

MY *Fine Art* STORY BOOK

VOLUME FOUR

COMPILED BY MARLENE PETERSON

My Fine Art Story Book

Volume Four



Stories of Artists and Fine Art
Pieces for the Young Reader

Compiled by Marlene Peterson

Libraries of Hope

My Fine Art Story Book
Volume Four

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Italy

Bartolomeo Colleoni

Verrocchio

Andrea del Verrocchio

1435-1488, Italy

Who is this rider, stern of countenance, with deep-set eyes and an iron will! Who is this warrior bold!

About five hundred years ago a poor unknown young man, without occupation, offered himself to the officers of the Venetian army. This young man was Bartolomeo Colleoni.

In the army he soon attracted the attention of his superior officers. Before long he was himself made an officer. He proved so able that he quickly rose to greater prominence. As general, he became the friend of princes. Later he was promoted to the highest military post in the Venetian Republic. He became General-in-Chief of the Venetian armies.

Colleoni was every inch a soldier. Constant exercise kept him fit. It is said that wearing his armour, he could outrun the swiftest in his camp. Without his armour, few indeed, were even the horses that could outstrip him.

Though he was a soldier, he loved study and the society of scholars. He made his camp a gathering place for students and men of affairs. History says the he was a good man, a just man, and that he dealt kindly

with his people. This is saying much, for in that period of Italian history there was much of cruelty, bloodshed, and crime.

When Colleoni died, it was found that his fortune had been left to the Venetian Republic—on one condition. A statue must be erected to him in the great square of St. Mark!

It was, however, against the law to place a statue in this great square. Finally it was decided to place the statue in another square, also a Square of St. Mark, but much smaller and removed some distance from the center of the city. Today, in the little Square of St. Mark, stands the Colleoni—the greatest equestrian statue in the world!

Here it has stood for nearly five hundred years. Never before had an artist attempted a prancing steed! Colleoni's statue was different from all others. Here the artist lifted the foreleg of the horse as if he were moving forward. He suddenly becomes alive! He becomes a wonderful steed—full of fire, full of price, full of power.

And what shall we say of the rider? A Colleoni of iron! A Colleoni whose glance never quailed before the foe!

He sits in complete armour, drawing himself up to the fullest height. His head is turned, as he looks out defiantly. Horse and rider are one in their haughty pride. They move together in spirit, feeling, and form.

Notice the delicate design worked out on the saddle and trappings. This hints of the artist's training as a goldsmith. Do not let the knotted mane escape you! So marvelous a creation as the Colleoni deserves all the praise it has received through the centuries.

Andrea del Verrocchio was born in 1435. Though he is known as one of the greatest sculptors of the fifteenth century, he was as well a designer, a goldsmith, and a painter.

Verrocchio enjoyed a wide reputation as a painter, but one day he ceased to paint and turned his attention to sculpture.


Mary with the Child by Verrocchio



Baptism of Christ by Verrocchio

Among the pupils in Andrea's studio was a handsome lad with flowing curls, who usually wore a rose-colored coat and long hose. This was the youthful Leonardo da Vinci.

One day while Verrocchio was working on a large picture, he fell ill. Unable to paint, he selected the most capable of his pupils to complete the work. This was the young Leonardo.

"Do thy best," said the master to the youth, as he turned away, too ill to give him any supervision.

The youthful Leonardo realized the serious responsibility which had fallen upon him. With hesitating hand he took the brush, then knelt and said a prayer: "It is for my beloved master; I implore skill and power for this deed."

The work was later completed. [See: *Baptism of Christ*]

Verrocchio was led by his pupils to the studio to view the picture. He sat before it. Leonardo, kneeling beside him, waited. The teacher looked in silence. Not a word was spoken. At last Leonardo spoke. "Master," said he. Verrocchio threw his arms around him and burst into tears.

"My son," said he, "I paint no more; to thee I commit my pencil and palette."

From that time Verrocchio painted no more. Leonardo became the pride of his life. This same Leonardo grew to be one of the greatest Italian masters.

Now Verrocchio gave his attention to sculpture. He attracted the attention of the most powerful princes of Italy. Then it was that, next to discovering Leonardo, the greatest event in his life happened. He was commissioned to model the great Colleoni!

With great care and study he modeled the horse. Soon he heard that another artist had been chosen to model the figure of Colleoni. So angry did he become, that, in a fit of temper, he broke the legs and head of the horse.

When the rulers of Venice heard this, they were highly indignant.

They sent word warning the artist never again to appear in Venice, under penalty of being beheaded. The artist was not disturbed. He sent back word saying: "You must not cut off my head, for you can never replace it; while I can easily replace the head and legs of the horse."

The fearlessness of the reply impressed the rulers. They begged him to return. They promised double pay. They assured him they would never again interfere with his work.

Verrocchio returned to Venice. His work completely absorbed him. At last the great Colleoni was finished!



Doubting Thomas and Christ (Detail) by Verrocchio



Tobias and the Angel by Verrocchio

The Last Supper GHIRLANDAJO



Domenico Ghirlandajo

1448-1494, Italy

It is a good deal of a name—Domenico di Tommaso di Currado Bigordi—and it would appear that the child who bore it was under obligation to become a good deal of a something before he died.

Italian and Spanish painters generally had large names to live up to, and the one known as Ghirlandajo did nobly.

His father was a goldsmith and a popular part of his work was the making of golden garlands for the hair of rich Italian ladies. His work was so beautiful that it gained for him the name of Ghirlandajo, meaning the garland-twiner, a name that lived after him, in the great art of his son. Domenico began as a worker in mosaic, a maker of pictures or designs with many coloured pieces of glass or stone.

Ghirlandajo's art was no improvement on that of his teacher, but he in turn became the teacher of Michael Angelo.

The Florentine school of painting, to which Ghirlandajo belonged, was not so famous for colour as the Venetian school, but it had many other elements to commend it. One cannot expect Ghirlandajo to rank with Titian, Rubens, or other "colourists" of his own and later periods, but he did the very best work of his day and school. He attained to fame through his choice of types of faces for his models, and by his excellent grouping of figures.

Until his day, the faces introduced into paintings were likely to be unattractive, but he chose pleasing ones, and he painted the folds of garments beautifully. He was not entirely original in his ideas, but he carried out those which others had thus far failed to make interesting.

Often, in his wish to paint exactly what he saw, he softened nothing and therefore his figures were repulsive, but Fra Bartolommeo's pupil gave promise of what Michael Angelo was to fulfill.

Ghirlandajo and Michael Angelo were a good deal alike in their emotional natures. Both sought great spaces in which to paint, and both chose to paint great frescoes. Indeed Ghirlandajo had the extraordinary ambition to put frescoes on all the fortification walls about Florence. It certainly would have made the city a great picture gallery to have had its walls forever hung with the pictures of one master. Had he painted them, inside and out, when such an enemy as Napoleon came along, with his love of art, and his fashion of taking all that he saw to Paris, he would likely enough have camped outside the walls while he decided what part of the gallery he would transfer to the Louvre.

One of the reasons that Ghirlandajo is famous is that he often chose well-known personages for his models, and as he painted just what he saw, did not idealise his subject, he gave to the world amazing portraits, as well as fine paintings. The same thing was done by painters of a far different school, at another period. The Dutch and Flemish painters were in the habit of using their neighbours as models.

Ghirlandajo is classed among religious painters, but let us compare some of his "religious" paintings with those of Raphael or Murillo, and see the result.

He painted seven frescos on the walls of the Santa Maria Novella in Florence, all scenes of Biblical history, as Ghirlandajo imagined them. They show him to have been a fine artist, but to have had not much idea of history, and to have had little sense of fitness.

Ghirlandajo's seven subjects are taken from legends of the Virgin, and the greatest represents Mary's visit to Elizabeth; it is called "The



Calling of the Apostles by Ghirlandajo



The Visitation by Ghirlandajo

Visitation," and it is a fresco about eighteen feet long painted on the choir wall.

Let us imagine the possible scene. The Virgin Mary came from Cana, a little town in Galilee placed in the hills about nine miles from Nazareth, the home of the lowliest and the poorest, of a kindly pastoral people living in the open air, needing and wanting very little, simple in their habits. Elizabeth, Mary's old cousin, lived in Judea, and St. Luke writes thus: "Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judea; and entered into the house of Zacharias" (Elizabeth's husband) "and saluted Elizabeth."

This record had been made at least eleven hundred years before Ghirlandajo painted in the Santa Maria Novella, and from it one cannot imagine that Mary made any preparation for her journey, nor does it suggest that Elizabeth had any chance to arrange a reception for her. Even had she done so, it must have been of the simplest description, at that time among those people. One can imagine a lowly home; an aged woman coming out to meet her young relative either at her door or in the high road.

There may have been surroundings of fruit and flowers, a stretch of high road or a hospitable doorway; but the wildest imagination could not picture what Ghirlandajo did.

He paints Elizabeth flanked with hand-maidens, as if she were some royal personage, instead of a priest's wife in fairly comfortable circumstances where comfort was easily obtained. Mary appears to be escorted by ladies-in-waiting, hardly a likely circumstance since she was affianced to no richer or more important person than a carpenter of Galilee. Possibly the three ladies that stand behind Mary in the picture are merely lookers-on, but in that case the visit of Mary would seem to have been of public importance, especially as there are youths near by who are also much interested in one woman's hasty visit to another. The rich brocades worn by Elizabeth's waiting ladies are splendid indeed and the landscape is fine—a rich Italian landscape with architecture of the

most up-to-date sort—showing, in short, that the artist lacked historical imagination. He found some models, made a purely decorative painting with an Italian setting and called it "The Visitation." The doorway on the right is distinctly renaissance.

Such a painting as this is not "religious," nor is it historic, nor does it suggest a subject; it is merely a fine picture better coloured than most of those of the Florentine school. There is another painting of this same subject by Ghirlandajo in the Louvre, but it is no nearer truth than the one in the Santa Maria.

Ghirlandajo painted other than religious subjects, and one of them, at least, is quite repulsive. It is the picture of an old man, with a beautiful little child embracing him. The old man may have tenderness and love in his face, but his heavy features, his warty nose, do not make one think of pleasant things and one does not care to imagine the dear little child kissing the old fellow.

It was before Ghirlandajo's time that another painter had discovered the use of oil in mixing paints. Previously colours had been mixed in water with some gelatinous substance, such as the white and yolk of an egg, to give the paint a proper texture or consistency. This preparation was called "distemper," and frescoes were made by using this upon plaster while it was still wet. Plaster and colours dried together, and the painting became a part of the wall, not to be removed except by taking the plaster with it.

The different gluey substances used had often the effect of making the colours lose their tone and they presented a glazed surface when used upon wood, a favourite material with artists.

There are numberless anecdotes written of this artist and his brother, and one of these shows he had a temper. The brothers were engaged in a monastery at Passignano painting a picture of the "Last Supper." While at work upon it, they lived in the house. The coarse fare did not suit Ghirlandajo, and one night he could endure it no longer. Springing from his seat in the refectory he flung the soup all over the



Birth of St. Mary in Santa Maria Novella in Firenze by Ghirlandajo

Giovanna Degli Albizi by Ghirlandajo



monk who had served it, and taking a great loaf of bread he beat him with it so hard that the poor monk was carried to his cell, nearly dead. The abbot had gone to bed, but hearing the rumpus he thought it was nothing less than the roof falling in, and he hurried to the room where he found the brothers still raging over their dinner. David shouted out to him, when the abbot tried to reprove the artist, that his brother was worth more than any "pig of an abbot who ever lived!"

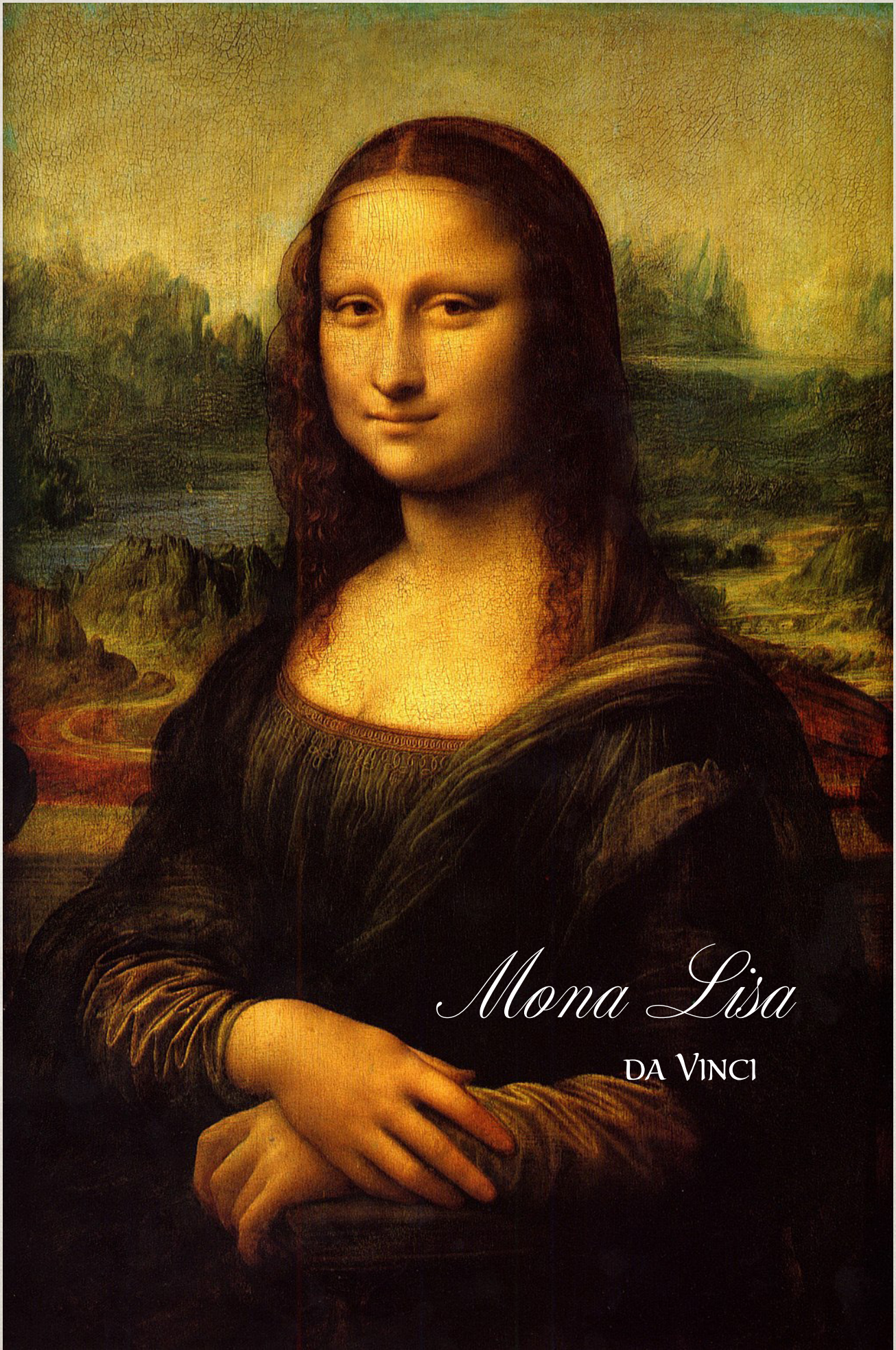
It is recorded in the documents found in the Confraternity of St. Paul that:

> Domenico de Churrado Bighordi, painter, called del Grillandaio, died on Saturday morning, on the 11th day of January, 1493 (o.s.), of a pestilential fever, and the overseers allowed no one to see the dead man, and would not have him buried by day. So he was buried, in Santa Maria Novella, on Saturday night after sunset, and may God forgive him! This was a very great loss for he was highly esteemed for his many qualities, and is universally lamented.

