



# The True Witness

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**AVE MARIA.**

O Ave Maria! I pray unto thee,  
Thro' life and thro' death, be thou ever beside me,  
Ever, O Virgin! do thou pray for me,  
To Jesus for faith to protect and guide me,  
That here I may walk in the narrow pathway  
Which leads to eternity's never-ending day,  
When the clouds of the evening shall lower around me,  
And earth, like a mirage, is fading away  
From my sight, and the shadow of death shall surround me,  
And all that is mortal to decay,  
Oh! then, dearest Mary! my Mother most mild!  
Receive to thy heart thy poor, wayward child!

When the cold hand of death shall be laid on my heart,  
To stay its pulsations, to stop its emotion,  
And to tell me the moment has come to depart,  
Be thou shining near me, O Star of the Ocean!  
When I stand on eternity's never ending shore,  
O Ave Maria! thy aid I implore!  
When the arrows of death shall afflict me with pain  
And my sins shall surprise me, O Mary! I pray  
For thy intercession, to wipe out each stain.  
From my soul, as she yields up her dwelling of clay,  
In the dark hour of dread, which precedes the cold grave,  
O Ave Maria! thy blessing I crave!

### THE LAST DAYS OF CARTHAGE; OR A SISTER OF FABIOLA. AFTER THE MANNER OF THE FRENCH.

CHAPTER V.—THE CONSPIRACY.

Some days after the scene which we have just described, two men were in close interview in a house near by and were meditating upon the means of executing a scheme which they had already formed. Tertullian, as we have already remarked, had met the High Priest of Carthage issuing forth from the temple accompanied by his attendants. As soon as he saw this worshipper of the false gods, he had cast upon him a look of supreme contempt and indignation. Olympian (the High Priest) was not slow to remark it. He felt profoundly humbled, but knowing the celebrity of the Christian Priest, he thought proper to disguise his sentiments and bear in silence the indignity of the affront. But he nourished in his heart a burning desire for vengeance, and only waited for a favorable moment, which he knew would not be far distant.

At this period, Christianity was making great progress in Africa. It was opposed by the researches of science, and the sayings of oracles, which the heathens regarded as dogmas emanating from the gods. Morality was at its lowest ebb, and this conflicted strongly with the purity and austere discipline of the Christian religion. Persecution had sought to stifle it in its birth, but the germ was divine, and the blood that was made to flow, only served to give sap and vigor to the tender plant. Thus the Church increased in number and strength, while the old religion, wasted and decrepit, was protracting its miserable existence. The gods of the Pantheon were almost deserted, and the smoke of incense arose from its altars, scarcely accompanied by a single prayer. Something was wanting to restore vitality to its cold and inanimate form, and to establish its impotent priapicogony. The disease was recording its vital and it was necessary to apply some remedy, and what was better to accomplish this than the barbarous games of the amphitheatre, the roar of hungry lions, and the blood of martyrs flowing in the arena?

Carthage had been visited by the Apostles at an early age. A few poor slaves at first formed their Church. Afterwards families of high standing en-

tered into their ranks, and many of the nobles did not disdain to follow in their footsteps. Not only in the City but in the neighboring provinces Churches were erected and placed under the direction of pious Bishops. The Church of Carthage was the most flourishing of them all and had obtained the dignity of a metropolitan see. A century afterwards the primate could assemble three hundred Bishops from the provinces over which he exercised his jurisdiction.

Carthage was far distant from Rome and separated from it by a large expanse of water. Its laws and customs were different, and up to the present time it had not imbibed the persecuting spirit of the Roman people. The direful scenes which occurred in the arena of the Coliseum, had never been introduced in Carthage, nor were the Christians obliged to descend into the bosom of the Earth, as was the case in Rome, to consecrate their sacred mysteries in secret and in fear. Sometimes indeed the public opinion would break forth into bitter invectives against the Nazarenes, and the Senate, as a matter of form, would institute an investigation and issue sundry restrictions which would satisfy the people and at the same time leave to the Christians the free exercise of their worship. In every quarter of the town, there was a Christian Church, a sanctuary, an altar and a priest, and their worship was conducted in peace and tranquility. But wounded pride was soon to trouble their repose, and disturb this long peace.

