

"We may be astonished," said Consuelo adroitly, "at what we admire. If great things are the most simple, they are, at least, rare enough to surprise us at first."

"You should also," added the empress, "comprehend the particular interest I feel for you and all the artists whom I love to make the ornaments of my court. In every part of the world, the theatre is a school for scandal and an abyss of turpitude. I have a disposition praiseworthy at least, even though it be impracticable, to reinstate and to purify in the mind of God and man, the profession which has been subjected to blind contempt, and even to religious persecution in other nations. While in France, the church shut its doors in their faces, I wish in my States to remove all obstacles. I have never admitted, either into my Italian opera troupe, my company of French comedians, or the national theatre, any but persons of well-known morality, or who bona fide, have resolved to reform their conduct. You know my actors are married, that I even become sponsor for their children at the baptismal font, and resolve, by every possible favor, to encourage the legitimacy of births and the observance of the marriage tie."

"Had we known that," said Consuelo, "we would have besought your majesty to be the god-mother of Angela, in my place. Your majesty sows to gather a good harvest, and had I a fault on my conscience, I would be glad to find in her a confessor, charitable as God's own self. But—"

"Continue the subject of which you were speaking just now."

"I was saying," said Consuelo, "that being ignorant of the blame attached to the residence of Joseph Haydn, in our house, I was not so very devoted in exposing myself to it."

"I understand," said the empress; "you deny all?"

"How can I confess an untruth!" said Consuelo; "I have neither any love for my master's pupil, nor have I any wish to marry him. Even if the case were otherwise, I would not accept a hand offered me by imperial decree."

"Then you wish to remain unmarried?" said the empress, rising. "Then I must tell you, it is a condition of life which, in the point of view of respectability, does not offer all the securities I require. It is also inconvenient for a young person to appear in certain *roles*, and represent certain passions, unless sanctioned and protected by a husband. You might have triumphed over your opponent, Madame Corilla, of whom I have heard much good, but who, by no means, pronounces Italian as well as you do. She, though, is a married woman and the mother of a family—a circumstance which gives her great advantages, in case you persist in remaining in your present condition." Consuelo could not refrain from muttering between her teeth, "Married!" She was completely overpowered at the idea of that virtuous—remarkably virtuous—person being preferred to her.

"Yes, married!" said the empress positively, and angry at the suspicion expressed in relation to her protégée. "She gave birth to a child recently, which she has confided to a laborious ecclesiastic—the Canon * * * *—to receive a religious education. Certainly, that worthy person would not have taken charge of it, unless he knew the mother had a right to his esteem."

"I am sure of it," said Consuelo, a little consoled at the idea that the canon was approved of and not censured for his adoption; she was, though, most indignant.

"This history is written, and thus monarchs are instructed," said she when the empress, with a stern air, had left the room, making as she passed but a slight inclination of the head. "Well, something of good can always be extracted from misfortune, and the human errors have often a good result. The canon will not lose his priory—Corilla will, if the empress interferes, become a virtuous woman, and I have not knelt to one who is no better than I am."

"Well!" said Porpora, with an anxious voice from the gallery in which he had been impatiently walking and twisting his hands; "I hope we have succeeded."

"No, my kind maestro, we have failed."

"How calmly you say this! What the devil is the matter?"

"You must not mention the devil; he has no chance to show himself at court. When we are out of the palace I will tell you all."

"Well, what is the matter?" said Porpora impatiently, as soon as they had passed the ramparts.

"Do you remember, maestro, what we said of the Prime Minister, Kaunitz, when we left the Margrave's?"

"We said he was an old gossip. Has he foiled us?"

"Certainly. Well, now I tell you her Majesty, the empress, Queen of Hungary, is also a gossip."

CHAPTER XC.

CONSUELO told Porpora all she thought he should know of the motives of Maria Theresa for the kind of disgrace to which she had been subjected. The rest would, perhaps, have irritated, disturbed, and offended the maestro with Joseph Haydn, without any benefit at all. She also decided not to tell her young friend what she concealed from Porpora. Rightly enough she contemned the vague accusations which she knew had been made by two or three enemies, to the empress, and which had no public circulation. The ambassador Korner, to whom she confided every thing, approved of her following this course; and to prevent malice from obtaining possession of these seeds of slander, acted prudently and wisely. He persuaded Porpora to remain at his hotel with Consuelo, and Haydn entered the service of the ambassador, being admitted to the table of the private secretaries. Thus the old maestro was freed from want, and Joseph continued to render him some personal services, which enabled him to see him often and to take his lessons. Consuelo was protected from all malicious insinuations.

In spite of this, Corilla was engaged instead of Consuelo for the Imperial Theatre. The latter had not been able to please Maria Theresa. This great queen, though laughing at the green-room intrigues which Kaunitz and Metastasio half displayed to her in the most charming manner, wished to assume the *role* of an incarnate and crowned providence amid a troupe of strolling actors, who professed to her to be repentant sinners and converted demons. It may be imagined that among these hypocrites, who received little pensions and presents for their so-called piety, were found neither Caffariello, Fariñelli, la Tesi, nor Madame Hasse; none, in fine, of those great

virtuosi Vienna sometimes heard, and who, from their high talent, were leniently treated. The lower parts, though, were always occupied by people who deigned to flatter the devout and moralizing humor of her majesty; who exhibited her intriguing disposition in every thing, and used all her art to bring about the marriage or conversion of an actor. We may read in the Memoirs of Favart, (that interesting romance of real life in the green-room,) the difficulty he had to find actresses and singers willing to go to Vienna. The court insisted on having them cheap, and besides, chaste as vestals. I think this furnisher of musical chastity—specially appointed by Maria Theresa—succeeded in finding *one*. This speaks volumes in favor of our operatic artists! as was then said.

