

LITERATURE.

LOVE AND AUTHORSHIP.

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Will you remember me, Rosalie?

Yes!

Will you keep your hand for me a year?

Yes!

Will you answer me when I write to you?

Yes!

One question more—O, Rosalie, reflect that my life depends upon your acquiescence—should I succeed, will you marry me in spite of your uncle?

Yes!" answered Rosalie. There was no pause—reply followed question, as if it were a dialogue which they had got by heart—and by heard indeed they had got it—but I leave you to guess the book they had conned it from.

'Twas in a green lane, on a summer's evening, about nine o'clock, when the west, like a gate of gold, had shut upon the retiring sun, that Rosalie and her lover, hand in hand, walked up and down. His arm was the girdle of her waist; hers formed a collar for his neck, which a knight of the garter—aye, the owner of the sword that dubbed him—might have been proud to wear. Their gait was slow, and face turned to face; near were their lips while they spoke, and much of what they said never came to the ear, though their souls caught up every word of it.

Rosalie was upwards of five years the junior of her lover. She had known him since she was a little girl in her twelfth year. He was almost eighteen then, and when she thought far more about a doll than a husband, he would set her upon his knee, and call her his little wife. One, two, three years passed on, and still whenever he came from college, and as usual went to pay his first visit at her father's, before he had been five minutes in the parlor, the door was flung open, and in bounded Rosalie, and claimed her accustomed seat. The fact was, till she was fifteen, she was a child of a very slow growth, and looked the girl when many a companion of hers of the same age had begun to appear the woman.

When another vacation, however, came round, and Theodore paid his customary call, and was expecting his little wife, as usual, the door opened slowly, and a tall young lady entered, and curtsying, colored, and walked to a seat next the lady of the house. The visitor stood up and bowed, and sat down again, without knowing that it was Rosalie.

"Don't you know Rosalie?" exclaimed her father.

"Rosalie!" replied Theodore, in an accent of surprise; and approached his little wife of old, who rose and gave him her hand, and curtsying, colored again; and sat down again without having interchanged a word with him. No wonder—she was four inches taller than when he had last seen her, and her bulk had expanded correspondingly; while her features, that half a year before gave one the idea of a sylph that would bound after a butterfly, had now mellowed in their expression, into the sentiment, the softness, and the reserve of the woman.

Theodore felt absolutely disappointed. Five minutes before, he was all volubility. No sooner was one question answered than he proposed another—and he had so many capital stories for Rosalie, when she came down—and yet, when Rosalie did come down, he sat as though he had not a word to say for himself. In short, every thing and every body in the house seemed to have changed along with its young mistress; he felt no longer at home in it, as he was wont; and in less than a quarter of an hour he made his bow and departed.

Now this was exceedingly strange; for Rosalie, from a pretty little girl, had turned into a lovely young woman. If a heart looked out of her eyes before, a soul looked out of them now; her arm, which formerly the sun had been allowed to salute when he liked, and which used to bear the trace of many a kiss that he had given it, now shone white through a sleeve of muslin, like snow behind a veil of haze; her bosom had enlarged its wavy curve, and leaving her waist little more than the span it used to be, sat down proudly heaving above it; and the rest of her form which, only six months ago, looked trim and airy in her short and close-fitting frock, now lengthening and throwing out its flowing line, stood stately in the folds of a long and ample drapery. Yet could not all this make up for the want of the little wife that used to come and take her seat upon Theodore's knee.

To be sure there was another way of accounting for the young man's chagrin. He might have been disappointed that Rosalie, when five feet four, should be a little more reserved than when she was five feet nothing. Romantic young men, too, are apt to fancy odd things. Theodore was a very romantic young man; and having, perhaps, traced for himself the woman in the child—as one will anticipate, in looking at a peach that is just knit, the hue, and form, and flavor of the consummate fruit—he might have set Rosalie down in his mind as his wife in earnest, when he appeared to call her so only in jest.

Such was the case. Theodore never calculated that Rosalie knew nothing about his dreams—that she had so such visions herself; he never anticipated that the

frankness of girlhood would vanish, as soon as the diffidence of young womanhood began its blushing reign—the thought never occurred to him that the day would come when Rosalie would scruple to sit on his knee—ay, even though Rosalie should then begin to think upon him, as for many a year before he had thought upon her. He returned from college the fifth time—he found that the woman, which he imagined in a year or two she would become, was surprised by the woman that she already was; he remarked the withdrawal of confidence, the limitation of familiarity—the penalty which he must inevitably pay for her maturing—and he felt repelled and chilled, and utterly disheartened by it.

