

A Poem of
Letitia Elizabeth Landon
(L. E. L.)
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compiled
by
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Remembrance



REMEMBRANCE

Painted by E. T. Parris Engraved by L. Stocks

REMEMBRANCE.

BY L. E. L.

"What doth it here at such an hour?"

Love taketh many colours, and weareth many shapes,
 As from the hidden heart within its lighted life escapes ;
 Stern circumstance is round it, till what in Heaven had
 birth
 Seems but an added misery, to this our weary earth.

There were two that loved each other, they were but
 children then,
 Companions in the wild wood, and comrades in the glen ;
 The beautiful was round them, and feeling took its tone
 From the face of lovely Nature, by whose side it had grown.

Within an ancient castle, their childhood had been past,
 Around whose Gothic turrets like a spirit moan'd the blast,
 With a voice of many ages, for that castle stood on high
 When the banner of the red cross flung its sunset o'er
 the Wye.

The birch copse and the wild flower, the battlements above,
 The forest's summer darkness, gave its colouring to love ;
 And the poetry indwelling, nay, that is the heart of youth,
 Was developed in such elements to a diviner truth.

But the boy springs up to manhood, the girl to woman
 grows,
 So the sapling gives the oak tree, the bud becomes the rose ;
 Alas ! for childhood, leaving its fairy land behind—
 The green grass dies with summer, so fares it with the
 mind.

The world was now before them, they enter'd in its coil,
Like the serpent's rainbow circles, and with as deadly
 spoil;

He wedded with another, I know not of his bride,
I only speak of her who grew in girlhood at his side.

Her hair was glistening blackness, a sort of golden gloom,
Like sunshine on the raven's wing, a softness and a bloom;
Dark, like the nightfall, on her cheek the dusky eyelash lay,
But the sweet eyes beneath were blue as April or as day.

Her cheek was pale as moonlight, that melancholy light,
When the moon is at her palest, grown weary of the night;
Pale, sad, and onward looking, as if the future threw
The shadow of the coming hours it felt before it knew.

My God! the utter wretchedness that waiteth on the heart,
That nurses an unconscious hope, to see that hope depart;
That owns not to itself it loves, until that love is known,
By feeling in the wide, wide world so utterly alone.

No face seem'd pleasant to her sight, one image linger'd
 there,

The echo of one only voice was on the haunted air.
Speak not of other sorrow, life knoweth not such pain,
As that within the stricken heart, which loves, and loves
 in vain.

Yet she, too, at the altar gave up her wan cold hand,
That shudder'd as they circle it with an unwelcome band;
Ah! crime and misery both, the heart—on such a die to set,
The veriest mockery of love is striving to forget.

30 I AM COME BUT YOUR SPIRITS TO RAISE.

She stands before her mirror, it is her wedding day,
But she hath flung aside in haste her desolate array ;
Down on the ground her bridal wreath is dash'd in bitter
scorn—

That hour's impassion'd agony, alas ! it must be borne.

And long years are before her, long, weary, wasting years ;
Though tears grow heavy on the lash, she must suppress
those tears ;

The past must be forgotten, and 'tis the past that gives
The truest and the loveliest light in which the future lives.

Such is a common history, in this our social state,
Where destiny and nature contend in woman's fate ;
To waste her best affections, to pine, to be forgot,
To droop beneath an outward smile—such is a woman's lot.