Thus Maria Theresa wished to make even her amusement an edifying pretext for the display of the beneficent majesty of her character. Monarchs always place themselves in postures, and great monarchs, perhaps, more frequently than others. This Porpora frequently said, and he was not mistaken. The great empress was a zealous Catholic, an exemplary mother, and yet had no objections to talk to a prostitute, to catechise and call forth the strongest confessions, merely to have the glory of bringing a repentant Magdalen to the foot of the altar. The privy purse of her majesty, thus standing between vice and contrition, worked numerous and infallible miracles of grace. Thus Corilla, weeping and crushed, if not in person, for I doubt if she could bend her stern character to such a comedy—but in the person of Kaunitz, who watched over her new-born virtue—was certain to triumph over a decided young girl, who was bold and resolute as the immaculate Consuelo. Maria Theresa loved no dramatic proteges that she could not say she had herself been the creator. Self-made and self-guarded virtues did not greatly interest her. She did not have that confidence her own virtue should have inspired her to believe. The bearing of Consuelo also had piqued her, and she had found her calm and reflective. It was too arrogant and presumptuous conduct for a little gipsy to presume to be honest and virtuous without the empress; and when Kaunitz, therefore, who feigned to be very impartial towards each of the singers, asked if she had granted the prayer of "the young girl," the empress answered, "I was not satisfied with her principles; do not mention her again to me." The voice, face, and even the name of la Porporina were completely forgotten.

One single word alone was necessary and sufficient to explain to Porpora the reason of his being out of favor. Consuelo told him that her position as an unmarried woman seemed inadmissible to the empress. "But la Corilla?" said Porpora, who had known that the latter had been engaged. "Has her majesty found la Corilla a husband?"

"As well as I could understand or devise the meaning of her majesty's words, la Corilla here passes for a widow."

"Ah, thrice ten, a hundred times a widow, in fact," said Porpora, with a bitter smile. "What will people say, though, when it is known what she is, and when begins another series of her numberless widowhoods? And the child they told me of, whom she left with an old canon near Vienna? That child she wished to present to Count Zustiniani, and whom Zustiniani advised her to confide to the paternal tenderness of Anzoletto. She will laugh at all this with her companions; she will tell of it, as she is wont, in cynical terms, and will

laugh in the privacy of her dressing-room at the trick she has played the empress."

"But if the empress learns the truth?"

"She will not; sovereigns are surrounded, I imagine, by ears, which are mere portals to their own. Much remains outside, and nothing enters the sanctuary of the imperial ear but what the guardians suffer to pass. Besides," said Porpora "Corilla will always have the resource of being able to confess. M. Kaunitz will always point out her penitence."

The poor maestro exhaled his bile in such bitter jests as the above. He became hopeless of being able to produce the opera lying in his desk—now completed—especially as it was for a libretto not by Metastasio, who had a monopoly of the poetry of the court. He was not without a presentiment of the little tact Consuelo had displayed in captivating the good graces of the empress. He could not, therefore, repress his ill humor. As an additional misfortune, the Venetian ambassador, in an enthusiasm of pride and pleasure at the development of the musical intelligence of Haydn, one day told him all the truth about the young man, and showed him his beautiful attempts in musical composition, which began to be circulated and to be talked of by amateurs. The maestro had been deceived, and became much enraged. Luckily, though, he did not suspect Consuelo of being the accomplice of the *ruse*. Korner, seeing the storm he had created, hastened to prevent his suspicions by a good lie. He could not, though, prevent Haydn from being banished for some days from the maestro's room. All the ascendancy which his protection and his services gave him over the latter were required to restore him to fa. Porpora, though, for a long time was offended with him, and made him do penance for his offence by a more minute discharge of his duties as a valet than was necessary, since the valets of the embassy were at his orders. Haydn did not refuse, and by means of gentleness, patience, and devotion, being constantly exhorted and encouraged by Consuelo, was always faithful and attentive to his lessons, finally disarming the rude professor, whom he induced to impart to him all he had the wish or capacity to learn.

The genius of Haydn dreamed of a different route from any yet attempted, and the future author of the symphony confided to Consuelo his ideas in relation to the development of its instrumental arrangement in the most gigantic proportions. These gigantic proportions, which seem to us now so simple and natural, must have seemed as much the utopia of a fool, as the revelation of a new era of genius. Joseph yet mistrusted himself, and not without trepidation confessed to Consuelo the terror which tormented him. Consuelo, too, was at first much afraid. Until that time the instrumentation played but a secondary part, and when isolated from the human voice, had no complication. There was, though, so much calmness and perseverance in her young associate—he exhibited in his whole conduct so much real modesty, and so calm a research after the truth—that Consuelo, unable to think him presumptuous, considered him prudent, and encouraged him in his plans. Just then Haydn composed a serenade for three instruments, which, with his friends, he performed beneath the windows of the *dilettanti*, the attention of whom he was anxious to attract to his works. He began with Porpora, who, not knowing the name of the composer, heard with pleasure, and clapped his hands without reserve. On this occasion, the

ambassador, who was in the secret, said nothing, and did not betray the young composer. Porpora was unwilling that one taking lessons in plain song should be distracted by other words.

