

hands trembled, but the song bore no trace of his anxiety :

'In the depths of your eyes,
O Carmela, my soul
In calmness dwells,
There the passing day
Love's truth will find away.'

Carmela had listened attentively, knitting her brows from time to time as one who is absorbed in thought.

'Good! Good!' they shouted. 'He sings like an angel,' said one. The officer continued :

'I'll draw peace from your eyes,
O Carmela, when the toll
Of death's hour knells;
Their constant ray—
Hope's star to light the way.'

Those were the words, that was the music, precisely as they had been given on that other evening. 'Good! Good!' repeated the guests. The officer sat down in fear, not daring to look at Carmela. She had not moved, but kept her eyes riveted upon his face. 'Silence!' cried the officer, and all became still. The window was open, and music was heard from the plaza and the cheers of a crowd. It was the village band surrounded by many of the islanders, who believed that the division unexpectedly had been ordered to leave. Carmela looked toward the window. The expression on her face kept changing, and her large eyes moved from the window to the officer, from him to his guests, and then again to the window. When the music ceased a clapping of hands was heard, as had been three years before upon the same occasion. At that moment hurried steps were heard upon the stairs and a soldier entered.

'Lieutenant, the steamer is waiting.'

And the lieutenant, arising, said :

'We must go.'

Carmela, with her eyes fixed upon him, got up slowly, pushing her chair slightly aside. All the guests arose and gathered around the lieutenant. Carmela's mother entered. She kissed her daughter affectionately, and whispered: 'Have courage, my dear; he will surely return in two months.'

Carmela looked at her mother for an instant, and freeing herself slowly from the embraces, without uttering a word turned her head around to stare at the officer. His friends were thanking him and wishing him a pleasant voyage. He buckled on his sword and took his cap in his hand. Meanwhile Carmela had stepped beyond the threshold of the room in which she had been sitting, glancing rapidly and nervously from the officer to those about him; then at the orderly, then at her mother. She clasped her forehead with both hands, breathing heavily and trembling convulsively. Again they heard the music upon the plaza and the clapping of hands.

'We must go,' said the officer resolutely, and he started for the door. A long, despairing cry came from Carmela. She rushed to him and threw her arms about him, kissing him furiously upon his face and neck, crying and moaning. At last, before he could catch her, she fell upon the floor with her head at his feet.

She was saved.

Four months later, upon a beautiful night in September, when the moon was shining brightly, the steamer from Tunis that had made its usual stop in the harbour of Pantelleria was rapidly nearing the shore of Sicily. The water about them was calm and undisturbed save the path that the steamer had ploughed. The passengers were all on deck, and the beauty of the scene had awed them into silence. Apart from the rest were a young man and woman leaning over the rail with their heads close together that they seemed to touch. In the distance they could see the outline of the island they had left. They gazed long upon it without speaking, until the woman, raising her face, said :

'I am sorry to leave my village, though I have suffered no there, where I first saw you, where you gave me life once more.' And she laid her head upon her companion's shoulder.

'We shall go back there some day,' he said, turning her so that he could look upon her face and into her eyes.

'And shall we go back to your quarters?' she asked softly, 'and in the evening sit at the window from which you used to call me? Then perhaps you will sing the song I love to hear. Won't you hum it softly now?'

And with his lips to her ears he began :

'In the depths of your eyes,
O Carmela—'

Carmela threw her arms about her husband's neck and sobbed.

'My darling!' he murmured, drawing her closer to him.

When she looked up he saw a new beauty upon her face, and the moonlight showed where tears had been.

She looked pensively upon the sea, the island in the distance and at her husband, and whispered :

'It is a dream.'

'No, my darling. It is the awakening.'

And the boat glided silently on.

HER * LITTLE * HIGHNESS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF NATALY VON ESCHTROTTE.

Author of 'A Priestess of Comedy,' 'Countess Dynar,' 'A Princess of the Stage.'

BY ELISE L. LATHROP.

CHAPTER I.

THEY called him 'Valleria.' How he came by this most uncommon nickname, the old nurse who had raised Count Lankwitz's only son alone knew. In the days when she cradled little Cyprian in her arms, she had been a buxom young peasant, who knew no better lullaby for the young master than the jolly student song she heard every day in the village, with its lively refrain, 'juvalleria, juvallerleralera.'

'Juvalleria, juvallerleralera' rang in little Count Cyprian's ears from morning to night. What wonder, then, if the first word he lipped was not 'papa' or 'mamma,' but an indistinct murmur, 'valleria'! And when he would barely speak, he began to sing the song in merry Rosa's style, so drolly, that his parents finally themselves called him 'Little Valleria,' and thus gave the signal for general imitation.

Letted and spoiled as only children usually are, little Valleria ruled his father's castle from garret to cellar, but in such a gay, winning manner that no one could be angry or punish him.

