

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE sun was high when the princess opened her eyes from sleep on the following day. Her glance rested first on the ceiling, and remained there long; then it took in the whole room. In her breast returning consciousness struggled still with the remnants of sleep and visions. On her face were depicted wonder and disquiet. Where is she, whence did she come, and in whose power is she? Is she dreaming yet, or is she awake? What means the splendor with which she is surrounded? What has happened to her?

At that moment the awful scenes of the taking of Bar rose before her as if in life. She remembered everything,—the slaughter of thousands of nobles, townspeople, priests, nuns, and children; the faces of the mob smeared in blood, their necks and heads wound around with the still steaming entrails, the drunken uproar, that day of judgment for the ruined town; finally the appearance of Bogun and her seizure. She remembered also how in a moment of despair she had fallen upon a knife held by her own hand, and the cold sweat stood on her temples. It was evident that the knife slipped along her shoulder, for she suffers only a little pain; but immediately she feels that she is alive, that strength and health are returning to her, and finally she remembers that she has been borne a long time somewhere in a swing. But where is she now? In some castle, is she saved, rescued, out of danger? And again her eyes wandered around the room. The windows in it were small, square, as in a peasant's cottage, and the world outside could not be seen through them; for instead of panes of glass, they were fitted with pieces of white membrane. Was it really a peasant's cottage? No, for the unbounded luxury within bears witness against that. Instead of a ceiling over her head was an enormous piece of purple silk on which were embroidered golden stars and a moon; the walls were entirely hung in brocade; on the floor lay a many-colored carpet, covered as with living flowers. In front of the fireplace was a Persian rug; golden fringes, silks, velvets, everywhere, from the walls of the ceiling to the pillows

on which her head is reposing. The bright light of day, penetrating the window membranes, lighted up the interior, but was lost in the purple, dark violet, and sapphire colors of the velvet, forming a kind of enchanted rainbow darkness. The princess marvelled, did not believe her eyes. Was this some witchery, or had not the troops of Yeremi rescued her from the hands of Cossacks and put her away in one of the prince's castles?

She clasped her hands. "Oh, Holy Most Pure! grant that the first face to appear at the door shall be the face of my guardian and friend!"

Then through the heavy fringed bed-curtain came to her the flowing sound of a distant lute, and at the same time a voice began to accompany with the familiar song,—

"Oh, this loving
Is worse than sickness!
Sickness I can live through,
And grow well again;
But my faithful loving
I cannot part with while I live."

The princess raised herself, and the longer she listened the wider stared her eyes from terror. At last she screamed and fell as if dead on the cushions. She recognized the voice of Bogun.

Her scream passed evidently through the walls of the chamber; for after a while the heavy curtain rustled, and the chief himself appeared on the threshold.

Kurtsevichovna covered her eyes with her hands, and her whitened and quivering lips repeated, as if in a fever: "Jesus, Mary! Jesus, Mary!"

And yet the sight which so terrified her would have rejoiced the eyes of more maidens than one, for there was a blaze from the apparel and the countenance of the young hero. The diamond buttons of his uniform glittered like stars in heaven, his dagger and sabre were covered with precious stones, his coat of silver cloth and his scarlet kontush doubled the beauty of his brunette face; and he stood before her, lithe, dark-browed, magnificent,—the beauty of all the Ukraine heroes. But his eyes were in mist, like stars curtained by haze, and he looked on her with obedience; and seeing that fear did not leave her face, he began to speak in a low, sad voice,—

"Have no fear, Princess!"

"Where am I? where am I?" asked she, looking at him through her fingers.

"In a safe place, far from war. Fear not, my dear soul! I brought you here from Bar, so that no harm might come to you from man or war. The Cossacks spared no one in Bar; you alone came out alive."

"What are you doing here? Why do you pursue me?"

"I pursue you! Oh, merciful God!" And the chief extended his arms as a man who is confronted by a great injustice.

"I fear you terribly," she said.

"And why do you fear? If you say so, I shall not move from the door. I am your slave; I will sit here at the door and look into your eyes. Evil I do not wish you. Why do you hate me? Oh, merciful God! you thrust a knife into your body at the sight of me, though you have known me long, and knew that I was going to defend you. You know I am not a stranger to you, but a heartfelt friend; and you stabbed yourself with a knife."

