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A TRANSPLANTED BOY.

BY CONSTANCE FENIMORE WOOLSON.

I.

THE old Rondinelli Palace at Pisa has been for many years a boarding-house, or *pension*, called Casa Corti. The establishment is a large one, and Madame Corti, the proprietress, believes that it has much distinction.

One evening in the spring of 1880 a pretty little American, who looked not more than twenty-five years old, but who was thirty-three, left the drawing-room where the seventy boarders were assembled after dinner, and mounted to her own quarters. She did not care for tea, or whist, or books on art, or wool-work; and, besides, her little boy Maso was waiting for her.

"Oh, how early you've come up! I'm awful glad," said Maso, as she entered

her bedroom on the third floor. It was a large room, shabbily furnished in yellow, the frescoed walls representing the Bay of Naples. Maso was lying on the rug, with his dog by his side.

"Why are you in the dark?" said his mother. There was a smouldering fire on the hearth; for though the day had been fine (it was the 15th of March), the old palace had a way of developing unexpected shivers in the evening. In spite of these shivers, however, this was the only room where there was a fire. Mrs. Roscoe lighted the lamp and put on the pink shade; then she drew the small Italian sticks together on the hearth, threw on a dozen pine cones, and with the bellows blew the whole into a brilliant blaze. Next she put a key into the Bay

of Naples, unlocked a wave, and drew out a small Vienna coffee-pot.

"Are we going to have coffee? Jolly!" said the boy.

His mother made the coffee; then she took from the same concealed cupboard, which had been drilled in the solid stone of the wall, a little glass jug shaped like a lachrymal from the catacombs, which contained cream; sugar in a bowl; cakes, and a box of marrons glacés. Maso gave a Hi! of delight as each dainty appeared, and made his dog sit on his hind legs. "I say, mother, what were they all laughing about at dinner? Something you said?"

"They always laugh; they appear never to have heard a joke before. That about the bishops, now, that is as old as the hills." Leaning back in her easy-chair before the fire, with Maso established at her feet, enjoying his cake and coffee, she gave a long yawn. "Oh, what a stupid life!"

Maso was well accustomed to this exclamation. But when he had his mother to himself, and when the room was so bright and so full of fragrant aromas, he saw no reason to echo it. "Well, I think it's just gay!" he answered. "Mr. Tiber, beg!" Mr. Tiber begged, and received a morsel of cake.

Mrs. Roscoe, after drinking her coffee, had taken up a new novel. "Perhaps you had better study a little," she suggested.

Maso made a grimace. But as the coffee was gone and the cakes were eaten, he complied; that is, he complied after he had made Mr. Tiber go through his tricks. This took time; for Mr. Tiber, having swallowed a good deal of cake himself, was lazy. At last, after he had been persuaded to show to the world the excellent education he had received, his master decided to go on with his own, and went to get his books, which were on the shelf at the other end of the long room. It pleased him to make this little journey on his heels, with his toes sharply upturned in the air—a feat which required much balancing.

"That is the way you run down the heels of your shoes so," his mother remarked, glancing at his contortions.

"It doesn't hurt them much on the carpet," replied the boy.

"Mercy! You don't go staggering through the streets in that way, do you?"

"Only back streets."

He was now returning in the same obstructed manner, carrying his books. He placed them upon the table where the lamp was standing; then he lifted Mr. Tiber to the top of the same table and made him lie down; next, seating himself, he opened a battered school-book, a United States History, and, after looking at the pictures for a while, he began at last to repeat two dates to himself in a singsong whisper. Maso was passing through the period when a boy can be very plain, even hideous, in appearance, without any perception of the fact in the minds of his relatives, who see in him the little toddler still, or else the future man; other persons, however, are apt to see a creature all hands and feet, with a big uncertain mouth and an omnipresent awkwardness. Maso, in addition to this, was short and ill developed, with inexpressive eyes and many large freckles. His features were not well cut; his complexion was pale; his straight hair was of a reddish hue. None of the mother's beauties were repeated in the child. Such as he was, however, she loved him, and he repaid her love by a deep adoration; to him, besides being "mother," she was the most beautiful being in the whole world, and also the cleverest.

While he was vaguely murmuring his dates, and rocking himself backwards and forwards in time with the murmur, there came a tap at the door. It was Miss Spring. "I have looked in to bid you good-by," she said, entering. "I am going to Munich to-morrow."

"Isn't that sudden?" said Mrs. Roscoe. "The torn chair is the most comfortable. Have a marron?"

"Thank you; I seldom eat sweets. No, it is not sudden."

"Shall I make you a cup of coffee?"

"Thank you; I don't take coffee."

Mrs. Roscoe pushed a footstool across the rug.

"Thank you; I never need footstools."

"Superior to all the delights of woman-kind!"

Miss Spring came out of her abstraction and laughed. "Not superior; only bilious, and long-legged." Then her face grew grave again. "Do you consider Pisa an attractive place for a permanent residence?" she inquired, fixing her eyes upon her hostess, who, having offered all the hospitable attentions in her power,

was now leaning back again, her feet on a hassock.

"Attractive? Heavens! no."

"Yet you stay here? I think I have seen you here, at intervals, for something like seven years?"

beginning, the things you don't care for: Niccola and the revival of sculpture; the early masters. But I have not found them satisfying. I have tried to care for that sarcophagus; but the truth is that I remain perfectly cold before it. And the



"MR. TIBER, BEG."

"Don't count them; I hate the sound," said Mrs. Roscoe. "My wish is—my hope is—to live in Paris; I get there once in a while, and then I always have to give it up and come away. Italy is cheap, and Pisa is the cheapest place in Italy."

"So that is your reason for remaining," said Miss Spring, reflectively.

"What other reason on earth *could* there be?"

"The equable climate."

"I hate equable climates. No, we're not here for climates. Nor for Benozzo; nor for Niccola the Pisan, and that everlasting old sarcophagus that they are always talking about; nor for the Leaning Tower either. I perfectly hate the Leaning Tower!"

Miss Spring gazed at the fire. "I may as well acknowledge that it was those very things that brought me here in the

Campo Santo frescoes seem to me out of drawing. As to the Shelley memories, do you know what I thought of the other day? Supposing that Shelley and Byron were residing here at this moment—Shelley with that queerness about his first wife hanging over him, and Byron living as we know he lived in the Toscanelli palace—do you think that these ladies in the pension who now sketch the Toscanelli and sketch Shelley's windows, who go to Lerici and rave over Casa Magni, who make pilgrimages to the very spot on the beach where Byron and Trelawny built the funeral pyre—do you think that a single one of them would call, if it were to-day, upon Mary Shelley? Or like to have Shelley and Byron dropping in here for afternoon tea, with the chance of meeting the curates?"