At this time Porpora received a letter from the admirable contralto, Hubert, whom he had taught, and who bore the name of Porporino. That artist was in the service of Frederick the Great. He was not, like the professor's other pupils, infatuated with his own merit, so as to forget his obligations to Porpora. From him the Porporino had imbibed a kind of talent he had never attempted to modify, and which had always succeeded. He used to sing in an ample, pure style, without ornament, and without deserting the correct method of his master. He was particularly admirable in the *adagio*. Porpora, therefore, had a liking for him very difficult to be concealed in the presence of the fanatical admirers of Farinelli and Caffariello. He did not deny the skill, the brilliancy, and the suppleness of those great virtuosi, as being able to give more *ecclat* and to delight more suddenly an audience greedy of difficulties. He said, though, to himself, that Porporino made no sacrifices to bad taste, and that people were never weary of hearing him. It really appears the Prussians never did, for he shone there during the whole of his musical existence, more than forty years, dying at a very advanced age.

This letter of Hubert told Porpora that his music was highly appreciated at Berlin, and that if he would join him, he would use every effort to have his new compositions received and admitted. He advised him to leave Vienna, a city in which the artists were constantly involved in the cabals of cliques, and to obtain a distinguished female singer who would appear with himself in some of Porpora's own works. He spoke highly of the king's enlightened taste, and of the honorable protection he gave musicians. "If this plan suit your views, reply at once what are your pretensions, and three months hence I will promise you an engagement, at least sufficient to procure you a peaceable life. As for glory, my dear instructor, do you but write, and we will sing so as to cause you to be appreciated even as far as Dresden.

At this last phrase Porpora erected his ears like an old war-horse. It was an allusion to the triumphs of Hasse and his singers at Dresden. The idea of equalling his rival in the north of Germany was grateful to the maestro, and he at once conceived an aversion to Vienna, the Viennese, and the court. He at once replied to the Porporino, authorising him to make arrangements for him at Berlin. He made his *ultimatum* small as possible in order to prevent disappointment. He spoke in the highest terms of la Porporina, saying she was his sister, both in education and in genius, as well as by name. He urged him to make the best possible terms for her. All this he did without consulting Consuelo until after the letter was gone.

The poor girl was terrified at the very mention of Prussia, and the name of Frederick the Great made her shudder. Since the affair of the deserter she had always looked on the celebrated monarch as an ogre and vampire. Porpora complained not a little at the disregard she showed at the idea of a new engagement, and as she could not tell him the story of Carl and the promises of Mayer, she looked down, and suffered him to scold away.

When she found time to think, though, she found some consolation in the idea. It postponed her return to the stage, for the Porporino might fail and at all events asked three months to conclude the ar-

range. Till then she might dream of the love of Count Albert, and resolve herself to return it. If she saw a probability of uniting herself to him, or if she did not, she might with honor and frankness keep the resolution she had formed, to think of him with distraction and without constraint.

Before she announced the news to her hosts at Riesenberg, she resolved to wait until Count Christian had replied to her letter. The expected reply did not come, and Consuelo began to be afraid that old Rudolstadt was become dissatisfied with the contemplated marriage and was trying to induce Albert to renounce it. One day, however, she received a letter by the hands of Keller, which ran as follows:

"You promised to write to me. You did so, when you indirectly advised my father of the difficulties of our present situation. I see you wear a burden, to relieve you of which would be a crime in me. I see that my good father is terrified at the consequences of your submission to Porpora—though I am not now afraid of anything—because you exhibit to my father terror and regret for the course you have been led to take. This satisfies me that you will not with inconsideration condemn me to eternal despair. No, you will not break your word; you will try to love me. What matters it to me where you are, or how you are engaged, or in what rank the respect or prejudice of men may hold you, or even the obstacles which keep you from me, if you bid me hope or despair? I suffer much, certainly, but can bear more without failing, until you shall have extinguished all hope.

"I will wait, for I have learned to do so. Do not be afraid to pain me, by taking time to reply to me. Do not write to me under the impression of fear or pity, with which I will have nothing to do. Take my fate into your heart, my soul into yours; and when the time is come, whether in a convent cell, or on the stage of a theatre, tell me never to annoy you again, or, to come to join you. I shall either lie at your feet, or be mute for ever.

ALBERT."

"Noble Albert," said Consuelo, as she placed the paper to her lips, "I feel that I love you. It would be impossible not to do so, and I will not hesitate to say so. I wish to reward you by a promise of constancy and devotion."

At once she sat down to write. The sound of Porpora's voice made her at once hide the letter in her bosom, as well as the answer she was about to write to Albert. During the whole day she could not be alone for one moment. It seemed that the old growler guessed at her wish to be alone, and took care that she should not. Night came, Consuelo became calm, and understood that so grave a determination demanded a longer test of her own feelings. It was necessary that Albert should not be exposed to the disastrous consequences of a reaction on her own emotions. She re-read his letter a hundred times, and saw that he apprehended both the pain of a refusal and a precipitate promise. She resolved to think for some days: Albert himself seemed to insist on it.

The life Consuelo led at the embassy was calm and regular. To avoid all misinterpretations, Korner never visited her in her room, and never, in even Porpora's company, invited her to his. He only met her in the apartments of Madame Wilhelmina, where he could speak to her without compromising her, and where, to oblige the company, she often sang. Joseph was often sent for to accompany her.

