

PLAYS  
AND  
LYRICS

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PLAYS  
AND  
LYRICS

BY  
CALE YOUNG RICE

LONDON  
HODDER AND STOUGHTON  
27 PATERNOSTER ROW  
NEW YORK: McCLURE PHILLIPS & CO.  
44 EAST TWENTY-THIRD STREET  
1906

UNWIN BROTHERS, LIMITED. PRINTERS, WOKING AND LONDON.



To

IDA M. TARBELL

WITH FAITHFUL FRIENDSHIP

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## PREFACE

*This volume contains "Yolanda of Cyprus," a hitherto unpublished play; many new lyrics; some others that appeared in "Song-Surf," a volume whose publishers failed before it reached the public; and "David," which came out in America in 1904. The author's desire has been to include only his best work.*

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YOLANDA OF CYPRUS

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## CHARACTERS

RENIER LUSIGNAN . . . . .		<i>A descendant of the Lusignan kings of Cyprus.</i>
BERENGERE . . . . .		<i>His wife.</i>
AMAURY . . . . .		<i>His Son, Commander of Famagouste under the Venetians.</i>
YOLANDA . . . . .		<i>The Ward of Berengere, betrothed to Amaury.</i>
CAMARIN . . . . .		<i>A Baron of Paphos, guest in the Lusignan Castle.</i>
VITTIA PISANI . . . . .		<i>A Venetian Lady, also a guest.</i>
MORO . . . . .		<i>A Priest.</i>
HASSAN . . . . .		<i>Warden of the Castle.</i>
HALIL . . . . .		<i>His Son, a boy.</i>
TREMITUS . . . . .		<i>A Physician.</i>
OLYMPIO . . . . .		<i>A Greek boy, serving Amaury.</i>
ALESSA . . . . .	}	<i>Berengere's Women.</i>
MAGA . . . . .		
CIVA . . . . .		
MAURIA . . . . .		
SMARDA . . . . .		<i>Slave to Vittia.</i>
PIETRO . . . . .		<i>In Vittia's pay.</i>
		<i>Priests, acolytes, etc.</i>

TIME—*The sixteenth century.*

PLACE—*The island of Cyprus.*

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## ACT I

SCENE: *A dim Hall, of blended Gothic and Saracenic styles, in the Lusignan Castle, on the island of Cyprus near Famagouste. Around the walls, above faint frescoes portraying the deliverance of Jerusalem by the Crusaders, runs a frieze inlaid with the coats-of-arms of former Lusignan kings. On the left, and back, is a door hung with heavy damask, and in the wall opposite, another. Farther down on the right a few steps, whose railing supports a Greek vase with jasmine, lead through a chapel to the sleeping apartments. In the rear, on either side, are guled lattice windows, and in the centre an open grated door, looking upon a loggia, and, across the garden below, over the moonlit sea. Seats are placed about, and, forward, a divan with rich Turkish coverings. A table with a lighted cross-shaped candle-stick is by the door, left; and a lectern with a book on it, to the front, right. As the curtain rises, the Women, except CIVA, lean wearily on the divan, and HALIL near is singing dreamily,*

Ah, the balm, the balm,  
And ah, the blessing

Of the deep fall of night  
 And of confessing.  
 Of the sick soul made white  
 Of all distressing :  
 Made white ! . . .  
 Ah, balm of night  
 And, ah the blessing !

*The music falls and all seem yielding to sleep. Suddenly there are hoof-beats and sounds at the gates below.*  
 HALIL springs up.

*Halil.* Alessa ! Maga ! Stirrings at the gates !  
 (*All start up.*)

Some one is come.

*Alessa.* Boy, Halil, who ?

*Halil.* Up, up !

Perhaps lord Renier—No : I will learn.

(*He runs to curtains and looks.*)

It is Olympio ! Olympio !

From Famagouste and Lord Amaury !

*Mauria.* Ah !

And he comes here ?

*Halil.* As he were lord of skies !

To lady Yolanda, by my lute !

*Maga.* Where is she ?

*Alessa.* I do not know ; perhaps, her chamber.

*Mauria.* Stay :

His word may be of the Saracens.



- Halil* (*calling*). Oho!  
 (*He admits OLYMPIO, who enters insolently down. All press around him gaily.*)
- Mauria*. Well what, Olympio, from Famagouste?  
 What tidings? tell us.
- Maga*. See, his sword!
- Olympio*. Stand off.
- Mauria*. The tidings, then, the tidings!
- Olympio*. None—for women.
- Mauria*. So, so, my Cupid? None of the Saracens?  
 Of the squadron huddling yesterday for haven  
 At Keryneia?
- Olympio*. Who has told you?
- Mauria*. Who?  
 A hundred galleys westing up the wind,  
 Scenting the shore, but timorous as hounds.  
 A gale—and twenty down!
- Maga*. The rest are flown?
- Olympio*. Ask Zeus, or ask, to-morrow, lord Amaury,  
 Or, if he comes, to-night. To lady Yolanda  
 I'm sent and not to tattle silly here.  
 (*He starts off, but is arrested by laughter within. It is CIVA who enters, holding up a parchment.*)  
 O! Only Civa. (*Starts again with HALIL.*)
- Civa*. How, Olympio!  
 Stay you, and hear!—May never virgin love him!  
 Gone as a thistle! (*Turns.*)
- Mauria*. Pouf!
- Alessa* (*to CIVA*). Now, what have you?

*Civa.* Verses! found in the garden. Verses! verses!  
 On papyrus of Paphos. O, to read!  
 But you, Alessa—!

*Alessa* (*takes them*). In the garden?

*Civa.* By  
 The fountain cypress at the marble feet  
 Of chaste Diana!

*Maga.* Where Sir Camarin  
 And oft our lady—!

*Civa.* Maga, will you prattle?  
 Read them to us, Alessa, read them, read.  
 They are of love!

*Maga.* No, sorrow.

*Civa.* O, as a nun  
 You ever sigh for sorrow!—They are of love!  
 Of valour bursting through enchanted bounds  
 To ladies prisoned in an ogre's keep!  
 Then of the bridals!—O, they are of love!

*Maga.* No, Civa, no! of sorrow! see, her lips!  
 (*She points to ALESSA, who, reading, has paled.*)  
 See, see!

*Civa.* Alessa!

*Alessa.* Maga—Civa—Ah!  
 (*She rends the parchment.*)

*Mauria.* What are you doing?

*Alessa.* They were writ to her!

*Mauria.* To her? to whom? what are you saying? Read!  
 Read us the verses.

*Alessa.* No.

- Mauria.* Tell then his name  
Who writes them, and to whom.
- Alessa.* I will not.
- Mauria.* Then  
It is some guilt you hide!—And touching her  
You dote on—lady Yolanda!
- Alessa.* Shame!
- Mauria.* Some guilt  
Of one, then, in this castle!—See, her lips  
Betray it is.
- Maga.* No, Mauria! no! (*holds her*) hush!  
(*Forms appear without.*)
- Mauria.* O, loose me.
- Maga.* There, on the loggia! Hush, see—  
Our lady and Sir Camarin.
- Alessa* (*fearful*). It is. . . .  
They heard us, Maga?
- Maga.* No, but—
- Mauria* (*to ALESSA*). So? that mouse?
- Alessa.* You know not, Mauria, what 'tis you say.  
(*BERENGERE coldly, as if consenting to it, enters.*)  
She is seeking us; be still.  
(*Stepping out.*) My lady?
- Berengere.* Yes.  
Your lamps; for it is time  
Now for your aves and o'erneeded sleep.  
But first I'd know if yet lord Renier—  
(*Sees their disquiet—starts.*)  
Why are you pale?

*Alessa.*

I?

*Berengere.*

So—and strange.

*Alessa.*

We have

But put away the distaff and the needle.

*CAMARIN enters.*

*Berengere.* The distaff and the needle—it may be.

And yet you do not seem—

*Alessa.*

My lady—?

*Berengere.*

Go;

And send me Hassan.

*(The women leave.)*

Camarin—you saw?

They were not as their wont is.

*Camarin.*

To your eyes,

My Berengere, that apprehension haunts.

They were as ever. Then be done with fear!

*Berengere.* I cannot.

*Camarin.*

To the abyss with it. To-night

Is ours—Renier tarries at Famagouste—

Is ours for love and for a long delight!

*Berengere.* Whose end may be—

*Camarin.*

Dawn and the dewy lark!

And passing of all presage from you.

*Berengere (sits).*

No:

For think, Yolanda's look when by the cypress

We read the verses! And my dream that I

Should with a cross—inscrutable is sleep!—

Bring her deep bitterness.

*Camarin.*

Dreams are a brood

Born of the night and not of destiny.  
 She guesses not our guilt, and Renier  
 Clasps to his breast ambition as a bride—  
 Ambition for Amaury.

*Berengere.* None can say.  
 He's much with this Venetian, our guest,  
 Though Venice gyves us more with tyranny  
 Than would the Saracen.

*Camarin.* But through this lady  
 Of the Pisani, powerful in Venice,  
 He hopes to lift again his dynasty  
 Up from decay; and to restore this island,  
 This venture-dream of the seas, unto his house.  
 'Tis clear, my Berengere!

*Berengere.* Then, *her* design?  
 And what the requital that entices her?

(*Rises.*)

Evil will come of it, to us some evil,  
 Or to Yolanda and Amaury's love.  
 But, there; the women.

*Camarin.* And too brief their stay.  
 What signal for to-night?

*Berengere.* Be in the garden.  
 Over the threshold yonder I will wave  
 The candle-sign, when all are passed to sleep.

*Camarin.* And with the beam I shall mount up to you  
 Quicker than ecstasy.

*Berengere.* I am as a leaf  
 Before the wind and raging of your love.

Go—go.

*Camarin.* But to return unto your breast !

(*He leaves her by the divan.*)

(*The women re-enter with silver lighted lamps ; behind them are HASSAN and the slave SMARDA. They wait for BERENGERE, who has stood silent, to speak.*)

*Berengere (looking up).* Ah, you are come ; I had forgotten.  
And it is time for sleep.—Hassan, the gates :  
Close them.

*Hassan.* And chain them, lady ?

*Berengere.* Wait no longer.  
Lord Renier will not come.

*Hassan.* No word of him ?

*Berengere.* None, though he yesterday left Nicosie  
With the priest Moro.

*Hassan.* Lady—

*Berengere.* Wait no longer.

Come, women, with your lamps and light the way.

(*The women go by the steps. BERENGERE follows.*)

*Hassan (staring after her).* The reason of this mood in her ?  
the reason ?

Something is vile. Lady Yolanda weeps  
In secret ; all for what ?—unless because  
Of the Paphian—or this Venetian.

(*Seeing SMARDA.*) Now,

Slave ! Scythian ! You linger ?

*Smarda.* I am bidden—

My mistress.

*Hassan.* Spa ! Thy mistress hath, I think,

Something of hell in her and has unpacked  
A portion in this castle. Is it so?

*Smarda.* My lady is of Venice.

*Hassan.* Strike her, God.

Her smirk admits it.

*Smarda.* Touch me not!

*Hassan.* I'll wring

Thy tongue out sudden, if it now has lies.

What of thy lady and lord Renier?

*Smarda.* Off!

*RENIER enters behind, with MORO.*

*Hassan.* Thy lady and lord Renier, I say!

What do they purpose?

*Smarda.* Fool-born! look around.

*Hassan.* Not till——

*Smarda.* Lord Renier, help.

*Hassan.* What do you say?

*(Turns, and stares amazed.)*

A fool I am . . .

*Renier.* Where is my wife?

*Hassan.* Why, she . . .

This slave stung me to pry.

*Renier.* Where is my wife?

*Hassan.* A moment since, was here—the women with her.

She asked for your return.

*Renier.* And wherefore did?

*Hassan.* You jeer me.

*Renier.* Answer.

*Hassan.* Have you not been gone?

*Renier.* Not—overfar. Where is Yolanda?—Well?

No matter; find my chamber till I come.

Of my arrival, too, no word to any.

(*HASSAN goes, confused.*)

You, Moro, have deferred me; now, no more.

Whether it is suspicion eats in me,

Mistrust and fret and doubt—of whom I say not,

Or whether desire and unsubduable

To see Amaury sceptred—I care not.

(*To SMARDA.*)

Slave, to your lady who awaits me, say

I'm here and now have chosen.

*Moro.*

Do not!

*Renier.*

Chosen.

(*SMARDA goes.*)

None can be great who will not hush his heart

To hold a sceptre, and Amaury must.

He is Lusignan and his lineage

Will drown in him Yolanda's loveliness.

*Moro.* It will not.

*Renier.*

Then at least I shall uncover

What this Venetian hints.

*Moro.*

Hints?

*Renier.*

I must know.

*Moro.* 'Tis of your wife?—Yolanda?

*Renier.*

Name them not.

They've shut from me their souls.

*Moro.*

My lord, not so;

But you repulse them.



*Renier.* When they pity. No,  
 Something has gone from me or never was  
 Within my breast. I love not—am unlovable.  
 Amaury is not so,  
 And this Venetian Vittia Pisani——

*Moro.* Distrust her!

*Renier.* She has power.

*Moro.* But not truth.  
 And yesterday a holy relic scorned.

*Renier.* She loves Amaury. Wed to her he will  
 Be the elected Governor of Cyprus.  
 The throne, then, but a step.

*Moro.* But all too great.  
 And think; Yolanda is to him as heaven:  
 He will not yield her.

*Renier.* Then he must. And she,  
 The Venetian, has ways to it—a secret  
 To pierce her from his arms.

*Moro.* Sir, sir?—of what?

*Renier.* I know not, of some shame.

*Moro.* Shame!

*Renier.* Why do you clutch me?

*Moro.* I—am a priest—and shame——

*Renier.* You have suspicion?

(VITTIA enters unnoted.)

Of whom?—Of whom, and what?

*Vittia (lightly).* My lord, of women.

(RENIER starts and turns.)

So does the Holy Church instil him.

- Renier.* You  
Come softly, lady of Venice.
- Vittia.* Streets of sea  
In Venice teach us.
- Renier.* Of what women, then?  
My wife? Yolanda?
- Vittia.* By the freedom due us,  
What matters it? In Venice our lords know  
That beauty has no master.
- Renier.* Has no . . . That,  
That too has something hid.
- Vittia.* Suspicious lord!  
Yet Berengere Lusignan is his wife!  
And soon Yolanda—But for that I'm here.  
You sent for me.
- Renier (sullen).* I sent.
- Vittia.* To say you've chosen?  
And offer me irrevocable aid  
To win Amaury?
- Renier.* All is vain in me  
Before the fever for it.
- Vittia.* Then, I shall.  
It must be done. My want is unafraid.  
Hourly I am expecting out of Venice  
Letters of power.  
And what to you I pledge is he shall be  
Ruler of Cyprus and these Mediterranean  
Blue seas that rock ever against its coast.  
That do I pledge . . . but more.

*Renier* Of rule? . . . Then what?

*Vittia* (*going up to him*). Of shame withheld—dishonour unrevealed.

(*He half recoils and stands. SMARDA enters hastily to them.*)

*Smarda.* My lady—

*Vittia.* Speak.

*Smarda.* She!

*Vittia.* Who? Yolanda? comes?

She's not asleep as you averred to me,

Was not asleep, but comes? . . . My lord—!

*Renier.* I'll stay,

Stay and confront her.

*Vittia.* Ignorantly? No.

*Renier.* I'll question her.

*Vittia.* Blindly, and peril all?

*Renier.* I will return. You put me off, and off.

(*By the loggia, with MORO, he goes; the slave slips out.*)

*YOLANDA enters, sadly, her gaze on the floor. She walks slowly, but becoming conscious starts, sees VITTIA, and turns to withdraw.*)

*Vittia.* Your pardon—

*Yolanda.* I can serve you?

*Vittia.* If you seek

The women, they are gone.

*Yolanda.* I do not seek them.

*Vittia.* Nor me?

*Yolanda.* Nor any.—Yet I would I might

With seeking penetrate the labyrinth

Of your intent.

- Vittia.* I thank you. And you shall,  
To-night—if you have love.
- Yolanda.* That thread were vain.
- Vittia.* I say, if you have love.
- Yolanda.* Of guile?
- Vittia.* Of her  
You hold as mother, and who is Amaury's.
- Yolanda.* Were it so simple, no design had ever  
Laired darkly in you, but to my eyes been clear  
As shallows under Morpha's crystal wave.
- Vittia.* Unproven you speak so.
- Yolanda.* And proven would.
- Vittia.* If so, then—save her.
- Yolanda.* Who? What do you—?
- Vittia (with irony).* Mean?  
It is not clear?
- Yolanda.* Save her?
- Vittia.* The surety flies  
Out of your cheek and dead upon your heart:  
Yet you are innocent—oh innocent?—  
O'er what abyss she hangs!
- Yolanda.* O'er no abyss.
- Vittia.* But to her lord is constant!
- Yolanda (desperate).* She is constant.
- Vittia.* And to his bed is true?
- Yolanda.* True.
- Vittia.* And this baron  
Of Paphos—Camarin—is but her *friend*,  
And deeply yours—as oft you feign to shield her?

*Yolanda.* He is no more.

*Vittia.* Your heart belies your lips,  
Knows better than believing what you say.

*Yolanda.* Were, were he then . . . (*struggles*) lord Renier  
knows it not!

And never must. I have misled his thought  
From her to me. The danger thus may pass,  
The open shame.

Sir Camarin departed, her release  
From the remorse and fettering will seem  
Sweet as a vista into fairyland.  
For none e'er will betray her.

*Vittia.* None?

*Yolanda.* Your tone . . . !  
(*Realising with gradual horror.*) The still insinuation!  
You would do it!

This is the beast then of the labyrinth?  
And this your heart is?

*Vittia.* No, not ever: no.  
But *now*, if you deny me.

*Yolanda.* Speak as a woman,  
If there is Womanhood in you to speak.  
The name of Berengere Lusignan must  
Go clean unto the years, fair and unsullied.  
Nor must the bloody leap  
Of death fall on her from lord Renier's sword,  
A death too ready if he but suspect.  
No, she is holy!  
And holy are my lips

Remembering that they may call her mother!  
 All the bright world I breathe because of her,  
 Laughter and roses, day-song of the sea,  
 Not bitterness and loneliness and blight!  
 All the bright world,  
 Of voices, dear as waking to the dead—  
 Voices of love and tender earthly hopes—  
 O, all the beauty I was once forbid!  
 Yes, yes!—  
 She lifted me, a lonely convent weed,  
 A cloister thing unvisited of dew,  
 Withering and untended and afar  
 From the remembered ruin of my home,  
 And here has planted me in happiness.  
 Then, for her, all I am!

*Vittia.*

Or—hope to be?

*Yolanda.* The price, say, of your silence.—I am weary.

*Vittia.* And would be rid of me.

*Yolanda.*

The price, the price.

*Vittia.* It is (*low and ashamed*) that you renounce  
 Amaury's love.

(*A pause.*)

*Yolanda.* Amaury's love. . . . You then would rend me  
 there

Where not Eternity could heal the wound  
 Though all the River of God might be for balm!  
 Cruelty like to this you could not do?

(*Waits a moment.*)

A swallow on the battlements to-day

Fell from the hawk : you soothed and set it free.  
This, then, you would not—!

*Vittia.* Yes.

*Yolanda.* You cannot!

*Vittia.* Yes.

*Yolanda* (*wrung for a moment then calm*).

I had forgotten, you are of Venice—Venice  
Whose burdening is vast upon this land.  
Good-night.

*Vittia.* And you despise me!

*Yolanda.* More am sick  
That love of him has led your thought so low.  
To-morrow—

*Vittia.* Not to-morrow! But you must  
Choose and at once.

*Yolanda.* Then——

(*They start and listen. Approaching hoofs are heard.*)

*Vittia.* Ah! Amaury?—It is?  
His speed upon the road? now at the gates?

(*The fall of chains is heard.*)

What then, what is your purpose—to renounce  
And force him from you, or to have me breathe  
To Renier Lusignan the one word  
That will transmute his wrong to madness?  
Say quickly. Centuries have stained these walls,  
But never a wife; never——

*Enter BERENGERE.*

*Yolanda.* Mother? . . .

*Berengere.* Amaury

Has spurred to us, Yolanda, from his post,  
Secret and sudden. But . . . what has befallen?

*(Looks from one to the other.)*

Yolanda. He comes here, mother?

Berengere. At once.

Yolanda. No!

Vittia. *(coldly, to YOLANDA).* Then to-night  
Must be the end.

Yolanda. Go, go.

Berengere *(as Vittia passes out).* What thing is this?

Yolanda. Mother, I cannot have him—here—Amaury!  
Defer him but a little—till to-morrow.  
I cannot see him now.

Berengere. This is o'erstrange.

Yolanda. Help me to think. Go to him, go, and say  
Some woman thing—that I am ill—that I  
Am at confession—penance—that—Ah, say  
But anything!

Berengere. Yolanda!

Yolanda. Say. . . . No use.  
Too late.

Berengere. His step?

Yolanda. Oh, unmistakable;  
Along the corridor. There!

*(The curtains are thrown back.)*

Amaury *(at the threshold).* My Yolanda!

*(Hastens down and takes her, passive, into his arms.)*

BERENGERE *goes.*

My, my Yolanda!



To touch you is as triumph to the blood,  
Is as the boon of battle to the strong!

*Yolanda.* Amaury, no; release me and say why  
You come: The Saracens—?

*Amaury.* Not of them now!

*(Bends back her head.)*

But of some tribute incense to this beauty!  
Dear as the wind wafts from undying shrines  
Of mystery and myrrh!  
I'd have the eloquence of quickened moons  
Pouring upon the midnight magicly,  
To say all I have yearned,  
Now, with your head pillowed upon my breast!  
Slow sullen speech come to my soldier lips,  
Rough with command, and impotent of softness!  
Come to my lips! or fill so full my eyes  
That the unutterable shall seem as sweet  
To my Yolanda. *(Lifting her face, with surprise.)*  
But how now? tears?

*Yolanda.* *Amaury*——

*Amaury.* What have I done? Too pitiless have pressed  
You to this coat of steel?

*Yolanda.* No, no.

*Amaury.* My words,  
Or silence, then?

*Yolanda.* Amaury, no, but sweet,  
Sweet as the roses of Damascus crushed,  
Your silence is! and sweeter than the dream  
Of April nightingale on Troados,

Or gushing by the springs of Chitria,  
 Your every word of love! Yet—yet—ah, fold me,  
 Within your arms oblivion and hold me,  
 Fast to your being press me, and there bless me  
 With breathèd power of your manhood's might.  
 Amaury! . . .

*Amaury.* This I cannot understand.

*Yolanda (freeing herself).* Nothing—a folly—groundless frailty.

*Amaury.* You've been again at some old tale of sorrow,  
 (*Goes to the lectern.*)

Pining along the pages of a book—  
 This, telling of that Italy madonna  
 Whose days were sad—I have forgotten how.  
 Is it not so?

*Yolanda.* No, no. The tears of women  
 Come as the air and sighing of the night,  
 We know not whence or why.

*Amaury.* Often, perhaps.  
 I am not skilled to tell. But these—not these!  
 They are of trouble known.

*Yolanda.* Yet now forget them.

*Amaury.* It will not leave my heart that somehow—how  
 I cannot fathom—Camarin—

*Yolanda. (lightly, to stop him).* No farther!

*Amaury.* That Camarin of Paphos is their cause.  
 Tell me—

*Yolanda.* Yes, that I love thee!

*Amaury.* Tell me—

*Yolanda.* Love thee!

As sea the sky! and as the sky the wind!  
 And as the wind the forest! As the forest—  
 What does the forest love, Amaury? I  
 Can think of nothing!

*Amaury.* Tell me then you have  
 Never a moment of you yielded to him,  
 That never he has touched too long this hand—  
 Till evermore he must, even as I—  
 Nor once into your eyes too deep has gazed!  
 You falter? darken?

*Yolanda.* Would he ne'er had come  
 Into these halls! that it were beautiful,  
 Holy to hate him as the Lost can hate.

*Amaury.* But 'tis not?

*Yolanda.* God shall judge him.

*Amaury.* And not you?

*Yolanda.* Though he is weak, there is within him—

*Amaury.* That

Which women trust? and you?

(BERENGERE enters. He turns to her.)

Mother?

*Berengere.* A runner,

A soldier of your troop within the forts  
 Has come with word.

*Amaury (starting).* Mother!

*Berengere.* It is ill news?

I've seen that battle-light in you before.  
 'Tis of the Saracens? you ride to-night  
 Into their peril?

*Amaury.* Come, the word, the word!

*Berengere.* Only this token.

*Amaury.* The spur? the spur? (*Takes it.*)

They then  
Are landing!

*Yolanda.* How, Amaury; tell your meaning!

*Amaury.* The galleys of the Saracens have found  
Anchor and land to-night near Keryneia.  
My troops are ready and await me—  
So, no delay.

*Yolanda.* I pray you (*strangely, with terror*) do not go.

*Amaury.* Yolanda!

*Yolanda.* If I am left alone—!

*Amaury.* Yolanda!

*Yolanda* (*sinking to a seat*). I meant it not—a breath of fear  
—no more.

Go, go.

*Amaury.* I know you not to-night. Farewell.  
(*He kisses her and hurries off. . . . A silence.*)

*Berengere.* Yolanda—

*Yolanda.* Mother, I will go to sleep.  
(*She rises.*)

*Berengere.* A change is over you—a difference  
Drawn as a veil between us.

*Yolanda.* I am weary.

*Berengere.* You love me?

*Yolanda.* As, O mother, I love him,  
With love impregnable to every ill,  
As Paradise is.

*Berengere.* Then—

*Yolanda.* I pray, no more.

To-night I am flooded with a deeper tide  
Than yet has flowed into my life—and through it  
Sounds premonition: so I must have calm.

*(She embraces BERENGERE; goes slowly up steps and off.)*

*Berengere (chilled).* What fear—if it is fear—has so unfixed  
her?

It is suspicion—Then I must not meet  
Him here to-night—or if to-night, no more.  
Her premonition!—and my dream that I  
Should with a cross bring her deep bitterness.

*(Thinks a moment, then takes the crucifix from her neck.)*

Had Renier but come, perhaps I might . . .

*(Lays it on table.)*

O were I dead this sinning would awake me! . . .

And yet I care not *(dully.)* . . . No, I will forget.

*(Goes firmly from door to door and looks out each. Then lifts, unnoting, the cross-shaped candlestick; and waving it at the loggia, turns holding it before her.)*

Soon he will come up from the cool, and touch  
Away my weakness with mad tenderness.

Soon he will . . . Ah!

*(Has seen with terror the candlestick's structure.)*

The cross! . . . My dream! . . . Yolanda!

*(Lets it fall.)*

Mercy of God, move in me! . . . Sacrilege!

*(Sinks feebly to the divan, and bows, overcome.)*

*Camarin* (*appearing after a pause on the loggia*).

My Berengere, a moment, and I come!

(*Enters, locking the grating behind him. Then he hurries down and leans to lift her face.*)

*Berengere.* No, no! nor ever, ever again, for ever!

(*Shrinks.*)

Go from me and behind leave no farewell. . . .

*Camarin.* This is—illusion. In the dew I've waited,  
And the night's song of you is in my brain—  
A song that seems—

*Berengere.* Withhold from words. At last  
Fate is begun! See, with the cross it was  
I waved you hither. Leave me—let me pass  
Out of this sin—and to repentance—after.

*Camarin.* I cannot, cannot!

*Berengere.* Pity, then, my fear.

This moment were it known would end with murder,  
Or did it not, dishonour still would kill!  
Leave, leave.

*Camarin.* To-morrow, then; but not to-night!

(*He goes behind and puts his arms around her.*)

Give me thy being once again, thy beauty.  
For it I'm mad as bacchanals for wine.

(*YOLANDA, entering on the balcony, hears, and would retreat,  
but sees RENIER come to the grating.*)

Once more be to me all that woman may!  
Let us again take rapture wings and rise  
Up to our world of love, guilt would unsphere.  
Let us live over days that passed as streams

Limpid by lotus-banks unto the sea,  
 O'er all the whispered nights that we have clasped  
 Knowing the heights and all the deeps of passion!  
 But speak, and we shall be amid the stars.

(RENIER draws a dagger and leaves the grating. With a low cry YOLANDA staggers down: the Two rise, fearful.)

Berengere. Yolanda!

Yolanda. Mother, mother! . . . Ah, his eyes!

Berengere. What brings you here—to spy upon me?

Yolanda. Listen! . . .

Think not of me—no, hush—but of the peril  
 Arisen up . . . Your husband!

Camarin. Renier?

Yolanda. Was at that grating—heard. And from its sheath,  
 A dagger—! Ah, he will come.

Berengere (weakly). What does she say?

Yolanda. Find calmness now, and some expedient.

(She struggles to think.)

Berengere. I cannot die.

Yolanda. No, no.

Berengere. My flesh is weak,

Is poor of courage—poverished by guilt,  
 As all my soul is! But, Yolanda, you—!

Yolanda. Yes, something must be done—something be done.

(CAMARIN goes to the curtains and returns.)

Berengere. The shame . . . the shame . . . the shame!

Yolanda. There yet is time.

Berengere. You can deliver! you are innocent.

Yolanda. Perhaps. Let me but think.—He came—

*Berengere.*

You see?

There is escape? a way from it?

*Yolanda.*

Perhaps.

He came after your words . . . yes . . . could not see  
Here in the dimness . . . but has only heard  
Sir Camarin?

*Berengere.*

I do not know!

*Yolanda.*

Go, go,

Up to your chamber and be as asleep.  
There is a way—I think—dim, but a way.  
Go to your chamber; for there yet may be  
Prevention!

*Berengere.*

I—yes, yes.

*Yolanda.*

There is a way.

(BERENGERE goes.)

Strength now to walk it! strength unfaltering.

*Camarin.* What do you purpose?

*Yolanda.*

Here to take her place,

Here at the lowest of her destiny.

*Camarin.* I do not understand.

*Yolanda.*

But wholly shall.

Clasp me within your arms; he must believe  
'Tis I and not his wife you have unhallowed,  
Your arms about me, though they burn! and breathe me  
Thirst of unbounded love as unto her.

(*He clasps her, and they wait.*)

Ah, it is he!

*Camarin.*

No.

*Yolanda.*

Yes, the words; at once!



*Gamarin (hoarsely).* With all my body and soul-breath  
I love you,

(*RENIER enters with MORO.*)

And all this night is ours for ecstasy.

Kiss me with quenchless kisses, and embrace

Me with your beauty, till——

(*YOLANDA with a cry, as of fear, looses herself, pretending  
to discover RENIER, who is struck rigid.*)

*Moro.*

My lord, my lord! . . .

It is Yolanda.

*Renier.*

Then—

(*The dagger falls from him.*)

Why, then—Amaury!

(*YOLANDA, realising, stunned, sinks back to the divan.*)

CURTAIN.

## ACT II

SEVERAL DAYS HAVE ELAPSED.

SCENE: *The forecourt of the castle, beyond which is the garden and in the distance the mountains, under the deep tropical blue of morning. On the right the wall enclosing the castle grounds runs back and is lost in the foliage of cypress, palm, orange; it is pierced by an arched gate with lifted portcullis. On the left rises the dark front of the castle, its arabesqued doorway open. Across the rear a low arcaded screen of masonry, with an entrance to the right, separates the court from the garden. Before it a fountain, guarded by a statue of a Knight of St. John, falls into a porphyry basin. By the castle door, to the front, and elsewhere, are stone seats. HASSAN is standing moodily by the screen, left, looking out the portcullis. He starts, hearing steps, and as the old leech TREMITUS enters, motions him silently into the castle; then muttering "the old blood-letter," stands as before, while CIVA, MAGA, and MAURIA are heard in the garden, and enter gaily bearing water-jars to the fountain. CIVA sees his look and breaks into a twitting laughter. The other two join her.*

*Civa.* Look at him! Maga! Mauria! behold!  
Was ever sight so sweet upon the world?  
His eyes! his lips! a prince!

