

silence, and only in the evening did he order the young man to be called.

The stripling stood before the face of his lord barely alive, and thought that the ground was opening under his feet. But the prince inquired, —

"What is your name?"

"Jelenski."

"You fired at the Cossack?"

"I did," groaned he, pale as a sheet.

"Why did you do it?"

"Because I could not look at the torment."

"Oh, you will see so much of their deeds that at a sight like this pity will fly from you like an angel; but because on account of your pity you risked your life, the treasurer in Lubni will pay you ten golden ducats, and I take you into my personal service."

All wondered that the affair was finished in this way; but meanwhile it was announced that a detachment from Zólotonosha had come, and attention was turned in another direction.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

LATE in the evening the army arrived in Rozlogi by moonlight. There they found Pan Yan sitting on his Calvary. The knight, as is known, had lost his senses altogether from pain and torment; and when the priest Mukhovetski brought him to his mind, the officers bore him away and began to greet and comfort him, especially Pan Longin Podbipienta, who for three months past had been a popular officer in Skshetuski's regiment. Pan Longin was ready also to be his companion in sighing and weeping, and for his benefit made a new vow at once, that he would fast every Tuesday of his life, if God would in any way send solace to the lieutenant.

Skshetuski was conducted straightway to Vishnyevetski at a peasant's cottage. When the prince saw his favorite he said not a word; he only opened his arms to him and waited. Skshetuski threw himself into those arms with loud weeping. Yeremi pressed him to his bosom and kissed him on the forehead, and the officers present saw the tears in his worthy eyes. After a while he began to speak, —

"I greet you as a son, for I thought I should never see you again. Bear your burden manfully, and remember that you will have thousands of comrades in misfortune who will leave wives, children, parents, and friends; and as a drop of water is lost in an ocean, so let your suffering sink in the sea of universal pain. When such terrible times have come on our dear country, whoever is a man and has a sword at his side will not yield himself to weeping over his own loss, but will hasten to the rescue of the common mother, and either find relief in his conscience or lie down in a glorious death, receive a heavenly crown, and with it eternal happiness."

"Amen!" said the priest Mukhovetski.

"Oh, I should rather see her dead!" groaned the knight.

"Weep, then, for great is your loss, and we will weep with you; for you have come not to Pagans, wild Scythians, or Tartars, but to brothers and loving comrades. Say to yourself, 'To-day I will weep over myself, but to-morrow



is not mine;’ for remember that to-morrow we march to battle.”

“I will go with you to the end of the world; but I cannot console myself. It is so grievous for me without her that I cannot, I cannot—”

The poor fellow seized himself by the head, then put his fingers between his teeth, and gnawed them to overcome the groans, for a storm of despair was tearing him afresh.

“You have said, ‘Thy will be done!’” said the priest, severely.

“Amen, amen! I yield to his will, but with pain. I cannot help it,” answered the knight, with a broken voice.

They could see how he struggled and writhed, and his suffering wrung tears from them all. The most sensitive were Volodyovski and Podbipenta, who poured out whole streams. The latter clasped his hands and said pitifully:

“Brother, dear brother, contain yourself!”

“Listen!” said the prince on a sudden, “I have news that Bogun rushed off from here toward Lubni, for he cut down my men at Vassilyevka. Do not despair too soon, for perhaps he did not find her; if he did, why should he rush on toward Lubni?”

“As true as life, that may be the case,” cried some of the officers. “God will console you.”

Skshetusk opened his eyes as if he did not understand what they were saying. Suddenly hope gleamed in his mind, and he threw himself at the feet of the prince.

“Oh, your Highness!” cried he, “my life, my blood—”

He could speak no further. He had grown so weak that Pan Longin was obliged to raise him and place him on the bench; but it was evident from his looks that he had grasped at that hope as a drowning man at a plank, and that his pain had left him. The officers fanned that spark, saying he might find the princess in Lubni. Afterward they took him to another cottage, and then brought him mead and wine. He wished to drink, but could not, his throat was so straitened. His faithful comrades drank instead; and when they had grown gladsome they began to embrace and kiss him, and to wonder at his meagreness and the marks of sickness which he bore on his face.

“Oh, you look like one risen from the dead,” said portly Pan Dzik.

“It must be they insulted you in the Saitch, and gave you neither food nor drink.”

“Tell us what happened to you.”

“I will tell you some time,” said Skshetusk, with a weak voice. “They wounded me, and I was sick.”

“They wounded him!” cried Pan Dzik.