Cyprian, with all his mischievous pranks, was most lovable. His golden head and roguish, laughing face seemed to radiate sunshine. He was naughty through desire for amusement, not to harm or offend others; and as he was wholly lacking in fear of punishment, he always confessed his misdeeds frankly, merrily and unconcernedly, and marched triumphantly through life like a young conqueror, to the refrain 'juvalleria, juvallerleralera.'

He had never been whipped. When the countess and his nurse and governess once complained to bitterly of his misdeeds, and declared to his father that he was getting beyond their control, Count Lankwitz formed the stern resolve to procure a switch, and one fine day a brand-new switch appeared in the nursery, and the parents, followed by the servants, went thither in solemn procession to explain to the child the terrible meaning of this instrument.

Cyprian already stood before the new acquisition, his hands in the pockets of his first pair of trousers, and anticipated his father's speech with the delighted query: 'Thunder, papa, what is that jolly night up there?'

The count looked very solemn.

'That is a switch!' said he, with terrible emphasis.

'A switch? What is it used for?'

asked his son, with a bewitching smile.

The count took it down with a somewhat unsteady hand.

'This switch is to whip you with, Cyprian,' he began, solemnly, but his well-prepared little speech was nipped in the bud by the child's delighted exclamation:

'Vallerleralera!' he cried, rushed up to his amazed father and pulled the switch from his hand. 'To whip with? That is fine!' And before the horrified spectators could recover from their surprise, his little hand wielded the birch, applying it vigorously over Rosa's shoulders and back. The nurse fled, friend Valleria rushing after her, his eyes dancing with enjoyment.

The noise died away in the distance, the count and countess gazed at each other, speechless, until the mother burst into laughter and the father sighed resignedly: 'It is a failure, Dora. The switch is there, to be sure, but Master Cyprian chooses to wield it himself.'

Neudeck was a handsome old estate, but Count Lankwitz realized that in modern times a considerable fortune is needed to keep up an estate. But the fortune he could leave his son would be small, and therefore all his and his wife's hopes centred in an old uncle, little Valleria's god father, who, they hoped, would make the child his heir. Uncle Adolf was a retired cavalry general, possessed a large fortune, and was such a confirmed old bachelor that there seemed little fear that he, the septuagenarian, would ever marry.

Uncle Adolf had announced his arrival on Cyprian's fifth birthday for a visit, and the parents had devoted their energies for weeks to drilling their unreliable little son for this momentous day. Uncle Adolf had not been favoured by nature as regarded outward charms, and was most sensitive as to his appearance and easily insulted by the faintest allusion to it.

The parents confined their efforts chiefly to preparing little Valleria to make only the most agreeable speeches to his uncle, and, contrary to their expectations, the child showed himself most obliging, and promised to treat his stern uncle most affectionately. He kept his word.

With secret delight the parents saw how lovingly the boy treated the important guest, how much taken with him Uncle Adolf was, and how the two became more and more friendly.

Guests from the neighbouring estates assembled for dinner, among them the pretty, amusing, young Baroness Bohden, whom the general had already met in the capital.

He strolled with her in the shady park, holding Cyprian's little hand tight clasped in his, proud and delighted that the child was so ready and willing to accompany him, and this was due to no calculating motives on little Cyprian's part, but because the old man, with his rough carefree, pleased him, and had all the charms of novelty.

So, to the old bachelor's especial satisfaction, he insisted upon sitting beside his uncle at dinner, and as he could empty his glass of champagne right bravely with the old man, the two became more and more sociable. Uncle Adolf was never handsome, but wine flushed his face and made it ludicrously ugly.

Cyprian thought otherwise. Never before had he seen such a face; and as he admired everything about Uncle Adolf, he made use of a momentary pause in conversation, raised his hand lovingly on the general's arm, and gazed up into his face most affectionately.

'Oh, uncle!' he cried, enthusiastically. 'What beautiful little bits of eyes you have. What splendid big ears. What a crimson nose and such a lovely, big mouth; you could easily put that melon in it.'

The effect of this love declaration was indescribable. Uncle Adolf sat paralyzed with astonishment; with crimson cheeks the guests gazed at their plates or choked and coughed. Only Count and Countess Lankwitz sat pale with despair, and knew, at this moment, that the uncle's will would certainly be different from what they hoped.

The general was and remained noticeably out of temper, rose from the table at a very early hour, and departed by the first train. Valleria continued to address him lovingly, but the general was gloomy and absent-minded, and seemed scarcely to notice his little nephew's advances.

'Now, all is over, he is furious, and he will never become reconciled!' sobbed the countess, and her husband sighed his assent. But they were mistaken. Nothing seemed to go wrong with merry little Valleria. On the contrary, he seemed an especial favourite of fortune, and the more rash he was, the more did she dog his footsteps.

Uncle Adolf died most suddenly, and his will made Cyprian sole heir. From the diary found among his possessions, the boy's parents learned what a blessing instead of, as they had feared, the reverse, the boy's words at dinner had proved.