*Mauria* (*critically*). Now, is he not?  
With the price of vinegar upon his face.

(*All laugh.*)

The price of vinegar! who'll buy!—Not I!  
Not I! Not I! Not I!

*Hassan.* Wench.

*Civa.* Verily!

And not a man! he has discovered it!  
You're not a man, Mauria! we were duped.  
(*MAURIA slaps her playfully.*)

But see him now—a mummy of the Nile!  
Who died of choler!

*Mauria.* Then, a care, he'll bite.  
He's been in the grave a long while and he's hungry.  
A barley-loaf, quick, Maga!

*Civa.* To appease him!  
But ssh! beware! there's something of import.  
(*They stop in mock awe before him.*)

What does he think of?

*Mauria.* Sphinxes and the spheres.

*Civa.* Or little ants and guats that buzz about him.

*Mauria.* And how to make them smart for sauciness.

*Civa.* Or of Alessa!

*Maga.* No, no, Civa! come;  
Enough of teasing.

*Civa.* Of Alessa!

*Maga.*

No.

Your pitcher, come. He's troubled by the tale  
Of lady Yolanda—

And waits for lord Amaury from the battle.

*Civa.* The—! heigh! heigh-o! awaits! la, la! he does!

(*HASSAN starts at her tone.*)

For lord Amaury! does he so indeed?

*Hassan.* What do you know? Be silent.

*Civa.*

Ho!

*Hassan.*

Itch! would

You have lady Yolanda hear? She comes  
Now, as she has this morning thrice, to ask.

(*YOLANDA appears on the threshold with ALESSA.*)

Lord Renier's gall, remember, if she learns.

(*CIVA flouts him, but goes to the fountain. The others follow,  
fill their jurs, and, singing, return to the garden.*)

*YOLANDA then crosses to HASSAN, who waits evasive.*)

*Yolanda.* My want is still the same—words are unneeded.

*Hassan.* To know of lord Amaury?

*Yolanda.*

Lord Amaury—

He has not yet returned?

*Hassan (loathly).*

I have not seen him.

*Yolanda.* Nor heard?

*Hassan.*

Nothing.

*Yolanda.*

I cannot understand.

(*Goes to the gate, troubled.*)

*Hassan (low).* Liar that I am to say it!

*Yolanda.*

I cannot—cannot!

(*Returns.*)

The Saracens we know were routed to  
 Their vessels—all the Allah-crying horde.  
 And lord Amaury—said the courier not?—  
 Rode in the battle as a seraph might  
 To the Holy Sepulchre's deliverance.  
 And yet no word from him.

*Hassan.* Perhaps—with reason.

*(She looks at him quickly—he flushes.)*

With reason! . . . knowing, lady, what, here, now,  
 Is rumoured of a baron  
 And lady Yolanda! . . . Pardon!

*Yolanda (slowly).* Of a baron

And lady Yolanda.

*Hassan.* Yes: it is the women

Who with their ears ever at secresy  
 Rumour it. But, lady, it is a lie?  
 This Camarin, this prinker,  
 Whose purse is daily loose to us. . . . I curse him!  
 His father . . . Well, my mother's ten years dead  
 And flower lips breathe innocent above her.  
 But I'll avenge her shame.

*Yolanda.* On—him?

*Hassan.* On him!

And—you, who do not hush this tale of you,  
 Though it is truthless—hear:  
 I have a stab for Camarin of Paphos  
 Whenever he has lived—but say!—too long.

*Yolanda (who has listened rigidly. After a pause).*

Come here . . . look in my eyes, and—deeper . . . Shame!

(*He is quelled.*)

Pity alone we owe to sin not blame.  
 And they who love may stray, it seems, beyond  
 All justice of our judging.—  
 Is evil mad enchantment come upon  
 The portals of this castle?

*Hassan.* I would serve you.

*Yolanda.* With murder? no. But if you would indeed,  
 As oft you have——

*Hassan.* Lady, I will.

*Yolanda.* Then watch  
 The Venetian, and when Amaury comes  
 Find me at once. What sound was that? . . . A bugle?  
 It is! it is! Alessa! (*Overjoyed.*) Do you hear?  
 His troop! Amaury's! O the silver chime!  
 Again I breathe, I breathe!  
 My heart as a bird's in May!  
 Amaury! . . . Come! we'll go to him! we'll go!  
 Before any within Lusignan—!

*Alessa.* Lady!

*Yolanda.* At once! it rings again! again! we'll go!

*Alessa.* And tell him?

*Yolanda.* Warn! Warn him a fever's here  
 That he must fend his ear from. 'Twill suffice.  
 And I again shall see him, hear him speak,  
 Hang on his battle-story blessedly!  
 And you, Hassan. . . . But why do you stand stone?  
 You know something. . . . He's dead!

*Hassan.* No, lady, no.

*Yolanda.* Not? ah! . . . then what? 'Twas not his trumpet?

*Hassan (after a struggle).* No.

And I will lie to you no longer.

*Yolanda.* You?

*Hassan.* Though for obedience it be or life;  
And at lord Renier's command. . . . It is  
Not true that lord Amaury from the battle  
Has not returned.

*Yolanda.* But he—you mean—is here?

(*Stands motionless.*)

*Hassan.* Here: came on yesterday at dusk. Was led  
Up to his chamber . . .  
So much lord Renier who slipt him in  
Revealed, that I might guile you.

*Alessa (sharply).* And you have?

*Hassan.* Yes.

*Alessa.* Though you boasted love to me?

*Hassan.* Now, woman!

*Alessa.* Lady, I would have wed him—wed this toad!

Who'd kill the Paphian, too?

*Hassan.* Yes!

*Alessa.* Worm! with dust?

Heeling away from him?

*Yolanda.* Be still, be still.

(*ALESSA turns to her.*)

These words can wait on what may yet be helped.  
This may undo me! First of all I should  
Have seen Amaury! Now——!

*Hassan.* The Venetian!

(*They start. VITTIA enters from castle.*)

Lady, I will go in.

*Alessa.* And I; to wait.

[*They go.*

*Yolanda (suddenly).* But I to see Amaury.

*Vittia.* What?

(*Stops.*)

*Yolanda.* To see,

Vittia Visani, who withholds Amaury—

Who came last night at dusk, as well you know.

(*They face, opposed.*)

What have you told him?

*Vittia.* Hah?

*Yolanda.* Insolence, false

And feigning! But no matter; lies are brief.

I'll go myself to him.

*Vittia.* To be repelled?

BERENGERE enters.

*Yolanda.* If he could trust you—but he could not.

*Vittia.* Knowing

A Paphian ere this has fondled two?

*Yolanda.* You hear, mother? (*To Vittia.*) Out of my way  
at once.

*Berengere.* Stay, stay! She has not told him! nothing! . . .

Yes,

I too have been aware and kept you blind.

But, nothing! for he still is overworn.

And now his wound—



- Yolanda.* Wound ! he is wounded ?
- Berengere.* He sleeps.
- Yolanda.* And is in danger—jeopardy ?
- Berengere.* In none ;  
If the leech Tremitus has any skill ;  
And that you know.
- Yolanda.* I thank . . . Madonna . . . thee !  
(*VITTIA laughs and goes.*)  
But you, mother, are come at last to say  
Your promises, broken two days, are kept ?  
You've spoken ? won lord Renier to wisdom ?  
Pled him to silence which alone can save us ?  
Dear mother—— ?
- Berengere.* Do not call me so again.  
(*Turns away.*)  
I have not—and I will not.
- Yolanda.* Oh !
- Berengere.* I cannot. . . .
- Yolanda.* But can leave me so laden here within  
This gulf's dishonour ? Never ! . . . So return  
And pledge him but to wait !  
For this Venetian has now, I bode,  
Something of evil more,  
When once Amaury hears all that has passed.  
Return !
- Berengere.* I cannot.
- Yolanda (proudly).* Then hear, hear me ! I  
Too am a woman, and the woman wants,  
The beauty and ache and dream and glow and urge

Of an unreckoned love are mine as yours.  
I will not lose Amaury ; but will tell him  
Myself the truth.

*Berengere.* Then—I'll not stay for death,  
And wait for shame. But now with Camarin  
Will go from here.

*Yolanda.* Mother !

*Berengere.* To some retreat  
Away !

*Yolanda.* Where still pursuit would follow ! even,  
I fear, Amaury's !—  
And overtake you though it were as far  
As the sea foams, or past the sandy void  
Of stricken Africa. It would be vain.  
Vain, and I cannot have you. No, but listen—  
(*Breaks off seeing RENIER, on the castle threshold. His look  
is on her, but he comes down addressing BERENGERE.*)

*Renier.* She troubles you too much.

*Berengere.* My lord ?

*Renier.* Too much.  
You cherish her and reap unchastity  
For gratitude—unchastity against  
Our very son who was betrothed to her.  
Yet see her shameless.

*Berengere (dully).* No ; I think you wrong her.

(*YOLANDA moves apart.*)

*Renier.* Nobly you pity ! But it will not veil her.  
Rather the convent and the crucifix,  
Matin and Vesper in a round remote,

And senseless beads, for such.—But what more now  
Is she demanding?

*Berengere.* Little.

*Renier.* Not the means

Still to deceive Amaury?

*Berengere.* Renier . . . no.

*(Speaks loathly.)*

But I have a request that, if you grant,  
Will lead peace back to us . . . and from us draw  
This fang of fate.

*Renier.* Ah.

*Berengere.* Yes.

*Renier (slowly).* And we might be

As those that wedded love?

*Berengere.* Perhaps.

*Renier.* That—love!

*(A pause.)*

Then it shall be, at once . . . But no, I first  
Have a confession.

*Berengere.* You?

*Renier.* A pang!—For days

*(Takes her hand.)*

Before I found Yolanda on the breast  
Of Camarin of Paphos—  
I suffered in the furnace of suspicion  
The fume and suffocation of the thought  
That you were the guilty one—you my own wife.

*(She recoils to YOLANDA, who comes up.)*

I did; but rue, rue it! . . .

. . . Yet—it is just  
 That you recoil even as now you do  
 From stain upon your wedded constancy. . . .  
 But Time that is e'er-pitiful may pass  
 Soon over it—  
 And leave only forgiveness. And perhaps  
 Then I shall win you as I never have.—  
 Now the request.

*Berengere.* That now . . . I cannot plead.

(*Sees YOLANDA harden. Is impelled.*)

And yet I must . . . It is that, till I bid  
 Amaury may not know of this . . . not know  
 This trouble fallen from a night or evil—  
 Pitiless on us as a meteor's ash.

*Renier.* Not of it? he? not know?

*Berengere.* Trust to me.

*Renier.* How!

And to this wanton's perfidy to bind  
 Him witless to her—with a charm perhaps—  
 Or, past releasing, with a philtre? She  
 Whom now he holds pure as a spirit sped  
 From immortality, or the fair fields  
 Of the sun, to be his bride?

*Yolanda.* Sir, no! . . . She means  
 Not I shall wed him! (*Winningly.*) Only that you spare  
 To separate us with this horror; that  
 You trust me to dispel his love, to pall  
 And chill his passion from me. For I crave  
 Only one thing—innocence in his sight.

Believe!—believe!

*Renier.* I will—that you are mad,  
Yet madder I, if to this coil my brain  
Were blind.

*Yolanda.* As it will be! with deadlier dark,  
If you attend me not!  
And may have destiny you cannot know.  
But you will heed?  
For somewhere in you there is tenderness.  
Once when you chafed in fever and I bore  
White orange blossoms dewy to your pillow  
You touched my hand gently, as might a father.

(*Caresses his.*)

Once on the tower when alone at dusk  
I sang—I know not why—of lost delights,  
Of vanished roses that are ere recalling  
May to the world, you came and suddenly  
Lifted my brow up silent to your kiss.  
Ah, you remember; you will hear me?

*Renier.* No!  
Though you are cunning.—Thus you wove the mesh  
About Amaury—till he could not move  
Beyond you.

*Yolanda.* For his sake I ask it.

*Renier.* For  
No sake but to o'ersway him with your eyes  
In secret, thus, and with  
Your hair that he believes an aureole  
Brought with you out of Heaven.

*Berengere.*

Again—wrong.

*Renier.* So deem you and, my Berengere, I grieve,  
Desiring much your peace.

*Berengere.*

It grieves you not.

*Renier.* Then not ! and half I fear—you here ?—it should not.  
There's midnight in this thing and mystery.  
Does she not love—Camarin ?

*Yolanda (trembling).*

Say no more.

Be all—all as you will.

*Renier.*

That brings you low :

But brings to me no light—only again  
The stumbling in suspicion.

*Yolanda.*

It should not.

*Renier (with a sudden gleam).*

To-morrow then, unless Amaury runs  
Fitting revenge through Camarin of Paphos,  
Your lover, you shall clasp him openly  
Before all of Lusigman.

*Yolanda.*

No ; no, no !

The thought of it is soil ! . . . Rather . . . his death !

*Renier.* What, what ?

*Berengere.*

My lord, she knows not what she says.

The unaccustomed wind of these ill hours  
Has torn tranquillity from her and reason.

*Yolanda (realising).* Yes, as she says—tranquillity and reason.  
(*Strains to smile.*)

These hours of ill !

*Renier.*

I'll send her Camarin.

[*Goes, looking steadfastly back.*]

*Yolanda* (turning, then, to BERENGERE).

His mood and mien—that tremor in his throat,  
Unfaltering. I fear him.

*Berengere.* Life is fear.

No step was ever taken in the world  
But from a brink of danger, or in flight  
From happiness whose air is ever sin.  
It sickens me.

*Yolanda.* Mother!

*Berengere.* Nothing; a pain

Here in my breast. (*Sits.*)

*Yolanda.* And it is all through him

Who as a guest came pledged into this house.  
Came with the chivalry and manly show  
Of reverence and grace, and on his lips  
Lore of the east and wonders of the west.

(*CAMARIN appears from garden.*)

Ah, and he seeks us now! unwhelmed of it!

Ready of step, impassive, cold! And see—

(*He bows, then listens rigidly.*)

A flawless courtesy! as 'twere a king's.  
Can he not smile too on his handiwork?  
Our days were merciful and he has made  
Each moment's beat a blow upon the breast.  
Honour was here and innocence lies now  
A sacrifice that pain cannot consume.

(*Pauses.*)

*Camarin.* Or death.

*Yolanda.* Then have you not, unshameable!

A help for it or healing? you who know  
 So well the world and its unwonted ways!  
 A man would have, a man.

*Camarin.* And I am barren.

My brain an arid waste under remorse.  
 Only—one thing it yields—the love of her  
 My love has made unholy.

*Yolanda.* While to me

The shame is left, and silence—no defence,  
 When it is told Amaury, "See her you  
 Blest with betrothal and the boon of faith,  
 Chose as the planet-mate of your proud star!  
 While, in the battle,  
 You with the weal of Cyprus on your brow  
 Dared momentarily peril,  
 We found her" . . . Ah, the memory is fire!—  
 I will not bear it.

*Camarin.* Then how? what? . . . You must.

Though for your suffering I am pitiful.  
 You must! (*Takes her wrist.*)  
 For to one thing, one only now I'm bent—  
 That Berengere be saved.

*Berengere.* To-day . . . no more.

*Camarin.* Suspicion and the peril-feet of shame

I must keep from her still.

*Yolanda.* Though driven o'er

My heart they trample the lone flower of hope.  
 (*Shaking off his hand, then, unnaturally wrought up.*)  
 And even now perhaps Amaury hears



And turns away in horror!

*Camarin.* What? Come, come.

Enough is here without—

*Yolanda (as before).* I'll go to him!

Despite of them! in to his side and say

That I am innocent—as the first dawn

And dew of Eden! . . . Yes!

*Camarin.* A frenzy! Mere

Folly! you wander!

*Yolanda (listening).* Whose that anguish? whose?

*Camarin.* Amaury still is many leagues away—

*(Hassan appears.)*

At Keryneia! Do you hear me?

*Yolanda.* Hassan!

*(Is numb as he hurries down from the castle to her. A pause; then her voice falls hoarsely.)*

I hear you, speak. His wounds I know. The rest!

They've told him?

*Hassan.* The Venetian, who nursed him

Last night, pouring his potions—

She and lord Renier. They broke his sleep.

He listened to them as one in a grave.

Then they besought of him

Some oath against you, were they right: he would not.

Now he has risen,

Silent and pale and suffering in leash.

He's coming here.

*Camarin.* Why, you are mad!

*Yolanda.* Be still.

*Camarin.* Amaury was not then delayed? is—here?

*(Voices are heard perturbed within the castle. Then AMAURY, putting aside RENIER and TREMITUS, followed by VITTIA and others, enters down.)*

*Amaury.* I'll not return unto my couch though twice  
These wounds and all your wants were urging it!  
Yolanda! my Yolanda!—Never, never!

*(Takes her to him.)*

Until I prove you that a word against  
Her that I hold here in my arms is more  
To me than any peril.

*Tremitus.* But, sir—! . . . Aeih!  
My precious physic wasted!

*Amaury.* Till I prove it!  
For . . . my Yolanda! . . .  
You who are purity if Mary still  
Is mother of God and lighteth Paradise!  
You in whose presence I am purged as one  
Bathing a thousand years in angel song!  
They say, you, who are stainless to my eyes  
As is the sacring-bell to holy ears,  
So undefiled even the perfect lily  
Pendant upon your breast fears to pollute it!  
Listen, they tell me you—A fool, a fool  
Would know it unbelievable and laugh.

*Renier.* As now a fool is doing?

*Amaury.* O, sir, pardon.  
You are my father, and, I must believe,  
Mean well this monster breath's unchastity,

As does this lady (*of VITTIA*) who has gently nursed me.  
 But you were tricked; it was illusion swum  
 Before your sleep. Therefore my purpose is  
 Now to forget it.

*Tremitus.* Aieh! and to return  
 Now to my drugs.

*Renier.* Stand off!—As dogs forget  
 The lash in hunger of the wonted bone?  
 (*Laughs angrily.*)

*Amaury.* A poison so incredible and dark  
 You cannot duped inoculate me with.  
 Trust in my veins makes of it but more love.  
 And to dispel your minds (*goes to CAMARIN*) I'll clasp  
 his hand  
 Whom you have so accused.

*Vittia.* O do, my lord!  
 (*Smiles disdainfully.*)  
 And then embrace him in whose arms three nights  
 Ago she was embraced.

*Yolanda (to her).* Can you so say!

*Vittia.* Yes, and will add—

*Amaury.* Lady of Venice, nothing!  
 But this to all, I answer!—  
 There is my mother, see,  
 Wounded with wonder of this plight, and pity.  
 Yolanda has dwelt by her  
 As the fawn  
 By the white doe on mount Chionodes.  
 I would as quick believe that she had given

Her holiness up to contamination

As that Yolanda——

*Yolanda.* Amaury, enough! . . . I know!

*Amaury.* As quickly!

*Yolanda.* Then . . . quell this delirium!

(*A pause.*)

Out of your thought forever let it fall,

Hear no more of it, ever!

Be deaf to it as to a taunt of doom,

In triple mail to every peaceless word,

Granite against even its memory.

Say that you will, and now! . . .

*Renier.* So that you may

Allure him yet to wed you?

*Amaury.* Sir!

*Renier.* She would.

*Yolanda.* No, no! But let him. . . . Then I will go far

Away from here to any alien air,

To opiate India, a lost sea-isle!

To the last peak of arid Caucasus.

*Renier.* With Camarin of Paphos?

*Yolanda.* With whoever

Your peace and this compelling pain . . . Ah no!

*Renier.* With him, with him, I say? . . .

*Amaury.* You drive and drain her.

To me her words shall be—me and no other.

So my Yolanda now dissolve the cling

Of this invisible but heavy hydra;

I've striven with it till no more I can.

If any tare has been unseemly sown  
 Upon the April vision of our love,  
 Say it at once that I may rend and fling it  
 Away from us. Say it!

*Renier.* Vainly implored.—

Yet ask her this, If she three nights ago——

*Amaury.* I will not so insult her——

*Tremitus.* Aieh——

*Renier.* Insult?

She knows what I would bid and does she hurl  
 Her soul in any disavowal?

*Amaury.* I  
 Will speak to her alone. Go all of you  
 There to the fountain.

*Yolanda.* Yes, Amaury, then  
 One searching of my face shall free your fear.  
 Alone, alone.

*Renier.* Still to befool him!

*Yolanda (warningly).* Choose!

I cannot suffer more of this.

*Amaury.* Nor I  
 To breathe ever the burning of this mist  
 Of anguish and insatiate accusal,—  
 This wound upon my throat, fever it not  
 With longer fire of doubt, Yolanda.

*Yolanda.* Ah!

*Berengere.* I am not well. I will go to my chamber.

(*She passes into the castle.*)

*Renier.* But I never until this guiler grants

I found her in the arms of Camarin,  
 Drinking the frenzied wine of passion he  
 Poured from his soul.

*Amaury.* Yolanda ?

*Renier.* She is silent ;

Dumb to deny it.

*Amaury.* But she will, she will.

You've driven her with dread and awe.

*Vittia (lightly).* And truth ?

*Amaury.* Have wounded her. But do not fear, Yolanda,  
 Fiercely disown.

*Yolanda.* Amaury . . . it is true.

*(He staggers slowly back.)*

No, no ; I have not been faithless to you—  
 Even a moment  
 To the divinity of love high-altared  
 Here in my breast ! to the immutable  
 Beauty of it ! . . . look, look not on me so—  
 As I had struck, murdered a little child !  
 Or palsied one who put a hand to help me ;  
 Or through eternity had desecrated,  
 Vainly, virginity and trust and truth !  
 No, my Amaury ! I . . . do you not see ?

*(Hysterically.)*

Not faithless, hear ! it is not true ! not true !  
 But only this——

*Camarin.* Yolanda !

*Yolanda.* I——

*Camarin.* Yolanda!

(*A moment, then she sinks down, her face in her hands.*  
*AMAURY groans; then starting goes fiercely to HASSAN,*  
*and taking his sword recrosses trembling to CAMARIN.*)

*Amaury.* The day you first set step in Lusignan  
 An image of the Magdalen within  
 The chapel yonder fell—presaging this.  
 Only your death, your death or mine stands pale  
 Between us now, awaiting silently.  
 Draw, and at once.

*Camarin.* Amaury, I will not.

*Amaury.* Out, quickly.

*Camarin.* Do your will. I'll put no more  
 To the guilt I bear, or to the misery  
 That guilt has brought upon you.

*Amaury.* Coward!

*Camarin.* Strike!

*Amaury.* You play a part! (*Raves.*) And 'tis that you may  
 live  
 Still in the love that you a thief have stolen.  
 So, with your steel——!

*Camarin.* It stays within its sheath.

*Amaury.* Then I will not be thwarted though I must  
 Crush you as one a viper with his heel,  
 Though I must take your leper throat into  
 My hands and strangle life from it!  
 For the same sky you breathe I will not.  
 The sun that falls upon you shall not foul  
 My being—

Though I must go down into hell for it.

*(He starts, frenzied, to strike, but suddenly staggers; then clasps at his throat, drops the sword, and sinks down moaning.)*

Yolanda. His wound!

Tremitus. Aeih, aeih! at last.

Yolanda. Amaury! Oh!

*(Runs to him. He struggles to his feet.)*

Amaury! Amaury!

Amaury. Stand away from me.

*(She falls back; he laughs in derision.)*

I to believe her pure as my own mother!

Vittia. Had you but trusted me, Amaury.

Amaury. You?

*(Looks long at her.)*

Henceforth I will.

Vittia. And wholly?

Amaury *(significantly)*. She . . . shall do it.

*(Starts into the castle.)*

Yolanda *(dauntedly)*. Amaury! what is this?

Vittia. That, ere a dawn,

Guileless Yolanda, you shall wed with him

Your paramour of Paphos—

Yolanda. Camarin?

Vittia. And from these gates be led wanton away.

*(YOLANDA, for a moment whelmed, tries to laugh scorn; but, turning, her eye meets RENIER'S full of suspicion. He follows AMAURY meaningly into the castle.)*

CURTAIN.



## ACT III

### THE SAME DAY.

SCENE: *The Hall and loggia of Act I. ; but toward sunset, and afar, on the flushed sea, are seen the fisher-boats returning pale-winged to shore. In the left distance, also, a portion of Famagouste is visible above the waves—its orient walls and towers, white domes and houses, interspersed with tall palms. The interior of the Hall is the same ; only the divan is placed to the front and left, the lectern near the balcony leading to the sleeping apartments and to the chapel. SMARDA is lying lithely on the divan, beguiled with her charms and amulets, and from time to time giving a low, sinuous laugh. VITTIA enters, watches a moment, thoughtful, then advances.*

*Vittia.* Smarda——

*Smarda (springing up).* Lady . . . your slave !

*Vittia.* I think you are.

Think that you are—if ever the leopard yields.

*Smarda.* To you, lady ? A-ha ! let him refuse.

Command !

*Vittia.* And you will heed it well ; I fear not.  
But first I have thought of requital.

*Smarda (avidly).* Ovie !

*Vittia.* Those amulets——

*Smarda.* Of jade—and sard !

*Vittia.* And which

You prize so——

*Smarda.* From my home in Scythia  
Across the sea (*darkening*) they came with me.

*Vittia.* The home  
Whence you were torn by the Moor who was your  
master.

(*Sees SMARDA snarl.*)

Is it not so ?

*Smarda.* The spirits strangle him !  
(*Works lividly at the charms.*)

*Vittia.* Well, if I win to-night what is begun  
You shall not want, I think,  
Of gold for weightier witchery upon him.  
(*The slave's eyes gleam.*)

But listen, every sinew will be needed  
Still to achieve this wedding, though we have  
Camarin with us, willing. So I've learned  
A ship has come from Venice.

*Smarda (quickly).* Pietro !

*Vittia.* Yes, Pietro, it must be, has arrived  
With papers that will help.

*Smarda.* Ha ! Fortune's touch !

*Vittia.* It is, but tardy. Therefore I must have

Them instantly.

*Smarda.* Ere he has time, lady,  
To vaunt of love in Lusignan and babble.

*Vittia.* A wooing dolt! but safe—because he fears.—  
I shall be in this place with lord Amaury,  
Whom I must . . . but no matter.  
He left me suddenly  
A season since, seeing his father's look  
Strangely upon his mother: for that doubt,  
His father's, still I've been compelled to feed,  
To move Yolanda.—  
Here I shall be, then, here within this place.

[*She goes engrossedly.*]

*Smarda* (*recalling the pledge; evilly*). A-ha! ha-ha! ha-ha! if  
she but win!

A talisman with might upon the Moor!

(*Begins to dance—a charm held up before her.*)

If she but win! a-ha! a curse on him!

(*Whirls faster with a wild grace, swaying to and fro, and  
chanting softly the while, till suddenly a laugh in the  
corridor stops her, and PIETRO is heard through the  
curtains adoring CIVA, who pushes him into the Hall,  
then runs away laughing.*)

*Pietro* (*after her*). Hold, fair one! Stay!

(*Turns.*)

*Smarda.*

**PIETRO!**

*Pietro.*

Slave! (*Vainly*). I greet you.

(*Bows grandly.*)

*Smarda.* A-ha! . . . So!

*Pietro.* I, Pietro, as you see,  
Who, you're aware, am sought  
Of all the loveliest  
Attendant on the lords and high of Venice.

*Smarda.* Yes . . . Ha!

*Pietro.* "The gentle Pietro," they say.  
You may remember.

*Smarda.* Ha!

*Pietro.* "Proud Pietro!"  
And then they sigh.

*Smarda.* Sigh. But you've papers—

*Pietro.* Then—  
They weep and pine—until I must console them.

*Smarda* (*going to where he poses; contemptuously*). And for all  
this, O prince of paramours,

(*He is startled.*)

My lady has no doubt bid you to sail  
From Venice.

*Pietro.* Slave?

*Smarda.* And she will hear with love  
That you delay the powers of the Senate  
Sent in your keeping to her.

*Pietro.* She!

*Smarda.* Oh, with

(*As he twitches.*)

Love and delight—for urgently she waits them!

And then—then of your amorous mouthings yonder!

*Pietro.* You will not, slave! but quickly take them to her,

The papers . . . quickly !

*(Fumbles for them.)*

Dear slave, you will—and say if she inquire  
That I was led astray  
By the little Cyprian with guiling eyes  
Who fell enamoured of me at the gate.

*Smarda.* Civa !

*Pietro.* The same ! I sought to run away,

*(Still searching.)*

O slave, say to her, but I could not for—  
For—for a lady by the marble knight,  
That is, by the fountain, swooned, as—

*Smarda.*

Swooned !

*Pietro.*

She did.

Out by the fountain.

*Smarda.* As you came ? who ? which ?

Lady Yolanda ? lady Berengere ?

*(He stares at her ardour.)*

Did no one say ? . . . My mistress must know this !  
The papers, quickly !

*Pietro.* Slave, you —— ! By my sins !

*(She has seized them, and is gone. He follows amazed. Sunset begins without, crimson and far. AMAURY appears from the loggia, reckless, worn. He pauses, looks about him, troubled.)*

*Amaury.* Not here yet. . . . There is more in this than seems.

(*Goes to divan and sits. VITTIA enters behind.*)  
 More, Camarin of Paphos, than is clear!

(*Starts up.*)

And she must tell me! (*Sees Vittia.*) Lady, you I mean.

(*VITTIA advances inquiringly.*)

What is beyond this shame upon Yolanda?

*Vittia.* My lord——?

*Amaury.* What! It is moving in me clouded,  
 Deeper than sight but pressing at my peace.  
 My father's look! you saw it!

*Vittia.* Ah!

*Amaury.* And saw  
 Fear in my mother!

*Vittia.* Yes, implanted deep.

*Amaury.* And did not wonder?

*Vittia (sits).* When I knew its source?

No need, my lord—though your pang too I marked—  
 For, trust me, ere to-morrow it will cease—  
 If you are firm.

*Amaury.* I? who know nought? In what?

*Vittia.* That do not ask, I pray. (*Deftly.*) Another could  
 Fitly reply, but I——

*Amaury.* No other better!

*Vittia.* Then . . . it will cease, my lord—  
 So as a flail of doubt it should not still  
 Beat in you—when Yolanda

Is wed with Camarin . . . no, do not speak;  
 The reason for your sake I must withhold.

*Amaury.* Though as under sirocco I am kept. (*Sits.*)  
Sirocco !

(*Rises. a pause.*)

Yet you speak gently.

*Vittia.* No ; unblushingly !

(*He looks surprise.*)

Unblushingly to one who knows—though by  
A chance—my love to him.

(*Turns away.*)

And yet I cannot rue  
That he awaking sudden from the potion  
Surprised the dew of it upon my lips.  
No, and I would that gentle words might be  
As waters of enchantment on his grief—  
But of Yolanda—

(*Rises.*)

*Amaury.* Still I love her, still !

*Vittia (strainedly).* As well she knows, so may refuse to wed  
With Camarin.

*Amaury.* She ?

*Vittia.* Since you are Lusignan,

Heir of a sceptred line,  
And yet may reach—the realm.

*Amaury (pierced).* No . . . not for that  
Her hope was ?

*Vittia.* Were it folly to make sure ?

(*A pause.*)

*Amaury.* How ? speak.

*Vittia.* Again unshameful ? No ; one thing

Alone would serve you. That I must not bring  
My tongue to falter.

*Amaury.* Be it so.

*Vittia.* And yet . . .

*(He has turned away.)*

My lord, my lord, I will !

Will . . . for you suffer !

Will, though indelicacy seem to soil

What bloom I boasted.

Let her think . . let her,

But for to-day,

That you, for she's aware of my affection,

Have chosen—to wed me.

*Amaury.* You !

*Vittia.* For to-day.

To-morrow I return to Venice, then—

Denial.

*Amaury (moved).* Lady—?

*Vittia.* Yes.

*Amaury.* This is most kind.

*(She waits repressed—as he struggles.)*

Kind ; I will do it.

*Vittia.* Will ?

