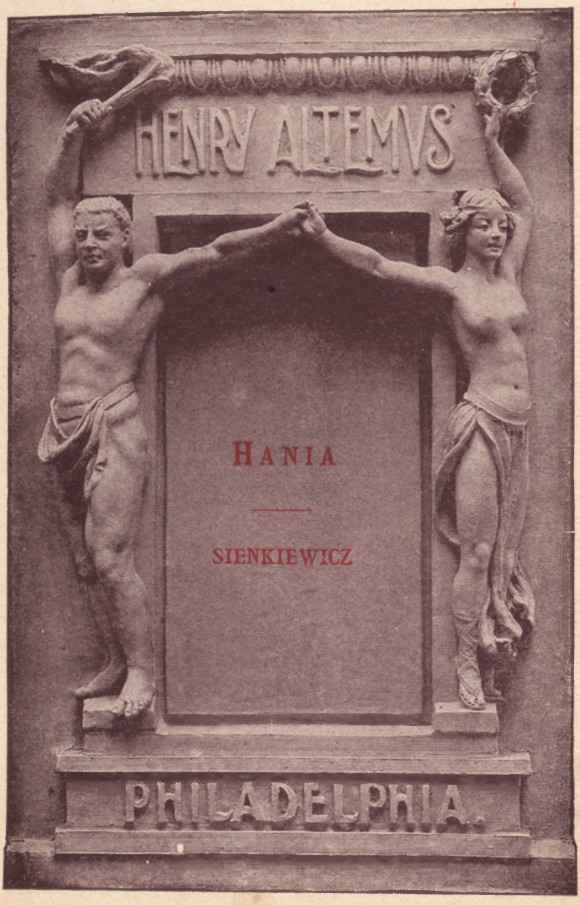
HANIA

Henryk Sienkiewicz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PROLOGUE.

The Old Servant.

The characteristic old servant of feudal times is now almost a thing of the past; soon he will become entirely extinct and his remains will lie underneath the green sod of the cemetery, whose cover of forgetfulness might be disturbed from time to time, to serve the purposes of history and fiction.

I well remember a typical representative of that class in the house of my parents. His name was Mikolai Suchovolski, a freeholder of the village of Sucha Vola, which name he often mentioned in his narratives. He had served as an orderly under my late grandfather, a colonel in Napoleon's army. In my father's house his duties were manifold; he was an overseer of the servants and

a servant of the family. During the summer and fall he superintended the laborers in the field; in the winter on the threshing floor; he wound all the clocks; and most of all, he scolded. I do not remember him otherwise than scolding. He scolded everybody, even my father and mother. I had a wholesome fear of him, although I liked him. In the kitchen he waged war with the cook, and at meal times posted himself behind my father's chair and took a peculiar delight in torturing the table-servant.

"Look sharp," he would say, "or I will help you. Look at him! Can't you move about a little quicker, you walk like a cow in a swamp. Don't you hear that my lord is calling you?"

He persistently mixed in the table conversation and always disagreed with everybody's opinion. It frequently happened that when my father gave an

order for the coachman to have the carriage in waiting after dinner, Mikolai would remonstrate: "Driving out? Certainly! What else are horses for? Even if they break their legs on the rough roads visiting must be done. I don't object. No! Business can wait but not the visit." At times my father lost patience; but it was impossible to silence old Mikolai for any length of time.

We, that is to say, I and my younger brother, were afraid of him; more afraid of him than of our tutor, Father Ludvik, and surely more so than of our parents. To our sisters he was polite and called them "Misses," though they were much younger than we boys. For me, old Mikolai had a special attraction, because of his habit of always carrying some percussion caps in his pockets. Oftentimes, having finished my lessons, I would go to him, and, mustering my courage, very politely say:

"Good day, Mikolai. Will Mikolai clean the pistols to day?"

"What does little Henry want? Oh, yes, when you want to practice shooting, then old Mikolai is good enough; otherwise the wolves may eat him. Why don't you study? Shooting won't make you wiser!"

"But I have finished my lessons," I would answer, half crying.

"Oh, finished your lessons! You study study and study, but don't know anything. I shall not give you the pistols, and that settles it. The powder will fly into your face and blind you; and they will blame Mikolai. Whose fault will it be?—Mikolai's. Who let you shoot? —Mikolai!"

So, between scolding and growling, he would enter my father's room to get the pistols, and during the practice under his supervision, he would make uncomplimentary remarks about the shooting,

advising me to study for the ministry because I was unfit to be a soldier.

In spite of this he was ambitious to make a soldier out of me. After dinner, I and my brother were drilled by him. I, as the elder, had to suffer more from his strict discipline. In his own way, old Mikolai was deeply attached to me and, when I was sent to college he cried as if the greatest misfortune had befallen him. My parents told me afterwards, that after my departure he became almost unbearable and scolded more than ever.

"They have taken the boy and dragged him away. What good will college do him? Why should he study Latin? They want to make a Solomon out of him?

It was a cold, winter morning, when I drove home for the first time to spend my Christmas vacation; the day was dawning and everybody was still asleep. Sometimes the shrieking of the cranes,

and the barking of the dogs broke the stillness. The shutters of all of the windows were closed; but the kitchen windows shone with a cheerful light, casting a red reflection on the snow outside. To me the whole presented a rather gloomy aspect, I had an unpleasant apprehension, because the first report I brought from school was not at all extraordinary. In fact, before I became accustomed to the routine of school life, examinations had come and I found no time to study. I feared my father's displeasure, I feared the criticism of my tutor, who had brought me to college at Warsaw. Thinking about my discouraging outlook, I saw the kitchen door open and old Mikolai step out; his face red and blue from the cold, carrying a tray with cups of steaming milk. Hardly had he seen me, when he put down the tray on the snow, spilled all the milk, ran up to the sleigh, and embra-

cing and kissing me, called me his dearest, his golden master. From this time he always addressed me "Mister," but the spilled milk he could not forget; scolding me for it on every occasion for several weeks.

My father threatened to punish me for two especially low marks in orthography and German; but he was deferred from the execution of his threat partly because of my promise to improve, partly because of the intervention of my dear mother, and lastly on account of the clamor raised by Mikolai. He had never heard of anything like orthography, and a punishment for deficiency in German, seemed to him criminal.

"Is he a heretic or a Suabian?" he said, Did the Colonel ever speak German? or yourself, my lord? addressing my father, "do you?" When we met the Germans at—where was it?—at Leipsic and the devil knows where, we didn't

speak German to them. They always showed us their backs."

Old Mikolai had another peculiarity. He seldom spoke about his former experiences, but when on special occasions he was in particularly good humor and talkative, he lost all regard for truth. It was without any evil intent, but fact and fiction became intermingled and his imagination created entirely new products. What war stories he had heard in his youth, he appropriated to the stock of his own experience and to that of my grandfather, the colonel, honestly believing them to be facts.

The laborers on the threshing floor were sometimes regaled by his fabulous stories, and involuntarily ceased working, leaned on their flails and with mouths open, listened with rapt admiration.

"Why do you stand there with your mouths open like cannon sighted at the

enemy?" and again the flails came down in measured time, but after a few moments Mikolai continued:

"My son writes me, that he has just been promoted General in the army of the Queen of Palmyra. He likes it well, he says, and receives a high salary; but he says it's terribly cold there."

Speaking of his children, it must be said, that they were of but little credit to him. He had a son, but he was a good-for-nothing, who, having committed numerous misdeeds, left home and was never heard from again. His only daughter was said to be a most beautiful girl, and as coquettish as she was beautiful. She had flirtations with all the officials of my father's manor; finally she gave birth to a child, and died. Her little daughter was named Hania. She was almost my age; a beautiful but delicate girl. I remember, we often played soldiers together. Hania represented

the reserve and the stinging-nettle was our enemy. She was as good and kind as an angel. A cruel fate was to be hers in this world, but those memories do not belong here.

I return then to old Mikolai and his wonderful stories. I, myself, heard him tell, that once, on the manoeuvering fields, near Warsaw, the horses of eighteen thousand Ulans became unmanageable and ran into Warsaw, killing thousands of people, who were unable to escape. At another time he told in the presence of the whole family the following:

"Did I fight bravely? Why shouldn't I? I remember as if it had been yesterday, when we had the battle with the Austrians. I was standing in the front rank when, suddenly, the commander-in-chief of the Austrian army galloped over to us, halted in front of me, and said: "I know you well Suchovolski. If

we could capture you the war would be at an end."

"Didn't he mention the colonel, at all?" my father asked.

"Certainly, didn't I just say, if we could capture you and the colonel?"

Here Father Ludvik became impatient and said: "But, Mikolai, you lie as if you were paid for it."

Mikolai looked offended and would have given a sharp retort, had not his respect for the priest restrained him. But to justify himself he remarked that Chaplain Sieklucki told him the same thing as the commander-in-chief of the Austrian army:

"An Austrian had pushed his bayonet below my fifteenth,—I meant to say my fifth rib—and it looked pretty bad for me. I prepared to die and confessed my sins to the Almighty. Chaplain Sieklucki, who heard my confession, listened and listened, and finally

said: "Why Mikolai, you haven't said a word of truth; and I answerd, may be. but I don't remember more."

"Did they cure you?"

"No, indeed not, I cured myself. One evening, I mixed two shots of powder in a quart of whiskey, drank it and got up next morning as fresh as a fish."

I might be able to relate many more of his stories but Father Ludvik, fearing evil consequences forbade him telling them in my presence.

Mikolai's influence on us children was far from being a harmful one; on the contrary, he guarded us very carefully and controlled our doings severely. He was a conscientious man in the fullest sense of that word. His soldier life had infused into him the laudable traits of punctuality and blind obedience to orders. One winter the wolves did great damage on my father's possessions. Being unmolested for a few days, they

ventured at night even into the village. My father was a passionate huntsman, and intending to arrange for a great chase, he wished that his neighbor, Pan Ustrzycki, a celebrated destroyer of wolves, should manage and lead the hunt. He wrote an invitation to Pan Ustrzycki, and handed it to Mikolai, saying: "The coachman drives to the city to-day; you can go with him. Step out on the way at Ustrzyce, and give this letter to his lordship. Remember to bring an answer back. Do not return without one."

Mikolai took the letter, and drove off with the coachman, who returned in the evening, but without Mikolai. My father supposed that he stayed over night at Ustrzyce, and would be back with Pan Ustrzycki in the morning. But the second and third days passed without Mikolia's return. My father grew apprehensive about him, because of the nu-

merous wolves in the neighborhood. Servants were sent out in quest of him, but not a trace of him could be found.

Messengers were dispatched to Ustrzyce. They were told that he had been there during the absence of his lordship; that Mikolai had inquired after him, and having borrowed four roubles from the footman, left, and went no one knew whither.

We were at a loss to explain what this all could mean. On the second day the messengers returned from the surrounding towns with the report that Mikolai could be found nowhere. We thought him dead and bewailed his sad end. On the evening of the sixth day after his disappearance, while sitting in the library, we heard some one wiping his feet at the door and growling and scolding in a half suppressed tone, which we immediately recognize as Mikolai's.

In fact, it was Mikolai; half frozen and

half starved; his eye-brows and moustache covered with ice, and hardly looking like himself.

"For the Lord's sake, Mikolai, what have you been doing all this time?"

"Doing, doing,"—growled Mikolai, "what should I have been doing? I did not find his lordship in Ustrzyce, so I went to Bzino, where they told me that I might have saved the journey, because he had gone to Karolovka. I went there, too, but he had gone before I came. As if he were not free to go wheresoever he pleased? Isn't he a lord? He won't go on foot. From Karolovka I went to the Capital, because I was told he was there. But what should he do at the Capital? He isn't a judge. He had gone to the Government's seat. Should I return, or what? No, I went, too, and gave the letter to him.

"Did he give you an answer?"

"Of course he did; but he laughed at

me so much that I could see his wisdom teeth. "This," he said, "is an invitation for a hunt on Wednesday, and you hand it to me on the following Sunday. Why it's all over!" And then he laughed again. But here is his answer. "Why shouldn't he laugh?"

"And what did you eat all this time?"

"Nothing since yesterday; but can't I eat enough here? If I haven't eaten yesterday, I will eat now."

From that time on we were careful to give Mikolia more explicit directions, with instructions what to do in cases of emergency.

A few months after this occurance Mikolai drove to a neighboring town to buy working horses, which transaction came within his particular experience. In the evening it was reported that Mikolai had returned and had bought the horses, but that he was so battered and bruised that he was ashamed to show himself. My father went immediately to him.

"What is it Mikolai?"

"I had a fight," he answered curtly.

"This is shameful: picking quarrels at the horse fair. You have lost your sense! Old, but foolish! I would discharge any one else for such conduct. You must have been drinking. This is a nice example for my servants."

My father was evidently angry, and in such a condition he was not to be trifled with. It was strange, however, that Mikolai, who was seldom at a loss for a gruff answer, was as silent as a Sphinx in this case. Others endeavored to extort some information from him, but in vain.

His injuries proved more serious than expected and a physician had to be called. From him at last we learned the truth of the whole matter. The foreman of our field-laborers had received a severe tongue lashing from my father a week ago. On the next day he left my father's em-

ploy and went into the service of Pan Zoll, a German, and a sworn enemy to my father. This Pan Zoll and several of his servants, including our former foreman, were also at the fair. Pan Zoll was the first to see Mikolai, and riding up to his wagon, spoke contemptuously of my father. Mikolai in turn called him a liar, and when Pan Zoll heaped new abuse on my absent father, Mikolai used the horse whip with telling effect on Pan Zoll's face. This was the signal for a general attack of Zoll's servants on poor Mikolai, whom they left bleeding and unconscious.

My father could not restrain his tears when informed of the facts. He could not forgive himself for having scolded Mikolai, who had modestly concealed his self-sacrifice.

When Mikolai had fully recovered, my father went to him and praised him for his conduct, but he refused to acknowl-

edge the real situation, grumbling in his usual way. However, his heart soon softened and weeping like a child he assured my father of his devoted faithfulness. Pan Zoll was challenged by my father to a duel, the effects of which the German remembered long afterwards.

Later the same physician endeared himself forever to Mikolai's heart. Hania was stricken with typhoid fever; those were days of sorrow, for me, too, for Hania was my playmate and I loved her as dearly as my sister. For three days and nights the doctor did not leave her room. Mikolai, who loved Hania with all his heart, was overcome with grief; he could not eat and would not sleep. He sat at the door of Hania's sick room, admitting no one except my mother, nursing the most bitter grief within his heart. His soul, hardened by the experience of an eventful life, was insusceptible to physical pain and moral suffering, but at the

bedside of his only beloved Hania he nearly succumbed under the pressure of despair And when, at last, after seemingly endless days of apprehension, the doctor softly opened the door of Hania's room, and with a face expressive of his own happiness, announced that Hania was saved; Mikolai lost all self-control, and with tears profusely flowing sank at the good doctor's feet, calling him his benefactor.

Hania recovered quickly. The doctor rose immeasurably in Mikolai's estimation.

"Great man, this doctor is," Mikolai would say, stroking his martial moustache, "Great man. If it hadn't been for him, Hania might be—I don't dare to say it."

About a year after Hania's illness Mikolai's health began to fail. His erect and vigorous figure stooped, his hair turned white, and he ceased to scold and

to relate his wonderful stories. He had reached his ninetieth year and soon became childish. All his time was spent in making fowler's net and catching birds. He kept numerous wag-tails in captivity in his room. A few days before his death he failed to recognize anybody. But on his last day on earth the fleeting light of his mind shone forth once more with distinguishing clearness. My parents were then abroad on account of the delicate health of my mother. It was a dreary winter evening. A fierce gale drove the falling snow against the windows of a cheerful room in which I and by younger brother Casimir were sitting at the grate-fire preparing the rifles for the next day's hunt; the chaplain, who had aged very much, was reading the breviary. Suddenly we were called to Mikolai's room—he was dying. Father Ludvik rushed to the house chapel for the Sacrament, I ran to Mikolai.

There he lay, pale and with the chill of death, but calm and conscious.

It was indeed a handsome head that rested on the pillows; two deep scars ornamented the martial features of the dying old soldier. The wax candles at his bedside cast a sepulchral light; the wagtails chirped dolefully in their little cages. With his right hand he pressed a crucifix to his breast. Hania, pale and careworn, held the other hand caressing it with kisses and tears.

Father Ludvik came in and administered the last rites of the Church, and then Mikolai asked to see me.

"My dearest Master and Mistress are not here," he whispered, "and it is hard for me to die. But you, the successor, are here and you have been always kind to me.—Take care of this orphan. God will reward you! Don't be angry—if I have failed—forgive!—but I was faithful—."

For a few moments he was silent then he called out in a loud voice—"My good Master—my orphan,—God in Thy hands—."

"I commend the spirit of a brave soldier, a faithful servant and a just man," concluded solemnly Father Ludvik.

Mikolai was dead. We knelt at his bedside and the chaplain read aloud the prayers for the dead.

Many years have passed since. Weeping willows shade the grave of good old Mikolai. Sad times came over us; the storms of war have destroyed our happy home. The bitter bread of daily subsistence I have to earn with my pen, and Hania—

Oh, the memory of her, is saddest of all!

CHAPTER I.

I was sixteen years old when Mikolai on his death-bed entrusted Hania to my guardianship. She was barely one year younger—a mere child.

Almost carrying her from the bedside of her dead grandfather, I led her to our house chapel. The doors were open; in front of the old Byzantine oil painting of the Virgin Mother two wax candles were burning their dim light. They but feebly pentrated the darkness. We knelt beside each other in front of the altar. Hania, overcome with grief and exhausted from weeping, leaned her little head on my shoulder and we remained there in silence. The hour was late, and from the hallway the chimes of the old Dantzic clock announced the second hour after midnight. Nothing could be heard but Hania's sighs and the distant howl of

the wintry gale, which rattled at the lead-cased chapel windows. I did not dare to speak even words of consolation to Hania, but softly pressed her head to my shoulder, with a feeling of brotherly protection. I could not pray, for a thousand thoughts whirled in my head and passed before my eyes in the greatest disorder; but gradually one clearly defined thought, one lasting impression emerged from the chaos; the poor little girl kneeling, pale and exhausted at my side, should never, never feel that she is an orphan, all alone in the world. Henceforth, she should be my beloved sister, for whose sake I would defy the world, for whom I would gladly sacrifice my life.

My brother Casimir had meanwhile entered the chapel, later on came Father Ludvik and some of the servants; all knelt down to say their evening prayers. These Father Ludvik read aloud; the

others responding, a custom observed daily in our family. When the chaplain prayed for the faithful departed and added Mikolia's name, Hania's suppressed sobs, broke forth anew. I made then the solemn vow within my heart to keep my trust sacred; and to faithfully perform its duties no matter at what sacrifice.

It was the pledge of a boy with exalted ideas, full of noble impulses, but with no realization of the extent of the sacrifice, which he might be called upon to perform.

After the evening prayers all retired. I instructed our old housekeeper, Vengrovska, to take Hania to the room which I had ordered prepared for her, and to spend the night with her. I kissed Hania "good-night," and went to my room which was in the "officina," occupied by the chaplain, myself, and my brother Casimir. I retired at once to bed. In

spite of the sorrow I felt at the death of Mikolai, to whom I had been deeply attached, I could not suppress a feeling of pride and satisfaction on account of my new role as guardian. I, a boy of sixteen years, was to be the protector of a poor orphan. My self-respect rose considerably; I thought myself a man. "Your confidence in your master shall not be betrayed, good old Mikolai," I said to myself, "the future of your grandchild is intrusted to good hands, and you can rest peacefully in your grave."

In fact, I felt perfectly assured as to Hania's future. The thought that she, in time, would become a woman and perhaps might marry, did not occur to me. I expected to be always with her, protecting and loving her as my own sister. From time immemorial it had been the custom,—an unwritten law,—that the eldest son's share in his father's es-

tate was about five times as much as that of the other children. The younger brothers and sisters respected this tradition and never objected to it although our estates did not descend according to the right of primogeniture. To me as the eldest, would come the largest part of my father's estate; and although I had not yet finished my education, I looked upon my father's manor as my future property. My father was one of the largest land holders of the surrounding country. True, our ancestors did not possess the princely fortunes of our Polish magnates, but rather the solid wealth of old-nobility, assuring a quiet but comfortable life under the ancestral roof. I was to be comparatively rich some day, and I could feel at ease as to my own and Hania's material prospects. No matter what fate might have in store for her, she would always have in me a faithful protector and a willing helper.

With these thoughts I feel asleep. The next morning I began the discharge of my duties as guardian. But with what childish overbearance I did it; and yet, to-day, recalling those times, I can not restrain a certain emotion. When Brother Casimir and I entered the dining-room we found already at the table the chaplain, Madame d'Yves, our governess, and my two little sisters who perched on high rattan chairs were chattering brightly, unconcerned about the happenings of last evening.

With the gravest dignity I seated myself in my father's arm chair, surveyed the table with the mien of a dictator and turning to the attendant curtly commanded:

"A cover for Panna Hania"—with considerable emphasis on "Panna."

This was something unusual. Hania had never taken her meals at the family dining table. Although it was my moth-

er's wish that she should sit with us, Mikolai would under no circumstances permit it. Now I introduced the innovation. Father Ludvik and Madame d'Yves smiled, the former good naturedly, and the latter rather sourly. She was an excellent woman, but coming from an old, aristocratic French family she was strictly conventional. Frank, the attendant, looked at me in blank astonishment.

"A cover for Panna Hania, don't you understand?" I repeated.

"Yes, your lordship," said Frank, evidently impressed by my commanding attitude.

To-day I must confess that I could hardly restrain from showing self-satisfaction at being addressed "your lordship." But the dignity of my position did not allow "his lordship" to put on a smile of approval. The cover was prepared, the doors opened, and Hania en-

tered, attired in a black dress which had been made for her during the night. She was very pale and traces of tears showed in her eyes. Her beautiful blonde hair was dressed in two long braids, the ends of which were fastened by black ribbon bows.

I rose and led her to her seat. My attention and the unusual surroundings surely embarrassed and tortured the poor child. But I did not understand then, that in times of sorrow a quiet nook and solitude offers more consolation than the ostentatious doing of friends, no matter how sincere the motives. Hania was silent at the table and only timidly answered to my repeated questions as to what she would eat and drink.

"Nothing, if it please, your lordship."

"This time the "lordship" was truly painful to me. Hania had always been more confiding, addressing me with a plain "Pan Henry."

"Hania, I beg of you to remember that you are now my sister. Never say to me again "your lordship."

"Very well your lord—, Pan Henry."

After breakfast Hania and I went to the family room. My position was a peculiar one; gladly would I have spoken words of condolence to her, but I feared that any mention of Mikolai's death would make Hania's tears flow anew. Without saying anything we sat down, Hania leaning her head on my shoulder and I gently stroking her hair. She nestled closely to me as if seeking protection; a feeling of sisterly confidence filled her eyes with tears.

"Why do you cry again my dear Hania,"—I said, "your grandfather is in heaven, and I will surely try—."

But I could not finish, it cost me a great struggle to keep down my own tears.

"Pan Henry, may I go to grandfather?" she wispered.

I knew that the preparations for the burial were not completed, and not wishing Hania to see her grandfather until everything had been arranged, I left the room to see for myself.

On the way I met Madame d'Yves whom I asked to wait for my return as I wished to speak to her. Having made the final arrangements for the funeral I returned to her and after a few introductory remarks asked if she would not consent to instruct Hania in music and French.

"Monsieur Henri," answered Madame d'Yves, somewhat irritated at my assumed prerogative, "I would gladly do it for I love the poor child, but I do not know if it is the intention of your parents, and I am not informed if they will approve of the authority which you have been pleased to exercise. Pas trop de zèle, Monsieur Henri."

"She is under my guardianship," I

said very haughtly, "and I will be answerable for her."

"But I am not under your guardianship," was Madame d'Yves' ready reply, "and I shall wait till your parents return."

"His lordship" felt rather humiliated, but I had much more success with Father Ludvik, who had previously instructed Hania in some elementary studies. He not only readily consented to extend his instructions, but praised me for my zeal.

"I notice," he said, "that you are in earnest with the discharge of your duties as guardian, and although you are still a mere child, it becomes you well, but be as persistent as you are zealous."

