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EDWARD WHELAN]

This is true Liberty, when Free-born Men, having to advise the Public, may speak free.—EURIPIDES.

[EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

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MOON'S PHASES.—SEPTEMBER, 1856.
First Quarter 7th day, 11h. 18m. morning. E.
Full Moon 14th day, 9h. 20m. morning. N.W.
Last Quarter 21st day, 1h. 9m. morning. E.
New Moon 28th day, 11h. 9m. evening. N.

Literature.

THE SHADOW OF THE HAND.

"How varied are life's flowery paths,
With various pleasures strown;
But there, where duty points the track,
Is happiness alone."
Thus musing as in fancy, far
My footsteps seem'd to stray—
Methought some strange mysterious power
Impell'd them on their way.
It was a shady path I trod,
Yet beautiful to see;
For there were flowers upon the turf
And birds on every tree.
I loved the flowers, their form, their hue,
Their fragrance, faint and rare,
I loved the birds, whose plaintive strains,
Harmonious, fill'd the air.
The clustering shadows of the trees
Upon the ground were cast;
They seem'd to change their form, each time
A breath of wind went past.
Yet still methought,—as if the path
Were some good angel's care,—
The figure of a hand I traced
Among the shadows there!
A hand, that ever pointed me
Along that peaceful way:
A way so happy, strange 'twould seem,
That I would wish to stray!
Yet oft, too oft, I knew not whence,
Gay sounds would reach mine ear,
Of music, mirth and revelry,
And I would pause to hear:
And through the trees, on either side
That shady path, would gleam
Bright eyes and glittering forms,—such sights
As happy lovers dream!
And they would call in wily tones,
That sounded sweet and low,—
And wave to me their snow-white arms,
Until I long'd to go.
But, while the shadow of the hand
Upon the greensward lay,
I could not turn to right or left,—
A charm was on the way!
I felt, beneath that hallow'd spell,
New life my being thrill,—
And all things lovely seem'd to take
A lovelier semblance still.
The air breathed purer,—from the flowers
A rarer fragrance given,
And through the leaves above I saw
The blue and quiet heaven.
All was so sweet within that path,
I would not from it stray,
And leave that shadow of the hand
Heaven-sent to point my way.
There may be sunnier paths afar,
With flowers more bright and rare;
But what of them, unless the hand
Have cast its shadow there?
Not fortune's brightest beams I ask
Around my path to play.
If duty, with its guiding hand,
But point my onward way.

ERIC WALDERTHORN.

IN SEVEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

"Eric!"
"Carl!"
These exclamations of surprise proceeded from the lips of two young men, who, after disencumbering themselves from various wrappings of cloaks and furs, found themselves suddenly face to face, in the middle of the coffee room of one of the principal hotels of Stettin. In their haste to approach the fire, which was blazing as merrily as logs heaped with coal could blaze, they had nearly knocked each other down, and it was in turning simultaneously to ask each other pardon that they had each recognised a well known face. The light fell full upon their animated countenances and sparkling eyes, as they stood in the middle of the room, their right hands locked in a hearty grasp, and their left still placed where they had seized each other by the shoulder. They were both fine specimens of early manhood. One, the tallest of the two, had a noble Teuton countenance. Rich brown hair fell back from a forehead of the finest intellectual development, whilst beneath eyebrows of a somewhat darker hue, looked forth large eyes of deep violet, which, whatever expression they might wear in repose, now beamed and flashed almost as brightly as the fire. The other, who had been addressed as Carl, had a Saxon countenance, the fair hair, the bright blue eye, the rounded chin, and, despite the fair skin, the bold fearless bearing which distinguish that hardy race amongst all others.
"Why Eric," said this last, "it seems but yesterday that I parted with you in sunny Rome. I little thought to have met with you here, in the frost and snow of a Pomeranian winter."
"And little did I expect to meet you here to-night, my dear Carl. Where are you going?"
"I am going to Rabenstein, to the house of a friend who lives in the neighborhood. I made his acquaintance in Munich last winter, and he promised me, if I would go and see him, to give me some wolf-hunting. And, as I was tired of Paris and the Carnival, I thought I would try Rabenstein by way of a change."
"A change, I should say, very much more to your taste, my Carl. But you are going my way; why not come with me, an old friend, instead of going to see this new friend? I am on my road to Kronenthal, as you may guess. Ernst is

