

The Boarwolf

By Robert Pearse Gillies

From *Tales of a Voyager to the Arctic Ocean*, Volume III (1826)

(Attributed to Johann August Apel)

Transcriber's note: In Tales of a Voyager, "The Boarwolf" was a story told by one of the characters, and appeared entirely in quotes. I have removed the quotes, for legibility. I have also retained (or modernized) the American spelling modifications that editor Henry St. Clair introduced when republishing this story in his anthology Tales of Terror (1833).

In that mountainous region called the Bergstrasse, which lies along the banks of the Rhine, it was formerly the custom for the young men, when they came to a certain age, to enroll themselves in a company of hunters, for the express purpose of pursuing and destroying wolves; for which reason the band was called the wolf-slaughterers. Indeed, that part of the country is so craggy, so full of caverns, and so crowded with woods, that it is the place in the world most fitted for the harbor of wild beasts, and accordingly, there were in former times a vast number to be found there; so many, in fact, that had not the wolf-slaughterers been very active, daring young men, it would have been almost impossible to have resided there; and it was only by their exertions, that the villagers of Fiendenheim were able to preserve any cattle. Many ages ago, and long before the invention of firearms, there were at the head of this band two young men, who were particularly successful in their attempts against the wolves. They were both strong, fearless, and well skilled in the use of their weapons, and they were considered as chiefs of the troop, because each had destroyed more wild beasts with his own hands than any other two belonging to it, although, between themselves, the number was equal; for if Hendrick, (so one was called,) at any time had the advantage, Wolfgang, the other, never desisted from the chase till he had brought home the head of a wolf, to reduce their conquests to the same level. This rivalry was, however, not the occasion of any enmity between these young men; for, as they had been brought up from children together, they were accustomed to strive for the same prizes, and engage in the same undertakings, so that they were always most pleased when both succeeded in the same degree. Indeed, it is said, that when one had the superiority,

he always relaxed his exertions, till the other came up with him, and that they retained this habit in the chase; for Wolfgang has been known, after he had killed one beast, to miss the next purposely, that Hendrick might strike it, and Hendrick has done the same, when fortune was on his side. Another reason why there was no quarrel between them, perhaps, was, that they were both equally handsome. Not that they were alike in feature, though they were of the same height; for Wolfgang's beauty had a boldness in it, which Hendrick's wanted, but then Hendrick's countenance was calm and interesting, and as their tempers agreed with their persons, each thought his own exterior the best, so that envy did not threaten to render their friendship of short duration. There is, however, always some stumbling block in the way of perfect happiness, and this the friends met with.

It chanced, one evening, whilst returning by themselves from the chase, bearing on the points of their spears the heads of two wolves, which they had just slaughtered, that they passed through a deep narrow glen, leading between high rocky banks, from the clefts of which grew out birch and mountain ash trees, in such numbers, as to overshadow their path, and give a wild gloom to the space beneath. They had not reached halfway, when they heard a loud growl, and looking carefully round, espied a hideous monster, partly concealed amongst tall stones and low bushes. Wolfgang cried out, "a boar! a boar!" and Hendrick exclaimed, "a wolf! a wolf!" both preparing instantly to attack it. But the brute, which was employed in devouring its prey, after displaying a frightful pair of jaws, and making show of resistance, turned its tail, and fled through the underwood, hidden from their view, till it reached the mouth of the ravine, when springing suddenly out, it escaped into a more open country. The huntsmen, however, knowing that it must choose to fly through the gorge of the pass, or remain in the dell, had hurried that way, and were close at its heels, when it darted from the thicket. This gave them hopes, and giving full rein to their horses, they pursued it over a wide piece of heathy waste. They had now a good opportunity for ascertaining the nature of the animal they followed; but, notwithstanding their skill in the chase, they were unable to decide what kind of beast it was; for, though it had the straight back, bushy tail, and long gallop of a wolf, still it had the thick, bristly, and snouted head of a boar, and its feet were not similar to those of any animal they had seen. They, therefore, supposed it might be some mongrel brute, or one of the wild beasts brought from Syria, which had broken loose from the menage of the Archbishop of

Mentz. But, be it what it might, they pushed after it with the greatest resolution, because, when they had started it from its lurking place, they perceived it had been tearing in pieces the body of a child.

