

We are contemplating, then, a realm, nay, a world, where anarchy is the rule, and anarchy in the widest sense. The fairies are of a world where Right and Wrong don't obtain, where Possible and Impossible are the only finger-posts at cross-roads; for the Gods themselves give no moral sanction to desire and hold up no moral check. The fairies love and hate intensely; they crave and enjoy; they satisfy by kindness or cruelty; they serve or enslave each other; they give life or take it as their instinct, appetite or whim may be. But there is this remarkable thing to be noted, that when a thing is dead they cannot be aware of its existence. For them it is not, it is as if it had never been. Ruth, therefore, is unknown, their emotions are maimed to that serious extent that they cannot regret, cannot pity, cannot weep for sorrow. They weep through rage, but sorrow they know not. Similarly they cannot laugh for joy. Laughing with them is an expression of pleasure, but not of joy. Here then, at least, we have the better of them. I for one would not exchange my privilege of pity or my consolation of pure sorrow for all their transcendent faculty.

It is often said that fairies of both sexes seek our kind because we know more of the pleasure of love than they do. Since we know more of the griefs of it that is likely to be true; but it is a great mistake