

A False Heir to a Large Possession

Father And Son—Thomas The Forester—A Conspiracy—The Assistant Steward—In America—A Personal—Identity Papers—A Sick Man—Congestion Of The Brain—Diedrich As Count—Thomas As Sailor—Making Acquaintances—A Pretty Means Of Information—Countess Von Buchanau—Excellent Luck—Thomas And Alice—Brother And Sister—The Brothers Vogel—The Father's Will—An Enormous Fortune—An Importunate Caller—Interviewing In The Park—Thomas Missing—A Call On The Banker—Alice In Anxiety—The Detective On The Track—Calling On The Count—Searching The Woods—A Treacherous Weapon—A Body Found In A Pond—Who Is The Murderer?—Count Or Convict

by George McWatters

A crime, which but seldom is found in the annals of the detective service, startled Germany, and especially the high nobility, in the beginning of last year. We will briefly render the facts; but before we enter upon the real story, as given by the detective, we shall have to go back some eighteen years, and visit the castle of Count Kuno von Hohenstaufen, near Hamburg. Let us enter at once the private apartment of the venerable count, and listen to the conversation which was had between him and his son Kurt, a young lad of about sixteen years.

The father is sitting in his arm-chair, with a care-worn face; the son is standing before him in a penitent position, but with pride beaming from his eyes, and a haughty smile playing around his lips.

“Kurt,” said the father, in a voice which trembled with inward emotion, but decidedly, “it is needless to talk long together. I have been thinking about your request; you wish to go to America. Are you sure you will not repent it? Are you so satisfied that you cannot live in one house with the noble lady whom I have deemed good to make my second wife?”

“Yes, father, I am very sure. I cannot bear the sight of her. If I should try and love her, it seems to me as if my mother would rise from her grave and reproach me with undue feeling for her rival.”

“Enough, Sir!” interrupted the old gentleman. “I have provided for your wants; you will be able to live in America according to your rank; but let me tell you, once for all, never overdraw your account, for it will not be paid. My banker in New York has strict instructions.”

“I thank you, father,” said the young man, rather startled by the severe tone of the old gentleman. “I will try and obey your orders.”

“I hope so, for your own sake,” replied the count. “And now,” he continued, with a voice almost choked by tears: “Kurt, you are my only son; you are the heir of my property, the bearer of my name and rank. If I should die, remember always in your bearing that you are a Count of Hohenstaufen; and let me warn you, once more, of the company of this friend of yours, who insists upon accompanying you. I do not trust him, I know not why; but something tells me that he will be the death of you. . .”

“Sir,” interrupted the young man, “you do him injustice. Diedrich is the best soul living, and he surely will be a great support to me in that foreign country.”

“I hope so,” the old man mildly replied; “as I said before, it may be that we shall never see each other again; foreseeing this, I have made the lawyer draw up some papers, which will enable you, in case of emergency, to prove your identity, and should I die before your return, you can prove by them your rights as the heir of your father.”

At parting, the old man took a package from his breast pocket, handed it to the young man, laid his hand upon his head, as if imploring the blessing of God upon his only son, then suddenly embraced him, kissed him, and hurriedly left the room.

We have now to introduce a person who played a very important part in the drama we are about to describe.

A man of about thirty years had been lying, one evening, in the street, overcome with fatigue and hunger. Kurt at once not only provided him with money, but saw to it that he was taken to the house of a gardener, belonging to the castle, where the poor man, at request of the young count, was nursed with the utmost care, and after his strength was sufficiently restored, Kurt knew how to prevail upon his father to give him the position of forester on the large estate.

The man had never forgotten this kindness, and when he heard that the young count intended to depart for America, with a friend of his, he carefully scrutinized that friend, and soon became satisfied, although he had no fact to rest his suspicions on, that the young man would bear watching. Therefore he resolved to question his young master about his new plans. Kurt candidly told him that he intended to go to New York on a vessel which was to leave Hamburg on the 12th of June, that Diedrich his friend intended to go with him, and that their plan was to stop a few days at New York, to see that important city, and then go farther west, probably to Cleveland, Ohio; however, they had not fully decided upon their further plans.

Thomas, an honest, straight-forward fellow, who had saved considerable of his wages as forester, requested Kurt to be allowed to follow him as his servant; he said that in a foreign country, among strangers, the young man would probably want [advice] and material assistance, and that as he had once taken care of him, he was eager now to redeem his old debt of gratitude, by watching over him in the New World.

Kurt, although he liked the honest fellow very much, and would have been pleased to take him along, objected, saying that he could not consent to have him forsake his good position on the estate for an uncertainty, and that he was not sure that his father would allow him a sufficient income which would enable him to afford keeping a servant.

No objections and entreaties of the old man were of any avail; Kurt, although very kindly thanking him for his good intentions, refused, and Thomas resolved to see the old gentleman about it. He had a long conversation with the old count, who liked the faithful forester very much, and sometimes had had long chats with him, and Thomas told him of his determination to follow Count Kurt to America; the old count at first objected, saying that his son now going to

America, ought to be obliged to stand on his own legs, and that the luxury of having a body-servant would remind him too much of the old days, and probably prevent him from ever making a man of himself. But, when Thomas told him that his greatest reason for desiring to follow Kurt, was that he did not like his friend Diedrich, the count perfectly agreed with him, and they together resolved that Thomas should try and follow Kurt, without being observed by him, and that he should closely watch Diedrich; at the same time, the Count requested him to now and then write to him, from America, and let him know how the young men got along.

Thomas was sent off on a message for the Count Kuno, and before leaving, he shook hands heartily with Kurt, taking cordial leave of him. Kurt and his friend Diedrich were to leave on the next day for Hamburg, so Thomas had a day the start of them. When he arrived at Hamburg, he went at once with a letter of recommendation of Count Kuno von Hohenstaufen, to the captain of the ship, told him, under secrecy, the reason for his departure to America, and requested the captain to give him a position on the ship, the performance of which would prevent his being seen by the cabin-passengers, among whom Kurt and Diedrich were enrolled.

The captain proposed that Thomas should pay half-fare, and that he would give him the position of assistant-steward, his duties being to distribute the meals to the five hundred steerage-passengers on board of the ship. Thomas gladly accepted this proposition, and entered the next day upon his new duties.

On the same day, Kurt and Diedrich were to leave the paternal house. Kurt had called in the carriage for Diedrich, and as they together stopped before the piazza of the castle, to say good-by to Kurt's father, the old gentleman stepped out, holding a little girl of about three years, in his arms, cordially shook hands with the young men, blessed his son once more, gave him much good advice, and, with tears in his eyes, he saw how Kurt wept and fervently kissed Unica, his little sister. He stared after the carriage, as the whip snapped and the full-blood horses started into full gallop.

Arrived at Hamburg, they had to wait a day before the vessel left, but on the next day, Thomas had the satisfaction to see them embark, without being seen by them.

We will silently pass over the incidents of the voyage, which, at that time, was only to be made in a sailing-vessel, and only mention that Count Kurt von Hohenstaufen, with his friend, safely landed in New York, and after he had settled his affairs with the bankers, set off for Cleveland, Ohio, where they soon occupied rooms in one of the hotels.

