

# The Green Sheaf

## CORNELION AND AMETHYST.

THERE was once a shepherd youth called Cornelion. He was wont to tend his flock and pipe all day upon an oaten reed in a field bedecked with poppies and white daisies. His loins were clad in a rugged sheep skin, and his bronzed limbs shone red-brown in the sunset. A wide brimmed hat was on his bright red towzled hair, shading his features—transparent in their beauty—and into leathern sandals were thrust his naked feet.

One day a maiden came among the poppies. She was very fair to see, her eyes were like two violets in Spring, and Cornelion named her Amethyst, because the garment girded round her body was deep in colour like that precious stone.

Now it came about that Cornelion took Amethyst in his arms, so that his brown limbs mingled with her fair flesh, and her hair tumbled all about his face like a bounteous aureole. Then did Cornelion kiss Amethyst, because he loved her, just as the sun was setting like a golden orange in a bowl of blue and all the daisies looked like stars in hell.

. . . . .

Amethyst hung her head in sorrow. The lustre had gone out of her eyes, her hair was dead, and the depth had faded from her raiment.

One day Cornelion came again.

“I want my child,” he said.

“No child of thine, false shepherd!”

“Come, come, my Amethyst, forget the past.”

“Then teach me to forget myself.”

“I do repent me and am come to make amends. Let me have the child and I will make a shepherd of him.”

“Must I suffer more, then?”

“For his sake—perhaps. How can you do for him so well as I do purpose? You cannot teach him how to tend the ewes at lambing time.”

Amethyst raised her tearful face, “I can if sorrow is the way.”

“My perfect jewel, I too can sorrow teach.”



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“ Then let the child decide. Come here, my little Born-of-sorrow. Wouldst rather go and be a shepherd with Cornelion or stay with me as heretofore ? ”

Born-of-sorrow looked up with anxious eyes from Amethyst to the well-built brawny shepherd, then back again to all he knew of love.

At last : “ I want you both ! ”

Then nymph and shepherd with a joyful throb took each a chubby hand and played once more upon the oaten pipe.

*E. Harcourt Williams.*

