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THREE PLAYS.

DR. SYLVESTER'S SUPPER.

THE LAST DAY OF DAPHNE.

CYTHERA.



SUNDERLAND :

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1911.



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DOCTOR SYLVESTER'S SUPPER.



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DOCTOR SYLVESTER.

AVIS- - - *His Ward.*LENORE - - *A former Mistress of Sylvester.*

MADAM POMEROY.

ROBIN - - *A Lad.*SIMON BALE - *A Neighbour.*CANDACE - - *A Negress, Servant to Sylvester.*

1ST MASQUE	}	-	<i>Visionary Appearances.</i>
2ND MASQUE			
3RD MASQUE			

A VOICE.

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 PERIOD.—THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.
 

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*The scene is laid in Dr. Sylvester's parlour in Salem, America. A long, low window to middle of scene, a door communicating with a garden, left, and a cut-off corner and door into a smaller room right, which wall becomes a transparent gauze during Sylvester's vision. To extreme left a fireplace, with a furnace, alembicks, etc.*

MADAM POMEROY.—(*Reading from a paper at table near door LEFT*):

What have we in the Flying Mercury?

A Romish Mass-house in Moorfields surpris'd,

The priest imprison'd and the flock dispers'd,

A flaming meteor falls at Middelburg.

The Young Pretender to St. Germain's goes,

A true black tulip blooms in Amsterdam.

The Queen of Spain miscarrys of a Prince,

—Venetian Commonwealth—the Grand Signor.

But, what is this, scored thro', but underlined,

'The ship "Good Hope" for Europe clears to-night,

From Boston Harbour, at the turn of tide,

Half after midnight—Captain Effingham.'

Aye, doubtless, by that barque my pigeon pair

Will journey—Avis and young Gaspard Legh,

Gaspard, the Governor's darling only son,

Avis, the ward, why not the daughter, then?

Of old quack salving Doctor Sylvester—

Sylvester the Empyrick Alchemist,

The Rosicrucian Medicaster ! Aye,  
 Sure she's his daughter, by what mother tho'  
 I know not. There's another mystery—  
 This new-come stranger that they call Lenore,  
 Talk of the Devil, as they say—she's here !  
 Good morrow, Madam.

LENORE.—(*Enters door RIGHT*) :

Madam Pomeroy.

(*Curtseys.*)

MADAM POMEROY :

Your most obedient Madam.

(*Curtseys.*)

LENORE :

Madam, pray——

MADAM POMEROY :

Ah, I was right, for all your Quaker garb,  
 You know the habit of Society !

And in this heathen savage settlement,  
 How good it is to meet a sister-soul.  
 You have known London, Madam? Paris, too?  
 Nay, never tell me you are not from town—  
 Perchance, have been on birthdays to the Court?  
 Not so? Ah, well, when mourning days are done,  
 Then you must come to Mistress Pomeroy!  
 I have a baby in the London mode,  
 With all the fine new fashions of Cornhill,  
 Twice yearly sent me hither, and such lace!  
 French lace, that never paid a Customs due;  
 And scented essences, if you should lack,  
 I have from Europe, and my private Still—  
 Amber and Frangipanni, Neroly,  
 With Almond Water Washes; Jessamine  
 Pulvilios, Sweets of Portugal to burn,  
 Amber Confections, and Extract of Pearl,  
 Barbadoes Water, Citron, Anise-seed;  
 And, for the spleen and vapours, Eau-de-vie.  
 Then, if your taste incline to amulets,

I've a bone Luz, and a Bezoar stone,  
 And hundred vanities and trinkets more.  
 But there, when you have dwelt a little here,  
 You shall know more of Madam Pomeroy ;  
 But tell me of yourself. You are fatigued  
 By some long journey. Yes? From——

LENORE :

Far away !

MADAM POMEROY :

And I presume your baggage follows you.  
 By packhorse out of Boston, you were brave  
 To come the highway unaccompany'd.

LENORE :

I us'd the forest footpath.

MADAM POMEROY :

Braver still !

For many a rascal harbours in the woods——

Runaway negroes, rogues transported, too,  
 Escaping from the godly discipline  
 Of our Virginia plantations——

LENORE :

It is enough that I am safe arriv'd,  
 So that must serve, good Madam Pomeroy.  
 I pray you, pardon me, for I must go.

*(Exit door RIGHT.)*

MADAM POMEROY.—*(To herself):*

So you are tacit, Madam, close and coy?  
 But I have guess'd your secret truly—first,  
 Not long from England, that is certain sure,  
 At night, on foot, all baggageless, alone,  
 By unfrequented by-ways hither come,  
 Lame, where the anklet gall'd her, clear as day!  
 A prisoner from the plantation 'scap'd.

*(Looking from window as AVIS appears  
 from garden.)*

Avis, sweet child, what would you with me?



AVIS.—(*Enters door LEFT*):

This :

To-night, you know, is Eve of All Souls' Day,  
 And I would try to-night such charm, such spell,  
 As makes a maid her future husband see.

MADAM POMEROY :

There is the looking-glass. the melted wax—  
 But the Dumb Supper, that is best of all.  
 Laying the table as for supper, work  
 In utter silence, hush'd and mute and mum.  
 Set on the service widdershins, reverse,  
 After a backward-wise recited grace  
 Under your breath, so leave the supper, set,  
 Midnight shall show you what companions  
 Your fate reserve you ; yet, of this beware!  
 To-night the air is full of wandering ghosts  
 And restless spirits, so the sortilege  
 May bring you fearsome fellowship, and seat  
 Strange guests about your table.

AVIS :

As for that,

By twelve o'clock I shall be far away ;  
 Why should I palter with you? Well you know—  
 Else I misjudge your wits—that I, to-night,  
 For England sail with my lover, Gaspard Legh.  
 This mummery of supper's but to trick  
 Sylvester and Lenore to think that I  
 Am watching in the little parlour there,  
 And, after midnight, tho' they find me fled,  
 They cannot catch me.

MADAM POMEROY :

Avis, dearest child,

I joy to think you leave this hateful coast,  
 To grace an English County, but the ring,  
 Sweet child, the ring! for troth plight still will hold,  
 Once seal'd and settled with a bride-ring.

AVIS :

Nay,

He swears that he will marry me in church  
Once we're in England.

MADAM POMEROY :

When you're rich and gay—  
Wedded or not, you shall be gay and rich—  
Then you must send for Madam Pomeroy,  
Who wears her life out far away from town—  
Here in this curs'd plantation, overseas !  
When you are gone, what will become of me ?  
Spleen or strong waters, will fulfil my day,  
Or, haply, I shall grow religious,  
Wax fanatic, and, like to Dame Lenore,  
Wear out the hours upon my marrowbones,  
Or turn a Catholic and seek Quebec.

AVIS :

That were as mad as Doctor Sylvester,  
Who melts his substance in a crucible,

With dissolution and with sublimation,  
 Seeking that stone of the Philosophers,  
 Which turns old age to youth, and lead to gold.  
 Gossip, what think you of this alchemy?

MADAM POMEROY :

True, long ago, with old Sylvester here,  
 I know the names of all the learned rout—  
 Albertus Magnus, Hermes Trismegist,  
 With Raymond Lully, aye, and Michael Scot,  
 And Paracelsus, but I need no spell,  
 Retorts, cucurbites, and such-like gear  
 Of these old wizards, turning lead to gold,  
 I use the old unfailing woman's way.

AVIS :

And that is, Gossip——?

MADAM POMEROY :

This great world of gulls  
 For my alembick, for transmuting stone,

My quick wits working on their leaden brain,  
Whereof the issue oft turns gold for me !

AVIS :

O, held I the elixir, I would change  
The dull recurrence of the dawn, the day,  
The dusk, the darkness ! In my universe  
A scarlet midnight and a purple noon  
Should scare the world at whiles ; I'd have the sea  
Of Marischal, Tuberoze, and Bergamot,  
A world of scent and colour, gems and light—  
No order'd hours, no deliberate days.  
In time of waxing night, and failing sun,  
I'd shame with corn November's scarcity,  
And shed in summer intempestive snows  
To sprinkle roses oversunn'd of June !

MADAM POMEROY :

Nay, it were foolish so to spend the spell.  
Believe me, child, you are too fanciful,

And lately you are alter'd—troubl'd. Eh?  
 Well, Pomeroy is still your faithful friend.  
 Have you forgotten Alison Crowboro'?  
 That nun-like flower of perfect purity,  
 So cold she chill'd mere mortal bystanders,  
 When kind old Deacon Alleyn, saintly man!  
 To feel for her so deeply—brought her here.  
 Where had she been but for poor Pomeroy  
 And the wise Doctor Sylvester?

AVIS :

But she,  
 Or he, or they, repay'd your service well.  
 You are not wont to work for love alone,  
 As witness here this empty purse of mine,  
 The vacant case where late my necklet lay,  
 My ringless fingers !

MADAM POMEROY :

Sure, ungrateful girl,  
 The labourer is worthy of his hire,

And most I work for the pure love of it,  
 Toiling among our friends and neighbours here.  
 And if I sometimes cut the cards for them,  
 Or stick a puppet full of corking pins—  
 Vexing a stingy, old, exacting spouse,  
 To please a jealous or a weary wife—  
 Woman should stand by woman, that's my creed ;  
 The men are wolves who raven for the lambs,  
 And we soft-hearted sheep must hold together.  
 So much the world has taught poor Pomeroy !

AVIS :

Poor Pomeroy ! You are misunderstood.  
 There is a many words begin with P,  
 That folks ill-natur'd still apply to you.  
 Yet there is something I would ask you—this :  
 A soothing potion, I desire a drug—  
 But not what made Ralph Archer sleep so sound—  
 This is to drowse Sylvester for to-night,  
 One night, but not for ever !

MADAM POMEROY :

Cruel girl !

I swear that what Ralph drank was colourless  
As purest water. Overheated men,  
Sweating from Sun, or passion, or the two,  
Who swill cold water, likely come to die !

AVIS :

What you may do is no concern of mine ;  
I would not harm Sylvester, that is all.

MADAM POMEROY :

Why have you harsh words for poor Pomeroy,  
Who loves you dearly; smile now ! You to-day  
Look sweetly, child, perhaps a thought too pale,  
But I have Spanish wools, for white or red,  
'Would set a rose-flush on a corpse's cheek,  
Or blanch the face of fever.



AVIS :

Keep your paints,  
 To use upon your own fast withering cheek ;  
 Young blood is still the finest rouge, and locks  
 One's own far better than the high-pil'd plaits,  
 Shorn from the gaol imprison'd, mad or dead !

MADAM POMEROY :

I am not Avis, a mere girl like you,  
 But many a man, aye, and the most of men,  
 Prefer a woman form'd to a raw girl.

AVIS :

Well, I have heard it oft, and now believe  
 God's good to women, that they never mark  
 Their long desir'd beauty's slow decay !  
 Once lovely still is lovely, to the eyes  
 That peer into the mirror at herself,  
 And shall be, till the dim eyes see no more.  
 Her new sheep's teeth more even than her own,

Whiteleaded, raddled, she'll outblush her prime,  
And still her latest tête becomes her best.

Content tho' she may bloat like Jonah's gourd,  
Or shrivel like a hemlock in the frost.

