

I am a widower, and so there is an end to my desire for revenge."

Quirino made no reply.
"Frankly," asked Tancred, "did you still care for her?"

"I did," murmured the Indian sadly.
"Do you know that for a savage you are doing pretty well? You tell a man that you are in love with his wife. That is pretty hard, for after all she was my wife."

Quirino again made no answer. He was still occupied with his own thoughts. Suddenly he stopped, and uttered an exclamation of surprise; then he hastily threw a corner of his Mexican mantle across his shoulder, so as to hide the greater portion of his face.

"What is the matter?" asked Tancred in astonishment.

"Go on without me," returned the other hurriedly. "Go to Boulogne, carry out your orders, and return as quickly as possible. You will find me here."

"You want me to leave you?" cried Tancred, more amazed than ever.

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Because it must be so."

"Remember I shall be away a week."

"That doesn't matter. I must stay here."

"Where will you be found?"

"There," said the Indian, pointing to a neighboring inn.

"Have you any money?"

"Yes, a thousand dollars."

"With you?"

"In my belt."

"Well, do as you like, but for friendship's sake, tell me what this strange fancy of yours means."

Quirino seized Tancred's hand and pressed it affectionately.

"It is no fancy that is keeping me here," he whispered; "it is a duty. You think that we have been hearing a true story; you are mistaken. We have been told a pack of lies. So sure as I am standing here, so sure is Carmen living. Why? Because I have just seen Morales."

In vain Tancred tried to persuade the Indian that he had been mistaken. Quirino insisted that he had seen Morales in the flesh. It was useless to try to dissuade him from his determination to stay at Havre, so Tancred returned to his vessel and made sail for Boulogne.

CHAPTER LV. THE CAPTURE.

Eight days after the Chevalier Tancred de Najac presented himself at the inn the Indian had indicated and asked for Quirino. He was not in, and was not expected before night, so to while away the time the young officer set off on a stroll among the wharves. He had not gone far, however, when he felt a hand laid on his shoulder. Turning round he saw a young man, very much bronzed, and dressed in European style.

"Did you wish to see me?" asked the unknown, with a short, guttural laugh.

Tancred looked again. It was Quirino, in disguise. He was going to break out with a string of questions, but the Indian put his hand over his mouth and led him off to the inn.

"Well?" asked Tancred, when they were alone together. "What does all this mean? What have you been doing while I was away?"

"I have been looking for what I wanted and I have found it."

"Found what?"

"Found Morales."

"So you were not mistaken, after all? And Morales is still alive?"

"Does he live in Havre?"

"Close by, at Ingouville."

"With his sister?"

"No. Carmen has really disappeared."

"What is the scoundrel doing at Ingouville?"

"He is robbing on a large scale Annunziata Rovero's husband, whose steward he is."

"Under his real name?"

"Under that of Don Guzman."

"So he is under the patronage of Don José's daughter?"

"Yes, so much so that she is suspected of being his accomplice."

"This is very strange, Quirino."

"There is something stranger yet."

"What is that?"

"Do you remember the color of Annunziata Rovero's hair?"

"Certainly I do. It was a light brown, with a golden shade here and there, and wavy as a lion's mane."

"And the color of her eyes?"

"Light blue."

"And what was the tint of her skin?"

"As white as alily, with delicate pink cheeks. But why do you ask?"

"You will understand just now. I asked for a description of Madame Le Vaillant's appearance. The description I got anything but tallies with yours. I was told she has long black hair, dark eyes, and the dark complexion of a Gitana. She whose appearance was described to me is certainly not Annunziata Rovero."

"Who then can she be?" murmured Tancred, not without an inward suspicion.

"The name on your lips is the same as that I have in mind. Who can she be, Morales' female accomplice if she be not Carmen. I believe it! We both believe it, but we must have proofs, and we shall not have long to wait."

"Is the false Annunziata returned?"

"No. She is following up, no one knows where, her husband, who is accused of a murder

which there can be little doubt he committed—the murder of her lover."

