

Thou hast brought important information; I do not deny that. I assert, even, that a great step is made toward finding Lygia; but do not cover thy news with falsehood. What is the name of that old man from whom thou hast learned that the Christians recognize each other through the sign of a fish?"

"Euricius. A poor, unfortunate old man! He reminded me of Glaucus, whom I defended from murderers, and he touched me mainly by this."

"I believe that thou didst discover him, and wilt be able to make use of the acquaintance; but thou hast given him no money. Thou hast not given him an as; dost understand me? Thou hast not given anything."

"But I helped him to lift the bucket, and I spoke of his son with the greatest sympathy. Yes, lord, what can hide before the penetration of Petronius? Well, I did not give him money, or rather, I gave it to him, but only in spirit, in intention, which, had he been a real philosopher, should have sufficed him. I gave it to him because I saw that such an act was indispensable and useful; for think, lord, how this act has won all the Christians at once to me, what access to them it has opened, and what confidence it has roused in them."

"True," said Petronius, "and it was thy duty to do it."

"For this very reason I have come to get the means to do it."

Petronius turned to Vinicius, —

"Give command to count out to him five thousand sesteritia, but in spirit, in intention."

"I will give thee a young man," said Vinicius, "who will take the sum necessary; thou wilt say to Euricius that the youth is thy slave, and thou wilt count out to the old man, in the youth's presence, this money. Since thou hast brought important tidings, thou wilt receive the same amount for thyself. Come for the youth and the money this evening."

"Thou art a real Cæsar!" said Chilo. "Permit me, lord, to dedicate my work to thee; but permit also that this evening I come only for the money, since Euricius told me that all the boats had been unloaded, and that new ones would come from Ostia only after some days. Peace be with you! Thus do Christians take farewell of one another. I will buy myself a slave woman, — that is, I wanted to say a slave man. Fish are caught with a bait, and Christians with fish. *Pax vobiscum! pax! pax! pax!*"

CHAPTER XV.

PETRONIUS TO VINICIUS:

"I send to thee from Antium, by a trusty slave, this letter, to which, though thy hand is more accustomed to the sword and the javelin than the pen, I think that thou wilt answer through the same messenger without needless delay. I left thee on a good trail, and full of hope; hence I trust that thou hast either satisfied thy pleasant desires in the embraces of Lygia, or wilt satisfy them before the real wintry wind from the summits of Soracte shall blow on the Campania. Oh, my Vinicius! may thy preceptress be the golden goddess of Cyprus; be thou, on thy part, the preceptor of that Lygian Aurora, who is fleeing before the sun of love. And remember always that marble, though most precious, is nothing of itself, and acquires real value only when the sculptor's hand turns it into a masterpiece. Be thou such a sculptor, carissime! To love is not sufficient; one must know how to love; one must know how to teach love. Though the plebs, too, and even animals, experience pleasure, a genuine man differs from them in this especially, that he makes love in some way a noble art, and, admiring it, knows all its divine value, makes it present in his mind, thus satisfying not his body merely, but his soul. More than once, when I think here of the emptiness, the uncertainty, the dreariness of life, it occurs to me that perhaps thou hast chosen better, and that not Cæsar's court, but war and love, are the only objects for which it is worth while to be born and to live.

"Thou wert fortunate in war, be fortunate also in love; and if thou art curious as to what men are doing at the court of Cæsar, I will inform thee from time to time. We are living here at Antium, and nursing our heavenly voice; we continue to cherish the same hatred of Rome, and think of betaking ourselves to Baia for the winter, to appear in public at Naples, whose inhabitants, being Greeks, will appreciate us better than that wolf brood on the banks of the Tiber. People will hasten thither from Baia, from Pompeii, Puteoli, Cumæ, and Stabia; neither applause nor

crowns will be lacking, and that will be an encouragement for the proposed expedition to Achæa.

"But the memory of the infant Augusta? Yes! we are bewailing her yet. We are singing hymns of our own composition, so wonderful that the sirens have been hiding from envy in Amphitrite's deepest caves. But the dolphins would listen to us, were they not prevented by the sound of the sea. Our suffering is not allayed yet; hence we will exhibit it to the world in every form which sculpture can employ, and observe carefully if we are beautiful in our suffering and if people recognize this beauty. Oh, my dear! we shall die buffoons and comedians!