Caffariello came thither frequently, and Count Hodtz sometimes Metastasio came rarely. All regretted that Consuelo had failed; but neither of the three dared to strive for her. Porpora was indignant, and found it very difficult to conceal it. Consuelo made every effort to soothe him, and make him associate with men, in spite of their weakness. She excited him to work, and thanks to her, from time to time, regained his hope and enthusiasm. She encouraged him only in the pique which induced him not to take her into society, and not to make her sing. Happy at the idea of being forgotten by the great, whom she had received with terror and repugnance, she gave herself up to serious study and deep reverie, cultivated the friendship (now become calm and holy) of Haydn, saying every day, as she attended to the wants of the good maestro, that, if nature had not provided for her a life without emotion and movement, it had least of all made her ambitious and fond of change. She had, indeed, not yet dreamed of a more animated existence, of more lively joy, and of more expansive and vast intellectual pleasures. The pure world of art, though, which she had created for herself, was so noble and sympathetic, never manifesting itself except under unpleasant circumstances, that she preferred an obscure and retired life, gentle affections, and a laborious solitude.

Consuelo had no new reflections to make, in relation to Rudolstadt's offer. She could entertain no doubt in relation to his generosity, and the unalterable holiness of the love of the son, and the kind indulgence of the father. She had not to inquire into her reason or her conscience. Both spoke in favor of Albert. On this occasion she had, without any difficulty, triumphed over her memory of Anzoletto. Victory over one passion enables us to subdue others. She, therefore, feared no influence, and henceforth would triumph over all other temptations.

Passion, however, did not speak in her heart in favor of Albert with any power. It was, therefore, still her duty to question that heart, in the depth of which a mysterious calm reflected the idea of a perfect love. Sitting at her window, the naive girl often saw the young people of the city passing down the street. Bold students, noble lords, melancholy artists, proud cavaliers, were often the objects of a serious and chaste examination, which in its character was almost infantine.

"How," said she, "is my heart—frivolous or chaste? Am I capable of loving madly and irresistibly at first sight, as many of my country-women of *la Scuola* confessed or boasted before me to each other? Is love a magic flash, which overpowers our nature, and turns us violently from the affections we protested to keep, in the days of our innocence? Is there among those men who look up to my window one face which troubles or fascinates me? That one with his tall form and lofty step seems to me more noble and handsome than Albert. The other, with his fine hair and handsome dress, effaces the image of my betrothed? Would I be the gaily decked lady I see in yonder coach, which the noble-looking gentleman now hands her fan and gloves? Which of all these things troubles or annoys me, or makes me blush? No—no, indeed! Speak, my heart—speak!—I appeal to you. I let you go at liberty. I scarcely know you, I have had so little time to consult you since my birth. I have not been used to contradiction. I abandoned to you the empire of my life, without examining the propriety of your impu-

You have been crushed, poor heart; and now that conscience has subdued you, you dare live no longer; you know not what to say. Reply! arouse yourself, and make your choice! Well, you are silent. You will not choose amid what is open to you. No; you love Anzoletto no more? No, no;—then Albert calls you. You seem to say yes. And every day Consuelo left her window with a smile on her lips, and a calm and gentle light burning in her heart.

After the end of a month she wrote to Albert, with a calm head, very slowly, and almost feeling her pulse at every letter her hand traced:—

"I love you only. I am almost sure that I love you. Now, let me dream of the possibility of our union. Dream of it yourself, also. Let us contrive together on means neither to distress your father nor your mother, nor to become egotistical in becoming happy."

In this letter she enclosed a brief note to Count Christian, in which she told him how calmly she lived, and told him of the respite which the new plans of Porpora had left her. She requested that a means might be found to soothe Porpora, and asked for a reply in a month. She would then have one month to prepare the maestro, before the matters in Berlin should be decided on.

Consuelo, having sealed the two notes, put them on the table, and went to sleep. A delicious calm had filled her soul, and never for a long time had she enjoyed so calm and delicious a sleep. It was late when she awoke. She was anxious to see Keller, who had promised to come to see her at eight o'clock. It was nine, and as she dressed herself, Consuelo saw with terror that the letter was not where she had placed it. She looked every where for it, and went to see if Keller was not waiting for her in the antechamber. Neither Keller nor Haydn were there; and, as she was about to return to look again for it in her room, she saw Porpora approach her and look sternly at her.

"What are you looking for?" he said.

"A sheet of music I have lost."

"That is not true; you are looking for a letter."

"Maestro!"

"Be silent, Consuelo, you know not how to deceive as yet. Do not learn to do so."

"Maestro, what have you done with that letter?"

"Given it to Keller—"

"Why—why did you?"

"Because he came for it. You sent for him yesterday. You do not know how to deceive, Consuelo, or I have a more acute ear than you think."

"Again," said Consuelo, with emotion, "I ask you, what you have done with the letter?"

"I have told you. Do not ask me again. I think it very wrong that a young girl, honest as I think you are, should give letters to her hair-dresser. To prevent this man from entertaining an erroneous idea of you, I gave him the letters calmly, and bade him send them for you. He will not think you are concealing any guilty secret from you adopted father."

"Maestro, you are right—you did well. Forgive me."

"I do; let us talk of the matter no more."

"And—did you read the letter?" asked Consuelo, with a timid and suppliant expression.

"For what do you take me?" said Porpora, angrily.

"Forgive me," said Consuelo, kneeling before him, and seeking to take his hand; "let me open my heart to you—"

"Not a word more," said Porpora, repelling her. He then left the room, shutting the door loudly as he passed from it.

