

like the superscription upon a malefactor's gallows in ancient times, the advertisement of the reason of his death to all who chose to inquire. Not a sound was heard save the noise that rose faintly and at intervals from the narrow street below, the cry of a hawker, the song of a street-boy, the bark of a dog. To-morrow the poor body would be mounted upon a magnificent catafalque, surrounded by the pomp of a princely mourning, illuminated by hundreds of funeral torches, an object of aversion, of curiosity, even of jest, perhaps, among those who bore the prince a grudge. Many of those who had known him would come and look on his dead face, and some would say that he was changed and others that he was not. His wife and his children would, in a few hours, be all dressed in black, moving silently and mournfully and occasionally showing a little feeling, though not more than would be decent. There would be masses sung, and prayers said, and his native city would hear the tolling of the heavy bells for one of her greatest personages. All this would be done, and more also, until the dead prince should be laid to rest beneath the marble floor of the chapel where his ancestors lay side by side.

But to-day he sat in state in his shabby chair, his head lying upon that table over which he had plotted and schemed for so many years, his white fingers almost touching the bit of paper whereon was written the ruin of the Saracinesca.

And upstairs the man who had killed him shuffled about the library, an anxious expression on his yellow face, glancing from time to time at his hands as he took down one heavy volume after another, practising in solitude the habit of seeming occupied, in order that he might not be taken unawares when an under-servant should be sent to tell the insignificant librarian of what had happened that day in Casa Montevarechi.

CHAPTER XXI.

Giovanni came home late in the afternoon and found Corona sitting by the fire in her boudoir. She had known that he would return before long, but had not anticipated his coming with any pleasure. When he entered the room she looked up quietly, without a smile, to assure herself that it was he and no one else. She said nothing, and he sat down upon the other side of the fireplace. There was an air of embarrassment about their meetings, until one or the other had made some remark which led to a commonplace conversation. On the present occasion neither seemed inclined to be the first speaker and for some minutes they sat opposite to each other in silence. Giovanni glanced at his wife from time to time, and once she turned her head and met his eyes. Her expression was cold and grave as though she wished him to understand that she had nothing to say. He thought she had never been so beautiful before. The firelight, striking her face at an upward angle, brought out clearly the noble symmetry of her features, the level brow, the wide, delicate nostrils, the even curve of her lips, the splendid breadth of her smooth forehead, shaded by her heavy black hair. She seemed to feel cold, for she sat near the flames, resting one foot upon the fender, in an attitude that threw into relief the perfect curves of her figure, as she bent slightly forward, spreading her hands occasionally to the blaze.

"Corona —" Giovanni stopped suddenly after pronouncing her name, as though he had changed his mind while in the act of speaking.

"What is it?" she asked indifferently enough.

"Would you like to go away? I have been wondering whether it would not be better than staying here."

She looked up in some surprise. She had thought of travelling more than once of late, but it seemed to her that to make a journey together would be only to increase the difficulties of the situation. There would be of necessity more intimacy, more daily converse than the

life in Rome forced upon her. She shrank from the idea for the very reason which made it attractive to her husband.

"No," she answered. "Why should we travel? Besides, with a child so young——"

"We might leave Orsino at home," suggested Giovanni. He was not prepared for the look she gave him as she replied.

"I will certainly not consent to that."

"Would you be willing to take him with you, and leave me here? You could easily find a friend to go with you—even my father. He would enjoy it immensely."

There was the shortest possible pause before she answered him this time. It did not escape him, for he expected it.

"No. I will not do that, either. I do not care to go away. Why should I, and at such a time?"

"I think I will go alone, in that case," said Giovanni quietly, but watching her face. She made no reply, but looked at him curiously as though she suspected him of laying a trap for her.

"You say nothing. Is silence consent?"

"I think it would be very unwise."

"You do not answer me. Be frank, Corona. Would you not be glad to be left alone for a time?"

"Why do you insist?" she asked with a little impatience. "Are you trying to make me say something that I shall regret?"

"Would you regret it, if it were said? Why not be honest? It would be an immense relief to you if I went away. I could find an excellent excuse and nobody would guess that there was anything wrong."

"For that matter—there is nothing wrong. Of course no one would say anything."

"I know you will think that I have no tact," Giovanni observed with considerable justice.

Corona could not repress a smile at the remark, which expressed most exactly what she herself was thinking.

