"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 rythmic 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 descried,
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 fail 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 noislessly 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 housekeeper, 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 jubilary 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-

tion, and eloquence, of which he did not care to adduce any direct proofs. Not that he was incapable of making good the opinion of his fellows, but that life is short, dinners are long, the cares of the toilet are indispensable, and the *far niente* delicious; in addition to which our canon had two innocent, although insatiable passions; the one for horticulture, the other for music. How, then, amid such a crowd of occupations should he have found room to attack his contemplated book? Beside all this, he had not failed to discover how pleasant it is to talk of a book which is in progress, and how disagreeable to talk of one which is completed.

In other respects, he was an extremely good-natured churchman; tolerant, not devoid of wit, eloquent and orthodox among churchmen, good-humored, full of anecdotes, easy of access in the world, affable, cordial, and generous with artists.

Our young travellers were therefore received by him with the most gracious kindness.

"You are children," he said, "full of talent and resources, and I am much pleased with you. Moreover, you have genius, and one of you—which I know not—has the sweetest and most touching voice I ever heard in my life. That voice is a prodigy, a treasure; and I was sorry this morning, when you left the curacy so abruptly, at the thought that I never should see you, never hear you again. In a word, I lost my appetite; I was out of spirits, absent. The fine voice and exquisite music seemed to be permanently infixed in my ears, in my soul. But Providence, ever gracious to me, has brought you back to me, and perhaps your own good hearts, my children, have had something to do with this, for you must have perceived that I can understand and appreciate you."

"We are bound to confess, Monsieur Canon," said Joseph, "that chance alone brought us hither, and that we were far from reckoning on such good fortune."

"The good fortune is mine," replied the amiable canon; "and you shall sing for me—that is, not now, for you are tired, and I dare say hungry, and that would be selfishness on my part. You shall sup first, have a good night's rest in my house, and to-morrow we will have music; yes! music all day long. Andrew, conduct these young people to the offices, and take every possible care of them; But no! let them remain; set two covers for them at the end of my table, and let them sup with me."

Andrew obeyed his orders promptly, and even with a sort of good-humored pleasure; but dame Bridget showed a very different disposition; she shook her head—hunched up her shoulders, and grumbled between her teeth—"Very pretty folk, forsooth! to sit at your table—nice society, truly, for a person of your station in society!"

"Hold your tongue, Bridget!" replied the canon calmly. "You are satisfied with nothing and with nobody; and when you see any one enjoy a little pleasure, it makes you rancorous."

Some farther wrangling ensued—for Bridget answered back, and the canon disputed with her, much to the amazement of Consuelo, who was astonished to see a man of such station condescending to parley with his own servants, and to enter into the smallest details of the cookery and the service. The supper, however, was exquisite and abundant, even to profusion; and at the end of the repast the cook was called in, gently blamed for the composition of some dishes, affectionately praised for others, and learnedly instructed as to others

again, in which he was not absolutely perfect. But at dessert, when he had given his housekeeper also her share in his praises and reprimands, the canon did not forget to pass from these graver questions to the subject of music; and soon showed himself in a far better light to his young guests. He had received a good musical education, a foundation of sound study, just ideas, and an accurate taste. He was a very fair organist, and having sat down to the harpsichord after dinner, played several fragments of the old German masters, which he executed with much purity of taste, and according to the good traditions of old times. Listening to these was a source of pleasure to Consuelo, and very soon, having found a great book of that old music, she began to turn over the leaves, and forgetting both her own fatigue and the lateness of the hour, requested the canon to play her several pieces—which had struck her eye—in his bold, clear style. The canon was excessively pleased at being thus listened to. The music which he played was no longer the fashion, and he seldom met with amateurs after his own heart. He took, accordingly, a great fancy to Consuelo, while Joseph, worn out with fatigue, had fallen asleep in a treacherously comfortable arm-chair."

"Truly," cried the canon, in a moment of enthusiasm, "you are a most happily gifted youth. Your precocious judgment announces a marvellous hereafter. This is the first time in my life that I ever have regretted the celibacy which my life imposes upon me."

This compliment made Consuelo both blush and tremble, for she thought he had discovered that she was a woman; but she instantly recovered herself when he added—"Yes! I regret having no children, for heaven might, perchance, have granted to me a son such as thou, who would have been the pride of my life, even if Bridget had been its mother. But tell me, my young friend, what think you of this Sebastian Bach, whose music is turning the heads of all this generation of *savans*? Do you also think him a prodigious genius? I have a volume of all his works there, which I have had collected and bound—because one must have everything, but I confess to you that being excessively difficult to read, I got tired of attempting it. Besides which, I have but little time for music, which I snatch from more serious occupatious. Because you saw me somewhat engaged with my housekeeper about the little cares of my menage, you must not imagine that I am altogether a free or happy man. I am a slave, on the contrary, to an enormous, almost frightful work, which I have imposed upon myself. I am writing a book, on which I have been engaged about thirty years, and which any other person could hardly have composed in forty—a book which requires incredible study, late watching, patience that can surmount everything, and the deepest reflection; and, in truth, I think that it will make some stir."

