

THEIR STORY RUNNETH THUS.

By FATHER RYAN.

Two little children played among the flowers, Their mothers were of kin, tho' far apart;

They played together till the sun went down, Earth held no happier hearts than theirs that day;

And tired at last she plucked a crimson rose And gave to him, her playmate, cousin-kin;

She leant her head upon her mother's breast, And ere she fell asleep, sighing, called,

She sighed a little sigh, then laughed again, And hand in hand they walked the winding ways;

Of that fair garden till they reached her home, A good-bye and a kiss—and he was gone.

She leant her head upon her mother's breast, And ere she fell asleep, sighing, called,

She sighed a little sigh, then laughed again, And hand in hand they walked the winding ways;

Of that fair garden till they reached her home, A good-bye and a kiss—and he was gone.

When flowers were in their agony of death,

And winds sang "De Profundis" over them, And skies were sad with shadows, he did walk

Where in a resting-place as calm as sweet, The dead were lying down; the Autumn sun

Was half way down the west—the hour was three, The holiest hour of all the twenty-four,

For Jesus leaned His head on it, and died, He walked alone amid the virgin's graves,

And o'er the buried virgin's grave, Where virgins slept—a convent stood near by,

And from the solitary cells of nuns, Unto the cells of death the way was short.

Low, simple stones and white watched o'er each grave, While in the hollows 'tween them sweet flowers

grew, Entwining grave with grave. He read the names

Engraven on the stones, and "Rest in peace" Was written 'neath them all, and o'er each name

A cross was heaved on the lowly stone, He passed each grave with reverential awe,

As if he passed an altar, where the Host Had left a memory of its sacrifice,

And o'er the buried virgin's virgin dust He walked as prayerfully as tho' he trod

The holy floor of fair Loretto's shrine, He passed from grave to grave, and read the names

Of those whose pure lips had changed the names, By which this world had known them into names

Of sacrifice known only to their God; Veiling their faces they had veiled their names,

The very ones who played with them as girls, Had they passed there, would know no more

than he, Or any stranger where their playmates slept, And then he wondered all about their lives,

Their thoughts, their feelings, and their dreams, Their joys and sorrows, and their smiles and tears,

He wondered at the stories that were hid Forever down within those simple graves.

In a lone corner of that resting-place Upraised a low white slab that marked a grave,

Apart from all the others—long, sad grass Drooped o'er the little mound, and mantled it

With veil of palest green—around the slab The whitest of white roses twined their arms,

Roses cold as the snows and pure as songs Of angels—and the pale leaflets and thorns

hid even the very name of her who slept Beneath. He walked on to the grave, but when

He reached its side a spell fell on his heart So suddenly—he knew not why—and tears

Went up into his eyes and trickled down Upon the grass—he was strangely moved

As if he met a long-gone face he loved, I believe he prayed. He lifted then the leaves

He told her of the night when all the flowers, A listing, heard the words of sacrifice—

He told her all; then said: "I saw a stone In yonder graveyard where your sisters sleep,

And written on it, hid by roses white, I saw a name I never ought to forget.

She wore a startled look, but soon repressed The wonder that had come into her face,

"Whose name?" she calmly spoke. But when he said "Ullaine,"

She forward bent her face and pierced his own With look intense; and he thought he heard

The trembling of her veil, as if the brow It mantled, throbbled with many thrilling

thoughts, But quickly rose, and in hurried tone Spoke thus: "Tis hour of sunset, 'tis our rule

To close the gates to all till to-morrow's morn. Return to-morrow, then, if so God wills, I'll see you."

He gave many thanks, passed out From that unworshipful place into the world,

Straight to the lonely graveyard went his steps, Swift to the "White-Rose-Grave," his heart's

humbly "kneel." Upon its grass he prayed that God might will The mystery's solution; then he took,

Where it was drooping on the slab, a rose, The whiteness of whose leaves was like the foam

Of summer waves upon a summer sea. Then thro' the night he went

And reached his room, where, weary of his thoughts, Sleep came, and coming found the dew of tears

Unshed within his eyes, and hung her veil Around him. Then he dreamt a strange, weird

dream, A rock, dark waves, white roses and a grave, And cloistered flowers, and cloistered nuns, and

That shone like jewels on a diadem, And two great angels with such shining wings;

All these and more were in most curious way Blended in one dream of many dreams. Then

He woke wearier in his mind. Then slept Again and had another dream.

