

CARLO III OF BOURBON, DUKE OF PARMA AND EMMA GUADAGNI



This is the life of our great grandfather Guadagno's sister, Emma Guadagni.

Emma, sister of Guadagno, and daughter of Donato Guadagni and Luisa Lee, was born in 1829.

Since her childhood, Emma suffered from a lung infection and needed to go often to thermal bathing establishments. Donato would send her with her mother to the thermal establishments of Vichy or Baden with a double goal in mind: that she would heal, and that she would find a husband. With this second goal in mind, he sent Emma to live in Milano with her sister Aurora, who had married Count Alexander Pejacsevich von Verocze, Austrian general and governor of Trento.

In Milano, Emma became interested in political movements, and she immediately sided with the liberals. She ended up by quarreling with her brother-in-law about it, in spite of her mother Luisa's warning to keep away from politics. She happened to witness Austrian troop violent repression of Italian patriotic manifestations in favor of an independent united Italy. A few years before, Carlo Alberto of Savoia, King of Piedmont, had declared war on Austria to free Northern Italy from Austrian occupation. It was called the Italian first war of independence. Many volunteers from all over Italy joined the Piedmontese army and enthusiasm spread all over the peninsula. However Austria won the war and King Carlo Alberto had to go in exile, leaving the throne to his son Vittorio Emanuele. When Austrian General Radetzky asked young King Vittorio Emanuele to abolish the Constitution from Piedmont and restore the Absolute Monarchy Regime, Vittorio Emanuele answered proudly, the "Savoia know the road of exile, not the road of dishonor...!"

Hopes were running high of an eventual second war of independence. Guadagno scandalized his brother-in-law's milieu by proclaiming his intention of joining the Piedmontese army. During a trip to Austria, Emma judged Vienna, the capital of the Austrian Empire, "sad and stupid". She refused one after the other, three wealthy and brilliant Austrian bachelors who proposed to marry her. Aurora, who defined herself "friend of the Piedmontese" and Guadagno, approved her refusals. Her parents instead warned her she might end up by becoming an old spinster. Emma retorted that she would love to get married but never with an Austrian. If it had to be an Austrian, she could not care less about marriage!

Eventually Emma returned to live in Florence. At the end of February 1852, she happened to go to a Horse Show at the Cascine, an elegant park just outside the walls of Florence, with her young sister Giulia. At that time, Emma was almost twenty three years old. Carlo III of Bourbon, Duke of Parma, 29 years old, was there also. Parma was a little Duchy, in Northern Italy, ruled by the Bourbon Family. The Bourbons at the time were also Kings of Naples and Spain.

Carlo III (1823-1854) was the only son of Carlo Ludovico of Bourbon, known as Carlo II Duke of Parma, and his wife Princess Maria-Teresa of Savoia. His complete name was Ferdinando Carlo Vittorio Giuseppe Maria Baldassarre and as a child his family called him "Danduccio". He spent most of his childhood in Germany and Vienna. When he was four, the

responsibility of his education was entrusted to a Hungarian priest Zsigmond Deaki. Later on, he was taught Italian history and language, as well as French, Hungarian, German, English and Spanish.

Carlo III married Princess Louise of Bourbon (1819-1864) his cousin, four years older than him, on November 10, 1845. He was only 22 at the time and it seems the marriage was arranged by the families, against his will. They had 4 children: Margherita in 1847, Roberto in 1848, Alicia in 1849, and Enrico in 1851. On March 24, 1849, his father Carlo II abdicated and Carlo III became Duke of Parma. His official title was: His Royal Highness the Duke of Parma, Piacenza and the Annexed States.

In February 1852, Carlo III was a guest of the Grand Duke of Florence, Leopold II. When he saw Emma at the horse show he was immediately struck by her. He asked his friend, Prince Poniatowsky, grandson of the last King of Poland and heir to the Polish throne, to introduce him to her. He immediately started asking her out. Soon the Florentine nobility realized what was going on and criticized the Duke for going out with "Emma the liberal".

An historical detail that shows the great love Carlo III had for Emma: a few years earlier, in March 1848, following the above mentioned outburst of the Italian first War of independence, led by the King of Piedmont against the Austrian Empire, revolution broke out in Parma against the Bourbon Dukes, who after all were foreign rulers, originally from France. Carlo III had to escape. However he was captured by the Italian "patriots" and remained their prisoner for several months. Eventually the British Government was able to negotiate his release. In August 1848, the victorious Austrian army entered Parma and officially restored the Bourbon rulers. In spite of this unpleasant experience, Carlo was willing to date Emma, the friend of the Piedmontese and of the Italian "patriots".

Carlo returned to Florence several times and spent there the months of April, May and part of June. He then went to Vienna, Austria, but came back to Florence in October. His relationship with Emma Guadagni was by now evident and well known, and involved diplomats and rulers of other countries, including the Emperor of Austria. Carlo III's father, Carlo Ludovico, wrote to Tommaso Ward, politician from Parma, living in Vienna: "I feel bad for my son because he is unhappy and he makes himself unhappy." In another letter, Carlo Ludovico wrote: "What can you do, the poor guy is not really guilty of it; what saddens me is that there are some people who are taking advantage of it for their own benefits."

The relationship between Emma Guadagni and Carlo III was thus also known and discussed abroad. They tried to convince Carlo III to stop seeing Emma or at least not to make their affair so obvious. Suddenly the rumor comes out that she is pregnant and that Carlo III wants to abdicate from his throne and live with her. Immediately, on hearing this, Carlo

Ludovico asks Tommaso Ward to contact Emma's mother, Luisa, proposing her to find a husband for Emma. By the way, Luisa Lee Guadagni, as a young maiden, used to hang out with Carlo Ludovico's friends in his palace, so they knew each other personally. Carlo Ludovico suggests Baron Pompeo Schmucker as a possible husband for Emma. Why Pompeo Schmucker and who is Pompeo Schmucker?

Pompeo Schmucker (born in 1822) was the son of Edoardo Schmucker, Austrian captain of the guards of the Bourbon King of Naples, and of his wife Floriana Cepulli. However, Edoardo had an affair with Maria Isabel of Bourbon, Queen of Naples (1789-1848), after the King's death in 1830, and had a son, called Enrico, from her. Enrico, crazy and epileptic died in 1851. Queen Maria Isabel, who by the way had also twelve children from her husband and cousin Francesco I of Bourbon, King of Naples, including the actual King of Naples, Ferdinando II of Bourbon (1810-1859), left a large sum of money to care for her illegitimate son. It seems that this sum of money was given to her cousin Carlo Ludovico of Bourbon, Carlo III's father, to administer. In 1834, Carlo Ludovico had given Enrico's father, Captain of the Guards Edoardo Schmucker, the title of Baron, for him and his descendants. He probably thought about little Enrico, through his mother a Bourbon prince, who would thus be a noble Baron, with his mother's money to support him. However, Queen Maria Isabel died in 1848, and Enrico in 1851. And Emma Guadagni was now pregnant with another illegitimate Bourbon prince. So probably Carlo Ludovico thought: Enrico does not need the money anymore, because he is dead, why not give it to his half-brother Pompeo Schmucker, who also inherits his father's title of Baron, if he agrees to marry Emma Guadagni, thus giving the new Bourbon illegitimate prince a noble legal name and settling this Bourbon mess in the family? The brother of an illegitimate Bourbon prince would thus become the stepfather of another illegitimate Bourbon prince, with a large amount of money inherited from his stepmother, the Bourbon Queen.

