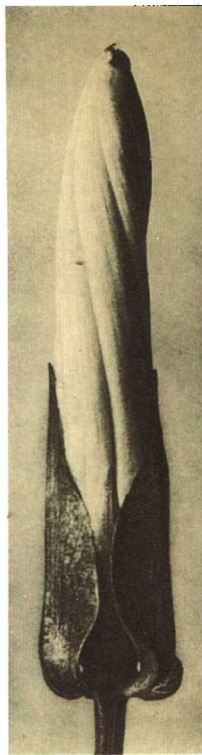
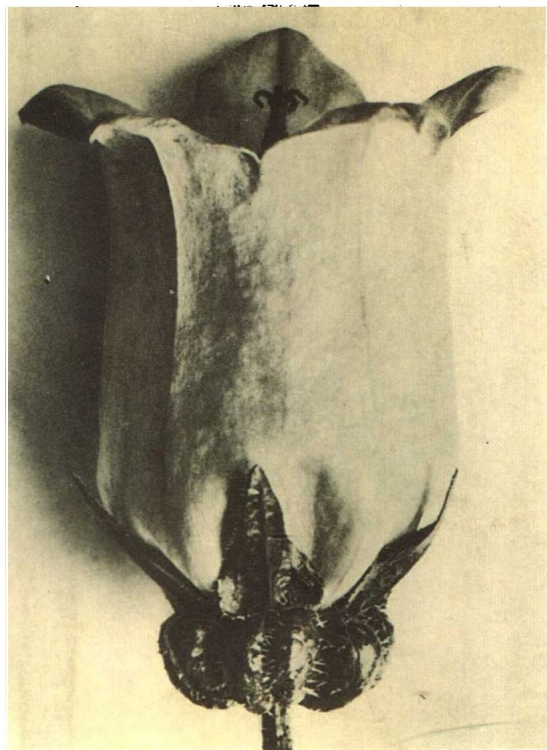
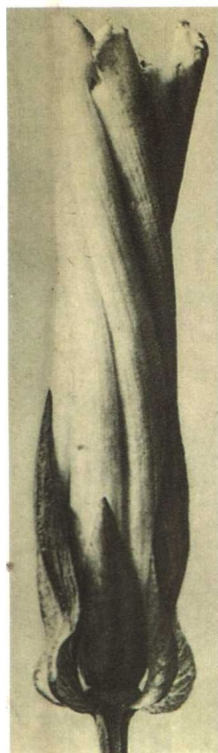


SOMETIMES THE SOUL



Two Novellas of Sicily

GIOIA
TIMPANELLI

NO ONE IN THE WORLD, YES, IN THE WORLD, CAN TELL A STORY BETTER THAN GIOIA
MPANELLI. YOU'LL READ THESE NOVELLAS FOR STORY BUT YOU'LL GO BACK FOR THE
MAGIC OF HER WORD PICTURES AND THE MUSIC OF HER LINES."

—FRANK McCOURT, author of *Angela's Ashes*

Sometimes
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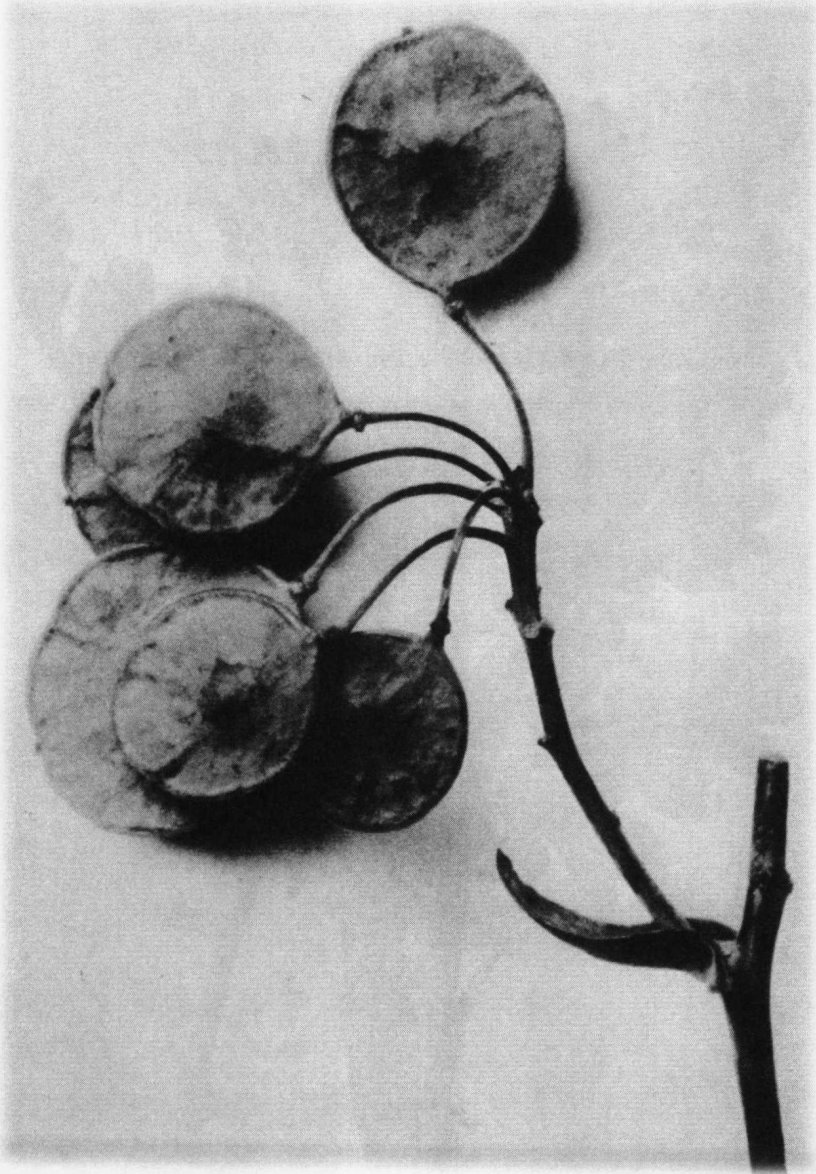
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Sometimes
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*Two Novellas
of Sicily*

