

# THE COLUMBIA SPY.

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## Poetry.

For the Columbia Spy.

### The Last Stake.

Two Persians sat at chess, one day,  
Princes haughty and proud were they,  
Playing a deep and desperate play.

Treasures of gold were lost and won;  
The vanquished lord at set of sun,  
Every treasure had lost but one.

His last stake was his lady bright—  
Marvel not that the haughty knight  
Faler grew than his chessking white.

They played beneath the lady's bowers,  
As stars come out at twilight hour,  
Dark eyes peeped from the princely tower.

Dark eyes looked on the fatal board,  
Dark eyes glared on the gleaming board,  
Dark eyes stung on their much-loved lord.

Fierces the struggle for death or life—  
Hark!—a voice o'er the silent strife—  
"Give your castle and save your wife." D. C.

For the Columbia Spy.

### Leaves from an Artist's Sketch-Book.

BY T. A.

Paul Werner and I sat by the water-side, gazing at the sunset. The waves rippled softly beneath our feet, and warm rays of light came dancing under the shadow of the old wall behind us, and up through the long streets, gilding the projecting gables and quaint time-worn carvings and mouldings of the old-fashioned houses, and lighting the window panes, until they seemed all aglow with fire. Piles of massive clouds rolled slowly along the blue sky; towards the western horizon, shaped like the enchanted palace of some fairy tale, their lofty towers and snow-white domes blazed in the deep golden radiance, flushed with blood-red, crimson, and royal purple, that melted away in the distance to the softest tinge of pearl. Boats glided up and down over the shining river, and we watched their course with longing eyes, wishing ourselves within them. So we sat there until a rising mist hid the lovely view, and the rich tints faded from the sky; then I laid my hand upon Paul's shoulder, and reminded him that it was time to return home.

This was our favorite idling place when we were children. Day after day found us in the shadow of the old wall, listening to the murmuring waters, for I cared little for the ordinary sports of boyhood, and Paul, perhaps in consequence of his frail health, still less. When I was not with him, he wandered to a nook in the cathedral near which we lived, and drank in with ecstasy every note that streamed down from the vast-organ overhead, or seated before his mother's old piano, improvised wild and touching airs. How well I remember his appearance at such times, when I would enter unexpectedly, and interrupt him, the bright color burning on his pale cheeks, his whole frame quivering with the strong excitement. And his large, dark eyes would sparkle with pleasure when I praised his performances, and predicted a future filled with that impossible success which exists only in youthful imaginations.

Our ages were almost the same, and we had lived together from infancy in a rambling old house in one of the quietest streets of Dusseldorf—Paul's widowed mother, a grave and silent woman, in very limited circumstances, renting a few rooms, and my father's family occupying the remainder. By the departure of my two elder brothers, one for Munich, the other for America, I should have been very much alone, had it not been for Paul's companionship.

We went to the same school, and conformed to the same rules, rarely neglecting them, for we were both fond of study. Every holiday hour was employed in unheeded rambles, through the town or along the beautiful banks of the Rhine, which my father, a flourishing tradesman, was too good natured, and my mother too busy superintending the operations of her maid Katchen, to restrain.

So we sat gazing over the water, while the dim shadows of twilight were creeping round us. The sound of dipping oars, and the boatmen's song came floating towards us from the distance, and one clear bright star shone out from the depths of the sky above. Suddenly a shower of rose-leaves fell on our heads, and I turned round just in time to see a beautiful head with long golden curls, disappearing behind the wall.

"Oh, Linda you wild child," I exclaimed, "you need not hide your face, for I see you!" "Where have you been all this afternoon, Linda?" asked Paul.

"Aunt Gretta keeps me in," said she, re-appearing from her hiding place, with a vexed look upon her fair features. "She says girls should not play with boys. I wish I was a boy; you would have taken me a fine stroll Carl, wouldn't you?" she added.

"Certainly," I replied patronizingly, for my three years' superiority gave me much importance in my own estimation. "You cannot think how much you lost this afternoon, Linda; there are beautiful yellow butter-cups growing all over the fields; they are fairies, and when they are tired of staying on their stems they spread out two golden wings and fly up through the air. Don't you wish you had seen them? And great dragon flies are there too; you might have gone riding upon one of them, with a toad-stool for a cushion. How delightful that would have been!"

"Oh, Carl, Carl!" said she laughing, "you are making fun of me, I know, and I don't believe you have been near the fields this afternoon; have you Paul?"

