

LOVE or DEATH

CHAPTER IV—Continued

By
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WNU Service

But the lady Bianca de Fioravanti never heard his last words. She fell back a step, and rested, as if for support, against one of the diminutive pillars of the porch. Her face had become deathly white, her eyes stared dully at the soldier.

"What? What is his name, did you say?" she faltered.

"Lorenzo Castrocara—a captain of Valentinos!" he repeated.

"Lorenzo Castrocara?" she said in her turn, but on her lips the name seemed another, so differently did she utter it.

"Ay, Madonna," he replied.

Suddenly she gripped his arm, so that she hurt him.

"And he is wounded—to the death!" she cried with a sudden fierceness, as if it seemed to him.

"Nay; not wounded. He is to die, having been captured. That is all, Messer Tolentino will have him jump from the rock. You will have a good view from the battlements, Madonna. It is—"

She released his arm, and fell back from him in horror, cutting short his praise of the entertainment provided.

"Take me to your captain," she commanded.

He stared at her, bewildered. "And the priest?" he inquired.

"Let that wait. Take me to your captain."

The command was so imperative that he dared not disobey her. He bowed, muttering in his beard, and, turning, went up the passage again, and so out into the courtyard, the lady and her women following.

Across the intervening space Madonna Bianca's eyes met the proud glance of Messer Lorenzo's, and saw the sudden abatement of that pride, saw the faint flush that stirred at sight of her in those pale cheeks. For to the young man this was a startling apparition, seeing that—as Cesare Borgia had been careful to provide—he had no knowledge or even suspicion of her presence in San Leo.

A moment she paused, looked at him, her soul in her eyes; then she swept forward, past Bernardo, her women ever following her. Thus came she, very pale but very resolute of men, to the captain of her fortress.

Messer Tolentino bowed profoundly, uncovering, and at once explained the situation.

"Here is a young adventurer, Madonna, whom we captured last night within these walls," said he. "He is a captain in the service of Cesare Borgia."

She looked at the prisoner again standing rigid before her, and from the prisoner to her officer.

"How came he here?" she asked, her voice curiously strained.

"He climbed the rock on the southern side at the risk of his neck," said Tolentino.

"And what sought he?"

"This what we cannot precisely ascertain," Tolentino admitted. "Nor will he tell us. When captured last night he pretended to be an envoy from Duke Guidobaldo, which plainly he was not. That was but a subterfuge to escape the consequences of his rashness."

And the captain explained, with a pardonable parade of his own shrewdness, how he had at once perceived that had Messer Lorenzo been what he pretended, there would have been no need for him to have come to San Leo thus, in secret.

"Nor need to risk his neck, as you have said, by climbing the southern side, had he been employed by Cesare Borgia," said the lady.

"That is too hasty a conclusion, Madonna," Tolentino answered. "It is only on the southern side that it is possible to climb the wall; and along the summit itself there is no way round."

"To what end, then, do you conceive that he came?"

"To what end? Why, to what end but to betray the castle into the hands of the Borgia troops?" cried Tolentino, a little out of patience at such a superfluity of questions.

"You have proof of that?" she asked him, a rising inflection in her voice.

"To common sense no proof is needed of the obvious," said he sententiously, snorting a little as he spoke, out of his resentment of this feminine interference in men's affairs. "We are about to fling him back the way he came," he ended with a certain grim finality.

But Madonna Bianca paid little heed to his manner.

"Not until I am satisfied that his intentions were as you say," she replied; and her tone was every whit as firm as his, and was invested with a subtle reminder that she was the mistress paramount of San Leo, and he no more than the castellan.

He had weighed them, seeking to resolve the riddle they contained, and—be it confessed at once—wondering how he might turn the matter to his profit in this present desperate pass.

I fear you may discover here something of the villain in Messer Lorenzo. And I admit that he showed himself but little a hero of romance in that his first thought now was how he might turn to account the lady's interest in him. But if it was not exactly heroic, it was undeniably human, and if I have conveyed to you any notion that Messer Castrocara was anything more than quite ordinarily human, then my task has been ill performed indeed.

