The Project Gutenberg eBook of A Woman's Will

This ebook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this ebook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you'll have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Title: A Woman's Will

Author: Anne Warner
Illustrator: I. H. Caliga

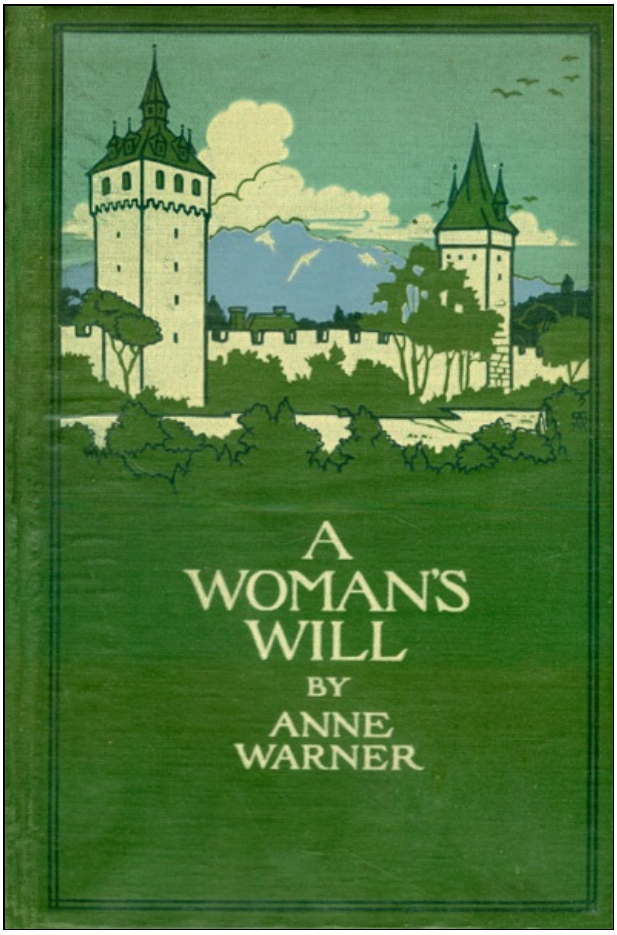
Release date: November 10, 2008 [eBook #27225]

Language: English

Credits: Produced by Suzanne Shell and the Online Distributed
Proofreading Team at http://www.pgdp.net

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A WOMAN'S WILL ***

A Woman's Will

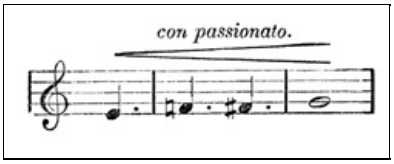


“And the unvoiceable wonder of his magic”

A Woman’s Will

By
Anne Warner

Illustrated by J. H. Caliga



con passionato.

Boston

Little, Brown, and Company

1904

Copyright, 1904,
By Little, Brown, and Company.

All rights reserved
Published April, 1904

THE UNIVERSITY PRESS, CAMBRIDGE, U.S.A.

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

From Pastel Drawings by I. H. Caliga

A Woman’s Will

Part I

THE RISE OF THE STORM

Chapter One

“GOOD-BYE—good-bye, Rosina!” cried Jack, giving one last violent wave to his handkerchief. And then he put it back in his pocket, because the crowd upon the deck of the departing Liner had now become a mere blur in the distance, and distant blurs seemed to his practical nature unworthy any further outlay of personal energy. “But oh!” he added, as he and Carter turned to quit the dock, “how the family are just agoing to revel in peace for these next few months! The Milennium!—well, I don’t know!”

“I do not see how you and your Uncle John ever came to let her go off all alone like that,” Carter said, with a gloom that did not try to mask a terrible reproach; “she’ll be so awfully liable to meet some foreigner over there and—and just marry him.” He threw up his cane as he spoke, intending to rap on the boarding by which they were that instant passing. [4]

Jack thrust his own cane out quickly and barred the other with an excellent fencing *fente*.

“No rapping on wood!” he cried sharply; “not after that speech!—you know!”

Carter turned two astonished eyes friend-ward.

“What do you mean?” he asked; “do you mean to say that you’d stand her marrying any one over there for one minute?”

“Stand it!” said Jack, “would we *stand* it, did you say? My dear fellow, how plainly you betray the fact that you are in love with Rosina. We,—myself and the family,—on the contrary, live with her. The difference in the two propositions is too tremendous to be quickly grasped by you even, but it is just about the same distance as that between theory and practice.”

“Nonsense!” said Carter, with an air of deep annoyance.

“I’ll tell you how I personally regard Rosina,” Jack went on, paying no attention to the other’s exclamation; “I look upon her as very likely to marry abroad, because I don’t know of but one man at home clever enough to be able to marry her.”

He laid his hand upon Carter’s shoulder as he spoke, and Carter, who didn’t at all understand [5] what he meant, thought that he understood, and was correspondingly happy.

They boarded the ferry then, and went from Hoboken straight back to civilization.

The “Kronprinz” meanwhile was slowly wending her way down the river, past the skyscrapers, and out towards the open sea.

Rosina, already established in her chair, with a mother-of-pearl lorgnette upon her lap and a pair of field-glasses swinging from the card-holder, felt more placidly happy than she had in years. If those left behind who supposed that she was going abroad to get a second husband could but have gazed into her heart, they would have comprehended the utter and complete falsity of their views.

Her year and a half of widowhood had been one long-continued period of quiet ecstasy.

Standing alone in her own room the morning after the funeral, she had made a vow to never marry again.

“Enough is as good as a feast,” she had said, surveying her crape-draped self with a deep sense of satisfaction; “it never approached anything like a feast, but it certainly has taught me to know [6] when I have had enough.”

And then new orders had been issued to every department of her establishment, and a peace approaching Paradise reigned in her heart.

When Carter, in a moment of daring courage, found words in which to unfold the facts of his case, she listened in a spirit of intense wonder that he could really be stupid enough to suppose that she would consider such an idea for a minute.

Carter, his heart jumping wildly about behind his shirt-bosom, thought that her look of amazement was a look of appreciation, and wound himself up to a tension that was quite a strain on the situation.

“I’m going abroad in May,” was her sole response when he had quite finished.

“Oh, my God! don’t go and marry some one over there!” he cried out, in the sudden awful stress of the moment.

“I shall marry no one,” she declared with freezing emphasis. “The very idea! you all seem to think that I am anxious to render myself miserable again; but I assure you that such is very far from being the case.”

Poor Carter was stricken dumb under her lash, but he loved her none the less, for it must be said that there was a certain passionate sweetness in both the bow and quiver of Rosina’s mouth [7] which always took the worst of the sting out of all of her many cruel speeches. And yet that very same bow and quiver were bound to breed a fearful doubt as to the degree of faith which one might be justified in holding in regard to the impregnability of her position. Very likely she herself did firmly intend remaining a widow forever; and yet—

And yet?—

Oh, the thought was unendurable!

Carter refused to endure it anyhow, but for all that the days had moved right along until that worst of days came into being, leaving him on the dock and sending the “Kronprinz” out to sea.

And, if the truth must be told, it is to be feared that if Rosina’s unhappy suitor could have caught a glimpse of her as night fell over that same day’s ending, his sickest doubts would have found food for reflection and consequent misery in her situation, for when Ottillie, the Swiss maid, came up on deck with a great, furred wrap, the most personable man aboard was already installed at her mistress’s side, thanks to a convenient college acquaintance with her dearest of cousins; and the way that the personable man grabbed the cloak from Ottillie and heaped it gently around its owner would have stirred the feelings of any casual lover whose bad luck it [8] might be to happen along just then.

Rosina nestled back into the soft fur folds and smiled a smile of luxurious content.

“I am so thoroughly imbued with utter bliss,” she said; “only to think that I am going *where*-ever I please, to do *what*-ever I please, just *when*-ever I please,—indefinitely.”

“It sounds like Paradise, surely,” said the man, dropping into his own seat and tucking himself

up with two deft blows administered to the right and left of his legs; “what do you suppose you’ll do first?”

“I think that I shall do almost everything first,” she answered laughing, and then, taking a long look out upon the twinkles of Fire Island, she sighed deeply and joyfully, and added, “Ah, but I’m going to have a beautiful time!”

The man plunged a hand into his breast-pocket.

“Did you ever smoke a cigarette?” he asked.

“Never!” she exclaimed delightedly; “never till this minute. But will you teach me now?”

He looked at her and laughed, his silver case in his hand.

“You must not go too fast at first, you know. Are you sure that it will not make you ill?”

“Oh, yes, yes! I’m sure!” [9]

“Perhaps it isn’t really the first time,” he suggested.

“No, it isn’t really the first time, but it will be the first time in just about one minute.”

He laughed again and held out the case; she took one from it and looked at it in a way that proved her ignorance.

“Does it make any difference which end?”

“Not with that kind.”

“Have I anything to bite, or to pinch, or to poke?”

“No, only something to light.”

“Very well, light the match.”

“I’m so original,” said the man; “you see I say nothing about your eyes.”

“I noticed your thoughtful consideration,” she replied with a smile. “Many thanks. And now the match, please.”

He scratched it somewhere and offered it. The cigarette lit easily, being of a good kind, and the same light did him equal service.

“How do you find it?” he asked presently.

“I find it horrible,” she gasped; “but my husband never would have allowed it, and so I shall go through with it to the bitter—the *awfully* bitter—other end.”

“Don’t stick to it if it makes you feel badly,” he said a little anxiously; “remember you have the whole wide ocean before you.” [10]

“Yes,” said Rosina, “I—I was just thinking of that.”

“Are you apt to be seasick?”

“Sometimes I have to lie still a day or two.”

“In your chair?”

“In my berth.”

“Please throw it away at once; I don’t want you to be lying still in your berth a day or two on *this* voyage, you know.”

There was a very earnest note in his voice; she took the cigarette from between her lips and looked at it meditatively.

“Do throw it overboard immediately,” he begged.

“Oh, I couldn’t.”

“But I entreat!”

Then she began to laugh.

“It isn’t the cigarette that I can’t manage,—it’s the throw!”

He sprang to his feet with one vast and comprehensive untuck.

“A thousand pardons! Give it to me.”

She held it out and he took it to the rail. The offshore breeze was growing into a wind that blew the stars out as fast as they appeared and caused the bosom of the ocean to appear unduly agitated. [11]

“Let us walk about a bit,” he suggested, coming back, and noting a certain vagueness in her expression; “come, it’s the best thing for us both,—exercise, you know.”

She smiled faintly.

“I think so too; if you’ll just unswathe me, please.”

He extricated her, and they made the tour of the deck three times.

“Do you get off at Plymouth?” he asked, when they finally came to a standstill beside their own chairs again.

“No, at Cherbourg.”

“And then Paris?”

“Naturally.”

“And then?”

“Anywhere I want to.”

“I’m going to Hamburg and then to Berlin; with me it’s a case of business first and pleasure afterwards.”

“Berlin’s a nice place,” she said thoughtfully; “I’ve been there twice.”

“Wouldn’t you enjoy going there again?”

“No.” She shook her head. “No, I don’t believe that I should. You see I went to Berlin both times with my husband, and my present state of mind is such that if I think Berlin will recall my husband to me, I’d rather remain permanently in Cherbourg.” [12]

She stooped and gathered up her rugs preparatory to building a new nest.

“Did you travel much with your husband,” he asked, taking the nest materials from her and sorting them over his arm.

“Yes, I did.” She sat down in the chair. “I travelled a great deal with him; but I intend to travel a great deal more now that I’m without him.”

The man was busy with her cloak and pillows and rugs. They were quite a combination, and the combining was rather a dangerous occupation, the lateness of the hour considered. He lost his head just a little bit.

“You might some day have another,” he suggested in a tone low enough to be thrilling to the thrillable.

Rosina squared herself smilelessly, and the electric deck-light which faced her seat showed up her sobriety in unmistakable colors.

“Watch me!” she said briefly, and her enunciation was clear and very distinct.

He heard.

Chapter Two [13]

THERE was at that particular date a man in Düsseldorf who was quite as set in his ideas as Rosina was in hers. He was lingering from day to day at the Hotel Heck, engaged for the most part in no more arduous pursuit than the awaiting of a telegram from his family. His family were at Evian, on the Lac de Génève, and if they decided to go from there to Paris, he wanted very much to visit Switzerland himself. But if, on the contrary, they merely ended in transferring their abode from Evian to Ouchy, as was very likely to prove to be the case, he had fully made up his mind to pass the early summer months in Leipsic. In Leipsic he had an interest —the one great interest of his existence. The family had but scant sympathy with the force of the Leipsic attraction; their ambitions were set in quite another direction, and all their hopes and plans and wishes were bent to the accomplishment of that one end. They desired most ardently that he should take unto himself a wife, because he was the last of his race, and there was a coronet hung up in the skies above his head. The natural effect of such anxiety upon the uncommon temperament of this particularly uncommon man was to decide him definitely to remain single forever, and because he had always proved himself of a strength of resolve and firmness of purpose quite unequalled in their experience, they felt justified in the gravest fears that in this case, as in all others, he would remain steadfast, keeping the word which he declared that he had solemnly pledged himself, and so become the last of a line whose castle had crowned the crag which it defended since the Goth was abroad in the land. [14]

To be sure, he was not yet so old but that, when he casually glanced at a girl, the girl, her mother, and his mother all immediately held their breath. But he was old enough to have proved

the futility of the hope by the casualty of the glance over and over again. And so his people were completely out of patience with him, and he and they found it accordingly more agreeable to take even their Switzerland in individual communion-cups. Therefore he remained in Düsseldorf, wandering in the Hofgarten, listening to the music in the Tonhalle, and occasionally quieting his impatience for the Lake of Lucerne, where his childhood had been passed, by writing a few pages [15] to Leipsic, the scene of his studies and the spot where his one incentive to labor dwelt.

After three weeks of manifold hesitation the family at last concluded to let it be Paris, and thus Southeastern Europe was thrown open to the recalcitrant. It being now quite middle June, he took his way southward with a leisure born of the warm summer sun, and spent a month *en route*. The Storks of Strasbourg and the Bears of Berne both ate of his bread before the final definite checking of his trunks for Lucerne took place. But the cry at his heart for the Vierwaldstattersee and the Schweizerhof became of a strength beyond resisting, and so he turned his back upon the Jungfrau and his face towards the Rigi, and slept beneath the mist-wreaths of Mount Pilatus that very night.

It was the next morning that Rosina, walking on the Quai with an American man (not the one on the "Kronprinz," however), first observed an especially tall and striking-looking individual, and wondered who he was. With her the wonder was always straightway followed by the ask, so she voiced her curiosity forthwith.

"That man?" said her companion, turning to make sure who she was referring to, "that dark man with the gray gloves? oh, that's Von Ibn. He's to be very great indeed some day, I'm given to [16] understand."

"Hasn't he stopped growing yet?"

"There is 'great' and 'great,' you know. He is in for both kinds, it appears."

"Because of his 'von'?" demanded Rosina, whose thirst for knowledge was occasionally insatiable.

"No, because of his violin."

"Does he play?"

"You show ignorance by asking such a question."

"He plays well, then?—is known?"—

"He is a composer."

She turned abruptly to the side and sank down on one of the numerous seats before which the endless procession of morning promenaders were ceaselessly defiling.

"Let me look at him!" she cried below her breath; "how more than interesting! He appears just as one might imagine that Paganini did before he made his famous bargain."

The American stood beside her and waited for the object of their watching to turn and pass again. He was quite willing to humor his charming country-woman in any way possible. He did not care who she might take a fancy to, for he was himself engaged to a girl at Smith College, [17] and men who fall in love with college girls are nearly always widow-proof.

Presently Von Ibn came strolling back. He was very tall, as befitted one half of his name, and very dark, as befitted the other, and around his rather melancholy eyes were those broad spaces which give genius room to develop as it will. He had black hair, a black moustache, and a chin which bore witness to the family opposition. Rosina, who chanced to be a connoisseur in chins, looked upon his with deep approval.

"Do you know him?" she asked, looking up at the man beside her; "oh, if you do, I do so wish that you would present him to me. He looks so utterly fascinating; I am sure that I shall like to talk to him."

The American appeared frankly amused.

"I should really enjoy seeing you turned loose upon Von Ibn," he said, "it would be such wild sport."

"Then be nice and bring him to me, and you can have all the fun of standing by and watching us worry one another."

Her friend hesitated.

"What is it?" she asked impatiently; "why don't you go? Is there any reason why I may not meet him? Is he a gambler who doesn't settle fair? Has he deserted his own wife, or run away with any [18] other man's? Does he lie, or drink beyond the polite limit, or what?"

"Why, the truth is," said the American slowly, "many people consider him an awful bore. The

fact is, he's most peculiar. I've had him stare at me time and again in a way that made me wonder if he was full-witted. I don't know anything worse against him than that, though."

"If that's all," Rosina answered, laughing, "you need not fear for me. I've lived in good society too many years not to know how to deal with a bore. A little idiosyncrasy like that will not mar my enjoyment one bit. Do go and get him now."

"But some consider him a very big bore indeed."

"One can see that at the first glance, and just on that account I shall have infinite patience with him."

"I warn you beforehand that he's very much of a character."

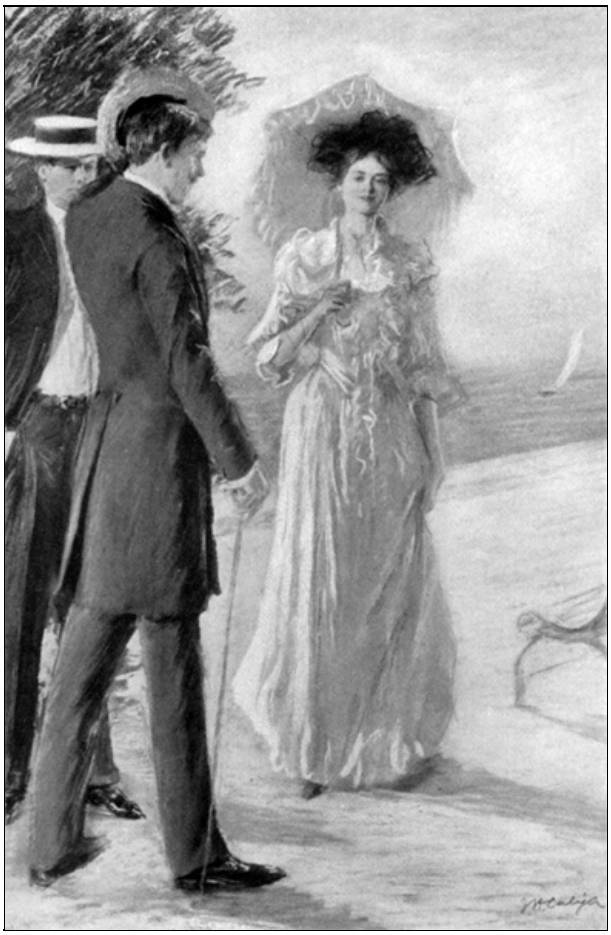
"I always did like characters better than people who were well-behaved."

The American took one step away and then halted.

"Your mind is set upon meeting him?"

"Yes, quite; and do hurry. He may disappear."

[19]



"She rose to receive them with radiant countenance"

He laughed.

"Possess yourself in patience for five short minutes," he began, but she cut his speech off.

"There, there, never mind; while you're talking he'll take a train or a boat, and I'll be left to go geniusless to my grave."

He lifted his hat at once then and walked away without another word, although inwardly he marvelled much that any woman should care about meeting that man—that particular man; for he was one of those whom the man bored out and out.

The Schweizerhof Quai is long, but not so long but that you may meet any one for whom you chance to be searching within ten minutes of the time of your setting out. The young American was favored by good luck, and in less than half that time returned to Rosina's bench, his capture safely in tow. She rose to receive them with the radiant countenance of a doll-less child who is engaged in negotiating the purchase of one which can both walk and talk. Indeed her joy was so delightfully spontaneous and unaffected that a bright reflection of it appeared in the shadows of those other eyes which were now meeting hers for the first time.

“Shall we walk on?” she suggested; “that is the pleasantest, to walk and talk, don’t you think?”

Von Ibn stood stock-still before her. [20]

“What will monsieur do?” he asked, with a glance at the other man.

“He will enjoy walking,” Rosina answered.

“But I shall not. I find nothing so tiresome as trying to walk with two people. One must always be leaning forward to hear, or else hearing what is not amusing.”

After which astonishing beginning he waited, pulling his moustache as he contemplated them both. The American glanced at Rosina as much as to say, “There, I told you that he was the worst ever!” But Rosina only smiled cheerfully, saying to her countryman:

“Since Herr von Ibn feels as he does, I think *you’d* better go and study the Lion or meditate the glaciers, and leave me here with this lion to do either or both.”

The American laughed. He might not have been so amused except that he knew that she knew all about the girl in Smith College. Such things count sadly against one’s popularity, and being a man of sense he recognized the fact.

“At your service, madame,” he said; “I’m going to turn the care of you over to our friend for the remainder of the promenade hour. He will no doubt appreciate to the fullest extent the honor of the transferred charge.”

Von Ibn bowed. [21]

“I do appreciate,” he said gravely; “thank you. Good-morning.”

Then as the other walked away he turned to Rosina.

“Was I impolite to him?” he asked, in quite the tone of an old and intimate friend.

“Yes, very,” she answered, nodding.

“You are then displeased?”

“Not at all; I wanted him to go myself.”

“Ah, yes,” he exclaimed eagerly, “you feel as I. Is it not always *ungemüthlich*, three people together?”

“Always.”

He glanced about them at the crowd of passers-by.

“It is not pleasant here; let us take a walk by the river, and then we can talk and come to know each one the other,”—he paused—“well,” he added.

“Do you really want to know me—well?” she asked, imitating his pause between the last two words.

“Yes, very much. I saw you in the hotel this morning when you came down the stair, and I wanted to know you then. And just now when we passed on the Quai I felt the want become much greater.”

“And I wanted to know you,” she said, looking and speaking with delicious frankness. “I wanted [22] to know you because of your music.”

“Because of my music!” he repeated quickly; “you are then of interest in the music? you are yourself perhaps a musician?” and he turned a glance, as deep as it was burning, upon her face.

“A very every-day musician,” she replied, lifting her smile to his deep attention. “I can accompany the musician and I can appreciate him, that is all.”

“But that is quite of the best—in a woman,” he exclaimed earnestly. “The women were not meant to be the genius, only to help him, and rest him after his labor.”

“Really!”

“Of a surety.”

“But what made you want to know me?” she continued. “I had a good reason for desiring your acquaintance, but you can have had no equally good one for desiring mine.”

“No,” he said quickly and decidedly; “that is, of an undenying, most true.” He knit his brows and reflected for the space of time consumed in passing nine of the regularly disposed trees which shade the boulevard just there, for they were now moving slowly in the direction of the [23] bridges, and then he spoke. “I do not know just why, yet I am glad that it is to be.”

“Would you have asked some one to introduce you if I had not sent for you?”

He thought again, this time for the space of six trees only, then:

“No, I do not think so.”

“Why not? since you wanted to meet me.”

“I never get myself made known to any one, because if I did that, then later, when they weary me, as they nearly always do, I must blame myself only.”

“Do most people weary you—later.”

“Oh, so very much,” he declared, with a sincerity that drew no veil over the truth of his statement.

Rosina, remembering the American’s views in regard to him, stifled a smile.

“Our friend,” she asked, “the man who presented you to me, you know, does he weary you?”

Von Ibn frowned.

“But he is a very terrible bore,” he said; “you surely know that, since you know him.”

Then she could but laugh outright.

“And I, monsieur,” she demanded merrily, “tell me, do you think that I too shall some day—?”

He looked at her in sudden, earnest anxiety. [24]

“I hope otherwise,” he declared fervently.

While talking they had passed the limits of the Quai, crossed the big, sunny square, and come to the embankment that leads to the foot-bridge. The emerald-green Reuss rushed beside them with a smooth rapidity which seemed to hush the tumult of its swift current far underneath the rippling surface. The old stone light-house—the town’s traditionary godfather—stood sturdily for its rights out in mid-stream, and helped support the quaint zigzag of that most charming relic of the past, the longest wooden foot-bridge of Lucerne. A never-ending crowd of all ages and sexes and conditions of natives and strangers were mounting and descending its steps, hurrying along its crooked passage, or craning their necks to study the curious pictures painted in the wooden triangles of its pointed roof.

“I like the bridge better than I do the Lion,” Rosina remarked; “I think it is much more interesting.”

Von Ibn was looking down into the water where they had stopped by the bridge’s steps. He did not pay any attention to what she said, and after a minute she spoke again.

“What do you think?”

He made no answer. She turned her eyes in the direction of his and wondered what he was looking at. He appeared to be lost in a study of the Reuss. [25]

“Do you always think before you speak,” she said, somewhat amused, “or are you doing mental exercises?”

But still no reply.

Then she too kept still. Her eyes wandered to a certain building on her left, and she reflected that necessity would shortly be driving her there with her letter of credit; but further reflection called to her mind the fact that she had intrusted Ottillie with a hundred-franc note to change that morning, and that would be enough to carry her over Sunday. The Gare across the water then attracted her attention, and she reviewed a last week’s journey on the St. Gotthard railway, and recalled the courtesy of a certain Englishman who had raised and lowered her window not once but perhaps twenty times. And then her gaze fell upon the skirt of her dress, which was a costume most appropriate for the Quai but much too delicate for a promiscuous stroll through the town streets.

“That is superficial!” Von Ibn suddenly declared.

She quite started.

“What is superficial?”

“Your comparison. You may not compare them at all.” [26]

“May not compare what?”

“The bridge and the Lion. The bridge is a part of life out of the Middle Ages, and the Lion is a masterpiece of Thorwaldsen.”

Rosina simply stared at him.

“Is that what you have been thinking of all this long time?” she asked in astonishment.

“Was it so long?”

“I thought so.”

“What did you think of in that so long time?”

She told him about the bank, and the Englishman on the Gotthardbahn, and her dress. He

smiled.

“How *drôle* a woman is!” he murmured, half to himself.

“But I think that you are droll too,” she told him.

“Oh,” he said energetically, “I assure you, madame, you do not as yet divine the tenth part of *my* drollness.”

She smiled.

“Do you think that I shall ever become sufficiently well acquainted with you to learn it all?”

He regarded her seriously.

“If you interest me,” he remarked, “I shall naturally see much of you, because we shall be much [27] together. How long do you stay in Lucerne?”

“Until Monday. I leave on Monday.”

He looked at her in dismay.

“But I do not want to leave on Monday. I have only come the last night. I want to stay two weeks.”

She felt herself forced to bite her lips, even as she replied:

“But you *can* stay two weeks, monsieur.”

He looked blank.

“And you go?”

“Naturally; but what does that matter? You would not be going where I went anyway.”

“Where do you go?”

“To Zurich.”

“Alone? Do you go alone?”

“I have my maid, of course; and I am to meet a friend there.”

“A friend!” His whole face contracted suddenly. “Ah,” he cried, sharply, “I understand! It is that Englishman.”

“What Englishman?” she asked, utterly at a loss to follow his thought.

“Your friend.”

“But he’s an American.”

“You said he was an Englishman.” ([28])

“I never did! How could I? Why, can’t you tell at once that he is an American by the way that he talks?”

“I never have hear him talk.”

She stared afresh, then turned to walk on, saying, “You must be crazy! or aren’t you speaking of the man who presented you to me?”

“Why should I be of any interest as to that man? Naturally it is of the Englishman that I speak.”

“What Englishman?”

“But that Englishman upon the Gotthardbahn, of course; the one you have said was so nice to you.”

She began to laugh.

“Oh, pardon me, but you are so funny, you are really so very funny;” then pressing her handkerchief against her rioting lips, “you will forgive me for laughing, won’t you?”

He did not smile in the least nor reply to her appeal for forgiveness; he only waited until she was quiet, and then went on with increased asperity veiled in his tone.

“You are to see him again, *n’est-ce pas*?”

“I never expect to.”

“Really?”

“Really.”

He stopped short and offered her his hand. ([29])

“Why?” she asked in surprise.

“Your word that you do not hope to meet him again.”

She began to laugh afresh.

Then, still holding out his hand, he repeated insistently.

“Tell me that you do not expect to meet him again.”

They were in one of the steep, narrow streets that lie beyond the bridges and lead up to the city wall. It was still, still as the desert; she looked at him, and his earnestness quelled her sense of humor over the absurdity of the situation.

“What shall I say to you?” she asked.

“Tell me that you do not expect to meet him again.”

“Certainly I do not expect to meet him again; although, of course, I might meet him by chance at any time.”

He looked into her face with an instant’s gravest scrutiny, and then some of his shadow lifted; with the hand that he had held out he suddenly seized hers.

“You are truthfully not caring for him, *n’est-ce pas*?” he demanded.

Rosina pulled her hand from his grasp.

“Of course not,” she said emphatically. “Why, I never saw the man but just that once.” [30]

“But one may be much interested in once only.”

“Oh, no.”

“Yes, that is true. I know it. Do not laugh, but give me your hand and swear that he does not at all interest you now.”

She did not give him her hand, but she raised her eyes to the narrow strip of blazing sky that glowed above the street and said solemnly:

“I swear upon my word and honor that I do not take the slightest interest in that English gentleman who so kindly raised and lowered my windows when I was on the St. Gotthard last week.”

Von Ibn drew a breath of relief.

“I am so glad,” he said; and then he added, “because really, you know, it had not been very nice in you to interest yourself only for the getting up of your window.”

“He put it down too,” she reminded him.

“That is quite nothing—to put a window down. It is to raise them up that is to every one such labor on the Gotthardbahn. To let them down is not hard; very often mine have fell alone. And much smoke came in.”

Rosina walked on and looked the other way, because she felt a need of so doing for a brief [31] space. Her escort strolled placidly at her side, all his perturbation appearing to have vanished into thin air with the satisfactory disposal of the English problem. They came to the top of the street and saw the old town-wall and its towers before them. The sun was very hot indeed, and the tourists in cabs all had their parasols raised.

“I think we had better return,” she said, pausing in the last patch of shade.

Von Ibn looked at his watch.

“Yes,” he said, “we must; *déjeuner* is there now.”

So they turned down into the town, taking another of the steep, little streets, so as to vary the scenery of their route. After a little he spoke again.

“And you are sure that you go Monday?”

“Yes, indeed.”

“To Zurich, and then to where?”

“Then to Constance.”

“And then?”

“I do not know where we shall go next.”

He started slightly, and a fresh cloud overspread his face.

“Much pleasure to you,” he said, almost savagely.

She looked up quickly, surprised at his tone, but her answer was spoken pleasantly enough. ([32])

“Thank you; and the same to you—all summer long.”

In response he shrugged his shoulders so fiercely as to force her to notice the movement.

“Why do you shrug your shoulders like that?” she demanded.

“I am amused.”

“You don’t look amused.”

He raised his eyebrows.

“I am amused to see that all women are the same; I have that thought just now.”

“Are you in the habit of shrugging your shoulders whenever that thought occurs to you?”

He tossed his head to one side.

“Women are all the same,” he repeated impatiently.

“In what way?”

“They can never tell the truth!”

“What makes you say that?”

“You.”

“I?”

“Yes.”

She felt very nearly vexed.

“Please explain,” she commanded.

He simply gave another shrug.

She decided to keep her temper. ([33])

“I might be clever enough to read minds,” she said mildly, “and still be dense about divining shoulders; I confess I miss the point that you’re trying to make with yours.”

He was silent.

She glanced sideways at him and was thoroughly startled at the black humor displayed in his countenance.

“What is really the matter?” she asked, anxiously.

“Nothing.”

She gave him another quick look, and saw that he saw her look and avoided it. Then she was angry at such poor taste displayed in the first hour of a new acquaintance, and almost thought of turning from him and insisting on being left to return to the Schweizerhof alone. But something kept her impulse in check.

“He is a genius,” she thought, “and they are entirely different from other men,” so she waited a moment and then spoke with the utmost earnestness.

“Please tell me what it all means, monsieur; why are you like this?”

“Because,”—he cried with a sudden passionate outburst of feeling,—“because you have lied to me!”

“Monsieur!” she exclaimed, in a shocked voice. ([34])

“You have done that,” he cried; “you have lift your eyes to heaven and swear that you were not interested in him, and then—” he stopped, and put his hands to either side of his collar as if it strangled him.

She grew pale at the sight of his emotion.

“Is it that man still?” she asked.

“But naturally it is that man still! *Je ne me fâche jamais sans raison.*”

“But what is there new to worry about him?”

She dared not contemplate smiling, instead she felt that the Englishman was rapidly becoming the centre of a prospective tragedy.

Von Ibn scowled until his black brows formed a terrible V just over his eyes.

“You do expect to see him in Zurich,” he declared.

“But I told you that I didn’t.”

He laughed harshly.

“I know; but you betrayed yourself so nicely.”

“How?”

“Just now, when I say where do you go from Constance, you quite forget your part, and you say, ‘I do not know where *we* shall go next.’ Yes, that is what you say, ‘We—*we*!’”

“And if I did.”

“But of a surety you did; and I must laugh in my interior when I hear your words.” ([35])

“Oh,” she exclaimed quickly, “you must not say that you laughed in your interior, it isn’t good English.”

“Where must I laugh within myself?”

“We say, ‘I laughed *to* myself.’”

He gave another shrug, as if her correction was too petty a matter to rightfully command attention at that crisis.

“This all does seem so foolish,” she said, “the idea of again having an explanation.”

“I do not care for you to explain,” he interrupted.

“Don’t you want to know what I meant?”

“I know quite well what you meant.”

“I meant my maid, she always travels with me.”

He looked his thorough disbelief.

“Very pretty!” he commented.

She glanced at him and wondered why she was not disgusted, but instead her heart swelled with a pity for the unhappiness that overlaid the doubt in his face.

“Just think,” she said softly, “our friendship is so very young, and you are already so very angry.”

“I am not angry; what I feel is justified.”

“Because I call my maid and myself ‘we’!”

He stopped short, and held out his hand. ([36])

“Will you say that it is only the maid?”

Then she felt sure that she should be obliged to scream outright, even while she was summoning all her self-control to the rescue.

They were come to an angle where two streets met steeply and started thence on a joint pitch into the centre of the town. She ran her eyes quickly up and down each vista of cobblestones, and, seeing no one that she knew either near or far, put her hand into his.

“Upon my word and honor,” she declared, with all the gravity which the occasion seemed to demand, “I swear that when I leave Constance my maid will be my only—”

“*Assez, assez!*” he interrupted, hastily dropping her hand, “it is not need that you swear that. I can see your truth, and I have just think that it may very well come about that I shall chance to be in Constance and wish to take the train as you. It would then be most misfortunate if you have swear alone with your maid. It is better that you swear nothing.”

This kaleidoscopic turn to the conversation quite took Rosina’s breath away, and she remained mute.

“What hotel in Constance do you stop at?” he asked presently.

“The Insel House, of course.” [37]

He put his hand in his pocket and pulled out a note-book.

“Perhaps I will want to remember,” he said, as he wrote. Then he put up the book and smiled into her eyes; he had a beautiful smile, warm and winning. “I find that we are very *sympathique*,” he went on, “that is why I may perhaps come to see you again. People who can enjoy together are not many.”

“Have you enjoyed this morning? I thought you had not at all.”

“But, yes,” he protested gravely, “I enjoy it very much. How could you think otherwise?”

She felt silence to be safest, and made no reply. He too was silent for a little, and then spoke suddenly.

“Oh, because of that Englishman! But that is all over now. We will never speak of him again. Only it is most fortunate that I am not of a jealous temperament, or I might very well have really offended me that you talk so much about him.”

“It is fortunate,” she agreed.

“Yes,” he answered, “for me it was very good.”

They had come to the crossing of the great square, and the sunlight was dazzling and dancing upon the white stones of the bridge and the molten gold of the Vierwaldstattersee. The Promenade was deserted and even its shade was unpleasantly warm. [38]

“Shall I see you this afternoon?” Von Ibn asked as they went leisurely through the heat.

“Perhaps.”

“I wish it was after the *déjeuner*,” he said, looking out upon the lake and the crest of the mountain beyond.

She wondered if she had better say “Why,” or not, and finally decided to say it. He brought his eyes back from the Rigi and looked at her.

“Because I have the habit of always sleeping after *déjeuner*,” he explained.

They crossed to the hotel. It was late, and more people were coming down in the lifts than going up.

“Are you tired?” he asked.

“Yes, I think that I am—a little.”

“I advise you to sleep too,” he said gravely.

“I always do.”

“So,” he cried triumphantly, “you see I say the truth when I say that we are very *sympathique*!”

Rosina looked up at him and her eyes danced; he returned the look with a responsive glow in his own big pupils.

“I am so glad we meet,” he exclaimed impulsively. ([39])

She stepped out of the lift and turned to dismiss him.

“And you?” he asked, bowing above her hand.

“I’m glad too,” she said, and her tone was most sincere. [40]

Chapter Three

LATE in the afternoon of the same day Ottillie, coming in to wake her mistress from a nap which the morning’s long walk had resulted in stretching to a most unusual duration, brought with her a great bunch of those luxuriantly double violets which brim over with perfume and beauty. There was also a note, very short, and couched in a flawless French.

If one must be roused out of a delicious sleep on a warm June day, surely violets, and such a note as accompanied these particular violets, were the least disagreeable means ever invented for accomplishing that end. Rosina’s frown for Ottillie changed into a smile for some one else, and she rose from among her pillows and submitted to her toilet with a good grace. Ottillie, who was French enough and experienced enough never to need to be told things, divined what the note must have contained the second time that she saw her mistress glance at the clock, and so accelerated her ordinary rate of movement that even the gown of lace which appeared to fasten nowhere, was fastened everywhere ere the town bells rang five. [41]

A few minutes after, a *garçon* in the hotel livery brought up a card, and, Continental etiquette made it quite *en règle* for Monsieur von Ibn to be ushered into the dainty little salon which the Schweizerhof permitted Rosina to enjoy (for a consideration), and there muse in company with his own violets, while he waited and turned his cane over and over in his gloved hands.

Then Ottillie opened the portières beyond, and Rosina appeared between them, delightfully cool and fresh-looking, and flatteringly glad to see him.

“We seem like quite long friends, do we not?” he said, as he bent above her hand and kissed it lightly.

“Yes, certainly, I feel that I have the sensation of at any rate three weeks,” she answered; and then she sank luxuriously down in a great *fauteuil*, and was conscious of an all-pervading well-content that it should be too warm to go out, and that he should be there opposite her while she must remain within. She was curious about this man who was so out of the ordinary, and the path

along which her curiosity led her seemed a most attractive one.

"Why do you say three weeks," he asked; "why not three months or three years?" [42]

"But in three years one learns to know another so well, and I do not feel—"

"Oh," he interrupted, "it is better as it is; perhaps you may be like I am, and get weary always soon, and then have no longer any wish to see me."

"Do you get tired of every one?"

He passed his hand across his eyes and sighed and smiled together.

"Yes, madame," he said, and there was a sad note in his voice, "I get often tired. And it is bad, because I must depend so deeply on who I speak with for my mind to be able to work after. *Comprenez-vous?*"

She made a movement of assent that he seemed to have paused for, and he continued.

"When I meet a stranger I must always wonder how soon I shall be finished with him. It comes very soon with nearly all."

"And are you sure that you are always the weary one?"

He looked blank for a moment, then,

"I have already bore you; yes?"

"Not at all, but I was warned this morning that you might possibly commit such a crime."

"And have I?"

She looked on his earnestness and smiled. ([43])

"Have I?" he reiterated; "yes?"

Then she spoke suddenly.

"Why do foreigners always say 'yes' at the end of every question that they ask in English? I get so tired of it, it's so superfluous. Why do they do it?"

He reflected.

"It is polite," he said, after a moment. "I ask you, 'Do I bore you?' and then I ask you, 'Do I?'"

"But why do you think that it is polite to ask me twice?"

He reflected again, and then replied:

"You are equally droll in English; you are even more droll in English, I think. You say, 'You will go to walk, will you not?' and the 'not' makes no sense at all."

It was her turn to reflect, and be forced to acquiesce.

"Yes, that is true."

"And anyway," he went on, "it is polite for me to ask you twice anything, because that shows that I am twice anxious to please you."

"So!"

"Yes;" he took a violet from the bowl at his side and began to unclose its petals. "Why did he say that?" he asked, suddenly raising his eyes from the flower to her.

"He! who?" ([44])

"Our friend."

"Why did he say what?"

"Why did he say that I was stupid? I have never been but nice to him."

She looked startled.

"He never said that you were stupid."

"You said that he told you that I was stupid."

