

her to make after their arrival in Germany, though once she had looked forward to it with eagerness as the stepping-stone to her highest ambition.

The second picture was a beautiful contrast. Instead of the brazen glare of the first, the air was full of glimmering lights and shades, and the sky of a deep transparent blue. Far up a mountain side, on an overhanging cliff, grew the same graceful ash-tree, but its branches were entwined with vines of the passion flower (signifying "holy love") that hung around in slender streamers. On a jutting rock, with precarious footing, stood a young man reaching up to grasp a branch, his glance bold and hopeful, and his whole manner full of daring and power. He had evidently had a hard climb to reach his present position; his hat was gone, and his dress light and simple and adapted to the severest effort.

But the chief figure in this picture also, was that of a young girl who stood near, her right hand clasping his left, and steadying and sustaining him in his perilous footing. The wind was in her golden hair, and swept to one side her light airy costume. Her pure, noble face was lifted up toward him, rather than toward the spray he sought to grasp, and an eager happy light shone from her eyes. She had evidently climbed *with* him to their present vantage-point, and now her little hand secured and strengthened him as he sought to grasp for her success and prosperity joined with unselfish love. The graceful wind-flowers tossed their delicate blossoms around their feet, and above them an eagle wheeled in its majestic flight.

Below and opposite them on a breezy hillside stood an elegant modern villa, as tasteful in its architecture as the former had been stiff and heavy. A fountain played upon the lawn, and back of it a cascade broke into silver spray and mist. High above this beautiful earthly home, in the clear, pure air rose a palace-like structure in shadowy golden outline, indicating that after the dwelling-place of time came the grander and more perfect mansion above.

Christine looked till her eyes were blinded with tears, and then dropped her veil. In the features of the lady in each case she had not failed to trace a faint likeness, sufficient to make it clear to herself. She said in a low plaintive tone, with quivering lips:

"Mr. Fleet painted that picture."

"Yes," said Mrs. Learned, looking at her with no little wonder and perplexity.

By a great effort Christine recovered herself and said:

"You know how deeply fine paintings always effect me."

Dennis of course knew nothing of Christine's feelings. He could only see that his picture had produced a profound effect on her, and that she had eyes for nothing else. But he overheard Mr. Consoor say:

"It is indeed a remarkable painting."

"Do you know its author?" asked Mr. Ludolph with a heavy frown.

"No, I do not. It is a mystery as yet."

"Will it take the prize do you think?"

"I am not at liberty to give an opinion as yet," replied Mr. Consoor with a smile. "There is another picture here, almost if not quite as fine, though much smaller and simpler," and he took Mr. Ludolph off to show him that.

Dennis was now recognized by Mrs. Learned and her husband, who came forward and greeted him cordially, and they commenced making a tour of the gallery together. Though his heart beat *fast*, he completely ignored Christine's presence, and replied coldly to Mr. Ludolph's slight bow.

Christine, on being aware of his presence, furtively devoured him with her eyes. The refining influences of his life were evident in his face and bearing, and she realized her ideal of what a man ought to be. Eagerly she watched till he should discover her painting where it hung opposite his own, and at last she was amply rewarded for all her toil. He stopped suddenly and stood as if spell-bound.

The picture was very simple, and a few accessories entered into it. Upon a barren rock of an island stood a woman gazing far out at sea, where in the distance a ship was sailing *away*. Though every part had been worked up with exquisite finish, the whole force and power of the painting lay in the expression of the woman's face, which was an indescribable mingling of longing and despair. Here also Christine had traced a faint resemblance to herself, though the woman was middle aged and haggard, with famine in her cheeks.

*To be continued.*