The artist left nine children behind him.



The Nativity (Detail) by Ghirlandajo


Mona Lisa
DA VINCI

Leonardo da Vinci

1452-1519, Italy

When the artist, Leonardo da Vinci, was a boy he liked nothing better than to model in clay. Although he modeled many figures in action, his chief delight was to model heads of smiling women and children. His boyhood was such a happy one, and he was so well liked, that even people with the most severe features relaxed them in a smile when he appeared. If they did not, he quickly made a sketch so comical in expression that they could not fail to be amused.

After he grew to manhood he had a very dear friend named Francesco del Gioconda, who asked him to paint a portrait of his wife, Mona Lisa, or La Gioconda, as the picture is often called. Leonardo wished to make this something more than a mere likeness. He wished it to show the character and soul of the woman herself. It proved to be a most difficult task, for after four years the portrait was put aside as unfinished.

Many critics claim that he intended to paint a face that no one could understand; others claim that the lady's moods were so changeable and her expressions so various that he tried to paint them all in one. The picture remains a mystery which no one seems to understand, yet like all mysteries it is fascinating and our interest in it grows stronger the longer we study it.

Many do not care for it at first, especially those who see it without

its beautiful coloring, but few fail to find it interesting if they but linger long enough.

But after all why should the fact that we do not understand the expression of this face trouble us, or that nearly every time we look at it we find a new expression, a different meaning? Is not the same thing true at times even with our most intimate friends? We think we know just what they will do and say, yet are we not often amazed at some sudden change in opinion or action on their part? It but marks their individuality, and we accept it as part of them. And that is one of the reasons this portrait of Mona Lisa is considered the greatest ever painted, because it represents so well the mystery of human personality. If so great an artist as Leonardo da Vinci spent four years painting this picture, and it is still considered by the great art critics the most wonderful portrait ever painted, we must study it even more carefully if we have not liked it at first.

Leonardo da Vinci had musicians playing or jesters with their funny sayings to amuse Mona Lisa while he was painting her picture. He did not wish her to think of herself or to grow weary and look tired.

As you look at the picture can you not imagine you hear the music of stringed instruments and the splash of that rushing, roaring little stream in the background? Mona Lisa is listening, dreaming, thinking. She looks at us, then on beyond without seeing us. She seems to know everything, feel everything, yet her smile is reassuring.

Her hands are beautiful. In that all will agree. The few details of her dress and scarf are exquisite, even in a print.

We cannot be quite sure about the chair she sits in; some say it is of marble, others that it is a wooden chair. And where is she seated? Some say it is on the roof of a building, others say on a balcony, but that is even less mysterious than that strange, winding, dashing little mountain stream that comes and goes we know not whither.

Critics cannot even decide what time of day it is in the picture, the light is so uncertain; some claim it is twilight; others, early morning.

If we could see the original, we would perhaps be astonished to find that the lady wears a very thin veil over her face and hair. Her eyes are a deep brown, her hair a beautiful auburn, and her dress a rich green with a touch of yellow. We cannot accuse her of vanity, for she wears no rings or ornaments of any kind.

Leonardo da Vinci loved problems. Even as a boy he would make up problems in arithmetic that would puzzle as well as interest his teachers. Here he has found a different kind of problem, which he has solved in his own way.

It seems as if each part of the face had an expression of its own, so that if the rest of the face were covered we could see that one alone. The left side of her face is thoughtful, the right side is smiling; her eyes are sad, the mouth is cheerful yet firm. There is hidden strength behind this face—it is as if she had discovered the secret of the world, but would allow no word of it to pass those lips so firmly closed. It is interesting to know, too, that the real Mona Lisa was one of the famous beauties in Florence.



Leonardo da Vinci was born in the little village called Vinci, about twenty miles from Florence, Italy. His father was a country lawyer of considerable wealth. Very little is known of Leonardo's boyhood, except that he grew up on his father's estate and early displayed remarkable talents. He was good-looking, strong, energetic, and an excellent student. He was especially good in arithmetic, and liked to make up problems of his own which even his teacher found interesting and difficult. Above all he loved to wander out in the great forest near the palace and to tame lizards, snakes, and many kinds of animals. Here he invented a lute upon which he played wonderful music of his own composing. Then, too, he sang his own songs and recited his own poems.

He loved to draw and paint because he could both represent the things he loved and use his inventive genius as well. He seemed to be


The Annunciation by da Vinci

gifted along so many lines, and was of such an inquiring mind, that it was difficult for him to work long enough at one thing to finish it. We read of him as musician, poet, inventor, scientist, philosopher, and last, but most important to us—as artist.

When he was fifteen years old he made some sketches which were so very clever that his father took them to a great artist, Verrocchio, who was delighted with them and was glad to take Leonardo as his pupil. The story is told that when Verrocchio was painting a large picture he asked Leonardo to paint one of the angels in the background. The boy spent much time and study on this work, and finally succeeded in painting an angel which was so beautiful that the rest of the picture seemed commonplace. It is said that Verrocchio felt very sad at the thought that a mere boy could surpass him, and declared he would paint no more pictures, but would devote his life to design and sculpture.

One time one of the servants of the castle brought Leonardo's father a round piece of wood and asked him to have his son paint something on it that would make it suitable for a shield, like the real shields that hung in the castle hall. Leonardo wanted to surprise his father. So he made a collection of all the lizards, snakes, bats, dragonflies, and toads that he could find and painted a picture, in which he combined their various parts, making a fearful dragon breathing out flame and just ready to spring from the shield. Coming suddenly upon the shield on his son's easel, the father was indeed startled. Studying the picture carefully, he declared it was far too valuable a present for the servant; so another shield had to be painted and the first was sold at a great price. No one knows what finally became of it.

Leonardo spent seven years with Verrocchio; then he opened a studio of his own in Florence, Italy.

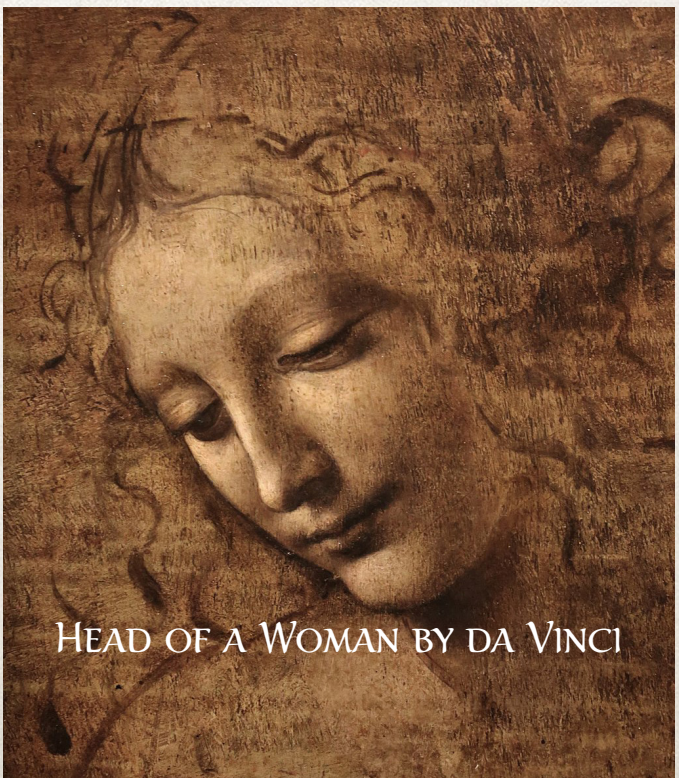
Later Pope Leo X invited him to Rome to paint for him, but most of his work there was left unfinished. The story is told of how one day the pope found him busily engaged in making a new kind of varnish with

which to finish his picture. “Alas,” said the pope, “this man will do nothing, for he thinks of finishing his picture before he begins it.”

From Rome, Leonardo went to Milan, where, with the Duke of Milan as patron, he painted his masterpiece, “The Last Supper.” He also made a model for an equestrian statue which, though never executed, was regarded as equal to anything the Greeks had ever done.

Leonardo da Vinci proved to be a great addition to the duke’s court; his fine appearance and his many talents made him very popular indeed. He played skillfully on a beautiful silver lyre and charmed the people with is music and songs. He also helped the duke found and direct the Academy at Milan, and gave lectures there on art and science. So his time was divided, as usual, among his many interests.

When the duke was driven out of Milan by the new French king, Leonardo spent several years in Florence, where he painted the famous “Mona Lisa,” and other portraits. Then followed a few years of travel through Italy. At the request of the French king, Francis I, Leonardo joined his court in France, and there he spent the last years of his life, regarded with great reverence and respect, and loved by all.



Head of a Woman by da Vinci



Virgin and Child with Saint Anne by da Vinci



Sistine Chapel Ceiling

MICHELANGELO

Michelangelo

1475-1564, Italy

This wonderful man did more kinds of things, at a time when almost all artists were versatile, than any other but one. Probably Leonardo da Vinci was gifted in as many different ways as Michael Angelo, and in his own lines was as powerful. This Florentine's life was as tragic as it was restless.

There is a tablet in a room of a castle which stands high upon a rocky mount, near the village of Caprese, which tells that Michael Angelo was born in that place. The great castle is now in ruins, and more than four hundred years of fame have passed since the little child was born therein.

The unhappy existence of the artist seems to have been foreshadowed by an accident which happened to his mother before he was born. She was on horseback, riding with her husband to his official post at Chiusi, for he was governor of Chiusi and Caprese. Her horse stumbled, fell, and badly hurt her. This was two months before Michael Angelo was born, and misfortune ever pursued him.

The father of Angelo was descended from an aristocratic house—the Counts of Canossa were his ancestors—and in that day the profession of an artist was not thought to be dignified. Hence the father had quite different plans for the boy; but the son persisted and at last had his

