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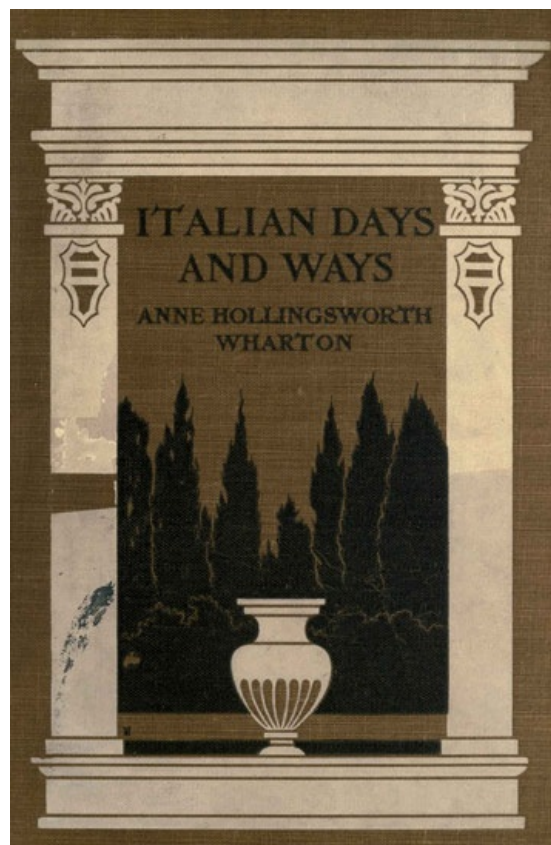
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[THIRD EDITION]

By Anne Hollingsworth Wharton

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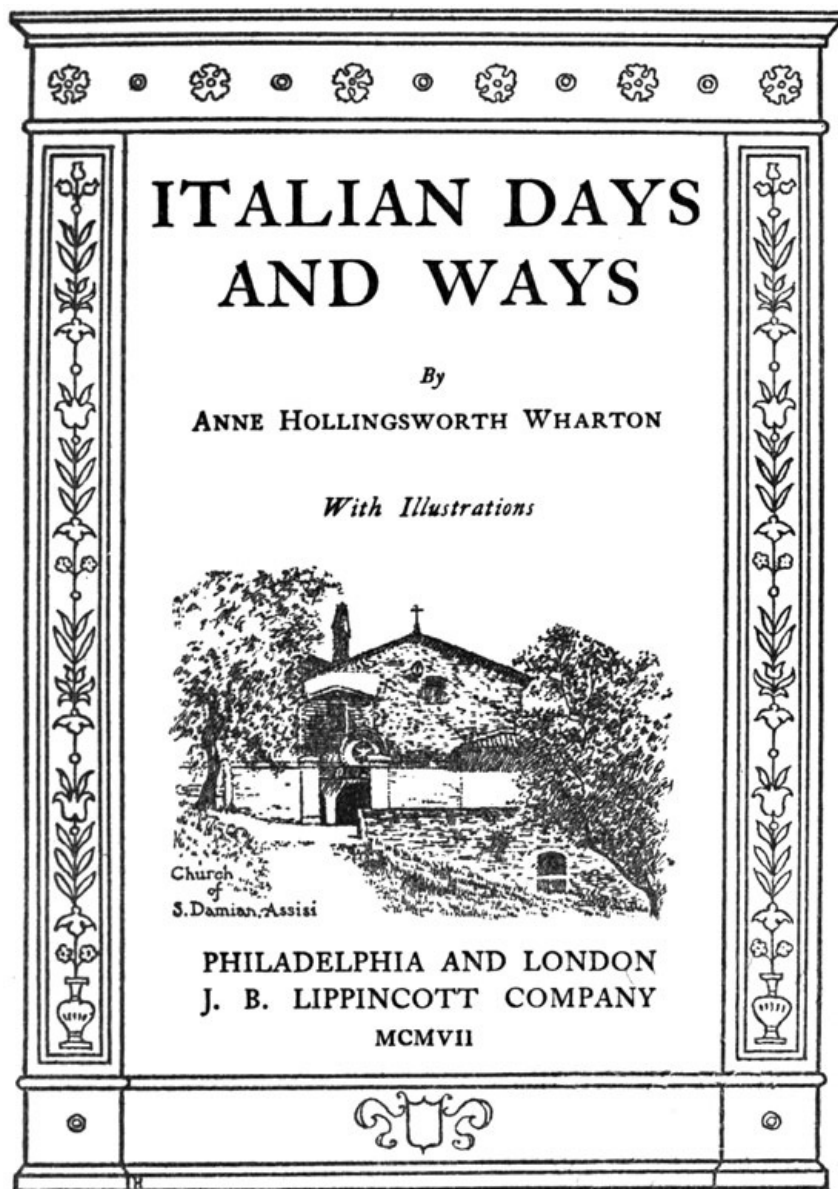
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CASTELLO SANT' ANGELO



ITALIAN DAYS AND WAYS

By
ANNE HOLLINGSWORTH WHARTON

With Illustrations
Church of S. Damian, Assisi

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ITALIAN DAYS AND WAYS

I LA SUPERBA IN THE CLOUDS

GENOA, February 19th.

Your most interesting letter, Sir Philosopher, reached me at Gibraltar, and served to give me a homelike feeling in that alien land of Spain. Any one who can write letters as interesting as yours, from your library, with the mercury at zero outside, and nothing more refreshing to look upon from the window than snow and sleet, does not need to wander in sunny lands and among ancient ruins for an inspiration. No, travel would be absolutely wasted upon you, who require only a cigar and a wood fire to encourage your "reveries of a bachelor."

You wish to know what are my first impressions of Italy, and how we three women get on together? To be perfectly candid with you, we ourselves are not wandering in sunny lands at present, and the cheerful blaze of your library fire would prove most welcome to benumbed fingers and pinched noses.

10

Our welcome to Genoa was not particularly cheerful. It had been raining for days; the sky was heavy with clouds, and the air chilly and damp. We can well understand why the prudent and all-informing Baedeker advises invalids visiting Genoa at this time to guard against raw winds and abrupt changes of temperature.

We enjoyed coming into the fine harbor, around which Genoa is built upon its hills and terraces in the form of a half-circle, the city widening out toward the ends of the arc. On the hills, we know, are many beautiful villas, seen to-day but dimly through veils of mist, and beyond are the mountains, which in clear weather must add much to the charm of this old fortress as seen from the sea.

Zelphine says that it would be very ungrateful of us if we were to complain of cloudy weather, as the skies might be pouring down upon us instead of only threatening, and, after all, we are having the same good luck that we had in Madeira, Granada, and Algiers in coming after the rain instead of before it.

And how do we get on together? Really, monsieur, you display courage when you ask that question, as I might here and now unburden my mind of a long list of grievances. As it is, however, I have so far no woes to relate, although I know that a sojourn on the Continent has wrecked many a friendship. We three must appear to those who meet us an ill-assorted trio; but because of our individualities we may be the better fitted to stand the crucial test of a tour of indefinite length, whose only object is pleasure.

11

Zelphine is the encyclopædia of the party, and, as Angela says, her information is always on tap, besides which she is amiable and refreshingly romantic. It is inspiring to travel with a woman, no longer young, to whom the world and its inhabitants still wear "the glory and the dream." On the other hand, when one is suffering from the discomforts of travel to such an extent that it would be a luxury to moan and groan a bit and find fault with the general condition of things, it is a trifle irritating to see Zelphine sailing serenely upon the seas of high content, apparently above such trifling accidents as material comfort. You, being a man and consequently a philosopher of greater or less degree, may not be able to understand this; it is just here that Zelphine and I might quarrel, but we "generally most always" do not.

Angela you have scarcely known since she was a little girl, when she was a prime favorite of yours. In the half-hour in which you saw her, just before we sailed, you must have realized that in appearance she had fulfilled the promise of her beautiful childhood. She is a spirited creature,

12

but with a fine balance of common sense, and with her delicate, spirituelle beauty is astonishingly practical—an up-to-date girl, in fine. Have you ever wondered, among your many ponderings, why the girls of to-day, with the beauty of their great-grandmothers, should be utterly devoid of the sentiment that enhanced the loveliness of those dear ladies as perfume adds to the charm of a flower? This question I leave with you for future solution.

Here in Genoa we meet the narrow, precipitous passages, streets by courtesy, which interested us in the Moorish quarter of Algiers, dating back in both cases to remote antiquity. They are to be found, we are told, in every old Italian town. Many of them answer to Hawthorne's description of the streets of Perugia, which, he says, are "like caverns, being arched all over and plunging down abruptly towards an unknown darkness, which, when you have fathomed its depths, admits you to a daylight that you scarcely hoped to behold again."

Old palaces overshadow these narrow, crooked streets, built many stories high and close together for protection against enemies without and factional feuds at home; such as those between the powerful houses of Doria, Spinola, Fieschi, and the like. The majority of these buildings have fallen from their ancient glory, and look, as Angela says, like tenement houses. This plebeian association is carried out by the squalid appearance of the inhabitants, and by the clothes-lines stretched across the streets from window to window, on which are hung garments of every size, degree, color, and ingenuity of patch, the predominant red and white lending a certain picturesqueness to the motley array.

13

Turning a corner, we suddenly found ourselves in the midst of a quarrel, or a violent altercation at the best, between a pretty signora at a fourth-floor window and a vendor of fruits and vegetables on the sidewalk below. The language which the lady used, as she leaned far out of the window, was so vigorous that no interpreter was needed to make her meaning plain: the merchant was a charlatan and a villain; the saints were all called upon as witnesses to his depravity. He, the so-called vendor of over-ripe fruit, pointed to his wares, beating his breast and spreading out his hands in token of his spotless innocence. He sell over-ripe oranges? All his neighbors would testify to his poverty and that of his family because he, honest one, daily sacrificed hundreds of oranges to satisfy his unreasonable customers!

14

The signora's dark eyes flashed, the Spanish mantilla upon her head shook in sympathy with the violence of her emotions, as she repeated her vocabulary of epithets. We were thankful that four stories separated the combatants, and retiring under the shadow of a doorway we anxiously awaited results. Something happened, we know not what; the fruit may have been reduced the fraction of a penny; whatever it was, a truce was declared, during which the signora's basket, filled with fruit and artichokes, was drawn up to the window by a rope. After the lady had carefully inspected each individual fruit and vegetable, she smiled blandly, lowered some money in her basket, and the pair parted with bows and compliments. Juliet on her balcony could not have been more graceful, nor Romeo on the pavement below more gallant than this shabby *venditore*, as he swept the ground with his cap, one hand upon his heart!

Feeling that we owed something to somebody for the pleasure that this little drama had afforded us, we crossed the street and bought from the chief actor some fresh dates such as we had first tasted in Algiers. As we paid the asking price without protest, we felt quite sure that the valiant little merchant was making off us anything that he may have lost in his previous transaction; but the dates, of a delicate amber color, as sweet as honey and almost as transparent, were worth whatever price we paid for them.

15

After much turning and retracing of steps, and laughing over being lost and not having the power to make inquiries with any certainty of being understood, we finally gained wider and more open streets, and on the Piazza Banchi found an exchange, where we were able to get some money on our letters of credit.

After attending to this practical detail we turned into the little old Via Orefici, Jewellers' Street, with its many goldsmiths' shops. Over one of the doors is a Virgin and Child, so beautiful that it cost the artist his life. Pellegrino Piola's master, insanely jealous of this work of his pupil, rose up in wrath and killed him. Even the patron, St. Eloy, was unable to save poor Piola's life, but the guild of smiths, who revere St. Eloy as their patron saint, invoked his aid to preserve this lovely fresco from the ruthless hands of Napoleon when he would have carried it off to France.

As we passed window after window, some with their display of exquisite gold and silver filigree and others containing lofty pyramids of the most delicious-looking candied fruit, Angela said that after a few hours' stay in Genoa she was quite sure of two characteristics of the Genoese: a passion for jewelry, especially of the filigree sort, and an inordinate appetite for sweets. The pretty, delicate ornaments, I am inclined to think, are only spread forth to tempt the unwary tourist; but the Italian taste for sweets is proverbial, whetted, doubtless, by the high price of sugar and the exquisiteness of the native confections.

16

Strolling along the fine, wide Via Vittorio Emanuele, eating our dates like true Bohemians and gazing about us upon the sights of the strange city, we turned, almost involuntarily, into the busy thoroughfare of the Via San Lorenzo, where we were confronted by the great façade of the cathedral of the same name, with huge stone lions standing guard at the door. Above the entrance—growsome and realistic spectacle—is poor St. Lawrence broiling away on his stone gridiron! We shall doubtless behold many such spectacles during our travels, and may, like Mark Twain, become quite hardened to the sight of St. Sebastian stuck full of arrows, and of lovely young St. Anastasia and of many others, of whom the world was not worthy, smiling amid the

flames; but this realistic thrusting of St. Lawrence and his gridiron into the life of to-day, as an ornament to a church, impressed us as unworthy of a people credited with a sense of beauty and fitness.

17

We were thankful to turn from the cathedral, whose interior we may explore to-morrow, and, like good Americans, wend our way along the Via Balbi, with its many palaces and handsome university buildings, to a lovely little square called Acquaverde, where there is a handsome modern statue of Columbus. Beside the really fine figure of the Genoese navigator is a woman who represents either Columbia or an Italianized American Indian, we were not sure which, to whom Columbus is offering the Catholic religion and other blessings of civilization. From the benevolent expression of the donor it is evident that he is making the presentation in good faith, although the lady appears singularly indifferent to the gifts offered her.

Some children with large, dark eyes and round, rosy cheeks, beautiful enough to serve as models for the Holy Child and St. John, were playing in the little green square some rhymed game in which their high, clear voices rang out joyously. It was probably an Italian equivalent for "ring-around-the-rosy" or "hot butter-beans." We longed to know just what the words meant. Zephine bribed the singers with soldi to an encore; but, alas! the song fell upon ears dull of understanding. This was the merriest scene that we have found in Genoa, which does not impress us as a gay city at all; but what mature and sane community could be merry under skies as leaden as these?

18

We are lodged in an old palace, which opens out on those most disappointing arcades of which we have read such fascinating descriptions. We see no pretty young Genoese women in thin muslin veils nor handsome matrons in veils of flowered chintz; probably the rain keeps them and their finery indoors. We remind ourselves, from time to time, that we are dwelling in marble halls for the first time in our lives, and yet some of the appointments of this rather expensive *albergo* are not equal to those of a second or third class hotel in America. My room is spacious, with windows opening to the floor and commanding a fine view of the harbor, where many ships lie at anchor, among them the floating city in which we came hither. It makes us feel at home to-night to see the lights of the Augusta Victoria, and we wave friendly greetings to her and our fellow-voyagers across the bay.

"We were far more comfortable in our little state-rooms on the ship than we shall ever be in this damp palace!" said Angela, shivering. "This room feels like a cellar. Do they never have any fires here?"

19

"Yes, behold the fireplace!" I replied, drawing aside a screen and revealing a small hole in the wall. "We will bask in the warmth of a cheerful blaze this evening, and toast our toes before the glowing coals."

As luck would have it, the chimney did not draw well, probably not having been used in this century, and so instead of a cheerful blaze we had clouds of smoke, and went to bed to dream of snow-storms and icebergs.

February 20th.

I awoke to hear the rain beating against my window and Angela's merry voice at my side, saying, "Such an experience! Zephine rang our bell, thinking that she would have a fire or smoke or something to take off the deadly chill from our room. In a minute there came a knock at the door, and instead of the chambermaid there stood a grand gentleman in a blue coat and brass buttons, with a breakfast-tray—the proprietor or head waiter, I should say. We hadn't the courage to say a word about fire to this dignified person. Indeed, he gave us no time to say anything, as he set the tray on a table beside the bed, and vanished with 'Madame est servie.' Of course Z. is the madame; I don't count, being *jeune fille*. Such manners Z. says she has seldom seen in a ballroom at home. So now, Margaret, the breakfast is there and must be eaten. Do order yours, and let us breakfast together."

20

"A kimono *déjeuner à trois*," I said, laughing over Angela's ignorance of Continental ways, to which I had become quite accustomed during my art winter in Paris with Katharine Clarke.

"A second ring may fetch the maid and fire," said Angela, pressing the button.

This, however, only served to bring the blue-coated waiter, with another tray of coffee and rolls. It was some time before we were able to get the maid, who, in turn, sent for the *facchino* who attends to the fires, and he, assisted by another *facchino*, finally succeeded in fanning into a blaze the infinitesimal quantity of wood used here for a fire. This "house that Jack built" distribution of labor is rather puzzling to the uninitiated. We are wondering how we shall ever compass the problem of fees, so many people are serving us.

"I don't wonder that Eugene Field sang with longing of the 'land of stoves and sunshine,'" said Zephine, as she held her hands over the feeble flame, "if he ever stayed in Genoa in February."

This is the nearest approach to a complaint that Zephine has uttered since we left New York. She accepts everything that comes to us, good, bad, or indifferent, as a part of the game. We breakfasted heartily, calling for more rolls and boiled eggs, to the evident but entirely well-bred astonishment of the presiding genius, who was not accustomed to such early morning appetites.

21

The rain continued to pour in torrents; and here let me confess, with more or less contrition, that we were all three most desperately homesick. Whether it was that we missed our pleasant fellow-

travellers who were steaming off for Nice to-day, or because of the persistent rain, we, one after another, fell a prey to the depressing malady. Angela, first of all, with eyes full of tears, wondered many times, in language more or less strenuous, why she had ever left her happy home for these inhospitable shores; and I—well, it matters little what I said. Zephine surprised me weeping over my travelling-hat, which, although it did present a rather dilapidated appearance after yesterday's rain, failed to afford sufficient cause for my tears. She, the heroic one, who had never told her woe, in attempting to console me broke down herself, and we wept in each other's arms, which had the good result of bringing Angela to our side and making her laugh heartily. Finally, in desperation, I proposed that we should order a cab and drive over to the Hôtel de Londres and try to find some of our steamer friends who expected to stay here a few days *en route* for Florence. 22

We were cordially welcomed by Bertha Linn and Mrs. Robins, who received us in their rooms, one of which was comfortably heated by a porcelain stove. Despite their more favorable surroundings, we soon discovered that our two countrywomen were as down-hearted as ourselves. Bertha, seated upon a trunk, looking about as cheerful as Miss Betsey Trotwood when she came up to London in pursuit of her scattered fortune, expressed herself to the effect that foreign travel might be of advantage educationally and enlarging to the mind, but for her part she preferred her own country, and would gladly take the next steamer back to New York. Angela heartily agreed with Bertha, while Zephine begged her to remember the enchanting days we had spent in Madeira and Granada, and that even more delightful experiences lay before us, assuring them that Italy is not a proverbially rainy country, et cetera; in the midst of which profitable conversation Mrs. Robins suggested that we should take cabs and drive to the Campo Santo, by way of a diversion.

"We certainly are in a proper frame of mind for a visit to a cemetery," said Angela, laughing a cheerless laugh, with a minor chord in it suggestive of tears near the surface. 23

No place could be more admirably adapted for a rainy day excursion than the Campo Santo of Genoa, as that vast cemetery is nearly all under cover. Our first impression of the long galleries with their monuments and low reliefs, many of them decorated with photographs of the dead and overhung with the tasteless wreaths of tin flowers dear to the Continental mourner, was of something hopelessly inartistic and artificial. Among the many shockingly realistic and inappropriate monuments we found a few simple and beautiful statues and low reliefs. You remember how many of the monuments in Westminster Abbey are in bad taste and overweighted with carved ornaments; the majority of these are not less artistic, but one has a right to expect more beauty and grace in Italy than in England, and then the grand old abbey lends a certain dignity to everything within its walls. The Campo Santo looks more like a picture-gallery than a necropolis; but *chacun à son goût*. This is evidently the *goût* of the Genoese, and the name of their cemetery is so beautiful that I, for one, am inclined to overlook lack of taste in other matters.

The tomb of the patriot Giuseppe Mazzini is in this Campo Santo, above the rotunda and over against the steep hillside. It did not impress us particularly; but we found ourselves turning again and again to the figure of an old woman in a fine brocade gown, with a ring of bread, which here they call *pain de la couronne*, over her arm, and what seemed to be strings of large pearls depending from her waist. 24

"It is evidently the statue of some great lady who sold her pearls to raise money to feed the poor," said Zephine. "Here are the pearls, and she carries the bread on her arm just as the peasants do in Spain and in all these southern countries. I wish we could find the story somewhere and the lady's name. This statue may have been erected by a grateful people in recognition of her generous aid."

"She certainly has the face and bearing of a peasant, rather than of a grand lady," said Bertha.

Just then we heard a low, infectious laugh behind us, and turned to find General W., one of our ship's company, who was evidently much amused by our discussion, and made haste to tear Zephine's romance into shreds by explaining that her Lady Bountiful was a peasant woman who made quite a sum of money by selling bread and nuts on the streets of Genoa. Having an ambition to rest with the rich and great in the Campo Santo, under a fine monument, she bought the right to be buried here for three thousand francs, and had the pleasure of ordering her own monument, for which she paid six thousand francs. Nine thousand francs, in all, for glory—quite a fortune for a peasant! 25

"The pearls are only nuts, after all!" exclaimed Zephine, "and——"

"The cake is dough," said Bertha, laughing; "but it is all very interesting as a study in human nature. I don't doubt the poor woman found great satisfaction in looking at this fine figure of herself."

"She did not have even that satisfaction," replied General W., "for she died soon after she had ordered it, in a street brawl or something of the sort. *Sic transit gloria mundi*."

"How you do break down our images and bowl over our idols!" exclaimed Angela.

We had dismissed our cabs on entering the Campo Santo, and, as the rain had ceased for the time, we returned by the electric tram of the Via di Circonvallazione a Mare, which runs close to the sea, and which, as Angela says, besides circumambulating the city, is a clever way of

circumventing the cabman. Our homesickness had disappeared amid the shades of the departed, and, a merry party, we made our way to the Concordia, that most delightful garden-café. Here we lunched upon *risotto* (rice made yellow with saffron), spaghetti, and other Italian dishes, with an accompaniment of bread in small sticks, crisp and brown.

26

February 21st.

A note has just come from your cousin, Geneva Fuller, urging us to make her a visit at her home in San Remo. This invitation, which is most cordial, is a temptation to us all, but Zephine and Angela have promised to spend their time with friends in Nice, stopping for a day at Monte Carlo, if their sporting tastes lead them so far afield, while I yield to Geneva's blandishments. You know of old that she is not a person to be lightly refused when she has set her heart upon any given thing—a family trait, I believe.

27

II ALONG THE RIVIERA

February 22d.

Of course the sun was shining when we left Genoa. We were glad to see how fair La Superba could be, with her terraced gardens, many villas, and noble background of blue mountains. Indeed, I confess to some qualms of conscience, feeling that I may have given you a too gloomy picture of the fine old city; but how can one give a cheerful view of the attractions of a place where one's gayest hours were spent in a cemetery?

Our way lay along the sea by the Western Riviera, one of the garden spots of the world. The railroad winds in and out among the rocks, or into tunnels pierced through them, often running parallel with the famous Cornice Drive, which was for many years the only road from Genoa to Nice. The beauty of this drive, which lies sometimes between the railroad and the sea and again ascends the rocky heights beyond, made us wish that railroads had never been invented. A coach and four, a Cinderella coach, would be the only suitable equipage in which to make this journey into fairyland.

28

"Why did we not drive?" I hear you ask, and you may well ask. Because the railroad, dashing in and out of tunnels, often crosses the drive most unexpectedly and on the grade. Even Zephine, much as she wished to drive over the self-same road taken by her dear Lucy in "Doctor Antonio," hesitated about imperilling her neck, and I was quite resolute upon this point. And if Zephine and I were so reckless as to be willing to risk our own lives, have we not under our care the only and well-beloved daughter of the ancient and honorable house of Haldane?

Did I say that the train dashed? Really, that was a slip of the pen—nothing dashes in Italy except a mountain torrent; but where there are so many grade crossings, even a slow train may be dangerous. We proceeded moderately and sedately upon our shining way, skirting the sapphire sea, dotted here and there with green islands. Reaching far out into the blue, one may see small towns which seem bent upon washing their white houses to a more dazzling whiteness in the clear water, painted towns against a painted sea and sky. Other hamlets and villas, with their green jalousies and their luxuriant gardens full of flowers and orange-trees, are on the heights above, and not seldom a solitary sanctuary is seen, perched upon some sea-washed cliff, the cherished guardian of the shore.

29

Now indeed, looking up at the terraced olive-groves, we feel that we are in Italy. For many miles the road lies beside these gardens, which are monuments to Italian thrift and industry, as every square inch of the scanty earth on the hillsides is held in place by stone walls, one above another, until some are almost mountain high, olive-trees growing to the very top. On the sunny plains between the hills are acres of carnations, violets, stock-gillies, and mignonette, which fill the air with their delicious fragrance. From these immense gardens the large cities are supplied with flowers, and also the manufactories of perfumes. Hundreds of the beautiful blossoms, they tell us, are sacrificed to make a single drop of essence.

We passed by Albenga and Alassio, over the suspension bridge at Porto Maurizio, and so on to Taggia, which is near San Remo, where we three were to part company for a few days. Off to the right we could see the picturesque ruins of Bussana Vecchia, destroyed by an earthquake as late as 1887, never rebuilt, and now standing silent and desolate on the hill-top above its namesake, the little modern town of Bussana Nuova.

30

Our view of Poggio and Bussana Vecchia was suddenly cut off by an inopportune tunnel, from which we emerged into the brilliant sunshine, to see before us the pretty villas, the waving palms, and the general air of cultivation and *bien-être* that belong to this favorite and highly favored town. When Zephine and Angela caught this glimpse of San Remo from the train, and saw Geneva's children waiting for me at the station, I am quite sure they repented them of their decision.

I had not seen Roger and Phœbe since they were babies, but I knew them at once, and we are already fast friends. Geneva's welcome, as you may believe, was of the warmest. It is delightful to be in a home again, after tossing about in a state-room and knocking around in strange hotels, and in a home as charming as this!

February 25th.

Everything is delightfully foreign in this *ménage*; Geneva lives in an apartment, as most people do here; hers is on the second floor, with a huge salon on one side of the hall, a *salle à manger* on the other, and the usual complement of bedrooms, kitchens, and the like. This is quite different from anything we have in America, where the apartments are on a scale of princely magnificence, with prices to match, or of a simplicity so extreme that "flat" seems to designate appropriately both them and the condition of those who inhabit them. This apartment is really a house on one floor; the entrance and stone stairway are quite palatial, and yet it is *à bon marché*. The drawing-room is spacious, with windows to the floor, opening out on balconies on which we step out to see the *bersaglieri* drill in the evenings, as the children are on the qui vive from the moment the spirited music reaches their ears. 31

Geneva's large salon is heated by an open fire of olive-wood, which she says makes it warm enough except when the winters are unusually cold. The English ladies who come to tea in the afternoon throw aside their wraps, exclaiming, "Ah, Mrs. Fuller's drawing-room is always so very hot!"

Hot is not exactly the word that I should apply to dear Geneva's pretty drawing-room, although I know that Lucie and Marthe are piling on extra wood all the time in compliment to Mademoiselle, the shivering American.

Everything in this house moves with a delightful smoothness and ease, and the whole atmosphere of the place is indescribably restful. When I awake in the morning I touch a bell, which soon brings to my bedside the trim, neat-handed Lucie with rolls and coffee. This morning my breakfast-tray was glorified with great bunches of dark purple and light Neapolitan violets. 32

"What is the meaning of this reckless extravagance?" I call out to Geneva, whose room is next to mine.

"Extravagance, *ma belle!*" replies Geneva. "Flowers are one of the economies of San Remo. If I were to carpet your path with violets it would be a cheap pleasure for me at the rate of two soldi a bunch!" Wasn't that like Geneva?—like the old Geneva, yet with a certain grace learned from these charming Italians! Only half believing her, and yet comforted by her assurances, I enjoy the delicious fragrance of the violets while I luxuriously sip my coffee and read the opening pages of Ruffini's "Doctor Antonio."

Yesterday we drove to Bordighera, and Geneva and I tried to find the place near Ospedaletti where Sir John Davenne's coach came to grief by the roadside. It was disappointing to find no trace of Rosa's little inn, only great hotels, a casino, and all manner of extravagant and unromantic modern innovations. The sea and the picturesque coast are fortunately the same, and Geneva pointed out to me the great rock near which Battista rowed Lucy's boat while Antonio told Sir John how cleverly the valiant citizens of Bordighera had here outwitted the British in their brig-of-war. And on this road the Doctor walked home by moonlight, after an evening with Sir John and Lucy, singing "O bell' alma innamorata!" Poor, dear, brave Antonio—love, dear love, treated him shabbily enough! Your mother will remember reading this story to me on one of my early visits to Woodford. Although I was but a child then, my wrath rose hot against Lucy's treatment of Antonio. After her marriage with Lord Cleverton I refused to listen to another word about the faithless Lucy, until curiosity and a real fondness for the pretty blonde heroine sent me back to this saddest of stories, over which I wept as girls of an earlier time wept over "The Sorrows of Werther." 33

This digression is all apropos of Bordighera, which is most interesting aside from its associations with Lucy and her lover, with its enchanting Coast Promenade ending at the Spianata del Capo. From this promontory there is a noble view of Ventimiglia, Mentone, Monaco, Villafranca and its light-house; beyond is the long, low line of the French shore, and still beyond, the Maritime Alps, with flecks of snow upon their sides, while near us, at our feet, lies the bay of Ospedaletti, sparkling in the sun. Bordighera is literally framed in by palm-trees—palms to right, to left, everywhere. No wonder that this little town long had the exclusive honor of supplying the palms to St. Peter's in Rome for Palm Sunday; but thereby hangs a tale which I may not relate to-day, as Geneva bids me drop my pen and join her and her friends over a cup of tea. 34

February 26th.

The days pass all too quickly in this charming place. My mornings are generally spent in walking—sometimes on the Promenade du Midi, which lies near the sea, a beautiful, palm-bordered terrace above the beach—or in wandering through the old quarter of San Remo, with Roger and Phœbe by my side. Here are narrow, precipitous streets like those of Genoa, in strong contrast with the gay walk by the sea, which has all the characteristics of a foreign watering-place. The *vive la bagatelle* existence of the Promenade du Midi is not without its charm once in a while, but in the winding streets of the old town is the typical life of San Remo.

We watch the vendors of fruit, vegetables, nuts, and herbs displaying their simple wares upon the sidewalk, or stroll down by the bank where the washing is done, picturesquely, if somewhat

laboriously, in the open. The *lavandaie* are, most of them, vigorous young creatures, and as they beat the clothes against the stones or rinse them in the clear, running water, their merry chatter and laughter suggest social joys even beyond those of our voluble Bridgets at home.

35

Your mother's favorite saw about the back being fitted to the burden often recurs to me here. If these peasants are poor, their wants are few, they live in a divine climate, the whole of the out-of-doors is theirs, and, above all, they have dispositions and digestions that may well cause them to be envied of princes. Dr. A., Genevra's physician, tells me that the peasants here are usually healthy and the children as robust as they are handsome. This Italian gentleman is one of the interesting characters of San Remo. I always feel like calling him Doctor Antonio, for although Dr. A. has travelled extensively, and speaks English perfectly, he is quite Italian in appearance and manner, and so loyally devoted to his Italy that I am quite sure he would have sacrificed life and fortune to her cause had he lived in the stirring times that developed Ruffini's heroic Doctor Antonio.

On Sunday afternoon Roger and Phœbe drove me up to the little sanctuary of the Madonna della Guardia. Our road crossed that leading to Bussana Vecchia, which picturesque ruin attracts me by its mystery and its remoteness from the life of to-day. If you were here you would certainly explore the remains of this old town, and perhaps you would take me with you through its silent streets. Just now fate seems to be against my seeing it. On Saturday, when we were all ready to set forth, the rain fell in torrents, and on Sunday there was no time to stop on our way to Capo Verde, so Bussana Vecchia seems destined to be my "Carcassonne."

36

The little sanctuary of the Madonna della Guardia is built, like the home of the wise man of the Scriptures, upon a rock, crowning the promontory of Capo Verde. From the heights there is a fine panorama, as they say here, of sea and shore; Taggia and Poggio were at our feet as we stood on the shelving rock, which overhangs a sheer declivity of many feet. In the church there is a collection of curious pictures, votive offerings, representing men and women in the midst of deadly peril by field and flood: fishermen in boats tossing upon stormy seas, and carriage-loads of pleasure-seekers pitching down precipices or dashing along the road at the mercy of steeds as wild as that of Mazeppa. All of these good people, as appears from the expressions of gratitude recorded in the several paintings, were saved from sudden and horrible death by the powerful intervention of the gentle Mother of Sorrows and Mercies.

37

I am finishing this letter while Genevra sings to the children their good-night songs and tucks them into their beds. To-morrow will be a full day, with some commissions to be attended to at the shops, which are tempting here, two or three visits, and an afternoon tea with some charming Scotch ladies at the Hôtel de Londres. The day following I leave here for Nice, having decided to meet Zephine and Angela there instead of at Genoa as I had intended. This change of plan is made in order that we may take the famous drive from Nice to Genoa, which Dr. A. assures me is not as dangerous as it appears, and in beauty more nearly approaches the description of Paradise than anything else to be seen upon earthly shores. If we make the trip in an automobile, which we shall probably do, we shall have a couple of hours to spend here with Genevra *en route* for Genoa, which anticipation helps to console her for her disappointment in losing two days of my visit. She will then be able to judge for herself whether Angela is as pretty as I have described her and whether Zephine is as charming with white hair as with brown, questions that may seem of little moment to the masculine mind, but are deeply interesting to Genevra. She will be calling me soon to join her at what Macaulay calls "the curling hour," which we count the best in the twenty-four. Lucie heaps up the olive-wood on the hearth until it blazes brightly, and places a tray with chocolate before us. Thus cheered and sustained we gossip into "the wee, sma' hours." Genevra asks so many questions about her old friends that we should have to talk until the cocks crow if I were to answer them all. By the way, do your ears ever burn these nights about twelve o' the clock? She often talks of you, asks if you have grown more sedate with added years and dignities, whether you have lost your habit of jesting, and speaks of a certain merry twinkle in the corner of your eye which used to betray you when mischief was brewing—on the whole Genevra cherishes a very cousinly affection for your lordship. There! she is calling me, so

38

"Good-night!—if the longitude please,—
For, maybe, while wasting my taper,
Your sun's climbing over the trees."

39

III CAPTURED BY A CABMAN

NAPLES, March 2d.

If Lady Morgan wrote of her beloved Irish capital "dear, dirty Dublin," we may describe Naples less alliteratively in somewhat the same words, except that to American eyes the Neapolitan city is even dirtier and vastly more beautiful. Indeed, no words written nor pictures painted give any adequate conception of the blueness of the sea, the soft purple shades upon the mountains, and

the fine transparency and lightness of this air. One breathes in gayety with every breath, a certain elasticity and *joie de vivre* which the filth, the noise, the bad odors, and even the hopeless poverty all around us are powerless to dispel.

From the Strada Vittorio Emanuele, where we are stopping, we look down upon a series of terraced gardens, some of them very poor little gardens with a few vegetables, among them the omnipresent and much beloved artichoke, the fennel, like a coarse celery, and lettuce. Roses are climbing all over the walls of these hillside gardens, and in many of them orange-trees are blooming, spreading around them a delicious perfume. Here on the heights we have none of the disadvantages of Naples, the noise, the unsavory odors, or the uncleanness.

40

Above this *strada*, which is the name by which the Neapolitans call their streets, the hills tower for many feet, and way up on their crests are the Castle of St. Elmo and the old Carthusian monastery of San Martino. We visited San Martino the day after our arrival, because Zelfine had an irrepressible desire to get to the tip-top of everything and view both the city and bay from the heights above us. The ascent was made in one of the *funicolari*, cable trams, which are used so much over here. They are rather terrifying at first, but are said to be quite safe, and are, I believe, less dangerous than many of our elevators.



THE BAY OF NAPLES

The old monastery is now a museum, under the management of the Museo Nazionale, and contains many paintings, porcelains, carvings, and other antiques. We neglected the treasures within for the greater pleasure of wandering at will through the charming, picturesque cloisters, which are richly carved and of a stone warm and creamy in tone, so different from the heavy, dark cloisters one sees in England and elsewhere. Most of our morning was spent basking in the sunshine of the court; we could fancy the old monks enjoying, as we did, the genial warmth that in the Southern Italian winter is only to be found out of doors. The museum itself was damp, as are all the galleries at this season.

41

In this court are a number of handsome sarcophagi, with inscriptions and coats-of-arms carved in the marble; from hence we passed into the Belvedere, whose balconies command an exquisite view of the city and bay. We gazed long at the noble panorama spread before us, from Posilipo to the hill of Capodimonte. Over across the bay were Ischia and Capri, blue as its own grotto, with Sorrento's long point of land reaching out into the sea, and off in the far distance the snow-line of the Apennines. To our left, Vesuvius, with its three peaks, was smoking away as peacefully as a Hollander on his *hooge stoep*. Seeing them by day it is hard to believe that these fair blue hills could have wrought sudden destruction upon the cities of the plain; but last night, when flames flashed up skyward from the smoking crater, I must confess that we had some misgivings. When we beheld these danger-signals, as they seemed to us, we carried our fears and our queries to the *padrone* and the concierge, who both assured us, to their own satisfaction if not entirely to ours, that Vesuvius has never erupted in the direction of Naples, evidently feeling that Italian volcanoes, like Italian people, are not in the habit of changing their ways.

