IN NINE DAYS.

BY CARMEN SYLVA.

It happened quite unexpectedly. I was sitting drawing at my little table—spring and sunshine always awakened in me the love of colors and the wish to paint—when Alice came into the room and said, in her abrupt way:

"Come with me; I want to go and buy some more old pitchers, and you must help me to choose."

I shut my paintbox and put on my hat without a moment's hesitation. I had not the least presentment of coming danger.

We crossed the square. The market was over, and the rows of booths, painted neatly a brown color, were shut, the pavement was swept clean, but in the vicinity of those stalls the butchers occupied a strong smell of meat still lingered.

"We had better, though, have gone the other way," Alice said, who happened to be walking a little in front of me. A perfect stream of workmen from the ramparts were coming towards us, and we had to push our way through them.

"Why, because of those honest descendants of Srajan?" I asked when I suddenly felt my left arm seized with such violence that I staggered and I was looking a great, shaggy dog in the eyes. What dreadful eyes they were! From which direction he had sprung on me I don't know; whether it was from behind the booths. I only know that I had to control myself with a violent effort from screaming, and that what I had read in the paper that morning about mad dogs flashed across me. I did not scream or even try to drive off the dog, fright positively paralyzed me. I hardly felt that my left arm was bitten, when a hand was stretched over my shoulder which seized the dog and flung him backward. Those gray gloves knew; they must be my husband's. It was like in a dream that he should be there just when I needed help. How can he have come here, I thought?

"It is a mad dog! It is mad!" I heard people calling out around me. Some ran away panic-stricken, while others rushed after the animal. My husband took hold of my arm just above the bitten part and said: "Come—quick." I let him lead me some way before I remembered Alice.

"Never mind her," said my husband. "You have no time to lose."

Everything danced before my eyes. I must have been half unconscious, but I noticed only now how pale his face was, and that one of his hands was stretched with blood. I drew his attention to it.

"It is nothing," he answered, and just then we entered the hospital, which stands almost immediately behind the market place. Louis opened the door, and we were in a sort of chemist shop.

"Bring quickly some caustic." Louis called out to a young man in enormous spectacles. "I don't believe it will be of much use," he added, turning to me, "but still one must try everything." Now I began to understand; there came a rumbling and singing in my ears, while a cold shiver crept over me.

"Was he really mad?" I asked in a low voice, which sounded hoarse and unnatural. Was that the first sign of the poison doing its work? I had to sit down, and then, before my husband could answer, my eyes closed and I lost consciousness of all around me in the one overwhelming thought, "My child."

But Louis had not answered: he had sprinkled the bitten part with something and then cauterized it, but all the time I felt nothing, only that nameless anxiety about my child. Now he bandaged the wound, which was not a big one, and then he let his own wrist be bandaged by the little man with the spectacles. He drew my arm through his, and we left the hospital quickly by another door than the one we had entered by. He looked at the clock, and hailed a passing cab.

We turned the corner of the Stranda Carol into Pod, and there, just what I had dreaded, a funeral was coming slowly to meet us. I had never once driven down this street without meeting one; it was the only way leading to the cemetery of Belo. I began to tremble as I saw the men with their horrible black cloaks with gold borders, holding long tapes in their hands, approaching. But I could not help looking at the bearer. Through the glass lid of the coffin I saw the face of a young woman with brown hair; the jolting over the uneven pavement had caused the head to fall on one side. I could have screamed out, "No, I will not die," and yet—in a few days I would be driven through the streets in like manner, but with my child in my arms—without the child I would not die. Oh, if only the cab-driver would drive faster, that I could get to my child! I took hold of my husband's arm and pressed it convulsively. He took my hand and stroked it.

"Must we also die?" I asked quite wildly.

"Yes, thank God," he answered quickly.

I drew my hand away; he would be glad I did so; he had only stroked it to soothe me as a doctor does his patient. We hated each other, of course, or has the shadow of that death which seems now so near us changed our feelings toward one another?

The cab stopped before our house. Louis helped me out, and then turned to get in again.

"You aren't coming with me?" I asked.

"A patient of mine has been waiting for me for the last half hour!" He drove off.