"No, I did not. I said that he warned me that—"

"Oh, it matters not," he broke in, shrugging his shoulders slightly, "*ça ne me fait rien*. What he may think of me matters me not at all. *Pauvre garçon*, he is so most uninteresting himself that I cannot expect interest from him. *Ecoutez-donc!* for him nothing exists but golf; for him where golf is there is something, elsewhere there is nothing anywhere. What did he say to me of Paris? he said that for him Paris was nothing, because no one plays golf; he said he could throw a dog all over the grounds any morning. I did not ask him what dog, or why a dog, for I thought it was not truly a dog, but just his bad American *argot*; and, if I must speak truth, pardon me that I find it very good that so stupid a fellow finds me dull. If he found me amusing, I should naturally know

that I, too, must be a fool."

He put the violet to his lips and smiled a little. ([45])

"He speaks but English," he added; "he knows but golf, he has been around the world and has seen nothing. I am quite content to have such a man despise me."

Then he was silent, biting the purple flower. Rosina rested her chin upon her hand.

"Please go on," she said briefly, "I am listening."

He looked at her and smiled.

"I do like Americans," he went on, "and I see that all the women have small waists, and do not grow so large so soon, but I do not see why they do not learn many things and so become much more nice; why, for example, are they so ignorant of all the world and think their own country alone fine?"

"Are we so?"

"Yes, of a truth. Because I speak English I meet very many of America, and they always want to talk, so naturally I must listen, because no one can arrive at speaking louder surely. And so I must always hear how good the light is in America, and how warm the houses are in America, and how high the buildings are in America, and how much everything has cost—always how much everything has cost; that is always very faithfully told to me. And while I listen I must feel how very narrow to so speak is. And afterwards when I go on to hear how very poor the light is here, and how very cold the hotels are here, I certainly must feel how very ill-bred that is." [46]

He paused to get a fresh violet, and then continued:

"I see no possible beauty for a place of four walls fifty *mètres* high; and there can be no health where all is so hot night and day; and so I only listen and am content to be counted so stupid. Why do you go to Zurich Monday?"

The question terminated his monologue with such suddenness that she started involuntarily.

"Why do you ask?"

"Naturally because I want to know."

"I go because I am anxious to be out of Switzerland before the first of July."

"But Switzerland is very nice in July."

"I know; and it is also very crowded."

"Where shall you be in July?"

"I am not sure; probably in the Tyrol."

He got up from his seat, went to the chimney-piece, lifted up a vase and turned it about in his hand with a critical air. Then he faced her again and said, with emphasis:

"I shall remain here all summer."

"In Lucerne?" ([47])

"Yes; not perhaps always at the hotel, but somewhere on the lake. I am born here."

"You are Swiss, then?"

"Yes; if I am Swiss because I am born here."

"Were you born in Lucerne?"

"No, but at a place which my father had then by Fluellen. It is for that that I love the Vierwaldstattersee."

"I wish that I had been born here," Rosina murmured thoughtfully.

"Where are you born?"

"In the fourth house of a row of sixteen, all just alike."

"How most American!"

She laughed a little.

"I amuse you?" he asked, with a look of pleased non-understanding.

"Oh, so very much!"

He came a little forward and smiled down at her.

"We are really friends, are we not?"

She looked into his big, earnest eyes.

“I think so,” she answered simply, with a little nod.

He moved slowly across the room and, going to the window, turned his back upon her.

“It is cooler out now, let us go out and walk. I like to walk, and you do too, do you not? yes?” [48]

“Oh, *please* stop saying ‘yes’ like that, it makes me so horribly nervous.”

He continued to look out of the window.

“Are you nervous?” he said. “I am sorry, because it is very bad to be nervous.”

“I shall not be so if you will only cease tacking that ‘yes’ on to the end of every question that you find occasion to ask me.”

“What is ‘tacking’?” he asked, whirling around.

“Attaching.”

“Why did you not pronounce it plainly the first time?”

She rose slowly from her seat and retouched the violets where he had disturbed their carefully arranged disorder. He quitted the window and approached her side.

“I asked you to go out with me,” he reminded her; “will you go? Yes?—I mean ‘No’?” he added in hasty correction.

She bent above the flowers, just to see what he *would* say next.

“Can you go to walk so,” he inquired, “or shall I go down and wait while you undress?”

She straightened up.

“I can go out this way,” she told him; “I have only to get my hat.” ([49])

“And you will go now?”

“Yes, with pleasure.”

“Is it long to get a hat? I will go down to wait for you, you know.”

“It is five minutes.”

“Is it really five minutes?” he asked anxiously; “or shall I be there very much longer?”

“If I say five minutes it will be five minutes.”

He took his hat and cane in his left hand and extended the other to her with a smile.

“I will go and wait,” he said.

She gave him her hand; he held it a minute, looking down into her eyes, which wavered and fell before his.

“*Comme vous êtes charmante!*” he exclaimed in a low voice, and, bending, pressed a kiss (a most fervent one this time) upon the fingers which he raised within his own.

After which he left the room at once.

Rosina caught a quick breath as she went in to where her maid sat mending some lace.

“Get my things, Ottillie, I am going out.”

“What a beautiful color madame has,” Ottillie remarked, as she rose hastily and went towards the wardrobe.

Rosina looked at herself in the mirror. She was forced to smile at what she saw there, for the best cosmetic in the wide world is the knowledge that the right person is waiting downstairs. [50]

“Do hurry, Ottillie,” she said impatiently, “and get me out a pretty, a *very* pretty, hat; do you hear?”

And then she felt with a glorious rush of joy how more than good life is when June is fair, and one is young, and—

“Where shall we walk?” he asked, when she came down to him.

“On the Quai, of course. No one ever walks anywhere else.”

“I do often, and we did this morning,” he replied, as they passed out through the maze of tables and orange-trees that covered the terrace before the hotel.

“I should have said ‘no one who is anybody.’”

He looked at her, a sadly puzzled trouble in his eyes.

“Is it a joke you make there,” he asked, “or but your *argot*?”

“I don’t know,” she said, unfurling her parasol; “the question that I am putting to myself just

now is, why did not you raise this for me instead of allowing me to do it for myself?”

He looked at her fixedly.

“Why should I do so? or is *that* a joke?” ([51])

“No, I asked that in dead earnest.”

“In dead—in dead—” he stammered hopelessly; “oh,” he exclaimed, “perhaps it is that I am really stupid, after all.”

“No, no,” she laughed; “it is I that am behaving badly. It amuses me to tease you by using words that you do not understand.”

“But that is not very nice of you,” he said, smiling. “Why do you want to tease me?”

“I don’t know, but I do.”

He laughed lightly.

“We amuse ourselves together, *n’est-ce pas*?” he asked. “It is like children to laugh and not know why. I find such pleasure very pleasant. One cannot be always wise—above all, with a woman.”

“I do not want to be wise,” she said, as they joined the promenading crowd; “I much prefer to have my clothes fit well.”

Then he laughed outright.

“*Vous êtes si drôle!*” he said apologetically.

“Oh, I don’t mind your laughing,” she said, “but I do wish that you would walk on the other side.”

“The other side of the street?” he asked, with surprise.

“No, no; the other side of me.”

“Why should I not be on this side as well as on that?” ([52])

“Because that’s the wrong one to be on.”

“It is not! I am on the very right place.”

“No; you should be between the lady and the street.”

“Why?” he demanded, as he raised his hat to some one.

“To protect her—me.”

“To protect you how? Nothing will come up out of the lake to hurt you.” Then he raised his hat to some people that she bowed to.

“It isn’t that, it is that the outside is where the man should walk. It’s the custom. It’s his proper place.”

“No, it is not. I am proper where I am; I would be improper if I was over there.”

“In America men always walk on the outside.”

“But we are not in America, we are in Lucerne, and that is Europe, and for Europe I am right. *Mon Dieu*, do you think that I do not know!”

Rosina shrugged her shoulders.

“I am really distressed when we meet any Americans, because I am sure that they think that you have not been well brought up.”

Von Ibn shrugged *his* shoulders.

“There are not many Americans here to think anything,” he said carelessly, “and all the Europeans whom we meet know that I am well brought up whichever side I may choose to walk upon.” He bowed again to some carriage people. [53]

She trailed her pace a little and then paused; he was such a temptation that she could not resist.

“I do wish,” she said earnestly, “that to please me you would do as I ask you, just this once!”

He stopped short and stared first at her and then at the lake.

“I wonder,” he said slowly,—“I wonder if we are to be together ever after these days?”

“Why do you wonder that? Would you rather never see me again than do something to please me?”

“No, no,” he said hastily, a little shock in his tone, “but you must understand that if we are to be much together I cannot begin with the making of my obedience to suit you. And yet, if it is but

for these two days, I can very well do whatever you may wish."

He moved out of the line so as to think maturely upon such a weighty matter. She covered her real interest in his meditations with an excellent assumption of interest in the superb view before her. The Rigi was towering there, and its crest and the crests of all its lofty neighbors were brightly silvered by the descending sun. From Pilatus on the right, away to the green banks of [54] Weggis and Vitznau on the left, the lake spread in blue and bronze, and by the opposite shore the water's calm was such that a ghostly Lucerne of the under-world lay upside down just beneath its level, and mocked reality above by the perfection of detail. Little bright-sailed boats danced here and there, a large steamer was gliding into the landing by the Gare, and the music from a band aboard came floating to their ears.

That little gray mother-duck who raises so many families under the shelter of the Schweizerhof Quai presently noticed these two silent people, and, suspecting them of possessing superfluous bread, came hastily paddling to the feast. It made Rosina feel badly to see the patient little creature wait there below; but she was breadless, and could only muse over the curious similarity of a woman's lot with a hungry duck's, until the duck gave up in despair and paddled off, leaving a possible lesson in her wake.

"Oh dear!" she exclaimed then, "I'm going to Zurich Monday, and you're going to stay here all summer; we shall never meet again, so what is the use of thinking so long over nothing!"

Then he put his hand up, gave his moustache ends a twist, and turned to walk on. He was still on the same side, and there was a sort of emphasis about his being there which made her want to [55] laugh, even while she recognized the fact that the under-current of the minute was a strong one —stronger perhaps than she was understanding just then.

"You don't feel altogether positive as to your summer plans, I see?" she queried, with a little glance of fun.

"I never am positive," he said, almost grimly. "I will never bind myself even by a thread. I must go free; no one must think to hold me."

"I'm sure I don't want to hold you," she laughed; "I think you are dreadfully rude, but of course you can do what you please."

"You find me rude?" he asked soberly.

"Yes, indeed, I think you are very rude. Here we are still on the first day of our acquaintance, and you refuse absolutely to grant me such a trifling request."

They had continued to follow the stone dalles of the embankment and were now near the end of the Quai; he stopped short again, and again stared at the mountains.

"Ask me what you will," he said, after a moment's pause, "and you shall have it; but to that first most absurd asking I shall always refuse."

Her eyes began to dance. ([56])

"If I asked you to buy me an automobile!" she ventured.

He glanced at her quickly.

"Do you ask me for an automobile?" he demanded.

Her eyes wandered towards a certain shop on the other side of the carriage way.

"If I asked you for that necklace in the window there!"

He raised his shoulders slightly.

"Ladies prefer to buy their own necklaces," he said briefly.

She gave him a furtive look out of the corner of her eye.

"Monsieur, suppose I beg you to take me back to the hotel and henceforth never speak to me!"

He did not appear in the slightest degree alarmed. Instead he put his hand beneath her arm and turned her for another round of promenade.

"I think the automobile will be best," he said tranquilly. "I will find you a good chauffeur, and you can go to Zurich on its wheels."

"I only said 'if,' you know," she murmured.

"Yes, I know," he replied; "but an automobile is always useful." He thought a moment and then [57] added, "About how much will you choose to pay for it?"

In spite of herself she started and stared at him. He met her eyes with a smile of mockery; Its innuendo was unbearable.

"You know very well," she burst forth impetuously, "that I would never have thought of really accepting an automobile from you!"

Then he laughed again with fresh amusement.

"*Comme madame se fâche!*" he cried, "it is most droll! All that I may say you will believe."

"I find you very exasperating," Rosina exclaimed, her cheeks becoming hotly pink; "you amuse yourself in a way that transcends politeness. I honestly think that you are very rude indeed, and I *am* in earnest now."

He made a careless movement with his head.

"Would you have preferred that I should believe you really expect of me an automobile?" he asked.

"You could not possibly have thought that anyhow, and so why should you have spoken as if you were afraid lest I might have meant it?"

He rapped on a tree with his cane as he passed it.

"'Might,' and 'would,' and 'should,'" he said placidly, "those are the hardest words for a stranger to learn correctly."

She felt her temper slipping its anchor. ([58])

"Probably when your tutor endeavored to teach you their difference you feared that yielding to his way might be sacrificing your independence, and so you refused to consider his instruction."

He struck another tree with his cane.

"When you talk so fast and use such great words I cannot understand at all," he said calmly.

Then she fairly choked.

"Are you quite really angry?" he asked with curiosity. She turned her face away and kept it averted.

"Let us go into the café of the Nationale and dine," he proposed suddenly.

"No," she said quickly,—"no, I must go home at once. I have a dinner engagement, and I must change my dress before I go."

"Then I shall not see you this evening?"

"No" (very bitterly); "what a pity that will be!"

"But to-morrow?"

"I am going with a party to the Gutsch."

"But that will not be all day?"

"Perhaps."

He hesitated in his step, and then came to a full stop.

"Let us go up this little street," he suggested. "I was there yesterday; it is interesting really."

She continued to walk on alone and he was obliged to rejoin her; then he glanced downward somewhat anxiously. ([59])

"We cannot speak here," he said in a low tone, "we know so many people that come against us each minute. Do walk with me up to the church there, we cannot go to the hotel like this."

It is true that the Quai at Lucerne has a trick of slipping away beneath one's feet to the end that the hotel is forever springing up in one's face. At this moment it loomed disagreeably close at hand.

"If you want to walk farther, monsieur, you will have to walk alone; I am going home."

For answer he took her arm firmly in his and turned her across towards the church street. Well-bred people do not have scenes on the Schweizerhof Quai, so Rosina went where she was steered by the iron grip on her elbow.

The instant that they were out of the crowd his manner and voice altered materially.

"You must forgive me," he pleaded. "I thought that you understood; I thought that we were together amused; it was against my intention to offend you."

She stopped and looked at a window full of carved bears and lions; various expressions contended in her face, but none of them were soft or sweet. [60]

"You pardon me, do you not?" he went on, laying his fingers upon her arm, while beneath his heavy eyelids there crept a look which his family would have regarded as too good to be true.

She shook the hand off quickly with an apprehensive glance at their surroundings.

"I ask you ten thousand pardons," he repeated; "what can I do to make you know my feeling is true?"

She bit her lip, and then a sudden thought occurred to her. Her anger took wings at once.

“Will you walk back to the hotel on the outside,” she asked seriously, looking up into his face.

He gave a quick movement of surprise, and then made his customary pause for decision.

“How drolly odd women are,” he murmured presently, “and you are so very oddly droll!”

“But will you do it?” she repeated insistently.

He took his cane and drew a line in the dust between two of the cement blocks of the sidewalk, and then he lifted his eyes to hers with a smile so sweet and bright, so liquidly warm and winning, that it metamorphosed him for the nonce into a rarely handsome man.

Few women are proof against such smiles, or the men who can produce them at will, and the remnants of Rosina’s wrath faded completely as she saw its dawning. It seemed futile to try to be cross with any one who had such magic in his face, and so she returned the glance in kind. [61]

“And you will walk home on the outside, will you not?” she asked, quite secure as to his answer now.

He laughed lightly and turned to continue on their way.

“Of a surety not,” he said; “but we will be from now on very *sympathique*, and never so foolishly dispute once more.”

At the dinner-party that evening was the young American who was engaged to the girl at Smith College.

“I saw you walking with Von Ibn this afternoon,” he said to Rosina as they chanced together during the coffee-and-cigarette period.

“Where?” she asked. “I don’t remember seeing you anywhere.”

“No; he appeared to engross you pretty thoroughly. I feel that I ought to warn you.”

“What about?”

“He isn’t a bit popular.”

“Poor man!” ([62])

“None of the men ever have anything to do with him; you never see him with any one, and it’s odd, because he talks English awfully well.”

“What do you suppose they have against him?”

“Oh, nothing in particular, I guess, only they don’t like him. He isn’t interesting to any one.”

“Oh, there I beg to differ with you,” she said quickly; “I saw him speak to some one to-day who I am sure found him very interesting indeed.”

“Who was it?”

“Myself.”

Chapter Four [63]

“HAVE you ever thought what is love and what is passion?”

It was the man who spoke as they leaned against the rail of that afternoon steamer which is scheduled to make port at the Quai by seven o’clock, at the Gare by seven-ten.

Rosina simply shook her head.

“I am going to tell you that,” he said, turning his dark gaze down upon the shadows in the wake behind them; “we part perhaps this night, and I have a fancy to talk of just that. Perhaps it will come that we never meet again, but when you love you will think of what I have say.”

“I never shall love,” she said thoughtfully.

He did not appear to hear her at all.

“It is as this,” he said, his eyes glowing into the tossing foam below: “many may love, and there

may be very many loves; very few can know a passion, and they can know but one. You may love, and have it for one that is quite of another rank or all of another world, but one has a passion [64] only for what one may hope for one's own. Love, that is a feeling, a something of the heart,"—he touched his bosom as he spoke but never raised his eyes,—"what I may have known,—or you. But passion, that is only half a feeling, and the other half must be in some other, or if it be not there it must be of a force put there, because with passion there *must* be two, and one *must* find the other and possess the other; that other heart must be, and must be won, and be your own, and be your own all alone." He paused a moment and took out his cigarette case, and contemplated it and put it back. She leaned on the rail and listened, undisturbed by the strength of his speech. In the few short hours of their acquaintance the breadth of mutual comprehension between them seemed to be widening at a ratio similar to the circles spread by a stone striking still water.

"I am going to speak to you in my tongue," he went on presently, "I am going to explain what I say with my music. Will you think to understand?"

"I will try," she told him simply.

"It is so easy there," he said; "I think if I had but my violin I could tell you all things. Because in music is all things. You must have feel that yourself. Only I fear you must smile at my language— [65] it is not so easy to place your soul on a strange tongue."

"I shall not smile," she reassured him, "I am deeply interested."

"That is good of you," he replied, raising his head to cast a briefly grateful glance at her, "if you may only really understand! For, just as there are all colors for the painter to use, so are there all of the same within music. There is from darkness far below the under bass to the dazzle of sun in the high over the treble, and in between there are gray, and rose, and rain, and twilight, so that with my bow I may make you all a sad picture between the clefs or a gay one of flowers blooming from G to upper C. And there is heat and cold there too,—one gasps in the F flat down low and one shivers at the needle frost above high C. And there are all feelings too. I may sing you to sleep, I may thunder you awake, I may even steal your heart forever while you think to only listen in pleasure."

"Not my heart," said Rosina decidedly.

"Ah, now it reminds me what I have begin to tell you," he exclaimed,—"of love and of passion. I must get some music and teach you that. Do you know the 'Souvenir' of Vieuxtemps?" he asked her abruptly.

"The 'Souvenir d'Amérique'?" [66]

"No, no," he said impatiently, "not one of those. 'Le Souvenir' it is. Not of anything. Just alone. If we were only to be of some together I would teach it to you; I have never teach any one, but I would trouble me to teach you that."

Then he paused and, producing his *étui* for the second time, lit a cigarette.

"It is like this," he went on, staring again upon the now rapidly darkening waters, "you may learn all that I have begin to tell you there in that one piece of music. There is love singing up and up in the treble, and one listens and finds that nothing may be sweeter or of more beauty, and then, most sudden and terrible there sounds there, below, a cry, 'E,—F,—F sharp,—G;' and it is not a cry, rather a scream, strength, force,—a Must made of the music,—and one perceives of a lightning flash that all the love was but the background of the passion of that cry of those four notes; and one listens, one trembles, one feels that they were to come before they are there, and when they have come, one can but shake and know their force." He stopped and took his cigarette from between his lips. "*Mon Dieu*," he cried violently, "of what was the composer thinking when he beat out those bars? When you shall play them you shall take only your [67] forefinger and draw all your strength within it, and when the notes shriek in pain you shall have one secret of passion there beneath your hand."

He spoke with such force,—such a tremendous force of feeling, that her face betrayed her wonder.

"I frighten you,—yes?" he asked with a smile of reassurance; "oh, that must not be. I only speak so because I will that you know too. It is good to know. Many go to the end and never know but love and are very well content, but I think you will know more. I did love myself once. She was never mine, and the time is gone, and I have thought to suffer much forever, and then I have stop to suffer, and now I am all forget. But," he flung his cigarette to the waves, and for the first time during his monologue turned squarely towards her, "but if I have a passion come to me *now*, *that* woman shall be mine! If I die for it she shall be mine. Because what I feel shall be so strong that she shall of force feel it too. Every day, every night, every hour, the need of me will go to her strongly and make her weaker, and weaker, and weaker, until she have no choice but of the being all mine. And so you are quite decided to go to Zurich to-morrow?"

He brought forth the question in such sudden change of subject that she started involuntarily. ([68]) But then relief at the descent into the commonplace came on her and she replied:

"Yes, I want to go there to-morrow."

"But why do you not want to on Tuesday—or next week?"

“My friend is there,” she reminded him.

His brow clouded, and she knew the reason why.

“You are so typically European,” she laughed; “I do believe that humanity over here has only two bases of action, and they are governed by ‘*Cherchez la femme*’ and ‘*Cherchez l’homme*.’”

“*Mais c’est vrai, ça!*” he said doggedly.

“Not always,” she replied; “or perhaps not always in the usual sense. It is true that I am going to Zurich to meet some one, but it is so very innocent when a woman goes ‘*cherchant la femme*,’ and, as I told you before, it is a woman that I go to meet, or, rather, it is a girl.”

“Are you sure?” he asked suspiciously.

“You don’t believe my word yet, do you?”

“I did not say that.”

“No, but really you do not.”

He gave a slight shrug.

“My friend is an Irish girl,” Rosina went on placidly. “I do love her so. We shall have such a good time being together next week.”

“You are sure that she is not English?” the man asked, with a little touch of sarcasm in his inflection. ([69])

“If you could hear her speak you could tell that from her accent.”

Von Ibn took out his case and lit another cigarette.

“What hotel do you go at in Zurich?” he asked presently.

“I shall go wherever my friend is.”

“Where is she?”

“I don’t know; I write her *Poste Restante*. She has been travelling for a long time with a Russian friend,—a lady,” she added, with a jerk.

“I hope you will go to the Victoria,” Von Ibn said slowly; “that is where I always have stay in Zurich.”

“So that we may have our dining-room souvenir in common, I suppose?”

“It is a very nice place,” he cried hotly; “it is not at all common! It is one of the best hotels in Zurich.”

She hastily interposed an explanation of the error in his comprehension of her meaning, and by the time that he understood, the lights of Lucerne were hazing the darkness, while the Rigi and Pilate had each hung out their rope ladder of stars.

“What time do you travel in the morning?” he asked then, turning his eyes downward upon her face. [70]

“By the first express; it goes, I believe, about eight o’clock.”

“I shall not be awake,” he said gloomily.

“I shall not be, either; but Ottillie will get me aboard somehow.”

“If it was noon that you go, I should certainly come to the Gare,” he said thoughtfully; then he reflected for a short space, and added eagerly, “why do you not go later, and make an excursion by Zug; it is just on your way, and a so interesting journey.”

“I know Zug, and the lake too; I’ve coached all through there.”

“Then it would not again interest you?”

“No; I want to go straight to Molly as fast as I can.”

“To Molli! Where is that? You said to Zurich you went.”

She laughed and explained.

“Molly is the name of my girl friend.”

“Ah, truly.”

Then he was silent, and she was silent, and the lights of Lucerne continued to draw nearer and nearer.

“I wonder if I shall really never see you again,” he said, after a long interval.

“I wonder.” [71]

“It is very unlikely that we shall ever meet again.”

“Very.”

In spite of herself her voice sounded dry.

“Where is your bank address?”

“Deutsches-Filiale, Munich, while I am in this part of the world. But why? Were you thinking of writing me weekly?”

“Oh, no,” he said hastily, “but I might send you a *carte-postale* sometimes, if you liked.”

She felt obliged to laugh.

“Would you send a colored one, or just one of the regular *dix-centime* kind,” she inquired with interest.

Von Ibn contemplated her curiously.

“You have such a pretty mouth!” he murmured.

She laughed afresh.

“But with the stamp it is fifteen *centimes* anyway,” he continued.

“Stamp, what stamp? Oh, yes, the postal card,” she nodded; and then, “I never really expect to see you again, but I’m glad, very glad that I met you, because you have interested and amused me so much.”

“American men are so very stupid, are they not?” he said sympathetically.

“No, indeed,” she cried indignantly; “American men are charming, and they always rise and ([72]) give their seats to women in the trams, which the men here never think of doing.”

“You need not speak to me so hotly,” said Von Ibn, “I always take a cab.”

The ending of his remark was sufficiently unexpected to cause a short break in the conversation; then Rosina went on:

“I saw a man do a very gallant thing once, he hurried to carry a poor old woman’s big bundle of washing for her because the tram stopped in the wrong place and she would have so far to take it. Wasn’t that royal in him?”

He did not appear impressed.

“Does that man take the broom and sweep a little for the street-cleaner when he meets her?” he asked, after a brief period for reflection.

“We do not have women street-cleaners in America.”

Then he yawned, with no attempt at disguise. She felt piqued at such an open display of ennui, and turned from him to the now brilliant shore past which they were gliding.

After a minute or two he took out his note-book and pencil.

“Deutsches-Filiale, Munich, you said, did you not?”

She nodded. [73]

“Can you write my name?” he asked.

“If strict necessity should drive me to it.”

“Write it here, please.”

He held the book upon the rail and she obeyed the request. Afterwards he held the page to the light until he was apparently thoroughly assured of some doubtful point, and then put it back in his pocket.

“I shall send you a card *Poste Restante* at Zurich,” he announced, as the lights of Lucerne blazed up close beside them.

“Be sure that you spell my name right.”

“Yes,” he said, taking out his note-book again; “it is like this, *n’est ce pas*?” and he wrote, and then showed her the result.

“Yes, that’s it,” she assented.

He continued to regard his book with deep attention.

“It exasperates me to have my name spelled wrong,” she went on; “doesn’t it you?”

“Yes,” he said; “it is for that that I look in my book.”

She came close and looked at what she had written,—“Von Ebn.”

“Isn’t that right?” she asked in surprise.

“It is your English E, but not my letter.”

“How do you spell your name?”

“I-b-n.” ([74])

“Oh!”

She laughed, and he laughed with her.

“That was very stupid in me,” she exclaimed.

“Yes,” he replied, with one of his rare smiles; “but I would have said nothing, only that at the *Poste Restante* I shall lose all my letters from you.”

“All! what leads you to suppose that there would ever be any?”

He turned and looked steadily at her, his eyes widely earnest.

“What, not even a post card?”

Rosina forgave the yawn, or perhaps she had forgotten it.

“Do you really want to hear from me again?”

“Yes, really.”

“Shall you remember me after I am gone?”

“*Natürlich.*”

“For how long?”

At that he shrugged his shoulders. Down below they were making ready for the landing.

“Who can say?” he answered at last.

“At least, monsieur, you are frank.”

“I am always frank.”

“Is that always best?”

“I think so.”

People were beginning to move towards the staircase. Below, the man stood ready to fling the [75] rope.

“Let us go to the other landing and walk back across the stone bridge,” he suggested.

“There is not time; it is quite seven o’clock now.”

“But I shall not again be with you, and there is something that I must say.”

“You must say it here, then.”

The rope was thrown and caught, and every one aboard received the violent jolt that attends some boat-landings. Rosina was thrown against her companion and he was thrown against the stair-rail.

“Can you hear if I speak now,” he whispered.

“Yes.”

“You will see that I really interest myself in you.”

Just then some one in front trod on a dog, which yelped violently for three minutes; for a brief space speech was impossible, and then they were on the gang-plank, and he bent above her once more.

“I want to ask you something; will you do it if I ask you?”

“What is it?”

“Will you promise me to do it?”

They were now squeezing past the ticket *kiosque*.

“But what is it?” ([76])

“It is this—”

A man behind stepped on Rosina’s skirt and nearly pulled her over backward; something ripped violently and she gave a low cry. The man said, “*Mille pardons*,” and Von Ibn looked ready to murder him.

“Are you undone?” he asked her solicitously.

“No, I’m only badly torn.”

“Do you want a pin?”

“Yes; have you one?”

“*Malheureusement que non.*”

“I think that I can hold it up,” she said bravely.

“It is unpardonable—a such man!”

He turned to scowl again at the offender. They were now in the Promenade.

“He couldn’t see in the dark, I suppose,” she murmured.

“But why was he come so near? If it was I who had torn from being too near, that would be quite different.”

“If you don’t take care it will be exactly the same thing.”

He laughed, and gave way three inches.

“You have not yet promise,” he said then.

“Promised what?”

“To do what I ask.”

“Tell me what it is; if I can do it I will.” ([77])

He took her arm to cross towards the hotel.

“You can do it if you will,” he said; “it is this—”

The Schweizerhof shone before them, great and white and sparkling; every window was lighted, every table on the terrace was full. Rosina quickened her steps.

“Oh, I’m so late,” she cried, “and I have *such* a toilette to make!”

Von Ibn had his hand upon her arm still.

“It is this,” he said emphatically, “promise me that you will go to the Victoria Hotel at Zurich; yes?”

Later in her own room, as Ottillie dressed her hair, she closed her eyes and tried to reduce her thoughts to a rational basis. But she gave up in despair.

“From the ‘Souvenir’ to the Victoria,” she murmured; “oh, he is most certainly a genius!” then she sighed a little. “I’m sorry that we shall probably never meet again,” she added sadly.

Chapter Five [78]

ROSINA fairly flung herself off of the train and into the arms of Molly, and then and there they kissed one another with the warmth born of a long interval apart.

“Well, my dear,” began the Irish girl, when they found themselves five minutes later being rolled away in one of the villainous Zurich cabs, “begin away back in the early days of our sad separation and tell me everything that has happened to you since.”

“Not much has happened,” Rosina replied. “I crossed in May and got some clothes in Paris, and then came Lucerne, and this is June. Before I came over *nothing* happened. How could things happen while I had to wear a crape veil?”

“To be sure!” said Molly wisely; “and yet they do sometimes,—I know it for a fact. And anyway the veil is off now, and you look so well that I should think perhaps—lately?”

“Oh, *dear*, no,” said Rosina, turning quickly scarlet; “don’t harbor such an idea for a second. Nothing of that sort will ever happen to me again. A burnt child dreads the fire, and I can assure you I’m cinders to the last atom. But never mind me, tell me about yourself. That is much more interesting.” [79]

"'About myself is it you're inquiring'?" laughed the Irish girl; "'tis easy told. Last winter, like a fool, I engaged myself to a sweet young Russian colonel, and this spring he died—"

"Oh, Molly!"

"Never mind, my dear, because I can assure you that *I* didn't. Russians are so furiously made up that he couldn't stand any of the other men that I was engaged to. My life was too broad a burden in consequence, and I was well satisfied at his funeral."

"Is it his mother that you are travelling with?"

"His mother! No, dear, I can't stand any of the family now."

"Whose mother is she?"

"She isn't anybody's mother. That's how she can be sixty-five and look forty-two by gaslight."

"Does she look forty-two by gaslight? Oh, imagine looking forty-two by gaslight!"

"By men's gaslight she looks forty-two. Any woman could just instinctively see through everything from her wig to her waist, and that's why she has grown to hate me so."

"Does she hate you?" [80]

"Hate me! Well, wait until you see her look at me. It's a sort of cross between a mud-turtle and a basilisk, and she's forever telling my age and telling it wrong. And she lays for every man that comes near me."

"Why, Molly, how awful!"

"I'm going slowly mad. You've no idea! she's so jealous that life is not only a burden, it's a weight that's smashing me flatter every day. I'm getting a gray hair and a wrinkle, and all because of her. And she wrote Ivan—"

"Who's Ivan?"

"He's one of the men that I've accepted lately; he's her cousin. He's a prince and she's a princess; but oh, my soul and body, my head is uneasy enough with lying and I've ceased to care a bit about the crown."

"Why, Molly, wouldn't you like to be a princess?"

"Not after this trip. Do you know what straits she's driven me to? actually I came near taking a Turk at Trieste."

"Did you?"

"No, I didn't. I thought it over and I decided I wasn't built for the monopoly of a harem."

Rosina burst out laughing.

"Molly," she gasped, "imagine *you* confined to only one man, and he your lord and master!" [81]

"I couldn't possibly imagine it, and I make it a point to never go in for anything that I can't imagine. But, my dear, I must tell you the great news. Being engaged is an old habit with me; but" (she put her hand to her throat and felt within her high stock) "you must know that I am now actually in love, for the first time in my life, too."

"Oh, Molly, since when?"

"Three weeks. Wait till I fish up my locket and you shall see him. Handsome is nowhere! And our meeting was *so* romantic. I was lying on the bottom of a boat waiting to be paddled into the Blue Grotto, and at the last minute a stranger came, and they laid him down at my feet. When we got into the grotto, of course we stood up; and it was lucky we did, for we fell in love directly, and of course we couldn't have fallen unless we were standing."

"Oh, Molly, who is he? do show me the picture."

"That's what I'm trying to do, but I think the clasp has hooked on to Captain Douglas' locket,—you remember Captain Douglas!—I can't pull it anyway. Never mind, I'll show you to-night."

"Is he English?" ([82])

"English, no; he's Italian. Such eyes you never saw. They're warmer than white porcelain tile stoves in early autumn. And he belongs to the Queen-mother's regiment, and wears the most resplendent uniform and a gray cape that he just carelessly sweeps across his chest and up over the other shoulder—ah!"

Molly stopped to draw a deep breath and sigh.

"Where is he stationed?" her friend inquired.

"Rome; and he hasn't a cent beyond his pay, so we can't think of any future which makes him *so* blue."

"Poor fellow! do you consider yourself engaged to him?"

“Of course I’m engaged to him. He came a whole day’s journey to propose. You don’t suppose I’d say ‘no’ to a chap who was awfully hard up, and then took a long, expensive trip just on my account! Besides, I’m most desperately in love with him, and he is the kind of man who couldn’t come to time any other way. He is a most awfully good sort—the sort that believe in everything. Why, he has such a high opinion of me that it’s almost depressing at times. I can’t live up to a high opinion; it’s all I can do to keep above a low one.”

“But how will it come out, Molly?”

“It won’t come out at all unless you tell it. No one else knows. He *can’t* say anything without ([83])
compromising himself, and I’m not likely to let it out unless I some day pull up the wrong locket by accident.”

“But don’t it trouble you?”

“Trouble me! Why should it trouble me? It’s that old Russian woman who troubles me. I’d be idiotic to add to my miseries by thinking up any other torments while I’m around with her. Here we are at the Quai,—that’s the hotel yonder. And I’ve talked one continuous stream ever since we left the Gare and you’ve never said a word. Begin right off and tell me something about yourself. Who have you met since you came over in May? Of course you’ve met *some one*. Who?”

“An old French marquis,” Rosina told her thoughtfully.

“And no one else?”

“Oh, yes, of course there were loads of others. But this was such a dear old gentleman, when he kissed my hand—well, really, I almost felt like a princess.”

“But not like a marchioness?”

“Oh, dear no! I wouldn’t think of undertaking the gout before I’m thirty.”

“The Lord preserve me from dear old men!” Molly ejaculated with fervor. “Why, I had a baron [84]
propose to me last winter; he was actually so shaky that his valet was always in attendance to stand him up and sit him down. While he was pouring out his remnant of a heart I kept expecting to see the valet come running in to throw him at my knees. He was over eighty and awfully rich, but that servant of his was too careful and conscientious for me to dare risk it,—a man like that with devoted attention and plenty of rare beef might live ten years, you know,—so I told him ‘no,’ and the valet came in and stood him up and led him away.”

The cab coming to a standstill before the hotel just at this moment, the two young women were forced to interrupt their conversation, and undertake the arduous labor of preparing for *déjeuner*. Ottillie was just laying out the contents of the travelling toilet-case when her mistress came in to be dressed, and it was quite two hours later before any opportunity presented itself for renewing their talk. Then Molly came into the salon of the blue-and-white suite which the friends shared, and they curled up together on the divan, prepared to spend one of those infinitely delightful hours which are only known to two thoroughly congenial women who have had the rare luck of chancing to know one another well.

Molly began by winding her arm about her friend’s shoulders and kissing her warmly. [85]

“’Tis like Paradise to be with you instead of that fussy old woman,” she said warmly; “now go on with what you were telling me in the carriage,—the marquis, you know.”

“There isn’t any more to tell you about him, he’s all over, but I’ll tell you about some one else, if you’ll be good.”

“I’ll be good. Who, and where, and which, and what is the other?”

“I haven’t any faith in you, I’m afraid you will tease me.”

“Did I ever tease you before?”

“I was married then and I didn’t mind. I feel differently now.”

“I promise not to tease you one bit. Where did you meet him?”

“In Lucerne.”

“What’s his name? I know a lot of people who are in Lucerne just now. Perhaps I know him.”

“I wish that you did know him.”

“Tell me his name.”

“It’s the composer, Herr von Ibn.”

Molly screamed with joy.

“Oh, my dear, what luck you do have! Did he play for you? Have you heard any of his things?”

“No, unfortunately. You see I only met him on Saturday, and as I came away this morning we ([86])
had to rush every second as hard as we could in order to become acquainted at all.”

“What fun to know him! He’s going to be so tremendously famous, they say; did you know

that?”

“So they told me there.”

“And he plays in such a wonderful manner, too. What a pity he didn’t play for you. Don’t you love a violin, anyhow?”

“I don’t know,” said Rosina thoughtfully; “I think that I like a flute best, but I always think whenever I see a man playing on a violin that the attitude ought to develop very affectionate tendencies in him.”

“What kind of a fellow was he to talk to? Was he agreeable?”

“Most of the American men didn’t like him, I believe,” said Rosina; then she added, “but most of the American men never like any foreigners, you know, unless it’s the Englishmen, perhaps.”

“But what did you think of him?”

“I thought he was very queer; and he got the better of me all the time.”

“That ought to have made you hate him.”

“That is what seems so odd to me. I’ve been thinking about him all the time that I was on the [87] train this morning. Do you know, Molly, that man was positively rude to me over and over again, and yet, try as I might, I couldn’t stay angry with him.” She paused and knit her brows for a few seconds over some recollection, and then she turned suddenly and laid her face against the other’s shoulder. “Molly, dear,” she said softly, “he had a way of smiling,—if you could only see it! Well!”

“Well!”

“I could forgive anything to that smile,—honestly.”

Molly looked thoughtful.

“Saturday to Monday,” she murmured apropos of nothing.

Rosina lifted her head and gave her a glance.

“I wish that *you* might meet him,” she said gravely.

“I wish that he was here in Zurich,” her friend replied.

At that instant there sounded a tap on the door.

“*Herein!*” Rosina cried.

It was a waiter with a card upon a tray; Molly held out her hand for the bit of pasteboard, glanced at it, and gave a start and a cry.

“Is anything the matter?” Rosina asked, reaching for the card. Her friend gave it to her, and as [88] her eyes fell upon the name she turned first white and then red.

“It *can’t* be that he is here in Zurich!” she exclaimed.

“This is his card, anyway.”

“Mercy on us!”

“Shall he come up here,—he had better, don’t you think?”

“I don’t know,” she gasped. “I’m too surprised to think! The idea of his coming here this afternoon! Why, I never thought of such a thing. He said good-bye *forever* last night. I—”

“Show monsieur to the room,” Molly said to the man, cutting Rosina short in the full tide of her astonishment.

“Of course you must see him,” she said, as the door closed, “and, not being entirely devoid of curiosity, I can’t help feeling awfully glad to think that now I shall see him too.”

She quitted the divan as she spoke and went to the mirror over the mantelpiece. There was something in the action that suddenly recalled Rosina to her senses, and she sprang to her feet and disappeared into the sleeping-room beyond, returning in two or three minutes bearing evidence of Ottillie’s deft touch. She found Molly still before the mirror, and as her own reflection [89] appeared over her friend’s shoulder the other nodded and laughed.

“You seem to have made a deep impression,” she said gayly.

“I can’t understand it all,” Rosina began; “he made *such* a fuss over his good-bye last night and —and—well, really, I never dreamed of his doing such a thing as to come here.”

“I’m heartily glad that he’s come, because now I shall meet him, and I’ve heard—”

She was interrupted by a slight tap at the door, and before either could cry “*Entrez!*” it was flung open and Von Ibn strode into the room. The first glance at his face showed both that something was gone all wrong, and most horribly so.

Rosina, flushed afresh, went towards him, holding out her hand and wondering if it was anything in connection with Molly that had produced such an utter blackness.

“This is a very great surprise,” she began, but he interrupted her at once.

