









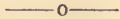
B No 253

1st  
issue



ALDRICH'S POEMS.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.



THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE.

(An Eastern Tale, in verse.)



THE  
BALLAD OF BABIE BELL

AND OTHER POEMS

BY  
THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH



NEW YORK  
RUDD & CARLETON 310 BROADWAY  
MDCCLXIX

ENTERED according to Act of Congress, in the year 1853, by  
THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH,  
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the  
Southern District of New York.

---

E. CRAIGHEAD,  
Printer, Stereotyper, and Electrotyper,  
Carlton Building,  
81, 83, and 85 Centre Street.



TO  
V. E. V.  
OF  
NEW ENGLAND.







## CONTENTS.

### I.

	PAGE.
THE BALLAD OF BABIE BELL. . . . .	11

### II.

CLOTH OF GOLD. . . . .	19
THE FADED VIOLET. . . . .	20
MY NORTH AND SOUTH. . . . .	21
THE GHOST'S LADY. . . . .	22
WE KNEW IT WOULD RAIN. . . . .	24
AFTER THE RAIN. . . . .	25
A BALLAD. . . . .	26
LAST NIGHT AND TO-NIGHT. . . . .	27
TIGER-LILIES. . . . .	28
THE BETROTHAL. . . . .	30
MADAM, AS YOU PASS US BY. . . . .	31
THE MERRY BELLS SHALL RING. . . . .	33
MAY. . . . .	34
LITTLE MAUD. . . . .	35
PERDITA. . . . .	36
NAMELESS PAIN. . . . .	37
THE MOORLAND. . . . .	38
AT THE DEAD-HOUSE. . . . .	40
SONG. . . . .	41
PALABRAS CARINOSAS. . . . .	42

	PAGE.
I SAT BESIDE YOU WHILE YOU SLEPT. . . . .	43
DEAD. . . . .	44
IN THE WOODS. . . . .	45
AUTUMNALIA. . . . .	47
SONG. . . . .	48
BARBARA. . . . .	49
IT WAS A KNIGHT OF ARAGON. . . . .	51
WHEN THE SULTAN GOES TO ISPAHAN. . . . .	53
L'ENVOI. . . . .	56

## III.

INFELICISSIMUS. . . . .	59
A BALLAD OF NANTUCKET. . . . .	62
THE SPENDTHRIFT'S FEAST. . . . .	64
A PASTORAL HYMN TO THE FAIRIES. . . . .	65
THE UNFORGIVEN. . . . .	68
A POET'S GRAVE. . . . .	70
INVOCATION TO SLEEP. . . . .	72
A GREAT MAN'S DEATH. . . . .	75
THE BLUE-BELLS OF NEW ENGLAND. . . . .	76
A LEGEND OF ELSINORE. . . . .	78
PASSING ST. HELENA. . . . .	84

## IV.

THE SET OF TURQUOISE. . . . .	87
SONNETS.	
I. GHOSTS. . . . .	113
II. TO — . . . . .	114
III. MIRACLES. . . . .	115
IV. HASSAN'S MUSIC. . . . .	116
V. FAIRY PUNISHMENT. . . . .	117



I.

The Ballad of Babie Bell.









## BABIE BELL.

THE POEM OF A LITTLE LIFE THAT WAS BUT THREE APRILS  
LONG.

### I.



AVE you not heard the poets tell  
How came the dainty Babie Bell  
Into this world of ours?  
The gates of Heaven were left ajar :  
With folded hands and dreamy eyes,  
Wandering out of Paradise,  
She saw this planet, like a star,  
Hung in the purple depths of even—  
Its bridges, running to and fro,  
O'er which the white-winged Angels go,  
Bearing the holy Dead to Heaven !  
She touched a bridge of flowers—those feet,  
So light they did not bend the bells  
Of the celestial asphodels !

## Babie Bell.

They fell like dew upon the flowers,  
 And all the air grew strangely sweet !  
 And thus came dainty Babie Bell  
 Into this world of ours.

## II.

She came and brought delicious May .  
 The swallows built beneath the eaves ;  
 Like sun-light in and out the leaves,  
 The robins went, the live-long day ;  
 The lily swung its noiseless bell,  
 And o'er the porch the trembling vine  
 Seemed bursting with its veins of wine !  
 How sweetly, softly, twilight fell !  
 O, earth was full of singing birds,  
 And happy spring-tide flowers,  
 When the dainty Babie Bell  
 Came to this world of ours !

## III.

O Babie, dainty Babie Bell,  
 How fair she grew from day to day !  
 What woman nature filled her eyes,  
 What poetry within them lay !

Those deep and tender twilight eyes,  
    So full of meaning, pure and bright  
    As if she yet stood in the light  
Of those oped gates of Paradise!  
    And we loved Babie more and more :  
    Ah, never in our hearts before  
    Was love so lovely born :  
    We felt we had a link between  
    This real world and that unseen—  
    The land beyond the morn!  
And for the love of those dear eyes,  
    For love of her whom God led forth,  
    (The mother's being ceased on earth  
When Babie came from Paradise)—  
For love of Him who smote our lives,  
    And woke the chords of joy and pain,  
We said, *Sweet Christ!*—our hearts bent down  
    Like violets after rain.

## IV.

And now the orchards, which in June  
    Were white and rosy in their bloom—  
Filling the crystal veins of air  
With gentle pulses of perfume—  
Were rich in Autumn's mellow prime :

## Babie Bell.

The plums were globes of honeyed wine,  
The hived sweets of summer time !  
The ivory chestnut burst its shell :  
The soft-cheeked peaches blushed and fell !  
The grapes were purpling in the grange,  
And time brought just as rich a change  
    In little Babie Bell.

Her tiny form more perfect grew,  
    And in her features we could trace,  
    In softened curves, her mother's face !  
Her angel-nature ripened too.  
We thought her lovely when she came,  
    But she was holy, saintly now . . . .  
    Around her pale angelic brow  
We saw a slender ring of flame !

## v.

God's hand had taken away the seal  
    Which held the portals of her speech ;  
And oft she said a few strange words  
    Whose meaning lay beyond our reach.  
She never was a child to us,  
We never held her being's key :  
    We could not teach her holy things :  
She was Christ's self in purity !

## VI.

It came upon us by degrees :  
We saw its shadow ere it fell,  
The knowledge that our God had sent  
His messenger for Babie Bell.  
We shuddered with unlanguage pain,  
    And all our hopes were changed to fears,  
    And all our thoughts ran into tears  
    Like sunshine into rain.  
We cried aloud in our belief,  
    ‘ O, smite us gently, gently, God !  
    Teach us to bend and kiss the rod,  
    And perfect grow through grief.’  
Ah, how we loved her, God can tell ;  
Her little heart was cased in ours :  
    Our hearts are broken, Babie Bell !

## VII.

At last he came, the messenger,  
    The messenger from unseen lands :  
And what did dainty Babie Bell ?  
She only crossed her little hands,  
She only looked more meek and fair !  
We parted back her silken hair ;

## Babie Bell.

We laid some buds upon her brow,  
White buds, the summer's drifted snow—  
Death's bride arrayed in flowers!  
And thus went dainty Babie Bell  
Out of this world of ours!





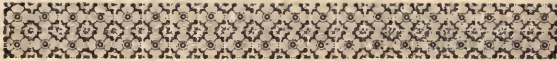
II.

Swallow-Flights.









## CLOTH OF GOLD.

**D**OU ask us if by rule or no  
Our many-colored songs are wrought?  
Upon the cunning loom of thought,  
We weave our fancies, so and so.

The busy shuttle comes and goes  
Across the rhymes, and deftly weaves  
A tissue out of autumn leaves,  
With here a thistle, there a rose.

With art and patience thus is made  
The poet's perfect Cloth of Gold:  
When woven so, nor moth nor mould  
Nor time, can make its colors fade.



## Swallow-Flights.

## THE FADED VIOLET.

WHAT thought is folded in thy leaves !  
 What tender thought, what speechless pain !  
 I hold thy faded lips to mine,  
 Thou darling of the April rain !

I hold thy faded lips to mine,  
 Though scent and azure tint are fled—  
 O dry, mute lips ! ye are the type  
 Of something in me cold and dead :

Of something wilted like thy leaves ;  
 Of fragrance flown, of beauty dim ;  
 Yet, for the love of those white hands  
 That found thee by a river's brim—

That found thee when thy sunny mouth  
 Was purpled as with drinking wine—  
 For love of her who love forgot,  
 I hold thy faded lips to mine !

