

cherished an ardent enthusiasm for his art, but it betrayed itself less openly, and seemed indeed to glow less steadily than before.—There were times, in which, when kindled by some rare form of external beauty, it would burst forth with all its wonted fervour, yet often Annibale marked him standing before some matchless chef d'œuvre of painting or sculpture, with an air abstracted, and an eye as cold and passionless, as if it gazed only on the untouched canvass, or the rude marble of the quarry which waited yet the inspiration of the master's mind, to stamp it with the impress of his genius. Hour after hour too, as they sat together at their studies, Agostino, contrary to his former wont, would suffer to pass in unbroken silence; and seldom now, was he the companion of his brother in their evening sail upon the Lagune, which had ever been to them a season of free and confidential enjoyment,—for then, as in their quiet gondola they floated over the smooth waters, and gazed up through the transparent depths of that beautiful Italian sky to "heaven's high empyrean," the soul of the reserved and sullen Annibale seemed almost to soften into gentleness beneath its matchless beauty, and to blend lovingly, and as it seldom did at other moments, with the more graceful and benign spirit of his brother.

But now his proud and jealous nature deeply resented the change he marked in Agostino—yet he deigned not to question him as to its cause—nor was there need, since it was made but too apparent in the thousand sketches of one lovely face which the enamoured Agostino multiplied in every subject that his pencil touched—his angels ever wore the features of the peasant girl Antonia, and his Madonnas, in their meek and heavenly beauty, gazed from their glowing canvass with her eyes of love.—Many a word of withering scorn fell from the biting tongue of Annibale, and all were heard in silent and patient gentleness by his conscious brother. Wider each day grew the breach between them; again jealousy usurped the place of kindlier feelings in Annibale's breast, and his envy was continually fed by the frequently superior success of Agostino in their art, and by the notice which his refined manners and elegant mind won for him from the great, whom they were in the habit of meeting at the house of Paul Veronese—many of whom sought his intimate companionship and honoured him with their lasting friendship.

Annibale affected to despise as effeminate, the varied accomplishments of his brother.—

His captivating manners, and the tasteful elegance which always distinguished him in dress, were subjects of his especial scorn and ridicule; particularly if in the presence of any of his noble friends he could by an ill-natured jest, or scornful word, inflict pain or mortification upon Agostino, it was a secret source of pleasure and of triumph to his embittered heart.

One day as he came forth from the church of St. Mark, he encountered his brother in the portico, walking arm-in-arm, and pleasantly conversing with the young Count Friuli.—Coldly returning the salutation which they gaily gave him, he passed moodily along, and obeying the sudden impulse of an envious thought, he paused at the extremity of the colonnade, and leaning against one of its massy pillars, drew forth his crayons, and extracting a leaf from his tablets, sketched with the rapid touch which characterised his genius, and true to the life, the figure of his humble father, seated upon his tailor's board, in the act of threading a needle, while near by, stood his mother, a faultless likeness, cutting from a piece of cloth the sleeves of the garment on which her husband was at work.

"This will sting him!" he muttered, as having finished, he held it with a smile of malicious triumph for an instant up before him, then walking towards the spot where Agostino still lingered with his friend, he said carelessly as he approached them—

"We who are married to our art, count," and he glanced with a derisive sneer at Agostino as he spoke, "must obey, whenever they impel us, the promptings of her genius—see, what they have but now suggested to me!" and he held the sketch for a moment before the count, then thrusting it into Agostino's hand—"fair brother," he said, "if thou dost recognise in these rude lines the humble portraits of those from whom we sprung, it may be that my unstudied draft shall read thee a timely lesson, since thou seemest not to remember among thy jewelled associates, that the dung-hill cock was never designed to soar to the nest of the skylark."

"Go to, ill-bred youth," said the fiery noble as Annibale turned away with a malicious laugh, "mate, if it so pleaseth thee, with thine own barn-yard fowls, but know, that true genius wears ever the eagle's plumage, and soars up unblenching in the bright blaze of the noontide sun!"

But Annibale was already beyond the sound of words, which, had they fallen on his ear would have extorted a sharp and cutting re-