Consuelo hoped that this first storm having passed by, she might, by a decisive explanation, appease him. She felt that she had power enough to tell him all she thought, and flattered herself that she would hasten the issue of her plans: he, however, would hear no explanation, and his severity in relation to that was unalterable. Besides, he testified as much kindness to her as usual; and thenceforth exhibited more apparent mirth and gratification. From this, Consuelo conceived a good augury, and waited impatiently for the answer from Riesenbergh.

Porpora had not read—he had burned Consuelo's letters without reading them—but had substituted for them another to Count Christian. He thought this prudent step had saved his pupil and preserved old Rudolstadt from a greater sacrifice than he was capable of. He fancied he had acted towards him like a faithful friend, and towards Consuelo like an energetic and kind father. He did not think he might have given Count Albert a death blow. He thought Consuelo had exaggerated matters—that the young man was neither so much in love nor so ill as they fancied. In fine, like all old men, he thought that love passes away, and that it kills no one.

CHAPTER XCL

EXPECTING an answer which would never come, for Porpora had burned her letter, Consuelo continued her calm and studious life. Her presence attracted to Madame Wilhelmina's some very distinguished persons, whom she was pleased to see frequently. Among others, was Baron Frederick Trenck, with whom she felt a tone of sympathy. He had tact enough the first time he saw her, not to approach her like an old acquaintance, but to ask for an introduction, after he had heard her sing, as any delighted auditor might do. When she met this brave and handsome young man, who had so bravely rescued her from Mayer and his band, the impulse of Consuelo was to offer him her hand. The baron, who did not wish her to commit any imprudence on his account, took her hand respectfully, as if he were about to lead her back to her chair, and to thank her for her kindness, pressed it gently. She afterwards heard from Joseph, who gave him music lessons, that he always asked after her with interest, and spoke of her with admiration; but that, from a feeling of propriety, he never made any allusion to the motives of her disguise, the reasons for her adventurous voyage, and the nature of their feelings to each other.

"I do not know," said Joseph, "what he thinks, but I assure you he speaks of no woman in the world with more respect."

"If that be so," said Consuelo, "I authorise you to tell him all our history, and all my career, without, of course, mentioning the family of Rudolstadt. I wish to possess all the esteem of that man, to whom we are indebted for our lives, and who has, in every respect, acted so nobly towards me."

A few weeks afterwards, Von Trenck, having terminated his mission at Vienna, was suddenly recalled by Frederick, and came one day to the embassy to bid adieu to Korner. Consuelo was coming down the stairway, to go out, and met him in the portico. As they were alone, he took her hand and kissed it tenderly.

"Permit me," said he, "to express for the first and probably for the last time, in my life, the feelings with which my breast is filled. It needed not for Beppo to tell me your history, to be filled with veneration for you. There are faces which never deceive us, and one glance sufficed to enable me to see in you great power and nobleness of heart. Had I known at Passau that Joseph was so little on his guard, I would have protected you from the rudeness of Count Hoditz, the intentions of whom I could not but foresee, in spite of my efforts to make him understand that he toiled in vain, and would make himself ridiculous. Besides, Hoditz himself told me that you laughed at him, and he is as much obliged to you as possible for having kept his secret. I shall never forget the romantic adventure which procured me the happiness of your acquaintance, and which I shall never cease to reckon among the happiest events of my life, even though it cost me my future success and fortune."

"Think you, then, it is likely to have such results?"

"I trust not. Yet, in Prussia anything may happen."

"You make me tremble at the King of Prussia. But do not think, baron, that it is at all impossible that ere long I shall meet you. I may be engaged at Berlin."

"Indeed," said Trenck, and his face suddenly lighted up with an expression of joy. "God grant that this plan may be realized. At Berlin I can serve you, and you may rely on me as on a brother. Yes, Consuelo, I feel a brother's affection for you; and, were I untrammelled, would, perhaps, be unable to defend myself from a yet tenderer sentiment. You, too, are not free; and solemn eternal ties do not permit me to envy the happy gentleman who may ask for your hand. Whoever he be, madam, rely on the fact, that if he pleases, I will be his friend; and if he does not, that I will be his champion against the prejudices of the world. . . . Alas! Consuelo, I also have a terrible barrier between her I love and myself. The person, though, whom you love is a man, and can break down the barrier; while the one who is dear to me is a woman, without power, strength, or liberty to do so."

"With her, then, will it be impossible for me to do anything in your behalf," said Consuelo. "For the first time, I regret the impotence of my situation."

"Who knows?" said the baron, anxiously. "You may, perhaps, be more powerful than you think; at least, to lessen the horror of our separation. Will you not encounter some danger for me?"

"With the same pleasure that you exposed your life in my behalf."

"Well—I rely on you. Remember this promise, Consuelo. Perhaps I may recal this to you some day, unexpectedly."

"At whatever hour of my life you may do so, I will not be unmindful of it," said she, giving him her hand.

"Well," said he, "give me some token, some valueless pledge, that may, when the time comes, remind you of it: I have a presentiment that great contests await me, and a time may come, when my signature may compromise her and you."

"Will you take this sheet of music I was about to take to a pup?"

of the maestro? I can easily get another, and on this I will make a mark to enable me, some day, to recognise it."

"Why not? A sheet of music is, perhaps, the thing most likely to be sent without awakening suspicion. That it may be of use to me more than once, I will separate the leaves. Make a mark on each of the pages."