“*Comme je vous ai cherché!*” he cried, with violence. “Why are you not gone to the Victoria as you say—as I ask you to?” His face was like a thunder-storm.

The corners of her mouth felt suddenly traitorous; she tried to speak, beginning, “I did not know—” but he broke in, and went hotly on with: [90]

“Naturally you did not know, but I had already known! One could not, of course, expect me to get up to ride on that most uncomfortable train which you chose, but of course also I came on the first train leaving after I did wake up.”

Molly turned abruptly to the window and leaned as far out as she could, her handkerchief pressed tightly over her mouth. Rosina wished that her friend might have been anywhere else; even during what is commonly called “a scene” two are infinitely better company than three.

“How most absurd I have been made,” Von Ibn continued wrathfully, “in a cab from hotel to hotel hunting for you! Do you think I have ever done so before? Do you think I have found it very amusing to-day? Naturally I go from the Gare to the Victoria, where I have told you to go. I take there a room, and tell the *garçon* to bring my card to madame; and in ten minutes, as I am getting me out of the dust of that most abominable middle-day train, he returns to say that no such as madame is within the house. *Figurez-vous?* Why are you acted so? Why are you always so oddly singular?”

Rosina appeared struck dumb by the torrent of his words; she stood pink and silent before his towering blackness. Molly, at the window, judged it prudent to interfere, and, turning, began: [91]

“It’s all my fault, monsieur. Rosina wanted to go to the Victoria; she wept when she found that she couldn’t, but I was here already and we wanted to be together, and so she consented to come with me and live by the lake.”

Von Ibn turned his eyes upon the new speaker, and their first expression was one of deep displeasure. But Molly’s eyes were of that brown which is almost bronze, and fringed by eyelashes that were irresistibly long and curly, and she furthermore possessed a smile that could have found its way anywhere alone, and yet was rendered twice wise in the business of hearts by two attendant dimples, to the end that the combination was powerful enough to slowly smooth out some of the deepest lines of anger in the face before her, and to vastly ameliorate its generally offended air.

From the evidently pardoned Irish girl the caller turned his somewhat softened gaze towards the young American, and then, and then only, it appeared that a fresh storm-centre had gathered force unto itself in that one small salon, and that it was now Rosina who had decided to exhibit *her* temper, beginning by saying, with a very haughty coolness:

“It’s nice of mademoiselle to try and make a joke out of all this, but she knows that I never thought for a minute of going anywhere except where she might chance to be. And as to you, monsieur, I cannot see how you could have expected or demanded that I should pay any attention whatever to your wishes. You told me last night that we might never meet again—” [92]

“And that could have truthed itself by chance,” he interrupted eagerly.

“—And I believed you, and you know it,” she finished, not noticing his interpolation.

He stood still, looking straight at her, and when she was altogether silent he stepped forward and raised her hand within his own.

“Does one meet a real friendship on Saturday to let it go from him for always after Monday?” he asked her, speaking with a simple dignity that suddenly swept the atmosphere free from clouds and storms.

Molly crossed the room hastily.

“I hear madame calling,” she explained.

Rosina knew that madame was down a corridor well around the corner, and that she was not in the habit of calling for anything or anybody, but she felt no desire to cover her friend with shame by forcing her to admit that she was lying. Indeed, just at that particular moment Molly’s absence appeared to be a very desirable quota in the general scheme of things. So the girl went away and stayed away—being wise in her views as to life and love affairs. [93]

When they were alone Von Ibn flung himself into an arm-chair and stretched forth his hand almost as if to command her approach to his side. She stood still, but she could feel her color rising and was desperately annoyed that it should be so.

“You are not angry that I be here?” he asked.

She drew a quick little breath and then turned to seat herself.

“You must have known that I must come,” he continued.

She felt her lips tremble, and was furious at them for it.

“I played the ‘Souvenir’ last night,” he said, dropping his eyes and sinking his voice; “it is then plain to me that I must travel to-day.”

Something dragged her gaze upward until their eyes met.

He smiled, and she blushed deeply....

Chapter Six

[94]

IT was very late that night—indeed the hour was dangerously close upon the morning after—before the two friends found themselves alone together again. Rosina lay up among the pillows, the centre of a mass of blue cambric, with tiny bands of lace confining the fulness here and there; while Molly, in such a dressing-gown as grows only in the Rue de la Paix, sat on the foot of the narrow continental bed and thoughtfully bound the braids of her bonny brown hair.

“Well, you know him now,” Rosina said at last, the inflection of her voice rampant with interrogative meaning.

“Yes,” was the non-committal answer.

“Don’t be horrid, Molly; you know I want so much to know what you think of him? Isn’t he delicious? Isn’t he grand? Didn’t he impress you as being just an ideal sort of a celebrity?”

Molly opened her eyes to an exceeding width.

“I don’t know,” she said slowly.

“Don’t know! then you don’t like him? What don’t you like about him?” ([95])

“Well, I’d prefer a Russian myself.”

“Why! what do you mean?”

“They’re not so fierce, and if one likes fierceness they’re plenty fierce enough.”

“What are you talking about?”

“The way that he came bursting in on us to-day.”

“But that was splendid! it was lovely to see him so worked up.”

“You never can count on when he’ll work up, though.”

“But I like men you can’t count on.”

“Do you?”

“You see, I could always count on my husband, and that sort of arithmetic isn’t to my taste any more.”

“Well, dear, from the little I’ve seen of Herr von Ibn I should say that it would be impossible to ever work him by any other rule than that of his own sweet—or otherwise—will.”

“But I like that.”

“Yes, so I gathered from your actions.”

“And, after all, whatever he is—” Rosina paused and ran her fingers through her hair. “It doesn’t any of it amount to anything, you know,” she added.

“Oh, dear no. That’s evident enough.” ([96])

Rosina started.

“What do you mean?” she cried.

“Oh, nothing as far as he’s concerned;—only as far as you are.”

“But,” Rosina insisted, “you did mean something. What was it? You mean—”

“I don’t mean anything,” said Molly; “if he don’t mean anything and you don’t mean anything, how in Heaven’s name could *I* mean anything?”

“I only met him Saturday, you know,” Rosina reminded her. “And this is Monday,” she reminded her further. “Nothing ever can happen in such a short time,” she wound up airily.

“No,” said Molly thoughtfully, “to be sure you can die and they can bury you between Saturday and Monday, but nothing ever happened to living people in such a short time, of course.”

“I wish you wouldn’t laugh.”

“I’m not laughing, I’m thinking.”

“What are you thinking?”

“I was thinking that if I met a man in Lucerne on Saturday and he came stalking me to Zurich on Monday, I certainly should—” she hesitated.

“Well, I shouldn’t,” Rosina declared flatly.

There was a pause, during which Molly finished her braids and proceeded to establish herself [97] on the foot of her friend’s bed in a most confidence-provoking attitude.

“Let’s talk about the lieutenant,” the American suggested at last.

“He’s too mild for to-night,” her friend said; “it would be like toast and rain-water after a hunt meet to discuss him just now. Let’s talk about Dmitri.”

“Whose Dmitri? another one of your *fiancés*?”

“Oh, dear no. He’s a cross Russian poodle that was given me last Christmas. When you try to be nice to him he bites. I don’t know what makes me think of him just now.”

Rosina laughed, and held her hand out lovingly towards the pretty girl at her feet.

“Forgive me, Molly. I really didn’t mean to be vexed. Let us talk of something pleasant and leave my latest to sleep in peace at the Victoria.”

“Are you sure that he’s at the Victoria?”

“Not at all; he may have moved to this hotel, or returned to Lucerne.”

“I should think so, indeed.”

“But never mind.”

Molly took her knees into the embrace of her clasped hands.

“I wonder if you ever *will* marry again,” she murmured curiously.

“Never.” ([98])

“Are you sorry that you ever married?”

“No-o-o,” said the other reflectively, “because I never could have known the joy of being a widow any other way, you know.”

“Would you advise me to marry,” Molly inquired; “one can’t be sure of the widowhood, and if one has courage and self-denial a life of single blessedness is attainable for any woman.”

“I don’t believe it is for you, though.”

“Why not, pray?”

“Your eyes are all wrong; old maids never have such eyes.”

“I got my eyes from my father.”

“Well, he wasn’t an old maid, surely?”

“No, he was a captain in the Irish Dragoons.”

“There, you see!”

Molly stood up and shook her gown out, preparatory to untying its series of frontal bows.

“But if you were to marry again—” she began.

Rosina threw up an imploring hand.

“You send cold December chills down my warm June back,” she cried sharply.

Molly flung the dressing-gown upon a chair and proceeded to turn off the lights.

“I don’t want you to think I’m cross,” began an apologetic voice in the dark which descended about them.

“I wasn’t thinking of you at all.” ([99])

“What were you thinking of?”

“Of Dmitri.”

Then low laughter rippled from one narrow bed to the other and back again.

Five minutes later there was a murmur.

“I do wish, Molly, that you’d tell me what you *really* thought of him.”

“I thought he was grand. How could any one think anything else?”

Then through the stillness and darkness there sounded the *frou-frou* of ruffles and the sweetness and warmth of a fervent kiss.

Chapter Seven

[100]

THE next morning they both breakfasted in bed, the ingenuity of Ottillie having somewhat mitigated the tray difficulty by a clever adjustment of the wedge-shaped piece of mattress with which Europe elevates its head at night. Molly was just “winding up” a liberal supply of honey, and Rosina was salting her egg, when there came a tap at the door of the salon.

“Ah, Monsieur von Ibn is up early,” the Irish girl said in a calm whisper, thereby frightening her friend to such a degree that she dropped the salt-spoon into her cup of chocolate. Then they both held their breath while Ottillie hurried to the door.

It proved to be nothing more unconventional than the maid of Madame la Princesse, a long-suffering female who bore the name of Claudine.

“What is the matter?” Molly demanded anxiously.

“Oh, mademoiselle, I am sent to say that it must that all go to-day!”

“To-day!” Molly screamed; “I thought that we were to remain until Friday anyway?” [101]

“And I also thought it. Let mademoiselle but figure to herself how yesterday I did all unpack in the thought of until Friday; and now to-day I am bidden inpack once more!”

“Now, did you *ever*?” Molly asked emphatically of Rosina, who shook her head and looked troubled in good earnest. “Do you really think that she means it?” she continued, turning to the maid once more; “she sometimes changes her mind, you know.”

“Not of this time, mademoiselle, I have already arrange her hairs, and I am bidden place her other hairs in the case.”

“Then it’s settled,” cried the Irish girl despairingly; “when her hair is done, the end of all is at hand. What train do we go by, Claudine?”

“I am not of all sure, mademoiselle; madame has spoken of he who runs by Schaffhausen.”

The Irish girl sighed heavily.

“Very well, Claudine, you and I know what it is to travel as we do. Go to madame and tell her I will come as soon as I am dressed,” and then she picked up the honey-jar and sighed again.

The maid went out.

“What makes you go?” Rosina asked; “I wouldn’t.” ([102])

“Oh, my dear, I’ve stayed at their place in the Caucasus weeks at a time, and I have to be decent, and she knows it.”

“Why did you ever accept an invitation to travel with such a horrid person?”

Molly was out of bed and jerking her hair-ribbons savagely loose.

“She isn’t a horrid person,” she said; “they are very nice princes and princesses, all of them. Only I hate to lead an existence like the slave of the ring or the genii of the lamp, or whoever the johnny was who had to jump whenever they rubbed their hands. It riles my blood just a bit too much.”

“I wouldn’t,” said Rosina decidedly; “I certainly wouldn’t.”

“I wish I’d taken the Turk,” the Irish girl exclaimed, as she wove her hair back and forth and in and out upon the crown of her head, “I’d have been free of Russia then; ’tis a hint for European politics, my present situation.”

Rosina suddenly gave a sharp cry.

“Oh, Molly,—and me?”

Molly looked over her shoulder.

“What is it?” she asked anxiously.

“Why, what am I to do? I came here to be with you, and now you’re going away.” ([103])

“You’ll have to go too if you can’t stay behind without me.”

“But I only came yesterday.”

“Well, what of that?”

“And, oh Molly, that man! I’ll *have* to go!”

“Why?”

“Why, because—because—Oh, you know why. And then,—if I go—what *do* you suppose he will think?”

Molly snatched her dressing-gown.

“He’ll come too, I fancy. At least, judging from what I’ve seen of him I should suppose that he’d come too.”

“Come too!” Rosina gasped.

“Why not? He’ll be just as interesting in Constance as he is here, or in Lucerne.”

“You don’t really think that he would come too; Molly, not *really*?”

“Certainly I think that he would.”

“Oh, Molly!”

“’Tis their way here on the Continent; they’ve nothing else to do, you know. I know a man who went from Paris to St. Petersburg after a girl (I know it for a fact, for the girl was myself), and another who came from Naples to Nice just to call, and went back at midnight.”

Rosina appeared most uncomfortable. ([104])

“I don’t want him to go to Constance—I don’t want to go myself!”

“Oh, if it comes to that, you can both remain in Zurich indefinitely, of course.”

“No, we can’t; that is, I can’t. You know that. If he’s going to stay I’ve got to go. Oh dear, oh dear, how aggravating it all is! I don’t *want* him to follow me about.”

“Why don’t you tell him so, then?”

“Molly!”

“Yes, just tell him so, and if you really mean it, he’ll understand, never fear.”

“But I don’t want to do that.”

“No, I didn’t expect that you would. One never likes to do that, which is one reason why I am myself betrothed to three different men at the present minute.”

“But, Molly—”

“I thought that you liked him.”

“I do like him, but there’s a wide difference between liking a man and wanting to have him tagging along behind all the time.”

“Oh, as to that, I don’t believe that *der* Herr von Ibn will stay enough behind to be considered as tagging very long.”

Rosina twisted uneasily in bed.

“I don’t see what to do,” she murmured.

Molly was getting into her clothes with a rapidity little short of marvellous. [105]

“I’ll be curious to see what you *do* do,” she said, sticking pins recklessly into herself here and there, while she settled all nice points with a jerk. “It’s ten o’clock,” she added, with a glance towards the chimney-piece, “you’d better be arising, for I presume he is coming this morning?”

Rosina smiled delightfully.

“You heard him say so last night, didn’t you?”

“Perhaps; somehow the remark didn’t make an impression on me, if I did.”

“I’ll get up directly you go. And oh, Molly, do tell me just once more before you leave me that you think he’s—”

Molly slashed the end of her four-in-hand through the loop and drew up the knot with a single pull; then she approached the bed and leaned over the face upon the pillow.

“I think he’s desperately in love,” she said, “and I’ve no blame for him if he is.”

“But do you really think that he is?”

“Well, of course one can never be sure with foreigners.”

“*Molly!*”

“’Tis a fact, my dear. But then you know one can never be sure with one’s self either, so there you are.” [106]

Rosina laughed ringingly. Then they kissed one another and Molly departed.

Then came work for Ottillie, and her mistress was hardly completed as to embroidered batiste and black moiré ribbon, when the large and remarkable card with which the more distinguished portion of European masculinity announce their presence was brought to the room by one of the hotel *garçons*.

He awaited her in the salon below, and when she appeared there to him, such an expression dawned within his eyes as altered completely not only their habitual melancholy, but the customary shadows of his whole face as well. There is no flattery so subtle in its charm or so deeply touching in its homage as such a change, and Rosina felt as much complimented as any other woman would have been, had it been in her to work so great a miracle in so great, and such, a man.

“*Vous allez bien?*” he asked eagerly, as he came quickly forward to bow over her hand.

“Yes, very well;” and then, because she always became nervous directly she lived beneath his steady look, she plunged wildly into the subject uppermost in her mind. “And I ought to feel very well, because in all probability I must travel again to-day.” [107]

“You leave Zurich already so soon?” he asked, and his voice betrayed neither surprise nor even interest.

“Yes,” she answered, “we are all going to Constance this afternoon.”

“You have change your plans?” he inquired; “yes?”

She looked up quickly at the much-objected-to word, and he received the little glance with a shrug of apology and a smile.

“Madame la Princesse wishes to go on,” said Rosina, “and mademoiselle thought that I would be so lonely without her that I—”

“You would have wished to stay, *n’est-ce pas*?” he asked, interrupting her.

“I don’t like to travel two days in succession.”

“I would beg you to stay,” he said, looking at his gloved hands, “but I also go to-day.”

She felt her heart jump suddenly; Molly’s prediction assaulted her memory with great violence.

“Yes,” he went on, “it happens oddly that my plans are also suddenly changed. It is to say good-bye that I am come.”

Ah, then he was not going to Constance.

“I am called to Leipsic by a telegram.”

“No one is ill, I hope?” ([108])

“No, fortunately,” he replied pleasantly; “but in Leipsic I am much interested.”

Rosina felt a sudden shock, not the less disagreeable because it was so undefined, but she pulled herself together at once and promptly swallowed it whole.

“I do hope that you will have a pleasant journey,” she said cordially.

He was staring steadily at her.

“Shall we meet again?” he said at last.

“Very likely.”

“And your address?”

“You have it.”

“Ah, yes, truly.”

Then he stood up.

“I go at one, and I have ordered to eat at twelve. I must therefore leave you this shortly. You will make my adieux to your charming friend, *n’est-ce pas*?”

“I am so glad that you came to Zurich and met her,” she said, rising also and lifting her eyes to his.

He was looking so indifferent that she felt for the instant both puzzled and hurt, and was angry at herself for ever having blushed on his account. Then she recollected the telegram from Leipsic and drew herself up well.

“Is it only because that I have the pleasure to meet mademoiselle that you are glad I come?” he [109] asked, holding out his hand.

She nodded, smiling, but ignoring the hand.

“In Lucerne you gave me your hand in good-bye,” he said presently.

She offered her fingers with a frankness unequalled.

“Good-bye,” she said.

He kissed her rings.

“It is ‘*au revoir*,’” he replied, in an almost inaudible tone.

She wondered which was true, the indifferent look or the inaudible tone.

He took up his hat.

“*Pensez à moi quelquefois*,” he said cheerfully, and departed.

When Molly was made acquainted with this piece of news her comment was simplicity itself.

“How queer!” she said, folding a lace fichu into a tulle hat, for she was packing fast and furiously.

“Of course I shall not go now; I shall stay here until Thursday and buy silk stockings.”

“Very commendable in you.”

“I’m really too tired to go before Thursday. I’ve been around night and day in Lucerne until I’m all worn out.”

“Yes?” said Molly, ramming down shoes into the corners; “well you can rest now, sure.” ([110])

“You will engage rooms for me near yours for Thursday, won’t you?”

“I will.”

“I’ll sleep and shop to-morrow, and come on that ten o’clock express Thursday.”

“’Tis settled,” said Molly, slamming down the trunk-lid; “we’ll be at the Insel, and expect you day after to-morrow.”

“What number do you wear?” Rosina asked, as she watched the trunk locked.

“Where,—round my neck or my waist?”

“On your feet?”

“Two-and-a-half.”

“Oh, what a fairy!”

Then they hurried down to lunch.

Chapter Eight [111]

THAT afternoon Rosina took her maid and went for a walk. As a companion Ottillie was certainly less congenial than the lofty and eccentric gentleman who had just taken his departure for Leipsic; but going out alone with a maid is such an eminently proper occupation for a young widow travelling abroad, that the knowledge that she was entirely above suspicion should have compensated for any slight ennui which Rosina may have suffered.

They first went a few blocks up and down the Bahnhofstrasse, and sent the various packages which were the natural result of such a course of action to the hotel; then came the Stadthaus Garten and the Alpen-Quai.

The Quai was as gay as the Quai in Lucerne, or as any other Promenade in Switzerland at that hour and season. Rosina, tired with her shopping, seated herself upon a bench and watched with interest the vast variety and animation of the never-ending double rank which passed slowly

along before her. Beyond, the Zurichersee lay brilliantly blue beneath the midsummer sun, and far away, upon the opposite shore, the Alps rose upward, dark gray below, and shining white above. [112]

There was a sudden exclamation, and out from among the crowd thronging before her came that American whose steamer-chair had elbowed Rosina's on the passage over. There was no manner of doubt as to his joy over meeting his fellow-traveller again, and they first shook hands and then sat down to re-tie their mutual recollections. The result was that Ottillie returned alone to the hotel.

"And since Berlin?" Rosina asked, interestedly.

"Since Berlin—" said the man (and she noticed that his voice appeared to be pitched quite two octaves higher than that other voice which had lately dawned upon her ear), "oh, I've been lots of places since then,—France and Germany and Italy, up to Innspruch and into Austria and over to Buda-Pesth, and then to Salzburg and down through the Tyrol here. I've never quit seeing new places since I finished my business,—not once."

"Dear me, but you must have had a good time!"

"Yes, I have. But I've often wished myself back on the 'Kronprinz,'—haven't you?"

"No, I don't think that I have. The person that I saw the most of on the 'Kronprinz' has been with me ever since." ([113])

The American looked surprised, having supposed himself to be that very person. Rosina laughed at his face.

"I mean my maid," she explained.

Then he laughed too.

"Did you ever smoke any more?"

"Oh, dear, no. Don't you remember how that one cigarette used me up?"

"You ought to have kept on,—you'd have liked them after a while."

"Perhaps; but some one told me that they would make my fingers yellow."

"Oh, pshaw, not if you hold them the right way."

"The smoke got in my eyes so too; oh, I didn't seem to care anything about it."

Then they rose and joined the promenaders, who were beginning to grow a little fewer with the approach of the dinner hour.

"And where have you been all this time?" the man asked.

"In Paris buying clothes, and in Lucerne wearing them."

"You're travelling with friends?"

"Yes, most of the time. They went on to Constance to-day, and I am to join them there Thursday." [114]

"If you haven't anything else to do to-night, won't you go with me to the Tonhalle and hear the music? It appears to be quite the thing to do."

"I think that that would be lovely, and I'd like to very much, only we must be back at the hotel by ten or half-past, for I am really very tired."

"That's easily done; you know we can go whenever we want to. What time shall I call for you?"

"I'll be ready after eight."

"I'll come about quarter past, and we can stroll about first and see something of the night side of Zurich."

"The night side of everything here is so beautiful," said Rosina; "the shops that are temptation incarnate by day become after dark nothing but bottomless pits into which all my money and my good resolutions tumble together."

By this time they had crossed the bridge and followed the Uto nearly to the Badeanstalt; it seemed time to turn their faces hotel-ward, and so they did so, and parted for an hour or two, during which to dine and to dress were the main objects in life for each.

Then about half-past eight Monsieur l'Américain came for his country-woman, and both went out into the charm and glow of the Continental night, with no other thought than that of enjoying a placid and uninterrupted evening amidst the music and electric lights of the Tonhalle. That such was not to be the case was one of the secrets of the immediate future, and the advantage of the future, when it is immediate, is that it is soon forced to stand and deliver as regards its secrets. Rosina, totally unconscious of what was impending over her head, entered fully into the spirit of gayety which prevailed, and absorbed the pleasure of the scene with open heart and hands. It is good to grow to womanhood (or manhood) without losing a child's capacity for [115]

spontaneous enjoyment,—to be capable of joy without knowing the reason why, to be flooded with enthusiasm for one knows not what. It was our lady's luck to possess this charm, and to be able to give herself up wholly to the end in view, and drink its glass to the dregs,—which in her life had generally proved to be sugar and to be almost as good as the liquid,—only requiring a spoon.

The concert, as is the way with summer concerts, was so arranged as to be easily varied with something cool and refreshing; and when her escort suggested that they should do as all the [116] others did, a table was found, and they sat down to ices and fairy cakes, amid the flowers and colored lights.

It was about nine o'clock, and Rosina, in spite of the environments, was beginning to realize forcibly that more interesting men than the one before her undoubtedly did exist, when the ice that she was putting in her mouth suddenly seemed to glide the full length of her spine, giving her a terrible sensation of frozen fright. She had just heard somebody behind her speaking in German to the *garçon*, and German, French, or English, that voice was unmistakable. How, what, or why she knew not, but *he* was surely there behind her, and the instant after he passed close at her side.

Of course it was Von Ibn, and the look that he gave her as he bowed, and walked on at once, dyed her face as deeply as ever a face was dyed in all the world before. She looked after him with a sort of gasp in her eyes, forgetting the man opposite her, the crowd around her, everybody, everything, except that one tall figure which with the passing of each instant was disappearing more and more among the labyrinth of tables and people. She saw him pause at last and seem to hesitate, and her heart throbbed wildly in her throat as she felt, with that strange instinctive [117] intuition which continues to follow one train of thought while our very life seems paralyzed by another, that if he took a seat with his back to her, the action would be witness to a displeasure far beyond what he must be feeling if he so placed himself as to be able to watch her.

He stood still, with his usual halt for deliberation, and then, at the end of a long minute, seated himself so that his profile was presented to her view.

"Now," she said to herself, "he will look away very carefully for a while, and then he will look at us;" and with the thought her breath mounted tumultuously.

The music, which had been playing loudly, wound up to a crashing pitch just here, and then ceased suddenly. With its ceasing her escort, who rejoiced in the well-known "wide-awake American look," and saw all that was to be seen within his range of vision, spoke:

"You knew that man who just passed, didn't you?"

She started, having forgotten the very existence of him who addressed her.

"Yes, oh, yes," she said confusedly; "I know him very well indeed," and then she was choked to silence by Von Ibn, who turned and gave her a carefully cold look of complete unrecognition. It was too elaborate to be genuine, but it made her feel sick all over; for where other women had [118] brains or souls, Rosina had a heart, and again a heart, and yet once more a heart. And that heart was not only the mainspring of her physical life, but it was also the source of all her thoughts and actions. Von Ibn's haughty stare pierced it to the very centre; she knew exactly what he was thinking, and the injustice of appearances goaded her to distraction. She did not stop to consider whether his own re-appearance was or was not an unworthy trick; she only writhed painfully under the lash of his vast displeasure. The American continued to probe her face with his eyes, but for that she cared not a whit; her only care was for those other eyes, those two great dark-circled, heavy-lidded eyes which knew no mask and tore her to the quick. Her mind fled here and there among the possibilities of the present, and found but one end to every vista, and that end grew momentarily in importance until she felt that at all costs he who glowered from afar must learn the falsity of his own imaginings and so restore her peace of mind to her. She looked upon her American friend as a mere means towards that end, a tool to quickly accomplish that which her impatience could no longer delay. So she leaned suddenly forward and threw herself upon his mercy.

"I must tell you," she cried hurriedly, "I know him very well—very, very well. I did not know ([119]) that he was in Zurich, and he—he did not expect to see me here. I want to speak to him; I must speak to him—I must!" And then, without paying any attention to the other's look of astonishment, she added with haste, "I wish that you would go to him and beg him to come to me for five minutes. I only want five minutes. And some day, perhaps, I'll be able to do you a good turn too."

The American did not look exactly rejoiced over this latest development in their acquaintance, but he rose from his chair and asked what name he should address the stranger by. Rosina told him, and he was sufficiently unversed in the world of music to have never heard it before and to experience a difficulty in getting it straight now.

"Von Ibn, Von Ibn," Rosina repeated impatiently. "Oh, I am so much obliged to you; he—he—"

She stopped; some queer grip was at her throat. Her companion was touched; he had never imagined her going all to pieces like that, and he felt sorry for the terrible earnestness betrayed in her voice and manner.

"I'll go," he said, "and he shall be here in five minutes."

Then he walked away, and she bent her eyes upon her music-card, asking herself if it was possible that not four full days had elapsed since the first one left her to seek Von Ibn at her request. This time she did not look after the messenger, she could not; she only felt able to breathe and try to grow calmer so that whatever might— ([120])

Ah, the long minutes!

Then a voice at her side said, almost harshly:

“You wish to speak to me, madame!”

She looked up and straight into his eyes; their blackness was so cool and hard that some women’s courage would have been daunted; but the courage of Rosina was a mighty one that rose with all opposing difficulties.

“Why are you not *en route* to Leipsic?” she asked.

“Why are you not in Constance?” he retorted.

“Sit down,” she said, “and I will tell you.”

“I do not wish to take the place of your friend,” he answered, with a stab of sharpest contempt.

“I think that he will not return for a little.”

Von Ibn remained standing, in the attitude of one detained against his inclination. She could not but resent the attitude, but she felt that her need of the moment required the swallowing of all resentment, and she did so. She was not able to raise her eyes to his a second time, but fixed them instead upon her card, and began in a low tone: [121]

“Monsieur, I intended going—”

“I can’t hear what you say,” he interrupted.

“You’ll have to sit down then; I can’t speak any louder; I’m afraid that I shall cry,” in spite of herself her voice trembled at the last words.

“Why should you cry?” he asked, and he sat down at the table beside her, and, leaning his chin upon his hand, turned his eyes upon her with a look that blended undisguised anger with a strange and passionate hunger.

She was biting her lip,—the under one,—unconscious of the fact that by so doing she rendered the corners of her mouth quite distracting; but he perceived both cause and result, and both the anger and the hunger in his gaze deepened as he looked, apparently in a blacker humor than ever.

“Why should you cry?” he said again, after a minute; “you are in a beautiful spot, listening to most excellent music, and you had with you (before I come) a friend very agreeable. Why should you cry?”

She clasped her hands hard and fast together.

“Oh,” she exclaimed, “I—I hardly know how to speak in the noise and the crowd! I feel quite crazy! I don’t know what I am saying—” she stopped short. [122]

He leaned a little towards her.

“Let us walk outside a minute,” he said. “Monsieur will surely know that we are not far. In the air it is better,—yes?”

“But what will he think?”

“*Mon Dieu*, let him think what he will! I also have had thinking this night. Let him think a little.”

He rose as he spoke, and she rose too. Already the anger in his eyes was fading fast before the sight of her so genuine emotion. They went out into the garden, and there she took up her explanation again.

“You thought I stayed here because of that man, didn’t you?”

“*Donnerwetter!*” he cried violently; “here he returns already again!”

It was indeed the American, approaching as fast as the crowd would let him. His face bore a curious expression. One might have gathered from it that he was much more clever, or much more stupid, than the vast majority gave him credit for being. The instant that he was near enough to speak, he began in out-of-breath accents:

“I’ve just met some people that I haven’t seen in years, and they want me to drive with them up by the University and see the town by moonlight, and I wondered if I could find you here in three-quarters of an hour—” [123]

Rosina looked at him helplessly, divining that he supposed a degree of friendship between herself and Von Ibn which would cause his proposition to be most warmly welcome.

But Von Ibn spoke at once, coldly, but politely.

“Perhaps madame will permit me to escort her to her hotel this evening. If she will do so, I shall be most happy.”

The American looked eagerly at Rosina.

“I am going very soon,” she said; “perhaps that will be best.”

He appeared puzzled.

“If you’d rather I stayed—” he suggested.

“No,” said Von Ibn sharply, “it is better that you go!” then he added, in a somewhat milder tone, “it is very fine, the moonlight from the University.”

When they were alone, he was silent and led her out of the crowded garden down upon the Quai. It was a superb night, and the moon and its golden beams were mirrored in the lake. Little waves came running tranquilly across the shivering silver sheet and tossing themselves gently up [124] against the stone-sheathed bank; some merry boat-loads were drifting out among the shadows, listening to the music from the shore and sending a silver echo of laughter to join in its accords.

They walked on until something of their own tumult was stayed by the stillness, and then Von Ibn said quietly:

“Tell me of what you were saying.”

“I was saying that you thought that I had remained here because of that man, and yet it was really all an accident.”

He shrugged his shoulders slightly.

“But you are quite free,—and he seems very nice, and is of your own country and all so agreeable.”

“I was really too tired to go to Constance, but—”

“Oh, madame, *je vous en prie*,” he interrupted, “no explanation is needful. It does not interest me, I assure you.”

“I did not want to go to Constance until Thursday,” she went steadily on; “but I could not stay here because—because—”

“Yes,” he interrupted, “all that I have understand,—I understand all.”

“So,” she continued, “I packed to go, and meant to go, and then when you told me that you [125] were leaving too, I thought that I might just as well adhere to my—”

“What is ‘adhere’?” he broke in; “that word I have never known before.”

“It means—well—it means ‘stick to.’”

“Glue paste?”

She felt as if a clown had suddenly turned a somersault into the midst of the death scene of Hamlet!

“Not glue paste,” she explained carefully; “of course, in one way, it means the same thing; but I meant that when I knew that you were going, I felt that I might just as well do as I had originally intended doing, and remain here to rest a little.”

“And you repose by coming to the Tonhalle with a gentleman?” he asked in a tone of smothered sarcasm.

“I met him this afternoon as I was walking—”

“Have you only know him first this afternoon?”

“*Monsieur!*” she cried in horror, “I came on the steamer with him from New York, and he went to college with my cousin!”

Von Ibn gave another shrug.

“You tell everything very cleverly,” he remarked; “but, my dear madame, we have too many difficulties,—it is always that between us, and—what is your proverb?—no smoke without over a [126] fire?—*Eh bien*, I begin to grow weary.”

“Don’t you believe what I have just told you?” she demanded.

They were near the further end of the Quai where the crowd was thinnest and the play of moonbeam and shadow most alluring. He stopped and looked long upon the shining water, and then long upon her face.

“Yes,” he said at last, “I do believe.” He held out his hand, “I do believe now, but I must tell you that truly if I had been of a ‘*tempérament jaloux*,’ I would have been very angry this night. Yes,—of a surety.”

She looked away, with an impulse to smile, and her heart was sufficiently eased of its burden to allow her to do so.

“Shall we go to the hotel now?” she asked after a moment.

“But you have not given me your hand?”

She put her hand in his, and he pressed it warmly, and then drew it within his arm as they turned to retrace their steps.

“I like better to walk alone,” she said, freeing herself.

“You are, perhaps, still angry?” he inquired anxiously.

“No, but I can walk easier alone. And I want you to tell me now why you are not *en route* North, [127] instead of staying here in Zurich.”

“But I have been North,” he said eagerly; “I have been this day to Aârburg.”

“To Aârburg!—Where is that?”

“Wait, I will make all plain to you,” he looked down upon her with the smile that always proclaimed a complete declaration of peace, “it all went like this: I see so plain that I make you to leave before you like, that I am glad to go away and so make you quite free. It came to my head like this,—I wanted to know something and by looking at your face and saying that I must go to Leipsic for some one there, I see all that I wish to know—”

“What did you see?” Rosina interrupted.

“I see plainly that you think it is some lady—”

“I did not think any such a thing!” she cried hotly.

He laughed and tossed his head.

“And so as I really should go to Leipsic I take the train and go, and then on the train I think why am I gone, and when I think again, I feel to leave the train at Aârburg and telegraph, and when the answer come that you are still here, I feel very strongly to return at once, and so I do.”

Rosina looked up with a smile, and, meeting his eyes, was suddenly overcome with a fear, ([128]) vague and undefined, it is true, but not the less real, as to whether she had been wise in bringing about this most complete reconciliation.

“But you must still go to Leipsic?” she asked presently.

“Yes, after a little.”

“I wish you had gone when you started.”

“Why?”

“I am sure that you, who always understand, know why.”

“After a while will do,” he said easily, “when we are more tired of ourselves.” He paused. “Perhaps Thursday,” he suggested.

“Oh!” she exclaimed, in spite of herself.

“Why ‘oh’?”

“You are so positive that we shall be *ennuyés* by Thursday.”

“Yes,” he replied tranquilly, “we see so much of us together that it cannot last long so. Indeed it was for that that I was quite willing to go to-day, but on the train I begin to think otherwise, and my otherwise thoughts are become so strong that I find myself obliged to get down at Aârburg.”

“And Leipsic?”

“Ah, for that you were so charming to send for me to-night and tell me how all has been I will [129] tell you all the truth of Leipsic. It is there that my professor lives, the man who has teach me all that I know. He is to me the most dear out of all the world, for he gave to me my music, which is my life and my soul. And so you may understand that I speak truth indeed when I say that I have much interest in Leipsic.”

Rosina nodded, a sympathetic smile upon her lips.

“But we must go back to the hotel now,” she said sadly; “it is nearly ten o’clock.”

“And I may come to-morrow morning and we shall make a promenade together, *n’est-ce pas*?” he said eagerly; “it is so good, you and I together, these days. How can I make you know how I feel if you have not the same feeling,—the feeling that all the clouds and all the grass are singing, that all about us is perfect accord of sound, when we are only free to laugh and to talk as we may please.”

“But I ought to go on to my friends to-morrow,” she said, “you must know that.”

“But I will go there.”

“To Constance?”

“Yes, surely.”

“Oh, monsieur, that will not do at all!”

“Why will it not do at all?”

“I don’t want you following me to Constance as you did to Zurich.” ([130])

“But I will not follow you; I will this time go on the same train with you.”

“Oh,” she said, in despair at the wide space between his views and those of the world in general, “you cannot do that, it would not look well at all.”

He stared at her in surprise.

“Who will it look unwell to?”

“Don’t say ‘unwell,’ say ‘not well.’”

“Not well; who will see it not well?”

“Ah,” she said, shaking her head, “there is no telling who would see only too well, and that is just the trouble.”

Von Ibn knit his black brows.

“I do not understand that just,” he said, after a moment. And then he reflected further and added, “You are of an oddness so peculiar. Why must the world matter? I am my world—nothing matters to me. *Vous êtes tortillante!* you are afraid of stupid people and the tongues they have in them. That is your drollness. And anyway, I may go to Constance if I will. I may go anywhere if I will. You cannot prevent.”

She looked off across the lake.

“You ought to want to do what pleases me,” she suggested.

“But I do not,” he said vigorously; “I want to do what pleases me, and you must want it too,—it [131] will be much better for America when all the women do that. I observe much, and I observe especially in particular that. An American woman is like a queen—she does her own wish always, and is always unhappy; in Europe she does her husband’s wish, and it is much better for her and very good for him, and they are very happy, and I am coming to Constance.”

“But I have no husband,” said Rosina insistently.

“It will be very good if you learn to obey, and then you can have one again.”

“But I never mean to marry again.”

“I never mean to marry once, *surtout pas une Americaine*.”

She felt hurt at this speech and made no reply.

“But I mean to come to Constance.”

“Monsieur, you say that we see too much of one another; then why do you want to drive our acquaintance to the last limits of boredom?”

“But you do not bore me,” he said; and then after a long pause he added, “yet.”

She was forced to feel that the “y” in “yet” had probably begun with a capital.

“I want to go to the hotel now,” she said, in a tired tone.

“Let us go and get an ice or some coffee first; yes?” ([132])

“Don’t keep saying ‘yes’ that way,” she cried impatiently; “you know how it frets me.”

He took her arm gently.

“You are indeed fatigued,” he said in a low tone, “I have troubled you much to-night. But I have trouble myself too. Did you see how unhappy I was, and was it so that you sent for me? *Dites-moi franchement*.”

“Yes,” she answered, with simplicity.

“And why did you care?”

“I didn’t want you to think what I knew that you were thinking.”

“Did you care that I was unhappy?”

“I cared that you thought that I would lie.”

“I was quite furious,” he meditated; “I came from the train so late and found that you were

gone out. *Je ne me fâche jamais sans raison,*—but I had good reason to-night."

"You had no right to be angry over my going out, and I had just as much cause for displeasure over your returning as you had over my going."

"No," he said quickly, "for it was a compliment to you that I return, and no compliment at all to me that you stay after I am gone so as to visit the concert with monsieur."

She laughed a little.

"I hope that you will never behave so again; you were so unbearably rude that I was sorry to ([133]) have sent for you. If I had not," she asked, with real curiosity, "if I had not, would you have spoken to me after a while?"

He shrugged his shoulders.

"*Je ne sais pas,*" he replied with brevity; and then looking down at her with one of his irresistible smiles he added, "but I find it probable."

She smiled in return, saying:

"Do undertake to never be angry like that again."

"Again!" he said quickly and pointedly; "then I *may* come to Constance?"

Her mind was forced to take a sudden leap in order to rejoin his rapid deduction of effect from cause.

"No, no," she cried hastily, "you must not think any more of Constance, you must go to Leipsic, just as you intended doing."

"But you said—" he began.

"I meant, in the future, if we should ever chance to meet by accident."

His brow darkened.

"Where?" he asked briefly.

"Who can tell," she answered cheerfully; "people are always meeting again. See how that man of the steamer met me again to-day."

"But you have hear of him since you come?" he demanded, a fresh shade of suspicion in his ([134]) tone.

"Never! Never a word until he came out of the Promenade and spoke to me this afternoon."

Von Ibn thought about it frowningly for a little and then decided it was not worth his pains.

"I would not care to meet again as he," he declared carelessly; "how he was sent to fetch me, and then he must go alone while we speak together, and then make that tale of a drive when there was no drive by the University, only a knowledge that he was much not wanted."

"Do you think he was not really invited to go to drive?" she asked, opening her eyes widely.

"Of a certainty not. But he could see he was not wanted by us. When he came near, you really looked to weep."

"Oh, *no*!" she cried, in great distress.

