

spoke of art and culture; why should I not tame myself to this—if for the realization of this sweet dream? Why not?—But oh! this present sentiment which engrosses him so much—this Angelica of his! By Heaven!" cried she, with a sudden energy, "by Heaven, she shall not baulk me!"

The gipsy felt to-night as she had never felt before, since her meeting with the Prince. The peaceful dream of the last sweet fortnight was interrupted—that dream which sleeping love, during its beginnings, throws round so many an unsuspecting heart, from which it only awakes to realize his presence, by the restlessness and inquietude which follow after. Perhaps Pepita could scarcely assign a rational cause to herself for her unhappiness. Her patient, in whom she felt so strong an interest, lay in the tranquil sleep of returning health. The voice to which she had so long sighed to listen, had spoken to her in those accents of kindness and gratitude which, but a short time before, she thought she would have laid down her life to hear. No longer insensible to her cares and tenderness, she was about to converse with him as a companion,—perhaps as a friend. But the thought of Angelica Romano struck her like a sudden pang or the sting of a scorpion, which imparted an anguish to every sensation.

She was occupied with these sad ideas, when one of the bandits appointed to keep watch over the prisoner, beckoned to her from a little distance to approach. He was an old, repulsive looking figure, with his face seamed with toil and age, and the lines of evil passions.

"How fares thy prisoner?" said he; "crazy as ever?"

"No, father, the fever is over."

"That is right! Tirontelli rewards me richly if his life is saved. A dead dog pays no ransom—you understand that. Pepita and Antonio, children of mine!" (this last the other sentinel who had joined them,) "I pledged my word for his life. And, now mind ye! mount steady guard. The peril to his life being over, I must betake me to some other business. There is small chance of prize or fortune in these out of the world solitudes; and I shall go hence—three days journey. Tirontelli, too, must hear from me of his prisoner's recovery, and he will probably return to treat with him of his deliverance. A rich prize, by the stars! And hark ye, children! have an eye on him—or by the infernals! if anything happens—this," said he, touching his stiletto, and looking at Antonio, "shall drink your heart's blood—blood as ye are of mine, and flesh of my flesh. And you," added he, fixing on Pepita a flashing eye, in which some

sudden suspicion seemed to be kindled, and seizing her long hair by which he shook her violently: "Mountain cat—wild goat as ye are—if ye should prove traitorous, I will treat you as I have often done before, and shake this body of yours to shreds as fine as the hair which I am now scattering on the wind."

"Certainly, father—I shall recollect your charges," said Pepita, whom this treatment appeared to have very little effect in discomposing from her usual placidity of demeanour; and the old man, buckling on his belt and accoutrements, soon trudged out of sight through one of the pathways of the ravine; while Pepita and her brother each departed to their usual stations—one by the side of the wounded Prince, and the other to a tent situated on an eminence, where it served as a sort of sentry box, in which he took up his lodgings for the night.

PART SECOND.

THE scene shifts to Venice. It was night, at the theatre Isola Bella; the Opera was over, and the stage occupied with the usual after piece of pantomime and masque. The crowd was immense—stalls, boxes, amphitheatre, in a swarm with eager and excited faces—for the new Prima Donna, Angelica Romano, afterwards more familiarly known as Madame Catalani, had that evening made her *début*, and with a success hitherto unequalled in the annals of the stage.

In one of the saloons fitted up behind the scenes, for the use of the actors, Angelica was seated, still in her stage dress. The crowd who usually assemble with congratulations on such occasions, had gradually dispersed, and but one individual remained. He was evidently a greatly favoured one, for he appeared admitted to a high degree of intimacy: and we should hardly have been able to recognize, in the gay, elegantly apparelled cavalier before us, the late captive and fever-stricken Prince Borello. Few traces of illness remained in the lighted eye, and animated figure he now presented, except a slight thinness and pallour, which increased the classic effect of his air and features. Never had he appeared more interesting to the cantatrice, never perhaps, through the years of unreserved intimacy in which the footing on which they stood, of preceptor and pupil, had placed them with respect to each other, had she thought of loving him until now. Perhaps the cause lay with himself. Hitherto treating her much as a child, or at least as an inferior, it was not till to-night, when the suffrages of the public had stamped rank, and if one may so speak, adolescence, on the young and