Consuelo, leaning on the staircase, wrote the name of Bertoni on each leaf. The baron folded it up and carried it away, after having promised our heroine eternal friendship.

At this time, Madame Tesi became sick, and the performances at the Imperial Theatre were on the point of being suspended, for she had the most important roles. La Corilla had a right to insist on replacing her. She had great success both with the court and the people. Her beauty and coquetry turned the heads of all those simple German lords, no one observing that her voice was rather hoarse and that she was rather epileptic. Every handsome woman on the stage seemed a great artist to them. Her snowy shoulders uttered wonderful notes, her round and voluptuous tones sang always correctly, and her superb attitudes gave wonderful expression to the music. In spite of the pure musical taste, which was so highly extolled, all felt the influence of the fascination of her eye, and Corilla prepared in her boudoir many minds to be completely dragged away upon the stage.

She then presented herself boldly to sing *ad interim*, the roles of la Tesi; the difficulty was to find some one to replace her in her own. The seedy voice of Madame Holzbaüer put her out of the question. It was therefore necessary to employ Corilla or put up with something very commonplace. Porpora made the most unearthly efforts. Metastasio, extremely disconcerted with the Lombard pronunciation of Corilla, and indignant at the effort she made to depress all other roles than her own, (contrary to the spirit of the poem, and destroying all dramatic effect,) did not conceal his dissatisfaction, and his sympathy for the silent and intelligent Porporina. Caffariello was very assiduous in his court to Madame Tesi, and she, cordially detesting Corilla for having disputed with her the sceptre of beauty, was strenuous in favor of the employment of Consuelo. Holzbaüer was anxious that his management should succeed; but, terrified at the ascendancy Porporina would soon acquire if she had even the right of *entrée* into the green-room, did not know which way to look. The good conduct of Consuelo had gained her so many friends, that it would be difficult to impose any longer on the empress. In consequence of all these circumstances, offers were made to Consuelo. By offering a scandalously low price, it was hoped that she would be induced to decline them. Porpora, though, accepted them at once, as usual, without consulting her. One fine morning, therefore, Consuelo found herself engaged for six representations, without being able to decline, and without knowing why. After patiently waiting six weeks, she received no letter from the Rudolstadt. She was hurried by Porpora to the representation of Metastasio's *Antigone*, the music by Hasse.

Consuelo had already studied her part with Porpora. It was doubtless most disagreeable to the latter to teach his pupil the music of a rival composer, the most ungrateful of his pupils, and the rival he hated worse than any: it was necessary, though, to do so for the purpose of opening the door to his own compositions, and Porpora was too conscientious a professor, and too honest an artist, not to be zealous and careful as possible. Consuelo assisted him so zealously, that

he was at once delighted and distressed. In spite of her wishes, she thought Hasse's music magnificent, and her soul seemed more delighted in the tender and passionate strains of the *Sassone*, than in the often naked and cold grandeur of Porpora. Accustomed, when she studied the other great masters, to give way to her own enthusiasm, she was now forced to repress it, when she saw the sadness of his brow, and his reverie after the lesson. When she went on the stage to rehearse with Caffariello and Corilla, though she knew her part very well, she felt such excitement that she could scarcely open the scene of *Ismene Berenice*, beginning:

"No tutto; O Berenice,
Tu non apri il tuo cor," etc

To which Corilla replied:

"—E ti par poco
Quel che sai de' miel casì?"

At that place Corilla was interrupted by a burst of laughter from Caffariello. Turning round, with her eyes sparkling with rage, she said:—

"What is it that amuses you so much?"

"You are right, my Berenice," said Caffariello, laughing louder. "You could say nothing more true."

"Do the words amuse you?" said Holzbaüer, who would have liked to tell Metastasio that the tenor laughed at his voice.

"The words are beautiful," said Caffariello drily, for he knew precisely the state of affairs. "They suit the case, however, so exactly that I could not but laugh."

He again laughed as he repeated to Porpora:—

"—E ti par poco
Quel che sai di tanti casì?"

Corilla saw this criticism referred to her morals, and, trembling with anger, hatred and fear, felt as if she could have torn Consuelo's eyes out. Her face was, however, so calm and gentle, that one dared not. Besides, in the dim light which fell on the stage, she paused as if she were struck with vague reminiscences, and strange terrors. She had never seen her by daylight, nor so closely, while at Venice. Amid the pains of childbirth, she had indistinctly seen the little Zingara Bertoni hovering confusedly around her, and did not understand her devotion. She now sought to recal her memories; but not succeeding in doing so, she stood for a moment under the influence of an uneasy sensation, which clung to her during the whole rehearsal. The manner in which Consuelo sang her part contributed not a little to her ill humor, and the presence of her old master, Porpora, who like a stern judge, heard her in silence, and almost in contempt, became a real punishment to her. Holzbaüer was not less mortified, when the maestro said his accompaniments cut across the voice, and he must have known it, having been present at the rehearsals Hasse had himself directed at Dresden, when the opera was first put on the stage. The need he had of a good adviser made him conceal his ill humor, and forced him to be silent. He conducted the whole rehearsal, taught each one what to do, and even corrected Caffariello, who pretended to submit, to induce others to do so. Caffariello had no object but to mortify the impertinent rival of Tesi, and he was willing to do anything for that gratification—even to submit and tr

be modest. Artists and diplomats are, in this particular, alike in the theatre and in the council chamber—the most beautiful, and the reverse, find their causes in the most frivolous and trifling matters.

