

was out of the house, had more than once asked her to mend something for him, and not infrequently she had brought him drink from the cellar when the frost was sharp and he had complained that he could not stand the cold. And with all his prudence Iotza had let drop a word in the workshop in praise of Ana's kindness.

And so it came about that they all waited for the mistress to go out that they might speak to Ana and ask her one thing or another.

Only Sandu had never been to her. And that was why he especially wanted now to divert her thoughts and make her smile.

Her eyes troubled him, and he felt happier when he found himself back in the workshop.

One day, according to the allotment of the work, it was his duty to turn the skins in the vats full of birch bark solution. He was alone in the workshop, he could work in peace, but he often let the stick fall from his hand, for, unlike other days, that day the fumes made him perspire, and he did not notice whether the skins were thoroughly turned. There was one vat more to turn when the door opened gently.

"Good luck, Sandu."

Sandu raised his head as though he were in a dream, wiped away the sweat, and looked at Ana as one looks at a person one does not the least expect to see. He wanted to say something to her, but a lump rose in his throat. Ana came nearer to him.

"Sandu, I came to tell you to put the sandals in the box after you have turned the skins."

"Good," replied Sandu.

"Don't forget what Father said," and away she went.

Outside she met Iotza, and passed him in such a hurry that she did not hear his greeting.

"Well, Sandu, what did Ana want in the workshop?" he asked as he threw his apron behind a vat.

"Nothing," replied Sandu, who was disappointed at not talking longer with Ana.

"Nothing? Well, well! Listen, have you turned the skins?"

"I have."

"Have you filled the boiler with water?"

"Yes, I have."

"How much have you put? You have not filled it! Bring two more bucketfuls."

"How can you pour two more bucketfuls in when it does not hold more than one?"

"It does not hold more? I tell you plainly you have been too lazy to bring more, and who knows how you have turned the skins."

Sandu grew red.

"Iotza, I learnt my work from the master and not from the workman."

"And what next?"

"The next is, that I don't need your advice."

"We shall see," cried Iotza, and went off.