

THE SACRIFICE;

—OR—
FOR HER FAMILY'S SAKE.

CHAPTER I.

The autumn sun shone merrily into the little guest-chamber of Frau Maria von Tollen; glanced back from the little mirror on the bare wall, and played about the point of an infantry helmet, which, peeping out of the open box, lay, together with all manner of toilet articles, on the old-fashioned table which the room contained. The regulation officer's trunk stood on the floor, half-emptied of various portions of a uniform, which lay about on the bed and chairs. On one of the plain wooden chairs sat a slender young man, easily recognized as the owner of this array. He had a handsome, intelligent face, thick brown hair, and on his upper lip an impertinent little mustache. At this moment he was looking, with an air of vexation, at a very elegant pair of boots.

"Confound it!" he muttered, "my only pair of nice boots—not paid for yet by a long way—and that idiot of a servant-girl has blackened them with common blacking! It is outrageous!"

He flung the boots angrily on the floor, luried his hands deep in his trousers pockets, and, placing himself before the window of the small whitewashed room, gazed down at the oblong strip of ground beneath him which was dignified by the name of garden, and upon whose narrow path the warm autumn wind was blowing down the yellow leaves of the wild linden, its only ornament. A young girl was just throwing a clothes-line round the thick trunk of the old tree. She stepped upon the bench that ran round it, and stood on tip-toe to throw the end of the rope over a branch. It was a charming, slender figure, in a very simple, gray woollen morning-dress. The sleeves, which were turned back, showed a pair of finely modelled arms. Her hair, coiled at the back of the head in thick, heavy braids, shimmered like pale gold from under the simple straw hat.

An elderly woman came across the little grass-plot, painfully dragging along a basket of wet clothes with the help of the servant-maid, a small, red-haired, weakly creature. Her blue linen apron still showed the wet traces of the wash-tub. She set down the basket and nodded to the young girl, who had sprung down off the bench, and now began hastily to hang the pieces on the line.

The young officer's face flushed a deep crimson as he watched this simple scene. Just at that moment the young girl glanced up at his window. She stopped her work and came toward him.

"Are you up already?" she called out gayly. "Only wait a moment, Rudolph, and you shall have your coffee, directly."

She took off her apron, threw it on the ground, and hurried into the house. He turned and left the room. In the little entry he could hear the rattling of cups and plates in the kitchen below.

He went down the narrow, creaking stairs, and was met by his mother at the foot. Her worn face, flushed by her recent efforts, brightened as she saw him.

"Good-morning, Rudi," she said pleasantly. "You will have to wait a little for your coffee; who could suppose you would be up so early? Did you sleep well, my dear boy?"

She put out her hand, still swollen and wrinkled from washing. "Come into the dining-room," she said, "Lora will soon have the breakfast ready."

He followed in embarrassed silence. His tall form, in elegant uniform, could not enter the low door without stooping. He looked around the small room, whose blue and gray carpet bore traces of long service, with a discontented air, and leaning against the neatly set table, before the sofa, on which his mother had already taken her seat, he said, in a tone of vexation:

"Why do you do the washing yourself, mother?"

"Why, Rudi!" cried the old lady, hastily buttering a roll; "because—well—because—I like to do it, and Lora does, too."

"Queer taste you must have! Can't you afford a washerwoman?"

Frau von Tollen turned crimson. No, they could no longer afford it, since they had lost the income of the little capital which the year before had been sacrificed for Rudi, on a "very urgent occasion"; but she contented herself with a slight shake of the head.

"Don't disturb yourself about that," said the lady, "it is really not so bad. Sit down here. Ah, here comes Lora with the coffee."

The young girl had just set the coffee-pot on the table, and then she seized her brother's curly head in both hands.

"Good-morning!" she cried laughing. "What a face you are making, you cross old bear! How did you sleep?"

"A horrid place, this wretched lodging," he replied, looking rather more pleasantly at the young girl. "This new lodging of yours is a perfect hole. The last one was a little more presentable at any rate, but—"

"But this cost eighty thalers less," cried Lora von Tollen. "Here is your cream and sugar. You had better take a good deal of it, and perhaps it may sweeten your conversation."

Smiling, she pushed the sugar-bowl toward him, and left the room.