'I was a may-pole in my girl-hood raw,  
But how improved in hips and bosom since,'  
The monster titters, whilst the bag-of-bones  
Bethinks her ; 'I am slim and modish now,  
That once was blowsy, and the cabbage rose  
Became me not as now the lilies do !'

**MADAM POMEROY :**

Well, Avis, well—natheless I will not mind.  
You shall not say you vex'd poor Pomeroy,  
Who'd work her fingers to the bone for you.  
Here in the bag I have the hood and cloak,  
The capucin you bade me bring you——

**AVIS :**

Good,——

MADAM POMEROY :

. . . And mask to keep the coaches dust at bay.  
 A rarity in this outlandish place,  
 But years ago in London well I mind  
 That every woman mask'd her to the play,  
 To veil the shame she feign'd, but did not feel,  
 The blush, tho' due, that tarry'd yet to rise  
 At Sedley or Centlivre's ribaldry.  
 Sure hoop and pannier, fardingale and fan,  
 With patches, deftly this or that way set,  
 Will pass away and come again in time.  
 The fashion still is like a turning wheel,  
 What under was, next moment's uppermost ;  
 Tho' yellow ruffs with Mistress Turner died,  
 I wager we shall see them spring again.

AVIS :

I go to lay the supper against to-night  
 Who knows what guests may gather round  
 the board?

*( She retires laughing, RIGHT. )*

*( SYLVESTER enters from Garden. )*

MADAM POMEROY :

Give you good morrow Master Sylvester !  
 How goes the great work? Still the furnace burns.  
 You, if a man may, should th' elixir find,  
 And yet the years go by, it 'scapes you still,  
 But Age comes on you, and the fire burns low !

SYLVESTER :

Aye, ' Vita Ignis, Corpus Lignum Est.'  
 Life is the fire and the fuel are we !

MADAM POMEROY :

And as his shadow follows on a man,  
 So hangs the devil ever at his heels.

SYLVESTER :

Better than he should follow, than should lead,  
 Laodicean Mother Pomeroy,

Who have the inclination for all ill,  
 And courage lack to perfect it, content  
 To trail at the fringe of the Devil's draggled skirts,  
 Rather than make him do your bidding.

MADAM POMEROY :

Aye,

But that commits a body, so no pact !  
 When you, long years ago, did, half in jest,  
 Sign, seal, deliver, that wicked document,  
 Providing if ever you th' Elixir found  
 You render'd up your soul——

SYLVESTER :

Where was it then ?

Either in Rome or in high Germany.  
 Have I not first frequented, then forsook  
 Schools of Bologna, Paris, Padua,  
 Ferrara, Louvain, Basel—having won

Whatever of wisdom each had got to give,  
I bind it now within this breast of mine !  
Have I not toil'd thro' many a weary year,  
Seeking in still, retort, and pelican,  
That supreme secret of Alchemy,  
Azoth, the Alcahest, the Sophic Fire,  
The Catholick and Universal Ens,  
That turns an old man to his youth again.  
But in those far off days, I reason'd well  
One traitor from within may ope a gate,  
That bade defiance to a myriad men,  
Who storm it from without, and one there was,  
High in the counsels of his mighty King  
Aforetime, since, in exile and disgrace,  
Ready to sell the secrets taught him once,  
To gain another subject for himself.  
So ran my reasoning when I was young,  
But now I need no Fiend's assistance, years  
Have taught what is the best Familiar,  
Undaunted Will ! to keep one end in view,

Nor suffer wave or wind of Circumstance  
 To bend the iron stanchion of your will.  
 Run the black ensign to the masthead up,  
 And take command, first casting overboard  
 Conscience, the super cargo querulous !

**MADAM POMEROY :**

How, Sylvester, cast Conscience overside,  
 To reign sole captain of a brigand barque ?  
 Beware you ship not a sable Admiral,  
 The single handed skipper sleeps at whiles,  
 And as he lies in mortal somnolence,  
 An Alien Pilot boards him, in the night,  
 Steering the luckless vessel to his will !

**SYLVESTER :**

Conscience must overboard, his specious plea  
 Of Pity and Mercy poisons, else, our lives !  
 Pity and Mercy are man's enemies,  
 And I look forward till, in years to be,

Arise a Conqueror, compassionless,  
 With soul self-centred, trusting in his star,  
 'Will turn old Europe to one trampled field,  
 Wading thro' blood and wrack of shatter'd thrones '  
 Until his utmost purpose be accomplish'd.  
 Who would not follow, where such leader led?  
 Aye, banish Pity, lest your dauntless will  
 Flow from you, melting as the sea-borne berg  
 Derelict, drifting on a Southward course,  
 Feels, soft, the gulf-stream sap the base of snow !

**MADAM POMEROY :**

Brave words, Sylvester, you foreswear the Fiend,  
 Because you know you'll never find the stone,  
 Else you would tremble lest the compact held,  
 Were the Elixir once by you distill'd !

**SYLVESTER :**

How, Witch, you taunt me that I fear the Fiend,  
 And that I never the Elixir find ?



Why fool, perhaps to-night—but I'll be mum !  
 I fear the Devil for a jesting bond ?  
 Nay, I would bid him as I bid you, pack.

MADAM POMEROY :

Well, once I go, I go not to return.  
 Next time you need me you may whistle in vain,  
 Wise Master ! you have wanted me before,  
 Avis is feather pated, over young,  
 And you grown old and failing need a crutch  
 To prop you in your dire infirmity.

SYLVESTER :

If in the street leaning upon my cane  
 It serve my purpose, I am not nice to mark  
 In what of dust and mud the ferrule dips,  
 But you are a broken reed, too near the mire.

MADAM POMEROY :

Ah ! cruel man, 'twas different years ago,

And what I am you made me. If some day  
 I ever were damn'd, which kind Heav'n forbid !  
 'Twould be of you, you only, led astray !

SYLVESTER :

Woman look only in the glass and mark  
 Your petty peevish mouth and foolish chin,  
 Mean, narrow brows with envy's wrinkles scored.  
 The Devil had no need your door to storm,  
 For it stood ever open and ajar,  
 That any wandering demon might harbour there.  
 Not fenced and guarded for God's garden, you !  
 Your soul lay ever fallow for the Fiend :  
 No alabaster box of ointment, once  
 To gracious holy service consecrate  
 Turn'd now to basest uses, always you  
 Were vessel of dishonour.

MADAM POMEROY :

Part we thus ?

SYLVESTER :

Aye wretched woman, Satan's renegade,  
 Give up the crown you might have worn with him,  
 With twice turn'd satins and in scour'd lace,  
 In tarnish'd mantua dight and vested, go,  
 Creep cravenly the back-stairs way to Heaven !  
 And as for any terror of the Fiend,  
 I should not quail or tremble now tho' Hell  
 For just one night unkennelling the damn'd  
 Vomit live devils forth, to sup with me !

(SYLVESTER *goes thro' garden door*, RIGHT.)

MADAM POMEROY.—(*Looking after him*) :

' Whilst the thief steals the hemp is ripening,'  
 'Tis an old proverb, he shall find it true.  
 Sylvester, soundly shall you sleep to-night,  
 Aye, sleep, and wake to find thyself in Hell !  
 You shall sup sorrow at the board of Death,  
 And pledge a toast to your chap-fallen mates

Of the glistening faces and white, fish-like eyes,  
Whose feast has sped, whose reckoning's to come!

*(During next scene she moves about the room preparing the posset.)*

*(ROBIN taps on window, speaks thro' lattice.)*

ROBIN :

Good Madam Pomeroy, the master ails ;  
I left him yonder, calling Dame Lenore,  
Or Avis, that they help him home again.  
Delivering a message I had brought,  
I saw him reel and totter, almost fall.

MADAM POMEROY :

What, then, the message, and by whom enjoin'd ?

ROBIN :

A woman bade me bring a word to him,  
A woman, tall, who bore her like a Queen.

Beneath the cedars in the setting sun,  
My eyes were dazzled, in the dying light ;  
She seem'd transfigur'd : gold her garment glow'd,  
Girt with the living cincture of a snake,  
Flower'd with faintly flickering flowers of flame,  
Whilst as of molten gold, a diadem,  
Sullenly glowing, burn'd upon her brow,  
And this the message she bade me give :  
' To-night, Sylvester, will your bond fall due,  
And payment be awaited.' Then she pass'd ;  
A dusky moth lured by the endless flame,  
She seem'd, in the low, red sunset, vanishing  
Between the cedar and the plummy pine.

**MADAM POMEROY :**

What said Sylvester when he heard of this ?

**ROBIN :**

He gazed upon me with so lost a look,  
Haggard in horror-haunted revery,

That clay-cold terror froze me where I stood,  
 And I forgot to beg some euphrasy,  
 To clear my dim, perplex'd, and dazzled eyes.

MADAM POMEROY :

'Tis well, good Robin, you shall have your drug !  
 And now good-bye, good night, good sleep,  
 Sylvester !

*(He runs off. She places silver posset pot on hob,  
 and as she approaches door meets SYLVES-  
 TER, supported by the Negress CANDACE  
 and LENORE.)*

LENORE :

Carry him in and lay him in his chair.

MADAM POMEROY :

Ah, madam, you have all my sympathy.  
 Poor Sylvester !

*( Aside in his ear. )*

Physician, heal thyself !

*( To LENORE. )*

I fear we shall not have him long with us,  
And if he should revive, with wits awry !

*( To CANDACE aside. )*

What of the Sabbath ?

*( During speech, which CANDACE mutters to POMEROY,  
LEFT, LENORE arranges pillows in settle,  
with her back to them. )*

CANDACE :

'Twill be full and gay !

Sisters from all the province will be there,  
For worthily we celebrate to-night  
The feast-day of the King of Africa ;  
Wherefore, we get us to the dim, deep woods,  
With hateful hymns upon the muffled drum,  
To imprecate all evil on our foes,

Chanting Obeah's praise and potency,  
 With sacrifices of a hornless goat ;  
 We hail and celebrate the crownéd snake,  
 And, worshipping, adore the powers of Ill !  
 And many of your grave, God-fearing folk  
 Will fare with us into the forest dim.  
 Lean Madam Hemingway, the Deacon's wife,  
 With other matrons as demurely famed,  
 Even the Parson—whisper—may be there,  
 With many Sabbath-minded of his flock  
 Who met the Black Man in the Cedar Woods,  
 To sign their name upon that book of his,  
 And Indian Pow-wows with their painted skins,  
 Will join in our congenial devilry !

**MADAM POMEROY :**

Here's for the Sabbath, but I will not sign !

**CANDACE :**

You need not sign, for in your forehead, plain



I see *his* signet glow, a blood-red brand,  
The brand that Cain bore, and his followers bear !

MADAM POMEROY.—(*Mutters to herself*) :

Nay, nay, not that, I am no murderer,  
First, 'tis not poison, but an opiate.  
Poured I too much ? It was my hand that shook,  
He has not drunk the posset, if he drink,  
'Tis Heaven, not I that wills it—I shall be  
Only the instrument of an outraged Heaven.