When she returned, after the rehearsal, Consuelo found Joseph most mysteriously joyful; and when they could speak together, she learned that the good canon had come to Vienna, and had immediately asked for his dear Beppo, of whom, while eating a good breakfast, he had asked a thousand things about that *dear lad*, Bertoni. They had contrived a way for him to become acquainted with Porpora, that he might see her openly, and without concealment. On the next day, the canon procured an introduction, as a protector of Joseph Haydn, a great admirer of Porpora, and under the pretence of coming to thank him for the lessons he had given to his young friend, Consuelo seemed to speak to him for the first time; and at night, the priest, Porpora and his two pupils all dined with the canon. Without pretending to a stoicism, which was not the want of musicians of any class of that age, Porpora could not but form a sudden affection for the good canon, who had so excellent a table, and was so excellent an admirer of his books. After dinner they had music, and subsequently they met every day.

This somewhat atoned for the uneasiness created by the silence of Albert. The canon loved enjoyments of a chaste, but at the same time, liberal character, and was, in relation to some matters, a fop, and in others just and enlightened. He was, in fact, an excellent friend, and a perfectly amiable man. His society animated and strengthened the maestro, whose manners became more gentle; and, consequently, the in-door life of Consuelo more agreeable.

One day, when they had no rehearsal, (it was the day before the representation of *Antigone*.) Porpora had gone into the country with a friend, the canon proposed to his young friends to visit the priory, to surprise those he had left there, and to ascertain, by falling like a bomb in the garden, if Angela was well taken care of, and if the gardener neglected the volkameria. The proposition was agreed to, and the canon's carriage filled up with *pates*, (for one could not travel four leagues without an appetite.) They came to their destination after having made a little detour, and left the carriage, in order to make the surprise more complete.

The volkameria was in perfect condition; it was warm weather, and the roots were fresh. It had ceased to flower since the cold had set in, but its leaves hung without languor over the trunk. The hedge was well trimmed, and the blue chrysanthemums braved the winter, and seemed to smile under their glass shelters. Angela, at the breast of the nurse, was smiling also when she was excited by caresses, and the canon made up his mind that it was wrong to force her good humor, for to compel these frail creatures to smile often disposes them to a too nervous temperament.

They were all enjoying themselves in the garden house, the canon, wrapped up in his furred pelisse, was warming his shins before a large fire of dried branches and pine cones, Joseph was playing with the fine children of the gardener's handsome wife, and Consuelo sat in the centre of the room, with Angela in her arms, and was gazing at her with a mingled expression of tenderness and sorrow. It seemed to her that this child was rather hers than another's, and that a mysterious fatality united its delicate existence to her own, when the door suddenly opened, and la Corilla stood before her like an apparition evoked by her melancholy reverie.

For the first time since the day of her delivery, la Corilla had felt, if not a feeling of love, an attack of maternal remorse, and she came secretly to see her child. She knew that the canon was at Vienna and coming after him with the interval of half an hour, and not finding any marks of carriage-wheels near the priory, in consequence of his having made a detour before he came to the house, she entered furtively and unseen until she came to the gardener's house, where Angela's nurse lived, (she had informed herself of all this). She had laughed at the good canon's embarrassment and Christian resignation, but was utterly ignorant of the part Consuelo had taken in the matter. With mingled surprise and terror, then, she saw her rival, and not knowing nor daring to think what child she thus petted, she was about to turn on her heel and fly. Consuelo, though, by an instinctive movement, had clasped the child to her bosom, as the partridge hides her young when the kite hovers above them. Consuelo, who now was at the theatre, and who the next day might describe the under-plot of the drama she was playing, and even describe her manner, held her overpowered and fascinated, as if by a spell, nailed to the centre of the room.

La Corilla, though, was too consummate an actress not to regain her presence of mind in a very short time. It was her plan to prevent a humiliation by an insult; and to get herself in voice, began her part by an apostrophe in the Venetian dialect, the tone of which is short and hissing.

"Eh! pardiou! la Zingarella—this house seems a foundling hospital. Have you also come to seek for, or to leave one of yours? I see we run the same chances and risks. Our two children, beyond doubt, have the same father, our adventures dating from Venice at the same time. And I see with compassion that it was not to rejoin you as I thought that the handsome Anzoleto so brusquely abandoned me in the midst of his engagement at Venice last season."

"Madam," said Consuelo, very pale, but very calm, "had I been so unfortunate as to be to Anzoleto what you were, I would at least have had the reward of being a mother, (they must feel,) and my child would not be here."

"Ah! I understand," said Corilla, with a sombre glare in her eyes; "he would have been at the villa Zustiniani; you would have been able to do what I could not, persuade the dear count that honor forced him to recognise it. You had not, though, what you call the misfortune of being the mistress of Anzoleto, and Zustiniani left no proofs of his love with you. They say Joseph Haydn, Porpora's pupil, consoled you for all your misfortunes, and, beyond doubt, is the father of the child you hold in your arms."

"This child, madam, is your own," said Joseph, for he understood Italian very well, and advanced between Consuelo and Corilla, so that the latter shrank back. "Joseph Haydn assures you of the fact, having been present at its birth."

