

(From the Army.) ST. SYLVESTER'S EVE.

(CONTINUED.)

With that he released her, and went out, while Herta threw herself on a sofa, in a passion of tears.

The gorgeous state apartments of the new palace were flooded with light and glittering with gliding frowns, and the brilliant costumes of a throng of maskers.

The King and Queen had just entered the white throne-room with the young Crown Prince and his little brother, Good King Max stood on the dais, his hand on the shoulder of his son, a slender stripling, with large visionary eyes, and an absent, dreamy air.

On whose shoulders the mantle of royalty would soon fall as a heavy burden. The courtiers came up one by one to pay their respects, and were received with the kindly dignity which made King Maximilian of Bavaria, and his wife, an amiable consort, so universally and deservedly beloved.

The Queen gave the signal to begin. Instantly the brilliant and noisy throng were waiting in the golden armor of the knightly status, which was arranged down each side of the throne-room, flashed and glittered as if their weapons were endowed with life, and might at any moment descend from their pedestals and mingle with the dancers.

Greeks, Arabs, characters of history and romance, priests and devils, whirled round with nuns, satyrs, bouquetiers, priestesses of the sun, and peasant girls.

The waits ended, and the strangely assorted couples were pronouncing through the splendid rooms.

"I wonder Albert does not make his appearance," said a noble-looking young man, attired as Max Ploccomani, to his companion; "a safely and beautiful druidess, with long golden hair flowing from under her oak wreaths, and falling in a wavy mantle over her white dress."

"Oh! I dare say he will come soon," she returned indifferently. "Did you not hear of his having made some wager that he would appear in a wonderful costume? Most likely he is waiting till the whole company shall have assembled, that he may have the more admirers."

"I do not think you will admire him particularly to-night, Countess Chrysta. In fact, he is so doubtful of your approval of his costume that he thinks you will refuse to dance the waltz with him; and has deputed me to that honor, if you have no objection."

"The by-ones wait! But you know I ought only to dance it with my fiancée, on account of known musical talents, with a deep blush, and then hurriedly continued, "Why should I refuse to dance it with Albert Count Louis?"

Louis was saved the trouble of answering, for at that moment a commotion took place in the ball-room seldom witnessed within the decorous limits of the Court. Little screams from the ladies and bursts of laughter from the gentlemen announced that something unusual was taking place.

Chrysta and Louis pressed forward to see what the commotion was about, but retreated as hurriedly from the approach of a most diabolical looking figure clothed in a ragged tight suit and battered hat, which, as well as his face, were black as a goblin. A short leader and scotch-bag were fastened over his shoulder, and as the other masques hastily cleared the way before him, he paraded the rooms, every now and then giving vent to the known musical city of the Munich swags. He marched right up to Col. Dottenhausen, politely presenting his brush, black and sooty, for that gentleman's inspection; but the bold waltzer gave way and fled with precipitation, while a shout of laughter from his brother officers deluged his discomfiture. The sweep instantly turned upon them, charging amongst them with his invincible weapons, from which they all ignominiously retreated for fear of having their gorgeous costumes destroyed. Undoubtedly Albert had won his wager, for no other masquerade had attracted so much attention. Even the royal party were roused to some curiosity by the stir, and hearing an account of the matter from Prince A., the King himself sent one of his equerries to summon the audacious waltzer to the presence. His ludicrous appearance was greeted by a hearty laugh from their majesties, which more smoothly tones by their smiles. The only one who did not seem infected by the general hilarity was the Hof Marshal von Lindenburgh, who scowled most portentously on recognizing his intended son-in-law.

The Queen laughingly complimented Count Albert von Aldenstein on his excellent taste in costume, and suggested that he should receive an appointment on the spot as Master of the Ceremonies to his Majesty. Graf von Lindenburgh muttered in his beard, so low as to be heard only by Albert, who happened to be standing in his vicinity, "Count Fool would be more appropriate."

After a round of ironical compliments, and as near an approach to jokes as may be allowed in a royal presence, Albert was dismissed, and made another pilgrimage through the ante-rooms, scattering the crowd right and left before him. He left the palace without speaking a word to his fiancée, who stood leaning on the arm of Count Louis, regarding him with half scornful amusement.

Was it pique that made the Countess Chrysta second and gracious attention to the efforts of Louis von Aldenstein for her entertainment during the remainder of the evening? It was very natural she should dance a good deal with one soon to be so closely connected with her, but she seemed to have entirely forgotten her truant lover, and to be so engrossed by the conversation of Louis, as to give rise to various remarks among the bystanders.

"One would say that Franklin von Lindenburgh consols herself very well for the negligence of her intended," said the Baroness Wallingen to Colonel Dottenhausen.

To be continued.

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