"If they met them, they couldn't out-

talk them," answered Violet, laughing. "Curates always want to explain something they said the day before. As to the calling and the tea, what would *you* do?"

"I should be consistent," responded Miss Spring, with dignity. "I should call. And I should be happy to see them here in return."

"Well, you'd be safe," said Violet. "Shelley, Byron, Trelawny, all together, would never dare to flirt with Roberta Spring!" She could say this without malice, for her visitor was undeniably a handsome woman.

Miss Spring, meanwhile, had risen; going to the table, she put on her glasses and bent over Maso's book. "History?"

"Yes, 'm. I haven't got very far yet," Maso answered.

"Reader. Copy-book. Geography. Spelling-book. Arithmetic," said Miss Spring, turning the books over one by one. "The Arithmetic appears to be the cleanest."

"Disuse," said Mrs. Roscoe, from her easy-chair. "As I am Maso's teacher, and as I hate arithmetic, we have never gone very far. I don't know what we shall do when we get to fractions!"

"And what is your dog doing on the table, may I ask?" inquired the visitor, surveying Mr. Tiber coldly.

"Oh, he helps lots. I couldn't study at all without him," explained Maso, with eagerness.

"Well!" said Miss Spring. She never could comprehend what she called "all this dog business" of the Roscoes. And their dog language (they had one) routed her completely.

"Why did you name him Mr. Tiber?" pursued the visitor, in her grave voice.

"We didn't; he was already named," explained Mrs. Roscoe. "We bought him of an old lady in Rome, who had three; she had named them after Italian rivers: Mr. Arno, Mr. Tiber, and Miss Dora Ripaira."

"Miss Dora Ripaira—well!" said Miss Spring. Then she turned to subjects more within her comprehension. "It is a pity I am going away, Maso, for I could have taught you arithmetic; I like to teach arithmetic."

Maso made no answer save an imbecile grin. His mother gesticulated at him behind Miss Spring's back. Then he muttered. "Thank you, 'm," hoping fervently that the Munich plan was secure.

"I shall get a tutor for Maso before long," remarked Mrs. Roscoe, as Miss Spring came back to the fire. "Later, my idea is to have him go to Oxford."

Miss Spring looked as though she were uttering, mentally, another "well!" The lack of agreement in the various statements of her pretty little countrywoman always puzzled her; she could understand crime better than inconsistency.

"Shall you stay long in Munich?" Violet inquired.

"That depends." Miss Spring had not seated herself. "Would you mind coming to my room for a few minutes?" she added.

"There's no fire; I shall freeze to death!" thought Violet. "If you like," she answered aloud. And together they ascended to the upper story, where, at the top of two unexpected steps, was Miss Spring's door. A trunk, locked and strapped, stood in the centre of the floor; an open travelling-bag, placed on a chair, gaped for the toilet articles, which were ranged on the table together, so that nothing should be forgotten at the early morning start—a cheap hair-brush and stout comb, an unadorned wooden box containing hair-pins and a scissors, a particularly hideous travelling pin-cushion. Violet Roscoe gazed at these articles, fascinated by their ugliness; she herself possessed a long row of vials and brushes, boxes and mirrors, of silver, crystal, and ivory, and believed that she could not live without them.

"I thought I would not go into the subject before Maso," began Miss Spring, as she closed her door. "Such explanations sometimes unsettle a boy; his may not be a mind to which inquiry is necessary. My visit to Munich has an object. I am going to study music."

"Music?" repeated Mrs. Roscoe, surprised. "I didn't know you cared for it."

"But it remains to be seen whether I care, doesn't it? One cannot tell until one has tried. This is the case: I am now thirty-seven years of age. I have given a good deal of attention to astronomy and to mathematics; I am an evolutionist, a realist, a member of the Society for Psychological Research; Herbert Spencer's works always travel with me. These studies have been extremely interesting. And yet I find that I am not fully satisfied, Mrs. Roscoe. And it has been a disappoint-

ment. I determined, therefore, to try some of those intellectual influences which do not appeal solely to reason. They appear to give pleasure to large numbers of mankind, so there must be something in them. What that is I resolved to find out. I began with sculpture. Then painting. But they have given me no pleasure whatever. Music is third on the list. So now I am going to try that."

Mrs. Roscoe gave a spring and seated herself on the bed, with her feet under her, Turkish fashion; the floor was really too cold. "No use trying music unless you like it," she said.

"I have never *disliked* it. My attitude will be that of an impartial investigator," explained Miss Spring. "I have, of course, no expectation of becoming a performer; but I shall study the theory of harmony, the science of musical composition, its structure—"

"Structure? Stuff! You've got to *feel* it," said Violet.

"Very well. I am perfectly willing to feel; that is, in fact, what I wish. Let them *make* me feel. If it is an affair of the emotions, let them rouse *my* emotions," answered Roberta.

"If you would swallow a marron occasionally, and drink a cup of good coffee with cream; if you would have some ivory brushes and crystal scent-bottles, instead of those hideous objects," said Violet, glancing towards the table; "if you would get some pretty dresses once in a while—I think satisfaction would be nearer."

Miss Spring looked up quickly. You think I have been too ascetic? Is that what you mean?"

"Oh, I never mean anything," answered Violet, hugging herself to keep down a shiver.

"I knew I should get a new idea out of you, Mrs. Roscoe. I always do," said Roberta, frankly. "And this time it is an important one; it is a side light which I had not thought of myself at all. I shall go to Munich to-morrow. But I will add this: if music is not a success, perhaps I may some time try your plan."

"Plan? Horrible! I haven't any," said Violet, escaping towards the door.

"It's an unconscious one; it is, possibly, instinctive truth," said Miss Spring, as she shook hands with her departing

guest. "And instinctive truth is the most valuable."

Violet ran back to her own warm quarters. "You don't mean to say, Maso, that you've stopped studying already?" she said, as she entered and seated herself before her fire again, with a sigh of content. "Nice lessons you'll have for me to-morrow."

"They're all O. K.," responded the boy. He had his paint-box before him, and was painting the Indians in his History.

"Well, go to bed, then."

"Yes, 'm."

At half past ten, happening to turn her head while she cut open the pages of her novel, she saw that he was still there. "Maso, do you hear me? Go to bed."

"Yes, 'm." He painted faster, making hideous grimaces with his protruded lips, which unconsciously followed the strokes of his brush up and down. The picture finished at last, he rose. "Mr. Tiber, pim."

At eleven, Mrs. Roscoe finished her novel and threw it down. "Women who write don't know much about love-affairs," was her reflection. "And those of us who have love-affairs don't write!" She rose. "Maso, you here still? I thought you went to bed an hour ago!"

"Well, I did begin. I put my shoes outside." He extended his shoeless feet in proof. "Then I just came back for a minute."

His mother looked over his shoulder. "That same old fairy-book! Who would suppose you were twelve years old?"