"Yes; it was just so."

There was a pause while she pondered this new phase of herself, and after a while he went on:

"There is something that I do not understand. Why do you desire so much to speak to me to-night and then not desire me at Constance? *Ça—je ne le comprends pas!*"

"You do understand," she said; "I know you do, and you know that I know that you do."

He looked at her for a few seconds and then asked: ([135])

"How long are you in Constance?"

"I do not know."

"And then where do you go?"

"Probably to Munich."

"With always that Molly?"

"I do not know whether they will go there or not. I believe they are going to Bayreuth and then to Berlin."

He reflected for the space of half a block.

"I should really go to Leipsic," he said at last.

“Then why don’t you go?” she retorted, more in answer to his tone than to his speech.

“I might perhaps go to Leipsic while you are in Constance,—*perhaps*.”

Heavy emphasis on the last “perhaps.”

“Oh, do!” she pleaded.

“Are you going to Bayreuth?”

“No, I don’t think so; they all come down to Munich right afterwards, you know.”

“But it is not the same in Munich. If you had been in Bayreuth you would know that. It is not the same at all. And ‘Parsifal’ is only there.”

He paused, but she made no answer.

“I am going to Bayreuth,” he said, “and then I shall come to Munich.”

He made the last statement with an echo of absolute determination, but she continued to keep ([136]) silence.

“In Munich I shall see you once more?”

“Perhaps.”

“Where will you be?”

She told him.

“And I shall be in the ‘Vierjahreszeiten’; why do you not come there?” he added.

“Because I love the *pension* with my whole heart,” she declared fervently; “I was there for an entire winter before my marriage; it is like home to me.”

He stopped, pulled out his note-book and carefully wrote down the name and address; as he put it up again, he remarked:

“That was droll, what you said to-night, that you would never marry again! Where do you get that idea?”

“From being married once.”

“I have it from never being married any, and I have it very strong. Have you it very strong?”

“Yes,” said Rosina decidedly, “very strong indeed.”

“Then when we know all is only nothing, why may I not come to Constance?”

“Because you can’t,” she said flatly, “I don’t want you to come.”

“But I will be very good, and—” ([137])

“Yes,” she said interrupting; “I know, but to prevent further misunderstanding, I may just as well tell you that I want all my time in Constance for my other friend—”

They were at the door of the hotel, and she had her foot upon the lower step; he was just behind her, his hand beneath her elbow. She felt him give a violent start and drop his hand, and, looking around quickly to see what had happened, she forgot to end her sentence in the emotion caused by the sight of his face. A very fury of anger had surcharged his eyes and swelled the veins upon his temples.

“So!” he said, in a low tone that almost shook with intense and angry feeling, “that is why I may not come! He goes, does he? *Bête que je suis*, that I did not comprehend before!”

Rosina stared at him, motionless, for the space of perhaps ten seconds, and then an utter contempt filled her, and every other consideration fled.

She ran up two or three steps, crossed the hall, and passed the *Portier* like a flash, flew up the one flight of stairs that led to her corridor, and broke in upon Ottillie with a lack of dignity such as she was rarely guilty of.

“Ottillie,” she exclaimed, panting under the weight of many mixed feelings, “I want to leave for [138] Constance by the first train that goes in the morning. I don’t care if it is at six o’clock, I’ll get up. Ring and find out about everything, and then see to the bill and all. I *must* go!”

Ottillie stood there, and her clever fingers were already unfastening her mistress’ hat-pins.

“Madame may rest assured,” she said quietly, “all shall be as she desires.”

Meanwhile below stairs Von Ibn had entered the café, lit a cigarette and taken up one of the evening journals.

He appeared to look over the pages of the latter with an interest that was intent and unfeigned.

But was it so?

Chapter Nine

[139]

"I SHALL certainly not tell Molly one word about these latest developments," Rosina said firmly to herself, and she remade the resolution not once but a hundred times during the train ride of that early Wednesday morning. She was too tired from excess of emotion, and no balance of much-needed sleep, to feel anything but unhappy over the termination of the preceding evening.

Everything was over now, and the only glory to be reaped in any direction would be the dignified way in which Molly should be kept in ignorance of all that had occurred.

Outside, the freshness of a Suabian morning lay over valley and mountain. The country was beautiful with the charm of midsummer's immediate promise, which spread over the fields of ripening grain and lost itself among the threading rivulets, or in the shadow of forest and mountain. The white-plastered farmhouses with the stable-door at one end, the house-door at the other, and the great sweep of straw-thatched roof sloping down over all, peeped out from among [140] their surrounding fruit-trees. Old, old women knit peacefully under the shadow of the stone-bound well, and little, little children tumbled about their knees in the grass. Out in the garden at one side the boys and girls were busy gathering berries or vegetables for the market of next day. Yokes of oxen passed slowly to and fro upon the shaded roads, their high, two-wheeled carts loaded to the very top; beside a pond a maiden herded geese; upon a hill a boy lay sleeping, his sheep nibbling the herbage near by. It was all quaint and picturesque, and to the American eyes surpassing strange to see, but those two particular American eyes before which all the panorama was displayed, happened just then to be blind to everything except one vivid spirit-photograph, and grew moist each time that they pictured that afresh.

"No, I shall not tell Molly one word," she repeated mentally; "I can't tell her part,—I won't tell her all,—so I just shan't tell her anything," and then she stared sightlessly out of the wide-open window, and knew not that it was the dregs of her own evaporated anger which veiled the sunlit landscape in a dull-gray mist.

The train came slowly in by the banks of the Bodensee, and halted at the Kaufhaus soon after [141] eleven o'clock. The Kaufhaus is that delightful old building where Huss was tried before the great Council. Built for a warehouse, it is now again a warehouse, Huss and his heresy having been but a ripple on the tranquil centuries of its existence.

Molly (who had been telegraphed to) was at the Gare to meet her friend, and managed to smother her surprise over the sudden turn of events with complete success.

"Let the maid take the boxes to the hotel," she said, after having greeted the traveller, "and you and I will just have a nice drive before dinner, and a good long nap right afterwards."

Rosina submitted to be led passively to a cab, and the strength of her resolution was such that before they reached the spot where Huss was burnt, Molly was in possession of the last detail as to the preceding evening. She said never a word in reply, being much engaged in looking out of the side of the cab to see if she could see the monument, an action which struck her unhappy friend as heartless in the extreme. When they drew up beside the iron fence, both got out and peered between the bars at the huge ivy-covered boulder within the enclosure.

"Was he burned *on* this stone?" Molly called to the cabman in German; "now why does he [142] laugh, do you suppose?" she asked in English of Rosina.

"Oh," the latter replied wearily, "you used the word for 'fried,' instead of the word 'burned,' but it doesn't matter," she added with a heavy sigh.

"I wonder whether he was looking towards the woods or towards the town when they lighted him!" Molly pursued with real interest.

Rosina felt that such talk was horribly frivolous, her own tale of woe considered, and made no reply; so they went back to the cab, and then Molly clasped her hands in her lap and became serious.

"I would forget all about him, if I was you," she said; "you will never get any satisfaction out of a man who is always going in for jealous rages like that."

Rosina felt with a shock that Molly was of a nature more intensely unsympathetic than any which she had hitherto encountered. She looked at the Rhine, wondered if it flowed past Leipsic, and wished that she had kept to her original determination and said nothing at all about any of it.

"I'm glad that I did as I did," she said, with an effort to speak in a tone of indifference (the effort was a marked failure). "I'm sure that I want to forget him badly enough," she added, and swallowed a choke. [143]

Molly put her hand upon hers and nodded.

"Certainly, my dear; it was the only thing to do with a man like that. You explained once, and once is enough, for one night, surely. Forget him now and be happy again."

"Don't let us talk about it any more," said Rosina, feeling bitterly that Molly lightly demanded oblivion of her when all her inclinations were towards tears.

They drove some distance in silence, and then Rosina said slowly:

"Do you suppose that I shall ever see him again now?"

"Yes, if you want to. One always sees the men again that one wants to see again."

"Are you sure?"

"I never knew it to fail."

"How does that happen?"

"I don't know why it is, but it always does happen. Effect of mental telepathy, perhaps. The man knows that he is to be given another chance, and comes to get it, I fancy."

"But Monsieur von Ibn is so *very* singular!"

"Every man is singular!"

"My husband wasn't. And he wasn't ever the least bit jealous," she stopped to sigh. "I like jealous men!" she added. [144]

"Yes," said Molly, dryly, "so I observed."

"He never lost his temper either," Rosina continued. "We never had anything to make up. And making up is so delicious. Oh, me!" she sighed, and her eyes filled with tears again.

"Never mind," said Molly, consolingly, "you'll soon be making it up this time."

"Don't you think," said Rosina, slowly, "that he ought to have sent some sort of an apology last night; it could have been put under the door, no matter how late it was, you know?"

"He isn't that sort of a man, I fancy."

"But his behavior was so unpardonable!"

"Yes, but he doesn't see that."

"Then I don't care if I never do meet him again," Rosina exclaimed passionately, and the next instant she burst into tears. "He's so interesting," she sobbed; "and his way of speaking is such an everlasting joy to me; and he never means to marry; and I never mean to marry; and I know that he really cared a great deal about me; and now it's—all—all over!"

Molly leaned over and kissed her, drew a comforting arm around her waist, and gave her an affectionate squeeze.

"Don't take it so awfully to heart, my dear," she whispered soothingly; "we all have troubles of one kind, if not of another. Here's a long letter come by the morning post from my dear gray-caped lieutenant, and it's just full of the worst sort of desperation over our mutual affairs. He knows that we can't possibly marry without a certain amount of money, which we have neither of us got, and so there you are!" [145]

"How much is it?" Rosina asked dully. She felt that she ought to try and make an effort to interest herself in the lives of others, even if her own had so completely crashed in.

"Oh, it's something awful in pounds, but in those Italian *lire*!—why, it's not to be thought of for a moment. He thinks that he had best chuck up the army and take me to America instead!"

"Oh, Molly, don't let him do that! We haven't any Italians in America except organ-grinders and miners, and the Ambassador, of course!"

"I knew it wouldn't do," said the Irish girl. Then she shrugged her shoulders and laughed.

"But then I never did intend to marry him, anyhow!"

They drove back to the hotel, and Rosina's eyes were fairly presentable when the *Portier* came out to receive them.

"There is a letter just come for madame," he said, as they entered the Kreuzgang; "it is in the office; I will bring it at once." [146]

"There!" Molly whispered, "do you see!"

Rosina trembled slightly as she held out her hand and saw the hotel stamp of Zurich on the

envelope. Then she tore it open and pulled out the single folded sheet contained therein.

It was her bill, receipted, which Ottillie had let fall in the haste of their early departure!

Madame la Princesse Russe having a migraine that afternoon, the two friends had the pleasure of a tête-á-tête dinner at half-past six. They sat by one of the great windows of what used to be the chapel of the monastery, but is now the dining-room of the Inselhaus, and enjoyed the sweet lake breeze, while their tongues ran delightfully. Rosina, liberally refreshed by a long nap, and mightily reinforced as to her pride by the last terrific blow of the letter, was in the best possible spirits, and her gayety quite rivalled, if it did not surpass, that of her companion.

As the waiter was removing the salad, a shadow fell suddenly athwart the floor at their side, and Molly, looking quickly upward, beheld—the man!

He was in evening dress, calm, cool, and smiling, and neither the surprised face of the one, nor [147] the violent start of the other shook his composure in the least.

"*Vous allez bien, mesdames?*" he asked politely, and then, speaking to the waiter with authority:

"Lay another place here," he said, indicating the end of the small table, "for I shall dine with you, *n'est-ce pas*?" he added, looking straight at Rosina.

She appeared to have been stricken suddenly dumb, and was so evidently incapable of speech that Molly came boldly to the front with the un-original remark:

"When *did* you come?"

"By Schaffhausen, that *train-rapide* that does go so fast. I had been more wise to have come this morning by the train as madame, for this afternoon the tourists were very terrible—also the heat."

"Was it dusty?" she went on.

"I believe you well that it was. And you," he continued, turning to Rosina, who sat helplessly staring at her plate, and was very pale except for a crimson spot on either cheek, "had you a pleasant ride?"

"No, she hadn't," said her faithful friend; "she arrived all used up."

"You were made too tired, and do not feel well?" he asked, addressing the scarlet cheeks again; ([148]) "truly, you look much so. What has arrived in Zurich to make you like that?"

He put the question in a tone the intensity of which forced her to lift her eyes to his. Molly did not see the glance, for the infinitude of her own experiences led her to find the moment favorable for gazing out of the window in a sort of rapt admiration for the Insel rose-bushes in the foreground and the placid Bodensee beyond.

It was the waiter who jarred them all three back to the knowledge of mundane things by bringing soup for the latest arrival and ices for his two companions.

"Ah, now I may eat!" the gentleman exclaimed in a tone of deep satisfaction, and began at once.

"You must not be surprised over me," he said to Molly, with a slight smile.

"I was not surprised," she reassured him.

"Because I have not eaten to-day before," he explained.

"Really?"

"Yes, of a truthfulness. I am most *drôle* as that. I may never eat when I am much troubled."

"Dear me, have you been troubled to-day?"

He looked at Rosina, whose face blazed yet deeper. ([149])

"I have said that I may not eat," he repeated simply.

Molly laid down her spoon and glanced out of the window again. Her feminine instinct divined what was to be.

"And madame your friend, she is not ill, I hope?" he inquired politely, as the waiter removed his soup.

"No," said the Irish girl, slowly, "or—that is,—yes, yes, she is."

"And you must go at once to her," he cried, springing up to draw back her chair, "I am so sad for that."

Molly rose to her feet.

“I’m sorry, too,” she said, nodding a smiling thanks; “but you see I’ve no choice.” And then she went coffee-less away to laugh alone above-stairs.

Von Ibn sat down again and ate his fish in silence. He did not appear greatly perturbed over the twin-silence which was opposite him, rather seeming to reflect upon the fresh reconciliation which was building itself on such a substantial foundation of blushes.

Finally, when the fish was gone, he leaned somewhat forward and spoke very low.

“*Oh, que j’étais malheureux hier le soir!*” he said in a tone that trembled with feeling; “you can [150]
figure to yourself nothing of what it was! And this morning—when I send and find that you are gone!—I must know then that you were very furious of me.”

She raised her eyes, but to the window, not to him.

“I was,” she said briefly, but not the less tensely.

“When you are run last night—on the stairs like that, you know!—it should have been amusing to see you run so fast; but I was not any amused whatever. But why did you run?” he questioned, interrupting himself; “did you think to leave me always then, there, forever? For an instant I had the idea to go after you, but the *Portier* was there, and I have thought, ‘What may he think?’”

“Oh,” she exclaimed, distressedly, “I altogether forgot him! What do you suppose he did think?”

Von Ibn shrugged his shoulders.

“*Rien du tout,*” he said easily; “he has think most probably that you have lost something from you—a pin or a button, you know. When a woman runs so, that is what every one knows.”

“Do they?”

“*Natürlich!* I always know.” ([151])

“Oh!”

He finished his dinner in short order and then looked a smiling inquiry into her eyes.

“We shall go now on to the terrace for the coffee; yes?” he asked as he rose, and she rose too and went with him to where their little table was spread among the dusk and the roses. The band in the Stadtgarten was playing delightfully, and its sweetness came across water and park to search out their very souls. The Bodensee spread all beyond in a gray peace that seemed to bid the very leaves upon the trees to slumber. The steamers were coming to their harbor rest in answer to the flaming summons flung them by the searchlight at the head of the pier. They glided in in slow procession, shivered at anchor, and submitted to the lulling of the lake’s night breath.

Von Ibn rested his elbow on the table and his chin upon his hand. He looked dreamily out across the water for a long time before saying:

“You pardon my impoliteness then of last night? I am not come to trouble you here, only to ask that, and something else, and then I go again at once.”

“Yes, I will pardon you,” said Rosina gently. She too was looking thoughtfully out into the [152]
twilight on the water. “Only don’t do so again.”

“It is that that I would ask,” he went on, looking always at the lake, never at her; “that is what I would beg of you. Let us promise sincerely—let us take a vow never to be angry again. I have suffer enough last night both with my own anger and from yours. I will believe what you may tell me. And let us never be angry so again.”

“It is you who are so unreasonable,” she began.

“No,” he interrupted quickly, “not unreasonable. *Jamais je ne me fâche sans raison!*”

“Yes, you do too. Just think of last night, you were twice angry for nothing at all. It was terrible!”

He stared afar and seemed to reflect doubly.

“He was *bête*, that man,” he said at last.

“He wasn’t either. He was very nice; I don’t know how I should have gotten along coming over if I had not had him on the steamer to amuse me.”

“You could have done very well without him at Zurich,” said Von Ibn doggedly; “myself, I did not like him the first minute that I see him.”

“When did you first see him?”

“He was there at the table beside you.” ([153])

Rosina laughed a little. He turned towards her and smiled.

“Then you will forgive me?”

“Yes, this one time more. But never, never again.”

He turned to the lake and consumed five minutes in assimilating her remark. Then his look came back to her.

“I was awake so much last night that my eyes burn me; do they show it?”

She looked into his eyes, and they burned indeed—burned with a latent glow that forced her own to lower their lids.

“Do they look strangely to you?” he asked.

“No,” she said in a low tone.

“That is odd, because in all my life they have never look at any one as they look at you to-night.”

She drew herself together suddenly.

“Don’t talk foolishly,” she said distinctly.

“That was no foolishness; it is true.”

“It is just the sort of thing that all men say, and I like you because you do not say things like all other men.”

“Do all other men say to you that?”

“Not just that, but its equivalents. Men in general are not very original.”

He took out his cigarette case and contemplated its bas-relief of two silver nymphs for several seconds. ([154])

“You may,” said his companion, smiling.

“May what?”

“May smoke.”

“But I am going to, anyway.”

“Oh.”

He looked at her with an air of remonstrance.

“This is not your parlor,” he reminded her.

“No,” she said meekly; “I stand corrected.”

He lit the cigarette and threw the match into a rose-bush.

“I think that I will go and find Molly,” she suggested presently.

“Why?”

“I think that she would be able to leave madame by this time.”

“But if she can leave her then she will come to us, and I do not want her; do you?”

“I always want her.”

“That is absurd. Why do you want her? I never want another man when we speak together.”

“But I am very fond of Molly.”

“So am I most affectionate of my professor in Leipsic, but I never once have wished for him when I was with you.”

“That’s different.” ([155])

“No, it is quite one. Do not go for mademoiselle; I have something to say to you, and there is only to-night to say it.”

“What is it?”

“It is that I have really to go away. This time I must. I go to-morrow morning without fail.”

“I am so glad,” she exclaimed.

“Yes,” he said, with a quick glance; “is it really so that my going makes you pleasure? Truly I only come in return for your kindness of last night—when you send for me, you know. I think that I wish to repay. But now, if we are quite friends, I must go very early to-morrow in the morning.”

“I am glad that you are going,” she said quietly, “and you know why. And I shall be glad when we meet again,” she added in a lighter tone.

Then a long silence fell between them, while to their ears came the famous symphony of a famous composer. When the music ceased he spoke again.

“You will write to me?”

“I am not a letter writer.”

“But you will send me a few lines sometimes?”

“Are you going to write me?”

“*Si vous voulez de mes nouvelles.*”

“Yes, I do.” [156]

“I will tell you,” he said, tossing his cigarette into the lake; “I will send you a post-card, as I tell you before—you recall? yes.”

“No,” said Rosina, with decision, “I don’t want post-cards; you can write me in an envelope or not at all.”

He looked at her thoughtfully.

“I have some very small paper,” he said at last, “I can use that; I use it to write my family on.”

She almost laughed.

“That will be all right,” she said, “and I will answer on my correspondence-cards. They only hold half a dozen lines, and they have my monogram on them and are really very pretty.”

“You can write on the back too,” he suggested.

“I shan’t have any more to say than will go easily on the front, though.”

“And I shall see you next in August in Munich?”

“*Espérons!*” with a smile.

He stood up suddenly.

“Let us walk to the Garten,” he suggested; “it is good to walk after dinner a little.”

She rose too, very willingly, and they went towards the bridge that connects the Insel with the mainland.

“Did you love your husband?” he asked as they passed above the moat-like stream. [157]

“Tremendously.”

“For long?”

“Until after we were married.”

He halted short at that.

“It was too bad to stop just then.”

Rosina felt that there were safer places to pause than there on the railroad tracks, and went on to the other side.

“It was too bad to stop at all,” she said, when he came too.

“*Assurément.*”

They walked along the bank and came into the Stadtgarten, full of people laughing and talking with the liveliness that is so pleasant to see and so difficult, apparently, to import, unless it be in the steerage. Perhaps it is the Custom House which takes all the gayety out of the First and Second Classes before they can get ashore in America.

“We shall have to say our parting very soon,” the man said presently; “we have both travelled to-day, and I must go in a very early hour to-morrow.”

“Yes,” she replied, “I am much more weary to-night even than I was last night.”

“If we are tired we might again have trouble,” suggested her companion wisely. Then he added quickly, “But, no, never again,—I have promise that.” [158]

“Shall we not return to the hotel now?” she asked.

“But why will you go back so quick?” he asked in an injured tone; “do you want to be so soon alone?”

“I thought that you wanted to be.”

“I want to sit down and not walk ever,” he said, pausing by an empty table in the open-air café. “What made you stop?” he went on, looking at her, she having paused where he did, naturally.

“I stopped because you did.”

“Because I did! that has no sense.”

“Then I’ll go on alone,” and she moved away.

He rejoined her in three steps, laughing.

“Why do you walk off like that?” he demanded.

“Because you said that there was no sense in my stopping.”

He looked at her in great amusement.

“*Que vous êtes tordante!* I asked you why you stopped loving your husband?”

She stared.

“Why, it’s ever so long since we were speaking of that. How funny you are!”

He turned her back towards the empty table. ([159])

“Let us sit down here and talk, it may be the last time for long.”

She hesitated, thinking of Molly.

“It is so nice here,” he declared, persuasively; “only for a few minutes we stay.”

She sat down forthwith; he followed suit. A maid came and took his order, and then he clasped his hands upon the table before him and was still, appearing to be overtaken by some sudden and absorbing train of thought.

After a little the music recommenced, and his soul returned to his eyes with a quick upblazing light. He reached out his hand and touched hers.

“Listen!” he exclaimed imperatively; “you go to learn something now. Pay much notice.”

The violins of the orchestra were pouring forth their hearts in a sweet treble song, whose liquid liaisons flowed high above the background of a dark monotony of single chords. The air was singularly full of feeling, and reached forth its individual pleading to each individual listener.

“You have hear that?” he whispered with a smile.

“Never,” she whispered in return.

“You shall wait a little,” he murmured, resting his chin on his hand and turning his eyes on the lake again; “in a moment you shall hear.”

At that instant the song appeared to terminate, and bass and treble ran together in long, sweeping arpeggios; and then, out over the merry crowd, out over the infinite peace of the Bodensee, there rang and resounded four notes,—E, F, F sharp, G; four notes, the pain, the prayer, the passion of which shrieked to the inmost mysteries of every hearing heart. ([160])

Rosina started; her companion turned quickly towards her.

“It is what you told me of at Lucerne that night on the steamer?” she asked, with no question in her voice.

He moved his head slowly in assent to her certainty. The cascading song was already running its silvery course again; he leaned far towards her.

“Have you comprehend, do you think?” he asked.

She nodded. And then she too leaned her chin on her hand, and looked to the lake to guard her eyes, while the music invaded and took complete possession of her senses.

“Do you play that on your violin?” she asked, when all was over.

“There is no music that I may not play,” he replied, “unless I have never see it, or hear it, or divine it for myself.”

“Do you play the piano also?”

“Only what I must. Sometimes I must, you know. Then I say to my hands, ‘You shall go here, you shall go there!’ and they go, but very badly.” ([161])

She looked straight at him with a curious dawning in her eyes.

“I wonder, shall we ever make any music together?” she murmured.

“Much,” he said tritely.

She was conscious of neither wonder nor resistance, as if the music had cast a spell over her self-mastery.

“I want to hear you play,” she said, with an echo of entreaty.

He shook his head, brushing a lock of hair off of his temple as he did so. There was a sort of impatience in each movement.

“Not these days; no! I played once after I saw you first, but only once. Since that the case is locked; the key is here.” He interrupted himself to draw out his keys, and separating one from the rest held it up to her. “Let us hope that in Munich, perhaps.”

The waitress had returned with their ices. He watched her arrange them, and she watched him. The heavy circle under his eyes was especially noticeable this night, the eyes themselves especially laughless.

"You are glad that I go?" he asked suddenly as he picked up his spoon and plunged it into the saucer before him; "yes?" [162]

"I shall be more glad when I know that you are really gone."

"But this time it is sure. This time it is really a true going." He stopped and broke a piece of cake into tiny morsels, pushing them together into a neat little pile. "Why were you unhappy in your husband?" he asked slowly.

"He drank," she replied.

"Perhaps he was unhappy?"

"Perhaps."

"And you?"

"Beyond a doubt."

He took another bit of cake and crumbed that up as he had the first.

"Don't do that."

"Why shall I not?" with an air of surprise.

"It isn't right."

"But I shall pay for it," he said remonstrantly.

"It's bad manners, anyhow."

"What does it matter if I like, and pay for it too?"

"Well, then, if you must know, it makes me horribly nervous!"

He looked at her quickly.

"Are you nervous?"

"Yes, when people waste cake like that." ([163])

He sighed and stopped his play.

"Did you ever love after?" he asked presently.

"No, never! Good Heavens, once was enough!"

"Was your husband so very bad?"

"He wasn't bad at all; he was only disagreeable."

"Perhaps he made you nervous?" he queried.

"Perhaps," she answered dryly.

There was a long, long pause. The band now played "*Doch Einer Schoner Zeit*," and some peasants in the native costume sang the words.

Finally he pushed his plate away and crossed his arms upon the table; his eyes were very earnest.

"Once I loved," he said; "I have speak of that to you before."

She made no reply.

"It was no passion of a whole life, but for a boy, as I was then, it was much. I was quite young, and, *Gott*! how I *did* love! She was such a woman as says, 'I will make this man absolutely mad;' and she did so. She made me crazy—*tout-à-fait fou*; and then, when I could only breathe by her eyes, she showed me that she was uncaring!"

He stopped, stared sightlessly out at the black water beyond, and then turned towards her. [164]

"Is it so in *your* mind towards me?" he asked, and in his voice and eyes was that heartrending pathos which once in a lifetime a man's soul may come to share with childhood's heavy sorrows.

She drew a quick breath. The pointed roofs of the Inselhaus off there beyond the trees printed themselves darkly and forever upon her brain; the scattered lights in the windows, the inky spots where the ivy trailings were massed thickest,—all those details and a dozen others were in that instant photographed upon her spirit, destined to henceforth form the background to the scene whose centre was the face opposite to her, all of the expression of which seemed to have condensed itself into the burning gaze of those two great eyes, so vastly sad.

"Oh, monsieur," she said, with a tone of deep appeal, "believe me, I have never done so cruel a

thing as that in all my life!”

“Are you to all men as to me?”

“I hope so.”

“That American in Zurich! when you met him again was it as to meet me again?”

“But he is no especial friend of mine.”

“And am I especial?—Am I?—Yes?”

“Yes,” she said slowly, “I feel as if I had known you all my life.” ([165])

“Yes,” he answered quickly, “just so I feel also.”

He put up his hand and again brushed the loose lock of his wavy hair back from his forehead.

“*Vraiment*,” he exclaimed, “I begin to feel that it is impossible that I go to-morrow.”

“Oh, but you must,” she cried, much alarmed.

“We are so happy; why can we not let this pleasure last?”

“You *must* go!” she reiterated with decision.

“We understand so well,” he went on, without noticing her words; “you understand, I understand. I wish nothing of you, I require nothing of you, only the friendship—only these good hours that we know together, only the joy of our sympathy. Why can I not be where you are everywhere? *Warum nichts*?”

“It isn’t possible!” she said firmly.

He turned about in his seat and called for the reckoning. After it was paid they went together back towards the hotel.

“You have told me that you will never marry again,” he said presently, “and I have told you that I also intend never. But—” he stopped short. The hotel court was there before them, and the [166] scent of some night flowers came on the evening breeze from those beds of riotous color which fill the central space of the old Cloister.

“Let us walk once around the Kreuzgang,” he suggested, “and after that we will go in.”

She assented, and they followed the vivid outline of Constance’s history as portrayed in the large frescoes upon the inner wall of the vaulted passage.

“I do not breathe here,” he said suddenly; “come into the garden with me once again. But for a moment? I beg—I pray!”

They went out on to the terrace, passing through the Refectory, now thick with smoke and scintillating with beer-steins.

“You say that you will never marry,” he said again, as they encircled the base of Huss’ Tower, “and I tell you that I also have the idea to never marry. But—”

He paused again, just by that bit of the old monastery wall which extends out towards the bathing-houses.

“But if—*if*,” he emphasized the monosyllable with marked emphasis,—“*if* I asked you to marry me, what would you say?”

Rosina did not stop for an instant’s consideration.

“I should say ‘no.’”

He received the blow full in his face. [167]

“Why?” he asked.

“I do not want another husband. I don’t like husbands. They are all alike.”

“How?”

“You can’t tell a thing about them beforehand; they always change, and are different after marriage from what they were before.”

“I shall never change,” he declared positively.

“They all say that.”

“But I speak truth!”

“They all say that too.”

“But with me it will arrive;” then he added, “with me it will arrive that I shall never change, because I shall *never* marry.”

His remark was such a complete surprise to her that she could hardly master her shock for a

moment.

“If that was the point that you were leading up to,” she said finally, “I’m certainly glad that I did not say ‘yes.’”

He surveyed her, smiling.

“I particularly said ‘if,’” he reminded her; “I said, ‘*if* I asked you to marry me,’ you know?”

Rosina felt a strong inclination to bring the evening to a close. She wanted to be alone and think.

“We must go in,” she said.

“I also feel it,” he answered. ([168])

So they went in. The hall and staircase were quite deserted. He walked with her to the top of the first flight.

“Do we leave good-bye here?” he asked.

“Yes,” she said smiling; “I think so.”

He stood looking at her, and out of the depths of his nature various phantoms strove into shape.

“It is well that I go,” he said seriously; “after all, we are not children, you and I, and however we laugh it is always that, that we really are not children.” He put out his hand and took hers. “I shall be away, and the time will be long, and—” he paused abruptly.

Her eyes almost closed beneath the unbearable heat of his gaze.

“Shall you remember me?” she asked, faintly this time.

“Yes, much.”

Then she opened her eyes and withdrew her hand.

“For how long?” she said as before.

He was still staring down at her.

“Who can say!”

“For three weeks? for four? for six?”

“*Je ne sais pas*,” he said briefly; “if I think too much I must come back, and that will not be wisely.”

“We must not stand here,” she said suddenly; “adieu, au revoir!” ([169])

“Yes,” he replied sombrely, “we must part now.”

He looked at her, and his eyes locked hers hard and fast for a long minute. She felt ill, faint, her breath seemed failing her. Then—

He seized her hand and pressed it so strongly against his lips that his lips parted and she felt his teeth against her flesh.

“*Je vous aime!*” he whispered, almost inaudibly. “Adieu!” [170]

Back to Contents

“They stood together on the Maximilianbrücke”

Part II

THE BEATING OF THE WAVES

Chapter Ten

IT was September in Munich. They stood together on the Maximilianbrücke, and, looking down into the gray and black turbulence of the Isar, felt themselves to be by contrast most tranquil and even-tempered. The little river rushed beneath them, forming a wealth of tiny whirlpools above its stone-paved way, its waters seeming to clash and struggle in a species of mimic, liquid warfare, and then, of a sudden, victor and vanquished fled wildly on together, giving place to other waves with their other personal scores to settle.

The banks on either side were beginning to show some touches of autumnal scarlet among those masses of vine whose ends trailed in the water below, and among the shrubs of the Promenade the same blood stain betrayed the summer’s death at the hands of the merciless frost king. The Peace Monument was there, piercing heaven with its golden wings; the Lucaskirche towered to the east; above them all sat the lofty Maximilianeum, that open-work crown of Munich, whose perfectly curved approach and double arcaded wings must joy the soul of every artist-nature that lingers near it.

“How old are you?” the man said suddenly.

Rosina jerked her consciousness up out of the bed of the Isar.

“No gentleman at home would ask a lady that,” she told him, thus showing great presence of mind.

He smiled and twisted his moustache.

“But I am not a gentleman at home,” he said pleasantly, “I am a gentleman travelling.”

“How old are you?”

“I have thirty-three years.”

“Well, I haven’t,” she said with decision; “you might think that I was forty, but that is only because I have had so much experience.”

He looked at her in a dubious, troubled way.

“I did not think that you had forty: I did not get that just perhaps. You have not truthfully forty, have you?”

Rosina laughed in unfeigned amusement.

“No, monsieur, I am not thirty even. I told you that if I seemed to be forty, it was because I had had so much experience.”

“So much experience?” ([175])

“Yes.”

“You feel that you have had experience?”

“I know it.”

“Experience as, *par exemple*, me?”

“Yes.”

He looked at her and smiled, shaking his head.

“Oh, madame, you say that, not at all knowing how much experience I have had.”

She raised her eyebrows slightly and turned to walk on. He followed at her shoulder, and when they came to the little stone stair that leads down to the Promenade, he halted and glanced expressively off among the paths and shade.

“There isn’t time,” she said, shaking *her* head now.

He went down two steps alone, and then held out his hand with that irresistible smile; she hesitated, looked helplessly around, and then, like all women who hesitate, was forthwith lost, swallowed up, in the maze of those wandering paths. Von Ibn secured his cane well beneath his arm and lit a cigarette.

“Do I ever now ask you ‘may I’?” he said.

“You never did ask me ‘might you?’” she replied.

He drew two or three satisfied puffs.

“It is good to be so friends,” he commented placidly, and then he took his cane into his right [176] hand again and swung it with the peculiarly vigorous swing which in his case always betrayed the possession of an uncommon degree of *bonne humeur*. “And now for your experience?” he asked after a little. “It is that which I will to hear.”

“Did you ever go to a masked ball?”

“*Mais, naturellement.*”

“Well, so did I.” She paused to note the effect.

He threw a quick glance of undefined question at her.

“Masked?” he demanded.

“Oh, dear no! thickly veiled, and ’way upstairs in a gallery.”

“Were you greatly amused ’way upstairs in your gallery?”

“Yes, really; there were ever so many men there that I knew.”

“Did they come upstairs in the gallery?”

“No indeed, no one knew that I was there. But it interested me to see whom *I* knew—”

“Was I there?” he interrupted.

“Oh, it wasn’t here! it was ever so long ago, while my husband was alive.”

“Did you see your husband?”

“Yes,” she said flushing, “and he was just like all the other men. He wore no mask, and he did ([177]) not care one bit who might recognize him.”

“You had been better not gone,” said the man decidedly.

“Yes, I think so; I lost all my love for my husband that night, and killed all my faith in mankind forever.”

“Why did you be possessed to go?”

“I went because I did not want to be deceived in the way that many women are deceived.”

Von Ibn laughed.

“You know now all of everything, you think?”

“I know more than most other women do.”

“You would have known much more yet if you had worn a mask,” he told her very dryly.

She did not reply, and after a few minutes he continued:

“And now, when you know everything, and can no more be deceived, are you so most happy?”

“I do not know,” she said slowly.

“How have you lost your faith?” he inquired; “what in especial can no more deceive you?”

“I don’t believe in men,” she declared; “I don’t believe in anything that they say, nor in anything that they promise. And I don’t believe one bit in love!”

The man stopped by an empty bench. ([178])

“We have walked so long,” he remarked parenthetically; and she sat down, parenthetically also, so to speak.

“That is sad,” he said, digging in the gravel with his cane, “not to believe in love, or in the truth of a man! and you are a woman, too! Then there is no more truth and love for you.”

Rosina felt disheartened. A ready acquiescence in her views is always discouraging to a woman. What is the use of having views, if they are just tamely agreed to at once?

“I think perhaps men really mean what they say when they say it,” she began; “but, oh dear, they can’t stick to it afterwards. Why, my husband told me that my lightest wish should be his law, and then what do you think he did?”

“He did perhaps kiss you.”

“No, he went and bought a monkey!”

“What is a monkey?”

“Don’t you know what a monkey is?”

“If I know I will not trouble you to ask.”

“*C’est un singe,—affe*; now you know.”

“Oh, yes; I was thinking of a monk, and of how one told me that you had them not with you.”

Then he scraped gravel for a long time, while her mind wandered through a vista of monks and [179] monkeys, and finally, entering the realm of the present day, paused over the dream of a hat which she had seen that morning in the Theatinerstrasse, a hat with a remarkably clever arrangement of one buckle between two wings; it was in the store that faced—

“I am an atheist,” said her companion, rising abruptly from his seat.

“Apropos of what?” she asked, decidedly startled, but rising too,—“apropos of the monkey?”

“*Comment?*” he said blankly.

“Nothing, nothing!” quickly.

They walked on slowly among the shadows which were beginning to gather beneath the trees; after a while he spoke again.

“I tell you just now that I am an atheist, and that is very true. Now I will make you a proposal and you shall see how serious I mean. I will change myself and believe in God, if you will change yourself and believe once more in men.”

“Can you believe in God or not just as you please?” she asked wonderingly.

“I am the master of myself,” he replied straitly; “if I say that I will pray to-night, I will pray. And you must say that you will believe,” he insisted; “you must again have a faith in men, and in their truth, and in honor.” Then he paused lengthily. “And in love?” he continued; “say that you will [180] again believe in love?—you will, will you not? yes?”

“I don’t know that I can do it, even if I want to,” she said musingly; “looking on at life is so terribly disheartening, especially with us in America, you know.”

“Oh,” he said quickly, “but I do not want you to believe in love in America; I talk of here in Munich.”

“I suppose you mean yourself?”

“Yes,” he said most emphatically,—“me.”

She could not help laughing a little.

“You do really amuse me so much,” she apologized.

A workman in a dirty blouse and a forlorn, green Tyrolese hat, the cock’s plume of which had been all too often rained upon, passed close beside them. Von Ibn, nothing daunted, seized her gloved hand and pressed it to his lips; she freed it quickly and swept all their environage with one swift and comprehensive glance.

“If any one that knew us should see you!” she exclaimed.

He calmly gazed after the now distant workman.

“I did not know him,” he said; “did you?”

Then she was obliged to laugh again.

“You are always so afraid of the world,” he continued, remonstrating; “what does it make if one [181] do see me kiss your hand? kissing your hand is so little kissing.”

He paused a moment and smiled whimsically.

“I did really laugh alone in my room the other night. I sit there smoking and thinking what a bad fright you have always when I will to take your hand and kiss it—you fear ever that some one shall not be there to see. Then I think, if I would give you a true kiss, that would be to your mind so awful,—the fear of a seeing, you know,—that we must then go in a cellar and bolt nine doors first, probably.”

He laughed, but she did not.

“When I go into a cellar with you,” she said coldly, “and allow nine doors bolted, you may kiss me, and I pledge you my word not to scream.”

A dead silence followed her remark, and lasted until Von Ibn broke it, saying abstractedly:

“One does go underground to visit the breweries;” after which he meditated some while longer before adding, “but they never would bolt the doors, I think.”

Rosina felt any comment on these words to be unnecessary and continued upon the even tenor of her way. They were close by the Luitpoldbrücke now, and she went towards the bridge, which [182] lay upon their homeward route. Von Ibn followed her lead placidly until they were upon the opposite bank, when he suddenly halted.

“Have you lost something?” she asked, stopping also.

“No, but I asked you some question just now and you have never reply.”

“What was it?”

“About believing.”

“But I am going so soon,” she objected.

“How soon?”

“In December.”

“It is then all settled?” he inquired, with interest.

“Yes.”

“But you can unsettle it?” he reminded her eagerly.

“I don’t want to unsettle it—I want to go.”

He stared at her blankly.

“How have I offended you?” he asked after a while.

“You have not offended me,” she said, much surprised.

“But you say that you want to go?”

“That is because I feel that I must go.”

“Why must you go? why do you not stay here this winter?—or, hold! why do you not go to [183] Dresden? Later I also must go to Dresden, and it would be so *gemüthlich*, in Dresden together.”

“It will be *gemüthlich* for me to get home, too.”

“Do you wish much to go?”

“Yes; I think that I do.”

Then she wondered if she was really speaking the truth, and, going to the edge of the bank, looked abstractedly down into the rapid current.

“What do you think?” he asked, following her there.

She turned her face towards him with a smile.

“I cannot help feeling curious as to whether, when I shall really be again in America, I shall know a longing for—for the Isar, or not?”

“I wonder, shall I ever be in America,” he said thoughtfully; “and if I ever should come there, where do you think would be for me the most interesting?”