There was a certain Jubal residing in Carthage at this time. He was possessed of considerable riches, and wielded a powerful influence among the nobles of this City. He was tall and well made, and attracted by his appearance the admiration of every one with whom he came in contact. His mind was cultivated and he might be said to have obtained the limits of that knowledge which would be necessary to fit him for the society of that age. His temper, however, was violent, and his anger once excited was almost implacable. He recognised the authority of no one to deflect him through the temptations of life, and left free to himself, he sought nothing but pleasure and amusement. He was but twenty-five years old and he had already drunk to the dregs the cup of criminal pleasure. He feared neither God nor man; once he had conceived the prospect of vengeance, he could not rest until he had carried it into execution, and where he could not accomplish this himself he had a slave who was always ready with his dagger to obey the injunctions of his master.

His father was acquainted with the father of Vivia, but it was rather courtesy that brought them together than feelings of true friendship. They were however, frequently in each others company, as they often invited young people to their banquets. Jubal had the opportunity of seeing Vivia before she had been married to Jarbas.

He was taken with her beauty the first moment he cast his eyes upon her. Her rich and elegant robes, set off with jewelled chains, served still more to enhance her natural charms. He sought a place by her side, and endeavored to draw her into a private conversation. But his style of converse, as well as the subject which he had chosen, was more suited to the houses of debauchery, which he frequented, than to the delicate and modest ears of Vivia. Vivia blushed with indignation, and casting at him a look of supreme contempt muttered through her trembling lips, "the lamb should not be near the wolf." She then arose and sat beside her mother. Jubal could scarcely restrain his rage, mingled feelings of shame and hatred left him unable to utter a single word. His lips trembled and grew livid, and in his impotent fury, all he could do was to cast a scowl of defiance at her, who, he imagined, had so deeply insulted him. He could stay no longer. He did not wish that any one should notice his confusion, so he withdrew quietly from the room, not however without a low murmur of imprecation upon Vivia.

"Vengeance! Ah! that word is sweet," exclaimed Jubal, when he had regained the street—"lamb! wolf! No one has ever wounded me with impunity, and by all the gods in Olympus, I will punish her for her audacity and impudence." His brow grew dark and his countenance assumed a fearful aspect as he thought of how he could bring his nefarious plan into execution. "Vengeance! what does that mean?" he muttered in a low tone—"It means the dagger—but no! her family is powerful and I might not escape the penalty of the law. But then the slave! he thought "can I trust him? Ah that is the question! Put to the torture might he not confess? And the vengeance would not indeed be sweet when I should taste its sweetness within the iron bars of a public prison."

He directed his steps along the coast, and endeavored to cool his burning passions in the distractions which the beauty of the scenery would naturally afford. But all was in vain. The image of Vivia was ever before him. The defiant look and frown of indignation was still visible to him, and made him feel every moment still more keenly, the bitterness of the affront. "Curse that phantom," he exclaimed from time to time, "will it pursue me forever? Her words, I confess, have penetrated my soul, and will remain there like the poisoned barb of an arrow fixed in the heart." Thus he continued thinking over the conduct of Vivia, now trying to banish her image from his mind, and again exerting all his ingenuity, with a view to find out some safe means of taking his revenge. Finally a sudden idea struck him.

"By Juno! I have her," and a wild maniac laugh escaped his lips, as his whole frame shook in the exultation of his childish delight.

"What! How is that?" he hurriedly exclaimed an individual, just by his side, catching him familiarly by the arm.