I knew that Father Ludvik was pleased with my self-assumed authority of the lord of the house and was rather amused than angered at it. The good man knew that it was partly childish play, but the intention was honest and he prided him-

self that it was the fruit of his educational labors. I had always been his favorite and I knew well how to take advantage of his weakness for me. He loved Hania and was glad to help in improving her position and I had a valuable helper in him.

Madame d'Yves, though somewhat opposed to my plans, loved Hania with a woman's heart, which never lacks sympathy for an orphan. Indeed, Hania could not complain of the lack of loving hearts. The conduct of our servants towards Hania had become quite different; formerly they had looked upon her as one of their associates, or little more. But now they classed her with our family. The will of the oldest son in the family, though a mere boy, was always respected. My father would have it so. The wish of the eldest son was under all circumstances to be complied with, and an appeal from it could not be taken

to the lord or lady of the house He was to be spoken of and addressed as the "young lordship." This distinction was observed by brothers and sisters and servants alike. "This is the foundation of the family" my father often said, and indeed it was a family tradition descended from generation to generation. Though its origin was not based on any legal dictum, it was as respected as if it had been law.

My mother had a well stocked house-dispensary and often visited the sick. During the cholera epidemic she spent many a night with the physician in the cottages of the afflicted peasants, exposing herself to infection. My father, trembling for her safety, approved her actions and praised her sense of duty. He himself, though of a somewhat severe disposition, was always ready to help. He often remitted the taxes of his serfs, paid their debts, gave a dowry to their

marrying daughters, and stood godfather to their children. Into us he infused respect for the peasants. The greeting of the aged peasants my father always acknowledged by taking off his hat, and even went so far as to ask their advice in matters of husbandry. No wonder then, that they were deeply attached to him and to the whole family, and had often given proofs of their loyalty.

I say all this, partly, to portray the conditions as they existed at home, and partly to show, that in my efforts to make a "lady" out of Hania I encountered few difficulties. In fact, she herself was the greatest obstacle in my way. Being of a timid disposition, and having been brought up by Mikolai with overmuch respect for us, she could not easily become accustomed to the changed situation.

CHAPTER II.

Mikolai's funeral took place three days after his death. Our neighbors were well represnted at the funeral; they honored the memory of old Mikolai who, although merely a servant, was respected and liked by all. We laid him to rest in our family vault, side by side with his colonel, my grandfather. Hania had come with me in my sleigh and during the ceremonies of the burial I did not leave her for a moment. I intended to take her home, but Father Ludvik asked me to invite the neighbors into our house for refreshments. Hania was taken care of by my friend and schoolmate, Selim, whose father, Mirza Davidovicz had extensive possessions in our neighborhood. He descended from a Tartar and Mohammedan family of noble extraction. But since the times of his

great-grandfather the family had lived in Poland, owning large estates, and enjoying all the rights and privileges of Polish nobility.

I had to drive home with the Ustrzyskis. Hania, Madame d'Yves, and young Davidovicz had a sleigh for themselves. I noticed how carefully Selim covered Hania with his fur coat and then taking the lines from the driver, he let the horses speed away at full gallop.

When we returned home, Hania went to her grandfather's room. I knew that the poor child's grief would again bring tears to her eyes and gladly would I have gone to her but the chaplain and I had to entertain the guests.

At last they all left, Selim only remaining. He was to study with me, and to stay with us for the remainder of the Christmas vacation. Within a few months we were to submit to the examination *maturitatis*; but riding, shoot-

ing, fencing, and hunting were occupations much more to our liking than translating the annals of Tacitus or Xenophon's Anabasis.

Selim was a merry boy, full of life, and harmless pranks. His temper was easily unbalanced but, withal, he was very sympathetic. We all liked him, excepting my father, who was rather annoyed because the young Tartar could shoot and fence better than I. Selim found most favor in the eyes of Madame d'Yves because he spoke French like a born Parisian, and could entertain her better than all of us.

Father Ludvik had the fervent hope that, some day, he could convert the heathen to Christianity, for Selim often jested at the expense of the Prophet and said that he would renounce the Koran if it were not for his father, who, out of regard for family traditions adhered to Mohammet's faith; saying, that being an

old nobleman, he preferred to be an old Mohammedan rather than a new Christian. His ancestors settled in Poland at the time of Vitold. Their estates, which represented a vast fortune, were granted by King John Sobieski to Mirza-Davidovicz, the colonel of a regiment of the Petyhorski light hussars. The cause of this munificent grant was the wonderful bravery which the colonel displayed at the liberation of Vienna from the Turks.

The portrait of the colonel hung in the gallery at Chorzele; the family estate of the Davidovicz's. I shall never forget what an impression the picture made on me when I first saw it. Colonel Mirza must have been terrible to look upon; his face was crossed with sabre cuts in all directions. It seemed to me as if the mysterious signs of the Koran had been engrafted upon it; the cheek bones were protruding, but strangest of all were the eyes whose gloomy look followed me no

matter from where I looked at the picture. My friend Selim, however, did not resemble his ancestors in the least. His mother was wedded to Davidovicz in the Crimea, she was not a Tartar, but was in the Caucasus. I did not remember her, but often have I heard she was a most beautiful woman and that Selim resembled her like her very picture. Indeed, Selim was a handsome youth. The position of his eyes barely showed the Tartar origin, they were large and dark with a peculiar melancholy glimmer. Truly I have never since seen eyes so beautifully expressive. If Selim asked for something, a look from his eyes would secure him his wish. His features were very regular, noble, the complexion delicate. His mouth had somewhat full, swelling lips and perfect teeth. But when Selim had a fight with any of his classmates, which happened quite often, his beauty and gentleness vanished as if

touched by a magic wand and he became almost terrible. The eyes stood askant and glittered like those of a wolf, the veins on his forehead seemed ready to burst, the complexion darkened and for a moment he looked like the true descendant of those Tartars with whom my forefathers had fought so many a time. But Selim's transfiguration lasted only for a short time. In a moment he cried, apologized, kissed his opponent, and was usually forgiven. His heart was the very best and his motives were noble, but he was superficial, light-minded, and of an uncontrolable temperament. He was a master in horsemanship, and with the pistol and sword. With his books, however, he was less familiar; he lacked diligence. We loved each other like brothers, quarreled often, and as often made peace. During vacations and holidays he was either with us or I with him at Chorzele and now, after Mikolai's fun-

eral, he was to remain till the end of the Christmas vacation.

When the guests had left after having partaken of refreshments, it was four o'clock in the afternoon. The short winter day was drawing to a close and twilight filled the rooms. In the court yard, around the tall, snow-laden trees, whose tops caught the red light of the setting sun, croaking ravens flew to and fro. Through the windows we saw large flocks of them flying over the water towards the forest, their black plumage glittering in the evening light. After dinner Madame d'Yves retired to her room, and we all went to a large chamber which served as a sitting room. The chaplain was crossing the room in a measured step, my two little sisters were playing on the rug, rolling over each other and sometimes bumping their little heads against the table, the abundance of their blonde locks saving them. Hania, I and

Selim sat on a couch near a window our eyes following the last light of the parting day.

Soon the twilight became darkness; Father Ludvik left us to read his breviary; my sisters were playing hide and seek in another room and we remained alone. Selim could not keep silent very long and commenced to grow talkative, when Hania, all at once, nestling closer to me, whispered:

"Pan Henry, I don't know why it is, but I am afraid."

"Don't fear my little Hania," I said, drawing her to me. "Lean on me; as long as I am with you, nothing will happen to you. You see that I am not afraid, and I will always be able to protect you."

This was not quite true, for whether it was on acount of the darkness or because of the memory of Mikolai's death, I, too, had an oppressed feeling.

"Perhaps you wish the lights brought in!" I asked.

"If you please, Pan Henry."

"Selim, tell Frank to bring in the lights."

Selim left the room quickly and returned with Frank who carried the lights, but Hania's eyes, swelled with weeping, could not endure the change and Selim blew the light out. Again we were surrounded by the mysterious darkness and again we were all silent. The moon had risen and her silvery rays came through the high windows of the room. Hania did not seem to have lost her fear. She nestled still closer to me and I had to hold her hand. Mirza was sitting opposite us, and, as was his custom, suddenly changed from the talkative mood to one of profound reverie.

"Let Mirza tell us a fairy tale," I said to break the silence—"he tells stories so beautifully. Will you listen Hania?"

"Yes," she whispered.

Mirza raised his eyes and looked dreamily through the window. The moonlight set off his beautiful profile in the darkness. After a few moments, in a half suppressed, soothing tone he began to tell a story in his own inimitable way, from the Arabian Nights. But suddenly he interrupted himself and asked me:

"Is Hania sleeping?"

"No, I am not," answered Hania drowsily.

Selim continued, but before he had finished he looked again at Hania who was now sleeping soundly. He dared not move for fear of awakening her. Her breath was quiet and regular, from time to time broken by a deep sigh. Selim rested his head on his hands, as if lost in deep thought. I looked up to the starry vault of heaven and it seemed to me as if my soul were taking wings into celes-

tial regions. I cannot express the feeling of happiness which I experienced, because that dear little girl was resting peacefully and with all confidence on my breast. Something unknown, something supernatural must have touched the chords of my heart, and in their vibrations they responded with a never-experienced, grandly beautiful harmony. Oh, how I loved Hania! True it was the love of a brother, of a guardian; but it was without limit, without measure.

I inclined my head and softly kissed her hair. There was nothing sensual in that kiss, it was as innocent as my heart.

Selim started suddenly out of his dreams.

"How happy you must be Henry," he whispered.

"Indeed, Selim."

"But we can not sit here all the time. Let us carry her to her room," he suggested.

"I shall carry her myself, you open the door." I removed my arm gently from underneath her head, and laid her on the couch. Then I lifted her with both arms. I felt so strong and she seemed to be so frail and delicate, that I carried her up as easily as a feather. Selim opened the door, and crossing the adjoining apartment we came to the green room which I had reserved for Hania. Her bed was prepared and in front of the cheerful fire in the grate sat old Vengrovska, the housekeeper. She started up at our entrance and exclaimed:

"For the Lord's sake, can't you awaken her and let her walk?"

"Be quiet, Vengrovska" I said angrily. "This is a 'lady' and not a girl. Do you understand me, Panna Hania is tired, I wish you would not wake her, but undress her and put her to bed. Remember, she is an orphan, and we must treat her kindly."

"Poor child, yes, an orphan," said the good woman her heart immediately softened at the thought that Hania was an orphan.

We left them and went to tea. At the tea table, Selim was jolly without restraint. I did not join in his merriment, thinking it unbecoming to the dignity of guardian. That same evening Selim contracted the displeasure of the chaplain. During the evening devotion in the chapel, Selim climbed upon the low roof of the ice house and amused himself by imitating very successfully the howling of a dog. Soon all the dogs of the yard joined him in such a dismal, earrending concert, that we had to discontinue the devotions.

"Have you gone mad, Selim?" Father Ludvik asked him.

"If you please, I held my evening devotion in Mohammedan style."

"You stripling, you must not ridicule any religion."

"But I want to become a Christian, I am only afraid of my father. What do I care for Mohammet?" Selim knew well Father Ludvik's weak spot and succeeded completely in pacifying him. We all retired. Selim occupied the same room with me, and went to bed without delay. While preparing to undress, I asked him: "Do you ever pray?"

"Of course. If you wish, I will show you how."

He rose from the bed and going to the window stretched out his arms towards the moon and began to cry in a singing voice:

"Oh, Allah! Akbar Allah! Allah Kerim!"

Dressed in a white night robe, his large eyes raised towards heaven, he made a strikingly beautiful picture. After a while he exclaimed to me:

"You may think it strange, but I don't believe in that Prophet of ours, who prohibited everybody else to have more than

one wife, he himself having as many as he pleased. And let me tell you I like wine. But I am not allowed to be anything else but a Mohammedan; I believe in God and sometimes pray to him in my own way." Then he changed the topic very suddenly:

"Henry, do you know?"

"Well?"

"I have a few splendid cigars. We are children no more, let us smoke."

"Get your cigars."

Selim jumped out of bed and produced them. We each took a cigar, lit it, smoked it silently, and expectorated a great deal secretly, for fear the other might see it. After a few moments of silence Selim began:

"Do you know Henry, I envy you. You are almost a full grown man."

"I rather think so."

"Because you are a guardian. Oh, I wish some one would place some girl under my care."

"That is not so easy. And then, where could you find another ward like Hania? But do you know Selim,"—I continued in a very impressive strain, "I can't go to college any more; a man who has such an obligation at home, can't very well waste his time studying."

"Now, you talk nonsense. Why, you must enter the University."

You know that I like to study, but duty is above all. I might continue my studies if my parents send Hania with me to Warsaw."

"They won't dream of it."

"Perhaps not till I enter the University, but then they will give Hania to me. Don't you know what it means to be an academician?"

Perhaps yes, perhaps not. You will play a little the guardian, and then you will marry Hania."

I jumped up in bed. "Mirza, have you lost your senses?"

"Why should I? At school one is not allowed to marry, but an academician may not only have a wife but also children. Ha, ha!"

At that moment the prerogatives and privileges of an academician concerned me little. Selim's remarks had illumined my inmost heart, heretofore dark even to me. A thousand thoughts flashed through my head. All at once I was clear with myself. My deep brotherly affection to Hania suddenly changed to the most fervent love. Marry my own, dearest Hania, that blonde haired angel, oh—yes, indeed.

With a somewhat unsteady voice I asked Selim again:

"Mirza have you lost your senses?"

"I will wager you love her already."

I did not answer, but blew the lights out and hid my head in the pillows, covering them with kisses. Yes indeed, I loved Hania already.

CHAPTER III.

A few days after Mikolai's funeral my father came home summoned by a telegram. I trembled, lest he might disapprove of the arrangements I had made for Hania, and to some extent my apprehensions were correct. My father praised me because of the conscientious discharge of my duty; he was evidently pleased and said with self-satisfaction: "That is our blood." Little he knew, that I was a very interested party. He was, however, less satisfied with all the arrangements I had made. Perhaps that Madame Yves' report was not favorable to me, and I must admit that during the last few days I had made too much of Hania. He was especially dissatisfied with my project of educating Hania on a par with my sisters.

"I will not revoke your orders, your

mother shall determine that"—he said to me—"She will say how it shall be. But it is worth considering how it will benefit the girl."

"Education is always an advantage, my father," I said, "it can never do harm. You have often said so yourself."

"Yes, in a man,"—he answered—"because it gives the man his station, but it is very different with women. The education of a woman should be adapted to the position which in future she will occupy. A girl like Hania does not need anything beyond a mediocre education, there is no necessity for French, music, and other studies. With a plain education she will sooner find a husband, some small official———

"Father?"

"He looked at me astonished."

"What is the matter with you?"

I was as red as a beet, my face burned like fire. The thought of Hania marry-

ing some small official seemed to me a desecration in view of my dreams and hopes. It hurt me the more because the thought came from my father. His words affected my youthful hopes as a frost does the sprouting vegetation. It was the bitter reality suppressing fanciful plans, that reality against which, in after life, we arm ourselves with pessimism and unbelief. A drop of water on a hot iron causes a sizzling noise for a second and then evaporates; the ardor of youthful enthusiasm shrinks from the touch of cold reality but by its own warmth absorbes the coldness.

My father's words affected me very strangely; they did not raise a spirit of opposition towards him, but rather of dislike towards Hania. But a youthful heart if easily affected, is also elastic and all thoughts unfavorable to Hania were soon dismissed forever. My father did not understand my emotion and ascribed

it to my over zealous disposition, something very natural for my age and not displeasing to him. He finally allowed me to write to mother, who was to remain for some time abroad, to give her a full statement of the situation and to ask her decision. It was the longest and most heartfelt letter I had ever written to her. I described vividly the last hours of Mikolai, his last request, my wishes, fears and hopes. I touched the chord of compassion in her heart, always so responsive to the sufferings of others. I pictured to her the remorse of my conscience in case of any neglect towards Hania; in short, in my opinion my letter was a veritable masterpiece of diplomacy, promising certain success. Satisfied with the course pursued I patiently awaited the answer, which came after some time in two letters, one to me and the other to Madame d'Yves. I had won a complete victory. My mother not only agreed to Hania's

education but most strongly recommended it. "It is my wish"—my dear mother wrote—"that, if it does not contradict the will of your father, Hania should be regarded in every respect as one of our family. We owe this to the memory of Mikolai, for his devotion to us."

My triumph was complete, and Selim shared this with all his heart, as he shared everything concerning Hania, just as if he were her guardian.

To be candid, the tender sympathy which he showed towards Hania was not quite to my liking, especially after the memorable night which brought me the realization of my love for her. I was embarrassed in her presence, the childish cordiality and confidence had entirely disappeared in me. Only a few days ago I bid her "good-morning" and "good-night" with the kiss of a brother and now the mere touching of her hand send a

thrill through my heart. I began to look at her with veneration,—which, I think now, we all harbor for the object of our first love,—and when Hania, not aware of any change in me, approached me with the usual frankness, I regarded my conduct to her as a desecration.

Love brought me unknown happiness and unknown trouble. If I had some one to confide in, some one to whom I could tell all my cares or on whose breast I could let my tears flow freely—as I felt often inclined to do—it would have eased my secret burden. I might have told Selim everything but I feared his disposition. While I felt assured that at first he would sympathize with me, I feared that the very next day he would ridicule my ideal in his characteristically cynical way, and this I could not have endured. There was a great difference between my own and Selim's disposition. I was secluded, inclined to be sentimen-

tal; he, on the contrary, could do nothing seriously. I hid my love, then, from all others and almost from myself, nobody was aware of it. Within a short time I learned instinctively how to practice deception, how to hide my blushes and embarrassments when Hania's name was mentioned in my presence. I had no intention to tell Hania of my love for her. I loved her and that was enough for me. At times, however, when we were all alone, I felt an almost irresistible impulse to kneel before her and to kiss the hem of her dress.

Selim meanwhile counterbalanced by unusual hilarity, my unusual sentimentality. He was the first to succeed in evoking a smile from Hania's face, by proposing to Father Ludvik to adopt the Mohammedan faith and to marry Madame d'Yves. Both of them tried to look angry, but the dignified chaplain had to join in the merry laughter which

Selim's joke created. Towards Hania he always showed tender care and was more confidential with her than I. It was evident that she liked him and his cheerful ways. In his presence she seemed happier. Selim never missed an opportunity to laugh at me or rather at my sentimentality which he mistook for the affected dignity of a youth who wanted to be a matured man.

Our Christmas vacation was at an end. My slight hopes that I would be allowed to remain home, were not realized. On a certain evening the dignified guardian was informed to hold himself in readiness for his departure the following morning. It was necessary to start very early as we had to stop on the way at Chorzele, where Selim was to take leave of his father. It was quite dark when we arose on that winter morning,—dreary, as my heart was hopeless. Selim, too, was in the worst of humor; as soon as he awoke,

he declared that everything in this world was wrong, with which sentiment I fully agreed. We dressed and went across the yard to the dining room in the main building. A cold wind blew drifts of fine snow into our faces. The sleigh was standing in front of the entrance and our trunks were being placed upon it. The horses tossed their heads and pawed the snow impatiently, making the bells on the harness ring. Dogs ran barking up and down. To Selim and me this seemed to be such a gloomy picture that our hearts were cramped in despair. In the dining room we found only my father and the chaplain. With suppressed excitement I cast glances at the door of the green room, Hania's apartment, wondering if she would come or if I had to leave without a farewell from her. Meanwhile my father and the chaplain preached some good advice and sound morals to us. They remarked that we

had arrived at an age where it is needless to speak about the necessity and importance of a good education, and then, disregarding the introductory remarks, continued to speak about nothing else but this very necessity. I understood about one word out of ten, and bit grimly into my toast, swallowing the mulled wine with a great deal of distaste. Suddenly my heart began to beat so loudly that I feared my father could hear it. I heard some one move in Hania's room and I could hardly keep on my chair. Then the door opened and out came—Madame d'Yves attired in a gorgeous morning wrap, her hair dangling from her head resembling as many corkscrews. She took affectionate leave of us, expressing the hope that we would, some day, become famous men; in grateful return for which kindness I felt maliciously inclined to pour the mulled wine over her head and Selim gave her the sarcastic assur-

ance that the memory of her beautiful locks would at all times inspire him to noble deeds. But I was not to empty the cup of bitterness. When we arose from the breakfast table, Hania came in from her room, somewhat sleepy, with flushed cheeks and loose hair. Bidding her "good-morning" I took her by the hand and noticed that it was very warm. I promptly imagined that Hania had fever on account of my departure and pictured to myself some very pathetic scenes. My father and the chaplain left the dining room to get some letters which I was to take to Warsaw. Selim straddled a huge dog which had come into the dining room and rode on him to the hall. Hania and I were left alone. Tears were rising into my eyes and I thought that I would burst forth in the most tender and pathetic words. I had no intention to tell her that I loved her but I felt an irresistible inclination to

say, for instance: "My dearest Hania, my only beloved Hania," and then to kiss her hands. This was a very good opportunity for such an outburst, for in anyone's presence I would not have dared it. Already I approached her, already I extended my hand, but it was done so clumsily, that when I finally opened my mouth and said, "Hania," my own voice frightened me so that I feared to speak more and I relapsed into silence.

"How lonesome it will be here without you"—said Hania.

"I will return for Easter"—I said very abruptly with a voice that seemed to belong to somebody else.

"But it is so very long till Easter!"

"Not at all"—was the curt reply.

At this moment Selim entered the room. With him came my father, the chaplain, Madame d'Yves, and several servants. "Take your seats!" I heard someone say. We went out and then I

took leave of my father and of all the others. When my turn with Hania came I was determined to embrace her and to kiss her as of old, but I could not do it. "Farewell, Hania," I said, extending my hand, and in my heart a hundred voices were weeping, and as many expressions of unalterable love were crowding my tongue.

At once I noticed, that Hania's eyes filled with tears, and my pride, or whatever perverted sentiment it may have been, created in me the desire—so often experienced in after life—to tear open my own wounds, and although my heart was breaking, I said very coldly:

"How foolish of you to cry," and then I stepped into the sleigh.

Meanwhile Selim was taking leave of everybody he saw. He stepped up to Hania, and taking both her hands, he covered them with fervent kisses, in spite of her resistance. Oh, how I should

have liked to thrash him! Then he jumped into the sleigh, my father called out "forward," the coachman cracked the whip, and the impatient horses bounded forward, starting us on our journey.

"Scoundred,"—I said to myself—"so you have taken leave of Hania! You have laughed at her tears, of which you are so unworthy! The tears of an orphan—

I raised the collar of my fur coat to hide the tears which were rolling down my cheeks fearing that Selim might see my emotion. He did not seem to notice anything till we were near Chorzele, when he spoke for the first time since we left home.

"Henry!"

"Well?"

"Are you crying?"

"Let me alone."

After a few moments Selim asked me again.

"Are you crying, Henry?"

I did not answer. Selim leaned out of the sleigh and gathering up a handful of snow uncovered my head and threw the snow over it. Then he put the cap on again, saying:

"So, this will cool you off——."

CHAPTER IV.

I did not return home for Easter, the approaching examination *maturitatis*, made it unadvisable to leave my studies. Moreover, my father desired, that before coming home I should submit to the examination necessary for entering the University. He well knew my dislike for studying during the vacation and feared that an interruption of my work would make me forget the half of what I learned. I studied, then, very diligently. In addition to our usual recitations and lessons at college and the labor preparatory for examination, Selim and I took private lessons from a young academician who not long before had entered the University, and who knew best what preparation was necessary for admission.

Those were ever memorable times for

me, for it was then, that the structure of my moral education, so laboriously reared by my father, our chaplain, and all influences of our quiet home, fell to the ground. Our young tutor was a radical in every respect. When in studying Roman history, we came to the reforms of the Grachi, he knew so well how to infuse into me his utter contempt for the great oligarchy, that my arch-aristocratic ideas disappeared like vapor. With what profound conviction he would, for instance, tell us, that the man who was soon to occupy the very dignified and influential position of a university student, should be free from all "prejudices" and should look upon everybody with the compassion of a true philosopher. In general, he was of the opinion that man between the ages of eighteen and twenty-three, was best adapted to rule this world or to exert a powerful influence in it; because after this age he gradually became

idiotic or conservative, as our tutor termed it. Of people who were neither professors, nor students of the University he spoke only with pity. He had his ideal authors whom he quoted on every occasion, and I learned then for the first time of the existence of Maleschott and Buechner, two savants whom he most frequently cited. It can not very well be described with what enthusiasm our preceptor spoke of the conquests of science, of the great truths which the ignorance and prejudice of the past left slumbering, but which were raised from "the ashes of oblivion" and proclaimed to all the world by the wonderful moral courage of modern scholars.

