not glad that she had quitted him, he was at least strangely satisfied at being left alone, and the old fancy for analysis made him try to understand himself. The attempt was fruitless, of course, but it occupied his thoughts.

He met Spicca in the street, and avoided him. He imagined that the old man must despise him for not having resisted and followed Maria Consuelo after all. The hypothesis was absurd and the conclusion vain, but he could not escape the idea, and it annoyed him. He was probably ashamed of not having acted recklessly, as a man should who is dominated by a master passion, and yet he was inwardly glad that he had not been allowed to yield to the first impulse.

The days succeeded each other and a week passed away, bringing Saturday again and the necessity for a visit to the bank. Business had been in a very bad state since it had been known that Montevarchi was ruined. So far, he had not stopped payment and although the bank refused discount he had managed to find money with which to meet his engagements. Probably, as San Giacinto had foretold, he would pay everything and remain a very poor man indeed. But, although many persons knew this, confidence was not restored. Del Ferice declared that he believed Montevarchi solvent, as he believed every one with whom his bank dealt to be solvent to the uttermost centime, but that he could lend no more money to any one on any condition whatsoever, because neither he nor the bank had any to lend. Every one, he said, had behaved honestly, and he proposed to eclipse the honesty of every one by the frank acknowledgment of his own lack of cash. He was distressed, he said, overcome by the sufferings of his friends and clients, ready to sell his house, his jewelry and his very boots, in the Roman phrase, to accommodate every one; but he was conscious that the demand far exceeded any supply which he could furnish, no matter at what personal sacrifice, and as it was therefore impossible to help

everybody, it would be unjust to help a few where all were equally deserving.

In the meanwhile he proved the will of his deceased wife, leaving him about four and a half millions of francs unconditionally, and half a million more to be devoted to some public charity at Ugo's discretion, for the repose of Donna Tullia's unquiet spirit. It is needless to say that the sorrowing husband determined to spend the legacy magnificently in the improvement of the town represented by him in parliament. A part of the improvement would consist in a statue of Del Ferice himself—representing him, perhaps, as he had escaped from Rome, in the garb of a Capuchin friar, but with the addition of an army revolver to show that he had fought for Italian unity, though when or where no man could tell. But it is worth noting that while he protested his total inability to discount any one's bills, Andrea Contini and Company regularly renewed their acceptances when due and signed new ones for any amount of cash they required. The accommodation was accompanied with a request that it should not be mentioned. Orsino took the money indifferently enough, conscious that he had three fortunes at his back in case of trouble, but Contini grew more nervous as time went on and the sums on paper increased in magnitude, while the chances of disposing of the buildings seemed reduced to nothing in the stagnation which had already set in.

CHAPTER XXV.

At this time Count Spicca received a letter from Maria Consuelo, written from Nice and bearing a postmark more recent than the date which headed the page, a fact which proved that the writer had either taken an unusually long time in the composition or had withheld the missive several days before finally despatching it.

"My Father—I write to inform you of certain things which have recently taken place and which it is important that you should know, and of which I should have the right to require an explanation if I chose to ask it. Having been the author of my life, you have made yourself also the author of all my unhappiness and of all my trouble. I have never understood the cause of your intense hatred for me, but I have felt its consequences, even at a great distance from you, and you know well enough that I return it with all my heart. Moreover I have made up my mind that I will not be made to suffer by you any longer. I tell you so quite frankly. This is a declaration of war, and I will act upon it immediately.

"You are no doubt aware that Don Orsino Saracinesca has for a long time been among my intimate friends. I will not discuss the question, whether I did well to admit him to my intimacy or not. That, at least, does not concern you. Even admitting your power to exercise the most complete tyranny over me in other ways, I am and have always been free to choose my own acquaintances, and I am able to defend myself better than most women, and as well as any. I will be just, too. I do not mean to reproach you with the consequences of what I do. But I will not spare you where the results of your action towards me are concerned.

"Don Orsino made love to me last spring. I loved him from the first. I can hear your cruel laugh and see your contemptuous face as I write. But the information is necessary, and I can bear your scorn because this is the last opportunity for such diversion which I shall afford you, and because I mean that you shall pay dearly for it. I loved Don Orsino, and I love him still. You, of course, have never loved. You have hated, however, and perhaps one passion may be the measure of another. It is in my case, I can assure you, for the better I love, the better I learn to hate you.

