

The Answer is "No"

It is not colored, doctored or adulterated in any form whatever.



In the cup shows an amazing superiority over all others, strikingly apparent. Sold only in lead packages. Black and mixed. All grocers. 25c, 30c, 40c, 50c, 60c per pound.

In the Net.

"I must go down to the community for a few minutes," Sister Agnes said to Valeria. "If you want to go upstairs before I come back, one of the girls will go with you. And she went."

The door of the sala opened abruptly, and a very stern-faced woman came out, and crossed the ante-room to Valeria, whom she confronted angrily. "You are a rascal!" she said violently in English.

"What have I done?" Valeria asked, shrinking. For the woman seemed about to strike her.

"You have said that I am the Count de Morny, and I am Louis Philippe, the king!" cried the woman.

"On the contrary, I always maintained that you were the king," Valeria replied.

"You are a rascal!" cried the woman, snarling.

"Will you say something to her?" said Valeria to the nurse. "I cannot bear this!"

"Go and sit down, Madama!" commanded the nurse. "She won't hurt you," she added to Valeria.

Madama went and seated herself in a chair, and losing after a moment her look of anger, began to smile and talk affably in English to an imaginary company, nodding and answering remarks unheard by all but herself, and totally unconscious of the people really present.

A young woman with yellow hair came out from the sala, and walking to and fro, began to declaim violently against the Italian Government, and to recount the wrongs of the Pope. The Donna Faustina, who had been sitting quietly at her table, rose and began to make courtesies to Valeria, and insisted on kissing her hand. The Donna Claudia burst out of another room followed by Fidelia, the nurse, who tried in vain to stop her. Her eyes were flashing with fury, her mouth was drawn down at the corners, and she growled fiercely, and ran about with her head down, like a wild bull, striking at everything in her way. All signs of beauty were obliterated from her face. She was a beast.

Without waiting for help, Valeria rose, and hastened, half fainting, to the staircase. One of the nurses followed, and helped her up to her chamber, and left her alone in the growing twilight.

This then, was the quiet and peace which they had promised her! This was the house where ladies who were a little nervous went for quiet! They called the Donna Claudia a little nervous!

Valeria was too weak to feel indignation. She was simply terrified. She started at a slight sound, fancying that one of these terrible women had followed her upstairs. She went to the door and tried to fasten it, but there was no lock nor latch on the inside. She longed to be locked in. Then things began to seem strange to her, and she doubted if she had not imagined that horrible scene below, and if it were not she who was mad.

She was in precisely the state in which the person who had carried out, her incarceration had known that she would be placed in the very active condition in such company. She was in danger of going mad.

Fortunately her own feelings terrified her so much as presently to overcome the other fear. She went to the window and watched the boughs wave in the wind and the clouds sailing over the sky.

"The boughs always move that way," she said, "and the clouds sail before me, as though there is nothing strange in nature. But if I were shut up where I could see only the walls of my room I should go mad. Oh, I must keep calm! I must not be afraid. I must wait till I gain a little strength before I think of anything. My room is pretty, and I have good care. I must pretend to be content. If I show any excitement I shall be ruined."

This brought her supper, and the nurse helped her to bed. She scarcely said anything, except to ask what day of the month it was.

"I have had nothing to remind me of the day of the month or of the week for some time," she said.

"Oh, as you get stronger, your memory will come back," the nurse said. "I have not forgotten anything," she replied. "It is because the days in a sick room are all alike."

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The girl went, and this time the door was not locked. She was sorry for it; but quieted her fears with the reflection that women as violent as those she had seen were likely to be locked in and watched. Stretching out her hand for the crucifix that stood by her bed, she clasped it close, and wept in silent desolation.

"Oh, my Lord this is what they call charity!" she said.

She would have been better off in a pagan land.

There were voices on the stairs from which one large chamber of the main body of the casino opened, and the Donna Faustina was heard snarling like a cat. The nurse tried to soothe her; the door shut, and there was silence.

An hour or two passed, and then Valeria, with wide-open eyes, saw a light shining in through her door, and heard a light step coming along the corridor. Her heart leaped, then grew quiet, for it was the black veiled head and white collar of Sister Agnes that appeared at the door.

Valeria closed her eyes and lay still while the sister with a gentle hand smoothed the sheet and cover of the bed, and went softly about the room. It reminded her of a time—how far back in her childish days—when her mother used to come to her so at night before going to bed herself, and make sure that she was well. And the question so often asked in those long-lost winters when the snow-drifts lay without thicker than the green boughs outside her window now, seemed to be spoken again. "Are you warm enough, Valeria?"

They were all dead that made her home and she was in a foreign land and in a mad-house; yet even here something like mercy had found her. As the sister came to her pillow again, Valeria put her arms up, drew the head down, and kissed her silently; and the kiss was not for Sister Agnes, but for her mother sleeping under the snows on a New England hillside across the sea.

"What! not sleeping yet!" said the sister, with a pretty chiding in her voice.

"No! but I think that your coming will bring me sleep. Are those women all locked up?"

"Oh, yes!" Sister Agnes said. "They are always locked in at night. And there is a nurse with the Donna Faustina, whom you could call if you should want anything."

She went away, and this time did not lock the door.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

While Valeria lay ill, telling in her delirium all the bitter story of the past months, while the flood of her malady passed by she lay faint and exhausted on the shore of life, only beginning to live again; and while, having detected and desired their wish to take her to the asylum, she had consented to go, and had been taken to Villa Barberini—the people who, to use the Roman phrase, "interested themselves in her," had been very busy.

It is impossible to commit one crime alone, unless the criminal is willing to suffer the consequences. The wrongdoer who wishes to be held respectable is driven almost in his own desire, by whatever means may best hide his fault, even though, as might happen, he should have to commit a greater crime to hide the first. This necessity is the scourge of the arch-enemy. They have, therefore, the poor excuse of self-defence.

There is another class of persons who presumably have not this excuse. They may be correct enough in their own conduct, but they are very far from those who are not correct. Foremost among this class in Valeria's affairs was Miss Cromo. Her warning on hearing the story of her delirium was to do a harm to one who had seriously offended her, she had two powerful motives; she could thus avoid the enmity of those who might suspect her as Valeria's confidante, and she could secure the friendship of the Countess Belvedere, who could scarcely be ungrateful for such a service.

She helped with a zeal which almost exceeded Bruno's; and she must have wearied even her very active tongue in repeating to all her

acquaintances the different inventions of Bruno's company of assistants.

The servant, Marta, whom Valeria had dismissed, was questioned by Miss Pendleton.

The girl had already been prepared. She was very quick-witted, and a hint was enough.

"Wasn't the signora Valeria a little strange?" Bruno had asked.

Of course she was. The girl poured out a hundred stories—too many, indeed. It was necessary to select from them; and she was made to understand on which she was to insist.

When Miss Pendleton examined the witness, she was scrupulous in charging her to tell only the strict truth.

Marta at once related her inventions in the most pious manner, and swore to the truth of them.

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