

for solitary confinement? With buttresses at intervals to prop them up, they were so enormously high! their height contrived expressly to hinder any one in the tallest house in the neighbourhood from ever seeing who might be walking in that secret enclosure.

In spite of its dismal seclusion the garden was very lovable, because it was very old, with moss and lichen growing on its stones, and because its walks were invaded by grass between the box-edges; a jet of water danced in a marble basin of antique fashion, and it had a little kiosque, much the worse for time, to dream in under the shade of the gnarled and knotted planes crowded with birds' nests. All these had this garden of old; and above all it held a soul, a sweet, homesick spirit, a soul breathed into it little by little in the course of years, the sadly exhaled repining of cloistered women, of youth and beauty here kept captive.

This morning four or five men, beardless negroes, were there in their shirt-sleeves, working at the preparations for the great event of tomorrow, one stretching an awning between the trees, another spreading splendid Asiatic rugs on the ground. Catching sight of the girl at the window, they greeted her with a twinkle of the eye full of covert meaning, and a 'Good day' at once familiar and respectful, which by an effort she returned with a frank smile, not at all scared by their gaze; till suddenly she started back in dismay at the aspect of a young peasant with a fair moustache, who came in loaded with baskets