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WEIRD TALES

BY

E. T. W. HOFFMANN

A NEW TRANSLATION FROM THE GERMAN

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR

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FORMERLY SCHOLAR OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

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THE DOGE AND DOGESS.[1]

THIS was the title that distinguished in the art-catalogue of the works exhibited by the Berlin Academy of Arts in September, 1816, a picture which came from the brush of the skilful clever Associate of the Academy, C. Kolbe.[2] There was such a peculiar charm in the piece that it attracted all observers. A Doge, richly and magnificently dressed, and a Dogess at his side, as richly adorned with jewellery, are stepping out on to a balustered balcony; *he* is an old man, with a grey beard and rusty red face, his features indicating a peculiar blending of expressions, now revealing strength, now weakness, again pride and arrogance, and again pure good-nature; *she* is a young woman, with a far-away look of yearning sadness and dreamy aspiration not only in her eyes but also in her general bearing. Behind them is an elderly lady and a man holding an open sun-shade. At one end of the balcony is a young man blowing a conch-shaped horn, whilst in front of it a richly decorated gondola, bearing the Venetian flag and having two gondoliers, is rocking on the sea. In the background stretches the sea

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[1] Written for the *Taschenbuch der Liebe und Freundschaft gewidmet*, 1819; edited by S. Schütze, Frankfort-on-Main.

[2] C. W. Kolbe, junr., historical and genre painter, was born in 1781 and died in 1853.

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itself studded with hundreds and hundreds of sails, whilst the towers and palaces of magnificent Venice are seen rising out of its waves. To the left is Saint Mark's, to the right, more in the front, San Giorgio Maggiore. The following words were cut in the golden frame of the picture.

Ah! senza amare,
Andare sul mare
Col sposo del mare,
Non puo consolare.

To go on the sea
With the spouse of the sea,
When loveless I be,
Is no comfort to me.

One day there arose before this picture a fruitless altercation as to whether the artist really intended it for anything more than a mere picture, that is, the temporary situation, sufficiently indicated by the verse, of a decrepit old man who with all his splendour and magnificence is unable to satisfy the desires of a heart filled with yearning aspirations, or whether he intended to represent an actual historical event. One after the other the visitors left the place, tired of the discussion, so that at length there were only two men left, both very good friends to the noble art of painting. "I can't understand," said one of them, "how people can spoil all their enjoyment by eternally hunting after some jejune interpretation or explanation. Independently of the fact that I have a pretty accurate notion of what the relations in life between this Doge and Dogess were, I am more particularly struck by the subdued richness and power that characterises the picture as a whole. Look at this flag with the winged lions,

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how they flutter in the breeze as if they swayed the world. O beautiful Venice!" He began to recite Turandot's[1] riddle of Lion of the Adriatic, "*Dimmi, qual sia quella terribil fera*," &c. He had hardly come to the end when a sonorous masculine voice broke in with Calaf's[2] solution, "*Tu quadrupede fera*," &c. Unobserved by the friends, a man of tall and noble appearance, his grey mantle thrown picturesquely across his shoulder, had taken up a position behind them, and was examining the picture with sparkling eyes. They got into conversation, and the stranger said almost in a tone of solemnity, "It is indeed a singular mystery, how a picture often arises in the mind of an artist, the figures of which, previously indistinguishable, incorporate mist driving about in empty space, first seem to shape themselves into vitality in his mind, and there seem to find their home. Suddenly the picture connects itself with the past, or even with the future, representing something that has really happened or that will happen. Perhaps it was not known to Kolbe himself that the persons he was representing in this pict-

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[1] The story *Turandot* has a history. Its prototype is in the Persian poet Nizámí (1141–1203). From Gozzi it was translated into German by Werthes; and it was from his translation that Schiller worked up his play in November and December, 1801. The proud Turandot, daughter of the Emperor of China, entertains such loathing of marriage that she rejects all suitors, until on her father's threatening to compel her to wed, she institutes a kind of version of the caskets in the *Merchant of Venice*. Any prince may woo for her, but in a peculiar way. He must solve three riddles in the full assembly of the court. If he succeeds, he wins the princess; if he does not succeed, he loses his own head. In Gozzi the three riddles are about the Year, the Sun, and (extremely inapposite to the circumstances) the Lion of the Adriatic. The two last Schiller replaced by riddles about the Eye and the Plough.

[2] Calaf, Prince of Astrakhan, successfully solves the riddles and wins the Princess Turandot.

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ure are none other than the Doge Marino Falieri[1] and his lady Annunciata."

The stranger paused, but the two friends urgently entreated him to solve for them this riddle as he had solved that of the Lion of the Adriatic. Whereupon he replied, "If you have patience, my inquisitive sirs, I will at once explain the picture to you by telling you Falieri's history. But have you patience? I shall be very circumstantial, for I cannot speak otherwise of things which stand so life-like before my eyes that I seem to have seen them myself. And that may very well be the case, for all historians—amongst whom I happen to be one—are properly a kind of talking ghost of past ages."

The friends accompanied the stranger into a retired room, when, without further preamble, he began as follows:—

It is now a long time ago, and if I mistake not, it was in the month of August, 1354, that the valiant Genoese captain, Paganino Doria[2] by name, utterly routed the Venetians and took their town of Parenzo. And his well-manned galleys were now cruising backwards and forwards in the Lagune, close in front of Venice, like ravenous beasts of prey which, goaded by hunger, roam restlessly up and down spying out where

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[1] The story of this Doge's conspiracy has furnished materials for a tragedy to Byron (1821), Casimir Delavinge (1829), and Albert Lindner (1875). A translation of the story is given by Mr. F. Cohen (Sir F. Palgrave) from Sanuto's *Chronicle*, in the Appendix to the play in Byron's works.

[2] Paganino Doria, one of the greatest of Genoese admirals, took and burnt Parenzo, a town on the west coast of Istria, on the 11th of August, 1354. At this period the rivalry between the two republics, Venice and Genoa, in their commercial relations with the East and in the Black Sea, was especially bitter, and they were almost constantly at war with each other.

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they may most safely pounce upon their victims; and both people and seignory were panic-stricken with fear. All the male population, liable to military service, and everybody who could lift an arm, flew to their weapons or seized an oar. The harbour of Saint Nicholas was the gathering-place for the bands. Ships and trees were sunk, and chains riveted to chains, to lock the harbour-mouth against the enemy. Whilst there was heard the rattle of arms and the wild tumult of preparation, and whilst the ponderous masses thundered down into the foaming sea, on the Rialto the agents of the seignory were wiping the cold sweat from their pale brows, and with troubled countenances and hoarse voices offering almost fabulous percentage for ready money, for the straitened republic was in want of this necessary also. Moreover, it was determined by the inscrutable decree of Providence that just at this period of extreme distress and anxiety, the faithful shepherd should be taken away from his troubled flock. Completely borne down by the burden of the public calamity, the Doge Andrea Dandolo [1] died; the people called him the "dear good count" (*il caro contino*), because he was always cordial and kind, and never crossed Saint Mark's Square without speaking a word of comfort to those in need of good advice, or giving a few sequins [2] to those who were in want of money. And as every blow is wont to fall with double sharpness upon those who are discouraged by misfortune, when at other times they would hardly have felt it at all, so now, when the people heard the bells of Saint

[1] Andrea Dandolo (1307–1354), Doge from 1343 to 1354. During his reign Venice actively extended her commercial conquests in the Black Sea and the countries around the Levant, engaged part of the time in active hostilities with the Genoese.

[2] See note, p. 63, vol. i.

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Mark's proclain in solemn muffled tones the death of their Duke, they were utterly undone with sorrow and grief. Their support, their hope, was now gone, and they would have to bend their necks to the Genoese yoke, they cried, in despite of the fact that Dandolo's loss did not seem to have any very counteractive effect upon the progress that was being made with all necessary warlike preparations. The "dear good count" had loved to live in peace and quietness, preferring to follow the wondrous courses of the stars rather than the problematical complications of state policy; he understood how to arrange a procession on Easter Day better than how to lead an army.

The object now was to elect a Doge who, endowed at one and the same time with the valour and genius of a war captain, and with skill in statecraft, should save Venice, now tottering on her foundations, from the threatening power of her bold and ever-bolder enemy. But when the senators assembled there was none but what had a gloomy face, hopeless looks, and head bent earthwards and resting on his supporting hand. Where were they to find a man who could seize the unguided helm and direct the bark of the state aright? At last the oldest of the councillors, called Marino Bodoeri, lifted up his voice and said, "You will not find him here around us, or amongst us; direct your eyes to Avignon, upon Marino Falieri, whom we sent to congratulate Pope Innocent [1] on his elevation to the Papal dignity; he can find better work to do now; he's the man for us; let us choose him Doge to stem this current of adversity. You will urge by way of objection that he is now almost eighty years old, that his hair and beard are white as silver, that his blithe appearance,

[1] Pope Innocent VI., Pope at Avignon, from 1352 to 1362.

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fiery eye, and the deep red of his nose and cheeks are to be ascribed, as his traducers maintain, to good Cyprus wine rather than to energy of character; but heed not that. Remember what conspicuous bravery this Marino Falieri showed as admiral of the fleet in the Black Sea, and bear in mind the great services which prevailed with the Procurators of Saint Mark to invest this Falieri with the rich countship of Valdemarino." Thus highly did Bodoeri extol Falieri's virtues; and he had a ready answer for all objections, so that at length all voices were unanimous in electing Falieri. Several, however, still continued to allude to his hot, passionate temper, his ambition, and his self-will; but they were met with the reply: "And it is exactly because all these have gone from the old man, that we choose the *grey-beard* Falieri and not the *youth* Falieri." And these censuring voices were completely silenced when the people, learning upon whom the choice had fallen, greeted it with the loudest and most extravagant demonstrations of delight. Do we not know that in such dangerous times, in times of such tension and unrest, any resolution that really is a resolution is accepted as an inspiration from Heaven? Thus it came to pass that the "dear good count" and all his gentleness and piety were forgotten, and every one cried, "By Saint Mark, this Marino ought long ago to have been our Doge, and then we should not have yon arrogant Doria before our very doors." And crippled soldiers painfully lifted up their wounded arms and cried, "That is Falieri who beat the Morbassan[1] — the valiant captain whose victorious banners waved in the Black Sea." Wherever a knot of people gathered, there was one

[1] Hoffmann states that he derived his materials for this story from Le Bret's "History of Venice,"—a book which, unfortunately, up to the time of going to press, the translator had not been able to obtain.

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amongst them telling of Falieri's heroic deeds ; and, as though Doria were already defeated, the air rang with wild shouts of triumph. An additional reason for this was that Nicolo Pisani,[1] who, Heaven knows why ! instead of going to meet Doria with his fleet, had coolly sailed away to Sardinia,[2] was now returned. Doria withdrew from the Lagune ; and what was really due to the approach of Pisani's fleet was ascribed to the formidable name of Marino Falieri. Then the people and the seignory were seized by a kind of frantic ecstasy that such an auspicious choice had been made ; and as an uncommon way of testifying the same, it was determined to welcome the newly elected Doge as if he were a messenger from heaven bringing honour, victory, and abundance of riches. Twelve nobles, each accompanied by a numerous retinue in rich dresses, had been sent by the Seignory to Verona, where the ambassadors of the Republic were again to announce to Falieri, on his arrival, with all due ceremony, his elevation to the supreme office in the state. Then fifteen richly decorated vessels of state, equipped by the Podesta[3] of Chioggia, and under the command of his own son Taddeo Giustiniani, took the Doge and his attendant company on board at Chiozza ; and now they moved on like the triumphal procession of a most

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[1] Nicolo Pisani, a very active naval commander in the third war with Genoa (1350–1355), fought battles in the Bosphorus, off Sardinia, and at Porto Longo, near Modon (Greece).

[2] Sardinia was for many, many years an object of contention between Pisa, Genoa, and the Aragonese. At this time (1354) it belonged to the latter, but the Genoese were constantly endeavouring to stir up the people of the island to revolt against the Aragonese ; hence we may see a reason for Pisani's being in Sardinian waters.

[3] Equivalent to "Governor." Chioggia was an old town thirty miles south of Venice, at the southern extremity of the Lagune. Chiozza = Chioggia.

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mighty and victorious monarch to St. Clement's, where the Bucentaur [1] was awaiting the Doge.

At this very moment, namely, when Marino Falieri was about to set foot on board the Bucentaur,—and that was on the evening of the 3d of October about sunset —a poor unfortunate man lay stretched at full length on the hard marble pavement in front of the Custom-house. A few rags of striped linen, of a colour now no longer recognisable, the remains of what apparently had once been a sailor's dress, such as was worn by the very poorest of the people—porters and assistant oarsmen, hung about his lean starved body. There was not a trace of a shirt to be seen, except the poor fellow's own skin, which peeped through his rags almost everywhere, and was so white and delicate that the very noblest need not have been shy or ashamed of it. Accordingly, his leanness only served to display more fully the perfect proportions of his well-knit frame. A careful scrutiny of the unfortunate's light-chestnut hair, now hanging all tangled and dishevelled about his exquisitely beautiful forehead, his blue eyes dimmed with extreme misery, his Roman nose, his fine formed lips—he seemed to be not more than twenty years old at the most—inevitably suggested that he was of good birth, and had by some adverse turn of fortune been thrown amongst the meanest classes of the people.

As remarked, the youth lay in front of the pillars of the Custom-house, his head resting on his right arm, and his eyes riveted in a vacant stare upon the sea,

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[1] The state barge of Venice; the word means "little golden boat." Pope Alexander III. bestowed upon the Doge Sebastian Ziani, for his victory over Frederick Barbarossa near Parenzo on Ascension Day, 1177, a ring in token of the suzerainty of Venice over the Adriatic. From this time dates the observance of the annual ceremony of the Doge's marrying the Adriatic from the Bucentaur.

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without movement or change of posture. An observer might well have fancied that he was devoid of life, or that death had fixed him there whilst turning him into an image of stone, had not a deep sigh escaped him from time to time, as if wrung from him by unutterable pain. And they were in fact occasioned by the pain of his left arm, which had apparently been seriously wounded, and was lying stretched out on the pavement, wrapped up in bloody rags.

All labour had ceased; the hum of trade was no longer heard; all Venice, in thousands of boats and gondolas, was gone out to meet the much-lauded Falieri. Hence it was that the unhappy youth was sighing away his pain in utter helplessness. But just as his weary head fell back upon the pavement, and he seemed on the point of fainting, a hoarse and very querulous voice cried several times in succession, "Antonio, my dear Antonio." At length Antonio painfully raised himself partly up; and, turning his head towards the pillars of the Custom-house, whence the voice seemed to proceed, he replied very faintly, and in a scarce intelligible voice, "Who is calling me? Who has come to cast my dead body into the sea, for it will soon be all over with me." Then a little shrivelled wrinkled crone came up panting and coughing, hobbling along by the aid of her staff; she approached the wounded youth, and squatting down beside him, she burst out into a most repulsive chuckling and laughing. "You foolish child, you foolish child," whispered the old woman, "are you going to perish here—will you stay here to die, while a golden fortune is waiting for you? Look yonder, look yonder at yon blazing fire in the west; there are sequins for you! But you must eat, dear Antonio, eat and drink; for it's only hunger which has made you fall down here on this cold pave-

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ment. Your arm is now quite well again, yes, that it is." Antonio recognised in the old crone the singular beggar-woman who was generally to be seen on the steps of the Franciscan Church, chuckling to herself and laughing, and soliciting alms from the worshippers; he himself, urged by some inward inexplicable propensity, had often thrown her a hard-earned penny, which he had not had to spare. "Leave me, leave me in peace, you insane old woman," he said; "but you are right, it is hunger more than my wound which has made me weak and miserable; for three days I have not earned a farthing. I wanted to go over to the monastery[1] and see if I could get a spoonful or two of the soup that is made for invalids; but all my companions have gone; there is not one to have compassion upon me and take me in his *barca*;[2] and now I have fallen down here, and shall, I expect, never get up again." "Hi! hi! hi! hi!" chuckled the old woman; "why do you begin to despair so soon? Why lose heart so quickly? You are thirsty and hungry, but I can help you. Here are a few fine dried fish which I bought only to-day in the Mint; here is lemon-juice and a piece of nice white bread; eat, my son; and then we will look at the wounded arm." And the old woman proceeded to bring forth fish, bread, and lemon juice from the bag which hung like a hood down her back,

[1] San Giorgio Maggiore. Venice, as everybody knows, is not built upon the mainland but upon islands. The two largest, whose greatest length is from east to west, are divided by the Grand Canal, upon which are situated most of the palaces and important public buildings. South of these two principal islands, and separated from them by the Giudecca Canal, are the islands of Giudecca and San Giorgio Maggiore close together, the latter on the east and opposite the south entrance to the Grand Canal, beyond which are the Piazetta and St. Mark's Square.

[2] This is larger than the gondola, and also more modern; it is calculated to hold six persons, and even luggage.

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and also projected right above her bent head. As soon as Antonio had moistened his parched and burning lips with the cool drink, he felt the pangs of hunger return with double fury, and he greedily devoured the bread and the fish.

Meanwhile the old woman was busy unwrapping the rags from his wounded arm, and it was found that, though it was badly crushed, the wound was progressing favourably towards healing. The old woman took a salve out of a little box and warmed it with the breath of her mouth, and as she rubbed it on the wound she asked, "But who then has given you such a nasty blow, my poor boy?" Antonio was so refreshed and charged anew with vital energy that he had raised himself completely up; his eyes flashed, and he shook his doubled fist above his head, crying, "Oh! that rascal Nicolo; he tried to maim me, because he envies me every wretched penny that any generous hand bestows upon me. You know, old dame, that I barely managed to hold body and soul together by helping to carry bales of goods from ships and freight-boats to the *dépôt* of the Germans, the so-called Fontego [1]—of course you know the building"—— Directly Antonio uttered the word Fontego, the old woman began to chuckle and laugh most abominably, and to mumble, "Fontego—Fontego—Fontego." "Have done with your insane laughing if I am to go on with my story," added Antonio angrily. At once the old woman grew quiet, and Antonio continued, "after a time I saved a little bit of money, and bought a new jerkin, so that I looked quite fine; and then I got enrolled amongst

[1] The Fondaco de' Tedeschi, erected in 1506, on the Grand Canal. It was formerly decorated externally with paintings by Titian and his pupils. At first it served as a *dépôt* for the wares of German merchants (whence its name), but is now used as a custom-house.

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the gondoliers. As I was always in a blithe humour, worked hard, and knew a great many good songs, I soon earned a good deal more than the rest. This, however, awakened my comrades' envy. They blackened my character to my master, so that he turned me adrift; and everywhere where I went or where I stood they cried after me, 'German cur! Cursed heretic!' Three days ago, as I was helping to unload a boat near St. Sebastian, they fell upon me with sticks and stones. I defended myself stoutly, but that malicious Nicolo dealt me a blow with his oar, which grazed my head and severely injured my arm, and knocked me on the ground. Ay, you've given me a good meal, old woman, and I am sure I feel that your salve has done my arm a world of good. See, I can already move it easily—now I shall be able to row bravely again." Antonio had risen up from the ground, and was swinging his arm violently backwards and forwards, but the old woman again fell to chuckling and laughing loudly, whilst she hobbled round about him in the most extraordinary fashion—dancing with short tripping steps as it were—and she cried, "My son, my good boy, my good lad—row on bravely—he is coming—he is coming. The gold is shining red in the bright flames. Row on stoutly, row on; but only once more, only once more; and then never again."

But Antonio was not paying the slightest heed to the old woman's words, for the most splendid of spectacles was unfolding itself before his eyes. The Bucentaur, with the Lion of the Adriatic on her fluttering standard, was coming along from St. Clement's to the measured stroke of the oars like a mighty winged golden swan. Surrounded by innumerable *barcas* and gondolas, and with her head proudly and boldly raised,

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she appeared like a princess commanding a triumphing army, that had emerged from the depths of the sea, wearing bright and gaily decked helmets. The evening sun was sending down his fiery rays upon the sea and upon Venice, so that everything appeared to have been plunged into a bath of blazing fire; but whilst Antonio, completely forgetful of all his unhappiness, was standing gazing with wonder and delight, the gleams of the sun grew more bloody and more bloody. The wind whistled shrilly and harshly, and a hollow threatening echo came rolling in from the open sea outside. Down burst the storm in the midst of black clouds, and enshrouded all in thick darkness, whilst the waves rose higher and higher, pouring in from the thundering sea like foaming hissing monsters, threatening to engulf everything. The gondolas and *barcas* were driven in all directions like scattered feathers. The Bucentaur, unable to resist the storm owing to its flat bottom, was yawing from side to side. Instead of the jubilant notes of trumpets and cornets, there was heard through the storm the anxious cries of those in distress.

Antonio gazed upon the scene like one stupefied, without sense and motion. But then there came a rattling of chains immediately in front of him; he looked down, and saw a little canoe, which was chained to the wall, and was being tossed up and down by the waves; and a thought entered his mind like a flash of lightning. He leaped into the canoe, unfastened it, seized the oar which he found in it, and pushed out boldly and confidently into the sea, directly towards the Bucentaur. The nearer he came to it the more distinctly could he hear shouts for help. "Here, here, come here—save the Doge, save the Doge." It is well known that little fisher-canoes are safer and

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better to manage in the Lagune when it is stormy than are larger boats; and accordingly these little craft were hastening from all sides to the rescue of Marino Falieri's invaluable person. But it is an invariable principle in life that the Eternal Power reserves every bold deed as a brilliant success to the one specially chosen for it, and hence all others have all their pains for nothing. And as on this occasion it was poor Antonio who was destined to achieve the rescue of the newly elected Doge, he alone succeeded in working his way on to the Bucentaur in his little insignificant fisher-canoe. Old Marino Falieri, familiar with such dangers, stepped firmly, without a moment's hesitation, from the sumptuous but treacherous Bucentaur into poor Antonio's little craft, which, gliding smoothly over the raging waves like a dolphin, brought him in a few minutes to St. Mark's Square. The old man, his clothing saturated with wet, and with large drops of sea-spray in his grey beard, was conducted into the church, where the nobles with blanched faces concluded the ceremonies connected with the Doge's public entry. But the people, as well as the seignory, confounded by this unfortunate *contretemps*, to which was also added the fact that the Doge, in the hurry and confusion, had been led between the two columns where common malefactors were generally executed, grew silent in the midst of their triumph, and thus the day that had begun in festive fashion ended in gloom and sadness.

Nobody seemed to think about the Doge's rescuer; nor did Antonio himself think about it, for he was lying in the peristyle of the Ducal Palace, half dead with fatigue, and fainting with the pain caused by his wound, which had again burst open. He was therefore all the more surprised when just before midnight

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a Ducal halberdier took him by the shoulders, saying, "Come along, friend," and led him into the palace, where he pushed him into the Duke's chamber. The old man came to meet him with a kindly smile, and said, pointing to a couple of purses lying on the table, "You have borne yourself bravely, my son. Here; take these three thousand sequins, and if you want more ask for them; but have the goodness never to come into my presence again." As he said these last words the old man's eyes flashed with fire, and the tip of his nose grew a darker red. Antonio could not fathom the old man's mind; he did not, however, trouble himself overmuch about it, but with some little difficulty took up the purses, which he believed he had honestly and rightly earned.

Next morning old Falieri, conspicuous in the splendours of his newly acquired dignity, stood in one of the lofty bay windows of the palace, watching the bustling scene below, where the people were busy engaged in practising all kinds of weapons, when Bodoeri, who from the days when he was a youth had enjoyed the intimate and unchangeable friendship of the Doge, entered the apartment. As, however, the Doge was quite wrapped up in himself and his dignity, and did not appear to notice his entrance, Bodoeri clapped his hands together and cried with a loud laugh, "Come, Falieri, what are all these sublime thoughts that are being hatched and nourished in your mind since you first put the Doge's bent bonnet on?" Falieri, coming to himself like one awakening from a dream, stepped forward to meet his old friend with an air of forced amiability. He felt that he really owed his bonnet to Bodoeri, and the words of the latter seemed to be a reminder of the fact. But since every obligation weighed like a burden upon Falieri's proud ambitious

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spirit, and he could not dismiss the oldest member of the Council, and his tried friend to boot, as he had dismissed poor Antonio, he constrained himself to utter a few words of thanks, and immediately began to speak of the measures to be adopted to meet their enemy, who was now developing so great an activity in every direction. Bodoeri interrupted him and said, cunningly smiling, "That, and all else that the state demands of you, we will maturely weigh and consider an hour or two hence in a full meeting of the Great Council. I have not come to you thus early in order to invent a plan for defeating yon presumptuous Doria or bringing to reason Louis[1] the Hungarian, who is again setting his longing eyes upon our Dalmatian seaports. No, Marino, I was thinking solely about you, and about what you perhaps would not guess—your marriage." "How came you to think of such a thing as *that?*" replied the Doge, greatly annoyed; and rising to his feet, he turned his back upon Bodoeri and looked out of the window. "It's a long time to Ascension Day. By that time I hope the enemy will be routed, and that victory, honour, additional riches, and a wider extension of power will have been won for the sea-born lion of the Adriatic. The chaste bride shall find her bridegroom worthy of her." "Pshaw! pshaw!" interrupted Bodoeri, impatiently; "you are talking about that memorable ceremony on Ascension Day, when you will throw the gold ring from the Bucentaur into the waves under the impression that you are wedding the Adriatic Sea. But do you not know,—you, Marino, you, kinsman to the sea,—of any other bride than the cold, damp,

[1] Louis I. the Great of Hungary (1342–1382). The Dalmatian and Istrian sea-board formed a fruitful source of contention between the Venetians and Hungary, Louis proving a very formidable opponent to the Republic.

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treacherous element which you delude yourself into the belief that you rule, and which only yesterday revolted against you in such dangerous fashion? Marry, how can you fancy lying in the arms of such a bride—of such a wild, wayward thing? Why when you only just skimmed her lips as you rode along in the Bucentaur she at once began to rage and storm. Would an entire Vesuvius of fiery passion suffice to warm the icy bosom of such a false bride as that? Continually faithless, she is wedded time after time, nor does she receive the ring as a treasured symbol of love, but she extorts it as a tribute from a slave? No, Marino, I was thinking of your marriage to the most beautiful child of the earth than can be found." "You are prating utter nonsense, utter nonsense, I tell you, old man," murmured Falieri without turning away from the window. "I, a grey-haired old man, eighty years of age, burdened with toil and trouble, who have never been married, and now hardly capable of loving"—— "Stop," cried Bodoeri, "don't slander yourself. Does not the Winter, however rough and cold he may be, at last stretch out his longing arms towards the beautiful goddess who comes to meet him borne by balmy western winds? And when he presses her to his benumbed bosom, when a gentle glow pervades his veins, where then is his ice and his snow? You say you are eighty years old; that is true; but do you measure old age then by years merely? Don't you carry your head as erect and walk with as firm a step as you did forty summers ago? Or do you perhaps feel that your strength is failing you, that you must carry a lighter sword, that you grow faint when you walk fast, or get short of breath when you ascend the steps of the Ducal Palace?" "No, by Heaven, no," broke in Falieri upon his friend, as he turned away from the window with an abrupt passion-

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ate movement and approached him, "no, I feel no traces of age upon me." "Well then," continued Bodoeri, 'take deep draughts in your old age of all the delights of earth which are now destined for you. Elevate the woman whom I have chosen for you to be your Dogess; and then all the ladies of Venice will be constrained to admit that she stands first of all in beauty and in virtue, even as the Venetians recognise in you their captain in valour, intellect, and power."

