

THE PAINTER OF PARMA; — OR, — THE MAGIC OF A MASTERPIECE.

CHAPTER XIII.

We left our hero in his studio, standing before the canvas on his easel. He had worked on the face of the saint until weariness had admonished him that further working might be faulty. He stood back, with his palette still in hand, and gazed upon the features that were coming out into life. It was, as yet—so the duke would have said he had seen it—the face of the Princess Isabel; only it seemed different; in a way impossible to explain. The lineaments were the same; in contour, in form, and in feature it was the same. Yet, for all that, there was something springing to life in this face that was not in the face of the living model.

Once or twice the artist moved forward, and started to touch his brush to a faint light which he would strengthen. It may have been a shadow, which he would make deeper; but, be it what it might, he did not make the mark.

"No," he said, with a last glance at the picture, "I will not touch it again until I have slept and dreamed. Who knows what may come to me in the visions of my sleeping hours. Something tells me—has told me since yesterday—that I shall not paint the face of my beloved on that canvas. Aye, I know it now! Mercy! Had I forgotten that my darling may be in trouble? The picture must have had a wonderful hold on my inner being, thus to close my thoughts against the possible catastrophe at the palace."

It was, indeed, as he had said. His painting—the face that he would picture there—had so absorbed and possessed his every thought and feeling, that he had, for the time, really forgotten, or had ceased to bear in mind, the calamity imaged forth by old Madelon's report. But it came to him now, and once more he turned his thoughts to his loved one and her surroundings.

But what could he do? Literally nothing. He could only think, and think, and think, and torture his heart with vain imaginings. The confined atmosphere of the studio was becoming oppressive to him. He wanted more air and more room. He would walk by the river, and perhaps into the country.

He cleaned his palette and put away his brushes; then covered his canvas; after which he arranged his garb for the public streets. He had donned his doublet of black velvet and put on the velvet cap he usually wore, and all that remained was his rapier. He took it from where it stood when not in use, and threw the baldric over his shoulder.

Then he cast a sweeping glance over the room, to make sure that everything was as it should be; and, being satisfied with the result of the survey, he turned toward the door. As he did so, he took hold upon the scabbard of his rapier to throw it farther back, out of his way, when he paused and considered.

Considered, what? Who shall say what could have possessed him—what could have led him to turn his attention to that rapier? It was a weapon he had worn daily for months, and on no former occasion had he once hung it upon his hip and then thought of exchanging it. But he thought of that now. The blade at his side felt light. It was not a weapon that exactly suited his hand. It had served him well enough in his passage with the Marquis Stefano, but suppose he should be called to defend himself against a better swordsman; or, suppose he should be waylaid and attacked by highwaymen. Such things had been, and were liable to be again.

However, he did not spend a long time in considering. No sooner had the thought of an exchange occurred to him than he proceeded to put it into execution. He slipped the scabbard of the light blade from the loop at the end of the baldric, and, having put it back into the corner whence he had taken it, he went to the closet where he hung his clothing, and took down from an upper shelf another rapier; but before he hung it at his side he took it into a stronger light, where he regarded it with a tender, loving look.

One not used to judging of such things would have said that it was new; that it had not been in use at all; it was a true rapier, though somewhat heavy—certainly heavier than the rapier of Italian fabrication. It was a Toledo blade, of exquisite finish and marvelous temper. The hilt was of gold and steel combined, the grip being fine gold, while the guard and the light basket protection for the back of the hand were of tempered steel. Its maker had evidently aimed to afford its possessor protection against the cutlass or broadsword. The scabbard was an artistic and elaborate piece of work, being a groundwork of silver with an intricate overlay of gold filigree.

The weapon had once been the property of a Spanish nobleman of high rank, who had worn it for many years. He had given it to the painter, Murillo; and he, by will, had left it to his friend and pupil, the younger Velasquez; and Velasquez, regarding Zanoni as the pupil of his own, who would do him greatest credit and honor, had given to him the priceless weapon in token thereof.

And this was the weapon which the painter now hung at his side, having done which, he went out, locked his door behind him, and descended to the street.

