

ФРЕДЕРИК

МАРРИЕТ

THE PACHA OF

MANY TALES

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The Pacha of Many Tales

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Frederick Marryat

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Volume One—Chapter One

Every one acquainted with the manners and customs of the East must be aware that there is no situation of eminence more unstable, or more dangerous to its possessor, than that of a pacha. Nothing, perhaps, affords us more convincing proof of the risk which men will incur, to obtain a temporary authority over their fellow-creatures, than the avidity with which this office is accepted from the sultan who, within the memory of the new occupant, has consigned scores of his predecessors to the bow-string. It would almost appear, as if the despot but elevated a head from the crowd, that he might obtain a more fair and uninterrupted sweep for his scimitar, when he cut it off; only exceeded in his peculiar taste by the king of Dahomy, who is said to ornament the steps of his palace with heads, fresh severed, each returning sun, as we renew the decoration of our apartments from our gay parterres. I make these observations, that I may not be accused of a disregard to chronology, in not precisely stating the year, or rather the months, during which flourished one of a race, who, like the flowers of the cistus, one morning in all their splendour, on the next, are strewed lifeless on the ground to make room for their successors. Speaking of such ephemeral creations, it will be quite sufficient to say, “There *was* a Pacha.”

Would you inquire by what means he was raised to the distinction? It is an idle question. In this world, pre-eminence over your fellow creatures can only be obtained, by leaving others far behind in the career of virtue or of vice. In compliance with the dispositions of those who rule, faithful service in the one path or the other will shower honour upon the subject, and by the breath of kings he becomes ennobled to look down upon his former equals.

And as the world spins round, the *why* is of little moment. The honours are bequeathed, but not the good, or the evil deeds, or the talents by which they were obtained. In the latter we have but a life interest, for the entail is cut off by death. Aristocracy in all its varieties is as necessary for the well binding of society, as the divers grades between the general and the common soldier are essential in the field. Never then inquire, why this or that man has been raised above his fellows; but, each night as you retire to bed, thank Heaven that you are not *a King*.

And if I may digress, there is one badge of honour in our country, which I never contemplate without serious reflection rising in my mind. It is the *bloody* hand in the dexter chief of a baronet, —now often worn, I grant, by those who, perhaps, during their whole lives have never raised their hands in anger. But my thoughts have returned to days of yore—the iron days of *ironed men*, when it *was* the symbol of faithful service in the field—when it really was bestowed upon the “hand embrued in blood;” and I have meditated, whether that hand, displayed with exultation in this world, may not be held up trembling in the next—in judgment against itself.

And I, whose memory stepping from one legal murder to another, can walk dry-footed over the broad space of five-and-twenty years of time,—but the “damned spots” won’t come out—so I’ll put my hands in my pockets and walk on.

Conscience, fortunately or unfortunately, I hardly can tell which, permits us to form political and religious creeds, most suited to disguise or palliate our sins. Mine is a military conscience; and I agree with Bates and Williams, who flourished in the time of Henry the Fifth, that it is “all upon the king:” that is to say, it *was* all upon the king; but now our constitution has become so incomparably perfect, that “the king can do no wrong;” and he has no difficulty in finding ministers, who voluntarily ignorantly themselves for all his actions in this world, will, in all probability, not escape from the clutches of the great *Pawnbroker* in the next—from which facts I draw the following conclusions:—

First. That his majesty (God bless him!) will go to heaven.
Secondly. That his majesty's ministers will all go to the devil.
Thirdly. That I shall go on with my story.

As, however, a knowledge of the previous history of our pacha will be necessary to the development of our story, the reader will in this instance be indulged. He had been brought up to the profession of a barber; but, possessing great personal courage, he headed a popular commotion in favour of his predecessor, and was rewarded by a post of some importance in the army. Successful in detached service, while his general was unfortunate in the field, he was instructed to take off the head of his commander, and head the troops in his stead; both of which services he performed with equal skill and celerity. Success attended him, and the pacha, his predecessor, having in his opinion, as well as in that of the sultan, remained an unusual time in office, by an accusation enforced by a thousand purses of gold, he was enabled to produce a bowstring for his benefactor; and the sultan's "firman" appointed him to the vacant pachalik. His qualifications for office were all superlative: he was very short, very corpulent, very illiterate, very irascible, and very stupid.

On the morning after his investment, he was under the hands of his barber, a shrewd intelligent Greek, Mustapha by name. Barbers are privileged persons for many reasons: running from one employer to another to obtain their livelihood, they also obtain matter for conversation, which, impertinent as it may sometimes be, serves to beguile the tedium of an operation which precludes the use of any organ except the ear. Moreover, we are inclined to be on good terms with a man, who has it in his power to cut our throats whenever he pleases—to wind up; the personal liberties arising from his profession, render all others trifling; for the man who takes his sovereign by the nose, cannot well after that be denied the liberty of speech.

Mustapha was a Greek by birth, and inherited all the intelligence and adroitness of his race. He had been brought up to his profession when a slave; but at the age of nineteen he accompanied his master on board of a merchant vessel bound to Scio; this vessel was taken by a pirate, and Demetrius (for such was his real name) joined this band of miscreants, and very faithfully served his apprenticeship to cutting throats, until the vessel was captured by an English frigate. Being an active, intelligent person, he was, at his own request, allowed to remain on board as one of the ship's company, assisted in several actions, and after three years went to England, where the ship was paid off. For some time, Demetrius tried to make his fortune, but without success, and it was not until he was reduced to nearly his last shilling, that he commenced the trade of hawking rhubarb about in a box: which speculation turned so profitable, that he was enabled in a short time to take his passage in a vessel bound to Smyrna, his own country. This vessel was captured by a French privateer; he was landed, and, not being considered as a prisoner, allowed to act as he thought proper. In a short time he obtained the situation of valet and barber to a "millionaire," whom he contrived to rob of a few hundred Napoleons, and with them to make his escape to his own country. Demetrius had now some knowledge of the world, and he felt it necessary that he should become a True Believer, as there would be more chance of his advancement in a Turkish country. He dismissed the patriarch to the devil, and took up the turban and Mahomet; then quitting the scene of his apostacy, recommenced his profession of barber in the territory of the pacha; whose good-will he had obtained previous to the latter's advancement to the pachalik.

"Mustapha," observed the pacha, "thou knowest that I have taken off the heads of all those who left their slippers at the door of the late pacha."

"Allah Kebur! God is most powerful! So perish the enemies of your sublime highness. Were they not the sons of Shitan?" replied Mustapha.

"Very true; but, Mustapha, the consequence is that I am in want of a vizier; and whom do I know equal to that office?"

“While your sublime highness is pacha, is not a child equal to the office? Who stumbles, when guided by unerring wisdom?”

“I know that very well,” replied the pacha; “but if I am always to direct him, I might as well be vizier myself; besides, I shall have no one to blame, if affairs go wrong with the sultan. Inshallah! please the Lord, the vizier’s head may sometimes save my own.”

“Are we not as dogs before you?” replied Mustapha: “happy the man, who by offering his own head may preserve that of your sublime highness! It ought to be the proudest day of his life.”

“At all events it would be the last,” rejoined the pacha.

“May it please your sublime highness,” observed Mustapha, after a pause, “if your slave may be so honoured as to speak in your presence, a vizier should be a person of great tact; he should be able to draw the line as nicely as I do when I shave your sublime head, leaving not a vestige of the hair, yet entering not upon the skin.”

“Very true, Mustapha.”

“He should have a sharp eye for the disaffected to the government, selecting them and removing them from among the crowd, as I do the few white hairs which presume to make their appearance in your sublime and magnificent beard.”

“Very true, Mustapha.”

“He should carefully remove all impurities from the state, as I have this morning from your sublime ears.”

“Very true, Mustapha.”

“He should be well acquainted with the secret springs of action, as I have proved myself to be in the shampooing which your sublime highness has just received.”

“Very true, Mustapha.”

“Moreover, he should be ever grateful to your highness for the distinguished honour conferred upon him.”

“All that you say is very true, Mustapha, but where am I to meet with such a man?”

“This world is convenient in some points,” continued Mustapha; “if you want either a fool or a knave, you have not far to go to find them; but it is no easy task to select the person you require. I know but one.”

“And who is he?”

“One whose head is but as your footstool,” answered the barber, prostrating himself,—“your sublime highness’s most devoted slave, Mustapha.”

“Holy Prophet! Then you mean yourself!—Well, now I think of it, if one barber can become a pacha, I do not see why another would not make a vizier. But then what am I to do for a barber? No, no, Mustapha; a good vizier is easy to be found, but a good barber, you know as well as I do, requires some talent.”

“Your slave is aware of that,” replied Mustapha, “but he has travelled in other countries, where it is no uncommon circumstance for men to hold more than one office under government; sometimes much more incompatible than those of barber and vizier, which are indeed closely connected. The affairs of most nations are settled by the potentates during their toilet. While I am shaving the head of your sublime highness, I can receive your commands to take off the heads of others; and you can have your person and your state both put in order at the same moment.”

“Very true, Mustapha; then, on condition that you continue your office of barber, I have no objection to throw that of vizier into the bargain.”

Mustapha again prostrated himself, with his tweezers in his hand. He then rose, and continued his office.

“You can write, Mustapha,” observed the pacha, after a short silence.

“Min Allah! God forbid that I should acknowledge it, or I should consider myself as unfit to assume the office in which your sublime highness has invested me.”

“Although unnecessary for me, I thought it might be requisite for a vizier,” observed the pacha.

“Reading may be necessary, I will allow,” replied Mustapha; “but I trust I can soon prove to your highness that writing is as dangerous as it is useless. More men have been ruined by that unfortunate acquirement, than by any other; and dangerous as it is to all, it is still more dangerous to men in high power. For instance, your sublime highness sends a message in writing, which is ill-received, and it is produced against you; but had it been a verbal message, you could deny it, and bastinado to death the Tartar who carried it, as a proof of your sincerity.”

“Very true, Mustapha.”

“The grandfather of your slave,” continued the barber-vizier, “held the situation of receiver-general at the custom-house; and he was always in a fury when he was obliged to take up the pen. It was his creed, that no government could prosper when writing was in general use. ‘Observe, Mustapha,’ said he to me one day, ‘here is the curse of writing,—for all the money which is paid in, I am obliged to give a receipt. What is the consequence? that government loses many thousand sequins every year; for when I apply to them for a second payment, they produce their receipt. Now if it had not been for this cursed invention of writing, Inshallah! they should have paid twice, if not thrice over. Remember, Mustapha,’ continued he, ‘that reading and writing only clog the wheels of government.’”

“Very true, Mustapha,” observed the pacha, “then we will have no writing.”

“Yes, your sublime highness, every thing in writing from others, but nothing in writing from ourselves. I have a young Greek slave, who can be employed in these matters. He reads well. I have lately employed him in reading to me the stories of ‘Thousand and one Nights.’”

“Stories,” cried the pacha; “what are they about? I never heard of them; I’m very fond of stories.”

“If it would pleasure your sublime highness to hear these stories read, the slave will wait your commands,” replied the vizier.

“Bring him this evening, Mustapha; we will smoke a pipe, and listen to them; I’m very fond of stories—they always send me to sleep.”

The business of the day was transacted with admirable precision and despatch by the two quondam barbers, who proved how easy it is to govern, where there are not “three estates” to confuse people. They sat in the divan as highwaymen loiter on the road, and it was “Your money or your life” to all who made their appearance.

At the usual hour the court broke up, the guards retired, the money was carried to the treasury, the executioner wiped his sword, and the lives of the pacha’s subjects were considered to be in a state of comparative security, until the affairs of the country were again brought under their cognisance on the ensuing day.

In obedience to the wish expressed by the pacha, Mustapha made his appearance in the afternoon with the young Greek slave. The new vizier having taken a seat upon a cushion at the feet of the pacha, the pipes were lighted, and the slave was directed to proceed.

The Greek had arrived to the end of the First Night, in which Schezehezerade commences her story, and the Sultan, who was anxious to hear the termination of it, defers her execution to the following day.

“Stop,” cried the pacha, taking the pipe from his lips; “how long before the break of day did that girl call her sister?”

“About half an hour, your sublime highness.”

“Wallah! Is that all she could tell of her story in half an hour?—There’s not a woman in my harem who would not say as much in five minutes.”

The pacha was so amused with the stories, that he never once felt inclined to sleep; on the contrary, the Greek slave was compelled to read every afternoon, until his legs were so tired that he could hardly stand, and his tongue almost refused its office; consequently, they were soon finished; and Mustapha not being able to procure any more, they were read a second time. After which the pacha, who felt the loss of his evening’s amusement, became first puzzled how to pass away his time;

then he changed to hypochondriacism, and finally became so irritable, that even Mustapha himself, at times, approached him with some degree of awe.

“I have been thinking,” observed the pacha, one morning, when under the hands of Mustapha, in his original capacity, “that it would be as easy for me to have stories told me, as the caliph in the Arabian Nights.”

“I wonder not that your highness should desire it. Those stories are as the opium to Theriarkis, filling the soul with visions of delight at the moment, but leaving it palsied from over-excitement, when their effect has passed away. How does your sublime highness propose to obtain your end; and in what manner can your slave assist to produce your wishes?”

“I shall manage it without assistance; come this evening and you shall see, Mustapha.”

Mustapha made his appearance in the afternoon, and the pacha smoked his pipe for some time, and appeared as if communing with himself; he then laid it down, and clapping his hands, desired one of the slaves to inform his favourite lady, Zeinab, that he desired her presence.

Zeinab entered with her veil down. “Your slave attends the pleasure of her lord.”

“Zeinab,” said the pacha, “do you love me?”

“Do not I worship the dust that my lord treads on?”

“Very true—then I have a favour to request: observe, Zeinab—it is my wish that,”—(here the pacha took a few whiffs from his pipe)—“The fact is—I wish you to dishonour my harem as soon as possible.”

“Wallah sel Nebi!!—By Allah and the Prophet your highness is in a merry humour this evening,” replied Zeinab, turning round to quit the apartment.

“On the contrary, I am in a serious humour; I mean what I have said; and I expect that you will comply with my wishes.”

“Is my lord mad? or has he indulged too freely in the juice of the grape forbidden by our Prophet? Allah kebur! God is most powerful—The hakim must be sent for.”

“Will you do as I order you?” said the pacha angrily.

“Does my lord send for his slave to insult her! My blood is as water, at the dreadful thought!—Dishonour the harem!—Min Allah! God forbid!—Would not the eunuch be ready and the sack?”

“Yes, they would, I acknowledge; but still it must be done.”

“It shall not be done,” replied the lady:—“Has my lord been visited by Heaven? or is he possessed by the Shitan?”—And the lady burst into tears of rage and vexation as she quitted the apartment.

“There’s obstinacy for you—women are nothing but opposition. If you wish them to be faithful, they try day and night to deceive you; give them their desires and tell them to be false, they will refuse. All was arranged so well, I should have cut off all their heads, and had a fresh wife every night until I found one who could tell stories; then I should have rose up and deferred her execution to the following day.”

Mustapha, who had been laughing in his sleeve at the strange idea of the pacha, was nevertheless not a little alarmed. He perceived that the mania had such complete possession, that, unless appeased, the results might prove unpleasant even to himself. It occurred to him, that a course might be pursued to gratify the pacha’s wishes, without proceeding to such violent measures. Waiting a little while until the colour, which had suffused the pacha’s face from anger and disappointment, had subsided, he addressed him:—

“The plan of your sublime highness was such as was to be expected from the immensity of your wisdom; but hath not the Prophet warned us, that the wisest of men are too often thwarted by the folly and obstinacy of the other sex? May your slave venture to observe, that many very fine stories were obtained by the caliph Haroun, and his vizier Mesroure, as they walked through the city in disguise. In all probability a similar result might be produced, if your highness were to take the same step, accompanied by the lowest of your slaves, Mustapha.”

“Very true,” replied the pacha, delighted at the prospect, “prepare two disguises, and we will set off in less than an hour—Inshallah, please the Lord, we have at last hit upon the right path.”

Mustapha, who was glad to direct the ideas of the pacha into a more harmless channel, procured the dresses of two merchants (for such, he observed, were the usual habiliments put on by the caliph and his vizier in the Arabian Nights), and he was aware that his master’s vanity would be gratified at the idea of imitating so celebrated a personage.

It was dusk when they set off upon their adventures. Mustapha directed some slaves well armed to follow at a distance, in case their assistance might be required. The strict orders which had been issued on the accession of the new pacha (to prevent any riot or popular commotion), which were enforced by constant rounds of the soldiers on guard, occasioned the streets to be quite deserted.

For some time the pacha and Mustapha walked up one street and down another, without meeting with any thing or any body that could administer to their wishes. The former, who had not lately been accustomed to pedestrian exercise, began to puff and show symptoms of weariness and disappointment, when at the corner of a street they fell in with two men, who were seated in conversation; and as they approached softly, one of them said to the other, “I tell you, Coja, that happy is the man who can always command a hard crust like this, which is now wearing away my teeth.”

“I must know the reason of that remark,” said the pacha; “Mesrour (Mustapha, I mean), you will bring that man to me to-morrow, after the divan is closed.”

Mustapha bowed in acquiescence, and directing the slaves who were in attendance to take the man into custody, followed the pacha, who, fatigued with his unusual excursion, and satisfied with the prospect of success, now directed his steps to the palace and retired to bed. Zeinab, who had laid awake until her eyes could remain open no longer, with the intention of reading him a lecture upon decency and sobriety, had at last fallen asleep, and the tired pacha was therefore permitted to do the same.

When Mustapha arrived at his own abode, he desired that the person who had been detained should be brought to him.

“My good man,” said the vizier, “you made an observation this evening which was overheard by his highness the pacha, who wishes to be acquainted with your reasons for stating ‘that happy was the man who could at all times command a hard crust, like that which was wearing away your teeth.’”

The man fell down on his knees in trepidation. “I do declare to your highness, by the camel of the Holy Prophet,” said he, in a faltering voice, “that I neither meant treason, nor disaffection to the government.”

