

"Divine, adorable fact, of course, I mean; Oh, Rosamund, how glad I am that it is true. Let us take the key and throw it into the river. I never want to be free again as long as I live."

"No use if you did!" with a saucy toss of the confident little head. "My poor boy," she went on presently, in a caressing, motherly tone, "I really can't help being rather sorry for you, you who have been so used to your freedom, you such a wicked, wicked wanderer. How will you ever endure it? Tell me the truth now—man to man, as they say—right at the bottom of your heart, aren't you just a tiny bit wistful sometimes for the old freedom?"

"Never," answered Sid, with portentous sincerity. "Never! Quite sure? Don't you ever feel a little homesick for some one of your old loves, and wonder what it would be like to see her again?"

Sid shook his head with emphasis. Rosamund, and for that matter, all Sid's world, was well acquainted with the main lines of his amorous history, and knew something of the various divinities who had figured in it.

"I will manage to get it from you," retorted Sid, making a clutch at his printed past.

"Even if you should," answered Rosamund, retaining possession of the book, "I should still remember some of the poems by heart. They are so beautiful. . . . This, for instance, to Myrtilla."

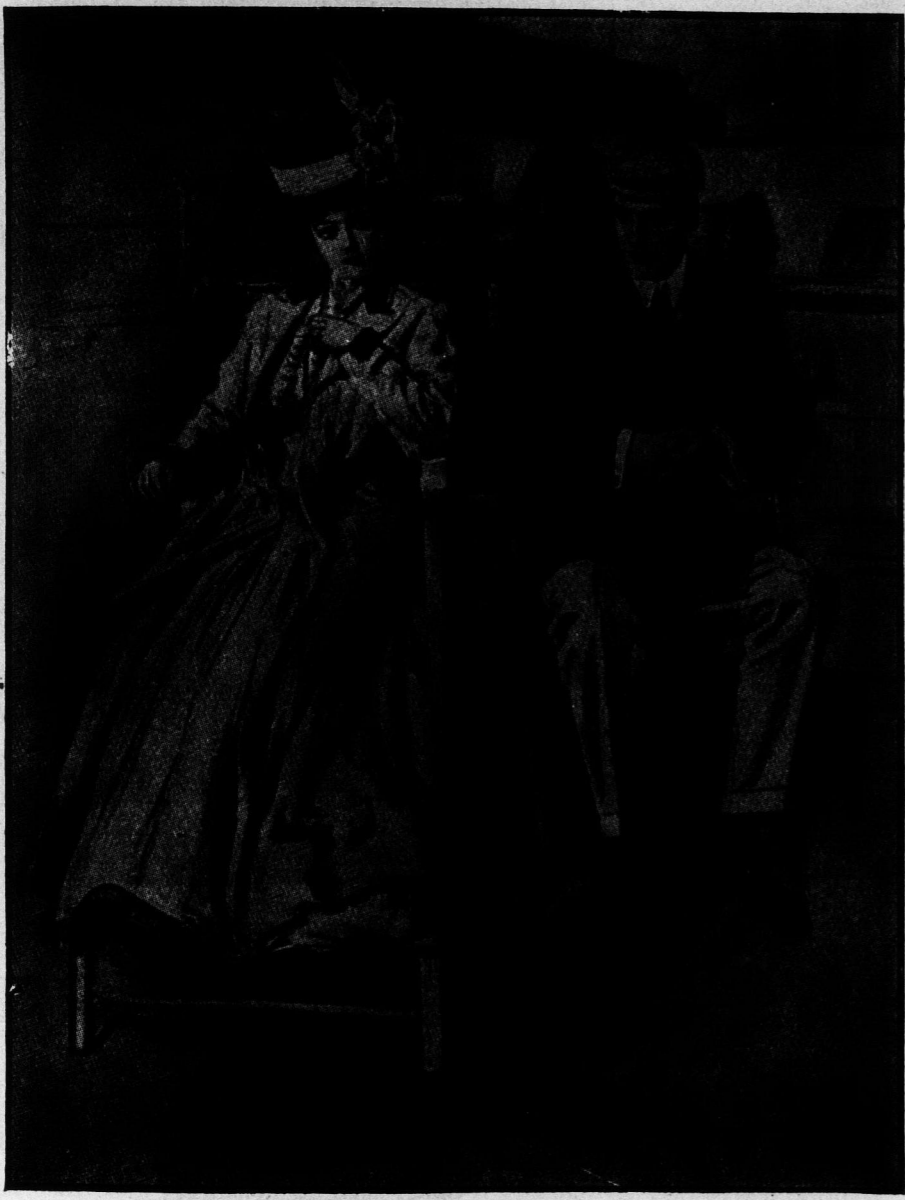
"Do be quiet, Rosamund. . . ."
"No, I insist. . . . I don't think you know how beautiful they are yourself. Listen:

