

and projected in such strong relief and palpitated so incessantly, that before that open palpitation of blood a kind of dread seized the nuns, as if they were viewing a body stripped of its skin.

When the month of Mary drew near, a loving diligence prompted the Benedictines to the preparation of an oratory. They scattered throughout the cloisteral garden, all flowering with roses and fruitful with oranges, while they gathered the harvest of early May in order to lay it at the foot of the altar. Anna having recovered her usual state of calmness, descended likewise to help at the pious work. She conveyed often with gestures the thoughts which her obstinate muteness forbade her to express. All of the brides of Our Lord lingered in the sun, walking among the fountains luxuriant with perfume. There was on one side of the garden a door, and as in the souls of the virgins the perfumes awoke suppressed thought, so the sun in penetrating beneath the two arches revived in the plaster the residue of Byzantine gold.

The oratory was ready for the day of the first prayer. The ceremony began after the Vespers. A sister mounted to the organ. Presently from the keys the cry of the Passion penetrated everywhere, all foreheads bowed, the censers gave out