

**GEORGE  
MEREDITH**

VITTORIA,  
VOLUME 3

George Meredith  
**Vittoria. Volume 3**

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# George Meredith

## Vittoria – Volume 3

### CHAPTER XIV

### AT THE MAESTRO'S DOOR

The house of the Maestro Rocco Ricci turned off the Borgo della Stella. Carlo Ammiani conducted Vittoria to the maestro's door. They conversed very little on the way.

'You are a good swordsman?' she asked him abruptly.

'I have as much skill as belongs to a perfect intimacy with the weapon,' he answered.

'Your father was a soldier, Signor Carlo.'

'He was a General officer in what he believed to be the army of Italy.

We used to fence together every day for two hours.'

'I love the fathers who do that,' said Vittoria.

After such speaking Ammiani was not capable of the attempt to preach peace and safety to her. He postponed it to the next minute and the next.

Vittoria's spirit was in one of those angry knots which are half of the intellect, half of the will, and are much under the domination of one or other of the passions in the ascendant. She was resolved to go forward; she felt justified in going forward; but the divine afflatus of enthusiasm buoyed her no longer, and she required the support of all that accuracy of insight and that senseless stubbornness which there might be in her nature. The feeling that it was she to whom it was given to lift the torch and plant the standard of Italy, had swept her as through the strings of a harp. Laura, and the horrible little bronze butterfly, and the 'Sei sospetta,' now made her duty seem dry and miserably fleshless, imaging itself to her as if a skeleton had been told to arise and walk: —say, the thing obeys, and fills a ghastly distension of men's eyelids for a space, and again lies down, and men get their breath: but who is the rosier for it? where is the glory of it? what is the good? This Milan, and Verona, Padua, Vicenza, Brescia, Venice, Florence, the whole Venetian, Tuscan, and Lombardic lands, down to far Sicily, and that Rome which always lay under the crown of a dead sunset in her idea—they too might rise; but she thought of them as skeletons likewise. Even the shadowy vision of Italy Free had no bloom on it, and stood fronting the blown trumpets of resurrection Lazarus-like.

At these moments young hearts, though full of sap and fire, cannot do common nursing labour for the little suckling sentiments and hopes, the dreams, the languors and the energies hanging about them for nourishment. Vittoria's horizon was within five feet of her. She saw neither splendid earth nor ancient heaven; nothing save a breach to be stepped over in defiance of foes and (what was harder to brave) of friends. Some wayward activity of old associations set her humming a quaint English tune, by which she was brought to her consciousness.

'Dear friend,' she said, becoming aware that there might be a more troubled depth in Ammiani's absence of speech than in her own.

'Yes?' said he, quickly, as for a sentence to follow. None came, and he continued, 'The Signora Laura is also your friend.'

She rejoined coldly, 'I am not thinking of her.'

Vittoria had tried to utter what might be a word of comfort for him, and she found she had not a thought or an emotion. Here she differed from Laura, who, if the mood to heal a favourite's little sore at any season came upon her, would shower out lively tendernesses and all cajoleries possible to the tongue of woman. Yet the irritation of action narrowed Laura more than it did Vittoria; fevered her and distracted her sympathies. Being herself a plaything at the time, she could easily play a part

for others. Vittoria had not grown, probably never would grow, to be so plastic off the stage. She was stringing her hand to strike a blow as men strike, and women when they do that cannot be quite feminine.

'How dull the streets are,' she remarked.

'They are, just now,' said Ammiani, thinking of them on the night to come convulsed with strife, and of her, tossed perhaps like a weed along the torrent of bloody deluge waters. Her step was so firm, her face so assured, that he could not fancy she realized any prospect of the sort, and it filled him with pity and a wretched quailing.

If I speak now I shall be talking like a coward, he said to himself: and he was happily too prudent to talk to her in that strain. So he said nothing of peace and safety. She was almost at liberty to believe that he approved the wisdom of her resolution. At the maestro's door she thanked him for his escort, and begged for it further within an hour. 'And do bring me some chocolate.' She struck her teeth together champing in a pretty hunger for it. 'I have no chocolate in my pocket, and I hardly know myself.'

'What will your Signor Antonio say?'

Vittoria filliped her fingers. 'His rule is over, and he is my slave:

I am not his. I will not eat much; but some some I must have.'

