

"After all is said," replied Haydn, "we owe him nothing. Who was it that first determined, and first had spirit enough to fight the recruiters? The baron of course. The count cared nothing about it and only did so through complaisance, and because he thought it the fashion to do so. Who was it that ran all the risks, and received a bullet through his hat, and very close to his brains? The baron again. Who was it that wounded, and perhaps killed the infamous Pistola? The baron once more. Who was it that saved the deserter, to his own cost perhaps, and at the risk of incurring the wrath of his terrible master? Last of all, who was it that respected you without pretending to recognise your sex, and both understood and appreciated the beauty of your Italian airs, and the good taste of your manner of singing?"

"Not to say the genius of Master Joseph Haydn?" added Consuelo, with a sly smile. "The baron—still the baron."

"Undoubtedly," said Haydn, paying her back for the malice of her observation; "and it is perhaps very fortunate for a noble and well-beloved absentee, of whom I have heard speak, that the declaration of love to the divine Porporina came from the ridiculous count, instead of from the brave and seductive baron."

"Beppo!" replied Consuelo, with a wan and mournful smile, "the absent are never wronged but by ungrateful and coward hearts. Therefore it is, that the baron, himself generous and sincere, who is deeply in love with his mysterious beauty, could never think of paying court to me. I ask you yourself, could you so easily sacrifice the love of your betrothed, and the faith of your heart, to a fancy for the first comer?"

Beppo sighed deeply. "A passion for you, by whomsoever nourished, could not be termed a *fancy for the first comer*," said he, "and the baron would have been perfectly excusable for forgetting all his past and present loves on seeing you."

"You are becoming quite gallant and flattering, Beppo. I see that you have profited by the society of Monsieur le Comte. But I trust that you may never marry a Margravine, and learn how love is regarded by those who marry for money."

They arrived at Lintz that night, and slept there, careless and fearless, until the morrow. So soon as Joseph was awakened, he hurried to buy shoes, linen, and several little articles of masculine attire for himself, as well as for Consuelo, who was now enabled to make herself brave and a *beau*, as Consuelo said in fine, to walk about the town and its neighborhood. The old boatman had told them that if he could get a freight for Mœlk, he would take them on board, the next day, and carry them yet twenty leagues further down the Danube. They passed that day, therefore, at Lintz, amused themselves with climbing the hill, examining the strong castles at the bottom and on the top of it, whence they could survey the majestic windings of the river, through the fertile plains of Austria. From that elevation they descried what greatly delighted them, the triumphal entry, namely, of Count Hoditz driving into the town. They recognised both the carriage and the liveries, and amused themselves by making low bows quite down to the ground, without the possibility of being seen by him. Toward evening they came down again to the shore, and found their boat laden with freight for Mœlk; whereupon they joyfully made a new bargain with their old steersman, embarked before daybreak, and saw the stars serenely burning far above their

heads, while the reflection of those stars ran in long silvery wakes over the moving mirror of the ripples. This day was not less delightful than the preceding. Joseph had but one regret, in the thought that they were hourly drawing nearer to Vienna, and that their journey, the sufferings and the sorrows of which he had all forgotten, in the memory of its last delicious instants, was drawing to its end.

At Mœlk they had to part from the brave old pilot, and that not without regret. They did not find in any of the vessels, which were in readiness to convey them farther down the stream, any which offered the same conditions of solitude and security. Consuelo felt herself entirely refreshed, recruited, and proof against all future accidents. She proposed to Joseph to resume their pedestrian habits until something new should occur. They had still twenty leagues to go, and this mode of procedure was not certainly the most rapid. The truth is, Consuelo, though she strove hard to persuade herself that she was all anxiety to resume the dress of her sex, and the proprieties of her station, was as little anxious, at the bottom of her heart, as was Joseph himself to see the end of their expedition. She was too thoroughly an artist, to the inmost nerve of her organization, not to love the liberty, the adventurous risks, the deeds of courage or address, and the constant and varied spectacle which the foot passenger alone enjoys in perfection; not to love, in a word, all the romantic activity and vicissitude of a wandering and solitary existence.

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#### CHAPTER LXXIV.

THE first day of this, their new start, as our travellers crossed a little stream, by a wooden bridge, they saw a poor mendicant who held a little girl in her arms, and who was huddled up beside the parapet, stretching out her hand for charity to the passengers. The child was pale and suffering, the woman haggard and shivering with fever. Consuelo was deeply touched by sympathy and pity at this scene, which strongly reminded her of herself and her mother. "This is as we were once," said she to Joseph, who understood her at half a word, and who stopped with her to examine and question the mendicant.

"Alas!" said she, "it is but a few days, and I was very happy. I am a peasant, from the vicinity of Harmanitz in Bohemia. I had married, five years ago, a fine stout cousin of my own, who was the most laborious of mechanics, and the best of husbands. At the end of a year, my poor Karl, who had gone to cut wood in the mountains, suddenly disappeared, without any person being able to conjecture what had become of him. At once, I fell into the depths of poverty and of sorrow. I thought my husband had fallen from some precipice and been devoured by wolves. Although it was often in my power to marry a second time, the uncertainty of his fate, and the love which I still felt for him, did not permit me to entertain such a thought. Oh! well was I recompensed, my children. Last year, some one knocked at my door one night; I opened it, and fell on my knees at seeing my dear husband before me. But, gracious heavens! in what a condition. He looked like a phantom. He was withered,