I couldn't help, for a moment, admiring him going on calmly discharging his duties, and thinking only of others; but then came the bitter thought, we are perfectly indifferent to him. I told the servant who opened the door to bring me a glass of water, and then I hurried upstairs to my boy, my sweet little boy! He came running to meet me, and put his arms around my neck as I knelt down before him.

"Where have you been to, mamma?"

I did not answer, I only pressed him closer to me. It did me good to feel his little warm body in my arms; yet, at such a moment I could even die, but the tears started to my eyes when he repeated, where have you been?"

With papa in the hospital."

"With sick people!" he asked, astonished.

"Yes; and I saw also a funeral."

My little one thinks a funeral a beautiful thing, with all its gaudy pomp.

The servant brought me the glass of water but I put it down untouched, though I knew I could not, as yet, have reached that stage of the terrible disease when one flies at the sight of water.

How long had I still to live? The wound now began to burn, and the nervous restlessness, from which I had thought was only longing for my son, did not leave me. Was this the beginning of the end? I possessed a book about medicine, which had often reassured me when I had been alarmed by some trifling ailment of the child. I went and fetched it. Was I, then so afraid of dying? In fancy I still saw the young woman with her head fallen to one side, but I have known all along what awaits one when life is over. Had I not often wished to die, and felt desperate at the thought of going on living? But my child, my child; he must die too, for what would become of him when both of his parents were dead? Nine days was still left for me, nine days [of health (so I read in the medical book), and the first symptoms of the fearful malady would appear. "Nine days still." I sprang up, and felt as if I received a new lease of life. I must make haste now and enjoy all happiness which this earthly life can give and then die by my own hand. Louis would help me. I took the child again on my knee; here was my greatest joy, and, who knows, perhaps the dog wasn't mad after all. Was it this hope which suddenly calmed me?

My husband returned home later than usual, and looking tired.

"The dog had been caught," Louis remarked, "and unfortunately killed."

"Why unfortunately?"

"Because now one can't ascertain whether it was mad or not, though I do not doubt that it was."

"Neither do I;" and again I cast that unreasonable glance at the water on the table. I had read that this dread of water was an old wife's fable, but it was of no use.

I put the little one to bed, and he begged me to lie down too. Though I dreaded lying down, I did so to please him, and threw myself on the bed beside him. I did not dare to move for fear of disturbing him; the hanging lamp burnt with a blue light. I shut my eyes and soon I fell asleep, but not for long. When I awoke, I fancied all that had taken place was only a bad dream, but only for a moment, and then the dreadful reality overwhelmed me again. I looked at the clock above my bed. The hands pointed to 11 o'clock, so it was still the first day? I got down off my bed and stole softly out of the room. It was dark in the room adjacent, and the lights in the drawing room were put out, but across the passage I saw a light burning in my husband's room, the door of which stood open as usual.

I remained standing, leaning against the doorpost, and watched him. Now he approached the lamp and examined the wound on his hand; he then bound it up again and began walking up and down the room. After a while he sat down and began to write. I was just going to him to ask to whom he was writing, when I espied a traveling bag lying open on the floor. He was going away, then? Perhaps with her who had destroyed my wedded happiness! This thought drove me mad. I ran across the passage and into his room; at sight of me he changed color.

"Where are you going to? Where, and why are you going? Because I am going to die?"

"Because I can't stay and see it," he replied, looking me full in the face with an almost defiant expression.

I took up the sheet of paper on which the pen had been dropped; it was evidently addressed to me and ran, "You are quite safe till next Sunday, then take these drops, they will act quickly and painlessly. I am writing to your brother; he will be here in three days."

"I won't have it!" I cried. "I won't see any one, no one shall know it, or even guess it, till all is over."

"You are right, Anna. Why make partings still harder? but—" He stood up. Was his composure only feigned? "I can't remain here—"

"You have been called away, then?" I asked distrustfully.

"Very likely," he answered mockingly; "but come, we have now more important things to consider—our child. I have long ago made my will."

"The child will die with me," I interrupted him.

"Anna!" he exclaimed, horrified. Do you know that would be a crime?"

Now I was calm. "Louis," I said, "the happiest life on this earth is not worth living, and our little orphan boy's life would not be of the happiest. Some day he must die, and I feel I cannot part from him, dreadful though it may sound."

"The child can't die; be reasonable, Anna. Life is not so bad as you think, though I also should not care to live mine over again; and I will not allow my son to be murdered."