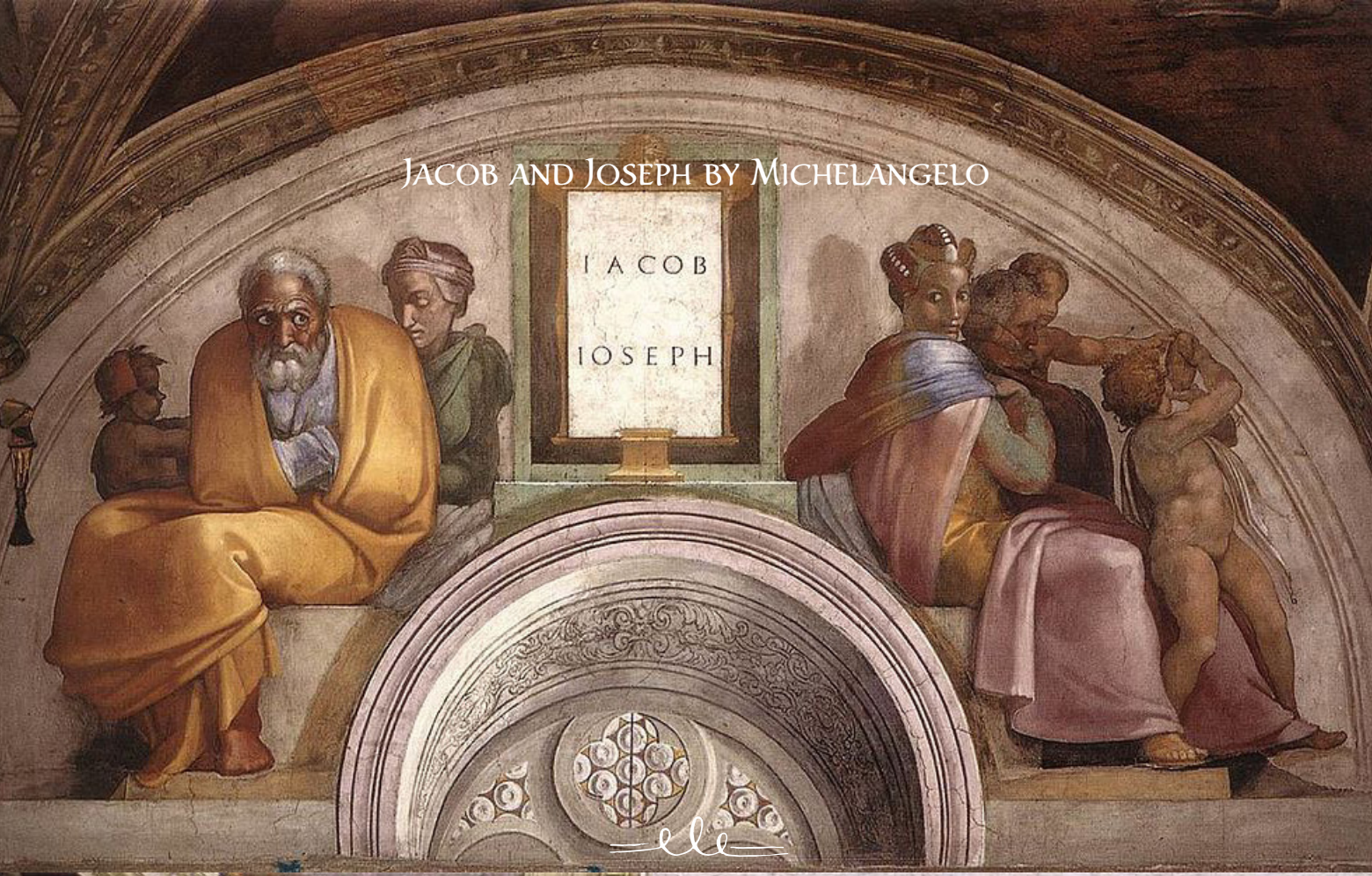
way. When he was still a little child his father finished his work as an official at Caprese and returned to Florence; but he left the little Angelo behind with his nurse. That nurse was the wife of a stonemason, and almost as soon as the boy could toddle he used to wander about the quarries where the stonecutters worked, and doubtless the baby joy of Angelo was to play at chiseling as it is the pleasure of modern babies to play at peg-top. After a time he was sent for to go to Florence to begin his education.

In Florence he fell in with a young chap who, like himself, loved art, but who was fortunate enough already to be apprenticed to the great painter of his time—Ghirlandajo. One happy day this young Granacci volunteered to take Michael Angelo to his master's studio, and there Angelo made such an impression on Ghirlandajo that he was urged by the artist to become his pupil.

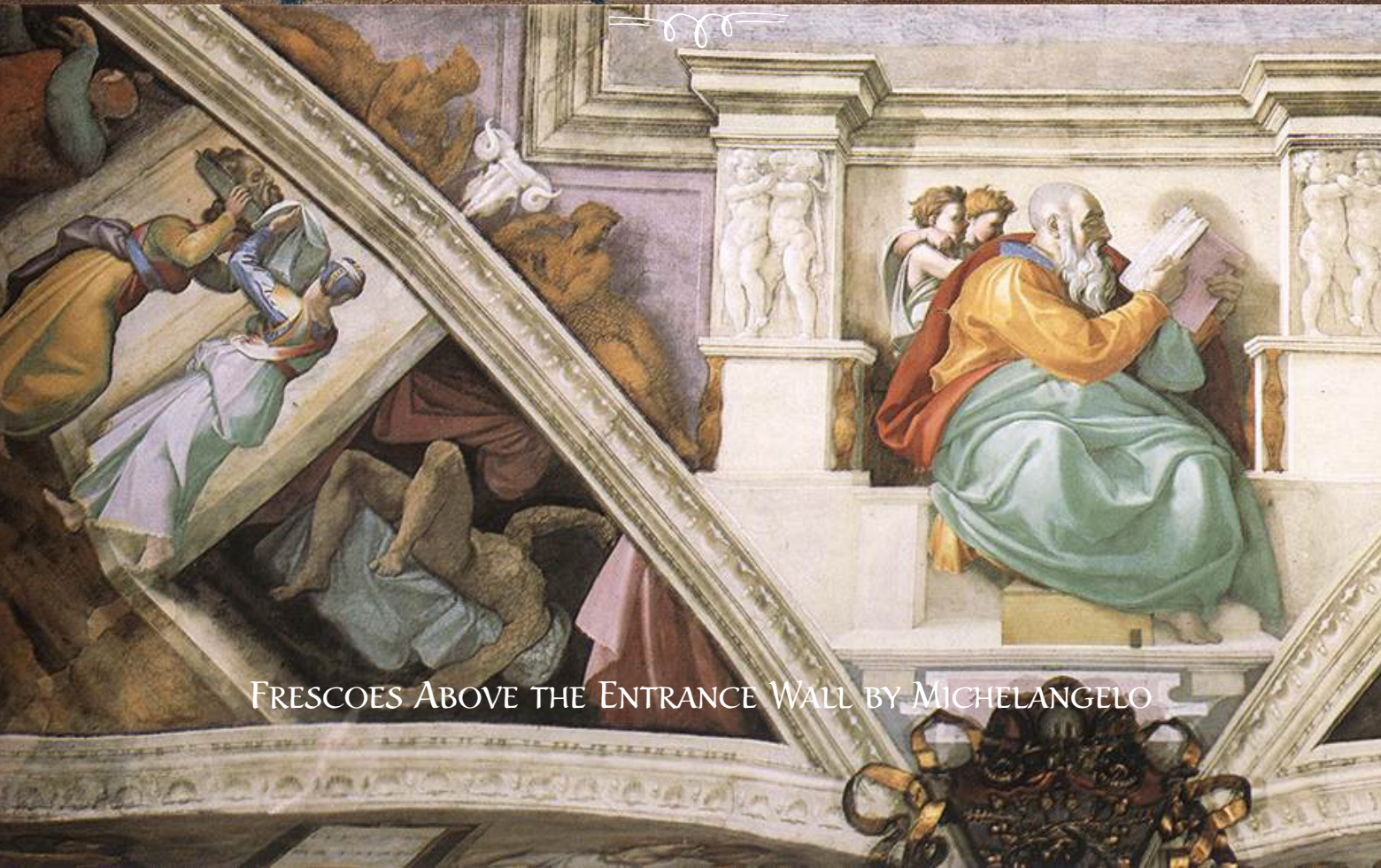
All the world began to seem rose coloured to the ambitious boy, and he started his life-work with enthusiasm. At that time he was thirteen years old, full of hope and of love for his kind; but his good fortune did not last long. He had hardly settled to work in Ghirlandajo's studio than his genius, which should have made him beloved, made him hated by his master. Angelo drew superior designs, created new art-ideas, was more clever in all his undertakings than any other pupil—even ahead of his master; and almost at once Ghirlandajo became furiously jealous. This enmity between pupil and master was the beginning of Angelo's many misfortunes.

One day he got into a dispute with a fellow student, Torregiano, who broke his nose. This deformity alone was a tragedy to one like Michael Angelo who loved everything beautiful, yet must go through life knowing himself to be ill-favoured.

In height he was a little man, topped by an abnormally large head which was part of the penalty he had to pay for his talents. He had a great, broad forehead, and an eye that did not gleam nor express the beauty of his creative mind, but was dull, and lustreless, matching his



Jacob and Joseph by Michelangelo



Frescoes Above the Entrance Wall by Michelangelo



David (Detail) by Michelangelo

broken, flattened nose. Indeed he was a tragedy to himself. In the "History of Painting" Muther describes his unhappy disposition:

"In his youthful years he never learned what love meant. 'If thou wishest to conquer me,' in old age he addresses love, 'give me back my features, from which nature has removed all beauty.' Whenever in his sonnets he speaks of passion, it is always of pain and tears, of sadness and unrequited longing, never of the fulfilment of his wishes."

Then, too, Michael Angelo had a quarrelsome disposition, and he was harsh in his criticism of others. He hated Leonardo da Vinci more for his great physical beauty than for his genius. He quarreled with most of his contemporaries, never joined the assemblies of his brother artists, but dwelt altogether apart. His was a gloomy and melancholy disposition and he never found relief outside his work.

He was all kinds of an artist—poet, sculptor, architect, painter—and although he worked with the irregularity of true genius, he worked indefatigably when once he began. It is said that when he was making his "David" he never removed his clothing the whole time he was employed upon the work, but dropped down when too exhausted to work more, and slept wherever he fell. ...

In Rome there was a high and haughty pope on the throne—Julius II—who had probably not his match for obstinacy and haughtiness, excepting in the great painter and sculptor. When Angelo went to Rome, he was bound to come in conflict with Julius for it was popes and princes who gave art any reason for being in those days, and the Church prescribed what kind of art should be cultivated. Michael was to come directly under the command of the pope and such a combination promised trouble. Kings themselves had to remove their crowns and hats to Julius, and why not Michael Angelo? Yet there he stood, covered, before the pope, opposing his greatness to that of the pope. Soderini says that Angelo treated the pope as the king of France never would have dared treat him; but Angelo may have known that kings of France might be born and die, times without number, while there would

never be born another Michael Angelo. There could be nothing but antagonism between Angelo and Julius, and soon after the artist returned to Florence; but the necessity for following his profession enabled Julius to tame him after all, and it is said that the pope led him back to Rome, later, "with a halter about his neck." This must have been agony to Angelo. ...

At another and later time, when he was engaged upon the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel, he was made to work by force. He accused the man who had built the scaffolding upon which he must stand, or lie, to paint, of planning his destruction. He suspected the very assistants whom he, himself, had chosen to go from Florence, of having designs upon his life. He locked the chapel against them, and they had to turn away when they went to begin work. Because of his insane suspicion he did alone the enormous work of the frescoes. Doubtless he was half mad, just as he was wholly a genius.

By the time he had finished those frescoes he was so exhausted and overworked that he wrote piteously to his people at home, "I have not a friend in Rome, neither do I wish nor have use for any." This of course was not true; or he would not have made the statement. "I hardly find time to take nourishment. Not an ounce more can I bear than already rests upon my shoulders." Even when the work was done he felt no happiness because of it, but complained about everything and everybody.

If Angelo thought this an unhappy day, worse was in store for him. Julius II died and in his place there came to reign upon the papal throne, Leo X. If Michael Angelo had been restricted in his work before, he was almost jailed under Leo X.... Michael Angelo stood aside with frowning brow and scornful mien. He approved of nothing and of nobody—despising even Raphael, the gentle and loving man whom the pleasure-crazed people of Rome paused to smile upon and love. The pope said that Angelo was "terrible," and that he filled everybody with fear.

Finally, Rome so resented his frowning looks and his surly ways that work was provided for him at a distance. He was sent to Florence again to build a façade. While there, the city was conquered, and Angelo was one who fought for its freedom, but even so, he fled just at the crisis. Thus he ever did the wrong thing—excepting when he worked. In Florence he had planned to do mighty things, but he never accomplished any one of them. He planned to make a wonderful colossal statue on a cliff near Carrara, and also he resolved to make the tomb of Julius the nucleus of a "forest of statues." ...

At last he withdrew himself from all human society but that of little children, whom he cared to speak with and to please. He would have naught to do with men of genius like himself; and when he fell from a scaffolding and injured himself, the physician had to force his way through a barred window, in order to get into the sick man's presence to serve him.

An illustration of his determined solitude is given in the *Young People's Story of Art*:

"There had long been lying idle in Florence an immense block of marble. One hundred years before a sculptor had tried to carve something from it, but had failed. This was now given to Michael Angelo. He was to be paid twelve dollars a month, and to be allowed two years in which to carve a statue. He made his design in wax; and then built a tower around the block, so that he might work inside without being seen."

Everything Angelo undertook bore the marks of gigantic enterprise. Although he never succeeded in making the tomb of Julius II the central piece in his forest of statues, the undertaking was marvellous enough. His original plan was to make the tomb three stories high and to ornament it with forty statues, and if St. Peter's Church was large enough to hold it, the work was to be placed therein; but if not, a church was to be built specially to hold the tomb. When at last, in spite of his difficulties with workmen and shipowners, the marbles were deposited

in the great square before St. Peter's, they filled the whole place; and the pope, wishing to watch the progress of the work and not himself to be observed, had a covered way built from the Vatican to the workshop of Angelo in the square, by which he might come and go as he chose, while an order was issued that the sculptor was to be admitted at all times to the Vatican. No sooner was this arrangement completed than Angelo's enemies frightened the pope by telling him there was danger in making his tomb before his death; and with these superstitions haunting him Julius II stopped the work, leaving Angelo without the means to pay for his marbles. With the doors of the Vatican closed to him, Angelo withdrew, post haste to Florence—and who can blame him? Nevertheless, the work was resumed after infinite trouble on the pope's part. He had to send again and again for Angelo and after forty years, the work was finished. There the sequel of the sculptor's forty-years war with self and the world stands to-day in "Moses," the wonderful, commanding central figure which seems to reflect all the fierce power which Angelo had to keep in check during a life-time.

The command of Julius that he should paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel aroused all his fierce resistance. He did it under protest, all the while accusing those about him of having designs upon his life.

"I am not a painter, but a sculptor," he said. "Such a man as thou is everything that he wishes to be," the pope replied.

"But this is an affair of Raphael. Give him this room to paint and let me carve a mountain!" But no, he must paint the ceiling; but to render it easier for him the pope told him he might fill in the spaces with saints, and charge a certain amount for each. This Angelo, who was first of all an artist, refused to do. He would do the work rightly or not at all. So he made his own plans and cut himself a cardboard helmet, into the front of which he thrust a candle, as if it were a Davy lamp, and he lay upon his back to work day and night at the hated task. During those months he was compelled to look up so continually, that never afterward was he able to look down without difficulty. When he had



Moses by Michelangelo


Pietà by Michelangelo

finished the work Julius had some criticisms to make.