(*Follows CANDACE out RIGHT.*)

SYLVESTER.—(*Coming to himself*) :

There, I am better—well—a dizzy fit  
From too much bending over the furnace fire,  
From too deep breathing the alembick's fumes.  
There, so, 'tis well—do thou thy worst, Old Age !  
Perchance this night may find thy empire cease,  
Fire in the brain, fire in the heart, fire in the eye,

The blood new coursing thro' my wither'd veins,  
This old, ill, life all done with.—

LENORE.—(*Aside*):

He's prepared

(*To SYLVESTER.*)

At least to die,—aye, it may not be long  
Ere Time smooth out the tangled, twisted thread,  
The clew that leads us hostel-wards, at night,  
To rest at that inevitable inn,  
Where Death is heedless and unhasting host.

SYLVESTER :

Who speaks of Death? I speak of Life made new,  
I seek a palace in this glorious World  
A fabrick visible, material,  
So fair the World, it doth suffice for me,  
Let others reconcile them to that rest,  
To lie in the low little house where all is done!

LENORE :

When all is done, Sylvester ? Nay, alas !  
 All is not done, our term of living sped,  
 There is a Judgment still to be endured,  
 And endless dolour, or gladness yet to be.

SYLVESTER :

Your God may rule His heaven, but here on earth  
 I know two Gods, two dull unheeding Gods,  
 Invidious Time and cruel Circumstance,  
 Who ride the poor man with a double spur  
 Desire and Hunger, and the rich man drive  
 With pointed goad of dull Satiety,  
 Or longing for things unattainable.  
 To rule those Gods one must be young and strong.  
 There is but one life that is certain, this  
 We live to-day, and this we must prolong  
 But young, reviv'd, and reinvigorate.  
 No more to know the longing vain regret

For Youth so soon departed, to preserve  
 Your youthful manhood in its fiery prime  
 No more with impotent passionate tears to cling  
 —In struggle desperate as very vain—  
 To the dear past's unblossom'd leafless branch,  
 Since the dun river drags you seaward still.

LENORE :

Did you grow young again indeed Sylvester,  
 By some abhorr'd, prodigious miracle,  
 Would second Youth be wiser than the first ?

SYLVESTER :

As in my old days, so with youth renew'd  
 I still should hold it sound philosophy  
 That man is compound, mind and body and soul,  
 Part God, part man, part beast, and it is well  
 That when the beast within you lick his chops  
 And fever for a little liberty,

You let him loose to have his will awhile,  
 Glutting himself, he will return again  
 And, tired, bide contented in his cage——

LENORE :

——Until the day that he devour you !  
 Grant your elixir to perfection come,  
 ‘The Red Rose blossom,’ as you used to say,  
 How would the world be better for the boon,  
 Would you take pity on the poor, the blind ?  
 Sharing its pretious benefit with them ?

SYLVESTER :

Aye, would I, truly, not the first, indeed,  
 Which were not for myself a drop too much,  
 But as I had progress’d—the second brew ?  
 That were a gift for Popes and Emperors,  
 A flask or two to Philosophick friends,  
 Aye, surely, in good time the poor should find  
 That they were not forgotten.

LENORE :

That is well,

But in the past, Sylvester, was it so,  
 Did ever your heart beat generously for them,  
 God's foster-children, fasting and forlorn,  
 Dids't ever claim their staion in the sun  
 For those poor children of the shadow ?

SYLVESTER :

Nay,

I never wish'd to see men suffer.

LENORE :

So,

But they might suffer out of sight of you.  
 Then your great gift of healing, long ago  
 You oft abus'd your medicinal skill,  
 Employ'd it not for solace of the sick,  
 But to work vengeance, veil'd, upon a foe.

SYLVESTER :

What I have done I have done, let it be !  
 A new life dawns for me, and so Lenore  
 Be of good courage, 'ere the dawn wear grey  
 The sublimated Ichor is my own,  
 Won the great prize of all Philosophers,  
 And I shall hold the keys of Life and Youth,  
 Hasten the tardy, check the hurrying years,  
 To live long ages at my healthy prime,  
 And you, Lenore, you shall grow young with me,  
 I wrong'd you once, you must forget the past !

LENORE :

Nay, Sylvester, too much must I forget,  
 Ever to be a happy girl again,  
 My life has known too many a beating storm  
 Toss'd on too many a tumultuous sea,  
 The grave sole quiet haven now I crave.  
 A guarded flower in a garden green

That was my girlhood, till I met with you,  
 Since when, with leaden feet and heart on fire,—  
 Sowing desire but to reap disdain—  
 Through summer dust and winter's mire I glean'd  
 Uncertain harvest of the stoney street,  
 To find you now a broken, ill, old man,  
 Myself a woman worn with miseries ;  
 Had I not found you, from Virginia  
 Plantation flying, never more for me  
 Had lighted lattice and a hearth aglow  
 Held out a welcome, I was near to death,  
 You took me in, and that shall plead for you,  
 Against your sentence, at the last assize !

SYLVESTER :

I ask no advocate to plead for me  
 But for myself will answer—there, Lenore,  
 We will not talk of dying, but of life—  
 Our life that shall be in the years to come.  
 A happy life in Europe ! We will dwell



Far from these frigid summers of temper'd sun,  
Nor France nor England, Italy for me !  
The city call'd Parthenopé of old,  
The Siren city bordering the bay,  
A hem of silver on a purple sea,  
Where Naples calls God's fiery judgment down,  
From raging vehement Vesuvio,  
The suburb stricken for the city's sin.  
Something too near the elemental fires  
For us cold-blooded English, what of Rome ?  
Her air's too heavy with mortality,  
And breathes a savour of the Cæsar's crimes,  
Among the ruins of Imperial things—  
Sinister, set upon her seven hills,—  
She tends her dying fire, like a crone,  
Crouching in purple rags above the ash,  
Revolving, weary, yet insatiate  
Memories of the wild, old, wicked days !  
Nor will we dwell, where looking o'er the Seine,  
A dull and liquorish devil leans and leers,

Brooding with mocking grin on Paris town :  
 Nor yet where London, Queen of Hypocrites,  
 Hides in a mist of fog and sea-coal smoke,  
 Her splendid squalor and gilded infamy—  
 Perchance, where Venice, flaring all with lights,  
 Set like a standish in her shallow seas,  
 Riots throughout a half-year's carnival ?  
 Nay, best of all, where yellow Arno brims  
 In one green vineyard plain by the Tuscan town,  
 And cluster'd palaces of the Medici,  
 We'll watch the trees rock 'gainst a golden sky,  
 Swart Cypress, like a distaff for the Fates,  
 Or green bronze flame aspiring silently.

LENORE :

Dreams ! Dreams !

SYLVESTER.—(*Takes the posset from the hob and  
 drinks it*):

That yet shall be reality !

But I must rest a little whilst I may.

There's a night's work that younger, stronger men  
 Than I might quail at ; I must try to sleep,  
 To snatch a little dreamless deep repose,  
 Last of my old age.

LENORE :

Sleep, and happy dreams  
 Attend you, should you dream,

*( Aside. )*

Not more fantastick  
 Could any dream be than your waking one,  
 Of age dispell'd and youth call'd back once more.

SYLVESTER :

Sing me some old song, that you us'd to sing ;  
 Soothe this old child with some faint lullaby,  
 That shall, like diver's plummet, sink me down  
 Into the depths of sleep, from which return'd,  
 As from a healing bath I may arise !

LENORE.—(*Sings*):

FINIS.

There was laughter in the sun,  
 And your day was scarce begun,  
                                 Gay Ladies.

As you loiter'd where the shade is, a dainty web  
 you spun ;

Day was never found too long,  
 There was music, there was song,  
 In your lover's merry throng,  
                                 Gay Ladies.



But the Town new faces please,  
 And the seasons burn and freeze,  
                                 Gay Ladies.

What was pleasure, now a trade is, and the wine  
 is on the lees.

As youth and looks slip off,  
 You know the chairman's scoff,

And Geneva cures no cough,

Gay Ladies.

---

As you haunt the bagnio,

In your mask and domino,

Gay Ladies,

A masquer black array'd is who walks behind you  
—slow.

As homeward you repair,

Though you see no gallant there,

One beside you mounts the stair,

Gay Ladies.

---

Ah, no more you'll walk the Mall,

In your muff and cardinal,

Gay Ladies.

Your lodging score unpaid is? They'll sell to pay  
your pall,

With each small high-heel'd shoe,

That such stony footpaths knew—  
 Did your heart ache sometimes, too?

Gay Ladies.

---

Nor the puppet show, nor play  
 May tempt you forth to-day,

Gay Ladies,

For the latest play outplay'd is, the puppets laid  
 away.

Watched by a wither'd crone,  
 Cold as marble, still as stone,  
 At length you sleep alone

Gay Ladies.

---

So farewell you mechlin tête  
 Your hoop, and pannier's state

Gay Ladies,

A hireling hag your maid is, and when she leaves  
 you, late

You've no more of lawn and lace  
 Than may serve to veil your face  
 From the leaden lid's disgrace

Gay Ladies.

---

Now she shears your pride of hair,  
 Which shall deck some other fair,

Gay Ladies,

Uncounting whence the braid is so a high piled  
 head she wear ;

Yet the crone sighs, ' well-a-day,  
 But a paltry price they'll pay ' !

For your gold's but gilded gray,

Gay Ladies.

---

**SYLVESTER :**

Your song has touch'd some chord my brain within,  
 And long forgotten thoughts float up once more

As after storm longwhelm'd and worthless weed,  
 Or waifs of spar from drown'd and ruin'd ships  
 Rise from the underseas, I fain would sleep,  
 Sleep till the Perfect Rose be come to bloom,  
 That turns an old man to his youth again !

*(SYLVESTER sinks into sleep. The fire burns low and duskily red. The wall LEFT grows transparent and the 'Dumb Supper' table is display'd with three mask'd figures standing about it.)*

**MASK'D LADY :**

Well met Sylvester ! On my festa day  
 I smell'd a nosegay by my husband sent,  
 Believing it my gallant's offering,  
 And swoon'd to death, so potent was the sweet  
 Of those fair-seeming flowery hypocrites.  
 Yet should I have been 'ware of poisons, I,—  
 Bred of the Borgias, and to Popes akin,—



So lost my English lover, and my life,  
I pledge you, for our passionate past, Sylvester !

2ND MASQUE :

After my Father's sudden, easy death,—  
Lull'd by the medicine you mix'd for him,  
You claim'd, returning from his obsequies  
Something too much of all his garner'd gear !  
Have you forgotten in the trampled snow,  
Our hurry'd duel by one torch's light,  
Late litten for my father's funeral,  
When on my breast-bone rang your rapier's hilt,  
And forth my spirit pass'd among the pines  
Of my north-country moorland—Sylvester,  
I pledge you.

SYLVESTER :

Ralph, Renata, can it be,  
And this the third masque, is it Denzil ?

3RD MASQUE :

Aye.

At our last parting in the Seville square,—  
 By whom delated to the Inquisition,  
 You best should know, Sylvester, both of us  
 Were cloth'd in antick raiment, wrought with  
     flame,  
 The painted fires of the San-Benito,  
 Upright on mine, on yours, 'fuego revolto,'  
 The pictur'd fires turn'd downward, bye and bye  
 Their fickle-figured Faith that tops the tower  
 Above, glowed golden in no painted flame,  
 But the fierce fire lit for me, your friend,  
 Where flesh and spirit sunder'd horribly.  
 I pledge you, Sylvester.