Gioia Timpanelli

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to my mother and father,
Lena Romeo and Charles Timpanelli,
with love and gratitude

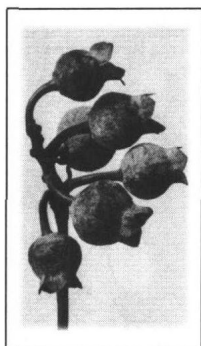
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A Knot of Tears

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Rusina, Not Quite in Love

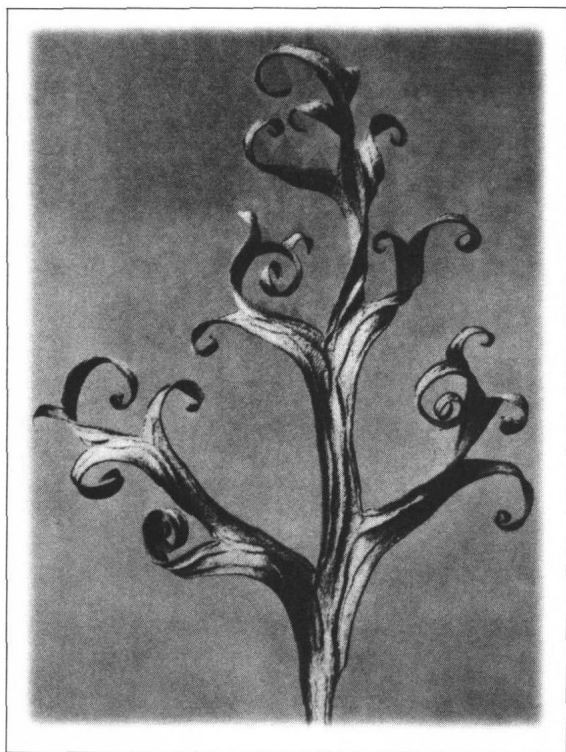
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SOMETIMES the soul is tested. The body feels sore, the mouth dumb, the big red hands hang useless on their arms. Time passes. Surely, the soul will have its way. It lolls. Time passes. And the soul waits. Nothing happens. Come on, *make* something happen. Make lists! There are always urgent things to do, things to do for this morning, for today, for next week, for a month, for an entire year. But then a laziness takes hold, and nothing on the lists proves as urgent as this lethargy, so the lists are left out in the sun in a shopping bag, become bleached, illegible, are rained on, and finally forgotten under the beach chair. (No, not lists, certainly not lists. Poor, dear, little papers. It's too heavy a burden for them.) Minutes pass, hours, maybe a year, possibly a decade. At last, the soul is refreshed in the sweet company it has made.

Then, one day, it gets up and stretches. Today is not like yesterday. The soul notes the difference. To the neighbors, opening and slamming shut their doors, nothing seems to have happened. Nothing at all. Finally, now, the soul lifts its arms and with its graceful hands brings down the fertile rain.

A Knot of Tears



Sunday



Palermo, at the turn of the century

It was not only the absence of light in the room that was disturbing but also the windows themselves seemed to be closing in. No, "closing in" is not right, for it hints at light dimming, taking time like dusk to night, rather than the sudden and unnatural darkness that had now filled the house for months. When was it that all the windows and doors had been shut, bolted, secured for the long night? Just now, when a door opened a figure could be seen in the afternoon sunlight; and then when the door closed the figure with all the objects in the room was suddenly plunged into the unseen world.