

eloquently to a loving heart. In the distance could be heard the sound of the hunter's horn, whilst the great trees rustled their leaves as though they wished to mingle their notes in the universal anthem. The prince gave himself up for a long time to the sweet pleasures of this solitude, turning his smiling glance first to the heavens where a few white clouds were floating, and then again to earth, where some glittering insect attracted his gaze.

But what was it which pierced through him with a deadly horror—which made him become so pale, and turn his flashing eyes with an indescribable expression of dread toward the hut? Why did he partially arise from his reclining position as the hunter does, who sees the prey approach that he wishes to destroy? What was it that made him press his lips so tightly, one against the other, as if he would repress a cry of agony, or an execration? And why does he listen now with bated breath, his gaze fixed upon the hut, and both hands raised, as if to threaten an approaching enemy? Suddenly he sprang up, and rushed trembling to the door, and, while in the act of bursting it open, he fell back, pale as death, as if his foot had trodden upon a poisonous serpent. Thus retreating, with wildly staring eyes, with half-open lips, which seemed stiffened in the very act of uttering a shriek, he slowly left the hut, and then suddenly, as if he could no longer look at any thing so frightful, he turned and fled from the spot as if pursued by furies. Farther, always farther, until his strength and his breath were exhausted; then he sank down.

"It was cowardly to fly," he murmured; "but I felt that I should murder them, if they came out of the hut before my eyes. A voice within whispered, 'Fly, or you will be a murderer!' I obeyed it almost against my will. It was cowardly—an unpardonable error, but I will return to the hut."

He sprang forward like a tiger, ready to fall upon his prey. His hand involuntarily sought his side for his sword.

"Ah, I have no weapon," he said, gnashing his teeth, "I must murder them with my hands."

He advanced with uplifted head, defiant as a conqueror, or as one who has overcome death and has nothing to fear. The hut was again before him, but it no longer smiled at him; it filled him with horror and fury. Now he has reached it, and with one blow he bursts open the door; but it is empty. The prince had not remarked that the ivy-wreath was no longer displayed, and that the hut was therefore vacant.

"They are gone," he murmured. "This time they have escaped punishment, but it surely awaits them."

## CHAPTER IX.

## BROTHER AND SISTER.

A MONTH had passed since Amelia dispatched her emissary to the queen's fireman, and she had as yet received no definite intelligence. General Riedt had called but once; he told her he had succeeded in interesting the Savoyard in Trenck's fate, and he had promised to remind the empress of the unfortunate prisoner. But a condition must be attached to this promise: no one must approach him again on this subject; it must be kept an inviolable secret. Only when Trenck was free would the fireman receive the other half of the stipulated sum; if he failed in his attempt, he would return the money he now held.

This was all that the princess had heard from Vienna; her heart was sorrowful—almost hopeless. Trenck still sat in his wretched prison at Magdeburg, and she scarcely dared hope for his release.

It was a dark, tempestuous November day. The princess stood at the window, gazing at the whirling snow-flakes, and listening to the howling of the pitiless storm. They sounded to her like the raging shrieks of mocking, contending spirits, and filled her heart with malignant joy.

"Many ships will go down to destruction in the roaring sea; many men will lose all that they possess," she murmured, with a coarse laugh. "God sends His favorite daughter, the bride of the winds; she sings a derisive song to men; she shows them how weak, how pitiful they are. She sweeps away their possessions—touches them on that point where alone they are sensitive. I rejoice in the howling, whistling tempest! This is the voice of the great world-spirit, dashing by in the thunder, and making the cowardly hearts of men tremble. They deserve this punishment; they are utterly unworthy and contemptible. I hate, I despise them all! Only when I see them suffer can I be reconciled to them. Aha! the storm has seized a beautifully-dressed lady. How it whirls and dashes her about! Look how it lifts her robe, making rare sport of her deceitful, affected modesty. Miserable, variegated butterfly that you are, you think yourself a goddess of youth and beauty. This wild tempest teaches you that you are but a poor, pitiful insect, tossed about in the world like any other creeping thing—a powerless atom. The storm first takes possession of your clothes, now of your costly hat. Wait, my lady, wait! one day it will take your heart; it will be crushed and broken to pieces—there will be none to pity. The world laughs and mocks at the wretched. Misfortune

is the only disgrace which is never forgiven. You may be a thief, a murderer, and you will be pardoned if you are adroit enough to slip your head from the noose. Criminals are pitied and pardoned, unfortunates never. Ah, this is a mad, gay world, and they are fools who take it earnestly; who do not laugh—laugh even as I do.”

The princess laughed aloud—if that could be called a laugh, from which she shuddered back herself in terror.

“It is bitter cold here,” she said, shuddering; “I think I shall never be warm again. I am always freezing, and this miserable frost has turned my heart and soul to ice. I would like to know if they will thaw in the grave?”