To convince Carlo III to accept this possible marriage of Emma with Pompeo, he was told that he would be able to continue his relationship with Emma, and that the marriage with Pompeo was just a legal procedure to cover things up. In the marriage contract of September 1853, (Emma was already four months pregnant) it was also established that her father, Donato Guadagni, would give her the very large dowry of 5,600 Tuscan Liras of the time. It was probably thought that a Bourbon prince, even though illegitimate, needed a large fortune to survive. And, also, a lot of money helped convince Pompeo to marry a woman expecting somebody else's son. Luisa Lee Guadagni was able to convince her daughter that this marriage was only a formality. The wedding of Emma and Pompeo was celebrated in the cathedral of Leghorn, far away from Florence, to avoid gossips. However, in spite of the promises made to the two lovers that the formal marriage would not interrupt their love relationship, Pompeo was immediately appointed Legation Secretary at the Embassy at the Court of Madrid, Spain, and asked to leave with his spouse for it as soon as possible. The Duchess of Parma, Louise, who

obviously knew of her husband's long and well-known betrayal, had insisted that neither Pompeo nor Emma ever return to Florence.

Carlo Ludovico writes that his son "suffers horribly" from this separation from Emma. In November, only two months later, Carlo III goes to Madrid, to be reunited with Emma. Ambassadors and politicians unsuccessfully try to settle the situation. In the middle of February 1854, Carlo and Emma embark on the Spanish man-of-war Lepanto to return to Italy. During the trip Emma has a son, after a difficult delivery. They name him Filippo. This complicates things even more.

The 24 year old Emperor of Austria, Franz Joseph von Hapsburg, has his prime minister, Count Karl Ferdinand von Buol-Schauenstein, tell the Parma prime minister Baron Tommaso Ward, that if Carlo III's relationship with Emma does not stop immediately, he will fight Carlo over it and not only on a personal level. It is the threat of a declaration of war between the two countries. Franz Joseph, whose Empire already includes all of Austria and Hungary, part of Tchechoslovakia and Jugoslavia and Poland, and Northern Italy, thinks that the love story between the Duke of Parma and Emma Guadagni is a good pretext for him to attack the small Duchy and annex it to his large Empire.

At this point, Napoleon III, Emperor of France, is also interested in the matter. The small Duchy of Parma, is strategically located in the center of Northern Italy. A possible annexation of the Duchy by the Austrian Empire, would dramatically change the balance of powers in that part of Europe.

By then, Carlo III had firmly decided to abdicate in favor of his son Roberto, who is six years old, and to entrust the regency to his wife Duchess Louise. He plans on moving to England, where he intends to live with Emma and Filippo.

However, the Duke could not carry out his project, because, having returned to Parma on February 4, 1854, he was mortally wounded by a stabbing in the stomach on March 26, 1854. It happened at 5:45 PM, while he was going for a walk along the streets of Parma. He was attacked in front of the Church of Santa Lucia, while he was with his aide-de-camp Count Bacinetti. The Duke had many enemies, however, he did not seem to care and would often walk unescorted in the streets of Parma. The assailant probably knew it and acted accordingly. His name was Antonio Carra, a saddler and upholsterer from Parma.

After atrocious sufferings, which he endured with praiseworthy bravery, the Duke died the following day, March 27, at 5:30 PM. Just before his death, he received the last rites and was able to see his wife and his Bourbon children for the last time.

The Duke was buried in the Chapel of the Macchia, near Viareggio, a seaside resort in Tuscany, because the Bourbon Family had a large estate there, and probably other members of the family were buried there. His heart instead was placed in an urn in the crypt of the Sanctuary of Santa Maria della Steccata in Parma. Emma is now left poor and alone with her baby son Filippo. The only one who helps her is her English grandmother, Sarah Lee (Luisa Lee Guadagni's mother). Every day she goes with her son to the Chapel of the Macchia and puts flowers on Carlo III's tomb. However, upon hearing about it, Duchess Louise, Carlo's widow, gives order to the custodian of the chapel to stop her from visiting her late husband's tomb. So Emma walks everyday to the outside gate of the Chapel enclosure and leaves the flowers there and "talks to her deceased lover".

At a certain moment, driven by her dire need, she went to Paris, to implore help from Carlo Ludovico. However the latter turned her away, treating her very badly, uncaring even about his grandson Filippo. Now that his son had been murdered, and that there was no legal proof that Filippo was really his grandson (D.N.A. did not exist at that time) why bother about a family scandal that had ceased to exist? And then he also probably thought that, after all, he and her mother Luisa had arranged the marriage between her and Pompeo Schmucker, whose father he had made a baron. Why did she leave him in Madrid and escape with her lover even at the risk of a possible war between the Emperor of Austria and the Emperor of France?

Filippo died in Lausanne in 1862. He was only eight years old. Emma then moved to Pisa, a Tuscan town close to Viareggio. She was allowed to live in a little room in the Franceschi palace, where a sister of charity took care of her until she died of an illness in 1866. On her deathbed she wrote her family: "I die in peace because I am going to see my son and his father." She was 37. This is how ended the short, tragic and passionate life of Emma Guadagni.

References

* Cecchini, Bianca Maria. *La danza delle ombre: Carlo III di Borbone Parma, un regicidio nell'Italia del Risorgimento*. Lucca: Istituto storico lucchese, 2001. ("The dance of the shadows: Charles III of Bourbon Parme, the murder of a Duke in the Italy of the wars of independence"). Vieri Guadagni, of Guitto, had asked Cecchini to reorganize the Guadagni Family Archives, still in Masseto at that time. She might have found some information in it.

* Passerini. *Storia della famiglia Guadagni, 1872* ("History of the Guadagni Family, 1872")

Italian historical magazine called "Tricolore" (Speciale N. 180 16 Novembre 2007)

www.tricolore-italia.com, on Roberto of Bourbon Parma, the last Duke on the throne of Parma.

Roglo

Gli ultimi giorni di Carlo III, duca di Parma: racconto popolare d'un profugo parmigiano, trascritto da un

Brontolone Milanese" ("The last days of Carlo III, Duke of Parma: folk account by a refugee from Parma, copied down by a grouchy Milanese"), Milano, presso la libreria di Dante, 1861.

The information contained in the book "La danza delle ombre" was given to me completely by Professoressa Aurora Delmonaco, who was able to find the rare book and read it. Professoressa Delmonaco and I have been doing the research on Emma Guadagni together, even though from different continents, emailing each other's discoveries and ideas. Very little was known and written on Emma Guadagni before. In the name of all of the Guadagni Family I want to thank Professoressa Delmonaco for her precious and irreplaceable collaboration.

The love story between Emma and the Duke of Parma, with the tragic ending of the Duke, became famous. In the 1970s Carlo Laurenzi, an Italian writer, wrote a book called: "Quell'antico amore" (That ancient love). It talks about a great love of Duke Charles III of Parma, for the "daughter of a Florentine Marquis" and it won second prize at the famous Campiello Prize manifestation. In the book, the daughter of the Marquis has the fictional name of Argia. In 1981 a movie about it was made in Italy by Anton Giulio Majano with the same title. The actors were Giuseppe Pambieri, Isabella Goldman and Alida Valli. The movie was later adapted as a television series of five instalments. It was reviewed thus: "The story is based on the tragic affair of Charles III, as narrated by Laurenzi. It is the story of the passionate love of the Duke of Borbone Parma for a young girl, Emma, whom he seduces. The real and overwhelming love between the two is terminated by a political attack in which the Duke is murdered".

Another book on Carlo III called "Sangue a Parma: la tragica vicenda di Carlo III, 1848-1859" (Blood in Parma: the tragic life of Carlo III, 1848-1859) was written by Giansiro Ferrata and Elio Vittorini. It analyzes the difficult childhood and the tormented personality of the Duke of Parma, ending in his early violent death.