The pale cheeks of the princess were suddenly suffused with blood. "I preferred death to disgrace; and I swear, if you do not respect me, I will kill myself, even if I were to lose my soul!"

The eyes of the maiden flashed fire, and the chief knew that there was no trifling with the princely blood of the Kurtsevichi; for in her frenzy she would carry out her threat, and a second time would point the knife with more success. He made no answer, therefore, merely advanced a couple of steps toward the window, and sitting on a bench covered with gold brocade, hung his head.

Silence lasted for a time.

"Be at rest," said he. "While my head is clear, while Mother Gorailka does not heat my brain, you are for me like an image in the church. But since I found you in Bar I have ceased to drink. Before that I drank and drank, drowning my sorrow with Mother Gorailka. What could I do? But now I take to my mouth neither sweet wine nor spirits."

The princess was silent.

"I will look on you," he continued, "comfort my eyes with your face, then go."

"Give me back my liberty!" said she.

"But are you in captivity? You are mistress here. And where do you want to go? The Kurtsevichi have perished, fire has devoured villages and towns; the prince

is not in Lubni, he is marching against Hmelnitski and Hmelnitski against him; war is everywhere, blood is flowing; every place is filled with Cossacks and Tartars and soldiers. Who will have sympathy and respect for you? Who will defend you, if not I?"

The princess raised her eyes, for she remembered that there was another in the world who would give her protection, sympathy, and defence; but she would not speak his name, so as not to rouse the fierce lion. Deep sorrow therefore pressed her heart. Was he for whom her soul was yearning still alive? While in Bar she knew that he was, for immediately after the departure of Zagloba she heard Skshetusk's name coupled with the victories of the terrible prince. But from that time how many days and nights had passed, how many battles might have been fought, how many perils have reached him. News of him could come to her then only through Bogun, of whom she neither wished nor dared to inquire.

Her head then dropped on the cushions. "Am I to remain a prisoner here?" asked she, with a groan. "What have I done to you, that you follow me like misfortune?"

The Cossack raised his head, and began to speak so quietly that scarcely could he be heard.

"What have you done to me? I know not; but this I do know, that if I am misfortune to you, you too are misfortune to me. If I had not loved you, I should have been free as the wind in the field, free in heart and in soul, and full of glory as was Konashevich Sahaidachny himself. Your face is my misfortune, your eyes are my misfortune; neither freedom is dear to me, nor Cossack glory! What were beauties to me, till from being a child you had grown to be a woman? Once I captured a galley with maidens the most beautiful, for they were on the way to the Sultan; and no one of them touched my heart. The Cossack brothers played with them; then I ordered a stone to the neck of each, and into the water they went. I feared no man, I minded nothing. I went with war against the Pagan. I took booty, and like a prince in his castle was I in the steppe. And to-day what am I? I sit here; I am a slave. I crave a kind word from you and cannot receive it; I have never heard it, even when your aunt and your cousins gave you to me. Oh, if you, girl, had been different to me, then what has come to pass would not have been! I should not have stricken down your cousins, I should not have joined fraternal hands with rebellion and peasants; but through you I

have lost my mind. If you had wished to lead me anywhere, you could have led me where you liked, and I should have given you my blood, my soul. Now I am steeped in blood of nobles; but in old times I killed only Tartars, and brought you booty, that you might be clothed in gold and jewels like cherubim of the Lord. Why did you not love me, then? Oh, it is heavy and sad at my heart! I cannot live with you nor without you, nor far away nor near you, neither on the mountain nor in the valley, my dove, my precious heart! But forgive me that I came for you to Rozlogi in Cossack style, with sabre and fire; but I was drunk with anger at the princes, and I drank gorailka on the way, — unhappy outlaw! But afterward, when you escaped me, I howled like a dog, and my wounds tortured me, and I could not eat. I begged death to take me; and you want me to yield you now, to lose you a second time, my dove, my heart!"

The chief stopped, for his voice broke in his throat, and he began to groan. Helena's face grew red and pale by turns. The more of measureless love there was in Bogun's words, the greater the gulf which opened before her, bottomless, and without hope of rescue.