"And will it be soon finished?" asked Consuelo.

"Not yet, not yet!" replied the canon, desirous, perhaps, of concealing from himself that it was not even begun. "We were talking about the extreme difficulty of Sebastian Bach's music, and to me, I confess that it seems to me a little fantastical."

"I think, nevertheless, that if you would take the trouble to surmount your repugnance, you would come to the opinion, that he is a genius who enkindles, reproduces, and vivifies all science, past and present."

"Well," replied the canon, "if it be so, we will try all three of us to decypher something of it to-morrow. It is time now that you

should take some rest and that I should go to my studies. But to-morrow you will pass the day with me. That is understood; is it not?"

"The day!—that is saying a good deal monsieur. We are in great haste to reach Vienna, but in the morning we shall be at your service."

The canon protested and insisted, and Consuelo pretended to yield, though inwardly determined to hurry over a little the slow movements of the great Bach, and to leave the priory about noon. When it was time to talk of going to bed, a warm discussion arose between dame Bridget and the first valet-de-chambre, concerning the quality of lodgings to be assigned to them—the obliging man-servant wishing to accommodate them with comfortable rooms in obedience to his master's wishes—the housekeeper wanting to put them in some miserable cells on the ground-floor, which discussion was not brought to a close until the canon himself, who had overheard from his dining-room, all that was passing, put an end to it, and summarily silenced Madam Bridget.

After our travellers had taken possession of their pretty dormitories, they long heard the harsh voice of the ill-tempered old woman grumbling like a wintry wind through the hollow corridors. But when the bustle, which harbingered the solemn retiring of the canon, had ceased, dame Bridget came a-tip-toe to the door of her young guests, and adroitly turned the key in each lock, so as to fasten them securely in. Joseph, who had never before in all his life slept in such a bed, was already buried in deep slumber; and Consuelo, after laughing at Bridget's terrors, followed his example. The idea that she, who had trembled every night of their journey, should now inspire terror to another, seemed in itself absurd, and she might well have applied to herself the fable of the frogs and the hare; but it would be too bold to affirm that Consuelo had ever heard of the fables of la Fontaine; although at this period, all the wits of the world were at issue on their merits. Voltaire made fun of them, and Frederick the Great, who desired to ape his philosophy, despised them from the bottom of his heart.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

At break of day, Consuelo, seeing that the sun shone brightly and feeling herself invited, by the merry warbling of the birds, who were already making good cheer in the gardens, to take an early walk, arose and tried to leave her chamber, but the night-watch was not yet removed, and Bridget still held her prisoners safe under lock and key. Consuelo thought at first that this must be some ingenious stratagem on the canon's part, who, in order to secure their musical services, had begun by making sure of their persons. But the young girl, who had become bold and active, since she had donned the male attire, saw that a descent from the window would be rendered very easy by a large vine which was supported by a massive trellis against the wall of the building. Descending then slowly and with precaution, in order to avoid injuring the fine grapes, she easily reached the ground, and hurried away into the garden, laughing within herself at the surprise and disappointment of Bridget, when she should find all her precautions useless.

Consuelo now saw all the superb fruits and sumptuous flowers, which she had so much admired by moonlight, under a different aspect. The breath of the morning, and the laughing rosy tints of the sun, gave a new poetry to those fair productions of the earth. A robe of lustrous velvet covered the fruits, the dew hung in pearls of crystal on all the branches, and the turf-plats, overlaid with silver, exhaled that slight refreshing odor which resembles the aspiring breath of earth striving to mount toward heaven, and blend with it in loving unison. But nothing could equal the freshness and the beauty of the flowers, still surcharged with the humidity of the night, at this mysterious hour of dawn, when they expand their petals, as if to display treasures of purity, and to outpour the most exquisite of odors, which the earliest and purest sunbeams are alone worthy to see and possess for one moment. The canon's *parterre* was a paradise of delights to a lover of horticulture. To Consuelo's eyes it was something too symmetrical and formal. But the fifty varieties of roses—the rare and charming hibiscuses, the purple stocks, the ever-varying geraniums, the sweet-scented daturas, deep opal cups impregnated with the ambrosia of the gods, the elegant asclepiades, subtle buds of poison, wherein the insect race find a voluptuous death; the spendid cactuses displaying glowing crimson hues, on strange and wrinkled stems, studded with angry thorns, a thousand curious and beautiful plants, of which Consuelo had never heard the names, any more than she knew the countries whence they came, for a long time occupied her attention.