going to be married, and I am to be his best man. Come with me; you will be a most welcome guest, and we can have some wolf-hunting together. My brother has a rare pack of hounds. Have you told your friend to expect you?"
"Oh no," answered Carl. "I reserved to myself the privilege of accepting anything by the way I might meet with more attractive; and I would rather go to Kronenthal with you, who have asked me to accompany you there so often. But your brother—what will he say to the presence of a stranger on an occasion when none but friends are usually present?"
"Ernst will make you heartily welcome; besides you are not so great a stranger to him as you may think. I have often spoken of you to him in my letters, and he generally asks after my friend Carl, the eccentric young Englishman."
"Too bad of you, Eric," said Carl: "I dare say you have given him a fine character of me."
"I have told him, Carl," said Eric, laying his hand on his friend's arm, as they both stood near the fire, "what you are to me, my dearest, best, and truest friend. Ah, Carl! many a time but for your encouraging voice prompting me to fresh efforts, I should have despaired of myself. It was you, and you only, who enabled me to battle with the arduous trials which beset my path as an artist, and now—"
"And now, dear Eric, you are what you would always have become, with me or without me, not only an artist heart and soul, but one who possesses the power to render his ideas visible. And this, owing solely to your own undaunted courage, energy, perseverance, and strong faith in yourself, under and through great difficulties. But, come, what do you say to some dinner? I am furiously hungry. What a keen air one breathes in these night rides."
"By all means let us have something to eat, Carl; but it must only be a hasty snatch, for we have another ride before us. I want to get to Kronenthal to-night. Ernst is to send his travelling sleigh for me. It will be a glorious ride by this glorious moonlight. The distance is but three leagues."
"Don't go to-night, Eric, it is so comfortable here, and I had made up my mind to remain here to-night. It is cold out there, and I am tired; I have come a good long distance to-day."
"Don't have one of your lazy fits, Carl; we will have something to eat, and after that you will be all ready for a fresh start. I know you Englishmen; you are something like your own horses; there is nothing like a good feed for putting your mettle up."
So the young men rang the bell; and the waiter appearing, something to eat was ordered to appear as quickly as possible. Whilst it was being prepared, a cloth, which rivalled the snow outside, was spread on a table, drawn up close to the fire; and the young men chatted as young men do, who have lived together the rich artist-life of classical Rome.
"By the way," said Eric, interrupting himself, "waiter, can you tell me whether any message has arrived from Kronenthal for me, from Baron Ernst Waldertorn?"
"I cannot say, honored sir," replied the waiter; "I will enquire of Herr Wirkmann, the landlord."
"Do," said Eric, and the waiter vanished, to re-appear presently, ushering in no less a personage than Herr Wirkmann himself, whose bald polished head shone again in the bright light of the blazing fire.
"Noble sirs," said he, bowing low to the two young men, "to whom shall I give the letter, directed to the hands of the well-born Eric Waldertorn, arrived to-day from the honorable castle of Kronenthal?"
"To me, worthy Herr Wirkmann. I am Eric Waldertorn. So the sleigh is here, mine host?" said Eric, after reading the letter.
"Yes, honored sir, and will be ready whenever your excellency chooses to order it."
"Then let it be made ready at once," said Eric, and the landlord withdrawing, the young men sat down, and discussed, with keen relish, the excellent production of the kitchen of mine host of the Geldernstern, worthy Herr Wirkmann.
In less than half an hour, they again stood at the door of the hotel, wrapped up in their cloaks and furs. Before the door, a sleigh was drawn up, well lined with the skins of the reindeer; while two huge black bearskins lay all ready to form the outer wrappings of the travellers. Two fine grey horses, evidently of the English breed, pawed the ground impatiently, and snorted, anxious to be off. Their crimson body cloths, ornamented with silver, sparkled in the moonlight, and the silver bells which hung from their head gear filled the rarefied air with fairy-like music every time they tossed their heads.
"What a pretty turn out," said Carl, biting off the end of his cigar previous to lighting it; "I give your brother credit for his taste, Eric."
"Ernst is a fine fellow every way," replied Eric, "and you will say so when you know him, Carl. Herr landlord, are the pistols put in?"
"Yes, honored sir, they are here," replied the landlord, pointing to the hostlers fastened on each side of the reversed dashing-board.
"All right," said Eric.
"Pistols! do we expect to meet robbers?" said Carl, laughing.
"The wolves have been very troublesome this winter, honored sir," returned the landlord; "but since the last grand hunt to which his excellency's brother, the noble baron, treated them, they have not been quite so obstreperous."
"What a chance, if we could get a shot at a wolf to-night," said Carl. "And what a night! how bright the moon is! and the air how clear! One might see anything by such a light."
Carl stepped into the sleigh. Eric, gathering up the reins, settled down into his place; the bear skins were spread over them, and tucked in all round; and then, with a good night to all, responded to by a chorus of groans and stable-helpers, who had gathered round to see the handsome sleigh and the beautiful English horses, he gave a touch of the lash to these last, and they bounded forward; the sleigh skating smoothly over the frozen snow. The silver harness glittered in the bright moonshine, and the silver bells tinkled merrily in the cold night air, as they left the streets of Stettin, and emerged into the open country beyond.
For some time they proceeded in silence, as if each were communing with his own thoughts, or were awed by the deep stillness of the night. Not a sound was to be heard, not a creature to be seen. They seemed to be traversing a vast desert of snow. Everything was wrapped in the same dazzling uniform, by which the eye was almost pained. The light of the moon reflected from the thousand points of snow, sparkling like silver in its rays, was increased to an intensity which almost equalled the light of day. The trees of the forest, along which they now skirted, stretched out their branches, encased in sheaths of glittering crystal. At first,