"All the Augustians are here, male and female, not counting ten thousand servants, and five hundred she asses, in whose milk Poppæa bathes. At times even it is cheerful here. Calvia Crispinilla is growing old. It is said that she has begged Poppæa to let her take the bath immediately after herself. Lucan slapped Nigidia on the face, because he suspected her of relations with a gladiator. Sporus lost his wife at dice to Senecio. Torquatus Silanus has offered me for Eunice four chestnut horses, which this year will win the prize beyond doubt. I would not accept! Thanks to thee, also, that thou didst not take her. As to Torquatus Silanus, the poor man does not even suspect that he is already more a shade than a man. His death is decided. And knowest what his crime is? He is the great-grandson of the deified Augustus. There is no rescue for him. Such is our world.

"As is known to thee, we have been expecting Tiridates here; meanwhile Vologeses has written an offensive letter. Because he has conquered Armenia, he asks that it be left to him for Tiridates; if not, he will not yield it in any case. Pure comedy! So we have decided on war. Corbulo will receive power such as Pompeius Magnus received in the war with pirates. There was a moment, however, when Nero hesitated. He seems afraid of the glory which Corbulo will win in case of victory. It was even thought to offer the chief command to our Aulus. This was opposed by Poppæa, for whom evidently Pomponia's virtue is as salt in the eye.

"Vatinius described to us a remarkable fight of gladiators, which is to take place in Beneventum. See to what cobblers rise in our time, in spite of the saying, 'Ne sutor ultra crepidam!' Vitelius is the descendant of a cobbler;

but Vatinius is the son of one! Perhaps he drew thread himself! The actor Aliturus represented *Œdipus* yesterday wonderfully. I asked him, by the way, as a Jew, if Christians and Jews were the same. He answered that the Jews have an eternal religion, but that Christians are a new sect risen recently in Judea; that in the time of Tiberius the Jews crucified a certain man, whose adherents increase daily, and that the Christians consider him as God. They refuse, it seems, to recognize other gods, ours especially. I cannot understand what harm it would do them to recognize these gods.

"Tigellinus shows me open enmity now. So far he is unequal to me; but he is superior in this, that he cares more for life, and is at the same time a greater scoundrel, which brings him nearer Ahenobarbus. These two will understand each other earlier or later, and then my turn will come. I know not when it will come; but I know this, that as things are it must come; hence let time pass. Meanwhile we must amuse ourselves. Life of itself would not be bad were it not for Bronzebeard. Thanks to him, a man at times is disgusted with himself. It is not correct to consider the struggle for his favor as a kind of rivalry in a circus, — as a kind of game, as a struggle, in which victory flatters vanity. True, I explain it to myself in that way frequently; but still it seems to me sometimes that I am like Chilo, and better in nothing than he. When he ceases to be needful to thee, send him to me. I have taken a fancy to his edifying conversation. A greeting from me to thy divine Christian, or rather beg her in my name not to be a fish to thee. Inform me of thy health, inform me of thy love, know how to love, teach how to love, and farewell."

VINICIUS TO PETRONIUS:

"Lygia is not found yet! Were it not for the hope that I shall find her soon, thou wouldst not receive an answer; for when a man is disgusted with life, he has no wish to write letters. I wanted to learn whether Chilo was not deceiving me; and at night when he came to get the money for Euricius, I threw on a military mantle, and unobserved followed him and the slave whom I sent with him. When they reached the place, I watched from a distance, hidden behind a portico pillar, and convinced myself that Euricius was not invented. Below, a number of tens of people were unloading stones from a spacious barge, and piling them up on the bank. I

saw Chilo approach them, and begin to talk with some old man, who after a while fell at his feet. Others surrounded them with shouts of admiration. Before my eyes the boy gave a purse to Euricius, who on seizing it began to pray with upraised hands, while at his side some second person was kneeling, evidently his son. Chilo said something which I could not hear, and blessed the two who were kneeling, as well as others, making in the air signs in the form of a cross, which they honor apparently, for all bent their knees. The desire seized me to go among them, and promise three such purses to him who would deliver to me Lygia; but I feared to spoil Chilo's work, and after hesitating a moment went home.

"This happened at least twelve days after thy departure. Since then Chilo has been a number of times with me. He says that he has gained great significance among the Christians; that if he has not found Lygia so far, it is because the Christians in Rome are innumerable, hence all are not acquainted with each person in their community, and cannot know everything that is done in it. They are cautious, too, and in general reticent. He gives assurance, however, that when he reaches the elders, who are called presbyters, he will learn every secret. He has made the acquaintance of a number of these already, and has begun to inquire of them, though carefully, so as not to rouse suspicion by haste, and not to make the work still more difficult. Though it is hard to wait, though patience fails, I feel that he is right, and I wait.