Suddenly, in the midst of the fanciful harmonies of that delicious contemplation, Consuelo heard loud and painfully piercing human cries, appearing to come from a clump of trees which appeared to conceal the external walls. To these cries succeeded the roll of a carriage, and the carriage stopping, loud blows were struck against the iron grate which, on that side, closed the entrance into the garden. But, whether all the world was still asleep, or that no one chose to answer, they knocked again and again to no purpose, and the agonizing shrieks of a woman, intermingled with the hoarse oaths of a man shouting for succor, struck the walls of the priory, and awakened no more echoes from those senseless stones than they did from the hearts of the inhabitants. All the windows on that side of the house were so perfectly caulked, in order to prevent any interruption to the canon's slumbers, that no noise could penetrate the stout oaken shutters, padded and stuffed with horse hair. The valets were engaged in the offices behind the priory, and heard nothing of the din. Dogs there were none about the priory, for the canon loved not those troublesome guardians, which under the pretence of keeping rogues at a distance, disturb the slumbers of their masters. Consuelo first endeavored to get into the house to give notice of the arrival of travellers in distress, but all was so well closed that she could make no impression, and following her first impulse, she ran to the grate whence the voice came to her ears.

A travelling carriage, covered with luggage, and whitened with the dust of a long journey, stood at the entrance of the principal alley of the garden. The postilions had got off their horses, in order to knock at the inhospitable gate, while groans and lamentations issued from the carriage windows.

"Open," shouted the men to Consuelo. "Open, if ye be Christians! There is a lady dying here."

"Open," cried a woman, whose features were unknown to Consuelo, leaning as she spoke out of the window, and using the Venetian dialect. "Madam will die if she be not promptly aided. Open, then, if ye be men."

Consuelo, without reflecting on the results of her previous attempts, tried to open the gate, but it was closed with a huge padlock, the key of which was probably in dame Bridget's pocket. The bell was in like manner protected by a secret spring. In that tranquil and honest country, these precautions had not been taken against malefactors, but against noise and the annoyance of untimely visits. It was impossible, therefore, for Consuelo to do what she most desired, and she endured with pain the abusive language of the chamber-maid, who, talking to her mistress in Venetian, kept exclaiming—"Oh! the little idiot!—the little fool does not know how to open the door," until at length the lady herself showed her head, and cried out in bad German—"Ha! by the blood of the devil! do go and get some one who can open the gate, you wretched little animal!"

This energetic apostrophe reassured Consuelo as to the imminence of the lady's danger. "If she be near dying," said she to herself, "it must needs be a violent death!" and thinking thus, she adressed the lady, whose accent was clearly Venetian as that of her servant woman, in the same dialect.

"I do not belong to this house," said she; "I only received hospitality here for last night. I will go and try to awaken the owners, which will be neither quickly nor easily done. Are you in such danger, madam, that you cannot wait here a short time without despairing?"

"I am on the point of being confined, you fool," cried the traveller: "run, scream, break every thing, bring people and get me admitted here, and you shall be well paid for your trouble." And she began again to shriek at the top of her voice. Consuelo felt her knees tremble under her; for neither the face nor the voice of the woman was unknown to her.

"What is the name of your mistress?" she asked the waiting maid,

"What is that to you?" cried the waiting-maid, now entirely bewildered. "Run, you little wretch, or you shall get nothing at all from us."

"Ah!" I want nothing from you," answered Consuelo, with spirit, "but I want to know who you are, and I will know it. If your mistress is a musician, you will be received here eagerly, and if I am not mistaken, she is a celebrated singer."

"Go, my little one," said the lady within, who, in the intervals of pain, was calm and collected.

"You are not mistaken. Go, tell the people who live here, that the celebrated Corilla is at the door, almost dying, unless some charitable person or good artist will take compassion on me. I will pay—tell her that I will pay largely. Alas! Sophia," said she to her maid, "have me laid on the ground; I shall suffer less by the roadside than in this infernal carriage." Consuelo was already running to the priory, determined at all hazards to obtain access to the canon; and she could not even find room for wonder at the strange chance which brought her rival thither in such a pass; she was only anxious to assist her; but she had no occasion now to knock, for she found

Bridget, at length, aroused by the knocking, followed by the gardener and valet-de-chambre.

"A fine story, truly!" she said, when Consuelo had told her the facts. "Do not go, Andrew, do not stir a foot, gardener. How should a lady have set out on a journey at such a time? And if she has, is it not her own fault? How can we hinder her sufferings? Let her be confined in her carriage, which she can be just as easily as with us, who have no idea of receiving such visitors."

