

know the grade and caliber of that love. I am certain that Carmen builds upon your honesty. Otherwise she would not have gone so far with you. For as to her pride, I presume we are of the same opinion."

"Carmen is too broad and too free a being to place such importance upon the customary thought of matrimony."

"Not the thought of matrimony. The thought of fidelity."

"We are true to each other."

"And will remain so? Then it would be a true union."

"That does not depend upon me alone."

"You lie, man."

Laurenz Terbroich started up. The two men stood facing each other angrily.

"You lie. For you are trying to make me believe that that could also depend upon my daughter. And in the same manner you lie to my daughter, when you paint for her a picture of fidelity, while, as a matter of fact, you would not like just yet to lose the pretty toy. Not yet. But you will not go one step farther, Terbroich. I warn you! She is my daughter!"

"You are insulting me in an unpardonable fashion."

"That insult can be wiped out quickly. Answer me clearly and without beating about the bush: Do you intend to marry Carmen?"

"That is out of the question just now. Although Carmen has a small fortune, it would not suffice to establish us free and clear of debt. And the factory could not at the present time support another household beside my father's, in the style I am accustomed to, and as I should have to have it if I were to marry.