

## BOOK IV.

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE KING AND HIS OLD AND NEW ENEMIES.

THREE years, three long, terrible years had passed since the beginning of this fearful war; since King Frederick of Prussia had stood alone, without any ally but distant England, opposed by all Europe.

These three years had somewhat undeceived the proud and self-confident enemies of Frederick. The pope still called him the Marquis of Brandenburg, and the German emperor declared that, notwithstanding the adverse circumstances threatening him on every side, the King of Prussia was still a brave and undaunted adversary. His enemies, after having for a long time declared that they would extinguish him and reduce him once more to the rank of the little Prince-Elector of Brandenburg, now began to fear him. From every battle, from every effort, from every defeat, King Frederick rose up with a clear brow and flashing eye, and unshaken courage. Even the lost battles did not cast a shadow upon the lustre of his victories. In both the one and the other he had shown himself a hero, greater even after the battles in his composure and decision, in his unconquerable energy, in the circumspection and presence of mind by which he grasped at a glance all the surroundings, and converted the most threatening into favorable circumstances. After a great victory his enemies might indeed say they had conquered the King of Prussia, but never that they had subdued him. He stood ever undaunted, ever ready for the contest, prepared to attack them when they least expected it; to take advantage of every weak point, and to profit by every incautious movement. The fallen ranks of his brave soldiers appeared to be dragons' teeth, which produced armed warriors.

In the camps of the allied Austrians, Saxons, and Russians hunger and sickness prevailed. In Vienna, Petersburg, and Dresden, the costs and burden of the war were felt to be almost insupportable. The Prussian army was healthy, their magazines well stocked, and, thanks to the English subsidy, the treasury seemed inexhaustible.

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Three years, as we have said, of never-ceasing struggle had gone by. The heroic brow of the great Frederick had been wreathed with new laurels. The battles of Losovitz, of Rossbach, of Leuthen, and of Zorndorf were such dazzling victories that they were not even obscured by the defeats of Collin and Hochkirch. The allies made their shouts of victory resound throughout all Europe, and used every means to produce the impression upon the armies and the people that these victories were decisive.

Another fearful enemy, armed with words of Holy Writ, was now added to the list of those who had attacked him with the sword. This new adversary was Pope Clement XIII. He mounted the apostolic throne in May, 1758, and immediately declared himself the irreconcilable foe of the little Marquis of Brandenburg, who had dared to hold up throughout Prussia all superstition and bigotry to mockery and derision; who had illuminated the holy gloom and obscurity of the church with the clear light of reason and truth; who misused the priests and religious orders, and welcomed and assisted in Prussia all those whom the holy mother Catholic Church banished for heresies and unbelief.

Benedict, the predecessor of the present pope, was also known to have been the enemy of Frederick, but he was wise enough to be silent and not draw down upon the cloisters, and colleges, and Catholics of Prussia the rage of the king.

But Clement, in his fanatical zeal, was not satisfied to pursue this course. He was resolved to do battle against this heretical king. He fulminated the anathemas of the church and bitter imprecations against him, and showered down words of blessing and salvation upon all those who declared themselves his foes. Because of this fanatical hatred, Austria received a new honor, a new title from the hands of the pope. As a reward for her enmity to this atheistical marquis, and the great service which she had rendered in this war, the pope bestowed the title of apostolic majesty upon the empress and her successors. Not only the royal house of Austria, but the generals and the whole army of pious and believing Christians, should know and feel that the blessing of the pope rested upon their arms, protecting them from adversity and defeat. The glorious victory of Hochkirch must be solemnly celebrated, and the armies of the allies incited to more daring deeds of arms.

For this reason, Pope Clement sent to Field-Marshal Daun, who had commanded at the battle of Hochkirch, a consecrated hat and sword, thus changing this political into a religious war. It was no longer a question of earthly possessions, but a holy contest against an heretical enemy of mother church. Up to this time, these conse-

crated gifts had been only bestowed upon generals who had already subdued unbelievers or subjugated barbarians.\*

But King Frederick of Prussia laughed at these attacks of God's vicegerent. To his enemies, armed with the sword, he opposed his own glittering blade; to his popish enemy, armed with the tongue and the pen, he opposed the same weapons. He met the first in the open field, the last in winter quarters, through those biting, mocking, keen *Fliegenden Blättern*, which at that time made all Europe roar with laughter, and crushed and brought to nothing the great deeds of the pope by the curse of ridicule.

The consecrated hat and sword of Field-Marshal Daun lost its value through the letter of thanks from Daun to the pope, which the king intercepted, and which, even in Austria, was laughed at and made sport of.

The congratulatory letter of the Princess Soubise to Daun was also made public, and produced general merriment.

When the pope called Frederick the "heretical Marchese di Brandenburgo," the king returned the compliment by calling him the "Grand Lama," and delighted himself over the assumed infallibility of the vicegerent of the Most High.

But the king not only scourged the pope with his satirical pen—the modest and prudish Empress Maria Theresa was also the victim of his wit. He wrote a letter, supposed to be from the Marquise de Pompadour to the Queen of Hungary, in which the inexplicable friendship between the virtuous empress and the luxurious mistress of Louis was mischievously portrayed. This letter of Frederick's was spread abroad in every direction, and people were not only *naïve* enough to read it, but to believe it genuine. The Austrian court saw itself forced to the public declaration that all these letters were false; that Field-Marshal Daun had not received a consecrated wig, but a hat; and that the empress had never received a letter of this character from the Marquise de Pompadour. †

These *Fliegende Blättern*, as we have said, were the weapons with which King Frederick fought against his enemies when the rough, inclement winter made it impossible for him to meet them in the open field. In the winter quarters in 1758 most of those letters appeared; and no one but the Marquis d'Argens, the most faith-

\* *Œuvres Posthumes*, vol. iii.