She stepped slowly from the window, and crept through the large, empty room to the chimney, where a large wood-fire was burning—now flickering up in clear flames, now breaking into glowing coals.

Amelia took the poker, and amused herself by dashing the coals apart, and watching the flashing, dancing flames. The fire seemed to embrace her whole figure, and threw a rosy shimmer over her wan and fallen cheeks. She gazed deep down into the glowing coals, and murmured broken, disconnected words. From time to time a mocking smile trembled on her lips, then heavy sighs wrung her breast. Was she perhaps telling the fire of the flames which raged within her bosom? Was she perhaps a magician, who understood the language of these mysterious tongues of flame, and answered their burning questions? The hasty opening of the door aroused her from her dreams, and a page entered and announced in a loud voice—“His majesty the king!”

Amelia bowed her head, and advanced slowly and with a stern countenance to meet the king, who now appeared at the threshold.

“May I enter, my sister, or do you command me to withdraw?” said Frederick, smiling.

“The king has no permission to ask,” said Amelia, earnestly; “he is everywhere lord and master. The doors of all other prisons open before him, and so also do mine.”

Frederick nodded to the page to leave the room and close the door, then advanced eagerly to meet his sister. Giving her his hand, he led her to the divan, and seated himself beside her.

“You regard me then as a kind of jailer,” he said, in a gentle, loving voice.

“Can a king be any thing but a jailer?” she said, roughly. “Those who displease him, he arrests and casts into prison, and not one of his subjects can be sure that he will not one day displease him.”

“You, at least, my sister, have not this to fear, and yet you have just called this your prison.”

“It is a prison, sire.”

“And am I, then, your jailer?”

“No, sire, life is my jailer.”

“You are right, there, Amelia. Life is the universal jailer, from whom death alone can release us. The world is a great prison, and only fools think themselves free. But we are involuntarily commencing an earnest, philosophical conversation. I come to you to rest, to refresh myself; to converse harmlessly and cheerfully, as in our earlier and happier days. Tell me something, dear sister, of your life, your occupations, and your friends?”

“That is easily done, and requires but few words,” said Amelia, hoarsely. “Of my life I have already told you all that can be said. Life is my jailer, and I look longingly to death, who alone can release me. As to my well-being, there is nothing to say; all is evil, only evil continually. My occupations are monotonous, I am ever asleep. Night and day I sleep and dream; and why should I awake? I have nothing to hope, nothing to do. I am a superfluous piece of furniture in this castle, and I know well you will all rejoice when I am placed in the vault. I am an old maid, or, if you prefer it, I am a wall-frog, who has nothing to do but creep into my hole, and, when I have vitality enough, to spit my venom upon the passers-by. As to my friends, I have nothing to relate; I have no friends! I hate all mankind, and I am hated by all. I am especially on my guard with those who pretend to love me; I know that they are deceitful and traitorous, that they are only actuated by selfish motives.”

“Poor sister,” said the king, sadly; “how unhappy must you be to speak thus! Can I do nothing to alleviate your misfortune?”

Amelia laughed loudly and scornfully. “Forgive me, your majesty, but your question reminds me of a merry fairy tale I have just read of a cannibal who is in the act of devouring a young girl. The poor child pleaded piteously for her life, naturally in vain. ‘I cannot, of course, give you your life,’ said the cannibal, ‘but I will gladly grant you any other wish of your heart. Think, then, quickly, of what you most desire, and be assured I will fulfil your request.’ The pretty maiden, trembling with horror and despair, could not collect her thoughts. Then, after a short pause, the cannibal said, ‘I cannot wait; I am hungry! but in order to grant you a little longer time to determine upon the favor you will ask, I will not, as I am accustomed to do, devour the head first, I will commence with the feet.’ So saying, he cut off the legs and ate them, and on cutting off each limb he graciously asked the poor shuddering, whimper-

ing being, 'Well, why do you not think? Is there, then, no favor I can show you?' Confess now, sire, that this was a most magnanimous cannibal."

Frederick laughed heartily, and appeared not to understand his sister's double meaning.

"You are right," said he; "that is a merry fairy tale, and brings the tears to my eyes—I scarcely know whether from laughter or weeping. Where did you read it, my sister?"

"The fire-spirits who spring up and down in the chimney so lustily, related it to me. Oh, sire, these are merry sprites; and often in my solitude, when I am sitting in my arm-chair in the chimney-corner, they nod to me, and chat freely of by-gone times, and the days which are to come."

"I fear they have not much that is cheerful or encouraging, certainly not much that is interesting to tell you," said Frederick.

"To those who, like us, have passed the meridian of life, and are going rapidly down-hill, the surroundings become ever duller and more drear; for us there are no more great and agreeable surprises; the farther they advance, the more lonely and desolate it appears; life has no more to offer, and they are glad at last to reach the valley and lie down in quiet graves. But while we live and are still wanderers, Amelia, we must not fold our hands in idleness; we must work and achieve. You also, my sister, must be active and energetic; an unusual opportunity is now offered you. The Abbess of Quedlinberg is dead, and you can now enter upon her duties."