*Amaury.* Grateful, intent

For the issue's utterance. And this wear you,

This token of our race,

*(Takes off his ring.)*

For a proof to her of any tie soever.

*(He puts it on VITTIA'S finger.)*



But now—for the sails make home along the sea—  
Now of my mother.

*Vittia.* More, my lord?

*Amaury.* This only;

(*SMARDA glides in.*)

To-morrow . . . Scythian!

*Vittia.* Who! my lord? . . .

(*Sees the slave's look, which stirs him.*)

Smarda!

Why are you here? . . . Those papers—but your lips!

(*Takes the papers.*)

Not these alone have brought you thus; then what?

(*Follows SMARDA's eye.*)

Of lord Amaury?

*Smarda.* Of his mother.

*Vittia.* How!

*Smarda.* She swooned of terror at the castle gate.

She lies in danger. Hear—'twas as she fled

The lord of Lusignan.

*Amaury.* My father?

*Smarda.* He.

And you are sought below, I heard it said:

Some officer of Famagouste—and men.

(*AMAURY turns dazed and goes.*)

*Vittia* (*with fervour, then—yet awed*).

This is again fortune! . . . fortune!

*Smarda.* Lady?

*Vittia.* Is! though an instant since it seemed disaster.

*Smarda.* And how?

*Vittia.* Yolanda, does she know?

*Smarda.* Nothing.

Nothing. She was returning from the rocks  
Where nest the windy gulls (*gloatingly*)  
As I came hither. I stole there at noon  
To see her suffer.

*Vittia.* Then—I can compel her.  
She will come here. Go to the curtains, see.  
If she is near, the Paphian is in  
The bower by the cypress: go, tell him,  
*The loggia—at once . . . Ah!*

YOLANDA enters.

*Yolanda (to herself).* "Ah" indeed.

(*Her look of purpose changes to one of distrust. But she firmly fronts to VITTIA, as the slave slips out.*)

*Vittia.* My gratitude! I wished, and you are here.

*Yolanda.* And—for some reason of less honour—you.

*Vittia.* I, a dear guest? *fa!*

*Yolanda.* Were you! and not one

This ne'er-before-evenomed air would banish.

(*Slowly*) One whose abiding

These walls would loathe aloud—had they a tongue

To utter.

*Vittia.* Yet I may be mistress of them,

Ere all is done—since still it is my purpose.

*Yolanda.* Gulfs wide as the hate of God for infamy

Would lie preventing; so there is no fear.

(*Sits.*)

*Vittia.* A prophesy!

*Yolanda.* A deeper than disdain.

*Vittia.* Or than your love of Camarin of Paphos!

*Yolanda.* Which you would feign, but cannot.

*Vittia.* Still, before

Evening is done, you will become his wife?

*Yolanda.* If, ere it come, all under Lusignan

Do not look scorn on Vittia Pisani.

(*Rises.*)

*Vittia.* What! how?

*Yolanda.* Plentiful scorn! (*With joy.*) A thing may still

Be done to lift my hope out of this ruin!

To bring Amaury grateful to my feet!

And I will do it.

*Vittia.* Tell? . . . vowing him first

To win his father's lenience? . . . No . . . I see!

You would when she who's guilty

And this enamoured Paphian are fled!

(*YOLANDA turns pale.*)

When they are fled! ha . . . And it is too late.

*Yolanda.* Too—? You by some trick—a trick have—!

*Vittia.* Hindered? Little

I needed . . . Her wings are flightless. She is ill,

Verging—go learn!—to death.

*Yolanda.* No!

*Vittia.* To the grave.

And you alone, she knows, can put it far—

Since she is numbed and drained

Momently by the terror of her husband,

Whose every pulse seems to her a suspicion.

*Yolanda.* And it is you . . . you who have urged again  
His doubt that would have sunk !

*Vittia.* It was enough  
Merely to sigh—and fear her innocence  
Can only seem simple again as dew  
If you wed freely Camarin of Paphos.

*Yolanda.* And that, you could ! though in her heart remorse  
Trampled and tore !  
Though with the wounds of battle he you “love”  
Is livid still.

*Vittia.* And grieves?—Be comforted !  
For *he* is—now security has come.  
(*Shows ring ; YOLANDA falls back.*)  
As *he* is, do not fear.

*Yolanda.* Amaury ! . . . Oh !  
He is not ! no, Amaury ! . . . He ? so soon ?—  
Ah, you are merciless !

*Vittia.* Only aware  
How to compel your pity to my ends ;  
For you will spare his mother.

*Yolanda.* Yielding—still,  
And past all season of recovery ?  
Shattering love for ever at my feet ?  
No, you are duped. For empty, cold are the veins  
Now of submission in me ; numb and dead  
The pleading of it. And upon you, back,  
I cast the burden of your cruelty.

(*Slowly.*)

And—if she dies in terror of the lips

Of Renier Lusignan—on your peace  
The guilt be!

*Vittia.* No.

*Yolanda.* The heaping mass of horror!

*Vittia (moved).* No, on her own; for she has sinned.

*Yolanda.* And suffered!

But you—

*Vittia.* I say her own. I've done no crime.  
And you will wed him.

*Yolanda.* Were I Venetian!

But am not; so remorse has come in you!  
There at the gates that guard your rest you hear  
Dim now the risen phantom cries of it,  
The presage beat of them like hungry hands  
That will o'erwhelm you!  
All that I could to spare her I have done;  
All that was duty and of love the most.  
But you it was who struck and kindled first  
Within lord Renier fire of suspicion.  
Then yours the penance!

*Vittia.* Liar! . . . ah . . . enough.

*(Recovers herself.)*

A babe I am so to be fed with fright.  
You—well I know—will not desert her thus  
To . . . the medusa of his doubt.

*Yolanda.* I will not.

*(With exultance.)*

Will, will not, will not, will not!  
But you it is—

For in the worst that live there still is heaven!—  
 Must null his doubt and ease the sobbing ebb  
 And flood of her sick spirit; you who must  
 Go to his fear and with persuasion say  
 That it is folly of him and of you  
 So to suspect her, since in Camarin's  
 Arms I was found. You will!

*Vittia.*

And—then go pray?

*(Draws out the papers scornfully.)*

Rather I'll bring you this:—Authority  
 Sent me of Venice  
 To make Amaury lordly over Cyprus,  
 Or to abase him even of Famagouste;  
 Which I will do—

*(Goes to her.)*

Unless I have the pledge that you will wed,  
 Though not to be his wife and free to leave him,  
 This Paphian,  
 And with him from Lusignan hence will pass.

*(CAMARIN appears on loggia.)*

And he has come now for your answer.

*Yolanda.*

Here!

In league with you! in this!

*Vittia.*

Most loyally;

And ready skilfully to disavow,  
 With every force, your innocence—if you  
 Attempt betrayal!—  
 Enter, my lord of Paphos—

*(CAMARIN enters desperately.)*

I have spoken.

She has not pledged to wed you—though the life  
Of Berengere Lusignan fall for it,  
And though Amaury . . . But you may avail.

*(Moves off. YOLANDA stands silently between them.*

*CAMARIN looks at her, falters, then turns on VITTIA.)*

*Camarin.* As an anchorite for immortality,  
Venetian, I covet this—covet!  
Yet . . . I will not entreat it of her.

*Vittia.*

What!

*Camarin.* I swore in dread, but will not!

*Vittia.*

Now!

*Yolanda (low).*

Madonna!

*Vittia.* Now you refuse?

*Yolanda.*

He does—he does!

*Vittia.*

The whole?

*Yolanda.* Lady of Venice, yes; for very shame!

*(With grave joy.)*

Bitterly tho' it be, he must, for shame!  
Though he would waste the air of the world to keep  
The breath still in the veins  
Of her his love so wronged,  
He cannot ask me more than breast can bear  
Knowing I have already borne for her  
Infection worse than fetid marshes send  
From Mesaoria—  
Have lost the sky of love that I had arched  
And all the stars of it. See, he is dumb!—  
He cannot.

*Camarin (coldly).* No; but to your heart I leave her  
And to your pity.

*Yolanda.* Say not pity to me!

*(The word overwhelms her anew.)*

Am I not needy, fain of it, and can  
Endurance ever dure!  
What have I left  
Of joy to ripple in me or of light  
To sway me to forgetting—I to whom  
Dawn was enchanted incense once, and day,  
The least of earth, an ideo of heaven bliss.  
What to me left! to me!  
Who shepherded each happy flock of waves  
Running with silvery foaming there to shore,  
Who numbered the little leaves with laughing names  
Out of my love,  
And quickened the winds with quicker winds of hope,  
That now are spent . . . as summer waters,  
Leaving my breast a torrent's barren bed.  
Pity and pity! ever pity! No.

*(Enter HASSAN.)*

A nun to pity I will be no more.  
But you, cruel Venetian . . . Ah, ah,  
Mother of God! is there no gentleness  
In thee to move her and dissolve away  
This jeopardy congealing over us?

*(A pause.)*

*Vittia.* You see, none.

*Yolanda.* Ah, for sceptre and for might



Then to compel you.

*Vittia.* Still, there is none.

*Yolanda.* None . . .

*(Sinks to a seat in despair.)*

Yet could I think !

*Hassan.* Lady Yolanda—

*(Advances.)*

*Yolanda.* Were

My brain less weary !

*Hassan.* Lady Yolanda—

*Yolanda.* Well ?

*Hassan.* There is a means—a might.

*Yolanda.* Well ?

*(Is half heedless.)*

*Hassan.* To compel her.

*Yolanda.* To . . . what ?

*Hassan.* If you will dare it.

*Yolanda.* Will— ?

*Hassan.* I swear.

*Yolanda (rising).* Your thought ! I have no fear.

*Hassan* Then . . . let me but

Seize her and shut her fast an hour within

The leprous keep, and she shall write whate'er

You order ; then upon a vessel quick

Be sent to Venice whence she came.

*Camarin.* Mad ! mad !

Venice would rise !

*Hassan.* And Cyprus, to be free !—

But 'tis not, lady ! and lord Renier

Shall have a letter of her guile and flight.

Venture it, venture !

*Yolanda (after a long pause).* If it can be done,  
It shall be.

*Hassan.* Ah !

*Yolanda.* And must be.

*Vittia.* Fools, to me !

*(She stands defensive, as HASSAN prepares to close in.)*

*Yolanda.* Quickly, and take her.

*Hassan.* Now.

*Camarin (with sudden horror).* No ! . . . Fateless God !

*(His eyes are fixed on the balcony.)*

See, see ! . . . Berengere ! Oh ! fury of hell !

*(They look and fall back appalled. For slowly down the steps comes RENIER following BERENGERE, whose eyes turn back in fluttering trance upon him.)*

*Yolanda.* Ah ! . . . he will kill her ! Stop, my lord ! mother !  
Lord Renier !

*(Runs ; takes BERENGERE in her arms.)*

Cold is she, stony pale,

And sinking ! . . . Go away from her, go go !

*Renier.* No . . . she shall tell me.

*Yolanda.* Mother ! . . . Tell you that  
You are her murderer ?

*Renier.* The truth !

*Yolanda.* The truth !

*(Laughs bitterly, and at a loss, as if amazed. Then, almost against her will, led, to the end—)*

It is suspicion! is that mad suspicion  
That you have had of her.

*Renier.* It is! It is!

*Yolanda.* And—all because I have these days delayed  
To wed with Camarin.

*Renier.* Delayed?

*Yolanda.* Because  
I show befitting shame that I was here  
Found in his arms . . . when to Amaury  
I was betrothed!

*Renier.* Power of—! No!

*Yolanda.* Because  
I grieve to leave Lusignan, this my home—  
Where I have dwelt as under tented love—  
Though I am bidden.

*Renier.* This can be?

*Berengere (faintly).* Yolanda!

*Renier.* I say—only delayed? and you—?

*Yolanda.* Yes, yes.

Now I will wed him, heedless, wantless, wild.  
Send for the priest and for Amaury, for  
Laughter and lights and revelry—for all  
Within this castle. But first to her bed,  
And to tranquillity,  
She must be borne, she your cold violence  
Has driven here. . . . Alessa—Tremitus!

*(They have entered.)*

Lead her within. O mother! piteous mother!—  
Ah, it was ruthless, kindless!

*Renier.* We shall see.

(*To HASSAN.*)

Bid Moro and Amaury.—As for her,  
I soon may come and seek forgiveness.

*Berengere.* No!

(*HASSAN goes.*)

My brain and breath! . . . the pall . . . where am I  
. . . how  
Long must I lie! . . .

*Tremitus.* She speaks to visions. So,  
So can the blood do—trick us utterly!

(*He supports her—with ALESSA—slowly up steps and off.*  
*YOLANDA covers her eyes. HASSAN returns with*  
*MORO, then, and AMAURY, whose look seeks VITTIA.*)

*Yolanda (as all stand silent).*

Speak, speak, and tell him!

*Renier.* Yes, Amaury . . . you

Are sent for to behold Yolanda wed,  
As you commanded,  
Here unto Camarin. Shame has till now  
Withheld her, but . . . what ails you?

*Amaury.* On; go on.

The sudden blood up to my wounds.

*Renier.* It has,

I say, withheld her. But she now has chosen.

*Amaury.* So; and . . . it is well. And here are her  
Vows I have kept—

(*Takes a packet from his breast.*)

Vows and remembrances . . . I shall aspire--

*(Hands it; she lets it fall.)*

That I may loathe her not o'ermuch; and to  
Muffle my sword from him that now she weds.

*(His voice breaks tonelessly.)*

Come, let it be.

*Yolanda.* Amaury!

*Amaury (angrily.)* Priest, be brief!

*Moro (before them; as CARAMIN takes YOLANDA'S hand).*

The Church invests me and the powers of  
This island here to make you man and wife.

Be joined, ye who have sinned,  
In soul, peace and repentances for ever.

*(He signs the cross. YOLANDA stands dazed. A silence.*

*Then a shuddering cry and all turn toward the balcony,  
where ALESSA bursts, pale, wild, and striving to speak.*

*Yolanda (with dread, awe, premonition).* Alessa!

*Alessa.* Lady Yolanda! you have wed him?

*Yolanda (pausing.)* Yes.

*Alessa.* Lady Berengere is dead.

*Yolanda.* No! . . . No!

*(Chokes rebelliously.)*

It cannot be! mother! cannot! awake her!

And tell her I have wed him! mother! cannot!

*(Goes trembling, belieflessly, up the balcony. A strange doubt  
seizes AMAURY. On the rest is silence, consternation,  
and fear.)*

CURTAIN.

## ACT IV

SCENE: *The Chapel of the Castle—or Chapel of the Magdalen—a few hours later. It is of stone, low-arched, gloomy, and adorned with Byzantine mosaics of gaunt saints on backgrounds of gold. The altar is in the rear, and above it a large window, through which pours the still moon. In front of it, to either side, rise two pillars supporting the roof, and on one of them, halfway up, stands a stone image of the Magdalen. Forward are two other pillars whose bases form seats. The right wall has, set midway, a large door hung with heavy curtains. In the rear are smaller doors leading to a sacristy. The altar lamp and a few tapers burn. ALESSA enters, rubbing her eyes as if to clear them of vision, looks around, then calls uncertainly—*

*Alessa.* Good father! Father Moro! . . . He is not here.

*(Rubs her eyes again.)*

The dead are strange! I knew not all their power.

It is as if her spirit still imprisoned

Hovered beneath the pallor of her face

And strove to speak. Good father!

# YOLANDA

77

*Enter MORO.*

Ah, you were

There in the sacristy.

*Moro.* Yes. Your desire?

*Alessa.* The acolytes summoned from Famagouste  
To aid your rites before her burial  
Have come, and wait.

*Moro.* Send hither two.

*(Looks closely at her.)*

*Alessa.* At once.

*(Is going. He stops her.)*

*Moro.* Woman, this passes silence. There must be  
Some question. Do you understand this wedding?  
The evil that has risen in this house?  
Speak.

*Alessa.* I may not.

*Moro.* As says Yolanda, who  
Has been to-day impenetrable in all.  
But who, now, in a lofty grief above  
The misery that blasted her, seems calm,  
And answers only,  
"God in His season will,  
I trust, unfold it soon; I cannot, now!" . . .  
And yet I heard  
Her darkly bid the Paphian be gone—  
From here—without her.

*Alessa.* And he would not?

*Moro.* No.

*(A pause.)*

Does she not see lightnings now in Amaury,  
Plunging for truth? What is't?

*Alessa.* The acolytes  
Are waiting.

*Moro.* Go . . . But if this hour bring forth  
What you shall rue——

*Alessa.* Father!

[*Goes quickly, troubled.*  
In blindness still!

*Moro*  
For Vittia Pisani, who alone  
Seems with these twain to share this mystery  
Is silent to all importunity.  
Oh, Berengere Lusignan!

But 'tis mine  
To pray and to prepare. (*Listens.*) The acolytes.  
(*Two enter, sleek, sanctimonious.*)

(*To First.*) Come here . . . You're Serlio,  
Of the Ascension. You?

*2nd Acolyte.* Hilarion.  
From Santa Maria by the Templars' well,  
Which God looks on with gratitude, father.  
For though we're poor and are unworthy servants  
We've given willingly our widow's mite.  
And now we . . .

*Moro.* You are summoned to this place  
For ministrations other than the tongue's.  
Prepare that altar—masses for the dead.

*Hilarion.* Man is as grass that withers!

*Moro.* Kindle all



Its tapers. The departed will be borne  
 Hither for holy care and sacred rest.  
 So do—then after  
 Look to that image of the Magdalen,  
 Once it has fallen.

*Serlio.* Domine, dirige!  
 (*MORO goes. They put off cant and set to work.*)

*Hilarion (insolently, lighting a taper).*  
 We'll have good wine for this!

*Serlio.* The Chian! Hee!  
 None's like the Chian! and to-morrow, meat!  
 Last week old Ugo died and we had pheasant.

*Hilarion.* When we are priests we'll give no comforting  
 To wife or maid—till we have sipped!

*Serlio.* And supped!  
 Though 'tis a Friday and the Pope is dead!  
 (*Silence. They work faster.*)

*Hilarion.* There, it is done. Now to the image.

*Serlio.* Well,  
 Olympio, the cock who fetched us, said  
 That image fell first on the day——

*Hilarion.* Tchuck! tchuck!  
 Better no breath about that lord of Paphos  
 Or any here. For till the dead are three  
 Days gone, you know—! But there's the woman. Feign.  
 (*As ALESSA re-enters; hypocritically.*)

The blessed dead! in Purgatory may  
 They briefly bide.

*Serlio.* Aye! aye!

*Alessa (still troubled).*

What say you?

*Hilarion.*

Ah!

I lay that it is wise never to foul  
The dead, even in thinking,  
For they may hear us, none can say, and once  
My mother saw a dead man who had gone  
Unshriven start up white and cry out loud  
When he was curst.

*Serlio.*

O Lord!

*Alessa (staring).*

No! . . . Well, such things

There are perchance. And now they say that Venus,  
The Anadyomene, who once ruled this isle,  
Is come again. . . . But you have finished? Soon  
They bring her body here.

*Hilarion.*

Now have I, now!

It will not totter again. (*Descends.*)

*Alessa.*

Would that it might

Upon the head of— (*catches herself; calmly*)

You are awaited

There in the sacristy. . . . The chant begins!

(*The acolytes go. She grows more disquieted.*)

Begins! and lady Yolanda still awaits  
Heedless, though Lord Amaury's desperate  
As is the Paphian! . . . They near! . . . The curtains!  
(*Goes to them and draws them back. As she does so the  
chant swells louder. Then the cortège enters—MORO,  
the acolytes with tapers; BERENGERE on a litter,  
AMAURY, RENIER, VITTIA, the women, HASSAN, and*

*last YOLANDA. The litter, AMAURY by it, comes to the altar ; the chanting ceases.)*

*Moro (as AMAURY bows, shaken).*

No moan or any toil of grief be here  
Where we have brought her for sainted appeal.  
But in this holy place until the tomb  
Let her find rest.

*Amaury.* Set down the bier.  
(*It is placed.*)

*Moro.* Lone rest !  
Then bliss Afar for ever !

*Amaury (rises).* Be it so !  
(*Turning ; brokenly.*)

But unto any, mother, who have brought thee  
Low to this couch, be never ease again.  
To any who have put thy life out, never !  
But in them be the burning that has seemed  
To shrivel thee—whether with pain or fear !  
And be appeaseless tears,  
Salt tears that rust the fountain of the heart.  
(*Sinks to a seat. A pause.*)

*Moro.* My son, relentless words.

*Amaury (up again).* To the relentless !

*Moro.* God hear you not !

*Amaury.* Then is He not my God.

*Moro.* Enough, enough. (*To the rest.*) But go and for her  
soul

Freight all of you this tide of night with prayer.

*Amaury.* Never !

*Mrs.* I bid.

*Amaury.* And I forbid those who  
Have prized her not!  
For though nought's in the world but prayer may move,  
Still but the lips that loved her  
Should for her any sin beseeching lift.

(*Looking at YOLANDA.*)

They and no other!

*Yolanda.* And, you mean——?

*Amaury.* Not one.

*Yolanda.* Then, mother——

(*Goes to bier.*)

*Amaury.* That name again?

*Yolanda.* While I have breath.

(*Nobly.*) Yes, though you hold me purgeless of that sin  
Only the pale arch-angels may endure  
Trembling to muse on!  
Or though yon image of the Magdalen,  
Whose alabaster broke amid her tears  
And her torn hair, forbade me with a voice.  
And you, whose heart is shaken  
As in a tomb a taper's flame, would know  
I speak with love.

*Camarin.* Unswerving love.

*Amaury.* Then, by  
Christ, and the world that craves His blood, I think  
She, if she would, or you, could point to me,  
Or you, Vittia Pisani,  
The reason of this sudden piteous death

Hard on the haunted flight before my father,  
Whose lips refuse.

*Camarin.* She knows no shred of it.

*Amaury.* You lie to say it.

*Camarin.* Then will, still—if there  
Is need.

*Amaury.* Because you love her?

*Yolanda.* Peace, peace, peace.

*Amaury.* A hollow word for what had never being.

*Yolanda.* Look on her face and see.

*Amaury (at bier).* Upon her face!

Where not oblivion the void of death

Has hid away, or can, the agony

(Of her last terror—but it trembles still.

I tell you, no. Grief was enough, but now

Through it has risen mystery that chokes

As a miasma from Iscariot's tomb.

And till this pall of doubt be rent away

No earth shall fall and quicken with her dust!

But I will search her face . . . till it reveals.

*Camarin.* He raves.

*Amaury.* Iscariot! yes!

*Yolanda.* Again, peace, peace!

*Amaury.* That you may palter!

*Yolanda (gently).* That she may not grieve.

(*Goes again to bier.*)

For—if 'tis near—her soul with this is wrung.

Near! would it were to hear me and impart

Its yearning and regret to us who live,

Its dim unhappiness and hollow want.  
 Yes, mother, were you now about us, vain,  
 Invisible and without any voice  
 To tell us of you !  
 Were you and now could hear through what of cold  
 Or silence wrap you, oh, so humanly  
 And seeming but a veil—  
 Then would you hear me say—(*suddenly aghast*)  
 Ah, God !

*Amaury.* Yolanda !

*(She starts back from the bier.)*

Yolanda !

*Renier.* Girl, what rends you ?

*Yolanda.* Saw you not ?

*(Rushes to bier and shakes it.)*

Mother ! you hear me ? mother !

*Renier.* Girl !

*Yolanda.* She breathes !

*(Consternation. Some fall to their knees.)*

*Vittia.* What ? what ?

*Yolanda.* Mother ! Her breast ! Mother ! She  
 moves !

*Amaury.* God ! God !

*Yolanda.* Stand off from her . . . Mother !

*Camarin.* Her eyes ! . . .

They open ! open !

*Yolanda.* Mother ! . . .

*Amaury.* See ; her lips !

They strive to speak ! O faintly, O so faint !

Can you not hear?

*Berengere.*

Yolanda!

*Yolanda.*

Mother!

*Berengere.*

Renier!

*Renier.* Yes, yes?

*Berengere.*

Yolanda—

*Renier.*

Speak!

*Berengere.*

Christ, save me . . . Christ!

Yolanda's innocent, and I . . . 'twas I.

*Amaury.* What? what is it she says?

*Berengere.*

Camarin! Ah!

*(She shudders and dies, amid low-uttered awe. RENIER bends, lays his hand a moment on her breast, then, with a cry of rage, springs from her and draws, and rushes on CAMARIN, who awaits him, desperate.)*

*Amaury (confused, as they engage).*

Yolanda; what is this?

*Yolanda.*

Amaury, in!

Compel lord Renier back! he cannot live,

You only could against Camarin now!

Wait not to question, but obey me! if

You ever—! *(As he rushes in)* Holy Magdalen, defend him!

*(RENIER falls back.)*

Now, now defend him, if to chastity

Thou'rt vowed in heaven.

*Vittia.*

Fool!—Camarin, strike!

*Yolanda.* He's wounded!

*Camarin.* Oh! . . . Berengere! . . . treachery!  
*(He staggers and sinks back heavily toward the pillar. There is breathless, strained suspense. Then he strikes the sacred column, and as he does so the image above sways, totters and crushes upon him. A cry, "The Magdalen!" goes up around.)*

*Hassan (hurrying to him; after awe and silence).*

He's dead.

*Alessa.* The Magdalen!

*Hassan.* No breath in him.

*(A pause.)*

*Renier (low, harshly).*

Bear him without then ever from this place,  
 That never more shall know a holy rite—  
 And from these gates, I care not to what tomb.

*(To AMAURY.)*

Then shall you hear this mystery's content,  
 That still as a madness measures to your sight.  
 Bear him without.

*(The limp body is borne away. All follow but AMAURY, YOLANDA, RENIER.)*

Now you shall hear, with shame,  
 But with exalted pride and happy tears;  
 Then come obliteration!  
 Speak, girl . . . Nobility  
 Had never better title to its truth.

*[Kisses her hand and goes.]*

*Amaury.* Yolanda! . . . he! . . . this reverence as to  
 An angel? Speak!



*Yolanda.*

Amaury—

*Amaury.*

O pause not!

*Yolanda.* Then—to save her who's dead—from death and shame,

I took her place within the Paphian's arms.

*Amaury.* O! . . . and by me, driven by me, bore this!

*(Overcome)* Pure as the rills of Paradise, endured?

*Yolanda.* For you!—and her who sleeps forgiven there,  
*(With deep abandon.)*

Now while her spirit weightless overwingeth  
Night, to that Throne whose seeing heals all shame!  
For her I did! but oh, for you, whose least  
Murmur to me is infinite with Spring,  
Whose smile is light, filling the air with dawn,  
Whose touch, wafture of immortality  
Unto my weariness; and whose eyes, now,  
Are as the beams God lifted first, they tell us,  
Over the uncreated,  
In the far singing mother-dawn of the world!—  
Come with me then, but tearless, to her side.

*(They go to the bier and stands as in a dream. A pause;  
then her lips move, last, as if inspired.)*

While there is sin to sway the soul and sink it  
Pity should be as strong as love or death!

*(With a cry of joy he enfolds her, and they kneel, wrapped  
about with the clear moon.)*

THE END.

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## LYRICS

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## J A E L

J E H O V A H ! Jehovah ! art Thou  
not stronger than gods of the heathen ?  
I slew him, that Sisera, prince  
of the host Thou dost hate.  
But fear of his blood is upon me,  
about me is breathe  
His spirit—by night and by day  
come voices that wait.

Athirst and affrightened he fled from  
the star-wrought waters of Kishon.  
His face was as wool when he swooned  
at the door of my tent.  
The Lord hath given him into  
the hand of perdition,  
I smiled—but he saw not the face  
of my cunning intent.

He thirsted for water : I fed him  
the curdless milk of the cattle.

## JAEL

He lay in the tent under purple  
and crimson of Tyre.  
He slept and he dreamt of the surge  
and storming of battle.  
Ah ha! but he woke not to waken  
Jehovah's ire.

He slept as he were a chosen  
of Israel's God Almighty.  
A dog out of Canaan!—thought he  
I was woman alone?  
I slipt like an asp to his ear  
and laughed for the sight he  
Would give when the carrion kites  
should tear to his bone.

I smote thro' his temple the nail,  
to the dust a worm did I bind him.  
My heart was a-leap with rage  
and a-quiver with scorn.  
And I danced with a holy delight  
before and behind him—  
I that am called blessed o'er all  
who're of Judah born.

“Aye, come, I will show thee, O Barak,  
a woman is more than a warrior,”  
I cried as I lifted the door  
wherein Sisera lay.

“To me did he fly and I  
shall be called his destroyer—  
I, Jael, who am subtle to find  
for the Lord a way !”

“Above all the daughters of men  
be blest—of Gilead or Asshur,”  
Sang Deborah, prophetess, under  
her waving palm.

“Behold her, ye people, behold her  
the heathen’s abasher ;  
Behold her the Lord hath uplifted—  
behold and be calm.

“The mother of him at the window  
looks out thro’ the lattice to listen—  
Why roll not the wheels of his chariot ?  
why does he stay ?  
Shall he not return with the booty  
of battle, and glisten  
In songs of his triumph—ye women,  
why do ye not say ?”

And I was as she who danced when  
the Seas were rendered asunder  
And stood, until Egypt pressed in  
to be drowned unto death.  
My breasts were as fire with the glory,  
the rocks that were under

## JAEL

My feet grew quick with the gloating  
that beat in my breath.

At night I stole out where they cast him,  
a sop to the jackal and raven.

But his bones stood up in the moon  
and I shook with affright.

The strength shrank out of my limbs  
and I fell a craven

Before him—the nail in his temple  
gleamed bloodily bright.

Jehovah ! Jehovah ! art Thou  
not stronger than gods of the heathen ?

I slew him, that Sisera, prince  
of the host Thou dost hate.

But fear of his blood is upon me,  
about me is breathe

His spirit—by day and by night  
come voices that wait.

I fly to the desert, I fly to the  
mountain—but they will not hide me.

His gods haunt the winds and the caves  
with vengeance that cries

For judgment upon me ; the stars in  
their courses deride me—

The stars Thou hast hung with a breath  
in the wandering skies.



## J A E L

95

Jehovah ! Jehovah ! I slew him  
the scourge and sting of Thy Nation.  
Take from me his spirit, take from me  
the voice of his blood.  
With madness I rave—by day  
and by night, defamation !  
Jehovah, release me ! Jehovah !  
if still Thou art God !

## MARY AT NAZARETH

I KNOW, Lord, Thou hast sent Him—  
Thou art so good to me!—  
But Thou hast only lent Him,  
His heart's for Thee!

I dared—Thy poor hand-maiden—  
Not ask a prophet-child:  
Only a boy-babe laden  
For earth—and mild.

But this one Thou hast given  
Seems not for earth—or me!  
His lips flame truth from heaven,  
And vanity

Seem all my thoughts and prayers  
When He but speaks Thy Law;  
Out of my heart the tares  
Are torn by awe!

## MARY AT NAZARETH

97

I cannot look upon Him  
So strangely burn His eyes—  
Hath not some grieving drawn Him  
From Paradise?

For Thee, for Thee I'd live, Lord!  
Yet oft I almost fall  
Before Him—Oh, forgive, Lord,  
My sinful thrall!

But e'en when He was nursing,  
A baby at my breast,  
It seemed He was dispersing  
The world's unrest.

Thou bad'st me call Him "Jesus"  
And from our heavy sin  
I know He shall release us,  
From Sheol win.

But, Lord, forgive! the yearning  
That He may sometimes be  
Like other children, learning  
Beside my knee,

Or playing, prattling, seeking  
For help,—comes to my heart. . . .  
Ah sinful, Lord, I'm speaking—  
How good Thou art!

## OUTCAST

I DID not fear,  
But crept close up to Christ and said,  
"Is He not here?"

They drew me back—  
The seraphs who had never bled  
Of weary lack—

But still I cried,  
With torn robe, clutching at His feet,  
"Dear Christ! He died

So long ago!  
Is He not here? Three days, unfleet  
As mortal flow

Of time I've sought—  
Till Heaven's amaranthine ways  
Seem as sere nought!"

