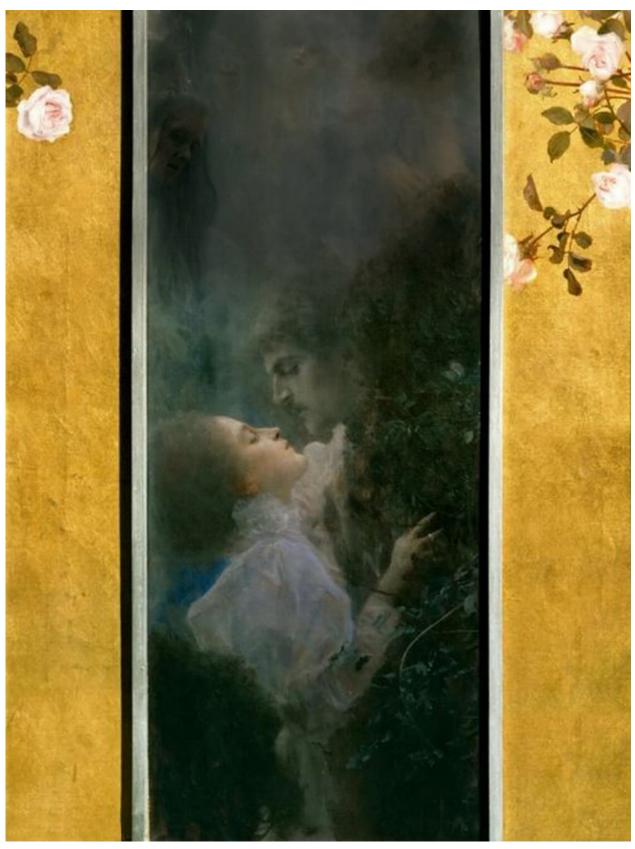# Movements in a Waltz

by **Letitia Cary** (October 2023)

Love, Gustav Klimt, 1895

Movements in a Waltz

Like an organ on a carousel,
Which plays its scripted song—
To perforations in the paper
It can only go along—
Our melody's one of providence,
So perfectly composed;
With the progression of each note,
Towards you I am disposed.

What is this divine choreography,
That has ushered us together?
The chances rarer than lightning,
Yet we defy the weather;
And so I return to the metaphor
That absolves us of both our faults:
These are pre-determined movements,
Movements in a waltz.

It was destined to play out this way,
Right from the beginning;
Each moment in our lives a step
So how could we be sinning?
We're only moving to the rhythm,
Of one-two-three-four,
The steady tapping of our feet
Upon a checkerboard floor.

It was arranged in such a sequence,
That every person and every place
Would lead me to stroke your ebony hair
And kiss your formidable face.
Everything directed there,
Even those things fleeting;
Interests acquired and pages turned

All brought me to our meeting.

Still the tempo rises and falls,
Is this a coda or crescendo?
Until we reach the very end
Neither of us can quite know.
At times we cannot bear the suspense—
I turn away, and you want more—
But know that even the intervals
Are part of the same score.

Spinning like the planets,
You and I are wandering stars,
When I retreat it's only retrograde,
As in the orbit of Venus or Mars.
In the end the pattern completes itself,
And so everything I do
Is another movement in the waltz;
Waltzing towards you.

The Time of Natural Theology

One day, when I'm older,
When our tangled web has come undone,
I'll remember the days we spent here
In the village of your ancestor.
How we basked together in the light
Of that early autumn sun;
The quality it gave the memories
Like photographs faded to sepia.

How I knew I loved you then
Because it moved me as much as you
To walk the very ground once trodden
By the curate of Holmes Chapel.

To see the turning of the seasons
As he did in seventeen-forty-two;
A clergyman just after Newton's time
In the wake of that fateful apple.

Because each and every branch
Of your Cheshire family tree
Evoked within me such wonder, as if
Your distant relatives were mine.
To read their names in the gothic font
Of Great Budworth's cemetery
Was to unearth a mystery for myself;
Your being unfolding through time.

And when, on our adventure,
To the hall of the country squire,
Where we tried to glimpse the ghosts
Of your great uncle and his wife,
Like a grandfather clock it struck me
That no one else could so inspire
That part of my imagination which longs
To see history brought to life.

And then, come the evening,
We'd retire to the reverend's parish,
And sit together in the meadow
With Twemlow viaduct in our view.
We'd wait to see the trains pass over
In seconds, and then vanish,
And I knew the thrill of those moments
I could only share with you.

It was there, in the twilight
That I came to terms once again
With the nature of that mechanism
As fixed a law as gravity;
That has pulled us in one direction,
Like the flow of the River Dane,

Just to usher our souls together;
A force decreed by destiny.

So I said, with the conviction
Of the eighteenth century vicar,
In pastures tended by his shepherd
Or the watchmaker divine,
That all the magic I felt then
Was not some ephemeral flicker;
That we were meant to be there
And our branches to entwine.

So that day, when I'm older,
I'll recall our days spent in history,
The spectres of your ancestors
And the England that they knew;
And my epiphany not unlike those
In the time of natural theology:
A tangled web we may have weaved
But it was all I believed to be true.

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Letitia Cary is the pseudonym of a writer from Oxfordshire, England. She takes her name from the 17th century noblewoman who hosted The Great Tew Circle, a group of theologians and poets who discussed controversial ideas with her husband Lucius, the 2nd Viscount Falkland.

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