THE DECAMERON OF GIOVANNI BOCCACCIO VOLUME II

Faithfully Translated

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- FIFTH DAY -

NOVEL I. - Cimon, by loving, waxes wise, wins his wife Iphigenia by capture on the high seas, and is imprisoned at Rhodes. He is delivered by Lysimachus; and the twain capture Cassandra and recapture Iphigenia in the hour of their marriage. They flee with their ladies to Crete, and having there married them, are brought back to their homes.

NOVEL II. - Gostanza loves Martuccio Gomito, and hearing that he is dead, gives way to despair, and hies her alone aboard a boat, which is wafted by the wind to Susa. She finds him alive in Tunis, and makes herself known to him, who, having by his counsel gained high place in the king's favour, marries her, and returns with her wealthy to Lipari.

NOVEL III. - Pietro Boccamazza runs away with Agnolella, and encounters a gang of robbers: the girl takes refuge in a wood, and is guided to a castle. Pietro is taken, but escapes out of the hands of the robbers, and after some adventures arrives at the castle where Agnolella is, marries her, and returns with her to Rome.

NOVEL IV. - Ricciardo Manardi is found by Messer Lizio da Valbona with his daughter, whom he marries, and remains at peace with her father.

NOVEL V. - Guidotto da Cremona dies leaving a girl to Giacomino da Pavia. She has two lovers in Faenza, to wit, Giannole di Severino and Minghino di Mingole, who fight about her. She is discovered to be Giannole's sister, and is given to Minghino to wife.

NOVEL VI. - Gianni di Procida, being found with a damsel that he loves, and who had been given to King Frederic, is bound with her to a stake, so to be burned. He is recognized by Ruggieri dell' Oria, is delivered, and marries her. NOVEL VII. - Teodoro, being enamoured of Violante, daughter of Messer Amerigo, his lord, gets her with child, and is sentenced to the gallows; but while he is being scourged thither, he is recognized by his father, and being set at large, takes Violante to wife.

NOVEL VIII. - Nastagio degli Onesti, loving a damsel of the Traversari family, by lavish expenditure gains not her love. At the instance of his kinsfolk he hies him to Chiassi, where he sees a knight hunt a damsel and slay her and cause her to be devoured by two dogs. He bids his kinsfolk and the lady that he loves to breakfast. During the meal the said damsel is torn in pieces before the eyes of the lady, who, fearing a like fate, takes Nastagio to husband.

NOVEL IX. - Federigo degli Alberighi loves and is not loved in return: he wastes his substance by lavishness until nought is left but a single falcon, which, his lady being come to see him at his house, he gives her to eat: she, knowing his case, changes her mind, takes him to husband and makes him rich.

NOVEL X. - Pietro di Vinciolo goes from home to sup: his wife brings a boy into the house to bear her company: Pietro returns, and she hides her gallant under a hen-coop: Pietro explains that in the house of Ercolano, with whom he was to have supped, there was discovered a young man bestowed there by Ercolano's wife: the lady thereupon censures Ercolano's wife: but unluckily an ass treads on the fingers of the boy that is hidden under the hen-coop, so that he cries for pain: Pietro runs to the place, sees him, and apprehends the trick played on him by his wife, which nevertheless he finally condones, for that he is not himself free from blame.

- SIXTH DAY -

NOVEL I. - A knight offers to carry Madonna Oretta a horseback with a story, but tells it so ill that she prays him to dismount her.

NOVEL II. - Cisti, a baker, by an apt speech gives Messer Geri Spina to know that he has by inadvertence asked that of him which he should not.

NOVEL III. - Monna Nonna de' Pulci by a ready retort silences the scarce seemly jesting of the Bishop of Florence.

NOVEL IV. - Chichibio, cook to Currado Gianfigliazzi, owes his safety to a ready answer, whereby he converts Currado's wrath into laughter, and evades the evil fate with which Currado had threatened him.

NOVEL V. - Messer Forese da Rabatta and Master Giotto, the painter, journeying together from Mugello, deride one another's scurvy appearance.

NOVEL VI. - Michele Scalza proves to certain young men that the Baronci are the best gentlemen in the world and the Maremma, and wins a supper.