“*Chez moi*,” she laughed.

He smiled in amusement at her quick answer.

“But I shall never come to America,” he went on presently; “I do not think it is a healthy country. I have an uncle who did die of the yellow fever in Chili.”

“There is more of America than Chili; that’s in South America—quite another country from mine.”

“Yes, I know; your land is where the men had the war with the negroes before they make them all free. I study all that once and find it quite dull.” [184]

“The war was between the Northern and Southern States of North America—” she began.

“*Ça ne m’intéresse du tout*,” he broke in; “let us walk on.”

They walked on, and there was a lengthy pause in the conversation, because Rosina considered his interruption to be extremely rude and would not broach another subject. They went a long way in the darkness of a heavily clouded September twilight, and finally:

“Where did he buy it?” he asked.

“Where did he buy what? where did who buy what?”

“The monkey.”

“Oh! I don’t know, I’m sure.”

Then there was another long silence.

“To-morrow,” he announced, “I am going to the Tagernsee, and—”

“I’m not,” she put in flatly.

He turned his head and stared reprovingly.

“How you have say that! not in the way of good manners at all.”

“No,” she said, with an air of retort, “I am with you so much that I am beginning to forget all my good manners.”

“Am I so bad mannered?” [185]

“Yes, you are.”

“How?”

“You interrupt, and you are frank to a degree that is always impolite, and sometimes really awful.”

“And you,” he exclaimed eagerly, “how bad you also are! you never even try to be agreeable, and when I speak with great seriosity you are often more amused than before, even.”

Rosina tried to look sorry, but found it safer, even in the twilight, to look the other way.

“The truth is,” he went on vigorously, “I am very much too good with you! I have never taken my time to an American before, and I am always fearful. I have been a fool. I shall not be a fool any more.”

“How do you intend to begin to grow wise?”

“You will see.”

The threat sounded dire, but they were now at the corner by the Maximiliansstrasse, and supper was too near for her to feel downcast.

“I hope that we are to have potato salad to-night,” she said cheerfully.

He continued to meditate moodily.

“Oh, we are much too much together,” he announced at last.

“Well,” she replied, “if you go to the Tagernsee to-morrow that will give us a little mutual rest.” [186]

“I may miss the train,” he added thoughtfully; “if I do—”

“You can take the next one,” she finished for him.

He looked at her witheringly.

“If I do miss the train, I will carry my violin to you and we will make some music in the evening.”

Rosina stopped, fairly paralyzed with joy.

“Oh, monsieur,” she cried, “will you really?”

“Yes, that is what I will; *if* I miss the train.”

They had entered beneath the long arcade, which was dark and altogether deserted except for one distant figure.

“I almost want you to miss your train,” she said eagerly. “You do not know how very, very anxious I am to hear you play.”

“I can miss it,” he said thoughtfully; “it is very simple to miss a train. One can sleep, and then here in Munich one may say the cabman a wrong Gare. If I say ‘Ostbahnhof’ when I must go from the Starnberg, I shall surely miss the train, you know.”

He looked at her gravely and she burst out laughing at the picture he had drawn for her mind, [187]
because there is all of three or four miles between those two particular stations.

“But I don’t want you to miss the train,” she said presently. “You can play for me after you come back, I—”

At this moment the figure which had been coming towards them suddenly resolved itself into that of a stalwart young man, who, just as he was directly in front of them, stopped, seized Rosina in his arms and kissed her. She very naturally screamed in fright, and her escort delivered a blow at the stranger which sent him reeling backwards against one of the stone pillars.

The man, who was well dressed and appeared to be a gentleman, recovered himself with surprising quickness, and laughed oddly, saying:

“My Lord, what a welcome!”

At the sound of his voice Rosina screamed afresh, this time in quite another tone, however, exclaiming:

“It’s my cousin Jack!”

“It is your—some one you know?” stammered Von Ibn. “Then I must demand a thousand pardons.”

“Not at all,” said Jack, taking his hand and shaking it heartily; “that’s all right! don’t say a word more. The trouble was that when I saw Rosina I forgot that she had gotten out of the habit of [188]
being kissed. Of course I scared her awfully. Are you over it yet, dear?”

Rosina stood between the two men, and appeared completely stunned by her cousin’s arrival.

“Where did you drop from, anyhow?” she asked, finding her tongue at last.

“Came over to go back with you; left Paris last night.”

“Where will you stay? There isn’t an empty corner in the *pension*, one has to write ever so long ahead.”

“I’m going to stay at the Vierjahreszeiten, just beside you. I’m all right.”

“Yes,” said Von Ibn suddenly, “you are very right; I stay there too.”

Rosina thought despairingly, “They’ll see a lot of one another, and Jack will dislike him and he’ll hate Jack.”

By this time they were come to her door and paused there.

“I’m going in with you,” the cousin said. “Madame was so glad to see me again that she wanted me to come back and sit next to her at supper. I was awfully glad to see her. She’s even younger and prettier than when I last saw her—when you and I were kids there that winter, don’t you remember?”

Von Ibn was staring sombrely at Rosina and she was sure that Jack would notice it, and wished [189]
that he wouldn’t. Then he gave a little start and held out his hand.

“I shall not come to-night,” he said, “and to-morrow I go to the Tagernsee; so it is ‘good-bye’ here.”

She felt choked.

“Good-bye,” she said, keenly aware of being watched, but striving to speak pleasantly notwithstanding. He shook her hand, raised his hat, and left them.

Then her cousin swung the big *porte* open and they entered the passage and went towards the stairs. At the first step he paused and said in a peculiarly pointed tone of voice:

"Well, are you going to marry him?"

She jumped at the suddenness of the question, and then, recovering herself quickly, answered coldly:

"Of course not."

"Why of course not?"

Her neck took on a quite new poise—not new to the man behind her, however.

"I asked you, 'Why of course not'?" he repeated.

"You know how foolish such a question is."

"It isn't foolish. Yourself considered, it's the most natural question in the world."

"You never met me before when I was walking with a stranger, and then asked me such a ([190]) thing."

"This man's different. Some one wrote home that you were going to marry him. You can imagine Uncle John! I was sent for from the beach and shipped by the first thing that sailed after my arrival."

Rosina stopped on the first landing to stare in tranceful astonishment.

"Some one wrote!" she ejaculated faintly. "Who wrote?"

"Never you mind who wrote. Whoever it was set uncle thinking, and I was posted off to look him up."

"When did you come over?"

"Landed in Hamburg the last of August."

"Where have you been ever since?"

"Been looking him up."

Rosina began to mount the second staircase; she appeared completely bewildered.

"It's very nice of uncle," she said about the fourth step, "and of course I'm awfully obliged to whoever wrote home; but I'm not going to marry him, really."

Jack whistled.

"Well," he said cheerily, as they attained the second landing, "I know all about him now, anyway; and if you ever do want to go ahead, you can be sure that he's all right." [191]

"I knew that he was all right," she said quietly; "every one in Europe knows that he's all right."

"He's a first-class boxer, anyhow," the cousin declared. "Lord, what a blow that was! And I did not mean to frighten you at all, either; I thought that you saw me coming."

"How was I to know that it was you? I supposed that you were in New York. I did not think that there was a man on this continent who had a right to kiss me. And even if there was I shouldn't be expecting him to do so in public. You never kissed me in the street yourself before. What possessed you to do so this time?"

She faced about on the stairs as she spoke, and he stopped and drew a deep breath or two. It takes time to become acclimated to the stairs abroad.

"Don't be vexed at me," he implored, "or I shall think that you are not glad that I came; and you are, aren't you?"

"Yes, of course I am."

"And after supper to-night we'll go out and take a good old-fashioned tramp and talk a lot, won't we?"

They were now before the door of the *pension* and he was pressing the electric bell. She sighed [192] a resigned sigh of utter submission, nodded acquiescently, and waited beside him.

Anna, a maid whose countenance left much to be divined at pleasure, finally let them in. When she saw that the lady had changed her escort, her face fell and she slightly shook her head as if regretful that one who was so generous should own openly to the vice of fickleness. They went into the long hall and Jack paused to hang his hat upon one of the hooks in that angle by the door; then he overtook his cousin and they went together to the salon, the pretty little salon with its great window, tall white-tiled stove, piano, corner-ways divan, tabouret, table of magazines, quaint Dutch picture of Queen Wilhelmina, and the vase in the corner—that green vase from whose stem hangs the flower-like body of a delicate porcelain nymph.

"You can't smoke here, you know," she cautioned him. "If you want to smoke you must go into

the corridor."

"I don't want to smoke," he said. "I'll look out of the window. I like to watch the people."

So she left him there and sought Ottillie.

After supper that night they did go to walk; and if Rosina's cousin came abroad with a mission he certainly went in for fulfilling it vigorously.

"Who wrote you about him, anyhow?" she demanded at last, when her patience was nearly [193] exhausted by the mercilessness of his cross-examination. She was inwardly furious at whoever had done so, but it seemed wisdom to conceal her fury—for the present at least.

"You can't travel about all summer with the same man everlastingly at your heels, without other people's seeing him as well as yourself."

"But some one person must have written. It can't be that several people would bother to."

"You won't ever know who wrote, so don't you fret."

They were crossing the Max-Joseph Platz diagonally, and a light flashing from a passing trolley seemed to suddenly illuminate her brain.

"I bet I do know," she cried.

"I bet you don't."

"It was a man; now wasn't it?"

"Yes, it was a man; but I won't say a word more."

She smiled, triumphant in her woman's intuition.

"It was that man at Zurich," she exclaimed; "wasn't it?"

He turned into the Residenzstrasse and made no reply.

"It was, wasn't it?" she insisted.

"I shan't tell."

"You needn't tell. I know that it was and you know that it was too, so I'm satisfied." ([194])

They went along past the two sentinels who guard the gate of the royal palace, and emerged on the large open space that spreads before the Feldherrnhalle. From there the Ludwigsstrasse stretches straight out and away to the Siegesthor, stretches in one magnificent splendor of breadth and boulevard and electric lights. They took the right-hand side and set off at a pace neither swift nor slow—just such a pace as will allow sufficient breath for ample conversation.

"You know you'll marry again, Rosina, no matter what you may say; you know that, don't you?"

"No, I don't."

"Nonsense!"

"Well, I'm sure that I won't for a long time."

"Of course you can't until the two years are out, but they're out this October; and you know the more dead-set you are against doing anything the surer you are to do it. We all know that just by the light of the past."

She elevated her eyebrows and made no reply.

"You've got so much money that naturally we couldn't hear that any one was following you continually, without wanting to know what he was after. I should think you could see how that would strike Uncle John."

"Monsieur von Ibn doesn't mean to marry any more than I do," she declared positively. ([195])

"Doesn't he? How do you know?"

"He told me so himself."

"When?"

"Ever so many times."

He laughed and stopped to examine one of the posters of the "Elfscharfrichters,"—the one of the cadaverous lady all in black, with her hands outspread.

"What interests you in him, anyhow?" he asked after a little.

“Can’t a woman enjoy being with a man without wanting to marry him? I like him because he’s so original.”

“He’s original all right,” Jack reflected; “that’s very, very true. He’s the first man who ever thought of knocking me down for kissing you.”

“It was because I screamed. Why didn’t you write that you were coming?”

“I wanted to arrive unexpectedly and see for myself.”

“Well, did you see?”

He chuckled.

“Yes, and felt too. He doesn’t intend that any one else shall kiss you.”

Rosina whirled, her eyes sparkling with anger.

“I’ll never forgive you if you say another thing like that,” she cried hotly. [196]

The cousin judged it advisable to suggest diverging from the Ludwigsstrasse, and extending their promenade in the direction of the Wittelsbach Palace. Dark streets have a naturally subduing effect, and he knew what an upheaval his arrival had produced even better than she did.

They went towards the Caserne, and were in the Améliesstrasse before either began another subject. And even then it was really not a new one, because Jack, having a definite end in view, could not lose sight of it for a minute.

“Why do you think that you don’t want to get married again?” he said, courageously returning to the fight.

“I don’t think anything about it. I know that I don’t want to get married again!”

“Von Ibn seems to be a mighty nice sort of a fellow. I’ve met ever so many people who told me lots about him. He’s got quite a property for these men over here, and he’ll have two jolly places and a title, too. And the family won’t kick over his marrying any one; they’ve been at him to get married for years and years. He’s the only son, you know.”

“All right,” she said dryly.

“Have you anything personal against him?”

“No; but I know that I can see all that I want of him without marrying him; and as long as we do ([197]) not get married we have the delightful privilege of being able to separate the instant that we grow tired of one another. And the ability to stop when you’ve had enough is a great thing.”

“Has he bored you any yet?”

“Not yet. Oh, Jack, you ought to hear him talk. He said yesterday that we must go somewhere early before the cool grew too hot.”

Jack regarded her sympathetically.

“I’d certainly marry him,” he said, with decision. “If he can say things like that offhand, only think what he’d be to live with day after day.”

Rosina was silent for a moment, and then she gave a violent shiver.

“Oh,” she exclaimed, in a voice that echoed like a low cry, “I don’t believe that I ever *can* marry again—it’s so *terrible*!”

Jack took her hand and drew it closely within his arm.

“Don’t say that,” he said earnestly. “Every one knows that you didn’t have a fair show first time. Your husband was—Well, you know what he was.”

“I should say that I did know what he was.”

“I always wondered if you just wanted to get your hands on a big establishment.” ([198])

“Oh, what makes you say such things? You know that I was desperately in love with him—as much so as a girl can be.”

“Do you feel anything like it again now?”

She shook her head.

“No, indeed; I feel that I may get tired of monsieur any day.”

They turned down towards the Ludwigsstrasse and Rosina appeared to be thinking deeply. At last she spoke, and her accents were firm as granite.

“I do not believe that I ever *could* marry again.”

Jack shrugged his shoulders.

“There’s no string on you,” he declared lightly.

The next morning, as the lady was stirring her whipped cream into her chocolate, Ottillie entered with a note:

> “Dear Rosina,—Von Ibn and I are leaving for the Tagernsee by the early train. Think we’ll be gone four or five days.
>
> “Always yours,
>
> “Jack.”

Chapter Eleven

[199]

IT was three o’clock on the last day of September, and the last day of September had been a very rainy one. Little draggled sparrows quarrelled on the black asphalt of the Maximiliansstrasse because it was wet and they came in for their share of the consequent ill-humor; all the cabs and cabmen and cab-horses were waterproofed to the fullest possible extent; all the cocks’ plumes in the forlorn green hats of the forlorn street-sweeping women hung dolefully and dejectedly down their backs. People coming to the Schauspielhaus lowered their umbrellas at the entrance and scooted in out of the drizzle; people coming out of the Schauspielhaus raised their umbrellas and slopped away through the universal damp and spatters.

All of which but served to deepen the already deep melancholy and *ennui* of Rosina, who leaned in her window across the way, staring upon the outer world with an infinite sense of its pitiful inadequacy to meet her present wishes, and a most profound regret that her cousin had ever crossed the ocean on her account.

[200]

For they had not returned from the Tagernsee. On the contrary the expedition had stretched to other “sees,” to the Herrn-Chiemsee, to Salzburg, and now she held in her hand a hastily pencilled scrawl, brought by the two o’clock post, which said:

> “Ho for Vienna. Always did want to see Buda-Pesth.
>
> J.”

And nothing more!

“It’s so like a man,” she told herself without troubling to think just what she did mean by the words. “Oh, dear! oh, *dear*!” and she turned from the window and flung herself despairingly into one of the big red velvet chairs, preparing to read or to cry as the fancy might seize her.

There came a light tap at the door and then it opened a very little.

“Oh, pardon me,” cried a sweet, sweet voice, “I think you are perhaps gone out!”

Then the door opened and the speaker showed herself. It was the daughter of the house, an ideally blonde and bonny German girl. She came across the room and her face shaded slightly as she asked:

“You have no bad news? no?”

“No,” said Rosina, forcing a smile; “I’m only very cross.”

“Cross? Why cross? You are but laughing at me. You are not really cross.” ([201])

Rosina was silent; her lip quivered slightly.

“Oh,” said Fraülein quickly. “I am come that I may ask you a favor! The parlor has a workman to make the window again; it is not good closed, and the French lady wishes to call on you. May she come here?”

“Yes,” Rosina said, “I shall be so very glad to have her come here, and Ottillie can bring us some tea after a while.”

She dried her eyes openly in preparation for the visit to be.

“You are lonely to-day,” said Fraülein sympathetically. “I am glad that your cousin did come.”

“Yes,” said Rosina, “but he went away so soon again.”

Her eyes immediately refilled.

“You love each other so very much in America,” said the German girl gently; she stood still for a minute and then smiled suddenly. “I will tell madame to come here,” she added, and left the room.

Rosina went back to the window and her unseeing contemplation of the outdoors. Presently some one knocked and she turned, crying:

“*Entrez!*”

The door opened, and instead of the French lady whose husband was fleeing the revolution in Caraccas by bringing his family to Munich for the winter, a man entered. [202]

The man was tall and dark, with brown eyes and a black moustache, and his eyes were oddly full of light and laughter.

She stood still staring for one short minute, and then suddenly something swallowed up all the space between them, and her hand was fast between his grasp, pressed hard against his lips, while the pleasure in her eyes rose and fell against the joy of his own.

“*Vous me voyez revenu!*” he said.

“Where is Jack?” she asked; both spoke almost at once, and Von Ibn was conscious of sharing a divine sense of relief with her as he replied:

“He is gone alone to Vienna!”

It was as if a heavy cloud had been lifted from her horizon. She sank down in one of the big easy-chairs and he dragged another close, very close to her side.

“Not so near!” she exclaimed, a little frightened.

He withdrew the chair two inches and fixed his eyes hungrily upon her face.

“Has it been long to you?” he asked, his tone one of breathless feeling.

And then she realized to the full how very long it had been, and confessed the fact in one great in-drawn sigh. [203]

“Why did you go so far?” she demanded.

“It was one step beyond the another; I have no idea but of the Tagernsee when we leave.”

“You’ve been gone weeks!”

He leaned forward and seized her hand again.

“Was it so long?” he questioned softly.

“You know that I only saw my cousin just that one evening!” she had the face to say complainingly.

“Yes,” he said sympathetically; “he is so nice, your cousin. I have learned to like him so very much; we have really great pleasure together. But,” he added, “I did not come back to talk of him.”

“Why did you come back?” she asked, freeing herself and pushing her chair away.

He smiled upon her.

“You ask?” he said, in amusement; “shall I say that it was to see you?”

“I hope that you did not return on my account.”

He paused, twisting his moustache; then started a little and said:

“No, I am returned wholly for business.”

Rosina received the cold douche with a composure bred of experience, and after a liberal interval he went on. ([204])

“But I wanted also to see you too.”

“Well, you are seeing me, are you not?”

“Yes, but you do not smile as before your cousin is come. I want you to smile. Oh,” he exclaimed, suddenly interrupting himself, “have you ride horseback since I left?”

“Oh, yes, almost every day.”

His face clouded slightly.

“Who have you ride with?”

“With my friends who are here, and twice with the lieutenant.”

Then his face clouded very heavily.

“Is he interesting?” he asked; “yes?”

“It was the Englischergarten that was wonderful,” she told him. “We rode very early in the morning and the dew was on the grass and we could hear the pheasants in the underbrush when the noise of the horses’ feet frightened them further away.”

“And the lieutenant?” he asked.

“And oh,” she continued, “you know that place where the woods open so widely, and you can see so far across,—*eh bien*, we saw one morning the deer standing in the edge of the forest just there, one would have said fifty miles from civilization, not at all as if they were in the midst of [205] Munich.”

“And the lieutenant?” he repeated.

“And then another day the clouds of morning mist were so thick that we could see their outlines as they lay upon the earth, and ride into them and ride out of them,—a quite new experience for me.”

“But the lieutenant?” he exclaimed impatiently, “the lieutenant? what did he talk of? what did you speak together of?”

Rosina laughed, nodding merrily over his impatience.

“We talked of the pheasants,” she said, “of the deer, of the fog. Are you satisfied?”

He shrugged his shoulders, his frown lifted.

“It is quite one to me,” he said indifferently; “you know that I have said before that I am not of a *tempérament jaloux*.”

Then he got up and walked about the room, taking a cigar from his pocket and holding it unlighted in his mouth.

“May I smoke here?” he asked.

“I don’t care if you do.”

He returned suddenly to his chair, laid the cigar on the table, and took her hand again.

“Your cousin is so nice,” he told her, as if the recollection of Jack’s charms had necessitated his [206] at once expressing his feelings towards Jack’s cousin.

“When is he coming back?” she asked.

“In one week.”

“When does he sail? Do you know?”

“On the nineteenth day, from Genoa.”

She quite sprang from her seat.

“Not really!” she exclaimed.

“Yes, so he tell me.”

He drew her back into her chair and she forgot the hand which he still held in her desperate feeling of the instant. She was helplessly choked with conflicting emotions. October instead of December! That came of having a cousin!

The kingdom of the other chair advanced its border-line more than two inches, and she did not appear to notice the bold encroachment.

“What does it matter?” she asked herself bitterly; “in a few days I’m going, and then I shall never lay eyes on him again,” and the tears welled up thickly at the thought.

“*Qu’est-ce que vous avez?*” he said anxiously; “you must not cry when I am returned, you know!”

At that she sobbed outright.

He looked at her with an intentness very foreign to his usual expression, and seemed to weigh two courses of action and deliberate as to their relative advisability; he ended by laying her hand [207] down gently and going to the window, where he remained for several minutes, looking out and saying nothing.

She dried her eyes quickly and quietly (only a foolish woman continues to weep after the man has gone), and waited for him to turn. Finally he did so.

“It is not raining once more,” he said; “let us go out and walk far. That will do you quite well; I cannot bear that you weep.”

He added the last words in a lower tone, and coming close behind her chair suddenly stooped.

She realized all in a flash where he was, what he was meditating, the half-open door, and writhed quickly out of the chair and away.

“Why not?” he asked, looking after her unsmilingly. “It will do you no hurt and me much good.”

“I’m out of the habit,” she said shortly, recollecting Jack’s words on that famous night of his arrival.

They were both on their feet, she by the window and he by the chair which she had just left.

“Was your husband very *tendre*?” he asked.

She felt the corners of her mouth give way under the stressful shock of this question. “I might [208]
say, ‘I never tried him to see,’” she thought, “but he *never* would understand,” and so there was an instant of silence.

“Why do you smile?” he demanded, smiling himself.

“Because we don’t call men ‘tender.’ We call meat ‘tender’ and men ‘affectionate.’”

“But I *am* tender,” he affirmed.

“Are you? Well, you are younger than my husband and perhaps that accounts for it.”

He reflected, but did not appear to understand; finally he gave it up for a bad job and said, changing to a less abstruse subject:

“We go to walk? yes?”

“Certainly; if you will wait while I have some proper boots found for me.”

“Yes, I will wait.”

He came towards her.

“Oh, you had better go into the corridor and wait,” she exclaimed hastily. “I’ll come in a moment.”

He stopped short and smiled his irresistible smile.

“You are so madly queer. *Qu’est-ce que vous avez*? You scream always, and yet I have not done nothing.”

Then without another word he left the room.

When she was alone Rosina rang for her maid. As Ottillie knelt at her feet, she frowned deeply, [209]
thinking how more than horrid it was that Jack should have come, that she should be obliged to go, and that women may not allow themselves to be kissed. Later she recollected that Jack was in Vienna, that there was the half of October yet to be lived, and that all disembodied kisses must of necessity have an incarnation yet to come. And then she smiled once more.

Ottillie brought her wraps and adjusted her hat.

“Will madame take supper here?” she asked.

“*Je le pense, oui.*”

The maid muffled a sigh; she would have made Von Ibn a conquering hero indeed, if her heartfelt wishes could have given him the victory. And apropos of this subject, it would be interesting, very interesting, to know how many international marriages have been backed up by a French *femme-de-chambre* burning with impatience to return to her own continent.

Rosina went to the salon and found her hero looking at a “Jugend” with a bored expression. When he saw her he sprang to his feet and sought his hat and umbrella forthwith.

Then they went down the three flights of stairs to the street, and found it wet indeed.

“We cannot go on the Promenade,” he said, after casting a comprehensive glance about and [210]
afar. “I think we will go by the Hofgarten and walk under the arcade there; there will it be dry, *n’est-ce pas*?”

“Yes, surely it will be dry there,” she acquiesced. “It is always dry under cover in Europe, because your rain is so quiet and well behaved; it never comes with a terrible gale, whirling and twisting, and drenching everything inside and outside, like our storms.”

“Why do your storms be so?”

“We haven’t found any way of teaching them better manners yet. They are like our flies; our flies are the noisiest, most intrusive, most impertinent creatures. You don’t appreciate your timid, modest little flies.”

“I do not like flies.”

“Yes,” she laughed, “that is the whole story. You ‘do not like flies,’ while we go crazy if there is

one around, and have our houses screened from cellar to garret."

"I do not find this subject very amusing," he said; "let us speak of another thing."

Rosina glanced up at the prison-like façade which they were passing.

"I find the architecture of the Hoftheater terribly monotonous," she said warmly. "Why do you not have a more diversified style of windows where so many must be in a straight row?" [211]

"Munich is not my city," he responded, shrugging his shoulder; "and if you will to find fault with the way those windows go, you must wait to meet the shade of Klenze in the after-world. He made it all in 1823."

"When I get among the Bavarian shades," she said thoughtfully, "I want to meet King Louis more than any one else. I think that he is the most interesting figure in all the history of the country."

"Perhaps he will be there as here, and not care to meet any one."

"Oh, no," she said hopefully; "he was crazy here, but he will be sane there and—"

"*Mon Dieu*, madame, have a care!" he cried in a low tone, glancing apprehensively about.

"What is it?" she asked, alarmed.

He lowered his voice to an almost inaudible pitch.

"It is that we do not discuss our kings in public as you are habited to do. *Voyons donc*," he continued, "if I said, '*Oh, je trouve l'Empereur très-bête!*' (as I well might say, for I find him often bête enough); if I say that, I might find a *sergeant-de-ville* at my elbow, and myself in prison almost as the words were still in the air."

Rosina looked thoroughly frightened. [212]

"And what would they do to you?" she asked, looking up at him with an expression which brought a strange answering look into his own eyes.

"That would depend on how *bête* I had found the emperor," he declared, laughing; "but, madame, do not be so troubled, because no one has heard this time."

They were walking at a good pace, the puddles considered, and came now to the arched entrance into the Hofgarten, where a turning brought them beneath the arcades. The south side was crowded, thanks to the guide-book recommendation to examine the frescoes there on a day when it is too wet to "do" other sights about the city; but the west side, where the frescoes are of landscapes only, and sadly defaced at that, was quite deserted, and they made their way through the crowd to the grateful peace of the silence beyond. It was a pleasant place to walk, with the Hofgarten showing its fresh green picture between the frames of the arcaded arches. The façade of the Hof formed the background to all—a background of stone and marble, of serried ranks of windows marshalled to order by lofty portals and balconies.

"Why are women always like that?" he asked, when they had paced in silence to the other end and turned to return. [213]

"Like what?"

He threw a quick glance of exasperation at her.

"When I say a question, it is always with another question that you reply!"

"Well," she said, "we were talking of the emperor, and now you say 'why are women always like that?' and I ask 'like what?'"

He looked more exasperated than before.

"I have all finished with the emperor," he said, as if outraged by her want of comprehension as to his meaning. "Is it likely that I will wish to talk of the emperor when on the nineteenth you sail from Genoa?"

She felt her eyes moistening afresh at this recurrence to her departure, and made no answer. He slashed along vigorously for two or three yards, cutting a wide swathe with his umbrella, and then his grievance appeared somewhat appeased, and he explained in a milder tone:

"I ask you why are women like that,—like that, that they never will like to be kissed?"

Rosina halted in astonishment.

"What is it now?" he asked, turning because he missed her. "Have I not yet made myself plain?"

"The idea—after all this while—of your going back to that subject!" ([214])

"I have not go back to it," he said coolly; "I have thought of no other thing while you were booting yourself or now. Why do women say 'No'? Why do you say 'No'?"

"Let me see," she said thoughtfully. "I think it is like this: if I allowed you to, you would naturally feel that hereafter you could, whereas I very much prefer that you should know that you

can’t.”

He looked in a despair so complete as to be almost ludicrous.

“Oh, say slower,” he pleaded, earnestly. “It is so very important to well understand.”

She laughed at his serious face. For the moment Jack and Genoa were both forgotten, and nothing but the pleasure of good company and an atmosphere breathing the perfume that follows rain where there are flowers, were left to joy her.

“It isn’t worth repeating slower,” she said, with a smile. “It was a positive negative which even if developed in a dark room would make a proof that I did not want to be kissed.”

They went the entire length of the arcade while he endeavored to work out the solution of her second riddle, and then he shrugged his shoulders, remarking:

“I have never interest myself in a kodak any,” and appeared to regard the subject as finished. [215]

They came back up the arcade, and, the sidewalks being now fairly dry, went out under the stairway at the corner, into the Galleriestrasse.

“Do you like this country?” he asked presently.

“Bavaria? Immensely.”

“I mean, do you like the Continent—Europe?”

“Yes.”

“What do think about it?”

“I think Europa showed great good taste in getting down from the bull just where she did.”

“Then you like this land?”

“I love it! It hurts me whenever I hear my countrymen malign it.”

They were in the Ludwigsstrasse, and the scene was like a holiday in America. Every one was out after the rain and all faces reflected that exuberant gayety which seems to be born about five o’clock in each continental city. People in carriages, people in cabs, people on horseback, people on bicycles, people walking, people leading dogs, people wheeling babies, people following children, all one laughing, bowing, chattering procession, coming and going ceaselessly between the Feldherrnhalle and the Siegesthor, with the blue Bavarian sky blessing all the pleasure, and [216] the tame doves of Munich under the feet of each and every one.

Von Ibn stopped to watch the brilliant scene; Rosina stood beside him.

“What ill can one say of us?” he asked, after a while. “How can a place be better than this?”

“*I* never said that any place could be better than this,” she asseverated; “but I am uncommon in my opinions. The average American is born in a land overflowing with steam-heat, ice-water, and bath-tubs, and he suffers when he has to lose the hyphens and use the nouns separately.”

Von Ibn frowned.

“You amuse yourself much with queer words to-day,” he said discontentedly. “I wish I have stayed with Jack. I was much pleasured with him.”

“But you said that you had to return because of some business,” she reminded him.

He raised his eyebrows, and they went on again. After a little she turned her eyes up to his and smiled.

“Don’t say that you wish you were with Jack. I am so glad that you are here.”

He returned the smile.

“I have no wish to be with your cousin,” he said amicably; “I find you much more agreeable.”

Then a little dog that a lady was leading by a long chain ran three times around his legs and ([217]) half choked itself to death, and the lady screamed, and it was several minutes before all was calm again.

“I find it *bête* to have a dog like that,” he said, looking disgustedly over his shoulder at the heroine of the episode, as she placidly continued on her way. “It was *grand merci* that I am not fallen, then. What was about my feet I could not fancy, and also,”—he began to laugh,—“and also it was droll, for I might not kick the dog.”

Rosina laughed too.

“But in America,” he went on, suddenly recurring to their earlier topic, “have you no art?”

“Oh, yes; but nothing to compare with our sanitary arrangements. Our president’s bath-tub is cut out of one solid block of marble,” she added proudly.

“That is not so wonderful.”

“Isn’t it? The head-lines in the papers led me to think that it was. But I’ll tell you what I think is a disgrace to America,” she went on with energy, “and that is that the American artists who come to study abroad must pay duty on their own pictures when they take them back.”

“Is that really so?” he asked.

“Yes, that is really so. And it is very unjust, for the musician and surgeon and scientist can [218] bring all the results of their study in duty free.”

“They have them within their heads.”

“Yes; but they have them just the same.”

“Everything costs a great deal with you, *n’est-ce pas*?”

“I should say it did. No one ought to blame us for telling what things cost, because everything costs so much. A carriage is six to ten *marks* an hour.”

“*C’est assez cher!*” he said, laughing.

“*C’est un peu trop!*” she rejoined warmly. “But the well-to-do certainly do revel in griddle-cakes and hot-water faucets, and when I meet an American man in Europe I am forced to believe that they are the only really worthy ambitions to be striven for.”

“I could not live there, I think,” he exclaimed.

“I’m afraid not,” said she sadly. “You don’t play golf or drink, and men of leisure have almost no other careers open to them with us.”

“I have my music.”

“But you could never enjoy that there,” she cried, shivering involuntarily. “Every one talks during music, and some cough, and gentlemen clear their throats—”

“And does no one hiss them?” he interrupted, wide-eyed.

“Hiss them? Never! The idea!” [219]

He stopped and lit a cigarette.

“But one can travel?” he suggested.

“Yes, surely there is plenty of room for that,” she said dryly; “but you don’t see many ruined castles or historic battlefields *en route*. And the dust, *oh, la, la*! And the steam coils under your seat—and the air—and the ventilation—and the nights—and the days.”

“You would better stay here,” he remarked.

“Oh, *I* think so,” she responded frankly; “it’s so jolly getting your gloves cleaned for two cents a pair; but if we don’t change the subject I shall cry.”

He looked at her quickly.

“That is the University there,” he told her, pointing to their left; “shall we go there?”

“What for?”

“To look upon it.”

“Why, I’ve seen it dozens of times.”

He took his cigarette out of his mouth, examined it carefully, and replaced it between his lips.

“But one washes here,” he said presently.

“One—washes—” she stammered blankly; and then it flashed across her that it was the bath-tub that was rankling in his soul, and she gasped, adjusted herself, and answered:

“Of course one washes here. But in America it is all made so convenient, and is regarded as [220] less of an event.”

“It is no event to me to wash,” he said indignantly; “I find no excitement in washing.”

“I never said you did; I was comparing quite another class of society with their equals in the other country.”

“But to shave,” he went on, “that I find terrible.”

“It’s no worse than having a *coiffure* to make.”

“But I have no *coiffure* to make.”

“No; but I have.”

He threw his cigarette into the street.

“It is not so bad as shaving.”

“It takes longer.”

“Yes; but shaving you may cut yourself.”

Rosina laughed; he heard her and turned suspiciously.

“Why do you laugh?”

“Because.”

“What amuses you?”

“You do.”

He smiled and they walked one or two blocks in silence. They were now in the suburb of Schwabing, far out by the western end of the Englischergarten. The street was very uninteresting and comparatively deserted.

“Do you see my cravat?” he asked. ([221])

She was wondering if they had not better be returning towards home.

“I know that you have one on,” she said; “I can’t say that I notice anything especial about it.”

“I will show you something very curious about it.”

“You’re not going to take it off, are you?”

“I will show you how I tie it.”

“I know how to tie that kind myself.”

“Not as I tie it.”

Then he deliberately handed her his umbrella and untied his cravat, and proceeded to turn one end up and fold the other across and poke a loop through and draw an end under, and thus manipulate the whole into a reproduction of the same tiny bowknot as before. She held the umbrella and contemplated the performance with an interest which was most flattering to his labor.

“I don’t see how you ever do it,” she exclaimed when the job was complete and he took the umbrella again.

“I will teach you some day,” he said readily. “I have myself invented four cravats,” he added with pride.

“Will you teach me all the four?”

“Yes; I have thought, if I shall ever be poor, to go to Paris and have a cab and drive about from [222] house to house each morning and tie cravats *pour les messieurs*. You can see how many would pay for that.”

“Yes; but when you arrived and they were not ready,—were still in bed, you know,—what would you do then?”

He reflected, and then shrugged his shoulders.

“I would put on the collar, tie the cravat, and leave monsieur to sleep again.”

Rosina’s marital past presented her mind with a lively picture of one of the cravat-tier’s clients struggling to bring his shirt into proper connection with the *chef d’œuvre*, when he should arise to attire himself for the day. She laughed outright. Then she grew sober and said:

“We ought to go back; it must be after five.”

He took out his watch.

“No, it is not.”

“Yes, it is; it was after four when we left the *pension*. I know it’s after five now.”

“It is not after five,” he declared calmly; “it is not after five because it is after six.”

She laughed again; he looked at her, smiling brightly himself.

“It is good together, *n’est-ce pas*?” he said, putting his hand upon her arm as they turned back upon their steps. There was in his eyes the happy look that dispelled every trace of the usual [223] shadow on his face. “We are again those same children,” he went on, “children that the same toy amuses both. What pleasures you always makes joy for me also.”

Something came up in her throat as she listened. It might have been a choke, but she was so positive that it was only Genoa that she swallowed it at once and looked in the opposite direction. He had kept his hand upon her arm, and now he bent his head a little and said, his voice lowering:

“I think—”

The dusk was gathering heavily. The Siegesthor loomed blackly great against the lights of the city beyond. It was no longer quiet about them, but the hum and buzz of all the bees swarming home was in the air, on the pavement, along the trolley wires.

“I think,”—he said, his fingers closing about her arm,—“I think that we might be always very happy together.”

She looked up quickly, and then down yet more quickly.

“Why do you speak that way when you know that I am going so soon?”

“Let us turn here,” he said eagerly; “by here it will be quiet. Do walk so,” he added pleadingly, as she hesitated, “we have not long to be together. *Il faut me gâter un peu.* There is but a week left for us.” [224]

She started.

“A week! If we sail the nineteenth we need not leave here until the fourteenth surely.”

“But your cousin will leave on the eighth.”

She looked up at him, and by the light of a street lamp which they were just passing, he saw the great tears starting in her eyes, tears of helplessness, the tears of a woman who feels and cannot speak. It was a very quiet little street, that into which they had turned, with lines of monotonous gray houses on either side, and certainly no better place for tears was ever invented. Rosina’s appeared to know a good thing when they saw it, and rolled heavily downward, thus proving in their passage the sincerity of both her nature and her color. Her companion drew her hand within his own, pressing her fingers hard and fast. He did not say one word, and finally she wiped her eyes, smiled through the mist that hung upon her lashes, and said with simple directness:

“I don’t want to go.”

“I know.”

“But they want me to, and I must.”

There was another long silence, and then he said:

“You would not stay for me?” ([225])

His voice was wonderfully soft and persuasive, and for a single instant she admitted the possibility into her mental future; but the instant after it found itself driven violently forth again.

“No, no,” she cried, forcibly, “I will not—I cannot. I *never* want another husband.”

He hesitated one step in his gait and then went on as before.

“I do not say that all would be as you wished,” he said slowly, with pauses between, “or that I would live only to joy your life. That would be very untrue. To be with you this week I put aside as it would not be right for me to put aside again. These days I have throw away because I will not say all in my after life that I did not try.” He stopped and his voice changed strangely. “I must try with all my strength,” he continued, drawing each breath as if in great pain; “I must, because to me with my work it is what does not trouble, what gives me sympathy, that is the most large of all. I have never marry because I know that so well. How could I ever do my work if a single discord is there to fret—fret—fret? As well ask me to play in concert on an untuned instrument. To my ear the untune is agony; to my music, a discord in my day is death to what would have been written that day. It is so that I have come to expect to never marry. My music must be first, and how can I risk—” he stopped his speech and his steps. She tried to move on but he held her still. “But,” he said, very low but with an accent the intensity of which cut into her very heart, “but now I know that better work would be if you were there; I should have greater force; I should—I—if you loved—” [226]

He trailed his speech helplessly, faltered, and was silent. The night had come heavily down and they learned the fact by the discovery that they could no longer look into the eyes of one another. The quiet little street had led them down to the borders of the Englischergarten, and its forest rose up before them. He led her straight towards it.

“It will be wet,” he said, in reply to the resistance in her arm; “but we must be alone until I have finished all that I will to say. The trees about us are best; we do not want cabs and streets just now.”

She felt blindly, miserably wretched.

“I don’t want to be married again,” she declared in a voice that was thick with more tears; and then she gathered her skirt well into her hand and they plunged together into the darkness beyond.

The park was dusk with night’s downfall and heavily misted by the day’s rain. Its paths, usually like hard gray cement, were a slippery mosaic of clay and brown leaves, and on either hand arose a stockade-like effect of tree-trunks knowing no light beyond. Wind there was none to rustle the leaves, nor sound of bird or beast. An utter and complete silence echoed the footfalls of these two who had come into the solitude, to the end that they might search there for a solution of themselves. [227]

At the first forking of their way, Rosina said timidly:

“We must not go too far; it is so lonely, I am afraid.”

Von Ibn stopped short, drew one of her arms behind his back, caught her firmly to his bosom, and approached his face so close to hers that his breath came and went against her lips.

“Are you frightened?” he asked.

“No,” she said, wrapt in a sort of awe at the wonder of her own sensations, “I have the utmost faith in you.”

He loosed her instantly, and walked a little way off for a moment.

“I felt that you wished not,” he said, bitterly, “and so I held myself back. *Mon Dieu*, how good I am to you,—how cruel to myself,—and no thanks.”

