

Master Joss, the most unhappy of all; for his conscience ceased not to say, in a voice that would be heard: "You alone are the cause of all this." By way of a little self-comfort, the sacristan used to exclaim at intervals: "If I only had hold of that Lawrence! If I once had that Ottkar by the throat!" But both worthies kept carefully out of sight; nor were they ever again seen in the fair city of Vienna.

"Ah!" said Gabriel towards evening, "tis all over between me and Annie. She would shudder at the sight of an old wrinkled gray-haired fellow like me."

No one answered. His sister hid her face on the pillow, while her bright ringlets mingled with his poor gray locks; and Arnold's handsome face grew very sad as he thought—"The poor fellow is right; there are few things that young girls dislike more than gray hairs and yellow wrinkles."

"I have one request to make of you all, dear friends," said Gabriel, painfully raising himself on his couch—"do not let Annie know a word of this. Write to her that I am dead, and she'll mind it less, I think; then I'll go into the forest, and let the wolves eat me if they will. I want to save her from pain."

"A fine way, indeed, to save Annie from pain!" cried a well-known voice, while a light figure rushed towards the bed, and clasped the poor sufferer in a close and long embrace. "My own true love! you were never more beautiful in my eyes than now. And pretend that you were dead! A likely story, while every child in Vienna is talking of nothing but my poor boy's adventure. And let yourself be eaten by wolves! No, no, Gabriel; you wouldn't treat poor Annie so cruelly as that!"

A regular hail-storm of kisses followed; and it is said—how truly I know not—that somehow in the general *mélée* Arnold's lips came into wonderfully close contact with the rosy ones of Gabriel's little sister. Certainly he was heard the next day to whisper into his friend's ear: "A fair exchange is no robbery, my boy; I think if you take my sister, the least you can do is to give me yours."

It does not appear that any objection was made in any quarter. Love and hope proved wonderful physicians; for although Gabriel's hair to the end of his life remained as white as snow, his cheeks and eyes, ere the wedding-day arrived, had resumed their former tint and brightness. A happy man was Master Joss on the day that he gave his blessing to the two young couples—the day when Gabriel's sore-trying love found its reward in the hand of his Annie.

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THE GOLDEN LION OF GRANPERE.

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER IX.—Continued.

Her aunt thought that the marriage should be settled for the earliest possible day,—though she never quite expressed her thoughts. Madame Voss, though she did not generally obtain much credit for clear seeing, had a clearer insight to the state of her niece's mind, than had her husband. She still believed that Marie's heart was not with Adrian Urmand. But, attributing perhaps to very great importance to a young girl's heart, and fancying that she knew that in this instance the young girl's heart could not have its own way, she was quite in favour of the Urmand marriage. And if they were to be married, the sooner the better. Of that she had no doubt. "It's best to have it over always as soon as possible," she said to her husband in private, nodding her head, and looking much wiser than usual.

"I won't have Marie hurried," said Michel.
"We had better say some day next month, my dear," said Madame Voss, again nodding her head.

Michel, struck by the peculiarity of her voice, looked into her face, and saw the unaccustomed wisdom. He made no answer, but after a while nodded his head also, and went out of the room a man convinced. There were matters between women, he thought, which men can never quite understand. It would be very bad if there should be any slip here between the cup and the lip; and, no doubt, his wife was right.

It was Madame Voss at last who settled the day—the 15th of October, just four weeks from the present time. This she did in concert with Adrian Urmand, who, however, was very docile in her hands. Urmand, after he had been accepted, soon managed to bring himself back to that state of mind in which he had before regarded the possession of Marie Bromar as very desirable. For some four-and-twenty hours, during which he had thought himself to be ill-used, and had meditated a retreat from Granpere, he had tried to teach himself that he might possibly live without her; but as soon as he was accepted, and when the congratulations of the men and women of Granpere were showered down upon him in quick succession—so that the fact that the thing was to be became assured to him—he soon came to fancy again that he was a man as successful in love as he was in the world's good, and that this acquisition of Marie's hand was a treasure in which he could take delight. He undoubtedly would be ready by the day named, and would go home and prepare everything for Marie's arrival.

They were very little together as lovers during those two days, but it was necessary that there should be an especial parting.

"She is up-stairs in the little sitting-room," Aunt Josey said, and up-stairs to the little sitting-room Adrian Urmand went.

"I am come to say good-bye," said Urmand.

"Good-bye, Adrian," said Marie, putting both her hands in his, and offering her cheek to be kissed.

"I shall come back with such joy for the 15th," said he.

She smiled, and kissed his cheek, and still held his hand.

"Adrian," she said.

"My love?"

"As I believe in the dear Jesus, I will do my best to be a good wife to you."

Then he took her in his arms, and kissed her close, and went out of the room with tears streaming down his cheeks. He knew now that he was in truth a happy man, and that God had been good to him in this matter of his future wife.

CHAPTER X.

"So your cousin Marie is to be married to Adrian Urmand, the young linen merchant at Basle," said Madame Faragon one morning to George Voss.