Bodoeri now began to sketch the picture of a beautiful woman, and in doing so he knew how to mix his colours so cleverly, and lay them on with so much vigour and effect, that old Falieri's eyes began to sparkle, and his face grew redder and redder, whilst he puckered up his mouth and smacked his lips as if he were draining sundry glasses of fiery Syracuse. "But who is this paragon of loveliness of whom you are speaking?" said he at last with a smirk. "I mean nobody else but my dear niece—it's she I mean," replied Bodoeri. "What! your niece?" interrupted Falieri. "Why, she was married to Bertuccio Nenolo when I was Podesta of Treviso." "Oh! you are thinking about my niece Francesca," continued Bodoeri, "but it is her sweet daughter whom I intend for you. You know how rude, rough Nenolo was enticed to the wars and drowned at sea. Francesca buried her pain and grief in a Roman nunnery, and so I had little Annunciata brought up in strict seclusion at my villa in Treviso"—— "What!" cried Falieri, again impatiently interrupting the old man, "you mean me to raise your niece's daughter to the dignity of Dogess? How long is it since Nenolo was married? Annunciata must be a child—at the most only ten years old. When I was Podesta in Treviso, Nenolo had not even thought of marrying, and that's"—— "Twenty-five years ago,"

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interposed Bodoeri, laughing; "come, you are getting all at sea with your memory of the flight of time, it goes so rapidly with you. Annunciata is a maiden of nineteen, beautiful as the sun, modest, submissive, inexperienced in love, for she has hardly ever seen a man. She will cling to you with childlike affection and unassuming devotion." "I will see her, I will see her," exclaimed the Doge, whose eyes again beheld the picture of the beautiful Annunciata which Bodoeri had sketched.

His desire was gratified the self-same day; for immediately he got back to his own apartments from the meeting of the Great Council, the crafty Bodoeri, who no doubt had many reasons for wishing to see his niece Dogess at Falieri's side, brought the lovely Annunciata to him secretly. Now, when old Falieri saw the angelic maiden, he was quite taken aback by her wonderful beauty, and was scarcely able to stammer out a few unintelligible words as he sued for her hand. Annunciata, no doubt well instructed by Bodoeri beforehand, fell upon her knees before the princely old man, her cheeks flushing crimson. She grasped his hand and pressed it to her lips, softly whispering, "O sir, will you indeed honour me by raising me to a place at your side on your princely throne? Oh! then I will reverence you from the depths of my soul, and will continue your faithful handmaiden as long as I have breath." Old Falieri was beside himself with happiness and delight. As Annunciata took his hand he felt a convulsive throb in every limb; and then his head and all his body began to tremble and totter to such a degree that he had to sink hurriedly into his great arm-chair. It seemed as if he were about to refute Bodoeri's good opinion as to the strength and toughness of his eighty summers. Bodoeri, in fact, could not keep back the

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peculiar smile that darted across his lips; innocent, unsophisticated Annunciata observed nothing; and happily no one else was present. Finally it was resolved for some reason—either because old Falieri felt in what an uncomfortable position he would appear in the eyes of the people as the betrothed of a maiden of nineteen, or because it occurred to him as a sort of presentiment that the Venetians, who were so prone to mockery, ought not to be so directly challenged to indulge in it, or because he deemed it better to say nothing at all about the critical period of betrothal—at any rate, it was resolved, with Bodoeri's consent, that the marriage should be celebrated with the greatest secrecy, and that then some days later the Dogess should be introduced to the seignory and the people as if she had been some time married to Falieri, and had just arrived from Treviso, where she had been staying during Falieri's mission to Avignon.

Let us now turn our eyes upon yon neatly dressed handsome youth who is going up and down the Rialto with his purse of sequins in his hand, conversing with Jews, Turks, Armenians, Greeks.[1] He turns away his face with a frown, walks on further, stands still, turns round, and ultimately has himself rowed by a gondolier to St. Mark's Square. There he walks up and down with uncertain hesitating steps, his arms folded and his eyes bent upon the ground; nor does he observe, or even have any idea, that all the whispering and low coughing from various windows and various richly draped balconies are love-signals which are meant for

[1] At this epoch Venice was the mart and mediatory between the West and the East, the commercial riches of the latter having been opened up to the feudal civilisation of Europe, chiefly through the Crusades. Hence the cosmopolitan character of the merchants on the Rialto.

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him. Who would have easily recognised in this youth the same Antonio who a few days before had lain on the marble pavement in front of the Custom-house, poor, ragged, and miserable? "My dear boy! My dear golden boy, Antonio, good day, good day!" Thus he was greeted by the old beggar-woman, who sat on the steps leading to St. Mark's Church, and whom he was going past without observing. Turning abruptly round, he recognised the old woman, and, dipping his hand into his purse, took out a handful of sequins with the intention of throwing them to her. "Oh! keep your gold in your purse," chuckled and laughed the old woman; "what should I do with your money? am I not rich enough? But if you want to do me a kindness, get me a new hood made, for this which I am now wearing is no longer any protection against wind and weather. Yes, please get me one, my dear boy, my dear golden boy,—but keep away from the Fontego,—keep away from the Fontego." Antonio stared into the old woman's pale yellow face, the deep wrinkles in which twitched convulsively in a strange awe-inspiring way. And when she clapped her lean bony hands together so that the joints cracked, and continued her disagreeable laugh, and went on repeating in a hoarse voice, "Keep away from the Fontego," Antonio cried, "Can you not have done with that mad insane nonsense, you old witch?"

As Antonio uttered this word, the old woman, as if struck by a lightning-flash, came rolling down the high marble steps like a ball. Antonio leapt forward and grasped her by both hands, and so prevented her from falling heavily. "O my good lad, my good lad," said the old crone in a low, querulous voice, "what a hideous word that was which you uttered. Kill me rather than repeat that word to me again. Oh! you don't know

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how deeply you have cut me to the heart, me—who have such a true affection for you—no, you don't know"—— Abruptly breaking off, she wrapped up her head in the dark brown cloth flaps which covered her shoulders like a short mantle, and sighed and moaned as if suffering unspeakable pain. Antonio felt his heart strangely moved; lifting up the old woman, he carried her up into the vestibule of the church, and set her down upon one of the marble benches which were there. "You have been kind to me, old woman," he began, after he had liberated her head from the ugly cloth flaps, "you have been kind to me, since it is to you that I really owe all my prosperity; for if you had not stood by me in the hour of need, I should long ere this have been at the bottom of the sea, nor should I have rescued the old Doge, and received these good sequins. But even if you had not shown that kindness to me, I yet feel that I should have a special liking for you as long as I live, in spite of the fact that your insane behaviour—chuckling and laughing so horribly—strikes my heart with awe. To tell you the truth, old dame, even when I had hard work to get a living by carrying merchandise and rowing, I always felt as if I must work still harder that I might have a few pence to give you." "O son of my heart, my golden Tonino," cried the old woman, raising her shrivelled arms above her head, whilst her staff fell rattling on the marble floor and rolled away from her, "O Tonino mine, I know it; yes, I know it; you must cling to me with all your soul, you may do as you will, for—but hush! hush! hush!" The old woman stooped painfully down in order to reach her staff, but Antonio picked it up and handed it to her.

Leaning her sharp chin on her staff, and riveting her eyes in a set stare upon the ground, she began to

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speak in a reserved but hollow voice, "Tell me, my child, have you no recollection at all of any former time, of what you did or where you were before you found yourself here, a poor wretch hardly able to keep body and soul together?" With a deep sigh, Antonio took his seat beside the old crone and then began, "Alas! mother, only too well do I know that I was born of parents living in the most prosperous circumstances; but who they were and how I came to leave them, of this I have not the slightest notion, nor could I have. I remember very well a tall handsome man, who often took me in his arms and smothered me with kisses and put sweets in my mouth. And I can also in the same way call to mind a pleasant and pretty lady, who used to dress and undress me and place me in a soft little bed every night, and who in fact was very kind to me in every way. They used to talk to me in a foreign, sonorous language, and I also stammered several words of the same tongue after them. Whilst I was an oarsman my jealous rivals used to say I must be of German origin, from the colour of my hair and eyes, and from my general build. And this I believe myself, for the language which that man spoke (he must have been my father) was German. But the most vivid recollection which I have of that time is that of one terrible night, when I was awakened out of deep sleep by a fearful scream of distress. People were running about the house; doors were being opened and banged to; I grew terribly frightened, and began to cry loudly. Then the lady who used to dress me and take care of me burst into the room, snatched me out of bed, stopped my mouth, enveloped me in shawls, and ran off with me. From that moment I can remember nothing more, until I found myself again in a splendid house, situated in a most charming district. Then

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there rises up the image of a man whom I called 'father,' a majestic man of noble but benevolent appearance. Like all the rest in the house, he spoke Italian.

"For several weeks I had not seen my father, when one day several ugly-looking strangers came and kicked up a great deal of noise in the house, rummaging about and turning out everything. When they saw me they asked who I was, and what I was doing there? 'Don't you know I'm Antonio, and belong to the house?' I replied; but they laughed in my face and tore off all my fine clothes and turned me out of doors, threatening to have me whipped if I dared to show myself again. I ran away screaming and crying. I had not gone a hundred yards from the house when I met an old man, whom I recognised as being one of my foster-father's servants. 'Come along, Antonio,' he said, taking hold of my hand, 'come along, my poor boy, that house is now closed to us both for ever. We must both look out and see how we can earn a crust of bread.'

"The old man brought me along with him here. He was not so poor as he seemed to be from his mean clothing. Directly we arrived I saw him rip up his jerkin and produce a bag of sequins; and he spent the whole day running about on the Rialto, now acting as broker, now dealing on his own account. I had always to be close at his heels; and whenever he had made a bargain he had a habit of begging a trifle for the *figliuolo* (little boy). Every one whom I looked boldly in the face was glad to pull out a few pence, which the old man pocketed with infinite satisfaction, affirming, as he stroked my cheeks, that he was saving it up to buy me a new jerkin. I was very comfortable with the old man, whom the people called Old Father Blue-

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nose, though for what reason I don't know. But this life did not last long. You will remember that terrible time, old woman, when one day the earth began to tremble, and towers and palaces were shaken to their very foundations and began to reel and totter, and the bells to ring as if tolled by the arms of invisible giants. Hardly seven years have passed since that day. Fortunately I escaped along with my old man out of the house before it fell in with a crash behind us. There was no business doing; everybody on the Rialto seemed stunned, and everything lifeless. But this dreadful event was only the precursor of another approaching monster, which soon breathed out its poisonous breath over the town and the surrounding country. It was known that the pestilence, which had first made its way from the Levant into Sicily, was committing havoc in Tuscany.[1] As yet Venice had been spared. One day Old Father Bluenose was dealing with an Armenian on the Rialto; they were agreed over their bargain, and warmly shook hands. Father Bluenose had sold the Armenian certain good wares at a very low price, and now asked for the usual trifle for the *figliuolo*. The stranger, a big stalwart man with a thick curly beard (I can see him now), bent a kind look upon me, and then kissed me, pressing a few sequins into my hand, which I hastily pocketed. We took a gondola to St. Mark's. On the way the old man asked me for the sequins, but for some reason or other, I don't know what induced me to do it, I maintained that I must keep them myself, since the Armenian had wished me to do so.

[1] In the year 1348, Venice was visited by an earthquake, and this was followed by the plague (the Black Death). In order to complete the roll of the republic's misfortunes in this gloomy year, it may be added that she also lost almost the whole of her Black Sea fleet to the Genoese.

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The old man got angry ; but whilst he was quarrelling with me I noticed a disagreeable dirty yellow colour spreading over his face, and that he was mixing up all sorts of incoherent nonsense in his talk. When we reached the Square he reeled about like a drunken man, until he fell to the ground in front of the Ducal Palace —dead. With a loud wail I threw myself upon the corpse. The people came running round us, but as soon as the dreaded cry 'The pestilence ! the pestilence !' was heard, they scattered and flew apart in terror. At the same moment I was seized by a dull numbing pain, and my senses left me.

"When I awoke I found I was in a spacious room, lying on a plain mattress, and covered with a blanket. Round about me there were fully twenty or thirty other pale ghastly forms lying on similar mattresses. As I learned later, certain compassionate monks, who happened to be just coming out of St. Mark's, had, on finding signs of life in me, put me in a gondola and got me taken over to Giudecca into the monastery of San Giorgio Maggiore, where the Benedictines had established a hospital. How can I describe to you, old woman, this moment of re-awakening ? The violence of the plague had completely robbed me of all recollections of the past. Just as if the spark of life had been suddenly dropped into a lifeless statue, I had but a momentary kind of existence, so to speak, linked on to nothing. You may imagine what trouble, what distress this life occasioned me in which my consciousness seemed to swim in empty space without an anchorage. All that the monks could tell me was that I had been found beside Father Bluenose, whose son I was generally accounted to be. Gradually and slowly I gathered my thoughts together, and tried to reflect upon my previous life, but what I have told you, old

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dame, is all that I can remember of it, and that consists only of certain individual disconnected pictures. Oh! this miserable being-alone-in-the-world! I can't be gay and happy, no matter what may happen!" "Tonino, my dear Tonino," said the old woman, "be contented with what the present moment gives you."

"Say no more, old woman, say no more," interrupted Antonio; "there is still something else which embitters my life, following me about incessantly everywhere; I know it will be the utter ruin of me in the end. An unspeakable longing,—a consuming aspiration for something,—I can neither say nor even conceive what it is—has taken complete possession of my heart and mind since I awoke to renewed life in the hospital. Whilst I was still poor and wretched, and threw myself down at night on my hard couch, weary and worn out by the hard heavy labour of the day, a dream used to come to me, and, fanning my hot brow with balmy rustling breezes, shed about my heart all the inexpressible bliss of some single happy moment, in which the Eternal Power had been pleased to grant me in thought a glimpse of the delights of heaven, and the memory of which was treasured up in the recesses of my soul. I now rest on soft cushions, and no labour consumes my strength: but if I awaken out of a dream, or if in my waking hours the recollection of that great moment returns to my mind, I feel that the lonely wretched existence I lead is just as much an oppressive burden now as it was then, and that it is vain for me to try and shake it off. All my thinking and all my inquiries are fruitless; I cannot fathom what this glorious thing is which formerly happened in my life. Its mysterious and alas! to me, unintelligible echo, as it were, fills me with such great happiness; but will not this happiness pass over into the most

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agonising pain, and torture me to death, when I am obliged to acknowledge that all my hope of ever finding that unknown Eden again, nay, that even the courage to search for it, is lost? Can there indeed remain traces of that which has vanished without leaving any sign behind it?" Antonio ceased speaking, and a deep and painful sigh escaped his breast.

During his narrative the old crone had behaved like one who sympathised fully with his trouble, and felt all that he felt, and like a mirror reflected every movement and gesture which the pain wrung from him. "Tonino," she now began in a tearful voice, "my dear Tonino, do you mean to tell me that you let your courage sink because the remembrance of some glorious moment in your life has perished out of your mind? You foolish child! You foolish child! Listen to—hi! hi! hi!" The old woman began to chuckle and laugh in her usual disagreeable way, and to hop about on the marble floor. Some people came; she cowered down in her accustomed posture; they threw her alms. "Antonio—lead me away, Antonio—away to the sea," she croaked. Almost involuntarily—he could not explain how it came about—he took her by the arm and led her slowly across St. Mark's Square. On the way the old woman muttered softly and solemnly, "Antonio, do you see these dark stains of blood here on the ground? Yes, blood—much blood —much blood everywhere! But, hi! hi! hi! Roses will spring up out of the blood—beautiful red roses for a wreath for you—for your sweetheart. O good Lord of all, what lovely angel of light is this, who is coming to meet you with such grace and such a bright starry smile? Her lily-white arms are stretched out to embrace you. O Antonio, you lucky, lucky lad! bear yourself bravely! bear yourself bravely! And at the

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sweet hour of sunset you may pluck myrtle-leaves—myrtle-leaves for the bride—for the maiden-widow—hi! hi! hi! Myrtle-leaves plucked at the hour of sunset, but these will not be blossoms until midnight! Do you hear the whisperings of the night-winds? the longing moaning swell of the sea? Row away bravely, my bold oarsman, row away bravely!" Antonio's heart was deeply thrilled with awe as he listened to the old crone's wonderful words, which she mumbled to herself in a very peculiar and extraordinary way, mingled with an incessant chuckling.

They came to the pillar which bears the Lion of the Adriatic. The old woman was going on right past it, still muttering to herself; but Antonio, feeling very uncomfortable at the old crone's behaviour, and being, moreover, stared at in astonishment by the passers-by, stopped and said roughly, "Here—sit you down on these steps, old woman, and have done with your talk; it will drive me mad. It is a fact that you saw my sequins in the fiery images in the clouds; but, for that very reason, what do you mean by prating about angels of light — bride — maiden-widow — roses and myrtle-leaves? Do you want to make a fool of me, you fearful woman, till some insane attempt hurries me to destruction? You shall have a new hood—bread—sequins—all that you want, but leave me alone." And he was about to make off hastily; but the old woman caught him by the mantle, and cried in a shrill piercing voice, "Tonino, my Tonino, do take a good look at me for once, or else I must go to the very edge of the Square yonder and in despair throw myself over into the sea." In order to avoid attracting more eyes upon him than he was already doing, Antonio actually stood still. "Tonino," went on the old woman, "sit down here beside me; my heart is bursting, I must

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tell you—Oh! do sit down here beside me." Antonio sat down on the steps, but so as to turn his back upon her; and he took out his account-book, whose white pages bore witness to the zeal with which he did business on the Rialto.

The old woman now whispered very low, "Tonino, when you look upon my shrivelled features, does there not dawn upon your mind the slightest, faintest recollection of having known me formerly a long, long time ago?" "I have already told you, old woman," replied Antonio in the same low tones, and without turning round, "I have already told you, that I feel drawn towards you in a way that I can't explain to myself, but I don't attribute it to your ugly shrivelled face. Nay, when I look at your strange black glittering eyes and sharp nose, at your blue lips and long chin, and bristly grey hair, and when I hear your abominable chuckling and laughing, and your confused talk, I rather turn away from you with disgust, and am even inclined to believe that you possess some execrable power for attracting me to you." "O God! God! God!" whined the old dame, a prey to unspeakable pain, "what fiendish spirit of darkness has put such fearful thoughts into your head? O Tonino, my darling Tonino, the woman who took such tender loving care of you when a child, and who saved your life from the most threatening danger on that awful night—it was I."

In the first moments of startled surprise Antonio turned round as if shot; but then he fixed his eyes upon the old woman's hideous face and cried angrily, "So that is the way you think you are going to befool me, you abominable insane old crone! The few recollections which I have retained of my childhood are fresh and lively. That kind and pretty lady who

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tended me—Oh! I can see her plainly now! She had a full bright face with some colour in it—eyes gently smiling—beautiful dark-brown hair—dainty hands; she could hardly be thirty years old, and you—you, an old woman of ninety!" "O all ye saints of Heaven!" interrupted the old dame, sobbing, "all ye blessed ones, what shall I do to make my Tonino believe in me, his faithful Margaret?" "Margaret!" murmured Antonio, "Margaret! That name falls upon my ears like music heard a long long time ago, and for a long long time forgotten. But—no, it is impossible—impossible." Then the old dame went on more calmly, dropping her eyes, and scribbling as it were with her staff on the ground, "You are right; the tall handsome man who used to take you in his arms and kiss you and give you sweets was your father, Tonino; and the language in which we spoke to each other was the beautiful sonorous German. Your father was a rich and influential merchant in Augsburg. His young and lovely wife died in giving birth to you. Then, since he could not settle down in the place where his dearest lay buried, he came hither to Venice, and brought me, your nurse, with him to take care of you. That terrible night an awful fate overtook your father, and also threatened you. I succeeded in saving you. A noble Venetian adopted you; I, deprived of all means of support, had to remain in Venice.

"My father, a barber-surgeon, of whom it was said that he practised forbidden science as well, had made me familiar from my earliest childhood with the mysterious virtues of Nature's remedies. By him I was taught to wander through the fields and woods, learning the properties of many healing herbs, of many insignificant mosses, the hours when they should

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be plucked and gathered, and how to mix the juices of the various simples. But to this knowledge there was added a very special gift, which Heaven has endowed me with for some inscrutable purpose. I often see future events as if in a dim and distant mirror; and almost without any conscious effort of will, I declare in expressions which are unintelligible to myself what I have seen; for some unknown Power compels me, and I cannot resist it. Now when I had to stay behind in Venice, deserted of all the world, I resolved to earn a livelihood by means of my tried skill. In a brief time I cured the most dangerous diseases. And furthermore, as my presence alone had a beneficial effect upon my patients, and the soft stroking of my hand often brought them past the crisis in a few minutes, my fame necessarily soon spread through the town, and money came pouring in in streams. This awakened the jealousy of the physicians, quacks who sold their pills and essences in St. Mark's Square, on the Rialto, and in the Mint, poisoning their patients instead of curing them. They spread abroad that I was in league with the devil himself; and they were believed by the superstitious folk. I was soon arrested and brought before the ecclesiastical tribunal. O my Tonino, what horrid tortures did they inflict upon me in order to force from me a confession of the most damnable of all alliances! I remained firm. My hair turned white; my body withered up to a mummy; my feet and hands were paralysed. But there was still the terrible rack left—the cunningest invention of the foul fiend, —and it extorted from me a confession at which I shudder even now. I was to be burnt alive; but when the earthquake shook the foundations of the palaces and of the great prison, the door of the under-

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ground dungeon in which I lay confined sprang open of itself, and I staggered up out of my grave as it were through rubbish and ruins.[1] O Tonino, you called me an old woman of ninety; I am hardly more than fifty. This lean, emaciated body, this hideously distorted face, this icicle-like hair, these lame feet—no, it was not the lapse of years, it was only unspeakable tortures which could in a few months change me thus from a strong woman into the monstrous creature I now am. And my hideous chuckling and laughing—this was forced from me by the last strain on the rack, at the memory of which my hair even now stands on an end, and I feel altogether as if I were locked in a red-hot coat of mail; and since that time I have been constantly subject to it; it attacks me without my being able to check it. So don't stand any longer in awe of me, Tonino. Oh! it was indeed your heart which told you that as a little boy you lay on my bosom." "Woman," said Antonio hoarsely, wrapped up in his own thoughts, "woman, I feel as if I must believe you. But who was my father? What was he called? What was the awful fate which overtook him on that terrible night? Who was it who adopted me? And—what was that occurrence in my life which now, like some potent magical spell from a strange and unknown world, exercises an irresistible sway over my soul, so that all my thoughts are dissipated into a dark night-like sea, so to speak? When you tell me all this, you mysterious woman, then I will believe you." "Tonino," replied the old crone, sighing, "for your own sake I must keep silent;

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[1] It may perhaps be interesting to observe that a precisely similar occurrence forms the central feature in H. v. Kleist's "Erdbeben in Chili" (1810), perhaps one of the best of his short stories.

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but the time when I may speak will soon come. The Fontego – the Fontego—keep away from the Fontego."

"Oh!" cried Antonio angrily, "you need not begin to speak your dark sentences again to enchant me by some devilish wile or other. My heart is rent, you must speak, or"—— "Stop," interrupted she, "no threats—am I not your faithful nurse, who tended you?"—— Without waiting to hear what the old woman had got further to say, he picked himself up and ran away swiftly. From a distance he shouted to her, "You shall nevertheless have a new hood, and as many sequins besides as you like."

It was in truth a remarkable spectacle, to see the old Doge Marino Falieri and his youthful wife: he, strong enough and robust enough in very truth, but with a grey beard, and innumerable wrinkles in his rusty brown face, with some difficulty bearing his head erect, forming a pathetic figure as he strode along; she, a perfect picture of grace, with the pure gentleness of an angel in her divinely beautiful face, an irresistible charm in her longing glances, a queenly dignity enthroned upon her open lily-white brow, shadowed by her dark locks, a sweet smile upon her cheeks and lips, her pretty head bent with winsome submissiveness, her slender form moving with ease, scarce seeming to touch the earth—a beautiful lady in fact, a native of another and a higher world. Of course you have seen angelic forms like this, conceived and painted by the old masters. Such was Annunciata. How then could it be otherwise but that every one who saw her was astonished and enraptured with her beauty, and all the fiery youths of the Seignory were consumed with passion, measuring the old Doge with mocking looks, and swearing in their hearts that they would be the

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Mars to this Vulcan, let the consequences be what they might? Annunciata soon found herself surrounded with admirers, to whose flattering and seductive words she listened quietly and graciously, without thinking anything in particular about them. The conception which her pure angelic spirit had formed of her relation to her aged and princely husband was that she ought to honour him as her supreme lord, and cling to him with all the unquestioning fidelity of a submissive handmaiden. He treated her kindly, nay tenderly; he pressed her to his ice-cold heart and called her his darling; he heaped up all the jewels he could find upon her; what else could she wish for from him, what other rights could she have upon him? In this way, therefore, it was impossible for the thought of unfaithfulness to the old man ever in any way to find lodgment in her mind; all that lay beyond the narrow circle of these limited relations was to this good child an unknown region, whose forbidden borders were wrapped in dark mists, unseen and unsuspected by her. Hence all efforts to win her love were fruitless.

But the flames of passion—of love for the beautiful Dogess—burned in none so violently and so uncontrolled as in Michele Steno. Notwithstanding his youth, he was invested with the important and influential post of Member of the Council of Forty. Relying upon this fact, as well as upon his personal beauty, he felt confident of success. Old Marino Falieri he did not fear in the least; and, indeed, the old man seemed to indulge less frequently in his violent outbreaks of furious passion, and to have laid aside his rugged untamable fierceness, since his marriage. There he sat beside his beautiful Annunciata, spruce and prim, in the richest, gayest apparel, smirking and smiling, challenging in the sweet glances of his grey eyes,—from

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which a treacherous tear stole from time to time,—those who were present to say if any one of them could boast of such a wife as his. Instead of speaking in the rough arrogant tone of voice in which he had formerly been in the habit of expressing himself, he whispered, scarce moving his lips, addressed every one in the most amiable manner, and granted the most absurd petitions. Who would have recognised in this weak amorous old man the same Falieri who had in a fit of passion buffeted the bishop[1] on Corpus Christi Day at Treviso, and who had defeated the valiant Morbassan. This growing weakness spurred on Michele Steno to attempt the most extravagant schemes. Annunciata did not understand why he was constantly pursuing her with his looks and words; she had no conception of his real purpose, but always preserved the same gentle, calm, and friendly bearing towards him. It was just this quiet unconscious behaviour, however, which drove him wild, which drove him to despair almost. He determined to effect his end by sinister means. He managed to involve Annunciata's most confidential maid in a love intrigue, and she at last permitted him to visit her at night. Thus he believed he had paved a way to Annunciata's unpolluted chamber; but the Eternal Power willed that this treacherous iniquity should recoil upon the head of its wicked author.

One night it chanced that the Doge, who had just received the ill tidings of the battle which Nicolo Pisani had lost against Doria off Porto Longo,[2] was unable to sleep owing to care and anxiety, and was rambling through the passages of the Ducal Palace. Then he became aware of a shadow stealing apparently

[1] Narrated in the translation of the Chronicle of Sanuto by Sir Francis Palgrave in Byron's notes to "Marino Faliero."

[2] On the island of Sapenzia, south-west of the Morea.

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out of Annunciata's apartments and creeping towards the stairs. He at once rushed towards it; it was Michele Steno leaving his mistress. A terrible thought flashed across Falieri's mind; with the cry "Annunciata!" he threw himself upon Steno with his drawn dagger in his hand. But Steno, who was stronger and more agile than the old man, averted the thrust, and knocked him down with a violent blow of his fist; then, laughing loudly and shouting, "Annunciata! Annunciata!" he rushed downstairs. The old man picked himself up and stole towards Annunciata's apartments, his heart on fire with the torments of hell. All was quiet, as still as the grave. He knocked; a strange maid opened the door—not the one who was in the habit of sleeping near Annunciata's chamber. "What does my princely husband command at this late and unusual hour?" asked Annunciata in a calm and sweetly gentle tone, for she had meanwhile thrown on a light night-robe and was now come forward. Old Falieri stared at her speechless; then, raising both hands above his head, he cried, "No, it is not possible, it is not possible." "What is not possible, my princely sir?" asked Annunciata, startled at the deep solemn tones of the old man's voice. But Falieri, without answering her question, turned to the maid, "Why are *you* sleeping here? why does not Luigia sleep here as usual?" "Oh!" replied the little one, "Luigia would make me exchange places with her to-night; she is sleeping in the ante-room close by the stairs." "Close by the stairs!" echoed Falieri, delighted; and he hurried away to the ante-room. At his loud knocking Luigia opened the door; and when she saw the Doge, her master's face inflamed with rage, and his flashing eyes, she threw herself upon her bare knees and confessed her shame, which was set beyond all doubt by a

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pair of elegant gentleman's gloves lying on the easy-chair, whilst the sweet scent about them betrayed their dandified owner. Hotly incensed at Steno's unheard-of impudence, the Doge wrote to him next morning, forbidding him, on pain of banishment from the town, to approach the Ducal Palace, or the presence of the Doge and Dogess.