"Those dresses on your saints are such poor things," he said. "Not rich enough—such very poor things!"

"Well, they were poor things," was Angelo's answer. "The saints did not wear golden ornaments, nor gold on their garments."

Angelo's methods of work, as well as their results, were oppressive. In his youth, while trying to perfect himself in his study of the human form, he drew or modelled from nude corpses. He had these conveyed by stealth from the hospital into the convent of Santo Spirito, where he had a cell and there he worked, alone.

It was characteristic of his perversity that he left his name upon nothing that he made, with one exception. Vasari relates the story of that exception:

"The love and care which Michael Angelo had given to this group, 'In Paradise,' [see: *Pietà*] were such that he there left his name—a thing he never did again for any work—on the cincture which girdles the robe of Our Lady; for it happened one day that Michael Angelo, entering the place where it was erected, found a large assemblage of strangers from Lombardy there, who were praising it highly; one of them asking who had done it, was told, 'our Hunchback of Milan'; hearing which Michael Angelo remained silent, although surprised that his work should be attributed to another. But one night he repaired to St. Peter's with a light and his chisels, to engrave his name on the figure, which seems to breathe a spirit as perfect as her form and countenance."

This colossal genius died in Rome, and was carried by the light of torches from that city back to his better loved Florence, where he was buried. His tomb was made in the Santa Croce, and upon it are three female figures representing Michael Angelo's three wonderful arts: Architecture, sculpture and painting. No artist was greater than he.

His will committed "his soul to God, his body to the earth, and his property to his nearest relatives."



Madonna of the Chair RAPHAEL

Raphael Sanzio

1483-1520, Italy

A long time ago a good old man whose name was Bernardo lived all alone in a little house in the woods. If people were lost in the woods, or tired, or hungry, they always came to him and he would help them. It was his work to take care of the trees and see that only the oldest and largest were cut down. But there was one large oak near his house he never would let the men cut. Its branches kept his house cool in summer with their shade, and in the winter they sheltered it from the bitter cold winds. Bernardo, living all alone and with no one to talk to, used to talk to the tree. And the big oak would nod its branches as if it understood every word.

All the trees belonged to a man who used the wood to make barrels. He made hundreds and hundreds of barrels, and though it took a great many trees to give him wood enough, he always spared the oak tree. Sometimes when this man came out to see about his trees his little daughter Mary came with him. And so Bernardo and little Mary became great friends. In fact, the old man said he had only two friends, the oak to whom he talked and little Mary who talked to him.

One day there was a dreadful storm and Bernardo's little house shook so in the wind that he was afraid to stay in it. He looked at the oak tree, and it seemed to motion to him and tell him to come into its

branches, where he would be safe. So he put some bread in his pocket, for he knew the storm would last a long time, and climbed up into the tree. It was a good thing he did so, too, for very soon his house was blown down. Hundreds of birds also hid among the branches of the big tree during the storm, which lasted three days.

The old man wished he had brought more bread to eat, for the ground was covered with water so deep he did not dare leave the tree. Just as he began to think he would starve, Mary and her father came in search of him and took him to their home. Little Mary had been thinking of him all the time, and just as soon as they could they had come for him. So you see his two friends, Mary and the oak, had saved his life, and Bernardo loved them more than ever. He prayed that in some way his two good friends might always be remembered together.

Many years after, Bernardo died. By that time the oak was so old it seemed as if it would fall over and break the other trees near it, or maybe hurt somebody. So it was cut down, and Mary's father had it made into fine new barrels. By this time the little Mary had grown up, was married, and had two fine boys of her own. She was sitting out on the nice big porch of her home one day, holding the baby in her arms, when the older boy came running to her to show her a stick which one of the workmen had carved into a cross. And who should happen to be passing the house at that very moment but the great artist, Raphael.

When he looked up and saw the lovely mother and her children, he thought he had never seen anything so beautiful. He was on his way home after a long walk, and did not even have his paints with him. But he saw the empty barrels in the yard, and choosing one with a nice smooth head, he drew on it, with a piece of charcoal, a picture of Mary and her children. He took the drawing home with him and painted this great picture. So the old man's wish came true, for this barrel end made from the old oak tree, with the picture of Mary and her children upon it, has become famous over all the world.

Such a round-faced, healthy, happy-looking baby, held tight in the



The Sistine Madonna by Raphael



La Donna Velata by Raphael

mother's strong arms! Perhaps he is getting tired of sitting so long for his picture, and wants to go down and see what the artist is doing. His chubby little arms and feet make us think he is not sitting very still. His lovely mother bends her head toward him. Her head is covered with a handkerchief, and there is such a beautiful shawl around her shoulders. The older boy looks with love and adoration at his sweet baby brother, who is looking toward us. What a beautiful old carved chair they must have been sitting in!

The mother's face was so good and kind, and she looked so lovely there on the porch with her children, that she reminded Raphael of that other mother, Mary, the mother of the baby Jesus. The elder brother looked like the little St. John adoring Jesus. So Raphael painted a halo around their heads and called the picture the "Madonna of the Chair." This halo is a ring of light which artists often paint around the heads of angels and saints. Raphael wanted to make us think loving and tender thoughts about the baby Jesus, Mary, and St. John.



The Holy Family by Raphael



Pietà with Saints

DEL SARTO

Andrea del Sarto

1486-1531, Italy



The Last Supper by del Sarto



The Holy Night

CORREGGIO

Antonio Allegri Correggio

1494-1534, Italy

This painting [*The Holy Night*] is not characteristic of Correggio's work, but nevertheless it is very beautiful. The brilliant warm light which comes from the Infant Jesus in His mother's arms is reflected upon the faces of those gathered about, and even illuminates the angelic group hovering above him. The slight landscape forming the background is also suggestive, and the conditions of the birth are indicated by the ass which may be seen in the middle distance. The faces of all are joyous yet full of wonderment, the whole scene intimate and human.

The picture is also called the "Adoration of the Shepherds," and that title best tells the story. See the shepherdess shading her face with one hand and offering two turtle-doves with the other. The ass in the distance is the one on which Mary rode to Bethlehem, and Joseph is caring for it. Even the cold light of the dawning day is softened by the beauty of the group below.

[In *The Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine*, t]he Infant Jesus sits upon His mother's lap, and places the ring upon St. Catherine's finger, while Mary's hand helps to guide that of her Child. This action brings the three hands close together and adds to the beauty of the composition. All of the faces are full of pleasure and kindliness, while that of St.

Sebastian fairly glows with happy emotion. The light is concentrated upon the body of the Child and is reflected upon the faces of the women. This painting hangs in the Louvre.

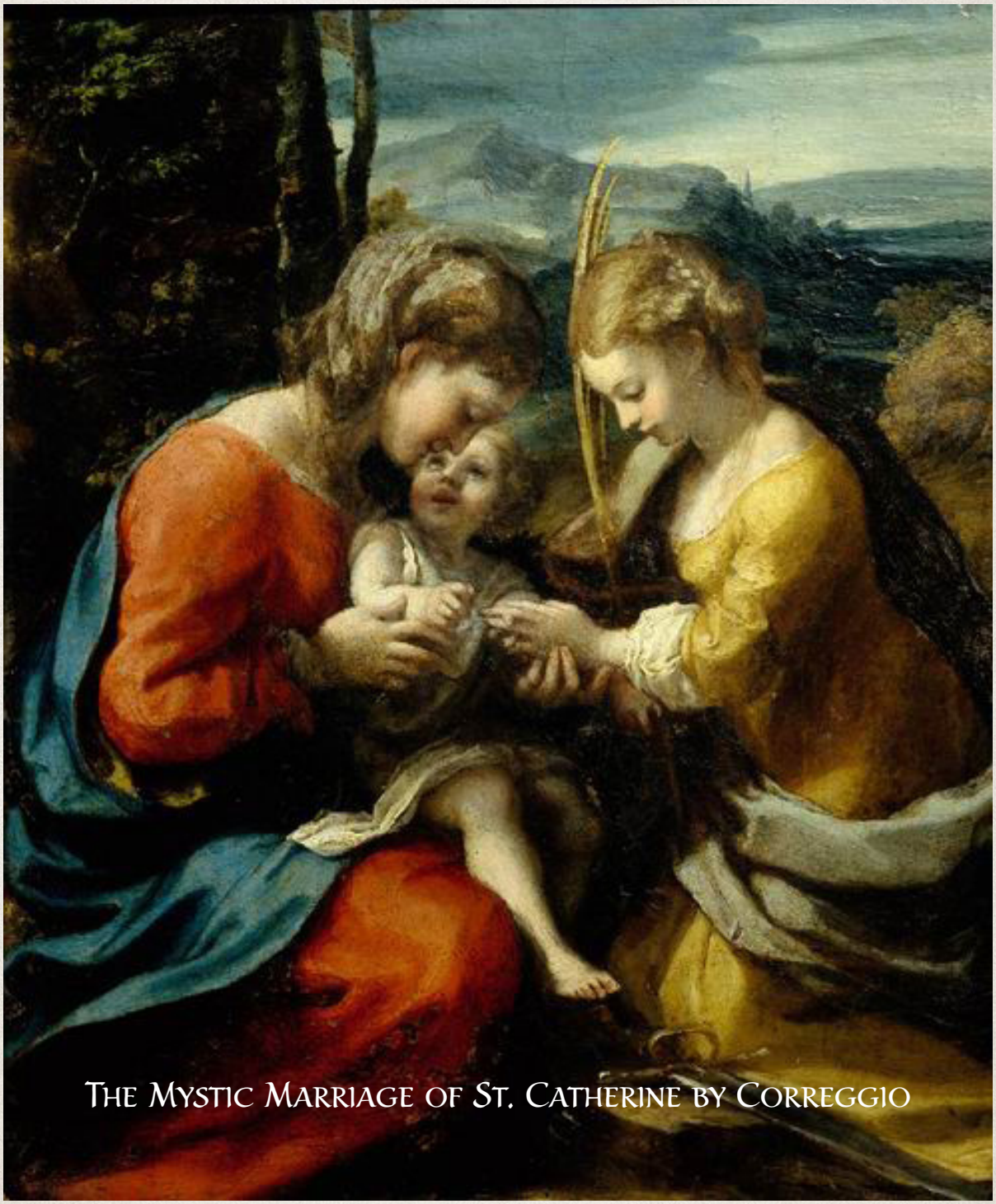
When Correggio was a little boy, he lived in the odour of spices, which were kept upon his father's shop-shelves. He was a highly-spiced little boy and man, although the most timid and shrinking. His imagination was the liveliest possible.

The spice merchant lived in the town of Correggio, and thus the artist got his name. Correggio knew what should be inside the lovely flesh of his painted figures before he began to paint them, because he studied anatomy in a truly scientific manner before he studied painting. Probably no other artist up to that time, had ever begun with the bare bones of his models, but Correggio may be said to have worked from the inside out. He learned about the structure of the human frame from Dr. Giovanni Battista Lombardi, and showed his gratitude to his teacher by painting a picture "Il Medico del Correggio" (Correggio's Physician), and presenting it to Doctor Lombardi.

Now Correggio's childhood, or at least his early manhood, could not have been spent in poverty, because it is known that he used the most expensive colours to paint with, painted upon the finest of canvas, while greater artists had often to be content with boards. He also painted upon copper plates, and it is said that he hired Begarelli, a sculptor of much fame, to make models in relief for him to copy for the pictures he painted on the cupolas of the churches in Parma. That sculptor's services must have been expensive.

On the lovely island of Capri, in the Franciscan convent, will be found one of his first pictures, painted when Correggio was about nineteen years old.

He was highly original in many ways. Although he had never seen the work of any great artist, he painted the most extraordinary



The Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine by Correggio



Madonna Adoring the Child by Correggio

fore-shortened pictures; and fore-shortening was a technicality in art then uncommon. He also was the first to paint church cupolas. Fore-shortening produces some peculiar as well as great results, and being a feature of art with which people were not then familiar, Correggio's work did not go uncriticised. Indeed one artist, gazing up into one of the cupolas where Correggio's fore-shortened figures were placed, remarked that to him it appeared a "hash of frogs."

But when Titian saw that cupola, he said: "Reverse the cupola, fill it with gold, and even then that will not be its money's worth."

Correggio did not receive very large sums for his work, and since he was married and took good care of his family, he must have had some source of income besides his brush. He received some interesting rewards for his paintings. For example, for "St. Jerome," called "Il Giorno," he was given "400 gold imperials, some cartloads of faggots and measures of wheat, and a fat pig." That picture is in the Parma Gallery, and all the cupolas which he painted are in Parma churches.

Some of his pictures are signed; "Leito," a synonym for his name, "Allegri." This indicates his style of art.

There is an interesting story told of how Correggio stood entranced before a picture of Raphael's, and after long study of it he exclaimed: "I too, am a painter!" showing at once his appreciation of Raphael's greatness and satisfaction at his own genius.

Doubtless a good share of Correggio's comfortable living came from the lady he married, since she was considered a rich woman for those times and in that locality. Her name was Girolama Merlini, and she lived in Mantua, the place where the Montagues and Capulets lived of whom Shakespeare wrote the most wonderful love story ever imagined. This young woman was only sixteen years old when Correggio met and loved her, and very beautiful and later on he painted a picture, "Zingarella," for which his wife is said to have been the model. It seems to have been a stroke of economy and enterprise for painters to marry, since we read of so many who made fame and fortune through the

beauty of their wives.

They were very happy together, Correggio and his wife, and they had four children. Their happiness was not for long, because Correggio seems to have been but thirty-four years old when she died, nor did he live to be old. There is a most curious tale of his death which is probably not true, but it is worth telling since many have believed it. He is supposed to have died in Correggio, of pleurisy, but the story is that he had made a picture for one who had some grudge against him, and who in order to irritate him paid him in copper, fifty scudi. This was a considerable burden, and in order to save expense and time, it is said that Correggio undertook to carry it home alone. It was a very hot day, and he became so overheated and exhausted with his heavy load that he took ill and died, and he may be said literally to have been killed by "too much money," if this were true. Vasari, a biographer to be generally believed, says it is a fact.