"Your son? The child is mine, mine alone. What have you done that you deserve to have still a voice in any matter concerning him?"

He was white with anger. Now I thought at last he will speak out; but no, he took a few turns up and down the room, and then said:

"In eight days we shall be both dead, so it is hardly worth speaking about; but you know that if our mutual sufferings were to be weighed in the balance mine would be found far greater than yours. But now is enough; it is against my nature to talk in this way. Only one thing more; I will stay here, a woman is always a woman, and I need not fear now any return of weakness on my part. Good-night."

"Good-night; thank you for staying."

"Thank yourself," he answered shortly, and left the room.

The day after the accident, when I stood at the window, I positively shrank back at the sight of the passer-by. This is one of the symptoms of growing mad, I thought, and when I saw the watch-dog cross the courtyard I shuddered and felt quite sick. I felt ashamed of myself, but I seemed to have lost all I control over my feelings. I took my boy on my lap and leaned my burning head in the cushions, when Louis entered.

"I have settled everything," he cried, "and we start this evening."

"We are going away?" I asked astonished.

"Yes, we will make the most of the time left us. Did you not say yourself, last night, you wished to enjoy life over again?"

"Yes, but to-day I can't any more. I feel suffocating. I think I am going mad already."

"Leave everything to me, and trust me entirely."

"And we shall die in a foreign land, but of course the child with us," I added eagerly.

"The last day you shall decide that," he answered slowly. "Come now, the carriage is waiting, and we will go for a drive and take a last look at the country."

Our little boy sat between us, and Louis chattered away and laughed. I looked at him in astonishment; for my part, I could not even smile, my heart was heavy within me and the one dreadful thought haunted me persistently. But the fresh breeze did me good, and the pale green of early spring awakened in me the former admiration for nature's coloring. I began gradually to feel better.

"Man you really also die?" I asked suddenly. The thought had struck me, as his bite was less severe than mine, and he had been bitten after me, perhaps he had not caught the infection. O!, what relief in the thought that he would remain to look after the little one!

"Would I be so happy if I were not sure of dying soon?" he answered. This evening we will start on our journey, which will last eight days and for these eight days you will become mine, alone. Has life ever given me this happiness till now?"

On returning home we found Alice had called. I looked at Louis with suspicion.

"Aren't you sorry to have missed her?" I asked.

He did not answer, and I saw he was hurt, so I followed him into his room.

"Louis, forgive me, but I hardly know what I am saying or doing; I am like in a dream."

He looked at me pityingly. I felt he must despise me, and I felt ashamed of my weakness; I who had always imagined myself to be so brave was but a pitiful coward after all. I reproached myself also with my selfish fear, but it was all of no use. I could not feel differently; only when I had my child on my lap and buried my face in his curls while the tears flowed freely, then I breathed easier.

"Shall we really go away, Louis?" I asked, shyly.

"Of course. We will take old Marjory with us, and she can bring the child back. We can rest him to her, and she has often travelled the way we are going."

I tried to sit down quietly, but it was no use. I had to spring up again, and always with the thought I must enjoy the present and yet I am not doing so.

"Come, Anna, I will read you something aloud, as I used to in the dear old times long ago; do you remember?"

"No! can't listen. Come, rather, and let me play something on the piano."

He did as I wished, and we played one of Beethoven's symphonies, but I broke down a the adagio, and leant my head against Louis' shoulder.

"I can't go on," I whispered.

At last the evening came. It was late when we got to the station. The train was to starter 11 o'clock; the child was tired and had fallen asleep in his nurse's arms. As usual, we met several acquaintances on the platform, who all asked us where we were going to so suddenly.

"My wife has had some bad news from her relations," Louis answered, "and I am taking her to Vienna."

I was quite silent, and felt half-stunned, or else I think at the last moment I could not have got into the train. Only when we began to move out of the station I cried:

"Nowwe are really off, and I shall never see my home again."

Louis held both my hands tight in his; the train pushed onward and the carriage rattled and shook. I lay down on the seat and closed my eyes. Louis sat opposite me, and near him lay the child; the nurse was in another compartment of the sleeping car.

"Why are we going to travel through Moldavia?" I asked. It had just struck me we were going to Vienna by that route.