Michele Steno was wild with fury at the failure of his well-planned scheme, and at the disgrace of being thus banished from the presence of his idol. Now when he had to see from a distance how gently and kindly the Dogess spoke to other young men of the Seignory—that was indeed her natural manner—his envy and the violence of his passion filled his mind with evil thoughts. The Dogess had without doubt only scorned him because he had been anticipated by others with better luck ; and he had the hardihood to utter his thoughts openly and publicly. Now whether it was that old Falieri had tidings of this shameless talk, or whether he came to look upon the occurrence of that memorable night as the warning finger of destiny, or whether now, in spite of all his calmness and equanimity, and his perfect confidence in the fidelity of his wife, he saw clearly the danger of the unnatural position in which he stood in respect to her —at any rate he became ill-tempered and morose. He was plagued and tortured by all the fiends of jealousy, and confined Annunciata to the inner apartments of the Ducal Palace, so that no man ever set eyes upon her. Bodoeri took his niece's part, and soundly rated old Falieri ; but he would not hear of any change in his conduct.

All this took place shortly before Holy Thursday. On the occasion of the popular sports which take place on this day in St. Mark's Square, it was custom-

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ary for the Dogess to take her seat beside the Doge, under a canopy erected on the balcony which lies opposite to the Piazetti. Bodoeri reminded the Doge of this custom, and told him that it would be very absurd, and sure to draw down upon him the mocking laughter of both populace and Seignory, if, in the teeth of custom and usage, he let his perverse jealousy exclude Annunciata from this honour. "Do you think," replied old Falieri, whose pride was immediately aroused, "do you think I am such an idiotic old fool that I am afraid to show my most precious jewel for fear of thievish hands, and that I could not prevent her being stolen from me with my good sword? No, old man, you are mistaken; to-morrow Annunciata shall go with me in solemn procession across St. Mark's Square, that the people may see their Dogess, and on Holy Thursday she shall receive the nosegay from the bold sailor who comes sailing down out of the air to her." The Doge was thinking of a very ancient custom as he said these words. On Holy Thursday a bold fellow from amongst the people is drawn up from the sea to the summit of the tower of St. Mark's, in a machine that resembles a little ship and is suspended on ropes, then he shoots from the top of the tower with the speed of an arrow down to the Square where the Doge and Dogess are sitting, and presents a nosegay of flowers to the Dogess, or to the Doge if he is alone.

The next day the Doge carried out his intention. Annunciata had to don her most magnificent robes; and surrounded by the Seignory and attended by pages and guards, she and Falieri crossed the Square when it was swarming with people. They pushed and squeezed themselves to death almost to see the beautiful Dogess; and he who succeeded in setting eyes upon her thought he had taken a peep into Paradise and had beheld the

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loveliest of the bright and beautiful angels. But according to Venetian habits, in the midst of the wildest outbreaks of their frantic admiration, here and there were heard all sorts of satiric phrases and rhymes—and coarse enough too—aimed at old Falieri and his young wife. Falieri, however, appeared not to notice them, but strode along as pathetically as possible at Annunciata's side, smirking and smiling all over his face, and free on this occasion from all jealousy, although he must have seen the glances full of burning passion which were directed upon his beautiful lady from all sides. Arrived before the principal entrance to the Palace, the guards had some difficulty in driving back the crowd, so that the Doge and Dogess might go in; but here and there were still standing isolated knots of better-dressed citizens, who could not very well be refused entrance into even the inner quadrangle of the Palace. Now it happened just at the moment that the Dogess entered the quadrangle, that a young man, who with a few others stood under the portico, fell down suddenly upon the hard marble floor, as if dead, with the loud scream, "O good God! good God!" The people ran together from every side and surrounded the dead man, so that the Dogess could not see him; yet, as the young man fell, she felt as if a red-hot knife were suddenly thrust into her heart; she grew pale; she reeled, and was only prevented from fainting by the smelling-bottles of the ladies who hastened to her assistance. Old Falieri, greatly alarmed and put out by the accident, wished the young man and his fit anywhere; and he carried his Annunciata, who hung her pretty head on her bosom and closed her eyes like a sick dove, himself up the steps into her own apartments in the interior of the Palace, although it was very hard work for him to do so.

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Meanwhile the people, who had increased to crowds in the inner quadrangle, had been spectators of a remarkable scene. They were about to lift up the young man, whom they took to be quite dead, and carry him away, when an ugly old beggar-woman, all in rags, came limping up with a loud wail of grief; and punching their sides and ribs with her sharp elbows she made a way for herself through the thick of the crowd. When she at length saw the senseless youth, she cried, "Let him be, fools; you stupid people, let him be; he is not dead." Then she squatted down beside him; and taking his head in her lap she gently rubbed and stroked his forehead, calling him by the sweetest of names. As the people noted the old woman's ugly apish face, and the repulsive play of its muscles, bending over the young fellow's fine handsome face, his soft features now stiff and pale as in death, when they saw her filthy rags fluttering about over the rich clothing the young man wore, and her lean brownish-yellow arms and long hands trembling upon his forehead and exposed breast—they could not in truth resist shuddering with awe. It looked as if it were the grinning form of death himself in whose arms the young man lay. Hence the crowd standing round slipped away quietly one after the other, till there were only a few left. They, when the young man opened his eyes with a deep sigh, took him up and carried him, at the old woman's request, to the Grand Canal, where a gondola took them both on board, the old woman and the youth, and brought them to the house which she had indicated as his dwelling. Need it be said that the young man was Antonio, and that the old woman was the beggar of the steps of the Franciscan Church, who wanted to make herself out to be his nurse?

When Antonio was quite recovered from his stupe-

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faction and perceived the old woman at his bed-side, and knew that she had just been giving him some strengthening drops, he said brokenly in a hoarse voice, bending a long gloomy melancholy gaze upon her, "*You* with me, Margaret—that is good; what more faithful nurse could I have found than you? Oh! forgive me, mother, that I, a doltish, senseless boy, doubted for an instant what you discovered to me. Yes, you are *the* Margaret who reared me, who cared for me and tended me; I knew it all the time, but some evil spirit bewildered my thoughts. I have seen her; it is she—it is she. Did I not tell you there was some mysterious magical power dwelling in me, which exercised an uncontrollable supremacy over me? It has emerged from its obscurity dazzling with light, to effect my destruction through nameless joy. I now know all—everything. Was not my foster-father Bertuccio Nenolo, and did he not bring me up at his country-seat near Treviso?" "Yes, yes," replied the old woman, "it was indeed Bertuccio Nenolo, the great sea-captain, whom the sea devoured as he was about to adorn his temples with the victor's wreath." "Don't interrupt me," continued Antonio; "listen patiently to what I have to say.

"With Bertuccio Nenolo I lived in clover. I wore fine clothes; the table was always covered when I was hungry; and after I had said my three prayers properly I was allowed to run about the woods and fields just as I pleased. Close beside the villa there was a little wood of sweet pines, cool and dark, and filled with sweet scents and songs. There one evening, when the sun began to sink, I threw me down beneath a big tree, tired with running and jumping about, and stared up at the blue sky. Perhaps I was stupefied by the fragrant smell of the flowering herbs in the midst of which I lay; at any rate, my eyes closed involuntarily,

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and I sank into a state of dreamy reverie, from which I was awakened by a rustling, as if some one had struck a blow in the grass beside me. I started up into a sitting posture; an angelic child with heavenly eyes stood near me and looked down upon me, smiling most sweetly and bewitchingly. 'O good boy,' she said, in a low soft voice, 'how beautiful and calmly you sleep, and yet death, nasty death, was so near to you.' Close beside my breast I saw a small black snake with its head crushed; the little girl had killed the poisonous reptile with a switch from a nut-tree, and just as it was wriggling on to my destruction. Then a trembling of sweet awe fell upon me; I knew that angels often came down from heaven above to rescue men in person from the threatening attack of some evil enemy. I fell upon my knees and raised my folded hands. 'Oh! you are surely an angel of light, sent by God to save my life,' I cried. The pretty creature stretched out both arms towards me and said softly, whilst a deeper flush mantled upon her cheeks, 'No, good boy; I am not an angel, but a girl—a child like you.' Then my feeling of awe gave place to a nameless delight, which spread like a gentle warmth through all my limbs. I rose to my feet; we clasped each other in our arms, our lips met, and we were speechless, weeping, sobbing with sweet unutterable sadness.

"Then a clear silvery voice cried through the wood, 'Annunciata! Annunciata!' 'I must go now, darling boy, mother is calling me,' whispered the little girl. My heart was rent with unspeakable pain. 'Oh! I love you so much,' I sobbed, and the scalding tears fell from the little girl's eyes upon my cheeks. 'I am so—so fond of you, good boy,' she cried, pressing a last kiss upon my lips. 'Annunciata,' the voice cried again; and the little girl disappeared behind the bushes. Now that,

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Margaret, was the moment when the mighty spark of love fell upon my soul, and it will gather strength, and, enkindling flame after flame, will continue to burn there for ever. A few days afterwards I was turned out of the house.

"Father Bluenose told me, since I did not cease talking about the lovely child who had appeared to me, and whose sweet voice I thought I heard in the rustling of the trees, in the gushing murmurs of the springs, and in the mysterious soughing of the sea—yes, then Father Bluenose told me that the girl could be none other than Nenolo's daughter Annunciata, who had come to the villa with her mother Francesca, but had left it again on the following day. O mother—Margaret—help me, Heaven! This Annunciata—is the Dogess." And Antonio buried his face in the pillows, weeping and sobbing with unspeakable emotion.

"My dear Tonino," said the old woman, "rouse yourself and be a man; come, do resist bravely this foolish emotion. Come, come, how can you think of despairing when you are in love? For whom does the golden flower of hope blossom if not for the lover? You do not know in the evening what the morning may bring; what you have beheld in your dreams comes to meet you in living form. The castle that hovered in the air stands all at once on the earth, a substantial and splendid building. See here, Tonino, you are not paying the least heed to my words; but my little finger tells me, and so does somebody else as well, that the bright standard of love is gaily waving for you out at sea. Patience, Tonino—patience, my boy!" Thus the old woman sought to comfort poor Antonio; and her words did really sound like sweet music. He would not let her leave him again. The

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beggar-woman had disappeared from the steps of the Franciscan Church, and in her stead people saw Signor Antonio's housekeeper, dressed in becoming matronly style, limping about St. Mark's Square and buying the requisite provisions for his table.

Holy Thursday was come. It was to be celebrated on this occasion in more magnificent fashion than it had ever been before. In the middle of the Piazzetta of St Mark's a high staging was erected for a special kind of artistic fire—something perfectly new, which was to be exhibited by a Greek—a man experienced in such matters. In the evening old Falieri came out on the balcony along with his beautiful lady, reflecting his pride and happiness in the magnificence of his surroundings, and with radiant eyes challenging all who stood near to admire and wonder. As he was about to take his seat on the chair of state he perceived Michele Steno actually on the same balcony with him, and saw that he had chosen a position whence he could keep his eyes constantly fixed upon the Dogess, and must of necessity be observed by her. Completely overmastered by furious rage, and wild with jealousy, Falieri shouted in a loud and commanding tone that Steno was to be at once removed from the balcony. Michele Steno raised his hand against Falieri, but that same moment the guards appeared, and compelled him to quit his place, which he did, foaming with rage and grinding his teeth, and threatening revenge in the most horrible imprecations.

Meanwhile Antonio, utterly beside himself at sight of his beloved Annunciata, had made his way out through the crowd, and was striding backwards and forwards in the darkness of the night alone along the edge of the sea, his heart rent by unutterable anguish. He debated within himself whether it would not be

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better to extinguish the consuming fire within him in the ice-cold waves than to be slowly tortured to death by hopeless pain. But little was wanting, and he had leapt into the sea; he was already standing on the last step that goes down to the water, when a voice called to him from a little boat, "Ay, a very good evening to you, Signor Antonio." By the reflection cast by the illuminations of the Square, he recognised that it was merry Pietro, one of his former comrades. He was standing in the boat, his new cap adorned with feathers and tinsel, and his new striped jacket gaily decorated with ribbons, whilst he held in his hand a large and beautiful nosegay of sweet-scented flowers. "Good evening, Pietro," shouted Antonio back, "what grand folks are you going to row to-night that you are decked off so fine?" "Oh!" replied Pietro, dancing till his boat rocked; "see you, Signor Antonio, I am going to earn my three sequins to-day; for I'm going to make the journey up to St. Mark's Tower and then down again, to take this nosegay to the beautiful Dogess." "But isn't that a risky and break-neck adventure, Pietro, my friend?" asked Antonio. "Well," he replied, "there is some little chance of breaking one's neck, especially as we go to-day right through the middle of the artificial fire. The Greek says, to be sure, that he has arranged everything so that the fire will not hurt a hair of anybody's head, but"—— Pietro shrugged his shoulders.

Antonio stepped down to Pietro in the boat, and now perceived that he stood close in front of the machine, which was fastened to a rope coming out of the sea. Other ropes, by means of which the machine was to be drawn up, were lost in the night. "Now listen, Pietro," began Antonio, after a silent pause, "see here, comrade, if you could earn ten sequins to-day without

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exposing your life to danger, would it not be more agreeable to you?" "Why, of course," and Pietro burst into a good hearty laugh. "Well then," continued Antonio, "take these ten sequins and change clothes with me, and let me take your place, I will go up instead of you. Do, my good friend and comrade, Pietro, let me go up." Pietro shook his head dubiously, and weighing the money in his hand, said, "You are very kind, Signor Antonio, to still call a poor devil like me your comrade, and you are generous as well. The money I should certainly like very much; but, on the other hand, to place this nosegay in our beautiful Dogess's hand myself, to hear her sweet voice—and after all that's really why I am ready to risk my life. Well, since it is you, Signor Antonio, I close with your offer." They both hastily changed their clothes; and hardly was Antonio dressed when Pietro cried, "Quick, into the machine; the signal is given." At the same moment the sea was lit up with the reflection of thousands of bright flashes, and all the air along the margin of the sea rang with loud reverberating thunders. Right through the midst of the hissing crackling flames of the artificial fire, Antonio rose up into the air with the speed of a hurricane, and shot down uninjured upon the balcony, hovering in front of the Dogess. She had risen to her feet and stepped forward; he felt her breath on his cheeks; he gave her the nosegay. But in the unspeakable delirious delight of the moment he was clasped as if in red-hot arms by the fiery pain of hopeless love. Senseless, insane with longing, rapture, anguish, he grasped her hand, and covered it with burning kisses, crying in the sharp tone of despairing misery, "O Annunciata!" Then the machine, like a blind instrument of fate, whisked him away from his beloved back to the sea, where he sank down stunned,

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quite exhausted, into Pietro's arms, who was waiting for him in the boat.

Meanwhile the Doge's balcony was the scene of tumult and confusion. A small strip of paper had been found fastened to the Doge's seat, containing in the common Venetian dialect the words :

Il Dose Falier della bella muier,
I altri la gode é lui la mantien.

(The Doge Falieri, the husband of the beautiful lady ; others kiss her, and he—he keeps her.)

Old Falieri burst into a violent fit of passion, and swore that the severest punishment should overtake the man who had been guilty of this audacious offence. As he cast his eyes about they fell upon Michele Steno standing beneath the balcony in the Square, in the full light of the torches ; he at once commanded his guards to arrest him as the instigator of the outrage. This command of the Doge's provoked a universal cry of dissent ; in giving way to his overmastering rage he was offering insult to both Seignory and populace, violating the rights of the former, and spoiling the latter's enjoyment of their holiday. The members of the Seignory left their places ; but old Marino Bodoeri mixed among the people, actively representing the grave nature of the outrage that had been done to the head of the state, and seeking to direct the popular hatred upon Michele Steno. Nor had Falieri judged wrongly ; for Michele Steno, on being expelled from the Duke's balcony, had really hurried off home, and there written the above-mentioned slanderous words ; then when all eyes were fixed upon the artificial fire, he had fastened the strip of paper to the Doge's seat, and withdrawn from the gallery again unobserved. He maliciously hoped it would be a galling blow for them,

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for both the Doge and the Dogess, and that the wound would rankle deeply—so deeply as to touch a vital part. Willingly and openly he admitted the deed, and transferred all blame to the Doge, since he had been the first to give umbrage to *him*.

The Seignory had been for some time dissatisfied with their chief, for instead of meeting the just expectations of the state, he gave proofs daily that the fiery warlike courage in his frozen and worn-out heart was merely like the artificial fire which bursts with a furious rush out of the rocket-apparatus, but immediately disappears in black lifeless flakes, and has accomplished nothing. Moreover, since his union with his young and beautiful wife (it had long before leaked out that he was married to her directly after attaining to the Dogate) old Falieri's jealousy no longer let him appear in the character of heroic captain, but rather of *vechio Pantalone* (old fool); hence it was that the Seignory, nursing their swelling resentment, were more inclined to condone Michele Steno's fault, than to see justice done to their deeply-wounded chief. The matter was referred by the Council of Ten to the Forty, one of the leaders of which Michele had formerly been. The verdict was that Michele Steno had already suffered sufficiently, and a month's banishment was quite punishment enough for the offence. This sentence only served to feed anew and more fully old Falieri's bitterness against a Seignory which, instead of protecting their own head, had the impudence to punish insults that were offered to him as they would offences of merely the most insignificant description.

As generally happens in the case of lovers, once a single ray of the happiness of love has fallen upon them, they are surrounded for days and weeks and months by a sort of golden veil, and dream dreams of

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Paradise; and so Antonio could not recover himself from the stupefying rapture of that happy moment; he could hardly breathe for delirious sadness. He had been well scolded by the old woman for running such a great risk; and she never ceased mumbling and grumbling about exposure to unneccessary danger.

But one day she came hopping and dancing with her staff in the strange way she had when apparently affected by some foreign magical influence. Without heeding Antonio's words and questions, she began to chuckle and laugh, and kindling a small fire in the stove, she put a little pan on it, into which she poured several ingredients from many various-coloured phials, and made a salve, which she put into a little box; then she limped out of the house again, chuckling and laughing. She did not return until late at night, when she sat down in the easy-chair, panting and coughing for breath; and after she had in a measure recovered from her great exhaustion, she at length began, "Tonino, my boy Tonino, whom do you think I have come from? See—try if you can guess. Whom do I come from? where have I been?" Antonio looked at her, and a singular instinctive feeling took possession of him. "Well now," chuckled the old woman, "I have come from her—her herself, from the pretty dove, lovely Annunciata." "Don't drive me mad, old woman!" shouted Antonio. "What do you say?" continued she, "I am always thinking about you, my Tonino.

"This morning, whilst I was haggling for some fine fruit under the peristyle of the Palace, I heard the people talking with bated breath of the accident that had befallen the beautiful Dogess. I inquired again and again of several people, and at last a big, uncultivated, red haired fellow, who stood leaning against a

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column, yawning and chawing lemons, said to me, 'Oh well, a young scorpion has been trying its little teeth on the little finger of her left hand, and there's been a drop or two of blood shed—that's all. My master, Signor Doctor Giovanni Basscggio, is now in the palace, and he has, no doubt, before this cut off her pretty hand, and the finger with it.' Just as the fellow was telling me this there arose a great noise on the broad steps, and a little man—such a tiny little man—came rolling down at our feet, screaming and lamenting, for the guards had kicked him down as if he had been a ninepin. The people gathered round him, laughing heartily; the little man struggled and fought with his legs in the air without being able to get up; but the red-haired fellow rushed forward, snatched up the little doctor, tucked him under his arm, and ran off with him as fast as his legs could carry him to the Canal, where he got into a gondola with him and rowed away—the little doctor screaming and yelling with all his might the whole time. I knew how it was; just as Signor Basseggio was getting his knife ready to cut off the pretty hand, the Doge had had him kicked down the steps. I also thought of something else—quick—quick as you can—go home—make a salve—and then come back here to the Ducal Palace.

"And I stood on the great stairs with my bright little phial in my hand. Old Falieri was just coming down; he darted a glance at me, and, his choler rising, said, 'What does this old woman want here?" Then I curtsied low—quite down to the ground—as well as I could, and told him that I had a nice remedy which would very soon cure the beautiful Dogess. When the old man heard that, he fixed a terrible keen look upon me, and stroked his grey beard into order;

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then he seized me by both shoulders and pushed me upstairs and on into the chamber, where I nearly fell all my length. O Tonino, there was the pretty child reclining on a couch, as pale as death, sighing and moaning with pain and softly lamenting, 'Oh! I am poisoned in every vein.' But I at once set to work and took off the simple doctor's silly plaster. O just Heaven! her dear little hand—all red as red—and swollen. Well, well, my salve cooled it—soothed it. 'That does it good; yes, that does it good,' softly whispered the sick darling. Then Marino cried quite delighted, 'You shall have a thousand sequins, old woman, if you save me the Dogess;' and therewith he left the room.

"For three hours I sat there, holding her little hand in mine, stroking and attending to it. Then the darling woman woke up out of the gentle slumber into which she had fallen, and no longer felt any pain. After I had made a fresh poultice, she looked at me with eyes brimming with gladness. Then I said, 'O most noble lady, you once saved a boy's life when you killed the little snake that was about to attack him as he slept.' O Tonino, you should have seen the hot blood rush into her pale face, as if a ray of the setting sun had fallen upon it—and how her eyes flashed with the fire of joy. 'Oh! yes, old woman,' she said, 'oh! I was quite a child then—it was at my father's country villa. Oh! he was a dear pretty boy—I often think of him now. I don't think I have ever had a single happy experience since that time.' Then I began to talk about you, that you were in Venice, that your heart still beat with the love and rapture of that moment, that, in order to gaze *once* more in the heavenly eyes of the angel who saved you, you had faced the risk of the dangerous aërial voyage, that you it was who had given

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her the nosegay on Holy Thursday. 'O Tonino, Tonino,' she cried in an ecstasy of delight, 'I felt it, I felt it; when he pressed my hand to his lips, when he named my name, I could not conceive why it went so strangely to my heart; it was indeed pleasure, but pain as well. Bring him here, bring him to me—the pretty boy.'" As the old woman said this Antonio threw himself upon his knees and cried like one insane, "O good God! pray let no dire fate overtake me now—now at least—until I have seen her, have pressed her to my heart." He wanted the old woman to take him to the Palace the very next day; but she flatly refused, since old Falieri was in the habit of paying visits to his sick wife nearly every hour that came.

Several days went by; the old woman had completely cured the Dogess; but as yet it had been quite impossible to take Antonio to see her. The old woman soothed his impatience as well as she could, always repeating that she was constantly talking to beautiful Annunciata about the Antonio whose life she had saved, and who loved her so passionately. Tormented by all the pangs of desire and yearning love, Antonio spent his time in going about in his gondola and restlessly traversing the squares. But his footsteps involuntarily turned time after time in the direction of the Ducal Palace. One day he saw Pietro standing on the bridge close to the back part of the Palace, opposite the prisons, leaning on a gay-coloured oar, whilst a gondola, fastened to one of the pillars, was rocking on the Canal. Although small, it had a comfortable little deck, was adorned with tasteful carvings, and even decorated with the Venetian flag, so that it bore some resemblance to the Bucentaur. As soon as Pietro saw his former comrade he shouted out to him, "Hi! Signor Antonio, the best of good greetings to you; your sequins have

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brought me good luck." Antonio asked somewhat absently what sort of good luck he meant, and learned the important intelligence that nearly every evening Pietro had to take the Doge and Dogess in his gondola across to Giudecca, where the Doge had a nice house not far from San Giorgio Maggiore. Antonio stared at Pietro, and then burst out spasmodically, "Comrade, you may earn another ten sequins and more if you like. Let me take your place; I will row the Doge over." But Pietro informed him that he could not think of doing so, for the Doge knew him and would not trust himself with anybody else. At length when Antonio, his mind excited by all the tortures of love, began to give way to unbridled anger, and violently importune him, and to swear in an insane and ridiculous fashion that he would leap after the gondola and drag it down under the sea, Pietro replied laughing, "Why, Signor Antonio, Signor Antonio, why, I declare you have quite lost yourself in the Dogess's beautiful eyes." But he consented to allow Antonio to go with him as his assistant in rowing; he would excuse it to old Falieri on the ground of the weight of the boat, as well as being himself a little weak and unwell, and old Falieri did always think the gondola went too slowly on this trip. Off Antonio ran, and he only just returned to the bridge in time, dressed in coarse oarsman's clothing, his face stained, and with a long moustache stuck above his lips, for the Doge came down from the Palace with the Dogess, both attired most splendidly and magnificently. "Who's that stranger fellow there?" began the Doge angrily to Pietro; and it required all Pietro's most solemn asseverations that he really required an assistant, before the old man could be induced to allow Antonio to help row the gondola.

It often happens that in the midst of the wildest de-

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lirium of delight and rapture the soul, strengthened as it were by the power of the moment, is able to impose fetters upon itself, and to control the flames of passion which threaten to blaze out from the heart. In a similar way Antonio, albeit he was close beside the lovely Annunciata and the seam of her dress touched him, was able to hide his consuming passion by maintaining a firm and powerful hold upon his oar, and, whilst avoiding any greater risk, by only glancing at her momentarily now and then. Old Falieri was all smirks and smiles; he kissed and fondled beautiful Annunciata's little white hands, and threw his arm around her slender waist. In the middle of the channel, when St. Mark's Square and magnificent Venice with all her proud towers and palaces lay extended before them, old Falieri raised his head and said, gazing proudly about him, "Now, my darling, is it not a grand thing to ride on the sea with the lord—the husband of the sea? Yes, my darling, don't be jealous of my bride, who is submissively bearing us on her broad bosom. Listen to the gentle splashing of the wavelets; are they not words of love which she is whispering to the husband who rules her? Yes, yes, my darling, you indeed wear my ring on your finger, but she below guards in the depths of her bosom the ring of betrothal which I threw to her." "Oh! my princely Sir," began Annunciata, "oh! how can this cold treacherous water be your bride? it quite makes me shiver to think that you are married to this proud imperious element." Old Falieri laughed till his chin and beard tottered and shook. "Don't distress yourself, my pet," he said, "it's far better, of course, to rest in your soft warm arms than in the ice-cold lap of my bride below there; but it's a grand thing to ride on the sea with the lord of the sea!" Just as the Doge was saying these words,

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the faint strains of music at a distance came floating towards them. The notes of a soft male voice, gliding along the waves of the sea, came nearer and nearer; the words that were sung were—

Ah! senza amare,
Andare sul mare,
Col sposo del' mare
Non puo consolare.

Other voices took up the strain, and the same words were repeated again and again in every-varying alternation, until the song died awa like the soft breath of the wind as it were. Old Falieri appeared not to pay the slightest heed to the song; on the contrary, he was relating to the Dogess with much prolixity the meaning and history of the solemnity which takes place on Ascension Day when the Doge throws his ring from the Bucentaur and is married to the sea.

He spoke of the victories of the republic, and how she had formerly conquered Istria and Dalmatia under the rule of Peter Urseolus the Second,[1] and how this ceremony had its origin in that conquest. But if old Falieri heeded not the song, so now his tales were lost upon the Dogess. She sat with her mind completely wrapped up in the sweet sounds which came floating along the sea. When the song came to an end her eyes wore a strange far-off look, as if she were awakening from a profound dream and striving to see and interpret the images which sportively mocked her efforts to hold them fast. "*Senza amare, senza amare, non puo consolare*," she whispered softly, whilst the tears glistened like bright pearls in her heavenly eyes, and

[1] Pietro Urseolo II. was Doge from 991 to 1009; Dalmatia was subdued in 997.

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sighs escaped her breast as it heaved and sank with the violence of her emotions. Still smirking and smiling and talking away, the old man, with the Dogess at his side, stepped out upon the balcony of his house near San Giorgio Maggiore, without noticing that Annunciata stood at his side like one in a dream, speechless, her tearful eyes fixed upon some far-off land, whilst her heart was agitated by feelings of a singular and mysterious character. A young man in gondolier's costume blew a blast on a conch-shaped horn, till the sounds echoed far away over the sea. At this signal another gondola drew near. Meanwhile an attendant bearing a sunshade and a maid had approached the Doge and Dogess; and thus attended they went towards the palace. The second gondola came to shore, and from it stepped forth Marino Bodoeri and several other persons, amongst whom were merchants, artists, nay people out of the lowest classes of the populace even; and they followed the Doge.

