Rosamond's Way.

BY HARRIET PRESCOT SPOFFORD.

CHAPTER I.

THE MEETING.

From New York Ledger:

But Scott heard nothing of that, of course. He was far above anything of the sort. He contrived to keep himself just enough on earth to carry away the thread of an idea that Rosamond rode in the park tomorrow, at a time that would be after office-hours that day. And what a singular coincidence it was that he should meet her there next day! How beautiful, how stately, how perfect she was in that habit! Of course it would have been rude not to join her for a moment, the groom at a discreet distance behind; and the end of that was, that Phaeton, driving the chariot of the sun, had no such hour as that hour was to Scott.

Rosamond had allowed it to escape her, too, that she was to attend the private view of the new loan-collection at the Metropolitan the next day. Scott knew somebody who knew somebody else who knew General Cesnola; he did not waste a moment in procuring an admission. How the work in the insurance office was done that day, goodness knows; Scott Surrey knew nothing about it. He only knew that there were all the cold white forms glowing with their immortal beauty, and here was this girl mounting the staircase, more beautiful than themselves, almost as white, but moving, breathing, glowing, pronouncing his name with a sweet surprise, and letting the waxen lids fall over the violet eyes, till the long lashes swept the cheeks, and called up a ghost of color there. They paused on their way to the pictures, and leaned over one of the cases containing the ornaments that decked some fine beauty of a day thousands of years before.

"Oh," said Rosamond, "she is in dust now, and here are her necklaces, her bracelets still. When I am dead—"

What profanity! He shuddered. But then, what absurdity! Could all this pulsing life and light and warmth turn to dust? Let the queens of Cyprus die and turn to dust—Rosamond was alive. Another hour of enchantment. He had no more conception of what the pictures were about than if he had been blind; they were about Rosamond; that was enough. With all their color and splendor they were simply the hangings on the walls of heaven; and he closed the door of the brougham at last, where her maid was waiting, and lifted his hat, and walked home with his head still in the clouds.

Scott did not see Rosamond now for three or four days. There was a stress of work at the office; and the best men were kept at their desks until it was too late an hour to attempt anything else. And the first thing that brought him to his senses was, when meeting her, he received formal and lofty acknowledgement as she passed on, and nothing more. And as he had mounted like Phaeton, he fell like Phaeton; and when he opened his eyes after the crash, he saw where he was.

"'There was a man of the north countree
In love with a lady of high degree,'"

sang Akron, when he saw his face.

"Well, I'm glad you've waked so early."

"Glad I've waked? What in the world are you talking about, Akron?"

"Oh, I've been there myself. Not in the house of Rosamond, though. I know too much to fall in love with a girl who spends my salary on her candies."

"I don't quite understand this talk of yours about spending, Akron," said Scott, presently. "I don't see any evidence of it. She wore to-day only something dark and plain, perfectly simple, and it fitted her till her figure, by George, was like some wonderful bronze in it."

"Oh, you poor idiot!" laughed Akron. "It was a Redfern gown. It cost a hundred and seventy-five dollars. She has a half-dozen of them, besides all her state affairs, her array for the great social functions; her ball-dresses, her tea gowns, her wrappers, her—deuce knows what-and-all. You have fourteen hundred a year, haven't you, Scott? She had a carriage-cloak come home to-day, and the bill for the fur-lining was just fourteen hundred dollars. To be sure, she has that now, and won't have to get it again. But the that's used used to that—there's always something new in the same line. Yes, by Jove! I'm glad you've waked up!"

"I haven't waked, Akron," said Scott, leaning over the table more earnestly. "If you mean 'change' by waking, I never shall wake. When I am dead the wild fire will run back through my very ashes if she comes near. Only she will never know—she will never care—"

"Is it as bad as that? What makes you think she won't care?"

"A marble Diana would have made less formal recognition of me than she did to-day."

"Oh! Ah! The cold shoulder! Distant, stately, cool. We don't presume upon a slight acquaintance sir! Yes, I know. My dear fellow it looks bad for you."

"Yes," said Scott, darkly.

"Let me see. By the Lord, Scott, I thought you had some sense! She told you—she allowed you to know, didn't she?—you gathered from her remarks—that she was going to St Luke-in-the-Fields on Sunday, and to sit for her portrait at Jaune's studio on Monday, and to hear the symphonic poem on Tuesday. And here it is Thursday, and you haven't been to St. Luke's, or—am I right? Is that it?"

[To be Continued.]

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