"Thirteen," said Maso, coloring.

"So you are. But only two weeks ago. Never mind; you'll be a tall man yet—a great big thing striding about, whom I shall not care half so much for as I do for my little boy." She kissed him. "All your father's family are tall, and you look just like them."

Maso nestled closer as she stood beside him. "How did father look? I don't remember him much."

"Much? You don't remember him at all; he died when you were six months old—a little teenty baby."

"I say, mother, how long have we been over here?"

"I came abroad when you were not quite two."

"Aren't we ever going back?"

"If you could once see Coesville!" was Mrs. Roscoe's emphatic reply.

II.

"Hist, Maso! Take this in to your lady mother," said Giulio. "I made it myself, so it's good." Giulio, one of the dining-room waiters at Casa Corti, was devoted to the Roscoes. Though he was master of a mysterious French polyglot, he used at present his own tongue, for Maso spoke Italian as readily as he did, and in much the same fashion.

Maso took the cup, and Giulio disappeared. As the boy was carrying the broth carefully towards his mother's door, Madame Corti passed him. She paused.

"Ah, Master Roscoe, I am relieved to learn that your mother is better. Will you tell her, with my compliments, that I advise her to go at once to the Bagni to make her recovery? She ought to go to-morrow. That is the air required for convalescence."

Maso repeated this to his mother: "'That is the air required for convalescence,' she said."

"And 'this is the room required for spring tourists,' she meant. Did she name a day—the angel?"

"Well, she did say to-morrow," Maso admitted.

"Old cat! She is dying to turn me out; she is so dreadfully afraid that the word fever will hurt her house. All the servants are sworn to call it rheumatism."

"See here, mother, Giulio sent you this."

"I don't want any of their messes."

"But he made it himself, so it's good." He knelt down beside her sofa, holding up the cup coaxingly.

"Beef tea," said Mrs. Roscoe, drawing down her upper lip. But she took a little to please him.

"Just a little more."

She took more.

"A little *teenty* more."

"You scamp! You think it's great fun to give directions, don't you?"

Maso, who had put the emptied cup back on the table, gave a leap of glee because she had taken so much.

"Don't walk on your hands," said his mother, in alarm. "It makes me too nervous."

It was the 12th of April, and she had been ill two weeks. An attack of bronchitis had prostrated her suddenly, and the bronchitis had been followed by an intermittent fever, which left her weak.

"I say, mother, let's go," said Maso. "It's so nice at the Bagni—all trees and everything. Miss Anderson 'll come and pack."

"If we do go to the Bagni we cannot stay at the hotel," said Mrs. Roscoe, gloomily. "This year we shall have to find some cheaper place. I have been counting upon money from home that hasn't come."

"But it *will* come," said Maso, with confidence.

"Have you much acquaintance with Reuben John?"

He had no very clear idea as to the identity of Reuben John, save that he was some sort of a dreadful relative in America.

"Well, the Bagni's nice," he answered, "no matter where we stay. And I know Miss Anderson 'll come and pack."

"You mustn't say a word to her about it. I have got to write a note, as it is, and ask her to wait for her money until winter. Dr. Prior too."

"Well, they'll do it; they'll do it in a minute, and be glad to," said Maso, still confident.

"I am sure I don't know why," commented his mother, turning her head upon the pillow fretfully.

"Why, mother, they'll do it because it's you. They think everything of you; everybody does," said the boy, adoringly.

Violet Roscoe laughed. It took but little to cheer her. "If you don't brush your hair more carefully they won't think much of *you*," she answered, setting his collar straight.

There was a knock at the door. "Letters," said Maso, returning. He brought her a large envelope, adorned with Italian superlatives of honor and closed with a red seal. "Always so civil," murmured Mrs. Roscoe, examining the decorated address with a pleased smile. Her letters came to a Pisan bank; the bankers re-enclosed them in this elaborate way, and sent them to her by their own gilt-buttoned messenger. There was only one letter to-day. She opened it, read the first page, turned the leaf, and then in her weakness she began to sob. Maso in great distress knelt beside her; he put his arm round her neck, and laid his cheek to hers; he did everything he could think of to comfort her. Mr. Tiber, who had been lying at her feet, walked up her back and gave an affectionate lick to her



“WE MUST SINK OR SWIM TOGETHER, MASO.”

hair. “Mercy! the dog too,” she said, drying her eyes. “*Of course* it was Reuben John,” she explained, shaking up her pillow.

Maso picked up the fallen letter.

“Don’t read it; burn it—horrid thing!” his mother commanded.

He obeyed, striking a match and lighting the edge of the page.

“Not only no money, but in its place a long, hateful, busyboding sermon,” continued Mrs. Roscoe, indignantly.

Maso came back from the hearth, and took up the envelope. “Mrs. Thomas R. Coe,” he read aloud. “Is our name really Coe, mother?”

“You know it is perfectly well.”

“Everybody says Roscoe.”

“I didn’t get it up; all I did was to call myself Mrs. Ross Coe, which is my name, isn’t it? I hate Thomas. Then these English got hold of it and made it Ross-Coe and Roscoe. I grew tired of correcting them long ago.”

“Then in America I should be Thom-as Ross Coe,” pursued the boy, still scanning the envelope, and pronouncing the syllables slowly. He was more familiar with Italian names than with American.

“No such luck. Tommy Coe you’d be now. And as you grew older, Tom Coe—like your father before you.”



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN WATERHOUSE.

They went to the Bagni, that is, to the baths of Lucca. The journey, short as it was, tired Mrs. Roscoe greatly. They took up their abode in two small rooms in an Italian house which had an unswept stairway and a constantly open door. Maso, disturbed by her illness, but by nothing else—for they had often followed a nomadic life for a while when funds were low—scoured the town. He bought cakes and fruit to tempt her appetite; he made coffee. He had no conception that these things were not

the proper food for a convalescent; his mother had always lived upon coffee and sweets.

On the first day of May, when they had been following this course for two weeks, they had a visitor. Dr. Prior, who had been called to the Bagni for a day, came to have a look at his former patient. He staid fifteen minutes. When he took leave he asked Maso to show him the way to a certain house. This, however, was but a pretext, for when they reached the street he stopped.

"I dare say ye have friends here?"

"Well," answered Maso, "mother generally knows a good many of the people in the hotel when we are staying there. But this year we ain't."

"Hum! And where are your relatives?"

"I don't know as we've got any. Yes, there's one," pursued Maso, remembering Reuben John. "But he's in America."

The Scotch physician, who was by no means an amiable man, was bluntly honest. "How old are you?" he inquired.

"I'm going on fourteen."

"Never should have supposed ye to be more than eleven. As there appears to be no one else, I must speak to you. Your mother must not stay in this house a day longer; she must have a better place—better air and better food."