Ammiani laughed and promised to obtain it. 'That is, if there's any to be had.'

'Break open doors to get it for me,' she said, stamping with fun to inspirit him.

No sooner was she standing alone, than her elbow was gently plucked at on the other side: a voice was sibilating: 'S-s-signorina.' She allowed herself to be drawn out of the light of the open doorway, having no suspicion and no fear. 'Signorina, here is chocolate.' She beheld two hands in cup-shape, surcharged with packets of Turin chocolate.

'Luigi, it is you?'

The Motterone spy screwed his eyelids to an expression of the shrewdest secrecy.

'Hist! signorina. Take some. You shall have all, but wait:—by-and-by. Aha! you look at my eyes as you did on the Monterone, because one of them takes the shoulder-view; but, the truth is, my father was a contrabandist, and had his eye in his ear when the frontier guard sent a bullet through his back, cotton-bags and cutleries, and all! I inherit from him, and have been wry-eyed ever since. How does that touch a man's honesty, signorina? Not at all. Don't even suspect that you won't appreciate Luigi by-and-by. So, you won't ask me a word, signorina, but up you go to the maestro:—signorina, I swear I am your faithful servant —up to the maestro, and down first. Come down first not last:—first. Let the other one come down after you; and you come down first. Leave her behind, la Lazzaruola; and here, 'Luigi displayed a black veil, the common head-dress of the Milanese women, and twisted his fingers round and round on his forehead to personate the horns of the veil; 'take it, signorina; you know how to wear it. Luigi and the saints watch over you.' Vittoria found herself left in possession of the veil and a packet of chocolate.

'If I am watched over by the saints and Luigi,' she thought, and bit at the chocolate.

When the door had closed upon her, Luigi resumed his station near it, warily casting his glances along the house-fronts, and moving his springy little legs like a heath-cock alert. They carried him sharp to an opposite corner of the street at a noise of some one running exposed to all eyes right down the middle of the road, straight to the house: in which foolish person he discerned Beppo, all of whose proceedings Luigi observed and commented on from the safe obscurity under eaves and starlight, while Beppo was in the light of the lamps. 'You thunder at the door, my Beppo. You are a fire-balloon: you are going to burn yourself up with what you carry. You think you can do something, because you read books and frequent the talking theatres—fourteen syllables to a word. Mother of heaven! will you never learn anything from natural intelligence? There you are, in at the door. And now you will disturb the signorina, and you will do nothing but make la Lazzaruola's ears lively. Bounce! you are up the stairs. Bounce! you are on the landing. Thrum! you drum at the door, and

they are singing; they don't hear you. And now you're meek as a mouse. That's it—if you don't hit the mark when you go like a bullet, you 're stupid as lead. And they call you a clever fellow! Luigi's day is to come. When all have paid him all round, they will acknowledge Luigi's worth. You are honest enough, my Beppo; but you might as well be a countryman. You are the signorina's servant, but I know the turnings, said the rat to the cavaliere weazel.'

In a few minutes Beppo stepped from the house, and flung himself with his back against the lintel of the doorway.

'That looks like determination to stop on guard,' said Luigi.

He knew the exact feeling expressed by it, when one has come violently on an errand and has done no good.

'A flea, my feathery lad, will set you flying again.'

As it was imperative in Luigi's schemes that Beppo should be set flying again, he slipped away stealthily, and sped fast into the neighbouring Corso, where a light English closed carriage, drawn by a pair of the island horses, moved at a slow pace. Two men were on the driver's seat, one of whom Luigi hailed to come down then he laid a strip of paper on his knee, and after thumping on the side of his nose to get a notion of English-Italian, he wrote with a pencil, dancing upon one leg all the while for a balance:—

'Come, Beppo, daughter sake, now, at once, immediate,  
Beppo, signor.'

'That's to the very extremity how the little signora Inglese would write,' said Luigi; yet cogitating profoundly in a dubitative twinkle of a second as to whether it might not be the English habit to wind up a hasty missive with an expediting oath. He had heard the oath of emphasis in that island: but he decided to let it go as it stood. The man he had summoned was directed to take it straightway and deliver it to one who would be found at the house-door of the Maestro Rocco Ricci.

'Thus, like a drunken sentinel,' said Luigi, folding his arms, crossing his legs, and leaning back. 'Forward, Matteo, my cherub.'

'All goes right?' the coachman addressed Luigi.