The young men, at first, spent their money rather freely. Diedrich was very soon through his, and lived on that of Kurt, anticipating a position to gain his own livelihood; however, he did not prevail upon his friend to curtail their expenses, and soon Count Kurt saw that his yearly allowance would presently be spent, if he did not obtain a position which would secure him a moderate income above his yearly allowance.

The two friends talked the matter over, and came to the conclusion that it would be best for them to go to St. Louis, as many Germans were living there, and probably by their recommendations

they might be able to obtain a good position. Accordingly, they went to St. Louis; but we shall have to leave them for a while, and note what became of Thomas.

After the three men had arrived in New York, Thomas had managed to see Kurt alone; he told him that, notwithstanding his objections, he had come to America, that he had saved some money while he was forester at Hohenstaufen, and that he intended to make his own way, not being, in any way, an obstacle to the perfect freedom of Kurt. He only requested him to solemnly promise not to tell Diedrich, who probably did not recognize his face at all, of what had occurred, and to leave him in entire ignorance of the presence of Thomas. Kurt laughed at this precaution, and at the suspicion of the faithful fellow, but willingly promised him to keep his presence secret from Diedrich, and to write to him about every move they were going to take. "At the outstart," said Kurt, "I can tell you that, four days from now, we intend to start for Cleveland, and according to information taken, we will stop there at the Weddell House."

Thomas started, at once, for Cleveland, Ohio, procured a position as night-porter in the hotel, and had the satisfaction to see the two young gentlemen step from the 'bus, three days afterwards, and take their quarters in the hotel.

Thomas managed to keep out of the way, when Diedrich was about, and had several interviews with Kurt, who assured him of his highest esteem, and promised him to do everything in his power to advance his interest.

We have seen how the young men left for St. Louis, while Thomas remained behind in Cleveland, Kurt promising him to look out for a position for him, and to write to him as soon as an occasion offered.

The two young gentlemen met with good fortune in St. Louis. Kurt, who was a perfect master of the German, French, and English languages, soon obtained a good position in one of the leading wholesale dry goods houses; he proved a valuable assistant, and his employers, whom he had told of his prospects, and shown his papers, promised to take him in as a partner at some future time, if he proved himself proficient, as he had done till now. He soon obtained great influence in the house, and by his recommendation, Diedrich, who till now had lived on his friend's income, obtained a position in another dry goods house, not so good, it is true, as that of Kurt, but yet one remunerative enough to enable him to pay his way, and to return to Kurt what the latter had advanced to him.

Kurt had many occasions for going to the Planters' hotel, on Fourth street, as he had to see, there, at different times, customers from the surrounding country. In this way, he soon made acquaintance with the proprietor, and was fortunate enough to procure a position for Thomas as porter.

He wrote to him, at once, and our honest fellow was, on the week following, installed in his new dignity.

Things went on in this way for several years, Kurt rising in favor with his employers, and Diedrich receiving a very good salary. The young men had both cultivated whiskers, Kurt wore a side beard and mustache, Diedrich a full beard.

It is proper to mention, here, that Kurt, shortly after his arrival in St. Louis, had written to his father about his good fortune. The old gentleman had replied in a very cordial tone, but told him that as he was now able to take care of himself, he thought it would be better for Kurt to withdraw the half of his yearly allowance, and he hoped that Kurt would wisely acknowledge the wisdom of this step, which was only intended to make a man of him. Kurt thought this hard, and did not reply at all.

The old gentleman, who stood too much on his dignity to send a second letter, or to alter his determination, did not write, but, now and then, he heard about his son from Thomas, who had promised to send intelligence about the young man.

For this reason, the son did not hear anything regarding the father.

May be that the performance of his duties put too much strain on Kurt, may be from some other physical reason, Kurt felt very ill, for the last few days. He often complained of headache, and Diedrich, who, although they did not board in the same house, had been, all the while, very good friends with him, and advised him to obtain leave of absence for a while, saying that he would do the same, and that they would go and spend the hot summer months together at Alton, Ill., which place is only about twenty miles from St. Louis.

This advice had been prompted by the following fact: Diedrich, having taken up the *New York Herald*, saw, among the personals, the following advertisement:

PERSONAL.

“Countess Unica von Hohenstaufen begs Count Kurt von Hohenstaufen to return at once to his father-land, where his estates are waiting for the righteous heir.”

Diedrich was not well-pleased with this news. He silently put the paper in his pocket, proposed, as we have seen, a trip to Alton to his friend, and when the latter consented, he soon obtained leave of absence for both of them, and two days afterwards they were lodged at Alton.

After they had passed the first night there, Diedrich entered the room of his friend, early in the morning, and inquired after his health. Kurt said that he felt a little better, and that he hoped the change of air and absence from business cares would soon cure him. Diedrich expressed his gratification at this news, and asked whether Kurt ever heard from his family.

Kurt replied: “No; after I got my position in St. Louis, my father withdrew one-half of my allowance; since then, I never wrote to him, and never received a word from home.”

“That is very strange,” replied Diedrich. “I cannot see any motive for such an action; if you had squandered your money, it would have been quite a different thing—but now—incomprehensible! Are you sure your father is living yet?”

“I do not know; I never heard anything to the contrary, and I suppose if he were dead, I should know it, by medium of our minister.”

“That is so,” shortly replied Diedrich, and his heart bounded for joy; he was sure, now, that his friend had not seen the *Herald*.

“But,” he continued, “supposing your father dies, your stepmother will not be very eager to restore to you your property. Have you any means of proving your identity?”

“Oh, yes,” replied Kurt. “I have, in my trunk, all the papers, which my father handed to me before my departure for America. They are drawn up by a lawyer, and fully prove my identity.”

“Will you allow me to see those papers?”

“Certainly; they are in the red portfolio lying at the top of a number of letters in my trunk. Here is the key.”

Diedrich opened the trunk, looked carefully over the papers, and then said: “I believe they are all right. However, if I were in your place, I would have them looked over by a German lawyer in this country; if anything has to be altered in them, I would have it done before it is too late. Will I take them along to-morrow? I am going to St. Louis with the steamer, and will be back in the evening. I might drop into a German lawyer’s office, and make a sure thing of it.”

“All right, if you wish to do so; however, I do not see the necessity.”

Diedrich put the papers in his pocket. He, who had registered himself at the hotel as Count Kurt von Hohenstaufen, and the real Count as Diedrich Neumann, was now in the possession of papers which might prove his rights to the succession of the property of Hohenstaufen.

When Diedrich returned from St. Louis, he found Kurt in a worse position, and was so preoccupied with taking measures for his careful nursing, that everything about the papers was forgotten.

Kurt wanted to have a physician, but Diedrich said that he thought it would be wiser to wait until the next day, and then see; he strongly hoped that he would feel better then.

The next day, Kurt’s illness had considerably increased; his head ached fearfully, and the blood rushed, at every instant, to his brain, causing frequent unconsciousness.

Diedrich had been out, on the evening preceding, had seen a doctor, with whom he had had quite a lengthy private interview, and now sent a message, by a waiter of the hotel, to call the doctor in question.