A grieving stole  
Up from His heart and waned the gaze  
Of His clear soul

Into my eyes.  
"He is not here," troubled He sighed.  
"For none who dies

Beliefless may  
Bend lips to this sin-healing Tide,  
And live alway."

Then darkness rose  
Within me, and drear bitterness.  
Out of its throes

I moaned, at last,  
"Let me go hence! Take off the dress,  
The charms Thou hast

Around me strown!  
Beliefless too am I without  
His love—and lone!"

Unto the Gate  
They led me, tho' with pitying doubt.  
I did not wait

But stepped across  
Its portal, turned not once to heed  
Or know my loss.

Then my dream broke,  
And with it every loveless creed—  
Beneath love's stroke.

## ADELIL

PROUD Adelil ! Proud Adelil !

Why does she lie so cold ?

(I made her shrink, I made her reel,  
I made her white lids fold.)

We sat at banquet, many maids,  
She like a Valkyr free.

(I hated the glitter of her braids,  
I hated her blue eye's glee !)

In emerald cups was poured the mead ;  
Icily blew the night.

(But tears unshed and woes that bleed  
Brew bitterness and spite.)

“A goblet to my love !” she cried,

“Prince where the sea-winds fly !”

(Her love !—it was for that he died,  
And for it she should die.)

She lifted the cup and drank—she saw  
A heart within its lees.

(I laughed like the dead who feel the thaw  
Of summer in the breeze.)

They looked upon her stricken still,  
And sudden they grew appalled.

(“It is thy lover’s heart!” I shrill  
As the sea-crow to her called.)

Palely she took it—did it give  
Ease there against her breast?

(Dead—dead she swooned, but I cannot live,  
And dead I shall not rest.)

## THE DYING POET

SWING in thy splendour, O silent sun,  
Drawing my heart with thee over the west !  
Done is its day as thy day is done,  
    Fallen its quest !

Swoon into purple and rose—then sink,  
Tho' to arise again out of the dawn.  
Sink while I praise thee, ere thro' the dark link  
    Of death I am drawn !

Sunk ? art thou sunken ? how great was life !  
I like a child could cry for it again—  
Cry for its beauty, pang, fleeting and strife,  
    Its women, its men !

For, how I drained it with love and delight !  
Opened its heart with the magic of grief !  
Reaped every season—its day and its night !  
    Loved every sheaf !



Aye, not a meadow my step has trod,  
Never a flower swung sweet to my face,  
Never a heart that was touched of God,  
    But taught me its grace.

Off, from my lids then a moment yet,  
Fingering Death, for again I must see  
Miraged by memory all that I met  
    Under Time's lee.

There! . . . I'm a child again—fair, so fair!  
Under the eyes does a marvel not burn?  
Speak they not vision, song, frenzy to dare,  
    That still in me yearn? . . .

Youth! my wild youth!—O, blood of my heart,  
Still you can answer with whirling the thought!  
Still like the mountain-born rapid can dart,  
    Joyous, distraught! . . .

Love, and her face again! there by the wood!—  
Come thou invisible Dark with thy mask!  
Shall I not learn if she lives? and could  
    I more of thee ask? . . .

Turn me away from the ashen west,  
Where love's sad planet unveils to the dusk.  
Something is stealing like light from my breast—  
    Soul from its husk . . .

## THE DYING POET

Soft! . . . Where the dead feel the buried dead,  
Where the high hermit-bell hourly tolls,  
Bury me, near to the haunting tread  
Of life that o'errolls.

## ON THE MOOR

1

I MET a child upon the moor  
A-wading down the heather ;  
She put her hand into my own,  
We crossed the fields together.

I led her to her father's door—  
A cottage mid the clover.  
I left her—and the world grew poor  
To me, a childless rover.

2

I met a maid upon the moor,  
The morrow was her wedding.  
Love lit her eyes with lovelier hues  
Than the eve-star was shedding.

She looked a sweet goodbye to me,  
And o'er the stile went singing.  
Down all the lonely night I heard  
But bridal bells a-ringing.

## ON THE MOOR

3

I met a mother on the moor,  
By a new grave a-praying.  
The happy swallows in the blue  
Upon the winds were playing.

“Would I were in his grave,” I said,  
“And he beside her standing!”  
There was no heart to break if death  
For me had made demanding.

## HUMAN LOVE

WE spoke of God and Fate,  
And of that Life—which some await—  
    Beyond the grave.  
“It will be fair,” she said,  
“But love is here !  
I only crave thy breast  
Not God’s when I am dead.  
For He nor wants nor needs  
    My little love.  
But it may be, if I love thee  
And those whose sorrow daily bleeds,  
He knows—and somehow heeds !”

## OH, GO NOT OUT

OH, go not out upon the storm,  
Go not, my sweet, to Swalchie pool !  
A witch tho' she be dead may charm  
Thee and befool.

A wild night 'tis ! her lover's moan,  
Down under ooze and salty weed,  
She'll make thee hear—and then her own !  
Till thou shalt heed.

And it will suck upon thy heart—  
The sorcery within her cry—  
Till madness out of thee upstart,  
And rage to die.

For him she loved, she laughed to death !  
And as afloat his chill hand lay,  
“ Ha, ha ! to hell I sent his wraith ! ”  
Did she not say ?

And from his finger strive to draw  
The ring that bound him to her spell?—  
But on her closed his hand—she saw . . .  
Oh, who can tell?

For tho' she strove—tho' she did wail,  
The dead hand held her cold and fast:  
The tide crawled in o'er rock and swale,  
To her at last!

Down in the pool where she was swept  
He holds her—Oh, go not a-near!  
For none has heard her cry but wept  
And died that year.

## CALL TO YOUR MATE, BOB-WHITE

O CALL to your mate, bob-white, bob-white,  
And I will call to mine.  
Call to her by the meadow-gate,  
And I will call by the pine.

Tell her the sun is hid, bob-white,  
The windy wheat sways west.  
Whistle again, call clear and run  
To lure her out of her nest.

For when to the copse she comes, shy bird,  
With Mary down the lane  
I'll walk, in the dusk of locust tops,  
And be her lover again.

Ay, we will forget our hearts are old,  
And that our hair is gray.  
We'll kiss as we kissed at pale sunset  
One summer's halcyon day.



CALL TO YOUR MATE, BOB-WHITE 111

That day, can it fade? . . . ah, bob, bob-white,  
Still calling—calling still?  
We're coming—a-coming, bent and weighed,  
But glad with the old love's thrill!

## TRANSCENDED

I WHO was learned in death's lore  
Oft held her to my heart  
And spoke of days when we should love no more—  
In the long dust, apart.

“Immortal?” No—it could not be,  
Spirit with flesh must die.  
Tho' heart should pray and hope make endless plea,  
Reason would still outcry.

She died. They wrapped her in the dust—  
I heard the dull clod's dole,  
And then I knew she lived—that death's dark lust  
Could never touch her soul!

## THE CRY OF EVE

DOWN the palm-way from Eden in the moist  
Midnight lay Eve by her outdriven mate,  
Pillowed on lilies that still told the sweet  
Of birth within the Garden's ecstasy.  
Pitiful round her face that could not lose  
Its memory of God's perfecting was strewn  
Her troubled hair, and sigh grieved after sigh  
Along her loveliness in the white moon.  
Sudden her dream, too cruelly impent  
With pain, broke and a cry fled shuddering  
Into the wounded stillness from her lips.  
Then, cold, she fearfully felt for his hand,  
While tears, that had before ne'er visited  
Her lids with anguish, stinging traced her cheeks.

"Oh, Adam!" then as a wild shadow burst  
Her moan on the pale air, "What have I dreamed?  
Now do I understand His words, so dim  
To creatures that had quivered but with bliss!  
Since at the dusk thy kiss to me, and I  
Wept at caresses that were once all joy,

## THE CRY OF EVE

I have slept, seeing through Futurity  
The uncreated ages visibly !  
Foresuffering phantoms crowded in the womb  
Of Time, and all with lamentable mien  
Accusing thee and me !  
And some were far  
From birth, without a name, but others near—  
Sodom and dark Gomorrah . . . from whose flames  
Fleeing one turned . . . how like her look to mine  
When the tree's horror trembled on my taste !  
And Nineveh, a city sinking slow  
Under a shroud of sandy centuries  
That hid me not from the buried cursing eyes  
Of women who gave birth ! And Babylon,  
Upbuilded on our sin but for a day !

Ah, to be mother of all misery !  
To be first-called out of the earth and fail  
For a whole world ! To shame maternity  
For women evermore—women whose tears  
Flooding the night, no hope can wipe away !  
To see the wings of Death, as, Adam, thou  
Hast not, endlessly beating, and to hear  
The swooning ages suffer up to God !  
And O that birth-cry of a guiltless child !  
In it are sounding of our sin and woe,  
With prophesy of ill beyond all years !  
Yearning for beauty never to be seen—  
Beatitude redeemless evermore !

And I whose dream mourned with all motherhood  
Must hear it soon! Already do soft skill,  
Low-babbled lulls, enticings and quick tones  
Of tenderness—that will like light awake  
The folded memory children shall bring  
Out of the dark—move in me longingly.  
Yet thou, Adam, dear fallen thought of God,  
Thou, when thou too shalt hear humanity  
Cry in thy child, wilt groaning wish the world  
Back in unsummoned Void! and, woe! wilt fill  
God's ear with troubled wonder and unrest!”

Softly he soothed her straying hair, and kissed  
The fever from her lips. Over the palms  
The sad moon poured her peace into their eyes,  
Till Sleep, the angel of forgetfulness,  
Folded again her wings above their rest.

## THE CHILD GOD GAVE

“GIVE me a little child  
To draw this dreary want out of my breast,”  
I cried to God.

“Give, for my days beat wild  
With loneliness that will not rest  
But under the still sod !”

It came—with groping lips  
And little fingers stealing aimlessly  
About my heart.  
I was like one who slips  
A-sudden into Ecstasy  
And thinks ne'er to depart.

“Soon he will smile,” I said,  
“And babble baby love into my ears—  
How it will thrill !”  
I waited—Oh, the dread,  
The clutching agony, the fears !—  
He was so strange and still.

Did I curse God and rave  
When they came shrinkingly to tell me 'twas  
    A witless child?  
No . . . I . . . I only gave  
One cry . . . just one . . . I think . . . because . . .  
You know . . . he never smiled.

## MOTHER-LOVE

THE seraphs would sing to her  
And from the River  
Dip her cool grails of radiant Life.  
The angels would bring to her,  
Sadly a-quiver,  
Laurels she never had won in earth-strife.

And often they'd fly with her  
O'er the star-spaces—  
Silent by worlds where mortals are pent.  
Yea, even would sigh with her,  
Sigh with wan faces!  
When she sat weeping of strange discontent.

But one said, "Why weapest thou  
Here in God's heaven—  
Is it not fairer than soul can see?"  
"'Tis fair, ah!—but keepest thou  
Not me depriven  
Of some one—somewhere—who needeth most me?"



For tho' the day never fades  
Over these meadows,  
Tho' He has robed me and crowned—yet, yet!  
Some love-fear for ever shades  
All with sere shadows—  
Had I no child *there*—whom I forget?"

## ASHORE

WHAT are the heaths and hills to me?

I'm a-longing for the sea!

What are the flowers that dapple the dell,  
And the ripple of swallow-wings over the dusk;

What are the church and the folk who tell  
Their hearts to God?—my heart is a husk!

(I'm a-longing for the sea!)

Aye! for there is no peace to me—

But on the peaceless sea!

Never a child was glad at my knee,  
And the soul of a woman has never been mine.

What can a woman's kisses be?—

I fear to think how her arms would twine,

(I'm a-longing for the sea!)

So, not a home and ease for me—

But still the homeless sea!

Where I may swing my sorrow to sleep

In a hammock hung o'er the voice of the waves,

## ASHORE

121

Where I may wake when the tempests heap  
And hurl their hate—and a brave ship saves.  
(I'm a-longing for the sea !)

Then when I die, a grave for me—  
But in the graveless sea !  
Where is no stone for an eye to spell  
Thro' the lichen a name, a date and a verse.  
Let me be laid in the deeps that swell  
And sigh and wander--an ocean hearse !  
(I'm a-longing for the sea !)

## LOVE'S WAY TO CHILDHOOD

WE are not lovers, you and I,  
Upon this sunny lane,  
But children who have never known  
Love's joy or pain.

The flowers we pass, the summer brook,  
The bird that o'er us darts—  
We do not know 'tis they that thrill  
Our childish hearts.

The earth-things have no name for us,  
The ploughing means no more  
Than that they like to walk the fields  
Who plough them o'er.

The road, the wood, the heaven, the hills  
Are not a World to-day—  
But just a place God's made for us  
In which to play.

## LISSETTE

OH . . . there was love in her heart—no doubt of it—  
Under the anger.  
But see what came out of it!

Not a knave, he!—A Romeo rhyme-smatterer,  
Cloaking in languor  
And heartache to flatter her.

And just as a woman will—even the best of them—  
She yielded—brittle.  
God spare me the rest of them!

Aye! though 'twas but kisses—she swore!—he had of  
her.  
For, was it little?  
She thought 'twas not bad of her,

Said I would lavish a burning hour full  
On any grissette.  
A parry!—and powerful!

But—"You are mine, and blood is inflammable,  
Flaunty Lissette!"  
My rage was undammable. . . .

Could a stiletto's one prick be prettier?  
Look at the gaping.  
No? —then you're her pitier!

Pah! she's the better, and I . . . I'm your prisoner.  
Loose me the strapping—  
I'll lay one more kiss on her.

## TEARLESS

Do women weep when men have died ?

It cannot be !

For I have sat here by his side,  
Breathing dear names against his face,  
'That he must list to were his place  
Over God's throne—

Yet have I wept no tear and made no moan.

No ! but to lids, that gaze stone-wide,  
Grief seems in vain.

Do women weep ?—I was his bride—  
'They brought him to me cold and pale—  
Upon his lids I saw the trail  
Of deathly pain.

They said, " Her tears will fall like Autumn rain."

I cannot weep ! Not if hot tears,  
Dropped on his lips,  
Might burn him back to life and years  
Of yearning love, would any rise  
To flood the anguish from my eyes—  
And I'm his bride !

Ah me, do women weep when men have died ?

## THE LIGHTHOUSEMAN

WHEN at evening smothered lightnings  
Burn the clouds with opal fires ;  
When the stars forget to glisten,  
And the winds refuse to listen  
To the song of my desires,  
    Oh, my love, unto thee !

When the livid breakers angered  
Churn against my stormy tower ;  
When the petrel flying faster  
Brings an omen to the master  
Of his vessel's fated hour—  
    Oh, the reefs ! ah, the sea !

Then I climb the climbing stairway,  
Turn the light across the storm ;  
You are watching, fisher-maiden,  
For the token flashes laden  
With a love death could not harm—  
    Lo, they come, swift and free !



*One*—that means, “I think of thee!”

*Two*—“I swear me thine!”

*Three*—Ah, hear me tho’ you sleep!—

Is, “Love, I know thee mine!”

Thro’ the darkness, One, Two, Three,

All the night they sweep:

Thro’ raging darkness o’er the deep,

One—and Two—and Three.

## BY THE INDUS

THOU art late, O Moon,

Late,

I have waited thee long.

The nightingale's flown to her nest,

Sated with song.

The champak hath no odour more

To pour on the wind as he passeth o'er—

But my heart it will not rest.

Thou art late, O Love,

Late,

For the moon is a-wane.

The kusa-grass sighs with my sighs,

Burns with my pain.

The lotus leans her head on the stream—

Shall I not lean to thy breast and dream,

Dream ere the night-cool dies ?

Thou art late, O Death,  
Late,  
    For he did not come !  
A pariah is my heart,  
    Cast from him—dumb !  
I cannot cry in the jungle's deep—  
Is it not time for Nirvana's sleep?  
    O Death, strike with thy dart !

## FROM ONE BLIND

I CANNOT say thy cheek is like the rose,  
Thy hair ripple of sunbeams, and thine eyes  
Violets, April-rich and sprung of God.  
My barren gaze can never know what throes  
Such boons of beauty waken, tho' I rise  
Each day a-tremble with the ruthless hope  
That light will pierce my useless lids—then grope  
Till night, blind as the worm within his clod.

Yet unto me thou art not less divine,  
I touch thy cheek—and know the mystery hid  
Within the twilight breeze ; I smoothe thy hair  
And understand how slipping hours may twine  
Themselves into eternity : yea, rid  
Of all but love, I kiss thine eyes and seem  
To see all beauty God Himself may dream.  
Why then should I o'ermuch for earth-sight care ?

## AT THE FALL OF ROME

A.D. 455

DRINK to Death, drink !  
He's god o' the world.  
Up with the cup—  
Let no man shiver !  
Up with the cup—  
Let no man shrink !  
Drink to death,  
He's lord o' the breath  
Of mortals hurled from the world  
Into Oblivion's river !

Drink to Death, aye !  
And then—to the dust !  
Fill with a will—  
And quaff like a lover !  
Fill with a will—  
Who dares a Nay !  
Drink to Death ! . . .  
He lies who saith  
That life is just—'tis a crust  
Tossed to a slave in his hover !

Drink to Death!—So!  
Who recks for the rest?  
Love is above—  
Or Hate, what matter?  
Love is above—  
Or Hell below.  
Drink to Death,  
For vile is the peth  
Of Rome, and Shame is her name!  
Then drink, and the goblet shatter!

## PEACELESS LOVE

I SAY unto all hearts that cannot rest  
For want of love, for beating loud and lonely,  
Pray the great Mercy-God to give you only  
Love that is passionless within the breast.

Pray that it may not be a haunting fire,  
A vision that shall steal insatiably  
All beautiful content, all sweet desire,  
From faith and dream, star, flower, and song, and sea.

But seek that soul and soul may meet together,  
Knowing they have for ever been but one—  
Meet and be surest when ill's chartless weather  
Drives blinding gales of doubt across their sun.  
Pray—pray! lest love upturned shall seem as nether  
Hell-hate and rage beyond oblivion.

## SUNDERED

God who can bind the stars eternally  
With but a breath of spirit speech, a thought ;  
Who can within earth's arms lay the mad sea  
Unserverably, and count it as sheer nought—  
With His All-might can bind not you and me.

For though he pressed us heart to burning heart,  
Knowing this fatal spell that so enthralls,  
Still would our souls, unhelpably apart,  
Stand aliens—beating fierce against the walls  
Of dark unsympathies that 'tween us start.  
Stands aliens, aye, and would ! tho' we should meet  
Beyond the oblivion of unnumbered births—  
Upon some world where Time cannot repeat  
The feeblest syllable that once was earth's.



## WITH OMAR

I SAT with Omar by the Tavern door  
Musing the mystery of mortals o'er,  
And soon with answers alternate we strove  
Whether, beyond death, Life hath any shore.

*“Come, fill the cup,”* said he. *“In the fire of Spring  
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling.  
The Bird of Time has but a little way  
To flutter—and the Bird is on the Wing.”*

“The Bird of Time?” I answered. “Then have I  
No heart for Wine. Must we not cross the Sky  
Unto Eternity upon his wings—  
Or, failing, fall into the Gulf and die?”

*“So some for the Glories of this World; and some  
Sigh for the Prophet’s Paradise to come;  
But you, Friend, take the Cash—the Credit leave,  
Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum!”*

“What, take the Cash and let the Credit go?  
Spend all upon the Wine the while I know  
A possible To-morrow may bring thirst  
For Drink but Credit then shall cause to flow?”

*“Yea, make the most of what you yet may spend,  
Before we too into the Dust descend;  
Dust unto Dust, and under Dust, to lie,  
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and—sans End!”*

“Into the Dust we shall descend—we must.  
But can the soul not break the crumbling Crust  
In which he is engaged? To hope or to  
Despair he will—which is more wise or just?”

*“The worldly hope men set their hearts upon  
Turns Ashes—or it prospers: and anon,  
Like Snow upon the Desert’s dusty Face,  
Lighting a little hour or two—is gone.”*

“Like Snow it comes—to cool one burning Day;  
And like it goes—for all our plea or sway.  
But flooding tears nor Wine can ever purge  
The Vision it has brought to us away.”

*“But to this world we come and Why not knowing  
Nor Whence, like water willy-nilly flowing;  
And out of it, as Wind along the waste,  
We know not Whither, willy-nilly blowing.”*

“True, little do we know of *Why* or *Whence*.  
But is forsooth our Darkness evidence  
There is no Light?—the worm may see no star  
Tho’ heaven with myriad multitudes be dense.”

“*But, all unasked, we’re hither hurried Whence?  
And, all unasked, we’re Whither hurried hence?  
O, many a cup of this forbidden Wine  
Must drown the memory of that insolence.*”

“Yet can not—ever! For it is forbid  
Still by that quenchless soul within us hid,  
Which cries, ‘Feed—feed me not on Wine alone,  
For to Immortal Banquets I am bid.’”

“*Well oft I think that never blows so red  
The Rose as where some buried Caesar bled:  
That every Hyacinth the Garden wears  
Dropt in her lap from some once lovely Head.*”

“Then if, from the dull Clay thro’ with Life’s throes,  
More beautiful spring Hyacinth and Rose,  
Will the great Gard’ner for the uprooted soul  
Find Use no sweeter than—useless Repose?”

“*We cannot know—so fill the cup that clears  
To-day of past regret and future fears:  
To-morrow!—Why, To-morrow we may be  
Ourselves with yesterday’s sev’n thousand Years.*”

“No Cup there is to bring oblivion  
 More during than Regret and Fear—no, none!  
 For Wine that’s Wine to-day may change and be  
 Marah before to-morrow’s Sands have run.”

*“Myself when young did eagerly frequent  
 Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument  
 About it and about: but evermore  
 Came out by the same door wherein I went.”*

“The doors of Argument may lead Nowhither,  
 Reason become a Prison where may wither  
 From sunless eyes the Infinite, from hearts  
 All Hope, when their sojourn too long is thither.”

*“Up from Earth’s Centre thro’ the Seventh Gate  
 I rose, and on the throne of Saturn sate,  
 And many a Knot unravelled by the Road—  
 But not the Master-knot of Human fate.”*

The Master-knot knows but the Master-hand  
 That scattered Saturn and his countless Band  
 Like seeds upon the unplanted heaven’s Air:  
 The Truth we reap from them is Chaff thrice fanned.

*“Yet if the Soul can fling the Dust aside  
 And naked on the air of Heaven ride,  
 Wer’t not a shame—wer’t not a shame for him  
 In this clay carcass crippled to abide?”*

“No, for a day bound in this Dust may teach  
 More of the Saki's Mind than we can reach  
 Through aeons mounting still from Sky to Sky—  
 May open through all Mystery a breach.”

*“You speak as if Existence closing your  
 Account and mine should know the like no more;  
 The Eternal Saki from that Bowl has poured  
 Millions of bubbles like us, and will pour.”*

“Bubbles we are, pricked by the point of Death.  
 But, in each bubble, hope there dwells a Breath  
 That lifts it and at last to Freedom flies,  
 And o'er all heights of Heaven wandereth.”

*“A moment's halt—a momentary taste  
 Of Being from the Well amid the Waste—  
 And Lo!—the phantom Caravan has reached  
 The Nothing it set out from—Oh, make haste!”*

“And yet it should be—it should be that we  
 Who drink shall drink of Immortality.  
 The Master of the Well has much to spare:  
 Will He say, ‘Taste’—then shall we no more be?”

*“The Moving Finger writes; and having writ,  
 Moves on; nor all your Piety nor Wit  
 Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,  
 Nor all your tears wash out a word of it.”*

## WITH OMAR

“And—were it otherwise? . . . We might erase  
 The Letter of some Sorrow in whose place  
 No other sounding, we should fail to spell  
 The Heart which yearns behind the mock-world’s face.”

*“Well, this I know; whether the one True Light  
 Kindle to Love, or Wrath—consume me quite,  
 One flash of it within the Tavern caught  
 Better than in the Temple lost outright.”*

“In Temple or in Tavern ’t may be lost.  
 And everywhere that Love hath any Cost  
 It may be found; the Wrath it seems is but  
 A Cloud whose Dew should make its power most.”

*“But see His Presence thro’ Creation’s veins,  
 Running Quicksilver-like eludes your pains;  
 Taking all shapes from Mah to Mahi; and  
 They change and perish all—but He remains.”*

“All—it may be. Yet lie to sleep, and lo,  
 The soul seems quenched in Darkness—is it so?  
 Rather believe what seemeth not than seems  
 Of Death—until we know—until we know.”

*“So wastes the Hour—gone in the vain pursuit  
 Of This and That we strive o’er and dispute.  
 Better be jocund with the fruitful Grape  
 Than sadden after none, or bitter Fruit.”*

“Better—unless we hope the Shadow ’s thrown  
Across our Path by glories of the Unknown  
Lest we may think we have no more to live  
And bide content with dim-lit Earth alone.”

*“Then, strange, is't not? that of the myriads who  
Before us passed the door of Darkness through  
Not one returns to tell us of the Road,  
Which to discover we must travel too?”*

“Such is the ban! but even though we heard  
Love in Life's All we still should crave the word  
Of one returned. Yet none is *sure*, we know,  
Though they lie deep, they are by Death deterred.”

*“Send then thy Soul through the Invisible  
Some letter of the After-life to spell:  
And by and by thy Soul returned to thee  
But answers, ‘I myself am Heaven and Hell.’”*

“From the Invisible, he does. But sent  
Through Earth where living Goodness though 'tis blent  
With Evil duress, may he not read the Voice,  
‘To make thee but for Death were toil ill-spent’?”

*“Well, when the Angel of the darker drink  
At last shall find us by the river-brink,  
And offering his Cup invite our souls  
Forth to our lips to quaff, we shall not shrink.”*

“No. But if in the sable Cup we knew  
 Death without waking were the fateful brew,  
 Nobler it were to curse as Coward Him  
 Who roused us into light—then light withdrew.”

*“Then thou who didst with pitfall and with gin  
 Beset the Road I was to wander in,  
 Thou wilt not with Predestined Evil round  
 Enmesh, and then impute my fall to sin.”*

“He will not. If one evil we endure  
 To ultimate Debasing, oh, be sure  
 ’Tis not of Him predestined, and the sin  
 Not His nor ours—but fate’s He could not cure.”

*“Yet, ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!  
 That Youth’s sweet-scented Manuscript should close!  
 The Nightingale that on the branches sang—  
 Ah, whence, and whither flown again, who knows?”*

“So does it seem—no other joys like these!  
 Yet Summer comes, and Autumn’s honoured ease;  
 And wintry Age, is’t ever whisperless  
 Of that Last Spring, whose Verdure may not cease?”

*“Still, would some winged Angel ere too late  
 Arrest the yet unfolded roll of Fate,  
 And make the stern Recorder otherwise  
 Enregister or quite obliterate!”*



“To otherwise enregister believe  
He toils eternally, nor asks Reprieve.  
And could Creation perfect from his hands  
Have come at Dawn, none overmuch should grieve.”

So till the wan and early scene of day  
We strove, and silent turned at last away,  
Thinking how men in ages yet unborn  
Would ask and answer—trust and doubt and pray.

## A JAPANESE MOTHER

(IN TIME OF WAR)

THE young stork sleeps in the pine-tree tops,  
Down on the brink of the river.  
My baby sleeps by the bamboo copse—  
The bamboo copse where the rice field stops :  
The bamboos sigh and shiver.

The white fox creeps from his hole in the hill ;  
I must pray to Inari.  
I hear her calling me low and chill—  
Low and chill when the wind is still  
At night and the skies are starry.

And ever she says, "He's dead ! he's dead !  
Your lord who went to battle.  
How shall your baby now be fed,  
Ukibo fed, with rice and bread—  
What if I hush his prattle ?"

## A JAPANESE MOTHER

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The red moon rises as I slip back,  
    And the bamboo stems are swaying.  
Inari was deaf—and yet the lack,  
The fear and lack, are gone, and the rack,  
    I know not why—with praying.

For though Inari cared not at all,  
    Some other god was kinder.  
I wonder why he has heard my call,  
My giftless call—and what shall befall? . . .  
    Hope has but left me blinder!

## SHINTO

(MIYAJIMA, JAPAN, 1905)

LOWLY temple and torii,  
Shrine where the spirits of wind and wave  
Find the worship and glory we  
Give to the one God great and grave—

Lowly temple and torii,  
Shrine of the dead, I hang my prayer  
Here on your gates—the story see  
And answer out of the earth and air.

For I am Nature's child, and you  
Were by the children of Nature built.  
Ages have on you smiled—and dew  
On you for ages has been spilt—

Till you are beautiful as Time  
Mossy and mellowing ever makes :  
Wrapped as you are in lull—or rhyme  
Of sounding drum that sudden breaks.

## SHINTO

147

This is my prayer then, this, that I  
Too may reverence all of life,  
Beauty, and power and miss no high  
Awe of a world with wonder rife.

That I may build in spirit fair  
Temples and torii on each place  
That I have loved—O hear it, Air,  
Ocean and Earth, and grant your grace!

## EVOCATION

(NIKKO, JAPAN, 1905)

WEIRD thro' the mist and cryptomeria  
Booms the temple bell,  
Down from the tomb of Iëyasu  
Yearning, as a knell.

Down from the tomb where many an aeon  
Silently has knelt,  
Many a pilgrimage of millions—  
Still about it felt.

Still, for see them gather ghostly  
Now, as the numb sound  
Floats as unearthly necromancy  
From the past's dead ground.

See the invisible vast millions,  
Hear their soundless feet  
Climbing the shrine-ways to the gilded  
Carven temple's seat.

## EVOCATION

149

And, one among them—pale among them—  
    Passes waning by.

What is it tells me mystically  
    That strange one was I? . . .

Weird thro' the mist and cryptomeria  
    Dies the bell—'tis dumb.

After how many lives returning  
    Shall I hither come?

Hither again! and climb the votive  
    Ever mossy ways?

Who shall the gods be then, the millions,  
    Meek, entreat or praise?

## THE ATONER

WINTER has come in sackcloth and ashes  
(Penance for Summer's enverdured sheaves).  
Bitterly, cruelly, bleakly he lashes  
His limbs that are naked of grass and leaves.

He moans in the torest for sins unforgiven  
(Sins of the revelrous days of June)—  
Moans while the sun drifts dull from the heaven,  
Giftless of heat's beshriving boon.

Long must he mourn, and long be his scourging,  
(Long will the day-god aloof frown cold),  
Long will earth listen the rue of his dirging—  
Till the dark beads of his days are told.



## INTIMATION

ALL night I smiled as I slept,  
For I heard the March-wind feel  
Blindly about in the trees without  
For buds to heal.

All night in dreams, for I smelt,  
In the rain-wet woods and fields,  
The coming flowers and the glad green hours  
That summer yields.

And when at dawn I awoke,  
At the blue-bird's wooing cheep,  
Winter with all its chill and pall  
Seemed but a sleep.

## IN JULY

THIS path will tell me where dark daisies dance  
To the white sycamores that dell them in ;  
Where crow and flicker cry melodious din,  
And blackberries in ebon ripeness glance  
Luscious enticings under briery green.  
It will slip under coppice limbs that lean  
Brushingly as the slow-belled heifer pants  
    Toward weedy water-plants  
That shade the pool-sunk creek's reluctant trance.

I shall find bell-flower spires beside the gap  
And lady phlox within the hollow's cool ;  
Cedar with sudden memories of Yule  
Above the tangle tipped with blue skullcap.  
The high hot mullein fond of the full sun  
Will watch and tell the low mint when I've won  
The hither wheat where idle breezes nap,  
    And fluffy quails entrap  
Me from their brood that crouch to escape mishap.

Then I shall reach the mossy water-way  
That gullies the dense hill up to its peak,  
There dally listening to the eerie eke  
Of drops into cool chalices of clay.  
Then on, for elders odorously will steal  
My senses till I climb up where they heal  
The livid heat of its malingering ray,  
    And wooingly betray  
To memory many a long-forgotten day.