42

Standing upon the Belvedere of San Martino, we were able to form some idea of the great width of the bay, where just now "William's yacht," as one of our English friends always calls it, is riding at anchor. The Kaiser is making one of his rapid, semi-official, quite friendly, and wholly diplomatic visits to Rome, and his yacht awaits him here.

March 4th.

We have spent the morning at the National Museum, where are so many of the world-famous sculptures, the Hercules, a magnificent, strong figure in perfect repose, a giant taking his ease,

and the Farnese Bull, both of them from the Baths of Caracalla in Rome, and a huge bronze horse from Herculaneum. Most impressive and interesting to us is the statue of Diana of the Ephesians, against whose worship Paul preached at Ephesus. A curious statue is this, odd enough to have fallen down from Jupiter, according to the tradition, or from any other heathen god! The torso is of fine, variegated marble, and the head, hands, and feet, the latter slender and delicate, are of bronze. This Diana is not a huntress, like the Greek Artemis with the crescent above her brow, but bears about her the symbols of abundance. We lingered long near this statue of the great goddess of the Ephesians, marvelling wherein lay the secret of her power. To Demetrius and the other silversmiths who made her shrines she was valuable, as she brought them great gain; but for beauty or grace there was no reason why this Diana should have been worshipped by "Asia and all the world."

43

Among the bronzes from Pompeii and Herculaneum we found the originals of many of the exquisitely graceful figures with which we are all familiar. We greeted as old friends the Dancing Faun, the Mercury, the Flying Victory, the Wrestlers, Silenus, the Boy with the Dolphin, and, above all, the lovely Narcissus, which they now call by another name. Zelfine and I have decided that we will never acknowledge this to be a Dionysus or anything less poetic than the Narcissus. This charming, youthful figure with the bent head and listening ear is quite small, not nearly life-size, and for that reason, perhaps, its beauty is more delicate and spiritual. If that little figure could speak, what could it not tell of pomp, luxury, love, and delight, all overtaken and overwhelmed by sudden destruction in the buried city where it was found!

Now, indeed, if it were in my power to rhyme four lines and make sense at the same time, which was my school-girl idea of poetry-making, I should certainly be sending you a poem about the Narcissus; but why cudgel my brains when Keats has, with his own sympathetic charm, told the pathetic story of the beautiful youth?—

44

"Who gazed into the stream's deep recess
And died of his own dear loveliness."

On our way home from the museum our *vetturino* beat his horse so unmercifully, although the poor nag was going as fast as a horse could be expected to go up hill, that Zelfine remonstrated with him, very tactfully, as I thought, paying his sorry Rosinante compliments and calling the wretched beast *il buono cavallo*. The idea of any one feeling compassion for a horse evidently touched the driver's sense of humor, and, regarding it as a huge joke, he laughed and whipped the poor animal still more unmercifully, making us understand, in the gibberish of French and Italian peculiar to the cabmen here, that there was no need to be merciful to a creature without a soul. We longed for greater facility in some language that he could understand, to inquire into his own spiritual condition. As, however, words were wanting, we fell to wondering wherein such a being as this differs from the beasts of the field. The cabmen of Naples would certainly afford our friend Dr. C. an additional argument in favor of his pet doctrine of conditional immortality.

45

Our driver's attitude toward the animal creation is, we are told, that of most Neapolitans. Even persons of more intelligence question the advisability of caring for the comfort of dumb creatures, yet these apparently cruel people have a most kindly custom. If parents lose a child, and children are generally so numerous that it seems as if one could scarcely be missed, they adopt an orphan, call it God's child, and treat it as their own.

March 6th.

We have been wondering, ever since we came here, where the beauty and fashion of Naples are to be found, having seen on the streets only tradespeople and beggars. We put the question to our friend the concierge at the Hotel B. At five o'clock in the afternoon, he told us, the *beau monde* could be seen taking an airing on the Chiaia, never earlier. It seems that Neapolitans of quality do not drive while the sun is shining. You remember that old Italian proverb about only dogs and Englishmen liking the sun? To this I would add the wise peasants, with whom its genial warmth takes the place of food, fire, and proper clothing.

Five o'clock on a March afternoon is a rather chilly and uncomfortable hour for a drive; but we should have to go then or give up all idea of a fashionable *promenade en voiture* with the élite of Naples. This afternoon was the time arranged for our drive. A *carrozza*, a two-horse carriage, was to meet us at a favorite coral shop on the Chiaia, whose exquisite wares draw Angela daily with a glittering eye. Having arranged with Zelfine about this rendezvous, I left her hanging over some Pompeian statuettes in a shop on the Toledo, copies, of course, but very good ones, quite too tempting to be safely dallied with, and made my way to Thomas Cook's office and to several glove shops. When my commissions were finished, I had more than an hour on my hands, so I lingered for some time before the tall monument in the Square of the Martyrs, a memorial to the patriots who perished during several Neapolitan revolutions. This monument has much of the simplicity and strength of the Nelson memorial on Trafalgar Square, having like it four colossal bronze lions at the base. The noble shaft is surmounted by one of Caggiani's graceful figures, a Victory delicately poised as if on tiptoe for a flight.

46

After gazing long at the beautiful monument, I strolled down the Strada Chiaia to the esplanade with the statues and fountains, a charming place to walk on a cool afternoon. You know my fancy for wandering alone through strange streets and byways. On and on I sauntered, thinking that I might have time to walk as far as the Aquarium before keeping my tryst at the coral shop, and not fully realizing how deserted the place was until I heard a penetrating voice quite close to me

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speaking rapid and almost unintelligible French, accompanied by the cracking of a whip. "A cabman—I'll pay no attention to him," I said to myself; "he'll be discouraged after a while and leave me." I soon found that I had reckoned without my host: that vociferous, whip-cracking Jehu followed me, dogged my steps, offered me his cab at absurdly low rates, and finally cornered me in a recess of one of the large public buildings. I looked around; there was not a person in sight to help me, only a few beggars on the steps, who would naturally make common cause with the cabman. You will laugh at me, I am sure, but so terrified was I by the creature's language and gestures and whip-cracking that I abjectly stepped into his cab, telling him to drive me for an hour and set me down at the well-known coral shop on the Chiaia at five o'clock, showing him the time on my watch-face. Was I not just a bit like the woman who married a persistent suitor in order to get rid of him? Her troubles probably began then and there; mine certainly did. My *cocher*, with an irritating expression of triumph on his face, set forth upon a tour of sight-seeing which threatened to be of long duration. We passed from street to street, from building to building, until to my dismay I found that he was driving toward the upper town. I protested, knowing that there would not be time to get back to the Chiaia by five o'clock. Would I like to see San Martino? No, I answered, with decision, I had already been to San Martino; I wished to go back to the Chiaia. Then—for astuteness commend me to a Neapolitan *vetturino*—that irritating creature became suddenly deaf, dumb, and blind, while his horse went on and on up the heights toward San Martino. Fortunately, the road winds around the hill, and as we reached one of its windings I saw, by a sign, that we were on the Strada Vittorio Emanuele. Hope revived when I began to recognize familiar buildings; we would soon reach our hotel. "Hotel B.! Albergo B.!" I cried, with so much insistence and with gestures so like his own that the creature finally listened to me, the horse slackened its pace slightly, and then, oh joy! the Hotel B. appeared, the concierge at the door. I called to him, he made a peremptory sign to the driver to stop, and I was once again a free woman, standing on my two feet, with solid ground beneath them.

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49

My Jehu now regained the use of his tongue, and unblushingly insisted upon a two hours' fee for the drive of a trifle over an hour which I had been coerced into taking. The sum was not extortionate, according to American ideas, but no one wishes to be cheated, especially with one's eyes wide open. I protested, explained the state of affairs to the concierge, when, to my surprise, he, my ally and champion as I had thought him, deserted me at this critical moment and joined the enemy, saying, "The signorina would do well to pay the *vetturino* what he asks, as according to the signorina's own watch she has had the cab over an hour."

My humiliation was great when I handed the triumphant cabman his ill-gotten gains, but greater still was my disappointment over the defection of the concierge, whom we have all trusted. It seems, indeed, as if every man's hand is against us in this beautiful city, from the salesman who tries to sell us imperfect coral to the crafty vendor of fruit who slips bad oranges into a paper bag for us, while he tries to distract our attention by sentimental remarks on the weather and the "bella vista."

Rather than trust myself to the mercy of another cabman, I ignominiously made my way down the many steps of the terrace to the street below, where I took a tram to the Chiaia. Angela was seated in the carriage, looking around anxiously, while Zephine was walking up and down the pavement, both evidently much disturbed, wondering what had detained me.

50

"There is still time to take the drive," I said, in reply to their eager questions. "I saw a number of carriages coming down by the Square of the Martyrs. Get in, Zephine, and I will explain my delay as we drive along."

All Naples seemed to be *en voiture*, this afternoon, and it was pleasant to be making a *course* with the languid, dark-eyed ladies and their attendant cavaliers, even if we were not intimately associated with them.

March 7th.

This whole morning we spent in the Aquarium, which is down near the sea, a part of the Villa Nazionale. Here we saw all manner of beautiful and hideous creatures of the deep, some exquisitely colored fish from the Mediterranean, living coral, medusæ, crested blubbers, airy and transparent as soap-bubbles, and the wonderful octopus. Angela insisted on seeing these horrible creatures fed, and by the time that important ceremony was over and we had walked through the shaded park enjoying the flowers, which are blooming in profusion everywhere, it was time to go home for our second breakfast.

51

We went to Posilipo in the steam tram, this afternoon, and were shown the old Roman columbarium on the hillside, popularly known as the Tomb of Virgil. Whether or not the poet was buried there is now disputed by scholars; however, Zephine says that Virgil certainly wrote his "Georgics" and "Æneid" in his villa near by, and that Petrarch considered this tomb sufficiently important to plant a laurel here. She and I have no patience with the iconoclasts who take so much pleasure in destroying our illusions, and we see no reason why the traveller should not be allowed to weep over this tomb of Virgil, unless, indeed, a more authentic one can be furnished him.

Later we climbed up to the terraced garden that belongs to the Ristorante Promessi Sposi—fancy an inn at home named The Betrothed! Here we had afternoon tea, while our eyes were feasted with the beauties of a gorgeous sunset. Vesuvius, Capri, Ischia, and all the smaller islands of the bay were bathed in heliotrope light, a royal array of purple velvet. Buchanan Read's lines on the Bay of Naples must have been inspired by just such a sea and sky as this. Zephine evidently had

"My soul to-day
Is far away,
Sailing the Vesuvian Bay;
My winged boat,
A bird afloat,
Swims round the purple peaks remote."

We should have been in a boat on the purple bay instead of in a tram!

I am finishing this letter rather hurriedly for to-night's mail, as we shall be off to-morrow bright and early for a tour of several days, to Pompeii, La Cava, and Pæstum, returning by the coast drive and stopping at Amalfi and Sorrento. It is the sort of excursion that you would enjoy so much—would you like to be of the party?

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IV AN EXCITING DRIVE

CAVA DEI TIRRENI, March 8th.

We have spent the day in the streets and houses of Pompeii, living over again in the buried city the thrilling scenes of Lord Lytton's novel. His descriptions are still marvellously accurate, although so much has been unearthed since he wrote "The Last Days of Pompeii" that the ruins as they stand to-day are much more extensive than those pictured by the novelist. The house of Glaucus is called by the guides the House of the Tragic Poet, but the mosaic of the dog, with its inscription, "Cave canem," apparently as perfect as in the days when Glaucus thus whimsically greeted his friends and enemies, serves to identify it.

Lord Lytton was in Naples during the winter of the most important excavations at Pompeii, and his romance doubtless took form and shape as he walked through these deserted streets, where the ruts made by the chariot-wheels of the two rivals, Glaucus and Arbaces, are still to be seen. The houses, as he tells us, still undespoiled of their exquisite decorations and rich furniture, were much as their unfortunate owners left them. Even now, despite the fact that many of the beautiful frescoes, statues, busts, and other ornaments have been taken to the Naples Museum, much is still left of the interior of the houses, enough to give one a very good idea of how these luxurious Pompeians lived. The lower floors of some of these houses, as that of the Vettii and the Faun, are complete, with their vestibule, dining-room, parlor, bedrooms, and kitchen. These rooms are all rather small, according to our ideas, as the wise Pompeians lived out of doors, spending their days in the large central court of their houses or in the gardens. Of the gardens we saw the most perfect examples in the house of the Vettii. The restoration seems to have been made most carefully here as elsewhere; even the graceful bronze statuettes are not wanting, as excellent replicas have been put in the places of the originals, which are in the Naples Museum.

54

Nothing brings the reality of that old life before us more forcibly than to walk along the streets, where the bakeries and the wine and oil shops are still to be found. In the latter are many great jars, which are, as Zephine says, not unlike those in which Morgiana entrapped her Forty Thieves.

55

Turning a corner, we were startled by seeing a roughly drawn sketch upon a wall, such as any street gamin of to-day might draw upon a tempting blank surface. Further along the same street we beheld a still stronger evidence that the life of Pompeii was not altogether different from that of our own time. Something corresponding to a modern poster announced in red letters the name of a favorite candidate for the next municipal election. We lingered long in the vast amphitheatre, in which the Pompeians were wont to take their pleasure, protected in sunny weather by an awning, whose usefulness we could appreciate to-day, as the sun of March is intensely hot in this region. The barracks for the gladiators, near the theatre, are not unlike the casemates for soldiers in a fort, and are quite complete. Zephine, who is sitting near me, poring over Bulwer's novel, has just read me Pansa's lament over what he considered an infamous law, that forbade a man to send his own slaves to the wild beasts in the arena. Having seen the houses of Glaucus and Pansa, one can more readily understand the point of view of these luxurious, pleasure-loving ancients, who were probably not more cruel than many of their contemporaries.

We left Pompeii late this afternoon and came to La Cava, a pretty town in the mountains, where we are stopping on our way to Pæstum. Zephine has just been talking to the *padrone*, who speaks excellent English, about the excursion to-morrow. Our tickets, which we bought of the concierge at the Hotel B., entitle us to a drive or a railway journey. The *padrone* strongly advises the former. He says the trains are so slow and the waits so long that we make almost as good time by driving, and then it is much more interesting. The drive is between forty and fifty miles, but by starting at eight o'clock in the morning, and changing horses at Battipaglia, we shall have

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two hours at Pæstum and get back to this hotel in time for dinner. Another party of American travellers, of the inconvenient number of five, go by coach to-morrow. The *padrone* asks us, in case we decide to drive, whether we will give a seat in our carriage to the odd number. Having concluded to drive, we are hoping that the fifth wheel of the other coaching-party may prove to be Mrs. Coxe, a charming old lady who talks most picturesquely of a drive to Pæstum forty years ago, when the roads were so infested by brigands that it was necessary to travel with a mounted escort.

"Could anything be more delightfully romantic?" exclaims Zelfine, on hearing this.

"Or more horridly uncomfortable?" adds Angela.

57

These exclamations drew from Mrs. Coxe a detailed and spirited recital of her adventures, which Zelfine heard with the great wide-open eyes of a child listening to a fairy-tale. Women of Mrs. Coxe's age delight in a sympathetic listener. The members of her own party have doubtless heard all of her *contes de voyage*. She will certainly elect to go with us, and have the advantage of a new and appreciative audience.

March 9th.

I opened my windows this morning and stepped out on the marble terrace to enjoy a view of the mountains, which had looked so enchanting by moonlight and were no less beautiful by day. In the garden below a blue gown flitting about among the orange-trees attracted my attention. Angela had evidently brought her charms to bear upon the heart of the *padrone*, as I heard him say, "Here are scissors for the signorina to cut all the oranges she wishes. In the signorina's own country the oranges do not grow up to the doorstep as with us. Is it not so?"

"No, indeed," said Angela, deftly snipping off a golden ball. "This is a great pleasure. I never cut an orange from a tree but once in my life, and that was in Granada."

Being possessed of an inquiring turn of mind, the *padrone* asked many questions concerning Granada, and so talking and working industriously Angela soon collected a fine dish of oranges for our breakfast—an unwonted luxury, as in this land of abundance they never give us fruit for our early *déjeuner*. The carriages were at the door before we had finished our breakfast, and in ours, as though in answer to our desires, sat Mrs. Coxe, provided with a guide-book, lorgnette, lunch, and all the equipment of a good traveller for a long day's drive.

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The proprietor announced that he would accompany us as far as Salerno, occupying the seat on the box beside the driver and his little brother. Mrs. Coxe evidently considered this her opportunity for informing herself with regard to the country, its inhabitants, and its productions. She had added not a little to her already large store of information, gained in many lands, when the *padrone*, to our great regret, left us, with many bows, smiles, and wishes for a "bel giro."

We had the very tip-top of the morning for the beginning of our drive, as we set forth at eight o'clock. The air is soft and clear like that of a May day at home. We can scarcely believe that it is March, and that our friends across the water are still in the grasp of winter, as we left all that behind us when we sailed from New York six weeks ago.



Our way lay between green meadows dotted with purple cyclamen and a small yellow flower much like the English primrose, and in some places through groves of orange-trees covered with golden fruit.

Fortunately for those who take this long drive, the roads are excellent. We drove slowly through the old town of Cava, with its narrow, precipitous streets, and through Salerno, which is upon a bluff overlooking the bay, and commands a noble panorama of sea and shore. When, however, we reached the plain, our horses set forth at a brisk pace. There was not much to be seen here except acres of fennel, artichoke, and a bean, now covered with white blossoms, which I believe is used chiefly for feeding the cattle. Even this road through a flat country is not without a touch of picturesqueness, as it is in many places bordered by gnarled sycamores twisted into the most weird and grotesque shapes. Between these trees a peasant woman was walking, bearing upon her head an immense brush-heap, which was probably her winter firewood. Zelfine and Angela had their kodaks with them, of course, and begged the driver to stop and allow them to get a snap-shot, which he did, crying out, "Ecco, ecco, signora!" The woman stopped obediently, and stood like a statue, in a natural pose full of grace and strength. She was evidently pleased to have her picture taken, as these peasants always are, especially if a few soldi are thrown in to seal the contract. If the picture is good you shall have one, as it will give you a characteristic bit of this Southern Italian life. 60

Here women young and old are to be seen working in the fields with the men, driving ox-carts, walking beside them, and bearing burdens that seem far too heavy for any woman's shoulders. Although the land seems fertile, the people are evidently very poor, the villages small, and the houses comfortless.

We should have liked to ask the driver some questions about the products of the soil, the peasants, and their lives, but neither he nor his little brother, who was on the box beside him, adapted themselves gracefully to the restrictions of our vocabulary—there is, we find, a great difference in drivers in this respect. At Battipaglia, a railroad station and the most considerable town on the route, we changed horses and drivers also. This latter substitution we found was to our advantage, as the second *vetturino* proved to be a better linguist than his predecessor, which enabled us to continue our interrupted studies in agriculture and political economy. The new driver was serviceable also in other respects. When we came upon a field of narcissus, he stopped the carriage in order to allow us the pleasure of gathering the fragrant blossoms, besides bringing us handfuls of flowers, the largest bunch of course being laid at Angela's feet. We are quite sure that he considers her the living image of the pictures of the Blessed Virgin, although he is too discreet to say so. 61

Angela was charming to-day, in a blue suit and a white shirt-waist, but the March sun was so hot that by the time we reached Pæstum it had taken all the color out of the crown of her pretty blue hat.

As there is no inn at Pæstum we ate our luncheon by the roadside, stopping under the shade of a tree where a peasant was enjoying his siesta, his oxen being tethered near by. Zelfine is enthusiastic over the beauty of these gentle creatures, with their soft, kindly brown eyes, and says that she is sure that Homer, when he wrote of his ox-eyed maidens, had just such a one in mind as she was feeding from her hand. She made so pretty a picture as she stood beside the great white ox, feeding him daintily with bean-blossoms, that Angela tried to get a snap-shot of her, but that provoking ox—the slowest of all animals—took it into his head to move at the critical moment.

The country seemed more level and marshy as we drew near Pæstum, although on the left there rose the spur of a mountain range, on one of whose heights are the ruins of the hillside fortress of Capaccio Vecchio. This town was founded by the inhabitants of Pæstum when they were driven from their city by the Saracens in the ninth century. 62

To our surprise, we saw herds of buffalo grazing in the fields, much smaller and different in other respects from the American bison. Our driver told us that this small black buffalo is to be found near the coast in many parts of Italy, and is often seen on the Campagna near Rome. From the number of calves in some of the fields we are inclined to think that the young buffaloes are used for food. I noticed several of the well-grown animals drawing carts, sometimes harnessed with the white oxen.

We caught a glimpse of the old wall and gate with the sea beyond, and then in a moment the temples were in full view. Nothing could be more impressive than those magnificent ruins on that lonely plain, sharply outlined against the blue sky. The Temple of Neptune, with its thirty-six fluted Doric columns, its double columns inside, and its noble, almost perfect façade, is a superb example of Greek architecture of the fifth century B.C. The stone of which the temple is built is a kind of travertine, to which the passing years have imparted a creamy, mellow tone. The Temple of Ceres is less complete than that dedicated to Neptune, although it belongs to the same period. The gate of the town opening out toward the sea and the old wall adjoining it are wonderfully preserved. These with the temples of Neptune and Ceres and the so-called Basilica are all that remain of this settlement made by Greeks from Sybaris about 600 B.C. Two days we have passed with the ancients, yesterday in a city where "the earth, with faithful watch, has hoarded all," and to-day in a town not much older than Pompeii, where the conquering Saracens and Normans and 63

the devastating elements have left nothing to tell the tale of the daily life and habits of the Greeks who made their home upon these shores.

We climbed over the ruins of the old temples and sat upon the town wall overlooking the sea, while Angela made a fairly good sketch of the temples. Zelfphine and I bought coins and pottery from children who, being without visible habitation, seemed to have literally sprung from the soil. Finally our *vetturino* warned us that we had better set forth at once if we wished to reach Cava before nightfall.

At Battipaglia we resumed our former horses and driver. Zelfphine whispered something to me about his face being rather red. I quite agreed with her, but as the mention of the fact could not be of any especial advantage, the other carriage being already far in advance and no person at hand to take the reins, there was nothing to do but to set forth on our homeward journey, despite some misgivings upon Zelfphine's part and mine. 64

We had not left Battipaglia before I realized that our gravest fears were fulfilled. Our driver was what you men picturesquely call "gloriously drunk"—we practical women would use a less dignified adverb. He was as happy as a lord, cracking his whip and dashing through the streets of Battipaglia in fine style. We soon passed the other coach, containing Mrs. Coxe's friends. They called after us, but must have seen that we had no time for conversation *en route*; indeed, like Cowper's citizen "of credit and renown," we passed everything on the road. Zelfphine and I were on the front seat, facing Mrs. Coxe and Angela. They, happily, did not grasp the situation at once, but when they did the terror written on that dear old lady's face was something never to be forgotten. Angela, with resolute cheerfulness, chatted away about anything and everything, especially about Mrs. Coxe's experiences in Honolulu, her favorite subject of conversation. I shall never hear of that island kingdom of the Pacific without seeing before me Mrs. Coxe's agonized face. 65

Remembering that there lay before us a long stretch of road overhanging a sharp declivity, Zelfphine and I made a desperate attempt to stop our hilarious *vetturino* in his mad career. Finding that our remonstrances excited him to more strenuous exertions, Zelfphine tried the effect of her few available words and many eloquent gestures upon the small boy, urging him to make his brother drive more carefully, telling him that the old lady of the party was very much alarmed, and advising him to get the whip into his own hands. This, however, proved to be impossible; the boy, well frightened himself by this time, only succeeded in getting hard words and a shaking. Give up his whip! Not he. As well ask a soldier to lay down his arms. The whip was his pride and joy, his *pièce de résistance*, so to speak, with which he awoke the echoes of these slumbering old Italian towns, bringing the inhabitants, men, women, children, cats, dogs, and chickens, to the sidewalk to witness our rapid transit. Even those among our own countrymen who pride themselves most upon their skill in annihilating space could not have made better time than we did as we rattled over that Calabrian highway. Fortunately, the horses were well-trained and steady enough to balance the driver's eccentricities. Perhaps they were accustomed to them by long experience. Be this as it may, we proceeded on our way without any accident, passing the dangerous part of the road before darkness overtook us. 66

We clattered through Salerno at a tearing gallop, and as we neared La Cava the whip-cracking was resumed with renewed vigor, bringing the citizens to their doors and windows. Some of them, indeed, followed the carriage, crying out, "Prima donna! Prima donna!"

"What can they mean?" asked Mrs. Coxe, looking as though she expected to be attacked by a furious mob. Zelfphine reminded her that as we drove by the theatre in the morning we had noticed a poster announcing that a grand opera was to be given in Cava that evening. In our gay morning spirits we had even thought that it might be pleasant to assist at the function. Now the most that we dared to hope was that we might reach the hotel in safety. Troops of children ran after us, repeating the shout of "Prima donna! Prima donna!"

"We are honored by being mistaken for a part of the opera troupe," said Zelfphine, laughing, "and Angela is evidently the leading lady, as they are all looking at her."

Angela, sitting erect on the back seat, her costume as crisp and immaculate as if she were on her way to a horse-show, her jaunty hat at the most stylish angle even if the crown was off color, looked indeed like a leading lady, albeit a trifle pale and in need of the aid of the rouge-pot of the greenroom. 67

When we reached our hotel we were all exhausted by the fatigue of the day and the long strain of the afternoon; but Mrs. Coxe showed herself the thorough-going traveller that she is by stopping not for rest or refreshment until she had laid a detailed account of our experiences before the proprietor.

He came to us later, after a visit to the driver's home, and reported him as covered with confusion and filled with remorse. "*Ecco, ecco*, he is the penitent one now!" exclaimed the *padrone*. "His parents have scolded him soundly, and have threatened to beat him with a stick. He is in tears, the sorrowful one! It is the first time, and it will never happen again!"

"All of which would not mend our bones if they had been broken!" said Mrs. Coxe, stoutly. "It is your duty to give your patrons good, safe drivers."

The *padrone* then called upon the saints to witness to the fact that he had never known an accident to befall any of his patrons, repeating that this was Antonio's first offence, and that he

must have been drinking some bad stuff at the tavern, as good wine would never so set the brain on fire. The proprietor has a frank manner that gives one the impression that he is speaking the truth; we are inclined to believe him, although we have been warned not to allow ourselves to be deceived by appearances in this land of ready eloquence. Our valiant countrywoman having made her protest for the party, and this disagreeable duty having been taken off our shoulders, we went into dinner with high spirits and famous appetites.

68

Zelphine and I are so wide awake after our exciting drive that we are devoting the evening to letter-writing, both of us being sadly in arrears. The other guests of the Hotel S. have betaken themselves to their slumbers, and we enjoy undisturbed possession of the only warm room in the house. A wood fire blazes on the hearth, and as we bask in its genial warmth we shiver at the thought of our rooms upstairs, which, with their stone floors, are of about the temperature of refrigerators.

SORRENTO, March 11th.

We left Cava on Wednesday, and made the tour from there to Amalfi in the brilliant morning sunshine. This is another "Cornice Drive," and far finer, I think, than that along the Riviera. The road winds above, beneath, and beside rugged cliffs of great height, always with the sea in full view. Often from airy summits we looked down upon fishing villages and towns built around bays and inlets, as Cetara and Atrani, while upon projecting headlands are many watch-towers, now used chiefly as dwellings.

69

We needed not to be told that the making of macaroni is one of the chief industries of Amalfi. As we drew near the town many yards of it were to be seen hanging upon lines like a wash or spread upon the grass to dry.

Amalfi is charmingly situated at the entrance to a deep ravine, surrounded by mountains and rocks of the most picturesque forms. We climbed up the sixty steps of the Cathedral of St. Andrew. Mrs. Coxe and some of her party were carried up in chairs by two stout Calabrians, but we preferred to walk, turning every now and then to gaze upon the enchanting view spread before us. At the top of the slope is a spacious garden terrace full of flowers, with roses climbing all over its walls.

We stopped overnight at the old Capuchin monastery, which is now fitted up as a hotel, and yesterday drove here, the greater part of the way beside terraces of lemon-trees covered with ripening fruit—enough lemons to make lemonade for the whole world, one would think. As we drew near Sorrento orange-trees took the place of lemon-trees, groves and groves of them, with their dark, shining leaves and brilliantly colored fruit. Peasants brought oranges to the carriage for sale, clusters of them, with fruit and blossoms growing together, which they were glad to give us for a few soldi.

70

This morning we spent in the shops buying wood-carvings and silk, which is made here, and is consequently astonishingly cheap. We found Mr. Crawford's charming villa, and, to Zelphine's great delight, the house of Tasso's sister on the Strada San Nicola. Tasso's birthplace and the rock upon which the house stood have both been swallowed up by the sea; but the house of his sister Cornelia, to which the great Tasso came in 1592 disguised as a shepherd, is still standing, and there is a statue of Torquato Tasso in the chief square of Sorrento.



AN AMAZONIAN TRIBUTE, CAPRI

I am writing on a fine terrace overlooking the sea, where stone benches and tables are conveniently arranged for our use. The sun is like that of June, and roses such as belong to that month are blooming all over the wall beside me. The concierge has just brought me a handful of

them, charming pink and white ones. We are equipped for a drive to the Deserto, which Mrs. Coxe, who visited the place forty years ago, tells us is most interesting. Within a few years the monastery has been suppressed, and the building is now used as a home for destitute children.

71

We should like to spend a week in Sorrento, which is so beautiful itself and from which so many excursions are to be made; but Capri beckons to us from across the bay and our time is limited, as Zephine has promised to meet some cousins in Naples.

CAPRI, March 13th.

Our reception on the island of the Blue Grotto was sufficiently novel to please the most blasé traveller. As our boat drew near the rocky shore dozens of women, most of them young and handsome, hurried down to the wharf and seized our luggage, which they bore on their heads easily and lightly up the steep path to the hotel. It seemed strange enough to have women carry our dress-suit-cases and bags, but on our way to the hotel we saw a much more unusual sight—three women carrying two trunks and a valise, while a man, evidently the owner of the trunks, was walking quite at his ease beside them. He was, we were told later, a Caprian peasant on his way to America, and this delicate attention was a final act of devotion on the part of his Amazonian countrywomen.

Capri has not been as kind to us as other towns of Southern Italy. The mountains have had their heads buried in clouds all the morning, and when the donkeys arrived which we had ordered for a ride up to the Villa of Tiberius, a fine rain was falling, which prevented us from making the excursion. We sent the donkeys and their women drivers home, much to the disappointment of the latter.

72

"Women seem to do everything here!" said Angela. "Where are the men?"

"Gone to America," replied Mrs. Coxe, quickly. "The women ship them off, bag and baggage, and then have everything their own way."

Fortune favored us later in the day, as the clouds rolled off the mountains before noon, and the *padrone* informed us that the wind was in the right quarter for a visit to the Blue Grotto. We made our expedition satisfactorily, although the sea was high and we literally rode the waves in our small boats. The grotto is quite as blue as any picture of it that I have ever seen, and with an exquisite, luminous transparency that no brush or pencil can portray. When we were in the midst of the silvery blueness, watching with some apprehension a small boy who dives into the water to show off its wonderful color, our boatman suddenly became loquacious, and told us thrilling tales of unfortunate visitors to the grotto who had been walled in by the sea and were obliged to spend days and even weeks in this drear abode, living upon supplies which daring sailors, who contrived to get their boats near to the mouth of the grotto, handed in to them. The smallness of the opening of the grotto gave a semblance of reality to these Münchhausen tales. Mrs. Coxe, who was in the boat with me, became very much alarmed and insisted upon leaving at once, calling to the other members of the party to follow. We were splashed a little by the spray as we emerged from the grotto, and those in the other boats were quite wet; but as we rowed away the mouth of the fairy cave was almost hidden by the waves. It seemed indeed as if there might be a grain of truth in the boatman's tales, which the *padrone* corroborated, adding, "But it does not often happen that travellers are shut up for any time in the Grotta Azzurra; we are very careful." "Not very often indeed! As if once would not be enough!" exclaimed Mrs. Coxe, who had interrogated the *padrone* after her straightforward fashion of getting at the truth of the matter.

73

HOTEL B., NAPLES, March 15th.

We are glad to be in Naples again, and in this homelike hotel. Zephine has met her cousins, and has been making some excursions with them, taking the famous drive to the monastery of Camaldoli and to the Solfatara, a half-extinct volcano which, she says, gives one an even more impressive idea of the Inferno than the Doré illustrations of Dante. Angela corroborated Zephine's report, saying that it was quite the most unpleasant place she had ever seen, especially as they dropped a poor dog into the crater to try the effects of the sulphur upon his constitution. They pulled him out before he was quite dead; but who except these cruel Neapolitans would so persecute a helpless animal?

74

I, with my old habit of clinging to the skirts of the things I already know, declined to take that excursion, for the greater pleasure of spending a morning in the National Museum among the Pompeian treasures and another whole day among the ruins of the buried city. It is really much more interesting to examine the relics from Pompeii after one has been there, as one naturally fits the frescoes, furniture, and ornaments into just such rooms as one has seen. Some of the furniture was strangely modern; I noticed a red and gilt bedstead that looked as if it might have belonged to the First French Empire, rather than to the first century A.D. Among the kitchen furnishings were just such colanders, saucepans, and skillets as we use to-day—is there anything really new under this shining sun? The surgical and dental instruments exhibited in one of the cases caused me a genuine thrill of sympathy for those unhappy Pompeians; to have been smothered with hot ashes might really have been more endurable than to have lived at the mercy of those primitive dentists and surgeons!

75

We leave Naples to-morrow with regret, as we have grown very fond of this beautiful city. I wrote a week since to Ludovico Baldini, and also to the proprietor of a hotel that he recommended to me; but I have heard from neither. Ludovico may be in Florence on some army business, but it is very stupid of the proprietor of the Hotel L. not to answer my letter. We have telegraphed for

rooms in a pension on the Via Sistina, which Mrs. Coxe tells us is delightful, and we are thankful to know that they will accommodate us, as Rome is full to overflowing now, all the world going up thither for Easter. When I told my maid that we were going to Rome to-morrow, she clasped her hands in ecstasy, exclaiming, "Bella Roma! Bella Roma!" These Italians have a natural instinct for beauty and a genuine pride in the wonders of their own country, both of which help them to endure the poverty and hardness of their lives, just as some people of your acquaintance and mine are supported through many trials by the uplifting sense of having been born in the purple.

76

V BELLA ROMA

VIA SISTINA, ROME, March 16th.

We felt as if we had accomplished a day's work before we left Naples, this morning, the getting away from these places is so laborious. After our trunks were strapped and ready for the *facchini* and porters, the feeing of the servants had to be attended to. This was Angela's especial task. She had managed the financial part of our six days' trip so admirably that Zelfphine and I have honored her by electing her bursar for the party. She does not seem fully to appreciate the honor we have conferred upon her, but with her usual amiability she is quite willing to do the work.

When the servants all lined up in the dining-room, they made a formidable array. I did not wonder that Angela looked as if she would rather be somewhere else. She was getting through the ordeal very creditably, however, when the *padrone* appeared upon the scene; very indelicate of him, was it not, to come in just then? This so embarrassed Angela that she was very near giving him the generous tip that she had dedicated to the head waiter. Would he have taken it, think you? Zelfphine says that he certainly would, as no hotel-keeper in Italy can withstand the glint of silver. Be this as it may, we are glad that Angela did not persist in her indiscriminate generosity, as our purses are already seriously depleted by the demands made upon them by chambermaids, *facchini*, head porter, sub-porter, concierge, head waiter and his troop of underlings, each one with an empty hand and an expectant eye. There is, we have learned, a long step between the *facchini* and the porter, and still another social gradation between the porter and the concierge. The latter is quite an important personage, in a fine uniform, who usually speaks excellent English, French, and often several other languages.

77

At the station we had to undergo the weighing of our luggage, a weariness to the flesh at all times, but especially trying to-day, as all the world seemed to be *en route* for Rome. We were detained so long that we barely had time to catch our train. I sometimes wonder if any one ever actually lost one of these slow-moving trains. We travelled second class to-day, "for local color," as Zelfphine says. In point of comfort there seems to us little difference between first and second class; the former have stuffy plush coverings on the seats, instead of leather and reps, and somewhat more select company. Our companions were two well-to-do young matrons, an old peasant woman, and three children. The two younger women were inclined to be sociable as far as our common vocabularies permitted, and plied us with questions, which we answered with more or less accuracy according to our ability—it is sometimes difficult to be entirely truthful in a language one does not understand; but Zelfphine did most of the talking, having developed considerable facility in speaking French with a fine Italian accent. Confusing as this mongrel dialect might be to an educated Italian, it often stands us in good stead with shopkeepers, maids, cabbies, and *facchini*, and to-day seemed tolerably intelligible to our *compagnons de voyage*. Indeed, we became so intimate that one of the women asked Zelfphine for her vinaigrette for the "bambino" to smell, the bambino having proved herself to be a poor traveller.

78

Zelfphine invariably carries a black satin bag, which we have dubbed "Mrs. Lecks," because, like Frank Stockton's queen of emergencies, it always provides what we need at any given moment, whether it happens to be a shoe-button or a guide-book. The bambino was fascinated by the smelling-bottle, and stretched out her hand for it as soon as Zelfphine took it from the depths of Mrs. Lecks and applied it to her own patrician nostrils. As this is a country where bambinos seem to be denied nothing, the mother's hand was also outstretched, and there was nothing for Zelfphine to do but to hand over her dainty vinaigrette to that untidy-looking baby. Now was not that a trial of good nature?

