has been spent?”

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Here Warren made a still longer pause than before, and appeared absorbed in gloomy thought. At last he resumed in a lower tone:

“I had not followed up Ellen’s invitation. But in some way she had discovered my address, and knew of my illness. Do not be alarmed, my dear Hermann; my story will not become romantic. No heavenly vision appeared to me during my fever; I felt no gentle white hands laid on my burning brow. I was nursed at the hospital, and very well nursed too; I figured there as ‘Number 380,’ and the whole affair was, as you see, as prosaic as possible. But on quitting the hospital, and as I was taking leave of the manager, he handed me a letter, in which was enclosed a note for five hundred dollars. In the envelope there was also the following anonymous note:

“’An old friend begs your acceptance, as a loan, of the inclosed sum. It will be time enough to think of paying off this debt when you are strong enough to resume work, and you can then do it by instalments, of which you can yourself fix the amount, and remit them to the hospital of New York.’

“It was well meant, no doubt, but it caused me a painful impression. My determination was taken at once. I refused without hesitation. I asked the manager, who had been watching me with a friendly smile while I read the letter, whether he could give the name of the person who had sent it. In spite of his repeated assurances that he did not know it, I never doubted for a single instant that he was concealing the truth. After a few seconds’ reflection I asked if he would undertake to forward an answer to my unknown correspondent; and, on his consenting to do so, I promised that he should have my answer the next day.

“I thought long over my letter. One thing was plain to me—it was Ellen who had come to my help. How could I reject her generous aid without wounding her or appearing ungrateful? After great hesitation I wrote a few lines, which, as far as I can recollect, ran thus:

“’I thank you for the interest you have shown me, but it is impossible for me to accept the sum you place at my disposal. Do not be angry with me because I return it. Do not withdraw your sympathy; I will strive to remain worthy of it, and will never forget your goodness.’

“A few days later, after having confided this letter to the manager, I left New York for San Francisco. For several years I heard nothing of Ellen; her image grew gradually fainter, and at last almost disappeared from my memory.

“The dark river that bore the frail bark which carried me and my fortunes was carrying me smoothly and unconsciously along towards the mysterious abyss where all that exists is engulfed. Its course lay through a vast desert; and the banks which passed before my eyes were of fearful sameness. Indescribable lassitude took possession of

my whole being. I had never, knowingly, practised evil; I had loved and sought after good. Why, then, was I so wretched? I would have blessed the rock which wrecked my bark so that I might have been swallowed up and have gone down to my eternal rest. Up to the day when I heard of Ellen's betrothal, I had hoped that the morrow would bring happiness. The long-wished-for morrow had come at last, gloomy and colorless, without realizing any of my vague hopes. Henceforth my life was at an end."

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Warren said these last words so indistinctly that Hermann could scarcely hear them; he seemed to be speaking to himself rather than to his friend. Then he raised the forefinger of his right hand, and after moving it slowly from right to left, in imitation of the swing of a pendulum, he placed it on the large black dot he had drawn on the sheet of paper exactly below his pendulum, and said, “Dead Stop, Absolute Repose. Would that the end were come!”

Another and still longer interval of silence succeeded, and at last Hermann felt constrained to speak.

“How came you to make up your mind,” he said, “to return to Europe?”

“Ah, yes, to be sure,” answered Warren, hurriedly; “the story—the foolish story—is not ended. In truth it has no end, as it had no beginning; it is a thing without form or purpose, and less the history of a life than of a mere journeying towards death. Still I will finish—following chronological order. It does not weary you?”

“No, no; go on, my dear friend.”

“Very well. I spent several years in the United States. The pendulum worked well. It came and went, to and fro, slowly along the line of Indifference, without ever transgressing as its extreme limits on either hand, Moderate Desires and Slight Troubles. I led obscurely a contemplative life, and I was generally considered a queer character. I fulfilled my duties, and took little heed of any one. Whenever I had an hour at my disposal, I sought solitude in the neighboring woods, far from the town and from mankind. I used to lie down under the big trees. Every season in turn, spring and summer, autumn and winter, had its peculiar charm for me. My heart, so full of bitterness, felt lightened as soon as I listened to the rustling of the foliage overhead. The forest! There is nothing finer in all creation. A deep calm seemed to settle down upon me. I was growing old. I was forgetting. It was about this time that, in consequence of my complete indifference to all surroundings, I acquired the habit of answering ‘Very well’ to everything that was said. The words came so naturally that I was not aware of my continual use of them, until one day one of my fellow-teachers happened to tell me that masters and pupils alike had given me the nickname of ’Very well.’ Is it not odd that one who has never succeeded in anything should be known as ‘Very well’?

“I have only one other little adventure to relate, and I will have told all. Then I can listen to your story.

“Last year, my journeyings brought me to the neighborhood of Elmira. It was holiday-time. I had nothing to do, and I had in my purse a hundred hardly earned dollars, or thereabout. The wish seized me to revisit the scene of my joys and my sorrows. I had not set foot in the place for more than seven years. I was so changed that nobody

could know me again; nor would I have cared much if they had. After visiting the town and looking at my old school,

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and the house where Ellen had lived, I bent my steps towards the park, which is situated in the environs—a place where I used often to walk in company of my youthful dreams. It was September, and evening was closing in. The oblique rays of the setting sun sent a reddish gleam the leafy branches of the old oaks. I seated on a bench beneath a tree on one side of the path. As I drew near I recognized Ellen. I remained rooted to the spot where I stood, not daring to move a step. She was stooping forward with her head bent down, while with the end of her parasol she traced lines upon the gravel. She had not seen me. I turned back instantly, and retired without making any noise. When I had gone a little distance, I left the path and struck into the wood. Once there, I looked back cautiously. Ellen was still at the same place and in the same attitude. Heaven knows what thoughts passed through my brain! I longed to see her closer. What danger was there? I was sure she would not know me again. I walked towards her with the careless step of a casual passer-by, and in a few minutes passed before her. When my shadow fell on the path, she looked up. and our eyes met. My heart was beating fast. Her look was cold and indifferent; but suddenly a strange light shot into her eyes, and she made a quick movement, as if to rise. I saw no more, and went on without turning round. Before I could get out of the park her carriage drove past me, and I saw her once more as I had seen her five years before in Central Park, pale, with distended eyes, and her anxious looks fixed upon me. Why did I not bow to her? I cannot say; my courage failed me. I saw the light die out of her eyes. I almost fancied that I saw her heave a sigh of relief as she threw herself back carelessly in the carriage; and she disappeared. I was then thirty-six, and I am almost ashamed to relate the schoolboy's trick of which I was guilty. I sent her the following lines: 'A devoted friend, whom you obliged in former days, and who met you yesterday in the park without your recognizing him, sends you his remembrances.' I posted this letter a few minutes before getting into the train which was to take me to New York; and, as I did so, my heart beat as violently as though I had performed a heroic deed. Great adventures, forsooth! And to think that my life presents none more striking, and that trifles such as these are the only food for my memory!

"A twelvemonth later I met Francis Gilmore in Broadway. The world is small—so small that it is really difficult to keep out of the way of people one has once known. The likeness of my former pupil to his sister struck me, and I spoke to him. He looked at me at first with a puzzled expression, but after a few moments of hesitation he recognized me, a bright smile lighted up his pleasant face, and he shook hands warmly.

"'Mr. Warren,' he exclaimed, 'how glad I am to see you! Ellen and I have often talked of you, and wondered what could have become of you. Why did we never hear from you?'

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“‘I did not suppose it would interest you.’ I spoke timidly; and yet I owed nothing to the young fellow, and wanted nothing of him.

“‘You wrong us by saying that,’ replied Francis; ’do you think me ungrateful? Do you fancy I have forgotten our pleasant walks in former days, and the long conversations we used to have? You alone ever taught me anything, and it is to you I owe the principles that have guided me through life. Many a day I have thought of you, and regretted you sincerely. As regards Ellen, no one has ever filled your place with her; she plays to this day the same pieces of music you taught her, and follows all your directions with a fidelity that would touch you.’

“‘How are your father and mother, and how is your sister?’ I inquired, feeling more deeply moved than I can express.

“’My poor mother died three years ago. It is Ellen who keeps house now.’

“‘Your brother-in-law lives with you, then?’

“‘My brother-in-law!’ replied Francis, with surprise; ’did you not know that he was on board the Atlantic, which was lost last year in the passage from Liverpool to New York?’

“I could find no words to reply.

“‘As to that,’ added Francis, with great composure—’between you and me, he was no great loss. My dear brother-in-law was not by any means what my father fancied he was when he gave him my sister as a wife. The whole family has often regretted the marriage. Ellen lived apart from her husband for many years before his death.’

“I nodded so as to express my interest in his communications, but I could not for worlds have uttered a syllable.

“‘You will come and see us soon, I hope,’ added Francis, without noticing my emotion. ’We are still at the same place; but to make sure, here is my card. Come, Mr. Warren —name your own day to come and dine with us. I promise you a hearty welcome.’

“I got off by promising to write the next day, and we parted.

“Fortunately my mind had lost its former liveliness. The pendulum, far from being urged to unruly motion, continued to swing slowly in the narrow space where it had oscillated for so many years. I said to myself that to renew my intimacy with the Gilmores would be to run the almost certain risk of reviving the sorrows and the disappointments of the past. I was then calm and rational. It would be madness in me, I felt, to aspire to the hand of a young, wealthy, and much admired widow. To venture to see Ellen again was to incur the risk of seeing my reason once more wrecked, and the fatal chimera which had been the source of all my misery start into life again. If we are to believe what

poets say, love ennobles man and exalts him into a demigod. It may be so, but it turns him likewise into a fool and a madman. That was my case. At any cost I was to guard against that fatal passion. I argued seriously with myself, and I determined to let the past be, and to reject every opportunity of bringing it to life again.

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“A few days before my meeting with Francis, I had received tidings of the death of an old relative, whom I scarcely knew. In my childhood I had, on one or two occasions, spent my holidays at his house. He was gloomy and taciturn, but nevertheless he had always welcomed me kindly. I have a vague remembrance of having been told that he had been in love with my mother once upon a time, and that on hearing of her marriage he had retired into the solitude which he never left till the day of his death. Be that as it may, I had not lost my place in his affections, it seems: he had continued to feel an interest in me; and on his deathbed he had remembered me, and left me the greater part of his not very considerable fortune. I inherited little money; but there was a small, comfortably-furnished country-house, and an adjoining farm let on a long lease for two hundred and forty pounds per annum. This was wealth for me, and more than enough to satisfy all my wants. Since I had heard of this legacy I had been doubtful as to my movements. My chance meeting with Francis settled the matter. I resolved at once to leave America, and to return to live in my native country. I knew your address, and wrote to you at once. I trusted that the sight of my old and only friend would console me for the disappointments that life has inflicted on me—and I have not been deceived. At last I have been able to open my heart to a fellow-creature, and relieve myself of the heavy burden which I have borne alone ever since our separation. Now I feel lighter. You are not a severe judge. Doubtless you deplore my weakness, but you do not condemn me. If, as I have already said, I have done no good, neither have I committed any wicked action. I have been a nonentity—an utterly useless being; ‘one too many,’ like the sad hero of Tourgueneff’s sad story. Before leaving, I wrote to Francis informing him that the death of a relative obliged me to return to Europe, and giving him your address, so as not to seem to be running away from him. Then I went on board, and at last reached your home. Dixi!”

Warren, who during this long story had taken care to keep his pipe alight, and had, moreover, nearly drained the bottle of port placed before him, now declared himself ready to listen to his friend’s confession. But Hermann had been saddened by all he had heard, and was in no humor for talking. He remarked that it was getting late, and proposed to postpone any further conversation till the morrow.

Warren merely answered, “Very well,” knocked the ashes out of his pipe, shared out the remainder of the wine between his host and himself, and, raising his glass, said, in a somewhat solemn tone, “To our youth, Hermann!” After emptying his glass at one draught, be replaced it on the table, and said complacently, “It is long since I have drunk with so much pleasure; for this time I have not drunk to forgetfulness, but to memory.”

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Warren spent another week in Leipzig with his friend. No man was easier to live with: to every suggestion of Hermann's he invariably answered, "Very well;" and if Hermann proposed nothing, he was quite content to remain seated in a comfortable arm-chair by the fireside, holding a book which he scarcely looked at, and watching the long rolls of smoke from his pipe. He disliked new acquaintances; nevertheless, the friends to whom Hermann introduced him found in him a quiet, unobtrusive, and well-informed companion. He pleased everybody. There was something strange and yet attractive in his person; there was a "charm" about him, people said. Hermann felt the attraction without being able to define in what it consisted. Their former friendship had been renewed unreservedly. The kind of fascination that Warren exercised over all those who approached him often led Hermann to think that it was not unlikely that in his youth he had inspired a real love in Ellen Gilmore.

One evening Hermann took his friend to the theatre, where a comic piece was being performed. In his young days Warren had been very partial to plays of that kind, and his joyous peals of laughter on such occasions still rang in the ears of his friend. But the attempt was a complete failure. Warren watched the performance without showing the slightest interest, and never even smiled. During the opening scenes he listened with attention, as though he were assisting at some performance of the legitimate drama; then, as if he could not understand what was going on before his eyes, he turned away with a wearied air and began looking at the audience. When, at the close of the second act, Hermann proposed that they should leave the house, he answered readily:

"Yes, let us go; all this seems very stupid—we will be much better at home. There is a time for all things, and buffoonery suits me no longer."

There was nothing left in Warren of the friend that Hermann had known fifteen years before. He loved him none the less; on the contrary, to his affection for him had been superadded a feeling of deep compassion. He would have made great sacrifices to secure his friend's happiness, and to see a smile light up the immovable features and the sorrowful dulness of the eye. His friendly anxiety had not been lost upon Warren; and when the latter took his leave, he said with emotion:

"You wish me well, my old friend, I see it and feel it; and, believe me, I am grateful. We must not lose sight of each other again—I will write regularly."

A few days later, Hermann received a letter for his friend. It was an American letter, and the envelope was stamped with the initials "E. H." They were those of Ellen Howard, the heroine of Warren's sad history. He forwarded the letter immediately, and wrote at the same time to his friend: "I hope the inclosed brings you good news from America." But in his reply Warren took no notice of this passage, and made no allusion to Ellen. He only spoke of the new house in which he had just settled himself—"to end," as he said, "his days;" and he pressed Hermann to come and join him. The two friends at last

agreed to pass Christmas and New Year’s Day together; but when December came, Warren urged his friend to hasten his arrival.

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“I do not feel well,” he wrote, “and am often so weary that I stay at home all day. I have made no new acquaintances, and, most likely, will make none. I am alone. Your society would give me great pleasure. Come; your room is ready, and will be, I trust, to your liking. There is a large writing table and tolerably well-filled book-shelves; you can write there quite at your ease, without fear of disturbance. Come as soon as possible, my dear friend. I am expecting you impatiently.”

Hermann happened to be at leisure, and was able to comply with his friend’s wish, and to go to him in the first week of December. He found Warren looking worn and depressed. It was in vain he sought to induce him to consult a physician. Warren would reply:

“Doctors can do nothing for my complaint. I know where the shoe pinches. A physician would order me probably to seek relaxation and amusement, just as he would advise a poor devil whose blood is impoverished by bad food to strengthen himself with a generous diet and good wine. The poor man could not afford to get the good living, and I do not know what could enliven or divert me. Travel? I like nothing so well as sitting quietly in my arm-chair. New faces? They would not interest me—yours is the only company I prefer to solitude. Books? I am too old to take pleasure in learning new things, and what I have learned has ceased to interest me. It is not always easy to get what might do one good, and we must take things as they are.”

Hermann noticed, as before, that his friend ate little, but that, on the other hand, he drank a great deal. The sincere friendship he felt for him emboldened him to make a remark on the subject.

“It is true,” said Warren, “I drink too much; but what can I do? Food is distasteful to me, and I must keep up my strength somehow. I am in a wretched state; my health is ruined.”

One evening, as the two friends were seated together in Warren’s room, while the wind and sleet were beating against the window-panes, the invalid began of his own accord to speak about Ellen.

“We now correspond regularly,” he said. “She tells me in her last letter that she hopes soon to see me. Do you know, Hermann, that she is becoming an enigma for me? It is very evident that she does not treat me like other people, and I often wonder and ask myself what I am in her eyes? What does she feel towards me? Love? That is inadmissible. Pity, perhaps? This then, is the end of my grand dreams—to be an object of pity? I have just answered her letter to say that I am settled here with the fixed intention of ending my useless existence in quiet and idleness. Do you remember a scene in Henry Heine’s ‘Reisebilder,’ when a young student kisses a pretty girl, who lets him have his own way and makes no great resistance, because he has told her, ’I will

be gone to-morrow at dawn, and I will never see you again'? The certainty of never seeing a person again gives

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a man the courage to say things that otherwise he would have kept hidden in the most secret depths of his being. I feel that my life is drawing to a close. Do not say no, my dear friend; my presentiments are certain. I have written it to Ellen. I have told her other things besides. What folly! All I have ever done has been folly or chimera. I end my life logically, in strict accordance with my whole Past, by making my first avowal of love on my deathbed. Is not that as useless a thing as can be?"

Hermann would have wished to know some particulars about this letter; but Warren replied, somewhat vaguely, "If I had a copy of my letter, I would show it to you willingly. You know my whole story, and I would not be ashamed to lay before you my last act of folly. I wrote about a fortnight ago, when I felt sure that death was drawing near. I was in a fever, not from fear—Death gains but little by taking my life—but from a singular species of excitement. I do not remember what were the words I used. Who knows? Perhaps this last product of my brain may have been quite a poetical performance. Never mind! I do not repent of what I have done; I am glad that Ellen should know at last that I have loved her silently and hopelessly. If that is not disinterested, what is?" he added with a bitter smile.

Christmas went by sadly. Warren was now so weak that he could scarcely leave his bed for two or three hours each day. Hermann had taken upon himself to send for a doctor, but this latter had scarcely known what to prescribe. Warren was suffering from no special malady; he was dying of exhaustion. Now and then, during a few moments, which became daily more rare and more brief, his vivacity would return; but the shadow of Death was already darkening his mind.

On New Year's Eve he got up very late. "We will welcome in the New Year," he said to Hermann. "I hope it may bring you happiness; I know it will bring me rest." A few minutes before midnight he opened the piano, and played with solemnity, and as if it had been a chorale, a song of Schumann's, entitled "To the Drinking-cup of a Departed Friend." Then, on the first stroke of midnight, he filled two glasses with some old Rhenish wine, and raised his own glass slowly. He was very pale, and his eyes were shining with feverish light. He was in a state of strange and fearful excitement. He looked at the glass which he held, and repeated deliberately a verse of the song which he had just been playing. "The vulgar cannot understand what I see at the bottom of this cup." Then, at one draught, he drained the full glass.

While he was thus speaking and drinking, he had taken no notice of Hermann, who was watching him with consternation. Recovering himself at length, he exclaimed, "Another glass, Hermann! To friendship!" He drained this second glass, like the first, to the very last drop; and then, exhausted by the effort he had made, he sank heavily on a chair. Soon after, Hermann led him, like a sleepy child, to his bed.

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During the days that followed, he was unable to leave his room; and the doctor thought it right to warn Hermann that all the symptoms seemed to point to a fatal issue.

On the 8th of January a servant from the hotel in the little neighboring town brought a letter, which, he said, required an immediate answer. The sick man was then lying almost unconscious. Hermann broke the seal without hesitation, and read as follows:

"*My dear friend*,—A visit to Europe which my father had long planned has at last been undertaken. I did not mention it to you, in order to have the pleasure of surprising you. On reaching this place, I learn that the illness of which you spoke in your last letter has not yet left you. Under these circumstances, I will not venture to present myself without warning you of my arrival, and making sure that you are able to receive me. I am here with my brother, who, like myself, would not come so near to you without seeing you. My father has gone on to Paris, where Francis and I will join him in a few days. *Ellen*."

Hermann, after one instant's thought, took up his hat and dismissed the messenger, saying he would give the answer himself. At the hotel he sent in his card, with the words, "From Mr. Warren," and was immediately ushered into Ellen's presence.

She was alone. Hermann examined her rapidly. He saw an extremely beautiful woman, whose frank and fearless eyes were fixed on him with a questioning look.

Hermann had not frequented the society of women much, and was usually rather embarrassed in their presence. But on this occasion he thought only of his friend, and found no difficulty in explaining the motive of his visit. He told her his friend was ill—-very ill— dying—and that he had opened the letter addressed to Warren. Ellen did not answer for some time; she seemed not to have understood what she had heard. After a while her eyes filled with tears, and she asked whether she could see Mr. Warren. On Hermann answering in the affirmative, she further inquired whether her brother might accompany her.

"Two visitors might fatigue the invalid too much," said Hermann; "your brother may come later."

"Are you not afraid that my visit may tire him?"

"I do not think so; it will make him very happy."

Ellen only took a few minutes to put on her hat and cloak, and they started. The short journey was accomplished in silence. When they reached the house, Hermann went in first to see how the dying man was. He was lying in his bed, in the delirium of fever, muttering incoherent sentences. Nevertheless he recognized Hermann, and asked for something to drink. After having allayed his thirst, he closed his eyes, as if to sleep.

"I have brought you a friend," said Hermann; "will you see him?"

“Hermann? He is always welcome.”

