

and was consumed with ambition to be an operatic star. She had summoned her courage upon one memorable occasion and broached the subject to her father. All the terrified family had expected his instant dissolution from apoplexy, and in spite of his petty tyrannies they loved him. The best instructor in Berlin continued to give her lessons, as nothing gave the Graf more pleasure of an evening than her warblings.

The household, quite apart from the Frau Gräfin's admirable management, ran with military precision, and no one dared to be the fraction of a minute late for meals or social engagements. They attended the theater, the opera, court functions, dinners, balls, on stated nights, and unless the Kaiser took a whim and altered a date, there was no deviation from this routine year in and out. They walked at the same hour, drove in the Tiergarten with the rest of fashionable Berlin, started for their castle in the Saxon Alps not only upon the same day but on the same train every summer, and the electric