This discourse, which was begun for Consuelo's benefit, and grumbled the whole length of the walk, was finished to Corilla's maid, through the gate, and while the travellers were exchanging reproaches, invectives, and even abuse with the ill-tempered housekeeper, Consuelo had entered the house, hoping to succeed with the goodness and artistic predilections of the canon. She sought in vain for the master's apartment, and only came near to losing herself in the large rambling building, with the details of which she was wholly unacquainted. At last, she met Haydn, who was looking for her, and who told her that the canon was in the orangery. They went thither together, and found the worthy man coming to meet them, beneath an arbor of jessamine, with a face as fresh and smiling as the fine autumnal morning. She was already beginning to lay before him the case of poor Corilla, when Bridget, appearing quite unexpectedly, cut her short with these words: "There is a vagabond down yonder at your gate, a theatrical singer, who says she is famous and who has the air and tones of a low drab. She says she is in child-birth, cries and swears like twenty devils, and insists on being confined here. See how you like that."

The canon made a gesture of disgust and refusal.

"Monsieur Canon," said Consuelo, "whatever this woman may be, she is still a woman—she is suffering, her life is perchance in danger, as well as that of the innocent creature whom God has called into this world, and whom religion commands you, perhaps, to receive into the pale of Christianity. You will not allow her to lie at your door, groaning and in agony."

"Is she married?" asked the canon, coldly, after a moment's consideration.

"I know not. Perhaps she may be; but what matters it. God has granted her the happiness of becoming a mother; it is for Him alone to judge."

"She told me her name, Monsieur Canon," resumed Bridget, violently, "and you must know her, you who are on terms with all the actors in Venice. Her name is Corilla."

"Corilla!" cried the canon "Has she come from Venice already? She has a fine voice, I hear."

"In favor of her fine voice, open the door to her. She is lying in the dust at your gate," said Consuelo.

"She is a woman of evil life," replied the canon. "She made a great scandal at Venice, a year since."

"And there are many persons who envy your reverence this benefice, Monsieur Canon. Do you mark me? If an abandoned woman were to be confined here, you are undone—it would not be represented as a chance, much less as an act of charity!" said dame Bridget.

These words made a final impression on the canon. He laid them up in the sanctuary of his prudence, although he pretended to have scarcely heard them.

"There is," he said, "an inn within a hundred yards, let the lady go thither. She will find all that she requires there, and will be much better than at a bachelor's house. Go tell her so, Bridget; but politely, very politely. Show the postilions the inn; and you, my children," he continued, turning to Joseph and Consuelo, "come and try one of Bach's fugues with me, while they are getting breakfast ready for us."

"Monsieur Canon!" cried Consuelo, deeply moved, "will you abandon her——?"

But at this moment the canon stopped abruptly, in seeming consternation. "Ah!" he exclaimed, "here is my finest volkameria dried up and dead. I have told the gardener often enough that he did not water it sufficiently. The rarest and most inimitable plant in my garden. Go, Bridget, call the gardener, that I may scold him."

"I will go first and send the famous Corilla about her business," said Bridget, retiring.

"And do you consent to this? Will you permit this, Monsieur Canon?" cried Consuelo, indignantly.

"It is impossible for me to do otherwise," he replied, in a soft voice, but with an accent which denoted a firmly planted resolution. "I desire that I may hear no more about it. Come, then, I am waiting to hear music."

"There is no more music for you here," answered Consuelo, energetically. "You are not capable of understanding Sebastian Bach, you who have no bowels of compassion. Ah! may your fruits and flowers perish! May the frost cut your jessamines, and kill your finest shrubs! May this soil, hitherto so fertile, which gives you everything in profusion, produce nothing for you now but brambles, for you have no heart, and avail yourself of the gifts of heaven, regardless of the rites of hospitality."

As she spoke thus, Consuelo left the canon gazing in astonishment about him, as if he really feared to see the curse of heaven called down by that fiery spirit, alight on his precious volkamerias, and cherished anemones. She ran to the grating which had not been opened, scaled it without hesitation, and followed Corilla to the miserable pot-house, to which, under the title of inn, the canon had directed her.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

JOSEPH HAYDN, who was by this time accustomed to surrender himself to the sudden impulses of his comrade, but endowed with a calmer spirit, and a more reflective character, did not hesitate to obey her, but he first went to fetch their knapsack and violin with its music, the bread-winner, the consoler, and the joyous companion of their route. Corilla was laid on one of those wretched beds common to German inns, in which you must choose, so small are they, whether your head or feet shall be exposed beyond the end. Unluckily there was no woman in the hovel: the mistress had gone on a pilgrimage to a place six leagues distant, and the girl of the house had been sent to drive the cow to pasture. An old man and a boy were keeping house and more alarmed than pleased at the arrival of

the rich travellers, suffered their house to be turned upside down without seeming to think of the mischief that might be done. The old man was deaf; the boy had been sent for the midwife of a neighboring village, at least a league distant. The postilions were much more disturbed about their horses, which had nothing to eat, than about their passengers; and she, abandoned to the care of her maid, who had lost her head, and was crying nearly as loud as she did herself, filled the air with her outcries, which more resembled the ravings of a lioness than the groans of a woman.

