

"Yes, noble sir; the lady Katrine has darker hair, and darker eyes than her sister. It was she who fainted."

"Marie is a beautiful name, and suits her well," said Carl.

"I believe the ladies would like to see you to-night, noble gentlemen," said the landlord.

"They were very anxious when they heard your excellency had gone back into the storm. The beautiful lady Marie was speechless with terror, and was only pacified when she heard you were returned."

Eric's countenance flushed with strong emotion. Joy beamed from his dark eyes. Carl looked at him, and smiled mischievously.

"I suppose I am not to go?" said Carl. "I dare say the ladies never saw me," he continued with an air of mock despondency.

"O yes, noble sir, but they did! Mademoiselle Marie saw you holding the plunging horses at the risk of your life, and she wants particularly to see the friend for whom the noble Eric Walderthorn risked his life in the storm. She told my wife that she thought he must love and value you like a brother."

Eric and Carl looked at each other and smiled, while their hands met in a friendly grip.

"We have seen some danger and some trouble together, worthy Herr Wirkmann," said Carl, "and that always makes men friends."

"Noble sirs," observed the landlord, "the gracious ladies bade me say they would be glad to see you after your supper; there will be coffee in their apartment if you will do them the honour to partake of it."

Carl and Eric despatched their suppers in all haste, and then following a waiter whom they had summoned, they found themselves in the room where the two ladies were expecting them.

Katrine was kneeling down bathing Schwartz's ear, which had been torn in the affray with the wolf; Marie, kneeling beside her, held him round the neck; their servant, Wilhelm—the man who had been thrown out of the sleigh—stood beside them, holding a bowl containing warm water.

The sisters rose on the entrance of the two young men, and Marie blushing, and looking more lovely than ever with joy beaming in her face, came forward hastily towards Eric, holding out both her hands. Eric took them, and pressed them in his own with a fervour partak-

ing of the twofold nature of his feelings for her,—the spiritual devotion he had borne towards her so long, and the more human passion struggling for mastery in his breast, now when he found his cherished dream a reality. He pressed the offered hand of Katrine, receiving their grateful thanks with a manly embarrassment, presenting at the same time his friend, Carl.

"His name is not Carl, exactly," said Eric "but as he always laughs at me whenever I attempt to pronounce his English name, I have always called him Carl."

"And what is your unpronounceable name?" asked Marie, smiling.

"Charles Tomestone," answered Carl, laughing; "Eric cannot say anything but 'Shurles,' so we have made an arrangement that I am to be Carl for him, and he has further germanized my name, and calls me Carl Tohanson."

"So you are German, after all, you see," said Katrine, "and now that you have killed some wolves and been out in a snow-storm, you are quite naturalized."

"I am so glad you are a German," said Marie; "I like my friends to be German; here is a third who fought in our defence; Schwartz, dear Schwartz!" and she patted the head of the handsome wolf-hound, who, on, Eric's entrance, had jumped up to greet him. "See!" she continued, to Eric, "he recognizes you who killed his antagonist."

Eric stooped to put Schwartz's head, and in so doing touched Marie's hand by accident. Their eyes met, Eric's heart throbbed violently, and when, at Katrine's invitation, he sat down and took the coffee presented to him, his hand shook so much that, had it not been for Carl, he would have dropped the cup on the ground.

"You know we are old acquaintances," said Katrine, laughing, to Eric. "Do you not remember three ladies in the Sistine Chapel, last spring?"

"I recognized you the moment I saw your sister. And my friend Carl, he was with me that morning. But there was another lady with you."

"That was our aunt," said Marie. "It was returning from her house to-night that we were beset by the wolves, when you came so opportunely to our help."

"No wonder that we remarked your countenance in the Sistine Chapel," said Katrine. "You are so like your brother the Baron Ernst."