Louis did not answer. Was he already dead? My brain was in a whirl. I sprang up and seized his hand. I had roused him out of a brown study. He came and sat near me and said:

"I was thinking whether I ought to tell you something or not. For natures like yours suspense is harder to bear than certainty, however bad it may be. Do you remember the time when you told me this yourself, and then answered you, 'Yes, it is true; I love another' and you bore it quite calmly?"

Was he mocking me?—but no, his face was grave and sad, and he went on quietly:

"That is why I told you what I believe to be true, instead of leaving you in doubt; out the dog has not been killed, as I told you. He is strongwatched, and perhaps we shall find the news awaiting us at Vienna that he wasn't mad after all."

"Louis, is that possible?"

"You may well ask," he continued, "why all this time I have tormented you so unnecessarily, but I thought you would not have minded dying, as you so often expressed a wish to die; besides which, I can't deny it, to me the dog seemed mad."

"Oh, can it be possible? I can't believe in so much happiness." I cried, and threw my arms around his neck; I longed to wake the child and ell it him; I longed to cry it to the four winds of heaven.

"Life is not so bad, then?" Louis asked.

"Oh, no; no now that you love me again life is worth living; but how you must have thought me a great coward," I added in a low voice.

He smiled.

"No, I only felt humiliated that my love had no power over you any more."

Now I took laugh again. "Oh, can it be true—really true?" I asked again and again in my rapture. "Now I know there is a merciful God above, but you will show me the telegram—promise me that I may see with my own eyes that you are not deceiving me; you really love me now."

Thus I chattered away in my joy; but the thought would somehow come, "is he deceiving you?" but then the thought of the telegram which I would go with him to fetch on arriving at Vienna reassured me.

The next day after a restless night spent washing the child, I was still at my toilet, when Louis came into my room, holding an open telegram in his hand.

I read and with a joyful cry I threw myself in his arms. "We will live, we will live!" and I burst into a flood of tears.

He looked at me; he was moved and even somewhat embarrassed as it seemed to me. We went up to the child's bed, who was sitting up playing with his toys. "He has only a bad cold—nothing more."

"You say that as if you quite regretted not being able to try your medical skill on him," I answered, laughing; "but anyhow we can't leave Vienna to-day."

Louis looked impatient, but saw I was right. "Should like to go home again," he said presently; "I forgot a lot of things I meant to attend to before we started."

"We shall return home quite soon enough. My God! how I thank you that it was only a fright I got, nothing more—I can hardly believe it yet, I am too happy."

Louis smiled in an absent way. The fear and suspense of the last few days had decidedly told on him; he was feverish and nervous, and I watched him anxiously.

That evening we went to the opera, and, as he had apparently recovered his good spirits, I smiled at my proneness for exaggerating things. The opera given was "Tannhauser." We had a box to ourselves and could enjoy the music undisturbed. As we drove home Louis asked me, "did you enjoy it thoroughly?"

"Yes, why do you ask?"

"Because I couldn't; all the time I kept thinking how it would be if we were going soon to die."

"Then we shouldn't be able to enjoy anything."

At length it was decided that we should go to Dresden; but this time the journey to which I had looked forward was not the same as our journey through Moldavia had been—something was wanting. I didn't know what, perhaps Louis' good spirits.

It was late in the evening when we reached Dresden and got to our hotel, and on Friday morning we were woke by the sunshine streaming into our room and reflected brightly from the river beneath our windows.

Only once, when Louis remarked, "Tomorrow it makes eight days since we were bitten," I felt a cold shudder creeping over me.

We went early to bed; my husband did not wish to go to the theater. "Tannhauser was so beautiful," he said, he did not wish the recollection of it marred by anything fresh.

It was almost midnight when I was awoke by an intense pain in the part which had been bitten. The wound had healed already in Vienna, and I had thought no more about it—but now, in this moment, I awoke to the full consciousness of my awful position and the last eight days. It is in this consciousness that I am writing to you. "O God, never tells the full truth, not even in the presence of death," you said to me once, and I write this to show you you were wrong. As yet I am in the first stage of the terrible disease, and while I am still able to, I will write to my sister and commit my little orphan boy into her keeping. My son shall live; I have learnt a lesson from my husband in these last eight days, and I can't express enough my admiration for how he has acted toward me. Now I understand that strange gleam in his eyes as he bent over the sick child; he thought God would lighten our parting and take him to himself. He never all the time said what was passing in his mind as I did, and he concealed much more than I. And the false tidings we got at Vienna? He must have telegraphed at the frontier for them to be sent in order to be able to show the answer to me!