"Last Thursday Don Orsino asked me to be his wife. I had known for some time that he loved me and I knew that he would speak of it before long. The day was sultry at first and then there was a thunderstorm. My nerves were unstrung and I lost my head. I told him that I loved him. That does not concern you. I told him, also, however, that I had given a solemn promise to my dying husband, and I had still the strength to say that I would not marry again. I meant to gain time, I longed to be alone, I knew that I should yield, but I would not yield blindly. Thank God, I was strong. I am like

you in that, though happily not in any other way. You ask me why I should even think of yielding. I answer that I love Don Orsino better than I loved the man you murdered. There is nothing humiliating in that, and I make the confession without reserve. I love him better, and therefore, being human, I would have broken my promise and married him, had marriage been possible. But it is not, as you know. It is one thing to turn to the priest as he stands by a dying man and to say, Pronounce us man and wife, and give us a blessing, for the sake of this man's rest. The priest knew that we were both free, and took the responsibility upon himself, knowing also that the act could have no consequences in fact, whatever it might prove to be in theory. It is quite another matter to be legally married to Don Orsino Saracinesca, in the face of a strong opposition. But I went home that evening, believing that it could be done and that the opposition would vanish. I believed because I loved. I love still, but what I learned that night has killed my belief in an impossible happiness.

"I need not tell you all that passed between me and Lucrezia Ferris. How she knew of what had happened I cannot tell. She must have followed us to the apartment I was furnishing, and she must have overheard what we said, or seen enough to convince her. She is a spy. I suppose that is the reason why she is imposed upon me, and always has been, since I can remember—since I was born, she says. I found her waiting to dress me as usual, and as usual I did not speak to her. She spoke first. 'You will not marry Don Orsino Saracinesca,' she said, facing me with her bad eyes. I could have struck her, but I would not. I asked her what she meant. She told me that she knew what I was doing, and asked me whether I was aware that I needed documents in order to be married to a beggar in Rome, and whether I supposed that the Saracinesca would be inclined to overlook the absence of such papers, or could pass a law of their own abolishing the necessity for them, or, finally, whether they would accept such certificates of my origin as she could produce. She showed me a package. She had nothing better to offer me, she said, but such as she had, she heartily placed at my disposal. I took the papers. I was prepared for a shock, but not for the blow I received.

"You know what I read. The certificate of my birth as the daughter of Lucrezia Ferris, unmarried, by Count Spicca who acknowledged the child as his—and the certificate of your marriage with Lucrezia Ferris, dated—strangely enough a fortnight

after my birth—and further a document legitimizing me as the lawful daughter of you two. All these documents are from Monte Carlo. You will understand why I am in Nice. Yes—they are all genuine, every one of them, as I have had no difficulty in ascertaining. So I am the daughter of Lucrezia Ferris, born out of wedlock and subsequently whitewashed into a sort of legitimacy. And Lucrezia Ferris is lawfully the Countess Spicca. Lucrezia Ferris, the cowardly spy-woman who more than half controls my life, the lying, thieving servant—she robs me at every turn—the common, half educated Italian creature,—she is my mother, she is that radiant being of whom you sometimes speak with tears in your eyes, she is that angel of whom I remind you, she is that sweet influence that softened and brightened your lonely life for a brief space some three and twenty years ago! She has changed since then.

"And this is the mystery of my birth which you have concealed from me, and which it was at any moment in the power of my vile mother to reveal. You cannot deny the fact, I suppose, especially since I have taken the trouble to search the registers and verify each separate document.

"I gave them all back to her, for I shall never need them. The woman—I mean my mother—was quite right. I shall not marry Don Orsino Saracinesca. You have lied to me throughout my life. You have always told me that my mother was dead, and that I need not be ashamed of my birth, though you wished it kept a secret. So far, I have obeyed you. In that respect, and only in that, I will continue to act according to your wishes. I am not called upon to proclaim to the world and my acquaintance that I am the daughter of my own servant, and that you were kind enough to marry your estimable mistress after my birth in order to confer upon me what you dignify by the name of legitimacy. No. That is not necessary. If it could hurt you to proclaim it I would do so in the most public way I could find. But it is folly to suppose that you could be made to suffer by so simple a process.

