

together. Perhaps if you were to give allegiance to the law of Egypt\* I might like to become your *romi*. But that is nonsense: It cannot be. Bah, my lad! believe me, you have cleared your score at a cheap rate. You have met the devil; yes, the devil: he is not always black, and has not wrung your neck. I am dressed in wool,† but am not a sheep. Go burn a taper before your *majari*;‡ she has well won it. Come! once more good-bye. Think no more of Carmencita, or she will make you marry a widow with wooden legs.”§

“Thus speaking, she drew out the bar that fastened the door, and when fairly in the street, wrapped herself in her mantilla and turned on her heel.

“She spoke the truth. It would have been wise to think of her no more; but from that day in the rue Candilejo, she never left my thoughts. I walked through the streets hoping to meet her; I asked news of her from the old woman and the fried-fish dealer, but both of them said that she had gone to Laloro,|| which is the name for Portugal. Their replies were probably in accordance with Carmen's instructions, but only a short time passed before I knew they lied. A few weeks after the day passed with Carmen, I was placed on sentinel duty at one of the city gates, at a short distance from which was a breach in the wall that some workmen were employed in repairing in the day, and at night a sentry was posted to intercept smugglers. During the morning I saw Lillas Pastia pass and repass the guard-house, stopping to talk with my comrades, who all knew him, and his fish and fritters much better. He approached me, and asked if I had any tidings of Carmen.

“No, I have not.”

“Well, you soon will.”

“He was not mistaken. At night I was pacing my sentinel-beat at the breach, and as soon as the corporal had withdrawn I saw a woman coming towards me. My heart told me that it was Carmen, nevertheless I cried out:

“Keep off! no one can pass!”

“Now use no naughty threats,” she said, making herself known to me.

“What! you here, Carmen?”

“Yes, my countryman. Let us have a few words, but to the purpose. Do you wish to gain a *douro*? Some people will presently come by with packages; take no notice of them.”

“No, I must prevent them from passing: such are my orders.”

“Your orders! your orders! You did not think of that in the rue Candilejo.”

“Ah!” I replied, quite distracted by the mere remembrance, “that was well worth all forgetfulness of orders; but I will not take money from the smugglers.”

“Come, then! If you will not have the money, would you like to dine with me again at old Dorothea's house?”

“No,” I said, half choked in the effort, “I cannot.”

“Very well. If you are so fastidious, I know to whom to apply. I shall invite your officer to go with me to Dorothea's. He appears to be a good fellow, and will post an obliging sentry who will only see what is necessary to be seen. Adieu canary. I shall laugh heartily the day on which the order comes to hang you.”

“I had the weakness to call her back, and consented to permit all Bohemia to pass, if necessary, provided that I obtained the only reward I desired. She immediately swore to fulfil her promise the next day, and ran to apprise her friends, who were only a few paces distant. There were five of them, one of whom was Pasta, all heavily laden with English goods. Carmen kept watch, and was to give warning with her castanets as soon as she should perceive the advance of the guard; but for this she had no need; the smugglers completed the business in a moment.

“The next day I went to rue Candilejo, where Carmen kept me waiting, and at length arrived in very ill humor.

“I do not care for people who need to be entreated,” she said. “You rendered me a much greater service the first time, without knowing if anything was to be gained by it; yesterday you bargained with me. I do not know why I have come, for I no longer like you. Here, off with you, there is a *douro* for your trouble.”

“I was very near throwing the money at her head, and was obliged to exercise great self-control not to beat her. After disputing violently a whole hour, I left her, and in a rage wandered for some time through the city, walking here and there like a madman, and at length, entering a church and placing myself in the darkest corner, wept bitter tears. Suddenly I heard a voice: ‘Tears of a dragoon! I will make a philter of them.’ I raised my eyes; Carmen stood before me.

“Well, my countryman, are you still angry with me? she said. ‘It must be that I like you in spite of myself for since you left me I do not know what ails me. Come! Now it is I who ask if you will come to the rue Candilejo.’

“We made peace, but Carmen's temper was like the weather in my country. Among our mountains never is a storm so near as when the sun is most brilliant. She had again promised to meet me at Dorothea's and did not come. Dorothea told me over and over that she had gone to Portugal on business for her people. Knowing by experience how far to rely upon this, I sought Carmen wherever I thought it possible for her to be, and passed through rue Candilejo twenty times a day. One evening I was waiting with Dorothea, whom I had nearly humanized by dint of paying for a glass of anise-seed cordial from time to time, when Carmen entered, followed by a young man, a lieutenant in our regiment.

“Go at once,” she said to me in Basque.

“I remained stupefied, rage in my heart.

“What are you doing here?” said the lieutenant. “Decamp, away with you.”

“I could not move a step; I was powerless. The officer, very angry, seeing that I did not withdraw, and that I had not even removed my foraging cap, took me by the collar and shook me roughly. I do not know what I said to

him, but he drew his sword and I unsheathed my own. The old woman seized my arm, and the lieutenant gave me a cut across the forehead, the mark of which I still bear. I sprang back, with one blow of my elbow knocked over Dorothea, then, as the lieutenant hotly pursued me, I whirled round, turned the point of my sword towards him, and he ran himself through the heart. Carmen extinguished the lamp, and in her language told Dorothea to fly. I escaped into the street, and began to run I knew not whither. It seemed to me that some one was following me, and when I recovered my senses I found that Carmen had not left me.

