

GIACOMO CASANOVA

THE MEMOIRS OF
JACQUES CASANOVA DE
SEINGALT, 1725-1798.
VOLUME 28: ROME

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CHAPTER XIII

Rome—The Actor's Punishment—Lord Baltimore—
Naples—Sara Goudar—Departure of Betty—Agatha—
Medina—Albergoni—Miss Chudleigh—The Prince of
Francavilla—The Swimmers

As I fell over the Englishman I had struck my hand against a nail, and the fourth finger of my left hand was bleeding as if a vein had been opened. Betty helped me to tie a handkerchief around the wound, while Sir B- M- read the letter with great attention. I was much pleased with Betty's action, it shewed she was confident, and sure of her lover's forgiveness.

I took up my coat and carpet-bag, and went into the next room to change my linen, and dress for dinner. Any distress at the termination of my intrigue with Betty was amply compensated for by my joy at the happy ending of a troublesome affair which might have proved fatal for me.

I dressed myself, and then waited for half an hour, as I heard Betty and Sir B— M— speaking in English calmly enough, and I did not care to interrupt them. At last the Englishman knocked at my door, and came in looking humble and mortified. He said he was sure I had not only saved Betty, but had effectually cured her of her folly.

"You must forgive my conduct, sir," said he, "for I could not guess that the man I found with her was her saviour and not her betrayer. I thank Heaven which inspired you with the idea of catching hold of me from behind, as I should certainly have killed you the moment I set eyes on you, and at this moment I should be the most wretched of men. You must forgive me, sir, and become my friend."

I embraced him cordially, telling him that if I had been in his place I should have acted in a precisely similar manner.

We returned to the room, and found Betty leaning against the bed, and weeping bitterly.

The blood continuing to flow from my wound, I sent for a surgeon who said that a vein had been opened, and that a proper ligature was necessary.

Betty still wept, so I told Sir B— M— that in my opinion she deserved his forgiveness.

"Forgiveness?" said he, "you may be sure I have already forgiven her, and she well deserves it. Poor Betty repented directly you shewed her the path she was treading, and the tears she is shedding now are tears of sorrow at her mistake. I am sure

she recognizes her folly, and will never be guilty of such a slip again."

Emotion is infectious. Betty wept, Sir B— M— wept, and I wept to keep them company. At last nature called a truce, and by degrees our sobs and tears ceased and we became calmer.

Sir B— M—, who was evidently a man of the most generous character, began to laugh and jest, and his caresses had great effect in calming Betty. We made a good dinner, and the choice Muscat put us all in the best of spirits.

Sir B— M— said we had better rest for a day or two; he had journeyed fifteen stages in hot haste, and felt in need of repose.

He told us that on arriving at Leghorn, and finding no Betty there, he had discovered that her trunk had been booked to Rome, and that the officer to whom it belonged had hired a horse, leaving a watch as a pledge for it. Sir B— M— recognized Betty's watch, and feeling certain that she was either on horseback with her seducer or in the wagon with her trunk, he immediately resolved to pursue.

"I provided myself," he added, "with two good pistols, not with the idea of using one against her, for my first thought about her was pity, and my second forgiveness; but I determined to blow out the scoundrel's brains, and I mean to do it yet. We will start for Rome to-morrow."

Sir B— M—'s concluding words filled Betty with joy, and I believe she would have pierced her perfidious lover to the heart if he had been brought before her at that moment.

"We shall find him at Roland's," said I.

Sir B- M- took Betty in his arms, and gazed at me with an air of content, as if he would have shewn me the greatness of an English heart—a greatness which more than atones for its weakness.

"I understand your purpose," I said, "but you shall not execute your plans without me. Let me have the charge of seeing that justice is done you. If you will not agree, I shall start for Rome directly, I shall get there before you, and shall give the wretched actor warning of your approach. If you had killed him before I should have said nothing, but at Rome it is different, and you would have reason to repent of having indulged your righteous indignation. You don't know Rome and priestly justice. Come, give me your hand and your word to do nothing without my consent, or else I shall leave you directly."

Sir B- M- was a man of my own height but somewhat thinner, and five or six years older; the reader will understand his character without my describing it.

My speech must have rather astonished him, but he knew that my disposition was benevolent, and he could not help giving me his hand and his pledge.

"Yes, dearest," said Betty, "leave vengeance to the friend whom Heaven has sent us."

"I consent to do so, provided everything is done in concert between us."

After this we parted, and Sir B- M-, being in need of rest,

I went to tell the vetturino that we should start for Rome again on the following day.

"For Rome! Then you have found your pocketbook? It seems to me, my good sir, that you would have been wiser not to search for it."

The worthy man, seeing my hand done up in lint, imagined I had fought a duel, and indeed everybody else came to the same conclusion.

Sir B— M— had gone to bed, and I spent the rest of the day in the company of Betty, who was overflowing with the gratitude. She said we must forget what had passed between us, and be the best of friends for the rest of our days, without a thought of any further amorous relations. I had not much difficulty in assenting to this condition.

She burned with the desire for vengeance on the scoundrelly actor who had deceived her; but I pointed out that her duty was to moderate Sir B— M—'s passions, as if he attempted any violence in Rome it might prove a very serious matter for him, besides its being to the disadvantage of his reputation to have the affair talked of.

"I promise you," I added, "to have the rogue imprisoned as soon as we reach Rome, and that ought to be sufficient vengeance for you. Instead of the advantages he proposed for himself, he will receive only shame and all the misery of a prison."

Sir B— M— slept seven or eight hours, and rose to find that a good deal of his rage had evaporated. He consented to abide

by my arrangements, if he could have the pleasure of paying the fellow a visit, as he wanted to know him.

After this sensible decision and a good supper I went to my lonely couch without any regret, for I was happy in the consciousness of having done a good action.

We started at day-break the next morning, and when we reached Acquapendente we resolved to post to Rome. By the post the journey took twelve hours, otherwise we should have been three days on the road.

As soon as we reached Rome I went to the customhouse and put in the document relating to Betty's trunk. The next day it was duly brought to our inn and handed over to Betty.