yellow, with haggard eyes, hair stiff with icicles, feet covered with blood—those poor feet with which he had travelled, I know not how many hundreds of miles over the most hideous of roads, in the most inclement of winters. But he was so happy at again rejoining his wife, and his poor little girl, that he soon recovered his health, his good looks, and his ability to work. He told me that he had been carried off by brigands who had carried him very far, almost to the sea coast, and had sold him to the king of Prussia for a soldier. He had lived three years in that cruel servitude, at the hardest of all trades, beaten from morning until night. At length, he succeeded in escaping, in deserting, my good children. Fighting, like a desperado, against his pursuers, he had killed one, and put out the eye of another, by throwing a stone. To conclude, he had walked, day and night, concealing himself in the morasses and the woods like a wild beast; he had traversed Saxony and Bohemia, and he had escaped—he was restored to me. Ah! how happy we were during that winter, in spite of all the inclemency of the season, and the hardships of poverty. We had but one cause of anxiety, and that was the fear of seeing the birds who had caused all our misery reappear in our neighborhood; we had often thought of going to Vienna, to see the Empress, tell her the tale of our woes, obtain her protection, military service for my husband, and some means of subsistence for myself and my little girl; but I fell ill in consequence of the revulsion of feeling which I experienced on recovering my poor Karl, and we were compelled to pass the whole winter and the following summer in our mountains, always awaiting the moment when we should be able to set out, always keeping on our guard, and sleeping only with one eye closed. At length, the happy day arrived; I had become strong enough to walk, but my little girl, who was still weak, was to journey in the arms of her father. But our ill fortune awaited us on issuing from the mountains. We were walking quietly and slowly along the edge of an unfrequented road, without paying any attention to a carriage which, for the last quarter of an hour, had been slowly ascending the same steep. On a sudden the carriage stopped, and three men got out of it. 'Are you sure it is he?' asked one. 'Yes,' replied the other, who was one-eyed. 'Upon him! upon him!'—My husband turned round and exclaimed, 'Ah! they are Prussians. That is the fellow whose eye I knocked out. I recognise him.'—'Fly!' I exclaimed—'fly—save yourself!' He had already taken to flight, when one of the monsters flew upon me, struck me down, and set the muzzle of one pistol to my head, and another to that of my little girl. Had it not been for that fiendish idea, he would have escaped, for he ran much better than the brigands, and he had the start of them. But at the cry I uttered when I saw the pistol at my child's head, Karl turned round, set up a loud shout to arrest the shot, and ran back as fast as he could. When the ruffian, whose foot was on my body, saw Karl within hearing, 'Surrender,' he cried, 'or I kill them both. Make one step to escape, and all is over with them!'—'I surrender—I surrender—here I am!' cried my poor husband, and he ran back to them quicker than he had fled at the first, disregarding all my prayers that he would leave us to die. When the tigers had him in their power, they beat him till he was half dead, and covered with blood; when I advanced to assist him, they beat me too. When I saw him pinioned before my eyes, I sobbed, and filled the air with my groans, when they told me that if I did not hold silence, they would kill my child. They had

already torn it from my arms, when Karl said, 'Be silent, wife; I command you—think of our child.' I obeyed; but the agony I underwent at seeing my husband beaten, bound, and gagged before my face, while those monsters cried 'Aye! weep—weep! thou wilt never see him again, for we lead him hence to be hanged,' was so overpowering that I fell in the road as one dead, and lay all day senseless. When I opened my eyes it was night; my poor child lay on my bosom, writhing and sobbing as if its heart would break; there was no longer anything on the road but my husband's blood, and the traces of the carriage wheels which carried him off. I stopped there yet an hour or two, trying to console and reanimate Maria, who was as cold as ice, and half dead with fear. At length, when I recovered my senses, I began to consider which was the best to be done. It was clearly not to pursue the robbers, but to go and make my deposition before the magistrates of Wiesenbach, which was the nearest town. This I did; and I afterwards determined to proceed to Vienna, and cast myself at the feet of the Empress, in order that she may prevent the King of Prussia from executing sentence of death against my husband. Her Majesty can reclaim my husband as her subject, in case the recruiters cannot be overtaken. I have therefore used the small alms which I obtained in the lands of the bishopric of Passau, in getting brought so far as the Danube, in a cart, and thence I came down the river in a boat so far as Moelk, but now my resources are exhausted. The people to whom I relate my adventure are unwilling to receive it, and, in the doubt whether I am not an impostor, give me so little, that I must prosecute my journey on foot. Happy, if I arrive in five or six days, without dying of weariness; for sickness and despair are consuming me. Now, my dear children, give me some little charity, if you have the means of doing so, for I can rest no longer, but must journey onward, still onward, like the wandering Jew, until I shall obtain justice."

"Oh! my good woman!—my poor woman!" cried Consuelo, clasping her in her arms, and weeping tears of joy and compassion. "Courage! courage! Have good hopes, and be of heart. Your husband is free. He is now galloping toward Vienna, on a good horse with a well filled purse in his pocket."

"What say you?" cried the deserter's wife, whose eyes were suffused with tears, while her lips quivered convulsively, so that she could hardly speak. "You know him! You have seen him! Oh! my God! Great God! God of goodness!"

"Alas! what are you doing?" said Joseph to Consuelo,—“suppose you are giving her but a false joy. Suppose the deserter, whom we assisted in saving, is not her husband?”

"It is he, Joseph. I tell you it is he. Think of the one-eyed man—think of Pistola's manner of proceeding. Remember how the deserter said he was a father of a family, and an Austrian subject; but it is very easy to be satisfied. How does your husband look?"

"Red-haired, gray-eyed, large-faced, five feet eight inches high; his nose a little flattened—his forehead low—a superb man."

"That resembles him certainly," said Consuelo. "And how was he dressed?"

"An old green cassock, worn breeches, and gray stockings."

"That corresponds also; and the recruiters, did you pay any attention to them?"

"Did I not pay attention!—Holy Virgin! Their horrible faces

will never be effaced from my memory.' And then the poor woman accurately described Pistola, the slier man, and him with the one eye. "There is yet one other," said the poor woman—"the fourth, who remained near the horse, and took no part in what was passing. He had a coarse, indifferent face, which seemed to me even more cruel than that of the others; for, while I was shrieking, and they were beating my husband, and binding him with cords, like an assassin, the fat fellow sat there humming, and mimicking the trumpet with his mouth: 'Broum—broum—broum—broum!' Ah! what a heart of steel!"

"Well! that was Mayer," said Consuelo to Joseph. "Can you doubt any longer; he has a trick of humming continually, and of playing the trumpet thus."

"It is true," said Joseph. "It was then Karl whom we saw delivered. Thanks be to Heaven!"