“Slave! I am not quite sure of that,” replied Mustapha, with a stern look, in hopes of frightening the man into a compliance with his wishes—“there was something very enigmatical in those words. Your ‘*hard crust*’ may mean his sublime highness the pacha; ‘wearing away your teeth’ may imply exactions from the government and as you affirmed that he was happy who could *command* the hard crust—why it is as much as to say that you would be very glad to create a rebellion.”

“Holy Prophet! May the soul of your slave never enter the first heaven,” replied the man, “if he meant any thing more than what he said; and if your highness had been as often without a mouthful of bread as your slave has been, you would agree with him in the justice of the remark.”

“It is of little consequence whether I agree with you or not,” replied the vizier; “I have only to tell you that his sublime highness the pacha will not be satisfied, unless you explain away the remark, by relating to him some story connected with the observation.”

“Min Allah! God forbid that your slave should tell a story to deceive his highness.”

“The Lord have mercy upon you if you do not,” replied the vizier; “but, to be brief; if you can invent a good and interesting story, you will remove the suspicions of the pacha, and probably be rewarded with a few pieces of gold; if you cannot, you must prepare for the bastinado, if not for death. You will not be required to appear in the sublime presence before to-morrow afternoon, and will therefore have plenty of time to invent one.”

“Will your highness permit your slave to go home and consult his wife? Women have a great talent for story telling. With her assistance he may be able to comply with your injunctions.”

“No,” replied Mustapha, “you must remain in custody; but, as on this occasion she may be of the greatest assistance to you, you may send for her. They have indeed a talent! As the young crocodile, from instinct, runs into the Nile as soon as it bursts its shell, so does woman, from her nature, plunge into deceit, before even her tongue can give utterance to the lies which her fertile imagination has already conceived.”

And with this handsome compliment to the sex, Mustapha gave his final orders, and retired.

Whether the unfortunate man, thus accused of treason, derived any benefit from being permitted to “retain counsel,” will be shown by the following story, which he told to the pacha when summoned on the ensuing day:—

Story of the Camel-Driver

That your highness should wish for an explanation of the very doubtful language which you overheard last night, I am not surprised; but I trust you will acknowledge, when I have finished my narrative, that I was fully justified in the expressions which I made use of. I am by birth (as my dress denotes) a fellah of this country, but I was not always so poor as I am now. My father was the possessor of many camels, which he let out for hire to the merchants of the different caravans which annually leave this city. When he died, I came into possession of his property, and the goodwill of those whom he had most faithfully served. The consequence was, that I had full employ, my camels were always engaged; and, as I invariably accompanied them that they might not be ill-treated, I have several times been to Mecca, as this ragged green turban will testify. My life was one of alternate difficulty and enjoyment. I returned to my wife and children with delight after my journeys of suffering and privation, and fully appreciated the value of my home from the short time that my occupation would permit me to remain there. I worked hard, and became rich.

It was during a painful march through the desert with one of the caravans, that a favourite she-camel foaled. At first it was my intention to leave the young one to its fate, as my camels had already suffered much; but, on examination, the creature showed such strength and symmetry that I resolved to bring it up. I therefore divided half of one of the loads between the other camels, and tied the foal upon the one which I had partly relieved for the purpose. We arrived safely at Cairo; and, as the little animal grew up, I had more than ever reason to be satisfied that I had saved its life. All good judges considered it a prodigy of beauty and strength; and prophesied that it would some day be selected as the holy camel to carry the Koran in the pilgrimage to Mecca. And so it did happen about five years afterwards, during which interval I accompanied the caravans as before; and each year added to my wealth.

My camel had by this time arrived to his full perfection; he stood nearly three feet higher than any other; and, when the caravan was preparing, I led him to the sheiks, and offered him as a candidate for the honour. They would have accepted him immediately, had it not been for a maribout, who, for some reason or another, desired them not to employ him, asserting that the caravan would be unlucky if my camel was the bearer of the holy Koran.

As this man was considered to be a prophet, the sheiks were afraid, and would not give a decided answer. Irritated at the maribout's interference, I reviled him; he raised a hue and cry against me; and, being joined by the populace, I was nearly killed. As I hastened away, the wretch threw some sand after me, crying out, “Thus shall the caravan perish from the judgment of heaven, if that cursed camel is permitted to carry the holy word of the Prophet.” The consequence was, that an inferior camel was selected, and I was disappointed. But on the ensuing year the maribout was not at Cairo; and, as there was no animal equal to mine in beauty, it was chosen by the sheiks without a dissentient voice.

I hastened home to my wife, overjoyed with my good fortune, which I hoped would bring a blessing upon my house. She was equally delighted, and my beautiful camel seemed also to be aware of the honour to which he was destined, as he repaid our caresses, curving and twisting his long neck, and laying his head upon our shoulders.

The caravan assembled: it was one of the largest which for many years had quitted Cairo, amounting in all to eighteen thousand camels. You may imagine my pride when, as the procession passed through the streets, I pointed out to my wife the splendid animal, with his bridle studded with jewels and gold, led by the holy sheiks in their green robes, carrying on his back the chest which contained the law of our prophet, looking proudly on each side of him as he walked along, accompanied by bands of music, and the loud chorus of the singing men and women.

As on the ensuing day the caravan was to form outside of the town, I returned home to my family, that I might have the last of their company, having left my other camels, who were hired by the pilgrims, in charge of an assistant who accompanied me in my journeys. The next morning I bade adieu to my wife and children; and was quitting the house, when my youngest child, who was about two years old, called to me, and begged me to return one moment, and give her a farewell caress. As I lifted her in my arms, she, as usual, put her hand into the pocket of my loose jacket to search, as I thought, for the fruit that I usually brought home for her when I returned from the bazaar; but there was none there: and having replaced her in the arms of her mother, I hastened away that I might not be too late at my post. Your highness is aware that we do not march one following another, as most caravans do, but in one straight line abreast. The necessary arrangement occupies the whole day previous to the commencement of our journey, which takes place immediately after the sun goes down. We set off that evening; and after a march of two nights, arrived at Adjeroid, where we remained three days, to procure our supplies of water from Suez, and to refresh the animals, previous to our forced march over the desert of El Tyh.

The last day of our repose, as I was smoking my pipe, with my camels kneeling down around me, I perceived a herie (a swift dromedary) coming from the direction of Cairo, at a very swift pace; it passed by me like a flash of lightning, but still I had sufficient time to recognise in its rider the maribout who had prophesied evil if my camel was employed to carry the Koran on the pilgrimage of the year before.

The maribout stopped his dromedary at the tent of the emir Hadjy, who commanded the caravan. Anxious to know the reason of his following us, which I had a foreboding was connected with my camel, I hastened to the spot. I found him haranguing the emir and the people who had surrounded him, denouncing woe and death to the whole caravan if my camel was not immediately destroyed, and another selected in his stead. Having for some time declaimed in such an energetic manner as to spread consternation throughout the camp, he turned his dromedary again to the west, and in a few minutes was out of sight.

The emir was confused; murmurings and consultations were arising among the crowd. I was afraid that they would listen to the suggestions of the maribout; and, alarmed for my camel, and the loss of the honour conferred upon him, I was guilty of a lie.

“O! emir,” said I, “listen not to that man who is mine enemy: he came to my house, he ate of my bread, and would have been guilty of the basest ingratitude by seducing the mother of my children; I drove him from my door, and thus would he revenge himself. So may it fare with me, and with the caravan, as I speak the truth.”

I was believed; the injunctions of the maribout were disregarded, and that night we proceeded on our march through the plains of El Tyh.

As your highness has never yet made a pilgrimage, you can have no conception of the country which we had to pass through: it was one vast region of sand, where the tracks of those who pass over it are obliterated by the wind,—a vast sea without water,—an expanse of desolation. We plunged into

the desert; and as the enormous collection of animals, extending as far as the eye could reach, held their noiseless way, it seemed as if it were the passing by of shadows.

We met with no accident, notwithstanding the prophecies of the maribout; and, after a fatiguing march of seven nights, arrived safely at Nakhel, where we replenished our exhausted water-skins. Those whom I knew joked with me, when we met at the wells, at the false prophecies of my enemy. We had now three days of severe fatigue to encounter before we arrived at the castle of Akaba, and we recommenced our painful journey.

It was on the morning of the second day, about an hour after we had pitched our tents, that the fatal prophecy of the maribout, and the judgment of Allah upon me, for the lie which I had called on him to witness, was fulfilled.

A dark cloud appeared upon the horizon; it gradually increased, changing to a bright yellow; then rose and rose until it had covered one half of the firmament, when it suddenly burst upon us in a hurricane which carried every thing before it, cutting off mountains of sand at the base, and hurling them upon our devoted heads. The splendid tent of the emir, which first submitted to the blast, passed close to me, flying along with the velocity of the herie, while every other was either levelled to the ground or carried up into the air, and whirled about in mad gyration.

Moving pillars of sand passed over us, overthrowing and suffocating man and beast; the camels thrust their muzzles into the ground, and, profiting by their instinct, we did the same, awaiting our fate in silence and trepidation. But the simoom had not yet poured upon us all its horrors: in a few minutes nothing was to be distinguished—all was darkness, horrible darkness, rendered more horrible by the ravings of dying men, the screams of women, and the mad career of horses and other animals, which breaking their cords, trod down thousands in their endeavours to escape from the overwhelming fury of the desert storm.

I had laid myself down by one of my camels, and thrusting my head under his side, awaited my death with all the horror of one who felt that the wrath of heaven was justly poured upon him. For an hour I remained in that position, and surely there can be no pains in hell greater than those which I suffered during that space of time. The burning sand forced itself into my garments, the pores of any skin were closed, I hardly ventured to breathe the hot blast which was offered as the only means of protracted existence. At last I fetched my respiration with greater freedom, and no more heard the howling of the blast. Gradually I lifted up my head, but my eyes had lost their power, I could distinguish nothing but a yellow glare. I imagined that I was blind, and what chance could there be for a man who was blind in the desert of El Tyh? Again I laid my head down, thought of my wife and children, and abandoning myself to despair, I wept bitterly.

The tears that I shed had a resuscitating effect upon my frame. I felt revived, and again lifted up my head—I could see! I prostrated myself in humble thanksgiving to Allah, and then rose upon my feet. Yes, I could see; but what a sight was presented to my eyes! I could have closed them for ever with thankfulness. The sky was again serene, and the boundless prospect uninterrupted as before; but the thousands who accompanied me, the splendid gathering of men and beast, where were they? Where was the emir Hadjy and his guards? where the mamelukes, the agas, the janissaries, and the holy sheiks? the sacred camel, the singers, and musicians? the varieties of nations and tribes who had joined the caravan? All perished!! Mountains of sand marked the spots where they had been entombed, with no other monuments save here and there part of the body of a man or beast not yet covered by the desert wave. All, all were gone, save one and that one, that guilty one, was myself, who had been permitted to exist, that he might behold the awful mischief which had been created by his presumption and his crime.

For some minutes I contemplated the scene, careless and despairing; for I imagined that I had only been permitted to outlive the whole, that my death might be even more terrible. But my wife and children rushed to my memory, and I resolved for their sakes to save, if possible a life which had

no other ties to bind it to this earth. I tore off a piece of my turban, and cleansing the sand out of my bleeding nostrils, walked over the field of death.

Between the different hillocks I found several camels which had not been covered. Perceiving a water skin, I rushed to it, that I might quench my raging thirst; but the contents had been dried up—not a drop remained. I found another, but I had no better success. I then determined to open one of the bodies of the camels, and obtain the water which it might still have remaining in its stomach. This I effected, and having quenched my thirst—to which even the heated element which I poured down, seemed delicious—I hastened to open the remainder of the animals before putrefaction should take place, and collect the scanty supplies in the water-skins. I procured more than half a skin of water, and then returned to my own camel, which I had laid down beside of, during the simoom. I sat on the body of the animal, and reflected upon the best method of proceeding. I knew that I was but one day's journey from the springs; but how little chance had I of reaching them! I also knew the direction which I must take. The day had nearly closed, and I resolved to make the attempt.

As the sun disappeared, I rose, and with the skin of water on my back proceeded on my hopeless journey. I walked the whole of that night, and, by break of day, I imagined that I must have made about half the progress of a caravan; I had, therefore, still a day to pass in the desert, without any protection from the consuming heat, and then another night of toil. Although I had sufficient water, I had no food. When the sun rose, I sat down upon a hillock of burning sand, to be exposed to his rays for twelve everlasting hours. Before the hour of noon arrived, my brain became heated—I nearly lost my reason. My vision was imperfect, or rather I saw what did not exist. At one time lakes of water presented themselves to my eager eyes; and so certain was I of their existence, that I rose and staggered till I was exhausted in pursuit of them. At another, I beheld trees at a distance, and could see the acacias waving in the breeze; I hastened to throw myself under their shade, and arrived at some small shrub, which had thus been magnified.

So was I tormented and deceived during the whole of that dreadful day, which still haunts me in my dreams. At last the night closed in, and the stars as they lighted up warned me that I might continue my journey. I drank plentifully from my water-skin, and recommenced my solitary way. I followed the track marked out by the bones of camels and horses of former caravans which had perished in the desert, and when the day dawned, I perceived the castle of Akaba at a short distance. Inspired with new life, I threw away the water-skin, redoubled my speed, and in half an hour had thrown myself down by the side of the fountain from which I had previously imbibed large draughts of the refreshing fluid. What happiness was then mine! How heavenly, to lay under the shade, breathing the cool air, listening to the warbling of the birds, and inhaling the perfume of the flowers, which luxuriated on that delightful spot! After an hour I stripped, bathed myself, and, taking another draught of water, fell into a sound sleep.

I awoke refreshed, but suffering under the cravings of hunger, which now assailed me. I had been three days without food; but hitherto I had not felt the want of it, as my more importunate thirst had overcome the sensation. Now that the greater evil had been removed, the lesser increased and became hourly more imperious. I walked out and scanned the horizon with the hopes of some caravan appearing in sight, but I watched in vain; and returned to the fountain. Two more days passed away, and no relief was at hand: my strength failed me; I felt that I was dying; and, as the fountain murmured, and the birds sang, and the cool breeze fanned my cheeks, I thought that it would have been better to have been swallowed up in the desert than to be tantalised by expiring in such a paradise. I laid myself down to die, for I could sit up no more; and as I turned round to take a last view of the running water, which had prolonged my existence, something hard pressed against my side. I thought it was a stone, and stretched out my hand to remove it, that I might be at ease in my last moments; but when I felt, there was no stone there it was something in the pocket of my jacket. I put my hand in, unconscious what it could be; I pulled it out, and looking at it before I threw it away, found that it was a piece of *hard dry bread*. I thought that it had been sent to me from heaven, and it was as pure an offering as if it

had come from thence, for it was the gift of innocence and affection—it was the piece of bread which my little darling girl had received for her breakfast, and which on my departure she had thrust into my pocket, when I imagined she had been searching for fruit. I crawled to the spring, moistened it, and devoured it with tears of gratitude to heaven, mingled with the fond yearnings of a father's heart.

It saved my life; for the next day a small caravan arrived, which was bound to Cairo. The merchants treated me with great kindness, tied me on one of the camels, and I once more embraced my family, whom I had never thought to see again. Since that I have been poor, but contented—I deserved to lose all my property for my wickedness; and I submit with resignation to the will of Allah.

And now I trust that your highness will acknowledge that I was justified in making use of the expression, that “Happy was the man who could at *all times* command a *crust of bread!*”

“Very true,” observed the pacha; “that’s not a bad story: Mustapha, give him five pieces of gold, and allow him to depart.”

The camel-driver quitted the divan, prostrating himself before the pacha, and overjoyed at the fortunate termination of what had threatened so much danger. The pacha was silent for a little while, during which he puffed his pipe—when he observed:—

“Allah kebur, God is most powerful! That man has suffered much—and what has he to show for it?—a green turban.—He is a hadjy; I never thought that we should have heard so good a story about a ‘crust of bread.’ His description of the simoom parched up my entrails. What think you, Mustapha, cannot a true believer go to Heaven without a visit to the tomb of the Prophet?”

“The holy Koran does not say otherwise, your highness, it inculcates that all who can, should do so, as the path will be rendered easier. Min Allah! God forbid! Has your highness ever had the time to go to Mecca, and is not your highness to go to Heaven?”

“Very true, Mustapha, I never had time. In my youth I was busy shaving heads: after that, Wallah! I had enough to do, splitting them; and now am not I fully occupied in taking them off? Is it not so, Mustapha; are not these the words of truth?”

“Your highness is all wisdom. There is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet; and when the latter said, that a visit to the holy shrine would be a passport to heaven, it was intended to employ those who were idle, not to embarrass true believers who work hard in the name of the Most High!”

“Min Allah! God forbid! the case is clear,” replied the pacha, “why, if every body were to go to Mecca what then, Mustapha?”

“Your highness—it is the opinion of your slave, if such were to take place, that all the fools would have left the country.”

“Very true, Mustapha; but my mouth is parched up with the sand of that simoom—sherbet I cannot drink, rakee I must not, the hakim has forbid it; what must it be then, Mustapha?”

“Hath the holy Prophet forbidden wine to true believers in case of sickness; is not your highness sick; was the wine of Shiraz given by Allah to be thrown away? Allah karim! God is most merciful; and the wine was sent that true believers might, in this world, have a foretaste of the pleasures awaiting them in the next.”

“Mustapha,” replied the pacha taking his pipe out of his mouth, “by the beard of the holy Prophet, your words are those of wisdom. Is a pacha to be fed on water-melons? Staffir Allah! do we believe the less, because we drink the wine? Slave, bring the pitcher. There is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet.”

“The words of the Prophet, your highness, are plain he says. ‘True believers drink no wine,’ which means, that his followers are not to go about the streets, drunken like the Giaours of Franguistan, who come here in their ships. Why is wine forbidden? because it makes men drunk. If then we are not drunk, we keep within the law. Why was the law made? Laws cannot be made for all; they must therefore be made for the control of the majority—Is it not so? Who are the majority? Why the poor. If laws were made for the rich and powerful, such laws would not suit the community

at large. Mashallah! there are no laws for pachas, who have only to believe that there is one God and Mahomet is his prophet. Does your slave say well?"