There I shall rest within the woody peace  
Of afternoon. The bending azure frothed  
With silveryness, the sunny pastures swathed,  
Fragrant with morn-mown clover and seed-fleece ;  
The hills where hung mists muse, and Silence calls  
To Solitude thro' aged forest halls,  
Will waft into me their mysterious ease,  
    And in the wind's soft cease  
I shall hear hintings of eternities.

## FROM ABOVE

WHAT do I care if the trees are bare  
And the hills are dark  
And the skies are gray.

What do I care for chill in the air,  
For crows that cark  
At the rough wind's way.

What do I care for the dead leaves there--  
Or the sullen road  
By the sullen wood.

There's heart in my heart  
To bear my load!  
So enough, the day is good!

## SONGS TO A. H. R.

### I.

#### THE WORLD'S, AND MINE

THE world may hear  
The wind at his trees,  
The lark in her skies,  
The sea on his leas ;  
May hear the song rise  
From the breast of a woman  
And think it as dear  
As heaven tho' human.  
But I have a music they can never know—  
The touch of you, soul of you, heart of you. Oh !  
All else that is said or sung 's but a part of you—  
Ever to me 'tis so !

II.

LOVE-CALL IN SPRING

Not only the lark but the robin too  
(Oh, heart o' my heart, come into the wood!)  
Is singing the air to gladness new  
    As the breaking bud  
    And the freshet's flood!

Not only the peeping grass and the scent—  
(Oh, love o' my life, fly unto me here!)  
Of violets coming ere April's spent—  
    But the frog's shrill cheer  
    And the crow's wild jeer!

Not only the blue, not only the breeze,  
(Oh, soul o' my heart, why tarry so long!)  
But sun that is sweeter upon the trees  
    Than rills that throng  
    To the brooklet's song!

Oh, heart o' my heart, oh, heart o' my love,  
(Oh soul o' my soul, haste unto me, haste!)  
For spring is below and God is above—  
    But all is a waste  
    Without thee—Haste!

### III.

## MATING

THE bliss of the wind in the redbud ringing !  
What shall we do with the April days !  
Kingcups soon will be up and swinging—  
What shall we do with May's !

The cardinal flings, "They are made for mating !"  
Out on the bough he flutters, a flame.  
Thrush-flutes echo "For mating's elating !  
Love is its other name !"

They know ! know it ! but better, oh, better,  
Dearest, than ever a bird in Spring,  
Know we to make each moment a debtor  
Unto love's burgeoning !

IV.

UNTOLD

COULD I, a poet,  
Implant the truth of you,  
Seize it and sow it  
As Spring on the world.  
There were no need  
To fling (forsooth) of you  
Fancies that only lovers heed!  
No, but unfurled,  
The bloom, the sweet of you,  
(As unto me they are opened oft)  
Would with their beauty's breath repeat of you  
All that my heart breathes loud or soft!



V.

LOVE-WATCH

My love's a guardian-angel  
Who camps about thy heart,  
Never to flee thine enemy,  
Nor from thee turn apart.

Whatever dark may shroud thee  
And hide thy stars away,  
With vigil sweet his wings shall beat  
About thee till the day.

VI

AS YOU ARE

DARK hair—dark eyes—  
But heart of sun,  
Pity and hope  
That rill and run  
With flowing fleet  
To heal the defeat  
Of all Life has undone.

Dark hair—dark eyes—  
But soul as clear,  
Trusty and fair  
As e'er drew near  
To clasp its mate  
And enter the gate  
Of Love that casts out fear.

Dark hair—dark eyes—  
But, there is seen  
In them the most  
That earth can mean;  
The most that death  
Can bring—or breath  
*There*—in the bright Unseen!

## VII

### AT AMALFI

COME to the window, you who are mine.  
Waken ! the night is calling.  
Sit by me here—with the moon's fair shine  
Into your deep eyes falling.

The sea afar is a fearful gloom ;  
Lean from the casement, listen !  
A near, it breaks with a faery spume,  
Spraying the moon-path's glisten.

The little white town below lies deep  
As eternity in slumber.  
O, you who are mine, how a glance can reap  
Beauties beyond all number !

“Amalfi !” say it—as the stars set  
O'er yon far promontory.  
“Amalfi !” . . . Shall we ever forget  
Even Above this glory ?

## AT AMALFI

No ; as twin sails at anchor ride,  
Our spirits rock together  
On a sea of love—lit as this tide  
With tenderest star-weather !

And the quick ecstasy within  
Your breast is against me beating.  
Amalfi ! . . . Never a night shall win  
From God again such fleeting.

Ah—but the dawn is redd'ning up  
Over the moon low-dying.  
Come, come away—we have drunk the cup :  
Ours is the dream undying !

## VIII

### ON THE PACIFIC

A STORM broods far on the foam of the deep ;  
The moon-path gleams before.  
A day and a night, a night and a day,  
And the way, love, will be o'er.

Six thousand wandering miles we have come  
And never a sail have seen,  
The sky above and the sea below  
And the drifting clouds between.

Yet in our hearts unheaving hope  
And light and joy have slept.  
Nor ever lonely has seemed the wave  
Tho' heaving wild it leapt.

For there is talismanic might  
Within our vows of love  
To breathe us over all seas of life—  
On to that Port above

## ON THE PACIFIC

Where the great Captain of all ships  
Shall anchor them or send  
Them forth on a vaster Voyage, yea,  
On one that shall not end.

And upon *that* we two, I think,  
Together still shall sail.  
O may it be, my own, or may  
We perish in death's gale!

## THE WINDS

THE East Wind is a Bedouin,  
And Nimbus is his steed ;  
Out of the dusk with the lightning's thin  
Blue scimitar he flies afar,  
Whither his roving lead.  
The Dead Sea waves  
And Egypt caves  
Of mummied silence laugh  
When he mounts to quench the Siroc's stench,  
And to wrench  
From his clutch the tyrant's staff.

The West Wind is an Indian brave  
Who scours the Autumn's crest.  
Dashing the forest down as a slave  
He tears the leaves from its limbs and weaves  
A maelstrom for his breast.  
Out of the night  
Crying to fright

## THE WINDS

The earth he swoops to spoil—  
There is furious scathe in the whirl of his wrath,  
In his path  
There is misery and moil.

The North Wind is a Viking—cold  
And cruel, armed with death!  
Born in the doomful deep of the old  
Ice Sea that froze ere Ymir rose  
From Niflheim's ebon breath.  
And with him sail  
Snow, Frost, and Hail,  
Thanes mighty as their lord,  
To plunder the shores of Summer's stores—  
And his roar's  
Like the sound of Chaos' horde.

The South Wind is a Troubadour ;  
The Spring, his serenade.  
Over the mountain, over the moor,  
He blows to bloom from the winter's tomb  
Blossom and leaf and blade.  
He ripples the throat  
Of the lark with a note  
Of lilting love and bliss,  
And the sun and the moon, the night and the noon,  
Are a-swoon—  
When he woos them with his kiss.



## THE DAY-MOON

So wan, so unavailing,  
Across the vacant day-blue dimly trailing !

Last night, sphered in thy shining,  
A Circe—mystic destinies divining ;

To-day but as a feather  
Torn from a seraph's wing in sinful weather,

Down-drifting from the portals  
Of Paradise, unto the land of mortals.

Yet do I feel thee awing  
My heart with mystery, as thy updrawing

Moves thro' the tides of Ocean  
And leaves lorn beaches barren of its motion ;

Or strands upon near shallows  
The wreck whose weirded form at night unhallows

## THE DAY-MOON

The fisher maiden's prayers—  
“For *him!*—that storms may take not unawares!”

So wan, so unavailing,  
Across the vacant day-blue dimly trailing!

But Night shall come atoning  
Thy phantom life thro' day, and high enthroning

Thee in her chambers arrased  
With star-hieroglyphs, leave thee unharassed

To glide with silvery passion,  
Till in earth's shadow swept thy glowings ashen.

## TO A SINGING WARBLER

“BEAUTY ! all—all—is beauty ?”  
Was ever a bird so wrong !  
“No young in the nest, no mate, no duty ?”  
Ribald ! is this your song ?

“Glad it is ended,” are you ?  
The Spring and its nuptial fear ?  
“Freedom is better than love ?” beware you  
There will be May next year !

“Beauty !” again ? still “beauty” ?  
Wait till the winter comes !  
Till kestrel and hungry kite seek booty  
And there are so few crumbs !

Wait ? nay, fling it unbidden,  
The false little song you prate !  
Too sweet are its fancies to be chidden,  
E’en of the rudest fate !

## TO THE SEA

ART thou enraged, O sea, with the blue peace  
Of heaven, so to uplift thine armed waves,  
Thy billowing rebellion 'gainst its ease,  
And with Tartarean mutter from cold caves,  
From shuddering profundities where shapes  
Of awe glide through entangled leagues of ooze,  
To hoot thy watery omens evermore,  
And evermore thy moanings interfuse  
With seething necromancy and mad lore ?

Or, dost thou labour with the drifting bones  
Of countless dead, thou mighty Alchemist,  
Within whose stormy crucible the stones  
Of sunk primordial shores, granite and schist,  
Are crumbled by thine all-abrasive beat ?  
With immemorial chanting to the moon,  
And cosmic incantation dost thou crave  
Rest to be found not till thy wild be strewn  
Frigid and desert over earth's last grave ?

Thou seemest with immensity mad, blind—  
With raving deaf, with wandering forlorn ;  
Parent of Demogorgon whose dire mind  
Is night and earthquake, shapeless shame and scorn  
Of the o'ermounting birth of Harmony.  
Bound in thy briny bed and gnawing earth  
With foamy writhing and fierce-panted tides,  
Thou art as Fate in torment of a dearth  
Of black disaster and destruction's strides.

And how thou dost drive silence from the world,  
Incarnate Motion of all mystery !  
Whose waves are fury-wings, whose winds are hurled  
Whither thy Ghost tempestuous can see  
A desolate apocalypse of death.  
Oh, how thou dost drive silence from the world,  
With emerald overflowing, waste on waste  
Of flashing susurrations, dashed and swirled  
'Gainst isles and continents and airs o'erspaced !

Nay, frustrate Hope art thou of the Unknown,  
Gathered from primal mist and firmament ;  
A surging shape of Life's unfathomed moan,  
Whelming humanity with fears unmeant.  
Yet do I love thee, O, above all fear,  
And loving thee unconquerably trust  
The runes that from thy ageless surfing start  
Would read, were they revealed, gust upon gust,  
That Immortality is might of heart !

## THE DEAD GODS

I THOUGHT I plunged into that dire Abyss  
Which is Oblivion, the house of Death.  
I thought there blew upon my soul the breath  
Of time that was but never more can be.

Ten thousand years I thought I lay within  
Its Void, blind, deaf, and motionless, untill—  
Though with no eye nor ear—I felt the thrill  
Of seeing, heard its phantoms move and sigh.

First one beside me spoke, in tones that told  
He once had been a god,—“Persephone,  
Tear from thy brow its withered crown, for we  
Are king and queen of Tartarus no more ;

And that wan, shrivelled sceptre in thy hand,  
Why dost thou clasp it still? Cast it away,  
For now it hath no virtue that can sway  
Dull shades or drive the Furies to their spoil.

Cast it away, and give thy palm to mine :  
Perchance some unobliterated spark  
Of memory shall warm this dismal Dark.  
Perchance—vain ! vain ! love could not light such  
gloom.”

He sank. . . . Then in great ruin by him moved  
Another as in travail of some thought  
Near unto birth ; and soon from lips distraught  
By aged silence, fell, with hollow woe :

“ Ah, Pluto, dost thou, one time lord of Styx  
And Acheron make moan of night and cold ?  
Were we upon Olympus as of old  
Laughter of thee would rock its festal height.

But think, think thee of me, to whom or gloom  
Or cold were more unknown than impotence !  
See the unhurlèd thunderbolt brought hence  
To mock me when I dream I still am Jove ! ”

Too much it was : I withered in the breath ;  
And lay again ten thousand lifeless years ;  
And then my soul shook, woke—and saw three biers  
Chiselled of solid night majestically.

The forms outlaid upon them were unwound  
As with the silence of eternity.  
Numbing repose dwelt o'er them like a sea,  
That long hath lost tide, wave and roar, in death.

“Ptah, Ammon, and Osiris are their names,”  
A spirit hieroglyphed unto my soul,  
“Ptah, Ammon, and Osiris—they who stole  
The heart of Egypt from the God of gods :

“Aye, they ! and these ;” pointing to many wraiths  
That stood around—Baal, Ormuzd, Indra, all  
Whom frightened ignorance and sin’s appall  
Had given birth, close-huddled in despair.

Their eyes were fixed upon a cloven slope  
Down whose descent still other forms a-fresh  
From earth were drawn, by the unceasing mesh  
Of Time to their irrevocable end.

“They are the gods,” one said—“the gods whom men  
Still taunt with wails for help.”—Then a deep light  
Upbore me from the Gulf, and thro’ its might  
I heard the worlds cry, “God alone is God !”



## AT WINTER'S END

THE weedy fallows winter-worn,  
Where cattle shiver under sodden hay.  
The plough-lands long and lorn—  
The fading day.

The sullen shudder of the brook,  
And winds that wring the withen trees in vain  
For drearier sound or look—  
The lonely rain.

The crows that train o'er desert skies  
In endless caravans that have no goal  
But flight—where darkness flies—  
From Pole to Pole.

The sombre zone of hills around  
That shrink in misty mournfulness from sight,  
With sunset aureoles crowned—  
Before the night.

## APRIL

A LAUGHTER of wind and a leaping of cloud,  
And April, oh, out under the blue!  
The brook is awake and the blackbird loud  
In the dew!

But how does the robin high in the beech,  
Beside the wood with its shake and toss,  
Know it—the frenzy of bluets to reach  
Thro' the moss!

And where did the lark ever learn his speech?  
Up wildly sweet he's over the mead!  
Is more than the rapture of earth can teach  
In its creed?

I never shall know—I never shall care!  
'Tis, oh, enough to live and to love!  
To laugh and warble and dream and dare  
Are to prove!

## AUGUST GUESTS

THE wind slipt over the hill  
And down the valley.  
He dimpled the cheek of the rill  
With a cooling kiss.  
Then hid on the bank a-gee  
And began to rally  
The rushes—Oh,  
I love the wind for this!

A cloud blew out of the west  
And spilt his shower  
Upon the lily-bud crest  
And the clematis.  
Then over the virgin corn  
Besprinkled a dower  
Of dew-gems—And,  
I love the cloud for this!

## AUTUMN

I know her not by fallen leaves  
Or resting heaps of hay ;  
Or by the sheathing mists of mauve  
That soothe the fiery day.

I know her not by plumping nuts,  
By redded hips and haws,  
Or by the silence hanging sad  
Under the wind's sere pause.

But by her sighs I know her well—  
They are like Sorrow's breath ;  
And by this longing, strangely still,  
For something after death.

## THE WORLD

*Vox desperans.*

THE World is a wind—on which are blown  
All mysteries that are.  
Out of a Void it sprang—and to  
A Void shall spring, afar.

*Vox sperans.*

The World is Visible God—who is  
Its Soul invisible.  
There is no Void beyond that He  
Abiding fills not full.

## TO THE DOVE

### I

THY mellow passioning amid the leaves  
Trembles around me in the summer dusk  
That falls along the oatlands' sallow sheaves  
And haunts above the runnel's voice a-husk  
With plashy willow and bold-wading reed.  
The solitude's dim spell it breaketh not,  
But softer mourns unto me from the mead  
Than airs within the dead primrose's heart,  
Or breath of silences in dells begot  
To soothe some grief-wan maid with love a-mort.

### 2

On many sylvan eves of childhood thou  
Didst woo my homeward path with tenderness,  
Woo till the awing owlet ceased to caw  
With his chill screech of quavering distress.  
At phantom midnight wakened I have heard  
Thy mated dreams from the wind-erie elm,

And as a potion medicined and myrrhed,  
As an enchantment's runic utterance,  
It would draw sleep back to her lulling realm  
Over my lids till day should disenfranchise.

## 3

A priestess art thou of Simplicity,  
Who hath one fane—the heaven above thy nest;  
One incense—love; one stealing litany  
Of peace from rivered vale and upland crest.  
Yea, thou art Hers, who makes prayer of the breeze,  
Hope of the cool upwelling from sweet soils,  
Faith of the dark'ning distance, charities  
Of vesper scents, and of the glow-worm's throb  
Joy whose first leaping rends the care-wound coils  
That would earth of its heavenliness rob.

## 4

But few, how few her worshippers! For we  
Cast at a myriad shrines our souls, to rise  
Beliefless, unanointed, bound not free,  
To sacrificing a vain sacrifice!  
Let thy lone innocence then quickly null  
Within our veins doubt-led and wrong desire  
Or drugging knowledge that but fills o'erfull  
Of feverous mystery the days we drain!  
Be thy warm notes like an Orphean lyre  
To lead us to life's Arcady again!

## AT TINTERN ABBEY

(JUNE, 1903)

O TINTERN, Tintern! evermore my dreams  
Troubled of thy grave beauty shall be born;  
Thy crumbling loveliness and ivy streams  
Shall speak to me for ever, from this morn;  
The wind-wild daws about thy arches drifting,  
Clouds sweeping o'er thy ruin to the sea,  
Gray Tintern, all the hills about thee, lifting  
Their misty waving woodland verdancy!

The centuries that draw thee to the earth  
In envy of thy desolated charm,  
The summers and the winters, the sky's girth  
Of sunny blue or bleakness, seek thy harm.  
But would that I were Time, then only tender  
Touch upon thee should fall as on I sped;  
Of every pillar would I be defender,  
Of every mossy window—of thy dead!



Thy dead beneath obliterated stones  
Upon the sod that is at last thy floor,  
Who list the Wye not as it lonely moans  
Nor heed thy Gothic shadows grieving o'er.  
O Tintern, Tintern! trysting-place, where never  
Is wanting mysteries that move the breast,  
I'll hear thy beauty calling, ah, for ever—  
Till sinks within me the last voice to rest!

## THE VICTORY

SEE, see!—the blows at his breast,  
Abyss at his back,  
The peril of dark that pressed,  
The doubts in a pack,  
That hunted to drag him down  
Have triumphed? and now  
He sinks who climbed for the crown  
To the Summit's brow?

No!—though at the foot he lies,  
Fallen and vain,  
With gaze to the peak whose skies,  
He could not attain,  
The victory is, with strength—  
No matter the past!—  
He'd dare it again, the dark length,  
And the fall at last!

## SEARCHING DEATH'S DARK

WHEN Autumn's melancholy robes the land  
With silence and sad fadings mystical  
Of other years move thro' the mellow fields,  
I turn unto this meadow of the dead  
Strewn with the leaves stormed from October trees,  
And wonder if my resting shall be dug  
Here by this cedar's moan or under the sway  
Of yonder cypress—lair of winds that rove  
As Valkyries from Valhalla's court  
In search of worthy slain.  
And sundry times with questioning I tease  
The entombed of their estate—seeking to know  
Whether 'tis sweeter in the grave to feel  
The oblivion of Nature's flow, or here  
Wander as gleam and shadow flit her face.  
Whether the harvesting of pain and joy  
Ends with the ivied slab, or whether death  
Pours the warm chrism of Immortality  
Into each human heart whose glow is spent.

Nor do my askings fall on the chill voids  
Of unavailing silence. For a voice  
Of sighing wind may answer, or it leaps,  
Though wordless, from a marble seraph's face.  
Or sometimes from unspeakable deeps of gold  
That ebb along the west revealings wing  
And tremor, like ethereal swift tongues  
Unskilled of human speech, about my heart—  
Till, youth, age, death . . . even earth's all, it seems,  
Are but wild moments wakened in that Soul,  
To whom infinities are as a span,  
Eternities as bird-flights o'er the sun,  
And worlds as sands blown from Sahara's wilds  
Into the sea. . . .

Then twilight bells ring back  
My wandered spirit from the wilderness  
Of Mystery, whence none may find a path  
To the Unknown, and like one who upborne  
Has steered the unmeasured summer skies until  
Their calm seems God, I turn transfigured home.

## SERENITY

AND could I love it more—this simple scene  
Of cot-strewn hills and fields long-harvested,  
That lie as if forgotten were all green,  
    So bare, so dead?

Or could my gaze more tenderly entwine  
Each pallid beech or silvery sycamore,  
Outreaching arms in patience to divine  
    If winter's o'er?

Ah no, the wind has blown into my veins  
The blue infinity of sky, the sense  
Of meadows free to-day from icy pains—  
    From wintry vents.

And sunny peace more virgin than the glow  
Falling from eve's first star into the night,  
Brings hope believing what it ne'er can know  
    With mortal sight.

## TO THE SPRING WIND

Ah, what a changeling!  
Yester you dashed from the west,  
Altho' it is Spring,  
And scattered the hail with maniac zest  
Thro' the shivering corn—in scorn  
For the labour of God and man.  
And now from the plentiful South you haste,  
With lovingest fingers,  
To ruefully lift and wooingly fan  
The lily that lingers a-faint on the stalk:  
As if the chill waste  
Of the earth's May-dreams,  
The flowers so full of her joy,  
Were not—as it seems—  
A wanton attempt to destroy.

## THE RAMBLE

DOWN the road  
Which asters tangle,  
Thro' the gap  
Where green-briar twines,  
By the path  
Where dry leaves dangle  
Down from the ivy vines,

We go—  
By sedgy fallows  
And along  
The stifled brook,  
Till it stops  
In lushy mallows  
Just at the bridge's crook.

'Then, again,  
O'er fence, thro' thicket,  
To the mouth  
Of the rough ravine—

## THE RAMBLE

Where the weird  
Leaf-hidden cricket  
Chirrs thro' the weirder green—

There's a way  
O'er rocks—but quicker  
Is the best  
Of heart and foot,  
As the beams  
Above us flicker  
Sun upon moss and root!

And we leap—  
As wildness tingles  
From the air  
Into our blood—  
With a cry  
Thro' golden dingles  
Hid in the heart of the wood.

Oh, the wood  
With winds a-wrestle!  
With the nut  
And acorn strown!  
Oh, the wood  
Where creepers trestle,  
Tree unto tree o'ergrown!



## THE RAMBLE

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With a climb  
The ledging summit  
Of the hill  
Is reached in glee.  
For an hour  
We gaze off from it  
Into the sky's blue sea.

But a bell  
And sunset's crimson  
Soon recall  
The homeward path.  
And we turn  
As the glory dims on  
The hay-fields' mounded math.

Thro' the soft  
And silent twilight  
We come,  
To the stile at last,  
As the clear  
Undying eyelight  
Of the stars tells day is past.

## RETURN

AH, it was here—September  
And silence filled the air—  
I came last year to remember,  
And muse, hid away from care.  
It was here I came—the thistle  
Was trusting her seed to the wind ;  
The quail in the croft gave whistle  
As now—and the fields lay thinned.

I know how the hay was steeping,  
Brown mows under mellow haze ;  
How a frail cloud-flock was creeping  
As now over lone sky-ways.  
Just there where the cat-bird's calling  
Her mock-hurt note by the shed,  
The use-worn wain was stalling  
In the weedy brook's dry bed.

And the cricket, lone little chimer  
Of day-long dreams in the vines,  
Chirred on like a doting rhymer  
O'er-vain of his firstling lines.  
He's near me now by the aster,  
Beneath whose shadowy spray  
A sultry bee seeps faster  
As the sun slips down the day.

And there are the tall primroses  
Like maidens waiting to dance.  
They stood in the same shy poses  
Last year, as if to entrance  
The stately mulleins to waken  
From death and lead them around :  
And still they will stand untaken,  
Till drops their gold to the ground.

Yes, it was here—September  
And silence round me yearned.  
Again I've come to remember,  
Again for musing returned  
To the searing fields assuaging,  
And the falling leaves' sad balm :  
Away from the world's keen waging—  
To harvest and hills and calm.

## THE EMPTY CROSS

THE eve of Golgotha had come,  
And Christ lay shrouded in the garden's tomb :  
Among the olives, Oh, how dumb,  
How sad the sun incarnadined the gloom !

The hill grew dim—the pleading cross  
Reached empty arms toward the closing gate.  
Jerusalem, oh, count thy loss !  
Oh, hear ye ! hear ye ! ere it be too late !

Reached bleeding arms—but how in vain !  
The murmurous multitude within the wall  
Already had forgot His pain—  
To-morrow would forget the cross—and all !

They knew not Rome before its sign,  
Bending her brow bound with the nations' threne,  
Would sweep all lands from Nile to Rhine  
In servitude unto the Nazarene.

## THE EMPTY CROSS

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Nor knew that millions would forsake  
Ancestral shrines great with the glow of time,  
And lifting up its token shake  
Aeons with thrill of love or battle's crime.

With empty arms aloft it stood :  
Ah, Scribe and Pharisee, ye builded well !  
The cross emblotted with His blood  
Mounts, highest Hope of men against earth's hell !

## SUNSET-LOVERS

UPON how many a hill,  
Across how many a field,  
Beside how many a river's whispery flowing,  
They stand, with eyes a-thrill,  
And hearts of day-rue healed,  
Gazing, O wistful sun, upon thy going!

They have forgotten life,  
Forgotten sunless death;  
Desire is gone—is it not gone for ever?  
No memory of strife  
Have they, or pain-sick breath,  
No hopes to fear or fears hope cannot sever.

Silent the gold steals down  
The west, and mystery  
Moves deeper in their hearts and settles darker.  
'Tis faded—the day's crown;  
But strange and shadowy  
They see the Unseen as night falls stark and starker.

## SUNSET-LOVERS

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Like priests whose altar fires  
Are spent, immovable  
They stand, in awful ecstasy uplifted.  
Zephyrs awake tree-lyres,  
The starry deeps are full,  
Earth with a mystic majesty is gifted.

Ah, sunset-lovers, though  
Time were but pulsing pain,  
And death no more than its eternal ceasing,  
Would you not choose the throë,  
Hold the oblivion vain,  
To have beheld so many days releasing?

## TO A ROSE

(IN A HOSPITAL)

WHY do I love thee?—  
Not because thy wak'ning lips  
Were wooed to bloom by minstrel wind  
Of Araby or Ind.

Not because thy fragrance slips  
Into my soul—as if thou must  
Be sprung of a mother's dust.

Not because *she* gave her breast  
To thee for one long night—she whose  
Pure heart I ne'er shall lose.

But when I lay in sick unrest  
Afar from those who are my own,  
Thou camest from hands unknown :  
Therefore I love thee !



## UNBURTHENED

Not pain nor the sunny wine  
Of gladness steepeth my still spirit as  
I lift my gaze across the winter meads  
Engarmented in stubble robes of brown.  
For, as those solitary trees afar  
Have reached unbudding boughs  
To the dim warmth of the February sun,  
And melted on the infinite calm of space,  
So I have reached—and am no more distraught  
With the quivering pangs of memory's yesterday.  
But the boon of blue skies deeper than despair,  
Of rests that rise  
As tides of sleep,  
And care borne on the plumes  
Of swan-swift clouds away to the sullen shades  
Of quelled snow-storms low-lying in the west,  
Have lulled my soul with soft infinitude.  
And now . . . down sinks the sun,  
Until, half-arched above the marge of earth,  
It hangs, a golden door,  
Through which effulgent Paradise beyond

Burns seeming forth along the path of those  
Who, crowned by Death with Life, pass to its portal.  
How soon 'tis closed—how soon! The trumpeting  
Of seraphs whose gold blasts of light break o'er  
Purplescent passing battlements of cloud,  
Sound clear . . . then comes the dusk!

## WHERE PEACE IS DUTY

DIMMING in sunniness, aerily distant,  
Valley and hillside float ;  
Up to me wavering, softly insistent,  
Wanders the wood-brook's note.

Anchored beyond in azure unending  
Cloud-sails await wind-tide.  
Oh, for the skylands where soon they'll be wending—  
And, unabiding, bide.

Where Time aflow thro' infinite spaces  
Stays for no throttle of pain !  
Where the stars go at eve to their places ;  
Where silence never shall wane !

Where there's no sense but of beauty's wild sweetness,  
Thought but of sweetening beauty !  
Where wanting's stilled in unwanting's completeness—  
Where peace is duty !

## WANTON JUNE

I KNEW she would come !  
Sarcastic November  
Laughed cold and glum  
On the last red ember  
Of forest leaves.  
He was laughing, the scorner,  
At me forlorn  
Than any that grieves—  
Because I asked him if June would come !

But I knew she would come !  
When snow-hearted winter  
Gripped river and loam,  
And the wind sped flinter  
On icy heel,  
I was chafing my sorrow  
And yearning to borrow  
A hope that would steal  
Across the hours—till June should come.

And now she is here.—  
The wanton!—I follow  
Her steps, ever near,  
To the shade of the hollow  
Where violets blow :  
And chide her for leaving,  
Tho' half, still, believing  
She taunted me so,  
To make her abided return more dear.

## AUTUMN AT THE BRIDGE

BROWN dropping of leaves,  
Soft rush of the wind,  
Slow searing of sheaves  
    On the hill ;  
Green plunging of frogs,  
Cool lisp of the brook,  
Far barking of dogs  
    At the mill ;  
Hot hanging of clouds,  
High poise of the hawk,  
Flush laughter of crowds  
    From the Ridge ;  
Nut-falling, quail-calling,  
Wheel-rumbling, bee-mumbling—  
Oh, sadness, gladness, madness,  
Of an autumn day at the bridge !

## SONG

HER voice is vibrant beauty dipt  
In dreams of infinite sorrow and delight.  
Thro' an awaiting soul 'tis slipt  
And lo, words spring that breathe immortal might.

## TO HER WHO SHALL COME

### I

Out of the night of lovelessness I call  
Thee, as, in a chill chamber where no ray  
Of unbelievable light and freedom fall,  
Might cry one manacled! And tho' the way  
Thou'lt come I cannot see; tho' my heart's sore  
With emptiness when morning's silent gray  
Wakes me to long aloneness; yet I know  
Thou hast been with me, who like dawn wilt go  
Beside me, when I have found thee, evermore!

### 2

So in the garden of my heart each day  
I plant thee a flower. Now the pansy, peace,  
And now the lily, faith—or now a spray  
Of the climbing ivy, hope. And they ne'er cease  
Around the still unblossoming rose of love  
To bend in fragrant tribute to her sway.  
Then—for thy shelter from life's sultrier suns,  
The oak of strength I set o'er joy that runs  
With brooklet glee from winds that grieve above.



## 3

But where now art thou? Watching with love's eye  
The eve-star wander? Listening through dim trees  
Some thrilled muezzin of the forest cry  
From his leafy minaret? Or by the sea's  
Blue brim, while the spectral moon half o'er it hangs  
Like the faery isle of Avalon, do these  
My yearnings speak to thee of days thy feet  
Have never trod?—Sweet, sweet, oh, scaling sweet,  
My own, must be our meeting's mystic pangs.

## 4

And will be soon! For last night near to day,  
Dreaming, God called me thro' the space-built sphere  
Of heaven and said, "Come, waiting one, and lay  
Thine ear unto my Heart—there thou shalt hear  
The secrets of this world where evils war."  
Such things I heard as must rend mortal clay  
To tell, and trembled—till God, pitying,  
Said, "Listen" . . . Oh, my love, I heard thee sing  
Out of thy window to the morning star!

## AVOWAL TO THE NIGHTINGALE

THOUGH thou hast ne'er unpent thy pain's delight  
Upon these airs, bird of the poet's love,  
Yet must I sing thy singing! for the Night  
Has poured her jewels o'er the lap of heaven  
As they who've heard thee say thou dost above  
The wood such ecstasies as were not given  
By nestling breasts of Venus to the dove.

Oft I have watched the moon orb her fair gold,  
Still clung to by the tattered mists of day  
And look for thee. Then has my hope grown bold  
Till almost I could see how the near laurels  
Would tremble with thy trembling: but the sway  
Of bards who've wreathed thee with unfading chorals  
Has held my longing lips from this poor lay.