"Yes, thanks to kind Heaven, above all," cried the poor woman, casting herself on her knees, "and you, too, Maria, do you, too, kiss the earth with me, to thank the guardian angels and the Holy Virgin. Your father is found again, and we shall soon rejoin him."

"Tell me, my good woman, is it a custom with Karl to kiss the earth when he is very happy?"

"Yes, my child; he never fails to do so. When he came back to us after deserting, he would not enter the house, until he had kissed the door-sill."

"Is that a custom of your country?"

"No; it is a custom of his own, which he has taught us, and which has always stood us instead."

"It was he then certainly whom we saw," resumed Consuelo, "for we saw him kiss the earth to thank those who had delivered him. Did you not observe it, Beppo?"

"Perfectly. It was he. There cannot now be a doubt of it."

"Come, let me clasp you to my heart," cried Carl's wife. "Oh! you two; you are angels of paradise, to bring me such news. But tell me how it fell out?"

Joseph told her all that had happened, and, when the woman had exhausted her gratitude in prayers to Heaven for the welfare of Joseph and Consuelo, whom she very naturally regarded as the first liberators of her husband, she asked what she had better do to recover him.

"I think you had better go to Vienna. You will find him there, if you do not overtake him on the way. Should you get there the first, be sure that you inform the officers of the administration where you live, in order that Karl may be informed the moment he presents himself there."

"Ah! me! what officers?—what administration? I know nothing of their habits. I shall be lost in so large a city, poor peasant that I am."

"Hold!" said Joseph. "We have never had any business by which we can know how such things are to be managed; but ask the first person you see to direct you to the Prussian embassy. Ask them for Monsieur le Baron de—"

"Take care what you are about, Beppo," said Consuelo in a whisper to Joseph, in order to prevent him from compromising the baron, in reference to that adventure.

"Well Count Hoditz, then," said Joseph. "Yes, the count. He

will do for vanity what the other would have done from good feeling. Enquire for the house of the Margravine, Princess of Bareith, and give her husband the note which I will hand to you."

And with the word, she tore a white leaf out of Joseph's blank book, and wrote the following words in pencil:—"Consuelo Porporina, prima donna of the theatre of San Samuel at Venice, ex-signor Bertoni, wandering singer at Passau, recommends to the noble heart of the Count Hoditz Roswald, the wife of Karl the deserter, whom his lordship saved from the hands of the recruiters and loaded with favors. La Porporina promises herself the pleasure of thanking Monsieur le Comte for his protection, in the presence of Madam the Margravine, if Monsieur the Comte will permit her the honor of singing in the private apartments of her highness." Consuelo signed it carefully and looked at Joseph, who, understanding her at a glance pulled out his purse. Without farther consultation, and by a spontaneous impulse, they then gave the poor woman the two pieces of gold which remained to them of Trenck's present, in order that she might travel in a carriage, and walked with her to the nearest village, at which they helped her to make her bargain with a cheap carriage driver. Then, having procured her something to eat, and some few articles of clothing at the expense of the rest of their little fortune, they saw the happy creature, who had received life as it were at her hands, embarked on her journey.

Consuelo then asked with a smile, how much was left at the bottom of the purse.

Joseph took up the violin, shook it beside his ear, and replied, "Nothing but sound."

Consuelo tried her voice in the open country, executed a brilliant roudade, and then exclaimed—"there is plenty of sound left." Then she joyously took the hand of her companion, gave it an affectionate squeeze, and said—"You are a brave lad, Beppo."

"And so are you," replied Beppo, bursting into a loud fit of laughter after he had wiped away a tear.

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#### CHAPTER LXXV.

It is not very alarming to fall short of money, when one is nearly at the end of a journey; but had they been much farther distant from it, our young artists would not have felt less gay than they now did on finding themselves all but safely landed. One has found himself in a foreign country destitute of resources; for Joseph was almost as much of a stranger as Consuelo at that distance from Vienna, to know what, marvellous security, what enterprising and inventive genius are revealed to the artist, who has thus spent his last penny. Up to that very moment, it is a sort of agony—a continual dread of falling short—a black apprehension of sufferings, of embarrassments and humiliations, which vanish as soon as the chink of the last piece of money is heard. Then to poetic minds, a new world commences—a holy confidence in the charity of others, full of charming illusions, mingled with a disposition to labor, and a willingness to be satisfied, which easily triumph over all obstacles.

"It is Sunday to-day," said Consuelo to Joseph, "you must play dances in the first village we come to. We shall not pass through two streets ere we shall find plenty of people who will wish to dance, and will gladly hire us as their minstrels. Do you know how to make a pipe? if you do, I shall easily learn to make some use of it, and provided I can draw a few single sounds from it, that will suffice for an accompaniment to you."

"Do I know how to make a pipe?" cried Joseph, "You shall soon see that."

They soon found on the river's edge a reed very fit from which to make a pipe; it was skillfully pierced, and sounded admirably. The key note was successfully pitched, a rehearsal followed, and our young folk proceeded very quietly to a little hamlet at about three miles distant, which they entered joyously to the sound of their instruments, crying at every door—"Who will dance, who will dance?" Here are the instruments; the ball is about to begin."

They soon came to a little square planted with fine trees, to which they were escorted by about forty children, marching in time to the music, clapping their hands, and shouting.

Ere long two or three merry couples came, and set the dust flying as they opened the ball; and, before the ground was fairly beaten the whole rustic population made a circle round this rustic ball, got up without premeditation and without conditions. At the conclusion of the first waltzes, Joseph put his violin under his arm, and Consuelo climbing up on her chair, addressed them in a little speech, informing them that when artists were hungry, their fingers were always stiff, and they were themselves short-winded. Five minutes afterward, bread, milk, cakes and ale, were brought to them in abundance. As to salary, they very soon came to an understanding, a collection was to be made, at which each person should give what he pleased.

When they had done eating, they mounted again on a barrel, which was rolled triumphantly into the middle of the circle, and the dancing recommenced; but at the expiration of about a couple of hours, they were interrupted by some news which appeared to set the whole place in a stir, and which, passing from mouth to mouth, at last reached the minstrels. The village shoemaker, in finishing a pair of shoes in a great hurry, had pricked his thumb badly with his awl.