That thou shouldst live when I am dead,  
 When hate is dead, for me, and wrong,  
 For this, I use my subtlest art,  
 For this, I fold thee in my song.

## MY NORTH AND SOUTH.

I AM very, very fond  
Of a blonde,  
Mistress Maud, and so come here ;  
And yet, and yet, and yet  
I like a gay brunette,  
    Therese, dear !

O what can a body do  
With you two ?—  
Golden hair and rosy mouth !  
Black hair and eyes of jet !  
You blonde, and you brunette !  
    You North and South !

Now, I love you, eyes and curls,  
Little girls !  
Give me each a dainty hand :  
New England's hand shall lie  
On my heart, and yours near by—  
    You understand ?



## Swallow-Flights.

## THE GHOST'S LADY.

## 1.

UNDER the night,  
In the white moonshine,  
Look thou for me  
By the graveyard tree,  
Lady of mine,  
*While the nightingales are in tune,  
And the quaint little snakes in the grass  
Lift their silver heads to the moon.*

## 2.

Blushing with love,  
In the white moonshine,  
Lie in my arms,  
So, safe from alarms,  
Lady of mine,  
*While the nightingales are in tune,  
And the quaint little snakes in the grass  
Lift their silver heads to the moon.*

3.

Paler art thou

Than the white moonshine:

Ho! thou art lost—

Thou lovest a Ghost,

Lady of mine!

*While the nightingales are in tune,  
And the quaint little snakes in the grass  
Lift their silver heads to the moon.*



## WE KNEW IT WOULD RAIN.

WE knew it would rain, for all the morn,  
A spirit on slender ropes of mist  
Was lowering its golden buckets down  
Into the vapory amethyst

Of marshes and swamps and dismal fens—  
Scooping the dew that lay in the flowers  
Dipping the jewels out of the sea,  
To sprinkle them over the land in showers!

We knew it would rain, for the poplars showed  
The white of their leaves, the amber grain  
Shrunk in the wind—and the lightning now  
Is tangled in tremulous skeins of rain!



## AFTER THE RAIN.

THE rain has ceased, and in my room  
The sunshine pours an orange flood ;  
And on the church's dizzy vane  
The ancient Cross is bathed in blood.

From out the dripping ivy-leaves,  
Antiquely-carven, gray and high,  
A dormer, facing westward, looks  
Upon the village like an eye :

And now it glimmers in the sun,  
A globe of gold, a disc, a speck :  
And in the belfry sits a Dove  
With purple ripples on her neck.



## A BALLAD.

## 1.

THE blackbird sings in the hazel dell,  
And the squirrel sits on the tree ;  
And Maud she walks in the merry green-wood,  
Down by the summer sea.

## 2.

The blackbird lies when he sings of love ;  
And the squirrel, a rogue is he ;  
And Maud is an arrant flirt I trow,  
And light as light can be !

## 3.

O, blackbird, die in the hazel dell !  
And, squirrel, starve on the tree !  
And, Maud — you may walk in the merry green-  
wood,  
You are nothing more to me !



LAST NIGHT AND TO-NIGHT.

LAST night my soul was lapped  
    In shallow merriment :  
The sweet bee, Music, buzzed about my ears !  
Swan-throated women, under chandeliers,  
    Like odors came and went !

To night I hate them all :  
    It better suits my mind  
To walk where ocean sobs on pitiless crags,  
Bethinking me of foul sea-hags  
    In noisome caves confined.



## TIGER-LILIES.

I LIKE not lady-slippers,  
Nor yet the sweet-pea blossoms,  
Nor yet the flaky roses,  
    Red, or white as snow ;  
I like the chaliced lilies,  
The heavy Eastern lilies,  
The gorgeous tiger-lilies,  
    That in our garden grow !

For they are tall and slender ;  
Their mouths are dashed with carmine ;  
And when the wind sweeps by them,  
    On their emerald stalks  
They bend so proud and graceful—  
They are Circassian women,  
The darlings of the harem  
    Adown our garden walks !

And when the rain is falling,  
I sit beside the window .

## Swallow-Flights.

29

And watch them glow and glisten,  
    How they burn and glow !  
O for the burning lilies,  
The fragrant Eastern lilies,  
The gorgeous tiger-lilies,  
    That in our garden grow !



## THE BETROTHAL.

I HAVE placed a golden  
Ring upon the hand  
Of the sweetest little  
Lady in the land !

When the early roses  
Scent the sunny air,  
I shall gather white ones  
To tremble in her hair !

Hasten, happy roses,  
Come to me by May—  
In your folded petals  
Lies my wedding day !



MADAM, AS YOU PASS US BY.

MADAM, as you pass us by,  
    Dreaming of your loves and wine,  
Do not brush your rich brocade  
    Against this little maid of mine,  
Madam, as you pass us by.

When in youth my blood was warm,  
    Wine was royal, life complete ;  
So I drained the flasks of wine,  
    So I sat at woman's feet,  
When in youth my blood was warm.

Time has taught me pleasant truths :  
    Lilies grow where thistles grew :  
Ah, you loved me not. This maid  
    Loves me. There's an end of you !  
Time has taught me pleasant truths.

## Swallow-Flights.

I will speak no bitter words :

    Too much passion made me blind ;  
You were subtle. Let it go !

    For the sake of woman-kind  
I will speak no bitter words.

But, Madam, as you pass us by,  
    Dreaming of your loves and wine,  
Do not brush your rich brocade  
    Against this little maid of mine,  
Madam, as you pass us by.



## THE MERRY BELLS SHALL RING.

1

THE merry bells shall ring,  
*Marguerite* ;  
The little birds shall sing,  
*Marguerite*—  
You smile, but you shall wear  
Orange blossoms in your hair,  
*Marguerite* !

2

Ah me ! the bells have rung  
*Marguerite* ;  
The little birds have sung,  
*Marguerite*—  
But cypress leaf and rue  
Make a sorry wreath for you,  
*Marguerite* !

## Swallow-Flights.

MAY.

BY A POET IN CLOVER.

HEBE'S here, May is here !  
The air is fresh and sunny ;  
And the fairy bees are busy  
Making golden honey !

See the knots of butter-cups,  
And the double pansies—  
Thick as these, within my brain,  
Grow the quaintest fancies !

Let me write my songs to-day,  
Rhymes with dulcet closes—  
Tiny epics one might hide  
In the hearts of roses !

What's the use of halcyon May,  
Of air so fresh and sunny,  
If such a busy bee as I  
Can't make golden honey ?



## LITTLE MAUD.

O WHERE is our dainty, our darling,  
The daintiest darling of all?  
O where is the voice on the stairway,  
O where is the voice in the hall?  
The little short steps in the entry,  
The silvery laugh in the hall?  
O where is our dainty, our darling,  
The daintiest darling of all,  
*Little Maud?*

The peaches are ripe in the orchard,  
The apricots ready to fall;  
And the grapes are dripping their honey  
All over the garden-wall—  
But where are the lips, full and melting,  
That looked up so pouting and red,  
When we dangled the sun-purpled bunches  
Of Isabells over her head?  
O rosebud of women! where are you?  
(She never replies to our call!)  
O where is our dainty, our darling,  
The daintiest darling of all,  
*Little Maud?*

## PERDITA.

## 1.

POET, shape a song for me  
Of troubled love, of jealousy,  
Of sick conceit ;  
But make its rhymes as sad and sweet  
As parting kisses be !

## 2.

Sing me merry, when I'm gay ;  
But touch a mournful string to-day ;  
The birds have flown,  
Save one, the Wind, that maketh moan—  
Perdita's gone away !



## NAMELESS PAIN.

IN my nostrils the summer wind  
Blows the exquisite scent of the rose !  
O for the golden, golden wind,  
Breaking the buds as it goes,  
    Breaking the buds,  
    And bending the grass,  
And spilling the scent of the rose !

O wind of the summer morn,  
    Tearing the petals in twain,  
Wafting the fragrant soul  
    Of the rose through valley and plain,  
I would you could tear my heart to-day,  
    And scatter its nameless pain.