It was not so much his love of her as his love of himself, youth's natural love of life, that now showed him how he might induce her to open a door for his escape from the peril that encompassed him; And yet, lest you should come to think more ill of him than he deserves, you are to remember that he had raised his eyes to her long since, although accounting her far beyond his adventurer's reach.

She looked at him in silence for a moment. Then, with a calm too complete to be other than assumed, she spoke.

"Will you give me your arm to the battlements, Messer Lorenzo?"

A scarlet flush leapt to his cheeks; he stepped forward briskly to her side. Tolentino would still have interposed.

"Consider, Madonna," he began.

But she waved him peremptorily aside; and, after all, she was the mistress in San Leo.

Side by side the prisoner and the lady paramount moved away toward the staircase that led up to the embattled parapet. Tolentino growled his impatience, cursed himself for be-



She Looked at Him in Silence for a Moment.

ing a woman's lackey, dismissed his men in a rage, and sat down by the well in the center of the courtyard to await the end of that precious interview.

Leaning on the embattled wall, looking out over the vast, sunlit Etrurian plain, Madonna Bianca broke at last the long spell of silence that had endured between herself and Castrocara.

"I have brought you here, Ser Lorenzo," she said, "that you may tell me the true object of your visit to San Leo." Her eyes were averted from his face, her bosom heaved gently, her voice quivered never so slightly.

He cleared his throat to answer her. His resolve was now clear and definite.

"I can tell you what I did not come to do, Madonna," he answered, and his accents were almost harsh. "I did not come to betray you into the hands of your enemies. Of that I here make oath as I hope for the salvation of my soul."

It may seem perjury at the first glance; yet it was strictly true, if not the whole truth. As we have seen, he had not dreamt that she was in San Leo, or that in delivering up the

castle to Della Volpe's men he would be delivering up Madonna Bianca. Had he known of her presence, he would not, it is certain, have accepted the task. Therefore was he able to swear as he had done, and to swear truly, though he suppressed some truth.

"That much I think I knew," she answered gently.

The words and the tone if they surprised him emboldened him in his deceit, urged him along the path to which already he had set his foot. At no other time—considering what he was, and what she would have dared so much. But his was now the courage of the desperate. He stood to die, and nothing in life daunts him who is face to face with death. He threw boldly that he might at the eleventh hour win back the right to live.

"Ah, ask me not why I came," he implored her hoarsely. "I have dared much, thinking that I dared all. But now—here before you, under the glance of your angel eyes—my courage fails me. I am become a coward who was not afraid when they brought me out to die."

"Look, Madonna." He held out his hands, bruised, swollen and gashed. "I am something in this state from head to foot." He turned. "Look yonder." And he pointed down the sheer face of the cliff. "That way I came last night—in the dark, risking death at every step. You see that ledge, where there is scarce room to stand. Along that ledge I crept, to yonder wider space, and thence I leapt across that little gulf." She shuddered as she followed his tale.

"By that crevice I came upward, tearing knees and elbows, and so until I had gained the platform on the southern side, there."

"How brave!" she cried.

"How mad!" said he. "I show you this that you may know what courage then was mine, what indomitable impulse drove me hither. You would not think, Madonna, that having braved so much, I should falter now, and yet—"

He stopped, and covered his face with his hands.

She drew nearer, sidling toward him. "And yet?" said she softly and encouragingly.

"Oh! I dare not!" he cried out. "I was mad—mad!" And then by chance his tongue stumbled upon the very words to suit his case. "Indeed, I do not know what was the spirit of madness that possessed me."

He did not know! She trembled from head to foot at that admission. He did not know! But she knew. She knew, and hence the confidence with which she had interposed to brush Tolentino aside. For had he died, had the executioner driven him over the ledge in that horrible death-leap, it would have been her hands that had destroyed him.

For was it not she who had bewitched him? Was it not she who had drugged him with a love-philter—the elixirium aureum procured, from Messer Corvino Trismegistus? Did she not know that it was that elixir, burning fiercely and unappeasably in his veins, that had possessed him like a madness and brought him thither, reckless of all danger, so that he might come to her?

