

placed Frau Maria in it. No strange hand was to touch her. "She need not be adorned. One does not give pennies to a rich man."

Then the omnibus drove up, and Lachner and Carmen stepped out. Otten stood alone in his room, awaiting his daughter. They let her enter alone.

Without a muscle in his face twitching, he stood there, awaiting her. Now she was in the room. Now she ran toward him. Now she twined her arms about his neck and pressed her body against his, closer and closer, as if she must grow fast to him. And he enfolded her in his arms and pressed her against his breast.

A single short, wild cry filled the room for a second. And yet they both had uttered one.

Joseph Otten had gone downstairs to greet Carmen's escort. He found him in the hallway, beside Heinrich Koch. "I thank you, Moritz. Don't seek for words to express your sympathy. You are the best consolation yourself."

He sat down with them at the table, and there was silence for a while.

"Herr Doktor, Lachner has some news for you from Cologne," Heinrich Koch said finally, looking intently at his friend.

"Is it important?"

"Had I not better wait with it?" Moritz Lachner said confusedly.

"Just tell it. Some time we will have to begin living again, at any rate."

"Laurenz Terbroich is dead."

"Is that so important?"

"It is a strange coincidence."