79

Angela was much interested in a half-starved, ill-clad boy of ten or twelve, who was, the old peasant informed us, an *orfano* adopted by her. We wondered how these people came to be travelling second class, as everything about them indicated extreme poverty. The orphan's eyes gleamed when Angela spread out her luncheon, and she made haste to share her rolls and figs with him, while we offered our refreshments to the other occupants of the carriage, having understood that this is Italian etiquette. They, with many compliments, declined the bounty—which may also be in accordance with good breeding in Italy—all except the orphan, who fell upon Angela's stores with the appetite of youth sharpened by a long fast from dainties. Upon this the old woman, not to be outdone, drew forth from a stuff bag a loaf of brown bread wrapped in a red kerchief such as she wore on her head, and proceeded to cut off a goodly slice. Angela

begged her for a small piece, *piccolo* being one of the words that she knows, and I came to the rescue by handing her a bottle of wine and begging her to give the old dame a generous glass of it. This libation proved so acceptable that I really do not think that the woman knew whether or not Angela had eaten that untempting bit of bread. She finally hid it under her napkin, saying, "A bit of local color, Zelfhine, that I will share with you later."

80

We found little to interest us in this journey of more than five hours over a level, sparsely wooded country, whose monotony was broken now and again by an abrupt rise in the ground. These hills that have been thrown up from the general flatness of the land by some internal disturbance are generally crowned by a church and monastery, and many of them by towns of some size. As they rise from the plain, gray buildings upon gray rocks, standing out against the blue of the sky, they perfectly fulfil one's idea of a fortress town of the middle ages.

The guide-books are all written for those who reach Rome from the north, but however the Eternal City may appear from other approaches, we felt that we were fortunate in our first view of her spires and domes across the green and blossoming Campagna. Through a mist or delicate veil of peach and almond blossoms we saw her seated upon her seven hills, glorious, dominant, the mother of us all, drawing us to her by the power of her great past and the charm of her beautiful present. You probably remember that when Mrs. Browning visited Rome as early as 1854, she found it to be disappointingly modern, "a palimpsest Rome—a watering-place written over the antique." Zelfhine and I had heard somewhat the same criticism from so many intelligent and conscientious travellers that we were prepared for disappointment. I can truthfully say that despite the overlying modern characters the ancient writing on the walls reveals itself so plainly that, even with all this weight of authority against us, we are not disappointed. Mrs. Browning's impressions of Rome were clouded, as she herself confesses, by the sad death of Mr. Story's little boy, Penini's playmate, which occurred soon after her arrival, and by her consequent anxiety about her own child. Then, again, vast tracts of ancient Rome have been unearthed since Mrs. Browning looked upon the Forum, which was then level with the street, and overgrown with vines and grass with flowers.

81

Of course, railroad stations cannot fail to be modern, customs officials are unpleasantly up-to-date in their ways, and it seems strangely incongruous to find electric trams whirling around St. Peter's, the Coliseum, and the Forum; but having once accepted these innovations, we were pleased to find antiquity raising its hoary head at every turn. Near the bustling railroad station are the great ruins of the Baths of Diocletian, and driving from thence to the Via Sistina we passed through a most interesting street named after the four fountains that adorn it. The Via Sistina, where we are lodged, joins the Via Gregoriana a few steps from our pension, and at the angle of meeting is a quaint, picturesque house where the Zuccari, a family of artists, once lived. A little further on is the ancient Church of Trinità de' Monti, where one may hear the nuns sing their vesper hymns on Sunday afternoons, and beyond the church the wide pergola of ilex-trees, twisted and bent and clipped in a fashion known only to Italian gardeners. This broad pergola shades the sunny street leading to the Pincio, or "Hill of Gardens," as the ancients called it. Here we found our way soon after our arrival, and sitting upon the stone wall above the Piazza del Popolo we basked in the warm sunshine and read our home letters, with Rome spread before us. St. Peter's, with the long line of the Vatican buildings, a city in themselves, lies to the right, and quite near on the Tiber is the Castle of St. Angelo, Hadrian's tomb, with an angel on the summit sheathing his bloody sword, while on the western horizon, as far as the eye can reach, is the Janiculum Hill. We could faintly trace upon its crest the outline of the equestrian statue of Garibaldi, which dominates all Rome, as indeed it should. We strolled back through the blooming shrubbery and the pergola to the Square of Trinità de' Monti, and down those Spanish Steps of which we have read so much—great, wide steps, so many of them that we have not the courage to count them, and of marble that is neither white nor gray but of a warm yellow tone with a dash of pink in it, reminding us of the soft shades of the gates of the Alhambra. To the left as one goes down the steps is a square yellow house, where John Keats passed the last suffering weeks of his life. This house was selected for Keats by Dr. Clark because it was near his own. A square tablet marks the building as the one from which this rare spirit "outsoared the shadow of our night."

82

83

At the foot of the Spanish Steps are the vendors of flowers. Men and women are always to be found here selling the most exquisite roses, lilies, daffodils, frusias, anemones, giant mignonette of the most fragrant kind, and long sprays of peach and almond blossoms. Fancy, if you can, the steps, above them the Piazza of Santa Trinità de' Monti, with its marble balustrades, and the Piazza di Spagna below, with its sparkling fountain, all bathed in the most brilliant sunshine, and you will believe that we are indeed well placed, living near so much that is beautiful.

84

March 18th.

Although there were a thousand things to be seen in Rome, we turned our backs upon them all and went to Tivoli yesterday, because a pleasant party was going from here and the day was fine. We drove through the newly built Veneto quarter, passing Queen Margherita's palace, with its handsome broad façade, which is directly on the street. The great gardens are behind, surrounded by high walls overtopped by tall camellia-trees full of their red and white blossoms. We passed through the Porta San Lorenzo, beyond which is the station for Tivoli. The road passes near the Church of San Lorenzo, which is said to be a perfect example of the basilica, as it rises in "its gray reverend dignity" against the background of the Campagna and the blue mountains of Tivoli. Inside of this church are the tombs of Pius IX. and several other popes, and frescoes and mosaics, ancient and modern, of great richness.

Our road lay through a desolate-looking country, but for that reason none the less dear to the heart of the antiquarian. For near the river Anio and the Tuzia, both of which we crossed, our guide told us that Hannibal had encamped; a little way beyond was the hallowed grove of the Muses; and to the ruined baths of the Aquæ Albulæ the captive queen of Palmyra came from her villa near by, to bathe in the milk-white water. The steam tram stopped for us most accommodatingly at the sulphur springs, and allowed us time to walk around and see all that is left of this ancient resort. Here the emperors and tribunes of Rome came to wash away their sins, just as our politicians go to Saratoga and the Southern springs for the same purpose. The water, which is always spoken of as milk-white, seemed to us to have a decidedly blue shade, an exquisite light blue. The deposit left by the sulphur or sulphuretted hydrogen has hardened in the beds of the streams and pools into the most curious and grotesque shapes. These deposits we afterwards found used at the Villa d'Este and elsewhere for the decorations of the fountains.

85

At Tivoli hacks were awaiting us, in which we drove to the Villa d'Este. This stately and imposing palace, with its spacious garden, was worthy to be the residence of one of the oldest and most distinguished princely houses of Italy. We entered the palace enclosure through the cloister of the Church of St. Francis, and saw in the long corridors and spacious apartments many beautiful frescoes by Zuccaro and Muziano. Some of these are considerably damaged by the dampness, but many still exhibit rare grace of design and richness of color. Beneath the villa is a broad terrace ending in a noble archway, through which one may look forth upon hillsides glorified by the blossoming almond, peach and Judas trees. From this terrace winding stairways lead to other terraces below, upon each one of which fountains send up jets of feathery spray that display their iridescent colors against the background of huge cypresses. It is all a dream of loveliness, and full of the indescribable atmosphere of old-world charm. We could imagine the poet Tasso, who was attached to the court of one of the Dukes of Ferrara, drawing inspiration from these classic groves, in whose leafy quiet the nightingale must surely sing. Here the beautiful young daughters of the house played in the sunshine of the too brief girlhood granted to old-time princesses.

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We afterwards drove through the old town, and from a lower road had a good view of the temples and churches, and of the heights of Monte Catillo, its picturesque hillsides, and the cascades which seemed to bubble forth from every fissure and crevice in the rocks—so many waterfalls that one could not count them all.

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CYPRESS WALK, HADRIAN'S VILLA

The hotel where we stopped for luncheon is built upon a shelving rock on whose garden terrace we sat overlooking the valley. Above us, on another projection, was the little Temple of Vesta, the Sibyl, or what you will—it seems to make little difference what one calls this exquisite circular temple, as antiquarians do not agree about its name. It is, however, so graceful in form and so rich in coloring that, like the rose, it is equally lovely by whatever name it is called, especially as we saw it to-day, draped with clematis and ivy, crowning

"The green steep whence Anio leaps,
In floods of snow-white foam."

After luncheon we made our excursion to Hadrian's Villa, or Villa Adriana, as they now call it, which is the chief object of interest at Tivoli and is worthy of something more than a superficial inspection. As you doubtless know, it is not a villa, or even a palace, like the Villa d'Este, but a military or university town. Here are quarters for the soldiers, dining-rooms for the officers and their men, temples, libraries, hospitals, baths, theatres, race-courses, gardens, and fountains. Most of the sculptures have been carried away from the beautiful Golden Court and the Hall of Philosophy, but exquisite bits of stone carving are still to be seen in the courts and baths, and mosaic pavements looking as bright and fresh as when trodden by the feet of Hadrian in A.D. 138.

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As we passed through room after room, with their more or less fragmentary decorations, Angela reminded us of the story of the Western girl who, on her way to Tivoli, hoped that when she called at the villa the Hadrians would not be at home, as she had not put on her best hat. Zelfine and I thought that this "innocent abroad" must have been surprised to find that when the Hadrians left their villa they had taken away most of their furniture and ornaments with them. What queer specimens of our own countrymen we do meet *en voyage*! The question that we ask ourselves most frequently is, why did they come?

March 21st.

I have been wondering why I have not heard from Ludovico Baldini. We went to the bank on the Piazza di Spagna this morning, and found my Naples letter lying unopened. To-day I had decided to go to French, Lemon & Co., thinking I had made a mistake about the bank, when as we were walking along the Via Nazionale on our way to the Rospigliosi Palace, I saw a young man on the other side of the way take off his hat and wave it as he dashed across the street. Of course it was Ludovico, just returned from Florence, as bright and cordial as ever, but very indignant over not having had my letter forwarded to him.

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I think you must have met young Mr. Baldini, of whom I speak so unceremoniously as Ludovico, as he was often at our common friends', the W.'s, last year. I met him first at Jamestown, in the summer, and he gave me so many valuable suggestions about Italian travel that I feel greatly indebted to him. He is young, not much over twenty-one, but in some respects seems older, and, being American on one side, he combines considerable practical ability with the Italian charm of manner which we all realize, even if we are not always happy in describing it.

We had intended to go somewhere this afternoon with Mrs. Robins and Bertha Linn, and when Ludovico suggested our driving out to the meet near the Tomb of Cæcilia Metella, we concluded that this was the thing of all others that we wished to do, more especially as this was the last meet of the season. We arrayed ourselves in our best, as all the smart people go to the meets here. Ludovico secured the most presentable hacks that he could find, and we set forth, following a gay procession of carriages along the street of tombs to a sporting scene; but for such incongruities as this, commend me to the sympathetic Italian!

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The meet was worth seeing—fine horses, good riding, life, motion, and color. There were many handsome, well-dressed women in the carriages and walking about; all this gayety brought out in strong relief by the sombre background of the old aqueduct and the great circular tomb of the beloved wife of Crassus.

As the carriages were crowded together, we left ours, and attempted to walk over the field, as many persons were doing. The horses and dogs turned suddenly in our direction, and Mrs. Robins, in trying to get out of their way, slipped, fell, and would have been trampled by one of the horses had not his rider been a most expert horseman. Ludovico was in a rage such as these hot-blooded Latins alone are capable of, and was ready to call out the young horseman, who had done all that man could do to prevent an accident, dismounting at once and most courteously apologizing. "It is entirely our fault for being on foot where horses and dogs had the right of way," I said to the *cavaliere*, who bowed with the gravity of a Don Quixote, evidently quite agreeing with me. Ludovico, somewhat appeased, asked me to allow him to present the gentleman, who was an acquaintance of his, and this ceremony being accomplished satisfactorily they both handed us to our carriages in fine style. As Mrs. Robins fortunately was not hurt, we were all able to enjoy the spirited scene from our coign of vantage. The dogs broke covert over on the Campagna, and then the rush and scamper of the gay cavalcade across the plain was most exciting, horsemen and hounds in full cry.

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As it was still early in the afternoon, we decided to drive to the Janiculum Hill to see the fine equestrian statue of Garibaldi and the magnificent view from what seems here quite a height, because it rises abruptly from the plain, but is really less than three hundred feet. The air was perfectly clear, and we could literally behold all Rome, old and new, spread out before us. Between the hill and the Tiber lies that large quarter known as Trastevere, where are some of the most interesting churches, as Santa Maria and Santa Cecilia. Here beautiful villas once stood, but Trastevere is now almost exclusively inhabited by the working classes. A fine and handsome race, differing in dialect from the citizens of other quarters of Rome, the Trasteverians seem to have some right to the distinction which they claim of being the direct descendants of the ancient Romans.

On our return from the Janiculum we stopped at St. Peter's in Montorio, which is on one of the slopes of the Janiculum. Although the crowning glory of this church, Raphael's Transfiguration, has been taken from the high altar and carried to the Vatican, a few good pictures still remain. What we desired to see the most, though, was the little temple in the court said to mark the spot

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where the cross of St. Peter stood. The chapel contains a statue of the saint, and below, down some steps, is a grewsome place where he is said to have been crucified in a manner so horrible that I really cannot undertake to describe it to you. The impression made upon one by this spot is somewhat the less thrilling because several other places are shown as the scene of the martyrdom of this great apostle. The woman who opened the temple for us scratched up some of the earth and gave it to us with great solemnity. Angela's face was a study as she received her portion. She is not, as you may believe, much of a relic-hunter.

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VI A POET'S CORNER

VIA SISTINA, ROME, March 22d.

Your letter in answer to mine written from San Remo reached me to-day. It really seems a year since I wrote you that letter, instead of one month. So many impressions have come crowding one upon another since then that I cannot quite recall what I said of a personal nature. The meeting with Genevra brought back the old familiar associations so vividly that we sometimes forgot all that had happened since we had parted, and lived over our early, happy days. If you read into my letter more than was meant, it is because some of the glamour of that time caused will-o'-the-wisps to mislead you. No, "gang your ain gait, Allan," as your mother's old Scotch maid used to say. You have a great future before you in your profession, and I—it seems to me sometimes that I have only a past, and a present which I live day by day, with no plans for the years to come. It is so difficult to readjust one's life to new standards, and those who stake much lose heavily. We both loved Headley too well to say one harsh word about him. I could not talk to you thus freely were it not so; indeed, I never could *speak* to you at all about Headley—writing is easier, across the great expanse of waters. Now that I have broken the silence, let me say to you, best of friends, that I have in this sunny land and among these changing scenes found content, which may in time reach the measure of happiness. Do not disturb this peace, I beg of you, but be satisfied with our good old friendship, which is so safe and sane.

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I shall really be afraid to tell you of any of our contretemps, you take them so seriously, and yet you wish to know of all our wanderings and of just how certain things impress us. I had forgotten about that absurd homesickness in Genoa, until you spoke of it. It was an acute attack, I assure you, and, like the proverbial grief of the widower, violent while it lasted, but soon well over and done with. Now we wonder how any one could possibly be homesick in this Italy which we love so much, above all in Rome, which seems each day more and more the mother of us all. Zelfphine and Angela will tell you that Margaret is the gayest of the party. You know that I never would be a kill-joy, and here there is so much to interest one on all sides.

So you are glad that there is one good English name in the party, and are pleased to like the sound of my homespun baptismal? Angela is of the same mind; she says that my sensible "Margaret" strikes a happy balance between Zelfphine's romantic name, which she feels it her duty to live up to, and her own, equally fanciful, which she takes pleasure in defying. By way of adapting herself gracefully to the situation, Angela has fallen into the habit of calling Zelfphine "Z." This is all very well, but I am thankful that she does not insist upon being called "A.," as the constant turning from A. to Z. would be unpleasantly suggestive of algebraic formulæ, which were the bane of my school-days.

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We laugh at Zelfphine and chaff her continually about her flights of fancy; but no person could travel with her without realizing what a pleasure it is to be with a woman whose mind is so stored with the poetry and history of these old cities, one who enters so heart and soul into every interesting association. I said something of this to Angela one morning as we turned from the Via Condotti into the Corso, feeling that she might not appreciate all her privileges.

"Zelfphine is," I said, "steeped in the lore of the past."

"Yes, up to the neck!" replied Angela, with emphasis. "I feel that I am now enjoying that liberal education that I have heard about all my life."

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"The education is not liberal in including your expressions," I said, with an attempt at severity.

"Don't you understand, Margaret? Must I always explain?" said Angela, lifting her innocent blue eyes to mine. "I mean that Z. swims in learning, and one must be in up to one's neck to swim comfortably!"

Angela is quite hopeless, and by way of punishing her I stopped to buy her some of the delicious red roses that make me think of June days at home, especially of the roses in your mother's garden, which were always the reddest. Zelfphine having stepped on in advance of us to attend to a commission at the cleaner's, where they "gar auld claes look amaist as weel's the new," we sauntered on along what one of your favorite writers describes so enthusiastically as "that world-famous avenue, the Corso."

"Do look at her!" exclaimed Angela, as we passed the Via Convertite and saw Zelfine standing at the corner of the Via San Claudio, gazing spellbound at the windows of a house on the other side of the street. "She's quite happy; time and place are nothing to her—she has discovered the Shelley tablet on that house. I saw it several days ago, but I thought I'd let Z. find it for herself. She'll never rest content till she sees the room in which Shelley wrote 'The Cenci' and 'Prometheus Unbound.' It is probably not worth seeing when you get into it, and may not be the room at all; but see it Z. will, or die in the attempt. I don't believe in all these wonderful tales that we hear. You only half believe in them yourself, Margaret, so I dare to talk to you; Z. swallows them whole, and so does Ludovico, and that is what makes them such good friends."

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"And is it your incredulity, my dear, that makes you and Ludovico such bitter enemies?"

Angela laughed her light, musical laugh.

"We do quarrel, you know; we had quite a battle last evening over the Catacombs. Ludovico says that I must see them; that it would be positively disgraceful for me to leave Rome without seeing the Catacombs of Calixtus, at least. You know that I don't care for such dismal places. Rome is so gay and bright on top, why should we burrow underneath after tombs and Christian martyrs, while the sun is shining upon the Pincio and there are no end of things to be seen above ground? There she goes, after the concierge!"

There was nothing for us to do but to follow Zelfine into the somewhat shabby house and upstairs into the poet's room. It was worth much to stand in the room where Shelley had once written, and to look from the windows from which he could see the varied, moving panorama of the busy Corso and the ancient Church of San Silvestro in Capite, in whose adjoining convent the beautiful Vittoria Colonna took refuge in her widowhood, and wrote her sonnets in memory of a beloved husband.

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A curious commentary upon the power of the world over the Church is to be found in the fact that Pope Clement VII. forbade the abbess and nuns, "under pain of the greater excommunication," to permit this noble lady the usual solace of afflicted womanhood, the cloister and the veil. This picturesque old convent with its lovely cloisters is now used as a post office.

From Shelley's house we retraced our steps along the Corso and turned into the Piazza San Lorenzo, where is the little Church of San Lorenzo in Lucina, in which Browning's Pompilia was baptized and married, her "own particular place," where she wondered, as we did,

"what the marble lion meant,
With half his body rushing from the wall,
Eating the figure of a prostrate man."

Standing before the wonderful altar-piece of Guido Reni's Crucifixion, painted against a wild and stormy sky, we realized how the suffering face of the compassionate Christ must have risen again and again before the despairing eyes of the persecuted child-wife:

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"the piece
Of Master Guido Reni, Christ on Cross,
Second to nought observable in Rome."

Other and more impressive associations with Shelley's life in Rome than the little room on the Corso we found this afternoon when we drove out to the Baths of Caracalla, which even now cover so large a space that they have been well named a city of pleasure. We climbed over the mountainous ruin and up the winding stairs, trying to find just such a perch as Shelley described in the preface to his "Prometheus Unbound."

Bald and naked are these walls to-day, but not unsightly, as they stand out against the blue of the Roman sky and the fresh green of the Campagna. They are denuded of the vines and flowers that adorned them when, as Shelley says, he wrote his poem "among the flowery glades and thickets of odoriferous blossoming trees which are extended, in ever-winding labyrinths, upon its immense platforms and dizzy arches suspended in the air."

Now as then Rome lies on one side, with her many domes and towers; on the other are the mountains, blue in the distance, and white beyond the blue, where the snow lingers late upon their peaks. Like another mountain stands out the dome of St. Peter's, which Ampère says is "the only one of the works of man that possesses something of the grandeur of the works of God."

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Being in the mood for poetic associations, we drove around by the Porta San Paolo, just outside of which, enclosed by high walls and overshadowed by the great pyramidal Tomb of Caius Cestius, is the old Protestant Cemetery. An ideal Campo Santo is this lovely spot, of which Shelley wrote that "it might make one in love with death to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place." We wandered over the grass and looked up at the sky through the trees, while Zelfine quoted the lines that fit the scene so well:

"Pass, till the spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access,
Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead
A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread."

And so passing from grave to grave we came to the one we sought, and standing before a simple stone slab, read those sad words which poor Keats, in bitterness of spirit, wished to have written above his grave: "Here lies one whose name was writ in water." It was comforting to turn from this to a marble tablet on the wall near by, where there is a head of Keats in low relief, and under it a beautiful inscription saying that he is among the immortals. The young poet's devoted friend Joseph Severn lies near him. 101

Across the road is the newer cemetery, whose gate was opened for us by a girl with a huge key fastened to her girdle, whom Zelfine and I likened to "the damsel named Discretion." Angela, being a modern girl and unfamiliar with "Pilgrim's Progress," did not understand the allusion, and said:

"Small thanks to her if she is discreet, when she is not able to say a word to us, good or bad!"

Zelfine always looks at me hopelessly on such occasions, lamenting over what she calls the lack of background in the outlook of the girl of to-day, whom I always defend loyally although I believe Zelfine is more than half right.

We found the grave of Shelley, who so soon followed his Adonais. It seemed as if that lonely "Cor Cordium" should have been buried near the friendly shades of Keats and Severn. Yet Mrs. Shelley, in writing of the burial of the ashes of her husband, makes no mention of their being placed within the newer cemetery. She simply says he selected the hallowed place himself, where is the

"sepulchre,
O, not of him, but of our joy!"

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VII ANTIQUITIES AND ORANGE-BLOSSOMS

VIA SISTINA, ROME, March 23d.

It is so delightful to have some one with us who knows and loves Rome as Ludovico does. He shows us about *con amore* and with the greatest enthusiasm, not in the perfunctory guide-book fashion. He and Angela are already good friends, and chatter away like two magpies about everything upon the earth and beneath it as well, which is quite natural, as many of our proposed excursions are subterranean, and we never know what wonder of the world may be sprung upon us at the next corner.

Ludovico was much pleased to learn that we had not yet found our way to the Capitol, as he wished to personally conduct us thither, advising us to drive to the Piazza del Campidoglio in order to save the climb up the long flight of steps leading to it from the street. We thus missed the first view from below of the noble statue of Marcus Aurelius, which was once gilded over, like some of our modern statues, and stood near the Lateran. Those old sculptors knew how a ruler should look! You must see this statue of your grand old heathen emperor some day; there is majesty and dominance in every line. 103

In the museum we passed beautiful bas-reliefs representing classic scenes, the colossal statue of the Emperor Hadrian in armor, and sarcophagi strangely decorated with bacchanalian representations, until we suddenly found ourselves in the Room of the Dying Gladiator, with that wonderful marble figure before us of which Byron wrote:

"He recked not of the life he lost, nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
Butchered to make a Roman holiday."

We lingered long beside this impressive marble, and then turned to the Resting Satyr of Praxiteles, made familiar to us all by Hawthorne's description. You remember that Donatello so strongly resembled the statue that Miriam begged him to shake aside his thick curls and allow her to see whether he had the Faun's leaf-shaped pointed ears. This he declined to do, saying, as he danced around the statue of the Dying Gladiator, "I shall be like a wolf of the Apennines if you touch my ears ever so softly. None of my race could endure it." 104

If, as Hawthorne says, "only a sculptor of the finest imagination, the most delicate taste, the sweetest feeling, and the rarest artistic skill—in a word, a sculptor and a poet too—could have first dreamed of a faun in this guise, and then have succeeded in imprisoning the sportive and frisky thing in marble," surely none but a novelist and a poet too could have presented on the page of romance this creature of the woods and hills, half man, half animal, the sensitive, emotional, whimsical, and altogether fascinating Donatello.

The statues of the Faun, the Dying Gladiator, and the beautiful youth Antinous are all among the treasures of which Hadrian's Villa was despoiled, as was also the exquisite mosaic of doves on a fountain basin, called Pliny's Doves, because, in speaking of the perfection to which the mosaic art had attained, Pliny described a wonderful mosaic in which one dove is drinking and casting her shadow in the water while others are pluming themselves on the edge of the vase. While in the room of the Doves we paid our respects to the Capitoline Venus, which, although considered a perfect type of feminine grace, failed to appeal to us as did the Venus della Coscia in the Naples Museum, and is, of course, not to be mentioned in the same breath with the lovely armless lady of the Louvre.

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After spending two hours in the museum, Zelfhine said that she had seen enough for one day, and that her mind refused to grasp anything more. We usually find that this is quite time enough to spend in any picture-gallery or museum, and I am inclined to think that people who stay longer wear themselves out to no purpose.

Angela suggested that as we were so near the Church of Ara Coeli, it would be well to go to see the wonderful Bambino. Ludovico prepared us for some disappointment by telling us that the most interesting time to visit this church is during the Epiphany, when the Bambino lies in a manger and little children come here and recite poems in its honor. But as a Christmas visit was only a remote possibility, we concluded to climb up to this church, hung like an eagle's nest upon the precipitous rock, and well named the "Altar of Heaven." Zelfhine quite forgot her fatigue when she read in her guide-book that it was in this church that Edward Gibbon first conceived the idea of writing his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," while Ludovico, by way of giving us something cheerful to think of, told us that at the foot of the steps Tiberius Gracchus and Cola di Rienzi were both slain by their nobles. There is a statue of Rienzi in the piazza below, and above is that wonderful group of the horse-taming Dioscuri, your copies of which have always interested me so much. A curious and most unromantic association with these steps is that here the monks of the Ara Coeli, who were famous dentists, used to perform their hideous but useful operations, out in the open, before the eyes of the passer-by. It appears that the Romans of this time were denied the alleviating circumstance of enduring their miseries in private. Zelfhine, who has a pleasant habit of counting her blessings, finds just here another reason for offering up thanks that she lives in this year of grace 1904 rather than in that ancient and less comfortable period.

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As the steps are many and the sun was hot we were warm and out of breath when we reached the top, and were glad of the coolness and peace that we found inside. I gave Angela an admonitory look before the Bambino was displayed, fearing that she might do or say something to hurt Ludovico's feelings. As it happened, however, he seemed to care even less about it than we did, although he told us, with his usual simplicity and directness, that "il Santissimo Bambino," as he calls it, is carefully guarded, not on account of its rich clothing and jewels, but because a woman once formed the design of appropriating to herself the baby image and its benefits. "She had another bambino prepared, of the same size and general appearance as this," said Ludovico, looking at the fresh-colored, richly dressed doll. "She pretended to be ill, and so got possession of the Santissimo. She dressed the false image in the garments of the true Bambino, and sent it back to Ara Coeli. That night the most remarkable thing happened: the monks were awakened by a wild ringing of bells at the west door of the church, and what should they find there but the little, shivering, naked figure of the Santissimo Bambino, in the wind and rain! Of course, the false bambino was sent back to its owner, and now the Santissimo is never taken away from the church unattended. This is easy enough, as the Bambino has its own carriage, coachman, and footman, and makes its visits to the sick in great state."

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I glanced at Angela. Amusement and incredulity were all too plainly visible on that fair young face, so I hastened to suggest that we look at some of the beautiful tombs. There are several by Donatello and the Cosmati so exquisitely sculptured that they alone repay a visit to the church. From the terrace outside we looked down on the Forum below us, where to-day a great mass of blue iris flowers were waving and dancing in the breeze under the very shadow of the three columns of the Temple of Castor and Pollux.

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Ludovico suggested our going to the Tarpeian Rock, which is part of this precipitous hill, if we were not too tired. No, we were not too tired; the many steps of the Ara Coeli seemed to have brought positive refreshment to Zelfhine, who announced herself ready for a new start, and so, through delightful winding ways known only to the initiated, Ludovico led us to the garden from which we looked down upon the Tarpeian Rock.

Do you remember the picture in our school histories of Marcus Curtius plunging into the abyss? I could see him, in my mind's eye, boldly riding his white horse over the cliff into the depths of the chasm below, until Zelfhine reminded me that it was not from this rock that Curtius made his fatal plunge, but over on the Forum, where the chasm closed at once upon horse and rider. I cannot even find mention of our old friend Marcus Curtius; he is now known as Mettius Curtius. Now the edge of the precipice is so guarded by an iron railing that it would be quite impossible in these days for any one to leap from the rock, or for Donatello to push the monk over into the street below, as in Hawthorne's tale. Mr. Julian Hawthorne says that it was to a moonlight visit to the Tarpeian Rock in the good company of Miss Bremer that we owe this scene in "The Marble Faun," the "most visibly tragic of my father's writings." A pleasant-faced young woman who unlocked the gate of the garden for us was evidently bewitched by Angela's charms, as she did not take her eyes off her face from the moment that she saw her. When we turned to leave the enclosure she broke from one of the trees an exquisite branch of orange-blossoms, and gave it to

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Angela with a charming grace, at the same time glancing over at Ludovico in a manner that brought the color to his face. He laughed, evidently pleased, and said a few words to her in Italian, after which she bestowed a smaller cluster of the fragrant flowers upon him. Angela, all unconscious, walked on, revelling in the rich perfume of these loveliest of blossoms.

I went to sleep last night wondering what the sweet-faced custodian of the grim rock had said to Ludovico, and what his reply had been, and so fell to dreaming of a wedding; but Zelfphine was the bride, not Angela, despite her orange-blossoms, and the groom was a certain widower who pays intermittent attention to Zelfphine—intermittent because she will not allow him to be a "regular steady," as one of our maids used to say in speaking of her own suitor.

You have surely heard of Walter Leonard's devotion to Zelfphine, which is so much of an open secret among her friends that when subjects for conversation fail, they fall back with ever fresh interest upon speculations as to whether or not she will eventually accept him and his family of small children. Angela and I have an idea that she left home in order to avoid a crisis in her affairs, and when she looks sad or tired, Angela says that remorse is preying upon her because of the motherless condition of those hapless children. I did not tell Zelfphine about my dream, because it is bad luck to dream about a marriage. You scorn all such fancies, I know, but she is really superstitious, and I might injure Mr. Leonard's chances if I should talk just now. Angela and I have our own fun out of the situation. She predicts that he will appear in Venice, which surely would be an appropriate place for a lover to make his entrance, and romantic enough to please Zelfphine. This is only idle talk, however, as she has never spoken of the possibility of Walter Leonard's coming over; and pray do forget my gossip. It is too late, and I am quite too tired to rewrite this part of my letter. I know you of old, and so am sure that you will tell no tales.

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Sunday, March 27th.

This is a gloriously beautiful day. The Spanish Steps are brilliant in the sunshine, with more flowers than usual on the stalls at the base. As Sunday is a fête-day, the vendors do a thriving business. And how cheap the flowers are! One may have all the roses one can carry, for a franc or two! Yet, with the idea that there is no fixed price in Italy, travellers are always to be seen at the stalls outdoing the Romans themselves in their efforts to cheapen the flowers, while the merchant volubly protests that his house will be desolated and his children in rags if he sells his roses for a soldo less than the asking price. A few artists' models are still to be found sunning themselves on the marble steps or around the fountain of the Piazza di Spagna, but in less brilliant array than one would desire, peasant dress being as little worn in Rome as in Paris.

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To go to St. Peter's seemed the thing of all others to do to-day, and we found an accommodating tram waiting for us in the Piazza di Spagna.

They tell us that no one ever realizes the vastness of St. Peter's upon a first visit. However this may be, it seemed immense to us, outside and in. One notices first Bernini's great colonnades on each side of the basilica, which, with its façade, form a hemicycle with the Egyptian obelisk in the centre. Behind the church is the monotonous mass of the Vatican buildings, while in the foreground the twin fountains send up their spires of feathery spray. Small wonder that the practical and thrifty German Emperor advised them to turn off the water. "Turn them off now," he said, after admiring the beauty of the fountains. "It's a pity to waste so much water!" But these fountains of Maderno's have played untiringly, in sunlight and shade, by moonlight and starlight, for nearly three hundred years. Everywhere in Rome one hears the sound of flowing water from the many fountains. In the Borghese Gardens up on the Pincio, in the Piazza di Spagna, down in the Piazza Poli where the great Fountain of Trevi dashes continually, throwing its *jets d'eau* into the great basin beneath, over in the Piazza delle Terme, near the railroad station—on all sides one hears the refreshing sound of splashing, leaping water.

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We wandered about the great basilica as if in a strange city, avoiding, of course, the several chapels in which services were being held, and stopping long before the Chapel of the Pietà, in which Michael Angelo's beautiful marble of the Sorrowing Mother with the dead Christ upon her knees is enshrined. From the gorgeous mosaics in Michael Angelo's dome and from the rich and elaborate tombs of many popes we turned almost with relief to the strong and simple Rezzonico monument, upon which Canova has placed two great lions at the feet of Pope Clement XIII., while in sharp contrast is a graceful, youthful figure, the Genius of Death, holding a torch reversed. Zelfphine and I think this the most beautiful example of Canova's work that we have seen anywhere. Another of the monuments that interested us is that erected by George IV. to the memory of the unfortunate princes of the house of Stuart, James III., Charles Edward, and Henry, Cardinal of York.

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Zelfphine, who adores the Stuarts, almost wept over this tomb, although she could not help smiling a bit at the high-sounding titles engraved upon the monument to Maria Clementina Sobieski, the wife of the second Pretender, whose name is here inscribed as "Queen of Great Britain, France, and Ireland."

We both enjoyed Stendhal's trenchant comment upon the post-mortem honors paid by the Hanoverian king to the Stuart princes: "George IV., fidèle à sa réputation du *gentleman* le plus accompli des trois royaumes, a voulu honorer la cendre des princes malheureuses que de leur vivant il eût envoyés à l'échafaud s'ils fussent tombés en son pouvoir."

The temporary tomb of the late Pope is in this part of St. Peter's, near the monument of Innocent III. The permanent resting-place of Leo XIII. is to be in St. John Lateran; for this tomb Tadolini is

We drove from St. Peter's, by the Tiber, passing the Castle of St. Angelo, where Ludovico took us yesterday to show us the pitiful little cell in which poor Beatrice Cenci was imprisoned. We had already seen her lovely, sad picture at the Barberini Palace. The exquisite, haunting beauty of the Cenci portrait is quite indescribable. As Charles Dickens says, "Through the transcendent sweetness and beauty of her face there is something shining out that haunts me. I see it now as I see this paper or my pen."

This afternoon we drove for an hour or more in the Borghese Gardens, after which we went to the evening service at the American Church in the Via Nazionale, which naturally looked somewhat cold and plain after the gorgeous color and decoration of St. Peter's. It was, however, restful and homelike to sit there and listen to the beautiful service of our own church.

Zelphine says that Catholic visitors in Rome are especially fortunate, as for them the path of duty and the path of pleasure lie side by side, leading them always into the most beautiful churches and giving them the satisfying combination of art and religion. I entirely agree with her, having often felt that in a service in Westminster Abbey an element of adventure was added to the act of devotion. I think it was you who told me of a Scotchwoman who considered a service in the abbey "among the images" too much of a diversion for a Sabbath day. I should think that good Catholic travellers might have somewhat the same feeling about a great ceremonial at St. Peter's.

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In the Borghese Gardens, the shadows under the ilex-trees were most lovely this afternoon, the sunshine filtering through the branches here and there, flecking the green sward with spots of light, and bringing out the color of the anemones which grow here in such profusion. We could readily fancy Miriam and Donatello dancing in this sylvan shade, although no vagrant musicians were waking the echoes among the leafy coverts, no herdsman in goatskin breeches, no peasants from the Campagna, or pretty *contadine* appeared, to add a touch of local color to the natural beauties of the scene.

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VIII VIA APPIA

Monday, March 28th.

Ludovico proposed that we should take the long-talked-of drive along the Via Appia this beautiful afternoon. Knowing Angela's objection to subterranean excursions, he discreetly said nothing about the Catacombs, although I realized well that they were uppermost in his mind, and felt that I might safely trust a bit of diplomacy to this clever little Italian.

As we are living in the north-eastern part of Rome and the Via Appia is in the southern part, leading toward the Pontine Marshes and ancient Brundisium, we had a long drive across the city. We drove through the Corso as far as the Piazza Colonna, with its towering column erected by the Senate and the people in honor of your hero Marcus Aurelius, and then by smaller streets and squares to the Porta Capena. Of this gate, which is associated with so many interesting events, only fragmentary ruins remain. Near it were once grouped temples of Mars and Hercules and the tomb of the young sister of the Horatii, who was betrothed to one of the Curiatii. Ludovico repeated the sad little story, which we had all read in our school-days, of the girl coming out to meet her brother Horatius at the Porta Capena. When she saw the cloak wrought by her own hands borne by Horatius, she wept, as any other girl would have done, knowing that her lover was dead; upon which the cruel Horatius stabbed her to the heart, crying, "So perish the Roman maiden who shall weep her country's enemy!"