“No; it is a friend from America.”

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“From America?...I lived there many years...How desolate and monotonous were the shores I visited!...”

“Will you see your friend?”

“I am carried away by the current of the river. In the distance I see dark and shadowy forms; there are hills full of shade and coolness...but I will never rest there.”

Hermann retired noiselessly, and returned almost immediately with Ellen.

Warren, who had taken no notice of him, continued to follow the course of his wandering thoughts.

“The river is drawing near to the sea. Already I can hear the roar of the waves...The banks are beginning to be clothed with verdure...The hills are drawing nearer....It is dark now. Here are the big trees beneath which I have dreamed so often. A radiant apparition shines through their foliage....It comes towards me... Ellen!”

She was standing beside the bed. The dying man saw her, and without showing the least surprise, said with a smile, “Thank God! you have come in time. I knew you were coming.”

He murmured a few unintelligible words, and then remained silent for a long while. His eyes were wide open. Suddenly he cried, “Hermann!”

Hermann came and stood beside Ellen.

“The pendulum...You know what I mean?” A frank childish smile—the smile of his student days—lighted up his pallid face. He raised his right hand, and tracing in the air with his forefinger a wide semicircle, to imitate the oscillation of a pendulum, he said, “Then.” He then figured in the same manner a more limited and slower movement, and after repeating it several times, said, “Now.” Lastly, he pointed straight before him with a motionless and almost menacing finger, and said with a weak voice, “Soon.”

He spoke no more, and closed his eyes. The breathing was becoming very difficult.

Ellen bent, over him, and called him softly, “Henry, Henry!” He opened his eyes. She brought her mouth close to his ear, and said, with a sob, “I have always loved you.”

“I knew it from the first,” he said, quietly and with confidence.

A gentle expression stole over his countenance, and life seemed to return. Once more he had the confident look of youth. A sad and beautiful smile played on his lips; he took the hand of Ellen in his, and kissed it gently.

“How do you feel now?” inquired Hermann.

The old answer, “Very well.”

His hands were plucking at the bedclothes, as if he strove to cover his face with them. Then his arms stiffened and the fingers remained motionless.

“Very well,” he repeated.

He appeared to fall into deep thought. There was a long pause. At last he turned a dying look, fraught with tender pity and sadness, towards Ellen, and in a low voice, which was scarcely audible, he said these two words, with a slight emphasis on the first — “*Perfectly* well.”

THE BOOKBINDER OF HORT

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BY

LEOPOLD VON SACHER-MASOCH

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Looking abroad from the table-land of Esced, over the Hungarian plain that stretches from the foot of Mount Matra to Szolnok, and finally merges into the horizon where the silver thread of the Theiss winds its way, the eye is attracted by a smiling section of country whose vineyards and cornfields gleam brightly in the sun. This fair spot is neither a park nor grove nor pleasant woodland, but the imposing village of Hort, its pretty white houses half concealed by a wealth of trees and shrubbery.

In this village lived a Jewish bookbinder, Simcha Kalimann, a wit and bel esprit, the oracle of the entire province, the living chronicle of his times and people.

Reviewing in reverie the procession of events in his own life, Kalimann could see, as in a mirror, the phases through which his co-religionists in Hungary had passed in their efforts toward liberty. He had lived during that dark period when the Jew dared claim no rights among his fellow-countrymen. He had suffered evil, he had endured disgrace, and the storehouse of his memory held many a tragi-comic picture of the days that were no more. But he had also lived in times when the spirit of tolerance took possession of men’s minds, and he had been swept along on that tidal movement inaugurated by Count Szechenyi, the greatest of Hungarians, through his celebrated book, “Light.”

The revolution of 1848 brought about the new Hungarian Constitution, and put an end to feudal government. Light penetrated into the darksome streets of the Ghetto, and through the windows opened to receive the Messiah, a saviour entered proclaiming liberty and equality to the downtrodden and oppressed.

Crushed and forsaken, as all Israel was, it gratefully responded to this message of universal brotherhood.

The Hungarian Jew had found a country, and from that moment he had thrown aside his native timidity, and found the strength to display his patriotism with an ardor and enthusiasm worthy of the cause. Thousands quitted the Ghettos, and gathered around the tricolored flag. Among the warm-hearted soldiers was Simcha Kalimann. He followed Kossuth as a simple honved (volunteer), and fought at Kapolna, Vaitzen, and Temesvar.

High hopes and golden dreams were succeeded by despondency and disillusion; then supervened years of impatient waiting,—a standing with folded arms when so much

remained to be done, a time of despair, of restless suffering. But the Jew had acquired his franchise, and gratefully he remembered those to whom he owed this priceless blessing.

When the Austro-Hungarian Convention gave Hungary her king and constitution, the hearts of the people of the Ghetto beat high. This time, however, liberty did not make her entry with clang of arms and beat of drum,—peace and reconciliation were her handmaidens, and progress followed in her footsteps.

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It was at this epoch in Hungary's history that Israelites began to speak the language of the country, and to accept Hungarian names. To her credit be it said that no such shameful sale was made as disgraced the time of Joseph II., when surnames were sold, according to their attractiveness or desirability, to the highest bidder.

Consequently, as a high-sounding name cost no more than a simple one, Kalimann chose the most imposing he could find, and, his country's hero in mind, called himself Sandor Hunyadi. This historic title revived, as it were, his latent patriotism, and, digging his gun and cartridge-box from their hiding-place in the garden where he had carefully buried them after the capitulation of Vilagos, he proudly hung these trophies of his prowess over his bed, and rejoiced in the memories of his martial exploits.

Liberty and religious peace held equal sway. Reciprocal kindliness and toleration spread light where darkness had been, and scattered the shadows of prejudice.

Hunyadi, or Kalimann, was regarded in Hort as a freethinker. This was scarcely just; he was pious, and strictly discharged his religious observances, emancipating himself at the same time from those distinctions in dress and customs which he deemed neither in accordance with Mosaic law nor with his ideas of progress.

He followed the observance of wearing his hat while at synagogue, but during no other religious ceremony; troubled himself but little regarding the dietary laws; dressed as his Christian neighbor did; and strictly prohibited any superstitious practices in his house. He even permitted his wife to let her hair grow,—a bold innovation.

His appearance was by no means suggestive of the hero. Short, thin, and insignificant-looking, with hair that frizzled beyond all thought of disentanglement, a tanned and freckled skin, flaxen moustache, and gray eyes that blinked continuously, Kalimann had truly no cause for vanity. Besides, he was excessively near-sighted, and as his large spectacles were taken from their red case only when he read or worked, it not unfrequently happened that when he took his walk abroad he would mistake a tall post for the chief magistrate of the county, and salute it with his most respectful bow; or, with a composure born of self-complacency, it would be his misfortune to pass by Madame Barkany, his best customer, with a vacant stare, under the impression that the fair apparition was linen hung to bleach in the sun.

Kalimann worked alone with a little apprentice named Hersch, whom he had indentured far more from charity than necessity, since the worthy bookbinder felt within him that love for his art which would have enabled him to bind the entire literature of Europe with no greater aid than his good right arm. He was a conscientious, faithful workman, and, as a rule, his entire days were spent in his shop; when necessity demanded he would toil on late into the night by the light of a tallow candle, or an ill-smelling lamp.

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His work was his pride; reading his delight. If a single dark spot clouded the surface of this simple honest life, that shadow fell from the portly form of Mrs. Rachel Kalimann, or Rose Hunyadi, as it was that lady's pleasure now to be called. It would be unjust, however, to the handsome woman, whose buxom proportions served, as it were, to give weight to the establishment, to say that her faults were of a serious nature; she was, at the most, insensible to her husband's intellectual aspirations, which she termed, with more vigor than the occasion demanded, "stuff and nonsense."

Quotations from the Talmud and the Scriptures were equally impotent to quell the torrent of the worthy woman's eloquence when she felt that the occasion demanded her timely interference; in vain Kalimann supported his side of the question by citing from the book of Job: "The gold and the crystal cannot equal it, and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold. No mention shall be made of coral or of pearls; for the price of wisdom is above rubies." [Footnote: See Job xxviii. 17, 18.]

Rose would retort curtly: "What can I buy with your wisdom? Will it give me wherewith to eat and to drink, and to clothe myself? No! Very well then, what is the good of it?"

The learned bookbinder would, as a rule, sigh and silently abandon the argument when it had reached this stage, but at times his composure would break down under the strain imposed on it. Disputes and quarrels would ensue, but in the end Kalimann would capitulate, his conjugal love overcoming his anger and resentment.

Occasionally, however, he would endeavor to escape his wife's vigilance, and take refuge in a remote corner with one of his treasured volumes. On one of these "secret" evenings she surprised him in the poultry house, at his side a small lantern shedding a doubtful light upon a fine edition of "Hamlet" on his lap. Rose read him a long lecture, and commanded him to retire at once. The good man obeyed, but carried "Hamlet" to bed with him, turning once more to his Shakespeare for refreshment and sweet content. He had scarcely read half a page, when his spouse rose in all her majesty and blew out the candle.

Kalimann was desperate, and yet resistance would have been unwise. Sadly resigned, he turned his head upon the pillow, and soon snored in unison with Hersch. A half-hour of profound silence, then the culprit rose, and making sure that his wife was sleeping the sleep of the just, he cautiously took his book and spectacles, glided out of doors, and sitting upon the old moss-grown bench in front of the house, continued the tragedy of the Danish prince by the light of the moon.

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Yes, he loved his books with passion and tenderness; but not having means wherewith to buy them, he read every book that was entrusted to him to bind. Not being the collector of the volumes in his workshop, chance alone being responsible for the heterogeneous display,—to-day a sentimental love-tale, to-morrow a medical treatise, the next day a theological work,—it followed that the poor little bookbinder's head was filled with as confused a mass of lore, religious and profane, as ever cast in its lot in the sum of human knowledge. The more a book pleased him, the longer did the owner have to wait for it; and it was only after repeated insistence that the coveted volume was placed in the rightful possessor's hands.

Naturally, Kalimann's prices varied according to the work required, or the cost of material; but when it came to the question of ornamental finishing or decorative impressions, his customer's orders were totally ignored, and he it was who decided upon the finishing according to the subject or the value of the work.

When he carried the books back to his customers, he would always tie them up carefully in a large colored handkerchief, and, while unwrapping them, would embrace the opportunity of expressing his views upon their contents; at times, however, he regarded the open assertion of his opinion as dangerous, and could not be induced to pass judgment. On these occasions he never failed to say with a sorrowful shake of the head, "While we are living we may not speak, when we are dead it is too late!"

There lived in Hort at this time a wealthy and pretty widow, Mrs. Zoe Barkany by name, originally Sarah Samuel. From her, Kalimann would get his novels and classical literature; these he bound in pale blues and greens and brilliant scarlets, ornamenting them with a golden lyre, surmounted with an arrow-pierced heart. He worked upon these bindings con amore, and, transported by his love of the aesthetic, would occasionally give vent to his enthusiasm, and venture observations bordering upon the chivalrous. In each and every heroine of the plays and romances he devoured, he could see the captivating face and figure of Mrs. Barkany.

Entering the fair widow's garden one morning, and discovering her seated on a rustic bench, dressed in white, a guitar in her hand, he exclaimed, with a reverential bow: "Ah, mon Dieu, there sits Princess Eboli!" (the heroine in "Don Carlos"). Another time seeing her in a. morning gown of Turkish stuff, he declared she must be sitting for the picture of Rebecca in "Ivanhoe." In short, Mrs. Barkany very soon learned to anticipate her bookbinder's speeches, and would say, with a pretty smile: "Well, am I Esmeralda to-day?" or, "I wager that I am reminding you of the Duchess; tell me, am I right or not?"

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Binding works on jurisprudence for the notary, he developed his philosophy of law; returning some volumes to the village doctor, he surprised that worthy by launching forth with enthusiasm into a disquisition on medicine; and dropping in one fine day at Professor Gambert's,—the pensioned schoolmaster,—he proved himself no mean adversary in a discussion upon natural history. He invariably approached a subject with a refreshing originality, and on one occasion maintained with an obstinacy born of conviction that the reason Moses had prohibited the Jews from eating pork was because he had discovered the trichina.

Simcha Kalimann had taken upon himself the office of censor in his village, as may be seen by the following incident. The widow had given him a richly illustrated German edition of "Nana" to bind. At dusk one evening he discovered his apprentice crouched in a corner by the window, evidently intensely amused over the illustrations. He quietly seized the culprit by the hair, shook him as he would a puppy, and then, putting on his spectacles, began inspecting the volume himself. At first he shook his head, then took off his glasses and rubbed them as though they were playing him some prank, and finally closed the book with an expression of profound disgust.

Mrs. Barkany awaited the return of her "Nana" with unruffled patience; finally she despatched her cook Gutel with an order for the book. Kalimann was ready with his excuses, and after a fortnight's delay the widow found her way into the workshop, and began suing for the book in person.

"I want my copy of 'Nana,'" she began.

"Nana?" Kalimann went on with his work.

"You have not bound it yet?"

"No, madame."

"But when am I to have it?" "You are not to have that book at all."

"What! You talk absurdly."

> "We merit trust, the Count will own;
> For nothing's left of flesh or bone,"

quoted Kalimann from Schiller's ballad "The Forge." "As for 'Nana,' I've simply pushed it in the stove."

"Kalimann, this is going too far."

"It is not a book for a Jewish woman to own."

The widow flushed indignantly, but would not yield the victory to her adversary.

“If you have burned my book you must give me an equivalent.”

“With pleasure,” replied the bookbinder, and taking down a picture from the wall, he begged her acceptance of it. It represented a scene from Schiller’s “Song of the Bell,” a fair young woman, surrounded by her children, seated on the balcony of her house. As title to the picture were printed these lines:

> “The house spreadeth out,
> And in it presides
> The chaste gentle housewife,
> The mother of children;
> And ruleth metely
> The household discreetly.”

Our bookbinder had a reverential admiration for all scholars, poets, or artists, irrespective of race or creed. Awaiting the widow in her library one day, his attention was attracted by an engraving representing Schiller at Carlsbad seated upon an ass. His eyes filled with tears at the sight. “A man like that,” he exclaimed, “riding upon an ass! While ordinary people like Baron Fay or Mr. de Mariassy ride about proudly on horses.”

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Later on it occurred to him that Balaam too was mounted on an ass, and he derived a measure of consolation from the thought that Schiller was a prophet as well. Would it be venturesome to say that in Kalimann there was the stuff for poet or prophet?

In addition to his trade, our bookbinder carried on another pursuit which was quite lucrative in its way, and one universally well established among all Jewish communities of Eastern Europe. Kalimann was Cupid's secretary: in other words, he wrote love-letters for those who could neither read nor write. The opportunity thus vouchsafed his native tendency toward sentiment helped not only to swell the hearts of his clients with gratitude, but also to swell his own slender income. Thus it was that the fire of his poetic genius was enkindled, and thus it was he became the Petrarch of Hort.

One day Gutel Wolfner, Mrs. Barkany's cook, came to him with the request that he would write a letter for her to a friend at Gyongos.

"Well, well, little one," said the scribe, "so Love's arrow has reached you at last!"

"Heaven preserve me!" cried the girl, "he is not named Love, but Mendel Sucher, and he has never drawn a bow in his life."

Gutel now gave the bookbinder a general idea of the letter she wished written, and inquired the price.

"That will not depend upon the length of the epistle," he replied, "but upon its quality." Thereupon he read aloud to her his tariff.

1st. A friendly letter .....10 kreutzers
2d. A kind and well-intentioned letter.15 "
3d. A tender letter ..... 20 "
4th. A touching letter .....30 "
5th. A letter that goes straight to the heart ..... 1/2 florin

"Very good; a friendly letter will do well enough this time," said the girl, as she deposited her ten kreutzers on the table.

"I will write a kind and well-intentioned letter for you for the same price as a friendly one," said Kalimann, gallantly.

Mendel Sucher received the missive the following day, and as his scholarship was as limited as Gutel's, he forthwith sought out Saul Wahl, a lawyer's clerk at Gyongos, likewise a member of the same erotic profession as the bookbinder of Hort. Wahl read Kalimann's letter to the smiling recipient with such pathos that Mendel was completely

overcome. Placing twenty kreutzers on the table, the happy swain begged the clerk to write as finely turned a letter to Gutel as the one she had sent him.

Saul, who had at a glance recognized Kalimann's calligraphy, said to himself: "It will go hard with me but I will show the bookbinder that they know how to write letters at Gyongos, and can also quote from the classic authors."

He at once wrote Gutel a missive so thickly interlarded with quotations from the Song of Solomon, from Goethe, Petofi, Heine, and Chateaubriand, that when Kalimann read the billet-doux to the blushing girl her head was quite turned.

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The bookbinder himself scratched his head and muttered: "This Saul is a man of letters; his style is vigorous! Who would have thought it?"

The correspondence between Gutel and Mendel, or rather between Kalimann and Saul, flourished for some time. If Kalimann addressed Mendel as "my cherished friend," "my turtle dove," Saul on his side would intersperse throughout his letters such expressions as "your gazelle-like eyes," "your fairy form," "your crimson lips," "your voice rivalling the music of the celestial spheres."

Kalimann's "friendly" letter was followed by those of the tender and touching variety, and finally Gutel decided upon sacrificing her half florin and sending one that "would go straight to the heart." To make assurance doubly sure she supplemented her silver piece by a bottle of wine. Her amanuensis poured out a glass, emptied it at a draught, smacked his lips, and began to write. Suddenly, however, he stopped, and turning to the girl, said: "Do you know, Gutel, that wine of yours was a happy inspiration, but the great poet Hafiz was not alone inspired by the spirit of wine, he placed a great virtue upon the crimson lips of pretty girls."

Gutel was not slow to understand.

"As I have given you a half florin and a bottle of wine," she said, in a shamefaced way, wiping her mouth with the corner of her apron the while, "I see no reason why I should not add a touch of my lips as well." So saying she gave the happy bookbinder a hearty kiss. The consequence of all this was that the pen flew over the paper, and when Kalimann read the letter for Gutel's approval the tender-hearted girl burst into tears of emotion.

As for Mendel, when Saul read him this letter going "straight to the heart," he could contain himself no longer; rushing from the house he flew to the factory where he worked, and asked his employer, Mr. Schonberg, to permit him to quit his service.

"What is the matter with you?" cried Schonberg. "Why do you wish to leave? Do you want more wages?"

"No, no, Mr. Schonberg, that is not the reason. But—but I can stay no longer here at Gyongos, I must go to Hort."

"To Hort? What is the reason of that?"

For reply the dazed fellow held out the letter for him to read. Schonberg glanced over it, and smiled. "This Kalimann," he murmured, "is a deuce of a fellow. The world has lost a novelist in him. But let me see how I can arrange matters. Mendel," he continued, turning to the open-mouthed lover, "you shall stay here, and you shall marry your Gutel.

I will give you two or three rooms in the factory for your housekeeping, and Mrs. Barkany will give the girl her trousseau. How does that strike you?"

Mendel beamed. He would have thrown himself on his employer's neck, but resisted the impulse, and, instead, brushed the back of his hand across his eyes. Schonberg gave him a day's holiday, and the happy fellow lost no time in making his way to Hort, and subsequently into the arms of his inamorata. Mrs. Barkany gave Gutel the trousseau, and the marriage took place at harvest-time.

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At one end of the table, in the seat of honor next to the rabbi, sat the bookbinder of Hort. All had been his work, and, truth to tell, this was not the first happy couple he had been the means of bringing together.

When it was his turn to deliver a toast in honor of the bride and groom, he rose, filled his glass, and holding it in his hand, declaimed from his favorite poet Schiller, and with an enthusiasm worthy the occasion:

"Honor to women! round Life they are wreathing
Roses, the fragrance of Heaven sweet-breathing!"

THE EGYPTIAN FIRE-EATER

BY

RUDOLPH BAUMBACH

From "Summer Legends," translated by Helen B. Dole.
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Next Easter he must go to N—to school.—Fact.—It is high time; he is eleven years old, and here he is running wild with the street-boys.—That's what I say."

He, that is, I, hung my head, and I felt more like crying than laughing. I had passed eleven sunny boyhood years in the little country town, I stood in high esteem among my playmates, and would rather be the first in the ranks of my birthplace than second in the metropolis.

Through the gray mist, which surrounded my near future like a thick fog, gleamed only one light, but a bright, attractive light; that was the theatre, the splendor of which I had already learned to know. The white priests in the "Magic Flute," Sarastro's lions, the fire-spitting serpents, and the gay, merry Papageno,—such things could not be seen at home; and when my parents promised me occasional visits to the theatre, as a reward for diligence in study and exemplary conduct, I left the Eden of my childhood, half consoled.

Young trees, transplanted at the proper time, soon take root. After a tearful farewell to my friends and a slight attack of home-sickness, I was quite content. I was received into the second class at the gymnasium, and drank eagerly of the fountain of knowledge; a certain Frau Eberlein, with whom I found board and lodging, cared for my bodily welfare.