None but the sky-hid lark whose spirit is  
Too high for earth may vie for praise with thee  
In aery rhapsody. And since tis' his  
To sing of day and joy as thou of sorrow

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And night o'erhovering singest, thou'lt e'er be  
More dear than he—till hearts shall cease to borrow  
From grief the healing for life's mystery.

Then loose thy song ! Though no grave ear may list  
Its lyric trouble, still 'tis soothing sweet  
To know that songs unheard and graces missed  
By every eye melt on the skies that nourish  
Us with immortal blue ; and, changed, repeat  
Their protean loveliness in all we cherish.  
For beauty cannot die, howe'er 't may fleet.

## STORM-EBB

DUSKING amber dimly creeps  
Over the vale,  
Lit by the kildee's silver sweeps,  
Sad with his wail.

Eastward swing the silent clouds  
Into the night.  
Burdens of day they seem—in crowds  
Hurled from earth's sight.

Tilting gulls whip whitely far  
Over the lake,  
Tirelessly on o'er buoy and spar  
Till they o'ertake

Shadow and mingled mist—and then  
Vanish to wing  
Still the bewildering night-fen,  
Where the waves ring.

## STORM-EBB

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Dusking amber dimly dies

Out of the vale.

Dead from the dunes the winds arise—

Ghosts of the gale.

## SLAVES

A **HOST** of bloody centuries lie prone  
Upon the fields of **Time**—but still the wake  
Of **Progress** loud is haunted with the groan  
Of myriads, from whose peaceful veins, to slake  
His scarlet thirst, has **War**, fierce **Polypheme**  
Of fate, insatiately drunk **Life's** stream.  
We bid the courier lightning leap along  
Its metal path with spaceless speed—command  
Stars lost in night-eternity to throng  
Before the magnet eye of **Science**—stand  
On **Glory's** peak and triumphingly cry  
Out mastery of earth and sea and air.  
But unto **War's** necessity we bare  
Our piteous breasts—and impotently die.

## WAKING

Oh, the long dawn, the weary, endless dawn,  
When sleep's oblivion is torn away  
From love that died with dying yesterday  
But still unburied in the heart lies on!

Oh, the sick gray, the twitter in the trees,  
The sense of human waking o'er the earth!  
The quivering memories of love's fair birth  
Now strown as deathless flowers o'er its decease!

Oh, the regret, and oh, regretlessness,  
Striving for sovranity within the soul!  
Oh, fear that life shall never more be whole,  
And immortality but make it less!

## FAUN-CALL

Oh, who is he will follow me  
    With a singing,  
Down sunny roads where windy odes  
    Of the woods are ringing?

Where leaves are tossed from branches lost  
    In a tangle  
Of vines that vie to clamber high—  
    But to vault and dangle!

Oh, who is he?—His eye must be  
    As a lover's  
To leap and woo the chicory's hue  
    In the hazel-hovers!

His hope must dance like radiance  
    O'er the shadows  
Of clouds that fling their threatening  
    On the stubbly meadows!



And he must see that Autumn's glee  
And her laughter  
From his lips and heart will quell all smart—  
Of before and after !

## LINGERING

I LINGERED still when you were gone,  
When tryst and trust were o'er,  
While memory like a wounded swan  
In sorrow sung love's lore.

I lingered till the whippoorwill  
Had cried delicious pain  
Over the wild-wood—in its thrill  
I heard your voice again.

I lingered and the mellow breeze  
Blew to me sweetly dewed—  
Its touch awoke the sorceries  
Your last caresses brewed.

But when the night with silent start  
Had sown her starry seed,  
The harvest which sprang in my heart  
Was loneliness and need.

## STORM-TWILIGHT

Tossing, swirling, swept by the wind,  
    Beaten abaft by the rain,  
The swallows high in the sodden sky  
    Circle oft and again.

They rise and sink and drift and swing,  
    Twitterless in the chill ;  
A-haste, for stark is the coming dark  
    Over the wet of the hill.

Wildly, swiftly, at last they stream  
    Into their chimney home.  
A livid gash in the west, a crash—  
    Then silence, sadness, gloam.

## WILDNESS

To drift with the drifting clouds,  
And blow with the blow of breezes,  
To ripple with waves and murmur with caves,  
To soar, as the sea-mew pleases!

To dip with the dipping sails,  
And burn with the burning heaven—  
My life! my soul! for the infinite roll  
Of a day to wildness given!

## BEFORE AUTUMN

SUMMER's last moon has waned—

Waned

As amber fires

Of an Aztec shrine.

The invisible breath of coming death has stained

The withering leaves with its nepenthean wine—

Autumn's near.

Winds in the woodland moan --

Moan

As memories

Of a chilling yore.

Magnolia seeds like Indian beads are strewn

From crimson pods along the earth's sere floor—

Autumn's near.

Solitude slowly steals,

Steals

Her silent way

By the songless brook.

At the gnarly yoke of a solemn oak she kneels,

The musing joy of sadness in her look—

Autumn's near.

## BEFORE AUTUMN

Yes, with her golden days—  
Days  
When hope and toil  
Are at peace and rest—  
Autumn is near, and the tired year 'mid praise  
Lies down with leaf and blossom on her breast—  
Autumn's near.

## FULFILMENT

A-BASK in the mellow beauty of the ripening sun,  
Sad with the lingering sense of summer's purpose done,  
The cut and searing fields stretch from me one by one  
    Along the creek.

The corn-stooks drop their shadows down the fallow hill ;  
Wearing autumnal warmth the farm sleeps by the mill,  
Around each heavy eave low smoke hangs blue and still—  
    Life's flow is weak.

Along the weedy roads and lanes I walk—or pause—  
Ponder a fallen nut or quirking crow whose caws  
Seem with prehuman hintings fraught or ancient awes  
    Of forest-deeps.

Of forest deeps the pale-face hunter never trod,  
Nor Indian, with the silent stealth of Nature shod ;  
Deeps tense with the timelessness and solitude of God  
    Who never sleeps.

And many times has Autumn, on her harvest way,  
Gathered again into the earth leaf, fruit, and spray ;  
Here many times dwelt rueful as she dwells to-day,  
    The while she reaps.



## TO THE FALLEN LEAVES

I HEAR the moaning rains beat on your rest  
In the long nights of Winter and his wind—  
And Death, the woeful, guilty of your fall,  
Crying that he has sinned.

## MAYA

(HIROSHIMA, JAPAN, 1905)

PALE sampans up the river glide  
With set sails vanishing and slow ;  
In the blue west the mountains hide  
As visions that too soon will go.

Across the rice-lands flooded deep  
The peasant peacefully wades on—  
As in unfurrowed vales of sleep,  
A phantom out of voidness drawn.

Over the temple cawing flies  
The crow with carrion in his beak.  
Buddha within lifts not his eyes  
In pity or reproof meek ;

Nor, in the bamboos, where they bow  
A respite from the blinding sun,  
The old priest—dreaming painless how  
Nirvana's calm will come when won.

“All is allusion, *Maya*, all  
The world of will,” the spent East seems  
Whispering in me, “And the call  
Of Life is but a call of dreams.”

## SPIRIT OF RAIN

(MIYANOSHITA, JAPAN, 1905)

SPIRIT of rain—

With all thy ghosts of mist about the mountain, lonely  
As a gray train  
Of souls newly discarnate seeking new life only!

Spirit of rain!

Leading them thro' dim torii, up fane-ways onward  
Till not in vain  
They tremble upon the peaks and plunge rejoicing  
dawnward.

Spirit of rain!

So would I lead my dead thoughts high and higher,  
Till they regain  
Birth and the beauty of a new life's fire.

## THE NYMPH AND THE GOD

SHE lay by the river dead,  
A broken reed in her hand,  
The nymph whom an idle god had wed  
And led from her maidenland.

The god was the great god, Jove.  
Two notes would the bent reed blow,  
The one was sorrow, the other love,  
Enwove with a woman's woe.

She lay by the river dead,  
And he at feasting forgot.  
The gods, shall they be disquieted  
By dread of a mortal's lot?

## A SEA-GHOST

OH, fisher-fleet, go in from the sea  
And furl your wings.  
The bay is gray with the twilit spray  
And the loud surf springs.

The chill buoy-bell is rung by the hands  
Of all the drowned,  
Who know the woe of the wind and tow  
Of the tides around.

Go in, go in! O haste from the sea,  
And let them rest—  
A son and one who was wed and one  
Who went down unblest.

Aye, even as I whose hands at the bell  
Now labour most,  
The tomb has gloom, but O the doom  
Of the drear sea-ghost!

He evermore must wander the ooze  
Beneath the wave,  
Forlorn—to warn of the tempest born,  
And to save—to save!

Then go, go in! and leave us the sea,  
For only so  
Can peace release us and give us ease  
Of our salty woe.

## LAST SIGHT OF LAND

THE clouds in woe hang far and dim :  
I look again and lo  
Only a faint and shadow line  
Of shore—I watch it go.

The gulls have left the ship and wheel  
Back to the cliff's gray wraith.  
Will it be so of all our thoughts  
When we set sail on Death ?

And what will the last sight be of life  
As lone we fare and fast ?  
Grief and the face we love in mist—  
Then night and awe too vast ?

Or the dear light of Hope—like that,  
O see, from the lost shore  
Kindling and calling “Onward, you  
Shall reach the Evermore !”



## SILENCE

SILENCE is song unheard,  
Is beauty never born,  
Is light forgotten—left unstirred  
Upon Creation's morn.

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DAVID

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## CHARACTERS

SAUL . . . . .	<i>King of Israel.</i>
JONATHAN . . . . .	<i>Heir to the throne.</i>
ISHUI . . . . .	<i>His brother.</i>
SAMUEL . . . . .	<i>The Prophet of Israel.</i>
ABNER . . . . .	<i>Captain of the Host of Israel.</i>
DOEG . . . . .	<i>An Edomite; chief servant of Saul, and suitor for Michal.</i>
ADRIEL . . . . .	<i>A Lord of Meholah, suitor for Merab.</i>
DAVID . . . . .	<i>A shepherd, secretly anointed King.</i>
ABISHAI . . . . .	<i>A follower of David.</i>
ABIATHAR . . . . .	<i>A priest and follower of David.</i>
A PHILISTINE SPY.	
AHINOAM . . . . .	<i>The Queen.</i>
MERAB . . . . .	} <i>Daughters of Saul and Ahinsam.</i>
MICHAL . . . . .	
MIRIAM . . . . .	<i>A blind prophetess, and later the "Witch of Endor."</i>
JUDITH . . . . .	} <i>Timbrel-players of the King.</i>
LEAH . . . . .	
ZILLA . . . . .	
ADAH . . . . .	<i>Handmaiden to Merab.</i>
<i>A Chorus of Women. A Band of Priests. Followers of David. Soldiers of Saul. People of the Court, &amp;c.</i>	

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# DAVID

## ACT I

SCENE: *A Hall of Judgment in the palace of SAUL at Gibeah.*

*The walls and pillars of cedar are richly carven—with serpents, pomegranates, and cherubim in gold. The floors are of bright marble; the throne of ivory hung with a lion's skin whose head is its footstool. On the right, by the throne, and on the left are doors to other portions of the palace; they are draped with woven curtains of purple and white. In the rear, which is open and supported on pillars, a porch crosses a court. Through the porch, on the environing hills, glow the camp-fires of the Philistines, the enemies of Israel. Lamps in the Hall burn low, and on the floor JUDITH, LEAH and ZILLA are reclining restively.*

*Judith (springing to her feet impatiently).* O for a feast,  
pomegranate wine and song!

*Leah.* Oh! Oh!

*Zilla.* A feast indeed! the men in camp!

When was a laugh or any leaping here?  
Never; and none to charm with timbreling!

*(She goes to the porch.)*

*Leah.* What shall we do?

*Judith.* I'll dance.

*Zilla.* Until you're dead.

*Judith.* Or till a youth wed Zilla for her beauty?

I'll not soil mine with sullen fear all day

Because these Philistines press round. As well

Be wenches gathering grapes or wool! Come, Leah.

*(She prepares to dance.)*

*Leah.* No, Judith, I'll put henna on my nails,

*(Sits down.)*

And mend my anklet.

*Zilla (at the curtains).* Oh! Oh! Oh!

*Judith.* Now, hear her!

Who, who, now? who, who is it? dog, fox, devil?

*Zilla.* All!

*Judith.* Then 'tis Ishui! *(Bounding to curtains.)* Yes, Ishui!

And fury in him, sallow, souring fury!

A jackal were his mate! Come, come, we'll plague him.

*Zilla.* Shall we—with David whom he hates?

*Judith.* Aie, David!

The joy of rousing men to jealousy!

*Leah.* Why hates he David, Zilla?

*Zilla.* Stupid Leah!

*Judith.* Hush, hush, be meet and ready now; he's near.

Look as for silly visions and for dreams!

*(They pose. ISHUI entering sees them. JUDITH sighs.)*



*Ishui.* Now, timbrel-gaud, why gape you here?

*Judith.* O! 'tis

Prince Ishui!

*Zilla.* Prince Ishui! Then he

Will tell us! he will tell us!

*Leah.* Yes!

*Judith.* Of David!

O, is he come? when, where?—quick, quick. And will

He pluck us ecstasies out of his harp,

Winning until we're wanton for him, mad,

And sigh and laugh and weep to the moon?

*Ishui.* Low thing!

Chaff of the king!

*Judith.* The king! I had not thought!

David a king! how beauteous would he be!

*Ishui.* David?

*Judith.* Turban of sapphire! robe of gold!

*Ishui.* A king? o'er Israel?

*Judith.* Who, who can tell?

Have you not heard? Yesterday in the camp,

Among war-old but fearful men, he offered

Kingly to meet Goliath—great Goliath!

*Ishui.* What do you say? to meet Goliath?

*Judith (laughing in his face).* Aie!

(*Thrust from him, she goes, dancing with ZILLA and LEAH.*)

*Adriel (who has entered).* Ishui, in a rage?

*Ishui.* Should I not be?

*Adriel.* Not would you be yourself.

*Ishui.* Not? (*Deftly.*) You say well.

I should not, no. Pardon then, Adriel.

*Adriel.* What was the offence?

*Ishui.* Turn from it : I have not  
Bidden you here for vapours . . . tho' they had  
Substance as well for you !

*Adriel.* For me ?

*Ishui.* Who likes  
Laughter against him ?

*Adriel.* I was laughed at ?

*Ishui.* Why,  
It is this shepherd !

*Adriel.* David ?

*Ishui.* With his harp !

Flinging enchantment on the palace air  
Till he impassions to him all who breathe.

*Adriel.* What sting from that ? He's lovable and brave.

*Ishui.* Lovable ? *lovable ?*

*Adriel.* I do not see.

*Ishui.* This, then : you've hither come with gifts and gold,  
Dream-bringing amethyst and weft of Ind,  
To wed my sister, Merab ?

*Adriel.* It is so.

*Ishui.* And you've the king's consent ; but she denies ?

*Adriel.* As every wind, you know it.

*Ishui.* Still denies !

And you, lost in the maze of her, fare on  
Blindly and find no reason for it !

*Adriel.* How ?

What reason can be ? women are not clear ;

And least unto themselves.

*Ishui.* Or to their fools.

(*Goes to curtain, draws out ADAH.*)

Your mistress, Merab, girl, whom does she love?  
Unclench your hands.

*Adah.* I hate her.

*Ishui.* Insolent!

Answer; I am not milky Jonathan,  
Answer; and for the rest—You hear?

*Adah.* She loves—

The shepherd David!

*Adriel.* Who, girl?

*Adah.* I care not!

She is unkind; I will not spy for her  
On Michal, and I'll tell her secrets all!  
And David does not love her—and she raves.

*Ishui.* Off to your sleep; be off—

(*Makes to strike her.*)

*Adriel.* *Ishui,* no.

[*ADAH goes.*

*Ishui.* (*gnashingly*). Then see you now how “lovable” he is?

I tell you that he stands athwart us all!  
The heart of Merab swung as a censer to him,  
My seat at table with the king usurped!  
Mildew and mocking to the harp of Doeg  
As it were any slave's; the while we all  
Are lepered with suspicion.

*Adriel.* Of the king?

*Ishui.* Ah! and of Jonathan and Michal.

*Adriel.*

Hush.

*Enter MICHAL, passing, with MIRIAM.*

Michal, delay. Whom lead you ?

*Michal.*

Miriam,

A prophetess.

*Adriel.*

How of the king to-night ?

*Michal.*

He's not at rest ; dreads Samuel's prophecy  
The throne shall pass from him, and darkens more  
Against this boundless Philistine Goliath  
Who dares at Israel daily on the hills,  
As we were dogs !

*Adriel.*

Is David with him ?

*Michal.*

No ;

But he is sent for—and will ease him—Ah !  
He's wonderful to heal the king with his harp !  
A waft, a sunny leap of melody,  
And swift the hovering mad shadow's gone—  
As magic !

*Ishui.*

Michal. . . . Curst !

*Michal.*

What anger's this ?

*Ishui.*

Disdaining Doeg and his plea to dust,  
His waiting and the winning o'er of Edom,  
You are enamoured of this David too ?

*Michal.*

I think my brother Ishui hath a fever.

*(She goes, calmly, with MIRIAM.)*

*Ishui.*

Now are you kindled—are you quivering,  
Or must this shepherd put upon us more ?

*Adriel.*

But has he not dealt honourably ?

*Ishui.*

No.

*Adriel.* Why do you urge it?

*Ishui.* Why have senses. He

With Samuel the prophet fast enshrouds  
Some secret, and has Samuel not told  
The kingdom from my father shall be rent  
And fall unto one another?

*Adriel.* You are certain?

*Ishui.* As granite.

*(Voices are heard in altercation.)*

Yonder!

*Adriel.* The king?

*Ishui.* And Samuel

With prophecy or some refusal tears him!

*(They step aside. SAUL, followed by SAMUEL, strides in and  
mounts the throne.)*

*Saul.* You threat, and ever thunder threatening!

Pour seething prophecy into my veins,  
Till a simoon of madness in me moves.  
Am I not king, the king? chosen and sealed?  
Who've been anathema and have been bane  
Unto the foes of Israel, and filled  
The earth with death of them?  
And do you still forbid that I bear gold  
And bribe away this Philistine array  
Folded about us, fettering with flame?

*Samuel.* Yes,—yes! While there is air—and awe of Heaven  
Do I forbid! A champion must rise  
To level this Goliath. Thus may we  
Loose on them pest of panic and of fear.

*Saul.* Are forty days not dead? A champion!  
None will arise—'tis vain. And I'll not wait  
On miracle.

*Samuel.* Offer thy daughter, then,  
Michal, thy fairest, to whoever shall.

*Saul.* Demand and drain for more! without an end.  
Ever vexation! No; I will not.

*Samuel.* Then,  
Out of Jehovah and a vast foreseen  
I tell thee again, thou perilous proud king,  
The sceptre shall slip from thee to another!  
*(He moves to go.)*

*Saul.* The sceptre. . . .

*Samuel.* To another!

*Saul.* From me! No!  
You rouse afar the billowing of ill.  
I grant—go not!—I grovel to your will,  
Fear it and fawn as to omnipotence,  
*(Snatching at SAMUEL'S mantle.)*  
And vow to all its divination—all!

*Samuel.* Then, Saul of Israel, the hour is near,  
When shall arise one, and Goliath fall!

*(Goes slowly out by the porch, Saul sinks back.)*

*Ishui (after a pause, keenly).* Oh,—subtle!

*Saul.* Thus he sways me.

*Ishui.* Subtle!—subtle!

And yet I must not speak; come, Adriel,  
*(As if going.)*

No use of us is here.

- Saul.* Use? subtle? Stand!
- Ishui.* No, father, no.
- Saul.* What mean you?
- Ishui.* Do not ask. . . .  
Yet how it creeps, and how!
- Saul.* Unveil your words.
- Ishui.* Do you not see it crawl, this serpent scheme?  
Goliath slain—the people mad with praise,  
Then fallen from you—Michal the victor's wife. . . .
- Saul.* Say on, say on.
- Ishui.* Or else the champion slain—  
Fear on the people—panic—the kingdom's ruin!
- Saul.* Now do the folds slip from me.
- Ishui.* And you see?  
Ah, then, if one arise? If one arise?
- Saul.* Death, death! If he hath touched this prophet—if  
Merely a little moment!—
- Ishui.* I have seen  
Your David with him.
- Saul.* Death! if— Come here: David?
- Ishui.* In secret.
- Saul.* Say you?
- Ishui.* Yes.
- Saul.* The folds slip further;  
To this you lead me—hatred against David!  
To this with supple envy's easy glide!
- Ishui.* I have but told—
- Saul.* You have but builded lies,  
As ever you are building and for ever.

I'll hear no more against him—Abner!—no.

(*To ABNER, who enters.*)

David, and with his harp.

*Abner.* My lord—

*Saul.* Not come?

He is not come? Forever he delays!

(*Remounts throne.*)

*Abner.* Time's yet to pass.

*Saul.* There is not. Am I king?

(*A harp is heard.*)

See you, 'tis he! . . . 'Tis David! . . . And he sings!

*David (bravely, within).*

Smiter of Hosts,

Terrible Saul!

Vile on the hills shall he laugh who boasts

None is among

Great Israel's all

Fearless for Saul, King Saul!

(*Entering with people of the palace.*)

Aye, is there none

Galled of the sting,

Will at the soul of Goliath run?

Wring it and up

To his false gods fling? . . .

None for the king, the king?

(*He drops to his knee, amid praise, before the throne.*)

*Saul (darkening).* Forego this praise and stand

Away from him; 'tis overmuch.

(*To DAVID.*)

Why have



You dallied and delayed?

*David.* My lord, delayed?

*Saul.* Do not smile wonder, mocking!

*David.* Why, my lord,

I do not mock. Only the birds have wings.

Yet on the vales behind me I have left

Haste and a swirl, a wonderment of air,

And in the torrent's troubled vein amaze,

So swift I hurried hither at your urgency

Out of the fields and folding the far sheep!

*Saul.* You have not; you have dallied. (*Motions rest out.*)

You have dallied.

(*Comes down indeterminately.*)

And now——

*David.* And now the king with darkness foams,

With sheeted passions like to lightning gusts.

(*All have gone.*)

Shall I not play to him?

*Saul.* You shall not, no.

(*Slowly draws a dagger.*)

I'll not be lulled.

*David.* But show a tiger gleam?

Terrible fury stealing from the heart

And crouching cold within the eye, O Saul?

*Saul.* I'll not endure. They say that you——

*David.* They say?

What is this ravage in you? Does the truth

So limpid overflow in palaces?

Never an enemy to venom it?

Am I not David, faithful, and thy friend?

*Saul.* I'll slay you and regretless.

*David (unmoving).* Slay, my lord?

*Saul.* Do you not fear? And brave me to my breast?

*David.* Have I done wrong that I should fear the king?

Reed as I am, could he not breathe and break?

And I should be oblivion at a word!

But under the terror of his might have I

Not seen his heart beat justice and beat love?

See, even now! . . .

*Saul.* I will not listen to them!

*David.* To whom, my lord, and what?

*Saul.* Ever they say,

"This David," and "This David!"

*David.* Ah, my harp!

*Saul.* But think you, David, I shall lose the kingdom?

*David (starting).* My lord! . . .

*Saul.* Pain in your eyes? you think it? Deem

I cannot overleap this destiny?

*David.* To that let us not verge; it has but ill.

Deeper the future gulf is for our fears.

Forget it. Forget the brink may ever gape,

And wield the throne so well that God Himself

*Must* not unking you, more than He would cry

The morning star from Heaven! Then, I swear it,

None else will!

*Saul.* Swear?

*David.* Nay, nay!

*Saul.* You swear?

*David.* But words,

Foolishly from the heart ; a shepherd speech !  
 Give them no mood ; but see, see yonder fires  
 Camping upon the peace of Israel,  
 As we were carrion beneath the sun !  
 Let us conceive annihilation on them,  
 Hurricane rush and deluging and ruin.

*Saul.* Ah, but the prophecy ! the prophecy !  
 It eats in me the food of rest and ease.  
 And David, nearer : Samuel in my stead  
 Another hath anointed.

*David.* Saul, not this !  
 This should not fall to me, my lord ; no more !  
 You cannot understand ; it pains beyond  
 All duty and enduring !

*Saul.* Pains beyond . . . ?  
 Who is he ? know you of him ? do you ? know you ?  
 You sup the confidence of Samuel ?  
 I'll search from Nile to Nineveh——

*David.* My lord !

*Saul.* Mountain and desert, wilderness and sea,  
 Under and over, search—and find.

*Davia.* Peace, peace !

*Enter MICHAL joyously.*

*Michal.* O father, father ! David ! Listen ! . . . Why  
 All here is dark and quivering as pain,  
 And a foreboding binds me ere I breathe !  
 David, you have not been as sun to him !

*David.* But Michal will be now.

*Saul.* Child, well, what then?

*Michal.* Father, a secret! Oh, and it will make  
Dawn and delight in you!

*Saul.* Perhaps; then, well?

*Michal.* Oh, I have heard . . . !

*Saul.* Have heard!—Why do you pale?

*(She stands unaccountably moved.)*

Now are you Baal-bit?

*David.* Michal!

*Michal (in terror).* David! . . . the dread  
What does it mean? I cannot speak! It shrinks  
Shivering down upon my heart in awe!

*David.* And numbs you so?—Let it rush from your lips!  
Can any moving in the world so bring  
Terror upon you! Speak, what is it?

*Michal.* Ah!

I know not; danger rising and its wing  
Sudden against my lips!

*David.* To warn?

*Michal.* It shall not!

There—now again flows joy: I think it flows.

*Saul.* Then—you have heard . . . ?

*Michal.* Yes, father, yes! Have you  
Not much desired discovery of whom  
Samuel hath anointed?

*Saul.* Well?

*Michal.* I've found—

*(DAVID blenches.)*

Almost have found! A prophetess to-day

Hath told me that he is a——

(*Realises.*)

*Saul.* Now you cease?

(*She stands horrified.*)

Sudden and senseless!

*Michal.* David!—No!

*Saul.* God! God!

Have I not bidden swiftly! Ever then  
Vexation? I could—Ah. Will she not speak!

*Michal.* I cannot.

*Saul.* Cannot! Are you flesh of me?

*David.* My lord, not anger! Hear me . . .

*Saul.* Cannot?

*David.* Hear!

Her lips could never seal upon a wrong.  
Sudden divinity is on them, silence  
Sent for the benison of Israel,  
Else were it shattered by her love to you!  
Believe, in all the riven realm of duty  
There's no obedience from thee she would hold.  
If it seem other——

*Enter ABNER hurriedly.*

*Abner.* Pardon, O king. A word.

*Saul.* I will not. Do you come with vexing too?

*Abner.* The Philistines—some fury is afoot;

A spy's within our gates—and scorns to speak.

*Saul.* Conspiracy of silence! . . . Back to him.

[*ABNER goes.*]

(*To DAVID and MICHAL.*) But you—I'll not forget.

I'll not forget.

(*Goes trembling, his look bent backward still upon them.*)

*David* (*casting off gloom, then joyful*). Forget! anointing  
peril! What are they all?

*Michal*!—for me you have done this, for me?

(*She stands immovable.*)

I'm swung with joy as palms of Abila!

(*Goes to her.*)

A princess, you! and warm within your veins

Live sympathy and all love unto your father,

Yet you have shielded me?

*Michal.* You are the anointed?

*David.* I am—oh, do not flint your loveliness!—

I am the anointed, but all innocent

In will or hope of any envious wrong,

As lily blowing of blasphemy! as dew

Upon it is of enmity!

*Michal.* Anointed!

You whom the king uplifted from the fields!

*David.* And who am ever faithful to him!

*Michal.* You,  
Whom Jonathan loves more than women love!

*Davia.* Yet reaches not my love to Jonathan!

*Michal.* You—you!

*David.* But, hear me!

*Michal.* You, of all!

*David.* O hear!

Of my anointing Jonathan is 'ware,

Knows it is holy, helpless, innocent

As dawn or a drift of dreaming in the night!  
 Knows it unsought—out of the skies—supernal—  
 From the inspired cruse of Samuel!  
 For Israel it dripped upon me, and  
 For Israel must drip until I die!  
 Or till high Gath and Askalon are blown  
 Dust on the wind, and all Philistia  
 Lie peopleless and still under the stars! . . .  
 Goliath, then, a laughter evermore! . . .  
 Still, still you shrink? do you not see, not feel?

*Michal.* So have you breathed yourself about my heart,  
 Even as moonlit incense, spirit flame  
 Burning away all barrier!

*David.* But see!

*Michal.* And all the world has streamed a rapture in,  
 Till even now my lids from anger falter  
 And the dew falls!

*David.* Restrain! O do not weep!  
 Upon my heart each tear were as a sea  
 Flooding it from all duty but the course  
 Of thy delight!

*Michal.* Poor, that I should have tears!  
 Fury were better, tempest! O weak eyes,  
 When 'tis my father, and with Samuel  
 You creep to steal his kingdom!

*David.* Michal! . . . God!

*Michal.* Yes, steal it!

*David.* Cruel! fell accusal! Yea,  
 Utterly false and full of wounding!

*(Struggling, then with control.)*                      Yet,  
 Forgive that even when thy arrows sink  
 Deeper than all the skill of time can draw,  
 I spare thee not the furrowed face of pain . . .  
 Delirious wings of hope that fluttered up,  
 At last to fall!

*(Moves to go.)*

*Michal.*

David!

*David.*

Farewell!

*Michal.*

. . . You must not!

*David.* Peace to you, peace and joy!

*Michal.*

You must not go!

*(He turns. She sways and reaches to him her arms.  
 As they move together DOEG and MERAB appear, but  
 vanish from the curtains as MICHAL utters dismay.)*

*Michal.* Merab and Doeg!

*David (has sprung to her).* Yet what matter, now!

Were it the driven night-unshrouded dead!  
 Under the firmament is but one need,  
 That you will understand!

*Michal.*

But Merab! ah,

She's cunning, cold and cruel, and she loves thee;  
 Hath told her love to Ahinoam the queen!  
 And Doeg hates thee—since for me he's mad!

*David.* Then be his hate as wild, as wide as winds

That gather up the desert for their blast,  
 Be it as Sheol deep, stronger than stars  
 That fling fate on us, and I care not, care not,  
 If I am trusted and to Michal truth!



Hear, hear me! for the kingdom, tho 't may come,  
I yearn not; but for you!

*Michal.* No, no!

*David.* For you!

Since I a shepherd o'er a wild of hills  
First beheld you the daughter of the king  
Amid his servants, leaning, still with noon,  
Beautiful under a tamarisk, until  
All beauty else is dead——

*Michal.* Ah, cease!

*David.* Since then

I have been wonder, ecstasy and dream!  
The moulded light and fragrant miracle,  
Body of you and soul, lifted me till  
When you departed——

*Michal.* No, you rend me!

*David.* I

Fell thro' infinity of void!

*Michal.* No more!

*David.* Then came the prophet Samuel with anointing!  
My hope sprung as the sun!

*Michal.* I must not hear!

*David.* Then was I called to play before the king.  
Here in this hall where cherubim shine out,  
Where the night silence——

*Michal.* David!

*David.* Strung me tense,

I waited, shepherd-timid, and you came,  
You for the king to try my skill! you, you!

*Michal.* Leave me, ah leave! I yield!

*David.* And often since  
Have we not swayed and swept thro' happy hours,  
Far from the birth unto the bourne of bliss?

*Michal.* And I——

*David.* To-night you did not to the king  
Reveal my helpless chrism, give me to peril.  
Say but the reason!

*Michal.* David!

*David.* Speak, O speak!

*Michal.* And shall I, shall I? how this prophetess  
Miriam hath foretold——

*David.* Some wonder? speak!

*Michal* (*springs up the throne, then down*). No, no! horror in  
me moans out against it.

Wed me with destiny against my father?

Dethrone my mother? Ah!

