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WAITING IN HOPE.

Two lovers stray'd beneath a churchyard yew, Where many a dead spirit wide to left and right; Their hearts were brave, and light with hope, and

Green graves lay scattered round the loving pair, Where poppy-flowers, his head all glowing, rear; Forgotten graves, one shadow'd by despair; Now blended with dim dreams of long-dried tears.

Oh, they were poor, those lovers of my tale; No gold of earth had fallen to their share; The lover with his brightly lit wax'd pale,

And she with hope deferred, and carking care; Her heart was full of woe, and sad and drear; Where rollers told for fame, and gold, and bread;

He was a sculptor, with a poet's mind; Beneath his hand the marble glow'd with truth; He might be proud to prove famous to his youth;

White life is young, while blood runs red and warm; While hope beats high and ardor is awake; White strength of unshak'd will with the storm;

He left the village in the early morn; The dew was on the grass, and on the wood; He sought his laborer in the harvest field;

And thought as he went, "I shall be rich and good; Like those that serve in the cavalry."

"Oh! I knew it at once, by your light and easy walk. And you are an Ensign, at least."

"Better than that, Raubvogel." "Pshaw! Lieutenant, then?" "Better still."

"Captain?" "Go on."

"Major?" "You have not reached it yet."

"But you are still too young to command a regiment," replied the hunter with an air of doubt.

"I had two of them under my command six years ago, when I had the glory of an annihilating the armies of the modern Attila, under the walls of Leipzig. But let us leave this subject, and let me hear of your work."

"My rank in the army concerns you but little. Take a drink of this brandy, which I brought back from the campaign, and let us continue our way."

Raubvogel took the brandy, and was about to raise it to his lips when a scuffling hissing whistle was heard in the distance. Dropping the bottle on the ground, and springing behind the rock which sheltered them, he exclaimed in a voice vibrating with agitation:

"Fall flat on your face, Meinherr Wilhelm; be flat on your face! Zounds! you were born under a lucky star. There are the chamois coming to us. Stretch yourself out behind that stone, and keep as quiet as the hare when it hears the hunter approaching."

He had not finished speaking, when a herd of seven or eight chamois emerged from a gorge several hundred yards distant, and then stopped. Frightened either by the attack of some larger animals, or by the appearance of another huntsman, they had fled, leaping from rock to rock, and promising to pass within short range of our two companions.

Couching behind his shelter, Raubvogel had already carried his carbine to his shoulder, and was carefully adjusting it, according to the custom of people of his profession. "Am at the large male who leads the flock," Meinherr Wilhelm, "he is the general of the chamois. I will choose another in the rear."

The animals started on again with the rapidity of an arrow, but were almost immediately stopped by a large ravenine too wide to be leaped over. In an instant Wilhelm aimed at the large leader, which had been pointed out to him by his companion and fired. The chamois staggered for a second under the shot, then turning to the left, he bounded away down the side of the mountain followed by the rest of the herd. Raubvogel, however, firing in his turn, brought down the last of the chamois, which seemed to be killed instantaneously, and laid stretched out inert on the stones.

"Quick! quick! Meinherr Wilhelm, cried the hunter triumphantly. "As for mine, it is only necessary to pick him up, but yours—I have an idea that he will lead us a long chase."

"By the three Kings! I am sure I wounded him badly," replied the young man, panting with emotion.

"Of course! but let us hasten after him. To think that if Heaven does not come to our aid, such a superb animal will serve for the supper of some peasant in the valley! A nice piece of business that would be, Meinherr Wilhelm!"

While speaking, the two hunters had directed their steps towards the spot where the dead chamois lay. Raubvogel did not take the trouble to look at his victim, but taking off his hunting-bag and his vest, he threw them over the animal, in order to keep away the eagles, who would otherwise attack it while they were away; then preceding his companion they made their way over the rocks in the direction in which the chamois had fled. The hunter walked along, bending over and examining the ground carefully for the blood-tracks. "You aimed a little too high and too far in the rear, Meinherr," said he

after an instant; "you hit the animal just above the hind shoulder; see, the mark of the blood is at the edge of the print of the hoof. However, he none after taking several steps, "even if the bone is not broken, the wound is the less grave. He bleeds profusely, and the blood is red and frothy; here is another imprint of his foot, more bloody still. If his strength is exhausted, we have some chance of finding him, and you may yet be able to boast of your good fortune, Meinherr Wilhelm. To get sight of a chamois so easily, to hit him at the first shot, and to carry him back with you is an excellent day's work for any hunter."