She was a widow, and kept a little store, in which, with the assistance of a shop-girl, she served customers, who called from morning to night. She dealt principally in groceries and vegetables, but besides these, every conceivable thing was found piled up in her shop: knitting-yarn, sheets of pictures, slate-pencils, cheese, pen-knives, balls of twine, herring, soap, buttons, writing-paper, glue, hairpins, cigar-holders, oranges, fly-poison, brushes, varnish, gingerbread, tin soldiers, corks, tallow candles, tobacco-pouches, thimbles, gum-balls, and torpedoes. Besides, she prepared, by means of essences, peach brandy, maraschino, ros solis, and other liqueurs, as well as an excellent ink, in the manufacture of which I used to help her. She rejoiced in considerable prosperity, lived well, and did not let me want for anything.

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My passion for the theatre was a source of great anxiety to good Frau Eberlein. She did not have a very good opinion of the art in general, but the comedy she despised from the bottom of her heart. Therefore she made my visiting the theatre as difficult as possible, and it was only after long discussions, and after the shop-girl had added her voice, that she would hand over the necessary amount for purchasing a ticket. The shop-girl was an oldish person, as thin as a giraffe which had fasted for a long time, and was very well read. She subscribed regularly to a popular periodical with the motto, "Culture is freedom," and Frau Eberlein was influenced somewhat by her judgment. This kind-hearted woman was friendly towards me, and as often as her employer asked, "Is the play a proper one for young people?" she would answer, "Yes," and Frau Eberlein would have to let me go.

Those were glorious evenings. Long before it was time for the play to begin, I was in my seat in the gallery, looking down from my dizzy height, into the house, still unlighted. Now a servant comes and lights the lamps in the orchestra. The parquet and the upper seats fill, but the reserved seats and the boxes are still empty. Now it suddenly grows light; the chandelier comes down from an opening in the ceiling. The musicians appear and tune their instruments. It makes a horrible discord, but still it is beautiful. The doors slam; handsomely dressed ladies, in white cloaks, gay officers, and civilians in stiff black and white evening dress take their seats in the boxes. The conductor mounts his elevated seat and now it begins. The overture is terribly long, but it comes to an end. Ting-aling-aling,—the curtain rises. Ah!—

I soon decided in my own mind that it should be my destiny, some time, to delight the audience from the stage, but I was still undecided whether I would devote myself to the drama or the opera, for it seemed to me an equally desirable lot to shoot charmed bullets in "Der Freischutz," or, hidden behind elderberry bushes, to shoot at tyrannical Geslers in "William Tell." In the meantime I learned Tell's monologue, "Along this narrow path the man must come," by heart, and practised the aria, "Through the forest, through the meadows."

Providence seemed to favor my plan, for it led me into an acquaintance with a certain Lipp, who, on account of his connections, was in a position to pave my way to the stage.

Lipp was a tall, slender youth, about sixteen years old, with terribly large feet and hands. He usually wore a very faded, light-blue coat, the sleeves of which hardly came below his elbows, and a red vest. He had a rather stooping gait, and a beaming smile continually played about his mouth. Besides, the poor fellow was always hungry, and it was this peculiarity which brought about our acquaintance.

On afternoons when there was no school, and I went out on the green to play ball with my companions or fly my kite, Frau Eberlein used to put something to eat in my pocket. Lipp soon spied it out, and he knew how to get a part, or even the whole of my luncheon

for himself. He would pick up a pebble off the ground, slip it from one hand to the other several times, then place one fist above the other, saying:

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"This hand, or that?
Burned is the tail of the cat.
Which do you choose?
Upper or under will lose!"

If I said "upper," the stone was always in the lower hand, and vice versa. And Lipp would take my apple from me with a smile, and devour it as if he were half-famished.

Why did I allow it? In the first place because Lipp was beyond me in years and in strength, and in the second place, because he was the son of a very important personage. His father was nothing less than the doorkeeper of the theatre; a splendid man with a shining red nose and coal-black beard reaching to his waist. The wise reader now knows how young Lipp came by a light-blue coat and red vest.

My new friend from his earliest years had been constantly on the stage. He played the gamin in folk-scenes and the monster in burlesques. Besides, he was an adept at thunder and lightning; by means of cracking a whip and the close imitation of the neighing of horses, he announced the approaching stage-coach; he lighted the moon in "Der Freischutz;" and with a kettle and pair of tongs gave forewarning of the witches' hour. When I opened my heart to Lipp and confided to him that I wanted to go on the stage, he reached out his broad hand to me with emotion and said, "And so do I." Hereupon we swore eternal friendship, and Lipp promised as soon as possible to procure me an opportunity for putting my dramatic qualifications to the test. From that hour his manner changed towards me. Before, he had treated me with some condescension, but now his behavior towards me was more like that of a colleague. Moreover, the game of chance for my lunch came to an end, for from that time forth I shared it with him like a brother.

The fine fellow kept his promise to make a way for me to go on the stage. A few evenings later ("Der Freischutz" was being played), I stood with a beating heart behind the scenes, and friend Lipp stood by my side. In my hand I held a string, with which I set the wings of the owl in the wolf's glen in rhythmic motion. My companion performed the wild chase. By turns he whistled through his fingers, cracked a whip, and imitated the yelping of the hounds. It was awfully fine.

"You did your part splendidly," said Lipp to me at the end of the scene; "next time you must go out on the stage."

I swam in a sea of delight. A short time after, "Preciosa" was given, and Lipp told me that I could play the gypsy boy. They put a white frock on me and wound red bands crosswise about my legs. Then a chorister took me by the hand and led me up and down the back of the stage two or three times. That was my first appearance.

It was also my last. The affair became known. In school I received a severe reprimand, and in addition, as a consequence of the airy gypsy costume, a cold with a cough, which kept me in bed for a day or two.

“It serves you right,” said Frau Eberlein. “He who will not hear must feel. This comes from playing in the theatre. If your blessed grandmother knew that you had been with play-actors she would turn in her grave.”

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Crushed and humiliated, I swallowed the various teas which my nurse steeped for me one after another. But with each cup I had to listen to an instructive story about the depravity of actors. In order to lead me back from the way of the transgressors to the path of virtue, Frau Eberlein painted with glowing colors; one story in particular, in which occurred three bottles of punch-essence never paid for, made a deep impression on me. But Frau Eberlein's anecdotes failed to make me change my resolves.

Soon after, something very serious happened. Lipp's father, the doorkeeper of the theatre, after drinking heavily, fell down lifeless by the card-table in the White Horse; and my friend, in consequence of this misfortune, came under the control of a cold-hearted guardian, who had as little comprehension of the dramatic art as Frau Eberlein. Lipp was given over to a house-painter, who, invested with extended authority, took the unfortunate fellow as an apprentice.

Lipp was inconsolable at the change in his lot. The smile disappeared from his face, and I too felt melancholy when I saw him going along the street in his paint-bespattered clothes, the picture of despair.

One day I met the poor fellow outside the city gate, where the last houses stand, painting a garden fence with an arsenic-green color. "My good friend," he said, with a melancholy smile, "I cannot give you my hand, for there is paint on it; but we are just the same as ever." Then he spoke of his disappointed hopes. "But," he continued, "because they are deferred, they are not put off for ever, and these clouds" (by this he referred to his present apprenticeship as painter) "will pass away. The time will come—I say no more about it; but the time will come." Here Lipp stopped speaking and dipped his brush in the paint-pot, for his master was coming around the corner of the house.

One day Lipp disappeared. The authorities did everything in their power to find him, but in vain; and since, at that time, the river, on which the city stood, had overflowed its banks, it was decided that Lipp had perished. The only person who did not share in this opinion was myself. I had a firm conviction that he had gone out into the wide world to seek his fortune, and that some day he would turn up again as a celebrated artist and a successful man. But year after year passed by and nothing was heard of Lipp.

I had entered upon my fifteenth year, was reading Virgil and Xenophon, and could enumerate the causes which brought the Roman empire to ruin. But in the midst of my classical studies I did not lose sight of the real aim of my life, the dramatic art; and as the stage had been closed to me since my first appearance, I studied in my own room the roles in which I hoped to shine later. Then I had already tried my skill as a dramatic author, and in my writing-desk lay concealed a finished tragedy. It was entitled "Pharaoh." In it occurred the seven plagues of Egypt and the miracles of Moses; but Pharaoh's destruction in the Red Sea formed the finale from which I promised myself the most brilliant success.

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Therefore I went about dressed as a regular artist. My schoolmates imitated the University students,—wore gay-colored caps, dark golden-red bands, and carried canes adorned with tassels; but I wore over my wild hair a pointed Calabrian hat, around my neck a loose silk handkerchief fastened together in an artistic knot, and in unpleasant weather a cloak, the red-lined corner of which I threw picturesquely over my left shoulder.

In this attire I went about in my native town, where I was accustomed to spend my summer vacations. The boys on the street made sport of me by their words and actions, but I thought, “What does the moon care when the dog bays at her!” and holding my head high, I walked past the scoffers.

Every year, in the month of August, a fair was held in the little town. On the common, tents and arbors were put up, where beer and sausages were furnished. Further entertainment was provided in the way of rope-dancers, jugglers, a Punch-and-Judy show, fortune-tellers, monstrosities, wax figures, and tragedies.

As a spoiled city youth, I considered it decidedly beneath my dignity to take part in the people’s merry-making; but I couldn’t get out of it, and so I went with my parents and brothers and sisters to the opening of the festival out in the park, and walked more proudly than ever under my Calabrian hat.

The sights were inspected one after another, and in the evening we all sat together in the front row of a booth, the proprietor of which promised to exhibit the most extraordinary thing that had ever been seen. The spectacle was divided into three parts. In the first a little horse with a large head was brought out, which answered any questions asked him by nodding, shaking, and beating his hoofs. In the second part two trained hares performed their tricks. With their forelegs they beat the drum, fired off pistols, and in the “Battle with the Hounds” they put to flight a whining terrier.

The proprietor had kept the best of all—that is, the Egyptian fire-eater, called “Phosphorus”—for the last part. The curtain went up for the third time, and on the stage, in fantastic scarlet dress, with a burning torch in his left hand, there stood a tall —ah! a form only too well known to me. It was Lipp, who had been looked upon as dead.

I saw how the unfortunate fellow with a smile put a lump of burning pitch in his mouth, and then everything began to swim around me. I pulled my hat down over my eyes, made my way through the crowd howling their applause, and staggered home exhausted.

During the rest of the festival I kept myself in strict seclusion. I announced that I was not well, and this was really no untruth, for I was very miserable. “That is because he is

growing," said my anxious mother; and I assented, and swallowed submissively the family remedies which she brought to me.

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At last the fair was over, and the Egyptian fire-eater had left the town. But the poor fellow did not go far. In the city where he exhibited his skill he was recognized and arrested, because he had avoided service in the army. To be sure, he was set free again after a few weeks as unqualified; but in the meantime his employer with the performing hares had gone nobody knew where, and Lipp was left solely dependent on his art, which he practised for some time in the neighboring towns and villages.

The end of his artistic career is sad and melancholy. He fell a victim to his calling. As an ambitious man he enlarged his artistic capabilities; he ate not only pitch but also pieces of broken glass, and an indigestible lamp-chimney was the cause of his destruction.

When I returned to the city I burned my tragedy of “Pharaoh,” and sold my cloak and Calabrian hat to an old-clothes dealer. I was thoroughly disgusted with the career of an artist, and whenever afterwards I was inclined to relapse, Frau Eberlein would call out to me, “Do you, too, want to die from a lamp-chimney?” Then I would bend my head and bury my nose in my Greek grammar.

THE CREMONA VIOLIN

BY

E.T.A. HOFFMANN

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Councillor Krespel was one of the strangest, oddest men I ever met with in my life. When I went to live in H——for a time the whole town was full of talk about him, as he happened to be just then in the midst of one of the very craziest of his schemes. Krespel had the reputation of being both a clever, learned lawyer and a skilful diplomatist. One of the reigning princes of Germany—not, however, one of the most powerful—had appealed to him for assistance in drawing up a memorial, which he was desirous of presenting at the Imperial Court with the view of furthering his legitimate claims upon a certain strip of territory. The project was crowned with the happiest success; and as Krespel had once complained that he could never find a dwelling sufficiently comfortable to suit him, the prince, to reward him for the memorial, undertook to defray the cost of building a house which Krespel might erect just as he pleased. Moreover, the prince was willing to purchase any site that he should fancy. This offer, however, the Councillor would not accept; he insisted that the house should be built in his garden, situated in a very beautiful neighborhood outside the town-walls. So he bought all kinds of materials and had them carted out. Then he might have been seen day after day, attired in his curious garments (which he had made himself

according to certain fixed rules of his own), slacking the lime, riddling the sand, packing up the bricks and stones in regular heaps, and so on. All this he did without once consulting an architect or thinking about

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a plan. One fine day, however, he went to an experienced builder of the town and requested him to be in his garden at daybreak the next morning, with all his journeymen and apprentices, and a large body of laborers, *etc*., to build him his house. Naturally the builder asked for the architect's plan, and was not a little astonished when Krespel replied that none was needed, and that things would turn out all right in the end, just as he wanted them. Next morning, when the builder and his men came to the place, they found a trench drawn out in the shape of an exact square; and Krespel said, "Here's where you must lay the foundations; then carry up the walls until I say they are high enough." "Without windows and doors, and without partition walls?" broke in the builder, as if alarmed at Krespel's mad folly. "Do what I tell you, my dear sir," replied the Councillor quite calmly; "leave the rest to me; it will be all right." It was only the promise of high pay that could induce the builder to proceed with the ridiculous building; but none has ever been erected under merrier circumstances. As there was an abundant supply of food and drink, the workmen never left their work; and amidst their continuous laughter the four walls were run up with incredible quickness, until one day Krespel cried, "Stop!" Then the workmen, laying down trowel and hammer, came down from the scaffoldings and gathered round Krespel in a circle, whilst every laughing face was asking, "Well, and what now?" "Make way!" cried Krespel; and then running to one end of the garden, he strode slowly towards the square of brickwork. When he came close to the wall he shook his head in a dissatisfied manner, ran to the other end of the garden, again strode slowly towards the brickwork square, and proceeded to act as before. These tactics he pursued several times, until at length, running his sharp nose hard against the wall, he cried, "Come here, come here, men! break me a door in here! Here's where I want a door made!" He gave the exact dimensions in feet and inches, and they did as he bid them. Then he stepped inside the structure, and smiled with satisfaction as the builder remarked that the walls were just the height of a good two-storeyed house. Krespel walked thoughtfully backwards and forwards across the space within, the bricklayers behind him with hammers and picks, and wherever he cried, "Make a window here, six feet high by four feet broad!" "There a little window, three feet by two!" a hole was made in a trice.

It was at this stage of the proceedings that I came to H——; and it was highly amusing to see how hundreds of people stood round about the garden and raised a loud shout whenever the stones flew out and a new window appeared where nobody had for a moment expected it. And in the same manner Krespel proceeded with the buildings and fittings of the rest of the house, and with all the work necessary to that end; everything had to be done on the spot

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in accordance with the instructions which the Councillor gave from time to time. However, the absurdity of the whole business, the growing conviction that things would in the end turn out better than might have been expected, but above all, Krespel's generosity—which indeed cost him nothing—kept them all in good-humor. Thus were the difficulties overcome which necessarily arose out of this eccentric way of building, and in a short time there was a completely finished house, its outside, indeed, presenting a most extraordinary appearance, no two windows, *etc*., being alike, but on the other hand the interior arrangements suggested a peculiar feeling of comfort. All who entered the house bore witness to the truth of this; and I too experienced it myself when I was taken in by Krespel after I had become more intimate with him. For hitherto I had not exchanged a word with this eccentric man; his building had occupied him so much that he had not even once been to Professor M——'s to dinner, as he was in the habit of doing on Tuesdays. Indeed, in reply to a special invitation, he sent word that he should not set foot over the threshold before the house-warming of his new building took place. All his friends and acquaintances, therefore, confidently looked forward to a great banquet; but Krespel invited nobody except the masters, journeymen, apprentices, and laborers who had built the house. He entertained them with the choicest viands; bricklayers' apprentices devoured partridge pies regardless of consequences; young joiners polished off roast pheasants with the greatest success; whilst hungry laborers helped themselves for once to the choicest morsels of truffes fricassees. In the evening their wives and daughters came, and there was a great ball. After waltzing a short while with the wives of the masters, Krespel sat down amongst the town musicians, took a violin in his hand, and directed the orchestra until daylight.

On the Tuesday after this festival, which exhibited Councillor Krespel in the character of a friend of the people, I at length saw him appear, to my no little joy, at Professor M——-'s. Anything more strange and fantastic than Krespel's behavior it would be impossible to find. He was so stiff and awkward in his movements, that he looked every moment as if he would run up against something or do some damage. But he did not; and the lady of the house seemed to be well aware that he would not, for she did not grow a shade paler when he rushed with heavy steps round a table crowded with beautiful cups, or when he manoeuvred near a large mirror that reached down to the floor, or even when he seized a flower-pot of beautifully painted porcelain and swung it round in the air as if desirous of making its colors play. Moreover, before dinner he subjected everything in the Professor's room to a most minute examination; he also took down a picture from the wall and hung it up again, standing on one of the cushioned chairs to do so. At the same time

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he talked a good deal and vehemently; at one time his thoughts kept leaping, as it were, from one subject to another (this was most conspicuous during dinner); at another, he was unable to have done with an idea; seizing upon it again and again, he gave it all sorts of wonderful twists and turns, and couldn't get back into the ordinary track until something else took hold of his fancy. Sometimes his voice was rough and harsh and screeching, and sometimes it was low and drawling and singing; but at no time did it harmonize with what he was about. Music was the subject of conversation; the praises of a new composer were being sung, when Krespel, smiling, said in his low, singing tones, "I wish the devil with his pitchfork would hurl that atrocious garbler of music millions of fathoms down to the bottomless pit of hell!" Then he burst out passionately and wildly, "She is an angel of heaven, nothing but pure God-given music!—the paragon and queen of song!"— and tears stood in his eyes. To understand this, we had to go back to a celebrated artiste, who had been the subject of conversation an hour before.

Just at this time a roast hare was on the table; I noticed that Krespel carefully removed every particle of meat from the bones on his plate, and was most particular in his inquiries after the hare's feet; these the Professor's little five-year-old daughter now brought to him with a very pretty smile. Besides, the children had cast many friendly glances towards Krespel during dinner; now they rose and drew nearer to him, but not without signs of timorous awe. What's the meaning of that? thought I to myself. Dessert was brought in; then the Councillor took a little box from his pocket, in which he had a miniature lathe of steel. This he immediately screwed fast to the table, and turning the bones with incredible skill and rapidity, he made all sorts of little fancy boxes and balls, which the children received with cries of delight. Just as we were rising from table, the Professor's niece asked, "And what is our Antonia doing?" Krespel's face was like that of one who has bitten of a sour orange and wants to look as if it were a sweet one; but this expression soon changed into the likeness of a hideous mask, whilst he laughed behind it with downright, bitter, fierce, and, as it seemed to me, satanic scorn. "Our Antonia? our dear Antonia?" he asked in his drawling, disagreeable singing way. The Professor hastened to intervene; in the reproving glance which he gave his niece I read that she had touched a point likely to stir up unpleasant memories in Krespel's heart. "How are you getting on with your violins?" interposed the Professor in a jovial manner, taking the Councillor by both hands. Then Krespel's countenance cleared up, and with a firm voice he replied, "Capitally, Professor; you recollect my telling you of the lucky chance which threw that splendid Amati [Footnote: The Amati were a celebrated family of violin-makers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, belonging

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to Cremona in Italy. They form the connecting-link between the Brescian school of makers and the greatest of all makers, Straduarius and Guarnerius.] into my hands. Well, I've only cut it open to-day—not before to-day. I hope Antonia has carefully taken the rest of it to pieces." "Antonia is a good child," remarked the Professor. "Yes, indeed, that she is," cried the Councillor, whisking himself round; then, seizing his hat and stick, he hastily rushed out of the room. I saw in the mirror how that tears were standing in his eyes.