'As honey, as butter, as a mulberry leaf with a score of worms on it! The wine and the bread and the cream-cheeses are inside, my dainty one, are they? She must not starve, nor must I. Are our hampers fastened out side? Good. We shall be among the Germans in a day and a night. I've got the route, and I pronounce the name of the chateau very perfectly— "Schloss Sonnenberg." Do that if you can.'

The unpractised Italian coachman declined to attempt it. He and Luigi compared time by their watches. In three-quarters of an hour he was to be within hail of the maestro's house. Thither Luigi quietly returned.

Beppo's place there was vacant.

'That's better than a draught of Asti,' said Luigi.

The lighted windows of the maestro's house, and the piano striking corrective notes, assured him that the special rehearsal was still going on; and as he might now calculate on two or three minutes to spare, he threw back his coat-collar, lifted his head, and distended his chest, apparently to chime in with the singing, but simply to listen to it. For him, it was imperative that he should act the thing, in order to apprehend and appreciate it.

A hurried footing told of the approach of one whom he expected.

'Luigi!'

'Here, padrone.'

'You have the chocolate?'

'Signor Antonio, I have deposited it in the carriage.'

'She is in up there?'

'I beheld her entering.'

'Good; that is fixed fact.' The Signor Antonio drove at his moustache right and left. 'I give you, see, Italian money and German money: German money in paper; and a paper written out by me to explain the value of the German paper-money. Silence, engine that you are, and not a man! I am preventive of stupidity, I am? Do I not know that, hein? Am I in need of the acclamation of you, my friend? On to the Chateau Sonnenberg:—drive on, drive on, and one who stops you, you drive over him: the gendarmes in white will peruse this paper, if there is any question, and will pass you and the cage, bowing; you hear? It is a pass; the military pass you when you show this paper. My good friend, Captain Weisspriess, on the staff of General Pierson, gives it, signed, and it is effectual. But you lose not the paper: put it away with the paper-money, quite safe. For yourself, this is half your pay—I give you napoleons; ten. Count. And now—once at the Chateau Sonnenberg, I repeat, you leave her in charge of two persons, one a woman, at the gate, and then back—frrrrr..'

Antonio-Pericles smacked on the flat of his hand, and sounded a rapid course of wheels.

'Back, and drop not a crumb upon the road. You have your map. It is, after Roveredo, straight up the Adige, by Bolzano . . . say "Botzen."'

"Botz," said Luigi, submissively.

"Botz"—"Botz"—ass! fool! double idiot! "Botzon!" Antonio-Pericles corrected him furiously, exclaiming to the sovereign skies, 'Though I pay for brains, can I get them! No. But make a fiasco, Luigi, and not a second ten for you, my friend: and away, out of my sight, show yourself no more!'

Luigi humbly said that he was not the instrument of a fiasco.

Half spurning him, Antonio-Pericles snarled an end both to his advices and his prophetic disgust of the miserable tools furnished unto masterly minds upon this earth. He paced forward and back, murmuring in French, 'Mon Dieu! was there ever such a folly as in the head of this girl? It is her occasion:—Shall I be a Star? Shall I be a Cinder? It is tomorrow night her moment of Birth! No; she prefers to be extinguished. For what? For this thing she calls her country. It is infamous. Yes, vile little cheat! But, do you know Antonio-Pericles? Not yet. I will nourish you, I will imprison you: I will have you tortured by love, by the very devil of love, by the red-hot pincers of love, till you scream. a music, and die to melt him with your voice, and kick your country to the gutter, and know your Italy for a birthplace and a cradle of Song, and no more, and enough! Bah!'

Having thus delivered himself of the effervescence of his internal agitation, he turned sharply round upon Luigi, with a military stamp of the foot and shout of the man's name.

'It is love she wants,' Antonio-Pericles resumed his savage soliloquy. 'She wants to be kindled on fire. Too much Government of brain; not sufficient Insurrection of heart! There it is. There it lies. But, little fool! you shall find people with arms and shots and cannon running all up and down your body, firing and crying out "Victory for Love!" till you are beaten, till you gasp "Love! love! love!" and then comes a beatific—oh! a heaven and a hell to your voice. I will pay,' the excited connoisseur pursued more deliberately: 'I will pay half my fortune to bring this about. I am fortified, for I know such a voice was sent to be sublime.' He exclaimed in an ecstasy: 'It opens the skies!' and immediately appended: 'It is destined to suffocate the theatres!'