Paul did not answer for his eyes were fixed dreamily upon the stars.

"Linda, Linda!" called a shrill voice, "come in this instant, Linda!"

"Oh, I must go!" she said hurriedly—"Aunt Gretta will be so angry! Good-bye—good-bye, Paul!" and the next moment brought the sound of her rapidly retreating footsteps.

She lived in an old and decayed house, standing near the brink of the river. It had perhaps been handsome a century before, when occupied by a small community of nuns, and there were many ecclesiastical designs carved round the narrow doors and high loop-holes of windows—angels heads, and lilies, and crosses, which pleased my boyish fancy. It stood in the midst of an extensive, but utterly neglected garden, of which the wall I have mentioned, formed one of the boundaries. Thus it happened that two years before, the lonely and orphan Linda had made our acquaintance, by shyly peeping over at us through her golden curls, as we sat beneath, and Paul and I succeeded at last in coaxing her warm affection; for having no brothers of her own, she came to regard us as such, and we often made her the companion of our rambles, and petted and teased her by turns.

The stars shone out brighter and brighter as we strolled leisurely homeward. Paul was silent, and so was I. That bright summer afternoon, the brilliant sky and the restless waters had filled my mind with an intense longing to realize a dream which had haunted me all my life long; a dream of the myriad forms of real and ideal loveliness starting into glowing life beneath my hand, upon the painter's canvas. My memory furnished me with many examples of those who had risen from obscurity to a high place among the masters of their glorious art, and I coveted a like career for myself. It is true, I knew there were many difficulties in the way, but that knowledge only increased my desire to grapple with and overcome them; yet one, I feared would not be overcome easily. My father had always destined me for his successor in business, and although the most indulgent of men, with an equanimity of temper which was very rarely disturbed, he could at times evince the most dogged obstinacy of resolve; and what was still worse, he looked upon all poets, artists, and musicians, with feelings very much akin to those which a well-disposed, industrious bee would regard the lazy drones cumbering the hive. So, if I met with any angry opposition, I expected my designs to be thwarted all the same, with the comfort of being treated as one suddenly bereft of all the sense he ever possessed. And my good mother, quite as practical in her way as my father, would coincide perfectly in all his views. I often envied Paul his liberty to devote himself to the study of music, and planned a thousand ways for opening the matter to my parents; yet always, at the moment, my courage would desert me, and then the shop would rise before my eyes and seem more odious than ever. I mused silently over these things till we reached the door of our home, where I bade my companion good-night, and entered the large, comfortable kitchen, our usual sitting room, when the long-dreaded explanation came rather sooner than I had expected.

A bright fire burned upon the hearth, filling the room with a cheerful glow that was reflected from rows of shining tins upon the wall, danced merrily over the face of the old clock in the corner, and deepened the flush in my mother's cheeks, as she leaned over the blaze, preparing some savory dish for supper. Katchen had drawn out the table, and was covering it with a snow white cloth, while my father, leaning back in his wide arm chair at the open window, with the smoke from his pipe curling lazily round his head, appeared to be listening sleepily to the singing of the kettle, and the murmur of insects among the leaves in the garden. He looked earnestly at me as I approached, and said,

"You are late this evening, son Carl!"

"It was such a beautiful sunset," I replied, "that I stayed out later than I intended."

"Hum!" said my father, and he resumed his pipe, and smoked away for some moments, in silence, which was only broken by my mother inquiring if Paul was with me.

"Carl!" he exclaimed suddenly, "I have something to say to you which may as well be settled at once. You will be fifteen very soon, and have more learning than I ever had. I am going to give you a place in the shop next week. It is quite time for you to know something of business, and you are growing flighty."

"Oh, Father!" I cried, in an agony—"I cannot learn business—I hate the shop!"

"Hate the shop," repeated my mother, dropping the spoon in amazement, "is the boy mad?"

"This is all Paul Werner's nonsense," said my father. "Neighbor Bertha shows very little sense in the way she spoils that child, and he has none at all. Why, what do you mean, Carl? Do you expect to doze away your life over sunsets and musty books? What do you want to be?"

"A painter, father!" I answered promptly, "I want to be a painter."

"Give up the shop which your father and grandfather kept before you, to be a miserable painter. Oh, Carl Carl! I wish you were like your brothers," he said, in a tone which betrayed much irritation. "Franz and Heinrich never would have dreamed of such folly. Why, you are talking of things which you

know no more about than the cat under the table. You will like business well enough when you are in it. Yes! and you will thank me for putting you there, I know you will!"