SYLVESTER :

It is a dream !

But I'll go through with it, come raise your mask  
 And doff your domino.

2ND MASQUE :

We must not, here

We keep our Carnival Incognito,  
 We are but as it were an Embassy,  
 Chosen from many fain of your company,  
 With expectation unimaginable  
 Who wait your advent.

3RD MASQUE :

Will you fare with us,

Fare to the palace of our Princely Host,  
 Where thro' high halls and league-long corridors,  
 To music of eternal revelry,  
 Pace the pale people of the burning heart,  
 Passion's proud Daughters with the Sons of Sin !

SYLVESTER :

The burning heart, then still in Hell ye love,  
 And I should find the lemans of my youth,  
 And half a hundred ladies of my prime ?

1ST MASQUE :

What, love in Hell, so once a poet feign'd,  
 And he is curs'd by many a soul that sinn'd,  
 Who sang of guilty lovers, side by side,  
 Faring together thro' unending storm,  
 Twin wither'd leaves upon the wind of Hell——

SYLVESTER :

Yet having this of heav'n that still they love ?

2ND MASQUE :

Nay, there's no love in Hell ! Your craving lips,  
 Your asking eyes would meet blank unresponse,  
 Your hand that fain would clasp, meet hand that  
 clench'd,

For Haggard Hate glows in our burning eyes,  
 And all despair our hollow heart fulfils

In an equality of joyless years——

For none grow old, tho' each has lost her youth,

We pass our endless hours, insatiate.  
 Only our hair in youth's abundance grows,  
 And turns a torture to the aching brain,  
 Crisping and curling on our ashen brows,  
 Pale forehead scor'd with Passions hieroglyph,  
 Over our beauty's ruin, tired eyes,  
 Sunk cheek, and writhen lips of a fever'd mouth,  
 That ever laughs, but smiles not ever, at all.  
 O agony of fix'd unclosing lids  
 Under the blasting cressets above that flare,  
 Reverberate from the slabb'd asphaltum way,  
 No respite ever of dew, of dawn, of tears !  
 No light wind stirs, no spring-time wakes again,  
 But swooning scents make faint the icy air  
 Where spiring incense fumes unceasingly.

### 3RD MASQUE :

Come, I grow home-sick for the harmony  
 Of our Eternal holiday in Hell.  
 I hear the echo of our revelry !

Faint hollow music ever breathing up  
 In unsurpass'd soul-trancing symphony  
 To utter consummation of all desire,  
 That just as eager longing grows piercing pain,  
 Dies off, until it rack your soul once more  
 With the bitter joy of its hateful melody,  
 And leave you again a soul gall-surfeited  
 With sick dissatisfaction of unsinned sin !

2ND MASQUE :

Nay, there's no love in Hell but only Hate !!

3RD MASQUE :

But the night wears, and we shall meet anon,  
 We must not linger, tho' our Prince and Lord  
 For just one night unkennelling the damn'd,  
 Hath loos'd live Devils forth to sup with you,  
 Yet are we on parole, and must return !

*( They laugh and disappear. )*

(SYLVESTER *groans and stirs in his sleep. The logs of the fire fall apart. A knock is heard at the window.*)

LENORE :

Who knocks so late?

BALE :

Your neighbour Simon Bale,  
I have a word for Doctor Sylvester.

LENORE :

Is it of import, for the old man sleeps?

BALE :

Take you the message then, an hour ago  
Crossing the forest clearing, I did meet  
An Indian Squaw who ask'd a word of me  
And bade me tell Sylvester that to-night  
The time accomplish'd was, and payment due  
Awaited by the holder of the bond.

LENORE :

How strange an hour to demand a debt,  
Knew you the woman ?

BALE :

All unknown to me,

One of a tribe beyond the woods, mayhap,  
But, strangely, on the finger of her hand  
A ring of molten metal seemed to cling,  
And all the wood was full of sudden calls,  
And cries, now single, now of multitudes,  
Like mocking peals of laughter——

LENORE :

Frighted birds——

BALE :

Aye, maybe, tho' I never heard the like,  
Birds they might be, and frightened by a fire  
Which in the distance glow'd among the pines,



That blaz'd one moment sky-ward, and the next,  
 Made with its dying all the wood more dim.  
 Well, I have told my message, so farewell.

(SYLVESTER *moves in his sleep, sighs and wakes.*)

SYLVESTER :

It was a dream, a dream foreboding, what?  
 These last few days I've had a brooding sense  
 A strange, confus'd, distracted memory,  
 Of obscure ominous presages half-forgot,  
 Like warning of too-late remember'd dream,—  
 Equivocal menace of a half-caught word  
 Of threatening danger vizarded and veil'd,  
 Whisper'd by muffled dancers at a masque.

LENORE :

Ah, yet Sylvester, it is not too late,  
 To take the warning, only pray and weep,  
 'Ere the long-boded meaning break on you

Like ill news read by light'ning, in a storm,  
 And looking back clear shall the sense appear  
 Of what seem'd hidden, hieroglyphick, script,  
 Till penitent tears had wash'd your vision clear,  
 Repent, Sylvester, call upon the sky,  
 For you are old and have offended Heaven,  
 Weep, pray, repent, lay by your stubborn pride,  
 Call on the Infinite Mercy !

SYLVESTER :

Nay, Lenore,  
 If in the angry heats of burning Youth—  
 Heady and fierce as the Italian springs—  
 I sinn'd, as men count sinning, I my sin  
 Regret not and repent not, what I might  
 Have done and did not, solely I repent,  
 And count for merit of my own deserts  
 That wilful sadness, listless weariness,  
 Or dull indifference I never knew.  
 Extreme in pleasure, as in toil extreme,

On my own actions let me stand or fall !  
 But the night wears, heap up the furnace fire,  
 How low it burns, or do mine eyes grow dim ?

*( Tearing books and manuscripts. )*

Here is the 'Tree of the Hesperides'  
 And Raymond Lully's 'Dark-dispelling Lamp,'  
 'Triumphal Chariot' of Basilides,  
 I need no more the lore of these Adepts.  
 Here's the Italian Master's 'Pearl of Price,'

*( Throws them on the fire. )*

And bosom book of the Canon of Bridlington.  
 Heap fuel, blow the bellows, see Lenore,  
 How the Elixir changes momentarily,  
 With the intensest element of fire  
 The vary'd colours of the peacock's tail  
 Which emerald grew after the third degree,  
 Now turn to snowy whiteness, citron next,  
 Then it shall glow at last to glorious red !

LENORE :

Sylvester, what belated visitant  
 With liling voice and high unmirthful laugh,  
 And restless, padding foot-fall to and fro  
 Paces without ? The light, uneasy step,—  
 Soft as a child's and restless as a beast's—  
 Thrills me with foolish, causeless fear.

THE VOICE.—(*From without*):

Sylvester

The hour has come !

SYLVESTER :

Hour of my victory !

Over th' inveterate adversary age.

Is the door bolted fast ? Who tries the bolt ?

LENORE.—(*Looking thro' the key-hole*):

Only I see a slim and dusky hand

That fingers at the latch !

SYLVESTER :

Pile up the fire !

Only an hour to the dawning, God,  
 To die a dog's death in a dumb despair  
 With the Elixir brimming at my lips,  
 Never ! I set my will against the Fiend's !

THE VOICE :

The hour has come Sylvester.

SYLVESTER.—(*Stooping over the fire*) :

I prevail !

The brew glows golden, I outwit the Fiend !  
 Go slinking watcher, waiting there without,  
 I can defy you Devil, even now  
 Bubbles and stirs within the crucible  
 Glows in the glass the Perfect Rose supreme,  
 The Red, Red Rose of the Philosophers.  
 Here is the flower of my magistry,  
 Water of Life, the priceless Arcanum

Healing disease and all infirmity,  
 That turns my Old Age back to Youth again !  
 I can lay by Mortality, and strip  
 The outworn garment of my years away,

*( He lifts the glass which glows to a glorious  
 golden red. )*

I drink Undying Youth.

THE VOICE :

Sylvester come !  
 Your labour's lost.

*( The glass drops with a crash from his hands.  
 He falls face forward. Whole stage  
 darkens. )*

SYLVESTER :

What, is this darkness Death ?

THE VOICE :

Your labour's lost.

*(The door bursts open.)*

LENORE.—*(Crouching in the ashes):*

Lost Soul, lost Sylvester !

*(SCENE CLOSES.)*





THE LAST DAY OF DAPHNE.



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LIBANIUS	}	-	<i>Philosophers.</i>
THEMISTIUS			
ASCLEPIADES	-	-	<i>Priest of Apollo.</i>
CALLIXENA	-	-	<i>An aged Priestess of Demeter.</i>
ION	-	-	<i>A devout Child.</i>
MELISSA	}	-	<i>Young Lovers.</i>
NARCISSUS			
OPORA	-	-	<i>A Flute-Player.</i>
LYSIS	-	-	<i>Her Lover.</i>
ISIAS	-	-	<i>A Pilgrim from Egypt.</i>
AGLÄIA	-	-	<i>A Young Girl of Antioch.</i>
MYRTO	-	-	<i>Her Maid.</i>
DAMIS	-	-	<i>An Old Man.</i>
MYSTA	-	-	<i>A Temple Attendant.</i>
THEONÖE	-	-	<i>The Sibyl of Daphne.</i>
FLAVIAN	-	-	<i>A young Roman in love with Theonöe.</i>

PILGRIMS, GARLAND SELLERS, CHILDREN.

---

*Voices of an unseen mob.*

*Before the Curtain rises, a hymn is sung by Pilgrims within the Temple, who answer the question of ASCLEPIADES.*

---

## CHORAL HYMN.

**ASCLEPIADES :**

Whence come ye, Pilgrims to the speaking spring  
Of the unconquer'd comrade, priest and King,  
Far-voyaging ?

---

**PILGRIMS :**

From the Mother of Mirage, marvellous Asia,  
Where elephants processionally rank'd  
In far Taprobané,  
Like milk white mountains meekly bow the knee,  
From immemorial magical Asia,  
Whose praise is sung by Brachmans yellow  
prank'd  
Where Holy Ganga dreams through India.

From the Mother who weaves us silk of deftest dye  
 —Spun in dim depth of secret Serica,—  
 And cunning broidery.

---

ASCLEPIADES :

And ye whence come ye led of your desire  
 To the lyric leader of the starry Quire  
 The Purifier ?

---

PILGRIMS :

From the mighty Mother of music, Africa,  
 Where Egypt Nilus' yearly bounty craves  
 To flood her land of drought.  
 Where first, long since, the thrilling harp rang  
 out,  
 'Ere yet the cymbal was, or cithara  
 From the midnight Mother of ebony, Nubia,  
 Mart of the ivory tusks, the sable slaves.  
 Mysterious Mother of marvels, Africa,  
 Whose voice inviting to venturous voyages,

Calls yet 'twixt Calpe's height, and Abyla  
Unto remotest seas.

---

ASCLEPIADES :

And yet, who by the incense altar linger  
To praise the unerring, far-darting, bow-stringer  
The Sweetest Singer ?