Her heart was wrung. ([228])

“Oh, let us go back and go home,” she cried; “all this is of no use. It makes me glad to go away, because I see now that for me to go will be better for you.”

“And for you?” he asked, returning to her side.

“I said ‘for you,’” she answered gently.

“Then not at all for you too?”—he laid his hand insistently upon her arm,—“not at all for you too?” he repeated.

She was silent.

“It was there in Lucerne,” he went on presently; “I knew it at first—the first time I see you; and when I found that it was you who had sent for me—I—I dared to hope that you too felt something, even then, even so at the very first. Have you never known that feeling?”—he exclaimed, his breath rising passionately, “has such storm never swept within you?—and you have no other life for a while but its longing,—no sleep but the stupid fatigue when one cannot think more? What has my existence been since that day on the Quai by the Vierwaldstattersee?—*Je ne peux rien faire!*—To the world I am dead.—There is perhaps no future for me because I have learned to love and have not learned to be loved.”

His voice broke utterly; he loosed her arm, walked apart once more, and was once more silent. ([229])

Then her agitation suddenly found voice and to her own intense horror she heard herself laughing—laughing a loud hysterical laughter, that resounded hideously and was beyond her own control.

“You are amused,” he exclaimed, and his mood took on a justifiable tone of outraged anger; “you laugh. You have made me like this and now you laugh. If you were suffering and I had made you so, I should be ashamed and sorry; but a woman laughs. You are as that other,” he continued, impetuously, “and it will be the same some time after. When she had made me wild, then she laughed. When I heard her laugh, I grew quite cold, I cared no more, never more. Then, when I cared no more, she learned to care, she grew to love, she wrote me many letters, she became most miserable; but for me nothing mattered. Because I could not care more.”

Her laughter continued spasmodically in spite of her struggles to check it. But between the paroxysms she gasped:

“I never tried—to make you love me. I never wanted you to come where I did—”

“But now that I am all yours,” he interrupted, “now that nothing is left for me, but you—” He [230]
paused. “What will I do now?” he added, asking the question with a simplicity at once boyish and heartrending.

She was silent; her laughter had ceased. He came close to her and took her hand again within his own. And then in the darkness beside him he suddenly heard the bursting misery of her sobs.

“You weep,” he cried.

“No,” she whispered faintly, “no.”

“You weep,” he repeated slowly, and gathered her warmly and closely within his arms.

“What is it necessary that we suffer?” he asked her softly. “Let us cease struggling, let us be only happy,” and then he bent his head so that his cheek touched hers, and waited for the words of her answer. “Your heart is very near mine,” he whispered to her silence, “let it stay near mine, let it rest mine.” Still she was silent. “*N’est-ce pas?*” he asked, pressing her closer yet.

To her, at that instant, the darkness was flashing with strange lights, the silence was roaring in thunder, the trees charging and whirling in giant combat. Her head was suddenly light and then suddenly heavy; her breath strangled her and then failed altogether. She swayed from side to side, her head fell backward, and Von Ibn had it borne upon him, that instead of being in love she [231]
had fainted.

“*Qu’est-ce que vous avez?*” he cried, as he felt her reeling, and then he knew; and knowing,

recognized the fact that he was alone in the depths of the rain-soaked forest, with a helpless woman on his hands, and that the situation was infinitely more novel than amusing.

He was obliged to let his umbrella fall in order that he might raise her in his arms; and when she was so raised he felt a poignant wonder as to what to do with her next. He had no idea which direction to take, for the night was now night in good earnest, and the Englischergarten is so large that one may walk for two hours and a half without passing its limits. He felt uncertain as to just where they had entered it, the common ingress not being from Schwabing, and also uncertain as to just how far towards the centre they had penetrated. A pale, young moon peeped up above the tree-tops; he looked at the moon and then at Rosina, and they both appeared unnecessarily weak and inadequate to the urgent necessities of the moment.

"She should be laid on her back and have water thrown upon her face," he murmured to himself in French, and then he felt his boots sinking deeply into the mud, and recognized the impracticability of that means of resuscitation at this particular moment. [232]

"Why did I ever pray that I might hold her in my arms?" he thought in German. "*Mein Gott*, what shall I do?"

Failing all other remedies, he shook her hard, and her eyes flew open on some wax-doll-like principle. She gave him a look of complete unrecognition, and closed them with a sigh.

"You must not faint once more," he cried, anxiously; "you cannot, you know."

Something like physical despair swept over him as he felt her tremble and sway again.

"What can I do?" he cried, shaking her very hard indeed, "we are far from all. I cannot leave you to get a carriage, I cannot take you—"

"I don't care what you do," she murmured, with the usual complete resignation of the swooning, always so exasperating to those who care for them. He felt desperately that she was telling the truth.

There was a sound in the wilderness beyond, a sound that thrilled him with hope and fear at the same instant. The developments of a sound may under some circumstances prove one's salvation or destruction. He riveted his eyes anxiously in the direction from whence the echo of a horse's feet splashing through the mud was now drawing nearer each second. [233]

"If it prove the Prinz Regent himself," he said decidedly, "he must take us in."

It proved to be, not a royal coach, but a mere ordinary cab, than which nothing more welcome had ever crossed his vision in all his life before. He hailed the cabman, and the cabman stopped in the greatest possible astonishment, and was good enough to descend in the mud and open the door. He asked no questions—cabmen never do—but took the address, mounted to his seat, and put his horse to a rounder trot in the direction of the city.

Rosina leaned back in her corner and shook as if she had the ague. Her hands and feet were icy cold; Von Ibn took her hands in his and feared that she was ill, or going to be so.

"What did make you like that?" he asked, as the wheels dashed the mud-spatters up against the windows; "was it that I distress you, yes?"

"Yes," she sighed.

Then he kissed her hands.

"Forgive me," he said, contritely, "I have not meant it so. There in the trees, when you were unconscious, I did not kiss you, I did not touch even your hair,—not thirty men in all Germany had been so good as that. You see what I try to be for you." [234]

He was leaning over her, the blood seemed to be boiling up into her ears. She put up her hand:

"If you speak so," she said, "I shall faint again; I get dizzy when you talk to me in that way."

"But if I kiss you only once," he whispered.

"No—no—no," she reiterated, and raised her hand and pushed his lips away with it.

"*En effet vous n'êtes pas du tout gentille*," he cried, in violent anger, for his moods knew no shading in their transposition from one to another; "you are cold and without heart. How long do you think that I stood there in the wet and hold you back from the mud, and now you will do nothing for me; and you were quite heavy too, and—oh, *mon Dieu*!" he exclaimed sharply, interrupting himself, "my umbrella!"

"Have you lost it?"

"Have I lost it? Naturally I have let it fall to upraise you, and now I have leave it there."

"I will give you another," she said pacifically.

"Another," he commented scornfully; "do you think that I have no other?" Then his weathercock cast of mind whirled again: "I do not want an umbrella," he said more forcefully, "I want a kiss." [235]

“I thought that you were distressed over losing it.”

“Not at all; I have already very many others. But a kiss from you I have never yet.”

He seized her hand again, and tearing off the glove with a haste that demolished two buttonholes, pressed the bare cold fingers to his lips and eyes and forehead.

“Oh, I do love you!” he cried in a fresh storm of feeling. “You *must* love me, because my much *must* make of you a little.”

Then he kissed her hand many times more, stopping his rapid caresses to gaze upon her with that curious, burning glow firing the sombreness of his eyes the while he held her wrist against the fever of his face.

“If I obeyed myself,” he said hoarsely, “how I would hold you and kiss you. *Je vous embrasserais tellement!*”

She wondered why she was not distressed and alarmed. Instead the awe at her own emotion that had come upon her spirit in the wood was with her again. Something like strength seemed rising within her, and what it rose against was—strangely enough—not him, but herself. She was [236] conscious of a sympathy for him in place of any fear for herself.

She looked from the window and saw that they were now rolling rapidly through the brightly lighted streets, and a glimpse of the Hof told her that the end was but five minutes further on.

“You answer not,” he said, insistently; “you must say me some word.”

“Oh, what can I say?” she cried helplessly.

“Say that you love me.”

“But I do not.”

Then he loosed her hand and ground his teeth.

“Decidedly you are queer,” he said bitterly; “it is there in your eyes and you will to deny it. You are senseless,—*vous n’avez pas de cœur!* I am always a fool to go on as I go.”

She turned her eyes upon him.

“*Je ne suis pas pour vous*,” she said gently and very, very sadly; “*mais je ne suis pour personne non plus*,” she added, and there was a tone in her voice that he had never heard before. His temper faded instantly.

“You think of me with kindness, always,—*n’est-ce pas*?” he said, returning her look.

Their eyes rested steadily upon each other for a little space. Then he exclaimed:

“You do love me,” and started to seize her in his arms forgetful of lights, streets, passers-by, [237] and all other good reasons for self-restraint.

But just then the cab stopped before the door of No. 6, the cabman descended.

There was no further question as to *les convenances*.

Chapter Twelve

[238]

“Buda-Pesth.

“DEAR ROSINA,—If you’re laid up I might just as well take a week more in this direction. Plenty to see, I find, and lots of jolly company lying around loose. I’ll get back about the twelfth and we’ll plan to skip then as fast as we can. Keep on writing Poste Restante, Buda, and I’ll have them forward. Don’t try to fool me any by being too sick to sail. I’ve got to go the nineteenth and you must too.

“Lovingly,

“Jack.”

She sat in the little salon the night of October fifth and read the above affectionate epistle which the postman had brought to keep her company, because every one else in the house was gone to the famous concert of the famous pianist.

She could not go; that little episode in the Englischergarten and all the attendant agitation had put her in bed for three days and rendered her quite unable to go out for two or three more. She had been obliged to write Jack that she was ill, with the above results, and she read his answer

[239]

with the sensation that life was long, the future empty, and none of its vistas worth contemplating. Her heart ached dully—it was forever aching dully these days, and she—

There was a tap at the door. Europe has no open-door policy, be it known; all doors are always shut. Even those of *pension* salons.

She looked up, and saw him coming in, his violin case in his hand. Then life and its vistas underwent a great transformation, because he smiled upon her and, putting the case down carefully, came eagerly to kiss her hand.

"*Vous allez bien ce soir?*" he asked pleasantly, standing before her chair and looking down into her face.

"Oh, I am almost well, thank you; but why are you not gone to the concert?"

He pointed to his violin with a smile.

"It is a concert that I bring to you who may not go out," he said.

"But you are making a tremendous sacrifice for me, monsieur."

He stood before her, twisting his moustache.

"It is that I am regretful for the other night," he said briefly, "for that I am glad to give the concert up and make you some pleasure. The other night—"

"Don't," she pleaded uncomfortably; "never mind all that. Let it all go."

"But I would ask your pardon. *J'étais tout-à-fait fou!*" ([240])

"If I have anything to forgive it shall be forgiven you when you play. Do so now, please. Oh, you have no idea how impatient I am to hear you."

He stared through her and beyond her for several seconds, and then came back to himself with a start.

"Then I do play," he exclaimed, and went to where he had placed the case of rosewood, and lifting it from the small table, set it on the floor and knelt before it, as a priest at some holy shrine. She leaned her head against the chair back and watched him, her eyes searching each detail of his appearance without her spirit being cognizant of the hunger which led to the seeking, of the soul-cry which strove to fortify itself against the inevitable that each hour was bringing nearer.

He felt in his pocket for his key-ring, chose from the many one particular key, inserted it, turned it, left it sticking in the hole, and then, with a curious breathless tightening of the lips, he raised the lid, put aside the knit wool shield of white and violet, and with the tender care which a mother bestows upon a very tiny baby lifted the violin from its resting-place. As he did so his eye [241] travelled with a sudden keen anxiety over its every detail, as if the possibility of harm was ever present, and as he held it to his ear and snapped the strings one after another, she beheld with something akin to awe the dawning of another nature upon his face, of another light within his eyes, the strange light of that abnormal, unworldly gift which God gave man and which we have elected to call by the name of genius. As he rested there before her, tightening one cord, trying another, listening to a third, she realized—with a sorrowful sense of her own remoteness at the minute—that this man was some one who, in spite of all their hours of intercourse, she had never met before.

He loosened the bow from its buttons and rose slowly to his feet. His eyes sought hers, and he said dreamily:

"What shall I play?" even while his fingers were forming dumb notes, and the uplifted bow quivered in the air as if impatient.

"Oh," she said, acutely conscious of her inferiority,—of the ten thousand leagues of difference between his grandeur and her commonplace,—"play what you will."

He hardly seemed to hear, his eyes roved over the little salon as if its walls were gone, and he beheld a horizon illimitless. He just slightly knit his brows and then he bowed his head above the [242] instrument and said briefly:

"Listen!"

And she listened.

And the unvoiceable wonder of his magic!

It was an intangible echo of the Tonhalle at Zurich, with the music that they had heard there sounding as the waves lapped up against the embankment and the crowd laughed and chatted after; those strains to which she had then been deaf on account of her agitation came back now, and the thrill of her pain was there still, rising and falling amidst the music and the water breaking up against the stones. While she waited on the verge of tears, the whole shifted to Constance, and through the slow sweep of the steamers coming into the harbor sounded the "Souvenir" of Vieuxtemps, drifting across the rose-laden air and carrying her back to the minutes when—Ah, when! She put her hand before her eyes and it was not the cords of his violin, but the

sinews of her soul which responded to his bow. That which man may not voice he played, and that which our ears may not hear she absorbed into the depths of her being. Something within them each burst bonds and met at last, but neither knew it then, and the wonder carried her out upon the bosom of the Bodensee, showed her the charm of its gracious peace, and then drifted as [243] the breezes drift, to the concert in the open air that is given each day by the Feldherrnhalle, a concert that knows no discord, because the murmur of life, the calls of the birds, the splashing of the fountains, and the light-hearted joy of the crowd around, all meet and mingle in its chorus. He echoed them all with the sublimity of the power which he controlled, and all—bird-calls, fountain-drip, desultory laughter, and careless joy, all flowed from him, and took from him as they flowed that subtle and precious subconsciousness which lines our every cloud with the infinite hope that is better than all else in this world.

She leaned forward breathlessly, her fingers interlaced around her knees; her eyes had grown as dark as his own, her heart stood still, and between its throbs she asked herself if *this* was the secret of their sympathy,—if *this* was the basis of his mastery.

Then there was silence in the room and he stood motionless, his eyes on the floor, the violin still resting against his shoulder in its rightful position, above his heart, quite touching his head.

She did not speak and he did not speak,—neither knew for how long that period of silence [244] endured. But after a while he lowered the instrument and looked at her.

“You like, yes?” he said with a faint smile.

“Can you ask?”

He laid his hand upon a vase that sat upon the table and shook his head.

“All this is not good, you know,” he said, as if communing with himself alone; “here is no room for the music to spread. All these,” he pointed to another ornament, “are so very, very bad. But some day, perhaps,” he added, with another smile, “you will hear me in a good place.”

Then he raised the violin to position once more.

“Choose what you will have,” he told her.

“Oh, forget that I am here,” she pleaded, speaking with a startled hushedness, as if no claim of conventional politeness might dare intrude itself upon that bewildering hour, “do not remember that I am here,—play as you would if you were quite alone.”

“That is very well,” he said, with a recurrence to his unseeing stare and dreamy tone, “because for me you really are not here. Nothing is here;—the violin is not here;—I am myself not here;—only the music exists. And if I talk,” he added slowly, “the inspiration may leave me.”

He went beside the piano and turned his back towards her, and then his prayer made itself real ([245]) and his love found words....

She wept, and when he ceased to play he remained standing in silence as the very reverent rest for a short interval after the termination of holy service....

After a while he moved to where the case lay open on the floor and knelt again, laying his instrument carefully in its place and covering it with its little knit wool quilt. Then he locked the lid down, replaced the keys in his pocket, and, rising, seemed to return to earth.

“Can you understand now,” he asked, taking a chair by her side,—“can you understand now how it would be for me if I lost my power to create music?”

“Yes,” she said, very humbly.

“I think that nothing so bad could arrive,” he went on, pulling his moustache and looking at her as he spoke, “because I am very much more strong than anything that may arrive at me, and the music is still much more strong than I. But if that *could* arrive, that a trouble might kill my power, you can know how bad it would be for me.”

She sat there, gazing always at her new conception of him. The tears which she had shed [246] during his music filled her face with a sort of tender charm. It did not occur to her that any words of hers could be other than a desecration of those minutes.

“I am going now,” he said presently, rising. “I have done no work since in June, but I feel it within me to write what I have played to-night.” He went over and took up the violin case and then he laid it down again and came back to her side.

“I shall kiss you,” he said, not in any tone of either doubt or entreaty, rather with an imperativeness that was final. “In the music that I go to write to-night I want to put your eyes and also your kiss.”

He put his arms about her and raised her to his bosom.

“*Regardez-moi!*” he commanded, and she lifted her eyes into his.

Their lips met, and the kiss endured.

Then he replaced her gently upon the sofa, took up the violin and went out.

Later that night she reproached herself bitterly.

"I ought to have a chaperone," she told her pillow in strict confidence.

But the kiss had a place now in her life, and the place, like the kiss itself, endured.

Von Ibn, in his room at the hotel, paused over his manuscript score, laid down his pen and closed his eyes. [247]

"*Elle sera à moi!*" he murmured, and smiled.

For him also the kiss was enduring.

Chapter Thirteen [248]

JACK was expected on the morrow, and on the day after the start for Genoa was to be made.

Under these cheerful circumstances Von Ibn came to call at the pension, and Amelia tapped at Rosina's door to announce to the "*gnädige Frau*" that "*der Herr von Ibn ist im Salon*."

Rosina was dressed for dinner and when her visitor saw her gown with its long trailing skirt his face fell.

"We go to walk, yes?" he said, in a doubtful tone. She looked from the window out upon the rainy view.

"It's too wet," she said hopelessly; but the hopelessness was hypocritical, because she had resolved to never walk alone with him again.

He threw himself down upon the divan and entered into a species of gloomy trance. She took a chair by the window and unfolded her embroidery. Since the night of the music their mutual feelings had become more complicated than ever, and sometimes she wanted to get away with a [249] desperation that was tainted with cowardice, while at other times she almost wondered if she should ever have the strength to go at all. What he was meditating in these last days she could not at all divine. He continued to have fits of jealousy and periods of long and absorbing thought. The new knowledge of the spirit which he revealed in his art was always with her and always held her a little in awe. Also the recollection of the Englischergarten and of her own overwhelming sensations there stayed by her with a persistence which knew no diminution.

"I wouldn't be off like that with him again for anything," she thought, as she drew a thread of red chenille from the skein upon her knee, and stole a glance at the dark face opposite her.

"Why may we not walk?" he asked, looking up as if she had spoken aloud. "I will be *très raisonable*."

"It isn't that," she replied, annoyed to feel herself blushing; "it is that it is so wet. I should ruin a skirt."

He started to argue the question but just then the salon door opened and Mrs. Jones came in with a book in her hand. He saw the book and she knew it. Mrs. Jones had evidently come to stay. The salon was public property, and Mrs. Jones had just as much right there as they had. [250] Nevertheless when she smiled and said, "Shall I disturb you?" they resented her question as a sarcasm unworthy of Genoa's proximity. Von Ibn stood up and said, "Certainly not," with a politeness which did credit to his bringing up, but Rosina as she threaded her needle took a vow to remember to *never*, in all time to come, pause for an instant even in a room where two people were talking together.

Mrs. Jones seated herself and then made the discovery that she had left her glasses in her own room; she rose at once and started to get them.

"Now we *must* go out," he exclaimed, hurriedly, "we may not talk here with her. She speaks French as well as we, and German much better than you;" he referred to the cosmopolitan custom of altering one's tongue to disagree with an (unwelcome) third party.

Rosina was already huddling her work together in hot haste.

"Yes," she said, "I have a short skirt that I can wear." She rose and went towards the door. "I won't be five minutes," she said, turning the knob.

Mrs. Jones was leisurely about coming back. She did not want to inconvenience them too much, but she did want to find the salon empty on her return, and she found it so.

While she was smiling and settling herself, they were going down the three flights of stairs and [251] out of the large main door. The rain had ceased but it was still blackly and distinctly wet. Von Ibn

had a tightly rolled umbrella which he held with a grasp that somehow suggested thoughts of their other promenade at nightfall.

“You can walk well, yes?” he said, as they turned in the direction of the Isar.

“In this skirt,” she laughed, glancing down at her costume whose original foundations had been laid for golf, “in this skirt I am equal to anything!”

“But if you slip?” he supposed, anxiously.

“You ought to see the soles of my boots. I sent them to the little shoemaker in the Wurzerstrasse and he soled them with rubber half an inch thick.”

“How much is an inch?” he asked.

“Twice the width of the rubber on my boots.”

“No, but earnestly,” he said, “is it a *centimètre*?”

“Two *centimètres* and a half make one inch.”

“You are droll, you English and Americans,” he said, “you see nothing but your own way. I have heard Englishmen laugh as to how yet the Russians count their time different from the civilization part of the world, and then all England and America do their measure and weight in a [252] manner so uneven that a European is useless to even attempt to understand it. There was a man there at Lucerne,—what did he say to me? ‘A mark is a quarter, is it not?’ that is what he asked. ‘*Mon Dieu*,’ I said, ‘if you cut it in four pieces it is four quarters, and if you leave it whole it is whole,’ then he looked to find me *bête*, and I was very sure that he was, and we spoke no more.”

Rosina laughed.

“He meant a quarter of a dollar,” she explained.

“I know that. You do not really think that I did not know that, do you? It was for his poor careless grammar that I find the American even more *bête* than for his ignorance. Do you believe that in my own tongue I would speak as many of you speak yours? In my own tongue I am above correction.”

They were under the long arcade in front of the Regierung and in view of the discussion which seemed impending she judged it advisable to say, with a gesture:

“There is where we met Jack; you remember?”

Von Ibn looked quickly about.

“Yes, it was here,” he said, and then he shuddered slightly. “It was very well to laugh after, but that might have been so bad. I was angry and I struck a fearful blow then; I have often think of it [253] when we were travelling together.”

She grew thoughtful also, and her imagination found food among some miserable possibilities which might have been.

So they came to the river banks and the Maximilianbrücke, and paused by its rail.

The air was grand, fresh and moist, reminiscent of summer’s breath while also prophetic of winter’s bite, and the Isar swept below them, carrying its hurry of tumult away, away, far into the west, towards a wealth of rose and golden sky. Between the glory and the water, in the middle distance, lay a line of roofs stretching irregularly into the blackness of their own shadows, and beyond them was the forest, to the fringing haze of whose bare branches the distance lent a softness not their own. The banks of the Promenade were still green, but the masses of vine that trailed in the green ripples were all of a crimson or reddish brown, and the shrubs showed here and there an echo of the same color.

It was beautiful and wonderful to see, and they stood still and feasted their eyes for some long minutes.

“Oh, Isar,” Rosina cried softly, holding her hand out towards the singing waters below, “when shall I see you again?”

“You will return some day,” her companion said hopefully. ([254])

“Who can tell?”

“But always you must come over some bridge to return to-night.”

She felt that such levity jarred upon her mood, and refused to return his smile. She did not like him to feel like smiling too often these days.

“Do not be of a bad humor,” he entreated. “I am this afternoon of such a good one; and how can you know that you will not return? A woman can never be decided, so you may very well see the Isar soon again. *Vous comprenez?*”

“Is it being bad-humored to be sad?” she asked; “and why can’t I be decided if I want to be?”

“Because,” he said, wisely, “you are a woman; and a woman is very foolish to ever be decided,

for she always changes her mind; and then all her decided seems to have been quite useless."

Rosina felt that this sentence called for study before reply, and so walked on without speaking.

"Is that not so?" he asked, as they went down by the little stone stair.

"I never change."

"Oh, now you know well that you do not speak the truth,—you are so very changeable. This afternoon, *par exemple*, when I first come to ask you to go out, you say you cannot of any [255] possibility make it, and then, very suddenly, we go."

"But I recollected that I might wear this skirt."

"And there was that lady, also," he said thoughtfully.

"Yes, she was there, too."

"But always you did change."

"I don't call it being changeable when one has a good reason for so doing."

He stopped short; and she, after going a few steps further, discovered herself to be unaccompanied and stopped also.

"What is the matter?"

"Suddenly, I think."

"Can't you walk and think at the same time?"

He smiled, and came up with her again.

"If I make you a good reason—" he began, and then hesitated and was silent.

They followed the muddy path almost to the Luitpoldbrücke before he continued his phrase.

"If one can change for a good reason, and if I make you a good reason, then will you change about me?"

She drew a quick little breath.

"I can't change in that way," she said; "you know that I do not want to marry again: marriage is ([256]) too awful an undertaking. Don't you see that even now it does not make you always happy to be around me—"

"I am never around you," he exclaimed indignantly. "I never have hardly touch you. I have been with you not as a man, but as an angel. *Je me comporte comme un ange—comme un ange—c'est moi qui vous le dit!* I have given you one kiss such as a small baby might give its mother, and that is all;—and then you say that I am always around you."

He ceased speaking, and looked straitly and darkly before him. She wanted to laugh and cry at the same time.

"I tell you," he continued violently after a short interval, "I am very much too good. Whatever you bid me do, that I do. Whatever you bid me not do, that I do not. And you do not thank me, or trust me, or treat me as a friend. *Vous avez toujours peur de moi.* When I approach you, you have always the air to expect that I will displease you. Have I deserved that? Have I behaved badly once? Did I kiss you when you knew nothing and I held you there in the mud—the night when I lose my umbrella? *Mon Dieu*, you are very *drôle*, if you have known many men and do not [257] appreciate me."

He stopped as if choked.

They had passed beyond the bridge and entered upon a path along the river bank, a path bordered with willow trees. The sky was more brilliantly gorgeous than ever, but under foot it was wet indeed.

"Try not to stamp so much as you walk," she asked him very gently; "you keep splashing me."

"What is splash?" he demanded gloomily; "something that annoys your ears?"

"No, something that spoils my boots."

"I do not care if I spoil those boots; I find them most ugly."

"Perhaps; but I could not be here but for them."

He walked on with somewhat less vigor.

"Let us talk about us," he suggested, presently.

"With reference to what?"

"To me."

"No, no," she said unwillingly.

“Yes; why not?”

“You always come back to that same subject; your mind appears to follow a circuit, like a squirrel in a ring.”

“‘Wheel,’ you mean.” ([258])

“Well, ‘wheel,’ then.”

“What squirrel? We never have talked of a squirrel before.”

Rosina’s laugh rang out among the willows.

“*Decidément vous n’êtes pas du tout poli*,” he cried angrily. “You say I am like a squirrel; I ask what squirrel, and you begin to laugh.”

“I never said that you were like a squirrel,” she exclaimed, greatly shocked; “how can you think that I would say such a thing?”

“You did,” he declared bitterly. “You said I was like a squirrel in his wheel, because I tell you so often that I love you.”

“Oh, monsieur, you *know* that I never meant it in that way; how can you think for an instant that I could have—have said that—that—” She felt it impossible to define her offence again without having the corners of her mouth give way; but she went close beside him and faced his vexation with earnest, upraised eyes the while that she laid one hand upon his arm with the sweet impulsive gesture of a pleading child.

The gold had all faded from the sky, and the pink reflection in the far west was sunk beyond the horizon. The path was very solitary; they were quite alone except for an occasional peasant returning from his labor.

“Say that you understand,” she said anxiously, as a break in the trees revealed a long stretch of river; “you *must* say something, because I want to know how far it is to the next bridge.” [259]

He stopped and stared ahead.

“There are no more bridges,” he proclaimed.

“No more bridges,” she cried.

He shook his head.

“Must we go the whole way back along this same muddy path?”

“Yes, surely.”

She turned.

“Then let us go back now. There is no fun walking any further this way after the sunset is over.”

“Is it for the sunset alone that you walk?”

“What shall I say?” she asked, looking up at him.

“Say that you walk for me.”

“And then what follows?”

“I follow.”

They laughed together.

“I am so good to you,” he declared; “even when you laugh at me I am never angry. I am truly so very good.”

He appeared so well content with himself that they went the whole distance to the Peace Monument before she disturbed his placid introspection. There was a pleasure to her in simply walking beside him in silence; it was a sensation which she had never attempted to analyze, but its existence had become a part of her own. [260]

“Do not let us go home,” he proposed suddenly, when her turning to cross the Luitpoldbrücke recalled him to himself; “let us go somewhere and dine alone together. It is perhaps the last time; Jack returns to-morrow.”

“Oh, let us,” she agreed delightedly; but then her voice altered suddenly for the worse. “No, it’s impossible,” she said sadly, “I can’t go to a café and dine in this short skirt.”

“Why can you not?”

“Can’t you see why?”

He walked off some ways to the side and gazed critically at her skirt.

“Yes,” he said, rejoining her, “I can see why.”

They were halfway across the bridge; he laid his hand on her arm and stopped her.

"*Je vous ferai un propos*," he said eagerly; "we will take a car going to the Ostbahnhof, and then we will leave it at a quiet place and seek a quiet café and dine there."

"All right," she said; "but you must telephone to the *pension*, or they won't know what has become of me."

"I can say that we are gone to the theatre," he suggested. [261]

"They won't believe that because of this skirt."

"I will say we are gone too far and must send for a cab, and will eat while we wait."

"I think that whatever you say will sound like a lie, so it doesn't really matter."

"Then I will say that we do not return until after the supper, and nothing else."

"Where will you telephone from?"

"From the café. Where would I telephone from?"

Rosina looked vaguely around in the darkness.

"We are only three or four blocks from the *pension* now, are we not?"

He glanced about.

"It will be droll if we meet some one you know."

"Yes," she said coldly; "it will be very funny—like Mrs. Jones to-day."

"I am quite vexed when she came in," he said seriously; "why do people come in like that?"

"We'll be just as thoughtless when we're her age," Rosina said charitably. "I think myself that it is astonishing that so many young people manage to get betrothed when there are so many old people to keep coming in."

"Getting betrothed is very simple," said Von Ibn, "because always the young girl is willing; but ([262]) when she is a young widow and not willing, that is what is difficult, and makes Mrs. Jones *de trop*."

She was obliged to laugh.

They were come to the Maximiliansstrasse, and a car was making its way jerkily around the corners of the monument in the middle of the square. It was a car for the Ostbahnhof, and full—very full.

"Let it go by," he said. "We will walk on and another comes in a moment."

They let it pass, and wandered on towards the rushing river.

"You see why it was so foolish to be sad," he remarked, as they approached the bridge; "here is the second time that you have seen the Isar since you weep good-bye forever this afternoon."

"I didn't weep," she said indignantly.

"Did you not? I thought that you did."

They waited for another car at the end of the bridge; the island where the Isarlust sports its lights and music all summer, looked particularly deserted in the contrast of this October night. She spoke of the fact.

"You were often there?" he asked; "yes?"

"Yes, very often." ([263])

"With who?"

She smiled a little in the dark.

"We used to come in the evenings," she said; "every one used to come."

Another car approached—again crowded.

"Let us walk," she suggested; "all the cars will be crowded for the next hour."

"Will your feet go further?" he inquired anxiously.

"Yes, I think so."

They turned their faces to that gardened slope which rises to the right of the Maximilianeum. The full moon was coming up behind the stately building, and its glorious open arches were outlined against the evening sky. The great tower which rose at the end near them seemed to mount straight upward into heaven itself.

"I don't want to leave the Maximilianeum," she exclaimed, reft with an intense admiration for the grandeur of what was before her; "I don't want to leave the Bavarian moon; oh, I don't want

to leave Munich; not a bit."

"And me?" said her companion, taking her arm, "do you want to not leave me also?"

"I don't want to leave you either," she declared. "I don't want to leave anything, and I must leave everything. Oh," she exclaimed suddenly and viciously, "I wish I might know who it was [264] that wrote home to Uncle John."

"But you have thought to know?"

"Oh, I'm almost sure that it was that man in Zurich."

"He was not so bad, that Zuricher man," he said, reflectively. "Did I ever say to you that I did go to the Gare with him when he went to Lucerne?"

"No, you never told me that. What did you go to the station with him for?"

"I thought that I would know whether after all he really went to Constance. At the Gare, after he has bought his ticket for Lucerne, I find him most agreeable."

"Did you really think that perhaps he *was* going to Constance?"

"Yes, I did. I find it very natural that he shall want to go to Constance. I am surprise that day at every one who can decide to go any other place because I so wish to get to Constance myself. *Vous comprenez?*"

She was obliged to smile audibly.

"It was very funny the way that you came into the Insel *salle-à-manger* that night. I never was more surprised in my life."

"I like to come to you that way," he went on. "When you are so your face becomes glad and I [265] believe that you have been really lonely for me and—"

He stopped suddenly; two big electric lights loomed at the corner to their right and the scene which was revealed by the uncurtained state of the window was responsible for the sudden turn of the current of his thoughts.

"We can eat there," he exclaimed.

She stopped, astonished.

"Can we?" she asked. "I wouldn't think so."

"But surely yes," he affirmed; "it is a café."

He flung the door open as he spoke and stood back to let her pass inside.

"It is a little smoky," he continued, as the door fell to, "but—"

"A little!" she interrupted.

"But what does that do to you? and there is another lady, so it is very right for you to be here too."

"She doesn't look like a lady to me," said Rosina, dodging under a billiard-cue, for in this particular café the centre of the room is occupied by the billiard-tables; "she looks decidedly otherwise."

Von Ibn glanced carelessly at the person alluded to.

"It is always a woman," he remarked; and then he led the way around to a vacant corner where [266] there was somewhat less confusion than elsewhere. "Here you may sit down," he commanded, and laid aside his own hat and overcoat.

She obeyed him, contemplating her surroundings with interest as she began to unbutton her gloves.

For the place was, to her eyes, unique of its kind, her lot having been cast hitherto in quite another class of cafés. It was very large, and decidedly hideous, wainscoted in imitation panels and frescoed in imitation paintings. The columns which supported the ceilings were brilliantly banded in various colors and flowered out below their pediments into iron branches of oak leaves among which blossomed the bulbs of many electric lights. By each column stood a severely plain hat-rack. In the middle of the room were four billiard tables, around its sides numberless small marble-topped stands where beer was being served galore. Against the walls were fastened several of those magnificent mirrors which testify so loudly to the reasonable price of good glass in that happy land across the seas; each mirror was flanked by two stuffed eagles, and decorated above its centre with one ornate quirl in gilt and stucco. And the whole was full and more than full of smoke.

Von Ibn rapped on the tiled floor with his umbrella, and a waitress serving at a table near, five [267] beer-mugs in each hand, nodded that she heard. Then he turned to Rosina:

"*Eh bien!*"

“I never was in a place like this before.”

“You may very likely never be in such a one again,” he told her seriously; “so you must be as happy as you can while you’re here.”

“That reason for having a good time hadn’t occurred to me,” she answered, giving him back his smile.

“Then think to occur it now,” he rejoined.

The waitress had by this time gotten rid of her ten mugs and came to them, beginning proceedings by spreading the ménu down on the table and running her pencil through item after item.

“You had better order before everything is gone,” Rosina suggested.

“I must think the same,” he replied, and took up the ménu.

“*Haben Sie bouillon?*” he demanded immediately.

The waitress signified that bouillon was not to be.

“How shall I do?” he asked, looking blank. “In all my life I have never eat without a bouillon before?”

Rosina and the waitress felt their mutual helplessness in this difficulty, and the proceedings in hand came to a standstill natural under the circumstances. ([268])

“Can’t they make you some?” the American brain suggested.

He turned the idea over in his mind once or twice and then:

“No,” he said; “it is not worth. It will be better that we eat now, and later, when I am in town, I will get a bouillon.”

So, that difficulty being disposed of, he ordered a species of repast with an infinite sense of amusement over the bill of fare. The waitress then retired and they were left alone in their corner.

“The other lady is getting kissed,” Rosina said. The publicity of a certain grade of continental love-making is always both interesting and amazing to the Anglo-Saxon temperament.

He looked behind him without at all disturbing what was in progress there. After a minute’s quiet stare he turned back in his seat and shrugged his shoulders.

“You see how simple it is when the woman is still,” he said pointedly. “There is no fainting there; he loses no seventeen-mark umbrella from Baden-Baden.”

She ignored the gist of this remark, and began to unhook the collar of her jacket. Then she decided to take it off altogether. [269]

“You find it too warm?” he said, rising to assist her.

“I certainly do.”

“It is curious for you and I to be in such a place, *n’est-ce pas*?”

“Very curious.”

“But it is an experience, like eating in the woods.”

“I don’t think that it is at all like eating in the woods; I think that nothing could be more different.”

“We are so alone.”

“Oh!”

“Now you understand what I mean.”

“Yes, now I understand what you mean. And it is really a little like the woods, too,” she added. “Those iron acorns and leaves are the branches, and the stuffed eagles are the birds.”

He looked at the oak-branches and the eagles for some time, and then he said:

“Let us talk.”

“What are we doing now?”

“We are waiting for what is to be to eat.”

“I thought that that in itself was always sufficient entertainment for a man.”

“I like better to talk. I have not much time more to talk with you, *vous savez*.” ([270])

“We will talk,” she said, hastily. Her eyes wandered vaguely over the room seeking a subject for immediate discussion; all that she saw was the perpendicular cue of one of the billiard players.

“Watch!” she exclaimed. “He’s going to make an awfully difficult shot.”

Von Ibn looked towards the player with very little interest depicted on his countenance.

“Oh, he missed,” she exclaimed disgustedly.

“But of course. How could a man like that do such a *massé*? You are so hopeful ever. You say, ‘See him make so difficult a play,’ when only looking upon the man’s face tells that he himself is sure that he is about to fail.”

“I’ll give you a riddle,” she went on, receiving his expostulation with a smile. “But perhaps you don’t know what a riddle is?” she added questioningly.

“Yes, I do know what a riddle is; it is what you do not know and must tell.”

“Yes, that is it.”

“And your riddle is?”

“Why am I like a dragon?”

“Like a—” he faltered.

“Dragon.”

“What is a dragon?”

“It’s a horrible monster. Don’t you know the picture in the Schaak Gallery of that creature running its neck out through the slit in the rock so as to devour the two donkeys?” ([271])

“Yes, I know the picture. But that creature is blue.”

“Oh,” she said hopelessly, “it’s no use trying to tell you riddles, you don’t understand.”

“Yes, I do,” he cried eagerly. “I understand perfectly and I assure you that I like very much. Dragon is ‘*drachen*,’ *n’est ce pas*?”

“Yes.”

“And you are as one?”

“I ask *why* am I like one?”

He looked particularly blank.

“You are perhaps hungry?” he hazarded.

She began to laugh.

“No, it’s because I’m breathing smoke.”

“Do dragons breathe smoke? It is a salamander you are believing in.”

“In pictures dragons always breathe smoke and fire.”

“But there is no fire here.”

“There must be somewhere, because there is so much smoke.”

He was unmoved and ruminative.

“I do not find your riddle very clever,” he said at last.

Rosina buried the poor, weak, little scintillation at once and stamped on its grave in hot haste. [272]

“I think that our dinner is coming,” she announced presently, turning her veil above her brows, “and I am so hungry.”

“I find your hunger a much better answer of that riddle than to be breathing smoke,” he said.

“Of course you do, because that is the answer that you thought of.”

The waitress began to arrange the dishes upon the table and when all was in order he prepared to serve them both.

“I often start to say most clever things,” he said, as he carved the fish, “but before I can speak you have always say something else.”

She took the plate that he passed her, and picked up her fork at once.

“Then when you are silent for a quarter of an hour or so it would really pay me to keep still and wait; wouldn’t it?” she inquired.

He took a mouthful and deliberated.

“I think so,” he said at last.

A deep stillness fell over the festal board. Von Ibn was mute and his companion felt that, the preceding remarks considered, she would be dumb herself. The entire meal was accordingly

eaten in absolute silence, until, when she had finished, she could not refrain from stealing one amused glance in his direction. [273]

“You laugh,” he said, returning the smile in kind.

“I am sure that it is going to be something very brilliant this time,” she told him.

He stared for a minute; and then he understood and laughed aloud.

“I only eat then,” he exclaimed, “*mais, Dieu! quels enfants nous sommes ensemble*. I must often wonder if you are so happy with me as I am with you? I cannot say why it is, but if you only be there I am content. Tell me, is it at all so for you?”

“I enjoy you,” she answered; “most men are stupid or horrid.”

“When?” he asked anxiously.

“When one is much with them.”

He looked at her with some alarm.

“But are many men much with you?”

Rosina laughed merrily over the trouble in his face.

“You would have been unbearable if you had been of a jealous disposition,” she said, nodding.

“Yes,” he replied gravely, “I have always feel that myself; for with me it is very strong that there shall be no other. But tell me now, truly are many men much with you?”

“Why I have hosts of friends,” she declared, “and, on account of the way that the world is made, ([274]) half of them are obliged to be men.”