"He learned, too, that they have places of meeting for prayer, frequently outside the city, in empty houses and even in sandpits. There they worship Christ, sing hymns, and have feasts. There are many such places. Chilo supposes that Lygia goes purposely to different ones from Pomponia, so that the latter, in case of legal proceedings or an examination, might swear boldly that she knew nothing of Lygia's hiding-place. It may be that the presbyters have advised caution. When Chilo discovers those places, I will go with him; and if the gods let me see Lygia, I swear to thee by Jupiter that she will not escape my hands this time.

"I am thinking continually of those places of prayer. Chilo is unwilling that I should go with him; he is afraid. But I cannot stay at home. I should know her at once, even in disguise or if veiled. They assemble in the night, but I should recognize her in the night even. I should know her

voice and motions anywhere. I will go myself in disguise, and look at every person who goes in or out. I am thinking of her always, and shall recognize her. Chilo is to come tomorrow, and we shall go. I will take arms. Some of my slaves sent to the provinces have returned empty-handed. But I am certain now that she is in the city, — perhaps not far away even. I myself have visited many houses under pretext of renting them. She will fare better with me a hundred times; where she is, whole legions of poor people dwell. Besides, I shall spare nothing for her sake. Thou writest that I have chosen well. I have chosen suffering and sorrow. We shall go first to those houses which are in the city, then beyond the gates. Hope looks for something every morning, otherwise life would be impossible. Thou sayest that one should know how to love. I knew how to talk of love to Lygia. But now I only yearn; I do nothing but wait for Chilo. Life to me is unendurable in my own house. Farewell!"

CHAPTER XVI.

BUT Chilo did not appear for some time, and Vinicius knew not at last what to think of his absence. In vain he repeated to himself that searching, if continued to a certain and successful issue, must be gradual. His blood and impulsive nature rebelled against the voice of judgment. To do nothing, to wait, to sit with folded arms, was so repulsive to him that he could not be reconciled to it in any way. To search the alleys of the city in the dark garb of a slave, through this alone, that it was useless, seemed to him merely a mask for his own inefficiency, and could give no satisfaction. His freedmen, persons of experience, whom he commanded to search independently, turned out a hundred times less expert than Chilo. Meanwhile there rose in him, besides his love for Lygia, the stubbornness of a player resolved to win. Vinicius had been always a person of this kind. From earliest youth he had accomplished what he desired with the passionateness of one who does not understand failure, or the need of yielding something. For a time military discipline had put his self-will within bounds, but also it had engrafted into him the conviction that every command of his to subordinates must be fulfilled; his prolonged stay in the Orient, among people pliant and inured to slavish obedience, confirmed in him the faith that for his "I wish" there were no limits. At present his vanity, too, was wounded painfully. There was, besides, in Lygia's opposition and resistance, and in her flight itself, which was to him incomprehensible, a kind of riddle. In trying to solve this riddle he racked his head terribly. He felt that Acte had told the truth, and that Lygia was not indifferent. But if this were true, why had she preferred wandering and misery to his love, his tenderness, and a residence in his splendid mansion? To this question he found no answer, and arrived only at a kind of dim understanding that between him and Lygia, between their ideas, between the world which belonged to him and Petronius, and the world of Lygia and Pomponia, there existed some sort of difference, some kind of misunderstanding as deep as an abyss, which nothing could fill up or make even. It seemed to him, then, that he must lose

Lygia; and at this thought he lost the remnant of balance which Petronius wished to preserve in him. There were moments in which he did not know whether he loved Lygia or hated her; he understood only that he must find her, and he would rather that the earth swallowed her than that he should not see and possess her. By the power of imagination he saw her as clearly at times as if she had been before his face. He recalled every word which he had spoken to her; every word which he had heard from her. He felt her near; felt her on his bosom, in his arms; and then desire embraced him like a flame. He loved her and called to her. And when he thought that he was loved, that she might do with willingness all that he wished of her, sore and endless sorrow seized him, and a kind of deep tenderness flooded his heart, like a mighty wave. But there were moments, too, in which he grew pale from rage, and delighted in thoughts of the humiliation and tortures which he would inflict on Lygia when he found her. He wanted not only to have her, but to have her as a trampled slave. At the same time he felt that if the choice were left him, to be her slave or not to see her in life again, he would rather be her slave. There were days in which he thought of the marks which the lash would leave on her rosy body, and at the same time he wanted to kiss those marks. It came to his head also that he would be happy if he could kill her.