"And can this be the pure sweet Annunziata that I knew. No! Impossible! But where are we to get the proofs we need?"

"From Morales."

"What! Do you think he will tell us?"

"I do."

"When?"

"This very night. For this very night he will fall into our hands and we shall be his masters and his judges."

"How so?"

"We will carry him off."

"And then?"

"We will take him on board the vessel you command."

"Can it be done?"

"Easily."

"But think, Quirino, it is no easy thing to carry off a man from a large and populous city like this."

"Listen to me, and you will soon change your opinion."

Hereupon the Indian informed Tancred of the results he had attained by the incessant watch he had kept on Morales' movements. It seemed that the Gitano, notwithstanding the disdain with which he usually looked down upon the fair sex, was in the habit of visiting every evening a woman who sold parrots, and whose shop gave on the harbor. It would be an easy matter for a few determined men to seize him as he came out.

Tancred admitted that this plan, although not without its dangers, was perfectly realizable and it was agreed that the attempt should be made the same night.

(To be continued.)

SAINT ANNIE.

All saints are not numbered in glory,
They humble appear, now and then,
The aureole round them is hidden
From sight of the children of men.
God's heroes are quietly bearing
Their armor, though wounded, in pain,
And earth-walks, all quiet and lonely,
Show Ephesus' martyr-won stain.

Here—brain-workers loitering, linger,
While summer winds rock them to sleep;
There—weary hands folded together
Their holiday thankfully keep.
But Annie—dear heart—from her window
Looks out on her atom of sky,
With a thought of the far-away coolness,
That trembles at last to a sigh;

Then turns to her burden right bravely,
The burden she never lays down,
Upholding which, sunshiny summer
Must find faithful Annie in town.
Wouldst ask of the burden? 'Tis yonder,
Where helpless an idiot lies—
A brother, sore stricken, at manhood,
Whose speech is but gibbering cries.

And yet at her near-drawing footstep
The face wears a pitiful smile;
The soul, from its dim, darkened window,
Peers wistfully out for a while.
And this is the tale of the summer,
This summer, as if those passed away;
And this is the burden Saint Annie
Bears patiently day after day.

Oh, that beautiful, beautiful waking,
To come after easket and pall,
When off from the soul in its whiteness
The cumbrous clay-letters shall fall!
When the voice that is stifled be lifted
Its glad halloinjuts to shout—
When the sister-love, patient and saintly
Shall shine like a glory about.

THE COUNTESS INSFELDT.

It was a gay season in the higher circles of London society, and among the lovely women who adorned those circles none attracted such universal admiration as Lady Minnie Insfeldt, the young widow of an old French count.

She was perfect itself, in feature, form, and motion, and not the least of her attractiveness lay in her captivating manner, and in the witchery of her matchless eyes through which there flashed the fires of an ardent and burning soul. She was one of those creatures whose very look is conquest, and whose sway over the heart of man is as unquestioned as her beauty.

She was the guest of my father, and as I was then absent from my regiment on leave I was thrown daily, nay, almost hourly, in her company. Was it strange, then, that I felt a growing interest in her which gradually deepened into love? Yet it seemed a hopeless love; for when one dared to touch upon the subject the instant coldness of her manner and look threw back upon the heart in a moment all those feelings which were ready to gush out at the shrine of beauty.

I was but twenty-two, and inexperienced in the mysteries of the heart, and, one or the other of my sisters being always with her, I never had an opportunity of pouring out my soul at her feet. The sentiments I experienced towards her gradually deepened and strengthened, till I determined that in despite of all her coldness to

the words of love I would risk all my hopes upon a bold declaration. I was the heir expectant to a title and untold wealth, and she would have graced the title and been worthy the wealth were they even the title and wealth of a prince.

The opportunity did not present itself for several weeks. Then, at a magnificent assembly at the house of the Lady Mostyn, I saw the countess, late in the evening, retire to one of the embowered alcoves which joined one side of the assembly room, and were in fact almost a part of the gardens which they overlooked. With eager steps I made my way amid the throng to the alcove, and had very nearly reached it, when Colonel Gannett, of the Light Dragoons, passed into the recess. I knew he, too, was deeply in love with the countess, and from the excitement depicted on his features I feared that he was on a similar mission with myself. I felt half inclined to enter with him and thwart his opportunity by my presence. Prudence withheld me, and I remained as near the spot as possible without attracting attention.