"Are you aware, my father, that you have ruined all my life from the first? Being so bad, you must be intelligent and you must realise what you have done, even if you have done it out of pure love of evil. You pretended to be kind to me, until I was old enough to feel all the pain you had in store for me. But even then, after you had taken the trouble to marry my mother, why did you give me another name? Was that necessary? I suppose it was. I did not understand then why my

older companions looked askance at me in the convent, nor why the nuns sometimes whispered together and looked at me. They knew perhaps that no such name as mine existed. Since I was your daughter why did I not bear your name when I was a little girl? You were ashamed to let it be known that you were married, seeing what sort of wife you had taken, and you found yourself in a dilemma. If you had acknowledged me as your daughter in Austria, your friends in Rome would soon have found out my existence—and the existence of your wife. You were very cautious in those days, but you seem to have grown careless of late, or you would not have left those papers in the care of the Countess Spicca, my maid—and my mother. I have heard that very bad men soon reach their second childhood and act foolishly. It is quite true.

"Then, later, when you saw that I loved, and was loved, and was to be happy, you came between my love and me. You appeared in your own character as a liar, a slanderer and a traitor. I loved a man who was brave, honourable, faithful—reckless, perhaps, and wild as such men are—but devoted and true. You came between us. You told me that he was false, cowardly, an adventurer of the worst kind. Because I would not believe you, and would have married him in spite of you, you killed him. Was it cowardly of him to face the first swordsman in Europe? They told me that he was not afraid of you, the men who saw it, and that he fought you like a lion, as he was. And the provocation, too! He never struck me. He was showing me what he meant by a term in fencing—the silver knife he held grazed my cheek because I was startled and moved. But you meant to kill him, and you chose to say that he had struck me. Did you ever hear a harsh word from his lips during those months of waiting? When you had done your work you fled—like the murderer you were and are. But I escaped from the woman who says she is my mother—and is—and I went to him and found him living and married him. You used to tell me that he was an adventurer and little better than a beggar. Yet he left me a large fortune. It is as well that he provided for me, since you have succeeded in losing most of your own money at play—doubtless to insure my not profiting by it at your death. Not that you will die—men of your kind outlive their victims, because they kill them.

"And now, when you saw—for you did see it—when you saw and knew that Orsino Saracinesca and I loved each other, you have broken my life a second time. You might so easily have

gone to him, or have come to me, at the first, with the truth. You know that I should never forgive you for what you had done already. A little more could have made matters no worse then. You knew that Don Orsino would have thanked you as a friend for the warning. Instead—I refuse to believe you in your dotage after all—you make that woman spy upon me until the great moment is come, you give her the weapons and you bid her strike when the blow will be most excruciating. You are not a man. You are Satan. I parted twice from the man I love. He would not let me go, and he came back and tried to keep me—I do not know how I escaped. God helped me. He is so brave and noble that if he had held those accursed papers in his hands and known all the truth he would not have given me up. He would have brought a stain on his great name, and shame upon his great house for my sake. He is not like you. I parted from him twice, I know all that I can suffer, and I hate you for each individual suffering, great and small.

"I have dismissed my mother from my service. How that would sound in Rome! I have given her as much money as she can expect and I have got rid of her. She said that she would not go, that she would write to you, and many other things. I told her that if she attempted to stay I would go to the authorities, prove that she was my mother, provide for her, if the law required it and have her forcibly turned out of my house by the aid of the same law. I am of age, married, independent, and I cannot be obliged to entertain my mother either in the character of a servant, or as a visitor. I suppose she has a right to a lodging under your roof. I hope she will take advantage of it, as I advised her. She took the money and went away, cursing me. I think that if she had ever, in all my life, shown the smallest affection for me—even at the last, when she declared herself my mother, if she had shown a spark of motherly feeling, of tenderness, of anything human, I could have accepted her and tolerated her, half peasant woman as she is, spy as she has been, and cheat and thief. But she stood before me with the most perfect indifference, watching my surprise with those bad eyes of hers. I wonder why I have borne her presence so long. I suppose it had never struck me that I could get rid of her, in spite of you, if I chose. By the bye, I sent for a notary when I paid her, and I got a legal receipt signed with her legal name, Lucrezia Spicca, *nata Ferris*. The document formally releases me from all further claims. I hope you will understand that you have no power whatsoever to impose her upon me again, though I confess that I am expecting your next move with interest. I suppose that you have not done with me yet, and have some new means of torment in reserve. Satan is rarely idle long.