"Frankly—I think it would be better to leave things alone. Do you not think so, too?"

"How coolly you say that!" exclaimed Giovanni.

"It is so easy for you—so hard for me. I would do anything you asked, and you will not ask anything, because you would make any sacrifice rather than accept one from me. Did you ever really love me, Corona? Is it possible that love can be killed in a day, by a word? I wonder whether there is any woman alive as cold as you are! Is it anything to you that I should suffer as I am suffering, every day?"

"You cannot understand——"

"No—that is true. I cannot understand. I was base, cowardly, cruel—I make no defence. But if I was all that, and more too, it was because I loved you, because the least suspicion drove me mad, because I could not reason, loving you as I did, any more than I can reason now. Oh, I love you too much, too wholly, too foolishly! I will try and change and be another man—so that I may at least look at you without going mad!"

He rose to his feet and went towards the door. But Corona called him back. The bitterness of his words and the tone in which they were spoken hurt her, and made her realise for a moment what he was suffering.

"Giovanni—dear—do not leave me so—I am unhappy, too."

"Are you?" He had come to her side and stood looking down into her eyes.

"Wretchedly unhappy." She turned her face away again. She could not help it.

"You are unhappy, and yet I can do nothing. Why do you call me back?"

"If I only could, if I only could!" she repeated in a low voice.

There was silence for a few seconds, during which Giovanni could hear his heart beat loudly and irregularly.

"If I could but move you a little!" he said at last, almost inaudibly. "If I could do anything, suffer anything for you——"

She shook her head sorrowfully and then, as though afraid that she had given him pain, she took his hand and pressed it affectionately—affectionately, not lovingly. It was as cold as ice. He sighed and once more

turned away. Just then the door opened, and old Pasquale appeared, his face pale with fright.

"Eccellenza, a note, and the man says that Prince Montevarchi has just been murdered, and that the note is from Donna Faustina, and the police are in the Palazzo Montevarchi, and that the poor princess is dying, and —"

Corona had risen quickly with a cry of astonishment. Giovanni had taken the letter and stood staring at the servant as though he believed that the man was mad. Then he glanced at the address and saw that it was for his wife.

"Faustina is accused of the murder!" she exclaimed. "I must go to her at once. The carriage, Pasquale, instantly!"

"Faustina Montevarchi — killed her own father!" cried Giovanni in the utmost astonishment.

Corona thrust the note into his hands. It only contained a few words scrawled in an irregular hand as though written in great emotion.

"Of course it is some horrible mistake," said Corona, "but I must go at once."

"I will go with you. I may be able to give some help."

Five minutes later, they were descending the stairs. The carriage was not ready, and leaving orders for it to follow them they went out into the street and took a passing cab. Under the influence of the excitement they acted together instinctively. During the short drive they exchanged but few words, and those only expressive of amazement at the catastrophe. At the Palazzo Montevarchi everything was already in confusion, the doors wide open, the servants hurrying aimlessly hither and thither with frightened faces. They had just been released from the preliminary examination held by the prefect of police. A party of gendarmes stood together in the antechamber talking, while one of their number mounted guard at the door with a drawn sabre, allowing no one to leave the house. A terrified footman led Giovanni and Corona to the great drawing-room.

The vast chamber was lighted by a single lamp which

stood upon a yellow marble pier-table, and cast dim shadows on the tapestry of the walls. The old-fashioned furniture was ranged stiffly around the room as usual; the air was damp and cold, not being warmed even by the traditional copper brazier. The voices of the group of persons collected within the circle of the light sounded hollow, and echoed strangely in the huge emptiness. Dominant above the rest were heard the hard tones of the prefect of police.

"I can assure you," he was saying, "that I feel the greatest regret in being obliged to assert my decision."

Giovanni and Corona came forward, and the rest made way for them. The prefect stood with his back to the light and to the table, like a man who is at bay. He was of middle height, very dark, and inclining to stoutness. His aquiline features and his eyes, round in shape, but half veiled by heavy lids, gave him something of the appearance of an owl. When he spoke, his voice was harsh and mechanical, and he always seemed to be looking just over the head of the person he addressed. He made no gestures and held himself very straight.