On that very day, Uncle Adolf had been nearer love making than ever before. Cyprian's tenderness, his carefree and affectionate ways, had a kind strange emotion in the solitary old bachelor's heart. An indescribable longing for what he had never possessed, for love and domestic happiness, filled him. And just in this mood, fate threw in his way Baroness Bohden, whose grace and charms had already attracted his attention in the capital, and who, in the park at Neudeck, had fairly bewitched him with her pretty coquetry.

He had taken a sudden, passionate resolution. After dinner, when wine had loosed his tongue, he would boldly venture to lay his heart, hand and fortune at Baroness Bohden's feet.

As Alice von Bohden was penitence and dependent upon relatives, the general need have feared no refusal; but the thought of being accepted merely for his wealth tormented his sensitive heart, thirsting for love. But the girl's dark eyes gazed at him so tenderly, the red lips smiled so charmingly, and what they said was as delightful as though Alice were talking, not to an old gray-haired invalid, but to the youngest of handsome, irrepressible cavaliers. He almost persuaded himself that she really cared for him. And then—

Then came the catastrophe at the table. Cyprian's child life truly and tenderly uttered the fatal criticism of his appearance, which did not offend the general; but the laughter, the exchange of glances among the guests wounded him deeply.

And most deeply did Alice's heartless laugh, which she barely concealed with her napkin, out him. She fancied herself

hidden by the sponge, from the general's sight, and did not suspect that it was she whom he watched between the flowers. Her mocking smile banished his illusions, and he saw that Alice coquetted far more with the young officer at her side than with him.

Thus his belated dream of love was blighted, and little Valleria had unconsciously served his own fortune.

And it continued thus. There are fortunate mortals who may do what they will without ever harming themselves, and Cyprian was one of these. Careless, smiling, amusing, without being fast or dissipated, always agreeable and winning, he led a merry life, understanding admirably how to interest his governesses and tutors in anything rather than his studies.

He learned nothing, and yet knew enough to join in any conversation and to entertain people excellently with his amusing chat—a matter of which he boasted in the sunshine, delighted every eye, and was welcomed by every flower, and who yet was a careless, idle thing, without any serious object in life.

The weak parents tormented themselves with the thought that their son would never pass an examination, or have a profession, but Valleria's luck did not desert him. He was clear-headed, and the thought of wearing a handsome hussar uniform flattered his vanity. What wonder that he finally became serious at his long detention, went to work, and actually passed the necessary examination 'to be rid of school books,' and was admitted to the army.

The parents were overjoyed when they could at last embrace their twenty-year old lieutenant and Valleria, without the slightest idea of the reality of army life, departed for his new garrison in a small country town.

Subordination, service and respect were terms which conveyed no meaning to him; that a captain is a being of great importance to his youngest lieutenant, and especially in a one-company station, was something inconceivable to Cyprian, Count Lankwitz, and highly amusing to the young tyrant of Neudeck. Up to this time he had been the leader in every place that he chose to honour with his presence, and now, to and behold, a captain appeared upon the scene, a plain Mr. von Angerschatz, who dared address him in such a manner that in his first indignation Count Cyprian declared that the disgrace of an official snub could only be wiped out with blood.

The clear-headed, agreeable first lieutenant of his company had great difficulty in making the young hothed understand the impossibility of the act; but when Valleria had been assured on all sides that a subordinate officer may not challenge his superior on account of differences in matters of drill, he good-naturedly submitted to the inevitable, for his moods were as variable as April weather, and when his honour and reputation were not concerned, he was perfectly willing to look at matters on their comical side.

The captain was not an agreeable character. The duel which his youngest lieutenant had planned had, of course, come to his ears, and he could not forgive Valleria's unheard of arrogance. The young count who had taken all hearts by storm vexed and irritated him, and his crabbed nature now sought relief in annoying Valleria in every possible way.

But Valleria troubled himself no further in the matter. As he now knew that he was powerless against his superior in affairs of service, he shook off all annoyances with easy good nature. In all intercourse with Captain von Angerschatz, in barracks or exercise place, he was coolness personified, and this irritated his hothed enemy more than he suspected; but on neutral ground, in the club or society, it was Count Cyprian, the wealthy, jolly, agreeable heir, who could always amuse the public as well as himself by fresh little malicious acts, which drove the captain to despair.

On this neutral ground many a bitter fight took place, carried on, on Cyprian's part, in the best of tempers, on the captain's with ever-increasing rage and many an imprudent act. This unequal conflict was watched with especial interest by the regiment.

Valleria, always affable, good company and ever ready to help a comrade, had the full sympathy of all the men, even to the colonel, whom his youngest lieutenant's tact and repartee highly amused. Angerschatz had never been popular, and many a comrade saw in Cyprian the avenger of some slight offered to himself.

Valleria occupied a bachelor apartment, very handsome for the size of the town, with stable and yard. What wonder then if the idea suddenly occurred to him to keep a ram? Everyone laughed and thought it quite a la Valleria that the young officer busied himself for hours with this ram; and, in fact, it was rumoured that Count Lankwitz was personally training it. For what purpose? They racked their brains in vain. Was he about to surprise some little daughter of the regi-