Correggio said that he always had his "thoughts at the end of his pencil," and there are those who impudently declare that is the only place he did have them, but that is a carping criticism, because he was a very great artist, his greatest power being the presentation of soft blendings of light and shade. There seem to have been few unusual events in Correggio's life; very little that helps us to judge the man, but there is a general opinion that he was a kind and devoted father and husband, as well as a good citizen. With little demand upon his moral character, he did his work, did it well, and his work alone gave him place and fame.

He became the head of a school of painting and had many imitators, but we hear little of his pupils, except that one of them was his own son, Pompino, who lived to be very old, and in his turn was successful as an artist.

Correggio was buried with honours in the Arrivabene Chapel, in the Franciscan church at Correggio.





Noli Me Tangere by Correggio


The Miracle of St. Mark
Tintoretto

Jacopo Robusti Tintoretto

1518-1594, Italy

This painting in the Academy at Venice tells the story of how a Christian slave who belonged to a pagan nobleman went to worship at the shrine of St. Mark. That was unlawful. The nobleman had his slave taken before the judge, who ordered him to be tortured. Just as the executioner raised the hammer with which he was finally to kill the slave, St. Mark himself came down from heaven, broke the weapon and rescued the slave.

The figure of the patron saint of Venice is swooping down, head first, above the group, his garments flying in the air. A bright light touches the slave's body, as he lies upon his back, the executioner having turned away and raised his hammer aloft, while others have drawn back in fright at the appearance of the patron saint. We may imagine that Tintoretto was trying to acquire this power of painting wonderful figures hovering in the air when he hung his little clay images from the ceiling of his studio years before.


The Wedding at Cana
Veronese

Paul Veronese

1528-1588, Italy

This painting [*The Wedding at Cana*] is most characteristic of Veronese's methods. He has no regard for the truth in presenting the picture story. At the marriage at Cana everybody must have been very simply dressed, and there could have been no beautiful architecture, such as we see in the picture. In the painting we find courtier-like men and women dressed in beautiful silks. Some of the costumes appear to be a little Russian in character, the others Venetian; and Jesus Himself wears the loose every-day robe of the pastoral people to whom he belonged. We think of luxury and rich food and a splendid house when we look at this painting, when as a matter of fact nothing of this sort could have belonged to the scene which Veronese chose to represent. Perhaps no painter was more lacking in imagination than was Veronese in painting this particular picture. He chose to place historical or legendary characters, in the midst of a scene which could not have existed coincidently with the event.

"One has never done well enough, when one can do better; one never knows enough when he can learn more!"

This was the motto of Paul Veronese. This artist was born in Verona

—whence he took his name—and spent much of his life with the monks in the monastery of St. Sebastian.

His father was a sculptor, and taught his son. Veronese himself was a lovable fellow, had a kind feeling for all, and in return received the good will of most people. When he first went to Venice to study he took letters of introduction to the monks of St. Sebastian, and finally went to live with them, for his uncle was prior of the monastery, and it was upon its walls that he did his first work in Venice. His subject was the story of Esther, which he illustrated completely.

He became known in time as "the most magnificent of magnificent painters." He loved the gaieties of Venice; the lords and ladies; the exquisite colouring; the feasting and laughter, and everything he painted, showed this taste. When he chose great religious subjects he dressed all his figures in elegant Venetian costumes, in the midst of elegant Venetian scenes. His Virgins, or other Biblical people, were not Jews of Palestine, but Venetians of Venice, but so beautiful were they and so inspiring, that nobody cared to criticise them on that score. He loved to paint festival scenes such as, "The Marriage at Cana," "Banquet in Levi's House," or "Feast in the House of Simon." He painted nothing as it could possibly have been, but everything as he would have liked it to be.

Into the "Wedding Feast at Cana," where Jesus was said to have turned the water into wine, he introduced a great host of his friends, people then living. Titian is there, and several reigning kings and queens, including Francis I of France and his bride, for whom the picture was made. This treatment of the Bible story startles the mind, but delights the eye.

It was said that his "red recurred like a joyful trumpet blast among the silver gray harmonies of his paintings."

Muther, one who has written brilliantly about him, tells us that "Veronese seems to have come into the world to prove that the painter need have neither head nor heart, but only a hand, a brush, and a pot of



Banquet in Levi's House by Veronese



The Last Supper by Veronese

paint in order to clothe all the walls of the world with oil paintings" and that "if he paints Mary, she is not the handmaid of the Lord or even the Queen of Heaven, but a woman of the world, listening with approving smile to the homage of a cavalier. In light red silk morning dress, she receives the Angel of the Annunciation and hears without surprise—for she has already heard it—what he has to say; and at the Entombment she only weeps in order to keep up appearances."

Such criticism raises a smile, but it is quite just, and what is more, the Veronese pictures are so beautiful that one is not likely to quarrel with the painter for having more good feeling than understanding. His joyous temperament came near to doing him harm, for he was summoned before the Inquisition for the manner in which he had painted "The Last Supper."

After the Esther pictures in St. Sebastian, the artist painted there the "Martyrdom of St. Sebastian," and there is a tradition that he did this work while hiding in the monastery because of some mischief of which he had been guilty.

At that time he was not much more than twenty-six or eight, while the great painter Tintoretto was forty-five, yet his work in St. Sebastian made him as famous as the older artist.

Veronese married, and had two sons; the younger being named Carletta. He was also the favourite and an excellent artist, who did some fine painting, but he died while he was still young. Gabriele the elder son, also painted, but he was mainly a man of affairs, and attended to business rather than to art.

Veronese was a loving father and brother, and beyond doubt a happy man. After his death both his sons and his brother worked upon his unfinished paintings, completing them for him. He was buried in the Church of St. Sebastian.





St. Matthew and Angel

Reni

Guido Reni

1575-1642, Italy

The artist, Guido Reni, was the son of a musician and singer of Italy. The father taught his son to sing and play on the flute and harpsichord. He intended that he should grow up and become a singer and musician like himself.

The little Guido, however, liked best to draw, and paint, and model in clay. He used to run away from his music lessons and go to a nearby studio. Here he could work with the paints and clay as much as he liked.

After the lad was older and had made some progress in his drawing, his work was observed by a well-known painter. The artist recognized the boy's talent, and advised his father to send him to a teacher. The father consented, but added—"If Guido doesn't do well at painting, he must go back to his music."

Much to his father's delight, however, the boy made great progress. It was just about this time that the little artist grew to be very beautiful. Indeed, so beautiful did he become that many of the older artists were eager to paint his picture. One of the famous painters of the day painted him as an angel in several of his pictures.

By the time he was thirteen, he was so skillful in the use of the pencil and brush that his teacher allowed him to instruct the other pupils.

The pupils loved their little teacher. They listened to all he said. They liked to watch him take a pencil or brush and sketch a picture.

It was not long before the fame of the youthful Guido spread to the great cities of Italy. Many honors came to him. By and by he was called upon to decorate one of the princely palaces of Rome.

There upon the ceiling of the great hall of the palace he painted the famous "Aurora."

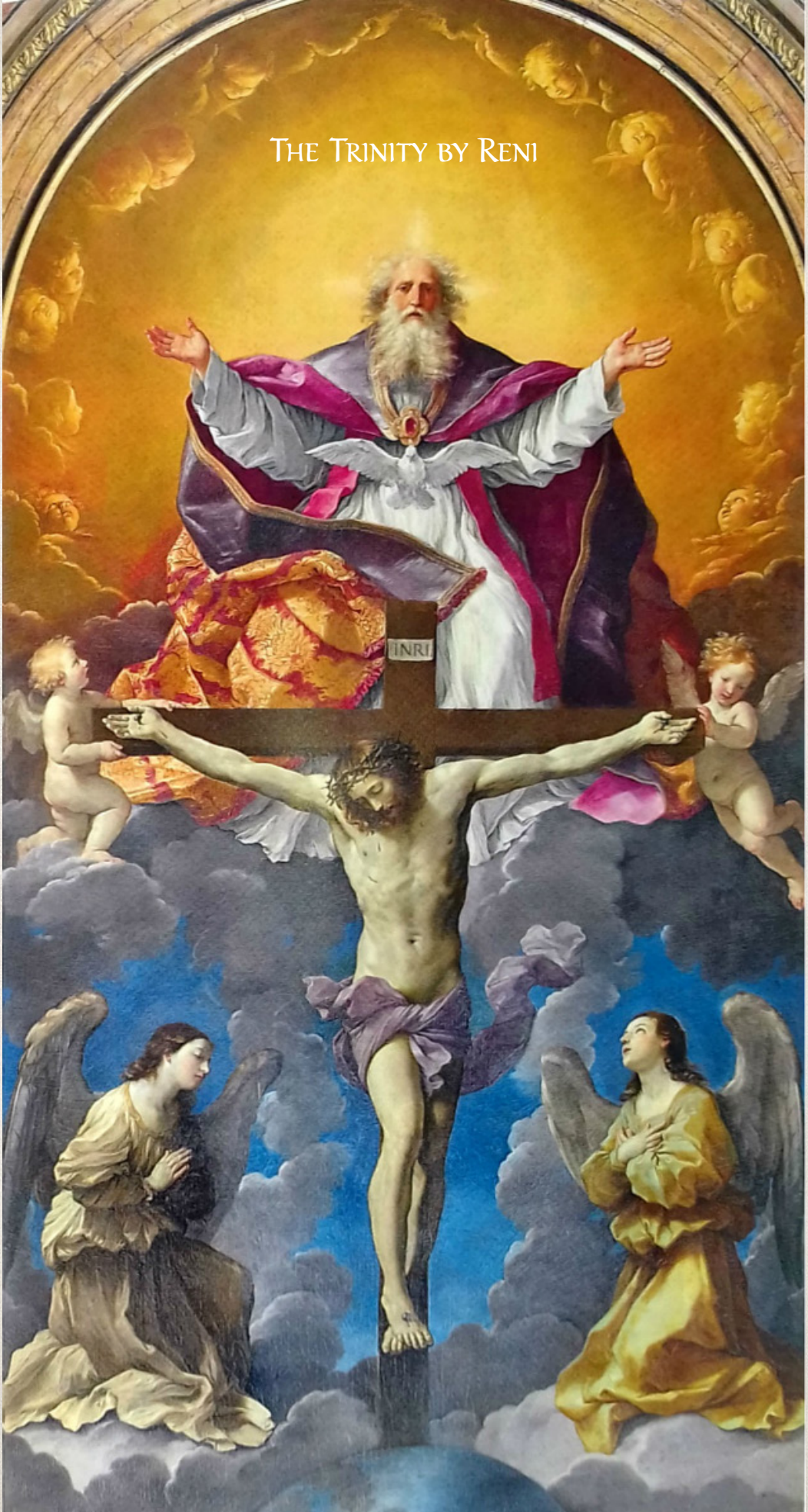
For over three hundred years, travelers have been going to Italy to see this great picture painted so long ago. Today it is one of the twelve great pictures of the world, truly a great masterpiece!

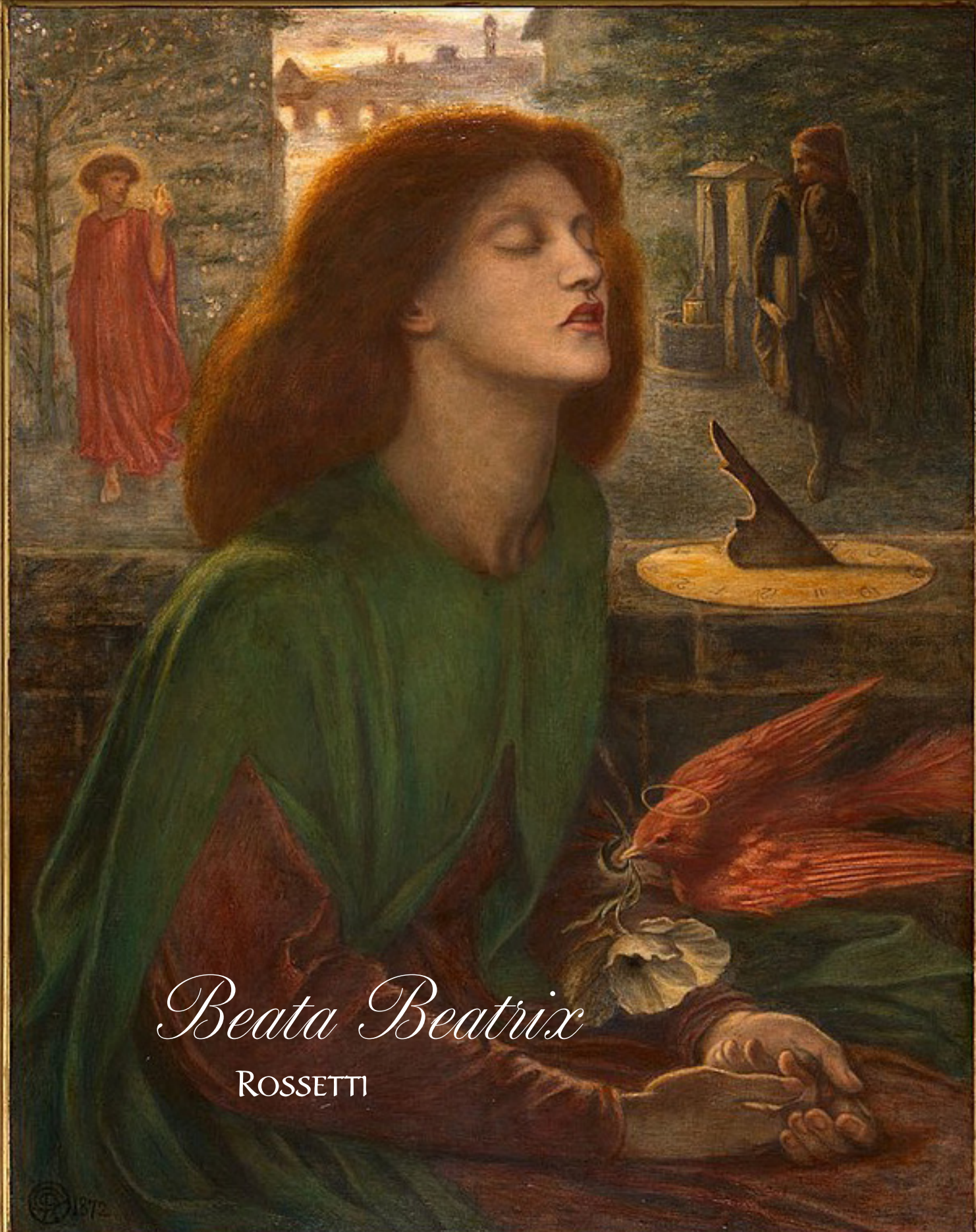
Though Guido Reni grew to be one of the world's celebrated painters, he never entirely forgot his music. We see his love for music in the beautiful dancing Hours of his "Aurora."



