

THE FIGURE IN THE SCENE

It pleased her to step in front and sit
Where the cragged slope was green,
While I stood back that I might pencil it
With her amid the scene;
Till it gloomed and rained;
But I kept on, despite the drifting wet
That fell and stained
My draught, leaving for curious quizzings yet
The blots engrained.

And thus I drew her there alone,
Seated amid the gauze
Of moisture, hooded, only her outline shown,
With rainfall marked across.
--Soon passed our stay;
Yet her rainy form is the Genius still of the spot,
Immutable, yea,
Though the place now knows her no more, and has known her not
Ever since that day.

From an old note.

"WHY DID I SKETCH"

Why did I sketch an upland green,
And put the figure in
Of one on the spot with me? -
For now that one has ceased to be seen
The picture waxes akin
To a wordless irony.

If you go drawing on down or cliff
Let no soft curves intrude
Of a woman's silhouette,
But show the escarpments stark and stiff
As in utter solitude;
So shall you half forget.

Let me sooner pass from sight of the sky
Than again on a thoughtless day
Limn, laugh, and sing, and rhyme
With a woman sitting near, whom I
Paint in for love, and who may

Be called hence in my time!

From an old note.