† In this letter the marquise complained bitterly that the empress had made it impossible for her to hasten to Vienna and offer her the homage, the love, the friendship she cherished for her in her heart. The empress had established a court of virtue and modesty in Vienna, and this tribunal could hardly receive the Pompadour graciously. The marquise, therefore, entreated the empress to execute judgment against this fearful tribunal of virtue, and to bow to the yoke of the omnipotent goddess Venus. All these letters can be seen in the "*Supplément aux Œuvres Posthumes*."

ful friend of Frederick, guessed who was the author of these hated and feared satires.

The enemies of the king also made use of this winter rest to make every possible aggression; they had their acquaintances and spies throughout Germany; under various pretences and disguises, they were scattered abroad—even in the highest court circles of Berlin they were zealously at work. By flattery, and bribery, and glittering promises, they made friends and adherents, and in the capital of Prussia they found ready supporters and informers. They were not satisfied with this—they were haughty and bold enough to seek for allies among the Prussians, and hoped to obtain entrance into the walls of the cities, and possession of the fortresses by treachery.

The Austrian and Russian prisoners confined in the fortress of Küstrin conspired to give it up to the enemy. The number of Russian prisoners sent to the fortress of Küstrin after the battle of Zorndorf, was twice as numerous as the garrison, and if they could succeed in getting possession of the hundred cannon captured at Zorndorf, and placed as victorious trophies in the market-place, it would be an easy thing to fall upon and overcome the garrison.

This plan was all arranged, and about to be carried out, but it was discovered the day before its completion. The Prussian commander doubled the guard before the casemates in which three thousand Russian prisoners were confined, and arrested the Russian officers. Their leader, Lieutenant von Yäden of Courland, was accused, condemned by the court-martial, and, by the express command of the king, broken upon the wheel. Even this terrible example bore little fruit. Ever new attempts were being made—ever new conspiracies discovered amongst the prisoners; and whilst the armies of the allies were attacking Prussia outwardly, the prisoners were carrying on a not less dangerous guerilla war—the more to be feared because it was secret—not in the open field and by day, but under the shadow of night and the veil of conspiracy.

Nowhere was this warfare carried on more vigorously than in Berlin. All the French taken at Rossbach, all the Austrians captured at Leuthen, and the Russian officers of high rank taken at Zorndorf, had been sent by the king to Berlin. They had the most enlarged liberty; the whole city was their prison, and only their word of honor bound them not to leave the walls of Berlin. Besides this, all were zealous to alleviate the sorrows of the "poor captives," and by *fêtes* and genial amusements to make them forget their captivity. The doors of all the first houses were opened to the distinguished strangers—everywhere they were welcome guests, and there was no assembly at the palace to which they were not invited.

Even in these fearful times, balls and *fêtes* were given at the

court. Anxious and sad faces were hidden under gay masks, and the loud sound of music and dancing drowned the heavy sighs of the desponding. While the Austrians, Russians, and Prussians strove with each other on the bloody battle-field, the Berlin ladies danced the graceful *Parisienne* dances with the noble prisoners. This was now the *mode*.

Truly there were many aching hearts in this gay and merry city, but they hid their grief and tears in their quiet, lonely chambers, and their clouded brows cast no shadow upon the laughing, rosy faces of the beautiful women whose brothers, husbands, and lovers, were far away on the bloody battle-field. If not exactly willing to accept these strangers as substitutes, they were at least glad to seek distraction in their society. After all, it is impossible to be always mourning, always complaining, always leading a cloistered life. In the beginning, the oath of constancy and remembrance, which all had sworn at parting, had been religiously preserved, and Berlin had the physiognomy of a lovely, interesting, but dejected widow, who knew and wished to know nothing of the joys of life. But suddenly Nature had asserted her own inexorable laws, which teach forgetfulness and inspire hope. The bitterest tears were dried—the heaviest sighs suppressed; people had learned to reconcile themselves to life, and to snatch eagerly at every ray of sunshine which could illumine the cold, hopeless desert, which surrounded them. They had seen that it was quite possible to live comfortably, even while wild war was blustering and raging without—that weak, frail human nature, refused to be ever strained, ever excited, in the expectation of great events. In the course of these three fearful years, even the saddest had learned again to laugh, jest, and be gay, in spite of death and defeat. They loved their fatherland—they shouted loudly and joyfully over the great victories of their king—they grieved sincerely over his defeats; but they could not carry their animosities so far as to be cold and strange to the captive officers who were compelled by the chances of war to remain in Berlin. They had so long striven not to seek to revenge themselves upon these powerless captives, that they had at last truly forgotten they were enemies; and these handsome, entertaining, captivating, gallant gentlemen were no longer looked upon even as prisoners, but as strangers and travellers, and therefore they should receive the honors of the city.\*

The king commanded that these officers should receive all attention. It was also the imperative will of the king that court balls should be given; he wished to prove to the world that his family were neither sad nor dispirited, but gay, bold, and hopeful.

\* Sulzer writes: "The prisoners of war are treated here as if they were distinguished travellers and visitors."