As Sir B— M— had placed the case in my hands I went to the bargello, an important person at Rome, and an expeditious officer when he sees a case clearly and feels sure that the plaintiffs do not mind spending their money. The bargello is rich, and lives well; he has an almost free access to the cardinal-vicar, the governor, and even the Holy Father himself.

He gave me a private interview directly, and I told him the whole story, finally saying that all we asked for was that the rogue should be imprisoned and afterwards expelled from Rome.

"You see," I added, "that our demand is a very moderate one, and we could get all we want by the ordinary channels of the law; but we are in a hurry, and I want you to take charge of the whole affair. If you care to do so we shall be prepared to defray legal expenses to the extent of fifty crowns."

The bargello asked me to give him the bill of exchange and all the effects of the adventurer, including the letters.

I had the bill in my pocket and gave it him on the spot, taking a receipt in exchange. I told him to send to the inn for the rest.

"As soon as I have made him confess the facts you allege against him," said the bargello, "we shall be able to do something. I have already heard that he is at Roland's, and has been trying to get the Englishwoman's trunk. If you liked to spend a hundred crowns instead of fifty we could send him to the galleys for a couple of years."

"We will see about that," said I, "for the present we will have him into prison."

He was delighted to hear that the horse was not l'Etoile's property, and said that if I liked to call at nine o'clock he would have further news for me.

I said I would come. I really had a good deal to do at Rome. I wanted to see Cardinal Bernis in the first place, but I postponed everything to the affair of the moment.

I went back to the inn and was told by a valet de place, whom Sir B— M— had hired, that the Englishman had gone to bed.

We were in need of a carriage, so I summoned the landlord and was astonished to find myself confronted by Roland in person.

"How's this?" I said. "I thought you were still at the Place d'Espagne."

"I have given my old house to my daughter who has married

a prosperous Frenchman, while I have taken this palace where there are some magnificent rooms."

"Has your daughter many foreigners staying at her house now?"

"Only one Frenchman, the Comte de l'Etoile, who is waiting for his equipage to come on. He has an excellent horse, and I am thinking of buying it from him."

"I advise you to wait till to-morrow, and to say nothing about the advice I have given you."

"Why should I wait?"

"I can't say any more just now."

This Roland was the father of the Therese whom I had loved nine years before, and whom my brother Jean had married in 1762, a year after my departure. Roland told me that my brother was in Rome with Prince Beloselski, the Russian ambassador to the Court of Saxony.

"I understood that my brother could not come to Rome."

"He came with a safe-conduct which the Dowager Electress of Saxony obtained for him from the Holy Father. He wants his case to be re-tried, and there he makes a mistake, for if it were heard a hundred times the sentence would continue the same. No one will see him, everyone avoids him, even Mengs will have nothing to say to him."

"Mengs is here, is he? I thought he had been at Madrid."

"He has got leave of absence for a year, but his family remains in Spain."

After hearing all this news which was far from pleasant to me, as I did not wish to see Mengs or my brother, I went to bed, leaving orders that I was to be roused in time for dinner.

In an hour's time I was awakened by the tidings that some one was waiting to give me a note. It was one of the bargello's men, who had come to take over l'Etoile's effects.

At dinner I told Sir B— M— what I had done, and we agreed that he should accompany me to the bargello's in the evening.

In the afternoon we visited some of the principal palaces, and after taking Betty back to the inn we went to the bargello, who told us our man was already in prison, and that it would cost very little to send him to the galleys.

"Before making up my mind I should like to speak to him," said Sir B— M—.

"You can do so to-morrow. He confessed everything without any trouble, and made a jest of it, saying he was not afraid of any consequences, as the young lady had gone with him of her own free will. I shewed him the bill of exchange, but he evinced no emotion whatever. He told me that he was an actor by profession, but also a man of rank. As to the horse, he said he was at perfect liberty to sell it, as the watch he had left in pledge was worth more than the beast."

I had forgotten to inform the bargello that the watch aforesaid belonged to Betty.

We gave the worthy official fifty crowns, and supped with Betty, who had, as I have remarked, recovered her trunk, and

had been busying herself in putting her things to rights.

She was glad to hear that the rascal was in prison, but she did not seem to wish to pay him a visit.

We went to see him in the afternoon of the next day.

The bargello had assigned us an advocate, who made out a document demanding payment by the prisoner of the expenses of the journey, and of his arrest, together with a certain sum as compensation to the person whom he had deceived, unless he could prove his right to the title of count in the course of six weeks.

We found l'Etoile with this document in his hand; someone was translating it for him into French.

As soon as the rascal saw me, he said, with a laugh, that I owed him twenty-five Louis as he had left Betty to sleep with me.

The Englishman told him he lied; it was he that had slept with her.

"Are you Betty's lover?" asked l'Etoile.

"Yes, and if I had caught you with her I should have blown out your brains, for you have deceived her doubly; you're only a beggarly actor."

"I have three thousand crowns."

"I will pay six thousand if the bill proves to be a good one. In the meanwhile you will stay here, and if it be false, as I expect it is, you will go to the galleys."

"Very good."

"I shall speak to my counsel."

We went out and called on the advocate, for Sir B— M— had a lively desire to send the impudent rascal to the galleys. However, it could not be done, for l'Etoile said he was quite ready to give up the bill, but that he expected Sir B— M— to pay a crown a day for his keep while he remained in prison.

Sir B— M— thought he would like to see something of Rome, as he was there, and was obliged to buy almost everything as he had left his belongings behind him, while Betty was well provided for as her trunk was of immense capacity. I went with them everywhere; it was not exactly the life I liked, but there would be time for me to please myself after they had gone. I loved Betty without desiring her, and I had taken a liking to the Englishman who had an excellent heart. At first he wanted to stay a fortnight at Rome, and then to return to Leghorn; but his friend Lord Baltimore, who had come to Rome in the meanwhile, persuaded him to pay a short visit to Naples.

This nobleman, who had with him a very pretty Frenchwoman and two servants, said he would see to the journey, and that I must join the party. I had made his acquaintance at London.