"Excellently well, Mustapha," replied the pacha, lifting the pitcher to his mouth for a minute, and then passing it to Mustapha. "Allah karim! God is most merciful! your slave must drink; is it not the pleasure of your highness? As the wine poured down the throat of your highness, pervades through your whole frame to the extremities, so does your slave participate in your bounty. Do I not sit in your sublime presence? Can the sun shine without throwing out heat; therefore if your highness drink, must not I drink? Allah acbar! who shall presume not to follow the steps of the pacha?" So saying, Mustapha lifted up the pitcher, and for a minute, it was glued to his lips.

"I think that story should be written down," observed the pacha, after a pause of a few moments.

"I have already given directions, your highness, and the Greek slave is now employed about it, improving the language to render it more pleasing to the ears of your sublime highness, should it be your pleasure to have it read to you on some future day."

"That is right, Mustapha; if I recollect well, the caliph Haroun used to command them to be written in letters of gold, and be deposited in the archives: we must do the same."

"The art no longer exists, your highness."

"Then we must be content with Indian-ink," replied the pacha, lifting the pitcher to his mouth, and emptying it. "The sun will soon be down, Mustapha, and we must set off."

Volume One—Chapter Two

The pacha called for coffee, and in a few minutes, accompanied, as before, by Mustapha and the armed slaves, was prowling through the city in search of a story-teller. He was again fortunate, as, after a walk of half an hour, he overheard two men loudly disputing at the door of a small wine-shop, frequented by the Greeks and Franks living in the city, and into which many a slave might be observed to glide, returning with a full pitcher for the evening's amusement of his Turkish master, who, as well as his betters, clandestinely violated the precepts of the Koran.

As usual he stopped to listen, when one of the disputants exclaimed—"I tell thee, Anselmo, it is the vilest composition that was ever drunk: and I think I ought to know, after having distilled the essence of an Ethiopian, a Jew, and a Turk."

"I care nothing for your distillations, Charis," replied the other, "I consider that I am a better judge than you: I was not a monk of the Dominican order for fifteen years, without having ascertained the merit of every description of wine."

"I should like to know what that fellow means by *distilling people*," observed the pacha, "and also why a Dominican monk should know wine better than others, Mustapha, I must see those two men."

The next morning the men were in attendance, and introduced; when the pacha requested an explanation from the first who had spoken. The man threw himself down before the pacha, with his head on the floor of the divan, and said,—“First promise me, your highness, by the sword of the Prophet, that no harm shall result to me from complying with your request; and then I shall obey you with pleasure.”

“Mashallah! what is the kafir afraid of? What crimes hath he committed, that he would have his pardon granted before he tells his story?” said the pacha to Mustapha.

“No crime toward your state, your sublime highness; but when in another country, I was unfortunate,” continued the man; “I cannot tell my story, unless your highness will condescend to give your promise.”

“May it please your highness,” observed Mustapha, “he asserts his crime to have been committed in another state. It may be heavy, and I suspect 'tis murder;—but although we watch the flowers which ornament our gardens, and would punish those who cull them, yet we care not who intrudes and robs our neighbour—and thus, it appears to me, your highness, that it is with states, and sufficient for the ruler of each to watch over the lives of his own subjects.”

“Very true, Mustapha,” rejoined the pacha; “besides, we might lose the story. Kafir, you have our promise, and may proceed.”

The Greek slave (for such he was) then rose up, and narrated his story in the following words:—

Story of the Greek Slave

I am a Greek by birth; my parents were poor people residing at Smyrna. I was an only son, and brought up to my father's profession,—that of a cooper. When I was twenty years old, I had buried both my parents, and was left to shift for myself. I had been for some time in the employ of a Jewish wine-merchant, and I continued there for three years after my father's death, when a circumstance occurred which led to my subsequent prosperity and present degradation.

At the time that I am speaking of, I had, by strict diligence and sobriety, so pleased my employer, that I had risen to be his foreman; and although I still superintended and occasionally worked at the cooperage, I was intrusted with the drawing off and fining of the wines, to prepare them for market. There was an Ethiopian slave, who worked under my orders, a powerful, broad-shouldered, and most malignant wretch, whom my master found it almost impossible to manage; the

bastinado, or any other punishment, he derided, and after the application only became more sullen and discontented than before. The fire that flashed from his eyes, upon any fault being found by me on account of his negligence, was so threatening, that I every day expected I should be murdered. I repeatedly requested my master to part with him; but the Ethiopian being a very powerful man, and able, when he chose, to move a pipe of wine without assistance, the avarice of the Jew would not permit him to accede to my repeated solicitations.

One morning I entered the cooperage, and found the Ethiopian fast asleep by the side of a cask which I had been wanting for some time, and expected to have found ready. Afraid to punish him myself, I brought my master to witness his conduct. The Jew, enraged at his idleness, struck him on the head with one of the staves. The Ethiopian sprung up in a rage, but on seeing his master with the staff in his hand, contented himself with muttering, "That he would not remain to be beaten in that manner," and reapplied himself to his labour. As soon as my master had left the cooperage, the Ethiopian vented his anger upon me for having informed against him, and seizing the staff, flew at me with the intention of beating out my brains. I stepped behind the cask; he followed me, and just as I had seized an adze to defend myself, he fell over the stool which lay in his way; he was springing up to renew the attack, when I struck him a blow with the adze which entered his skull, and laid him dead at my feet.

I was very much alarmed at what had occurred; for although I felt justified in self-defence, I was aware that my master would be very much annoyed at the loss of the slave, and as there were no witnesses, it would go hard with me when brought before the *cadi*. After some reflection I determined, as the slave had said "He would not remain to be beaten," that I would leave my master to suppose he had run away, and in the mean time conceal the body. But to effect this was difficult, as I could not take it out of the cooperage without being perceived. After some cogitation, I decided upon putting it into the cask, and heading it up. It required all my strength to lift the body in, but at last I succeeded. Having put in the head of the pipe, I hammered down the hoops and rolled it into the store, where I had been waiting to fill it with wine for the next year's demand. As soon as it was in its place, I pumped off the wine from the vat, and having filled up the cask and put in the bung, I felt as if a heavy load had been removed from my mind, as there was no chance of immediate discovery.

I had but just completed my task, and was sitting down on one of the settles, when my master came in, and inquired for the slave. I replied that he had left the cooperage, swearing that he would work no more. Afraid of losing him, the Jew hastened to give notice to the authorities, that he might be apprehended; but after some time, as nothing could be heard of the supposed runaway, it was imagined that he had drowned himself in a fit of sullenness, and no more was thought about him. In the mean while I continued to work there as before, and as I had the charge of every thing I had no doubt that, some day or another, I should find means of quietly disposing of my incumbrance.

The next spring, I was busy pumping off from one cask into the other, according to our custom, when the *aga* of the *janissaries* came in. He was a great wine-bibber, and one of our best customers. As his dependants were all well known, it was not his custom to send them for wine, but to come himself to the store and select a pipe. This was carried away in a litter by eight strong slaves, with the curtains drawn close, as if it had been a new purchase which he had added to his harem. My master showed him the pipes of wine prepared for that year's market, which were arranged in two rows; and I hardly need observe that the one containing the Ethiopian was not in the foremost. After tasting one or two which did not seem to please him, the *aga* observed, "Friend Issachar, thy tribe will always put off the worst goods first, if possible. Now I have an idea that there is better wine in the second tier, than in the one thou hast recommended. Let thy Greek put a spile into that cask," continued he, pointing to the very one in which I had headed-up the black slave. As I made sure that as soon as he had tasted the contents he would spit them out, I did not hesitate to bore the cask and draw off the wine, which I handed to him. He tasted it, and held it to the light—tasted it again and smacked his lips—then turning to my master, exclaimed, "Thou dog of a Jew! wouldst thou have

palmed off upon me vile trash, when thou hadst in thy possession wine which might be sipped with the houris in Paradise?”

The Jew appealed to me if the pipes of wine were not all of the same quality; and I confirmed his assertion.

“Taste it then,” replied the aga, “and then taste the first which you recommended to me.”

My master did so, and was evidently astonished. “It certainly has more body,” replied he; “yet how can that be, I know not. Taste it, Charis.”—I held the glass to my lips, but nothing could induce me to taste the contents. I contented myself with agreeing with my master, (as I conscientiously could), “that it certainly had more *body* in it than the rest.”

The aga was so pleased with the wine, that he tasted two or three more pipes of the back tier, hoping to find others of the same quality, probably intending to have laid in a large stock; but finding no other of the same flavour, he ordered his slaves to roll the one containing the body of the slave into the litter, and carried it to his own house.

“Stop a moment, thou lying kafir!” said the pacha, “dost thou really mean to say that the wine was better than the rest?”

“Why should I tell a lie to your sublime highness—am not I a worm that you may crush? As I informed you, I did not taste it, your highness; but after the aga had departed, my master expressed his surprise at the excellence of the wine, which he affirmed to be superior to any thing that he had ever tasted—and his sorrow that the aga had taken away the cask, which prevented him from ascertaining the cause. But one day I was narrating the circumstance to a Frank in this country, who expressed no surprise at the wine being improved. He had been a wine-merchant in England, and he informed me that it was the custom there to throw large pieces of raw beef into the wine to feed it; and that some particular wines were very much improved thereby.”

“Allah kebur! God is great!” cried the pacha—“Then it must be so—I have heard that the English are very fond of beef. Now go on with thy story.”

Your highness cannot imagine the alarm which I felt when the cask was taken away by the aga’s slaves. I gave myself up for a lost man, and resolved upon immediate flight from Smyrna. I calculated the time that it would take for the aga to drink the wine, and made my arrangements accordingly. I told my master that it was my intention to leave him, as I had an offer to go into business with a relation at Zante. My master, who could not well do without me, intreated me to stay; but I was positive. He then offered me a share of the business if I would remain, but I was not to be persuaded. Every rap at the door, I thought that the aga and his janissaries were coming for me; and I hastened my departure, which was fixed for the following day,—when in the evening my master came into the store with a paper in his hand.

“Charis,” said he, “perhaps you have supposed that I only offered to make you a partner in my business to induce you to remain, and then to deceive you. To prove the contrary, here is a deed drawn up by which you are a partner, and entitled to one third of the future profits. Look at it, you will find that it has been executed in due form before the *cadi*.”

He had put the paper into my hand, and I was about to return it with a refusal, when a loud knocking at the door startled us both. It was a party of janissaries despatched by the aga, to bring us to him immediately. I knew well enough what it must be about, and I cursed my folly in having delayed so long; but the fact was, the wine proved so agreeable to the aga’s palate that he had drunk it much faster than usual; besides which, the body of the slave took up at least a third of the cask, and diminished the contents in the same proportion. There was no appeal, and no escape. My master, who was ignorant of the cause, did not seem at all alarmed, but willingly accompanied the soldiers. I, on the contrary, was nearly dead from fear.

When we arrived, the aga burst out in the most violent exclamations against my master—“Thou rascal of a Jew!” said he, “dost thou think that thou art to impose upon a true believer, and sell him a

pipe of wine which is not more than two thirds full,—filling it up with trash of some sort or another. Tell me what it is that is so heavy in the cask now that it is empty?”

The Jew protested his ignorance, and appealed to me; I, of course, pretended the same. “Well then,” replied the aga, “we will soon see. Let thy Greek send for his tools, and the cask shall be opened in our presence; then perhaps, thou wilt recognise thine own knavery.”

Two of the janissaries were despatched for the tools, and when they arrived, I was directed to take the head out of the cask. I now considered my death as certain—nothing buoyed me up but my observing that the resentment of the aga was levelled more against my master than against me; but still I thought that, when the cask was opened, the recognition of the black slave must immediately take place, and the evidence of my master would fix the murder upon me.

It was with a trembling hand that I obeyed the orders of the aga—the head of the pipe was taken out, and, to the horror of all present, the body was exposed; but instead of being black, it had turned *white*, from the time which it had been immersed. I rallied a little at this circumstance, as, so far, suspicion would be removed.

“Holy Abraham!” exclaimed my master, “what is that which I see!—A dead body, so help me God!—but I know nothing about it—do you, Charis?” I vowed that I did not, and called the patriarch to witness the truth of my assertion. But while we were thus exclaiming, the aga’s eyes were fixed upon my master with an indignant and deadly stare which spoke volumes; while the remainder of the people who were present, although they said nothing, seemed as if they were ready to tear him into pieces.

“Cursed unbeliever!” at last uttered the Turk, “is it thus that thou preparest the wine for the disciples of the Prophet?”

“Holy father Abraham!—I know no more than you do, aga, how that body came there; but I will change the cask with pleasure, and will send you another.”

“Be it so,” replied the aga; “my slave shall fetch it now.” He gave directions accordingly, and the litter soon re-appeared with another pipe of wine.

“It will be a heavy loss to a poor Jew—one pipe of good wine,” observed my master, as it was rolled out of the litter; and he took up his hat with the intention to depart.

“Stay,” cried the aga, “I do not mean to rob you of your wine.”

“Oh, then, you will pay me for it,” replied my master; “aga, you are a considerate man.”

“Thou shalt see,” retorted the aga, who gave directions to his slaves to draw off the wine in vessels. As soon as the pipe was empty, he desired me to take the head out; and when I had obeyed him, he ordered his janissaries to put my master in. In a minute he was gagged and bound, and tossed into the pipe; and I was directed to put in the head as before. I was very unwilling to comply: for I had no reason to complain of my master, and knew that he was punished for the fault of which I had been guilty. But it was a case of life or death,—and the days of self-devotion have long passed away in our country. Besides which, I had the deed in my pocket by which I was a partner in the business, and my master had no heirs,—so that I stood a chance to come in for the whole of his property. Moreover—

“Never mind your reasons,” observed the pacha, “you headed him up in the cask—Go on.”

“I did so, your highness; but although I dared not disobey, I assure you that it was with a sorrowful heart—the more so, as I did not know the fate which might be reserved for myself.”

As soon as the head was in, and the hoops driven on, the aga desired his slaves to fill the cask up again with the wine; and thus did my poor master perish.

“Put in the bung, Greek,” said the aga in a stern voice.

I did so, and stood trembling before him.

“Well! what knowest thou of this transaction?”

I thought, as the aga had taken away the life of my master, that it would not hurt him if I took away a little from his character. I answered that I really knew nothing, but that, the other day, a black slave had disappeared in a very suspicious manner—that my master made very little inquiry after him

—and I now strongly suspected that he must have suffered the same fate. I added, that my master had expressed himself very sorry that his highness had taken away the pipe of wine, as he would have reserved it.

“Cursed Jew!” replied the aga; “I don’t doubt but he has murdered a dozen in the same manner.”

“I am afraid so, sir,” replied I, “and suspect that I was to have been his next victim; for when I talked of going away, he persuaded me to stay, and gave me this paper, by which I was to become his partner with one third of the profits. I presume that I should not have enjoyed them long.”

“Well, Greek,” observed the aga, “this is fortunate for you; as, upon certain conditions, you may enter upon the whole property. One is, that you keep this pipe of wine with the rascally Jew in it, that I may have the pleasure occasionally to look at my revenge. You will also keep the pipe with the other body in it, that it may keep my anger alive. The last is, that you will supply me with what wine I may require, of the very best quality, without making any charge. Do you consent to these terms, or am I to consider you as a party to this infamous transaction?”

I hardly need observe that the terms were gladly accepted. Your highness must be aware that nobody thinks much about a Jew. When I was questioned as to his disappearance, I shrugged up my shoulders, and told the inquirers, confidentially, that the aga of the janissaries had put him *in prison* and that I was carrying on the business until his release.

In compliance with the wishes of the aga, the two casks containing the Jew and the Ethiopian slave, were placed together on settles higher than the rest, in the centre of the store. He would come in the evening, and rail at the cask containing my late master for hours at a time; during which he drank so much wine, that it was a very common circumstance for him to remain in the house until the next morning.

You must not suppose, your highness, that I neglected to avail myself (unknown to the aga) of the peculiar properties of the wine which those casks contained. I had them spiled underneath, and, constantly running off the wine from them, filled them up afresh. In a short time there was not a gallon in my possession which had not a *dash* in it of either the Ethiopian or the Jew: and my wine was so improved, that it had a most rapid sale, and I became rich.

All went on prosperously for three years; when the aga, who during that time had been my constant guest, and at least three times a-week had been intoxicated in my house, was ordered with his troops to join the sultan’s army. By keeping company with him, I had insensibly imbibed a taste for wine, although I never had been inebriated. The day that his troops marched, he stopped at my door, and dismounting from his Arabian, came in to take a farewell glass, desiring his men to go on, and that he would ride after them. One glass brought on another, and the time flew rapidly away. The evening closed in, and the aga was, as usual, in a state of intoxication;—he insisted upon going down to the store, to rail once more at the cask containing the body of the Jew. We had long been on the most friendly terms, and having this night drunk more than usual, I was incautious enough to say—“Prithee, aga, do not abuse my poor master any more, for he has been the making of my fortune. I will tell you a secret now that you are going away—there is not a drop of wine in my store that has not been flavoured either by him or by the slave in the other cask. That is the reason why it is so much better than other people’s.”

“How!” exclaimed the aga, who was now almost incapable of speech. “Very well, rascal Greek! die you shall, like your master. Holy Prophet! what a state for a Mussulman to go to Paradise in—impregnated with the essence of a cursed Jew!—Wretch! you shall die—you shall die.”

He made a grasp at me, and missing his foot, fell on the ground in such a state of drunkenness as not to be able to get up again. I knew that when he became sober, he would not forget what had taken place, and that I should be sacrificed to his vengeance. The fear of death, and the wine which I had drunk, decided me how to act. I dragged him into an empty pipe, put the head in, hooped it up, and rolling it into the tier, filled it with wine. Thus did I revenge my poor master, and relieved myself from any further molestation on the part of the aga.

“What!” cried the pacha, in a rage, “you drowned a true believer—an aga of janissaries! Thou dog of a kafir—thou son of Shitan—and dare avow it! Call in the executioner.”