## THE MOORLAND.

THE moorland lies a dreary waste ;  
The night is dark with drizzling rain ;  
In yonder yawning cave of cloud  
The snaky lightning writhes with pain !  
*And the Wind is wailing bitterly.*

O sobbing rain, outside my door !  
O wailing phantoms, make your moan !  
Go through the night in blind despair—  
Your shadowy lips have touched my own !  
*And the Wind is wailing bitterly.*

No more the robin breaks its heart  
Of music in the pathless woods !  
The ravens croak for such as I,  
The plovers screech above their broods.  
*And the Wind is wailing bitterly.*

All mournful things are friends of mine,  
    (That weary sound of falling leaves !)  
Ah, there is not a kindred soul  
    For me on earth, but moans and grieves !  
    *And the Wind is wailing bitterly.*

I cannot sleep this lonesome night ;  
    The ghostly rain goes by in haste,  
And, further than the eye can reach,  
    The moorland lies a dreary waste !  
    *And the Wind is wailing bitterly.*



## AT THE DEAD-HOUSE.

“Drown'd! drown'd!”—HAMLET.

HERE is where they bring the dead  
When they rise from the river's bed,  
Sinful women who have thrown  
Away the life they would not own—  
Life despised and trampled down!

Sad enough. Now, you who write  
Plays that give the world delight,  
Tell me if in this there be  
Naught for your new tragedy?  
Ha! you start, you turn from me  
A face brimful of misery!  
Do you know that woman there,  
That icy image of Despair?  
Have you heard her softly speak?  
Have you kissed her, lips and cheek?  
Faith! you do not kiss her now!  
Poor young mouth, and pale young brow,  
Drenchéd hair, and glassy eye—  
Go, put that in your tragedy!

SONG.

1.

MAIDEN Maud and Marian  
Have not passed me by--  
Archéd foot and red-ripe mouth,  
And bronze-brown eye !

2.

When my hair is gray,  
Then I shall be wise ;  
Then I shall not care  
For bronze-brown eyes.

3.

Then let maiden Maud  
And Marian pass me by ;  
So they do not scorn me now  
What care I ?

## PALABRAS CARIÑOSAS.

GOOD-NIGHT! I have to say good night  
 To such a host of peerless things!  
 Good-night unto that snowy hand  
 All queenly with its weight of rings!  
 Good-night to fond, delicious eyes,  
 Good-night to chestnut braids of hair,  
 Good-night unto the perfect mouth,  
 And all the sweetness nestled there—  
     The snowy hand detains me, then  
     I'll have to say Good-night again!

But there will come a time, my love,  
 When, if I read our stars aright,  
 I shall not linger by this porch  
 With my adieu. Till then, good-night!  
 You wish the time were now? And I.  
 You do not blush to wish it so?  
 You would have blushed yourself to death  
 To own so much a year ago—  
     What, both these snowy hands! ah, then,  
     I'll have to say Good-night again!



## I SAT BESIDE YOU WHILE YOU SLEPT.

I sat beside you while you slept,  
And Christ ! but it was woe  
To see the long dark lashes rest  
Upon your cheeks of snow,  
To see you lie so happily,  
And to think you did not know  
What a weary, weary world is this,  
While you were sleeping so !

You are dearer than my soul, love,  
But in that hour of pain,  
I wished that you might never lift  
Those eyes to mine again,  
Might never weep, but lie in sleep  
While the long seasons roll—  
I wished this, I who love you, love,  
Better than my soul !  
And then—I cannot tell what then,  
But that I might not weep  
I caught you in my arms, love,  
And kissed you from your sleep.

## D E A D.

I HEARD a sorrowful woman say,  
“Come in and look at our child!”

I saw an Angel at shut of day,  
And it never spoke—but smiled!

I think of it in the city’s streets,

I dream of it when I rest—

The violet eyes, the waxen hands,

And the one white rose on the breast!



## IN THE WOODS.

THE summer birds are in the summer sky :  
I hear the music of the woods again,  
The wild wind-symphonies that moan and die  
On hemlock harps with such a sad refrain.

I long for him who knew so well these tones ;  
He loved this greening world of scented vines,  
This slumberous air that stirs the chestnut cones,  
And wafts an odor from the gummy pines.

Here do the slim imperial tulips blow,  
And those ground-flowers that seem like clots of blood  
On the green grass : and here do lilies grow—  
The pale-faced Dryads of the summer wood !

All pleasant noises, all delicious smells,  
All things whereof our poets' songs are born—  
Alas ! that painful Autumn through these dells  
Should moaning come, and make the place forlorn.

## Swallow-Flights.

Autumn will come ; the fretful winds will blow ;  
The rain will weep for summer in the grave ;  
Then Winter—building palaces of snow  
With crystal vestibule and architrave.

Shadow of sorrow, brood upon the place !  
Here did I part with one who nevermore  
Shall hunt for Spring's first violet, nor chase  
The hungry fox when woods and fields are hoar.



## AUTUMNALIA.

WHEN marigolds heaped lie like ignots of gold,  
And the snowy syringas their petals unfold,  
I drink the warm sunshine, I dream in the grass,  
I shout to the swallows that over me pass ;  
And thoughts of dull Winter go out of my mind,  
For I lie in the lap of the Summer Wind,  
*Singing so cheerily,*  
*Living so merrily.*

But when I see stretched through the desolate night  
The menacing hand of the weird Northern Light ;  
When the leaves have turned sere, and the tulips are  
dead,  
And the beautiful sumacs are burning with red ;  
Then a Vision of Death comes over my mind,  
And I shrink from the touch of the Autumn Wind,  
*Sighing so wearily,*  
*Living so drearily.*

## SONG.

## 1.

It was with doubt and trembling  
I whispered in her ear :  
O take her answer, bonny bird,  
That all the world may hear !

## 2.

Sing it, sing it, Silver-throat,  
Upon the way-side tree,  
How fair she is, how true she is,  
And how she loveth me !

## 3.

Sing it, sing it, Silver-throat,  
And all the summer long  
The other birds shall envy you  
For knowing such a song !

## BARBARA.

BARBARA hath a falcon's eye,  
And a soft white hand hath Barbara ;  
Beware—for to make you wish to die,  
To make you as pale as the moon or I,  
Is a pet trick with Barbara !

Merrily bloweth the summer wind,  
But cold and cruel is Barbara !  
And I, a Duke, stand here like a hind,  
Too happy, i' faith, if I am struck blind  
By the quick look of Barbara !

Ay, Sweetmou', you are haughty now :  
Time was, time was, my Barbara,  
When I covered your lips and brow  
And bosom with kisses—faith, 'tis snow  
That was all fire then, Barbara !

## Swallow-Flights.

For whom shall you hold Agatha's ring?  
Whom will you love next, Barbara?  
Choose from the Court—your page or the King?  
Or one of those sleek-limbed fellows who bring,  
Rose-colored notes ' For Barbara ? '

Love the King, by all that is good !  
Make eyes at him, sing to him, Barbara !  
I think you might please his royal mood  
For a month, and then—what then if he *should*  
Fling you aside, Queen Barbara ?

You might die out there on the moor,  
(Where Rouel died for you, Barbara !)  
For the world, you know, sets little store  
On beauty, and charity closes the door  
On fallen divinity, Barbara !

But if his Majesty grew so cold—  
In the dead of night, my Barbara,  
I'd go to his chamber, Hate is bold,  
And strangle him there in his purple and gold,  
And lay him beside you, Barbara !



## IT WAS A KNIGHT OF ARAGON.

[SPANISH.]

*“Fuerte qual azero entre armas,  
Y qual cera entre las damas.”*

## I.

It was a Knight of Aragon, and he was brave to see,  
His helmet and his hauberk, and the greaves upon his  
knee:  
His escuderos rode in front, his cavaliers behind,  
With stained plumes and gonfalons, and music in the  
wind.

## 2.

It was the maid Prudencia, the rose-bud of Madrid,  
Who watched him from her balcony, among the jas-  
mines hid.  
‘O, Virgin Mother!’ quoth the Knight, ‘is that the  
day-break there?’—  
It was the saintly light that shone above the maiden’s  
hair!

3.

Then he who crossed the Pyrenees to fight the dogs of  
France,  
Grew pale with love for her whose look had pierced  
him like a lance ;  
And they will wed the morrow morn : beat softly, happy  
stars !—  
And, mind you, gallant cavaliers, how Venus conquers  
Mars.



