

(CONTINUED FROM TENTH PAGE.)

away, but I don't know the name of it. Pietro lives over yonder at Cittareale; he will no doubt, tell the signor all he can about it.

'I will go to him,' said Ted. But are you sure that no one left any message for me?

The woman shook her head doubtfully. 'There was no message exactly,' she said. 'It is true there was a letter, but—'

'What letter?' Ted asked eagerly.

'I don't know if I should do right to say,' she murmured, hesitating; but another gold coin from Ted's pocket convinced her that she would. 'It is a letter the signorina had given me,' she said, 'with orders to deliver it to the English signor if he should call, but the marchese took it from me forbidding me to say anything about it, and promising to attend to the matter himself.'

Ted ground his heel on the marble threshold with fierce but impotent anger. He thought it best, however, not to show it, and having made a note of the address of Pietro Moro, started back the way he had come, in anything but a pleasant temper.

On reaching the chapel, something prompted him to walk around it, to make sure if no trace of Giacinta's presence, remained there.

It was a lucky inspiration, for far back in the corner of the wide stone bench by the door he found the book that she had been reading when he came there last.

He took it up with a remembrance that was very sweet to him. Of the glad surprise that had made her drop it as she sprang up to welcome him that day.

It was a very odd volume of poems, and in turning the leaves over he noticed that one of the thick, blank pages in the front was written on with pencil.

A moment after, he gave an exclamation of joy as he saw that the writing was Giacinta's and was meant for him.

'I have waited and looked for you all day,' he read, 'but you never came and now I shall have to go with out seeing you. The marchese has decided suddenly that we are to go away; he will not tell me where, nor for how long and Filomena does not know. I have left a letter for you, but you may never get it, though the woman promised, and I may not be able to write again. Oh, how I wish that you had come today, and that I need not go this hateful journey with him, he grows so strange that some times I am frightened. But you have promised to help me, and I will try to be patient, for I know you won't forget.'

No sooner had he read the message, than, retaining possession of the book, which had suddenly grown very precious to him, Ted started down the hill, resolving to try what information he could get from his host Luca before seeking out Pietro Moro.

## CHAPTER III

Luca was stretched on a bench at the door of the inn, a spent pipe in his mouth, and his head peacefully nodding in a quiet noontime slumber.

He jumped up, however, wide awake, as Ted came up.

'Welcome back, signor,' he said; 'how are you?'

'Very angry indeed,' Ted replied. 'And it remains to be seen if you won't come in for a share of the row.'

'Ha! let us hope not,' said Luca, looking troubled.

'Where is the Marchese di Castagna? The marchese—why, up at the villa.'

'You are wrong. He is gone away.'

'Ah, where, signor?'

'That is just what I am trying to find out, and I hoped you might be able to help me.'

And Ted told him what had occurred at the villa that morning, with the exception of his finding Giacinta's message.

Luca turned to him with sudden resolve. 'See here, signor,' he said, 'you may think me interfering if you will, but there are reasons why the signorina should not be taken away like this—perhaps even against her wish. Someone must look to her interests.'

'But, surely no one could do that better than the young lady's grandfather?'

Luca made a gesture of angry contempt. 'The signorina must be found,' he said doggedly. 'And if no one else will undertake it I will do it myself.'

Ted's face brightened, and he slapped Luca on the shoulder with sudden friendly approval.

'You are right, caro mio,' he said. 'And since you have been good enough to say so much, I will tell you something more. The man who died five years ago at your brother-in-law's inn was not Alessandro Mazzi, but his master, the Marchese di Castagna.'

Luca did not speak at once, but sank slowly down on the bench and stared at Ted.

Then presently his face cleared, and he got up with an air almost of relief.

'So the signor has found it out?' he said. 'Well, I am not sorry. It is hard on the women, of course—his sister and mine—that they should suffer for the men's guilt, but at least the signorina will have justice done to her.'

'She shall,' said Ted, 'and, as a last step towards it, you had better tell me exactly what took place five years ago at Roccaigna.'

'I will, signor, and, luckily, I can give you all the details clearly, for between the two men I managed to get pretty minute account of the affair. It is more than five years ago that the marchese started on his last journey, taking Alessandro with him. He had just inherited some property from the death of a relative, and had realized a large sum of money with the intention of having the villa repaired on his return. When his business with the lawyers was over, the marchese bethought him of an old friend of his who used to live in a lonely house in the neighbourhood of Roccaigna, and he decided to go there on his way home and pay him a visit. But he found the house shut up and his friend gone, no

one seemed to know where. It was dark when they made this discovery, and the marchese was very tired, so Alessandro proposed that they should spend the night at Roccaigna, where he knew the innkeeper well. The marchese agreed, and a few hours later he was settled in his rooms, and went to bed early, complaining of being tired.