Antonio could hardly wait until the following evening, since he hoped then to have the desired message from his beloved Annunciata. At last—at last the old woman came limping in, dropped panting into the arm-chair, and clapped her thin bony hands together again and again, crying. "Tonino, O Tonino! what in the world has happened to our dear darling? When I went into her room, there she lay on the couch with her eyes half closed, her pretty head resting on her arm, neither slumbering nor awake, neither sick nor well. I approached her: 'Oh! noble lady,' said I, 'what misfortune has happened to you? Does your scarce-healed wound hurt you still?' But she looked at me, oh! with such eyes, Antonio — I have never seen anything like them. And directly I looked down into the humid moonlight that was in them, they with-

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drew behind the dark clouds of their silken lashes. Then sighing a sigh that came from the depths of her heart, she turned her lovely pale face to the wall and whispered softly—so softly, but oh! so sadly! that I was cut right to the heart, '*Amare—amare—ah! senza amare!*' I fetched a little chair and sat down beside her, and began to talk about you. She buried herself in the cushions; and her breathing, coming quicker and quicker and quicker, turned to sighing. I told her candidly that you had been in the gondola disguised, and that I would now at once without delay take you, who were dying of love and longing, to see her. Then she suddenly started up from the cushions, and whilst the scalding tears streamed down her cheeks, she exclaimed vehemently, 'For God's sake! By all the Holy Saints! no—no—I cannot see him, old woman. I conjure you, tell him he is never—never again to come near me—never. Tell him he is to leave Venice, to go away at once!' 'So then you will let my poor Antonio die?' I interposed. Then she sank back upon the cushions, apparently smarting from the most unutterable anguish, and her voice was almost choked with tears as she sobbed out, 'Shall not I also die the bitterest of deaths?' At this point old Falieri entered the room, and at a sign from him I had to withdraw." "She has rejected me—away—away into the sea!" cried Antonio, giving way to utter despair. The old woman chuckled and laughed in her usual way, and went on, "You simple child! you simple child! don't you see that lovely Annunciata loves you with all the intensity, with all the agonised love of which a woman's heart is capable? You simple boy! Late to-morrow evening slip into the Ducal Palace; you will find me in the second gallery on the right from the great staircase, and then we will see what's to be done."

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The following evening as Antonio, trembling with expectant happiness, stole up the great staircase, his conscience suddenly smote him, as though he were about to commit some great crime. He was so dazed, and he trembled and shook so, that he was scarcely able to climb the stairs. He had to stop and rest by leaning himself against a column immediately in front of the gallery that had been indicated to him. All at once he was plunged in the midst of a bright glare of torches, and before he could move from the place old Bodoeri stood in front of him, accompanied by some servants, who bore the torches. Bodoeri fixed his eyes upon the young man, and then said, "Ha! you are Antonio; you have been assigned this post, I know; come, follow me." Antonio, convinced that his proposed interview with the Dogess was betrayed, followed, not without trembling. But imagine his astonishment when, on entering a remote room, Bodoeri embraced him and spoke of the importance of the post that had been assigned to him, and which he would have to maintain with courage and firm resolution that very night. But his amazement increased to anxious fear and dismay when he learned that a conspiracy had been long ripening against the Seignory, and that at the head of it was the Doge himself. And this was the night in which, agreeably to the resolutions come to in Falieri's house on Giudecca, the Seignory was to fall and old Marino Falieri was to be proclaimed sovereign Duke of Venice.

Antonio stared at Bodoeri without uttering a word; Bodoeri interpreted the young man's silence as a refusal to take part in the execution of the formidable conspiracy, and he cried incensed, "You cowardly fool! You shall not leave this palace again; you shall either take up arms on our side or die—but talk

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to this man first." A tall and noble figure stepped forward from the dark background of the apartment. As soon as Antonio saw the man's face, which he could not do until he came into the light of the torches, and recognised it, he threw himself upon his knees and cried, completely losing his presence of mind at seeing him whom he never dreamt of seeing again, "O good God! my father, Bertuccio Nenolo! my dear foster-parent." Nenolo raised the young man up, clasped him in his arms, and said in a gentle voice, "Aye, of a verity I am Bertuccio Nenolo, whom you perhaps thought lay buried at the bottom of the sea, but I have only quite recently escaped from my shameful captivity at the hands of the savage Morbassan. Yes, I am the Bertuccio Nanolo who adopted you. And I never for a moment dreamt that the stupid servants whom Bodoeri sent to take possession of the villa, which he had bought of me, would turn you out of the house. You infatuated youth! Do you hesitate to take up arms against a despotic caste whose cruelty robbed you of a father? Ay! go down to the quadrangle of the Fontego, and the stains which you will there see on the stone pavements are the stains of your father's blood. The Seignory when making over to the German merchants the *dépôt* and exchange which you know under the name of the Fontego, forbade all those who had offices assigned to them to take the keys with them when they went away; they were to leave them with the official in charge of the Fontego. Your father acted contrary to this law, and had therefore incurred a heavy penalty. But now when the offices were opened on your father's return, there was found amongst his wares a chest of false Venetian coins. He vainly protested his innocence; it was only too evident that some

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malicious fiend, perhaps the official in charge himself, had smuggled in the chest in order to ruin your father. The inexorable judges, satisfied that the chest had been found in your father's offices, condemned him to death. He was executed in the quadrangle of the Fontego; nor would you now be living if faithful Margaret had not saved you. I, your father's truest friend, adopted you; and in order that you might not betray yourself to the Seignory, you were not told what was your father's name. But now—now, Anthony Dalbirger,—now is the time—now, to seize your arms and revenge upon the heads of the Seignory your father's shameful death."

Antonio, fired by the spirit of vengeance, swore to be true to the conspirators and to act with invincible courage. It is well known that it was the affront put upon Bertuccio Nenolo by Dandulo when he was appointed to superintend the naval preparations, and on the occasion of a quarrel struck Nenolo in the face, that induced him to join with his ambitious son-in-law in his conspiracy against the Seignory. Both Nenolo and Bodoeri were desirious for old Falieri to assume the princely mantle in order that they might themselves rise along with him. The conspirators' plan was to spread abroad the news that the Genoese fleet lay before the Lagune. Then when night came the great bell in St. Mark's Tower was to be rung, and the town summoned to arms, under the false pretext of defence. This was to be the signal for the conspirators, whose numbers were considerable, and who were scattered throughout all Venice, to occupy St. Mark's Square, make themselves masters of the remaining principal squares of the town, murder the leading men of the Seignory, and proclaim the Doge sovereign Duke of Venice.

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But it was not the will of Heaven that this murderous scheme should succeed, nor that the fundamental constitution of the harassed state should be trampled in the dust by old Falieri—a man inflamed with pride and haughtiness. The meetings in Falieri's house on Giudecca had not escaped the watchfulness of the Ten; but they failed altogether to learn any reliable intelligence. But the conscience of one of the conspirators, a fur-merchant of Pisa, Bentian by name, pricked him; he resolved to save from destruction his friend and gossip, Nicolas Leoni, a member of the Council of Ten. When twilight came on, he went to him and besought him not to leave his house during the night, no matter what occurred. Leoni's suspicion was aroused; he detained the fur-merchant, and on pressing him closely learned the whole scheme. In conjunction with Giovanni Gradenigo and Marco Cornaro he called the Council of Ten together in St. Salvador's (church); and there, in less than three hours, measures were taken calculated to stifle all the efforts of the conspirators on the first sign of movement.

Antonio's commission was to take a body of men and go to St. Mark's Tower, and see that the bell was tolled. Arrived there, he found the tower occupied by a large force of Arsenal troops, who, on his attempting to approach, charged upon him with their halberds. His own band, seized with a sudden panic, scattered like chaff; and he himself slipped away in the darkness of the night. But he heard the footsteps of a man following close at his heels; he felt him lay hands upon him, and he was just on the point of cutting his pursuer down when by means of a sudden flash of light he recognised Pietro. "Save yourself," cried he, "save yourself, Antonio,—here in my gondola. All is betrayed. Bodoeri—Nenolo—are in the power of the Seignory;

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the doors of the Ducal Palace are closed; the Doge is confined a prisoner in his own apartment—watched like a criminal by his own faithless guards. Come along—make haste—get away." Almost stupefied, Antonio suffered himself to be dragged into the gondola. Muffled voices — the clash of weapons — single cries for help—then with the deepest blackness of the night there followed a breathless awful silence. Next morning the populace, stricken with terror, beheld a fearful sight; it made every man's blood run cold in his veins. The Council of the Ten had that very same night passed sentence of death upon the leaders of the conspiracy who had been seized. They were strangled, and suspended from the balcony at the side of the Palace overlooking the Piazzetta, the one whence the Doge was in the habit of witnessing all ceremonies,—and where, alas! Antonio had hovered in the air before the lovely Annunciata, and where she had received from him the nosegay of flowers. Amongst the corpses were those of Marino Bodoeri and Bertuccio Nenolo. Two days later old Marino Falieri was sentenced to death by the Council of Ten, and executed on the so-called Giant Stairs of the Palace.

Antonio wandered about unconsciously, like a man in a dream; no one laid hands upon him, for no one recognised him as having been of the number of the conspirators. On seeing old Falieri's grey head fall, he started up, as it were, out of his death-like trance. With a most unearthly scream—with the shout, "Annunciata!" he rushed storming in the Palace, and along the passages. Nobody stopped him; the guards, as if stupefied by the terrible thing that had just taken place, only stared after him. The old crone came to meet him, loudly lamenting and complaining; she seized his hand and—a few steps more, and along with

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her he entered Annunciata's room. There she lay, poor thing, on the couch, as if already dead. Antonio rushed towards her and covered her hands with burning kisses, calling her by the sweetest and tenderest names.

Then she slowly opened her lovely heavenly eyes and saw Antonio; at first, however, it appeared as if it cost her an effort to call him to mind; but speedily she raised herself up, threw both her arms around his neck, and drew him to her bosom, showering down her hot tears upon him and kissing his cheeks—his lips. "Antonio—my Antonio—I love you, oh! more than I can tell you—yes, yes, there *is* a heaven on earth. What are my father's and my uncle's and my husband's death in comparison with the blissful joy of your love? Oh! let us flee—flee from this scene of blood and murder." Thus spake Annunciata, her heart rent by the bitterest anguish, as well as by the most passionate love. Amid thousands of kisses and never-ending tears, the two lovers mutually swore eternal fidelity; and, forgetting the fearful events of the terrible day that was past, they turned their eyes from the earth and looked up into the heaven which the spirit of love had unfolded to their view. The old woman advised them to flee to Chiozza; thence Antonio intended to travel in an opposite direction by land towards his own native country.

His friend, Pietro, procured him a small boat and had it brought to the bridge behind the Palace. When night came, Annunciata, enveloped in a thick shawl, crept stealthily down the steps with her lover, attended by old Margaret, who bore some valuable jewel caskets in her hood. They reached the bridge unobserved, and unobserved they embarked in their small craft. Antonio seized the oar, and away they went at a quick

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and vigorous rate. The bright moonlight danced along the waves in front of them like a gladsome messenger of love. They reached the open sea. Then began a peculiar whistling and howling of the wind far above their heads; black shadows came trooping up and hung themselves like a dark veil over the bright face of the moon. The dancing moonshine, the gladsome messenger of love, sank in the black depths of the sea amongst its muttering thunders. The storm came on and drove the black piled-up masses of clouds in front of it with wrathful violence. Up and down tossed the boat. "O help us! God, help us!" screamed the old woman. Antonio, no longer master of the oar, clasped his darling Annunciata in his arms, whilst she, aroused by his fiery kisses, strained him to her bosom in the intensity of her rapturous affection. "O my Antonio!"—"O my Annunciata!" they whispered, heedless of the storm which raged and blustered ever more furiously. Then the sea, the jealous widow of the beheaded Doge Falieri, stretched up her foaming waves as if they were giant arms, and seized upon the lovers, and dragged them, along with the old woman, down, down into her fathomless depths.

As soon as the man in the mantle had thus concluded his narrative, he jumped up quickly and left the room with strong rapid strides. The friends followed him with their eyes, silently and very much astonished; then they went to take another look at the picture. The old Doge again looked down upon them with a smirk, in his ridiculous finery and foppish vanity; but when they carefully looked into the Dogess's face they perceived quite plainly that the shadow of some unknown pain—a pain of which she only had a fore-

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boding—was throned upon her lily brow, and that dreamy aspirations of love gleamed from behind her dark lashes, and hovered around her sweet lips. The Hostile Power seemed to be threatening death and destruction from out the distant sea and the vaporous clouds which enshrouded St. Mark's. They now had a clear conception of the deeper significance of the charming picture; but so often as they looked upon it again, all the sympathetic sorrow which they had felt at the history of Antonio and Annunciata's love returned upon them and filled the deepest recesses of their souls with its pleasurable awe.

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MASTER MARTIN, THE COOPER, AND HIS JOURNEYMAN.[1]

WELL may your heart swell in presentient sadness, indulgent reader, when your footsteps wander through places where the splendid monuments of Old German Art speak, like eloquent tongues, of the magnificence, good steady industry, and sterling honesty of an illustrious age now long since passed away. Do you not feel as if you were entering a deserted house? The Holy Book in which the head of the household read is still lying open on the table, and the gay rich tapestry that the mistress of the house spun with her own hands is still hanging on the walls; whilst round about in the bright clean cupboards are ranged all kinds of valuable works of art, gifts received on festive occasions. You could almost believe a member of the household will soon enter and receive you with genuine hearty hospitality. But you will wait in vain for those whom the eternally revolving wheel of Time has whirled away; you may therefore surrender yourself to the sweet dream in which the old Masters rise up before you and speak honest and weighty words that sink deeply into your heart. Then for the first time will you be able to grasp the profound significance of

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[1] Written for the Leipsic *Taschenbuch zum geselligen Vergnügen* for 1819.

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their works, for you will then not only live in, but you will also understand the age which could produce such masters and such works. But, alas! does it not happen that, as you stretch out your loving arms to clasp the beautiful image of your dream, it shyly flees away on the light morning clouds before the noisy bustle of the day, whilst you, your eyes filling with scalding tears, gaze after the bright vision as it gradually disappears? And so, rudely disturbed by the life that is pulsing about you, you are suddenly wakened out of your pleasant dream, retaining only the passionate longing that thrills your breast with its delicious awe.

Such sentiments as these, indulgent reader, have always animated the breast of him who is about to pen these pages for you, whenever his path has led him through the world-renowed city of Nuremberg. Now lingering before that wonderful structure, the fountain[1] in the market-place, now contemplating St. Sebald's shrine,[2] and the ciborium[3] in St. Lawrence's Church, and Albert Dürer's[4] grand pictures in the castle and

[1] The "Beautiful Fountain," as it is called, is about 64 ft. in height, and consists of three stone Gothic pyramids and many statues (electors and heroes and prophets). It was built by Schonhover in 1355–61, and restored in 1820.

[2] St. Sebald's shrine in St. Sebald's Church consists of a bronze sarcophagus and canopy of rich Gothic style. It stands about 16½ ft. high, and bears admirable statues of the Twelve Apostles, certain church-fathers and prophets, and other representations of a semi-mythological character, together with reliefs illustrative of episodes in the saint's life. It is regarded by many as one of the gems of German artistic work, and is the result of thirteen years' labour (1506–1519) by Peter Vischer and his sons.

[3] This ciborium or receptacle for the host is the work of Adam Krafft, stands about 68 feet in height, and represents Christ's Passion. The style is florid Gothic, and the material stone.

[4] Albrecht Dürer, born at Nuremberg in 1471, and died in 1528, contemporary with Titian and Raphael, the most truly representative German painter as well as, perhaps, the greatest.

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in the town-house, he used to give himself up entirely to the delicious reveries which transported him into the midst of all the glorious splendours of the old Imperial Town. He thought of the true-hearted words of Father Rosenblüth [1]—

> O Nuremberg, thou glorious spot,
> Thy honour's bolt was aimed aright,
> Sticks in the mark whereat wisdom shot;
> And truth in thee hath come to light.

Many a picture of the life of the worthy citizens of that period, when art and manual industry went loyally and industriously hand in hand, rose up brightly before his mind's eye, impressing itself upon his soul in especially cheerful and pleasing colours. Graciously be pleased, therefore, that he put one of these pictures before you. Perhaps, as you gaze upon it, it may afford you gratification, perhaps it may draw from you a good-natured smile, perhaps you may even come to feel yourself at home in Master Martin's house, and may linger willingly amongst his casks and tubs. Well! —Then the writer of these pages will have effected what is the sincere and honest wish of his heart.

How Master Martin was elected "Candle-master," and how he returned thanks therefor.

On the 1st of May, 1580, in accordance with traditionary custom and usage, the honourable guild of coopers, or wine-cask makers, of the free Imperial

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[1] Hans Rosenblüth, *Meistersinger* and *Wappendichter* (Mastersinger and Herald-poet), called the *Schnepperer* (babbler), was a native of Nuremberg. Between 1431 and 1460 is the period of his literary activity, when he wrote *Fastnachtspiele* (developments of the comic elements in Mysteries), "Odes" on Wine, Farces, &c. He marks the transition from the poetry of chivalric life and manners to that of burgher life and manners.

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Town of Nuremberg, held with all due ceremony a meeting of their craft. A short time previously one of the presidents, or "Candle-masters," as they were called, had been carried to his grave; it was therefore necessary to elect a successor. Choice fell upon Master Martin. And in truth there was scarcely another who could be measured against him in the building of strong and well-made casks; none understood so well as he the management of wine in the cellar;[1] hence he counted amongst his customers very many men of distinction, and lived in the most prosperous circumstances—nay, almost rolled in riches. Accordingly, after Martin had been elected, the worthy Councillor Jacobus Paumgartner, who, in his official character of syndic,[2] presided over the meeting, said, "You have done bravely well, friends, to choose Master Martin as your president, for the office could not be in better hands. He is held in high esteem by all who know him, not only on account of his great skill, but on account of his ripe experience in the art of keeping and managing the rich juice of the grape. His steady industry and upright life, in spite of all the wealth he has amassed, may serve as an example to you all. Welcome then a thousand times, goodman Master Martin, as our honoured president."

With these words Paumgartner rose to his feet and

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[1] Wine was frequently stored at this period on the cooper's premises in huge casks, and afterwards drawn off in smaller casks and bottled.

[2] In many Mediæval German towns the rulers (Burgomaster and Councillors) were mostly self-elected, power being in the hands of a few patrician families. A Councillor generally attended a full meeting of a guild as a sort of "patron" or "visitor." Compare the position which Sir Patrick Charteris occupied with respect to the good citizens of Perth. (See Sir Walter Scott's *Fair Maid of Perth*, chap. vii., *et passim*.)

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took a few steps forward, with open arms, expecting that Martin would come to meet him. The latter immediately placed both his hands upon the arms of his chair and raised himself as expeditiously as his portly person would permit him to rise,—which was only slowly and heavily. Then just as slowly he strode into Paumgartner's hearty embrace, which, however, he scarcely returned. "Well," said Paumgartner, somewhat nettled at this, "well, Master Martin, are you not altogether well pleased that we have elected you to be our 'Candle-master'?" Master Martin, as was his wont, threw his head back into his neck, played with his fingers upon his capacious belly, and, opening his eyes wide and thrusting forward his under-lip with an air of superior astuteness, let his eyes sweep round the assembly. Then, turning to Paumgartner, he began, "Marry, my good and worthy sir, why should I not be altogether well pleased, seeing that I receive what is my due? Who refuses to take the reward of his honest labour? Who turns away from his threshold the defaulting debtor when at length he comes to pay his long-standing debt? What! my good sirs," and Martin turned to the masters who sat around, "what! my good sirs, has it then occurred to you at last that I—I *must* be president of our honourable guild? What do you look for in your president? That he be the most skilful in workmanship? Go look at my two-tun cask made without fire,[1] my brave masterpiece, and then come and tell me if there's one amongst you dare boast

[1] The well-known Great Cask of Heidelberg, built for the Elector Palatine Ernest Theodore in 1751, is calculated to hold 49,000 gallons, and is 32 feet long and 26 feet in diameter. This is not the only gigantic wine cask that has been made in Germany. Other monsters are now in the cellars at Tübingen (made in 1546), Groningen (1678), Königstein (1725), &c.

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that, so far as concerns thoroughness and finish, he has ever turned out anything like it. Do you desire that your president possess money and goods? Come to my house and I will throw open chests and drawers, and you shall feast your eyes on the glitter of the sparkling gold and silver. Will you have a president who is respected by noble and base-born alike? Only ask our honoured gentlemen of the Council, ask the princes and noblemen around our good town of Nuremberg, ask his Lordship, the Bishop of Bamberg, ask what they all think of Master Martin? Oh! I—I don't think you'll hear much said against him." At the same time Master Martin struck his big fat belly with the greatest self-satisfaction, smiling with his eyes half-closed. Then, as all remained silent, nothing being heard except a dubious clearing of the throat here and there, he continued, "Ay! ay! I see. I ought, I know very well, to thank you all handsomely that in this election the good Lord above has at last seen fit to enlighten your minds. Well, when I receive the price of my labour, when my debtor repays me the borrowed money, I write at the bottom of the bill or of the receipt my 'Paid with thanks, Thomas[1] Martin, Master-cooper here.' Let me then thank you all from my heart, since in electing me to be your president and 'Candle-master' you have wiped out an old debt. As for the rest, I pledge you that I will discharge the duties of my office with all fidelity and uprightness. In the hour of need I will stand by the guild and by each of you to the very best of my abilities with word and deed. I will exert the utmost diligence to uphold the honour and fame of our celebrated handicraft, without

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[1] Hoffmann calls him Tobias also lower down, and then Thomas again.

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bating one jot of its present credit. My honoured syndic, and all you, my good friends and masters, I invite to come and partake of good cheer with me on the coming Sunday. Then, with blithesome hearts and minds, let us deliberate over a glass of good Hochheimer[1] or Johannisberger,[2] or any other choice wine in my cellar that your palates may crave, what can be done for the furtherance of our common weal. Once again, I say you shall be all heartily welcome."

The honest masters' countenances, which had perceptibly clouded on hearing Master Martin's proud words, now recovered their serenity, whilst the previous dead silence was followed by the cheerful buzz of conversation, in which a good deal was said about Master Martin's great deserts, and also about his choice cellar. All promised to be present on the Sunday, and offered their hands to the newly-elected "Candle-master," who took them and shook them warmly, also drawing a few of the masters a little towards him, as if desirous of embracing them. The company separated in blithe good-humour.

What afterwards took place in Master Martin's house.

Now it happened that Councillor Jacobus Paumgartner had to pass by Master Martin's in order to reach his own home; and as they both stood outside Master Martin's door, and Paumgartner was about to proceed on his way, his friend, doffing his low bonnet, and bowing respectfully and as low as he was able, said

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[1] Hochheimer is the name of a Rhine wine that has been celebrated since the beginning of the ninth century, and is grown in the neighbourhood of Hochheim, a town in the district of Wiesbaden.

[2] Johannisberger is also grown near Wiesbaden. *The* celebrated vineyard is said to cover only 39½ acres.

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to him, "I should be very glad, my good and worthy sir, if you would not disdain to step in and spend an hour or so in my humble house. Be pleased to suffer me to derive both profit and entertainment from your wise conversation." "Ay, ay! Master Martin, my friend," replied Paumgartner smiling, "gladly enough will I stay a while with you; but why do you call your house a humble house? I know very well that there's none of the richest of our citizens who can excel you in jewels and valuable furniture. Did you not a short time ago complete a handsome building which makes your house one of the ornaments of our renowned Imperial Town?[1] In respect of its interior fittings I say nothing, for no patrician even need be ashamed of it."

Old Paumgartner was right; for on opening the door, which was brightly polished and richly ornamented with brass-work, they stepped into a spacious entrance hall almost resembling a state-room; the floor was tastefully inlaid, fine pictures hung on the walls, and the cupboards and chairs were all artistically carved. And all who came in willingly obeyed the direction inscribed in verses, according to olden custom, on a tablet which hung near the door:—

Let him who will the stairs ascend
See that his shoes be rubbed well clean,
Or taken off were better, I ween;
He thus avoids what might offend.
A thoughtful man is well aware
How he indoors himself should bear.

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[1] Nuremberg is noted for its interesting old houses with high narrow gables turned next the street: amongst the most famous are those belonging to the families of Nassau, Tucher, Peller, Petersen (formerly Toppler), and those of Albrecht Dürer and of Hans Sachs, the cobbler-poet of the 16th century.

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It had been a hot day, and now as the hour of twilight was approached it began to be close and stuffy in the rooms, so Master Martin led his eminent guest into the cool and spacious parlour-kitchen. For this was the name applied at that time to a place in the houses of the rich citizens which, although furnished as a kitchen, was never used as such—all kinds of valuable utensils and other necessaries of housekeeping being there set out on show. Hardly had they got inside the door when Master Martin shouted in a loud voice, "Rose, Rose!" Then the door was immediately opened, and Rose, Master Martin's only daughter, came in.

I should like you, dear reader, to awaken at this moment a vivid recollection of our great Albrecht Dürer's masterpieces; I would wish that the glorious maidens whom we find in them, with all their noble grace, their sweet gentleness and piety, should recur to your mind, endowed with living form. Recall the noble and delicate figure, the beautifully arched, lily-white forehead, the carnation flitting like a breath of roses across the cheek, the full sweet cherry-red lips,—recall the eyes full of pious aspirations, half-veiled by their dark lashes, like moonlight seen through dusky foliage,—recall the silky hair, artfully gathered into graceful plaits,—recall the divine beauty of these maidens, and you will see lovely Rose. How else than in this way could the narrator sketch the dear, darling child? And yet permit me to remind you here of an admirable young artist into whose heart a quickening ray has fallen from these beautiful old times. I mean the German painter Cornelius,[1] in Rome. Just as Margaret looks in Cor-

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[1] Peter von Cornelius (1783–1867), founder of a great German school of historical painting. Going to Rome in 1811, he painted a set of seven scenes illustrative of Goethe's *Faust*, having previously finished a

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nelius's drawings to Goethe's mighty *Faust* when she utters the words, "Bin weder Fräulein noch schön"[1] (I am neither a lady of rank, nor yet beautiful), so also may Rose have looked when in the shyness of her pure chaste heart she felt compelled to shun addresses that smacked somewhat too much of freedom.

Rose bowed low with child-like respect before Paumgartner, and taking his hand, pressed it to her lips. The crimson colour rushed into the old gentleman's pale cheeks, as the sun when setting shoots up a dying flash, suddenly converting the dark foliage into gold, so the fire of a youth now left far behind gleamed once more in his eyes. "Ay! ay!" he cried in a blithesome voice, "marry, my good friend Master Martin, you are a rich and a prosperous man, but the best of all the blessings which the good Lord has given you is your lovely daughter Rose. If the hearts of old gentlemen like us who sit in the Town Council are so stirred that we cannot turn away our purblind eyes from the dear child, who can find fault with the young folks if they stop and stand like blocks of wood, or as if spell-bound, when they meet your daughter in the street, or see her at church, though we have a word of blame for our clerical gentry, because on the Allerwiese,[2] or wherever

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set at Frankfort (on Main). Amongst his many famous works are the Last Judgment in the Ludwig Church at Munich and frescoes in the Glyptothek there.

[1] Gretchen's real words were "Bin weder Fräulein weder schön." See the scene which follows the "Hexenküche" scene in the first part of *Faust*.

[2] A meadow or common on the outskirts of the town, which served as a general place of recreation and amusement. Nearly every German town has such; as the Theresa Meadow at Munich, the Canstatt Meadow near Stuttgart, the Communal Meadow on the right bank of the Main not far from Frankfort (see Goethe, *Wahrheit und Dichtung*, near the beginning), &c.

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else a festival is held, they all crowd round your daughter, with their sighs, and loving glances, and honied words, to the vexation of all other girls? Well, well, Master Martin, you can choose you your son-in-law amongst any of our young patricians, or wherever else you may list."

A dark frown settled on Master Martin's face; he bade his daughter fetch some good old wine; and after she had left the room, the hot blushes mantling thick and fast upon her cheeks, and her eyes bent upon the floor, he turned to old Paumgartner, "Of a verity, my good sir, Heaven has dowered my daughter with exceptional beauty, and herein too I have been made rich; but how can you speak of it in the girl's presence? And as for a patrician son-in-law, there'll never be anything of that sort." "Enough, Master Martin, say no more," replied Paumgartner, laughing. "Out of the fulness of the heart the mouth must speak. Don't you believe, then, that when I set eyes on Rose the sluggish blood begins to leap in my old heart also? And if I do honestly speak out what she herself must very well know, surely there's no very great mischief done."