## WHEN THE SULTAN GOES TO ISPAHAN.

[ARABIC.]

WHEN *the Sultan Shah-Zaman*  
*Goes to the city Ispahan,*  
Even before he gets so far  
As the place where the clustered palm-trees are,  
At the last of the thirty palace-gates,  
The Pet of the Harem, Rose-in-Bloom,  
Orders a feast in his favorite room—  
Glittering squares of colored ice,  
Sweetened with syrop, tintured with spice,  
Creams, and cordials, and sugared dates,  
Syrian apples, Othmanee quinces,  
Limes, and citrons, and apricots,  
And wines that are known to Eastern princes :  
And Nubian slaves, with smoking pots  
Of spicéd meats and costliest fish  
And all that the daintiest palate could wish,

## Swallow-Flights.

Pass in and out of the golden doors !  
Scattered over mosaic floors  
Are anemones, myrtles, and violets,  
And a musical fountain throws its jets  
Of an hundred colors into the air !  
The dusk Sultana loosens her hair,  
And stains with the henna-plant the tips  
Of her pearly nails, and bites her lips  
Till they seem to pout like that rarest rose  
Which only for Sultans buds and blows !

Then at a wave of her sunny hand,  
The dancing-girls of Samarcand  
Float in like mists from Fairy-land !  
And to the low voluptuous swoons  
Of music rise and fall the moons  
Of their full brown bosoms. Orient blood  
Runs in their veins, shines in their eyes :  
And there, in this Eastern Paradise,  
Filled with the fumes of sandal-wood,  
And Khoten musk, and aloes and myrrh,  
Sits Rose-in-Bloom on a silk divan,  
Sipping the wines of Astrakhan ;  
And her Arab lover sits with her !  
*That's when the Sultan Shah-Zaman  
Goes to the city Ispahan !*

Now, when I see an extra light,  
Flaming, flickering on the night  
From my neighbor's window opposite,  
I know as well as I know to pray,  
I know as well as a tongue can say,  
*That the innocent Sultan Shah-Zaman  
Has gone to the city Ispahan!*  
I rather think my neighbor's wife  
Is leading this Orient sort of life!



## L'ENVOI.

MEN turn to angels when dead .  
 A thought grows into a Song :  
 Every thing ripens with time,  
 Or I and my rhyme are wrong.

The May-moon blossomed, and grew,  
 And withered, the flower full-blown ;  
 But out of the ruined moon  
 The beautiful June has grown !

O ye Poets that sit i' the sun,  
 Your brows with the laurel moist,  
 When shall I sit and sing with you,  
 Sweet-thoughted and silver-voiced ?





III.

Poems and Ballads.









## INFELICISSIMUS.

### I.



WALKED with him one melancholy night  
Down by the sea, upon the moon-lit strands,  
While in the dreary heaven the Northern Light  
Beckoned with flaming hands—

### II.

Beckoned and vanished, like a woeful ghost  
That fain would lure us to some dismal wood,  
And tell us tales of ships that have been lost,  
Of violence and blood.

### III.

And where yon dædal rocks o'erhang the froth,  
We sat together, Lycidas and I,  
Watching the great star-bear that in the North  
Guarded the midnight sky.

## IV.

And while the moonlight wrought its miracles,  
 Drenching the world with silent silver rain,  
 He spoke of life and its tumultuous ills :  
 He told me of his pain.

## V.

He said his life was like the troubled sea  
 With autumn brooding over it : and then  
 Spoke of his hopes, of what he yearned to be,  
 And what he might have been.

## VI.

‘I hope,’ said Lycidas, ‘for peace at last,  
 I only ask for peace ! My god is Ease !  
 Day after day some rude Iconoclast  
 Breaks all my images !

## VII.

‘There is a better life than I have known—  
 A surer, purer, sweeter life than this :  
 There is another, a celestial zone,  
 Where I shall know of bliss.’

## . VIII.

So, close his eyes, and cross his helpless hands,  
And lay the flowers he loved upon his breast ;  
For time and death have stayed the golden sands  
That ran with such unrest !

## IX.

You weep : I smile : I know that he is dead,  
So is his passion, and 'tis better so !  
Take him, O Earth, and round his lovely head  
Let countless roses blow !



## A BALLAD OF NANTUCKET.

‘WHERE go you, pretty Maggie,  
Where go you in the rain?’

‘I go to ask the sailors  
Who sailed the Spanish main,

‘If they have seen my Willie,  
If he’ll come back to me—  
It is so sad to have him  
A-sailing on the sea!’

‘O Maggie, pretty Maggie,  
Turn back to yonder town;  
Your Willie’s in the ocean,  
A hundred fathoms down!

‘His hair is turned to sea-pelt,  
His eyes are changed to stones,  
And twice two years have knitted  
The coral round his bones!

'The blossoms and the clover  
Shall bloom and bloom again,  
But never shall your lover  
Come o'er the Spanish main !'

But Maggie never heeded,  
For mournfully said she :  
'It is so sad to have him  
A-sailing on the sea !'

She left me in the darkness :  
I heard the sea-gulls screech,  
And burly winds were growling  
With breakers on the beach !

The blythe bells of Nantucket,  
What touching things they said,  
When Maggie lay a-sleeping  
With lilies round her head !

The parson preached a sermon,  
And prayed and preached again—  
But she had gone to Willie  
Across the Spanish main !

## THE SPENDTHRIFT'S FEAST.

[FROM A PLAY.]

TO-NIGHT we sup with Fiole—  
We shall be delicately banqueted.  
But do you know wherewith he pays for this?  
No? Then I'll tell you; it is laughable.  
A week ago his miserly father died—  
Despite his swollen money-bags, he died—  
But not a para of his hoarded wealth  
Goes to Fiole. No; he builds a church  
And gives it candles for a century,  
Endows a hospital, and God knows what,  
And only leaves that precious son of his  
An antique drinking-cup all rough with gems  
And moist with the grapes' bleeding—a shrewd hit  
At Fiole, whose lady-love is Wine.  
Neat, was it not? and worthy of the Count.  
Well, this gold satire, this begemmed lampoon,  
Fiole pawns to Jacobi the Jew,  
And we're to dine on it!

## A PASTORAL HYMN TO THE FAIRIES.

## I.

O YE little tricky gods!  
Tell me where ye sleep o' nights,  
Where ye laugh and weep o' nights!  
Is it in the velvet pods  
Of the drooping violets—  
In the purple palaces,  
Scooped and shaped like chalices?  
Or beneath the silver bend,  
In among the cooling jets,  
Of Iris-haunted, wood cascades  
That tumble down from porphyry heights?  
Do ye doze in rose-leaf boats  
Where the dreamy streamlet floats,  
Full of fish and and phosphorus motes,  
Through the heart of quiet glades?

## II.

When we crush a pouting bloom,  
Ten to one we kill a Fairy!  
May be that the light perfume  
In our nostrils, sweet and airy,

Is the spirit of the Fairy  
 Floating upward. O, be wary!  
 Who can tell what size or make  
 The wilful little beings take?  
 There's a bird; now, who can say  
 'Tis a Robin or a Fay?  
 Why may not immortal things  
 Go on red and yellow wings!  
 Ah! if so the Fairies bide  
     Round us, with us, tell me why  
 Is their silver speech denied?  
     Are they deafened to my cry?

## III.

If you ask me why my song  
     Morn, and noon, and night complains,  
 I will tell you . . . Long ago,  
     When the orchards and the lanes  
 Were, with fragrant apple-blooms,  
     White as in a fall of snow,  
 It was then we missed a Voice—  
     It was little Mary's!  
 For one morn she wandered forth,  
 In the spring-time of the earth,  
     And was lost among the Fairies!



So I go in pensive moods  
Through the shadows, by the brooks,  
Talking to the solemn woods,  
Peering into mossy nooks,  
Asking sadly, now and then,  
After tiny maids and men !  
For my thoughts are with the child,  
All my heart is gone with Mary's—  
O, sad day she fled away,  
And was lost among the Fairies !



## THE UNFORGIVEN.

NEAR my bed, there, hangs the picture, jewels could not  
buy from me :

'Tis a Siren, a fair Siren, in her sea-weed drapery,  
Playing on a lute of amber, by the margin of a sea !