"Never, father!" I replied calmly, for I felt the time for a final decision had now arrived. "This is no new thing with me, and Paul Werner's influence has nothing to do with it. I have always longed to be painter, and if you allow me, I will study and work hard for proficiency and success. I am sure I shall win them; but I am not suited to a business life, and I should be perfectly wretched shut up in the shop."

"Wretched, you silly boy!" said my mother, angrily, "wretched! when you might be earning money, and growing a rich man!"

"Might look out in the street all day long!" murmured Katchen.

My father threw himself back in his chair again, replaced his pipe in his mouth, and closed his eyes, and I listened anxiously to my mother, whose mind was divided between comments on my conduct, and the labor of placing supper upon the table, in which she well cooed and assisted by her blooming hand maiden. It was not till their preparations were completed, that he resumed the conversation, by saying,

"Peace, both of you! Carl, I have been considering this matter, and have determined to let you have your own way, for two reasons; because, in the first place, I see you will be good for nothing if you don't have it, and in the second, you will soon see the folly of it if you do. I will send you tomorrow to the Herr Von Siegel's studio; that will soon disgust you with grinding paints, and daubing canvases, so say no more about it. Urula, let us have supper!"

He kept his word, and the next day opened a new era in my life.

Four years passed away, four bright and happy years. Revelling among the glorious creations of art, with the companionship of the good and gifted, with my own endeavors crowned with a success which I had scarce dared to hope for, how could they be otherwise? My master, Adrien Von Siegel, was one of the best and noblest of men; enthusiastically fond of his art, because he believed its inspiration a divine gift, capable of raising the mind from all that was coarse, and mean, and low, up to the pure ethereal heights of virtue and holiness, and that the mission of the true artist was to regenerate the world, he was yet guileless and single-minded as a child. To his teaching, his friendship, I owe more than I can ever express, and he did that for me by his delicate tact which I am sure no one else could have attempted successfully. He induced my parents not only to abandon their opposition to my new occupation, but eventually to take a warm interest in it, especially after my brother Heinrich, settling advantageously his affairs in Munich, returned to Dusseldorf, and took the place in the old shop which my father had destined one day for me. Heinrich, to my great joy, warmly approved my choice of a profession, and seconded the advice of the Herr Von Siegel, that I should go to Rome, and study for a year or two among the works of the old masters, which was finally agreed upon, and I looked forward with eager interest to the time when I should tread the classic ground of the seven-hilled city, and gaze upon the immortal works enshrined amid its faded and melancholy grandeur.

Paul was still the same—still the earnest and impassioned dreamer he had ever been. We were now necessarily much separated by our different pursuits, yet whenever I entered his room, I found him as I had always done, sitting before the piano, with his fingers wandering over the keys, and the floor strewn with music and blotted manuscripts. Not that there was aught of listlessness or indolence in his nature! Beneath the show of a calm and reticent exterior burned the hidden fires of intense feeling, proud self-reliance, and ambition powerful and restless enough to soar like the pinions of an eagle, up to the sun-bright heights of Fame. He worked, nay toiled, among his compositions, with a sort of feverish and impatient ardor, rarely satisfied with the fruits of his labors; and every day his cheek seemed paler, and his tall, slight form, still sligher. There is a head of St. John in the altar piece of one of the chapels in Rome which is a striking resemblance of Paul Werner, as he looked then; it has the same dark spiritual eyes and straight features, the same massive and transparent brow, half shaded by wavy masses of rich brown hair, and is a model of noble intellectual beauty. How often, in after years, it has recalled the past to my mind! There was one, however, whose sweet influence could live even Paul from his studies, and make my heart throb with strange emotions which I could scarce define. Our little playmate, Linda, still a playful child in heart, was fast approaching the dawn of a most perfect womanhood, and I had long since learned that in her was centered all my hopes of earthly happiness. She was so simple and innocent that I feared to startle her by avowing the love I felt, willing, rather, to wait patiently until I discovered some signs of reciprocity; and in the meanwhile she called us her brothers, as in the days when we roamed the fields together, and treated us both with perfect impartiality—perhaps she was somewhat gayer and more unreserved with me than she was with Paul, but I regarded this as a good omen for my future success, and persuaded myself that to his demonstrative nature, she was dear only as a sister. So I

kept my love hidden in the depths of my heart; yet the thought of a happy home with Linda beside me supplied a new incentive for exertion, and I worked away with palette and brushes, dreaming of her pure and delicate loveliness, and seeing the ripple of her golden hair in every sunbeam that glanced across my easel.