In this manner were the first assured tidings of the coming marriage conveyed to the rival lover. This occurred a day or two after the betrothal, when Adrian was back at Basle. No one at Granpere had thought of writing an express letter to George on the subject. George's father might have done so, had the writing of letters been a customary thing with him; but his correspondence was not numerous, and such letters as he did write were short, and always confined to matters concerning his trade. Madame Voss, however, sent a special message to Madame Faragon, as soon as Adrian was gone, thinking that it would be well that in this way George should learn the truth.

It had been fully arranged by this time that George Voss was to be the landlord of the hotel at Colmar on and from the first day of the following year. Madame Faragon was to be allowed to sit in the little room down-stairs, to scold the servants, and to make the strangers from a distance believe that her authority was unimpaired. She was also to receive a moderate annual pension in money, in addition to her board and lodging. For these considerations, and on condition that George Voss should expend a certain sum of money in renewing the faded glories of the house, he was to be the landlord in full enjoyment of all real power on the first of January following. Madame Faragon, when she had expressed her agreement to the arrangement, which was indeed in almost all respects one of her own creation, wept and wheezed and groaned bitterly. She declared that she would soon be dead, and so trouble him no more. Nevertheless, she especially stipulated that she should have a new arm-chair for her own use, and that the feather-bed in her own chamber should be renewed.

"So your cousin Marie is to be married to Adrian Urmand, the young linen merchant at Basle," said Madame Faragon.

"Who says so?" demanded George. He asked his question in a quiet voice; but, though the news had reached him thus suddenly, he had sufficient control over himself to prevent any plain expression of his feelings. The thing which had been told him had gone into his heart like a knife; but he did not intend that Madame Faragon should know that he had been wounded.

"It is quite true. There is no doubt about it. Stodel's man with the roulage brought me word direct from your step-mother."

George immediately began to inquire within himself why Stodel's man with the roulage had not brought some word direct to him, and answered the question to himself not altogether incorrectly.

"Oh, yes," continued Madame Faragon, "it is quite true—on the 15th of October. I suppose you will be going over to the wedding."

This she said in her usual whining tone of small complaint, signifying thereby how great would be the grievance to herself to be left alone at that special time.

"I shall not go to the wedding," said George. "They can be married, if they are to be married, without me."

"They are to be married; you may be quite sure of that," said Madame Faragon's grievance now consisted in the amount of doubt which was being thrown on the tidings which had been sent direct to her.

"Of course you will choose to have a doubt, because it is I who tell you."

"I do not doubt it at all. I think it is very likely. I was well aware before that my father wished it."

"Of course, he would wish it, George. How should he not wish it? Marie Bromar never had a frame of her own in her life, and it is not to be expected that he, with a family of young children at his heels, is to give her a *dot*."

"He will give her something. He will treat her as though she were a daughter."

"Then I think he ought not. But your father was always a romantic headstrong man. At any rate, there she is,—bar-maid, as we may say, in the hotel,—much the same as our Flosschen here; and, of course, such a marriage as this is a great thing; a very great thing, indeed. How should they not wish it?"

"Oh, if she likes him ———?"

"Like him? Of course, she will like him. Why should she not like him? Young, and good-looking, with a fine business, doesn't owe a son, I'll be bound, and with a houseful of furniture? Of course, she'll like him. I don't suppose there is so much difficulty about that."

"I dare say not," said George. "I believe that women's likings go after that fashion, for the most part."

Madame Faragon, not understanding this general sarcasm against her sex, continued the expression of her opinion about the coming marriage.

"I don't suppose anybody will think of blaming Marie Bromar for accepting the match when it was proposed to her. Of course, she would do as she was bidden, and could hardly be expected to say that the man was above her."

"He is not above her," said George in a hoarse voice.

"Marie Bromar is nothing to you, George; nothing in blood; nothing beyond a most distant cousin. They do say that she has grown up good-looking."

"Yes;—she is a handsome girl."

"When I remember her as a child she was broad and dumpy, and they always come back at last to what they were as children. But of course M. Urmand only looks to what she is now. She makes her hay while the sun shines; but I hope the people won't say that your father has caught him at the Lion d'Or, and taken him in."

"My father is not the man to care very much what anybody says about such things."

"Perhaps not so much as he ought, George," said Madame Faragon, shaking her head.

After that George Voss went about the house for some hours, doing his work, giving his orders, and going through the usual routine of his day's business. As he did so, no one guessed that his mind was disturbed. Madame Faragon had not the slightest suspicion that the matter of Marie's marriage was a cause of sorrow to him. She had felt the not unnatural envy of a woman's mind in such an affair, and could not help expressing it, although Marie Bromar was in some sort connected with herself. But she was sure that such an arrangement would be regarded as a family triumph by George,—unless, indeed, he should be inclined to quarrel with his father for over-generosity in that matter of the *dot*.

"It is lucky that you got your little bit of money before this affair was settled," said she.

