

"I said to myself, Suppose I go to them! I did try. I went aside, and got upon the path; the stones rolled down. I felt weary, as if I had been beaten; I hurt my foot against a pebble, and returned to the meadow. Then those in the path looked at me more sadly than before, and went on.

"I had a weight at my heart. But evening was closing in; there was nothing for it but going on, though, as I went, I trembled. A fear came over me. All at once it broke upon me that we were all going towards death. Then I tried to get back into the path; but there was no longer any path, any travellers, only the great green meadow, stretching far as eye could reach, and I was walking alone in the middle of it.

"I beg your pardon!"

Lisette was in tears! Then she recovered.

"At the end of the great meadow, I saw a beautiful dwelling; a square house, very large, very high, not one side larger or higher than the other. This house was of gold, bright as the sun at noon; the grass went close up to the walls; the setting sun shone through the clear windows, and fell upon it—

"A great rush of joy came over me! I was happy! No one had told me so, but I knew quite well that this dwelling was the Paradise of God. When I came close to it, I looked for the door; there was none on that side; there were only the large windows, with their panes, transparent as water, the red sunset darting through them. I went round the house; no door. I went round again; none. There was only the grass and the windows. I felt, searched about. Fear came over me again. At last I returned to the front, and looked up. Behind one of the windows of clear glass, I saw an old woman like myself, only handsomely dressed in black silk, with white hair, and a severe, though sweet look, sitting up and knitting. She went on knitting, without seeing me. She looked very happy. I cried out, or seemed to do so. Then she turned towards me. "You have made a mistake," she said; "you did not take the right road. You will not get in, my daughter." Then, with a calm face, she took to her knitting again; and as for me, I fell dead."

You are inclined, perhaps, to laugh; if you had seen Lisette, you would not have been so. She was pale; fear, that fear of God which hath torment, had got hold of her. She turned and re-turned her dream in her mind. She could not treat it lightly; she was too pious for that. She could not pray; the servile dread of the slave paralysed her heart.

Lisette, I said, you have told me a dream; I will tell you a story, a very very short one.

"One spring day in Judea, just as the corn was ripening, a crowd was coming out of the city. With much tumult and loud cries, they were leading three men to execution. Of these three, two had killed, stolen, pillaged; they were thieves: the other had announced God's pardon; it was Jesus.

"They nailed them to the cross. One of the criminals insulted Jesus; the other, suddenly struck, said, "Dost thou not fear God? as for us, we are punished justly; but this man!" Then turning to Jesus,—"Lord, remember me!" He got in safe. Lisette, what road, then, had he taken?"

Lisette kept a solemn silence; a divine light dispelled the shadows on her brow.

"Neither the highway, nor that terrible mountain path, had he, Lisette?"

Lisette looked at me; her beautiful black eyes shone; the sweet, pure smile played round her mouth. "He believed," she said.

That day we philosophized no more.

At the present time, many winters have passed since Lisette entered the golden house.—*Madame de Gasparin.*

THE WASP AND THE SPIDER.

I sat under an elm-tree one mellow fall afternoon listening to the tinkle of a little spring that dripped through the rocks and turf at my feet, and repeating to myself the first lines of Walter Scott's "Lady of the Lake," when an angry buzz