The direction which the monster took led them across a small stream, that divided their district from the neighboring one, and brought them at last into a place dangerous for horsemen, and difficult for the pursuit of game. It was an extensive level, reaching from the rivulet to a distant range of hills, and would have been a plain had it not been covered with huge masses of detached rock, scattered about it, as if a large mountain had been dashed to pieces, and strewed over its surface.

Many of the fragments were so large, that they resembled small cliffs, and from their tops and sides grew out and hung down trees and shrubs of every description. Several lay as if fallen against each other, so as to leave caverns and arches between their sides, and the red glare of the sun setting behind the hills, gleamed through these openings in a wild and beautiful manner. Other pieces were small and plentiful, lying in heaps, as well as separately, amongst the larger masses; so that, though there were many roads and passages between these rocks, still they were rendered unsafe for horses by these lesser stones.

The hunters had scarcely entered this region before they lost sight of their game; but, hoping to regain the scent, they dashed forward amongst the pathways, and, after a short time saw the brute turning round the corner. This tempted them still further, till, after bewildering themselves amidst the intricacies of this desert, they gave over the pursuit, having ceased for some time to see the monster, and, indeed it was growing so dark, that they would not have been long able to view it had it been before them.

They now thought of returning home to Fiendenheim, and turned their horses the way contrary to that which they had come, and, as they rode along, wondering what kind of beast they had chased, they found that their exertion had both, fatigued them and made them excessively thirsty. Accordingly, they resolved to take a full draught from the stream when they reached it, and agreed to ask permission of the lord of that domain to bring their whole troop on the following day, to give full pursuit to so dangerous a monster. They were talking about the dogs and weapons they would bring with them, when they caught a glimpse of a light at a

short distance, and wishing to obtain, if possible, something better than a draught of water, to quench their thirst, they made towards it, and arrived at the door of a residence, half cottage and half cavern, which stood under the side of one of the largest masses of rock; and they recollected that this place was the habitation of a hermit, a recluse so austere that he hardly ever suffered himself to be seen by any body.

They knocked at the door, however, and it was opened, not by an old man, with a white beard, as they expected, but by a beautiful girl, of about sixteen, whose face and figure far excelled those of all the daughters of their native hamlet, and, in truth, of any other place they knew. She blushed at first, and seemed inclined to close the door again, but Wolfgang asked, in a tone of compliment, that she would give him a draught of milk, and Hendrick seconded him, with such gentle supplication, that she felt almost compelled to speak; and, then, not liking to refuse so small a request, she brought out a large jug, not of milk but of true Rhenish wine, which she poured out into horns, and offered to each of the huntsmen. They accepted her gifts with many thanks, which she received with smiles; and by way of prolonging the conversation, they inquired whether she had seen or heard of any strange beast near her habitation. She replied, that, within the few last days, her father had told her that he had seen an animal that he had never seen before, and had bidden her be careful that she was not surprised, for that it was very ferocious, and had carried off the child of one of the inhabitants of the village of Grifhausen. She then invited them to alight, saying that, perhaps, her parent could tell them more concerning it.

The young men were both so fascinated with this beauty, that they would willingly have spent some hours in gazing at and conversing with her; but, for some reason or other, they obstinately refused, although she pressed them to enter the cottage. After a little more conversation she wished them good night; and though they both intended to see her again, neither of them mentioned a word of his intention, either to her or to his companion. Indeed, from that moment they became so desperately jealous of each other, (which was the reason why they would not stop that night, each looking upon the other as a rival,) that they scarcely spoke all the way back to Fiendenheim; and the next day, instead of summoning the troop to give the beast chase, each rode separately in search of the cottage, where they met, and quarrelled for the first time; and so bitter was their enmity

afterwards, that it would have been a pleasure to either of them to have run the ether through with a boar spear.