While uttering such sentences, his abundant, curly hair shook in affirmation and the smoke of countless cigarettes consumed by him, surrounded his head with a halo of mysticism,—at least to us. He also frequently assured us of his skill in

smoking cigarettes, that he could let the smoke out through his nose or his mouth with equal ease, and that there was no man in Warsaw who could inhale so much as he. Putting on his faded overcoat (with most of the buttons lacking) preparatory to his departure, he pretended to be in great haste to keep a "little rendezvous." Saying this he winked his eyes significantly, and added, that our tender age did not allow him to give us nearer information as to his rendezvous, but that in due time we would know without his explanation.

Notwithstanding, his many characteristics of which our parents would hardly have approved, he had also his good traits. He was a thorough scholar, being well versed in all the branches which he taught us. He was almost a fanatic scholar. His boots were torn, his clothes shabby, his cap resembled a crow's nest. He never had a penny in his pocket but

his thoughts never drifted into channels of his own material cares, of his poverty, —well-nigh starvation. Study seemed to nourish his soul and body. I and Mirza looked upon him as something supernatural, an ocean of wisdom, the most sublime dignity. We believed firmly that if anything was to save humanity in case of a general calamity, it would surely be his imposing genius. No doubt, he thought so too. In his own teachings he had the fullest confidence. I became even more radical than my tutor. It was the natural re-action of my previous education; moreover, he had opened fields of science so utterly unknown to me, that my former knowledge of things appeared to me exceedingly limited. Enlightened by those newly discovered truths and preoccupied with them, I had barely sufficient time to think of Hania.

For some days after I had left home

I could think of nothing else but my ideal. The letters which I received from her fanned the flame on the altar of my heart. But in full view of the ocean of ideas of our young tutor, the little world of our country home, so quiet and peaceful, gradually disappeared from sight, and with it the memory of Hania. Though not entirely lost, it became as if surrounded by a mist, still visible, it is true, but not clearly discernible. As to Selim, he kept step with me on the path of radical ideas. Of Hania he thought the less, since the house opposite ours had a window which was oftentimes occupied by Josy, the pupil of a fashionable girls' school. To her Selim's sighs were addressed and for hours they looked at each other from the windows like two birds out of their cages. Selim came soon to the settled conclusion that it was to be "she or no one else."

Examination came and went. We

had to pass two of them; the examination *maturitatis*, of our college and, that required for entering the University. We passed them both very creditably and then we were free. During the three days which we were yet to spend in Warsaw, we enjoyed ourselves to our hearts' content. We purchased our uniforms as university students, and prepared for a wine supper, to be held before we left the City. Our tutor considered this closing festivity indispensable. The wine supper consisted of nothing more or less than an inaugural getting drunk in some wine shop.

After our second bottle of wine, when my own and Selim's thoughts became rather confused, and the face of our former tutor and new colleague unusually flushed, we suddenly grew very emotional and strongly inclined to exchange confidences. Our tutor delivered himself as follows:

"Well, you have become men, my dear fellows and the world is open before you. You may partake of all the pleasures, spend money freely, and play the role of a lord. You may even fall in love; but let me tell you, this all is nonsense. Such a superficial, external life, without thought, without an object, is not worth the continuation. To live prudently, one must view things seriously. As to me, I think I am serious. I do not believe anything that is not within my grasp and advise you to do likewise. True, there is an infinite variety in the walks of life and everything is in such a confusion that it is very difficult to select and keep the right way. Therefore I adhere to science and feel satisfied in disregarding everything else. It is an established truth that life is a farce, and this being known to all, everybody is responsible for the investment of his individual talents. There is bankruptcy in every-

thing, except in science. Everywhere is disappointment. You love and confide, and the woman betrays you; you believe, and already are harboring a doubt. How different it is with science! You can spend a lifetime in the study of amphibiology, not noticing the flight of time, till, all at once your last day comes:—a short biography with, perhaps, your portrait in some periodical and (the comedy is over).—There is nothing more after that, I assure you, and if some one tells you to the contrary, do not believe him. There is another advantage in connection with science: You can safely walk in ragged boots and sleep on straw without fear of losing your dignity."

Selim proposed a toast to science, not because he shared our tutor's pessimistic views, but because the speech was ended.

But our worthy preceptor had merely drawn breath, and having emptied another glass of wine, and with a few

puffs consumed a whole cigarette, continued:

"Besides the study of a defined science —Selim you are drunk—there is also philosophy and there are ideas. Both are sufficient to fill to the brim a man's intellectual want. But I prefer the actual science. I laugh at philosophy especially the ideal-realistic. It is nothing but an empty phrase. It pretends to be in quest of truth, but it is very much like a dog chasing its own tail. And then, I dislike phrases, I want facts. As to ideas, that is quite another thing, they are well worth striving for. But you and your father do not know where to find ideas, let me tell you that. Long live the ideas!"

Again we emptied our glasses. It was growing dark in the room, the candles on the table burned with a dim light and the smoke formed fantastic figures on the wall and under the low ceiling. From

the street, through the open window, came the melancholy strains of a violin accompanying the feeble voice of an old man who was singing: "Heavenly Queen of Angels." A strange feeling filled my breast. I believed, to some extent, what our tutor had said, but felt, that he had forgotten something that could fill life more than philosophy and advanced ideas. Something was lacking, for which I felt a sad longing under the influences of this occasion, and I asked rather timidly:

"And woman, loving, devoted woman, is she nothing in life?"

Selim commenced to sing:

> "Woman not constant is
> 'Tis foolish to trust her,——"

Our tutor looked at me absent-mindedly, but soon recovered, and said:

"Oh, there is your sentimentality again! Let me tell you that Selim will

sooner than you be a man; you will have sad experiences. Beware,—and mark my words,—let not a petticoat cross your path and ruin your life. Women? Oh, I know of what material they are made. I have no disagreebale recollection, but I remember the old adage "give the devil your little finger and he will claim your whole hand." Women! Love! It is a mistake that we make so much of them. If you wish to play with them, very well, play, but do not endanger your life. Perhaps you think I hate women? No, I like them, only I don't want to fall a sacrifice to vivid imagination. I remember, when I was in love for the first time, I adored her very dress, and it was merely calico. It was not her fault because she walked in the mud of the street instead of soaring heavenward,—no, it was my fault because my imagination pictured her always with wings. Man is an animal with somewhat limited in-

tellect. He carries a certain ideal in his heart, and feeling more or less the necessity to love some one, he meets the first best goose and says "that's she." Later he discovers that he made a mistake and either becomes idiotic or takes his life."

"But then you admit," I said, "that every man feels the necessity to love, and you, too, have known it."

"Every necessity," he answered—"has its peculiar satisfaction, and I shall look to my own. But I have known men whose whole lives were ruined because of women, and I can merely say that life is deserving of a higher aim.

"I drink to the health of the ladies!" said Selim,—

"Very well, I join you. They are agreeable creatures when not taken too seriously."

Selim and I jingled our glasses, I proposing Josy's health.

"Wait, now it is my turn"—said Se-

lim—"health and happiness to your Hania! One is as good as the other."

I felt my temper rising.—"Silence, Mirza,"—I shouted,—"do not dare to speak her name in this den!"

So saying I threw my glass to the ground where it shattered into fragments.

"Have you gone mad?" Our tutor asked me.

But I seemd to think clearer than before, only, I could not control my anger. I had listened to his cynical remarks about women and could have taken pleasure in joining him, merely because I did not apply any of the sarcasm to those who were dear to me. But to hear the name of Hania in the midst of the associations of the dingy room in a restaurant amid smoke, filth, empty bottles and corks, seemed to me such a sacrilege, such a deep injury to Hania, that my anger made me lose my self-control.

For a moment Selim looked at me astonished, then a sudden change took place. His face darkened, and the veins on his forehead swelled, his eyes had the savage expression of a tiger. The slumbering nature of the Tartar had been roused.

"You forbid me to say what I please?" Fortunately our tutor interfered at this moment.

"You are not worthy of the uniform you are wearing. Will you pull each other's ears like school boys? Is that your philosophy? And I should expound social questions to you? Shame on you to come from a contest of ideas to a fistic battle! I propose a toast in honor of the University and I shall call you fools if you don't fill your glasses and join me."

We recovered somewhat; Selim spoke first. "I beg your pardon," he said in a soft tone,—"I was very foolish."

We embraced each other and emptied

our glasses, then we sang "*Gaudeamus igitur.*" The noise attracted the attention of several clerks who looked from the store through the glass-door leading to our room. We were very hilarious, not to say completely intoxicated. But our hilarity had reached its climax and gradually sobered down. Our tutor became quite thoughful and after meditating a few moments said:

"This is all very well, but taking it altogether, life is a farce. Mirth can be produced by artificial means, but how unresponsive is the heart. To-morrow will be like to-day; the same want, four bare walls, a straw-tick, ragged boots, and poverty without end. Work and work, but happiness—ah! Man deceives himself and pretends not to see the reality.—Farewell, Boys!"

So saying he rose, put on his torn cap and coat and mechanically went through several motions intended for the button-

ing of his overcoat by means of non-existing buttons. Then he lit a cigarette and motioning with his hand, said:

"Well, you may pay for me, you know that I have no money. You may remember me or not; it is all the same to me. I am not sentimental. Good-by, my dear fellows."

The tone of his last words contradicted very much the denial of sentimentality. His heart was in need of sympathy and capable of love. But dire poverty from his earliest childhood, adversity, and the indifference of men, had taught him seclusion. His was a proud soul, always apprehending repulsion from his fellow-men and yet longing for some confidant.

For a moment after he had left we remained silent as if under the influence of a coming sad event forecasting its shadows. It was a prophetic feeling, for we had seen our tutor the last time. Neither he nor either of us realized then,

that he carried in his breast the seed of a disease for which there is no remedy. Poverty, over-exertion in his studies, and sleepless nights brought about the end very quickly. In the early fall he died of consumption. Only a few persons accompanied him to his last resting place; it was during the vacation. But his poor old mother, who sold holy pictures and wax candles at the portal of the Dominican Church, loudly bewailed the death of her only son, whom she in his life time had seldom understood, but, with a true mother's heart, always tenderly loved.

CHAPTER V.

The day following our escapade old Mirza sent horses from Chorzele and we prepared for our early departure next morning. We rose very early; everybody else in the house was asleep. But in a window across the street, amidst geraniums, fuchsias and carnations appeared the pretty face of Josy. Selim posted himself in a window of our room. The little grip slung over his shoulders and the student's cap on his head were meant to convey to Josy that he was ready to set out, in due understanding of which meaning deep sighs came forth from between the flowers. But when he put one hand reassuringly to his heart, and with the other threw a kiss, the pretty face suddenly assumed the color of the carnations and disappeared.

Just then our "bryczka" drawn by

four spirited horses rolled up in front of the entrance; it was time to leave. But Selim remained at the window, expecting his Josy's reappearance. He hoped in vain, however, and we both took our places in the bryczka when Selim's keen eyes discerned something white in the hallway in the house opposite, he left his seat immediately; I was near enough to hear a noise resembling that of a kiss. A few moments later Selim came out of the hall, looking somewhat sad, and took his seat. The driver cracked his whip, we both turned involuntarily and saw a white hand above the flowers in the window waving a dainty handkerchief. One more look and the horses swiftly turned the corner taking me and Josy's handsome ideal out of view.

The day had hardly begun, Warsaw was sleeping yet. A soft red, the forerunner of the glaring light of the day,

tinted many thousand windows of quaint, pretenseless houses and of munificent edifices. The steps of the few passers-by woke the sleeping echo. Here and there the night watchman was making his last round, now and then a small wagon bringing vegetables from the country rumbled over the pavement towards the market place. Otherwise it was quiet, so light, so airy as only a summer morning can be. Our little bryczka, looking quite diminutive behind the four stately animals, fairly flew over the pavement. Soon we reached the shore of the Vistula and the cool breeze greeted us. The horses hoofs woke a thundering echo from the bridge and after half an hour's ride we had the toll gate behind us and were driving through fertile fields and shady forests.

With delight we inhaled the pure air and our eyes devoured the beautiful scenery. Earth seemed awaking; pearly

dew hung on the wet leaves and glittered from the vegetation in the field. From out the woods manifold voices of feathered singers greeted the ascending sun. Fields and forests emerged from the mist. Thousands of golden-blossoms and dandelions were clustered around small pools of water in which storks promenaded with amusing dignity. Ringlets of smoke curled up from the chimneys of the cottages and the light breeze swayed the crops into the rythmic motion of a peaceful sea. Over the beautiful country, gladness spread and all nature seemed to sing:

> "When the morning sun ascendeth,
> Earth and ocean sing Thy praises—"

Our emotions can easily be understood if, one recalls the closing days of his school life, and the coming home from college on a beautiful summer morning. Behind us were the days of our child-

hood and school obligations, before us loomed up temptingly the infinite prospects of the world, an unknown world to us, into which we were journeying under good auspices: young, healthy, rich. And of all the treasures in this world youth is the greatest, and of all its abundance we had as yet spent nothing.

We covered the way rapidly; rested horses were awaiting us at all larger stations. Towards evening of the second day, having traveled the preceding night, we could see in the distance the house-minaret of Chorzele, shining brightly in the evening sun. Soon we had reached the dam on which was the driveway hedged on either side with willows and privet. Large ponds with numerous mills extended to the right and left. In the high reed-grass on the shore innumerable frogs croaked a strangely melodious accompaniment to the cracking of

the wheels on the gravel. Herds of sheep and cattle, enveloped in clouds of dust, were being driven homewards. Small groups of harvesters, singing merry songs, returned from the fields. The good people halted our bryczka and kissed Selim's hands, welcoming him home.

And now the sun had hidden its orb beneath the western horizon and in the mirror-like surface of the waters were reflected the crimson of the evening sky and the trees on the shore. We made a slight turn to the right and amid linden-trees, mallows, pines and firs we beheld the white walls of the manor house of Chorzele. The bell in the court-yard called the servants and the laborers to supper and at the same time we heard the Muezzin's plaintive, half-singing voice, announcing from the minaret that a star-lit night would sink upon the earth and that Allah was great. As if in affirmation of Allah's praise, the stork, who

had his nest on a high poplar towering above the roof of the house, and who stood in it like an Etruscan vase, disturbed the resemblance by thrusting his red bill towards the evening sky, and then bowing his head, rattled a welcome to Selim.

I looked at him; tears were in his eyes and that peculiar, tender expression shone from them. Our bryczka halted in the yard. In front of the glass covered hallway sat old Mirza, smoking a long Turkish pipe, looking in happy contemplation at the peaceful, yet busy life on the beautiful scenery. When he saw his son he rose to welcome him. Old Mirza was very severe with Selim but he loved him above all, and now pressed him in a long embrace to his proud bosom. His first question was about the outcome of the examination and then new embraces followed. Meanwhile all the servants came and there was a great number of them—

to greet the young lord and all the dogs that were not chained joined in the manifestation of joy at his return. Out from the hall-way shot Zula the tame she-wolf, old Mirza's pet. When Selim called her "Zula, Zula!" She jumped up, put her powerful paws on Selim's shoulder and licked his face. Then she ran around him in circles as if she had gone mad, all the while showing her formidable teeth.

After the first greetings we went to the dining room. I looked at Chorzele and everything that was connected with it, like a man who expects changes.—But nothing had changed; the portraits of Selim's ancestors were hanging in their old places. The terrible Mirza, the colonel of the Petyhorski hussars from the time of Sobieski, had the same ill-boding look following me wherever I went in the room. Only his sabre-battered face seemed to me more dreadful than ever.

Mirza, Selim's father, had changed most of all. His black hair was strangely intermingled with grey, his long moustache was completely white, and the type of a Tartar had become more prominent. What an irreconcilable difference there was between the bony face with the severe, almost cruel expression of the father and the classically beautiful features of the son. But it would be difficult to describe with what loving pride old Mirza looked upon Selim, how he watched over all of his motions.

Not wishing to disturb them, I stood aside, but Mirza, with the true hospitality of a Polish nobleman, paid every attention to me and asked me to stay over night. My anxiety to reach home did not allow me to accept the invitation; however, I had to stay for supper. I left Chorzele late in the evening and when I was nearing home it was midnight. The village was wrapped in darkness, far from

out the forest the collier's hut marked its place by a tiny light. In the alley of limes leading up to our house an Egyp tian darkness reigned; a team of horses passed me, the driver humming a song, but I couldn't recognize his face. The bryczka halted at the entrance of the court yard. All the windows were dark, evidently everybody was asleep ; only dogs came running from all sides. I stepped out and knocked at the door, but nobody answered for some time. It was a disappointment to me, because I thought I would be expected. At last a flickering light shone through some window and a sleepy voice, which I recognized as Frank's, inquired:

"Who is there?"

I answered, Frank opened the door and very officiously kissed my hand.

"Is everybody well?" I asked.

"All well," Frank answered me, "but his lordship has driven to the city and will not return before to-morrow,"

So saying he opened the door to the dining room, lit the lamp hanging above the table and left me, to prepare the tea. For a few moments I was alone,—alone with my thoughts and feverishly beating heart. But my solitude did not last long; soon Father Ludvik came in followed by Madame d'Yves, then Casimir rushed in, and they all welcomed me with loving hearts. They were surprised that I had grown so much; Father Ludvik said that I looked manlier, while Madame d'Yves maintained that I had become handsomer; then Father Ludvik inquired rather timidly about the result of the examination, and being told of their favorable result, he embraced me and called me a good fellow. My two little sisters, in their night dresses and barefooted, came tripping from their bedroom, shouting "Henry is come," and climbed upon my knees. In vain Madame d'Yves protested that it was not becoming for young

ladies to appear in such attire (they were six and seven years old). In their joy Madame d'Yves was forgotten, and they put their little arms around my neck and pressed their darling faces against my cheek. After some time I ventured to ask for Hania.

"Oh, she has grown so much!" said Madame d'Yves, "she will be here presently."

I had not long to wait, within five minutes Hania entered the room. I looked at her,—good Heavens; what had become of the poor orphan, so weak and delicate, in the short space of five months? Before me stood an almost full-grown and well-developed young lady. Her complexion was delicate, but healthy. Her whole being, in its youth, charming freshness, and glowing health, seemed like a rose just opening its bud. I noticed, that her large blue eyes rested upon me with considerable curiosity, but I

was also aware that she noticed my astonishment and understood my admiration, for in the dimples of her mouth a charmingly mischievous smile was only half hidden. The apparent curiosity with which we received each other was very likely that indefinable embarrassment of a youth and a maiden. Oh, the cordial, unrestrained intercourse between brother and sister had fled never to return! How beautiful she was with that smile and the serene expression in her eyes! The light of the lamp hanging above the table shone on her blonde hair. She was dressed in black, a black shawl had been hurriedly thrown around her shoulders, and was gathered by her hand on her bosom. Her whole appearance indicated a fascinating carelessness owing to her hurried preparation to see me. Welcoming me, she extended her hand whose touch, as soft as velvet, sent a thrill of joy through me. But Hania had changed

in every respect, not in her physical appearance only. I had left her a plain girl, almost a domestic, now I found a young lady of noble appearance and refined manners, indicating education and intercourse with good society. Her soul, morally and mentally awakened, was reflected in her eyes. She had ceased to be a mere child; a certain innocent coquettishness with which she treated me proved, that she understood how much our former relation had changed. I soon became aware that she even had a certain advantage over me. Although my education was more thorough than hers, I was an inexperienced boy in matters of social obligations and etiquette. Hania was more at ease with me than I with her. My dignity of the guardian and young lord had also disappeared. On the way home I had already pictured to myself how I should greet her; what I would have to say to her, and how kind and con-

descending she should always find me. But all my plans failed utterly. Not I to her, but she to me was good and kind; at least I felt so. I had prepared my questions so as to ascertain the progress in her studies, how she spent her time, whether Madame d'Yves and Father Ludvik were satisfied with her; but now, strange enough, with her charming smile of suppressed mischief she asked me what I had been doing, what I had studied and what my plans for the future were. It was all strangely different from what I expected; in short, our positions had become reversed.

After an hour's conversation we all retired. I went to my room somewhat pensive, rather surprised but also disappointed and somewhat humiliated for many reasons. But my love had received fresh nourishment and it penetrated my heart like the flames that find their way through every crevice of a burning house.

Hania's very appearance, her youthful, charming figure wrapped in slumber,—her white hand clasping the dress on her bosom, and her streaming hair awoke my youthful imagination and covered all my disappointments.

With her picture before my eyes, I fell asleep.

CHAPTER VI.

I rose very early and went into the garden. It was a resplendent morning, pregnant with dew and the odor of flowers. In response to my heart's expectation that I would find Hania at the vineyard, I went there without delay. But Hania was not there. After breakfast we met each other and I asked her to walk with me in the garden. She gladly assented, ran to her room, and returned soon with a parasol and a large straw hat which completely shaded her face. From underneath the hat her charming smile seemed to ask: "See how becoming it is?" We entered the garden together going in the direction of the vineyard. On the way I tried to think of an appropriate beginning for a conversation and wondered why Hania, who surely knew what to say, instead of help-

ing me out, seemed amused at my embarrassment. I continued to walk silently beside her, cutting flowers with my riding whip, till Hania laughingly took it away from me, and said:

"Pan Henry, what have the flowers done to you?"

"Oh, Hania do not mind the flowers, but you see that I don't know what to say to you, you have changed so very much."

"Admitting I have, does that provoke you?"

"I dont say that," I answered rather sadly, "but I cannot become used to the change, because it seems to me that the little Hania whom I once knew, and you, are different persons. That little Hania is connected with my memories, has grown to my heart like a sister, and——

"And this Hania," pointing at herself, "is for you a stranger, is it so?" she asked softly.

"Hania, Hania, how can you think that?"

"But that is very natural, although, perhaps, sad. You are seeking in your heart that brotherly feeling you once had for me and cannot find it; that is all."

"No, Hania I do not seek in my heart the Hania of old, because she is always there, but I look in vain for her in you, and as to my heart———"

"And as to your heart," she interrupted merrily, "I can guess what became of it. It remained somewhere in Warsaw, next to some other happy little heart. That is easy to guess!"

I looked into her eyes, not knowing whether she was merely quizzing me, or whether she, depending on the impression which she had made on me last night and the effects of which I could not conceal, wanted to jest with me, perhaps in a somewhat cruel manner. But suddenly a rebellious feeling rose within me. I

thought it very ridiculous to look at her with the expression of a dying deer, and I controlled my sentimental inclination and answered:

"And if it actually were so?"

A hardly perceptible shadow of surprise and disappointment crossed her cheerful face.

"If it actually is so, then you have changed and not I."

Then she grew silent and looked askant at me. We continued our walk for some time not speaking to each other, but I had difficulty to hide the happiness which her words had caused me. I immediately began to reason: "If she says that I have changed because I loved some one else, then she has not changed and consequently she"—But I did not dare to finish my inference.

Withal, she had changed and I was the same. That little girl, who only half a year ago was so unsophisticated, know-

ing almost nothing of the world, to whom the very thought of love was unknown and to whom such a conversation would have been Greek, now spoke of such matters with perfect ease and unconcern, as if reciting a lesson. How flexible and broadened had become her childish intellect! But such miracles of transformation do take place with young girls. Many of them go to sleep in the evening as a mere child,—and in the morning awake a maiden with a different world of thought and feeling. For Hania, who was naturally bright, sensitive, and of quick perception, the change of her social sphere, her education, perhaps novels secretly read, had been more than sufficient to bring about that change.

Meanwhile we walked silently on till Hania asked:

"Then you are actually in love Pan Henry?"

"Perhaps," I answered laughingly.

"And you are longing very much for Warsaw?"

"No, Hania, I should be very glad never to go from here."

Hania looked at me quickly; evidently she wanted to say something but she surpressed it, stroked her dress lightly with her parasol and after a little while, as if answering her own thought she said:

"Oh, what a simpleton I am!"

"Why do you say so?"