“Mercy! your sublime highness, mercy!” cried the Greek—“Have I not your promise by the sword of the Prophet? Besides, he was no true believer, or he would not have disobeyed the law. A good Mussulman will never touch a drop of wine.”

“I promised to forgive, and did forgive, the murder of the black slave; but an aga of janissaries!—Is not that quite another thing?” appealed the pacha to Mustapha.

“Your highness is just in your indignation—the kafir deserves to be impaled. Yet there are two considerations which your slave ventures to submit to your sublime wisdom. The first is, that your highness gave an unconditional promise, and swore by the sword of the Prophet.”

“Staffir Allah! what care I for that! Had I sworn to a true believer, it were something.”

“The other is, that the slave has not yet finished his story which appears to be interesting.”

“Wallah! that is true. Let him finish his story.”

But the Greek slave remained with his face on the ground; and it was not until a renewal of the promise, sworn upon the holy standard made out of the nether garments of the Prophet, by the pacha who had recovered his temper, and was anxious for the conclusion of the story, that he could be induced to proceed, which he did as follows:—

As soon as I had bunged up the cask, I went down to the yard where the aga had left his horse, and having severely wounded the poor beast with his sword, I let it loose that it might gallop home. The noise of the horse’s hoofs in the middle of the night, aroused his family, and when they discovered that it was wounded and without its rider, they imagined that the aga had been attacked and murdered by banditti when he had followed his troop. They sent to me to ask at what time he had left my house; I replied, an hour after dark—that he was very much intoxicated at the time—and had left his sabre, which I returned. They had no suspicion of the real facts, and it was believed that he had perished on the road.

I was now rid of my dangerous acquaintance; and although he certainly had drank a great quantity of my wine yet I recovered the value of it with interest, from the flavour which I obtained from his body and which I imparted to the rest of my stock. I raised him up alongside of the two other casks; and my trade was more profitable and my wines in greater repute than ever.

But one day the cadî, who had heard my wine extolled, came privately to my house; I bowed to the ground at the honour conferred, for I had long wished to have him as a customer. I drew some of my best—“This, honourable sir,” said I, presenting the glass, “is what I call my aga wine: the late aga was so fond of it, he used to order a whole cask at once to his house, and had it taken there in a litter.”

“A good plan,” replied the cadî, “much better than sending a slave with a pitcher, which gives occasion for remarks: I will do the same; but, first, let me taste all you have.”

He tasted several casks, but none pleased him so much as the first which I had recommended. At last he cast his eyes upon the three casks raised above the others.

“And what are those?” inquired he.

“Empty casks, sir,” replied I; but he had his stick in his hand, and he struck one.

“Greek, thou tellest me these casks are empty, but they do not sound so; I suspect that thou hast better wine than I have tasted: draw me off from these immediately.”

I was obliged to comply—he tasted them—vowed that the wine was exquisite, and that he would purchase the whole. I stated to him that the wine in those casks was used for flavouring the rest; and that the price was enormous, hoping that he would not pay it. He inquired how much—I asked him four times the price of the other wines.

“Agreed,” said the cadî; “it is dear—but one cannot have good wine without paying for it:—it is a bargain.”

I was very much alarmed; and stated that I could not part with those casks, as I should not be able to carry on my business with reputation, if I lost the means of flavouring my wines, but all in

vain; he said that I had asked a price and he had agreed to give it. Ordering his slaves to bring a litter, he would not leave the store until the whole of the casks were carried away, and thus did I lose my Ethiopian, my Jew, and my aga.

As I knew that the secret would soon be discovered, the very next day I prepared for my departure. I received my money from the *cadi*, to whom I stated my intention to leave, as he had obliged me to sell him those wines, and I had no longer hopes of carrying on my business with success. I again begged him to allow me to have them back, offering him three pipes of wine as a present if he would consent, but it was of no use. I chartered a vessel, which I loaded with the rest of my stock; and, taking all my money with me, made sail for Corfu, before any discovery had taken place. But we encountered a heavy gale of wind, which, after a fortnight (during which we attempted in vain to make head against it), forced us back to Smyrna. When the weather moderated, I directed the captain to take the vessel into the outer roadstead that I might sail as soon as possible. We had not dropped anchor again more than five minutes when I perceived a boat pulling off from the shore in which was the *cadi* and the officers of justice.

Convinced that I was discovered, I was at a loss how to proceed, when the idea occurred to me that I might conceal my own body in a cask, as I had before so well concealed those of others.

I called the captain down into the cabin, and telling him that I had reason to suspect that the *cadi* would take my life, offered him a large part of the cargo if he would assist me.

The captain who, unfortunately for me, was a Greek, consented. We went down into the hold, started the wine out of one of the pipes, and having taken out the head, I crawled in, and was hooped up.

The *cadi* came on board immediately afterwards and inquired for me. The captain stated that I had fallen overboard in the gale, and that he had in consequence returned, the vessel not being consigned to any house at Corfu.

“Has then the accursed villain escaped my vengeance!” exclaimed the *cadi*; “the murderer, that fines his wines with the bodies of his fellow-creatures: but you may deceive me, Greek, we will examine the vessel.”

The officers who accompanied the *cadi* proceeded carefully to search every part of the ship. Not being able to discover me, the Greek captain was believed; and, after a thousand imprecations upon my soul, the *cadi* and his people departed.

I now breathed more freely, notwithstanding I was nearly intoxicated with the lees of the wine which impregnated the wood of the cask, and I was anxious to be set at liberty; but the treacherous captain had no such intention, and never came near me. At night he cut his cable and made sail, and I overheard a conversation between two of the men, which made known to me his intentions: these were to throw me overboard on his passage, and take possession of my property. I cried out to them from the bung-hole: I screamed for mercy, but in vain. One of them answered, that, as I had murdered others, and put them into casks, I should now be treated in the same manner.

I could not but mentally acknowledge the justice of my punishment, and resigned myself to my fate; all that I wished was to be thrown over at once and released from my misery. The momentary anticipation of death appeared to be so much worse than the reality. But it was ordered otherwise: a gale of wind blew up with such force, that the captain and crew had enough to do to look after the vessel, and either I was forgotten, or my doom was postponed until a more seasonable opportunity.

On the third day I heard the sailors observe that, with such a wretch as I was remaining on board, the vessel must inevitably be lost. The hatches were then opened; I was hoisted up and cast into the raging sea. The bung of the cask was out, but by stuffing my handkerchief in, when the hole was under water, I prevented the cask from filling; and when it was uppermost, I removed it for a moment to obtain fresh air. I was dreadfully bruised by the constant rolling, in a heavy sea, and completely worn out with fatigue and pain; I had made up my mind to let the water in and be rid of my life, when I was tossed over and over with such dreadful rapidity as prevented my taking the precaution

of keeping out the water. After three successive rolls of the same kind, I found that the cask, which had been in the surf, had struck on the beach. In a moment after, I heard voices, and people came up to the cask and rolled me along. I would not speak, lest they should be frightened and allow me to remain on the beach, where I might again be tossed about by the waves; but as soon as they stopped, I called in a faint voice from the bung-hole, begging them for mercy's sake to let me out.

At first they appeared alarmed; but, on my repeating my request, and stating that I was the owner of the ship which was off the land, and the captain and crew had mutinied and tossed me overboard, they brought some tools and set me at liberty.

The first sight that met my eyes after I was released, was my vessel lying a wreck; each wave that hurled her further on the beach, breaking her more and more to pieces. She was already divided amid-ships, and the white foaming surf was covered with pipes of wine, which, as fast as they were cast on shore, were rolled up by the same people who had released me. I was so worn out, that I fainted where I lay. When I came to, I found myself in a cave upon a bundle of capotes, and perceived a party of forty or fifty men, who were sitting by a large fire, and emptying with great rapidity one of my pipes of wine.

As soon as they observed that I was coming to my senses, they poured some wine down my throat, which restored me. I was then desired by one of them, who seemed to be the chief, to approach.

“The men who have been saved from the wreck,” said he, “have told me strange stories of your enormous crimes—now, sit down, and tell me the truth—if I believe you, you shall have justice—I am cadì here—if you wish to know where you are, it is upon the island of Ischia—if you wish to know in what company, it is in the society of those who by illiberal people are called pirates: now tell the truth.”

I thought that with pirates my story would be received better than with other people, and I therefore narrated my history to them, in the same words that I now have to your highness. When I had finished, the captain of the gang observed:—

“Well, then, as you acknowledge to have killed a slave, to have assisted at the death of a Jew, and to have drowned an aga, you certainly deserve death; but, on consideration of the excellence of the wine, and the secret which you have imparted to us, I shall commute your sentence. As for the captain and the remainder of the crew, they have been guilty of treachery and piracy on the high seas—a most heinous offence, which deserves instant death: but as it is by their means that we have been put in possession of the wine, I shall be lenient. I therefore sentence you all to hard labour for life. You shall be sold as slaves in Cairo, and we will pocket the money and drink your wine.”

The pirates loudly applauded the justice of a decision by which they benefited, and all appeal on our parts was useless. When the weather became more settled, we were put on board one of their small xebeques, and on our arrival at this port were exposed for sale and purchased.

Such, pacha, is the history which induced me to make use of the expressions which you wished to be explained; and I hope you will allow that I have been more unfortunate than guilty, as on every occasion in which I took away the life of another, I had only to choose between that and my own.

“Well, it is rather a curious story,” observed the pacha, “but still, if it were not for my promise, I certainly would have your head off for drowning the aga; I consider it excessively impertinent in an unbelieving Greek to suppose that his life is of the same value as that of an aga of janissaries, and follower of the Prophet; but, however, my promise was given, and you may depart.”

“The wisdom of your highness is brighter than the stars of the heaven,” observed Mustapha. “Shall the slave be honoured with your bounty?”

“Mashallah! bounty! I've given him his life, and, as he considers it of more value than an aga's, I think 'tis a very handsome present. Drown an aga, indeed!” continued the pacha, rising, “but it certainly was a very curious story. Let it be written down, Mustapha. We'll hear the other man tomorrow.”

Volume One—Chapter Three

“Mustapha,” said the pacha the next day, when they had closed the hall of audience, “have you the other Giaour in readiness?”

“Bashem ustun! Upon my head be it, your highness. The infidel dog waits but the command to crawl into your sublime presence.”

“Let him approach, that our ears may be gratified. Barek Allah! Praise be to God. There are others who can obtain stories besides the Caliph Haroun.”

The slave was ordered into the pacha’s presence. He was a dark man with handsome features, and he walked in with a haughty carriage, which neither his condition nor tattered garments could disguise. When within a few feet of the carpet of state he bowed and folded his arms in silence. “I wish to know upon what grounds you asserted that you were so good a judge of wine the other evening, when you were quarrelling with the Greek slave.”

“I stated my reason at the time, your highness, which was, because I had been for many years a monk of the Dominican order.”

“I recollect that you said so. What trade is that, Mustapha?” inquired the pacha.

“If your slave is not mistaken, a good trade everywhere. The infidel means that he was a mollah or dervish among the followers of Isauri (Jesus Christ).”

“May they and their fathers’ graves be eternally defiled,” cried the pacha. “Do not they drink wine and eat pork? Have you nothing more to say?” inquired the pacha.

“My life has been one of interest,” replied the slave; “and if it will please your highness, I will narrate my history.”

“It is our condescension. Sit down and proceed.”

Story of the Monk

May it please your highness, I am a Spaniard by birth, and a native of Seville; but whether my father was a grandee, or of more humble extraction, I cannot positively assert. All that I can establish is, that when reason dawned, I found myself in the asylum instituted by government, in that city, for those unfortunate beings who are brought up upon black bread and oil, because their unnatural parents either do not choose to incur the expense of their maintenance, or having, in the first instance, allowed unlawful love to conquer shame, end by permitting shame to overcome maternal love.

It is the custom, at a certain age, to put these children out to different trades and callings; and those who show precocity of talent are often received into the bosom of the church.

Gifted by nature with a very fine voice and correct ear for music, I was selected to be brought up as a chorister in a Dominican convent of great reputation. At the age of ten years, I was placed under the charge of the leader of the choir. Under his directions, I was fully occupied receiving my lessons in singing, or at other times performing the junior offices of the church, such as carrying the frankincense or large wax tapers in the processions. As a child my voice was much admired; and after the service was over, I often received presents of sweetmeats from the ladies, who brought them in their pockets for the little Anselmo. As I grew up, I became a remarkable proficient in music; at the age of twenty, I possessed a fine counter-tenor; and flattered by the solicitations of the superior of the convent and other dignitaries of the church, I consented to take the vows, and became a member of the fraternity.

Although there was no want of liberty in our convent, I was permitted even more than the rest of the monks. I gave lessons in music and singing, and a portion of my earnings were placed in the superior’s hands for the benefit of the fraternity. Independent of this, my reputation was spread all

over Seville; and hundreds used to attend the mass performed in our church, that they might hear the voice of brother Anselmo. I was therefore considered as a valuable property, and the convent would have suffered a great deal by my quitting it. Although I could not be released from my vows, still I could by application have been transferred to Madrid; and the superior, aware of this circumstance, allowed me every indulgence, with the hopes of my being persuaded to remain. The money which I retained for my own exigencies enabled me to make friends with the porter, and I obtained egress or ingress at any hour. I was a proficient on the guitar; and incongruous as it may appear with my monastic vows, I often hastened from the service at vespers to perform in a serenade to some fair *senhora*, whose *inamorata* required the powers of my voice to soften her to his wishes.

My *sedillas* and *canzonettas* were much admired; and eventually no serenade was considered as effective, without the assistance of the counter-tenor of Anselmo. I hardly need observe that it was very profitable; and that I had the means of supplying myself with luxuries which the rules of our order did not admit. I soon became irregular and debauched; often sitting up whole nights with the young cavaliers, drinking and singing amorous songs for their amusement. Still, however, my conduct was not known, or was overlooked for the reasons which I have stated before.

When once a man indulges to excess in wine, he is assailed by, and becomes an easy prey to every other vice. This error soon led me into others; and, regardless of my monastic vows, I often felt more inclined to serenade upon my own account than on that of my employers. I had the advantage of a very handsome face, but it was disguised by the shaven crown and the unbecoming manner of cutting the hair; the coarse and unwieldy monastic dress belonging to our order hid the symmetry of my limbs which might have otherwise attracted notice on the Prado. I soon perceived that, although my singing was admired by the other sex, their admiration went no farther. They seemed to consider that in every other point I was, as I ought to have been, dead to the world.

There was a young lady, Donna Sophia, whom I had for some time instructed in music, who appeared to be more favourably inclined. She was an excellent performer, and passionately fond of the science: and I have always observed, your highness, that between the real amateurs of harmony there is a sympathy, a description of free-masonry, which immediately puts them on a level, and on terms of extreme intimacy; so much so, that were I a married man, and my wife extremely partial to music, I should be very careful how I introduced to her a person of a similar feeling, if I possessed it not myself. I was very much in the good graces of this young lady, and flattered myself with a successful issue: when one day, as we were singing a duet, a handsome young officer made his appearance. His hair, which was of the finest brown, curled in natural ringlets: and his clothes were remarkably well-fitted to his slender and graceful figure. He was a cousin, who had just returned from Carthage; and as he was remarkably attentive, I soon perceived that all my advances had been thrown away, and that I was more and more in the background each morning that I made my appearance.

Annoyed at this, I ventured to speak too freely; and during his absence calumniated him to the Donna Sophia, hoping by these means to regain my place in her affections; but I made a sad mistake: for not only were my services dispensed with for the future, but, as I afterwards discovered, she stated to her cousin the grounds upon which I had been dismissed.

I returned to the convent in no pleasant mood, when I was informed that my presence had been demanded by the superior. I repaired to the parlour, where he stated that my licentious conduct had come to his ears; and after much upbraiding, he concluded by ordering me to submit to a severe penance. Aware that disobedience would only be followed up by greater severity, I bowed with humility in my mien, but indignation in my breast; and returning to my cell, resolved upon immediately writing for my removal to Madrid. I had not been there many minutes when the porter brought me a note. It was from Donna Sophia, requesting to see me that evening, and apologising for her apparent ill-usage, which she had only assumed the better to conceal her intentions; being afraid, at our last interview, that her mother was within hearing.

I was in raptures when I perused the note, and hastened to comply with her request. Her directions were to repair to the back door, which looked out upon some fields, and give three taps. I arrived, and as soon as I raised my hand to give the signal, was seized by four men in masks, who gagged and bound me. They then stripped off my friar's dress, and scourged me with nettles, until I was almost frantic with the pain. When their vengeance was satisfied, they cast me loose, removed the gag, and ran away. As I then suspected, and afterwards discovered to be true, I was indebted to the young officer for this treatment, in return for what I had said, and which his mistress had repeated. Smarting with pain, and boiling with rage, I dragged on my clothes as well as I could, and began to reflect in what manner I should act. Conceal my situation from the other members of the convent I could not; and to explain it would not only be too humiliating, but subject me to more rigorous discipline. At last I considered that out of evil might spring good; and gathering a large bundle of the nettles which grew under the walls, I crawled back to the convent. When I attained my cell, I threw off my gown, which was now unbearable from the swelling of my limbs, and commenced thrashing the walls of my cell and my bed with the nettles which I had procured.

After a short time, I moaned piteously, and continued so to do, louder and louder, until some of the friars got up to inquire the reason; when they found me, apparently, castigating myself in this cruel manner. When they opened the door, I threw myself on the bed, and cried still more vociferously. This certainly was the only part of my conduct which was not deceptive, for I was in the most acute agony. To their inquiries, I told them that I had been guilty of great enormities: that the superior had reproved me, and ordered me penance; and that I had scourged myself with nettles; requesting them to continue the application as my strength had failed me. With this injunction they were too humane to comply. Some went for the surgeon of the convent, while others reported the circumstance to the superior. The former applied remedies which assuaged the pain: the latter was so pleased at my apparent contrition, that he gave me absolution, and relieved me from the penance to which I had been subjected. When I recovered, I was more in favour, and was permitted the same indulgences as before.