Meantime the wild monster committed great ravages throughout the surrounding country, and it became unsafe for men unarmed, and women and children, to pass from one village to the other; so that there was a general alarm spread round about, for a great distance. The wolf-hunters made many attempts to destroy it, but in vain; for though it did not keep out of the way by day, yet it was so swift, and so artful in eluding pursuit that all their endeavors were fruitless. Even Wolfgang and Hendrick could gain no advantage over their companions, except getting a little closer to the beast than the rest. At length, the lords of three villages, which this animal infested, fancying that there might be some want of energy in the attempts to destroy it, or, perhaps, a little fear, offered a reward of a piece of land to the man who should produce its head, "to belong to him and his heirs for ever," besides the privilege of choosing the fairest maiden within their domains as a wife, to whom they also promised a portion.

This offer produced a great commotion among the young men of the three villages, as well as among the maidens; ail of them being willing to obtain the reward; but upon Wolfgang and Hendrick it had a very strong effect. Since first beholding the young beauty among the rocks, they had both striven to gain her as a wife, but, though she gave them equal audience, she declared positively in favor of neither of them. But when the reward was offered for the head of the beast, she said she would willingly give her hand to the huntsman who should obtain it. Thus, besides the hope of obtaining the reward, and the beauty, there was the fear that another should gain her, and Wolfgang said, that he would rather the beast should tear him to pieces, than that Hendrick should become possessed of her, and Hendrick said much the same of Wolfgang. Nevertheless, the monster continued his ravages, though all the country was in arms against him, and it was at length reported, that Count Albert of Fiendenheim was going to invite all the knights and warriors of his acquaintance, to come and make a grand attempt to rid his lands of such a scourge.

When it came to be known that Wolfgang and Hendrick had quarrelled, the inhabitants of their village were anxious to know the cause of disagreement between two such strict friends, and they soon found it out. But when the young men of Fiendenheim had seen the damsel, they said they could find nothing in her

so enchanting, that there were many girls in their own hamlet far superior to her, and in fact, that she was more disagreeable than pleasing. On the other hand, the two huntsmen had told their sisters that there could not be a greater beauty among women, that her countenance was delightfully fascinating; her eyes of the most brilliant black, her lips glowing coral, her nose finely formed, her complexion radiant with health, and her curling tresses of the loveliest auburn. This, of course, tempted many of the young women to make an opportunity of seeing her, and they agreed with the young men, that she was any thing but agreeable. They found her features sharp and vixen-like, her eyes too small, and glowing more like live coals than diamonds, her nose hooked, her complexion of a peculiar Fallow, and her locks elfish, snake-like, and of a fiery red color. her shape, which they had been told was exquisite, they thought too flimsy, and her dress was so gaudy and scanty, that they agreed she resembled one of the lost girls who wandered about the streets of Mentz, to tempt young men to their ruin, more than a modest inhabitant of the district of Brockencragg; and, in fine, they all agreed that she had infused some philter into the wine she had given to Wolfgang and Hendrick, and thereby deprived them of the right use of their senses and understanding. But, what displeased them more than any thing else, was that she refused to tell from whence she came, or who her father was, nor would she listen to any inquiries about her family, saying, that those who liked her need not know her friends, and that those who disliked her should not.

Wolfgang, as I have already said, was of a temper somewhat impatient, and when he heard that Count Albert purposed calling his friends to assist him, fearing he should lose an opportunity of at once acquiring the beauty, he mounted his horse, and set out on the chase, swearing he would never return without the head of the monster; and, accordingly, he tried every art he was acquainted with, to surprise it unawares, for when it was conscious of being pursued no body had any chance of coming up with it. All his address and toil, through the heat of the day, was, however, of no avail to him. Twenty times had he been on the point of plunging his short sword between its ribs, and as often had it slipped aside, and disappointed him. At last, towards evening, when all the rest, similarly engaged, had given up the chase, he fancied that the animal appeared lame, and exhausted with fatigue. Although he was scarcely otherwise himself, this idea dissipated all his weariness, and hoping that he might now run him down, he borrowed a fresh horse

from the nearest house, and returning to where it lay, hid in its lair, he forced it to rise, and betake itself to that same plain over which he had first pursued it, in company with Hendrick. He had now no doubt that it was maimed, for it ran with a limping gait, and with less speed than before. However, it managed to keep him at too great a distance behind to wound it, and, taking the same course it had formerly done, it led him across the boundary stream, and among those wildly-scattered crags where it had once escaped before. But as Wolfgang had now more advantage than at that time, both in the freshness of his horse, and in the knowledge of the roads, which he had acquired by visiting the cottage, he was able to keep the boarwolf, (for so the monster was called by the peasantry,) in sight.