For a whole week he never returned to the house. Three days of a second week elapsed, and still he kept away. He had been invited, however, to a ball, which was to be given there the day following; and, much as he was inclined to absent himself, being a little more inclined to go—he went.

All three hours was he in the room without once setting his eyes upon Rosalie. He saw her mother and her father, and talked with them; he saw squire this, and doctor that, and attorney such-a-one, and had fifty things to say to each of them; he had eyes and tongue for every one but Rosalie—not a look, or a word did he exchange with her; yet he was here and there and everywhere! In short, he was all communicativeness and vivacity, so that every one remarked how bright he had become since his last visit to college.

At last, however, his fine spirits all at once seemed to forsake him, and he withdrew to the library, which was lighted up for the occasion as an anti-room, and taking a volume out of the book-case, he threw himself into a chair and began to turn over the leaves.

"Have you forgotten your little wife?" said a soft voice near him—'twas Rosalie's—if you have,' she added, as he started from his seat, 'she has not forgotten you.'

She wore a carnation in her hair—the hue of the flower was not deeper than that of her cheek, as she stood and extended her hands to Theodore, who, at the moment he rose, had held forth both of his.

"Rosalie!"

"Theodore?" He led her to a sofa, which stood in a recess on the opposite side of the room, and for five minutes not another word was spoken. At length she gently withdrew her hand from his—she had suffered him to hold it all that time—"We shall be observed," said she.

"Ah, Rosalie," replied he, "nine months since you sat upon my knee, and they observed us, yet you did not mind it!"

"You know I am a woman now," rejoined Rosalie, hanging her head, "and—and—will you lead off the next dance with me?" cried she, suddenly changing the subject. "There now; I have asked you," added she, "which is more than you deserve!" Of course Theodore was not at all happy to accept the challenge of the metamorphosed Rosalie.

One might suppose that the young lady's heart was interested, and that Theodore was a far happier man than he imagined himself to be. The fact was neither more nor less. Little Rosalie was proud of being called Theodore's wife, because she heard every body else speak in praise of him. Many a marriageable young lady had she heard declare—not mindful to speak before a child—that Theodore was the finest young man in B—; that she hoped Theodore would be at such or such a house where she was going to dine, or spend the evening; nay, that she would like to have a sweet-heart like Theodore. Then would Rosalie interpose, and with a saucy toss of her head exclaim, that nobody should have Theodore but Rosalie, for Rosalie was his little wife. 'Twas thus she learned to admire the face and person of Theodore, who more than once paid for her acquired estimation of them; for sometimes before a whole room full of company she would march up to him, and scanning him from head to foot, with folded arms, at length declare aloud, that he was the handsomest young man in B—. Then Theodore was so kind to her, and thought so much of any thing she did, and took such notice of her! Often, at a dance, he would make her his partner for the whole evening; and there was Miss Willoughby, perhaps, or Miss Miller, sitting down, either of whom would have given her eyes to stand up if only in a reel with Theodore.

But when the summer of her seventeenth year beheld her bursting into womanhood; when her expanding thoughts, from a bounding, fitful, rill-like current, began to run a deep, a broad and steady stream; when she found that she was almost arrived at the threshold of the world, and reflected that the step which marks a female's first entrance into it is generally taken in the hand of a partner—the thought of who that partner might be, recalled Theodore to her mind—and her heart fluttered as she asked herself the question—should she ever be indeed his wife?

When, this time, he paid his first visit, Rosalie was as much mortified as he was. Her vexation was increased when she saw that he absented himself; she resolved, if possible, to ascertain the cause, and persuaded her mother to give a ball, and especially invite the young gentleman. He came; she watched him; observed that he neither inquired after her nor sought for her; and marked the excellent terms that he was upon with twenty people, about whom she knew him to be perfectly indifferent. Women have the perception of the workings of the heart, far more quick and subtle than

we have. She was convinced that all his fine spirits were forced—that he was acting a part. She suspected that while he appeared to be occupied with every body but Rosalie—Rosalie was the only body that was running in his thoughts. She saw him withdraw to the library; she followed him—found him sitting down with a book in his hand—perceived, from his manner of turning over the leaves, that he was intent on anything but reading. She was satisfied that he was thinking of nothing but Rosalie. The thought that Rosalie might one day indeed become his wife, now occurred to her for the thousandth time, and a thousand times stronger than ever—a spirit diffused itself through her heart which had never been breathed into it before; and filling it with hope and happiness, and unutterable contentment, irresistibly drew it towards him. She approached him, accosted him, and in a moment was seated with him, hand in hand, upon the sofa!