Rose brought the wine and two beautiful drinking-glasses. Then Martin pushed the heavy table, which was ornamented with some remarkable carving, into the middle of the kitchen. Scarcely, however, had the old gentlemen taken their places and Master Martin had filled the glasses when a trampling of horses was heard in front of the house. It seemed as if a horseman had pulled up, and as if his voice was heard in the entrance-passage below. Rose hastened down and soon came back with the intelligence that old Junker[1] Heinrich

[1] This word is generally used to designate an untitled country nobleman, a member of an old-established noble "county" family. In Prussia the name came to be applied to a political party. A most in-

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von Spangenberg was there and wished to speak to Master Martin. "Marry!" cried Martin, "now this is what I call a fine lucky evening, which brings me my best and oldest customer. New orders of course, I see I shall have to 'cask' out again"—— Therewith he hastened down as fast as he was able to meet his welcome guest.

How Master Martin extols his trade above all others.

The Hochheimer sparkled in the beautiful cut drinking-glasses, and loosened the tongues and opened the hearts of the three old gentlemen. Old Spangenberg especially, who, though advanced in years, was yet brimming with freshness and vivacity, had many a jolly prank out of his merry youth to relate, so that Master Martin's belly wabbled famously, and again and again he had to brush the tears out of his eyes, caused by his loud and hearty laughing. Herr Paumgartner, too, forgot more than was customary with him the dignity of the Councillor, and enjoyed right well the noble liquor and the merry conversation. But when Rose again made her appearance with the neat housekeeper's basket under her arm, out of which she took a table-cloth as dazzling white as fresh-fallen snow,—when she tripped backwards and forwards busy with household matters, laying the cloth, and placing a plentiful supply of appetising dishes on the table,—when, with a winning smile she invited the gentlemen not to despise what had been hurriedly prepared, but to turn to and eat—during all this time their conversation and laughter ceased. Neither Paumgartner nor Spangen-

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teresting description of the old Prussian Junker is given in Wilibald Alexis' (W. H. Häring's) charming novel *Die Hosen des Herrn v. Bredow* (1846–48), in Sir Walter Scott's style.

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berg averted their sparkling eyes from the fascinating maiden, whilst Master Martin too, leaning back in his chair, and folding his hands, watched her busy movements with a gratified smile. Rose was withdrawing, but old Spangenberg was on his feet in a moment, quick as a youth; he took the girl by both shoulders and cried, again and again, as the bright tears trickled from his eyes, "Oh you good, you sweet little angel! What a dear darling girl you are!" then he kissed her twice—three times on the forehead, and returned to his seat, apparently in deep thought.

Paumgartner proposed the toast of Rose's health. "Yes," began Spangenberg, after she had gone out of the room, "yes, Master Martin, Providence has given you a precious jewel in your daughter, whom you cannot well over-estimate. She will yet bring you to great honour. Who is there, let him be of what rank in life he may, who would not willingly be your son-in-law?" "There you are," interposed Paumgartner; "there you see, Master Martin, the noble Herr von Spangenberg is exactly of my opinion. I already see our dear Rose a patrician's bride with the rich jewellery of pearls[1] in her beautiful flaxen hair." "My dear sirs," began Martin, quite testily, "why do you, my dear sirs, keep harping upon this matter—a matter to which I have not as yet directed my thoughts? My Rose has only just reached her eighteenth year; it's not time for such a young thing to be looking out for a lover. How things may turn out afterwards—well, that I leave entirely to the will of the Lord; but this I do at any rate know, that none shall touch my daughter's hand, be he patrician or who he may, except the

[1] A string of pearls worn on the wedding-day was a prerogative of a patrician bride.

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cooper who approves himself the cleverest and skilfullest master in his trade—presuming, of course, that my daughter will have him, for never will I constrain my dear child to do anything in the world, least of all to make a marriage that she does not like." Spangenberg and Paumgartner looked at each other, perfectly astonished at this extraordinary decision of the Master's.[1] At length, after some clearing of his throat, Spangenberg began, "So, then, your daughter is not to wed out of her own station?" "God forbid she should," rejoined Martin. "But," continued Spangenberg, "if now a skilled master of a higher trade, say a goldsmith, or even a brave young artist, were to sue for your Rose and succeeded in winning her favour more than all other young journeymen, what then?" "I should say," replied Master Martin, throwing his head back into his neck, "show me, my excellent young friend, the fine two-tun cask which you have made as your masterpiece; and if he could not do so, I should kindly open the door for him and very politely request him to try his luck elsewhere." "Ah! but," went on Spangenberg again, "if the young journeyman should reply, 'A

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[1] In the Middle Ages, in Nuremberg, and in most other industrial towns also, the artisans and others who formed *guilds* (each respective trade or calling having generally its guild) were divided into three grades, masters, journeymen, and apprentices. Admission from one of these grades into the one next above it was subject to various more or less restrictive conditions. A man could only become a "master" and regularly set up in business for himself after having gone through the various stages of training in conformity with the rules or prescriptions of his guild, after having constructed his masterpiece to the satisfaction of a specially appointed commission, and after fulfilling certain requirements as to age, citizenship, and in some cases possession of a certain amount of property. It was usual for journeymen to spend a certain time in travelling, going from one centre of their trade to another.

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little structure of that kind I cannot show you, but come with me to the market-place and look at yon beautiful house which is sending up its slender gable into the free open air—that's *my* masterpiece.'" "Ah! my good sir, my good sir," broke in Master Martin impatiently, "why do you give yourself all this trouble to try and make me alter my conviction? Once and for all, my son-in-law must be of *my* trade; for my trade I hold to be the finest trade there is in the world. Do you think we've nothing to do but to fix the staves into the trestles (hoops), so that the cask may hold together? Marry, it's a fine thing and an admirable thing that our handiwork requires a previous knowledge of the way in which that noble blessing of Heaven, good wine, must be kept and managed, that it may acquire strength and flavour so as to go through all our veins and warm our blood like the true spirit of life! And then as for the construction of the casks—if we are to turn out a successful piece of work, must we not first draw out our plans with compass and rule? We must be arithmeticians and geometricians of no mean attainments, how else can we adapt the proportion and size of the cask to the measure of its contents? Ay, sir, my heart laughs in my body when we've bravely laboured at the staves with jointer and adze and have gotten a brave cask in the vice; and then when my journeymen swing their mallets and down it comes on the drivers clipp! clapp! clipp! clapp! —that's merry music for you; and there stands your well-made cask. And of a verity I may look a little proudly about me when I take my marking-tool in my hand and mark the sign of my handiwork, that is known and honoured of all respectable wine-masters, on the bottom of the cask. You spoke of house-building, my good sir. Well, a beautiful house is in truth

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a glorious piece of work, but if I were a house-builder and went past a house I had built, and saw a dirty fellow or good-for-nothing rascal who had got possession of it looking down upon me from the bay-window, I should feel thoroughly ashamed,—I should feel, purely out of vexation and annoyance, as if I should like to pull down and destroy my own work. But nothing like that can happen with the structures I build. Within them there comes and lives once for all nothing but the purest spirit on earth—good wine. God prosper my handiwork!"

"That's a fine eulogy," said Spangenberg, "and honestly and well meant. It does you honour to think so highly of your craft; but—do not get impatient if I keep harping upon the same string—now if a patrician really came and sued for your daughter? When a thing is brought right home to a man it often looks very different from what he thought it would." "Why, i' faith," cried Master Martin somewhat vehemently, "why, what else could I do but make a polite bow and say, 'My dear sir, if you were a brave cooper, but as it is'"—— "Stop a bit," broke in Spangenberg again; "but if now some fine day a handsome Junker on a gallant horse, with a brilliant retinue dressed in magnificent silks and satins, were to pull up before your door and ask you for Rose to wife?" "Marry, by my faith," cried Master Martin still more vehemently than before, "why, marry, I should run down as fast as I could and lock and bolt the door, and I should shout 'Ride on farther! Ride on farther! my worshipful Herr Junker; roses like mine don't blossom for you. My wine-cellar and my money-bags would, I dare say, suit you passing well—and you would take the girl in with the bargain; but ride on! ride on farther.'" Old Spangenberg rose to his feet, his face hot and red all

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over; then, leaning both hands on the table, he stood looking on the floor before him. "Well," he began after a pause, "and now the last question, Master Martin. If the Junker before your door were my own son, if I myself stopped at your door, would you shut it then, should you believe then that we were only come for your wine-cellar and your money-bags?" "Not at all, not at all, my good and honoured sir," replied Master Martin. "I would gladly throw open my door, and everything in my house should be at your and your son's service; but as for my Rose, I should say to you, 'If it had only pleased Providence to make your gallant son a brave cooper, there would be no more welcome son-in-law on earth than he; but now'—— But, my dear good sir, why do you tease and worry me with such curious questions? See you, our merry talk has come abruptly to an end, and look! our glasses are all standing full. Let's put all sons-in-law and Rose's marriage aside; here, I pledge you to the health of your son, who is, I hear, a handsome young knight." Master Martin seized his glass; Paumgartner followed his example, saying, "A truce to all captious conversation, and here's a health to your gallant son." Spangenberg touched glasses with them, and said with a forced smile, "Of course you know I was only speaking in jest; for nothing but wild headstrong passion could ever lead my son, who may choose him a wife from amongst the noblest families in the land, so far to disregard his rank and birth as to sue for your daughter. But methinks you might have answered me in a somewhat more friendly way." "Well, but, my good sir," replied Master Martin, "even in jest I could only speak as I should act if the wonderful things you are pleased to imagine were really to happen. But you *must* let me have my pride; for you cannot but

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allow that I am the skilfullest cooper far and near, that I understand the management of wine, that I observe strictly and truly the admirable wine-regulations of our departed Emperor Maximilian[1] (may he rest in peace!), that as beseems a pious man I abhor all godlessness, that I never burn more than one small half-ounce of pure sulphur[2] in one of my two-tun casks, which is necessary to preserve it — the which, my good and honoured sirs, you will have abundantly remarked from the flavour of my wine." Spangenberg resumed his seat, and tried to put on a cheerful countenance, whilst Paumgartner introduced other topics of conversation. But, as it so often happens, when once the strings of an instrument have got out of tune, they are always getting more or less warped, so that the player in vain tries to entice from them again the full-toned chords which they gave at first, thus it was with the three old gentlemen; no remark, no word, found a sympathetic response. Spangenberg called for his grooms, and left Master Martin's house quite in an ill-humour after he had entered it in gay good spirits.

The old Grandmother's Prophecy.

Master Martin was rather ill at ease because his brave old customer had gone away out of humour in this way, and he said to Paumgartner, who had just emptied his last glass and rose to go too, "For the life of me, I can't understand what the old gentleman meant by his talk, and why he should have got testy about it

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[1] From another passage (*Der Feind*, chap. i.) it appears that the reference is to a series of regulations dealing with the wine industry, of date August 24, 1498, in the reign of Maximilian I.

[2] Sulphur is burnt inside the cask (care being taken that it does not touch it) in order to keep it sweet and pure, as well as to impart both flavour and colour to the wine.

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at last." "My good friend Master Martin," began Paumgartner, "you are a good and honest man; and a man has verily a right to set store by the handiwork he loves and which brings him wealth and honour; but he ought not to show it in boastful pride, that's against all right Christian feeling. And in our guild-meeting to-day you did not act altogether right in putting yourself before all the other masters. It may true that you understand more about your craft than all the rest; but that you go and cast it in their teeth can only provoke ill-humour and black looks. And then you must go and do it again this evening! You could not surely be so infatuated as to look for anything else in Spangenberg's talk beyond a jesting attempt to see to what lengths you would go in your obstinate pride. No wonder the worthy gentleman felt greatly annoyed when you told him you should only see common covetousness in any Junker's wooing of your daughter. But all would have been well if, when Spangenberg began to speak of his son, you had interposed—if you had said, 'Marry, my good and honoured sir, if you yourself came along with your son to sue for my daughter—why, i' faith, that would be far too high an honour for me, and I should then have wavered in my firmest principles.' Now, if you had spoken to him like that, what else could old Spangenberg have done but forget his former resentment, and smile cheerfully and in good humour as he had done before?" "Ay, scold me," said Master Martin, "scold me right well, I have well deserved it; but when the old gentleman would keep talking such stupid nonsense I felt as if I were choking, I could not make any other answer." "And then," went on Paumgartner, "what a ridiculous resolve to give your daughter to nobody but a cooper! You will commit, you say, your daughter's destiny to Providence,

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and yet with human shortsightedness you anticipate the decree of the Almighty in that you obstinately determine beforehand that your son-in-law is to come from within a certain narrow circle. That will prove the ruin of you and your Rose, if you are not careful. Have done, Master Martin, have done with such unchristian childish folly; leave the Almighty, who will put a right choice in your daughter's honest heart when the right time comes—leave Him to manage it all in his own way." "O my worthy friend," said Master Martin, quite crest-fallen, "I now see how wrong I was not to tell you everything at first. You think it is nothing but overrating my handiwork that has brought me to take this unchangeable resolve of wedding Rose to none but a master-cooper; but that is not so; there is another reason, a more wonderful and mysterious reason. I can't let you go until you have learned all; you shall not bear ill-will against me over-night. Sit down, I earnestly beg you, stay a few minutes longer. See here; there's still a bottle of that old wine left which the ill-tempered Junker has despised; come, let's enjoy it together." Paumgartner was astonished at Master Martin's earnest, confidential tone, which was in general perfectly foreign to his nature; it seemed as if there was something weighing heavy upon the man's heart that he wanted to get rid of.

And when Paumgartner had taken his seat and drunk a glass of wine, Master Martin began as follows. "You know, my good and honoured friend, that soon after Rose was born I lost my beloved wife; Rose's birth was her death. At that time my old grandmother was still living, if you can call it living when one is blind, deaf as a post, scarce able to speak, lame in every limb, and lying in bed day after day and night after night. Rose had been christened; and the nurse

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sat with the child in the room where my old grandmother lay. I was so cut up with grief, and when I looked upon my child, so sad and yet so glad—in fact I was so greatly shaken that I felt utterly unfitted for any kind of work, and stood quite still and wrapped up in my own thoughts beside my old grandmother's bed; and I counted her happy, since now all her earthly pain was over. And as I gazed upon her face a strange smile began to steal across it, her withered features seemed to be smoothed out, her pale cheeks became flushed with colour. She raised herself up in bed; she stretched out her paralysed arms, as if suddenly animated by some supernatural power,—for she had never been able to do so at other times. She called distinctly in a low pleasant voice, 'Rose, my darling Rose!' The nurse got up and brought her the child, which she rocked up and down in her arms. But then, my good sir, picture my utter astonishment, nay, my alarm, when the old lady struck up in a clear strong voice a song in the *Hohe fröhliche Lobweis*[1] of Herr Hans Berchler, mine host of the Holy Ghost in Strasburg, which ran like this—

Maiden tender, with cheeks so red,
Rose, listen to the words I say;
Wouldst guard thyself from fear and ill?
Then put thy trust in God alway;
Let not thy tongue at aught make mock,
Nor foolish longings feed at heart.
A vessel fair to see he'll bring,
In which the spicy liquid foams,
And bright, bright angels gaily sing.
And then in reverent mood
Hearken to the truest love,
Oh! hearken to the sweet love-words.

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[1] See note 2, p. 15. The German *Meistersinger* always sang without any accompaniment of musical instruments.

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The vessel fair with golden grace—
Lo! him who brings it in the house
Thou wilt reward with sweet embrace;
And an thy lover be but true,
Thou need'st nor wait thy father's kiss.
The vessel fair will always bring
All wealth and joy and peace and bliss;
So, virgin fair, with the bright, bright eyes,
Let aye thy little ear be ope
To all true words. And henceforth live,
And with God's richest blessing thrive.

And after she had sung this song through, she laid the child gently and carefully down upon the coverlet; and, placing her trembling withered hand upon her forehead, she muttered something to herself, to us, however, unintelligible; but the rapt countenance of the old lady showed in every feature that she was praying. Then her head sank back upon the pillows, and just as the nurse took up the child my old grandmother took a deep breath; she was dead." "That is a wonderful story," said Paumgartner when Master Martin ceased speaking; "but I don't exactly see what is the connection between your old grandmother's prophetic song and your obstinate resolve to give Rose to none but a master-cooper." "What!" replied Master Martin, "why, what can be plainer than that the old lady, especially inspired by the Lord at the last moments of her life, announced in a prophetic voice what must happen if Rose is to be happy? The lover who is to bring wealth and joy and peace and bliss into the house with his vessel fair, who is that but a lusty cooper who has made his vessel fair, his masterpiece with me? In what other vessel does the spicy liquid foam, if not in the wine-cask? And when the wine works, it bubbles and even murmurs and splashes; that's the lovely angels chasing each other backwards and forwards in

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the wine and singing their gay songs. Ay, ay, I tell you, my old grandmother meant none other lover than a master-cooper; and it shall be so, it shall be so." "But, my good Master Martin," said Paumgartner, "you are interpreting the words of your old grandmother just in your own way. Your interpretation is far from satisfactory to my mind; and I repeat that you ought to leave all simply to the ordering of Providence and your daughter's heart, in which I dare be bound the right choice lies hidden away somewhere." "And I repeat," interrupted Martin impatiently, "that my son-in-law *shall* be,—I am resolved,—*shall* be none other than a skilful cooper." Paumgartner almost got angry at Master Martin's stubbornness; he controlled himself, however, and, rising from his seat, said, "It's getting late, Master Martin, let us now have done with our drinking and talking, for neither methinks will do us any more good."

When they came out into the entrance-hall, there stood a young woman with five little boys, the eldest scarce eight years old apparently, and the youngest scarce six months. She was weeping and sobbing bitterly. Rose hastened to meet the two old gentlemen and said, "Oh father, father! Valentine is dead; there is his wife and the children." "What! Valentine dead?" cried Master Martin, greatly startled. "Oh! that accident! that accident! Just fancy," he continued, turning to Paumgartner, "just fancy, my good sir, Valentine was the cleverest journeyman I had on the premises; and he was industrious, and a good honest man as well. Some time ago he wounded himself dangerously with the adze in building a large cask; the wound got worse and worse; he was seized with a violent fever, and now he has had to die of it in the prime of life." Thereupon Master Martin approached

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the poor disconsolate woman, who, bathed in tears, was lamenting that she had nothing but misery and starvation staring her in the face. "What!" said Master Martin, "what do you think of me then? Your husband got his dangerous wound whilst working for me, and do you think I am going to let you perish of want? No, you all belong to my house from now onwards. To-morrow, or whenever you like, we'll bury your poor husband, and then do you and your boys go to my farm outside the Ladies Gate,[1] where my fine open workshop is, and where I work every day with my journeymen. You can install yourself as housekeeper there to look after things for me, and your fine boys I will educate as if they were my own sons. And, I tell you what, I'll take your old father as well into my house. He was a sturdy journeyman cooper once upon a time whilst he still had muscle in his arms. And now—if he can no longer wield the mallet, or the beetle or the beak iron, or work at the bench, he yet can do something with croze-adze, or can hollow out staves for me with the draw-knife. At any rate he shall come along with you and be taken into my house." If Master Martin had not caught hold of the woman, she would have fallen on the floor at his feet in a dead swoon, she was so affected by grief and emotion. The eldest of the boys clung to his doublet, whilst the two youngest, whom Rose had taken in her arms, stretched out their tiny hands towards him, as if they had understood it all. Old Paumgartner said, smiling and with bright tears standing in his eyes, "Master Martin, one can't bear you any ill-will;" and he betook himself to his own home.

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[1] This is one of the principal round towers, erected 1558–1568, in the town walls; it is situated on the south-east.

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How the two young journeymen Frederick and Reinhold became acquainted with each other.

Upon a beautiful, grassy, gently-sloping hill, shaded by lofty trees, lay a fine well-made young journeyman, whose name was Frederick. The sun had already set, and rosy tongues of light were stretching upwards from the furthest verge of the horizon. In the distance the famed imperial town of Nuremberg could be plainly seen, spreading across the valley and boldly lifting up her proud towers against the red glow of the evening, its golden rays gilding their pinnacles. The young journeyman was leaning his arm on his bundle, which lay beside him, and contained his necessaries whilst on the travel, and was gazing with looks full of longing down into the valley. Then he plucked some of the flowers which grew among the grass within reach of him and tossed them into the air towards the glorious sunset; afterwards he sat gazing sadly before him, and the burning tears gathered in his eyes. At length he raised his head, and spreading out his arms as if about to embrace some one dear to him, he sang in a clear and very pleasant voice the following song:—

My eyes now rest once more
On thee, O home, sweet home!
My true and honest heart
Has ne'er forgotten thee.
O rosy glow of evening, come,
I fain would naught but roses see.
Ye sweetest buds and flowers of love,
Bend down and touch my heart
With winsome sweet caresses.
O swelling bosom, wilt thou burst?
Yet hold in pain and sweet joy fast.
O golden evening red!
O beauteous ray, be my sweet messenger,

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And bear to her my sighs and tears—
My tears and sighs on faithfully to her.
And were I now to die,
And roses then did ask thee—say,
"His heart with love—it pined away."

Having sung this song, Frederick took a little piece of wax out of his bundle, warmed it in his bosom, and began in a neat and artistic manner to model a beautiful rose with scores of delicate petals. Whilst busy with this work he hummed to himself some of the lines of the song he had just sung, and so deeply absorbed was he in his occupation that he did not observe the handsome youth who had been standing behind him for some time and attentively watching his work.

"Marry, my friend," began now the youth, "by my troth, that is a dainty piece of work you are making there." Frederick looked round in alarm; but when he looked into the dark friendly eyes of the young stranger, he felt as if he had known him for a long time. Smiling, he replied, "Oh! my dear sir, how can you notice such trifling? it only serves me for pastime on my journey." "Well then," went on the stranger youth, "if you call that delicately formed flower, which is so faithful a reproduction of Nature, trifling, you must be a skilful practised modeller. You have afforded me a pleasant surprise in two ways. First, I was quite touched to the heart by the song you sang so admirably to Martin Häscher's *Zarte Buchstabenweis;* and now I cannot but admire your artistic skill in modelling. How much farther do you intend to travel to-day?" Frederick replied, "Yonder lies the goal of my journey before our eyes. I am going home, to the famed imperial town of Nuremberg. But as the sun has now been set some time, I shall

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pass the night in the village below there, and then by being up and away in the early morning I can be in Nuremberg at noon." "Marry," cried the youth, delighted, "how finely things will fit; we are both going the same way, for I want to go to Nuremberg. I will spend the night with you here in the village, and then we'll proceed on our way again to-morrow. And now let us talk a little." The youth, Reinhold by name, threw himself down beside Frederick on the grass, and continued, "If I mistake not, you are a skilful artist-caster, are you not? I infer it from your style of modelling; or perhaps you are a worker in gold and silver?" Frederick cast down his eyes sadly, and said dejectedly, "Marry, my dear sir, you are taking me for something far better and higher than I really am. Well, I will speak candidly; I have learned the trade of a cooper, and am now going to work for a well-known master in Nuremberg. You will no doubt look down upon me with contempt since, instead of being able to mould and cast splendid statues, and such like, all I can do is to hoop casks and tubs." Reinhold burst out laughing, and cried, "Now that I call droll. I shall look down upon you—eh? because you are a cooper; why man, that's what I am; I'm nothing but a cooper." Frederick opened his eyes wide in astonishment; he did not know what to make of it, for Reinhold's dress was in keeping with anything sooner than a journeyman cooper's on travel. His doublet of fine black cloth, trimmed with slashed velvet, his dainty ruff, his short broadsword, and baretta with a long drooping feather, seemed rather to point to a prosperous merchant; and yet again there was a strange something about the face and form of the youth which completely negatived the idea of a merchant. Reinhold, noticing Frederick's doubting glances, undid his travelling-bundle and pro-

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duced his cooper's apron and knife-belt, saying, "Look here, my friend, look here. Have you any doubts now as to my being a comrade? I perceive you are astonished at my clothing, but I have just come from Strasburg, where the coopers go about the streets as fine as noblemen. Certainly I did once set my heart upon something else like you, but now to be a cooper is the topmost height of my ambition, and I have staked many a grand hope upon it. Is it not the same with you, comrade? But I could almost believe that a dark cloud-shadow had been hung unawares about the brightness of your youth, so that you are no longer able to look freely and gladly about you. The song which you were just singing was full of pain and of the yearning of love; but there were strains in it that seemed as if they proceeded from my own heart, and I somehow fancy I know all that is locked up within your breast. You may therefore all the more put confidence in me, for shall we not then be good comrades in Nuremberg?" Reinhold threw his arm around Frederick and looked kindly into his eyes. Whereupon Frederick said, "The more I look at you, honest friend, the stronger I feel drawn towards you; I clearly discern within my breast the wonderful voice which faithfully echoes the cry that you are a sympathetic spirit. I must tell you all—not that a poor fellow like me has any important secrets to confide to you, but simply because there is room in the heart of the true friend for *his* friend's pain, and during the first moments of our new acquaintance even I acknowledge you to be my truest friend.

"I am now a cooper, and may boast that I understand my work; but all my thoughts have been directed to another and a nobler art since my very childhood. I wished to become a great master in

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casting statues and in silver-work, like Peter Fischer[1] or the Italian Benvenuto Cellini;[2] and so I worked with intense ardour along with Herr Johannes Holzschuer,[3] the well-known worker in silver in my native town yonder. For although he did not exactly cast statues himself, he was yet able to give me a good introduction to the art. And Herr Tobias Martin, the master-cooper, often came to Herr Holzschuer's with his daughter, pretty Rose. Without being consciously aware of it, I fell in love with her. I then left home and went to Augsburg in order to learn properly the art of casting, but this first caused my smouldering passion to burst out into flames. I saw and heard nothing but Rose; every exertion and all labour that did not tend to the winning of her grew hateful to me. And so I adopted the only course that would bring me to this goal. For Master Martin will only give his daughter to the cooper who shall make the very best masterpiece in his house, and who of course finds favour in his daughter's eyes as well. I deserted my own art to learn cooperage. I am now going to Nuremberg to work for Master Martin.

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[1] Peter Vischer (*c.* 1455–1529), a native of Nuremberg, one of the most distinguished of German sculptors, was chiefly engaged in making monuments for deceased princes in various parts of Germany and central Europe. The shrine in St. Sebald's, mentioned above, is generally considered his masterpiece.

[2] Benvenuto Cellini (1500–1569) of Florence, goldsmith and worker in metals. Mr. W. M. Rossetti rightly says that his biography, written by himself, forms one of the most "fascinating" of books. It has been translated into English by Thomas Roscoe, and by Goethe into German.

[3] Holzschuher was the name of an old and important family in Nuremberg. Fifty-four years before the date of the present story, that is in 1526, a member of the family was burgomaster of his native town, and was painted by Dürer.

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But now that my home lies before me and Rose's image rises up before my eyes, I feel overcome with anxiety and nervousness, and my heart sinks within me. Now I see clearly how foolishly I have acted; for I don't even know whether Rose loves me or whether she ever will love me." Reinhold had listened to Frederick's story with increasing attention. He now rested his head on his arm, and, shading his eyes with his hand, asked in a hollow moody voice, "And has Rose never given you any signs of her love?" "Nay," replied Frederick, "nay, for when I left Nuremberg she was more a child than a maiden. No doubt she liked me; she smiled upon me most sweetly when I never wearied plucking flowers for her in Herr Holzschuer's garden and weaving them into wreaths, but——" "Oh! then all hope is not yet lost," cried Reinhold suddenly, and so vehemently and in such a disagreeably shrill voice that Frederick was almost terrified. At the same time he leapt to his feet, his sword rattling against his side, and as he stood upright at his full stature the deep shadows of the night fell upon his pale face and distorted his gentle features in a most unpleasant way, so that Frederick cried, perfectly alarmed, "What's happened to you all at once?" and stepping back, his foot knocked against Reinhold's bundle. There proceeded from it the jarring of some stringed instrument, and Reinhold cried angrily, "You ill-mannered fellow, don't break my lute all to pieces." The instrument was fastened to the bundle; Reinhold unbuckled it and ran his fingers wildly over the strings as if he would break them all. But his playing soon grew soft and melodious. "Come, brother," said he in the same gentle tone as before, "let us now go down into the village. I've got a good means here in my hands to banish

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the evil spirits who may cross our path, and who might in particular have any dealings with me." "Why, brother," replied Frederick, "what evil spirits will be likely to have anything to do with us on the way? But your playing is very, very nice; please go on with it."

