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a tear crept slowly down her cheek. How happy she had been those days so long ago. She saw the old caravan and she was again with her old companions.

Next came the carnival at Florence. Then, her father coming claiming her, her pleasure and excitement, and the new life came before her. The whirl of pleasure and excitement.

The tune changed—a little discordant note crept in—she was happy—she saw her husband, an old man—she hated him, and he did not care for her. She was very unhappy—the music was sad and discordant.

All pleasure had fled—she was growing old, and her beauty was fading—now she was alone.

The music moved her, why did she stay and listen. She wanted to go and leave this man to his violin and mad music.

The rope of pearls around her neck was choking her, she undid the clasp.

The violin was playing again, it was calling her to come to him. She gave this life with all its shame and unrealities, and go with him, he would never leave her.

He would care for her just the same, when she was old and her beauty faded.

She thought of the man she was to marry, and whom she had never seen. Did not even know what he was like, and people said that he was mad.

The violin was calling now with a sob. He was disappointed in her; he had thought her mistaken. She left the balcony and hurried down the marble steps.

"Francisco," she sobbed, "I am not what you think me. I am coming. The violin called her on. Presently she came into a little opening and saw Francisco, leaning against a tree, the violin lightly in his hand. She stood in the full light, while he was in the shadow. The pale light fell upon her, showing up more clearly her exquisite beauty.

"Francisco," she cried, "you wanted me?"

He laughed lightly, and laid the violin on the grass at his feet.

"Well, Naomi, it is a long time since we met."

How well he looked, so tall and manly, not one of the men she knew could bear comparison with him.

She twisted and untwisted nervously the rope of pearls around her neck.

"I am going to be married tomorrow," she said at last.

"So I hear, to some great nobleman. You will be very happy," he replied.

"I do not know. I have never seen him, Francisco."

"Never seen him? It is indeed a strange wooing, never to see the man you are to marry, with whom you have to live the remainder of your life." He laughed scornfully.

"My mother wishes it."

"And, of course, you, like a dutiful daughter, obey." He again laughed harshly.

"You do not understand." His laugh goaded her. She was a great lady, and yet here was a gipsy, poorer than her own servants, daring to speak to her so. He seemed to read her thoughts. "Come, Naomi," he said gently, "Let us talk this over. Remember, I am your brother. We loved each other in the old days, and had no secrets from each other."

The hand he laid upon her arm was very white and thin; it had not been so in the old days. She looked at him keenly; dark shadows were under his eyes.

"Francisco have you been ill?" she said anxiously.

"Yes, I have been very ill." His tone was weary and tired.