Aurora by Reni

The Trinity by Reni




Beata Beatrix
Rossetti

Beata Beatrix

Dante Gabriel Rossetti

Long ago, in the age of chivalry, there lived a beautiful Florentine lady named Beatrice Portinari. A great poet, Dante, has described her to us from her childhood to her death.

In those days, when all true knights served their ladies, and even small boys were requred to choose objects of devotion, it was not strange that a boy of nine years should choose a little neighbor girl for his honor. She was only a year younger than he when her father, Folco Portinari, a rich nobleman of Florence, gave a festival in her honor, inviting all his neighbors and friends. Dante went with his father. Here for the first time he met Beatrice, whom he afterwards described as "the youngest of angels."

"'People called her Beatrice then,' he explains, ' without knowing how truly the name belonged to her, for it means 'one who blesses.'" The artist, Rossetti, must have been thinking of this when he named his picture "Beata Beatrix," which means "happy or pleasing; one who blesses." Beata sometiems has another meaning — "the elect of Paradise" — and Dante suggests this meaning as he tells us how the people remarked, as she passed, that "she seemed not to be the daughter of a mortal man, but of God." Indeed, he tells us that whoever looked at her was made better, for all ill thoughts must vanish before her — "the

destroyer of all evil, and the queen of all good."

It was not until nine years after this first meeting that Dante met Beatrice face to face again. She was walking on the street between two older women, and turned to greet him pleasantly. Dressed in white this time, she seemed to him the finest and most beautiful lady in all Florence.

This meeting had such an effect upon Dante that he declared he felt as if he had reached the "furthest limit of blessedness." Hurrying to his room, he spent hours in thinking of Beatrice; — finally he fell asleep and dreamed of her. As soon as he awoke, he commenced a sonnet, which he addressed, not to her, but to his fellow-poets. It was not until later that he ventured to address his verses to Beatrice, usually speaking of her as "my lady."

After each meeting or new thought of Beatrice, Dante wrote his poems, until at last he put them all into a book which he called "Vita Nuova," meaning "new life." He declared that from the time of his first meeting with Beatrice he had begun a new life, and this book would contain the record of it. Here he tells all his inmost thoughts and feelings, for in those days it was the fashion for poets to tell of their loves.

So we hear how Dante spent his days and nights thinking of the lovely Beatrice, until his health began to fail and his friends questioned, even taunted him, as to the cause. He did not wish them to know who it was that so affected him, and was wondering how to keep his secret when an accident showed him the way. As he sat in church looking across to where his beloved Beatrice sat unconscious of his presence, his glance was returned by a lady sitting half way between. She thought his glances were for her. She looked around several times, and other people, noticing her, soon decided she must be the lady Dante loved. Dante then decided to use her as a screen, and though he continued to write his verses to Beatrice, he did so in such a way that all believed they were directed to the screen lady.

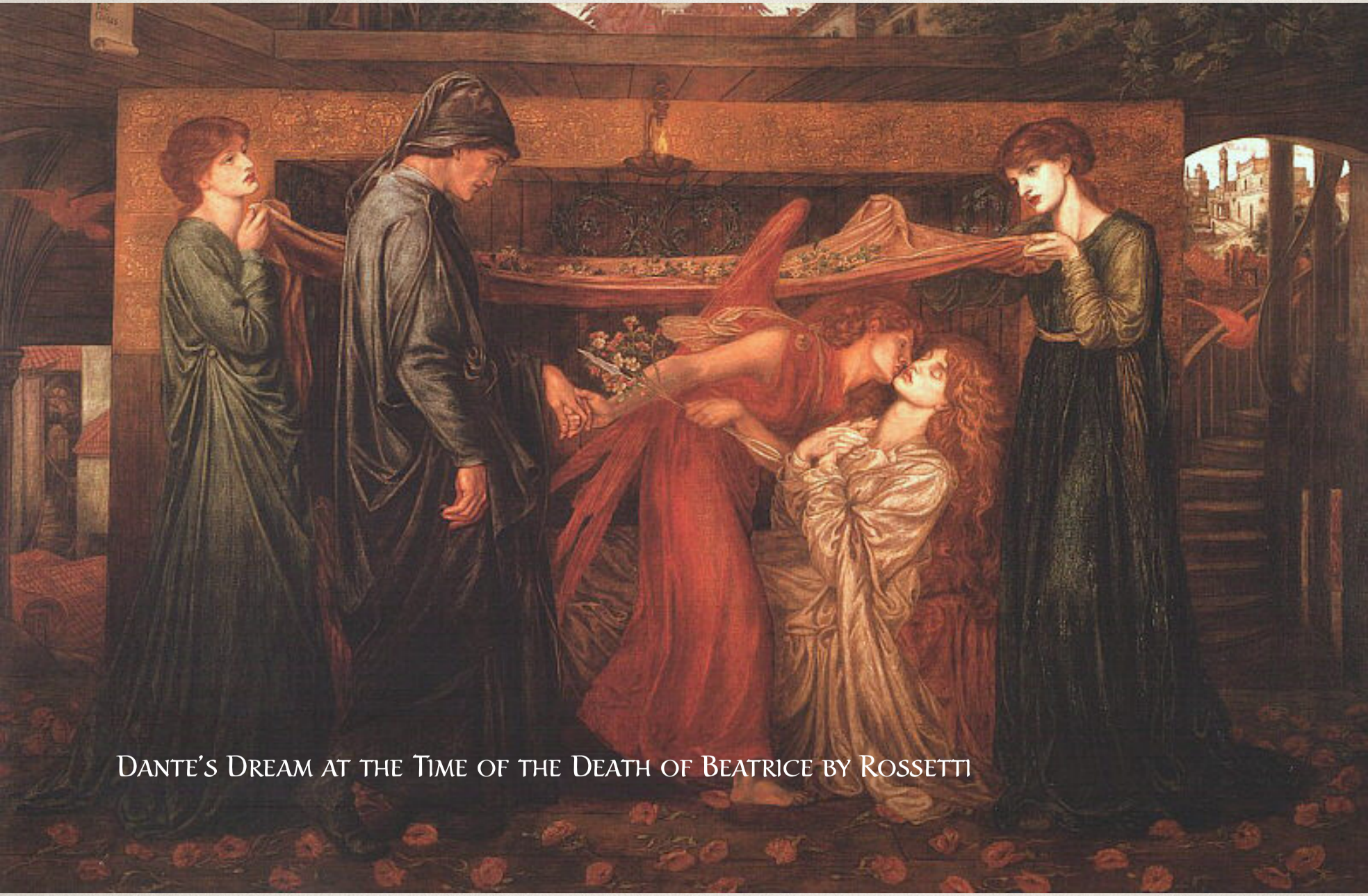
This did very well for several years, until the screen lady moved to

another city. Then Dante chose another screen lady, but she got him into trouble. False rumors spread rapidly and soon the gentle Beatrice heard them. So one day, when she passed Dante on the street, she did not give him the customary greeting. He was nearly heartbroken, for this greeting was all the recompense he had ever had or hoped to have for his love. He tells how much it meant to him, how kindly it made him feel toward even his enemies, and that it was the inspiration and hope of his life.

A friend took him to a wedding feast at which Beatrice was one of the guests. At the sight of her he grew faint and was obliged to return home. As he passed a group of women, they stopped him and inquired what kind of a love his was that made him numb and speechless in the mere presence of the loved one. He told them that until the day when Beatrice refused it, the end and aim of his love had been "her salutation"; but now his desire had changed to something that could not fail him: His happiness now lay "in the words which praise my lady."

Is it any wonder then that one so gentle and beautiful as Beatrice, and to whom the attention of all Florence was directed by the adoration of so beloved a poet as Dante, should become a kind of goddess or queen in that city? Dante tells us that people came to the corners of the streets to see her pass. Her companions, too, were honored for her sake, and it seemed as if Beatrice herself was "the only creature in Florence unaware of her own perfections." It gave him the most exquisite pleasure to think that he had helped bring this about.

At the death of Beatrice's father, Dante's grief was almost as deep as for his own father, and he remained near the house in the vain hope that he might comfort his lady in some way. Shortly after this, Dante became very ill, and as he thought of death, he realized that some day his beloved Beatrice must die. The thought drove him into a frenzy of despair; and when at last he fell asleep, it was only to dream of her approaching death. This dream proved to be a true omen, for only once more was Dante permitted to see his Beatrice; then one day as he was



Dante's Dream at the Time of the Death of Beatrice by Rossetti

composing a sonnet to her, the news of her death was brought to him. He was prostrated with grief, and it was some time before he could write again.

Dante was then twenty-seven years old, and left, as he said, "to ruminate on death, and envy whomsoever dies." To console himself he read religious philosophy, and from thinking of Beatrice as a saint upon earth, he began to think of her in heaven in company with saints and angels. And so almost before he knew it he had started to write his masterpiece, "The Divine Comedy." In this, Beatrice, still the object of his adoration, leads him from circle to circle in Paradise, and for the first time we hear her speak. ...

The "Vita Nuova" was written in Italian, and one of the best English translations was made by Rossetti, who painted this picture as one of the many illustrations for the book. No one could have been more in sympathy with this subject than Rossetti; both because of his great admiration for Dante, and because he had suffered a similar affliction in the loss of his beloved wife.

Dante sought to prove in verse that death is but passing from one world into another, and Rossetti wished to show Beatrice in that transition stage, or swoon, in which she is about to pass into another life. In his own words Rossetti tells us, "The picture illustrates the 'Vita Nuova,' embodying symbolically the death of Beatrice as treated in that work. The picture is not intended at all to represent death, but to render it under the semblance of a trance in which Beatrice, seated at a balcony overlooking the city, is suddenly rapt from earth to heaven."

We are supposed to be in an adjoining room in the home of Beatrice, and to be looking out upon the balcony where she is sitting. Her closed eyes, half-closed lips, and listless hands make her appear to be half sleeping, half waking, yet conscious of some heavenly vision we cannot see. The dove, crowned with a halo to show that it is a heavenly messenger, brings the poppy to Beatrice. This flower is the symbol of death; the dark heart of the flower stands for the mystery and the white

petals for purity.

The sundial represents the hour as close at hand. Dante was quite superstitious about the number nine, and in his book refers to that number so often that this picture would not be complete without some indication of it. He was nine years old when he met Beatrice; nine years later he received her salutation; it was usually on the ninth hour that he saw or dreamed of her; and it was at the ninth hour that she passed away.

As we glance away from Beatrice, beyond the balcony we catch a glimpse of the Florence in which she lived, with its river Arno, its bridge, and some of the towers and palaces in the dim distance. The two figures gazing sadly at one another represent Dante and Love. In this "Vita Nuova," Dante always speaks of Love as an actual person appearing to him in different forms. First he appeared as a traveler dressed in coarse clothes; then as a youth in white who came and sat on the edge of his bed and comforted him; and on those rare occasions when Dante saw Beatrice he was always present. Dressed in vermilion in this picture, he stands holding a flaming heart and pointing upward, as if he would beckon Dante to follow. Critics generally agree that the figure of Love in this picture represents the spiritual Beatrice, who beckons Dante to follow as she passes upward. Dante, dressed in scholarly gown, gazes fixedly at the figure as if he would not fail to get the message.

The colors in which this picture is painted add much to its air of mystery. The purplish tints of late sunset linger in the distant view of the city and bring out the golden auburn hair against the twilight distance. Yet Rossetti has been very careful to make Beatrice appear as a real person and not as a vision. To accomplish this, he has made the figure stand out clearly against the brilliant light, yet so lost in the half shadows of the balcony, so she appears to be both of this world and of the next. He has represented life and death again in the colors of her dress — green and purple. The bird is a deep rose color. It carries the purplish white poppy to her lap.



The First Anniversary of the Death of Beatrice by Rossetti



San Marco

Tito

Ettore Tito

1859-1941, Italy

We are not surprised that the artist who painted "Venetian Waters" lived in Venice. Only one who has lived beside the lazy lagoons, who has listened to the low songs of the gondoliers, and who has watched the setting sun paint the waters of the Grand Canal, can make pictures of Venice. Such a one is Ettore Tito.

Tito was born in southern Italy in 1859. As a little boy he showed great promise along artistic lines. When he was twelve, he could draw and paint with some degree of skill. His parents were pleased by these signs of talent in their little son. They decided that his talent must be developed.

They lived not far from the city of Venice. This city had been the home of many of the great artists of the past. They loved Venice because there they found beautiful color and sparkling light for their pictures.