The red glare of the setting sun was now again gleaming through the uncouth archways, and along the narrow passes of the rocks, as the impatient huntsman followed the brute into the centre of the great level. Here, entering upon a small sandy space, scattered over with fragments of stone and dead wood, Wolfgang lost sight of the animal, for, as it reached the plain before him, he could not decide the way it had taken. His temper, which had long been giving way during the pursuit, now totally forsook him, and throwing himself from his horse, lie rolled upon the sand, cursing and blaspheming every thing that came in his mind. He lay thus employed, at last with his face towards the ground, when, fancying that he felt a strange gust of heat pass over him, he turned his head, and beheld the figure of a being somewhat human, but more resembling a devil. It had horns and a tail, its horns curled round its ears, and its tail was short and turned up like a hook. It was hairy all over and its feet ended in hoofs, like those of a hog.

Wolfgang was in too great a rage to tremble.

"Wolfgang," said the being, "if you will give me power over you for four and twenty hours, you shall cut off the head of the boar wolf."

"I agree," said the huntsman, without stopping one moment to consider.

"Then kiss my hand, in token of obedience," said the stranger.

Wolfgang kissed the hand held out to him, and whilst he started back, for the touch of the being burnt his lips, it vanished, saying, "chase the boarwolf to-morrow."

The huntsman now remounted his horse, and without allowing himself to

think of what he had done, he hastened to the cottage of the beauty, with whom he staid conversing till daylight, for both she and her father treated him as if they could not treat him too well.

At daybreak he saddled his steed, and set off to dislodge the boarwolf from its lurking place, impatient both to make sure of the rewards and to return home, for, as he had vowed not to go back without the head, so he had kept his word.

When Wolfgang reached the glen, where he expected to meet the boarwolf, he found Hendrick there with some companions, who had risen early that morning to try the powers of two large dogs, which they had procured from a great distance. These were bloodhounds of a fine breed, and were now engaged by Hendrick, because all the other dogs that had been employed in the chase of this monster refused to follow it, being so terrified, that, whenever they were put upon the scent, they howled and slunk away in fear. Wolfgang, elated with the kindness so lately shown him by the beauty and her father, and relying on the promise that he should cut off the head of the boarwolf, could not refrain from uttering a loud laugh of contempt, when he saw the pains taken by his former friend and his associates. He even bid him, with a sneer, go home and look out for a wife, for that he meant to marry the beauty that night himself. Hendrick was too intent on endeavoring to get scent of the wild beast, to reply to these insults, and having ascertained that it was not in the dell, he hurried over the hills in search of it; and his rival notwithstanding his security, not being willing that he should first start the game, set off to another spot, where he once or twice had met the animal.

About an hour after this, Wolfgang unearthed the boarwolf. It sprung from beneath the root of an old withered yew-tree, which grew over a low dark cave, in the side of a bank, just as the sun rose brilliantly from behind some opposite hills; and when the ferocious brute opened its jaws, to utter a hideous roar, its long tusks gleamed in the morning-rays, and the white foam spurted from its mouth like flakes of snow, while its bristly hide seemed to glitter in the light, as if throwing out sparks of fire. The eager huntsman rushed forward after it, eyeing with joy the ghastly grinning head, which he expected soon to sever from its huge, ill-fashioned carcass, and which was to form the foundation of his fortune, and the pledge of his union with his mistress. He forgot that Hendrick was also in the field with his friends, and their unerring dogs, or, if he thought of him, it was only to enjoy the anticipated mortification of his former friend, when he returned to the village,

bearing with him the spoil for which they both thirsted so ardently.