A book was written in 1860 by Franco Mistrali: "Cinque anni di reggenza: storia aneddotica di Luisa Maria di Borbone" ("Five years of Regency: Anecdotal history of Luisa Maria of Bourbon"). It echoes the historical period in which it was written and treats the Bourbon with contempt. You can read it all in the website.

Pompeo Schmucker was later on assigned as a diplomat in the legation at San Marino, a small independent republic in central Italy, the size of Andorra or Lichstenstein. In an undated letter of Telesforo Bini, who had been the tutor of Carlo III when he was a child, Pompeo is referred to as His Excellency Baron Pompeo Schmucker, which makes me think he was an Ambassador at the time, because that is how ambassadors are called. In 1879, the Italian Government officially

recognized the nobility title of Baron to Pompeo Schmucker and his brother Ferdinando and all their descendants, males and females. He was 57 at the time.

CARLO III OF BOURBON, DUKE OF PARMA

Carlo III was born on January 1823 in Lucca, Italy. He was stabbed in the stomach on March 26, 1854, in Parma, and died the following day after atrocious sufferings. He was 31 years old. He left a widow, Duchess Luisa Maria of Bourbon, 35 years old, and four young children, Margherita, 7 years old, Roberto, 6, Alicia, 5, and Enrico, 3. He also left a mistress, Emma Guadagni, 25 years old, and their little baby, Filippo, one month old.

Many people, including family members and foreign rulers, both conservative and liberal, were happy at his death. So they did not want to punish the culprits of the murder. That is why, in spite of a three year long trial, no suspect was proven guilty and everybody was released. To this day, after 157 years, the names of the murderer and of the people who hired him and covered his escape are unknown. Somewhere in the attic of a castle or an old palace, are listed names and documents concerning the assassin and the people behind the assassination. However, nobody has revealed them yet. We only have suspects, but nobody proven guilty.

A few years ago, Marquis Vieri Guadagni, of Guitto, asked historian Bianca Maria Cecchini, to reorganize the 9 centuries of Family Archives the Guadagni had in their villa of Masseto, near Florence. Cecchini found many unedited information on the murder of Carlo III.

With Vieri's permission, she wrote a book called "La danza delle ombre: Carlo III di Borbone Parma, un regicidio nell'Italia del Risorgimento. Lucca: Istituto storico lucchese, 2001. ("The dance of the shadows: Charles III of Bourbon Parme, the murder of a Duke in the Italy of the wars of independence"). This book reveals precious unknown details on the tragic end of the Duke of Parma, found in the Guadagni Archives of Masseto. Historian Aurora Delmonaco was able to find the last printed copy of Cecchini's book, in a second-hand book store, and studied it attentively. She was very nice and sent us the information on Carlo III's murder and following trial. Thus, much of the information in this biography of Carlo III of Bourbon, Duke of Parma, comes from the Guadagni Archives and was unknown until a few years ago.

We are now going to reveal details about Carlo III's parents, little known aspects of his life and personality, which might have provoked his death, and analyze the trial of his suspected murderers.

Carlo III's parents were Carlo Ludovico of Bourbon, Duke of Parma, known as Carlo II, (1799-1883) and Princess Maria Teresa of Savoia (1803-1879), daughter of King Vittorio Emanuele I of Piedmont.

Carlo II was born in Madrid, in 1799. In 1803, when he was only four, he succeeded his father Luigi as King of Etruria, at his father's early death. His mother, Maria Luisa, was the regent. In 1807, Emperor Napoleon dissolved the Kingdom of Etruria, and 8 year old King Carlo II and his mother were exiled to France. In 1815, after Napoleon's downfall, Carlo II's mother was made Duchess of Lucca with Carlo II as her heir. During this period, on September 5, 1820, he married Princess Maria Teresa of Savoia.

Princess Maria Teresa of Savoia, was born in 1803 in the Colonna Palace in Rome, daughter of King Victor Emmanuel I of Piedmont, and of his wife, Archduchess Maria Teresa of Austria-Este. Maria Teresa had a twin sister Maria Anna. The two princesses were baptized by Pope Pius VII. A painting of the baptism can be seen in the Museum of Rome. Maria Teresa spent most of her childhood in Cagliari, on the island of Sardinia, where her family had taken refuge from the armies of Napoleon I of France. In 1814 her father was restored to rule in Piedmont and the family returned to Turin, capital of Piedmont.

Carlo II and Maria Teresa were considered a mismatched couple. She was a deeply religious woman, committed to her Catholic faith. Carlo Ludovico instead lived largely for his own pleasure often ignoring his governmental responsibilities. They lived most of their married life apart from each other.

Carlo II and Maria Teresa had two children: Luisa Francesca Beatrice (October 29, 1821-September 8, 1823), who died as a little child, and Carlo III (1823-1854).

In 1824, at his mother's death, Carlo II became Duke of Lucca, with the name Carlo I of Lucca. He was not interested in governing his duchy and spent nine years (1824-1833) traveling in Italy and Germany, where he owned two castles: Uchendorff and Weisstropp (near Dresden).

On December 17, 1847, Napoleon's widow, Empress Marie-Louise, died. She had been given the Duchy of Parma, at the death of her husband. Now, in accordance with the Congress of Vienna, the Duchy of Parma was given back to the Bourbons, while the Duchy of Lucca was annexed to the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. So in 1847, Carlo II became Duke of Parma and his wife Duchess of Parma. For the next few months Maria Teresa was the virtual ruler of Parma until revolution broke out in March 1848. Even though the revolution was crushed by the Austrian army, in March 1849 Carlo II abdicated as Duke of Parma and was succeeded by his son, Carlo III. Henceforward, Maria Teresa was styled Dowager Duchess of Parma.

Carlo II lived the rest of his life in France. As we know he administered the inheritance of his cousin Queen of Naples' illegitimate son Enrico Schmucker, then organized the marriage between Emma Guadagni and Enrico's half-brother Pompeo Schmucker, and eventually, after Carlo III's death, refused to help Emma Guadagni and her son Filippo.

Maria Teresa lived mostly at her villa in Viareggio, near Lucca, particularly after the assassination of her son in 1854. Later she lived in a villa in San Martino in Vignale on the hills just north of Lucca. The villa is still called "Tenuta Maria Teresa" (Maria Teresa's Estate) in her honor. There she died in 1879 as a result of cerebral arteriosclerosis. She is buried in the Verano cemetery in Rome, dressed in the habit of the Third Order of St. Dominic.

Carlo III grew up as an only child. As a child, he rebelled against too strict disciplines. His parents adored him but, as we stated before, lived separated. They offered him contradictory models of life. He grew up with two important feelings: on one side, he felt his royal Bourbon blood as a direct descendant of Louis XIV, King of France, nicknamed "Le Roi Soleil" ("The Sun King") gave him the right to be the only master of his destiny and to live it as he wanted, with no restrictions from anybody; on the other side he felt the influence of the newly born revolutionary nonconformist romantic movement, giving importance to feelings, first of all the patriotic one. When he was sent to the Military School of Turin, Piedmont, he participated in patriotic meetings for the unification of Italy and even waived an Italian green, white and red flag. During a meeting, he said: "If you are going to be "liberal", I will be "Jacobin" (i.e. like the French revolutionaries who beheaded his relatives King Louis XVI of France and his wife Queen Marie-Antoinette, and most of the French nobility during the French Revolution). His behavior scandalized the conservative legitimists. However also the liberals, whose goal of unification of Italy included the elimination of the independent Duchy of Parma, of which he was the ruler, distrusted him and feared a trap against them.

