

faces after washing them at the fountain, and a large fish-bone with which we used to comb our hair.

My sister used to wash my shirt and her own poor under-garment, and while so occupied had nothing on her fragile little form but her wretched ragged gown. It was summer-time; in the evenings I bathed in the Arno. Our food was bread, fruit, and a little *Salame*; in short, with God's help we did not die of hunger. Morning and evening we said our prayers, and recommended ourselves to the Divine keeping. As we never dared return to the Piazza in the daytime, we heard nothing more of Signor Carlino.

One day I said to Pallidina, "Will you come to Lucca? Perhaps we shall find my father there."

"How can we go so far?" she replied.

"With begging and singing one can get to Rome itself."

"Then let us set off, Momo;" and without having a single soul to whom to say good-bye, without leaving behind us in the populous town one heart that cared for us or missed us, we bent our steps towards the Lucca gate and found ourselves in the country.

The country was almost new to us; we ate the blackberries on the hedges, and enjoyed ourselves thoroughly; when we got to a farm, Pallidina sang and I begged.

There is far more charity in country places than in towns. The farmers would ask us many questions, whence we came, where we were going, and the good people could hardly believe in our utterly forsaken condition. One day, among the hills between Pisa and Lucca, in a wooded spot, surrounded by olives, vineyards, and chestnut-trees, we came upon a pretty brook, a small mill, and the miller's cottage.

"How I should like to live here!" cried Pallidina; and the words were hardly spoken when out came the miller's wife with a baby in her arms. Coming up to us she put the questions to which we were now so used, and then, calling to her husband, said, "Look, Lorenzo; this little girl is strong enough to clean the house, help me with the child, and take the cow to the field."

"Do take my brother too," implored Pallidina.

"No," said the good woman, "he must go to Lucca to look after his father; but there is no reason you should have the journey. He will come and see you on his return. Just now we have no need of but just such a young girl as you; by the time he comes back we shall see whether you suit us and whether we suit you; if not, you can return to Pisa with your brother."

"Stay, Pallidina," said I, with tears in my eyes.

"Yes, I know I must, Momo, for fear of despising what God's providence sends," said she, sobbing; "and, besides, you know that it is a sin to refuse work when it is offered."

"Don't cry, my children," said the miller's wife. She brought us bread and a great jug of milk, gave me five pence, spoke kind words, and accompanied me to the highway that I might not lose myself. A man was sitting at a house door. "Wait a moment, my boy," said the good woman: "I am going to ask the schoolmaster to be so good as to write down our name and address on a slip of paper for you; you might forget the way."

Mute through very gratitude, inwardly blessing God, the madonna, and the saints, I left my sister and her new mistress.

"Come back soon, Momo," cried Pallidina, at the turn of the road. I took one last look, then the trees hid her from me. I kissed my hand to her shadow; then, trembling all over, sat on the ground and burst into tears.

Ashamed of my weakness, "I am a man," I cried. "I must work, work as Pallidina is going to do;" and with a strong effort I rose and ran without stopping from the hills into the valley.

When I got to Lucca, I looked out for my father wherever beggars assembled, but no one could give me any tidings of such a man. Then summoning all my courage, I went to the police office and gave his name and description; but no one knew him; no one had seen him. One of the policemen who helped me in my search took an interest in my case, and placed me with a brother of his who hired out hackney coaches—in the capacity of stable-boy. But first I asked and obtained leave to go and see my sister, and had the comfort of finding that she suited the miller's wife, and was herself better off than the poor child had ever been before. "Momo," she said, "if only you were with me, there would not be a single thing for me to want." She was dressed in a blue cotton frock with a linen apron, and had a handkerchief tied about her head. Never had I seen her look so neat or pretty. The mountain air had given her a colour, and her eyes shone like stars.

The miller's wife kept me two days to make me a little tidier in my dress; and once more I had to leave my sister. She came alone with me as far as the high road. On leaving I embraced her with my whole heart, and she, standing under a tree garlanded with vines, lingered there, sobbing and wishing me a good journey.

I carried away her image in my heart, and all my thoughts remained with her. Whatever