The boarwolf, however, as if conscious that its existence was to terminate that day, seemed resolved to exercise the strength and perseverance of its pursuer. It took wider and more intricate circuits than it ever had done before, it turned more frequently to bay and almost appeared to enjoy the eager onsets which the huntsman made to overcome it: but the horse of Wolfgang could only be brought to ride at it by the most strenuous endeavors of its master, exhibiting such evident marks of dismay at its glaring eye-balls, and erected bristles, that he could scarcely keep its head towards it; and when to offered to dismount, for the purpose of attacking it with his sword, the monster took the opportunity of making off at full speed.

In this manner the chase continued till long past noon, by which time Wolfgang had become so faint, with hunger and exhaustion, that he could scarcely keep his seat; for he had been extremely fatigued the day before, and had not closed his eyes during the night, having been too much engaged with his mistress to think of sleep. Besides, he had scarcely tasted food since the morning of the day before, for he took nothing but wine at the hermitage, and this day he would not stop one moment to assuage his hunger at the cottages of his acquaintances, near which he passed, lest the boarwolf should escape, or have time to renew his strength by rest. However, he recollected that his mistress, when she heard that he intended to renew the chase early in the morning, had given him a small cake, which she had prepared during his stay, for she said that she was certain his eagerness would not allow him to think of refreshment, and that her gift would quell his appetite, and support his strength, till he had slain the monster. Upon this he drew the loaf from his pocket, and eat it, with many mental thanks for the kind attention of the giver, and he felt his desire to slaughter the boarwolf increase with his wish to obtain the hand of so amiable a girl. As she had said, so the cake, though small, satisfied his hunger, and renewed his spirits, or, rather, made them more buoyant than before. Indeed, so much did he feel elated, that he spurred on his horse as if just set off in the pursuit, and the monster was obliged to fly more quickly than it had ever done. But the weather, which had hitherto been brilliant and enlivening, now suddenly altered; large masses of dark clouds rolled up from behind the distant mountains, the wind rose, and swept along the edges of the woods with violence, full drops of rain fell at intervals, and the distant waters of the

river were heard rushing along their rocky bed. Wolfgang was too much accustomed to the field not to know that these signs presaged a storm; but his ardor would not permit any idea of relinquishing the pursuit to enter his mind; besides, he fancied these signs were but preludes to the death of the boarwolf, and he gazed at it with exultation as, for the third time that day, it hurried through the dell where he and Hendrick had first discovered it. His spirits, now high, and free from fatigue, bore him along with a feeling of triumph, and though the wind shook the branches of the trees over his head, and sighed in the most threatening manner, he paid no attention to the impending tempest.

At length, as he once more spurred along to the rocky level, the clouds burst above him, and a deluge of rain and hail surrounded him instantaneously; he seemed almost as if enclosed in a moving mass of water, and as the drops struck against the ground they broke into a fine mist, which rose up on the wind like a second shower, or as if the earth were heated and being quenched by the rain, while large hailstones flew and danced about in every direction, causing his horse to start repeatedly.

So thick and heavy was the shower, that Wolfgang lost sight of the boarwolf for a short time, though it still kept at the same distance before him. But an unusual darkness now began to add to the horrors of the storm, not like the approach of night but a deep gloom, as if the sun were losing its light. Thunder burst in loud peals amongst the hills, and flashes of lightning at times shot along before him. Yet all these combined terrors had no effect on the mind of the huntsman; at least he laughed at them with the feelings of a man intoxicated, for the few mouthfuls he had taken had produced a state of idea almost similar to the effect caused by liquor, without impeding his capability of bodily action. A hundred times he blessed the providence of the beauty, in providing against his fatigue, and he heard the swollen waters of the boundary stream foam amidst the stony windings of its channel, without one impression of fear, or suggestion of prudence.

The boarwolf chose the widest whirlpool over which to leap, and Wolfgang sprung boldly over the boiling vortex. He heeded not the laboring breath and staggering limbs of his courser, but spurred him violently, as he entered the district of Brockencragg, along the path which led to the hermitage, for in that direction the monster proceeded before him.

