

e tutti i languori  
 che tu ovunque diffondi  
 negli alberi nel ciel nel mare  
 empiono di tristezza  
 e di malinconia,  
 Settembre, questa stanca anima mia.

GIOVANNI CURMI



## Letters to Charlotte

### II

I remember.

It was long, very long ago.

I was a poet, and you a goddess.

A poet! Not that I ever wrote poetry:—I have many sins to account for, I own; but one sin I have not; for I never wrote, or even attempted to write one single line of poetry. And yet I was a poet, for this world which now seems so commonplace and dreary was then filled with mystery and beauty, and I gazed on it with a virgin and wondering eye. I loved to roam through deserted gardens, silent country lanes or by the restless sea, a book of poems in my hands, and drink in the lovely scenery around me and the lofty thoughts of my beloved poets. Yes, I was a poet, for my heart was filled with poetry. What though I never expressed my ardent thoughts in numbers? Has it not been said that a poet's best poem is that which he has never written?

A goddess! You,—a veritable goddess, a wanderer from the highest of the heavens who had humbly come down to this lowly sphere and put on the shape of the loveliest of Eve's daughters to show a poor poet that she could easily excel his wildest ideas of heavenly and earthly beauty;—a strayer from fairyland who with her exceeding love would make a poor poet the happiest of mortals, his life the most passionate of dreams.

And now the poet has been turned into a stern, hardhearted, unfeeling man for whom woman is a heartless, cruel, selfish creature who pretends to be made all of love but is really the profanation of love; whose weapons are wile, cunning and deceit; who has a pure angelic face, but an earthly, brazen heart; who cares nothing for the