

before Vincenzo could awake from his lethargy. And I was absent for some time.

Though I performed my task as quickly as might be, it took me longer than I thought, and filled me with more loathing and reluctance than I had deemed possible. It was a grewsome, ghastly piece of work—a work of preparation—and when I had finished it entirely to my satisfaction, I felt as though the bony fingers of death itself had been plunged into my very marrow. I shivered with cold, my limbs would scarce bear me upright, and my teeth chattered as though I were seized by strong ague. But the fixity of my purpose strengthened me till all was done—till the stage was set for the last scene of the tragedy. Or comedy? What you will! I know that in the world nowadays you make a husband's dishonor more of a whispered jest than anything else—you and your heavy machinery of the law. But to me—I am so strangely constituted—dishonor is a bitterer evil than death. If all those who are deceived and betrayed felt thus, then justice would need to become more just. It is fortunate—for the lawyers—that we are not all honorable men!

When I returned from my dreary walk in the driving storm I found Vincenzo still fast asleep. I was glad of this, for had he seen me in the plight I was, he would have had good reason to be alarmed concerning both my physical and mental condition. Perceiving myself in the glass, I recoiled as from an image of horror. I saw a man with haunted, hungry eyes gleaming out from under a mass of disordered white hair, his pale, haggard face set and stern as the face of a merciless inquisitor of old Spain, his dark cloak dripping with glittering rain-drops, his hands and nails stained as though he had dug them into the black earth, his boots heavy with mire and clay, his whole aspect that of one who had been engaged in some abhorrent deed, too repulsive to be named. I stared at my own reflection thus and shuddered; then I laughed softly with a sort of fierce enjoyment. Quickly I threw off all my soiled habiliments, and locked them out of sight, and arraying myself in dressing-gown and slippers, I glanced at the time. It was half-past one—already the morning of my bridal. I had been absent three hours and a half. I went into my salon and remained there writing. A few minutes after two o'clock had struck the door opened noiselessly, and Vincenzo, looking still very sleepy, appeared with an expression of inquiring anxiety. He smiled drowsily, and seemed relieved to see me sitting quietly in my accustomed place at the writing-table. I surveyed him with an air of affected surprise.

"Ebbene, Vincenzo! What has become of you all this while?"

"Eccellenza," he stammered, "it was the Lacrima; I am not used to wine! I have been asleep."

I laughed, pretended to stifle a yawn on my own account, and rose from my easy-chair.

"Veramente," I said, lightly, "so have I very nearly! And if I would appear as a gay bridegroom, it is time I went to bed. *Buona notte.*"

"*Buona notte, signor.*"

And we severally retired to rest, he satisfied that I had been in my own room all the evening, and I, thinking with a savage joy at my heart of what I had prepared out there in the darkness, with no witnesses of my work save the whirling wind and rain.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

My marriage morning dawned bright and clear, though the high wind of the past night still prevailed and sent the white clouds scudding rapidly, like ships running a race, across the blue fairness of the sky. The air was strong, fresh, and exhilarating, and the crowds that swarmed into the Piazza del Popolo, and the Toledo, eager to begin the riot and fun of Giovedì Grasso, were one and all in the highest good humor. As the hours advanced, many little knots of people hurried toward the cathedral, anxious, if possible, to secure places in or near the Chapel of San Gennaro, in order to see to advantage the brilliant costumes of the few distinguished persons who had been invited to witness my wedding. The ceremony was fixed to take place at eleven, and at a little before half-past ten I entered my carriage, in company with the Duke di Marina as best man, and drove to the scene of action. Clad in garments of admirable cut and fit, with well-brushed hair and beard, and wearing a demeanor of skillfully mingled gravity and gayety, I bore but little resemblance to the haggard, ferocious creature who had faced me in the mirror a few hours previously.