"It would not have made the difference of a copper sou," said George Voss, as he walked angrily out of the old woman's room. This was in the evening, after supper, and the greater

part of the day had passed since he had first heard the news. Up to the present moment he had endeavoured to shake the matter off from him, declaring to himself that grief—or at least any outward show of grief—would be unmanly and unworthy of him. With a strong resolve he had fixed his mind upon the affairs of his house, and had allowed himself to meditate as little as might be possible. But the misery, the agony, had been then present with him during all those hours,—and had been made the sharper by his endeavours to keep it down and banish it from his thoughts. Now, as he went out from Madame Faragon's room, having finished all that it was his duty to do, he strolled into the town, and at once began to give way to his thoughts. Of course he must think about it. He acknowledged that it was useless for him to get rid of the matter and let it be as though there were no such persons in the world as Marie Bromar and Adrian Urmand. He must think about it; but he might so give play to his feelings that no one should see him in the moments of his wretchedness. He went out, therefore, among the dark walks in the town garden, and there, as he paced one alley after another in the gloom, he revelled in the agony which a passionate man feels when the woman whom he loves is to be given into the arms of another.

As he thought of his own life during the past year or fifteen months, he could not but tell himself that his present suffering was due in some degree to his own fault. If he really loved this girl, and if it had been his intention to try and win her for himself, why had he taken his father at his word and gone away from Granpere? And why, having left Granpere, had he taken no trouble to let her know that he still loved her? As he asked himself these questions, he was hardly able himself to understand the pride which had driven him away from his old home, and which had kept him silent so long. She had promised him that she would be true to him. Then had come those few words from his father's mouth, words which he thought his father should never have spoken to him, and he had gone away, telling himself that he would come back and fetch her as soon as he could offer her a home independently of his father. If, after the promises she had made to him, she would not wait for him without further words and further vows, she would not be worth the having. In going, he had not precisely told himself that there should be no intercourse between them for twelve months, but the silence which he had maintained, and his continued absence, had been the consequence of the mood of his mind and the tenor of his purpose. The longer he had been away from Granpere without tidings from any one there, the less possible had it been that he should send tidings from himself to his old home. He had not expected any letter. But when nothing came, he told himself over and over again that he too would be silent, and would bide his time. Then Edmond Grisee had come to Colmar, and brought the first rumour of Adrian Urmand's proposed marriage.

The reader will perhaps remember that George, when he heard this first rumour, had at once made up his mind to go over to Granpere, and that he went. He went to Granpere partly believing, and partly disbelieving Edmond's story. If it were untrue, perhaps she might say a word to him that would comfort him and give him new hope. If it were true, she would have to tell him so; and then he would say a word to her that should tear her heart, if her heart was to be reached. But he would never let her know that she had torn his own to rags! That was the pride of his manliness; and yet he was so boyish as not to know that it should have been for him to make those overtures for a renewal of love, which he hoped that Marie would make to him. He had gone over to Granpere, and the reader will perhaps again remember what had passed then between him and Marie. Just as he was leaving her he had asked her whether she was to be married to this man. He had made no objection to such a marriage. He had spoken no word of the constancy of his own affection. In his heart there had been anger against her because she had spoken no such word to him,—as of course there was also in her heart against him, very bitter and very hot. If he wished her to be true to him, why did he not say so? If he had given her up, why did he come there at all? Why did he ask any questions about her marriage, if on his own behalf he had no statement to make,—no assurance to give? What was her marriage, or her refusal to be married, to him? Was she to tell him that, as he had deserted her, and as she could not busy herself to overcome her love, therefore she was minded to wear the willow for ever? "If my uncle and aunt choose to dispose of me, I cannot help it," she had said. Then he had left her, and she had been sure that for him that early game of love was a game altogether played out. Now, as he walked along the dark paths of the town garden, something of the truth came upon him. He made no excuse for Marie Bromar. She had given him a vow, and should have been true to her vow, so he said to himself a dozen times. He had never been false. He had shown no sign of falseness. True of heart, he had remained away from her only till he might come and claim her, and bring her to a house that he could call his own. This also he told himself a dozen times. But, nevertheless, there was a very agony of remorse, a weight of repentance, in that he had not striven to make sure of his prize when he had been at Granpere before the marriage was settled. Had she loved him as she ought to have loved him, had she loved him as he loved her, there should have been no question possible to her of marriage with another man. But still he repented, in that he had lost that which he desired, and might perhaps have then obtained it for himself.

But the strong feeling of his breast, the strongest next to his love, was a desire to be revenged. He cared little now for his father, little for that personal dignity which he had intended to return by his silence, little for pecuniary advantages and prudential motives, in comparison with his strong desire to punish Marie for her perfidy. He would go over to Granpere, and fall among them like a thunderbolt. Like a thunderbolt at any rate he would fall upon the head of Marie Bromar. The very words of her love promises were still firm in his memory, and he would see if she also could be made to remember them.

"I shall go over to Granpere the day after to-morrow," he said to Madame Faragon, as he caught her just before she retired for the night.

"To Granpere, the day after to-morrow? And why?"

"Well, I don't know that I can say exactly why. I shall not be at the marriage, but I should like to see them first. I shall go the day after to-morrow."

And he went to Granpere on the day he fixed.

(To be continued.)