---

PILGRIMS :

From the odorous Mother of Myrrh, Arabia,  
Who bids on every altar incense wreath  
From happy spice-land sweet.  
Whose Queens in royal weed, from head to feet  
Dyed with thy purple pomp, Phoenicia,—  
The fainting potency of perfume breathe.  
From cinnamon, cedar, sandal, cassia ;  
The while the fateful stars doth soothly scan  
—Thy spell enforcéd stars, Arabia—  
The pale rapt Magian.

## SCENE.

THE GROVE OF DAPHNE OUTSIDE ANTIOCH.

---

*Forecourt of Apollo's Temple. Cypress and Cedar trees of the Daphne Wood seen to the left, above the wall. The colonnade and steps of the Temple to the right. A wall surrounds the court with a large grille at the extreme left. About midway in the wall a niche holds a statue of the Ephesian Artemis, before which are flowers and a burning taper. The shadow of the great image of the God Apollo is thrown across the stage from within the Temple and slowly lessens as the scene goes on.*

---

LIBANIUS, THEMISTIUS, DAMIS, LYSIS, and OPORA  
*are seated on the steps of the Temple.*

---

*As the hymn ends ASCLEPIADES passes slowly between the columns down the steps.*

(*Curtain rises.*)

OPORA :

Once more the dawn's recurrent miracle !  
 Cloudless, save for one little cloud that seems  
 A rout of rose leaves blown across the sky,  
 Above the vineyards of Mount Silpius.  
 The world, dawn-dewy, is a world made new,  
 And Beauty's self seems rising from the sea,  
 Born from the Sun's caressing of the wave.  
 Whilst, as the light strikes thwart across his fane  
 The shadow of the Golden God withdraws.  
 Only a fallen blossom testifies  
 To last night's tempest.

THEMISTIUS.—(*Raising his hand to the Image of  
 Apollo*) :

Helios, Radiant King,  
 Paian, befriend us in that last, worst, wind  
 That darkest night, that most distracting storm  
 Which some day blows for all who sail this sea.



Whether it whelm us memory-less and lost  
 In the abysmal gulf of nothingness,  
 Or cast us on a shadow-haunted shore  
 For ultimate purgation by a fire—  
 As soiled asbestos whitens in the flame—  
 Or, maybe waft us to the fortunate isles,  
 Of lost Atlantis, then at last regained.

DAMIS.—(*To LIBANIUS*) :

What stir unwonted fills the fane to-day?  
 It has not known such throng of pilgrimage,  
 These many years. From ancient villages  
 Sequester'd, and great cities far away  
 Flock in the faithful of the Elder Gods,  
 Stirring old echoes that I thought were dead.  
 On altars long neglected incense fumes,  
 Whilst wreathéd roses round the image flung—  
 Riot with more than Egypt's opulence.

LIBANIUS :

Know that to-day the Galilean horde  
 Bear forth the body of their Babylas,  
 Expell'd this all too long polluted grove.  
 And fervent, the devout in Antioch  
 Pray the great giver of good, Father of light,  
 Breathing by Sibylline Theonœ  
 To grant them answer of his speaking spring,—  
 Silent so long thro' presence of the dead—  
 How fares our hope, our stay, our Julian  
 Upon his Parthian venture.

DAMIS :

Well ye do,  
 Seeking enlightenment of Helios,  
 Truth's self, the Sun all-seeing. Not for me  
 Serapis' screed delivered in a dream,  
 Or chance-caught word in temple Memphian,  
 I sue not at such seats of sooth-saying  
 As where, by torch-light, men at Megara,

With lore of Chthonian mysteries, compel  
 An oracle obscure of age-old Night ;  
 Winning a dubious light from darkness' self.  
 Nor, impious, seek from deaf inarticulate Earth  
 To wring ambiguous answer in the cave  
 Trophonian.

THEMISTIUS :

The true Philosopher

At every fane should be a neophyte,  
 Initiate of every mystery,  
 Enquirer at every oracle.  
 From Delos' conscious antre to Deplhi's cave,  
 From the Trophonian chasm to the height  
 Where Carmel tends an ever-burning fire,  
 Or Aphrodité by a falling star  
 Answers her worshippers on Lebanon,  
 To misty Mona with her Druid rites,  
 Culling the best of many an alien faith  
 To bind it in the nose-gay of his own,

A link the more in the gold unending chain  
 From Hermes Trismegist thro' Orpheus down  
 To us late guardians of the mysteries.

*(Isias passes up towards the Temple.)*

But here is Isias just from Thebes returned.  
 What learned you of the priests Egyptian,  
 What wisdom found you in the desert sands,  
 Under that clear Ætherial canopy  
 Where most one seems to commune with the Gods?

ISIAS :

I gazed upon the unregarding Sphynx  
 Who heeds not Time's insidious injuries,  
 Or slow-corroding outrage of the years,  
 But gazes, blind, across the desert sand  
 The drifted dust her world that overwhelm'd  
 As long as Nilus lapse to meet the sea  
 Still subtly smiling thro' her stony sleep !  
 I sought, I found, I worshipp'd Destiny.

## THE PILGRIM OF FATE.

To Destiny I pilgrim went  
For whom alone no altars rise,  
No incense fumes, no spikenard drips.  
She gazes down the centuries  
On all eternity intent.  
A smile upon her marble lips.

---

I mute before her Idol bowed  
Whose peace nor praise nor prayer stirs,  
Whom Gods revere and Dæmons dread,  
Who still, by myriad ministers  
The passive leads but drag the proud  
The way predestin'd each must tread.

---

How should she heed—that stony sphynx—  
The tiny flame which lights our years?  
Our puny heart that throbs and bleeds?

She counts the throbbing of the spheres,—  
 The fount of fire that springs and sinks  
 From worlds aflame—not us—she heeds.

---

Ah! seek no longer with Fate to war!  
 Lay passion by, since strife is vain;  
 Who dares his destiny to brave  
 Has such reward for all his pain  
 As his, who slings against a star,  
 Or aims an arrow to wound the wave.

---

*(ISIAS passes up the Temple steps as NARCISSUS and  
 MELISSA come down them.)*

NARCISSUS :

Melissa, rightly are you honey-named  
 For honey-coloured is your amber hair  
 And heather-honey-hued your eyes of brown,  
 And white as garden honeycomb your arms  
 And honey-breathing bosom.

MELISSA :

Ah forbear

Your sugar'd words, lest like a foolish fly,  
You drown in honey.

NARCISSUS :

'Tis the death I crave,  
My honey-bee ! These flowers are consecrate  
To Artemis, but there are blooms enough  
Within the groves of Daphne for us two,  
For you to gather honey, for me to sip,  
Away to Daphne then.

MELISSA :

Away, Away !

( *They pass out LEFT.* )

OPORA.—( *Looking after them* ) :

Fair fortune 'fal you, happy youth and maid,  
Opora ever was a lover of love !

Pass in a good hour under a lucky star,  
 How happy were I but for one short day,  
 To be again the girl Melissa is !

YSIS :

She is but promise, you fulfilment are.

OPORA :

She is the blossom'd branch, and I the tree  
 Full-fruited, Autumn sets his seal upon.

LYSIS :

Aye, the sweet fruit of prime maturity  
 The Summer sun made perfect.

OPORA :

Nay, our life

Unlike the tree's, one only Autumn knows,  
 Instant on which the dreary Winter waits



That breaks no more to spring-time.      Darling

Youth

So little lasting, and so lightly lost  
 And all too late lamented.    Brief, so brief,  
 A Childhood seeking, and a Youth that finds,  
 Then Age that still remembers, and regrets.  
 Theonœ holds for direst tragedy  
 That Chrestos stands where late Apollo stood  
 But what the pathos of a passing God,—  
 Since Gods have pass'd, and Gods may come  
           again—

Match'd with the tragedy intolerable  
 Of Woman's fading beauty and of Youth  
 That passes un-returning.

LYSIS :

None may probe

The pitiful puzzle of our day that hastes  
 To ambush'd Death who lours and lies in wait,  
 In vain we strive the problem to forget

Since ever thro' the laughter and the song,  
 Through mornings quiet and hush of evening,  
 We hear the barking of the insistent Sphynx,  
 Inveterate asker, challenging us to guess  
 Her irreducible riddle, unanswer'd still.

OPORA :

It is not Death I fear but hateful Age.

LYSIS :

But even Age may happy be, a mind  
 At ease and purg'd of passion,——

OPORA.—(*Interrupting him*):

——Aye to men,  
 But woman's life with her last lover ends.  
 Conceive a may-fly, with a life prolong'd  
 Beyond the splendid setting of its sun,  
 So late to linger were not, sure, to live?  
 The dark, the dew, for radiant light and heat

That call'd it unto being—Even so,  
 Love is a woman's life, a woman's sun,  
 And mine slants fast to westward, why to-day  
 One only yellowing garland decks my gate,  
 Where once there rain'd such blossom, you had  
       deem'd

The Spring astray,—of all the treasur'd sweets  
 She bore to deck the world with weary grown—  
 Had dropp'd her fragrant burthen at my door.

*( Dreamily. )*

Ah Youth, Youth, Youth, the delicate days went by,  
 Sweet and ephemeral as the year's new wine,  
 Falling as soft as drifted petals dropp'd  
 From o'er-blown garlands to the lilt o' flutes  
 But now, in this uneasy time of change,  
 The hour grows late, the faltering harp-string fails,  
 The wine runs down to latest, muddy lees.  
 As when in dawn-chill'd hall the sleepy slaves  
 Expiring lamps extinguish, one by one.

LYSIS :

How one remembers.

OPORA :

How can one forget

The days when Love and Life were bourgeoning,  
 Breaking so soon to fragile flower. One day,  
 Winter no longer, but the Spring not yet,  
 Then thro' a grey night laced with silver showers  
 Gliding by green gradations, Spring was here,  
 Whelming the world with fragrance, as the guests  
 At flowery feasts of the Imperial Fool  
 Were drowned in roses by their fitful host.

LYSIS :

(THEONÖE *enters during first words of speech,*  
 RIGHT.)

Aye, youth was pleasant, though we lived too late  
 Who never knew the noontide day of Rome.

Our afternoon was bright and warm the hour  
 Lit by the westering sun, now soon to set.  
 Winter is hard upon us, and a night  
 Heavy with cloud, and ominous of storm.  
 Theonöe, I knew you not so near—

THEONÖE :

I listen'd, for I heard you speak of Rome.  
 Ah, what a passion of insanity,  
 Furies more fell than those of Atreus  
 Beset this poor Tithonus of a world  
 Which has outliv'd the glory of its prime.  
 Immortal, Immemorial, Mother Rome,  
 How can I help but hate your gloomy foes  
 Who set their little nook of Galilee  
 Above the Mistress City of the World.  
 Poor brambles, jealous of the cedar tree,  
 Beneath whose shade their puny briar sprung.  
 These weeds wind-borne within our marble fane,  
 Will work insidious their destructive way

Forcing the fair well-jointed blocks apart,  
 Rejoicing in the ruin they have wrought  
 As Colonnade and cornice nod and fall.

