

tender memories. She looked into his eyes, he looked into hers; they both looked across to Trinità de' Monti, and in the eye-asking between them she said plainly, "Do you remember—over there?"

Ah, love is of the soul, but who shall say the body has no part in it? Youth and beauty are the bridge of love, and the soul is the stream itself that washes shore and shore.

Roma was assisted back to the bed-chair, and then, conversation being impossible, Rossi began to read. Every day he had read something. Roma had made the selections. They were always about the great lovers—Francesca and Paolo, Dante and Beatrice, even Alfred de Musset and poor John Keats, with the skull-cap which burnt his brain. To-day it was Roma's favourite poem:

"Teach me, only teach, Love!
As I ought
I will speak thy speech, Love,
Think thy thought . . ."

His right hand held the book. His left was between Roma's hands, lying blue-veined in her lap. She was looking out on the sunlit city as if taking a last farewell of it. He stopped to stroke her glossy black hair and she reached up to his lips and kissed them. Then she closed her eyes to listen. His voice rose and swelled with the ocean of his love, and he felt as if he were pouring his life into her frail body.

"Meet, if thou require it,
Both demands,
Laying flesh and spirit
In thy hands."

Her blanched lips moved. She took a deep breath and made a faint cry. He rose softly and bent over her with a trembling heart. Her breathing seemed to have ceased. Had sleep overtaken her? Or had the tender flame expired?

"Roma!"

She opened her eyes and smiled.

"Not yet, dear—soon," she said.

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