In this torture, torment, uncertainty, and suffering, he lost health, and even beauty. He became a cruel and incomprehensible master. His slaves, and even his freedmen, approached him with trembling; and when punishments fell on them causelessly, — punishments as merciless as undeserved, — they began to hate him in secret; while he, feeling this, and feeling his own isolation, took revenge all the more on them. He restrained himself with Chilo alone, fearing lest he might cease his searches; the Greek, noting this, began to gain control of him, and grew more and more exacting. At first he assured Vinicius at each visit that the affair would proceed easily and quickly; now he began to discover difficulties, and without ceasing, it is true, to guarantee the undoubted success of the searches, he did not hide the fact that they must continue yet for a good while.

At last he came, after long days of waiting, with a face so gloomy that the young man grew pale at sight of him, and springing up had barely strength to ask, —

"Is she not among the Christians?"

"She is, lord," answered Chilo; "but I found Glaucus among them."

"Of what art thou speaking, and who is Glaucus?"

"Thou hast forgotten, lord, it seems, that old man with whom I journeyed from Naples to Rome, and in whose defence I lost these two fingers, — a loss which prevents me from writing. Robbers, who bore away his wife and child, stabbed him with a knife. I left him dying at an inn in Minturna, and bewailed him long. Alas! I have convinced myself that he is alive yet, and belongs in Rome to the Christian community."

Vinicius, who could not understand what the question was, understood only that Glaucus was becoming a hindrance to the discovery of Lygia; hence he suppressed his rising anger, and said,—

"If thou didst defend him, he should be thankful and help thee."

"Ah! worthy tribune, even gods are not always grateful, and what must the case be with men? True, he should be thankful. But, unhappily, he is an old man, of a mind weak and darkened by age and disappointment; for which reason, not only is he not grateful, but, as I learned from his co-religionists, he accuses me of having conspired with the robbers, and says that I am the cause of his misfortunes. That is the recompense for my fingers!"

"Scoundrel! I am certain that it was as he says," replied Vinicius.

"Then thou knowest more than he does, lord, for he only surmises that it was so; which, however, would not prevent him from summoning the Christians, and from revenging himself on me cruelly. He would have done that undoubtedly, and others, with equal certainty, would have helped him; but fortunately he does not know my name, and in the house of prayer where we met, he did not notice me. I, however, knew him at once, and at the first moment wished to throw myself on his neck. Wisdom, however, and the habit of thinking before every step which I intend to take, restrained me. Therefore, on issuing from the house of prayer, I inquired concerning him, and those who knew him declared that he was the man who had been betrayed by his comrade on the journey from Naples. Otherwise I should not have known that he gives out such a story."

"How does this concern me? Tell what thou sawest in the house of prayer."

"It does not concern thee, lord, but it concerns me just as much as my life. Since I wish that my wisdom should survive me, I would rather renounce the reward which thou hast offered, than expose my life for empty lucre; without which, I as a true philosopher shall be able to live and seek divine wisdom."

But Vinicius approached him with an ominous countenance, and began in a suppressed voice,—

"Who told thee that death would meet thee sooner at the hands of Glaucus than at mine? Whence knowest thou, dog, that I will not have thee buried right away in my garden?"

Chilo, who was a coward, looked at Vinicius, and in the twinkle of an eye understood that one more unguarded word and he was lost beyond redemption.

"I will search for her, lord, and I will find her!" cried he, hurriedly.

Silence followed, during which were heard the quick breathing of Vinicius, and the distant song of slaves at work in the garden.

Only after a while did the Greek resume his speech, when he noticed that the young patrician was somewhat pacified.

"Death passed me, but I looked on it with the calmness of Socrates. No, lord, I have not said that I refuse to search for the maiden; I desired merely to tell thee that search for her is connected now with great peril to me. On a time thou didst doubt that there was a certain Euricius in the world, and though thou wert convinced by thine own eyes that the son of my father told the truth to thee, thou hast suspicions now that I have invented Glaucus. Ah! would that he were only a fiction, that I might go among the Christians with perfect safety, as I went some time since; I would give up for that the poor old slave woman whom I bought, three days since, to care for my advanced age and maimed condition. But Glaucus is living, lord; and if he had seen me once, thou wouldst not have seen me again, and in that case who would find the maiden?"

Here he was silent again, and began to dry his tears.

"But while Glaucus lives," continued he, "how can I search for her?—for I may meet him at any step; and if I meet him I shall perish, and with me will cease all my searching."

"What art thou aiming at? What help is there? What dost thou wish to undertake?" inquired Vinicius.

"Aristotle teaches us, lord, that less things should be sacrificed for greater, and King Priam said frequently that old age was a grievous burden. Indeed, the burden of old age and misfortune weighs upon Glaucus this long time, and so heavily that death would be to him a benefit. For what is death, according to Seneca, but liberation?"