"And now I have done. If you were not the villain you are, I should expect you to go to the man whose happiness I have endangered, if not destroyed. I should expect you to tell Don Orsino Saracinesca enough of the truth to make him understand my action. But I know you far too well to imagine that you would willingly take from my life one thorn of the many you have planted in it. I will write to Don Orsino myself. I think you need not fear him—I am sorry that you need not. But I shall not tell him more than is necessary. You will remember, I hope, that such discretion as I may show, is not shown out of consideration for you, but out of forethought for my own welfare. I have unfortunately no means of preventing you from writing to me, but you may be sure that your letters will never be read, so that you will do as well to spare yourself the trouble of composing them.

"Maria Consuelo d'Aranjuez."

Spicca received this letter early in the morning, and at mid-day he still sat in his chair, holding it in his hand. His face was very white, his head hung forward upon his breast, his thin fingers were stiffened upon the thin paper. Only the hardly perceptible rise and fall of the chest showed that he still breathed.

The clocks had already struck twelve when his old servant entered the room, a being thin, wizened, grey and noiseless as the ghost of a greyhound. He stood still a moment before his master, expecting that he would look up, then bent anxiously over him and felt his hands.

Spicca slowly raised his sunken eyes.

"It will pass, Santi—it will pass," he said feebly.

Then he began to fold up the sheets slowly and with difficulty, but very neatly, as men of extraordinary skill with their hands do everything. Santi looked at him doubtfully and then got a glass and a bottle of cordial from a small carved press in the corner. Spicca drank

the liqueur slowly and set the glass steadily upon the table.

"Bad news, Signor Conte?" asked the servant anxiously, and in a way which betrayed at once the kindly relations existing between the two.

"Very bad news," Spicca answered sadly and shaking his head.

Santi sighed, restored the cordial to the press and took up the glass, as though he were about to leave the room. But he still lingered near the table, glancing uneasily at his master as though he had something to say, but was hesitating to begin.

"What is it, Santi?" asked the count.

"I beg your pardon, Signor Conte—you have had bad news—if you will allow me to speak, there are several small economies which could still be managed without too much inconveniencing you. Pardon the liberty, Signor Conte."

"I know, I know. But it is not money this time. I wish it were."

Santi's expression immediately lost much of its anxiety. He had shared his master's fallen fortunes and knew better than he what he meant by a few more small economies, as he called them.

"God be praised, Signor Conte," he said solemnly. "May I serve the breakfast?"

"I have no appetite, Santi. Go and eat yourself."

"A little something?" Santi spoke in a coaxing way. "I have prepared a little mixed fry, with toast, as you like it, Signor Conte, and the salad is good to-day—ham and figs are also in the house. Let me lay the cloth—when you see, you will eat—and just one egg beaten up with a glass of red wine to begin—that will dispose the stomach."

Spicca shook his head again, but Santi paid no attention to the refusal and went about preparing the meal. When it was ready the old man suffered himself to be persuaded and ate a little. He was in reality stronger than he looked, and an extraordinary nervous energy still lurked beneath the appearance of a feebleness almost amounting to decrepitude. The little nourishment he took sufficed to restore the balance, and when he rose from the table, he was outwardly almost himself again. When a man has suffered great moral pain for years, he bears a new shock, even the worst, better than one who is hard hit in the midst of a placid and long habitual happiness. The soul can be taught to bear trouble as the great self mortifiers of an earlier time taught their bodies to bear scourging. The process is painful but hardening.

"I feel better, Santi," said Spicca. "Your breakfast has done me good. You are an excellent doctor."

He turned away and took out his pocket-book—not over well garnished. He found a ten franc note. Then he looked round and spoke in a gentle, kindly tone.

"Santi—this trouble has nothing to do with money. You need a new pair of shoes, I am sure. Do you think that ten francs is enough?"

Santi bowed respectfully and took the money.

"A thousand thanks, Signor Conte," he said.

Santi was a strange man, from the heart of the Abruzzi. He pocketed the note, but that night, when he had undressed his master and was arranging the things on the dressing table, the ten francs found their way back into the black pocket-book. Spicca never counted, and never knew.

He did not write to Maria Consuelo, for he was well aware that in her present state of mind she would undoubtedly burn his letter unopened, as she had said she would. Late in the day he went out, walked for an hour, entered the club and read the papers, and at last betook himself to the restaurant where Orsino dined when his people were out of town.

In due time, Orsino appeared, looking pale and ill tempered. He caught sight of Spicca and went at once to the table where he sat.

"I have had a letter," said the young man. "I must speak to you. If you do not object, we will dine together."