"And your majesty thinks it is really a worthy vocation for me to go to Quedlinberg and become the shepherdess of that fearful flock of old maids who took refuge in a nunnery because no man desired them? No, your majesty, do not send me to Quedlinberg; it is not my calling to build up the worthy nuns into saints of the Most High. I am too unsanctified myself to be an example to them, and, in fact, I feel no inclination to purify them from their sins."

"Well, that might be found a difficult task," said the king, laughing, "and it would not make you beloved. Men love nothing so much as their vices, and they hate those who would free them from their cherished yoke. You can, however, remain in Berlin and still accept this office, once so worthily filled by the lovely Aurora of Königsmark. King Augustus gave her, at least, with this refuge, provided by his love, a rich widow's income; and you can now, Amelia, enjoy the fruit of that love which at one time filled all Europe with admiration. The salary of the abbess amounts to seventeen thousand thalers, and I think this addition to your fortune will be welcome. Your income will now be forty thousand thalers."

"Lodging and fuel included," said Amelia, with a sarcastic laugh. "Look you, sire, I see that I have nothing to complain of. My hospital is splendidly endowed, and if I should ever become miserly, I may be able to lay aside a few thalers yearly."

"I will gladly put it in your power to lay aside a larger sum, if you become covetous," said the king; "and I beg you, therefore, to allow me the pleasure of raising your salary as princess, six thousand thalers." \*

Amelia looked at him distrustfully. "You are very gracious to me to-day, my brother. You grant favors before I ask them. I confess to you this alarms and agitates me. You have perhaps some bad news to disclose, and fearing I will be crushed by it, you desire, beforehand, to apply a balsam."

The king's glance was tender and sympathetic. "Poor Amelia! you will, then, never believe in my affection," said he, mildly. "You distrust even your brother! Oh, Amelia! life has hardened us both. We entered upon the stage of life with great but fleeting illusions. How gloriously grand and beautiful did the world appear to us; now we look around us soberly, almost hopelessly! What remains of our ideals? What has become of the dreams of our youth?"

"The storm-winds have shattered and scattered them," cried Amelia, laughing. "The evil fiend has ploughed over the fair soil of your youth and turned it to stone and ashes. I am content that this is so. I would rather wander amongst ruins and dust and ashes than to walk gayly over a smooth surface with whose dark caves and pitfalls I was unacquainted, and which might any day engulf me. When both foundation and superstructure lie in ruins at your feet, you have nothing more to fear. But I say this for myself, sire, not for you, the fame-crowned king, who has astonished the world by his victories, and now fills it with admiration by the wisdom with which he governs his subjects and advances the glory of his kingdom!"

"My child," said the king, mildly, "fame has no longer any attraction for me. Nero was also renowned; he burned cities and temples, and tortured Seneca to death. Erostratus succeeded in making his name imperishable. I am utterly indifferent as to the world's admiration of my wisdom and power to govern. I try to do my duty as a king. But I tell you, child, in one little corner of the king's heart there remains ever something human; and the poor creature man sometimes cries out for a little personal comfort and happiness. One may be very rich as a king, but poor—oh, how poor—as a man! Let us, however, dismiss these sad thoughts. I was speak-

\* History of Berlin and Court.

ing to you of money, Amelia. We will return to this theme. I cannot prevent your heart from suffering, but I can secure to you every outward good. Your income, until now, has been small; tell me what debts you have contracted, and I will pay them!"

"Your majesty falls into my room like a shower of gold," cried Amelia; "you will find no Danæ here, only an ugly old maid, who is, however, ready to receive the glittering treasure; but you give me credit for too good a memory when you think I know the amount of my debts. I only know the sum now in my casket."

"And what is the amount, Amelia?"

"A cipher, sire; your majesty knows this is the end of the month."

"I know it, my sister; and I therefore beg you to accept from me to-day a small sum in advance. I dreamt last night that you had recently been called upon to pay out four thousand louis d'or. This dream was significant; it seemed to me a suggestion to give you this sum. I therefore sent, in your name, an order on my treasurer for four thousand louis d'or."

Amelia looked at him and trembled with terror. "Do you know the use to which I have applied this sum?" said she, breathlessly.

"My dream was silent on this point," said Frederick, rising; "it only told me that you needed this amount, nothing more. If I had been curious, I might have asked your page, who has an acute ear, and for whom no key-hole is too small."

"Ah, he has betrayed me, then," murmured Amelia.

Frederick did not appear to hear her; he took his hat, and offered his sister his hand. Amelia did not see it; she stood as if turned to stone in the middle of the room, and as the king advanced toward the door, she stepped slowly and mechanically after him.

Suddenly the king turned and looked at his sister.