I was glad to have the opportunity of seeing Naples again. We lodged at the "Crocielles" at Chiaggia, or Chiaja, as the Neapolitans call it.

The first news I heard was the death of the Duke of Matalone and the marriage of his widow with Prince Caramanica.

This circumstance put an end to some of my hopes, and I only thought of amusing myself with my friends, as if I had never

been at Naples before. Lord Baltimore had been there several times, but his mistress, Betty, and Sir B— M—, were strangers, and wanted to see everything. I accordingly acted as cicerone, for which part I and my lord, too, were much better qualified than the tedious and ignorant fellows who had an official right to that title.

The day after our arrival I was unpleasantly surprised to see the notorious Chevalier Goudar, whom I had known at London. He called on Lord Baltimore.

This famous rout had a house at Pausilippo, and his wife was none other than the pretty Irish girl Sara, formerly a drawer in a London tavern. The reader has been already introduced to her. Goudar knew I had met her, so he told me who she was, inviting us all to dine with him the next day.

Sara skewed no surprise nor confusion at the sight of me, but I was petrified. She was dressed with the utmost elegance, received company admirably, spoke Italian with perfect correctness, talked sensibly, and was exquisitely beautiful; I was stupefied; the metamorphosis was so great.

In a quarter of an hour five or six ladies of the highest rank arrived, with ten or twelve dukes, princes, and marquises, to say nothing of a host of distinguished strangers.

The table was laid for thirty, but before dinner Madame Goudar seated herself at the piano, and sang a few airs with the voice of a siren, and with a confidence that did not astonish the other guests as they knew her, but which astonished me

extremely, for her singing was really admirable.

Goudar had worked this miracle. He had been educating her to be his wife for six or seven years.

After marrying her he had taken her to Paris, Vienna, Venice, Florence, Rome, etc., everywhere seeking fortune, but in vain. Finally he had come to Naples, where he had brought his wife into the fashion of obliging her to renounce in public the errors of the Anglican heresy. She had been received into the Catholic Church under the auspices of the Queen of Naples. The amusing part in all this was that Sara, being an Irishwoman, had been born a Catholic, and had never ceased to be one.

All the nobility, even to the Court, went to see Sara, while she went nowhere, for no one invited her. This kind of thing is a characteristic of nobility all the world over.

Goudar told me all these particulars, and confessed that he only made his living by gaming. Faro and biribi were the only pillars of his house; but they must have been strong ones, for he lived in great style.

He asked me to join with him, and I did not care to refuse; my purse was fast approaching total depletion, and if it were not for this resource I could not continue living in the style to which I had been accustomed.

Having taken this resolution I declined returning to Rome with Betty and Sir B— M—, who wanted to repay me all I had spent on her account. I was not in a position to be ostentatious, so I accepted his generous offer.

Two months later I heard that l'Etoile had been liberated by the influence of Cardinal Bernis, and had left Rome. Next year I heard at Florence that Sir B— M— had returned to England, where no doubt he married Betty as soon as he became a widower.

As for the famous Lord Baltimore he left Naples a few days after my friends, and travelled about Italy in his usual way. Three years later he paid for his British bravado with his life. He committed the wild imprudence of traversing the Maremma in August, and was killed by the poisonous exhalations.

I stopped at "Crocicelles," as all the rich foreigners came to live there. I was thus enabled to make their acquaintance, and put them in the way of losing their money at Goudar's. I did not like my task, but circumstances were too strong for me.

Five or six days after Betty had left I chanced to meet the Abby Gama, who had aged a good deal, but was still as gay and active as ever. After we had told each other our adventures he informed me that, as all the differences between the Holy See and the Court of Naples had been adjusted, he was going back to Rome.

Before he went, however, he said he should like to present me to a lady whom he was sure I should be very glad to see again.

The first persons I thought of were Donna Leonilda, or Donna Lucrezia, her mother; but what was my surprise to see Agatha, the dancer with whom I had been in love at Turin after abandoning the Corticelli.

Our delight was mutual, and we proceeded to tell each other

the incidents of our lives since we had parted.

My tale only lasted a quarter of an hour, but Agatha's history was a long one.

She had only danced a year at Naples. An advocate had fallen in love with her, and she shewed me four pretty children she had given him. The husband came in at supper-time, and as she had often talked to him about me he rushed to embrace me as soon as he heard my name. He was an intelligent man, like most of the pagletti of Naples. We supped together like old friends, and the Abbe Gama going soon after supper I stayed with them till midnight, promising to join them at dinner the next day.

Although Agatha was in the very flower of her beauty, the old fires were not rekindled in me. I was ten years older. My coolness pleased me, for I should not have liked to trouble the peace of a happy home.

After leaving Agatha I proceeded to Goudar's, in whose bank I took a strong interest. I found a dozen gamesters round the table, but what was my surprise to recognize in the holder of the bank Count Medini.

Three or four days before this Medini had been expelled from the house of M. de Choiseul, the French ambassador; he had been caught cheating at cards. I had also my reason to be incensed against him; and, as the reader may remember, we had fought a duel.

On glancing at the bank I saw that it was at the last gasp. It ought to have held six hundred ounces, and there were scarcely

a hundred. I was interested to the extent of a third.

On examining the face of the punter who had made these ravages I guessed the game. It was the first time I had seen the rascal at Goudar's.

At the end of the deal Goudar told me that this punter was a rich Frenchman who had been introduced by Medini. He told me I should not mind his winning that evening, as he would be sure to lose it all and a good deal more another time.

"I don't care who the punter is," said I, "it is not of the slightest consequence to me, as I tell you plainly that as long as Medini is the banker I will have nothing to do with it."

"I have told Medini about it and wanted to take a third away from the bank, but he seemed offended and said he would make up any loss to you, but that he could not have the bank touched."

"Very good, but if he does not bring me my money by to-morrow morning there will be trouble. Indeed, the responsibility lies with you, for I have told you that as long as Medini deals I will have nothing to do with it."

"Of course you have a claim on me for two hundred ounces, but I hope you will be reasonable; it would be rather hard for me to lose two-thirds."