As soon as the Councillor was gone, I at once urged the Professor to explain to me what Krespel had to do with violins, and particularly with Antonia. "Well," replied the Professor, "not only is the Councillor a remarkably eccentric fellow altogether, but he practises violin-making in his own crack-brained way." "Violin-making!" I exclaimed, perfectly astonished. "Yes," continued the Professor, "according to the judgment of men who understand the thing, Krespel makes the very best violins that can be found nowadays; formerly he would frequently let other people play on those in which he had been especially successful, but that's been all over and done with now for a long time. As soon as he has finished a violin he plays on it himself for one or two hours, with very remarkable power and with the most exquisite expression, then he hangs it up beside the rest, and never touches it again or suffers anybody else to touch it. If a violin by any of the eminent old masters is hunted up anywhere, the Councillor buys it immediately, no matter what the price put upon it. But he plays it as he does his own violins, only once; then he takes it to pieces in order to examine closely its inner structure, and should he fancy he hasn't found exactly what he sought for, he in a pet throws the pieces into a big chest, which is already full of the remains of broken violins." "But who and what is Antonia?" I inquired, hastily and impetuously. "Well, now, that," continued the Professor,—"that is a thing which might very well make me conceive an unconquerable aversion to the Councillor, were I not convinced that there is some peculiar secret behind it, for he is such a good-natured fellow at bottom as to be sometimes guilty of weakness. When we came to H——, several years ago, he led the life of an anchorite, along with an old housekeeper, in —— Street. Soon, by his oddities, he excited the curiosity of his neighbors; and immediately he became aware of this, he sought and made acquaintances. Not only in my house but everywhere we became so accustomed to him that he grew to be indispensable. In spite of his rude exterior, even the children liked him, without ever proving a nuisance to him; for, notwithstanding all their friendly passages together, they always retained a certain timorous awe of him, which secured him against all over-familiarity. You have to-day had an example of the way in which he wins their hearts

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by his ready skill in various things. We all took him at first for a crusty old bachelor, and he never contradicted us. After he had been living here some time, he went away, nobody knew where, and returned at the end of some months. The evening following his return his windows were lit up to an unusual extent! This alone was sufficient to arouse his neighbors' attention, and they soon heard the surpassingly beautiful voice of a female singing to the accompaniment of a piano. Then the music of a violin was heard chiming in and entering upon a keen ardent contest with the voice. They knew at once that the player was the Councillor. I myself mixed in the large crowd which had gathered in front of his house to listen to this extraordinary concert; and I must confess that, besides this voice and the peculiar, deep, soul-stirring impression which the execution made upon me, the singing of the most celebrated artistes whom I had ever heard seemed to me feeble and void of expression. Until then I had had no conception of such long-sustained notes, of such nightingale trills, of such undulations of musical sound, of such swelling up to the strength of organ-notes, of such dying away to the faintest whisper. There was not one whom the sweet witchery did not enthral; and when the singer ceased, nothing but soft sighs broke the impressive silence. Somewhere about midnight the Councillor was heard talking violently, and another male voice seemed, to judge from the tones, to be reproaching him, whilst at intervals the broken words of a sobbing girl could be detected. The Councillor continued to shout with increasing violence, until he fell into that drawling, singing way that you know. He was interrupted by a loud scream from the girl, and then all was as still as death. Suddenly a loud racket was heard on the stairs; a young man rushed out sobbing, threw himself into a post-chaise which stood below, and drove rapidly away. The next day the Councillor was very cheerful, and nobody had the courage to question him about the events of the previous night. But on inquiring of the housekeeper, we gathered that the Councillor had brought home with him an extraordinarily pretty young lady whom he called Antonia, and she it was who had sung so beautifully. A young man also had come along with them; he had treated Antonia very tenderly, and must evidently have been her betrothed. But he, since the Councillor peremptorily insisted on it, had had to go away again in a hurry. What the relations between Antonia and the Councillor are has remained until now a secret, but this much is certain, that he tyrannizes over the poor girl in the most hateful fashion. He watches her as Doctor Bartholo watches his ward in the Barber of Seville; she hardly dare show herself at the window; and if, yielding now and again to her earnest entreaties, he takes her into society, he follows her with Argus' eyes, and will on no account suffer a musical note to be sounded, far less let Antonia sing— indeed,

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she is not permitted to sing in his own house. Antonia's singing on that memorable night has, therefore, come to be regarded by the townspeople in the light of a tradition of some marvellous wonder that suffices to stir the heart and the fancy; and even those who did not hear it often exclaim, ever any other singer attempts to display her powers in the place, 'What sort of a wretched squeaking do you call that? Nobody but Antonia knows how to sing.'"

Having a singular weakness for such like fantastic histories, I found it necessary, as may easily be imagined, to make Antonia's acquaintance. I had myself often enough heard the popular sayings about her singing, but had never imagined that that exquisite artiste was living in the place, held a captive in the bonds of this eccentric Krespel like the victim of a tyrannous sorcerer. Naturally enough I heard in my dreams on the following night Antonia's marvellous voice, and as she besought me in the most touching manner in a glorious adagio movement (very ridiculously it seemed to me, as if I had composed it myself) to save her—I soon resolved, like a second Astolpho, [Footnote: A reference to Ariosto's Orlando Furioso. Astolpho, an English cousin of Orlando, was a great boaster, but generous, courteous, gay, and remarkably handsome; he was carried to Alcina's island on the back of a whale.] to penetrate into Krespel's house, as if into another Alcina's magic ca stle, and deliver the queen of song from her ignominious fetters.

It all came about in a different way from what I had expected; I had seen the Councillor scarcely more than two or three times, and eagerly discussed with him the best method of constructing violins, when he invited me to call and see him. I did so; and he showed me his treasures of violins. There were fully thirty of them hanging up in a closet; one amongst them bore conspicuously all the marks of great antiquity (a carved lion's head, *etc*.), and, hung up higher than the rest, and surmounted by a crown of flowers, it seemed to exercise a queenly supremacy over them. "This violin," said Krespel, on my making some inquiry relative to it, "this violin is a very remarkable and curious specimen of the work of some unknown master, probably of Tartini's [Footnote: Giuseppe Tartini, born in 1692, died in 1770, was one of the most celebrated violinists of the eighteenth century, and the discoverer (in 1714) of "resultant tones," or "Tartini's tones," as they are frequently called. Most of his life was spent at Padua. He did much to advance the art of the violinist, both by his compositions for that instrument, as well as by his treatise on its capabilities.] age. I am perfectly convinced that there is something especially exceptional in its inner construction, and that, if I took it to pieces, a secret would be revealed to me which I have long been seeking to discover, but— laugh at me if you like —this senseless thing which only gives signs of life and sound as I make it, often

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speaks to me in a strange way of itself. The first time I played upon it I somehow fancied that I was only the magnetizer who has the power of moving his subject to reveal of his own accord in words the visions of his inner nature. Don't go away with the belief that I am such a fool as to attach even the slightest importance to such fantastic notions, and yet it's certainly strange that I could never prevail upon myself to cut open that dumb lifeless thing there. I am very pleased now that I have not cut it open, for since Antonia has been with me I sometimes play to her upon this violin. For Antonia is fond of it—very fond of it." As the Councillor uttered these words with visible signs of emotion, I felt encouraged to hazard the question, "Will you not play it to me, Councillor?" Krespel made a wry face, and falling into his drawling, singing way, said, "No, my good sir!" and that was an end of the matter. Then I had to look at all sorts of rare curiosities, the greater part of them childish trifles; at last thrusting his arm into a chest, he brought out a folded piece of paper, which he pressed into my hand, adding solemnly, "You are a lover of art; take this present as a priceless memento, which you must value at all times above everything else." Therewith he took me by the shoulders and gently pushed me towards the door, embracing me on the threshold. That is to say, I was in a symbolical manner virtually kicked out of doors. Unfolding the paper, I found a piece of a first string of a violin about an eighth of an inch in length, with the words, "A piece of the treble string with which the deceased Stamitz [Footnote: This was the name of a well-known musical family from Bohemia. Karl Stamitz is the one here possibly meant, since he died about eighteen or twenty years previous to the publication of this tale.] strung his violin for the last concert at which he ever played."

This summary dismissal at mention of Antonia's name led me to infer that I should never see her; but I was mistaken, for on my second visit to the Councillor's I found her in his room, assisting him to put a violin together. At first sight Antonia did not make a strong impression; but soon I found it impossible to tear myself away from her blue eyes, her sweet rosy lips, her uncommonly graceful, lovely form. She was very pale; but a shrewd remark or a merry sally would call up a winning smile on her face and suffuse her cheeks with a deep burning flush, which, however, soon faded away to a faint rosy glow. My conversation with her was quite unconstrained, and yet I saw nothing whatever of the Argus-like watchings on Krespel's part which the Professor had imputed to him; on the contrary, his behavior moved along the customary lines, nay, he even seemed to approve of my conversation with Antonia. So I often stepped in to see the Councillor; and as we became accustomed to each other's society, a singular feeling of homeliness, taking possession of our little circle

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of three, filled our hearts with inward happiness. I still continued to derive exquisite enjoyment from the Councillor's strange crotchets and oddities; but it was of course Antonia's irresistible charms alone which attracted me, and led me to put up with a good deal which I should otherwise, in the frame of mind in which I then was, have impatiently shunned. For it only too often happened that in the Councillor's characteristic extravagance there was mingled much that was dull and tiresome; and it was in a special degree irritating to me that, as often as I turned the conversation upon music, and particularly upon singing, he was sure to interrupt me, with that sardonic smile upon his face and those repulsive singing tones of his, by some remark of a quite opposite tendency, very often of a commonplace character. From the great distress which at such times Antonia's glances betrayed, I perceived that he only did it to deprive me of a pretext for calling upon her for a song. But I didn't relinquish my design. The hindrances which the Councillor threw in my way only strengthened my resolution to overcome them; I *must* hear Antonia sing if I was not to pine away in reveries and dim aspirations for want of hearing her.

One evening Krespel was in an uncommonly good humor; he had been taking an old Cremona violin to pieces, and had discovered that the sound-post was fixed half a line more obliquely than usual—an important discovery!—one of incalculable advantage in the practical work of making violins! I succeeded in setting him off at full speed on his hobby of the true art of violin-playing. Mention of the way in which the old masters picked up their dexterity in execution from really great singers (which was what Krespel happened just then to be expatiating upon) naturally paved the way for the remark that now the practice was the exact opposite of this, the vocal score erroneously following the affected and abrupt transitions and rapid scaling of the instrumentalists. "What is more nonsensical," I cried, leaping from my chair, running to the piano, and opening it quickly—"what is more nonsensical than such an execrable style as this, which, far from being music, is much more like the noise of peas rolling across the floor?" At the same time I sang several of the modern fermatas, which rush up and down and hum like a well-spun peg-top, striking a few villainous chords by way of accompaniment.

Krespel laughed outrageously and screamed: "Ha! ha! methinks I hear our German-Italians or our Italian-Germans struggling with an aria from Pucitta, [Footnote: Vincenzo Pucitta (1778-1861) was an Italian opera composer, whose music "shows great facility, but no invention." He also wrote several songs.] or Portogallo, [Footnote: Il Portogallo was the Italian sobriquet of a Portuguese musician named Mark Anthony Simao (1763-1829). He lived alternately in Italy and Portugal, and wrote several operas.] or some other Maestro di capella, or rather

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schiavo d'un primo uomo." [Footnote: Literally, "The slave of a primo uomo," primo uomo being the masculine form corresponding to prima donna, that is, a singer of hero's parts in operatic music. At one time also female parts were sung and acted by men or boys.] Now, thought I, now's the time; so turning to Antonia, I remarked, "Antonia knows nothing of such singing as that, I believe?" At the same time I struck up one of old Leonardo Leo's [Footnote: Leonardo Leo, the chief Neapolitan representative of Italian music in the first part of the eighteenth century, and author of more than forty operas and nearly one hundred compositions for the Church.] beautiful soul-stirring songs. Then Antonia's cheeks glowed; heavenly radiance sparkled in her eyes, which grew full of reawakened inspiration; she hastened to the piano; she opened her lips; but at that very moment Krespel pushed her away, grasped me by the shoulders, and with a shriek that rose up to a tenor pitch, cried, "My son—my son—my son!' And then he immediately went on, singing very softly, and grasping my hand with a bow that was the pink of politeness, "In very truth, my esteemed and honorable student-friend, in very truth, it would be a violation of the codes of social intercourse, as well as of all good manners, were I to express aloud and in a stirring way my wish that here, on this very spot, the devil from hell would softly break your neck with his burning claws, and so in a sense make short work of you; but, setting that aside, you must acknowledge, my dearest friend, that it is rapidly growing dark, and there are no lamps burning to-night, so that, even though I did not kick you downstairs at once, your darling limbs might still run a risk of suffering damage. Go home by all means; and cherish a kind remembrance of your faithful friend, if it should happen that you never,—pray, understand me,— If you should never see him in his own house again." Therewith he embraced me, and, still keeping fast hold of me, turned with me slowly towards the door, so that I could not get another single look at Antonia. Of course it is plain enough that in my position I couldn't thrash the Councillor, though that is what he really deserved. The Professor enjoyed a good laugh at my expense, and assured me that I had ruined for ever all hopes of retaining the Councillor's friendship. Antonia was too dear to me, I might say too holy, for me to go and play the part of the languishing lover and stand gazing up at her window, or to fill the role of the lovesick adventurer. Completely upset, I went away from H—; but, as is usual in such cases, the brilliant colors of the picture of my fancy faded, and the recollection of Antonia, as well as of Antonia's singing (which I had never heard), often fell upon my heart like a soft faint trembling light, comforting me.

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Two years afterwards I received an appointment in B——, and set out on a journey to the south of Germany. The towers of H—— rose before me in the red vaporous glow of the evening; the nearer I came the more was I oppressed by an indescribable feeling of the most agonizing distress; it lay upon me like a heavy burden; I could not breathe; I was obliged to get out of my carriage into the open air. But my anguish continued to increase until it became actual physical pain. Soon I seemed to hear the strains of a solemn chorale floating in the air; the sounds continued to grow more distinct; I realized the fact that they were men's voices chanting a church chorale. "What's that? what's that?" I cried, a burning stab darting as it were through my breast. "Don't you see?" replied the coachman, who was driving along beside me, "why don't you see? they're burying somebody up yonder in yon churchyard." And indeed we were near the churchyard; I saw a circle of men clothed in black standing round a grave, which was on the point of being closed. Tears started to my eyes; I somehow fancied they were burying there all the joy and all the happiness of life. Moving on rapidly down the hill, I was no longer able to see into the churchyard; the chorale came to an end, and I perceived not far distant from the gate some of the mourners returning from the funeral. The Professor, with his niece on his arm, both in deep mourning, went close past me without noticing me. The young lady had her handkerchief pressed close to her eyes, and was weeping bitterly. In the frame of mind in which I then was I could not possibly go into the town, so I sent on my servant with the carriage to the hotel where I usually put up, whilst I took a turn in the familiar neighborhood to get rid of a mood that was possibly only due to physical causes, such as heating on the journey, *etc*. On arriving at a well-known avenue, which leads to a pleasure resort, I came upon a most extraordinary spectacle. Councillor Krespel was being conducted by two mourners, from whom he appeared to be endeavoring to make his escape by all sorts of strange twists and turns. As usual, he was dressed in his own curious home-made gray coat; but from his little cocked-hat, which he wore perched over one ear in military fashion, a long narrow ribbon of black crape fluttered backwards and forwards in the wind. Around his waist he had buckled a black sword-belt; but instead of a sword he had stuck a long fiddle-bow into it. A creepy shudder ran through my limbs: "He's insane," thought I, as I slowly followed them. The Councillor's companions led him as far as his house, where he embraced them, laughing loudly. They left him; and then his glance fell upon me, for I now stood near him. He stared at me fixedly for some time; then he cried in a hollow voice, "Welcome, my student friend! you also understand it!" Therewith he took me by the arm and pulled me into the house, up the steps, into the room where the violins

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hung. They were all draped in black crape; the violin of the old master was missing; in its place was a cypress wreath. I knew what had happened. “Antonia! Antonia!” I cried, in inconsolabie grief. The Councillor, with his arms crossed on his breast, stood beside me, as if turned into stone. I pointed to the cypress wreath. “When she died,” said he, in a very hoarse solemn voice, “when she died, the sound-post of that violin broke into pieces with a ringing crack, and the sound-board was split from end to end. The faithful instrument could only live with her and in her; it lies beside her in the coffin, it has been buried with her.” Deeply agitated, I sank down upon a chair, whilst the Councillor began to sing a gay song in a husky voice; it was truly horrible to see him hopping about on one foot, and the crape strings (he still had his hat on) flying about the room and up to the violins hanging on the walls. Indeed, I could not repress a loud cry that rose to my lips when, on the Councillor making an abrupt turn, the crape came all over me; I fancied he wanted to envelop me in it and drag me down into the horrible dark depths of insanity. Suddenly he stood still and addressed me in his singing way, “My son! my son! why do you call out? Have you espied the angel of death? That always precedes the ceremony.” Stepping into the middle of the room, he took the violin-bow out of his sword-belt, and, holding it over his head with both hands, broke it into a thousand pieces. Then, with a loud laugh, he cried, “Now you imagine my sentence is pronounced, don’t you, my son? but it’s nothing of the kind—not at all! not at all! Now I’m free—free— free—hurrah! I’m free! Now I shall make no more violins—no more violins—hurrah! no more violins!” This he sang to a horrible mirthful tune, again spinning round on one foot. Perfectly aghast, I was making the best of my way to the door, when he held me fast, saying quite calmly, “Stay, my student friend, pray don’t think from this outbreak of grief, which is torturing me as if with the agonies of death, that I am insane; I only do it because a short time ago I made myself a dressing-gown in which I wanted to look like Fate or like God!” The Councillor then went on with a medley of silly and awful rubbish, until he fell down utterly exhausted; I called up the old housekeeper, and was very pleased to find myself in the open air again.

I never doubted for a moment that Krespel had become insane; the Professor, however, asserted the contrary. “There are men,” he remarked, “from whom nature or a special destiny has taken away the cover behind which the mad folly of the rest of us runs its course unobserved. They are like thin-skinned insects, which, as we watch the restless play of their muscles, seem to be misshapen, while nevertheless everything soon comes back into its proper form again. All that with us remains thought passes over with Krespel into action. That bitter scorn which the spirit

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that is wrapped up in the doings and dealings of the earth often has at hand, Krespel gives vent to in outrageous gestures and agile caprioles. But these are his lightning conductor. What comes up out of the earth he gives again to the earth, but what is divine, that he keeps; and so I believe that his inner consciousness, in spite of the apparent madness which springs from it to the surface, is as right as a trivet. To be sure, Antonia's sudden death grieves him sore, but I warrant that to-morrow will see him going along in his old jog-trot way as usual." And the Professor's prediction was almost literally filled. Next day the Councillor appeared to be just as he formerly was, only he averred that he would never make another violin, nor yet ever play on another. And, as I learned later, he kept his word.

Hints which the Professor let fall confirmed my own private conviction that the so carefully guarded secret of the Councillor's relations to Antonia, nay, that even her death, was a crime which must weigh heavily upon him, a crime that could not be atoned for. I determined that I would not leave H—— without taxing him with the offence which I conceived him to be guilty of; I determined to shake his heart down to its very roots, and so compel him to make open confession of the terrible deed. The more I reflected upon the matter, the clearer it grew in my own mind that Krespel must be a villain, and in the same proportion did my intended reproach, which assumed of itself the form of a real rhetorical masterpiece, wax more fiery and more impressive. Thus equipped and mightily incensed, I hurried to his house. I found him with a calm smiling countenance making playthings. "How can peace," I burst out—"how can peace find lodgment even for a single moment in your breast, so long as the memory of your horrible deed preys like a serpent upon you?" He gazed at me in amazement, and laid his chisel aside. "What do you mean, my dear sir?" he asked; "pray take a seat." But my indignation chafing me more and more, I went on to accuse him directly of having murdered Antonia, and to threaten him with the vengeance of the Eternal.

Further, as a newly full-fledged lawyer, full of my profession, I went so far as to give him to understand that I would leave no stone unturned to get a clue to the business, and so deliver him here in this world into the hands of an earthly judge. I must confess that I was considerably disconcerted when, at the conclusion of my violent and pompous harangue, the Councillor, without answering so much as a single word, calmly fixed his eyes upon me as though expecting me to go on again. And this I did indeed attempt to do, but it sounded so ill-founded and so stupid as well that I soon grew silent again. Krespel gloated over my embarrassment, whilst a malicious ironical smile flitted across his face. Then he grew very grave, and addressed me in solemn tones. "Young man, no doubt you think I am foolish, insane; that

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I can pardon you, since we are both confined in the same mad-house; and you only blame me for deluding myself with the idea that I am God the Father because you imagine yourself to be God the Son. But how do you dare desire to insinuate yourself into the secrets and lay bare the hidden motives of a life that is strange to you and that must continue so? She has gone and the mystery is solved." He ceased speaking, rose, and traversed the room backwards and forwards several times. I ventured to ask for an explanation; he fixed his eyes upon me, grasped me by the hand, and led me to the window, which he threw wide open. Propping himself upon his arms, he leaned out, and, looking down into the garden, told me the history of his life. When he finished I left him, touched and ashamed.