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To see the place where this sad scene was enacted and the site of the grave of the hapless maiden made it seem as real as if it had occurred last year instead of—how many hundred years ago? We are realizing, as never before, what an old world this is. Even now, out in the Forum, they are opening the graves of men and women who lived before Romulus, as if the Rome of Numa and the Cæsars was not old enough for all antiquarian uses!

The old Romans, like the ancient Egyptians, seem to have had no shrinking from keeping death well in view, as this Via Appia, which was the patrician cemetery of Rome, was also a military highway and a pleasure-drive, and from it still branches a road leading to the race-course. Indeed, there is nothing dismal about this "way of tombs," for the road is wide, paved with large blocks of stone, and flanked by vineyards. On the right are the Baths of Caracalla, on the left are the tombs of the Scipios, while the long bridge-like ruins of the old aqueduct rise here and there above the level of the Campagna, and beyond, framing all, are the mountains. Flowers are blooming along the sides of the road, among the tombs and over them. Angela and Ludovico gathered a large bunch of cyclamen and the purple lady's-slipper orchids. Wherever there is an unsightly stone or a bit of broken wall, Nature has generously covered it with a drapery of green vines or white banksia roses.

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Here, out in the sunshine and among the flowers, are the tombs of the grand old heathen, while the good Christians sleep in the dismal subterranean Catacombs. Is not this another example of the way in which the ancient pagan city dominates the Rome of later times?

A little way beyond the fine tombs of the Scipios we passed through the Arch of Drusus, with its equestrian statue and trophies, on whose summit is still a bit of the aqueduct by which Caracalla carried water to his baths. A little beyond the Porta San Sebastiano we came to the small Church of Domine Quo Vadis. You may remember the story which led to its foundation. During a great persecution of the Christians, under Nero, some of St. Peter's converts and devoted friends besought him not to expose his life by remaining in Rome. Peter finally listened to their counsels and fled along the Appian Way; but about two miles from the gate he was met by a vision of the Saviour, journeying towards the city. Filled with amazement, Peter exclaimed, "Domine, quo vadis?" "Lord, whither goest Thou?" To this question his Master replied, sadly, "I go to Rome to be crucified a second time," and vanished. Peter, accepting this as a sign that he was to submit to the sufferings that menaced him, turned back to Rome and met his fate. Hence the little yellow church of Domine Quo Vadis, which was built to mark the sacred spot.

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We left the carriage and entered the church, as Zelfine wished to see the sacred footprints upon the stone pavement; but Ludovico told her that those impressions were only copies, the originals being at the Church of St. Sebastian. We walked on and on along the Via Appia, glad to tread the same stones that had been pressed by the feet of St. Peter, St. Paul, and so many great ones of the earth.

We were so much absorbed in the associations of the road, and had such unbounded confidence in our young guide, that we did not even ask where we were going, although I suspected that Ludovico was about to enact his *coup d'état* for Angela's benefit. Through a gateway shaded by cypresses we followed him into a rose-garden, with a chapel to the left and a booth opposite, where were displayed a number of odd and discordant relics. Here Ludovico stopped to buy some tickets, and then we descended many steps into darkness made somewhat visible by the light of curious little spiral tapers, *cerini*, which we carried.

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Light seemed to dawn upon Angela's mind when the taper was handed to her at the entrance; she turned and shook her finger at Ludovico, exclaiming, "The Catacombs!" I felt at first that it was not quite fair to have beguiled the child here, against her will, to this dismal home of the dead, which cannot fail to impress a sensitive nature. Afterwards, however, Angela was so much interested in the little chapels in which the early Christians worshipped, with the paintings on the walls and the symbols of the fish, the dove, and the anchor over many of the tombs, that she quite forgot her terror.

The guide explained that these Catacombs of St. Calixtus include several columbaria, there being forty separate catacombs extending under the city, covering, according to Michele de Rossi's calculations, an area of 615 acres. The city of the dead is far greater than the city of the living; but this is not to be wondered at, considering the population of Rome under the Cæsars and the large number of converts to Christianity.

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We were surprised to find the air mild, not chill and damp as one would expect in underground passages. Although there are wires for electric lights in some of the corridors, the Catacombs are not lighted by electricity. It was introduced five years ago, but was found to be impracticable, as the wires were soon injured by rust; hence we were spared this incongruity. Despite the many tales we had read of travellers being lost in the Catacombs, we never once thought of the danger, although our guide told us more than once that it would be well for us to keep close together.

He took us into a chapel containing the tombs of some of the early martyred popes, as St. Fabian, St. Lucius, and St. Sextus. In some of these chapels, or cubicula, are beautiful inscriptions to Pope Damasus, whose labor of love it was to restore and preserve these tombs of the Christians. At the end of a long inscription over the door of one of the largest of these sepulchral chambers, which records that here lie heaped together a number of the holy ones, the good Pope has humbly added:

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"Here I, Damasus, wished to have laid my limbs,
But feared to disturb the holy ashes of the saints."

We then entered a chamber with an air-shaft above, like most of the cubicula, where, on the walls, were a number of Byzantine paintings of St. Urban, St. Cecilia, and a head of Christ. The guide told us that this chamber contained the remains of St. Cecilia until they were removed to the Church of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere. Without a word of warning, Ludovico drew us across the room to a niche in the wall, where we saw, lying upon her side, the loveliest of girlish figures. The first impression, in the semi-obscurity, with all the light falling on the recumbent figure, was that of a veiled woman asleep.

"Santa Cecilia!" said Ludovico, in a hushed voice. Zelfine bent forward as if ready to fall on her knees, when the official guide broke the reverent silence by reciting in a sing-song tone, but in quite comprehensible English:

"This rich Roman lady was sentenced to death by the prefect of Rome because she would not sacrifice to idols. After trying to smother the lady in her own bath, but not succeeding, because the saints were watching over her, a lictor was sent to cut off her head; but the saints took the strength out of his arm and he only wounded her, after which she lived three days preaching to

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the people. Step nearer and you will see the wound on the lady's neck. It is partially covered by a gold necklace."

In the sixteenth century the tomb of St. Cecilia was opened, and her embalmed body was found, beautiful and perfect, as if asleep in her own bed rather than lying in a tomb. Pope Clement III. and all Rome went to the Catacombs to look upon the saint, and Stefano Maderno, the greatest sculptor of his time, was called upon to model the marble statue of the lovely sleeping saint. Maderno's original statue of St. Cecilia we had seen in the Church of St. Cecilia in Trastevere, and also the artist's inscription, in which he says that he has modelled her in the very same posture of body as that in which she was found lying incorrupt in her tomb. Beautiful as is the marble in the church, it failed to impress us as did this replica in the appropriate setting of the cubiculum.

Tears were in our eyes as we turned away, and I heard Angela say to Ludovico, in her softest tone, "It is the most real thing I have seen in Rome!"

"Ludovico has good reason to be pleased with the success of his strategy," whispered Zephine, and then, wishing to carry away undisturbed this exquisite memory of St. Cecilia, we made our way out toward the open, where we found our carriage awaiting us.

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We were all very subdued, for pleasure-seekers, and were silent as we drove on past the vast tomb of Cæcilia, the daughter of Metellus and the beloved wife of the younger Crassus. Above the inscription are Gallic trophies which belonged to the elder Crassus, who was Cæsar's legate in Gaul. The tomb itself, a great round tower seventy feet in diameter, seems more like a fortress than a tomb, and we were not surprised to learn that the monument of this noble Roman lady had been used as a fortress in the thirteenth century.

Beyond this tomb, whose mystery and charm have inspired many a poet, the natural beauties of the Appian Way begin, as the vineyard walls no longer interrupt the more extended view over the Latin plain, with its ruined castles, villages, and aqueducts. When we had driven past the fifth mile-stone, near which are the tombs of the Horatii and the vast ruins of the Villa of Commodus, we were warned by a delicate, violet mist which was rising over the Campagna that it was time to turn towards Rome. Good Romans tell us that their city is perfectly healthful now, since the marshes have been drained, and so it seems to be; but it is always a question whether it is wise to linger near the Campagna about sunset, as we usually notice a chill dampness in the air at this time.

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Thursday, March 31st.

Mrs. M., my old friend Rosalie L., has come from Sorrento to spend Holy Week and Easter with us. Dr. M. has a professional engagement which will detain him for a week or ten days, and in the interim we four are visiting churches most assiduously. There are interesting Tenebræ services in nearly all the churches this week. This rainy afternoon we went to Santa Maria Maggiore, which is one of the most beautiful and harmonious buildings we have seen. The mosaics are very rich, and the Borghese Chapel is gorgeous with precious marbles and alabaster. Here above an altar of jasper and lapis lazuli is the famous picture of the Virgin said to have been painted by St. Luke. It is much revered, not only on account of its origin, but because of its having, according to tradition, stopped the plague in Rome and brought about the overthrow of the Moorish dominion in Spain.

At St. Peter's, where we went later in the afternoon to hear the fine music, a lock of the Virgin's hair was exhibited, a piece of the true cross, and St. Veronica's handkerchief. I trust you will never cross-examine me upon the color of the Virgin's hair, and to forestall any such inquiries, I here frankly confess that I did not really see it, as the sacred relics were displayed from a high balcony over the great statue of St. Veronica. The handkerchief we did see, and the face of the Saviour on it, which was distinct. The basilica, near the high altar, was crowded; poor people and soldiers were kneeling beside richly dressed Roman ladies; many of the *forestieri*, like ourselves, were standing about, gazing at the strange sights, and some of them, I regret to say, were talking.

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Rosalie, Zephine, and I were interested, as indeed we always are, in watching the poor people, who are so attentive and devout, so much in earnest, coming to their churches as to a home. Groups of little children came in holding each other's hands, some of them bringing with them little toddling things of two and three. The face of one little girl I shall never forget, she was so exquisitely beautiful, with the loveliness of childhood and yet with a womanly seriousness in her dark eyes. Rosalie and I imagined Dante's Beatrice looking something like this little girl, and could understand his cherishing in his heart the image of that woman-child all his days.

Easter Sunday, April 3d.

We are glad to have a bright Easter Day, and enjoy it the more because Holy Week has been dark and rainy. We went to the English Church on the Via del Babuino in the morning, and in the afternoon to St. Peter's, to witness a procession of the priests which was somewhat disappointing. We then turned into the Pincio, which was a blaze of color with Judas-trees, wistaria, roses, and anemones. All Rome was in evidence. This is one of the few days in the year when the King and Queen drive out together in state. Angela and I were too late to see them, but Zephine was more fortunate, as she passed them when she was driving with her cousins. She thought the Queen exceedingly pretty, youthful, and charming.

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The well-to-do people were *en voiture* drawn up in line, the poor on foot crowding the walks and benches near the music-stand, where the band was playing merrily; a good-natured, cheerful crowd, and gayer, it seemed to me, than the same class of people in Paris. Nothing on the Pincio is more picturesque than the nurses in their full skirts of gay colors, with their luxuriant black hair decorated with bright ribbons and gold combs and pins. They look very stylish carrying the aristocratic bambini on pillows. We are told that these unfortunate babies are still swaddled like those in Della Robbia's terra-cottas.

In the meadows adjoining the Borghese Gardens the students of the different colleges were playing ball. Do you wonder that Italian immigrants find our Sundays insupportably dull? Here it is a fête-day all the year, and to-day being the feast of feasts, the people have come out to enjoy themselves in the sunshine. What would your father think of it all, Allan, and your Scotch grandmother? I could feel the shadow of her displeasure darkening the sunshine as I stood in the midst of this joyous crowd, and yet, after all, it seems an innocent way of spending a beautiful Sunday afternoon.

IX TU ES PETRUS

VIA SISTINA, April 7th.

A grand and elaborate Gregorian ceremonial is to be held in St. Peter's on Monday, the eleventh, and, as you may imagine, *tout le monde*, the small world as well as the great, is rushing after tickets. We were able to secure the white entrance cards from our banker on the Piazza di Spagna, with which we were quite satisfied until Miss Dean, the charming Irish lady who sits next to me at the table d'hôte, showed me a yellow *biglietto*, which assures her a seat in the tribunes. Since then we have been filled with envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. We did not at all understand the difference between the white *ingresso* cards and the yellow until she explained it, with a delicious rolling of the *r* in *ingresso* such as even Angela, with all her aptitude for mimicking, is unable to attain. The white tickets simply give one an entrée to the church, the yellow, which come only to the favored few, are for seats in the tribunes. Recalling Madame Waddington's description of her own sufferings and those of the other diplomatic ladies at the coronation of the Czar Alexander III., we earnestly hope that we may be so fortunate as to have seats in one of the tribunes.

Ludovico, who has been rushing hither and thither for several days, trying to secure tickets for us through his godfather, who is one of the Pope's chamberlains, came in this evening, his face flushed with the joy of victory. I knew that he had secured the coveted *biglietti*, as soon as I saw him. There was, however, a shade of embarrassment in his manner which I could not quite understand. The reason became evident when Ludovico pulled two tickets, instead of three, out of his pocket, explaining with much hesitation that it was impossible to get more than two even from his official godfather, so great was the demand. We all three made haste to say, with proper politeness, that it was a great deal to have two tickets for such an occasion and to ask where was his own; to which he replied that there were no places in the tribunes for men. Did we not see that printed on the *biglietti*? He would go, of course, and stand about, or secure a perch on one of the great columns.

Although we were perfectly civil in our expressions to Ludovico, and, I trust, sufficiently grateful for a favor to which we could lay no possible claim, we were wondering how we could make two tickets answer for three women, all equally anxious to see the great ceremonies. Unlike the dame who was expected to fry her ten fish in nine separate pans at the same moment, we were unwilling "to give it up," and so continued to discuss the problem after we went to our rooms that night. Zelfine and I said most decidedly that Angela should go, at which she opened her eyes wide and asked why, adding, "I was always told that the older children should go everywhere and the younger ones stay at home, on the same principle as the helping at table. Being one of the older children, this has always seemed to me a perfectly fair arrangement, and I have never doubted the propriety of having my younger brothers eat the drumsticks."

"In the first place," said Zelfine, in her most judicial manner, "as you are so much younger, you will probably live longer to tell the tale."

"I don't think that is much of an argument," replied Angela stoutly. "The young occasionally die, and you are neither of you very aged, and you are both much giddier and more frivolous than I. Indeed, I sometimes wonder——"

You will never know the cause of Angela's wonder, because I interrupted her:

"After all, don't you think we had better consider Ludovico in this matter? Is it likely that he would travel all over Rome for days to get tickets for two old-er women?" I started to say "old," but I saw Zelfine wince, and so compromised on "older." "It is quite natural that a youth like Ludovico should wish to please the young lady of the party, and I must confess that although he

handed the tickets to me, he looked at Angela for a smile of thanks, which she never vouchsafed him."

"It wasn't so very much to do," said Angela, laughingly, but with a tone of yielding in her voice. "He had only to go to his godfather and ask him for some tickets."

"Ungrateful child," I exclaimed, "is there any service that you would consider too great to be performed at your behest? I firmly believe that if Ludovico should bring you a wagon-load of roses from Queen Margherita's own garden you would simply raise your eyebrows and say, 'How charming! I never had quite so many roses; I hope you have been at no inconvenience in gathering them.'"

"What a picture!" exclaimed Angela, "and what an imagination you have, Margaret! And what darlings you both are!" With which the spoiled child kissed us both, and dismissed us to our slumbers.

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"That is what comes of being a beauty," said Zelfhine, "but with Angela's charm and cleverness nothing is really too good for her."

"Zelfhine, you are quite as bad as the Italians over Angela's blonde head. I only trust that we may get her home without any love-affairs or duels; but she must go on Monday, *coûte que coûte!*"

April 10th.

Something has just happened that has forcibly impressed me with the wisdom of your favorite proverb about crossing bridges before one comes to them—a most delightful happening this! Dr. M. came in this evening to say that Rosalie had two tickets for the tribunes, and would I go with her? Of course I accepted with great alacrity, and we are all to set forth together to-morrow. Dr. M. and Ludovico will accompany us to the entrance to the church, when they and the other male barbarians will find such places as they may. I really feel sorry for Dr. M., who may never be here again upon such an occasion; but then he would probably not be willing to change places with any one of us, even with Angela, and I—well, I have never been quite so glad to be a woman as I am now. We do have some privileges, although Miss Susan B. Anthony would say that all of them, when weighed in the balance against the right of suffrage, are lighter than vanity.

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Miss Dean informed me at dinner last night that the Earl and Countess of Denbigh, with their two young sons, have come to assist at the service to-morrow. From the expression of awe in her enchanting voice, I am sure that my charming neighbor feels that the pension and everything in it is honored by the presence of this peer and peeress of ancient lineage; but as these noble folk lunch and dine in their own parlor, we have only the uplifting consciousness that they pass through the same hall and go up and down in the same *ascenseur* (when it runs at all) upon their goings out and comings in. This, however, seems to fill to the brim the cup of content of my Irish friend.

April 11th.

We were all up betimes this morning, and were on our way to St. Peter's before eight o'clock. I must here confess to a quite pardonable pride in the appearance of my companions. Zelfhine and Mrs. M., in long black gowns which accentuated their tall slenderness, with handsome lace at the neck and sleeves and the regulation black lace scarf most coquettishly draped over their white pompadours, looked like fair and noble ladies of the court of Louis Quinze on their way to mass at the Sainte Chapelle or Notre Dame. Angela, who owned no black gown, had borrowed one of mine, which she had tucked in and let out and generally readjusted until it became her as everything does that she puts on her graceful figure. The sombreness of her dress and veil served to bring out the gold of the girl's hair and the whiteness of her skin, and with a delicate flush on her cheek, like the inside of a shell, she looked like one of the beings whose name she bears.

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Ludovico evidently had the same thought. Touched by the girl's beauty, after the manner of his beauty-loving race, he bent over Angela and repeated the old story of the three prisoners from Britain whose fair faces and blonde heads drew from Pope Gregory the exclamation, "Non Angli sed angeli!" "And this," added Ludovico, devoutly, "as you know, led to the Christianizing of Britain."

By the time Ludovico had finished his story we had reached the Borgo Nuovo. At the Piazza Rusticucci there was so long a line of carriages that we abandoned ours, and passed on foot through Bernini's lofty colonnade, and on by wicked Caligula's grand obelisk out into the vastness of the piazza, spanned to-day by the most perfect of Italian skies, into whose ethereal blueness Maderno's noble fountains were trying which one could throw its spray the highest.

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It is a privilege to see St. Peter's at any time, but to see it to-day, with the great piazza filled with soldiers and the vast, surging, swaying throng of people, is an inspiration as well as a joy. The varied uniforms of the soldiers and guards and the gowns of the different seminarists, blue, green, purple, and, above all, the brilliant scarlet gowns of the German students, against the gray background of the great basilica, added much to the picturesqueness of the scene.

At the top of the great steps leading to the vestibule Ludovico begged us to turn for a moment to see the crowd below, a restless sea of heads, an immense concourse of people, but a good-natured crowd to which any one might trust himself with safety. Many tourists, English, French, and German as well as American, went to St. Peter's to-day provided only with the white *biglietti* of admission, and suffered no inconvenience. I really hesitate to tell you just how many souls are

said to have been in the basilica this morning, lest the apparent extravagance of my statement should lead to incredulity in the future; but it is said that there were over 50,000 souls inside the walls.

Dr. M. and Ludovico left us at the south door, and once inside the building we had no difficulty in making our way to the sacristy, and through the gray marble portal, by Romano's statues of St. Peter and St. Paul, and so on to the tribunes in the transept.

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Rich silk hangings draped the stone walls and columns, those behind the papal throne being embroidered in ecclesiastical designs. The throne was placed in front of the ancient Chair of St. Peter, and between our seats and the throne was the great high altar, ninety-five feet in height, with its bronze canopy and graceful spiral columns of Bernini, double spirals richly gilded. As the mass was to be celebrated at the high altar and as we were in the fourth row of seats from the front, we were sure of a good view of the Pope. All around us were the Swiss Guards, in the picturesque costume of red, yellow, and black designed by Michael Angelo, and the Pope's Guardia Nobile, with "winged Achillean helmet above the Empire uniform—half Greek, half French, half gods, half dandies," as Mrs. Ward described this guard of young nobles which surrounds the Pope. The uniform of the Gendarme Pontificio is somewhat like that of the old Philadelphia City Troop, a handsome uniform of black and white with an immense shako adorned with a red plume. But most gorgeous of all were the chamberlains, in a costume of black velvet of the period of Philip II., a Spanish dress with a velvet cape thrown over one shoulder, superb lace cuffs and collar and an immense ruff around the neck, and gold cords and chains without end. Zelfine and I fancied our friend Dr. R., who was chamberlain to Pope Leo XIII., figuring in this rich, decorative costume. One of the chamberlains wore a costume of ruby-colored velvet with a sable hood over his shoulders.

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It was so interesting to sit still and watch the changing scene before us that the two hours of waiting passed quickly. The Pope's little sisters sat in front of us in the seats nearest to the high altar, but although quite close to us we could not see their faces. They, of course, wore the costume *de rigueur* for such functions, black gowns, and black lace veils on their heads. During the long wait, an American girl sitting near us told us of her experiences. Not understanding about the costume required, "very stupidly," as she said and as we thought, she appeared in a dark blue suit with a hat to match. The guard refused to admit her, explaining the reason with signs and gestures, pointing at the same time to the veiled ladies passing through the doorway. Then, in a flash, presto change!—our quick-witted countrywoman had taken off her hat and tucked it in the folds of her skirt, having previously denuded it of a black dotted veil which she threw over her head. The guard, lost in wonder at the sudden transformation, was so bedazzled that he did not notice that her gown was blue instead of black, or perhaps he was so sure that she would get in by hook or by crook, that he allowed her to pass, exclaiming, "Ah, these Americans!"

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"Something is going to happen," said Angela; "the Swiss Guards are coming." A detachment marched along the central aisle, with cuirass and iron helmet added to their brilliant plumage of every-day wear, and lined up by the papal throne. There was a rustle and stir of expectancy over the vast assemblage, then breathless stillness like the silence of nature before a storm. All eyes strained towards the eastern door, through which entered the gorgeous procession. The Palatine Guard lined the way down the central aisle, some of the Swiss Guard being stationed at different points. First came the Guardia Nobile, then the mitred abbots, the bishops and archbishops in copes and mitres of white and gold, the patriarchs and cardinals, these latter with long capes of cloth of gold worn over their scarlet robes. Then came the canons and *monsignori* in lace and fur tippets, after them the prince in attendance on the papal throne, Don Filippo Orsini, followed by the secret chamberlains bearing the precious tiaras and mitres covered with gold and jewels. The triple crown, which was borne upon a cushion, was a blaze of the most brilliant jewels, diamonds, emeralds, and rubies, too heavy in its richness to be borne long by any mortal head.

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Finally, announced by a blast from the silver trumpets, the Pope appeared, seated in the *sedia gestatoria*, borne above the heads of the multitude by members of the household in a livery of scarlet cloth, the huge feather fans or flabella being carried on each side. I really did not grasp all these details at first, as the interest all centred in that one august figure. The Pope was pale, and at first appeared to be somewhat agitated. It is said that he very much dislikes to be carried into the church, and it must, indeed, be a trying position. The chair is lifted high above the heads of the people, that every one may see the Holy Father; it is borne along slowly, pausing altogether at intervals. There was a stop near our seats of a minute or more, which gave us an opportunity to see the noble, benevolent face of the one man who stands for so much to millions of the faithful. Less handsome and distinguished in appearance than some of his pictures, Pius X. has that in his face that is worth infinitely more than manly beauty or aristocratic bearing; one cannot look into it without being impressed by his earnestness and sincerity.

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It was all perfectly entrancing; the vast crowd of people so still and reverent, and now and again, when the interest was most intense, a subdued murmur, the Pope turning to right and left to give his blessing, just as he appears in the picture I send you. When the Holy Father had been carried to the apse, he descended from the *sedia gestatoria* and knelt in prayer before St. Peter's Chair. At this moment a bright ray of sunshine fell upon the group of prelates in their rich and varied vestments; the jewels flashed back their many-hued lights, making a gorgeous mass of color, in the midst of which was the white-robed, triple-crowned figure of the kneeling Pope.

In the service that followed we could hear the Pope's voice distinctly when he intoned the Gloria,

and we were near enough to the altar to see him give the cardinals the kiss of peace and celebrate the mass.

The Gregorian chants, which Pius X. so much desires to restore to the services of the Catholic Church, do not seem to be popular, especially among musicians; but in this spacious basilica they sounded grand and beautiful as they swelled forth and rose and fell through its lofty arches. Suddenly from Michael Angelo's great dome overhead there issued the exultant strains of the silver trumpets, filling the church with their sweet, penetrating music; the long line of soldiers from the Chair of St. Peter to the eastern door bent the knee, lowering their arms upon the stone pavement with a ringing sound, the mighty congregation bowed or knelt, and we knew that the supreme moment had come for the elevation of the Host upon the high altar. Then there was a solemn stillness, in which one could hear a pin drop, followed by the stir of the rising of the vast audience, like nothing that I can think of save the rustling of the leaves of a forest swept over by an autumn storm. 142

There was a great deal of antiphonal singing in the service, in which the Holy Father took part; his beautiful voice rang through the church when he chanted the liturgical prayers and the responses in the "Exultate Justi" and the "Filii Jerusalem." The choruses were glorious, about twelve hundred voices, pupils from the seminaries and colleges and from the Schola Cantorum taking part.

After the Pope had given the apostolic benediction and granted plenary indulgence to the faithful, which formula was read by the Cardinal Bishop in a loud voice, he again ascended the gestatorial chair and was borne from the church as he had entered it, slowly, giving the blessing to right and left, amid a subdued murmur, which he himself prevented from rising to applause by placing his finger upon his lip in very decided disapproval. He could not, however, prevent the waving of handkerchiefs and other mute signs of delight. The Holy Father looked much more cheerful on his journey back to the Vatican, as if greatly relieved that the ordeal was nearly over. All eyes eagerly followed the receding figure until the canopied chair passed out of sight behind the heavy damask curtains of the Chapel of the Pietà. 143

There was stillness for a moment, and then the voices, long silenced, broke forth in exclamations of interest and pleasure and in salutations to friends. All the English and Americans in Rome seemed to be in St. Peter's to-day, and many distinguished Catholics from different parts of the world. A number of persons came forward to speak to the Pope's sisters, who seemed to be holding quite a reception as we passed by them on our way to the doors.

It was good to be in the open again, in the sparkling air and under the shining sun, which is not too hot, only genial and kindly in its warmth in these early April days.

Angela was telling Ludovico how much she had enjoyed the solemn yet brilliant spectacle, and asking him rapid, eager questions about this official and that—questions that Ludovico was only too glad to answer, while he drew her to the other side of the piazza where a German grand duchess and two lesser duchesses were stepping into their coaches. We also had the honor of seeing the Earl and Countess of Denbigh enter their carriage. 144

"It has all been perfectly delightful; I shall never forget it!" exclaimed Angela, and then turning to me with frankest inconsequence, she said, "Pray let us do something quite different this afternoon!"

Ludovico fortunately did not hear her aside; but Dr. M. did, and, with his ready sense of humor, was vastly entertained, and will never cease to tease Angela about the effect upon her mind of a solemn service in the greatest cathedral in the world. 145

X VALE ROMA

Tuesday, April 12th.

The "something quite different" that Zelphine and I consented to do with Angela yesterday afternoon was to go to the Villa Madama. The drive was pleasant, and the villa itself is charmingly situated on one of the precipitous sides of Monte Mario, but alas! when we reached the entrance gate we found it barred and bolted, which shows how important it is to consult guide-books and local itineraries before making these expeditions.

Rosalie, who was with us, spied a man in the grounds, to whom our *vetturino* called, "Ecco, ecco!"—the ejaculation which corresponds to our "hello," although it is more universal, as it seems to be suited to all occasions, grave or gay. This man proved to be the custodian of the villa. He stated emphatically that the villa was closed and could not be exhibited to-day; but when he caught the gleam of silver in Angela's outstretched hand, he swung the gate open hospitably. 146

This Medici villa, which was named after a daughter of Charles V. who married Alessandro de'

Medici, is not spacious and imposing like the Villa d'Este or the Borghese; but it is an ideal patrician country-seat. We had been reading Marion Crawford's novel in which he describes this villa, restored by the Contessina Cecilia Palladio. So perfect is the *vraisemblance* of the novelist's picture that when we entered the half-ruinous, deserted house, from whose damp walls the beautiful frescoes are fast fading, we felt a shock of disappointment. Mr. Crawford's glowing description is of the Villa Madama as it should be rather than as it is.

If I were only a multi-millionaire, I would buy this lovely old place and make it the thing of beauty that Mr. Crawford describes. In fact, Rosalie and I sat in the "court of honor" by the old fountain basin, and planned a restoration which we thought even superior to Cecilia Palladio's, with plate-glass sashes in the loggias and steam heat to dry out the dampness and preserve Giulio Romano's wonderful frescoes; comfort as well as beauty would reign in the old villa! When this great work is completed, we four are to meet here every spring in the rose-time; would you like to come, Allan, as our first guest to this *château en Espagne*?

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Angela, in whom the instincts for castle-building and for home-making are sadly wanting, interrupted our day-dreams by reminding us that we were due at a tea, and had barely time to get to the Via Ludovisi by five o'clock. As we passed by the barracks near the Ponte Margherita, our driver motioned toward an approaching carriage—a handsome carriage with liveries and a fine span of horses but no outriders. In the flash of the rapid passing we could only catch a glimpse of two ladies inside; one with fine dark eyes, animated and gracious, attracted us especially.

"The good Queen Mother," said the *vetturino*, turning to us. "We all love her."

We were glad to have even this fleeting view of the Queen so beloved by the Italians. It is charming to hear them speak of her as they do, not as the Queen Dowager, or the old Queen, but affectionately, as the Queen Mother.

Friday, April 15th.

Mrs. Coxe, with whom we made the excursion to Pæstum, called to see us yesterday morning. We came near losing her visit altogether in this curious, rambling pension, where the drawing-rooms are on the third floor, the dining-room on the fourth, and the bedrooms are scattered over all of the floors. The bell-boy escorted our visitor, in truly foreign fashion, to Zephine's bedroom on the fourth *piano*, and as she happened to be in the salon, and there was no boy or bell in sight, Mrs. Coxe set forth on a voyage of discovery, exploring the dining-room and then going down to the smoking-rooms and library until she found the salon, in which we were comfortably seated enjoying our morning mail.

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She laughed heartily over our detached way of living, but said she was determined to find us even if she followed us to the cellar, as she was the bearer of an invitation to join a party to be conducted by Monsignor A. through some of the rooms of the Vatican not usually open to visitors. Mrs. Coxe had brought a letter to this gentleman from her parish priest, which was the reason for this courteous invitation in which we were so generously included.

We met the Monsignor and his party near the steps leading to the Sistine Chapel, and were taken through the rooms in which the finest tapestries are kept—immense pieces representing Scripture scenes. These tapestries, which are beautiful, with all the delicacy of painting and the richness of needlework, are only used behind the altar when the Pope celebrates. Monsignor A. told us that the Holy Father never celebrates before a painting, always before tapestry. In another room we saw a man at work upon a large altar-piece, weaving in the colors by hand—a slow process, as you may imagine, but they count years here as we count days.

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We were allowed to enter the grand banquet-hall hung with tapestries, in which preparations were being made for a great dinner; handsome glass and plate were on the buffet, looking very secular for *il Vaticano*. We saw the rooms of one of the old popes, and Monsignor A. showed us the low, broad steps over which the popes used to ride on their white mules from one part of the Vatican to the other. We did not wonder that they were glad to ride through this vast building, as we were tired after we had seen only a small part of it and a few of the eleven thousand rooms. Fancy the extent of this palace, with its museums, libraries, chapels, and suites of apartments, of which we gained some idea from the inner court and galleries.

Monsignor A. proved to be a genial old gentleman who enlivened his discourse with occasional anecdotes, which, delicious as they were in his broken English, would lose something of their flavor if I should undertake to repeat them in less picturesque language. He took us out on the balcony overlooking the piazza, from which the Pope used to give his blessing to the populace on Easter Sunday. The Monsignor said, with some sadness, that this custom belonged to the old régime. We could imagine what the great piazza must have been, filled with devout kneeling figures, and, like the good father, we regretted the passing of this impressive ceremony.

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As we were going through one of the large audience-halls, an American lady drew Mrs. Coxe and me aside.

"What shall we do about tipping?" she whispered. "These men," pointing to some attendants, "have been opening doors for us ever since we started. We must fee them, and yet how can we do it without attracting the attention of the Monsignor? Do you think there will be an opportunity to give them something?"

"If there is not," said Mrs. Coxe, promptly, "it will be the first time such a thing ever happened in Italy! I, for one, am quite willing to take my chances on it."

A few minutes later the Monsignor signified that we had completed our tour with him. He courteously hoped that we had been repaid for the fatigue of the many steps we had taken. Then, motioning toward the attendants, he said that we might give them a few soldi for their trouble, adding, simply and naturally, as if the words cost him no effort:

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"The keys of the rooms that you have seen are in the charge of a gentleman who lends them to me. When I return them, I should be glad to hand him something to repay him for his kindness. If you feel like giving him a trifle, he and his friends will sit down at a table in some garden, with a bottle of wine before them, and drink to Father A.'s hat." His own hat, of course! Was it not deliciously frank and foreign? Mrs. Coxe glanced triumphantly at us, and Angela was so much amused at the idea of contributing to the convivial pleasures of several unknown gentlemen in return for our privileges at the Vatican that I thought it wise to make our compliments and adieus to the Monsignor as quickly as possible, before she should disgrace the party by unseemly hilarity.

Thursday, April 21st.

This has been a full week, in which there has been little time for letter-writing. Zelfine and I have been driving about making calls and leaving cards upon people who have invited us to their days. Angela flatly refuses to join us, declaring that she did not come to Rome to do the self-same things that she has to do at home. Instead of which, she has been having a gay time with the W.'s from Philadelphia, driving to the "Doria-Pamfili" and going to the races at the Campanelle, for this is the height of the racing season. To-day she went to the Grand Steeplechase of Rome, and had the pleasure of seeing the King and Queen driving in an open carriage drawn by four horses. The Queen gave her own prize, the Queen Elena prize offered to gentlemen riders, and who of all people should get it but the young Roman who nearly ran over Mrs. Robins at the meet! He is a titled personage, the Marquis de B., but as we could not remember his long, unpronounceable name, we have dubbed him the Marquis de Carabas, being more familiar with titles in fairy lore than in real life. Angela says that when Ludovico brought the Marquis de B. to the carriage to speak to her, she was in such terror lest she should call him by our nickname that she was afraid to open her mouth. Fancy Angela afraid to open her mouth under any circumstances! She must have overcome her hesitation, for she afterwards had a long talk with the young Marquis, who took her and Mrs. W. to have tea.

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Zelfine and I find that our social duties have their compensations, as we meet such interesting people. I had a long talk with your friend Dr. White at a reception the other evening. He told me that he was publishing his reminiscences of diplomatic life in Russia and Germany. Madame Waddington is here now, and much *fêted* of course. Mrs. Coxe, who has known her for years, says that she is the same Mary King whom she knew as a school-girl, and is quite as unspoiled by the success of her book as by her diplomatic successes.

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One day this week an American friend, who lives here in a beautiful old palace, sent us her box for "Les Huguenots." The box was in the centre of what we call the balcony, near the royal box. We were hoping that the King and Queen would appear, but we have learned since that they seldom go to any plays except those given in their own royal theatre. Otherwise the house was as brilliant as we had expected, and the singing very fine, the choruses unusually strong.

Ludovico brought the Marquis de B. to our box. He has charming manners; indeed, so much manner that one does not get beyond it. I prefer our American heartiness to this studied politeness. Ludovico has asked permission to bring the young Marquis to call on us, assuring us that he belongs to one of the oldest families in Italy. I told him that as a gentleman and his friend the Marquis de B. would be welcome without the glory of an ancient lineage. Ludovico laughed, and said, "Oh, you Americans are so proud—as proud of your democracy as if you were all nobles!"

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President Loubet is coming to Rome next Sunday, and the whole city has begun to put on yards of bunting to receive him. These people possess a genius for decoration, and have a clever fashion of hanging bright-colored shawls and bits of carpet out of their windows; the effect is really very good.

Sunday, April 24th.

Rome is *en fête* to-day, a brilliantly gay city! We were invited to see the reception of M. Loubet from a balcony overlooking the Esedra di Termine, from which we had a fine view of the great concourse of people—a wonderful sight! All the school-children of Rome were seated on stands surrounding the piazza; there were lines and lines of soldiers, cavalry and infantry, and people were standing everywhere except in the space reserved for the carriages; those of the nobility were like gilded Cinderella coaches, their coachmen and footmen in gorgeous livery. The carriage of the Mayor, Prince Prosper Colonna, was especially fine.

The band played the Marcia Reale, a curious little quickstep air, which announced the approach of the expected guest. A troop of cuirassiers opened the way; then came the royal carriage with the red liveries of the house of Savoy, the King and President Loubet seated side by side. Prince Colonna received the distinguished guest with much grace and dignity; the band then struck up the Marseillaise; the applause was wild, vivas, bravos on all sides. These Italians are not, I fancy, devotedly attached to the French Republic or to its President; but like all Latin peoples they

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delight in a celebration, a general hurrah, martial music, flying banners, and tumultuous applause.

Monday, April 25th.

