

TOKENS.

I send back the little tokens,
Once given your love to show.
Ah! I wonder if you'll keep them.

ELECTIVE AFFINITIES.

A Novel.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF GEORGE.

PART I.

CHAPTER XVII. (Continued.)

In all this work she could not sufficiently value the assistance of the young architect. In a short time the lake lay stretched out under her eyes, its now shores turfed and planted with the most discriminating and excellent judgment.

It was, therefore, a very welcome proposal that they should get together the boys of the peasants, and employ them in keeping the park clean and neat. Edward had long entertained the idea. A pleasant-looking sort of uniform was made for them, which they were to put on in the evenings, after they had been properly cleaned and washed.

And this stimulated her, and made her wish to begin something of the sort herself. They had before endeavored to encourage the girls of the village in knitting, and sewing, and spinning, and whatever else women could do; and since what had been done for the improvement of the village itself, there had been a perceptible advance in these descriptions of industry.

Ottile could not be angry with the girl, for to her the little thing was especially attached—she clung to her, went after her, and ran about with her, whenever she was permitted—and then she would be active and cheerful and never tire. It appeared to be a necessity of the child's nature to hang about a beautiful mistress.

The latter's footsteps were often bent towards the garden, where she liked to watch the beautiful show of fruit. It was just the end of the raspberry and the cherry season, the few remains of which were no little delight to Nanny. On the other trees there was a promise of a magnificent bearing for the autumn, and the gardener talked of nothing but his master; and how he wished that he might be at home to enjoy it.

Ottile observed, how well all the grafts which had been budded in the spring had taken. "I only wish," the gardener answered, "my good master may come to enjoy them. If he were here this autumn, he would see what beautiful sorts there are in the old castle garden, which the late lord, his honored father, put there. I think the fruit gardeners that are now don't succeed as well as the Carthusians used to do. We find many fine names in the catalogue, and then we had from them, and bring up the shoots, and, at last, when they come to bear, it is not worth while to have such trees standing in our garden."

Over and over again, whenever the faithful old servant saw Ottile, he asked when his master might be expected home; and when Ottile had nothing to tell him, he would look vexed, and let her see in his manner that he thought she did not care to tell him; the sense of uncertainty which was thus forced upon her became painful beyond measure, and yet she never could be absent from these beds and borders. What she and Edward had sown and planted together were now in full flower, requiring no further care from her, except that Nanny should be at hand with the watering pot; and who shall say with what sensations she watched the late flowers, which were just beginning to show, and which were to be in the bloom of their beauty on Edward's birthday, the holiday to which she had looked forward with such eagerness, when these flowers were to have expressed her affection and her gratitude to him!

Into real open, hearty understanding with Charlotte, there was no more a chance of her being able to return; for, indeed, the position of these two ladies was very different. If things could remain in the old state—if it were possible that they could return again into the smooth, even way of calm ordered life, Charlotte gained everything; she gained happiness for the present, and a happy future opened before her. On the other hand, for Ottile all was lost—one may say all; for she had first found in Edward what life and happiness meant; and, in her present position, she felt an infinite and dreary chasm of which before she could have formed no conception. A heart which seeks, feels well that it wants something; a heart that is lost, feels that something is gone—its yearning and its longing changes into uneasy patience—and a woman's spirit, which is accustomed to waiting and to enduring, must now pass out from its proper sphere; become active, and attempt and do something to make its own happiness.

Ottile had not given up Edward—how could she?—although Charlotte, wisely enough, in spite of her conviction to the contrary, assumed it as a thing of course, and resolutely took it as decided that a quiet rational regard was possible between her husband and Ottile. How often, however, did not Ottile remain at night, after boiling herself into her room, on her knees before the open door, gazing at the birthday presents, of which as yet she had not touched a single thing—not out out or made up a single dress! How often with the sunrise did the poor girl hurry out of the house, in which she once had found all her happiness, away into the free air, into the country which then had had no charms for her. Even on the solid earth she could not bear to stay; she would spring into the boat, and row out into the middle of the lake, and there, draw out some book of travels, lie, rocked by the motion of the waves, reading and dreaming that she was far away, where she would never fail to find her friend—she remaining ever nearest to his heart, and he to hers.

CHAPTER XVIII.

