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HIGHEST AWARD ST. LOUIS, 1904.

A MISSION FULFILLED

And now, at length, after hours of suspense and uncertainty, each one growing more unbearable than the last, as he stood upon the tiny pier, searching the cloudy night for signs of a coming boat—now at length he heard the splash of oars breaking through the calmer shelter of the Sorrento Bay, and heard the preconcerted signal — the whistle twice repeated. In another minute Margherita, wet and cold, was in his arms, and the anxious vigil was over.

"It was too rough for you to come over, little one," he murmured, with solicitude, now that he had her safe.

"Ah, no! We know the way so well," she answered, shyly. "But Giuseppe and Serafino, poor boys, they cannot return tonight. It is too late and wild."

"No, no, of course not," assented Keith. "You must sleep here tonight, ragazzi miei, and be off early tomorrow morning." And he put some money—a large sum, as it seemed to the boy—into Guiseppe's hand. "But, in twenty minutes—no later—come up to the Hotel Victoria, above yonder."

Giuseppe grinned and nodded. Even in these few days Keith's Italian had much improved; and, if not very grammatical, was at any rate generally comprehensible. Then the young Englishman offered his arm to his wife, and they climbed quickly up the steep incline. Arrived at the hotel, he dragged her in to make a hurried meal, while the horses were being put to the carriage. If they were quick, it was just possible to get to Castle-a-Mare in time for the last train to Naples.

As Ronaldson led the girl into the half-lighted salle-a-manger, now silent and deserted, he glanced hastily toward her. He was prepared for anything, down to bare feet and ankles, and at the moment was too much in love to feel that any eccentricity in Margherita's appearance would trouble him greatly. But, when the fisher-girl had thrown off the large shawl with which she had been enveloped, he found that there was nothing peculiar in her attire, or want of attire, and that she was dressed like any ordinary middle-class Italian. Her pretty feet were thrust into shoes and stockings, and her jacket and skirt were of some dark unnoticeable material, fitting the slight figure not ungracefully. Margherita had, in fact, as was natural, dressed herself in her Sunday suit, and having no bonnet or hat in her possession, had tied, after the fashion of the women of the mainland, a strip of black lace about her dark hair, and round her slight brown neck. Intuitively she guessed that her English husband would like her appearance to be as little remarkable as possible in the eyes of strangers. For the rest, her cheeks were flushed and her dark eyes shining, and she had never looked more beautiful or more modest than now, as she stood blushing beneath Keith's approving glance.

"The boys must take that back," she said, shyly, pointing to the large dark shawl; "it is the poor madre's. I took it to cover me from the storm, and for the first half hour I lay beneath it at the bottom of the boat, as it was not quite dark, and I feared that someone might recognize me."

Then she relapsed into silence as the waiter entered, and Ronaldson found it useless to try to induce her to eat. She tried to do so at his bidding, but failed, and he could see that, although very quiet, she was full of excitement. When at length the boys came in, and had received the letter with many injunctions from Keith as to its immediate delivery, she still stood by in silence as he addressed them.

"Look here, boys," said the young man, with a good-humored frankness, "if anyone asks you after Margherita, you can tell them that she is my wife. I married her this morning in the church at Capri. You can ask the padre P. And I'm very proud of my wife," he added, putting his arm around her. "Don't forget the letter, boys, and don't forget that Margherita is my wife. Now be off with you!"

The boys grinned and showed their white teeth, but paused as Margherita came toward them. Without a word, but with trembling lips, she suddenly flung her arms round each of their necks—a caress which they received somewhat less ungraciously than would have done two English boys of the same ungallant age of twelve and fourteen. Then she turned, and putting her trembling hand on Keith's arm, walked out with him into the troubled, fitful moonlight, where the carriage stood awaiting them. In an hour they were rattling over the stones of Castel-a-Mare, and a few minutes later were seated in an empty first-class on the Naples line.