We have quaffed our last draught from the Fountain of Trevi, thrown a penny into the pool to ensure our return to Rome, and taken a farewell look at Neptune and his floundering steeds. Our trunks are packed, as we had planned to leave Rome this morning, but the men did not come for our boxes, which are to go by *petite vitesse* to Florence while we loiter by the way in several hill towns. We set forth to discover the reason of the delay, and found the express office closed, all business being suspended during the grand review which is being held on the Piazza d'Armi in honor of the French President. It is evident that we shall have to adapt our movements to those of this worthy gentleman; but after all, this detention cannot be looked upon as an unmixed evil, as it gave us a few hours more in Rome which we spent in the Vatican. After taking a last lingering look at the Apollo and the Laocoon, we had an hour in the Sistine Chapel for the ceiling frescoes of Michael Angelo. To-day being brilliantly clear, the faces and figures stood out as we had never seen them before, and we ended by feeling grateful to M. Loubet, for had he not detained us we might never have so truly appreciated the magnificent Prophets and Sybils, which are difficult to see properly in cloudy weather such as we had during Holy Week.

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EN ROUTE FOR VITERBO.

Ludovico and the Marquis de B. were at the station this afternoon to see us off, although they had spent a part of the morning with us. They both brought offerings of flowers, which was certainly a graceful attention on the part of the Marquis, whom we only know casually; but here they offer flowers with almost as little thought as one says good morning in America. Zelfphine and I have the dark red ones that we love; Angela's are white and pink. The Marquis paid our youngest and fairest some compliments about the roses matching the color in her cheeks, which served to spread a pink glow all over her face and to make Ludovico angry. It is quite evident that we are not leaving Rome too soon, as these good friends might quarrel if we should stay longer, and my duties as a chaperon would certainly become more arduous. We shall miss Ludovico at every turn, and I flatter myself that he will miss us. We have all so enjoyed our Roman days together, and he and Angela were simply *bons camarades*, after the comfortable, unsentimental fashion of the modern boy and girl, until the Marquis came into our little circle with his too evident admiration and florid, Continental compliments.

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XI SHORT JOURNEYS

ORVIETO, April 27th.

We have been travelling so fast, in the last days, that there has been no time for writing, which is my excuse for not sending you a letter from Viterbo, whose middle-age charms might fill many pages. Now I am writing with the brilliant colors of the façade of Orvieto's great cathedral still dazzling my eyes. We saw it first at sunset, when its exquisite colors were intensified, and glowed in harmony with the delicate rose and rich golden glory of the sky. With its vast mosaic front and exquisite Gothic arches and spires, the Cathedral of Orvieto is the central point of shining light in the old gray-brown town which it crowns. This evening it was like a jewel with a thousand facets gleaming in the sunset light, and, as many travellers have asserted, its immense rose-window above the cathedral portal is in itself worth a journey to Orvieto. This window with the lovely mosaic above it of Christ and the Virgin Mary enthroned and surrounded by angels, all in the softest blue, crimson, and gold, quite enthralled us, and we lingered so long before the cathedral that the sunset colors faded, the delicate hues of the mosaic grew dim, and darkness fell upon the huge mass, wrapping it about as with a garment. "We shall never again see anything so beautiful in this world," said Zelfphine, solemnly, as we walked back to our hotel through the narrow, dark streets. And indeed I doubt if we ever shall; to behold a sunset of such brilliancy illuminating a building of beauty so entrancing is something that one need not expect to have repeated in a lifetime.

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We intended to come here directly from Rome, a journey of only a few hours; a detour to Montefiascone and Viterbo was decided upon, on the spur of the moment, just before leaving Rome. Zelfphine came across some notes about Montefiascone in her Baedeker that reminded her of Mr. Longfellow's description of his visit to the tomb of Johannes Fugger of Augsburg, upon which she insisted that we linger a day and night on our journey hither, in order to visit the sacred city of the Etruscans.

You probably recall the story in "Outre-Mer," and will be laughing at us for going many miles to do honor to the memory of a wine-loving old bishop; but I was glad that we had listened to Zelfphine's words of wisdom, as the place itself, quite aside from the strange tomb, is so interesting—a little gray town towering above the green plain, with narrow streets and high stone houses, plastered, to be sure, but still ancient and impressive. Just outside the gate is a

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small inn, the Aquila Nera, which is said to occupy the site of the shrine of Voltumna, the tutelary goddess of the Etruscans, where the princes of the nation once gathered in council. Here we discharged our *vetturino*, as this hill town is not adapted to the luxuries of modern transportation, and made our way on foot to the Church of San Flaviano.

We did not, like Mr. Longfellow, make a midnight pilgrimage to Bishop Fugger's tomb; our visit was at high noon. The eleventh-century Church of San Flaviano is unique and imposing, with its huge Romanesque columns, Gothic doorways, and upper and lower buildings. Here before the high altar is a well-worn gravestone with a relief of a bishop in his robes, a goblet on each side of his head, and at his feet the cabalistic words "Est, Est, Est." The remainder of the inscription we could not decipher, but we afterwards learned that it ran thus:

"EST. EST. EST. PR(OPTER) NIM(IUM)—EST. HIC IO(ANNES) DE VC DO(MINUS)—MEUS MORTUUS EST."

The strange inscription and the two goblets confirmed the story of the convivial bishop, who, in order to secure good wine at each inn, while travelling through Etruria, sent his servant a day's journey in advance of him, instructing him to write "Est" in some agreed place if he found the wine good. When the taster came to Montefiascone, he was so charmed with the native wine that he wrote "Est, Est, Est," on the wall. Bishop Fugger arrived in due time, thoroughly endorsed the opinion of his servant, and drank of the "Est" wine so freely that in a short time he himself was *non est*. With his last breath the bishop dictated a will, by which he bequeathed a considerable sum of money to the town upon condition that a cask of the "Est" wine be annually poured over his grave. This, they tell us, was actually done until within a few years, when the wine became too precious to be poured forth in libations so generous. Now you will surely come to Montefiascone—"mountain of the flask," as everything has a vinous association here—and drink to the peace of his soul who drank "not wisely but too well."

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From San Flaviano we strolled back to the Aquila Nera, where, if the bread was of the color and consistency of leather, the eggs were fresh and the fried artichokes delicious, while the wine—well, the wine, like dear Charles Lamb's sublimated roast pig and many other delectable things, must be tasted to be understood. No words of mine can convey to you any idea of its sweetness and fragrance and general deliciousness, cooled as it is with snow from the surrounding mountains, after the fashion of the ancient Romans. After tasting of the "Est, Est, Est," we were more ready to shed a tear over the tomb of the bishop than we had been before luncheon, and we can also better understand how the peasants of this region live on their poor fare when it is accompanied by nectar of the gods—a wine which does not seem to intoxicate, as they drink it, but is an article of diet like coffee or tea or cocoa or oil. Another characteristic of the "Est, Est, Est," is that it must be drunk here, as it will not bear transportation even to Rome.

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After luncheon we climbed up the steep street which leads to the cathedral. This great building, with its gigantic dome, richly colored marbles, and its many statues and frescoes, in a little out-of-the-way town whose history is all over and done with, affords one of the striking contrasts that add so much to the charm of Italy. A brilliant gem in a dull setting is this old church, and yet with its many points of light the jewel irradiates the sombre setting, instead of making it seem darker by contrast. We left the beautiful cathedral reluctantly to take an afternoon train to Viterbo, where we were told that we should find a much more comfortable inn than at Montefiascone.

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Zelphine, living over again the glorious past of the great Etruscan city which we were about to visit, scorned all thought of creature comfort, yet Angela and I noticed that she seemed to enjoy the unexpected luxuries of the really good hotel in Viterbo as much as we more mundane beings. Angela was in her element in a brilliantly lighted hotel, with a large, bright dining-room and well-appointed tables, and began at once to wish that we had better gowns in which to grace the festive scene than the light silk waists which we had brought with us to wear with our travelling-skirts. And yet, this very morning, we had all been congratulating ourselves upon our small amount of luggage, declaring that we were only free women when we had sent our trunks in advance of us and could hold our worldly goods in our two hands. Zelphine and I still rejoice in our freedom; but we are not Angelas, with youth and all its possibilities.

Viterbo is the oldest-looking place that we have seen except Pompeii. In the most ancient portions of the city, in the little dark streets with their high walls, tunnels, and archways, one may go back a thousand years to the ninth and tenth centuries. Here are many towers for defence, and massive fortified dwellings with richly carved porticos, balustrades, and balconies; and in keeping with the antique architecture are the peasants, in their wide-brimmed hats and sheepskin breeches with the hair outside, still wearing their cloaks like the ancient Romans, one end thrown over the left shoulder. The storm-cloaks of the peasants of this region are heirlooms, descending from father to son, often more than a hundred years old. The walls of Viterbo are almost as perfect as in the twelfth century, when, like Troy of old, it stood a long siege for the sake of a woman's beauty and charm. Galiana, for whose possession two powerful families of Rome and Viterbo waged war, must have been a far nobler creature than the lady of Trojan fame. When the Romans outside the walls promised to end the war if Galiana would but grant them a sight of her fair face upon the town walls, she promptly yielded to the request, and appeared upon a tower which still bears her name. Here Galiana fell, pierced by the arrow of a treacherous Roman. We saw the tomb and an inscription to the heroic Galiana on the façade of the Church of St. Angelo, which stands on the Piazza del Plebiscito.

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"I wonder if women are beautiful enough nowadays to lead men to war for their sakes," said Angela. As she stood there, her perfect outline silhouetted against the gray background of

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Galiana's old tower, the slanting sunbeams lighting up her fair hair, I wondered whether Helen of Troy or Galiana of Viterbo had either of them been more beautiful than our American Angela. Then, suddenly recalling the little scene at the railroad station in Rome, I answered so emphatically, "I hope not," that Zelfine started, and came back from the past long enough to look at me questioningly.

"How seriously you take it all, Margaret," said Angela, with her light laugh. "Even if we are not as beautiful as those old-time ladies, we are certainly much happier, travelling about to please ourselves, as we are doing, instead of being carried off to some castle to please somebody else, and then having a long war about it all. I do wonder, though, that some great poem has not been written about Galiana on her tower."

"No doubt Italian poets have written about her again and again," said Zelfine.

"Oh yes, of course, but I mean in some language that people can understand. Mr. Browning, for instance, could have written a great poem about Galiana."

I doubt if Mr. Browning ever found his way here; few English-speaking people came to Viterbo before the railroad from Rome was built. But was not Angela's explanation sufficiently original to please you or Zelfine or any other ardent admirer of Mr. Browning? 166

Zelfine was delighted, and said, as she linked her arm in mine to descend the narrow, steep street that leads towards the hotel, that under her tutelage and mine Angela was really beginning to develop some sentiment. Angela's sentiment did not impress me as much as her linguistic perspective, which made me think of the Scotchwoman who said that the Lord would not listen to the prayers of the French, because they were "sic jabberin budies."—You remember the story; was it before the battle of Agincourt? How one forgets English history, here in towns that so long antedate the Norman conquest!

This morning we drove to Bagnaja, only a short distance north-east of Viterbo and built upon one of the slopes of the Ciminian Hills. From an eminence near Bagnaja we had a noble view of Montefiascone ten miles away, a little, gray town dominated by the dome of the vast cathedral, while much nearer lay Viterbo, with its lofty campanile and one hundred towers, dark, formidable, and majestic. We stopped at Bagnaja to see the great mediæval castle, with its huge machicolated tower; and then driving to the south of the main piazza over a fine macadamized road, if one may venture to use a term so modern in describing this land of the ancients, we were soon face to face with one of the most beautiful of the Italian villas, that of the Duca di Lante. We were admitted to fairyland by a very conventional method, the presentation of visiting-cards, and were then conducted by a most obsequious servant, evidently with generous expectations, who unlocked gates that led to the more secluded precincts of this garden of delight. Rest and refreshment for body and spirit we found in the loveliness and harmony of our surroundings. Surely the queen of the fairies, Titania herself, must have presided over the laying out of these grounds. Zelfine and I ignored the lore of guides and guide-books, not caring to learn that any mortal man had had a hand in producing such beauty as this. The great basin in front of the house, with its central fountain bordered by blooming plants, glittered in the sunshine. Beyond were the terraces, with their tiers of fairy cascades and fountains, where ilexes as large as those in the Borghese Gardens cast a shade so deep that nymphs and sprites might dance under them, as freely as in Corot's pictures, unseen by loiterers on the adjacent parterres. 167 168

Sitting under the shade of a huge ilex, while a bird sang to us from its sheltering branches, we all breathed a deep sigh of content, and congratulated ourselves, in Jeffersonian phrase, upon life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, after our own vagrant fashion. We might suffer from cold and even from hunger in some wretched inn to-night, but to-day we drank from a full cup of delight; the largess of the gods was ours, in a wealth of Italian sunshine and an air as intoxicating as the muscatel wine for which this region is famous. For the moment we possessed all the glories of the dead and gone Dukes of Lante, with neither their sorrows nor their crimes to deepen the shadows upon those gay parterres and sparkling fountains.

"It matters little whether or not we lunch to-day," said Zelfine, "for we

"on honey-dew have fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise."

"Speak for yourself, Zelfine," said Angela. "Honey-dew and the milk of Paradise may satisfy your delicate appetite, but mine needs something more substantial to feed upon. A good slice of American roast beef would be more to my taste."

"Oh, Angela!" exclaimed Zelfine. "And in such a spot as this!" 169

Evidently Angela's sentiment was not developing as rapidly as Zelfine could wish.

"Yes," continued our practical youngest, "I would not turn away from a slice of roast beef and a baked potato, even in this enchanting spot. I really am almost hungry enough this moment to share with our driver the crust of leathery bread that he is probably enjoying while he waits for us."

"Poor child," said Zelfine, compassionately, delving into "Mrs. Lecks," from which convenient receptacle she produced a cake of chocolate.

"Zelphine, you certainly are a dear, and have a human heart," said Angela, as she contentedly munched the chocolate, "even if you are as romantic as—as—"

"As her own great-grandmother's portrait by Stuart," said I, helping out Angela, who is not strong in the line of similes, "a beautiful lady, chiefly composed of fine eyes and hair, with a marvellous complexion and no anatomy to speak of."

Laughing and talking we sauntered on toward the entrance gate, near which we found our *vetturino*. As Angela had predicted, he was eating his dry crust, flavored, we were glad to notice, by a crisp bit of fennel, which they use here as we do celery.

When we returned to Viterbo, it looked like a deserted village; the picturesque peasants in their sheepskin suits were nowhere to be seen on the streets, and shops and windows were closed. It appeared as if some public calamity had befallen the beautiful old city. We afterwards learned that the inhabitants of Viterbo, adhering to a time-honored custom, retire for a siesta at mid-day, from which they emerge at three or four in the afternoon to spend the evening gaily on the Corso, thronging the shops, which are brilliantly lighted. Fortunately for us, the employes of the hotel do not demand a mid-day rest, and a luncheon was served us sufficiently substantial to satisfy appetites sharpened by a long morning in this bracing mountain air. 170

Here at Orvieto we are lodged in a modern hotel, something of a surprise in this ancient, isolated city, which is built upon a rock, like the habitation of the wise man of the Scriptures. This morning we spent some time in the Necropolis, which is under the precipitous cliffs of red tufa that seem to buttress this old town. In the Campo Santo, which is all that is left of the Etruscan city of Orvieto, we found avenues lined with tomb chambers. The streets are like those of a city, except that the houses are without windows, and no eager eyes look forth from the doors that open upon the silent street. Within is a square chamber containing stone couches at its sides for the repose of the dead, all of the other furniture of an Etruscan tomb, vases, bronzes, terra-cotta portrait busts and statues, having been carried off for the enrichment of various museums. From the Necropolis we made our way to the famous Well of San Patrizio, with its curious corkscrew stairway leading down into the huge basin below. 171

We would gladly spend another day in Orvieto, in order to view the cathedral's matchless façade once more by morning light, and at noon, and again at sunset, and so allow its beauty to print itself upon our minds, and also to study the Signorelli frescoes in the interior, the Fate of the Wicked and the Saints in Heaven, which, with their muscular devils and saints, are strangely suggestive of Michael Angelo.

"Why do you not stop another day?" I hear you ask. Because if we tarry here longer, we shall be obliged to cut off a day in Perugia or Assisi or some ancient city quite as interesting as Orvieto, and Katharine Clarke is writing to us urging us to get to Florence early in May, if we wish to see the City of Flowers in the exquisite freshness of its spring beauty. The roses on the hillside garden near San Miniato are budding and blowing, and she tells us that we must be there soon if we would see them in their prime. No matter how charming a spot we may be in, there is always some other delightful place beckoning us on and on! 172

We quite agree with the traveller, whose name I forget, but whose advice is, "Whatever towns you neglect between Rome and Florence, do not fail to see Orvieto." And yet we are filled with regret because we must pass by so many of the interesting towns of this region, Terni with its rushing waters, "rapid as the light," Bolsena on its lovely lake, and Orte. Of this latter town we saw little from the window of the railway carriage, except a line of hungry tourists struggling to reach the buffet during the short stop at the station, a scene so suggestive of our own land of rapid transit and hurried luncheons that, for a moment, we almost felt that we were travelling in America. 173

XII AN UMBRIAN IDYL

PERUGIA, April 28th.

The journey from Orvieto to Perugia is a short one, and we had our first sight of this fine old town in the brilliancy of a spring afternoon. We were fortunate in finding a cab at the station, and a *vetturino* who welcomed us to his coach with great cordiality, we being the only arrivals by the afternoon train. Having with many ejaculations disposed of us and our various pieces of hand-luggage, large and small, he hospitably invited a comely peasant woman to a seat by his side. Her luxuriant black hair was fashionably dressed and guiltless of hat or kerchief; her black dress was coarse but tidy, while a pair of kid gloves, which had evidently seen service, gave a touch of elegance to the simple costume. A large kerchief, which is the favorite shopping receptacle, marketing bag, and portmanteau of the Italian peasant—this one as full as the proverbial horn of plenty—occupied one gloved hand, while with the other she gesticulated and accentuated her animated conversation, to the evident interest and amusement of her host. With their heads close 174

together, deep in conversation, one talking, the other listening and occasionally interjecting a comment, we wondered whether the pair were lovers or only *bons camarades* discussing the last bit of home news or village gossip, for village gossip is said to flourish under the shadow of the shrine of St. Francis, just as here the cheerful and apparently honest *vetturino* will cheat you out of a franc as cleverly as a cabby of Naples or any other Sodom of the plain.

A cheerful town Perugia seemed to us, as we drove up the long hill and saw the old fortress, with its weed-grown ramparts and many towers, basking in the April sunshine. Like all of these hill towns Perugia is gray, and yet with a difference: a dash of chrome in its stones gives a warmer tone to the old palaces and walls, which seem to be all of a piece with the rock from which they were hewn. This rock forms the foundation, and was once the strength, of this "empress of hillside Italian cities."

We had no hotel addresses for Perugia except the Brufani, and, as we often find it more enlightening to our minds as well as more advantageous to our purses to stop in small hotels or pensions, we asked the driver if he knew of a good stopping-place. He seemed to understand, shook his head as if in deep thought, then consulted his companion; upon which they both looked us all over as if taking our measure, and, evidently being agreed as to our status, he exclaimed, reassuringly, "*Ecco, ecco*, we know the *albergo* that will suit the *società*!" Whipping his horse as we drew near the Porta Nuova, he rattled through the gate, across the wide piazza, and down a long hill, to a house on a narrow street, where we are comfortably lodged.

175

This pleasant little pension is kept by an English lady, with whom we have already established relations, as some of our friends stopped here last year, and we are all now basking in the genial atmosphere of good will created by them.

April 29th.

This morning we found our way to the little Piazza delle Prome, on the verge of the cliff, below which is a sheer fall of one hundred feet to the ancient city wall of the Etruscans. Below us, as we stood in the garden of the Prefettura, were the remains of Etruscan buildings, above them massive blocks laid by the Romans, and spread before us was the wide valley bordered by near and distant mountains. This marvellous view from the Prefettura is second to none that we have seen, always excepting the vast sweep of the green and fertile plain at Grenada as we saw it from the heights of the Alhambra.

176

We afterwards wandered from street to street, across piazzas and under arches, until we found ourselves in the Via Vecchia. Well named indeed is this ancient street, for the Via Vecchia has been trodden by the foot of man for three thousand years! This street, with its high buildings of heavy Roman workmanship, more like fortresses than dwelling-houses, leads to the great Arch of Augustus. The arch, constructed of solid blocks of travertine and sustained by huge buttresses, is adorned by a graceful pavilion and loggia, a noble monument to the Roman Emperor who rebuilt Perugia and inscribed upon its gateway "*Augusta Perusia*."

After we had revelled for a couple of hours in the delight of strolling about in the open, we retraced our steps to the Via Vanucci, and entered the Collegio del Cambio, in whose audience-chamber are many Perugino frescoes, all lovely save a horribly realistic Beheading of John the Baptist, from which we were glad to turn to a Nativity and a Transfiguration and to the noble Sibyls and Prophets. The head of Daniel is said to be a portrait of Perugino's greater pupil, Raphael. Even if Perugino was lacking in breadth and sometimes in grace, there is a depth and delicacy of color in his work and so much sweetness and tenderness in the faces of the women and children that, as we stood before these charming groups, we could well believe that this Umbrian artist was, as his chronicler said, "possessed of a stainless purity of soul," and that Raphael owed much to his early master.

177

Perugino was named after the town, not of his birth, but of his fame; *mais, de grace*, monsieur, I do not intend to give you a disquisition upon the Umbrian school of painting, of which there are many notable examples in the churches here and in the Pinacoteca. This last, let me explain, is the name, unpronounceable by English-speaking people, which is given to the picture-galleries in some of these old towns. There are really treasures of art in Perugia, with whose beauties I might fill many letters, interesting paintings by Manni, by Bonfigli, the great forerunner of Perugino, by Pinturicchio, his associate, and by many of his pupils; and in the Sala del Fra Angelico are some of the exquisite works of the idealist whose name it bears.

The Pinacoteca Vanucci is on the third floor of the Palazzo del Municipio. The doorway of this palace, with its mediæval lions and griffins—the emblem of Perugia—in exquisite Gothic carving all dominated by three saints, presents a much more harmonious whole than this confused grouping would lead one to suppose.

178

This afternoon we drove to Lake Thrasymene, passing the tower of San Manno, with its Etruscan inscription, and castles and battle-grounds of long ago, until we reached that most ancient one on the shores of the beautiful lake where Hannibal and Flaminius fought until the little stream ran red with blood, and so ever after has been named "*Sanguinetto*." A grewsome association this, with a fair stream of running water, and yet how much more euphonious, especially with the soft Italian lingering over syllables, than our American equivalent "*Bloody Run*!"

April 30th.

We wandered joyously through the streets and squares of the old town this morning, for here one

does not set forth to walk to a given point—one simply wanders at will. We generally cross the Piazza Vittorio Emanuele, with its heroic statue of Italy's soldier king, stroll along the Corso Vanucci, the main street of the town, and then go down steps, many steps, which descend into narrow winding streets and *viali* with most alluring names, as Via Curiosa, Via Deliziosa, Via Bontempi, and the like. Angela says that the last sounds delightfully convivial and suggests no end of a good time; but it probably means nothing less prosaic than good weather.

179

After winding in and out of narrow streets and up and down steps, all exquisitely picturesque if somewhat fatiguing, we came out on the Piazza del Municipio and before a beautiful thirteenth-century fountain with three basins, which are richly decorated with scriptural and mythological figures. The many slender columns which support these basins give to the whole a charming lightness and grace. This lovely fountain of Fra Bevignate was without water for centuries until, in 1899, the new aqueduct, which comes directly from the springs of Nocera, was opened, whereupon it played gayly in the sunshine, as it does to-day. The Nocera water, for which, bottled, we paid a considerable price in Rome, is free as air on this favored hill-top.

Facing the fountain is the Cathedral of San Lorenzo. To the left of the doorway is a bronze statue of Pope Julian III., who restored some ancient privileges to the Perugians, and on the right is a handsome Gothic pulpit from which St. Bernardino once preached to the faithful in the square. Inside the cathedral we saw the beautiful tomb of Bishop Baglioni, a fine Deposition by Baroccio, and a miraculous picture of the Madonna delle Grazie by Manni.

San Lorenzo claims the distinction of being the burial-place of three popes, Innocent III., Urban IV., and Martin IV. Here, too, is the betrothal ring of the Virgin. This precious relic is preserved in a silver casket guarded by fifteen locks, the keys of which are entrusted to fifteen persons of distinction, and is only to be seen five times during the year. The mystery and exclusiveness with which this relic is guarded whetted Zelfine's curiosity, and she insisted that it was in a certain sense our right to see the precious ring, having been shown the hair of the Blessed Virgin in Rome. Angela said that as American travellers we had a right to see anything and everything, but, as the next date for the exhibition of the ring was the second Sunday in July, the real question at issue was, were we willing to stay in Perugia so long, and, even if the Perugians were disposed to make an earlier date for us, was it likely that the fifteen persons of distinction with their fifteen keys could be collected on short notice? From my own observations, I was inclined to doubt the existence of fifteen Perugians of distinction at any date. However, distinction is a descriptive quite as subject to variations as the clear or cloudy day of the scientific gentleman who arranges our weather for us in America, and some of the men whom we passed on the piazza this morning may be lineal descendants of the ancient lords of Perugia, and now in possession of the important keys.

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The celebrated Sposalizio of Perugino—a unique conception of the Virgin's espousal—which should be here with the betrothal ring, has unfortunately been carried off to France; but there are still many more treasures in painting and sculpture in San Lorenzo than we could appreciate in one morning, among the latter a statue of Leo XIII., who was Archbishop of Perugia. Over across the piazza is the Episcopal Palace, where this Prince of the Church lived for many years, preparing himself by study and reflection for the great future in store for him. We passed from the church into the cloisters, which are ruinous, but charming, as are all the ruins here, with their bits of lovely sculpture and flowers growing in the "crannied walls" and on the little balconies above our heads.

Retracing our steps along the Via Bontempi, and losing ourselves several times, after the fashion of travellers who will not consent to have their pleasure interfered with by guides, we reached the quaint covered Via della Stalla and suddenly emerged upon a gay scene—the Piazza Garibaldi on a market-day. Here were flowers and fruits heaped upon wagons, and booths gay with colored prints, gorgeous kerchiefs, and endless lines of small stockings of all colors, which the Perugians doubtless buy even if the feet of their children are as guiltless of covering as those of the Venus and Adonis. The stockings are probably for Sundays and high holidays. Here above all were the peasants from the surrounding country, not wearing the elaborate, gayly colored costume of the Italian peasants of our childhood, but something more picturesque than the work-a-day costume that has disappointed us so much through Italy. The older women had brilliantly colored kerchiefs on their heads, while some of the younger women wore nothing upon theirs except their own glossy, luxuriant hair, which is always neatly and tastefully dressed.

182

We have often wondered why there are so many *old* women in Italy. Is it because they live long in this favored clime, or, sadder thought, do the young grow old early under the heavy strain of bread-winning, where wages are low and the mouths to be filled numerous?

Angela, who is an enthusiastic shopper, suggested that we should stop and buy some of the native products, urging that a little shopping would be good for us all and relieve our minds from the strain of cathedrals, statues, and tombs. Indeed the fruit, flowers, and gay handkerchiefs displayed upon the booths were sufficiently alluring to detain us.

Most interesting were the color, movement, and chatter of the sunlit piazza against the gray background of the old Palazzo del Podestà, which is built on the ancient Etruscan wall. It is just such contrasts that make these old Italian towns so charming.

183

At one of the booths, presided over by a pretty young peasant girl with eyes of brown velvet, Angela found a gay red and yellow bandana which she insisted that the *contadina* should try on. The effect was so charming that Zelfine took the girl's picture on the spot, to her evident

delight. Nothing but a brush and colors, the latter well mixed with the atmospheric transparency of Perugia, could give you any idea of the lovely effect of the girl's soft, dark eyes and the peach-like bloom of her cheeks, both enhanced by the brilliant head-dress. Then the signorina must try on a kerchief. "Ecco! ecco!" Carefully selecting one of dark blue with a yellow border, with many exclamations and more gestures the deft peasant fingers removed Angela's hat, and adjusted the kerchief over her golden crescent of hair. I must confess that the bandana became Angela well enough to excuse the chorus of admiring expressions that arose from a circle of voluble crones gathered around us. "Bella donna! Bella signorina!" was heard on all sides. Some of the women pressed near Angela to kiss her hand, saying that she looked like the pictures of the Madonna over there in the cathedral. The child was a little frightened, and drew closer to me for protection. Zelfine cleverly diverted the attention of the group by taking Angela and the pretty young Rosa Maria across the piazza to the large door of the old Palazzo del Podestà, to take their photographs against this fine background. Nothing could have been more charming than the blonde and brunette heads and graceful girlish figures against the old palace gateway. After taking two or three pictures Zelfine thanked Rosa Maria, pressing a silver coin into her hand; upon which she, with charming ingenuousness, intimated that she would take it as a wedding-gift, and, beckoning to a handsome young peasant whom we had noticed standing over in the shadow of the statue of Giuseppe Garibaldi, she presented him to us with smiles, blushes, and courtesies. Then, as we gathered from the few words that we could understand and by the pair standing hand in hand before Zelfine, Umbrian etiquette demanded that she should take a photograph of the *fidanzati* together, which congenial task Zelfine set about with alacrity before shyness should overcome the happy couple.

184

We all hope that the pictures may prove a success, as copies are to be sent to Rosa Maria and Battista, whose names we have in full, their address being the Central Post Office of Perugia, where they are always to be found on market-days.

185

The groom elect was so manly and gentle and the little bride so sweet and confiding that they both won our hearts. We left them with good wishes on our part and *molte, molte grazie* on theirs. These expressions were in view of our small contributions toward a little household soon to be established over near Spello. Angela, in a sudden enthusiasm over this charming picture of young love, unfastened a pretty chain that she wears around her neck, and linked it about that of Rosa Maria. We shall long remember the lovers as we left them, standing hand in hand on the sunlit Piazza Garibaldi under the shadow of the ancient Gateway of Justice, and they, I am sure, will never forget the *forestieri*, above all the *bella signorina*. They will show their children the pictures and tell them they were taken on the old piazza; and, to be quite foreign in my prophecy, I am certain that they will name their first daughter Angela.

From this "charming bit of local color," as Zelfine catalogues our little adventure, we returned to Rosa Maria's booth, now presided over by her mother, and bought many other bits of local color in the form of kerchiefs—Angela more than any of us. As she succumbed to the temptation of each one, she excused herself by saying, "These people are so poor, Margaret!" or "That gay red one will make a fine bandana for old Susan!" or "This will cover the little table in my morning-room." As we are travelling with only dress-suit-cases, which are crowded with the bare necessities of life, I know not how we are to dispose of these new possessions, to which Zelfine has added a number of books about Perugia and Assisi. She is still lugging around the beloved Narcissus, from Pompeii, because she will trust him to no trunk.

186

After our delightfully vagrant forenoon and a substantial breakfast, for which we were quite ready, we decided to dedicate the afternoon to tombs. We had intended to visit the famous Etruscan tombs on our way to Assisi, driving thither after the conventional fashion of Perugian tourists, but, hearing from some of our countrymen who sit near us at the table d'hôte that there are two or three fairly good inns in Assisi, we have decided to go there by rail to-morrow, and thus have a Sunday in the good company of the blessed St. Francis.

Angela flatly refused to go on the afternoon expedition, saying that she had taken a full course on tombs in Rome and would have no more of them, so Zelfine and I drove alone to the ancient Etruscan Necropolis of Perugia, a drive of not over an hour from the Porta Romana. These tomb chambers of the *Volumnii* are most interesting, with their portrait figures in terra-cotta and carvings of sun-gods and dolphins, quite different from anything we have seen except in Orvieto, and, as Angela says, we have had experience in tombs. Zelfine and I were much impressed by the fact that these massive stone tombs of the third century B.C. should have been buried under the earth until the middle of the last century, when a peasant discovered them while ploughing. Another story is that the tombs were unearthed when the new road was being made, but Zelfine and I prefer the tale about the peasant ploughing. After all, it matters little which tradition we adopt; the wonder remains that these richly adorned sarcophagi still testify to the wealth and artistic ability of the Etruscans of more than twenty-five centuries ago.

187

So much history lies underground in this land of the past that we do well to tread softly lest we be, at any moment, walking over graves, pagan or Christian; and yet these devout Italians are far less jealous of the desecrating foot of the stranger than the "heathen Chinese."

When we returned from our drive we found Angela in the gayest of moods, having evidently enjoyed her respite from sight-seeing. She had met some American acquaintances, and had afternoon tea with Mrs. Allen and her fascinating children in the charming hall at the Brufani, where one may sit under the shade of palm-trees all the year round.

188

Our modest luggage is in the hall in charge of several porters and *facchini*, and while we wait for the cab that is to take us to the station, I jot down a few impressions before they are dimmed or quite swept away by the interests of our next stopping-place. One should really have two or three days in an absolutely dull and unattractive place, if such a spot is to be found in Italy, after each one of these entrancing cities and towns. Our minds are steeped with the beauties and associations of Perugia, and now Assisi will overwhelm us with its own charm.

Our way this morning was down the Via Marzia and the great stone steps of San Ercolano, by the church of the same name, which is built against the Etruscan wall. I wondered why Hercules should have been canonized; but we learned afterwards that this curious octagonal church was built in honor of Perugia's patron saint, the heroic Bishop Ercolano, who defended his city against the Goths thirteen hundred years ago. From the Church of San Ercolano we passed on to the Corso Cavour and the Church of San Domenico, which has the distinction of possessing the largest Gothic window in Italy. Here also is one of the most beautiful tombs we have seen anywhere, that of Pope Benedict XI. This fine monument, designed by Giovanni Pisano, represents Benedict asleep, guarded by two angels. Above the face and figure, which are lovely in their perfect repose, is a lofty canopy supported by graceful spiral columns. Bits of the fine mosaic with which this tomb was once enriched are to be found here and there, the greater part having been carried off by Napoleon's soldiers, who seem to have played much the same rôle in the destruction and sacking of Italian churches as that enacted by Cromwell's army in England. Indeed I never before realized the ruthless manner in which the French army ravaged this land of beauty and art; we hear so much less of its depredations than of those of the Roundheads.

189

Zelphine, who, for some unaccountable reason, includes the conqueror of Europe among her heroes, undertook to defend him, while Angela, who, perhaps with more justice, reckons Cromwell among hers, resented my mentioning the French and English soldiers in the same breath, which led to an animated discussion, in the midst of which we passed through the beautiful and richly decorated Porta San Pietro, and so on to the old Benedictine monastery, which is now used for a very practical purpose, that of an institute for experimental agriculture. Seeing large bunches of millet and other cereals over the fine old doors, we thought we had made a mistake, but some peasants at work on the road assured us that San Pietro was just beyond.

190

After passing through the agricultural school we crossed the courtyard, and entered the great doorway of beautiful carved stone-work, and so found ourselves in the basilica, which, with its flat, elaborately decorated ceiling, its high altar adorned with lapis lazuli, agate, and other colored stones, and its many columns of granite and marble, is wonderfully rich in depth and harmony of color. Around the sides of the church are a number of large paintings by Vassilacchi, two by Guido Reni, and some charming little paintings by Sassoferrato. But the crowning glory of the basilica, the great Perugino of the Assumption, has been carried off to France, although the five saints that once surrounded it still hover above the altar.

The exquisitely carved choir-stalls of San Pietro, attributed to Raphael, are the most beautiful that we have seen anywhere. The lovely traceries, the infinite variety of faces and figures, the quaint masks interspersed with carvings of beasts, birds, and flowers, could only have been designed by an artist of delicate fancy and marvellous genius.

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The verger opened the great doors at the back of the church, thus disclosing a noble panorama of distant hills and fertile valleys.

On the opposite side of the road is the Giardino del Frontone, and beyond, the Porta San Costanzo, inside of which is a church of the same name, dedicated to the patron saint of all Perugian lovers. Here many happy couples are to be seen wending their way along the hillside park, to gain the blessing of the unlovely Byzantine Madonna who presides over the marble doorway of San Costanzo. Beyond the garden and the church lies the wide-spread Umbrian plain, girt about by the ample belt of the Apennines. Off to the north and west are Cortona and Siena, with Lago Trasimeno between, quite near, although shut off from us by a screen of green hills. To the south, following the windings of the Tiber, lies Rome, where our hearts still linger, and to the east, so near that we can see the twinkling of their lights at night, are Foligno and Spello and Assisi, which last, we are told, we shall end by loving more than any other spot in Italy.

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XIII

A SUNDAY IN ASSISI

ASSISI, Saturday Evening, May 1st.

As we first beheld Assisi from the railroad station at sunset, the delicate mauve pink of her towers and walls glowed with a more rosy hue and it seemed as if the old town for a brief moment must have worn something of the grace of her long-vanished youth.

On one side of the station is the little village of the plain, Santa Maria degli Angeli, with the church from which it takes its name, so christened by St. Francis in memory of the angelic visions here granted him. On the other side of the road, across a sweep of green meadows, is the town, built upon terraces half-way up the hill, Mount Subasio towering beyond it to a height of over three thousand feet above the sea-level. The crowning glory of Assisi is the great basilica of San Francesco, with its remarkable substructure—a vast colonnaded monastery standing guard over the happy valley beneath.

