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A LEGEND OF THE HARTZ MOUNTAINS.

By Frank Waters.

PREFACE.

MANY years ago, while still a child, I read a wild German legend which made an indelible impression on me. Name and author alike I have forgotten, and nearly all else of the tale, beyond the basic facts of the bridegroom-musician's compact with an evil power and a ruin consequent thereon.

In so far as these two basic ideas go, the following poem is founded on the tale. Otherwise, it is wholly my own. The grotesque horrors of the original I have changed, and elevated to a tragic sublimity and pathos. I have expanded my theme, until it touches on heaven at its zenith, and on hell at its nadir, depicting man and woman as living centres open to the direct influence of Godhead on the one hand, and of the Adversary on the other. In the bride, I have drawn faithfully the portraiture of a perfect womanhood; and, in the bridegroom, that of a most imperfect, but potentially a noble, manhood, wrecked by a perverted devotion to false ideals and aims, but finally retrieved by a noble repentance. In this poem, too, as in "Shadows of the Soul," I have especially striven to convey some realisation of that divine delicacy and purity of passion which should characterise the love between the sexes—that love which is, by choice, God's own favorite figure of expression for the love which should unite the creature with its Creator. In fine, I have illustrated the worse-than-uselessness of all art which is not directly derived from God, and so referred back to Him; and I have taught the omnipotence of prayer to raise even the most desperately fallen. But here, as elsewhere, I have inculcated the moral aim of my work *as an artist*, not as a preacher; merely shaping a perfect work of art informed with a soul of spiritual meaning self-expounding.

CORNWALL, ONT.,
August 8th, 1894.

FRANK WATERS.

PART FIRST.

The quiet German village—'mid the trees
Dreaming it sate upon the aged knees
Of the old mountains watching over it
With sheltering tenderness, as grandames sit
And gaze upon their children's children fair.
But, for the human souls that habit there,
The mountains cannot shield them, but may be,
As those do choose, or haunts of Diety,
Or of the dwellers in the deep, who build
New hells on earth till time shall be fulfilled.

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