Knowing Goudar to be a greater rascal than Medini, I did not believe a word he said; and I waited impatiently for the end of the game.

At one o'clock it was all over. The lucky punter went off with his pockets full of gold, and Medini, affecting high spirits, which

were very much out of place, swore his victory should cost him dear.

"Will you kindly give me my two hundred ounces," said I, "for, of course, Gondar told you that I was out of it?"

"I confess myself indebted to you for that amount, as you absolutely insist, but pray tell me why you refuse to be interested in the bank when I am dealing."

"Because I have no confidence in your luck."

"You must see that your words are capable of a very unpleasant interpretation."

"I can't prevent your interpreting my words as you please, but I have a right to my own opinion. I want my two hundred ounces, and I am quite willing to leave you any moneys you propose to make out of the conqueror of to-night. You must make your arrangements with M. Goudar, and by noon to-morrow, you, M. Goudar, will bring me that sum."

"I can't remit you the money till the count gives it me, for I haven't got any money."

"I am sure you will have some money by twelve o'clock to-morrow morning. Goodnight."

I would not listen to any of their swindling arguments, and went home without the slightest doubt that they were trying to cheat me. I resolved to wash my hands of the whole gang as soon as I had got my money back by fair means or foul.

At nine the next morning I received a note from Medini, begging me to call on him and settle the matter. I replied that he

must make his arrangements with Goudar, and I begged to be excused calling on him.

In the course of an hour he paid me a visit, and exerted all his eloquence to persuade me to take a bill for two hundred ounces, payable in a week. I gave him a sharp refusal, saying that my business was with Goudar and Gondar only, and that unless I received the money by noon I should proceed to extremities. Medini raised his voice, and told me that my language was offensive; and forthwith I took up a pistol and placed it against his cheek, ordering him to leave the room. He turned pale, and went away without a word.

At noon I went to Gondar's without my sword, but with two good pistols in my pocket. Medini was there, and began by reproaching me with attempting to assassinate him in my own house.

I took no notice of this, but told Gondar to give me my two hundred ounces.

Goudar asked Medini to give him the money.

There would undoubtedly have been a quarrel, if I had not been prudent enough to leave the room, threatening Gondar with ruin if he did not send on the money directly.

Just as I was leaving the house, the fair Sara put her head out of the window, and begged me to come up by the back stairs and speak to her.

I begged to be excused, so she said she would come down, and in a moment she stood beside me.

"You are in the right about your money," she said, "but just at present my husband has not got any; you really must wait two or three days, I will guarantee the payment."

"I am really sorry," I replied, "not to be able to oblige such a charming woman, but the only thing that will pacify me is my money, and till I have had it, you will see me no more in your house, against which I declare war."

Thereupon she drew from her finger a diamond ring, worth at least four hundred ounces, and begged me to accept it as a pledge.

I took it, and left her after making my bow. She was doubtless astonished at my behaviour, for in her state of deshabelle she could not have counted on my displaying such firmness.

I was very well satisfied with my victory, and went to dine with the advocate, Agatha's husband. I told him the story, begging him to find someone who would give me two hundred ounces on the ring.

"I will do it myself," said he; and he gave me an acknowledgment and two hundred ounces on the spot. He then wrote in my name a letter to Goudar, informing him that he was the depositary of the ring.

This done, I recovered my good temper.

Before dinner Agatha took me into her boudoir and shewed me all the splendid jewels I had given her when I was rich and in love.

"Now I am a rich woman," said she, "and my good fortune is all your making; so take back what you gave me. Don't be

offended; I am so grateful to you, and my good husband and I agreed on this plan this morning."

To take away any scruples I might have, she shewed me the diamonds her husband had given her; they had belonged to his first wife and were worth a considerable sum.

My gratitude was too great for words, I could only press her hand, and let my eyes speak the feelings of my heart. Just then her husband came in.

It had evidently been concerted between them, for the worthy man embraced me, and begged me to accede to his wife's request.

We then joined the company which consisted of a dozen or so of their friends, but the only person who attracted my attention was a very young man, whom I set down at once as in love with Agatha. His name was Don Pascal Latilla; and I could well believe that he would be successful in love, for he was intelligent, handsome, and well-mannered. We became friends in the course of the meal.

Amongst the ladies I was greatly pleased with one young girl. She was only fourteen, but she looked eighteen. Agatha told me she was studying singing, intending to go on the stage as she was so poor.

"So pretty, and yet poor?"

"Yes, for she will have all or nothing; and lovers of that kind are rare in Naples."

"But she must have some lover?"

"If she has, no one has heard of him. You had better make her acquaintance and go and see her. You will soon be friends."

"What's her name?"

"Callimena. The lady who is speaking to her is her aunt, and I expect they are talking about you."

We sat down to the enjoyment of a delicate and abundant meal. Agatha, I could see, was happy, and delighted to shew me how happy she was. The old Abbe Gama congratulated himself on having presented me. Don Pascal Latilla could not be jealous of the attentions paid me by his idol, for I was a stranger, and they were my due; while her husband prided himself on his freedom from those vulgar prejudices to which so many Neapolitans are subject.

In the midst of all this gaiety I could not help stealing many a furtive glance towards Callimena. I addressed her again and again, and she answered me politely but so briefly as to give me no opportunity of displaying my powers in the way of persiflage.

I asked if her name was her family name or a pseudonym.

"It is my baptismal name."

"It is Greek; but, of course, you know what it means?"

"No."

"Mad beauty, or fair moon."

"I am glad to say that I have nothing in common with my name."

"Have you any brothers or sisters?"

"I have only one married sister, with whom you may possibly

be acquainted."

"What is her name, and who is her husband?"

"Her husband is a Piedmontese, but she does not live with him."

"Is she the Madame Slopis who travels with Aston?"

"Exactly."

"I can give you good news of her."

After dinner I asked Agatha how she came to know Callimena.

"My husband is her godfather."

"What is her exact age?"

"Fourteen."

"She's a simple prodigy! What loveliness!"

"Her sister is still handsomer."

"I have never seen her."

A servant came in and said M. Goudar would like to have a little private conversation with the advocate.