the moon reigned alone in the deep blue sky; but now small fleecy clouds began to appear, every now and then overshadowing their brightness. Presently a low moaning sound began to make itself heard, as if the wind were rising in the depths of the leafless forest. Eric seemed to listen uneasily, and to watch anxiously these ominous signs.
"I hope we shall reach Kronenthal before a snow storm sets in," said Carl, "I have no desire to be buried in a snow heap."
"I do not think it will be here so soon," answered his companion, "though I expect we shall have it here before long. The sky looks a little brighter again now. However, I will drive the horses as fast as they like to go."
So saying Eric touched their flanks slightly with the long lash of the sleigh whip, giving them their heads at the same time. The noble creatures again bounded forward with a speed which promised to outstrip all pursuers, snow storms included.
"By the way, Eric," said Carl, breaking the silence after some time, "what became of your last spring adventure? Did you ever see the lady of the Sistine chapel again? And did you find out who she was?"
"Yes, and no," said Eric. "Yes to the question as to whether I ever saw her again. I saw her three times after you and I saw her that morning, but I never could find out who she was, or where she had gone to, and I did not even wish to find out after a time."
"Not wish to find out, Eric? I thought you were madly in love with her, even the first time you saw her."
"Call it love I felt for her then, if you like, Carl; but it is with a holier feeling I think of her now than any earthly passion. It seems more to me now as if she had been the vision of some saint or angel. I have her still before me there; those heavenly blue eyes upturned in rapt devotion; those twining locks of pure gold descending on the falling shoulders! I was very glad when she disappeared from Rome. Those three visits of hers to the gallery where I was making that study of Canova, nearly drove me wild. Day after day I looked for her anxiously; and nearly gave up everything to hunt her out; but my better angel prevailed: I righted myself at last, and recovered, not only my serenity, but also my communion with the spiritual, which is so essential to the life of an artist who would accomplish anything, and which at one time I seemed to have almost lost."
"What have you done with the sketch you made of her, kneeling in the chapel, with the dark background of the long aisle behind her. I thought you were going to make a picture from it, and send it to the exhibition."
"The picture is finished, and I have brought it for my mother's oratory. I could not summon up the courage to send it where it would be stared at by a hundred indifferent eyes. I could not bear to let others have a glimpse of a vision which seemed so entirely my own. Except you, Carl, no one knows I ever saw her; and I doubt much if you had not been with me that morning, whether I should ever have told you, under any name, as you are to me."
"Well," said Carl, taking the end of his cigar out of his mouth, and lighting another with it, "if that is not what is called being in love, I do not know what it is. What would you care who knew what impression she had made on you, if you did not love her?"
"I do not love her, Carl, and I do not wish to love her."
"Not wish to love her! Why, Eric, what on earth do you mean?"
"Would you have me find that my angel, my vision of purity and holiness, was nothing but a mere woman, perhaps a capacious one, too, enough to drive one mad with whims and follies of all sorts. Besides, I never mean to be in love if I can help it. But, hark! What is that?"
"It is the moaning of the wind," said Carl. "No!" he exclaimed, springing up in his seat, as a shrill, wild, piercing cry for help, rang through the still night. "Hear that cry?"
"Sit down, Carl, I beseech you," said Eric, "you will upset the sleigh! Look at the horses how they tremble. I can scarcely manage them as it is, they are so wild. That is the baying of a hound, a wolf-hound," he said, listening to fresh sounds, his head bent, at the same time that he kept urging his horses on, continually and smartly applying the lash to them, without which god they would certainly have come to a stand-still. "That is the yell of a wolf!" he exclaimed, as a loud yell reached their ears, whilst wild shrieks again followed in quick succession, and then a cry of agony and terror, so prolonged, that the blood froze in the veins of the listeners.
"That is the cry of a horse beset by wolves," said Carl, the truth now flashing upon him. "Let me out, Eric, let me out, that I may fly to their assistance. Where is my rifle?"
"Sit still, Carl, I implore of you; our only chance of getting up to them in time for help, is to trust to the speed of our horses, if I can only keep them going. Get the pistols ready; they are loaded. Can you manage to get at my hunting knife? It is in the case which the landlord put under the seat."
"All right," said Carl, who, having secured the weapons, now sat, his teeth clenched, his eyes straining forward in the direction from which the cries seemed to come.
"There they are," he exclaimed at last, "right ahead. Heavens! there is a sleigh and two women in it; the horses are on the ground, and there is a battle going on between a wolf and a large hound."
The bright light of the moon revealed the scene distinctly to the eyes of the two young men. Eric forced his now frantic horse alongside the sleigh which Carl had described. Standing upright in this was a young girl, clasping in her arms another, who appeared to have fainted. Her hood and cloak had fallen off, and her golden curls streamed in the wind from under a light blue Polish cap, bordered with ermine; her large blue eyes were raised to Heaven, as if seeking from thence that help which her wild cries had vainly implored from Earth.
Eric stood for an instant transfixed in amazement, but it was only for an instant, the next moment both he and Carl had sprung to the ground.
"Lay hold of the horses' heads, Carl! Don't let them go, for God's sake! We shall need their best speed soon." Seizing his pistols and the hunting-knife, Eric ran round to the side where the battle was going on between a large wolf and a magnificent wolf-hound. This latter had seized his antagonist by the throat, with a gripe the wolf tried in vain to escape from. They now rolled over and over on the snow together; fierce snorts coming from the hound, and faint stifled cries from the wolf. As Eric approached the scene of the fray, two wolves who had been gorging themselves on a prostrate horse lying behind the ladies' sleigh, sprang fiercely upon him. These, however, he soon despatched, after some little difficulty; one he shot through