"Mamma," she cried, coming back again, "now you must sit quite still here and talk with Rudi; I will see to everything. Papa's cocoa is on the stove, if you should want it."

The mother sat opposite her son and gazed at him with mule admiration. Then, however, began the stream of talk, so long with difficulty restrained. At last she had him alone, and could ask him all the thousand things which her mother's heart longed to know, and for which there had been no time since his arrival last evening.

"Your father is so happy, Rudi," she concluded, at length; "you must tell him everything you can. I am so glad that you have four weeks' leave, on Lora's account, too. The poor girl has no pleasure at all in her young life."

"Yes, in this hole," said the son, as he lighted a cigar; and drawing a few whiffs, he asked: "Does she still keep to that unlucky idea of marrying that poverty-stricken fellow, that Dr. What's-his-name?"

"You ask more than I can answer, Rudi. I do not know. I know that the young people are interested in each other; but Lora has never spoken to me on the subject, and I do not like to say anything myself."

"You have some sense at last," he muttered. "But do you hear?—my father is awake."

Three heavy thumps sounded overhead, as if some one were pounding on the floor with a stick. Frau von Tollen put down her half-empty cup and ran quickly out of the room. Rudi looked after her with an air of vexation.

"What's the great hurry?" he said half aloud, and placing himself astride of his chair with his arms on the back, and blowing blue wreaths of smoke into the air, he began meditating as to how he could best make to "the Governor" an extremely unpleasant communication, namely, that he wanted some money to—well, to pay his debts, to be sure.

"Confound it, there will be a pretty howl about it! But it is outrageous to expect a man to get along on such a paltry sum. And when one has such confounded luck besides—"

He stopped in his soliloquy, for his sister came in. Instead of the big working-apron, she had put on a dainty white one, had pulled down her sleeves and sat down at the window, opposite her brother, with a dish of beans to shell.

"There," she said, "now talk to me, too, Rudi; you must have enough to tell, it is so long since we have seen each other."

As she spoke she began with nimble fingers to shell the beans, and did not look into her brother's face for some time, until she perceived that he would not answer. She must have known the significance of the fretful, anxious expression with which he looked at her, for her beautiful brown eyes suddenly opened wide with terror.

"For heaven's sake, Rudi, you haven't got into trouble again?"

"Ah, bah! It is nothing of any consequence—but I wish papa knew about it."

Every trace of color faded from her blooming face, and a painful expression of anxiety was depicted on her soft features.

"Rudolph, if it will trouble papa, I beg of you not to tell him—he is so ill—so easily agitated. Oh, do not tell him!"

He shrugged his shoulders and continued to smoke.

"What is it about?" she asked. "You do not need money, Rudolph?"

"Of course I do! I have lost 'Isidor.' You know I was going to sell him to pay off Lowenthal—and the beast got the cork, and in three hours he was dead."

"Lowenthal? Who is Lowenthal, and what does he want? You never said anything about him last year."

"He wants money," he replied angrily, "and he is a horse-dealer that I borrowed money of—voilà tout!"

The fair young girl bent her head as if she had received a severe blow. She had had a suspicion, when the letter came announcing his visit, that he was coming to bring new cares and anxieties; he would never have come to this "confounded hole," as he was accustomed to speak of it, for nothing; he would never subject himself to the deadly dullness of his home for nothing—and her suspicion was now suddenly verified. There he sat and smoked the cigars that she had provided from her careful savings, and out in the kitchen his mother was toiling over her son's favorite dishes.

For days the devoted mother had spoken of nothing but "when Rudi comes—when Rudi is here."

Lenore von Tollen was not one of those young girls who look out with very bright hopes toward the future; but a little sunshine by the way, she modestly thought, was necessary to existence. Ah, and the sun seldom shone in that young heart; and if once in a while its golden rays did seem to shimmer before her, then there always, always came a dark cloud which hid them from her. She recalled the miserable weeks the year before, which had followed a similar confession of her brother's. The movements of the usually nimble fingers grew slower before the

prospect of another catastrophe: of her mother's tears of anguish, which were scarcely dried; of her sick father's grief and wrath, from which he had by no means recovered; and her hands rested idle in her lap.

"Don't tell him to-day!" she at length managed to say. "Say nothing till after his birthday, at least, Rudolph." And as he made a movement of impatience, she added softly, "He can not help you any more."