"By all means. There is nothing like a thoroughly bad dinner to promote ill-feeling."

Orsino glanced at the old man in momentary surprise. But he knew his ways tolerably well, and was familiar with the chronic acidity of his speech.

"You probably guess who has written to me," Orsino resumed. "It was natural, perhaps, that she should have something to say, but what she actually says, is more than I was prepared to hear."

Spicca's eyes grew less dull and he turned an inquiring glance on his companion.

"When I tell you that in this letter, Madame d'Aranjuez has confided to me the true story of her origin, I have probably said enough," continued the young man.

"You have said too much or too little," Spicca answered in an almost indifferent tone.

"How so?"

"Unless you tell me just what she has told you, or show me the letter, I cannot possibly judge of the truth of the tale."

Orsino raised his head angrily.

"Do you mean me to doubt that Madame d'Aranjuez speaks the truth?" he asked.

"Calm yourself. Whatever Madame d'Aranjuez has written to you, she believes to be true. But she may have been herself deceived."

"In spite of documents—public registers——"

"Ah! Then she has told you about those certificates?"

"That—and a great deal more which concerns you."

"Precisely. A great deal more. I know all about the registers, as you may easily suppose, seeing that they concern two somewhat important acts in my own life and that I was very careful to have those acts properly recorded, beyond the possibility of denial—beyond the possibility of denial," he repeated very slowly and emphatically. "Do you understand that?"

"It would not enter the mind of a sane person to doubt such evidence," answered Orsino rather scornfully.

"No, I suppose not. As you do not therefore come to me for confirmation of what is already undeniable, I cannot understand why you come to me at all in this matter, unless you do so on account of other things which Madame d'Aranjuez has written you, and of which you have so far kept me in ignorance."

Spicca spoke with a formal manner and in cold tones, drawing up his bent figure a little. A waiter came to the table and both men ordered their dinner. The interruption rather favoured the development of a hostile feeling between them, than otherwise.

"I will explain my reasons for coming to find you here," said Orsino when they were again alone.

"So far as I am concerned, no explanation is necessary. I am content not to understand. Moreover, this is a public place, in which we have accidentally met and dined together before."

"I did not come here by accident," answered Orsino. "And I did not come in order to give explanations but to ask for one."

"Ah?" Spicca eyed him coolly.

"Yes. I wish to know why you have hated your daughter all her life, why you persecute her in every way, why you——"

"Will you kindly stop?"

The old man's voice grew suddenly clear and incisive, and Orsino broke off in the middle of his sentence. A moment's pause followed.

"I requested you to stop speaking," Spicca resumed, "because you were unconsciously making statements which have no foundation whatever in fact. Observe that I say, unconsciously. You are completely mistaken. I do not hate Madame d'Aranjuez. I love her with all my heart and soul. I do not persecute her in every way, nor in any way. On the contrary, her happiness is the only object of such life as I still have to live, and I have

little but that life left to give her. I am in earnest, Orsino."

"I see you are. That makes what you say all the more surprising."

"No doubt it does. Madame d'Aranjuez has just written to you, and you have her letter in your pocket. She has told you in that letter a number of facts in her own life, as she sees them, and you look at them as she does. It is natural. To her and to you, I appear to be a monster of evil, a hideous incarnation of cruelty, a devil in short. Did she call me a devil in her letter?"

"She did."

"Precisely. She has also written to me, informing me that I am Satan. There is a directness in the statement and a general disregard of probability which is not without charm. Nevertheless, I am Spicca, and not Beelzebub, her assurances to the contrary notwithstanding. You see how views may differ. You know much of her life, but you know nothing of mine, nor is it my intention to tell you anything about myself. But I will tell you this much. If I could do anything to mend matters, I would. If I could make it possible for you to marry Madame d'Aranjuez—being what you are, and fenced in as you are, I would. If I could tell you all the rest of the truth, which she does not know, nor dream of, I would. I am bound by a very solemn promise of secrecy—by something more than a promise in fact. Yet, if I could do good to her by breaking oaths, betraying confidence and trampling on the deepest obligations which can bind a man, I would. But that good cannot be done any more. That is all I can tell you."

"It is little enough. You could, and you can, tell the whole truth, as you call it, to Madame d'Aranjuez. I would advise you to do so, instead of embittering her life at every turn."