The golden stars were beginning to dot the dark azure sky. The night-breezes in low murmurous whispers swept lightly over the fragrant meadows. The brooks babbled louder, and the trees rustled in the distant woods round about. Then Frederick and Reinhold went down the slope playing and singing, and the sweet notes of their songs, so full of noble aspirations, swelled up clear and sharp in the air, as if they had been plumed arrows of light. Arrived at their quarters for the night, Reinhold quickly threw aside lute and bundle and strained Frederick to his heart; and Frederick felt on his cheeks the scalding tears which Reinhold shed.

How the two young journeymen, Reinhold and Frederick, were taken into Master Martin's house.

Next morning when Frederick awoke he missed his new-won friend, who had the night before thrown himself down upon the straw pallet at his side; and as his lute and his bundle were likewise missing, Frederick quite concluded that Reinhold, from reasons which were unknown to him, had left him and gone another road. But directly he stepped out of the house Reinhold came to meet him, his bundle on his back and his lute under his arm, and dressed altogether differently from what he had been the day before. He had taken the feather out of his baretta, and laid aside his sword, and had put on a plain burgher's doublet of an unpretentious colour, instead of the fine one with the velvet

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trimmings. "Now, brother," he cried, laughing merrily to his astonished friend, "you will acknowledge me for your true comrade and faithful work-mate now, eh? But let me tell you that for a youth in love you have slept most soundly. Look how high the sun is. Come, let us be going on our way." Frederick was silent and busied with his own thoughts; he scarcely answered Reinhold's questions and scarcely heeded his jests. Reinhold, however, was full of exuberant spirits; he ran from side to side, shouted, and waved his baretta in the air. But he too became more and more silent the nearer they approached the town. "I can't go any farther, I am so full of nervousness and anxiety and sweet sadness; let us rest a little while beneath these trees." Thus spake Frederick just before they reached the gate; and he threw himself down quite exhausted in the grass. Reinhold sat down beside him, and after a while began, "I daresay you thought me extremely strange yesterday evening, good brother mine. But as you told me about your love, and were so very dejected, then all kinds of foolish nonsense flooded my mind and made me quite confused, and would have made me mad in the end if your good singing and my lute had not driven away the evil spirits. But this morning when the first ray of sunlight awoke me, all my gaiety of heart returned, for all nasty feelings had already left me last evening. I ran out, and whilst wandering among the undergrowth a crowd of fine things came into my mind: how I had found you, and how all my heart felt drawn towards you. There also occurred to me a pretty little story which happened some time ago when I was in Italy; I will tell it to you, since it is a remarkable illustration of what true friendship can do.

"It chanced that a noble prince, a warm patron and friend of the Fine Arts, offered a very large prize for a

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painting, the subject of which was definitely fixed, and which, though a splendid subject, was one difficult to treat. Two young painters, united by the closest bond of friendship and wont to work together, resolved to compete for the prize. They communicated their designs to each other and had long talks as to how they should overcome the difficulties connected with the subject. The elder, more experienced in drawing and in arrangement and grouping, had soon formed a conception of the picture and sketched it ; then he went to the younger, whom he found so discouraged in the very designing that he would have given the scheme up, had not the elder constantly encouraged him, and imparted to him good advice. But when they began to paint, the younger, a master in colour, was able to give his friend many a hint, which he turned to the best account ; and eventually it was found that the younger had never designed a better picture, nor the elder coloured one better. The pieces being finished, the two artists fell upon each other's neck ; each was delighted, enraptured, with the other's work, and each adjudged the prize, which they both deserved, to his friend. But when, eventually, the prize was declared to have fallen to the younger, he cried, ashamed, 'Oh ! how can I have gained the prize ? What is my merit in comparison with that of my friend ? I should never have produced anything at all good without his advice and valuable assistance.' Then said the elder, 'And did not you too stand by me with invaluable counsel ? My picture is certainly not bad ; but yours has carried off the prize as it deserved. To strive honestly and openly towards the same goal, that is the way of true friends ; the wreath which the victor wins confers honour also upon the vanquished. I love you now all the more that you have so bravely striven, and in your vic-

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tory I also reap fame and honour.' And the painter was right, was he not, Frederick? Honest contention for the same prize, without any malicious reserve, ought to unite true friends still more and knit their hearts still closer, instead of setting them at variance. Ought there to be any room in noble minds for petty envy or malicious hate?" "Never, certainly not," replied Frederick. "We are now faithful loving brothers, and shall both in a short time construct our masterpiece in Nuremburg, a good two-tun cask, made without fire; but Heaven forbid that I should feel the least spark of envy if yours, dear brother Reinhold, turned out to be better than mine." "Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Reinhold heartily, "go on with you and your masterpiece; you'll soon manage that to the joy of all good coopers. And let me tell you that in all that concerns calculation of size and proportion, and drawing plans of sections of circles, you'll find I'm your man. And then in choosing your wood you may rely fully upon me. Staves of the holm oak felled in winter, without worm-holes, without either red or white streaks, and without blemish, that's what we must look for; you may trust my eyes. I will stand by you with all the help I can, in both deed and counsel; and my own masterpiece will be none the worse for it." "But in the name of all that's holy," broke in Frederick here, "why are we chattering about who is to make the best masterpiece? Are we to have any contest about the matter?—the best masterpiece—to gain Rose! What are we thinking about? The very thought makes me giddy." "Marry, brother," cried Reinhold, still laughing, "there was no thought at all of Rose. You are a dreamer. Come along, let us go on if we are to get into the town." Frederick leapt to his feet, and went on his way, his mind in a whirl of confusion.

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As they were washing and brushing off the dust of travel in the hostelry, Reinhold said to Frederick, "To tell you the truth, I for my part don't know for what master I shall work; I have no acquaintances here at all; and I thought you would perhaps take me along with you to Master Martin's, brother? Perhaps I may get taken on by him." "You remove a heavy load from my heart," replied Frederick, "for if you will only stay with me, it will be easier for me to conquer my anxiety and nervousness." And so the two young apprentices trudged sturdily on to the house of the famed cooper, Master Martin.

It happened to be the very Sunday on which Master Martin gave his feast in honour of his election as "Candle-master;" and the two arrived just as they were partaking of the good cheer. So it was that as Reinhold and Frederick entered into Master Martin's house they heard the ringing of glasses and the confused buzz and rattle of a merry company at a feast. "Oh!" said Frederick quite cast down, "we have, it seems, come at an unseasonable time." "Nay, I think we have come exactly at the right time," replied Reinhold, "for Master Martin is sure to be in good humour after a good feast, and well disposed to grant our wishes." They caused their arrival to be announced to Master Martin, and soon he appeared in the entrance-passage, dressed in holiday garb and with no small amount of colour in his nose and on his cheeks. On catching sight of Frederick he cried, "Holla! Frederick, my good lad, have you come home again? That's fine! And so you have taken up the best of all trades—cooperage. Herr Holzschuer cuts confounded wry faces when your name is mentioned, and says a great artist is ruined in you, and that you could have cast little images and espaliers as fine as those in St. Sebald's or

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on Fugger's [1] house at Augsburg. But that's all nonsense ; you have done quite right to step across the way here. Welcome, lad, welcome with all my heart." And therewith Herr Martin took him by the shoulders and drew him to his bosom, as was his wont, thoroughly well pleased. This kind reception by Master Martin infused new spirits into Frederick ; all his nervousness left him, so that unhesitatingly and without constraint he was able not only to prefer his own request but also warmly to recommend Reinhold. "Well, to tell you the truth," said Master Martin, "you could not have come at a more fortunate time than just now, for work keeps increasing and I am bankrupt of workmen. You are both heartily welcome. Put your bundles down and come in ; our meal is indeed almost finished, but you can come and take your seats at the table, and Rose shall look after you and get you something." And Master Martin and the two journeymen went into the room. There sat the honest masters, the worthy syndic Jacobus Paumgartner at their head, all with hot red faces. Dessert was being served, and a better brand of wine was sparkling in the glasses. Every master was talking about something different from all his neighbours and in a loud voice, and yet they all thought they understood each other ; and now and again some of them burst out in a hearty laugh without exactly knowing why. When, however, Master Martin came back, leading the two young men by the hand, and announced aloud that he brought two journeymen who had come to him well provided with testimonials just at the time he wanted them, then all grew silent, each master scru-

[1] The family of Fugger, which rose from the position of poor weavers to be the richest merchant princes in Augsburg, decorated their house with frescoes externally, like so many other old German families.

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tinising the smart young fellows with a smile of comfortable satisfaction, whilst Frederick cast his eyes down and twisted his baretta about in his hands. Master Martin directed the youths to places at the very bottom of the table ; but these were soon the very best of all, for Rose came and took her seat between the two, and served them attentively both with dainty dishes and with good rich wine. There was Rose, a most winsome picture of grace and loveliness, seated between the two handsome youths, all in midst of the bearded old men —it was a right pleasant sight to see ; the mind instantly recalled a bight morning cloud rising solitary above the dim dark horizon, or beautiful spring flowers lifting up their bright heads from amidst the uniform colourless grass. Frederick was so very happy and so very delighted that his breath almost failed him for joy ; and only now and again did he venture to steal a glance at her who filled his heart so fully. His eyes were fixedly bent upon his plate ; how could he possibly dream of eating the least morsel? Reinhold, on the other hand, could not turn his sparkling, radiant eyes away from the lovely maiden. He began to talk about his long journeys in such a wonderful way that Rose had never heard anything like it. She seemed to see everything of which he spoke rise up vividly before her in manifold ever-changing forms. She was all eyes and ears ; and when Reinhold, carried away by the fire of his own words, grasped her hand and pressed it to his heart, she didn't know where she was. "But bless me," broke off Reinhold all at once, "why, Frederick, you are quite silent and still. Have you lost your tongue? Come, let us drink to the weal of the lovely maiden who has so hospitably entertained us." With a trembling hand Frederick seized the huge drinking-glass that Reinhold had filled to the brim and now in-

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sisted on his draining to the last drop. "Now here's long life to our excellent master," cried Reinhold, again filling the glasses and again compelling Frederick to empty his. Then the fiery juices of the wine permeated his veins and stirred up his stagnant blood until it coursed as it were triumphantly through his every limb. "Oh! I feel so indescribably happy," he whispered, the burning blushes mounting into his cheeks. "Oh! I have never felt so happy in all my life before." Rose, who undoubtedly gave another interpretation to his words, smiled upon him with incomparable gentleness. Then, quit of all his embarrassing shyness, Frederick said, "Dear Rose, I suppose you no longer remember me, do you?" "But, dear Frederick," replied Rose, casting down her eyes, "how could I possibly forget you in so short a time? When you were at Herr Holzschuer's—true, I was only a mere child then, yet you did not disdain to play with me, and always had something nice and pretty to talk about. And that dear little basket made of fine silver wire that you gave me at Christmas-time, I've got it still, and I take care of it and keep it as a precious memento." Frederick was intoxicated with delight and tears glittered in his eyes. He tried to speak, but there only burst from his breast, like a deep sigh, the words, "O Rose—dear, dear Rose." "I have always really from my heart longed to see you again," went on Rose; "but that you would become a cooper, that I never for a moment dreamed. Oh! when I call to mind the beautiful things that you made whilst you were with Master Holzschuer—oh! it really is a pity that you have not stuck to your art." "O Rose," said Frederick, "it is only for your sake that I have become unfaithful to it." No sooner had he uttered these words than he could have sunk into the earth for shame and confusion. He had most thoughtlessly let

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the confession slip over his lips. Rose, as if divining all, turned her face away from him; whilst he in vain struggled for words.

Then Herr Paumgartner struck the table a bang with his knife, and announced to the company that Herr Vollrad, a worthy *Meistersinger*,[1] would favour them with a song. Herr Vollrad at once rose to his feet, cleared his throat, and sang such an excellent song in the *Güldne Tonweis*[2] of Herr Vogelgesang that everybody's heart leapt with joy, and even Frederick recovered himself from his awkward embarrassment again. After Herr Vollrad had sung several

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[1] During the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries there existed in many German towns (Nuremberg, Frankfort, Strasburg, Ulm, Mayence, &c.) associations or guild-like corporations of burghers, the object of which was the cultivation of song in the same systematic way that the mechanical arts were practised. They framed strict and well-defined codes of rules (*Tablatures*) by means of which they tested a singer's capabilities. As the chief aims which they set before themselves were the invention of new tunes or melodies, and also songs (words), it resulted that they fell into the inevitable vice of cold formalism, and banished the true spirit of poetry by their many arbitrary rules about rhyme, measure, and melody, and the dry business-like manner in which they worked. The guild or company generally consisted of five distinct grades, the ultimate one being that of master, entrance into which was only permitted to the man who had invented a new melody or tune, and had sung it in public without offending against any of the laws of the *Tablature*. The subjects, which, as the singers were honest burghers, could not be taken from topics in which chivalric life took any interest, were mostly restricted to fables, legendary lore, and consisted very largely of Biblical narratives and passages.

[2] These words are the names of various "tunes," and signified in each case a particular metre, rhyme, melody, &c., so that each was a brief definition of a number of individual items, so to speak. These *Meistersinger* technical terms (or slang?) are therefore not translatable, nor could they be made intelligible by paraphrase, even if the requisite information for each instance were at hand.

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other excellent songs to several other excellent tunes, such as the *Süsser Ton*, the *Krummzinkenweis*, the *Geblümte Paradiesweis*, the *Frisch Pomeranzenweis*, &c., he called upon any one else at the table who understood anything of the sweet and delectable art of the *Meistersinger* also to honour them with a song. Then Reinhold rose to his feet and said that if he might be allowed to accompany himself on his lute in the Italian fashion he would give them a song, keeping, however, strictly to the German tune. As nobody had any objection he fetched his instrument, and, after a little tuneful prelude, began the following song :—

Where is the little fount
Where sparkles the spicy wine?
From forth its golden depths
Its golden sparkles mount
And dance 'fore the gladdened eye.
This beautiful little fount
Wherein the golden wine
Sparkles—who made it,
With thoughtful skill and fine,
With such high art and industry,
That praise deserve so well?
This little fount so gay,
Wrought with high art and fine,
Was fashionéd by one
Who ne'er an artist was—
But a brave young cooper he,
His veins with rich wine glowing,
His heart with true love singing,
And ever lovingly—
For that's young cooper's way
In all the things he does.

This song pleased them all down to the ground, but none more so than Master Martin, whose eyes sparkled with pleasure and delight. Without heeding Vollrad, who had almost too much to say about Hans Müller's

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Stumpfe Schossweis, which the youth had caught excellently well,—Master Martin, without heeding him, rose from his seat, and, lifting his *passglas*[1] above his head, called aloud, "Come here, honest cooper and *Meistersinger*, come here and drain this glass with me, your Master Martin." Reinhold had to do as he was bidden. Returning to his place, he whispered into Frederick's ear, who was looking very pensive, "Now, you must sing—sing the song you sang last night." "Are you mad?" asked Frederick, quite angry. But Reinhold turned to the company and said in a loud voice, "My honoured gentlemen and masters, my dear brother Fredcrick here can sing far finer songs, and has a much pleasanter voice than I have, but his throat has got full of dust from his travels, and he will treat you to some of his songs another time, and then to the most admirable tunes." And they all began to shower down their praises upon Frederick, as if he had already sung. Indeed, in the end, more than one of the masters was of opinion that his voice was really more agreeable than journeyman Reinhold's, and Herr Vollrad also, after he had drunk another glass, was convinced that Frederick could use the beautiful German tunes far better than Reinhold, for the latter had too much of the Italian style about him. And Master Martin, throwing his head back into his neck, and giving his round belly a hearty slap, cried, "Those are *my* journeymen, *my* journeymen, I tell you—mine, master-cooper Tobias Martin's of Nuremberg." And all the other masters nodded their heads in assent, and, sipping the last drops out of the bottom of their tall glasses, said, "Yes,

[1] A glass divided by means of marks placed at intervals from top to bottom. It was usual for one who was invited to drink to drink out of the challenger's glass down to the mark next below the top of the liquid.

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yes. Your brave, honest journeymen, Master Martin—that they are." At length it was time to retire to rest. Master Martin led Reinhold and Frederick each into a bright cheerful room in his own house.

How the third journeyman came into Master Martin's house, and what followed in consequence.

After the two journeymen had worked for some weeks in Master Martin's workshop, he perceived that in all that concerned measurement with rule and compass, and calculation, and estimation of measure and size by eyesight, Reinhold could hardly find his match, but it was a different thing when it came to hard work at the bench or with the adze or the mallet. Then Reinhold soon grew tired, and the work did not progress, no matter how great efforts he might make. On the other hand, Frederick planed and hammered away without growing particularly tired. But one thing they had in common with each other, and that was their well-mannered behaviour, marked, principally at Reinhold's instance, by much natural cheerfulness and good-natured enjoyment. Besides, even when hard at work, they did not spare their throats, especially when pretty Rose was present, but sang many an excellent song, their pleasant voices harmonising well together. And whenever Frederick, glancing shyly across at Rose, seemed to be falling into his melancholy mood, Reinhold at once struck up a satirical song that he composed, beginning, "The cask is not the cither, nor is the cither the cask," so that old Herr Martin often had to let the croze-adze which he had raised, sink again without striking and hold his big belly as it wabbled from his internal laughter. Above all, the two journeymen, and mainly Reinhold, had completely won their way into Martin's favour; and it was not diffi-

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cult to observe that Rose found a good many pretexts for lingering oftener and longer in the workshop than she certainly otherwise would have done.

One day Master Martin entered his open workshop outside the town-gate, where work was carried on all the summer through, with his brow weighted with thought. Reinhold and Frederick were in the act of setting up a small cask. Then Master Martin planted himself before them with his arms crossed over his chest and said, "I can't tell you how pleased I am with you, my good journeymen, but I am just now in a great difficulty. They write me from the Rhine that this will be a more prosperous wine-year than there ever has been before. A learned man says that the comet which has been seen in the heavens will fructify the earth with its wonderful tail, so that the glowing heat which fabricates the precious metals down in the deepest mines will all stream upwards and evaporate into the thirsty vines, till they prosper and thrive and put forth multitudes of grapes, and the liquid fire with which they are filled will be poured out into the grapes. It will be almost three hundred years before such a favourable constellation occurs again. So now we shall all have our hands full of work. And then there's his Lordship the Bishop of Bamberg has written to me and ordered a large cask. That we can't get done; and I shall have to look about for another useful journeyman. Now I should not like to take the first fellow I meet off the street amongst us, and yet the matter is very urgent. If you know of a good journeyman anywhere whom you would be willing to work with, you have only to tell me, and I will get him here, even though it should cost me a good sum of money."

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Hardly had Master Martin finished speaking when a young man, tall and stalwart, shouted to him in a loud voice, "Hi! you there! is this Master Martin's workshop?" "Certainly," replied Master Martin, going towards the young man, "certainly it is; but you needn't shout so deuced loud and lumber in like that; that's not the way to find people." "Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the young fellow, "marry, you are Master Martin himself, for—fat belly—stately double-chin—sparkling eyes, and red nose—yes, that's just how he was described to me. I bid you good hail, Master Martin." "Well, and what do you want from Master Martin?" he asked, indignantly. The young fellow replied, "I am a journeyman cooper, and merely wanted to ask if I could find work with you." Marvelling that just as he was thinking about looking out for a journeyman one should come to him like this, Master Martin drew back a few paces and eyed the young man from head to foot. He, however, met the scrutiny unabashed and with sparkling eyes. Noting his broad chest, stalwart build, and powerful arms, Master Martin thought within himself, it's just such a lusty fellow as this that I want, and he at once asked him for his trade testimonials.[1] "I haven't them with me just at this present moment," replied the young man, "but I will get them in a short time; and I give you now my word of honour that I will work well and honestly, and that must suffice you." Thereupon, without waiting for Master Martin's reply, the young journeyman stepped into the workshop. He threw down his baretta and

[1] These would consist of the certificate of his admission into the ranks of the journeymen of the guild, of the certificates of proper dismissal signed by the various masters for whom he had worked whilst on travel, together with testimonials of good conduct from the same masters.

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bundle, took off his doublet, put on his apron, and said, "Come, Master Martin, tell me at once what I am to begin with." Master Martin, completely taken aback by the young stranger's resolute vigour and promptitude, had to think a little; then he said, "Come then, my fine fellow, and show me at once that you are a good cooper; take this croze-adze and finish the groove of that cask lying in the vice yonder." The stranger performed what he had been bidden with remarkable strength, quickness, and skill; and then he cried, laughing loudly, "Now, Master Martin, have you any doubts now as to my being a good cooper? But," he continued, going backwards and forwards through the shop, and examining the instruments and tools, and supply of wood, "but though you are well supplied with useful stores and—but what do you call this little thing of a mallet? I suppose it's for your children to play with; and this little adze here—why it must be for your apprentices when they first begin," and he swung round his head the huge heavy mallet which Reinhold could not lift and which Frederick had great difficulty in wielding; and then he did the same with the ponderous adze with which Master Martin himself worked. Then he rolled a couple of huge casks on one side as if they had been light balls, and seized one of the large thick beams which had not yet been worked at. "Marry, master," he cried, "marry, this is good sound oak; I wager it will snap like glass." And thereupon he struck the stave against the grindstone so that it broke clean in half with a loud crack. "Pray be so kind," said Master Martin, "pray have the kindness, my good fellow, to kick that two-tun cask about or to pull down the whole shop. There, you can take that balk for a mallet, and that you may have an adze to your mind I will have Roland's sword, which is

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three yards long, fetched for you from the town-house." "Ay, do, that's just the thing," said the young man, his eyes flashing; but the next minute he cast them down upon the ground and said, lowering his voice, "I only thought, good master, that you wanted right strong journeymen for your heavy work, and now I have, I see, been too forward, too swaggering, in displaying my bodily strength. But do take me on to work, I will faithfully do whatever you shall require of me." Master Martin scanned the youth's features, and could not but admit that he had never seen more nobility and at the same time more downright honesty in any man's face. And yet, as he looked upon the young fellow, there stole into his mind a dim recollection of some man whom he had long esteemed and honoured, but he could not clearly call to mind who it was. For this reason he granted the young man's request on the spot, only enjoining upon him to produce at the earliest opportunity the needful credible trade attestations.

Meanwhile Reinhold and Frederick had finished setting up their cask and were now busy driving on the first hoops. Whilst doing this they were always in the habit of striking up a song; and on this occasion they began a good song in Adam Puschmann's *Stieglitzweis.* Then Conrad (that was the name of the new journeyman) shouted across from the bench where Master Martin had placed him, "By my troth, what squalling do you call that? I could fancy I hear mice squeaking somewhere about the shop. An you mean to sing at all, sing so that it will cheer the heart and make the work go down well. That's how I sing a bit now and again." And he began to bellow out a noisy hunting ditty with its hollas! and hoy, boys! and he imitated the yelping of the hounds and the shrill shouts of the hunters in such a clear, keen, stentorian voice that the

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huge casks rang again and all the workshop echoed. Master Martin held his hands over his ears, and Dame Martha's (Valentine's widow) little boys, who were playing in the shop, crept timorously behind the piled-up staves. Just at this moment Rose came in, amazed, nay, frightened at the terrible noise; it could not be called singing anyhow. As soon as Conrad observed her, he at once stopped, and leaving his bench he approached her and greeted her with the most polished grace. Then he said in a gentle voice, whilst an ardent fire gleamed in his bright brown eyes, "Lovely lady, what a sweet rosy light shone into this humble workman's hut when you came in! Oh! had I but perceived you sooner, I had not outraged your tender ears with my wild hunting ditty." Then, turning to Master Martin and the other journeymen, he cried, "Oh! do stop your abominable knocking and rattling. As long as this gracious lady honours us with her presence, let mallets and drivers rest. Let us only listen to her sweet voice, and with bowed head hearken to what she may command us, her humble servants." Reinhold and Frederick looked at each other utterly amazed; but Master Martin burst out laughing and said, "Well, Conrad, it is now plain that you are the most ridiculous donkey who ever put on apron. First you come here and want to break everything to pieces like an uncultivated giant; then you bellow in such a way as to make our ears tingle; and, as a fitting climax to all your foolishness, you take my little daughter Rose for a lady of rank and act like a love-smitten Junker." Conrad replied, coolly, "Your lovely daughter I know very well, my worthy Master Martin; but I tell you that she is the most peerless lady who treads the earth, and if Heaven grant it she would honour the very noblest of Junkers by permitting him to be her Paladin

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in faithful knightly love." Master Martin held his sides, and it was only by giving vent to his laughter in hums and haws that he prevented himself from choking. As soon as he could at all speak, he stammered, "Good, very good, my most excellent youth; you may continue to regard my daughter as a lady of high rank, I shall not hinder you; but, irrespective of that, will you have the goodness to go back to your bench?" Conrad stood as if spell-bound, his eyes cast down upon the ground; and rubbing his forehead, he said in a low voice, "Ay, it is so," and did as he was bidden. Rose, as she always did in the shop, sat down upon a small cask, which Frederick placed for her, and which Reinhold carefully dusted. At Master Martin's express desire they again struck up the admirable song in which they had been so rudely interrupted by Conrad's bluster; but he went on with his work at the bench, quite still, and entirely wrapped up in his own thoughts.

When the song came to an end Master Martin said, "Heaven has endowed you with a noble gift, my brave lads; you would not believe how highly I value the delectable art of song. Why, once I wanted to be a *Meistersinger* myself, but I could not manage it, even though I tried all I knew how. All that I gained by my efforts was ridicule and mockery. In 'Voluntary Singing'[1] I either got into false 'appendages,'

[1] On these great singing days, generally on Sundays in the churches, and on special occasions in the town-house, the "performances" consisted of three parts. 1. First came a "Voluntary Solo-Singing," in which anybody, even a stranger, might participate, no contest being entered into, and no rewards given. 2. This was followed by a song by all the masters in chorus. 3. Then came the "Principal Singing," the chief "event" of the day—the actual singing contest. Four judges were appointed to examine those who successively presented themselves, being guided by the strict laws and regulations of the *Tablatures*. Those who violated these laws, that is, who made mistakes, had to

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or 'double notes,' or a wrong 'measure,' or an unsuitable 'embellishment,' or started the wrong melody altogether. But you will succeed better, and it shall be said, what the master can't do, his journeymen can. Next Sunday after the sermon there will be a singing contest by the *Meistersinger* at the usual time in St. Catherine's Church. But before the 'Principal Singing' there will be a 'Voluntary,' in which you may both of you win praise and honour in your beautiful art, for any stranger who can sing at all, may freely take part in this. And, he! Conrad, my journeyman Conrad," cried Master Martin across to the bench, "would not you also like to get into the singing-desk and treat our good folk to your fine hunting-chorus?" Without looking up, Conrad replied, "Mock not, good master, mock not; everything in its place. Whilst you are being edified by the *Meistersinger*, I shall enjoy myself in my own way on the Allerwiese."

And what Master Martin anticipated came to pass. Reinhold got into the singing-desk and sang divers songs to divers tunes, with which all the *Meistersingers* were well pleased; and although they were of opinion that the singer had not made any mistake, yet they had a slight objection to urge against him—a sort of something foreign about his style, but yet they could not say exactly in what it consisted. Soon afterwards Frederick took his seat in the singing-desk; and doffing his baretta, he stood some seconds looking silently before him; then after sending a glance at the audience which entered lovely Rose's bosom like a burning arrow, and caused her to fetch a deep sigh, he began

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leave the singing-desk; the successful ones were, however, crowned with wreaths, and had earned the right to act themselves as judges on future occasions.

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such a splendid song in Heinrich Frauenlob's [1] *Zarter Ton*, that all the masters agreed with one accord there was none amongst them who could surpass the young journeyman.