Soon after, he was taken ill, as Alessandro had seen him several times before, with an attack that was painful, but, he had been told, not dangerous. The servant gave him the usual medicine and sat by him, until he thought the marchese had fallen asleep; but he was dead, and had been dead some time before Alessandro realized it.

'Then, I suppose, the thought of all the old man's money turned his brain, for he fell to emptying the pockets of his dead master and filling his own with all the notes and gold he could find. In the midst of it, a sound behind him made him look round and drop what he had in his hand, for my sister's husband was there watching him.'

'For a moment they stood staring at each other in silence, then the innkeeper held out his hand, and Alessandro put some gold pieces into it. But the man laughed jeeringly. "Only that?" he exclaimed. "Why, half the money here wouldn't be too much for an affair like this."

'Basta, signor, the two men haggled and disputed for an hour or more, with the poor marchese lying dead before them, and Heaven only knows who was the first to suggest that more could be made out of his death than just the money he had with him. Alessandro had always been very like his master in height and appearance, and I suppose that first put it into his head to pass himself off for the marchese.'

'When all had been arranged, they sent for the doctor, but of course he could do nothing except to certify death from heart disease. Alessandro pretended to be unnerved by the sudden death, and shut himself up in his own rooms whilst his beard grew, and during that time he practised writing in the marchese's hand until he had copied it so closely that not even the lawyers have ever found the difference.'

'When he came back to the villa, the signorina was frightened at what she thought was a terrible change in her grandfather, but no one recognized the sound-dreel except myself, and like a soft fool I gave in to the prayers of my sister and Filomena, and said nothing about it. But the wrong done to the little lady has lain like murder on my soul, and a thousand times I have been on the point of informing the police, though each time the thought of my sister has closed my mouth. And now who knows what mischief he means by taking the child into hiding like this?'

'That's what we are going to find out, I hope,' Ted answered cheerfully, 'and, to begin with, you had better come with me to hunt up Pietro Moro; but mind, we will say nothing to anyone about my discovery yet.'

Pietro was found after a few hours' pursuit, and answered readily to the questions Ted put to him.

But his knowledge of the affair was very small, amounting simply to the fact that he had on the previous afternoon driven the marchese, with the signorina and Filomena, to the station at Terni.

He had given their luggage, which was very slight, into the care of a porter and had driven off at once to fulfil another engagement, for which he was already late.

O the marchese's intended destination he knew nothing, and Ted, in a fever of impatience, set off to continue his inquiries at Terni.

The result was that he took an early train the next morning for Rome.

The first day's inquiries at the principal hotels there were quite fruitless, and Ted was slowly crossing the Piazza di Sdagna on the second day, wondering what he should do next, when he caught sight of a stout woman's figure on the other side of the square, that looked very like Filomena.

The woman had begun already to mount the long, wide steps leading to the Trinita dei Monti, and Ted, hurrying across the piazza, overtook her easily, as she labored, slow and panting, up the long ascent, with a basket of purchases on her arm.

He remained at a little distance behind, keeping carefully out of her sight, even when she reached the top of the steps and took the turn on the right that led to the Via Gregoriana.

He followed about halfway down the street, when she disappeared suddenly in one of the high old houses on the left.

The door remained open, but Ted hesitated, feeling sure of the refusal that awaited him if he presented himself in the ordinary way as a visitor to the marchese.

It seemed clear from Filomena's manner that they were living here, and Ted heaved a sigh of relief to have succeeded even so far.

While he was still debating how best to ensure seeing the marchese, two cabs drove up, and stopped at the door, depositing several gentlemen, who laughed and chatted noisily as they went into the rather dusky vestibule all together.

Ted walked boldly in with them, and past the porter in his narrow lodge, without being noticed.

The gentlemen were ushered by a servant into an apartment on the ground floor from which Ted concluded that the marchese's rooms must be above.

A dingy stone staircase led up from the hall, and, feeling very like a thief, Ted sprang quickly up it two steps at a time.

Arrived at the first landing, he stopped hesitating whether to go higher or try his luck at the door that faced him.

Before he could decide, he gave a great start, and his pulses throbbed with joy, for the door was opened, and Giacinta herself came out, followed by Filomena.

Giacinta gave a glad little cry, and put out her hands to Ted with a frank welcome that was very sweet to him.

But Filomena threw up her hands tragically, and groaned aloud.

'Will you take me to the marchese, please?' Ted asked, after the first greet-

ing. But Filomena interrupted quickly—'The marchese is not so well. He has not slept and has left orders that he must not be disturbed.'