A strange and secret mirth too possessed me, a sort of half-frenzied merriment that threatened every now and then to break through the mask of dignified composure it was necessary for me to wear. There were moments when I could have laughed, shrieked, and sung with a fury of a drunken madman. As it was, I talked incessantly; my conversation was flavored with bitter wit and pungent sarcasm, and once or twice my friend the duke surveyed me with an air of wonder.

ing inquiry, as though he thought my manner forced or unnatural. My coachman was compelled to drive rather slowly, owing to the pressing throngs that swarmed at every corner and through every thoroughfare, while the yells of the masqueraders, the gambols of street clowns, the firing of toy guns, and the sharp explosion of colored bladders, that were swung to and fro and tossed in the air by the merry populace, startled my spirited horses frequently, and caused them to leap and prance to a somewhat dangerous extent, thus attracting more than the customary attention to my equipage. As it drew up at last at the door of the chapel, I was surprised to see what a number of spectators had collected there. There was a positive crowd of loungers, beggars, children, and middle-class persons of all sorts, who beheld my arrival with the utmost interest and excitement.

In accordance with my instructions, a rich crimson carpet had been laid down from the very edge of the pavement right into the church as far as the altar; a silken awning had also been erected, under which bloomed a miniature avenue of palms and tropical flowers. All eyes were turned upon me curiously as I stepped from my carriage and entered the chapel, side by side with the duke, and murmurs of my vast wealth and generosity were audibly whispered as I passed along. One old crone, hideously ugly, but with large, dark piercing eyes, the fading lamps of a lost beauty, chuckled and mumbled as she craned her skinny throat forward to observe me more closely. "Ay, ay! The saints know he need be rich and generous—*pover'uomo* to fill *her* mouth. A little red cruel mouth always open, that swallows money like macaroni, and laughs at the suffering poor! Ah! that is bad, bad! He need be rich to satisfy *her*!"

The Duke di Marina caught these words and glanced quickly at me, but I affected not to have heard. Inside the chapel there was a great number of people, but my own invited guests, not numbering more than twenty or thirty, were seated in the space apportioned to them near the altar, which was divided from the mere sight-seers by means of a silken rope that crossed the aisle. I exchanged greetings with most of these persons, and in return received their congratulations; then I walked with a firm deliberate step up to the high altar and there waited. The magnificent paintings on the wall round me seemed endowed with mysterious life—the grand heads of saints and martyrs were turned upon me as though they demanded—"Must thou do this thing? Hast thou no forgiveness?"

And ever my stern answer, "Nay; if hereafter I am tortured in eternal flame for all ages, yet now—now while I live, I will be avenged!"

A bleeding Christ suspended on His cross gazed at me reproachfully with long-enduring eyes of deathful anguish—eyes that seemed to say, "Oh, erring man, that tormentest thyself with passing passions, shall not thine own end approach speedily?—and what comfort wilt thou have in thy last hour?"

And inwardly I answered, "None! No shred of consolation can ever again be mine—no joy, save fulfilled revenge! And this I will possess though the heavens should crack and the earth split asunder! For once a woman's treachery shall meet with punishment—for once such strange uncommon justice shall be done!"

And my spirit wrapped itself again in somber meditative silence. The sunlight fell gloriously through the stained windows—blue, gold, crimson, and violet shafts of dazzling radiance glittered in lustrous flickering patterns, on the snowy whiteness of the marble altar, and slowly, softly, majestically, as though an angel stepped forward, the sound of music stole on the incense-laden air. The unseen organist played a sublime voluntary of Palestrina's, and the round harmonious notes came falling gently on one another like drops from a fountain trickling on flowers.

I thought of my last wedding-day, when I had stood in this very place, full of hope, intoxicated with love and joy, when Guido Ferrari had been by my side, and had drunk in for the first time the poisoned draught of temptation from the loveliness of my wife's face and form; when I, poor fool! would as soon have thought that God could lie, as that either of these whom I adored could play me false. I drew the wedding-ring from my pocket and looked at it—it was sparkingly bright and appeared new. Yet it was old—it was the very same ring I had drawn off my wife's finger the day before; it had only been burnished afresh by a skilled jeweler, and showed no more marks of wear than if it had been bought that morning.

The great bell of the cathedral boomed out eleven, and as the last stroke swung from the tower, the chapel doors were flung more widely open: then came the gentle rustle of trailing robes, and turning, I beheld my wife. She approached, leaning lightly on the arm of the old Chevalier Mancini, who, true to his creeds of gallantry, had accepted with alacrity the post of paternal protector to the bride on this occasion; and I could not well wonder at the universal admiration that broke in suppressed murmurs from all assembled, as this most fair

masterpiece of the devil's creation paced slowly and gracefully up the aisle. She wore a dress of clinging white velvet made with the greatest simplicity—a lace veil, priceless in value and fine as gossamer, draped her from head to foot—the jewels I had given her flashed about her like little scintillating points of light, in her hair, at her waist, on her breast and uncovered arms.

