

her? I said I knew you would, and asked her what it was, and she said a letter—would you write a letter to her mother? And I said you would. But I said I would do it myself, and gladly; but she said no, that my labours were heavy, and she thought the young man would not mind the doing of this service for one not able to do it for herself, she not knowing how to write. Then I would have sent for you, and at that the sadness vanished out of her face. Why, it was as if she was going to see a friend, poor friendless thing. But I was not permitted. I did my best, but the orders remain as strict as ever, the doors are closed against all but officials; as before, none but officials may speak to her. So I went back and told her, and she sighed, and was sad again. Now this is what she begs you to write to her mother. It is partly a strange message, and to me means nothing, but she said her mother would understand. You will “convey her adoring love to her family and her village friends, and say there will be no rescue, for that this night—and it is the third time in the twelvemonth, and is final—she has seen The Vision of the Tree.”

‘How strange!’

‘Yes, it is strange, but that is what she said; and said her parents would understand. And for a little time she was lost in dreams and thinkings, and her lips moved, and I caught in her mutterings these lines, which she said over two or three times, and they seemed to bring peace and contentment to her. I set them down, thinking they might have some connection with her letter and be useful; but it was not so; they were a mere memory, floating idly in a tired mind, and they have no meaning, at least no relevancy.’

I took the piece of paper, and found what I knew I should find:

‘And when in exile wand’ring we
Shall fainting yearn for glimpse of thee,
O rise upon our sight!’