Consuelo, seized with terror and compassion, resolved that she would not forsake the unhappy creature.

"Joseph," she said to her companion, "return to the priory, even if you should be badly received there. Tell the canon to send hither linen, bedding, soup, wine, everything in short which a sick person requires. Speak to him kindly but firmly, and promise him, if necessary, that we will make music for him if he will assist this unhappy woman."

Joseph set forth, and poor Consuelo remained a spectator of the repulsive scene of a woman, without faith or hope, undergoing the august martyrdom of maternity, with blasphemy and imprecations. She never ceased to curse her destiny, her journey, the canon and his housekeeper—even the child that she was about to bring into the world—while she abused her maid servant to such a degree, that she rendered her utterly incapable of rendering her any service, and drove her, in tears, into the next room.

At times, when her pains ceased for a while, recovering her spirits and courage, she would talk quietly, and even jest with Consuelo, whom she did not recognise, and then again she would burst forth into the most hideous blasphemy. "Ah! cursed, thrice accursed, be the father of this child!" and as fresh pangs would seize her, she tore her neck-handkerchief asunder, and seizing Consuelo's arm with a gripe that left the impress of her nails in the flesh, she shrieked out, "Accursed! accursed! accursed! be the vile, infamous Anzoleto!"

At this moment Sophia returned into the chamber, and at the end of a quarter of an hour Corilla was delivered of a girl, which the maid wrapped in the first piece of clothing she could lay hands on in an open trunk. It was a theatrical mantle of tarnished satin, edged with fringes of tinsel, and it was in this miserable frippery that the pure betrothed of the noble Albert received on her knees the child of Anzoleto and Corilla.

"Come, madam, be consoled," said the poor serving girl, with an accent of simple and sincere good-nature. "It is all over, and you have got a beautiful little girl."

"Girl or boy, little care I, for I am in pain no longer," said Corilla, raising herself on her elbow, without looking at her child. "Give me a large glass of wine."

Joseph had now returned from the priory, bringing everything that a sick person could require, and that of the best, so that she had whatever she called for on the instant, and soon afterward, stretching herself out on the canon's comfortable cushions, she fell asleep, with all the easy abandonment which she derived from her iron constitution and her soul of ice. During her sleep the child was comfortably dressed, and that done, Consuelo, who felt nothing but disgust toward Corilla, gave the babe to the girl of the inn, who had returned, and seemed a good-natured person; then calling to Joseph, she took her way back with him toward the priory.

"I did not promise the canon," said he, as they went on their way "to bring you back to the priory. He seemed ashamed of his conduct, although he affected to be very much at his ease. In spite of a little selfishness, he is a good man at heart, and seemed really glad to send Corilla whatever was necessary."

"I will recompense the good canon for my impetuosity," said Consuelo. "For, in truth, there are souls so hard and hideous, that weak minds should inspire us with pity only."

Far from being angry, the canon received them with open arms, forced them to breakfast with him, and then they all sat down to the piano. Consuelo soon made him understand the admirable preludes of the great Bach, and to put him into a thoroughly good humor, she sang to him all the finest airs she knew, without endeavoring to conceal her voice, and with little fear of his observing her sex or age; for the good canon appeared resolved to divine nothing which should run counter to his delight at listening to such music. He was truly a passionate lover of music, and his transports had a depth and sincerity which could not fail to touch Consuelo.

"You are a strange child—a child of genius," cried the canon, patting Consuelo's brown head with chaste and paternal fondness. "You wear the livery of poverty, who ought to be borne aloft in triumph. Tell me who you are, and whence have you learned all that you know?"

"From accident and nature, Monsieur Canon."

"Ah! you are deceiving me," said the canon, slyly. "You must be a son of Cafarelli or of Farinelli. But listen to me, my children," he added with a serious but earnest air, "I will not have you leave me. I take charge of you; stay with me. I have fortune, and it shall be yours. I will be to you what Gravina was to Metastasio. It shall be my happiness and glory. Attach yourself to me. You need only enter the minor orders; I will take care to procure some snug little benefices, and after my death you will find that I have some savings, which I have no idea whatever of leaving to that harpy Bridget."

As the canon uttered these words Bridget entered suddenly, and heard what he said. "And I," she cried in a choking voice, and with tears of rage—"and I intend no longer to serve an ungrateful master. It is long enough already that I have been sacrificing to you my reputation and my youth."