Our approach was by winding roads bordered by hedges, with fields beyond green as England and bright as Italy alone, all abloom to-day with poppies and buttercups. Up and up the shining way climbed the shabby *vettura* with its lean horse, until we seemed to be getting near the blue of the sky, so close does the arch of heaven lean to these hill towns of Italy. 193

We all felt that we had left the world of to-day far behind us when we drove through the ancient Porta San Francesco, so entirely does Assisi belong to the past. Here where everything is ancient one ceases to make comparisons, and it seemed no more remarkable to find a Temple of Minerva standing beside twelfth-century buildings, than that we three twentieth-century Americans should be driving about these old streets, hearing the *vetturino* talk about St. Francis as if he had lived but yesterday.

You really must not expect an ordinary letter of to-day from this place, where we are so absolutely dominated by the twelfth century. Zelfhine, who is in a state of rapture and quite lifted above the ordinary affairs of life, is probably writing a poem at this moment, having been incited thereto by the history of Assisi's celebrated poet, Propertius, which she has just read to us from a charming little book which she found in Perugia. The story runs thus: Propertius, who was a contemporary of Virgil and Horace, relinquished the congenial atmosphere of Rome and the friendly companionship of the author of the "Metamorphoses" for the love of his Umbrian birthplace, where the Muse had first visited him. Recognized in his own day as the leader of a new school of poetry, Propertius appreciated his own powers sufficiently to write of himself in connection with his native town: "Ancient Umbria gave thee birth, from a noted household. Do I mistake, or do I touch rightly the region of your home, where misty Mevania stands among the dews of the hill-girt plain, and the waters of the Umbrian lake grow warm the summer through, and where on the summit of mounting Asis rise the walls to which genius has added glory?" His own genius! And yet, to prove to us that he was not wanting in modesty, Propertius has placed this charming compliment in the mouth of a soothsayer. If this is all familiar to you, O most learned, it is so fresh to me that you must allow me to repeat it, because it reveals once more the truth of the Scriptures—that a prophet is not without honor save in his own country. Propertius would not have been forced to sing his own praises if his contemporaries had sung them in the right key. 194

The little inn at which we are stopping, with its bare, stone floors and whitewashed walls, is quite primitive enough to have suited St. Francis and his brothers. We are told that there is another and larger hotel, which is more modern in its appointments. 195

"The idea of caring for a modern hotel or anything modern in Assisi!" exclaimed Zelfhine, walking with me toward the window of one of the rooms offered us.

A single glance out of that window decided us to stay. The Albergo Giotto is built on a cliff, and literally overhangs the valley. From our windows we look out upon green slopes billowing beneath us until they break away into the long reaches of the plain, where the dome of St. Mary of the Angels stands out against the sky.

HOTEL GIOTTO, ASSISI, Sunday, May 2d.

A May-day in Assisi!—could anything be more delightful?

Last night, after dinner, or supper, or whatever the nondescript meal is called which was served to us in the chilly *salle à manger*, a little lady, unmistakably American and evidently fresh from a study of the hotel register, joined us, and asked Zelfhine if she were Miss Vernon, and did she happen to know Dr. Vernon of New York? Zelfhine, who adores her brother, Dr. Vernon, and is immensely proud of him, was quite ready to fall upon the little lady's neck when she found that she was one of his admiring patients, and we all adopted her at once, she, Miss Horner by name, being alone and glad to be adopted, as lonely women usually are in remote places. 196

I spoke to a bright-faced girl who sat on my right at table, and after some conversation learned that she had come from an old Pennsylvania town in which we have many friends and acquaintances. Miss Morris is also alone, and we have adopted her. Angela says that our party is growing too rapidly, and that we really must stop attaching waifs and strays, even if their precious lives have been saved by our brothers, and their social status established by the most irreproachable visiting-lists. Angela may be right; but after all we found it so cheering to gather around the table in the reading-room and talk over friends at home that we quite forgot that we had intended to spend this evening in storing our minds with the history and traditions of Assisi.

As I was drifting away into dreamland to the sound of some sweet, distant bells (the bells are always ringing in Assisi), Zelfhine called in to me from her room, "Do you think there is a spot on the habitable globe where one would not be likely to meet some person who had known some one who had met a friend of our friends?" With this puzzle floating through my mind, rather hazily I confess, I fell asleep, soothed by a pleasant sense of the smallness of the world and the friendliness of the inhabitants thereof. 197

This morning we banished from our minds all irrelevant present-century associations, and have spent our Sunday in the goodly company of the early Franciscans. An enthusiastic party of five, for even Angela has succumbed to the influences of Assisi, we made our way to the Church of San Francesco, which we approached across a wide piazza framed on both sides by long arcades. Through the great Gothic portal, with its rich carvings, we passed into the twilight beauty of the lower church, for even on a bright May morning the light in this vast basilica is "dim and religious." The arches of the nave and chapel are richly decorated, as you will see from the pictures that I send you; but it was not until we reached the south end of the eastern transept that we realized the full beauty of these decorations, whose color glowed like jewels in the light that reached them from three windows in the far apse. Over the vaulting above the high altar are the wonderful frescoes of Giotto. In one of the most beautiful of these paintings the artist has represented the marriage of Francis with Lady Poverty. The cold, pale bride, her white robe torn by the acacia thorns around her, draws away from her lover as if to warn him of the trials and hardships that are in store for him who links his life with hers. She, who, as Dante says,

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"slighted and obscure,
Thousand and hundred years and more remain'd
Without a single suitor, till he came,"

is now crowned with love and honor by the adoring Francis. Dante's face appears among the many representative and mythological spectators who are gathered around the altar, where Christ himself gives the hand of the saint to the Lady Poverty, while the angels above rejoice over the holy marriage. A wonderful conception is this, rich in color and in devotional feeling, worthy of the hand and mind of the realistic and imaginative Giotto.

After studying the four symbolic compositions above the high altar we turned to Cimabue's work in the western transept, of which in many places only the lovely lines remain, as much of the color has faded out. If only something could be done to save the noble, sincere work of those who are now recognized as early masters and regenerators of art! The colors are fading so fast from the walls of San Francesco that very soon these valuable frescoes will be lost to the world.

As we turned to enter the sacristy, from which a stairway leads to the upper church, Miss Morris called our attention to a very interesting fresco of the Madonna and Child near the door of the sacristy. In this charming little painting the Madonna, instead of gazing upon the Child with adoring love or placid content, as in so many pictures, looks into his uplifted face with a wondering, questioning look in her eyes. Miss Morris, who is not only an artist of some merit but an investigator of no mean order, stood before the painting and looked her questions, upon which our guide explained, partly in English and more in Italian, that in this picture, by Lorenzetti, the Bambino is represented as speaking for the first time. The figures are a bit stiff and wooden, but the face of St. Francis, on the left, is full of devotional feeling, and there is something indescribably touching in the attitude of the Child as he turns lovingly and confidently toward his mother, with words upon his baby lips that all Christendom would gladly hear. We missed Miss Morris an hour later, when we were crossing the piazza, and found that she had returned to the little fresco, drawn to it by an irresistible fascination.

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From a narrow winding stairway we stepped into the lofty, spacious upper church, lighted by large, three-storied Gothic windows which flood the interior with sunshine. Here in twenty-eight great frescoes, executed by the pupils of Giotto, more or less faded and in some places badly restored, we followed the life of St. Francis from the early days when he is represented as giving his cloak to a beggar to his final parting with his brothers.

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When we at last emerged from the upper church and made our way down the outside stairway to the piazza, the scene which met our eyes seemed strangely modern and bizarre to us whose minds were filled with thoughts of St. Francis and his holy life. All along the side of the piazza were long tables filled with relics, rosaries, and the ubiquitous postal-card, which represents everything, real or imaginable, that has been seen or could be seen in Assisi. Old women and little girls were spreading out their wares under the very shadow of the sanctuary, and we, noticing the pinched, careworn faces of the women and the poor, scanty clothing of the pretty little girls who helped them, could not grudge them the limited revenue that comes to them from their Sunday sales. The little money that reaches these Assisian peasants is chiefly from tourists, and from a lace-making industry that has recently been established here. Miss Morris says that these old women were intoxicated with delight over the brilliancy of their financial prospects when they were told that they could make ten cents a day by lacework, if they plied their needles and shuttles industriously. Does not everything in life depend upon the point of view?

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When we finally turned from the piazza, we accepted the eagerly offered guidance of a lad of fourteen or fifteen, who led us through steep, narrow streets and under heavy stone arches to the Chiesa Nuova. Within the walls of this so-called new church is the house of the once prosperous cloth-merchant Pietro Bernardone, the home in which St. Francis spent his early years. A peasant woman unlocked a heavy wooden door and showed us with reverent pride the stable in which St. Francis was born, and our young guide spelled out with care the inscription upon one side of the church wall which records that here the Madonna Pica, the mother of Francis, had a vision of the future greatness of her long-desired son. The sacristan opened the door of a cell in the wall where Francis was confined by his father in the hope of disenchanting his son with his chosen bride, the Lady Poverty, and perhaps, as Angela suggested, to punish him for having taken good cloth from the paternal storehouse and given it to the Church. Zephine was shocked at the idea of any one thinking that St. Francis could ever have done anything wrong; but as the gift of cloth

figures quite prominently in the narrative and involves a nice question in ethics, we discussed the question, with some warmth, on our way to the Church of Santa Chiara, which is at the eastern end of the town. 202

This church, handsome as it is, with its pink and white stone, vast flying buttresses, and beautiful rose-window, interested us far less than Santa Chiara's convent, the San Damiano, which we visited later in the morning. We all regretted that we had gone down into the crypt at Santa Chiara to see the tomb of the founder of the Poor Clares and the friend of St. Francis. We would so much rather think of the gentle abbess at San Damiano than lying under a glass case in the dark crypt, the once beautiful face, which is quite clearly outlined against her veil, darkened by time and no longer beautiful. We turned hastily from the crypt, and were glad to be again in the open air and under the blue sky wending our way to Clare's hillside convent, which is only second in interest to the basilica of San Francesco.

It was after Clare, the daughter of Count Favorino Scifi, had listened to the preaching of St. Francis, and decided to devote her life to works of love and mercy, that he prepared the San Damiano as a retreat for her and other noble ladies who desired to accompany her. From the hour when the high-born maiden, Clare Scifi, yielded to the burning eloquence of Francis Bernardone, to the day of her death, her story is surrounded by all the charm of mediæval romance. The door of the Palazzo Scifi is still shown through which Clare escaped at night and made her way to the Portiuncula, where, in the presence of her aunt Bianca Guelfucci and several companions, she took upon herself the vows of poverty and obedience. The picture of the beautiful girl kneeling before the altar in the dim light of the Portiuncula, while the golden glory of her fair hair is shorn from her head, is one that has captivated the artist as it does the traveller. Every part of the Convent of San Damiano is associated with the lovely young abbess. Standing in the tiny terrace garden, with its few straggling wallflowers, we imagined Clare taking the air in the bloom of the lilies, surrounded by her nuns. Here is the cell where she lay ill, when tidings reached the quiet convent that a detachment of Saracen troops was advancing toward Assisi. The sisters gathered around the abbess like so many frightened doves; the bold invaders were already scaling the walls, when Clare, who was endowed with the high courage of her race, appeared at an upper window, holding aloft the chalice containing the Blessed Sacrament, which she was allowed to keep in a little chapel near her cell. At the sight of the holy and beautiful vision, so runs the legend, the soldiers upon the walls dropped to the ground and fled across the plain. As we saw the little convent, peaceful and bathed in the bright sunshine of May, it was difficult to imagine the confusion and terror that reigned there seven hundred years ago. 203 204

Still under the spell of Francis and Clare, whose story seems to be on the lips of all Assisi, young and old, we spent the long spring afternoon in the basilica of St. Mary of the Angels. The brother who showed us about the church, a namesake of Assisi's saint, spoke fairly good English, of which he was as proud as a Franciscan could venture to be, and took pleasure in relating to us some quaint and homely tales of the early days of the order. More especially did the good brother delight in speaking of the love of his Father Francis for the wild creatures of the wood, which instinctively turned to him for protection. One day a leveret hid itself in the folds of his gown, and upon another a timid hare sought shelter in his breast, still returning into the father's bosom, he said, "as if it had some hidden sense of the pitifulness of his heart."

When Angela spoke of the story that we had just been reading of Brother Juniper and the chickens, the brother laughed heartily, and said: "Chickens is goot; but Brother Juniper spoiled his by cooking the two weeks' portion of chickens in one day, and with the feathers on, to save much time for prayer; but it was not goot, and the brothers was angry." 205

Do you remember the story, Allan?—how Brother Juniper set the stew upon the table, "crying up his wares to find a customer for his unsavory dish, when," as the chronicler quaintly added, "there was not a pig in all the land of Rome so famished as to have eaten it."

"But he was goot," said our guide, "Brother Juniper was goot, and the guardian forgive him, and he was goot when he cut off the pig's foot and cooked it for to make the sick man well, and the herdsman forgive him this time and brought the maimed pig all killed and roasted for the brothers at St. Mary of the Little Portion to eat of it."

"This must have been the occasion," said Miss Morris, "when St. Francis exclaimed, 'Would to God, my brothers, that I had a whole forest of such Junipers!'"

"Yes, yes," said the brother, "roast pig is goot," leading us, as he talked, from the modern pictures that adorn the many chapels of this large church to the most interesting object within its walls, the Portiuncula. Here, surrounded by much that is too modern to be in harmony with the old, is the simple little Portiuncula, within whose walls many pilgrims, Protestant and Catholic, kneel feeling that this is a holy spot, for here were born the high purposes and noble aspirations that led to a great movement for purer religion in the Christian world. Near the Portiuncula, under the same roof, is the rude hut in which St. Francis spent his last days, and here, opening out from the cloisters, is the little rose-garden which witnessed his earlier struggles with the powers of darkness. The rose-bushes are still free from thorns, a miracle, the good brother tells us, and spotted with blood. The green leaves *are* covered with brown spots, the stems are thornless. We look at them as we listen to the earnest words of our guide; the spell is still upon us, we offer no word of dissent; for whether the thornless rose-tree is natural or miraculous, whether the spots on the leaves are from blood or rust, the truth remains that this little garden witnessed the struggle of a human soul, and from its soil there arose something more wonderful than the greatest miracle over material forces ever recorded—a soul born from clouds and 206

darkness into life and light eternal.

An overwhelming sense of Italy, of what it means to be in this old hill town, with its remains of Etruscan occupation and pagan Roman and Christian Roman life, has possessed my mind to-day. You will never quite understand what Mr. Emerson means by the oversoul until you stroll through Italian highways and by-ways, knowing that what you tread upon is only common earth and stone, well worn by many feet, and yet among the many feet there were some whose footsteps seem to have turned the common earth ways into paths that lead to the stars. But why should I try to explain that which is unexplainable, and to you, who have read more books about Italy than I shall ever read, and yet, here I triumph over you, no books, no, nor even letters of mine, can make you understand the compelling charm of this 207

"Woman-country, wooed not wed,
Loved all the more by earth's male lands."

Some day you must come here, Allan, and see and feel it all, while I, off in some prosaic spot, will envy you the penetrating joy of first impressions, the grace of a day that can never quite come back again.

The long twilight had deepened, the shadows of the hills had lengthened upon the wide-spread plain, when we turned from the church and the little town to retrace our steps along the hillside road. Upon the stillness of the evening air, seldom disturbed except by the ringing of church-bells, there broke forth a sound like a fog-horn, and a large red object suddenly appeared upon the crest of the hill. There followed a whizz and a whirr, a rush through the air, and a flutter of blue and white veils, as a great automobile sped past us along the white windings of the road. 208

"Is there any spot too sacred for the intrusion of an automobile?" asked Zelfhine.

"No," exclaimed Miss Horner, "not even the tomb of St. Francis!"

"And yet," said Angela, her eyes wistfully following the brilliant auto car and its gay company, "I should like to be in it, this moment, speeding along these perfect roads."

"Of course," said Miss Morris, "everything depends upon the point of view, and the only one from which an automobile is entirely unobjectionable is when you are in it, with all its machinery in perfect order."

HOTEL GIOTTO, ASSISI, May 4th.

You will be surprised to learn that we are still in Assisi. Yesterday afternoon, on our way to the station with our adopted companions, we spent an hour at St. Mary of the Angels to take a last look at the Portiuncula, the rose-garden, and Della Robbia's fine terra-cotta, and then repaired to a little tea-house near by for a parting love-feast, as we were all about to start for different places. Miss Morris was on her way to Perugia, Miss Horner was bound for Florence, and we three for Siena. In the midst of an exchange of cards, addresses, and quite sincere hopes of meeting again, Bertha Linn and Mrs. Robins surprised us by walking in, having driven over from Perugia. 209

You will laugh at me, I am sure, when I tell you that those two women persuaded us, three in number, with our luggage at the station, to go back with them to Assisi and stay over another day. In justice to our steadfastness of purpose I must tell you that we only yielded when we learned, what the *padrone* had not been clever enough to tell us, that on the following day the feast of the Holy Cross was to be celebrated, and the great basilica lighted with scores of wax candles.

We are truly glad that we yielded to Bertha's persuasions. Consistency in adhering to a schedule is not always a jewel in one's crown, especially when one is rewarded by such a view of the frescoes in San Francesco as can only be had by the light of many long candles and tapers.

It is just such incidents by the way, such turning back and retracing of steps at one's pleasure, that make for the happiness of the freeborn American traveller who carries her luggage with her and is not dominated by trunks—I say *her* instead of *him*, because most of the travellers we meet are women; and, as if to give weight to my reasoning, Bertha adds, "In a land where one reckons time by hundreds of years, what difference does one day more or less make?" 210

"Especially," said Angela, "if you are not hampered by a hard and fast schedule, or a conscience about disappointing our landlady at the Pension Riccoli in Florence."

"She will not be disappointed," said Mrs. Robins, oracularly, and Mrs. Robins, having travelled much, knows the ways of Italian landladies. 211

FLORENCE, May 6th.

Do you realize that your letter in answer to mine of March 18th from Rome was not quite within the pact? I found it awaiting me at Siena, with a number of others. I thought my explanation quite clear and eminently sane, but you seem to have strangely perverted my meaning; then you revert to an earlier letter from La Cava, and are pleased to imagine that we are taking risks all the time and leading a reckless life generally. I shall really hesitate to tell you again of any of our adventures such as that drive home from Pæstum, which I merely related as an amusing incident. There is no danger of brigands in these days and we did not "need a protector," especially as kind Providence looked after us. That drunken driver would not have surrendered his reins to you or to any one except the *padrone*; and then "all's well that ends well," and we returned from our excursion with nothing worse than a grievance.

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I was so vexed with you for two whole days that I wrote you not one line from Siena or Pisa. Now your indiscretion is partially atoned for by a letter which has just reached me here, and I am trying to forgive you and "be friends again," as we used to say when we were children. But the charms of Siena are already so eclipsed by those of Florence that it is quite impossible for me to give you an atmospheric description of its streets and churches, above all of the shining cathedral, rich from dome to pavement with colored marbles, frescoes, and mosaics. This may be no loss to you, who are doubtless well tired of my Italian rhapsodies; but your respite is only temporary, as I quite missed writing you that letter. I wanted to tell you that the campanile at Pisa leans quite as much as the little Parian model on your desk, and about the famous Campo Santo with its interesting paintings, and many other things. The habit of relieving my mind of the burden of surplus impressions, or of what I might call my "oversoul," has become second nature. Do you remember, Allan, the man in Frank Stockton's story who, on his return from abroad, found his friends and acquaintances so much interested in their own affairs that he engaged a young man at twenty-five cents an hour to listen to his traveller's tales? You seem to be all unwittingly playing the rôle of that youth, less the twenty-five cents, and I, alas! shall never know whether you prove yourself more worthy than that faithless one, who fell asleep in the midst of the most thrilling adventures.

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A STREET IN FLORENCE

I must explain to you for your benefit, when you travel this way, that we did what is discouraged by Baedeker and most of the guide-books; we changed cars at Empoli and took a train to Pisa, where we spent a night and day. The usual plan is to go directly from Siena to Florence, and make a separate day-trip to the city of the Leaning Tower. One of Zelfhine's pet economies is to save the retracing of steps or railway journeys by doing all that we can *en route*. In this case I think her plan was a good one, as we shall never be willing to spend one whole beautiful day in any other city, no matter how long we may tarry in Florence. I overheard Zelfhine, this morning, telling Katharine Clarke that she intended to stay here indefinitely and stifle the promptings of conscience with regard to Venice and all the rest of Italy, adding, in her earnest way, "After all, Katharine, the true pleasure of travelling is to settle down in one place and let its charms sink into your mind."

Katharine was so much amused at Zelfphine's novel definition of the joys of travel that she repeated it to an English acquaintance, who exclaimed, "Really!" with a delicious rising inflection, "would not that be rather unpractical?" Refreshingly English, was it not? The truth is, we are all well tired of short journeys, and look forward with pleasure to a whole month of Zelfphine's kind of travelling, living in Florence and making half-day trips to Fiesole, La Certosa, and some of the lovely villas on the hillsides near by.

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We reached Florence last night so late that the long twilight had quite faded, and darkness veiled the charms of this most beautiful city. As we drove along the Lung' Arno, its lights revealed glimpses here and there of the shining river and picturesque bridges, with a line of dark mountains rising beyond and above them. There is something fascinating and stimulating to the imagination in such a first view of a strange city, especially when, as in this instance, she discovers fresh beauties when she lifts her veil to the morning light.

We were not able to get into the delightful pension that Katharine Clarke told us of. Madame had not received my note from Assisi advising her that we would be two days later than our appointment, and had promptly rented our rooms, believing, like all Italian landladies, in the proverbial "bird in the hand." "Never mind," said Zelfphine, as we turned sadly away, "what is any pension, even the Pension Riccoli, whose feasts are said to rival those of Lucullus, compared with that incomparable last day in Assisi with St. Francis or that other red-letter day in the cathedral at Siena?"

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"And then," said Angela, "the Pension Riccoli is a paradise reached by many purgatorial stairs."

Being both tired and hungry by this time, we consulted our note-books, and directed our *vetturino* to the nearest pension. An indifferent hostel it proved to be, with the one charm of being directly on the Arno. Our windows opened on the river, and we were lulled to sleep by the music of its rushing waters. These rivers, fed by springs from neighboring hills, are widely different from the sluggish streams of the plain; the spirits of Undine and her kind seem to inhabit them and sing their lullabies in storm and calm. Zelfphine evidently had the same thought, as she told me that she had been dreaming all night of Undine and Sir Huldebrand, and that it would not have surprised her to have the lovely sprite appear at her window and dash water in her face. Instead she awoke to find Angela standing by our window, in the freshest of pink and white morning-gowns, the warm sun lighting up every thread of her blonde hair to pure gold. She begged us to come to the window and look out. The Florence of the left side of the Arno, the Florence of "Romola" and Mrs. Browning, lay before us, with its churches and palaces, connected with the Lung' Arno delle Grazie by the oldest bridge in the city, the Ponte alle Grazie. Off to the south are the heights of San Miniato, and still further the commanding Fortezza di Belvedere, and beyond, hill upon hill of blue velvet spanned to-day by a sapphire sky. Behind us are the Duomo, Santa Croce, San Marco, and a whole world of architectural wonder and entrancing interest, the old streets through which Dante, Michael Angelo, and Raphael walked and the churches that resounded to the voice of Savonarola.

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PENSION C., VIA SOLFERINO,
Saturday Evening.

Among surroundings of so much interest it seemed almost a desecration to devote an hour to a search for a pension, and yet even this practical business was illuminated by glimpses of beauty by the way. We passed through the Loggia dei Lanzi, with its many statues, where Cosimo's German lancers were once quartered, across the Piazza della Signoria and by the Strozzi Palace. This middle-age castle, with its rough-hewn stone walls unbroken by windows except on the upper floors, must have proved an impregnable fortress in days when war was the chief occupation of the Florentines and a man's house was primarily and emphatically his stronghold. Although the Palazzo Strozzi was built by a merchant, its exterior is decorated by the handsome iron *fanali* which were used only by the most distinguished citizens, and here are the rings to which the party standards were once attached. We passed the Palazzo Strozzi on our wandering way to Thomas Cook's office, which is on the same street, the Via Tornabuoni, with its alluring cafés, confectioners', modistes', and bric-à-brac shops. The massive walls and huge bulk of the old palace form a picturesque background for the bright, varied modern life and tourists' life of the Florence of to-day.

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Katharine told us of an excellent pension on the Via Solferino near the Cascine, which she feared would be full, like every other place that we had looked at, as all America seems to have come up here from the Eastertide in Rome to spend May in Florence. We meet more acquaintances on the Via Tornabuoni and under the arcades of the Piazza Vittorio Emanuele than on Fifth Avenue, and almost as many as on Rittenhouse Square. Zelfphine says that it would be pleasant to meet some Florentines once in a while, "or even some Romans," suggested Angela.

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"Romans never travel," replied Zelfphine, in her most encyclopædic tone; "like Parisians, their own surroundings satisfy them entirely."

"Never travel! How strange, how dull!" exclaimed Angela, shaking her head, incredulously. Was she thinking of Ludovico or of the Marquis de B., I wondered, this apparently frank but absolutely inscrutable Angela? She had a letter handed her at Cook's office this morning, with a Roman postmark, which she put in her pocket without a word or a sign of interest. It was not in Ludovico's handwriting, I know; whose then? Do I seem to be watching straws to find out which way the wind blows? You must remember, Allan, that I am the appointed chaperon of this party,

and that Angela's father, like the "Father of his Country," has a great objection to entangling foreign alliances. Indeed, my task is no light one, as there are times when Zelfphine needs a chaperon quite as much as Angela; her *beaux yeux* draw many admiring glances in our direction. But pray do not whisper this above your breath, as Zelfphine is absolutely unconscious of the admiration that she excites, and would accuse me of gross exaggeration, and then a certain widower of our acquaintance might become alarmed and feel it his duty to join us "as a protector," which would certainly interfere with Angela's pleasure and mine, however it might affect Zelfphine's happiness.

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To return to our quest, we found the Pension C. crowded, as Katharine had feared, but Madame assured us that she would have rooms for us in a few days, if we would only be content with lodgings in the *dépendance* for the present. The rooms shown us were altogether captivating, with their long windows and balconies overlooking a garden full of roses. When Zelfphine learned that in addition to their other attractions these rooms were presided over by a maid named Assunta, wild horses, buffaloes, or even the more probable menace of mice would not have drawn her from the Pension C. "Think of it, Margaret!" she exclaimed, "to sit on a balcony overhanging a rose-garden, and have our coffee and rolls brought to us by Assunta! And then," added Zelfphine, in her most persuasive tone, "she seems to understand my French, although she speaks nothing but Italian!" Although Katharine laughed heartily at Zelfphine's argument, and said that it reminded her of a sign in one of the shops on the Via Tornabuoni, "French spoken and English understood," I felt this to be an important consideration and one that would affect our comfort even more materially than the balcony, the rose-garden, or the pleasing name of our *femme de chambre*, and after some conversation with Madame we concluded to await her pleasure. We are now lodged in the *dépendance*, a dismal apartment-house on the Via Montebello, connected with the pension by a tunnel-like gallery. Here we and our belongings hang between heaven and earth until our promised rooms in the main house are vacant—to-morrow, or the next day, or the next; nothing is quite certain here, and dates do not seem to be reckoned with or upon.

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After our first dinner at the Pension C. Angela showed her satisfaction with her new surroundings by exclaiming, "I am glad that you two romantic creatures have decided upon a place where the food is so good, as we cannot be expected to live on antiquities for many days." Angela is quite right: we are fed upon strawberries, sugar, and cream, while succulent asparagus, and peas as sweet as those from your garden at Woodford, have replaced the artichokes and fennel, of which we had grown a bit tired. I saw Angela tremble this evening when the dish of green peas was offered to her right-hand neighbor first, according to the undeviating blindfold justice of table d'hôte rules; for although Madame provides most liberally for her guests, this woman would create famine in a land of plenty. Our youngest made a grimace over the small portion left for her on the platter, and then with resolute cheerfulness essayed to open a conversation with her neighbor, remarking that we had spent a delightful morning at the Annunziata, to which the lady, whose thoughts evidently never rise above her plate, asked, naïvely, "Why, what's going on there?"

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In view of all that has "gone on" at the Annunziata, especially in art, the masterpieces of Andrea del Sarto and Ghirlandajo and the lovely Della Robbias, we were all reduced to silence.

Although there are some charming people at the pension, we are not particularly well placed at the table d'hôte. Zelfphine is not more fortunate in conversation than Angela, as her neighbor is an Italian gentleman who, although charmingly polite, is deaf and dumb in every language save his own. Angela and I have concluded that this Signor A. is preternaturally dull, as Zelfphine can say enough with her eyes to make most men understand; beside which her adroitly pronounced and cleverly emphasized French usually appeals to the intelligent Italian imagination. Occasionally she touches the roses on the table, and says "Bella," when there follows a rapid flow of conversation on the part of Signor A., through which Zelfphine smiles sweetly. She scored quite a point this evening when Madame made her appearance, after an indisposition of a couple of days, and Zelfphine bowed in recognition of the return of our presiding genius, and, turning to her neighbor, said "Benia." "Benia" may not be the very best Italian equivalent for "better," but it evidently conveyed Zelfphine's idea to Signor A., who nodded his head in approval and beamed upon her like a sunburst. He has been her devoted slave ever since, passing everything at his end of the table to her, evidently quite incapable of helping himself first, and urging wine upon her until I tremble for her sobriety. Zelfphine is of a yielding nature up to a certain point, of course, beyond which she is a rock of steadfastness, as Angela and I have learned in the course of our travels together. We trust that she may discover the rocky side of her character if Signor A. fills up her glass too often, or makes her an offer of his heart, his hand, and his fortune. This latter we are disposed to think is inconsiderable, as one of his chief sources of revenue is, as we have incidentally gathered, the keeping of Madame's books.

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Angela looks discontentedly at her own insatiable neighbor and then at Zelfphine, so tenderly cared for by hers, and remarks in the crude slang of the day that "Zelfphine has a soft thing of it, all right!"

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A blooming widow opposite, with a daughter of twelve at her side, wastes the sweetness of her smiles upon the unrequiting feminine company of the pension. The only available man, available, I mean, for excursions and strolls in the Cascine, left this morning for Venice, wearing a bright red necktie which the lady has been knitting for days while he sat by her side in the rose-garden. Angela thought it very unbecoming, because it did not match his hair exactly, scarlet not being the color one would choose for a red-haired man, but then our youngest is overcritical in the matter of color.

Further down the table d'hôte are several widows with daughters, one, two, or three. Zephine and I have been wondering when the great mortality among American men occurred, as most of the women whom we meet are too young to be relicts of the Civil War. The widow *en voyage* with grown daughters is the rule. Some few wives are here who have husbands at home; the exception is when paterfamilias accompanies the party, and when he does, I must frankly admit that he looks excessively bored, especially in picture-galleries.

Sunday, May 9th.

Katharine came in this morning, bright and early, with her hands full of roses and her head full of plans. She had been modelling steadily for ten days, and, having reached a convenient stopping-
place, announced her intention of taking a vacation of three days, which she would be glad to
devote to us and our sight-seeing. Would it please us to go to Fiesole for the day or to
Vallombrosa? Zephine says that we must see Vallombrosa if we would know something of the
beauties of Paradise in advance. Milton is said to have drawn his description of the Garden of
Eden from the lovely slopes of the Pratomagno. You, ardent lover of the English classics, may
recall a passage in the first book of "Paradise Lost," in which Milton speaks of Fiesole and
Valdarno, and of

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"Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades
High overarch'd embower."

As Katharine is a delightful cicerone, intelligent and appreciative, her enthusiasm well balanced
by common sense, we were charmed by the prospect of three days in her good company, and
when she asked us what we would do to-day, I was about to say, properly and politely, that we
would go wherever it would please her to take us; but Zephine interposed, and solemnly
protested that it would be quite impossible for her to spend another day in Florence without
visiting the grave of Mrs. Browning. Being of a cheerful temper and not given to haunting
graveyards, Katharine seemed to have a rather vague idea of the location of the Protestant
Cemetery, but she readily consented to Zephine's request, and by dint of considerable
questioning we found it. Not an ideal Campo Santo is this, like that at Rome, where tall cypresses
shut it in from the outside world, and where the vast pyramidal Tomb of Caius Cestius
overshadows it grandly. Just outside the Porta Pinti is this Protestant burial-ground of Florence.
The old walls that once framed it in have been removed, and it now stands in the midst of dusty
highways where noisy trams pass to and fro with their freight of eager-eyed tourists. Once inside
the enclosure, we found trees and shrubbery, and roses blooming everywhere. Katharine and
Angela stood under a tree to rest beneath its grateful shade, while Zephine walked on and on as
if drawn by a magnet, I following her, until we stood before a square marble sarcophagus, simple
and dignified, with the initials E. B. B. on one side and the date June 29, 1861. A cedar-tree
stands guard by the poet's grave, one branch leaning over it protectingly, roses climb all about it,
and as we stood there, silent and reverent, a bird sang from one of the branches overhead, and,
like Browning's "wise thrush," he sang his song

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"twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!"

Standing by the grave of the English poetess in the beauty of a May day, with the blue sky above
it, the air filled with the fragrance of flowers and the songs of birds, it seemed to us that they
were wise who decided that Elizabeth Browning's tomb should be here, in this Italy that she
loved, and among the Florentines who adored her, rather than in the vast gloom of the abbey
where her husband lies and where she is by right entitled to rest among the great of England.

Two other English poets sleep in this cemetery, Arthur Hugh Clough and Walter Savage Landor.
Landor died in Florence in a house on the Via Nunziatina, in 1864. As we stood by his grave,
Zephine softly murmured Swinburne's lovely lines to his brother poet:

"So shall thy lovers, come from far,
Mix with thy name,
As morning-star with evening-star,
His faultless fame."

This afternoon, returning from Katharine's studio, which is beyond the Porta Romana, as we
passed the vast monotonous façade of Palazzo Pitti and entered the Via Maggio, we were
attracted by a tall gray house with a white tablet above its first-floor windows. "The Casa Guidi!"
exclaimed Zephine, reading the words in which the Florentines recorded their love and gratitude
to the woman poet who had by her golden ring of verse linked Italy to England. The well-known
lines by the poet Tommaseo are inscribed in letters of gold upon the marble tablet, in Italian of
course, but I am quite sure that Zephine could read an inscription to the Brownings in
Hindustani. After lingering long before the windows of the *primo piano*, which will always be
associated with the Brownings, we walked around the corner to the Piazza Santa Felicità and
looked up at the terrace where Mrs. Browning spent so many days, and up and down which she
described her husband as walking with the third Browning in his arms.

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I must frankly confess that we were disappointed in the terrace, as we had expected to see one of
the charming garden terraces, adorned with blooming plants and even trees, in which the Italians

delight to find rest and seclusion above the noise and dirt of the street; instead we saw only a balcony overhanging the piazza, with a few straggling plants in pots. So small is this balcony that Mr. Browning's goodly proportions must have filled all the available space, even if it was quite large enough for the fairy-like lady who sat there through long summer days. Do you remember that she wrote to Miss Mitford that she was so happy despite the intense heat that she could quite comprehend the possibility of St. Lawrence's ecstasies on a gridiron? In another letter Mrs. Browning wrote, "Here we can step out of the window on a sort of balcony terrace which is quite private, and swims over with moonlight in the evenings, and as we live upon watermelons, iced water, and figs, and all manner of fruit, we bear the heat with angelic patience and felicity which are really edifying."

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It is not strange that, with new happiness and renewed health, everything in Florence was glorified to Mrs. Browning, and that the Casa Guidi apartment, with its windows looking out upon the Pitti Palace on one side and on the other "toward the gray wall of a church, called San Felice, for good omen," seemed a bit of Paradise.

Near the Casa Guidi are several classic spots. On the right of the Via Maggio at the corner of the Via Marsili is the house where Bernardo Buontalenti lived when the great Tasso came from Ferrara to embrace him and thank him for the beautiful scenery painted by him which had contributed so much to the success of his "Aminta." The story runs, as told by Baldinucci, that after thanking Buontalenti and kissing him on the neck and forehead Tasso mounted his horse and rode away, leaving the painter as amazed as if he had beheld a vision from the world of spirits.

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A little way beyond on the same street is the house of Bianca Capello, from whose windows her delicate, fascinating face looked forth for men's undoing. Whether or not Bianca looked out from these windows "to see the Duke go by," as Mrs. Browning says, it was from her balcony here that she attracted the admiration of her first husband, Pietro Bonaventuri, with whom she eloped, and near this house he was murdered to give place to a princely suitor. The story of Bianca's marriage with the Grand Duke Francesco, of which we found accounts in several books at the all-embracing Vieusseux's, reads like a chapter of the "Arabian Nights." Never, surely, were wrongdoing and shame so gilded and glorified!—gilded literally, as the bodies of men and women were painted with gold that they might represent the deities of Olympus in the nuptial procession of Bianca, whose own car was drawn by real lions, while to other chariots were harnessed horses and buffaloes dressed in the skins of wild animals to represent griffins, unicorns, and elephants.

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At the corner of the Via Toscanella an old wall marks the site of "the darksome, sad, and silent house" where Boccaccio lived and wrote.

As we regained the Piazza Pitti and turned for one more look at the Casa Guidi windows, Angela was indiscreet enough to say what I had been thinking all the time: "After all, it does not look much like a palace, although Mrs. Browning dated some of her letters from the Palazzo Guidi. It's just like an ordinary apartment-house." Zephine vouchsafed no word in reply to this irreverent criticism, but with a withering glance at Angela strode before us along the Via Guicciardini and across the Ponte Vecchio, her head in the air and her thoughts doubtless "commencing with the skies," which were of Italy's bluest this evening. The emotions of the day had evidently been quite too much for Zephine. She left us abruptly after dinner, and shut herself up in her own room, "to think great thoughts," Angela said, while we more practical travellers turned to our Hare and our Baedeker to plan out a campaign for to-morrow.

