

istyle, courts paved with marble, ornamental fountains —”

“Alas!” said Ulric, interrupting his companion in the oft-recited catalogue, “speak not to me of fortune.”

“How! are you unhappy?”

“I ought not to be. Simple in my tastes, without ambition or desire for riches, I might live quietly and honourably on the produce of the small farm my father bequeathed me, if my heart were only free: but——”

“You are in love?” interrupted George.

“Yes!” replied Ulric, with a profound sigh.

“I love the prettiest girl in the village—one who richly deserves my affection. I mean Clara, the daughter of Farmer Wagner, a perfect angel—with melting blue eyes, winning features——”

“Spare me a lover’s rhapsodies, good Ulric! I well believe that she is everything good and fair, though I have never seen her. I called this morning on Maurice Wagner, her father, to offer him some of my tickets for sale, but was very speedily shown to the door, with a pretty volley of abuse from both the farmer and his wife. I am sorry your mistress belongs to so rude a family. And yet old Maurice seems very well off in the world.”

“That is the source of my unhappiness,” replied Ulric, with bitterness. “Maurice Wagner is in easy circumstances; he may even be called a rich man; and I am too poor to become his son-in-law.”

“The case of many a worthy lad, my dear Ulric! But what bewitched you to fall in love before you made your fortune? As for myself—unless I should please some rich heiress in the meantime—I do not intend to think of marriage for the next dozen of years. Still, if the girl is well disposed towards you——”

“I think she is. During the last three years I have given many tokens of my love which did not seem to displease her. I was left an orphan, as you know, at the age of sixteen, and Maurice Wagner—a kind worthy soul, with all his faults—took me into his house to instruct me in farming. For a year I had the happiness of seeing the charming Clara every day; and became, at last, so accustomed to it, that I could not think any other mode of existence possible. But, alas! the day at last arrived when my apprenticeship was to terminate. Then, when I found I had to quit the house, I experienced such trouble of mind as I had never before known. I found it impossible to separate myself from her I loved, and in my despair, I even offered to remain with Wagner, not as apprentice, as before, but—I blush to say it—as farm servant.”

“You a servant, Ulric!”

“Maurice angrily refused me, rebuking me for my want of spirit: I looked to gain nothing by my proposal; but another understood me better. Clara knew the sacrifice I made for her sake; she could appreciate the depth of my devotion; and, I believe, her heart was mine from that day.”

“Have you continued to see her often since that time?”

“Maurice could not altogether shut his door in the face of an old friend’s son. Besides, my care and attention had gained me the good graces of his wife.”

“Strange, that with both mother and daughter in your favour you could not succeed. When I think that in one of these scraps of paper may lie your fortune, your marriage——”

“Spare your phrases, George! or go spend them among the crowd in the market place. There you may find some one to believe all you say, but do not expect to succeed with me, who can reflect calmly on the matter, and can calculate the million of chances accumulated against the holder of one paltry ticket.”

“Well then, take twenty—thirty—fifty—a whole series.”

“You mock me surely. The price of my whole farm would scarcely suffice, even if I had time to dispose of it. When do you return to Frankfurt?”

“To-morrow I must restore to the banker either the tickets or their value; the drawing will take place in a week.”

“You see clearly that even your mode of relief will not suffice. In fact, my fate may be even now decided. Good Madame Wagner promised to plead my cause with her husband, who begins to look on my frequent visits with a very suspicious eye. Alas! my only expectation is to receive an absolute and final dismissal.”

“If the result is such as you expect, you will hear it soon enough. Do not go to the farm to-day, but come with me to the *Golden Sun*. We will converse of the days of our childhood, of Freudenberg, our birth-place, and of a thousand pleasant reminiscences that cannot fail to raise your spirits.”

“No; I must obey my destiny. It may be my last opportunity, for many a day, of seeing my poor Clara, and if I lose her forever, I can at least take a last farewell.”

“Go then, and success attend you. Shall I see you before my departure?”

“I will see you at your inn on my return from the farm, this evening.”

And the two friends separated.

Ulric took the road which led to the farm, his mind filled with thoughts as gloomy as the shadows of evening that were now thickening around.