I remember now every word I read in the medical book, and know in a few hours the disease will have mastered me; but he, my dearly loved husband, shall only know it when I send him for the poison. I will tell him I promised my sister to send the little one to her for a few days, and under this pretext I will pass from him. It must be soon done, and I must wear a smiling face; my boy must keep a bright picture of his mother in his memory.

Afterward the nameless dread will again overpower me. I feel it already approaching and then death will come. Oh, my God! Death is almighty everywhere, whether on sea or land; but to me no longer fraught with pain and terror, for I take my best beloved on earth with me, yes, we are both lost, but our child will live, for life is beautiful and he is like his father.

. . . . . .

I have seen my son for the last time. How Louis struggled with emotion as he saw the quiet parting, how hard it was for him not to cry aloud, "But you will never see him again!" and he hardly let the child out of his arms. The great solemnness of approaching death gives me strength. Just now I looked out at the pattering sheet of rain below, and I sank down giddy and faint. Now it is here—the terrible disease—the dog was mad, and Louis knew it—all will soon be over! Farewell!

Death of Lord Napier.

The death of Lord Napier of Magdala was announced in England on Jan. 14th. He is to be laid to rest in St. Paul's Cathedral and will be the first soldier to share the honors of the crypt there since the Duke of Wellington was interred in 1852. The dreaded influenza is responsible for the warrior's death at the age of 79. Robert Cornelius, Baron Napier of Magdala, has occupied for nearly thirty-five years an enviable position in British military circles. He was the son of Maj. C. F. Napier, R. A., and was born in Ceylon in 1810. Educated at the military academy of Addiscombe, he joined the Bengal engineers in 1828 as a lieutenant. Of 1846 he was made major, and he was twice wounded and came out of it with the title of major. During the Indian mutiny he further distinguished himself as chief of the engineer department of Sir Colin Campbell's army. Under Henry Lawrence, recognizing the soldierly qualities of Napier, advanced him from post to post under his administration. The knowledge the young officer gained of Indian life proved of incalculable value later on in his career. To him is due exclusively the plan of bridging the Goomtee river prior to the siege of Lucknow. When, after the fall of Lucknow, the rebels had gathered under the flag of Tantia Topee, Napier, now a colonel, was given command of the force sent out against them. But a dispute arose at this juncture, Sir Hugh Rose claiming the execution of this task. Napier was forced to yield, but, nevertheless, as second in command of the expedition, did yeoman's service. Napier's fame as soldier and engineer was now widespread. He added to his laurels in Sir Grant Hope's Chinese campaign, and was rewarded by being made a major-general, and a K. C. B., and the successor of Sir John Outram as military member of the council of India. But the most brilliant portion of his career fast approached. In 1863 he was created commander-in-chief at Bombay, with the local rank of lieutenant-general. Four years later he began his celebrated campaign in Abyssinia against King Theodore. Its ostensible purpose was to rescue the Christian captives which that monarch had taken. Napier's successes made him a national hero. In 1868 occurred the battle of the Heights of Islamgee, and the subsequent release of the captives. Three days later, April 13, 1868, Magdala was stormed, and Theodore, despairing of making headway against his conqueror, committed suicide. This was the most romantic chapter in Sir Robert Napier's life. On his return to England after the Abyssinian campaign the nation rose to welcome him. Parliament voted him its thanks, the sum of £2,000 a year was granted him and his next heir, he was given the freedom of London, was presented with a costly sword, and he was finally raised to the peerage under the title of Baron Napier of Magdala. In 1870 Gen. Napier succeeded to the command of the forces in India and was made a member of the governor-general's council. Appointed to the governorship of Gibraltar in 1875, three years afterward, before the treaty of Berlin had averted war with the czar, Baron Napier was selected by the government to command the expeditionary forces against Russia. His crowning honor came to him in 1882, when he was appointed a British field marshal. He had been a fellow of the Royal society since 1869. Twice married, he has left a family of eight sons and half as many daughters.