As a monarch, he had two options: participate in the Italian revolution against foreign powers, siding with Piedmont in its efforts to found a new unified Italy, or obey orders from the Austrian Empire, who controlled or owned most of Northern Italy. His personality and his political intuition made him prefer the first solution. He understood that the period of the traditional absolutist non-constitutional empires was coming to an end. So, when the first Italian War of Independence between the Kingdom of Piedmont and the Empire of Austria started in 1848, he left for Turin, to join the army of King Carlo Alberto of Piedmont, in spite of everybody's opposite advice. However Carlo Alberto did not like him around, because he was an inconvenient competitor in who was going to be the leader in the movement of an independent and unified Italy. So upon hearing that he was coming to join his army, he sent a group of "volunteers" to stop him.

Historian Vittore Trevisan, in his book "Carlo III di Parma, brano storico" (Carlo III of Parma, historical passage, pages 94-95), published in 1854, the year Carlo III was murdered, recounts the story of Carlo's arrest by the volunteers.

"Not far from Codogno, in the Region of Lombardy, Carlo is arrested by a handful of volunteers, who had been warned of his arrival. They pull him out of the carriage, tie his hands behind his back, insult him, laugh at him, and jokingly ask him to introduce himself. His complete name was Ferdinando Carlo Vittorio Giuseppe Maria Baldassarre, but he used to go by "Ferdinando" before he was crowned Duke of Parma as "Carlo III". So he answered with a firm voice: "Ferdinando of Bourbon, Piedmontese General", because he had attended the military school of Turin, Piedmont and he hoped to join the Piedmontese Army as a general. "Ho! Ho!..Royal blood..." sneered his captors. "Yes, royal blood...Does that bother you?" answered Carlo proudly. Asked where he was going, he said: "To the headquarters of King Carlo Alberto." "Too much of a hassle..." somebody remarked.

"I have to evaluate that, not you..." answered Carlo. "After all, he is right!" commented one of the captors and they did not kill him.

First they take him to Cremona, then Milano. He had with him a letter of his father, Carlo II, for King Carlo Alberto. It said: "I offer my only son to the cause of our homeland; he is now in the ranks of those heroes that fight for the independence and the freedom of Italy." Carlo II did not really care for the independence and the freedom of Italy, he just wanted to cover his back and his throne. In case, Piedmont won the war against Austria, the Duke of Parma would not have been an enemy to send into exile, but an ally who would deserve to keep his throne. King Carlo Alberto understood all of it pretty well so he did not care to have Carlo II's son in his army and kept him in jail until the British Government intervened and had him freed. Eventually in 1849, Piedmont lost the war against Austria, King Carlo Alberto had to go into exile, while Carlo III became Duke of Parma, after the abdication of his father.

When his father abdicated in 1849, and Carlo III became the Duke of Parma, he started to create a large army, not to attack Austria, but to be able to have a personal and dignified foreign policy, independent from his powerful neighbor. He wanted to be a balancing power between the two close enemies, Piedmont and Austria.

However, the nobility and upper class of Parma were angry at him for it. Traditionally, the high-ranking officers were chosen among them, by right of birth, instead Carlo III was now nominating the officers of his new army according to their capacity and not because of their noble birth. On the other hand, Carlo tried to redistribute wealth in his duchy, by favoring the poor peasant class. Again, this created animosity: the peasants did not understand what he was doing and the land owners were obviously against it, even the liberal ones.

As most states in Italy at the time, also Parma experienced upheavals and attempts of subversion which endangered the throne. Carlo reacted by abolishing the death penalty, which he opposed, and the long and painful imprisonments. He replaced them by what he thought was a major and more spectacular deterrent: the people convicted of a political crime were whipped and beaten with a stick in the public square and then set free. This gave him the reputation of being violent and cruel, even though in his five years of reign not more than fifty people received such treatment. Furthermore, the culprits of political crimes were usually intellectuals or upper middle class idealists, so having members of their group whipped or beaten publicly in front of a crowd, did certainly not endear Carlo III to those two important social and political groups.

I will now make a personal commentary for what it is worth. In Italy you normally inflict physical punishment on somebody only in a moment of anger or impatience, never in cold blood, and then often you regret it and apologize for it. Cold blood whipping or beating is considered a sadistic measure used by Northern European peoples like British and Germans and it is strongly frowned upon. The fact that with Carlo III, more or less once a month, somebody was mercilessly beaten or whipped in the public square, was probably considered a barbarian act. Probably the Duke, as the ruler of the country, and some friends were watching the executions from time to time, maybe even smoking a cigar, or sipping a Campari, while the poor victim was crying or screaming under the repeated blows. That reminded the Parmesan citizens of the pagan Roman Emperors watching gladiators or Christians massacred in the arena.

However we must remember that Carlo spent most of his childhood in Austria and Germany, educated by foreign tutors, not knowing anything about Italian customs and mentality. Until 1847, he was heir to the Duchy of Lucca, in Tuscany, and did not know much about Parma. He became heir of the Duchy of Parma only in 1847, at 24 years old, and two years later, at his father's abdication, he became its ruler. There was no Constitutional government in Parma at the time to advise him or to oppose any unpopular or unnecessary laws. It is difficult to be the absolute and only ruler of a country you know nothing about. And his father, Carlo II, could not give him much advice, since he mostly avoided carrying out his job as a Duke.

In his book "Gli ultimi giorni di Carlo III, duca di Parma: racconto popolare d'un profugo parmigiano, trascritto da un Brontolone Milanese" ("The last days of Carlo III, Duke of Parma: folk account by a refugee from Parma (Parmesan refugee), copied down by a grouchy Milanese"), Milano, presso la libreria di Dante, 1861, the Parmesan refugee relates with horror how in Milano, the Austrian government specified in a written law how many slashes of the whip should be inflicted on women per beating. Unhappily he adds: "In the Duchy of Parma, it is even worse."

In the same book, the Parmesan relates of a love romance between Carlo III and a working class young woman called Giovanna. I presume this happened before Carlo met Emma Guadagni. I will summarize the first meeting between the two: "In Parma lived a poor beautiful young girl, called Giovanna B. She was a seamstress and earned 15 or 20 cents a day. She had a hard working older brother, named Francesco. They were orphans and lived together. He was very nice, however he was impulsive and hot tempered. One day, Duke Carlo was walking in San Roberto Street, in Parma, when a little boy inadvertently bumped into him while running after a ball. Duke Carlo grabbed the child and started whipping him mercilessly with his little whip, which he often carried with him in case somebody bothered him and he became upset. As he was the ruler of the city, he could do whatever he wanted and nobody better interfere. Giovanna was coming back home from work. She had never met the Duke so she did not know what he looked like. She just saw a grown-up man whipping without pity a little child. She stepped forward and exclaimed: "Shame on you! Beating a little boy!" Her beautiful face had become red with indignation. A courtier intervened: "You do not talk like this to the Duke!" Aghast, she stepped backwards and became pale. Carlo III was touched by her courage in defending a little boy she did not even know and by the beauty of her face, enhanced by the quick changing of color, from crimson red to white. He did not say anything, let the little boy go, and walked calmly away, not before having looked at her with admiration for her beauty and her character. Giovanna noticed the expression in his glance and was secretly pleased."

We notice two important details in the story: Carlo III was looked upon as a merciless tyrant, beating upon defenseless victims when they bothered him, but, in spite of that, women would fall in love with him.

