

were his intimates many years, thus much. He was on terms of visiting in a house where were three sisters; one of them beautiful, *spirituelle*, and a coquette. The old story was here once more re-enacted in due order. Paradise opened before him; the imaginative and passionate soul of a devoted boy bended in homage before an enchantress. She received it, was pleased with it, even encouraged and stimulated it, by various arts known to that class of person, until she was fully and proudly conscious of her absolute power over one other noble and gifted nature—until she knew that she was the centre of the whole orbit of his being, and the light of his life; then with a cold surprise, as wondering that he could be guilty of such a foolish presumption, she exercised her undoubted prerogative and whistled him down the wind. His air-paradise was suddenly a darkness and a chaos.

Well, it was a needful part of his education; if his Frances had not done him this service, some other as fair and cruel most undoubtedly would. She was but the accidental instrument and occasion of giving him that one fundamental lesson of a poet's life, *une grande passion*. As a beautiful dream she entered into his existence once for all; as a tone of celestial music she pitched the keynote of his song; and sweeping over all the chords of his melodious desolation you may see that white hand. Let us bid her farewell, then, not in unkindness; for she was more than half the Mangan.

He never loved, and hardly looked upon, any woman for ever more. Neither over his disappointment did he gnash his teeth and beat his breast before the public; nor make himself and his sorrows the burden of his song. Only in the selection of poems for translation, and in the wonderful pathos of the thought which he scrupled not sometimes to interpolate, can you discern the master-misery—as in that ballad from Ruckert:—

"I saw her once, one little while, and then no more.

'Twas Paradise on earth awhile, and then no more;

Ah! what avail my vigils pale, my magic lore?

She shone before my eyes awhile, and then no more.

The shallop of my peace was wrecked near Beauty's shore—

Near Hope's fair isle it rode awhile, and then no more!

I saw her once, one little while, and then no more.

Earth looked like Heaven a little while, and then no more.

Her presence thrilled and lighted to its inner core

My desert breast a little while, and then no more."

Into the empty and dreary interval which followed there are but few glimpses of light; unless the hinted revelations in that ghastly poem, "The Nameless One," be regarded as autobiographic. One thing is plain: he could

not afford leisure to brood over the shivered splinters of his great dreams, by reason of the necessity of earning daily bread for himself and his mother and sister: which is also probably what saved him from suicide. Men do not usually rush to meet death, when death by mere hunger stands like a wolf at the door. It is well, also, if the devil find one for ever occupied; which was the receipt found effectual by the learned Count Caylus, who kept diligently engraving, to illustrate his own works, a glass always stuck in his eye, and a burin in his hand, his maxim and rule of life being, "*Je grave pour*

*ne pas me pendre.*" Certain it is the man became miserable enough. At home he had no pleasure; nothing but reproaches and ill-humor. He contracted a "friendship" with I know not whom; and the friend betrayed him at his need. Baffled, beaten, mocked, and all alone amid the wrecks of his world, is it wonderful that he sought at times to escape from consciousness by taking for bread opium, and for water brandy? Many a sore and pitiable struggle he must have maintained against the foul fiend, but with a character and a will essentially feeble, he succumbed at last.

## A Complete Story

### THE INVISIBLE GUIDE

Father Locke gazed at the beautiful monstrosity. He could see new loveliness in it each time he beheld it. It was a poem in gold and precious stones.

Ruefully he smiled as he looked it carefully away in a safe specially made for it by the donor, a convert lady now dead.

A few years ago the priest had come to this southern village to tend to its group of scattered Catholics. He chafed at the change from a city, where he had scope for his zeal. Still he had visited diligently his little flock, opened a school for the children, and thus drawn the careless adults to the battered makeshift of a church. By degrees, with perseverance, he had worked a transformation in this lost spot.

His wonderful personality drew some Protestants into the Church. One of these, Mrs. Lacy, a stern old Puritan, had spent her last years in making the lonely chapel worthy of the Real Presence, and, ere she died had presented Father Locke with the lovely monstrosity studded with jewels—her jewels—which she now offered as a gift to beautify the resting place of her loving Saviour.

She had made one stipulation, and that was that wherever Father Locke went to minister he was to take the monstrosity with him. It was to him she had given it, as a faithful imitator of his Master.

"A call, Father, to the hills," his servant announced, one dark night. "Mr. Gray is dying."

The priest was ready in a few moments. As he placed pyx and oils in his breast, he took the key to the safe which he always kept about him and put it in an inner pocket. Outside he glanced round in hope of seeing Gray's messenger, but there was no one in sight. The hill paths to Gray's home were steep. Several times *en route* he looked around, so sure was he that he had heard steps on the pathway—yet he saw nothing, and so concluded that it was his own imagination.

What was his astonishment when he found, after repeated knocking at Gray's, the door opened by the supposed sick man!

Inquiry revealed that he had not been ill at all, had sent no one for the priest, and was as mystified as his pastor.

"I guess it was a practical joke, and a poor one," Father Locke told him, as the priest prepared to return home

Gray vowed vengeance on the perpetrator, should he discover him, and Father Locke descended the steep pathways in the darkness. Again he heard footsteps, and stopped to listen—he even called out, "Who is there?"—but as no reply was forthcoming, concluded he had been mistaken again.

He could never find out anything concerning the mysterious night call, and eventually it faded from his memory. The years passed on in the quiet southern place, and, when, in time, he was given charge of an important city parish, he brought his beautiful monstrosity with him.

During Quarant Ore, amid flowers and lights, how the precious stones blazed. "The stars of Little Jesus," as one small child explained graphically, pointing to the glittering brilliants.

"Any cases to-day, nurse?" Father Locke asked one morning, entering the ward of the hospital he ministered to spiritually.

"Yes, indeed," she answered; "Number Nine," pointing to a bed surrounded by a white screen, "is in a bad shape. He entered himself as a Catholic, but when I suggested confession, he refused point blank."

"Leave him to me," smiled the Father, advancing toward the screen.

"Good morning!" he said cheerfully.

"Good morning, Father," a distinctly Irish voice answered.

The priest sat down. By degrees O'Brien told him his story. He had been in Persia for twenty years in the oil fields, never seeing a priest during all that period.

"Well, now," Father Locke said encouragingly, "you see one. What about the Sacraments?"

"Ah, Father! how could I tell in an hour twenty years' sins?"

However, by the time the dinner arrived in the ward, the twenty years' job was finished satisfactorily. O'Brien was beaming, and repeating, in a resounding voice, ejaculatory prayers.

The following morning he received with sentiments of devotion, love and respect the God he had been so long separated from.

Father Locke and he became great friends, and it was arranged that, as soon as he was

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