The advocate came back in a quarter of an hour, and informed me that Goudar had given him the two hundred ounces, and that he had returned him the ring.

"Then that's all settled, and I am very glad of it. I have certainly made an eternal enemy of him, but that doesn't trouble me much."

We began playing, and Agatha made me play with Callimena, the freshness and simplicity of whose character delighted me.

I told her all I knew about her sister, and promised I would write to Turin to enquire whether she were still there. I told her

that I loved her, and that if she would allow me, I would come and see her. Her reply was extremely satisfactory.

The next morning I went to wish her good day. She was taking a music lesson from her master. Her talents were really of a moderate order, but love made me pronounce her performance to be exquisite.

When the master had gone, I remained alone with her. The poor girl overwhelmed me with apologies for her dress, her wretched furniture, and for her inability to give me a proper breakfast.

"All that make you more desirable in my eyes, and I am only sorry that I cannot offer you a fortune."

As I praised her beauty, she allowed me to kiss her ardently, but she stopped my further progress by giving me a kiss as if to satisfy me.

I made an effort to restrain my ardour, and told her to tell me truly whether she had a lover.

"Not one."

"And have you never had one?"

"Never."

"Not even a fancy for anyone?"

"No, never."

"What, with your beauty and sensibility, is there no man in Naples who has succeeded in inspiring you with desire?"

"No one has ever tried to do so. No one has spoken to me as you have, and that is the plain truth."

"I believe you, and I see that I must make haste to leave Naples, if I would not be the most unhappy of men."

"What do you mean?"

"I should love you without the hope of possessing you, and thus I should be most unhappy."

"Love me then, and stay. Try and make me love you. Only you must moderate your ecstasies, for I cannot love a man who cannot exercise self-restraint."

"As just now, for instance?"

"Yes. If you calm yourself I shall think you do so for my sake, and thus love will tread close on the heels of gratitude."

This was as much as to tell me that though she did not love me yet I had only to wait patiently, and I resolved to follow her advice. I had reached an age which knows nothing of the impatient desires of youth.

I gave her a tender embrace, and as I was getting up to go I asked her if she were in need of money.

This question made her blush, and she said I had better ask her aunt, who was in the next room.

I went in, and was somewhat astonished to find the aunt seated between two worthy Capuchins, who were talking small talk to her while she worked at her needle. At a little distance three young girls sat sewing.

The aunt would have risen to welcome me, but I prevented her, asked her how she did, and smilingly congratulated her on her company. She smiled back, but the Capuchins sat as firm as

two stocks, without honouring me with as much as a glance.

I took a chair and sat down beside her.

She was near her fiftieth year, though some might have doubted whether she would ever see it again; her manner was good and honest, and her features bore the traces of the beauty that time had ruined.

Although I am not a prejudiced man, the presence of the two evil-smelling monks annoyed me extremely. I thought the obstinate way in which they stayed little less than an insult. True they were men like myself, in spite of their goats' beards and dirty frocks, and consequently were liable to the same desires as I; but for all that I found them wholly intolerable. I could not shame them without shaming the lady, and they knew it; monks are adepts at such calculations.

I have travelled all over Europe, but France is the only country in which I saw a decent and respectable clergy.

At the end of a quarter of an hour I could contain myself no longer, and told the aunt that I wished to say something to her in private. I thought the two satyrs would have taken the hint, but I counted without my host. The aunt arose, however, and took me into the next room.

I asked my question as delicately as possible, and she replied,

—
"Alas! I have only too great a need of twenty ducats (about eighty francs) to pay my rent."

I gave her the money on the spot, and I saw that she was very

grateful, but I left her before she could express her feelings.

Here I must tell my readers (if I ever have any) of an event which took place on that same day.

As I was dining in my room by myself, I was told that a Venetian gentleman who said he knew me wished to speak to me.

I ordered him to be shewn in, and though his face was not wholly unknown to me I could not recollect who he was.

He was tall, thin and wretched, misery and hunger spewing plainly in his every feature; his beard was long, his head shaven, his robe a dingy brown, and bound about him with a coarse cord, whence hung a rosary and a dirty handkerchief. In the left hand he bore a basket, and in the right a long stick; his form is still before me, but I think of him not as a humble penitent, but as a being in the last state of desperation; almost an assassin.

"Who are you?" I said at length. "I think I have seen you before, and yet . . ."

"I will soon tell you my name and the story of my woes; but first give me something to eat, for I am dying of hunger. I have had nothing but bad soup for the last few days."

"Certainly; go downstairs and have your dinner, and then come back to me; you can't eat and speak at the same time."

My man went down to give him his meal, and I gave instructions that I was not to be left alone with him as he terrified me.

I felt sure that I ought to know him, and longed to hear his story.

In three quarters of an hour he came up again, looking like some one in a high fever.

"Sit down," said I, "and speak freely."

"My name is Albergoni."

"What!"

Albergoni was a gentleman of Padua, and one of my most intimate friends twenty-five years before. He was provided with a small fortune, but an abundance of wit, and had a great leaning towards pleasure and the exercise of satire. He laughed at the police and the cheated husbands, indulged in Venus and Bacchus to excess, sacrificed to the god of pederasty, and gamed incessantly. He was now hideously ugly, but when I knew him first he was a very Antinous.

He told me the following story:

"A club of young rakes, of whom I was one, had a casino at the Zuecca; we passed many a pleasant hour there without hurting anyone. Some one imagined that these meetings were the scenes of unlawful pleasures, the engines of the law were secretly directed against us, and the casino was shut up, and we were ordered to be arrested. All escaped except myself and a man named Branzandi. We had to wait for our unjust sentence for two years, but at last it appeared. My wretched fellow was condemned to lose his head, and afterwards to be burnt, while I was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment 'in carcere duro'. In 1765 I was set free, and went to Padua hoping to live in peace, but my persecutors gave me no rest, and I was accused of the

same crime. I would not wait for the storm to burst, so I fled to Rome, and two years afterwards the Council of Ten condemned me to perpetual banishment.

