

A violinist finds friendship

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address I had found in his wallet. Numbed in body and spirit I crawled to the mouth of the cave, haunted by that young dead face. In the evening the stretcher bearers found me.

'John, are those accounts ready?' I started and looked round to see Henry's face, streaked with oil, smiling at me from the door of the office. He came over and put his hand on my shoulder, when he saw Carl's picture lying in front of me, on top of the accounts I was to have checked. 'John, I sometimes think that you loved Carl as much as I did. He is our common link, for he and I loved each other in life, and you were able to comfort him when he died.'

It was now three years since I had come home and written to Henry telling him of Carl's death. At his invitation I had gone to spend a weekend with him. We talked well into the night after my arrival, and when I left he asked me to come again soon. However, a week had scarcely gone when I received a letter from him asking me to come down for good as his partner, looking after the administrative side of the business.

Those three years have gone in a flash, three years of hard work to build up a flourishing business. We have been successful in our efforts, but above all we have been successful in building up our own personal happiness. Maybe that's what Carl wanted when he realized he was dying. But he is not dead — his spirit abides with us.

A Violinist finds Friendship

Paganini, aged thirty-two, and disgusted by the squalid aftermath of a female entanglement, wrote to his lawyer, the illustrious Signor Luigi Gulielmo Germi: «the kiss I send you comes from my heart . . . all the sirens in the world may go to the devil. All I care for is the continuance of your friendship». Two years later, after a long separation, he wrote: «Let me soon have the joy of clasping you to my heart . . . Love me as I love you».

At Placentia he met Lipinsky, a polish Violinist of whom he said: «He hardly ever leaves me, he adores me».

From Warsaw, aged forty-eight he wrote to Germi: «My heart leapt when I saw your writing . . . I am still a bachelor. It is more than two years since I looked at a woman. My only happiness is the knowledge that you are my faithful friend.»

Later on, having received two wreaths at Strasburg, he said: «I shall keep the more elaborate to place on the head of my friend Germi».

From London he wrote: «Do not cease to love me. I live only for you and for my son.» Back in Italy, he wrote: «Without you I am a body without a soul», and «I hope to have the happiness of embracing you again — a consolation which may almost be compared to the bliss of lovely and genuine music». Even after Germi's marriage he wrote: «Amico pregiatissimo — carissimo . . . amatissimo . . ., I beseech you to love me».

To the very end of a tragic life Germi was indeed faithful to his temperamental friend.

Beuno.

(Paganini: Renée de Saussine).