In a few words, his relations with Antonia rose in the following way. Twenty years before, the Councillor had been led into Italy by his favorite engrossing passion of hunting up and buying the best violins of the old masters. At that time he had not yet begun to make them himself, and so of course he had not begun to take to pieces those which he bought. In Venice he heard the celebrated singer Angela——i, who at that time was playing with splendid success as prima donna at St. Benedict's Theatre. His enthusiasm was awakened, not only in her art—which Signora Angela had indeed brought to a high pitch of perfection—but in her angelic beauty as well. He sought her acquaintance; and in spite of all his rugged manners he succeeded in winning her heart, principally through his bold and yet at the same time masterly violin-playing. Close intimacy led in a few weeks to marriage, which, however, was kept a secret, because Angela was unwilling to sever her connection with the theatre, neither did she wish to part with her professional name, that by which she was celebrated, nor to add to it the cacophonous "Krespel." With the most extravagant irony he described to me what a strange life of worry and torture Angela led him as soon as she became his wife. Krespel was of opinion that more capriciousness and waywardness were concentrated in Angela's little person than in all the rest of the prima donnas in the world put together. If he now and again presumed to stand up in his own defence, she let loose a whole army of abbots, musical composers, and students upon him, who, ignorant of his true connection with Angela, soundly rated him as a most intolerable, ungallant lover for not submitting to all the Signora's caprices. It was just after one of these stormy scenes that Krespel fled to Angela's country seat to try and forget in playing fantasias on his Cremona violin the annoyances of the day. But he had not been there long before the Signora, who had followed hard after him, stepped into the room. She was in an affectionate humor; she embraced her husband, overwhelmed him with sweet and languishing glances, and rested her pretty head on his shoulder. But Krespel, carried away into

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the world of music; continued to play on until the walls echoed again; thus he chanced to touch the Signora somewhat ungently with his arm and the fiddle-bow. She leapt back full of fury, shrieking that he was a “German brute,” snatched the violin from his hands, and dashed it on the marble table into a thousand pieces. Krespel stood like a statue of stone before her; but then, as if awakening out of a dream, he seized her with the strength of a giant and threw her out of the window of her own house, and, without troubling himself about anything more, fled back to Venice—to Germany. It was not, however, until some time had elapsed that he had a clear recollection of what he had done; although he knew that the window was scarcely five feet from the ground, and although he was fully cognizant of the necessity, under the above-mentioned circumstances, of throwing the Signora out of the window, he yet felt troubled by a sense of painful uneasiness, and the more so since she had imparted to him in no ambiguous terms an interesting secret as to her condition. He hardly dared to make inquiries; and he was not a little surprised about eight months afterwards at receiving a tender letter from his beloved wife, in which she made not the slightest allusion to what had taken place in her country house, only adding to the intelligence that she had been safely delivered of a sweet little daughter the heartfelt prayer that her dear husband and now a happy father would come at once to Venice. That, however, Krespel did not do; rather he appealed to a confidential friend for a more circumstantial account of the details, and learned that the Signora had alighted upon the soft grass as lightly as a bird, and that the sole consequences of the fall or shock had been psychic. That is to say, after Krespel’s heroic deed she had become completely altered; she never showed a trace of caprice, of her former freaks, or of her teasing habits; and the composer who wrote for the next carnival was the happiest fellow under the sun, since the Signora was willing to sing his music without the scores and hundreds of changes which she at other times had insisted upon. “To be sure,” added his friend, “there was every reason for preserving the secret of Angela’s cure, else every day would see lady singers flying through windows.” The Councillor was not a little excited at this news; he engaged horses; he took his seat in the carriage. “Stop!” he cried suddenly. “Why, there’s not a shadow of doubt,” he murmured to himself, “that as soon as Angela sets eyes upon me again, the evil spirit will recover his power and once more take possession of her. And since I have already thrown her out of the window, what could I do if a similar case were to occur again? What would there be left for me to do?” He got out of the carriage, and wrote an affectionate letter to his wife, making graceful allusion to her tenderness in especially dwelling upon the fact that his tiny daughter had, like him, a little mole behind the ear,

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and—remained in Germany. Now ensued an active correspondence between them. Assurances of unchanged affection—invitations—laments over the absence of the beloved one—thwarted wishes—hopes, *etc*.—flew backwards and forwards from Venice to H——, from H—— to Venice. At length Angela came to Germany, and, as is well known, sang with brilliant success as prima donna at the great theatre in F——. Despite the fact that she was no longer young, she won all hearts by the irresistible charm of her wonderfully splendid singing. At that time she had not lost her voice in the least degree. Meanwhile, Antonia had been growing up; and her mother never tired of writing to tell her father how that a singer of the first rank was developing in her. Krespel's friends in F—— also confirmed this intelligence, and urged him to come for once to F—— to see and admire this uncommon sight of two such glorious singers. They had not the slightest suspicion of the close relations in which Krespel stood to the pair. Willingly would he have seen with his own eyes the daughter who occupied so large a place in his heart, and who moreover often appeared to him in his dreams; but as often as he thought upon his wife he felt very uncomfortable, and so he remained at home amongst his broken violins. There was a certain promising young composer, B —— of F——, who was found to have suddenly disappeared, nobody knew where. This young man fell so deeply in love with Antonia that, as she returned his love, he earnestly besought her mother to consent to an immediate union, sanctified as it would further be by art. Angela had nothing to urge against his suit; and the Councillor the more readily gave his consent that the young composer's productions had found favor before his rigorous critical judgment. Krespel was expecting to hear of the consummation of the marriage, when he received instead a black-sealed envelope addressed in a strange hand. Doctor R—— conveyed to the Councillor the sad intelligence that Angela had fallen seriously ill in consequence of a cold caught at the theatre, and that during the night immediately preceding what was to have been Antonia's wedding-day, she had died. To him, the Doctor, Angela had disclosed the fact that she was Krespel's wife, and that Antonia was his daughter; he, Krespel, had better hasten therefore to take charge of the orphan. Notwithstanding that the Councillor was a good deal upset by this news of Angela's death, he soon began to feel that an antipathetic, disturbing influence had departed out of his life, and that now for the first time he could begin to breathe freely. The very same day he set out for F——. You could not credit how heartrending was the Councillor's description of the moment when he first saw Antonia. Even in the fantastic oddities of his expression there was such a marvellous power of description that I am unable to give even so much as a faint indication of it. Antonia inherited all her mother's

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amiability and all her mother's charms, but not the repellent reverse of the medal. There was no chronic moral ulcer, which might break out from time to time. Antonia's betrothed put in an appearance, whilst Antonia herself, fathoming with happy instinct the deeper-lying character of her wonderful father, sang one of old Padre Martini's [Footnote: Giambattista Martini, more commonly called Padre Martini, of Bologna, formed an influential school of music there in the latter half of the eighteenth century. He wrote vocal and instrumental pieces both for the church and for the theatre. He was also a learned historian of music. He has the merit of having discerned and encouraged the genius of Mozart when, a boy of fourteen, he visited Bologna in 1770.] motets, which, she knew, Krespel in the heyday of his courtship had never grown tired of hearing her mother sing. The tears ran in streams down Krespel's cheeks; even Angela he had never heard sing like that. Antonia's voice was of a very remarkable and altogether peculiar timbre: at one time it was like the sighing of an Aeolian harp, at another like the warbled gush of the nightingale. It seemed as if there was not room for such notes in the human breast. Antonia, blushing with joy and happiness, sang on and on—all her most beautiful songs, B—— playing between whiles as only enthusiasm that is intoxicated with delight can play. Krespel was at first transported with rapture, then he grew thoughtful— still—absorbed in reflection. At length he leapt to his feet, pressed Antonia to his heart, and begged her in a low husky voice, "Sing no more if you love me —my heart is bursting—I fear—I fear— don't sing again."

"No!" remarked the Councillor next day to Doctor R——, "when, as she sang, her blushes gathered into two dark red spots on her pale cheeks, I knew it had nothing to do with your nonsensical family likenesses, I knew it was what I dreaded." The Doctor, whose countenance had shown signs of deep distress from the very beginning of the conversation, replied, "Whether it arises from a too early taxing of her powers of song, or whether the fault is Nature's— enough, Antonia labors under an organic failure in the chest, while it is from it too that her voice derives its wonderful power and its singular timbre, which I might almost say transcend the limits of human capabilities of song. But it bears the announcement of her early death; for, if she continues to sing, I wouldn't give her at the most more than six months longer to live." Krespel's heart was lacerated as if by the stabs of hundreds of stinging knives. It was as though his life had been for the first time overshadowed by a beautiful tree full of the most magnificent blossoms, and now it was to be sawn to pieces at the roots, so that it could not grow green and blossom any more. His resolution was taken. He told Antonia all; he put the alternatives before her—whether she would follow her betrothed and yield to his and the world's seductions,

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but with the certainty of dying early, or whether she would spread round her father in his old days that joy and peace which had hitherto been unknown to him, and so secure a long life. She threw herself sobbing into his arms, and he, knowing the heartrending trial that was before her, did not press for a more explicit declaration, He talked the matter over with her betrothed; but, notwithstanding that the latter averred that no note should ever cross Antonia's lips, the Councillor was only too well aware that even B—— could not resist the temptation of hearing her sing, at any rate arias of his own composition. And the world, the musical public, even though acquainted with the nature of the singer's affliction, would certainly not relinquish its claims to hear her, for in cases where pleasure is concerned people of this class are very selfish and cruel. The Councillor disappeared from F—— along with Antonia, and came to H——. B—— was in despair when he learned that they had gone. He set out on their track, overtook them, and arrived at H—— at the same time that they did. "Let me see him only once, and then die!" entreated Antonia. "Die! die!" cried Krespel, wild with anger, an icy shudder running through him. His daughter, the only creature in the wide world who had awakened in him the springs of unknown joy, who alone had reconciled him to life, tore herself away from his heart, and he—he suffered the terrible trial to take place. B—— sat down to the piano; Antonia sang; Krespel fiddled away merrily, until the two red spots showed themselves on Antonia's cheeks. Then he bade her stop; and as B—— was taking leave of his betrothed, she suddenly fell to the floor with a loud scream. "I thought," continued Krespel in his narration, "I thought that she was, as I had anticipated, really dead; but as I had prepared myself for the worst, my calmness did not leave me, nor my self-command desert me. I grasped B——, who stood like a silly sheep in his dismay, by the shoulders, and said (here the Councillor fell into his singing tone), 'Now that you, my estimable pianoforte-player, have, as you wished and desired, really murdered your betrothed, you may quietly take your departure; at least have the goodness to make yourself scarce before I run my bright hanger through your heart. My daughter, who, as you see, is rather pale, could very well do with some color from your precious blood. Make haste and run, for I might also hurl a nimble knife or two after you.' I must, I suppose, have looked rather formidable as I uttered these words, for, with a cry of the greatest terror, B—— tore himself loose from my grasp, rushed out of the room, and down the steps." Directly after B—— was gone, when the Councillor tried to lift up his daughter, who lay unconscious on the floor, she opened her eyes with a deep sigh, but soon closed them again as if about to die. Then Krespel's grief found vent aloud, and would not be comforted. The doctor, whom the old housekeeper had called in, pronounced

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Antonia's case a somewhat serious but by no means dangerous attack; and she did indeed recover more quickly than her father had dared to hope. She now clung to him with the most confiding childlike affection; she entered into his favorite hobbies—into his mad schemes and whims. She helped him take old violins to pieces and glue new ones together. "I won't sing again any more, but live for you," she often said, sweetly smiling upon him, after she had been asked to sing and had refused. Such appeals, however, the Councillor was anxious to spare her as much as possible; therefore it was that he was unwilling to take her into society, and solicitously shunned all music. He well understood how painful it must be for her to forego altogether the exercise of that art which she had brought to such a pitch of perfection. When the Councillor bought the wonderful violin that he had buried with Antonia, and was about to take it to pieces, she met him with such sadness in her face and softly breathed the petition, "What! this as well?" By some power, which he could not explain, he felt impelled to leave this particular instrument unbroken, and to play upon it. Scarcely had he drawn the first few notes from it than Antonia cried aloud with joy, "Why, that's me!—now I shall sing again." And, in truth, there was something remarkably striking about the clear, silvery, bell-like tones of the violin; they seemed to have been engendered in the human soul. Krespel's heart was deeply moved; he played, too, better than ever. As he ran up and down the scale, playing bold passages with consummate power and expression, she clapped her hands together and cried with delight, "I did that well! I did that well."

From this time onwards her life was filled with peace and cheerfulness. She often said to the Councillor, "I should like to sing something, father." Then Krespel would take his violin down from the wall and play her most beautiful songs, and her heart was right glad and happy. Shortly before my arrival in H——, the Councillor fancied one night that he heard somebody playing the piano in the adjoining room, and he soon made out distinctly that B—— was flourishing on the instrument in his usual style. He wished to get up, but felt himself held down as if by a dead weight, and lying as if fettered in iron bonds; he was utterly unable to move an inch. Then Antonia's voice was heard singing low and soft; soon, however, it began to rise and rise in volume until it became an ear-splitting fortissimo; and at length she passed over into a powerfully impressive song which B——had once composed for her in the devotional style of the old masters. Krespel described his condition as being incomprehensible, for terrible anguish was mingled with a delight he had never experienced before. All at once he was surrounded by a dazzling brightness, in which he beheld B——and Antonia locked in a close embrace, and gazing at each other in a rapture of ecstasy. The music of the song

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and of the pianoforte accompanying it went on without any visible signs that Antonia sang or that B—— touched the instrument. Then the Councillor fell into a sort of dead faint, whilst the images vanished away. On awakening he still felt the terrible anguish of his dream. He rushed into Antonia's room. She lay on the sofa, her eyes closed, a sweet angelic smile on her face, her hands devoutly folded, and looking as if asleep and dreaming of the joys and raptures of heaven. But she was—dead.

ADVENTURES OF A NEW-YEAR'S EVE

BY

HEINRICH ZSCHOKKE

From "Tales by Heinrich Zschokke." Translated by Parke Godwin. Published by G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Mother Kate, the watchman's wife, at nine o'clock on New Year's Eve, opened her little window, and put out her head into the night air. The snow was reddened by the light from the window as it fell in silent, heavy flakes upon the street. She observed the crowds of happy people, hurrying to and fro from the brilliantly lighted shops with presents, or pouring out of the various inns and coffee-houses, and going to the dances and other entertainments with which the New Year is married to the Old in joy and pleasure. But when a few cold flakes had lighted on her nose, she drew back her head, closed the window, and said to her husband: "Gottlieb, stay at home, and let Philip watch for thee to-night; for the snow comes as fast as it can from Heaven, and thou knowest the cold does thy old bones no good. The streets will be gay to-night. There seems dancing and feasting in every house, masqueraders are going about, and Philip will enjoy the sport."

Old Gottlieb nodded his assent. "I am willing, Kate," he said. "My barometer, the old wound above my knee, has given me warning the last two days of a change of weather. It is only right that my son should aid me in a service to which he will be my successor."

We must give the reader to understand that old Gottlieb had been a sergeant of cavalry in one of the king's regiments, until he was made a cripple for life by a musket-ball, as he was the first mounting the walls of a hostile fort in a battle for his fatherland. The officer who commanded the attack received the cross of honor on the battlefield for his heroism, and was advanced in the service; while Gottlieb was fain to creep homewards on a pair of crutches. From pity they made him a schoolmaster, for he was intelligent, liked to read, and wrote a good hand. But when the school increased they took it away

from him to provide for a young man who could do none of these as well as he, merely because he was a godson of one of the trustees. However, they promoted Gottlieb to the post of watchman, with the reversion of it to his son Philip, who had in the meantime bound himself to a gardener. It was only the good housewifery

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of Mistress Katharine, and the extreme moderation of old Gottlieb, that enabled them to live happily on the little they possessed. Philip gave his services to the gardener for his board and lodging, but he occasionally received very fine presents when he carried home flowers to the rich people of the town. He was a fresh, handsome young fellow, of six-and-twenty. Noble ladies often gave him sundry extra dollars for his fine looks, a thing they would never have thought of doing for an ugly face. Mrs. Kate had already put on her cloak to go to the gardener's house to fetch her son, when he entered the apartment.

"Father," said Philip, giving a hand to both father and mother, "it's snowing, and the snow won't do you much good. I'll take the watch to-night, and you can get to bed."

"You're a good boy," said old Gottlieb.

"And then I've been thinking," continued Philip, "that as to-morrow is New Year's Day, I may come and dine with you and make myself happy. Mother perhaps has no joint in the kitchen, and—"

"No," interrupted the mother, "we've no joint, but then we have a pound and a and a half of venison; with potatoes for a relish, and a little rice with laurel leaves for a soup, and two flasks of beer to drink. Only come, Philip, for we shall live finely to-morrow! Next week we may do better, for the New Year's gifts will be coming in, and Gottlieb's share will be something! Oh! we shall live grandly."

"Well, so much the better, dear mother," said Philip; "but have you paid the rent of the cottage yet?"

Old Gottlieb shrugged his shoulders.

Philip laid a purse upon the table.

"There are two-and-twenty dollars that I have saved. I can do very well without them; take them for a New Year's gift, and then we can all three enter on the new year without a debt or a care. God grant that we may end it in health and happiness! Heaven in its goodness will provide for both you and me!"

Tears came into Mother Katharine's eyes as she kissed her son; old Gottlieb said: "Philip, you are the prop and stay of our old age. Continue to be honest and good, and to love your parents, so will a blessing rest on you. I can give you nothing for a New Year's gift, but a prayer that you may keep your heart pure and true—this is in your power—you will be rich enough—for a clear conscience is a Heaven in itself."

So said old Gottlieb, and then he wrote down in an account-book the sum of two-and-twenty dollars that his son had given him.

“All that you have cost me in childhood is now nearly paid up. Your savings amount to three hundred and seventeen dollars, which I have received.”

“Three hundred and seventeen dollars!” cried Mistress Katharine, in the greatest amazement; and then turning to Philip with a voice full of tenderness, “Ah, Philip,” she said, “thou grievest me. Child of my heart! Yes, indeed thou dost. Hadst thou saved that money for thyself thou might have bought some land with it, and started as gardener on thy own account, and married Rose. *Now* that is impossible. But take comfort, Philip. We are old, and thou wilt not have to support us long.”

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“Mother!” exclaimed Philip, and he frowned a little; “what are you thinking of? Rose is dear to me as my life, but I would give up a hundred Roses rather than desert you and my father. I should never find any other parents in this world but you, but there are plenty of Roses, although I would have none but Mrs. Bittner’s Rose, were there even ten thousand others.”

“You are right, Philip,” said Gottlieb; “loving and marrying are not in the commandments—but to honor your father and mother is a duty and commandment. To give up strong passions and inclinations for the happiness of your parents is the truest gratitude of a son. It will gain you the blessing from above:—it will make you rich in your own heart.”

“If it were only not too long for Rose to wait,” said Mrs. Katharine, “or if you could give up the engagement altogether! For Rose is a pretty girl, that can’t be denied; and though she is poor, there will be no want of wooers. She is virtuous and understands housekeeping.”

“Never fear, mother,” replied Philip; “Rose has solemnly sworn to marry no man but me; and that is sufficient. Her mother has nothing to object to me. And if I was in business and had money enough to keep a wife with, Rose would be my wife to-morrow. The only annoyance we have is, that her mother will not let us meet so often as we wish. She says frequent meetings do no good; but I differ from her, and so does Rose—for we think meeting often does us both a great deal of good. And we have agreed to meet to-night, at twelve o’clock, at the great door of St. Gregory’s Church, for Rose is bringing in the year at a friend’s house, and I am to take her home.”

In the midst of such conversation the clock of the neighboring tower struck three-quarters, and Philip took his father’s great-coat from the warm stove where Katharine had carefully laid it, wrapped himself in it, and taking the lantern and staff, and wishing his parents good-night, proceeded to his post.

II.

Philip stalked majestically through the snow-covered streets of the capital, where as many people were still visible as in the middle of the day. Carriages were rattling in all directions, the houses were all brilliantly lighted. Our watchman enjoyed the scene, he sang his verses at ten o’clock, and blew his horn lustily in the neighborhood of St. Gregory’s Church, with many a thought on Rose, who was then with her friend. “Now she hears me,” he said to himself; “now she thinks on me, and forgets the scene around her. I hope she won’t fail me at twelve o’clock at the church door.” And when he had gone his round, he always returned to the dear house and looked up at the lighted windows. Sometimes he saw female figures, and his heart beat quick at the sight; sometimes he fancied he saw Rose herself; and sometimes he studied the long shadows thrown on the wall or the ceiling to discover which of them was Rose’s, and to

fancy what she was doing. It was certainly not a very pleasant employment to stand in frost and snow and look up at a window; but what care lovers for frost and snow? And watchmen are as fiery and romantic lovers as ever were the knights of ancient ballads.

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He only felt the effects of the frost when, at eleven o'clock, he had to set out upon his round. His teeth chattered with cold; he could scarcely call the hour or sound his horn. He would willingly have gone into a beer-house to warm himself at the fire. As he was pacing through a lonely by-street, he met a man with a black half-mask on his face, enveloped in a fire-colored silken mantle, and wearing on his head a magnificent hat turned up at one side, and fantastically ornamented with a number of high and waving plumes.

Philip endeavored to escape the mask, but in vain. The stranger blocked up his path and said: "Ha! thou art a fine fellow; I like thy phiz amazingly. Where are you going, eh? I say, where are you going?"

"To Mary Street," replied Philip. "I am going to call the hour there."

"Enchanting!" answered the mask. "I'll hear thee: I'll go with thee. Come along, thou foolish fellow, and let me hear thee, and mind thou singest well, for I am a good judge. Canst thou sing me a jovial song?"

Philip saw that his companion was of high rank and a little tipsy, and answered: "I sing better over a glass of wine in a warm room, than when up to my waist in snow."

They had now reached Mary Street, and Philip sang and blew the horn.

"Ha! that's but a poor performance," exclaimed the mask, who had accompanied him thither. "Give me the horn! I shall blow so well that you'll half die with delight."

Philip yielded to the mask's wishes, and let him sing the verses and blow. For four or five times all was done as if the stranger had been a watchman all his life. He dilated most eloquently on the joys of such an occupation, and was so inexhaustible in his own praises that he made Philip laugh at his extravagance. His spirits evidently owed no small share of their elevation to an extra glass of wine.

"I'll tell you what, my treasure, I've a great fancy to be a watchman myself for an hour or two. If I don't do it now, I shall never arrive at that honor in the course of my life. Give me your great-coat and wide-brimmed hat, and take my domino. Go into a beer-house and take a bottle at my expense; and when you have finished it, come again and give me back my masking-gear. You shall have a couple of dollars for your trouble. What do you think, my treasure?"

