

It might have been two years or so after this event, that I first saw Rosamund Gray. A summer residence of a few months with a friend, the next door neighbour of her father, and particularly intimate with him and family, gave me the ready opportunity of an acquaintance with herself, and from my friend the particulars of her little story as I have recounted it. The window of my apartment, though somewhat distant from, yet overlooked the garden in which it was. I first beheld this lovely victim of a blighted faith. It was the hour of evening—the early twilight close of a beautiful afternoon; and her occupation and attitude at the time such as, though comparatively trifling in themselves, strongly characterized the impulse of her thoughts. There was a pretty grass-covered rustic seat at the end of an alley of flowers, redolent of bloom and fragrance, and some part of its construction being accidentally broken and deranged, her attenuated but beautiful form was bent over it, as she, with apparent assiduity, was busy in restoring it to its former order. She then, with her hands crossed over her bosom, stood gazing on it for minutes together—possibly, she deemed it typical of the ruined and displaced hopes once so verdantly rooted in her own heart,—she turned and walked slowly away, but quickly again retraced her steps, and cutting a bunch of the most exquisite flowers from the parterre bordering her path, laid them gently on the seat, and knelt before it. The place had been formed by her lover, whose faithful toil in ornamenting her favourite garden had ever been at her command. It is probable that the sight of it gave to her vivid memory the happy hours she had known in that spot: when by his side, and listening to his spirited or feeling portraiture of scenes in other and stranger climes, or in his own aristocratic land—or when he breathed into her willing and absorbing soul, the glowing day-dreams of a happiness, that, being all of him, had concentrated her very nature in his own. Be what it may, the outpouring of her spirit's idolatry of aught connected with the recollection of her false lover,—and strange to say they never could persuade her to believe that this breach of faith to her was the impulse of his own free agency—and in charity we would deem not—her palpable worship of his memory in the particular manner I have described, grew into the confirmed habit of mental aberration, that now slightly and fitfully rose upon the hitherto placid serenity of a quiet but surely consuming grief. She had been removed from her native village to scenes of gaiety and joyous variety to win her to forgetfulness—as they fondly hoped a heart so young could be cheated to forget—but it would not do. The home of her childhood, as it had been the home of her love, was the chosen place alone for her wounded spirit to weep, and dream, and decay over the joys she had known—and there at last was she left in peace to pass away from her earthly sorrow. It was evident that the springs of existence were jarred beyond the power of reparation, and it alone became the study of those around her, to soothe and soften her quick shortening path to her eternal rest.

Poor Rosamund Gray! I almost fancy I can see her now as I used to look on her for hours, as she busied herself, while she was yet strong and capable of the exertion, among her beloved flowers. I think I see her light and elastic form enfolded in its white morning robe, by the rose bush near the vine covered summer house; the large hat with its broad green ribbon in the hand listlessly drooping by her side, as she supported her head with the other against the white trellised paling, just as she would rest herself at times, from the stooping position of her employment. I see the full luxuries of her glossy light hair, as it fell in soft, and thick waving, and curling tresses over her beautiful neck and shoulders;—and the angel sweetness of those downcast features, whose loveliness, as you gazed upon them, involuntarily drew your soul's worship to that God who could create a being so passively lovely among the creatures of earth, rather than take it to its kindred home among the angels in His own bright and eternal Heaven.

As I observed before, this sadly interesting girl became, as her frame and constitution bowed to a premature decay, subject to fits of mental wandering, slightly perceptible at the most, and merely displaying itself

in little and peculiar pursuits, and which thought but trifling anomalies in the ordinary routine of common place life, yet told too surely of the hidden madness within. A characteristic of this was, when the fit was upon her, her evening orisons before the garden seat as noticed before; and which was to her, it is evident, the shrine of memories walking alone into light from the burning fever of her own smouldering heart. I have often strayed by her side along the borders of the beautiful and wide-spreading lake, on the margin of which her village home was situated. A steam packet, which navigated the waters of this inland ocean, passed in its course through two islands in the far distance; and from an eminence commanding a view of this channel, it was her strange and solitary pleasure to watch for, and contemplate the progress of this vessel. At night, particularly, she loved to do this; and to mark the feathery sparks it flung like a spangled meteor against the darkened vault of the heavens, as long as they were visible through the gloom of the lonely hour. It was from this spot that she had gazed on a similar object, bearing the very life pulse of her very being on its winged and fiery speed, from the home and the heart which the parting with him now made so drear and desolate.

I used to notice, too, that, when after a long and silent gaze, whose intensity then seemed not the natural property of her soft, pale blue eyes, usually so sweetly gentle and dreamy in their expression,—and when the luminous speck had passed away into the far distance from the shadowed bosom of the lake, large tears would gather beneath and roll fast from the full fair lids bent closely to the earth over those beautiful orbs, and which seldom shed the drops of sorrow at other moments. She rarely, if ever, wept or could weep;—and it seemed to me her peculiar choice in watching the nightly progress of the boat, from some retrospective connexion with a chord of her writhing heart, which then unlocked the secret fountains of her silent anguish,—that it principally was attributable to the relief it afforded to the bursting heaviness of her sorrow.

