

between the two neighbouring habitations, which, to speak properly, made but one. Far from having been neglected, her education had been pushed far enough for her to continue it herself, and finish it without needing extraneous assistance. She spoke French with purity, almost without accent. Like all Germans and too many French, alas! she understood music thoroughly, and what is unfortunately rarer, she did not misuse it. The marquise and chevalier were delighted to hear her sing tyroliennes of her country; but these airs, which carried them back to their days of exile and poverty, cruelly recalled to her, her mother and her country, both irrevocably lost, and frequently the poor little one was interrupted by her tears and sobs. For Maurice, at the end of one, or two weeks at the most, during which he felt obliged to occupy himself with his cousin, and do with her the honours of the country, hardly appeared to perceive her presence. He was twenty, and possessed all the ardours and all the transports of his age; other cares already engaged him. This young man had grown up in the greatest freedom, doubly spoiled by his father and by the marquise, who knew nothing in the world more beautiful or more charming than he. A private tutor had instructed him a little in Latin and Greek; at the same time M. de Valtravers, with whom the love of wood-sculpture had become a true mania, had initiated him in the secrets of his art. The good old chevalier wept with pride and joy when he saw his son at his side squaring, turning, polishing, and promising to surpass his father. Maurice, on his part, appeared to enjoy this innocent pastime; but one day, here is the misfortune! he asked himself if there might not be something here below besides the chevalier, the marquise and sculpture-in-wood. At this indiscreet question that was addressed to him by turbulent youth, uneasy and about to break forth, the response was not long in coming,—it was youth itself that answered by an explosion.

There are some tender and poetic natures veiled in their morning by a light cloud; there are others, on the contrary, more vivacious and energetic, whose dawn glows with all the fires of mid-day. With the former, the first trouble of the senses and the imagination that are excited, reveal themselves without disturbance and become translated into sorrowful reveries; with the latter, violently, in tumultuous agitations. Maurice participated in both these natures. They saw him at times, sad, preoccupied, dreamy; then suddenly seized with illimitable and nameless ardors, restless, impetuous, ebullient,

even somewhat passionate, and knowing not to what wind he owed the savage energy that consumed him,—remaining affectionate to his aged father, overflowing with kindness to his old friend, good to all, loved by every one, merely having for diversion besides sculpture-in-wood, of the hereditary manor eternal histories that he endured since twenty years, he asked himself with bitter irritation if his whole existence must for ever occupy itself with turning box-wood, with fashioning oak, and at evening, at the corner of the fire-place, to listen, with feet upon the andirons, to the interminable stories of the times of emigration. While waiting more, he hunted a *loute outrance*, scoured the country and killed horses.

It was in the midst of this explosion that Madeleine's unexpected arrival occurred. One can easily judge of what importance would be, at such an hour, in the destiny of this young man, the apparition of a young girl of fourteen or fifteen years, timid, reserved, silent, without too much beauty or grace. He concerned himself about her hardly more than if she had not left Munich. He went away at sunrise and did not return until nightfall; also he frequently passed a whole week, either in the neighbouring city or in one of the chateaux of the vicinage. If he saw Madeleine in the morning at her window, he unceremoniously bade her good-morning, and that was all. During dinner, he addressed her, at intervals, without looking at her, with some insignificant phrase. When she sang her tyroliennes, as it was for the chevalier and marquise an occasion which they embraced with eagerness, to speak of Nuremberg and to recall, the one his nut-crackers, the other her miniatures, Maurice stopped his ears and never failed to escape at the first note. One evening, however, as he stood near her, he could not help being struck by the luxuriance of her hair—indeed, of rare magnificence. He made in a loud tone some remark upon it, raising familiarly with one hand the luxuriant mass of fine blonde hair that covered the head of the little German. The poor child was so little accustomed to see herself the object of the attentions of her cousin, that she blushed, was troubled and trembled like an aspen. When she attempted, by a smile, to express her recognition, Maurice, having a presentiment of some tyrolienne, had already escaped. Another time, returning from the chase, he offered her a pretty pheasant that he had snatched living from the jaws of one of his dogs.

'What! my cousin, do you sometimes think of me?' asked the young girl quite moved.

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