

ment, in his well-known charming way, with a goat carriage? Very possibly.

Hans, as the ram was called—strange to say, this was also the captain's name—was an enormous fellow, with imposing horns, and of a most pugnacious nature, which fact made all visitors to the Lankwitz garden very cautious. Yet Hans had never attacked any one.

The captain's residence was two houses further down the street and he was obliged to pass Cyprian's gate whenever he went to the barracks. One morning Valleral invited the two lieutenants with whom he was most intimate to breakfast; and after the meal the three young fellows happened to be at the window just as the captain set foot in the street on his way to the barracks.

Hans, the ram, was gamboling happily in the yard when he suddenly started, and raised his head abruptly. Valleral gave a long, sharp whistle, changing into the tune, 'Gaudemus'; and, as though the ram had only waited for this signal, he rushed out of the gate, and at the approaching captain.

Hans advanced with lowered horns. Angerschutz sprang aside, the ram followed; hard pressed, the captain retreated to the house steps. Hans followed after him as though bewitched, and a wild and bitter conflict ensued. Angerschutz attacked the animal with his sabre; but the ram seemed proof against blows and pricks, and sprang at his master's enemy with redoubled fury.

A crowd assembled. People screamed with laughter, while the captain's face flushed crimson with rage.

'Lankwitz, call your accursed beast off, or I will stab it. Devil take it!'

Valleral called most tenderly, while the other man almost suffocated with laughter. But it was in vain; it seemed as though his young master's voice merely excited the ram to fresh fury.

Finally the lieutenants descended to the street, and their combined efforts succeeded in ridding the captain of his attacker.

Angerschutz trembled with rage. He read in the young fellows' faces that he could count on little sympathy from them; therefore, he contented himself with making slurring remarks about a cavalry officer who had to keep a goat because he

let too insecure upon horseback, and walked off.

Lankwitz had apologised most politely, and his comrades were highly indignant at the captain's rudeness.

The next day Angerschutz rode past the gate. As though possessed with an evil spirit, the ram rushed out and attacked his horse, which, startled, shied so violently, that his unprepared rider could with difficulty keep his seat and check the runaway. He had not heard Cyprian whistle 'Gaudemus.'

The street was filled with laughing spectators. The amusing story that Count Lankwitz's ram had taken a violent dislike to the captain interested everyone, and all now began to suspect how and why the animal had been trained.

Angerschutz was beside himself with fury, and sent word to the count that unless he got rid of the ram at once, he, the captain, would shoot it.

Lankwitz replied in a highly courteous note that unfortunately he could not gratify the captain's wish. The goat was the property of the circus proprietor R., who had trained him, and who had only left him here during his absence on a business trip. Hans was an extremely intelligent and valuable animal, and it would cost the captain a considerable sum if he harmed him.

Angerschutz was noted for his miserliness. He wrote back that he did not intend to be put to expense on the count's account, but must request the latter to keep his rate locked, that the ram could no longer annoy the passers by. If the count did not do this he would be forced to adopt other measures.

The next day the gate was closed indeed, and in addition a huge beam placed across it, but Hans grazed peacefully in the neighbouring meadow, and when the captain smiling ironically, had passed the gate, his enemy suddenly rushed through the defective hedge and attacked that unprepared gentleman more fiercely than ever.

Angerschutz saw that the whole affair had been planned by the count to annoy him, but as he found that sly Valleral had protected himself on all sides, and that to kill the hated ram would but cause expense and fresh unpleasantness to himself, he changed his plan. At first he tried to

attack the beast with a couple of dogs, but they retreated, howling, after a few thrusts from the sharp horns of this unusual opponent, and Angerschutz only saved himself by speedy flight.

For the next few days he took a most circuitous route to the barracks, and to the regret of all the staff seemed ended.

CHAPTER II.

For some days peace prevailed in the little garrison, but it was but the calm before the storm.

The captain's eyes still flashed threateningly, and the triumphant, malicious glances he cast upon his second lieutenant, would have excited disgust in any one but Cyprian Lankwitz, whose careless nature looked upon deceit as an impossibility. The owners of one of the neighbouring estates had sent out invitations to a particularly promising hunt, and, as Valleral was fond of all kinds of sport, he was among the hunters, while, strange to say, Captain von Angerschutz was absent. But no one missed him; on the contrary, the young officers breathed more freely not to have their superior's presence to act as a damper upon their spirits.

Cyprian looked so handsome in his hunting costume, and was in such high spirits, that Baroness Soldau, usually so cold and indifferent, who had driven over to call upon the daughter of the house, could scarcely turn her eyes from him.

Baroness Soldau was considered the wealthiest heiress in the whole neighbourhood. An only child, she was heiress to a large, wholly unencumbered estate, with fine coal mines, a palatial villa in the capital, and besides, a considerable amount of ready cash, which would make her large, bony hand seem highly desirable to most men.

And yet she had no visitors, strange to say, for although she was no beauty, she was far from ill-looking. Tall, very brunette, somewhat awkward in figure and manner, Bianca von Soldau gazed for the most part, right coldly, ill-humouredly and misanthropically upon the world. In spite of her twenty years she was not young-looking, nor was she in either mind or body. Severe and pessimistic, she lived secluded as a nun, and it was said that

Captain von Angerschutz was the first lover who had ever seemed to find favour in her eyes, for he was as bitter and pessimistic as the young lady herself.

It therefore excited great astonishment when Baroness Bianca had actually laughed aloud once or twice when Count Lankwitz had recently escorted her to dinner, and to-day, too, all marvelled at the unfeigned interest with which her eyes followed the young hunter as often as he drew near. Unexpecting this great distinction Valleral made one fine shot after another, and returned victorious to dinner, where he entertained the whole table, especially the young ladies, of whom Baroness Soldau was one.

At first she had intended paying a short call only, but had remained so long that the hostess was not wrong in thinking that she would please the young lady by inviting her to remain to the hunt dinner.

Bianca accepted very gladly, and during the meal singled out Count Lankwitz for her especial attention, consisting merely in a peasant smile and the glance of her large, beautiful eyes. Yet Valleral was teased greatly afterward about his new conquest, which amused him highly, since it made him the captain's rival.

What could be more amusing than to contest Baroness Bianca with Angerschutz, who had already believed himself almost at his goal? How furious it would make him if his goldfish were to forsake him and turn to his enemy! Cyprian could give the avaricious man no greater blow, and his eyes danced at the thought. He proceeded to make himself most agreeable; and Baroness Soldau's cheeks, as they flushed more and more deeply, proved how well it succeeded. The flirtation was watched with amusement, and looked upon merely as a new bit of malice on the part of the lieutenant, directed at his captain; for serious intentions seemed out of the question. There could not have been a more unsexed, unlike pair than Cyprian and Bianca; and besides, the youngest lieutenant, barely twenty years old, surely did not think of matrimony.

And they were right. At that time nothing was further from Count Lankwitz's thoughts, although his remarkable success with the cold Bianca flattered his

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