The singing-school came to an end towards evening, and Master Martin, in order to finish off the day's enjoyment in proper style, betook himself in high good-humour to the Allerwiese along with Rose. The two journeymen, Reinhold and Frederick, were permitted to accompany them; Rose was walking between them. Frederick, radiant with delight at the masters' praise, and intoxicated with happiness, ventured to breathe many a daring word in Rose's ear which she, however, casting down her eyes in maidenly coyness, pretended not to hear. Rather she turned to Reinhold, who, according to his wont, was running on with all sorts of merry nonsense; nor did he hesitate to place his arm in Rose's. Whilst even at a considerable distance from the Allerwiese they could hear noisy shouts and cries. Arrived at the place where the young men were amusing themselves in all kinds of games, partly chivalric, they heard the crowd shout time after time, "Won again! won again! He's the strongest again! Nobody can compete with him." Master Martin, on working his way through the crowd, perceived that it was nobody else but his journeyman Conrad who was reaping all this praise and exciting the people to all this applause. He had beaten everybody in racing and boxing and throwing the spear. As Martin came up, Conrad was shouting out and inquiring if there was anybody who would have a merry bout

[1] Heinrich von Meissen, called Frauenlob (died 1318), after having lived at various courts in both the north and the south of Germany, settled at Mayence and gathered together (1311) a school or society of burgher singers.

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with him with blunt swords. This challenge several stout young patricians, well accustomed to this species of pastime, stepped forward and accepted. But it was not long before Conrad had again, without much trouble or exertion, overcome all his opponents; and the applause at his skill and strength seemed as if it would never end.

The sun had set; the last glow of evening died away, and twilight began to creep on apace. Master Martin, with Rose and the two journeymen, had thrown themselves down beside a babbling spring of water. Reinhold was telling of the wonders of distant Italy, but Frederick, quiet and happy, had his eyes fixed on pretty Rose's face. Then Conrad drew near with slow hesitating steps, as if rather undecided in his own mind whether he should join them or not. Master Martin called to him, "Come along, Conrad, come along, come along; you have borne yourself bravely on the meadow; that's what I like in my journeymen, and it's what becomes them. Don't be shy, lad; come and join us, you have my permission." Conrad cast a withering glance at his master, who however met it with a condescending nod; then the young journeyman said moodily, "I am not the least bit shy of you, and I have not asked your permission whether I may lie down here or not,—in fact, I have not come to *you* at all. All my opponents I have stretched in the sand in the merry knightly sports, and all I now wanted was to ask this lovely lady whether she would not honour me with the beautiful flowers she wears in her bosom, as the prize of the chivalric contest." Therewith he dropped upon one knee in front of Rose, and looked her straight and honestly in the face with his clear brown eyes, and he begged, "O give me those beautiful flowers, sweet Rose, as

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the prize of victory; you cannot refuse me that." Rose at once took the flowers from her bosom and gave them to him, laughing and saying, "Ay, I know well that a brave knight like you deserves a token of honour from a lady; and so here, you may have my withered flowers." Conrad kissed the flowers that were given him, and then fastened them in his baretta; but Master Martin, rising to his feet, cried, "There's another of your silly tricks—come, let us be going home; it is getting dark." Herr Martin strode on first; Conrad with modest courtly grace took Rose's arm; whilst Reinhold and Frederick followed them considerably out of humour. People who met them, stopped and turned round to look after them, saying, "Marry, look now, look; that's the rich cooper Thomas Martin, with his pretty little daughter and his stout journeymen. A fine set of people I call them."

Of Dame Martha's conversation with Rose about the three journeymen. Conrad's quarrel with Master Martin.

Generally it is the morning following a holiday when young girls are wont to enjoy all the pleasure of it, and taste it, and thoroughly digest it; and this after celebration they seem to like far better than the actual holiday itself. And so next morning pretty Rose sat alone in her room with her hands folded on her lap, and her head bent slightly forward in meditation—her spindle and embroidery meanwhile resting. Probably she was now listening to Reinhold's and Frederick's songs, and now watching Conrad cleverly gaining the victory over his competitors, and now she saw him coming to her for the prize of victory; and then she hummed a few lines of a pretty song, and

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then she whispered, "Do you want my flowers?" whereat a deeper crimson suffused her cheeks, and brighter glances made their way through her downcast eyelashes, and soft sighs stole forth from her inmost heart. Then Dame Martha came in, and Rose was delighted to be able to tell at full length all that had taken place in St. Catherine's Church and on the Allerwiese. When Rose had done speaking, Dame Martha said, smiling, "Oh! so now, dear Rose, you will soon have to make your choice between your three handsome lovers." "For God's sake," burst out Rose, quite frightened, and flushing hotly all over her face, "for mercy's sake, Dame Martha, what do you mean by that? I—three lovers!" "Don't take on so," went on Dame Martha, "don't take on in that way, dear Rose, as if you knew nothing, as if you could guess nothing. Why, where do you put your eyes, girl? you must be quite blind not to see that our journeymen, Reinhold, Frederick, and Conrad—yes, all three of them—are madly in love with you." "What a fancy, to be sure, Dame Martha," whispered Rose, holding her hands before her face. Then Dame Martha knelt down before her, and threw her arm about her, saying, "Come, my pretty, bashful child, take your hands away, and look me straight in the eyes, and then tell me you have not long ago perceived that you fill both the heart and the mind of each of our journeymen, deny that if you can. Nay, I tell you, you can't do it; and it would, i' faith, be a truly wonderful thing if a maiden's eyes did not see a thing of that sort. Why, when you go into the shop, their eyes are off their work and flying across to you in a minute, and they bustle and stir about with new life. And Reinhold and Frederick begin their best songs, and even wild Conrad grows quiet and gentle; each tries to in-

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vent some excuse to approach nearer to you, and when you honour one of them with a sweet look or a kindly word, how his eyes sparkle, and his face flushes! Come now, my pet, is it not nice to have such handsome fellows all making love to you? But whether you will choose one of the three or which it will be, that I cannot indeed say, for you are good and kind to them all alike, and yet—and yet—but I must not say more. Now an you come to me and said, 'O Dame Martha, give me your advice, to which of these young men, who are all wanting me, shall I give my hand and heart?' then I should of course answer, 'If your heart does not speak out loudly and distinctly, It's this or it's that, why, let them all three go.' I must say Reinhold pleases me right well, and so does Frederick, and so does Conrad; and then again on the other hand I have something to say against each of them. In fact, dear Rose, when I see them working away so bravely, I always think of my poor Valentine; and I must say that, if he could not perhaps produce any better work, there was yet quite a different kind of swing and style in all that he did do. You could see all his heart was in his work; but with these young fellows it always seems to me as if they only worked so, so—as if they had in their heads different things altogether from their work; nay, it almost strikes me as if it were a burden which they have voluntarily taken up, and were now bearing with sturdy courage. Of them all I can get on best with Frederick; he's such a faithful, affectionate fellow. He is the one who seems to belong to us most; I understand all that he says. And then his love for you is so still, and as shy as a good child's; he hardly dares to look at you, and blushes if you only say a single word to him; and that's what I like so much in the dear lad." A tear seemed to glisten in Rose's eye as

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Dame Martha said this. She stood up, and turning to the window, said, "I like Frederick very much, but you must not pass over Reinhold contemptuously." "I never dreamt of doing so," replied Dame Martha, "for Reinhold is by a long way the handsomest of all. And what eyes he has! And when he looks you through and through with his bright glances—no, it's more than you can endure. And yet there's something so strange and peculiar in his character, it quite makes me shiver at times, and makes me quite afraid of him. When Reinhold is working in the shop, I should think Herr Martin, when he tells him to do this or do that, must always feel as I should if anybody were to put a bright pan in my kitchen all glittering with gold and precious stones, and should bid me use it like any ordinary common pan—why, I should hardly dare to touch it at all. He tells his stories and talks and talks, and it all sounds like sweet music, and you are quite carried away by it, but when I sit down to think seriously about what he has been saying, I find I haven't understood a single word. And then when he now and again jests in the way we do, and I think now he's just like us, then all at once he looks so distinguished that I get really afraid of him. And yet I can't say that he puffs himself up in the way that many of our Junkers or patricians do; no, it's something else altogether different. In a word, it strikes me, by my troth, as if he held intercourse with higher spirits, as if he belonged, in fact, to another world. Conrad is a wild overbearing fellow, and yet there is something confoundedly distinguished about him as well; it doesn't agree with the cooper's apron somehow. And he always acts as if nobody but he had to give orders, and as if the others must obey him. In the short time that he has been here he has got so far that when he bellows at Master

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Martin in his loud ringing voice, his master generally does what he wishes. But at the same time he is so good-natured and so thoroughly honest that you can't bear ill-will against him; rather, I must say, that in spite of his wildness, I almost like him better than I do Reinhold, for even if he does speak fearfully grand, you can yet understand him very well. I wager he has once been a campaigner, he may say what he likes. That's why he knows so much about arms, and has even got something of knights' ways about him, which doesn't suit him at all badly. Now do tell me, Rose dear, without any ifs and ands, which of the three journeymen you like best?" "Don't ask me such searching questions, dear Dame Martha," answered Rose. "But of this I am quite sure, that Reinhold does not stir up in me the same feelings that he does in you. It's perfectly true, too, that he is altogether different from his equals; and when he talks I could fancy I enter into a beautiful garden full of bright and magnificent flowers and blossoms and fruits, such as are not to be found on earth, and I like to be amongst them. Since Reinhold has been here I see many things in a different light, and lots of things that were once dim and formless in my mind are now so bright and clear that I can easily distinguish them." Dame Martha rose to her feet, and shaking her finger at Rose as she went out of the room, said, "Ah! ah! Rose, so Reinhold is the favourite then? I didn't think it, I didn't even dream it." Rose made answer as she accompanied her as far as the door, "Pray, dear Dame Martha, think nothing, dream nothing, but leave all to the future. What *it* brings is the will of God, and to that everybody must bow humbly and gratefully."

Meanwhile it was becoming extremely lively in

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Master Martin's workshop. In order to execute all his orders he had engaged with ordinary labourers and taken in some apprentices, and they all hammered and knocked till the din could be heard far and wide. Reinhold had finished his calculations and measurements for the great cask that was to be built for the Bishop of Bamberg, whilst Frederick and Conrad had set it up so cleverly that Master Martin's heart laughed in his body, and he cried again and again, "Now that I call a grand piece of work; that'll be the best little cask I've ever made—except my masterpiece." Now the three apprentices stood driving the hoops on to the fitted staves, and the whole place rang again with the din of their mallets. Old Valentine was busy plying his draw-knife, and Dame Martha, her two youngest on her knee, sat just behind Conrad, whilst the other wideawake little rascals were shouting and making a noise, tumbling the hoops about, and chasing each other. In fact, there was so much hubbub and so much vigorous hard work going on that hardly anybody noticed old Herr Johannes Holzschuer as he stepped into the shop. Master Martin went to meet him, and politely inquired what he desired. "Why, in the first place," said Holzschuer, "I want to have a look at my dear Frederick again, who is working away so lustily yonder. And then, goodman Master Martin, I want a stout cask for my wine-cellar, which I will ask you to make for me. Why look you, that cask they are now setting up there is exactly the sort of thing I want; you can let me have that, you've only got to name the price." Reinhold, who had grown tired and had been resting a few minutes down in the shop, and was now preparing to ascend the scaffolding again, heard Holzschuer's words and said, turning his head towards the old gentleman, "Marry,

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my friend Herr Holzschuer, you need not set your heart upon *this* cask ; we are making it for his Lordship the Bishop of Bamberg." Master Martin, his arms folded on his back, his left foot planted forward, his head thrown back in his neck, blinked at the cask and said proudly, "My dear master, you might have seen from the carefully selected wood and the great pains taken in the work that a masterpiece like that was meant for a prince's [1] cellar. My journeyman Reinhold has said the truth ; don't set your heart on a piece of work like that. But when the vintage is over I will get you a plain strong little cask made, such as will be suitable for your cellar." Old Holzschuer, incensed at Master Martin's pride, replied that his gold pieces weighed just as much as the Bishop of Bamberg's, and that he hoped he could get good work elsewhere for ready money. Master Martin, although fuming with rage, controlled himself with difficulty ; he would not by any means like to offend old Herr Holzschuer, who stood so high in the esteem both of the Council and of all the burghers. At this moment Conrad struck mightier blows than ever with his mallet, so that the whole shop rang and cracked ; then Master Martin's internal rage boiled over, and he shouted vehemently, "Conrad, you blockhead, what do you mean by striking so blindly and heedlessly ? do you mean to break my cask in pieces ?" "Ho ! ho !" replied Conrad, looking round defiantly at his master, "Ho ! ho ! my comical little master, and why should I not ?" And therewith he dealt such a terrible blow at the

[1] The word "prince" is expressed in German by two distinct words ; one, like the English word, designates a member of a royal or reigning house ; the other is used as a simple title, often official, ranking above duke. The Bishop of Bamberg was in this latter sense a prince of the empire.

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cask that the strongest hoop sprang, rattling, and knocked Reinhold down from the narrow plank on the scaffolding; and it was further evident from the hollow echo that a stave had been broken as well. Completely mastered by his furious anger, Master Martin snatched out of Valentine's hand the bar he was shaving, and striding towards the cask, dealt Conrad a good sound stroke with it on the back, shouting, "You cursed dog!" As soon as Conrad felt the blow he wheeled sharply round, and after standing for a moment as if bereft of his senses, his eyes blazed up with fury, he ground his teeth, and screamed, "Struck! struck!" Then at one bound he was down from the scaffolding, had snatched up an adze that lay on the floor, and aimed a powerful stroke at his master; had not Frederick pulled Martin on one side the blow would have split his head; as it was, the adze only grazed his arm, from which, however, the blood at once began to spurt out. Martin, fat and helpless as he was, lost his equilibrium and fell over the bench, at which one of the apprentices was working, into the floor. They all threw themselves upon Conrad, who was frantic, flourishing his bloody adze in the air, and shouting and screaming in a terrible voice, "Let him go to hell! To hell with him!" Hurling them all off with the strength of a giant, he was preparing to deal a second blow at his poor master, who was gasping for breath and groaning on the floor,—a blow that would have completely done for him—when Rose, pale as a corpse with fright, appeared in the shop-door. As soon as Conrad observed her he stood as if turned to a pillar of stone, the adze suspended in the air. Then he threw the tool away from him, struck his hands together upon his chest, and cried in a voice that went to everybody's heart, "Oh, good God! good

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God! what have I done?" and away he rushed out of the shop. No one thought of following him.

Now poor Master Martin was after some difficulty lifted up; it was found, however, that the adze had only penetrated into the thick fleshy part of the arm, and the wound could not therefore be called serious. Old Herr Holzschuer, whom Martin had involved with him in his fall, was pulled out from beneath the shavings, and Dame Martha's children, who ceased not to scream and cry over good Father Martin, were appeased as far as that could be done. As for Martin himself, he was quite dazed, and said if only that devil of a bad journeyman had not spoilt his fine cask he should not make much account of the wound.

Sedan chairs were brought for the old gentlemen, for Holzschuer also had bruised himself rather in his fall. He hurled reproaches at a trade in which they employed such murderous tools, and conjured Frederick to come back to his beautiful art of casting and working in the precious metals, and the sooner the better.

As soon as the dusk of evening began to creep up over the sky, Frederick, and along with him Reinhold, whom the hoop had struck rather sharply, and who felt as if every limb was benumbed, strode back into the town in very low spirits. Then they heard a soft sighing and groaning behind a hedge. They stood still, and a tall figure at once rose up; they immediately recognised Conrad, and began to withdraw timidly. But he addressed them in a tearful voice, saying, "You need not be so frightened at me, my good comrades; of course you take me for a devilish murderous brute, but I am not—indeed I am not so. I could not do otherwise; I *ought* to have struck down the fat old master, and by rights I ought to go along with you and do it *now*, if I only could. But no, no; it's all

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over. Remember me to pretty Rose, whom I love so above all reason. Tell her I will bear her flowers on my heart all my life long, I will adorn myself with them when I—but she will perhaps hear of me again some day. Farewell! farewell! my good, brave comrades." And Conrad ran away across the field without once stopping.

Reinhold said, "There is something peculiar about this young fellow; we can't weigh or measure this deed by any ordinary standard. Perhaps the future will unfold to us the secret that has lain heavy upon his breast."

Reinhold leaves Master Martin's house.

If formerly there had been merry days in Master Martin's workshop, so now they were proportionately dull. Reinhold, incapable of work, remained confined to his room; Martin, his wounded arm in a sling, was incessantly abusing the good-for-nothing stranger-apprentice, and railing at him for the mischief he had wrought. Rose, and even Dame Martha and her children, avoided the scene of the rash savage deed, and so Frederick's blows fell dull and melancholy enough, like a woodcutter's in a lonely wood in winter time, for to Frederick it was now left to finish the big cask alone, and a hard task it was.

And soon his mind and heart were possessed by a profound sadness, for he believed he had now clear proofs of what he had for a long time feared. He no longer had any doubt that Rose loved Reinhold. Not only had she formerly shown many a kindness to Reinhold alone, and to him alone given many a sweet word, but now—it was as plain as noonday—since Reinhold could no longer come to work, Rose too no

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longer thought of going out, but preferred to stay indoors, no doubt to wait upon and take good care of her lover. On Sundays, when all the rest set out gaily, and Master Martin, who had recovered to some extent of his wound, invited him to walk with him and Rose to the Allerwiese, he refused the invitation; but, burdened with trouble and the bitter pain of disappointed love, he hastened off alone to the village and the hill where he had first met with Reinhold. He threw himself down in the tall grass where the flowers grew, and as he thought how that the beautiful star of hope which had shone before him all along his homeward path had now suddenly set in the blackness of night after he had reached his goal, and as he thought how that this step which he had taken was like the vain efforts of a dreamer stretching out his yearning arms after an empty vision of air,—the tears fell from his eyes and dropped upon the flowers, which bent their little heads as if sorrowing for the young journeyman's great unhappiness. Without his being exactly conscious of it, the painful sighs which escaped his labouring breast assumed the form of words, of musical notes, and he sang this song:—

My star of hope,
Where hast thou gone?
Alas! thy glory rises up—
Thy glory sweet, far from me now—
And pours its light on others down.
Ye rustling evening breezes, rouse you,
Blow on my breast,
Awake all joy that kills,
Awake all pain that brings to death,
So that my sore and bleeding heart,
Steeped to the core in bitter tears,
May break in yearning comfortless.
Why whisper ye, ye darksome trees?

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So softly and like friends together?
And why, O golden skirts of sky,
Look ye so kindly down on me?
Show me my grave;
For that is now my haven of hope,
Where I shall calmly, softly sleep.

And as it often happens that the very greatest trouble, if only it can find vent in tears and words, softens down into a gentle melancholy, mild and painless, and that often a faint glimmer of hope appears then in the soul, so it was with Frederick; when he had sung this song he felt wonderfully strengthened and comforted. The evening breezes and the darksome trees that he had called upon in his song rustled and whispered words of consolation; and like the sweet dreams of distant glory or of distant happiness, golden streaks of light worked their way up across the dusky sky. Frederick rose to his feet, and went down the hill into the village. He almost fancied that Reinhold was walking beside him as he did on the day they first found each other; and all the words which Reinhold had spoken again recurred to his mind. And as his thoughts dwelt upon Reinhold's story about the contest between the two painters who were friends, then the scales fell from his eyes. There was no doubt about it; Reinhold must have seen Rose before and loved her. It was only his love for her which had brought him to Nuremberg to Master Martin's, and by the contest between the two painters he meant simply and solely their own—Reinhold's and Frederick's—rival wooing of beautiful Rose. The words that Reinhold had then spoken rang again in his ears,—"Honest contention for the same prize, without any malicious reserve, ought to unite true friends and knit their hearts still closer together, instead of setting them at

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variance. There should never be any place in noble minds for petty envy or malicious hatred." "Yes," exclaimed Frederick aloud, "yes, friend of my heart, I will appeal to you without any reserve, you yourself shall tell me if all hope for me is lost."

It was approaching noon when Frederick tapped at Reinhold's door. As all remained still within, he pushed open the door, which was not locked as usual, and went in. But the moment he did so he stood rooted to the spot. Upon an easel, the glorious rays of the morning sun falling upon it, was a splendid picture,—Rose in all the pride of her beauty and charms, and life size. The maul-stick lying on the table, and the wet colours of the palette, showed that some one had been at work on the picture quite recently. "O Rose, Rose!—By Heaven!" sighed Frederick. Reinhold, who had entered behind him unperceived, clapped him on the shoulder and asked, smiling, "Well, now, Frederick, what do you say to my picture!" Then Frederick pressed him to his heart and cried, "Oh you splendid fellow—you are indeed a noble artist. Yes, it's all clear to me now. You have won the prize—for which I—poor me!—had the hardihood to struggle. Oh! what am I in comparison with you? And what is my art against yours? And yet I too had some fine ideas in my head. Don't laugh at me, dear Reinhold; but, look you, I thought what a grand thing it would be to model Rose's lovely figure and cast it in the finest silver. But that's all childishness, whilst you—you—Oh! how sweetly she smiles upon you, and how delightfully you have brought out all her beauty. O Reinhold! Reinhold! you happy, happy fellow! Ay, and it has all come about as you said long ago. We have both striven for the prize and you have won it: you could not help but win it, and I shall still continue

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to be your friend with all my heart. But I must leave this house—my home : I cannot bear it, I should die if I were to see Rose again. Please forgive me, my dear, dear, noble friend. To-day, this very moment, I will go—go away into the wide world, where my trouble, my unbearable misery, is sending me." And thus speaking, Frederick was hastening out of the apartment, but Reinhold held him fast, saying gently, "You shall not go ; for things may turn out quite different from what you think. It is now time for me to tell you all that I have hitherto kept silence about. That I am not a cooper but a painter you are now well aware, and I hope a glance at this picture will convince you that I am not to be ranked amongst the inferior artists. Whilst still young I went to Italy, the land of art ; there I had the good fortune to be accepted as a pupil by renowned masters, who fostered into living fire the spark which glowed within me. Thus it came to pass that I rapidly rose into fame, that my pictures became celebrated throughout all Italy, and the powerful Duke of Florence [1] summoned me to his court. At that time I would not hear a word about German art, and without having seen any of your pictures, I talked a good deal of nonsense about the coldness, the bad drawing, and the hardness of your Diirer and your Cranach.[2]

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[1] At this time Francesco I. (of the illustrious house of Medici) was *Grand Duke of Tuscany*, his father Cosimo I. having exchanged the title of Duke of Florence for that of Grand Duke of Tuscany in 1569. Francesco did much for the encouragement of art and science. He founded the well-known Uffizi Gallery, and it was in his reign that the Accademia Della Crusca was instituted.

[2] Lucas Cranach occupies along with his contemporary Albrecht Dürer the first place in the ranks of German painters. Born in Upper Franconia in 1472 (died 1553), he secured the favour of the Elector of Saxony, and manifested extraordinary activity in several branches of painting.

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But one day a picture-dealer brought a small picture of the Madonna by old Albrecht to the Duke's gallery, and it made a powerful and wonderful impression upon me, so that I turned away completely from the voluptuousness of Italian art, and from that very hour determined to go back to my native Germany and study there the masterpieces upon which my heart was now set. I came to Nuremberg here, and when I beheld Rose I seemed to see the Madonna who had so wonderfully stirred my heart, walking in bodily form on earth. I had the same experiences as you, dear Frederick; the bright flames of love flashed up and consumed me, mind and heart and soul. I saw nothing, I thought of nothing, but Rose; all else had vanished from my mind; and even art itself only retained its hold upon me in so far as it enabled me to draw and paint Rose again and again—hundreds of times. I would have approached the maiden in the free Italian way; but all my attempts proved fruitless. There was no means of securing a footing of intimacy in Master Martin's house in any insidious way. At last I made up my mind to sue for Rose directly, when I learned that Master Martin had determined to give his daughter only to a good master-cooper. Straightway I formed the adventurous resolve to go and learn the trade of cooperage in Strasburg, and then to come and work in Master Martin's work-shop. I left all the rest to the ordering of Providence. You know in what way I carried out my resolve; but I must now also tell you what Master Martin said to me some days ago. He said I should make a skilful cooper and should be a right dear and worthy son-in-law, for he saw plainly that I was seeking to gain Rose's favour, and that she liked me right well." "Can it then indeed well be otherwise?" cried Frederick, painfully agitated. "Yes, yes,

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Rose will be *yours;* how came I, unhappy wretch that I am, ever to hope for such happiness?" "You are forgetting, my brother," Reinhold went on to say; "you are forgetting that Rose herself has not confirmed this, which our cunning Master Martin no doubt is well aware of. True it is that Rose has always shown herself kind and charming towards me, but a loving heart betrays itself in other ways. Promise me, brother, to remain quiet for three days longer, and to go to your work in the shop as usual. I also could now go to work again, but since I have been busy with, and wrapt up in this picture, I feel an indescribable disgust at that coarse rough work out yonder. And, what is more, I can never lay hand upon mallet again, let come what will. On the third day I will frankly tell you how matters stand between me and Rose. If I should really be the lucky one to whom she has given her love, then you may go your way and make trial of the experience that time can cure the deepest wounds." Frederick promised to await his fate.

On the third day Frederick's heart beat with fear and anxious expectation; he had in the meantime carefully avoided meeting Rose. Like one in a dream he crept about the workshop, and his awkwardness gave Master Martin, no doubt, just cause for his grumbling and scolding, which was not by any means customary with him. Moreover, the master seemed to have encountered something that completely spoilt all his good spirits. He talked a great deal about base tricks and ingratitude, without clearly expressing what he meant by it. When at length evening came, and Frederick was returning towards the town, he saw not far from the gate a horseman coming to meet him, whom he recognised to be Reinhold. As soon as the latter caught sight of Frederick he cried, "Ha! ha! I meet you just

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as I wanted." And leaping from his horse, he slung the rein over his arm, and grasped his friend's hand. "Let us walk along a space beside each other," he said. "Now I can tell you what luck I have had with my suit." Frederick observed that Reinhold wore the same clothes which he had worn when they first met each other, and that the horse bore a portmanteau. Reinhold looked pale and troubled. "Good luck to you, brother," he began somewhat wildly; "good luck to you. You can now go and hammer away lustily at your casks; I will yield the field to you. I have just said adieu to pretty Rose and worthy Master Martin." "What!" exclaimed Frederick, whilst an electric thrill, as it were, shot through all his limbs—"what! you are going away now that Master Martin is willing to take you for his son-in-law, and Rose loves you?" Reinhold replied, "That was only a delusion, brother, which your jealousy has led you into. It has now come out that Rose would have had me simply to show her dutifulness and obedience, but there's not a spark of love glowing in her ice-cold heart. Ha! ha! I should have made a fine cooper—that I should. Week-days scraping hoops and planing staves, Sundays walking beside my honest wife to St. Catherine's or St. Sebald's, and in the evening to the Allerwiese, year after year"—— "Nay, mock not," said Frederick, interrupting Reinhold's loud laughter, "mock not at the excellent burgher's simple, harmless life. If Rose does not really love you, it is not her fault; you are so passionate, so wild." "You are right," said Reinhold; "It is only the silly way I have of making as much noise as a spoilt child when I conceive I have been hurt. You can easily imagine that I spoke to Rose of my love and of her father's good-will. Then the tears started from her eyes, and her hand trembled in mine. Turning her

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face away, she whispered, 'I must submit to my father's will'—that was enough for me. My peculiar resentment, dear Frederick, will now let you see into the depths of my heart; I must tell you that my striving to win Rose was a deception, imposed upon me by my wandering mind. After I had finished Rose's picture my heart grew calm; and often, strange enough, I fancied that Rose was now the picture, and that the picture was become the real Rose. I detested my former coarse, rude handiwork; and when I came so intimately into contact with the incidents of common life, getting one's 'mastership' and getting married, I felt as if I were going to be confined in a dungeon and chained to the stocks. How indeed can the divine being whom I carry in my heart ever be my wife? No, she shall for ever stand forth glorious in youth, grace, and beauty, in the pictures—the masterpieces—which my restless spirit shall create. Oh! how I long for such things! How came I ever to turn away from my divine art? O thou glorious land, thou home of Art, soon again will I revel amidst thy cool and balmy airs." The friends had reached the place where the road which Reinhold intended to take turned to the left. "Here we will part," cried Reinhold, pressing Frederick to his heart in a long warm embrace; then he threw himself upon horseback and galloped away. Frederick stood watching him without uttering a word, and then, agitated by the most unaccountable feelings, he slowly wended his way homewards.

How Frederick was driven out of the workshop by Master Martin.