"I had almost forgotten to tell you a piece of news," said he, carelessly; "something which will perhaps interest you, Amelia. Even at this moment a prisoner is being released from his cell and restored to life and liberty. The Empress Maria Theresa, influenced by her fireman, it is said, has appealed to me—"

Princess Amelia uttered a heart-rending shriek, and rushing forward she seized the arm of the king with both her trembling hands.

"Brother! oh, brother, be merciful! do not make cruel sport of me. I acknowledge I appealed to the fireman of the empress. I offered him four thousand louis d'or if he would intercede for Trenck. I see that you know all; I deny nothing. If I have committed a crime worthy of death, condemn me; but do not inflict such fearful tortures before my execution. Do not mock at my great grief, but be pitiful. Look upon me, brother; look at my

withered limbs, my deformed visage; is not my punishment sufficient? torture me no longer. You return me the sum of money I sent to Vienna: does that mean that you have discovered and destroyed my plot? Is this so, brother? Have you the heart to play this cruel jest with me? Having thus made my last attempt fruitless, do you tell me in mockery that Trenck is free?" She held the arm of the king firmly, and half sinking to her knees, she looked up at him breathlessly.

"No, Amelia," said Frederick, and his voice trembled with emotion. "No, I have not that cruel courage. The hand of your clock points now to twelve; at this moment Trenck leaves Magdeburg in a closed carriage, accompanied by two soldiers. To-morrow he will reach Prague, and then he is free to go where he will, only not in Prussia. Trenck is free."

"Trenck is free!" repeated Amelia, with a shout of joy; she sprang from her knees, clasped the king in a close embrace, and wept upon his bosom such tears as she had not shed for many long years—tears of holy happiness, of rapture inexpressible; then suddenly releasing him, she ran rapidly about the room, in the midst of bitter weeping breaking out into loud ringing laughter, a laugh which rung so fresh, so joyous, it seemed an echo from her far-off happy childhood. "Trenck is free! free!" repeated she again; "and, oh, unspeakable happiness! I obtained him his liberty! ah, no, not I, but a poor Savoyard who wished a dowry for his daughter. Oh, ye great ones of the earth, speak no more of your glory and power, a poor Savoyard was mightier than you all! But no, no; what have I said? you, my brother, you have released him. To you Trenck owes his life and liberty. I thank you that these fearful chains, which held my soul in bondage, have fallen apart. Once more I breathe freely, without the appalling consciousness that every breath I draw finds this echo in a cavern of the earth. You have released me from bondage, oh, my brother, and henceforth I will love you with all the strength of my being. Yes, I will love you," cried she, eagerly; "I will cling to you with unchanging constancy; you will ever find in me a faithful ally. I can be useful. I cannot act, but I can listen and watch. I will be your spy. I will tell you all I see. I will read all hearts and make known to you their thoughts. Even now I have something to disclose; do not trust your brothers. Above all others put no faith in Prince Henry; he hates you with a perfect hatred for the sake of Augustus William, who, he says, died of your contempt and cruelty. Trust him in nothing; he is ambitious, he envies you your throne; he hates me also, and calls me always '*La fée malfaisant*.' He shall be justified in this! I will be for him *La fée malfaisant*. I will revenge myself for this hatred.

Without my help, however, he will soon be sufficiently punished. His beautiful Wilhelmina will revenge me."

She broke out in wild and convulsive laughter, and repeated again and again in joyous tones, "Yes, yes, his beautiful Wilhelmina will punish him for calling me an old witch."

The king shuddered at her mad laughter, and was oppressed by her presence; her mirth was sadder than her tears. He bade her a silent adieu, and hastened away as if flying from a pestilence. The princess did not detain him; she had fallen upon a chair, and staring immovably before her, she cried out: "Trenck is free! Trenck is free! Life is his once more! I must, I will live till I have seen him once more. Then, when my poor eyes have looked upon him yet once again, then I will die—die!"\*

Suddenly she sprang from her seat. "I must know Trenck's future; I must draw his horoscope. I must question the cards as to his destiny, and know whether happiness or misery lies before him. Yes, I will summon my fortune-teller. There is a destiny which shapes our ends."

## CHAPTER X.

### THE STOLEN CHILD.

It was a dark, stormy December night. The long-deserted streets of Berlin were covered with deep snow. By the glare of a small oil-lamp affixed to a post, the tall form of a man, wrapped in a large travelling-cloak, could be seen leaning against a wall; he was gaz-