"Poor—poor Lorenzo!" she murmured fondly.

He started round and stared at her, very white.

"Oh, Madonna!" he cried, and sank upon one knee before her. "You have surprised my secret—my unutterable secret! Ah, let me go! Let them hurl me from the rock, and so end my wretchedness!"

It was supremely well done, the villain knew; and she were no woman but a very harpy did she now permit his death. He was prepared for a pitying gentleness toward an affliction which she must now suppose her own beauty had inspired, and so he had looked for a kindly dismissal. But he was not prepared for any such answer as she made him.

"Dear love, what are you saying? Is there no other happiness for you save that of death? Have I shown anger? Do I know aught but gladness that for me you should have dared so much?"

He gave utterance to his overmastering amazement.

"Oh, it is impossible!" he cried; and this time there was no acting in his cry.

"What is impossible?" quoth she; and, setting her hands under his elbows, she raised him gently: from his kneeling posture. "What is impossible?" she repeated when they stood face to face once more.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Sayings That Cannot Be Termed Gallant

A Spanish rhyme runs—Were a woman as little as she is good, a peapod would make her a gown and a hood.

An old English saying—If a man lose a woman and a farthing, he will be sorry he lost the farthing.

French adage—A man of straw is worth a woman of gold.

German—There are only two good women in the world—one dead, and the other can't be found.

Scottish—Honest men marry soon, wise men never.

In Fife they say—The next best thing to no wife is a good wife.

Arabian—Words are women; deeds are men.

A Persian sage says that a woman's wisdom is under her heel.

The Persian asserts that women and dragons are best out of the world.

Coriscan—Just as a good and a bad horse both need the spur, a good and a bad woman both need the stick.

—London Tit-Bits.

Nicotine in Tobacco

The percentage of nicotine varies with the kind of tobacco and with the district in which it is grown. Our domestic "cabbage-leaf" brand contains from .94 to 5 per cent of nicotine. This on the authority of the United States Department of Agriculture. The French, department of agriculture states that it finds 2.2 to 10.5 gr. in tobacco examined by their experts.

Tidy Profit in Poultry Raising

Best Records in Illinois Show Average Gain of \$2.45 on Each Hen.

Chickens may be a side line on some farms, but 234 Illinois farmers who cooperated last year with the agricultural service of the college of agriculture, University of Illinois, in keeping records on their flocks realized total profits of \$43,778.01 from their poultry raising, according to a summary of their records prepared by John Vandervort, poultry extension specialist.

Receipts and Expenses.

The total labor income which the farmers realized from their poultry amounted to \$66,588.54. Cash receipts from eggs alone amounted to \$86,154.79, while the sale of market poultry brought in cash receipts totalling \$42,778.78. The total cash receipts from all sources amounted to \$148,998.07. The bill for chicken feed on the 234 record farms amounted to \$78,276.26. There were 39,126 chickens kept on the 234 record farms, while 4,164,568 eggs were laid. This was 347,047 dozen eggs, 11,568 cases or a little more than 28 carloads of eggs of 400 cases each.

The object of the flock record project, under which the records were kept, is to point out success-promoting practices in farm poultry raising. In this connection the summary of the records brings out some striking contrasts between the best one-third of the records and the poorest one-third. In the case of egg production per hen, for instance, the average for that third of the records which were best was 118 eggs a hen, while the average for the poorest one-third was 100 eggs a hen, or one and one-half dozens a year less. With eggs at 30 cents a dozen, the average income from the hens in the poorest one-third of the records, therefore, would average 45 cents less a year than that from the hens in the best one-third of the records, Vandervort pointed out.

Culled Flocks Best.