The storm raged with peculiar fury in this wild and desolate region. The wind roared hideously, as it rushed along the numerous passages amongst the rocks, and the summits of the tall trees, that grew upon them, were bent below the crevices in which their roots found nourishment. Twice did Wolfgang escape the fall of trunks, which were torn with harsh crashes from their beds, and many times was he nearly struck from his saddle by pieces of stone, broken from the margin of cliffs by the lightning, which now darted closely around him. But his spirit and his persuasion that the head of the monster would soon become his spoil, were unabated and unalloyed, till, just as he was approaching the cottage of his mistress, the boarwolf uttered a tremendous yell, which was answered by the distant bay of dogs. "That fiend Hendrick!" muttered Wolfgang, as the idea that his hated rival might rush in between him and his reward glanced across his mind. He spurred on his steed, more unmercifully than before, and was in an instant close by the hermitage. The beauty, as if fearless of wild beasts, of lightning, or of thunder, stood at the door, waving her hand in encouragement to her lover, and he thought she seemed to enjoy the flashes of fire that glanced along before her; her face was bright, and her eyes shone, her hair floated in the wind. He heard her say, "Do you hear Hendrick?" and in a moment was out of her sight and hearing, for, having turned a corner, the brute led him directly to the centre of the level. All the fury of the storm seemed likewise to tend that way, for the violence of the wind, rain, and hail, behind him, was almost intolerable. His horse rushed along, as if borne by a rapid stream, striving more to keep itself steady than to maintain its speed; the lightning flashed round every crag, and the thunder seemed rolling along upon the earth, and jarring at every instant with the scattered fragments of rock.

Even these he fancied tottered as he passed them, and shook their crumbling edges on his head; — tittering and grinning whispers seemed to mock his oars, as he listened to the deep mouthings of Hendrick's blood hounds; and the boarwolf growled and tore up the earth, as it fled before him. However, he gained upon it, and, only intent upon the accomplishment of his wishes, drew forth his short sword, to make a desperate attack, for he perceived by its agitation and furious howls that it would soon turn to bay. He was close at its heels, as it entered upon the sandy space in the centre of the level, and at the instant the monster turned and offered resistance, his horse fell dead close beside it. The boarwolf sprung upon Wolfgang, and ripped up his thigh with its tusk; but the huntsman, though writhing

with pain, struck a tremendous blow at its brawny neck, which cleft the spine, and the head hung from its shoulders. Another blow severed it completely; but at that instant a dense smoke, mingled with flame, issued from the carcass, and the boarwolf was changed into that fiend-like being whom he had seen in that same place on the day before.

"Wolfgang," it exclaimed to the terrified hunter, "thou hast cut off the head of the boarwolf; for twenty-four hours thou art mine. — Aye, and forever! — Be thou now a boarwolf!"

"Not now," cried Wolfgang, gasping with horror at the thought, "Hendrick is coming, he will slay me."

"I mean it," replied the demon laughing ferociously, "I brought him here, his dogs are mine — see he comes!"

Wolfgang turned his head and saw Hendrick rushing towards him; he felt his figure change, his hands became feet, his head grew large and bristly, he sunk down towards the earth, and stood like a four-footed brute, but bewildered and unable either to fly or resist.

The most bitter feelings of terror and despair overwhelmed his faculties. He sprung into the air, and attempted to scream with rage, but he only uttered a harsh hoarse roar, like a boarwolf. It was answered by Hendrick, who at that moment fixed his eye upon him, with a wild shout of joy; his friends also shouted, and the blood-hounds, giving a tremendous yell, sprung upon him and held him firmly with their teeth. Hendrick leaped from his horse, and raised his sword, and while Wolfgang vainly strove to exclaim, "Spare me, Hendrick! spare me!" his rival and former friend smote off his head at a blow. His spirit fled with a groan, a dreadful clap of thunder shook the earth, a flash of lightning enveloped the group, and scathed the bleeding body of the huntsman; but Hendrick nevertheless lifted up the head, and with his companions gave three victorious shouts; he then thrust the point of his spear into the neck, and, remounting his horse, rode away from the plain with his associates, bearing before him, unconsciously, the head of his once dearest friend.