In the east, the rose of morning biddeth fair to blossom  
soon,

But it never, never blossoms, in this picture ; and the  
moon

Never ceases to be crescent, and the June is always June !

And the heavy-branched banana never yields its creamy  
fruit ;

In the citron-trees are nightingales forever stricken mute ;  
And the Siren sits, her fingers on the pulses of her lute !

In the hushes of the midnight, when my heliotropes  
grow strong

With the dampness I hear music—hear a quiet, plain-  
tive song—

A most sad, melodious utterance, as of some immortal  
wrong—

Like the pleading, oft repeated, of a Soul that pleads in  
vain,  
Of a damnéd Soul repentant, that cannot be pure  
again!—  
And I lie awake and listen, with an agony of brain!

O, the mystical, wild music! how it melts into the  
white  
Of the moon that turns the sombre, brooding shadows  
into light!  
How it sobs itself to slumber in the quiets of the night!

And whence comes this mournful music?—whence, un-  
less it chance to be  
From the Siren, the sad Siren, in her sea-weed drapery,  
Playing on a lute of amber, by the margin of a sea!



## A POET'S GRAVE.

In this pleasant beechen shade  
Where the crocus blossoms red,  
Lieth one who, being dead,  
Is neither matron, man, nor maid.

But once he wore the form of God,  
And walked the earth with meaner things :  
Death snapt him. See ! above him springs  
The very grass whereon he trod !

Let the world swing to and fro,  
The slant rain fall, the wind blow strong :  
Time cannot do him any wrong  
While he is wrapped and cradled so !

Ah, much he suffered in his day :  
He knelt with Virtue, kissed with Sin—  
Wild Passion's child, and Sorrow's twin,  
A meteor that had lost its way !

He walked with goblins, ghouls, and things  
Unsightly,—terrors and despairs ;  
And ever in the starry airs  
A dismal raven flapped its wings !

He died. Six people bore his pall ;  
And three were sorry, three were not :  
They buried him, and then forgot  
His very grave—the lot of all !

But strains of music here and there,  
Weird children whom nobody owns,  
Are blown across the fragrant zones  
Forever in the midnight air !



## INVOCATION TO SLEEP.

## I.

THERE is a sleep for all things. On still nights  
     There is a folding of a million wings—  
 The purple honey-bees in unknown woods,  
 The speckled butterflies, and downy broods  
     In dizzy poplar heights :  
 Sleep for innumerable nameless things,  
 Sleep for the creatures underneath the sea,  
     And in the Earth, and in the starry Air! . . .  
 If easeful sleep so universal be.  
     Why will it not unburden me of care?  
     It comes to meaner things than my despair!  
 O weary, weary night, that brings no rest to me!

## II

Spirit of dreams and silvern memories,  
     Delicate Sleep!  
 One who is sickening of his tiresome days,  
 Brings thee a soul that he would have thee keep

A captive in thy mystical domain,  
 'Mong wild Puck-fancies, and the grotesque train  
 That do inhabit slumber. Give his sight  
 Immortal shapes, and bring to him again  
 His Psyche that went out into the night !

## III.

Thou who dost hold the keys of rest,  
 Strew lotus-leaves and poppies on my breast—  
 Narcotic buds from misty Godland brought,  
 The flowers of Lethe ! Then with viewless hand  
 Lead me into thy castle, in the land  
 Touched with all colors like a burning west,  
 The Castle o' Vision, where the feet of thought  
 Wander at will upon enchanted ground,  
 Fall like quick blossoms, making not a sound  
 In all the corridors . . . . .  
 The bell sleeps in the belfry—from its tongue  
 A drowsy murmur floats into the air,  
 Like thistle-down. Slumber is everywhere.  
 The rook's asleep, and, in its dreaming, caws ;  
 And silence mopes where oreoles have sung ;  
 The Sirens lie in grottos cool and deep :  
 The lily-wreathéd Naiades in streams :

But I, in chilling twilight, stand and wait  
On the portcullis, at thy castle gate,  
Yearning to see the golden door of dreams  
Turn on the noiseless hinges of a sleep!





## A GREAT MAN'S DEATH.

TO-DAY a god died. Never any more  
Shall man look on him. Never any more,  
In hall or senate, shall his eloquent voice  
Give hope to a sick nation. In his prime  
Not all the world could daunt him : yet a ghost,  
A poor mute ghost, a something we call Death,  
Has silenced him forever ! Let the land  
Look for his peer : he hath not yet been found.

A crimson bird, of not so many days  
As there are leaves upon the wildling rose,  
Sings from yon sycamore ; this violet  
Sprung up an hour since from the fibrous earth :  
At noon the rain fell, and to-night the sun  
Will sink with its old splendor in the sea !—  
And yet to-day a god died. . . . Nature smiles  
On our mortality. A robin's death,  
Or the unnoticed falling of a leaf,  
Is more to her than when a great man dies !

## THE BLUE-BELLS OF NEW-ENGLAND.

THE roses are a regal troop,  
And humble folks the daisies ;  
But, Blue-bells of New-England, .  
To you I give my praises—  
To you, fair phantoms in the sun,  
Whom merry Spring discovers,  
With blue-birds for your laureates,  
And honey-bees for lovers !

The south-wind breathes, and lo ! ye throng  
This rugged land of ours—  
Methinks the pale blue clouds of May  
Drop down, and turn to flowers !  
By cottage doors along the roads,  
You show your winsome faces,  
And, like the spectre lady, haunt  
The lonely woodland places.

All night your eyes are closed in sleep,  
But open at the dawning ;  
Such simple faith as yours can see  
God's coming in the morning !

You lead me by your holiness,  
    To pleasant ways of duty :  
You set my thoughts to melody,  
    You fill me with your beauty.

And you are like the eyes I love,  
    So modest and so tender,  
Just touched with morning's glorious light,  
    And evening's gentle splendor.  
Long may the heavens give you rain,  
    The sunshine its caresses,  
Long may the little girl I love  
    Entwine you in her tresses.



## A LEGEND OF ELSINORE.

O BUT she had not her peer !  
In the kingdom far or near,  
There were never such brown tresses, such a faultless  
hand :  
She had youth, and she had gold,  
She had jewels all untold ;  
And many a lover bold  
Wooded the Lady of the Land.

But, alack ! they won not Maud,  
Neither belted knight nor lord :  
“ Woo me not, for Jesus’ sake, good gentlemen,” she  
said.  
If they wooed, then,—with a frown  
She would strike their passion down.  
O she might have wed a crown  
To the ringlets on her head !

From the dizzy castle tips,  
She would watch the silent ships,

Like sheeted phantoms, coming and going evermore,  
While the twilight settled down  
On the sleepy little town.  
On the gables peaked and brown,  
That had sheltered kings of yore.

Her blue eyes drank in the sight,  
With a full and still delight ;  
For it was as fair a scene as aught in Arcadic :  
Through the yellow-beaded grain,  
Through the hamlet-studded plain,  
Like a trembling azure vein,  
Ran the river to the sea.

Spotted belts of cedar-wood  
Partly clasped the widening flood ;  
Like a knot of daisies lay the hamlets on the hill ;  
In the ancient town below,  
Sparks of light would come and go,  
And faint voices, strangely low,  
From the garrulous old mill.

Here the land, in grassy swells,  
Gently rose ; there, sank in dells

With wide mouths of crimson moss, and teeth of rock  
 and peat ;  
 Here, in statue-like repose,  
 An old wrinkled mountain rose,  
 With its hoary head in snows  
 And musk-roses at its feet !

And so oft she sat alone,  
 In the turret of gray stone,  
 Looking o'er red miles of heath, dew-dabbled, to the  
 sea,  
 That there grew a village cry,  
 How Maud's cheeks did lose their dye,  
 As a ship, once, sailing by,  
 Melted on the sapphire lea.

'Lady Maud,' they said, 'is vain ;  
 With a cold and fine disdain  
 She walks o'er mead and moorland, she wanders by the  
 sea—  
 Sits within her tower alone,  
 Like *Ænone* carved in stone,  
 Like the queen of half a zone,  
 Ah, so icy-proud is she !'

When Maud walked abroad, her feet  
Seemed far sweeter than the sweet  
Wild flowers that would follow her with iridescent eyes ;  
And the spangled eglantine,  
And the honeysuckle vine,  
Running round and round the pine  
Grew tremulous with surprise.