'I am very sorry,' Ted replied; 'but my business is too important to be delayed.' 'Leave it to me, Filomena,' said Giacinta decidedly. 'I will take the responsibility on myself. Come with me, Signor Ingram.'

She led him quickly through a little ante room, and down a dim passage with a door at the end.

Here she turned, with her hand on the knob, and looked at Ted searchingly. 'Something has happened; I can see it, she said. "What is it?"

'Yes, something has happened that will shock and perhaps pain you. I am very sorry, Signora. I would spare you the pain if I could, but in justice to you I must tell my story. Will you ask Filomena, to come with us? She had better hear it, too.'

Giacinta grew a little pale and grave with vague dread; but, after one confident glance at Ted, she called to Filomena, who stood anxiously watching them, and all three passed into the marchese's room.

The old man swung round in his chair, startled at their entrance, and, with an angry exclamation, he threw down the newspaper he had been trying to read.

He looked ill and worried, and a sudden quail of pity intruded itself into Ted's voice.

'You must please blame me alone for this intrusion,' he said. 'I have some business with you that will not bear delay.'

The old man eyed him keenly before replying—

'You will oblige me by making it as short as possible,' and he made a sign to Giacinta and Filomena to leave the room.

But Ted interposed.

'What I have to say concerns all present, and the signorina in particular. I wish them to remain.'

He put a chair for Giacinta, and took his stand beside her as she sank into it with her heart beating wildly with dread.

'I will not keep you long,' Ted began; 'very few words are necessary, and the marchese at least will understand me perfectly when I say that the trick which has succeeded for the last five years has failed at last.'

There was silence for a moment, then Filomena fell to sobbing loudly, with her hands before her face.

The old man sat strangely still, with a dull red color flickering in his haggard face, and his hands clenched upon the arms of his chair.

Giacinta got up, and looked from one to the other with wide, startled eyes.

'What is it?' she asked, shuddering.

'What does it mean?'

Ted laid a strong hand on the little white one she had clasped on his arm, and stilled its trembling.

'I mean, signorina, that your grandfather died five years ago at Roccaigna, and that this man is his old servant, Alessandro Mazzi.'

Giacinta looked for a moment appealingly at the culprit, as if begging of him to deny the charge, but he made no movement, and she drew back with a little cry of pain.

'Oh, I can't believe it, it is too horrible—and yet it must be true! I seem to have felt it all along.'

Filomena's sobs grew louder, and with womanly self-forgetfulness Giacinta strove to comfort her.

Alessandro Mazzi had spoken no word, but the wavering color had died from his face and left it ghastly.

Then suddenly, as Ted looked at him, the clenched hands relaxed, and he struggled to his feet.

Ted sprang to his side just in time to prevent his falling.

'Your brother has fainted,' he said to Filomena. 'If you will show me his bedroom, I will take him there.'

But it was more than a fainting fit, and when the doctor was hurriedly sent for from the floor below, he spoke learnedly about 'failure of the heart's action,' and doubted if consciousness ever would return to the haggard, gaunt old man who lay so white and still on the bed where Ted had laid him.

And the doctor was right, for the sullen old eyes opened no more to the light, and Alessandro never heard the soft, pitying words that told him Giacinta had forgiven.

'It is better so,' sobbed Filomena. 'And as for punishment—Heaven knows, the last five years have been enough!'

'And you have really decided to keep it all a secret, signorina?' Ted asked of Giacinta, four days later, when the funeral was over, and he had left her in charge of her cousin and his young wife, who had been summoned from Florence for the purpose.

'Yes; I have decided,' she answered, for the sake of Filomena, who was always devoted to me, and of poor Luca's sister. I have been trying to think what grandfather would have had me do, and I feel sure that he would have wished me to forgive.'

'Then nothing remains for me,' said Ted 'but to say good bye to you and go.'

'For the present, that is all, signor,' Giacinta hesitated, colored a little, then smiled, and added, with a sweet audacity quite new to the man who waited, breathless, for the words: 'We will discuss the rest, later on, at the Villa Castagna.'

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'It's a hard life, that of a drummer's,' said one yesterday, to whom 30 years of hard life had given the right to speak with authority. 'It's a hard life, but it's an interesting one, and gives a man a close hold on hard facts and realities. The drummer learns in a hard school, but he does learn, and the lessons pay. What is the first lesson he has to learn? How to manage men; how to approach a reluctant or indifferent or a suspicious buyer so as to win his confidence and overcome his indisposition.'

