

At his wife's words Master Dinu stayed the knife in the middle of the skin.

"She is not a smart lady, is she, and you are not going to marry her to some grandee? There is no disgrace to her in coming to give a little help."

His wife lost her temper. Her daughter damp sandals! Her daughter associate with the men! Her daughter, who had gone to school to the nuns for so many years! Her daughter, who knew how to sew so beautifully! Her daughter, who was friends with the niece of one important person, and the inseparable companion of the daughters of another! Her daughter to handle the sandals and make her fingers smell of bark!

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself," she said, hoarse with anger, "even if you do not know how to behave properly, you need not insult your daughter."

"Insult?" questioned Master Dinu.

But his wife rushed from the room.

He looked long after her, then glanced at the workmen, took up the knife with a nervous movement, and began quickly to cut out the sandals.

The workmen, who had heard the words exchanged, and seen the abrupt departure of the mistress, kept complete silence and busied themselves with their work.

Master Dinu finished cutting the skins.

"You might hurry yourselves a little when you know the work ought to be ready," he said to the men, and departed, hanging his head.

"Very unhappy is Master Dinu," said Iotza, looking after him.

"Why?" one of them asked him.

"Why? Because those are the sharpest words I have ever heard coming from his mouth."

Dinner was unusually quiet, only the little boy whined and asked for first one thing and then another. His mother gave him one or two raps over the knuckles to make him sit still and be silent, but the child began to cry, and she angrily sent him into the next room.

Master Dinu said never a word and his daughter, Ana, looked round her in a frightened manner, and would like to have asked what had happened to-day to make them all so downcast.

Sandu had seen her many times, but he had never seen her well. He knew she was the master's daughter. He greeted her when she came to the table, but speak to her or look her really in the face, that, up till to-day, he had never done.

But when he saw her looking sadly, now at her father, now at her mother, and then at the others seated round the table, he wanted to say something to her to cheer her and make her laugh. But he had nothing to tell her, he could not find a word, and when their eyes met he felt as though he were being swept away by a storm, and carried he knew not whither.

Ana was so beautiful and so graceful. With her white hands and her fair face one would never have believed her to be the daughter of an artisan. Her big blue eyes, so full of kindness, were shaded by black eyelashes, and when she laughed one's heart glowed in the joyous sound, and one wished one could often hear her laughing.

Iotza--he had been workman with Dinu for a long time--when the mistress