Upon the broad piazza of the building he stood for a few moments to look around upon the stirring scene open to his view in the Grand Square. The day was near its close, the sun being within an hour of its setting, and the humble artisans and still hum-

bler laborers on the highways were going to their homes or to their places of rest for the night. How many of them had never known the shelter of a proper home we would not dare to say; but there were many. They were abroad late in the morning, and they were tired of work before the day was done. The price of an American's cigar, and the cheapest at that, paid for the day's labor, and supplied the laborer with the food he ate and the sour, thin wine he drank.

Zanoni looked; he had given a shuddering, sympathetic thought to the ignorant ill-fed, and far more ill-clad, creatures bearing the Maker's image, who passed before him, and was upon the point of stepping down into the great thoroughfare, when on casting a glance in the direction he had thought of taking, he saw the two men, of all the world, whom at that moment he would avoid.

They were the Marquis Stefano Farnese and Count Guiseppe Denaro. He thought their gaze was turned upon him, but was not sure. However, he must avoid them. If they were going to the river by the route he usually took he would take another. He considered a few seconds, then stepped down and took his way toward the north. There were delightful walks in that direction and the path by the river, not so much frequented by pleasure-seekers as was the case generally in the other direction. He walked rapidly until he had gained the street by which he had planned to reach the river's bank, and there his pace became more slow.

At the bridge he struck off upon the waterside path, well pleased to find it comparatively deserted. A few pedestrians were walking here and there, here a couple in friendly confab, and there a lonely man given to contemplation. Also there were a few soldiers of the city guard, a portion of whom by their sedate and methodical walk, appeared to be on duty; while others, more favored, were privileged to lounge their moments away at their own will and pleasure.

At the distance of half a mile from the bridge, where he had turned upon the river path, our painter came to a beautiful grove of wild orange trees. They were of the native orange tribe, but on public land and uncultivated. Yet they bore fruit, but the predatory urchins that invested the locality at night never suffered it to ripen.

Here he walked still more slowly, with his arms folded on his breast and his head bent in thought. He was thinking of Stefano Farnese, and wishing he could see through his plotting, for that he was plotting mischief, and mischief against the peace of Isabel, he could not doubt. And his thoughts of the marquis had another direction.

"I am not mistaken," he said, speaking, his thoughts audibly. "I have seen that face in Spain in the years ago. It is not a face one would be likely to forget! I know it! I know it! Oh, if I could only surely locate it. It was in Madrid, and he was in company with an older man—a man who, if I do not mistake the whole affair, was arrested by the police, convicted to prison, and afterwards set at work on the public thoroughfare, with a ball and chain attached to his ankle, and escaped."

"What can it all mean? Can he be a bold impostor, imposing all these years on the too credulous duke? Upon my soul! it appears so to me."

Anon, his thoughts turned upon the count who, he verily believed, was concerned with the marquis in much of the underhanded work that was going on. The princess had opened his eyes to Denaro's true character, since which he had been surprised that he had not discovered it himself.

"He is not so lost to all sense of honor and decency as is the other; but he is not a gentleman. He is not a good-hearted man, nor does he—"

So far had our hero spoken his thought of Count Denaro, when he was somewhat startled by the sound of a quick step behind him, and a second later, a smart tap on his shoulder. He turned and stood face to face with the count himself, and at a short distance was the Marquis Stefano! They had certainly followed him. The meeting, he knew, was not accidental.

"Did you wish to speak with me, Signor Count?"

Ordinarily the count was not a man addicted to drink. Occasionally, as we have before remarked, he would take wine to excess, but the occasions were rare. On the present, however, he had drunk freely, though Zanoni did not observe it. Remember, the man had been a slave to his wrath for a long time. The man whom he had stopped in a public place, and who now stood before him, had, as he fancied—as he had brought himself to firmly believe—robbed him of the dearest treasure earth held in store. But for this man he might have won the love and the hand of the beautiful princess. She might have been all his own—his wife.

Since his meeting that morning with Isabel he had not only nursed his hot anger, and breathed continuous imprecations upon the plebeian painter, believing him to be a demon and very ghoul; but the plotting marquis had been constantly by his side, whispering into his ear base and revengeful thoughts.

So that now, with all the influence that had been urging him on from hour to hour to madness and to vengeance, brought to a climax in this meeting, Zanoni found himself confronted by a very maniac, who had resolved to slay or be slain. But the painter could not know this. He could know nothing of

the unfortunate workings of the count's mind. Had he known—had he suspected even a moiety of the truth—he might have found means of avoiding the catastrophe that was to come.