As soon as the dance was done—"Rosalie," said Theodore, "'tis almost as warm in the air as in the room, will you be afraid to take a turn with me in the garden?"

"I will get my shawl in a minute," said Rosalie, "and meet you there;" and the maiden was there almost as soon as he.

They proceeded, arm-in-arm, to the farthest part of the garden; and they walked up and down without either seeming inclined to speak, as though their hearts could discourse through their hands, which were locked in one another.

"Rosalie!" at last breathed Theodore. "Rosalie!" breathed he a second time, before the expecting girl could summon courage to say "Well?" "I cannot go home to-night," resumed he, "without speaking to you." Yet Theodore seemed to be in no hurry to speak, for there he stopped, and continued silent so long, that Rosalie began to doubt whether he would open his lips again.

"Had we not better go in?" said Rosalie, "I think I hear them breaking up."

"Not yet," replied Theodore.

"Nay," resumed the maid, "we have remained long enough, and at least allow me to go in."

"Stop but another minute, dear Rosalie!" imploringly exclaimed the youth.

"For what?" was the maid's reply.

"Rosalie," without a pause resumed Theodore, "you used to sit upon my knee, and let me call you wife. Are those times passed for ever? Dear Rosalie!—will you never let me take you on my knee and call you wife again?"

"When we have done with our girlhood, we have done with our plays," said Rosalie.

"I do not mean in play, dear Rosalie," cried Theodore. "It is not playing at man and wife to walk, as such, out of church. Will you marry me, Rosalie?"

Rosalie was silent.

"Will you marry me?" repeated he.

"Not a word would Rosalie speak."

"Hear me!" cried Theodore. "The first day, Rosalie,

I took you upon my knee, and called you my wife, just as it seemed to be, my heart was never more in earnest. That day I wedded you in my soul; for though you were a child, I saw the future woman in you, rich in the richest attractions of your sex. Nay, do me justice: recall what you yourself have known of me—inquire of others. To whom did I play the suitor from that day? To none but you, although to you I did not seem to play it. Rosalie! was I not always with you? Recollect now. Did a day pass, when I was at home, without my coming to your father's house? When there were parties there, whom did I sit beside but you? Whom did I stand behind at the piano forte, but you? Nay, for a whole night, whom have I danced with, but you? Whatever you might have thought then, can you believe now, that it was merely a playful child that could have so engrossed me?—No, Rosalie! it was the generous, lovely, loving woman, that I saw in the playful child.—Rosalie! for five years have I loved you, tho' I never declared it to you till now. Do you think I am 'worthy of you?' Will you give yourself to me? Will you marry me? Will you sit upon my knee again, and let me call you wife?"

Three or four times Rosalie made an effort to speak; but desisted, as if she knew not what to say, or was unable to say what she wished; Theodore still holding her hand. At last, "Ask my father's consent!" she exclaimed, and tried to get away; but before she could effect it, she was clasped to the bosom of Theodore, nor released until the interchange of the first pledge of love had been forced from her bashful lips!—Should not appear that night in the drawing-room again.

Theodore's addresses were sanctioned by the parents of Rosalie. The wedding day was fixed; it wanted but a fortnight to it, when a malignant fever made its appearance in the town; Rosalie's parents were the first victims. She was left an orphan at eighteen, and her uncle, by her mother's side, who had been nominated her guardian in a will, made several years, having followed his brother-in-law and sister's remains to the grave, took up his residence at B—.

Rosalie's sole consolation now was that, as she received from the society of Theodore; but Theodore soon wanted consolation himself.—His father was attacked by the fever and died, leaving his heirs, to the astonishment of every one, in a state of the most inextricable embarrassment; for he had been looked upon as one of the wealthiest inhabitants of B—. This was a double blow to Theodore, but he was not aware