I know a little starlit spring—
Last night I leaned upon the brink,
And to the dimpled surface pressed
My hallowed lips to drink.

And now the sun is up, and I
Am with a dream athirst:
O was it good to drink that spring,
Or was the spring accurst?

Accurst, that he who drinks therein
Shall long, even as I,
To drink again, yet never drink
Again until he die.

"Truly now," Rosamund continued, doesn't hearing that make you a bit thirsty again for your little starlit spring? It is not too late. I am sure that if you were to go back to her, she



"And it was to be no easy fight, he realized, as the siren nestled herself into a comfortable position in that sheltered nook."

Besides, Sid, a promising young lawyer, with known literary leanings, has put his heart on record beyond withdrawal by the publication of a volume of verse entitled "The Nine Muses." The volume consisted of love-verses addressed to various ladies to whom Sid had from time to time, or simultaneously, been devoted; and though, of course, they figured under fanciful names, their identities were no secret to the learned gossips of Sid's circle. This book had been a thorn in Sid's side since he had met and loved Rosamund, a thorn which she sometimes amused herself by using to his discomfiture. She had the volume with her this afternoon, and as she turned to it, with malicious merriment in her eye, Sid knew that she meditated some of her merciless railery.

"I do wish, Rosamund, you would let me forget that wretched book. I wish it were at the bottom of the sea. I'll have the whole edition destroyed. I will, to-morrow. . . ."

"Oh, that would be sacrilege!" interrupted Rosamund, mockingly; "besides, I should still have my copy."

would let you drink all you want. . . . I happen to know that she isn't married yet!"

Sid sat dumb under the raillery, with set, gloomy face. Turning over a page or two, Rosamund began again.

"Here is one of my favorites," she said, ignoring Sid's silence. "It is to Meriel:

Was there a moon in the sky,
Was there a wind in the tree,
I only remember that you and I
Sat somewhere with you and me.

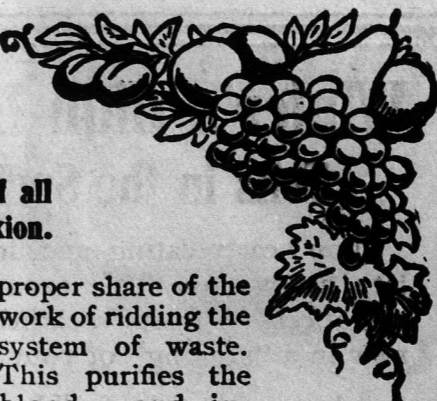
I only remember the joy—the joy—
And the ache of going away;
Oh, little girl, here's a little boy
Will love you till Judgment Day."

As she finished reading this, Rosamund let the book close in her lap, and her mood seemed suddenly to have changed to a thoughtful seriousness. She repeated, as if to herself, the last two lines:

"Oh, little girl, here's a little boy
Will love you till Judgment Day."

she said over slowly, as though weighing every word; and there was something in her voice that might have sug-

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