

spun it myself—perhaps Frau Hellwig could use it for towels—”

“Are you out of your senses, woman, that you want to take the bird from your husband?” interrupted the professor, angrily—his eyes almost vanished under his frowning brows. “I can't bear birds, positively can't endure them—and why should you think it necessary to supply us with household linen? Pack the things up at once and go home.”

The woman stood before him in speechless confusion.

“You ought to have spared me and yourself, Frau Walther!” he said, in a more gentle tone. “I have repeatedly told you that you must not give me anything. Come, go now, and tell your William that I will see him again to-morrow.”

He shook hands with her and drew her cloak over the objects of her unsuccessful expedition. The poor woman courtesied with downcast eyes, and went away. Frau Hellwig and Adele had been silent witnesses of the scene; the face of the former lady expressed marked disapproval, once she had even seemed disposed to interfere.

“I really don't understand you, John,” she said, sharply, after the woman had left. “When I think of all the expense of your education, it seems to me that you have no reason to refuse compensation for your advice. It was a stupid idea about the bird—I could not have endured its noise in my quiet house—but the woman might have left her linen here—good linen ought not to be thrown away in that fashion.”

“Oh, aunt, then I'm afraid the charitable idea that just flashed into my head would have found little favor in your eyes,” said the young widow, in a jesting tone. “Just think, John,” she went on, more gravely, “we heard this morning of an unfortunate family so poor that the little children actually have nothing except their ragged gowns to cover them. I felt so sorry for them. Aunt and I instantly thought of making a collection. If you had taken the linen, I should have begged it all from you, it would have made splendid clothes for those children—I would have sewed them myself.”

“Oh, the depth of this Christian charity!” interrupted the professor, with a grim laugh. “The last possession of one poor family must be taken to supply the needs of another—and the generous originator of this deed of love stands before a contrite world with a halo of compassion around her fair locks.”

“You are too bad, John!” cried the young widow, deeply offended. “I like to give—”

“Only it must not, on any account, cost you any sacrifice, Adele,” he replied, with bitter irony. “Why doesn't the true German housekeeper dive into her well-filled linen-chest? For instance, here's this superfluous piece,” he touched the bundle of linen in her arms. Both ladies pushed his hand away as if the young widow's life was in danger.

“Oh, that goes beyond a joke, John!” replied the young widow, in a complaining tone, “this marvelously fine linen!”

“You have just reproached me,” the professor continued, turning to his mother, without paying any further heed to his irate cousin, “for not setting a proper value upon the results of my expensive education. I can assure you that I, too, am very practical, and consider it a man's duty to gain property; but I also have a higher view of my profession. There is no calling—not even that of the clergyman—which requires a greater exercise of charity. I will never be one of those physicians who, while using one hand to lift a poor man from his couch of suffering, plunge him with the other into a sea of anxieties concerning the means of paying for this aid.”

Hitherto he had not noticed Felicitas' presence, and even now his glance wandered over her figure unconsciously, but remained riveted upon

the beautiful face glowing with heartfelt pleasure; for the first time their eyes met with an expression of mutual sympathy. It was but the space of a lightning-flash, then the young girl dropped her eyelids in alarm and the professor, with a hurried gesture that seemed like indignation, pulled his hat so far over his forehead that his flushed face was nearly hidden by its broad brim.

“Very well—I don't care, John, it is your own business, you can do as you please,” replied Frau Hellwig, in a tone of icy coldness. “Your grandfather would hardly have listened to such opinions. The practice of medicine is your business, and in business, he used to say, no sentimental considerations can be tolerated.”

Her ungainly figure moved clumsily toward the door of the house. The councillor's widow, clasping her precious bundle to her heart with a pretty pout, followed her, walking at the professor's side. In the hall the latter glanced back toward the court-yard. Felicitas, complying with Anna's entreaties to be carried up and down a few times, was just lifting the child out of her carriage. As, clinging with both arms around the young girl's neck, she hung with all her weight, it seemed as though the slender figure must break under the burden. The physician instantly returned to the court yard.

“I have already repeatedly forbidden you to carry the child—she is too heavy for you!” he angrily exclaimed. “Did not Frederica tell you that Heinrich was to help you?”

“She forgot it—and Heinrich is away.”

The professor took the little girl and put her back in the carriage, talking gravely to her. The expression of his face was even sterner and more gloomy than usual—at any other time Felicitas would have turned defiantly away, but to-day she was the cause of his ill-humor; she had disturbed the physician's studies by her singing, perhaps driven away some new idea just shaping itself in his mind. No matter how angry he might be, she must relieve her heart of the burden that oppressed it, he must know that her sin had been committed ignorantly. The moment was a favorable one, as she could not see his face—he was still bending over the carriage, talking to Anna.

“I must ask you to pardon me for having annoyed you by my singing,” she said, timidly. The sweet entreaty in her voice, a tone so entirely new to him, evidently produced a marked impression; he stood erect and gazed intently into her face. “I hope you will believe,” she continued, still more earnestly, “that I had not the least idea that you were in the house.”

The word singing reminded Anna of Felicitas' tears. “You naughty uncle! Poor Caroline cried!” she said, reproachfully, shaking her little clenched hand at him.

“Is the child telling the truth, Felicitas?” asked the professor, hastily. (TO BE CONTINUED.)

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