"Play the fool with Petronius, not with me! Tell what thy desire is."

"If virtue is folly, may the gods permit me to be a fool all my life. I desire, lord, to set aside Glaucus, for while he is living my life and searches are in continual peril."

"Hire men to beat him to death with clubs; I will pay them."

"They will rob thee, lord, and afterward make profit of the secret. There are as many ruffians in Rome as grains of sand in the arena, but thou wilt not believe how dear they are when an honest man needs to employ their villainy. No, worthy tribune! But if watchmen catch the murderers in the act? They would tell, beyond doubt, who hired them, and then thou wouldst have trouble. They will not point to me, for I shall not give my name. Thou art doing ill not to trust in me, for, setting aside my keenness, remember that there is a question of two other things, — of my life, and the reward which thou has promised me."

"How much dost thou need?"

"A thousand sestertia, for turn attention to this, that I must find honest ruffians, men who when they have received earnest money, will not take it off without a trace. For good work there must be good pay! Something might be added, too, for my sake, to wipe away the tears which I shall shed out of pity for Glaucus. I take the gods to witness how I love him. If I receive a thousand sestertia to-day, two days hence his soul will be in Hades; and then, if souls preserve memory and the gift of thought, he will know for the first time how I loved him. I will find people this very day, and tell them that for each day of the life of Glaucus I will withhold one hundred sestertia. I have, besides, a certain idea, which seems to me infallible."

Vinicius promised him once more the desired sum, forbidding him to mention Glaucus again; but asked what other news he brought, where he had been all the time, what he had seen, and what he had discovered. But Chilo was not able to tell much. He had been in two more houses of prayer, — had observed each person carefully, especially the

women, — but had seen no one who resembled Lygia: the Christians, however, looked on him as one of their own sect, and, since he redeemed the son of Euricius, they honored him as a man following in the steps of "Christ." He had learned from them, also, that a great lawgiver of theirs, a certain Paul of Tarsus, was in Rome, imprisoned because of charges preferred by the Jews, and with this man he had resolved to become acquainted. But most of all was he pleased by this, — that the supreme priest of the whole sect, who had been Christ's disciple, and to whom Christ had confided government over the whole world of Christians, might arrive in Rome any moment. All the Christians desired evidently to see him, and hear his teachings. Some great meetings would follow, at which he, Chilo, would be present; and what is more, since it is easy to hide in the crowd, he would take Vinicius to those meetings. Then they would find Lygia certainly. If Glaucus were once set aside, it would not be connected even with great danger. As to revenge, the Christians, too, would revenge; but in general they were peaceful people.

Here Chilo began to relate, with a certain surprise, that he had never seen that they gave themselves up to debauchery, that they poisoned wells or fountains, that they were enemies of the human race, worshipped an ass, or ate the flesh of children. No; he had seen nothing of that sort. Certainly he would find among them even people who would hide away Glaucus for money; but their religion, as far as he knew, did not incite to crime, — on the contrary, it enjoined forgiveness of offences.

Vinicius remembered what Pomponia had said to him at Acte's, and in general he listened to Chilo's words with pleasure. Though his feeling for Lygia assumed at times the seeming of hatred, he felt a relief when he heard that the religion which she and Pomponia confessed was neither criminal nor repulsive. But a species of undefined feeling rose in him that it was just that reverence for Christ, unknown and mysterious, which created the difference between himself and Lygia; hence he began at once to fear that religion and to hate it.

CHAPTER XVII.

FOR Chilo, it was really important to set aside Glaucus, who, though advanced in years, was by no means decrepit. There was considerable truth in what Chilo had narrated to Vinicius. He had known Glaucus on a time, he had betrayed him, sold him to robbers, deprived him of family, of property, and delivered him to murder. But he bore the memory of these events easily, for he had thrown the man aside dying, not at an inn, but in a field near Minturna. This one thing he had not foreseen, that Glaucus would be cured of his wounds and come to Rome. When he saw him, therefore, in the house of prayer, he was in truth terrified, and at the first moment wished to discontinue the search for Lygia. But on the other hand, Vinicius terrified him still more. He understood that he must choose between the fear of Glaucus, and the pursuit and vengeance of a powerful patrician, to whose aid would come, beyond doubt, another and still greater, Petronius. In view of this, Chilo ceased to hesitate. He thought it better to have small enemies than great ones, and, though his cowardly nature trembled somewhat at bloody methods, he saw the need of killing Glaucus through the aid of other hands.