"Did you wish to speak to me, Signor Count?"

A few seconds elapsed before the count could gain his breath. The sight of the painter's lofty front, his statuesque form and his marble-like handsome face, and the sound of his voice, so calm and so musical, seemed to touch the match and the powder in the magazine.

"Yes," he shrieked, with lips as white as death. "I wish to inform you that you are a base, low-born, contemptible scoundrel, as unfit to live as is the poisonous reptile that lurks by night in its noisome, reeking place of hiding, dangerous alike to man and beast."

"Count Denaro!" returned the artist in blank astonishment, and without the least particle of anger, "will you tell me what is the occasion of this strange and unwarranted accusation? What of harm have I done to you and yours?"

"Villain! Trickster! Demon incarnate! You have utterly ruined the life of one of the fairest and noblest of women! and for that I intend to chastise you!"

"Hold! Hold! Count, I understand you now. But I do not recognize your right to interfere. I shall not attempt to excuse or exonerate myself to you."

"By the eternal heavens! but you will!" the count exclaimed, madly; and at the same time he drew his rapier and made a motion to attack. Indeed, he would have attacked, and that, too, with deadly aim and intent, had not the object of his blind wrath stepped quickly out of his way, thus giving him time to remember that he was about to strike an unarmed man. He was not quite senseless enough to commit downright murder.

In that moment our hero made a discovery. He had caught sight of the count's rapier, and had seen that it was a weapon belonging to the marquis—a Spanish blade, heavier and longer than his own. It was a weapon well known to him; and he knew it to be of perfect temper and keen. And then he knew that the pair of villains had sought him on purpose to kill him.

"Will you draw?" Denaro demanded, moving again into a position of attack. "Are you a craven—a coward—as well as a low-born villain?"

"Don't let him escape you!" whispered Stefano in the count's ear—but loud enough for Zanoni to hear—as the latter made a further movement away from his assailant.

"He shall not!" said Denaro hotly, thus admitting the part his companion was acting. Then advancing upon the painter, he again offered attack, at the same time shouting, in a temper not to be mistaken:

"By the heavens above me! if you don't draw, I will run you through where you stand! Ha! Show us your skill! Let us see if you can disarm me!" And he sprang forward with his point aimed at the artist's bosom.

Zanoni had no choice. Stepping lightly and gracefully aside to avoid the deadly thrust, he drew his rapier and turned upon the defensive.

"Ha! Now, adventurer! baseborn hound! necromancer! I have thee! Take that! that! San Marco! I'll have thee yet!" And he struck out madly, furiously, blindly, never once seeing that not a single effort had his opponent made to do him harm. If he thought by those opprobrious epithets to drive the painter frantic and careless, he made a mistake. The bleating of a lost lamb would have affected him far more deeply.

"Hold!" our hero cried, when he had seen his enemy ready to draw back and take breath. "Let me have a word. Do you not know that you are murdering me, if you force this thing to a deadly ending? Should you kill me, no law can touch you to do you harm; while, should I be so unfortunate as to kill you, the law will demand my life in return; and no power can save me!"

"Signor Zanoni," interposed Marquis Stefano, at this point, "you are mistaken. I have no fear that you can do mortal harm to my friend, the noble count; but, should you chance to do so, I give you my word you shall not be called to answer for it."

"Your word, Marquis! What power or authority have you?"

"Authority, none!—but power, much," returned Stefano, coolly, and with assurance. "Let what will come, you know you must leave Parma. After what has occurred—after what has been discovered—you cannot surely hope that you will be suffered to remain longer in the midst of a people who you have so grossly insulted and outraged. Good heavens! do you think the duke would allow you to contaminate the air of his capital longer? No, you must flee; and I will help you. That I promise. If the worst comes for you—the killing, or seriously wounding, of Count Denaro—I will help you to leave the country. And I can do it."

Could the poor count have looked down into the heart of his professing friend at that moment, or read aright the diabolical expression on his swart face, he would have given up the contest at once and trusted to some other means of obtaining his desire. But he could not see; he could not read Stefano's dark face; and, when the latter had done speaking, he made ready for further attack.

To Be Continued.

MODERN THINGS IN OLD MANILA.

There is a central electric lighting station in Manila which supplies current for 12,000 incandescent and 260 arc lamps. There are about 720 miles of telegraph in the island and 70 miles of steam railways. Manila has also a telephone system. The conductors are all overhead lines carried on poles with porcelain insulators.

