

"The sweet pea sips the lily dew—  
The sparrow's strain is sweet;  
And I will dance and be as you,  
The worn and ere to meet."

It was not long before her heart was mine, and mine was her's. I gained her father's favor and his consent that we should be married. Oh, if heaven there is below, I was its possessor, with the lovely Catharine! Can I forget the mellow melodious golden evenings I spent with her in this very month, when the broad expanse of nature smiled up to heaven, and her wild music threw magic on the scene? How often did I gaze at the little white cottage, peering from out the trees that out-topped it! how often did I listen to their roar, while their white heads danced in the scented breeze, but how much oftener did I melt beneath the voice and harp of her I loved! Oh by-gone days, mock not the sage of years!—wisdom has taught me thy value; but also thy instability. Press not on the breath of the wind, it will bear thee not. We were married, I say, and lived happy. I saw my Catharine's father entered beneath his favorite elm, where he often sat; yes, sat with her mother, his once loved Emily. The green turf grew over him and the violet, planted by his daughter, threw its unconscious fragrance over the bosom of decay. I often saw Catharine play on her guitar some mournful strain, until the tears bathed her face and its tones died on the melancholy of her soul. But how long can mortals be happy? The breath of an hour scathes all their hopes. My fondly-loved Catharine died on the eve in which she blessed me with a daughter. Her last words were spoken with a smile on me, then on her babe, and then her spirit took wings, never to return.... Ah, cruel fate! thou bitest the brightest part of my soul! I was after this inconsolable. I lived, 'tis true, but it was for my daughter—for the image of you, dearest Catharine. I taught her to be like thee." Here the old man sighed deeply. "Norah, my daughter, was my sole comfort. She was beautiful and sprightly. Often when I came home with down-cast spirits, did she entwine me, and infuse throughout my soul a glow of happiness. I could gaze on her innocent face, as free from care as it was placid, until the striking resemblance she bore to her mother, recalled the desolating thought of death; but dearly as I loved this flower of my existence, she too was doomed to leave me. Ten years had scarcely sunk into the ocean of the past, ere Norah, the gem of the neighborhood in which she lived, died of a gradual consumption; like the dew-drop on the rose that flies the morning sun, thus fled Norah from the world. I had seen that she was going six months before her death, but resignation to the will of Providence soothed my soul. Here then was the last bud of my hopes shorn and withered.—Young man, they may talk of fatalists and

sceptics, gazing on such scenes with indifference, but they cannot do it; it is a desolating thing and would wring tears from the proudest heart. Thus was I left alone in the midst of wealth, but my heart was tottering beneath the stroke of cruel fortune. Some weeks after Norah's death, on a mild autumn's eve with dejected spirits, I went to visit for the last time the tombs of those I only loved. Every thing around me was gay and the sun was sinking in autumnal mellowness into the west. I stood over their graves and determined to resign myself to passive contemplation. But the melancholy history of the past, like a vision, was before my aching eyes. All thought I, that was once lovely to my soul, is buried beneath me. O where are their spirits fled, said I; bright orb of the day, thy departing beauty, like the sunny visions of the past, throw a deeper melancholy o'er my soul. The tears started from my eyes involuntarily, and I sank on the tomb of my once loved Catharine. After this I wandered a maniac in the wilderness, I know not how long or whither; but since, and for the last forty years I have had my senses and been as I am now. I have, however, never returned to the world—I cared not for it, and resigned myself to eternal solitude. Solitude, thou friend of my soul! yes, with thee I have long dwelt in peace and happiness, and hope to breathe away my latest breath under the shadow of thy wings!—I live inoffensive to all the creation; the birds build their nest on the boughs by my side, heedless of my presence; and the wild deer lick my hand. I love to rove in the lone depths of nature, in the sufficiency of myself."

Here the old man paused and his last word died on my ear in plaintive mellowness, natural to his voice. I had fallen into a profound sleep from fatigue, and the melancholy strain in which he had delivered his story. Metho't in my sleep, an old man with a grey and flowing beard, approached me as I was lying in contemplative silence, admiring the heavens, "Arise, youth," said he, "and depart; but remember the tale I have told thee; haply it may instil into thy young mind a lesson of truth—a fortitude to bear up against the misfortunes of life's mysterious round. Let it not, however, damp thy hopes or youthful feelings. Life is a game, lucky or unlucky, that we all have to play; let us then play it wisely and bravely. My race is nearly run; for eighty springs have fled before me. A few more suns will guild my silver locks, and I must too be numbered among the spirits of dark kingdom of the past; adieu, adieu!"

The last words sunk solemnly on my ear; and I remembered no more. When I awoke in the morning I found myself where, the previous evening I had seen the Philosopher;—but how I came there, I knew not. Soon get-