the brain, so close to his own face, that the flash of the pistol scorched his eyes; the other received a thrust from his hunting-knife, which penetrated his lungs, and he fell beside his companion suffocated in his own blood. Eric once more free, approached to the help of the noble hound. It was well nigh time. The wolf had extricated his throat from his teeth, and was now making strenuous efforts to free himself from the gripe which the desperate hound still fastened on him. It was some time before Eric could give him any help, so closely were the two antagonists locked together. At last, watching his opportunity, he was able by a well-directed blow to plunge his knife into him. The wolf rolled over and over, dyeing the trampled snow with the life blood streaming from his wound. The hound rose slowly, shook himself well, and then rushed to the sleigh and leapt fawning upon his young mistress.
Meanwhile, Carl struggled manfully with the plunging horses. It required the full strength of his nervous arm to keep them from galloping off wildly to the forest. But when the scuffle with the wolves was over, and Eric came round covered with blood and snow, he patted them, and the sound of his voice quieted them.
Eric then flew to the side of the ladies' sleigh. The wolf-hound stood with his paws on his mistress's knees, vainly trying to induce her to look up. She had sunk back on her seat. Her face was concealed in her hands, and she wept aloud. Her companion, still insensible, lay beside her, totally unconscious of the deliverance which had been wrought for them.
"Gracious lady," said Eric, in his gentlest tones, "you are safe now. Will you not look up and tell me whether there are any more of your party in need of our assistance?"
The young girl looked up, and said through her tears, that there were two men servants with them; that one of them, who had been driving, had been thrown out of the sleigh when the wolves first attacked them, and another on horseback, after trying in vain to stop the horses who had galloped off in affright, had disappeared all at once, and she did not know what had become of him.
"Here he is!" said Carl, who having contrived to fasten Eric's horses, so that they should not escape, was searching in the wrecks around them. "Here is a poor fellow half smothered under his horse. I think the horse is dead. Yes, his throat is cut—no doubt, by the wolves' teeth."
"That is what those brutes were about when they jumped upon me, as I came round," said Eric, stooping to help Carl to remove the dead horse from the top of his rider, in which operation they were assisted by the wolf-hound, who alternately scratched in the snow and fawned upon Eric. When they had succeeded in getting the man disinterred from the mass which half-suffocated him, they found he was quite whole as far as bones were concerned; but so bruised he could hardly stand. Whilst they were busy with him, another man ran up from the direction of the forest.
"God be thanked!" he said, "are the young ladies safe? Noble gentlemen, you have saved us all from death. I was thrown out of the sleigh a quarter of a mile away—when the horses first bolted. Heaven be praised for your arrival. I expected to find my dear young mistress dead."
All this had taken some time. The wind now blew in gusts, and the clouds were coming up fast before it.