"The devil he can!" murmured the lieutenant. "Who else is going to do it? My worthy brother refuses, point-blank. My uncle says he is tired of doing it—"

"You wrote to Victor?" cried the young girl, a burning flush overspreading her face. "Rudolph, how could you do that; how was it possible?"

"I did not write, I went myself," he replied, carelessly brushing the ashes of his cigar from the arm of the chair.

"I went to Durkheim, yesterday, and was received very civilly. They had a big dinner party, and invited me to join them. Some of the higher officers, with their families, were there, and some of Frau Clotilda's relations. There were six glasses to every plate; the dinner began with oysters, and at the end champagne flowed in streams. But when I spoke to Victor, after dinner, about my difficulties, he declared roundly, though pleasantly enough, that unfortunately he was not in a position to meet my wishes. It was his firm resolve never to touch a penny of his wife's fortune, either in his own interest or in that of his family, and he himself had nothing but his very modest colonel's pay, and I knew that very well; he was so sorry—so very sorry, etc. We shook hands cordially. I sat for another hour in Frau Clotilda's salon, and then, after receiving all sorts of commissions from her, I said good-bye to the other guests, and tipped the footman in lilac velvet livery, with my last thaler. Happily I had a ticket to Westenberg in my pocket, and, thanks to my sister-in-law's kindness, I had dined so well that I managed to pass the five hours between here and Berlin without being hungry. There is my whole story, my dearest Lora!"

"Thank heaven, you did not—speak to her, at least," said the girl, with pale lips.

"Don't be afraid—say it out plainly—'beg' is the word you want. No, I did not beg from her then, but perhaps I shall write to her."

"Rudolph! The woman who has insulted us all, who offered our sister a position in her house that was below the level of a servant! You would go to her, so that she might complain that her husband's whole family is a burden on her!"

"Ah, bah! Helen exaggerated; she has grown nervous and irritable on account of her everlasting engagement, and she has put on all the airs of an old maid. It is quite time her beloved Franz was taking her to his heart and home," he replied. "Clotilda is not the only one who complained of her," he continued. "My uncle did it, too. The old fool can go to Berne for all I care. I shall never trouble him again. He wrote, in answer to my polite letter, that he was on the point of taking a long journey, and he needed all his money himself, and I had better think seriously about living within my income; every one ought to cut his coat according to his cloth. It is so pleasant when a man can plead poverty—he has such a very good excuse then for not giving away anything. He has a nice little sum laid up in the bank—but he holds onto it tight."

"I beg your pardon, Rudi, but uncle has no means; he has nothing but his pension as lieutenant-general, and he gives away a great deal of that," said Lora. "He pays for Katie's school, and gives Helen and me a little pocket-money, and he sends wine and tobacco to papa, and—"

"Oh, yes; he is liberal enough to you girls, but for me—"

"I should think he had done enough for you," said the young girl, in a low tone.

"Oh, yes; he has been mildly liberal," sneered the young man, as he took out a fresh cigar. "But there is no use talking about it; I must have the money, and that is all there is about it."

"No, no, don't say so to father," cried Lora, springing up, "not to-day at least; and not for a few days. I will talk to mother, and perhaps Franz can suggest something."

"Helen's lover, who has been waiting five years to scrape together enough to get married on? You dear child!" He looked compassionately at her, drew his slender fingers across his forehead, threw away his just-lighted cigar, and stood up.

"We can wait if you like," he said. "We have three weeks yet. What in the world can a man do here all day?" he continued, looking out into the little quiet garden, where the clothes were fluttering gayly in the wind. "In this miserable hole there isn't even a decent café. How they keep up the same old programme here; the afternoon walk, mamma's whist party, and moonlight evenings a meeting of the club, with dancing and mild refreshments?"

The young girl had finished her work, and was gathering up her dishes. She nodded lightly in answer to her brother's ironical questions.

"Next Monday we—and you, too—are invited to a ball at the Bechers'."

"What!" cried the lieutenant, "do you visit them now? How did that come about? Papa swore up and down that he would never have anything to do with those money-bags."

"They called here," explained Lora. "first the son—"

"Adalbert Becher? Oh, I see!"

"And then the mother," continued Lora. "The circle is so small here, and mamma thought we could not hold back alone; every one else visits them, and they are even admitted to the club."

