

the clouds are gathering, Albrecht ! I am afraid that we shall have an awful storm."

It was almost midnight, but the brothers were still pacing the silent and deserted streets. It was their last night together ; for Bertrand was to leave Utrecht before noon on the following day, and neither knew what lay before him. They were only certain that danger and difficulty were in store for both.

They were Netherlanders of good family, and were firm supporters of the Prince of Orange in his brave attempts to save his unhappy country. Like him, they had lost much in the cause of freedom, but had refused with contempt Philip's offer of pardon and reward on the condition of their return to his service.

Albrecht van Hessfeldt was now about thirty years of age; his brother was some five or six years younger. Both were tall and dark ; Albrecht was unquestionably the handsomer of the two, but Bertrand was much more generally liked and admired. The misery of his surroundings had been too much for Albrecht ; his face was set, stern, and melancholy—no jest could move his dark eyes to laughter, no light or careless words were heard from his lips. If he had not been a good man, he would have been an utterly repellent one ; as it was, he was feared more generally than loved, for the gentler side of his nature was hidden by the intense hatred he bore to his foes, and crushed down by the weight of his despair.