Opposite him stood Faustina Montevarchi, her face luminously pale, her eyes almost wild in their fixed expression. She held her hands clasped before her, and her fingers worked nervously. Around her stood her brothers and their wives, apparently speechless with horror, crowding together like frightened sheep before the officer of the law. Neither her mother, nor Flavia, nor San Giacinto accompanied the rest. It would be impossible to imagine a number of persons more dumb and helpless with fear.

"Oh Corona, save me!" cried Faustina, throwing herself into her friend's arms as soon as she saw her face.

"Will you be good enough to explain what has occurred?" said Giovanni, confronting the prefect sternly. "Do you mean to tell me that you have accused this innocent child of murdering her father? You are mad, sir!"

"Pardon me, Signor Principe, I am not mad, and no one can regret more than I what has occurred here," replied the other in loud, metallic tones. "I will give

you the facts in two minutes. Prince Montevarchi was found dead an hour ago. He had been dead some time. He had been strangled by means of this pocket handkerchief—observe the stains of blood—which I hold as part of the evidence. The Signora Donna Faustina is admitted to be the last person who saw the prince alive. She admits, furthermore, that a violent scene occurred between her and her father this afternoon, in the course of which his Excellency struck his daughter, doubtless in the way of paternal correction—observe the bruise upon the young lady's mouth. There is also another upon her arm. It is clear that, being young and vigorous and remarkably well grown, she opposed violence to violence. She went behind him, for the prince was found dead in his chair, leaning forward upon the table, and she succeeded in knotting the handkerchief so firmly as to produce asphyxia superinduced by strangulation without suspension. All this is very clear. I have examined every member of the household, and have reluctantly arrived at the conclusion, most shocking no doubt to these pacifically disposed persons, that this young lady allowed herself to be so far carried away by her feelings as to take the life of her parent. Upon this charge I have no course but to arrest her person, the case being very clear, and to convey her to a safe place."

Giovanni could scarcely contain his wrath while the prefect made this long speech, but he was resolved to listen to the account given without interrupting it. When the man had finished, however, his anger burst out.

"And do you take nothing into consideration," he cried, "but the fact that the prince was strangled with that handkerchief, and that there had been some disagreement between him and his daughter in the course of the day? Do you mean to say, that you, who ought to be a man of sense, believe it possible that this delicate child could take a hale old gentleman by the throat and throttle him to death? It is madness, I say! It is absurd!"

"It is not absurd," answered the prefect, whose mechanical tone never changed throughout the conversation. "There is no other explanation for the facts, and

the facts are undeniable. Would you like to see the body?"

"There are a thousand explanations each ten thousand times as reasonable as the one you offer. He was probably murdered by a servant out of spite, or for the sake of robbing him. You are so sure of your idea that I daresay you did not think of searching the room to see whether anything had been taken or not."

"You are under a delusion. Everything has been searched. Moreover, it is quite well known that his deceased Excellency never kept money in the house. There was consequently nothing to take."

"Then it was done out of spite, by a servant, unless some one got in through the window."

"No one could get in through the window. It was done out of anger by this young lady."

"I tell you it was not!" cried Giovanni, growing furious at the man's obstinacy.

"There is reason to believe that it was," returned the prefect, perfectly unmoved.

Giovanni stamped his foot upon the floor angrily and turned away. Faustina had drawn back a little and was leaning upon Corona's arm for support, while the latter spoke words of comfort in her ear, such words as she could find at such a time. A timid murmur of approval arose from the others every time Giovanni spoke, but none of them ventured to say anything distinctly. Giovanni was disgusted with them all and turned to the young girl herself.

"Donna Faustina, will you tell me what you know?"

She had seemed exhausted by the struggle she had already endured, but at Sant' Ilario's question, she straightened herself and came forward again one or two steps. Giovanni thought her eyes very strange, but she spoke collectedly and clearly.

"I can only say what I have said before," she answered. "My father sent for me this afternoon, I should think about three o'clock. He spoke of my marriage, which he has been contemplating some time. I answered that I would not marry Prince Frangipani's son, because——" she hesitated.

"Because?"

"Because I love another man," she continued almost defiantly. "A man who is not a prince but an artist."

A murmur of horror ran round the little group of the girl's relations. She glanced at them scornfully.

"I am not ashamed of it," she said. "But I would not tell you unless it were necessary—to make you understand how angry he was. I forgot—he had called my mother, and she was there. He sent her away. Then he came back and struck me! I put my handkerchief to my mouth because it bled. He snatched it away and threw it on the floor. He took me by the arm—he was standing—I wrenched myself out of his hands and ran away, because I was afraid of him. I did not see him again. Beyond this I know nothing."