“But you said that they were all stupid or horrible,” he reminded her carefully.

“I said that most of them were.”

He thought a moment.

“I wish that there had been a bouillon here,” he said then.

She began to put on her gloves, thinking that the hour of departure was close at hand.

“*J’ai envie de fûmer une cigarette*,” he said suddenly, “*ça ne vous fait rien d’attender un peu*?”

“I don’t care,” she answered, and laid her gloves down again.

“Am I ever horrible to you?” he asked, taking a match from the white china pyramid that ornamented the centre of the table.

“I didn’t say ‘horrible;’ I said ‘horrid.’”

“Is there a difference?” he lit his cigarette.

“Yes, indeed.”

He crossed his arms upon the table, and smiled at her through his own personal quota of smoke.

“Tell me the difference. Why are we horrid?”

“Because you so often are. Men never understand.”

“*Au contraire*,” he said quietly, “men always understand. It is the woman who will not believe [275] it, and it is cruel to say her the truth. A woman is always *genée*, she will sob in a man’s arms and still declare that ‘No.’ Why is it necessary for her to be so? That I cannot understand.”

Rosina caught a quick little breath; she had not been prepared for such a turn of conversation. Von Ibn went on with a degree of nonchalance that masked his close observance admirably.

“When a man loves a woman, he knows certainly if she loves him or not. It is there every minute in her eyes and on her lips; and yet he must ask her, and she must pretend a surprise. Why? We are altogether human. Then why must women be different? I am most sorry for a poor woman; she cannot be kissed or caressed or loved without the pretence that she dislikes it. It must be very difficult.”

She felt her face getting warm.

“You do not like what I have say?” he asked.

“No.”

“Because it is true?”

“It isn’t true.”

“An American would not say that to you?”

“Certainly not.”

“Do you like better the American way of covering up all truth?”

“It is politer, I think.” ([276])

He looked at her for a moment.

“I have been horrible, *n’est-ce pas*?” he asked.

She felt very uncomfortable indeed.

“Do let us go now,” she said in a low tone.

He struck his water-glass with a knife, and their waitress, who was near by, looked around.

“*’Zahlen!*” he called to her. She nodded. He went for his coat and hat, and when he returned Rosina was fastening the frogs on her jacket.

“I would have put it on if you had waited,” he said in a tone of remonstrance.

“I am used to getting into it,” she assured him.

He looked attentively at her and perceived more than she thought. Then the waitress came up and recited all that they had eaten in a sing-song tone, and he pushed some money towards her with a gesture that disposed of the question as to making change.

“We will go out now,” he said, turning towards the door, and the next minute they were in the cool, fresh night air. He put his hand upon her arm, and bent his head a little.

“Do not be vexed with me,” he said softly; “even a little vexing of you makes me great pain.”

Then he pressed her arm closely. [277]

“It is not long that we have now to talk. I beg you talk to me; do not be so sad.”

“I’m not sad.”

“Then talk.”

She gathered up her energy with a mighty effort.

“What shall we talk about?”

“Anything. Have you a letter to-day?”

“Yes.”

“From who? From Jack?”

“No, from the Marquis de W——.”

His fingers came together over her arm in a vice-like grip.

“I have never heard of him,” he cried; “where have you know him?”

“In Paris. And then I met him on the train—”

Von Ibn’s eyes grew large with fright.

“But you must not meet men on trains,” he said; “that is not at all proper for you.”

“He took charge of me from Paris to Lucerne,” she said soothingly; “he is really very delightful —”

“I did not see him at Lucerne,” he interrupted.

“No, he was gone when you came.”

“How old is he?”

“He is seventy.” ([278])

His heat subsided suddenly, and there was a pause during which she felt circulation returning slowly to her arm.

“And you have a letter from him to-day?” he asked, after a while.

“I have a letter from him almost every day.”

He looked down at her with an air of genuine astonishment.

“What can a man of seventy say in a letter almost every day?” he asked.

“He can say a great deal. He wants me to marry him!”

He laughed aloud, and then exclaimed gayly:

“What a great lady you will be! and how nice you will look in your mourning!” and then he threw his cigarette away and laughed afresh.

His laughter was so infectious that she laughed also.

“He writes me how happy I would be with him,” she continued merrily; “and he is very positive about it, too. How can he think that I would really wish to marry him?”

“He can think it very well from the newspapers of your land. Is he not a marquis? If I did not love you, I should always have surprise to think that you are an American, and will not let me make you a great lady.”

She ignored this speech in its entirety. ([279])

“To think,” she pursued, “that one cannot travel in a daughterly way with a gentleman of seventy without—”

“Yes,” he interrupted, “but that is why it is best not to travel in the charge of gentlemen. One is always so liable to be disagreeably urged to become a marchioness.”

She assented with a thoughtful nod.

“I don’t answer all his letters,” she said; “I burn them.”

“Poor marquis!”

“They are good letters of their kind; but there are a whole lot of things which it does not pay to write to a widow. You can fool a girl, but a widow always knows.”

“Does a widow always know?”

“Oh, dear me; yes.”

“Then why did you not save the poor marquis his pain?”

“I never dreamed of his feeling that way. How could I? I only thought he was delightful. And always, even the first day at Madame de S——’s, when he said adieu he would kiss my hands in the most adorable Louis XIV. kind of a way.”

“And all the while it was in his heart a plot to marry you. You see!”

“Men are so queer,” she reflected; “I cannot see why that old gentleman should have wanted to ([280]) marry me.”

“I can,” said Von Ibn, dryly; “I can see quite well.”

The marquis as a topic of conversation seemed at an end. They were in the Hellerstrasse, going towards the river, and the heaviness which the Isar always cast over her fell down about her spirits.

“Oh, I *cannot* believe that in forty-eight hours I shall be gone!” she exclaimed suddenly.

“Do not go,” he said, tightening his hold upon her arm again; “stay with me.”

“I must go,” she declared. “I couldn’t stay with you, anyway,” she added, in a tone of unintended mournfulness.

His mood altered, and the light of a street lamp showed that every tinge of gayety had fled his face.

“You have no will of your own,” he said with acerbity; “that Jack has it all. I find you so very weak.”

She raised her eyes to his and they looked strangely at one another. The moon was above them, full and beautiful, and the Isar rapids were murmuring their far cry.

“We shall return over the Ludwigsbrücke,” he said, and they went down the incline in silence. [281]

She thought vaguely, “I am here now, and *he* is here! How will it be when I am gone and we are separated forever?” But her brain refused to comprehend—only her heart felt the warmth of his touch upon her sleeve.

So they came down to the bridge, which abuts on an island and accommodates the tram passing from the Ostbahnhof to the Marien Platz. The Isarthor rose up grimly between the city lights and their view. Above was the golden moon. Behind, the black outlines of the suburb which they had just quitted.

“Let us stop here,” he proposed, pausing by the bridge rail, and she stayed her steps in obedience.

It was nearly nine o’clock, and the passers-by were few. They had the bridge quite to themselves; the water running beneath murmured gently, but did not interrupt even their unvoiced thoughts.

The man took out his *étui* and lit another cigarette, sinking his sombre gaze meanwhile deep into the stream below. His companion leaned upon the stone parapet.

And then he sighed most heavily.

"It is the autumn," he said; "all the summer is over. *Tout est fini!*" There was a profound melancholy in his voice which threw a band of iron about her throat and choked all power of speech out of her. "How little I know last May of what this summer brings," he continued; "I have believe that all summers were to come alike to me." [282]

A tram approached and crossed behind them with a mighty rumble. When all was still he spoke again, and the tone of his voice was childishly wistful.

"I did not know, there in Lucerne, before you came, how happy I might be. You are not so wonderful, but to me you are now a need, like air which I must breathe to live."

There was an anguish underlying his words which set her heart to aching intolerably.

"Oh," she gasped helplessly, "let us walk on! Let us go home! I cannot bear to hear all that again."

She turned to go, but he caught her hand in his.

"I must speak," he said forcefully, though in the lowest possible tones; "it is perhaps the tenth time, but it is certainly the last time. Will you not think once more again of it all, and say here now that you love me?"

He held her hand so tightly that it was impossible for her to withdraw it. She looked up in his face, and the moon showed each the unfeigned feeling of the other. [283]

"You don't know about marriage," she told him with white lips and laboring breath. "One may be very unhappy alone, and there is always the strength to bear, but when you are married and unhappiness comes, there is always that other unhappiness chained to you like a clog, shutting out all joy in the present, all hope in the future; and nothing can help you, and you can help nothing." She stopped and put her hand to her bosom. "Only death can help!" she cried, in a voice as if a physical torture had its grip upon her; "and it is so awful when death alone can help!" She looked at the ground and then up at him. "Oh," she sighed miserably, "how can I dare to go where I may come to that pass again? Don't ask that of me."

He turned his face away from her and she felt his fingers loosen, little by little, their clasp upon her arm. Then he loosed her altogether, left her side, moved away a space, and stood, his head bowed, his eyes bent upon the water. There was a fearful horror of hopelessness in his attitude.

Down from the Gasteig came a cab, an empty cab, and he looked up and hailed it.

"We will ride home," he said, coming back to her; "I am bereft of strength."

The cab halted and he put her inside. ([284])

"6 Maximiliansstrasse," he called to the driver, and got in himself and banged the door behind him.

Then he threw himself back against the cushions, covered his eyes with his hand, and remained silent and motionless the ten minutes that they were *en route*.

She did not speak either; she dared not. The air was so heavy with sorrow and despair that words would have seemed like desecration; and the telepathic misery that emanated from him loaded her soul as if she had been guilty of a crime.

When the cab stopped he opened the door, and as he turned to give her his hand she caught one shocked glimpse of the grief in his face—of the oddly drawn look of suffering in his half-closed eyes. The whole change in him, in them, in it all, had come so quickly that as she stepped from the cab she was conscious of a stunned sensation, a dazed lack of feeling, a cold and stony power to bear much—for a little while.

"Go by the door," he said in muffled tones, "I must pay the cab."

She crossed the width of the sidewalk and stood by the great *porte*, waiting.

When the cabman was disposed of he came to her side, and felt in his pocket for the keys. Then he took his gloves off and felt again; as he felt he stared steadily across the street. [285]

"It's the round key," she said, when he finally produced them. "Have you any tapers? I'm afraid that the hall will be dark."

He shrugged his shoulders as if tapers were of no earthly consequence in such a time of stress. Then he fitted the key in the lock and swung back the massive portal.

Because of that vast key system which is part of the intricacy of the very good housekeeping of Frau G——, there was no necessity to disturb the Hausmeister; but nothing could lessen the wail of the door which let them in with a groan, and closed behind them with a bang that was worthy of the occasion. It was the man's place to have lessened the noise by laying a restraining hand upon the lock, in accordance with the printed directions nailed against the main panel, but Rosina felt intuitively that this was no time to remind him of the fact.

With the closing of the door they were left in a darkness thorough and complete.

Rosina's voice: "You said you had wax tapers."

Von Ibn’s voice: “No, I have not say so.”

Rosina’s accents of distress: “Haven’t you any tapers?”

Von Ibn’s voice, dully: “Yes, I have, but I have not say so before.” ([286])

Rosina, entreatingly: “Then do please light one.”

Dead silence.

She began to walk towards the stairs that she could not see; as she did so she heard his keys jingling, and knew from the sound that he must be hunting the wherewithal for illumination. He struck a match and adjusted it in the small hole at the end of the box, and as he did so he called:

“Stop! wait for me to come also.”

She paused and looked back towards him. By the white light of the little taper his face appeared absolutely ghastly, and his heavy eyelids drooped in a way that pierced her heart.

“I think,” he said, when he was beside her, “that it is better that I go to-morrow very early, and that we meet no more.”

At that she was forced to put her hand against the wall in the seeking for some support without herself. They were upon the first step of the stairs, she leaning against one side wall and he standing close to the other. After he had spoken he crossed to her and his voice altered.

“If you had loved me,” he said, “here—now—I should have kissed you, and all would have been for us as of the skies above.”

“Oh, look out!” she exclaimed. ([287])

He was close above her.

“You are afraid of me?”

“No, it is the wax; you are letting it drip on us both.”

“It should stop upon the box,” he said shortly.

She began to mount the stairs, pulling off her gloves as she went. One fell, and he stooped quickly for it, with the result that he dropped the match-box. Again they were alone in the darkness.

“This is an awful place,” he said irritably, feeling blindly for what was lost. “That I am on my knees to a match-box this night,” he added savagely.

Her soul was full of sympathy for him. She bent to aid him in his search, and her hand in its wandering encountered his own. He seized her fingers and pressed them to his lips, and she knew that he was kneeling close at her feet.

“This is impossible,” he said vaguely, hurriedly; “we may not part now in a minute, like this. You have spoken foolishly, and I have accept it too quick. We must speak longer and talk reasonably to each of us. We must go where we may sit down and be quiet. *Faut être raisonable.* Let us go out of the door and go to the Café Luitpold and there speak.”

The Café Luitpold is a gorgeous and fashionable resort in the Briennerstrasse; its decorations are a cross between Herrn-Chiemsee and a Norddeutscher steamer, and its reputation is blameless. ([288])

“I can’t go to the Café Luitpold at ten o’clock at night in a golf skirt,” she objected gently, and tried to continue on her upward way; but he held her fast by her hand, and as he pressed it alternately to his face and lips, she felt her flesh wet with hot tears.

“You are crying!” she exclaimed in awe.

“I hope not,” he said; “I hope not, but I am near it. If I do weep, will you then despise me?”

“No,” she said faintly; “no—I—”

He rose to his feet, and in the dark she knew him to be very, very near. He still held her hand and his breath touched her cheek.

“Oh,” he whispered, “say you love me if it be but so little! *Dites que vous m’aimez!* I have hoped so greatly, I have dreamed so greatly; I will ask now no more to possess you for my own; I will content myself with what you can so easy give—only a little love—”

He drew his arm about her. Something within her was rising as the slow tide rises before the September gale, and she felt that all her firmness would be as the sand forts which the children build, when that irresistible final wave shall carry its engulfing volume over all. She summoned to her aid the most frightful souvenirs of her unhappy marriage, and pushed him violently away. His answer was a sudden grasp of mighty vigor, at which she gave a muffled scream. [289]

“You detest me, then?” he said through his teeth.

“It is my hat,” she cried, freeing herself; “you drove the longest pin straight into my head.”

He moved a little away, and in so doing trod upon the match-box. Then in an instant there was light again, and he could see her, her arms upraised, straightening her hat.

“It is most badly on,” he told her.

“I know it,” she replied, starting swiftly upward.

At the curve he stopped short and shut his eyes; she stopped too, three steps farther on.

“Are you ill?” she asked anxiously.

He opened his eyes.

“I am most unhappy,” he replied, and went on again.

So they came to the top at last.

“Here we are,” she said, halting before the door; “give me the keys, they work intricately.”

He handed them to her in silence; she took them in her hand and tried to smile. ([290])

“If you really go to-morrow,” she said, as she put one into the lock, “I hope—” her lips trembled traitorously and she could not go on.

“*Dites*,” he whispered, coming nearer, “you do care a little, a very—”

He dropped the matches a second time.

“*That* was never an accident,” she cried, below her breath.

“It was not my intention,” he declared; then he added, “you have only to go in, I can very well find my way out in the dark.”

But the door refused to open; instead, the key turned around and around in the lock.

“I do believe,” she said at last, in a curiously inexplicable tone, “that we have come up the wrong stairs!”

A sort of atmosphere of blankness saturated the gloom.

“Is there another stair?” he asked.

“Yes; it goes from the other passage. It’s the staircase to No. 5. I think—indeed I’m sure—that we have come up the stairs of No. 6 with the keys of No. 5.”

“I have never know that there was another stair,” he declared. “If you had say that before I—” [291] then a fresh thought led him to interrupt himself. “It is a fate that leads us. We must go to the street again, and we shall go to the American Bar and talk there.”

The “American Bar” is the name which the Hotel Vierjahreszeiten has elected to give to a small and curious restaurant situated in its basement. There is nothing against the “American Bar” except its name, which naturally leads American women to avoid it.

“I don’t want to go anywhere,” said Rosina, drawing the keys into her hand; “it is no use. We are both all used up. I want to get home. And I couldn’t go anywhere if I wanted to in this skirt.”

“It is always that skirt,” he cried angrily; “that my heart breaks to-night is nothing,—only ever I must hear of your skirt.”

“Oh, where *are* the matches?” she said nervously; “we must find them somehow.”

He stooped to institute another search, and the umbrella slipped from his hand; it struck the floor with a noise that echoed from the attic to the cellar.

“Oh!” she gasped sharply; “we shall wake every one in the building before we get through.”

“It is very terrible—this night,” he said quietly, and as he spoke he found the match-box and [292] there was light again. Then he picked up his umbrella, and they returned down the three flights of stairs. In the lower hall he stopped again.

“We *cannot* separate like this,” he said, laying his hand upon her arm; “there are doings that one human cannot do. I must speak longer with you before I go. It is not talking to be going ever up and down steps with a wax taper. I know nothing of what I have say since we leave the cab, and here, each minute, any one may enter. When we go out, come with me across to the Hofbrauhaus, and there we will talk for but five minutes, and then you shall return. Your skirt will go very well there. We shall quickly return. *Dites ‘oui’*.”

The Hofbrauhaus is, as its name indicates, the café, or rather *brasserie*, of the Court brewery. It is a curious place, the beer of which is backed by centuries of fame, and Von Ibn told no lie when he said that any skirt would do well there.

“Oh, I can’t go,” she said, almost crying in her distress and agitation. “It will do no good; we just suffer more and more the longer we are together. I am miserable and you are miserable, and it takes all my strength to remember that if I yield we shall be very much more miserable in the end. Let me get home!”

She unlocked the large *porte* as she spoke, and he blew out the taper, pushed it open, held it while she passed through, and then stayed its slam carefully behind her. [293]

Then there was the *porte* of No. 5 to unlock and the taper to relight, and three more staircases to mount.

"I shall go to-morrow morning," he said quietly and hopelessly, as they went a second time upon their upward way. "I shall put all the force of my will to it that I go. It is better so. *Pourquoi vous vexer avec mon ardent désir pour vous?*"

Her heart contracted with a spasm of pain, but she made no reply.

"To meet again will be but more to suffer," he continued. "I touch at the end of what I am capable to suffer. Why should I distress you for no good to any one? And for me all this is so very bad! I can accomplish nothing. The power dies in me these days. *Toute ma jeunesse est prise!* I feel myself become old and most desolate. I am content that it is good-bye here."

It seemed to her that her turn had come to falter, and fail to move, and close her eyes in misery. If—if—only—

But they went on slowly until the top landing was just above their heads. Both knew that the top landing must bring the termination of all. [294]

She took the door-key in her hand, went a little ahead of him and fitted it noiselessly into the lock. It turned. The end was at hand. She looked towards him and attempted a smile. He put the match-box on the window ledge and drew her within his arms.

"It is for the first and the last time," he said hoarsely, and then he kissed her furiously, passionately,—twice, thrice, and once again. "*C'est comme ça, l'amour!*" he whispered; "and because you know nothing of it, you let it go from you."

Then he put his hand to his throat as if strangling, and, opening the door, stepped aside.

"Good-bye," he murmured, as she passed within. "*Bon voyage!*"

The door closed between them.

She went to her room and found Ottillie asleep upon the sofa.

She crossed to the window, opened it softly and leaned out; after a little she heard the door beneath open and close, and then his shadow fell beneath the electric light.

Then he was gone!

This time there would be no return. [295]

The moisture of his lips was yet upon her own, and he was gone forever.

She crossed the room and fell upon her knees beside the bed. [296–298]

Back to Contents

Part III [299]

THE BREAKING OF THE BARRIERS

Chapter Fourteen

IT was very early, very dark, very cheerless, that most miserable hour of six o'clock in the morning, the very worst hour ever known in which to be routed out of bed in order that an unpleasant journey may be begun.

Without, it was faintly light; within, it was brightly gas. What is less cheerful than the aspect given a room by the gas burning high at six o'clock in the morning? Rosina's room looked absolutely ghastly, for it was bare of everything but travelling apparatus, and they were all strapped and waiting. She herself sat before her untouched breakfast tray and watched Ottillie lace her boots, while she dismally went over for the two hundred and seventy-sixth time every detail of the night before the last.

There was a tap at the door and Jack came in. He was tanned with his recent trip and had a [300] thrilling new travelling ulster with carved deer-horn buttons. He had bought the buttons at the Tagernsee and had had an ulster constructed in Vienna, just as a background for them. He looked at his cousin with a buoyant air that she felt to be bitterly unkind, all things considered, and exclaimed:

"You must hurry up, my dear; the cab will be at the door in five minutes, and we don't want to miss that train, you know."

"I'm quite ready," she said helplessly.

"Is all this stuff going?" he asked, looking about; "you can't mean to carry all this with us to Genoa, surely."

Rosina's eyes strayed here and there over the umbrella case, the two dress-boxes, the carry-all, the toilet case, the two valises, the dress-suit case, and the hat-box. She did not appear to consider the total anything to be ashamed of.

"What's in those two boxes?" Jack continued.

"Clothes."

"Why didn't you put them in a trunk?"

"You told me to send all my trunks *frachtgut* two weeks ago. I had to keep out some to wear, naturally."

He drew a martyr's breath.

"You do beat all! I don't know how we're ever going to get all this stuff along with us. There [301] isn't anything more, is there, Ottillie?"

"*Oh, mais non, monsieur!*"

"All right. You better have them take all this down; the cab must be there by this time."

Rosina stood up.

"I must say good-bye to Fraulein Hélène and her mamma," she said sadly, going to the door.

The good-bye was a trying one, and its tears were harshly interrupted by a voice in the hall:

"Come on, Rosina, we're going to miss that train for a fact if you don't hurry."

"Go, my dear child," said Frau G——; "do not weep so. Many think that they are going forever, but they all always return."

Rosina choked, and went.

Jack rattled her down the stairs—those sob-provoking stairs—at a tremendous rate, and when they went out of the *porte* their eyes were greeted by a cab that looked like a furniture van, so overloaded was its capacity.

"George, but it's full!" Jack cried in dismay. "Well, there's no time to get another; we must just pile in some way and let it go at that."

They piled in some way and it went at that.

"The train leaves at 7.20," Jack remarked as they passed the post-office clock, "we shall just make it easy."

Rosina made no answer, and no one spoke again until they reached the Karl Platz and the [302] cabman slowed up and looked around inquiringly; for some trains are reached from the front and some from the sides of the main station at Munich, and the cabs suit their routes to the circumstances from the Karl Platz on.

"Zurich!" Jack called out, "and hurry!" he added. "We really are making pretty close connection," he went on, "it's 7.05 now. But then there is only one trunk to check."

"I'm glad that that's yours," Rosina said, thinking of her hand luggage and his comments thereon.

He whistled blithely.

“Oh, we’ll get there all straight,” he said hopefully.

They drew up before the Bahnhof at 7.10, and it behooved the man of the party to be very spry indeed. He got their unlimited baggage on to a hand-truck, paid the cabman, and hustled the whole caravan inside.

“*Wo fahren Sie hin?*” asked the porter who operated the hand-truck, as he went leisurely after their haste.

“Zurich,” said Jack, “and *wir haben sehr wenig* time to spare; you want to look lively.” Then he rushed to the ticket gate to send Rosina and her maid aboard while the trunk was being weighed. [303]

“*Wo fahren Sie hin?*” asked the man at the gate.

“Zurich.”

“Train goes at 7.45.”

“It doesn’t either,” said Jack, who understood German fluently, “it goes at 7.20.”

For answer the man pointed to the great sign above his head, which bore out the truth of his statement in letters six inches high.

“Well, I vow,” said Jack blankly, “if that man at Schenker’s isn’t the worst fraud I ever ran up against. Say, cousin, we’ve got over half an hour to check my trunk in.”

She shook her head as if she didn’t care.

“I’ll go and see to it now,” he said, “and then I’ll come back here and try to get on to the train.”

He went off, and they waited by the gate while the man stationed there looked at Ottillie, and her mistress recalled the tone in which a voice had said, “It is for the first and last time!” and what came next.

When Jack returned they were permitted to pass the gates and go aboard the cars. The porter loaded the entire length of both racks with their belongings, and as soon as he was paid Jack hung up his ulster with the deer-horn buttons, stretched himself at full length upon the longest seat, and was asleep within five minutes. [304]

Rosina took the window corner opposite him and contemplated his callous slumber with a burning bitterness.

“And he must see how unhappy I am, too,” she said to herself.

Then she leaned her chin upon her hand and fell into a reverie which so blinded her with tears that when the train did move out of the yards she beheld a Munich of mist and fog, and a Pasing which was a mere blot amidst the general blur of her universe. She did not want to go to Genoa, she wanted to stay in Germany; and everything which the train passed appeared to be returning towards Munich with all possible speed, while she, she alone, was being borne swiftly away from all—all—all.

“Leaving for home,” she reflected. “I’m not *leaving* at all; I’m simply being wrenched away! Talk about turning one’s face towards America! I’m not turning my face; I’m having my neck wrung in that direction!” and the tears rolled heavily down her cheeks.

Ottillie unfastened one of the small valises and handed her mistress a fresh pocket-handkerchief, an attention which was most welcome just at that juncture.

About ten o’clock Jack opened his eyes and yawned vigorously twice or thrice. Then he got up on his elbow. [305]

“You *are* a pretty sight!” he said, after a lengthy contemplation of her woe; “you look like—like—well, you look pretty bad, and you haven’t a soul to blame for it all but yourself.”

She made no reply.

“There’s Von Ibn gone north, declaring that his future is completely ruined, and you sit crying like a baby because you must leave him, and yet you won’t marry him. If he was some worthless scoundrel that couldn’t be thought of, you know very well that all we might try to say or do wouldn’t keep you from him for three minutes; but just because he is so eminently all right you see a necessity for cooking up a sort of tragedy out of nothing, and making him crazy, and yourself about as bad.”

“Have you heard from him?” she asked coldly.

“I know that he left Munich yesterday early. He must have been awfully cut up to have been willing to undertake a trip at that hour. He hates to get up early—”

“That’s no crime.”

“Who said it was? So far from being a crime, it ought to have been another bond of congeniality between you two.”

“Do you know where he went?” [306]

“If he was a man at home he’d take to drink and go to the devil, but being a fellow over here I suppose that he’ll just go up the Zug-spitz and down the Matterhorn, and up Mont Blanc and down the Dent du Midi, until he considers himself whole again.”

She choked and said no more.

The train guard came through soon after and put the usual question:

“*Wo fahren Sie hin?*”

“Zurich,” said Jack, as he produced their tickets; “about what time do we get there?”

“Are you going straight through?” the guard inquired as he punched a page in each little book and restored the library to their rightful possessor.

“Yes.”

“Then why did you not take the express?”

Jack fairly bounded in his seat.

“The express!” he ejaculated. “Great Scott, do you mean to say that we are not on it!!!”

“Oh, no,” said the guard, “you are upon the way-train that follows half an hour later. The express arrives at two-forty; this train gets in between seven and eight at night.”

Nothing could bear deeper testimony to the state of Rosina’s crushed sensibilities than the way [307] in which she received this bit of information. While Jack swore violently she continued to look out of the window with an indifference that was entirely genuine.

“To think that that other train must have been right there within a hundred feet of us!” cried her cousin.

She did not turn an eyelash.

“By George, Rosina, I don’t believe I ever was as mad as this in all my life before!”

She sighed.

“I don’t mind anything,” she said sadly.

“You ought to mind getting to Zurich at eight o’clock instead of half-past two; there’s quite a little difference.”

“I don’t mind,” she repeated.

“Well, I do,” said Jack. After a pause of stormy thought he unclenched his fist and said, “I bet I get even for this some day, but just at present I think that I’ll go to sleep again.”

Which he did forthwith.

About noon they came to Lindau on the Bodensee. Rosina shivered and felt sick, because Constance lay upon the further side. The train did not run beyond Lindau and a change was necessary. The change revealed the fact that there was a custom-house at that point. An unexpected custom-house is one of the worst features of continental travel; but the officials of [308] Lindau were delightful, drew chalk circles on everything, and sent every one upon their way rejoicing. Our party went around the little station and were halted by a guard with the common greeting:

“*Wo fahren Sie hin?*”

“Zurich,” Jack answered, hauling out his tickets.

“*Fahren Sie mit Bahn oder fahren Sie mit Schiff?*”

Jack looked nonplussed.

“Which are the tickets for?” he asked.

“Either.”

He turned to where Rosina waited, her eyes gazing in the direction of Constance.

“Oh, Rosina,” he called out, “do you want to *fahr* from here on *mit* the *Bahn* or the *Schiff*?”

“I don’t care,” she replied.

“What’s the difference, anyhow?” he asked the man.

“With the boat you do not connect with the train on the other shore,” he was told.

“You don’t, eh? Well, I’m very anxious to make that train upon the other shore, so I think we’ll *fahr* right along *mit* the *Bahn*. Come on!” he called again to his cousin, “we must get aboard.”

They went slowly along the platform to the train gate. ([309])

“They call Lindau the German Venice,” he said, as they waited to pass the gate, “but I don’t

think that it looks very Venetian; do you?”

She choked, because Venice began with V, and felt herself quite unable to frame an answer to his question.

As every one but themselves seemed to have elected for the “Schiff,” they found an entire wagon empty and spread their luggage out well. Jack even went so far as to establish himself in solitary state in an adjoining compartment, to the end that he might consider the proposition of more sleep. Before the train was well under way the guard came through, and past experience led Rosina to call through the connecting door:

“Do ask him if we must change again.”

“Do we change again?” he asked.

“*Wo fahren Sie hin?*”

“Zurich.”

“You must change in Bregenz.”

“We must change in Bregenz,” Jack called out.

By that time the German Venice was well behind, and the train was skirting the southern shore of the Bodensee. The sun was shining on the waves, and the woods upon the banks were [310] spattered with red and yellow. And off to the north Constance was lying. Ah, Constance—the Stadtgarten—Huss’ Tower—the “Souvenir” of Vieuxtemps!

Rosina wept afresh.

“Oh, Ottillie,” she sobbed, forlornly, “*que je suis malheureuse aujourd’hui*!”

Ottillie opened her little bag and handed her mistress another fresh handkerchief; it was the only way in which she could testify to her devotion upon this especial day.

At Bregenz they descended, with the aid of a porter, at about half-past two. As they left the train it was borne in upon them that this change was not a change at all, but just another custom-house.

“What strange country have we run up against, I’d like to know!” Jack asked in amazement; and then the black cocks’ plumes in the *casquette* of the *douanier* revealed the information that he craved.

“How does Austria get to the Bodensee?” Rosina begged to know, having seen the cocks’ plumes as quickly as he had.

“I don’t know,” replied Jack, not at all pleased at the discovery as to where they were. “It does seem as if every country in Europe has a finger in this lake, though; or, if they haven’t, they keep [311] a custom-house open on it just as a side line to their regular business.”

The porter led them into the great wooden shed, where some unplaned boards laid across boxes served as counters, Bregenz being in the throes of the erection of a new station.

“I bet they make it plain whether its *kronen* or *gulden*,” said Rosina’s cousin as he threw his valise on top of the porter’s small mountain; “if I’d known that I was to come in connection with that vile money system again I’d have *schiffed* it across the lake or walked around the northern shore before I’d ever have come this route.”

By this remark he testified to a keen recollection of his Viennese experiences and the double dealing (no pun intended) of the Austrian shopkeeper just at the present epoch in the national finance system of that country.

Behind the boards two uniformed officials paced up and down, and when all was neatly ranged before them the one bestowed his attention upon Rosina while the other turned his in among the infinity of boxes belonging to her party. He peeped into two or three of the valises and chalked them and all of their kind; then he demanded the opening of the largest dress-box. Ottillie unstrapped it and undertook to satisfy his curiosity to the fullest possible extent.

The object uppermost of all was a Russian leather writing-tablet. The official leapt upon that at [312] once.

“On this you must pay thirty *centimes*,” he declared, grabbing it up.

“*Warum?*” said Jack. He found “*warum*” the most useful word in his German vocabulary, because by the very nature of things it always threw the burden of the conversation on to the shoulders of the other party.

“You cannot pretend that it is an article of wearing apparel for madame,” said the officer archly.

“I never said that it was an article of wearing apparel for any one,” Jack retorted hotly; “I asked why I had to pay thirty *centimes* on it. It isn’t new and it isn’t dutiable, and I know that, and you know it too.”

“What is it, anyhow?” asked the man.

“It’s to write on.”

“Why does not madame write on paper, like everybody else?” inquired the witty fellow.

“There’s your six cents,” said Jack, in great disgust; “I reckon you take *pfennigs*, don’t you?”

“Oh, yes,” said the Austrian, “we take everything.”

“Yes,” replied the American, “so I observed in Vienna.”

Then he turned away and the porter loaded up again. ([313])

They went out on the platform and were told that the train had just gone.

“*Wo fahren Sie hin?*” asked the guard, taking pity on their consternation at being left high and dry so unexpectedly.

“Zurich.”

“Oh, then that wasn’t your train anyway; that train went to Rorshack. You take the Zurichbahn at half-past three.”

There was three-quarters of an hour to wait.

“Do you suppose that there is anything worth seeing in Bregenz?” the man of the party suggested.

“I don’t want to see it if there is,” his cousin replied.

“Well, I do want to see it, even if there isn’t,” he answered; “you and Ottillie can go into the waiting-room and I’ll be back in half an hour.”

So he went off whistling, his ulster floating serenely around him. Rosina established herself in a boarded-off angle which under existing circumstances was dignified by the title of “Warte-Saal,” and every nail that was driven into the new Gare of Bregenz pierced her aching heart and echoed in her aching head.

After the lapse of half an hour Jack turned up again, having thoroughly exhausted Bregenz and [314]
purchased a new cane most ingeniously carved with bears’ heads and paws interlaced.

He was not overpleased to be informed that the Zurichbahn was late, and that there was no probability of their leaving the dominions of Francis Joseph before four o’clock at the earliest.

“It’s an awful shame the way this world is put on,” he said, yawning and walking up and down; “it would be Paradise to Von Ibn to have the right to cart you and your bags around, and it’s h—l for me, and I’ve got it to do notwithstanding.”

“I never sent for you to take me home,” Rosina said in an outraged tone.

“Oh, I wasn’t blaming you,” he declared amicably.

“Oh,” she said coldly, “I thought that you were.”

The Zurichbahn was very late, and did not put in an appearance until half-past four. Then they went aboard with a tired feeling that would have done credit to an arrival in Seattle from New York.

“Do we change again?” Rosina asked with latent sarcasm, when the guard (a handsome guard, worthy to have been a first lieutenant at the very least) came through to tear some pages out of their little books.

“*Wo fahren Sie hin?*” he asked, with a beaming smile. [315]

“Zurich,” Jack sung out, with renewed vigor.

The guard opened the door leading into the next compartment, and then, when his exit was assured, he told them:

“Must in St. Margarethen change,” and vanished.

“He knows the time for disappearing, evidently,” Jack said; “I bet somebody that felt as I do threw him out of the window when he said that once. And I have a first-class notion of getting down and taking the next train straight back to Munich for the express purpose of murdering that fellow that started us out this morning.”

Rosina felt a deep satisfaction that none of his heat could be charged up to her; *she* had offered no advice as to this unlucky day. She sat there silent, her eyes turned upon the last view of the Bodensee, and after some varied and picturesque swearing her cousin laid down and went to sleep again.

They arrived in St. Margarethen about half-past five, and night, a damp, chill night, was falling fast. The instant that the train halted a guard rushed in upon them.

“*Wo fahren Sie hin?*” he cried, breathlessly.

“Zurich, d—— you!” Jack howled. He was making too small a shawl-strap meet around too large a rug for the fifth time that day, and the last remnant of his patience had fled. ([316])

“Must be very quick; no time to lose,” said the man and hurried away.

That he spoke a deep and underlying truth was evidenced by the mad rush of passengers and porters which immediately ensued. They joined the crowd and found themselves speedily flung in some shape into Zurichbahn No. II., which moved out of the station at once.

Jack was too saturated with sleep to be able to try any more. He went through to the smoker’s compartment, and Rosina looked apathetically out upon the Lake of Zurich and reflected her same reflections over again and again. The moon, which had looked down upon the Isar rapids, rode amidst masses of storm clouds above the dark sheet of water, and illuminated with its fitful light the shadows that lay upon the bosom of the waves. She felt how infinitely darker were the shadows within her own bosom, and how vain it was to seek for any moon among her personal clouds.

“It’s a terrible thing to have been married,” she thought bitterly. “Before you’ve been married you’re so ready to be married to any one, and after you’ve been married you don’t dare marry any one.” Then she took out her handkerchief and wiped her eyes. “Oh, dear,” she sobbed, “it doesn’t seem as if I could possibly be more wretched with him than I am without him!” [317]

They reached Zurich in the neighborhood of nine o’clock. The end of a trip always brings a certain sense of relief to the head of the party, and Jack’s spirits rose prodigiously as he got them all into a cab.

“We’ll get something to eat that’s good,” he declared gayly, “and then to-morrow, after a first-class night’s sleep, we’ll go over the Gotthard, and be in Milan Monday. And then, ho for Genoa, Gibraltar, and joy everlasting!”

He seized Rosina’s hand and gave it a hard squeeze.

“Cheer up, you poor dear!” he cried; “you’ll come out all right in the end,—now you see!”

She pressed her lips tightly together and did not trust herself to say one word in reply.

She felt that she was beginning to really hate her cousin.

Chapter Fifteen [318]

THEY stood at the summit of that double flight of marble steps which run up the right-hand side of the Milan Cathedral’s roof and down the left. There are one hundred steps on either side, and having just mounted the right-hand hundred Rosina looked down the left-hand hundred with an affright born of appreciative understanding.

“Oh, Jack,” she cried, “I never shall get down from here alive! What did you ever bring me up for?”

“I brought you up to talk,” said her cousin. “Come over here, and sit down on the ridge-pole beside me.”

The ridge-pole of the Milan Cathedral is of white marble, like all the rest of the edifice; it is wide and flat, and just the height for a comfortable seat.

The cousins placed themselves side by side thereon, and Jack lit a cigarette while he deliberated on just how he should proceed with the case in hand.

“‘I want you to pay a lot of attention to what I am going to say, Rosina’”

“Well,” he said at last, folding his arms, clearing his throat, crossing his legs, and in other ways [319] testifying to the solemnity of what was forthcoming, “I want you to pay a lot of attention to what I’m going to say, Rosina, for I’m going to talk to you very seriously, and you must weigh my words well, for once let us get out to sea next week and it will be too late to ever take any back tacks as to this matter.”

She turned her sad eyes towards him; she was looking pale and tired, but not cross or impatient.

“Go on,” she said quietly.

“It’s just this: it’s four days now since we left Munich, and I can see that your spirits aren’t picking up any; instead, you seem more utterly done up every day. So I’ve made up my mind to give you one more chance. It’s this way: you know we’re all awfully fond of you and proud of you and all that, but you know too that no one can ever make you out or manage you—unless it’s me,” he added parenthetically; “and you always do what you please, and you always will do what you please, and the family share in the game generally consists in having to get you out of the messes that your own folly gets you into. You didn’t need to marry, you know, but you just would do it in spite of anything that any one could say, and all we could do was to be sorry for it, and sorry for [320] you when you were unhappy, as we all knew that you would be beforehand. And that was the one mess that no one could get you out of. Well, then he died, and you had another show.” Jack paused and jarred his cigarette ash off with his finger-tip. “You know and I know just who there was waiting there at home, but you elected to turn them all down and come over here to travel around alone. And that was all right as long as you stayed alone, but terribly risky when,—well, when that letter was written in Zurich—”

“Ah,” she cried sharply, “then it *was* from Zurich!”

“Yes, it was from Zurich,” he replied indifferently; “and it was perfectly natural under the circumstances that the letter should have been written. The letter was straightforward enough, only, of course, it necessitated Uncle John’s sending me over to—”

“But I hadn’t known him but three days then,” she interrupted.

“That wasn’t making any difference to him, evidently. And so I came over and looked up everything; and I even did more, I came there to Munich and went off with him on that trip so as to learn just everything that it was possible to learn, and it all comes to just what I’ve told you [321] before: if you want to marry him, you can; if you don’t want to marry him, you needn’t; but for Heaven’s sake why do you persist in refusing him if it uses you up so awfully?”

Her mouth quivered and her eyes filled slowly.

“Have you been flirting?” he asked, with a very real kindness veiled in his voice, “or do you really love him?”

She lifted her wet eyes to his.

“I don’t know,” she said, with simple sincerity; and after a minute she added, “But I can’t make up my mind to marry just for the sake of finding out.”

Jack whistled softly.

“So that’s it!” he said at last.

