

found out, for I made no acquaintances except Pietro. I thought that trees ran in types, like people. Olives were poets. Fruit trees in blossom and fulfilment were happy women, living in homes, among families who loved them. Pines were the explorers and pioneers. Willows were young and beautiful widows. Oaks were men like my kind manager, Mr. Otis, strong to rely upon; and cypresses were the monks and nuns of the tree world.

You, who have always had your brain filled with thoughts, can't realise what it was for a crude, untaught girl, to be able to call thoughts to her, like wild birds which she could tame.

It is perfectly true, I did not *think* consecutively in the other days that came before Paris. I only felt, and dreamed. I told you that I was asleep when I was a very young girl. But I came near to thinking sometimes, when I was a little child. If there had been anyone then to lead me out into a different life, I might have gone on thinking always, walking up, higher and higher, mounting a golden stairway of thoughts.

When there was moonlight, often Pietro did not bring me back from the lagoon till twelve or after. I wanted to wait until I had heard the midnight bells on the water. And I would say to myself, as I listened, "Is this I—is it I? Or was there no 'I' before? Am I only just born?"

I have found myself wishing since I knew you, that I had met you in Venice. But I think you *were* with me there. I think I must have begun to feel you in the world.

On the water at night, far out towards the Lido, when the gondola seemed to swing in the darkness between sea and sky. I used to pretend that I was the pendulum in a great clock of the universe, where the