"I might bear this if I had the wherewithal to live, but a brother-in-law of mine has possessed himself of all I have, and the unjust Tribunal winks at his misdeeds.

"A Roman attorney made me an offer of an annuity of two pawls a day on the condition that I should renounce all claims on my estate. I refused this iniquitous condition, and left Rome to come here and turn hermit. I have followed this sorry trade for two years, and can bear it no more."

"Go back to Rome; you can live on two pawls a day."

"I would rather die."

I pitied him sincerely, and said that though I was not a rich man he was welcome to dine every day at my expense while I remained in Naples, and I gave him a sequin.

Two or three days later my man told me that the poor wretch had committed suicide.

In his room were found five numbers, which he bequeathed to Medini and myself out of gratitude for our kindness to him. These five numbers were very profitable to the Lottery of Naples, for everyone, myself excepted, rushed to get them. Not a single one proved a winning number, but the popular belief that numbers given by a man before he commits suicide are infallible is too deeply rooted among the Neapolitans to be destroyed by such a misadventure.

I went to see the wretched man's body, and then entered a cafe. Someone was talking of the case, and maintaining that death by strangulation must be most luxurious as the victim always expires with a strong erection. It might be so, but the erection might also be the result of an agony of pain, and before anyone can speak dogmatically on the point he must first have had a practical experience.

As I was leaving the cafe I had the good luck to catch a handkerchief thief in the act; it was about the twentieth I had stolen from me in the month I had spent at Naples. Such petty thieves abound there, and their skill is something amazing.

As soon as he felt himself caught, he begged me not to make any noise, swearing he would return all the handkerchiefs he had stolen from me, which, as he confessed, amounted to seven or eight.

"You have stolen more than twenty from me."

"Not I, but some of my mates. If you come with me, perhaps we shall be able to get them all back."

"Is it far off?"

"In the Largo del Castello. Let me go; people are looking at us."

The little rascal took me to an evil-looking tavern, and shewed me into a room, where a man asked me if I wanted to buy any old things. As soon as he heard I had come for my handkerchiefs, he opened a big cupboard full of handkerchiefs, amongst which I found a dozen of mine, and bought them back for a trifle.

A few days after I bought several others, though I knew they were stolen.

The worthy Neapolitan dealer seemed to think me trustworthy, and three or four days before I left Naples he told me that he could sell me, for ten or twelve thousand ducats, commodities which would fetch four times that amount at Rome or elsewhere.

"What kind of commodities are they?"

"Watches, snuff-boxes, rings, and jewels, which I dare not sell here."

"Aren't you afraid of being discovered?"

"Not much, I don't tell everyone of my business."

I thanked him, but I would not look at his trinkets, as I was afraid the temptation of making such a profit would be too great.

When I got back to my inn I found some guests had arrived, of whom a few were known to me. Bartoldi had arrived from Dresden with two young Saxons, whose tutor he was. These young noblemen were rich and handsome, and looked fond of pleasure.

Bartoldi was an old friend of mine. He had played Harlequin at the King of Poland's Italian Theatre. On the death of the monarch he had been placed at the head of the opera-buffa by the dowager electress, who was passionately fond of music.

Amongst the other strangers were Miss Chudleigh, now Duchess of Kingston, with a nobleman and a knight whose names I have forgotten.

The duchess recognized me at once, and seemed pleased that I paid my court to her. An hour afterwards Mr. Hamilton came to see her, and I was delighted to make his acquaintance. We all dined together. Mr. Hamilton was a genius, and yet he ended by marrying a mere girl, who was clever enough to make him in love with her. Such a misfortune often comes to clever men in their old age. Marriage is always a folly; but when a man marries a young woman at a time of life when his physical strength is running low, he is bound to pay dearly for his folly; and if his wife is amorous of him she will kill him even years ago I had a narrow escape myself from the same fate.

After dinner I presented the two Saxons to the duchess; they gave her news of the dowager electress, of whom she was very fond. We then went to the play together. As chance would have it, Madame Goudar occupied the box next to ours, and Hamilton amused the duchess by telling the story of the handsome Irishwoman, but her grace did not seem desirous of making Sara's acquaintance.

After supper the duchess arranged a game of quinze with the two Englishmen and the two Saxons. The stakes were small, and the Saxons proved victorious. I had not taken any part in the game, but I resolved to do so the next evening.

The following day we dined magnificently with the Prince of Francavilla, and in the afternoon he took us to the bath by the seashore, where we saw a wonderful sight. A priest stripped himself naked, leapt into the water, and without making the

slightest movement floated on the surface like a piece of deal. There was no trick in it, and the marvel must be assigned to some special quality in his organs of breathing. After this the prince amused the duchess still more pleasantly. He made all his pages, lads of fifteen to seventeen, go into the water, and their various evolutions afforded us great pleasure. They were all the sweethearts of the prince, who preferred Ganymede to Hebe.

The Englishmen asked him if he would give us the same spectacle, only substituting nymphs for the 'amoyini', and he promised to do so the next day at his splendid house near Portici, where there was a marble basin in the midst of the garden.

CHAPTER XIV

My Amours with Gallimena—Journey to Soyento—Medini—Goudar—Miss Chudleigh—The Marquis Petina—Gaetano—Madame Cornelis's Son—An Anecdote of Sara Goudar—The Florentines Mocked by the King—My Journey to Salerno, Return to Naples, and Arrival at Rome

The Prince of Francavilla was a rich Epicurean, whose motto was 'Fovet et favet'.

He was in favour in Spain, but the king allowed him to live at Naples, as he was afraid of his initiating the Prince of Asturias, his brothers, and perhaps the whole Court, into his peculiar vices.

The next day he kept his promise, and we had the pleasure of seeing the marble basin filled with ten or twelve beautiful girls who swam about in the water.

Miss Chudleigh and the two other ladies pronounced this spectacle tedious; they no doubt preferred that of the previous day.

In spite of this gay company I went to see Callimena twice a day; she still made me sigh in vain.

Agatha was my confidante; she would gladly have helped me to attain my ends, but her dignity would not allow of her giving me any overt assistance. She promised to ask Callimena to accompany us on an excursion to Sorento, hoping that I should succeed in my object during the night we should have to spend

there.