"Ah, Tertullian! you surprised me. Glad to see you nevertheless, I have need of you. I know your talent in executing a delicate mission, and for this reason I would rather entrust it to you than to any other. Besides we are bound together by the indissoluble bond of a common religion; and are not tainted with the superstitious doctrines and infamous rites of a public malefactor. You know what I mean—we are worshippers of the gods, not Christians. Hence we are bound together by the ties of friendship, and expressed his readiness to do any favor for him, that lay in his power.

"Well listen. I am in love with Vivia—you know her—the daughter of Hanno, and I will have her at any price."

"Ah! I see your meaning now. I did not fully comprehend at first—well, it is enough. Can I be of any service in the matter?"

"Service? Immense service! But to make you understand the nature of my commission, I must go into detail. I met with her some time ago, and as we spent evenings together, what was more natural than that I should become enamored with her, especially as her gorgeous attire indicated the highest degree of opulence. It was, I assure you, a combination of riches and beauty, and you know that a compound of this sort forms a medicine by no means nauseous to swallow. Well, matters went on smoothly until I fancied the time had come to get more familiar. It will not take long to tell you the result. She grew indignant and put on those airs which women are wont to do when they quarrel with their lovers. Now the breach must be filled up and I want you to do it."

"By the gods! a delicate affair truly."

"Yes, I confess it is rather so, and it is for this reason that I have chosen you to act as mediator."

"All I can do, I will do—depend upon that, Jubal; but when shall I have to perform this duty which you have imposed upon me?"

"This very night. Go now, and bid the slave at the door tell her mistress that a stranger desires to speak with her on a matter of vital importance. When the lady comes to the door—begin without further preamble and say: Jubal begs pardon—that is—yes—and here he laughed ironically, while a savage grin played upon his lips. "Yes, Jubal begs pardon and seeks to be received once more. I can then see what temper she is in—if she has forgotten the scene that has passed, and if she has she will answer you mildly and tell you to convey to me the pleasing message of pardon. You know now your commission—execute it faithfully and well and by Olympian, you shall have your reward for— and dropping his voice into scarcely an audible sound—"revenge is sweet!"

Thermis failed, for on making known his commission, he was unceremoniously ushered to the door. He immediately directed his steps to the house of Jubal and communicated to him the result of his errand. He found him half intoxicated. When the latter heard that Vivia had refused to listen to his overtures, he exclaimed, "Wise! Wiser perhaps than she is conscious of—for as sure as Juno rides through the Elysian fields, I would have poisoned her!"

Thermis started. He had not understood the commission after all. He thought it better to say nothing further, and accordingly he took his departure with promises to meet again.

"About a week afterwards Jubal received a message from the High Priest, who thought to make use of him in executing his plans of vengeance. The Priest knew him intimately, and did not doubt for a moment but what he would find him an ardent and devoted auxiliary. He disguised his personal hatred toward Tertullian. His scheme was more cunningly devised. He was well aware that Jubal and Vivia were estranged from each other, and that there would be nothing more agreeable to Jubal, than to denounce her as professing a religion forbidden by the laws of the State. This done, persecution would begin, and then the blood of Tertullian would pay for the insult he had offered him at the gate of the temple.

"Jubal," he said as soon as he entered the room, "you know that the ancient religion of our fathers is on the decline. The gods that have protected Carthage; that have rendered it so glorious amongst all other kingdoms—that have given power to its arm and brought to its shores such luxury and opulence—these gods, I say, are now neglected and despised. Instead of the temples resounding with sacred chants, there is dreary silence, instead of their being crowded by our people, a sad and gloomy solitude reigns in their spacious halls. On days of solemnity how many victims were laid upon the altar? How many were there—there to accompany by their prayers, the smoke of sacrifice as it ascended before the Gods?"

"Have I come here," interrupted Jubal, flushed with anger, and rising from his seat. "Have I come here only to hear this ridiculous lamentation? What do I care if your gods are growing old? Besides, I have no power to restore to them their primitive youth and vigor. If they cannot defend themselves, they are worthy of the neglect and contempt, in which you say they are held by the people. As for me, I look upon Jupiter, Apollo and all of such sort of divinities as simple men who have departed this life and have gone to the shades. My god is pleasure; ignorance, superstition and fear have created all others."