Pausing as before a splendid vision: 'Money—let it go like dust! I have an object. Sandra Belloni—you stupid Vittoria Campa!—I have millions and the whole Austrian Government to back me, and you to be wilful, little rebel! I could laugh. It is only Love you want. Your voice is now in a marble chamber. I will put it in a palace of cedarwood. This Ammiani I let visit you in the hope that he would touch you.

Bah! he is a patriot—not a man! He cannot make you wince and pine, and be cold and be hot, and—Bah! I give a chance to some one else who is not a patriot. He has done mischief with the inflammable little Anna von Lenkenstein—I know it. Your proper lovers, you women, are the broad, the business lovers, and Weisspriess is your man.'

Antonio-Pericles glanced up at the maestro's windows. 'Hark! it is her voice,' he said, and drew up his clenched fists with rage, as if pumping. 'Cold as ice! Not a flaw. She is a lantern with no light in it— crystal, if you like. Hark now at Irma, the stork-neck. Aie! what a long way it is from your throat to your head, Mademoiselle Irma! You were reared upon lemons. The split hair of your mural crown is not thinner than that voice of yours. It is a mockery to hear you; but you are good enough for the people, my dear, and you do work, running up and down that ladder of wires between your throat and your head;—you work, it is true, you puss! sleek as a puss, bony as a puss, musical as a puss. But you are good enough for the people. Hola!'

This exclamation was addressed to a cavalier who was dismounting from his horse about fifty yards down the street, and who, giving the reins to a mounted servant, advanced to meet the Signor Antonio.

'It is you, Herr Captain von Weisspriess!'

'When he makes an appointment you see him, as a rule, my dear Pericles,' returned the captain.

'You are out of uniform—good. We will go up. Remember, you are a connoisseur, from Bonn—from Berlin—from Leipsic: not of the K.K. army! Abjure it, or you make no way with this mad thing. You shall see her and hear her, and judge if she is worth your visit to Schloss Sonnenberg and a short siege. Good: we go aloft. You bow to the maestro respectfully twice, as in duty; then a third time, as from a whisper of your soul. Vanitas, vanitatis! You speak of the 'UT de poitrine.' You remark: "Albrechtsberger has said—," and you slap your head and stop. They think, "He is polite, and will not quote a German authority to us": and they think, "He will not continue his quotation; in truth, he scornfully considers it superfluous to talk of counterpoint to us poor Italians." Your Christian name is Johann?—you are Herr Johannes. Look at her well. I shall not expose you longer than ten minutes to their observation. Frown meditative; the elbow propped and two fingers in the left cheek; and walk into the room with a stoop: touch a note of the piano, leaning your ear to it as in detection of five-fifteenths of a shade of discord. Frown in trouble as of a tooth. So, when you smile, it is immense praise to them, and easy for you.'

The names of the Signor Antonio-Pericles and Herr Johannes were taken up to the maestro.

Tormented with curiosity, Luigi saw them enter the house. The face and the martial or sanguinary reputation of Captain Weisspriess were not unknown to him. 'What has he to do with this affair?' thought Luigi, and sauntered down to the captain's servant, who accepted a cigar from him, but was rendered incorruptible by ignorance of his language. He observed that the horses were fresh, and were furnished with saddle-bags as for an expedition. What expedition? To serve as escort to the carriage?—a nonsensical idea. But the discovery that an idea is nonsensical is not a satisfactory solution of a difficulty. Luigi squatted on his haunches beside the doorstep, a little under one of the lower windows of Rocco Ricci's house. Earlier than he expected, the captain and Signor Antonio came out; and as soon as the door had closed behind them, the captain exclaimed, 'I give you my hand on it, my brave Pericles. You have done me many services, but this is finest of all. She's superb. She's a nice little wild woman to tame. I shall go to the Sonnenberg immediately. I have only to tell General Pierson that his nephew is to be prevented from playing the fool, and I get leave at once, if there's no active work.'

'His nephew, Lieutenant Pierson, or Pole—hein?' interposed the Greek.

'That 's the man. He 's on the Marshal's staff. He 's engaged to the Countess Lena von Lenkenstein. She has fire enough, my Pericles.'