They made their way directly to Fiendenheim, and were received joyfully by the villagers, who ran to inform Count Albert. The lord received the spoil in form,

admiring its ghastly look, and directed his seneschal to make out the deed of gift, of four acres of land, to Hendrick the wolfslayer, to him and his heirs forever. He then bade the fortunate huntsman choose the maiden he liked best for his bride, and bring her to him on the following morning, as he intended to bestow upon her a marriage portion.

Hendrick, notwithstanding the fatigue he had undergone since daybreak, could not resist the pleasure of communicating his success to the beauty, and of claiming her promise. He therefore quitted Fiendenheim, and took the direction of the Brockencragg level, with almost as much speed as if engaged in another chase. The weather was now calm and serene, the wind had subsided, not a drop of rain fell from the unclouded sky, and a pure and beautiful evening had succeeded to the tempestuous afternoon; nor would it have been suspected that such a storm had so recently occurred, had not the swollen streams, that rushed amongst the rocks, and over the pathways, been unusually large, and their waters turbid, and loaded with fragments of branches, and the spoils of their banks.

By the time the eager lover arrived within sight of the cottage of his mistress, the first stars of evening had appeared, and a gentle gloom had fallen on all the surrounding objects. A calm stillness was spread over the vast desert of shattered rocks, only interrupted by the croak of the raven, which sat among the overhanging trees, by the shriek of the owl, which floated forth from the recesses amongst the cliff. But of a sudden, as Hendrick spurred his horse up to the door of the hermitage, a strange wild shout of mirth burst from within the dwelling, composed of sounds and voices he had never heard before. The chimney, too, smoked violently, and a bright gleam of light shot from the casement across the pathway, and small rays issued from beneath the caves and crevices in the walls.

Impatient and alarmed, Hendrick, with a lover's privilege, hastily opened the door, and entered; but what was his amazement to find himself in the midst of a company of beings of the most appalling description. There sat in the old chair, which the beauty's father was wont to occupy, the same fiend who had tempted Wolfgang to his destruction. Before him, in the midst of the floor, was a large fire, blazing up to the ceiling in blue flames, mingled with green and yellow. Around this danced a circle of devils, of all figures and sizes, throwing themselves into the most distorted attitudes, and shrieking at alternate intervals. There lay on the floor a human carcass, the head of which was concealed by a black veil, and the old fiend

had his feet placed upon it, while his hoofs, now lengthened into claws, penetrated the flesh, and when the demon contracted his talons, the body gave convulsive throes, and dashed its limbs about, to the great diversion of the assembly.

Hendrick stood and stared aghast at this sight, for a crowd of fears and suspicions overwhelmed his soul. He looked around for the beauty and her father, but in vain; till at length a tall slender fiend sprung from the circle towards him, and seizing his hand in her burning grasp, drew him forward, saying, "Why, Hendrick my betrothed, do you not know your bride?"

Hendrick gazed upon her, and saw in her sharpened features, parchment skin, and glowing eyes, some appearance of the girl who had been the sole object of his and Wolfgang's love; but with a shuddering start he endeavored to free himself from her grasp. She, however, held him tightly, and drawing him to the circle, another fiend caught him by the hand, in the same manner, and he was thus forced to dance round the fire, as one of the group, whilst the demons grinned and chattered at him, with fearful and malicious joy.

Although the heart of Hendrick sunk within him, at the hideous figures and grimaces of his companions, his senses still remained collected, and his thoughts were bent on finding some method of escaping from this detestable spot. His love and hopes were converted into the utmost disgust and dread, and his eyes wandered from side to side, to avoid the diabolical leers and hellish mockery of the fiend who pretended to be his bride. She, however, seemed not to regard his hatred, but telling her crew that he was impatient for the conclusion of his nuptials, stopped opposite to the frightful demon who sat in the chair —

"Father," said she, "this is my bridegroom, he wishes you to unite us forever."

"Have you the ring?" said the old fiend, in a harsh and hollow voice.