*David.* Not that—no wrong!

*Michal.* Then swear conspiracy upon its tide  
Never shall lift you!

*David.* Deeper than soul or sea,  
Deep as divinity is deep, I swear.  
If it shall come, the kingdom——

*Michal.* “If!” not “if.”

Surrender this anointing! Spurn it, say  
You never will be king though Israel  
Kingless go mad for it!

*David.* I cannot.

*Michal.* Guile! -

*David.* I cannot—and I must not. It is holy !

*Michal.* Then must I hate you—scorn you—

*David.* Michal !

*Michal.* And will.

But to reign over Israel you care,  
Not for the peace of it !

*David.* Thus all is vain ;

A seething on the lips, I'll say no more. . . .

Care but to reign and not for Israel's calm ?

I who am wounded with her every wound ? . . .

Look out upon yon Philistine bold fires

Lapping the night with bloody tongue—look out !

*(A commotion is heard within.)*

As God has swung the world and hung for ever

The infinite in awe, to-morrow night

Not one of them shall burn !

*Michal.* You pall me !

*David.* None !

*Michal.* What is this strength ! It seizes on me ! No,

I'll not believe ; no, no, more than I would

From a boy's breath or the mere sling you wear

A multitude should flee ! And you shall learn

A daughter to a father may be true

Tho' paleness be her doom until she die !

*(She turns to go. Enter JONATHAN eagerly.)*

*Jonathan.* David !

*David.* My friend—my Jonathan ! 'Tis you ?

*(They embrace. MICHAL goes.)*

*Jonathan.* Great heart, I've heard how yesterday before

The soldiers you . . . But Michal's gone ! No word ?

*David.* The anointing.

*Jonathan.* Ah, she knows ?

*David.* All.

*Jonathan.* And disdains

Believing ? tell me.

*David.* No, not now—not now.

Let me forget it in a leap of deeds.

*(The commotion sounds again.)*

For there is murmur misty of distress,

What is it ? sprung of the Philistines ? new terror ?

This sounding giant flings again his foam ?

Jonathan, I am flame that will not wait.

What is it ? I must strike.

*Jonathan.* David . . .

*David.* Tell me,

And do not bring dissuasion more, or pause.

*Jonathan.* The king comes here.

*David.* Now ?

*Jonathan.* With a spy who keeps

Fiercely to silence.

*David.* Then is peril up !

Jonathan. . . !

*Jonathan.* David, you must cool from this.

Determination surges you o'erfar.

I will not see you rush on perishing,

Not though it be the aid of Israel.

*David.* I must. . . . I will not let them ever throng,

Staining the hills, and starving us from peace.

Rather the last ray living in me, rather  
 Death and the desecration of the worm.  
 Bid me not back with love, nor plea; I must!

*Jonathan.* But think——

*David.* No thought!

*Jonathan.* 'Twere futile——

*David.* Hear; the king!

*Jonathan.* The madness of it!

*David.* No, and see; they come.

*Jonathan.* Strangely my father is unstrung.

*David.* They come.

*Enter SAUL with SAMUEL; Soldiers with the spy; AHINOAM  
 with ABNER; and all the court in suppressed dread.*

*Saul (to SAMUEL).* He will not speak, but scorns me, and  
 his lips

Bitterly curve and grapple. But he shall  
 Learn there is torture to it! Set him forth.

*(The spy is thrust forward.)*

Tighten his bonds up till he moan.

*(It is done.)*

Aye, gasp,

Accursed Philistine! Now wilt thou tell  
 The plan and passion of the people 'gainst us?

*Spy.* Baal!

*Saul.* Tighten the torture more. . . . Now will you?

*Spy (in agony).*

Yea!

*Saul.* On, then, reveal.

*Spy.* New forces have arrived,

Numberless; more than peaks of Arabah.

*(General movement of uneasiness.)*

Unless before to-morrow's moon one's sent  
To overthrow Goliath . . . Gods! the pain!

*Saul.* Well? Well?

*Spy.* Then Gibeah attacked, and all,  
Even to sucking babes, they'll put to sword!

*(A movement of horror.)*

*Ahinoam.* All Gibeah!

*A Woman.* My little ones? No, no!

*(She rushes frantically out.)*

*Samuel.* Then, Saul of Gibeah, one thing and one  
Alone is to be done. A champion,  
To break this beetling giant down to death!

*Saul.* There is none.

*Samuel.* Is none! Call! I order it.

*Saul.* Then who will dare against him!

*(A silence.)*

See you now.

*Samuel.* You, Abner, will not?

*Abner.* It were death and vain.

*Samuel.* Doeg, chiet servant of the king?

*Doeg.* Why me?

Had I a mother out of Israel?

I am an alien, an Edomite.

*David.* My lord, this is no more endurable!

*(Steps forth.)*

Futile and death? Alien? Edomite?

Has not this Philistine before the gates,

With insult and illimitable breath

Vaunting of vanity and smiting laughter,  
 Boasted and braved and threatened up to Baal ?  
 And now unless one slay him, Israel  
 From babe to age must bleed and be no more !  
 I am a shepherd, have but seized the lion  
 And throttled the bleating kid out of his throat ;  
 Little it then beseems that I thrust in  
 Where battle captains pale and falter off ;  
 But this is past all carp of rank or station.  
 One must go out—Goliath must have end.

*Doeg.* Ah, ah ! and you will !

*Ishui.*

*You ?*

*Jonathan.*

No, David !

*Saul.*

*You ?*

*David.* Sudden you hound about me ravenous ?  
 Have I thrown doom not daring to your feet,  
 Ruler of Israel, that you rise wild,  
 Livid above me as an avalanche ?

*Doeg.* A plot ! it is a plot ! He will be slain—  
 From you, my lord, dominion then will fall !  
 Or should it not . . .

*Samuel.* Liar ! it is no plot.

But courage sprung seraphic out of night,  
 Beautiful, yea, a bravery from God !

*Michal (behind the throng).* Open ! and let me enter ! Open !

*(She enters.)*

Father !

It is not false ? but now, the uttermost ?  
 To-morrow, if Goliath still exult,

There's peril of desolation, bloody ruin?

*Samuel.* I answer for him; yea.

*Michal.*

Then to your will,

Father, unto will of yesterday

I bend me now with sacrificial joy.

Unto Goliath's slayer is the hand

Of Michal, the king's daughter!

*David (joyously).*

Michal! Michal!

*Doeg.* See you, my lord? Do you not understand?

*Ishui.* It is another coiling of their plot!

*Michal.* Coiling of plot? What mean you?

*Merab.*

Ah! You know

Not it is David offers against Goliath?

*Michal.* David? (*Shrinking.*) David?

(*A low tumult is heard without. Enter a Captain hurriedly.*)

*Captain.*

O King, bid me to speak!

*Saul.* Then speak!

*Captain.*

Fear is upon the host. There will

Be mutiny unless, Goliath slain,

Courage spring up anew.

*David.*

My lord, then, choose!

Ere longer waiting fester to disaster.

*Samuel.* Yea, king of Gibeah, and bid him go,

And Michal for his meed! or evermore

Evil be on you and the sear of shame—

And haunting memory beyond the tomb!

*Saul.* Then let him—let him. And upon the field

Of Ephes-Dammin. But I am not blind!



(To ABNER.)

Let him, to-morrow! Go prepare the host.

Yet—I am king, remember! I am king!

(SAUL goes; murmurs of relief . . . All follow, but MICHAL,  
past DAVID with joy or hate.)

David. Michal!

(She struggles against tears, but, turning, goes. He stands  
and gazes after her. Then a trumpet sounds and  
soldiers throng to the porch.)

David (thrilled, his hand on his sling). For Israel! For Israel!

[Goes toward them.]

CURTAIN.

## ACT II

SCENE.—*The royal tent of SAUL pitched on one hill of the battlefield of Ephes-Dammin. The tent is of black embroidered with various warlike designs. To one side on a dais are the chairs of SAUL and AHINOAM; also DAVID's harp. On the other side, toward the front, is a table with weapons. The tent wall is lifted along the back, revealing on the opposite hill, across a deep narrow valley, the routed camp of the Philistines; before it in gleaming brazen armour lies GOLIATH slain. Other hills beyond, and the sky above. By the small table, her back to the battlefield, sits MERAB in cold anger. AHINOAM and several women look out in ecstasy toward DAVID, SAUL, JONATHAN, and the army, returning victorious, and shouting.*

*First Woman.* See, see, at last!

*Second Woman.* They come!

*Third Woman.* An avalanche!

Over the brook and bright amid hosannas!

*Second Woman.* And now amid the rushes!

*First Woman.* And the servants!

Goliath's head high-borne upon a charger!

The rocks that cry reverberant and vast !

The people and the palms !

*Third Woman.* Yea, all the branches

Torn from the trees ! The waving of them—O !

*Second Woman.* And David, see ! triumphant, calm, between

The king and Jonathan ! . . . His glory

All the wild generations of the wind

Ever shall utter ! Hear them—

(*The tumult ascends afar.*) “David ! David !”

O queen ! a sea of shouting !

*Ahinoam.* Which you crave ?

Then go and lave you in this tide of joy.

(*The women go rapturously. AHINOAM turns.*)

*Merab.* Mother !

*Ahinoam.* My daughter ?

*Merab.* Well ?

*Ahinoam.* They all are gone.

*Merab.* And Michal, where ?

*Ahinoam.* I do not know, my child.

*Merab.* Why did my father pledge her to him ? you

Not hindering ?

*Ahinoam.* She is your sister. You

Are pledged to Adriel.

*Merab.* And as a slave !

And if I do not love him there is—riches !

If he is Sodom-bitter to me—riches !

*Ahinoam.* But for the kingdom.

*Merab.* For my torture ! What

Kingdom is to a woman as her love ?

*Ahinoam.* And David still enthralls you?

*Merab.* Though he never  
Sought me with any murmur or desire!  
Though he is Michal's for Goliath's death!  
Michal's to-day, unless——

*Ahinoam.* Merab, a care!  
Too near in you were ever love and hate.  
(*The tumult nears. AHINOAM goes to look out. DOEG enters to MERAB.*)

*Doeg (low).* News, Merab!

*Merab.* Well?

*Doeg.* A triumph o'er him, yet!  
The king is worn, as a leper pent, between  
Wonder of David and quick jealousy  
Because of praise this whelming of Goliath  
Wakes in the people.

*Merab.* Then? the triumph?

*Doeg.* This.

(*The tumult, nearer.*)

I've skilfully disposed the women  
To coldly sing of Saul, but of our David  
(*Watches her.*)

With lavish of ecstasy as to a king.

*Merab (springing up).* Then I will praise him!

*Doeg.* David? you?

*Merab.* As he

Was never—and shall never be again.

(*Takes a dagger.*)

*Doeg.* But——

*Merab.* Give me the phial.

*Doeg.* The poison?

*Merab.* Come—at once!

*Doeg.* What will you do?

*Merab (seizes phial).* At once with it.

*(Dips dagger in.)*

*Doeg.* You'll stab him?

*Merab.* As any fool? Wait. And the rest now, quick.

This timbrel-player, Judith?

*Doeg.* She is ready

And ravishing!

*Merab.* Well, well; then—?

*Doeg.* We will send her

Sudden, as Michal is alone with David,

To seize him with insinuating kisses,

And arms that wind as they were wonted to him.

Michal once jealous—and already I

Have sowed suspicions——

*(Laughs.)*

*Merab.* May it be their rending.

*(The tumult near.)*

But come, come, we must see; and show no frown.

*(They go to look out. Shouts of "David! David!" arise, and timbrelers, dancing and singing, pass the tent opening; then priests with the Ark and its cherubim of gold. DAVID, SAUL, JONATHAN, ISHUI, and the court then enter amid acclamations. Before them the head of Goliath is borne on a charger, under a napkin.*

SAUL darkly mounts the throne with AHINOAM, to waving of palms and praise.)

*A Woman (breaking from the throng).* Our little ones are saved ! Hosannah ! joy !

(*She kisses DAVID's hand.*)

*Jonathan.* Woman, thy tongue should know an angel-word,  
Or seraph syllables new-sung to God !  
Earth has not any rapture well for this !  
David, my brother !

*David.* Jonathan, my friend !  
While life has any love, know mine for you.

*Jonathan.* Then am I friended as no man was ever !  
And though my soul were morning wide it were  
Helpless to hold my wonder and delight !  
O people, look upon him !

*People.* David ! David !

*Jonathan.* Never before in Israel rose beauty  
Up to this glory !

*David.* Jonathan, nay——

*Jonathan.* Never !

(*Losses his robe and girdle.*)

Therefore I pour him splendour passionate.  
In gold and purple, this my own, I clothe him.  
David, my brother !

*Saul (livid).* Brother !

*Ahinoam.* Saul ?

*Saul.* Thou fool !

*Jonathan.* Father ?

*Ahinsam.* My lord ?

- Saul.* Thou full-of-lauding fool!  
Of breath and ravishment unceasing!
- Ahinoam.* Saul!
- Saul.* Is it not praise enough, has he not reached  
The skies on it?
- David.* O king, my lord——
- Saul.* Had Saul  
Ever so rich a rapture from his son?  
Ever this worshipping of utterance?
- David.* My lord, my lord, this should not fret you.
- Doeg (derisively).* Nay!
- David.* 'Tis only that the soul of Jonathan,  
Brimmed by the Philistines with bitterness,  
Sudden is joy and overfloweth——
- Doeg.* Fast——
- David.* Upon his friend, thy servant, David.
- Doeg.* Aie!  
(*He turns away laughing.*)
- Saul.* Why do you laugh?
- Doeg.* “Thy servant David!”
- Saul.* Why!
- A Woman (without).* King Saul has slain his thousands!
- Doeg.* Why, my lord?
- Woman.* But David his ten thousands!
- Doeg.* Do you hear?  
King Saul has slain his thousands, David ten!  
Thy servant, is he? servant?
- David.* Yea, O king! . . .  
Therefore be wielded by no venom-word,

As a weed under the wind!

*Saul.* 'Tis overmuch!

I'll burst all bond of priest or prophesy.  
Nor cringe to threatening and fondle fear.

*(He seizes a javelin.)*

I'll smite where'er I will.

*David.* No!

*Jonathan.* Father!

*David.* No!

For rapid palsy would come on thy hand,  
Awful and sceptre-ruined lord of men,  
An impotence, a shrivelling with fear,  
Avenging ere thou shed offenceless blood!

*(Saul's hand drops.)*

Is this thy love, the love of Saul the king,  
Who once was kindlier than kindest are?  
For but a woman's wantonness of word  
And idle air, my life?

*Ahinoam.* Saul, Saul!

*Jonathan.* The shame!

*David.* Some enemy—does Doeg curve his lip?—

Hath put into her mouth this stratagem  
Of fevered, false-impassioned overpraise.

*(SAUL, tortured, sweeps from the tent, entreated of JONATHAN.*

*Many follow in doubt, whispering.)*

*Doeg (at door, to DAVID).* This is not all, boy out of  
Bethlehem.

Goliath's dead——

*David.* But not all villainy?



(Only MICHAL and MERAB are left with DAVID; he waits.)

*Merab* (after a pause, then as if in shame). I burn for it!

*David*. For what, and suddenly?

*Merab*. My father so ungenerously wroth!

And wrought away from recompense so right.

Can you forgive him?

*David*. Merab?

*Merab*. Is it strange

That even *I* now ask it?

*David*. Merab's self?

*Merab*. Herself and not to-day your friend; but now

Conquered to exultation and aglow

To wreath you for this might to Israel,

Beautiful, unbelievable and bright!

Noble the dawn of it was in your dream,

Noble the lightning of it in your arm,

And noble in your veins the fearless flow

And dare of blood!—so noble that I ask

As a remembrance and bequest for ever,

In priceless covenant of peace between us,

A drop of it—

(*She draws dagger and offers it to him.*)

Upon this sacred blade . . .

*David*. Such kindness? in all honour?

*Merab*. Poor requital

To one whose greatness humbles me from hate.

*David* (slowly). Then of my veins whatever drop you will

But, no . . . (*Pauses.*) You do not mock me?

*Merab.* Rather upon

Its edge one vein of you—than priceless nard.

*David.* Or perfume out of India jewel poured?

*(He searches her eyes.)*

Or than—I may believe?—a miracle

Of dew, were you a traveller upon

The illimitable desert's thirst? Or than—

*(He draws his own dagger, pricks his wrist, and hands it her.)*

Than this?

*Merab.* Shepherd!

*David (quickly).* Treachery? treachery, then?

Under a sham of tribute poison?

*Michal.* Poison?

*David.* And I of vanity should prick it in?

I a mere shepherd innocent of wile!

A singer music-maudled and no more? . . .

The daughter of King Saul has yet to learn.

*(She goes. He turns to MICHAL.)*

But you, fairest of all my hopes, what word!

The vaunting of this victory is done.

We are alone at last.

*Michal.* Yes.

*David.* That is all? . . .

For Israel I've wrought to-day—and for

You, ever round about me as a mist

Of armed mighty angels triumphing.

*Michal.* Yes: It was well.

*David.* To you no more? to you

Whom not a slave can serve unhonoured?

*Michal* (*struggling*).

Nothing.

*David.* Empty of glow then seems it, impotent,  
A shrivelled hallowing . . .  
Ashes of ecstasy that burned in vain.

*Michal.* No, no! I——

*David.* Michal?

*Michal.* No, divine it was!

And had I cried my praise the ground had broke  
'To Eden under me with blossoming.  
Where was so wonderful a deed as this,  
So fair a springing of salvation up?  
Glory above the heavens could I seize,  
Wreathing of dawn and loveliness unfading,  
To crown you with and crown!

*David.* O lips!

*Michal.* With but

A sling, a shepherd's sling, you sped the brook,  
Drew from its bed a stone, and up the hill  
Where the great Philistine contemning cried,  
Mounted and flung it deep upon his brain!

*David.* This is the victory and not his death!  
'Tell, tell thy joy with kisses on my lips!  
'Thy mouth! thy arms! thy breast!

*Michal.* No no!

*David.* Thy soul!

(*Clasps her.*)

Too much of waiting and of severance,  
Of dread and distance and the deep of doubt!

Now must I fold you, falter all my love  
 And triumph on your senses till they burn  
 Beautiful to eternity with bliss.

*Michal.* Loose, loose me!

*David.* Nay, again! immortal kisses!

*Michal.* A frenzy, 'tis a frenzy! From me! see!

This irremediable victory  
 Over Goliath severs us the more.

(*The tumult, again, afar.*)

Hear how the people lift you limitless!  
 Almost to-day and in my father's room  
 They would that you were king.

*David.* But ere to-morrow

Dim shall I be, and ere the harvest bend  
 Less than a gleam in their forgotten peril!

*Michal.* O were it, were it! But all silently  
 Jehovah fast is beckoning the realm  
 Into thy hands.

*David.* Then futile to resist  
 The gliding on of firm divinity.  
 And yet whatever may be shall be done.

*Michal.* All, all?

*David.* That for thee reverently may.

*Michal.* That anointing, then——

*David.* Of that! . . . not that!

*Michal.* Yet grant

It may be told my father; that I may  
 Say to him all the secret!

*David.* And provoke

Murder in him, insatiable though  
I fled upon the wilderness and famine ?

*Michal.* He would not !

*David.* Nay.

*Michal.* I'll plead with him.

*David.* In vain.

*Michal (coldly).* Then . . . it is as I thought.

*David.* You are distraught.

*Michal.* This stroke to-day (*pointing to GOLIATH'S head*) no  
love of me had in it.

*David.* A love, a passion fervid through me as  
The tread and tremble of seraphic song  
Along the infinite.

*Michal.* You use me !

*David.* Use ?

*Michal.* A step to rise and riot in ambition !

*David.* So bitter are you, blind ? even in all ?

*Michal.* You snared me to you !

*David.* Michal !

*Michal.* Cunningly

With Samuel netted fears about my father,  
Till I am paltrily unto you pledged.

*David.* Enough.

*Michal.* Too much.

*David.* No more : the pledge I fling  
Out of my heart, as 'twere enchantment dead,  
And free you ; but no more.

(*He moves from her.*)

*Michal.* As if it were

Enchantment dead . . . Ah then 'tis true—there is  
Another—is another !

*David.* Now, what fever ?

A gentleness clad once your every grace.

*Michal.* There is some other that you lure and love.

*David.* It is not Michal speaking ; so I wait.

*Michal.* Then you will learn . . . Who's that ?

(*JUDITH glides in.*)

(*To her.*) Why are you here ?

*Judith* (*to DAVID, with a laugh, as if with amorous joy*).

Brave, it was brave, my love ! beauteous ! brave !

*David.* Woman ?

*Judith.* The Philistine, a brazen tower,

A bastion of strength, fell to the earth !

*David.* Woman, who are you ?

(*She clasps and kisses him.*)

Take away your flesh.

(*Free.*) Take it away, the heat and myrrh of it.

*Judith.* So cold ?

*David.* Hireling !

*Judith.* It is no longer fair ?

(*Wantonly.*) Oh ! Ah ! I understand ! the princess ! Oh !

(*Goes laughing and shaking her timbrel wickedly.*)

*Michal.* A dancer, then, a very timbrel-player !

*David.* Until this hour I never looked upon her.

It is chicanery of chance or craft.

You who are noble, though in doubt adrift,

Be noble now !

*Michal.* And loving ? Oh, I will—

Now that I know what should be done. Be sure!

*David.* You mean . . . that Saul——? You would not, no!

*Michal.* Rest sure.

*(A hand is seen at the door. AHINOAM enters.)*

*Ahinoam.* David, the king . . . But what is this?

[*MICHAL* goes.

*David.* O queen . . .

It is but life.

*Ahinoam.* Nay.

*David.* Life that ever strings

Our hearts, so pitifully prone for it,

To ecstasy—then snaps.

*Ahinoam.* I love thee, David.

*David.* Then gracious be, and question here no more,

Where words are futile for an utterance.

But of the king—the king——?

*Ahinoam.* He's driven still.

And hither comes again, and must be calmed.

The harp take you, and winds of beauty bring,

And consolation, as of valley eyes

When there is ebb of sorrow and of toil.

Oh, could you heal him and for ever heal!

*David.* Then would I be——!

*(Breaks off with great desire. Takes the harp and seats himself.)*

*Ahinoam.* At once, for he will come.

*(A strain of wild sadness brings SAUL, and many, within. He pauses, his hand to his brow, enspelled of the playing: then slowly goes up the acis.)*

*Ahinoam.* My lord, shall David sing—to ease us?

*Saul.*

Let him.

*David (with high sorrow).*

O heart of woe,  
Heart of unrest and broken as a reed! (*Plays.*)

O heart whose flow  
Is anguish and all bitterness of need! (*Plays.*)

O heart as a roe,  
Heart as a hind upon the mountain fleeing  
The arrow-wounds of being,  
Be still, O heart, and rest and do not bleed!  
(*Plays longer with bowed head.*)

O days of life,  
Days that are driven swift and wild from the womb!  
(*Plays.*)

O days so rife—  
Days that are torn of trouble, trod of doom!  
(*Plays. MICHAL enters.*)

O days of strife—  
Days of desire on deserts spread unending,  
The burning blue o'erbending,  
O days, our peace, our victory is the tomb!  
(*He plays to a close that dies in anguished silence.*)

*Saul (rising in tears).* David!

*David.*

My lord?

*Saul.*

Thy song is beauteous!

Stilling to sorrow! . . . Oh, my friend, my son!

*David.* To me is this? I do not dream? The king  
Again is kind and soft his spirit moves?



*Saul.* To you!

*David.* How shelter o'er me then will spring  
And safety covering!

*Saul.* It ever shall.

Loveliest have you been among my days,  
And singing weary madness from my brain.

(*DAVID starts toward him.*)

How I have wronged thee!

*Michal.* Wronged him? (*in fury*).

*David.* Michal!

*Saul.* Girl?

*Michal.* You have not wronged him!

*David.* Michal!

*Michal.* No! but he

Is jeopardy and fate about you! drive  
Him from you utterly and now away!

(*Murmurs of astonishment.*)

*Saul.* What mean you?

*Ishui.* Speak.

*Saul.* What mean you?

*Michal.* This!

*David.* No word!

*Michal.* I'll not be kept!

*David.* But shall be; for to tell

Would rend silence for ever from you—pale

Your flesh with haunting of it evermore!

All, all your being would become a hiss,

A memory of syllables that sear,

A living iteration of remorse.

I—I myself will save your lips the words  
Of this betrayal leaping from your heart.

*(Nobly before SAUL.)*

You seek, my lord . . . you seek whom Samuel  
Anointed.

*Saul.* Yes.

*David.* Then know that it is I.

*(Consternation.)*

*Saul.* You!

*David.* Guiltless I, no other!

I, though I sought it not and suffer, though—

*(SAUL seizes a javelin.)*

I would it had not come and fast am sworn

Never against you to lift up—

*Merab.* Hear, hear!

Now he will cozen!

*Doeg.* He, "thy servant!"

*Ishui.* Hear!

*(GOLIATH'S heaa is upset.)*

*A Voice.* A thousand Saul hath slain! but David ten!

*Saul (choking).* Omnipotence shall not withhold me more.

*(Lifts javelin.)*

Die, die!

*Jonathan.* No, father . . . hold!

*Michal (as SAUL flings).* What have I done?

*(Reels.)*

*Jonathan.* David, unhurt? Away, the wilderness!

*Saul (with another javelin).*

He shall not, no!

*David (aflame).* Strike, strike, then! strike, strike, strike,  
(*Rushes up throne.*)

Murderous king, afoam with murder-heat.

Strike me to darkness and the waiting worm!

But after be your every breathing blood!

Remorse and riving bitterness and fear!

Be guilt and all the hideous choke of horror!

(*SAUL trembling cowers, the javelin falling from him. DAVID breaks through DOEG and ISHUI and escapes by the door. MICHAL sinks to her knees, her face buried in her hands.*)

CURTAIN.

## ACT III

SCENE : *A savage mountain-cliff in the wilderness of Engeddi. On either side grey crags rise rugged, sinking away precipitously across the back. Cut into each is a cave. The height is reached by clefts from all sides. Between the crags to the East is the far blue of the Dead Sea ; and still beyond, bathed in the waning afternoon, stretch the purple shores of Moab. During the act the scene grows crimson with sunset and a thundercloud arises over the sea. Lying on a pallet of skins near the cliff's verge, DAVID tosses feverishly. Three of his followers and a lad, who serves him, are gathered toward the front, ragged, hungry, and hunted, in altercation over a barley cake.*

*David.* Water ! the fever fills me, and I thirst.

Water !

*First Fol.* Listen.

*Second Fol.* He calls.

*David.* Water ! I thirst.

*The Lad.* Yes, yes, my lord. (*Takes up a water-skin.*) Ah, empty, not a quaff !

They've drunk it all from him ! My lord, none's left.

I'll run and in the valley brim it soon.

(*He goes. DAVID sinks back.*)

*Second Fol.* (to FIRST). You drank it, then.

*First Fol.* And should I thirst, not he?

Give me the bread.

*Second Fol.* If it would strangle you.

*First Fol.* I'll have it.

*Second Fol.* Or betray him? spitefully?

It is the last. Already you have eat.

And we are here within a wilderness.

*First Fol.* Be it, but I'll not starve.

*Third Fol.* He utters right.

Why should we but to follow a mere shepherd

Famish—over a hundred desert hills?

The prophecy portending him the throne—

Folly, not fate! though it is Samuel's.

I'll trust in it no more.

*First Fol.* Nor I.

*Third Fol.* And Saul

Has driven us from waste to waste—pressed us

Even unto the Philistines for shelter,

And now unto this crag. And is not David's

Thought but of Michal, not of smiting him

And, with a host, of leaping to the kingdom?

(*DAVID stirs to rise.*)

*First Fol.* He moves; peace!

*Third Fol.* Let him.

*Second Fol.* Peace.

*Third Fol.* And fawning too?

*David (sufferingly).* Men—men, we must have news. Perpetual,

Implacable they stare unto each other,  
This rock and stony sky. . . . We must have news.

*(Rises and comes down to them. They are silent.)*

Longer is death. 'Tis over many days  
Of sighing—and remembered verdancy ;  
Nor any dew comes here or odour up.  
Who will go now and bring us word of Saul ?

*Thira Fol.* Have not Abishai, Abiathar,  
And others gone ?

*David.* Bravely.

*Third Fol.* And none returned !

*David.* Not one of all.

*Third Fol.* Well, then, we are not swine ;  
And life's but once. . . . So we will follow you  
No longer hungered and rewarded never,  
But perilously ever.

*David.* It is well.

*(He looses a bracelet from his arm.)*

This was a gift from Saul. In it is ease.

*(Gives it THIRD FOLLOWER, who goes.)*

This ring was Jonathan's. The jewel tells  
Still of the sunny haven of his heart.

Upon my hand he pressed it—the day we leapt  
Deeper than friends into each other's love.

*(Gives it to FIRST, who goes.)*

This chain—

*Second Fol.* I want it not.

*David.* You have not thought;  
'Tis riches—such as Sidon marts and Tyre  
Would covet.

*Second Fol.* I care not.

*David.* None else is left.

*Second Fol.* No matter.

*David.* Then——?

*Second Fol.* There was of Gibeah  
A woman—dear to me. Her face at night . . .  
Weeping among my dreams. . . .

The prophesy  
Is unfulfilled and vain!

*David.* And you would go?

*Second Fol.* The suffering—this cliff.

*David.* I understand.

*(Motions.)* So, without any blame, go—to content.

*(The SECOND, faltering, goes.)*

*(Quietly.)* A desolation left, of rock and air,  
Of barren sea and bitterness as vast.

Thou hast bereft me, Saul! . . . and Michal, thou!

*(He moves up cliff, gazes off, then kneels as to pray.)*

My flesh cries for oblivion—to sink

Unwaking away into the night . . . where is

No tears, but only tides of sleep. . . .

No, crieth

Not for oblivion and night, but for

Rage and revenge! Saul! Saul! . . . My spirit, peace.

I must revenge's call within me quell

Though righteously it quivers and aflame.

As pants the hart for the water-brook, so I!

(*He bows his head. . . .* MICHAL *enters in rags with the lad. She sees DAVID rise and wander into cave, right.*)

*Michal.* This is the place, then, this?

*Lad.*

Yes, princess.

*Michal.*

Here

So long in want and sickness he hath hid?

Under the livid day and lonelier night?

*Lad.* I brought him water, often.

*Michal.*

Little lad!

But he has heard no word from me?—not how

My father, Saul, frantic of my repentance,

Had unto Phalti, a new lord, betrothed me?

How then I fled to win unto these wilds?

*Lad.* He heard not anything—only the tales

I told of Moab, my own land. . . . But, oh!

(*DAVID plays within.*)

It is his harp.

*Michal.*

And strains that weep o'er me! . . .

I'll speak to him . . . and yet must be unknown!

A leper? as a leper could I . . . ?

*Lad.*

Why

Must he not know you?

*Michal.*

Ask me not, lad, now;

But go a little.

*Lad.*

Yes.

[*He sets down the water-skin and goes.*]



*Michal* (*delaying, then in a loud voice*). Unclean! Unclean!

(*Conceals her face in her hair.*)

*David*. Who crieth here?

*Michal*. Unclean!

*David* (*appearing*). Who cries unclean?

Poor leper in these wilds, who art thou?

*Michal*. One

Outcast and faint, forlorn!

*David*. Then you have come

To one more bitter outcast than yourself—

One who has less than this lone void to give,

This sterile solitude and sun, this scene

Of leaden desolation that makes mad;

Who has no ease but cave or shading rock,

Or the still moon, or stars that glide the night.

One over whom——

*Michal*. Yet, pity!

*David*. The pale hours

Flow dead into eternity.

*Michal*. Ah, yet . . .!

*David*. My cloak, then, for thy tattered limbs. Or, no—

This chain of Ophir for thy every need.

Once it was dear, but should be so no more.

(*Flinging it to her*). Have it, and with it vanish memory

Out of my breast——

*Michal*. No, no.

