

drearier than even a modern cemetery, and she wondered what it was that drew Roserra to them, with a kind of fascination. On the way there, along the Avenue Victor Hugo, there were some few signs of life: the cafés, the Zouaves going in and out from their big barrack, the carts coming in from the country; and in the evening the people walked there. But she hated the little melancholy public garden at the side, with its paths curving upwards to the ruined walls and arches of the Roman theatre, its low balustrades of crumbling stone, its faint fountains, greenish grey. It was a place, she thought, in which no one could ever be young or happy; and the road which went past it did but lead to the tombs. Roserra told her that Dante, when he was in hell, and saw the "modo più emaro" in which the people there are made into alleys of living tombs, remembered Arles:

"Si com' ad Arli ove'l Rodano stagna."

She laughed uneasily, with a half shudder. The tombs have been moved aside from the Aliscamps, into the little secluded Allée des Tombeaux, where they line both sides of the way, empty stone trough after empty stone trough, with here and there a more pompous sarcophagus; there is a quiet path between them, which she did not even like to walk in, leading to the canal of the bowling-green; and evening the old men creep out and sit among the tombs.

II.

At first there was bright sunshine every day, but the sun scorched; and then it set in to rain. One night a storm awakened her, and it seemed to her that she had never heard such thunder, or seen such lightning, as that which shook the old roof under which she lay, and blazed and flickered at the win-

dow until it seemed to be licking up the earth with liquid fire. The storm faded out in a morning of faint sunshine; only the rain clung furtively about the streets all day.

Day after day it rained, and Livia sat in the house, listlessly reading the novels which she had brought with her, or staring with fierce impatience out of the window. The rain came down steadily, ceaselessly, drawing a wet grey curtain over the city. Roserra liked that softened aspect which came over things in this uncomfortable weather; he walked every day through the streets in which the water gathered in puddles between the paving-stones, and ran in little streams down the gutters; he found a kind of autumnal charm in the dripping trees and soaked paths of the Aliscamps: a peaceful and to him pathetic and pleasant, odour of decay. Livia went out with him once, muffled in a long cloak, and keeping her whole face carefully under the umbrella. She wanted to know where he was taking her, and why; she shivered, sneezed, and gave one or two little coughs; when she saw the ground of the Aliscamps, and the first trees began to drip upon her umbrella with a faint tap-tapping on the strained silk, she turned resolutely, and hurried Roserra straight back to the house.

After that she stayed indoors day after day, getting more irritable every day. She took up one book after another, read a little, and then laid it down. She walked to and fro in the narrow room, with nothing, as she said, to think about, and nothing to see if she looked out of the window. There was the square, every stone polished by the rain; the other houses in the square, most of them shuttered; the little church in the corner, with its monotonous bell, its few worshippers. She knew them all; they

RODIN

VII

Les deux Génies

Good bends and breathes into the rosy shell
Of peace and perfume, love in idleness,
Of pure cold raptures, hymns the mystic stress,
Imagining's reiterate miracle.

Evil breathes, bending, the reverberate spell,
Conjuring ghosts of the insane address
Of agony lurid in the damned caress,
Exulting tortures of the heart of hell.

The maiden sits and listens, smiles. Her breath
Is easy; over her bowed head falls deep
Glowing cascades of hair; she combs her hair

With subtle ecstasy, electric sweep
Of unimaginable joy; let life and death
Pass, she will comb, and comb, and will not care.