'The Countess Anna, you say?' The Greek stretched forward his ear, and was never so near getting it vigorously cuffed.

'Deafness is an unpardonable offence, my dear Pericles.'

Antonio-Pericles sniffed, and assented, 'It is the stupidity of the ear.'

'I said, the Countess Lena.'

'Von Lenkenstein; but I choose to be further deaf.'

'To the devil, sir. Do you pretend to be angry?' cried Weisspriess.

'The devil, sir, with your recommendation, is too black for me to visit him,' Antonio-Pericles rejoined.

'By heaven, Pericles, for less than what you allow yourself to say, I've sent men to him howling!'

They faced one another, pulling at their moustachios. Weisspriess laughed.

'You're not a fighting man, Pericles.'

The Greek nodded affably. 'One is in my way, I have him put out of my way. It is easiest.'

'Ah! easiest, is it?' Captain Weisspriess 'frowned meditative' over this remarkable statement of a system. 'Well, it certainly saves trouble. Besides, my good Pericles, none but an ass would quarrel with you. I was observing that General Pierson wants his nephew to marry the Countess Lena immediately; and if, as you tell me, this girl Belloni, who is called la Vittoria—the precious little woman!—has such power over him, it's quite as well, from the General's point of view, that she should be out of the way at Sonnenberg. I have my footing at the Duchess of Graath's. I believe she hopes that I shall some day challenge and kill her husband; and as I am supposed to have saved Major de Pymont's life, I am also an object of present gratitude. Do you imagine that your little brown-eyed Belloni scented one of her enemies in me?'

'I know nothing of imagination,' the Signor Antonio observed frigidly.

'Till we meet!' Captain Weisspriess kissed his fingers, half as up toward the windows, and half to the Greek. 'Save me from having to teach love to your Irma!'

He ran to join his servant.

Luigi had heard much of the conversation, as well as the last sentence.

'It shall be to la Irma if it is to anybody,' Luigi muttered.

'Let Weisspriess—he will not awake love in her—let him kindle hate, it will do,' said the Signor Antonio. 'She has seen him, and if he meets her on the route to Meran, she will think it her fascination.'

Looking at his watch and at the lighted windows, he repeated his special injunctions to Luigi. 'It is near the time. I go to sleep. I am getting old: I grow nervous. Ten-twenty in addition, you shall have, if all is done right. Your weekly pay runs on. Twenty—you shall have thirty! Thirty napoleons additional!'

Ten fingers were flashed thrice.

Luigi gave a jump. 'Padrone, they are mine.'

'Animal, that shake your belly-bag and brain-box, stand!' cried the Greek, who desired to see Luigi standing firm that he might inspire himself with confidence in his integrity. When Luigi's posture had satisfied him, he turned and went off at great strides.

'He does pay,' Luigi reflected, seeing that immense virtue in his patron. 'Yes, he pays; but what is he about? It is this question for me—"Do I serve my hand? or, Do I serve my heart?" My hand takes the money, and it is not German money. My heart gives the affection, and the signorina has my heart. She reached me that cigarette on the Motterone like the Madonna: it is never to be forgotten! I serve my heart! Now, Beppo, you may come; come quick for her. I see the carriage, and there are three stout fellows in it who could trip and muzzle you at a signal from me before you could count the letters of your father's baptismal name. Oh! but if the signorina disobeys me and comes out last!—the Signor Antonio will ask the maestro, who will say, "Yes, la Vittoria was here with me last of the two"; and I lose my ten, my twenty, my thirty napoleons.'

Luigi's chest expanded largely with a melancholy draught of air.

The carriage meantime had become visible at the head of the street, where it remained within hearing of a whistle. One of the Milanese hired vehicles drove up to the maestro's door shortly after, and Luigi cursed it. His worst fears for the future of the thirty napoleons were confirmed; the door opened and the Maestro Rocco Ricci, bareheaded and in his black silk dressing-gown, led out Irma di Karski, by some called rival to la Vittoria; a tall Slavic damsel, whose laughter was not soft and smooth, whose cheeks were bright, and whose eyes were deep in the head and dull. But she had

vivacity both of lips and shoulders. The shoulders were bony; the lips were sharp and red, like winter-berries in the morning-time. Freshness was not absent from her aspect. The critical objection was that it seemed a plastered freshness and not true bloom; or rather it was a savage and a hard, not a sweet freshness. Hence perhaps the name which distinguished her la Lazzeruola (crab apple). It was a freshness that did not invite the bite; sour to Italian taste.