## CHAPTER II.

## THE THREE OFFICERS.

It was the spring of 1759. Winter quarters were broken up, and it was said the king had left Breslau and advanced boldly to meet the enemy. The Berlin journals contained accounts of combats and skirmishes which had taken place here and there between the Prussians and the allies, and in which, it appeared, the Prussians had always been unfortunate.

Three captive officers sat in an elegant room of a house near the castle, and conversed upon the news of the day, and stared at the morning journals which lay before them on the table.

"I beg you," said one of them in French—"I beg you will have the goodness to translate this sentence for me. I think it has relation to Prince Henry, but I find it impossible to decipher this barbarous dialect." He handed the journal to his neighbor, and pointed with his finger to the paragraph.

"Yes, there is something about Prince Henry," said the other, with a peculiar accent which betrayed the Russian; "and something, Monsieur Belleville, which will greatly interest you."

"Oh, I beseech you to read it to us," said the Frenchman, somewhat impatiently; then, turning graciously to the third gentleman who sat silent and indifferent near him, he added: "We must first ascertain, however, if our kind host, Monsieur le Comte di Ranuzi, consents to the reading."

"I gladly take part," said the Italian count, "in any thing that is interesting; above all, in every thing which has no relation to this wearisome and stupid Berlin."

"*Vraiment!* you are right," sighed the Frenchman. "It is a dreary and ceremonious region. They are so inexpressibly prudish and virtuous—so filled with old-fashioned scruples—led captive by such little prejudices—that I should be greatly amused at it, if I did not suffer daily from the dead monotony it brings. What would the enchanting mistress of France—what would the Marquise de Pompadour say, if she could see *me*, the gay, witty, merry Belleville, conversing with such an aspect of pious gravity with this poor Queen of Prussia, who makes a face if one alludes to La Pucelle d'Orléans, and wishes to make it appear that she has not read Crébillon!"

"Tell me, now, Giurgenow, how is it with your court of Petersburg? Is it as formal, as ceremonious as here in Prussia?"

Giurgenow laughed aloud. "Our Empress Elizabeth is an angel

of beauty and goodness—mild and magnanimous to all—sacrificing herself constantly to the good of others. Last year she gave a ball to her body-guard. She danced with every one of the soldiers, and sipped from every glass; and when the soldiers, carried away by her grace and favor, dared to indulge in somewhat free jests, the good empress laughed merrily, and forgave them. On that auspicious day she first turned her attention to the happy Bestuchef. He was then a poor subordinate officer—now he is a prince and one of the richest men in Russia.”

“It appears that your Russia has some resemblance to my beautiful France,” said Belleville, gayly. “But how is it with you, Count Ranuzi? Is the Austrian court like the court of France, or like this wearisome Prussia?”

“The Austrian court stands alone—resembles no other,” said the Italian, proudly. “At the Austrian court we have a tribunal of justice to decide all charges against modesty and virtue. The Empress Maria Theresa is its president.”

“*Diable!*” cried the Frenchman, “what earthly chance would the Russian empress and my lovely, enchanting marquise have, if summoned before this tribunal by their most august ally the Empress Maria Theresa? But you forget, Giurgenow, that you have promised to read us something from the journal about Prince Henry.”

“It is nothing of importance,” said the Russian, apathetically; “the prince has entirely recovered from his wounds, and has been solacing himself in his winter camp at Dresden with the representations upon the French stage. He has taken part as actor, and has played the rôle of Voltaire’s *Enfant Prodigue*. It is further written, that he has now left the comic stage and commenced the graver game of arms.”

“He might accidentally change these rôles,” said Belleville, gayly, “and play the *Enfant Prodigue* when he should play the hero. In which would he be the greater, do you know, Ranuzi?”

The Italian shrugged his shoulders. “You must ask his wife.”

“Or Baron Kalkreuth, who has lingered here for seven months because of his wounds,” said Giurgenow, with a loud laugh. “Besides, Prince Henry is averse to this war; all his sympathies are on our side. If the fate of war should cost the King of Prussia his life, we would soon have peace and leave this detestable Berlin—this dead, sandy desert, where we are now languishing as prisoners.”

“The god of war is not always complaisant,” said the Frenchman, grimly. “He does not always strike those whom we would gladly see fall; the balls often go wide of the mark.”

“Truly a dagger is more reliable,” said Ranuzi, coolly.

The Russian cast a quick, lowering side glance upon him.

“Not always sure,” said he. “It is said that men armed with daggers have twice found their way into the Prussian camp, and been caught in the king’s tent. Their daggers have been as little fatal to the king as the cannon-balls.”

“Those who bore the daggers were Dutchmen,” said Ranuzi, apathetically; “they do not understand this sort of work. One must learn to handle the dagger in my fatherland.”

“Have you learned?” said Giurgenow, sharply.

“I have learned a little of every thing. I am a *dilettanti* in all.”

“But you are master in the art of love,” said Belleville, smiling. “Much is said of your love-affairs, monsieur.”

“Much is said that is untrue,” said the Italian, quietly. “I love no intrigues—least of all, love intrigues; while you, sir, are known as a veritable Don Juan. I learn that you are fatally in love with the beautiful maid of honor of the Princess Henry.”

“Ah, you mean the lovely Fraulein von Marshal,” said Giurgenow; “I have also heard this, and I admire the taste and envy the good fortune of Belleville.”

“It is, indeed, true,” said Belleville; “the little one is pretty, and I divert myself by making love to her. It is our duty to teach these little Dutch girls, once for all, what true gallantry is.”

