

GARGOYLES

Nec tamen illa mihi dextra deducta paterna
Fragrantem Assyrio venit odore domum
Set furtiva dedit muta munuscula nocte.

TO LOLA BENTROVATA.

Go sunnily through my garden of flowers, dear maiden o' mine, and once in a while you shall come upon some grotesque Chinese dragon with huge and hideous eyes leering round the delight of the daffodils ; or it may be some rude Priapus looking over the calm rock-shadowed beauty of the lake ; or even, hanging amid the glory of elm or beech, an human skeleton, whose bones shall rattle in the breeze, and from whose eyeless sockets shall glare—?—I dare not bid you guess what evil knowledge.

Then, an you be wise, you shall know that a wise gardener wisely put them there. For Every garden is the world ; and in the world these are.

So every cathedral is the world, and the architect of Notre Dame deserved his heaven.

To me life and death have most often appeared a majesty and beauty, in solemnity and horror ; in emotions, to be brief, so great that man had no place therein. But there are moods, in which the heights are attained indirectly, and through man's struggle with the elemental powers.

In these poems you shall hear the laughter of the gods and of the devils ; understand their terrors and ecstasies ; live in their heavens and hells.

But I not only heard and understood and lived ; I sounded and imposed and begat : you must also do both, or the universe will still be a mystery to you as to the others.