Maso's heart gave a great throb. "Is she—is she very ill?"

"Not yet. But she is in a bad way; she coughs. She ought to leave Italy for a while; stay out of it for at least four months. If she doesn't care to go far, Aix-les-Bains would do. Speak to her about it. I fancy ye can arrange it—hey? American boys have their own way, I hear."

Maso went back to his mother's room with his heart in his mouth. When he came in she was asleep; her face looked wan. The boy, cold all over with the new fear, sat down quietly by the window with Mr. Tiber on his lap, and fell into anxious thought. After a while his mother woke. The greasy dinner, packed in greasy tins, came and went. When the room was quiet again he began, tremulously: "How much money have we got, mother?"

"Precious little."

"Mayn't I see how much it is?"

"No; don't bother."

She had eaten nothing. "Mother, won't you please take that money, even if it's little, and go straight off north somewhere? To Aix-les-Bains."

"What are you talking about? Aix-les-Bains? What do you know of Aix-les-Bains?"

"Well, I've heard about it. Say, mother, do go. And Mr. Tiber and me'll stay here. We'll have lots of fun," added the boy, bravely.

"Is that all you care about me?" demanded his mother. Then seeing his face change, "Come here, you silly child," she said. She made him sit down on the rug beside her sofa. "We must sink or swim together, Maso (dear me! we're not much in the swim now); we can't go anywhere, either of us; we can only just manage to live as we're living now. And there won't be any more money until November." She stroked his hair caressingly. His new fear made him notice how thin her wrist had grown.

III.

"You will mail these three letters immediately," said Mr. Waterhouse, in Italian, to the hotel porter.

"Si, signore," answered the man, with the national sunny smile, although Waterhouse's final gratuity had been but a franc.

"Now, Tommaso, I must be off; long drive. Sorry it has happened so. Crazy idea her coming at all, as she has enjoyed bad health for years, poor old thing! She may be dead at this moment, and probably, in fact, she *is* dead; but I shall have to go, all the same, in spite of the great expense; she ought to have thought of that. I have explained everything to your mother in that letter; the money is at her own bank in Pisa, and I have sent her the receipt. You have fifty francs with you?"

"Yes, sir."

"Fifty francs—that is ten dollars. More than enough, much more; be careful of it, Tommaso. You will hear from your mother in two days, or sooner, if she telegraphs; in the mean while you will stay quietly where you are."

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Waterhouse shook hands with his pupil, and stepping into the waiting carriage, was driven away.

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Benjamin F. Waterhouse, as he signed himself (of course the full name was Benjamin Franklin), was an American who had lived in Europe for nearly half a century, always expecting to go home "next summer." He was very tall, with a face that resembled a damaged portrait of Emerson, and he had been engaged for many years in writing a great work, a *Life of Christopher Columbus*, which was to supersede all other *Lives*. As his purse was a light one, he occasionally took pupils, and it was in this way that he had taken Maso, or, as he called him (giving him all the syllables of the Italian Thomas), Tommaso. Only three weeks, however, of his tutorship had passed when he had received a letter announcing that his sister, his only remaining relative, despairing of his return, was coming abroad to see him, in spite of her age and infirmities; she was the "poor old thing" of her dry brother's description, and the voyage apparently had been too great an exertion, for she was lying dangerously ill at Liverpool, and the physician in attendance had telegraphed to Waterhouse to come immediately.

The history of the tutorship was as follows: Money had come from America after all. Mrs. Roscoe (as everybody called her) had been trying for some time, so she told Maso, "to circumvent Reuben John," and sell a piece of land which she owned in Indiana. Now, unexpectedly, a purchaser had turned up. While she was relating this it seemed to her that her little boy changed into a young man before her eyes. "You've just got to take that money, mother, and go straight up to Aix-les-Bains," said Maso, planting himself before her. "I sha'n't go a single step; I ain't sick, and you are; it's cheaper for me to stay here. There isn't money enough to take us both, for I want you to stay up there *ever* so long; four whole months."

This was the first of many discussions, or rather of astonished exclamations from the mother, met by a stubborn and at last a silent obstinacy on the part of the boy. For of late he had scarcely slept, he had been so anxious; he had discovered that the people in the house, with the usual Italian dread of a cough, believed that "the beautiful little American," as they called his mother, was doomed. Mother and son had never been separated; the mother shed tears over the idea of a sep-

aration now; and then a few more because Maso did not "care." "It doesn't seem to be anything to *you*," she declared, reproachfully.

But Maso, grim-faced and wretched, held firm.

In this dead-lock Mrs. Roscoe at last had the inspiration of asking Benjamin Waterhouse, who was spending the summer at the Bagni, and whom she knew to be a frugal man, to take charge of Maso during her absence. Maso, who under other circumstances would have fought the idea of a tutor with all his strength, now yielded without a word. And then the mother, unwillingly and in a flood of tears, departed. She went by slow stages to Aix-les-Bains; even her first letter, however, much more the later ones, exhaled from each line her pleasure in the cooler air and in her returning health. She sent to Maso, after a while, a colored photograph of herself, taken on the shore of Lake Bourget, and the picture was to the lonely boy the most precious thing he had ever possessed; for it showed that the alarming languor had gone; she was no longer thin and wan. He carried the photograph with him, and when he was alone he took it out. For he was suffering from the deepest pangs of homesickness. He was homesick for his mother, for his mother's room (the only home he had ever known), with all its attractions and indulgences.

Now Maso was left alone, not only schoolless but tutorless. When the carriage bearing the biographer of Columbus had disappeared down the road leading to Lucca, the boy went back to the porter, who, wearing his stiff official cap adorned with the name of the hotel, stood airing his corpulent person in the doorway. "Say, Gregorio, I'll take those letters to the post-office if you like; I'm going right by there."

Gregorio liked Maso; all Italian servants liked the boy and his clever dog. In addition, the sunshine was hot, and Gregorio was not fond of pedestrian exercise; so he gave the letters to Maso willingly enough. Maso went briskly to the post-office. Here he put two of the letters into the box, but the third, which bore his mother's address, remained hidden under his jacket. Returning to the hotel, he went up to his room, placed this letter in his trunk, and locked the trunk carefully; then, accompanied by Mr. Ti-

ber, he went off for a walk. His thoughts ran something as follows: "Tany rate, mother sha'n't know; *that's* settled; I ain't going to let her come back here and get sick again; no, sir! She's getting all well up there, and she's *got* to stay four whole months. There's no way she can hear that old Longlegs" (this was his name for the historical Benjamin) "has gone, now that I've hooked his letter; the people she knows here at the Bagni never write; besides, they don't know where she's staying, and I won't let 'em know. If they see me here alone they'll suppose Longlegs has arranged it. I've got to tell lies some; I've got to pretend, when I write to her, that Longlegs has sprained his wrist or his leg or something, and that's why he can't write himself. I've got to be awful careful about what I put in my letters, so that they'll sound all right; but I guess I can do it bully. And I'll spend mighty little (only I'm going to have ices); I'll quit the hotel, and go back to that house where we staid before the money came."