Farmers who turned in the best one-third of the records culled out 53 per cent of their hens while those who turned in the poorest records culled only 40 per cent. Only 11 per cent of the hens died on the farms making up the best one-third, while 14 per cent died on the poorest one-third. Perhaps the most striking difference between the best one-third and the poorest one-third of the records was in point of profits from each hen. Farms from which the best records came realized an average profit of \$2.45 on each hen, while that one-third of the farms which had the poorest records realized an average profit of six-tenths of one cent on each hen. The best one-third showed net receipts of \$1.83 a hen in contrast to 88 cents from the poorest one-third, while the feed cost per hen on the best farm records was \$2.01 as compared to \$1.99 on the poorest one-third. In other words, it cost the farmers who had the poorest records about the same for feed as it did those who had the best records, Vandervort said. Farmers who turned in that one-third of the records which were best realized an average of \$1.41 return for each hour of their labor, while those who turned in the poorest records got only 25 cents for each hour or their labor.

Close culling did its full share toward boosting the profits of the farmers who turned in the best one-third of the records, Vandervort believes. These best flocks paid a profit of \$2.45 a hen, while the poorest flocks paid less than one cent a hen. In the best flocks, 53 per cent of the original number of chickens were culled out and disposed of during the year, while in the poorest flocks only 40 per cent of the birds were culled.

Kafir for Dairy Feed

A very slight advantage was found in ground kafir corn as compared with ground kafir during tests conducted at the Kansas Agricultural college. However, the advantage in producing milk and butterfat was very small. One was practically as good as the other in maintaining body weights. A basal ration of alfalfa hay and sorgho silage was used. In addition the cows received a grain ration consisting of four parts of the kafir to be compared, two parts of wheat bran and one part of linseed oil meal.

Grease Cures Lice

If your chicks begin to show signs of having some secret sorrow and seem worried and unthrifty and nervous, examine them carefully for head lice. The head louse is a peculiar parasite and quite destructive. There is a sure and easy remedy for him. He cannot endure grease. Rub the heads of affected chicks with lard after you have verified the presence of head lice by examination, and they will get almost immediate relief. Do this again in a week.

Turkey Is Dainty Eater

Turkeys are naturally dainty eaters. Not only as to quantity, but also as to quality. The turkey's food must be clean, or it sickens and dies. Clean food and live meat is the lure free range holds for turkeys. It is not proved that they won't live and thrive in confinement, but the flocks of turkeys that have thrived, though fenced in comparatively small quarters, have been given free range conditions as to fresh air, cleanliness and food.

Feed for Young Calf

Until the calf is about one month of age it should be fed sparingly about four to six pounds a day. The milk can be fed morning and evening. Some persons prefer feeding young calves three or four times a day, but this is not necessary unless the calf is a weakling. By the time the calf is a month old the milk can be increased gradually, so that by the time it is six weeks old it can be receiving ten to fifteen pounds a day.

Money Spent in Culling Chickens is Money Saved.

Who pays for advertising? Nobody, it pays for itself. Tell the world what you have to sell.

All Work and No Play Makes Jack a Dull Farmer Boy.

Give the whole family a vacation this year.

It is Not Too Late to Thin Fruit on Trees that Set Heavily.

The color, size and general quality will be improved by thinning.

Acid Soils Need an Application of Lime before Seeding to Alfalfa.

Your farm bureau or state agricultural college will test your soil.

Horses' Collars Should be Washed with Warm Water Frequently to Keep them Clean and Smooth.

If they are scraped with a knife they are likely to be rough. Collars that do not fit well, or are dirty or rough, make the horse's breasts sore.

Booklet Describes Best Uses for Salt

With Adequate Supply Cattle Develop Better.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Why and how salt should be used for grazing animals is told in a new publication, "The Use of Salt in Range Management," just issued by the United States Department of Agriculture.

The authors, W. R. Chapline and M. W. Talbot of the forest service have brought together the results of experimental work, careful observations, and studies of existing practices in the salting of live stock on western ranges.

"With an adequate quantity of salt," they say, "grazing animals develop better than they would otherwise, are more contented, and are more easily handled. Also, proper quantity and distribution of salt on the range go a long way toward controlling the grazing of live stock and obtaining satisfactory use and maintenance of the forage."

In addition to describing the results of actual experiments, the booklet gives many details regarding the proper salt allowances, kinds and grades of salt to use, kind and construction of salt containers, and the principles of adequate range salting methods for cattle, horses, sheep and goats. The use of proper salting in the control, distribution and range management of cattle is given special attention.