At present the only question with him was the choice of people, and to this he was turning that thought of which he had made mention to Vinicius. Spending his nights in wine-shops most frequently, and lodging in them, among men without a roof, without faith or honor, he could find persons easily to undertake any task, and still more easily others who, if they sniffed coin on his person, would begin, but when they had received earnest money, would extort the whole sum by threatening to deliver him to justice. Besides, for a certain time past Chilo had felt a repulsion for nakedness, for those disgusting and terrible figures lurking about suspected houses in the Subura or in the Trans-Tiber. Measuring everything with his own measure, and not having fathomed sufficiently the Christians or their religion, he judged that among them, too, he could find willing tools. Since they seemed more reliable than others, he resolved to turn to them and present the affair in such fashion that they

would undertake it, not for money's sake merely, but through devotion.

In view of this, he went in the evening to Euricius, whom he knew as devoted with whole soul to his person, and who, he was sure, would do all in his power to assist him. Naturally cautious, Chilo did not even dream of revealing his real intentions, which would be in clear opposition, moreover, to the faith which the old man had in his piety and virtue. He wished to find people who were ready for anything, and to talk with them of the affair only in such a way that, out of regard to themselves, they would guard it as an eternal secret.

The old man Euricius, after the redemption of his son, hired one of those little shops so numerous near the Circus Maximus, in which were sold olives, beans, unleavened paste, and water sweetened with honey, to spectators coming to the circus. Chilo found him at home arranging his shop; and when he had greeted him in Christ's name, he began to speak of the affair which had brought him. Since he had rendered them a service, he considered that they would pay him with gratitude. He needed two or three strong and courageous men, to ward off danger threatening not only him, but all Christians. He was poor, it was true, since he had given to Euricius almost all that he owned; still he would pay such men for their services if they would trust him and perform faithfully what he commanded.

Euricius and his son Quartus listened to him as their benefactor almost on their knees. Both declared that they were ready themselves to do all that he asked of them, believing that a man so holy could not ask for deeds inconsistent with the teaching of Christ.

Chilo assured them that that was true, and, raising his eyes to heaven, he seemed to be praying; in fact, he was thinking whether it would not be well to accept their proposal, which might save him a thousand sestertia. But after a moment of thought he rejected it. Euricius was an old man, perhaps not so much weighted by years as weakened by care and disease. Quartus was sixteen years of age. Chilo needed dexterous, and, above all, stalwart men. As to the thousand sestertia, he considered that — thanks to the plan which he had invented — he would be able in every case to spare a large part of it.

They insisted for some time, but when he refused decisively they yielded.

"I know the baker Demas," said Quartus, "in whose mills slaves and hired men are employed. One of those hired men is so strong that he would take the place, not of two, but of four. I myself have seen him lift stones from the ground which four men could not stir."

"If that is a God-fearing man, who can sacrifice himself for the brotherhood, make me acquainted with him," said Chilo.

"He is a Christian, lord," answered Quartus; "nearly all who work for Demas are Christians. He has night as well as day laborers; this man is of the night laborers. Were we to go now to the mill, we should find them at supper, and thou mightest speak to him freely. Demas lives near the Emporium."

Chilo consented most willingly. The Emporium was at the foot of the Aventine, hence not very far from the Circus Maximus. It was possible, without going around the hill, to pass along the river through the Porticus Æmilia, which would shorten the road considerably.

"I am old," said Chilo, when they went under the Colonnade; "at times I suffer effacement of memory. Yes, though our Christ was betrayed by one of his disciples, the name of the traitor I cannot recall at this moment—"

"Judas, lord, who hanged himself," answered Quartus, wondering a little in his soul how it was possible to forget that name.

"Oh, yes — Judas! I thank thee," said Chilo.

And they went on some time in silence. When they came to the Emporium, which was closed, they passed it, and going around the storehouse, from which grain was distributed to the populace, they turned toward the left, to houses which stretched along the Via Ostiensis, up to the Mons Testaceus and the Forum Pistorium. There they halted before a wooden building, from the interior of which came the noise of millstones. Quartus went in; but Chilo, who did not like to show himself to large numbers of people, and was in continual dread that some fate might bring him to meet Glaucus, remained outside.

"I am curious about that Hercules who serves in a mill," said he to himself, looking at the brightly shining moon. "If he is a scoundrel and a wise man, he will cost me something; if a virtuous Christian and dull, he will do what I want without money."

Further meditation was interrupted by the return of Quartus, who issued from the building with a second man,

wearing only a tunic called "exomis," cut in such fashion that the right arm and right breast were exposed. Such garments, since they left perfect freedom of movement, were used especially by laborers. Chilo, when he saw the man coming, drew a breath of satisfaction, for he had not seen in his life such an arm and such a breast.