I forgot to tell you that we went across the river this afternoon to the little American Church on the Piazza del Carmine, where there was a short service, after which we had quite enough daylight to study Masaccio's interesting frescoes in the Cappella Brancacci of the Church of the Carmine near by. There is something intensely realistic and hopelessly sad in Masaccio's Expulsion from Paradise. Here despair and anguish are portrayed in every feature and line; our first parents really suffer, as Masaccio represents them being driven by an avenging angel from the Paradise in which, according to Filippino Lippi's panel near by, they seem to have lived in a placid and rather dull content before the Fall.

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Angela reminds me of the lateness of the hour and of our early start for Vallombrosa to-morrow, whither we have elected to spend two of Katharine's holidays, thus breaking through our resolve at the very start, you see, and leaving Florence for two whole days; but as you are already familiar with my sentiments on the subject of changes of plans, I offer no apology, especially as Katharine says that one really cannot do justice to Vallombrosa in a hurried day's journey.

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XV AN EARTHLY PARADISE

The day has been spent in driving, walking, and climbing hills, yet we seem to feel no fatigue, so invigorating is this air, "mountain air, sheathed in Italian sunshine," as Mrs. Browning aptly described it. Vallombrosa is three thousand feet above Florence—small wonder that we have been ascending skyward since we drove away from Pelago this morning!

Zelphine's pet project was to stop over night at the hermitage of Il Paradisino, which is on a rock more than two hundred feet above the old monastery of Vallombrosa; but here again Katharine's common sense stood us in good stead. The inn at Il Paradisino is, she says, wretchedly kept, so we have adopted her plan and are spending the night here in comfort. We climbed up to the hermitage and chapel this evening for the sunset view of the valley of the Arno, in which Florence lies. In the far distance we could see the strangely indented line of the mountains of Carrara, with Mount Cimone, and other remote peaks of the Apennines.

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Zelphine found a copy of Mrs. Browning's letters *chez* Vieusseux, that good friend of all English-speaking travellers. We have brought the first volume with us, and are thus enjoying, in Mrs. Browning's good company, the charms of this region which she described so vividly.

Although we did not set out from Pelago at four in the morning, nor journey in a sledge drawn by white oxen, but in a carriage, even in this less picturesque conveyance we felt that we were ascending the heights of Paradise, and were awed into silence by the rugged grandeur of the scenery, the hills with their heads among the clouds, the dense pine forests and the beech and chestnut woods hanging from the mountain sides. We were at times reminded of Switzerland, although some of our fellow-travellers found a stronger likeness to Norway in the black ravines, gurgling waters, and mountain torrents; but alas and alas! as we drew near the summit, instead of Milton's

"Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view,"

we found that most of the fine trees which once adorned the ascent had been ruthlessly destroyed. They tell us that a public-spirited and beauty-loving Englishman offered to pay a fair price for some of the goodliest trees if they might only be left standing in their places; but the offer was refused, and the vandalism continues. How you will mourn these noble trees when you come here!—feeling, as you do, that the wanton destruction of trees is a crime near to that of homicide in the category of sins. Yet, in the midst of this wholesale destruction, a school has been established for the training of foresters. It is to be hoped that this Foresteria, which occupies the old monastery buildings, may disseminate so much light that in the future trees may be preserved as well as planted. We were told that thousands of trees had been planted within a short time.

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With the suppression of the monastery many of the characteristic features of Vallombrosa have disappeared, and so we may not see the place as the Brownings saw it when they came here in the summer of 1847. Do you remember how they were ingloriously expelled from the monastery at the end of five days, as Mrs. Browning says, "by a little holy abbot with a red face, who was given to sanctity and had set his face against women"? We could well understand what it would have been to those lovers of nature to spend two months, as they had planned, in the midst of the majestic beauty of this mountain paradise. We long inexpressibly to stay a week here and then take a couple of days for La Verna, where again one comes upon footprints of St. Francis and his brothers, but we all learned from our school copybooks that "time and tide wait for no man," and we have promised to be in Florence to-morrow night to meet Bertha and Mrs. Robins, who are to join us in a trip to the Certosa on the following day. Zelphine and I make solemn vows, as we have done in many other entrancing spots, that we will return to Vallombrosa some day and stay as long as we wish. These resolves comfort us, and yet—and yet—do we ever have "the time and the place and the loved one all together," especially the time? To-morrow we shall be up betimes to enjoy the early morning view from Il Paradisino, with the clouds rolling away beneath our feet to show us once again the dome of our beloved Santa Maria del Fiore above the shoulder of a hill, a sight which it is worth while climbing mountains to see, and if the day is fine, and here days usually are fine, we may even catch a glimpse of the glistening sea beyond Florence and its hills.

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PENSION C., FLORENCE, May 12th.

We found Ludovico's cards on our return from Vallombrosa. He had come quite unexpectedly on military business, so he says, for of course he returned later in the evening and we had a long talk with him. He proposes to act as our guide here, as in the old Roman days, and is planning a number of delightful excursions for us. As the sun is very hot now we are glad to spend our mornings in the galleries and churches, which are delightfully cool.

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This morning, to our surprise, and also, I think, to Ludovico's, the Marquis de B. appeared. He also has come upon military business, being in the army, like most young Italians of good family. Indeed, as Ludovico ingenuously remarked, the other day, "There is nothing else for us to do, unless we go into the Church or marry an American heiress; and neither of these," with perfect sang-froid and not a trace of embarrassment, "is to my taste."

Although there is nothing in the least alarming in the appearance of these sons of Mars, I must confess that their arrival has filled me with misgivings. Ludovico still bears himself with the air of frank camaraderie that charmed us when we first met him. The Marquis is formality itself, his manners simply perfection as such; what lies beyond and beneath an exterior so impressive I have never been clever enough to discover. Both of these young men address much of their conversation to Zelphine and me, after the polite Continental fashion, yet neither one misses a

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glance or a movement of Angela's, and they both furtively watch each other. It is interesting and exciting, and would be amusing were I not the chaperon and temporary guardian of this apparently unconscious charmer.

It is not easy for such good Americans as we are to adapt our tongues to foreign titles, and for some inexplicable reason "marquis" is much more difficult for us "to handle," as Angela says, than "count," and the Italian "marchese" is quite impossible. Ludovico has relieved our embarrassment by telling us that it is quite immaterial whether we call his friend "marquis" or "count," as they have both titles in his family, and several others beside.

This morning we spent in the Church of San Lorenzo, where the first Cosimo de' Medici is buried. In one of the chapels are some statuettes by Donatello and in the other the world-famous Medici tombs, the thoughtful Lorenzo, the most expressive of all marbles, and beneath him, the Dawn and Twilight, the former the finest of the four statues, the effort of waking from sleep being plainly revealed in every line. The narrow niches in which these masterpieces are placed are so out of all proportion to their size and grandeur that, as Ludovico pointed out to us, they seem to be slipping off the pitiable pedestals which support them. Do you remember what Ruskin said of these impressive figures? To him they spoke "not of morning nor evening, but of the departure and the resurrection, the twilight and the dawn of the souls of men." Zelfine and I think that those few lines give the *motif* of the statues better than any of the elaborate descriptions that have been written about them.

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May 13th.

Ludovico and Count B. accompanied us to-day on our morning stroll through the galleries. Ludovico has the excellent taste in art that seems born in these Latins, and draws our attention to the best pictures in each gallery without recourse to guide or catalogue. Count B. doubtless has good taste also, but it is not in the line of antiques at present, as he seldom withdraws his eyes from Angela's face, except when she expresses admiration or asks him some question, when he reveals his knowledge of Florentine history and tradition by long, erudite, and somewhat tiresome explanations. This morning when I expressed my preference for the Raphael Madonnas over and above all others, the Count delivered himself quite sententiously of Vasari's opinion of Andrea del Sarto's work, especially of the Madonna del Sacco, which we saw again yesterday at the Annunziata, that "for drawing, grace, and beauty of color, for liveliness and relief, no artist had ever done the like," after which he repeated Vasari's story of Michael Angelo writing to Raphael that there was "a certain sorry little scrub of a painter going about the streets of Florence who would bring the sweat to his [Raphael's] brow, if he had his chance." You know the tale; Browning refers to it in his "Andrea del Sarto." The Count told this story with a glint of humor in his handsome eyes that I have never seen there before. Zelfine says that I am not quite just to Count B. I am willing to admit that he is taller and handsomer than Ludovico and has more the air of a *grand seigneur*; but then I like Ludovico far better, and no matter what the Count says or whom he quotes to support his arguments in favor of the Del Sarto Madonnas, for tenderness and motherliness we must always come back to the Raphaels. Our two companions found us this morning lingering before the lovely Madonna with the Cardinal-bird, which in its sweetness and domesticity is, I think, only equalled by the Belle Jardinière of the Louvre. Zelfine agrees with the Count in his estimate of Del Sarto, but Angela and Ludovico are quite in sympathy with me in their loyalty to Raphael. When the work of both these great masters is so supremely beautiful, it seems absurd to be discussing their comparative merits so hotly. Which side would you take, I wonder?

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We crossed the Arno by the picture-gallery of the Ponte Vecchio, a passageway lined with portraits of dead-and-gone kings and queens, dukes and princesses, many of these latter proud Spanish ladies with whom the crafty lords of Tuscany allied themselves. How luxurious and beauty-loving were those Medici princes! Not content with a noble gallery of paintings on each side of the river, Cosimo spanned the distance between them with a third, having already turned the Florentine butchers out of the lower part of the Ponte Vecchio and given their stalls to goldsmiths, whose successors still display their wares here. Half-way across we stopped before the large windows cut in the sides of the bridge, which frame in a fine view of the heights of San Miniato upon one side and on the other of the windings of the Arno and the Cascine with its trees and shrubbery. From the bridge, by many stairs, we reached the vast salons of the Pitti Palace, which contain priceless treasures of art with which photographs and engravings have made us all familiar. We passed from one glorious Raphael to another, pausing before a superb Del Sarto or Murillo in a state of rapturous delight, until, as we stood before Fra Bartolommeo's Marriage of St. Catherine of Siena, beautiful in composition, drawing, and relief, a pleasant English voice at our side said, "Rather nice, is it not?"

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We turned to see a fresh-faced girl, who addressed this remark to the typical John Bull *en voyage*. We waited, like her, for the reply which came slowly, in a gruff voice.

"Yes, rather. A pastel?"—and in just such a tone as one might have spoken of a chromo. An Englishwoman standing near, from the London cockney district but evidently with an appreciation of art, looked at the girl compassionately, and ejaculated, "Poor lidy!" Whether the pitying tone was in consequence of the girl's art-limitations or because the pretty creature was the bride of the dull, red-faced giant, with whom she walked away, hand in hand, we shall never know, for just at this moment we heard a clock striking one. How the morning had sped away!

"It will be quite impossible to get back to the pension in time for luncheon," said Angela. Upon which Count B., with elaborate courtesy, begged us to honor him by breakfasting with him in a

little garden-café near the entrance to the Boboli Gardens. The luncheon had all been ordered in advance, this being, as we afterwards discovered, a cleverly arranged plan of the Count's and Ludovico's, and there was nothing to do but accept the invitation as graciously as it was given.

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The little garden had been converted into a bower of roses, and the table was a dream of beauty, covered with exquisite flowers, sparkling glass and silver, and, not less important to hungry sight-seers, the menu was delicious. It was all like a fairy feast to which we had been bidden by Prince Charming himself. Zephine said she would not be surprised to see a white cat or a genie appear at any moment.

"Priest and book are what we are in more danger of than white cat or genie," I whispered, as I bent over the table to admire some rare lilies that adorned its centre.

I feel as if a spell of enchantment were being spread around Angela's path, and yet she talks and laughs and is as free as air, never by word or look revealing which of her suitors she prefers, or whether she has a penchant for either. The modern girl is a study, as you well know, and Angela is not the least interesting one that I have met.

After luncheon the Count proposed that we should stroll over to the Boboli Gardens. Here in one of the marvellous pergolas, where, by the careful clipping and training of the ilexes, a refreshing twilight shade is to be found at high noon, we sought refuge from the scorching heat of the sun. Again it appeared that our host's thoughtful care had preceded us, as camp-chairs awaited us in this green bower, and here coffee and ices were served to us as if by magic, which we enjoyed in the coolness of our pergola, from which we looked forth upon the terraces beneath us, where the horse-chestnuts are covered with pink feathery bloom, and upon the old amphitheatre, the fountain, and the "cyclopean massiveness" of the walls of the great Palazzo Pitti.

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The amphitheatre was filled with children at play and nurses with babies, as it always is on the free days at the Boboli.

"Why are the boys catching so many crickets and putting them in cages?" asked Angela of Ludovico.

For several days we have noticed the children in the Cascine busily engaged in catching crickets, on the grass and among the bushes. Some of the boys go off with dozens of them, sometimes in large cages, but more frequently in a number of pretty little cages of wire or wood, all strung on a stick, a single cricket in each one.

"Yes," added Zephine, "what is the meaning of all this catching of crickets?"

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"For Grilli Day, of course," said Ludovico, laughing heartily at the idea of our not knowing anything so well known. "On the feast of the Ascension, to-morrow, you will see what the boys do with the *grilli*, and you will be buying *grilli* like the rest."

"And why should I buy crickets," asked Angela, "especially as I don't like them at all?"

"For luck, of course, signorina; everybody buys the *grilli* for luck." And then Ludovico sang, in his light, gay Italian fashion but in a voice in which a minor chord seemed to dominate the gay notes:

"Grillo, mio grillo!
Si tu vo' moglie dillo!"

To our surprise, the Count joined in Ludovico's song, in a rich bass voice that resounded through the little pergola and brought a crowd of urchins to our retreat with their hands full of *grilli* in cages. The Count laughed good-humoredly, and presented each one of us with a caged *grillo*, saying, "For luck, ladies; if the *grilli* live, the luck will be good; if not," with a shrug, "it may be good all the same."

He then insisted that Angela should buy him a *grillo* in a cage, which she did laughingly, but which he received quite seriously, looking as if he intended to guard it with his life.

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Zephine, her thirst for knowledge still unsatisfied, asked for information as to the origin of this curious custom.

"It is a custom of great antiquity," replied Ludovico, which, as we have learned by experience, is his method of silencing troublesome American questions that he is unable to answer. The Count, who appeared to be in an especially genial mood, then told us many stories and legends about the *grilli*, in which fairies and princesses figured quite prominently and goodness was rewarded and wickedness punished after the charmingly judicial fashion of fairyland. One of the prettiest of these tales we found afterwards in Mr. Leland's "Legends of Florence," in the form of a poem called "The King of the Crickets."

About four o'clock a delightful breeze sprang up, and Ludovico proposed that we drive to San Miniato. The suggestion was made apparently on the spur of the moment, and yet when we descended from our airy height to the street below, carriages were awaiting us, not ordinary cabs but fairy coaches fit for princesses.

The drive through the Porta Romana and along the hillside road of Le Colle was enchanting. The church which Michael Angelo called "La Bella Villanella" is beautiful in its simplicity. After we had admired *some* of the frescoes on the walls—not all of them—and the exquisitely wrought marble screen and pulpit, and explored the crypt with its twenty-eight columns, we were glad to

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go out upon the marble steps and enjoy from thence the view of Florence in the distance, and the intervening hills covered with olive-groves and vineyards. Count B., who had lingered with Angela in the lovely cypress avenue that leads to the church, joined us on the terrace and took us back into the nave to show us the chapel tomb of young Cardinal Jacopo of the royal house of Portugal, with its beautiful low reliefs by Luca della Robbia. Descanting eloquently upon the virtues and charity of the Portuguese cardinal, who died at an early age, Count B. led us down the steps of the church and out upon the Piazza Michelangelo, where the David stands, as best becomes him, *en plein air*. You know that the original marble, of which this is an admirable copy in bronze, was sculptured for the Piazza della Signoria. It is now carefully guarded from the elements in the Belle Arti. This noble figure is the embodiment of glorious, inextinguishable youth and strength, and is to me the most inspiring of Michael Angelo's statues.

Zelphine and I walked around the piazza to view the statue from all sides, while Count B. and Ludovico took turns in trying to keep the sun off Angela, whose complexion seems to require unusual care in these days!

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"Is there any other American girl who could resist all this devotion and a title to crown it?" asked Zelphine.

"You seem to have decided this important question for Angela," said I. "What makes you think that she will turn a deaf ear to Prince Charming's suit?"

"I cannot say just why. Angela is charmingly polite and appreciative, and yet——"

At this moment, having suddenly recalled the fact that we existed, Ludovico came over to point out to us the beauty of the Duomo from this hill-top, Giotto's pink tower glowing to rose in the warm sunset light.

Ludovico looks rather sad and distraught, to my thinking; his views may differ from Zelphine's, whose "and yet—" may be variously construed by the three onlookers who anxiously await developments.

Ascension Day, otherwise Grilli Day.

Zelphine and Angela, with the two cavaliers of the party, started off early this morning in a great stage-coach to breakfast *al fresco* in some pretty garden after the Florentine fashion. The idea of a festival here seems to be to breakfast or to dine anywhere in space except at home; consequently all Florence seems to be breakfasting abroad. The little dairies in and about the Cascine are surrounded by so many tables filled with family parties and gaily dressed folk that they look like huge bouquets of many-colored flowers. It is delightful to see people take their pleasure after so natural and simple a fashion as they do in these Latin countries. To be out of doors, with ever so simple a menu before them, seems to make a *fiesta* for these light-hearted people.

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Although I admire the Florentine custom, I was glad to stay at home to-day to write letters and to sit in the Cascine, as I am doing this minute, where the great trees spread "their webs of full greenery" above me and the children are playing all around on the grass.

I was rejoicing in the beauty and restfulness of this lovely spot, having up to this time escaped the vendors of *grilli*, when several boys approached me with their crickets in especially pretty cages. "Quanto?" I asked, pointing to a dainty wire cage. "Una lira," was the reply. This was too much by half, and having managed to reduce the price to the proper sum, I handed the boy a lira, and waited for the change with the cage in my hand. The small salesman seemed to have considerable difficulty in finding the desired change, turned out his pockets, questioned his companions, and finally rubbed his eyes hard and began to weep piteously. At this moment a policeman appeared, and asked the boy what troubled him, when he, accomplished actor that he was, pointed to the cage in my hand, and explained that I had taken his wares and not paid him the half lira demanded. To prove this he pointed to his empty pockets. What he had done with my lira, whether he had swallowed it or deposited it with a confederate, I know not. The policeman, looking very stern, asked me for an explanation, which I gave in the best Italian that I could muster, feeling quite sure that had Zelphine been there, her ready tongue and eloquent gestures would have convinced that distrustful policeman of my innocence. An Englishwoman who had witnessed the transaction approached, and gave in her testimony in much better Italian than mine, all to no purpose.

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By this time quite a crowd had gathered around us, all deeply interested. The boy, encouraged by a sympathetic audience, wept copiously and repeated his tale of woe; the big policeman looked at me threateningly. My English ally repeated her explanation, and seeing that it made no impression, and the lira not being in the boy's hands, she whispered to me, "You had better pay him again for the cage; the policeman is evidently on the boy's side, and between them they may make a disagreeable scene for you." "Never," I replied, resolutely, "but he shall have his cage again," handing it to the little gamin, saying, "I have paid for it twice already, but you may have it."

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The scene was already sufficiently disagreeable, and, supported by my English friend, I made my way to another part of the Cascine, with visions of a Florentine court and jail floating through my mind.

"That is one of the stock tricks of these gamins," she explained. "It would have been all right if

you had given him the half lira at once, but with the whole lira in his hand there came the temptation to keep it all. These people see so little money, a lira is quite a fortune to them."

The *grilli* had certainly brought me no luck, and I now carefully avoid looking at a cage, although I do want one of the pretty little wire ones to take home with me. Perhaps Ludovico will get me one. When he joined me later and heard of my experience, he was so indignant that if he could have laid hands on that small actor it is doubtful whether his histrionic powers would have been allowed to develop to maturity. The humor of the situation did not appeal to him, as it did to Angela and Zephine.

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May 16th.

As Ludovico and Count B. do not speak of leaving Florence soon, we conclude that the military affairs that keep them here must be of a rather protracted nature. They do not, however, complain of the delay, nor do we. To be escorted by two devoted cavaliers through palaces and villas and gardens of delight is an experience that one might wish to prolong indefinitely. Halcyon days are these, truly, and if storms and rain come, it is only at night, as we awake each morning to find the sun shining upon the rose-garden beneath our windows and a new day of pleasure beckoning us on.

We have had some charming afternoons in the villas near Florence. Yesterday we went to Sesto in a tram that starts from the Piazza del Duomo, and from Sesto a short walk brought us to Castello. This royal villa, which once belonged to the Medici, is full of family portraits, and some of its beautiful rooms look really home-like—"as if one could live in them," Angela said, which remark seemed greatly to amuse Count B., who has, I fancy, spent all his days in such cold, formal apartments as are to be found in most of these palaces. It was in the gardens, however, that we were tempted to linger. Those of Castello are elaborately laid out and adorned with fountains and statues, and now with the orange and lemon trees in blossom are filled with delicious fragrance. We stopped so long on the terrace under the great ilexes and beeches that the twilight had begun to fall and the nightingales to sing before we started homeward. *Usignuoli* Ludovico calls these birds of the night. He and the Count were so pleased with Zephine's delight over Castello and its nightingales that they insisted upon taking us this afternoon to Petraja, an even more elaborate villa on the heights above Castello. In this villa, which is on the southern slope of the Apennines, Scipione Ammirato wrote his celebrated history of Florence. In the last century Petraja was elaborately fitted up by Victor Emmanuel II. for Madame Mirafiore, for which reason, probably, it has not been a favorite residence of the royal family of Italy, and its lovely gardens and terraces are enjoyed only by tourists and occasional visitors.

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XVI FIESOLE

FIESOLE, Tuesday, May 17th.

We women, in the absence of our cavaliers, who will be away for two days upon some special military service, have planned to spend a day in fairyland and an evening in Bohemia. Is not that a sufficiently sensational beginning to please one of our own newspapers at home? This morning, Bertha and Mrs. Robins having joined us, we all set forth in a tram from the Piazza della Signoria for Fiesole. Half-way up the hillside we stopped at the Domenico, where Fra Angelico lived as a monk, gathering here, as one of his brothers relates, "in abundance the flowers of art which he seemed to have plucked from Paradise." One of the richest of these treasures, the Coronation of the Virgin, has been carried away to the Louvre, but there is still in the choir of the Domenico a lovely memorial of him—a Virgin Enthroned between St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist. Behind the group are five guardian angels with tributes of flowers in their hands. This and a Baptism of Christ, by Lorenzo di Credi, are the treasures of the Domenico. We stopped at La Badia and enjoyed the fine view from its terrace, and walked slowly past the Villa Landore, now shut in by tall cypresses, where Walter Savage Landor once lived. Here in these beautiful grounds described by Boccaccio in his "Valley of Ladies," surrounded by his little children and his many pets, Porigi the house-dog, the cat Cincirillo, whose original sin showed itself in a decided taste for birds, the tame martin, and the leveret, Landor spent the most peaceful years of a life that was far from happy. "Aerial Fiesole" he might well name this lovely hillside garden, in which he promised Mr. Francis Hare and his bride "grapes, figs, and nightingale concerts galore." At the Medici Villa, a favorite residence of Lorenzo the Magnificent, we admired once again the unerring taste of old Cosimo, who chose for a summer residence this favorite spot which overhangs Florence. Brunelleschi's superb dome, Giotto's belfry, Santa Maria Novella, beautiful as a bride, Santa Croce, San Marco, and San Spirito, all stood out in fairy-like beauty this lovely May morning.

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After stopping at the cathedral on the Piazza of Fiesole, and at Santa Maria Primerana to look at a tabernacle by one of the Della Robbias and a painting by Andrea da Fiesole, Angela insisted that we had done our whole duty as sight-seers and might now begin to enjoy ourselves in

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earnest. To this Bertha heartily agreed, suggesting that as we had come to Fiesole for a day of rest and recreation in the open, we should lunch on the terrace of the little hotel, and spend the afternoon in the ancient theatre.

We have learned in Florence, even better than in vast Rome, whose historic past appealed to us so insistently on all sides, that it is not in the galleries and churches, interesting as they are, that we find the most pleasure, but in the market-places and on the streets, with their chatter and life, or in sitting, as we sat to-day, on the hotel terrace, with the fertile plain spread before us and the garden at our feet, in which the peasants were singing at their tasks. Beyond are villa-dotted hills, and still beyond, the chain of distant mountains veiled in purple light, which melts into the azure sky with an indescribable charm of its own.

Florence is on the other side of Fiesole, and from the terrace we had a rural view, with nothing but hill, valley, and mountain, excepting the villas, of course, among these Vincigliata, which Katharine says we must see if we would know what a castle of the middle ages is like. Vincigliata is built on the ruins of a castle of the Bisdomini, and contains great collections of ancient furniture and armor. We shall drive out to Vincigliata in a coach and four some day, as this is a favorite afternoon excursion from the Pension C. 256

Having finished our luncheon, which was quite Italian and really delicious, we strolled down to the old amphitheatre, where we sit on the stone seats and look away toward Florence while Mrs. Robins reads to us Browning's "Old Pictures in Florence" and "Andrea del Sarto," both poems so full of the atmosphere of the beautiful city.

The other day when we were at the Annunziata, at the corner of the Via della Mandorla, we saw the little house where Andrea and his fair and false Lucrezia sat in the evenings and looked over toward "yonder sober, pleasant Fiesole." We seem to see the old-world pair sitting there

"Inside that melancholy little house
We built to be so gay with,"

Andrea with the face of an artist and dreamer, a trifle weak withal, and she with the

"Perfect eyes, and more than perfect mouth,
And the low voice my soul hears, as a bird
The fowler's pipe, and follows to the snare."

How beautiful this Lucrezia was we know from many a picture of Andrea's. Zephine and I think that the Madonna del Sacco must have been likest to her. The superb beauty of flesh and blood, line and color, so satisfies us that we do not miss the soul that seems to have been wanting in the original; or did Andrea, artist-like, give to the pictured Lucrezia graces with which his imagination endowed her? We hope so, for if he saw her as Browning represents her in his poem, he must have been indeed the most unhappy of men. 257

While I write, Angela and Zephine try to get snap-shots of us as we sit under the trees, and Katharine warns us that we shall soon have to turn our faces homeward, if we wish to be in time for the dinner in Bohemia to which she invites us.

PENSION C., Tuesday Evening.

Our evening in Bohemia was, in its way, quite as much of a success as the day in fairyland. Katharine conducted us through winding streets, whose twistings and turnings we shall never be able to follow without Ariadne's thread, to a café in a cellar, where artists most do congregate. A friend of Katharine's, an exceedingly pretty and vivacious Englishwoman, joined us at table, and amused us very much by telling us that she had sometimes been taken for an American and was said to talk like an American, which evidently pleased her very much. Did I think so? I laughed, and said that she would have to talk many different ways in order to verify the description, as that was a part of our infinite variety. She said that she had recently met a unique American man. 258

"Why unique?" asked Bertha.

"In being selfish," was the prompt reply. "All the American men I had met before were unselfish, chivalrous, ready to do anything and everything for the comfort and pleasure of the women of their party; but this man, this unique specimen, seemed to forget that we existed."

Now was not that a pleasant hearing, and are you not proud of the reputation of your compatriots?

While we were discussing national traits the cook, in white cap and apron, was broiling our beefsteak and cooking vegetables over his little charcoal fire; these he served to us smoking hot and delicious. The wine was brought on the table in a huge bottle, which was weighed before and afterwards, like the unfortunates who are fattened on cereals and predigested foods, with this difference, that the bottle lost in weight instead of gaining, and we paid for the shortage. We had an *omelette soufflée* of the lightest for our dessert, after which a man in a white paper cap handed around a tray of sweets, all manner of delicious confections on sticks, for each of which we paid one soldo. It was all delightfully novel and Bohemian, and as we strolled home by the Arno, with the sound of its rushing water in our ears, its shining breast gleaming like silver in the moonlight, we sang old songs, like college-girls, and were so happy that one drop more would have caused our cup of content to overflow in tears—and if tears had been shed it would have 259

been because some of those we care for were not here to share with us the pleasure of this day of days and this night of perfect beauty.

May 18th.

If we think of Dante and Savonarola as we cross the Piazza of the Signoria and walk through the narrow winding streets that lead from it, every old building and quaint corner recalls some line or verse of the Brownings, husband or wife. In the Via Belle Donne we naturally thought of them, as it was in this little street, which opens into the Piazza di Santa Maria Novella, that the poet lovers first made their home, and in the Cascine, where we saw some of the lovely Florentine beauties, as Mrs. Browning described them, "lean and melt to music as the band plays," and above all at the Belvedere, that crowns the many terraces of the Boboli Gardens, from which height Florence, with her domes and towers and palaces, framed in by hills of blue velvet, answers to the poet's own picture of the beautiful city, and

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"Of golden Arno, as it shoots away
Through Florence' heart beneath her bridges four!"

To-day has been devoted to Browning pilgrimages. An American woman at our table rashly asserted that Mr. Browning had made a mistake in his "Statue and the Bust" by placing the lady with the "pale brow spirit-pure" at the window of the Riccardi Palace, as it would be quite impossible for the great Duke Ferdinand to look up from the Piazza of the Annunziata at the casement of the Palazzo Riccardi, now the Prefettura, which is way over on the Piazza San Lorenzo. This statement may seem to you a trifle confusing; but it was sufficiently clear to rouse Zelfine's ire, and after breakfast we set forth determined to clear up the seeming inconsistency. In the Piazza of the Annunziata Duke Ferdinand still "rides by with the royal air," as John of Bologna has represented him, "in subtle mould of brazen shape," his face turned directly toward the one window of the palace, from which a terra-cotta bust should look forth.

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"This all answers perfectly to the description," said Angela, "except that there is no bust of the lady at the casement; it seems as if Mr. Browning had made a mistake this time. I really don't care very much, but I can't stand having that flippant, red-haired woman get the better of you, Z."

"She shall not," said Zelfine, with determination in every line of her lithe figure. "Vieusesux to the rescue!"

Zelfine set forth to gain what information might be had from the library shelves, while Angela and I crossed over to the Piazza San Lorenzo, and spent a delightful hour in studying the wonderful frescoes that adorn the chapel of the debatable Palazzo Riccardi.

Here is that most remarkable procession of the Magi winding along a rocky hillside, the perspective of the most original character: Cosimo, Pater Patriæ, well in the foreground, the Three Kings represented by the Patriarch of Constantinople, the Emperor of the East, and, youngest of the three, Lorenzo the Magnificent, on a white charger. You know the painting well, but no photograph can give you any conception of the richness of color and exquisite details of this impossible, fairy-like landscape, in which distant mountains, hovering angels, birds, beasts, and flowers unknown to this lower world, add to the variety and charm of Gozzoli's great work. It is of this fresco that Mr. Ruskin wrote, "Bright birds hover here and there in the serene sky, and groups of angels, hand joined with hand and wing with wing, glide and float through the glades of the unentangled forest."

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Angela and I were so absorbed in the beauty of the painting that we had quite forgotten about Zelfine's quest, when a voice at our side exclaimed, triumphantly:

"I have solved the riddle. The palace on the Square of the Annunziata was a Riccardi palace at the time of Mr. Browning's poem, and at the window toward which Duke Ferdinand's eyes are turned there was a bust of a lady as late as 1887. The present Palazzo Riccardi, now the Prefettura, was once a Medici palace; it was sold many years later to the Riccardi family. Here Duke Ferdinand made his feast on the night of the wedding, the one and only time that the lovers met:

"Face to face the lovers stood,
A single minute and no more,
While the bridegroom bent as a man subdued—
Bowed till his bonnet touched the floor—
For the Duke on the lady a kiss conferred,
As the courtly custom was of yore."

"Cannot you see it all?" continued Zelfine, breathlessly, quite regardless of the interest that her animated face and eager words were exciting in the little group around us,

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"the pile which the mighty shadow makes,
For Via Largo is three-parts light,
But the palace overshadows one,
Because of a crime which may God requite!"

"This crime was the murder of Duke Alessandro by his distant cousin Lorenzino, and this, you

see, fixes the fact beyond dispute that the feast was given by the Duke in this great Riccardi palace on the Square of San Lorenzo. Isn't it all wonderful and thrilling, and is there any place in the world so filled to the very brim with interest and romance as Florence?"

"No place except Rome," said Angela, true to her first love.

"Yes, but the history seems less remote here; everything seems nearer and closer, more intimate—you understand what I mean, Margaret."

When Zephine appeared at the lunch table, flushed with the joy of victory and quite ready to annihilate her scoffing adversary, whom Angela disrespectfully designated as "Red-top," she found, to her dismay, that the lady had left for Venice before noon. This is surely one of the incompletenesses of life. To think of that misguided woman proceeding on her way to scatter misinformation broadcast, when Zephine could have set her right in five minutes!

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When Bertha heard of Zephine's disappointment, she was most sympathetic, and proposed, as a congenial and solacing occupation, that we should return that afternoon to the Square of San Lorenzo and try to find the old stall where Mr. Browning, on a memorable June day, bought for a lira the little volume that contained the whole story of "The Ring and the Book."

The piazza, a market for old clothes, old furniture, and all manner of cooking-utensils, still answers to Mr. Browning's description, and here, close to the statue, which is of Giovanni delle Bande Nere, father of the first Cosimo, is just such a table full of nondescript rubbish as the one upon which the poet found the parchment-covered book which furnished him with his plot. Then at Bertha's suggestion, to humor our fancies as to the associations of the time and place, we followed in the poet's footsteps, as he described himself, walking and reading,

"on, through street and street,
At the Strozzi, at the Pillar, at the Bridge;
Till, by the time I stood at home again
In Casa Guidi by Felice Church,
Under the doorway where the black begins
With the first stone-slab of the staircase cold,
I had mastered the contents, knew the whole truth
Gathered together, bound up in this book."

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To my surprise, when we reached the doorway of the Casa Guidi, Bertha also entered "where the black begins," and began to ascend "the staircase cold."

"Where are you going?" we called after her, standing within the doorway.

"Follow me," said Bertha. "I have some friends who live in an apartment in the Casa Guidi, and we are all invited to afternoon tea here."

"Why didn't you tell us before?" asked Angela, "so that we might have made ourselves a little smart?"

"Because I wanted to give you all a surprise. My friend asked me to bring you any afternoon, so I sent a messenger to tell her that we were coming, to make sure of her being at home, as she often spends the afternoon up in the Boboli Gardens with her baby."

Alas! Bertha's artist friends do not live in the Browning apartment, as that, by some irony of fate, is in the possession of an Austrian family; but as Zephine said, with a rapturous look in her eyes, it was worth much to pass over the stairs that had known the footsteps of the two poets. Mr. and Mrs. Cobbe's apartment is on what we should call the fourth floor, which here they more encouragingly designate the third. Charming airy rooms, at the top of many stairs, we found the home of the two American artists, where a warm welcome awaited us. Later, refreshments were served to us in the large room that corresponds to Mrs. Browning's drawing-room on the floor below; but whether we ate and drank ordinary cakes and tea, or were regaled with nectar and ambrosia, Zephine and I cannot tell you. It was all so delightfully homelike and yet so filled with associations that this afternoon in the Casa Guidi will always be one of our most cherished memories, and we parted with our compatriots feeling that the old palace was an appropriate setting for artist as well as for poet lovers.

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PENSION C., FLORENCE, May 20th.

What will you say when I tell you that since writing my last letter to you I have received a proposal of marriage? M. le Marquis de B. di T., of ancient Roman lineage and irreproachable family connections, laid his heart, his hand, and his fortune at my feet—for Angela. Are you amused at my rôle? I assure you that it was not in the smallest degree amusing at the time, and the fact that the *prétendant* acted in a highly honorable manner, and did not consult Angela definitively before speaking to her stern guardian, added to the difficulties of my position. I explained, at some length, that affairs of the heart are arranged by the young people themselves in America, always, of course, with the consent of their parents and guardians—for this last unqualified statement I trust that I may be forgiven—to which I added that if Miss Haldane returned the Count's affection, we would both write to her father. After delivering myself of a series of appropriate phrases I sent for Angela, and awaited the result of the interview between the two young persons with some anxiety, as you may believe. You will be laughing at me and reflecting upon the inconsistency of women when I tell you that I felt quite disturbed over

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Angela's absolute and unequivocal dismissal of the Count's suit. He has been growing in favor with me ever since that fairy-like afternoon at the Boboli Gardens, and when he came to take a solemn and ceremonious farewell of me, assuring me that he had spent the happiest hours of his life in *our* society, and was so exquisitely courteous, so evidently anxious to save me from embarrassment, I found myself liking him almost as much as Ludovico. We shall miss him sadly, and, to add to our sorrows, Ludovico, loyal friend that he is, has gone with the Count.

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"Did you send him away, too, heartless one?" I asked Angela.

She looked at me reproachfully, her lovely blue eyes full of tears, and replied, with gentle dignity, "How can you be so unkind, Margaret? You know very well that I did not."

It appears that this is all that Zelfine and I are to hear on this most exciting subject, although we are naturally devoured with curiosity to know more. If only Count B. had not declared himself just at this time, when we were all so happy together in this beautiful Florence! I am quite sure that the affair was brought to a crisis by Angela's charming appearance last Sunday in a ravishing costume of pale blue muslin, her golden crescent of hair adorned with one of the Tuscan hats that we buy for next to nothing at the Mercato Vecchio. This particular hat was of silvery blue turned up with white roses, and became her almost as well as a coronet—so I am sure the Count thought. To-day there is nothing gay in the heavens above or on the earth beneath, as the skies, suiting themselves to our mood, are heavy and gray, and the Arno is dull green instead of lovely blue.