NOVEL VII. - Madonna Filippa, being found by her husband with her lover, is cited before the court, and by a ready and jocund answer acquits herself, and brings about an alteration of the statute.

NOVEL VIII. - Fresco admonishes his niece not to look at herself in the glass, if 'tis, as she says, grievous to her to see nasty folk.

NOVEL IX. - Guido Cavalcanti by a quip meetly rebukes certain Florentine gentlemen who had taken him at a disadvantage.

NOVEL X. - Fra Cipolla promises to shew certain country-folk a feather of the Angel Gabriel, in lieu of which he finds coals, which he avers to be of those with which St. Lawrence was roasted.

- SEVENTH DAY -

NOVEL I. - Gianni Lotteringhi hears a knocking at his door at night: he awakens his wife, who persuades him that 'tis the bogey, which they fall to exorcising with a prayer; whereupon the knocking ceases.

NOVEL II. - Her husband returning home, Peronella bestows her lover in a tun; which, being sold by her husband, she avers to have been already sold by herself to one that is inside examining it to set if it be sound. Whereupon the lover jumps out, and causes the husband to scour the tun for him, and afterwards to carry it to his house.

NOVEL III. - Fra Rinaldo lies with his gossip: her husband finds him in the room with her; and they make him believe that he was curing his godson of worms by a charm.

NOVEL IV. - Tofano one night locks his wife out of the house: she, finding that by no entreaties may she prevail upon him to let her in, feigns to throw herself into a well, throwing therein a great stone. Tofano hies him forth of the house, and runs to the spot: she goes into the house, and locks him out, and hurls abuse at him from within.

NOVEL V. - A jealous husband disguises himself as a priest, and hears his own wife's confession: she tells him that she loves a priest, who comes to her every night. The husband posts himself at the door to watch for the priest, and meanwhile the lady brings her lover in by the roof, and tarries with him.

NOVEL VI. - Madonna Isabella has with her Leonetto, her accepted lover, when she is surprised by one Messer Lambertuccio, by whom she is beloved: her husband coming home about the same time, she sends Messer Lambertuccio forth of the house drawn sword in hand, and the husband afterwards escorts Leonetto home.

NOVEL VII. - Lodovico discovers to Madonna Beatrice the love that he bears her: she sends Egano, her husband, into a garden disguised as herself, and lies with Lodovico; who thereafter, being risen, hies him to the garden and cudgels Egano.

NOVEL VIII. - A husband grows jealous of his wife, and discovers that she has warning of her lover's approach by a piece of pack-thread, which she ties to her great toe a nights. While he is pursuing her lover, she puts another woman in bed in her place. The husband, finding her there, beats her, and cuts off her hair. He then goes and calls his wife's brothers, who, holding his accusation to be false, give him a rating.

NOVEL IX. - Lydia, wife of Nicostratus, loves Pyrrhus, who to assure himself thereof, asks three things of her, all of which she does, and therewithal enjoys him in presence of Nicostratus, and makes Nicostratus believe that what he saw was not real.

NOVEL X. - Two Sienese love a lady, one of them being her gossip: the gossip dies, having promised his comrade to return to him from the other world; which he does, and tells him what sort of life is led there.

- EIGHTH DAY -

NOVEL I. - Gulfardo borrows moneys of Guasparruolo, which he has agreed to give Guasparruolo's wife, that he may lie with her. He gives them to her, and in her presence tells Guasparruolo that he has done so, and she acknowledges that 'tis true.

NOVEL II. - The priest of Varlungo lies with Monna Belcolore: he leaves with her his cloak by way of pledge, and receives from her a mortar. He returns the mortar, and demands of her the cloak that he had left in pledge, which the good lady returns him with a gibe.

NOVEL III. - Calandrino, Bruno and Buffalmacco go in quest of the heliotrope beside the Mugnone. Thinking to have found it, Calandrino gets him home laden with stones. His wife chides him: whereat he waxes wroth, beats her, and tells his comrades what they know better than he.

NOVEL IV. - The rector of Fiesole loves a widow lady, by whom he is not loved, and thinking to lie with her, lies with her maid, with whom the lady's brothers cause him to be found by his Bishop.

NOVEL V. - Three young men pull down the breeches of a judge from the Marches, while he is administering justice on the bench.