Giovanni was struck by the concise way in which Faustina told her story. It was true that she had told it for the second time, but, while believing entirely in her innocence, he saw that her manner might easily have made a bad impression upon the prefect. When she had done, she stood still a moment. Then her hands dropped by her sides and she shrank back again to Corona who put her arm round the girl's waist and supported her.

"I must say that my sister's tale seems clearly true," said the feeble voice of Ascanio Bellegra. His thin, fair beard seemed to tremble as he moved his lips.

"Seems!" cried Corona indignantly. "It is true! How can any one be so mad as to doubt it?"

"I do not deny its truth," said the prefect, speaking in the air. "I only say that the appearances are such as to oblige me to take steps——"

"If you lay a hand on her——" began Giovanni.

"Do not threaten me," interrupted the other calmly. "My men are outside."

Giovanni had advanced towards him with a menacing gesture. Immediately Faustina's sisters-in-law began to whimper and cry with fright, while her brothers made undecided movements as though wishing to part the two angry men, but afraid to come within arm's length of either.

"Giovanni!" exclaimed Corona. "Do not be violent—it is of no use. Hear me," she added, turning towards

the prefect, and at the same time making a gesture that seemed to shield Faustina.

"I am at your service, Signora Principessa, but my time is valuable."

"Hear me—I will not detain you long. You are doing a very rash and dangerous thing in trying to arrest Donna Faustina, a thing you may repent of. You are no doubt acting as you believe right, but your heart must tell you that you are wrong. Look at her face. She is a delicate child. Has she the features of a murderess? She is brave against you, because you represent a horrible idea against which her whole nature revolts, but can you believe that she has the courage to do such a deed, the bad heart to will it, or the power to carry it out? Think of what took place. Her father sent for her suddenly. He insisted roughly on a marriage she detests. What woman would not put out her whole strength to resist such tyranny? What woman would submit quietly to be matched with a man she loathes? She said, 'I will not.' She even told her father and mother, together, that she loved another man. Her mother left the room, her mother, the only one from whom she might have expected support. She was alone with her father, and he was angry. Was he an enfeebled invalid, confined to his chair, broken with years, incapable of an effort? Ask his children. We all knew him well. He was not very old, he was tall, erect, even strong for his years. He was angry, beside himself with disappointment. He rises from his chair, he seizes her by the arm, he strikes her in the face with his other hand. You say that he struck her when he was seated. It is impossible—could she not have drawn back, avoiding the blow? Would the blow itself have had such force? No. He was on his feet, a tall, angry man, holding her by one arm. Is it conceivable that she, a frail child, could have had the physical strength to force him back to his seat, to hold him there while she tied that handkerchief round his neck, to resist and suppress his struggles until he was dead? Do you think such a man would die easily? Do you think that to send him out of the world it would be enough to put your fingers to his throat—such little fingers as these?" she held up Faustina's passive hand

in her own, before their eyes. "A man does not die in an instant by strangling. He struggles, he strikes desperate blows, he turns to the right and the left, twisting himself with all his might. Could this child have held him? I ask it of your common sense. I ask of your heart whether a creature that God has made so fair, so beautiful, so innocent, could do such terrible work. The woman who could do such things would bear the sign of her badness in her face, and the fear of what she had done in her soul. She would tremble, she would have tried to escape, she would hesitate in her story, she would contradict herself, break down, attempt to shed false tears, act as only a woman who has committed a first great crime could act. And this child stands here, submitted to this fearful ordeal, defended by none, but defending herself with the whole innocence of her nature, the glory of truth in her eyes, the self-conscious courage of a stainless life in her heart. Is this assumed? Is this put on? You have seen murderers — it is your office to see them — did you ever see one like her? Do you not know the outward tokens of guilt when they are before your eyes? You would do a thing that is monstrous in absurdity, monstrous in cruelty, revolting to reason, outrageous to every instinct of human nature. Search, inquire, ask questions, arrest whom you will, but leave this child in peace; this child, with her angel face, her fearless eyes, her guiltless heart!"