In the above book, Carlo contacts Giovanna and courts her, in a romantic poetic way, bringing her flowers and presents, never taking advantage of his position of ruler of Parma. Giovanna falls madly in love with him. After some time, he tires of her (or maybe meets Emma?) and stops seeing her. Giovanna tries to resume her job as seamstress but nobody hires her, because she is known as the "ex-mistress of the Duke of Parma". As with Emma, Carlo did not seem to care about concealing his extra-marital affairs. She dies of illness some time later, in dire poverty, but still madly in love with Carlo. At her bedside, a priest tries to comfort her and absolve her of her sins, but she only talks about Carlo in a loving way and invokes his presence. At her death, her brother Francesco decides to avenge her, but he does not make any specific move until some international powerful people offer him a large sum of money to kill the Duke and protection for him to flee abroad. Beforehand these same people had planned to murder the Duke during a show at the local theatre, but the large crowd of spectators blocks them from doing so. Again, like Emma, Giovanna remains in love with Carlo until she dies, even though he has disappeared from her life. There is however an important difference between the two: for Carlo, Giovanna was a temporary fling, while Emma was the great love of his life

and for her he was ready to abandon everything, power, prestige and his own wife and small children.

Monsieur Cabanis de Courtois, *attache'* to the French Legation in Florence, in a document of 1855, "Etude historique sur Lucques et Parme (1847 – 1854)" (Historical Study on Lucca and Parma, 1847 -1854), draws a portrait of Carlo III: "Carlo III was unable to make himself respected by the nobility or loved by the common people; he was violent and shy at the same time, his manners were authoritarian, often offensive; his kindness was as dangerous as his anger. He had many qualities: wit, great alertness, powerful memory; however, his education had been unable to refine these rich gifts and provide others he did not have...Summoned to reign when he was only twenty-six, the events did not quicken his experience...He lacked enough common sense and will power to understand what he owed himself as a sovereign and what he owed other people".

Finally, he made a mistake which eventually became one of the causes of his death. In 1853, the Crimean War was going to start between Russia on one side, and the Turkish Empire, France, Great Britain and Piedmont on the other. Guadagno Guadagni participated in the war as a British officer. Carlo III thought that if he could join the alliance of the Turkish Empire, the French Empire, the British Empire and the Kingdom of Piedmont, against the Russian Empire, it would be a big international promotion for the little Duchy of Parma and its brand new army.

However, Count Camillo di Cavour, Piedmont's prime minister, was fiercely against it. After the disastrous defeat of Piedmont against the Austrian Empire, in the Italian First War of Independence, only four years earlier, Cavour understood that the only way for Piedmont to beat Austria, was with the help of a powerful foreign ally on the battlefield. He was hoping France would join him. That is why he had joined France in the Crimean War, which was of no political interest for Piedmont by itself. Cavour wanted the French Emperor, Napoleon III, to believe that the new young King of Piedmont, Victor Emmanuel, was the only possible Italian sovereign that could lead all the other little Italian States and volunteers in a victorious Italian war of independence and unification against foreign powers, mainly Austria. The presence of Carlo III, another young Italian sovereign, and his army, fighting side by side with the French, to help them defeat Russia, would only create problems and confusion in Napoleon III's decision making.

As Carlo III was insisting in joining the alliance of the Western European Powers in the Crimean War, Cavour thought that "the end justifies the means" and that the only sure way for Piedmont to obtain the alliance of France was to eliminate Carlo III. Cavour also probably feared that, between an Italian candidate, like Vittorio Emanuele of Savoia, and the heir of the Bourbon Royal Family of France, like Carlo III, the French Emperor might choose the French candidate. He started encouraging Carlo III's political adversaries to plot against him. Two nuclei

were created, one in Turin, capital of Piedmont, and one in Parma itself. In Turin the conspirators were three middle class people who assembled around Count Luigi Sanvitale, refugee from Parma himself, son in law of Napoleon's widow, Empress Marie Louise, who used to be Duchess of Parma, and so cousin in law of the Emperor of Austria. In Parma the nucleus was made of nobles, led by Count Ferdinando Douglas Scotti, including Count Demofilo Bajardi and Marquis Giovanni Molinari. There were also professors and lawyers. Altogether they were twelve and met in engineer Pontoli's house.

A butler, Antonio Clerici, called Rosset, who worked at the Croce di Malta Inn, in Parma, was the liaison between the two groups. The group of craftsmen and shopkeepers, who were also involved in the plot, met mostly in bars, and often at the Croce di Malta Inn, where Antonio Clerici worked. It was at the Croce di Malta, that the components of the plot met: the refugees of Turin, the "city of Parma elite", and the "physical executors (craftsmen and shopkeepers)".

The idea of "killing" the Duke started in Parma, in the Pontoli house. A Countess heard about it and denounced the group. They could have been arrested, but nobody did anything. Cavour was obviously pleased about it, even though maybe he had not planned to arrive to such an extreme. The Austrian Government was also happy because Carlo III did not want to follow the conservative politics of the Austrian Empire. Austria was obviously against any political change in Italy that would diminish its supremacy and control over the country. Carlo's progressive ideas and most of all his relationship with Emma Guadagni, who Austria's head of the Foreign Affairs Department, Buol-Schauenstein, defined as "that liberal little bitch", were an obstacle to the Austrian foreign policy. In Vienna the relationship between Carlo III and Emma Guadagni was considered very negative also for another reason. At that time, often monarchs did not marry for love but for political reasons. Extra-marital affairs were accepted for Kings and Emperors, as long as they remained quiet and not publicly exhibited. And also as long as the sovereign remained united with his spouse and children and continued his "job" as the ruler of the country. But Carlo's project of leaving his wife Luisa Maria and their four little children, and abdicating his throne, to flee abroad with his mistress and illegitimate child was considered completely unacceptable and a very bad example to other monarchs. Duchess Luisa Maria heard about the plot to kill her husband and chose not to tell him. So Carlo III remained unaware of it until the end. Did Duchess Luisa Maria hope to save the throne for her young son, Roberto, by following more closely Austria's conservative foreign policy than her husband did? Was she also angry at him for his publicly known affair with Emma Guadagni?

This is the letter Carlo III wrote his father, Carlo Ludovico, when the marriage with Luisa Maria was imposed on him when he was twenty-two:

"Dear Dad, today at the military maneuvers, Francesco (his cousin Duke of Modena, another little independent state in Northern Italy) tried to convince me to marry Mademoiselle

(Luisa Maria de Berry, very wealthy descendant of the last Bourbon King of France) but I answered that I would do whatever you wanted me to do and possibly wait until I was twenty-five years old to make such an important decision. It is true that her large wealth would be very useful for our finances. However there are one thousand good reasons not to marry her. First of all she is a cousin of ours and we all know how dangerous it is for close-blooded relatives to intermarry. If we do not start marrying somebody who is not from our family, we are going to end up with a bunch of retarded sickly descendants! Second of all, she is surrounded by a crowd of noisy turbulent legitimists who want her to act and try and regain the throne of France! Most of all they want to be able to spend her money! Third of all I would have to live close to her aunt and her mother, and you know how unpleasant they both are! And finally: she is three or four years older than I am! That is why I do not want to hear about it right now. I want to wait until I am twenty-five. I want to grow up more so I will be able to choose a wife that is good for me and live happily with her in our house. That is what I desire the most. And if there will be disagreements between us, instead of doing war with one another at home, I would prefer for each one of us to have love affairs with other people and remain calm and moderate with each other. At this point I feel it is a disgrace to be who I am. Excuse me dear Dad, if I talk like this to you. I am opening my heart to you as to a friend. You know what love is all about, what a mixture of happiness and torments it is...Excuse me my very dear Dad, but right now I am treating you not as a father, but as the dearest friend I have on earth". Carlo Ludovico reacted by cutting off his privy purse, leaving him completely destitute until he accepted the marriage proposal with Luisa Maria.