\*This wish of the princess was fulfilled after the death of Frederick the Great. Trenck received permission from his successor, Frederick William II., to return to Berlin. He was graciously received at court; his first visit, even before he was announced to the king, was paid to the Princess Amelia. She received him in the same room in which, forty-seven years before, they had passed so many happy hours. Upon the same spot where, beautiful in youth and grace, they had once sworn eternal love and faith, they now looked upon each other and sought in vain, in these fallen and withered features, for any trace of those charms, which had once enraptured them. Trenck remained many hours with her; they had much to relate. He confessed freely all the events of his fantastic and adventurous life. She listened with a gentle smile, and forgave him for all his wanderings and all his sins. On taking leave he promised the princess to bring his oldest daughter and present her, and Amelia promised to be a mother to her. Death, however, prevented the fulfilment of these promises. It appeared as if this interview had exhausted her remaining strength. In 1786, a few days after the meeting with Trenck, Amelia died. Trenck lived but a few years; he went to France and died under the guillotine in 1793. As he sat with his companions upon the car on their way to execution, he said to the gaping crowd: "*Eh bien, eh bien, de quoi vous émerveillez-vous? Ceci n'est qu'une comédie à la Robespierre.*" These were Trenck's last words; a few moments afterward his head fell under the guillotine.

ing fixedly at the houses opposite him. The snow beat upon his face, his limbs were stiff from the cold winter wind, his teeth chattered, but he did not seem to feel it. His whole soul, his whole being was filled with one thought, one desire. What mattered it to him if he suffered, if he died? As a dark shadow appeared at the opposite door, life and energy once more came back to the stoic. He crossed the street hastily.

"Well, doctor," said he, eagerly, "what have you discovered?"

"It is as your servant informed you, my lord. Your wife, Lady Elliot, is not at home. She is at a ball at Count Verther's, and will not return till after midnight."

"But my child? my daughter?" said Lord Elliot, in a trembling voice.

"She, of course, is at home, my lord. She is in the chamber adjoining your former sleeping apartment. No one but the nurse is with her."

"It is well—I thank you, doctor. All I now require of you is to send my valet, whom I sent to your house after me, with my baggage. Farewell!"

He was rushing away, but the doctor detained him.

"My lord," said he, in a low and imploring voice, "consider the matter once more before you act. Remember that you will thus inform all Berlin of your unfortunate wedded life, and become subject to the jeers and laughter of the so-called nobility; lowering the tragedy of your house to a proverb."

"Be it so," said Lord Elliot, proudly, "I have nothing to fear. The whole world knows that my honor is stained; before the whole world will I cleanse it."

"But in doing so, my lord, you disgrace your wife."

"Do you not think she justly deserves it?" said Lord Elliot, harshly.

"But you should have pity on her youth."

"Doctor, when one has suffered as I have, every feeling is extinguished from the heart but hatred. As I have not died of grief, I shall live to revenge my sufferings. My determination is unalterable. I must and will tear my child from the bad influence of her mother, then I will punish the guilty."

"Consider once more, my lord—wait this one night. You have just arrived from a hasty, disagreeable journey; you are excited, your blood is in a fever heat, and now, without allowing yourself a moment's rest, you wish to commence your sad work."

"I must have my child. You know that as it is a girl the mother can dispute this right with me, for by the laws of this land in case of divorce, the daughters are left to their mother."

"You should endeavor to obtain her by kindness."

"And suppose that Camilla, not out of love to the child, but to wound and torture me, should refuse me my daughter, what then? Ah! you are silent, doctor; you see I cannot act otherwise."

"I fear, my lord, you will have some trouble in getting the child. Lady Elliot has lately changed all the servants engaged by you, not one of them was allowed to remain. It is most likely that none of the present servants know you, and therefore you will not be obeyed."

"My plans are all arranged, they shall not prevent me from fulfilling them."

"But if they refuse to let you enter?"

"Ah, but I shall not ask them, for I have the keys necessary to enter my own house. When I left home, Camilla threw them laughing and jesting into my trunk—I now have them with me. All your objections are confuted. Again, farewell. If you wish to give me another token of your friendship, meet me at the depot in an hour. I will be there with my child."

He pressed the doctor's hand tightly, and then hurried into the house. Noiselessly he mounted the steps. He now stood in front of the large glass door leading to his dwelling; he leaned for a moment against the door gasping for breath—for a moment a shuddering doubt overcame him; he seemed to see the lovely countenance of Camilla, bedewed with tears, imploring his mercy, his pity. "No, no! no pity, no mercy," he murmured; "onward, onward!"

He drew forth a key, opened the door and closed it noiselessly behind him. A bright lamp burned in the hall; sounds of laughing and merry-making could be heard from the servants' hall; the cries of a child, and the soft lullaby of a nurse from above. No one saw or heard the dark form of their returned master pass slowly through the hall. No one saw him enter his former sleeping apartments. He was so conversant with the room that he found his way in the dark without difficulty to his secretary. Taking from it a candle and some matches, he soon had a bright light. He then glanced sternly around the room. All was as usual, not a chair had been moved since he left. Beneath the secretary were the scraps of letters and papers he had torn up the day of his journey. Even the book he had been reading that morning lay upon the table in front of the sofa; beside it stood the same silver candlesticks, with the same half-burnt candles. It had all been untouched; only he, the master of the apartment, had been touched by the burning hand of misfortune—he alone was changed, transformed. He smiled bitterly as his eye glanced at every object that formerly contributed to his happiness. Then taking up the light, he approached the table upon

which stood the two silver candlesticks; lighting one after the other, the large, deserted-looking chamber became illuminated, bringing the pictures on the walls, the heavy satin curtains, the handsome furniture, the tables covered with costly knick-knacks, the large Japan vases, and a huge clock upon the mantel-piece, into view. All bore a gay and festive appearance, much at variance with the unfortunate man's feelings.