But I was some days confined to my bed, during which I was continually reflecting upon what had passed. I perceived, to my misery, the pale which I had placed between me and the world, by embracing a monastic life and how unfit I was, by temperament, to fulfil my vows. I cursed my father and mother, who had been the original cause of my present situation. I cursed the monastic dress which blazoned forth my unhappy condition. Then I thought of the treacherous girl, and planned schemes of revenge. I compared my personal qualifications with those of the young officer; and vanity suggested, that were it not for my vile professional disguise, the advantage was on my side. At last I decided upon the steps that I would take.

As I before stated, my purse was well supplied from the lessons which I gave in music, and from assisting at the serenades. When I was sufficiently recovered to go out, I proceeded to a barber, and on the plea of continual headache, for which it had been recommended that I should shave my head, requested him to make me a false tonsure. In a few days it was ready, and being very well made, no difference could be perceived between the wig and my own hair, which was then removed. So far I had succeeded; but as the greatest caution was necessary in a proceeding of this nature, to avoid suspicion, I returned to the convent, where I remained quiet for several days. One evening I again sallied forth, and when it was quite dark repaired to the *friperie* shop of a Jew, where I purchased a second-hand suit of cavalier's clothes, which I thought would fit me. I concealed them in my cell, and the next morning went in search of a small lodging in some obscure part, where I might not be subject to observation. This was difficult, but I at last succeeded in finding one to let, which opened upon a general staircase of a house, which was appropriated to a variety of lodgers, who were constantly passing and repassing. I paid the first month in advance, stating, it would be occupied by a brother whom I daily expected, and in the mean time took possession of the key. I bought a small chest, which I conveyed to my lodgings, and having removed my cavalier's dress from the convent, locked

it up. I then remained quiet as before, not only to avoid suspicion, but to ingratiate myself with the superior by my supposed reformation.

After a few days I sallied forth, and leaving a note for one of the most skilful perruquiers of Seville, desired him to call at my lodgings at an hour indicated. Having repaired there to be ready to receive him, I took off my monk's dress and false tonsure, which I locked up in my chest; I tied a silk handkerchief round my head and got into bed, leaving my cavalier's suit on the chair near to me. The perruquier knocked at the appointed time. I desired him to come in, apologised for my servant being absent on a message, and stating that I had been obliged to shave my head on account of a fever, from which I had now recovered, requested that he would provide me with a handsome wig. I explained at his request the colour and description of hair which I had lost; and in so doing, represented it as much lighter than my own really was, and similar to that of the young officer, whose ringlets had been the cause of my last disaster. I paid him a part of the price down, and having agreed upon the exact time at which it should be delivered, he departed; when I rose from my bed, I resumed my monastic dress and tonsure, and returned to the convent.

During the whole of the time occupied by these transactions, I had been assiduous in laying up money, which before I had squandered as fast as I obtained it, and had realised a considerable sum. I could not help comparing myself to a chrysalis previous to its transformation. I had before been a caterpillar, I was now all ready to burst my confinement, and flit about as a gaudy butterfly. Another week I continued my prudent conduct, at the end of which I was admitted to my superior, in whose hands I placed a sum of money which I could very conveniently spare, and received his benediction and commendations for having weaned myself from my former excesses. With a quickened pulse I hastened to my lodgings, and throwing off my hateful gown and tonsure, dressed myself in my new attire.

The transformation was complete. I could not recognise myself. I hardly could believe that the dashing young cavalier that confronted me in the mirror was the brother Anselmo. "Is this a face," said I, communing with myself, "to be disfigured with a vile tonsure? are these limbs to be hid under the repulsive garment of a monk?" Again I surveyed myself, and it was with difficulty that I could tear myself away from contemplating my metamorphosis. I was indeed a butterfly. At last I determined upon sallying forth. I locked up my monastic dress and descended the staircase. I must acknowledge that it was with trepidation I ventured into the street, but I had soon reason to take confidence, for I was met by one of my most intimate friends, who looked in my face and passed on without the slightest recognition. Overjoyed at this circumstance, I took courage, and boldly proceeded to the Prado, where I was greeted with favourable glances from the women, and sneers from the men, both of which I considered equally flattering. In the evening I returned to my lodgings, resumed the habit of my order, and gained the convent. I now felt that there was no chance of discovery, and anticipated the happiness which had been denied me. I subsequently ordered the most fashionable and expensive clothes, hired my lodgings for six months, assumed the name of Don Pedro, made the acquaintance of many young men, and amongst others of the officer who had treated me so ill. He took a fancy to me, which I encouraged to further my views. I became his confidant, he informed me of his amour with his cousin, adding that he was tired of the business, and wished to break with her; also, as an excellent joke, the punishment which he had inflicted upon the friar Anselmo.

He was a great proficient with the small sword, an accomplishment which, of course, had been neglected in my education, and which I accounted for by stating, that until the death of my elder brother I had been intended for the church. I accepted his offer to be my instructor, and my first rudiments in the science were received from him. Afterwards I applied to a professor, and constantly practising, in the course of a few months I knew, from occasional trials of skill with the officer, that I was his superior. My revenge, which hitherto had been controlled, was now ripe.

But in narrating my adventures abroad, it must not be supposed that I neglected every thing that prudence or caution could suggest to avoid discovery. On the contrary, now that I had the means

of enjoying myself, I was more careful that I did not by any indiscretion excite surmises. I generally devoted four days out of the seven in the week to the convent and to my professional occupation as music-master. To increase the difficulty of identification, I became more serious in my manner, more dirty in my person, as the brother Anselmo. I pretended to have imbibed a fancy for snuff, with which I soiled my face and monastic attire, and seldom if ever spoke, or if I did, in a very solemn voice. So far from suspicion, I every day gained more and more the good will of the superior. My absence in the day-time was not noticed, as it was known that I gave lessons in music, and my irregularity during the night was a secret between the porter and myself.

I hardly need observe that, as Don Pedro, I always lamented not having been gifted with a voice, and have even in the presence of my companions, sent a billet to brother Anselmo to serenade a lady whom I courted as Don Pedro. I do not believe until ulterior circumstances, that there was ever in the mind of any the slightest idea that, under my dissimilar habits, I was one and the same person.

But to continue: one day the young officer, whose name was Don Lopez, informed me that he did not know how to act; he was so pestered with the jealousy and reproaches of his mistress, and requested my advice as to how to proceed. I laughed at his dilemma. "My dear Lopez," replied I, "introduce me to her, and depend upon it that she will give you no more trouble. I will make love to her, and pleased with her new conquest she will soon forget you."

"My good fellow," replied he, "your advice is excellent: will you come with me this afternoon?"

Once more I was in the presence of her whom I had loved, but loved no more, for I now only felt and lived for revenge. She had not the most distant recognition of me. Piqued as she was with Don Lopez, and fascinated with my exertions to please, I soon gained an interest; but she still loved him between the paroxysms of her hate. Trying all she could to recover him at one moment, and listening to my attentions at another, he at last accused her of perfidy and took his leave for ever. Then her violence broke out, and as a proof of my attachment, she demanded that I should call him to account. I wished no better, and pretending to be so violently attached to her that I was infatuated, I took occasion of his laughing at me to give him the lie, and demand satisfaction. As it was in the presence of others, there was no recal or explanation allowed. We met by agreement, alone, in the very field where I received my chastisement; I brought with me my monastic habit and tonsure, which I concealed before his arrival among the very nettles which he had gathered for my chastisement. The conflict was not long; after a few thrusts and parries he lay dying at my feet. I immediately threw over my dress that of the friar, and exchanging the wig for the tonsure, stood by him. He opened his eyes, which had closed from the fainting occasioned by the sudden gush from his wound, and looked at me with amazement.

"Yes, Don Lopez," said I, "in Don Pedro behold the friar Anselmo; he whom you scourged with nettles; he who has revenged the insult." I then threw off the monk's dress, and exposed to him the other beneath it, and changing my tonsure for the wig, "Now you are convinced of the truth," added I, "and now I have my revenge."

"I am, I am," replied he faintly; "but if you have slain me as Don Pedro, now that I am dying I entreat you, as brother Anselmo, to give me absolution. Carry not your revenge so far as to deny me this."

I could not refuse, and I gave absolution in the one costume to the man who had fallen by my hand in the other: for my own part I thought it was an absurdity, but my revenge was satisfied, and I would not refuse him such a poor consolation.

A few minutes afterwards he expired, and I hastened to my lodgings, changed my dress, and repaired to the convent, where as Don Pedro I wrote to Donna Sophia, in forming her of what had taken place, and of my having absconded until the hue and cry should be over. For three weeks I remained in the convent, or only appeared abroad as the father Anselmo. I brought a considerable sum to the superior for the use of the church, partly to satisfy the qualms of conscience which assailed me for the crime which I had committed; partly that I might continue in his good graces.

At the expiration of the time I sent a note to the young lady, as from Don Pedro, acquainting her with my return, and my intention to call upon her in the dusk of the evening. I went to my lodgings, dressed myself as Don Pedro, and tapping at her door was admitted; but instead of being cordially greeted, as I expected, I was repulsed, loaded with abuse, and declared an object of detestation. It appeared that, although in her rage at the desertion of her lover, she had listened to the dictates of revenge, now that he was no more all her affection for him had revived. I returned her upbraiding, and quitted the room to leave the house; but she had no intention that I should escape, and had stationed two of her relations below, ready to intercept me.

She called to them as I descended the stairs; when I arrived at the hall, I found them with drawn swords to dispute my passage. I had no resource but to fight my way; and charging them furiously, I severely wounded one, and shortly afterwards disarmed the other, just as the enraged fair one, who perceived that I was gaining the day, had run behind me and seized my arms; but she was too late: I threw her indignantly upon the wounded man, and walked out of the house. As soon as I was in the street, I took to my heels, gained my lodgings, changed my dress, and repaired to the convent.

This adventure sobered me much. I now remained quiet for some months, never assuming my dress as Don Pedro, lest the officers of justice should lay hold of me. I became more rigid and exact in my duties, and more austere in my manner.

The several confessional chairs in our church were usually occupied by the senior monks, although, when absent from sickness or other causes, the juniors occasionally supplied their place. One of the monks had been taken ill, and I knew that the mother of the young lady, who was very strict in her religious duties, confessed at that chair every Friday; I took possession of it, with the hopes that I should find out some means of prosecuting my revenge. The young lady also confessed at the same chair, when she did come, which was but seldom. Since the death of her lover, she had never made her appearance.

As I anticipated, the mother came, and after having run over a string of peccadilloes, for which I ordered a slight penance, I inquired, through the punctured communication on the side of the confessional chair, whether she had not children, to which she answered in the affirmative. I then asked, when her daughter had confessed last. She mentioned a long date, and I commenced a serious expostulation upon the neglect of parents, desiring that her daughter might be brought to confess, or otherwise I should be obliged to inflict a penance of some hundred Pater-Nosters and Ave-Marias upon herself, for not attending to her parental duties. The old lady, who had no wish to submit to her own penance, promised to bring her daughter the next day, and she was true to her word. Donna Sophia appeared to come very unwillingly. As soon as she had taken her seat by the confessional chair, she made a confession of a hundred little nothings, and having finished her catalogue, stopped as if waiting for absolution.

“Have you made no reservation?” inquired I, in the low muttering tone which is used at the confessional; for although neither party can distinguish the person of the other, I did not wish her to recognise my voice.

“Everything,” replied she, in a faint whisper.

“My daughter,” replied I, “by your trembling answer, I know that you are deceiving yourself and me. I am an old man, and have been too many years in this chair, not to ascertain by the answers which I receive, whether the conscience is unloaded. Yours, I am convinced, has something pressing heavily upon it; something for which you would fain have absolution, but which you are ashamed to reveal. If not a principal, you have been a party to crime; and never shall you have absolution until you have made a full confession.” Her heart swelled with emotion, she attempted to speak, and burst into tears. “These are harbingers of good,” observed I; “I am now convinced that my supposition was correct: pour out your soul in tribulation, and receive that comfort which I am empowered to bestow. Courage, my daughter! the best of us are but grievous sinners.” As soon as she could check her sobbing, she commenced her confession; narrating her penchant for me, her subsequent attachment

to the young officer, my abuse of him, and the punishment which had ensued—his desertion, the introduction of Don Pedro, her pique at having instigated him to kill her lover, his death, and all that I have narrated to your highness.

“These are serious crimes, my daughter! grievous indeed; you have yielded to the tempter in your own person, caused the death of one man, you have led another astray, and have deceived him, when he claimed the reward of his iniquity; but all these are trifles compared to the offence upon the holy monk, which is the worst of sacrilege. And what was his fault? that he cautioned you against a person, whose subsequent conduct has proved, that the worthy man was correct in his suppositions.

“In every way you have offended Heaven; a whole life will be scarce sufficient for the task of repentance, laying aside the enormous crime of sacrilege, which, in justice, ought to be referred to the inquisition. Excommunication is more fitting in your case than absolution.” I waited some time before I again spoke, during which she sobbed bitterly. “My daughter,” observed I, “before I can decide upon what is to be done to save you from everlasting perdition, it is necessary that you humble yourself before the religious man, whose person you have abused. Send to the convent to which he belongs, and entreat him to come; and when you have confessed your crime, offer to him the same implements of punishment, which through your instigation were so sacrilegiously applied. Submit to his sentence, and the penance which he may prescribe. When you have done that, repair again to me. I shall be in this chair the day after to-morrow.”

The girl muffled up her face, waited a few minutes to compose herself, and then returned to her mother, who wondered what could have detained her so long.

That evening, I received a note from Donna Sophia, requesting me to call on the ensuing day. I found her in her room, she had been weeping bitterly, and when I entered coloured up with shame and vexation; but she had been too much frightened on the day before, to resist the injunctions which she had received: a large bundle of nettles lay on the chair; and when I entered she turned the key of the door, and falling down on her knees, with many tears made a full confession. I expressed the utmost horror and surprise; she embraced my knees, implored my pardon, and then, pointing to the nettles, requested I would use them if I thought proper. Having said this, she covered her face with her hands, and remained on her knees in silence.

I must confess, that when I called to mind the punishment which had been inflicted on me through her means, and the manner in which she had attempted to betray me to my death, I felt very much inclined to revenge myself by scourging her severely; but although the affection I once felt for her had passed away, I had a natural tenderness for the sex, which made me abandon this petty revenge. My object was to remove her, so that I might not be recognised in my worldly attire; and she, I knew, was the only person who could prove that I had killed her lover. I therefore raised her up, and telling her that I was satisfied with her repentance, and, as far as I was personally concerned, forgave her ill treatment, desired her to repair to her confessor, who was the proper person to award a punishment for such a catalogue of heinous crimes. The next day I was in the confessional, when she narrated all that had passed: I then told her she had nothing to do, but to propitiate Heaven by dedicating her musical talents to its service; pointing out, that her only chance of salvation was from immediately taking the veil. I refused to listen to any other species of penance, however severe, for which she gladly would have compromised the sentence. Goaded by her conscience, miserable at the desertion and death of her lover, and alarmed at the threats of excommunication, in less than a week she repaired to the Ursuline Convent; and, after a short probation, she took the veil, and was admitted as one of the sisterhood.

As soon as my only accuser was fairly locked up, I occasionally resumed my dress and wig. I say occasionally, because in the society which I chiefly delighted in, and in which I became the connoisseur of good wine, that I asserted myself to be, when your highness overheard me, I had no occasion for it, being quite as well received when I sang and played the guitar in my monkish dress, as I should have been in my other. Besides which, I never had to pay when in that costume, as I

was obliged to do when I sported the other; which was only put on when I wished to make myself agreeable to any fair one. I hardly need observe, that I took great care to avoid the society in the one dress with which I mixed in the other. This disguise I continued very successfully for three years, when a circumstance occurred, which ended in my discovery, and my eventually becoming a slave in your highness's dominions.

For some time I had taught the niece of an elderly lady, who was of noble family and very rich. The aunt was always present at the lessons; and, knowing that she was very devout, I rejected all songs that were of an amorous tendency, and would only practise such as were unimpeachable. In my demeanour I was always sedate and respectful—full of humility, and self-accusation. When I received my money from the old lady, I used to thank her in the name of our convent, for whose use it was to be appropriated, and call her donation a charity, for which Heaven would reward her. Her confessor died, and the old lady chose me to supply his place. This was what I was anxious to obtain, and I redoubled my zeal, my humility, and my flattery.

It was not that I had originally any design upon the affections of the niece, although she was a very pretty girl, but upon the old lady's purse, for I knew that she could not last for many years. On the contrary, I was anxious, if possible, to have the niece removed, as it was supposed that she would inherit the old lady's doubloons; but this required time and opportunity, and, in the meanwhile, I assiduously cultivated the old lady's good graces. She used to confess once a week; and I often observed that she acknowledged as a sin, thinking too much of one who had led her from her duty in former days, and for whom she still felt too much worldly passion. One evening when the clock had struck ten, we had laid down the cards, which we occasionally played, it being the day and her usual hour for confessing. Again she repeated the same offence, and I then delicately hinted, that she might be more at ease if she were to confide to me the circumstances connected with her compunctions. She hesitated; but on my pointing out to her that there ought to be no reservation, and that the acknowledgment of the compunction arising from a sin was not that of the sin itself, she acquiesced. Her confession referred to her early days, when, attached to a young cavalier, against the wishes of her parents, under a solemn promise of marriage, she had consented to receive him into her chamber. The intercourse continued for some time, when it was discovered. Her lover had been way-laid and murdered by her relations, and she had been thrown into a convent. There she had been confined, and the child removed as soon as it was born: she had resisted all the force and threats employed to induce her to take the veil; and at the death of her father had been released and came into possession of her property, of which they could not deprive her: that she made every endeavour to find out to where her child had been removed, and at last discovered that it had been sent to the Foundling Asylum; but this information was not obtained until some years afterwards, and all the children sent there at the period had been dispersed. Never having married, her thoughts would revert to the scenes which had taken place with her adored Felix, although years had rolled away, and she felt that she was wrong to dwell upon what in itself had been so criminal.

