

burgomasters house, he went to young herr matanesse van wibismas aunt to get his cloak, which had not been returned to him. he did not usually give much heed to his dress, yet he was glad that the rain kept people in the house, for the outgrown wrap on his shoulders was by no means pleasing in appearance. wilhelm must certainly have looked anything but well clad, for as he stood in old fraulein van hoogstratens spacious, stately hall, the steward belotti received him as patronizingly as if he were a beggar. but the neopolitan, in whose mouth the vigorous dutch sounded like the rattling in the throat of a chilled singer, speedily took a different tone when wilhelm, in excellent italian, quietly explained the object of his visit. nay, at the sweet accents of his native tongue, the servants repellent demeanor melted into friendly, eager welcome. he was beginning to speak of his home to wilhelm, but the musician made him curt replies and asked him to get his cloak. belotti now led him courteously into a small room at the side of the great hall, took off his cloak, and then went upstairs. as minute after minute passed, until at last a whole quarter of an hour elapsed, and neither servant nor cloak appeared, the young man lost his patience, though it was not easily disturbed, and when the door at last opened serious peril threatened the leaden panes on which he was drumming loudly with his fingers. wilhelm doubtless heard it, yet he drummed with redoubled vehemence, to show the italian that herself by his side in rich though unpretending splendor. she pictured herself with her son and daughter as enjoying menas estate, freed from debt and increased by anis generosity, and then a new, intoxicating hope came into her mind. perhaps already at this moment her daughter was a widow, and why should she not be so fortunate as to induce ani to select her child, the prettiest woman in thebes, for his wife then she, the mother of the queen, would be indeed unimpeachable, and all powerful. she had long since come to regard the pioneer as a tool to be cast aside, nay soon to be utterly destroyed; his wealth might probably at some future time be bestowed upon her son, who had distinguished himself at kadesh, and whom ani must before long promote to be his charioteer or the commander of the chariot warriors. flattered by these fancies, she forgot every care as she walked faster and faster to and fro in her tent. suddenly the steward, whom she had this time sent to the very scene of the fire, rushed into the tent, and with every token of terror broke to her the news that the king and his charioteer were hanging in mid air on a narrow wooden parapet, and that unless some miracle happened they must inevitably be killed. it was said that incendiaries had occasioned the fire, and he, the steward, had hastened forward to prepare her for evil news as the mangled body of the pioneer, which had been identified by the ring on his finger, and the poor little corpse of nemu, pierced through by an arrow, had been carried past him. katuti was silent for a moment. and the kings sons she asked opportunities of indulging in such details when we meet, replete as i can assure you they are with interest. i have written instructions to my agent in town for the immediate disposal of my paternal estate in wiltshire, and mean hereafter to take up my abode on one i have recently purchased in the neighbourhood of belville hall, where i anticipate many pleasurable opportunities of seeing you and our friend tallyho surrounding my hospitable and hereafter family board. we shall be there within a month, as we mean to reach our place of destination by easy stages, and look about us. please remember me to all old friends in town, and believe as ever, yours truly, charles sparkle. carlisle. the receipt of this letter and its contents were immediately communicated to young mortimer, who had already received some intelligence of a similar nature, which had the effect of allaying apprehension and dismissing fear for his sisters safety. the mysterious circumstances were at once explained, and harmony was restored to the previously agitated family. i am truly glad of this information, said tom, and as we are at present likely to be politically engaged, we cannot do less than take a bumper or two after dinner, to the health and happiness of the candidate who so emphatically observes, he has gained his election, and, in the true language of every patriot, declares he is the happiest man alive, notwithstanding the rivets by which he is bound. you are inclined to be severe, said tallyho. by no means, replied dashall; the language of the letter certainly seems a little in consonance with my observation, but i am sincere