The circular, numbered 379-D, is now available free, as long as the supply lasts, upon application to the United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., or upon application to any district office of the forest service.

Following the exhaustion of the free supply the pamphlet can be purchased from the superintendent of public documents, Washington, D. C. for 10 cents a copy.

Notion That Farm Seeds Run Out Is Dispelled

The old notion that seed runs out if grown many years in succession on a single farm and that new seed must be brought in by purchase or by trading with the neighbors has been well dispelled from the minds of farmers. This idea was one of the worst obstacles to the cause of good seed and it took years of education and demonstration to convince crop growers that it was all wrong.

Now, instead of trading seed and getting some of the breeding of which is unknown and which may introduce weeds onto his own farm, the grower keeps his seed clean, grows pure-bred varieties, cleans and grades his seed thoroughly with the fanning mill to get rid of the small weak kernels and any foreign seed, and as a result has a high grade of pure-bred seed adapted to his particular conditions by being grown and selected on his own farm.

The effort to provide farmers with good seed, carried on by the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment association, has not only gone far toward accomplishing this purpose, but has made the state an outstanding source of supply for seed grain.

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FARM NOTES

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Horses' collars should be washed with warm water frequently to keep them clean and smooth. If they are scraped with a knife they are likely to be rough. Collars that do not fit well, or are dirty or rough, make the horse's breasts sore.

Ask for the Handy Pack P.K.



3 Handy Packs for 5¢

People who are careful of their health and strength use Wrigley's Chewing Sweets.

Because Wrigley's, besides being a delightful confection, cleans the teeth of food particles and aids digestion! It removes odors of eating or smoking.

Mouth cleanliness benefits young and old.

Peppermint Flavor GUM

Chew it "after every meal"

Chlorine Bomb for Home

A chlorine gas bomb has just been perfected by a couple of chemists of San Francisco by which the same results may be obtained in a treatment at home as that provided by more elaborate apparatus. All that is necessary is for the patient suffering from a cold to sit in a closed room for an hour after breaking off the ends of the gas bomb, which is a glass globe filled with pure, filtered chlorine gas. The escaping gas mingles with the air of the room and, it is claimed, will cure a stubborn cold.

Cuticura for Pimply Faces.

To remove pimples and blackheads smear them with Cuticura Ointment. Wash off in five minutes with Cuticura Soap and hot water. Once clear keep your skin clear by using them for daily toilet purposes. Don't fail to include Cuticura Talcum Advertisement.

Auto Enthusiasts

Martha's Vineyard, an island 25 miles long and 5 miles wide, claims the largest per capita automobile ownership in the United States. The island has a population of 4,720 and there is one automobile to every 3.77 persons. West Tisbury, one of the largest towns on the island, having a population of 892, has one automobile to every 2.7 persons.

Joyous Hours

"Is Bernice happily married?"

"Yes, indeed, her husband's away most of the time."

Enjoy GOOD HEALTH



Nature's Remedy

Relieves constipation, biliousness, sick headache A SAFE, DEPENDABLE LAXATIVE



Mother! Many Baby Ailments Can Be Easily Avoided

Teething is an ordeal that is most painful to babies at any time. But in summer the trials of teething are worse, for baby is so likely to suffer intensely with stomach and bowel troubles.

Much of baby's terrors and mother's anxiety can be avoided, however, if Teethingina is used regularly. Teethingina soothes the nerves, quickly relieves stomach and bowel troubles, inflammation of the gums, feverish conditions, and makes baby sleep better.

Teethingina is a famous baby doctor's prescription. It contains nothing that can harm baby's delicate system. For over fifty years mothers have been using it to help end the distress and suffering of their little loved ones.

Price 50c per package at all drug stores.

FREE! SEND FOR USEFUL Booklet About Babies C. J. MOFFITT CO., COLUMBUS, GA.

TEETHINA Builds Better Babies

SEND \$6.00 With Good Photograph

for beautiful hand colored miniature on porcelain in gold-plated frame, \$7.50 to postman when delivered. \$55.00 value for \$12.50 for short time.

Gay's Art Galleries, Fall River, Mass. Established in 1864.