

ROSEMARY.

*Originally published in the _____
issue of Vanity Fair (UK edition).*

"There's rosemary, that's for remembrance;
Pray you, love, remember!"—*Hamlet*.

AMID the grandeur of my melancholy,
Lackeyed by spectres of my somber past,
I sit and smile at all the shapes of folly
That I evoke—save One, that looms at last
Towering above these ten tremendous years,
I see Him, sacred, single in the vast,
A Man of Sorrows, grey with useless tears;
A Man of Glory, with His aureole
Radiant gossamer, a mist of spears
Storming the sky, His heart one crimson coal
To burn all lesser gods, to gild the shame
Of this my life's long infamy, the soul
(Abased for Him) in Him on flower of flame—
Mine Aceldama one white lily-bloom
Availing me above all wealth and fame
Unto the latter things, the destined doom.
Ten years ago! how blind and black the abyss!
How swept the springtide from the winter's womb
At the sharp summons of the swift strong kiss
That rapt me up from the unfriendly earth
Into the star-abodes of Salmacis;
Bringing the soul that slept to sudden birth.
O frenzy of flame that swept across the world
In orgiastic opulence of mirth,
And left me ever in His arms close curled,
Never, O never! to shrink back again,
But (through all ruinous time violently hurled)
Never to lose the stigma of that pain,
The martyr's crown of shameful spines that weighs
Even now upon these brows, that bear in vain

Fantastic myrtles and deceitful bays
And vine-leaves withering even ere they clung.
For in His love, Hos love beyond all praise.

I am still beautiful, still wise, still young.
Nay, in the nuptial of that fruitful night
Of fruitless joy unmeasured and unsung

There was no seed of sorrow. O my light,
My love, my lord, accept the piteous plaint
Of me, the little wayward wanton wight,

Whose wickedness was never fain to faint,
Through these dull years still cherishing the spark
Of Thy dear godhead in him—happy saint!

Who hath Thy light within him in the dark
Ready to burst again to ruddier dawn
And Thou shouldst travel in Thine holy bark.

To drip Thy dew upon the thirsty lawn,
And wake to song beatified the bird,
But art Thou living, Lord, or far withdrawn

Into the shrines of solitude unstirred?
O Pan! have pity on the trembling faun!
In all Thy silence is there not one word?

ALEISTER CROWLEY.