Encouraged by Corona's determined manner as well as by the good sense of her arguments, the timid flock of relations expressed their approval audibly. Giovanni looked at his wife in some surprise; for he had never heard her make so long a speech before, and had not suspected her of the ability she displayed. He was proud of her in that moment and moved nearer to her, as though ready to support every word she had uttered. The prefect alone stood unmoved by her eloquence. He was accustomed in his profession to hear far more passionate appeals to his sensibilities, and he was moreover a man who, being obliged generally to act quickly, had acquired the habit of acting upon the first impulse of his intelligence. For a moment his heavy lids were raised a little, either in astonishment or in admiration, but no other feature of his face betrayed that he was touched.

"Signora Principessa," he said in his usual tone, "those are arguments which may be used with propriety by the persons who will defend the accused before the tribunals —"

Giovanni laughed in his face.

"Do you suppose, seriously, that Donna Faustina will ever be brought to trial?" he asked scornfully. The prefect kept his temper wonderfully well.

"It is my business to suppose so," he answered. "I am not the law, nor his Eminence either, and it is not for me to weigh the defence or to listen to appeals for mercy. I act upon my own responsibility, and it is for me to judge whether the facts are likely to support me. My reputation depends upon my judgment and upon nothing else. The fate of the accused depends upon a number of considerations with which I have nothing to do. I must tell you plainly that this interview must come to an end. I am very patient. I wish to overlook nothing. Arguments are of no avail. If there is any better evidence to offer against any one else in this house, I am here to take note of it."

He looked coolly round the circle of listeners. Faustina's relations shrank back a little under his glance.

"Not being able to find any person here who appears more likely to be guilty, and having found enough to justify me in my course, I intend to remove this young lady at once to the Termini."

"You shall not!" said Giovanni, placing himself in front of him in a threatening attitude. "If you attempt anything of the sort, I will have you in prison yourself before morning."

"You do not know what you are saying, Signor Principe. You cannot oppose me. I have an armed force here to obey my orders, and if you attempt forcible opposition I shall be obliged to take you also, very much against my will. Donna Faustina Montevarchi, I have the honour to arrest you. I trust you will make no resistance."

The semi-comic phrase fell from his lips in the professional tone; in speaking of the arrest as an honour to himself, he was making an attempt to be civil according to his lights. He made a step forward in the direction

of the young girl, but Giovanni seized him firmly by the wrist. He made no effort to release himself, however, but stood still.

"Signor Principe, be good enough to let go of my hand."

"You shall not touch her," answered Giovanni, not relinquishing his grasp. He was beginning to be dangerous.

"Signor Principe, release me at once!" said the prefect in a commanding tone. "Very well, I will call my men," he added, producing a small silver whistle with his free hand and putting it to his lips. "If I call them, I shall have to send you to prison for hindering me in the execution of my duty," he said, fixing his eyes on Giovanni and preparing to sound the call.

Giovanni's blood was up, and he would not have let the man go. At that moment, however, Faustina broke from Corona's arms and sprang forward. With one hand she pushed back Sant' Ilario; with the other she seized the whistle.

"I will go with you!" she cried, speaking to the prefect. "I will go with him!" she repeated, turning to Giovanni. "It is a horrible mistake, but it is useless to oppose him any longer. I will go, I say!" An hysterical chorus of cries from her relations greeted this announcement.

Giovanni made a last effort to prevent her from fulfilling her intention. He was too much excited to see how hopeless the situation really was, and his sense of justice was revolted at the thought of the indignity.

"Donna Faustina, I implore you!" he exclaimed. "I can still prevent this outrage — you must not go. I will find the cardinal and explain the mistake — he will send an order at once."

"You are mistaken," answered the prefect. "He will do nothing of the kind. Besides, you cannot leave this house without my permission. The doors are all guarded."

"But you cannot refuse that request," objected Corona, who had not spoken during the altercation. "It will not take half an hour for my husband to see his Eminence and get the order —"

"Nevertheless I refuse," replied the official firmly.

"Donna Faustina must go with me at once. You are interfering uselessly and making a useless scandal. My mind is made up."

"Then I will go with her," said Corona, pressing the girl to her side and bestowing a contemptuous glance on the cowering figures around her.

By this time her sisters-in-law had fallen into their respective husband's arms, and it was hard to say whether the men or the women were more hopelessly hysterical. Giovanni relinquished the contest reluctantly, seeing that he was altogether overmatched by the prefect's soldiers.