The girl was still very silent, and even Keith did not wonder. It had been an eventful day to her, and self-controlled though she were, yet it would have been strange had she not been quivering mentally and bodily with an over-wrought brain and heart. She seemed only half to hear the voice of her husband as he tried to divert her mind by light and loving talk.

"Tomorrow morning, my Margherita," he said, "we must be out early—very early, before, the old prefect is ready for us, and go to the shops. We must buy you a bonnet and a traveling dress; that will do for the present—until we get to Florence or Milan; and then, little one, my wife must have a regular trousseau."

But for the moment Margherita seemed deaf even to the magic subject of personal adornment. She smiled absently, and then, suddenly raising her head from his shoulder, whither she had laid it, she looked into his face with a terrible earnestness.

"Ah," she exclaimed, pitifully, "if it should not last—if you should change?"

"You are cruel, Margherita; why do you think of such things?"

"Ah, Dio! a man is not always in love. I am not of your rank, of your education. If you should learn to despise me, sposo mio!"

"I could never despise you, my darling."

"If you should compare me with your friends in England——"

"They could few of them compare with you," he answered, warmly. "Margherita, little wife, do you misdoubt my love?"

"Not now, sposo mio, not now. But ah! if you should ever tire of me, and wish all this undone, if ever you should feel the coral girl a burden on your life—ah, then, Dio mio! I would that I might rather fling myself instead out through yonder window—now while you love me—into those waves below!"

The train was winding round the shore; the rise and fall of the heavy rollers made solemn music through the open windows. On the other side of them was a weird and ghastly glow, which also rose and caught the girl's pale face in its crimson gleam, as she fixed her eyes on his. It was the falling shower of blood-red cinders that dropped, rocket-like, from the volcanic cone. They were passing Torre del Greco, and Vesuvius was hanging just above their heads.

Ronaldson put his arm around her and gently laid her face against his breast.

"Look away, my Marghe," he said, with sudden tenderness; "do not think of sea or volcano tonight; they are beautiful by day, but terrible at night. So it is with your fears, my Marghe; they will be gone tomorrow; you are nervous and upset tonight. Tomorrow you will not doubt my love. Call me 'sposo' once more—it is a pretty word; do you think I shall ever tire of it or you? Never, never, my darling!"

CHAPTER IX.

A Peasant Bride.

Eight months had passed; it was the end of March, and Paris, the city of sunshine and flaneurs, looked anything but agreeable today. A cold, raw drizzle was falling from a cold, gray sky, and seemed quite unable to make up its mind whether to continue as drizzle, or to resolve itself into sleet. Inside a handsome apartment on the first floor of a house in one of the most fashionable quarters of the city, a couple were warming themselves assiduously before the little open fireplace which was such a concession to insular tastes. The young man was flinging logs of wood upon the hearth with no niggard hand, while his wife had drawn up an easy-chair, and was stretching out her feet toward the inviting blaze. Presently the former, after looking at his companion approvingly for a minute, bent down and kissed her smooth forehead.

"We didn't do that duet badly, I think, Marghe," he said.

She smiled a little absently in reply.

Eight months of married life, of constant travel and general culture, had greatly changed the coral girl. It was not only that she was now dressed in the most fashionable style and colors, her beauty enhanced, and her queenly figure displayed, as Keith would have them to every advantage; the change went deeper than this. Margherita's very features seemed altered. Her eyes were as gentle and as dovelike as of old, yet more full of thought; education had already refined the contour of her face, and written on it the lines of a new experience, sweet but serious. In truth, the girl's beauty was much spiritualized and now of a higher type—more perfect than before.