"So Adalbert is posing as a lion in Westenberg society?"

"Yes," cried a fresh voice, "and he is in love with our Lora."

A young girl between sixteen and seventeen had entered the room, threw her arms round her brother's neck, and looking at him, bent her head back till her long dark braids touched the floor.

"Did you bring me the photograph of the emperor, and of Prince William, and Prince Henry? And—"

"Upon my word I forgot it, Pussy," declared her brother, "but next time I come—"

"This is the seventh time that you have said that. If you don't want to, then don't do it," was the answer. She set down at the table, with a pout, and filled her cup.

She was a lithe, slender creature, with a pale face that had something very strange about it. At times it seemed very plain. The mouth, though small, seemed too full, the short, snub nose too saucy, the brown skin was almost ashy; but she had only to lift her eyes, and all that was forgotten. Those large dark eyes, shaded by long lashes, were really wonderful, as they expressed now a deep, melancholy longing, now mirth and laughter—they were constantly changing. And these eyes gave the expression to the whole face, and were an emblem of her whole nature.

At one time she would be the sunshine of the house, her clear, ringing laugh filled it with merriment; but she could make it dismal also, for she took care to have plenty of occasions for vexation. She was opposition personified to all household order; she would never help, and understood perfectly how to escape from every sort of work, and disappear with a novel into some out-of-the-way corner. In this, the youngest of the family, the feudalism of the whole race of the von Tollens seemed to have been concentrated. Her preference would have been to mount a palfrey, to carry a falcon on her wrist, and as the lady of the castle, to ride through wood and over moor, with a dozen devoted knights in her train. But as matters really stood, unfortunately, she was obliged, instead of a proud castle, to content herself with inhabiting a very modest abode at the end of a quiet street in the good city of Westenberg, and to dream of future glory in the clematis-covered arbor of the little garden.

In the meantime, she eagerly collected coats of arms, the genealogy of all prominent families she knew by heart, and flashed out into fierce anger at the constantly increasing number of mesalliances. When her eldest brother was married, the child, then only eight years old, pretended to have a sore throat, and stayed at home. She couldn't bear to see Victor von Tollen, the stately cuirassier, married to a simple Fraulein Lange, if the money-bags of the little bride had been ten times larger. Katie would rather have lived in the time of the robber-knights, so that Victor might have plundered Counsellor Lange, instead of marrying his daughter.

All this, however, did not in the least prevent her from being enthusiastically devoted to Dr. Schonberg, who took the literature class in the school that Katie attended, with a view to be a governess. She comforted herself for this lapse of principle by making up the most wonderful romances, in which "he" was always "von Schonberg," and had only been obliged to lay aside his nobiliary particle for awhile.

Lora looked reproachfully at her sister. "How late you are again," she said, "and you might have helped us so much, for your school does not begin to-day till ten."

"Kate made a wonderful grimace, put two big lumps of sugar into her coffee, and changed the subject."

"Rudi! Rudi!" called his mother, just then, "your father is asking for you."

Lora's eyes followed her brother with a sad, appealing look as he went out.

(To be Continued.)

PROGRESS EXPENSIVE.

Great Sums Being Spent on Public Improvements in India.

In the coming official year £9,041,000 is to be spent on railways in India out of capital, no less than £3,787,300 of it on new rolling stock, for which there is an urgent demand and necessarily, but which ought to be provided for out of revenue and not by permanent additions to the capital account, says the Indian Review.

Nearly £3,000,000 more is to be laid out on open lines for other purposes, so that altogether capital to the extent of about £6,785,000 will be poured into Indian railways already opened for traffic, and only £2,255,000 of the allotted total will remain to be devoted to new construction.

Irrigation works are to have £833,300 spent upon them and £665,400 represents discharge of debt under various heads, which naturally means re-borrowing unless we regard the anticipated surplus revenue of £775,000 as being devoted to this particular object.

Already a loan of £2,000,000, or three crores of rupees, has been issued in India, and the borrowings in England by the Secretary of State and the railway companies are put at £6,697,000. In reality, therefore, about £9,000,000 will be raised in England to keep India steady on the path of progress by usury, since it is from Great Britain and not from India itself that even the rupee loans are chiefly provided.