A disagreeable-looking Esculapius soon entered the room, felt the patient's pulse, inquired into the symptoms, and soon declared, in the presence of the waiter who had ushered him in, that the patient was subject to congestion of the brain, that he feared the disease had too far advanced, that he could not respond for the safety of the patient, but that he would try his utmost; he wrote a prescription, which had a soothing effect; the poor young man suffered less intensely, but three days afterwards he was a corpse.

Nothing seemed extraordinary in the matter; the doctor declared that the patient had died from congestion of the brain, and Kurt von Hohenstaufen was buried under the name of Diedrich Neumann, that of the friend.

Diedrich, immediately before the funeral, shaved off his chin-whiskers, and in this way looked very much like the Count. He went back to St. Louis, taking the luggage of the Count with him, presented himself at the dry-goods house, where Kurt had been employed, told them of his sudden death, and said that he had come to settle affairs for his friend, as he himself intended to go to Germany, to take the sad news to his family, and deliver into their hands whatever was left behind by the deceased. The firm willingly paid him the small amount due, and expressed their deep regret at the so sudden death of the talented young man.

In the meanwhile, Thomas had found, after the departure of the friends to Alton, the above-mentioned personal in the New York *Herald*. He at once sent a note to Kurt, containing the announcement in the paper, but he received no reply. Surely, if the Count had received the note, even if he did know of the advertisement, he would have replied, and this meditation made Thomas resolve to go and see for himself; he applied for a day's absence, readily received it, and took the steamer for Alton. Judge of his astonishment when he was told, at the hotel, that the Count had died and was buried, and that his friend had left. Was at last his suspicion proven to be true? Had some foul trick been played upon him to whom he owed the deepest gratitude? He wanted to convince himself, and to inquire into the matter. Without saying anything about his suspicions, he inquired, at the hotel, in detail about the description of the man, who had given himself out for the Count, and soon came to the conclusion that Diedrich Neumann had played the part of the Count, and that the man who had been buried was not Diedrich Neumann, but Count Kurt himself.

However, Thomas very well knew that no further particulars could be obtained here, and resolved to return to St. Louis, and inquire of the firm. They told him, there, the same story as related above. The description of the man, given by them, satisfied Thomas, beyond doubt, that Diedrich had shaved off his chin-whiskers, to appear like the deceased Count.

What was to be done? Diedrich probably had already left for Germany; at all events, Thomas would see, and follow his track as closely as possible.

He drew his savings from the bank, packed all his things together, and left for New York, where, immediately after his arrival, he requested the officials of the different steamship lines to be allowed to look over the list of the passengers. After looking for a long time in vain, he was delighted by seeing Count Kurt von Hohenstaufen's name on the list of one of the German steamers. It was to leave in two days, and Thomas went to a sailors' boarding-house, where he

was soon enabled to get an introduction to the captain of the steamer. Thomas dressed himself as a sailor, and the captain readily engaged him for the trip home, if he would take out his wages in board. Thomas gladly agreed, being convinced that Diedrich, should he ever see him, had never noticed his face sufficiently to recognize, in the sailor, the forester Thomas. Besides, many a year had gone by between his forestership and his being a sailor, and the American climate had strongly told on the good man's features.

So Thomas went on shore again, and after he had seen Diedrich step aboard the steamer, he took his effects and went aboard to follow his new destination.

During the war, Thomas had enjoyed good wages, and as he was a man who spent only as much as was necessary, he had saved a considerable amount of money; this enabled him to return to Europe, and it was his plan, that after he had convicted Diedrich of having usurped, by foul means, the right of Count Kurt von Hohenstaufen, to settle down in Germany, on his little income, and enjoy a comfortable life in his old age.

We will not follow them on their trip, but only say that the sailor had occasion to make acquaintance, on board of the steamer, with a young lady, to whom he paid the greatest attention, and as she traveled alone, and their destination was the same, she confidently entrusted her person to the care of the honest seaman.

They soon got very well acquainted, and Alice—this was the name of the young lady—seeing, one day, that the sailor was sitting on deck, in deep meditation, inquired into the cause of his despondency; he then told her, under the promise of deep secrecy, what was really the aim of his journey; that he had made money enough, in America, to live comfortably in Germany, and that he intended to settle down there, as soon as he had traced out the crime, and brought the criminal to justice.

On the 15th of May, the steamer arrived at Hamburg; the passengers soon stepped ashore, and after Thomas had received the thanks of the captain for his faithful service, he was dismissed, and our sailor went ashore with his new acquaintance, Alice.

Arriving at the depot, they stepped into the eating-room, and there, before the bar, the pseudo-count was standing, taking some refreshments; the sailor pointed him out to her, as Alice had never seen him near by, as the steerage-passengers and those of the cabin are strictly separated.

Count Kurt soon stepped aboard a first-class car, for Bamberg, and Thomas and Alice went into a second-class compartment of the same train.

We will now closely follow the pseudo-count, and give the details as traced up by the German detective, Friedrich Mayer.

The Count, as we mentioned above, stepped into a compartment of the first class, and scarcely had he taken his place, when a very elegantly-dressed young lady stepped in, politely answering, with a somewhat coquettish smile, the courteous bow of the young man.

She had a very pretty face, and the young lady seemed to be aware of it, for her long eyelashes were blushing lowered, as soon as her eyes met those of the Count.

The train started, and soon a conversation ensued, which we will recite in full, as it throws much light on the subject in question.

“You are going also to Bamberg?” asked the Count, while he looked inquiringly at the ticket of the young lady. “How glad I am to have met with such agreeable company! Allow me to introduce myself to you. Count Kurt von Hohenstaufen!”

Surprised, almost startled, the young lady looked at him; she even forgot to answer his graceful bow.

“Did I really hear well?” she said. “You are Count Kurt von Hohenstaufen?”

“I think your astonishment is natural,” replied the Count, laughingly; “I have not been, in a long while, in my fatherland.”

“Yes, as long as I can remember.”

“Almost eighteen years!”

“What strange meeting! You probably will know my name, sir—Flora Romberg; my father was the banker of yours.”

Again the Count bowed; he read, in the eyes of the beautiful Flora, great joy on account of their meeting.

“You probably can tell me a great deal of news about home,” he said.

“I am afraid that I will not be able to satisfy your curiosity; I am but slightly acquainted with the circumstances of your family at the present time.”

“Oh, how often,” said the Count, “did I long to return, especially so, when the war between Germany and France broke out. I would have been so glad, if I could have taken my place in the ranks as a volunteer; but alas! you will know that it was not possible for me. I did not know what my reception here would be. I feared that the house of my ancestors would be closed to me, and I could not have borne with this insult. Well, I confess I have been rather wild in my youth; I opposed the wish of my father with great violence, but I probably would have submitted, if the ill-nature of my step-mother had not made an impassable abyss between us. This prevented me from returning; I would not meet this woman again.”

“The Countess of Hohenstaufen died during the war,” said Flora; “you probably know it?”

“I know nothing, Miss. Only, when I read the advertisement of my step-sister, I had a presentiment that the mother of Unica was dead; never would this woman have thought of letting me know. It would have been to her interest to conceal it from me.”