“They wounded him, though an envoy!” added Pan Sleshinski. The officers, astounded at Cossack insolence, looked at one another, and then began to press forward to Pan Yan with great friendliness.

“And did you see Hmelnitski?”

“I did.”

“Well, give him here!” said Migurski; “we will make mince-meat of him in a minute.”

The night passed in such conversation. Toward morning it was announced that the second party, despatched on the more distant road to Cherkasi, had returned. It was evident the men of this party had not come up with Bogun; they had brought wonderful news, however. They brought many people whom they had found on the road, and who had seen Bogun two days before. These people said that the chief was evidently pursuing some one, for he inquired everywhere if a fat noble had not been seen fleeing with a young Cossack. Besides, he was in a terrible hurry, and flew at breakneck speed. The people also affirmed that they had not seen Bogun taking away a young woman, and they would have seen her without fail if she had been with him, for only a few Cossacks were following the chief.

New consolation, but also new anxiety, entered the heart of Pan Yan, for these stories were simply beyond his comprehension. He did not understand why Bogun, pursuing first in the direction of Lubni, threw himself on the garrison at Vassilyevka, and then returned suddenly in the direction of Cherkasi. That he had not carried off Helena appeared to be certain, for Pan Kushel had met Anton’s party, and she was not with them. The people now brought from the direction of Cherkasi had not seen her with Bogun. Where could she be then? Where was she hiding? Had she escaped? If so, in what direction? Why should she not escape to Lubni, instead of Cherkasi or Zólotonosha? Still Bogun’s parties were pursuing and hunting somebody around Cherkasi and Próhorovka. But why were they inquiring about a noble with a young Cossack? To all these questions the lieutenant found no answer.

“Put your heads together, talk the matter over, explain what this means,” said he to the officers, “for my head is unequal to the task.”



"I think she must be in Lubni," said Pan Migurski.

"Impossible!" rejoined Zatsvilikhovski; "for if she were in Lubni then Bogun would hurry to Chigirin, and would not expose himself to the hetmans, of whose defeat he could not have known at that time. If he divided his Cossacks and pursued in two directions, I tell you that he was pursuing no one but her."

"And why did he inquire for an old noble and a young Cossack?"

"No great sagacity is needed to guess that. If she fled, she was not in woman's dress, but surely in disguise, so as not to be discovered. It is my opinion, then, that that Cossack is she."

"Sure as life, sure as life!" repeated the others.

"Well, but who is the noble?"

"I don't know that," replied the old man, "but we can ask about it. The peasants must have seen who was here and what happened. Let's have the man of this cottage brought in."

The officers hurried, and brought by the shoulder a "sub-neighbor" from the cow-house.

"Well, fellow," said Zatsvilikhovski, "were you here when the Cossacks with Bogun attacked the castle?"

The peasant, as was customary, began to swear that he had not been present, that he had not seen anything, did not know anything. But Zatsvilikhovski knew with whom he had to deal; therefore he said, —

"Oh, I know, you son of a Pagan, that you were right here when they plundered the place. Lie to some one else. Here is a gold ducat for you, and there is a soldier with a sword. Take your choice. Besides, if you do not tell, we will burn the village, and harm will come to poor people through you."

Then the "sub-neighbor" began to tell of what he had seen. When the Cossacks fell to revelling on the square before the house, he went with others to see what was going on. They heard that the old princess and her sons were killed, but that Nikolai had wounded the ataman, who lay as if lifeless. What happened to the young woman they could not discover; but at daybreak next morning they heard that she had escaped with a noble who had come with Bogun.

"That's it! that's it!" said Zatsvilikhovski. "Here is your gold ducat. You see that no harm has come to you. And did you or any one in the neighborhood see that noble?"

"I saw him; but he was not from this place."

"What did he look like?"

"He was as big as a stove, with a gray beard, and swore like a minstrel; blind of one eye."

"Oh, for God's sake!" said Pan Longin, "that must be Pan Zagloba."

"Zagloba, who else!"

"Zagloba? Wait! — Zagloba? — maybe it is. He kept company with Bogun in Chigirin, — drank and played dice with him. Maybe it is he. The description fits him."

Here Zatsvilikhovski turned again to the peasant.

"And that noble fled with the young lady?"

"Yes; so we heard."

"Do you know Bogun well?"

"Oh, very well! He used to be here for months at a time."

"But maybe that noble took her away for Bogun?"