The fifty francs carried the two through a good many days. Mr. Tiber, indeed, knew no change, for he had his coroneted bed, and the same fare was provided for him daily—a small piece of meat, plenty of hot macaroni, followed by a bit of cake and several lumps of sugar. When there were but eight francs left, Maso went to Pisa. Mr. Waterhouse, who was very careful about money affairs, had paid all his pupil's bills up to the date of his own departure, and had then sent the remainder of the money which Mrs. Roscoe had left with him for the summer to her bankers at Pisa. Maso, as a precaution, carried with him the unmailed letter which contained the receipt for this sum. But he hoped that he should not be obliged to open the letter; he thought that they would give him a little money without that, as they knew him well. When he reached Pisa he found that the bank had closed its doors. It had failed.

Apparently it was a bad failure. Nobody (he inquired here and there) gave him a hopeful word. At the English bookseller's an assistant whom he knew said: "Even if something is recovered after a while, I am sure that nothing will be paid out for a long time yet. They have always been shaky; in my opinion, they are rascals."

Maso went back to the Bagni. In the

bewilderment of his thoughts there was but one clear idea: "Tany rate, mother *sha'n't* know; she's got to stay away four whole months; the doctor said so."

IV.

After a day of thought, Maso decided that he would leave the Bagni and go down to Pisa, and stay at Casa Corti. Madame Corti would not be there (she spent her summers at Sorrento), and officially the pension was closed; but Giulio would let him remain, knowing that his mother would pay for it when she returned; he had even a vision of the very room at the top of the house where Giulio would probably put him—a brick-floored cell next to the linen-room, adorned with an ancient shrine, and pervaded by the odor of freshly ironed towels. It would be no end of a lark to spend the summer in Pisa. Luigi would be there. And the puppet-shows. And perhaps Giulio would take him up on Sundays to the house on the hill-side, where his wife and children lived; he had taken him once, and Maso had always longed to go again. But when he reached Pisa with his dog and his trunk he found the Palazzo Rondinelli wearing the aspect of a deserted fortress; the immense outer doors were swung to and locked; there was no sign of life anywhere. It had not been closed for twenty years. It was the unexpected which had happened. Maso went round to the stone lane behind the palace to see Luigi. It was then that he learned that his friend had gone to live in Leghorn; he learned, also, that the Casa Corti servants, having an opportunity to earn full wages at Abetone for two months, had been permitted by Madame Corti to accept this rare good fortune; the house, therefore, had been closed. Maso, thus adrift, was still confident that the summer was going to be "huge," a free banditlike existence, with many enjoyments; pictures of going swimming, and staying in as long as he liked, were in his mind; also the privilege of having his hair shaved close to his head, of eating melons at his pleasure, and of drinking lemonade in oceans from the gayly adorned jingling carts. Of course he should have to get something to do, as his money was almost gone. Still, it would not take much to support him, and there was going to be an exciting joy in independence, in living in "bachelor quarters." He found his bach-

elor quarters in the Street of the Lily, a narrow passage that went burrowing along between two continuous rows of high old houses. The Lily's pavement was slimy with immemorial filth, and, in spite of the heat, the damp atmosphere was like that of an ill-kept refrigerator. At the top of one of the houses he established himself, with Mr. Tiber, in a bare room which contained not much more than a chair and a bed. Nevertheless, the first time he came out, locked his door, and descended the stairs with the key in his pocket, he felt like a man; and he carried himself like one, with a swagger. The room had one advantage, it contained a trap-door to the roof, and there was a ladder tied up to the high ceiling, its rope secured by a padlock; the boy soon contrived means (this must have been his Yankee blood) to get the ladder down when he chose; then at night he went up and cooled himself off on the roof, under the stars. There were two broken statues there—for the old house had had its day of grandeur; he made a seat, or rather a bed, at their feet. Mr. Tiber was so unhappy down below that Maso invented a way to get him up also; he spread his jacket on the floor, made Mr. Tiber lie down upon it, and then fastening the sleeves together with a cord, he swung the jacket round his neck and ascended with his burden. Mr. Tiber enjoyed the roof very much.

Having established himself, selected his trattoria, and imbibed a good deal of lemonade as a beginning, the occupant of the bachelor quarters visited the business streets of Pisa in search of employment. But it was the dullest season in a place always dull, and no one wished for a new boy. At the Anglo-American Agency the clerk, languid from the heat, motioned him away without a word; at the Forwarding and Commission Office no one looked at him or spoke to him; so it was everywhere. His friend the bookseller's assistant had gone for the summer to the branch establishment at Como.

Mrs. Roscoe, who detested Pisa, had established no relations there save at the confectioner's and at the bank. But the bank continued closed, and the confectioner objected to boys of thirteen as helpers. In this emergency Maso wrote to Luigi, asking if there was any hope of a place in Leghorn.

"There is sure to be a demand at the

large establishments for a talented North American," Luigi had answered, with confidence.

But Maso went up and down the streets of Leghorn in vain; the large establishments demanded nothing.

"Say, Maso, couldn't you look a little different?" suggested Luigi, anxiously, as they came out of an office, where he had overheard the epithet "sullen-faced" applied to his American friend.

The two boys spoke Italian; Luigi knew no English.

"Why, I look as I'm made. Everybody looks as they're made, don't they?" said Maso, surprised.

"Ah, but expression is a beautiful thing—a sympathetic countenance," said Luigi, waving his hand. "Now you—you might smile more. Promise me to try a smile at the next place where we go in to ask."

At three o'clock Maso appeared at Luigi's shop. Luigi was dusting goblets. "Well?" he said, inquiringly.

Maso shook his head.

"Didn't you smile?"

"Yes, I did it as I took off my hat. And every time they seemed so surprised."

"I've a new idea, Maso; behold it; the consul of your country!"

"Is there one in Leghorn?" asked Maso, vaguely.

"Of course there is; I have seen the sign many a time." And Luigi mentioned the street and the number.

The proprietor of the shop, who was packing a case of the slender Epiphany trumpets, now broke off by accident, and immediately scolded Luigi in a loud voice; Maso was obliged to make a hasty departure.

The office of the representative of the United States government was indicated by a painted shield bearing the insignia of the republic, and a brass plate below, with the following notification: "Consolato degli Stati Uniti d' America." The first word of this inscription rouses sometimes a vague thrill in the minds of homesick Americans in Italy coming to pay a visit to their flag and the eagle.

