

## THE GOLDEN BOUGH

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We are thankful for your assistance. We have come to relieve you of our prisoners."

"*Bitte?*" said Hoffmeier.

"Our prisoners," repeated Von Stromberg. "We have come for them."

"There is doubtless some misunderstanding," said the Swiss officer politely. "I have no prisoners of yours. As Herr Lieutenant Zapp will doubtless tell you——"

"Come, Herr Lieutenant," broke in Von Stromberg, "we do not wish to delay you or indeed to be delayed. Our time is short."

"And mine. I have a patient who must go to the hospital at once."

"And you have the temerity to say that you will not relinquish these prisoners to me?"

Hoffmeier bowed.

"You have not mistaken my meaning."

"And you are willing to accept the consequences of this action?"

"Beyond doubt, or I would not take it."

Von Stromberg turned to his companion.

"Herr Lieutenant Zapp,—it cannot be that this gentleman is aware of my power—my authority——"

"You are mistaken," broke in the Swiss quite coolly, "You are Herr General Graf von Stromberg, Head of the military sections of the Imperial German Secret Service, Geheimrath, Privy Councilor of his Majesty, Emperor William II." He took two steps toward the brass rail and pointed, "But your power—your authority—ends yonder—a mile away. If you are unfamiliar with the treaties—with the law which governs the Bodensee, Herr Lieutenant Zapp will doubtless enlighten you, on your way back to Lindau."