"No; how could he do that? He bound Bogun, — tied him up with his coat, — then, they say, carried off the young lady as far as the eye of people could see. The ataman howled like a werewolf, and before daylight had himself bound between horses, and rushed off toward Lubni, but did not find them; then he rushed in another direction."

"Praise be to God!" said Migurski; "she may be in Lubni. That he hurried in the direction of Cherkasi is nothing; not finding her in one place, he tried in another."

Pan Yan was already on his knees, praying fervently.

"Well, well," said the old standard-bearer, "I did not think there was such mettle in Zagloba that he would dare to attack such a hero as Bogun. True, he was very friendly to Skshetuski for the triple mead of Lubni which we drank in Chigirin. He mentioned it to me more than once, and called him a distinguished cavalier. Well, well, this cannot find a place yet in my head, for he drank up no small amount of Bogun's money. But that he should bind Bogun and carry off the lady! I did not expect such a daring deed from him, for I held him a squabbler and a coward. Cunning he is, but a tremendous exaggerator; and all the bravery of such people is generally on their lips."

"Let him be as he likes; it is enough that he has snatched the princess from the hands of robbers," said Volodyovski. "And since, as is evident, he has no lack of stratagems, he has surely fled with her in such fashion as to be safe from the enemy himself."



"His own life depended on that," said Migurski.

Then they turned to Pan Yan and said: "Comfort yourself, dear comrade; we shall all be your best men yet!"

"And drink at the wedding."

Zatsvilikhovski added: "If he fled beyond the Dnieper and heard of the defeat at Korsún, he was obliged to return to Chernigoff, and in that case we shall come up to him on the road."

"Here is to the happy conclusion of all the troubles and sufferings of our friend!" called out Sleshinski.

They began to raise their glasses to the health of Pan Yan, the princess, their future descendants, and Zagloba. Thus passed the night. At daybreak the march was sounded, and the forces moved for Lubni.

The journey was made quickly, for the troops of the prince went without a train. Pan Yan wished to gallop ahead with the Tartar regiment, but was too weak. Besides, Prince Yermi kept him near his own person, for he wished to hear the account of his mission to the Saitch. The knight was obliged, therefore, to give an account of how he had travelled, how they attacked him at Hortitsa and dragged him into the Saitch, but was silent concerning his disputes with Hmelnitski, lest it might seem that he was praising himself. The prince was affected most by the news that old Grodzitski had no powder, and therefore could not defend himself long.

"That is an unspeakable loss," said he, "for that fortress might cause great damage and hindrance to the rebellion. Grodzitski is a famous man, really a *decus et præsidium* to the Commonwealth. Why did he not send to me for powder? I should have given it to him from the cellars of Lubni."

"He thought evidently that by virtue of his office the Grand Hetman should think of that," said Pan Yan.

"I can believe it," added the prince, and was silent.

After a while, however, he continued: "The Grand Hetman is an old and experienced soldier, but he had too much self-confidence, and thereby has ruined himself; he underestimated the whole rebellion, and when I hurried to him with assistance he did not look at me at all agreeably. He did not wish to divide the glory with any one, feared the victory would be attributed to me."

"That is my opinion too," said Skshetuski, gravely.

"He thought to pacify the Zaporojians with clubs. God has punished the insolence. This Commonwealth is per-

ishing through that same kind of pride, which is hateful to God, and of which perhaps no one is free."

The prince was right; and in truth he was not himself without blame, for it was not so long since, in his dispute over Gadyach with Pan Alexander Konyetspolski, the prince entered Warsaw with four thousand men, whom he ordered, in case he should be pressed to take the oath in the Senate, to break into the Chamber and fall upon them all; and he did this through nothing else but insolent pride, which would not allow him to be brought to oath instead of giving his word. Maybe he remembered this affair at that moment; for he fell to thinking, and rode on in silence, his eyes wandering over the broad steppes which lay on both sides of the road. Perhaps he thought of the fate of that Commonwealth which he loved with all the power of his ardent spirit, and to which the day of wrath and calamity seemed approaching.

After midday the swelling cupolas of Lubni churches and the glittering roof and pointed towers of St. Michael appeared from the lofty bank of the Sula. The army marched without hurry, and entered before evening.