"It is a serious event—a great misfortune," said an old man who was leaning against the barrel on which they were standing. "It is Gottlieb, the shoemaker, who is our village organist, and to-morrow is our patron saint's day. Oh! what a holiday! There is nothing like it within ten leagues round. Our mass, above all, is a wonder, and people come to hear it from great distances. Gottlieb is a real chapel master. He is the organist, he makes the children sing, he sings himself; in a word, what does he not do, especially on our holiday? And what will M. le Canon say? M. le Canon of St. Stephen's, who is himself the officiating minister at the high mass, and who is always so well pleased with our music? He is passionately fond of music, is the good canon; and it is a matter of great pride with us to see him at our altar, since we scarcely belong of right to his benefice, and it gives him not a little trouble to be present with us, which he does not like without good reason."

"Well," said Consuelo, "all that can be managed: my comrade and I together will take charge of the organ, of the singing-school, of the mass, in a word; and if Monsieur the Canon is not satisfied with us we will take nothing for our trouble."

"Very fine, very fine!" said the old man. "You talk about it quite at your ease, young man; but our mass is not played with a violin and a flute. No, indeed, it is a very different affair, and you are not acquainted with our partitions."

"We will make ourselves acquainted with them this very evening," said Joseph with an assumption of superiority, which was not without its influence on the auditors, who were grouped around him."

"Let us see," said Consuelo. "Take us to the church, let some one blow the organ, and if we do not play it to your satisfaction, you can always refuse your assistance."

"But the partitions, which is the master-piece of Gottlieb's arrangements?"

"We will call upon Gottlieb, and if he do not declare him satisfied with us, we give up all our pretensions. Besides, a wounded finger will not prevent Gottlieb from marshalling his choir, and singing his own part."

The village patriarchs, who had collected around them, now held council, and resolved on trying the experiment. The ball was abandoned; the canon's mass was a very different sort of affair from a dance.

Haydn and Consuelo, after successfully trying their hands at the organ, and singing both solos and duets, were admitted to be very tolerable musicians, in the absence of better. Some mechanics indeed were bold enough to say that their execution was superior to Gottlieb's; and that the fragments of Scarlatti, of Pergolesi and Bach, which they rehearsed, were equal at least to the music of Holzbaüer, which Gottlieb adhered to exclusively. The curate, who had come to listen, went so far as to assert that the canon would greatly prefer this music to that with which he was ordinarily regaled. The sacristan, who did not agree, shook his head gloomily; and the curate, in order to avoid giving offence to his parishioners, consented that these two *virtuosi*, who seemed to have been sent by Providence to their aid, should come to some agreement with Gottlieb to play the accompaniment to the mass.

They went in crowds to the house of the shoemaker, who showed them his hand so badly swollen that no one could imagine him capable of performing his functions of organist. The impossibility was far more real than he could have desired. Gottlieb was endowed with a certain degree of musical intelligence, and played tolerably well on the organ; but spoiled by the praises of his townsmen, and the half-mocking approbation of the canon, over-estimated most absurdly both his powers of execution and direction. He would have been willing that the holiday should have been a total failure, and that the patron saint's mass should be deprived of music, rather than that his own place should be filled by two wandering players. Nevertheless he was compelled to yield, and pretended to search for the *partition*, but he was so long about it, that the curate threatened to give the whole management into the hands of the two young artists, before he could be induced to find it.

Consuelo and Joseph had then to prove their science by reading at sight the passages which passed for the most difficult of that one of Holzbaüer's six and twenty masses which was to be performed on the morrow. That music, lacking both originality and genius, was at best well written and easy to catch, especially by Consuelo, who had mastered many more difficult trials. The auditors were wonder-struck; and

Gottlieb, who grew every moment more morose and sullen, declared that he had a fever, and that he should go to bed, being perfectly charmed that every one was satisfied.

The voices and instruments were therefore immediately collected in the church, and our two little *extempore* chapel-masters at once directed the rehearsal. All went well. The brewer, the weaver, the schoolmaster, and the baker of the village, played the four violins. The choirs consisted of the children with their parents, good peasants or mechanics, cool-witted, full of attention, and eager to proceed. Joseph had already heard Holzbauer's music at Menna, where it was all the rage, and easily mastered it; and Consuelo, taking her part alternately in the parts, led the choir so well, that the artists surpassed themselves. There were two solos, however, which were to be sung by a nephew and a niece of Gottlieb's, his two favorite pupils, and the best singers in the parish; but these two artists did not make their appearance, on the pretext that they were perfect in their parts, and needed no rehearsal.

Joseph and Consuelo supped at the house of the curate, where an apartment had been prepared for them. The worthy curate was delighted, and evidently showed how much he looked forward to the excellence of the mass for to-morrow, and to the gratification of Monsieur le Canon.

On the following day the whole village was in a bustle long before daybreak. The bells rang loud and long. The roads were full of faithful worshippers hurrying from the surrounding country to share in the solemnities of the occasion. The canon's carriage drew near majestically slow. The church was dressed up in all its best ornaments. Consuelo was much amused by the self-importance of every person she saw. For indeed there was almost as much vanity and self-esteem here as in the side-scenes of a theatre, except that things passed more simply, with more of laughter, and less of indignation.

Half-an-hour before the mass, the sacristan came up, frightened half out of his wits, and revealed to them a base plot which they had discovered, the planning of the jealous and perfidious Gottlieb. Having learned that the rehearsal had been excellent, and that all the musical force of the parish were enchanted with the new comers, he now pretended to be very sick, and forbade his nephew and niece from leaving the head of his bed; so that they should neither have Gottlieb's presence, which the people fancied indispensable to the arrangement of the whole, nor the solos, which were the finest part of the mass. All the performers were disconcerted, and it was with great pains that the important sacristan, who believed himself a great judge, succeeded in gathering them in the church to council. Consuelo and Joseph hurried to meet them, made them go over again all the difficult parts, encouraged those who were the weakest, and inspired all with confidence and energy. As to the solos, they soon agreed to undertake them in person. Consuelo, on reflection, easily remembered a religious piece of Porpora's which was perfectly adapted to the tone and words of the solo required. She hastily wrote it out on her knee, and rehearsed it with Haydn, who was soon ready to accompany her. She then thought of a fragment of Sebastian Bach, which he already knew, and which they arranged as well as they could for the occasion between themselves.