As it happened, the consul himself was there alone. Maso, upon entering, took off his hat and tried his smile, then he began: "If you please, I am trying to get a place—something to do. I thought perhaps, sir, that you might—"

He stopped, and in his embarrassment

put the toe of his shoe into a hole in the matting, and moved it about industriously.

"Don't spoil my matting," said the consul. "You're a very young boy to be looking for a place."

"I'm going on fourteen."

"And of what nation are you?" demanded the consul, after another survey.

"Why, I'm American," said Maso, surprised.

"I shouldn't have taken you for one. What is your name?"

"Maso—I mean Thom-as Ross Coe," replied the boy, bringing out the syllables with something of an Italian pronunciation.

"Tummarse Erroso? Do you call that an American name?"

"I'll write it," said Maso, blushing. He wrote it in large letters on the edge of a newspaper that was near him.

"'Thomas R. Coe,'" read the consul. "Coe is your name, then?"

"Yes, sir."

"You want something to do, eh? What do you want, and why do you come here for it?"

Maso told his story, or rather a tale which he had prepared on his way to the consulate. It was a confused narrative, because he did not wish to betray anything that could give a clew to his mother's address.

The consul asked questions. "A failure, eh? What failure?"

"It—it wasn't in Leghorn."

"And your mother will be back in September? Where is she at present?"

"She—she is North; she isn't very well, and—" But he could not think of anything that he could safely add, so he stopped.

"We haven't any places for boys. Did you expect me to take you in here?"

"No, sir. I thought perhaps you'd recommend me."

"On general principles, I suppose, as an American, seeing that I don't know anything else about you. And you selected the Fourth as a nice good patriotic day for it?"

"The Fourth?"

"I suppose you know what day it is?"

"Yes, sir—Tuesday."

The consul looked at him, and saw that he spoke in good faith. "You an American boy? I guess not! You may go." And dipping his pen in the ink, he resumed his writing.

Maso, though disturbed and bewildered, held his ground. He certainly was an American boy. What could the man mean?

"I'm American. True as you live, I am," said Maso, earnestly.

Something in his face made the consul relent a little. "Perhaps you've got some American blood hidden in you somewhere. But it must be pretty well thinned out not to know the Fourth of July! I suppose you've never heard of the Declaration of Independence either?"

A gleam of light now illumined the darkness of Maso's mind. "Oh yes; I know now; in the History." He rallied. "The Indians took a *very* bloody part in it," he added, with confidence.

"Oh, they did, did they? Where were you brought up?"

"In Italy, most; a little in other places. I came abroad before I was two."

"I see—one of the expatriated class," said Maclean, contemptuously. He had a great contempt for Americans who leave their own country and reside abroad. The dialogue ended, after a little more talk, in his saying: "Well, you get me a note from your mother (I suppose you write to her?) telling me something more about you. Then I'll see what I can do." For the boy's story had been a very vague one.

As Maso, heavy-hearted, turned towards the door, Maclean suddenly felt sorry for him. He was such a little fellow, and somehow his back looked so tired. "See here, my son," he said, "here's something for the present. No use telling you to buy fire-crackers with it, for they haven't got 'em here. But you might buy rockets; can't look out of the window summer nights in this place without seeing a lonely rocket shooting up somewhere." He held out two francs.

Maso's face grew scarlet. "I'd rather not, unless I can work for it," he muttered. It was a new feeling to be taken for a beggar.

"You can work enough for that if you want to. There is a printed list on that desk, and a pile of circulars; you can direct them. Show me the first dozen, so that I can see if they'll pass."

Maso sat down at the desk. He put his hat in six different places before he could collect his wits and get to work. When he brought the dozen envelopes for inspection, Maclean said:

"You seem to know Eytalian well, with all these Eytalian names. I can't make head or tail of 'em. But as to handwriting, it's about the worst I ever saw."

"Yes, I know," answered Maso, ashamed. "I've never had regular lessons, 'cepting this summer, when—" He stopped; Mr. Waterhouse's name would be, perhaps, a clew. He finished the circulars; it took an hour and a half. The consul shook hands with him, the mechanical hand-shake of the public functionary. "You get me that note, and I'll see."

Maso went back to Pisa.

When he arrived at his door in the Street of the Lily, the wife of the cobbler who lived on the ground-floor handed him a letter which the postman had left. The sight of it made the boy's heart light; he forgot his weariness, and climbing the stairs quickly, he unlocked his door and entered his room, Mr. Tiber barking a joyous welcome. Mr. Tiber had been locked in all day; but he had had a walk in the early morning, and his solitude had been tempered by plenty of food on a plate, a bowl of fresh water, and a rubber ball to play with. Maso sat down, and, with the dog on his knees, tore open his letter. It was directed to him at Pisa, in a rough handwriting, but within there was a second envelope, enclosing a letter from his mother, which bore the address of the hotel at the Bagni di Lucca, where she supposed that her son was staying with his tutor. She wrote regularly, and she sent polite messages to Waterhouse, regretting so much that his severe sprain prevented him from writing to her in reply. Maso, in his answers, represented himself as the most hopelessly stupid pupil old Longlegs had ever been cursed with; in the net-work of deception in which he was now involved he felt this somehow to be a relief. He had once heard an American boy call out to another who was slow in understanding something, "You're an old gumpy"; so he wrote, "Longlegs yels out every day your an old gumpy," which greatly astonished Mrs. Roscoe. The boy exerted every power he had to make his letters appear natural. But the task was so difficult that each missive read a good deal like a ball discharged from a cannon; there was always a singularly abrupt statement regarding the weather, and another about the food at the hotel; then

followed two or three sentences about Longlegs; and he was her "affectionate son Maso. P.S.—Mr. Tiber is very well." He sent these replies to the Bagni; here his friend the porter, taking off the outer envelope, which was directed to himself, put the letter within with the others to go to the post-office; in this way Maso's epistles bore the postmark "Bagni di Lucca." For these services Maso had given his second-best suit of clothes, with shoes and hat, to the porter's young son, who had aspirations.

The present letter from Mrs. Roscoe was full of joyousness and jokes. But the great news was that she intended to make a tour in Switzerland in August, and as she missed her little boy too much to enjoy it without him, she had written urgently to America about money, and she hoped that before long (she had told them to cable) she could send for him to join her. Maso was wildly happy; to be with his mother again, and yet not to have her return to Italy before the important four months were over, that was perfect; he got up, opened his trunk, and refolded his best jacket and trousers with greater care, even before he finished the letter. For he wore now continuously his third-best suit, as the second-best had been left at the Bagni. At last, when he knew the letter by heart, he washed his face and hands, and, accompanied by Mr. Tiber, tail-wagging and expectant, went down to get supper at the trattoria near by.