Two minutes elapsed. Then the countess swept out of the alcove with flashing eyes and compressed lips, and went through an adjoining door, which opened upon the balcony. Passing the entrance of the alcove, I eagerly glanced in. Colonel Gannett was sitting on the velvet couch, his face buried in his hands.

I followed my fair friend, and found her at last in a little arbour in a retired part of the garden, with her handkerchief over her eyes and her bosom convulsively heaving. The apparent defeat of the colonel, instead of irritating me, seemed strangely to add a new fire to my determination. I paused a moment in astonishment. I had never seen the proud beauty thus giving way to her natural feelings. Her tears touched my heart; and sitting softly down beside her, I took her hand.

"Dearest Minnie, what has the colonel said to cause those tears? Why do you weep?"

She hastily withdrew her hand and sought to rise.

"Stay, Minnie," persisted I; "I have a right to know, for you are my father's guest. Has he insulted you?"

"Grossly, deeply. I rejected his suit firmly and calmly, and he broke out into the wildest reproaches. What have I done to merit such epithets as he showered upon me?"

"He shall meet his reward," I replied, as I turned hastily away to seek him.

The countess imploringly placed herself before me.

"No, no, not for me, Charles; do not think of it. There, I am better now; I shall soon be happy."

I was struck with the change in the countess.

"But he dared to insult you. I cannot think of it with patience. I must see him immediately."

"Do not go, Charles—do not go," said Minnie, imploringly. "I do not care for what he said, see, I am smiling."

And she whom I thought so cold and proud was gazing in my face, smiling through her tears. I was astonished.

"Fear not," returned I; "I will act prudently."

"Oh, Charles, stay, stay! I know the imprudence of hot, young blood, and the results of a hasty word. There must be no bloodshed on my account. You may fall, and then—"

She suddenly paused, in embarrassment, and looked down, while a rich colour suffused her face. I gazed upon her earnestly. What could that unfulfilled sentence mean?

A new hope came thrilling into my bosom. Col. Gannett, my own fears, everything but Minnie was forgotten.

I took her unresisting hand, and my arm stole around her waist. What a thrill of joy passed through my frame when I found that instead of withdrawing from my embrace, she rather leaned upon my bosom!

"Minnie, I love you," whispered I; "and you do not scorn my suit, you do not turn from me! What unexpected joy is this?"

Her large, dark eyes were raised to mine with a searching gaze, but their expression changed, and she smiled, as she said, earnestly:

"You thought that I would look proudly down upon you, and turn away; but you see I do not. I love you, Charles; I will not, must not deny it."

She paused, and regarded me with a glance of love. To my surprise, she uttered a quick exclamation, and, darting from my arms, hurried from the arbour and disappeared. The cause was at once apparent. Col. Gannett stood before me, with all his passionate nature gleaming forth in his countenance, yet silent, and with his arms folded on his bosom.

"Eaves-dropper!" muttered I, between my closed teeth, filled with the fury his intrusion at such a moment and in such a manner had excited.

"Eaves-dropper!" echoed he, in a cold, firm voice, while the expression of a demon rested on his features.

"Colonel Gannett," responded I, with difficulty restraining my hands, "you are a pitiful and contemptible scoundrel, who has dared to insult an unprotected woman, even while seeking to force on her your unaccepted love."

"It is sufficient. You shall hear from me again."

He was evidently rejoiced at the opportunity my hasty word had given him of bringing me to a hostile meeting.

"I am ready," responded I, recovering an appearance of calmness. "I shall not return home to-night. Your friends will find me at my club."

We separated. Avoiding the possibility of meeting any of my own household, or the countess, I sent a servant for a few necessary articles, and acquainting one or two of my friends with what had occurred, departed hastily to make my arrangements.