FOREBODINGS.

Jimmy, did you tell your sister I was here?

Yes, Mr. Tanks, an' she said she'd felt all day that somepin' awful waz goin' to happen.

JEWELS POSSESSED BY QUEENS.

When a London dealer of precious stones is commanded to Windsor or Osborne he finds in the queen a very shrewd and intelligent purchaser. She knows diamonds like an expert, and buys like one.

She owns a marvelous green diamond that has never been set, and, furthermore, she has at her fingers' ends the history of every notable stone in Europe now in possession of royalty.

Queen Margaret of Italy owns, next to the ex-Queen of Hanover, the finest necklace of pearls in existence. She does not, like her deposed majesty of Hanover, possess a six-foot string of these love beads, every one an absolute match in shape and color, but so extensive and precious are her pearl ropes that her maids are obliged to wear a portion of the collection all the while in order to assist the queen in keeping the gems pure, lustrous and healthy by constant contact with warm human flesh.

It is King Humbert who buys the pearls for his wife, and he is, like Queen Victoria, an expert in jewels.

The Queen of Austria owns the greatest emeralds in the world and a necklace of emeralds that is quite unrivaled. They, like Margaret of Italy's pearls, are now crown property.

The Empress of Russia wears next after Queen Victoria the largest diamond and rubies of surpassing splendor, but all of these belong to the nation, though the richest and most varied aggregation of precious stones are owned by the Russian church.

That quiet, domestic lady, the Queen of Dresden, enjoys the ownership of four sapphires equal in size and beauty to the one that glows in the crown of England, and the favorite wives of the Shah of Persia and the Sultan of Turkey wear turquoises the like of which no western queen can boast.

Mrs. Langtry at one time owned the most perfect set of turquoises in Europe, but her necklace and bracelets were sold at length, and the finest stones went to the United States.

The Duchess of Westminster still wears however, the largest flawless turquoise owned by any private individual, and the Duchess of Sutherland possesses the only complete necklace of black pearls.

WAYS OF GREAT WOMEN.

George Eliot, was once asked what was the chief lesson she had learned in life's experience, and her answer was "Tolerance." It might have been expected from a woman who once said that she regarded life as a game of cards in which she watched each move with the deepest interest and turned as far as possible to her own advantage.

The Queen of Roumania plays the organ in the Protestant church of Abbazia, where she is staying, and is also learning to play on the flute.

Queen Victoria's well-known love for rough winds and for being out in the rain has not made her scornful of other persons' dislikes for bad weather. Often, in the choice of companions for her driving expeditions on rainy days, the queen has been influenced by consideration for the tastes and health of her attendants. Her majesty is most sympathetic toward sufferers from such ills as neuralgia and toothache.

A queen who insists on going barefooted is her majesty of Madagascar. All the same, she wears the most expensive of Parisian toiles.

The name of the ex-Empress Eugenie was Montijo. She was born in Granada, was the Spanish Countess of Teba, and as soon as the authorities can agree upon the spelling of the name of the admiral at Manila it may be found that she was some relation to him.

SOUTH SEA ISLAND CUSTOMS.

One would imagine that love making in Fiji was a very tame affair from the fact that marriages are often arranged while those most nearly concerned are still in their infancy. However, courtship there is quite as interesting as anywhere else, and it has some peculiar features.

Cupidi's nappy hunting ground is generally a garden or a plantation, and on a moonlight evening he is generally pretty busy. At that time, high up in the branches of the bread fruit trees, those who have eyes to see may spy many a pair of human love birds perched on the branches forty feet or so from the ground. Fijian etiquette seems to demand that the fair one and her lover should occupy different branches, and should be separated by the trunk of the tree—this, at any rate, is the usual custom.

"Spare the bite and spoil the child," would probably be the South Sea Island mother's rendering of the wise man's saying, for she knew nothing of the use of the rod as a means of correction.

Instead of punishing her offspring in ways known to European mothers, she pulls its hair and bites some part of its body, generally selecting the fleshy part of its arm for the purpose. Thus it happens that travelers note among little South Sea Islanders many bearing wounds or scars on the body which have been produced by their mother's teeth.

The mode of caress is as queer as that of punishment. It is either to gently take hold of the child's neck with the teeth, or to pass the thumb deftly over its eyebrow or cheek.