The Cossack rested awhile, regained self-command, and continued, —

"Ask what you like. See how the room is decorated! This is mine; this is booty from Bar, which I brought for you on six horses. Ask what you wish, — yellow gold, shining garments, bright jewels, willing slaves. I am rich, I have enough of my own; and Hmelnitski will not spare treasures on me, and Krivonos will not spare them. You will be like Princess Vishnyevetski. I will win castles for you, give you half the Ukraine; for though I am a Cossack, not a noble, I am a bunchuk ataman. Under me are ten thousand men, — more than Prince Yeremi commands. Ask what you like, only not to flee from me, — only stay with me and love me, O my dove!"

The princess raised herself on the cushions. She was very pale, but her sweet and marvellous face expressed such unbroken will, pride, and power that the dove was most like an eagle at that moment.

"If you are waiting for my answer," said she, "then know that if I had even a lifetime to groan out in captivity with you, never, never should I love you, God be my aid!"

Bogun struggled with himself a moment. "Do not tell me such things," said he, with a hoarse voice.

"Do not speak to me of your love; it brings me shame and offence. I am not for you."

The chief rose. "And for whom, then, are you, Princess Kurtsevichovna? And whose would you have been in Bar but for me?"

"Whoso saves my life to give me shame and captivity is my enemy, not my friend."

"And do you suppose that the peasants would have killed you? The thought is terrible."

"The knife would have killed me, but you wrenched it from me."

"And I will not give it up, for you must be mine," burst out the Cossack.

"Never! I prefer death."

"You must and will be."

"Never!"

"Well, if you were not wounded, after what you have told me, I should send my Cossacks to Rashkoff to-day and have a monk brought here, and to-morrow I should be your husband. Then what? It is a sin not to love your husband and fondle him. Ai! you high mighty lady, the love of a Cossack is an offence, an anger to you. And who are you that I am for you a peasant? Where are your castles and boyars and troops? At what are you angry, — at what are you offended? I took you in war; you are a captive. If I were a peasant, I should teach you reason on the white shoulders with the whip, and without a priest would have enough of your beauty, — if I were a peasant, not a knight!"

"Angels of heaven, save me!" whispered the princess.

But in the mean while greater and greater fury rose to the face of Bogun, and anger seized him by the hair.

"I know," said he, "why you are offended, why you resist me. You preserve for another your maiden modesty. But in vain, as I live, as I am a Cossack! Nakedness¹ the noble! The insincere, miserable Pole barely saw you, merely turned with you in the dance, — death to him! — and took you captive altogether. Then let the Cossack suffer, break his head. But I will reach this Pole, and I will order him torn out of his skin, will nail him up. Do you know that Hmelnitski is marching on the Poles, and I go with him; and I will find your dove even under the ground, and when I return I will throw his head at your feet as a present."

¹ Holota (Nakedness) was often given as a nickname to a poor noble.

Helena did not hear the last words of the ataman. Pain, anger, wounds, emotion, terror, took her strength; an immeasurable weakness came upon all her limbs, her eyes and her thoughts grew dark, and she fell into a swoon.

The chief stood some time, pale from anger, with foam on his lips. Then he saw the lifeless head hanging back powerless, and from his lips went out a roar almost unearthly. "It is all over with her! Horpyna! Horpyna!" And he threw himself on the floor.

The giantess rushed into the room with all speed. "What is the matter?"

"Help! help!" cried Bogun. "I have killed her, my soul, my light!"

"What! Did you scold her?"

"I have killed her, I have killed her!" groaned he; and he wrung his hands over his head.

But Horpyna, approaching the princess, soon discovered that it was not death, but a deep faint, and putting Bogun outside the door, began to assist her. The princess opened her eyes after a time.

"My dear, there is nothing the matter with you," said the enchantress. "You were frightened at him, I see, and darkness settled on you; but the darkness will pass and health will come. You are like a nut, my girl; you have long to live in the world and enjoy happiness."

"Who are you?" asked the princess, with a weak voice.

"I? Your servant, for he so ordered it."

"Where am I?"

"In the Devil's Glen. A pure wilderness here; you will see no one but him."

"Do you live here?"

"My farm is here. I am Dontsovna. My brother is a colonel under Bogun; he leads young heroes, and I stay here, and will care for you in this golden chamber. From a cottage it has become a bower, so that light gleams from it. He has brought all this for you."

Helena looked at the lively face of the young woman, and it seemed to her full of sincerity.

"But will you be good to me?"

The white teeth of the young witch gleamed in a smile. "I shall; why should n't I? But do you be good also to the ataman. He is a falcon, he is a glorious hero, he will —"

Here the witch bent to the ear of Helena, whispered something, then burst into laughter.

