

*Mrs. Kelly*

# THE ORANGE LILY.

VOL. VI.

BYTOWN, SEPTEMBER 11, 1834.

NO. 32.

## Poetry.

### Mine Own.

And we have met, O love, at last!  
Thy cheek is wan with wild regret,  
The bloom of life is half-way past;  
But we have met!—yes, we have met!

My heart was wak'd beneath thy kiss  
From dreams which seem to haunt it yet:  
But I am I—thou, thou—and this  
Is waking truth!—and we have met!

Ah; though its fate, there may remain  
Before the grave—oh yet! e'en yet—  
Some quiet hours I and free from pain,  
Some happy days, now we have met.

Thine arms, thine arms!—one long embrace  
Ah, what is this? thine eyes are wet—  
Thy hand it waxes me from the place—  
Ah fool! O love, too late we met!

Couldst thou not wait?—what hast thou doue?  
Another's rights are sharply yet  
Twist thee and me. I come—mine own!  
Receive me not. In rain we met.

Farewell! be happy. I forgot,  
Yet what remains for both? Forget,  
That we did ever meet; and live  
As though our meeting were not yet.

Love off; for we shall meet once more,  
When eyes grown dim with care and fret  
No longer weep, when life is o'er,  
And earth and heaven in God are met.

### AN INDIAN TALE.

BY MRS. POSTANS.

In one of those large and elegant apartments peculiar to the harems in the East, the richly-carved windows, of heavy fret-work, looked forth upon a landscape lying so far below the eye, that grove, and hut, and river, the wandering herds, and the labouring cultivators, appeared rather like the varied features introduced by some skillful artist on a mimic ground, than the real and active portions of natural life, while the interior of the hall, with its grand and lofty dimensions, but total lack of adornment, presented an idea of solitary gloom that was in good keeping with the cold and haughty character of the Moslem noble to whose palace it belonged. Rarely indeed, was either the sound of music, the voice of childhood, or the merry laugh of a misanthropic slave-girl, heard in the harem of Ameean Khan, while throughout Hindostan his name was a source of terror to the weak, of apprehension to the timid, and of oppression to the helpless and the poor.

Still, at the time of which I write, altho' there was neither mirth nor music, neither the chattering of female news-mongers, the quarrelling of favourite slave-girls, the screaming of petted birds, nor evidence of any other of the thousand means of trivial entertainment that usually tend to break the monotony of woman's seclusion in the East, the harem of the prince was not wholly de-

solate. Retired, as if to avoid the rays that gleamed through the high lattice, and cast the shadows of its carved work upon the marble flooring, on a low cushion of dark blue velvet, embroidered with Persian sentences from the 'Koran,' reclined the drooping form of a young Moslem lady, the sister of the Khan; and at her feet crouched an aged slave, the nurse of her infancy, the sole companion of her maturer years. The lady's eyes rested on the grotesque forms thus pictured upon her prison floor, but with that fixed gaze which proved she saw them not; and when the gray-haired slave whispered a word of tenderness in her ear, a heavy sigh heaved her fair bosom, and a tear stole upon her cheek, but she seemed as if too sad for words.

Soon, however, a lengthened shadow threw its dark hues almost to her feet, and the lady, with a startled movement, raised her eyes, not animated, however, with the quick joyful glance of happy expectation, but heavy with the grief of hopeless certainty. The prince, who now entered, was unhappily little likely to be touched by such an expression, even in the eyes of his first sister, and as he advanced towards her, noting her carelessly arranged tresses, her cheek bearing evident marks of tears, and the air of deep and inconsolable sorrow that appeared both in her face and form, the brow of Ameean Khan grew more heavy with the reflected bitterness of his feelings, and a sterner determination flashed from his dark eyes.