But she passed by with a stare,  
With a half unconscious air,  
Making waves of amber froth, upon a sea of maize :  
With her large and heavenly eyes  
Looking through and through the skies,  
As if God's rich paradise,  
Were growing upon her gaze !

Her lone walks led all one way,  
And all ended at the gray  
And the ragged, jagged rocks, that tooth the dreadful  
beach ;  
5 There Queen Maud would stand, the Sweet !  
With the white surf at her feet,  
While above her wheeled the fleet  
Sparrow-hawk with startling screech.

When the stars had blossomed bright,  
And the gardens of the night  
Were full of golden marigolds, and violets astir,  
Lady Maud would sit alone,  
And the sea with inner tone,  
Half of melody and moan,  
Would rise up and speak with her.

And she ever loved the sea—  
God's half-uttered mystery—  
With its million lips of shells, its never-ceasing roar :  
And 'twas well that, when she died,  
They made Maud a grave beside  
The blue pulses of the tide,  
'Mong the crags of Elsinore.

One chill, red leaf-falling morn,  
Many russet Autumns gone,  
A lone ship with folded wings, lay dozing off the lea :  
It had lain throughout the night,  
With its wings of murky white  
Folded, after weary flight—  
The worn nursling of the sea !



Crowds of peasants flocked the sands ;  
There were tears and clasping hands ;  
And a sailor from the ship passed through the kirk-yard  
gate.

9  
Then amid the grass that crept,  
Fading, over her who slept,  
How he hid his face and wept,  
Crying, 'Late, alas ! too late !'

10  
And they called her cold. God knows . .  
Underneath the winter snows,  
The invisible hearts of flowers grow ripe for blossoming !  
And the lives that look so cold,  
If their stories could be told,  
Would seem cast in gentele mould,  
Would seem full of love and spring.



## PASSING ST. HELENA.

AND this is St. Helena? This the spot  
Haunted forever by an Emperor!  
Methinks 'twere meet that such a royal ghost  
Should pace these gloomy battlements by night!  
—The ship veered off, and we passed out to sea:  
And in the first fair moonrise of the month,  
I watched the island, till it seemed a speck  
No bigger than Astarte. Year by year,  
The picture came and went upon my brain,  
Like frost-work on the windows: in my dreams  
I saw those jagged turrets of dull rock  
Uplifted in the moonlight: saw the gulls  
Darting in sudden circles; heard the low  
And everlasting anthem of the sea!  
And from the nether world a voice would come,  
*Here did they bring the Corsican, and here  
Died the chained eagle by these dismal cliffs!*





IV.

The Set of Turquoise.



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COUNT OF LARA, *A poor nobleman.*

BEATRICE, *His wife.*

FLORIAN, }  
JACINTA, } *Her dressing-maids.*

A PAGE, *for the occasion.*

*The scene is laid in the vicinity of Mantua.*



## THE SET OF TURQUOISE

A DRAMATIC SKETCH.

SCENE I.—COUNT of LARA's villa. *A balcony overlooking the garden. Moonlight. LARA and BEATRICE.*

LARA.

HE third moon of our marriage, Beatrice!  
It hangs i' the heaven, ripe and ready to drop,  
Like a great golden orange—

BEATRICE.

Excellent!

Breathe not the priceless simile abroad,  
Or all the poetlings in Mantua  
Will cut the rind of 't! Like an orange? yes,  
But not so red, Count. Then it hath no stem,  
And ripened out of nothing.

## The Set of Turquoise.

LARA.

Critical!

Make thou a neater pocsy for the moon.

BEATRICE.

Now, as 't is hidden by those drifts of cloud,  
With one thin edge just glimmering through the dark,  
'Tis like some strange, rich jewel of the east,  
I' the cleft side of a mountain.

LARA.

Not unlike!

BEATRICE.

And that reminds me—speaking of jewels—love,  
There is a set of turquoise at Malan's,  
Ear-drops and bracelets and a necklace—ah!  
If they were mine!

LARA.

And so they should be, dear,  
Were I Aladdin, and had slaves o' the lamp  
To fetch me ingots. Why, then, Beatrice,  
All Persia's turquoise-quarries should be yours,  
Although your hand is heavy now with gems  
That tear my lips when I would kiss its whiteness.  
Oh! so you pout! Why make that full-blown rose  
Into a bud again?

BEATRICE.

You love me not.

LARA.

A coquette's song.

BEATRICE.

I sing it.

LARA.

A poor song.

BEATRICE.

You love me not, or love me over-much,  
Which makes you jealous of the gems I wear !  
You do not deck me as becomes our state,  
For fear my grandeur should besiege the eyes  
Of Monte, Clari, Marcus, and the rest—  
A precious set ! You're jealous, Sir !

LARA.

Not I.  
I love you.

BEATRICE.

Why, that is as easy said  
As any three short words ; takes no more breath  
To say, ' I hate you.' What, Sir, have I lived  
Three times four weeks your wedded loyal wife,

## The Set of Turquoise.

And do not know your follies? I will wager  
 (If I could trap my darling into this!)

[*Aside.*]

The sweetest kisses I know how to give  
 Against the turquoise, that within a month  
 You'll grow so jealous—and without a cause,  
 Or with a reason thin as window-glass—  
 That you will ache to kill me!

LARA.

Will you so?

And I—let us clasp hands and kiss on it.

BEATRICE.

Clasp hands, Sir Trustful; but not kiss—nay, nay!  
 I will not pay my forfeit till I lose.

LARA.

And I 'll not lose the forfeit.

BEATRICE.

We shall see.

*BEATRICE enters the house singing.*

There was an old earl and he wed a young wife,

Heigh ho, the bonny.

And he was as jealous as Death is of Life,

Heigh ho, the nonny!



## The Set of Turquoise.

91

Kings saw her, and sighed ;  
And wan lovers died,  
But no one could win the bright honey  
That lay on the lips of the bonny  
Young bride,  
Until Cupid, the rover, a-hearting would go,  
Then—heigh ho !

[*Exit.*

### LARA.

She hath as many fancies as the wind  
Which now, like slumber, lies 'mong spicy isles,  
Then suddenly blows white furrows in the sea !  
Lovely and dangerous is my leopardess.  
To-day, low-lying at my feet ; to-morrow,  
With great eyes flashing, threatening doleful death—  
With strokes like velvet ! She's no common clay,  
But fire and dew and marble. I'll not throw  
So rare a wonder in the lap o' the world !  
Jealous ? I am not jealous— though they say  
Some sorts of love breed jealousy. And yet,  
I would I had not wagered. It implies  
Doubt. If I doubted ? Pshaw ! I'll walk awhile  
And let the cool air fan me. [*Paces the balcony.*  
'Twas not wise.  
It's only Folly with its cap and bells  
Can jest with sad things. She seemed earnest, too.

What if, to pique me, she should over-step  
The pale of modesty, and give sweet eyes  
(I could not bear that, nay, not even that!)  
To Marc or Claudian? Why, such things have been  
And no sin dreamed of. I will watch her close.  
There, now, I wrong her. She is wild enough,  
Playing the empress in her honeymoons:  
But untamed falcons will not wear the hood  
Nor sit on the wrist, at bidding. Yet if she,  
To win the turquoise of me, if she should—  
Oh! curséd jewels! would that they were hung  
About the glistening neck of some mermaid  
A thousand fathoms underneath the sea!



SCENE II.—*A garden: the villa seen in the back-ground.*

LARA *stretched on the grass with a copy of Boccaccio's 'Decameron' in his hand. Sunset.*

LARA. [Closing the book.]

A book for sunset—if for any time.  
Right spicy tongues and pleasant wit had they,  
The merry Ladies of Boccaccio!  
What tales they told of love-in-idleness,  
(Love old as earth, and yet forever new!)  
Of monks who worshipped Venus—not in vain;  
Of unsuspecting husbands, and gay dames  
Who held their vows but lightly—by my faith,  
Too much of the latter! 'Tis a sweet, bad book.  
I would not have my sister or my wife  
Caught by its cunning. In its golden words  
Sin is so draped with beauty, speaks so fair,  
That naught seems wrong but virtue! Yet, for all,  
It is a sprightly volume, and kills care.  
I need such sweet physicians. I have grown  
Sick in the mind—at swords' points with myself.  
I am mine own worst enemy!  
And wherefore? wherefore? Beatrice is kind,

Less fanciful, and loves me, I would swear,  
 Albeit she will not kiss me till the month  
 Which ends our foolish wager shall have passed.  
 An hundred years, and not a single kiss  
 To sweeten time with! What a freakish dame!