"Oh,—nothing. Let us sit down here on the bench and speak about something else. Truly, is not this a beautiful view from here?" She asked with her usual smile. She sat on a bench underneath a huge lime-tree from where there was a truly beautiful view of the little lake and the dam and the forest beyond. Hania pointed it out to me with her parasol, but I, although a fervent admirer of nature's beauties, had not the least desire

to contemplate them now; first, I had seen this particular view often before; secondly, I had with me Hania who was a hundred times more beautiful than anything that surrounded her; and lastly, I thought of something entirely different.

"How beautifully the trees are reflected in the water," said Hania.

"I see, you are an artist," I answered looking neither towards the trees nor the water.

"Father Ludvik instructed me in drawing. Oh I have learned a great deal during the time that you were gone. I wanted—but what is the matter with you,——are you angry?"

"No Hania, I am not angry, I could not be angry with you; but I see that you evade my questions and that we are playing hide and seek with each other, instead of speaking frankly and with confidence, as we used to do formerly. Perhaps you do not feel it, but to me it is very painful, Hania!

This outspoken expression had only the one effect of bringing us into a dreadful embarrassment, for, while Hania gave me both her hands, I pressed them perhaps a little hard, and—oh, terror! bending over them kissed them with a fervor unbecoming to a guardian. Then we became extremely confused. Hania overflowed with blushes, so did I, finally we lapsed into absolute silence, neither of us being able to utter a word. However, we gathered courage to look at each other, which resulted in a renewed diffusion of our cheeks with blushes. Our situation became intolerable. We sat like dolls; it seemed to me that I could hear the beat of my own heart. At times I imagined that some powerful hand grabbed me by the collar forcing me down to Hania's feet, but another and stronger hand held me back by the hair. At once Hania fairly jumped up and said excitedly:

"I must go now, Madame d'Yves gives me a lesson at this time. It is almost eleven o'clock."

We returned the same way we came, as silently as before. I cut the flowers with my riding whip, but now Hania had no sympathy for them. Well, former relations, had changed strangely. "Good heavens, what is going on with me?" I asked myself when Hania had left me alone. I had fallen so much in love, that my hair stood on end.

Meanwhile the chaplain had come and asked me to go with him to look at the husbandry. On the way he told me many things relating to our manor, but they interested me very little, although I pretended to listen attentively.

My brother Casimir, availing himself of the freedom which vacation afforded, was all day long about the farm-buildings or in the forest, or with his rifle and dogs, hunting on horseback or in the boat.

Just now he was breaking some horses of our stud. Seeing the chaplain and me, he galloped his horse alongside of us. The beautiful and fiery animal was making every effort to throw him. Casimir called our attention to the horse's beautiful proportions, his vigor and elegant gait. Then he dismounted and joined us. Together we looked over the stables, barns and store-houses and were going to the fields, when we were called home because father had arrived. He welcomed me more gladly than ever before. Hearing of the result of the examinations he said, that henceforth he would consider me a full-grown man. There was indeed a great change in his conduct to me, he was more confidential, more cordial. He began to speak about his financial affairs and confided to me his intention of buying an adjoining manor, asking my opinion. I inferred that he spoke purposely so, in order to show me, that he gave due

consideration to the importance of my position as eldest son and heir-apparent. I noticed also that he was very glad at the progress I had made in my studies. His fatherly pride was greatly flattered by the recommendations and compliments from my professors. He scrutinized my character, my mode of reasoning, my conception of honor, putting various searching questions to me. Evidently this paternal examination ended satisfactorily to him, for we had no difference whatever although my philosophical and social views were directly opposite to his. But this difference I carefully concealed, and the severe and imperious expression of my father's countenance gave way to an unusually kind look. He overwhelmed me with gifts on that day, presenting me with a set of pistols which he had used not long ago in a duel with Pan Zoll. The pistols bore engravings of the dates of several other encounters which my

father had had during his service in the army. Then he gave me a magnificent saddle horse of Arabian blood, and an old sabre that had been handed down through generations from our remotest ancestors. Costly jewels were set in the grip, on the broad damascus blade was chiseled in gold an image of the Mother of Christ. This sabre was the most highly prized heirloom in our family, and to me and Casimir has ever been an object of profound admiration mingled with fervent longings for its possession, because it cut iron as if it were wood. Before giving the sabre to me, my father drew it from the scabbard and sent the glittering steel whizzing through the air. Then he made with it the sign of the cross over my head, and handing it to me said:

"I entrust it into worthy hands, I have never disgraced it. See that you do not." I embraced my father and thanked him. Meanwhile Casimir had possessed

himself of the sabre and, although only fifteen years of age, showed such skill and accuracy in handling it, as would have been commendable in a professional fencing master. My father looked at him with satisfaction and said:

"He will be a fighter! but you can do as well, can you not?"

"I can father, I could manage Casimir. Of all my colleagues with whom I took fencing lessons only one excelled me."

"Who was he?"

"Selim."

My father looked displeased. "Oh—Mirza, but you must be stronger."

"That is the only advantage I have over him. But Selim and I will never fight against each other."

"Well, strange things come to pass sometimes."

After dinner on that day we all sat on the vine-shaded veranda, from where we had a comprehensive view of the large

court, and in the distance, of the road shaded by large lime-trees on either side. Madame was making lace work for the chapel, my father and the chaplain were smoking their pipes and sipping black coffee. Casimir was very restless, following with his eyes the airy flight of the swallows whom he surely would have made an object for his marksmanship, had he not been forbidden by his father to do so. Hania and I looked at some drawings which I had brought, and I saw as little as possible of them. For me, at least, they were merely serving as a cover for the glances which I cast at Hania.

"Tell me, how do you find Hania, has she grown very homely, Pan Guardian," my father asked me, looking smilingly at her.

"I can not say homely, but she has grown tall and changed."

I did not lift my eyes from the drawings while speaking.

"Pan Henry has already reproached me because of the change," Hania exclaimed not appearing to have been much impressed with my criticism.

I wondered at her self-possession. I could not have mentioned such a reproach so indifferently.

"What does it matter whether she has grown handsome or homely?" said the chaplain. "She studies well and learns quickly. Madame, will you tell us how quickly she learned French?"

It may be said here that the chaplain, although a thoroughly educated man did not speak French and could not learn it notwithstanding his association with Madame d'Yves for a number of years. But he had a great predilection for French, and he regarded its knowledge as an indispensable requisite of the higher education.

"I can not deny that Hania learns quickly and cheerfully, but I have to

complain of her,"—Madame d'Yves added, looking at me.

"Oh, Madame, what have I done?"—asked Hania, folding her hands imploringly.

"What have you done? you must explain yourself"—said Madame d'Yves. "Just imagine, this young lady, when she finds a moment's spare time, reads novels. I have even good reasons to believe that, when retiring for the night, instead of blowing out the candle and going to sleep, she reads for hours."

"That is very wrong, but then, I know from good sources that in doing so she merely follows the example of her preceptress,"—said my father, who liked to tease Madame d'Yves when he was in good humor.

"Oh, pardon me, but I am forty-five."

"Well, who would have thought that"—remarked my father.

"You are unkind."

"I don't know about that, but I do know that if Hania secures novels from somewhere, it is not from the library, because the chaplain has the key to it; the fault, therefore, must be with the lady."

In fact, Madame d'Yves was very fond of novels and had the weakness of telling everybody about the plot. It was likely, that Hania had heard from her a great deal about novels. There was a hidden reproach in my father's words.

"Some one is coming to us, just look!" called out Casimir.

We all looked towards the shady avenue on which, a few thousand yards away we saw a cloud of dust nearing us very rapidly.

"Who can that be? what a speed,"—said my father leaving his seat.—"There is so much dust that it is impossible to see."

The heat was very oppressive; for more than two weeks it had not rained, and on

the roads clouds of fine, white dust arose with every motion. For awhile we were unable to distinguish the object enveloped in the dust-cloud, which was now quite near, when at once we saw a horse's head with expanded nostrils, fiery eyes, and flowing mane. A white horse was coming at a furious gallop, the hoofs barely touching the ground, and leaning over the horses neck in Tartar style was none other than my friend Selim.

"Selim is coming, Selim!" Casimir shouted."

"What is the dare-devil doing! the gate is closed!" I cried, running towards it.

But there was no time to open the gate. No one could have reached it. Meanwhile Selim galloped blindly at a fearful speed. It seemed inevitable that he would strike with full force the iron gate which was over four feet high, with spikes on the top.

"God, be merciful to him!"—called out Father Ludvik.

"The gate! Selim the gate!" I yelled at the top of my voice, waving my handkerchief madly and rushing across the court yard.

Suddenly, about five steps from the gate, Selim straightened himself in the saddle and with a quick glance measured the pickets. Then I heard the screams of the women on the veranda, violent stamping of hoofs, the horse reared, with front feet high in the air, and then cleared the gate in full gallop without stopping for a moment, till it reached the front of the veranda. Here Selim made such a sudden halt, that the hoofs of the horse sunk into the ground. He took off his hat waved it lustily, and greeted us:

"How are you all, ladies and gentlemen? How do you do? My respects to his lordship"—bowing to my father—"my respects to the reverend gentlemen, to Madame d'Yves and Panna Hania! Now we are all together again, hurrah!"

So saying he dismounted, gave the bridle to Frank who hurried from the hallway. Selim then embraced the gentlemen and kissed the hands of the ladies.

Madame d'Yves and Hania were still pale from fright and looked at Selim with the attention given to a person just rescued from deadly peril. The chaplain said:

"You reckless fellow! You have frightened us. We thought it was all over with you."

"Why?"

"Because of the gate. How can you ride so blindly?"

"Blindly? Oh, I saw that closed gate very well, I have a Tartar's keen eyes!"

"And you were not afraid to jump?"

"No, not a bit, Father Ludvik. After all, my horse deserves the credit, not I."

"Voila un brave garcon"—said Madame d'Yves.

"Oh! indeed, not everybody would have risked it,"—added Hania.

"You mean"—I corrected her—"that not every horse would have cleared the gate, because such riders may be found in abundance."

Hania looked at me for some time and said: "I should not advise you to try."

Then she looked at Selim with an expression that plainly bespoke admiration. His beautiful black hair fell over his forehead, his face was flushed from the swift ride, his eyes sparkling, full of happiness and youthful fire. Standing beside Hania I doubt, if the mind of the greatest artist could have conceived a picture more beautiful.

As far as I was concerned, I must say that I felt deeply hurt at Hania's words. It seemed to me that Hania's "I should not advise you to try it," was said in a tone that sounded rather ironically. I cast an inquiring look at my father, who was examing Selim's horse. I knew his parental ambition, I knew that he was

jealous whenever anyone excelled me and and that this especially provoked him against Selim. I expected therefore, that he would not object, should I want to prove that I was as good a horseman as Selim.

"That horse jumps very well, father" I said.

"Yes, but that fellow rides well." And you, "could you do as well?"

"Hania doubts it"—I answered with some bitterness—"may I try?"

My father hesitated; he glanced at the gate, at the horse, and then at me, and said: "No."

"Of course, it is better that I be considered an old woman in comparison with Selim," I exclaimed, now thoroughly irritated.

"Henry, what nonsense do you talk," said Selim, putting his arm around my neck."

Now my father's pride was touched.

"Go my boy, and clear the gate; and do it well!"

"Bring me the horse!" I called to Frank, who was walking the tired charger in the court yard. Suddenly Hania left her seat.

"Pan Henry," she said, "I am the cause of this. I wish it not, I wish it not. Please, do not do it for my sake!"

Saying so, she looked into my eyes, as if she wanted to express with one glance what she could not express in words. Oh, for that look I would have given my life, but I could not step back now. My injured pride was in that moment stronger than all other emotions. I controlled myself and said dryly:

"Panna Hania, you mistake. You are not the cause of it; I shall try it for my own amusement."

Then I mounted the hourse in spite of protestations from all except my father. Frank opened the gate and

closed it behind me. My heart was overflowing with bitterness and I would have tried the jump had the gate been thrice as high. Having ridden about three hundred steps, I turned the horse, started a trot, and quickly changed to a gallop. Suddenly I felt that the saddle was loose.

One of two things must have happened: Either the saddle-girth had broken at the first jump, or Frank had loosened it to relieve the horse, and from forgetfulness or stupidity had failed to warn me.

Now it was too late; the horse was nearing the gate at the utmost speed and I did not want to stop. "If I get killed that ends it,"—I said to myself. I was desperate; I pressed the flanks of my horse convulsively, the wind whistled in my ears. Suddenly the pickets of the gate flashed before my eyes. I lashed the horse with the whip, and then I felt as if lifted into the air. I could hear

shrieks from the veranda, darkness surrounded me and—after a while—I found myself on the lawn, recovering from a fainting spell.

I jumped up. "What has happened?" I asked, "did I fall?"

Around me stood my father, the chaplain, Selim, Casimir, Madame d'Yves, and Hania, very pale, with tears in her eyes.

"Are you hurt?" was asked on all sides.

"No, not in the least. I fell; but that was not my fault, the saddle-girth broke."

In fact, I was not injured in the least only my breath was a little heavy. My father examined my arms, legs, and my back.

"Do you feel any pains?" he asked.

"No, I am quite well."

In a short time I recovered my normal breath. I was provoked, because it seemed to me, that I looked rather ridiculous. It could not be otherwise, for

the impetus of the fall had landed me across the road on the lawn, and the knees and elbows of my light suit had assumed a green color; my whole appearance was rather disordered. But this unfortunate accident had its advantages. Only a short time before Selim was the object of general attention, but now I had taken the palm from him, at the expense of my knees and elbows. Hania, who considered herself the cause of my hazardous feat,—and I feel constrained to say that she was,—did her best to counteract her carelessness by a very kind and loving treatment of me. Under such conditions I soon recovered my good humor and imparted it in short time to the still somewhat terrified company. We enjoyed ourselves very well. Refreshments were served, Hania making a charming hostess. Later on we went into the garden. Here Selim became very jolly, doing all kinds of pranks and Hania assisted him effectively.

"How we three enjoy ourselves!" said Selim.

"I wonder," asked Hania, "who of us is the merriest?"

"Surely I," he answered.

"Or perhaps I, I am naturally very merry."

"And the least happy is Henry," added Selim. "His disposition is severe and inclines to melancholy. If he had lived in the medieval ages he would have become a knight-errant, or a troubadour, —but halt,—he can't sing. But we," looking at Hania, "are just as if made for each other.

"I do not agree with you," I said: "Well-mated disposition I consider such, as oppose each other, in such a case one has that which the other lacks."

"Thank you," said Selim. "I suppose that with your disposition you like to weep, and Hania to laugh. Now suppose further—you marry—."

"Selim!"

"And what my dear sir; ha! ha! Do you remember Cicero's Pro Archia? '*commoveri videtur juvenis*,' which means in Polish: the youth seems to grow embarrassed. But this is nothing, you are well known to blush without cause. Panna Hania, he blushes beautifully, and just now he is doing it for both of us."

"Selim!"

"Never mind. I am returning to my supposition. You Pan Tears marry Panna Smiles. What happens? He starts to cry, she starts to laugh. You never understand each other, you don't attract each other, you repulse each other. And those are well-mated dispositions! Oh, with me it would be different. We would laugh throughout our lives."

"How you talk," said Hania, and then they both laughed very heartily.

I did not have the least inclination to

laugh. Selim did not know how deeply he had hurt me by calling Hania's attention to the great contrast between our temperaments. I felt very irritable, and said to Selim:

"A peculiar view you have. The more peculiar it seems to me, since I know your prediliction for melancholy persons."

"I?" he asked, with genuine astonishment.

"Yes, I will recall to you a certain window, flowers in the window and a petite face between the flowers. I give you my word, I had never seen a more melancholy face."

Hania clasped her hands.

"Oho! I am learning something now," she said laughing, "That's nice, Pan Selim, beautiful."

I expected Selim to become confused and loose his humor, but he merely said:

"Henry, too long a tongue should be cut off," and laughed.

But Hania teased him much about it and implored him to tell her the name. He said without hesitation: "Josy." He must not have cared very much to keep the matter secret, as otherwise he would have regretted his frankness, because Hania spoke about nothing else all evening, but Josy.

"Is she pretty?" she asked.

"Rather."

"What color of hair and eyes has she.

"Oh, quite pretty, but not such as please me best of all."

"And which pleases you most?"

"Blonde hair—and eyes—if you please, blue—just like those into which I am now looking."

"Oh, Pan Selim!" and Hania looked serious. But Selim folded his hands in supplication and looked at her with his peculiar touching expression, saying:

"Panna Hania, do not be angry with me. What has the poor Tartar done to

you? Please forgive me, and do smile again."

Hania looked at him, and the longer she looked the less provoked he appeared to be, the cloud had gone. He seemed to enchant her; smiles were vainly trying to hide in her dimples, her face brightened, and at last she said in a kind forgivng tone:

"Very well, I shall not be angry, but be pleased to behave."

"I shall, by the love of Mohammet, I shall!"

"Do you love Mohammet very much?"

"Like dogs love tramps," and then they both laughed again.

"Now tell me," resumed Hania, "with whom did Pan Henry fall in love? I have asked him, but he will not tell me."

"Henry?—Do you know," here Selim looked at me askance, "perhaps he is not in love yet, but he will be. Oho! I know well with whom. And as far as I am concerned—."

"What about you?" asked Hania, endeavoring to hide her embarrassment.

"I would do the same. After all, it may be, that he is in love already."

"Selim, I must ask you to leave me alone."

"Why, my dear fellow?" asked Selim, putting his arm on my shoulder. "Oh, Panna, if you knew, how good he is!"

"I know it well," said Hania. I remember how good he was to me when my grandfather died."

A shadow of sadness clouded our mirth. Selim, desiring to change the topic of conversation, said:

"Let me tell you of the time, when after our examination for university, we were intoxicated in company with our tutor—."

"What, intoxicated?"

"Yes; oh, that is a custom and it can not be avoided. Well then, when we were all intoxicated, I not knowing what

I was doing, proposed your health. Of course, it was very improper, you see. But Henry jumped up: 'How do you dare to pronounce Hania's name in such a place!' he said to me. It was in a public wine shop. It came almost to a fight. He would not suffer anyone to insult you with impunity."

Hania gave me her hand: "Pan Henry how very good you are."

Selim's frankness reconciled me with him and I said to Hania: "But is not Selim equally good in telling about it."

"What a goodness!" Selim said laughing.

"You are worthy of each other," said Hania, "and we will be very happy together."

"And you shall be our queen," exclaimed Selim, with enthusiasm.

"Gentlemen, Hania! Tea is ready," called Madame d'Yves, from the veranda.

We returned in the best of humor.

The table was set on the vedanda. Around the glass-globes of the candles, which burned with a flickering light, night-fliers swarmed in circles. The vine leaves rustled, moved by the soft breezes of the balmy night-air, and above the high poplars rose the full moon. Our conversation had brought us into a very happy mood. The evening, so beautiful and silent, also influenced the elder people. The faces of my father and the chaplain looked as happy and free from care as the sky above was free from clouds. After tea my father spoke of olden times,—with him always a sign of good humor.

The chaplain who had often heard those reminiscences of the past and the strange and thrilling adventures, gradually ceased smoking, listened more and more attentively, pushed his spectacles up his forehead, and nodding with his head, would say: "hm, hm,"—or, at an

appropriate time exclaimed: "Good Heavens! what happened then?"

I and Selim leaning on each other, with eyes intently fixed on my father, strained our ears not to lose one word. But on no face were impressions as vividly portrayed as on Selim's. His eyes glistened like live coal, his cheeks were glowing red. His oriental blood, like oil on the water, was floating uppermost. With difficulty he restrained himself to sit quiet. Madame d'Yves smilingly looked at him and then, with her eyes directed Hania's attention to him, after which they both admired that face, which reflected like a mirror the impressions from without.

To-day, recalling the memories of such evenings I can not withstand a deep emotion. Since then many a wave has rolled by in the ocean, many a cloud has passed underneath the heavens, but before my eyes constantly stand the visions of like

scenes of our happy country life, of silent summer nights, of a contented, loving and happy family. The old gray-haired veteran telling of his younger days, and among the eagerly listening youths, a wild-flower like, little face—oh, many waves have rolled to the ocean's shore, and many the clouds that have passed since then.

Meanwhile it struck ten o'clock. Selim rose to go, because he had been told to return home for the night. We concluded, that all should accompany Selim to the cross at the end of the poplar avenue, I was to escort him on horseback for some distance beyond the meadows. All of us, excepting Casimir who had retired, set out for the walk.

I, Hania, and Selim took the lead, Hania in the middle, and we on each side, leading the horses by the bridles. The elder folks followed us. It was dark in the avenue; the moon penetrating

through the dense foliage, threw silvery spots on the black ground.

"Let us sing something," said Selim, "some old and pretty song,—about Filo, for instance."

"That is very seldom sung," answered Hania, "I know another:"

> "In the autumn, in the autumn,
> Leaves are colored on the trees."

They compromised to sing first about Filo,—a song which my father and the chaplain liked very much, because it reminded them of olden times,—and then Hania's song of the autumn. Hania held with her white little hand the mane of Selim's horse, and she and Selim sang:

> "The moon has risen in the west
> And silence now prevails.—"

When they had finished, we heard approving bravos from those behind us and "sing more!" I joined Hania and Selim as well as I could, but my voice

was poor. They sang very well, especially Selim. Sometimes, when my notes deflected too much, they both laughed at me. They sang a few more songs, and I was asking myself: "Why does Hania hold the mane of Selim's horse and not mine?" She evidently liked it very much. Sometimes she petted its neck with her hand, saying: "My pretty animal," and the gentle creature neighed in response and showed its snuffing, expanded nostrils into Hania's hand, in quest of sugar. This all made me asd again, and I saw nothing but Hania's hand resting on the horse's mane.

We had reached the end of the avenue. Selim bid good-night to everybody, and kissed Madame d'Yves hand. He wanted to kiss Hania's, but she did not allow him, looking at me with some embarrassment. But when Selim had mounted, she went near him and spoke. By the light of the moon,—at this place

unobstructed by the poplars,—I could see her eyes up-lifted to Selim, and the sweet expression of her face.

"Don't forget Pan Selim," she said to him, "we will always play and sing together, and now: 'good-night!' " So saying she gave him her hand. Then they all turned to go home and Selim rode off towards the meadows.

For sometime we rode in silence on the open highway. All around, it was so light, that one could have counted the little needles of the juniper-brushes, growing alongside the road. From time to time the horses snorted, and the clang of the stirrups, striking each other, was audible. I looked at Selim; he was lost in deep thought and his eyes wandered about the nocturnal scenery. I had an irrepressible desire to speak of Hania, I felt the necessity of confiding to some one the impressions of the day, to talk overy every word spoken,—but I could

not make a beginning with Selim. But all at once Selim himself began. He leaned over to me, put his arm around my neck, and kissing my cheek, exclaimed:

"Oh, Henry, how beautiful and good your Hania is! I don't care a bit for Josy."

That exclamation chilled me like an icy wind. I did not answer, but loosened his arm from my neck and pushed him coldly away. We rode on in silence, and I noticed that he seemed very much embarrassed, but he said nothing; after a while he turned towards me and asked:

"Are you angry about something?"

"You are childish!"

"Perhaps you are jealous!"

I checked my horse.

"Good-night to you Selim!"

It was evident that he did not want to part yet, but he mechanically extended his hand. Then he opened his mouth

as if to say something, but I turned my horse quickly, and trotted homewards.

"Good-night," Selim called.

For a moment he remained on the spot, then he rode slowly in the opposite direction.

I slackened the speed of my horse and rode at a walk. The night was beautiful, warm and quiet. The dew-covered meadows resembled large lakes; from afar I heard the call of the mistle-thrush and the humming of the chafters in the high reeds. I looked up to the starry immensity; I wanted to pray and to cry.

Suddenly I heard the clang of a galloping horse. I looked around; it was Selim. He stopped in front of me, and said with a voice full of emotion:

"Henry I have come back, because there is something wrong with you. At first I thought; if he is angry,—let him be! but afterwards I felt sorry for you,

I could not stand it. Tell me, what is the matter with you, perhaps I have spoken too much with Hania? Perhaps you love her? Henry, tell me!"

Tears choked my voice and I could not answer him immediately. If I had only followed my first impulse, thrown myself on the breast of that good fellow and told him everything! Oh, how many times in my life have I felt the necessity of making a clear breast of that which oppressed me, but as many times an unconquerable foolish pride, which had to be broken like rock with a chisel, chilled my heart and tied my tongue! Of how much happiness has this pride bereft me in my life, how many times have I been sorry for it afterwards! and yet, in the first moment I was never able to resist it!

Selim had said, "I felt sorry for you," consequently he pitied me. That was enough to close my mouth.

I was silent, and he looked at me with his beautiful eyes, and said in an imploring and remorseful tone:

"Henry do you love her? You see I like her, but that is all. If you wish, I will never speak another word to her. Tell me, do you love her, already? What have you against me?"

"I am not in love, I have nothing against you. I fell from the horse and I feel somewhat shaken up. But in love I am not."

"Henry!"

"I tell you again, it is merely the fall."

Again we parted, Selim rode off, a little more satisfied. In fact, it was very natural that the fall from the horse should have affected me. I remained aolne with bitterness and deep regret in my heart; touched by Selim's kindness, and angry at myself because I had repelled him. I brought the horse to a gallop and in a few moments was home.

There was light in the music room and through the open windows the soft chords of the piano reached my ears. Frank took the horse and I went inside. Hania was playing some song unknown to me. She played with that confidence peculiar to diletantis, not infrequently striking a wrong key; she was a mere beginner. But her playing was more than sufficient to enrapture my soul, more loving, than musical. When I entered she recognized me with a smile, but continued to play. I dropped into an easy chair standing opposite the piano, and looked at her. Her serene forehead and the regularly marked brows were visible above the music stand, her eyelids were lowered. Having played for sometime, she stopped, and looking at me, said in an ingratiating manner:

"Pan Henry!"

"What is it, Hania?"

"I meant to ask you something—oh!

have you invited Pan Selim for to-morrow?"

"No. My father wishes that we should go to-morrow to Ustrzyce because a package arrived from my mother for lady Ustrzycka." Hania was silent and struck a few chords, very mechanically, thinking of something else. After a while she asked again.

"Pan Henry?"

"Well, Hania?"

"I wanted to ask something—oh, yes! —is that Panna Josy from Warsaw very pretty?"

Well, that was too much! Bitterness and anger cramped my heart. I walked rapidly towards her and with a trembling voice said:

"Not prettier than you. Rest easy, you may safely try your charms on Selim!"

Hania rose from the piano stool, and a deep crimson covered her cheeks.

"Pan Henry, what do you say!"

"Just what you intended."

Then I took my hat, and bowing to her, left the room.

CHAPTER VII.

It may easily be imagined how I spent the night after all the worries of the day. Having gone to bed, I asked myself, what had happened that would account for my strange behavior during the day? The answer was easy; nothing had happened; that is, nothing could be ascribed to either Selim or Hania, that could not be easily explained, be it on account of common courtesy equally obligatory upon all, or through mere curiosity, or, perhaps, mutual sympathy. There could be no doubt that Selim liked Hania and she him, but because of that I had no reason to be indignant and to disturb the peace of others. They were not guilty of any misbehavior, but I was. This thought should have quieted me, but on the contrary, however much I explained to myself their relative positions, how-

ever much I assured myself that nothing had happened, and although I blamed myself for having unjustly caused them annoyance, I could not help feeling a foreboding of something indefinable that clouded my future. The very fact, that it was something uncertain and unknown, something that could not well be put in the form of a reproach to either Mirza or Hania, made my apprehension the more sensitive. I had no cause for a reproach but I did have ground for uneasiness. All these thoughts and apprehensions were subtilties, intangible, in which my unsophisticated mind became entangled. I felt completely exhausted as if I had just returned from a long journey, but withal, the most bitter and painful thought, was the consciousness that I, yes I, through my jealousy and indiscretion was the main cause of their attraction for each other. Oh, it was not difficult for me to draw that conclusion.

although, I had no experience. Such things are easily guessed. Moreover, I was aware, that in all this chaos I would choose the wrong path, because of my wrong impulses, and because of other circumstances, temporary and trifling, perhaps, and yet of sufficient importance to make happiness depend upon them. I was very unhappy and miserable; and although my troubles may seem to some mere trifles, I wish to say, that misfortune is not measured by the greatness of its own self but by the way in which it afflicts the individual.

And yet, nothing had happened whatever; these were the words I repeated to myself, till gradually my thoughts became confused and fell into that dreamy disorder that usually precedes sound sleep. Many strange thoughts mingled with my own sorrows. My father's narratives, their characters and events, came up at the present moment, with Selim,

Hania, and my love. Perhaps I had a slight fever because of my fall. The candle had burned low, and suddenly, the wick fell into the holder. There was darkness for a moment, then a bright light jumped out, flickering smaller and smaller, till, once more, with a final effort, it shone out brightly, and then died. It must have been late; the crow of the cock penetrated the shutters, and then I fell into a heavy, unwholesome sleep, from which I did not awake for some time.

I overslept myself next morning, missed breakfast and also the opportunity to see Hania before noon, because she had lessons with Madame d'Yves till two o'clock. My long sleep had refreshed my depressed spirits and I looked less gloomily upon the world, and I said to myself, "I shall be good to Hania, and polite, to repair the rudeness of last evening."

But I had forgotten, that I had not only annoyed, but also offended her. When Hania came down with Madame d'Yves for dinner, I advanced towards her rapidly, but stopped, as if someone had poured icewater over me. All my good resolutions had flown, not because I had renounced them, but I felt repelled. Hania said very politely "good-day," but at the same time so formally, that I lost all desire for cordial effusions. Then she sat down beside Madame d'Yves and throughout the dinner seemed entirely unaware of my existence. I must admit that my existence seemed to me at that moment so worthless and deplorable, that if someone had offered me a paltry sum for it, I would have told him, that he was overpaying. The spirit of opposition rose within me: I will pay Hania with her own coin. (Strange conduct towards the person whom one loves above all!) I could verily say that while

my mouth laughed my heart wept. During dinner we did not speak one word to each other, except through the medium of a third party. If, for instance, Hania said that it would rain towards evening, she addressed herself to Madame d'Yves, and I would say to her, and not to Hania, that it would not rain. This pouting and teasing gave me a cruel delight. "I wonder, my dear Miss, how you will treat me in Ustrzyce," I thought to myself. I would purposely ask her something in presence of strangers. Then she will be forced to answer me and the ice will melt. I promised myself much from our stay in Ustrzyce. True, Madame d'Yves was to go with us, but that did not matter. Meanwhile I feared, that somebody might notice our estrangement and ask why we were angry at each other, and then everything would be known. I blushed at the very thought and fear cramped my heart. Strange

enough, Hania seemed to be much less apprehensive than I. Not only that, but she noticed my embarrassment and was amused at it. I felt chagrined, but nothing could be done. I would bide my time at Ustrzyce.

But Hania, too, evidently thought of Ustrzyce, because after dinner, when she served my father with black coffee, she kissed his hand, and said:

"May I remain at home, if you please, and not go to Ustrzyce?"

He did not hear her at once; kissing her forehead, he asked:

"What do you want, little woman?"

"I have a request."

"What is it?"

"May I remain at home?"

"Why, are you not well?"

If she says that she is ill everything is lost, I thought, the more so as father was in good humor and would allow her to stay home.

But Hania never uttered an untruth, and instead of pretending to have a headache she said:

"I am well, but I do not care to go."

"Oh, then you will go to Ustrzyce because it is necessary."

Hania did not say a word, but curtesied and left the room. I rejoiced over her discomfiture.

Being left alone with my father I asked him why he insisted on Hania's going.

"It is my wish that our neighbors should become used to look upon Hania as a member of our family. Hania, going to Ustrzyce, goes in the name of your mother. Do you understand?"

I not only understood him but felt like kissing my good father for his thoughtfulness.

At five o'clock we were to leave. Madame d'Yves and Hania were preparing upstairs. Intending to go on

horseback I had ordered a light carriage for two. It was one and a half miles* to Ustrzyce and with favorable weather, we had before us a very agreeable drive. When Hania came down, dressed very carefully and becoming in black, I could not turn my eyes from her. She looked so beautiful that my heart immediately softened, and all desire of resistance and coolness went with the wind. But my queen passed by me in a truly regal style, not deigning to even look at me; although I had done my best to appear at an advantage. In fact, Hania was somewhat out of humor because she disliked to go, less for the reason that it would provoke me, than for other, and as I learned later, weightier reasons. Punctually at five I mounted my horse. The ladies took their seats in the carriage and we left together.

On the way I kept at Hania's side and

* Six English miles.

used all possible means to attract her attention. But only once, when my horse reared, did she look, measuring me with a cool glance from head to foot and—it seemed to me—smiling faintly, at which I felt encouraged. But she turned to Madame d'Yves and spoke to her in such a way that I could not join the conversation.

We finally arrived at Ustrzyce and found Selim there. Pani Ustrzycki was not at home. There were the lord of the house, two governesses, French and German, and the two young ladies. The elder, Lola, was of Hania's age, and quite a pretty young woman; the younger, Mary, a mere child.

After the first exchange of greetings and welcomes the ladies went into the garden to gather strawberries, while Pan Ustrzycki took me and Selim to show us some new guns, and his hounds trained for boarhunting, which he had secured

in Breslau at a high price. I have already mentioned that Pan Ustrzycki was the most enthusiastic huntsman in the surrounding country. Moreover, he was a very fair-minded and good-hearted gentleman, and as generous and obliging as he was rich. He had one little shortcoming that tended to make him rather tiresome: he laughed almost incessantly, and in conversation would repeat every few moments: "It's all a farce, my dear sir, what do you say?" For this reason he had been nicknamed "the farce-neighbor," or "Lord what-do-you-say."

So our farce-neighbor took us to the dog kennels, not considering for a moment, that we would likely prefer to be with the ladies in the garden. For sometime we listened patiently to him, but at length I remembered some engagement with Madame d'Yves, and Selim told him frankly:

"This is all very good, and the dogs

are very nice, but what shall we do when we would much rather join the ladies?"

Pan Ustrzycki laughed and said: "It's all a farce my dear sir, what-do-you-say? Well, come on, I will go with you."

And we went. But I discovered very soon, that I had little reason to wish for the ladies. Hania, who kept somewhat apart from her companions, was reserved as to me and purposely paid attention to, Selim. Of course, it was my obligation to entertain Panna Lola. About what I talked to her, and what incoherent things I answered to her polite questions, I do not remember; for I followed Hania and Selim very closely, pricked my ears to hear every word they spoke, and strained my eyes to espy all their movements. Selim did not notice this, but Hania did, and she lowered her voice a little and looked coquettishly at Selim who was willing to be carried away by the high-tide of her good graces. "Wait,

Hania," I thought to myself, "as you to me, so I to you." And so reasoning I turned to my companion. I forgot to say, that Panna Lola had a fancy for me, which she showed me quite plainly. I became suddenly very attentive to her, courted and laughed, although I felt more like crying. Panna Lola looked at me tenderly with her glimmering, deep-blue eyes and was sinking fast into a romantic mood.

Oh, if she had only known how I disliked her! And yet, I had so thoroughly assumed my role of insincerity, that I even became guilty of something dishonorable. In the course of the conversation Panna Lola made a rather sarcastic remark about Selim and Hania, and I,—although I felt very indignant and should have answered her accordingly, smiled stupidly and said nothing.

In such a manner we passed a whole hour in each other's company. Then

supper was served underneath the spreading chestnut tree, whose long branches touched the ground, forming a green cupola above us. At supper I began to understand that it was not on my account alone that Hania did not wish to go to Ustrzyce but that she had good reasons of her own for her refusal. The whole matter stood thus: Madame d'Yves, who came from a family of French nobility and who doubtless had a better education than other governesses, considered herself above the French and especially the German governess at Ustrzyce. They, in their turn, deemed themselves better than Hania, because her grandfather had been a servant. But the well-bred Madame d'Yves did not let them feel her superiority, while they slighted Hania, going even beyond the limits of propriety. These were merely little caprices and vanities, not unusual among women, but I could not permit that my dearest

Hania, who was worth to me a hundred times more than the whole of Ustrzyce, should be their victim. Hania bore the slights with great tact and amiability, which reflected very creditably on her character; but, of course, they must have been painful to her. When Pani Ustrzyci was present, nothing of this kind ever happened, but now the two governesses made use of their opportunity. As soon as Selim sat down next to Hania, they whispered and giggled, and made insinuations, in which, even Panna Lola also joined, because she was jealous of Hania's beauty. Several times I parried their insinuative thrusts very sharply, perhaps too much so; when Selim, much against my will, took my place, I noticed a cloud of anger on his brow, but he controlled himself and turned a sarcastic glance upon the governesses. Being acute, witty, and more ready at repartee than the most people of his age, he

soon won a decisive victory over them. He was ably assisted by Madame d'Yves with her dignity, and by me, who had a strong desire to thrash the foreigners. Panna Lola, not wishing to antagonize me also sided with us and commenced to show a great deal of attention to Hania. In short, our triumph was complete but unfortunately to my sorrow, Selim received the largest share of the credit. After we left the table, and began promenading in couples in the garden, I heard Hania say to Selim in a surpressed tone:

"Pan Selim, I am very much—."

Then she ended abruptly because she did not want to show her tears, as her emotion was gradually getting beyond her control.

"Panna Hania, don't let us speak about it. Don't pay any attention to it, and please don't worry."

"You see how hard it is for me to speak about it, but I wished to thank you."

"And what for, Panna Hania, what for? I can't see tears in your eyes. For you I would gladly—."

Now he ended abruptly, probably because he could not find an appropriate expression, or he noticed in time, that the emotions which filled his breast were carrying him away. He turned his head in embarrassment to hide his feeling, and grew silent.

Hania looked at him through her tears with radiant eyes, and this time I did not have to ask myself what had happened.

I loved Hania with all the power of my soul, I idolized her. Mine was not the love of ordinary human beings, mine was a love beyond the common. I loved her appearance, her eyes, each hair of her head, the sound of her voice. I loved each one of her dresses, the very air in which she breathed. And that love not only penetrated my heart, but my whole existence. I lived only in this love and

through it; it coursed through my veins like my blood. For others there might be something else beside their love, but for me the whole universe was contained in my love, beyond it there was nothing. For the world I was blind, deaf, and senseless, because my reason, my senses were wrapped up in that one feeling. I felt that the mighty flame of my love was devouring me like a lighted torch. I felt that I would perish. What was that love? A grand voice, a mighty call from one soul to another: "My goddess, my saint, my adored, hear me!"

But now I knew what had happened. Not to me came Hania's answer to my fervent prayers. Amidst indifferent people, a man who thirsts for love walks as if lost in a forest, calling out, that a sympathetic voice may answer him. Why should I call out? I knew through my own love and through my vain longings that Selim's and Hania's

hearts were calling each other to happiness, and me to ruin. One was to the other the echo of the forest, and one followed the other like the echo follows the voice. And what could I do against the inevitable, that was happiness to them and misery to me? How could I change the order of nature and reverse the fatal logic of things? How could I conquer Hania's heart if some irresistible power turned it from me?

I separated from the company and sat down on a bench in the garden. All those thoughts were crossing my head like a flock of frightened birds. A feeling of despair came over me. I felt how lonesome I was amidst loving parents, brother and sister, amidst well-wishing hearts. The whole world seemed to me so lonely and empty, the heavens above so indifferent to human sufferings, that, involuntarily, one thought dominated all the others within me and overshadowed

everything with its grave peacefulness. That thought was: death. And then there would be an escape out of the chaos, and end to all my sorrows. The said comedy would be ended, and all the ties that cruelly bound my soul, severed. Then I would find rest after all my sufferings; oh, that peace for which I wished so much. A sepulchral peace, a peace of nothingness, but calm, and eternal!

I was overcome by tears, sorrow, and sleep. I wanted to sleep, to sleep, even at the price of my life! But then came to me another thought from the peaceful, infinite heavens above whither the faith of my childhood had flown, and that thought formed itself into the question: If I should die?

This presented a new aspect to all the difficulties into which my ill star had driven me. Oh, I suffered fearfully,—and there, from the shaded avenue came to me merry voices and soft whispers.

Around me was the scent of flowers, in the trees the birds were singing their evening song, above me the serene sky, reddened by the setting sun, everything —everybody was at peace, and only I, careworn and sore, wished to die amid all this bloom of life.

Suddenly I heard the rustle of a dress, I looked up: It was Panna Lola. She seemed sad and looked at me with pity, and, perhaps, with more than sympathy. In the twilight and underneath the shadows of the trees she seemed pale; her rich hair—some accident perhaps loosened it —streaming down her shoulders.

In this moment I did not feel any aversion towards her. "The only soul that has pity for me! I thought, "do you come to console me?"

"Pan Henry, you seem so sad! perhaps you suffer?"

"Oh, indeed, dear young lady, I do suffer! I exclaimed passionately, and

grasping her hand I held it to my feverish forehead, kissed it fervently, and ran away.

"Pan Henry!" she cried after me, in a suppressed voice.

Just at this time Hania and Selim appeared at the bend of the driveway. Both had seen my outburst, how I had pressed and kissed Lola's hand, both had seen it, and smilingly they exchanged a knowing look, as if to say: "We understand what that means."

Meanwhile it had grown late and it was time to turn homewards. Selim's way branched off at the first turnpike, but I feared that he might wish to accompany us farther. I hastily mounted my horse and remarked in a loud voice that it was late. Taking leave, I received a very warm pressure from Lola's hand, but I did not respond and rode away.

Selim took his road at the turnpike,

but he kissed Hania's hand, and for the first time Hania did not seek to prevent it.

She did not ignore me any more and seemd to be in too happy a mood to remember the quarrels of the morning. But I interpreted her happy disposition most unfavorably to myself. Madame d'Yves had fallen asleep after a few moments, her head nodding in all directions. I looked at Hania, she did not sleep. Her eyes were wide open and reflected happiness. She did not break the silence, being evidently occupied with her own thoughts. At last, when we neared home she looked at me, and seeing me thoughtful, asked:

"Of whom are you thinking, of Lola, perhaps?" I did not answer one word but bit my teeth and thought: "you may tear open my wounds, if it pleases you, but you will not press one sigh out of me."

But Hania certainly did not intend to cause me pain, she asked the question because she had a right to do so.

Astonished at my silence she asked again,—again no answer. She must have seen that I continued the pouting from the morning, and so remained silent.

CHAPTER VIII.

A few days later, the roseate hues of the morning sun shone through the heart-shaped openings in the shutters and awoke me. Soon I heard some one knock on the shutters and through the fiery openings appeared the bearded face of Wach, our forester, and his deep voice called out:

"Sir!"

"What is it!"

"The wolves are running the she-wolf in the Pohorowo forests. We were to go for a hunt."

"Right away!"

I dressed hastily, took my gun and hunting hanger and left the room. Wach stood there quite wet from the morning dew, on his shoulder a double barreled, rusty gun whose charges never missed.

It was very early. The sun had not yet risen. Fields and meadows were still deserted. The sky was vari-colored; red and golden in the East; cold and grey in the West. But old Wach was in a hurry.

"I have a horse and cart. We will drive towards the Pits," said he.

We mounted the cart and drove away. We had hardly passed the stables, when a hare jumped from out the oats, crossed our way and disappeared in the high grass of the meadows, leaving a dark trace on the silvery dew-covered surface.

Old Wach said: "Cut across the road means bad luck." And then he added: "It's late, soon the ground will catch shadows."

He meant that the sun would rise soon because the morning twilight does not throw shadows.

"Will the shadows interfere?" I asked.

"If it is a large shadow, I don't mind,

but if it is small, our troubles are for nothing."

This meant, in hunter's language, that the later the worse, the nearer noon the shorter the shadow.

"Where shall we begin?" I asked again.

"At the caves in the Pohorowo thickets."

The Pohorowo thicket was the densest part of the forest, and caves had formed under the roots of gigantic trees, felled by the storm.

"And do you think Wach, you can decoy the wolf?"

"I'll howl like one, and may be he will come out."

"And may be not."

"Oh, he will come anyway."

Reaching Wach's hut we left the horse and cart in charge of a boy and proceeded on foot. After half an hour's march, when the sun had just risen, we reached the caves.

Around us was an impenetrable growth of underwood, here and there a tall tree loomed up. The cave was so deep that it hid us from sight.

"Now the backs towards each other, growled Wach."

We sat down, each leaning on the other's back, only our eyes and gun barrels being above the ground.

"Attention," said Wach, "I'll begin to call."

He put two fingers into his mouth and emitted a longdrawn, modulated whistle or howl, just like a she-wolf calling her companion.

"Listen," and he put his ear to the ground.

I did not hear anything, but Wach raised himself and said: "He answers, but very, very far off. About half a mile."*

Then he waited a quarter of an hour and howled again, modulating the tone

* Two geographical miles.

by moving his fingers in his mouth. A faint, depressing howl penetrated the thicket, traveling from a great distance over the moist ground and reverberating from tree to tree. Wach again listened on the ground.

"He answers about one and a half viorsts away."

Now I, too, heard the distant echo of the howl very far off, and faint, but clearly distinguishable as the howl of a wolf.

"Where will he come out?" I asked.

"On your side."

Wach howled a third time. Now the answer came back from close quarters. I grasped my gun tightly and we hardly dared to breathe. The silence was oppressive, only the dew drops fell rustling through the dense foliage from leaf to leaf. From a distant part of the forest was heard the calling of the black cock.

Suddenly about three hundred steps

from me something rustled in the thicket. The branches of a juniper tree moved, from behind the dark-green needles protruded a grey, triangular head with pointed ears and red eyes. I could not shoot yet, it was too far, so I waited patiently, though with fast beating heart. Now the whole animal had come out, and with a few bounds neared the cave, snuffing the air in all directions. About one hundred and fifty feet from the cave the wolf suddenly halted and pointed his ears as if in apprehension. I knew that he would not move another step and I pulled the trigger.

The report of the gun mingled with the piercing howl of the wolf. We jumped out of the cave, Wach after me, but the wolf had gone. Wach examined the place carefully where the dew was brushed off the grass, and said: "He colors."

In fact, there were traces of blood on the ground.

"You did not hit the air, even though it was a little far. But he colors, we must follow him." We followed in his track. Occasionally we found the grass trodden down and larger traces of blood, showing where the wounded wolf had rested from time to time. But meanwhile an hour passed in our search through thickets and brushes, and then another hour. The sun was high. We had covered a long way finding nothing but traces and even they disappeared sometimes entirely. Finally we came to the end of the forest. The trail continued for about two viorsts into the field towards the water and then it lost itself in the reed-covered swamp. Further we could not proceed without a dog.

"He will stay there and to-morrow I'll find him," said Wach, and we turned homewards.

Soon I forgot all about the wolf, about find him," said Wach; and we turned

result of our hunt, and my thoughts turned again to the usual circle of my sorrows. When we neared the forest again, a hare jumped up from underneath my very feet and I forgot to shoot at it.

"Oh, my good master," exclaimed Wach with indignation, "I would shoot my own brother if he had jumped up like that."
that."

But I merely smiled and continued my walk in silence. Crossing a road in the forest, the so-called Ciocina path which led from our manor to Chorzele, I noticed on the wet ground fresh traces of a horse wearing shoes.

"Do you know Wach, what these tracks are?" I asked.

"I should say, that the young Panich from Chorzele passed this way to the manor," answered Wach.

"Then I shall go that way, too," I said. "Farewell, Wach."

Wach began, rather bashfully, with an invitation for me to enter his modest home and refresh myself. I knew I would hurt his feelings if I refused; but I did refuse, promising him, to come early the next day. I did not wish to leave Selim and Hania together very long without me.

During the five days that had passed since our visit to Ustrzyce, Selim had called daily. A mutual understanding had developed rapidly underneath my very eyes. I had watched them very carefully and to-day they had the first opportunity to be alone for a longer time. And now, I said to myself, it will come to declarations between them, and at the very thought I felt as if all hope were lost.

I dreaded the realization of my thought, as a terrible misfortune, as the condemned man dreads the execution of the sentence which he knows must come, and he prays for its delay.

Returning home I met our chaplain in the court with a bag, and a wire net around his head. He was going to the bee-hive.

"Is Selim here, father?"

"He is. It must be an hour and a half since he came."

My heart beat rapidly.

"And where shall I find him?"

"He must be boating with Hania and little Eva."

I hurried across the garden towards the boat landing. I missed one of the larger boats and looked out on the pond but saw nothing. I concluded that Selim must have rowed to the right where the alders stood; in this way the high reeds on the shore would hide the boat and its occupants from view. I took an oar and jumped into a small, one-seated boat rowing out carefully and keeping close to the reeds; I wanted to see, not to be seen.

Their boat soon came into view; it floated motionless on the wide, clear surface of the pond; the oars rested. In one end of the boat, wtih her back towards Hania and Selim, sat my little sister Eva; they occupied the other end. Eva leaned out and splashed in the water with her little hands, being much interested in the amusement. Selim and Hania, leaning on each other's shoulder, seemed to be absorbed in conversation. Not the slightest breeze rippled the clear, glittering water; and the boat, Hania, Eva, and Selim were reflected in it like in a large mirror.

It undoubtedly was a beautiful picture but at its sight the blood rushed to my head. I understood it all; they had taken little Eva because she would not disturb them, she would not comprehend their loving speech, she was there for propriety's saks. "You have lost her," I thought. "You have lost her," rustled

the reeds; "you have lost her," murmured the water, softly splashing against the sides of my boat,—and it grew dark before my eyes; I felt an oppressive heat and a chilling cold, I felt that paleness covered my cheeks. "You have lost Hania," said voices within and around me. "Go nearer, hide in the reeds, and you will hear more," they added. I obeyed, and noiselessly, like a cat pushed forward. But I could not hear what they said, I merely saw them plainer. They were sitting together on the same seat. It seemed, that Selim turning to Hania, was kneeling before her; but it merely seemed so. She did not look at him, but turned her head anxiously in all directions and then looked heavenwards. I saw her embarrassment, I saw his imploring look, I saw how he folded his hands, and how she slowly, slowly turned her eyes and head towards him and, at last, she leaned towards him. But sud-

denly she recovered and shuddering moved to the very edge of the boat; and then he reached out for her hand as if in fear that she would fall into the water. I saw that he kept her hand in his and then I did not see anything; my eyes were clouded, the oar dropped out of my hand, and I fell on the bottom of the boat. "Have mercy, oh God," I sighed from the depths of my heart, "they are taking my life." I gasped for breath. Oh, how I had loved her, and how unhappy I was! Lying on the bottom of the boat and tearing my coat in senseless anger, I felt the impotency of my madness.

Yes, I was as powerless as if my hands had been tied, for what could I do? I might have killed Selim and myself. I might have run my boat into theirs and caused them both to drown, but I could not tear the love for Selim out of Hania's heart and claim it as my own! Oh!

this consciousness of my impotence, the conviction that here was no help, was the most cruel of all my sufferings. I had always been ashamed to weep even when alone. If pain pressed tears to my eyes, pride did not allow them to flow. But now my pride and the anger that rent my breast were mastered, and amid the deep silence, in view of the boat, with the loving pair reflected on the glassy surface, underneath the serene, blue immensity, around me the weird rustling of the reeds on the shore, alone with my misery and hopeless fate, I burst out in convulsive sobs, a flood of tears found its way down my cheeks and I cried aloud in inexpressible misery.

Then I weakened. A numbness was creeping over me, and my senses refused to act, I felt coldness in my hands and feet. It seemed to me that the cold hand of death claimed me with its touch and brought me a long, long rest, an icy

sleep. "'Tis the end," I thought, and my heart felt free from the great burden that oppressed it.

But nothing had ended. How long I had lain in the boat I could not say. On the blue firmament sometimes light, little clouds passed before my eyes, sometimes snipes and cranes with a melancholy shriek. The sun stood high and shone with a tropical heat. The slight breeze had gone down and the reeds stood motionless. I awoke from my dream and looked around. The boat, Hania, and Selim were gone. A blissful, serene peace seemed to have penetrated nature, and it formed a strange contrast to my pitiful condition. All around me, everything was quiet and happy. Dark-blue libellas swayed around the boat and let themselves down on the shield-like leaves of the water-lily. Diminutive, grey birds clung to the flexible reed and twittered melodiously, at

times I heard the busy hum of a bee, lost on the waters; from the distance there came the chatter of the wild-duck, and the moor-duck was leading her young ones into the water. Nature's republic revealed her life to me, but I paid no attention to what I saw and heard. I was still half dreaming, the heat was oppressive and I felt an intense headache; leaning out of the boat I drew water with my hands and drank it with feverish lips. That restored me somewhat; taking the oar I made for the shore, apprehending that I was being missed at home.

On the way I tried to quiet and to persuade myself. If Selim and Hania told each other of their love, it was better for all concerned, I thought. At least, those confounded days of uncertainty would end. Misfortune had taken off its mask and faced me undisguised. I knew it and would face it boldly. Strangely enough, these thoughts filled me with a

cruel delight. But everything was not certain yet, and I determined to question little Eva, as far as it was possible.

I reached home in time for dinner, greeted Selim very coldly, and sat silently down at the table. My father glanced at me, and exclaimed:

"What ails you, are you sick?"

"No, I am well; merely tired. I rose at three o'clock this morning."

"Why?"

"I went with Wach on a wolf chase. Later, I laid down and slept, and now I have a headache."

"Just glance at the mirror and see how you look!"

Hania looked up from her plate and looked at them closely.

"Perhaps yesterday's visit to Ustrzyce has had such an effect upon you Pan Henry?" she asked. I looked at her and asked curtly: "How do you mean it?" Hania said something indistinct and

became confused. Selim came to her aid,

"Well, that's quite natural. He who loves, grows thin, to which I answered slowly and with great emphasis:

"I do not notice, that you are growing thin; neither you, nor Hania."

A flush of crimson red covered their faces and then came a moment of embarrassing silence. Even I feared that I had gone too far. Fortunately, my father did not hear it, and our chaplain took the whole matter for a little tiff.

"Oh, but he is a wasp with a sting," he exclaimed, "now he has repaid you! do you see, don't provoke him."

How little satisfaction did my triumph give me, and how gladly would I have exchanged it for Selim's humiliation!

After dinner, passing through the salon, I glanced into the high mirror. I looked indeed like a man about to be hanged; the eyes bloodshot and blue rings underneath, my face pale and drawn.

It seemed to me that I had grown very homely, but to that I was indifferent. I went in quest of little Eva. Both my little sisters, who dined before we did, were in the garden where a children's gymnasium was arranged for them. She was sitting carelessly in a little wooden chair, which was suspended by four ropes from a beam and served as a swing. She was lost in deep conversation with herself, from time to time shaking her golden locks and her little feet dangling in the air. Seeing me, she stretched out her little hands and smiled. I lifted her with my arms and carried her out in the garden where we sat down on a bench.

"What did Evunia* do all day?"

"Evunia was out boating with the man and Hania."

Selim was denominated by Eva as "the man."

"And did Evunia behave well?"

* Evunia—diminutive for Eva.

"Yes."

"Because well-behaved children always listen to what older people say and pay attention, so that they learn something. Does Evunia remember what Selim said to Hania?"

"Forgot."

"You are naughty, you must remember, or else I wont love Evunia." Then her eyes filled with tears and she repeated in a plaintive voice:

"Forgot."

What else could the poor little girl answer? I felt ashamed and humiliated to play the hypocrite to the innocent darling; she was the pet of the whole house and I would not molest her longer. Kissing her cheek I let her run to the playground. She returned to her swing, and I left, knowing as little as before, but with the assurance in my heart that an uuderstanding had been reached by Hania and Selim.

Towards evening Selim said to me:

"I shall not see you for a week, I leave."

"Where to?" I asked indifferently.

"My father has ordered me to visit my uncle in Szumna. I must remain there for a week."

I looked at Hania; the news did not in the least astonish her. Evidently Selim had informed her. She smiled and lifting her eyes from her handwork and looking cunningly at Selim, asked:

"Do you like to go there?"

"As a dog to his chain," he answered quickly, but noticing Madame d'Yves displeased at his levity, he added:

"Pardon my expression, I love my uncle, but you see I am happier near—near—Madame d'Yves." Saying he cast a sentimental glance at her, and made everybody laugh, not excepting Madame d'Yves, who although very sensitive, had a great fondness for Selim. She took

him lightly by the ear and said with a well meaning smile:

"Young man, I could be your mother."

Selim kissed her hand and made peace, and I thought how much difference there was between him and me. If I had possessed Hania's love, I would dreamingly look at the skies all day, and jesting would have been impossible to me. But he laughed, was jolly and happy as if nothing had happened. Immediately before he left he said to me:

"I will ask something of you, come with me.'

"I will not, don't have the least intention." The cold tone of my answer hurt Selim.

"You have grown strange of late," he said, "you have not been yourself for some time, but—."

"Continue."

"But everything is forgiven him who loves."

"Except when he crosses our path," I said with freezing emphasis.

Selim cast a penetrating look at me that seemed to read the bottom of my heart.

"What do you say?"

"I repeat that I will not go, and I will not forgive everything."

If it had not been for the presence of all the others, Selim would have put the whole matter in its proper light, but I did not wish it till I had better proofs. But I noticed that my last words made Selim and Hania uneasy. Selim lingered for a few moments under some pretext, and watching for a moment to speak to me alone, he whispered: "Mount your horse and come with me. I have something to tell you."

"Another time, I answered aloud. To-day I don't feel well."

CHAPTER IX.

Selim actually paid a visit to his uncle and remained there for ten days, and those days were dreary ones for us at Litwinowo. Hania seemed to evade me, and looked at me with apprehension. For my part, I had no intention to speak to her confidentially, because pride closed my mouth ; but she managed to so arrange it, that never for a moment were we left alone. Evidently, Hania was lonesome. She grey pale and thin, and I, seeing her sadness, thought with dread that her love was not the passing caprice of a little girl, but a sincere and deeply-rooted sentiment. I too, was sad, irritable, and out of humor. My father, our chaplain, and Madame d'Yves asked in vain for the cause, or if I were sick? I gave negative and evasive answers, and their kind thoughtfulness merely irrita-

ted me. The days I spent alone on horseback, in the forest, or in the boat among the reeds. I lived like a trapper. One night I spent in the forest at a fire which I had built; my dog and gun for my only companions. Again I remained for hours with our shepherd, who through continual solitude had grown to be almost a savage. He was something of a doctor, busied himself with gathering herbs, and testing their properties. I was duly initiated into the mysteries of his dreary and fantastical existence. And I—would any one believe it?—I longed for Selim, and the torture which his presence brought to me.

One day the thought occurred to me to visit old Mirza at Chorzele. The old man, flattered because I came to visit him, received me with open arms. But I had come with another object in view. I wanted to look at the eyes of the terrible Mirza's portrait; the colonel of the

Petyhorski hussars, from Sobieski's times. And when I looked into those dreary eyes, that followed wherever one stood, I was reminded of my own ancestors, whose portraits hung in our reception hall, with expressions of equal severity and iron energy.

Under the influence of such impressions my mind reached a stage of strange exaltation. Solitude, the silence of the night, the close touch with nature, all this should have exerted a quieting influence upon me. But I carried within me the poisoned arrow. I gave myself up to dreary imaginings and that, naturallly, made my condition worse. Oftentimes, lying in a remote corner of the forest, or in the boat, I imagined that I was in Hania's room, kissing her hands, feet, and hem of her dress; that I called her by the tenderest names, and that she, placing her adorable hands on my feverish brow, said: "You have suffered

enough; forget everything! It was all a cruel dream! I love thee Henry!" But then came the awakening and cold reality, and then the hopeless outlook of my future, to be without her till the end of my life, was more fearful than ever. I became more and more misanthropic. I avoided people, even my father, our chaplain, and Madame d'Yves. Casimir, with the talkativeness of his age, with his curiosity and constant readiness to play mischief, was unbearable to me.

And yet, all these good people, were anxious to cheer me, and silently worried because of my condition which they could not understand. Hania, whether she was aware of the true cause or not, did her best to cheer me, thinking probably that I was in love with Lola Ustrzyci. But my conduct towards Hania was so cold and harsh that she always showed a certain fear, when speaking to me. Even my father, who was very severe and re-

gardless for the troubles of other tried to divert my thoughts and to arouse my interest. One day after dinner he went with me into the yard and asked, casting a searching look at me,

"Have you not noticed a certain thing? I wish to speak to you about it. Don't you think that Selim pays a little too much attention to Hania?"

In the natural course of things I should have become embarrassed and thus allowed myself to be trapped, but I was in such a mood, that I did not give the slighest indication what impression my father's words made on me, and I answered indifferently:

"I don't think so."

It hurt me somewhat, that my father took part in the whole difficulty which, concerning only me, was to be decided by me only.

"Do you assure me it is not so?"

"I do. Selim loves some girl, that is at school in Warsaw."

"You should remember that you are Hania's guardian and you should watch over her."

I knew well, that my good father spoke with intention to stir my self-love and ambition, to interest me in something and to direct my thoughts from their melancholy channels; but again I answered indifferently:

"Not very much of a guardian. There was no father and old Mikolai left her to me, but I am hardly her actual guardian.'

My father's brow darkened. Seeing that he could not gain anything with me in this way, he tried another. He winked at me knowingly, his moustache hiding a smile, and taking me lightly by the ear, he said confidentially and half teasingly:

"Is it, perhaps, that Hania has turned your head? speak my boy?"

"Hania? Not a bit! That would be

strange!" How I lied, but it went smoother than I expected.

"Then it must be Lola Ustrzycki, how?"

"Lola is a coquette!"

My father was becoming impatient.

"Then why the deuce, if you are not in love, do you walk about like a recruit after the first muster?

"I don't know."

Similar processes of questioning, which the solicitation of my father, our chaplain, and Madame d'Yves did not spare me, were a great torture to me. At last my relation to them became painful, my temper unbearable. Our chaplain discovered in this the first indications of a developing despotic character, and my father often lost patience with me. Between him and me it came several times to very disagreeable scenes. Once, at dinner time, in a discussion about nobility and democracy, I forgot myself so

far, that I said, I would a thousand times rather not having been born a nobleman. My father bid me to leave the room. The ladies wept and for two days everybody was in bad humor.

So far as I was concerned, I was at that time neither an aristocrat, nor a democrat, but in love and unhappy. There was no room in me for principles, theories, and social questions; and if I contended for one and against the other, I did it out of sheer spite not knowing against whom and why, just for the sake of being contrary. And for just the same reason I engaged with our chaplain in religious discussions which usually ended with the slamming of doors. In short, I made life miserable for myself and everyone else around me.

When finally Selim did come back after ten days absence, I felt greatly relieved. When he came to our house, I was not home, roaming in the neighbor-

hood on horseback; I returned towards evening and rode to the farm-buildings, where a stable-boy took my horse and said:

"The young Panich from Chorzele has come."

At the same time Casimir came telling the same news.

"I know all about it," was my cross answer, "where is Selim?"

"I think in the garden with Hania, I'll go and look for him."

We went into the garden, Casimir running ahead, I followed very slowly, having no desire to hasten the meeting. I had hardly walked fifty steps, when at a turn of the path, I saw Casimir hurrying back making all kinds of grimaces and gestures, and crimson in the face from an effort to suppress laughter.

"Henry, st— ha ha!"

"What have you now?"

"Oh—! by my love to mother! Selim kneels at Hania's feet in the bower!"

I grabbed him by the shoulder and held him.

"Silence! You stay here! Not a word to anybody! I'll go myself. But remember, don't talk if you love your life."

Casimir, who at first took the matter from its comical side, seeing the pallor which covered my face, became frightened and remained on the spot with his mouth open.

I ran towards the bower. Gliding noiselessly through the barberry brushes that surrounded the bower I came close to the walls, which were so latticed that I could see and hear everything. The contemptible role of an eavesdropper had nothing degrading for me. I parted the leaves cautiously and listened.

"Somebody is near here—" I heard the suppressed whisper of Hania.

"No, the leaves are rustling on the branches," assured Selim.

I looked at them through the foliage. Selim did not kneel before Hania, but sat next to her on a low bench. Her face was as white as a sheet of linen, her eyes were closed. She leaned on Selim's shoulder and he, holding her with his arm, pressed her in loving happiness.

"I love you Hania, I love you," he was repeating in persistent whisper, his lips seeking hers. She seemed to resist the kiss, but in spite of that, their lips met and closed in a long kiss—oh, so long! it seemed an eternity to me!

And then I thought that everything they should have told each other, was expressed in kisses. A sense of shame seemed to prevent them from speaking. They had courage enough for kisses but not for words. There was a sepulchral silence and amidst it I heard only their passionate breathing.

I clutched with my hands the wooden grating of the bower and feared they

would break to splinters in my convulsive grasp. It was dark before my eyes, my head swam, and the ground seemed to give way beneath my feet. But I wanted to hear what they said even if I had to pay for it with my life. Controlling myself, I put my head against the lattice and listened, counting their every breath.

For some time it was silent, at length Hania began in a whisper:

"Enough! it is enough! I dare not iook into your eyes! Let us go away!" and turning her head she endeavored to free herself from his embrace.

"O, Hania, what has happened to me? I feel so happy!"

"Let us go, somebody might come."

Selim jumped up, his eyes flashing and nostrils expanded:

"Let the whole world come," he said, "I love you, and I will tell it to everybody! I myself don't know how it came.

I have struggled with myself and I have suffered, because I thought that Henry loved you and that you loved him. But I don't fear anything, you love me, and your happiness is concerned. Oh, Hania, Hania!"

And again I heard a kiss, and then Hania spoke in a soft, almost faint voice:

"I believe you Pan Selim; but I have many things to tell you! They are going to send me across the frontier to our ladyship's. Madame d'Yves spoke yesterday about it with his lordship. She thinks that I am the cause of Pan Henry's strange conduct. They think that he is in love with me, I myself don't know whether it is so. There are moments when I believe it. I do not understand him, I fear him. I feel that he will be in our way, that he will separate us, and I—" here she spoke in a faint whisper, "love you so much!"

"Listen, Hania," said Selim, "no

power on earth can separate us. If Henry forbids me to come, I shall write to you. I know someone who will carry our letters. And I will come from the side of the pond and every evening at twilight you come into the garden. But you shall not go away; if they want to send you away I shall not allow it; as true as there is a God in Heaven. Hania, don't even speak of such things, or I will go mad! oh, my beloved darling!"

And seizing her hands he pressed them passionately to his lips.

Hania arose excitedly from the bench.

"I hear voices, they are coming!" Hania exclaimed in fear.

They left the bower, but no one was coming. The evening sun cast a flood of golden light upon them, but to me the light seemed as red as blood. I, too, walked slowly homewards. At the turn of the pass I met Casimir waiting.

"They have gone. I have seen them," he whispered. "Tell me, what shall I do?"

"Shoot him!" I burst out.

Casimir's face flushed and his eyes phosphorised.

"Very well," he said, and turned to go.

"Stay! Don't be a fool! Don't do anything, and upon your honor, be silent. Leave everything to me, if I need you I shall tell you. But not a word to anyone."

"Not a syllable, I would rather die!"

We walked silently together. Casimir comprehended the importance of the situation and anticipated some threatening danger; and that was just to his liking. He looked at me eagerly and asked:

"Henry!"

"Well?"

We spoke in a whisper although no one could possibly hear us.

"Will you fight Mirza?"

"Don't know, perhaps."

Casimir halted suddenly and threw his arms around my neck.

"Henry, my own dear Henry, if you want to fight with him, let me do it for you! I will take care of him! Let me try it! Oh, Henry, please do!"

Casimir, in true boy's fashion, was yearning for adventures, but I felt at this moment that I had a true brother in him and I lovingly returned his embrace.

"No; Cassimir, I don't know yet. And then he would not accept you. It's too early yet to tell what will happen. Meanwhile go and order my horse saddled, I shall leave before he does, halt him on the way, and talk to him. And you watch them, but do not show that you know anything. Order my horse."

"Will you take weapons?"

"Fie, Cassimir, he has no weapons. No, I shall merely talk to him. Don't be alarmed; and now go to the stables." Cassimir went without delay and I returned slowly home.

I was like a man that completely lost

his wits. I did not know what to do nor how to conduct myself. I should have liked best to cry out aloud. Before I had the certainty that I had lost Hania's heart, I wished for the decisive moment, hoping, that, whatever might come I would feel relieved. Now, that the dreaded uncertainty had taken a definite shape, stood before me unmasked, and I looked into its merciless features, new doubts rose in my heart, not uncertainties as to my misfortune, but how to combat them.

My heart was full of bitterness and despair. Those noble instincts which appealed to my magnanimity to sacrifice myself for the sake of Hania's happiness, had died away. The spirit of submission, of silent tears and sufferings had fled far away. I felt that I had been wronged. Till now I had fled from my fate like the wolf, pressed by hounds. But now, driven to despair, no escape

anywhere, I resolved to turn and show my teech. A new strange energy had possessed me; it was revenge. I began to feel hatred towards Selim and Hania. I would rather lose everything even my life, than allow their undisturbed happiness. Penetrated by this thought I clung to it as a drowning man clings to a plank. I had found a new object for my life. Now I knew what to do! The horizon cleared, and I breathed freely, with such a relief as never before. My scattered thoughts arrayed themselves in systematic order, directing all their efforts in one direction: to do evil to Selim and Hania. When I returned home I was quiet, self-possessed. I met in the salon Madame d'Yves, our chaplain, Hania, Selim and Casimir, who had returned from the stables and was now on guard.

"Is my horse ready?" I asked.

"Yes."

"Will you escort me?" Selim asked.

"I will. I must ride out to the hay-stacks, to see if everything is in order. Casimir, will you let me have your seat?"

Casimir did so and I sat next to Selim and Hania on a divan underneath the window. Involuntarily I recollected, that long, long ago, when old Mikolai died, we were sitting at the same place, Selim telling a fairy tale, and Hania, tired from weeping, leaning her head on my shoulders was asleep. To-day, the same Hania, taking advantage of the twilight, stealthily pressed Selim's hand. Then a band of innocent friendship united us, to-day love and hatred were among us. But to all appearances everything was serene. The lovers cast fervent glances at each other and I was unusually happy, but no one suspected what happiness it was. Madame d'Yves asked Selim to play. He rose, went to the piano and played a Mazourka by Chopin. I remained with Hania alone

on the divan, and noticed that she looked unceasingly at Selim and that her thoughts, borne on the wings of music, were drifting into the realm of imagination. I resolved to bring her to reality.

"Is it not true, Hania, how very talented Selim is? He plays and sings."

"Oh, it is true!"

"And what a handsome face. Just look at him at this moment,"

Her eyes followed my direction. Selim sat in the twilight, only his head was clearly seen in the reflection on the evening sky; and in its roseate, faint-trembling light he looked, with his eyes uplifted, like one inspired. Undoubtedly, at that moment he was full of inspiration.

"How handsome he is, Hania, is he not?" I asked again.

"Do you love him much?" asked Hania.

"That matters little to him, but the

women love him. Oh, how poor Josy did love him!"

A frown of uneasiness ruffled Hania's smooth forehead.

"And he?" she asked.

"Ha, he loves one to-day and another to-morrow. He can not be faithful to any one very long, that is his nature. If he should ever tell you, that he loves you, do not believe him, for," here I spoke with emphasis, "he merely cares for your kisses, but not for your heart. Do you understand?"

"Pan Henry!"

"How I do talk. Of course, that does not concern you. You, who are so modest, would you give a kiss to a stranger? Hania, I do beg your pardon, the very thought must have been an insult to you! You would never allow that, would you Hania?"

Hania started off to go, but I caught her hand and held her by force. I

struggled for self-control, for a desperate madness seemed to choke me with an iron grip; I felt that I was the weaker.

"Answer me," I said with suppressed excitement, "I will not let you go sooner."

"Pan Henry what do you want? What do you say?"

"I say," I spoke with feverish hatred, "I say, that you have lost all sense of shame!"

Hania sank on the divan. I looked at her; she was deadly pale. But I felt no pity for the poor girl. I clenched her delicate hand, and said again:

"Listen! I was at your feet. I loved you more than the whole world—."

"Pan Henry!!"

"Be quiet; I have seen and heard it all. You are shameless, you and he!"

"Oh God, oh God!"

"Yes, you are shameless! I did not dare to kiss the hem of your dress, and

he has kissed your lips, and yon have offered them to him. Hania, I despise you, I hate you!!"

My voice died in my throat, I breathed heavily and gasped for air.

"You have guessed," I continued, "I shall separate you, if I have to kill myself, you, and him. It is not true what I said a moment ago. He loves you, he will not leave you, but I shall separate you!"

"What are you discussing so lively?" suddenly asked Madame d'Yves, who sat at the other end of the salon.

For a moment I wanted to jump up and tell it all aloud, but I controlled myself, and said as quietly as I could.

"We were discussing which bower was the prettiest, the bower of the roses or the one with the vines."

Here Selim ceased to play and looking attentively at us, said:

"I would give all the bowers in the world for the one with the vines."

"Your taste is not bad," I said, "Hania thinks the same."

But I felt that I could not continue the conversation. Fiery rings were flying past my eyes. I jumped up, ran through several rooms into the dining hall and grabbed the decanter of water from the table, pouring the contents over my head. Then, not knowing what I did, I threw the decanter to the floor where it broke into a thousand pieces. I ran into my room, dried my dripping hair and returned to the salon, where I met only Selim and our chaplain, both in profound consternation.

"What has happened?"

"Hania fainted!"

"How, when?" I cried out, grasping the chaplain by the shoulders.

"Immediately after you left she burst out crying, and then fainted. Madame d'Yves has taken care of her."

Not saying one word, I hastened to

Madame d'Yves room. Hania had indeed fainted, but the paroxysm had passed. When I saw her I forgot everything, fell on my knees at her bedside, and without noticing the presence of Madame d'Yves, cried out:

"Hania, my own darling Hania, what has happened?"

"Nothing," she answered in a faint voice, attempting to smile. "Nothing, I feel well again."

I remained with her for a quarter of an hour. Leaving her, I kissed her hand, and returned to the salon. No, it was not true, I did not hate her, I loved her more than ever. But when I saw Selim, I had a great desire to choke him. Oh, he it was, whom I hated from the bottom of my heart.

As soon as the chaplain and Selim saw me, they inquired eargerly for Hania.

"She feels well."

Turning to Selim I whispered to him:

"Leave the house. We will meet to-morrow near the stacks before the forest. I wish to speak to you, you must not come here again; our relations must end."

Selim's blood rushed to his face.

"What does that mean?"

"I will explain to-morrow. To-day I will not. Do you understand? I will not! To-morrow morning at six o'clock."

I started to go to Madame d'Yves' room, Selim followed for a few steps, but halted in the door. A few moments later I saw him ride away.

For one hour I sat in the room adjoining Hania's. I could not enter to see her, because she had fallen asleep. Madame d'Yves and the chaplain had gone to father's room for some consultation. I was alone till tea time.

At tea I noticed that my father, the chaplain, and Madame d'Yves looked

serious. I must confess that I felt a certain uneasiness. Did they know anything? It was very likely; at all events, things were going wrong among us young people.

"I received a letter from mother today," said my father.

"How is her health?"

"Very good. But she is uneasy about us. She wishes to return soon, but I won't permit it. She must remain away for two months longer."

"Why is mother uneasy?"

"You know, there is smallpox epidemic in the village. I was careless enough to write her about it."

I did not know about the epidemic. I might have heard of it, but my mind was occupied with other things.

"Will you visit mother?"

"Perhaps, we will speak about that."

"It is nearly a year that our good lady is abroad," said the chaplain.

"Her health demands it. The coming winter she can remain with us. She writes, that she is much better, but she is uneasy and longs for home."

Then my father turned to me and said: "Come to my room after tea, I wish to speak with you."

"Very well, father."

We all rose from the table and went to see Hania. She was quite well and wanted to rise, but my father would not allow her. At about ten o'clock a "bryczka" drove up in front of the hallway. Doctor Stanislaus had come after half a day of labor in the afflicted village-homes. He examined Hania carefully, and declared that she was not sick, but only in need of rest and diversion. He forbade her to read and recommended out-door plays and merriment.

My father consulted him about the advisability of sending my two little sisters away till the epidemic had passed.

The Doctor assured him that there was no danger, and wrote a reassuring letter to my mother. Then the Doctor retired, being almost overcome by fatigue. I led him to his room and felt a strong desire to go to bed myself, for the effects of the eventful day had completely exhausted me. But Frank entered telling me that father wished to see me.

I went without delay. My father was sitting at his desk with mother's letter before him. In the room were the chaplain and Madame d'Yves. My heart was beating uneasy. I felt like the accused standing before the tribunal of justice, knowing that I was to be questioned about Hania. At first father spoke about other important matters. He was determined to send my little sisters with Madame d'Yves to my uncle at Kopczan, in order to satisfy my mother. In such a case Hania would remain alone among us, but this my father did not wish. He

added, that he knew that certain affairs were going on between us young people which he did not wish to inquire into, but of which he strongly disapproved. He expected, however, that Hania's departure would end everything.

At this moment all looked at me inquiringly, and they were greatly disappointed, when, instead of strenuously opposing Hania's departure, I eagerly recommended it. Of course, I calculated that Hania's absence would put an end to all intercourse with Selim. And then I had some hope, but merely a feeble, flickering light, that I, and no one else would bring Hania to my mother. I knew that father could not leave, for the harvest was to begin. Our chaplain had never been beyond the confines of his native land and I was therefore the only available person. But that faint ray of hope was soon extinguished by father's announcement that lady Ustrzyci was go-

ing to the seashore, and that she had consented to take Hania to our mother. Hania was to leave the day following, in the evening. That was a deep disappointment to me, but I preferred to have Hania go, even without me, to her remaining home. And then I must confess, I felt a keen delight at the thought of Selim, what he would say, how he would receive the news I was to bring him to-morrow.

CHAPTER X.

Promptly at six o'clock next morning I was at the haystacks, where Selim was waiting for me. On the way I had promised myself most faithfuly to keep calm and self-possessed.

"What do you desire to tell me?" asked Selim.

"I wish to tell you that I know it all. You love Hania and she loves you. Mirza, you have acted contemptibly in winning Hania's heart. This I wished to tell you above all."

Selim became pale, but inwardly he was raving. He rode on to me so that the horses almost collided, and asked me: "Why, why? Be careful with your words!"

"In the first place, because you are a Mohammedan and she is a Christian. can not marry her."

"I shall renounce my faith."

"Your father will not allow it."

"Oh he will, but then—."

"But then there are other obstacles, even if you should change your faith, neither my father nor I, will ever give you Hania's hand. No! never, never! Do you understand me?"

Mirza leaned forward in the saddle, and emphasizing each syllable, said:

"And I shall never ask you for it! Now, do you understand me?"

I still controlled myself, keeping the announcement of Hania's departure till the last.

"Not only that she shall never be yours," I answered coldly and with equal emphasis, "but you shall not see her again. I know that you promised to send letters. But I shall watch, and the first time that your messenger is caught, he will be horsewhipped. You yourself must never come to us again. I forbid it."

"We will see," he answered gasping with anger: "Let me speak in turn. Not I, but you have acted contemptibly! I see it plainly! I asked you if you loved her, you answered: "No!" I wanted to step back before it was too late, but you repelled my sacrifice. Whose fault is it? You lied when you said you didn't love her. Through self-love and egotistical pride you were ashamed to say that you loved her! You loved her in darkness. I in light! You loved her secretly, I openly! You have embittered her life, I tried to make her happy. Whose fault is it? I would have stepped back, God knows, I would! but now it's too late. Now, she loves me; and listen to what I tell you: You can forbid me your house, you can seize my letters, but I swear to you, that I will never give up Hania; that I will always love her and that I shall find her wherever she is. I act openly and honorably; but I love

and my love is more than anything else in this world. I live through my love, without it, I would die. I don't want to bring unhappiness into your house, but remember, there is something within me, of which I, myself, am afraid. I am ready to do anything. Oh! if you should do any harm to Hania!!"—

He spoke rapidly, pale and with teeth clinched. An intense love had penetrated this fiery eastern nature and flared in it like a mighty flame. But I paid no attention to that and answered him with cold determination:

"I did not come here to listen to your love-confession, and I laugh at your threats, but I tell you again, Hania will never be yours."

"Listen for one moment. I don't try to tell you, how much I love Hania. I could not express it and you could not understand it. But I swear to you, that in spite of all my love to her, if she loves

you, even now I would find enough nobility of sentiment in my heart, to relinquish her forever. Henry! it is she for whom we should care! You have always been such an excellent fellow! Relinquish her, and then ask of me anything, and if it were my life! Here is my hand, Henry. It is for Hania's sake, remember!"

And he leaned towards me with outstretched arms, but I jerked my horse back.

"Leave to my father and me the care of Hania. We have thought of her welfare. I have the honor to tell you, that Hania goes abroad to-morrow, and you will not see her again. And now farewell!"

"Ah! if it's so, we will see!"

"Yes, we will see!"

I turned my horse and rode homewards, not looking back.

Those two days before Hania's depart-

ure were gloomy days. Madame d'Yves had left with my two sisters the day following my father's conversation with me. There remained only my father, our chaplain, Hania, and I at home. Hania knew that she was to leave, and this consciousness filled her with despair. She evidently hoped for help from me, as her last resort, but I carefully avoided every opportunity of being with her. I knew myself sufficiently, to fear, that her tears would make me do anything she desired. I avoided even her look, because I could not endure the silent supplication for pity expressed in her eyes.

On the other hand, even if I had the desire to intercede with my father on her behalf, it would be of no avail, because he never changed what had once been determined upon. Moreover, a sense of remorse kept me at a distance from Hania. I felt ashamed because of my last conversation with Mirza and my

harsh conduct towards her. I felt ashamed at the part which I played in the whole matter; and lastly, because in avoiding her, I spied upon her. But for this I had good reason. I knew that Mirza was hovering about our house like a bird of prey.

The first day after my talk with him I saw how Hania anxiously hid a note, evidently a leter from or to him. I even feared that they would contrive to see each other, but however eagerly I watched for Selim in the twilight, I could not meet with him. Meanwhile the two days passed as rapidly as an arrow through the air. Towards the evening of the day when Hania was to leave for Ustrzyce to spend the night, my father drove into town to buy horses and took Casimir with him to try them. Our chaplain and I were to escort Hania to Ustrzyce. I noticed that Hania became possessed of a strange uneasiness the

nearer the hour for departure came. Her features changed and she trembled in every limb. Sometimes she made a convulsive motion as if to escape from something that frightened her. When the sun had set, thick clouds of a yellow hue appeared on the horizon, threatening hail and thunder. From the far west the dull rumble of storm could be heard. The atmosphere was oppressive, sultry, and pregnant with electricity. The birds sought shelter under cornices and in the trees; and only the swallows shot restlessly through the air. The leaves did not stir and hung listless on the branches. The cattle were returning from the pastures with suppressed, doleful bellowing. A gloomy silence possessed nature. The chaplain ordered all the windows closed. I was anxious to reach Ustrzyce before the storm broke out, and turned to go to the stables to order the carriage in readiness.

I had barely left the room, when Hanit started up with a sudden motion, but immediately sat down again. I looked at her, she blushed and then turned pale.

"Oh, it is so dreadfully oppressive here," she said and went to the window fanning herself with a handkerchief.

Her strange uneasiness was evidently increasing.

"We will wait," said the chaplain, "in half an hour the storm will break loose."

"In half an hour," I answered, "we shall be in Ustrzyce, and perhaps it's merely a false alarm."

My horse was ready, but as usual there was delay in hitching the carriage horses. One half of an hour passed before the coachman drove up in front of the hallway, I following him on horseback. The storm threatened to break loose at any moment, but I did not want to wait. Hania's trunks were brought out and fastened behind the coach. The chap-

lain was waiting in the hallway, attired in a white linen-duster and holding a large parasol of the same color.

"Where is Hania? Is she ready," I asked.

"She is. It's fully half an hour since she went to the chapel to pray."

I hastened to the chapel, but did not find Hania. Returning I passed through several rooms of the house but Hania was nowhere.

"Hania! Hania!" I began to call, but no one answered. Feeling somewhat uneasy, I went to her room, thinking that she might have fainted. In the room sat old Vangrovska, crying.

"Is it time," she asked, "to take leave of our dear Panna?"

"Where is she?" I asked impatiently.

"She went into the garden."

I ran down to the garden.

"Hania, Hania! It's time to go!"

Silence.

"Hania! Hania!"

But only the leaves rustled in answer to my anxious calling. A few rain drops fell and then everything was quiet again.

What does this mean? I asked myself, and I felt, that my hair was standing on end.

"Hania! Hania!"

For a moment it seemed that someone answered from the other end of the garden. I felt relieved. "Ah, how foolish I am," I thought and went in the direction of the voice.

But I found nobody.

On that side, the garden ended with a picket fence, beyond that was the field-road leading to the sheep stalls. I bent over the pickets and looked on the road. There was no one except Ignac, the goose-herd, pasturing his geese in the ditch.

"Ignac!"

He took off his cap and ran towards me.

"Have you seen the young lady?"

"I have. The young lady just drove by here."

"What! When? Where?"

"Towards the forest with the young Panich from Chorzele. Oh! how they went! The horses just flew."

"Merciful heavens! Hania has eloped with Selim!"

It grew dark before my eyes and then like lightning, it shot through my brain: Hania's uneasiness and the letter which I saw in her hand. Was it all prepared? Mirza had written to her and had seen her. They had chosen the very moment before Hania's departure, because they knew, that everybody would be engaged in the house. Cold perspiration broke through my pores. I do not remember how and when I reached the house.

"A horse, a horse!" I shouted.

"What has happened?" asked the chaplain.

But a peal of thunder answered him. The wind whistled in my ears while the horse galloped madly. Reaching the lime-tree avenue, I turned in the direction of the road they had taken. My horse took one fence, then another, and continued in its fearful speed. The tracks were fresh, but now the storm had broken loose. The clusters of black clouds were rent by the zig-zag line of the lightning; at times the whole heavens stood aflame and then followed a deep darkness, the rain was falling in torrents. The trees on the road-side were twisting convulsively. My horse, urged on by the whip and spur, snorted and groaned. I too groaned from madness. Leaning over the horse's neck I looked for the tracks and thought of nothing else. Thus I reached the forest. At this moment the storm grew fiercer yet. It seemed that the infernal powers had been turned loose and had possessed heavens and

earth. The mighty forest bent like a corn-field swayed by the wind. From tree to tree reverberated the roaring echo; the bolt of thunder, the rushing of the torrent, the crash of breaking trees and branches, united in an infernal harmony. I had lost the tracks but I sped onward with the wind. Beyond the forest the lightning showed them to me, but I noticed with fear that my horses breath became short and its speed decreased. I cut him with the whip.

Here, beyond the forest, was a sea of sand which I could have avoided, but Selim must have taken it; and that must delay his flight.

I lifted my eyes to heaven; "O God, grant that I reach them, and then I will die, if it is Thy will!" And my prayer was heard. A red flash rent the darkness and its brilliant light showed me the fleeing "brycka." I could not distinguish faces but I was sure of the occu-

pants. They were only half a voirst from me, but did not flee very fast; because of the darkness and the flood Selim had to drive very carefully. A cry of madness and joy escaped me. Now I was sure of them.

Selim turned around, gave an outcry and whipped the frightened horses. Through the flashes of lightning Hania saw me. I noticed how she graped Selim imploringly by the arm and then he said something to her. A few seconds later I was near enough to hear Selim's voice:

"I am armed!" he called out in the darkness, "don't come near or I'll shoot!"

But I paid no attention and urged forward, coming nearer and nearer.

"Halt!" cried Selim, "halt!"

I was only fifteen steps from them but the road improved now and Selim's horses went away at full speed. For a moment the distance between us grew wider, but

then I gained again. Now Selim turned and leveled his pistol at me. He looked threatening and aimed quietly. Another moment and I could reach the bryczka with my hand. Suddenly there was a flash and a report of the pistol, my horse reared to the side, made two or three leaps and then broke down on his knees. I jerked him up, he sat on his hind-legs, and panting, fell over with me.

I jumped up and ran as fast as I could, but in vain were my endeavors. The bryczka was gaining ground more and more and soon I saw it only, when lightning rent the darkness. Now it had disappeared in the distance and my last hope with it. I trid to cry out but for want of breath I could not. The rumble of the wheels grew fainter and fainter; I stumbled against a stone and fell.

After a little I rose. "They have gone, they have gone," I repeated to

myself aloud, not knowing what I was doing. I was powerless, all alone in storm and darkness. The devilish Mirza had outwitted me. Oh, if Casimir had not gone with father, if we both had pursued them! But now, what could I do?

"What shall I do?" I cried out aloud to hear my own voice, lest I would go mad. And the wind howled sarcastically: "Here you are sitting without a horse and he is with her in safety." I returned slowly to my horse. From his nostrils a stream of blood was flowing, but he was yet alive, and looked at me with a breaking eye. I sat beside him, leaned my head on him and thought that I, too, would die. And the wind howled and shouted into my ears: "He is with her!" I thought I heard the rumble of the bryczka fleeing with my happiness. And all this time the wind howled "He is with her."

A strange numbness possessed me.

How long it lasted, I do not know, but when I recovered my strength the storm had passed. On the heavens were passing light flocks of little clouds and between them the deep blue of the sky was visible: The moon was shining. My dead horse, which had already grown cold and stiff, brought me the recollection of all that had happened. I looked around, to know where I was. To my right I saw a faint light and I went in that direction and discovered, that I was near Ustrzyce.

I resolved to go there and to see Pan Ustrzycki, which I could the easier accomplish, as he did not stay in the villa proper, but had his little cottage in which he slept. There was a light in his windows. I knocked at the door. He himself opened it, but started back in amazement.

"It's all a farce! How do you look Henry!"

"Lightning killed my horse near Ustrzyce, I could do nothing else but come here."

"Good Lord, how wet and cold you are. It's all a farce, I will order food and clothing."

"No, no, I must return at once."

"And why did Hania not come? My wife leaves at two o'clock in the morning. We thought you would send her for the night."

Suddenly, I resolved to tell him everything, because I needed his help.

"Sir," I said, "a misfortune has happened. I depend on this, that you will tell no one, not evn your wife or daughters. The honor of our house is concerned."

I knew that he would not mention a word to anybody, and then, I had little hope to keep the matter secret. I therefore told him everything, except that I myself loved Hania.

"Then you will have to fight Selim. Oh, it's a farce!" he said to me, having listened till I ended.

"Yes, I shall fight him to-morrow, but now I want to follow him and I beg of you to give me your best horses."

"You need not follow him. They have not gone far. They drove around a little and are now at Chorzele. Whither should they have gone? It's a farce! They have returned to Chorzele and fallen at the feet of old Mirza. There was no other way. Old Mirza has locked Selim up in the granary and the young Panna he has taken back to you. But Hania, Hania—well—."

"Sir!"

"No, no; my boy, don't be angry. I do not blame her. But, why are you losing time?"

Ustrzycki meditated for a moment.

"I know what to do. I will start immediately for Chorzele and you go home,

or better still, wait here. If Hania is in Chorzele I shall take her and bring her to your home. Perhaps, they will not let me have her? Nonsense! But I would rather go with old Mirza when we bring her back. Your father has a violent temper and he might be angry at old Mirza and challenge him. But old Mirza is not at fault. What do you say?"

"Father is not at home."

"All the better, all the better."

Here Pan Ustrzycki clapped his hands.

"Janek, come here!"

The attendant came in.

"Two horses and a bryczka. Must be ready in ten minutes, do you understand?"

"And for me?" I asked.

"Two more for Pan Henry." It's a farce."

We were silent for a time. After a while I asked:

"Will you permit me to write to Se-

lim? I want to challenge him in writing."

"Why?"

"I fear that old Mirza will not allow him to fight. He will lock Selim up for a time and then think that everything is forgotten. And that would not be enough for me! No, not by far! If he is locked up you will not see him, and the letter can be left with anybody. I shall not tell father that I am going to fight Selim. Perhaps he himself will challenge old Mirza who is innocent. But if I and Selim fight a duel first, then there will be no cause. Did you yourself not say that I must fight?"

"I should think so. Fight by all means, fight! There is the only remedy for a nobleman, be he young or old, it is all the same. For anybody else it would be a farce, but for a nobleman —oh, no. Send the challenge by letter, you are right."

I sat down and wrote as follows: "You are a scoundrel. With this letter I strike your face. If you do not come to-morrow morning at five o'clock to Wach's hut with pistols or sabre, I shall think you the greatest coward, and that you are, in all probability, anyway."

I sealed the letter and gave it to Pan Ustrzycki; then we went out into the court yard where the bryczkas were waiting for us.

Just before I stepped into mine, another apprehensive thought went through my head.

"Sir," I said to Ustrzycki, "what, if Selim did not take Hania to Chorzele?"

"If not to Chorzele, then he has gained time. It is night; fifty roads in all directions, and—you might as well seek the wind in the field. But where should he have taken her?"

To the town of N."

"Sixteen miles* without change of horses? Do not worry, it's a farce! Then I would go to-morrow to N., to-day even. But first, to Chorzele. I tell you again, you need not be alarmed."

In an hour I was at home. It was late, very late, but in all the windows were lights and I could see people running to and fro. When my bryczka halted at the hallway, the door opened and the chaplain came out with a candle in his hand.

"Be quiet!" he said putting his finger on his mouth.

"Hania?" I asked anxiously.

"Psst—, Hania is here. Old Mirza brought her back. Come with me, I shall tell you everything."

We went to the chaplain's room.

"What has happened to you?"

"I followed them. Mirza shot my horse. Where is father?"

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* Sixty-four geographical miles.

"He returned just after old Mirza left. Oh, what a misfortune! The doctor is with him now. We feared, he would get a stroke of paralysis. He wanted to challenge old Mirza. Do not go to him now, it might do him harm. To-morrow beg of him not to challenge Mirza. The sin is grevious but the old man is innocent. He thrashed Selim and locked him up. Then he himself brought Hania back and enjoined his people to observe silence. It was great luck that he did not find your father home."

It was plain that old Ustrzycki had exactly foreseen everything.

"How is Hania?"

"She is completely drenched, and has a fever. Your father scolded her terribly. Poor child!"

"Has the doctor seen her?"

"Yes, and he ordered her to bed. Old Vengrovska is now with her. Wait here for me; I shall go to your father to tell

him that you have come. He has sent horses after you in all directions. Casimir is also looking for you. Good God! what has all happened here!"

So saying the chaplain went to my father. I could not wait in his room and went to Hania. I did not want to see her, oh, no—that would have been too much for her. I wanted to assure myself that she had returned, that she was safe under our roof, near me; that she was protected against the storm and the terrible happenings of the day. Those. were strange emotions that swayed me when I was nearing her room. No anger, no hatred I felt in my heart, but a sincere, profound sorrow, an inexpressible sympathy for the poor and unhappy victim of Selim's mad folly. What mortification that poor child must have suffered! What a humiliation to be brought to Chorzele in the presence of old Mirza! I made the solemn vow that I would not

make the least reproach, neither to-day nor ever hereafter, and that I would treat her as if nothing had happened. At the moment when I reached the door, it opened and old Vengrovska came out. I stopped her and asked if Hania slept.

"No she is not sleeping, poor dear. Oh! if the dear young Panich only knew what happened here to-day! Oh, if the dear young Panich had only heard, how terribly his lordship scolded the poor, young girl" (here old Vengrovska raised her apron to dry her tears). "She was so frightened and so drenched, I thought she would die."

"Well, how is she now?"

"I am afraid, she will be very, very sick. It's lucky the doctor was right here!"

I ordered her back to Hania and asked her not to close the door. I wanted to look at Hania, if it was only from afar. Through the half-opened door I saw her

reclining on the bed, dressed in a white wrap. There was a hectic flash on her cheeks and her eyes were gleaming. I noticed that she breathed very heavily. Evidently, she was feverish.

I hesitated for some time, whether or not to enter, but at this moment our chaplain touched my arm.

"Your father calls for you."

"But she is ill!"

"The doctor is coming to her again. Meanwhile you will speak with father. Go—it's late."

"What is the hour?"

"One after midnight."

And at five I was to meet Selim.

CHAPTER XI.

Half an hour later, having seen my father, I returned to my room, but left the bed undisturbed. I calculated, that in order to reach Wach's hut at five o'clock I would have to leave at four. I had three hours left to me. But soon the chaplain came in to see if the mad chase had any ill effect on me and if I had changed my wet attire. He insisted that I should go to bed, but talked for a whole hour before he left me.

He told me in detail what old Mirza had said. From that I learned that he considered Selim's conduct sheer madness, although Selim assured his father that he could not do otherwise. He supposed that after the elopement his father would be compelled to give his consent and we ours. It was also shown, that after my last conversation with Selim,

he had managed to see Hania and then persuaded her to leave our house. The poor girl, although not apprehending such consequences from this step, instinctively opposed it with all her power. But Selim overcame her objections with his passionate persuasion and love. He represented to her the elopement as a mere ride to Chorzele, and then they would be one, and forever happy. He also assured her, that he himself would bring her back to us, but as his betrothed; my father would be contented with all, and I would have to be, the more, as Lola Ustrzycki would console me. He besought Hania, prayed and begged of her. He told her that he would sacrifice everything for her, even his life; that he could not survive separation, that he would drown or shoot or poison himself. And that he fell at her feet and poor Hania consented to everything. But when the flight actually did occur, Hania became

frightened and with tears streaming, begged of him to return, but he refused, because,—as he told his father—he did not know what he was doing.

So was the chaplain told by old Mirza and he probably made this explanation to show, that Selim's rashness was somewhat excused by his good faith and sincerity. Considering all this, the chaplain could not share my father's anger, who felt grieved at Hania's ingratitude. The chaplain did not think Hania ungrateful, but led astray by love,—sinful, because it was worldly. For this reason he gave an edifying sermon on the vanity of mundane sentiments, but I did not blame Hania in the least because her love was worldly, if I only could have led it into a different channel. For Hania, I had the utmost sympathy and my heart was so deeply attached to her, that in an effort to tear it away I should have broken it. I asked the chaplain to in-

tervene with father on Hania's behalf and to explain her error as he had explained it to me. Then I bid him good-night because I wanted to be alone.

When he had gone, I took from the wall the old sabre and the pistols which my father had presented me, to prepare everything for the early encounter. Till now I had had no time to think of the duel. I only knew that it was to be either life or death. I wiped the sword carefully with wadding. On the broad and glittering blade there was not the least speck, although during the two hundred years of its existence it had cleaved many a helmet and armor and it had drank many a drop of Tartar, Swedish, and Turkish blood. I tested the edge, it was as fine as that of a silk ribbon. The turquoise-studded hilt seemed to invitingly ask me to grasp, and to warm it with a strong hand.

After the sabre I prepared the pistols,

not knowing which weapon Selim would choose. I poured olive oil into the locks and on little pieces of linen for the bullets. Then I loaded both pistols carefully. Daylight was breaking. It was three o'clock. Having finished my work I lay down on the sofa and collected my scattered thoughts. From a consideration of what had happened, and what the chaplain told me, I soon gained this certainty: I was far from being without fault in all the unfortunate occurrences. I asked myself if I had fulfilled the duties of guardianship with which Mikolai had entrusted me, and I answered: "No." Have I always thought of Hania and not of myself? I had to answer: "No."

What had been my chief consideration in the whole matter? I, myself. And Hania, the mild and gentle creature, had been like a dove in the nest of hawks. I could not suppress the most disagreeable thought that I and Selim had con-

tended for her and dragged her between us, as if she were our prey; and in our selfish struggle the least guilty party suffered the most. Well, within a few hours we were to wage our last battle for her.

Sad, painful thoughts were these. It was plain these surroundings of nobility were too rough for Hania. Unfortunately my mother had not been home for a long time and we men did not know how to cultivate this delicate flower which fate had planted among us. The fault weighed heavily on our whole house and either mine or Selim's blood was to remove it.

I was ready for the one as well as the other. Meanwhile, the daylight had grown stronger, the twitter of the swallows greeted the rising sun. I blew out th candles burning cn the table; it was light. The stroke of the clock in the salon, announcing half-past three, could

be distinctly heard. It was time; throwing a mantle over my shoulders, to conceal the weapons, I left my room.

Passing by the house I saw the main entrance open. The doors were always locked for the night with two heavy iron bolts. Evidently, someone had left the house and I resolved to use all possible care to avoid meeting anyone. I glided noiselessly towards the lime-tree walk, looking around in all directions, but everything seemed to rest peacefully. When I had reached the avenue I felt safe, being sure that no one in the house could see me. The morning was beautiful and clear after the night's storm; the sweet odor of the lime-trees penetrated the atmosphere.

I turned to the left, passed the blacksmith shop, the mills and the dam, where the path led me to Wach's hut. Under the exhilarating influence of the pure morning-air, sleepiness and fatigue soon

left me. A feeling of good cheer and self-confidence gave me the assurance that in the fight soon to come I was to be the victor. True, Selim was a splendid marksman, but I equalled him. In the use of the sword he was more dexterous, but I so much stronger that he could hardly sustain my stroke. "What ever may happen," I said to myself, "this will be final." If not solving it will be severing the Gordian knot that has so long cramped and oppressed me. And then, Selim had wronged Hanai greatly, whether in good faith or bad, he should suffer for it.

Thus meditating, I reached the pond. A light mist and vapor hung over it and the blue surface reflected the golden hue of the morning sun. The early twilight had developed into the young day, the air became clearer and round me it was cheerful, fair, and quiet. From the reeds the quacking of wild-ducks reached my

ear. I had now come to the flood gate and the bridge, when suddenly I halted, as if rooted in the ground.

My father was standing on the bridge; with hands folded on his back, looking thoughtfully at the water.

Evidently, he had not slept, like myself, and wished to breath the bracing air, perhaps to look after the husbandry.

I did not at once notice him, because I approached by a side path, and the willows hid the bridge from view.

But my father did not stir from the place. I looked at him; his face showed traces of sorow and of a restless night. He looked at the water and murmured his morning prayers.

Waiting grew tiresome and I resolved to glide past him across the bridge. I might safely try that, because he faced the pond, and I have already mentioned that his hearing was defective as a result from his service during the war. Step-

ping forward carefully I had almost passed the bridge, when some loose boards moved, causing my father to look around:

"What are you doing here?"

I became very embarrassed.

"Just taking a walk."

But he approached me and opening the mantle with which I had carefully covered myself, pointed at the sabre and pistols, asking:

"What does this mean?"

There was no help, I had to confess.

"I will tell you all, father, I am going to fight Mirza."

I feared that my father's temper would break out, but contrary to my expectation, it did not. He only asked:

"Who challenged him?"

"I did!"

"Without saying one word to your father?"

"I challenged him yesterday after my

ride to Ustrzyce. There was no time to ask you. And then I feared you might forbid me."

"You have guessed right. Go home and leave this whole affair to me!"

I thought my heart would break.

"Father," I said, "I implore you for the sake of everything that is sacred to you, the memory of my grandfather, let me fight the Tartar! Remember that you called me democratic and you were angry at me. But now I know that the blood of my grandfather and yours is running in my viens. Father! he has wronged Hania, and shall that be forgiven him? All people will say that we suffered wrong done to an orphan and did not avenge her. I, too, am guilty: I loved her and I did not tell you. But I swear to you, even if I did not love her, I would do that what I am doing now, to preserve our fair name. My conscience tells me that this is noble and you, my

father will not say otherwise. And it's my duty, you will not forbid me to do it. I do not believe it; I can not believe it! Father think of it! Hania has been wronged, I have challenged Mirza and gave my word I would come. I I know I am not yet of age but that does not mean that I lack the sense of honor? I have called him out and I have given my word, and you have often told me that honor is the first right of a nobleman Hania is insulted and the fair name of our house is blemished! Father! Father!"

And covering his hands with kisses I almost dissolved in tears; I had almost prayed to my father But the more I implored him the more changed the expression of his face from severity to kindness. He lifted his eyes heavenward and a large, and truly fatherly tear rolled down his cheek and fell on my forehead. A hard struggle was waging

within him; he loved me above everything in the world and trembled for my safety. But at last he bent his grey head, and said in a low, scarcely audible voice:

"May the Gor of your forefathers lead you! Go and fight the Tartar!"

We embraced each other and my father pressed me to his breast. At last he overcome his emotion, aand said in a firm and cheerful tone:

"Strike hard my boy, so that they can hear it in heaven!"

I kissed his hand, and he said:

"Sabres or pistols?"

"He has the choice."

"And the seconds?"

"We have none, we trust each other. Why should we have witnesses, father?"

And now one more embrace, the time was pressing. Before I left the road I looked around: My father was still on the bridge blessing me with the sign of

the cross. The golden light of the morning sun shone upon his erect stature and surrounded it with a brilliant halo. And so standing in the radiance, with uplifted hands, this grey haired veteran, seemed to me an old war-eagle blessing his offspring for the soaring life in battle which he himself had lived and loved.

Oh, my heart was beating so fast! I had so much courage, confidence, and fervor, that if ten Selims had awaited me, instead of one, I should have fought them all.

At last I reached the hut. Selim was waiting for me at the crest of the forest. I confess that I looked at him as the wolf does upon his prey. We measured each other with threatening and curious eyes. Selim had changed during the four days; he had grown thin and ugly. But perhaps I merely imagined that he had become ugly. His eyes glistened feverishly and the corners of his mouth twisted convulsively.

We repaired immediately into the forest, not speaking a word to each other. After some time we came to a small lane surrounded by firs. I halted and said:

"Here! Satisfied?"

Selim nodded and commenced to unbutton his coat.

"Choose," said I showing the sabre and pistols,

He pointed at the sabre he had with him, Turkish with a very curved Damascus blade.

I threw off my coat, he did the same; but before putting it down, he took a letter out of his pocket.

"If I should fall, please give this to Panna Hania."

"I will not!"

"These are not confessions, merely explanations."

"Very well!"

While we were speaking we had bared our arms. Not till now did my heart

begin to beat excitedly. At last Selim grasped the hilt, drew himself up to a haughty and defiant position and holding his sabre above his head said:

"I am ready."

I took the same position, touching his sabre with mine.

"Ready?"

"Yes!"

"Begin!"

I attacked at once so aggresively, that he had to retreat a few steps and only with difficulty parried the strokes of my sabre. But he returned stroke for stroke with such rapidity that attack and parade resounded at nearly the same time.

Crimson covered Mirza's face; his nostrils were expanded and his Tartar eyes darted daggers at me. For a moment there was only to be heard the whizzing of the blades, the cold clang of the steel, and our whistling breath.

Selim soon understood that if the com-

bat lasted much longer he would be defeated because his strength and his lungs would give away. Large beads of perspiration stood on his forehead, and his breath was short and labored. But madness, the despair of the battle, possessed him. His hair thrown into disorder by the violent motions, fell over his forehead, his open mouth showed the clinched and glittering teeth.

You might have said, that the Tartar nature was roused and had gone mad, feeling the sabre in his hand and scenting blood. But I had the advantage over him of equal ferocity and greater strength. Once he could not parry my stroke and blood spurted from his left shoulder; a few seconds later the point of my sabre touched his forehead. Fearful he looked then with the crimson band of blood which mingling with the perspiration, dripped down to his mouth and chin. But this seemed to fan his

fury. He bounded forward and back like a wounded tiger. The end of his blade twisted with lightning rapidity around my head, shoulders, and breast. With difficulty I parried his furious assaults, the more so, as I endeavored to return them. At times we were so close to each other, that breast touched breast.

Suddenly Selim leaped back, his blade hissed close to my temple but I parried it with such force, that for a moment his head was ungarded; I aimed a blow sufficient to cleave his skull, when suddenly, a thunder bolt seemed to strike my head, I cried out: "My God!" The sabre dropped from my hand, and I fell with my face to the ground.

CHAPTER XII.

What happend to me after this, I do not remember. When I revived I found myself in my father's room lying on his bed. He was sitting near me in an arm-chair, his head leaned back, pale and with eyes closed. The shutters were closed, candles were burning on the table, and in the deep silence prevailing in the room I could hear only the tick of the clock. For some time I stared at the ceiling, and tried to collect my scattered thoughts; then I tried to move, but an intense pain in my head prevented me. This pain brought me the recollection of everything that had happened, and I whispered with a feeble voice:

"Father!"

My father started and leaned towards me. Joy and tender sympathy were expressed in his face, and he said:

"God be thanked! He has recovered! What is it, my son?"

"Father, I fought Selim?"

"Yes, my dear boy; but do not think of it."

For a moment we were silent, then I asked:

"Who brought me here from the forest to this room?"

"I carried you in my arms; but don't speak, don't trouble yourself."

But five minutes did not pass when I asked again:

"Father."

"What is it, my child?"

"What has become of Selim?"

"He, too, was senseless from loss of blood, I had him carried to Chorzele."

I wanted to ask about Hania and mother, but I felt that I was again losing consciousness. It seemed to me that black and yellow dogs danced on their hind legs around my bed and I looked

at them. Then again it seemed that I heard the sound of rural music, and that instead of the clock hanging opposite my bed, I saw a face, now staring at me and then hiding again. I was not entirely unconscious, but feverish, and my thoughts were scattered. But this condition must have lasted for some time.

In moments, when I felt somewhat better, I saw as through a mist the faces surrounding my bed: My father, the chaplain, Casimir, and Doctor Stanislaus. I remember that among those faces I missed one, but whose, I could not make out. Still I know that I missed it and sought for it instinctively.

Once, having slept throughout the night, I awoke towards morning. The candles were still burning on the table. I felt very, very weak. Suddenly I saw somebody lean over my bed, I could not recognize who it was, but I felt so tranquil and happy, as if I had died already

and were in heaven. It was an angelic face, so holy, with the tears flowing from its eyes, that I, too, felt like weeping. All at once a clear light illumined my clouded mind, and I called out faintly:

"Mother!"

The angelic face leaned over my emaciated hands pressing her lips to them. I endeavored to rise, but felt a sharp pain in my temples, and again I whispered:

"Mother! it hurts!"

My mother, for she it was, changed the cold bandages. This always caused great pain, but now the dear, delicate hands so tenderly touched my battered head, that I did not feel the least pain and I whispered:

"Oh, how pleasant."

From that time I retained my memory somewhat better, but towards evening I fell again into a fever. Then I saw Hania, although when I was conscious,

I never saw her. But I always beheld her in some peril. Now a wolf with blood-shot eyes leaped at her. Now someone took her away from me, it was Selim and yet it was not Selim, because the face was covered with black bristles and horns were on the head. Then I cried out, and sometimes I would beg very meekly of the wolf and the horned creature, not to take Hania. In such moments my mother put her hands on my forehead, and the frightful visions at once vanished.

At last the fever left me entirely, and I regained my consciousness completely; but this did not mean that I was recovering. Some other illness fell upon me, some terrible weakness, under whose influence I was sinking fast.

For whole days and nights I stared at one point in the ceiling. I may have been conscious but I was indifferent to everything. Neither life nor death, nor

the presence around my bed, concerned me. I received impressions, I saw everything that happened around me, I remembered everything, but I did not have sufficient strength to collect my thoughts and to feel.

One evening it seemed that I could not rally. A large wax candle was put at my bedside, then I saw the chaplain clad in a surplice. He administered to me the Sacrament and Extreme Unction, and sobbed so violently that I thought he would faint. My mother was carried unconscious out of the room. Casimir fairly howled and tore at his hair. My father sat with clasped hands like a statue hewn out of stone. I saw everything distinctly, but I was entirely indifferent, and with dim eyes staring at the ceiling, at the foot end of my bed, or at the window, through which now the moon shone with a silvery light.

Then came the servants pressing

through the doors of the room. Crying, sobbing and howling, Casimir led them in, and they filled the room. Only father was still sitting immovable. But at last, when all knelt down, and the chaplain, with a voice broken by sobs, said the litany for the dead, my father started and crying out: "My God, my God!" fell to the floor.

At that moment I felt that my toes and fingers became numb, a strange languor possessed me. "Ah, I am dying," I thought, and fell asleep.

But I merely fell asleep and did not die, and my sleep was so deep that I did not wake till twenty-four hours later and so strengthened and refreshed that I could not comprehend what had happened to me. My indifference had disappeared. The young and powerful organism had conquered and with new vigor was waking to new life. Again there were scenes around my bed but

now so joyfully, that I will not attempt to describe them. Casimir was completely out of his wits for joy.

I was told afterwards, that immediately after the duel, when father brought me home wounded, and the doctor did not vouch for my life, they had to lock Casimir up, because he was hunting for Selim as for a wild beast, and had sworn, that, should I die, he would shoot him at sight. Fortunately, Selim, who was also, wounded, was for some time confined to his bed.

Meanwhile, every day brought me greater relief, the love for life was returning. Father and mother, the chaplain, and Casimir were watching day and night at my bedside. How I loved them, how I longed for them, when some left the room for a few moments. But with renewed life came back to my heart the love for Hania. When I awoke from the sleep, which everybody thought the

beginning of my eternal rest, I, at once asked for Hania. My father answered that she was well, but that she had gone with Madame d'Yves and my little sisters, to my uncle, because the small-pox epidemic was increasing in the village. He also had told me that he had forgotten everything and I should not worry.

Afterwards I often spoke about her to my mother, who knowing that this topic interested me most of all, frequently began herself to speak of Hania. She always ended such conversations with well-meaning words and with the promise that, when I had fully recovered my father would speak to me about many things that would be very agreeable to me, but I should be quiet now and do my best to hasten my recovery. Saying so she smiled sadly, but I wanted to weep from happiness.

But sometimes things happened, that

disturbed my quietude and even filled me with fear. One evening, for instance, when my mother was with me, Frank, the servant, entered and asked her to come to Hania's room. I immediately sat up in my bed.

"Has Hania returned?" I asked.

"No, she has not returned," answered my mother. "He asks me to her room, because it is being renovated."

Sometimes it seemed to me, that a cloud of some great and ill-hidden grief rested on the brows of those surrounding me. I did not understand what it meant, and my questions were evaded. I asked Casimir, but he, like the others, told me that everything was well, that our little sisters, Madame d'Yves, and Hania would return soon, and that I should not worry.

"But why are you all so sad?"I asked.

"Well, I will tell you everything. Selim with old Mirza comes here every day.

Selim is in despair all day long, cries and wants to see you. But our parents are afraid that his visit will harm you."

I smiled.

"How thoughtful Selim is," I said, "first he nearly cleaves my skull and now he weeps over it. Does he still think of Hania?"

"Oh, no! he does not think of her! I have not asked him, but I think, that he has given her up forever."

"That is a question."

"In any case, somebody else will get her, rest assured."

Here Casimir cut a grimace, and said knowingly:

"I know who will get her. But God grant that—."

"That what?"

"That she return soon," he added quickly.

His words quieted me. "A few days afterwards, father and mother were with

me in the evening. Father and I commenced a game of chess. After a while mother left, leaving the door open and I could see into the corridor at the end of which was the door to Hania's room. I looked at it but saw nothing. All other rooms, except mine, were dark, and the door to Hania's room, as far as I could discern, was closed.

Suddenly, somebody entered there, I thought Doctor Stanislaus, and left the door somewhat open.

My heart beat uneasily; there was light in Hania's room. The light shone with a clear streak into the dark corridor, and in that clear streak I saw fine ringlets of smoke curling in the light like dust in the sun shine.

Gradually I noticed a faint, indistinct odor, which grew stronger and stronger with every second. Suddenly my hair stood on end: I recognized the smell of juniper.

"Father, what is that?" I cried out violently, overturning the chess-board with the figures.

My father started in confusion having also noticed the fatal aroma.

"Nothing, it's nothing."

But I was on my feet, and although swaying, quickly advanced to the door.

"Why do you burn juniper, then? I want to go there."

My father held me round the waist.

"You will not go there. You must not, I forbid you!"

But I had become desperate, grabbing the bandage I said with the utmost excitement:

"Very well, but I swear to you that I will tear off the bandage and open the the wound with my own hands. Hania is dead! I want to see her!"

"Hania is not dead, I give you my word!" said my father, holding my hands and struggling with me. "She was ill,

but much better now. Be quiet! Be quiet I will tell you everything, but lie down. You can not go there. You would kill her. Be quiet, lie down, I swear to you, she is better."

My strength left me. I fell on the bed, murmuring only:

"My God, my God!"

"Henry, compose yourself. Are you a woman? Be firm. She is out of danger. I have promised to tell you everything and I will, but under the condition that you are composed, lean your head on the pillow. So! Cover yourself and be quiet!

I obeyed.

"I am quiet, but quick father, tell me. I wish to know it once and for all. Is she surely better? What was her illness?"

"Listen: that night when Selim took her, there was a storm. Hania had only a light dress and was drenched through

and through. That reckless step has cost her much. In Chorzele, whither Mirza had taken her, she could not change her dress and returned in the same wet garments. The same day she had chills and a very strong fever. The next day old Vengrovska could not hold her tongue and told Hania about you. She even said you were killed. This endangered her condition. In the evening she was unconscious. For a long time the doctor did not know what it was, at last—. You know, in the village was and still is a small-pox epidemic. Hania fell a victim."

I closed my eyes and my senses seemed to leave me, at last, I said:

"Continue father, I am quiet."

"There were moments," my father continued, "of great peril. The same day that we feared to lose you, we gave up all hope of her recovery. But for both of you came a happy crisis at the same

time. To-day, like you, she is convalescing. In a week she will be well."

"But what happened in the house?"

My father had finished and looked at me attentively as if in fear, lest his words might have shocked my weakened mind; I did not stir. Silence reigned for some time. I was collecting my thoughts to contemplate the new calamity. My father rose and crossed the room with a heavy step, looking at me from time to time.

"Father?" I said, after a long silence.

"What is it, my boy?"

"Is her face very—very—marred?"

My voice was quiet and collected, but my heart beat loud in expectation of an answer.

"Yes," said my father, "as usual after small-pox. It may be, that the scars will disappear. She has them now, but they will leave her, surely."

I turned towards the wall, I felt worse than usual.

Within a week I was well again and within two weeks I saw Hania. Oh, I do not dare describe what became of the beautiful, ideal face. When the poor girl left her room and when I saw her for the first time, although I had sworn to myself, not to show any emotion, I fainted, and fell as if dead to the ground. Oh, how terribly marred she was.

When I regained consciousness, Hania was weeping aloud, probably over her own and my misfortune; for I, too, resembled more a shadow than human being.

"I am the cause of it all!" she sobbed, "I am."

"Hania, my dearest sister! do not weep, I shall always love you," I said, and took her hands intending as of old to raise them to my lips.

But I shuddered and drew back. Those hands, once so white, delicate, and beau-

tiful, now were horrible. Black spots covered them entirely and they were rough, almost repulsive.

"I shall always love you," I repeated with an effort.

I lied. My heart was filled with profound pity and brotherly affection, but my old love had taken wings and fled, not leaving a trace.

Then I went to the garden and the same bower, where Selim and she had declared their love for each other, and I wept as bitterly as if some one very dear to me had died. In fact, Hania of old had died for me; or rather my love had died, and in my heart remained the sufferings from an unhealed wound and the recollection which brought tears into my eyes.

I sat there for a long time. The quiet autumn evening, with red light of its parting sun set the tree-tops aglow. I must have been missed at home, my father came into the bower.

He looked at me and respected my grief.

"Poor boy," he said "God has visited you heavily, but trust in Him. He knows best."

I leaned my head on his shoulder and for some time we were both silent.

At last my father said:

"You were deeply attached to her. Now tell me, should I say to you: 'She is yours; give her your hand for life,' what would you answer me?"

"Father," I said, "love may have left me, but my honor never. I am ready."

He kissed me with great emotion.

"God bless you. I recognize your own self. But this is not your obligation, not your duty, it is Selim's."

Later on Selim came. When he saw Hania, he reddened and then turned very pale. For a moment his face expressed the fearful struggle between his heart and his conscience. From him, too, the

winged bird of love was fleeing. But the noble fellow conquered himself. He rose, extended his hands, fell on his knees before Hania, and exclaimed:

"My Hania! I am always the same! I shall never, never leave you!"

Copious tears flowed down Hania's cheeks, but she pushed Selim gently away.

"I can not believe, that anybody could love me now," and then covering her face with her hands, she exclaimed:

"Oh, how good and noble you all are. I, alone, am the least noble, the most sinful. But this has all ended, I have changed!"

And in spite of old Mirza's insistings and Selim's importunings, she refused him her hand. The first storm in life had broken this beautiful flower, barely blossomed. Poor girl! After the storm she was in need of a holy and peaceful shelter, where she could quiet her conscience and comfort her heart.

And she found this peaceful and holy refuge: she became a Sister of Charity.

After some years I saw her unexpectedly. Peace was expressed on her angelic countenance. The traces of that fearful disease had disappeared entirely. She was never so beautiful as now, in her black habit and coronet; it was a supernatural beauty—more angelic than human.

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