A YOUNG GIRL'S ESCAPE.

Saved from being a Nervous Wreck BY MILBURN'S HEART AND NERVE PILLS.

For the benefit of Canadian mothers, who have daughters who are weak, pale, run down or nervous, Mrs. Belanger, 128 Rideau Street, Ottawa, Ontario, made the following statement, so that no one need suffer through ignorance of the right remedy to use: "My daughter suffered very much from heart troubles at times. Often she was so bad that she could not speak, but had to sit and gasp for breath. She was so extremely nervous that her limbs would fairly shake and tremble. Frequently she would have to leave school, and finally she grew so weak that we were much alarmed about her health. I gave her many remedies, but they did not seem to do her any good.

Then I heard of Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills, and got a box of them, and they have indeed worked wonders with her. I can recommend them very highly as the best remedy I ever heard of for complaints similar to those from which my daughter suffered."

Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills never fail to do good. They cure palpitation, faintness, dizziness, smothering sensation, weakness, nervousness, sleeplessness, anemia, female troubles and general debility. Sold by all druggists at 50c. a box or three boxes for \$1.25. T. Milburn & Co., Toronto, Ontario.

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SQUAW-MEN IN ALASKA.

English Nobleman Who Sacrificed His Life For His Black Family.

At Lake LeBarge, says a writer in Leslie's Magazine, we met an Englishman who was taking his wife and three children for a trip to Five Finger Rapids. His wife was a squaw, and her face was painted black, as were also those of the children. I never did find out the real reason these squaws have for painting their faces black. Some say it is because they think it makes them more beautiful, and still others claim that it is a preventive from the mosquitoes. We became quite friendly with this Englishman. He was taking his family to visit some of his wife's people. He had just received news from England that the death of three persons had made him heir to a noble title and quite an inheritance, but to enjoy its possession, etc., of course he would have to return to England. "Of course," said I, "you are going at once?" He looked around at his family and said, "Well, I too hardly take them with me, and I'm too fond of them to leave them here, so I think I'll stay here myself and let the other fellow enjoy my property over there." This was all said with a degree of pathos, which was sublime, and yet I could not help picturing to myself the sensation that that squaw wife would make at some reception held among his titled friends if she were to enter as we were looking at her then. I think something of the same thought must have passed through our friend's mind, for, hastily murmuring, "What might have been," etc., he looked suspiciously like shedding a few tears, bade us a hurried farewell, and gathered his small family and belongings together and proceeded on his way. There are many white men in Alaska married to the Indians. They call them squawmen.

(From Toronto Globe.)

THIS CERTIFICATE

Brings Forth a Story.

BOWMANVILLE, Ont.
We, the undersigned, certify that the health of the Rev. R. A. Bilkey has for months been deteriorating, and that he is now suffering from severe nervous prostration, and urgently requires immediate and prolonged rest. J. W. McLaughlin, M.D., A. Beith, M.D., L. Holland Reid, M.R.C.S., etc.

THIS INTERVIEW TELLS IT.

A reporter called on the Rev. R. A. Bilkey, rector St. John's (Episcopal) Church, Bowmanville, Ontario, during a church function, and on congratulating him on the great change for the better in his appearance, the reverend gentleman said, "It is due entirely to Dr. Ward's Blood and Nerve Pills.

"I suffered for over three years from extreme nervousness, weakness and prostration, and could not obtain relief. A few months ago it became only too apparent that extreme nervous prostration had set in, as I lost flesh and emaciated rapidly. Three of our four medical men pronounced me in urgent need of immediate and prolonged rest in order to build up my nervous system, giving me a certificate to that effect. About this time, by pure accident, Dr. Ward's Blood and Nerve Pills were brought to my notice. I decided to try them, and on doing so I decided change for the better took place at once. I have since continued taking the pills, with continued and marked benefit and improvement. My appetite has returned. I am gaining in flesh steadily, and my general health is now good. Further, I am sure that these results are due to the action of Dr. Ward's Blood and Nerve Pills, and I have every confidence that they will do for others all that they have done for me."

Dr. Ward's Blood and Nerve Pills are sold at 50c. per box, 3 boxes for \$1.25, or mailed on receipt of 50c. to Dr. Ward Co., 21 Victoria Street, Toronto, Ont., Canada.

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