When in the house of worship, the venerable old Minister prayed that the benevolent mercies of a compassionate Providence would shed the balm of consolation over the agony of a wounded spirit, and as he breathed the prayer, kindly rested his pitying glance on the bleeding heart in the pew beneath him, I remarked she would ever sigh with an expression so sadly piercing in its deep toned and melancholy respiration, that you would imagine her soul had issued with it from her lips.

This could not last. She had been confined to her bed for weeks, and her weakened nature was fast sinking before its untimely decay. In the days of their happiness, her lover had presented her with a gift, then much more costly and rare than at the present day—a toy of some fanciful kind, with a musical movement contained within it, and which with similar novelties he had obtained in the course of his foreign travel. The air was a sweet and simple one, and a favourite with him who had conferred the gift. One evening, as her father sat in the twilight stillness by her bed side, and after a silence of hours—for even to the last she was fitful—she surprised him when she suddenly and faintly expressed a wish to hear the melody again. The article itself had long been laid aside, and kindly kept from her sight, even with her own concurrence. She was raised by pillows to a sitting posture, and the music placed by her request in her own emaciated hand.

Most people laugh at omens,—and, possibly, reason and judgement demand our doing so. The first part of the air was of a light and gleesome kind, followed by a low strain of peculiar and touching sadness, and which was succeeded in turn by a movement similar in its joyousness to the first. Perhaps the mechanism of the toy had been injured by disuse,—for when the piece had played to the last tremulous note of the second part, it audibly jarred and ceased—and almost at the same instant dropped from the relaxed grasp of the lifeless being who had held it. The spirit of Rosamund Gray had departed with the sweet dying tones of that wailing melody, which strangely seemed to

identify the lingering melancholy of its trembling voice with the closing sorrows of a Broken Love.

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CONVERSATIONS WITH AN AMBITIOUS STUDENT IN ILL HEALTH.

* * * * * "Here our discourse was interrupted by the entrance of a female relation of L—s; she came with his medicine, for though he considers himself beyond human aid, he does not affect to despise the more sanguine hopes of those attached to him. 'Let them think,' said he, 'they have done all they could for me: my boat is on the water, it is true, but it would be ill-natured if I did not loiter a little on the strand. It seems to me, by the way, a singular thing that, among persons about to die, we note so little of that anxious, intense, restless curiosity to know what will await them beyond the grave, which, with me, is powerful enough to conquer regret. Even the most resigned to God, and the most assured of revelation, know not, nor can dream of the nature of the life, of the happiness, prepared for them. They know not how the senses are to be refined and sublimated into the faculties of a spirit; they know not how they shall live, and move and have their being, they know not whom they shall see, or what they can hear; they know not the color, the capacity of the glories with which they are to be brought face to face, among the many mansions which is to be theirs! All this, the matter of grand, and of no irreverent conjectures—all this, it seems to me, so natural to revolve—all this I revolve so often, that the conjecture incorporates itself into a passion, and I am impatient to pass the Ebon gate, and be lord of the eternal secret. Thus, as I approach nearer to death. Nature and the face of things assume a more solemn and august aspect. I look upon the leaves, and the grass, and the water, with a sentiment that is scarcely mournful; and yet I know not what else it may be called, for it is deep, grave and passionate, though scarcely sad. I desire as I look on those, the ornaments and children of earth, to know whether, indeed, such things I shall see no more—whether they have no likeness, no archetype in the world in which my future home is to be cast, or whether they have their images above, only wrought in a more wondrous delightful mould. Whether, in the strange land that knoweth neither season nor labour, there will not be, among all its glories something familiar. Whether the heart will not recognize somewhat that it has known, somewhat of the blessed household tones, somewhat of that which the clay loved and the spirit is reluctant to disavow. Besides, to one who like us, has made a thirst and a first love of knowledge, what intenseness, as well as divinity, is there in that peculiar curiosity which relates to the extent of the knowledge we are to acquire.—What, after all, is Heaven but a transition from dim guesses and blind struggling with a mysterious and adverse fate to the fullness of all wisdom, from ignorance in a word, to knowledge, but knowledge of what order? Thus, even books have something weird and mystic in their speculations—what, some years ago, my spirit was too encumbered with its frame to recognize, for what of those speculations shall be—true—what false? How far has our wisdom gone toward the Arcanum of a true morality—how near has some daring and erratic reason approached to the secret of circulating happiness round the world.—Shall He, whom we now conceive as a visionary, be discovered to have been the inspired prophet of our blinded and defenced race—and shall He, whom we now honour as the lofty saint, or the professed teacher, be levelled to the propagator and sanctifier of narrow prejudices—the reasoner in a little angle of the great and scarcely discovered universe of Truth?—The moral Chinese, supposing that his empire fills the map of the world, and placing under an imperialist the improvements of a nobler enlightenment."

SICILIAN VESPER.—Once evening as we were rambling about the island, the sound of music floating on the air, induced us to go in search of the invisible harmonists; when, close to the sea shore, and thrown into a strong relief by the light of the pale moon, which was sailing in majesty through a cloudless sky, we beheld a round chapel, and, before a small shrine to the Virgin