Before Agatha had made these arrangements, Hamilton had made similar ones with the Duchess of Kingston, and I succeeded in getting an invitation. I associated chiefly with the two Saxons and a charming Abbe Guliani, with whom I afterwards made a more intimate acquaintance at Rome.

We left Naples at four o'clock in the morning, in a felucca with twelve oars, and at nine we reached Sorrento.

We were fifteen in number, and all were delighted with this earthly paradise.

Hamilton took us to a garden belonging to the Duke of Serra Capriola, who chanced to be there with his beautiful Piedmontese wife, who loved her husband passionately.

The duke had been sent there two months before for having appeared in public in an equipage which was adjudged too magnificent. The minister Tanucci called on the king to punish this infringement of the sumptuary laws, and as the king had not yet learnt to resist his ministers, the duke and his wife were exiled to this earthly paradise. But a paradise which is a prison is no paradise at all; they were both dying of ennui, and our arrival was balm in Gilead to them.

A certain Abbe Bettoni, whose acquaintance I had made nine years before at the late Duke of Matalone's, had come to see them, and was delighted to meet me again.

The abbe was a native of Brescia, but he had chosen Sorrento as his residence. He had three thousand crowns a year, and lived

well, enjoying all the gifts of Bacchus, Ceres, Comus, and Venus, the latter being his favourite divinity. He had only to desire to attain, and no man could desire greater pleasure than he enjoyed at Sorento. I was vexed to see Count Medini with him; we were enemies, and gave each other the coldest of greetings.

We were twenty-two at table and enjoyed delicious fare, for in that land everything is good; the very bread is sweeter than elsewhere. We spent the afternoon in inspecting the villages, which are surrounded by avenues finer than the avenues leading to the grandest castles in Europe.

Abbe Bettoni treated us to lemon, coffee, and chocolate ices, and some delicious cream cheese. Naples excels in these delicacies, and the abbe had everything of the best. We were waited on by five or six country girls of ravishing beauty, dressed with exquisite neatness. I asked him whether that were his seraglio, and he replied that it might be so, but that jealousy was unknown, as I should see for myself if I cared to spend a week with him.

I envied this happy man, and yet I pitied him, for he was at least twelve years older than I, and I was by no means young. His pleasures could not last much longer.

In the evening we returned to the duke's, and sat down to a supper composed of several kinds of fish.

The air of Sorento gives an untiring appetite, and the supper soon disappeared.

After supper my lady proposed a game at faro, and Bettoni,

knowing Medini to be a professional gamester, asked him to hold the bank. He begged to be excused, saying he had not enough money, so I consented to take his place.

The cards were brought in, and I emptied my poor purse on the table. It only held four hundred ounces, but that was all I possessed.

The game began; and on Medini asking me if I would allow him a share in the bank, I begged him to excuse me on the score of inconvenience.

I went on dealing till midnight, and by that time I had only forty ounces left. Everybody had won except Sir Rosebury, who had punted in English bank notes, which I had put into my pocket without counting.

When I got to my room I thought I had better look at the bank notes, for the depletion of my purse disquieted me. My delight may be imagined. I found I had got four hundred and fifty pounds—more than double what I had lost.

I went to sleep well pleased with my day's work, and resolved not to tell anyone of my good luck.

The duchess had arranged for us to start at nine, and Madame de Serra Capriola begged us to take coffee with her before going.

After breakfast Medini and Bettoni came in, and the former asked Hamilton whether he would mind his returning with us. Of course, Hamilton could not refuse, so he came on board, and at two o'clock I was back at my inn. I was astonished to be greeted in my antechamber by a young lady, who asked me sadly whether

I remembered her. She was the eldest of the five Hanoverians, the same that had fled with the Marquis della Petina.

I told her to come in, and ordered dinner to be brought up.

"If you are alone," she said, "I should be glad to share your repast."

"Certainly; I will order dinner for two."

Her story was soon told. She had come to Naples with her husband, whom her mother refused to recognize. The poor wretch had sold all he possessed, and two or three months after he had been arrested on several charges of forgery. His poor mate had supported him in prison for seven years. She had heard that I was at Naples, and wanted me to help her, not as the Marquis della Petina wished, by lending him money, but by employing my influence with the Duchess of Kingston to make that lady take her to England with her in her service.

"Are you married to the marquis?"

"No."

"Then how could you keep him for seven years?"

"Alas You can think of a hundred ways, and they would all be true."

"I see."

"Can you procure me an interview with the duchess?"

"I will try, but I warn you that I shall tell her the simple truth."

"Very good."

"Come again to-morrow."

At six o'clock I went to ask Hamilton how I could exchange

the English notes I had won, and he gave me the money himself.

Before supper I spoke to the duchess about the poor Hanoverian. My lady said she remembered seeing her, and that she would like to have a talk with her before coming to any decision. I brought the poor creature to her the next day, and left them alone. The result of the interview was that the duchess took her into her service in the place of a Roman girl, and the Hanoverian went to England with her. I never heard of her again, but a few days after Petina sent to beg me to come and see him in prison, and I could not refuse. I found him with a young man whom I recognized as his brother, though he was very handsome and the marquis very ugly; but the distinction between beauty and ugliness is often hard to point out.

This visit proved a very tedious one, for I had to listen to a long story which did not interest me in the least.

As I was going out I was met by an official, who said another prisoner wanted to speak to me.

"What's his name?"

"His name is Gaetano, and he says he is a relation of yours."

My relation and Gaetano! I thought it might be the abbe.

I went up to the first floor, and found a score of wretched prisoners sitting on the ground roaring an obscene song in chorus.

Such gaiety is the last resource of men condemned to imprisonment on the galleys; it is nature giving her children some relief.

One of the prisoners came up to me and greeted me as

"gossip." He would have embraced me, but I stepped back. He told me his name, and I recognized in him that Gaetano who had married a pretty woman under my auspices as her godfather. The reader may remember that I afterwards helped her to escape from him.

"I am sorry to see you here, but what can I do for you?"