NOVEL VI. - Bruno and Buffalmacco steal a pig from Calandrino, and induce him to essay its recovery by means of pills of ginger and vernaccia. Of the said pills they give him two, one after the other, made of dog-ginger compounded with aloes; and it then appearing as if he had had the pig himself, they constrain him to buy them off, if he would not have them tell his wife.

NOVEL VII. - A scholar loves a widow lady, who, being enamoured of another, causes him to spend a winter's night awaiting her in the snow. He afterwards by a stratagem causes her to stand for a whole day in July, naked upon a tower, exposed to the flies, the gadflies, and the sun.

NOVEL VIII. - Two men keep with one another: the one lies with the other's wife: the other, being ware thereof, manages with the aid of his wife to have the one locked in a chest, upon which he then lies with the wife of him that is locked therein.

NOVEL IX. - Bruno and Buffalmacco prevail upon Master Simone, a physician, to betake him by night to a certain place, there to be enrolled in a company that go the course. Buffalmacco throws him into a foul ditch, and there they leave him.

NOVEL X. - A Sicilian woman cunningly conveys from a merchant that which he has brought to Palermo; he, making a shew of being come back thither with far greater store of goods than before, borrows money of her, and leaves her in lieu thereof water and tow.

- NINTH DAY -

NOVEL I. - Madonna Francesca, having two lovers, the one Rinuccio, the other Alessandro, by name, and loving neither of them, induces the one to simulate a corpse in a tomb, and the other to enter the tomb to fetch him out: whereby, neither satisfying her demands, she artfully rids herself of both.

NOVEL II. - An abbess rises in haste and in the dark, with intent to surprise an accused nun abed with her lover: thinking to put on her veil,

she puts on instead the breeches of a priest that she has with her: the nun, espying her headgear, and doing her to wit thereof, is acquitted, and thenceforth finds it easier to forgather with her lover.

NOVEL III. - Master Simone, at the instance of Bruno and Buffalmacco and Nello, makes Calandrino believe that he is with child. Calandrino, accordingly, gives them capons and money for medicines, and is cured without being delivered.

NOVEL IV. - Cecco, son of Messer Fortarrigo, loses his all at play at Buonconvento, besides the money of Cecco, son of Messer Angiulieri, whom, running after him in his shirt and crying out that he has robbed him, he causes to be taken by peasants: he then puts on his clothes, mounts his palfrey, and leaves him to follow in his shirt.

NOVEL V. - Calandrino being enamoured of a damsel, Bruno gives him a scroll, averring that, if he but touch her therewith, she will go with him: he is found with her by his wife, who subjects him to a most severe and vexatious examination.

NOVEL VI. - Two young men lodge at an inn, of whom the one lies with the host's daughter, his wife by inadvertence lying with the other. He that lay with the daughter afterwards gets into her father's bed and tells him all, taking him to be his comrade. They bandy words: whereupon the good woman, apprehending the circumstances, gets her to bed with her daughter, and by divers apt words re-establishes perfect accord.

NOVEL VII. - Talano di Molese dreams that a wolf tears and rends all the neck and face of his wife: he gives her warning thereof, which she heeds not, and the dream comes true.

NOVEL VIII. - Biondello gulls Ciacco in the matter of a breakfast: for which prank Ciacco is cunningly avenged on Biondello, causing him to be shamefully beaten.

NOVEL IX. - Two young men ask counsel of Solomon; the one, how he is to make himself beloved, the other, how he is to reduce an unruly wife to order. The King bids the one to love, and the other to go to the Bridge of Geese.

NOVEL X. - Dom Gianni at the instance of his gossip Pietro uses an enchantment to transform Pietro's wife into a mare; but, when he comes to attach the tail, Gossip Pietro, by saying that he will have none of the tail, makes the enchantment of no effect.

<u>- TENTH DAY -</u>

NOVEL I. - A knight in the service of the King of Spain deems himself ill requited. Wherefore the King, by most cogent proof, shews him that the blame rests not with him, but with the knight's own evil fortune; after which, he bestows upon him a noble gift.

NOVEL II. - Ghino di Tacco, captures the Abbot of Cluny, cures him of a disorder of the stomach, and releases him. The abbot, on his return to the court of Rome, reconciles Ghino with Pope Boniface, and makes him prior of the Hospital.