“Why! did you never receive any intelligence from your father?”

“No, never! I did not write, and nobody knew where I was.”

“Countess Unica von Hohenstaufen, your step-sister, was my friend at the boarding-school; we have not seen each other often, since; I do not know why. Unica’s mother died, as I already remarked, during the war, shortly after the battle of Sedan; she had been suffering during many a year. The Count, your father, was also suffering, and Unica told me that, at that time, he often spoke of you. Whether he took any steps to discover where you were, I do not know. He suddenly died. Countess Unica inserted, after the funeral, an advertisement in all the important newspapers—”

“And this advertisement I read in the *New York Herald*,” interrupted the Count. “Seeing this, I at once undertook my journey, in the hope that my reception at home would coincide with the hearty tone of the advertisement.”

“There cannot be any doubt of it,” said Flora, laughingly.

“When I left home, Unica was only three years old.”

“Of course you cannot know how the character of your step-sister has been developed, and therefore, Count, I am very glad to be able to appease your mind in that respect. Countess Unica is, if I may be allowed a little indiscretion, not an imposing beauty, it is true, but she possesses an excellent heart, and a very accommodating character.”

“Her mother was the exact contrary,” exclaimed the Count, while he looked from the window at the beautiful scenery through which they were traveling at a very swift rate.

“Unica has only the exterior form of her mother; the same tall stature, the same blonde hair, and same blue, unsoundable eyes.”

“Most of the old servants are probably dead?” asked the Count.

“As far as I know, only an old man, Daniel, is living yet.”

“H’m—that sneak! “ said the Count, softly, as if speaking to himself. “He was the confidential man of my stepmother.”

They now spoke, for awhile, about indifferent matters, and at once Kurt said:

“I hope that your father will be kind enough to be also my minister of finance; my father had already connections with him, when I left the country.”

“The two gentlemen were great friends,” replied Flora, and in her tone one could easily perceive a self-pleased pride. “The Count came often to our house. Since my mother died, we have given no *soirées*, but I hope our *salons* will be opened again next winter, and that Countess Unica, in that case, will remember her old friend.”

The count bowed.

“I will have the honor to bring your friend back to you, if you will allow me to,” he said, while he took her hand, which she smilingly allowed, and pressed it to his lips.

A purple hue covered the cheeks of Flora; quickly she withdrew her hand, and looked out of the window.

“Countess Unica has found a friend in the immediate neighborhood of the castle; she is very intimate with her,” she said, after a long silence. “You probably know the baronet of Buchanau; he was the friend of your father.”

“I remember him,” said the count.

“The daughter of the baronet, Alma von Buchanau, is the intimate friend of Unica.”

“Alma von Buchanau,” repeated the Count, as if he desired to imprint this name into his memory. “Is she the only child of the baronet?”

“He had a son besides, Werner von Buchanau, whom I have only seen once.”

“And have you brothers or sisters?”

“Only a brother.”

“The pillar of the bank, is it not so?” joked the Count.

“Of course, Theoder is a great support to my father, only I wish he was somewhat more a man of the world; he is so very serious, retired, how shall I say—so dull.”

“Would you rather have him a spendthrift?”

“Oh, no! but is there no midway between them?”

“Certainly, but it is difficult to draw the exact line,” replied the Count.

“The Baronet von Adlerberg often calls on us,” continued Flora; “he is already an elderly man, a friend of papa. I do not know whether you know him.”

“No, I do not remember to ever have heard his name.”

“But how soon the hours have passed!” interrupted Flora, looking out of the window, and throwing a glance at her watch. “We will soon be at our place of destination.”

“Indeed,” replied the count. “I recognize the scenery. But how much has been changed! How many factories seem to have risen from the ground!”

“You will probably find many surprising things,” said Flora. “We have seen all this growing under our very eyes, and it is therefore not new to us. Will papa soon have the honor to see you at his house? “

“Certainly, Miss Romberg; and I hope that you will allow me to come and thank you for the most important communications which you have given to me in such a delightful manner.”

“It will be a great pleasure to me,” said Flora, blushing; “ and I remind you of your promise, Count, in regard to Countess Unica.”

“I will keep it, you may depend upon it.”

The train stopped. The Count smiled; he had, now, all the information he so necessarily wanted for the accomplishment of the role which he was about to play. He never, when a boy, had been admitted in the circle he now imposed upon, and therefore knew but little about the family relations. Flora had enlightened him, and he was over-joyous about his excellent luck.

He politely assisted Flora in alighting, and a slight pressure of her hand rewarded him for his painstaking.

Flora’s brother now stepped nearer, and she at once introduced the Count to her brother, who coldly bowed, offered his arm to his sister, and led her to the carriage.

The sailor and Alice had also alighted, and were talking together on the platform before the depot; but as soon as they had seen the Count, who had sent, from Hamburg, a dispatch to his sister, enter into a carriage which was waiting for him, they went towards the city.

Soon they stopped before the house of the brothers Vogel, and as Alice had sent a dispatch from Hamburg, she was heartily welcomed, and the brothers had adorned the house with green; it was a matter of course that the sailor who had paid so many attentions to the sister, was received with the greatest cordiality, and they would not listen to the excuses of the old tar, who wanted to pass the night in the hotel.

Early the next morning, he said that he had to speak with Count Kurt von Hohenstaufen, and, therefore, intended to go to the castle.

Before we speak of the meeting between the Count and the sailor, let us return to the evening before, and see how the Count succeeded in deceiving the Countess Unica.

Unica von Hohenstaufen and Alma von Buchanau were sitting on the piazza before the lordly mansion, when a carriage stopped before the gate, and Count Kurt von Hohenstaufen alighted, assisted by the old servant Daniel, who, deeply bowing, opened the door of the carriage. Unica soon lay in the arms of her brother, whom she had not seen for so many years, and Alma von Buchanau was introduced to the handsome Count, for whom they both felt the greatest interest, after his adventurous life in the United States.

“My dear sister!” he said, with an emotional tone, while he kissed her on her forehead, “I return as a stranger to the house of my ancestors, and thank Heaven to have found such a true heart as yours in it.”

“And you are heartily welcome,” replied Unica, while tears were standing in her beautiful eyes. “I hope you will find rest, at last, after your tumultuous life.”

“And there is my old Daniel, too!” said Kurt, shaking hands with the old man; “the old, faithful man of whom I have so often thought.”

Hesitatingly the old man laid his hand in that of the Count, and looking inquiringly into the face of his new master, he said:

“Welcome home, gracious master!”

“Have I changed much?” asked the Count, in a jesting tone. “Probably you would not have recognized me.”

“Hardly!” said the old man, shaking his gray head. “At that time, you did not wear glasses, and you had no beard. But your tall, stately form, and your firm, sharp look have remained the same; the American sun has not been able to alter those.”

“Only my eyes have become more feeble,” replied the Count; and turning towards Unica, he said: “Come, let us go in, my dear sister; the journey has fatigued me,” and bowing to Alma von Buchanau, and offering her his arm, he said, smilingly: “May I have the honor, Miss von Buchanau?”