His glance had wandered everywhere. Not once, however, had his eye strayed to two large pictures hanging on the left side of the room. The one was of himself—gay, smiling features, a bright glance such as was never now seen upon his countenance. The other was Camilla—Camilla in her bridal robes, as beautiful and lovely as a dream, with her glorious, child-like smile in which he had so long believed—for which, seeing in it the reflection of her pure, innocent soul, she was so unspeakably dear to him. To these two pictures he had completely turned his back, and was walking sadly up and down the room. He now raised his head proudly, and his countenance, which but a moment before had been sad and dejected, was now daring and energetic.

"It is time," murmured he.

With a firm hand he grasped a bell lying upon the table. Its loud, resounding ring disturbed the deep stillness that reigned throughout the apartments, causing Lord Elliot's heart to tremble with woe. But there was no noise—all remained quiet. Lord Elliot waited awhile, then opening the door passed into the hall. Returning, he again rang the bell long and loudly. "They cannot fail to hear me now," said he.

Several doors were now opened by some of the servants, but their terror was such that they retreated in haste, slamming the doors behind them.

Lord Elliot rang again. A servant now hastened forward; another soon followed; a third door was opened from which sprang a lively, trim-looking lady's maid. She was followed by the house-girl. Even the cook rushed up the steps. All hurried forward to a room which was generally kept locked, but which now stood wide open. All gazed at the man standing there scanning them with an earnest, commanding glance. They stood thus lost in wonder for a moment, then Lord Elliot approached the door.

"Do you know me—you, there?" said he.

"No, we do not know you," said the waiter, with some hesitation. "We do not know you, and would like to know by what right—"

"There is no question here of your likes or dislikes, but of the orders you will receive from me. Do you know the picture next to the one of your mistress?"

"We have been told that it is our master, Lord Elliot."

Lord Elliot advanced nearer the picture, and stood beneath it. "Do you know me now?" said he.

The servants examined him critically for a time, then whispered and consulted together.

"Now do you know me?" repeated Lord Elliot.

"We think we have the honor of seeing his excellency, Lord Elliot," said the waiter.

"Yes, Lord Elliot," repeated the lady's-maid, the house-girl, and the cook, bowing respectfully.

He ordered them to enter the room. Tremblingly they obeyed him.

"Are these all the servants, or are there any more of you?" said he.

"No one but the nurse, who is with the little lady, and the coachman who is in the stable."

"That is right. Come nearer, all of you."

As they obeyed, he closed and locked the door, dropping the key in his pocket. The servants looked at him in wonder and terror, hardly daring to breathe. Though they had never seen their master, they knew by his stern, expressive countenance that something remarkable was about to transpire. Like all other servants, they were well acquainted with the secrets, the behavior of their employer. They were, therefore, convinced that their mistress was the cause of their master's strange conduct.

"Do not dare to move from this spot—do not make a sound," said Lord Elliot, taking a light and advancing to a second door. "Remain here. If I need you I will call." Throwing a last look at the servants, Lord Elliot entered the adjoining room, drawing the bolt quickly behind him.

"All is right now," said he, softly. "None of them can fly to warn Camilla to return." Candle in hand, he passed through the chamber, looking neither to right nor left. He wished to ignore that he was now in Camilla's room, which was associated with so many painfully sweet remembrances to him. He entered another room—he hurried through it. As he passed by the large bedstead surrounded by heavy silk curtains, the candle in his hand shook, and a deep groan escaped his breast. He now stood at the door of the next chamber. He stopped for a moment to gain breath and courage. With a hasty movement he threw open the door and entered. His heart failed him when he beheld the peaceful scene before him. A dark shady carpet covered the floor, simple green blinds hung at the windows. There were no handsome paintings on the wall, no glittering chandelier, no bright furniture, and still the apartment

contained a wondrous tenement, a great treasure. For in the middle of the room stood a cradle, in the cradle lay his child, his first-born—the child of his love, of his lost happiness. He knew by the great joy that overcame him, by the loud beating of his heart, by the tears that welled to his eyes, that this was his child. He prayed God to bless it—he swore to love it faithfully to all eternity. He at last found the strength to approach the little sleeping being whose presence filled him with such wild joy.

The nurse sat by the cradle fast asleep. She did not see Lord Elliot kneel beside the cradle and look tenderly at the sleeping face of her nursling—she did not see him kiss the child, then lay its little hands upon his own bowed head as if he needed his little daughter's blessing to strengthen him. But all at once she was shaken by a strong hand, and a loud, commanding voice ordered her to wake up, to open her eyes. She sprang from her chair in terror—she had had a bad dream. But there still stood the strange man, saying in a stern voice, "Get up and prepare to leave here at once with me."