However, on the eve of Luisa Maria's marriage with Carlo, Luisa Maria was able to obtain that none of her large dowry would go to Carlo, so the Borbone-Parma family or the Duchy of Parma itself did not gain any financial advantage from Carlo's marriage with her. In spite of Carlo's affirmation in his letter to his father, concerning the legitimacy of extra-marital affairs if the marriage did not work well, he had four children with his wife and did not fool around much, until he met Emma Guadagni. Emma was the great love of his life. For her he was willing to leave wife and children and abdicate his throne.

We remember the international scandal caused by his outspoken love affair with Emma, which became even worse when she became pregnant of his child. The affair was talked about all over Europe, from Paris to Vienna, Madrid to Florence, Parma and Turin. Carlo's father, Carlo Ludovico, thought he was able to quench the scandal by arranging the marriage of Emma with Baron Pompeo Schmucker and have the newlywed couple leave immediately for Madrid in the fall of 1853.

However, Carlo III was broken-hearted and joined Emma in Madrid on Christmas Eve 1853. He left with Emma for Italy in mid February 1854 on the Spanish man-of-war Lepanto.

The affair had created a dangerous European crisis. The Emperor of Austria, Franz Joseph von Hapsburg, was so appalled by it that he threatened to invade the Duchy of Parma and annex it to his Empire if the love affair between Carlo III and Emma Guadagni did not stop immediately. The Emperor of France, Napoleon III Bonaparte, was getting ready to defend the independence of Parma, at the eventual cost of a war against the Austrian Empire. Carlo Ludovico and Baron Ward were hoping the Spanish ship would sink and Emma Guadagni would drown.

However, not only the “Lepanto” ship did not sink, but little baby Filippo Borbone Parma Guadagni was born on it during the trip. By now Carlo III, disappointed by the internal opposition to his government policies from the population of Parma, his failure to join the coalition of Turkey and Western European powers against Russia in the Crimean War, his marriage failure with Duchess Luisa Maria, had decided that he could only find happiness with Emma and Filippo in a private life in England, after having abdicated from his throne of Parma. As soon as they disembarked in Italy, Carlo, Emma and Filippo started to organize their departure for England. On March 11, 1854, they tried to escape via Milano, but the Austrian police stopped them there and refused to let them continue their trip to England. Then Carlo sent Emma and baby to Florence, who was not controlled by Austria, with the idea that he would quickly join them and leave by ship for England from the Tuscan port of Leghorn. However Baron Ward, the Parma prime minister, was able to create a diplomatic incident with Florence, which blocked Carlo III at the border of the Grand duchy of Tuscany (Florence was the capital of the Grand duchy of Tuscany, at that time another independent state in Central-Northern Italy). Furthermore, while Emma and Filippo were still waiting for Carlo in Florence, the marriage of Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph with Princess Sisi was announced in Vienna. Baron Ward told Carlo III that, as the ruler of the Duchy of Parma, he could not miss attending it. His absence would create very serious diplomatic problems between the Austrian Empire and the Duchy of Parma and right now the relations between the two countries were already very strained (because of his love affair with Emma).

So the Duke postponed again his departure for Leghorn, where Emma and Filippo were waiting for him. And it was now March 26, 1854, the date the conspirators had decided to kill him

In the preparation of the crime, several conspirators, mostly “physical executors”, positioned themselves in different parts of Parma. Two of them, Carra and Bocchi, had a great physical resemblance with each other, and this was going to define their role in the murder of the Duke. Antonio Carra was a saddler. He was married with children. Ireneo Bocchi was a poor man, with dubious moral principles.

That afternoon, Carlo III went out for a walk along the streets of Parma, unescorted as usual. He had with him only his aide-de-camp Count Bacinetti, and four or five servants

following a few yards behind. Suddenly he saw his wife, Duchess Luisa Maria, sitting in a carriage, listening to an open air concert in a square of Parma. They waived to each other politely.

A little while later, at 5:45 PM, Carlo was passing in front of the Church of Santa Lucia, close to his palace. All of a sudden, a group of men, who seemed hiding behind their coats, blocked the street as though they were waiting for the Duke. One of them, had a large hat covering the upper part of his face, and a tight coat covering his hands. When Carlo III and his friend were only two yards from him, the man, who had remained still for the last few moments, moved towards them. The Duke and his followers did not even look at him and continued moving forwards as though their appearance would be enough to convince the man and his friends to step aside. The man stopped in front of Carlo and with an angry look told him: "Get out of my way! ...I am in a hurry!" The Duke looked at him surprised and answered: "How dare you..?" At that moment the man opened his coat and thrust a triangular file deep in Carlo's stomach. Then, leaving the blade in the Duke's lacerated stomach, he pushed him a few yards back and mixed quickly with the crowd. Wounded Carlo started staggering, while his friend Bacinetti rushed to help him. People started running around. Then with a loud cry Carlo fell heavily on the pavement in a large puddle of blood. In the meantime, Bocchi, who had attacked Carlo III, disappeared in the crowd and created himself an alibi. Carra, instead, dressed the same way as Bocchi, started running away as if he was the culprit. An old halberd guard tried to run after him, but the latter was running too fast. The crowd thought the Duke had fallen because of drinking too much wine and moved backwards scared. Count Bacinetti, realizing what had happened, started crying for help. Another halberd guard, standing next to the nearby palace of the Duke, saw the whole scene and the street where Carra disappeared after the attack. He started running in that direction. He got a glimpse of the fugitive turning a corner. He rushed and turned the same corner. He saw Carra running desperately but he started catching up with him. The fugitive realized he was lost. While running, he quickly slipped off his large overcoat, tied it in a bundle and threw it in the feet of the guard, who was now only a few feet behind him. The halberd guard could not avoid the bundled overcoat and tripped on it, falling flat on his face. Then Carra quickly disappeared for good.

That evening, at seven, Duchess Luisa Maria was sitting in the dining room of the ducal palace. She asked the butler if he had seen the Duke and why was he not coming down for dinner. With a dismayed expression on his face, the butler answered that an hour ago, the Duke had been brought back to the palace, bleeding heavily, and that he was now in his room. The Duchess became pale and quickly stood up. "What happened?" she asked. The butler replied he had heard that somebody had attacked the Duke in front of the Church of Santa Lucia and stabbed him in the lower stomach.

Luisa Maria quickly ran to Carlo's room. The door was closed. She knocked and got in. Carlo was sitting on a chair, leaning against a table, with his stomach bandaged but still bleeding heavily and two servants were around him trying to help him. He refused to lie on his bed, in spite of the unbearable pain. He looked at her. She ran towards him and hugged him but avoided meeting his gaze. The Duke's personal physician Dr. Benninger was called and so was another doctor.

News of the attack against the Duke spread quickly in Parma and abroad. The Austrian Ambassador in Parma, Baron Lederer, rushed immediately to the ducal palace. However he was not allowed to enter the room of the dying Duke. He spent the long night of the Duke's agony, sitting on a chair just outside the Duke's room, writing down in a journal everything that he could hear happening in it.