“And is that your only reason for paying court to this beautiful girl?” said Giurgenow, frowningly.

“The only reason, I assure you,” cried Belleville, rising up, and drawing near the window. “But, look,” cried he, hastily; “what a crowd of men are filling the streets, and how the people are crying and gesticulating, as if some great misfortune had fallen upon them!”

The two officers hastened to his side and threw open the window. A great crowd of people was indeed assembled in the platz, and they were still rushing from the neighboring streets into the wide, open square, in the middle of which, upon a few large stones, a curious group were exhibiting themselves.

There stood a tall, thin man, enveloped in a sort of black robe; his long gray hair fell in wild locks around his pallid and fanatical countenance. In his right hand he held a bible, which he waved aloft to the people, while his large, deeply-set, hollow eyes were raised to heaven, and his pale lips murmured light and unintelligible words. By his side stood a woman, also in black, with dishevelled hair floating down her back. Her face was colorless; she looked like a corpse, and her thin, blue lips were pressed together as if in death. There was life in her eyes—a gloomy, wild, fanatical fire flashed from them. Her glance was glaring and uncertain, like

a will-o'-the-wisp, and filled those upon whom it fell with a shivering, mysterious feeling of dread.

And now, as if by accident, she looked to the windows where the three gentlemen were standing. The shadow of a smile passed over her face, and she bowed her head almost imperceptibly. No one regarded this; no one saw that Giurgenow answered this greeting, and smiled back significantly upon this enigmatical woman.

"Do you know what this means, gentlemen?" said Belleville.

"It means," said Giurgenow, "that the people will learn from their great prophet something of the continuance, or rather of the conclusion of this war. These good, simple people, as it seems to me, long for rest, and wish to know when they may hope to attain it. That man knows, for he is a great prophet, and all his prophecies are fulfilled."

"But you forget to make mention of the woman?" said Ranuzi, with a peculiar smile.

"The woman is, I think, a fortune-teller with cards, and the Princess Amelia holds her in great respect; but let us listen to what the prophet says."

They were silent, and listened anxiously. And now the voice of the prophet raised itself high above the silent crowd. Pealing and sounding through the air, it fell in trumpet-tones upon the ear, and not one word escaped the eager and attentive people.

"Brothers," cried the prophet, "why do you interrupt me? Why do you disturb me, in my quiet, peaceful path—me and this innocent woman, who stood by my side last night, to read the dark stars, and whose soul is sad, even as my own, at what we have seen."

"What did you see?" cried a voice from the crowd.

"Pale, ghostly shadows, who, in bloody garments, wandered here and there, weeping and wailing, seating themselves upon a thousand open graves, and singing out their plaintive hymns of lamentation. 'War! war!' they cried, 'woe to war! It kills our men, devours our youths, makes widows of our women, and nuns of our maidens. Woe, woe to war! Shriek out a prayer to God for peace—peace! O God, send us peace; close these open graves, heal our wounds, and let our great suffering cease!'"

The prophet folded his hands and looked to heaven, and now the woman's voice was heard.

"But the heavens were dark to the prayer of the spirits, and a blood-red stream gushed from them; colored the stars crimson, turned the moon to a lake of blood, and piteous voices cried out from the clouds, and in the air—'Fight on and die, for your king wills it so; your life belongs to him, your blood is his.' Then, from two rivulets of blood, giant-like, pale, transparent forms

emerged; upon the head of the first, I read the number, '1759.' Then the pale form opened its lips, and cried out: 'I bring war, and ever-new bloodshed. Your king demands the blood of your sons; give it to him. He demands your gold; give it to him. The king is lord of your body, your blood, and your soul. When he speaks, you must obey!'"

"It seems to me all this is a little too Russian in its conception," said Ranuzi, half aloud. "I shall be surprised if the police do not interrupt this *séance*, which smells a little of insurrection."

"The scene is so very piquant," said Giurgenow, "I would like to draw nearer. Pardon me, gentlemen, I must leave you, and go upon the square. It is interesting to hear what the people say, and how they receive such prophecies. We can, perhaps, judge in this way of the probabilities of peace and liberty. The voice of the people is, in politics, ever the decisive voice." He took his hat, and, bowing to the gentlemen, left the room hastily.

## CHAPTER III.

## RANUZI.

COUNT RANUZI gazed after the Russian with a mocking smile.

"Do you know, Belleville, where he is going?"

"He has not told us, but I guess it. He is going to approach this fortune-teller, and give her a sign that her zeal has carried her too far, and that, if not more prudent, she will betray herself."

"You think, then, that Giurgenow knows the fortune-teller?"

"I am certain of it. He has engaged these charlatans to rouse up the people, and excite them against the king. This is, indeed, a very common mode of proceeding, and often successful; but here, in Prussia, it can bear no fruit. The people here have nothing to do with politics; the king reigns alone. The people are nothing but a mass of subjects, who obey implicitly his commands, even when they know, that in so doing, they rush on destruction."

"Giurgenow has failed, and he might have counted upon failure! If you, Belleville, had resorted to these means, I could have understood it. In France, the people play an important rôle in politics. In order to put down the government, you must work upon the people. You might have been forgiven for this attempt, but Giurgenow never!"

"You believe, then, that he is manœuvring here, in Berlin, in the interest of his government?" said Belleville, amazed.

Ranuzi laughed heartily.

