

## A Recall

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Originally published in the 2 March 1907 issue of *The Agnostic Journal*; London, England, page 134.

Upon my bed in sickness I did lie,  
    Too weak to know or think, too sick to dream;  
And they had left me, and I feared to die,  
    For through my veins  
    An ever-growing, turgid, rolling stream  
Of blood and youth unconquered hurried by;  
    And in my brains  
All thought was merged into a lurid gleam  
    Of light; my laboured breath  
    Too strong for me did seem,—  
And then came peace and calm, and with them mighty Death.

A sombre mantle o'er his shoulders fell,  
    Trailing the ground, where scarce his feet did light;  
And he exhaled a faded, musky smell  
    With his slow breath;  
    His eyes were deepless as a starless night;  
His bosom with deep breath did sink and swell;  
    No word he saith,  
    But held his bended arms, as loth to smite,  
    Against his sides; he seemed  
    Fitter for sleep than fight:  
Around his radiant head an ominous halo streamed

Bright stars the window of my chamber bore,  
    As in a frame-work set; I strove to rise  
Upon my elbow; said I, "Never more,  
    Unless I strive,  
    Shall I behold the daylight with mine eyes."  
And I was losing fast my vital store.  
    "Now shall I dive  
    With this dark angel who is over-wise,  
    Into his sunless halls,  
    Where the dark Fate denies  
A gleam of light, a flash of summer to her thralls?

The angel to my window moved, and gazed  
    Into my garden sweet with night and dew,  
And, his head leaning on his arms, upraised  
    His speechless eyes:  
    Them, turning to my bed-side, slowly drew  
My eyes to his, that held me dulled and dazed.  
    I strove to rise  
    But a calm breeze from the still garden blew,  
    Over my weary brow,  
    And suddenly I knew  
That, as his sad lips moved, he whispered softly, "Now."

And so I rose, night-garmented, and sped  
    Swift doorwards, with the angel at my side,  
And marvelled at the speed with which he led,  
    Yet felt no speed,  
    And he traversed much space and countries wide;  
Past myriad towns o'er which were stars thick-spread,  
    He still did lead,  
    And still I followed swiftly in his stride  
    Over unshadowed lands;  
    Then, by the yellow tide  
Of a broad hasting stream, he turned, and seized my hands.

Now, on the purple hills the dawn did fall,  
    Slow-moving, grey, it crept around the world,  
And fringed with light the sombre, flowing pall  
    Of ancient Night;  
    The angel's lips with sorrow deep were curled,  
As one whose steps are stayed by a great wall  
    Of dreadful height,  
    Or one who sees an alien flag unfurled  
    His city's heart within,  
    And sees his kinsfolk hurled  
From towers high, and hears their bones crash 'midst the din.

So gazed the angel as he dropped my hand,  
    And somberly surveyed the dawning day;  
Then, lingering a moment on the strand,  
    Unfurled his wings  
    That then I first saw; swift he sped away,  
His wings vibrating as the skies he spanned;  
    He passed the rings  
    Of light that fringe the sun,—his dark array  
    Faded into the light, . . .

And so I wondering lay  
Upon my couch, and lo! the day had conquered night!

And so they came to me when daylight came,  
I smiled at them and at the light of morn;  
The sun had risen as a mighty flame;

The morning breeze  
Blew me the thrushes' singing; I was worn  
And wearied pleasantly. They spoke my name.

Slow-rustling trees  
I heard outside my window, on them borne  
The healing morning air.

Ah! then no more forlorn,  
I lay at ease, and smiled that life should seem so fair.