"I will go too," he said. "You cannot object to our taking Donna Faustina in our carriage."

"I do not object to that. But male visitors are not allowed inside the Termini prison after dark. The Signora Principessa may spend the night there if it is her pleasure. I will put a gendarme in your carriage to avoid informality."

"I presume you will accept my promise to conduct Donna Faustina to the place," observed Giovanni. The prefect hesitated.

"It is informal," he said at last, "but to oblige you I will do it. You give your word?"

"Yes — since you are able to use force. We act under protest. You will remember that."

Faustina's courage did not forsake her at the last moment. She kissed each of her brothers and each of her sisters-in-law as affectionately as though they had offered to bear her company. There were many loud cries and sobs and protestations of devotion, but not one proposed to go with her. The only one who would have been bold enough was Flavia, and even if she had been present she would not have had the heart to perform such an act of unselfishness. Faustina and Corona, Giovanni and the prefect, left the room together.

"I will have you in prison before morning," said Sant' Ilario fiercely, in the ear of the official, as they reached the outer hall.

The prefect made no reply, but raised his shoulders almost imperceptibly and smiled for the first time, as he pointed silently to the gendarmes. The latter formed into an even rank and tramped down the stairs after the

four persons whom they accompanied. In a few minutes the whole party were on their way to the Termini, Faustina with her friends in Sant' Ilario's carriage, the prefect in his little brougham, the soldiers on their horses, trotting steadily along in a close squad.

Faustina sat leaning her head upon Corona's shoulder, while Giovanni looked out of the window into the dark streets, his rage boiling within him, and all the hotter because he was powerless to change the course of events. From time to time he uttered savage ejaculations which promised ill for the prefect's future peace, either in this world or in the next, but the sound of the wheels rolling upon the uneven paving-stones prevented his voice from reaching the two women.

"Dear child," said Corona, "do not be frightened. You shall be free to-night or in the morning — I will not leave you."

Faustina was silent, but pressed her friend's hand again and again, as though she understood. She herself was overcome by a strange wonderment which made her almost incapable of appreciating what happened to her. She felt very much as she had felt once before, on the night of the insurrection, when she had found herself lying upon the pavement before the half-ruined barracks, stunned by the explosion, unable for a time to collect her senses, supported only by her physical elasticity, which was yet too young to be destroyed by any moral shock.

CHAPTER XXII.

On the following morning all Rome rang with the news that the Saracinesca had lost their title, and that Faustina Montevarchi had murdered her father. No one connected the two events, but the shock to the public mind was so tremendous that almost any incredible tale would have been believed. The story, as it was generally told, set forth that Faustina had gone mad and had strangled her father in his sleep. Every one agreed in affirm-

ing that he had been found dead with her handkerchief tied round his neck. It was further stated that the young girl was no longer in the Palazzo Montevarchi, but had been transferred to the women's prison at the Termini, pending further examination into the details of the case. The Palazzo Montevarchi was draped in black, and before night funeral hatchments were placed upon the front of the parish church bearing the Montevarchi arms. No one was admitted to the palace upon any pretext whatever, though it was said that San Giacinto and Flavia had spent the night there. No member of the family had been seen by any one, and nobody seemed to know exactly whence the various items of information had been derived.

Strange to say, every word of what was repeated so freely was true, excepting that part of the tale which accused Faustina of having done the deed. What had taken place up to the time when Corona and Giovanni had come may be thus briefly told.

Prince Montevarchi had been found dead by the servant who came to bring a lamp to the study, towards evening, when it grew dark. As soon as the alarm was given a scene of indescribable confusion followed, which lasted until the prefect of police arrived, accompanied by a party of police officials. The handkerchief was examined and identified. Thereupon, in accordance with the Roman practice of that day, the prefect had announced his determination of taking Faustina into custody. The law took it for granted that the first piece of circumstantial evidence which presented itself must be acted upon with the utmost promptitude. A few questions had shown immediately that Faustina was the last person who had seen Montevarchi alive. The young girl exhibited a calmness which surprised every one. She admitted that her father had been angry with her and had struck her, but she denied all knowledge of his death. It is sufficient to say that she fearlessly told the truth, so fearlessly as to prejudice even her own family with regard to her. Even the blood on the handkerchief was against her, though she explained that it was her own, and although the bruise on her lip bore out the statement. The prefect was inexorable. He explained that