The bells rang for the mass while they were yet rehearsing, and they came to a perfect harmony in spite of the din of the great bell.

When Monsieur the Canon made his appearance at the altar, the choir was all in full swing and was running through the figures of the German composer with a steadiness and unison which gave great promise. Consuelo felt a real pleasure in observing the good German proletaries, with serious faces, their correct voices, their methodical manner, and their powers never failing, because never pressed beyond a certain limit. "Those," said she to Joseph, "are exactly the musicians suited to music such as this. If the performers possessed the fire which the master lacked, all would go wrong; but they have it not; and pieces mechanically composed are the best rendered when mechanically rendered. Why have not we the illustrious maestro Hoditz-Roswald here, to drill these machines? He would worry himself vastly, do no good, and be the happiest man on earth."

The solo for the male voice disturbed these good people very greatly, but Joseph acquitted himself wonderfully well; but when Consuelo's turn arrived, her Italian manner first astonished them, then scandalised them not a little, and at last filled them with enthusiasm. The cantatrice took pains to sing her best, and the large and sublime expression of her song transported Joseph to the seventh heaven.

"I cannot believe," said he "that you ever sang better than you did to-day for this poor village mass."

"At all events I never sang with more pleasure to myself. This audience is much more agreeable to my sympathies than that of the theatre. Now let me look at the pulpit and see if Monsieur the Canon is well pleased. Yes! he looks perfectly happy, the worthy canon, and by the way in which every one looks to his features to find his reward, assures me that the only ONE of whom no person thinks here, is He whom all ought to adore."

"Except you, Consuelo! Divine faith and love alone are capable of inspiring accents like yours."

When the two artists came out of church little was wanted to make the people carry them in triumph to the curate's house, where an excellent breakfast was in readiness for them. The curate presented them to the canon, who loaded them with praises, and expressed a desire to hear Porpora's solo again, after luncheon. But Consuelo, who was astonished that her female voice had not been discovered, and who dreaded the canon's eye, excused herself on the pretext that her rehearsals, and the active part she had taken in all the exercises, had greatly tired her. But the excuse was not accepted, and they were obliged to appear at the canon's breakfast. The canon was a man of fifty, of a handsome and pleasing countenance, although a little inclined to fat. His manners were distinguished, even noble; nor was he slow to tell every one in confidence, that he had royal blood in his veins, being one of the four hundred natural children of Augustus II. Elector of Saxony and King of Poland.

He showed himself affable and gracious, as a man of the world and a high ecclesiastic should be, and Joseph remarked by his side a layman whom he treated at once with distinction and familiarity, and whom Haydn remembered to have seen in Vienna, though he could not fit his face with his name.

"Well, my good boys," said the canon, "and so you refuse me a second hearing of that theme of Porpora's. Here, however, is a friend of mine, much more a musician and a hundred times a better judge of music than I, who was very much struck with your perform-

ance. Since you are tired," he added, turning to Joseph, "I will not torment you any farther; but you must be so kind as to tell me your name, and where you have learned music."

Joseph knew at once that Consuelo's solo was attributed to him, and as an expressive glance from her made him understand that she wished him to confirm the canon in his mistake, he replied shortly, "My name is Joseph, and I studied at the music-school of St. Stephen's."

"So did I," said the stranger. "I studied at the music school under Reuter, the father—you, I presume, under the son."

"Yes, monsieur."

"But you have had subsequent lessons; you have studied in Italy, have you not?"

"No, monsieur."

"Was it you who played the organ?"

"Sometimes I—sometimes my companion!"

"And who sang?"

"Both of us."

"Well, but that theme of Porpora's. It is not you who sang that?" said the stranger, looking sideways at Consuelo.

"Bah! it is not that child," said the canon, also looking at Consuelo.

"He is too young to know how to sing so well."

"Of course it is not I—it is he"—she replied abruptly, pointing to Joseph. She was anxious to get rid of these questions, and looked impatiently toward the door.

"Why do you tell a falsehood, my child?" said the curate simply. "I heard you sing yesterday, and saw you too; and I recognised your companion's organ in the solo of Bach."

"No, no! you must be mistaken, Monsieur Curate," resumed the stranger, with a shrewd smile, "or else the young man must be extraordinarily modest. At all events, we must give them high praises, the one and the other."

Then drawing the curate aside, "You have a true ear," he said, "but you have not a penetrating eye. It does honor to the purity of your character. But still you must be undeceived. That little Hungarian peasant is an exceedingly able Italian singing girl."

"A woman disguised!" cried the curate in astonishment. He looked attentively at Consuelo, who was engaged in replying to the good-humored questions of the canon, and whether it was shame, pleasure, or indignation, he blushed crimson from his skull-cap to his hands.

"It is as I tell you," replied the stranger; "I am trying to think who she can possibly be; I do not know her; and as to her disguise and the humble position in which she now is, I can only attribute them to some freak. It must be a love affair, Monsieur Curate, which is no business of ours."

"Ah! a love affair, indeed! very well, indeed, as you say," cried the curate becoming very animated; an abduction, a criminal intrigue with this young man. All this, however, is very atrocious! and I who fell into the trap! I who lodged them in my curacy! Luckily, I gave them separate rooms, and I trust there has been no scandal in my house. What an adventure; and how the free thinkers of my parish—and there are two or three such, I assure you—would laugh at my expense if they knew it."

"If none of your parishioners knew that she was a woman by her

voice I. is very little probable that I have recognised her by her features or deportment. Look, however, what pretty hands she has, what silky hair, what a small foot, in spite of her coarse shoes."