Being, as she deemed herself, a widow, she had no bride-maids; her train was held up by a handsome boy clad in the purple and gold costume of a sixteenth century page—he was the youngest son of the Duke di Marina. Two tiny girls of five and six years of age went before, strewing white roses and lilies, and stepping daintily backward as though in attendance on a queen: they looked like two fairies who had slipped out of a midnight dream, in their little loose gowns of gold-colored plush, with wreaths of meadow daffodils on their tumbled curly hair. They had been well trained by Nina herself, for on arrival at the altar they stood demurely, one on each side of her, the pretty page occupying his place behind, and still holding up the end of the velvet train with a charming air of hauteur and self-compacency.

The whole *cortège* was a picture in its way, as Nina had meant it to be: she was fond of artistic effects. She smiled languishingly upon me as she reached the altar, and sunk on her knees beside me in prayer. The music swelled forth with redoubled grandeur, the priests and acolytes appeared, the marriage service commenced. As I placed the ring on the book I glanced furtively at the bride; her fair head was bent demurely—she seemed absorbed in holy meditations. The priest having performed the ceremony of sprinkling it with holy water, I took it back, and set it for the second time on my wife's soft white little hand—set it in accordance with the Catholic ritual, first on the thumb, then on the second finger, then on the third, and lastly on the fourth, where I left it in its old place, wondering as I did so, and murmured, "*In Nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, Amen!*" whether she recognized it as the one she had worn so long! But it was evident she did not; her calm was unbroken by even so much as a start or tremor; she had the self-possession of a perfectly satisfied, beautiful, vain, and utterly heartless woman.

The actual ceremony of marriage was soon over; then followed the Mass, in which we, the newly-wedded pair, were compelled, in submission to the rule of the Church, to receive the Sacrament. I shuddered as the venerable priest gave me

the Sacred Host. What had *I* to do with the inward purity and peace this memento of Christ is supposed to leave in our souls? Methought the Crucified Image in the chapel regarded me afresh with those pained eyes, and said, "Even so dost thou seal thine own damnation!" Yet *she*, the true murderess, the arch liar, received the Sacrament with the face of a rapt angel—the very priest himself seemed touched by those upraised, candid, glorious eyes, the sweet lips so reverently parted, the absolute, reliable peace that rested on that white brow, like an aureole round the head of a saint!

"If *I* am damned, then is *she* thrice damned!" I said to myself, recklessly. "I daresay hell is wide enough for us to live apart when we get there."

Thus I consoled my conscience, and turned resolutely away from the painted appealing faces on the wall—the faces that in their various expressions of sorrow, resignation, pain, and death seemed now to be all pervaded by another look, that of astonishment—astonishment, so I fancied, that such a man as I, and such a woman as she, should be found in the width of the whole world, and should be permitted to kneel at God's altar without being struck dead for their blasphemy!

Ah, good saints, well may you be astonished! Had you lived in our day you must have endured worse martyrdoms than the boiling oil or the wrenching rack! What you suffered was the mere physical pain of torn muscles and scorching flesh, pain that at its utmost could not last long; but your souls were clothed with majesty and power, and were glorious in the light of love, faith, hope, and charity with all men. *We* have reversed the position *you* occupied! We have partly learned, and are still learning, how to take care of our dearly beloved bodies, how to nourish and clothe them and guard them from cold and disease; but our souls, good saints, the souls that with you were everything—*these* we smirch, burn, and rack, torture and destroy—*these* we stamp upon till we crush out God's image therefrom—*these* we spit and jeer at, crucify and drown! *There* is the difference between you, the strong and wise of a fruitful olden time, and we, the miserable, puny weaklings of a sterile modern age.

Had you, sweet St. Dorothy, or fair child-saint Agnes, lived in this day, you would have felt something sharper than the executioner's sword; for being pure, you would have been dubbed the worst of women—being prayerful, you would have been called hypocrites—being faithful, you would have been suspected of all vileness—being loving, you would have been mocked at more bitterly than the soldiers of Pontius Pilate

mocked Christ; but you would have been *free*—free to indulge your own opinions, for ours is the age of liberty. Yet how much better for you to have died than have lived till now!