I listened to her story with great interest, for the idea occurred to me, that I might be the unfortunate offspring of their loves, and if not, that in all probability the old lady might be induced so to believe. I inquired whether her child had any marks by which he could be recognised. She answered, that she made most particular inquiries of the people who attended her, and that one of the women had stated that the child had a large wart upon the back of its neck: this however was not likely to remain, and she had abandoned all hopes of its discovery.

I observed that warts were easily removed when contracted accidentally, but that those which appeared at the birth were no more to be removed than moles. I then turned the conversation, by stating, that I could not consider her conduct criminal; it was more than could be expected from human nature, that she should not retain affection for one who had lived with her as a husband, and died for her sake. I gave her absolution for half a dozen Ave-Marias, and took my leave for the night. When I lay on my pallet, I reflected upon what had passed; the year and month agreed exactly with

the time at which I had been sent to the Asylum. A wart, as she very truly observed, might disappear. Might not I be the very son whom she was lamenting? The next morning I repaired to the Asylum, and demanded the date of my reception, with all the particulars, which were invariably registered in case of the infants being eventually claimed. It was in the month of February. There was one other entry in the same month, same day, and nearly the same hour as my own.

“At nine at night, a male infant left at the door in a basket, parties absconded, no marks, named Anselmo.”

“At ten at night, a male infant brought to the door in a capote, parties absconded, no marks, named Jacobo.”

It appeared then that there were two children brought within an hour of each other to the Asylum, and that I was one of them. In the evening I returned to the old lady, and accidentally resumed the subject of her not having made further search for her child, and asked if she had the precise date. She answered that she had it in her memory too well, that it was on the 18th of February; and that when she referred to the Asylum, they had informed her that the children brought in February had no marks; that they had all been sent away, but where they could not tell, as the former governor had died, and he was the only person who could give the information. That either I or the other was her child was clear, but to prove which, was impossible. It however made me less scrupulous about my plan of proceeding, which was to identify myself with the child she had lost. It was useless to prove that I was sent in on that day as there was a competitor; besides which, my monastic vows were at variance with my speculation: I therefore resolved to satisfy her, if I could not satisfactorily prove it to myself or to the rest of the world, and I took my measures accordingly.

It was in my worldly disguise, that I determined to attempt my purpose; and as it was necessary to have a wart on my neck, I resolved to obtain one as soon as possible. This was easily managed: a friar of the convent was troubled with these excrescences, and I jocularly proposed a trial to see whether it was true that the blood of them would inoculate. In a fortnight, I had a wart on my finger which soon became large, and I then applied the blood of it to my neck. Within three months I had a large wart on the back of my neck, or rather a conglomeration of them, which I had produced by inoculation, assisted by constant irritation: during this period I was not so frequent in my attendance upon the old lady, excusing myself on account of the duties of the convent which devolved upon me. The next point was, how to introduce myself in my other apparel. This required some reflection, as it would be but occasionally that I could make my appearance. After some reflection, I determined that the niece should assist me, for I knew that even if I succeeded in my plans, she would be a participator in the property which I wished to secure. Often left in her company, I took opportunities of talking of a young friend whom I highly extolled. When I had raised her curiosity, I mentioned in a laughing manner, that I suspected he was very much smitten with her charms, as I had often found him watching at the house opposite. An admirer is always a source of gratification to a young girl; her vanity was flattered, and she asked me many particulars. I answered them so as to inflame her curiosity, describing his person in a very favourable manner, and extolling his good qualities. I also minutely described his dress. After the music lesson was over, I returned to my lodgings, arrayed myself in my best suit, and putting on my curling ringlets, walked up and down before the window of the house. The niece soon recognised me as the person whose dress and appearance I had so minutely described, one moment showing herself at the window, at another darting away with all the coquetry of her sex. I perceived that she was flattered with her conquest; and, after parading myself for a short time, I disappeared.

When I called the next day in my monastic costume, I had a billet-doux ready in my pocket. The singing commenced: I soon found out that she had a prepossession, from her selecting a song which in the presence of her aunt I should have put on one side, but it now suited my purpose that she should be indulged. When the aunt made her appearance we stopped, and commenced another: by this little ruse I became a sort of confidant, and the intimacy which I desired was brought about. When we had

practised two or three songs, Donna Celia, the aunt, left the room: I then observed that I had seen the young cavalier whom I had mentioned, and that he appeared to be more infatuated than ever: that he had requested me as a favour to speak on his behalf, but that I had threatened to acquaint her aunt if he mentioned the subject; for I considered that my duty as a confessor in the family would be very irreconcilable with carrying clandestine love messages. I acknowledged that I pitied his condition; for to see the tears that he shed, and listen to the supplications which he had made, would have softened almost anybody; but that notwithstanding my great regard for him, I thought it inconsistent with my duty to interfere in such a business: I added, that he had told me that he had walked before the house yesterday afternoon, with the hopes of meeting one of the servants, whom he might bribe to convey a letter; and that I had threatened to acquaint Donna Celia if he mentioned the subject again. Donna Clara (for such was her name) appeared very much annoyed at my pretended rigour, but said nothing. After a little while, I asked her if she had seen him; she replied in the affirmative without further remarks. Her work-box lay upon the sofa, upon which she had been seated, and I put the note in it without being perceived. The lesson was finished, and I repaired to her aunt's apartments to pay her a visit in the quality of confessor. After half-an-hour's conversation, I returned through the saloon, where I had left Donna Clara: she was at her embroidery, and had evidently seen and read the note, for she coloured up when I entered. I took no notice, but, satisfied that she had read it, I bade her adieu. In the note, I had implored her for an answer, and stated that I should be under her window during the whole night. As soon as it was dark, I dressed myself as Don Pedro, and repaired to the street, striking a few notes on the guitar to attract her attention. I remained there more than half-an-hour, when the casement opened, and a little hand threw out a billet, which fell at my feet: I kissed it with apparent rapture, and retired. When I gained my lodgings, I opened it, and found it as favourable as I could hope. My plan then was to act as her confidant.

When I called the next day, I told her that, satisfied with the honourable intentions of the young cavalier, he had overcome my scruples, and I had consented to speak in his behalf: that I thought it was not right; but the state of the young man was so deplorable, that I could not withstand his entreaties; but that I expected that no steps would be taken by either party without my concurrence; and with this proviso, if she was pleased with the young cavalier, I would exert my influence in their behalf. Donna Clara's face beamed with delight at my communication: and she candidly acknowledged, as she had before in the note, that his person and his character were by no means displeasing. I then produced another note, which I said he had prevailed upon me to deliver. After this, affairs went on successfully. I repeatedly met her in the evening; and although I at first was indifferent, yet I soon became attached from the many amiable and endearing qualities which love had brought to light. She one day observed that there was a strong resemblance between Don Pedro and me, but the possibility of a serious shaven monk, and a gay cavalier with his curling locks, being one and the same person, never entered her head. When I considered matters ripe, I called upon Donna Celia, and, with the preamble that I had something of importance to communicate, informed her I had discovered that a young man was attached to her niece; and that I strongly suspected the regard was reciprocal; that I knew the young cavalier very well, who was very amiable, and possessed many good qualities, but there seemed to be a mystery about his family, as he never mentioned them. I ended by observing, that I considered it my duty to acquaint her with the circumstance; as, if she objected to the match, or had other views for her niece, an immediate stop ought to be put to the correspondence.

The old lady was very much astonished at the information, and very angry that her niece should have presumed to make an acquaintance without her knowledge. I waited until she had said all she could think of, and then calmly took up the right of a confessor, pointing out that she had herself fallen into the same error in her youthful days; that the young man had confessed to me that his views were honourable; but had not an idea, at the time, that I was acquainted with the family. Donna Celia then appeared to be more pacified, and asked many questions: all that she seemed to object to, was the mystery about his family, which at her request I promised to clear up before any other steps

should be taken. Cautioning her against any violence of language to her niece, I took my leave. As I went out I spoke a few words to Clara, informing her of the *dénouement* which had taken place, and recommending her by no means to irritate her aunt, but to be very penitent when she was reproved. Clara obeyed my injunctions, and the next day, when I called, I found her sitting by the side of Donna Celia, who was apparently reconciled. I motioned Clara out of the room, when Donna Celia informed me that she had acknowledged her error; and as she had promised for the future to be regulated by her advice, she had overlooked her indiscretion. When she had finished: “Prepare yourself, madam,” said I, “for strange tidings—the ways of Heaven are wonderful. Last evening I had an explanation with the young cavalier, Don Pedro, and he proves to be—that son whose loss you have so much lamented.”

“Merciful Heaven!” cried the old lady, and she fainted away. As soon as she recovered, she cried out, “Oh where is he! bring him to me—let a mother’s eyes be blessed with his sight—let the yearnings of a mother’s heart be recompensed in his embraces—let the tears of affection be wept upon his bosom.”

“Calm yourself, my dear madam,” replied I: “the proofs you have not yet seen. First be satisfied, and then indulge in your delightful anticipation. When I pressed Don Pedro upon the subject of his family, I told him candidly that his only chance of success was unlimited confidence: he acknowledged that he had been sent to the Asylum when an infant, and that he did not know his parents; that the mystery and consequent stigma on his birth had been a source of mortification to him through life. I asked him if he knew his age, or had a copy of the register of his reception. He took it out of a small cabinet; it was on the 18th of February, in the same year that your child was sent there. Still as I was not sure, I stated that I would call upon him this morning, and see what could be done; assuring him that his candid avowal had created strong interest in his favour. This morning I repaired to the Asylum, when I examined the register. Two children were brought in on that night: here is the extract, and I feel much mortified, as you will observe, that no marks are mentioned. If, therefore, the wart you spoke of was not still remaining, the uncertainty would have been as great as ever. When I returned to him about an hour since, I renewed the subject, and stated that I thought it was the custom to make a note of any particular marks upon the children, by which they might be eventually reclaimed. He replied that it was customary when they were indelible, but not otherwise: that he had no indelible mark, although a large wart had been on the back of his neck as long as he could remember; ‘but,’ added he, ‘it is of no use,—all hopes of finding my parents have long since been abandoned, and I must submit to my unfortunate destiny. I have thought upon what has passed, and I feel that I have acted wrong. Without family and without name, what right have I to aspire to the hand of any young lady of good parentage? I have made the resolution to conquer my feelings; and before the intimacy has been carried on to an extent that a rupture would occasion any pangs to her that I adore, I will retire from Seville, and lament in solitude my unfortunate condition.’

“Are you capable of making such a sacrifice, Don Pedro?” said I. ‘I am, Father Anselmo,’ replied he: ‘I will always act as a man of honour and of family, although I cannot prove my descent.’

“Then,” said I, ‘Don Pedro, do me the favour to call upon me this evening at my convent, and I hope to have some pleasing intelligence to impart.’ I then left him, to come here and acquaint you with the joyful discovery.”

“But why did you not bring him here immediately?” cried Donna Celia.

“Madam, I have important duties at my convent which will occupy me with the superior till late at night. These must be attended to; and it is not impossible that the affairs of our convent may require my absence for some time, as there are new leases of our lands to be granted, and I have reason to expect that the superior may despatch me on that business. I will acquaint the young man with what has been discovered, and will then send him to your arms; but it were advisable that you allow a few hours to repose after the agitation which you have undergone, and previous to the affecting scene that will naturally take place. I wish I could be present; for it is not often, in this world, that we can witness the best affections of the heart in their virtuous action.”

I then took my leave, requesting Donna Celia to inform her niece of the circumstances, as I presumed there would now be no obstacle to the mutual attachment of the young people.

My reason for an early departure was that I might arrange the story I should tell, when, as Don Pedro, my new mother would demand from me the events of my life. I had also to request leave of absence, which I obtained in expectation of some property being left to the convent by an elderly gentleman residing at Alicant, who was expected to die, and from whom I produced a letter, requesting my presence. As I was on the best terms with the superior, and there was a prospect of obtaining money, his consent was given. That I should be there in time, I was permitted to depart that evening. I took my leave of the superior, and the rest of the monks, intending never to return, and hastened to my lodgings, where I threw off my monastic habit, which from that hour has never been resumed. I repaired to Donna Celia's house, was admitted and ushered into a room, to await her arrival. My person had been set off to the best advantage. I had put on a new wig, a splendid velvet cloak, silk doublet and hose; and as I surveyed myself for a second or two in the mirror, I felt the impossibility of recognition, mingled with pride at my handsome contour. The door opened, and Donna Celia came in, trembling with anxiety. I threw myself on my knees, and in a voice apparently choked with emotion, demanded her blessing. She tottered to the sofa overpowered by her feelings; and still remaining on my knees, I seized her hand, which I covered with kisses.

"It is—it is my child," cried she at last; "all powerful nature would have told me so, if it had not been proved," and she threw her arms round my neck, as she bent over me and shed tears of gratitude and delight. I do assure your highness that I caught the infection, and mingled my tears with hers; for I felt then, and I even now firmly believe, that I was her son. Although my conscience for a moment upbraided me, during a scene which brought back virtuous feelings to my breast, I could not but consider, that a deception which could produce so much delight and joy, was almost pardonable. I took my seat beside her, and she kissed me again and again, as one minute she would hold me off to look at me, and the next strain me in her embraces.

"You are the image of your father, Pedro," observed she, mournfully, "but God's will be done. If he has taken away, he also hath given, and truly grateful am I for his bounty." When we had in some degree recovered our agitation, I intreated her to narrate to me the history of my father, of whom I had heard but little from the good brother Anselmo, and she repeated to me those events of her youthful days which she had communicated before.

"But you have not been introduced to Clara: the naughty girl little thought that she was carrying on an amour with her own cousin."

When Donna Celia called her down, I made no scruple of pressing the dear girl to my heart, and implanting a kiss upon her lips: with our eyes beaming with love and joy, we sat down upon the sofa, I in the centre, with a hand locked in the hand of each. "And now, my dear Pedro, I am anxious to hear the narrative of your life," said Donna Celia: "that it has been honourable to yourself, I feel convinced." Thanking her for her good opinion, which I hoped neither what had passed, or might in future occur, would be the means of removing, I commenced the history of my life in the following words...

"Commenced the history of your life?" interrupted the pacha. "Does the slave laugh at our beards? What then is all this you have been telling us?"

"The truth, your highness," replied the Spaniard.

"What I am about to tell, is the history of my life, which I invented to deceive the old lady Donna Celia, and which is all false."

"I understand, Mustapha, this kafir is a regular kessehgou (Eastern story-teller), he makes one story breed another; but it is late; see that he attends to-morrow afternoon, Bero! Go, infidel, the muezzin calls to prayers."

The Spaniard quitted the sublime presence, and in obedience to the call of the muezzin, the pacha and Mustapha paid their customary evening devotions—to the bottle.

Volume One—Chapter Four

The next day the Spanish slave was summoned to continue his narrative.

“Your sublime highness of course recollects where I left off yesterday evening,” commenced the slave.

“Perfectly well,” replied the pacha, “you left off at the beginning of your story; but I hope you will finish it this evening, as I have already forgotten a great deal of what you said.”

“Your highness may recollect that I was seated—”

“Yes, in our presence,” interrupted the pacha; “such was our condescension to a Giaour. Now go on with your story.”

“With due submission to your highness, I was seated on a sofa, between my mother Donna Celia and my mistress Donna Clara.”

“Very true; I recollect now that you were.”

“A hand clasped in the hand of each.”

“Exactly,” replied the pacha, impatiently.

“And was about to tell a story of my own invention, to deceive the old lady my mother.”

“Anna senna! curses on your mother!” cried the pacha, in an angry tone. “Sit down and continue your story. Is a pacha nothing? Is the lion to be chafed by a jackal? Wallah el Nebi! By God and the Prophet! do you laugh at our beard? The story!”

“The story requested by your highness,” replied the slave, with great coolness, “was commenced in the following words.”

Story of the Monk

What occurred during my infancy, my dearest mother, I do not recollect; but I can retrace to the age of seven years, when I found myself in company with a number of others, from the squalling infant of a few days old, up to about my own age. I also recollect that our fare was indifferent, and our punishment severe.

“Poor child!” exclaimed Donna Celia, pressing my hand which was still locked in hers. I continued there until the age of ten, when an old lady who came to the asylum, took a fancy to me; for I often heard it remarked, that I was a very handsome boy, although I have rather grown out of my good looks lately, Clara.

A pressure of my other hand, and a negative smile, was the answer; and I proceeded—The old lady Donna Isabella, who was of the noble family of Guzman, wanted a page, and intended to bring me up in that capacity. She carried me to her house where I was clad in a fancy dress. I used to sit by her side on the carpet, and run upon any message which might be required; in fact, I was a sort of human bell, calling up every body and fetching every thing that was wanted; but I was well fed, and very proud of a little dagger which I wore in my girdle. The only part of my education to which I objected, was learning to read and write from a priest, who was domiciled in the family, and who had himself as great an aversion to teaching as I had to learning. Had the affair rested entirely between us, we might have arranged matters so as to please both parties; but as the old lady used to prove my acquirements by making me read to her, as she knotted, we neither of us could help fulfilling our engagements. By dint of bullying and beating, at last I was sufficiently enlightened to be able to read a romance to my mistress, or answer an invitation-note in the negative or affirmative. My mistress had two nieces who lived with her, both nearly grown up when I entered the family. They taught me dancing for their own amusement, as well as many other things; and by their care I improved very much, even in reading and writing. Although a child, I had a pleasure in being taught by two pretty

girls. But it is necessary that I should be more particular in my description of these two young ladies. The eldest, whose name was Donna Emilia, was of a prudent, sedate disposition, always cheerful, but never boisterous; she constantly smiled, but seldom, if ever, indulged in a laugh. The youngest, Donna Teresa, was very different—joyous and light-hearted, frank and confiding in her temper, generous in disposition: her faults arose from an excess of every feeling—a continual running into extremes. Never were two sisters more fond of each other—it appeared as if the difference between their dispositions but added to their attachment. The serious character of the elder was roused to playfulness by the vivacity of the younger, and the extravagance of the younger was kept in due bounds by the prudence of the elder. As a child I liked Donna Emilia, but I was devotedly fond of Donna Teresa.