Quick of intelligence and sensitive of heart, Keith had been astonished to perceive how rapidly she had absorbed the new impressions, assimilated herself to the new circumstances of her life and of his tastes. Her accomplishments, before marriage, had consisted of a knowledge how to read her own tongue fluently and to write it with difficulty; and even in reaching this stage she was in advance of most of her companions. But now she could both talk and understand English, also read and write it fairly well, and had improved herself in the penmanship of Italian. She had picked up a good deal of miscellaneous knowledge about architecture, painting, and history, such as an intelligent mind would gather from the guidance of a well-informed man like Keith Ronaldson, through the churches and picture galleries of foreign towns. She had also been having lessons in music and singing; and, although as yet no great pianist, could pick out simple airs upon the piano, greatly to her own gratification.

But her singing was her greatest enjoyment, and her husband's greatest pride. Possessed of a beautiful contralto voice and a musical ear, a few weeks had sufficed to put her into sufficient training to take part in duets, both English and Italian, with Keith, to his and her mutual delight. They were never tired of singing together; and although her husband seemed, to her at any rate, too perfect in his art to require further tuition, yet the young Englishman generally took part in the lessons which, by his wish, she received whenever a stay of sufficient length at any one place made them practicable.

One thing there was about Margherita which, from the first, had been subject for deepest self-congratulation to her husband. It was the innate refinement which helped her, in matters where her peasant bringing up had left her ignorant or deficient, so rapidly and instinctively to recognize the better way the moment she saw it. He never had occasion to lecture his wife, however tenderly, on good manners, of ways well-bred; silently she watched and copied—love and sensitiveness her most efficient teachers. Her movements were by nature graceful—even as a fisher-girl he had noticed this — and probably fastidious as he was, he would not otherwise have lost his heart to her. She was, in fact, in deportment already in advance, and in education not so very far behind, many of the wives of his English associates.

It had worked well, he said to himself, this taking his girl bride about from place to place; this showing to her the best pictures, and letting her hear the best music. The artistic Italian nature had readily seized upon culture of this sort; already she knew the names and styles of all the greatest masters, and could sing from memory most of the best-known operatic airs. She was, he decided, quite fit to hold her own in English society; and he would have no cause to blush for his peasant bride. Her foreign ways and Italian accent would effectually disguise any little ignorance or excuse any little eccentricity; and either to look gauche or to act awkwardly would have been almost impossible to Margherita.

It had been a pleasant task to the young man to teach his young wife her first lessons in social life; and he told himself, as indeed he told her, that he loved her every day better. There was some truth in this; as, day by day, Margherita's character unfolded, and charms of disposition and manner, at first hidden away by shyness ventured freely to develop themselves. Alone with him, she was often playful and full of a winsome, gentle fun; while her desire to learn and to improve herself at all times was both amusing and touching to perceive.

She lay back in her chair now, full of thought, and for some time was silent.

"Sposo mio," she said at length—for this was a pet title of his, and she was glad by any form of endearment to avoid that dreadful name of Keith—"Sposo mio, it seems terrible to think it has come so near at last. Only tomorrow, and we shall be there. Ah, Dio!" and she heaved a sigh that was more than half a gasp of terror.

To be Continued.

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KAISER CLASHES WITH THE PRESS

Relations of Newspapers With the German Emperor Is Somewhat Strained.

Berlin, Sept. 3.—Just at present the German Emperor is having all kinds of trouble with the newspapers, and the newspapers are having all sorts of trouble with the German Emperor.

At the present moment the discontent with the fashion in which the Kaiser is kept informed of the trend of public opinion, both in Germany and abroad, is becoming more and more accentuated. For his knowledge of the press opinion in Europe and in Germany his majesty is dependent on the press bureaus of the foreign office and the ministry of the interior. In each ministry there is a special official whose business it is to go through the papers and cut out all that he thinks would interest the Kaiser, or that it is advisable he should read. If, however, this official, as is likely, develops into a sort of censor who decides what the Kaiser should or should not read, his majesty ends by having a completely false idea of what is happening in the world.