The face of Haydn, which Corilla had never seen since that unfortunate day, recalled all the events which she had before attempted to. The Zingara Bertoni appeared before her as the Zingarella Consuelo. A cry as of surprise escaped from her lips, and for a moment shame and pique contended for the ascendancy. Ill humor soon, though, returned to her heart and sneers to her lips. "Indeed, my children," said she, with an atrociously benignant air, "I have not forgotten you. You were each very good, before all these strange things hap-

pened, and Consuelo in her disguise was really a handsome lad. It was then in this holy house that she passed her time in devotion, dividing her hours between the precious canon and the good Joseph, since the time she left Venice? Well, Zingarella, let us not make each other uneasy. We know each other's secrets, and the empress, who wishes to know everything, will be able to blame neither the one nor the other."

"Suppose even I had a secret," said Consuelo, "you know nothing of it. I, however, learned yours, when I had a conversation of an hour's duration with the empress, three days, Corilla, before you made your engagement."

"And you sought to injure me?" said Corilla, becoming flushed with anger.

"Had I told her what I knew of you, your engagement never would have been made. If you are now employed, it is because I was unwilling to take an advantage of my opportunities."

"But why did you not? You must have been a great fool," said Corilla with a candor and perversity of heart, which were wonderful to see.

Consuelo and Joseph could not repress a smile as they heard her. Joseph's was full of contempt—that of Consuelo was angelic and looked to heaven.

"Yes, madam," said she, with overpowering gentleness, "I am foolish, as you say I am, and am glad of it."

"No! no! my child; for I have an engagement and you have not," said Corilla amazed and reckless. "They told me at Venice that you had no mind, and never could succeed. That is the only truth Anzoleto ever uttered about you. What then? that is not my fault. Had I been in your place, I would have told all I knew of la Corilla, and would have represented myself as a virgin and as a saint. The empress would have believed it, and I would have supplanted every rival."

At first contempt was more powerful than indignation. Consuelo and Haydn laughed loud and long, and la Corilla who, in becoming aware of what she called the impotence of her rival, lost the aggressive bitterness which had characterised her, drew up a chair near the fire, and sought to resume the conversation, for the purpose of sounding the strong and weak points of her adversaries. Just then her eye fell on the canon, whom she had not previously seen, because the latter, guided by an instinct of prudence peculiar to his profession, had, by a gesture, bidden the fat nurse and her children to stand before him, until he should have gathered the purport of what was going on.

CHAPTER XCII.

AFTER the insinuation which she had uttered a few minutes previously, about the connections between Consuelo and the priest, the appearance of the latter had on Corilla almost the effect of the head of Medusa. She gradually, though, recovered her mind, when she reflected that she had spoken Venetian, and at once spoke to him in German, with that mixture of embarrassment and effrontery which

is the characteristic of an immodest woman. The canon, ordinarily polished and polite in his own house, did not quit his seat and did not even return her salute. Corilla, who had asked about him in Vienna, had heard all say he was extremely well-bred, passionately fond of music, and absolutely incapable of lecturing a woman, especially a singer, severely. She had intended to go and see him and to fascinate him so that he would not be able to scold her. Though in matters of this kind, she had the kind of sense in which Consuelo was deficient, she had that negligence and disregard of propriety which is the consequence of disorder, idleness, and—though this may seem perhaps extravagant—evil deportment. In persons of gross organizations all these things are linked together. Weakness of body and mind make intrigue powerless, and Corilla, who had an instinctive perception of perfidy of every kind, had not often sufficient capacity to lead a plot to a successful termination. She had therefore postponed from day to day her visit to the canon; and when she found him so cold and stern, began to be visibly disconcerted.

Then seeking to resume her position by a *coup de main*, she said to Consuelo, who yet held Angela in her arms—"Well, why do you not suffer me to kiss my child and place it at his reverence's feet, that—"

"*Dame Corilla*," said the canon, in the dry and mocking tone in which he had previously said *Dame Bridget*, "suffer that child to be unmolested." Then speaking Italian with a great deal of elegance, though perhaps too slowly and with too much accent, he continued, without uncovering himself—"I have been listening to you for a quarter of an hour, and though not very familiar with your *patois*, I have heard enough to authorise me to say that you are the most impudent person of your sex I ever met with. I think, however, you are rather stupid than depraved, rather contemptible than dangerous. You have no idea of the beautiful, and it would be useless to seek to make you comprehend it. I have but one thing to say; this young girl, this virgin as you called her just now in derision, has been sullied by your having spoken to her, and you shall do so no more. The child you have given birth to shall not be sullied by your touch; so do not lay your hands on it. Consuelo has said, 'it is a holy thing,' and I know it is. Through her intercession I took charge of it, and did not fancy that the perverse instincts it inherited from you one day might make me repent having done so. We have been told that divine goodness gives to every being the power to know and practice virtue, and we have resolved to teach it what is right, and render it amiable and docile. Henceforth, then, do not look on this child as your own. You have abandoned it, and given it up. It does not belong to you. You have deposited a sum of money to pay for its education." He made a sign to the gardener's wife, who on an intimation from him a few minutes before, had taken a bag with a seal attached to it, from the chest. This was what Corilla had sent with her daughter to the priest, and which had never been opened. He took the bag and threw it at Corilla's feet. "We have nothing to do with that, nor do we wish to. Now I beg you to leave my house and never enter it again, under any possible pretext. On these conditions, and provided you will never open your mouth in relation to the circumstances which made me acquainted with you, we will promise the most absolute silence in relation to all that relates to you. If you act in any other manner I warn you; I have more means than you fancy, to inform her imperial majesty of the state of affairs; and you may