

Mrs. Wyndham, and while Harry was superintending the arrangement, she called the Colonel's attention to a fine copy of Titian's Flora that had just been hung in the drawing-room.

"My dear wife," he replied, "why will you insist upon my admiring things for which I have no sort of taste. The face is a pretty one, to be sure—but not half so lovely to my eye as that portrait of yourself that hangs above it, and I would give all the heathen goddesses together for one bright smile of my little Emily here"—and as he spoke the Colonel drew the blushing girl towards him and kissed her forehead with paternal fondness. "Has not our Emily grown, Harry?"

"Very much," replied Harry, still intent upon his statue and without a glance at the object to which his attention had been directed.

Emily did not much relish this comparison with the heathen goddesses, for she was well aware that neither her face nor form presented any of the classical beauty for which Harry expressed such devoted admiration. She was rather under size, very slender, and though her eyes were fine, her nose was *un peu retroussé*, and her mouth, though filled with splendid teeth, was decidedly too large. She had, however, a fair complexion, luxuriant hair and very pretty little hands and feet, and the expression of goodness and intelligence that beamed in her face more than compensated for the want of more regular beauty. Mrs. Wyndham and the Colonel thought her handsome enough for any body, but as month after month passed without Harry's paying any especial homage to her charms, they began to fear that the airy castle they had built for their son's happiness upon the shadowy foundation of their own wishes, must fade away as these unsubstantial fabrics are apt to do. They had, however, no comfort—Harry showed no inclination to bestow this homage elsewhere, and though caressed and consoled by many scheming mammas, he paid their fair daughters as little attention as civility demanded. The whole pleasure of his life seemed to be centered in his home. Here he aided his mother in her schemes of benevolence, his father in his plans of improvement, particularly as they regarded the comfort and happiness of his numerous negro dependents, and Emily in the cultivation of her refined and elevated tastes, which were in many respects the echo of his own. But his happiest hours were evidently those he spent alone—either among his books, where he could dive still deeper among the treasured remnants

of ancient genius, and sympathize with those of later days who have imbibed their spirit, or in the realm of his own fantasy, peopled as it was with images of beauty drawn from its purest sources. And did no one form claim precedence here? Was there no presiding nymph in these revels of the imagination to whom the youth yielded the worship he refused to those of earth? Ah yes. A vision of grace and loveliness had swept before him, one on whom the cestus of Venus had been bound, and to whom Minerva had imparted her heavenly wisdom—she whispered to him in softest accents of a life of love known only to the pure and good on earth, and enduring as existence. True, she was but a phantom of the brain, an ideal object, but may not her living presence one day cross his path, and then what happiness were his! He loved the gentle girl, whose sweetness and intelligence shed a charm over his daily life, with all a brother's fondness, but that brighter being was the one his heart yearned to meet, and her image was the companion of his lonely hours.

Mrs. Wyndham had, as we have said, no small tinge of woman in her own disposition; she was a firm believer in the elective affinities, (she and the Colonel had fallen in love with each other at first sight,) and therefore gave up much sooner than her husband, the long-cherished idea of her son's union with Emily.—"True love," said she, "seldom grew out of friendship. It was a mysterious sympathy that united those formed for each other in indissoluble bonds—an immediate recognition in the beloved object of all that is wanting to one's own completeness," and many other arguments of the same nature, totally incomprehensible to her husband, as to most matter-of-fact people, but very clear and conclusive, no doubt, to those who use them.

"What more does the boy require?" he would answer: "has not Emily the best blood of Virginia flowing in her veins—is she not gentle and affectionate, sprightly and intelligent? Does she not sit a horse like Di Vernon—sing a ballad that brings tears to one's eyes, and dance like a sylph? Has she not drawn Medon's likeness with Dick the groom beside him, so that no one could mistake it—is she not learned in all the tongues? And then so good and religious as she is! Our Emily—God bless her—is an angel upon earth—and this blind boy not love her after all!"

"But he does love her, Colonel, like a fond devoted brother, and Emily repays it with a sister's affection. Neither think of the other