Your correspondent used to watch the process of the preparation of the Kaiser's mental pabulum in the Wilhelmstrasse a matter of a dozen years ago. At that time supervision was intrusted to a Herr Gabriel, one of the assistants of Geheimrath Lindau, and later of Lindau's successor, Geheimrath Rossier. Your correspondent first met Herr Gabriel in Sofia, in Bulgaria, when he was German vice-consul in that principality. He was a young and pushful German diplomatist of considerable intelligence; intelligent enough at least to give the Kaiser a fair selection from the European press. He is now back in the east as consul in Varnia. His successors are distinctly inferior, just as Geheimrath Hammann, the present chief of the press bureau, is as far inferior to his predecessor Geheimrath Rossler, as the latter was to Geheimrath Lindau. Under these circumstances it is not to be wondered at if the Kaiser occasionally goes off at a tangent. His knowledge of the trend of European public opinion is poisoned at the source.

Recently the German Emperor has given indications that he is breaking through this false environment — "kicking over the traces," as you would say in America. For instance, there was the remarkable interview with M. Gaston Menier of chocolate fame. While on a cruise in northern waters on board his yacht Ariane he met the Kaiser and was imperially entertained by him. The Kaiser, speaking French all the time, showed that he knew Paris and its latest fashions or fads to his finger tips. He discussed the theater hat question with keen interest, and proved an uncompromising opponent of big millinery. He did not talk much politics, but did not avoid them. On the contrary, touching upon the Franco-German incident of last year, he said that "his intentions had been misunderstood and misconstrued," and accused the press in the matter.

The irresponsibility prevailing in journalism the Kaiser considered most singular. In other professions certain conditions must be fulfilled. Journalists require neither study nor examination. A young man of 22 can write in the greatest and most respected journal in the world articles which make the deepest impression on his contemporaries.

While employing all the necessary courtesy of language in criticising the Kaiser's views, there is much indignation expressed here that his majesty should resort to these regrettable generalizations on such insufficient evidence. The Berliner Tageblatt, for example, wants to know where those 22-year-old leader writers are.

According to the Hamburger Nachrichten the Kaiser, early in his reign, did really try to understand the press, but relinquished the idea after he had set on foot investigations regarding the antecedents and qualifications of the men who wrote for it. His inquiries at the time were conducted by military men, and it is believed that the Kaiser's lingering dislike to the fourth estate is largely due to the influence of his military advisers, who nourish traditional suspicions of newspapermen and their work.

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BLACK HANDS SAY "LIFE FOR A LIFE"

Shadow of Terror Spread Over Russia by Its Mysterious Threat.

St. Petersburgh, Sept. 3.—The assassination of Professor Herzenstein, one of the representatives from the city of Moscow in the recent Duma, and one of the ablest and most useful members of that body, seems to have been a deliberate, cold-blooded murder, committed by a policeman named Nishikin, who went from Moscow to a little watering place in Finland to commit the deed, under the instructions, or at least, with the knowledge of the members of the "League Against Anarchy," an organization of reactionaries in the ancient city. Their knowledge and complicity were accidentally disclosed by the publication in their organ of the news of the assassination on the morning of the evening on which it occurred—more than twelve hours before the deed was actually committed. In the meantime several of Herzenstein's friends at Moscow inquired by telegraph and telephone as to the truth of the story, and were informed that he was stopping with his daughter and a dozen or more leaders of the Constitutional Democrats in daily consultation at a little quiet village on the Baltic Sea.

There have been many assassinations in Russian history, even in modern times, but none was ever more inexcusable or unjustifiable than this. And it is difficult to see what the conspirators expected to accomplish by taking this life, unless it is true, as many believe, it was a mere reprisal for the accidental assassination of General Koskoff, who was shot by mistake for General Trepoff ten days ago. Professor Herzenstein was in no sense a revolutionist. On the contrary, he deplored the methods and the activity of the revolutionary party and used all of his influence to persuade them to adopt peaceful and lawful measures. He was a man of judicial temperament, deliberate habits and a profound student. His advice was invariably on the side of peace and patience, and he was continually advocating conciliatory measures.

