

Poems of  
Felicia Hemans  
in  
Friendship's Offering, 1827

compiled  
from other sources  
by  
Peter J. Bolton

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## THE BRIGAND

Painted by C. Eastlake      Engraved by G. B. Ellis

**THE BRIGAND LEADER AND HIS WIFE.**

*(From a picture by Eastlake.)*

*By Mrs Hemans.*

**DARK** chieftain of the heath and height,  
Wild feaster on the hills by night!  
Seest thou the stormy sunset's glow,  
Flung back by glancing spears below?  
Now, for one strife of stern despair!  
The foe hath track'd thee to thy lair.

Thou, against whom the voice of blood  
Hath risen from track and lonely wood,  
And in whose dreams a man should be,  
Not of the water, nor the tree;  
Haply, thine own last hour is nigh,  
Yet, shalt thou not forsaken die.

There's one, that pale beside thee stands,  
More than all thy mountain bands!  
She will not shrink, in doubt and dread,  
When the balls whistle round thy head;  
Nor leave thee, though thy closing eye  
No longer may to hers reply.

Oh! many a soft and quiet grace  
Hath faded from her soul and face ;  
And many a thought, the fitting guest  
Of woman's meek, religious breast,  
Hath perish'd, in her wanderings wide,  
Through the deep forests, by thy side.

Yet, mournfully surviving all,  
A flower upon a ruin's wall,  
A friendless thing, whose lot is cast,  
Of lovely ones to be the last ;  
Sad, but unchanged, through good and  
ill,  
Thine is her lone devotion still.

And, oh ! not wholly lost the heart,  
Where that undying love hath part ;  
Not worthless all, though far and long  
From home estranged, and guided wrong :  
Yet, may its depths by Heaven be stirr'd,  
Its prayer for thee be pour'd and heard.

## LAST RITES.

By the mighty minster's bell,  
Tolling with a sudden swell ;  
By the colours half-mast high,  
O'er the sea hung mournfully ;  
          Know, a prince hath died !

By the drum's dull muffled sound,  
By the arms that sweep the ground,  
By the volleying muskets' tone,  
Speak ye of a soldier gone  
          In his manhood's pride.

By the chanted psalm that fills  
Reverently the ancient hills,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A custom still retained at rural funerals in some parts of England and Wales.

Learn, that from his harvests done,  
Peasants bear a brother on  
To his last repose.

By the pall of snowy white  
Through the yew-trees gleaming bright ;  
By the garland on the bier,  
Weep ! a maiden claims thy tear—  
Broken is the rose !

Which is the tenderest rite of all !—  
Buried virgin's coronal,  
Requiem o'er the monarch's head,  
Farewell gun for warrior dead,  
Herdsman's funeral hymn ?

Tells not each of human woe ?  
Each of hope and strength brought low ?  
Number each with holy things,  
If one chastening thought it brings  
Ere life's day grow dim !



## FADING FLOWERS

Painted by J. M. Wright

Engraved by E. Finden

' FADING FLOWERS. By Mrs. HEMANS.

' O pale and drooping flowers!  
Ye that so brightly meet the morning's eye!  
Is there no sorrow in your native bowers  
That thus ye die?

' Are there not folded wings  
On the green boughs?—a silence and a gloom  
Amidst the leaves and all the breathing things  
That loved your bloom?

' No! the rejoicing bee  
There woos the violets, as at early dawn;  
And o'er the elastic sod, in tameless glee,  
Still bounds the fawn.

' And the rich bank ye crown'd,  
By the wood's fount, yet hears a thousand songs  
Float through the branches, trembling far around  
With happy throngs.

' Wherefore, to us alone,  
Of all that walk the warm and laughing earth,  
Bring ye sad thoughts of Hope and Beauty gone,  
And vanished Mirth?

' Why must your fading bells,  
With the faint sweetness of your parting breath,  
Remind us but of sorrowful farewells,  
Decay and Death?

' Surely, it is to teach  
Our hearts, by converse with their changeful lot,  
That, 'midst the glories which the blight can reach,  
Our Home is not.'





## THE TOMB OF MADAME LANGHANS

Sculpted by Johann August Nahl  
(This image is not from the Gift Book)

From page 246 onwards

From Poems of Felicia Hemans, 1872, page 457

## THE TOMB OF MADAME LANGHANS.

**“ To a mysteriously consorted pair  
This place is consecrate ; to death and life,  
And to the best affections that proceed  
From this conjunction.”            WORDSWORTH.**

**[At Hindlebank, near Berne, she is represented as bursting from the sepulchre, with her infant in her arms, at the sound of the last trumpet. An inscription on the tomb concludes thus:—“ Here am I, O God! with the child whom thou hast given me.” ]**

**How many hopes were borne upon thy bier,  
O bride of stricken love ! in anguish hither !  
Like flowers, the first and fairest of the year,  
Pluck'd on the bosom of the dead to wither ;  
Hopes from their source all holy, though of earth,  
All brightly gathering round affection's hearth.**

Of mingled prayer they told ; of Sabbath hours ;  
Of morn's farewell, and evening's blessed meeting ;  
Of childhood's voice, amidst the household bowers ;  
And bounding step, and smile of joyous greeting ;—  
But thou, young mother ! to thy gentle heart  
Did'st take thy babe, and meekly so depart.

How many hopes have sprung in radiance hence !  
Their trace yet lights the dust where thou art  
sleeping !

A solemn joy comes o'er me, and a sense  
Of triumph, blent with nature's gush of weeping,  
As, kindling up the silent stone, I see  
The glorious vision, caught by faith, of thee.

Slumberer ! love calls thee, for the night is past ;  
Put on the immortal beauty of thy waking !  
Captive ! and hear'st thou not the trumpet's blast,  
The long, victorious note, thy bondage breaking ?  
Thou hear'st, thou answer'st, " God of earth and  
heaven !

Here am I, with the child whom thou hast given !"

The following inscription has been attributed to Mrs Hemans but it does not appear in her collected works and it seems more than likely it is the translation by Mrs. Rose Lawrence that she included in *The Last Autumn at a Favourite Residence, and Other Poems* (2nd Edition, 1829) and which is reproduced here.

## Enscription

### ON THE TOMB OF MADAME LANGHANS

AT HINDELBANK, NEAR BERNE.

FROM THE GERMAN OF HALLER.

This celebrated monument represents her as ascending through the newly opening grave, bearing in her arms the infant whose birth occasioned her death.

—“HARK!—through the gloom the archangel’s  
trumpet speaks!

Child of my anguish! from thy slumbers rise:

Thy Saviour’s voice the grave’s dread silence  
breaks,

And bids thee seek with me thy native skies.”