Dangers of Moose Hunting.

Moose hunting is thought by the inexperienced to be rare fun. It is not always so agreeable as it seems and the hunter frequently has to "hump" himself to prove himself the killer instead of the killed. A friend of mine was recently in Maine hunting and he tells of the experience of a companion of his there, which is rather startling. The hero of the adventure is a Waltham, Mass., sportsman who had been in camp at Alligator lake, the centre of the richest deer shooting region in Maine. More than once this gentleman, Alanson Haslam, had brought down his deer, and he was no novice. A short distance from camp the other morning he saw a handsome deer, but was unarmed, and stealing swiftly into the cabin he caught up his rifle and started out. The deer had moved but a few rods, and Haslam, eager to add another to his list, raised the rifle to his shoulder and fired. To his great satisfaction the deer fell, and the Waltham man, as is customary with the sportsmen, drew his hunting knife and ran towards the spot to cut the animal's throat and bleed him, letting his rifle drop as he did so. He saw as he neared the place that he had brought down a magnificent three-year old buck, and was gloating over his triumph, when to his astonishment the deer arose slowly, and then, after looking at his captor, made a dash at him, head down. Haslam was but five or six feet away, and his hair stood on end as he saw the maddened animal start for him. There was but one thing for him to do, however, to catch the buck by one of his horns, and he did it instinctively, being thrust heavily against a tree by the powerful rush of the buck. That tree saved the life of a citizen of Waltham, for had Haslam fallen the strong, young animal would have gored him to death. As it was he was only strengthened. He had maintained his grasp on the hunting knife, and as the buck bent his head the sportsman plunged the blade in deeply between the forward legs of the animal. The first stab seemed only to add to his strength. Haslam had a deadly grip upon the horn, and although his opponent was heavier, stronger and livelier, the hunter kept upon his feet all the time, using his knife with fearful effect. Back and forth they swayed, the eyes of the buck shooting fiends his madness and for fully five minutes—the hunter thought for five hours—they held their position, neither gaining an advantage. All the time the prongs of the deer's horns were having a great effect upon Mr. Haslam's clothing, tearing it into shreds and bruising both chest and stomach each time they struck him. Had he not seen the deer weakening from loss of blood his courage would have failed for he was becoming exhausted. Finally a plunge of his knife higher than the previous thrusts struck a vital spot and the crazy buck dropped to the ground dying. The hunter, with his clothes hanging in rags from him, dropped near the deer and lay motionless until he was rested and recovered his mind and had the supreme satisfaction of seeing the deer die before his eyes. An examination showed the bullet from the rifle had struck the deer on the horn, cracking it, but beyon knocking the deer down for a moment, did not hurt him. When the hunter arrived on the spot the buck maddened by pain and cornered, was ready to fight for his life, and did it to the full extent of his powers.

His Reason.

Recent reports from St. Petersburg explain the Czar's failure to recognize the new government of Brazil. The Czar is hanging on to his throne with both hands, and is not disposed to encourage republics in any way. There are rumors of a great conspiracy against the Czar among army officers and nobles of the empire. One or two of the Czar's body-guard have committed suicide or have been summarily removed by assassination. Peril for the Czar lurks in the royal palaces. The system of espionage has reached its highest development. Spies watch spies. With all these precautions the Czar can trust no one. His system of government by spies is heaping up wrath against the day of wrath. He may retain his throne for a time if he consents to a war. War would engage the attention of the Russians and satisfy a faction among them that they do not think meanwhile of changing their government. The idea of reaching the Mediterranean is firmly fixed in the mind of every Russian, and any movement in that direction gains immediate sympathy, and every other issue is allowed to rest. If the Czar can ward off death long enough, he will probably move again. He must obey the wishes of the people of the empire that every sovereign must make an effort to open the Dardanelles to Russian commerce, and to Russian war ships. Penetrating to the heart of Asia pleases the Russian people but is does not satisfy them. During peace, they struggle to gratify their desire for larger liberty and better government; and find the chief obstacle in the Czar and his despotic methods. The Russians are a great and vigorous people and in time will have their will.

The Portuguese Cortes are dissolved, the new body to meet on April 19. It is thought this action has been taken to give the Government untrammelled power in making arrangements with England respecting the East African question.