Before March 26, Carlo III had written a will in which he nominated his father Carlo Ludovico and Baron Ward as prince regents in case something would happen to him. As soon as he heard of the assassination attempt against Carlo, Ward left Vienna in a hurry and rushed toward Parma. However, Duchess Luisa Maria was able to stop him while she declared herself princess regent for her six-year-old son Roberto. She also made an official statement declaring the Duke had departed in a peaceful and Christian way blessing her and their children. Baron Lederer contradicts her by saying that from his chair outside Carlo's room, he heard the Duke cursing and swearing all night long. On the other hand, Dr. Benninger, who attended Carlo III's last hours of life, hurled accusations against the Duchess. He declared he was willing to do everything he could to find the murderers of "his Duke". In reality, Benninger was a friend of Baron Ward's, and was upset that the Duchess had outrun the Baron in proclaiming herself Regent for little Roberto. He was only hoping to discover some wrongdoing of the Duchess and so have her lose the Regency to Ward. Both parties agreed on a foreign policy more akin to Austria's desires, so it was only a question of who had the political power in Parma.

During Carlo's agony and last hours, the Duchess dismissed all the secretaries of State and ministers of her husband's government and put Marquis Pallavicino in charge of forming a new government, more inclined to obey Austria's directives. Pallavicino had been removed by the Duke from his government. However he had been at the side of the Duchess during her husband's agony. At the end of the night, a few minutes after the Duke had died, Luisa opened the door and, holding little Roberto by the hand, told the assembled politicians and personalities waiting in the hall: "Gentlemen, here is your new Duke...I will be his regent until he comes of age."

The only accurate description of the last hours of life of Carlo III and of his last words, which I was able to find, are in the book:"

“Gli ultimi giorni di Carlo III, duca di Parma: racconto popolare d’un profugo parmigiano, trascritto da un Brontolone Milanese” (“The last days of Carlo III, Duke of Parma: folk account by a refugee from Parma (Parmesan refugee), copied down by a grouchy Milanese”), Milano, presso la libreria di Dante, 1861.

The above mentioned book, published in 1861, presents Carlo III as a handsome and selfish Don Juan. However all the details of his murder are accurate as is the hypothesis of the duchess silence about the plot to kill her husband, and on the physical executioner of the murder, hired and paid by important and powerful personalities of Parma and beyond. From portraits of his, in fact, Carlo III does look very handsome, with a slightly crazy romantic look in his eyes. Upon looking at their portraits, also Carlo’s father, Carlo Ludovico, was handsome and charming, and Maria Teresa di Savoia, his mother, was breath-taking beautiful. And Emma Guadagni fell madly in love with him, remaining thus forever, even after his premature death.

“Carlo III was slender, tall and agile. His face had distinctive features: an almost non-existing chin made him look like a leopard, a tiger or a cat, or any other wild feline. Thus nature gave him the resemblance of the predominant tendencies of his soul. The ravings of his crazy and ferocious nature, the chaotic lust of his passions, the despotic and firm temper of his will, the absolute independence of one who was able to keep himself all his life above any restraint of law, common decency, or social custom, his continuous weirdness which inspired hate, contempt or terror, were the most striking aspects of his really original personality.” This is how his wife Luisa Maria saw him, according to the Parmesan refugee, during a dispute with him, a few days before he was murdered.

In his book, the Parmesan refugee states: “Duchess Luisa Maria did not love her husband, nor did she hate him. She only despised him. And she hoped their children would not resemble him.” Maybe that is why, after Carlo’s death, Luisa Maria never allowed his father, Carlo Ludovico, to have any contact with her children, or have anything to do with their upbringing.

This is how the Parmesan refugee describes the last moments of Carlo III’s life, in his room: “The Duke, squatting on a chair, is whispering secret words in the ear of the priest...maybe it is his Confession. On the face of the dying Duke you can read anguish, prostration, and from time to time a slight smile of hope, even an ironic smirk.

The priest admonishes and comforts him...telling him that a sincere repentance cancels all kinds of sin, that the Church is rich in indulgences, mostly for the dying, that his protection of the Jesuits, of the St. Vincent Society, and other religious orders, his strict censure of the customs of the city of Parma and his enforcing the ordinances of the Pope, all this will be important before God...and most of all he must pray and hope...

However, the closer the terrible moment was getting, the more a tempest of gloomy and sorrowful thoughts was appearing on the Duke's forehead. Suddenly, he tried to get up from the chair and exclaimed: "By Jove, before I die, I want to see this rotten city, which has become a den of murderers, completely destroyed and burned down! Nobody must remain alive and rejoice over my death! "

"Irma, continued the Duke, Irma had warned me about it...(Irma was a dancer whom the Duke, it seems in a moment he had drunk too much wine, had appointed head of the Police of Parma. Soon after he regretted it and appointed somebody else) Duke, she told me, they want to kill you...but I did not believe her...I did not notice how pale she was when she told me that..."

He frowned: "I do not want to think about her any more...And my wife, my wise and chaste wife...Is she really wise and chaste? And her despair they are telling me about is it not fake? And even the sadness of all these other guys...?" And he looked with dazed and suspicious eyes at all the courtesans around him. The latter were desperately trying to find expressions and gestures showing the sorrow they wanted to express.

"Maybe they all betrayed me, including that woman...maybe they hate me...I have not done much to be loved by them...may this be the penance for my sins...my punishment for them!"

"Punishment!...Will I be punished?...But is not the future life an idiotic nonsense like the present one?... However I would like to get rid of the burden of all of the injustices and abuses I committed!... I would not like my children to follow my example!"

"I realize priests and friars have played an infamous comedy around me, and that I knowingly participated in it...but I am also aware that I should not have made fun of certain ideas..."

And he became sad and started growling.

"And I will have to leave this beautiful country, so many pastimes, so many dreams...and everything will come to an end, and I will be reduced to a heap of dust...and in a short time, nobody will think about me anymore...nobody!"

In the meantime the Duchess entered the room, grief stricken but also scared. She threw herself at the knees of the Duke, holding with one hand the right hand of her husband, with the other the arm of their six-year-old son Roberto. She was crying and keeping her eyes down as though she feared to meet her husband's gaze.

Carlo looked around himself. He only saw humble and bent heads, facing the ground. He stared at his wife.

"I have done you many wrongs, he said,...I have a lot to be forgiven by everybody...I have been a bad father, a bad ruler, a bad husband...but the flattery...and the abjection of those around me...if I had found even only one good human being, among so many stupid, idiotic and cruel people...I made many people cry...everybody will be happy at my death...nobody will cry for me. --- I repent for all the evil I have done... I would like to be able to make up for all of it.'

"I degraded human dignity...I treated human beings as cannon fodder, and now...the cheapest scoundrel will be able to laugh over my grave and trample it...and even my murderer will come and insult my remains...and also the ones who hired him to do it."

"Forgive and you will be forgiven!" said the priest.

"Yes, I forgive...I forgive" and he hugged tightly the crucifix the priest was handing to him. "I am dying...I am dying..." he added, "and I am given death as a punishment for my sins...If we could only catch the murderer..."

"Oh forgive!" exclaimed the priest and the Duchess, who was still on her knees...

"I forgive...and if we catch him, he should have no other punishment than being sent into exile...Children...Duchess...pray for me...God...may my blood be enough for you...bless my children, as I bless them in your holy name."

And he died.

It was 5:30 P.M. of March 27, 1854.

The reader might wonder why Emma is not mentioned in the Duke's last night. The Parmesan Refugee never mentions Emma Guadagni or Filippo in his book:"The last days of Carlo III, Duke of Parma". It could also be that Carlo realized Emma and Filippo were not a viable option in his last minutes of life, on his deathbed in Parma, and mentioning their names in front of the Duchess, might expose them to future vengeance and retaliation by the same.

Immediately after his death, Duchess Luisa Maria enacted the following official declaration:" As the Almighty God was pleased to call to Himself our beloved husband Carlo III, Duke of Parma, Piacenza and Annexed States, we declare the very sad news to the citizens of such States, and we proclaim as new sovereign of these same States our beloved first-born son Roberto. We also declare that we assume the Regency of the same States because of his young age."

