

STREET DUST, AND OTHER STORIES

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649223541

Street dust, and other stories by Maria Louise Ramé Ramé

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

MARIA LOUISE RAMÉ RAMÉ

**STREET DUST, AND
OTHER STORIES**

Street Dust

and

Other Stories

By Ouida

London

F. V. White & Co., Bedford Street, Strand

George Bell & Sons, York Street, Covent Garden

1901

PRINTED BY
WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
LONDON AND BECCLES.

PR
4527
S75



Contents

	PAGE
STREET DUST	1
LETTA	57
A LITTLE THIEF	107
THE FIG TREE	129
GERRY'S GARDEN	167

Street Dust

Street Dust

THEIR mother was dead.

She had lived only thirty years, and a few months; but she had died before her time, as so many do, of over-toil and little food, some days no food at all, only grass seeds and leaves of wild sago. She was dead; a mere skeleton, brown and dry as a mummy, lying on her bed of dry ferns, from which swarms of lice and fleas were hurrying in their knowledge of and horror of a lifeless thing; only the torpid flies remained, gathering together in black dots upon her as the day advanced.

Her two children, who had seen her die, and had exhausted themselves in shrieks and sobs, went up to her again and kissed her and pressed their heads against her body. But there was no warmth, no response.

“She must be dead—dead—dead,” said the elder of them; and then they fell again to weeping, and they screamed loudly and long. But the echoes of their screams were the only answer that they had.

The day was now bright, and the great grass plains were hushed in their morning calm. A little greenfinch was hopping to and fro on a slab of broken marble, pecking at some seed or insect invisible to any eyes except his own: the small bird was the only living thing near.

The woman had come there three years earlier. She had been the wife or leman of a shepherd who had had some share, through his revelations, in the capture of a noted brigand whose headquarters had been at Palombaro. For that share the shepherd had been quieted for ever, by a dagger stroke between the shoulders, one evening as he took his flocks to drink at the Anio water.

Life in Palombaro was no longer safe or possible for the family known to belong to him. She left the town stealthily and in terror, carrying with her a new-born male child, whilst her two elder children toiled after her as best they could, carrying a few cooking vessels and a bundle of clothes. She went on and on, on and on, down into the Campagna and across