"This is the one he gave me," said the pretended bride, holding forth one which Hendrick knew he had presented to her, some days before.

"Is he willing to bind himself to you and yours?" said the presiding devil of this infernal ceremony.

"You shall hear him promise," answered the bride. "Speak, Hendrick, love, speak," continued she to the astonished huntsman, whose hair now stood on end,

and whose limbs quaked beneath him, whilst the sweat stood cold upon his brow, although the room felt like a furnace.

"If he will not speak, let him kneel and do homage," exclaimed Satan.

At this the fiends on either side of the terrified hunter, strove to pull him down; but Hendrick, aware that by that prostration he should yield up his soul to the powers of darkness, resisted with his utmost strength, whilst he groaned loudly and wrestled with the demons.

"Show him, then," cried the arch-demon, stamping with passion, "show him what he shall become, unless he obeys. Let him see! let him see! — up Wolfgang up!" continued he, shouting hideously. Upon this the corpse that lay at the foot of the chair started from the floor, and as the black cloth fell from its head, Hendrick recognised the pale and bloody corpse of his friend Wolfgang. The head was resting on the shoulders, but there was a deep red gash round the neck, as if it had been divided.

"Dost thou know him?" cried the fiend-bride, as she saw her lover tremble involuntarily.

"Yes, he knows him." cried the old demon, "and shall be like him, unless he joins in the chase." He then vociferated, "the boarwolf! the boarwolf!" and the body of Wolfgang was changed into the resemblance of that monster, and began to run round the cottage, whilst all the imps and demons, uttering tremendous yells, pursued it, darting fire from their nostrils, and piercing the howling brute with their burning claws. Hendrick's two companions endeavored to pull him forward after the rest, and the principal fiend exclaimed, "Force him! tear him! drag him!" — but the huntsman's feelings were wound up to a pitch of horror, and struggling violently, he exclaimed, "God and St. Hubert protect me!"

The fiends instantly screamed, and let him go, and he sprung through the fire, his only way to escape, and out at the door. In an instant he was on his horse, and in good time, for the whole legion of devils poured out of the cottage, with the boarwolf at their head.

Hendrick dashed his spurs into the sides of his beast, and fled, and the frightful crew followed, filling the air with their vociferations. At every instant one or other of the demons seemed on the point of pulling him from his horse; they snatched at

him, at his arms, at his neck, at his legs, and at his long flying dress, that floated on the air behind him. They called on him to stop; his bride offered to throw her arms round him, she shrieked in his ears, and blew fire from her mouth, she cursed and reviled him. But the huntsman still fled, and called on the saints to assist him, till reaching the boundary stream, he leaped his horse over its rapid current, and found himself free from his hateful persecutors. Nevertheless he checked not his bridle, but kept on his way till he reached the village of Fiendenheim, where he rushed in dismay up to a crowd of the inhabitants.

The men of Fiendenheim shouted when they saw the successful huntsman, who had ridden forth in the anticipation of happiness, return so terrified, and the women screamed as they gazed at the man and horse, black with smoke, and dripping with perspiration. "Is this the bridegroom?" cried they. "Where is the bride?" Hendrick, for a long time, could not speak; at length, after drinking a deep and long draught to clear his throat, he told what he had seen. All the hamlet was in agitation. They ran to the castle of Count Albert, and clamoured to see the head of the boarwolf. The warder called for torches, and led the way into an inner court; but instead of the grim visage of the rapacious monster, they beheld the pale and withered features of Wolfgang the huntsman, slowly dropping gore, as it stood on the end of a pike. Hendrick fainted, and lay long in a trance, and when he did recover he retired into the monastery of St. Hubert, where he shortly died.

Ages have passed away since this event is said to have occurred, and generation after generation has sunk into the tomb, but the tradition survives, and the peasant of the Bergstrasse, when he hears the howls of the wolf, redoubled and prolonged by the echoes of his mountains, starts with horror, and recollects the fate of Wolfgang the hunter; and it is still asserted that, on the anniversary of the fatal night, when he was slain, the boarwolf is seen to run yelling amid the hills, pursued by the demons to whom he so unhappily bound himself.