THEMISTIUS.—(*Looks up from a scroll he is reading*):

May we not pity their insanity?  
 Whom factious Jews despise, deride, for us  
 Were worthy pity.

THEONÖE.—(*Scornfully*):

Nay, such pity is pityless!  
 Pity's for women, not for Gods or men.  
 Pity had never piled the pyramid  
 Or flung the Colosseon arch so high!  
 The great strong wise old world knew not of it,  
 Till dawn'd the day of this, her decadence.  
 Pity is baleful, like a noxious weed,  
 Springing where e'er the Galilean trode,  
 Stealthily spreading in the minds of men

To choke the springs of action, bind in turn  
 The restless tidal surge of human thought  
 And turn it to a fell Sargossa Sea,  
 Leaving for clean, clear depth of wave that was,  
 —Struck by the sun to living emerald—  
 A sickly breathing marsh malarial  
 Lit with fantasmal fires of the fen.

LIBANIUS :

And that faint flickering fire they dare oppose  
 —These Galileans—to our Helios !  
 What say the priests of other mysteries ?  
 ‘Come Clean of heart, and hand, Discreet of tongue.  
 Draw nigh Devout, with happy holy awe  
 And raise yourself to fellowship with God.  
 He stoops not us-ward, we must rise to Him.’  
 But their God comes in likeness of a man  
 To Sinner sent and witless, not to the Sage  
 Of stainless life and purpose.

THEONÖE :

Pardon and truth

Denied to them that soar and seek the Sun,  
 Granted to those that in congenial dark  
 Batten and creep, a conquest piteous,  
 To lose the eagle and to win the worm !  
 Ah, Galilean, that were a victory  
 More bitter than your vigil of despair,  
 Of God forsaken, and by man betray'd,  
 The night where blaz'd for sole sinister star  
 The traitor's torch of a familiar foe.

LIBANIUS :

How might a God men pity be a God?  
 A God that suffer'd were a God that sinn'd  
 Letting the World's ways mire his marble feet,  
 The World's dust mar the whiteness of his brow.  
 Who fram'd th' undying world, himself to die,  
 Were past conceiving.



ASCLEPIADES :

Wreathe our God with thorns  
 That crown that blossom'd roses on his hair,  
 The cup of torment turned to honey wine.  
 But leave contending of an alien God,  
 And self-tormenting, sad, cadaverous creed,  
 Since noontide bids us greet the Father of Light,  
 With murmured litany and chanted hymn.

*( All enter the Temple. )*

---

### THE HYMN.

O sure-aim'd stringer of the golden bow !  
 Laying the marsh-bred mist-born Python low.

Archer !

---

O Priest, interpreting by secret ways  
 The ringing tripod's sense, and shaken bays.

Prophet !

O Liberator from degrading pain !  
 Faller of the white soul's earth-contracted stain.

Helios !

---

O Golden God whose shadow is the Sun !  
 Chanting the triumph-song, the Victory won.

Paian !

---

*(At the end of the hymn some pass out by grille,  
 LEFT. Others assemble about DAMIS and  
 LIBANIUS, who sit on the Temple steps.)*

DAMIS :

How wild was last night's intempestive storm,  
 The fabrick of the world grows crazy and old,  
 Strange stars blaze forth portentous characters  
 Drawn on the tablets of the midnight sky  
 Threatening menace indecipherable

Beyond Chaldæa's science, or the lore  
 Of flame-adoring Zoroastrian.  
 Spring is distracted with untimely heats  
 And Summer knows unseasonable blight,  
 Whilst Earth herself, our nursing mother old  
 Grown weary of her swarming progeny  
 Quakes town and temple in one ruin down,  
 As Ocean quits his wonted bed, to sweep  
 Enormous death on Asia's crowded coast.  
 Either the Gods are weary of the world  
 Or angry with their children.

LIBANIUS :

Pray you, leave  
 To Jew and Galilean jealous Gods.  
 No angry God may ever work man ill,  
 Anger is contrary to the mind Divine,  
 But man's misunderstanding of the Gods  
 Himself may injure. Souls in fear of God  
 Are souls from Him by their own default estrang'd,

Thereby enduring worst of punishment,  
 The God is not in need of any man.  
 The wise man is in need of God alone.

VOICES :

Fain would I find the God, but He is far,

DAMIS :

Veil'd is the vision that in youth was clear.

AGLAÏA :

Where may we seek, how find Him?

LIBANIUS :

Look within.

For who would single-hearted seek for God  
 Fairest and first, may find within himself  
 The revelation, where unsoil'd, unvex'd  
 By mire of matter, or the storms of time

Sleeps in the still recesses of our soul  
 A crystal pool of God's own provenance.  
 Gazing therein,—as stare the sooth-sayers  
 Within their speaking crystal—first dispel  
 Discordant voices from the world of sense  
 Outside, and listen for the inward voice.  
 Disperse the shadow'd clouds that brood above,—  
 The shadow of your own imagining—  
 And wait with half-clos'd eyes the day-spring true.  
 So, seeking God's illumination, muse  
 Waiting the vision of beatitude  
 In brooding silence and a holy calm,  
 Your spirit steep'd in peace.

*(During the speech ASCLEPIADES descends steps behind speaker.)*

ASCLEPIADES :

Far more avails  
 The sage's silence with the Mind Divine

Than praise and sacrifices of the fool,  
 Whose hecatomb, whose golden offering  
 Is food for flame or Sacrilegious spoil  
 For temple robbers.

LIBANIUS :

God is first and last

Who leads the chorick dancing of the stars  
 The planet's progress, as the solar stay,  
 And God is Very Beauty, would you win  
 To that Diviner essence—count it not  
 As Earthly Beauty is to man of earth  
 The brief liv'd promise of immediate joy,  
 The panting halt before possession prove  
 Prelude again to dull satiety.  
 The Very Beauty passes not, nor palls,  
 But since God's face is mirror'd in His world,  
 The best of earthly beauty you may know  
 Deep in your soul's shrine reverently set,  
 Imperfect image, in a little space,

But still reduction of the master-work  
 An emanation of the infinite,  
 And glassing still his great perfection.  
 Cherish and worship Beauty, till the shrine  
 Shall grow too frail for the in-dwelling God ;  
 No longer shall infrequent ecstasy—  
 More fleet than fancy, swifter than a star  
 In rapture of its falling self-consum'd—  
 Like sudden lightning break athwart your night  
 With baffling brightness, but a Sun Serene  
 Shall flood your life with radiance. Having stood  
 With Beauty face to face a moment's span,  
 Now rapt to heaven and your sister souls,  
 Granted no more to this less lovely earth,  
 Bless'd by the brightness of His face serene  
 Stand you within the light ineffable  
 Of very Beauty, one and absolute.

*(The listeners melt away one by one, leaving only*

*THEONÖE, CALLIXENA, and LIBANIUS.)*

THEONÖE :

May then a Soul, grown sick at heart for home  
 Languishing here in prison, unloose the chain,  
 Draw back the bolt and win to her father-land  
 By the low door of Death ?

LIBANIUS :

It may not be.

You know that Soul and Body dwelt apart  
 One in the gulf beneath, and one ensky'd,  
 Till quicken'd by the universal soul  
 What was mere matter takes a body on,  
 Since God has bound the Body to the Soul,  
 With Time the Soul has learn'd to suffer it,  
 As men may suffer a poor hovel's shade,  
 Unknowing of a palace waiting them.  
 Though Death shall loose the Body from the Soul,  
 The Soul from Matter must herself release,  
 Yet not precipitately. Travellers,



Too quickly stripping off a tatter'd cloak,  
 May leave a treasure hidden in their rags,  
 And thus a Soul, too swiftly separate  
 From earthly things, missing her starry road,  
 Seeks her late lodging in a wild regret—  
 Free of the Earth, yet all unfit for Heaven—  
 And vainly strives to enter it again.  
 Such Spirits haunt the world with wandering lights,  
 Or cryings from a solitary place.  
 But the True Soul, when called, will pass serene,  
 Calmly, augustly, from her late abode,  
 And, like a dew-drop, upward to the Sun,  
 Exhale, aspire to Him who bade it fall.

THEONÖE.—(*Musingly*) :

And, yet, there have been noble suicides!  
 The lotus crown'd divine Antinoüs,  
 That last-born lamb in the starry flocks of Heaven.  
 Did *he* not well? Vicarious sufferer,

Drinking the waters of the tawny Nile,  
Self-immolated victim, to avert  
Impending peril from a darling head.  
So would I gladly give for Julian  
The unavailing, ineffectual,  
And unregarded remnant of my life,  
Could but my shorten'd day his day prolong.  
But what's a woman's life—a woman's death?  
Libanius, that I had dwelt in Rome!  
That beating heart of our Imperial State—  
Not here, in lazy, lukewarm Antioch,  
Which sets her Chrestus and her Constantine  
Above our philosophic Emperor.  
Our Hero Julian, yet here I bide,  
Heart-sick that I must linger, like a weed,  
Not wafted at the wind and water's will,  
In trackless tideways of the middle deep,  
But where sick waters, neither fresh nor salt,  
Churn at the harbour's mouth, among the piles,  
Limbo of all unprofitable things.

Still the stream offers, still the waves repel,  
The shores off-scouring, scouted of the Sea.

(LIBANIUS *enters the Temple* RIGHT, *leaving* THEONÖE  
*sunk in thought.* FLAVIAN *enters from*  
LEFT.)

FLAVIAN :

Dreaming your day-dreams yet, Theonöe,  
With not one passing thought for Flavian,  
Whose long day loiters heavy with dreams of you,  
Of you, the Delian's priestess Sibylline !  
Yet, sad you seem for one who serves the Sun,  
And apter for the pale Moon's ministry ;  
'Twas she that dower'd you with magian spell,  
And kissed to paleness all that perfect face,  
Wan as the Moon is on a windless night ;  
You bear with you a breath from astral space,  
As though you fared the wind-swept ways of  
Heaven,

Entangl'd in a mazy web of dream,  
Familiar with secrets of the sky.

THEONÖE :

Enough for me the earth's strange secrets be,  
Perplexing and insoluble, and sad.

FLAVIAN :

The moon's attraction of the strenuous sea  
Looks from your eyes, swaying my heart to you  
My heart unquiet as the surging tide.

THEONÖE :

I would not sway your heart, rather your mind.

FLAVIAN :

It is my body then that you despise,  
My arms too vigorous, my brain too dull ?  
Then will I sail for Athens even now,

Assume the cloak, the wallet and the staff,  
 To haunt the Painted Porch and Academe  
 So I may make me worthier of you.

THEONÖE :

Brother, your body is a living joy,  
 I love you for your stainless sanity,  
 And so that ages hence the world may know  
 What was a gallant Roman at his prime,  
 I pray some Myron come to earth again  
 With bronze or marble immortality  
 To brace your muscles in a strenuous game,  
 Wrestling, running, heaving high the disk,  
 Binding the parsley fillet on your brow,  
 Shedding your smile through centuries to come.

FLAVIAN.—(*Takes her hand*) :

May still you hold me for a froward boy  
 As you would have me, only bid me be  
 And love shall teach me likeness to the type.