'Experience teaches this better than anything else, though some men learn it more easily than others. I remember when I first began to travel as a salesman, when I was hardly more than a lad. I had an experience that proved very valuable to me. There was an old fellow on my route who had been known as the terror of the traveling men. He was declared to be absolutely the worst-natured, worst-mannered fellow they had ever met anywhere, but I hadn't even heard of him then, and so I entered his store very confidently and handed him my card. He took it without even glancing at it, tore it into bits and threw the pieces on the floor. "Now, sir," he said to me, "get out of my store." There were two pretty young girls in the store, who did not understand the proceeding, and who looked at me as I walked out as if I had been an escaped convict.'

'Well, I smarted for several days over that affair, during which time I made up my mind that I'd even matters up with him if I could next time. So before I visited his town again I had a card made expressly for my good friend. It looked exactly like the one I used before, only that it was made of tin. When I reached his town I waited until I saw the store pretty well filled with people, and then I walked in and gave him my card. He took it just as before, glared at me and gave the card a twist.'

'But it didn't fall on the floor in bits this time, and he only succeeded in giving his wrist a wrench and raising a titter among his customers.'

'I was nearly out of the door by this time, for I really didn't think my life was safe; but he called after me, and I went back. "Come into my office," said he. I went in expecting never to come out.'

'What do you want to sell me?' he asked me.

'Dress goods,' I responded.

'Well, go on.' And I actually sold the old curmudgeon \$1,000 worth of clothes before I left. For years after so long as he lived, in fact—he was one of my best customers and one of the best friends I ever made in my business.'

## WANTED TO BE INSULTED.

He Was Doggedly Disappointed When he Couldn't Be.

Whenever I see a regulation railway lunch counter,' said a man at the Texas & Pacific depot—I mean one of the kind with schools and stacks of doughnuts and petrified pies under glass shades—I am reminded of a queer little incident that occurred several years ago at Texarkana.

'I was on the train coming down to New Orleans from the northwest, and we stopped at the place to get supper. The depot was provided with such a lunch counter as I have described, and when I took possession of one of the stools I found myself next to a typical cowboy, with wide white sombrero, leather leggings, enormous spurs and a pair of big six-shooters hanging low down over his hips. A livid scar, evidently the result of a knife wound, ran from the corner of his eye to the angle of his jaw, and his whole appearance was so sinister and forbidding that I edged instinctively as far away as I could get. A few minutes later a big, coal black negro came sauntering in and deliberately seated himself on one of the stools at the other side. The passengers who were eating, exchanged glances of indignation, but he was a vicious-looking fellow and nobody

cared to invite certain trouble by ordering him out. Presently the tough cowboy leaned over and tapped me on the shoulder.

'Scuse me, stranger,' he said in a hoarse whisper; 'but will you please call me a—liar?'

'What?' I exclaimed in amazement.

'I want ter git you to call me a—liar, if y' don't mind,' he repeated still in a whisper; 'teller it right out so as everybody kin hear!'

'But why should I call you that?' I asked, beginning to doubt his sanity.

'Well, I tell y', he replied earnestly, 'as soon as you do, I'll rip and cuss some, and then I'll take out my gun and take a shot at you.'

'Take a shot at me?' I said in alarm.

'Yes,' said he, 'but it's all right—I'll miss you and accidentally hit the nigger; see? Go ahead now and out looke.'

'I begged hastily to be excused. I assured him that I liked the idea, and didn't doubt his marksmanship, but I was a little nervous about firearms, and—well, I hardly know what I said; but I gulped down my coffee as quick as I could and made a bee line for the outer air. Before the train started I encountered the cowboy on the platform. He was looking gloomy.'

'You didn't get a chance to put your little scheme in execution?' I remarked inquiringly.

'No, doggone the luck!' he replied. 'I couldn't get a single white man to insult me.'

Had Catarrh since Childhood But Catarrh-cure Cured Him.

Ulric Breault, of Sweetsburg, Que., says: "Since childhood I have been afflicted with Catarrh of the throat and nose and never knew what relief meant till I tried Catarrh-cure. Two bottles completely cured me, and I have not one single symptom of Catarrh now. I can heartily recommend Catarrh-cure for Catarrh, and would advise all sufferers to get an outfit at once and be cured as I was." Catarrh-cure is sold by all druggists. Trial outfit sent for 10c in stamps by N. C. POLSON & CO., Kingston, Ont., Proprietors.

'Mary has a billy-goat, its tail is sort of bent, and everywhere that Mary goes the goat is sure to want. He followed her to school one day, which made her hot as fire, for Mary had ridden on her wheel, and Billy ate the tyre.'

'What can I do for my little boy?' asked mamma, 'so that he won't want to eat between meals?' 'Have the meals closer together and more of them,' replied the young hopeful.

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