

VENDETTA;

The Story of One Forgotten.

CHAPTER IV.

Every one knows what kind of summer we had in Naples, in 1884. The pestilence of all lands...

It was useless to expostulate with this feminine scare-crow; her son was happily by himself, unconscious, and after some time...

The heat in the city was intense. The sky was a burning dome of brilliancy, the Bay was still as a glittering sheet of glass...

August was the most terrible of all the summer months in Naples. The cholera increased with frightful steadiness, and the people seemed to be literally mad with terror...

One morning—one of the very hottest mornings of that scorching month—I awoke at an earlier hour than usual. A suggestion of possible coolness in the air tempted me to rise and stroll through the garden...

A faint breeze greeted me as I sauntered slowly along the garden walks—a breath of wind scarcely strong enough to flutter the leaves...

beats! All illness, a not the plague. Rest here till I return; I am going to fetch a doctor.

The little fellow looked at me with wondering, pathetic eyes, and tried to smile. He pointed to his throat, and made an effort to speak...

"What?" I cried, "you will not try if you can save him?"

"The Frenchman bowed with satirical suavity. Monsieur must pardon me! My own health would be seriously endangered by touching a cholera-stricken man."

"Of course!" he answered calmly. "But what will you? The people here love pleasure. Their hearts are set solely on this life. When death, common to all, enters their midst they are like babes scared by a dark shadow."

"It is the heat, I think," I said, in feeble tones like those of a very aged man. I am faint—ridiculous. You had best leave me here—see to the boy, Oh, my God!

This last exclamation was wrung out of me by sheer anguish. My limbs refused to support me, and I sank down, cold and bitter as though naked steel had been thrust through my body...

"I swear it most willingly, my son," he answered solemnly. "By all I hold sacred, I will respect your wishes."

What did Guido say? "Eure! than the flawless diamond, unapproachable as the farthest star..."

"I am dreamily astonished at this. Dead—so soon? I cannot understand this. And I drift off again into a state of confused imaginings."

"I remember then a fearful sensation, as of being dragged into a deep whirlpool, whence I stretched up my hands..."

"There followed a long, drowsy time of stillness and shadow. I seemed to have fallen in some deep well of delicious oblivion and unconsciousness."

"I looked at him in a certain admiration, and was about to speak, when a curious dizziness overcame me, and I caught at his arm to save myself from falling."

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Roman vault that had never been opened since my father's body was carried to its last resting place with a solemn pomp and magnificent funeral obsequies.

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fantastic terror to my own fears. I knew that were my agony much further prolonged I should go mad, and that my imagination would be filled with frightful things...

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the ground, its splintered portions bearing dejected witness to the dreadful struggle that had ended in my freedom. I had been examined closely. It was a frail shell of a human being, unornamented—a wretched specimen of the undertaker's art...

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