*A Page crosses the garden.*

That page again! 'T is twice within the week  
 That slender-waisted, pretty-ankled knave  
 Has crossed my garden at this self-same hour,  
 Trolling a canzonetta with an air  
 As if he owned the villa. Why the fop!  
 He might have doffed his bonnet as he passed.  
 I'll teach him better if he comes again.  
 What does he at the villa? Oh! perchance  
 He comes in the evening when his master's out,  
 To lisp soft romance in the ready ear  
 Of Beatrice's dressing-maid; but then  
 She *has* one lover. Now I think she's two:  
 This gaudy popinjay would make the third,  
 And that's too many for an honest girl!  
 If he's not Florian's, he's Jacinta's, then?  
 I'll ask the Countess—no, I'll not do that;  
 She'd laugh at me, and vow by the Madonna  
 This varlet was some noble in disguise,  
 Seeking *her* favor. Then I'd crack his skull—

That is, I would, were I a jealous man :  
But then I'm not. So he may come and go  
To Florian—or the devil ! I'll not care.  
I would not build around my lemon-trees,  
Though every lemon were a sphere of gold,  
A lattice-fence, for fear the very birds  
Should sing, *You're jealous, you are jealous, Sir !*



SCENE III.—*A wooded road near the villa. The garden-gate seen on the left. LARA leaning against a tree. Evening.*

LARA.

Sorrow itself is not so hard to bear  
 As the thought of sorrow coming. Airy ghosts,  
 That work no harm, do terrify us more  
 Than men in steel with bloody purposes.  
 Death is not dreadful; 't is the dread of death—  
 We die whene'er we think of it!

I'll not

Be cozened longer. When the page comes out  
 I'll stop him, question him, and know the truth.  
 I cannot sit in the garden of a night  
 But he glides by me in his jaunty dress,  
 Like a fantastic phantom!—never looks  
 To the right nor left, but passes gayly on,  
 As if I were a statue. Soft, he comes,  
 I'll make him speak, or kill him; then, forsooth,  
 It were unreasonable to ask it. Soh!  
 I'll speak him gently at the first, and then—

*The Page enters by a gate in the villa-garden, and walks carelessly past the Count.*

Ho ! pretty page, who owns you ?

PAGE.

No one now.

I was the Signor Juan's, but am no more.

LARA.

What, then, you stole from him ?

PAGE.

Oh ! no, Sir, no.

He had so many intrigues on his hands,  
There was no sleep for me nor night nor day.  
Such carrying of love-favors and pink notes !  
He 's gone abroad now, to break other hearts,  
And so I left him.

LARA.

A frank knave.

PAGE.

To-night  
I 've done his latest bidding—

LARA.

As you should—

PAGE.

A duty wed with pleasure—'t was to take  
 A message to a countess all forlorn,  
 In yonder villa.

LARA. [*Aside.*]

Why, the devil! that's mine!  
 A message to a countess all forlorn?  
 [*To the Page.*] In yonder villa?

PAGE.

Ay, Sir. You can see  
 The portico among the mulberries,  
 Just to the left, there.

LARA.

Ay, I see, I see.  
 A pretty villa. And the lady's name?

PAGE.

Ah! that's a secret which I cannot tell.

LARA. [*Catching him by the throat.*]

No? but you shall, though, or I'll strangle you!  
 In my strong hands your slender neck would snap  
 Like a brittle pipe-stem.



PAGE

You are choking me !  
Oh ! loose your grasp, Sir !

LARA.

Then the name ! the name !

PAGE.

Countess of Lara.

LARA.

Not her dressing-maid ?

PAGE.

Nay, nay, I said the mistress, not the maid.

LARA.

And then you lied. Oh ! woful, woful Time !—  
Tell me you lie, and I will make you rich,  
I'll stuff your cap with ducats twice a year !

PAGE.     *[Smiling.]*

Well, then—I lie.

LARA.

Ay, now you lie, indeed !  
I see it in the cunning of your eyes ;

Night cannot hide the Satan leering there.  
 Only a little lingering fear of heaven  
 Holds me from dirking you between the ribs!  
 Wo! wo!            [*Hides his face in his hands.*]

PAGE.    [*Aside.*]

I would I were well out of this.

LARA.    [*Abstractedly.*]

Such thin divinity! So foul, so fair!

PAGE.

What would you have? I will say nothing, then.

LARA.

Say every thing, and end it! Here is gold.  
 You brought a billet to the Countess—well?  
 What said the billet?

PAGE.

Take away your hand,  
 And, by St. Mary, I will say it all.  
 There, now, I breathe. You will not harm me, Sir?  
 Stand six yards off, or I will not a word.

It seems the Countess promised Signor Juan  
A set of turquoise—

LARA.      [*Starting.*]

Turquoise? Ha! that's well.

PAGE.

Just so—wherewith my master was to pay  
Some gaming debts; but yester-night the cards  
Tumbled a golden mountain at his feet;  
And ere he sailed, this morning, Signor Juan  
Gave me a perfumed, amber-tinted note,  
For Countess Lara, which, with some adieux,  
Craved her remembrance morning, noon, and night;  
Her prayers while gone, her smiles when he returned;  
Then told his sudden fortune with the cards,  
And bade her keep the jewels. That is all.

LARA.

All? Is that all? 'T has only cracked my heart!  
A heart, I know of little, little worth—  
An ill-cut ruby, scarred and scratched before,  
But now quite broken! I have no heart, then:  
Men should not have, when they are wronged like this.  
Out of my sight, thou demon of bad news!

O sip thy wine complacently to-night,  
Lie with thy mistress in a pleasant sleep,  
For thou hast done thy master (that 's the Devil !)  
This day a goodly service : thou hast sown  
The seeds of lightning that shall scathe and kill ! [Exit.

PAGE. [*Looking after him.*]

I did not think 't would work on him like that.  
How pale he grew ! Alack ! I fear some ill  
Will come of this. I 'll to the Countess quick,  
And warn her of his madness. Faith, he foamed  
I' the mouth like Guido whom they hung last week  
(God rest him !) in the jail at Mantua,  
For killing poor Battista. Crime for crime ! [Exit.



SCENE IV.—BEATRICE'S chamber. *A Venetian screen on the right. As the scene opens, JACINTA places lamps on a standish, and retires to the back of the stage. BEATRICE sits on a fauteuil in the attitude of listening.*

BEATRICE.

Hist! that 's his step. Jacinta, place the lights  
Farther away from me, and get thee gone. [*Exit*] JACINTA.  
And Florian, child, keep you behind the screen,  
Breathing no louder than a lily does;  
For if you stir or laugh 't will ruin all.

FLORIAN. [*Behind the screen.*]

Laugh! I am faint with terror.

BEATRICE.

Then be still.  
Move not for worlds until I touch the bell,  
Then do the thing I told you. Hush! his step  
Sounds in the corridor, and I 'm asleep!

LARA enters with his dress in disorder. He approaches within a few yards of BEATRICE, pauses, and looks at her.

LARA.

Asleep!—and Guilt can slumber! Guilt can lie  
Down-lidded and soft-breathed, like Innocence!  
Hath dreams as sweet as childhood's—who can tell?—  
And paradisa! prophecies in sleep,  
Its foul heart keeping measure, as it were,  
To the silver music of a mandoline!  
Were I an artist, and did wish to paint  
A devil to perfection, I'd not limn  
A hornéd monster, with a leprous skin,  
Red-hot from Pandemonium—not I.  
But with my delicatest tints, I'd paint  
A Woman in the splendor of her youth,  
All garmented with loveliness and mystery!  
She should be sleeping in a room like this,  
With Angelos and Titians on the walls,  
The grand old masters staring grandly down,  
Draped round with folds of damask; in the alcoves,  
Statues of Bacchus and Endymion,  
And Venus's blind love-child: a globed lamp  
Gilding the heavy darkness, while the odors  
Of myriad hyacinths should seem to break  
Upon her ivory bosom as she slept;

And by her side, (as I by Beatrice,)  
Her injured lord should stand and look at her! [*Pauses.*

How fair she is! Her beauty glides between  
Me and my purpose, like a pleading angel.  
Beauty—alack! 't is that which wrecks us all;  
'T is that we live for, die for, and are damned.  
A pretty ankle and a laughing lip—  
They cost us Eden when the world was new,  
They cheat us out of heaven every day!  
To-night they win another Soul for you,  
Master of Darkness! . . . . [BEATRICE *sighs.*

Her dream 's broke, like a bubble, in a sigh.  
She 'll waken soon, and that—that must not be!  
I could not kill her if she looked at me.  
I loved her, loved her, by the Saints, I did—  
I trust she prayed before she fell asleep!  
[*Unsheathe a dagger.*

BEATRICE. [*Springing up.*]

So, you are come—your dagger in your hand?  
Your lips compressed and blanchéd, and your hair  
Tumbled wildly all about your eyes,  
Like a river-god's? Oh! love, you frighten me!  
And you are trembling. Tell me what this means.

