

vain, but that made no difference to her heart; that would have its way.

Almost trembling with excitement, she entered the Art Building the next day, and glanced around with a timidity that was in marked contrast to her usual cold and critical glance. But, as the reader knows, Dennis Fleet was not to be seen. From time to time she went again, but neither he nor Ernst appeared. She feared that for some reason he had left, and determined to learn the truth. Throwing off the strange timidity and restraint that ever embarrassed her where he was concerned, she said to Mr. Schwartz one day:

"I don't like the way that picture is hung. Where is Mr. Fleet? I believe he has charge of that department."

"Why, bless you! Miss Ludolph," replied Mr. Schwartz, with a look of surprise, "Mr. Ludolph discharged him over two months ago."

"Discharged him! what for?"

"For being away too much, I heard," said old Schwartz with a shrug indicating that that might be the reason and might not.

Christine came to the store but rarely thereafter, for it had lost its chief element of interest. That evening she said to her father:

"You have discharged Mr. Fleet?"

"Yes," was the brief answer.

"May I ask the reason?"

"He was away too much."

"That is not the real reason," she said, turning suddenly upon him. "Father, what is the use of treating me as a child? What is the use of trying to lock things up and keep them from me? I intend to go to Germany with you this fall, and that is sufficient."

With a courtly smile Mr. Ludolph replied: "And I have lived long enough, my daughter, to know that what people *intend* and what they *do* are two very different things."

She flushed angrily and said:

"It was most unjust to discharge him as you did. Do you not remember that he offered his mother's services as nurse, when I was dreading the small pox?"

"You are astonishingly grateful in this case," said her father with a meaning that Christine understood too well, "but if you will read the records of the Ludolph race, you will find that its representatives have often been compelled to do things somewhat arbitrarily. Since you have been gone, I have received letters announcing the death of my brother and his wife. I am now Baron Ludolph."

But Christine was too angry and too deeply wounded to note this information, which at one time would have elated her beyond measure, and she coldly said:

"It is a pity that noblemen are compelled to aught but noble deeds," and, with this parting arrow, left him.

Even her father winced, and then with a heavy frown said, "It is well that this Yankee youth has vanished; still the utmost vigilance is required."

Again he saw the treacherous maid, and promised increased reward if she would be watchful, and inform him of every movement of Christine.

In the unobtrusive ways that her sensitive pride permitted, Christine tried to find out what had become of Dennis, but vainly. She offered her maid a large reward if she would discover him, but she had been promised a larger sum not to find him, and so did not. The impression was given that he left the city, and Christine feared, with a sickening dread, she would never see him again. But one evening Mr. Consoor stated a fact, in a casual way, that startled both Mr. and Miss Ludolph.

He was calling at their house, and they were discussing the coming exhibition of the pictures of those who would compete for the prize.

"By the way, your former clerk and porter is among the competitors; at least he entered the lists last spring, but I have lost sight of him since. I imagine he has given it up, and betaken himself to tasks more within the range of his ability."

The eyes of father and daughter met, but she turned to Mr. Consoor, and said, coolly, though with a face somewhat flushed;

"And has Chicago so much artistic talent that a real genius has no chance here?"

"I was not aware that Mr. Fleet was a genius," answered Mr. Consoor.

"I think he will satisfy you on that point, and that you will hear from him before the exhibition takes place."

Mr. Ludolph hastily changed the subject, but he had forebodings as to the future.

Christine went to her room, and thought for a long time; suddenly she sprang up, exclaiming:

"He told me his story once, on canvas, I will now tell him mine."

She at once stretched the canvas on a frame for a small picture, and placed it on an easel, that she might commence with the dawn of day.

During the following weeks she worked