Absorbed in strange, half-morose, half-speculative fancies, I scarcely heard the close of the solemn service. I was roused by a delicate touch from my wife, and I woke, as it were, with a start, to hear the sonorous, crashing chords of the wedding-march in "Lohengrin" thundering through the air. All was over: my wife was *mine* indeed—mine most thoroughly—mine by the exceptionally close-tied knot of a double marriage—mine to do as I would with "*till death should us part*." How long, I gravely mused, how long before death could come to do us this great service? And straightway I began counting, counting certain spaces of time that must elapse before—I was still absorbed in this mental arithmetic, even while I mechanically offered my arm to my wife as we entered the vestry to sign our names in the marriage register. So occupied was I in my calculations that I nearly caught myself murmuring certain numbers aloud. I checked this, and recalling my thoughts by a strong effort, I strove to appear interested and delighted, as I walked down the aisle with my beautiful bride, through the ranks of admiring and eager spectators.

On reaching the outer doors of the chapel several flower-girls emptied their full and fragrant baskets at our feet; and in return, I bade one of my servants distribute a bag of coins I had brought for the purpose, knowing from former experience that it would be needed. To tread across such a heap of flowers required some care, many of the blossoms clinging to Nina's velvet train—we therefore moved forward slowly.

Just as we had almost reached the carriage, a young girl, with large laughing eyes set like flashing jewels in her soft oval face, threw down in my path a cluster of red roses. A sudden fury of impotent passion possessed me, and I crushed my heel instantly and savagely upon the crimson blossoms, stamping upon them again and again so violently that my wife raised her delicate eyebrows in amazement, and the pressing people who stood round us shrugged their shoulders, and gazed at one another with looks of utter bewilderment—while the girl who had thrown them shrunk back in terror, her face paling as she murmured, "*Santissima Madonna! mi fa paura!*" I bit my lip with vexation, inwardly cursing the weakness of my own behavior. I laughed lightly in answer to Nina's unspoken, half-alarmed inquiry.

"It is nothing—a mere fancy of mine. I hate red roses! They look to me like human blood in flower!"

She shuddered slightly.

"What a horrible idea! How can you think of such a thing?"

I made no response, but assisted her into the carriage with elaborate care and courtesy; then entering it myself, we drove together back to the hotel, where the wedding breakfast awaited us.

This is always a feast of general uneasiness and embarrassment everywhere, even in the sunny, pleasure-loving south; every one is glad when it is over, and when the flowery, unmeaning speeches and exaggerated compliments are brought to a fitting and happy conclusion. Among my assembled guests, all of whom belonged to the best and most distinguished families in Naples, there was a pervading atmosphere of undoubted chilliness: the women were dull, being rendered jealous of the bride's beauty and the richness of her white velvets and jewels; the men were constrained, and could scarcely force themselves into even the appearance of cordiality—they evidently thought that, with such wealth as mine, I would have done much better to remain a bachelor. In truth, Italians, and especially Neapolitans, are by no means enthusiastic concerning the supposititious joys of marriage. They are apt to shake their heads, and to look upon it as a misfortune rather than a blessing. "*L'altare è la tomba dell' amore*," is a very common saying with us, and very commonly believed.

It was a relief to us all when we rose from the splendidly appointed table, and separated for a few hours. We were to meet again at the ball, which was fixed to commence at nine o'clock in the evening. The cream of the event was to be tasted *then*—the final toasting of the bride was to take place *then*—*then* there would be music, mirth and dancing, and all the splendor of almost royal revelry. I escorted my wife with formal courtesy to a splendid apartment which had been prepared for her, for she had, as she told me, many things to do—as, for instance, to take off her bridal robes, to study every detail of her wondrous ball costume for the night, and to superintend her maid in the packing of her trunks for the next day's journey. *The next day!* I smiled grimly—I wondered how she would enjoy her trip! Then I kissed her hand with the most profound respect and left her to repose—to refresh and prepare herself for the brilliant festivity of the evening.