The perspective that Raubvogel presented to him animated Wilhelm very decidedly. He felt the cheeks become tinged with a deep red. His eyes sparkled, and at the same time his strength seemed increased tenfold; he clambered over the rough rocks and made his way through the difficult passes with an ardor that the hunter was unable to temper.

But after they had traveled about a thousand yards, the latter began to exhibit signs of impatience and of spite, which attracted the attention of the young man.

"What is the matter, Master Raubvogel?" said he. "Have you lost trace of our chamois? Do you think that he has strength enough left to escape us after all?"

"When the chamois takes the trouble to mark in bloody letters the path he has taken, Raubvogel does not lose trace of him. The animal you wounded has not five minutes more to run; he vacillates on his legs like a man who has taken too much exercise, but it is precisely because of this that I find myself sufficiently rested. You asked a frédéric d'or to guide me in search of the chamois; you have your money; the rest concerns only myself."

"Pardon," replied the hunter, whose physiognomy had again taken its wonted expression, "but it is precisely because I have received your money that I wish to earn it, in enabling you, I will not say to kill, but to discharge your carbine at the finest chamois that ever bounded over the Rawsberg; and if you do not carry his horns back to Berlin, I do not wish you to be able to accuse Stephen Raubvogel of your ill luck."

"Bah!" said Wilhelm, uncorking his drinking-bottle. "Perhaps they will be complainant enough to meet us half way."

"Do not count on that, Meinherr," exclaimed the hunter. "If you were in search of the little silly hares on your sand plains, I would not discourage you; but the game of these mountains is not so easily versed in the art of politeness to do that. The chamois will the less decide to descend, as he does not suspect the honor that a personage of your importance wishes to do him. For, Meinherr Wilhelm," continued he, in a chaffing manner, "you belong to the army, do you not?" "I am willing to wager that you do, and, further, that you serve in the cavalry."

"You have guessed right."

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great cleft which you see before you opened between the Princess and her pursuers. The latter stopped short; the Burgrave alone, intoxicated with love and with rage, burying his spurs into the sides of his courser, tried to leap over the abyss.

The spirit of the animal was so great that he gave a tremendous bound, touching this stone with his fore feet, making the marks you will see here; but he fell back, the horse and rider were swallowed up in the gulf, which since that time has been called the Rosstrapp."

"And the Princess?" demanded Wilhelm, who had listened with interest to the legend of the chamois hunter.

"She was never seen afterward, either here or elsewhere, and it is supposed that every day she gave herself to him. But a few days after, a herdsman, who was drawn by curiosity to the edge of the crevice, perceived some distance down, the crown that the Princess wore; it was hanging on a projecting stone. The King who had been notified of this fact, at once sent his servants descended in the gulf by means of a rope, but the instant he reached out his hand to seize the crown, it detached itself and rolled down to the torrent below. Since then it has been sought a number of times—for there have been those who have wished to possess it—but in vain."

"I can well believe that," replied the young man, "for the crown must represent a fortune."

"Yes, a fortune more than that, Meinherr Wilhelm; all the old people of the country here will tell you that it is written on high, that he who possesses that crown shall reign over Germany entire."

A silence of several seconds followed these words; they had produced on Wilhelm a perceptible impression, which he endeavored to hide, but which the movement of his lips and the expression of his eyes plainly revealed. He approached the precipice, and bending over its edge, gazed for some time in its sombre depths; then turning to the hunter he said, in a vibrating voice, "Raubvogel, I must have that crown!"

"No! no! All of those who have attempted to rescue it have met with misfortune; as well ask me to seize that cloud which floats above our heads."

"This morning," replied Wilhelm, "you did not think it possible to see the chamois before attaining their pasture grounds, and yet you had a bullet in one of them not far from here. Try," continued he, in a strangely persuasive voice, "try without fear this perilous descent, for not only will you run no risk, but you will certainly succeed."

"Ah! it seems that the elements figure among the squares of the command, Meinherr Wilhelm," said the hunter, returning to his bantering tendencies.

His companion did not appear to hear him, but continued:

"I must have that crown, Raubvogel! Put it on my head, and you will have served the Divine will."

This last movement astonished the hunter without moving his resolution; he replied to it with a smile which expressed better than words his incredulity. After a moment's pause, he answered:

"In my quality of good Christian, I would not wish to see you waste his trust to God, the master of us all; but inasmuch as He Himself has not declared to me His desire that I should break my neck, I shall continue to hesitate. Yet," said he slowly, "perhaps we may come to an agreement. I love Eva, the daughter of Deitrich, the rich farmer who has promised to give her to me when I shall be able to put down five hundred frederics on his table. Enable me to present myself at the house of old Deitrich, and I will see. One could well risk his neck for such a prize as this."