But Philip did not like this arrangement. At last, however, at the solicitations of the mask, he capitulated as they entered a dark lane. Philip was half frozen; a warm drink would do him good, and so would a warm fire. He agreed for one half-hour to give up his watchmanship, which would be till twelve o'clock. Exactly at that time the stranger was to come to the great door of St. Gregory's and give back the great-coat, horn, and

staff, taking back his own silk mantle, hat, and domino. Philip also told him the four streets in which he was to call the hour. The mask was in raptures:

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“Treasure of my heart, I could kiss thee if thou wert not a dirty, miserable fellow! But thou shalt have naught to regret, if thou art at the church at twelve, for I will give thee money for a supper then. Joy! I am a watchman!” The mask looked a watchman to the life, while Philip was completely disguised with the half-mask tied over his face, the bonnet ornamented with a buckle of brilliants on his head, and the red silk mantle thrown around him. When he saw his companion commence his walk he began to fear that the young gentleman might compromise the dignity of the watchman. He therefore addressed him once more, and said:

“I hope you will not abuse my good nature and do any mischief or misbehave in any way, as it may cost me the situation.”

“Hallo!” answered the stranger. “What are you talking about? Do you think I don’t know my duty? Off with you this moment, or I’ll let you feel the weight of my staff. But come to St. Gregory’s Church and give me back my clothes at twelve o’clock. Good-bye. This is glorious fun!”

The new guardian of the streets walked onward with all the dignity becoming his office, while Philip hurried to a neighboring tavern.

III.

As he was passing the door of the royal palace, he was laid hold of by a person in a mask who had alighted from a carriage. Philip turned round, and in a low whispering voice asked what the stranger wanted.

“My gracious lord,” answered the mask, “in your reverie you have passed the door. Will your Royal Highness—”

“What? Royal Highness?” said laughing. “I am no highness. What put that in your head?”

The mask bowed respectfully, and pointed to the brilliant buckle in Philip’s hat. “I ask your pardon if I have betrayed your disguise. But, in whatever character you asume, your noble bearing will betray you. Will you condescend to lead the way? Does your Highness intend to dance?”

“I? To dance?” replied Philip. “No—you see I have boots on.”

“To play, then?” inquired the mask.

“Still less. I have brought no money with me,” said the assistant watchman.

“Good heaven!” exclaimed the mask. “Command my purse—all that I possess is at your service!” Saying this, he forced a full purse into Philip’s hand.

“But do you know who I am?” inquired Philip, and rejected the purse.

The mask whispered with a bow of profound obeisance: “His Royal Highness, Prince Julian.”

At this moment Philip heard his deputy in an adjoining street calling the hour very distinctly, and he now became aware of his metamorphosis. Prince Julian, who was well known in the capital as an amiable, wild, and good-hearted young man, had been the person with whom he had changed his clothes. “Now, then,” thought Philip, “as he enacts the watchman so well, I will not shame his rank; I’ll see if, for one half-hour, I can’t be the Prince. If I make any mistake, he has himself to blame for it.” He wrapped the red silken mantle closer round him, took the offered purse, put it in his pocket, and said: “Who are you, mask? I will return your gold to-morrow.”

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“I am the Chamberlain Pilzou.”

“Good—lead the way—I’ll follow.” The Chamberlain obeyed, and tripped up the marble stairs, Philip coming close behind him. They entered an immense hall lighted by a thousand tapers and dazzling chandeliers, which were reflected by brilliant mirrors. A confused crowd of maskers jostled each other, sultans, Tyrolese, harlequins, knights in armor, nuns, goddesses, satyrs, monks, Jews, Medes, and Persians. Philip for a while was abashed and blinded. Such splendor he had never dreamt of. In the middle of the hall the dance was carried on with hundreds of people to the music of a full band. Philip, whom the heat of the apartment recovered from his frozen state, was so bewildered with the scene that he could scarcely nod his head as different masks addressed him, some confidentially, others deferentially.

“Will you go to the hazard table?” whispered the Chamberlain, who stood beside him, and who Philip now saw was dressed as a Brahmin.

“Let me get thawed first,” answered Philip; “I am an icicle at present.”

“A glass of warm punch?” inquired the Brahmin, and led him into the refreshment-room. The pseudo-prince did not wait for a second invitation, but emptied one glass after the other in short time. The punch was good, and it spread its genial warmth through Philip’s veins.

“How is it you don’t dance tonight, Brahmin?” he asked of his companion, when they returned into the hall. The Brahmin sighed, and shrugged his shoulders.

“I have no pleasure now in the dance. Gayety is distasteful to me. The only person I care to dance with—the Countess Bonau—I thought she loved me; our families offered no objection—but all at once she broke with me.” His voice trembled as he spoke.

“How?” said Philip, “I never heard of such a thing.”

“You never heard of it?” repeated the other; “the whole city rings with it. The quarrel happened a fortnight ago, and she will not allow me to justify myself, but has sent back three letters I wrote to her, unopened. She is a declared enemy of the Baroness Reizenthal, and had made me promise to drop her acquaintance. But, think how unfortunate I was! When the Queen-mother made the hunting party to Freudenwald, she appointed me cavalier to the Baroness. What could I do? It was impossible to refuse. On the very birthday of the adorable Bonau I was obliged to set out.....She heard of it.....She put no trust in my heart!”

“Well, then, Brahmin, take advantage of the present moment. The New Year makes up all quarrels. Is the Countess here?”

“Do you not see her over there—the Carmelite on the left of the third pillar beside the two black dominos. She has laid aside her mask. Ah, Prince! your intercession would —”

Philip thought: “Now I can do a good work!” and, as the punch had inspired him, he walked directly to the Carmelite. The Countess Bonau looked at him for some time seriously, and with flushed cheeks, as he sat down beside her. She was a beautiful girl; yet Philip remained persuaded that Rose was a thousand times more beautiful.

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“Countess,” he said,—and became embarrassed when he met her clear bright eye fixed upon him.

“Prince,” said the Countess, “an hour ago you were somewhat too bold.”

“Fair Countess, I am therefore at this present moment the more quiet.”

“So much the better. I shall not, then, be obliged to keep out of your way.”

“Fair lady, allow me to ask one question. Have you put on a nun’s gown to do penance for your sins?”

“I have nothing to do penance for.”

“But you have, Countess!—your cruelties—your injustice to the poor Brahmin yonder, who seems neglected by his God and all the world.”

The beautiful Carmelite cast down her eyes, and appeared uneasy.

“And do you know, fair Countess, that in the Freudenwald affair the Chamberlain is as innocent as I am?”

“As you, Prince?” said the Countess, frowning, “what did you tell me an hour ago?”

“You are right, dear Countess, I was too bold. You said so yourself. But now I declare to you the Chamberlain was obliged to go to Freudenwald by command of the Queen-mother—against his will was obliged to be cavalier to the hated Reizenthal—”

“Hated—by him?”—interrupted the Countess with a bitter and sneering laugh.

“Yes—he hates,—he despises the Baroness. Believe me, he scarcely treated her with civility, and incurred the Royal displeasure by so doing. I know it; and it was for your sake. You are the only person he loves—to you he offers his hand, his heart—and you!—you reject him!”

“How comes it, Prince, that you intercede so warmly for Pilzou? You did not do so formerly.”

“That was because I did not know him, and still less the sad state into which you have thrown him by your behavior. I swear to you he is innocent—you have nothing to forgive in him—he has much to forgive in you.”

“Hush!” whispered the Carmelite, “we are watched here; away from this.” She replaced her mask, stood up, and placing her arm within that of the supposed Prince, they crossed the hall and entered a side-room. The Countess uttered many bitter complaints

against the Chamberlain, but they were the complaints of jealous love. The Countess was in tears, when the tender Brahmin soon after came timidly into the apartment. There was a deep silence among the three. Philip, not knowing how to conclude his intercession better, led the Brahmin to the Carmelite, and joined their hands together, without saying a word, and left them to fate. He himself returned into the hall.

IV.

Here he was hastily addressed by a Mameluke: "I'm glad I have met you, Domino. Is the Rose-girl in the side-room?" The Mameluke rushed into it, but returned in a moment evidently disappointed. "One word alone with you, Domino," he said, and led Philip into a window recess in a retired part of the hall.

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“What do you want?” asked Philip.

“I beseech you,” replied the Mameluke, in a subdued yet terrible voice, “where is the Rose-girl?”

“What is the Rose-girl to me?”

“But to me she is everything!” answered the Mameluke, whose suppressed voice and agitated demeanor showed that a fearful struggle was going on within. “To me she is everything. She is my wife. You make me wretched, Prince! I conjure you drive me not to madness. Think of my wife no more!”

“With all my heart,” answered Philip, dryly; “what have I to do with your wife?”

“O Prince, Prince!” exclaimed the Mameluke, “I have made a resolve which I shall execute if it cost me my life. Do not seek to deceive me a moment longer. I have discovered everything. Here! look at this! ’tis a note my false wife slipped into your hand, and which you dropped in the crowd, without having read.”

Philip took the note. ’T was written in pencil, and in a fine delicate hand: “Change your mask. Everybody knows you. My husband watches you. He does not know me. If you obey me, I will reward you.”

“Hem!” muttered Philip. “As I live, this was not written to me. I don’t trouble my head about your wife.”

“Death and fury, Prince! do not drive me mad! Do you know who it is that speaks to you? I am the Marshal Blankenswerd. Your advances to my wife are not unknown to me, ever since the last rout at the palace.”

“My Lord Marshal,” answered Philip, “excuse me for saying that jealousy has blinded you. If you knew me well, you would not think of accusing me of such folly. I give you my word of honor I will never trouble your wife.”

“Are you in earnest, Prince?”

“Entirely.”

“Give me a proof of this?”

“Whatever you require.”

“I know you have hindered her until now from going with me to visit her relations in Poland. Will you persuade her to do so now?”

“With all my heart, if you desire it.”

“Yes, yes! and your Royal Highness will prevent inconceivable and unavoidable misery.”

The Mameluke continued for some time, sometimes begging and praying, and sometimes threatening so furiously, that Philip feared he might make a scene before the whole assembly that would not have suited him precisely. He therefore quitted him as soon as possible. Scarcely had he lost himself in the crowd, when a female, closely wrapped in deep mourning, tapped him familiarly on the arm, and whispered:

“Butterfly, whither away? Have you no pity for the disconsolate Widow?”

Philip answered very politely: “Beautiful widows find no lack of comforters. May I venture to include myself amongst them?”

“Why are you so disobedient? and why have you not changed your mask?” said the Widow, while she led him aside that they might speak more freely. “Do you really fancy, Prince, that every one here does not know who you are?”

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“They are very much mistaken in me, I assure you,” replied Philip.

“No, indeed,” answered the Widow, “they know you very well, and if you do not immediately change your apparel, I shall not speak to you again the whole evening. I have no desire to give my husband an opportunity of making a scene.”

By this Philip discovered whom he was talking with. “You were the beautiful Rose-girl; are your roses withered so soon?”

“What is there that does not wither? not the constancy of man? I saw you when you slipped off with the Carmelite. Acknowledge your inconstancy—you can deny it no longer.”

“Hem,” answered Philip, dryly, “accuse me if you will, I can return the accusation.”

“How,—pretty butterfly?”

“Why, for instance, there is not a more constant man alive than the Marshal.”

“There is not indeed!—and I am wrong, very wrong to have listened to you so long. I reproached myself enough, but he has unfortunately discovered our flirtation.”

“Since the last rout at Court, fair Widow——”

“Were you so unguarded and particular—pretty butterfly!”

“Let us repair the mischief. Let us part. I honor the Marshal, and, for my part, do not like to give him pain.”

The Widow looked at him for some time in speechless amazement.

“If you have indeed any regard for me,” continued Philip, “you will go with the Marshal to Poland, to visit your relations. ’Tis better that we should not meet so often. A beautiful woman is beautiful— but a pure and virtuous woman is more beautiful still.”

“Prince!” cried the astonished Widow, “are you really in earnest? Have you ever loved me, or have you all along deceived?”

“Look you,” answered Philip, “I am a tempter of a peculiar kind. I search constantly among women to find truth and virtue, and ’tis but seldom that I encounter them. Only the true and virtuous can keep me constant—therefore I am true to none; but no!—I will not lie— there is one that keeps me in her chains—I am sorry, fair Widow, that that one —is not you!”

“You are in a strange mood to-night, Prince,” answered the Widow, and the trembling of her voice and heaving of her bosom showed the working of her mind.

“No,” answered Philip, “I am in as rational a mood to-night as I ever was in my life. I wish only to repair an injury; I have promised to your husband to do so.”

“How!” exclaimed the Widow, in a voice of terror, “you have discovered all to the Marshal?”

“Not everything,” answered Philip, “only what I knew.”

The Widow wrung her hands in the extremity of agitation, and at last said, “Where is my husband?”

Philip pointed to the Mameluke, who at this moment approached them with slow steps.

“Prince,” said the Widow, in a tone of inexpressible rage,—“Prince, you may be forgiven this, but not from me! I never dreamt that the heart of man could be so deceitful,—but you are unworthy of a thought. You are an impostor! My husband in the dress of a barbarian is a prince; you in the dress of a prince are a barbarian. In this world you see me no more!”

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With these words she turned proudly away from him, and going up to the Mameluke, they left the hall in deep and earnest conversation. Philip laughed quietly, and said to himself: "My substitute, the watchman, must look to it, for I do not play my part badly; I only hope when he returns he will proceed as I have begun."

He went up to the dancers, and was delighted to see the beautiful Carmelite standing up in a set with the overjoyed Brahmin. No sooner did the latter perceive him, than he kissed his hand to him, and in dumb-show gave him to understand in what a blessed state he was. Philip thought: 'T is a pity I am not to be prince all my life-time. The people would be satisfied then; to be a prince is the easiest thing in the world. He can do more with a single word than a lawyer with a four-hours' speech. Yes! if I were a prince, my beautiful Rose would be—lost to me for ever. No! I would not be a prince." He now looked at the clock, and saw 't was half-past eleven. The Mameluke hurried up to him and gave him a paper. "Prince," he exclaimed, "I could fall at your feet and thank you in the very dust. I am reconciled to my wife. You have broken her heart; but it is better that it should be so. We leave for Poland this very night, and there we shall fix our home. Farewell! I shall be ready whenever your Royal Highness requires me, to pour out my last drop of blood in your service. My gratitude is eternal. Farewell!"

"Stay!" said Philip to the Marshal, who was hurrying away, "what am I to do with this paper?"

"Oh, that,-'tis the amount of my loss to your Highness last week at hazard. I had nearly forgotten it; but before my departure, I must clear my debts. I have indorsed it on the back." With these words the Marshal disappeared.

V.

Philip opened the paper, and read in it an order for five thousand dollars. He put it in his pocket, and thought: "Well, it's a pity that I'm not a prince." Some one whispered in his ear:

"Your Royal Highness, we are both discovered; I shall blow my brains out."

Philip turned round in amazement, and saw a negro at his side.

"What do you want, mask?" he asked, in an unconcerned tone.

"I am Colonel Kalt," whispered the negro. "The Marshal's wife has been chattering to Duke Herman, and he has been breathing fire and fury against us both."

"He is quite welcome," answered Philip.

“But the King will hear it all,” sighed the negro. “This very night I may be arrested and carried to a dungeon; I’ll sooner hang myself.”

“No need of that,” said Philip.

“What! am I to be made infamous for my whole life? I am lost, I tell you. The Duke will demand entire satisfaction. His back is black and blue yet with the marks of the cudgelling I gave him. I am lost, and the baker’s daughter too! I’ll jump from the bridge and drown myself at once!”

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“God forbid!” answered Philip; “what have you and the baker’s daughter to do with it?”

“Your Royal Highness banters me, and I am in despair!—I humbly beseech you to give me two minutes’ private conversation.”

Philip followed the negro into a small boudoir dimly lighted up with a few candles. The negro threw himself on a sofa, quite overcome, and groaned aloud. Philip found some sandwiches and wine on the table, and helped himself with great relish.

“I wonder your Royal Highness can be so cool on hearing this cursed story. If that rascally Salmoni was here who acted the conjurer, he might save us by some contrivance, for the fellow was a bunch of tricks. As it is, he has slipped out of the scrape.”

“So much the better,” interrupted Philip, replenishing his glass; “since he has got out of the way, we can throw all the blame on his shoulders.”

“How can we do that? The Duke, I tell you, knows that you, and I, and the Marshal’s wife, and the baker’s daughter, were all in the plot together, to take advantage of his superstition. He knows that it was you that engaged Salmoni to play the conjurer; that it was I that instructed the baker’s daughter (with whom he is in love) how to inveigle him into the snare; that it was I that enacted the ghost, that knocked him down, and cudgelled him till he roared again. If I had only not carried the joke too far, but I wished to cool his love a little for my sweetheart. ’T was a devilish business. I’ll take poison.”

“Rather swallow a glass of wine—’t is delicious,” said Philip, taking another tart at the same time. “For to tell you the truth, my friend, I think you are rather a white-livered sort of rogue for a colonel, to think of hanging, drowning, shooting, and poisoning yourself about such a ridiculous story as that. One of these modes would be too much, but as to all the four—nonsense. I tell you that at this moment I don’t know what to make out of your tale.”

“Your Royal Highness, have pity on me, my brain is turned. The Duke’s page, an old friend of mine, has told me this very moment, that the Marshal’s wife, inspired by the devil, went up to the Duke, and told him that the trick played on him at the baker’s house was planned by Prince Julian, who opposed his marriage with his sister; that the spirit he saw was myself, sent by the Princess to be a witness of his superstition; that your Highness was a witness of his descent into the pit after hidden gold, and of his promise to make the baker’s daughter his mistress, and also to make her one of the nobility immediately after his marriage with the Princess. ’Do not hope to gain the Princess. It is useless for you to try,’ were the last words of the Marshal’s wife to the Duke.”

“And a pretty story it is,” muttered Philip; “why, behavior like that would be a disgrace to the meanest of the people. I declare there is no end to these deviltries.”

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“Yes, indeed. ’T is impossible to behave more meanly than the Marshal’s lady. The woman must be a fury. My gracious Lord, save me from destruction.”

“Where is the Duke?” asked Philip.

“The page told me he started up on hearing the story, and said, ’I will go to the King.’ And if he tells the story to the King in his own way—”

“Is the King here, then?”

“Oh, yes, he is at play in the next room, with the Archbishop and the Minister of Police.”

Philip walked with long steps through the boudoir. The case required consideration.

“Your Royal Highness,” said the negro, “protect me. Your own honor is at stake. You can easily make all straight; otherwise, I am ready at the first intimation of danger to fly across the border. I will pack up, and to-morrow I shall expect your last commands as to my future behavior.”

With these words the negro took his leave.

VI.

“It is high time I were a watchman again,” thought Philip. “I am getting both myself and my substitute into scrapes he will find it hard to get out of—and this makes the difference between a peasant and a prince. One is no better off than the other. Good heavens! what stupid things these court lords are doing which we do not dream of with our lanterns and staff in hand, or when at the spade. We think they lead the lives of angels, without sin or care. Pretty piece of business! Within a quarter of an hour I have heard of more rascally tricks than I ever played in my whole life. And—” but his reverie was interrupted by a whisper.

“So lonely, Prince! I consider myself happy in having a minute’s conversation with your Royal Highness.”

Philip looked at the speaker; and he was a miner, covered over with gold and jewels.

“But one instant,” said the mask. “The business is pressing, and deeply concerns you.”

“Who are you?” inquired Philip.

“Count Bodenlos, the Minister of Finance, at your Highness’s service,” answered the miner, and showed his face, which looked as if it were a second mask, with its little eyes and copper-colored nose.

“Well, then, my lord, what are your commands?”

“May I speak openly? I waited on your Royal Highness thrice, and was never admitted to the honor of an audience; and yet—Heaven is my witness—no man in all this court has a deeper interest in your Royal Highness than I have.”

“I am greatly obliged to you,” replied Philip; “what is your business just now? But be quick.”

“May I venture to speak of the house of Abraham Levi?”

“As much as you like.”

“They have applied to me about the fifty thousand dollars which you owe them, and threaten to apply to the King. And you remember your promise to his Majesty, when last he paid your debts.”

“Can’t the people wait?” asked Philip.

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“No more than the Brothers, goldsmiths, who demand their seventy-five thousand dollars.”

“It is all one to me. If the people won’t wait for their money, I must—”

“No hasty resolution, my gracious Lord! I have it in my power to make everything comfortable, if—”

“Well, if what?”

“If you will honor me by listening to me one moment. I hope to have no difficulty in redeeming all your debts. The house of Abraham Levi has bought up immense quantities of corn, so that the price is very much raised. A decree against importation will raise it three or four percent. higher. By giving Abraham Levi the monopoly, the business will be arranged. The house erases your debt, and pays off your seventy-five thousand dollars to the goldsmiths, and I give you over the receipts. But everything depends on my continuing for another year at the head of the Finance. If Baron Griefensack succeeds in ejecting me from the Ministry, I shall be unable to serve your Royal Highness as I could wish. If your Highness will leave the party of Griefensack, our point is gained. For me, it is a matter of perfect indifference whether I remain in office or not. I sigh for repose. But for your Royal Highness, it is a matter of great moment. If I have not the mixing of the pack, I lose the game.”