"Your reputation? your youth?" interrupted the canon, sneeringly, without being in the least put out. "Ah, you flatter yourself, my poor old woman. What you are pleased to call the one protects the other."

"Yes! yes!" she replied, "sneer as you will. But never expect to see me again. I quit a house in which I can establish neither decency nor order. Pay me my wages; I will not pass the night under your roof."

"Have we come to that?" said the canon, very calmly. "Well, Bridget, you give me great pleasure, and may you never regret it. I never dismiss any one from my service, and I believe if the devil were once in it, I should not turn him out. But if the devil wished to go, I am so good-natured that I should not hinder him, but should sing a *magnificat* to his departure. Go and make up your baggage, Bridget, and as for your wages, sum them up yourself, my child. Whatever you want, even if it were all that I possess, shall be yours, if you will only go at once."

"Oh, Monsieur Canon," exclaimed Haydn, who was not unmoved by this domestic scene, "you will greatly regret a servant so much attached."

"She is attached to my benefice," replied the canon, "and for my part, I shall only regret her coffee."

"You will soon be accustomed to doing without her coffee, Monsieur Canon," said Consuelo, very firm and stern, "and you are doing well. Be silent, Joseph, and speak for her no more. I will say it out before her, because it is the truth. She is evil-minded and hurtful to her master. He is good; nature made him noble and generous, but that woman renders him selfish. She checks all the good emotions of his soul, and if he keeps her, she will render him as hard and heartless as she is herself. Pardon me, Monsieur Canon, for speaking thus, but you have made me sing so much, and have so raised my enthusiasm by the display of your own, that I am almost out of my head. But believe me, I do not desire your fortune; I have not a wish—not a want. If I desired it, I could even be richer than you; and an artist's life is so full of risks, that perhaps you will survive me, and then it will be you who will find yourself inscribed on my will, in gratitude for what you have done in behalf of us to-day. To-morrow we set off, perhaps to meet no more, but we set off with hearts full of respect, of gratitude, and of love for you, if you discharge Madame Bridget, whose pardon I beg of you for this plain mode of speaking."

Two hours afterward the dispossessed queen departed from the priory, after having subjected it to not a little pillage. This the canon affected not to observe, and by the expression of supreme content which overspread his countenance, Haydn perceived that Consuelo had done him a real service. She, at dinner, to prevent his feeling the slightest regret, made coffee for him after the Venetian fashion, which is the best in the world. Andrew immediately set himself to take lessons of her, and the canon declared that he had never sipped better coffee in his life. They had music again in the evening, after sending to enquire after Corilla, who was already, as they brought word, sitting up in the arm-chair, which the canon had sent her. In the evening, they walked in the garden, by the light of a glorious moon, the canon leaning on Consuelo's arm, and still imploring her to take minor orders, and to attach herself to him as his adopted son.

"Beware," said Joseph to her, as they were parting at the doors of their chambers; "this good canon is becoming a little too seriously taken with you."

"Nothing should disquiet us while travelling. I shall no more become an abbe than I have become a trumpeter. M. Mayer, Count Hoditz, and the canon have all counted without a to-morrow."

CHAPTER LXXX.

NEVERTHELESS, Consuelo had retired to her own chamber, without giving Joseph the signal for departure at daybreak for which he had looked. She had reasons of her own for not hurrying her departure and Joseph was content to await them, too well pleased to pass

a few more hours in so pleasant a house, leading the jolly canonical life which he found so agreeable. Consuelo permitted herself to sleep until late in the morning, and did not appear until the canon's second breakfast, for he had the habit of rising very early, taking a slight and dainty repast, walking in his gardens and through his hot-houses, with his breviary in his hand, and then taking a second nap while awaiting a savory breakfast *a la fourchette*.

"Our neighbor, the travelling lady, is very well," said he to our young travellers, as soon as he met them. "I sent to enquire after her, and to let Andrew serve her breakfast. She expressed much gratitude for our attentions, and as she is about to set off this very day for Vienna, contrary to all prudence, she begs that you will go and see her, in order that she may recompense the charitable zeal you have shown in her behalf. Therefore, my children, breakfast as quickly as you can, and then go to her. Doubtless you will receive some pretty present from her."

"We will breakfast as slowly as we can, Monsieur Canon, and we will not go to see the sick woman. She has no longer need of us, and we have no need of her presents."

"Singular boy!" cried the canon, in astonishment. "Your romantic disinterestedness gains on me to such a degree that I shall never be able to part with you."

Consuelo smiled, and they sat down to table. The breakfast was delicious, and lasted nearly two hours; but the dessert was very different from what the canon anticipated.