'How now! Shereen,' he exclaimed, 'still thus? Is it not enough that my will has been spoken? Have I not given you the time you sought for preparation, and yet, on the very eve of your nuptials, I find you marrying your beauty with vain tears?' For a moment, the lady's eyes were again cast upon the ground, and a shudder passed over her form, as if in the struggle to find those words that were lost in the deep misery of the moment, but she then rose, and advanced quickly, as if to cast herself upon her brother's breast.

'Oh, Ameean,' she whispered, as he turned coldly from her, 'call not these tears vain. Say that thou relent at last; that thou wilt have mercy. We are but two, brother and sister, alone in the wide world, then cast me not from you into the arms of this debauched and hated Ashraf Khan, who, as you know, is as hoary with age as his heart is seared with crime.' 'Girl!' exclaimed the prince, 'what words are these? by the beard of the Prophet, you do well to talk of your love, as my only sister, when you thus strive to defeat and disgrace me, with a perjured oath and a blackened name.' 'Nay, my brother, hear me,' cried Shereen, 'if, as a Moslem noble, your word is pledged that I should wed this prince, hold pure your honor, give me the kasoomba draught, and I will drain it, blessing you in death; but, Ameean, though I am a Moslem girl, give me not over to a fate far worse than that of either the cup or steel.'

She paused, then, winding her fair arms around the Khan, raised her streaming eyes to his. But, alas! she read no mercy there, he sternly disengaged himself from her embrace, and with the accents of anger rapidly

replied.—'Cease, unhappy one, to trifle longer with my will. I have sworn that ere this moon has waned, you shall be the bride of Ashraf Khan, the seal of our alliance. Girl, beware of a worse fate; think not, that in this aversion to the Khan, this obstinate disobedience to my will, I cannot trace a degrading passion for him, you once saw, when my fond indulgence suffered you to gaze from behind the purdah's screen upon my counsils? Rawaral! I would save your honour and my own.'

Shereen started from her position of fond entreaty, and, stepping back, stood gazing, but with eyes no longer tearful, upon her brother's face; but the expression of her own was scarcely less marked by proud defiance.

'Ameean,' she cried, 'forbear! I also inherit the spirit of my father, who never bent to insult. Prince, I am a Moslem woman, holding as high as any of her race the honour and purity of her ancient family; even though I deny your right to make my peace and happiness the price of your gratified ambition, I offer my life to save your honour; but I cast back the foul persuasion you have dared to throw upon my sister's fame.'

The Khan gazed upon the speaker, whose dilated eye and flushing cheek seemed to agitate him more than all her previous tenderness. 'Do you think,' he said, 'that I speak of the honour of a noble Moslem house as I should of that among the lowest of the people? that had Ameean Khan but dreamed that his sister had been seen by the stranger, or that he had heard her voice, his word had not long since washed out the stain? but to have one thought of one not destined to be thy husband, is degradation to a Moslem girl, and do I not know, that since that fatal hour when your eye fell upon the brahmin Cheddaneer in my council chamber, you have pined in the harem's solitude, and now, perchance, for love of this Pagan stranger, dare to weep at thy appointed fate?'

As the Khan spoke, successive expressions chased each other over the brow of Shereen, but when he paused, she raised the fringed curtains of her soft dark eyes to his, whence beamed a light of pure tenderness. 'Ameean,' she replied, 'gently, it may be as you say; but is it strange, that a girl nurtured as I have been, solitary, but for the care of the faithful Heera, should feel that pure affection which is born with nature in our hearts? And is it strange, if the noble bearing of the young brahmin seized on my imagination, doomed as I am to lone musings? Surely there is no crime in this, my brother, nor should I have shrunk from this hated union less had I never looked from the purdah's screen. Has not nature given to the human heart affection, tenderness, and joy, and can we be insensible to their influences? Oh, my brother! the law of our hearts is stronger than those of men, and cannot be disobeyed.'

'What words are these?' exclaimed the Khan with a sarcastic laugh, at feelings his harshly-toned mind could little understand. 'By the Prophet, you have turned Moollah, and deal in wise sayings; but it is time that tones such as these be ended—Heera! prepare your mistress for her nuptials; brand