Philip for some time did not know what answer to make. At last, while the Finance Minister, in expectation of his reply, took a pinch out of his snuff-box set with jewels, Philip said:

“If I rightly understand you, Sir Count, you would starve the country a little, in order to pay my debts. Consider, sir, what misery you will cause. And will the King consent to it?”

“If I remain in office I will answer for that, my gracious Lord! When the price of corn rises, the King will, of course, think of permitting importation, and prevent exportation by levying heavy imposts. The permission to do so is given to the house of Abraham Levi, and they export as much as they choose. But, as I said before, if Griefensack gets the helm, nothing can be done. For the first year he would be obliged to attend strictly to his duty, in order to be able afterwards to feather his nest at the expense of the country. He must first make sure of his ground. He is dreadfully grasping!”

“A pretty project,” answered Philip; “and how long do you think a finance minister must be in office before he can lay his shears on the flock to get wool enough for himself and me?”

“Oh, if he has his wits about him, he may manage it in a year.”

“Then the King ought to be counselled to change his finance minister every twelve months, if he wishes to be faithfully and honorably served.”

“I hope, your Royal Highness, that since I have had the Exchequer, the King and Court have been faithfully served?”

“I believe you, Count, and the poor people believe you still more. Already they scarcely know how to pay their rates and taxes. You should treat us with a little more consideration, Count.”

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“Us!—don’t I do everything for the Court?”

“No! I mean the people. You should have a little more consideration for them.”

“I appreciate what your Royal Highness says; but I serve the King and the Court, and the people are not to be considered. The country is his private property, and the people are only useful to him as increasing the value of the land. But this is no time to discuss the old story about the interests of the people. I beg your Royal Highness’ answer to my propositions. Shall I have the honor to discharge your debts on the above specified conditions?”

“Answer,—no—never, never! at the expense of hundreds and thousands of starving families.”

“But, your Royal Highness, if, in addition to the clearance of your debts, I make the house of Abraham Levi present you with fifty thousand dollars in hard cash? I think it may afford you that sum. The house will gain so much by the operation, that—”

“Perhaps it may be able to give *you* also a mark of its regard.”

“Your Highness is pleased to jest with me. I gain nothing by the affair. My whole object is to obtain the protection of your Royal Highness.”

“You are very polite!”

“I may hope, then, Prince? My duty is to be of service to you. To-morrow I shall send for Abraham, and conclude the arrangement with him. I shall have the honor to present your Royal Highness with the receipt for all your debts, besides the gift of fifty thousand dollars.”

“Go, I want to hear no more of it.”

“And your Royal Highness will honor me with your favor? For unless I am in the Ministry, it is impossible for me to deal with Abraham Levi so as—”

“I wish to Heaven you and your Ministry and Abraham Levi were all three on the Blocksberg! I tell you what, unless you lower the price of corn, and take away the monopoly from that infernal Jew, I’ll go this moment and reveal your villainy to the King, and get you and Abraham Levi banished from the country. See to it—I’ll keep my word.” Philip turned away in a rage, and proceeded into the dancing-room, leaving the Minister of Finance petrified with amazement.

VII.

“When does your Royal Highness require the carriage?” whispered a stout little Dutch merchant in a bob-wig.

“Not at all,” answered Philip.

“’Tis after half-past eleven, and the beautiful singer expects you. She will tire of waiting.”

“Let her sing something to cheer her.”

“How, Prince? Have you changed your mind? Would you leave the captivating Rollina in the lurch, and throw away the golden opportunity you have been sighing for for two months? The letter you sent to-day, inclosing the diamond watch, did wonders. The proud but fragile beauty surrenders. This morning you were in raptures, and now you are as cold as ice! What is the cause of the change?”

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“That is my business, not yours,” said Philip.

“I had your orders to join you at half-past eleven. Perhaps you have other engagements?”

“Perhaps.”

“A petit souper with the Countess Born? She is not present here; at least among all the masks I can’t trace her out. I should know her among a thousand by that graceful walk and her peculiar way of carrying her little head—eh, Prince?”

“Well, but if it were so, there would be no necessity for making you my confidant, would there?”

“I will take the hint, and be silent. But won’t you at any rate send to the Signora Rollina to let her know you are not coming?”

“If I have sighed for her for two months, she had better sigh a month or two for me. I sha’n’t go near her.”

“So that beautiful necklace which you sent her for a New Year’s present was all for nothing?”

“As far as I am concerned.”

“Will you break with her entirely?”

“There is nothing between us to break, that I know of.”

“Well, then, since you speak so plainly, I may tell you something which you perhaps know already. Your love for the Signora has hitherto kept me silent; but now that you have altered your mind about her, I can no longer keep the secret from you. You are deceived.”

“By whom?”

“By the artful singer. She would divide her favors between your Royal Highness and a Jew.”

“A Jew?”

“Yes! with the son of Abraham Levi.”

“Is that rascal everywhere?”

“So your Highness did not know it? but I am telling you the exact truth; if it were not for your Royal Highness, she would be his mistress. I am only sorry you gave her that watch.”

“I don’t regret it at all.”

“The jade deserves to be whipped.”

“Few people meet their deserts,” answered Philip.

“Too true, too true, your Royal Highness. For instance, I have discovered a girl—O Prince, there is not such another in this city or in the whole world! Few have seen this angel.—Pooh! Rollina is nothing to her. Listen—a girl tall and slender as a palm tree—-with a complexion like the red glow of evening upon snow—eyes like sunbeams—rich golden tresses,—in short, the most beautiful creature I ever beheld—a Venus—a goddess in rustic attire. Your Highness, we must give her chase.”

“A peasant girl?”

“A mere rustic; but then you must see her yourself, and you will love her. But my descriptions are nothing. Imagine the embodiment of all that you can conceive most charming—add to that, artlessness, grace, and innocence. But the difficulty is to catch sight of her. She seldom leaves her mother. I know her seat in church, and have watched her for many Sundays past, as she walked with her mother to the Elm-Gate. I have ascertained that a handsome young fellow, a gardener, is making court to her. He can’t marry her, for he is a poor devil, and she has nothing. The mother is the widow of a poor weaver.”

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“And the mother’s name is?”

“Widow Bittner, in Milk Street; and the daughter, fairest of flowers, is in fact called Rose.”

Philip’s blood boiled at the sound of the beloved name. His first inclination was to knock the communicative Dutchman down. He restrained himself, however, and only asked:

“Are you the devil himself?”

“’T is good news, is it not? I have taken some steps in the matter already, but you must see her first. But perhaps such a pearl has not altogether escaped your keen observation? Do you know her?”

“Intimately.”

“So much the better. Have I been too lavish of my praises? You confess their truth? She sha’n’t escape us. We must go together to the widow; you must play the philanthropist. You have heard of the widow’s poverty, and must insist on relieving it. You take an interest in the good woman; enter into her misfortunes; leave a small present at each visit, and by this means become acquainted with Rose. The rest follows, of course. The gardener can be easily got out of the way, or perhaps a dozen or two dollars slipped quietly into his hand may—”

Philip’s rage broke forth.

“I’ll throttle you—”

“If the gardener makes a fuss?” interposed the Dutchman. “Leave me to settle this matter. I’ll get him kidnapped, and sent to the army to fight for his country. In the meantime you get possession of the field; for the girl has a peasant’s attachment for the fellow, and it will not be easy to get the nonsense out of her head, which she has been taught by the canaille. But I will give her some lessons, and then—”

“I’ll break your neck.”

“Your Highness is too good. But if your Highness would use your influence with the King to procure me the Chamberlain’s key—”

“I wish I could procure you—”

“Oh, don’t flatter me, your Highness. Had I only known you thought so much of her beauty, she would have been yours long ago.”

“Not a word more,” cried the enraged Philip, in a smothered voice; for he dared not speak aloud, he was so surrounded by maskers, who were listening, dancing, talking, as they passed him, and he might have betrayed himself; “not a word more!”

“No, there will be more than words. Deeds shall show my sincerity. You may advance. You are wont to conquer. The outposts will be easily taken. The gardener I will manage, and the mother will range herself under your gilded banners. Then the fortress will be won!”

“Sir, if you venture,” said Philip, who now could hardly contain himself. It was with great difficulty he refrained from open violence, and he clutched the arm of the Dutchman with the force of a vice.

“Your Highness, for Heaven’s sake, moderate your joy. I shall scream—you are mashing my arm!”

“If you venture to go near that innocent girl, I will demolish every bone in your body.”

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“Good, good,” screamed the Dutchman, in intense pain; “only let go my arm.”

“If I find you anywhere near Milk Street, I’ll dash your miserable brains out. So look to it.”

The Dutchman seemed almost stupefied; trembling, he said:

“May it please your Highness, I could not imagine you really loved the girl as it seems you do.”

“I love her! I will own it before the whole world!”

“And are loved in return?”

“That’s none of your business. Never mention her name to me again. Do not even think of her; it would be a stain upon her purity. Now you know what I think. Be off!”

Philip twirled the unfortunate Dutchman round as he let go his arm, and that worthy gentleman slunk out of the hall.

VIII.

In the meantime Philip’s substitute supported his character of watchman on the snow-covered streets. It is scarcely necessary to say that this was none other than Prince Julian who had taken a notion to join the watch—his head being crazed by the fire of the sweet wine. He attended to the directions left by Philip, and went his rounds, and called the hour with great decorum, except that, instead of the usual watchman’s verses, he favored the public with rhymes of his own. He was cogitating a new stanza, when the door of a house beside him opened, and a well-wrapped-up girl beckoned to him, and ran into the shadow of the house.

The Prince left his stanza half finished, and followed the apparition. A soft hand grasped his in the darkness, and a voice whispered:

“Good-evening, dear Philip. Speak low, that nobody may hear us. I have only got away from the company for one moment to speak to you as you passed. Are you happy to see me?”

“Blest as a god, my angel,—who could be otherwise than happy by thy side?”

“I’ve some good news for you, Philip. You must sup at our house to-morrow evening. My mother has allowed me to ask you. You ’ll come?”

“For the whole evening, and as many more as you wish. Would we might be together till the end of the world! ’T would be a life fit for gods!”

“Listen, Philip; in half an hour I shall be at St. Gregory’s. I shall expect you there. You won’t fail me? Don’t keep me waiting long—we shall have a walk together. Go now—-we may be discovered.” She tried to go, but Julian held her back and threw his arms round her.

“What, wilt thou leave me so coldly?” he said, and tried to press a kiss upon her lips.

Rose did not know what to think of this boldness, for Philip had always been modest, and never dared more than kiss her hand, except once, when her mother had forbidden their meeting again. They had then exchanged their first kiss in great sorrow and in great love, but never since then. She struggled to free herself, but Julian held her firm, till at last she had to buy her liberty by submitting to the kiss, and begged him to go. But Julian seemed not at all inclined to move.

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“What! go? I’m not such a fool as that comes to! You think I love my horn better than you? No indeed!”

“But then it isn’t right, Philip.”

“Not right? why not, my beauty? there is nothing against kissing in the ten commandments.”

“Why, if we could marry, perhaps you might—but you know very well we can’t marry, and—”

“Not marry? why not? You can marry me any day you like.”

“Philip!—why will you talk such folly? You know we must not think of such a thing.”

“But *I* think very seriously about it—if you would consent.”

“You are unkind to speak thus. Ah, Philip, I had a dream last night.”

“A dream—what was it?”

“You had won a prize in the lottery; we were both so happy! you had bought a beautiful garden, handsomer than any in the city. It was a little paradise of flowers—and there were large beds of vegetables, and the trees were laden with fruit. And when I awoke, Philip, I felt so wretched—I wished I had not dreamed such a happy dream. You’ve nothing in the lottery, Philip, have you? Have you really won anything? The drawing took place to-day.”

“How much must I have gained to win you too?”

“Ah, Philip, if you had only gained a thousand dollars, you might buy such a pretty garden!”

“A thousand dollars! And what if it were more?”

“Ah, Philip—what? is it true? is it really? Don’t deceive me! ’twill be worse than the dream. You had a ticket! and you’ve won!— own it! own it!”

“All you can wish for.”

Rose flung her arms around his neck in the extremity of her joy, and kissed him.

“More than the thousand dollars? and will they pay you the whole?”

Her kiss made the Prince forget to answer. It was so strange to hold a pretty form in his arms, receive its caresses, and to know they were not meant for him.

“Answer me, answer me!” cried Rose, impatiently. “Will they give you all that money?”

“They’ve done it already—and if it will add to your happiness I will hand it to you this moment.”

“What! have you got it with you?”

The Prince took out his purse, which he had filled with money in expectation of some play.

“Take it and weigh it, my girl,” he said, placing it in her hand and kissing her again. “This, then, makes you mine!”

“Oh, not *this*—nor all the gold in the world, if you were not my own dear Philip!”

“And how if I had given you twice as much as all this money, and yet were not your own dear Philip?”

“I would fling the purse at your feet, and make you a very polite curtsey,” said Rose.

A door now opened; the light streamed down the steps, and the laughing voices of girls were heard. Rose whispered:

“In half an hour, at St. Gregory’s,” and ran up the steps, leaving the Prince in the darkness. Disconcerted by the suddenness of the parting, and his curiosity excited by his ignorance of the name of his new acquaintance, and not even having had a full view of her face, he consoled himself with the rendezvous at St. Gregory’s Church door. This he resolved to keep, though it was evident that all the tenderness which had been bestowed on him was intended for his friend the watchman.

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IX.

The interview with Rose, or the coldness of the night, increased the effect of the wine to such an extent that the mischievous propensities of the young Prince got the upper hand of him. Standing amidst a crowd of people, in the middle of the street, he blew so lustily on his horn that the women screamed, and the men gasped with fear. He called the hour, and then shouted, at the top of his lungs:

> The bus'ness of our lovely state
> Is stricken by the hand of fate—
> Even our maids, both light and brown,
> Can find no sale in all the town;
> They deck themselves with all their arts,
> But no one buys their worn-out hearts."

"Shame! shame!" cried several female voices from the window at the end of this complimentary effusion, which, however, was crowned with a loud laugh from the men. "Bravo, watchman!" cried some; "Encore! encore!" shouted others. "How dare you, fellow, insult ladies in the open street?" growled a young lieutenant, who had a very pretty girl on his arm.

"Mr. Lieutenant," answered a miller, "unfortunately watchmen always tell the truth, and the lady on your arm is a proof of it. Ha! young jade, do you know me? do you know who I am? Is it right for a betrothed bride to be gadding at night about the streets with other men? To-morrow your mother shall hear of this. I'll have nothing more to do with you!"

The girl hid her face, and nudged the young officer to lead her away. But the lieutenant, like a brave soldier, scorned to retreat from the miller, and determined to keep the field. He therefule made use of a full round of oaths, which were returned with interest, and a sabre was finally resorted to, with some flourishes; but two Spanish cudgels were threateningly held over the head of the lieutenant by a couple of stout townsmen, while one of them, who was a broad-shouldered beer-brewer, cried: "Don't make any more fuss about the piece of goods beside you—she ain't worth it. The miller's a good fellow, and what he says is true, and the watchman's right too. A plain tradesman can hardly venture to marry now. All the women wish to marry above their station. Instead of darning stockings, they read romances; instead of working in the kitchen, they run after comedies and concerts. Their houses are dirty, and they are walking out, dressed like princesses; all they bring a husband as a dowry are handsome dresses, lace ribbons, intrigues, romances, and idleness! Sir, I speak from experience; I should have married long since, if girls were not spoiled."

The spectators laughed heartily, and the lieutenant slowly put back his sword, saying peevishly: “It’s a little too much to be obliged to hear a sermon from the canaille.”

“What! Canaille!” cried a smith, who held the second cudgel. “Do you call those canaille who feed you noble idlers by duties and taxes? Your licentiousness is the cause of our domestic discords, and noble ladies would not have so much cause to mourn if you had learned both to pray and to work.”

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Several young officers had gathered together already, and so had some mechanics; and the boys, in the meantime, threw snowballs among both parties, that their share in the fun might not be lost. The first ball hit the noble lieutenant on the nose, and thinking it an attack from the canaille, he raised his sabre. The fight began.

The Prince, who had laughed amazingly at the first commencement of the uproar, had betaken himself to another region, and felt quite unconcerned as to the result. In the course of his wanderings, he came to the palace of Count Bodenlos, the Minister of Finance, with whom, as Philip had discovered at the masquerade, the Prince was not on the best terms. The Countess had a large party. Julian saw the lighted windows, and still feeling poetically disposed, he planted himself opposite the balcony, and blew a peal on his horn. Several ladies and gentlemen opened the shutters, because they had nothing better to do, and listened to what he should say.

“Watchman,” cried one of them, “sing us a New Year’s greeting!”

This invitation brought a fresh accession of the Countess’ party to the windows. Julian called the hour in the usual manner, and sang, loud enough to be distinctly heard inside:

“Ye who groan with heavy debts,
And swift approaching failure frets,
Pray the Lord that He this hour
May raise you to some place of power;
And while the nation wants and suffers,
Fill your own from the people’s coffers.”

“Outrageous!” screamed the lady of the Minister; “who is the insolent wretch that dares such an insult?”

“Pleashe your exshellenshy,” answered Julian, imitating the Jewish dialect in voice and manner, “I vash only intendsh to shing you a pretty shong. I am de Shew Abraham Levi, vell known at dish court. Your ladyship knowsh me ver’ well.”

“How dare you tell such a lie, you villain?” exclaimed a voice, trembling with rage, at one of the windows; “how dare you say you are Abraham Levi? I am Abraham Levi! You are a cheat!”

“Call the police!” cried the Countess. “Have that man arrested!”

At these words the party confusedly withdrew from the windows. Nor did the Prince remain where he was, but quickly effected his escape through a cross-street. A crowd of servants rushed out of the palace, led by the secretaries of the Finance Minister, and commenced a search for the offender. “We have him!” cried some, as the rest eagerly

approached. It was in fact the real guardian of the night, who was carefully perambulating his beat, in innocent unconsciousness of any offence. In spite of all he could say, he was disarmed and carried off to the watch-house, and charged with causing a disturbance by singing libellous songs. The officer of the police shook his head at the unaccountable event, and said: “We have already one watchman in custody, whose verses about some girl caused a very serious affray between the town’s people and the garrison.”

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The prisoner would confess to nothing, but swore prodigiously at the tipsy young people who had disturbed him in the fulfilment of his duty. One of the secretaries of the Finance Minister repeated the whole verse to him. The soldiers standing about laughed aloud, but the ancient watchman swore with tears in his eyes that he had never thought of such a thing. While the examination was going on, and one of the secretaries of the Finance Minister began to be doubtful whether the poor watchman was really in fault or not, an uproar was heard outside, and loud cries of “Watch, watch!”

The guard rushed out, and in a few minutes the Field-Marshal entered the office, accompanied by the captain of the guards on duty. “Have that scoundrel locked up tight,” said the Marshal, pointing behind him—and two soldiers brought in a watchman, whom they held close prisoner, and whom they had disarmed of his staff and horn.

“Are the watchmen gone all mad to-night?” exclaimed the chief of police.

“I’ll have the rascal punished for his infamous verses,” said the Field-Marshal angrily.

“Your excellency,” exclaimed the trembling watchman, “as true as I live, I never made a verse in my born days.”

“Silence, knave!” roared the Marshal. “I’ll have you hanged for them! And if you contradict me again, I’ll cut you in two on the spot.”

The police officer respectfully observed to the Field-Marshal that there must be some poetical epidemic among the watchmen, for three had been brought before him within the last quarter of an hour, accused of the same offence.

“Gentlemen,” said the Marshal to the officers who had accompanied him, “since the scoundrel refuses to confess, it will be necessary to take down from your remembrance the worlds of his atrocious libel. Let them be written down while you still recollect them. Come, who can say them?”

The officer of police wrote to the dictation of the gentlemen who remembered the whole verses between them:

“On empty head a flaunting feather,
A long queue tied with tape and leather;
Padded breast and waist so little,
Make the soldier to a tittle;
By cards and dance, and dissipation,
He’s sure to win a Marshal’s station.”

“Do you deny, you rascal,” cried the Field-Marshal to the terrified watchman; “do you deny that you sang these infamous lines as I was coming out of my house?”

“They may sing it who like, it was not me,” said the watchman.

“Why did you run away, then, when you saw me?”

“I did not run away.”

“What!” said the two officers who had accompanied the Marshal—“not run away? Were you not out of breath when at last we laid hold of you there by the market?”

“Yes, but it was with fright at being so ferociously attacked. I am trembling yet in every limb.”

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“Lock the obstinate dog up till the morning,” said the Marshal; “he will come to his senses by that time!” With these words the wrathful dignitary went away. These incidents had set the whole police force of the city on the qui vive. In the next ten minutes two more watchmen were brought to the office on similar charges with the others. One was accused of singing a libel under the window of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, in which it was insinuated that there were no affairs to which he was more foreign than those of his own department. The other had sung some verses before the door of the Bishop’s palace, informing him that the “lights of the church” were by no means deficient in tallow, but gave a great deal more smoke than illumination. The Prince, who had wrought the poor watchmen all this woe, was always lucky enough to escape, and grew bolder and bolder with every new attempt. The affair was talked of everywhere. The Minister of Police, who was at cards with the King, was informed of the insurrection among the hitherto peaceful watchmen, and, as a proof of it, some of the verses were given to him in writing. The King laughed very heartily at the doggerel verse about the miserable police, who were always putting their noses into other people’s family affairs, but could never smell anything amiss in their own, and were therefore lawful game, and ordered the next poetical watchman who should be taken to be brought before him. He broke up the card-table, for he saw that the Minister of Police had lost his good humor.