"That is a fine and diplomatic mode of expressing the thing!" said he. "Yes, he is here in the interest of his government; but when the Prussian government becomes acquainted with this fact, they will consider him a spy. If discovered, he will be hung. If successful, when once more at liberty, he may receive thanks and rewards from Russia. See, now, how rightly I have prophesied! There is Giurgenow, standing by the side of the prophetess, and I imagine I almost hear the words he is whispering to her. She will commence again to prophesy, but in a less violent and fanatical manner."

"No, no; she will prophesy no more! The police are breaking their way forcibly through the crowd. They do not regard the cries of fear and suffering of those they are shoving so violently aside. These are the servants of the police; they will speedily put an end to this prophesying. Already the people are flying. Look how adroitly Giurgenow slips away, and does not condescend to give a glance to the poor prophetess he inspired. Only see how little respect these rough policemen have for these heaven-inspired prophets! They seize them rudely, and bear them off. They will be punished with, at least, twenty-four hours' arrest. In Prussia, this concourse and tumult of the people is not allowed. Come, monsieur, let us close the window; the comedy is over. The prophets are in the watch-house. Their rôle is probably forever played out!" said Belleville, smilingly.

"Not so; they will recommence it to-morrow. These same prophets have high and mighty protectors in Berlin; the police will not dare to keep them long under arrest. The Princess Amelia will demand her fortune-teller."

"*Vraiment*, monsieur le comte," said the Frenchman, "you seem extraordinarily well acquainted with all these intrigues?"

"I observe closely," said Ranuzi, with a meaning smile. "I am very silent—therefore hear a great deal."

"Well, I counsel you not to give to me or my actions the honor of your observations," said Belleville. "My life offers few opportunities for discovery. I live, I eat, I sleep, I chat, and write poetry, and caress, and seek to amuse myself as well as possible. Sometimes I catch myself praying to God tearfully for liberty, and truly, not from any political considerations—simply from the selfish wish to get away from here. You see, therefore, I am an innocent and harmless *bon enfant*, not in the least troubled about public affairs."

"No," said Ranuzi, "you do not love Fraulein Marshal at all from political reasons, but solely because of her beauty, her grace, and her charms. Behold, this is the result of my observations."

"You have, then, been watching me?" said Belleville, blushing.

"I have told you that I was always observant. This is here my only distraction and recreation, and really I do not know what I should do with my time if I did not kill the weary hours in this way."

"You do employ it sometimes to a better purpose?" said the Frenchman, in low tones. "Love is still for you a more agreeable diversion, and you understand the game well."

"It appears you are also an observer," said Ranuzi, with an ironical smile. "Well, then, I do find love a sweeter diversion; and if I should yield myself up entirely to my love-dreams, I would perhaps be less observant. But, Belleville, why do you take your hat? Will you also leave me?"

"I must, perforce. Through our agreeable conversation I had entirely forgotten that I had promised Fraulein Marshal to ride with her. A cavalier must keep his promise with a lady, at least till he knows she is ardently in love with him." He gave his hand to the duke, and as he left the room he hummed a light French *chanson*.

Ranuzi looked after him with a long, frowning glance. "Poor fool," murmured he, "he believes he plays his part so well that he deceives even me. This mask of folly and levity he has assumed is thin and transparent enough—I see his true face behind it. It is the physiognomy of a sly *intrigant*. Oh, I know him thoroughly; I understand every emotion of his heart, and I know well what his passion for the beautiful Marshal signifies. She is the maid of honor of the Princess Henry—this is the secret of his love. She is the confidante of the princess, who receives every week long and confidential letters from the tent of her tender husband. Fraulein Marshal is naturally acquainted with their contents. The prince certainly speaks in these letters of his love and devotion, but also a little of the king's plans of battle. Fraulein von Marshal knows all this. If Belleville obtains her love and confidence, he will receive pretty correct information of what goes on in the tent of the king and in the camp councils. So Belleville will have most important dispatches to forward to his Marquise de Pompadour—dispatches for which he will be one day rewarded with honor and fortune. This is the Frenchman's plan! I see through him as I do through the Russian. They are both paid spies—informers of their governments—nothing more. They will be paid, or they will be hung, according as accident is favorable or unfavorable to them." Ranuzi was silent, and walked hastily backward and forward in the room. Upon his high, pale brow dark thoughts were written, and flashes of anger flamed from his eyes.

"And I," said he, after a long pause, "am I in any respect better than they? Will not the day come when I also will be considered

as a purchased spy? a miserable informer? and my name branded with this title? No, no; away with this dark spectre, which floats like a black cloud between me and my purpose! My aim is heaven; and what I do, I do in the name of the Church—in the service of this great, exalted Church, whose servant and priest I am. No, no; the world will not call me a spy, will not brand my name with shame. God will bless my efforts as the Holy Father in Rome has blessed them, and I shall reach the goal."

Ranuzi was brilliantly handsome in this inspired mood; his noble and characteristic face seemed illuminated and as beautiful as the angel of darkness, when surrounded by a halo of heavenly light.