Venice is a city of many little islands and all her streets are water. Here and there through the canals glide the many little gondolas. Never a horse, a wagon, or a car is seen in Venice! Everywhere is gay color and sparkling sunlight!

Here it was that the parents of the little Italian boy decided to send their son. Here he could have lessons in drawing and painting. Here

he could see the great pictures of the world. Here, too, he would be living in one of the most picturesque cities in all the world, a city of bright sunlight.

Accordingly the lad went to Venice and began his studies. So delighted was he with his new school, so delighted was he with his work, that he gave all his time to study.

He soon made great progress, surprising both the teachers and students with his skill in drawing and his use of the color. Before long he was painting the pretty lagoons, the sparkling waters, and the gay gondolas of Venice.

When he was twenty-three years old he sent one of his pictures to a great exhibition in Rome. It attracted much attention. People began to praise his work. Soon he was made a teacher in the school where so many years before he had come to study.

Today Ettore Tito is the most famous living painter in Italy. It is his pictures of Italian life that have made him famous. Little fisherboys, in their old fishing boats, paintings of the sea, and the picturesque canals of Venice are his favorite subjects. These paintings, aglow with the light and color of Venice, are pictures of real life such as one sees every day in this city by the sea.

In all his pictures his figures are very natural. They look like real people. They act, too, like real people act. In our painting, "Venetian Waters," we see a real gondola of Venice. We see this sturdy gondolier expressing the action of handling the oar and pushing the boat through the water just as does the gondolier of Venice. The little boy standing in the front of the boat looks like hundreds of other little Italian boys who play around the wharf in Venice. The pose of the distant figure, standing on the far edge of the boat, is seen every day in this city by the sea. The gay colored sail of the Venetian boat is only one of many that lie at anchor along the Grand Canal. So it is with all the paintings of the artist. It is his picturing of real life, the naturalness of his figures, and the excellent drawing of form and movement that made him famous.



Mondine in Polesine by Tito

Ancient Greece and Rome





Victory of Samothrace

UNKNOWN

Victory of Samothrace

Artist Unknown

Long, long ago in centuries past, the most beautiful land in all the world lay far across the ocean. It bordered the blue Aegean Sea. Here and there beyond the shores of the mainland, were scattered her neighboring islands. Upon the violet-crowded hills rose the marble temples of gods and goddesses. Within her cities stood glorious monuments erected to her heroes. Yes, this was the land of heroes. This was the land of the gallant Greeks of old!

Today, we of the twentieth century marvel at the beauty of these ancient monuments. We are perhaps surprised to find that the people living over two thousand years ago had thoughts in common with us of today. They too had their war memorials. They too took civic pride in the beauty of these monuments, commemorating as they did the bravery of their warriors.

The Greeks, however, attributed all good fortune to the great gods and goddesses who, they believed, directed the affairs of the Greek world. Though they praised their warriors, their generals, their statesmen, yet they believed it was first of all to Nike, the Goddess of Victory, that they owed their great successes. Their imagination pictured Nike as a winged goddess, powerful alike on land and sea.

One day, long ago, in 306 BC, the Greek leader, Demetrius, returned

from a great and victorious sea fight off Salamis in the Island of Cyprus. His followers applauded him. He was acclaimed a hero.

This notable event must be commemorated! It must be proclaimed to all future generations! It was fitting that a statue of Nike, the goddess of all victories, should serve as a memorial to his glory.

As a result, the celebrated Nike, the Victory of Samothrace, was set up on the Island of Samothrace.

Samothrace was a sacred island with high rocky cliffs, windswept by the sea. Here on either slope of a deep ravine were the glorious temples of gods and goddesses. Here in this sacred place the great monuments of victory were raised. High up at one end of the valley stood a beautiful porch of marble columns. There, overlooking the ravine, towering above the temples and standing out against the mass of slender columns, stood the stormy wind-swept figure of Nike.

There she stood, heralding to all the world her victorious power in the great naval battle.

What an inspiration! How the sight of the glorious Nike thrilled the hearts of the ancient Greeks!

Years passed. Then came the crushing power of the Romans, and later centuries of disorder and destructive warfare. Cities were pillaged. Towns were destroyed. Temples, statues, and memorials, alike, were heaped in the dust. The Victory of Samothrace met its fate with the rest. There it lay overthrown and broken, buried for ages under the debris of the sacred valley.

In 1865 came the explorer! Two years later, digging deep into the accumulated rubbish, by long and patient exploration he discovered, piece by piece, the marble fragments of the Nike. One hundred and eighteen pieces recovered. They were carefully collected and sent to Paris. Ten years later the pedestal, which represented the prow of a ship, was discovered. This was in twenty-three fragments. Though some of these weighed more than two tons, they, also, were sent to Paris.

Here, under trained experts, the fragments of the figure and of the

pedestal were pieced together again. The head, arms, and a few other parts have never been found. The lack of these, however, in no way detracts from the beauty of the glorious figure.

Strangely enough coins of this period have also been found, which bear on the obverse side a design of this statue of Nike. These were doubtless struck as a further tribute to the victorious Demetrius. It was this ancient coin which gave the clue for restoring the Victory of Samothrace.

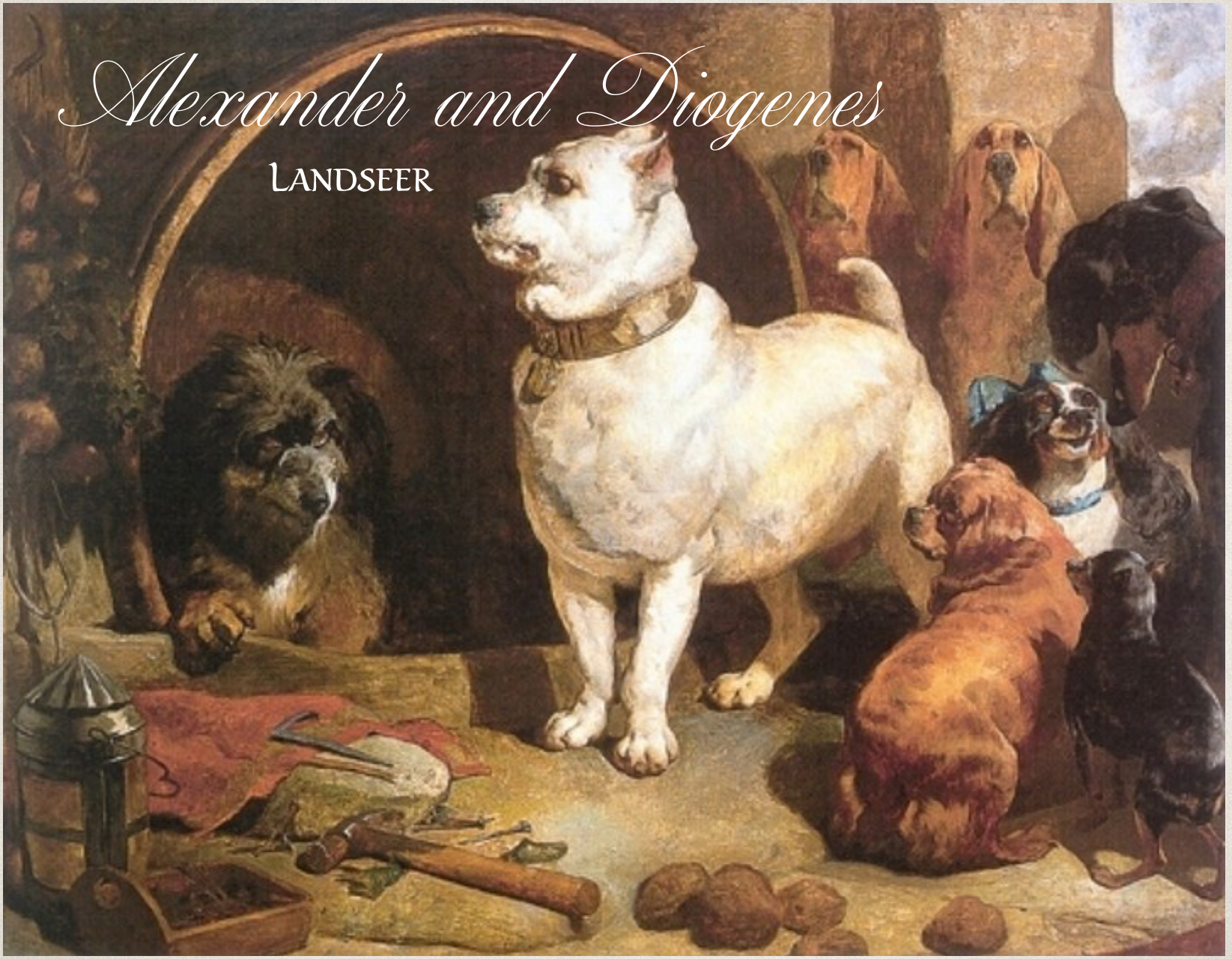
The design of the coin represents a figure of victory standing upon the prow of a vessel. With her right hand she holds a long straight trumpet to her lips, heralding victory. In her left she carries a trophy.

With this tiny design of a Nike serving as a guide, the skilled restorers set about the work of reconstructing the statue. Their efforts have been crowned with success.

Here stands the colossal figure, towering up more than double life size above the pedestal. Her great wings are half spread. She leads her fleet to victory. She stands erect, chest high, as she is carried rapidly forward against the wind. She triumphantly announces with a great blast of her trumpet the victory of her gallant troops!

See the windswept drapery! It clings to the figure in front. It swishes and rolls out in great folds at the back. On she goes against the breeze! On she goes proclaiming forever the valor of her mighty men—"the glory that was Greece"!

Today this marvelous work of twenty-three hundred years ago stands in an imposing position at the head of the grand stairway of the Louvre, the great art gallery of Paris. Here the rhythmic lines of the figure are seen to advantage. The long lines of the drapery clinging in front form swinging curves of beauty as they fall to the feet. These are repeated in the rhythmic swing of the shorter garment. The high curve of the wing, carried over the front of the figure and then down and back following the line of the leg, is a line of power, giving to the figure the rush of forward movement.


Alexander and Diogenes
Landseer

Alexander and Diogenes

Sir Edwin Landseer

Into the streets of Athens, bright with the life and brilliant colors of its gayly dressed people, came the uncouth figure of the philosopher Diogenes, ridiculing all that the Athenian held most dear. On his head he carried the tub in which he ate and slept. At first he also carried a cup, but after seeing a boy drink from the hollow of his hand, he broke his cup on the pavement, preferring the "simpler way." His ugly, cynical face, awkward figure, bare feet, and ragged clothing made him an object of astonishment and ridicule. Independent, surly, and ill-natured, he continued to be an outcast throughout his long life. He taught in the streets as did many of the philosophers in those days, and spoke so plainly and so contemptuously of the life of the people that but for his ready wit he must have been driven out of the city. He himself cared nothing for abuse and insult, and went so far in showing his contempt for pride in others that he acquired the same fault himself, and grew proud of his contempt for pride. He loved to show the contempt he felt for all the little courtesies of polite society.

The story is told that Diogenes came, uninvited and unannounced, to a dinner which Plato, a great philosopher, was giving to a select number of his friends, and, rubbing his dirty feet on the rich carpets, called out, "Thus I trample on the pride of Plato." To which that philosopher

quickly retorted, "But with greater pride, O Diogenes."

One day he went about the streets carrying a lantern, though the sun was shining brightly. He seemed to be looking earnestly for something, and when asked what he was searching for he replied, "I am searching for an honest man."

Plato gave lectures to his pupils in the Academic Gardens, and one day Diogenes was present. Plato defined man as "a two-legged animal without feathers." Diogenes immediately seized a chicken and, having plucked its feathers, he threw it among Plato's pupils, declaring it to be "one of Plato's men."

Once he was captured by pirates and sold as a slave, but even this did not subdue him, for on being asked what he could do he declared he could "govern men," and urged the crier to ask, "Who wants to buy a master?" The man who bought him set him free, and afterwards employed him to teach his children. That is how Diogenes happened to be in Corinth when Alexander the Great was passing that way. To that great Macedonian king, who considered himself the "son of a god" and to whom all had knelt in homage almost worship, the visit to Diogenes was something of a shock. He found him in one of the poorer streets, seated in his tub, enjoying the sun and utterly indifferent as to who his visitor might be. Astonished, the kind said, "I am Alexander."

The answer came as proudly, "And I am Diogenes."

Alexander then said, "Have you no favor to ask of me?"

"Yes," Diogenes replied, "to get out of my sunlight."

Far from being angry with him, Alexander seemed to respect and admire a man strong enough to be indifferent to his presence, and said, "Were I not Alexander, I would be Diogenes."

It happened one day that the artist, Sir Edwin Landseer, passing along one of the narrower streets of London, caught a glimpse of a dirty tramp dog resting comfortably in an empty barrel and looking up with an impish gaze at a well-cared-for dog. The well-kept dog was surveying the tramp with looks of mingled haughtiness and annoyance because of

his lack of respect. Immediately the thought came to the artist that here were another Alexander and Diogenes.

The well-fed and carefully cared-for pet, with his fine collar and snow-white coat, sniffs with disgust at the dirt and poverty of the tramp dog, yet is held in spite of himself by the look of indifference and disrespect on the other's face. He, the envied dog of the neighborhood, upon whom all honors have been showered, has found here for the first time a dog who dares to disregard him. And what a dog! He is amazed, yet held, waiting to see what the tramp dog will do.

Those smaller dogs do not share the indifference of Diogenes at the presence of this great personage. They seem ready to run at the first sign of danger, yet they remain near enough to see and hear all that might happen.

The two hounds in the background, waiting so solemnly for the master, hold their heads high in the air as if the neighborhood were not good enough for them, and they of course could have no interest in what is going on.

Probably Sir Edwin Landseer meant this picture to call attention to the vanities of human nature, and to make us smile at them. The expressions on the faces of these dogs are almost human, so well do they tell their story.