THE MICHAEL ANGELO WELL AT THE CERTOSA, FLORENCE

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The Convent of San Marco was decided upon as an appropriate place in which to spend this morning, and there, walking through the cloisters, adorned with their exquisite frescoes, Zelfine and I to some extent renewed our interest in life. Angela has gone off on a sketching trip to Certosa with Katharine Clarke. She has been wishing ever since she first saw it to get a sketch of the Michael Angelo well in the convent garden, and then I think that she is glad to be away from our questioning eyes for a day. Poor child! she looks pale and wan; the excitement of the last weeks has been too much for her. We are thinking seriously of leaving for Venice soon. Of course we have not seen half the things we wish to see in Florence, but we can never be quite as happy here as we have been, and Miss Morris writes from Venice, urging us to join her there for the full o' the moon.

Zelfine and I talked over our plans as we strolled through the cloisters, and in the little convent garden tried to fancy the great preacher of San Marco sitting under the "damask rose-tree," with his disciples gathered around him. The spirit of Savonarola dominates San Marco as that of St. Francis holds one spellbound in Assisi.

Some of the little cells of the brothers are adorned with exquisite frescoes by Fra Angelico, which must often have cheered their sad hearts. We stood in Savonarola's own small room, which is marked by a memorial tablet, and here in the adjoining chapel are his rosary and the crucifix before which he knelt in prayer.

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Curious and unexpected, savoring more of the pride of life than of the humility of the spirit, in

one of the cells of San Marco is an elaborate genealogical tree giving the descent of the monks. It was with some difficulty that we deciphered the name of Savonarola, now almost obliterated by the kisses of the faithful.

One of the most beautiful paintings in the convent is a Last Supper, by Ghirlandajo, in the smaller refectory. This picture, with its lovely details, decorated background, and well-spread board, does not represent poor men or fishermen at meat; but in Italy one becomes accustomed to the rich surroundings of Madonnas, saints, and apostles. Realism is not demanded; it is enough if one finds reverence and devotion; and as Mr. Henry James says of this picture, "the figures in their varied naturalness have a dignity and sweetness of attitude which admits of numberless reverential constructions." The grouping is charming, and through open arcades one looks beyond at a garden of full-fruited orange-trees, clusters of fruit are scattered over the table, strange birds fly through the air, and a peacock perched on the wall looks down upon the sacred feast. I shall always recall this painting, so lovely in composition, so rich in color, when I think of San Marco—this and Fra Angelico's beautiful Annunciation, which is familiar to us all. We shall not see them soon again, or any of the other pictures that we love so well in the Uffizi and the Pitti and the Belle Arti; instead, we shall be studying the Carpaccios in Venice.

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May 23d.

The skies have cleared to-day and life looks brighter, yet this is the anniversary of a most tragic event, the execution of Savonarola. The great Piazza della Signoria has been crowded with people all morning; there have been processions, and services in the churches, and hundreds of men and women going to offer their tribute of flowers to the memory of the great martyr for conscience' sake, until the tablet that marks the spot where Savonarola's body was burned is heaped with wreaths, crosses, and bunches of roses of various colors. Some of these offerings have cards attached to them with Savonarola's name written on them; upon others are inscriptions and sentiments, the one that most impressed us being "To Savonarola, a Martyr to Democratic Christianity." If time has its revenges, it has also its justifications!

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XVII HAPS AND HAPPENINGS

BEAU RIVAGE, VENICE, May 25th.

As we first saw Venice from the train, across a stretch of green marsh, its domes, spires, churches, and bridges seemed to rise out of the water just as you see them in Turner's pictures, with such an atmosphere as that great artist knew how to paint, veiling the delicate ethereal beauty of this bride of the sea. We were aroused from our rapt contemplation of the scene before us by the bustle and commotion of the arrival of the train and questions about luggage, hotels, and the proper fees to be given to the men who pushed our gondola off from the landing. If ever trunks are endurable it is when, as in Venice, one glides away with them in a gondola over summer seas.

There was some sort of a celebration last night, something special, I mean, for Venice must always appear more or less *en fête*. When we stepped into a gondola after dinner, the many boats with their gay pennons of all colors and the skiffs with their rich brown and yellow sails made the Grand Canal appear like a carnival of nations. And what a background for a carnival is the Canalazzo, as the Venetians call it, with its long vista of palaces, their *pali* painted in various colors, the Dogana surmounted by its curious weathercock, Fortune, aptly typifying the vicissitudes of Venice, Santa Maria della Salute glowing in the evening light with the shades of a bride rose, San Giorgio of a deep red, the Doge's Palace with its long, low water-front, the Bridge of Sighs spanning the dark canal that lies between a palace and a prison, and out on the open Piazzetta the two huge granite pillars which we see in so many pictures! One of these pillars is surmounted by the statue of St. Theodore, an ancient and now deposed patron saint of Venice, the other by the Lion of St. Mark, eager, watchful, dominant, clearly defined against the blue of the sky—for here the twilight lasts long, and far into the night the sky is of an exquisite, translucent blue such as one usually sees far north, much farther north than Venice. This is a part of the atmospheric charm, which makes it as impossible to describe this city of pearl and opaline tints and golden and crimson glows as it is to put the colors of a sunset on paper. Later the moon rose, and we floated over a silver sea, while strains of music, the cries of the gondoliers, and the songs of pleasure-parties were wafted to us across the water. Zelfine's eyes shone with rapturous delight; the excitement of the stimulating air and the beauty of the scene sent the red blood to Angela's cheeks until they flushed to as deep a rose as under the fire of the Count de B.'s most extravagant compliments, and I—well, I have no idea of how I looked, I only know that I felt as if every craving for beauty that I had known in all my life was satisfied entirely.

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Miss Morris, who had already experienced her first thrills of delight "upon such a night as this," watched us in silence and we were thus spared the distraction of voluble enthusiasm; of deep,

restrained enthusiasm there was quite enough for one gondola.

May 27th.

We are lodged in a pleasant, airy hotel on the Grand Canal where it begins to widen out toward the sea, and opposite the Island of San Giorgio Maggiore. This hotel is not absolutely in the canal, like most of the houses of this "water-logged town," as some Western traveller dubbed it, but has a strip of pavement in front, just enough dry land to make us realize that we still belong to the earth. On general principles I should say that the Venetians never sleep, for over the stone flagging between our hotel and the Canalazzo people are tramping all night, laughing, chatting, and singing. And we, in sympathy with them, sit by the windows for hours, feeling that the nights are too radiantly beautiful to be devoted to so prosaic a business as sleeping, which, as Angela remarks, "can be done in any old place." The child has so considerably refrained from having "the time of her life" in Italy and from measuring things generally by "galores," that we occasionally allow her to indulge in an innocent bit of slang.

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May 28th.

Our days glide by as swiftly as those of the "pilgrim stranger" in the hymn that we used to sing at Sunday School. We spend our mornings in churches or at the Accademia, revelling in the gorgeous canvases of Tintoretto, Titian, Paul Veronese, and Carpaccio. The color in Carpaccio's Presentation of Christ in the Temple is beautiful, and as vivid as if it had been painted yesterday, quite equal to Ghirlandajo's in his Adoration of the Magi, which we saw at the Foundling Hospital in Florence. The Child in Carpaccio's Presentation is a happy, smiling human baby, and the three little angels playing upon musical instruments are charming. The most fascinating of these cherubs, however, are in Giovanni Bellini's Madonnas at the Church of the Redentore and at the Frari. Zelfine has bought a dozen photographs of her favorite cherub in the picture in which the Madonna holds the sleeping Babe upon her lap, while the two darling cherubs play to him on mandolins. The little fellow on the right is not as pretty and chubby as his brother; but to prevent jealousy between the two I have bought some of his pictures for my collection.

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Of course we spend many hours in and around St. Mark's, for, like the bride of the Scriptures, this church is beautiful within and without. The day after our arrival, on our way home from the Posta and the Rialto, through the Merceria, a part of Venice in which one may really walk a considerable distance, we suddenly stepped into the Piazza of San Marco, with its fluttering pigeons, its arcades, its Clock-tower, and at the end the marvellous façade of the church, rich in color, its gilded mosaics glittering in the sun and the "glorious team of horses" dashing toward us. Since then, wherever we may be going, we always seem to cross the Square of St. Mark, and by sunlight or twilight or moonlight, or even electric light, by which we saw San Marco last night when we went to Florian's for ices, it is always bewilderingly beautiful. Rich and varied, "gorgeous in the wild, luxurious fancies of the East," is St. Mark's; almost too gorgeous it would be, had not time softened and mellowed its vivid colors, and if its setting were not against a sea and sky of surpassing brilliancy.

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PALAZZO REZZONICO

Our afternoons and evenings are spent on the water or at the Lido, where we have tea in the garden, or with one of our Philadelphia friends who has a cabin, after the Venetian fashion, on this narrow strip of land that runs out into the ocean. It is hot now at mid-day, and one needs to keep out of the sun between the hours of one and four; but after that there is usually a breeze and always coolness at the Lido.

We spent some hours to-day in the Palazzo Rezzonico, which now belongs to Mr. Robert Barrett Browning. One large room on the second floor is filled with furniture and pictures from the Casa Guidi in Florence, among other things Mrs. Browning's little table upon which she wrote her songs for Italy, and her small, old-fashioned, green leather writing-desk, which looked as if she had left it but yesterday, with pen and paper and some pressed flowers inside. On one side of the

room, toward the canal, in a recess in the wall, is a little shrine that the poet's son has placed here in memory of his mother. In gold letters on a white ground are the well-known lines from the tablet upon the Casa Guidi.

The poet Browning spent the last weeks of his life in a suite of rooms on the lower floor of the Palazzo Rezzonico, and here he died, which fact is recorded upon a tablet on the outside wall. We stopped to reread the inscription upon the gray palace wall. A young girl who was with her mother in a gondola quite near was reading aloud in English the Italian words upon the tablet, "Robert Browning died in this house, December 12, 1889," and the impressive and quite untranslatable "Venezia pose." With a questioning look at us she repeated the familiar lines from "De Gustibus":

"Open my heart and you will see,
Graven inside of it, 'Italy,'"

adding, "But I don't see where the poetry comes in."

Although Zephine, amiable as she is, is quite capable of withering and shrivelling with a glance any one who speaks slightingly of Robert Browning's poetry, she turned to the girl and said quite pleasantly, "No, there are no rhymes or jingles, only the deep thought of a great poet who loved Italy truly."

"Oh," exclaimed the girl, "I did not understand."

"Evidently," said Zephine, as we rowed out into the Grand Canal, "and for the same reason that Kipling's girl of 'the rag and the bone and the hank of hair' did not understand."

We really should have become used to people who do not understand, we meet so many of them.

RIVA SAN LORENZO, VERONA,

Sunday, June 5th.

You will be surprised to learn that we have quitted our beloved Venice, and quite suddenly, which is, I believe, the only way that we could have disentangled ourselves from the allurements of that fairy city. In the last week quite a number of our friends arrived from Florence and elsewhere, and there have been afternoon teas at the Lido and at Mrs. Allen's little apartment on the Grand Canal nearly opposite the palace of his superseded majesty, Don Carlos of Spain, water-parties every night, and just as we were stepping into a gondola yesterday morning, *en route* for Padua, a note was handed to Zephine containing a charming invitation from Mrs. B., to take tea and spend the afternoon with her at the Palazzino Tasso. She has been at Borca in the Dolomites for a fortnight, and wrote that she would be at home in time to receive us on Monday afternoon. So you see how difficult it was for us to get away from this fascinating place; but having planned to take this little *giro* with Miss Morris, we set our faces resolutely westward.

We spent a day at Padua, which is on the way to Verona, as there are some frescoes by Mantegna, Titian, Giotto, and Palma Vecchio that Miss Morris was particularly anxious to see. Our visit to the Basilica of St. Anthony of Padua, which with its seven domes is larger than San Marco, was not entirely satisfactory, as a high mass was being celebrated before the altar above which are the Donatello bronzes, and we were obliged to return in the afternoon or give up all thought of seeing those superb reliefs. At the Scuola del Carmine we were abundantly compensated for all other disappointments, as here we found a series of frescoes representing events in the life of the parents of the Blessed Virgin, as realistic in design and as frank in execution as the Giotto paintings in Assisi. We wondered in what fertile brain had originated the pathetic story here represented by Giotto and his pupils. Miss Morris says that she intends to look up the story of Joachim and Anna in the lives of the saints, assuring us that we shall find a continuation of their domestic trials and experiences on the walls of the Brera at Milan. No frescoes except those at Assisi have interested us as much as these, not on account of their beauty, but for their human feeling. These early Paduan masters treated sacred subjects with realistic simplicity and yet with perfect reverence and devotional spirit.

On the piazza of the Cappella San Giorgio is Donatello's fine bronze statue of General Gattamelata. This statue, the Marcus Aurelius in Rome, and the Colleoni in Venice are considered the greatest equestrian statues in the world. Beautiful as is this Gattamelata, which possesses all the spirit and grace of Donatello, it does not compare with the Colleoni. No man of bronze or marble ever sat his horse with the strength and ease with which the grand, dominant figure of the Italian *condottiere* sits his superb charger and rides out boldly into space. Miss Morris says that we may be pleased to know that Mr. Ruskin quite agreed with us about the Colleoni.

As Verona is only a two hours' ride from Padua, we reached here in time to gain a general view of its fine old sculptured buildings, arches, and bridges, and to see in the glow of sunset Diocletian's famous amphitheatre, which looks almost as large as the Coliseum and is more complete, as its stones have not been carted off so ruthlessly for the building of palaces.

This morning we saw the Casa di Romeo and the balconied home of Giulietta, sorry-looking abodes for youth and beauty such as theirs, although some of the carvings on these old buildings and the exterior frescoes still suggest bygone grandeur. A beautiful outside stairway in the Piazza dei Signori near the Scaliger tombs so charmed Miss Morris that she stopped to sketch it, while we visited the cathedral and several churches.

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We are now sitting upon a balcony—the place of all others to sit upon a balcony, even if there is not a Romeo in sight—listening to the song of the rushing Adige which flows beneath us, and looking out upon the mountains beyond. Zelfhine and I are writing, while Miss Morris and Angela make water-color sketches of the scene before us, and try to get on their brushes some of the soft, rich shades of brown and yellow that time and the light of the setting sun have given to the ancient palace of the Scaligers and to the fourteenth-century bridge that spans the river a short distance from this hotel. On the terrace beneath our balcony some Italians are dining and chatting gaily. When the lovely sunset glow has quite faded out and the evening light has deepened to twilight, we shall join them and dine *al fresco*.

To-morrow we take a train for Milan, that is, if the sketches are satisfactory; if not, we may stay here another day.

HOTEL DE L'EUROPE, June 7th.

Instead of writing to you from Milan, I am sending you another letter from Venice. A strange thing happened yesterday, or, rather, two strange things have happened. Zelfhine came to my room at the Riva San Lorenzo late on Sunday night, her face wearing the anxious look that betokens an uneasy mind.

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"What is the matter, Zelfhine?" I asked. "You look as if you were trying to make up your mind." We have long since decided that this is the mental process that is most wearing to the brain of the traveller, and I was not surprised when she said, "Yes, that is the trouble. I have attempted three separate times to answer Emily B.'s note, and I simply cannot do it."

"Oh, I took for granted that you had mailed that note on Saturday evening."

"No, Margaret, I have never written it at all. The truth is, I want to see Mrs. B. so much that I have almost decided to return to Venice to-morrow, instead of going on to Milan."

"That is rather against your principles, Zelfhine, you are so much opposed to doubling journeys and retracing steps," I said, trying to appear judicial in my tone, although I was delighted at the idea of returning to Venice, even for an afternoon.

"Yes, I know," said Zelfhine, quite penitently, "but I may not soon again have a chance of seeing Emily B. I could meet you in Milan in a day or two."

"No, Zelfhine," I said, in the tone of one who confers a distinguished favor, "I will go back to Venice with you. Angela may prefer to stay here, if Miss Morris remains."

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"Angela will go with you," said our youngest, opening her door, which was scarcely necessary, as the transom was already open. "There is a blue necklace in one of those fascinating shops up on the piazza near the Clock-tower that I have been regretting ever since we left Venice. I thought it would be an extravagance to buy it, but nothing is extravagant when you want it so much, and when this is the very last chance to get it."

"Nothing," said Zelfhine, laughing at Angela's comforting sophistry, "when your father's purse is always ready to honor your demands upon it. But what will Miss Morris say?"

That lady came to her door as if in answer to Zelfhine's question, saying, "I have been wishing that I had bought another of the pretty lace collars that they are positively giving away in one of the little shops opposite the Church of San Zaccaria. I shall not return to buy it, but will commission Angela to bring it to Milan for me."

With so many good reasons for returning to Venice, I am sure that you will agree with me in thinking that it would have been flying in the face of Providence and turning our backs upon the gifts of the gods not to have retraced our steps.

I must confess to a positive thrill of delight when I again beheld the shining water-ways of Venice. Even the great warehouses, with their heaps of gorgeous dyes and stuffs, have a picturesqueness of their own; the palaces, no matter how dilapidated they may be, stand out rich and sumptuous in the sunshine; luxuriant vines depend from their balconies and drape the seamed and cracked walls; great barges heavy with their golden freight of fruit and melons go by; and ever on the steps are the children, "those untiring spectators of life." Why those children playing on the very edge of doom do not all come to an untimely end no man knows. The very small children are often fastened by a strap to the arm of the mother or grandmother, who knits placidly while her nursling plays on the steps near the water; but for those little boys who hop in and out of boats and hang over the piers as they gaze into the canals there must be an especially detailed guardian angel—the same, probably, who saved Mr. Cross from instant death when he fell into the Grand Canal. By the way, we are stopping at the Hôtel de l'Europe, where he and George Eliot spent their honeymoon, and where this accident occurred which might have ended so tragically. You may remember that at the time there was some foolish talk about suicide; but we, who stand on these balconies and terraces overhanging the water, realize that drowning and suicidal intent do not need to go hand in hand in Venice.

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Our afternoon at the Palazzino Tasso was delightful. We had tea and much pleasant conversation with Mrs. B., in her pretty drawing-room. As she has lived long in Venice, and in consequence of her own literary connections has met most of the writers who have come here, she had many pleasant and amusing recollections to relate of the Storys, Mr. Browning, and many other great folk.

We were afterwards taken into the large garden, where dear old-fashioned pinks and tall annunciation lilies filled the air with delicious fragrance. Mrs. B. generously broke off for us great heads of lily-blooms, which we carried off with us, sweet mementos of an afternoon that was well worth coming back to Venice for.

As we drew near our hotel we noticed on the terrace a portly figure that had a familiar look, as it stood there silhouetted against the façade of the Europe. A strange light shone from Zelfphine's eyes; but it was Angela who broke the silence by exclaiming, "That gentleman on the landing really looks like Mr. Leonard!"

"It *is* Mr. Leonard," I said, as we drew nearer, and thus we recognized him first, although he was waiting there for us. He naturally did not expect to see a gondola full of women bearing tall lily-stalks in their hands, looking for all the world like part of a Venetian pageant. The smile that irradiated Walter Leonard's face, when he finally recognized the three Botticelli ladies as those he had come to seek, was beautiful to behold. The mingling of surprise and delight on Zelfphine's face entirely exonerated her from any complicity in this sudden appearance, although Angela and I chaff her unmercifully about her determination to return to see Mrs. B., and ask her if she does not believe more strongly than ever in telepathy. It was a rather curious coincidence, was it not? Yet, to quote a very trite saying, "truth is stranger than fiction."

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VILLA D'ESTE, LAKE COMO, June 15th.

Since my letter of June 7th, telling you of Mr. Leonard's sudden arrival in Venice, I have not sent you a line, not even an announcement of the engagement which of course soon followed. How or when the important affair was settled I know not. I can only tell you that the happy pair came to me with shining faces and asked for my blessing, which I freely gave. Angela has so far withheld her approval of the match, and is evidently very jealous of the "suitor," as she is pleased to call Mr. Leonard. She had begun to look upon Zelfphine as her particular property, and Mr. Leonard's attempts to propitiate this unrelenting goddess are really quite pathetic. He offers her flowers every time that he brings them to Zelfphine, and then, as he is far too polite to overlook my claims as chaperon-in-chief, I come in for my share of votive offerings.

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Zelfphine is so pleased with her own estate that she wishes to see all her friends equally happy. When Angela is pale or tired, she looks at her compassionately, and whispers to me that she is evidently regretting the Count de B. If Angela regrets any one, it is not the Count. She has long and frequent letters from Ludovico, from which she reads me choice bits, and there is always a message for me. Angela and I are naturally thrown very much upon our own resources, and the last days in Venice would have been rather dull for her had they not been enlivened by a number of entertainments given by our friends there in honor of the *fidanzati*. At one particularly charming afternoon tea, at the Lido, Angela was so much admired by a young Italian that I should have had another Count de B. affair on my hands had we not left Venice soon after. Zelfphine and Walter Leonard would have been satisfied to stay on indefinitely, spending their afternoons and evenings floating about in gondolas and their mornings in the shops buying presents for the children at home, whom the mamma elect has already adopted with enthusiasm. We were, however, fairly driven away from Venice last week by the heat and the mosquitoes, which are said to be unusually venomous this year. We have noticed that in whatever place we happen to be stopping, the disagreeables are always *unusual*.

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Having spent most of the beautiful springtime in cities, we concluded to come directly to this pretty place on Lake Como, from whence we can make day-trips to Milan, which is only a little over an hour from here. The Villa d'Este, once a royal villa, now a delightfully comfortable hotel, was for some years the home of the discarded wife of "the most elegant gentleman in Europe." The entrance-hall and stairways are handsome and imposing, and the rooms spacious and airy. We breakfast in the *salle de conversation* and dine in a great banqueting-hall. The grounds of the villa are quite extensive, and during her residence here Queen Caroline interested herself in improving them in every way, so Dr. A. tells me, for, to add to our pleasure, my "Doctor Antonio" from San Remo is spending the month of June here. He knows every inch of this beautiful region and promises us many excursions in his motor car.

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Picturesque as is the view of the lake and mountains from the front piazza and terrace, the part of the grounds that we most enjoy is the hillside behind the house, which abounds in mountain streams and cascades over which rustic bridges have been thrown, and where many wildwood paths lead to vine-covered pavilions, temples of love and temples of fame, these latter adorned with busts of distinguished men—all so odd and foreign, and so different from our idea of pleasure-grounds!

Adjoining the grounds of the Villa d'Este are those of the Villa Maximilian, which was the home of the unfortunate Archduke Maximilian and his wife during the early and happy years of their married life. The estate now belongs to a wealthy Milanese gentleman, who has had the good taste to make few changes in the house and gardens. This afternoon we all rowed across the lake to the Villa Pliniana on the opposite shore. This really classic spot owes its name to a remarkable spring of water near by, which Pliny speaks of in his letters. To-morrow we expect to make an all-day excursion to Bellagio and Cadenabbia. There are so many attractive resorts on the shores of this lake that we have not yet planned for a day in Milan at the Brera, whose wonders we hope to enjoy in the good company of Miss Morris.

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June 17th.

I have a most humiliating confession to make: yesterday, in getting off the boat at this landing, I made a misstep and sprained my ankle. It is not a serious affair, I fancy, "pas grand chose," as Dr. A. says, but it is most vexatious, as we may be obliged to stay here for a fortnight, and we really need a couple of weeks in Paris to get Zephine's trousseau and make other preparations for the wedding, which is to be in London the second week in July. I think the groom elect is secretly rejoiced over this delay, although openly most sympathetic and considerate, as it gives him a longer time here with Zephine, and really, if I had looked all over Europe for a fitting scene for an accident, and with a view to lovers, I could not have found a more suitable place than this. Mr. Leonard says that I apologize so abjectly for what is not my fault, but my misfortune, that I remind him of a story that Dr. William H. Furness used to tell of a saintly old lady who frequently and formally apologized to her assembled family for being so long a-dying.

It is inglorious, as Zephine says, to have had an accident here that I might much more conveniently have had stepping off a ferry-boat in New York or Brooklyn, to which Angela adds, "Yes, it would have been so much more up-to-date to have been thrown from an auto car, and it would certainly have been more dangerous."

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I retail these bits of conversation to prove to you that my companions are disposed to be patient and even merry over my misfortune and their delay. And I, aside from the inconvenience, have nothing to complain of. I suffer little pain, under Dr. A.'s skilful treatment, and here I am, laid up in lavender on a sofa, in a room so spacious and elegant that I think it must have been Queen Caroline's boudoir. The walls and ceiling are decorated with Loves and Graces, and the long windows open out upon a balcony from which there is a fine view of the lake and the mountains beyond. I have more books than I could read in a month, sent me by the English people in the house. Zephine and Angela bring me flowers and fruits, delicious great black cherries and a fruit unknown to us which they call *nespole*. These last I fear were stolen from Maximilian's garden, as the *nespole* hang most temptingly over the terraces there.

Dr. A. entertains me with interesting traditions of the neighborhood. This morning he brought me an old French book which gives a history of this villa, which was not, as I had supposed, a former possession of the princely house of Este, one of whose villas we saw at Tivoli. The name seems to have been purely a fancy on the part of the Queen. I am to have some passages translated for my benefit from a recent book written by an Italian upon Queen Caroline and her life at the Villa d'Este.

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"A swallow without a nest, which for many years flew from city to city in Europe, Africa, and Asia," this author calls the unhappy Queen, upon which Dr. A. shrugs his shoulders, and says that bad as her husband was, he, for his part, has little admiration for Caroline of Brunswick. I have always entertained the most profound sympathy for this unfortunate lady, and we naturally have animated discussions over her rights and wrongs. I fancy that Signor Clerci is entirely on Dr. A.'s side of the argument, otherwise he would not so cheerfully offer to read me passages about the Queen's life at the Villa d'Este.

June 19th.

Last evening, to our surprise and joy, Mrs. Coxe arrived. She had learned that we were here, and of my accident, from Miss Morris, whom she met in Milan, and came at once, like the good Samaritan that she is, to cheer and comfort me. Now that I have so agreeable a companion, the rest of my party will not hesitate to go to Milan for a day at the Brera.

Mrs. Coxe is a perfect dear, and entertains me immensely; but, with all the blessings that I have been recounting to you, I feel a bit homesick to-night. Am I not unreasonable? The truth is, I shall miss Zephine sadly if she and Mr. Leonard sail in August and if Angela and I do not return until October. Is there any chance of your getting over to England this summer? You had better come in time for the wedding.

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XVIII ANGELA'S LETTER

VILLA D'ESTE, LAKE COMO, June 27th.

DEAR MAMMA:

When you next send your only daughter abroad, I advise you to choose for her guardians and companions the young and giddy rather than the mature and sedate. Here am I, the youngest of the party and "the likeliest," as Aunt Lyddy would say, in the curious position of chaperon to my elders and betters, which is not easy, as I have never learned the art of being in two places at one time. If it were not for Mrs. Coxe I really do not know what would become of me, as my happy couples usually choose to be in different places. I generally attach myself to Z. and Mr. Leonard, who treat me with studied politeness, although I am quite sure that they would rather have me in the lake or anywhere else than just where I am, tagging after them. It seems more important to

chaperon Z. thoroughly, because she attracts so much attention. Her white hair and dark eyes always give her quite an air, and now, since Mr. Leonard's appearance upon the scene, she has dropped ten years from her shoulders and developed into a pinkness and whiteness of complexion that might cause grave doubts on the part of her chaperon were she not generally in attendance at her toilet. Why Z. should be any happier than she was before Mr. Leonard claimed her for his own I fail to understand. She had everything that heart could desire—health, good looks, plenty of money, and freedom to travel to the ends of the earth with Margaret and me, and the certainty that she could have Mr. Leonard at her feet whenever she wished, which Margaret and I think is quite an ideal position for a lover. If he had not followed Z. over here and taken advantage of her being in a strange country, with no one but two helpless women to protect her, and made love to her in gondolas by moonlight, and sighed for her under the Bridge of Sighs, and talked of their future happiness under the Ponte del Paradiso and other perfect places, I doubt whether she would have accepted him, for several years at least—and then the children! Mrs. Coxe says that Z. had better take all the pleasure she can get out of this trip, as she will not be able to get away soon again, with all those children hanging around her. But I must tell you the rest of the story, as it is simply thrilling and as good as a novel.

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For some time I have had my suspicions about Margaret. I told you how sad and depressed she was when we sailed, and what an effort she made to appear cheerful. I suppose she really did care for that Mr. Grant, although you and papa thought him a rather poor affair and not at all worthy of her. In the last two months she has been quite different, and positively gay at times, especially so on mail days. Z. and I both noticed this, or, rather, Z. did notice it before she gave up her interest in the things around her. We didn't think so much of the long letters that Margaret was always sending off to Mr. Ramsay, because, as Z. said, they were old friends, and she was quite frank about the letters and assured us that they were for his mother's entertainment as much as for Mr. Ramsay's. This sounded very nice and proper, and as Margaret always seemed a truthful person, I believed her, and so did Z., but then Z. believes in every one until they are proved to be thieves and pickpockets. What really aroused my suspicions was Margaret's absent manner, on occasions. Several times, when I have come upon her suddenly, sitting in one of the romantic seats up on Queen Caroline's terrace, with a book in her lap and her eyes gazing off into space, she has started, blushed, and begun to read her book diligently. This was of course before the accident. Since then she has been in a constant state of apology for keeping us here so long, and spends her days studying maps and guide-books to find out how fast we can travel when we are once fairly started. Mr. Leonard and Z. both assure her that they could not be happier anywhere else, and their looks certainly do not belie their words; and I tell her that nothing could please me better than to stay in this lovely, cool place, where we may make a new excursion every day, and Dr. A. is always ready to take me in his motor car if only Z. and Mr. Leonard will sit in the back of the car to do propriety. He seems to forget that I am chaperoning them; but it really doesn't make any difference so long as the proprieties are attended to—you know how much more exacting they are over here than at home.

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Count B.'s ideas of propriety used to amuse us so much when we were in Florence. He would pay me compliments by the yard about my cheeks and my hair, speeches that we should think rather bad form at home, and yet when he was walking with me, he would never by any chance go out of Margaret's or Z.'s sight. At first this made me feel uncomfortable, as if he really was afraid that I should do or say something improper. Ludovico Baldini, who has been in America long enough to know something of our ways, was much amused when I said this, but insisted that the Count was quite right, as a *jeune fille* must be rigidly shadowed by her chaperon on the Continent.

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Dr. A. is a really delightful person. We generally call him "Doctor Antonio," because he reminds Margaret of the Doctor in that queer, old, deadly romantic novel that you are so fond of, and then his Italian name is so difficult to twist around our American tongues! He and Mrs. Coxe have an occasional tilt, which helps to liven us up. She is perfectly dear and the best fun in the world, but she is a bit bossy, all the same, and sets up her opinion against the Doctor's, because, as she is so fond of saying, "Having brought up a family of eight children, of course I know more than these young physicians."

Yesterday when Dr. A. had Margaret out on the terrace in a rolling chair, he said, "To-morrow we will have a little turn in the auto car." To this Mrs. Coxe objected quite decidedly, said that it was madness to attempt so much exertion, etc. The Doctor listened to all that she had to say, with the most angelic patience, and when she was suddenly called away to receive a visitor, Margaret smiled, and said quite apologetically, "It is quite evident, Dr. A., that Mrs. Coxe is the daughter of a major-general."

"Yes, yes!" exclaimed Dr. A., shrugging his shoulders, "I quite understand. I knew the daughters of General Garibaldi, and they were just the same."

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"And," said Margaret, "we shall have our trip in the auto car?"

"Yes, yes, I never allow any one to interfere with my practice."

"Even the mother of eight grown children, all well brought up?"

The Doctor is bright and quick at catching on to our little jokes and asides. I like him so much that I had almost made up my mind to Margaret's marrying a foreigner, when—but I must not run ahead of my story, and of course I have no reason to think that he has asked her to marry him.

This afternoon (it really seems as if two whole weeks had passed since yesterday) Dr. A. said that

he thought Margaret could stand the ride to Varese, which is about eighteen miles from Como. We were all delighted, and after *déjeuner* we set forth in gay good spirits, Margaret on the front seat with Dr. A. and I behind with Zephine and Mr. Leonard.

Our way lay through a fine farming country with fertile fields and bits of woodland here and there, quite different from the rocky hillsides covered with grape-vines and olives that we have seen so much of all through Italy. The roads are fine, and a rush through the fresh air is so intoxicating to me, as you know, that even the company of two lovers, so absorbed in each other that they probably did not know whether they were in Italy or in Ireland, was quite powerless to take off the keen edge of my enjoyment, beside which I could talk to Margaret and Dr. A., who pointed out all the places of interest to us as we sped along. We did not stop in the town of Varese, as the Grand Hôtel on Lake Varese was our destination. Here we sat out in the garden overlooking the lake, with a fine view of the whole chain of the Western Alps spread before us, "a fine panorama," as the Doctor calls it. We had tea on the terrace and enjoyed ourselves generally, Dr. A. and Mr. Leonard trying which could tell the most amusing stories.

301

We flew home from Varese on the wings of the wind, far faster than we made the trip there, and as we drew up before the villa, Margaret laughing and talking to Dr. A., by far the gayest of the party, whom should we see standing on the piazza but Mr. Ramsey!

Such a curious expression crossed his face when he saw Margaret—surprise, wonder, something like pain; and she grew so pale that I expected her to faint the next minute. Dr. A. whisked a bottle of something out of his pocket and called for water and gave Margaret some drops, all in such a professional manner that Mr. Ramsay's spirits revived as quickly as if he had taken the dose himself, and by the time the invalid was ready to get out of the car both their faces were as red as peonies. The Doctor and Mr. Ramsay then shook hands in a friendly manner, which was a relief to my mind, as for the first few minutes visions of pistols and coffee at five o'clock in the morning floated through my brain. They really did glare at each other at first. As they helped Margaret out very carefully, a question suddenly occurred to me: how did Mr. Ramsay know anything about the sprained ankle? Papa always said that I would make a good detective. I turned suddenly to Mr. Leonard with my question. From his confused and unsatisfactory answer, and a quizzical look in his eyes when he met Mr. Ramsay's, I am almost certain that there has been some collusion between the two. I have been counting the days since Margaret's accident, and I find that Mr. Ramsay sailed two days after it. He took a fast steamer and landed at Southampton, all of which confirms me in my suspicion that Mr. Leonard sent him a cablegram. You don't approve of betting, mammy dear, but I am quite willing to wager my new Leghorn hat, which Margaret says is very becoming, against Z.'s fine pearl necklace, that Mr. Leonard gave her, that he had a hand in this, having learned by experience that sudden appearances are sometimes the most satisfactory ways of settling difficulties of long standing. I shall probably know all about this some day, and whatever Mr. Leonard did or did not do, he will doubtless be forgiven, as from present appearances I should say that Margaret is incapable of cherishing anger against any living thing.

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303

June 30th.

And now, dearest mammy, what do you think of my two frisky chaperons, who planned this trip for their own improvement and mine?

There is to be a double wedding, of course. Z.'s date is postponed until some time later in July; as soon as the happy day is named I will let you know.

Before I close this long letter I must tell you of the wedding journey that Margaret and Mr. Ramsay are planning—nothing less sentimental than to come back to Italy and visit all the places that she has been writing about in her letters. They, the places, will not look half so pretty in the autumn as in the spring, but that won't make much difference to them. If they invite me very cordially, I may go with them. You see, I shall be reduced to the necessity of tagging on to one of these couples, or of marrying some one myself for the sake of having a travelling companion, unless you and papa come over here and look after me a bit. Another reason for your coming: there is no proper person to give Margaret away. Mrs. Coxe says that I shall have to do it, as the dignified chaperon of the party. I really think that this and my unprotected position are sufficient reasons for papa's coming to the wedding, so make your plans, like a dear, and work papa up to the starting-point. Dr. Vernon is to join us in Paris, so Z. will be given away by her natural protector.

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Mrs. Coxe is going up to London for the wedding, and I am quite certain that Margaret's young Italian friend, Ludovico Baldini, will be there, and perhaps the Marquis de B.—who knows? I for one do not.

Margaret's ankle is almost well; she walked the length of the piazza to-day, with the Doctor on one side and Mr. Ramsay on the other. The Doctor is delighted with the improvement in his patient, and yet he looks quite serious when we talk of leaving next week for Lucerne, *en route* for Paris. Here he comes to ask me to take a spin in his auto car. As Margaret and Z. are both up on the hillside with their suitors (I have given up all attempts to chaperon them), I shall have to look up Mrs. Coxe and make her go with me. She hates automobiles, poor soul!—says they take away her breath and make her heart thump, but she will have to go all the same. I shouldn't in the least object to going with Dr. A. alone, but he would be scandalized at the mere mention of such a reckless proceeding, so Mrs. Coxe must be sacrificed to the proprieties.

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I wish you knew Dr. A. He is a perfect dear. I am sure that you would like him.

This is the longest letter that I have ever written, but then there was so much to tell you, and as Margaret seems to have forgotten how to write, some one must do it for the party. Hoping to see you and papa in Paris or London, believe me

Your affectionate daughter,
ANGELA.

Transcriber's Note:

Obvious typographical errors have been corrected.

Inconsistent spelling and hyphenation in the original document have been preserved.

The text uses the spelling/punctuation Sant' Angelo, Lung' Arno, and bell 'alma, which have been retained.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK ITALIAN DAYS AND WAYS ***

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