THEONŌE.—( *Holding both hands to him* ):

Ah ! Flavian, I love you sisterly,  
 But I am Hesper to your Phosphoros  
 You lead on joyous dawning, I the night.  
 Your mind is like a wide, a wind swept heath,  
 Fragrant with thyme, athrill with skylark song,  
 But mine most like this sombre Daphne wood,  
 Here blow pale flowers in the shadow'd glades.  
 Jonquil and violet, fair narcissus white,  
 And swooning, heavy headed hyacinth,—  
 The flower that crys Alas ! for beauty slain,  
 Under the bays and cypress secular  
 Where living springs that murmur to the moss  
 Fed from a fountain flowing from afar  
 Eternal tears for Daphne dead distil.  
 And this I have against you that you live  
 Not for Apollo all, not all for Christ.  
 Strewing your incense with indifferent hand  
 To God of Galilean or Hellene.

You do not well, for in these evil days,  
At the decisive parting of the paths,  
The old unswerving as the Appian way  
With firm foundation fixed unfathomably,  
The new a devious track thro' bog and fen—  
The destinies of our Eternal Rome  
Demand a constancy in all we do.

FLAVIAN :

O leave the jargon of conflicting creed,  
And hear me when I tell you of my love.  
I cannot woo like a philosopher  
Weaving you fine-spun specious sophistries,  
I only seek to fold you in my arms  
And love you as a man. My father's faith  
Is nothing to me, all the good I have  
I dedicate to you that did inspire  
As men may pour to Dionysos wine,

*(Kneels to her.)*

Or offer roses to the Queen of flowers.  
 You are the radiant Goddess of my dreams,  
 And I your darkling, desperate devotee  
 Kneel in the dark, yet pray towards the light.  
 Do you approve my worship? O my Queen,  
 Come you to Athens from these troublous times  
 And dwell in peace under the budded bays  
 With him whose life were aimless lacking you,  
 Rearing fair children maybe, that may serve  
 The God with gracious worship, when we twain  
 Are dust within one urn.

THEONŌE :

O I rejoice

To find that Helios with golden bow  
 Has chased the gloomy shadow from your brain  
 I joy to think you sail for Athens soon,  
 To find the dear, the dread Divinities  
 Their fair white fanes full-fronting to the dawn.  
 Where manly Gods are served by men divine,—



The priest almost the peer of Deity—  
 With worship reasonable, temperate,  
 But I must wait as you must wander.

FLAVIAN :

Nay,

O anchor of my life's unstable ship,  
 You cannot love me if you let me go.

*( Kisses the hem of her robe. )*

THEONÖE.—*( Lays her hand on his head )* :

I love you well enough to leave you, Dear.  
 Your sun be high in Heaven when mine is set.  
 What would you do in the eternal night  
 For whom no day has ever been too long,  
 Who have the Summer sunshine in your hair,  
 The morning freshness in your clear blue eyes,  
 Who blythely to the banquet of your life  
 Address you, with so keen a zest of it.

Ah, wrestler mine, wherefore, unconquer'd yet,  
 Should Death defeat you with a felon fall?  
 Live long and happy, train'd to such true health  
 That all excess seem alien as disease.  
 In generous emulation of your peers  
 Using the good things Gods have given to men  
 And winning women worthier of love  
 Than I, poor leaf upon the winds of fate.

FLAVIAN.—(*Rising, rushes off LEFT*):

A laurel leaf for garland of the God,  
 Too proud to wreath a merely mortal brow!

(*CALLIXENA enters from Temple RIGHT.*)

CALLIXENA.—(*To THEONÖE*):

Sibyl, reclaim'd by service of your king  
 Assume the choric robe, the crown of bays,  
 The wand of budded laurel in your hand  
 Sprinkl'd with lustral water of His Spring.

Unfaltering, unflinching pass beyond  
 The veil'd prophetic portal, whence the voice  
 Of very Truth shall breathe to us by you.

THEONÖE.—(*Folding her hands on her breast*):

Behold I am the handmaid of the God,  
 So may I echo His Divine decree  
 Unfaltering, unflinching.

CALLIXENA.—(*Leads her away RIGHT as ION comes on  
 drawing AGLÄIA by the hand. MYRTO  
 follows*):

Fortunate

And happy-omen'd may His answer be——

AGLÄIA :

This way.

ION.—(*Pointing to the Image of Artemis*):

No, this way, you reclaim a grace,

Here is the Goddess that shall grant your wish,  
Our Lady Artemis.

AGLÄIA :

The boy is craz'd  
Poor child, with over much devotion.  
I will indulge him.

ION.—(*Dreamily to himself*):

She commun'd with me,  
Last night in vision that was not a dream.  
Bending she kissed me, calling me her child,  
Promising me that I should be with her  
Before her crescent waxed to full of moon.

AGLÄIA.—(*Tenderly*):

Ah, gentle Boy, I'll pray a grace of her  
I would my dove would wing again to me,  
My coral-footed snowy-throated dove,  
Whose ruby eyes would mark my home-coming,  
Whose croon relieved my labour at the loom.

MYRTO.—(AGLÄIA looks appealingly at her):

The boy is craz'd, I care for none of such,  
 I like a limber lad who loves the games  
 And did I dwell in pagan darkness still  
 'Twere Aphrodite and not Artemis  
 From whom I'd beg a favour—very well,  
 I would my sea-captain from Ascalon  
 No more regarding the Iberian mime  
 Who danced the Danæ last new year's tide,  
 Would shower his golden rain once more on me.

AGLÄIA :

Mock not the gentle boy, if he be craz'd  
 The moon may well his mistress be. Farewell,  
 Be happy in your dream, fond nympholept.

(*They go out LEFT.*)

ION.—(*Kneels to the Image*):

Farewell, and now, O Patroness Divine,

As crown of glory for my dreamy days  
 And lonely nights of rapture at your shrine  
 From my life's ending, let me wake a star !  
 Not in the throng of undistinguish'd lights  
 Crowding the stair of that triumphal way,  
 Which sweeps straight on to your serene abodes.  
 My planet spin through else unlighted space,  
 That as I lived on earth, so still in Heaven,  
 Your taper-tending watchful minister  
 May yet, a little lamp in leagues of light  
 Shine to your glory.

*(ASCLEPIADES leads on THEONÖE half-fainting from  
 the Temple.)*

ASCLEPIADES :

So Theonöe,  
 Breathe deeply of the fresh free air of Heaven,  
 From your distracted dream awakening,  
 Shudder you back to anguish'd life again.

THEONÖE (*faintly at first*):

Ah, well, I know that some disastrous doom  
 Impends on us, falling or yet to fall,  
 Since duly rob'd and on the tripod thron'd  
 The influence awaiting, still there lay  
 A fear like stone so heavy at my heart  
 Almost it chok'd the springs of being, until  
 The trance began to fold me, then came sleep,  
 Not the old sleep, serene and anodyne,  
 No blesséd influence me seemed, but ambush'd foe  
 Warily watch'd my weakening, as I swoon'd  
 Plung'd in the gulf abysmal, memoryless  
 Save for a haunting horror—I return'd  
 Flung back to life and sunlight, from the void  
 Up sweeping, dizzy. Bending over me  
 I found you, weeping, with Callixena.  
 What then the sorrowful message that I brought  
 Returning from my ill-starred embassy,  
 What answer murmur'd in the merciful sleep,

—Merciful no, else I had never wak'd—  
To hear what you must tell me?

ASCLEPIADES :

Thus, the God.

*( Reads from a scroll. )*

### ANSWER OF THE ORACLE.

Faithful, to-day upon the Parthian plain  
His mightiest victory doth Julian gain.  
This day he doth to Helios restore  
The torch which bright, on high thro' life he bore,  
Hermes takes back the staff that once he gave  
Athene claims the buckler and the glaive,  
The Dust the dust reclaims, Fire, the fire,  
See skyward like a flame that soul aspire  
Granted awhile to earth, His mission done,  
Now rapt to presence of the Sovereign Sun,  
Who, blest by radiance of Light supreme,  
Knows now fulfilment of his life-long dream.



THEONÖE.—(*Wildly*):

O Julian, your life was like a cup  
 For worship or libation master-chas'd,  
 Brimming with wine, held upward to the sky  
 Golden, and goldener gilded of the sun,  
 That now dips down to darkness and the deep,  
 Slipp'd from the hold of an uncareful hand  
 Lost to this light, and sunken in the sea.

(ASCLEPIADES *tries to silence her; failing, he retires  
 into the Temple* RIGHT.)

(*Addresses the Image of Apollo.*)

And this you suffer, O Effeminate God,  
 In chorick garment woman-like arrayed !  
 By your own music's beauty rapt and whelm'd,  
 Your lips half-parted, softly in a sigh,  
 Tranc'd by the passion of your lonely lyre,  
 Sole with your song within a world of dream  
 Where wakes alone your melody, and you !

*(The confused noise and tramping of the mob is heard outside.)*

VOICES OUTSIDE :

God shall put down the mighty from his seat,  
Exalting humble men, and meek of heart.

THEONÖE.—*(Closes the grille and speaks through it):*

Humble and meek of heart, O hypocrites,  
Cowardice, rancour, your humility,  
Who by your slanders blacken what was clear  
With inky venom, as the sepia fish  
To take a prey, to shelter from a foe,  
Darkens the water. So you pride condemn?  
The noble pride that draws man up to God  
Raising himself since God stoops not to him,  
Nay then, arraign the lion for his strength,  
The hawk, bold pirate of the upper blue  
For swiftmess, and the tortoise for his sloth.

Indict the emmett for her industry,  
 Impugn the cricket's gay improvidence,  
 The fox's craft, the lamb's simplicity,  
 But leave to man the passion of that pride  
 Which sets him, sole among Creation's Sons  
 Feet in the dust, and forehead in the stars  
 To stand erect, and gaze upon the sky.

(THEONÖE *stands speaking thro' the grille, her back  
 to the audience.*)

VOICES OUTSIDE :

Curséd be they that worship graven Gods  
 Who boast themselves in Idols  
Babylas,
 Purge them with fire, Blesséd Babylas,  
 Death to the Pagans, burn them out like rats  
 Which scurried from Serapis' image late  
 When his great idol to our axes fell.  
 Ah, soon shall a last supreme burn'd offering—

A huger hecatomb than Julian's  
 Insensate sacrifice of snow white bulls—  
 From his last altar to Apollo flame,  
 Soon shall Himself, his temple, and his grove  
 Go up in fire.

(CALLIXENA *hurries down steps* RIGHT *with* ION  
*clinging to her mantle.*)

Torches, torches, lights.

CALLIXENA :

Ion, the troopers tarry still to come.  
 These Galileans, factious and turbulent,  
 Sudden and fierce as Phyrminos in flood,  
 Threaten the shrine of Helios himself,

(*Ion climbs over wall* CENTRE.)

So gliding by the hidden postern door  
 Fleet under shadow of the cedar trees  
 Along the line of Trajan's aqueduct,  
 And give the alarm in Antioch.

VOICES OUTSIDE :

Torches, fire !

But stay that devil's brat who slips away  
To call the soldiers from the guard-house up.  
He doubles like a hare, stones, stones and staves.  
A hit, a hit !

Ah, would you ?

Head him off.

THEONÖE :

Shame on you, spare him, he is but a child.