"Here, lord," said Quartus, "is the brother whom it was thy wish to see."

"May the peace of Christ be with thee!" answered Chilo. "Do thou, Quartus, tell this brother whether I deserve faith and trust, and then return in the name of God; for there is no need that thy gray-haired father should be left in loneliness."

"This is a holy man," said Quartus, "who gave all his property to redeem me from slavery, — me, a man unknown to him. May our Lord the Saviour prepare him a heavenly reward therefor!"

The gigantic laborer, hearing this, bent down and kissed Chilo's hand.

"What is thy name, brother?" inquired the Greek.

"At holy baptism, father, the name Urban was given me."

"Urban, my brother, hast thou time to talk with me freely?"

"Our work begins at midnight, and only now are they preparing our supper."

"Then there is time sufficient. Let us go to the river; there thou wilt hear my words."

They went, and sat on the embankment, in a silence broken only by the distant sound of the millstones and the splash of the onflowing river. Chilo looked into the face of the laborer, which, notwithstanding a somewhat severe and sad expression, such as was usual on faces of barbarians living in Rome, seemed to him kind and honest.

"This is a good-natured, dull man who will kill Glaucus for nothing," thought Chilo.

"Urban," inquired he then, "dost thou love Christ?"

"I love him from the soul of my heart," said the laborer.

"And thy brethren and sisters, and those who taught thee truth and faith in Christ?"

"I love them, too, father."

"Then may peace be with thee!"

"And with thee, father!"

Again silence set in, but in the distance the millstones were roaring, and the river was plashing below the two men.

Chilo looked with fixed gaze into the clear moonlight, and with a slow, restrained voice began to speak of Christ's death. He seemed not as speaking to Urban, but as if recalling to himself that death, or some secret which he was confiding to the drowsy city. There was in this, too, something touching as well as impressive. The laborer wept; and when Chilo began to groan and complain that in the moment of the Saviour's passion there was no one to defend him, if not from crucifixion, at least from the insults of Jews and soldiers, the gigantic fists of the barbarian began to squeeze from pity and suppressed rage. The death only moved him; but at thought of that rabble reviling the Lamb nailed to the cross, the simple soul in him was indignant, and a wild desire of vengeance seized the man.

"Urban, dost thou know who Judas was?" asked Chilo, suddenly.

"I know, I know! — but he hanged himself!" exclaimed the laborer.

And in his voice there was a kind of sorrow that the traitor had meted out punishment to himself, and that Judas could not fall into his hands.

"But if he had not hanged himself," continued Chilo, "and if some Christian were to meet him on land or on sea, would it not be the duty of that Christian to take revenge for the torment, the blood, and the death of the Saviour?"

"Who is there who would not take revenge, father?"

"Peace be with thee, faithful servant of the Lamb! True, it is permitted to forgive wrongs done ourselves; but who has the right to forgive a wrong done to God? But as a serpent engenders a serpent, as malice breeds malice, and treason breeds treason, so from the poison of Judas another traitor has come; and as that one delivered to Jews and Roman soldiers the Saviour, so this man who lives among us intends to give Christ's sheep to the wolves; and if no one will anticipate the treason, if no one will crush the head of the serpent in time, destruction is waiting for us all, and with us will perish the honor of the Lamb."

The laborer looked at Chilo with immense alarm, as if not understanding what he had heard. But the Greek, covering his head with a corner of his mantle, began to repeat, with a voice coming as if from beneath the earth, —

"Woe to you, servants of the true God! woe to you, Christian men and Christian women!"

And again came silence, again were heard only the roar of the millstones, the deep song of the millers, and the sound of the river.

"Father," asked the laborer at last, "what kind of traitor is that?"

Chilo dropped his head. "What kind of traitor? A son of Judas, a son of his poison, a man who pretends to be a Christian, and goes to houses of prayer only to complain of the brotherhood to Cæsar, — declaring that they will not recognize Cæsar as a god; that they poison fountains, murder children, and wish to destroy the city, so that one stone may not remain on another. Behold! in a few days a command will be given to the pretorians to cast old men, women, and children into prison, and lead them to death, just as they led to death the slaves of Pedanius Secundus. All this has been done by that second Judas. But if no one punished the first Judas, if no one took vengeance on him, if no one defended Christ in the hour of torment, who will punish this one, who will destroy the serpent before Cæsar hears him, who will destroy him, who will defend from destruction our brothers in the faith of Christ?"

Urban, who had been sitting thus far on a stone, stood up on a sudden, and said, —

"I will, father."