The next day he tried Pisa again, searching for employment through street after street. His mother had written that she hoped to send for him early in August. It was now the 5th of July, so that there were only four or five weeks to provide for; and then there would be his fare back to the Bagni. But his second quest was hardly more fortunate than the first. The only person who did not wave a forefinger in perspiring negative even before he had opened his lips was a desiccated youth, who, sitting in his shirt sleeves, with his feet up and a tumbler beside him, gave something of an American air (although Maso did not know that) to a frescoed apartment in which sewing-machines were offered for sale. This exile told him to add up a column of figures, to show what he could do. But when he saw that the boy was doing his counting with his fingers, he nodded him toward

the door. "Better learn to play the flute," he suggested, sarcastically.

Maso was aware that accountants are not in the habit of running a scale with the fingers of their left hand on the edge of their desks, or of saying aloud, "six and three are nine," "seven and five are twelve," and "naught's naught." He had caught these methods from his mother, who always counted in that way. He clinched his fingers into his palm as he went down the stairs; he would never count with them again. But no one asked him to count, or to do anything else. In the afternoon he sought the poorer streets; here he tried shop after shop. The atmosphere was like that of a vapor bath; he felt tired and dull. At last, late in the day, a cheese-seller gave him a hope of employment at the end of the week. The wages were very small; still, it was something; and, refreshed by the thought, he went home (as he called it), released Mr. Tiber, and, as the sun was now low, took him off for a walk. By hazard he turned toward the part of the town which is best known to travellers, that outlying quarter where the small cathedral, the circular baptistery, and the Leaning Tower keep each other company, folded in a protecting corner of the crenellated city wall. The Arno was flowing slowly, as if tired and hot, under its bridges; Pisa looked deserted; the pavements were scorching under the feet.

V.

The cheese shop was blazing with the light of four flaring gas-burners; the floor had been watered a short time before, and this made the atmosphere reek more strongly than ever with the odors of the smoked fish and sausages, caviare and oil, which, with the cheese, formed the principal part of the merchandise offered for sale. There was no current of air passing through from the open door, for the atmosphere outside was perfectly still. Tranquilly hovering mosquitoes were everywhere, but Maso did not mind these much; he objected more to the large black beetles that came noiselessly out at night; he hated the way they stood on the shelves as if staring at him, motionless save for the waving to and fro of their long antennæ. A boy came in to buy cheese. It was soft cheese; Maso weighed it, and put it upon a grape leaf. "It just gets hotter and hotter!" he remarked, indignantly. The Italian lad did not seem to

mind the heat much; he was buttery with perspiration from morning until night, but as he had known no other atmosphere than that of Pisa, he supposed that this was the normal summer condition of the entire world. It was the 27th of July.

On the last day of July, when Maso's every breath was accompanied by an anticipation of Switzerland, there had arrived a long disappointed letter from his mother; the hoped-for money had not come, and would not come: "Reuben John again!" The Swiss trip must be given up, and now the question was, could Mr. Waterhouse keep him awhile longer? "Because if he cannot, I shall return to the Bagni next week." Maso, though choked with the disappointment, composed a letter in which he said that old Longlegs was delighted to keep him, and was sorry he could not write himself, but his arm continued stiff; "proibly heel never be able to write agane," he added, darkly, so as to make an end, once for all, of that complicated subject. There was no need of her return, not the least; he and Mr. Tiber were well, "and having loads of fun"; and, besides, there was not a single empty room in the hotel or anywhere else, and would not be until the 6th of September; there had never been such a crowd at the Bagni before. He read over what he had written, and perceiving that he had given an impression of great gayety at the Italian watering-place, he added, "P.S. peple all cooks turists." (For Mrs. Roscoe was accustomed to declare that she hated these inoffensive travellers.) Then he signed his name in the usual way: "your affecshionate son, Maso." He never could help blotting when he wrote his name—probably because he was trying to write particularly well. Mrs. Roscoe once said that it was always either blot "so," or "Ma" blot; this time it was "Ma" blot.

This letter despatched, the boy's steadiness broke down. He did not go back to the cheese-seller's shop; he lived upon the money he had earned, and when that was gone he sold his clothes, keeping only those he wore and his best suit, with a change of under-clothing. Next he sold his trunk; then his school-books, though they brought but a few centimes. The old fairy-book he kept; he read it during the hot noon-times, lying on the floor, with Mr. Tiber by his side. The rest of the day he devoted to those pleasures of

which he had dreamed. He went swimming, and staid in for hours; and he made Mr. Tiber swim. He indulged himself as regarded melons; he went to the puppet-show accompanied by Tiber; he had had his hair cut so closely that it was hardly more than yellow down; and he swaggered about the town in the evening smoking cigarettes. After three weeks of this vagabond existence he went back to the cheese-seller, offering to work for half wages. His idea was to earn money enough for his fare to the Bagni, and also to pay for the washing of his few clothes, so that he might be in respectable condition to meet his mother on the 6th of September; for on the 6th the four months would be up, and she could safely return. This was his constant thought. Of late he had spoken of the 6th in his letters, and she had agreed to it, so there was no doubt of her coming. To-day, August 27th, he had been at work for a week at the cheese-seller's, and the beetles were blacker and more crafty than ever.

It was Saturday night, and the shop was kept open late; but at last he was released, and went home. The cobbler's wife handed him his letter, and he stopped to read it by the light of her strongly smelling petroleum lamp. For he had only a short end of a candle upstairs; and, besides, he could not wait, he was so sure that he should find, within, the magic words, "I shall come by the train that reaches Lucca at—" and then a fixed date and hour written down in actual figures on the page.

The letter announced that his mother had put off her return for three weeks: she was going to Paris. "As you are having such a wonderfully good time at the Bagni this summer, you won't mind this short delay. If by any chance Mr. Waterhouse cannot keep you so long, let him telegraph me. No telegram will mean that he can." She spoke of the things she should bring to him from Paris, and the letter closed with the sentence, "I am so glad I have thought of this delightful idea before settling down again in that deadly Casa Corti for the winter." (But the idea had a human shape: Violet Roscoe's ideas were often personified; they took the form of agreeable men.)

"Evil news? Tell me not so!" said the cobbler's wife, who had noticed the boy's face as he read.

"Pooh! no," answered Maso, stoutly.

He put the letter into his pocket and went up to his room. As he unlocked his door, there was not the usual joyful rush of Mr. Tiber against his legs; the silence was undisturbed. He struck a match on the wall and lighted his candle end. There, in the corner, on his little red coverlid, lay Mr. Tiber, asleep. Then, as the candle burned more brightly, it could be seen that it was not sleep. There was food on the tin plate and water in the bowl; he had not needed anything. There was no sign of suffering in the attitude, or on the little black face with its closed eyes (to Maso that face had always been as clearly intelligible as a human countenance); the appearance was as if the dog had sought his own corner and his coverlid, and had laid himself down to die very peacefully without a pain or a struggle.