They entered the castle; supper was served, and Kurt now told the ladies of his adventures in the United States; he did so with much spirit and fervor, and at last the carriage of Alma stood before the door; she took leave, and Kurt politely escorted her.

Kurt soon returned to the dining-hall, where he found his sister, and requested her to lead him into the different apartments of the castle, as he longed to see the old rooms once more.

“Will I call Daniel?” asked Unica.

“Why, Unica?”

“We cannot undertake our journey without a light.”

The Count had already taken up one of the silver candlesticks.

“I want to be alone with you,” he said, smiling; “the old Daniel may have been a faithful servant to my father; he was never true to me.”

Silently, Unica followed him into the next room.

“This is the study of our dear father. That door leads into the library, and the other into the armory.”

Kurt placed the candle on the table; he looked around, and said, with deep agony in his tone:

“Here it was that I had my last conversation with him, which severed us for life.”

“Oh, do not think any more of it,” she sweetly replied; “papa himself repented it. He has left a letter for you. I will give it to you at once, with his last will, which I found in his desk, after his death. Will you have them both now?”

The Count seemed to have mastered his emotions; he kissed Unica, and said:

“If you had not been here, I never would have entered the castle again. I will try to forget old remembrances. All is here exactly as I left it.”

“Only the portrait of my mother has been hung up here; if you will allow me, I will have it brought to my boudoir.”

“You will do me a great pleasure with it,” replied Kurt; “you only resemble your mother exteriorly; if she had had your noble heart, your sweet disposition, all would have been very different. But where is the portrait of my dear mother?”

“It hangs next to that of our father, in the hall of our ancestors.”

They now wandered from room to room, Kurt making short remarks of recognition, and skillfully inquiring, without raising suspicion, and at last they returned to the study; here, Unica went to the desk, and took out two papers, which she handed to her brother; they both sat down on the sofa, and Kurt began to peruse the contents; he first opened the letter, read its contents, and then said:

“Oh, if he had told me all this before, I would gladly have returned and asked his pardon; but I thought he was irreconcilable, and did not venture to return to a house where I was not welcome. Father requests me to sue for the hand of your friend, Alma von Buchanau, as he has always desired that the houses of Hohenstaufen and Buchanau should be connected by marriage. Did you know anything about this desire?”

“No,” she replied, greatly astonished; “papa never told me so.”

“Then I pray you to read the letter yourself; you know the family, and will be able to advise me in the matter.”

“I will do so, dear brother, but, please, let me delay giving you my advice, till to-morrow. I must think about this matter.” And then, handing him the last will of her father, she said: “Here is the last will; I wish you would read it, at once, and you will be convinced of his unfaltering love. He demanded of me that I advertise for you, for five years, in all the principal newspapers, and to write to the minister to America, in New York, and to request him to do all in his power to find your address. If you should not have returned after the lapse, of five years, or if I had the certainty of your death, the whole property should fall into my hands. In the other case, so in the present case, thank God! you are the heir of the whole property, the estate and all that belongs to it, and of the personal property I will have two-thirds.”

“And how large is the personal estate?”

“You will find an exact calculation of it in one of the books. As far as I can make out, it is about 1,500,000 thalers. It is invested in railroad stock and bonds; a part of the money is in the hands of the banker Romberg, another part is invested in mortgages; but you will find, in the desk, all the particulars.”

“So your part of the personal property will be a million of thalers!” said the Count, pensively. “I do not think that this division is just; the castle alone, with its art treasures, is worth more than half a million; to that, we must add the splendid park and the landed property.”

“I am perfectly satisfied with my part,” said Unica; “and now, Kurt, it is late; you must be tired with your travel, and I will leave you. We can speak, to-morrow, about everything. I will think about Alma and you. And now, good-night.” She kissed him, and left the room.

Soon Daniel entered, and asked if his master desired him to lead him to his apartments. Kurt stood up, and followed the servant, and soon a heavy sleep closed the remarkable events of the day.

On the next morning, Daniel entered the room, and announced that a sailor was waiting, in the vestibule, who desired to see the Count; that Daniel had told him to come back later, as the count was not able to see him yet, but the sailor insisted upon seeing the Count, at once, and had said that he would wait in the vestibule until the Count would consent to see him, should he have to wait for a week. Daniel added: “This insolent language revolted me, and I was about to call the servants, to have him thrown out of the door, when he exclaimed: ‘For the sake of your master, do not make any tumult; if you do, it will be the worse for him.’”

The Count startled, but did not show any signs of anxiety to the waiter; he told him to have the sailor wait in the vestibule until he was ready to see him. When the waiter had left, he murmured: “Strange! what does this man want? I remember a sailor, at Hamburg, looking very sharply at me. I saw him, again, at Bamberg, and it seems to me that I saw the same man on the steamer. Strange, very strange!” He paced up and down the room, in deep meditation; “if this man should

have traced me, if he had any suspicion of the crime, all would be discovered! What shall I do in that case?"

An inward struggle seemed to be going on; his fists were closed, and the thirst for revenge was glistening in his eyes; at last, he went to a bureau, took a stiletto from one of the drawers, and put it in the breast-pocket of his coat; he went to the window; at once he started back; the same sailor, whom he had seen at Hamburg, and afterwards at Bamberg, was walking in the park, looking, with a delighted air, at the flowers, and now and then stopping before a foreign plant, and carefully examining it.

"Ha!" exclaimed the Count; "he probably got tired of waiting in the hall, and waits for me in the garden. Very well; this answers my purpose, exactly; let me go and speak with him."

He passed into the corridor, where Gabriel was waiting; he told him that he would take a walk in the park, and take his breakfast afterwards. The Count was seen walking with the sailor, and going towards the wood, which lay behind the castle.

After about an hour, he returned, took his breakfast, and Unica, remarking that he looked very pale, asked him whether he did not rather defer calling on his banker, Romberg, till the next day.

"Oh, no!" he replied; "I am not accustomed to delay business for a single hour; the sooner this is settled, the better; it will put my mind at ease."

Accordingly, they soon drove out, and Unica called, at the request of the Count, on the beautiful Flora, while he entered the banker's office, and startled Mr. Romberg by not only introducing himself as Count Kurt von Hohenstaufen, but also by plainly intimating, that he had made acquaintance with his daughter Flora, that she had made a deep impression upon him, and that he requested him not only to manage his financial affairs, as he had done for his father, but also to consider him as a warm friend, and to allow him to call frequently on his family.

The banker was highly pleased, assured him that his services would never be wanting to a member of the house of Hohenstaufen, and that the Count did him a particular honor by desiring to make the acquaintance of his family.

Soon the carriage drove before the door, and as Unica was sitting in it, Kurt took leave of the banker, shaking hands with him, and desiring him to send, on the next day, a specification of the bonds which the old Count had entrusted to his care.

Mr. Romberg bowed deeply, Count Kurt entered the carriage, and soon they halted before the castle.

Now, we must leave the Count, for a moment, and return to the house of the brothers Vogel and Alice. The sailor, had gone, in the morning, to the castle, and had not returned for dinner, although they had waited a long while for him; supper-time came, and Thomas had not returned; Alice grew uneasy about him, but the brothers soothed her by saying that sailors, whenever they

were on land, generally roamed about, and that he certainly had gone out for a walk, after his call on the Count, and perhaps had met with other sailors, and kept them company.