"Carl," said my master to me one day, "when are you going to Rome?"

I looked up from the St. Francis which I was copying. He was standing beside me, regarding me attentively. My thoughts were elsewhere—and I felt conscious of blushing, as I answered hesitatingly, that I had not yet decided upon the time for departure.

"So I feared," he said, "but this is not well, Carl! remember, art is a jealous mistress; those who seek her favors must offer no divided hearts, and I have fancied of late, you are somewhat less ardent in her pursuit than you were wont to be. Never for one moment must your interest flag, my dear boy. You are richly dowered with youth, vigorous health, and talent. Go on bravely as you have begun; make every difficulty overcome, every triumph achieved, a stepping stone to mount still higher, and recollect that energy and perseverance are the true elements of success."

He was right, although he knew not the cause of the slight obstruction which he had noticed; but I recognized the force of his appeal, and before I left my master's studio I had determined to start for Rome one week from that date—the day after my nineteenth birthday.

One lovely summer evening I walked through the long streets to the old house by the river side, that I might say farewell to Linda. Paul was not with me. I had not sought him, for at that moment I desired none other companionship with my own thoughts. I was leaving home with many bright anticipations for the future, and yet with many fears. If Linda only loved me—but I knew she did not; not at least as I wished. One moment I was almost resolved to risk all by a frank confession; the next, I felt it would be ungenerous to obtain aid from her girlish ignorance which she might afterwards regret. She was so young—scarce sixteen; there was yet time for me to woo and win her, after I had made all the honors my own, to which I was aspiring. The thought that perhaps her love might be given to another would send the blood chilling round my heart, but I was too cheerful and sanguine to dwell long upon the possibility of disappointment, where I hoped for success, and my heart was light and buoyant as I opened the gate, and passed up the grassy and dew-laden walks, to a little honeysuckle porch, where Linda generally sat.

She was there, and I stood for a moment gazing upon her, as an exquisite picture, framed by the slender pillars bearing the heavy masses of leaves and flowers; her hands were folded negligently upon her lap as if weary with the garland she was weaving, and those deep blue, wondrously resplendent eyes were upraised in the clear moonlight, which poured a flood of silvery radiance over her snowy dress and shining curls. A slight rustling I made attracted her attention, and she welcomed me frankly and gaily, as she always would do.

"This is a farewell visit," I said "tomorrow I start for Rome."

"Are you going tomorrow, Carl? I am very sorry," and she stole into her eyes, as she turned them towards me.

"Then you will not forget me, dearest Linda?"

"Never," she replied; "but I fear you will forget me among the pictures and statues of Rome. You will study and paint, and become a great artist, and you will never think again of poor Linda."

"I will think of her at all times; she shall be my guiding star, my inspiration."

Linda laughed merrily at my rhapsody, and taking up the flowers in her lap, commenced anew the garland she had been braiding.

"I must have that wreath for a keepsake, and one of your ringlets, Linda; will you give them to me?"

She complied promptly with my last request by taking a pair of scissors which lay near her and severing an extended hand. I had just hidden its glossy curls in my bosom when Aunt Gretta joined us, arrayed as usual in the highest of starched caps, and the most immaculate of white aprons, anxious to hear all the particulars of my projected tour.

I happened to be a great favorite with the old lady, and although not very well pleased with the interruption I entered into the full history of all I had been doing and expected to do, and Linda listened with her warmest interest depicted upon her sweet face; so the hours flew past all too rapidly, and I rose to depart with many kind wishes from Aunt Gretta.

Linda accompanied me for a short distance through the moonlit shrubbery, and the tears shone again in her eyes when I said: "Farewell, dearest Linda, God bless you forever; yet I felt her response was that of an affectionate sister, nothing more."

Paul was much with me during the week preceding my departure, interrupting the completion of a piece of sacred music upon which he had been deeply occupied. He spoke very freely of his plans for the future, and of the grand works which were

to make his name immortal. His last words were, "In a year or two I will join you in Rome, Carl."