A frown of indignation passed over the features of Olympian, but he thought it better to dissipate his feelings lest he might lose a valuable assistant.

"I am well aware, Jubal, that there are many who adhere to your opinion regarding our gods. Those who call themselves wise men and philosophers, have taken delight in making the world believe that they alone are possessed of the truth and that the rest of mankind are wandering in the mazes of error. To follow the current of public opinion, is not the road to celebrity. We are thus in danger of being overshadowed and lost to sight in the stream. The first step that must be taken in order to gratify ambition is to depart from the established theories of the age, and invent some new system, which will satisfy the curiosity of our ever changing crowd. But the evil has not been confined to people of the ordinary class, it has wrought its way into the highest society of our City, and I regret to add, into the body of our order. These latter sacrifices, because in so doing, they are acting in conformity with their temporal interests. I have often been discouraged, and grieved at the rapid progress of indifference amongst a people that before were so attached to the worship of the immortal gods. But lately another evil genius had crossed our path. A new religion, the work of an obscure Jew, condemned for his crimes, to the punishment of the cross, has appeared in our midst and aspires to reign over the entire world! It does not hide itself, and perform its rites in secret, but marches proudly forward, displaying danger and confident of final success. Perverts abound, and amongst the rest your mother!"

"Yes, you are right, my mother belongs to the new sect, nor does she keep it a mystery. Why

what do you think? she wanted me to join this new doctrine, with a view to effect a reformation in my manners, which she thought somewhat objectionable! poor woman! It could not be otherwise, for old age has come upon her and she feels already the infirmities of a long life. Her mind, I fancy, is somewhat impaired, and it was but natural that she should yield to the seductions of the new religion; she has however, only changed one superstition for another! But my dear friend let us come to the point. I have business of importance that calls me hence, and if you have anything very particular to say to me, please say it at once."

"I am not astonished," replied the aged Priest. "This is it with all impetuous youths. If you wish to depart, you can do so, but I was going to speak to you about Vivia, of that proud patrician, that, so deeply insulted you some days ago. However, we can put this off to another time, as I see you are anxious to rejoin your companions."

The name of Vivia made Jubal tremble. His breast heaved, and a wild expression, which would seem to indicate vengeance, glanced from his bloodshot eyes.

"Vivia," he muttered in a hoarse voice! "that hateful name! It arouses within me the worst passions of my nature, and makes me thirst for revenge, like the tiger yearning for the blood of its victim. But Olympian, why do you speak of her?"

"She is a Christian as well as your mother."

"I thought so from her haughty demeanor and contempt of me. I can see through this hypocritical sect, that forbids all pleasure and affects unlimited austerities."

"You hate Vivia, then?"

"Hate her! I do and my vengeance will prove it."

"She is a Christian, and what prevents you from having it at once. Denounce her to the authorities and then we shall soon see the law enforced that forbids the existence of false worship. We shall then see the Christians humbly approach our pagan altars and offer incense to the gods, or else be led to the arena to be torn to pieces by the teeth of infuriated lions. Perhaps amongst them Vivia."

"Olympian, you speak of denouncing Vivia to the Governor. Don't you know that the Governor is well aware that there are numbers of Christians in Carthage? But what does he care so long as they pay regularly the imposts prescribed by the law. You talk of persecution. Have not the Christians as much right to adore their crucified God, as you have to adore the gods of Olympus? You talk likewise of vengeance, but your plan is at once ridiculous and useless. I have my own plans and ideas, and if I desire to punish Vivia for her insolent conduct, I can do it and that without the assistance you would offer me."

Olympian retained his composure, though he was indignant at the disrespect which the young man had shown him. It was not prudent to remonstrate with him on this point, so he continued.

"You say you can do it. How is it that you have not been able to do anything yet?"

