

A MISSION FULFILLED

CHAPTER VIII.
The Elopement.

The next day, true to his word, Ronaldson departed from Capri by the Naples boat. He did not, however, inform his friend Spencer of his departure, and Spencer did not inquire for the two parted with a certain coolness which weighed little upon Keith's mind, divining as he did how soon it would be removed. It was a gloomy day, breezy and showery, and Ronaldson made the weather a reason, rather than readily accepted by the other, why he should not accompany him to the steamer.

But the weather did not prevent Spencer later on from starting on a long trudge up the Anacapri hill and round the island. He was more annoyed than he chose to admit, even to himself, by Keith's enigmatical behavior, and by the suspicious which it aroused in his mind. A long climb and a good drenching did him but little good, and he came home to dinner in a bad temper, which the rising storm and consequent enforced confinement in doors to the little smoking-room did not tend to improve.

The next morning he was dressing, when Antonio, one of the waiters, knocked and entered apologetically. "Signor," he said, "Stefano Rucchi, the fisherman, is here, waiting to see you. I told him that it was too early, and that you were not now up; but he insists that he must see you at once."

A horrible quail shot through Spencer's mind—he had grown so intimate with some of these Capri fish-people, and with none more so than Stefano, whom he respected as a sturdy and upright young fellow.

"It's all right," he said, "you can show him up here, Antonio. I was just going down."

In another minute the young fisherman entered. He was a tall and handsome young fellow, darker and sterner looking than his friend Gerolamo, with a certain air of dignity about him that seemed to belong to all his family. Usually he was neat and clean to per-

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fection, with spotless shirt and well-scrubbed face; but today his dark hair was all rough and untidy, and his shirt tumbled, and he had not even, the other observed, taken the trouble to wash the signs of yesterday's toil from his strong brown hands.

One glance at his face told his tale to Spencer; nevertheless, he endeavored to look cheerful as he inquired, in his usual friendly tone: "Well, Stefano, and what is it?"

The young man had to struggle with his emotions for a moment, so strong were they, before he could speak. "It is this, signor. Where is your friend, the Englishman?"

"You know as well as I do, Stefano, that he went off by the boat yesterday."

"And I carried his luggage down for him. I wish I had flung both it and him into the sea, signor! but now—where is he?"

"I know not, Stefano; I know no more than you. Why do you ask?"

"Because, signor"—and the young fellow clinched his hands and drew his breath hard—"because my sister is gone too. She is gone after him, signor. Dio! that she should so disgrace herself! But I will find him, signor—I will kill one or both!"

"Gone, Stefano! Are you sure of it?" "Sure of it, ay!" And Stefano laughed bitterly. "She disappeared last night while I was at work at the Piccola Marina. She never came home all night—last night I have been looking for her; and this morning they tell me one of the rowing boats is gone, and that Serafino and Giuseppe Marazzi are also lost. They have rowed her over to the mainland, signor, those two boys—"

"What, last night? Through all that wind and rain?" exclaimed Spencer. "It was not too stormy for those who know the coast," remarked his companion; "they would get there safe. But if not—if they are all three drowned, so be it—it is better so!" he added, passionately.

"Hush, Stefano, hush, my poor boy; don't talk so madly. There may be less harm done than you think. Ronaldson is not a bad sort—it may be he has married Margherita, or is going to marry her."

"What! An English signor, rich and noble, marry a Capri coral girl—a girl of the fish-people? Ah, no, signor, such things do not happen!"

"They do sometimes, Stefano. At any rate," continued Spencer, earnestly, "I will help you all I can to find your sister. If," he continued, with a heat rarely provoked in his calm and equable disposition—"if Margherita has really been tempted away by Ronaldson, I shall not be much less hard upon him than you. Only be calm, Stefano—let us talk the matter over without excitement."

He was still speaking, when there came another tap to his door, and this time Antonio entered with a note.

"It was brought by Serafino Marazzi, signor," he explained, as he put the soiled and crumpled envelope into Spencer's hands; "but, so soon as he heard that Stefano yonder, and he jerked his head with some curiosity toward the fisherman, 'was here, he ran away at full speed, and would not stop.'"

The note was in Ronaldson's handwriting, and Spencer tore it open. Only a few words, Stefano, studying his features anxiously, saw their expression of anxiety change, as he read, to one of relief. His friend might be a fool, but that was his own lookout; at any rate, he declared himself to be no scoundrel, and that under present circumstances, was no small comfort.