The hammer and nails lying on the rough pavement near the barrel would indicate that this is not a permanent home for the tramp dog, but rather a temporary place of shelter into which he has strayed.

Notice how Landseer has centered our attention on the more important dog, by color, size, and position in the picture. The other spots of light, even that on the edge of the barrel, draw our eyes back to the proud Alexander. We might not discover Diogenes so soon if we did not follow the gaze of Alexander.

Landseer delighted in telling stories in his pictures of animals. [He] wished most of all to show their relation to human beings.

A Reading from Homer Alma-Tadema



A Reading from Homer

Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema

Let us imagine ourselves in that great walled-in city of Athens at the time of its greatest prosperity (fourth century B.C.). At whatever gate we enter—and there are many of them—our attention will be drawn toward the high, steep hill called the Acropolis, around which the city is built. We may reach the top of this hill in a chariot driven over a road of marble, or climb the marble steps, entering the magnificent gateway where we find many beautiful statues, temples, and altars. From this height we obtain a fine view of the city, the sea, other small hills, temples, and flat-roofed houses. As we look about us, we are surprised at the absence of spires or towers. There are no high towers or tall buildings. Most of the houses we see are one-story. The reason for this, it is said, is the frequency of earthquakes. The exterior of the houses is very plain. They are built of common stone, brick, or wood, coated with plaster, and so close to the street that if the door opens outward, the owner is compelled to knock before opening it in order to avoid injuring the passer-by in the street. There are no windows on the lower floor at the front of the house.

Beside the door is a statue of Hermes (god of highways, doorways, and boundaries and the bringer of good luck), or an altar to Apollo (god of light and the sun, and the protector from all evil); and over the door

we may notice an inscription such as "To the good genius," followed by the name of the master of the house. We raise the handle of the great knocker, and scarcely has the sound echoed back to us when the door is opened by the porter. We must be careful to step in with our right foot first, as it is considered unlucky to cross the threshold with the left foot. A long corridor or hall leads us to the open court, where all is as beautiful as the exterior is plain. Usually a fountain and flowers brighten the marble court, while on each side of it are the banqueting, music, sitting, and sleeping rooms, picture galleries, and libraries.

But the Greeks spent so much time out of doors that a house was to them only a safe place for their families and their property—a shelter from storm. Most of the houses had porticoes or porches, and often the second story consisted of nothing but these porches around the open court. The flat tiled roofs were used as promenades.

Probably the Greeks in our picture are seated on one of these porches, or they may be in one of the summer pavilions which so many wealthy Greeks had erected in their yards or grassy plots back of the house. Here they spent their afternoons and were entertained with music or by the tales of wandering minstrels or readers.

The scene in the picture is represented as it if were in the open air; the column and stone wall behind the reader suggest a part of a house. In the distance we catch a glimpse of the blue sea. The slightly raised seat of the reader indicates that it is a place built expressly for this purpose.

Before the Greeks wrote their stories it was the custom of certain bards or readers to go about from place to place singing or reciting the stories of events which have made their national history. Even when the stories were written, these bards were in great favor, for the Greeks preferred to hear the music of verse recited, and to feel the thrill of enthusiasm which could be aroused by the human voice, and not by a lifeless tablet or book.

The swaying form of the reader, his rapt expression, his flashing eye,



Sappho and Alcaeus by Alma-Tadema



Caracalla by Alma-Tadema

his musical voice rising and falling like the sea—these were the result of inspiration and had power to arouse men to noble actions. In our picture we see such a reader giving an interpretation or reading, much as our best elocutionists do now. In his hand he holds a long scroll from which he reads.

The Greeks used the Egyptian papyrus, and later the more expensive, but finer, parchment, to write upon. The reed pen was used, and double inkstands for black and red ink, which could be fastened to the belts or girdles of the writers. In libraries, the scrolls were arranged on shelves with the ends outward, or in pigeon holes. The reader unrolled one end of the scroll with one hand, while with the other he rolled up the part he had read.

Of all the Greek stories none were more fascinating than those of the immortal Homer. According to tradition, Homer was a schoolmaster who, growing tired of teaching, began to travel. Wandering about from place to place, he finally became blind. After this great affliction came upon him, he returned to his native town, where he dictated his two great poems, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Afterwards he wandered about from town to town, singing them, and adding to them as inspiration came. It is not even known where he was born, but, according to an old Greek epigram,

> "Seven rival towns contend for Homer dead,
> Through which the living Homer begged his bread."

He was a beggar, and yet he was a welcome guest at every home, for he could play upon his four-stringed harp and sing of the wonderful deeds of the Greek gods and heroes.

The subject of Homer's *Iliad* is the story of the siege of Troy. In a contest between Aphrodite (Venus) and two other goddesses, Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty, had promised Paris, son of the King of Troy, that if he would declare her the most beautiful of the goddesses he should have for his wife the handsomest woman of his time,

Helen, wife of the King of Sparta. Paris granted her request and, going to Sparta, with Aphrodite's aid he carried off Helen to Troy.

Of course her husband, the King of Sparta, objected. He appealed to all the Grecian princes to help him, and soon a hundred thousand men sailed away in eleven hundred and eight-six ships across the Aegean Sea, and camped before the walls of Troy. The siege lasted ten years.

Troy was finally taken by stratagem. The Greeks pretended to abandon the siege, leaving behind them a great wooden horse as an offering to Athena (Minerva), goddess of wisdom, and the special defender of citadels.

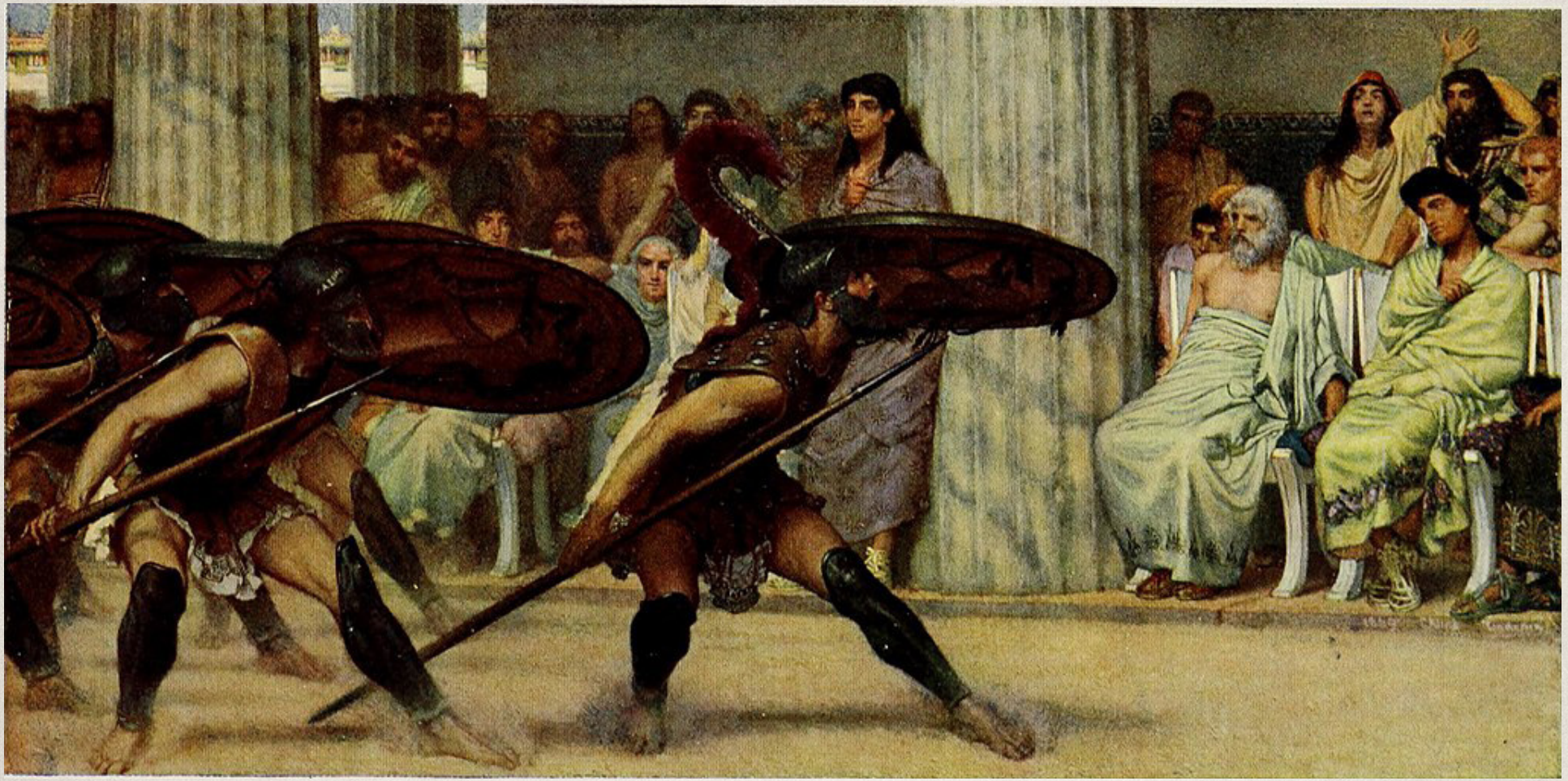
The Trojans could not find out their reason for building the monster; but while they were talking about it and gazing at it some shepherds brought into the town a young Greek named Sinon, whom they had captured. He told a pitiful story. He said the Greek leader hated him, and had induced the Greek soothsayer to declare that he must be put to death as a sacrifice for their safe return to Greece. He had escaped, and hidden in a swamp until the Greeks had gone.

The Trojans were ready to be kind to any man whom the Greeks hated, and he was set free at once.

"But tell us," said the king, "why that monster of a horse was built."

Sinon declared it was a sacrifice to Athena because she was angry with them. He said, "It was made too large to pass through your gates, for they knew that if it was once within your walls it would protect you, and victory would come to you instead of to the Greeks."

The Trojans believed every word of this, and ordered the huge horse brought within their city, even though they were obliged to take down part of the wall in order to make the opening large enough. That night the treacherous Sinon opened a door in the body of the horse and let out the armed Greeks who were hidden inside. They quietly slipped to the ground by means of a rope, killed the watchmen, and opened the gates to the Greek army which had returned and was waiting outside.



The Pyrrhic Dance by Alma-Tadema



A Roman Amateur by Alma-Tadema

A terrible battle followed, in which nearly all the Trojans were killed. Helen was taken back to Greece.

In Homer's *Odyssey* he tells the adventures of Ulysses, King of Ithaca, during the return journey from Troy. Ulysses had been one of the bravest of the Greek leaders, and was one of the heroes concealed in the wooden horse. The poem is full of vivid description and noble sentiments, both pathetic and sublime, and it stirred the hearts of the Greeks with pride and joy.

It is easy to see the interest in the faces of the listeners in the picture. Partly robed in a rose-colored garment, the reader sits on a chair of marble, holding on his knees a roll of papyrus, from which he is reading to a group of four persons before him. A wreath of bay leaves crowns his head, and as he leans forward his face expresses enthusiasm while he tells the thrilling adventures of the hero of Homer's story.

In the center of the background we see a woman. On her hair is a crown of daffodils, and in her left hand something resembling a tambourine. She half sits, half reclines, on a marble bench, a resting place which the Greeks always preferred to chairs. On the floor near her, in an attitude of careless ease, sits a young man who is very likely her lover, since he is holding her hand. His face expresses his interest in the story. In his right hand he holds a lyre, which suggests that the company has been listening to music, and that they will enjoy it again after this recital.

How intent their faces are as they follow in imagination all the adventures of their sturdy ancestors! Near the center of the picture and stretched out gracefully on the marble floor is a youth who appears anxious not to lose one word of the story. At the left we see a man standing. He wears a crown of flowers on his head, and wraps his long cloak closely about him. His face is wild and sad. His appearance seems to tell that he has duties elsewhere and ought to leave, but is being held by the story.

The people are all dressed in typical Greek costumes. The dress

of Greek men and women was very much alike. When they appeared on the streets they wore a cloak which consisted of a large square piece of cloth so wrapped about them as to leave only the right arm free. It required much skill to drape it gracefully, and the manner in which this was done decided the taste and elegance of the wearer. The women and men of the higher classes wore what they called a chiton, or dress which consisted of two short pieces of cloth sewed or clasped together and fastened over the shoulder, leaving open spaces for the arms. It was fastened at the waist with a girdle. A man usually wore this chiton, although he was considered fully dressed in the cloak alone. It was the lower classes who wore the tanned skins, so the young man lying on the floor is probably a servant.

A touch of bright color is added to this picture by the flowers in the girl's hair and those scattered on the bench beside her.

The flesh painting in this picture is claimed to be the most perfect that Alma-Tadema ever did, and the painting of the girl and her lover, one of his highest efforts. The reader is the center of interest in the picture. The light, the lines, and the position of the figures make this apparent.

The painting of these five large figures occupied the artist only eight weeks, but the preliminary studies before he began painting took eight months.

Alma-Tadema excelled in his painting of marble, and this picture gave him every opportunity to display his genius, since nearly the entire background is of marble. The delicate colors of the young girl's costume, with the few bright touches of color in the flowers; the darker, richer colors of the men's cloaks; and back of it all the clear opalescent colors of marble and the deep blue of the sea beyond give the picture a distinctive beauty which is most pleasing to the eye. A close student of Greek history, Alma-Tadema has been particular to see that every little detail is in harmony, and consistent with the age and country.


The Roses of Heliogabalus by Alma-Tadema


At the Spring Well
Siemiradzki

Paintings of Ancient Greece and Rome

Henryk Siemiradzki



Night at Pompei by Siemiradzki



The New Bracelet by Siemiradzki



Fishing by Siemiradzki



A Dangerous Lesson by Siemiradzki