She is powerful in the protection of her family, as also in the valiant arm of her husband, whom in marrying the other day, she has preferred to you. She can now brave your impotent fury and treat you with the same contempt as one of her slaves." The Priest here cast his acute eyes upon him, to watch the effect which his words had made upon him. It was not difficult to see that the arrow aimed by the wily Olympian had penetrated into the core. Jubal blushed to the temples and his lips trembled with indignation.

"She braves me?" he exclaimed. "She protected by her powerful house and by what? by her valiant husband! By all the gods that ever graced Olympus, I swear there will be blood shed in that powerful house before many days!"

"Take your revenge, Jubal—it is your due, but listen let me advise you. If you execute your threat perhaps you may buy your revenge at too high a price. Now look here. Vivia's husband appears to have yielded to the influence of a certain Tertullian, a Priest of that cursed sect, the Nazarenes. Before he departed for the army, he had several private conferences with him. On arriving at the camp he did not conceal that he had a leaning for the Christians, and now the soldiers are loud in their murmurs and express openly their indignation at the apostasy of their chief. It would be easy to work among such a crowd and Vivia once a widow—"

"It would be easier to sit like the blow!"

"You are right, Jubal, but passion in an ardent youth like you, is blind. I tell you again, have your revenge, but do not expose yourself to any danger. When Vivia is a widow, present yourself before her courageously and ask her in marriage a second time. If she rejects you a second time with disdain, then hesitate no longer. Accuse her of being a Christian, before the Governor and before the Senate. If it is necessary we can raise a crowd and stimulate them to repeat the Roman cry 'the Christians to the lions.' The blood of Vivia will then mingle with the sand of the arena."

If Jubal could have seen into the heart of the astute pontiff and have perceived the motives which incited him to give him the above advice, he would have in all probability rejected it with scorn. But he believed that the old man had really taken this interest in heart, and he was desirous of aiding him in his attempt to revenge the insult which Vivia had offered him. And when the idea of the amphitheatre, and of the arena flowing with the blood of his enemy presented itself to his mind, a ferocious joy took possession of him and his eyes moved rapidly in their sockets as if they were already feasting in anticipation on the horrors of the promised scene.

"Well, then," he exclaimed, "I agree to your plan, provided I can say that it was I who did the deed. By our immortal gods, I see already the crowds peering with anxious gaze upon those noble Numidian lions that are bounding with extended jaws to seize their prey. I can see Vivia fleeing to some corner, as if to protect herself from the grasp of the wild infuriated animals! Ah! ah! It will be the wolf and the lamb! Her place is found beside the lion! Curse that insult! my blood boils, and indignation chokes my utterance! But let me not forget the order of the programme. The husband must fall first. The poignard will here be

brought into requisition; and thy next meeting will be a cold embrace!"

Thus the two monsters reared as to their future plan and as there was nothing more to be said upon a subject which they had more than exhausted, they separated. The pontiff, stretched himself upon a couch and passed in review before his mind the probable result of their conspiracy. Tertullian appeared before his imagination laden with chains and subjected to all the tortures of confession. His ears rang with the words that condemned him to death, and his heart, beating with the sweets of revenge, extended at the thought.

Jubal had by this time rejoined his dissolute companions. They had been somewhat alarmed at his delay, for it was seldom that this occurred. They were glad to see him and all moved to make way for him. He drank with them and endeavored to conceal any symptoms of the deep pre-occupations that filled his mind. At length he rose to go. They pressed him to stay, as all the wine had not yet been drunk, but he was positive and succeeded in withdrawing into the porch. Here, according to previous agreement, he met one of his slaves.

"Ater, thy master must have revenge."

"Thou wilt not ask it in vain."

"Ah! I know. Thou must have money. Then indeed I can command thy valiant arm to perform the most glorious deeds. Thy devotion to thy master moves within that sphere marked out by personal interest. What better art thou than the slaves around thee?"