Alice said that she knew he was a man who did not associate much with other sailors, as he had not the habit of drinking, and their company might endanger him to do so; besides, he was really not a sailor, and, consequently, it could not be thought that their habits were his.

After a short consultation, they concluded to wait until the next morning; if he did not return by that time, they would inquire at the castle, and trace him from there; and laughing about the polite withdrawal of their guest, they went to bed.

Thomas had not returned, on the next morning, and the brothers Vogel sent one of their clerks to the castle, to inquire after him. On the road, he met with Konrad Rost, an uncle of Thomas; the latter asked him whether he had seen Thomas, and when the clerk said, "No, I was just going to the castle to inquire for him," Konrad responded:

"No, don't do that; let us go to the house of Messrs. Vogel. I like to see them, before we do anything further; the affair is strange, very strange!"

Arrived at the house, Konrad at once asked the brothers Vogel to accompany him to where Alice was, as he wished to speak privately with them:

When they had entered the room, and were seated, Konrad commenced thus: "I hear, from your clerk, that Thomas has not returned to your house since he went to the castle; I met him, yesterday morning, on the road, and invited him to take dinner with me, which he declined, saying that he had promised to dine with you; but that he would be glad to come and take supper with me, if I promised him to bring him back to your house, in the cart, in the evening, as he was a very bad walker. I did so, walked up with him to the castle, and there took leave of him, reminding him, once more, of his promise. I saw him enter the castle, and talk with the servant."

"And you have not seen him since?" asked Alice, growing very pale.

"No," replied Konrad.

"Perhaps he is in the castle yet," said Mr. Vogel.

"I do not believe so," replied Alice; "I think I know something about the business Thomas had to transact with the Count, and I know that it was not of an amicable nature. I do not know whether I may tell it, as he told it to me under strict secrecy. However, if we search for him, in vain, to-day, I believe that it would be best to tell you all about it, that we may take our measures."

"Alice," said Mr. Vogel, "of course you know I would not induce you to break a promise which you have given; but if the secret with which Thomas entrusted you is of such a nature that you fear bad consequences of the interview between the Count and Thomas, I propose that you tell it to me. I will carefully consider the matter, and if I do not deem it necessary to reveal it, his secret will be as safe as in the grave."

Alice, hereupon, went with her brother into the adjoining room, and soon returned, saying:

“I believe it is best that we acquaint the police with the disappearance of Thomas; they will soon find him, I hope; if not, we shall have to tell them what Alice knows. Let us, for the present, be satisfied with just putting the police on the track. She has promised secrecy to him, and we do not want to break it before it is highly necessary in his own interest.”

So far, we have given an outline of the story of the detective, and now we will let him speak in his own words:

“On the 18th of June, the brothers Vogel requested the police to trace a sailor, Thomas Neumann, who had disappeared, and, as they asserted, it was impossible to account for it in his general conduct; he was a sober, domestic man, and it could not be thought of that he would go on a ‘spree.’ The details of his visit to the castle were related; of course, when the chief put the matter into my hands, I had not the slightest idea but that the sailor would be easily found, and therefore I sent dispatches to the neighboring villages and towns to have the police look out for a man of that description; my next move was to go to the castle, and have an interview with Count Kurt von Hohenstaufen. He was, at the beginning, very polite, answered all my questions with the greatest readiness, and asserted that the sailor, who had rendered him some services during the journey, had come to remind him of them, and that, after he had rewarded him with some money, the sailor had said, in a jolly tone, that he intended to go and see some friends, and had taken leave of him, thanking him for his generosity. When I pushed my questions further, the Count was angry, and exclaimed:

‘What, after all, have I to do with this sailor? You may look for the sailor wherever you like, and I hope you will soon find him. I hope you do not think that I keep him here as my guest in the castle?’

I, seeing that, by talking, nothing could be done, that the Count evidently knew nothing about the sailor, and not having the slightest idea that any crime had been committed, took leave, and went to the house of Mr. Vogel. I told him of my reception at the castle. He meditated for a while, stood up, and said:

‘Excuse me for a moment; I am going to call my sister.’

He left the room, and soon afterwards the two brothers and Alice returned; the older Mr. Vogel requested Alice to tell me all the sailor had entrusted to her, as he thought that it was necessary I should know it.

Alice hesitated, but at last told me the whole story, as the sailor had told her, of the sudden death of Count Kurt in America, of the re-appearance of Count Kurt at Bamberg, in short, all that I have related before.

I expressed my regret that she had not told me so before, but, furnished with this important information, I went at once to the chief, to obtain a writ for the search of the castle and the park.

This was soon obtained, and I went at once to the castle. Daniel was in the hall; I told him who I was, and commanded him, in the name of the law, to tell me all about the visit of the sailor; he did so, and now, knowing that if a crime had been committed, it had been done in the park, I told him to announce me to the Count.

Daniel went to the room; I followed at his heels. He opened the door, and I saw the Count and the baronet von Buchanau in earnest conversation, drinking a bottle of wine.

Daniel said:

‘A detective of the police wishes to see the count.’

Kurt von Hohenstaufen frowned, throwing dark looks at the servant.

‘Will they never leave me at rest?’ he asked, in an angry tone. ‘I have told them all I know—’

I entered, and said: ‘Excuse me, Count, but I am ordered to search the castle.’

The Count turned towards me, and looked inquiringly at my face.

I introduced myself:

‘The detective Sommer, of the secret service.’

‘A search of the castle!’ he replied; ‘what do you mean?’

‘We intend to search the park, in which you had a conversation with the sailor.’

‘I hope you do not doubt the truth of my declarations?’ asked the Count, and his voice was rather trembling.

‘Not in the least,’ I replied, with a slight bow; ‘I am ordered to find a trace of the man who has so suddenly disappeared; the results of our inquiries have led us to believe that the man must have met with some accident.’

‘Why, I think it is very probable that he, having received money from me, has gone to some harbor, to spend it there with other sailors,’ said the Count.

‘There are too many grounds against such a supposition,’ I replied. ‘He has not been seen in the cars, and surely the man, in his sailor’s attire, would have attracted attention; besides, we may safely accept that he would not have left without taking leave of Miss Alice, to whom he was very much attached.’

The Count stood up.

‘Do you wish me to accompany you?’ he asked.

‘If you will be so kind,’ I replied.

The baronet von Buchanau went with us, and in the garden we were accompanied by two other gentlemen, an actuary and an officer.

The Count went quickly through the garden, towards the park, and his gloomy face very plainly indicated that he did so very unwillingly.

‘Here,’ he said, very short, ‘was the sailor sitting, waiting for me. If I had had no pity on the poor man, I would have ordered my servants to throw him out, and it would, perhaps, have been better.’

‘You accompanied him from this spot to the exit of the park?’ I asked, while I looked sharply around, and paid special attention to the surrounding of the bench.

‘Yes,’ he replied; ‘he told me his circumstances; he said that he could not expect anything of his relations, and he would not accept support of Miss Alice.’

‘What way did you go?’

‘I pursued the road upon which we are now; it leads straight to the exit.’