"Listen, Stefano," he said, his voice betraying his excitement. "I will read you every word. Margherita is not disgraced, thank God! Why did we fear such a thing, knowing the girl as we do?"

"Dear Spencer—Margherita and I are married (if you doubt my word, you may ask the fat old padre P. at the chiesa just beyond you). So now you may set your conscientious mind at rest, and comfort yourself with the reflection that I am not a ruffian after all. You may also, if you are a good fellow, which I think you are, go down and tell her people this, and tell them not to be frightened about her, as I mean to make her an excellent husband. Tomorrow morning we shall get the civil contract ratified before the prefect, and then be off elsewhere. I'm not quite sure yet where, but Margherita shall write and tell her mother ere long. I am afraid neither of us is particularly sorry for our sins just yet."

"Ever yours, K. R. P. S.—Don't let that stalwart young Stefano pound poor Giuseppe and Serafino into absolute pulp—they didn't know the wickedness they were in for. Margherita says, till they were halfway across, and then she wouldn't let them go back."

Inside this letter was another smaller piece of paper, covered with a few words written in a straggling and inexperienced hand:

"God bless my dear mother, and Stefano, and Serafino, and Elmiro! Don't be angry, dear Stefano—forgive me, madre mia. We were married before I went. I would not have gone otherwise. He is so good to me, I will come back some day, dear madre, dear Stefano, Yours,

"MARGHERITA."

In silence Stefano listened to the first letter, as the light, careless words were translated to him. In silence he received and read the second, his bronzed face working with emotion.

Then he suddenly turned toward the wall, and leaning his face upon his arms, broke down, sobbing aloud. His excitable Italian temperament could no longer control itself. But he soon rallied and choked down the heavy sobs that were shaking his broad chest.

"Ah, signor," he said, his black eyes glistening, "she is gone from us forever, though not to shame!"

Spencer could not but feel that this was probably only too true; but he endeavored, in his consolations, to avoid this part of the question, and to persuade the young man that so grand a marriage for his sister was a matter of congratulation. Stefano shook his head slowly and sadly.

"Ah, no, signor, such things are not wise. It does not do for a man like the Signor Ronaldson to marry an uneducated girl like our Margherita. It is not for happiness. Ah, she knew I thought so—she knew I would not let her do it—that is why she ran away at night. Ah! Margherita! Margherita, you will grieve one day that you listened to the Signor Ronaldson!"

"But," said Spencer, who in his heart agreed cordially enough with his companion, but endeavored to disguise the fact, "Ronaldson is a kind-hearted fellow; I do not think he will ever ill-treat Margherita."

"Ah, but there are other ways, signor, besides ill-treatment. He will tire of her; she will be unlike the signora he is used to. The signorine, his sisters, will mock at her ignorant ways; the fine ladies in England will be cold and strange to her. She will be sad at heart and lonely."

He stopped, his voice breaking, and Spencer too was silent, not knowing what to say. He was pacing up and down thoughtfully when Stefano began to move toward the door, cap in hand. "Signor," he said, pausing; "I thank you for your goodness. I must go now and tell the others. This, no doubt, will comfort her," and he put Margherita's little note into his pocket.

"Perhaps, Stefano," said Spencer, ignoring the respectful salute, and taking the young fisherman's hand in a friendly grasp, "perhaps, your mother will believe more in Margherita's happiness than you do?"

"Perhaps, so, signor—it is likely. She is but a woman, after all, though a good one; and women are easily blinded by their vanity. Doubtless she will be proud for our Margherita; but I—no, signor! and he broke off hurriedly and left the room.

Meanwhile he must be allowed to retrace our steps, and return to the incidents of the previous day. Before noon Ronaldson had arrived at Sorrento, and it may be imagined that the rest of the day was spent by him, notwithstanding his naturally easy disposition, in a somewhat restless and anxious frame of mind. Most of it, indeed, despite the uninviting weather, he was either upon the balcony of the hotel, where he had ordered dinner, or pacing up and down the narrow shore. The marriage ceremony had that morning been duly accomplished, amid the dimness of the gray old church, by the well-bribed and accommodating, but not highly-to-be-revered, old padre, the knot, though hurriedly, had been safely tied, and Margherita Rucchi and himself were now, according to the religious rites of the Roman Church, at the door, distinctly man and wife.