LARA.

Oh! nothing, nothing—I did think to write  
A note to Juan, to Signor Juan, my friend,  
(Your cousin and my honorable friend;)  
But finding neither ink nor paper here,  
Methought to scratch it with my dagger's point  
Upon your bosom, Madam! That is all.

BEATRICE.

You've lost your senses!

LARA.

Madam, no: I've found 'em!

BEATRICE.

Then lose them quickly, and be what you were.

LARA.

I was a fool, a dupe—a happy dupe.  
You should have kept me in my ignorance;  
For wisdom makes us wretched, king and clown.  
Countess of Lara, you are false to me!

BEATRICE.

Now, by the Saints—



LARA.

Now, by the Saints, you are!

BEATRICE.

Upon my honor—

LARA.

On your honor? fye!  
Swear by the ocean's feathery froth, for that  
Is not so light a substance.

BEATRICE.

Hear me, love!

LARA.

Lie to that marble Io! I am sick  
To the heart with lying.

BEATRICE.

You've the ear-ache, Sir,  
Got with too much believing.

LARA.

Beatrice,  
I came to kill you.

## The Set of Turquoise.

BEATRICE.

Kiss me, Count, you mean !

LARA. [*Approaching her.*]

If killing you be kissing you, why yes.

BEATRICE.

Ho ! come not near me with such threatening looks,  
Or I 'll call Florian and Jacinta, Sir,  
And rouse the villa : 't were a pretty play  
To act before our servants !

LARA.

Call your maids !  
I 'll kill them, too, and claim from Royalty  
A golden medal and a new escutcheon,  
For slaying three she-dragons—but you first !

BEATRICE.

Stand back there, if you love me, or have loved !

*As LARA advances, BEATRICE retreats to the table and rings  
a small hand-bell. FLORIAN, in the dress of a page,  
enters from behind the screen, and steps between them.*

FLORIAN.

What would my master, Signor Juan, say—

LARA. [*Starting back.*]

The Page? now, curse him!—What? no! Florian?  
Hold! 't was at twilight, in the villa-garden,  
At dusk, too, on the road to Mantua;  
But here the light falls on you, man or maid!  
Stop now; my brain 's bewildered. Stand you there,  
And let me touch you with incredulous hands!  
Wait till I come, nor vanish like a ghost!  
If this be Juan's page, why, where is Florian?  
If this be Florian, where 's — by all the Saints,  
I have been tricked!

FLORIAN. [*Laughing.*]

By *two* Saints, with your leave!

LARA.

The happiest fool in Italy, for my age!  
And all the damning tales you fed me with,  
You Sprite of Twilight, Imp of the old Moon!—

FLORIAN. [*Bowing.*]

Were arrant lies as ever woman told;  
And though not mine, I claim the price for them—  
This cap stuffed full of ducats twice a year!

## The Set of Turquoise.

LARA.

A trap! a trap that only caught a fool!  
 So thin a plot, I might have seen through it.  
 I've lost my reason!

FLORIAN.

And your ducats!

BEATRICE.

And  
 A certain set of turquoise at Malan's!

[*his arms.*

LARA. [Catching BEATRICE in

I care not, love, so that I have not lost  
 The love I held so jealously. And you—  
 You *do* forgive me? Say it with your eyes.  
 Right sweetly said! Now, mark me, Beatrice:  
 If ever man or woman, ghou! or fairy,  
 Breathes aught against your chastity—although  
 The very angels from the clouds drop down  
 To sign the charge of perfidy—I swear,  
 Upon my honor —

BEATRICE.

Nay, be careful there!  
 Swear by the ocean's feathery froth —

The Set of Turquoise.

111

LARA.

I swear,  
By heaven and all the Seraphim —

[*his mouth.*

BEATRICE. [*Placing her hand on*

I pray you!

LARA.

I swear—if ever I catch Florian  
In pointed doublet and silk hose again,  
I'll —

BEATRICE.

What?

LARA.

Make love to her, by all that's true!

BEATRICE.

O wisdom, wisdom! just two hours too late!  
You should have thought of that before, my love.

LARA.

It's not too late!

BEATRICE. [*To FLORIAN.*]

To bed, you dangerous page!  
The Count shall pay the ducats. [*Exit FLORIAN.*]

LARA.

And to-morrow  
I'll clasp a manacle of blue and gold  
On those white wrists. Now, Beatrice, come here,  
And let me kiss both eyes for you !





## SONNETS.

**T**HOSE forms we fancy shadows, those strange  
lights  
That flash on dank morasses, the quick wind  
That smites us by the roadside—are the Night's  
Innumerable children. Unconfined  
By shroud or coffin, disembodied souls,  
Uneasy spirits, steal into the air  
From festering graveyards when the curfew tolls  
At the day's death. Pestilence and despair  
Fly with the sightless bats at set of sun.  
And wheresoever murders have been done,  
In stately palaces or lonesome woods,  
Where'er a soul has sold itself and lost  
Its high inheritance, there, hovering, broods  
Some sad, invisible, accurséd Ghost!





Now, if the muses held me not in scorn,  
I'd shape a poem, perfect, fair and round  
As that thin band of gold wherewith I bound  
Your slender finger our betrothal morn ;  
And in the circuit of this faultless rhyme  
I'd place the dear initials of your name—  
Three koh-i-noors to glisten for all time !  
So would I lift my finger, and make fame  
Couch, like that well bred mastiff at your feet  
Lapping your hand with dangerous tenderness.  
And such a magic should this song possess,  
Maidens would wear it, like a musk-pouch, sweet,  
Upon their pinkish bosoms, night and day,  
To keep foul dreams and untrue loves away.







SICK of myself and all that keeps the light  
Of heaven away from me, I love to seek  
This breezy hill, and on its highest peak  
Sit down and watch the coming of the night.  
'Tis ever a new miracle to me.  
Men look to God for some mysterious sign,  
For marriage feasts with water turned to wine,  
For Christ to walk upon the troubled sea ;  
As if He did not to our sense unfold  
Meanings as miraculous as of old !  
Come watch with me the shaft of fire that glows  
In yonder heaven : the fair, frail palaces,  
The blue and crimson archipelagoes,  
And great cloud-continents of sunset-seas.





LAND of Delight ! you did not hold us long :  
Three moons we spent with Hassan, but those three,  
Like flies in amber, lie in memory—  
Three languid moons, three moons of dream and song.  
When Hassan played, the musky winds of night  
Trembled, and turned to music with delight !  
Lo ! it was melody's insanity :  
Now 'twas a honey-throated nightingale,  
And now a sigh, a soul in agony,  
A troubled dead-march with melodious wail,  
A fall of tears—then it came daintily,  
Like the perfuméd air that smote the sail  
Of Cleopatra's golden barge, when she  
Sailed down to Tarsus to Mark Antony.





“I AM not with you, Stoddard, in your sighs  
Because the Hamadryads and the Fauns  
Have left the moonlight lonely in the lawns!  
Let science kill them with her piercing eyes,  
Let death be Oberon’s and Titania’s doom,  
Poor moonlight nothings! let the faery broods  
Quit our demesne.” . . . But that was in my room  
In the hot city, not in these still woods  
Where I have slept and dreamed the whole day long.  
I did their pigmy majesties much wrong,  
And have been punished (such was their device,  
By them in mask; for see! this emerald spear  
Of grass hath pricked a ruby on my ear,  
And that fierce humble-bee hath stung me twice!



















UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



**A** 000 106 699 2