"We must decide what had better be done next, Carl," said Eric; "we have no time to lose, the storm will be upon us soon. I think the ladies had better go back to Stettin in our sleigh, it is the nearest shelter. If you will drive them, I will get these fallen horses up, and will follow you with the man who is hurt, as soon as I can."
But Carl insisted on staying behind. Eric pleaded the coming storm.
"You do not know, my Carl, what a snowstorm is; I do. Let me remain to get the horses up and bring the sleigh back, while you make the best of your way to Stettin with the ladies; and send me assistance to; but if we make haste, we shall be in Stettin now before it comes."
It was of no use. Carl was inexorable as fate, he said—
"You had better lose no more time, Eric, but take the ladies as fast as you can."
He helped Eric to put them in the sleigh. The lady who had fainted had now partly recovered and sat close nestled beside her sister. There was scarcely room for three; they were obliged to sit close. They were now ready for a start, and Eric, pressing Carl's hand, said:
"I shall be back in less than an hour. Make haste, dear Carl, and whatever you do, keep moving. I know you do not want for energy and a strong will. Have you your cigar case? Is it well furnished?"
"Yes, here it is, and plenty of cigars, and here is the brandy flask. I shall do well enough, don't fear."
Eric turned the horses' heads in the direction of Stettin. He had no need to touch their flanks now with the lash. They flew back along the road they had so lately come, winged with the double terror of wolves and the coming storm. The sleigh glanced over the ground like lightning. The wind now raged in furious squalls, tore off the icy branches of the trees and showered them on the heads of the fugitives.
"We shall have a frightful storm, I am afraid," said his golden-haired companion, who now sat next to him, muffled up in her cloak and hood. "O, why have you left your friend to save us: your friend whom you seem to love so dearly. Do, do, let us go back; it is not too late; we will wait till he is ready to come with us."
At this moment the moon broke through the thick mass of clouds driving before her, and fell full upon the upturned face of the beautiful speaker. Eric gazed down upon her in mute rapture; but, for only answer to her entreaties to go back to wait for Carl, he shook the reins, as he raised his head from that silent gaze. On they flew, and the ringing of the silver bells sounded faintly through the increasing din of the coming storm. On they flew, and alongside the sleigh the noble wolf-hound galloped in company.
Eric's head seemed to whirl, he thought he must be dreaming. She, she sat behind him, she who had been his thoughts for months, by day, by night; she, his pure vision; he had rescued her from a frightful death; it was carrying her away from the dreadful storm; and now there she sat, and whenever he turned to look at her, her blue eyes swimming in tears, sank before his ardent gaze. His heart beat fast, his eyes flashed with an emotion which seemed too great for words. He sat silent till the light of Stettin gleamed through the darkness before them; and now they stood before the door of the Geldernstern.
In a moment all its inhabitants were astir. Every one poured out to enquire why the beautiful grey horses were returned. Every one questioned, every one answered. The wolf-hound jumped up, and fawned upon Eric, as he handed the ladies out of the sleigh; and amidst the confused words of "the wolves—the gracious ladies—the noble hound—the storm