"Your reverence," said Andrew, appearing at the door. "Mother Bertha, the woman of the inn, has brought you hither a large basket, on behalf of the lady who lay in."

"It is the silver I lent her, I suppose," said the canon: receive it, Andrew, it is your affair. The lady, then, is set on going to-day."

"She is gone, your reverence."

"Already! She must be mad. She must assuredly wish to kill herself."

"No, Monsieur Canon; she neither wishes to kill herself, nor will she kill herself," said Andrew.

"Well, Andrew, what are you doing there with so ceremonious an air?"

"Mother Bertha will not give me the basket, your reverence; she says she is charged to give it into your hands only, and she has something to say to you."

"Well, well; it is a scruple or an affectation, at having received a deposit. Let her come in, and we will get it over."

The old woman entered, and with many curtseys, deposited upon the table a great basket covered with a veil. Consuelo moved her hand toward it quickly, while the canon's head was turned toward Bertha, and having pulled the veil a little aside, said to Joseph, "This is what I expected. This is the cause of my remaining here. Yes; I was sure of it. Corilla was certain to act thus."

"Well, Mother Bertha," said the canon, at the same time. "So you have brought back the household stuff I lent your guest. Good—good—but I was in no wise in anxiety about it, and I am sure none of it is missing, without so much as even looking at it."

"Your reverence," replied the old woman, "my servant girl brought all that, and I have given it to your *officers*. Nothing was missing, and I am quite easy on that head; but, with regard to this basket, I was sworn to deliver it to yourself only, and you know what it contains as well as I."

"I will be hanged if I do," said the canon, moving his hand carelessly towards the basket. But his hand remained as if struck by catalepsy, and his mouth stood half open with surprise, as the veil was moved and partly opened from within, and a little child's hand, rosy and delicate, showed itself, making a vague and feeble movement to grasp the canon's finger.

"Yes, indeed, your reverence," said the old woman, with a smile of confident satisfaction, "here it is, safe and sound, only wide awake and with a resolute determination to live."

The canon had absolutely lost the use of his tongue from astonishment, and the old woman continued, "By 'r lady, your reverence asked it of its mother to bring up and adopt! The poor lady had much trouble to determine on doing so; but at last we told her that her child could not be in better hands, and she recommended it to Providence as she gave it us to bring to you. As for me, she paid me very well. I ask nothing, and am very well satisfied indeed."

"Ah! you are satisfied, are you?" cried the canon, in a tragi-comic tone. Well, I am charmed to hear it. But now be so good as to carry away both the purse and the bantling. Spend the one, educate the other. It does not concern me the least in the world."

"I bring up the child!—Oh! no, indeed!—not I, your reverence. I am too old to take such a charge on myself as a new-born babe. They cry all night long, and my old man, deaf as he is, would never consent to such an arrangement as that."

"And I—pray how am I to arrange it? Many thanks, forsooth! So you counted upon that, did you?"

"Since your reverence asked the mother for it, I——"

"It is an atrocious falsehood—a gipsy trick!" cried the canon, "and I doubt not you are the confederates of this sorceress. Come—come—carry away the brat, give it to the mother, keep it yourself, do what you will with it, I wash my hands of it. If you want to get money out of me, you can have it. I never refuse money even to rogues and impostors; it is the only way by which to rid your house of them; but as to taking a child into my house, as for me, you may all go to the devil!"

"Ah! if it comes to that," said the old woman, very decidedly, "I will not do it, so may it not displease your reverence. I did not take charge of the child on my own account. As to being her confederates, we know nothing of such tricks, and your reverence must be joking when you accuse us of imposture. I am very much your reverence's servant, and I am going home. We have many pilgrims returning from the performance of a vow, who are very thirsty souls."

The old woman curtsied several times as she was going, and then returning on her steps, "I was on the point of forgetting," she said, "the child is to be called Angela in Italian. Upon my word, I forget how she spoke it."

"Angiolina—Anzoleta?" asked Consuelo.

"The last—exactly so," said the old woman, and again curtsying to the canon, she retired quietly.

"Well, what do you think of this trick?" asked the canon, when she was gone.

"I think it perfectly in keeping with her who invented it," said Consuelo, taking the child, which was beginning to grow fretful, out

of the basket, and feeding it gently with a spoonful or two of milk, which still continued warm in the canon's china cup.

"This Corilla is a demon, then, is she?" asked the canon; "do you know her?"

"By reputation only; but now I know her perfectly well, and you also, I think, Monsieur Canon."

"And it is an acquaintance of which I had just as readily be free. But what are we to do with this poor little outcast?" he added, casting a glance of pity on the child.

"I will carry it," said Consuelo, "to your gardener's wife, whom I saw yesterday nursing a fine little boy of five or six months old."