"Be off!" screamed the princess.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Two days later in the morning Horpyna sat with Bogun under the willow near the mill-wheel, and looked at the water foaming on it.

"You will be careful of her, you will guard her, you will not let your eye off her, so that she shall never leave the glen."

"The glen has a narrow neck near the river, but there is space enough here. Order the neck to be filled with stones, and we shall be as if in the bottom of a jug. When I need to go out I shall find a way."

"How do you live here?"

"Cheremis plants corn under the cliffs, cultivates grapes, and snares wild fowl. With what you have brought she will want nothing unless bird's milk. Have no fear! She will not leave the glen, and no one will know of her unless your men say she is here."

"I have made them swear silence. They are faithful fellows; they will say nothing, even if straps were torn from their skin. But you said yourself that people came here to you as to a soothsayer."

"Sometimes they come from Rashkoff, and sometimes when they hear of me they come from God knows what places. But they stay at the river; no one enters the glen, for they are afraid. You saw the bones. These were people who wished to enter; their bones are lying around."

"Did you kill them?"

"Whoever killed them, killed them! Those in search of soothsaying wait at the opening of the glen and I go to the wheel. What I see in the water, I tell them. I shall examine for you directly, but I don't know whether anything will be seen, for it does not always appear."

"If only you see nothing bad!"

"If I see something bad, you will not go; and in that case it would be better not to go."

"I must. Hmelnitski sent me a letter to Bar to return, and Krivonos ordered me. The Poles are marching on us now with great forces, so we must concentrate."

"When will you come back?"

"I know not. There will be a great battle such as has not been yet. Either death to us or to the Poles. If they beat us, I will hide here; if we are victorious, I will come for my cuckoo and take her to Kieff."

"And if you perish?"

"Being a witch, it is for you to tell."

"But if you perish?"

"Once my mother bore me."

"Oh, pshaw! But what shall I do with the girl, — twist her neck, or how?"

"But touch her with your hand and I will have you drawn on a stake with oxen." The chief fell into gloomy thought. "If I perish, tell her to forgive me."

"Ah, she is a thankless Pole that for such love she does not love. If I were wooed in that way, I should not resist you." Saying this, Horpyna nudged the chief in the side twice, showing all her teeth in laughter.

"Go to the devil!" said the Cossack.

"Oh, be quiet! I know that you are not for me."

Bogun looked into the foaming water on the wheel as if he wished himself to soothsay.

"Horpyna!" said he after a while.

"Well, what is it?"

"When I have gone will she be sorry for me?"

"If you are not willing to constrain her in Cossack fashion, then perhaps it is better for you to go."

"I will not, I cannot, I dare not. I know that she would die."

"Then maybe it is better for you to go. While she sees you she will not wish to know you, but when she has been a couple of months with me and Cheremis, you will be dearer to her."

"If she were well, I know what I should do. I should bring a priest from Rashkoff and have a marriage celebrated; but now I am afraid, for if she were frightened, she would die. You have seen yourself."

"Leave us in peace. What do you want of a priest and a marriage? You are not a real Cossack. I want neither Pole nor Russian priest here. There are Dobrudja Tartars in Rashkoff, you want to get them on our shoulders too; and if you should bring them, how much of the princess would you see? What has got into your head? Go your way and come back."

"But look in the water and tell me what you see. Tell the truth and don't lie, even if you should see me dead."

Dontsova approached the mill-stream and raised a gate holding back the water at the fall. All at once the swift current rushed with redoubled force, the wheel began to turn more swiftly, until at last it was covered with liquid dust; the foam, beaten fine, rolled under the wheel like boiling water.

The witch bent her eyes into the boiling mass and seizing the tresses near her ears, began to cry, —

"I call! I call! Appear! In the oaken wheel, in the white foam, in the clear mist, whether evil, whether good, appear!"

Bogun approached and sat at her side. His face denoted fear and feverish curiosity.

"I see!" screamed the witch.

"What do you see?"

"The death of my brother. Two bullocks are drawing him on a stake."

"To the devil with your brother!" muttered Bogun, who wished to know something else.

For a time was heard only the thunder of the wheel whirling around in fury.

"Blue is my brother's head, how blue! The ravens are tearing it," said the witch.

"What else do you see?"

