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reward,—the only reward I shall ask,—your faith."

"I know you are not an adventurer," answered the Princess impulsively. "You have proved yourself to be a faithful friend to my brother, and I will meet your candor halfway by telling you that I now take you on faith and without probation."

"I thank your Highness," answered Fritz Henry; "but if I am to help you and the Crown Prince, I must also have your father's favor, and if I have that, I fear you and your brother will doubt me."

A cloud came for a moment to the Princess' face; but she immediately said, "You are right. A wise friend is a double friend. My brother and I have found so much duplicity in the hearts of men, and have so often been deceived by my father's friends who have pretended to be ours, that we are naturally suspicious; but I feel sure that the hope of gain from Grumkow and my father would not induce you to hold a traitorous thought toward us."

"I will make no grand promises," answered Fritz Henry. "What I do shall be my promise. If I apparently take my stand among those who wish evil to you and to the Crown Prince, it will be because I can be of better help to you. Neither your father nor Grumkow has any favor to grant that could be of personal value to me. I have nothing to gain by remaining in Berlin save the great pleasure of serving you."

THE Princess, with difficulty, finished speaking, and her words fell so heavily on Fritz Henry's heart that he could not at once reply. Don't Care was right. Mina certainly made him pity her. One at least was completely carried off his feet by his yearning to help the rare, beautiful girl whose life was darkened by so much grief and trouble. Presently he spoke in low, earnest tones.

"I hope affairs are not so bad as you suppose; but if they were a thousandfold worse, if my life was in hourly peril, I should still remain for the sake of being near your Highness, to render what help I could give in case of need."

The girl looked up to his face with surprise in her eyes. There was also gratitude; but she did not speak, and Henry continued.

"I had heard your praises sung long before I thought of coming to Berlin, but the song was a poor tribute to—"

"I supposed you had come to Berlin involuntarily," interrupted Mina, with evident desire to change the subject.

"You are right," answered Henry. "I and an old servant were surrounded by a company of rascals in the mountains when we were on a journey. There were six of them and two of us, and I was unarmed, so I surrendered unconditionally. My servant was sent home—a long journey—to tell my father I had been captured by brigands, and I was carried off, having no knowledge of my destination. I did not know the reason for being taken till I met the Margrave of Schwedt at an inn a few miles from Berlin. The Margrave's shrewd wits—shrewder far than they appear to be—discovered the truth, and I learned from him that I was intended for the Grenadier Regiment. All Europe, of course, has heard of your father's peculiar methods of recruiting for his favorite regiment. When I learned that Berlin was my destination, and that I had been kidnapped to be made a Grenadier, I was relieved of all forebodings, because I knew I could at once obtain my release by disclosing to your father my identity, and—and my nationality."

Fritz Henry did not wish to reveal his identity to the Princess; but he felt that he must, in a way, follow up what he had said concerning himself, even though he should mislead her by an untruth, so he continued.

"Knowing that your father had recently had trouble because of having kidnapped one of King George's subjects, I felt sure he would be only too glad to avoid a similar complication with the King of England, and I knew he would release me at once on my demand."

The Princess glanced swiftly at Henry's face. He thought she intended asking him if he was an Englishman, and wishing to prevent the question, he hurriedly continued.

"Before seeing the King and—and yourself in the Mirrored Chamber, I had made up my mind to refuse to enter the regiment; but after—after seeing you—a man's mind may take a very great leap in a very little moment, so after—after seeing your Highness, I suddenly determined to remain." Henry's manner was more significant than his words, though he, perhaps, was unconscious of the fact.

The Princess lifted her eyes quickly to Henry's face, looked away from him, and said rather coldly, "I fear you forget yourself."

NO, I do not. I have good right to say that it was you who kept me here, if what I say is true; and if I seek no reward save the happiness of serving you faithfully, you have no right to deny me the pleasure of offering my services. You need not fear that I shall misunderstand your graciousness nor that I shall make a fool of myself by ever asking reward for any service I may be so fortunate as to render. But I am glad to have this opportunity to tell you for the first and last time what—that it is right that you should know. When my faith proves false, I hope I may receive your hatred. I shall not at this time ask your Highness to accept me on faith. I may be a mere adventurer, or I may be false; but when I have proved myself, then I hope you will give me my

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THE Queen had been glancing with evident displeasure toward Fritz Henry and Wilhelmima, whose conversation had already been too long to suit her, and the Princess, having caught her mother's signals, showed signs of uneasiness which Henry, in turn, was quick to catch. Therefore he bowed and said:

"I hope your Highness will often give me the privilege of speech with you."

"It is a privilege that I shall seek for my own sake at every opportunity," replied the Princess, lifting her eyes for a moment to Henry's face, and then looking to the floor.

"I beg to bid your Highness goodnight," said Henry.

"Goodnight."

FRITZ HENRY left the Princess, spoke a few words to the Crown Prince, talked for a few minutes with the Margrave of Schwedt, asked leave of the Queen to withdraw, made his adieus, and went to his bedroom, a garret near the apartments of Prince Fritz. Not far from Fritz Henry's room were the wretched little pigeonholes occupied by Katt and Keith, and nearby was the room of the Margrave of Schwedt.

WHEN the Queen reached her apartment that evening, she sent her maid Ramen to fetch Wilhelmima. When the Princess arrived, her Majesty glared angrily at her and said:

"You made a beautiful spectacle of yourself this evening!"

"In what respect, mother?" asked Mina.

"You talked to your father's new creature for half an hour. With blushing and casting down your eyes, and looking up to his face, one would have thought you were a country maiden talking to her yokel in the lane."

"You talked to him, mother, and Don't Care talked to him longer than I did," answered Mina.

"She must have been timing all who talked to her handsome Captain," said Don't Care.

"I timed nobody," said Mina. "I talked to the gentleman whom my father presented to you and whom my brother presented to me. No one else came near me, and while he remained at my side, I cannot see how I could have avoided talking to him; so I—I talked to him."

"Indeed you did talk to him half the evening!" retorted the Queen. "I hear he has already found favor with Grumkow and the King, though he has been in Berlin only a few days. Perhaps he was brought here to spy upon your brother and me. For all you know, he may be here for the purpose of assassinating the Crown Prince and abducting you."

"Mother, mother, you don't understand!" said the Princess Mina. "This man is—"

The Princess stopped speaking, because she knew that the Queen would repeat every word to her maid, Ramen. Mina also knew that Ramen was Grumkow's spy, though the Queen could never be brought to believe that important fact.

EVER since the birth of Wilhelmima, the Queen's great desire had been for the marriage of the Princess to Prince Frederick, the eldest son of her Majesty's brother, George II, of England. Queen Sophia was a foolish, bad tempered, though affectionate mother, and for some unaccountable reason blamed Wilhelmima because the English marriage had not been consummated; though the Princess had no more to do with it, pro or con, than she had to do with an eclipse of the moon. Mina knew her cousin and despised him; but she was well aware that her feelings in the matter would not be given even a passing thought by either of her parents, and the poor, helpless girl was ready to meet her fate, whatever it might be. At twenty she was almost tired of life, and was resigned to be the victim of either her father, her mother, or both. Many marriages had been proposed by the King, but the Queen clung to one,—that with England's Prince.

Nearly all the men Wilhelmima had met were repulsive in person and character. Up to the time of meeting Fritz Henry, she had spoken to few men who were worthy to be accepted by her as friends, save two or three of her brother's associates, who were all younger than she and hardly to be classed as men.

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