I had been three years in this situation, when legal business required the presence of Donna Isabella at Madrid. The young ladies, who were both very handsome, and remarkably like each other in person, were much admired by the cavaliers. Two had gained the victory over the rival candidates—Don Perez was the favoured suitor of Donna Emilia, while Don Florez was proud to wear the chains of the lively Teresa. Donna Isabella had, however, no intention that her nieces should quit her for the present; and aware, by the serenading which took place every night, that there were pretenders to her nieces' smiles, she hastened back to Seville sooner than she had intended.

Although I had not been trusted by either, I had an idea of what was going on; but with more prudence than most boys of my age, I made no remarks either to my mistress or to the young ladies. We had returned to Seville about a month, when Donna Emilia called me aside, and said, "Pedro, can you keep a secret?"

I told her—"Yes, if I was paid for it."

"And what do you want to induce you to keep it, you little miser?"

I replied—"From her, only a kiss."

She called me a little rogue, gave me the kiss, and then told me, that a cavalier would be under the window a little after vesper bell, and that I must give him a billet, which she put into my hand. Of course, having received my payment beforehand, I consented. At the time mentioned I looked out of the gate, and perceiving a cavalier under the window, I accosted him, "What ho, senhor, what is it you expect from a fair lady?"

"A billet, my little page," replied he.

"Then here you have it," replied I, pulling it out of my vest. He put a doubloon in my hand, and immediately disappeared.

I liked the gold very much, but I preferred the other payment more. I put the money into my pocket, and returned into the house. I had hardly come into the hall, when Donna Teresa, the other young lady, accosted me. "Pedro, I have been looking for you—can you keep a secret?"

"Yes, if I am paid for it," replied I, as before.

"And what must it be that will keep that little tongue of yours from chattering?"

"From you," replied I, "it must be a kiss."

"Oh! you little manikin—I'll give you twenty;" and she did so, until she almost took away my breath. "And now," said she, "there is a senhor waiting below for a note, which you must take him." I took the note, and when I came to the gate, found a cavalier there, as she had mentioned. "Oh, senhor," said I, "what are you waiting for, is it a billet-doux from a sweet lady?"

"It is, my pretty boy," answered he.

"Perhaps this will interest you," replied I, handing him the note. He snatched it from me, and would have departed. "Senhor," said I, "I cannot allow my mistress to be affronted. Her favours are beyond all price, but still they are always coupled with gold. Since you are so poor, and gold must pass, here is a piece for you," and I offered him the doubloon which I had received from the other cavalier.

"You are a witty boy," replied he, "and have corrected my negligence, for it was nothing more, I assure you. Add this to the other;"—and he put a quarter-doubloon in my hand, and disappeared.

I returned to the house; and, as I had been some time away from my mistress, I went into the saloon—where she was sitting alone.

“Pedro, come hither, child; you know how good I have been to you, and how carefully I have brought you up. Now tell me, can you keep a secret?”

“Yes, madam,” replied I, “I can keep yours, for it is my duty.”

“That’s a good child. Well then, I have an idea that my two nieces are followed by some of the gay cavaliers, who saw them at Madrid, and I wish you to find out if it is true.—Do you understand?”

“Oh, yes, madam,” replied I; “I do perfectly.”

“Well then, do you watch,—and Pedro, here are two reals for you, to buy sugar-plums.”

Thus did I enter in one day into the real occupation of a page. I added the two reals to the gold, and, as you may suppose, meant to serve as I was paid. But, as I found out afterwards, I had made a terrible mistake with the two billets-doux. That of Donna Emilia I had given to Don Florez, who was Donna Teresa’s admirer; that of Donna Teresa I had given to Don Perez, who was the lover of Donna Emilia; but I had better explain to you, before I go on, what did not come to my knowledge until the *dénouement* took place. Don Perez, the lover of Emilia, was a young man who was entitled to large property, at the death of an uncle, to whom he was heir by entail. Don Florez, on the contrary, was in possession of a splendid fortune, and able to choose for himself.

From fear of discovery, the notes were both in a disguised hand, and not signed by the respective christian names of the ladies. Donna Emilia’s ran thus:—“I found your note in the spot agreed, but my aunt has taken away the key of the shrubbery, and is I believe suspicious.—Why are you so urgent?—I trust your affection, like mine, will but increase from delay. It will be impossible to meet you to-night; but I have entered the page in my service, and will write soon.” That of Donna Teresa, which I put in the hands of Don Perez, ran as follows:—“I can no longer refuse your solicitations for an interview. My aunt has locked up the shrubbery, but if you have courage enough to scale the garden wall, I will meet you in the saloon which opens upon the garden; but not a word must be said, as the servants are continually passing the door—neither can we have a light—I must trust to your honour.”

Don Perez was delighted at Donna Emilia’s having at last yielded to his intreaties for a meeting; and Don Florez, as much annoyed at the reserved conduct of his mistress, went home accusing her of coquetry. At the appointed hour, Don Perez met his supposed mistress in the saloon. The two sisters were *confidantes*; and, as I was in their secret, they made no scruple of talking before me. The next day, when their aunt left the room, they began arguing upon the personal merits of the respective cavaliers. After a good-humoured controversy, they appealed to me.

“Come, Pedro,” said Teresa, “you shall decide. Which do you think the handsomest cavalier?”

“Why,” answered I, “I think that your senhor is, for a fair man, the handsomest I ever saw—but still the beautiful dark eyes of the Donna Emilia’s cavalier are equally prepossessing.”

“Why, Pedro, you have mistaken the two,” said Emilia, “it is Don Perez, the fair one, who is my admirer, and the dark senhor is Don Florez, who is in love with my sister.” I perceived that I had made a mistake when I delivered the notes, and Teresa coloured up. But I had sense enough to answer:—“Very true, madam, you are right; I now recollect that I am confounding the two.”

Shortly afterwards the aunt came into the room, and Teresa quitted it, beckoning me to follow her. As soon as I had joined her, she said, “Now, Pedro, tell the truth: did you not make the mistake that you stated, and deliver my note to the fair cavalier, Don Perez?”

I answered, “that I had, as I had already delivered Emilia’s note to the dark gentleman.” Donna Teresa put her hands over her face, and wept bitterly,—“Pedro, you must now keep this secret, for it is of the greatest importance.—My God, what will become of me?” cried she; and for some time she was in the greatest distress: at last she wiped her eyes, and after much reflection, she took up paper and wrote a note. “Pedro, take this note to the direction; recollect it is for the dark cavalier that it is intended.” Teresa had read the note of Emilia to Don Perez, which had been received by Don Florez—in consequence her present note ran thus:—“You may think me harsh for having refused to see you

last night, but I was afraid. Do not accuse me with trifling with your feelings, I will meet you in the saloon that leads to the garden, which was last night occupied; come at ten this evening.”

I went out with the note and gave it into the hands of Don Florez. “My dear boy, tell Donna Teresa I will not fail; I know now why she could not receive me last night; I only hope I may be as fortunate as Don Perez.” He put a doubloon in my hand, and I went away. I had not quitted the street when I met Don Perez.

“Ah! my little page, this is indeed lucky; just step to my rooms while I write a note to Donna Emilia.” I did so, and he gave me a quarter-doubloon as before. “I thank you, senhor,” replied I; “what with the doubloons of Don Florez and your quarter-doubloons, I shall soon be a rich man.”

“How say you,” replied he, “Don Florez give you doubloons—then he spoils the market; but I must not allow him to pay you better than I do, or I shall not be served so faithfully.—Here’s a doubloon and a half, which, with what you have already received, will make the accounts square.” I made my bow, and with many thanks withdrew.

Young as I was, I had an idea that something had occurred at the mistaken meeting of last night, which seriously affected Donna Teresa. As I was much more partial to her than to her sister, I resolved not to deliver the note of Don Perez to Emilia, until I had consulted Donna Teresa. On my return, I beckoned her into her chamber, and told her the answer of Don Florez, with his observation, “that he hoped he should be as fortunate as Don Perez was last night.” She coloured with shame and vexation; and I then told her how I had met Don Perez, and what had passed. I then gave her the note, and asked whether I should deliver it or not. She hastily tore it open—it ran as follows:—“How can I sufficiently express my gratitude to my adored Emilia, for her kindness to me last night? Tell me, dearest angel, when am I to have the pleasure of meeting you again in the saloon? Till you once more grant me the favour, life will be a blank.”

“Pedro,” said she, “you have indeed done me a service—you have been my preserver. How can I ever repay you?”

“Give me a double allowance of kisses, this time,” replied I.

“I will give you a thousand,” answered she; and she kissed and blessed me while tears ran down her cheeks: she then took some paper, and imitating the hand-writing, wrote as follows:— “I must submit to your wishes, Donna Emilia; and while your sister blesses Don Florez, must yield to the severity of your disposition. Still I hope that you will relent—I am very miserable; write to me, if you have any love still remaining for your adorer.—Perez.”

“Take this to Emilia, my sweet child.—What can I do to reward you?”

“Why you must take care of my money,” said I, “for if my mistress finds it out, I shall never be able to tell how I came by it.” She smiled mournfully as she received my doubloons, and locked them up in a trinket-box. “I will add to your wealth, Pedro,” said she.

“No,” replied I, “only kisses from you.” I told her why her aunt gave me the two reals, and we separated. I delivered the note to Donna Emilia, who in the afternoon put an answer into my hand; but I would not act without Donna Teresa knowing what took place; and it occurred to me, that it would be very possible to repair the mischief which my mistake had occasioned. I therefore took the answers of Donna Emilia to her lover to Donna Teresa, and told her what I thought. “My dear Pedro, you are indeed a treasure to me,” replied Teresa.

She opened Emilia’s note, which ran as follows:— “You accuse me of unkindness, which I do not deserve. Heaven knows my heart is but too yielding. I will arrange a meeting as soon as I possibly can; but as I before said, my aunt is suspicious, and I cannot make up my mind, like Teresa, to run the risk of discovery.”

Teresa tore up this note; and wrote as follows:— “If a woman has the misfortune to yield too much to the solicitations of her lover, he becomes arrogant, and claims as a right, what only can be received as a favour. I consider that what passes in darkness should remain as secret in the breast, and as silent in the tongue. I now tell you candidly, that I shall consider it as an insult, if ever you refer to

the meeting of last night; and to punish you for your arrogant request of another, shall treat you with the same reserve as before. Recollect that the least intimation of it, however private we may be, will be the signal of your dismissal. At the same time, expecting implicit obedience to this command, I shall punish you no further, if you offend not again. When I feel inclined to see you, I will let you know. Till then, Yours, etcetera.”

I took this note to Don Perez, whom I found at his lodgings drinking in company with Don Florez, for they had no secrets from each other. Perez opened the note, and appeared a little astonished. “Read this, Florez,” said he, “and tell me if woman is not a riddle.”

“Well, now I like her spirit,” replied Florez, “some women would have been dying with apprehension at your leaving them: she, on the contrary, considers that you are under greater obligations than before; and assumes her dominion over you. I recommend you to comply with her injunctions, if you wish to retain her love.”

“I don’t know but what you are right, Florez; and as we are lords and masters after marriage, it is but fair, that they should hold their uninterrupted sway before. I feel more attached to her than ever; and if she chooses to play the tyrant, why she shall. It shows her good sense; for keeping us off, is the only way to induce us to go on.”

I returned home, delivering a note from Don Perez to Emilia, stating his intention to abide by her wishes, and stated to Donna Teresa all that had passed between the cavaliers.

“Thanks to your prudence and sagacity, my dear little Pedro, all as yet is well; but it may yet be discovered; for I will now confide to you, that the tenderness last night, intended for Don Florez, was by your mistake, and the darkness and silence prescribed at the meeting, lavished upon my sister’s admirer. But all will I trust be well, and I shall not suffer for an unintentional misfortune.”

That evening Don Florez was received by Teresa in the saloon; and the next morning, I was sitting as usual by my mistress, when she asked, “Well, Pedro, have you discovered any thing?”

“Yes, madam,” replied I.

“And what is it, child?”

“Why, madam, a gentleman asked me to give a letter, but I would not.”

“Who was it for, child?”

“I don’t know, madam, for I refused to take it in my hand.”

“Well, Pedro, you were right; the next time he offers you a letter take it, and bring it to me.”

“I will, madam,” said I. “Here are two reals for you, child—have you spent the last I gave you?”

I left the room—when Donna Emilia met me outside, and put a note into my hand for Don Perez. I first took it to my friend Teresa, who opened it:—“At last my affection has borne down my resolution, and I consent to see you. There is no other way but in the saloon. Be careful not to offend me, or it will be for the last time.”

“This may go, Pedro,” said Teresa, “and you may call at Don Florez’s lodgings as you pass by.”

I delivered the note to Don Perez, and before he had finished it, Don Florez entered the room.—“Congratulate me, my dear friend,” said he. “I was received as kindly as I could wish.”

“And my fair one has not taken long to relent,” answered Perez, “for I have an appointment with her this evening. Pedro, tell your mistress, that I do not write, but that I bless her for her kindness, and shall not fail to meet her.—Do you understand? Well, what are you waiting for? Oh! you little rogue, I understand,” and he threw me a doubloon.—“Florez, you give that boy too much money, and I am obliged to do the same.” Florez laughed, and I again took my departure.

Thus did I continue in my vocation for some time, when the old lady fell sick and died. She divided her fortune between her two nieces, and as they were now independent, they married their respective lovers; but the old lady forgot to mention me in her will, and I should have been turned adrift on the world had it not been for Donna Teresa, who immediately appointed me as her own attendant. I was as happy as before, although no more doubloons fell into my hands, after the marriages took place. It appears that Don Perez was so much afraid of offending Donna Emilia, that he never

ventured to speak of the meeting, which he supposed he had with her in the saloon, until after marriage then, feeling himself quite at liberty, he had laughed at her on the subject. Donna Emilia was all astonishment, declared most positively that it had not taken place; and although he at first ridiculed the idea of her denial, yet recollecting that he still had her notes in his possession, he brought them out, and showed her the one in which she had prohibited him from speaking on the subject. Donna Emilia protested that it was not her writing, and was confounded at the apparent mystery. She stated that Teresa had agreed to meet Don Florez in the saloon that night.

“On the contrary,” replied Don Perez, “he received a letter from Donna Teresa, refusing him a meeting, at the same time that I received this from you, giving me the assignation.”

Donna Emilia burst into tears. “I see how it is,” replied she, “the page by mistake has given the note which I wrote you to Don Florez, and Teresa’s note fell into your hands. You have taken an unworthy advantage of the circumstance, and have met my sister. Never make me believe, Don Perez, that you were not aware of the mistake, when she received you in the saloon—or that she could not distinguish you from Don Florez. Cruel sister, thus to rob me of my happiness! Treacherous Don Perez, thus to betray your friend and me!”

Don Perez tried all he could to pacify his wife, but in vain. Her jealousy, her pride, and her conscientious scruples were roused, and she would not listen to any reasoning or protestations. Although he was almost certain, that the fact was as his wife had stated, he determined to make sure by referring to me. He came to Don Florez’s house, and after staying a little while with him and his wife, during which he appeared so uneasy that they asked him whether he was unwell, he went away making a sign for me to follow him. He then entered into all the particulars, and asked me about the delivery of the notes. I took it for granted, that an explanation had taken place between him and his wife—my only object was to save Donna Teresa.

“Senhor, whether what Donna Emilia says is true, I know not,” replied I; “but, that it was not Donna Teresa who met you, I can certify, for I was in her room with her that night till she went to bed, playing at piquet for sugar-plums.”

“Then who could it be,” observed he.

“I know not, senhor, for I did not go down stairs, where my mistress was, because she had sent me to bed, and I knew that I should have been scolded for being up. Therefore I cannot say whether Donna Emilia was with you or not.”

Don Perez meditated some time, and then came to the conclusion that his wife was ashamed of having been too indulgent to him in an unguarded moment, and would not acknowledge it. Still he was far from being satisfied. He returned home, to explain what he had gathered to his wife but found that she had left the house some time before, without stating whither she was going. As soon as Don Perez left the house, I hastened to my mistress, to acquaint her with what had passed, and what I had told him.

“I thank you for your kind intention, Pedro, but I am afraid that all will be discovered. It is a judgment on me for my folly and indiscretion.”

In the mean time, Donna Emilia, who had taken refuge in a neighbouring convent, sent for Don Florez. He found her in the convent-parlour in tears. Convinced by jealousy that her sister had an attachment to Don Perez, and that there had been a mutual understanding, she stated to Don Florez the whole of the circumstances, and pointing out to him how treacherously they both had been treated, acquainted him with her intention of retiring from the world.

Don Florez, stirred to madness by the information, exclaimed—“It was for this, then, that she put me off on that night, and was kind to me the next. Cursed dupe that I have been; but, thank Heaven, it is not too late to be revenged. Don Perez, you shall pay dearly for this.” So saying, he quitted Donna Emilia, uncertain whether he should first wreak his vengeance upon Don Perez or his wife. But this point was soon decided, for at the convent gate he encountered Don Perez, who had been informed whither his wife had retreated.

“You are the person I have been anxiously wishing to see, Don Perez—treacherous villain, void of all honour.”

“Not so, Don Florez. I am an unfortunate man, who is half mad by a cruel mistake which has occurred. Recall your words, for they are unjust.”

“I do not intend to recall them, but assert the truth with the point of my rapier. If you are not as great a coward, as you are a villain, you will follow me.”

“Such language will admit of no reply. I am at your service,” cried Don Perez.

The two brothers-in-law walked in silence, until they reached a field hard by, where they threw off their cloaks, and fought with the fury of demons. Victory was decided in favour of Don Perez; his sword passed through the heart of his adversary, who never spoke again. Don Perez viewed the body with a stern countenance, wiped his sword, took up his cloak, and walked straight to the house of Don Florez. “Donna Teresa,” said he, (I only was present,) “I call upon you, as you value salvation in the day of judgment, to tell me the truth. Was it you, that, by an unfortunate mistake, I met one night in the saloon; and were those caresses, intended for Don Florez, bestowed upon me?”

There was a wildness, a ferocity in his air that frightened her; she stammered out at last:—“for my sins, it is true; but you know, too well, that I never was false in heart, although when I found out my mistake, I attempted to conceal my indiscretion.”

