

favor in store for him, telling him playfully that as soon as he reached a certain standard of excellence in his art he would be rewarded by being allowed to paint her portrait.

Willingly he set to work to acquire the degree of proficiency which she declared he must attain before he would be privileged to make the attempt.

One morning while Norbert was wholly absorbed in copying an exquisite "Madona and child," from an original by Palasquez he was roused by a light touch on his arm. Thinking that Eva who had gone out with her former guardian, Mrs. Fielding, had returned, and that his pre-occupation prevented him hearing her enter, he turned with a smile to ask for an approving criticism. But the smile died out leaving his face deathwhite and rigid.

For a moment he went completely blind, the brush fell from his nerveless hands, as there before him in the flesh only thin, haggard, worn-looking, and wild-eyed stood Zivola. Stunned and bewildered though Norbert was, he realised on the instant how terrible was the mistake he made, how guilty of cruel wrong he had been to Eva, in withholding from her that Mexican adventure and its results.

In that brief time many things flashed through his mind. Chief among them Ned's advice to tell Eva all, and his emphatic refusal. Grasping his arm Zivola said eagerly.

"I come Norbert to stay with you to live with you always, you must go away from me never any more."

The spell was broken, Norbert's power of speech returned.

"Am I dreaming?" he asked, still gazing into the changed, but familiar face. "Do the dead come back?"

"I was not dead, Norbert," exclaimed the girl, vehemently. "Marque he carry me off, he come back sooner than we thought. Mulla she hear all we say; how I know not. They say I am mad, that I must be shut up. Marque took me miles and miles away and lock me in a queer house all alone, just a woman to watch me. He come one day and tell me that I am dead and laugh, oh! so loud. He tell me that he fix my grave, that when you come there will be another grave only there will be something in that one; then when I say I will marry him I will be free. I think I go mad then. I woke one night my head clear; I watch my chance, I escape. I hide round, I go to the cave. I get my jewels, the tin box and the dagger. See, here it is, I always keep it with me." Producing it. "I meet an Indian man and woman who were kind, very kind, who sell some of my jewels for me. But oh! how tell you all? how tell you half? I go to Toronto, they tell me that you were here. I come, I find you, so glad am I, for I am tired, O, so tired Norbert."

All this Zivola poured forth in a breathless torrent; then seating herself with a sigh of weariness and content repeated again.

"I am so tired, Norbert, and I think sick, but I stay here and rest."

"But you cannot stay here," cried Norbert. "You must not stay here, you don't know what you are talking about."

"Not stay here?" she asked in wonder and surprise, then "are you going to take me some other place than here? Don't, Norbert, here I would like to stay; I am tired of all the places."

"Listen to me Zivola," said Norbert through his dry, cold lips. "I went for you at the time appointed. Mulla and Marque told me you were dead, showed me your grave, and how could I suppose that you were not dead and in it? Had I found you there as I fully expected to, I would have taken you with me and performed faithfully all that I had promised. After that I came here to New Orleans to see a friend of my mother's, a young girl not much older than yourself. Do you hear Zivola? do you understand what I am telling you?" he asked sharply, for she seemed to take but little interest in what he was talking about. To be there with him seemed all sufficient, explanations were needless.

"I hear, Norbert," she answered, rather puzzled at his stern tone.

"Well, then," he continued, "this friend of whom I told you, my mother wished me to marry; thinking you were dead I married her."

Zivola was interested enough now. Springing to her feet, she asked incredulously, "Married her did you say, Norbert? Me it was you were to marry, did you not tell me that, O, so many times? What is it you mean, Norbert?"

"Oh listen, and try and comprehend what I am telling you, then you will understand how impossible it is that you should remain here," exclaimed Norbert in an agony of anxiety and fear that Eva would appear on the scene, or that some of the servants might observe his strange visitor before he could persuade her to go.

"You cannot remain here; it would be terribly wrong for me to allow you to do so. I am a married man, my wife is here with me, it was wrong for you to come here at all in this way."

"Your wife she lives here with you Norbert?" she asked appearing still not to fully understand, "but I am here now," she continued. "Send her away. I will stay with you, for did you not say so? I dare not leave you any more, I dare not. Mulla and Marque, they might find me then—Oh! Yes, stay I must, Norbert."

"You are talking the wildest nonsense Zivola," he exclaimed passionately, as grasping her arm he continued: "You must go away this instant. All that I can do for you I am willing to do. I shall find you a home some place, and see that your every want is supplied; more I cannot do."