*David*. And from me tall

Link upon link her loveliness that bound.

*Michal*. Oh, do not!

- David.* Woman . . . ?
- Michal.* Nothing. A chain like this  
I once beheld wind undulantly bright  
O'er Michal the king's daughter.
- David.* Woman, the king's?
- Michal.* Pity !
- David.* Who are you ?
- Michal.* Stay ! Unclean !
- David.* A spy ?  
A spy of Saul and hypocrite have crept  
Hither to learn . . . ?
- Michal.* Have heed—unclean !
- David.* How, then  
Wandering came you here ?
- Michal.* Unclean ! Unclean !
- David.* My brain is overfull of fever, mad.  
Almost and I had touched thy peril, held  
Thy hideous contagion.
- Michal.* Wrong !
- David.* Then who  
Art thou to know and speak of her, of Michal ?
- Michal.* One who has served the king.
- David.* And you have seen  
Michal, you have beheld her ?
- Michal.* Once, when she  
In face was fairer and in heart than now  
They say she is.
- David.* And heard her speak ?
- Michal.* A night

Under the leaves of Gibeah—when she  
Sang with another—David.

*David.* Say no more.

*Michal.* And from afar, under the moon, blew faint  
The treading of the wine-presses with song.  
David she loved, but anger-torn betrayed,  
Unworthy of him.

*Davia.* Speak of her no more,  
Nor of her cruelty, unless to pray  
He she has ruined may forget her.

*Michal.* Yet  
If deep she should repent?—if deep she should?

*(A cry interrupts. They start.)*

*Davia.* A jackal? (*Listens.*) No, the signal! Word at last!  
(*To MICHAL.*) He who is near may prove to thee less  
kind.

*(She goes. He leaps up the cliff.)*

Abishai? Abiathar? . . . It is!  
But staggering and wounded? breathless? torn?  
The priest with bloody ephod, too, and wild?  
*(Watching, then springing to meet them as they reel in.)*  
Abishai, what is it that you bring?  
Abiathar, up! answer!

*Abiathar.* Water!

*David.* Up!

*(He brings the water-skin. They drain it fiercely.)*  
What is it now so fevered from you stares,  
And breathing, too, abhorrence? Gasp it out.

*Abiathar.* I stifle—in a universe—he still—  
Has breath in.

*David.* Saul?

*Abiathar.* Ill scathe him! Scorpions  
Of terror and remorse sting in his soul!

*David.* If you have tidings, not in words so wild.

*Abiathar.* Then ask, and hate shall calm me.

*David.* Ask?

*Abiathar.* On, on!  
Seek if he lives!

*David.* Who?

*Abiathar.* Seek if prophecy  
Founts yet in Judah!

*David.* Samuel . . . ?

*Abiathar.* Is dead!  
Dead—and of tidings more calamitous.

(*A pause.*)

*David (hoarsely).* Tell on. I hear.

*Abiathar.* Saul gloating to believe  
The priests who gathered sacredly at Nob,  
Plotted assisting you, hath had them——

*David.* No . . . !

*Abiathar.* Slain at the hands of Doeg—murdered, all!

*David.* But he—your father?

*Abiathar.* Was among them; fell.

(*He stands motionless.*)

*David (gently).* Abiathar, my friend! . . . Appeaseless Saul!

*Abiathar.* Hear all, hear all! Thy father, too, and mother,  
Even thy kindred, out of Israel

Are driven into Moab ; and this king,  
 Delirious still for blood as a desert pard,  
 With Merab, whelp of him, and many armed,  
 Is near us now—a-quiver at Engeddi  
 For your destruction :

(*DAVID struggles for control.*)

And yet you will not strike.

*David (low).* No, but of Michal, tell me good at once,  
 Lest unendurable this lot, I may—  
 Mounting o'er every oath into revenge.

*Abiathar.* Ha—Michal!

*David.* She withholds her father's wrath :

*Abiathar.* She's well.

*David.* Not if you say no more.

*Abiathar.* I know

Nothing of her.

*David.* Your look belies.

*Abiathar.* Perhaps :

As did her love.

*David.* That is for me.

*Abiathar.* Well, what?

A woman who betrays?

*David.* Speak, not evade ;

And judge her when earth has no mystery.

*Abiathar.* Then from your craving put her—wide ; she is  
 Unworthy any tremor of your veins.

*David.* Dawn-lilies under dew are then unworthy,  
 And nesting doves are horrible to heaven.  
 I will not so believe. Your reason?

*Abiathar.* Saul

Has given her—and she will wed him, aye—  
To Phalti, a new lord.

*David.* Untrue of her!

*Abiathar.* Cry. Yet you will believe it.

*David.* Not until

The parable of verdant spring is hushed  
Ever of bloom, to prove it. Never till  
Hermon is swung into the sea! until  
The last void of the everlasting sky—

*(Looking up, falters, breaks off, and is strangely moved.)*

*Abiathar.* Now what alarm?

*Abishai.* What stare you on?

*Abiathar.* He's mad?

*(Then, suddenly seeing.)*

No, no! . . . an eaglet! . . .

*David.* Pierct!

*Abishai.* Pierct?

*David.* Falling here. . .

And beating against death unbuoyantly.

*(The bird drops at their feet.)*

A destiny, a fate in this is hidden!

*(Bends to it.)*

*Abiathar.* And—why?

*David.* The arrow!—His! *(Starts back.)* His  
and no other's!

Quick, no delay. Efface all trace of us.

*(Takes water-skin.)*

*Abiathar.* Be clear, clearer.

*David.* We are discovered—near  
 On us is death. Open the secret chamber  
 Within the cave, for from the bow of Saul  
 Is yonder bleeding—from no other.

*Abiathar.* Saul's?  
 But how; was any here?

*David.* To-day, to-day.  
 A leper wandering.

*Abiathar.* We are betrayed.  
 (*ABISHAI hastes to cave, right, DAVID and ABIATHAR  
 listen. Noise of approach is heard.*)

*David.* They near.

*Abiathar.* And many.

*David.* King of Israel!  
 Inexorable!

*Abiathar.* O, rebuke him, do!

*David.* Almost I am beyond this tolerance.

*Abiathar.* In truth. Therefore it is you rise and shake  
 Out of his power the sceptre!

*David.* Tempt me not!  
 Mercy and memory almost are dead,  
 And craving birth in me is fateful ire.

(*They follow into the cave: but hardly have done so when,  
 at a shout, pour in SAUL and his men, bloodthirstily,  
 from all sides, DOEG and ABNER leading.*)

*Saul.* On, to him! search the caves! in, in, and bring  
 Him to my sword and Michal with him.

(*Pacing.*)

They

Shall couch upon eternity and dust.

*(Weakly.)* I am the king and Israel is mine. . . .

I'll sleep upon their grave, I'll sleep upon it,

And hear the worm. . . .!

*(To a soldier re-entering from one cave.)*

Where is he? Bring him.

*Soldier.*

O king—

*Saul.* You've slain him and you tremble! Say it.

*Soldier.*

No.

*Saul.* Then hither with him; hither!

*Soldier.*

He's not here.

*Saul.* A treachery! You cunningly contrive

To aid him, so. . . .

*(To a soldier from the other cave.)*

Bring me his head.

*Soldier (fearfully).*

My lord,

He is not there. . . .

*Saul.*

I tell you it is lies—

Because you deem that he shall be the king,

And treasure up reward and amnesty.

*(Rushes wildly to caves in turn, then out among them.)*

From me ill-fruited ineffectual herd!

Away from me, he's fled and none of you

Is servant and will find and for me seize him!

From me—I'll sleep—I'll rest—and then—

*(As they cringe, going.)*

I'll sleep.

*(ABNER and DOEG remain. SAUL enters cave, left.)*

*Abner (to DOEG, significantly).* The Evil Spirit.



*Doeg.* Yes; upon him swift

It came as never before—as drunkenness.

*Abner.* Then—safe to leave him?

*Doeg.* Will he brook denial?

*Abner.* And Merab, too, will soon be here.

*Doeg.* Well, come.

*Abner.* I'll go and look upon him.

*(Goes.)*

*(Returning.)* Already he sleeps.

So we may seek us water; *(then suddenly)* no, abide!

*(Is held by MICHAL entering.)*

Woman, who are you, who?

*Michal (quaking).* Unclean! away!

*Doeg.* Unclean? a leper? in this place? Are there  
No stones to stone you? Hence! And had I not  
A brother such as thou—

*Michal.* Pity! Unclean!

*(She quickly goes, then they. A space; then she returns,  
trembling and fearful.)*

I'll call him! I will save him! David! David!—

I his discomfiture and ruin!—David!

*(Searches.)*

Hear, David! hear me! David!

*(Sees SAUL.)*

The king! My father!

I cannot—am not—whither shall I, whither. . .?

*(Flees, as a scuffling is heard and DAVID's voice.)*

*David.* Loose me, I say. 'Twas Michal, and she called!

*(Appears, withheld by ABIATHAR.)*

(*Breaking free.*) I say that it was she!

*Abiathar.*

Foolhardy, no

Return into the cave, and ere too late!

*MERAB, veiled, enters behind them.*

*David.* 'Twas Michal and no other.

*Abiathar.*

You are duped.

*David. (searching).* The breathing of archangels could not so

Have swung the burden from me as her . . . Ha!

(*Sees MERAB; slowly recoils.*)

*Merab.* It is not Michal.

*David.*

No—it is not Michal.

(*Motions the priest aside.*)

*Merab.* Yet it is one who—

*David.*

Need not lift her veil,

Or longer stay. The path she came is open.

*Merab.* I'm here—and here will speak! I've hither stolen,

Yearning—I say it—yearning—and I will.

*David.* These words I do not know.

*Merab.*

Because you will not.

More all-devouring than a Moloch is

This love within me—

*David.*

Love and you are twain,

As sun and Sheol.

*Merab.*

False. I am become

For want of you as famine-wind, a wave

In the mid-tempest, with no rest, no shore.

*David.* I do not hear the unashamed words

Of one who has but recently another,

Adriel, wedded.

*Merab.* You refuse me, then?

*David.* I beg you but to cease.

*Merab.* Goaded, chagrined?

No, but this will I do. The Philistines,  
For long at rioting within their walls,  
Gather again and break toward Gilboa. . . .

*David.* Merab of Saul!

*Merab.* To-morrow must my father  
Return from hunting you and arm for battle.  
But—many would that you were king.

*David.* Were. . . ?

*Merab.* King!

*David.* I do not understand your eyes.

*Merab.* I will

For love of you arouse rebellion up,  
Murmur about the host your heaven-call,  
And lift you to the kingdom.

*David.* To the—Stay!

Your words again.

*Merab.* The kingdom.

*David.* Awful God!

*Merab.* What is your mien? you will not?

*David.* Twice the words—

Full from her lips—and to betray her father.

(ABIATHAR discovers SAUL.)

*Merab.* You will not? answer!

*David.* Odious utterly!

As yonder sea of death and bitter salt!

As foam-girt Joppa of idolatry,

As Memphian fane of all abhorrencies !

*(A pause.)*

Morning would move with horror of it, noon

A livid sepulchre of shame span o'er,

And night shrink to remember day had been !

*Merab.* You scorn—you scorn me ?

*David.* Jonathan ! your sister !

*Merab.* Then Saul shall rend you dead. And Jonathan ! . . .

*(She laughs shrilly.)*

Perchance you had not heard that Jonathan

Knows to the Philistines you fled—and loathes you !

*David.* I have not heard.

*Merab.* Nor have not, ah ? how Michal

Is given to the embraces of another ?

*(DAVID shrinks.)*

You desperately breathe and pale at last ?

*(She laughs more bitterly.)*

To me for aid, to me you yet shall come.

*(She goes. DAVID lifts his hand to his brow in pain.*

*Then ABIATHAR abruptly descends from SAUL'S cave to him.)*

*Abiathar.* David——

*David.* Leave me.

*Abiathar.* Not till you know—and strike !

*David.* I tell you, go.

*Abiathar.* I tell you 'tis the king.

*David.* Who breaks forbearance—yes.

*Abiathar.* Who lieth yonder.

And sleeping lieth—for a thrust to end.

*David (his sword quickly out—struggling).*

Then shall there be an ending—of these wounds  
That wring me—of this wail  
Under the deeps of me against his wrongs.  
Saul, Saul! . . . Michal! . . . Oh, never-ceasing ill!  
(*Flings down the sword in anguish.*)

*Abiathar.* You will not come?

*David.* The sun is set.

*Abiathar.* Has Saul

Hunted you to this desert's verge?

*David.* Enough!

*Abiathar.* Has he pursued you, all his hate unleashed?

Are Samuel—the priests, not slain? my father?

The kingdom is not in decay, and falls?

You are not prophesy's anointed one?

Seize up the sword and strike—or I myself!

*David.* Or—you yourself? . . .

(*Puts them aside, takes sword, and goes to SAUL'S cave.*)

*Abishai.* What will he do? . . . listen

MICHAL enters unseen.

*Abiathar.* If Saul cries out—

*Abishai.* Be ready.

*Michal (to them).* What is this?

(*DAVID re-enters—haggard and worn—from the cave, a piece of SAUL'S cloak and the sword still in his hand. . . . The pause is tense with emotion.*)

*Michal (at last, with a cry, as David clenches).*

Ah, you have slain—have slain him! Wretch! thou wretch!

And sleeping as he was !

*David.* And it was you. . . . ?  
(*Rage takes him.*)

In lying rags ?

*Michal.* Have struck him in his sleep !  
And merciless ! And now will kill me, too ?

*David.* The leper, you ! The faithless leper, you,  
(*Grows frenzied.*)

Who drove me a prey upon this wilderness !  
Upon the blot of it and death and sear !  
The silence and relentless burning swoon !  
You are the leper, who have broken troth  
And shut the cry of justice from your breast !  
Who've stifled me with desolation's woe,  
Who've followed still and still have me betrayed !

*Michal.* Betrayed ? No, loose me !

*David.* Slain thy father ? slain ?  
(*Flinging the piece of SAUL'S cloak at her feet.*)

See how I might—see, see you, yonder he lies,  
A king who quits the kingdom, though a cloud  
Of Philistines is foaming toward Gilboa ;  
Jeoparded leaves it, undefended, for  
Pursuit of me and pitiless harrying !  
A king who murders priests. . .

*Michal.* Priests ?

*David.* Stifles God

With penitence that He has shaped the world !  
Have slain ? have slain him ! I have slain him ! Ah !  
Ah, that I had thy falseness and could slay him !

*Michal.* David . . . !

*David.* Nevermore near me! never with  
That quivering and tenderness of lure.  
Those eyes that hold infinity of fate,  
That breathing cassia-sweet, but sorcery!

*Michal.* Oh . . .

*David.* Never thy presence pouring beauty, swift,  
And seething in the brain as frantic wine!  
I'll be no more enspelled of thee—Never!  
I will not hear thee and be wound by words  
Into thy wile as wide as Ashtoreth's,  
Back into hope, eternity of pain!

*(He goes in agony—the priest and ABISHAI after. MICHAL stands gazing tearless before her as SAUL, awakened, comes slowly from the mouth of the cave down toward her.)*

CURTAIN.

## ACT IV

SCENE: *The house of MIRIAM, the "Witch of Endor," by Mount Gilboa—where SAUL is encamped against the Philistines. It is of one story, built rectangularly about an inner court, which is dimly lighted. Under the gallery which ranges around the court are doors leading to the sleeping and other apartments; before one of these a lattice. On the left is the gate opening to the street. At the back to one side, the teraphim, or image of divination; on the other side a stairway mounts to the roof. Above is the night and vague lightning amid a moan of wind. During the act comes dawn. Forward on a divan sits MIRIAM alone, in blind restlessness.*

*Miriam.* Adah! . . . The child is sunken in a sleep.  
Yet would I have her near me in this night,  
And hear again the boding of her tale.  
Unto the blind the vision and the awe  
Of the invisible sway ever in,  
The shadow of nativities that lead  
Upon fatality.



Girl! Adah! girl!

*(The wind passes. ADAH enters from a chamber, rubbing her eyes.)*

Thou art awake?

*Adah.* I slumbered.

*Miriam.* Stand you where  
Fathoming I may feel within you. Now,  
Again—you've hither fled your mistress Merab,  
In fear of her?

*Adah.* Yes.

*Miriam.* At Engeddi Michal  
By Saul was apprehended? Merab now  
Plotteth against her—she and Doeg?

*Adah.* Still.

*Miriam.* And 'twas in Merab's tent you heard, the king  
Despairing of to-morrow's battle, comes  
Hither to-night to bid me lift the spirit  
Of Samuel out of the dead and learn  
The issue?

*Adah.* Doeg said it.

*Miriam.* And—you hear?—  
Many within the army urge for David,  
Would cry him king, if Saul were slain?

*Adah.* O many.

*(A knock at the gate. They start up fearful.)*

*Miriam.* Who seeks blind Miriam of Endor's roof,  
Under the night and unextinguished storm?  
Come you a friend?

*David (without).* A friend.

*Miriam.* As knows my soul!  
*(Throws open the gate. DAVID enters and ABIATHAR  
 cloaked.)*

Thy voice again!—this blindness of my eyes—  
 If it be David, speak.

*David.* Yes, Miriam.

*Miriam.* David of Jesse, Israel's desire!  
 Let me behold thee (*her hands go over him*) with my  
 fingers' sight,  
 And gather in them touch of thee again!  
 Thy voice is as dream-dulcimers that stir  
 Quivering myrrh of memory and joy.  
 But, aie! why are you here? You have been *there*?

*David.* Yes—in the camp of Saul.

*Miriam.* In spite of Death!  
 Do you not know——

*David.* I know—that Saul would rather  
 O'er-trample me than a multitude of foes.  
 That it is told him I who shun his ire—  
 Though death were easier, if dutiful—  
 Am come up with the Philistines to win  
 The kingdom. That he would slay me though I fought  
 For Israel!—But, Michal!—

*Miriam.* Aie——

*David* What brews?  
 She was not in the camp.

*Miriam.* Men all are mad!  
 And you who should be never.

*David.* She is in

Some peril.

*Miriam.* You, in more! And must from here  
Swiftly away, for Saul is——

*David.* I must see her.

*Miriam.* Unholy!

*David.* Yet unholier were flight.

*Miriam.* You are the anointed!

(*A heavy knock at the gate.*)

Ah, calamity!

You would not heed—'tis Saul!

*David.* Here?

*Miriam.* He is come

That I shall call up Samuel.

*David.* You, you——

The awful dead?

*Saul (calls).* Woman of Endor!

*Miriam.* Hide!

The lattice yonder!

*Saul.* Woman of Endor! woman!

(*DAVID and ABIATHAR withdraw. The knocking hastier.*)

Woman of Endor! Woman of Endor! Woman!

*Miriam.* Who crieth at my gate?

*Saul.* Unbar and learn.

*Miriam.* To danger?

*Saul.* None.

*Miriam.* To thieves?

*Saul.* To rueing it

You tarry!

(*She lets him in, with ISHUI and ADRIEL.*)

*Miriam.* Whom seek you?

*Saul.* Witch of Endor, you,  
Who of the fate-revealing dead divine.  
Out of the Pit you call them!

*Miriam.* What is this?

*Saul.* I say that you can raise them!

*Miriam.* You are come  
With snaring! knowing well that Saul the king  
Is woe and bitterness to all who move  
With incantation.

*Saul.* He is not.

*Miriam.* Depart!

*Saul.* I must have up out of the Awfulness  
Him I would question.

*Miriam.* Perilous!

*Saul.* Prepare  
Before thy teraphim. No harm, I swear,  
Shall come of it. Bid Samuel appear.  
The battle! its event!

*Miriam (with a cry).* I know thee now!  
Saul! thou art Saul! the Terror!

*Saul.* Call him up.

Ready is it, the battle—but I am  
Forsaken of all prophesy and dream,  
Of voices and of priest and oracle,  
To augur it.

*Miriam.* A doom's in this!

*Saul.* He must  
Hold comfort, and the torrent of despair

Within me stay and hush.

*Miriam.*

Then must it be.

*(She turns to the teraphim, amid wind and pallid lightning  
prostrating herself.)*

Prophet of Israel, who art beyond  
The troubling and the terrifying grave,  
Th' immeasurable moan and melancholy  
Of ways that win to Sheol—Rise! Arise!

*(She waits . . . Only the wind gust. Then springing up,  
with wiae arms, and wild blind eyes.)*

Prophet of Israel, arise! Not in  
The name of Baal, Amon, Ashtoreth,  
Dagon or all the deities that dream  
In trembling temples of Idolatry,  
But of Jehovah! of Jehovah! rise!

*(An elemental cry is heard. Then wavering forms rise, vast,  
out of the earth, in continuous stream. MIRIAM, with  
a curdling shriek, sinks moaning to her knees.)*

*Saul.* Woman, I cannot—dare not—look upon it.  
Utter thy sight.

*(The Spirit of SAMUEL begins to take shape through the  
phantoms.)*

*Miriam.*

I see . . . ascending

Forms as of gods in swaying ghostliness,  
Dim apparitions of a dismal might,  
And now is one within a mantle clad,  
Who looketh—

*Saul.*

Samuel!

*Miriam.*

Who looketh with

Omniscience in his mien, and there is chill  
 And cling about him of eternity!  
 His eyes impale me!

*Saut.* Spirit, give me word!

*(He falls heavily to the ground.)*

*Samuel (as afar).* O evil king! and wretched king! why  
 hast

Thou brought me from the quietness and rest?

*Saul.* The battle on the morrow——

*Samuel.* Evil thou art

For underneath this night thou hast conspired  
 Death to thy daughter Michal—if at dawn  
 The battle shall be lost—lest she may fall  
 Into the hands of David——

*David (in horror).* O!

*Ishui.* Whose cry?

*Samuel.* I tell thee, Saul, thy sceptre shrivels fast.

The battle shall be lost—it shall be lost.

*(The Spirit of SAMUEL disappears. A wail of wind.)*

*Adriel.* Ishui, true? Is Michal to be slain?

*Ishui.* This is no hour for fools and questioning.

*Saul. (struggling up).* The battle, Ishui, at once command  
 It shall begin! To Jonathan and say it.

*(ISHUI goes.)*

No prophecy shall sink me and no shade.

I am the king, and Israel, my own.

*(Frenzied he goes. A silence.)*

*David (breaking forth).* Michal to die and Israel to fall!  
 Prophet of prophets, Samuel, return!

Out of the Shadow and the Sleep, return,  
 Compassionate, and tell me where she is  
 That I may save. Again appear and say  
 That Israel to-morrow may not fall—  
 Not fall on ruin !

*Adriel.* David ? is it thou ?

*David.* Meholah's Adriel, your conscience asks.

*Adriel.* You were concealed ?

*David.* And I have heard. Cry then  
 Out unto Saul ! Betray me, cry you out !

*Adriel.* Betray ?

*David.* Is the word honey ? Is it balm ?

*Adriel.* David, I've wronged you—

*David.* Haply !

*Adriel.* Jealously.

And ask now no forgiveness—not until  
 Michal is won from peril !

*David.* Do you know

More of her ? still ?

*Aariel.* Saul——

*David.* Saul—— ?

*Adriel.* Has given Doeg

Power of this. . . . And to some spot of Endor

Here he has brought her.

*David.* God !

*Adriel.* And now himself,

David, himself cannot be far away.

*David.* Ahaste, and bring him then by force or guile,

In any way, that we may from him win

Where she is prisoned.

(ADRIEL goes.)

The quivering  
Quicksands of destiny beneath her stir.  
Is heaven a mocking shield that ever keeps  
God from our prayers?

*Miriam.* David, contain thy heart.

(A faint uproar begins afar; and dawn.)

*David.* The battle! on the wind. Abiathar,  
Speed out upon the mountain-side and cull  
All that befalls.

(ADAH opens the gate. The priest goes.)

*Adah (springing back).* Oh!

*David.* Child, why do you quail?

*Adah.* My mistress, Merab!

*David.* Girl?

*Adah.* I saw her—she—  
Is coming hither! Do not let her—she—  
I fear—I fear her!

*David.* Hither coming?

*Adah.* She!

(The gate is thrown open fiercely.)

*Merab (entering).* Woman and witch, did Adriel, my husband,  
(Sees DAVID.)

Come to you with the king?

*David.* Unnatural,  
Unkind, most cruel sister!

*Merab (shrinks).* You are here?

*David.* Once me you would have poisoned, but the coil



Within your bosom I beheld. And now  
Michal your sister is the victim.

*Merab.* I—

Know not your meaning.

*David.* The battle burning yonder,  
If it adversely veers, the king has planned  
Michal is not to live lest she may hap  
Unto my arms.

*Merab.* That Michal shall be slain?  
(*The tumult again.*)

*David.* Almighty, smite, and save to Thee thy people!  
And save Thy altars unto Israel!  
(*He bows his head. A stir comes at the gate.*)

*Merab.* David, 'tis Adriel!

*Adriel.* Ope! open, you!

*David.* At last the word.

*Merab.* Girl, Adah, draw the bar.

(*DAVID throws a cloak to his face, as ADAH obeys. ADRIEL enters, and DOEG, who pauses in quick alarm, as DAVID goes between him and the gate.*)

*Doeg.* What place is this? Why do you bar that gate?

Merab, 'tis you? Why do you gaze, rigid?

And this is the blind witch, Miriam?

*David.* It is.

(*He throws off the cloak.*)

*Doeg.* Lured? I am snared? a trap?

*David.* Where have you Michal?

*Doeg (drawing).* No closer!

*David.* If she is an atom harmed——!

Where is she?

*Doeg.* I was the servant of the king,  
I but obey him.

*David.* And thy horrible heart.  
Then speak, or unto frenzy I am driven.

*Doeg.* I'll drive you there with——  
(*Breaks off with low laugh.*)

*David.* Tell it!

*Doeg.* Unto your  
Soft sympathy—and passion? (*Laughs.*) She is dead.

*David (immovable, then repressed).*  
If it is so, the lightning, that is wrath  
Within the veins of God, should sink its fang  
Into thy bosom and sear out thy heart.  
If it is so, this momentary calm,  
This silence pouring overfull the world,  
Would rush and in thee cry until thy bones  
Broken of guilt are crumbled in thy groans.  
Dead, she is dead?

*Miriam.* No, David, my lord, he lies!  
(*Strangely, as in a trance.*)

To wound you, lies!

*David.* Not dead?

*Miriam.* I see her eyes!  
(*All listen amazed.*)

I see her in a vision. She is near——  
Is in a cave—is bound—and is alone.  
I will go to her—quickly bring her.

*Doeg.*

Not

*(Lunges at her.)*

If this shall reach you.

*David.*

Ah, to pierce a woman!

*(MIRIAM finds her way out.)*

You've plotted, have been false and bloody, foul,  
 And as a pestilence of midnight marsh  
 Have oozed corruption into all around you.  
 The kingdom thro' you is in brokenness,  
 Within its arteries you flow, poison,  
 Incentive of irruption and unrest,  
 Of treachery and disaffection's sore,  
 'Till even the stars that light it seem as tares  
 Sown hostile o'er the nightly vale of heaven.

*(Draws firmly. Coldly, skilfully approaches for attack.)**Doeg (retreating).* No farther!*David.*

Unto the end! unto the end!

*(He rushes in; they engage; DOEG is wounded.)*

Your villainy is done.

*(Quickly forces him under. The gate then opens and ABIA-  
THAR hurries in.)**Abiathar.*

David, the battle——!

*(Sees DOEG and stops, pale.)**David.* Fetter him.*Abiathar.* Only fetter? *(His dagger out)* the murderer  
Of priestly sanctity and of my father?*David.* Abiathar! You know obedience?

(DOEG is sullenly bound and led aside. Then a panic is heard afar, and dim laments. DAVID, who has sunk to a seat, springs anxiously up.)

Listen! that cry!

*A Voice.* Woe! woe!

*David.* What is its wail?

*The Voice.* The battle's lost!

*David.* Abiathar—?

*The Voice.* Saul flees!

*David.* Abiathar, is lost?

*Abiathar.* I fear it.

*David.* Then (*pointing to DOEG*)

Off with his armour for me, I will go  
Forth and may backward, backward bend defeat.  
Duty to Saul is over.

*Adriel.* You must not.

A fruitless intrepidity it were.

*Abiathar.* Remember your anointing!

*Abishai.* The prophesy!

And Michal! (*The gate opens.*) Michal who lives! who  
lives! who lives!

(DAVID has turned and sees her enter with MIRIAM.)

Hosanna! . . .

*Adriel.* Ever! . . .

*Miriam.* David—

*Michal (pleading, to him).* It is I.

*Miriam.* The cords were cruel, hungrily sank in  
Her wrists and ankles.

*Michal.* David! look on me.

*David.* My words must be alone with her—alone.

*Adriel.* Come, all of you—the battle.

*Michal.* [*They go out the gate.*  
My lord! . . . my lord!

(*He is silent.*)

I ask not anything but to be heard—  
Though once I would not hear. Has all of life  
No glow for me?

*David.* Betrayers should have none.

*Michal.* I was a woman—the entanglement  
Of duty amid love we have no skill  
To loosen, but with passion.

*David.* You too late  
Remember it is so.

*Michal.* Nobility  
All unbelievable it seemed that you  
Could innocently wait on time to tide  
You to the kingdom. Then forgive, I plead.

*David.* But in the wilderness, your perfidy!

*Michal.* Doubt of it welletth thro' your voice. No, no,  
To save you strove I——!

*David.* Michal?

*Michal.* Not to betray!  
From Saul, my father, penitent I fled,  
Seeking you in Engeddi's wild.

*David.* And Phalti?

*Michal.* 'Twas wedding him I loathed.

*David.* Say true!

*Michal.* This knife

Unfailingly into my breast had sunk  
And spared me, had not flight.

*David.* This—this can be?

*(A great joy dawning in him.)*

Beyond all hope it is, even as day's  
Wide empery outspans our littleness.  
A tithing of thy loveliness were beauty  
Enough for earth. Yet it is mine, is mine?

*Michal.* David—for ever!

*(She starts toward his arms. But cries and confusion of  
cries beat back their joy. Then the gate is flung open  
and ADRIEL enters, shaken. He looks from one to the  
other.)*

*David (at last).* Adriel! Adriel!

What have you?

*Adriel.* Saul—is slain!

*Michal.* My father?

*Adriel.* Slain!

And Jonathan——

*David.* No!

*Adriel.* Fell beside him down. . .

The fray was fast—Israel fled—the foe  
Fierce after Saul, whom Jonathan defended.

*Michal.* My father!

*David.* And my brother Jonathan!

If I believe it will not miracle  
Alone bring joy again unto my pain?

*(The wailing again, and deeper groans.)*

O Israel, the Infinite has touched

Thy glory and it changes to a shroud !  
 Thy splendour is as vintage overspilt,  
 For Saul upon the mountains low is lying,  
 And Jonathan beside him, beautiful  
 Beyond the mar of battle and of death.  
 Yea, kingly Jonathan ! And I would give  
 The beating of my life into his veins.  
 Willing for it would I be drouth and die ! . . .

*(As the wails re-arise.)*

Peaks, mountains of Gilboa ! let no more  
 Dew be upon you, and as sackcloth let  
 Clouds cover you, and ashes be your soil,  
 Until I bring upon Philistia  
 And Gath and Askalon extinguishing,  
 And sorrow—and immensity of tears !

*(MICHAL goes to him. He folds her in his arms.)*

But we must calm the flowing of this grief.  
 Though yet we cannot mind us to remember,  
 Love will as sandal-breath and trickling balm  
 O'erheal us in the unbegotten years,  
 Too headlong must not be our agony.  
 Hush now thy woundedness, my Michal, now.  
 See, o'er the East the lifted wings of Dawn.

*(They climb the stair to the house-top. As they look away  
 toward the battle's rout the clouds part, and over them  
 breaks the full brightness of the sun. . . .)*

THE END.

The Grosvenor Press,  
UNWIN BROTHERS, LIMITED,  
WOKING AND LONDON.