"I will not look at anything of the kind," cried the curate, quite beside himself. "It is an abomination to dress herself as a man. There is a verse in the Holy Bible which condemns to death any man or woman guilty of assuming the dress of the opposite sex. *To death!* Do you hear, monsieur? That shows clearly the enormity of the sin! with that too, she has presumed to enter the church, and impudently dared to sing the praises of the Lord, her soul and body stained alike by the commission of such a crime."

"And most divinely she did sing them; the tears came into my eyes as I listened, for I never heard anything like it in my life. Strange mystery! Who can this woman be? All those of whom I can think are much older than she."

"She is a mere child—quite a young girl," cried the curate, who could not help looking at Consuelo with a feeling of interest which conflicted in his heart with the austerity of his principles. "Oh! the little serpent! See with how gentle and modest an air she replies to the questions of M. le Canon. Ah, I am a lost man, if any one here should ever discover the deceit. I should have to leave the country."

"What! did neither you yourself, nor any one of your parishioners, even suspect that her voice was a woman's? Of a truth, you must be a very simple audience."

"What would you have? We certainly perceived something very extraordinary in the voice, but Gottlieb said that it was an Italian voice, that he had already heard several others like it, that it was a voice of the Sistine Chapel—I don't know what that means, and I was a thousand miles from suspecting any thing. What must I do, monsieur? What must I do?"

"If no one has any suspicion, my advice to you is to say nothing at all about it. Get rid of the boys as quickly as you can. I will arrange to get rid of them for you if you wish it."

"Oh! yes. You will do me the greatest service; see here, I will give you the money—how much ought I to pay them?"

"This is not my part of the business. We pay artists liberally; but your parish is not rich, and the church is not forced to do as the theatre does."

"I will do things liberally. I will give them six florins. I will go and get it at once. But what will Monsieur the Canon say. He does not seem to have perceived anything as yet. See how paternally he is talking with her; the holy man."

"Frankly! do you believe that he would be much scandalized?"

"How should he fail to be so? However, it is not so much his reprimands as his raillery that I fear. You know how fond he is of a joke. He has so much wit—oh, how he will mock my simplicity."

"But if he partakes in your error, as he seems to do so far, he will have no right to quiz you. Come, do not seem to take any notice; let us join them, and you can take your own time to get rid of your musicians."

They quitted the embrasure of the window in which they had been thus conversing, and the curate gliding alongside of Joseph—who did not appear to engross the canon nearly so much as the Signor Bertoni—slipped the six florins into his hand. So soon as he had received that moderate sum Joseph made a sign to Consuelo to get rid

of the canon and to follow him out; but the canon called Joseph back and persisting in the belief that it was he who had the female voice, asked him, "Why, I pray you, did you choose that piece of Porpora's music, instead of singing M. Holzbäuer's?"

"We had not Holzbäuer's, and did not know it," replied Joseph. "I sang the only thing which I had studied, that remained complete in my memory."

The curate then hastily related Gottlieb's trick, and that bit of artistical jealousy made the canon laugh heartily.

"Well!" said the stranger, "your good shoemaker did us a great service. Instead of a very bad solo, we had a masterpiece of a very great maestro. You showed your taste," he added, addressing himself to Consuelo.

"I do not think," said Joseph, "that Holzbäuer's solo can be bad. What we sang of his was not without merit."

"Merit is not genius," replied the stranger with a sigh, and then pertinaciously addressing himself to Consuelo, he added, "What do you think of it, my young friend? Do you think they are the same?"

"No, monsieur, I do not," answered she, coldly and laconically, for the look of the man embarrassed and annoyed her more and more every moment."

"But you felt pleasure in singing that mass by Holzbäuer, did you not?" asked the canon. "It is fine; do you not think so?"

"I felt neither pleasure nor the reverse," said Consuelo, who was so impatient that she was becoming most positively frank.

"That is to say, it is neither good nor bad," said the stranger laughing. "Well! my lad, you have answered me very well, and my opinion agrees with yours."

The canon burst into a violent fit of laughter, the curate appeared to be very greatly embarrassed, and Consuelo following Joseph, made her escape without troubling her head about that musical difference.

"Well! Monsieur Canon," said the stranger, as soon as the musicians had got out of the room, "what do you think of those lads?"

"Charming! admirable! I beg your pardon for saying so, after the rub the younger one gave you just before leaving the room."

"My pardon? I think him adorable, that boy. What talents for such tender years. It is wonderful! what powerful and precocious natural temperaments these Italians have."

"I can say nothing for the talents of him you speak of," said the canon quite naturally. "I did not clearly observe it. It is his companion whom I think really wonderful, and he belongs to our nation, if it may so please your Italian mania."

"Oh! yes," said the stranger, winking his eye at the curate. "Then it was decidedly the elder who sang us Porpora's music."

"I presume so," said the curate, a good deal put out at being compelled to vouch for such a falsehood.

"For me, I am sure of it," said the canon, "for he told me so himself."

"And your other solo," said the stranger, "that must then have been one of your parishioners who sang that?"

"I suppose so," answered the curate, forcing himself to uphold the imposture.

Both looked at the canon to see whether he was their dupe, or whether he was laughing at them in his sleeve. But he did not seem

to entertain such a thought. His tranquillity reassured the curate, and they began to speak of other things. But at the end of a quarter of an hour, the canon returned to the subject of music, and wanted to see Joseph and Consuelo, in order, as he said, to take them to his country seat, and hear them at his leisure. The curate lost his head, and stammered out incomprehensible excuses. The canon then asked him if he had his little musicians put into the pot to make up the breakfast, which he really thought was quite good enough without. The curate was in agony. The stranger came to the rescue. "I will seek them out for you," he said, making a sign to the curate that he would devise some expedient or other. But he had not the trouble to do so, for he instantly learned from the servant woman that the young artists had set off across the fields, after generously giving her one of the florins which they had received.

"What, gone!" exclaimed the canon greatly dissatisfied. "I must send after them. I must see them again. I must hear them—absolutely I must!"

They affected to obey him, but they took no particular pains to overtake them. Beside which, they had taken their line as straight as the crow flies, eager to evade the curiosity which threatened them with embarrassment. The canon regretted the misunderstanding much, and was a little out of sorts at it.