"Nothing. Oh, how blue! I call! I call! In the oaken wheel, in the white foam, in the clear mist, appear! I see —"

"What?"

"A battle! The Poles are fleeing before the Cossacks."

"And I am pursuing?"

"I see you too. You encounter a little knight. Hur! hur! hur! Be on your guard against the little knight."

"And the princess?"

"She is not there. I see you again, and with you some one who is betraying you, — your false friend."

Bogun was devouring with his eyes at one instant the foam, at another Horpyna; and at the same time he worked with his brain to aid the soothsaying.

"What friend?"

"I don't see. I don't know whether old or young."

"Old, he must be old!"

"Maybe he is old!"

"I know who he is. He has betrayed me once already. An old noble with a blue beard and a white eye. Death to him! But he is not a friend of mine."

"He is lying in wait for you, I see again — Stop! the princess is here too; she is in a crown, a white dress, above her a hawk."

"That is I."

"Maybe it is. A hawk — or a falcon? A hawk!"

"That is I."

"Wait! All has vanished. In the oaken wheel, in the

white foam — Oh! oh! many soldiers, many Cossacks, oh, many, like trees in the forest or thistles in the steppes; and you are above all, — they are bearing three bunchuk standards before you.”

“And the princess is with me?”

“She is not; you are in the camp.”

The wheel roared till the whole mill trembled.

“Oh, how much blood, how much blood! how many corpses, — wolves above them, ravens above them, plague above them! Corpses and corpses, — far away nothing but corpses, nothing to be seen but blood!”

Suddenly a breath of wind whirled the mist from the wheel; and at the same time higher up above the mill appeared the deformed Cheremis with a bundle of wood on his shoulders.

“Cheremis, let down the sluice!” cried the girl.

When she had said this she went to wash her hands and face in the stream, and the dwarf stopped the water at once.

Bogun sat in thought. He was roused first by the coming of Horpyna.

“You saw nothing more?” he asked.

“What appeared, appeared; I shall see nothing more.”

“And you are not lying?”

“By my brother’s head, I spoke the truth. They were empaling him, drawing him on with oxen. I grieve for him. But death is written not for him alone. Oh, what bodies appeared! Never have I seen so many; there will be a great war in the world.”

“And you saw her with a hawk above her head?”

“Yes.”

“And was she in a wreath?”

“In a wreath and a white robe.”

“And how do you know that that hawk was I? I spoke to you of that young Polish noble, — maybe it was he?”

The girl wrinkled her brows and grew thoughtful. “No,” said she after a while, shaking her head; “if it had been the Pole, it would have been an eagle.”

“Glory to God, glory to God! I will go now to the Cossacks to prepare the horses for the road. We go to-night.”

“So you are going surely?”

“Hmelnitski has ordered, and Krivonos too. You know well that there will be a great war, for I read the same in Bar in a letter from Hmelnitski.”

Bogun in reality could not read, but he was ashamed of it; he did not wish to pass for illiterate.

“Then go!” said the witch. “You are lucky, — you will be hetman. I saw three bunchuks above you as I see these fingers.”

“And I shall be hetman and marry the princess, — I cannot take a peasant.”

“You would talk differently with a peasant girl, but you are afraid of her. You should be a Pole.”

“I am no worse.”

Bogun now went to the stable to the Cossacks, and Horpyna set about preparing dinner.

In the evening the horses were ready for the road, but the chief was in no hurry to depart. He sat on a roll of carpets in the chamber, with lute in hand, and looked on his princess, who had risen from the couch, but had thrust herself into the other corner of the room, and was repeating in silence the rosary without paying any heed to the chief, just as if he had not been in the room. He, on the contrary, followed with his eyes every movement of hers, caught with his ears every sigh, and knew not what to do with himself. From time to time he opened his mouth to begin conversation, but the words would not leave his throat. The face pale, silent, and with an expression of decisive sternness in the brows and mouth, deprived him of courage. Bogun had not seen this expression on the princess before, and involuntarily he remembered similar evenings at Rozlogi, which appeared before him as if real, — how they sat, he and the Kurtsevichi around an oaken table, the old princess husking sunflower seeds, the princes throwing dice from a cup, he looking on the beautiful princess just as he was looking now. But in the old time he was happy, for then he told of his expeditions with the Zaporojians, she listened, and at times her dark eyes rested on his face, and her open red lips showed with what interest she listened; now she would not even look. Then when he played on the lute she would listen and look, till the heart melted within him. And, wonder of wonders, he is now master of her, — he has taken her with armed hand; she is his captive, his prisoner; he can command her. But nevertheless in the old time he felt himself nearer, more her equal in rank. The Kurtsevichi were her cousins, she was as a sister; she was not only his cuckoo, falcon, dearest, dark-browed, but also a relative. Now she sits before him a proud lady, gloomy, silent, merciless. Ah, but anger is boiling within him! He would like to show her what it means to slight a Cossack; but he loves this merciless woman, he would shed his blood for her.