“Had you, madam, been as virtuous as your sister, all this mischief would not have happened—and your husband would not now be lying a corpse, by the hand of his brother.”

Donna Teresa fainted at the intelligence, and Don Perez immediately quitted the house. I hastened to her assistance, and succeeded in restoring her to life.

“It is but too true,” said she, mournfully; “crime will always meet with punishment, in this world, or in the next. By permitting my love to overcome the dictates of virtue, by being too fond of my husband, I have murdered him. Oh God! I have murdered him and rendered the lives of two others as much a burden to them as my own will ever be. My poor, dear sister, where is she?”

I tried all my powers of consolation, but in vain: all she requested was that I would find out where her sister was, and let her know. I set off upon my melancholy task, and met the people hearing in the body of Don Florez. I shuddered as it passed by, when I recollected how principal a part I had acted in the tragedy. I soon gained the information, and brought it to Donna Teresa. She dressed herself in deep mourning, and, desiring me to follow her, knocked at the convent gate, and, requesting to see the superior, was admitted. The superior came out of the parlour to receive her, not wishing that any one should enter, while Donna Emilia was in such a state of misery and despair.

“It is my sister that I come to see, madam, and I must not be refused: lead me to her, and be witness of the scene, if you please.”

The superior, who was not aware that Emilia would have refused to see Donna Teresa, led the way, and we were ushered into the presence of Emilia, who, looking up as Donna Teresa entered, turned away from her as if in abhorrence.

“Emilia,” said my mistress, “we are born of the same mother, we have lived as children, and we have grown up together; never did we have a secret from each other, till this unfortunate mistake occurred. On my knees, I request you to listen to me, and to believe what I say.”

“Plead your cause with your husband, Teresa; it is more necessary to pacify him than me.”

“I have no husband, Emilia; he is now pleading his own cause with God—for he has fallen by the sword of yours.”

Donna Emilia started.

“Yes, Emilia, dear, dear sister, it is but too true, and still more true, that you have caused his death. Do not kill me too, Emilia, by refusing to believe what I declare, as I hope for eternal salvation—that I never was aware of the mistake, until the boy discovered it to me, on the ensuing day. If you knew the shame, the vexation, the fear of discovery which racked my frame, when I was but too sure of it, you would forgive my having tried to hide a fault, the knowledge of which would make

others miserable, as well as me. Say you believe me—say you forgive me, Emilia. Oh! Emilia, cannot you forgive a sister?”

Emilia answered not, and Teresa, clinging to her knees, and embracing them, sobbed hysterically. At this moment Don Perez, who had obtained admittance to see his wife, came into the room, and walking up to the part in which the two unfortunate ladies remained in the attitudes described, said,—“You, Teresa, who have been the original cause of this unhappy business, I mean not to reproach again. Your punishment has been greater than your offence. It is to you, madam, I must address myself; who, by not believing in the words of truth, have caused me to slay my dearest friend and brother, and, after having unwittingly wounded him in the tenderest point, add to the injury by taking away his life. Are you yet satisfied, madam? Are you satisfied with having embittered my days by your injustice and unworthy suspicions—by having reduced your unfortunate, yet not guilty sister, to the state of an unhappy, lonely woman, now suing in vain for pardon at your feet; by having been the occasion of the death of your brother by marriage—her husband and my friend? Say, madam, are you yet satisfied, or will you have more victims to your unbelief?”

Emilia answered not, but continued with her face averted.

“Be it so, then, madam;” replied Don Perez; and, before any one was aware of his intention, he drew his sword, and fell upon it. “Now, Emilia, let the sacrifice of my life be a proof to you of my sincerity. As I hope for pardon, I have told the truth;” and Don Perez fell on his back, and was dead.

Emilia started round when he fell, and threw herself down by his side in horror and amazement. The film that passion had thrown over her eyes was removed, as she witnessed the last melancholy result of her unbelief. When Don Pedro ceased speaking, she threw herself on his body, in an agony of grief.—“I do, I do believe—Perez. I do, I do! Oh! indeed I do believe—speak to me, Perez—O God, he is dying!—Sister, Teresa, come, come, he’ll speak to you—he’s not angry with you—Sister, sister, speak—O God! O God!” screamed the unhappy woman, “he’s dead—and I have murdered him!”—and she dashed her head upon the floor. Teresa hastened to her sister, and held her in her arms, while the tears poured fast. It was some time before reason resumed her seat; at last, exhausted by the violence of her feelings, she was relieved with a flood of tears.

“Who is it?—you, Teresa—kind sister, whom I have used so ill—I do believe you—I do believe, Teresa; God forgive me! kiss me, sister, and say that you forgive me—for am I not punished?”

“It is all my fault,” answered Teresa, bursting into tears: “Oh! how wicked, how foolish have I been!”

“No, no, sister, your fault is small, compared to mine; you allowed your passion to overcome you, but it arose from an excess of love, the best feeling in our nature—the only remnant of heaven left us since our fall. I too have allowed my passion to overcome me; but whence has it arisen?—from hatred and jealousy, feelings which were implanted by demons, and which create a hell wherever they command. But it is done, and repentance comes too late.”

The unfortunate sisters embraced each other and mingled their tears together; and I hardly need say, that the lady abbess and I could not restrain our meed of pity at the affecting scene. As the evening closed, they separated, each to attend to the same mournful duty, of watching by the bodies of their husbands, and bedewing them with their tears. A few days after the interments took place, Emilia sent for her sister, and after an affectionate interview, took the veil in the convent to which she had retired—endowing the church with her property. Donna Teresa did not take the veil; but employed herself in the more active duties of charity and benevolence; but she gradually wasted away—her heart was broken. I stayed with her for three years, when she died, leaving a considerable sum to me, and the remainder of her wealth to beneficent institutions. This is about five years ago; since when I have been living on the property, which is nearly all expended by my extravagance. The stigma on my birth is, however, the only subject which has weighed upon my spirits—this is providentially removed, and I trust that I shall not disgrace the mother who has so kindly acknowledged me, or the dear girl who has honoured this faulty person with her attachment.

My mother and Clara thanked me when I had concluded my narrative, and we remained unto a late hour entering upon family affairs, and planning for the future. My mother informed me that upon the estates she had only a life interest, as they were entailed, and would revert to a cousin; but that she had laid by a considerable sum of money, intending it as a dowry for my Clara, and that she hoped to increase it before she died. As I was anxious to quit Seville, where I feared daily discovery, I proposed that we should retire to the estate near Carthagena, by which not only a considerable expense would be saved, but I should feel more happy in the company of Clara and herself. My mother and my intended gladly consented to the proposal, not only for the above reasons, but because she was aware that the questions which might be asked about me would tend to the injury of her character. In less than a fortnight the establishment at Seville was broken up, and we retired to the country, where I was made happy by the possession of my Clara. I now considered myself as secure from any discovery, and although I had led a life of duplicity, meant by future good conduct to atone for the past. Whether Donna Celia was my mother or not, I felt towards her as if she was, and after some time from habit considered it an established fact. My Clara was as kind and endearing as I could desire; and for five years I was as happy as I could wish. But it was not to last: I was to be punished for my deceit. My marriage with Clara, and the mystery attached to my birth, which was kept secret, had irritated the heir of the estate, who had been in hopes, by marrying Clara himself, to secure the personal as well as the real property. We occasionally met, but we met with rancour in our hearts, for I resented his behaviour towards me. Fearful of discovery, I had never paid any attention to music since my marriage; I had always pretended that I could not sing. Even my wife was not aware of my talent; and although latterly I had no fear of the kind, yet as I had always stated my inability, I did not choose to bring forth a talent, the reason for concealing which I could not explain even to my wife and mother, without acknowledging the deception of which I had been guilty.

It happened that one evening at a large party I met my cousin, the heir of the entailed estates. We were very joyous and merry, and had drunk a good deal more than usual. The wine was powerful, and had taken effect upon most of us. Singing was introduced, and the night passed merrily away, more visitors occasionally dropping in. My cousin was much elated with wine, and made several ill-natured remarks, which were meant for me. I took no notice for some time, but, as he continued, I answered with such spirit, as to arouse his indignation. My own blood boiled; but the interference of mutual friends pacified us for the time, and we renewed our applications to the bottle. My cousin was called upon for a song; he had a fine voice and considerable execution, and was much applauded.

“Now then,” said he, in an ironical tone, “perhaps Don Pedro will oblige the company; although perhaps the real way to oblige them will be by not attempting that of which he is not capable.”

Stung with this sarcasm, and flushed with wine, I forgot my prudence. Snatching the guitar from him, after a prelude which created the greatest astonishment of all present, I commenced one of my most successful airs: I sang it in my best style, and it electrified the whole party. Shouts proclaimed my victory, and the defeat of my relative. Some embraced me in their enthusiasm, and all loudly encored; but as soon as there was a moment's silence, I heard a voice behind me observe—“Either that is the monk Anselmo's voice, or the devil's.”

I started at the words, and turned round to the speaker, but he had mingled with the crowd, and I could not discover who it was. I perceived that my relative had followed him on; and I now cursed my own imprudence. As soon as I could, I made my escape from the company, and returned home. As I afterwards found out, my relative had immediately communicated with the person who had made the observation. He was one of the priests who knew me at Seville. From him, my cousin gained the information that brother Anselmo had left the convent about five years ago, and not having returned, it was thought that an accident had happened to him. But a discovery had since been made, which led them to suppose, that brother Anselmo had, for some time, been carrying on a system of deception. You may remember I stated, that when I resumed my worldly apparel to introduce myself as the son of Donna Celia, I changed the dress at my lodgings. I locked up my friar's dress and the false tonsure

in the chest, intending to have returned, and destroyed it; but I quite forgot it, and left Seville with the key of my lodgings in my pocket. The landlord waited until his rent was due, when not hearing any thing of me, he broke open the door and found the chest. This he opened, and discovered the false tonsure and friar's gown. Knowing the monastic order to which it belonged, and suspecting some mischief; he took it to our convent, and all the habits of the monks being numbered in the inside, it was immediately recognised as mine: the false tonsure also betrayed that I must have been breaking through the rules of my order, and the most rigorous search after me was made for some time without success. Possessed of this information, my vindictive relative repaired to Seville to ascertain the exact date of my quitting the convent, and found that it was about a fortnight previous to Donna Celia having quitted Seville. He then repaired to the landlord for further information. The landlord stated that the lodgings had been taken by a monk, for his brother, who had occupied them. He described the brother's person, which exactly corresponded with mine; and my relation was convinced that the monk Anselmo and Don Pedro were one and the same person. He immediately gave notice to the Inquisition. In the mean time, I was in the greatest consternation. I felt that I should be discovered, and reflected upon my conduct. I had lately abjured all deceit, and had each day gained a step in the path of virtue. I acknowledged with bitterness, that I deserved all that threatened me, and that, sooner or later, vice will meet with its reward. Had I at first made known my situation to Donna Celia, she would have had interest enough (believing me to be her son), to have obtained a dispensation of my vows. I then might have boldly faced the world—but one act of duplicity required another to support it, and thus had I entangled myself in a snare, by which I was to be entrapped at last. But it was not for myself that I cared; it was for my wife whom I doted on—for my mother (or supposed mother), to whom it would be the bitterness of death. The thoughts of rendering others miserable as well as myself drove me to distraction—and how to act I knew not.

After much reflection, I resolved as a last resource, to throw myself upon the generosity of my adversary; for although inimical to me, he bore a high character as a Spanish cavalier. I desired to be informed the moment that he returned from Seville; and when the intelligence came, I immediately repaired to his house, and requested an audience. I was admitted; when Don Alvarez, for that was his name, addressed me.

“You wish to speak with me, Don Pedro—there are others at your house by this time who wish to speak with you.”

I guessed that he meant the officers of the Inquisition; but pretending not to understand the remark, I answered him:—“Don Alvarez, the enmity that you have invariably shown towards me has, I am sure, proceeded from the affront, which you consider that your noble family has received, by your cousin having formed an alliance with one of unknown parentage. I have long borne with your pointed insults, out of respect for her who gave me birth; I am now about to throw myself upon your generosity, and probably when I inform you, that I am the unhappy issue of the early amour of Donna Celia (which of course you have heard of), I may then claim your compassion, if not your friendship, from having at least some of the same noble blood in my veins.”

“I was not indeed aware of it,” replied Don Alvarez, with agitation; “I would to Heaven you had confided in me before.”

“Perhaps it would have been better,” replied I, “but permit me to prove my assertions.” I then stated my having been the friar Anselmo, the discovery of my birth by accident, and the steps which I had taken. “I am aware,” continued I, “that I have been much to blame, but my love for Donna Clara made me regardless of consequences. Your unfortunate enmity induced me, in an unguarded moment, to expose myself; and it will probably end in my destruction.”

“I acknowledge the truth of your remark, and that no power can save you, I lament it, Don Pedro; but what is done cannot be undone. Even now the officers of the Inquisition are at your house.” As he uttered these words, a loud knocking at the door announced that they had followed me. “This

must not be Don Pedro,” said Don Alvarez, “step this way.” He opened a panel, and desired me to go in—and he hardly had time to shut it before the officers came into the room.

“You have him here, Don Alvarez, have you not?” inquired the chief.

“No, unfortunately,” replied he, “I tried to detain him, but suspecting some discovery he forced his way out, sword in hand, and has gone I do not know in what direction; but he cannot be far—saddle all the horses in my stable and pursue the sacrilegious wretch. I would sacrifice half my worldly wealth, that he should not escape my vengeance.”

As Don Alvarez was the informant, and uttered these words with the apparent violence of rage, the inquisitors had no suspicion, but hastened to comply with his request. As soon as they had departed, he opened the panel and let me out.

“So far, Don Pedro, have I proved the sincerity of my assertion; but now, what remains to be done?”

“But one thing, Don Alvarez, to conceal the truth from my poor wife and mother. I could bear it all with firmness, but for them,” (and I fell on a sofa, and burst into tears.) Don Alvarez was much affected.

“Oh, Don Pedro! it is too late now, or I should say, ‘What a warning this ought to be to us—that honesty is the best policy!’ had you communicated to me the mystery of your birth, this never would have occurred. Instead of having been your persecutor, I should have been your friend—What can I do?”

“Kill me, Don Alvarez,” replied I, baring my breast, “and I will bless you for the deed. My death may afflict them, but they will recover from their grief in time; but to know that I am murdered by the Inquisition, as a sacrilegious impostor, will bring them to their grave with shame and mortification.”

“Your observation is correct; but kill you I must not. I will, however, so far comply with your wishes, that I will bear the news of your death, and their hatred of the deed, rather than the family should be disgraced.” He then went to his scrutoire, and taking out a bag of one thousand pistoles—“This is all the money that I have at present—it will serve you for some time. Put on one of my servant’s dresses, and I will accompany you to a seaport, and secure your safety before I leave you. I will then state, that I met you in a fair duel, and will bribe the officers of the Inquisition to hold their tongues about the circumstances which have been communicated.”

The advice was good, and I agreed to it; following him as a servant, I arrived safely at Carthagen, whence I took a passage for New Spain. We sailed; and before we were clear of the Straits of Gibraltar, we were attacked by one of the cruisers of the state. We fought desperately, but were overpowered by numbers; and they took possession, after we had lost more than half of our crew. They brought us into this port; where, with the rest, I was sold as a slave.

“Such is my history,” ended the Spaniard, “which I trust has afforded some amusement to your sublime highness.”

The immediate answer of the pacha was a loud yawn.

“Shukur Allah! Praise be to God you have done talking. I do not understand much about it,” continued the pacha, turning round to Mustapha; “but how can we expect a good story from an unbelieving dog of a Christian?”

“Wallah thaib! Well said, by God!” replied Mustapha; “who was Lokman, that they talk of his wisdom? Are not these words of more value than strung pearls?”

“What was the name of the country?” demanded the pacha.

“Spain, your sublime highness; the infidel tribes which you allow to remain there, are employed in cultivating the olive for true believers.”

“Very true,” rejoined the pacha; “I remember now. Let the kafir taste of our bounty. Give him two pieces of gold; and allow him to depart.”

“May the shadow of your sublime highness never be less,” said the Spaniard. “I have here a manuscript which I received from an ancient monk of our order when at the point of death. At the

time of my capture it was thrown on one side, and I preserved it as curious. It refers to the first discovery of an island. As your highness is pleased to be amused with stories, it may be worth while to have it translated.” The Dominican then handed from his breast a discoloured piece of parchment.

“Very good,” replied the pacha, rising. “Mustapha let it be put into Arabic by the Greek slave, who shall read it to us some evening when we have no story-tellers.”

“Be chesm! Upon my eyes be it,” replied Mustapha, bowing low, as the pacha retired to his harem.

Volume One–Chapter Five

The pacha had repeated his perambulations for many nights, without success; and Mustapha, who observed that he was becoming very impatient, thought it advisable to cater for his amusement.

Among those who used to repair to Mustapha when he exercised his former profession, was a French renegade, a man of considerable talent and ready invention, but a most unprincipled scoundrel, who, previous to the elevation of Mustapha, had gained his livelihood by daring piratical attempts in an open boat. He was now in the employ of the vizier, commanding an armed xebeque which the latter had purchased. She passed off as a government cruiser but was in reality a pirate. Selim, for that was the name which the renegade had adopted when he abjured his faith, condemned every vessel that had the misfortune to meet with him, taking out the cargoes, burning the hull, and throwing the crews overboard, with the privilege of swimming on shore if they could. By this plan he avoided the inconveniences attending any appeals from the jurisdiction of the High Court of Admiralty, which he had established upon the seas.

The consequence was, that his cruises were more successful than ever; and Mustapha, who was not content with pillaging the pacha's subjects on dry land, was amassing a large fortune at their expense by his maritime speculations.

Occasionally, bales or packages would be recognised when landed as having the identical marks and numbers of those which had been shipped from the quay but a fortnight before; but the renegade could always give a satisfactory explanation to the vizier; and after a Jew, who could not bear the idea of parting with his property without remonstrance, had been impaled, people shrugged up their shoulders and said nothing.

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