

# THE GITANO

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## THE GITANA.

Expressly translated for the FAVORITE from the French of Xavier de Montepin.

LIII.

### CARMEN'S DISGUISES.

Carmen had them shown in. "Gentlemen," she said. "I have discovered the whereabouts of my husband. You will come with me and we shall be on his track."

"Shall we go on horseback or in a carriage?" asked one of the officers.

"In a carriage."

"Will the journey last long?"

"Several weeks."

"When do we leave?"

"This evening."

The officers assented and took their departure.

Morales entered.

"What do you mean to do, little sister?" said he.

"I mean to start."

"To go where?"

"To St. Nazaire."

"When?"

"To-night."

"How?"

"By post-chaise."

"With whom?"

"With my two *Alguacils*, and with you, if you wish to come."

Morales hesitated a moment, and at length decided to remain at the house to watch events during his sister's absence.

Carmen resumed:

"Take a conveyance and go down to Havre. Bring back to me the best tailor of the city, with all the ready costumes of my fit that he has in store. Simple garments, mind. No embroideries, no gold lace. Fetch me also a short sword, pistols, high-heeled shoes, gloves, spurs, in fine everything that belong to a masculine outfit."

Morales hastened to do the errand, and soon returned with the tailor.

Carmen chose three costumes.

The first was wholly black—velvet coat, waistcoat and trousers. The dress of a young ecclesiastic.

The second consisted of maroon coat, pearl-grey waistcoat and trouser, and riding boots with spurs.

The third comprised coat of king's blue, red waistcoat, white breech. A military costume.

Three hats of different styles completed the accoutrements.

In a few moments, the necessary alterations were made in the dresses and a perfect fit was obtained.

Carmen kept the black costume for the journey and had the others packed up with her own dresses.

She then retired a moment to don the new suit. When she reappeared, Morales could not restrain a cry of admiration.

Indeed, the dancing girl, in her male disguise, with her long hair rolled around her head and hidden under her little lampton hat, was sweet and seductive enough to make all women fall in love with her.

"Caramba!" exclaimed Morales. "You will strew the way with conquests."

"I intend to," replied Carmen gaily.

She then enjoined upon Morales to keep an eye on Zephyr so that he did not, in any way, communicate with Oliver during her absence.

At the appointed hour, the officer arrived and the horses were drawn up.

Carmen had her pistols loaded with ball and put them into her belt. Then wrapping herself in her cloak, she took a seat in the carriage. The two officers sat down in front of her; the postilion cracked his whip and the horses started in a gallop.

LIV.

A small vessel of the royal navy going from Cherbourg to Brittany had been hovering from an early hour in sight of Havre. It finally lowered a boat into the sea.

Two men, of whom one wore the uniform of an officer, took seats in the stern, while four sailors seized the oars and rowed rapidly to the harbor.

On reaching the quay, the two men stepped out, and entered directly into the city.

They were Tancred de Najac and the Indian Quirino.

We must here take the reader back a little to the first chapters of our story.

It will be remembered that when Tancred was fired upon by Quirino, he dropped his wea-

pon and rushed to the house of Morales, but that was abandoned.

"They have left for France," said Berenice, the mulatto woman.

When his rage and disappointment had somewhat subsided, Quirino returned to the place where Tancred lay. He found the body in the same position, but by no means rigid or cold. The blood had ceased to flow.



"CARMEN STARTS FOR ST. NAZAIRE."

pon and fell backward heavily, uttering a cry of agony.

Quirino ran up to him and found that the ball which had entered the right breast had lodged itself in the flesh of the shoulder.

"What have I done?" exclaimed the Indian, "He was not the guilty one. I must now avenge his death upon Morales."

He looked to the place where the Gitano had been tied, but the cords had been cut by the negro calesero, for ten doubloons, and Morales had escaped.

"He is not dead! I will save him," murmured the Indian.

He took up the body in his arms and carried it to his hut. He then gathered some medicinal herbs with which he dressed the wound and strange to say, with wonderful success. Later, the ball was extracted from the shoulder and in a comparatively short time, Tancred was restored to full health and strength.

The Chevalier de Najac was also completely cured of his passion for Carmen. He longed to return to France to have his marriage with her

annulled, on the ground of the grossest fraud and imposition.

But he had to wait many months.

At length a French frigate arrived, and Tancred obtained passage on her for himself and his friend Quirino. Their destination was Brest.

When the vessel arrived, Tancred would have wished to go direct to Havre in order to obtain from Annunziata Rovero, intelligence of Carmen and her brother.

But he received orders to take command of a coaster with twelve men, and to make for Boulogne with despatches to the naval commander of that port.

It was on his way to Boulogne that he stopped for a few hours at Havre.

After wandering objectless about the quay for some moments, Tancred accosted a lounging whose countenance had something good-natured in it, and asked to be directed to Philip Le Vaillant's house.

"Sir," replied the man, "Philip Le Vaillant died some months ago."

"Did he not leave a son?"

"Yes, but his son has taken flight, being accused of murder."

"Whom did he murder?"

"The governor of the city."

"In a duel I suppose."

"No, it was not a duel, it was a mere murder."

"That is serious, very serious. But pardon me, sir, if I trespass on your kindness. Could you tell me if a young lady, a stranger, came to live with Mr. Le Vaillant about a year ago?"

"The daughter of Don José Rovero, the rich shipowner of Havana, you mean, no doubt?"

"Exactly."

"She did come to live with Mr. Le Vaillant. And more than that, she is now married to Oliver Le Vaillant, who is wanted on a charge of murder."

"Is she in Havre at present?"

"I could not inform you. But you will be able to find out on applying at those buildings you see there—they are the offices of the firm."

On applying at the offices indicated Tancred and Quirino were informed by the chief clerk of the loss of the "Marsouin" and of Annunziata Rovero's marvellous escape and arrival at Havre.

"Then you are sure, sir," asked Tancred, "that only one person escaped from the wreck?"

"Yes, I am perfectly certain. There were two ladies on board the "Marsouin"; a young lady recently married at Havana to an officer of the French navy, who had lost her husband very shortly after her marriage; and Miss Annunziata, the daughter of Philip Le Vaillant's old partner. The latter only was saved. The body of her unfortunate companion was found at Cape St. Adrian. As for the men on board, the captain and crew, and the only male passenger, the brother of the young widow, were all lost."

"I am extremely obliged to you, sir," returned Tancred, "for the information you have given me. I now know all that it was necessary for me to know. I have the honor of knowing Madame Le Vaillant, indeed was her father's guest while I was at Havana. Could I, do you think, possibly see her and pay her my respects?"

"Madame Le Vaillant does not live in Havre, but at Ingouville, and she would doubtless be glad to see you, but she left last night on a voyage the object of which is unknown. It is also unknown how long she will remain away."

"Then would you be kind enough to inform her, on her return, that the Chevalier Tancred de Najac was here, and regretted having been unable to see her. She will hardly, I think, have forgotten my name, for at the time when I first had the honor of seeing her, she saved my life."

Leaving the offices Tancred and Quirino paced for some moments up and down the quay without exchanging a word. At last the younger man broke silence:

"Friend," he said, "so this marriage is dissolved more surely than it could have been by the Pope—But you don't know who the Pope is? I willingly forgive the poor girl. She is dead,