Our marriage customs are not as coarse as those of some countries; a bridegroom in Italy thinks it scarcely decent to persecute his bride with either his presence or his caresses as soon as the Church has made her his. On the contrary, if

ardent, he restrains his ardor—he forbears to intrude, he strives to keep up the illusion, the rose-colored light, or rather mist, of love as long as possible, and he has a wise, instinctive dread of becoming overfamiliar; well knowing that nothing kills romance so swiftly and surely as the bare blunt prose of close and constant proximity. And I, like other gentlemen of my rank and class, gave my twice-wedded wife her liberty—the last hours of liberty she would ever know. I left her to busy herself with the trifles she best loved—trifles of dress and personal adornment, for which many women barter away their soul's peace and honor, and divest themselves of the last shred of right and honest principle merely to outshine others of their own sex, and sow broadcast heart-burnings, petty envies, mean hatreds and contemptible spites, where, if they did but choose, there might be a widely different harvest.

It is easy to understand the feelings of Marie Stuart when she arrayed herself in her best garments for her execution: it was simply the heroism of supreme vanity, the desire to fascinate if possible the very headsman. One can understand any beautiful woman being as brave as she. Harder than death itself would it have seemed to her had she been compelled to appear on the scaffold looking hideous. She was resolved to make the most of her charms so long as life lasted. I thought of that sweet-lipped, luscious-smiling queen as I parted from my wife for a few brief hours: royal and deeply injured lady though she was, she merited her fate, for she was treacherous—there can be no doubt of that. Yet most people reading her history pity her—I know not why. It is strange that so much of the world's sympathy is wasted on false women!

I strolled into one of the broad *loggie* of the hotel, from whence I could see a portion of the Piazza del Popolo, and lighting a cigar, I leisurely watched the frolics of the crowds. The customary fooling proper to the day was going on, and no detail of it seemed to pall on the good-natured, easily amused folks who must have seen it all so often before. Much laughter was being excited by the remarks of a vender of quack medicines, who was talking with extreme volubility to a number of gayly-dressed girls and fishermen. I could not distinguish his words, but I judged he was selling the "elixir of love," from his absurd amatory gestures—an elixir compounded, no doubt, of a little harmless *cau sucré*.

Flags tossed on the breeze, trumpets brayed, drums beat; *improvisatores* twanged their guitars and mandolines loudly to attract attention, and failing in their efforts, swore at each other with the utmost joviality and heartiness; flower-girls and

lemonade-sellers made the air ring with their conflicting cries; now and then a shower of chalky *confetti* flew out from adjacent windows, dusting with white powder the coats of the passers-by; clusters of flowers tied with favors of gay-colored ribbon were lavishly flung at the feet of bright-eyed peasant girls, who rejected or accepted them at pleasure, with light words of badinage or playful repartee; clowns danced and tumbled, dogs barked, church bells clanged, and through all the waving width of color and movement crept the miserable, shrinking forms of diseased and loathly beggars whining for a soldo, and clad in rags that barely covered their halting, withered limbs.

It was a scene to bewilder the brain and dazzle the eyes, and I was just turning away from it out of sheer fatigue, when a sudden cessation of movement in the swaying, whirling crowd, and a slight hush, caused me to look out once more. I perceived the cause of the momentary stillness—a funeral *cortège* appeared, moving at a slow and solemn pace; as it passed across the square, heads were uncovered, and women crossed themselves devoutly. Like a black shadowy snake it coiled through the mass of shifting color and brilliance—another moment, and it was gone. The depressing effect of its appearance was soon effaced—the merry crowds resumed their thousand-and-one freaks of folly, their shrieking, laughing, and dancing, and all was as before. Why not?

The dead are soon forgotten; none knew that better than I! Leaning my arms lazily on the edge of the balcony, I finished smoking my cigar. That glimpse of death in the midst of life had filled me with a certain satisfaction. Strangely enough, my thoughts began to busy themselves with the old modes of torture that used to be legal, and that, after all, were not so unjust when practiced upon persons professedly vile. For instance, the iron coffin of Lissa—that ingeniously contrived box in which the criminal was bound fast hand and foot, and then was forced to watch the huge lid descending slowly, slowly, slowly, half an inch at a time, till at last its ponderous weight crushed into a flat and mangled mass the writhing wretch within, who had for long agonized hours watched death steadily approaching. Suppose that I had such a coffin now! I stopped my train of reflection with a slight shudder. No, no; she whom I sought to punish was so lovely, such a softly colored, witching, gracious body, though tenanted by a wicked soul—she should keep her beauty! I would not destroy that—I would be satisfied with my plan as already devised.