"It is an exalted and great aim which I have set before me," said he, after another pause; "a work which the Holy Father himself confided to me. I must and I will accomplish it to the honor of God and the Holy Madonna. This blasphemous war must end; this atheistical and free-thinking king must be reduced, humbled, and cast down from the stage he has mounted with such ostentatious bravado. Silesia must be torn from the hands of this profligate robber and incorporated in the crown of our apostolic majesty of Austria. The holy Church dare not lose any of her provinces, and Silesia will be lost if it remains in the hands of this heretical king; he must be punished for his insolence and scoffing, for having dared to oppose himself to the Holy Father at Rome. The injuries which he heaped upon the Queen of Poland must be avenged, and I will not rest till he is so humbled, so crushed, as to sue for a shameful peace, even as Henry the Fourth, clad like a peasant, pleaded to Canosa. But the means, the means to attain this great object."

Hastily and silently he paced the room, his head proudly thrown back, and a cold, defiant glance directed upward.

"To kill him!" said he suddenly, as if answering the voices which whispered in his soul; "that would be an imbecile, miserable resort, and, moreover, we would not obtain our object; he would not be humiliated, but a martyr's crown would be added to his laurels. When, however, he is completely humbled, when, to this great victory at Hochkirch, we add new triumphs, when we have taken Silesia and revenged Saxony, then he might die; then we will seek a sure hand which understands the dagger and its uses. Until then, silence and caution; until then this contest must be carried on with every weapon which wisdom and craft can place in our hands. I think my weapons are good and sharp, well fitted to give a telling thrust; and yet they are so simple, so threadbare—a cunning fortune-teller, a love-sick fool, a noble coquette, and a poor prisoner! these are my only weapons, and with these I will defeat the man whom his flatterers call the heroic King of Prussia."

He laughed aloud, but it was a ferocious, threatening laugh, which shocked himself.

"Down, down, ye evil spirits," said he; "do not press forward so boldly to my lips; they are consecrated now to soft words and tender sighs alone. Silence, ye demons! creep back into my heart, and there, from some dark corner, you can hear and see if my great rôle is well played. It is time! it is time! I must once more prove my weapons."

He stepped to the glass and looked thoughtfully at his face, examined his eyes, his lips, to see if they betrayed the dark passions of his soul; then arranged his dark hair in soft, wavy lines over his brow; he rang for his servant, put on his Austrian uniform, and buckled on the sword. The king had been gracious enough to allow the captive officers in Berlin to wear their swords, only requiring their word of honor that they would never use them again in this war. When Count Ranuzi, the captive Austrian captain, had completed his toilet, he took his hat and entered the street. Ranuzi had now assumed a careless, indifferent expression; he greeted the acquaintances who met him with a friendly smile, uttering to each a few kindly words or gay jests. He reached, at last, a small and insignificant house in the Frederick Street, opened the door which was only slightly closed, and entered the hall; at the same moment a side door opened, and a lady sprang forward, with extended arms, to meet the count.

"Oh, my angel," said she, in that soft Italian tongue, so well suited to clothe love's trembling sighs in words—"oh, my angel, are you here at last? I saw your noble, handsome face, from my window; it seemed to me that my room was illuminated with glorious sunshine, and my heart and soul were warmed."

Ranuzi made no answer to these glowing words, silently he suffered himself to be led forward by the lady, then replied to her ardent assurances by a few cool, friendly words.

"You are alone to-day, Marietta," said he, "and your husband will not interrupt our conversation."

"My husband!" said she, reproachfully, "Taliazuchi is not my husband. I despise him; I know nothing of him; I am even willing that he should know I adore you."

"Oh woman, woman!" said Ranuzi, laughing; "how treacherous, how dangerous you are! When you love happily, you are like the anaconda, whose poisonous bite one need not fear, when it is well fed and tended; but when you have ceased to love, you are like the tigress who, rashly awaked from sleep, would strangle the unfortunate who disturbed her repose. Come, my anaconda, come; if you are satisfied with my love, let us talk and dream." He drew

her tenderly toward him, and, kissing her fondly, seated her by his side; but Marietta glided softly to his feet.

"Let it be so," she said; "let me lie at your feet; let me adore you, and read in your face the history of these last three terrible days, in which I have not seen you. Where were you, Carlo? why have you forgotten me?"

"Ah," said he, laughing, "my anaconda begins to hunger for my heart's blood! how long before she will be ready to devour or to murder me?"

"Do not call me your anaconda," she said, shaking her head; "you say that, when we are satisfied with your love, we are like the sleeping anaconda. But, Carlo, when I look upon you, I thirst for your glances, your sweet words, your assurances of love. And has it not been thus all my life long? Have I not loved you since I was capable of thought and feeling? Oh, do you remember our happy, glorious childhood, Carlo? those days of sunshine, of fragrance, of flowers, of childish innocence? Do you remember how often we have wandered hand in hand through the Campagna, talking of God, of the stars, and of the flowers?—dreaming of the time in which the angels and the stars would float down into our hearts, and change the world into a paradise for us?"

"Ah! we had a bitter awaking from these fair dreams," said Ranuzi, thoughtfully. "My father placed me in a Jesuit college; your mother sent you to a cloister, that the nuns might make of you a public singer. We had both our own career to make, Marietta; you upon the stage, I on the confessor's stool. We were the poor children of poor parents, and every path was closed to us but one, the church and the stage; our wise parents knew this."

"And they separated us," sighed Marietta; "they crushed out the first modest flame of our young, pure hearts, and made us an example of their greed! Ah, Carlo; you can never know how much I suffered, how bitterly I wept on your account. I was only twelve years old, but I loved you with all the strength and ardor of a woman, and longed after you as after a lost paradise. The nuns taught me to sing; and when my clear, rich voice pealed through the church halls, no one knew that not God's image, but yours, was in my heart; that I was worshipping you with my hymns of praise and pious fervor. I knew that we were forever separated, could never belong to each other, so I prayed to God to lend swift wings to time, that we might become independent and free, I as a singer and you as my honored confessor."