The civil ceremony he had arranged for, having once decided on this, Ronaldson had no desire to accomplish it by halves—was to be performed the next morning as early as possible in Naples, whither he intended to journey that same evening with his bride as soon as practicable. He had as yet scarcely spoken one word to his wife, made the moment the ceremony had been performed she had fled homeward in terror, he whispering, as he laid his lips hurriedly to her forehead, "Tonight, my Margherita!" and she merely answering, "If I can—if not, tomorrow."

To be Continued.

IN SIGHT OF 15
MAN IS MURDERED

Laborers Held at Bay While Friend Is Stabbed Fifteen Times.

Lancaster, Pa., Aug. 31. — Placido Albanese, an Italian repair man on the Pennsylvania Railroad, was murdered last night in his shanty lodgings near Gap, Pa., in the presence of fifteen of his countrymen. The sixteen men were asleep when four Italians entered and during which Albanese received fifteen knife thrusts in his chest and head and a bullet in the shoulder. One knife thrust over the heart caused his death. He defended himself with a razor, and is believed to have slashed one of the robbers. During this melee the other Italians were kept in subjection by the robber standing guard at the door, who covered them with a revolver. The robbers made their escape, but a posse has been organized, and is in pursuit.

PEER LOSES \$500,000

Lord Amherst Meets With Sad Reverse in His Old Age

Cardiff, Sept. 1. — By the dishonesty of a lawyer, Lord Amherst of Hackney has lost a fortune of over \$500,000. This is a terrible blow to the old and popular peer, particularly falling with appalling suddenness just as Lord and Lady Amherst were offering to celebrate their golden wedding.

In a touching and sad little speech to his neighbors, Lord Amherst yesterday told them that retrenchment and retirement will be necessary for him, and the news was, of course, very sorrowful received. Not only has he and his family spent every summer for many years past at Didding Hall, entertaining freely and delightfully, but his generosity and kindness to tenants and laborers were endless. "Every man who works on Lord Amherst's estate," said a Norfolk friend yesterday, "is called a workman as long as he can crawl, and then he becomes a pensioner." Lord Amherst will spend the winter quietly abroad, as usual.

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Going on any regular train, Aug. 28, 29, Sept. 1, 4, and 6; \$2.55. Going on any other date, Aug. 27 to Sept. 8, \$3.40. All tickets good to return on or before Sept. 11. For tickets and full information call at C. P. R. Ticket Office, corner Dundas and Richmond, or at Depot Ticket Office.

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CAN'T GET TOGETHER

English Tilters at Toronto Exhibition Go on Strike.

Toronto, Sept. 1. — The four English tilters who were imported to take part in the tournament of "Ivanhoe" have gone on strike. Their knightly exercises have been the joke of the exhibition, for they seldom could get their horses near enough together to deliver the deadly strokes which they were supposed to inflict upon each other. The men blamed the horses for all the trouble, and demanded cavalry steeds from the barracks. These were supplied, but with no better results, and, struck till they were supplied with the kind of animal that will enable them to get together in the melee.

A MEDICINE FOR THE MINER'S BACK.—Prospectors and others going into the mining regions, where doctors are few and drug stores not at all, should take themselves with a supply of Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil. It will offset the effects of exposure, reduce sprains, and when taken internally will prevent and cure colds and sore throat, and as a lubricant will keep the muscles in good condition.

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Black Barathe.....75c and \$1.00	Black Hopsacking85c and \$1.00
Black Rosetta.....75c and \$1.00	Black Venetian75c and 85c
Black Voile.....65c, 75c and \$1.00	Black Venetian\$1.00, \$1.25 and \$1.50
Black Crepe de Chine.....50c and 75c	Black Broadcloth.....\$1.00 and \$1.25
Black Silk and Wool Crepe de Chine, \$1.00 and \$1.25	Black Broadcloth\$1.50 to \$2.25
Black Silk and Wool Crepe de Chine, \$1.50 and \$1.75	Black Vicuna75c and 85c
Black Wool Poplin.....75c and \$1.00	Black Vicuna.....\$1.00 and \$1.25
Black Poplin de Soie.....\$1.10 and \$1.50	Black Coating Twills.....\$1.25 and \$1.35
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