She wished to cry for help, but as she opened her mouth, he threw his strong arm around her. "If you make a sound, I take the child and leave you here alone. I have the right to command here—I am the father of this child."

"Lord Elliot!" cried the nurse, in amazement.

Lord Elliot smiled. This involuntary recognition of his right did him good and softened him.

"Fear nothing," said he, kindly, "no harm shall happen to you. I take you and the child. If you love and are kind to it, you shall receive from me a pension for life; from to-day your wages are doubled. For this I demand nothing, but that you should collect at once the necessary articles of clothing of this child, and put them together. If you are ready in fifteen minutes, I will give you this gold piece."

He looked at his watch, and took from his purse a gold piece, which lent wings to the stout feet of the nurse.

"Is all you need in here?" said he.

Receiving an answer in the affirmative, he took his light and left the chamber. Before leaving, however, he locked another door leading into the hall, so as to prevent the possible escape of the nurse.

As he entered Camilla's boudoir his countenance became dark and stern; every gentle and tender feeling that his child had aroused now fled from his heart. He was now the insulted husband, the man whose honor was wounded in its most sensitive point—who came to punish, to revenge, to seek the proofs of the guilt he sus-

pected. He placed the light upon the table, and opened his wife's portfolio to seek for the key of her drawer, which was generally kept there. It was in its usual place. Lord Elliot shuddered as he touched it; it felt like burning fire in his hand.

"It is the key to my grave," murmured he.

With a firm hand he put the key in the lock, opened the drawer, and drew out the letters and papers it contained. There were his own letters, the letters of love and tenderness he had sent her from Copenhagen; among them he found others full of passionate proofs of the criminal and unholy love he had come to punish. Camilla had not had the delicacy to separate her husband's from her lover's letters; she had carelessly thrown them in the same drawer. As Lord Elliot saw this he laughed aloud, a feeling of inexpressible contempt overpowered his soul and deadened his pain. He could not continue to love one who had not only been faithless to him, but wanting in delicacy to the partner of her sin.

Lord Elliot read but one of the *beau cousin's* letters, then threw it carelessly aside. He did not care to read more of the silly speeches, the guilty protestations of constancy of her insipid lover. He searched but for one letter; he wished to find the original of the last one Camilla had written to him, for he knew her too well to give her credit for the composition of that cold, sneering, determined letter. He wished, therefore, to find the author, whose every word had pierced his soul like a dagger, driving him at first almost to madness.

A wild, triumphant cry now escaped from him, resounding fearfully in the solitary chambers. He had found it! The letter was clutched tightly in his trembling hands as he read the first lines. It was in the same hand as the others, it was the writing of his rival, Von Kindar, her *beau cousin*.

Lord Elliot folded the paper carefully and hid it in his bosom; then throwing the others into the drawer, he locked it, placing the key in the portfolio.

"It is well," said he, "I have now all I need. This letter is his death-warrant."

He took the light and left the room. Fifteen minutes had just elapsed when he entered his daughter's chamber. The nurse advanced to meet him, the child and a bundle of clothes in her arms, and received the promised gold piece.

"Now, we must hasten," said he, stepping into the hall.

They passed silently through the house, down the steps, and into the court-yard. Lord Elliot walked hastily on, followed by the wondering nurse. He stopped at the stable door, calling loudly upon the coachman to get up and prepare the horses. At twelve o'clock the

coachman was to go for his mistress; he was therefore dressed, and had only laid down for a short nap.

"Put the horses to the carriage," repeated Lord Elliot.

The coachman, raising his lamp, threw a full glare of light upon the stranger.

"I do not know you," said he, roughly; "I receive orders from no one but my mistress."

For answer, Lord Elliot drew from his breast a pocket pistol.

"If you are not ready in five minutes, I will shoot you through the head," said Lord Elliot, quietly, tapping the trigger.

"For God's sake, obey him, John," cried the nurse; "it is his excellency Lord Elliot!"

In five minutes the carriage was ready, owing much more to the loaded pistol still in Lord Elliot's hand than to the conviction that this strange, angry-looking man was his master.

"To the depot!" cried Lord Elliot, placing the child and nurse in the carriage, then jumping in after them—"to the depot in all haste!"

They reached the building in a few minutes. There stood the horses in readiness, and beside them Lord Elliot's servant, with his baggage. He sprang from the carriage, and, giving the coachman a *douceur*, ordered him to loosen the horses and return home with them.

"But, your honor," stammered the mystified coachman, "how am I to call for my lady if you take the carriage?"

"My lady can wait," said Lord Elliot, jeeringly. "If she reproaches you, tell her that Lord Elliot wishes to be remembered to her; that he will return in eight days with her carriage."