But how many times had anger seized his breast! when suddenly an unseen hand, as it were, grasps him by the hair, and a voice shouts in his ear, "Stop!" He belches forth something like a flame, beats his forehead on the earth, and stops. The Cossack squirms now, for he feels that he is oppressive to her in that room. Let her but smile and give a kind word, he would fall at her feet and go to the devil, to drown in Polish blood all his grief and anger together with the insult put upon him. But in that room he is like a captive before that princess. If he had not known her of old, if she were a Pole taken from the first noble castle, he would have more daring; but she is Princess Helena, for whom he had asked the Kurtsevichi, and for whom he was willing to give up Rozlogi and all he had. And the more ashamed he is of being a slave before her, the less bold is he.

An hour passed. From before the cottage came the murmur of the talk of the Cossacks, who were surely in their saddles and waiting for the ataman; but the ataman was in torture. The bright light of the torch falls on his face, on the rich kontush, and on the lute. And she — if she would even look! The ataman felt bitter, angry, sad, and awkward. He would like to bid farewell with tenderness, and he fears the parting, — fears that it will not be such as from his soul he desires, — fears to go away in bitterness, anger, and pain.

Oh, if she were not that Princess Helena, — the Princess Helena stabbed with a knife, threatening death with her own hand; but dear, dear, and the more cruel and proud, the dearer is she!

Then a horse neighed near the window. The chief mustered courage.

"Princess," said he, "it is already my hour for the road."

She was silent.

"And you will not say to me, 'With God'?"

"Go, with God!" said she, with dignity.

The Cossack's heart was pressed. She said the words he wanted, but not in the way he wanted.

"Well I know," said he, "that you are angry with me, that you hate me; but I tell you that another would have been worse to you than I. I brought you here, for I could not do otherwise; but what harm have I done you? Have not I treated you well, like a queen? Tell me yourself. Am I such an outlaw that you will not give me a kind word? And, moreover, you are in my power."

"I am in the power of God," said she, with the same

dignity as before; "but because you restrain yourself in my presence, I thank you for that."

"Then I go with even such a word. Maybe you will regret me; maybe you will be sorry."

Helena was silent.

"I am sorry to leave you here alone," said Bogun, "sorry to go away; but I must. It would be easier for me if you were to smile, if you were to give a crucifix with a sincere heart. What can I do to appease you?"

"Give me back my freedom, and God will forgive you all, and I will forgive and bless you."

"Maybe you will forgive me yet; maybe you will be sorry yet that you have been so harsh to me."

Bogun wished to buy a word of farewell, even for half a promise which he did not think of keeping, and got what he wanted, for a light of hope gleamed in Helena's eyes and the harshness vanished from her face. She crossed her arms on her breast and fixed a clear glance on him.

"If you would only —"

"Well, I don't know," said the Cossack, in a low voice, for shame and pity seized him at the same time by the throat. "I cannot now, I cannot. The Tartars are in the Wilderness, their parties are going everywhere. The Dobrudja Tartars are moving from Rashkoff. I cannot, for it is terrible; but when I come back — I am a child in your presence, you can do what you like with me — I don't know, I don't know —"

"May God inspire you! May the Holy Most Pure inspire you! God go with you!" And she stretched out her hand to him.

Bogun sprang forward and fastened his lips on it. Suddenly he raised his head, met her look of dignity, and dropped her hand. Then retreating toward the door, he bowed to his girdle in Cossack fashion, bowed again at the door, and disappeared behind the curtain.

Soon there came through the window animated conversation, a clatter of arms, and later the words of a song in several voices: —

"Glorious fame will rise
Among the Cossacks,
Among the heroes,
For many a year,
Till the end of time."

The voices and clatter retreated, and grew fainter each moment.