Few men in the Duma were so useful as he, although he was not so conspicuous as several others. As I told you in a recent letter, nothing important was ever done by any of the political factions without consulting him, although, unfortunately, his advice was not always followed. If Mr. Stolypin had succeeded in persuading the Constitutional Democrats to assume the responsibilities of the cabinet, Herzenstein would undoubtedly have been minister of finance, because he was regarded as one of the ablest, if not the first authority, in the empire on financial and economical questions. Although he was removed from the chair of political economy in the faculty of the University of Moscow for his liberal opinions, he was frequently consulted by the officials of the Government.

There is an awful rumor in circulation that other members of the Constitutional Democratic party are to be assassinated by the "Black Hand;" and, although it is impossible to trace it to its origin, it causes serious forebodings. It is said that the "Black Hand" proposes an active campaign from this time on, and to take a life for a life. Whenever a supporter of the Czar, an officer of the army or navy or agent of the police or other official is killed by the terrorists, the members of the "Black Hand" propose to retaliate by taking the life of some prominent liberal. Mr. Stolypin, the new prime minister, places no credence in these rumors, and several times, in newspaper interviews, has informed the reactionary element that he had no need of their aid, but unless he takes some rigorous measures to make this appalling rumor untrue he will himself become responsible for whatever may happen. Hitherto it has been the policy to use the entire strength of the Russian Government to detect and punish crimes against the bureaucracy and to ignore crimes committed against the people; but the most important duty before the prime minister at present is to see that the Moscow policeman who was hired to kill Professor Herzenstein is found and executed.

There is a most surprising indifference on the part of the Russian public concerning these assassinations. Perhaps it is because they occur so often. The people of Finland are actually arranging a popular holiday to celebrate the anniversary of the assassination of General Bobrikoff, their former viceroy, and the expenses are to be paid out of the municipal treasuries! The people regard his "removal" as one of the most important events in their history and the first step toward liberty, the beginning of better things, for Finland today has one of the most liberal governments in Europe, with quite as much home rule as Canada.

The newspapers say that a new national flag—a yellow lion on a red background—is to be adopted as the banner of Finland, and will be brought out for the first time in place of the Russian flag at the celebration of Bobrikoff's murder.

A SAD TRAGEDY

Death Comes to Woman Instead of the Bliss Her Devotion Merited.

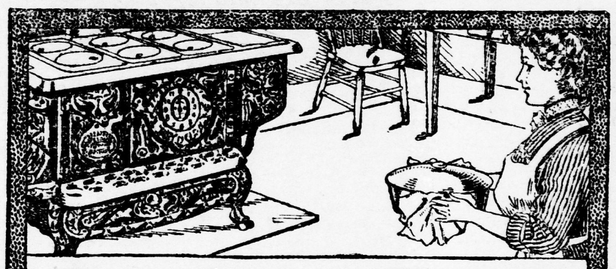
Geneva, Sept. 1. — A pathetic tragedy is reported from the Alpine village of Pernant, in Savoy.

Mlle. Regale, the daughter of a tradeswoman, had been engaged to be married for eleven years to a man who lived at Marseilles, but had always refused to marry so long as her mother was alive.

The mother died a few days ago, and Mlle. Reagle, who was now 32 years of age, wrote to her fiance, stating that there was no further obstacle to their union.

The man, who had continued to correspond with her, but had not seen her for four years, visited Pernant yesterday and told Mlle. Regale that he was married a year ago, and asked her to forgive him for deceiving her.

He left her home shortly afterward, and Mlle. Regale poisoned herself.



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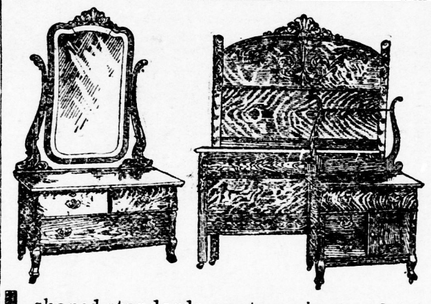

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