The next day Master Martin was working away at the great cask for the Bishop of Bamberg in moody silence, nor could Frederick, who now felt the full

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bitterness of parting from Reinhold, utter a word either, still less break out into song. At last Master Martin threw aside his mallet, and crossing his arms, said in a muffled voice, "Well, Reinhold's gone. He was a distinguished painter, and has only been making a fool of me with his pretence of being a cooper. Oh! that I had only had an inkling of it when he came into my house along with you and bore himself so smart and clever, wouldn't I just have shown him the door! Such an open honest face, and so much deceit and treachery in his mind! Well, he's gone, and now you will faithfully and honestly stick to me and my handiwork. Who knows whether you may not become something more to me still—when you have become a skilful master and Rose will have you—well, you understand me, and may try to win Rose's favour." | Forthwith he took up his mallet and worked away lustily again. Frederick did not know how to account for it, but Master Martin's words rent his breast, and a strange feeling of anxiety arose in his mind, obscuring every glimmer of hope. After a long interval Rose made a first appearance again in the workshop, but was very reserved, and, as Frederick to his mortification could see, her eyes were red with weeping. She has been weeping for him, she does love him, thus he said within himself, and he was quite unable to raise his eyes to her whom he loved with such an unutterable love.

The mighty cask was finished, and now Master Martin began to be blithe and in good humour again as he regarded this very successful piece of work. "Yes, my son," said he, clapping Frederick on the shoulder, "yes, my son, I will keep my word: if you succeed in winning Rose's favour and build a good sound masterpiece, you shall be my son-in-law. And then you can

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also join the noble guild of the *Meistersinger*, and so win you great honour."

Master Martin's business now increased so very greatly that he had to engage two other journeymen, clever workmen, but rude fellows, quite demoralised by their long wanderings. Coarse jests now echoed in the workshop instead of the many pleasant talks of former days, and in place of Frederick and Reinhold's agreeable singing were now heard low and obscene ditties. Rose shunned the workshop, so that Frederick saw her but seldom, and only for a few moments at a time. And then when he looked at her with melancholy longing and sighed, "Oh! if I might talk to you again, dear Rose, if you were only as friendly again as at the time when Reinhold was still with us!" she cast down her eyes in shy confusion and whispered "Have you something to tell me, dear Frederick?" And Frederick stood like a statue, unable to speak a word, and the golden opportunity was quickly past, like a flash of lightning that darts across the dark red glow of the evening, and is gone almost before it is observed.

Master Martin now insisted that Frederick should begin his masterpiece. He had himself sought out the finest, purest oak wood, without the least vein or flaw, which had been over five years in his wood-store, and nobody was to help Frederick except old Valentine. Not only was Frederick put more and more out of taste with his work by the rough journeymen, but he felt a tightness in his throat as he thought that this masterpiece was to decide over his whole life long. The same peculiar feeling of anxiety which he had experienced when Master Martin was praising his faithful devotion to his handiwork now grew into a more and more distinct shape in a quite dreadful way. He now knew that he should fail miserably and dis-

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gracefully in his work; his mind, now once more completely taken up with his own art, was fundamentally averse to it. He could not forget Reinhold and Rose's picture. His own art now put on again her full glory in his eyes. Often as he was working, the crushing sense of the unmanliness of his conduct quite overpowered him, and, alleging that he was unwell, he ran off to St. Sebald's Church. There he spent hours in studying Peter Fischer's marvellous monument, and he would exclaim, as if ravished with delight, "Oh, good God! Is there anything on earth more glorious than to conceive and execute such a work?" And when he had to go back again to his staves and hoops, and remembered that in this way only was Rose to be won, he felt as if burning talons were rending his bleeding heart, and as if he must perish in the midst of his unspeakable agony. Reinhold often came to him in his dreams and brought him striking designs for artistic castings, into which Rose's form was worked in most ingenious ways, now as a flower, now as an angel, with little wings. But there was always something wanting; he discovered that it was Rose's heart which Reinhold had forgotten, and that he added to the design himself. Then he thought he saw all the flowers and leaves of the work move, singing and diffusing their sweet fragrances, and the precious metals showed him Rose's likeness in their glittering surface. Then he stretched out his arms longingly after his beloved, but the likeness vanished as if in dim mist, and Rose herself, pretty Rose, pressed him to her loving heart in an ecstasy of passionate love.

His condition with respect to the unfortunate cooperage grew worse and worse, and more and more unbearable, and he went to his old master Johannes Holzschuer to seek comfort and assistance. He allowed

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Frederick to begin in his shop a piece of work which he, Frederick, had thought out and for which he had for some time been saving up his earnings, so that he could procure the necessary gold and silver. Thus it happened that Frederick was scarcely ever at work in Martin's shop, and his deathly pale face gave credence to his pretext that he was suffering from a consuming illness. Months went past, and his masterpiece, his great two-tun cask, was not advanced any further. Master Martin was urgent upon him that he should at least do as much as his strength would allow, and Frederick really saw himself compelled to go to the hated cutting block again and take the adze in hand. Whilst he was working, Master Martin drew near and examined the staves at which he was working; and he got quite red in the face and cried, "What do you call this? What work is this, Frederick? Has a journeyman been preparing these staves for his 'mastership,' or a stupid apprentice who only put his nose into the workshop three days ago? Pull yourself together, lad: what devil has entered into you that you are making a bungle of things like this? My good oak wood,—and this your masterpiece! Oh! you awkward, imprudent boy!" Overmastered by the torture and agony which raged within him, Frederick was unable to contain himself any longer; so, throwing the adze from him he said, "Master, it's all over; no, even though it cost me my life, though I perish in unutterable misery, I cannot work any longer—no, I cannot work any longer at this coarse trade. An irresistible power is drawing me back to my own glorious art. Your daughter Rose I love unspeakably, more than anybody else on earth can ever love her. It is only for her sake that I ever entered upon this hateful work. I have now lost her, I know, and shall soon die of grief for love of her; but

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I can't help it, I must go back to my own glorious art, to my excellent old master, Johannes Holzschuer, whom I so shamefully deserted." Master Martin's eyes blazed like flashing candles. Scarce able to speak for rage, he stammered, "What! you too! Deceit and treachery! Dupe *me* like this! coarse trade—cooperage! Out of my eyes, you disgraceful fellow; begone with you!" And therewith he laid hold of poor Frederick by the shoulders and threw him out of the shop, which the rude journeymen and apprentices greeted with mocking laughter. But old Valentine folded his hands, and gazing thoughtfully before him, said, "I've noticed, that I have, the good fellow had something higher in his mind than our casks." Dame Martha shed many tears, and her boys cried and screamed for Frederick, who had often played kindly with them and brought them several lots of sweets.

Conclusion.

However angry Master Martin might feel towards Reinhold and Frederick, he could not but admit to himself that along with them all joy and all pleasure had disappeared from the workshop. Every day he was annoyed and provoked by the new journeymen. He had to look after every little trifle, and it cost him no end of trouble and exertion to get even the smallest amount of work done to his mind. Quite tired out with the cares of the day, he often sighed, "O Reinhold! O Frederick! I wish you had not so shamefully deceived me, I wish you had been good coopers." Things at last got so bad that he often contemplated the idea of giving up business altogether.

As he was sitting at home one evening in one of these gloomy moods, Herr Jacobus Paumgartner and along with him Master Johannes Holzschuer came in

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quite unexpectedly. He saw at once that they were going to talk about Frederick; and in fact Herr Paumgartner very soon turned the conversation upon him, and Master Holzschuer at once began to say all he could in praise of the young fellow. It was his opinion that Frederick with his industry and his gifts would certainly not only make an excellent goldsmith, but also a most admirable art-caster, and would tread in Peter Fischer's footsteps. And now Herr Paumgartner began to reproach Master Martin in no gentle terms for his unkind treatment of his poor journeyman Frederick, and they both urged him to give Rose to the young fellow to wife when he was become a skilful goldsmith and caster,—that is, of course, in case she looked with favour upon him,—for his affection for her tingled in every vein he had. Master Martin let them have their say out, then he doffed his cap and said, smiling, "That's right, my good sirs, I'm glad you stand up so bravely for the journeyman who so shamefully deceived me. That, however, I will forgive him; but don't ask that I should alter my fixed resolve for his sake; Rose can never be anything to him." At this moment Rose entered the room, pale and with eyes red with weeping, and she silently placed wine and glasses on the table. "Well then," began Herr Holzschuer, "I must let poor Frederick have his own way; he wants to leave home for ever. He has done a beautiful piece of work at my shop, which, if you, my good master, will allow, he will present to Rose as a keep-sake; look at it." Whereupon Master Holzschuer produced a small artistically-chased silver cup, and handed it to Master Martin, who, a great lover of costly vessels and such like, took it and examined it on all sides with much satisfaction. And indeed a more splendid piece of silver work than this little cup

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could hardly be seen. Delicate chains of vine-leaves and roses were intertwined round about it, and pretty angels peeped up out of the roses and the bursting buds, whilst within, on the gilded bottom of the cup, were engraved angels lovingly caressing each other. And when the clear bright wine was poured into the cup, the little angels seemed to dance up and down as if playing prettily together. "It is indeed an elegant piece of work," said Master Martin, "and I will keep it if Frederick will take the double of what it is worth in good gold pieces." Thus speaking, he filled the cup and raised it to his lips. At this moment the door was softly opened, and Frederick stepped in, his countenance pale and stamped with the bitter, bitter pain of separating for ever from her he held dearest on earth. As soon as Rose saw him she uttered a loud piercing cry, "O my dearest Frederick!" and fell almost fainting on his breast. Master Martin set down the cup, and on seeing Rose in Frederick's arms opened his eyes wide as if he saw a ghost. Then he again took up the cup without speaking a word, and looked into it; but all at once he leapt from his seat and cried in a loud voice, "Rose, Rose, do you love Frederick?" "Oh!" whispered Rose, "I cannot any longer conceal it, I love him as I love my own life; my heart nearly broke when you sent him away." "Then embrace your betrothed, Frederick; yes, yes, your betrothed, Frederick," cried Master Martin. Paumgartner and Holzschuer looked at each other utterly bewildered with astonishment, but Master Martin, holding the cup in his hand, went on, "By the good God, has it not all come to pass as the old lady prophesied?—

'A vessel fair to see he'll bring,
In which the spicy liquid foams,
And bright, bright angels gaily sing.

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> . . . The vessel fair with golden grace,
> Lo! him who brings it in the house,
> Thou wilt reward with sweet embrace,
> And, an thy lover be but true,
> Thou need'st not wait thy father's kiss.'

O stupid fool I have been! Here is the vessel fair to see, the angels—the lover—Ay! ay! gentlemen; it's all right now, all right now; my son-in-law is found."

Whoever has had his mind ever confused by a bad dream, so that he thought he was lying in the deep cold blackness of the grave, and suddenly he awakens in the midst of the bright spring-tide full of fragrance and sunshine and song, and she whom he holds dearest on earth has come to him and has cast her arms about him, and he can look up into the heaven of her lovely face,—whoever has at any time experienced this will understand Frederick's feelings, will comprehend his exceeding great happiness. Unable to speak a word, he held Rose tightly clasped in his arms as though he would never let her leave him, until she at length gently disengaged herself and led him to her father. Then he found his voice, "O my dear master, is it all really true? You will give me Rose to wife, and I may go back to my art?" "Yes, yes," said Master Martin, "you may in truth believe it; can I do any other since you have fulfilled my old grandmother's prophecy? You need not now of course go on with your masterpiece." Then Frederick, perfectly radiant with delight, smiled and said, "No, my dear master, if it be pleasing to you I will now gladly and in good spirits finish my big cask—my last piece of work in cooperage—and then I will go back to the melting-furnace." "Yes, my good brave son," replied Master Martin, his eyes sparkling with joy, "yes, finish your masterpiece, and then we'll have the wedding."

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Frederick kept his word faithfully, and finished the two-tun cask; and all the masters declared that it would be no easy task to do a finer piece of work, whereat Master Martin was delighted down to the ground, and was moreover of opinion that Providence could not have found for him a more excellent son-in-law.

At length the wedding day was come, Frederick's masterpiece stood in the entrance hall filled with rich wine, and crowned with garlands. The masters of the trade, with the syndic Jacobus Paumgartner at their head, put in an appearance along with their housewives, followed by the master goldsmiths. All was ready for the procession to begin its march to St. Sebald's Church, where the pair were to be married, when a sound of trumpets was heard in the street, and a neighing and stamping of horses before Martin's house. Master Martin hastened to the bay-window. It was Herr Heinrich von Spangenberg, in gay holiday attire, who had pulled up in front of the house; a few paces behind him, on a high-spirited horse, sat a young and splendid knight, his glittering sword at his side, and high-coloured feathers in his baretta, which was also adorned with flashing jewels. Beside the knight, Herr Martin perceived a wondrously beautiful lady, likewise splendidly dressed, seated on a jennet the colour of fresh-fallen snow. Pages and attendants in brilliant coats formed a circle round about them. The trumpet ceased, and old Herr von Spangenberg shouted up to him, "Aha! aha! Master Martin, I have not come either for your wine cellar or for your gold pieces, but only because it is Rose's wedding day. Will you let me in, good master?" Master Martin remembered his own words very well, and was a little ashamed of himself; but he hurried down to receive

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the Junker. The old gentleman dismounted, and after greeting him, entered the house. Some of the pages sprang forward, and upon their arms the lady slipped down from her palfrey; the knight gave her his hand and followed the old gentleman. But when Master Martin looked at the young knight he recoiled three paces, struck his hands together, and cried, "Good God! Conrad!" "Yes, Master Martin," said the knight, smiling, "I am indeed your journeyman Conrad. Forgive me for the wound I inflicted on you. But you see, my good master, that I ought properly to have killed you; but things have now all turned out different." Greatly confused, Master Martin replied, that it was after all better that he had not been killed; of the little bit of a cut with the adze he had made no account. Now when Master Martin with his new guests entered the room where the bridal pair and the rest were assembled, they were all agreeably surprised at the beautiful lady, who was so exactly like the bride, even down to the minutest feature, that they might have been taken for twin-sisters. The knight approached the bride with courtly grace and said, "Grant, O lovely Rose, that Conrad be present here on this auspicious day. You are not now angry with the wild thoughtless journeyman who was nigh bringing a great trouble upon you, are you?" But as the bridegroom and the bride and Master Martin were looking at each other in great wonder and embarrassment, old Herr von Spangenberg said, "Well, well, I see I must help you out of your dream. This is my son Conrad, and here is his good, true wife, named Rose, like the lovely bride. Call our conversation to mind, Master Martin. I had a very special reason for asking you whether you would refuse your Rose to my son. The young puppy was madly in love with her, and he induced me to lay

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aside all other considerations and make up my mind to come and woo her on his behalf. But when I told him in what an uncourteous way I had been dismissed, he in the most nonsensical way stole into your house in the guise of a cooper, intending to win her favour and then actually to run away with her. But—you cured him with that good sound blow across his back ; my best thanks for it. And now he has found a lady of rank who most likely is, after all, *the* Rose who was properly in his heart from the beginning."

Meanwhile the lady had with graceful kindness greeted the bride, and hung a valuable pearl necklace round her neck as a wedding present. "See here, dear Rose," she then said, taking a very withered bunch of flowers out from amongst the fresh blooming ones which she wore at her bosom—"see here, dear Rose, these are the flowers that you once gave my Conrad as the prize of victory ; he kept them faithfully until he saw me, then he was unfaithful to you and gave them to me ; don't be angry with me for it." Rose, her cheeks crimson, cast down her eyes in shy confusion, saying, "Oh ! noble lady, how can you say so ? Could the Junker then ever really love a poor maiden like me ? You alone were his love, and it was only because I am called Rose, and, as they say here, something like you, that he wooed me, all the while thinking it was you."

A second time the procession was about to set out, when a young man entered the room, dressed in the Italian style, all in black slashed velvet, with an elegant lace collar and rich golden chains of honour hanging from his neck. "O Reinhold, my Reinhold !" cried Frederick, throwing himself upon the young man's breast. The bride and Master Martin also cried out excitedly, "Reinhold, our brave Reinhold is come !"

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"Did I not tell you," said Reinhold, returning Frederick's embrace with warmth,—"did I not tell you, my dear, dear friend, that things might turn out gloriously for you? Let me celebrate your wedding day with you; I have come a long way on purpose to do so; and as a lasting memento hang up in your house the picture which I have painted for you and brought with me." And then he called down to his two servants, who brought in a large picture in a magnificent gold frame. It represented Master Martin in his workshop along with his journeymen Reinhold, Frederick, and Conrad working at the great cask, and lovely Rose was just entering the shop. Everybody was astonished at the truth and magnificent colouring of the piece as a work of art. "Ay," said Frederick, smiling, "that is, I suppose, your masterpiece as cooper; mine is below yonder in the entrance-hall; but I shall soon make another." "I know all," replied Reinhold, "and rate you lucky. Only stick fast to your art; it can put up with more domesticity and such-like than mine."

At the marriage feast Frederick sat between the two Roses, and opposite him Master Martin between Conrad and Reinhold. Then Herr Paumgartner filled Frederick's cup up to the brim with rich wine, and drank to the weal of Master Martin and his brave journeymen. The cup went round; and first it was drained by the noble Junker Heinrich von Spangenberg, and after him by all the worthy masters who sat at the table—to the weal of Master Martin and his brave journeymen.

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MADEMOISELLE DE SCUDÉRI.

A TALE OF THE TIMES OF LOUIS XIV.

THE little house in which lived Madeleine de Scudéri,[1] well known for her pleasing verses, and the favour of Louis XIV. and the Marchioness de Maintenon, was situated in the Rue St. Honorée.

One night almost at midnight—it would be about the autumn of the year 1680—there came such a loud and violent knocking at the door of her house that it made the whole entrance-passage ring again. Baptiste, who in the lady's small household discharged at one and the same time the offices of cook, footman, and porter, had with his mistress's permission gone into the country to attend his sister's wedding; and thus it happened that La Martinière, Mademoiselle's lady-maid, was alone, and the only person awake in the house. The knockings were repeated. She suddenly remembered that Baptiste had gone for his holiday, and that she and her mistress were left in the house

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[1] Madeleine de Scudéry (1607–1701), a native of Normandy, went to Paris and became connected with the Hotel Rambouillet. Afterwards, on its being broken up by the troubles of the Fronde, she formed a literary circle of her own, their "Saturday gatherings" becoming celebrated. Mademoiselle de Scudéry wrote some vapid and tedious novels, amongst which were the *Cllie* (1656), an historical romance, to be mentioned presently in the text.

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without any further protection. All the outrages—burglaries, thefts, and murders—which were then so common in Paris, crowded upon her mind; she was sure it was a band of cut-throats who were making all this disturbance outside; they must be well aware how lonely the house stood, and if let in would perpetrate some wicked deed against her mistress; and so she remained in her room, trembling and quaking with fear, and cursing Baptiste and his sister's wedding as well.

Meanwhile the hammering at the door was being continued; and she fancied she heard a voice shouting at intervals, "Oh! do open the door! For God's sake, do open the door!" At last La Martinière's anxiety rose to such a pitch that, taking up the lighted candle, she ran out into the passage. There she heard quite plainly the voice of the person knocking, "For God's sake! do open the door, please!" "Certainly," thought she, "that surely is not the way a robber would knock. Who knows whether it is not some poor man being pursued and wants protection from Mademoiselle, who is always ready to do an act of kindness? But let us be cautious." Opening a window, she called out, asking who was down there making such a loud noise at the house-door so late at night, awakening everybody up out of their sleep; and she endeavoured to give her naturally deep voice as manly a tone as she possibly could.

By the glimmer of the moon, which now broke through the dark clouds, she could make out a tall figure, enveloped in a light-grey mantle, having his broad-brimmed hat pulled down right over his eyes. Then she shouted in a loud voice, so as to be heard by the man below, "Baptiste, Claude, Pierre, get up and go and see who this good-for-nothing vagabond is,

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who is trying to break into the house." But the voice from below made answer gently, and in a tone that had a plaintive ring in it, "Oh! La Martinière, I know quite well that it is you, my good woman, however much you try to disguise your voice; I also know that Baptiste has gone into the country, and that you are alone in the house with your mistress. You may confidently undo the door for me; you need have no fear. For I must positively speak with your mistress, and this very minute." "Whatever are you thinking about?" replied La Martinière. "You want to speak to Mademoiselle in the middle of the night? Don't you know that she has been gone to bed a long time, and that for no price would I wake her up out of her first sound sleep, which at her time of life she has so much need of?" The person standing below said, "But I know that your mistress has only just laid aside her new romance *Clélie*, at which she labours so unremittingly; and she is now writing certain verses which she intends to read to the Marchioness de Maintenon[1] to-morrow. I implore you, Madame Martinière, have pity and open me the door. I tell you the matter involves the saving of an unfortunate man from ruin,—that the honour, freedom, nay, that the life of a man is dependent upon this moment, and I *must* speak to Mademoiselle. Recollect how your mistress's anger would rest upon you for ever, if she learned that you had had the hard-heartedness to turn an unfortunate man away from her door when he came to supplicate her assistance." "But why do you come to appeal to my mistress's compassion at this unusual hour? Come again early in the morning," said La

[1] The well-known wife of Scarron, then the successor of Madame de Montespan in the favour of Louis XIV., and afterwards his wife.

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Martinière. The person below replied, "Does Destiny, then, heed times and hours when it strikes, like the fatal flash, fraught with destruction? When there is but a single moment longer in which rescue is still possible, ought assistance to be delayed? Open me the door; you need have nothing to fear from a poor defenceless wretch, who is deserted of all the world, pursued and distressed by an awful fate, when he comes to beseech Mademoiselle to save him from threatening danger?" La Martinière heard the man below moaning and sobbing with anguish as he said these words, and at the same time the voice was the voice of a young man, gentle, and gifted with the power of appealing straight to the heart. She was greatly touched; without much further deliberation she fetched the keys.

But hardly had she got the door opened when the figure enveloped in the mantle burst tumultuously in, and striding past Martinière into the passage, cried wildly, "Lead me to your mistress!" In terror Martinière lifted up the candle, and its light fell upon a young man's face, deathly pale and fearfully agitated. Martinière almost dropped on the floor with fright, for the man now threw open his mantle and showed the bright hilt of a stiletto sticking out of the bosom of his doublet. His eyes flashed fire as he fixed them upon her, crying still more wildly than before, "Lead me to your mistress, I tell you." Martinière now believed Mademoiselle was in the most imminent danger; and her affection for her beloved mistress, whom she honoured, moreover, as her good and faithful mother, burnt up stronger in her heart, enkindling a courage which she had not conceived herself capable of showing. Hastily pulling to the door of her chamber, which she had left standing open,

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she planted herself before it, and said in a strong firm voice, "I tell you what, your mad behaviour in the house here, corresponds but ill with your plaintive words outside; I see clearly that I let my pity be excited on a wrong occasion. You neither ought to, nor shall you, speak to my mistress now. If your intentions are not evil, you need not fear daylight; so come again to-morrow and state your business then. Now, begone with you out of the house." The man heaved a deep and painful sigh, and fixing Martinière with a formidable look, grasped his stiletto. She silently commended her soul to Heaven, but manfully stood her ground, and boldly met the man's gaze, at the same time drawing herself closer to the door, for through it the man would have to go to get to her mistress's chamber. "Let me go to your mistress, I tell you!" cried the man again. "Do what you will," replied Martinière, "I shall not stir from this place. Go on and finish your wicked deed; but remember that you also will die a shameful death at the Place Grève, like your atrocious partners in crime." "Ah! yes, you are right, La Martinière," replied the man, "I do look like a villainous robber and cut-throat, and am armed like one, but my partners have not been executed,—no, not yet." Therewith, hurling looks of furious wrath at the poor woman, who was almost dead with terror, he drew his stiletto. "O God! O God!" she exclaimed, expecting her death-blow; but at this moment there was heard a rattle of arms in the street, and the hoof-strokes of horses. "The *Maréchaussée!*[1] the *Maréchaussée!* Help! Help!" screamed Martinière. "You abominable woman, you are determined to ruin me. All is lost now—it's all over.

[1] A kind of mounted gensdarmes or police.

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But here, here—take this. Give that to your mistress this very night—to-morrow if you like." Whispering these words, he snatched the light from La Martinière, extinguished it, and then forced a casket into her hands. "By your hopes of salvation, I conjure you, give this casket to Mademoiselle," cried the man; and he rushed out of the house.

Martinière fell to the floor; at length she rose up with difficulty, and groped her way back in the darkness to her own room, where she sank down in an arm-chair completely exhausted, unable to utter a sound. Then she heard the keys rattle, which she had left in the lock of the street-door. The door was closed and locked, and she heard cautious, uncertain footsteps approaching her room. She sat riveted to the chair without power to move, expecting something terrible to happen. But her sensations may be imagined when the door opened, and by the light of the night-taper she recognised at the first glance that it was honest Baptiste, looking very pale and greatly troubled. "In the name of all the saints!" he began, "tell me, Dame Martinière, what has happened? Oh! the anxiety and fear I have had! I don't know what it was, but something drove me away from the wedding last evening. I couldn't help myself; I had to come. On getting into our street, I thought, Dame Martinière sleeps lightly, she'll be sure to hear me, thinks I, if I tap softly and gently at the door, and will come out and let me in. Then there comes a strong patrol on horseback as well as on foot, all armed to the teeth, and they stop me and won't let me go on. But luckily Desgrais the lieutenant of the *Maréchaussée*, is amongst them, who knows me quite well; and when they put their lanterns under my nose, he says, 'Why, Baptiste, where are you coming from at this time o' night? You'd better stay

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quietly in the house and take care of it. There's some deviltry at work, and we are hoping to make a good capture to-night.' You wouldn't believe how heavy these words fell on my heart, Dame Martinière. And then when I put my foot on the threshold, there comes a man, all muffled up, rushing out of the house with a drawn dagger in his hand, and he runs over me—head over heels. The door was open, and the keys sticking in the lock. Oh! tell me what it all means." Martinière, relieved of her terrible fear and anxiety, related all that had taken place.

Then she and Baptiste went out into the passage, and there they found the candlestick lying on the floor where the stranger had thrown it as he ran away. "It is only too certain," said Baptiste, "that our Mademoiselle would have been robbed, ay, and even murdered, I make no doubt. The fellow knew, as you say, that you were alone with Mademoiselle,—why, he also knew that she was awake with her writings. I would bet anything it was one of those cursed rogues and thieves who force their way right into the houses, cunningly spying out everything that may be of use to them in carrying out their infernal plans. And as for that little casket, Dame Martinière—I think we'd better throw it into the Seine where it's deepest. Who can answer for it that there's not some wicked monster got designs on our good lady's life, and that if she opens the box she won't fall down dead like old Marquis de Tournay did, when he opened a letter that came from somebody he didn't know?"

After a long consultation the two faithful souls made up their minds to tell their mistress everything next morning, and also to place the mysterious casket in her hands, for of course it could be opened with proper precautions. After minutely weighing every circum-

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stance connected with the suspicious stranger's appearance, they were both of the same opinion, namely, that there was some special mystery connected with the matter, which they durst not attempt to control single-handed; they must leave it to their good lady to unriddle.

Baptiste's apprehensions were well founded. Just at that time Paris was the scene of the most abominable atrocities, and exactly at the same period the most diabolical invention of Satan was made, to offer the readiest means for committing these deeds.

Glaser, a German apothecary, the best chemist of his age, had busied himself, as people of his profession were in the habit of doing, with alchemistical experiments. He had made it the object of his endeavour to discover the Philosopher's Stone. His coadjutor was an Italian of the name of Exili. But this man only practised alchemy as a blind. His real object was to learn all about the mixing and decoction and sublimating of poisonous compounds, by which Glaser on his part hoped to make his fortune; and at last he succeeded in fabricating that subtle poison[1] that is without smell and without taste, that kills either on the spot or gradually and slowly, without ever leaving the slightest trace in the human body, and that deceives all the skill and art of the physicians, since, not suspecting the presence of poison, they fail not to ascribe the death to natural causes. Circumspectly as Exili[2] went to work, he nevertheless fell under the suspicion of being a seller of poison, and was thrown into the Bastille. Soon afterwards Captain Godin de Sainte Croix was confined in the same dungeon. This man

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[1] Supposed to have been arsenic.

[2] These facts are all for the most part historically true.

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