"Oh!" said the young man, whose eyebrows gathered when he heard the price the hunter placed on his services, "five hundred is almost too much; say two hundred and fifty frederics; that is a greater sum than any mountaineer has ever possessed."

"Bah!" exclaimed Raubvogel, with a burst of laughter; "here is Meinherr, the General, who wishes like a Jew, to cheapen the life of one of his fellows."

"You shall have your five hundred frederics," answered Wilhelm, whose face became colored with deep red.

The hunter started, and replied in a tone of mistrust, which took no pains to conceal:

"The word promises, but it is the purse which counts."

"The word gives, also, when it falls from royal lips, Raubvogel, and he who promises you four five hundred frederics belongs to a royal family."

"You!"

"My name is Frederic Ludwig de Hohenzollern and I am the second son of your King, Wilhelm III."

The royal prestige is so great in old Germany, that, in spite of the skepticism which he had till then affected, the mountaineer was profoundly and visibly moved by the revelation of the rank of his companion. He raised himself quickly, and having respectfully uncovered, remained standing, with his head bowed, before the Prince.

"You have the right to claim the crown of Elfride, your Highness," said he; "it is to you and yours that it belongs. Under your incognito, I did not suspect your real position. Pardon me for having spoken of recompense. I was ignorant of whom I was addressing. It only remains now for you to speak to me obeyed."

The future Wilhelm I, who was already imbued with certain ideas of predestination, was touched by the devotion and abnegation of his guide; he hesitated a moment and seemed to waver in his determination; but the ambition to possess the precious treasure outweighed the sentiment of humanity which reproached him for exposing the life of a fellow man for the satisfaction of a caprice.

"Make the descent," said he, at length, "and I will give you five hundred frederics; but if you bring me up the crown of Elfride, you shall receive one thousand frederics."

This promise, which gave the lie to the reputation of parsimony which had already been attributed to Prince Wilhelm, electrified the chamois hunter.

"There is a cabin below here a short stretch," he exclaimed. "I will run and bring some people and some ropes. In a quarter of an hour I will be back, your Highness, and soon you shall hold in your hands the crown twice blessed, to which I shall owe the joy of possessing Eva, the blonde. And may God protect the future sovereign of Germany!"

This enthusiastic homage on the part of Raubvogel caused a gleam of satisfaction to pass over the face of the young Prince. When the hunter had disappeared behind the rocks, he walked up and down by the side of the Rosstrapp, gazing sometimes at the yawning gulf beneath his feet, sometimes at the clear blue sky of the horizon. What was passing in the mind of this young man for whom fortune reserved such a strange destiny, whom fate was going to place on a throne to which he had no right to pretend, and who, later, with no other merit than good sense united to a firmness almost bordering on obstinacy, was to be the Emperor of an entire Germany, and the leader of her victorious armies? He was too narrowly religious to be without superstition; and perhaps the idea of seeing in his hands the crown, to the possessor of which, the popular belief gave the government of an immense country, divided at that moment among twenty different sceptres, occupied a prominent place in the vague and confused aspirations of Prince Wilhelm.

Raubvogel soon returned, accompanied by four herdsmen of the neighborhood. He brought a great quantity of rope. One end of it was tied around a firm rock, the other was let down the precipice. The hunter assured himself that it touched the bottom; then kneeling, he made a short prayer, and carrying only his iron staff, he set himself against the sharp stones to which he was attached by the swaying of the rope, he resolutely descended into the abyss.

Lying down and bending over the edge of the Rosstrapp, the assistants saw him go down, and soon lost sight of him in the heavy mist which rose from the bottom of the gulf; the movement of the rope above indicated that the descent continued, and that the courageous mountaineer had not reached his objective point. At length the rope became motionless, and the quarter of an hour which followed was full of anguish for the watchers. Raubvogel had arrived at the rushing waters below, and had still to explore the bed of the torrent, the depth of which he was ignorant. All the faces were deathly pale, all the mouths remained mute. Prince Wilhelm could no longer control his agitation, and moved about in a feverish anxiety, which was plainly to be seen in his changed and almost haggard appearance.

But now a shout of triumph was heard above the roaring of the torrent, and five loud hurrahs at once responded. The rope began to sway anew.

The five men, their eyes fixed on the sombre cleft in which he descended, saw the lower part of the rope, for a time could distinguish nothing; but at the end of a few minutes, they saw an indistinct form which became more and more defined; it was he whom but a short time before they had believed lost. Raubvogel, who was remaining with an astonishing vigor. More pale than ever, the forehead of the Prince was bathed in a heavy sweat. The hunter continued to advance. He was not more than fifty feet from the surface, when the youngest of the herdsmen cried: