

THE GOVERNOR  
OF GREIFENSEE

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ON the 13th of July, 1783, that being Emperor Henry's Day, as it still stands in red letters on the Zürich calendar, a large crowd of city and country people, some in carriages, some on horseback, and some on foot, were wending their way along Schaffhauser Street toward the village of Kloten. For on the gentle slopes of that region Colonel Solomon Landolt, who was at that time Governor of the domain of Greifensee, was going to muster and drill the corps of Zürich sharpshooters which he had organized, and draw them up for review before the gentlemen of the War Council. He had chosen Henry's Day, as he said, because half of the militiamen of the worthy canton of Zürich bore the name of Henry, and were in the habit of celebrating the popular name-festival with an idle carousal, so that not much harm would be done by a muster.

The spectators enjoyed the unusual sight of the new, hitherto unknown troop, consisting of sturdy young volunteers in plain green uniforms, and were very much interested in their rapid movements with open ranks, as well as in the independent actions of each individual as he handled his accurate rifle; and especially were they pleased by the fatherly relation in which the organizer and leader of the entire corps seemed to stand toward his jolly men.

First one would see them, widely scattered, disappear along the edge of the woods; then, at the colonel's command, shouted as he flew over the hilly ground on his glossy bay mare, they would reappear as a dark column in the distance, come marching close by, singing merrily, and a moment later emerge into view again on top of a hill covered with fir-trees, against whose green they could no longer be distinguished. It was all done so swiftly and so cheerfully that the uninitiated spectator could have no idea of the amount of work and effort it had cost the worthy man to prepare this highly personal gift to his fatherland.

And when at last, at the sound of the bugle, he came trotting close up at the head of his troop of riflemen, of whom there were perhaps five hundred, and as quick as lightning commanded them to break ranks for rest and the return home, while he himself dismounted nimbly from his horse, showing as little fatigue as the young men, then every mouth was full of his praise. Several officers of Swiss regiments posted in France and the Netherlands were present, and they discussed the great future of the new arm and rejoiced that their country was introducing it independently and of its own accord. They also found satisfaction in recalling how even Frederick the Great, once when Landolt was attending the manoeuvres in Potsdam, had fixed his eyes on the tirelessly active man and sent for him; also how in repeated negotiations he had tried to secure him for his army. It was known that Landolt still possessed an autograph letter from the great man, which he preserved more carefully than a love-letter.

All eyes were fixed approvingly on the Governor as he now approached his Councillors and fellow-citizens, and cordially shook

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hands with all his friends. He had on a dark-green suit, without any galloons, light-colored riding-gloves, and high boots with white cuffs. A stout sword hung at his side, and his hat was turned up in the style of an officer. As for the rest, the aforesaid<sup>1</sup> biographer describes him as follows:

“Even one who had seen but once could never forget him. His brow, open and clear, was high-arched. His aquiline nose protruded from his face in a gentle curve. His thin lips formed delicate, graceful lines, and in the corners of his mouth there lay concealed behind a scarcely noticeable, whimsical smile, a suggestion of satire such as hits the mark, but never intentionally wounds. His bright, brown eyes glanced around freely and firmly, in a way to reveal the indwelling spirit, rested with indescribable kindness on gratifying objects, but flashed piercingly at everything which offended the honest man’s sensitive nature, when displeasure drew together his heavy brows. He was of medium height, powerfully and regularly built, and of military bearing.”

Let us add to this description that he wore a good-sized queue at the back of his neck, and that on this Emperor Henry’s Day he was in his forty-second year.

His brown eyes had an unforeseen opportunity to rest with that indescribable kindness on a gratifying object, when he approached a rose-red state-coach to greet its occupants, who extended their hands to him; for unexpectedly there was among them a very beautiful lady, whom he had once known, but whom he had not seen for years. She may have been about thirty-five years of age, had laughing brown eyes, a red mouth, and dark-brown hair. The latter hung down over the lace collar which inclosed her half-bare neck, and was piled up richly on her beautiful head, which was covered with a handsome straw hat, tilted forward. She wore a summer dress with white and green stripes, and had in her hand a parasol which people would now take for Chinese or Japanese. For the rest, to cut short any unfounded predictions, it must be observed at once that she had long been married and had several children; and that any relations between her and the officer could therefore only concern the past. In short, she had been the first girl to whom he had offered his heart, and she had given him a polite refusal. Her name must remain unknown, for the reason that all her children are still running about in honor and dignity; and we must content ourselves with the name which Landolt’s memory still retained for her—he called her “Goldfinch.”

Both persons blushed slightly as they shook hands. And as they were partaking of refreshments at the Lion in Kloten, whither they had betaken themselves, and where Landolt occupied a seat beside the lady, she was as pleasant and unreserved toward him as if she herself had been the enamored party. He began to feel very blithe, as he had not felt for years, and conversed in the best of spirits with the so-called Goldfinch, who still seemed as young as ever.

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But finally the long summer day began to draw to a close, and Landolt was obliged to think of returning home; for it was a ride of nearly three leagues to Greifensee, whose manorial domain he had been ruling as Governor for more than two years. As he took leave of the company an invitation found expression, seemingly of its own accord, and it was arranged that his old friend should come some day with her husband and children, and surprise him in his castle at Greifensee.

Absorbed in meditation, and accompanied by but one servant, he rode slowly home by way of Dietlikon. As he crossed the peat-bogs dusk was already coming on; at the right the evening glow was fading away over the wooded ridge, and on the left the waning moon was rising behind the mountains of the Zürich highlands—a mood and a situation in which the Governor was wont to feel a quickening of life, to become all eyes, and to heed only the quiet power of nature. But today the gleaming lights in the sky and the gentle dominance near and far made him more solemn than usual, even somewhat sentimental; and while he was thinking about the reception he would accord that nice creature who had given him the mitten, the desire suddenly came over him to invite not only her, but also three or four other lovely beings, toward whom he had once borne a similar relation. Enough, as he rode along there awakened in him a genuine longing to see the amiable, once-loved ladies all together at his home, and to spend a day with them. For, alas, it must be explained that the hardened old bachelor had not always been so unapproachable as now, and that at one time he had resisted all too little the blandishments of the other sex. On his list of pet names there was another whom he called Harlequin; also a Whitethroat, a Captain, and a Blackbird—making with Goldfinch five in all. Some were married, the others were not; but all five, since he was conscious of no wrongdoing with respect to any of them, could doubtless be induced to come. Had his hands not been occupied with the reins and whip, he would have rubbed them together with inward delight as he began to picture to himself how he would make the fair ones acquainted with one another, how they would behave and get along together, and what pretty sport was promised for him in playing the host to such a charming family.

The difficulty, to be sure, would be in taking his housekeeper, Frau Marianne, into his confidence, and obtaining her consent and assistance; for if she were not in the plot and favorably disposed toward so delicate an affair, the lovely plan would fall through.

Frau Marianne, however, was the oddest fish in the world; in a whole kingdom one could not have discovered another like her. She was the daughter of Kleissner, town-carpenter of Hall in Tirol, and had been brought up, along with a number of brothers and sisters, under the sway of a bad step-mother. The latter had sent her as a novice to a convent; she had a good singing-voice, and seemed to

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promise very well. But when the time came to take the vows she offered such wild and fearful resistance, that she was dismissed with horror. After that Marianne struck out alone into the world and found a position as cook in a tavern at Freiburg in Breisgau. On account of her well-shaped figure she had to endure the advances and wooings of the Austrian officers and students who frequented the place. But she energetically repulsed them all with the exception of a handsome student of good family from Donaueschingen, to whom she gave her affection; wherefore a jealous officer made slanderous remarks about her which reached her ears. Armed with a sharp kitchen-knife, she strode into the guest-room, where the officers were sitting, and called the offender to account as a calumniator; and when he attempted to put the resolute woman out of the room, she attacked him so fiercely that he was obliged to draw his sword to defend himself. But she disarmed the man, broke his sword and hurled it at his feet; in consequence of which affair he was expelled from the regiment. The plucky Tirolese girl now married the handsome student, against the will of his people too, the pair eloping together. In Königsberg he enlisted in a Prussian regiment of cavalry, which she also joined as a sutler-woman and accompanied on several campaigns. Here she proved so tirelessly industrious, and so skilful as a cook and baker, both in the field and in the garrison, that she earned enough money to make her husband's life comfortable, and to save something besides. In the course of time they had nine children, whom she loved more than anything in the world, and with all the strength of her passionate nature. But they all died, and each time it almost broke her heart, which, however, proved stronger than all the fatalities.

Finally, when youth and beauty had fled, the hussar, her husband, recalling his once better estate, began to despise his wife; for life had become too pleasant for him in her care. So she took the money she had saved, purchased his dismissal from the regiment, and let him go wherever he pleased to seek his fortune. She herself, all alone, again wandered southward, whence she had come, to find employment.

At St. Blasien in the Black Forest it happened that she was recommended to the Governor of Greifensee, who was looking for a housekeeper; and in that capacity she had now been serving him for two years. She was at least forty-five years old, and was more like an old hussar than a housekeeper. She would swear like a Prussian sergeant and when her displeasure was aroused would raise such a storm that everybody fled, save only the laughing Governor, who would hold his ground and enjoy the row. But she took excellent care of his house; she managed his servants and field-hands with unyielding severity, took care of his money faithfully and reliably, bargained and economized wherever it was possible and her master's generosity did not intervene, and in turn with her good cooking encouraged his hospitality so obligingly and so intelligently, that he was presently able to turn over to her, without reservation, the entire management of his

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household.

Then again her deeper nature would shine through all the roughness when, with an unbroken contralto voice, she would sing for the Governor, listening to her attentively, an old ballad, or a still older love-song, or a hunting-song; and she was not a little proud when her master, who could play the cornet, would learn the mournful melody, and sound it forth from the castle window over the moonlit lake.

Once when the ten-year-old son of a neighbor was lying in bed with an incurable disease, and the encouragement of neither pastor nor parents could comfort the child in his pain and dread of death—for he was so eager to live—the Governor, quietly smoking his pipe, sat down beside the bed and talked to him with such simple and appropriate words about the hopelessness of his condition, about the necessity of his composing himself and suffering for a short time, and then about the gentle release from it all that death would bring, and the blissful, undisturbed rest that he was going to enjoy for having been a patient and good boy, and finally about the love and sympathy which he, a stranger, cherished for him, that the child was changed from that hour; he bore his sufferings with cheerful patience, until death at last did bring release.

Then the passionate Frau Marianne rushed up to the death-bed, knelt beside the body, and prayed devoutly and long, asking the supposed little saint to intercede with God in behalf of all her dead children; whereupon she reverently kissed the Governor's hand, as if he were a great bishop, until he, laughing, shook her off with the words:

“Are you possessed, you old simpleton?”

And so this was the Governor's stewardess, with whom he would first have to come to an understanding, if he proposed to assemble his five old flames on his hearth and have them shine.

As he rode into the castle yard and dismounted from his horse, he heard her storming in the kitchen because the dogs were howling in their kennels—a maid having neglected to give them their evening meal.

“This is not a favorable time,” he thought, as he meekly sat down in his arm-chair to have supper, while his housekeeper entered in a stormy humor, and related to him all that had happened during the day. He poured out for her a glass of Burgundy, of which she was very fond but drank only when invited by her master, although she kept the cellar keys. This slightly cooled her temper. He then took his cornet down from the wall, and blew one of her favorite tunes out over the lake.

“Frau Marianne,” he now said, “won't you sing me that other song—how does it go—?”

Whoso the blessed maids hath seen  
High up in the evening light,  
By the haunted rock his soul, I ween,  
Must wing its parting flight.

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Adieu, adieu, O sisters dear,  
My body sleeps in the weeds down here.

She immediately sang all the stanzas of the song, each having a different theme, but all expressing a like longing to see something again. She herself was touched by the simple melody, and all the more when the Governor sent forth the sustained notes into the night.

“Frau Marianne,” he said, reentering the room, “we must make plans pretty soon for the proper reception of a small but select company!”

“What company, sir? Who is coming?”

“I expect,” he replied with a cough, “Goldfinch, Harlequin, Whitethroat, Captain, and Blackbird!”

The woman opened wide her mouth and eyes, and asked: “What sort of people are they? Do they sit on chairs or on a pole?”

But the Governor had already gone into the next room to get his pipe, which he now lighted.

“Goldfinch,” he said, blowing away the first puff, “is a beautiful woman!”

“And the second?”

“Harlequin?—She is also a woman, and beautiful in her way!”

Thus it went on, down to Blackbird. Since the housekeeper, however, was not satisfied with these laconic explanations, the Governor had to enter into further detail about things concerning which his lips had never before emitted a word.

“In a word,” he said, “they are all old sweethearts of mine, whom I wish to see all together for once!”

“But Lord o’ Mercy!” cried Frau Marianne, who with her eyes open still wider jumped up and ran over to the rear wall. “Governor! My most gracious master! You have loved, and so many? Heavens and earth! And devil a soul ever had a suspicion of it! And you’ve always acted as if you couldn’t stand women! And so you led on all those poor things and then jilted them?”

“No,” he replied with an embarrassed smile; “they didn’t want me!”

“Didn’t want you?” cried Marianne with increasing excitement. “Not one of them?”

“No, not one.”

“Cursed rabble! But your idea is good—they shall come. We’ll lure them here and have a look at them. That’ll be a funny company! I hope we’ll lock them up in the tower where the jackdaws perch, and let them starve! As for quarrels—I’ll take care of that!”

“No, none of that!” laughed the Governor. “On the contrary, you must extend to them all possible courtesy and hospitality! For it is to be a beautiful day for me, a day such as it would needs be if there were really a month of May—and of course there isn’t—and if this were at once the first and the last May!”



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Frau Marianne saw by the gleam of his eyes that he honestly meant the occasion to be edifying, ran to him, seized and kissed his hand, and then, drying her eyes, said softly:

“Yes, I understand you. It’s to be such a day as if I suddenly had all my dead children, the blessed little angels, here with me!”

The ice once broken, he gradually made her acquainted, as suitable opportunities came, with the five objects of his former devotion, explaining the course of events in each case; all of which gave occasion for sundry interruptions and much whimsical cross-fire between narrator and listener. We will retell the stories, but arrange them in order, round them off, and adapt them to our understanding.

### GOLDFINCH

This name Solomon Landolt got from the fair lady’s family coat-of-arms, which showed a finch and was painted over her front-door. As more than one family had such song-birds on their escutcheons, it is safe to betray the baptismal name, which was Salome, of the quondam little maid; or rather, she was a very stately young lady, when Solomon made her acquaintance.

In addition to the public domains and provinces, there also existed at that time a number of old estates, with castles, fields, and local jurisdiction—and some without these—which were purchased and sold by citizens according to their means, and thus passed from hand to hand as private possessions. Up to the time of the Revolution this was the prevailing way of investing capital and carrying on agriculture, and it gave even to non-aristocrats the pleasure of adorning their theoretical share in the local sovereignty with titles having a lordly and feudal sound. Thanks to this arrangement half of the more prosperous population lived during the pleasant season of the year, either as hosts or as guests, at these various official and non-official country seats, with their beautiful natural surroundings, very much as the old gods and demi-gods of feudal times had lived, except that they now enjoyed serene peace and had no feuds or war-troubles.

It was at one of these places that Solomon Landolt, then about twenty-five, met young Salome. On different sides they were distantly related to the family, so that while they could not rightly be called kinsfolk they had a pleasant feeling of common connection. Furthermore, as their names sounded somewhat alike they became the object of mirthful remarks, and there was much fun, to which they did not object, when one of their names would be called and they would both look around and blush to find that “the other” was meant. As they were equally good-looking, equally cheerful and high-spirited, their well-meaning friends thought them suited to each other, and a marriage not at all out of the question.

To be sure, Solomon was not yet exactly in a frame of mind to establish a home of his own; on the contrary, his ship of life was still cruising around outside the harbor, undecided whether to put to sea

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or to make port. At one time he had attended the French military school in Metz, first to study artillery and military engineering, then to take up civil architecture, with which he would some day serve his native city. With the same purpose he had also gone to Paris. But compass and rule and the everlasting measuring and computing had proved too tedious for his unfettered spirit and wild, youthful nature; so he had cultivated a natural talent for freehand drawing, sketching, and painting, and at the same time had kept his eyes and ears open, thus acquiring knowledge and experience of various kinds, particularly such as could be got on horse-back. But there was no architect or engineer in him when he came home. His parents were but little pleased at this, and their evident anxiety moved him to accept at least a position in the city court, in order to qualify himself for participation in the government. Carefree, but lovable and of good habits, he took things very easy there, while deep earnestness and energy slumbered but lightly within him.

Very naturally there was more talk of the young man's uncertain position with regard to a possible marriage, and every aspect of the matter was discussed more thoroughly than he himself suspected. Just as farmers, the more unknown the future is to them, usher in the year all the more lavishly with disparaging prophecies, so did the mothers of various marriageable daughters discuss and disparage the innocent morning-time of Solomon's life. The charming Salome gathered from all this that definite prospects and plans of marriage were out of the question, but that a friendly, even familiar intercourse was all the more permissible. She was called Mademoiselle, and was trained in the French spirit, except that she had been reared in a free protestant society and not in a convent; so that she regarded even a mild flirtation as not at all dangerous.

Guilelessly Solomon gave himself up to an affection which had presently bloomed in his honest heart, without, however, conducting himself obtrusively or with presumption. The result was that when either of them was visiting at the always hospitable country-seat, the other did not long remain away, and the effect of these occurrences was merely to amuse people by keeping them guessing: "They'll marry! They'll not marry!"

One fine day, however, a settlement of the question seemed to grow up out of the ground. Having in his younger days acquired all sorts of information about farming and eagerly increased it on his travels, Solomon induced the owner of the estate to have cherry-trees planted in a meadow which lay on a sunny slope. He himself procured the young, slender trees, and set about planting them with his own hands. Among them there was a new variety of white cherries, which he wanted to plant in alternate rows with the red ones, and since there were very nearly fifty trees in all, there would probably be a full day's work; for it was spring and the days were short.

But Salome insisted upon being on hand to help wherever she

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could, because, as she laughingly said, she might perhaps some day marry a country gentleman and must therefore learn about such things betimes. With a broad sun-hat on her head she did actually accompany him to the somewhat distant meadow, where she zealously assisted in the work. Solomon measured off the straight lines for the rows, and the distance between the separate trees, while Salome helped him to stretch the strings and to drive the stakes. He dug the holes in the soft ground as he wanted them, and Salome held the delicate trees upright while he threw the earth back in again and stamped it down so that it was nice and solid. Then Salome took the watering-pot and brought water from a tub, which a farm-hand kept filling with the life-giving element, and watered the trees as plentifully as Solomon directed.

At noon, when the shadows of the newly planted trees began to turn, the host humorously sent out to the industrious couple a rustic meal, suitable for field-hands. It tasted delicious too, as they ate it sitting on the greensward, and Salome asserted that she now had as much right as a farmer's daughter to drink a few glasses of wine, considering how hard she was working. The wine and the renewed exertion, which continued until evening, warmed her blood and made it tingle; it clouded the light of her worldly wisdom, eclipsing it momentarily, just as the moon eclipses the sun.

Solomon kept at the work so earnestly and so cheerfully, managed the business so cleverly and conscientiously, was all the while so uniformly merry, confidential and entertaining, and seemed so happy, without once forgetting himself all day long by so much as a bold look or remark, that a pleasant conviction came over her that with this comrade her entire life would be as nice as this day. A warm affection gained the upper hand in her, and when the last cherry-tree stood firmly in the ground, and there was nothing left to do, she said with a gentle sigh:

“Thus everything comes to an end!”

Solomon Landolt, carried away by the note of feeling in these words, looked at her in delight; but owing to the glow of the evening sun, which illuminated her beautiful face, he could not make out whether it was reddened by the light or by tender emotion. Only her eyes shone through all the brightness, and involuntarily their four hands came together. Nothing further happened, however, for just then the servant came to get the rake, shovel, watering-pot, and other implements.

Beneath changed stars they walked back between the rows of trees which they had planted. Since they could only look at each other with eyes of love, they spent less time together in the house and were more circumspect. On this account, and still more on account of a certain contentment which seemed to enliven and at the same time to calm them, it became quite evident that something new had taken place.

But Solomon did not allow it to go on thus for many days; he

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whispered a few significant words to her, which she caught very well, and then rode at a rapid gait to Zürich, in order to win over both families to the possibility of an engagement.

First, however, he felt an impulse to lay bare his heart to his lady-love in a letter; but scarcely had he got under way and penned the most urgent part, when curiosity suddenly prompted him to test the solidity of the girl's affection by means of a mysteriously dubious description of his lineage and prospects.

The former, to be sure, was of a peculiar kind on the mother's side.

His mother, Anna Margaretha, was the daughter of a Dutch General of Infantry, Solomon Hirzel, Lord of Wülflingen, who with his three sons drew large pensions from the government of the Netherlands, and used the money to conduct their well-known and singular farm on the aforesaid court-domain in the vicinity of Winterthur. A wolf, which howled and bayed vigilantly, was kept chained by the gate instead of a watch-dog—in itself a token of their eccentric ways. After the early death of the mother every one did as he pleased during the father's frequent absences, and the sons, as well as the three daughters, brought themselves up and did it in the wildest possible way. Only when the old General was at home was a certain order observed, in that every morning reveille, and every evening "taps," was beaten on the drum. Otherwise everybody went his own gait. The oldest daughter, Landolt's mother, managed the house, and the duties laid upon her had the effect of making her the best and steadiest member of the family. Nevertheless she would ride out hunting with the men, carrying the dog-whip, and whistling shrilly through her fingers. It was a custom of the men to have their habits and deeds painted in a humorous way on the walls of their buildings. Thus in a pavilion there was a picture showing the old general with his three sons and oldest daughter, who was already married, dashing along over stone and stubble, while little Solomon Landolt rode at his stately mother's side—a regular centaur-family.

Sometimes these rides were taken in pursuit of a tame stag, which had been trained to flee from hunters and dogs and finally let itself be captured. But that was merely for riding-practice; real hunting was indulged in constantly, varied only by feasts and the perpetration of innumerable practical jokes, which extended even to the exercise of magistracy.

Through all this wild life Landolt's mother, being a woman of good sense and cheerful temperament, lived decently, as has been said, and later on she was a true and reliable friend to her children, while the paternal house went under.

After the old general had died in the year 1755, and Anna Margaretha had married and left home, the sons gave themselves over to a life that grew more disorderly every day. Their hunting expeditions degenerated into quarrels with neighboring estate-owners regarding

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matters of jurisdiction, also into ill-treatment of inferiors. A pastor, who had preached to them from the pulpit, they attacked as he was riding through their forest, and chased him with whips through the Töss River and across country, until he collapsed with his mare, dropped trembling to his knees, and begged their forgiveness. Bailiffs who came to collect a rather large fine imposed upon them for this offense, they caused to be waylaid by masked men on their return and relieved of the money.

Besides their senseless extravagance, they acquired a passion-for gambling, which they would indulge continuously, week in and week out. They enticed poor devils there and took away from them all they owned, and then, in order to preserve their own gentlemanly honor by giving their victims a chance to get even, kept on playing until they themselves had lost twice as much to the unfortunates.

But finally it all came to a sad end. One after the other they were obliged to leave the castle, until finally the last one was compelled to sacrifice in rapid succession his seignorial rights and revenues, his woods and fields, his house and home and to make his escape. One of the brothers reached such a low estate that he was taken care of in a foreign work-house; another lived alone in a forest-hut for some time, but was so harassed by creditors and wasted by disease that he was obliged to abandon even this wretched place of refuge and disappear into remote obscurity; the third took refuge in foreign military service, where he too went to the bad.

Nevertheless the wild humor of the brothers staid with them until the last minute. Before they deserted the castle they had their rustic court-painter depict on the walls all the scenes and misdeeds connected with their decline, down to the last sitting of their court. Behind the stove stood forth the titles of all the alienated deeds and privileges, and in a forest clearing, illuminated by the moon, foxes, hares, and badgers were playing with the insignia of the lost estate. Over the door, moreover, they had themselves portrayed in a rear view, showing them near a boundary-stone, with their hats under their arms, solemnly striding over the line of their estate for the last time; underneath, in topsy-turvy letters, stood the word "Amen."

While Solomon Landolt was evolving this dubious history in the letter to Salome, the melancholy fear seized him that the unfortunate blood and fatal destinies of his three uncles might possibly revive in him, and that it had been due only to a lucky star that they had skipped his mother. All the more naturally, he concluded, the unlucky star might rise in him again. To fight against it conscientiously and in accordance with his best knowledge was, to be sure—so he wrote her—his ardent purpose; but he was obliged to acknowledge that he had already gambled away a considerable sum on his journeys, and had secretly been reimbursed for it by his mother. Furthermore, he went on, he had already, with other people's money and without the knowledge of his father, kept horses worth far more than he could

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afford; and as for cash, it was practically certain that he would never learn to husband it as became the head of an orderly household. Even the less harmful trait[s] of his uncles, fondness for riding and hunting, for pranks and jokes, were present in him, down to the very propensity to daub walls; for even as a boy he had covered the walls of Wellenberg Castle, where his father had lived as governor, with a hundred pictures of soldiers, drawn with charcoal and red chalk.

These grave anxieties, he thought, as an honorable man, he had no right to conceal from his much-beloved Mademoiselle Salome; he ought rather to give her an opportunity to reflect carefully on the weighty step over the threshold of a veiled future, and to make up her mind whether she would invoke the help of divine providence and venture it with him, or act with just and commendable caution, and with complete freedom of her worthy person, guard herself against a dark fate.

Scarcely had he dispatched the letter when he regretted having written it; for its contents had become in the course of its composition more serious, more possible, as it were, than he at first supposed. Indeed the situation was fundamentally as he had described it, although he himself looked into the future with good courage. But it was now too late to change things, and finally he again felt the need, after all, of being able to test the depth of Salome's affection by observing the result.

The result was not long in manifesting itself. Salome had immediately told her mother what had happened between her and Solomon. The news was talked over with the father, and the marriage, in view of the uncertain prospects of the young man, whom all liked and none understood, was declared undesirable, yes, even dangerous. And when the letter arrived, the parents cried:

"He is right, more than right! Let him be praised for his sturdy honesty!"

The good Salome, to whom a life of worry or actual unhappiness was unthinkable, wept bitter tears a whole day, and then wrote in a short note to the indiscreet tester of her heart: It could not be! It could not be for several weighty reasons! He should take no further steps in the matter, but keep his friendship for her, just as she would always faithfully put hers at his service with the most willing cordiality!

In a few weeks she became engaged to a wealthy man whose circumstances and temperament permitted no doubt to arise as to the certainty of a well-established future.

Landolt was slightly troubled for as much as half a day; then he shook off his vexation, and with cheerful visage came to the conclusion that he had escaped a danger.

## HARLEQUIN

The name of the sweetheart whom he called Harlequin may be



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given in full, since the family is now extinct. She bore the ancient baptismal name of Figura, and was a niece of the clever Councillor and Reformer Leu; so her full name was Figura Leu. She was an unspoiled child of nature, whose gold-blond curls could be arranged in the fashionable styles of the day only with the greatest difficulty and waged daily war with the hair-dresser of the house. Figura Leu's life consisted almost entirely of dancing and frisking about, and of a succession of jokes which she perpetrated with or without spectators. Only at the time of the new moon did she become more quiet: then her eyes, concealing the rogueries in their depths, were like a pool of blue water, in which the little silvery fish remain below unseen, and at the most only leap up occasionally to catch a fly venturing too near the surface.

At other times, however, her fun began early on Sunday morning. As Chairman of the Reformation Chamber, that is, the official Board that had charge of religious and moral betterment, it was her uncle's duty to permit the exit of those inhabitants who wished to go outside the gates on Sunday and to grant them passes, which they had to leave with the gate-watchman; for all other people were forbidden by strict Moral Ordinances to leave the city on days of worship. The enlightened gentleman secretly derived much amusement, from this function when it did not cause him too much trouble; for on many Sundays almost a hundred persons, with the greatest variety of excuses, would apply for permission to go out into the country. But it afforded even more amusement to Figura, who would first group the petitioners in the spacious hall, arranging them according to the soundness of their reasons, and then conduct them in classes into the Reformer's office. Her classification, however, was based not on their alleged excuses, but on the genuine reasons which she read in their faces. Thus she would unerringly place together apprentices, artisans, and servant-girls, who wanted to attend some distant kermess or harvest-dance, but made the pretense that they had to fetch an outside doctor for a sick master. These folk would invariably bring with them, as evidence of their sincerity, either an empty medicine-bottle, a salve-jar, a pill-box, or even a little flask of water, which, at the merry girl's suggestion, they would carefully hold in their hands when they were admitted. Next would come a group of modest little men, with boxes of angle-worms already in their pockets, who wished to enjoy their privileges of citizenship by fishing in quiet brooks. These would have a hundred different excuses, such as—to attend a christening, to collect an inheritance, or to inspect a head of cattle, and so forth. After these would follow more questionable fellows, well-known reprobates who were headed for a gang of gamblers in some out-of-the-way dive, or at best for a bowling or drinking resort. Last of all would come the lovers, who were honestly anxious to get outside the walls, in order to pick flowers and damage the bark of the forest trees with their pocket-knives.

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All these groups she would arrange with expert skill, and her uncle would find them so well classified that, without much loss of time, he could separate those whom on humane grounds he wished to let out for once, and reject the others, so that not too great a number would be running out of the gates at once.

Solomon Landolt heard about this merry muster which Figura Leu held every Sunday morning, and he felt a desire to try the adventure himself. Accordingly, although as an officer he could go in and out of the gates whenever he pleased, he mounted his horse one day, rode to the Leu house, and with his boots and spurs on entered the hall, where the curious grouping of the pleasure-seekers had in fact just been completed. Figura was standing on the front steps ready for church; in accordance with the Ordinance she was dressed in black, wore the prescribed nunlike kerchief on her head, while her little, marble-white neck was encircled by the permissible gold chain. Surprised by this dainty and delicate apparition, he hesitated a moment to greet her; but presently, with a scarcely suppressed smile, he politely asked to be shown where he was to stand.

The girl made a graceful courtesy, and recognizing a roguish purpose in the tone of his voice, inquired:

“What business is it, Sir, that calls you away?”

“I want to shoot a hare for my mother, who is having guests this evening and has no roast!” replied Landolt as soberly as possible.

“Then, will you kindly take your place there,” she said with corresponding gravity, pointing toward the group of lovers, whom he recognized by their bashful and love-lorn manner, as he had heard them described. As he approached the group, somewhat embarrassed, Figura bowed once more to him, and then as lightly as a spirit hurried out of the house and off to church, leaving everybody in the lurch. When she had disappeared, Landolt quietly made his way out of the vestibule again, mounted his horse, and trotted off thoughtfully toward the nearest gate, which was promptly opened for him.

He had at least made the acquaintance of the peculiar girl, who seemed to have no objection; for whenever he met Figura, she received his greeting in a most friendly manner, and indeed she often greeted him first with a merry nod, for she did not tie herself down to etiquette. Once, indeed, she unexpectedly tripped up to him on the street, as if borne by wings, and said:

“I now know who the hare-hunter is! Good-day, Mr. Landolt!”

This behavior was very agreeable to his straightforward, open nature, and she filled his heart, which had already been slightly pecked by Goldfinch, with tender sympathy. To get better acquainted with her, he sought the society of her brother, who also lived with their uncle, since they had been orphans from childhood. Solomon had found out that Martin Leu belonged to an association of young men called the Society for National History, which met in a clubhouse on the market-place.



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It was the aspiring young radicals of the ruling classes who were seeking under this title to bring about a better future, and to escape from the dark prison of the so-called "two-classes," that is the spiritual and secular authority. The subjects of enlightenment, culture, education, human dignity, and especially the dangerous theme of civic freedom, were dealt with in lectures and informal discussions, all the more extravagantly as their fathers of course took care that their ideas were not realized too fully, and that the sovereignty of the old city over the country was not called in question. For everybody knew that both country and people had been acquired in the course of centuries with good money, and the parchments of the State did not differ by a hair's breadth, in respect of legal status, from the deeds of the private citizen.

On the other hand, discussion whether the right of legislation, the right of changing the constitution, rested with the citizens or with the authorities, was a pleasure all the more in favor that it had to be enjoyed in secret, since the executioner with his sharp implement of correction was close at hand. Whenever the citizens, described by the rulers as most difficult to manage, would flare up in indignation, the executioner would be quickly withdrawn until the storm had passed over; afterward he would stand there again like a barometer-mannikin, and the magistracy would again become what it was before—the same mystically-abstract beast of prey, appointed by God alone.

There was consequently need of an all the more ardent and serious spirit among these young men wrestling with ideas, some of whom were being carried along toward a strict Puritanism. For, as people sometimes say one thing and mean another, they thundered against luxury and epicureanism, but in a spirit quite different from the Moral Ordinances. They did not desire the modesty of the Christian subject, but the virtue of the strict republican; wherefore there presently arose two factions, one of easygoing tolerants, the other of grim ascetics, who watched over and chided the liberals. A member who wore a gold watch and refused to discard it had already been expelled, while others had been watched and warned about leading too luxurious a life. The chief mentor was Professor Johann Jacob Bodmer, already a back number as man of letters and reformer of taste, but as citizen, politician, and moralist, a wise, enlightened, and broad-minded man; of such there were then few and are now none. He was well aware that he was regarded by the ruling class and the orthodox as a misleader of youth, but his prestige was so firm that he had no need to fear, and the faction of strict observance among the young men was his special guard of honor.

Into this society Solomon one day had himself introduced, and just before the business of the meeting began, he made the acquaintance of young Leu, who liked him from the first. They were obliged, however, to keep silent, as Professor Bodmer himself had appeared that day for half an hour to read a paper of ethical import and assign

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a lesson of similar nature. Landolt did not pay much attention, as his thoughts were wandering elsewhere. He occasionally glanced at Figura Leu's brother, who seemed even more bored than he, and both felt a sense of relief when the regular business was over.

But now came the critical moment. The serious members held it a matter of honor to stay together at least half an hour longer for general conversation, while the light-minded were eager to get away early to enjoy themselves in a tavern. This desertion was observed with sharp side-glances, denoting contempt or indignation, according to the fugitive's general worth. After several had thus sneaked away, Martin Leu plucked the unsuspecting Solomon by the coat-sleeve and in a whisper invited him to go out for a glass of wine. Landolt unsuspectingly went out with him, but great was his surprise when his companion suddenly rushed obliquely across the street, dragging him along, ran up Steingasse as fast as they could, hurried through the Home of the Destitute, a labyrinthine hole, toward the dark Löwengasslein, thence past the Red House across to Eselgasslein, as a hunted stag bounds across a clearing, circled around behind the slaughter-house, crossed the Lower Bridge and the Weinplatz, ran up Weggengasse and through Schlüsselgasse, cut across Storchengasse by the Red Man, passed along Kambelgasse, and then, coming to the Limmat again, turned to the right and finally entered the new and imposing Palace of the Tomtit Guild.

Breathless from laughing and running, the two young men halted to get their wind, clinging to the iron banister of the stairway, which still attracts the eye as a fine example of the smith-craft of that period. Leu now told his new friend about the state of affairs, how it had been his concern to avoid the glances of spies by taking a zigzag way. Landolt, being an enemy to any kind of bigotry, was not a little pleased by the clever ruse, especially as it proceeded from the brother of the girl in whom he was interested. With light hearts they entered the brilliantly-illuminated dining-room, the walls of which were adorned with numerous swords and three-cornered hats, belonging to the guests who were sitting at the various large tables.

Small sausages, tarts, muscatel, and malmsey—such were the things which the reunited faction of the Society for National History partook of, according to the exact inventory of the Cationic faction's spy, who had followed the last two runaways unseen through all the side streets, and now, with his hat pulled down over his brow, was standing in the doorway and taking careful note of every plate. And these things before the supper which was waiting for them at home, and after hearing a speech by the great Father Bodmer on "The Necessity of Self-restraint as a Leaven of Civic Freedom!"

To the young epicureans, however, it tasted none the worse; and friendship, as a genuine manly virtue, here celebrated another triumph; for Martin Leu formed a lifelong pact of friendship with Solomon Landolt, not suspecting that the latter had designs on his sister,

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or that he was besides a very temperate fellow, who thought little of conviviality for its own sake.

The consequences of excess were not long in revealing themselves. The strict moralist went to work without consulting Bodmer, nor did they disdain to report the matter secretly to the authorities, intending, however, to make a recommendation of mercy. In the form of a confidential tractandum the matter did in fact reach the supreme court of morals, the Chamber of Reformation. It was deemed prudent, however, as the sinners were sons of respectable families and were moreover gifted young men, to give them merely a mild, oral admonition. Accordingly one or two persons were assigned without any ado to each member of the Board for a quiet settlement suited to the end in view.

The elderly Mr. Leu quite properly had his own nephew and the latter's special accomplice, Solomon, turned over to him. When Solomon received an invitation to dine with the Councillor on a Sunday, punctually at twelve o'clock, he had already been apprized by the nephew as to what was up. Full of expectation he strode through the empty streets, which were avoided by the inhabitants on account of their strict observance of the Sabbath. A considerable number of heavy pie-baskets, borne by servants and resembling solemn Dutch men-of-war—these alone were cruising about on the quiet streets, squares, and bridges. At some distance Solomon followed one of these vessels, whose helmsman he knew, his excitement increasing because he hoped to see Figura Leu, and at the same time ran the risk of being reproved in her presence.

"You are going to get a lecture," she cried out to him as he was passing through the corridor. "But console yourself! I have disobeyed the Ordinances too—just look at me!"

She exhibited herself to him gracefully, and he saw that she had on a close-fitting silk dress, adorned with beautiful lace, and a necklace set with gleaming gems.

"I did this," she said, "so that the gentlemen need not feel ashamed in my presence, when they come to dinner after getting scolded. Good-by for the present!"

With that she vanished as quickly as she had appeared. And it was indeed true that everything Figura had on her slender body was forbidden to women in the Ordinances.

Solomon Landolt was first shown into the Reformatory's office. There he found Martin Leu, who laughed and shook hands with him.

"Gentlemen," the uncle began his address, after the young men, standing side by side, had assumed an attitude of attention, "there are two points of view from which I should like to bring home to you the matter which you know is pending. In the first place, it is not healthy to partake of food and drink, especially southern wines, before supper and at irregular hours, and thus to accustom the palate to frequent

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over-indulgence of that kind. Young officers, in particular, should refrain from such feasting, as it soon makes a man corpulent and thus unfits him for service. In the second place, however, if it must be, if the gentlemen absolutely require a collation, it is in my opinion unworthy of young citizens and officers to sneak off and run through a hundred dark alleys to get it. No, young fellows of the right sort do, without words of excuse, without secrecy, and without fear, what they think they can stand for before their own consciences. And now let us go to dinner at once, or the soup will get cold!”

Figura Leu received the three men in the dining-room, and played the hostess with jocosely grandezza, for her uncle was a widower. The latter looked at her gay attire in amazement, and she immediately explained to him that she was breaking the Ordinance intentionally, so that her poor brother should not stand alone in the pillory. The Reformer laughed heartily at this, while Figura filled Solomon Landolt's plate so full that he was obliged to protest.

“Has your lecture already had such good effect?” she asked, casting a laughing glance at him.

But now his good humor was awakened, too, and he became so merry and so entertaining with his many clever remarks, that Figura's silvery laughter was heard almost incessantly, while she herself was so busy listening to him that she found no opportunity for pleasantries of her own. The only one to relieve him was the Reformer, who told excellent droll stories from his long experience, mainly characteristic incidents of his official career, or about the narrow zealotry of the clergy. Also several comical instances of the profound influence exerted by the housewives in town and church affairs were brought to light, and it was easy to see that the Reformer had not failed to read his Voltaire.

“Mr. Landolt,” cried Figura almost passionately, “we two will never marry, lest such disgrace should befall us! Your hand on it!”

She held out her hand, which Solomon quickly seized and shook.

“So let it be,” he said laughing, yet with a throbbing heart; for he thought the very opposite, and took the beautiful girl's words as a sort of disguised hint, or encouragement. The Reformer also laughed, but straightway became solemn when the church-bells began to ring, sounding the first call to the afternoon sermon.

“These everlasting Ordinances again!” he exclaimed; for families were forbidden to protract the midday meal beyond the time for worship and they did not realize that it was already two o'clock. Everybody looked sadly at the inviting table, which was still well filled. Martin, the nephew, quickly opened another bottle of wine for dessert, while the Reformer hurried away to don his church robes, since station and custom required him to go to the cathedral. Presently he appeared again in the prescribed black gown, with the white, millstone collar around his neck, and the conical hat on his head. He intended merely to finish drinking his glass, but as Landolt was just in

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the midst of a new story, he sat down again for a moment. The conversation once more grew animated and did not stop until a sudden silence followed the full peal of the church bells, which had been ringing for some time.

Mr. Leu, the uncle, said with a start:

“It’s too late now! Fill the glasses, Martin! We’ll stay here out of sight, until the time is past!”

Figura Leu clapped her hands and cried joyfully:

“Now we are all malefactors, and what a fine sort! Let us clink glasses on that!”

With a smile she raised the crystal goblet of amber-colored wine, and for an instant the afternoon sun irradiated not only the glass and the rings on her fingers, but also her golden hair, her delicate, rosy cheeks, her red lips, and the precious stones in her necklace; she stood there as in a halo, like an angel of heaven celebrating a mystery. Even her care-free brother was struck by the edifying sight, and he would have liked to clasp his shining sister in his arms, but for the fact that he would have destroyed the vision. Her uncle, too, gazed at the girl with complacency and suppressed a rising sigh of anxiety as to her fate.

When another short hour had elapsed and evening was drawing near, the Reformer proposed to the two young men that they betake themselves to the promenade in the Schützenplatz, where, along the two rivers which inclose the place, stand the beautiful avenues of trees.

“There,” he continued, “the noble Bodmer, surrounded by his friends and disciples, is now taking a walk and speaking excellent words which are worth hearing; if we join him, we shall regain our good reputation with everybody. Meanwhile Figura can look up her Sunday girlfriends, who have the habit of promenading in the same place before they eat the preserved cherries to which they innocently treat one another.”

In accordance with this suggestion the three men went out to the aforesaid promenade, where various companies were strolling up and down in close array. Among them, in fact, was Bodmer and his retinue, explaining, as they walked along, the difference between the real and the ideal, between the republic of Plato and a Swiss city-republic; in the course of which discussion he spoke of all sorts of occurrences, and alluded to various stupidities and improprieties with unmistakable innuendo.

The two Leus and Landolt, after the proper exchange of compliments, joined the Bodmer group and walked along with them. Solomon Landolt, naturally vivacious and moreover not very attentive, was soon a few steps in advance of the others, while Bodmer passed over to the subject of public education grounded on definite political principles.

In advance of a group of young women, who were strolling from a side alley across the main avenue, Figura Leu was likewise walking,

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with a similar impatient mien. Landolt made a deep bow, and all the gentlemen behind him also took off their three-cornered hats and bent forward respectfully, so that their swords mounted into the air behind them. Figura bowed in return with inimitable gravity and great ceremony, and all the young ladies behind her, some twenty of them, followed her example.

As Bodmer was criticizing an educational work of Basedow, the feminine group met them again, this time in a straight line, and there followed a similar exchange of greetings, which lasted until all had passed. Turning now to the utility of the stage, of which Bodmer spoke not without allusions to his own dramatic efforts, he was once more interrupted by the same ceremonial, so that there was no end to the hat-lifting and bowing, almost to the disgust of the worthy professor.

The fault, to be sure, was partly Solomon Landolt's, who, as a hunter and a soldier skilled to keep constant watch on the movements of the enemy, directed the course of the learned gentlemen, without their realizing it, in such a way as to bring about these repeated meetings. But Figura responded so promptly and reliably each time with her exaggerated courtesies, that he did not repent of doing it.

And this day, when it was over, seemed to him the pleasantest he had ever known.

The merry girl was now in his mind all the time, but the cheerful composure which he had maintained in the case of Salome, the Goldfinch, was now gone. Indeed, whenever a considerable time elapsed without his seeing her, the mere thought of having to live his life without Figura Leu filled him with sadness and fear. And she, moreover, seemed to be truly fond of him; for she facilitated his efforts to be with her, and treated him like a good comrade who is always ready for fun and responsive to every sunbeam of good humor. A hundred times she would rest her hand on his shoulders, or even put her arm around his neck; but as soon as he attempted to clasp her hand in a familiar way, she would withdraw it almost hastily. And if he went so far as to venture an endearing word, or a significant glance, she would ignore it with cool indifference. Sometimes she even made fun of him about small matters, and he would bear it in silence, failing to notice in his embarrassment that she had at the same time given him a look of warm sympathy.

Brother and uncle were fully aware of this strange intercourse, but feeling that the girl's nature was something not to be changed, they let the young people alone, especially as they knew Solomon's character to be entirely honorable and upright.

But one day the affair came to a crisis. It being summer, Solomon Gessner, the poet, had taken up his official residence in the Sihl Forest, the supervision of which had been intrusted to him by his fellow-citizens. Whether or not he really attended to the duties of that office himself, is no longer to be ascertained; but so much is certain, that in



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that summer home he wrote poetry, painted, and enjoyed himself with the friends who often visited him. This new Solomon, renowned in our histories, was at that time in the prime of life and at the height of a fame which had already spread over all countries. As much of this fame as was merited and just, he bore with that amiable simplicity which is characteristic only of men who really have ability. Gessner's idyllic poems are by no means weak and vacuous compositions, but for their time—and no one who is not a hero can go beyond his time—they are finished little works of art, with a style of their own. Nowadays we scarcely look at them any more, just as we do not think what people will say fifty years hence of all that is being produced today.

However that may be, the atmosphere in which the man lived at his forest home was truly poetic and artistic, and his jovial, many-sided talent, combined with his frank humor, was the source of a constant golden mirthfulness. His own etchings, as well as those of Zingg and Kolbe done after his paintings, are destined to be much sought for by collectors a hundred years hence, whereas now we throw them in for a few pennies.

Having an interest in a china factory, he had lightly undertaken to learn to paint the vessels himself, and after a little practice had essayed to decorate a magnificent tea-set. The result was a great success. And now the handsome production was to be dedicated in the Sihl Forest, whither he had invited friends of both sexes to join in the little celebration. The table was spread on the bank of the river under some superb maple-trees, behind which the verdant mountain-slope, crown upon crown, towered up into the blue summer sky. On the dazzling-white, embroidered table-cloth stood the pitchers, cups, plates, and other dishes, covered with a hundred pictures of different size, each one of which was an invention, a little idyl, a bit of verse. And the charm of it lay in the fact that all these things—nymphs, satyrs, shepherds, children, landscapes, and flowers—were done with a free, firm hand, each one in its proper place; so that it did not look like the work of a factory painter, but like that of an artist at play.

The table, thus adorned, was sprinkled with roundish spots of sunlight, which fell through the crenate foliage of the maples and danced about to the soft rhythm of the waving branches, sometimes reminding one of a slow and solemn minuet.

Mr. Gessner was sitting alone, absorbed in watching this play of light, when the first carriageful of invited guests arrived. In it sat the wise Bodmer, the Cicero of Zürich, as Sulzer used to call him, and Canonicus Breitingen, who in former days had been his ally in the war against Gottsched. But as they had their worthy housewives with them, the two were occupying the rear seat. Other carriages brought other friends and scholars, all of whom spoke an extraordinarily lively and witty jargon, which was animated by a mixture of literary dandyism and Helvetic probity, or, if you will, old-fashioned national self-complacency. The last carriage was filled with young girls, among

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whom was Figura Leu, accompanied by Solomon Landolt and Martin Leu, on horseback.

All these dignified and handsome people were presently moving about joyously beneath the trees. The painted china tea-set was examined and highly praised. But it was not long before Solomon Gessner and Figura Leu enacted a scene showing a shepherdess teaching a bashful shepherd to dance; and it was done so naturally and so comically that it created a general merriment; and pretty Mrs. Gessner, nee Heidegger, had difficulty in getting the company seated again to do honor to her collation.

The more quiet conversation which now followed was helped along by one of those enthusiasts who always have to lug in personal topics. This man had already dug up the most recent events of Gessner's life, perhaps not without the help of the latter's excellent wife. Several letters had come from Paris. In a letter to Mr. Huber, translator of Gessner, Rousseau had made some most flattering remarks about the latter, asserting that he, Rousseau, always kept his writings within reach. Diderot even wished to have some of his own tales published in a single volume together with Gessner's latest idyls. That Rousseau should dote on the ideal state of nature in that idyllic world was after all nothing remarkable; but that the great realist and encyclopedist, Diderot, should seek the pleasure of appearing arm in arm with the simple idyllic poet, seemed the very acme of imaginable praise, and to Gessner's disgust gave rise to most protracted discussion.

By this, however, Cicero-Bodmer was thrown completely off his balance, so that human folly, which dwells even in the wisest, got the upper hand and broke loose; for he now insisted, irrepressibly and inconsiderately, in talking about his poetry. He recalled sadly how once upon a time, in a league of enthusiastic friendship with young Wieland, he, the elder, the man of established fame, had vied with the rising youthful star in planning a number of devout poems; and what had become now of those noble joys?

With his lean legs crossed, and with a light, gray summer cape thrown picturesquely around his shoulders as a protection against the rather cool forest air, he leaned back in his chair and gave himself over in sheer melancholy to the memory of those sad experiences. For, one soon after the other, those seraphic young men, Klopstock and Wieland, whom he had invited to Zürich, had so basely disappointed and betrayed his sacred, paternal friendship and his poetic brotherliness; one by attaching himself to a crowd of young carousers and manifesting an alarming worldliness, instead of working on his Messiah; the other by associating more and more with all sorts of women and ending up—so Bodmer thought—as the most frivolous and dissolute poetaster that had ever lived. In consequence he, Bodmer, had had his hands full fighting down his shame and grief with an inexhaustible flood of fearful hexameters in solemn biblical epics.



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Thus he came to speak of *The Trial of Abraham*, of *Jacob's Return from Haran*, of the *Noachid*, of the *Deluge*, and all those monuments of his restless activity, and recited numerous brilliant passages from them. Here and there he interwove deplorable incidents that had come to his knowledge from his wide correspondence; for example, how the Council of Danzig had forbidden poetically-inclined young citizens the use of the hexameter, on the ground that it was an indecent and seditious vehicle for the treatment of civic affairs. He also related with a malicious smile, as characteristic of modern friendship, how he had confidentially informed a clerical friend of his about the appearance of a bitterly satirical attack on him in a poem entitled *Bodmerias*, and how indignant the friend had been that anybody should attempt in such a spiteful, loathsome way to destroy men's delight in the immortal works of Bodmer. It was to be hoped—the friend had declared—that no honorable man would read such villainous stuff, and more to the same effect. Then he went on to tell how the hankering clergyman had concluded by inquiring if he, Bodmer, could not procure a copy of this *Bodmerias* for a day, since, after overcoming the vexation that would be caused by reading it, his delight in Bodmer's noble poems would undoubtedly be doubled.

Everybody present smiled with amusement at the inquisitiveness of the clergyman, whose identity they guessed. But Bodmer, with increasing excitement, let his cape drop to his hips, bent forward, so that he looked like a Roman senator, and cried:

“And for that he is going to miss being mentioned in the commemorative passage that I had designed for him in the new edition of the *Noachid*; for he has shown that he is not sufficiently refined to pass on into the future side by side with me!”

He now mentioned the faithful friends he had already favored with mention in passages of his various epics, and those he still meant to honor in this way, devoting to them a larger or smaller number of verses in larger or smaller works according to the man's importance.

With a sharp, scrutinizing glance he looked around him. All looked down; some blushed and some turned pale, but all were silent; for he seemed to be subjecting them to a serious inspection. Gradually his mood became gentler; he leaned back again, thinking of bygone days, and then, glancing up toward the green mountain-side, said in a plaintive voice:

“Oh, where is that golden time gone, when my young Wieland wrote the preface to our joint collection of poems, and added the words: ‘It is to be attributed chiefly to our divine religion, if in the moral excellence of our poems we are something more than Homers.’”

The moment he lowered his eyes he saw a sight so strange that he suddenly jumped up and cried out sternly:

“What is the little fool doing?”

It must be explained that all this time Solomon Landolt had been

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walking up and down beneath the trees, aloof from the others, thinking about his love-affair, and wondering whether something decisive could be made to happen that day. He was wearing at the time a conspicuous hair-bag, with large bows of ribbon on it. Now Figura Leu had procured in the house a small pocket-mirror and a round hand-mirror. The former she had managed, without his knowledge, by pretending to be arranging something to fasten to the hair-bag, and thus adorned he had calmly continued his walk. At the same time she began to trip along behind him as lightly and nimbly as a Grace, making pantomimic dance-steps that were inaudible on the mossy ground and all the time glancing alternately into the hand-mirror and then into the pocket-mirror on Landolt's back. Occasionally, as she danced along, she would turn the hand-mirror and the upper part of her body in such a way that one could see she was looking at herself from all sides at once.

Like a flash of lightning the agile-minded and shrewd old man began to suspect that wanton youth was here symbolizing vain self-admiration, namely, his own, as exhibited in the remarks he had been making. Everybody turned in the direction in which his long, bony index-finger was pointing, and laughed at the pretty spectacle. Finally Landolt himself had his attention attracted; he looked around in astonishment, and caught Figura in the act of quickly removing the mirror from his back.

"What does that mean?" asked the old professor, who had regained his composure, in a gentle, calm voice. "Is youth making fun of garrulous old age?"

What Figura really meant by it was never ascertained. Only so much is certain, that she was seized with remorse and stood there in great embarrassment. In her anxiety she pointed to Landolt and said:

"Do you not see that I am merely playing with this gentleman?"

And now Solomon Landolt blushed and turned pale, since he could not but feel that he had been made ridiculous. The guests too had finally become aware of the dubious nature of the spectacle, and a silent, somewhat painful suspense ensued.

Then Solomon Gessner sprang up, seized the hand-mirror, and cried:

"This is not a case of mockery—not a bit of it! The girl was trying to represent Truth following at the heels of Virtue, which none of you, I trust, will deny that our Solomon possesses. But her representation was faulty, for truth must exist for its own sake alone, and not be dependent in any way whatsoever upon virtue or vice. Let's see if I can do it better!"

With that he took a veil from the lady nearest him, hung it about his hips to produce an antique effect, and mounted a stone with the mirror in his hand. Standing on this pedestal, with contorted body and an insipid expression, he produced such a funny imitation of a pigtailed statue of Veritas that laughter and good cheer returned.

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Only Solomon Landolt remained in a disturbed state of mind and slipped away to seek a remote forest-path, in order to collect his thoughts, that he might afterward emerge from the affair like a brave man. He had not gone far, however, when he unexpectedly felt Figura Leu take his arm.

“Is it permissible to walk with you?” she whispered. For a while she walked along lightly beside the silent man, whose arm, in spite of his silence, she did not release. When they came to a certain eminence, where they could no longer be seen, she stopped and said:

“I must have one talk with you, or else I shall die in misery. But first this—”

With that she threw both arms around his neck and kissed him. But when he wanted to keep it up, she pushed him away forcibly.”

“That means,” she went on, “that I love you and know that you love me. But right here and now we must say Amen! Good-by and Amen! For you must know that I promised my mother on her death-bed, one minute before she gave up the ghost, that I would never marry! And I must and will keep that promise! She was deranged—at first melancholia, then something worse—and only in her last hour did her mind become clear once more, so that she could talk to me. It is in the family and crops out, now here, now there; formerly it regularly used to skip a generation, but my grandmother had it, and then my mother, and now they fear that I may get it too.”

She sank to the ground, covered her face with her hands, and began to weep bitterly.

Landolt, deeply touched, knelt beside her and tried to grasp her hands and comfort her. He groped for words to express his thanks, his feelings, but could say only:

“Courage! We’ll take care of that! A fine idea that! Nothing will ever come of that!” etc.

But she cried out with terrifying conviction:

“No! no! At present my mirth and folly are assumed only to drive away Melancholy, which stands behind me like a ghost. I feel it coming!”

At that time there were in our country no special institutions for such patients; unless they were violent, the deranged were kept at home, where they were long remembered as miserable demoniacal creatures.

The weeping girl arose sooner than he had hoped; she carefully dried her face, and with instinctive haste cast grief aside.

“Enough for the present,” she cried. “You know now! You must marry a good, beautiful girl, one who is wiser than I. Hush! Be still! This ends it!”

For once Landolt had nothing more to say. He was touched and shocked by the gravity of the fate that threatened, but he also felt within him an assured happiness that he did not intend to lose. They walked around together until all evidence of Figura’s excitement had

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vanished from her beautiful face, and then returned to the company. There a little dance among the young folk was already in progress, Gessner having procured a couple of country musicians.

When Figura reappeared, the reconciled Bodmer himself invited her to take a turn with him, in order to demonstrate his youthfulness. Afterward she danced with Landolt as often as she could without attracting attention, whispering to him that this would have to be the last day of their intimacy, as she could never tell when she would be called away into that unknown land where minds go wandering.

On the drive, back to the city he rode beside the carriage in which she sat. Her little tongue was never still for a moment. From a cherry-tree under which they passed he broke off a branch loaded with coral-red cherries and threw it into her lap.

“Thank you,” she said, and she carefully preserved the branch with its withered fruit for thirty years; for, although her health was always good and the dismal fate never appeared, she held firmly to her resolution. Martin, her brother, whom Solomon went to see early the next morning in order to have a talk with him, confirmed what she had said and asserted that the existence of insanity in the family was a recognized fact, and that the women in particular had always been susceptible to it. There was nobody, Martin averred, whom he would rather have had for a brother-in-law than Solomon Landolt; but for the sake of his sister’s peace of mind, which she had thus far maintained fairly well, he himself was compelled to ask him to make no further advances.

Landolt did not submit immediately; on the contrary he quietly waited for years, without, however, seeing any change in the situation. All that kept up his spirits was simply the fact that, whenever he saw Figura Leu after the regular intervals of separation, her eyes gave him to understand that he was her best and dearest friend.

### CAPTAIN

Solomon Landolt lived along for seven full years without concerning himself any more about the womenfolk; only Harlequin, as he called Figura Leu, continued to hold a place in his heart. Finally, however, he had another affair. At that time there was residing in Zürich a certain Captain Gimmel who had recently returned from military service in Holland, and had brought with him a daughter; his wife, a Dutch woman, was dead. He had a small private income in addition to his pension, but lived in such fashion that he spent almost all of it on himself. This man was an arrant drunkard and brawler, who prided himself particularly on his fencing. Although no longer young by any means, he was always associating with young fellows and roistering and raising rows. Happening to encounter him one day, Landolt was disgusted by the Captain’s noisy, boastful talk and accepted his challenge. The company betook themselves to Gimmel’s house, where he had a regular fencing-room. Here Landolt hoped to give the

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old brawler, in spite of his leather cuirass, a few stout pokes in the ribs; for he was himself a good fencer, having diligently practiced the art as a small boy in the castle at Wülflingen, also later at the military school in Metz, and again in Paris.

And so the room presently resounded with the noise of shuffling and stamping feet, and with the clang of swords. Landolt attacked the Captain more and more viciously, finally making him puff and blow; then suddenly dropped his weapon and stared as if spell-bound at the opening door, through which the Captain's daughter, the beautiful Wendelgard, was entering with a tray of small liqueur glasses.

The apparition might indeed have been called glorious. Her tall figure was richly dressed, seemingly beyond her means, in rustling silk; but even this splendor faded before the rare beauty of the girl herself, whose face, neck, hands, and arms were all of the same alabaster whiteness, as if she were a draped statue of Parian marble. Furthermore, she had a luxuriant growth of glossy, reddish hair, whose silk-like threads showed a hundred wavelets, while her large, dark-blue eyes, as well as her mouth, seemed to tell of an appealing earnestness, yes, almost a mild anxiety, though it was not exactly due to spiritual causes.

When this radiant creature looked around for a place to lay down the tray, the Captain, who welcomed the interruption with delight, motioned her to the window-sill. The young men, on the other hand, saluted her with that courtesy which we owe, under all circumstances, to such beauty. With a bow and charming smile which shone through the earnestness of her features, she withdrew, hastily casting a timid glance at the astonished Solomon, whom she had never before seen in the house. Her papa then produced a variety of fine Dutch brandies, which he passed around and thus managed to avert a continuation of the fencing-match.

But Landolt had lost all inclination to hurt Captain Gimmel; for in his eyes the Captain had all at once been transformed into a sorcerer, who possessed golden treasures and the power to dispense happiness and unhappiness out of his hands. When Gimmel proposed an expedition by boat to a good wine-garden, Landolt joined in without hesitation; unaccustomed as he was to the elderly braggart's jarring conduct, he was now the very personification of tolerant indulgence.

Out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh, and after one novelty comes another. From that day on, in order to hear something about the beautiful Wendelgard, he was continually bringing up her name by shrewd devices, but in the coolest and most casual way; at the same time the girl, otherwise but little known, was getting herself talked about because of the recklessness she was said to have displayed in contracting a large number of debts. Here was the unheard-of case of a young girl, the daughter of a citizen, hovering on the verge of disgraceful bankruptcy; for her father, it was said, refused to pay

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any debts contracted without his knowledge, and threatened the creditors with violence and the daughter with disinheritance.

The truth of the matter seemed to be that the daughter, in order to provide for the needs of the household, for which she was not allowed ample means by her father, had resorted to borrowing, and had then begun to fall back with increasing frequency on this easy solution of the problem for her personal needs. Want of maternal supervision, combined with inexperience and a certain naiveté, which are often characteristic of such exceptional persons, had not been without influence in the case, apart from the fact that she thought her boastful father very well-to-do.

However that may have been, she was now the subject of general gossip; the women clasped their hands and declared that doomsday must be near when such phenomena took place; the men thought it portended at least the downfall of the State; the young girls secretly put their heads together and indulged in the most uncanny descriptions of the unfortunate creature; the young men lapsed into wanton, malicious jokes about her, but at the same time manifested a certain timid prudence by avoiding the Captain's house and even the street where it stood; the victimized merchants and shopkeepers ran hither and thither to the courts, following up their complaints.

It was only Solomon Landolt whose heart went out with redoubled passion to the beautiful girl grieving amid her debts. Ardent sympathy inspired and filled him with an unconquerable longing, as if the fair sinner were sitting, not in the purgatory of her misery, but in a blooming rose-garden surrounded by a golden lattice. He could no longer resist the impulse to see her and to help her, and so one evening when he saw the Captain securely moored in a tavern, he went with quick decision to Wendelgard's house and pulled the door-bell forcibly. To the maid who looked out of the window and asked what he wanted, he replied brusquely that he was a messenger from the city court and wished to speak with the daughter of the house; he chose to introduce himself in this way in order to curtail any further explanations and useless excitement. As a matter of fact he did frighten the poor girl not a little by so doing; for she was very pale as she approached him, and turned a deep red on recognizing him. In the greatest confusion and with a voice plainly faltering with fear and alarm, she asked him to take a seat; for she was so helpless and forsaken that she had no notion of business procedure, and thought that she was now going to be led off to prison.

But Landolt had scarcely sat down when they changed roles, and he was now the one to find difficulty in hitting upon the right word for his communications; for to him the beautiful, unfortunate girl seemed more noble and exalted than a King of France, who, after all, when he was buying the blood of the Swiss, always had to call them *grands amis*. But finally, assuming the manner of one seeking protection, he made known to her the object of his visit; the increasing pleasure he



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derived from looking at her encouraged him so much that he was presently able to explain to her calmly how he, as an assessor at court, had taken cognizance of her annoying situation, and had now come for the purpose of conferring with her about the matter and discovering some way to adjust it. So she could impart to him with implicit confidence the extent and nature of the obligations she had incurred.

With, a deep sigh of relief Wendelgard cast another scrutinizing glance at him, similar to the first one, and then hurried out to get a box in which, without looking at them again, she had put all the bills, duns, and court records that had come in up to that time. With another sigh, accompanied by a blush of shame, she cast down her eyes and poured the entire lot on the table; then she leaned back in her chair and covered her face with the empty box, behind which she began to sob gently with averted head.

Touched and glad that he was in a position to intervene so helpfully, Solomon took the box from her, gently took her hands, and begged her to be of good courage. Then he set about examining the papers, and whenever he needed information, he put the question in such a kindly, confidence-inspiring way that she found it easy to answer him. Presently he drew forth the little sketch-book which he always carried with him, and which was filled with hasty studies of horses, dogs, trees, and cloud-formations; then, selecting a clean, white page, he noted down the good Wendelgard's debts. They were mostly for fine clothes and ornaments, as well as for elegant furniture, although a modest proportion of them was for dainties; but the total was far from being as enormous as was rumored in public. Still, all together it added up to well-nigh a thousand gulden of Zürich currency, a sum which the girl could in no way have procured.

But Landolt was so infatuated with the beautiful creature that the list of her debts seemed to him, as he carefully put the little book back into his breast-pocket, a sweeter, more precious, and more delightful possession than an inventory of the property of a rich bride. He loved everything on the list, the gowns, lace, hats, feathers, fans, and gloves; even the sweets merely aroused in him a desire to treat the charming, grown-up child to that sort of thing himself.

When he took his leave, promising to let her hear from him soon, she looked at him with a doubtful expression, since she could not see what was to come of it all. But she had become cheerful, and with an air of trusting gratitude she herself lighted him down to the front-door, where she whispered a friendly "good-night" which completely captivated the young city judge. Slowly and thoughtfully—the latter, perhaps, for the first time—she reascended the stairs, and, for the first time in a long while at least, dropped off into a sweet and peaceful slumber; so that she did not hear the noisy Captain when he came home.

So much the less did Solomon Landolt sleep that night; for he meditated over the affair until the cocks in the city's numerous hen-

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yards began to crow.

As Solomon still lived with his parents and was dependent upon them, he could at the most raise but part of the sum required for Wendelgard's redemption, because he had to conceal his interference in the matter, unless he wished, right at the start, to aggravate the difficulty of a subsequent marriage with this phenomenon of recklessness. On the other hand he had a rich grandmother, whose favorite he was, and who was in the habit of helping him out of all sorts of financial straits, and took pleasure in doing it secretly. But at the same time she had this peculiarity, that she vehemently opposed every matrimonial project of her grandson whenever the subject was mentioned. She declared that she knew him better than anybody else, and that he would only be unhappy and pine away; as for the women, she asserted that she understood them well enough too, and knew what they were. Consequently each of her donations and secret advances was accompanied by a confidential warning to him not to think of marrying; and when he turned to her in any difficulty, he needed only to make some such allusion in order to be sure of immediate results.

Now he again had recourse to this singular grandmother, and with a dissembled sigh confided to her that it was at last absolutely necessary for him to think of getting out of difficulty and in general of attaining an independent position by making a good match that was in sight. In alarm she took off her spectacles, with which she had just been reading in her interest-book, and looked at her unlucky grandson as if he were a lost youth about to set fire to his own house.

"Do you know that I shall disinherit you if you marry?" she cried, herself startled by the thought. "That would cap the climax, to have one of those scratching hens get into my boxes and chests! And you! How will you ever learn to tolerate a woman? How will you stand it, for example, if you get one who fibs all day long, or one who rails at everybody, so that your honorable table is turned into a place of slander, or one who is always eating wherever she happens to be, and gossiping while she chews? What will you do if you get one who goes pilfering around in the stores, or contracts debts like the Gimmel girl?"

The grandson suppressed a laugh at this last species, wherewith the grandmother had so nearly hit the mark, and said as seriously as possible:

"If the poor women are as bad as all that, there is all the more reason for not leaving them to themselves; we ought rather to marry them, in order to save what can be saved."

In extreme irritation the enemy of her sex cried:

"Be still, you abomination! What is it? What do you want?"

"I have gambled away a thousand gulden, six hundred of which I haven't got!"

The old woman replaced her spectacles, snatched the gloria-cap from her head, in order to run her fingers through her short, gray



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hair, and then hobbled over to the inlaid writing-desk, behind whose rising roll-top Solomon was delighted to see the guarded wonders that had once gladdened his childhood: a small round silver globe, a knight sitting on a carved ivory horse, with gilded armor of real silver that could be taken off, a shield ornamented with jewels and an enameled helmet-plume; finally, a four-inch ivory skeleton with a silver scythe, which was known as the "little Death," and was carved with such artistic skill that not the smallest bone was missing.

The old woman took this dainty Death in her trembling hand, making the fine ivory jingle and rattle a little, scarce audibly, and said:

"Look here—this is how husband and wife look when the fun is over! So who wants to love and marry?"

Solomon now took the little figure in his hand and looked at it attentively; a mild shudder passed through him as he pictured to himself Wendelgard's beautiful form crumbling away from such a framework. But when he thought of the swift flight of time and its irretrievableness, his heart beat so violently that the little skeleton trembled quite noticeably. He cast a longing glance at his grandmother's hand, which drew forth from a permanent supply of cash, in one of the compartments, a roll of shining double louis d'ors, as she said:

"There are the thousand gulden! But don't bother me with any more talk of marriage!"

He now betook himself first to Captain Gimmel, whom he found in a tavern and called aside. He set forth to him that he had been commissioned and put in a position by a third person, who preferred to be unnamed, to straighten out the unpleasant difficulty of his daughter, but on condition that the Captain, in order to spare his daughter as much as possible, should let the thing be done in his own name, and that she was to have no idea but that her father had paid her debts. On this condition he, Landolt, would deposit the money in a public office as coming from the Captain, and see to it that the various creditors were satisfied without publicity. Thus father and daughter would be spared all further annoyance.

The Captain looked at the young man with astonished eyes, mumbled something about unauthorized meddling and the preservation of his domestic rights, and felt for his sword. But when Landolt went on to say that people were taking great interest in the girl and in her future welfare, which might depend upon a prompt adjustment of the affair on hand, and the Captain began to scent a good provision for his child, he sheathed the sword of his honor, and declared himself satisfied with the proposed *modus procedendi*.

Solomon Landolt now brought the business to an end with cautious skill, so that the creditors were paid. Everybody believed that Captain Gimmel had thought better of it, and even Wendelgard suspected nothing else. The father assumed toward her a pompous mien, which strengthened her belief anew that he must surely be a man of means.

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Hence she was by no means excessively astonished or disconcerted when Solomon, the agent, reappeared one evening and handed her the receipts for all the debts, large and small. But Solomon was heartily glad of the outcome and rejoiced at the recovery of her composure; for while settling up and ferreting out the number and nature of her debts, certain doubts had occurred to him, which, to be sure, only filled him anew with tender sympathy for her in her helpless poverty, and inspired him with an ardent desire to guide her destiny with a firm hand. In anticipation of his visit Wendelgard had for the last few days been dressing and adorning herself even more painstakingly than usual, and she too was glad of her greater composure, but mainly because she no longer appeared humiliated before her deliverer, having extricated herself, as she supposed, with her own means.

Nevertheless she thanked him with childlike cordiality for his helpful efforts, and familiarly offered him her hand. She looked so beautiful that without further delay he confessed his love for her, asserting that this alone had induced him to interfere so obtrusively in her affairs. Yes, he even went so far in his unrestrained frankness as to explain to her that by returning his love and giving him her hand, she would help him far more than he had helped her, leading him to alter a somewhat unsettled and desultory life, and to do for love and beauty what he had not cared to do for himself.

But this honest indiscretion, or indiscreet honesty, awakened the beautiful girl's caution. She let the excited Solomon hold her hand while he was talking, and looked at him with friendly eyes, which gleamed charmingly with the happiness of being raised so suddenly from humiliation. But amid all the loveliness of the moment the formerly so frivolous girl thought of the unsettled life which her lover accused himself of having led, and requested a week's time for deliberation. She dismissed him very graciously, however, and drew short, quick breaths, like a young rabbit, when she found herself alone again.

Meanwhile the Captain had thought over Landolt's mysterious intimations more thoroughly, and had made the discovery that his daughter was, indeed, ripe for happiness and ready for the market. He was not disposed to let the jewel be carried off by an unknown hand, but wished to be on hand with open eyes, and above all to arrange a suitable exhibition. In order to start things going at once, he decided to visit with his daughter the baths of Baden, which was just then overrun with visitors, owing to the fine Whitsuntide weather. He had her pack up her finest clothes, which she was not allowed to wear at all in Zürich on account of the Moral Ordinances, and without delay they put up at the Hinterhof in Baden, which, like all the other hotels, was already filled with strangers. But with that Gimmel's paternal supervision ended abruptly; for he immediately sought and found a sufficient company of bibulous old soldiers, and left his daughter Wendelgard entirely to herself.

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As lucky chance would have it, Figura Leu was staying at the same hotel in the company of an elderly lady who was taking the baths for rheumatism. She too was now a trifle advanced in years, and did as she pleased even more than of yore. When she saw the beautiful Wendelgard, whose debts had made her quite famous, and noticed that in her forlornness she scarcely knew what to do with herself, she took her up and found her own pastime in studying and learning to understand the peculiar and original creature, in whom beauty, with no other attribute, seemed to have become incarnate. She soon won the confidence of the girl, who had never known the satisfaction of such intercourse, and on the very first day she knew about her relations with Solomon and about the week's time for deliberation. By the second day she was convinced that it would be the greatest calamity that could befall the incautious suitor, if he were to win the girl. She herself did not rightly know why. She merely had the feeling that Wendelgard did not have a real soul. Then again she saw Wendelgard as a clean, white canvas, on which Solomon would paint something passably good, and so perhaps everything would turn out well.

Troubled by her own uncertainty, she suddenly decided to leave the decision to a sort of ordeal of God or trial by fire, the idea of which came to her on the unexpected announcement of the arrival of her brother Martin, who for the past five years had been in Paris as captain of the Zürich regiment. He was a good hand at all clever feats, and in particular had come to be a first-rate comedian, from taking part in the private theatricals of Parisian society. Captain Gimmel and his daughter had never seen him, and even to those who knew him well he could make himself unrecognizable.

On this circumstance Figura based her plan; and hearing that her brother was on his way from Zürich to Baden, having come home unexpectedly for a visit, she contrived to meet him secretly on the way, to acquaint him hastily with her project and win him over to it; for he took almost as much interest in the welfare of his honest friend as did his sister. But she had need to hurry, for four of the seven days had already elapsed, and she could easily see that Wendelgard was not going to answer No.

Accordingly Martin Leu delayed his arrival until nightfall, while Figura hurried back alone and acted as if nothing had happened. During the night he made his preparations, and on the following day, with a grand and mysterious air, he strode upon the scene and as an unknown stranger. As if by chance, as soon as he had got his bearings, he approached Captain Gimmel, drank a bottle of wine with him, promptly allowed him to win a few thalers at dice, and then let matters drop, while he went out for a walk on the public promenades and along the bank of the river. Meanwhile Figura had cunningly spread the rumor that the stranger was a French gentleman, who had an income of half a million livres, and was bent on marrying a Swiss

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Protestant, since he himself belonged to that confession. He had already been in Geneva, but had found nobody there, and was now on his way to Zürich; he had stopped off to look around in Baden first, however, having learned that there was a very choice assemblage of ladies to be seen there.

The Captain came hurrying home, that is, to the hotel, before supper—which was contrary to his habit—to have his daughter put on her finery and go walking with him. He even gave her his arm as they walked along, and with his carbuncle nose he assumed such haughty, affected airs that the hundreds of pedestrians were no less amused by his comical appearance than edified by Wendelgard's beauty. When they encountered the wealthy Huguenot, there was a still grander scene and a long exchange of compliments and introductions. Martin Leu did not need to feign astonishment at Wendelgard's appearance—his astonishment was genuine; but at the same time he saw how necessary it was to rescue his friend Solomon from his danger. He offered her his arm and led her to the table in place of her father. Figura looked on as if frightened, and seemed to wonder at all the pretty scenes which now took place. Wendelgard talked with her but a few minutes after the meal, because there was to be an excursion to Schinznach, where a no less aristocratic throng of people was assembled.

In short, on the very first day Martin played his part so well that late in the evening Wendelgard came flying to Figura and informed her breathlessly that something was going to happen—the Huguenot had just asked her if she would not rather live in France than in Switzerland. And then he had asked her casually how old she was, and an hour before had said that if he ever married he would not take a penny as dowry from his wife. And her father had already told her to accept the suitor at once, if he proposed to her.

"But my dear child," remarked Figura, "all that does not mean much! Do be careful!"

But Wendelgard went on:

"And we were walking along together for more than an hour, and he kissed my hand and sighed!"

"And did he propose to you?"

"No, but he kissed my hand and sighed!"

"A French hand-kiss! Do you know what that is?—nothing at all!"

"But he is a devout Protestant!"

"What is his name?"

"I don't know yet—that is, I don't think I know. I didn't pay attention!"

"That changes the matter, to be sure," replied Figura thoughtfully. "But how about Solomon Landolt?"

"Yes, that is so," answered Wendelgard, sighing and stroking her white brow with her white finger-tips. "But just think of it—half a million income! That would end all care and grief! Anyway, Solomon

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needs a wife who can help him to settle down in life and become somebody! How can I do that, when I know nothing myself?"

"He doesn't mean that, you little goose! He means that if he only has you, he will begin to work, to strive, and to command for your sake. You can just look on, and needn't do anything yourself at all. And he would do it, let me tell you!"

"No, no! My light-mindedness will only hinder him! I feel that I shall run into debt again, and far deeper than before, unless I am rich, extraordinarily rich!"

"That changes the matter, to be sure," replied Figura, "unless you prefer to let yourself be reformed and bettered by him. And he is the man to do it, believe me"

But seeing that Wendelgard was merely getting into a state of anxious perplexity, without expressing any feeling for Solomon, she added:

"At all events take care not to fall between two stools. If the French gentleman proposes to you tomorrow, you must be able to give him his answer on the spot. The day after tomorrow is the seventh day; then you must expect to see Landolt come to hear your decision. Then there will be scenes and disclosures, and you'll run the risk of seeing both of them turn their backs on you!"

"Dear me! Yes, that's true! But what shall I do? He isn't here, and I can't go to him now!"

"Write to him, and this very day; for tomorrow a special messenger must take your letter to Zürich, or else the day after tomorrow he'll be here without fail. I know the man!"

"I'll do that—give me pen and paper!"

She sat down to write, but did not know how to begin. Figura Leu therefore dictated to her:

"On mature consideration I find that the feelings which attract me to you are merely those of gratitude, and that it would be false for me to give them another name. Furthermore, since the will of my father points out to me a different course, I beg you to honor my firm resolve to obey him as an indication of the confidence and sincere respect which will always be cherished for you by Your devoted, etc. . . ."

"Finis!" concluded Figura. "Have you signed it?"

"Yes, but it seems to me something more should be said. It doesn't just suit me."

"It is just right! That is the concise refusal style used in a situation that admits of no discussion. That cuts everything off short, and thirsty toppers can tell by the sound when they have tapped an empty keg."

This allusion, somewhat spiced by jealousy, Wendelgard did not understand, as she was kind-hearted. She begged Figura to see to the speedy dispatch of the letter, so that no meeting would take place. Figura promised and in order to be quite sure turned the letter over to her brother at daybreak. The latter rode straight to Zürich with it and surprised Solomon Landolt, who was making preparations to

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leave for Baden on the following day.

He turned pale a little as he read the note, and blushed when he saw that Martin Leu knew what was in it. But the latter at once gave him an oral elucidation of it by telling the whole story. Thereupon he left him alone for an hour, and then returned and said:

“Solomon, my sister sends her regards and says that, if you want the fair Miss Gimmel, you need only to let her, my sister, know, and the girl will not run away from you!”

“I don’t want her, and I realize my folly,” said Landolt. “But she is beautiful and lovable, and you two are rogues!”

Martin Leu remained in Zürich as Martin Leu; wherefore the wealthy Huguenot naturally vanished from Baden as if the earth had swallowed him. The Captain and Wendelgard tarried there two weeks longer, and then returned to Zürich; the Captain was thirstier and more unbearable than ever, and Wendelgard, quiet and dejected, kept out of sight.

But the story did not end there. For a spirit of mischievous curiosity impelled Martin Leu to get a closer view of the rare beauty. Taking every precaution not to be recognized as the mysterious Frenchman, he visited the Captain’s fencing-room. And now the wheel of Fortune turned; when he saw the poor daughter in her modest grief and beauty, the wild father having died suddenly of apoplexy, he fell so violently in love with the forlorn girl that he impatiently brushed aside all protests, warnings, and appeals to reason, and did not rest until she was his wife.

But first he asked Solomon for the last time:

“Do you want her, or not?”

Solomon had answered without hesitation:

“I say with the Bible: ‘Let your speech be Yea, Yea, and Nay, Nay;’ I shall not return to the matter.”—“Costs me a thousand gulden, to be sure, but thank God nobody knows it,” he added to himself; for he knew that his grandmother, with her sense of justice, made accurate note of all her advances to him, and that some day they would be subtracted from his inheritance for the benefit brothers and sisters.

Martin Leu lived with his wife in Paris for two years and then secured his discharge; on her return she was a well-trained and shrewd woman, and contracted no more debts. She knew about the episode at Baden, and had recognized the Huguenot before he suspected it and told her himself.

But later on, when Figura Leu would ask Solomon Landolt if he resented her interference and would rather have Wendelgard for himself, seeing that she had turned out so well and had evidently made herself out more stupid than she was, he would press her hand and say:

“No, it is better so.”

Wendelgard, for brevity’s sake, he called the Captain.



## THE GOVERNOR OF GREIFENSEE

### WHITETHROAT AND BLACKBIRD

The one-sided adoration of beauty, however, had such a detrimental effect upon Solomon immediately after its unfavorable outcome, that he completely lost his bearings and was at the mercy of all sorts of impressions. All the cupids, like swallows about to fly southward in the fall, were fluttering and clamoring about him; and in the same year that he lost Wendelgard he had two trifling adventures, which may be wrapped in the same swaddling-clothes, as is sometimes done with puny twins.

Every morning for some years, whenever the weather was fair and the air mild, Solomon had heard in his back room a psalm sung by a sweet girl-voice which came over the gardens from a somewhat remote neighborhood. This voice, at first that of a child, had gradually become stronger, without, however, attaining any great power. Yet he liked to hear the regular singing, which seemed to take place daily before breakfast, and he called the invisible songstress Whitethroat.

She was the daughter of Elias Thumeysen, proselyte-clerk and quondam pastor, who had rid himself of the burden of his real pastorate on coming into a handsome inheritance, but still continued to make himself useful by performing certain clerical functions, like that of clerk to the Commission for Exiles and Proselytes. From the latter, at his wife's desire, he took his customary title. He was also clerk of the Reformation Board and Inspector of Candidates for the Zürich Clergy. In addition to all that he amused himself by painting those maps on which the world now seems to us to stand on its head, East and West being at the top and bottom, and North and South at the left and right.

His daughter, Whitethroat, whose real name was Barbara, practiced arts of a quite different nature, and was occupied with them from morn till night. For her father, the proselyte-clerk, also made representations of all sorts of birds; he would paste together on paper their natural feathers, or even small fragments of them, and then paint in their beaks and feet. One of his masterpieces was a fine life-sized hoopoe in all its feathery splendor. Now Barbara had developed and perfected the art by applying it to humanity, having fashioned a multitude of full-length effigies, the hands and faces of which were painted, the rest consisting entirely of pieces of silk or wool, or some other natural product, artistically cut and arranged. And surely the Birds of Aristophanes could not have been wiser than those of the proselyte-clerk, which begat such a handsome race of human creatures as filled the work-room of the little songstress. Splendid above all others was her mother's brother, the ruling antistes of the local church. He was dressed in clerical robes of black satin, and wore black silk stockings, and a collar of the finest muslin. His wig, made of the fur of a white kitten, was an infinitely laborious and dainty piece of work, and harmonized splendidly with his water-blue eyes and pale-pink face. His

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shoes were cut out of tiny scraps of morocco leather, the silver buckles being of tinfoil, while the edges of the liturgy book which he held in his hand were of goldleaf.

This pontifex, hanging in a frame behind glass in the place of honor, was surrounded by other portraits of men and women of various ranks and vocations. The finest was a young lady enveloped in a dress of white lace, cut out of the finest *papier à jour*. On her hand sat a parrot, a mosaic of the smallest feathers of a humming-bird. Facing her sat a flute-player with his legs crossed; in a coat of sky-blue satin, with an artistic ruffle around his neck, he seemed to be teaching the parrot to sing, since the bird had its head turned toward him attentively. The buttons on the dress were made of reddish spangles or tinsel.

There was also a veritable parade of stately military persons on foot, whose uniforms, galloons, metal buttons, scabbards, leather accoutrements, and crests all gave like evidence of indefatigable industry. But here Barbara Thumeysen had reached the limit of her skill; for now when she attempted to pass over to officers on horseback, she knew well enough how to employ her English scissors in cutting and making caparisons, saddles, and reins from the appropriate materials; but the drawing of the horses was beyond her power, since hitherto she had practiced only on human heads and hands, and that with indifferent success. So it was necessary for her to find a teacher or helper for this, and upon inquiry she was given the name of Solomon Landolt, who was then the best horse-artist in Zürich.

Accordingly the proselyte-clerk one day made unexpectedly a polite call upon the city-magistrate and captain of riflemen, and in well-chosen words set forth his desire that he graciously consent to instruct and advise his daughter with regard to the proper portrayal of a riding horse; so that she could paint the animal on paper in its natural form and color, and with the correct step, whereupon the reins and saddle could afterward be added the more easily, and the rider seated in the proper posture.

Landolt was glad to offer his services, partly from sheer obligingness, but also from curiosity to see the Whitethroat who sang so charmingly every morning. With wonder he looked first at the motley bird-world of the proselyte-clerk—the hoopoe, and all the goldfinches, bullfinches, jays, woodpeckers, and plovers; then with still greater amazement at Miss Barbara's creations—the antistes, all the guild-masters, councillors, wives of chief magistrates, lieutenants, and captains; and finally at the girl herself, whose form was as delicate and regular as if turned out of ivory. Among all the birds and human effigies in the modest little museum, she herself seemed to him the most beautiful creation, and accordingly he began his course of instruction at once. With the help of suitable sketches he first explained to her the bony structure of the horse, and then, before passing on to the difficult form-secrets of a horse's head, taught her how to indicate with a



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few straight strokes the base-lines and fundamental proportions. In this way the instruction was gradually extended over the entire body, until finally they could proceed to coloring and the representation of white, bay, and black horses; the manes and tails were reserved by Barbara to be made of natural hair.

The pleasant relation lasted several weeks, while they were trying to overcome little imperfections and deficiencies that kept showing themselves. Landolt acquired the habit of spending an hour or two with her every forenoon; a glass of Malaga and three Spanish rolls were always set out for him, and presently he was left alone with his pupil—the gentlest and quietest teacher that had ever lived. White-throat was as familiar as a little tame bird, and it was not long before she was eating half of the Spanish rolls out of his hand, and even poking her beak into his glass of Malaga.

One day she surprised him with a secretly executed portrait of himself sitting in his captain's uniform on his dapple-gray Ukraine horse. Of course it was only his left side, the side with the sword, and had only one leg and one arm; on the other hand, as the horse's mane and tail were cut and pasted from her own glossy, jet-black hair, it could be seen from this sacrifice, as well as from the effigy as a whole, how much she cared for him.

And indeed she did think their mutual proclivities and ways so compatible and harmonious that whenever she seriously weighed the possibility of their marriage, blushing slightly at the thought, she felt that they could not fail to be happy together. And on his part Solomon thought he could wish for nothing better than to run into this peaceful little harbor, after all the storms he had weathered, and spend his days in Whitethroat's museum. Nor were the families of the two art-enthusiasts at all displeased by this increasing intimacy, since a marriage seemed to both sides wholly advantageous and desirable. And so the affair went so far that the Thumeysens called on the Landolts, under the diplomatic pretext of affording Mistress Thumeyen an opportunity to inspect Solomon's paintings, which were as yet quite unknown to her.

Now Solomon, although he possessed a decided and vigorous artistic vein, had never acquired the stamp of the finished and accomplished artist, because life did not give him time for it; nor did he in his modest indifference make any pretensions. Nevertheless as an amateur he stood on an extraordinarily high plane of independence, of original fertility of mind, and of immediate, personal understanding of nature. And with these qualities was united a bold, fresh workmanship, which was animated by the fire of an everlasting *con amore* in the most exact sense.

Hence the walls and easels of his painting-chapel, as he called it, afforded an unusual opulence, and, varied as were the pictures which met the eye, there shone forth from all the same bold, yet peacefully harmonious spirit. The ceaseless mutation of inwardly quiet Nature—

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her wakening and waning glow, her echoing and dying sound—seemed only the varying chords of the same composition. The landscape at gray dawn, the fading glow of evening, the darkness of the woods, with the moonlit, dew-laden cobwebs in the bushes of the foreground, the full moon peacefully swimming in the blue over the bay, the autumn sun battling with the mist over a reedy bank, the red glow of a fire behind the outlying tree-trunks of a forest, a village with smoking chimneys on a gray-green heath, a lightning-rent sky, rain-beaten surf—all this seemed like a single essence, but one trembling and quivering with the breath of life; and especially did it seem the result of the artist's own seeing and experiencing, the fruit of nocturnal wanderings, and of tireless rides at every hour of the day through storm and rain.

But now all that was most closely knit together and enlivened by a race of men, some deeply agitated and warlike, others wandering alone, or racing along swiftly like the clouds above them, others quietly bleeding to death on the ground. Cavalry patrols of the Seven Years' War, fleeing Kirghiz and Croats, fighting Frenchmen; then again peaceful hunters, country-people, the homeward-bound plow-team, shepherds in the autumn pasture, also forest and water birds flushed by war or the hunt, the grazing doe, the sneaking fox—all these were invariably found on the one and only spot appropriate to their situation. Then too one would often unexpectedly recognize in a gray, shadowy form, laboriously struggling along against the beating rain, some near acquaintance who was evidently being pictorially drenched for some offense; or else one would see some woman with a malicious tongue pictured perhaps as a night-witch out on a moor, washing her feet in a pool which lapped a gibbet. Finally one might see the painter himself riding away over a hill toward the evening glow, quietly smoking a pipe.

The call was executed and received in the most ceremonious manner; after they had taken their coffee, Solomon conducted the carefully and half-festively attired Barbara into his studio, while the rest of the company deliberately remained behind, in order to walk in the garden and inspect the house inside and out. Solomon now displayed and explained his pictures to the girl, together with a multitude of other objects, such as hunting-paraphernalia, weapons, animal skeletons he had prepared himself, and so forth. The jointed doll, which was sitting in a chair in the uniform of a red hussar and apparently gazing at a picture on an easel, had already frightened her, as she entered the room, and drawn forth a faint cry. But after that she kept still and gave absolutely no sign of pleasure or approval, but only of curiosity, since this entire world was strange and incomprehensible to her. Solomon thought nothing of it, did not even notice it, as he was not looking for praise and amazement. In his eagerness to attain his object he simply kept hurrying on from picture to picture, while Barbara's bosom, which was covered with light cloth, began to heave

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more and more vehemently under its covering of bright cloth, as if with great alarm. In front of a river-picture, showing a conflict between the early morning glow and the gleam of the setting moon, Landolt told her how early he had had to rise one morning to catch this effect, and how he could never have produced it at all without the help of his jews-harp. He laughingly explained to her the influence of such music when it was a question of mingling delicate color-tones; and he seized the little instrument, which lay on a table covered with a thousand other things, put it to his mouth, and drew from it a few trembling, faintly-breathed tone-structures, which now threatened to die away, and now fused together in a gentle swell.

“See,” he cried, “this is that bluish gray which changes to the dull copper-red on the water, while the morning star is still unusually large and bright. It will rain today in this landscape, I think!”

As he looked around at her joyfully, he discovered indeed that Barbara’s eyes were already full of water; she was very pale and cried out, as if in despair:

“No, no! We are not suited to each other! Never! Never!”

Quite startled and alarmed, he seized her hand and asked what was the matter, how she felt. She drew away her hand vehemently, and with confused words began to intimate that she did not understand the least bit of all that, that she had no aptitude for it, and never would have, and that it seemed almost hostile to her and frightened her. Under such circumstances a harmonious life together would be out of the question, because they would always be pulling in opposite directions; and Landolt could just as little value and appreciate the peaceful and innocent efforts which heretofore had made her happy as she could follow his work with even the slightest understanding of it.

Landolt began to see what she meant, and what was disquieting her, and told her in gentle encouraging words that his efforts were but play, just like hers—merely a side issue that was of no moment whatever. But his words only made things worse, and in the greatest agitation she hurried out of the room, sought her parents, and begged with tears to be taken home. In helpless dismay the members of both families gathered about her; Landolt also came up, and now she once more began her strange explanations. It appeared more clearly that she attributed vastly more importance to that which distressed her than could properly be expected of a delicate young creature so simple and unassuming; but that her inability to rise above herself and tolerate what was strange to her was no doubt largely attributable to a certain narrowness in which she had been brought up.

All the encouragement of Landolt and his parents was of no avail; the parents of the despairing girl, moreover, seemed rather to share her apprehensions, and anxiously hastened their departure. A sedan-chair was ordered and the daughter was packed into it. She immediately let down the diminutive curtain, and thus the little caravan

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marched away as fast as the bearers could walk, much to the annoyance and shame of the Landolts.

The next forenoon, as early as he thought it proper, Solomon went to the proselyte-clerk's house to inquire after the daughter's health and to see what he could do to patch matters up. The parents received him with polite excuses, and explained to him how not only the profound nature-cult and the wild love of sketching in his paintings, but also the doll, the animal skeletons, and all the other strange things, had alarmed their daughter's modest spirit; and how they too could not help thinking that such outspoken artistic whimsicality threatened to disturb the peace of a modest burgher's household. In the midst of these explanations, which amazed good Solomon more and more, the daughter herself appeared on the scene, with tear-swollen eyes but composed. She extended her hand to him cordially, and with gentle, but resolute words, said that she could be his only on the positive condition that both of them should renounce pictorial art forever and thus banish all the estrangement that had come between them, each one making his loving sacrifice.

Solomon Landolt hesitated a moment; but his presence of mind soon caused him to see that a kind of arrogance was here appearing in the guise of innocent narrowness; that this by no means insured domestic peace and made the demanded sacrifice all too costly. Accordingly without a word in defense of his painting-chapel he took leave of his hosts, as also of the hoopoe, the pontifex and all their train.

Scarcely had the usual period of mourning over the death of a hope passed away, together with the vexation of the grandmother over the "pretty piece of business" which she had finally found out about, when the Blackbird flew upon the scene as the immediate successor to the aforesaid Whitethroat.

Half city-residence and half country-seat, there lay in the midst of beautiful gardens in one of the suburbs, a house which Landolt, being well known and highly esteemed there, was in the habit of visiting quite frequently. This property had a landmark in the shape of a blackbird, which in the spring of the year would perch every evening on the tip-top of a tall Weymouth pine standing in a corner of the garden, and from there delight the entire neighborhood with its melodious singing. After this blackbird, in accordance with his custom of adopting the first good suggestion, Landolt named the beautiful girl Aglaia; which again is no Christian name, but a further invention of his, for he erroneously regarded this name of one of the three Graces as identical with the name of the plant columbine (*Agley*), *Aquilegia vulgaris*. He was led into this mistake by the dainty and graceful appearance of the columbine, whose cups, now blue and now violet, seemed to him to sway and nod around the tall, slender stalks no less charmingly than did Blackbird's or Aglaia's pale-blond looks play

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about her neck.

One evening in the previous spring, as he had passed the house and stopped a moment to listen to the blackbird's singing, he had for the first time seen the beautiful girl standing under the tree. She was a daughter of the family who had just been recalled from a sojourn of several years in foreign parts. He had taken a good look at her, but as he was just then involved in the Wendelgard affair, he merely lifted his hat and went his way.

It was now autumn, and one day as Solomon was strolling along the edge of a wood in the mild sunshine, he came across a late-blooming columbine; he plucked it and was examining it, when suddenly he was reminded of the girl standing under the blackbird-tree, though he had not thought of her since that day. This mysterious and immediate effect of the flower seemed to his much-tried and still seeking heart like a late-rising, but so much the brighter star, an infallible oracle from on high. He saw vividly the girl's slender form and curly hair, as she looked down while listening to the bird's song and then raised her grave eyes to him as he greeted her.

That very evening, for the first time in a long while, he again called at the house and staid nearly three hours conversing agreeably with the family. Aglaia sat quietly by the table knitting; when Solomon spoke she gazed at him quite frankly and attentively, and when anybody else said something worthy of note, she would look at him again as if eager to learn his opinion about it. He had a very pleasant visit, and when he went away she clasped his hand firmly and shook it repeatedly, as if he were an old friend. When he met her shortly afterward on the street, she returned his greeting with a faint smile of joy at the unexpected meeting, and not long after that she even sent a written message to her new friend asking him if he would not like to attend a modest little celebration which they were having that evening to mark the end of the grape-harvest then going on. He accepted the invitation with pleasure, provided himself with fire-works, and went at the appointed time to the half-rustic residence, where a crowd of merry young people and children were already assembled. With his rockets and small pinwheels he made himself very useful and popular among the excited young folk, and Aglaia, who was everywhere directing and arranging, came repeatedly to express her joy at his coming and his splendid performances. When it was time for the customary vintage feast, which the lady of the house, her mother, had to leave in the lurch on account of ill health, she seated him at the lower end of the long table beside her own place. And here again he made himself useful by carving with easy skill a goose and two hares, whereat Aglaia once more expressed joy and approval; he did it too in a way to indicate that he was glad to be able to do it, although the occasion for his doing it was that the father had burned his hand with a squib and so did not himself carve.

When the appetite of the lively throng had been appeased, and

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shouting, singing, dancing, and music held the field, Aglaia leaned back contentedly in her chair, alleging that she must now rest after her day's work. It was easy to keep her neighbor with her, and thus, undisturbed by the noisy autumn merry-making, they sat quietly together and derived much diversion and quiet satisfaction from a simple conversation. Aglaia kept looking at Solomon with inquiring friendliness, and then, when she would gaze off thoughtfully into space, he in turn would contemplate her charming head and graceful form. In a word, they became at this time professedly good friends, and the lovable girl formally urged the young man, as he took his leave, to increase the frequency of his visits and to maintain friendly relations, which she would not like to do without. After that she contrived to send more and more messages to him, asking favors or fulfilling promises which she had cunningly made him exact from her, and Solomon with a heart aglow reflected that he had at last knocked at the right door.

"There is a girl," he said to himself, "who knows what she wants, and who steers openly, honestly, and without affectation for her goal. Whether her course is prudent, or imprudent, I am not foolish enough to investigate, since it concerns my own self. Let every man come to his own in his own way!"

Thus he sank ever deeper into a dream which seemed sweeter and lovelier than any he had ever dreamt before, and which promised a new and better life, as clear and calm as the azure sky. But with unconscious caution he hesitated to cloud this brightness by precipitating matters; accordingly he enjoyed, all winter long, with an increasing sense of security, a peace of mind such as he had never before felt when under the spell of passion. And he enjoyed it all the more keenly that Aglaia was of a serious rather than cheerful temper and often gave herself up to dreamy meditation, from which she would suddenly awake to fix her eyes on him.

"Oh," he thought, "we'll let the little fish squirm a bit. This tribe has tormented us enough already!"

But in the spring it began to look as if Aglaia proposed to take the matter into her own hands. She unexpectedly expressed a desire to begin anew her neglected riding-practice, and with little difficulty she managed to have Solomon selected as her escort and teacher. Thus they rode together over all the most beautiful roads of the surrounding country, on the lake-drives, through the high-lying woods, and it was soon quite apparent that Aglaia needed no more instruction. All the more intimate and varied was their conversation, and they imparted to each other what they liked and disliked in the fair world, on the rugged earth.

One or another of Solomon's various love-affairs had very likely leaked out; certain it was that the last adventure had come to people's ears directly from the proselyte-clerk, if only because the tragic end of the visit and the solemn departure with the sedan-chair demanded an adequate explanation.



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To this Landolt referred the words of Aglaia when, as they were halting under green lindens to breathe their horses, she said to him in a soft, sympathetic voice:

“Dearest friend, you too have surely been very unhappy, haven’t you?”

He was surprised by the sudden question and with a laughing glance merely replied:

“Oh, that’s the way of the world! I can almost say, like Cousin Stille: I have had some happy and some unhappy times in my life!” But to himself he thought: “Now is the time! Now it must come!”

But whether it was that he regarded their situation on horseback as unsuitable for a declaration of love with the attendant circumstances, or that he was restrained by a final impulse of caution: he urged the horses to a rapid trot and the conversation ended. But when he took his leave, Aglaia squeezed his hand all the more warmly, and he had scarcely reached home when he sat down and wrote a few lines to her, declaring his love. She answered at once that his precious words touched, gladdened, and honored her, and begged him to come the following day and take her for a long walk, adding that a suitable pretext could easily be found. Early in the morning another note came, wherein she fixed the form and the pretext—the accident of their both going to call in the same neighborhood, suitable company on the footpaths in view of the fine weather, etc.

Landolt dressed himself more carefully than usual, almost like a Spartan going to battle; he even put on a pair of garnet cuff-buttons and took in his hand a slender cane with a silver knob.

When he arrived Aglaia was already decked out in her best summer finery; she had on a violet-figured white dress and long gloves of the finest leather. Her most precious ornament, however, was her eyes, with which she cast a radiant glance of gratitude at Solomon as she offered him her hand. Impatiently, like one who hopes to take a long step forward in some important matter, she hastened their departure.

When he saw the rare creature walking along ahead of him on the narrow path, he extolled in his heart that slender columbine with its bell-shaped cup which had led him on so pleasant a way. A breeze rustled softly in the leaves of the young beeches under which they were walking, slightly agitating the locks on Aglaia’s neck and shoulders.

“Proverbs are really fine things” he said to himself: “‘He who laughs last, laughs best,’ and ‘All’s well, that ends well!’”

Just then the path broadened, and Aglaia turned and stepped back beside him; once more she gave him her hand, a beautiful blush transfigured her face, and with beaming eyes filled with tears she said:

“I thank you for your noble affection and for your confidence! Life must and will go well with you, and better than if I were destined to make you happy. Let me tell you, then, that I myself am the captive



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of a happy-unhappy passion, and that a man whom I love ardently loves me in return—yes, I may tell you that I am loved!”

Then she told at length with passionate agitation the story of her love and sufferings, which had taken place in Germany and concerned a clergyman.

“A parson,” said Landolt almost inaudibly; and just then, in spite of his silver-mounted cane, and although there was not even a pebble in the path, he stumbled a little.

“Oh, don’t say parson” she implored. “He is a wonderful man—look here, look into these unfathomable eyes!”

She drew from her bosom a medallion, which she wore on a well-concealed string, and showed him the picture. It was that of a young man attired in black, with rather regular features and very large dark eyes, such as many painters give to Jesus of Nazareth; one might also call them black Juno-eyes. But Landolt thought as he stared vacantly at the picture with bitter feelings: “They are the eyes of a cow!” And as she put it back into her white bosom he seemed to hear a soft chuckle there, as if some one were saying: “He who laughs last, laughs best!”

The story which Aglaia now went on to tell was somewhat as follows: When only half-grown she had been taken into a family of blood-relatives in the German city of X, where she was to be educated. In this house she had met the young clergyman, who, in spite of his youth, was already highly esteemed as a pulpit-orator. He was very orthodox, but had, nevertheless, a touch of the pietistic enthusiasm of the day. He spoke with such fervent conviction of the divine and the beatific, of inexhaustible love-treasures, and the everlasting home of man, that all these things seemed to be actually present and guaranteed in his person; and combined with his captivating eyes, they had aroused in the young and inexperienced girl an insuperable longing to win his heart. This longing, increased by an over-rich imagination which embellished and transfigured everything, had developed into an ardent, sweetly-bitter passion, which in the lapse of years grew stronger rather than weaker. Such a passion, which naturally soon betrays itself, would be out of order in such a beautiful creature were it not to be strongly reciprocated. But the related family, as well as the girl’s parents, were for more than one reason opposed to a marriage, and the more serious the state of the charming Aglaia’s heart became, the more serious became also the difficulties which loomed up before her longing and desires. It resulted finally in her being forcibly removed from the house and taken home.

But, as hers was a deep-rooted character, she held all the more tenaciously to her affection; she exchanged letters with her lover, outwardly calm, but inwardly moved by a never-resting hope. This hope flamed up mightily anew when the young clergyman, passing through Switzerland in the company of a distinguished gentleman, found an opportunity to see her and was even granted admission to her house.

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But while his position and future seemed to be assured, this did not change the situation or affect the opposition of her parents, who from the first had cherished other hopes for their daughter and now clung to their plan with calm gentleness and love, but none the less persistently.

Such was the situation when Aglaia, who was always looking for help, sought in the above-described, roundabout way to secure Solomon Landolt as her friend and helper, which he became. He accompanied her faithfully to the country-seat where she wanted to call, and toward evening returned to get her; and by the time they had reached home, she had completely won him over. He loved and admired her love, the like of which he had never seen before, and he even became a partisan of the happy lover, and regarded it as a right, a duty, and an honor to help the fair Aglaia.

First he spoke in a confidential way with influential outsiders and managed to beset the parents with new arguments and suggestions; then he talked several times with the father and mother themselves, and before half a year had elapsed he had smoothed the way, and the clerical gentleman was able to lead home his bride. She was indebted to her friend even for the titles of *Consistorialrätin* and *Hofpredigerin*, for he had pestered his most exalted and learned connections in Zürich in order to secure a pleasant berth for her.

His heartfelt sympathy still went out to her when, after four or five years, she returned as a lone widow. For, unfortunately, the deep lustre of her husband's eyes was in part the result of a hectic constitution, and he died prematurely of the wasting disease. Just as consuming, to be sure, had been the fire of her husband's ambition, his uninterrupted worry about earthly prestige, promotion, and success; so that in her brief married life Aglaia experienced such an excited figuring of income, tithes, and perquisites as she had not known before and would not know again. All the more calmly and resignedly did she now seem to pass her days.

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These, then, were the five feminine beings and old flames whom the Governor of Greifensee was eager to bring together at his home. Two or three lived in Zürich, the others not far away, and it was simply a question of enticing them there in such a way that none of them would know about the others, and that each one would come alone expecting to find a company of friends. All this he talked over with Frau Marianne and made suitable arrangements. He set the last day of May for the great event, and sent out the invitations, all of which were accepted without suspicion, so that thus far the affair was a great success.

With the first gray light of dawn on the 31st of May Landolt ascended into the highest watch-tower of the castle to see what the weather-outlook was. The sky all around was cloudless, the stars were

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growing dim, and the eastern horizon was beginning to glow. Then he planted the great domanical flag, with the leaping griffin on it, above the gable-roof of the castle, and behind the encircling wall he placed two small cannons with which to thunder forth a welcome to the arriving fair ones. In order to make sure, he had arranged to have a special carriage call for each of them and convey them to the castle. All the servants were ordered to put on their best Sunday clothes; but the neatest of all was his monkey Cocco, who had been specially drilled for the occasion, was dressed up like a hoary little granny and wore a cap whose huge ribbon bore the inscription: I am Time!

Within the house Frau Marianne was standing ready as stewardess, attired in a rich old-fashioned Tirolese-Catholic costume; beside her stood a handsome fourteen-year-old boy whom the Governor himself had selected and dressed in the clothes of an attractive lady's-maid, to have him wait upon the ladies.

Shortly before nine o'clock the first cannon-shot boomed, and between the trees and hedges a coach was seen slowly approaching; in it sat Figura Leu. As the carriage stopped in front of the castle-gate, the monkey sprang up into it with a large bouquet of fragrant roses, and with ludicrous gestures thrust it into her hands. She saw into the rebus instantly and took both monkey and bouquet on her arm; and as she alighted from the carriage, while Landolt, with his sword at his side and his hat in his hand, offered her his arm in welcome, she cried out with joyous laughter:

"Whatever is going on here? What means the banner on the roof, and the cannon, and Time bringing roses?"

As she had been quite blameless and was the dearest of them all to him, he let her into the secret and confided to her that all five—she knew the ones—were going to meet there that day. At first she blushed, but after she had reflected a moment she smiled with a certain delicacy:

"You are a rogue and a clown!" she cried. "Take care—we'll nail you to the cross and roast your monkey, together with his roses, *singe aux roses*, won't we, Cocco, little Governor?"

He had scarcely escorted her into the house, where she was immediately waited upon by Frau Marianne and the boy-maid, when the cannon thundered again, and two carriages drove up simultaneously. They contained Wendelgard and Salome, Captain and Goldfinch, who had already been mutually wondering on the way who was in the other carriage, which had always kept in sight. These two ladies knew about each other and their former relations with the Governor; they eyed each other with quick glances of curiosity, but were presently taken away by Cocco, who came hopping up with a fresh bouquet of roses, and Landolt, who escorted them, one on each arm, into the house.

There, in the meanwhile, Frau Marianne had just finished her first examination of Figura; knowing that she had been blameless, she

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treated her with gracious kindness. But all the more did her eyes flash fire when Salome and Wendelgard entered; the nostrils of her hook-nose and her upper lip, on which grew a blackish moustache, quivered passionately at the sight of the two fair women who had once deserted the Governor, and the master had to direct a stern glance at his faithful servant in order to restrain her and compel her to assume a fairly courteous manner.

Aglaia too, who now arrived and was received in the same way as her predecessors, had to undergo a very critical scrutiny, since it was not yet decided whether what she had done to Landolt, in order to gain a helper in her distress, was pardonable or unpardonable. But the old woman, in view of the fact that Aglaia after all had been capable of true love and had married in accordance with her first affection, let her pass with a faint grumble.

Scarcely a glance, however, did she deign to bestow on Whitethroat, whose arrival was now announced by the final cannon-shot; what could she have to do with a fly who had dared to have an affair with the Governor and had then shrunk from him after all?

The Governor saw at once that the sensitive Whitethroat, who was almost trembling anyway and did not know where to turn among all the beautiful forms, was quite lost before the old hussar of a house-keeper, and with a few secret words he recommended her to the special protection of Figura, who immediately took her in charge. And now there began a great introducing and greeting; except Figura Leu the beautiful women all kept looking askance at one another, not knowing what to make of it. For of course they all knew one another by sight and reputation, apart from the relationship of Wendelgard and Figura. But the latter, aided by Landolt's happy humor, at once diffused a joyous and cheerful spirit; there was no room for idle suspense, for a light breakfast was passed around, consisting of tea, sweet wine, and pastry; Frau Marianne attended to pouring the beverages, while the boy carried around the cups and glasses. The ladies looked with inquisitive eyes at everything, especially at the putative waiting-maid, who seemed a little suspicious. They walked around and looked at the walls and the furnishings of the room, and then at one another again, while Landolt spoke to each in turn with courteous familiarity, all the time testing and comparing them with contented eye.

Finally the situation dawned upon them, and they realized that they had been drawn into an ambush. They began to blush and smile alternately, and finally to laugh. The reason and the open secret, however, were left unexplained; for the Governor unexpectedly put a damper on the merriment by seriously and solemnly excusing himself on the ground that he was obliged to devote a short hour to his official duties and hear a few cases in his capacity as judge. As they were all trivial matters, such as small matrimonial controversies, he thought it might perhaps entertain the ladies to attend the trials. They accepted

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the invitation with thanks, and accordingly he conducted them into his large office, where they took seats like jurors on both sides of his judicial chair, while the clerk sat before them at his little table in the centre.

The court-messenger, or bailiff, then led in a rustic couple who lived in great discord, although the Governor had not yet been able to find out on whose side the fault lay, because each would overwhelm the other with complaints and accusations, and neither was at a loss to keep matters evened up. The wife had recently thrown a basin of hot gruel at her husband, so that he stood there with a scalded pate from which large tufts of hair were already falling out—tufts which he kept testing every minute with the greatest uneasiness, only to regret it each time when a fresh bunch was left in his hand. The wife, however, emphatically denied the deed, maintaining that her husband in his wild rage had taken the soup-dish for his fur cap and had tried to put it on his head. The Governor, in order to find a way of his own out of the difficulty, had the woman withdraw, and then said to the man:

“I plainly see, Hans Jacob, that you are the sufferer and a poor Job, and that the injustice and devilry are on the side of your wife. Accordingly next Sunday I shall have her put in the revolving pillory on the market-place, and you yourself shall turn her about before the entire community, until your heart is satisfied and she is tamed!”

But the farmer was frightened by this sentence and urgently besought the Governor to retract it; for, he said, even if his wife was a bad woman, she was nevertheless his wife, and it did not become him to expose her in that way to public disgrace. He begged him to do nothing more than give her a severe reprimand.

Hereupon the Governor had the man taken out and the woman brought in again.

“Your husband,” he said to her, “is, according to all appearances, a good-for-nothing and scalded his own head in order to get you into trouble. His extraordinary malice merits appropriate punishment, and you yourself shall bestow it. Next Sunday we will put the fellow in the pillory, and there before all the people you may turn him around as long as your heart desires!”

When the woman heard this she leaped into the air for joy, thanked the Governor for his good sentence, and swore that she would turn the pillory with such tireless persistence that the very soul in his body would hurt him.

“Now we see where the devil lurks!” said Landolt sternly; and he sentenced the wicked woman to three days confinement in the tower on bread and water. The dragon looked around angrily, and when she saw the ladies with their roses, sitting at the right and left and eyeing her timidly, she stuck out her tongue at both groups as she was led out.

There now appeared an utterly care-worn couple, who could not

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live in peace and yet did not know why. The source of their unhappiness was this: husband and wife had never from the first had a good talk together or allowed each other to speak freely, and this in turn was due to the fact that both were equally lacking in any external charm which might have been dwelt on as a basis of reconciliation. The man, who was a tailor, claimed to possess a profound sense of justice, over which he brooded incessantly while sewing, whereas other tailors spent their time singing a song or excogitating vile jokes. His wife had exclusive charge of the little farm and while about her work would resolve not to yield at the next scene. Since both were industrious people, their only opportunity to quarrel was at meal-times, but even these times they could not properly utilize, because at the very beginning of the controversy their pointed arrows always shot past the mark into unfamiliar marsh-regions, where a regular battle was no longer possible, and their words were choked in dumb anger. In this sort of life the food they ate did not agree with them, so that they looked like *Famine* and *Misery*, although, as already remarked, they were poor only in amiability, which is, to be sure, the poorest sort of proletariat. Yesterday the anger of the husband had become so intense that he had jumped up and run from the table, but a hole in the ragged table-cloth was caught by a button on his vest, and he had dragged the cloth along with him, together with the porridge, the vegetable-dish, and the plates, and hurled them all on the floor. The wife took this for an intentional act of violence, and the tailor, with a sudden clever inspiration, allowed her to retain this opinion, in order to increase his prestige and exhibit his strength. But the wife didn't propose to tolerate such things and laid a complaint before the Governor.

As the latter listened to both in turn and perceived the hopelessness of their perpetual wrangling, which had neither compass nor rudder, he saw the nature of their case and sentenced the couple to four weeks' imprisonment and to the use of the marriage-spoon. At a sign from him the bailiff took this utensil down from the wall, where it hung on a little iron chain; it was a double spoon, neatly carved of linden-wood, and had two bowls on the same handle, so arranged that one turned up and the other down.

"See," said the Governor, "this spoon is made from the linden, the tree of love, peace, and justice. While you are eating, and when you offer to each other the spoon—for you'll not get another—think of a green linden standing in full bloom; imagine that the birds are singing in it, and that above it the clouds are floating in the sky, and that beneath its shade lovers sit and judges hold session and peace is concluded!"

The little man had to carry the spoon, the woman followed with her apron at her eyes, and thus the pale, lean couple marched sadly to the place decreed, whence after four weeks they came forth reconciled and harmonious, and even with a delicate touch of color in their



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cheeks.

After that there was led in from prison a cross fat woman, who looked around sulkily and was apparently not well. She was the wife of a subordinate official and had talked her husband into attempting to bribe the Governor with a quarter of veal, so that he would be favorably disposed to them and wink at their misconduct. When the woman brought the meat to Landolt and handed it to him obsequiously, he had sent her to the tower until she should eat up the quarter of veal, which was carefully cooked for her. As may be imagined, she hurried as fast as she could to finish it, and was now unable to conceal a certain discomfort. The Governor explained to her that the eating of the quarter of veal was to be regarded as punishment for attempted bribery, but that a fine of twenty-five gulden was imposed for misleading her husband into wrong-doing, and that a mulct of twenty-five gulden was added for the compliant weakness of her husband, all of which the clerk might note down. The fat woman made a clumsy bow, and wobbled out with both hands on her stomach.

Two sisters of beautiful figure were accused of deceiving their quiet and inoffensive husbands and of creating dissension and unhappiness in their homes, and furthermore of letting their old mother starve and languish away helplessly on a sick-bed. Summoned before the court of the Governor, they appeared in seductively voluptuous attire, their hair done up in a loud way and adorned with flowers. Smiling sweetly and casting ardent glances at the Governor, they entered. The latter, recognizing their impudent purpose, ended the hearing at once, and ordered that the wenches be taken out, shorn of their beautiful hair, whipped, and compelled to sit at the spinning-wheel until they had earned something for the support of their mother.

Then there appeared as complainants two religious sectarians, who had declined to take the oath of citizenship before the Governor, and had also persistently refused to perform any of the duties of citizens, absolutely closing their ears to repeated kindly warnings, and all this on the score of their faith and an inner call. They now complained of poor people who had forcibly entered their forests and supplied themselves with as much fire-wood as they wanted.

“Who are you?” asked the Governor; “I do not know you!”

“How is that possible?” they cried, as they told their names. “You have already summoned us here several times, and have sent the court-bailiff to us with written and oral orders!”

“Nevertheless, I do not know you” he went on cold-bloodedly; “since you yourselves recall that you have never recognized any of the duties of citizenship, I can grant you no justice. Go and find it wherever you can!”

Taken aback, they slunk out and made haste to secure justice by the performance of their duties.



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In a similar way he decided a few more cases with his clever inspirations; he settled quarrels and punished good-for-nothings, and it was particularly to be noticed that, with the exception of the bribing official, he did not impose a single fine or elicit a single shilling; albeit other governors were ordered to use this side of their jurisdiction as a source of income, and not infrequently abused it. Consequently his administration of justice stood in good repute with high and low; his judgments were described in a double sense as Solomonic, and for a long time afterward the people called that day's session, on account of the odor of roses, the rose-court of Governor Solomon.

But he was now glad that the business was over; for on account of the preparations for this festal day he had kept postponing it until finally it had to fall on the very day of the event. He invited the ladies to take a short stroll in the fresh air before the midday meal, which, he said, they had all well earned. And when they were by themselves in the garden on the shore of the lake they did indeed breathe a sigh of relief; for they had become quite concerned at the assurance with which this bachelor had understood and handled matrimonial affairs. One or two who until then had perhaps not thought him very shrewd racked their brains trying to fathom the nature of his case.

But they were all diverted from these mistrustful thoughts when they saw the monkey, Cocco, come hopping up pitifully, for they had forgotten to relieve him of his uncomfortable clothes. His cap was askew and hung down over his face, without his being able to get it off, and his clothes were wound around his legs or hanging from his tail, and all the while he was making a hundred efforts to free himself. The ladies sympathetically relieved the monkey of all his discomfort, and now he entertained them with a series of the cutest tricks and pranks, so that all doubt and melancholy forsook their beautiful heads, and the Governor found them laughing merrily when he came, followed by two servants, to bring them to dinner.

"Aha!" he cried, "that's the kind of dinner-bell I like to hear! When ladies laugh together it sounds like the bells of Saint Cecilia's chapel! Which of you rang the beautiful alto?—You, Wendelgard? And who the storm bell, as if her heart were on fire?—You, Aglaia? Whose was the pleasant intermediate tone of the vesper-bell?—It was yours, Salome! The silvery prayer-bell tinkles in your purple belfry, Barbara Thumeysen! And the voice that rang like a golden curfew?—That is easy to recognize, it was my Harlequin, Figura!"

"How ill-mannered," rang out the other four bells, "to call one of us a harlequin!" For they did not know that they all bore such pet-names, although Figura knew hers and had sanctioned it.

The brittle film of ice over their hearts was now entirely broken. The glory of the blue sky and the still bluer lake streamed in through the windows and lighted up the room in which the table was set, and when the roving eye looked out it was at once soothed by the fresh Maytime verdure of the opposite shore. The round table in the centre

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of the room was radiant with delicate spring flowers and scattered lights; for it was set most beautifully, being adorned with everything that the Governor had been able to furnish from his gardens, as well as his cupboards and heirlooms.

Six chairs with high backs stood around the table, each far enough from the next to enable its occupant to move freely and comfortably, and to see and converse, in a dignified manner, with his right-and left-hand neighbor. In short, the arrangement suggested a Round Table spread only for electoral princes, and there was nothing lacking except the private buffet behind each chair; instead of these, enthroned all the more magnificently in the background, was the great castle-buffet, with its antique utensils.

