

Chapel and the revelations of Michelangelo. Not any of the fountains in Viterbo or in Siena or Perugia had such a gracious setting as the moss-grown basins of the Villa Borghese, whose crystal jets, like Arachne of old, challenge Athena to spin a lovelier web below the ilexes and autumn-gilded maples. And when we came to worship at the shrine of the Unknown God on the sunny slopes of Rome's sacred hill, where the reapers were scything the fennel and thistles and tall rank weeds, which had grown higher than a man, we found the altar of the Genius of Rome fragrant with the last red roses of summer. Above it fluttered a butterfly like a soul that fain would speak, and a careless lizard was sunning himself upon the ancient inscriptions which mottled lichens seek vainly to erase.

Out on the Appian Way the roadside was still full of flowers, white, purple and gold. The dry fennel and yellow thistles and tall weedy mulleins were waist-high among the tombs. Butterflies fluttered their last dances before they yielded their little bodies to the enchantment of winter sleep; birds were fluting overhead, lizards sunned themselves upon the old grey stones.

For the rest we found the Ancient Way deserted, a home of sunshine and peace. If there was dust, was it not dust of the dead? Is not all the dust in the world dust of the dead? And were not the flowers, those gay brave pennons of spring and summer, the quintessence of this Roman dust?