"Heaven be thanked! he thinks nothing of the truth," said the curate to the stranger.

"Curate," replied he, "do you remember the story of a certain bishop, who, eating meat by mistake, one Friday, was informed of his inadvertency by his vicar. 'Wretch!' cried the bishop, 'could he not have held his peace, till dinner was over.' We might just as well have allowed Monsieur le Canon go on deceiving himself to his heart's content."

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## CHAPTER LXXVI.

THE night was tranquil and serene; the full moon shone through the lustrous atmosphere, and nine o'clock in the evening was striking on the clear sonorous bell of an antique priory, when Joseph and Consuelo having vainly endeavored to find a bell at the gate of the enclosure, walked round and round that silent habitation, in the hope of making themselves heard by some hospitable ear. But it was all in vain. All the gates were locked, not a dog barked, not a light was to be seen at the windows of this lifeless abode.

"This must be the palace of silence," said Haydn, laughing, "and had not the clock twice repeated in its slow and solemn voice the four quarters in *ut* and in *si*, and the nine strokes for the hour in *sol*, I should believe the place abandoned to ghosts and night owls."

"The country around," said Consuelo, "seems an absolute desert;" for she was very tired, and this mysterious convent had something of attraction for her poetical imagination. "Even if we must sleep in some chapel, I will go no further; let us try to enter at all hazards, even if it be over this wall, which does not look very difficult to climb."

"Come" said Joseph, "I will give you my hands, on which to set

your foot as you climb, and when once you are on the top, I will throw myself over quickly, and help you down."

No sooner said than done; the wall was a low one, and two minutes afterward, our young trespassers were walking with audacious tranquillity within the sacred demesnes. It was a fine kitchen-garden kept up with minute pains. The fruit trees, trained into the form of fans on their espaliers, offered to every comer their long arms loaded with red-cheeked apples, and golden pears. Arbors of vines, festooned on arches, bore, suspended like so many chandeliers, heavy branches of rich grapes. The great beds of vegetables did not lack, either, their own peculiar beauty. Asparagus with its graceful stalks and silky foliage, all sparkling with the evening dew drops, resembled a forest of Lilliputian pines covered with a gauze of silver. Peas climbed in light garlands up their rods, and formed long cradled alleys, among which the little hedge-sparrows, not as yet well asleep, chirruped in low murmurs. Gourds, proud leviathans of this wavy sea of verdure, displayed their great golden orbs among their large dark leaves. Young artichokes, like so many little crowded beads, arranged themselves around the principal individual, the centre of the royal stock; melons reposed beneath their bell glasses, like ponderous Chinese mandarins beneath their umbrellas; and from each of these glass domes, the reflection of the moon darted forth like the rays of a great blue diamond, against which the blundering moths persisted in knocking their heads with a ceaseless humming.

A hedge of rose-bushes formed the line of demarcation, between the kitchen-garden and the flower-garden, which touched the buildings, and surrounded them with a girdle of flowers. This garden was reserved like a sort of elysium. Fine ornamental shrubs, overshadowed plants of rare beauty and exquisite fragrance. The sand of the walks was as soft to the feet as a carpet; one would have said that the turf plats had been combed blade by blade, so regular and even was the sod. The flowers stood so close that the earth could not be seen, and each round flower-bed resembled a large basket.

The priory was a little building of the twelfth century, once fortified with battlements, which were now replaced by steep roofs of gray slate, the towers on which the machicolles and bastizans had been suffered to remain as ornaments, to give it a striking character, while great masses of ivy broke the monotony of the walls, on the unclothed portions of which, coldly shining in the moonlight, the gray and uncertain shadows of the young poplars wavered as the night-wind shook them. Great wreaths of vine, to conclude the picture, mantled the cornices of all the doors and windows.

"This dwelling is calm and melancholy," said Consuelo. "But it does not inspire me with so much sympathy as the garden. Plants are made to vegetate in their places, and men to move and live in society. Were I a flower I should desire to grow in this garden, it is the place for flowers; but being a woman, I should not desire to live in a cell, and to shut myself up alive in a mass of gray stones. Should you like to be a monk, Beppo?"

"Not I, God keep me from it! But I should wish to live beyond the care of considering my daily food and lodging. I should desire to live a peaceful and retired life, somewhat at my ease, never distracted by poverty or want. In a word, I should desire to vegetate as it were in a sort of passive regularity, even in a dependent state, provided my intelligence were left free, and that I had no other care or duty than to compose music."

"Were it so, friend, you would compose tranquil music in consequence of composing it tranquilly."

"And wherefore should it be bad on that account? What is more beautiful than calmness? The skies are calm, the moon is calm, those flowers, whose peaceful attitudes you love."

"Their motionless quiet touches me only because it succeeds to the undulations which they borrow from the breeze. The purity of the sky would not charm us had we never seen it blurred by the storm. The moon is never more glorious than when she wades in light through angry clouds. Can rest, except to the weary, bring any real happiness? Can that be even called rest, which is eternal? No. It is annihilation, it is death. Ah! had you inhabited, as I have done, the Giants' castle, for months in succession, you would be well assured that tranquillity is not life."

"But what do you call tranquil music?"

"Music which is too correct, and too cold. Beware of composing such, if you would avoid fatigue, and the cares of the world."

As they spoke thus, they had arrived at the base of the walls of the priory. A fountain of clear water spouted out of a marble globe surmounted by a gilded cross, and fell down from bowl to bowl, until at last it reached a large granite shell in which a quantity of gold-fish played. Consuelo and Beppo, who were scarcely more than children themselves, were diverted at watching their motions, when they saw a tall white figure, appearing with a pitcher in her hand, at whose appearance they were at first somewhat alarmed; but as soon as she discovered our intruders, which she did not, being very near-sighted, until she had nearly filled her pitcher, she dropped it, and took to her heels, screaming at the top of her lungs, and invoking the Holy Virgin and all the saints.

"What is the matter now, dame Bridget?" cried a man's voice from the interior of the house. "Have you met an evil spirit?"