It may be easily supposed that the strange, busy gentleman, whose acquaintance we have already made—Mittler—as soon as he received information of the disorder which had broken out among his friends, felt desirous, though neither side had as yet called on him for assistance, to fulfill a friend's part toward them, and do what he could to help them in their misfortune. He thought it advisable, however, to wait first a little while; knowing too well, as he did, that it was more difficult to come to the aid of cultivated persons in their moral perplexities, than of the uncultivated. He left them, therefore, for some time to themselves; but at last he could withhold no longer, and he hastened to seek out Edward, on whose traces he had already lighted. His road led him to a pleasant, pretty valley, with a range of green, sweetly-wooded meadows, down the centre of which ran a never-failing stream, sometimes winding slowly along, then tumbling and rushing among rocks and stones. The hills sloped gently up on

either side, covered with rich conifers and well kept orchards. The villages were at proper distances from each other. The whole had a peaceful character about it, and the detached scenes seemed designed expressly, if not for painting, at least for life.

At last a neatly-kept farm, with a clean, modest dwelling-house, situated in the middle of a garden, fell under his eye. He conjectured that this was Edward's present abode, and he was not mistaken.

Of this our friend in his solitude we have only thus much to say—that in his seclusion he was resigning himself utterly to the feeling of his passion, thinking out plan after plan, and feeding himself with innumerable hopes. He could not deny that he longed to see Ottile there; that he would like to carry her off there, to tempt her there; and whatever else, (putting, as he now did, no check upon his thoughts) pleased to suggest itself, whether permitted or unpermitted. Then his imagination wandered up and down, picturing every sort of possibility. If he could not have her there, if he could not lawfully possess her, he would secure to her the possession of the property for her own. There she should live for herself, silently, independently; she should be happy in that spot—sometimes his self-torturing mood would lead him further—be happy in it, perhaps, with another.

So days flowed away in increasing oscillation between hope and suffering, between tears and happiness—between purposes, preparations and despair. The sight of Mittler did not surprise him; he had long expected that he would come; and now that he did, he was partly welcome to him. He believed that he had been sent by Charlotte. He had prepared himself with a manner of excuses and delays; and if these would not serve, with decided refusal; or else, perhaps, he might hope to learn some thing of Ottile—and then he would be dear to him as a messenger from heaven. Not a little vexed and annoyed was Edward, therefore, when he understood that Mittler had not come from the castle at all, but of his own free accord. His heart closed up, and at first the conversation would not open itself. Mittler, however, knew very well that a heart that is occupied with love has an urgent desire to express—to pour out to a friend what is passing within it; and he allowed himself, after a few speeches backwards and forwards, for this once to go out of his character, and play the confidant in place of the mediator. He had calculated justly. He had been finding fault in a good-natured way with Edward, for burying himself in that lonely place, upon which Edward replied:

"I do not know how I could spend my time more agreeably. I am always occupied with her; I am always close to her. I have the inestimable comfort of being able to think where Ottile is at each moment—where she is going, where she is standing, where she is resting. I see her moving and acting before me as usual; ever doing or desiring something which is to give me pleasure. But this will not always answer; for how can I be happy away from her? And then my fancy begins to work; I think what Ottile should do to come to me; I write sweet, loving letters in her name to myself, and then I answer them, and keep the sheets together. I have promised that I will take no steps to seek her; and that promise I will keep. But what binds her, that she should make no advances to me? Has Charlotte had the barbarity to exact a promise, to exact an oath from her, not to write to me, not to send me a word, a hint about herself? Very likely she has. It is only natural; and yet to it is monstrous, it is horrible. If she loves me—as I think, as I know that she does—why does she not resolve, why does she not venture to fly to me, and throw herself into my arms? I often think she ought to do it; and she could do it. If I ever hear a noise in the hall, I look towards the door. It must be her—she is coming—I look up to see her. Alas! because the possible is impossible, I let myself imagine that the impossible must become possible. At night, when I like wake, and the lamp flings an uncertain light about the room, her form, her spirit, a sense of her presence, sweeps over me, approaches me, seizes me. It is but for a moment; it is that I may have an assurance that she is thinking of me, that she is mine. Only one pleasure remains to me. When I was with her I never dreamed of her; now when I am far away, and, oddly enough, since I have made the acquaintance of other attractive persons in this neighborhood, for the first time, her figure appears to me in my dreams, as if she would say to me, 'Look on them, and on me. You will find none more beautiful, more lovely than I, and so she is present in every dream that I have. In whatever happens to me with her, we are woven in and in together. There is her hand, and there is mine; there is her name, and there is mine; and they move one into the other, and seem to devour each other. Sometimes she does something which injures the pure idea which I have of her, by the indescribable anguish which it causes me. Again, unlike herself, she will rally and vex me; and then at once the figure changes—her sweet, round, heavenly face draws out; it is not her, it is another; but I lie vexed, dissatisfied and wretched."

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