Now we had arrived at the end of the park; a small gate led into the wood; it stood ajar.

‘There I gave him the money,’ said the Count; ‘two bills of a hundred thalers. He laid them in a small, leathern purse, shook hands with me, and went away.’

‘So he went into the wood?’ I asked.

‘Yes; he could return to the city by this road, too, and he seemed to prefer to roam in the wood.’

‘I am led to believe that he did not leave this wood, therefore we shall have to search it,’ I said.

‘I can scarcely believe that he can have met there with an accident,’ replied the Count; ‘according to my opinion, it would be far better to trace the money which I gave him. They are marked on the back with the word ‘bankrupt.’’

‘You may rest assured that nothing will be left undone, even in that respect,’ I replied, and I added, looking sharply at the Count, ‘if I am not mistaken, there is a small lake in the wood.’

The Count affirmed my question, but added: ‘We can scarcely suspect that the sailor would have drowned himself!’

‘No,’ said the baronet von Buchanau, laughingly; ‘a man with two hundred thalers in his pocket, loves life at least as long as they last.’

‘Can this water be let off?’ I inquired.

‘My intendant shall answer you that; I do not know anything about it,’ said the Count.

The lake was not far off; it was soon reached; a footpath led from the great road towards it.

I remained behind on the footpath, without the other gentlemen missing me. From this spot, I went into the bushes, as if I meant to have perceived a half-effaced trace leading into it.

The gentlemen now had reached the lake, and I heard one of them say ‘That is strange, look, here is an impression in the sand, as if a body has been lying there.’

The Count took his hat off, and went with his hands through his hair; his look wandered bewildered around.

At that moment, I came forward from the bushes. I had found a trace, and carefully followed it looking on the ground.

‘Have you made a discovery?’ asked the baronet.

‘If I may trust my eyes, yes!’ I replied. ‘The sailor seems to have fallen down on the footpath; a few traces indicate that he has been dragged to this spot, and if I am not deceived, the body has been thrown in the water on this very spot.’

‘That is merely a supposition,’ said the Count, while he wiped the sweat from his forehead.

‘To be sure, it is only a supposition, but it may be confirmed by the traces, which I believe I have found. If you will follow me from this point into the bushes, I will show them to you. You will see broken twigs, and in the grass, a sufficient sign that some heavy body has been dragged through it.’

‘Did you not discover any traces of blood?’ asked the baronet.

‘No, it would be difficult to find them, and I believe it is better to first search the lake,’ I replied, and the other gentlemen confirmed me in that belief.

‘So you will really search the lake?’ asked the Count. ‘I will not prevent your doing so, but I believe I am able to tell you, beforehand, that you trouble yourself in vain. The sailor was a strong man, and he would not have easily allowed himself to be knocked down, and if you did not find, in the wood, the traces of a fearful struggle, all the other traces do not mean anything.’

‘We may not follow our own reasoning; we must follow the trace, wherever we find it,’ I replied, in a cool and almost impolite tone; ‘the lake must be searched; perhaps it is not necessary to let off the water. May I send word to your intendant that he let us have some men, with long poles?’

‘Certainly, certainly!’ exclaimed the Count.

I at once requested the officer to go in search of them, and he soon returned with four men provided with the necessary tools, and as a boat was lying near the shore of the lake, we soon commenced our investigation. The men were seeking for a long while in vain, when all at once one of them exclaimed: 'I have him; he is here!'

'Prudently!' I exclaimed; 'draw slowly but steadily. Go one of the men at once to the city, and call for the physician.'

'Yes,' said Baronet Buchanan; 'you may use my carriage; it stands before the castle.'

One of the men went off.

Thomas was drawn on shore; a large wound, apparently caused by a stiletto, was in the left side, near the heart. I knew, now, enough, and without being observed, and while the others were gazing on the corpse, looked for his pocket-book, in which, however, no bank-notes were found. I went, once more, into the shrubbery, and, to my great satisfaction, I not only saw traces of blood on the ground, but also, in a thick bush, a stiletto, having D. N. engraved on the handle. I was now convinced that nobody but Diedrich Neumann, the pseudo-count, had committed the murder, in order to rid himself of the only man who knew of the criminal way in which he appropriated a property worth over three million dollars.

I went at once to the pseudo-count, laid my hands on his shoulders, and exclaimed: 'Diedrich Neumann, I arrest you, in the name of the law, for double murder and theft!'

The Count grew deathly pale, drooped his head, and, without saying a word, followed me to the castle, where I and my charge took seats in a carriage, and drove to the chief of police.

After a short preliminary hearing, in which Diedrich Neumann denied every charge, he was remanded to jail, not being allowed to give bail, as the judge asserted that the bail he was going to give was money which he had illegally obtained, and for that reason it did not belong to him, but to the Countess Unica von Hohenstaufen.

However, he was soon called before court, and was startled at seeing, in the bench of the witnesses, an old man by the name of Schulze, whom he had known, when a boy, before leaving for America, and the young woman whom he had seen with Thomas, at the depot of Hamburg, and afterwards at Bamberg.

The judge asked him what his real name was, to which question Diedrich proudly answered: 'I am the only son and heir of the deceased Count Kuno von Hohenstaufen; my name is Count Kurt von Hohenstaufen, and I am the rightful possessor of the estates which have fallen into my hands, after the death of my father.'

'Can you prove your identity?' asked the judge.

'Oh, yes!' was the reply; 'before I left for America, my father procured for me the necessary papers, which would prove my identity, in case my rights to the succession should be disputed.'

‘You are accused,’ said the judge, ‘of having assumed the name of Count Kurt von Hohenstaufen, in order to come into the possession of property not belonging to you. What can you answer to this charge?’

‘I plead not guilty to each of the two charges; they are perfectly absurd,’ replied Diedrich, in a haughty tone.

‘That is enough,’ replied the judge; ‘Schulze, you have known Diedrich Neumann, in his youth; will you declare, under oath, whether you recognize, in this man who presumes to be Count von Hohenstaufen, Diedrich Neumann, or not?’

It might easily have been seen that a fearful struggle took place within the old man; he grew red and pale by turns, lifted his eyes towards heaven, and at last exclaimed: ‘it must be!’

He then raised his right hand, and swore that he would tell nothing but the truth.

The judge now requested him to be short and explicit, and Schulze replied:

‘I have been working as a gardener for Mr. Diedrich Neumann, the father of the young man, who is now standing here, accused of murder and fraud. If I had met him in the street, without anybody telling me who he was, I would have recognized him at once. However, my eyes may be mistaken; but I remember that when he was ten years old, one day, jumping over a brook, he unfortunately fell and broke his arm; the bone was set very well, but where the fracture had been, a ring formed, which he, several times, showed to me, I taking great interest in knowing whether this would not disappear. I do not know whether it has vanished, now, but if not, this will be a sure sign that I am not mistaken.’

Diedrich showed the greatest anxiety, and when the judge ordered that the physician should be called, he exclaimed:

‘It is not necessary, judge; I acknowledge to be Diedrich Neumann.’ A piercing scream was heard in the audience. Unica, the poor, deceived girl, who had come there, in the conviction that her brother would easily prove his innocence, now plainly saw that the man standing there was a mean impostor; she swooned away, and was carried out of the hall, into her carriage, to the castle.