"Go then," said the canon, "or rather ring the bell, and they will call her hither. She will tell us of a nurse in some neighboring farm; not too near, however, for heaven only knows the injury which an evident interest in a child which falls from the clouds into his house may do to a man of any mark in the church."

"Were I in your place, Monsieur Canon, I would set myself above all such wretched considerations. I would neither anticipate or listen to the absurd suppositions of calumny. I would live in the midst of fools and their conjectures as if they had no existence. I would act as if they were impossible. Of what use else were a life of dignity and virtue, if it cannot ensure calmness of conscience and the liberty of doing good? Lo! your reverence, this child is entrusted to you. If it be ill cared for out of your sight, if it languish, if it die, you will never, I think, cease to reproach yourself."

After many objections on the part of the canon, whose timidity and apprehensions of public opinion warped him from his better will, and many arguments on that of Consuelo, the latter becoming more enthusiastic and energetic as the former began to yield, the point was carried.

"It is settled, then, your reverence," said Consuelo; "you will keep Angiolina in your own house, the gardener's wife will nurse her, and hereafter you will educate her in religion and in virtue. Her mother would have made of her a very devil; you will make of her a heavenly angel."

"You do what you will with me," said the canon, moved to tenderness, and suffering Consuelo to lay the child on his knees; "we will baptise the child to-morrow. You shall be its godfather. Had Bridget remained here, we would have compelled her to be godmother; her rage would have been amusing."

"As to Corilla's purse,—aye, indeed, it contains fifty Venetian sequins; we do not want it here. I charge myself with the present expenses and the future fortunes of the child, if it be not reclaimed. Take then this gold, it is well due to you, for the singular virtue and the great heart you have shown throughout all this."

"Gold to pay my virtue and the goodness of my heart!" cried Consuelo, waving away the purse in disgust, "and Corilla's gold too! the price of falsehood and of infamy. Ah! Monsieur Canon, it sullies our eyes. Distribute it among the poor, and it may so bring good fortune to our poor Angiolina."

For the first time perhaps in his life, the canon scarcely slept a wink. He felt a strange emotion and agitation within himself. His head was full of musical tones, of melodies, and modulations, which a slight doze interrupted every minute, and which, when at a minute's end he again awoke, he sought to remember and re-connect, without wishing to do so, and as it were in his own despite, without the power of doing so. After waking and sleeping, and waking again, and endeavoring to sleep again, a hundred times in succession, a luminous idea struck him. He arose, took his writing desk, and resolved to work upon the famous book which he had so long undertaken, but never yet commenced. It was necessary for him to consult his dictionary of canonical law in order to set himself right on the subject; but he had not read two pages before his ideas became confused, his eyelids grew heavy, the book slid easily down from the desk to the carpet, the candle was put out by a sigh of delicious sleepiness, heaved from the powerful lungs of the good man, and he slept soundly and happily until ten o'clock in the morning.

Alas! how bitter was his waking, when with a listless and lazy hand, he opened the following note, which Andrew laid upon his waiter beside his cup of chocolate.

"We are departing, Monsieur and Reverend Canon. An imperious duty called us to Vienna, and we feared our inability to resist your generous solicitations. We are flying, as though we were ungrateful, but we are not so, and never shall we lose the memory of your hospitality toward us, and of your sublime charity toward the deserted child. We will come to thank you for it. Within a week you will see us again; deign therefore to defer until then the baptism of Angiolina, and to count on the respectful and tender devotions of your humble proteges,

"BERTONI, BEPPO."

The evening of the same day Consuelo and Joseph enter Vienna under favor of the darkness. Keller, the worthy wig-maker, was admitted into their confidence, received them with open arms, and paid the utmost attention to the noble-hearted girl in her travelling disguise. Consuelo lavished all her kindness upon Joseph's intended bride, though to her regret she found her neither graceful nor pretty. On the following morning, Keller braided Consuelo's dishevelled hair; his daughter aided her to resume the apparel of her sex, and showed her the way to the house in which Porpora had installed himself.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

To the joy which Consuelo felt, as she clasped in her arms her master and benefactor, succeeded a sense of pain, which it was long before she could subdue. A year had elapsed since she had seen Porpora; and that year of uncertainty, annoyance, and vexation had left deep traces of age and distress on the brow of the master. He had gained, moreover, that unhealthy fatness into which inaction and languor of the soul often cast organizations already beginning to give way. His eye had still its wonted brightness, and a certain exaggerated color on his cheeks betrayed fatal efforts to acquire, by means of wine, forgetfulness of his sorrows, or a return of inspiration, discouraged by age and disappointment. The luckless composer had flattered himself that he should recover at Vienna some chances of patronage and fortune. He had been received with cold esteem, and had found his