

CHAPTER I

MY FIRST MEETING WITH VIGOROUS DAUNT

THE life of a gentleman courier and interpreter to tourists abroad is not always a rose-strewn pathway to fortune, and so I, Rupert Granville, found to my cost.

After bear-stringing Bethesda Carson, the Chicago pig merchant, his wife and daughter, half over Europe, I was summarily dismissed because, forsooth, Miss eighteen-year-old Sophia Carlotta Victoria Carson had chosen to construe my constant attitude of respectful attention to her entire family into a passive declaration of devotion for herself and her bread-and-butter charms. Her romantic imagination endowed me with sentiments and heroically unselfish attributes which I was far from possessing, and in a burst of generous emotion she assured me one night of her appreciation of my nobility. "I have read of men like you," she cried (we were strolling by moonlight in Berlin), "great, high-souled creatures, who will eat their hearts out in silence, fearing to say the word that may bring