Beside this buffet Frau Marianne was already standing like a marshal, with one hand resting on the buffet and the other on her hip. She wore a scarlet skirt and a black velvet bodice; a large silver crucifix hung over her plaited ruff and rested on her bosom, and her tanned neck was encircled by some filigree ornaments, while a cap of marten-skin covered her hair, which was turning gray. A white apron hanging from her waist proclaimed her office, but from under her black eyebrows she cast severe glances around the room, as if she were mistress.

But the awe she inspired did not dispel the once awakened merriment, and the five ladies, smiling joyously, took the seats which Landolt assigned them; at his right hand he placed Figura Leu, at his left Aglaia, opposite him the oldest of the flames, Salome, and in the two remaining seats, Wendelgard and Whitethroat. With a warm feeling of happiness he saw them thus assembled at one table, and with great assiduousness he kept up the conversation on all sides, so that without violating good breeding he could look at them all in turn, counting forward and backward and skipping about just as he pleased.

Frau Marianne served the soup at the buffet, and the disguised boy, who was the well-instructed and artful son of a near-by pastor, passed it around. He resembled an eighteen-year-old girl, always bashfully casting down his eyes when spoken to, obeyed Marianne's slightest signs, and placed himself mutely beside the door as soon as a service had been performed. But whenever the Governor would summon the supposed girl to his side and quietly give her a confidential commission, which she executed with zeal, the flames wondered anew at the unknown lady's-maid, of whom they had never heard, and cast many a fleeting glance at her.

Still, the chatting did not suffer on that account but rather grew more animated and cheerful, and the aforesaid chimes kept pealing as harmoniously and busily as do the bells of a town when the Pope is arriving. Now, as if he were already in town, there was a moment of silence, which Wendelgard took advantage of to inquire about the nature and size of the domain of Greifensee, as she was secretly anxious to know how great the measure of her happiness would have

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been, had she become the Governor's wife. The other ladies wondered that a citizen should not know this, but Landolt explained to her that the stronghold, city, and castle of Greifensee, with land and people, had been pledged in the year 1402 by the last Count of Toggenburg to the people of Zürich for six thousand gulden, and had never been redeemed, and that it was one of the smaller domains, numbering but twenty-one boroughs. For the rest, the present castle and town were not the original ones, which had of course been destroyed in the year 1444 by the Allied Swiss, who were warring against Zürich. Picturing to himself the scenes of that long and bitter civil strife, Landolt lapsed into a description of the downfall of the sixty-nine men, who, during almost the entire month of May, had defended the castle against the larger force of the besiegers. He related how, in accordance with civil war's horrible custom of destroying the conquered under the form of a fair trial, and in order to gain an end by inspiring terror, sixty of these men, preceded by their faithful leader, Wildhans von Landenberg, had been sentenced to be executed on the spot after they had finally surrendered. He dwelt especially on the proceedings of the War Council, which was held on the meadows at Nanikon, to decide the fate of the faithful.

He told how certain just men had boldly interceded for leniency and mercy and had pointed out the captives' honest faithfulness to duty; also how certain vengeful ones had protested wildly against showing mercy and opposed its advocates with intimidating inculpation; and how the passionate controversy thus carried on in the face of the doomed men had terminated in the cruel death sentence for them all. The mysterious cruelty displayed by a majority so great that there was no division at all when the matter was finally put to vote; the immediately following entrance of the executioner, whom the Swiss took with them in their wars, as they now take a doctor or a chaplain; the onrush of old men, women, and children imploring mercy; the obstinate mercilessness of the majority and their leader, Itel Reding—all this was vividly described. Then the ladies listened with quiet horror to the progress of the execution, and heard how the Captain of the Zürich troops, in order to set his own men a manly example in the hour of death, demanded that his head be struck off first, so that nobody might think he was hoping for a change of mind or an unforeseen event; how the executioner paused at first after each decapitation, then after every tenth, awaiting a reprieve and even begging for it himself, but each time received the answer: "Be silent and do your work"—until sixty innocent men lay in their blood, the last being beheaded by torch-light. Only a few minors and broken-down old men escaped the execution, and these more from inattention or fatigue on the part of the judges than for mercy's sake.

The good ladies heaved a deep sigh of relief when the story, much to their comfort, was ended. Toward the last they had been listening breathlessly; for the Governor had described it all so vividly that they

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really thought they saw before them the nocturnal meadow and the ring of wild warriors in the red torch-light, instead of the table covered with flowers and cups and lighted by the spring sun.

“It was indeed an uncanny aggregation, that War Council,” said Landolt, “whether they were deciding upon an attack or pronouncing a death-sentence. But now it is time,” he went on with a changed voice, “to leave these things and come back to ourselves. Fair ladies of my heart, I should now like to invite you to form a small, but more peaceful council, to hold a consultation, and to pronounce judgment concerning a matter which concerns me closely, and which I shall lay before you, provided you do not deny me the kind attention which has its seat in so many dainty ears. But first let the public withdraw, as the negotiations must be conducted in secret!”

He motioned to his housekeeper and her adjutant, and they immediately withdrew. Then he raised his voice and continued to talk, interrupted by a slightly embarrassed clearing of the throat, while the ten white ears listened in mouse-like silence.

“Honored ladies, I greeted you today with the proverb, Time brings roses, and surely it was well chosen, since it has sketched before my eyes a magic pentagram of five such fair heads, in which the magic line passes mysteriously from one head to the other, crosses itself, and at every point returns into itself, diverting all harm from me. Yes, time and fate have treated me well indeed. For had I won the first of you, I should never have known the second, and had the second granted me her hand, the third would have remained hidden from me forever, and so forth, and I should not now be enjoying the happiness of possessing a five-fold mirror of memory, unclouded by a single breath of harsh reality, or of dwelling in a tower of friendship, whose freestones have been piled on top of one another by cupids. It is indeed roses of renunciation which time has brought me; but how splendid and lasting they are! As if undiminished in beauty and youth I see you blooming before me; and on my word not one of you seems ready to falter or retreat by so much as a hair’s breadth before the storms of life. First of all, let us clink glasses on that! Long live your hearts and eyes, O, Salome, Figura, Wendelgard, Barbara, Aglaia!”

With flushed cheeks they all rose and smiled at him graciously, as they clinked their glasses with his. But Figura whispered into his ear:

“What are you driving at, you silly rogue?”

“Hush, Harlequin” said the Governor, and when they had all resumed their seats, he went on:

“But renunciation can never satisfy itself, and when it can find nothing more to renounce, it ends by renouncing itself. This seems but a bad play on words, but it nevertheless describes the dubious situation into which I see myself brought by circumstances. The occupancy of high governmental offices, and the management of a large

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household, no longer permit me to remain single with impunity; people are urging me to give up this unmarried state, in order, as judge and administrator at the head of a domain, to set an example of a true pater-familias—and so on, whatever the phrases may be with which they urge and worry me. In short, there is nothing left for me but to renounce the quiet stars of memory and to yield to necessity. Now, as I look around me, of course there can no longer be any talk of love and affection, which are banished by the pentagram; no, it is the cold light of necessity and common utility which must illuminate my decision. Now there are two worthy creatures between whom the tongue of the balance wavers, and the decision, dear friends, I have left to you! A wise friend of mine, a clergyman, has advised me to take either a very experienced old woman, or else a very young girl, but nobody in between. Both are now found, and the one you advise me to take, she shall it be, irrevocably. The old one is my good housekeeper, Frau Marianne, who until now has taken excellent care of my house; she is somewhat rough and smoky, to be sure, but honest and virtuous, and she was once beautiful as well, even if it was long ago. She has only to change her name, and then everything is in order. The other is the young maid who served us at table; she is distantly related to Marianne, who brought her here to help with the work and test her usefulness. She seems to be a gentle, well-mannered child, poor, but healthy, truth-loving, and straightforward. But I say no more on this point—you understand me! Now think it over, hold a consultation, exchange ideas; and then do me the friendly service of peacefully deciding the question. The majority rules, in case you are unable to agree unanimously. I shall now go out. Here is a brass bell; when you have reached a decision, ring this as hard as you can for me to come in and receive my fate from your white hands!”

Having uttered these words in an unusually serious tone, he left the room so quickly that none of the ladies had a chance to interject a word. So now, like five state councillors, they sat there on their chairs in silent astonishment and looked at one another. So great was their surprise that none of them could make a sound, until Salome, the first to collect her thoughts, cried out:

“This won’t do! If the Governor wants to marry, we must see that he gets the right sort of a wife. He is a made man now, and I shall soon find somebody who is suited to him. But by no means can we let him carry out this notion!”

“That’s what I think, too,” said Aglaia thoughtfully; “we must gain time!”

“Aha! you’d still take him yourself after all,” thought Salome; “but nothing will come of that—I know of one for him.” Then she said aloud: “Yes, above all we must gain time. Let us ring and explain to him that we will not decide the matter now, but postpone our decision.”

She had already reached for the bell, but the youngest, Barbara

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Thumeysen, restrained her and piped in rather forcibly:

“I oppose a postponement! Let him marry, it is right that he should! And for my part I vote for the old housekeeper, for it wouldn't be seemly for him to marry a young thing now!”

“Bah” said Wendelgard, “the old rattle-box! I vote for the young one! She is pretty and will let herself be moulded by him into the shape he wants; for she is also modest. And if she is poor, she will be all the more grateful!”

Salome and Aglaia, both vexed, made the objection that the first question was whether they were going to settle the matter that day or postpone it. Still more angrily Barbara cried out that she voted for a settlement and for the old woman; but if they wished to postpone it, she reserved the right of making a personal reconnaissance among the honorable and reputable daughters of the city. For, she said, there was more than one worthy deacon's daughter to be provided for, whose splendid virtues and principles would benefit the still somewhat too gay and fantastic Governor.

There now ensued an almost violent hubbub. Figura Leu alone had said nothing; she had turned pale, and felt such an oppression of the heart that she could not say anything. Although she ordinarily saw into all the Governor's tricks and notions instantly, she regarded the present jest, simply because she loved him, as a very serious matter; she saw something coming which she had long wished for him and feared for herself. But she resolutely pulled herself together, and begged to be heard.

“My friends,” she said, “I think we shall gain nothing by postponement, but rather that the Governor has already decided in favor of the girl, and that he wants our sanction from courtesy and in a spirit of fun. That he would marry Frau Marianne I will never believe, nor does she look as if she would fall in with such a plan; the old woman is too shrewd for that. But if we make no decision, or, which amounts to the same thing, if we refuse him the friendly sanction he expects, I for my part feel sure that we shall hear tomorrow the announcement of his decision.”

The little company convinced itself of the probable correctness of this view.

“Then I move,” said Salome, “that we proceed to vote. How old is he, anyway? Does anybody know?”

“He is almost forty-three,” answered Figura.

“Forty-three” said Salome; “all right, I vote for the young girl!”

“And I for the old woman” cried the proselyte-clerk's daughter, the delicate Whitethroat, who seemed as obstinate in the matter as one of the speakers in that bloody War Council of Greifensee.

“I vote for the girl!” cried out Wendelgard, on the other hand, and she tapped the table with the palm of her hand.

“And I for the old woman!” said Aglaia with an uncertain voice, staring vacantly into space.



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“Now we have two votes for the girl and two for the old woman,” cried Salome. “Figura Leu, your vote decides it!”

“I am for the young girl,” said Figura, and Salome immediately seized the bell and rang it forcibly.

A few moments elapsed before Landolt appeared, and a deep silence reigned during which the ladies experienced a variety of emotions. Figura was scarcely able to conceal a few large tears which hung from her eye-lashes; she had accustomed herself to think that Landolt would remain single, and now she knew that she would have to endure solitariness all alone. An idea of Wendelgard’s helped her to effect this concealment; for the latter broke the silence by proposing, in a rather loud voice, that the Governor must kiss the old woman before they made known their decision. He would then think that their choice fell on Marianne, and they would be able to tell by the face he made whether he really meant to marry her. This proposal was approved, although Figura opposed it, because she wanted to spare the Governor the unpleasant scene.

Just then the door opened and he entered solemnly, arm in arm with Frau Marianne, who bowed and smiled ludicrously in all directions as if she wanted to bid in advance for a friendly reception; at the same time, in a spirit of malicious roguery she cast penetrating glances at the five charming judges, one after the other, so that they sat there quite crestfallen and with guilty consciences. But the Governor said:

“Having convinced myself in advance that my friends and helpers would point out to me the road of calm reason and sedate age, I am now leading in my chosen partner, and am ready to exchange rings with her!”

Once more Frau Marianne bowed in all directions, and the ladies at the table became more and more puzzled and despondent. Not one of them dared say a word, for even Aglaia and Barbara, who had voted for the old woman, were afraid of her. Only Figura Leu, filled with sadness at the thought of the man’s lowering himself to marry a weather-beaten vagrant who had long ago had nine children, arose and said in a voice of impatient agitation:

“You are mistaken, Governor! We decided that you should marry the young cousin of this good woman, and we hope that you will respect our advice and have not made April fools of us!”

“I fear it’s already done!” replied Landolt, and he stepped to the table and rang the bell. Frau Marianne burst into a loud laugh, as the boy who had played the maid appeared in his own clothes and was introduced to the ladies by the Governor as the son of the pastor at Fellanden.

“But now,” he said, “inasmuch as the old woman is denied me, and I judge by her laughter, that she does not care, and as the young girl has slyly transformed herself into a boy, I think we’ll all remain as we are for the present. Forgive this wicked jest, and accept my thanks



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for the good will you showed me in that you did not deem me unworthy to be joined to youth and beauty! But how could it be otherwise when the judges themselves are enthroned in everlasting youth and beauty?"

He gave them his hand in turn and kissed each one on the mouth, to which none of them objected.

Figura gave the signal for a moderate outbreak of hilarity by crying out joyfully:

"And so he took us all in after all!"

With a loud chirping the lovely flock of birds flew up and alighted on the shore of the small harbor in front of the castle. There a boat, canopied with green foliage and decorated with gay pennons, lay ready for a pleasure-sail. Two young boatmen were holding the oars, and the Governor was sitting by the rudder. A short distance ahead a second boat was gliding out with a band consisting of the French-horn players from Landolt's riflemen. With the simple airs of the horn-players alternated the songs of the ladies, who were now aware with gentle heartfelt joy that the Governor, sitting quietly by the rudder, liked them, and that they shared his peaceful happiness. The horns and the singing of the ladies now and then elicited a faint echo from the wooded slopes of the Zürich mountains, and the large, dazzlingly white Glarner range was reflected on the motionless surface of the lake. When approaching evening began to veil everything with its mild golden glow, and all the blues grew deeper, the Governor steered the boat back toward the castle and landed in the midst of a full chorus, so that the five ladies were still singing as they sprang ashore.

Waiting for them at the castle were four sprightly young men whom Landolt had invited there for the evening. A small dance was arranged, and Solomon danced once with each of the flames. As they took leave, he assigned to each one of the young men as an escort; but to Figura Leu the modest boy who had played the young maid.

As they were driving away he had the cannons fired again, and then as the darkness increased, he had the flag on the roof taken in.

"Well, Frau Marianne," he asked, when the latter brought him his sleeping-cup, "how did you like the congress of old sweethearts?"

"Why, mighty well," she cried, "by all the saints! I'd never have thought that such a ridiculous thing as five mittens could ever come to such an edifying and glorious end! I'd like to see any other man do it! Now your heart is at peace—as much so as is possible here below; for complete and everlasting peace comes only yonder where my nine little angels dwell!"

Such was the course of this memorable enterprise. Later Landolt received the governorship of Eglisgau on the Rhine, where he remained until governorships came to an end everywhere, and feudal splendor collapsed, with the old Swiss Confederation, in the year 1798. He now saw foreign armies march across his fatherland and the beautiful hills and valleys of his youth—Frenchmen, Russians, and

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Austrians. Though no longer in official position, he was nevertheless always active with advice and help, always on horseback and indefatigable; but in all the misery and stress of the time his artistic eye watched over every change of the thousand different forms which detached themselves as in a feverish dream, and even in the thunder of the great battles, the scene of which was his immediate home-land, not a gleam of fire by night, nor a spying Cossack or Pandour at gray of dawn, escaped his notice. When the storm-floods finally subsided, he spent his time painting, hunting, and riding, frequently changing his residence, and died in the year 1818 in the Castle of Andelfingen on the Thur.

Of those last days his biographer says:

“On warm summer afternoons, especially during the harvest, when the entire region, which was rich in grain, swarmed with reapers, he would sit alone in the shade of the plane-trees. He liked to watch them from his height; when they sang at their work, he would break off a leaf, and whistle softly on it, accompanying the joyful melodies which came floating up from the valley; and occasionally he would fall asleep over it, like a weary reaper on his sheaf.”

In the late autumn of his seventy-seventh year, when the last leaf had fallen, he saw the end coming.

“The rifleman yonder took good aim,” he said, pointing to the ivory Death which he had inherited from his grandmother. Figura Leu, who had died before the beginning of the new century, had borrowed the delicate image from him, saying that it amused her, as she expressed it. After her death he had taken it back and placed it on his desk.

Frau Marianne passed away in the year 1808, completely exhausted by her work and the performance of her duties; but a funeral procession such as follows a distinguished man accompanied her body to the grave.

<sup>1</sup>In an introduction to the Züricher Novellen, of which this tale is one, Keller introduces an old gentleman who is supposed to tell the stories.