NOVEL III. - Mitridanes, holding Nathan in despite by reason of his courtesy, journey with intent to kill him, and falling in with him unawares, is advised by him how to compass his end. Following his advice, he finds him in a copse, and recognizing him, is shame-stricken, and becomes his friend.

NOVEL IV. - Messer Gentile de' Carisendi, being come from Modena, disinters a lady that he loves, who has been buried for dead. She, being reanimated, gives birth to a male child; and Messer Gentile restores her, with her son, to Niccoluccio Caccianimico, her husband.

NOVEL V. - Madonna Dianora craves of Messer Ansaldo a garden that shall be as fair in January as in May. Messer Ansaldo binds himself to a necromancer, and thereby gives her the garden. Her husband gives her leave to do Messer Ansaldo's pleasure: he, being apprised of her husband's liberality, releases her from her promise; and the necromancer releases Messer Ansaldo from his bond, and will tale nought of his.

NOVEL VI. - King Charles the Old, being conqueror, falls in love with a young maiden, and afterward growing ashamed of his folly bestows her and her sister honourably in marriage.

NOVEL VII. - King Pedro, being apprised of the fervent love borne him by Lisa, who thereof is sick, comforts her, and forthwith gives her in marriage to a young gentleman, and having kissed her on the brow, ever after professes himself her knight.

NOVEL VIII. - Sophronia, albeit she deems herself wife to Gisippus, is wife to Titus Quintius Fulvus, and goes with him to Rome, where Gisippus arrives in indigence, and deeming himself scorned by Titus, to compass his own death, avers that he has slain a man. Titus recognizes him, and to save his life, alleges that 'twas he that slew the man: whereof he that did the deed being witness, he discovers himself as the murderer. Whereby it comes to pass that they are all three liberated by Octavianus; and Titus gives Gisippus his sister to wife, and shares with him all his substance.

NOVEL IX. - Saladin, in guise of a merchant, is honourably entreated by Messer Torello. The Crusade ensuing, Messer Torello appoints a date, after which his wife may marry again: he is taken prisoner, and by training hawks comes under the Soldan's notice. The Soldan recognizes him, makes himself known to him, and entreats him with all honour. Messer Torello falls sick, and by magic arts is transported in a single night to Pavia, where his wife's second marriage is then to be solemnized, and being present thereat, is recognized by her, and returns with her to his house.

NOVEL X. - The Marquis of Saluzzo, overborne by the entreaties of his vassals, consents to take a wife, but, being minded to please himself in the choice of her, takes a husbandman's daughter. He has two children by her, both of whom he makes her believe that he has put to death. Afterward, feigning to be tired of her, and to have taken another wife, he

turns her out of doors in her shift, and brings his daughter into the house in guise of his bride; but, finding her patient under it all, he brings her home again, and shews her her children, now grown up, and honours her, and causes her to be honoured, as Marchioness.

ILLUSTRATIONS TO THE DECAMERON

VOLUME II

Pietro and Agnolella (fifth day, third story)

Gianni and Restituta (fifth day, sixth story)

Calandrino singing (ninth day, fifth story)

Titus, Gisippus, and Sophronia (tenth day, eighth story)

— Endeth here the fourth day of the Decameron, beginneth the fifth, in which under the rule of Fiammetta discourse is had of good fortune befalling lovers after divers direful or disastrous adventures. —

– FIFTH –

All the east was white, nor any part of our hemisphere unillumined by the rising beams, when the carolling of the birds that in gay chorus saluted the dawn among the boughs induced Fiammetta to rise and rouse the other ladies and the three gallants; with whom adown the hill and about the dewy meads of the broad champaign she sauntered, talking gaily of divers matters, until the sun had attained some height. Then, feeling his rays grow somewhat scorching, they retraced their steps, and returned to the villa; where, having repaired their slight fatigue with excellent wines and comfits, they took their pastime in the pleasant garden until the breakfast hour; when, all things being made ready by the discreet seneschal, they, after singing a stampita,(1) and a balladette or two, gaily, at the gueen's behest, sat them down to eat. Meetly ordered and gladsome was the meal, which done, heedful of their rule of dancing, they trod a few short measures with accompaniment of music and song. Thereupon, being all dismissed by the queen until after the siesta, some hied them to rest, while others tarried taking their pleasure in the fair garden. But shortly after none, all, at the queen's behest, reassembled, according to their wont, by the fountain; and the queen, having seated herself on her throne, glanced towards Pamfilo, and bade him with a smile lead off with the stories of good fortune. Whereto Pamfilo gladly addressed himself, and thus began.

