FOUR PHASES OF LOVE

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649587544

Four Phases of Love by Paul Heyse & E. H. Kingsley

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

www.triestepublishing.com

PAUL HEYSE & E. H. KINGSLEY

FOUR PHASES OF LOVE

Trieste

FOUR PHASES OF LOVE.

BY

PAUL HEYSE.

TRANSLATED

BY E. H. KINGSLEY.

LONDON:
G. ROUTLEDGE & CO. FARRINGDON STREET;
NEW YORK: 18, BEEKMAN STREET.
1867.

EYE-BLINDNESS AND SOUL-BLINDNESS.

CHAPTER I.

At the open window, which looked out into the little flower-garden, stood the blind daughter of the village sacristan, refreshing herself in the cool breeze that swept across her hot cheeks; her delicate, half-developed form trembled, her cold little hands lay folded in each other upon the window-sill. The sun had already set, and the night-flowers were beginning to scent the air.

Further within the room sat a blind boy on a stool, at the old spinet, playing wild melodies. He might have been about fifteen years old — only, perhaps, a year older than the girl. Whoever had heard and seen him, now throwing up his large eyes, and now turning his head towards the window, would never have suspected his privation—so much energy, and even impetuosity, lay in his every movement.

Suddenly he broke off in the midst of a religious hymn, which he seemed to have altered wildly after his own fancy.

"You sighed!" he said, turning his face towards her.

"I! No, Clement—why should I sigh? I only shrank together as the wind blew in so strongly!"

"But you *did* sigh. Do you think that I did not hear it as I played?—and I feel even here how you are trembling."

"Yes; it has grown so cold."

"You cannot deceive me. If you were cold you would not stand at the open window. But I know why you sigh and tremble!—because the doctor is coming to-morrow, and will prick our eyes with needles—that is what makes you so afraid; and yet he said how soon it would all be over, and that it would only be like the prick of a pin. And *you*, who used to be so brave and patient, that my mother always mentioned you as an example when I was little and cried when anything hurt me, though you were only a girl—have you now lost all your courage? Do you never think of the happiness we have to look forward to?"

She shook her little head, and answered, "How can you think that I am afraid of the passing pain! But I am oppressed with silly, childish thoughts, which I cannot drive away. Ever since the day that the doctor the baron sent for came down from the castle to your father, and mother called us out of the garden—ever since that hour something weighs upon me and will not go away. You were so full of joy that you did not perceive it; but when your father *began to pray*, and blessed God for this mercy, my

heart was silent and did not follow his prayer. I thought within myself, 'What have I to be thankful for?' and could not understand."

Thus she spoke in a quiet resigned voice. The boy again struck a few light chords. Between the sharp whizzing tones, peculiar to the instrument on which he played, rang the distant songs of home-returning peasants—a contrast, like that of *their* bright active life, with the dream-life of these blind children.

The boy seemed to feel it. He rose quickly, walked with a firm step to the window—for he knew the room and all its furniture—and said, as he threw back his bright fair locks, "You are incomprehensible, Mary! Our parents and all the village congratulate us. Will it not be a gain after all? Until it was promised me I never asked much about it. We are blind, they say; I never understood what was wanting in us. When we sat without there by the wood, and travellers came by, and said, 'Poor children!' I felt angry, and thought, 'What have they to pity in us?' But that we are different from others, I know well enough. They often talked about things which I could not understand, yet which must be very beautiful. And now that we are going to know them too, the longing never leaves me day nor night."

"I was contented as I was," said Mary, sadly, "I was so happy, and should have liked to be as

happy all my life. It will all be different now! Have you never heard people complain that the world is full of sorrow and care—and did we know care?"

"Because we did not know the world—and I *will* know it at all risks! I suffered myself to be pleased with groping about in the dark with you, and being obliged to do nothing, but not always! Often, when my father taught us history, and told us about heroes and bold deeds, I asked him if any of them had been blind? But whoever had done anything great could see. And then I often plagued myself all day long with thoughts about it. Then when I played on the spinet, or was allowed to play on the organ, in your father's place, I forgot my uneasiness for a time; but when it came back, I thought, 'Must you always play the organ, and go the few hundred paces up and down the village that you know; and must no one out of the village ever know you; and must none ever name you after you are dead?' Look you, Mary,—since the doctor has been at the castle, I hope that I yet may become a perfect man; and then I will go out into the world and take the path that pleases me, and I shall have nothing to ask any one!"

"And not me, Clement?"

She said it uncomplainingly and without reproach. But the boy answered vehemently, "Sister Mary, do not talk such nonsense—I cannot bear it! Do *you think* that I would leave you alone at home and

steal away amongst strangers? Do you not trust me?"

"I know well what happens when young men go from the village to the town, or on their wanderings, no one goes with them, not even their own sisters. And here too, even before they are grown up, the boys run away from the little girls and go into the woods with each other, and mock the girls when they meet them. Till now they have left you and me together, and we played and learned with each other. You were blind like me—what did you want with the other boys? But when you can see, and want to sit in the house with me, they will laugh at you, as they do at everyone who won't go with them. And then—then you will go quite away for a long, long time, and I had grown so accustomed to be with you."

She had spoken the last words with difficulty; then her sorrow overcame her and she sobbed aloud. Clement drew her closely to him, stroked her cheek, and said entreatingly, "You *must* not cry! I will never go away from you! never! never! rather than do that I will remain blind and forget everything. I *will* not leave you if it makes you cry. Come, be calm, be cheerful. You should not heat yourself, the doctor said, because it is so bad for your eyes, darling, darling Mary!"

He pressed her closer in his arms and kissed her for the first time in his life. His mother called to