"You can pay me the hundred crowns you owe me, for the goods supplied to you at Paris by me."

This was a lie, so I turned my back on him, saying I supposed imprisonment had driven him mad.

As I went away I asked an official why he had been imprisoned, and was told it was for forgery, and that he would have been hanged if it had not been for a legal flaw. He was sentenced to imprisonment for life.

I dismissed him from my mind, but in the afternoon I had a visit from an advocate who demanded a hundred crowns on Gaetano's behalf, supporting his claim by the production of an immense ledger, where my name appeared as debtor on several pages.

"Sir," said I, "the man is mad; I don't owe him anything, and the evidence of this book is utterly worthless.

"You make a mistake, sir," he replied; "this ledger is good evidence, and our laws deal very favorably with imprisoned creditors. I am retained for them, and if you do not settle the matter by to-morrow I shall serve you with a summons."

I restrained my indignation and asked him politely for his

name and address. He wrote it down directly, feeling quite certain that his affair was as good as settled.

I called on Agatha, and her husband was much amused when I told my story.

He made me sign a power of attorney, empowering him to act for me, and he then advised the other advocate that all communications in the case must be made to him alone.

The 'paglietti' who abound in Naples only live by cheating, and especially by imposing on strangers.

Sir Rosebury remained at Naples, and I found myself acquainted with all the English visitors. They all lodged at "Crocicelles," for the English are like a flock of sheep; they follow each other about, always go to the same place, and never care to shew any originality. We often arranged little trips in which the two Saxons joined, and I found the time pass very pleasantly. Nevertheless, I should have left Naples after the fair if my love for Callimena had not restrained me. I saw her every day and made her presents, but she only granted me the slightest of favours.

The fair was nearly over, and Agatha was making her preparations for going to Sorrento as had been arranged. She begged her husband to invite a lady whom he had loved before marrying her while she invited Pascal Latilla for herself, and Callimena for me.

There were thus three couples, and the three gentlemen were to defray all expenses.

Agatha's husband took the direction of everything.

A few days before the party I saw, to my surprise, Joseph, son of Madame Cornelis and brother of my dear Sophie.

"How did you come to Naples? Whom are you with?"

"I am by myself. I wanted to see Italy, and my mother gave me this pleasure. I have seen Turin, Milan, Genoa, Florence, Venice, and Rome; and after I have done Italy I shall see Switzerland and Germany, and then return to England by way of Holland."

"How long is this expedition to take?"

"Six months."

"I suppose you will be able to give a full account of everything when you go back to London?"

"I hope to convince my mother that the money she spent was not wasted."

"How much do you think it will cost you?"

"The five hundred guineas she gave me, no more."

"Do you mean to say you are only going to spend five hundred guineas in six months? I can't believe it."

"Economy works wonders."

"I suppose so. How have you done as to letters of introduction in all these countries of which you now know so much?"

"I have had no introductions. I carry an English passport, and let people think that I am English."

"Aren't you afraid of getting into bad company?"

"I don't give myself the chance. I don't speak to anyone, and when people address me I reply in monosyllables. I always strike a bargain before I eat a meal or take a lodging. I only travel in

public conveyances."

"Very good. Here you will be able to economize; I will pay all your expenses, and give you an excellent cicerone, one who will cost you nothing."

"I am much obliged, but I promised my mother not to accept anything from anybody."

"I think you might make an exception in my case."

"No. I have relations in Venice, and I would not take so much as a single dinner from them. When I promise, I perform."

Knowing his obstinacy, I did not insist. He was now a young man of twenty-three, of a delicate order of prettiness, and might easily have been taken for a girl in disguise if he had not allowed his whiskers to grow.

Although his grand tour seemed an extravagant project, I could not help admiring his courage and desire to be well informed.

I asked him about his mother and daughter, and he replied to my questions without reserve.

He told me that Madame Cornelis was head over ears in debts, and spent about half the year in prison. She would then get out by giving fresh bills and making various arrangements with her creditors, who knew that if they did not allow her to give her balls, they could not expect to get their money.

My daughter, I heard, was a pretty girl of seventeen, very talented, and patronized by the first ladies in London. She gave concerts, but had to bear a good deal from her mother.

I asked him to whom she was to have been married, when she was taken from the boarding school. He said he had never heard of anything of the kind.

"Are you in any business?"

"No. My mother is always talking of buying a cargo and sending me with it to the Indies, but the day never seems to come, and I am afraid it never will come. To buy a cargo one must have some money, and my mother has none."

In spite of his promise, I induced him to accept the services of my man, who shewed him all the curiosities of Naples in the course of a week.

I could not make him stay another week. He set out for Rome, and wrote to me from there that he had left six shirts and a great coat behind him. He begged me to send them on, but he forgot to give me his address.

He was a hare-brained fellow, and yet with the help of two or three sound maxims he managed to traverse half Europe without coming to any grief.

I had an unexpected visit from Goudar, who knew the kind of company I kept, and wanted me to ask his wife and himself to dinner to meet the two Saxons and my English friends.

I promised to oblige him on the understanding that there was to be no play at my house, as I did not want to be involved in any unpleasantness. He was perfectly satisfied with this arrangement, as he felt sure his wife would attract them to his house, where, as he said, one could play without being afraid of anything.

As I was going to Sorento the next day, I made an appointment with him for a day after my return.

This trip to Sorento was my last happy day.

The advocate took us to a house where we were lodged with all possible comfort. We had four rooms; the first was occupied by Agatha and her husband, the second by Callimena and the advocate's old sweetheart, the third by Pascal Latilla, and the fourth by myself.

After supper we went early to bed, and rising with the sun we went our several ways; the advocate with his old sweetheart, Agatha with Pascal, and I with Callimena. At noon we met again to enjoy a delicious dinner, and then the advocate took his siesta, while Pascal went for a walk with Agatha and her husband's sweetheart, and I wandered with Callimena under the shady alleys where the heat of the sun could not penetrate. Here it was that Callimena consented to gratify my passion. She gave herself for love's sake alone, and seemed sorry she had made me wait so long.

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