The net deposits of the savings banks are expected to increase by £685,000 during the year, and the whole of that like-wise will be absorbed in the projected capital expenditure, as well as £113,000 provided by deposits, remittances, etc.

There are made daily in England about 55,000,000 pins, two-thirds of them being manufactured in Birmingham.

A FEW HINTS ON SHAVING

HOW TO DO IT COMFORTABLY AND SATISFACTORILY.

It is Essential That Good Tools and a Reliable Soap be Used.

While so many men shave themselves now-a-days, upon hygienic grounds and from considerations of convenience, yet the average shaver regards it as a most irksome task. But shaving is really an easy, and not at all a disagreeable task, if the operation is performed in the proper manner.

In order to obtain a good shave it is essential that good tools be used, and, considering the importance of the operation, it is decided economy to purchase good articles.

A reliable soap must be used. Skins vary so remarkably in sensitiveness that the only way to find the best soap is by personal trial of several of the leading makes. Soaps which will suit one man will prove utterly

unsuitable to another.

The longer the soap is rubbed in, the better and easier the shave; warm water should be used. In the case of a very stiff beard, it is advisable to rub the lather well in with the fingers. The ease of shaving may be increased in such cases by sponging the face after well lathering, and applying fresh lather before shaving.

The object of lathering is to soften the beard so that it may be more easily cut close to the face.

In addition, the lather reduces the friction of the razor on the skin considerably, also it acts as a germicide in destroying the bacteria in the beard, and as an antiseptic in the case of cuts. The softening of the beard is accelerated by washing the face before shaving.

As to brushes, there is no brush to compare with the one of pure badger hair. A badger brush seems to have the properties of working its way round each individual hair, and of working the lather into a big mass. Not only are the ends of the hair softened, but the base is also softened.

HOW CUTS ARE CAUSED.

Next comes the consideration of razors, of which the hollow-ground now hold the field. When properly used and properly stropped, a razor should never require resetting.

For a stiff beard a narrow razor should be used, as a broad, hollow-ground razor will vibrate, and catch on such a beard. Cuts are usually caused by the blade catching on the hair, and turning downwards. A broad, thin blade is preferable for slighter growths.

Men with strong beards who frequently shave will find it advisable to have more than one razor, as it is an established fact that the razor's edge loses its keenness, or gets "tired" if used too frequently. Safely razors have come greatly into favor, and these can be obtained with additional blades.

Stropping is one of the most important operations necessary to obtain an easy shave. The blade should be stropped both before and after using; it should be dipped into hot water before stropping and using.

The strop should be hung no higher than the elbow. It is a common fault to hang the strop too high, in which case it is almost impossible to avoid producing a rounded edge on the razor. The fastening should be very strong, and the strop should be held perfectly taut; the result of holding the strop slack is bound to be a rounded edge on the razor.

SHAVE WITH THE MIDDLE.

In the case where a razor requires resetting, it will be found better to entrust the work to a practical man.

Having a keen edge on a razor, the next process is the actual shaving, the face being well lathered. In the act of shaving the skin should be held smooth and taut with the left hand, while the blade is drawn downwards and sideways in the direction of the hair's growth, being kept nearly flat against the face. The razor should be held firmly with the thumb close to the heel of the blade, the little finger under the handle, and the other fingers on the back of the blade and handle.

It is a matter of taste whether a full arm movement be used, or whether the elbow should be rested lightly on the chest, in order to steady the hand. Nearly all the shaving should be done with the middle of the blade, the point being used for such difficult parts of the face as the upper lip.

It is not advisable to shave against the growth of the hairs, as irritation is caused by the pulling. If a very close shave is required, the upward movement against the growth may be used in shaving a second time, though this always has a tendency to cause irritation. In all cases the beard should be cut, and not scraped, and the movement should be slow and firm.

In cases of cuts it is advisable to have a small piece of alum at hand. Application of this to the cut will stop the bleeding and heal the wound at once.

WORM TURNS.

"Josiah," said Mrs. Chugwater, looking up from the paper she had been reading, "what is an octopus?"

"An octopus," he said, "is a cat with only eight lives. It is so called to distinguish it from the ordinary cat, which has—"

"Josiah Chugwater, I don't believe you know."

The span of life in France is now seven years longer than it used to be sixty years ago.