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THE SONG OF A VOICE, OR The Song of the Debardeur.

BY FREDERIC S. COZZENS, AUTHOR OF "THE SPARROWGRASS PAPERS," ETC.

The weather was mild and warm when the master and valet set out on their journey. It was quite late in December, but the season had been generous, and winter with tardy kindness had lingered amid the falling bloom of autumn.

"Oh, he!" answered the fellow, with a rueful laugh, as he leaned over the wall. "Good Catholic you must be!" Here he turned and surveyed the valet with a sarcastic look out of the corners of his eyes. "Concealed grump?" "Oh, no!" "Who was she?" said Alfred, with a frown.

"Oh, monsieur," replied the fellow with a mock of courtesy, taking off his hat as he spoke, and revealing a forehead which Alfred recognized at once as that of the man he had seen in the custody of the police on that night after the opera at the Trois Femmes. "You only one of our peasant-girls. She was too good for me, she was! I was not worthy of her."

"I have not," answered the valet, "the faintest idea of who she is, nor of her name." "The fellow who was with me on that night after the opera at the Trois Femmes?" "No, monsieur, I have never seen him since." "You are sure?" "I am sure."

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Then for the music why, there was not a black-and-tan-colored violin, nor flute, nor clarinet in the village nor any of the instruments, nor church violoncello, that did not do parade-duty that day. And as for flowers? Winter as it was, they had flowers enough scattered through Nantaneli to make you feel that you were on a picnic in the bowers of Eden. As for ladders, he was dressed in a brand-new suit from head to heel, that still had the tailor's goose upon it, and a white favor upon his breast that was as big and as round as his own happy face. Yet he was in trouble. He had not come to Paris to get his hair cut. It had been cut by the village barber. And Pierre Laborde, whose wedding presents were numerous and appropriate, had given him a comb and a brush, with melancholy grace, away the bride. But at the dance afterwards even ladders were seized by Monsieur Laborde. Every peasant-girl in the village fell in love with him. He kept on his legs during the whole day, now leading one at a black-eyed peasant-girl, now a sunburnt blonde with yellow hair and blue eyes. He was a village musician, for he could play a little on the violin, and it was owing indeed to see his trim figure and his intellectual moustache at work amidst the rustic orchestra, with his grotesque face and hair, and his beard and mustache. But even a wedding must have an end. Rest, happy bride and groom, long years of content and joy be your portion in this life!

Alfred provided for them modestly, according to the advice of his friend, for her who had so unimpairedly perished in the flower of her youth, what could he do for a small girl who had passed around her humble grave, and laid out with sword and swordsmanship. Alfred was a young man of some means, and he had a large bill for medical attendance. One bottle of Pain's Compound also meant the complete banishment of that torturing, wearying, feverish, and irritable ailment which he had been suffering from for some time. It meant a dispensing with the usual remedies of opium, morphia, and other such things. It meant a complete and permanent cure of his ailment. It meant a complete and permanent cure of his ailment. It meant a complete and permanent cure of his ailment.

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