I threw away the end of my smoked-out cigar and entered

my own rooms. Calling Vincenzo, who was now resigned and even eager to go to Avellino, I gave him his final instructions, and placed in his charge the iron cash-box, which, unknown to him, contained 12,000 francs in notes and gold. This was the last good action I could do: it was a sufficient sum to set him up as a well-to-do farmer and fruit-grower in Avellino with Lilla and her little dowry combined. He also carried a sealed letter to Signora Monti, which I told him she was not to open till a week had elapsed; this letter explained the contents of the box and my wishes concerning it; it also asked the good woman to send to the Villa Romani for Assunta and her helpless charge, poor old paralyzed Giacomo, and to tend the latter as well as she could till his death, which I knew could not be far off.

I had thought of everything as far as possible, and I could already foresee what a happy, peaceful home there would be in the little mountain town guarded by the Monte Vergine. Lilla and Vincenzo would wed, I knew; Signora Monti and Assunta would console each other with their past memories and in the tending of Lilla's children; for some little time, perhaps, they would talk of me and wonder sorrowfully where I had gone; then gradually they would forget me, even as I desired to be forgotten.

Yes; I had done all I could for those who had never wronged me. I had acquitted myself of my debt to Vincenzo for his affection and fidelity; the rest of my way was clear. I had no more to do save the *one thing*, the one deed which had clamored so long for accomplishment. Revenge, like a beckoning ghost, had led me on step by step for many weary days and months, which to me had seemed cycles of suffering; but now it paused—it faced me—and turning its blood-red eyes upon my soul said, "Strike!"

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE ball opened brilliantly. The rooms were magnificently decorated, and the soft luster of a thousand lamps shone on a scene of splendor almost befitting the court of a king. Some of the stateliest nobles in all Italy were present, their breasts glittering with jeweled orders and ribbons of honor; some of the loveliest women to be seen anywhere in the world flitted across the polished floors, like poets' dreams of the gliding sylphs that haunt rivers and fountains by moonlight.

But fairest where all were fair, peerless in the exuberance of

her triumphant vanity, and in the absolute faultlessness of her delicate charms, was my wife—the bride of the day, the heroine of the night. Never had she looked so surpassingly beautiful, and I, even I, felt my pulse beat quicker, and the blood course more hotly through my veins, as I beheld her, radiant, victorious, and smiling—a veritable queen of the fairies, as dainty as a drop of dew, as piercing to the eye as a flash of light. Her dress was some wonderful mingling of misty lace, with the sheen of satin and glimmering showers of pearl; diamonds glittered on her bodice like sunlight on white foam; the brigand's jewels flashed gloriously on her round white throat and in her tiny shell-like ears, while the masses of her gold hair were coiled to the top of her small head and there caught by a priceless circlet of rose-brilliant—brilliant that I well remembered—they had belonged to my mother. Yet more lustrous than the light of the gems she wore was the deep, ardent glory of her eyes, dark as night and luminous as stars; more delicate than the filmy robes that draped her was the pure, pearl-like whiteness of her neck, which was just sufficiently displayed to be graceful without suggesting immodesty.

For Italian women do not uncover their bosoms for the casual inspection of strangers, as is the custom of their English and German sisters; they know well enough that any lady venturing to wear a *décolleté* dress would find it impossible to obtain admittance to a court ball at the Palazzo Quirinale. She would be looked upon as one of a questionable class, and no matter how high her rank and station, would run the risk of ejection from the doors, as on one occasion did unfortunately happen to an English peeress, who, ignorant of Italian customs, went to an evening reception in Rome arrayed in a very low bodice with straps instead of sleeves. Her remonstrances were vain; she was politely but firmly refused admittance, though told she might gain her point by changing her costume, which I believe she wisely did.

Some of the *grandes dames* present at the ball that night wore dresses the like of which are seldom or never seen out of Italy—robes sown with jewels, and thick with wondrous embroidery, such as have been handed down from generation to generation through hundreds of years. As an example of this, the Duchess of Marina's cloth of gold train, stitched with small rubies and seed-pearls, had formerly belonged to the family of Lorenzo de Medici. Such garments as these, when they are part of the property of a great house, are worn only on particular occasions, perhaps once in a year; and then they are laid carefully by and sedulously protected from dust and moths