"Well, a poor slave need not enter into the quarrels of his master. If he exposes himself to danger for his sake, should he not receive some reward? Dost thou not know that a slave has feelings like another, and that he shrinks from shedding the blood of those who have done him no harm? When you commanded me the other day to strike down that young Christian slave, the dagger trembled in my hand as I beheld beneath that innocent, unoffending creature. And when I heard her cry 'wretch, what have I done thee?' I felt every member of my body shake with an indescribable fear, and as I fled from the scene, I could not but exclaim Ater, thou art marked with the brand of a villain!"

"Silence, thou hypocritical slave!" cried Jubal, flushed with anger; thy soul is as black as thy skin, and thy heart, if indeed thou hast one, is as cold and insensible as the blade of thy poignard! Gold will throw a charm around thee, and if it were necessary, thou wouldst even slay thy master for it—at least thou wouldst do it for thy liberty!"

"Liberty! That word I have only heard. I have never enjoyed the sweets of the reality. What is the gold of this world to that sacred boon? When I think of my native forests in which my forefathers roamed in freedom and knew not the sound of a white man's voice; when I think of those grand old woods in which stood the log cabin or rush tent which never heard the clanking of chains, I feel within me a burning desire for revenge. By the gods of Olympus, name thy victim! Liberty! liberty!"

"Thou wilt have both gold and liberty, Ater, if thy dagger reaches the heart. But listen, it is no longer a young girl or timid slave that is in question, but a valiant soldier, the chief of the army of Numidia, and the husband of Vivia. He is well liked by his guards, and they will be ready to defend him. In the camp however it is not so. They are opposed to him. They suspect him of a tendency towards the Christians, and it is not astonishing that the veterans should be indignant at a commander who had thus forgotten the traditions of his nation. Now, what thou hast to do, is to side with the soldiers. Thou hast craft enough but thou wilt need it all to ensure the success of this delicate undertaking. Be cautious and prudent for the slightest word may betray thee, and then thy life will be taken without a shadow of doubt. Say not that thou art my slave. Thou mightest fall under suspicion by that, and put to the torture, thou wouldst confess all. Take another name. When thou arrivest at the camp, take care not to excite curiosity by giving out any extraordinary motive for thy arrival. Once more let me tell thee to be prudent. Strike when he is alone, asleep, and strike well so that not even a murmur should be heard. Depart now, even before the day dawns. Here is money, and when thy dagger has done its work, I will give thee more." He handed the purse to the slave who immediately concealed it in his belt.

"Vivia can now prepare her mourning garments," replied Ater, exulting over the dire results of his nefarious scheme. "Yes, she can then choose another husband. Before this moon has finished its monthly course, I shall have drunk the blood of Jarbas."

The town was still buried in darkness and the inhabitants were sleeping in peace when the slave started in the direction of the camp.

(TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.)

REMEDY FOR CABBAGE WORMS.—Hellebore, lime, salt, and similar substances have been used with varied success for the destruction of cabbage worms. It is now stated that bran and buckwheat flour answers the purpose better than any other remedies that have been tried. The bran is simply dusted over the infested cabbages as soon as the worms make their appearance. If the worms are very thick, about a handful of bran is required to each cabbage head, and sometimes it is necessary to go over the plants a second time. A hundred weight of bran is sufficient for an acre. It must be applied when the worms are young. When they are full grown, or very strong, it does not appear to affect them. The buckwheat flour is sifted upon them by means of a sieve, in the evening or in the morning, when the dew is on the plants. If one application does not destroy the worms, a second, should be made. It is probable that wheat flour, fine Indian meal, or any other pulverulent farinaceous substance would have the same effect.—*American Gardener.*

"Sir," said a little bustling man to a religious opponent, "to what sect do you suppose I belong?"

"Well, I don't exactly know," replied his opponent, "but to judge from your size, appearance, and constant buzzing, I should think you belonged to one class generally called insect."

"What is that which, by losing an eye, has only a nose left?" A noise.