

Scarcely had he left the house, breathing out cruel words of vengeance, before the young clock-maker entered, and found Guta sitting alone in her little room, leaning her head on her spinning-wheel, and weeping bitterly.

She very soon poured out her grief to Walther, as well as her fears that the wicked man would seek to injure her father. The young man was deeply touched at the sight of his fair one's distress, and as "pity is akin to love," quickly changed his tones of compassion to those of wooing, and this time Guta answered not, "Never, never."

Thus, amidst tender smiles and loving words, they plighted their troth to each other, in the little chamber which but half-an-hour before had been the scene of such violent discord.

Walther wanted to seek out the master and ask his blessing on their betrothal, but Guta dissuaded him. "The good father has been sorely tried already to-day," she said, "if we disturb him again, he will be beside himself; wait rather till to-morrow."

So Walther consoled himself by proceeding to tell Guta how he had come to offer himself as a partner to her father; for it had grieved him to watch the master's business declining, and he thought that if he might undertake the management of the ordinary work, her father might then devote himself wholly to his mysterious labours without detriment to his custom.

So on the following day, when Walther proposed this scheme to the master, his offer was readily accepted, and his entreaty, that at the close of the year Guta might become his bride, as readily granted.

After this fresh arrangement everything seemed to go on more prosperously. Walther's industry was unfailing, and Guta's pale cheeks grew rosy again, and her voice sounded blithe as the lark's, as she sat day by day spinning her wedding outfit in the soft spring sun-light. One morning when she was thus busily occupied, with Walther sitting opposite to her, engaged in repairing some clock-works, a loud cry of triumph from her father's room made Guta start and let fall her work. Greatly surprised

and in part frightened, she hastened upstairs to learn the cause of this unwonted sound.

The master stood awaiting her on the threshold of the room, which had hitherto been so carefully closed; but now he beckoned to Guta and to Walther—who had followed her—and ushered them into the presence of his great work, completed at last, and surpassing his fondest expectations.

There stood the noble clock which was to be the object of so much wonder and admiration in future ages, and standing beside it was the master, with his grey locks—grown greyer during the many months of anxious thought—all in disorder, his cheeks hollow and sunken with the weary vigils he had kept so long; but withal, his eyes so bright, so beaming with triumphant pleasure, that Guta could only throw herself into her father's arms, speechless with joy and astonishment.

Just at that moment the sun shone in through the lattice, and bathed the figures of the happy three in its bright light, throwing, as it were, a glorious halo round the matchless gem of workmanship.

But Guta's joy was perfect, when almost all the inhabitants of Strasbourg flocked as of old to their deserted dwelling, all hastening to inspect and admire the wonderful clock. Some few, however, distinguished themselves by keeping aloof, and foremost amongst the number was the magistrate, who refused even to see the master's handiwork, for his mean, jealous disposition forbade him to take any interest in his former friend's triumph.

But soon the fame of this grand *chef-d'œuvre* spread far and wide, and clock-makers came from Basle to Strasbourg to examine the wonderful work with their own eyes.

Although at first inclined to underrate the merits of the clock, the "Baselers" were soon forced to declare it to be one of the greatest works of art they had ever seen; and so enraptured were they that they begged to be allowed to buy it for a fabulous price, in order to preserve it in their own city.

But no; although Strasbourg had treated