From my dear old master I received several introductory letters addressed to his friends in Italy, one of them to a very eminent artist, in whose atelier I placed myself upon my arrival. Signor Comillo interested me much less than von Siegel, yet I felt conscious of making rapid improvement under his care. Then too I was upon classic ground, hallowed by all the poetic inspiration of past centuries. With what intense delight I wandered through the magnificent galleries of the Vatican, and gazed upon the colossal works of Michael Angelo, the exquisite grace and glowing tints of Raphael and Titian, or gathered materials for many a sketch from the picturesque groups of lazzaroni, which met me at every turn. My fellow students were all gay, genial young men, chiefly Italians, some of them possessing no inconsiderable degree of talent, and the fame of the Signor Comillo brought many admiring visitors to his atelier. One of them an elderly gentleman, evidently a German, attracted my attention by the frequency of his appearance among us, and the interest with which he contemplated every easel. I enquired his name and learned he was of high rank, the Count von Leichtenfels.

One day I was very busily engaged in giving a few slight touches to the picture I was finishing, when chancing to look up I espied the old gentleman peering curiously over my shoulder.

"You are very industrious, my young countryman," he said.

"Success cannot be won without industry," I replied.

"True, true," said he, "though few think so. Are you from Munich?"

"From Dusseldorf," I answered.

"Dusseldorf. Oh! And I doubt not you have come to Italy expecting to equal, if not surpass, all the painters who have existed since the art was known?"

"No, indeed," said I, provoked by his sarcastic tone, "I expect nothing of the sort; but if I cannot rival the great masters of antiquity, I will at least emulate their example."

"Very right, very right! persevere and you will do well. Come and dine with me tomorrow, and throwing his card into my lap, my eccentric companion sauntered off, leaving me much surprised by the conversation.

Singular as the Count von Leichtenfels certainly was, he proved my best friend in Rome. It was partly owing to his powerful patronage that my pictures sold rapidly, and several found a place in his own choice collection. Among them was a sunset view on the Rhine—a quaint old house near the water's edge, and two boys sitting in the shadows of a broken wall, watching the gliding boats upon the river. A little girl with golden ringlets and violet eyes looked over the crumbling wall, and a red glow burned as if weary with the garland she was weaving, and those deep blue, wondrously resplendent eyes were upraised in the clear moonlight, which poured a flood of silvery radiance over her snowy dress and shining curls. A slight rustling I made attracted her attention, and she welcomed me frankly and gaily, as she always would do.

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Singular as the Count von Leichtenfels certainly was, he proved my best friend in Rome. It was partly owing to his powerful patronage that my pictures sold rapidly, and several found a place in his own choice collection. Among them was a sunset view on the Rhine—a quaint old house near the water's edge, and two boys sitting in the shadows of a broken wall, watching the gliding boats upon the river. A little girl with golden ringlets and violet eyes looked over the crumbling wall, and a red glow burned as if weary with the garland she was weaving, and those deep blue, wondrously resplendent eyes were upraised in the clear moonlight, which poured a flood of silvery radiance over her snowy dress and shining curls. A slight rustling I made attracted her attention, and she welcomed me frankly and gaily, as she always would do.

"This is a farewell visit," I said "tomorrow I start for Rome."

"Are you going tomorrow, Carl? I am very sorry," and she stole into her eyes, as she turned them towards me.

"Then you will not forget me, dearest Linda?"

"Never," she replied; "but I fear you will forget me among the pictures and statues of Rome. You will study and paint, and become a great artist, and you will never think again of poor Linda."

"I will think of her at all times; she shall be my guiding star, my inspiration."

Linda laughed merrily at my rhapsody, and taking up the flowers in her lap, commenced anew the garland she had been braiding.

"I must have that wreath for a keepsake, and one of your ringlets, Linda; will you give them to me?"

She complied promptly with my last request by taking a pair of scissors which lay near her and severing an extended hand. I had just hidden its glossy curls in my bosom when Aunt Gretta joined us, arrayed as usual in the highest of starched caps, and the most immaculate of white aprons, anxious to hear all the particulars of my projected tour.

I happened to be a great favorite with the old lady, and although not very well pleased with the interruption I entered into the full history of all I had been doing and expected to do, and Linda listened with her warmest interest depicted upon her sweet face; so the hours flew past all too rapidly, and I rose to depart with many kind wishes from Aunt Gretta.

Linda accompanied me for a short distance through the moonlit shrubbery, and the tears shone again in her eyes when I said: "Farewell, dearest Linda, God bless you forever; yet I felt her response was that of an affectionate sister, nothing more."