Ranuzi laughed merrily. "But fate was unpropitious," said he. "The pious fathers discovered that I had too little eloquence to make a good priest; in short, that I was better fitted to serve holy mother

Church upon the battle-field. When I was a man and sufficiently learned, they obtained a commission for me as officer in the Pope's body-guard, and I exchanged the black robe of my order for the gold-embroidered uniform."

"And you forgot me, Carlo? you did not let me know where you were? Five years after, when I was engaged in Florence as a singer, I learned what had become of you. I loved you always, Carlo; but what hope had I ever to tell you so? we were so far away from each other, and poverty separated us so widely. I must first become rich, you must make your career. Only then might we hope to belong to each other. I waited and was silent."

"You waited and were silent till you forgot me," said Ranuzi, playing carelessly with her long, soft curls; "and, having forgotten me, you discovered that Signor Taliazuchi was a tolerably pretty fellow, whom it was quite possible to love."

"Taliazuchi understood how to flatter my vanity," said she, gloomily; "he wrote beautiful and glowing poems in my praise, which were printed and read not only in Florence, but throughout all Italy. When he declared his love and pleaded for my hand, I thought, if I refused him, he would persecute me and hate me; that mockery and ridicule would take the place of the enthusiastic hymns in my praise, with which Italy then resounded. I was too ambitious to submit to this, and had not the courage to refuse him, so I became his wife, and in becoming so, I abhorred him, and I swore to make him atone for having forced me to become so."

"But this force consisted only in hymns of praise and favorable criticisms," said Ranuzi, quietly.

"I have kept my oath," said Marietta; "I have made him atone for what he has done, and I have often thought that, when afterward compelled to write poems in my favor, he cursed me in his heart; he would gladly have crushed me by his criticisms, but that my fame was a fountain of gold for him, which he dared not exhaust or dry up. But my voice had been injured by too much straining, and a veil soon fell upon it. I could but regard it as great good fortune when Count Algarotti proposed to me to take the second place as singer in Berlin; this promised to be more profitable, as the count carelessly offered Taliazuchi a place in the opera troupe as writer. So I left my beautiful Italy; I left you to amass gold in this cold north. And now, I no longer repent; I rejoice! I have found you again—you, the beloved of my youth—you, my youth itself. Oh, Heaven! never will I forget the day when I saw you passing. I knew you in spite of the uniform, in spite of the many years which had passed since we met. I knew you; and not my lips only, but my heart, uttered that loud cry which caused you to look up, my



Carlo. And now you recognized me and stretched your hands out to me, and I would have sprung to you from the window, had not Taliazuchi held me back. I cried out, 'It is Ranuzi! it is Carlo! I must, I will fly to him,' when the door opened and you entered and I saw you, my own beloved; I heard your dear voice, and never did one of God's poor creatures fall into a happier insensibility than I in that rapturous moment."

"And Taliazuchi stood by and smiled!" said Ranuzi, laughing; "it was truly a pretty scene for an opera writer. He, no doubt, thought so, and wished to take note of it, as he left the room when you awaked to consciousness."

"Since that time, I am only awake when in your presence," said Marietta, passionately. "When you are not near me, I sleep. You are the sun which rouses me to life. When you leave me, it is night—dark night, and dark, gloomy thoughts steal over me."

"What thoughts, Marietta?" said he, placing his hand under her chin, and raising her head gently.

She looked up at him with a curious, dreamy smile, but was silent.

"Well, what thoughts have you when I am not with you?" he repeated.

"I think it possible a day may come in which you will cease to love me."

"And you think you will then fly to Taliazuchi for consolation?" said Ranuzi, laughing.

"No; I think, or rather I fear that I will revenge myself; that I will take vengeance on you for your unfaithfulness."

"Ah! my tigress threatens!" cried Ranuzi. "Now, Marietta, you know well that I shall never cease to love you, but a day will come when we will be forced to separate."

She sprang up with a wild cry, and clasped him stormily in her arms.

"No, no!" she cried, trembling and weeping; "no man shall dare to tear you from me! We will never be separated!"

"You think, then, that I am not only your prisoner for life, but also the eternal prisoner of the King of Prussia?"

"No, no! you shall be free—free! but Marietta will also be free, and by your side. When you leave Berlin, I go with you; no power can bind me here. Taliazuchi will not seek me, if I leave him my little fortune. I will do that; I will take nothing with me. Poor, without fortune or possessions, I will follow you, Ranuzi. I desire nothing, I hope for nothing, but to be by your side."

She clasped him in her arms, and did not remark the dark cloud which shadowed his brow, but this vanished quickly, and his countenance assumed a kind and clear expression.

"It shall be so, Marietta! Freedom shall unite us both eternally, death only shall separate us! But when may we hope for this great, this glorious, this beautiful hour? When will the blessed day dawn in which I can take your hand and say to you, 'Come, Marietta, come; the world belongs to us and our love. Let us fly and enjoy our happiness.' Oh, beloved, if you truly love me, help me to snatch this happy day from fate! Stand by me with your love, that I may attain my freedom."

"Tell me what I can do, and it is done," said she resolutely; "there is nothing I will not undertake and dare for you."

Ranuzi took her small head in his hands and gazed long and smilingly into her glowing face.