Chilo rose also; he looked for a while on the face of the laborer, lighted up by the shining of the moon, then, stretching his arm, he put his hand slowly on his head.

"Go among Christians," said he, with solemnity; "go to the houses of prayer, and ask the brethren about Glaucus; and when they show him to thee, slay him at once in Christ's name!"

"About Glaucus?" repeated the laborer, as if wishing to fix that name in his memory.

"Dost thou know him?"

"No, I do not. There are thousands of Christians in Rome, and they are not all known to one another. But tomorrow, in Ostrianum, brethren and sisters will assemble in the night to the last soul, because a great apostle of Christ has come, who will teach them, and the brethren will point out to me Glaucus."

"In Ostrianum?" inquired Chilo. "But that is outside the city gates! The brethren and all the sisters, — at night? Outside the city gates, in Ostrianum?"

"Yes, father; that is our cemetery, between the Viæ

Salaria and Nomentana. Is it not known to thee that the Great Apostle will teach there?"

"I have been two days from home, hence I did not receive his epistle; and I do not know where Ostrianum is, for I came here not long since from Corinth, where I govern a Christian community. But it is as thou sayest, — there thou wilt find Glaucus among the brethren, and thou wilt slay him on the way home to the city. For this all thy sins will be forgiven. And now peace be with thee —"

"Father —"

"I listen to thee, servant of the Lamb."

On the laborer's face perplexity was evident. Not long before he had killed a man, and perhaps two, but the teaching of Christ forbids killing. He had not killed them in his own defence, for even that is not permitted. He had not killed them, Christ preserve! for profit. The bishop himself had given him brethren to assist, but had not permitted him to kill; he had killed inadvertently, for God had punished him with too much strength. And now he was doing grievous penance. Others sing when the millstones are grinding; but he, hapless man, is thinking of his sin, of his offence against the Lamb. How much has he prayed already and wept? How much has he implored the Lamb? And he feels that he has not done penance enough yet! But now he has promised again to kill a traitor, — and done well! He is permitted to pardon only offences against himself; hence he will kill Glaucus, even before the eyes of all the brethren and sisters, in Ostrianum to-morrow. But let Glaucus be condemned previously by the elders among the brethren, by the bishop, or by the Apostle. To kill is not a great thing; to kill a traitor is even as pleasant as to kill a bear or a wolf. But suppose Glaucus to perish innocently? How take on his conscience a new murder, a new sin, a new offence against the Lamb?

"There is no time for a trial, my son," said Chilo. "The traitor will hurry from Ostrianum straightway to Cæsar in Antium, or hide in the house of a certain patrician whom he is serving. I will give thee a sign; if thou show it after the death of Glaucus, the bishop and the Great Apostle will bless thy deed."

Saying this, he took out a small coin, and began to search for a knife at his belt; having found it, he scratched with the point on the sestertium the sign of the cross; this coin he gave to the laborer.

"Here is the sentence of Glaucus, and a sign for thee. If thou show this to the bishop after the death of Glaucus, he will forgive thee the killing which thou hast done without wishing it."

The laborer stretched out his hand involuntarily for the coin; but having the first murder too freshly in his memory just then, he experienced a feeling of terror.

"Father," said he with a voice almost of entreaty, "dost thou take this deed on thy conscience, and hast thou thyself heard Glaucus betraying his brethren?"

Chilo understood that he must give proofs, mention names, otherwise doubt might creep into the heart of the giant. All at once a happy thought flashed through his head.

"Listen, Urban," said he, "I dwell in Corinth, but I came from Kos; and here in Rome I instruct in the religion of Christ a certain serving maiden named Eunice. She serves as vestiplica in the house of a friend of Cæsar, a certain Petronius. In that house I have heard how Glaucus has undertaken to betray all the Christians; and, besides, he has promised another informer of Cæsar's, Vinicius, to find a certain maiden for him among the Christians."

Here he stopped and looked with amazement at the laborer, whose eyes blazed suddenly like the eyes of a wild beast, and his face took on an expression of mad rage and threat.

"What is the matter with thee?" asked Chilo, almost in fear.

"Nothing, father; to-morrow I will kill Glaucus."

The Greek was silent. After a while he took the arm of the laborer, turned him so that the light of the moon struck his face squarely, and examined him with care. It was evident that he was wavering in spirit whether to inquire further and bring everything out with clearness, or for that time to stop with what he had learned or surmised.

At last, however, his innate caution prevailed. He breathed deeply once and a second time; then, placing his hand on the laborer's head again, he asked, in an emphatic and solemn voice, —

"But in holy baptism the name Urban was given thee?"

"It was, father."

"Then peace be with thee, Urban!"