‘Well, then,’ replied the judge, ‘if you are Diedrich Neumann, how did you come in the possession of the papers which were to prove your identity as Count Kurt von Hohenstaufen, and where is the Count?’

‘The Count died in America. I assisted him in his last moments, and, on his death-bed he besought me to take the papers, bury him under my name, and claim his property, as he did not wish that his step-mother, whom he mortally hated, should come into the possession of an estate which she, according to his opinion, had usurped.’

This piece of evidence was given in the most calm and convinced manner; it seemed as if the accused himself was convinced of the truth of what he was saying.

Now, Mr. Vogel, the brother of Alice, stood up, and looked in the face of the judge. The latter asked him whether he wished to say something, and Mr. Vogel replied:

‘Yes, judge; my sister wishes to give evidence, which, I think, will prove that the man standing there mocks justice, is a bold liar and impostor, and does not deserve the least consideration of the court.’

The judge kindly requested Alice, who was deeply blushing, to tell the court all she knew; and the bashful girl hesitatingly told the following story: ‘When I returned to Europe, after having been, for a few years, a governess in America, I made acquaintance, on board the vessel, with an old man, apparently a sailor; he was always very kind to me, assisted me, during my sea-sickness, with his good advice, and the good, honest man made me feel that I was not all alone in this world. It is very natural that I took a great liking for him; we very often talked together, and one day, I, remarking that he was very pensive and gloomy, now and then, inquired into the cause of it. He then told me the following story, which I will tell as nearly in his own words as I remember them, only I must say that he did not tell me, then, until after I had solemnly promised to keep his secret, and not to reveal it to anybody, as he judged that the revenge belonged to him alone. I would not have spoken, judge,’ said the girl, weeping, ‘if I did not consider his secret as an inheritance which his death had left to me, and if I was not convinced that he will bless me for having taken his revenge into my hands, now that a murderous hand has prevented him from doing so himself.

‘Thomas, taking my hand confidentially into his, said to me: “You must know, Miss Alice, that I am not a sailor, but disguised, in order to follow the track of a man who has, according to my opinion, committed a murder, in order to come into the possession of a large inheritance.

“The affair is briefly this: Count Kurt von Hohenstaufen, who had done me, once, a very noble turn, may God bless him, could not agree with his step-mother, and went to America, with a friend of his, Diedrich Neumann by name. Neither I nor the old Count had confidence in this friend, and we resolved that I should follow them, keeping an eye on them both. Well, we were first in Cleveland, Ohio; afterwards, in St. Louis, and all went well. I was porter in a hotel; Mr. Kurt and Diedrich were employed in different dry goods houses; they were good friends together, and really I began to relinquish my suspicions towards Diedrich; one day, Kurt was ill, and I heard, afterwards, that he and Diedrich had gone on a trip to Alton, Illinois, in order to have a change of air, and to drive away business cares. I approved of this foresight of Diedrich. Well, when they had been there a few days, I accidentally looked in a number of the *New York Herald*; it was an old one, and judge of my surprise when I read, among the personals, a request for Mr. Kurt to return home, as he had become the heir of his father’s estates. I cut the personal out, enclosed it in a letter to Mr. Kurt, and, as I did not receive any reply, I began to feel anxious about him. I took a day’s leave of absence, went to Alton, and there I heard that Diedrich Neumann had died and was buried, and that Count Kurt had left. The indications, which the clerk of the hotel gave me, plainly showed that not Diedrich, but Kurt, had been buried; in this suspicion, I was strengthened by what I was told at the dry goods house in St. Louis. The

Diedrich who was dead and buried in Alton, had presented himself to the firm, for which Count Kurt worked, and had claimed his salary due saying that he intended to go to Germany, to take the sad news to the family of Kurt, and restore to them what he had left behind. I now knew that Kurt had not died a natural death; why, else, all this deception? and I resolved to follow him. In New York," the good man continued, telling me, with tears in his eyes, "I had the fortune to find Dicdrich Neumann, alias Count Kurt von Hohenstaufen, on the list of the passengers of this steamer. I obtained a position as sailor on the same, and in this disguise. I intend to follow him, until I have convicted him of being perhaps a murderer, and decidedly an impostor and a cheat."

'When we arrived at Hamburg,' continued Alice, 'Thomas pointed him out to me; he was taking some refreshments in the restaurant of the depot. Diedrich went in the cars; we followed him, and at Bamberg, I saw him alight from the train, with Miss Romberg, and step into the carriage of the Countess von Hohenstaufen.'

'On the next day, Thomas told me that he intended to call on the pseudo-Count, at the castle. I conjured him to be prudent; he laughed, went away, and never returned; he ran into his death.' Here the girl covered her eyes with her handkerchief, and bitterly wept; after a short while, she said, amid convulsions, 'That is all I have to tell, judge.'

The judge kindly thanked her, and now, turning towards Diedrich, he said: 'Diedrich Neumann, you have heard this evidence; you will plainly see that the hand of Providence has destined that Thomas, who had to come to such a fearful end, should tell his story to Miss Alice Vogel; it is true, this is only circumstantial evidence, but I do not doubt that it can be fully substantiated by tracing your crime in America, with the plain indications given to us. This will take time, and the only benefit you can derive from it is to prolong your imprisonment, and the anxiety of a fate which you must be sure you cannot escape. Therefore, I beseech you, in your own behalf, and in that of justice, to make a full confession; perhaps this will speak in your favor with the jury.'

Diedrich, deathly pale, arose, and said, with a voice which was choked by tears: 'Judge, I am ready to confess all; I see that, by the evidence of this young woman, all my hope that the last witness against me had gone, by the death of Thomas, has vanished.'

And now he told that, as Kurt had become ill at the time when he saw the personal in the New York *Herald*, he devised a plan to take him to Alton, there to shorten his days, by giving him drugs which would increase his brain disease, and that he had administered them to him, withholding the drugs prescribed by the doctor. 'The young man,' he continued, 'died, and I buried him under my name, and I adopted that of Count Kurt, which I could substantiate with the papers in my possession. Desire for money, perhaps the hand of Providence, made me commit the foolish act of going to the firm in St. Louis; I arrived at Hamburg, and was installed into the castle as Count von Hohenstaufen, nobody disputing my rights, when Thomas came, and stood before me as an evil genius, threatening to blast all my bright projects, to tear from me everything, for which I had committed a crime; all the property for which I had sold my soul. I killed him.' Here he covered his eyes with his hands, and loudly wept; after a short while, he continued: 'May God forgive me, and the jury have pity on me. The demon of money had taken possession of me, it was stronger than my better feelings, and I succumbed to the brilliant prospect spread out before me.'

It is almost needless to say that the jury unanimously declared Diedrich Neumann guilty of murder in the first degree, and that the court passed the sentence of death over him. The Emperor, however, changed it to imprisonment for life, and Diedrich Neumann, at this moment, is probably consumed by remorse for his double crime.

McWatters, George. *Detectives of Europe and America*. Hartford: J. B. Burr, 1877.