

"Do you think I shall pity you because you don't eat? You have not turned them well, and that's all. I didn't begin to keep a workshop to-day or yesterday."

"Mistress-----"

"Oh, it's always mistress, mistress! Do your work properly, and don't let your thoughts go wandering far afield, then no one need find fault with you."

The workmen rose. Sandu got up too; his feet could hardly carry him, and his head was heavy.

For two whole days Sandu did not know whether he was himself or some one else. He could not take his food, sleep only came to him at rare intervals. And during this time he often thought of going to Master Dinu and giving him notice. Several times he had left the workshop determined to tell him, but once Iotza had called him to come and help with something, and then he had thought it over and had left it to a more suitable time when he should find Dinu alone, for in front of the mistress he could have said nothing to him.

And who knows whether he would have said anything, if Master Dinu had not come through the workshop. He asked him how the skins were getting on, and then, as he never cared to prolong a conversation, he prepared to go, after telling him that one lot of work must be pressed forward, and the other done in such and such a way.

Sandu had followed him but the words died upon his lips.

"What is it, Sandu? Do you want to tell me something?"

"Well, Master Dinu, without any offence to you, I want to give up the work."

Master Dinu looked long at him. He was prepared for anything except this, and just now when the fairs were in full swing.

"You want to give me notice? But why?"

"Because the mistress is always abusing me, and she is not satisfied with the way I work, and Iotza makes fun of me, and I can bear it no longer: it is too hard. I work with all my might, and I want to do good work, and I don't want you to keep me just out of charity as people say you do."

"Come, don't do that; you know the mistress, that is her way. As for Iotza--listen, I'll stop his mouth. And, then, where would you find another place? Take my advice and let me talk to the mistress."

Master Dinu went away, and Sandu returned to the workshop. Before he had spoken with Master Dinu he had not seemed to realize whether there was work to finish, and now he did not know whether he had finished it or not.

Master Dinu went into the house. He told his wife that Sandu had wished to leave, and bade her leave him in peace from now on, seeing that he was an industrious workman and an honest man.

"Thank you," replied his wife; "let me tell you that I take as much interest in the workshop as you do, and if I am not to be allowed to speak to the workmen, or give them orders about the work-----"

"I do not say you are not to give them orders, but you are not to make fun of them. After all, they are human beings."

"So I am in the wrong! If I tell them how they are to do something I am making fun of the men; impertinent man, to accuse me of joking. And why didn't you send him away?"