They remained sitting quietly side by side for two or three minutes, and then he spoke again; his voice was gentle, but firm and resolved, and there was a sort of finality about his words which clinched into her heart like an ice-grip.

“Then the best thing to do is just what we’re doing; I know that you wanted to stay and see more of him, but, feeling as you do, that wouldn’t have been right to him or to yourself either. It seems tough on you, but you’ll get over it in a few months, and if it comes to a funeral for Von Ibn —why, it isn’t our funeral, anyway!”

He stood up as he spoke, and smiled and held out his hand to her. She rose, feeling as if some [322] fearful ultimatum had been proclaimed above her head.

“It’s sort of hard, you know,” Jack said, as he assisted her carefully down the steep steps; “it’s *awful* hard to travel with you and have you never smile and never say anything, and not be able to explain that you feel bad because you won’t marry a man who wants you and whom you want.”

“I married just such a man once upon a time,” she replied sadly.

“Yes,” said Jack; “but I didn’t like that man, and I do like Von Ibn.”

She drew a quick breath.

From the cathedral they returned directly to the hotel. [323]

Chapter Sixteen

IT was Genoa.

The end of all was at hand.

Rosina recollected the careless, callous manner with which in earlier, happier days she had spoken of this fated spot.

“Are you going home by the Southern Route?”

“Yes, we sail from Genoa;” or, “Do you leave at Naples?” “Oh, no, it’s Monte Carlo this time, so we shall get off at Genoa.”

Genoa!

Once she had thought its blue mountain masses most sublimely beautiful, now anything with hollows and shadows reminded her of those two misery-circled eyes, and she was led to wonder afresh if he, or she, would ever recover.

It is always astonishing how the port from which we sail partakes of our sailing sentiments. It’s a “jolly good place” or a “dull old hole,” just according to who is on the deck or who is on the dock. Handkerchiefs flutter gayly in the stolid face of Hoboken every day of the year, and many beside Marie Stuart have wept themselves out of sight of sunny France. It isn’t the place that [324] counts when the anchor goes down or up, it’s the Who and the When; and in view of what has filled all the foregoing pages I trust that the reader will sympathize with Rosina and pardon my slang if I state that Genoa appeared to her upon this occasion very much more rocky than ever before.

Their arrival had not been auspicious, to begin with. The cab on its narrow way hotel-ward had collided energetically with another cab and had a wheel taken off. Jack was on the high side, and Rosina was only too anxious to have anything happen to her; but Ottillie, who had narrowly escaped being pitched out on her head, was quite perturbed, and feared that the accident was a bad omen for the voyage.

The following morning Rosina saw her cousin leave for the inevitable visit to Fratelli’s, and when he was safely out of the way she put on a walking-suit, veiled herself thickly, and, taking a carriage, went all alone to that grand eastern sweep of boulevard whose panorama of sea and city is so beyond the language of any pen to portray. At the summit she dismissed the carriage,

and rested there alone, leaning against the iron balustrade, her eyes turned afar, her bosom riven by emotions as limitless as the horizon that lay before her. A sailing-vessel was spreading its [325] wings for an Egyptian flight; in the port to her right the great white ocean liner was loading her cargo; overhead the gulls whirled, shrieking. But to all she was blind, deaf, unwitting.

For with the conversation upon the ridge-pole of the Milan Cathedral life had seemed to close for her. The finality of Jack's ruling had barred the future out of her present forever. There is no more unmitigated grief for a woman than to be chained to the consequences begotten of her own way, and to have her judgment taken seriously and acted upon, to the end that all possible chance of change is swept forever beyond the reach of her will.

She hung there against the cold iron and knew no tears, because her wretchedness had outstripped their solace.

Her reasons had reached the pass where they craved to be overruled, and no one was going to overrule them. She did not state the facts to herself in so many words, but she felt her helplessness and moaned her pain.

Oh, that pain! the pain of one who sees the light too late, who divines the sun only by the splendor of the glow which it has left behind. What memories they hold to torture everlastingly! What reveries they nurse from thence on evermore!

If only more had been said, or less! If only more had been denied, or granted! There is forever [326] imprinted on the brain some one especial look which time can never dim—some special word whose burden nor sleep nor wake will lighten.

There, at her feet, the Isar rushed, and through the myriad murmur of its rapids his voice came back to her. "*Tout est fini,*—all is finished!" he had said, with that enveloping mist of melancholy in which his spirit shrouded itself so easily. And then a wax taper flashed before the blackness that sheathed her vision, and she looked in heart-quivering agony upon the dumb appeal of those great, brown eyes, with their shadows doubled by the torturing of the hour.

"He felt perhaps as I feel now," she thought, pressing her hand against her bosom; "I didn't know then—I didn't know!"

She turned to walk along the cliff.

"If I was sure," she told herself, "I think that I would—" but there she paused, shuddered violently, and left the phrase unfinished.

At luncheon Jack was uncommonly cheerful. He asked her if she didn't want to go to Nice and spend one of the two days before their departure. She shook her head.

"But why don't you go?" she said; "you could just as well as not."

"I don't know but that I will," he replied; "only I hate to leave you here alone." [327]

"Oh, I'll do very well," she assured him, smiling.

About four that afternoon he came into her room, where she was lying in a reclining-chair by the window, looking listlessly out and dreaming of Munich. He stood before her for a long time, contemplating her and the gown of lace and silk which foamed about her throat and arms, and then cascaded down to spread in billows on the floor.

"I declare," he said suddenly, "it seems wasteful somehow for you to dress like that just to sit here alone."

Her mouth curved a little.

"Is that a night-dress?" he inquired curiously.

"No, cousin, it's a tea-gown."

"Oh!"

He stood still beside her.

"They told me a funny thing at the steamship office this morning," he said, after a while; "the man says that there's never a steamer sails but that some one who has made their last payment down is obliged for some reason to stay behind."

"Do they give them back their money?" she asked, trying to appear interested.

"Yes; and they always fill the room either at Naples or Gibraltar."

And still he stood there. ([328])

"Why don't you sit down?" she asked at last.

"Where's Ottillie?" he said, without seeming to notice her question.

"I've sent her out to do some errands. Why, do you want anything done?"

"No;" he leaned over and kissed her cheek. "I do love you, Rosina," he added, half joking, half serious; "I wonder what sort of a show I'd have had if I'd tried—ever?"

She shrank from him with a quick breath.

“Oh, Jack, I beg of you, don’t tease me these days.”

He straightened up and laughed, taking out his watch.

“It’s quarter after four,” he said, reflecting. “The mail must be in; I’ll see if there are any letters,” and he went out.

She remained by the window, twirling the shade-tassel with her idle fingers, and seeing, not the rattle and clatter of Italian street-life, but the great space of the Maximilian-Joseph Platz, with the doves pattering placidly over the white and black pattern of its pavement, and the Maximiliansstrasse stretching before her with the open arches of the Maximilianeum closing its long vista at the further end....

Quick steps in the hall broke in upon her day dream, and her cousin re-entered, an open letter [329] in his hand and his face curiously drawn. He gave her one strange look and halted.

“What has happened?” she asked hastily and anxiously.

He went to the window and looked out, so that his back was turned towards her and his face concealed from her view.

“I’ve just heard from Von Ibn,” he said briefly.

“Is that letter from him?”

“No; he’s not writing any letters these days.”

“Oh—” she began, and then stopped.

He kept his back towards her, and then, after a short pause:

“He’s going all to pieces,” he said in a low tone, very slowly.

“Oh—” she exclaimed again, and again stopped.

“I reckon he’s pretty badly off; he’s got beyond himself. He’s—well, he’s—. Rosina, the long and short of it is, he’s gone crazy!”

She rose slowly out of her seat, her face deadly white, her finger-nails turned cruelly into her palms.

“Jack!” she stammered; “Jack!”

He continued to look from the window.

“I knew he’d take it awfully hard,” he said, in a voice that sounded strained, “but I didn’t think [330] he’d give up so completely; he’s—”

Then she screamed, reaching forth and touching his hand.

“You’re not breaking it to me that he’s dead! You’re not telling me that he’s dead!”

He turned from the window at that, and was shocked at her face and the way that her hands were twisting.

“I know he’s dead!” she screamed again, and he sprang forward and caught her in his arms as she sank down there at his knees.

“He is *not* dead!” he told her forcefully; “honestly, he is *not* dead! But he’s in a bad way, and with it all just as it is, I don’t know what to do about you. If you don’t care, why, as I said before, it’s not our funeral; but if you do care, I—well, I—”

“Oh, Jack, can I go to him? I must go to him! Can’t you take me to him?”

She writhed in his arms as if she also was become a maniac.

“Do you really want to go to him? Do you know what that means? It means no more backing out, now or never.”

“I know, I understand, I’m willing! Only hurry! only telegraph that I will come! only—” she began to choke.

“I’ll tell you,” said he, putting her into the big chair again; “you shall go to him. Stay there a [331] minute and I’ll get my railway guides and look it up right away. Collect yourself, be a good girl!”

He went out, and she folded her hands and prayed wildly:

“God, let him live! God, take me to him!” over and over again.

And then her impatience stretched the seconds into minutes, and she sought her cousin’s room, which was just across the hall from the suite given to herself.

She flung the door open without knocking and entered precipitately, expecting to find Jack and the railway guides. But Jack was not there.

There *was* a man there, sitting by the window, twisting his moustache and biting his lips in raging impatience. To this man Jack had said three minutes before, “She’ll be in here in less than sixty seconds. I’m going to the steamship office,” and then the man had been left to wait, and his was not a patient disposition....

A tall man, a dark man, a man whose hair lay in loose, damp, wavy locks above his high forehead; a man whose eyes were heavy-circled underneath, and whose long, white hands beat nervously upon the chair-arms.

At the sound of the opening door the man looked up. She was there, staring as if petrified, by the door. ([332])

He made one bound. She was within his arms.

“*Alors tu m’aimes!*” he cried, and something mutual swallowed her reply and the consciousness of both for one long heaven-rifting minute.

“*Alors tu m’aimes?*” he said again, with a great quivering breath; “*tu m’aimes, n’est-ce pas?*”

“With my whole heart and soul and life,” she confessed.

And then he kissed her hastily, hungrily, murmuring:

“*Ma cherie!* my angel, mine, mine!”

She cried a little and laughed a little, looked up a little and looked down a little, tried to draw away from him and found herself drawn yet nearer; was kissed, and kissed him; was looked upon and returned the look; felt the strength of his love and felt the strength of her own; feeling at last that the wavelets of Lucerne which had splashed softly up against the stones at Zurich, and murmured in her ears at Constance, had been swelled by the current of the Isar into a mighty resistless storm that here, this day, upon the rocky coast of the Mediterranean, had come resistlessly roaring upwards, and, sweeping away all barriers, carried her heart and her life out into its bottomless depths forevermore. [333]

“*Attends!*” he said, after a minute, loosing her suddenly to the end that he might turn the key in Jack’s door; then he took her by the hand and led her to the chair where he had been sitting. It was one of those vast and luxurious *fauteuils* which have prevented the Old World from ever importing the rocker. He installed her in its depth and placed himself upon the broad and cushioned arm.

“*Mon Dieu, que je suis heureux!*” he said, smiling down into her eyes; “*alors tu m’aimes vraiment*?”

“Jack told me that you were terribly ill,” she said, her eyes resting upon his face with a sort of overwhelming content.

“And you have care?”

“I thought that I should lose my mind!”

“*Ma cherie!*”

“But you really look as if you had been ill?”

“Not ill, but most *malheureux*. It has not been easy always to wait and believe that you shall love me yet.”

“But you always did believe it?”

He smiled his irresistible smile of eyes and lip.

“Your cousin has said to me in Tagernsee, ‘She will certainly marry you because she declares that she will not, and she always does do exactly *le contraire*;’ but, *Mon Dieu*, how could I trust to that?” [334]

Rosina laughed ringingly.

“Dear Jack! I wish that I had known myself as well as he knows me.”

“He has been very good to me,” said Von Ibn, leaning above her and breaking his sentences in a manner that was perhaps only natural, all things considered; “he has kept me from—the real madness. But for him I was quite willing to shoot myself. It has never been anything so terrible for me as—when you enter the door of the *pension* that night and shut it between us.”

She lifted up her hand and closed his big eyes with its soft touch.

“I loved you in Lucerne,” she declared to his blindness, “that first moment when I saw you walking on the Quai. I did not know why, but I felt that I *must* know you.”

He snatched her hand away and laughed.

“*Voilà!*” he exclaimed; “what have I say to you that time in Munich, that the women are always *gênées*! You love in Lucerne, and insist not for all the summer after.”

Then they laughed together.

“Would you have liked me to have told you there on the Quai? would you have believed it?”

“Yes,” he said gravely; “I would have believed it very well, because I also knew the same. In the ([335]) hotel I had seen you, and on the Promenade I said myself, ‘*Voilà la jolie Américaine encore une fois!*’ You see!”

She wondered how she had ever for a moment thought that his eyes were melancholy, they appeared so big and bright and joyous now.

“When did you come?” she remembered to ask after a long time.

“I am come yesterday morning.”

“Before we did?”

“Oh, yes; because I have very much here to do.”

“In Genoa?”

“Yes; and Jack and I have been out all this morning also.”

“And I never knew!”

He looked a little uneasy and rose to his feet.

“There is something very serious that I must say,” he said, standing before her.

She looked up in a little anxiety; a crowd of ordinary, every-day thoughts suddenly swarmed into her mind.

“Do not be *gênée*!” he implored parenthetically; “what I have to say is so most important.”

“I am not *gênée*,” she assured him.

“Then why do you not come and stand by me?” he asked. “If you love me and will not show it, I [336] am to be very unhappy always.”

Rosina laughed; but she stood up and went close to him at once.

“I do love you,” she said, “and I am not at all afraid to show it. You see!”

He took her face between his hands and gazed down fondly upon her.

“Love is good, is it not?” he said. “There is a great joy to me to hold you so, and reflect upon those stairs at Munich.”

He paused—perhaps in consideration of the Munichian stairs—for a moment, and then said:

“I have heard that there is love so strong that it crushes; if I ever take hold of you so that your bones break, it is only that I think of the stairs in Munich.”

She laughed again.

“I will remember,” she said, not at all frightened.

He took her two hands tightly within his own.

“I must now say that very serious thing.”

“But I shall not run away.”

“No, but you may be surprised and unarrange yourself before I can hold you to stop.”

“Go on,” she begged.

“It is this: Jack and I have been out all this morning, because all must be very ready; I—” he [337] stopped.

“You are going with us?” she exclaimed joyously.

“No; I—”

“You are not going before we do?”

He smiled and shook his head.

Then he drew her very closely and tenderly to him and kissed her eyes and forehead.

“It is that I am to be married to-morrow,” he told her softly, and held her tightly as the shock of his words ran quivering through her.

“And I!” she gasped, after two or three paralyzed seconds.

“Naturally you are to be married also.”

She stared mutely up into the reassurance of his smile.

“Jack and I find that best,” he said. “I have no time to go to America to bring you again, and all is quite good arranged. I have telegraphed to Dresden about a larger apartment, and those

papers from the lawyers in New York waited here when you came. We may not marry like peasants, you and I, you know."

She felt completely overcome.

"*To-morrow!*" she said, at last.

"Yes," he said placidly; "I am much hasted to be again in the north, and we have arranged with [338] the consuls—your consul and my consul—for to-morrow."

"But my steamer passage!"

"Oh, that your cousin has given up; all the money has been returned. I think for a little that we will go with him as far as Naples, but I go and look at your stateroom this morning, and I have just a *centimétre* more than the berth."

Rosina was forced to laugh; her humor began to bubble riotously upwards at the notion of Von Ibn and Jack measuring the berth that morning. He did not know why she laughed, but he kissed her without caring.

"For me there is no comfort under two *métres*," he declared vigorously.

Just then the owner of the room tried the door.

"This is my room," he called through the crack.

They looked at each other, and she ran lightly to the door, unlocked it and let her cousin enter.

"You fearful liar!" she exclaimed, as he put his arm about her, and held out the spare hand to her lover. "Oh, Jack, you awful, *awful* liar, what shall I say to you?"

"Say to him that you are most happy," her lover suggested.

Jack was beaming.

"I never said a word that wasn't true," he declared. "You asked me if the letter was from him, [339] and I said that he wasn't writing any letters these days, and then I said that he was going crazy."

"And that was most true," the other man broke in; "I have no manner to think left in my head these later nights."

"And you began to scream that you must go to him, and I told you that you could go; and I see that you went."

Von Ibn crossed to the chimney-piece and picked up a cigarette and a match. He was smiling to himself.

"She consents to be married to-morrow," he said, facing about.

"Yes," said Rosina airily; "I see that conventionality and I are to be more two than ever henceforth, so I am going to yield up my own way at once."

"You are a brave fellow," Jack said to his friend; "I have always been able to do more with her than any one else, but, honestly, I tell you that I, even I, would never dare to undertake her forever."

Von Ibn lit his cigarette and laughed.

"She will obey me," he said easily; "she will have to. It will be a great good for her. I shall be very tender with her and most severe, that is what is best for a woman.

"Oh, Rosina!" said Jack, and in his tone resounded a succession of many feelings each more [340] indescribable than its predecessor.

"It is not needful that you kiss her," the lover went on, coming back across the room; "I wish that you would not, that does me no pleasure to watch."

"I don't care anything about kissing her," the cousin replied; "Rosina's novelty in kisses was over for me before I was five years old. Don't you remember—"

Some one rapped at the door.

"*Entrez!*" they cried in chorus.

It was a *garçon* with a card.

"'Madame La Francesca,'" said Rosina, reading. "Who is Madame La Francesca?"

The two men exchanged glances.

"Where is the lady?" Jack asked.

"She is gone at once to madame's room," the boy replied.

"You'd better go and see who's in your room," Jack suggested; "and you," he added, turning to her *fiancé*, "you must come with me and attend to what yet remains to be done."

Rosina hesitated, her hand upon the door-knob.

“I will come at once,” she told the boy, who was waiting, and then she looked towards the man by the chimney-piece.

“Never mind me,” said her cousin kindly; “I’ll look out of the window, if you wish.” [341]

Von Ibn threw his cigarette into the grate.

“You need not look from the window,” he said, laughing; “you may look straight to us, and see two most happy.”

He put his hand on either side of her smile and took the smile to himself. Then she went out.

“I can’t tell you,” the American said warmly, “how glad I am for you both. I do honestly think that she’ll make you very happy. And I hope and pray that you’ll be good to her.”

“I shall be good to her,” said his friend seriously; “I know her well. She is very ‘*tendre*’ and I love her much; she will not have her own will always, but with her love she will do mine. It is that that makes the life so happy with us. We give much affection and little liberty; it is not well for you, because with you all is so different. In America it is all liberty, and no time for love.”

“Maybe not,” said Jack carelessly; “but we make a lot of money all the same.” He picked up his ulster with the deer-horn buttons. “You’re coming, aren’t you?” he said.

The other man sought an eminently correct overcoat and silk hat in the adjoining room.

“*Natürlich*,” he said, “you know that I am of at any rate an equal interest with you in what is to be to-morrow.” [342]

Jack laughed.

“Perhaps if you knew your lady as well as I do—” he began, and then he stopped.

They went out to the staircase, and Von Ibn descended several steps in advance. Jack contemplated his back, and his lips twitched with the conquering of a rebellious smile.

“So there walks the end of all,” he said to himself. “Who would have thought it of Rosina! Poor girl, she is about over; in fact, I’m afraid that, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, ‘Rosina’ has already ceased to exist—knocked under for good, so to speak. Only to think of that particular girl choosing a thorough-bred European husband with a Tartar syllable in his name!” He paused and chuckled. “I’ve proved my truth to Carter, anyhow. I told him that there was but one man in America clever enough to marry my cousin, and now he’ll perceive that that man’s brains so far surpass the brains of all others, that, although capable of marrying her, he took precious good care to marry her to another fellow. Well, if they’re happy they owe it all to me; and if they’re miserable, they have no one but themselves to blame.”

Von Ibn had paused at the foot of the stairs and now looked up, smiling, into his friend’s eyes. ([343])

“I am this day so greatly rejoiced,” he said earnestly, “what life is to have for me, and for her, after this! You may not divine it, I think.”

Jack looked into the warm and shining light of his uplifted face.

“I hope you’ll both be just everlastingly happy,” he said sincerely.

“But that is certain,” the lover said, in a tone of deep feeling. “Did you look at her to-day? It is heaven she brings me with her. We were two in the great world, and Lucerne brought us to one. Then love did all the rest.”

“Oh, I say,” Jack remonstrated; “I certainly worked some too!”

Chapter Seventeen [344]

WHEN Rosina opened her door it was Molly who stood there; a gorgeous Molly, put forth by all that was uppermost in the Kärntnerstrasse of that year.

“Why, where ever did you come from?” she cried.

“From Vienna,” said Molly; “from Vienna by way of Botzen and Venice.”

“And Madame la Princesse?”

“I’ve left her and qualified as a chaperone on my own hook.”

“You’re with Madame—Madame—” Rosina looked down at the *carte-de-visite* which she held in

her fingers still.

“I’m not with her; I’m *her*!”

“You’re—”

“Madame La Francesca.”

“Molly, you’re not—”

“Yes, I am.”

“Not *married*?”

The Irish girl, or rather the Italian lady, nodded.

“Why, Molly, however did you do it? you said he was too poor.” [345]

“He was too poor.”

“And how—”

Molly was pulling off her gloves and laughing.

“My dear, this is another.”

Rosina sank abruptly on the sofa.

“’Tis a fact. I never told you a thing about him, but he’s as handsome—wait!” She put her hand to her collar. “No getting them tangled any more,” she said, smiling, as she felt for her chain. “I wear only one now, but I wear that one night and day.”

Rosina could do little else than gasp and stare.

“But who is he?” she asked.

“He’s the lieutenant’s colonel. He called on me to—Well, I do believe I’ve left that locket on the washstand after all!”

“Haven’t you got it on?”

“No, I haven’t. And I meant to wear it forever.”

“Never mind, go on about the colonel.”

“I do hope he won’t find the locket, that’s all. He put it on me the day we were married, and I promised to never unclasp it. Of course I never thought of baths when I spoke.”

“But do go on about how you came to—”

“I didn’t come to any one; he came to me, to beg me to give up the lieutenant, who was taking [346] to absinthe. My dear, you should just see the man! (Oh, if I *only* had my locket!) All Italy can’t show such another! I gave up the lieutenant that day and married the colonel just as fast as was possible. That’s why I haven’t written you this last month.”

“Is he rich?”

“Well, not in pounds; but he’s a millionaire in these Italian *lire*. We shall live like princes,—Italian princes, *bien entendu*.”

“But when were you married?”

“Day before yesterday; to-day’s the first time I’ve taken off the locket.”

“And where?”

“In Venice. Oh, ’twas like heaven, being paddled to church.”

“And now you’re—”

“Signora La Francesca.”

“Well, I declare!”

Rosina leaned back, staring helplessly. Finally she said:

“And how did you happen to come here?”

“To your wedding. I hurried my own a little on that account.”

“*Molly*, then you knew about me!”

Molly swept down upon the sofa and folded her friend in her arms.

“Knew about you! Why, my dear, I knew about you in Zurich. How could I help it? How could [347] any one help it?”

“Why, Molly, was it as bad as that?”

“Worse,” said the signora briefly.

“But you never could have known that I would marry him in Genoa then?”

“Oh, no; of course I didn’t know about Genoa, I only knew you were bound to marry him somewhere.”

“When did you know about Genoa?”

“Last week. Your cousin wrote me.”

Rosina’s face was a study, but finally she began to laugh.

“Molly, I have been tricked and deceived at every turn by those two men. Just listen while I tell you all about it.”

Molly listened and was told all about it, from the Isar to the Mediterranean, the roof of Milan’s cathedral included.

“You wouldn’t believe it, would you?” the heroine of all concluded when she paused, altogether out of breath.

“Yes, I would. Because really I never saw two people so tremendously in love before.”

“And you thought I—cared for him when we were there in Zurich?”

“I didn’t think; I could see it with my eyes shut.”

“Really?” ([348])

“Sure! and as to him—” the signora shrugged her shoulders expressively.

Rosina threw her arms around her and kissed her.

“Oh, I am so delightfully glad to be so happy, and for you to be so happy at the same time.”

“Yes, I like to be happy myself,” Molly confessed.

“You *are* happy, aren’t you? You do like being married, don’t you?”

“Pleasantest two days of my life,” declared the bride, with apparent sincerity.

“Do you think your husband is as good-looking as monsieur?”

Molly started violently.

“*As good-looking!* Why, my dear, didn’t I tell you that he was the—Oh, if I *only* had my locket!”

“Never mind,” Rosina said soothingly; “you can think he’s handsomest, if you like, I don’t mind. At any rate, he isn’t a great musician.”

“No,” said Molly proudly; “but he’s a colonel, and a colonel ranks a genius anywhere, any day, in Europe.”

“All right,” said the *fiancée* amicably; “but, dear, didn’t you think that it was awful in Jack to tell me that he’d gone crazy, and frighten me half to death?”

“It must have been a terrible blow when you found that he hadn’t cared enough to go crazy, after all.” ([349])

“*Molly!*”

“And however are you going to exist with the *‘tempérament jaloux’*?”

“I never minded that a bit. Every time he is angry he is *so* adorable afterwards. We shall have such lovely makings-up. Oh, I expect to just revel in his rages!”

Madame La Francesca’s dimples danced afresh.

“And I,” she said, “I was raised with a hot-headed Irish father and four hot-headed Irish brothers, and I’ve been engaged to one peppery Scotchman and to frequent red-peppery continentals, so I find my ideal in an Italian who is, as the French say, ‘*Doux comme un agneau.*’”

“I thought it was ‘*Doux comme un mouton*,’” said Rosina cruelly, even while she was conscious of a real and genuine pity for her friend, under the circumstances.

“No, it’s ‘*agneau*,’” the other replied placidly, and then she rose and shook out her stunning blue grenadine self. “I must go. I’ve been away a long time.”

“You don’t get a bit tired of him, do you?”

“Well, I haven’t yet.”

“Isn’t it curious? I used to be so bored if I had to talk to the same man into the second hour, and then I never guessed what made me so contented to walk around with this one forever and ever.” [350]

“But you know now?”

“Yes, I know now.”

“I shall see you to-night,” Molly said, adjusting her hat before the pier-glass; “your cousin is going to give an especially magnificent dinner to just we five.”

“I didn’t know that he was going to give a dinner,” Rosina exclaimed, starting up affrightedly. “Why, all my trunks are down on the steamer!”

“They aren’t now,” said Molly, “they’re in the next room; and your gown is laid out on the bed, and on the table is a diamond star from your cousin, and a bracelet from my beloved and myself, and a perfectly ripping tiara from your beloved to yourself.”

Rosina put two bewildered hands to her head.

“Nobody tells me *anything*!” she wailed.

“No,” said Molly mockingly; “you’re so set on having your own way that it really seems wiser not to.”

Then they threw their arms about one another, kissed, laughed, kissed again, and parted.

Chapter Eighteen

[351]

IT was some ten or twelve days later, and the hour was half-past nine, and the scene a private salon in the Schweizerhof at Lucerne. It was early November, or very close upon it, and so a fire blazed on the hearth, and the looped-back curtains at the windows showed only a mirrored reflection of what was within. Beside the chimney-piece stood a wee table with a coffee service upon it, and scattered on the floor beside was a typical European mail,—letters, postals and papers galore; the “Munchener Jugend,” the “Town Topics,” a “Punch,” a “Paris-Herald,” the “Fliegender-Blätter,” three “Figaros,” and two “Petit-Journaux.” There was a grand piano across one corner of the room, and the priceless Stradivarius lay in its unlocked case beside it. Upon the music-rack was spread “Le Souvenir” of Vieuxtemps, with directions in pencil dashed across it here and there, and upward sweeps and great fortes and pianissimos indicated by the hand that was never patient with life, but always positive in the painstaking of perfection as to its art.

[352]

The artist himself lay in a deep chair before the fire, smoking and dreaming in his old familiar way; his wife sat on the floor beside him, her head leaning against the arm of his chair, her clasped hands hanging about his knee, and in her eyes and on her lips there rested a charm of utter joy as sweet as it was beautiful.

They were so silent in the content of their mutual reverie that the call of the cuckoo clock startled them both slightly. Von Ibn took his cigar from between his lips and discovered that it had gone out some time since. Rosina smiled at his face and extended her hand towards the coffee table, on the side of which lay two or three wax matches.

“No, no,” her husband cried quickly, “it is no need. I have quite finish,” and he threw what remained of the cigar to the flames as he spoke. “What have you think of?” he asked, as she laid her head back on the chair-arm; “was it of a pleasant thing?”

“I was thinking,” she said slowly, “of that man in Zurich, and wondering when and where he would learn of our marriage.”

“Who of Zurich?”

“Surely you haven’t forgotten that man in Zurich that I went to the Tonhalle with.”

([353])

“Oh, yes,” he exclaimed quickly; “the one I did go to the Gare with.”

“Yes, the one who wrote Uncle John about you.”

“Did he write about me? What has that Zuricher man to say of me?”

She rose to her feet and stood beside the fire, staring down into its leaping blades of light and flame.

“You know what he said as well as I do,—just everything that he could to make trouble for you and me.”

Then her wrath began to rise, as it always did when her mind recurred to this particular subject.

“What do you suppose made him bother to do such a mean thing? Why did he want to make all that trouble for? Why couldn’t he stick to his own business and let us alone? It is maddening to

think of. I shall never forgive him—never!”

Von Ibn raised the heavy darkness of his eyes up to her profile, and a dancing light passed over the unutterable tenderness that shadowed their glow.

“What trouble has he make?” he asked gently; “why may you never forgive him? Come to me, here upon my knee, and tell me of that.” [354]

He held out his hand, smiling, and she smiled too, and came to take her place upon the seat which he had indicated to her.

“He made all the trouble that he possibly could,” she said, touching his hair here and there with a fanciful hand, while the expression of her face indicated a conflict between the sentiments with which the man of Zurich inspired her and those provoked by her hearer.

“Ah, so,” said the latter; and then after a little he added, “But because he writes, your cousin is caused to arrive, and of that arriving we are become married. I see no trouble in that. *Au contraire*, I see much good. If I think it were really that Zuricher man that has write to America I should be most grateful of him. I think I should at once buy him a cane as that one which I get myself this afternoon.”

“Oh, it was he,” she said confidently; “Jack told me as much himself. I asked him if the letter was from Zurich, and he said ‘Yes.’”

Von Ibn flung his head far back against the chair cushions and laughed heartily.

“Oh, *mon Dieu*!” he exclaimed, “I must ever amuse myself of a woman; a woman does always know!” [355]

Rosina looked at him.

“Why, it *couldn’t* have been any one else,” she said positively; “you know *that*.”

He caught her face quickly between his hands and kissed it.

“It could very well be myself,” he exclaimed, laughing.

“*You!*”

“Yes; quite with ease. *Pourquoi pas?*”

“*You!*”

Then he laughed afresh in the face of her most complete bewilderment.

“*Tu es tordante!*” he said, and then he crushed her suddenly up in his arms. “It was I that wrote; it was like this.—You shall hear.”

She freed herself so as to regain an upright position and the ability to fully satisfy her desire to stare in amazement full in his face.

“It *wasn’t you*!” she said incredulously; “not *really*?”

“Yes, it was very really I. *Écoutez donc*, you shall know all.”

He raised her hands in his, palm to palm, the fingers interwoven, and looked into her eyes.

“It was because I am quite decided to marry you,” he began.

“There, in Zurich!” she interrupted with a gasp. [356]

“No, not in Zurich.—Naturally in Lucerne; here that first day, out there where the Quai lies so still in to-night’s darkness. When you have spoken first to me I have decided, and from that hour on it is become only stronger, never less sure.”

She was drawn to lay her two arms about his neck and to listen breathlessly to his recital.

“If you had been rich and I nobody, it had been so simple to marry you, perhaps; but being myself somebody, I cannot risk anything. It is so easy to marry an American when one desires but her money, but when one has also money and desires to marry, *voilà ce qui est difficile*. It was for that that I go to the Gare with that man of Zurich,—ah, he has surely serve us well, that Zuricher man,—and I get of him the address of your uncle, and then I may write to that uncle and beg that one be sent over who will have full power to arrange for you, if I can ever bring you to say ‘Yes.’” He stopped and his voice sank. “I could not be sure that you would say ‘Yes’ ever,” he continued softly; “but in your eyes, even at first, I have thought to find a hope.”

“Go on,” she whispered, touching his lips very lightly with her own.

“I am cabled to Leipsic that your cousin will arrive at Hâvre, and we meet there.” ([357])

Rosina’s head flew upward suddenly.

“You met Jack!”

“But certainly. We go together to Dinard that he may meet all my family, and then we go to Cassel, where there is a castle to us, and to hunt in the Schwarzwald, and then he has written to

America that I am quite rich and most honest, and of a real love for you; and when there has come an answer of your uncle, then I return to Munich to you."

"And I never knew a thing about any of it!"

"*Ah, ma chérie, pour l'instant on n'avait pas besoin de toi*," he reminded her, smiling.

"Go on!"

"Jack is very sure that all goes well at the end, and I am full of hope when—"

"But if you knew him, why did you strike him that night in front of the Regierung?"

"But I did not know him there in the dark, and that he should kiss you there in the street, that did me great surprise. And you have scream so, naturally I have not think but of a stranger; one would not expect a cousin of such a scream."

"And you went off with him the very next day; why didn't you let him go alone?"

"He has say you were better left. *Mon Dieu*, but I have been the angel these past months! I ([358]) must despair, you are so much decided; and when I despair the most, Jack will always say, 'Wait and you shall see that she sails never from Genoa.' But I was most unhappy. And my work, my work that should have gone so greatly out to the world this summer! *Perdu*—lost—lost!"

She laid her cheek softly against his.

"But that music is not really gone," she whispered; "it will find a voice again, a better voice, because—"

She kissed him fondly.

"Oh, of a surety," he said, returning the kiss twofold; "do not think that I repent me of one second lost in your winning. *Mon Dieu*, what life was left me if I had get you not? That I will never bear to remember for a second. But you must now say that you forgive the man who did write the letter from Zurich. You will, will you not?"

"Yes," she declared fervently; "I forgive him for ever and always. I even," she smiled into his eyes,—"I even feel obliged to him for the trouble that he took. But," she added, "I truly never expected to learn in the end that ours was simply a '*mariage des convenances*' after all!"

"It was as the marriage of a queen," he laughed, taking her hand within his own and raising it ([359]) reverently to his lips; "with such a marriage every one knows, everything is quite well ready, the lawyers are done, all the papers are signed, and then it is last of all that they go to the queen, and the queen does then say 'Yes.'" [360]

A New Romance by the Author of "The Shadow of the Czar"

THE VIKING'S SKULL

By JOHN R. CARLING, author of "The Shadow of the Czar," etc.
Illustrated. 12mo. $1.50

Mr. Carling has written a spirited story of love and adventure, with an ingeniously constructed plot, which tells how Idris Marville, true Earl of Ormsby, recovered a treasure hidden by one of his progenitors,—a Viking of the Ninth Century,—and how he cleared the memory of his father, who had been wrongfully convicted of murder. There are many powerful scenes in the book and abundant love interest. The whole story is exceptionally strong, dramatic, vivid, and interest-compelling. It is a worthy successor to the author's remarkable and successful novel, "The Shadow of the Czar."

A Story of Modern Quebec by Miss Ray

BY THE GOOD SAINTE ANNE

By ANNA CHAPIN RAY, author of "The Dominant Strain," etc.
With frontispiece. 12mo. $1.25

A young Englishman, Cecil Barth, visiting Quebec on his way to a ranch, a New York physician

and his daughter Nancy, a Canadian of English descent, and a young French-Canadian studying law are the chief characters of this charming summer novel, abounding in bright and interesting conversations. This pleasing story of the love affairs of vivacious Nancy, the heroine, has for a background the many places of interest in and around Quebec.

A Stirring Tale of the Plains

THE RAINBOW CHASERS

By JOHN H. WHITSON
Author of "Barbara, A Woman of the West," etc.
Illustrated. 12mo. $1.50

Full of the atmosphere of the West, with a cowboy, land speculator, and lover for its hero, Mr. Whitson's new novel, without being in the least a copy, has many of the attractions of Mr. Wister's hero, "The Virginian."

"The Rainbow Chasers" is a virile American novel and treats of the elemental forces of Western life and the results of the great fever of speculation in land. The prairies and forests of the West are the scenes which the author has chosen for a novel which is full of interest and strength.

The characters of the story are vigorous men, men with red blood in their veins, men of action who build up new communities.

By the Author of "A Prince of Sinners"

ANNA THE ADVENTURESS

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM, author of
"A Prince of Sinners," etc. Illustrated. 12mo. $1.50

Mr. Oppenheim's new story of London life shows this talented and increasingly popular author at his best. The subtle character study of two sisters, Anna and Annabel, is masterly. The latter "got herself talked about" when she and her sister lived in Paris, and when Sir John Ferringham proposed to her, believing her to be Anna, she keeps up the delusion. The consequences of this bold deception Mr. Oppenheim has unfolded to us with remarkable ingenuity. The story increases in interest as it progresses, and sparkles with brilliant conversation and strong situations.

The Story of a Man's Triumph over the Flesh

THE WOOD-CARVER OF 'LYMPUS

By MARY E. WALLER, author of "A Daughter of the
Rich," etc. Illustrated. 12mo. $1.50

The hero of Miss Waller's new story is one of the most powerful and original characters portrayed in recent fiction. Hugh Armstrong, used to a busy out-of-door life, in felling a tree meets with an accident and loses the use of his limbs. At first he finds it impossible to adjust himself to his shut-in life, but a friend suggests wood-carving to him. Through work and love a great change comes over him, and the author has portrayed to us in a powerful manner Armstrong's salvation. The scenes are laid in the Green Mountains of Vermont.

A New Novel of Present-Day Virginia Life

WHERE THE TIDE COMES IN

By LUCY MEACHAM THRUSTON, author of “Mistress Brent,” “A Girl of Virginia,” etc.
Illustrated. 12mo. $1.50

In her new story Mrs. Thruston portrays a heroine as charming as her delightful “Girl of Virginia.” The scenes of the novel are laid at Norfolk and Portsmouth, and the vicissitudes of the Southern vegetable farmer, who depends on the irrepressible negro, are strongly pictured. The novel is a genuine love-story with a touch of politics, and the Southern atmosphere is delightfully unhackneyed.

A Tale of Norway in the Tenth Century

THE NORTH STAR

By M. E. HENRY-RUFFIN. Illustrated. 12mo. $1.50

This Viking romance is a tale of love and adventure with King Olaf Tryggveson for the hero. The story opens with a scene at a fair in Ireland, where Olaf meets a beautiful Irish princess, and later changes to Norway, where Olaf returns to be received as King. Such history and legend as have come to us of that time furnish fertile imagination a frame for stirring incident and rapid action.

By the Author of “The God of Things”

THE EFFENDI

By FLORENCE BROOKS WHITEHOUSE. With illustrations. 12mo. $1.50

The Prologue of this engrossing romance of the Soudan deals with the siege of Khartoum and the death of the hero, Gordon, and the Epilogue with the retribution which England exacted from the Arab hordes. Between the two is placed a dramatic story of love and adventure.

The author of this stirring story has been highly praised for characterization and imagination, and for her knowledge of the Nile country.

Some New Stories by Sienkiewicz

LIFE AND DEATH

AND OTHER LEGENDS AND STORIES. By HENRYK SIENKIEWICZ, author of “*Quo Vadis*,” etc. Translated from the original Polish by JEREMIAH CURTIN. Illustrated. 16mo. $1.00.

Contents: I. Life and Death: a Hindu Legend. II. Is he the Dearest One? III. A Legend of the Sea. IV. The Cranes. V. The Judgment of Peter and Paul on Olympus.

LITTLE, BROWN, & CO., PUBLISHERS
BOSTON, MASS.

Transcriber's Note:

Accents are as they appear in the original book.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A WOMAN'S WILL ***

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

START: FULL LICENSE

THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG LICENSE

PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase "Project Gutenberg"), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg™ License available with this file or online at www.gutenberg.org/license.

Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg™ electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. "Project Gutenberg" is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg™ electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg™ electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation ("the Foundation" or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg™ works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg™ name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg™ License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg™ work. The Foundation

makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg™ License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg™ work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

> This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg™ License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg™ License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg™.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, “Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation.”

- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.

- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.

• You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain “Defects,” such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the “Right of Replacement or Refund” described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you ‘AS-IS’, WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™’s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see

Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at www.gutenberg.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at www.gutenberg.org/contact

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations ($1 to $5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit www.gutenberg.org/donate.

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: www.gutenberg.org/donate

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: www.gutenberg.org.

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.