(1) A song accompanied by music, but without dancing.

NOVEL I.

— Cimon, by loving, waxes wise, wins his wife Iphigenia by capture on the high seas, and is imprisoned at Rhodes. He is delivered by Lysimachus; and the twain capture Cassandra and recapture Iphigenia in the hour of their marriage. They flee with their ladies to Crete, and having there married them, are brought back to their homes. —

Many stories, sweet my ladies, occur to me as meet for me to tell by way of ushering in a day so joyous as this will be: of which one does most commend itself to my mind, because not only has it, one of those happy endings of which to-day we are in quest, but 'twill enable you to understand how holy, how mighty and how salutary are the forces of Love, which not a few, witting not what they say, do most unjustly reprobate and revile: which, if I err not, should to you, for that I take you to be enamoured, be indeed welcome.

Once upon a time, then, as we have read in the ancient histories of the Cypriotes, there was in the island of Cyprus a very great noble named Aristippus, a man rich in all worldly goods beyond all other of his countrymen, and who might have deemed himself incomparably blessed, but for a single sore affliction that Fortune had allotted him. Which was that among his sons he had one, the best grown and handsomest of them all, that was well-nigh a hopeless imbecile. His true name was Galesus; but, as neither his tutor's pains, nor his father's coaxing or chastisement, nor any other method had availed to imbue him with any tincture of letters or manners, but he still remained gruff and savage of voice, and in his bearing liker to a beast than to a man, all, as in derision, were wont to call him Cimon, which in their language signifies the same as "bestione" (brute)(1) in ours. The father, grieved beyond measure to see his son's life thus blighted, and having abandoned all hope of his recovery, nor caring to have the cause of his mortification ever before his eyes, bade him betake him to the farm, and there keep with his husbandmen. To Cimon the change was very welcome, because the manners and habits of the uncouth hinds were more to his taste than those of the citizens. So to the farm Cimon hied him, and addressed himself to the work thereof; and being thus employed, he chanced one afternoon as he passed, staff on shoulder, from one domain to another, to enter a plantation, the like of which for beauty there was not in those parts, and which was then-for 'twas the month of May-a mass of greenery; and, as he traversed it, he came, as Fortune was pleased to guide him, to a meadow girt in with trees exceeding tall, and having in one of its corners a fountain most fair and cool, beside which he espied a most beautiful girl lying asleep on the green grass, clad only in a vest of such fine stuff that it scarce in any measure veiled the whiteness of her flesh, and below the waist nought but an apron most white and fine of texture; and likewise at her feet there slept two women and a man, her slaves. No sooner did Cimon catch sight of her, than, as if he had never before seen form of woman, he stopped short, and leaning on his cudgel, regarded her intently, saying never a word, and lost in admiration. And in his rude soul, which, despite a thousand lessons, had hitherto remained impervious to every delight that belongs to urbane life, he felt the awakening of an idea, that bade his gross and coarse mind acknowledge, that this girl was the fairest creature that had ever been seen by mortal eye. And thereupon he began to distinguish her several parts, praising her hair, which shewed to him as gold, her brow, her nose and mouth, her throat and arms, and above all her bosom, which was as yet but in bud, and as he gazed, he changed of a sudden from a husbandman into a judge of beauty, and desired of all things to see her eyes, which the weight of her deep slumber kept close shut, and many a time he would fain have awakened her, that he might see them. But so much fairer seemed she to him than any other woman that he had seen, that he doubted she must be a goddess; and as he was not so devoid of sense but that he deemed things divine more worthy of reverence than things mundane, he forbore, and waited until she should awake of her own accord; and though he found the delay overlong, yet, enthralled by so unwonted a delight, he knew not how to be going. However, after he had tarried a long while, it so befell that lphigenia—such was the girl's name—her slaves still sleeping, awoke, and raised her head, and opened her eyes, and seeing Cimon standing before her, leaning on his staff, was not a little surprised, and said:-"Cimon, what seekest thou in this wood at this hour?" For Cimon she knew well, as indeed did almost all the country-side, by reason alike of his uncouth appearance as of the