The following information on the accusation, trial, and dismissal of the suspects of the murder of Carlo III come mostly from the book: "La danza delle ombre: Carlo III di Borbone Parma, un regicidio nell'Italia del Risorgimento". Lucca: Istituto storico lucchese, 2001. ("The dance of the shadows: Charles III of Bourbon Parme, the murder of a Duke in the Italy of the wars of independence") by Bianca Maria Cecchini. Cecchini found a large part of the information in the Guadagni Family Archives, which late Marquis Vieri Guadagni allowed her to consult.

Bianca Maria Cecchini was lucky to be able to consult also the file Baron Lederer, Austrian Ambassador in Parma, sent to Vienna, concerning the murder of Carlo III and the following trial to find out and punish the responsables of it. After Napoleon's final defeat at Waterloo in 1815, the Austrian Government was able to restore to their thrones all the legitimate Kings, Dukes and Princes, whom Napoleon had sent into exile and replaced with his numerous brothers and sisters. Austria had also sworn to keep the legitimate rulers in power with the help of the Imperial Austrian Army. So Lederer was convinced that the murder of a Bourbon Duke was a horrible crime in the traditional political organization of Europe. And that the Austrian Government was very interested in finding the guilty party and punishing them.

Lederer checked every step of the investigatory commission and of the judges and had them give him all the minutes of the police interrogations and of the proceedings. However, in reality, the Austrian Government thought that the death of Carlo III was a "happy event". It enabled them to regain control over the Duchy of Parma, who, even though small, was a very important political piece in the European System. So they replaced Lederer with a less fervent investigating officer. All of Lederer's important findings on the crime were swept under the carpet, also to avoid annoying with them the new regent of Parma, Duchess Luisa Maria.

For a while, Giuseppe Mazzini, an Italian revolutionary, living in exile abroad, was accused of being the mastermind behind the plot to kill the Duke. Antonio Carra was arrested first. He was accused of being a follower of Mazzini. However, he was not confronted with any eyewitnesses and was released as soon the investigation began looking for his mandant. In the meantime, they arrested Ireneo Bocchi, because he looked a lot like Carra. The judges were not sure which of them to accuse, because they both corresponded to the "verbal identikit" given by the eyewitnesses of the crime. But again, there was no visual confrontation of the suspects with the witnesses themselves. However, two reliable witnesses had recognized Bocchi, whom they knew, as the fugitive running away along streets that were taking far away from the crime scene, in a different direction than Carra's. At this point, three witnesses were summoned, who presented an incredible alibi for Bocchi. Again, the judges were uncertain among the two.

At this point, a letter came from Genoa, by a certain "signor Francesco", stating that he was the murderer, and so to please let the other two free. In his letter, Francesco was affirming

that he was going to leave for America from Genoa. An urgent message was sent to Turin (capital of the Kingdom of Piedmont, to which Genoa belonged) demanding to arrest Francesco in the port of Genoa. Turin did not do anything about it because they said they did not believe Francesco's message was telling the truth. On both sides, the authorities were taking appropriate steps to avoid getting to any sure conclusion on who was the murderer and who was his mandant.

Emma was not mentioned in the inquiries because it would have drawn the attention on Luisa Maria, which Austria wanted to avoid at all costs, because the Duchess was following Austria's foreign policy perfectly, which Carlo III instead had always refused to do.

After Carlo's death, his aide-de-camp Count Bacinetti, who was present at the moment of the crime and could have given important information on it, was strangely accused of having committed a robbery. Eventually the court acquitted him of it, but Duchess Luisa Maria wrote Marquis Pallavicino: "If the Court finds him innocent, you must expel him from the Duchy." So Bacinetti was forced to leave Parma and could not witness at the trial.

In her book Cecchini relates how, after her husband's death, the Duchess destroyed or eliminated everything her late husband loved: friends, horses, uniforms, personal objects and even a pony Carlo III had given their son Roberto. She did not want her son to remember "that his father loved him." Why? Jealousy? Anger for not having been loved by him? Even the fact that she forbade Emma to pray on Carlo's tomb, shows the depths of her tormented feelings.

Because of the help given to the plot against the Duke, the Kingdom of Piedmont did their best to slow down the investigations, and not arrest the accused when they happened to be in their territory, and do everything possible so that the origin and the circumstances of the crime remained unknown. Carra, Bocchi and Francesco, and other indicted were let free. They encouraged people to believe that the crime was done by conspirators followers of Giuseppe Mazzini, who lived in exile abroad so could not be brought to trial, or because of some personal vengeance, like Carlo must have seduced some young woman, whose family avenged themselves by killing him.

Two years after the murder of the Duke, in 1856, the relations between Duchess Luisa Maria and the Austrian Government were not so smooth anymore, so an Austrian War Council reopened the trial. With Regent Luisa Maria the Duchy of Parma was now under Austrian control. They found out that the families of Carra and the other suspects of the murder of Carlo III lived at the expense of a Parmesan gentleman. The two nuclei, the one in Parma and the one in Turin were discovered. The names of the Parma committee (Count Douglas Scotti and the other 11) were revealed by Dr. Benninger, who assisted the Duke during his agony. All these documents can be found in the Historical Archives of Parma, Fund "Alta Polizia e Buongoverno.

Moti Politici” Busta 12, vari fascicoli (Police Commanders and Good Government. Political Movements. Envelope 12, various files) However, Luisa Maria accused the Council of wrongful procedures. A mixed Commission was created to investigate on the Austrian War Council activity, just when the Council was going to discover important information on the crime. The President of the War Council resigned and his successor put an end to its activity. The “suspects” were given money and passports and expelled from the Duchy, so they could not be interrogated any more. Baron Lederer wrote:” ...We might see the Duke again, without his death ever being avenged. From him we will learn that his wife knew about the plot to kill him, and because she did not warn him about it, she is the only culprit of his tragic death.”

A few months later however, the proceedings of the trial were transferred from the War Council to the Ordinary Court. In the meantime, all the politically or socially relevant “suspects” had been crossed out of the list. Only the poor people were left on the suspect list. From the original 188 the suspects were now only 37, and eventually were reduced to 16. The real suspects had already been set free and the final verdict was that they had acted for financial gains and not for political reasons. No proof could either be found against Giuseppe Mazzini. So, at the end everybody was found innocent and set free.

Before closing this chapter on Carlo III’s short life and tragic death, I want to ask myself a question: “What would have happened if Carlo Ludovico did not force his son Carlo III to marry Luisa Maria de Berry, the cousin he did not love, and allowed him instead to marry the great love of his life, Emma Guadagni?” Little Filippo would not have been an illegitimate son but the rightful heir to the throne of Parma. When he became seriously ill at eight, the best doctors in Europe would have assembled at his bedside and probably saved his life.

As a young adult, he might have assembled, under his command, all the little divided duchies and grand-duchy of Northern Italy, instead of King Victor Emmanuel of Piedmont, and led them in a victorious war against Austria, thus becoming the first King of a unified and independent Italy. He would have started the Borbone Parma-Guadagni Dynasty. In the 1920s, the Borbone Parma-Guadagni King would probably not have allowed Mussolini to transform Italy into a Fascist Dictatorship, with the tragic consequent alliance with Nazi Germany and the disastrous defeat at the end of World War II. The irate Italian people would not have sent them into exile like they did with the descendants of Victor Emmanuel, and the Borbone Parma-Guadagni Family would probably still be Kings of Italy.

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Roglo

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