The prince went immediately to the castle, where, in accordance with orders sent in advance, everything had been made ready for the road. The regiments were disposed for the night in the town, — which was no easy matter, for there was a great concourse of people in the place. Roused by reports of the progress of civil war on the right bank and of ferment among the peasants, all the nobles east of the Dnieper had crowded to Lubni. They had come even from distant settlements, with their wives, children, servants, horses, camels, and whole herds of cattle. There had come also the prince's agents, under-starostas and all kinds of officials from among the nobles, tenants, Jews; in a word, all against whom the rebellion might turn sharp knives. You would have said that some great annual fair was going on at Lubni; for there were not wanting even merchants of Moscow and Astrakhan Tartars, who, coming to the Ukraine with goods, halted there in view of war. On the square stood thousands of wagons of the most varied forms, — some with willow-bound wheels, others having wheels without spokes, cut out of one piece of wood, — Cossack telegas, and equipages of nobles. The more distinguished guests were lodged in the castle and in inns; the unimportant and servants, in tents near the churches. In the streets fires were kindled, at which food was cooking; and every-



where was a throng, a stir, a bustle, as in a bee-hive. The most varied costumes and colors were to be seen. There were present soldiers of the prince from different regiments, haiduks and Turkish grooms, Jews in black cloaks, peasants, Armenians in violet caps, Tartars in fur coats. The air was full of the sounds of different languages, of shouts, curses, cries of children, barking of dogs, and bellowing of cattle.

The people greeted the approaching regiments joyfully, for they saw in them assurance of safety and deliverance. Some went to the castle to shout in honor of the prince and princess. The most varied reports passed through the crowd, — one that the prince would stay in Lubni; another that he was going far away to Lithuania, where it would be necessary to follow him; a third, that he had already defeated Hmelnitski. The prince, after the greeting with his wife was over, and the announcement of the journey on the following day, looked with anxiety on those crowds of wagons and people which were to follow the army, and be fetters to his feet by lessening the speed of the march. His only comfort was the thought that beyond Bragin, in a quieter country, all would disperse, take refuge in various corners, and be a burden no longer. The princess herself, with ladies in waiting and the court, were to be sent to Vishnyovets, so that the prince without care or hindrance might move into the fire with his whole force. The preparations at the castle had been made already, — wagons were filled with effects and valuables, supplies were collected, all persons of the court were ready to take their seats in the wagons and on horseback at a moment's notice. This readiness was the work of Princess Griselda, who in calamity had as great a soul as her husband, and who, in truth, was equal to him in energy and unbending temper.

The prince was pleased with what he saw, though his heart was rent at the thought that he must leave the Lubni nest in which he had known so much happiness and had won so much glory. This sorrow, too, was shared by the whole army, the servants, and the entire court; for all felt certain that when the prince would be far away in battle, the enemy would not leave Lubni in peace, but would avenge on those beloved walls all the blows which they had suffered at the hands of Yeremi. Cries and lamentations were not lacking, especially among the women, and among those whose children were born there, and those who were leaving the graves of their parents behind.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

PAN YAN, who had galloped in advance of the regiments to the castle to inquire for the princess and Zagloba, did not find them. They had neither been seen nor heard of, though there was news of the attack on Rozlogi and the destruction of the troops at Vassilyevka. The knight locked himself up in his quarters at the arsenal, together with his disappointed hopes. Sorrow, fear, and affliction rushed upon him again; but he defended himself from them as a wounded soldier on the battle-field defends himself from crows and ravens flocking around to drink his warm blood and tear his flesh. He strengthened himself with the thought that Zagloba, being fertile in stratagems, might make his way to Chernigoff and hide on receiving news of the defeat of the hetmans. He remembered then that old man whom he met on the way to Rozlogi, and who, together with his boy, as he said himself, had been stripped of his clothes by some devil, and had sat three days in the reeds of the Kagamlik, fearing to come out into the world. The thought occurred to Skshetuski at once that it must be Zagloba who had stripped them in order to get a disguise for himself and Helena. "It cannot be otherwise," repeated he; and he found great consolation in this thought, since such disguise made flight much more easy. He hoped that God, who watches over innocence, would not abandon Helena; and wishing the more to obtain this favor for her, he determined to purify himself from his sins. He left the arsenal therefore; and on searching for the priest Mukhovetski, and finding him engaged in consoling some women, he begged to have his confession heard.

The priest led him to a chapel, entered the confessional at once, and began to hear him. When he had finished, the priest instructed, edified, and consoled him, strengthened his faith, and then rebuked him, saying: "A Christian is not permitted to doubt the power of God, or an individual to grieve more over his own misfortune than that of his country; but you have more tears for your personal interests — that is, for your friends — than for the nation, and grieve more over your love than over the catastrophe that has