

TO RHODOCLEIA - ON HER MELANCHOLY SINGING.

In "Grass of Parnassus," Chapter 6 delves into a poignant reflection addressed to Rhodocleia, a figure immortalized within the Greek Anthology for her melancholy allure. She is forever intertwined with the essence of Rufinus, a lamented poet of ancient grace, whose affections for her transcend the mere boundaries of their era. The text embodies a profound dialogue, not merely with Rhodocleia but with the essence of grief and remembrance itself. She is depicted as dwelling in the shadows of her sorrows, her song a conduit to the asphodel meadows, realms devoid of mortal joy, where echoes of the dead whisper across the void of time.

Rhodocleia's lament, steeped in the perpetual twilight of the underworld, reflects a soul ensnared by the allure of death's solemnity, yearning for the somber peace found beyond the veil of life. The narrative eloquently paints her as a beacon of despair, whose very being longs for the cold embrace of oblivion, seeking to join the spectral chorus of those long passed. Her melancholy is not born of fancy but of a profound, intimate acquaintance with the shadowy halls and golden stairs where the departed dwell in eternal dusk.

The author, through evocative imagery, bestows upon Rhodocleia a timeless beauty, a vision of sorrow crowned with cloudy hair and lips once kissed by joy, now portals to a soul marred by ancient wounds. Her eyes, pools of latent misery, betray her identity: the last jewel of Hellas, whose essence captivated the final bard of a golden age now dimmed. Her allure, once celebrated in roses and hymns, remains undiminished, encapsulated in the mourning of Rufinus, who veiled his adoration in the blooms of the earth and the enduring scent of nocturnal offerings.

This chapter is not merely a tribute to a forgotten muse but a tapestry of loss and longing, woven with the threads of poetic memory. It invites the reader to traverse the bridge between the ephemeral and the eternal, to feel the weight of history in the heart's quiet recesses, where the echoes of ancient loves and tragedies linger, timeless, beneath the canopy of stars and the gaze of the indifferent sun.