"Are you sure of yourself?" said he.

"I am sure. Tell me, Carlo, what I must do, and it is done."

"And if it is dangerous, Marietta?"

"I know but one danger."

"What is that?"

"To lose your love, Carlo!"

"Then this world has no danger for you, Marietta!"

"Speak, Carlo, speak! How can I aid you? What can I do to obtain your liberty?"

Ranuzi threw a quick and searching glance around the room, as if to convince himself that they were alone, then bowed down close to her ear and whispered:

"I can never be free till the King of Prussia is completely conquered and subjected, and only if I bring all my strength and capabilities to this object, may I hope to be free, and rich, and honored. The King of Prussia is my enemy, he is the enemy of the Church, the enemy of my gracious sovereign of Austria, to whom I have sworn fealty. A man may strive to conquer his enemies with every weapon, even with craft. Will you stand by me in this?"

"I will."

"Then observe and listen, and search all around you. Repeat to me all that you hear and see—seem to be an enthusiastic adherent of the King of Prussia; you will then be confided in and know all that is taking place. Be kind and sympathetic to your husband; he is a sincere follower of the king, and has free intercourse with many distinguished persons; he is also well received at court. Give yourself the appearance of sympathizing in all his sentiments. When you attend the concerts at the castle, observe all that passes—every laugh, every glance, every indistinct word, and inform me of all. Do you understand, Marietta?—will you do this?"

"I understand, Carlo, and I will do this. Is this all? Can I do nothing more to help you?"

"Yes, there are other things, but they are more difficult, more dangerous."

"So much the better; the more dangerous the stronger the proof of my love. Speak, dear Carlo!"

"It is forbidden for the captive officers to send sealed letters to their friends or relatives. All our letters must be read, and if a word of politics is found in them, they are condemned. All other persons have the right to send sealed letters in every direction. Have you not friends to whom you write, Marietta?"

"I have, and from this time onward your friends will be mine, and I will correspond with them."

As she said this, with a roguish smile, a ray of joy lighted up Ranuzi's eyes.

"You understand me, my beloved; your intellect is as clear and sharp as your heart is warm and noble. Think well what you do—what danger threatens you. I tell you plainly, Marietta, this is no question of common friendly letters, but of the most earnest, grave, important interests!"

She bowed to his ear and whispered: "All that you espy in Berlin you will confide to these letters; you will concert with your friends, you will design plans, perhaps make conspiracies. I will address these letters and take them to the post, and no one will mistrust me, for my letters will be addressed to some friends in Vienna, or to whom you will. Have I understood you, Carlo? Is this all right?"

He clasped her rapturously in his arms, and the words of tender gratitude which he expressed were not entirely wanting in sincerity and truth.

Marietta was proudly happy, and listened with sparkling eyes to his honeyed words.

As Ranuzi, however, after this long interview, arose to say farewell, she held him back. Laying her hands upon his shoulder, she looked at him with a curious expression, half laughing, half threatening.

"One last word, Carlo," she said; "I love you boundlessly. To prove my love to you, I become a traitress to this king, who has been a gracious master to me, whose bread I eat—who received and protects me. To prove my love, I become a spy, an informer. Men say this is dishonorable work, but for myself I feel proud and happy to undertake it for you, and not for all the riches and treasures of this world would I betray you. But, Carlo, if you ever cease to love me, if you deceive me and become unfaithful, as true as God helps me, I will betray both myself and you!"

"I believe truly she is capable of it," said Ranuzi, as he reached

the street; "she is a dangerous woman, and with her love and hate she is truly like a tigress. Well, I must be on my guard. If she rages I must draw her teeth, so that she cannot bite, or flee from her furious leaps. But this danger is in the distance, the principal thing is that I have opened a way to my correspondence, and that is immense progress in my plans, for which I might well show my gratitude to my tender Marietta by a few caresses."

## CHAPTER IV.

## LOUISE DU TROUFFLE.

MADAME DU TROUFFLE paced her room restlessly; she listened to every stroke of the clock, every sound made her tremble.

"He comes not! he comes not!" murmured she; "ne received my irony of yesterday in earnest and is exasperated. Alas! am I really an old woman? Have I no longer the power to enchain, to attract? Can it be that I am old and ugly? No, no! I am but thirty-four years of age—that is not old for a married woman, and as to being ugly—"

She interrupted herself, stepped hastily to the glass, and looked long and curiously at her face.

Yes, yes! she must confess her beauty was on the wane. She was more faded than her age would justify. Already was seen around her mouth those yellow, treacherous lines which vanished years imprint upon the face; already her brow was marked with light lines, and silver threads glimmered in her hair.

Louise du Trouffle sighed heavily.

"I was too early married, and then unhappily married; at eighteen I was a mother. All this ages a woman—not the years but the storms of life have marked these fearful lines in my face. Then it is not possible for a man to feel any warm interest in me when he sees a grown-up daughter by my side, who will soon be my rival, and strive with me for the homage of men. This is indeed exasperating. Oh, my God! my God! a day may come in which I may be jealous of my own daughter! May Heaven guard me from that! Grant that I may see her fresh and blooming beauty without rancor; that I may think more of her happiness than my vanity."

Then, as if she would strengthen her good resolutions, Louise left her room and hastened to the chamber of her daughter.

Camilla lay upon the divan—her slender and beauteous form was wrapped in soft white drapery; her shining, soft dark hair fell around her rosy face and over her naked shoulders, with whose ala-