Oh, it was a terrible sight to stand there and watch the mighty ship, hurrying hopelessly to its death. I looked till my soul grew sick—could no longer. I sank down upon the cliff where I was standing, and clasped my hands across my eyes. I did not see the struggles of the great ship, but I heard the sullen, deafening crash when she too struck upon hidden rocks, and went down, helplessly in sight of land. I heard the crash, and, putting my fingers in my ears, ran inland till my breath was spent.

And the early summer morning lawned. We had stood three hours though it seemed to me not as many minutes. So long had the good ship struggled with the waves—so long her brave crew died a living death of anguish and suspense. As soon as the earliest dawn-rays commenced to light my path, I turned my foot-steps homeward, and at the door of the hut I met John, bearing a senseless figure in his arms.

"This is all that's left of 'em Agnes," and he, with a sadness unusual to his tone, and entering his house, he laid his half drowned burden down upon the sea-weed couch. His wife had already opened the windows and lighted the fire, and she hastened to apply vigorously all her stock of simple restoratives. Her care was presently rewarded, by seeing the stranger's eyes unclose, and catching the faint sound of his irregular breathing.

It was several days, however, before he could rise from the couch where he had been placed. On the morning of the fourth day, he slowly approached the window and sat down. "My friend," said he to the fisherman, "I owe you already, more than gold can ever pay you. Will you do more for me still: Can you bring me, from the next post-town, a sheet of paper and some ink, and will you let me be your guest till I receive an answer to this letter which I must write? When it comes, I shall have gold enough to reward your care, and strength enough to proceed on my journey."

Of course he gained his point, for when did Horace Mann ever fail to do so? I watched his course after that for years, and I never knew him to fail to accomplish what he undertook. The letter was written, and sent, and during the two months that glided away before its answer came, Horace Mann was my constant companion in all my walks. He wanted a guide and took me, for want of any other, quite careless as to what effect such an association might produce upon my mind. And yet, to do him justice, he was really good-natured, and when he found out, a week or two after our acquaintance commenced, that I could not read, he set himself to work in earnest to supply the deficiency. I loved my teacher, and my progress was rapid.

I suppose Horace Mann would as soon have thought of winning the fisherman himself to love, as me, the rough, wild natured child of his adoption. But I have been told by physiognomical connoisseurs that half the blood in my veins is Spanish, and I, uncultivated child of thirteen, as I was, loved the handsome young Englishman with a wilder devotion than many a grown woman is capable of. *Oh, how I loved him!*

He told me nothing of his personal history, but years afterwards I learned that he was very rich and noble. I was for a long time unconscious of the nature of my own love, until one afternoon, when we were walking, words of his revealed it to me.

'So they call you Agnes Lee, do they?' he asked, pulling me down on a rock beside him, and leisurely drawing my long hair through his fingers. 'How in the world came *you* by such a romantic name?'

'I don't know what romantic means sir,' I answered simply, 'but they called me Agnes Lee, because on Saint Agnes' night I was cast upon the lee-shore, in a terrible storm, and my mother was drowned, and they hadn't any other name for me.'

'Ho, that's it, is it? Quite a good account. You must have been born for telling stories. Well, I've a mind to amuse myself now by telling you one. Did you ever hear about love? But I know you never did; you, who never saw a handsome man in your life.'

'Except you, sir,' said I, looking admiringly into his bold, handsome face. His laughing blue eyes twinkled with fun, in appreciation of the honestly-given compliment, and he proceeded to give me my first lesson of that love, stronger than life and more terrible than death. As he described its workings, my cheeks flushed crimson, and I *knew* that even so I loved him. At last he grew weary of me, or of his subject, and drawing a book from his pocket, (he had procured several from the market-town,) in order to teach me to read,) he bade me run away for a while to play, and come again when I got tired.

Slowly I sauntered onward, with one remark which he had made sounding in my ears; he had said, "*Love seeks beauty as naturally as the flowers the sunlight!*"

Was I beautiful? My whole mind and soul were full of the question. At last I remembered a sunny pool of clear, fresh water, where I could see myself as in a mirror. I had often looked there to adjust my sea-weed wreaths, but I had never noticed my face, for never, until this afternoon, had the question suggested itself whether I was beautiful. Cautiously I crept to the brink, and many times drawing back in fear, I at length looked in. I unbound my long tresses, and they floated almost to my feet, long, heavy and black as night. Set in them, as in a frame, a face looked out; a childish, sun-burned face. There were eyes there—like sloes, large, black, and melting and anon flashing fire. I thought *they* might be beautiful, but I was not sure. As to the features, I was not very well competent to judge. I know now that they were regular enough for a sculptor's model—then I only knew that Horace Mann was handsome—*my* face was *not* like Horace Mann's, therefore, I thought it must be homely.—But I was not satisfied. I stole lingering back to my companion, and found him in turn tired of his book, and ready to amuse himself with me.—'Please sir, may I ask you a question?' I inquired, rather timidly.

'Why yes, Miss Agnes Lee, since you never in the world did such a thing. I suppose you may.'

'Well, sir, am I handsome?'

Horace laughed long and loudly ere he replied. 'Well, you genuine descendant of Eve, you precious little specimen of feminine beauty, where you picked up your vanity, nested here on the lee-shore, like a sea-gull, I don't know; but go and stand there in the sunshine, and I'll answer you. Shake down your long, black hair, all about you, gipsy—there, that's right—now stand still.'

I should think I stood still there a minute and a half, waiting for him to make his decision. I really suffered, while his eyes were so bent upon me. At last, his fixed, steady look, was getting to be torture, and it was an inconceivable relief when he spoke.

'Well, Aggie, it took me some time to decide, didn't it? No, you are not handsome yet, Aggie. You are brown as a Malay, and there's something almost savage in your fierce black eyes. But your features are good enough—your hair is long and thick, and if it were taken care of, and weren't sun-burned, it might be magnificent, as it is, you're rather homely, but if *some* people had you, you might be made a very handsome woman.'

Strange to say, dearly as I loved him, this reply gave me pleasure instead of pain, though I well knew, had he loved me, he never would have made it. But I don't think I wanted him to love me *then*. He had said I had the material for a handsome woman, and that was all I wanted to know. My heart beat quicker with a high sense of power. I said that I would make *him* know that I was beautiful, some time—that some other day, I would make his proud heart beat quicker, and with this hope for the future I was quite content.

One day, soon after, we were walking together over the rough rocks bordering the shore. I remember a scene of life swelled high and exultant in my heart, and I bounded over the steepest ledges, hardly touching them, or paused to balance myself and turn around on their sharpest points. 'Come down sure, Agnes Lee,' said Horace Mann's voice, at length, and in an instant I was by his side.

'I've been thinking,' he commenced, (we had gone back to my favorite subject of sea-weed,) 'I've been thinking that you would make a tropical ballet-dancer. Are you fond of dancing? In another to my mind, there is no earthly reason why you should not be a good one in general, and ballet-dancing in particular.'

'It is bad sin,' he continued, and I would not answer for fear he should change his decision. 'I really suffered, while his eyes were so bent upon me. At last, his fixed, steady look, was getting to be torture, and it was an inconceivable relief when he spoke.

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