

### **EPILOGUE TO THE THIRD STORY.**

I have now related all that is eventful in the history of SISTER ROSE. To the last the three friends dwelt together happily in the cottage on the river bank. Mademoiselle Clairfait was fortunate enough to know them, before Death entered the little household and took away, in the fullness of time, the eldest of its members. She describes Lomaque, in her quaint foreign English, as "a brave, big heart"; generous, affectionate, and admirably free from the small obstinacies and prejudices of old age, except on one point: he could never be induced to take his coffee, of an evening, from any other hand than the hand of Sister Rose.

I linger over these final particulars with a strange unwillingness to separate myself from them, and give my mind to other thoughts. Perhaps the persons and events that have occupied my attention for so many nights past have some peculiar interest for me that I cannot analyze. Perhaps the labor and time which this story has cost me have especially endeared it to my sympathies, now that I have succeeded in completing it. However that may be, I have need of some resolution to part at last with Sister Rose, and return, in the interests of my next and Fourth Story, to English ground.

I have experienced so much difficulty, let me add, in deciding on the choice of a new narrative out of my collection, that my wife has lost all patience, and has undertaken, on her own responsibility, to relieve me of my unreasonable perplexities. By her advice--given, as usual, without a moment's hesitation--I cannot do better than tell the story of