X.

In the dancing-hall next to the card-room, Philip had looked at his watch, and discovered that the time of his appointment with Rose at St. Gregory’s had nearly come. He was by no means sorry at the prospect of giving back his silk mantle and plumed bonnet to his substitute, for he began to find high life not quite to his taste. As he was going to the door, the Negro once more came up to him, and whispered: “Your Highness, Duke Herrman is seeking for you everywhere.” Philip shook his head impatiently and hurried out, followed by the Negro. When they got to the ante-chamber, the Negro cried out, “By Heaven, here comes the Duke!”—and slipped back into the hall.

A tall black mask walked fiercely up to Philip, and said: “Stay a moment, sir; I’ve a word or two to say to you; I’ve been seeking for you long.”

“Quick, then,” said Philip, “for I have no time to lose.”

“I would not waste a moment, sir; I have sought you long enough; you owe me satisfaction, you have injured me infamously.”

“Not that I am aware of.”

“You don’t know me, perhaps,” said the Duke, lifting up his mask; “now that you see me, your own conscience will save me any more words. I demand satisfaction. You and the cursed Salmoni have deceived me!”

“I know nothing about it,” said Philip.

“You got up that shameful scene in the cellar of the baker’s daughter. It was at your instigation that Colonel Kalt made an assault upon me with a cudgel.”

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“There’s not a word of truth in what you say.”

“What!—you deny it? The Lady Blankenswerd, the Marshal’s lady, was an eye-witness of it all, and she has told me every circumstance.”

“She has told your grace a fancy tale—I have had nothing to do with it; if you made an ass of yourself in the baker’s cellar, that was your own fault.”

“I ask, once more, will you give me satisfaction? If not, I will expose you. Follow me instantly to the King. You shall either fight with me, or—go to his Majesty.”

Philip was nonplussed. “Your grace,” he said, “I have no wish either to fight with you or to go to the King.”

This was indeed the truth, for he was afraid he should be obliged to unmask, and would be punished, of course, for the part he had played. He therefore tried to get off by every means, and watched the door to seize a favorable moment for effecting his escape. The Duke, on the other hand, observed the uneasiness of the Prince (as he thought him), and waxed more valorous every minute. At last he seized poor Philip by the arm, and was dragging him into the hall.

“What do you want with me?” said Philip, sorely frightened, and shook off the Duke.

“To the King. He shall hear how shamefully you insult a guest at his court.”

“Very good,” replied Philip, who saw no hope of escape, except by continuing the character of the Prince. “Very good. Come, then, I am ready. By good luck I happen to have the agreement with me between you and the baker’s daughter, in which you promise—”

“Nonsense! stuff!” answered the Duke, “that was only a piece of fun, which may be allowed surely with a baker’s daughter. Show it if you like, I will explain all that.”

But it appeared that the Duke was not quite so sure of the explanation, for he no longer urged Philip to go before the King. He, however, insisted more earnestly than ever on getting into his carriage, and going that moment—Heaven knows where—to decide the matter with sword and pistol, an arrangement which did not suit our watchman at all. Philip pointed out the danger and consequences of such a proceeding, but the Duke overruled all objections. He had made every preparation, and when it was over he would leave the city that same night.

“If you are not the greatest coward in Europe, you will follow me to the carriage—-Prince!”

“I—am—no—prince,” at last stuttered Philip, now driven to extremities.

“You are! Everybody recognized you at the ball. I know you by your hat. You sha’n’t escape me.”

Philip lifted up his mask, and showed the Duke his face.

“Now, then, am I a prince?”

Duke Herrman, when he saw the countenance of a man he had never seen before, started back, and stood gazing as if he had been petrified. To have revealed his secrets to a perfect stranger! ’T was horrible beyond conception! But before he had recovered from his surprise, Philip had opened the door and effected his escape.

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XI.

The moment he found himself at liberty he took off his hat and feathers, and wrapping them in his silk mantle, rushed through the streets towards St. Gregory's, carrying them under his arm. There stood Rose already, in a corner of the high church door, expecting his arrival.

"Ah, Philip, dear Philip," she said, pressing his hand, "how happy you have made me! how lucky we are! I was very uneasy to get away from my friend's house, and I have been waiting here this quarter of an hour, but never cared for the frost and snow—my happiness was so great: I am so glad you're come back."

"And I too, dear Rose, thank God that I have got back to you. May the eagles fly away with these trinkum-trankums of great people. But I'll tell you some other time of the scenes I've had. Tell me now, my darling, how you are, and whether you love me still!"

"Ah! Philip, you've become a great man now, and it would be better to ask if you still care anything for me."

"Thunder! How came you to know so soon that I've been a great man?"

"Why, you told me yourself. Ah! Philip, Philip, I only hope you won't be proud, now that you've grown so rich. I am but a poor girl, and not good enough for you now—and I have been thinking, Philip, if you forsake me, I would rather have had you continue a poor gardener. I should fret myself to death if you forsook me."

"What are you talking about, Rose? 'T is true that for one half-hour I have been a prince; 't was but a joke, and I want no more of such jokes in my life. Now I am a watchman again, and as poor as ever. To be sure, I have five thousand dollars in my pocket, that I got from a Mameluke; that would make us rich, but unfortunately they don't belong to me!"

"You're speaking nonsense, Philip," said Rose, giving him the purse of gold that the Prince had given her. "Here, take back your money, 't is too heavy for my bag."

"What should I do with all this gold? Where did you get it, Rose?"

"You won it in the lottery, Philip."

"What! have I won? and they told me at the office my number was not yet out. I had hoped and wished that it might come to give us a setting up in the world; but gardener Redman said to me as I went a second time towards the office: 'Poor Philip—a blank.' Huzzah! I have won! Now I will buy a large garden and marry you. How much is it?"

“Are you crazy, Philip, or have you drunk too much? You must know better than I can tell you how much it is. I only looked at it quietly under the table at my friend’s, and was frightened to see so many glittering coins, all of gold, Philip. Ah! then I thought, no wonder Philip was so impertinent—for, you know, you were very impertinent, Philip,—-but I can’t blame you for it. Oh, I could throw my own arms round your neck and cry for joy.”

“Rose, if you will do it I shall make no objections. But there’s some misunderstanding here. Who was it that gave you this money, and told you it was my prize in the lottery? I have my ticket safe in my drawer at home, and nobody has asked me for it.”

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“Ah! Philip, don’t play your jokes on me! you yourself told me it half an hour ago, and gave me the purse with your own hand.”

“Rose—try to recollect yourself. This morning I saw you at mass, and we agreed to meet here to-night, but since that time I have not seen you for an instant.”

“No, except half an hour ago, when I saw you at Steinman’s door. But what is that bundle under your arm? why are you without a hat this cold night? Philip! Philip! be careful. All that gold may turn your brain. You’ve been in some tavern, Philip, and have drunk more than you should. But tell me, what is in the bundle? Why—here’s a woman’s silk gown.—Philip, Philip, where have you been?”

“Certainly not with you half an hour ago; you want to play tricks on me, I fancy; where have you got that money, I should like to know?”

“Answer me first, Philip, where you got that woman’s gown. Where have you been, sir?”

They were both impatient for explanations, both a little jealous— and finally began to quarrel.

XII.

But as this was a lovers’ quarrel, it ended as lovers’ quarrels invariably do. When Rose took out her white pocket-handkerchief, put it to her beautiful eyes, and turned away her head as the sighs burst forth from her breast, this sole argument proved instantly that she was in the right, and Philip decidedly in the wrong. He confessed he was to blame for everything, and told her that he had been at a masked ball, and that his bundle was not a silk gown, but a man’s mantle and a hat and feathers. And now he had to undergo a rigid examination. Every maiden knows that a masked ball is a dangerous maze for unprotected hearts. It is like plunging into a whelming sea of dangers, and you will be drowned if you are not a good swimmer. Rose did not consider Philip the best swimmer in the world—it is difficult to say why. He denied having danced, but when she asked him, he could not deny having talked with some feminine masks. He related the whole story to her, yet would constantly add: “The ladies were of high rank, and they took me for another.” Rose doubted him a little, but she suppressed her resentment until he said they took him for Prince Julian. Then she shook her little head, and still more when she heard that Prince Julian was transformed into a watchman while Philip was at the ball. But he smothered her doubts by saying that in a few minutes the Prince would appear at St. Gregory’s Church and exchange his watch-coat for the mask.

Rose, in return, related all her adventure; but when she came to the incident of the kiss —

“Hold there!” cried Philip; “I didn’t kiss you, nor, I am sure, did you kiss me in return.”

“I am sure ’twas *intended* for you, then,” replied Rose, whilst her lover rubbed his hair down, for fear it should stand on end.

“If ’twas not you,” continued Rose, anxiously, “I will believe all that you have been telling me.”

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But as she went on in her story a light seemed to break in on her, and she exclaimed: “And, after all, I do not believe it was Prince Julian in your coat!”

Philip was certain it was, and cried: “The rascal! He stole my kisses—now I understand! That’s the reason why he wanted to take my place and gave me his mask!” And now the stories he had heard at the masquerade came into Philip’s head. He asked if anybody had called at her mother’s to offer her money; if any gentleman was much about Milk Street; if she saw any one watching her at church; but to all his questions her answers were so satisfactory, that it was impossible to doubt her total ignorance of all the machinations of the rascally courtiers. He warned her against all the advances of philanthropical and compassionate princes—and Rose warned him against the dangers of a masked ball and adventures with ladies of rank, by which many young men have been made unhappy—and as everything was now forgiven, in consideration of the kiss not been wilfully bestowed, he was on the point of claiming for himself the one of which be had been cheated, when his designs were interrupted by an unexpected incident. A man out of breath with his rapid flight rushed against them. By the great-coat, staff, and horn, Philip recognized his deputy. He, on the other hand, snatched at the silk cloak and hat. “Ah! sir,” said Philip, “here are your things. I would not change places with you again in this world! I should be no gainer by the operation.”

“Quick! quick!” cried the Prince, and threw the watchman’s apparel on the snow and fastened on his mask, hat, and cloak. Philip returned to his old beaver and coat, and took up the lantern and staff. Rose had shrunk back into the door.

“I promised thee a dole, comrade—but it’s a positive fact—I have not got my purse.”

“I’ve got it here,” said Philip, and held it out to him. “You gave it to my intended there; but, please your Highness, I must forbid all presents in that quarter.”

“Comrade, keep what you’ve got, and be off as quick as you can. You are not safe here.”

The Prince was flying off as he spoke, but Philip held him by the mantle.

“One thing, my Lord, we have to settle—”

“Run! watchman! I tell you. They’re in search of you.”

“I have nothing to run for. But your purse, here—”

“Keep it, I tell you. Fly! if you can run.”

“And a billet of Marshal Blankenswerd’s for five thousand dollars—”

“Ha! what the plague do you know about Marshal Blankenswerd?”

“He said it was a gambling debt he owed you. He and his lady start to-night for their estates in Poland.”

“Are you mad? how do you know that? Who gave you the message for me?”

“And, your Highness, the Minister of Finance will pay all your debts to Abraham Levi and others if you will use your influence with the King to keep him in office.”

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“Watchman! you’ve been tampering with Old Nick.”

“But I rejected the offer.”

“*You* rejected the offer of the Minister?”

“Yes, your Highness. And, moreover, I have entirely reconciled the Baroness Bonau with the Chamberlain Pilzou.”

“Which of us two is a fool?”

“Another thing, your Highness. Signora Rollina is a bad woman. I have heard of some love affairs of hers. You are deceived—I therefore thought her not worthy of your attentions, and put off the meeting to-night at her house.”

“Signora Rollina! How did you come to hear of her?”

“Another thing. Duke Herrman is terribly enraged about that business in the cellar. He is going to complain of you to the King.”

“The Duke! Who told you about that?”

“Himself. You are not secure yet—but I don’t think he’ll go to the King, for I threatened him with his agreement with the baker’s daughter. But he wants to fight you; be on yoor guard.”

“Once for all—do you know how the Duke was informed of all this?”

“Through the Marshal’s wife. She told all, and confessed she had acted the witch in the ghost-raising.”

The Prince took Philip by the arm. “My good fellow,” he said, “you are no watchman.” He turned his face towards a lamp, and started when he saw the face of this strange man.

“Are you possessed by Satan, or...Who are you?” said Julian, who had now become quite sober.

“I am Philip Stark, the gardener, son of old Gottlieb Stark, the watchman,” said Philip, quietly.

XIII.

“Lay hold on him! That’s the man!” cried many voices, and Philip, Rose, and Julian saw themselves surrounded by six lusty servants of the police. Rose screamed, Philip took her hand, and told her not to be alarmed. The Prince clapped his hand on Philip’s shoulder.

“’Tis a stupid business,” he said, “and you should have escaped when I told you. But don’t be frightened; there shall no harm befall you.”

“That’s to be seen,” said one of the captors. “In the meantime he must come along with us.”

“Where to?” inquired Philip; “I am doing my duty. I am watchman of this beat.”

“That’s the reason we take you. Come.”

The Prince stepped forward. “Let the man go, good people,” he said, and searched in all his pockets for his purse. As he found it nowhere, he was going to whisper to Philip to give it him, but the police tore them apart, and one of them shouted: “On! We can’t stop to talk here.”

“The masked fellow must go with us too; he is suspicious-looking.”

“Not so,” exclaimed Philip; “you are in search of the watchman. Here I am, if you choose to answer for taking me from my duty. But let this gentleman go.”

“We don’t want any lessons from you in our duty,” replied the sergeant; “march! all of them!”

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“The damsel too?” asked Philip; “you don’t want her surely!”

“No, she may go; but we must see her face, and take down her name and residence; it may be of use.”

“She is the daughter of Widow Bittner,” said Philip; and was not a little enraged when the whole party took Rose to a lamp and gazed on her tearful face.

“Go home, Rose, and don’t be alarmed on my account,” said Philip, trying to comfort her; “my conscience is clear.”

But Rose sobbed so as to move even the policemen to pity her. The Prince, availing himself of the opportunity, attempted to spring out of his captors’ hands, but one of the men was a better jumper than he, and put an obstacle in his way.

“Hallo!” cried the sergeant, “this conscience is not quite so clear; hold him firm; march!”

“Whither?” said the Prince.

“Directly to the Minister of Police.”

“Listen,” said the Prince, seriously but affably, for he did not like the turn affairs were taking, as he was anxious to keep his watchman frolic concealed. “I have nothing to do with this business. I belong to the court. If you venture to force me to go with you, you will be sorry for it when you are feasting on bread and water tomorrow in prison.”

“For Heaven’s sake, let the gentleman go,” cried Philip; “I give you my word he is a great lord, and will make you repent your conduct. He is—”

“Hush; be silent,” interrupted Julian; “tell no human being who I am. Whatever happens keep my name a secret. Do you hear? an entire secret from every one!”

“We do our duty,” said the sergeant, “and nobody can punish us for that; you may go to a prison yourself; we have often had fellows speak as high, and threaten as fiercely; forward!”

“Men! take advice; he is a distinguished man at court.”

“If it were a king himself he should go with us. He is a suspicious character, and we must do our duty.”

While the contest about the Prince went on, a carriage, with eight horses and outriders, bearing flambeaux, drove past the church.

“Stop!” said a voice from the carriage, as it was passing the crowd of policemen who had the Prince in custody.

The carriage stopped. The door flew open, and a gentleman, with a brilliant star on the breast of his surtout, leaped out. He pushed through the party, and examined the Prince from head to foot.

“I thought,” he said, “I knew the bird by his feathers. Mask, who are you?”

Julian was taken by surprise, for in the inquirer he recognized Duke Herrman.

“Answer me,” roared Herrman in a voice of thunder.

Julian shook his head, and made signs to the Duke to desist, but he pressed the question he upon him, being determined to know who it he had accosted at the masquerade. He asked the policemen. They stood with heads uncovered, and told him they had orders to bring the watchman instantly before the Minister of Police, for he had been singing wicked verses, they had heard some of them; that the mask had given himself out as some great lord of the court, but that they believed that to be a false pretence, and therefore considered it their duty to take him into custody.

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“The man is not of the court,” answered the Duke; “take my word for that. He himself clandestinely into the ball, and himself off for Prince Julian. I forced him to unmask, and detected the impostor, but he escaped me. I have informed the Lord Chamberlain; off with him to the palace! You have made a fine prize!”

With these words the Duke strode back to his carriage, and once more urging them not to let the villains escape, gave orders to drive on.

The Prince saw no chance left. To reveal himself now would be to make his night’s adventures the talk of the whole city. He thought it better to disclose his incognito to the Chamberlain or the Minister of Police. “Since it must be so, come on then,” he said; and the party marched forward, keeping a firm hand on the two prisoners.

XIV.

Phipip was not sure whether he was bewitched, or whether the whole business was not a dream, for it was a night such as he had never passed before in his life. He had nothing to blame himself for except that he had changed clothes with the Prince, and then, whether he would or no, been forced to support his character. He felt pretty safe, for it was the princely watchman who had been at fault, and he saw no occasion for his being committed. His heart beat, however, when they came to the palace. His coat, horn, and staff were taken from him. Julian spoke a few words to a young nobleman, and immediately the policemen were sent away. The Prince ascended the stairs, and Philip had to follow.

“Fear nothing,” said Julian, and left him. Philip was taken to a little ante-room, where he had to wait a good while. At last one of the royal grooms came to him, and said: “Come this way; the King will see you.”

Philip was distracted with fear. His knees shook so that he could hardly walk. He was led into a splendid chamber. The old King was sitting at a table, and laughing long and load; near him stood Prince Julian without a mask. Besides these, there was nobody in the room.

The King looked at Philip with a good-humored expression. “Tell me all—without missing a syllable—that you have done to-night.”

Philip took courage from the condescension of the old King, and told the whole story from beginning to end. He had the good sense, however, to conceal all he had heard among the courtiers that could turn to the prejudice of the Prince. The King laughed again and again, and at last took two gold-pieces from his pocket and gave them to Philip. “Here, my son, take these, but say not a word of your night’s adventures. Await

your trial; no harm shall cone of it to you. Now go, my friend, and remember what I have told you."

Philip knelt down at the King's feet and kissed his hand as he stammered some words of thanks. When he arose, and was leaving the room, Prince Julian said: "I beseech your Majesty to allow the young man to wait a few minutes outside. I have some compensation to make to him for the inconvenience he has suffered."

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The King, smiling, nodded his assent, and Philip left the apartment.

“Prince!” said the King, holding up his forefinger in a threatening manner to his son, “’tis well for you that you told me nothing but the truth. For this time I must pardon your wild scrape, but if such a thing happens again you will offend me. There will be no excuse for you! I must take Duke Herrman in hand myself. I shall not be sorry if we can get quit of him. As to the Ministers of Finance and Police. I must have further proofs of what you say. Go now, and give some present to the gardener. He has shown more discretion in your character than you have in his.”

The Prince took leave of the King, and having changed his dress in an ante-room, sent for Philip to go to his palace with him; there he made him go over—word for word—-everything that had occurred. When Philip had finished his narrative, the Prince clapped him on the shoulder and said: “Philip, listen! You’re a sensible fellow. I can confide in you, and I am satisfied with you. What you have done in my name with the Chamberlain Pilzou, the Countess Bonau, the Marshal and his wife, Colonel Kalt, and the Minister of Finance—I will maintain—as if I had done it myself. But, on the other hand, *you* must take all the blame of my doings with the horn and staff. As a penalty for verses, you shall lose your office of watchman. You shall be my head-gardener from this date, and have charge of my two gardens at Heimleben and Quellenthal. The money I gave your bride she shall keep as her marriage portion,—and I give you the order of Marshal Blankenswerd for five thousand dollars, as a mark of my regard. Go, now; be faithful and true!”

Who could be happier than Philip! He almost flew to Rose’s house. She had not yet gone to bed, but sat with her mother beside a table, and was weeping. He threw the purse on the table and said: “Rose, there is thy dowry! and here are five thousand dollars, which are mine! As a watchman I have transgressed, and shall therefore lose my father’s situation; but the day after to-morrow I shall go, as head-gardener of Prince Julian, to Heimleben. And you, mother and Rose, must go with me. My father and mother also. I can support you all. Huzza! Gods send all good people such a happy New Year!”

Mother Bittner hardly knew whether to believe Philip or not, notwithstanding she saw the gold. But when he told her how it had all happened—though with some reservations—-she wept with joy, embraced him, laid her her daughter on his breast, and then danced about the room in a perfect ecstasy, “Do thy father and mother know this, Philip?” she said. And when he answered no, she cried: “Rose, kindle the fire, put over the water, and make some coffee for all of us.” She then wrapped herself in her little woollen shawl and left the house.

But Rose lay on Philip’s breast, and forgot all about the wood and water. And there she yet lay when Mother Bittner returned with old Gottlieb and Mother Katharine. They

surrounded their children and blessed them. Mother Bittner saw if she wanted coffee, she would be obliged to cook it herself.

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Philip lost his situation as watchman. Rose became his wife in two weeks; their parents went with them to—; but this does not belong to the adventures of a New Year's Eve, a night more ruinous to the Minister of Finance than any one else; neither have we heard of any more pranks by the wild Prince Julian.

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