“Great idiot of a canary!” she said, “you are only capable of blind stupidities; the more so that I always warned you that I should bring you misfortune. But there is a remedy for all things when one's good friend is a Fleming of Rome.\* Begin by putting this handkerchief on your head, and throw me that sword-belt. Wait for me in this lane. I shall return in two minutes.

“She disappeared, and soon brought back a striped mantle that she had found I know not where. She made me take off my uniform and put on the mantle over my shirt, and thus equipped, with the handkerchief with which she had bandaged my wounded head, I resembled a Valencian peasant, of whom there are many in Seville who come to sell their orgeat of *chufas*.† Carmen then conducted me to a house similar to that of Dorothea at the foot of a narrow lane, where she and another gypsy washed and dressed my wound better than a surgeon-major could have done, gave me a drink of I know not what, and at length placed me on a mattress, where I fell into a profound sleep.

“Probably these women had mingled in my potion some of the narcotic drugs of which they have the secret, for I did not awaken until very late the following day. I had a violent headache and fever, and some time elapsed before the recollection of the terrible scene of the previous day recurred to me.

“After again dressing my wound, Carmen and her friend both squatted on their heels near my mattress and exchanged some words in *chipi calli*, that seemed to be a medical consultation. Both of them assured me that I should be cured in a short while, but that it was imperatively necessary to quit Seville as soon as possible; for if the authorities caught me, I should be shot without mercy.

“My lad,” said Carmen, “something must be done; now that the King will no longer furnish you with rice and salt codfish,‡ you must think of some method of earning a livelihood. You are too stupid to rob *à pastesas*,§ but you are active and strong. If you have the mettle, off with you to the coast and become a smuggler. Did I not promise to have you hung? It is preferable to being shot. Moreover, if you have the wit to prosper, you will live like a prince so long as the *minons*|| and the coast-guards do not seize you by the collar.

“It was in this engaging fashion that this devil of a girl described the fresh career for which she destined me; the only one, truth to say, remaining to me, now that I had incurred the death-penalty. Shall I confess Monsieur? She convinced me without much difficulty. It seemed to me that I should be more intimately linked with her by this life of risk and rebellion; thenceforth I believed her love assured. I had often heard stories of smugglers who traversed Andalusia, mounted on a good horse, carbine in hand, and their sweetheart seated behind them. Already I saw myself trotting in this fashion over hills and vales with the pretty gypsy. When I told her of this fancy she laughed until the tears came to her eyes, and said there was nothing more delightful than a night in camp, when the *rom* retires with his *romi* beneath the little tent formed of three hoops covered with a blanket.

“If I cast my lot among the mountains,” I said, “I shall be sure of you! There no lieutenant will share your love with me.”

“Ah! you are jealous. So much the worse for you. How can you be so stupid! Do you not see that I love you, since I have never asked you for money?”

“When she spoke in this way I had a desire to throttle her. To make the story short, Monsieur, Carmen procured for me a civilian's dress, in which I left Seville without being recognized. I went to Xeres, bearing a letter from Pasta to a dealer in anise-seed whose house was a rendezvous for smugglers, to a number of whom I was presented, and whose leader, surnamed the Dancaire, received me into his band. We set out for Gaucin, where I found Carmen according to her promise. She acted as spy for our people, and never was there a better one. She returned from Gibraltar after arranging with the captain of a vessel for the shipment of some English merchandise, that we were to receive on the coast, and which we were to await near Estepona; then having concealed a portion of it in the mountain, laden with the remainder, we proceeded to Ronda. There Carmen had preceded us, and she it was again who indicated to us the moment in which we should enter the town. This first expedition and several succeeding ones were very lucky. The smuggler's life pleased me better than that of a soldier.

“I made presents to Carmen, I had money and my love, and felt but little remorse. We were well received everywhere. My companions treated me well and even showed me respect for the reason that I had killed a man, there being some among them who had no similar exploit on their conscience. But what conduced most to my content with my new life was the frequency with which I saw Carmen. She evinced for me more affection than ever before; nevertheless she would not acknowledge to our comrades her relations with me, and even made me swear every manner of oath to tell them nothing on that score. I was so weak, such wax in the hands of this creature, as to obey all her caprices. Then, too, it was the first time that she showed herself to me with the reserve and modesty of an honest woman, and I was simple enough to believe that she had really amended her former ways.

“Our band, numbering eight or ten men, rarely remained together, unless

\* One of the names borne by gypsies.

† Me dicas vriadà de orpoy, busne sino braco. Gypsy proverb.

‡ The blessed Virgin.

§ The gallows, the widow of the last person hung.

|| The red land.

\* *Flamenca de Roma*. Argot, designating gypsies. *Roma* does not mean the eternal city, but the nation of *Romi* or married people, the name given themselves by gypsies. The first who were seen in Spain probably came from the Netherlands, whence their name of Flemings (*Flamands*.)

† A bulbous root, of which they make quite a pleasant beverage.

‡ The usual ration of the Spanish soldier.

§ *Ustilar à pastesas*, to rob with skill, to pilfer without violence

|| A free corps.