"But am I not to live with you always?" she persisted. The certainty that such would be the case seemed to have taken possession of her mind so completely, that it was almost impossible to convince her to the contrary.

"No! great heavens no! have I

not told you over and over again that it cannot be? that it is out of the question. I am a married man. My wife is here with me, is living with me and will continue to live with me. Why is it or how is it that you do not understand how impossible it is that you should remain here?"

"And she it is who will live with you always, is it?" she asked, a lurid light burning in the great dark eyes, a sudden deep calm in voice and manner that chilled him.

"Yes," he replied, "all my life; who else should a wife live with but her husband all her life?"

"All her life," repeated Zivola looking strongly and intently at him. "And her it is that you love Norbert?" she persisted.

"Yes, she it is that I love," corrected Norbert.

"You said that you loved me; that thus it would be always, how is it? do you love me now?" Still in the same calm, tense voice.

"No, I love my wife; it would be wicked for me to love anyone else." Then forgetting all prudence in his desperation he exclaimed passionately: "I think I shall hate you if you don't go this instant. Why, why don't you understand, why don't you go?"

"I am going Norbert," she answered, the dangerous light in the restless glowing eyes deepening and intensifying as she spoke. "You're married, your wife will live with you all your life; yes all your life, ha!"

A low laugh caused Norbert's heart to stand still. For an instant he closed his eyes to collect his thoughts and try and say something to conciliate the girl whom he felt he had made his enemy; when he opened them and was about to speak, lo! he was alone. He flew to the open window which led to the balcony, then out into the hall; hurried down its spacious length into a small conservatory from which ran a flight of steps ending at the door of the conservatory below; down those steps he looked, but no where was Zivola to be seen.

ZELL.

For days after his encounter with Zivola, Norbert lived in a perfect fever of anxiety and dread.

Madly he now regretted that he did not take the young American's advice and tell his betrothed every detail of that episode in Mexico. Had he done so he could now warn Eva, and if he so requested, she would, he knew, be willing to leave New Orleans within twenty-four hours. Should he do so now? He pondered the question and concluded he must not, as it would both distress and alarm her. No, it must not be thought of. And if he could contrive a sufficient reason for an immediate departure to Europe or elsewhere. Could he ask Eva in her present state of health to undertake a long and perhaps unpleasant voyage?

No, it was out of the question, the fates were against him, he must only stay by her, never leave

her out of his sight, shield and protect her day and night. Yes, that was all, that for the time he could do until the summer, then he would take her—where? It mattered not he thought, even to the remotest part of the earth, were it necessary; any place where he might feel that danger could not reach her. With painful distinctness he recalled Zivola's fierce declaration that she would kill the woman who would dare to come between her and the man she loved, and there was that in her voice and look at the end of their terrible interview the memory of which caused his heart to sink with a chill sickening sense of fear. As for Eva she wondered very much at the sudden and unaccountable change in her husband. He appeared to be always ill at ease, lost all interest in his work, was never content to allow her out of his sight, became morbidly anxious about the fastenings of the doors and windows, a precaution that puzzled and amused the young wife not a little. To her anxious enquiries he answered with some light jest, frequently remarking that he was anxious to get back to his Canadian home; saying that he did not like New Orleans as well as he expected to and would be glad to leave it.

"Four months is not such a very long time after all," said Eva, "we shall, if all is well, be leaving here early in May, and there is no need for us to remain; as for next winter I have quite decided that I shall spend it in Toronto."

Ah! could she but know of the dark frightening shadow that had fallen over Norbert's life, the dread foreboding that was weighing on his heart, would she speak so confidently of "next winter."

Four weeks went by, still no word or sign of Zivola. Norbert began to hope that his fears had been unwarranted, and that perhaps after all Zivola had disappeared for good; he became less watchful and uneasy. Shortly after his interview with Zivola, a boy whom the cook had taken quite a fancy to, became a frequent visitor down stairs. He ran messages and errands, did anything required of him. In a short time he became almost indispensable, his company alone furnishing amusement to all the domestic old and young.

He could mimic anything or anybody, was somewhat of a ventriloquist, would frighten them half out of their wits one moment and convulse them with laughter the next, and was always ready and willing to serve or oblige all in any way he could. Norbert hearing something of all this made a few enquiries of the latter who informed him with true negro eloquence that he was, "the most beautiful and cleverest boy" he ever met, that he could do almost anything with his voice, his eyes or his body. Norbert smiled at the butler's enthusiastic description and forgot the incident almost immediately. A few nights after this Zell as the boy called himself put in an appearance and was in the most extravagant spirits. In the midst of a general