"Two devils, or rather two thieves, are standing by the fountain," replied dame Bridget, joining the questioner, who showed himself on the sill of the door, and stood there a few minutes, uncertain and incredulous.

"This will be another of your panics! Is it likely that thieves should come to attack us at such an hour as this?"

"I swear to you," she replied, "that there are two black figures by the fountain yonder, as motionless as stones. See, you can make them out from here."

"I believe I do see something," cried the man, attempting to talk big. "I will call for the gardener and his two big lads, who will soon take order with these fellows. They must have climbed the walls, for I shut all the doors myself."

"In the mean time let us shut this," said the old woman; "and then we will ring the alarm."

The door closed, and the young travellers stood doubting what they should do. To fly was to confirm the ill opinion already formed of them. To remain, was to await a violent attack. While they were yet consulting, a ray of light streamed through the chink of a shutter in the upper story. It became larger; a crimson curtain, behind which the lamp was burning, was gently lifted, and a hand which showed itself white and dimpled in the clear moonlight was seen at the window, lifting the fringes of the curtain, while probably an unseen eye was scrutinizing their every movement from within.



"All that we can do," said Consuelo to her companion, "is to sing. Allow me,—leave the words to me. No. Rather take your violin and play me any ritornella you please in the first key that occurs to you."

Joseph obeyed, and Consuelo began to sing, improvising both the words and the poetry, a sort of rhythmic chaunt in German, divided by passages of recitation.

"We are but two young children innocent,  
As small, as weak, as tuneful as the bird  
We imitate, the lovelorn nightingale."

"Now Joseph," she whispered aside, "a harmony to support the recitative." Then she resumed:—

"Worn by fatigue, dismayed by solitude  
Of silent night, this dwelling we deserted,  
At distance empty seeming; and presumed  
With timid feet its anxious wall to scale."

"A harmony in *la* minor, Joseph,"—

Then in a magic paradise we stood,  
Full of rare fruits, boon earth's delicious gift;  
Hungered, athirst, if but one smallest fruit  
Be missed i' the espalier, one grape i' the bunch,  
Let us be hunted hence, with shame and scorn."

"A modulation to return in *ut* major, Joseph,"—

"And now they threaten us, and now suspect,  
Yet will we not escape, nor yet will hide,  
As who have done no wrong, unless to climb  
The walls of the Lord's house be wrong.  
Yet, when the question is, how paradise  
To scale, all roads are good, the shortest best."

Consuelo concluded her recitative by one of those pretty canticles in vulgar Latin, which is called in Venice *Latino de frate*, and which the people sing at night before the Madonna. When she had finished, the two white hands which had gradually advanced during the singing applauded eagerly, and a voice, which did not sound entirely strange to her ear, cried from the window—"Welcome, disciples of the muses, enter, enter. Hospitality invites and awaits you."

The young people drew nigh, and a moment afterward a servant, in a red and violet livery, opened the door to them civilly. "I took you for robbers, my young friends, and I beg your pardon for it," he said laughing; "but it is your own fault. Why did you not sing before? With such a passport as your violin and your voice, you could not fall of a good reception from my master. Come; it appears he is acquainted with you before."

As he spoke thus, the civil servant had ascended a dozen steps of very easy stairs before them, all covered with a soft Turkey carpet. Before Joseph had time to ask his master's name, he had opened the two leaves of a folding door, which closed noiselessly behind them, and, after having crossed a comfortable antechamber, introduced them into a drawing-room where the gracious owner of this happy abode, seated opposite to a fine roast pheasant, between two bottles of old golden wine, was already beginning to digest his first course even while he

was paternally and majestically attacking the second. On his return from his morning walk he had committed himself to the hands of his valet to restore his complexion. He had been shaved and powdered anew. The slightly gray curls of his fine head were daintily rounded and besprinkled with a shade of exquisitely scented powder. His well-shaped hands rested on his knees, clad in black satin breeches with gold buckles. His well-turned leg, of which he was a little vain, decorated with a pair of very transparent violet stockings, well pulled up, rested on a velvet cushion, and his noble corporation, enveloped in an excellent doublet of pure-colored silk, wadded and stitched, reclined deliciously in a great tapestry arm-chair, where no part of the elbow saw the slightest risk of encountering an angle, so well was it stuffed and rounded on every side. Seated near the chimney, which blazed and crackled, behind her master's arm-chair, dame Bridget, the house-keeper, was preparing his coffee with a sort of religious care, while a second valet—not less perfect in his dress, or less courteous in his manners than the other—was delicately detaching one of the pheasant's wings, which the holy man awaited, without either impatience or anxiety.

Consuelo and Joseph bowed deeply, as they recognised in the person of their benevolent host, monsieur, the major canon, and jubilar of the cathedral chapel of St. Stephen, before whom they had sung the mass on the previous day.

## CHAPTER LXXVII.

MONSIEUR the Canon was a man as comfortably situated as any one in the world could be. At the age of seven years, thanks to royal protection which had not failed him, he had been declared at the age of reason, agreeably to the canons of the church, which admit that although one have not much reason at that age, he has at least enough to receive and enjoy the fruits of a benefice. In consequence of this decision, the young priest was admitted to the dignity of canon, although the natural son of a king.—Still, in accordance with the canons of the church—which always presumptively accept the legitimacy of a child presented to a benefice under the protection of royalty; although other articles of the same canons insist that all pretenders to the holding of ecclesiastical benefices must be the issue of good and lawful marriages, in default of which they may be declared *incapable*, not to say *unworthy*, and *infamous*, as might be done upon occasion.

A man of intellect, a good orator, an elegant writer, the canon had promised and still promised himself that he would write a book on the rights, privileges, and immunities of his chapter. Surrounded by dusty quartos which he had never opened, he had not made his own book, he was not making it, he was never likely to make it. The two secretaries who had been engaged at the expense of the chapter to assist him, had no occupation but to perfume his person and prepare his table. Much interest followed his book—it was expected eagerly—a thousand dreams of ambition, of revenge, of money, were built upon the power of his arguments. This book, which had no existence, already gained its author a reputation for perseverance, ambi-