The candle end had long burned itself out, and the boy still lay on the floor with his arm round his pet. It seemed to him that his heart would break. "Mr. Tiber, dear little Tiber, my own little doggie—dying here all alone!—kinnin little chellow!" Thus he sobbed and sobbed until he was worn out. Towards dawn came the thought of what must follow. But no; Mr. Tiber should not be taken away and thrown into some horrible place! If he wished to prevent it, however, he must be very quick. He had one of the large colored handkerchiefs which Italians use instead of baskets; as the dawn grew brighter he spread it out, laid his pet carefully in the centre, and knotted the corners together tightly; then, after bathing his face, to conceal as much as possible the traces of his tears, he stole down the stairs, and passing through the town, carrying his burden in the native fashion, he took a road which led toward the hills.

It was a long walk. The little body which had been so light in life weighed now like lead; but it might have been twice as heavy, he would not have been conscious of it. He reached the place at last, the house where Giulio's wife lived, with her five children, near one of the hillside villages, which, as seen from Pisa, shine like white spots on the verdure. Paola came out from her dark dwelling, and listened to his brief explanation with wonder. To take so much trouble for a dog! But she was a mild creature, her ample form cowlike, her eyes cowlike

also, and therefore beautiful; she accompanied him, and she kept the curious crowding children in some kind of order while the boy, with her spade, dug a grave in the corner of a field which she pointed out. Maso dug and dug in the heat. He was so afraid of the peasant cupidity that he did not dare to leave the dog wrapped in the cotton handkerchief, lest the poor little tomb should be rifled to obtain it; he gave it, therefore, to one of the children, and gathering fresh leaves, he made a bed of them at the bottom of the hole; then leaning down, he laid his pet tenderly on the green, and covered him thickly with more foliage, the softest he could find. When the last trace of the little black head had disappeared he took up the spade, and with eyes freshly wet again in spite of his efforts to prevent it, he filled up the grave as quickly as he could, levelling the ground smoothly above it. He had made his excavation very deep, in order that no one should meddle with the place later: it would be too much trouble.

It was now nearly noon. He gave Paola three francs, which was half of all he possessed. Then, with one quick glance towards the corner of the field, he started on his long walk back to Pisa.

VI.

"Do you know where you'll end, Roberta? You'll end with us," said Mrs. Harrowby.

"With you?"

"Yes; in the Church. You've tried everything, beginning with geology and ending with music (I can't help laughing at the last; you never had any ear), and you have found no satisfaction. You are the very kind to come to us; they always do."

The speaker, an American who lived in Naples, had entered the Roman Catholic Church ten years before; in Boston she had been a Unitarian. It was the 10th of September, and she was staying for a day in Pisa on her way southward; she had encountered Miss Spring by chance in the piazza of Santa Caterina at sunset, and the two had had a long talk with the familiarity which an acquaintance in childhood carries with it, though years of total separation may have intervened.

"There is one other alternative," answered Miss Spring; "it was suggested

by a pretty little woman who used to be here. She advised me to try crystal scent-bottles and dissipation." This being a joke, Miss Spring had intended to smile; but at this instant her attention was attracted by something on the other side of the street, and her face remained serious.

"Crystal scent-bottles? Dissipation? Mercy!" exclaimed Mrs. Harrowby. "What *do* you mean?"

But her companion had gone; she was hurrying across the street. "It isn't possible, Maso, that this is *you*!" She spoke to a ragged, sick-looking boy.

Two hours after her question Maso was in bed in the Palazzo Rondinelli. Madame Corti never came back till October, and the *pension* was not open, but the servants were there. The house-keeper went through the form of making protest: "The signora has always such great alarm about fever."

"You will refer Madame Corti to me; I will pay for her alarm," answered Roberta, marching past her to direct the driver of the carriage, who was assisting Maso up the stairs. "It's not infectious fever. Only malarial." Roberta was something of a doctor herself. She superintended in person the opening of a large cool room on the second floor, the making of the bed, and then the installation of Maso between linen sheets. The servants were all fond of the boy; in addition, Madame Corti was in Sorrento, and Miss Spring's francs were here. Her francs were few, but she spent them for Maso as generously as though they had been many.

The boy, as soon as he was in bed, whispered to Giulio, "Pencil; paper." Then, when Miss Spring had left the room, he scrawled on the page, Giulio holding a book under it, "My dog is ded," and signed his name. He told Giulio to give this to her when she came in; then, as he heard her step, he quickly closed his eyes.

Miss Spring read, and understood. "He was afraid I should ask. And he could not speak of it. He remembers, poor little fellow, that I did not care for the dog."

Maso had refused to tell her where his mother was. "She's coming, on the 22d, to the Bagni di Lucca"; this was all he would say. The next morning at daylight she left him with the nurse (for she had sent immediately for Dr. Prior and

for one of the best nurses in Pisa), and driving to the Street of the Lily, she ascended the unclean stairs, with her skirts held high and her glasses on, to the room at the top of the house. Maso had himself gathered his few possessions together after his meeting with her in the piazza of Santa Caterina, but he had not had the strength to carry them down to the lower door. Miss Spring took the two parcels, which were tied up in newspapers, and after looking about to see that there was nothing left, she descended in the same gingerly way, and re-entered the carriage which was waiting at the door, its wheels grazing the opposite house. "Yes, he is ill; malarial fever. But we hope he will recover," she said to the cobbler's wife, who inquired with grief and affection, and a very dirty face.

To find Mrs. Roscoe's address, so that she could telegraph to her, Miss Spring was obliged to look through Maso's parcels. She could not ask his permission, for he recognized no one now; his mind wandered. One of the bundles contained the best suit, still carefully saved for his mother's arrival. The other held his few treasures: his mother's letters, with paper and envelopes for his own replies; the old fairy-book; and Mr. Tiber's blanket, coverlid, and little collar, wrapped in a clean handkerchief. The latest letter gave the Paris address.

"My dear little boy! If I could only have known!" moaned Violet Roscoe, sitting on the edge of the bed with her child in her arms. She had just arrived; her gloves were still on. "Oh, Maso, why didn't you tell me?"

Maso's face, gaunt and brown, lay on her shoulder; his eyes were strange, but he knew her. "You mustn't get sick again, mother," he murmured, anxiously, the fixed idea of the summer asserting itself. Then a wider recollection dawned. "Oh, mother," he whispered with his dry lips, "Mr. Tiber's dead. Little Tiber!"

A month later Mr. Reuben J. Coe, of Coesville, New Hampshire, said to his brother David: "That foolish wife of Tom's is coming home at last. In spite of every effort on my part, she has made ducks and drakes of almost all her money."

"Is that why she is coming back?"

"No; thinks it will be better for the boy. But I'm afraid it's too late for that."