She was apparently in vast delight. 'There will be a perfect inundation to-morrow night from Prague and Vienna to see me even in so miserable a part as Michiella,' she said. 'Here I am supposed to be a beginner; I am no debutante there.'

'I can believe it, I can believe it,' responded Rocco, bowing for her speedy departure.

'You are not satisfied with my singing of Michiella's score! Now, tell me, kind, good, harsh old master! you think that Miss Vittoria would sing it better. So do I. And I can sing another part better. You do not know my capacities.'

'I am sure there is nothing you would not attempt,' said Rocco, bowing resignedly.

'There never was question of my courage.'

'Yes, but courage, courage! away with your courage!' Rocco was spurred by his personal grievances against her in a manner to make him forget his desire to be rid of her. 'Your courage sets you flying at once at every fioritura and bravura passage, to subdue, not to learn: not to accomplish, but to conquer it. And the ability, let me say, is not in proportion to the courage, which is probably too great to be easily equalled; but you have the opportunity to make your part celebrated to-morrow night, if, as you tell me, the house is to be packed with Viennese, and, signorina, you let your hair down.'

The hair of Irma di Karski was of singular beauty, and so dear to her that the allusion to the triumphant feature of her person passed off Rocco's irony in sugar.

'Addio! I shall astonish you before many hours have gone by,' she said; and this time they bowed together, and the maestro tripped back hurriedly, and shut his door.

Luigi's astonishment eclipsed his chagrin when he beheld the lady step from her place, bidding the driver move away as if he carried a freight, and indicating a position for him at the end of the street, with an imperative sway and deflection of her hand. Luigi heard the clear thin sound of a key dropped to her from one of the upper windows. She was quick to seize it; the door opened stealthily to her, and she passed out of sight without casting a look behind. 'That's a woman going to discover a secret, if she can,' remarked the observer; meaning that he considered the sex bad Generals, save when they have occasion to preserve themselves secret; then they look behind them carefully enough. The situation was one of stringent torment to a professional and natural spy. Luigi lost count of minutes in his irritation at the mystery, which he took as a personal offence. Some suspicion or wariness existed in the lighted room, for the maestro threw up a window, and inspected the street to right and left. Apparently satisfied he withdrew his head, and the window was closed.

In a little while Vittoria's voice rose audible out of the stillness, though she restrained its volume.

Its effect upon Luigi was to make him protest to her, whimpering with pathos as if she heard and must be melted: 'Signorina! signorina, most dear! for charity's sake! I am one of you; I am a patriot. Every man to his trade, but my heart is all with you.' And so on, louder by fits, in a running murmur, like one having his conscience ransacked, from which he was diverted by a side-thought of Irma di Karski, la Lazzeruola, listening, taking poison in at her ears; for Luigi had no hesitation in ascribing her behaviour to jealousy. 'Does not that note drive through your bosom, excellent lady? I can fancy the tremble going all down your legs. You are poisoned with honey. How you hate it! If you only had a dagger!'

Vittoria sang but for a short space. Simultaneously with the cessation of her song Ammiani reached the door, but had scarcely taken his stand there when, catching sight of Luigi, he crossed the street, and recognizing him, questioned him sternly as to his business opposite the maestro's house. Luigi pointed to a female figure emerging. 'See! take her home,' he said. Ammiani released him and

crossed back hurriedly, when, smiting his forehead, Luigi cried in despair, 'Thirty napoleons and my professional reputation lost!' He blew a whistle; the carriage dashed down from the head of the street. While Ammiani was following the swiftly-stepping figure in wonderment (knowing it could not be Vittoria, yet supposing it must be, without any clear aim of his wits), the carriage drew up a little in advance of her; three men—men of bulk and sinew jumped from it; one threw himself upon Ammiani, the others grasped the affrighted lady, tightening a veil over her face, and the carriage-door shut sharp upon her. Ammiani's assailant then fell away: Luigi flung himself on the box and shouted, 'The signorina is behind you!' And Ammiani beheld Vittoria standing in alarm, too joyful to know that it was she. In the spasm of joy he kissed her hands. Before they could intercommunicate intelligibly the carriage was out of their sight, going at a gallop along the eastern strada of the circumvallation of the city.

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