His dream ran thus: He told me all of it many years ago, But I forgot the most. I remember this:

Adove, whiter than whiteness' very self, Flattered thro' his sleep in vision or dream,

Blent away from earth, long distances, Thro' forests where the trees were all in dream,

And over wastes where silences held reign, And down pure valleys, till it reached a shore

By which blushed as in the evening sun; The dove rested there awhile, rose again

And flew across the sea into the sun. And then from near or far (he could not say) Came sound as faint as echo's own echo—

A low sweet hymn it seemed—and now And then he heard, or else he thought he heard,

"God gave my mother only me—one year. This very day He parted us." "Poor child!"

I murmured—"Nay—kind words—she replied: 'I know much wealth—they left me ample

means—I have true friends who love me and protect. I was a minor until yesterday;

But yesterday all guardianship did cease, And I am mistress of myself and all.

My words mean—and, Sister, they are true. If thou but take myself—nay—don't refuse."

"Nay—nay—my child?" I said—"The only wealth." We wish for is the wealth of soul—of grace,

Not all your gold could unlock yonder gate, Or buy a single thread of virgin's veil.

Not all the coins in coffers of a king Could bribe an entrance here for any one.

God's voice alone can claim a cell—a veil, For any one He sends.

Who sent you here, My child? "Myself." Or did some holy one Direct thy steps?

Or else some sudden grief? Or maybe, disappointment? Or perhaps, A sickly weariness of that bright world

Hath cloyed thy spirit? Tell me, which it is. "Neither—she quickly, almost proudly spoke.

"Who sent you here?" "A youthful Christ—she said— Who, had he lived in those far days of Christ,

Would have been His beloved Disciple, sure, Would have been His own gentle John; and

would Have leaped, on Thursday night, upon His breast

And stood, on Friday eve, beneath His cross To take His Mother from Him when He died.

He sent me here—he said the word last night In my own garden,—this the word he said:

"Oh! had you heard him whisper: 'Ethel, dear! Your heart was born with veil of virgin-orn—'

I hear it rustle every time we meet, In all your words and smiles;—and when you

weep I hear it rustle more. Go—wear your veil— And outward be what inwardly thou art,

And hast been from the first. And, Ethel, list: My heart was born with priestly vestments on,

And at Dream-Altars I have oft-times stood, And said such sweet Dream-Masses in my

sleep." And I lifted up a white Dream Host, A silver Dream Bell rang—and angels kneel,

Or seemed to kneel, in worship. Ethel, say, Thou wouldst not take the vestments from my

heart. No more than I would tear the veil from thine. My vestment and thy veil heart part to night.

To climb our Calvary and to meet in God— And this, fair Ethel, is Gethsemane—

And He is here, Who, in that other, bled— And He is here who came to comfort Him—

The dower of her mind, and she of her heart, Was of the richest, and she mastered art.

By instinct more than study. Her weak hands Moved ceaselessly amid the beautiful.

There is a picture hanging in our choir She painted. I remember well the dream

She came to me and told me she had dreamt A dream; then asked me would I let her paint

Her dream; I gave permission. Weeks and weeks Went by, and every spare hour of the day

She kept her cell all busy with her work. At last 'twas finished, and she brought it forth—

A picture my poor words may not portray. But you might gaze on it with your own eyes,

And drink its magic and its meanings in; I'll show it thee, kind sir, before you go.

In every May for two whole days she kept Her cell. We lumored her in that, but when

The days had passed, and she came forth again, Her face was tender as a lily's leaf,

With God's smile on it—and for days and days Thereafter, she would scarcely open her lips

save when in prayer; and then her very look Was rapt as if her soul did hold with God

Strange converse. And who knows? maybe she did.

I half forgot—on yonder mantlepiece You see that wondrous crucifix; one year

She spent on it, and begged to put beneath That most mysterious word—"Ullaine."

At last the cloister's angel disappeared; Her face was missed at choir, her voice was

missed— Her words were missed where every day we met

In recreation's hour:—And those who passed The angel's cell would lightly tread, and breathe

A prayer that death might pass the angel by And let her longer stay, for she lay ill—

Her frail, pure life was ebbing fast away. Ah! many were the orisons that rose

From all our hearts that God might spare her still; At Benediction and at holy Mass

Our hands were lifted, and strong pleadings went To heaven for her; we did love her so—

Perhaps too much, we loved her, and perhaps Our love was far too human. Slow and slow

She faded like a flower. And slow and slow Her pale cheeks whitened more. And slow and

slow Her large, brown, wondering eyes sank deep And dim.

Hope died in all our faces, but on her's Another and a different hope did shine,

And from her wasted lips sweet prayers arose That made her watchers weep. Fast came the