"I have not asked for your advice, Orsino. That she is unhappy, I know. That she hates me, is clear. She would not be the happier for hating me less, since nothing

else would be changed. She need not think of me, if the subject is disagreeable. In all other respects she is perfectly free. She is young, rich, and at liberty to go where she pleases and to do what she likes. So long as I am alive, I shall watch over her——"

"And destroy every chance of happiness which presents itself," interrupted Orsino.

"I gave you some idea, the other night, of the happiness she might have enjoyed with the deceased Aranjuez. If I made a mistake in regard to what I saw him do—I admit the possibility of an error—I was nevertheless quite right in ridding her of the man. I have atoned for the mistake, if we call it so, in a way of which you do not dream, nor she either. The good remains, for Aranjuez is buried."

"You speak of secret atonement—I was not aware that you ever suffered from remorse."

"Nor I," answered Spicca drily.

"Then what do you mean?"

"You are questioning me, and I have warned you that I will tell you nothing about myself. You will confer a great favour upon me by not insisting."

"Are you threatening me again?"

"I am not doing anything of the kind. I never threaten any one. I could kill you as easily as I killed Aranjuez, old and decrepit as I look, and I should be perfectly indifferent to the opprobrium of killing so young a man—though I think that, looking at us two, many people might suppose the advantage to be on your side rather than on mine. But young men nowadays do not learn to handle arms. Short of laying violent hands upon me, you will find it quite impossible to provoke me. I am almost old enough to be your grandfather, and I understand you very well. You love Madame d'Aranjuez. She knows that to marry you would be to bring about such a quarrel with your family as might ruin half your life, and she has the rare courage to tell you so and to refuse your offer. You think that I can do something

to help you and you are incensed because I am powerless, and furious because I object to your leaving Rome in the same train with her, against her will. You are more furious still to-day because you have adopted her belief that I am a monster of iniquity. Observe—that, apart from hindering you from a great piece of folly the other day, I have never interfered. I do not interfere now. As I said then, follow her if you please, persuade her to marry you if you can, quarrel with all your family if you like. It is nothing to me. Publish the banns of your marriage on the doors of the Capitol and declare to the whole world that Madame d'Aranjuez, the future Princess Saracinesca, is the daughter of Count Spicca and Lucrezia Ferris, his lawful wife. There will be a little talk, but it will not hurt me. People have kept their marriages a secret for a whole lifetime before now. I do not care what you do, nor what the whole tribe of the Saracinesca may do, provided that none of you do harm to Maria Consuelo, nor bring useless suffering upon her. If any of you do that, I will kill you. That at least is a threat, if you like. Good-night."

Thereupon Spicca rose suddenly from his seat, leaving his dinner unfinished, and went out.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Orsino did not leave Rome after all. He was not in reality prevented from doing so by the necessity of attending to his business, for he might assuredly have absented himself for a week or two at almost any time before the new year, without incurring any especial danger. From time to time, at ever increasing intervals, he felt strongly impelled to rejoin Maria Consuelo in Paris where she had ultimately determined to spend the autumn and winter, but the impulse always lacked

just the measure of strength which would have made it a resolution. When he thought of his many hesitations he did not understand himself and he fell in his own estimation, so that he became by degrees more silent and melancholy of disposition than had originally been natural with him.

He had much time for reflection and he constantly brooded over the situation in which he found himself. The question seemed to be, whether he loved Maria Consuelo or not, since he was able to display such apparent indifference to her absence. In reality he also doubted whether he was loved by her, and the one uncertainty was fully as great as the other.

He went over all that had passed. The position had never been an easy one, and the letter which Maria Consuelo had written to him after her departure had not made it easier. It had contained the revelations concerning her birth, together with many references to Spicca's continued cruelty, plentifully supported by statements of facts. She had then distinctly told Orsino that she would never marry him, under any circumstances whatever, declaring that if he followed her she would not even see him. She would not ruin his life and plunge him into a life long quarrel with his family, she said, and she added that she would certainly not expose herself to such treatment as she would undoubtedly receive at the hands of the Saracinesca if she married Orsino without his parents' consent.

A man does not easily believe that he is deprived of what he most desires exclusively for his own good and welfare, and the last sentence quoted wounded Orsino deeply. He believed himself ready to incur the displeasure of all his people for Maria Consuelo's sake, and he said in his heart that if she loved him she should be ready to bear as much as he. The language in which she expressed herself, too, was cold and almost incisive.

Unlike Spicca Orsino answered this letter, writing in an argumentative strain, bringing the best reasons he