rank and wealth of his father. To Iphigenia's question he answered never a word; but as soon as her eyes were open, nought could he do but intently regard them, for it seemed to him that a soft influence emanated from them, which filled his soul with a delight that he had never before known. Which the girl marking began to misdoubt that by so fixed a scrutiny his boorish temper might be prompted to some act that should cause her dishonour: wherefore she roused her women, and got up, saying:---"Keep thy distance, Cimon, in God's name." Whereto Cimon made answer:-"I will come with thee." And, albeit the girl refused his escort, being still in fear of him, she could not get quit of him; but he attended her home; after which he hied him straight to his father's house, and announced that he was minded on no account to go back to the farm: which intelligence was far from welcome to his father and kinsmen; but nevertheless they suffered him to stay, and waited to see what might be the reason of his change of mind. So Cimon, whose heart, closed to all teaching, love's shaft, sped by the beauty of Iphigenia, had penetrated, did now graduate in wisdom with such celerity as to astonish his father and kinsmen, and all that knew him. He began by requesting his father to let him go clad in the like apparel, and with, in all respects, the like personal equipment as his brothers: which his father very gladly did. Mixing thus with the gallants, and becoming familiar with the manners proper to gentlemen, and especially to lovers, he very soon, to the exceeding great wonder of all, not only acquired the rudiments of letters, but waxed most eminent among the philosophic wits. After which (for no other cause than the love he bore to Iphigenia) he not only modulated his gruff and boorish voice to a degree of smoothness suitable to urbane life, but made himself accomplished in singing and music; in riding also and in all matters belonging to war, as well by sea as by land, he waxed most expert and hardy. And in sum (that I go not about to enumerate each of his virtues in detail) he had not completed the fourth year from the day of his first becoming enamoured before he was grown the most gallant, and courteous, ay, and the most perfect in particular accomplishments, of the young cavaliers that were in the island of Cyprus. What then, gracious ladies, are we to say of Cimon?

Verily nought else but that the high faculties, with which Heaven had endowed his noble soul, invidious Fortune had bound with the strongest of cords, and circumscribed within a very narrow region of his heart; all which cords Love, more potent than Fortune, burst and brake in pieces; and then with the might, wherewith he awakens dormant powers, he brought them forth of the cruel obfuscation, in which they lay, into clear light, plainly shewing thereby, whence he may draw, and whither he may guide, by his beams the souls that are subject to his sway.

Now, albeit by his love for Iphigenia Cimon was betrayed, as young lovers very frequently are, into some peccadillos, yet Aristippus, reflecting that it had turned him from a booby into a man, not only bore patiently with him, but exhorted him with all his heart to continue steadfast in his love. And Cimon, who still refused to be called Galesus, because 'twas as Cimon that Iphigenia had first addressed him, being desirous to accomplish his desire by honourable means, did many a time urge his suit upon her father, Cipseus, that he would give her him to wife: whereto Cipseus always made the same answer, to wit, that he had promised her to Pasimondas, a young Rhodian noble, and was not minded to break faith with him. However, the time appointed for Iphigenia's wedding being come, and the bridegroom having sent for her, Cimon said to himself:-'Tis now for me to shew thee, O Iphigenia, how great is my love for thee: 'tis by thee that I am grown a man, nor doubt I, if I shall have thee, that I shall wax more glorious than a god, and verily thee will I have, or die. Having so said, he privily enlisted in his cause certain young nobles that were his friends, and secretly fitted out a ship with all equipment meet for combat, and put to sea on the look-out for the ship that was to bear Iphigenia to Rhodes and her husband. And at length, when her father had done lavishing honours upon her husband's friends, Iphigenia embarked, and, the mariners shaping their course for Rhodes, put to sea. Cimon was on the alert, and overhauled them the very next day, and standing on his ship's prow shouted amain to those that were aboard Iphigenia's ship:-"Bring to; strike sails, or look to be conquered and sunk in the sea." Then, seeing that the enemy had gotten their arms above deck, and were

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