During the night all was made ready. The colonel's challenges came and was accepted. Lord Grantville, as my second, named pistols as the weapons to be used. I had written two or three hasty letters, to be delivered to my friends, in case I should fall; and then after snatching a few hours' sleep, if it might be called by that name, arose just before daybreak. It was early in May, and the mornings were quite cold and raw; so that, when passing with two friends from the door of the club to the carriage which was to convey us to the rendez-vous, I was chilled to the heart. By an extraordinary effort I gained command of my feelings sufficiently to counteract the gloomy tendency of the morning, yet remained silent, and not till the carriage suddenly drew up at the end of an hour's drive did either of my friends break the silence.

"Here we are," said Lord Grantville, briefly, as he took up the case of pistols. The door was opened and he sprang out.

Dr. Moriarty followed, exclaiming as he did so:

"Colonel Gannett is already on the ground."

In a moment more I stood on the green turf beside them, and bowed to the friends of the colonel, with whom I was intimate.

The spot was well chosen. It was a green lawn, bounded on one side by the Thames, and surrounded on the other three by very thick hedges. There was a carriage road, now fallen into disuse, which passed through the ground, but was obstructed at each side by heavy gates, one of which had been opened for our entrance.

"There is no time to spare," said the colonel; "and as the distance has been marked out we may as well take our places."

I assented, and took the pistol which Lord Grantville handed me, whispering in my ear at the same time:

"Charles, my boy, do not miss him; let it be a dead shot; he has sworn to kill you. I never knew one half his nature until this moment. Your own safety, therefore, demands that you should make no child's play of it; winging him will be of no use in his present state of mind."

"I am aware of it," returned I, calmly; "I have been in the same circles with him for two years, and know too well his remorseless, pitiless heart. If I fall you will deliver that packet I gave you for the countess?"

"It is a sacred trust; and, more, I shall make it my duty to guard her from his rudeness," said he, solemnly. I thanked him with a glance.

"But I have no fear of your being struck by his ball. He is too eager to have a true aim."

"Gentlemen, we are waiting," called out the colonel's second.

I grasped my pistol, and faced my antagonist.

"Aim at the waistband, Charles."

"At the word three the handkerchief will drop, and both must fire. Are you ready, gentlemen?"

"Yes, and anxious," muttered Colonel Gannett, with a look of demoniac exultation in his dark eye.

I read his thoughts in an instant. He was a most expert marksman, and could strike a crow as far as a pistol would carry. On the contrary, I had benefited but slightly by my practice, and he knew it, for we had frequented the same gymnasium.

"One, two, three—fire."

Both pistols rang simultaneously. I felt a twinge in my left arm. The colonel stood erect, with a frenzied disappointment depicted in his features, but the blood trickling from the little finger of his right hand, which had been shot away. His pistol lay on the ground, the butt having been shattered by the same ball, which must have narrowly missed his side.

"I aimed at your heart; next time I shall hit it, for I never in my life missed an object at that distance."

"Look to yourself," returned I, "for this hour may be your last as well as mine."

"You are wounded," said Doctor Moriarty, taking my left hand. There was a rent in my coat sleeve, between the elbow and the shoulder.

"One inch more to the right, and he would have touched the fountain of your life. But, Lord Grantville, this, I hoped, would be the end of it."

"No," returned Grantville, "he will listen to no terms. He is bent on killing or being killed."

"It's downright murder," whispered the doctor, as he bound up my wound.

The colonel's pistols were in requisition, as one of mine had been injured. We were again placed at our distance apart.

"Gentlemen, I protest against this," interposed the doctor. "It is going too far altogether. One shot should have sufficed."

"You have my leave to retire," said the colonel, with a sneer; "men of your profession are not generally squeamish, if the term may be used. Are you so unused to the sight of blood?"

"Colonel Gannett, you are a blood-thirsty scoundrel if you do not stop this affair at once."

"Doctor," interposed Lord Grantville, "this will not do. We will both be involved in a quarrel."

"When I have finished this love-sick strippling," said the colonel, "your case shall be prescribed for."