"But she will dismiss me from her service, my lord."

"Wait patiently for eight days, and then you shall enter mine. And now, away with you!"

The coachman dared not answer, and soon disappeared with his horses.

The fresh horses were put to the carriage, the servant swung himself up to his seat; Lord Elliot stood in front of the carriage with his friend Dr. Blitz.

"All has happened as I desired," said he. "I take my child away with me, and, with God's will, she shall never know but that death deprived her of her mother. Poor child! she has no mother, but I will love her with all the strength of a father, all the tenderness of a mother, and I have a noble sister who will guard and watch over her. She awaits me at Kiel. I accompany my child so far, but as soon as she is in the faithful hands of my sister, as soon as I have placed them upon the ship sailing for Copenhagen, I return here."



"Why should you return, my lord?" said the doctor, in terror. "Is it not sufficient that you have deprived the mother of her child? that you have branded the woman with shame before the whole world? What more would you do, my lord?"

With a strange smile, Lord Elliot laid his hand upon the doctor's shoulder.

"Flows there milk instead of blood in your veins, man? or have you forgotten that I have been hit by a poisoned arrow? I must be revenged, if I would not die of this wound."

"Let your wounds bleed, my lord—the longer they bleed, the sooner they will heal. But why destroy the arrow that wounded you? Will you recover the sooner or suffer the less?"

"Again I ask you, is there milk instead of blood in your veins? My honor is stained—I must cleanse it with the blood of my enemy."

"A duel, then, my lord? You will suffer chance to decide your most holy and sacred interests—your honor and life? And if chance is against you? If you fall, instead of your adversary?"

"Then, my friend, God will have decided it, and I shall thank Him for relieving me from a life which will from henceforth be a heavy burden to me. Farewell, doctor. I will be with you in eight days, and will again need your assistance."

"It is then irrevocable, my lord?"

"Irrevocable, doctor."

"I shall be ready. God grant that if this sad drama is to end in blood, it may not be yours!"

They pressed each other's hands tenderly. Lord Elliot sprang into the carriage, the coachman whipped his horses, and the carriage in which were the unfortunate man and the stolen child rolled merrily along the deserted streets.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE DISCOVERY.

PRINCE HENRY stood at the window and looked down into the garden. He saw his wife walking in the park with her ladies, and enjoying the clear, cool winter day; he heard their gay and merry laughter, but he felt no wish to join them and share their mirth.

Since that day in the wood, a change had come upon the prince—a dark, despairing, melancholy had taken possession of him, but he would not let it be seen; he forced himself to a noisy gayety, and in the presence of his wife he was the same tender, devoted, complaisant lover he had been before; but the mask under which he

concealed his dislike and scorn was a cruel torture and terrible agony; when he heard her laugh he felt as if a sharp dagger had wounded him; when he touched her hand, he could with difficulty suppress a cry of pain; but he conquered himself, and kept his grief and jealousy down, down in his heart. It was possible he was mistaken. It was possible his wife was innocent; that his friend was true. His own heart wished this so earnestly; his noble and great soul rebelled at the thought of despising those whom he had once loved and trusted so fully. He wished to believe that he had had a hurtful dream; that a momentary madness had darkened his brain; he would rather distrust all his reflections than to believe that this woman, whom he had loved with all the strength of his nature, this man whom he had confided in so entirely, had deceived and betrayed him. It was too horrible to doubt the noblest and most beautiful, the holiest and gentlest—to be so confounded, so uncertain in his best and purest feelings. He could not banish doubt from his heart; like a death-worm, it was gnawing day and night, destroying his vitality—poisoning every hour of the day, and even in his dreams uttering horrible words of mockery. Since the *fête* in the wood he had been observant, he had watched every glance, listened to every word; but he had discovered nothing. Both appeared unembarrassed and innocent; perhaps they dissembled; perhaps they had seen him as he lay before the hut, and knew that he had been since that day following and observing them, and by their candor and simplicity they would disarm his suspicions and lull his distrust to sleep. This thought kept him ever on his guard; he would, he must know if he had been betrayed; he must have absolute certainty. He stood concealed behind the curtains of his window, and looked down into the garden. His eyes were fixed with a glowing, consuming expression upon the princess, who, with one of her ladies, now passed before his window and looked up, but she could not see him; he was completely hidden behind the heavy silk curtains.

The princess passed on, convinced that if her husband had been in his room, he would have come forward to greet her.

The prince wished her to come to this conclusion. "Now," thought he, "she feels secure; she does not suspect I am observing her, at last I may find an opportunity to become convinced."

Count Kalkreuth was there; he had gone down into the garden. He advanced to meet the princess, they greeted each other, but in their simple, accustomed manner, he, the count, respectfully and ceremoniously—the princess dignified, careless, and condescending. And now they walked near each other, chatting, laughing, charmingly vivacious, and excited by their conversation.

The prince stood behind his curtain with a loudly-beating heart,