VOICES :

A wolf cub can but grow into a wolf,  
Better to take him ere his fangs be grown.  
—He bleeds, he bleeds—trample him underfoot,—  
—There, there, take that from blesséd Babylas  
To Artemis, your demon patroness,—  
Enough, enough, a fine day's work is here,  
There boy, get up.—

THEONÖE :

How white and still he lies,  
Beyond the outrage of ill words and deeds.

VOICES :

Bind you your kerchief round about his brow,  
Lay him upon the steps and come away,  
Make our report unto the Governor.

(ASCLEPIADES, LIBANIUS *and* CALLIXENA, *with pilgrims, open the grille. CALLIXENA carries ION to mid stage, and lays him at the feet of ARTEMIS' image.*)

CALLIXENA.—(*Holding up her hand to the Image*):

Thou Regent of the darkness and the light,  
Queen of the Earth and Swayer of the Sea,  
Sovereign of the full four-season'd year,  
Sister and spouse of the all-governing Sun.  
Goddess and guardian of Incarnate Truth,

We lay thy little servant at thy feet,  
Knowing him safe with thee.

ION.—(*In a low voice*):

. . . To be with her  
Before her crescent wax to full of moon,  
She promis'd it, and she her promise keeps.  
Goddess, my Lady, all the pain is past,  
I never knew my mother, but you lean  
Over me, motherly, hushing me to sleep.  
Good-night, good rest, good fortune.

(*Dies.*)

CALLIXENA.—(*Covers his face*):

Gentle boy,  
Your life, all service, all devotion,  
You liv'd so near the Gods, but little space  
You need to travel 'ere you be with them.

MYSTA.—(*Touches his hand*):

Folding his frail hands for the workless night,  
Lo, he has breath'd his life out, with a smile.

THEONÖE.—(*Throwing herself on to the body of  
ION*):

Ah, tarry, tarry, Ion, wait for me,  
Who weary of this strange bewild'ring world;  
You have escap'd from prison and shall I stay.

(*Rises.*)

Ion is dead, and Julian is dead,  
Ion has flitted, moth-like, from the world,  
And Julian, disdainful of the dust  
That men call Empire, gold, or power here,  
Wings in a strong flight up the burning blue,  
A Roman eagle hungry for the sky  
To gaze for ever on the Sovereign Sun.  
Their goal the Sun and Moon, but what were  
mine?



The pale penumbra of some twilight star,  
 Where a nepenthes Earth has never grown  
 May give me solace of a lasting sleep.  
 For them the door has open'd, now for me !

*( Stands erect on steps RIGHT with arms extended. )*

Ah, weep not faithful as for funeral  
 But rather raise a rapturous nuptial song.  
 Robe me companions, robe me as a bride,  
 Wreathe me with myrtle, for the bridegroom waits.  
 Let all Sabæa in the censer smoke  
 And myriad roses strew the path for me !  
 As from this world of Beauty dispossess'd  
 —My last of song's my sweetest,—I shall pass,  
 The Swan's way, like the lyric Lesbian  
 Who could not mate her dream and her desire.  
 Though every song and sacrifice shall cease  
 A victim self-devoted shall not fail  
 To-day, upon thy Altar, Helios,  
 So let me cease in passionate extasy !

( *Stabs herself.* )

( *The women close round supporting her and lay her on steps RIGHT.* )

MYSTA :

Silent the Sibyl, seal'd the speaking spring.

THEONÖE (*faintly*) :

Sibyl no longer, but a woman now,  
I drink no more the spring Oracular,  
Engarlanded with the prophetic bay,

(*FLAVIAN enters during speech from LEFT with a sword in his hand. He moves as if stunned towards THEONÖE.*)

No more a slave constrainéd of my King,  
Death manumits me from my monarch now,  
Who held my soul in thrall, but not my heart.  
For careless am I that to-morrow's Sun

Shall find in Daphne, the last sibyl dead

(THEONÖE *holds out her hand to FLAVIAN.*)

And dried the sources of the silenc'd spring  
Since all my sorrow is to part with you.

FLAVIAN.—(*Bends over her*):

You are a woman then, I deem'd divine !

THEONÖE :

I am a mortal, to mortality  
Vowed and devoted.

FLAVIAN :

Nay, you must not die.  
The God must save his virgin votaress.

THEONÖE :

The God will work no miracle for me.  
He knows that flame which on his altar burn'd,

Pales in the fire of your warm human love,  
 And did I live,—but it is best to die  
 Since Life has grown too fair, the God too far.

FLAVIAN.—(*Kneels on one knee beside her*):

Halcyon fleeing from the imminent storm  
 Linger a little to conjure the sea,  
 And either bless me with thy love, and live,  
 Or, if thou must die, rather hating me  
 Than loving, leave me, else thou dost bequeathe  
 Undying, soul-dissolving vain regret.  
 Since still there lies less poignant break-of-heart,  
 In 'never could be' than in 'might have been'!

THEONÖE :

I laid aside my lamp to seek a star  
 That burns estrangéd, out of my poor reach,  
 And now, too late, I would my lamp relume—  
 The lamp I scorn'd of happy human love,  
 Which best can light our darkness.

MYSTA.—(*To the women*):

Of her life

The torch burns thin and shaken, like a flame  
Toss'd in the winds of adverse destiny.

THEONŌE.—(*Softly, but clearly*):

I dream'd my life away. I live but now.  
One instant waking, as eternal night  
Is closing in upon me, soft as sleep.

(*Passionately to FLAVIAN.*)

Come, mouth of mortal, consecrate my lips  
Anew, to Aphrodite, from my brow  
Lay by the laurel, crown me with a kiss,  
And set a withering rose upon my hair,  
A rose that should have flower'd a brief day thro'  
Whose bloom was shed or ever the noontide came,  
Who dies as I die, victim to the Sun.

FLAVIAN :

Burn out, false Sun, extinguishing the day !

Or blaze so brightly that you light the world  
 As pyre for her, your priestess and my bride,  
 Who gave you service, aye, who leaves me love !

DAPHNE.—(*To FLAVIAN*) :

Dear, had we only known one perfect hour !  
 Better than long year of the barren bay,  
 Or bitter laurel's bloomless death-in-life  
 To have lain one hour a rose upon your breast !  
 A white rose on my love's heart withering  
 Render you up my sweets, then droop and die  
 Content that I had grac'd your life one hour !

ASCLEPIADES.—(*To the people*) :

Not yet departing that white bird her soul,  
 —The cage confining her but just unclos'd,  
 The sky still strange to her, so late enlarg'd,—  
 Flutters a moment in the open door,

Pausing a space 'ere she take wing for heaven.

THEONÖE.—(*With a little laugh*):

Ion hath hid himself so safe away  
 I cannot find him, he would frighten me  
 Thinking him lost, but well I know at home  
 The first return'd he waits to welcome me.

LIBANIUS.—(*Standing over her*):

Lay by your body, like a faltering flute  
 That marr'd the fuller music of your song.  
 More fortunate than other mortals, you!  
 Their voice still breaks upon a soaring note,  
 Rapture of triumph, passion of despair.  
 Your sweet life, swooning to a perfect pause  
 Sweeps on a mode serene and gradual  
 To the propos'd inevitable chord  
 Closing the full, completed symphony.

THEONÖE.—(*Very softly*) :

The Sun sets early, it is very dark.

(*Dies.*)

FLAVIAN.—(*Prostrate, with face hidden in her robe*) :

How, dark for you? What then for those you leave?  
 A shadowing sorrow that obscures the Sun,  
 A night that never shall break to dawn again.

ASCLEPIADES.—(*Stands on the highest step, above the  
 body of THEONÖE, which he touches with a  
 branch of laurel*) :

Fleet you, sweet Spirit, on your star-ward way !  
 Pass to the presence of King Helios  
 Leaving your lovely body, myrrhine vase,  
 Whence has escap'd the essence volatile,  
 The attar of your world-perfuming days,  
 Exhaléd from the crystal continent,



Too frail for service in this wastrel world  
Where Time and Chance are careless servitors.

*( All raise their hands in prayer. The women strew  
flowers on THEONÖE.)*

VOICES OUTSIDE :

He hath put down the mighty from his seat.  
Julian is fallen and the old Gods dead.



CYTHERA.



## CYTHERA.

## PERSONAGES OF THE PLAY.

COLETTE	}	-	-	-	-	<i>Young Girls.</i>
SYLVIE						
HOU-CHÉ	-	-	-	-	-	<i>A Chinese Girl.</i>
OMBRAGE	-	-	-	-	-	<i>A Young Poet.</i>
CASSANDRE	-	-	-	-	-	<i>An Old Peasant.</i>
SOPHRON	-	-	-	-	-	<i>A Philosopher.</i>
YVES	}	-	-	-	-	<i>Young Artists.</i>
AMIS						
GASPARD						
CELADON						
ANTONY	-	-	-	-	-	<i>A Boy.</i>
FATHER BERNARDINE	-	-	-	-	-	<i>An Aged Priest.</i>
PEREGRINA	-	-	-	-	-	<i>A Stranger Lady.</i>
HERMES	-	-	-	-	-	<i>Her Companion.</i>

*Courtiers, Ladies, Children, and Musicians.*

## PERIOD.—THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

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*The action takes place in a glade of tall old trees just touch'd by Autumn. To the LEFT is a garden—architecture, baluster, and slowly dropping fountain. Thro' a clearing to the RIGHT a blue lagoon melts into a background of misty peaks, and the gilded masts and half-furl'd rainbow sails of an otherwise unseen galley appear.*

*The Farandôle sweeps down and across the glade from RIGHT to LEFT.*

## THE FARANDÔLE.

We'll to the woods no more, lopp'd is the laurel  
 now,  
 The glory gay despoil'd, and leafless every bough !  
 The fair crowns cut away, that grew so green  
 before,  
 Passionate pilgrims pass, we'll to the woods no  
 more !

---

We'll to the woods no more, the green glades  
 nymph bereft  
 In order'd columns fall, like swathe by scythes-  
 man left  
 The woodland shrine is fell'd, we lov'd so well of  
 yore,  
 Poor pilgrims dis-possess'd, we'll to the woods no  
 more.

Ah fall'n, fall'n low, the pillars of our fane !  
 Whose leaf-enwoven walls may rise no more again.  
 From high pil'd roof of boughs, from shadow-  
 dappl'd floor,  
 Passionate pilgrims pass ! We'll to the woods no  
 more !

---

OMBRAGE.—(*Looking after the dancers*):

Passionate pilgrims, so your passions pass,  
 I deem'd the laurel would outlast your loves,  
 The bay grow greenly yet when you were grey,  
 But they have fall'n and your loves abide,  
 Light loves as little lasting as the leaves  
 Renew'd each spring-tide, aye, and better so,  
 Since fleeting love is like the wayside well  
 You drink of, passing, but enduring love  
 Is bitter and unfathomable, salt as brine,  
 Mysterious as an unsounded sea.



(SYLVIE *appears* LEFT *and listens a moment.*)

SYLVIE :

What do you murmur, moody wanderer ?  
 Watching the dancers with a jaundic'd eye !  
 Is nothing lovely in this gay green world ?

OMBORAGE :

Much that is lovely, little to be lov'd,  
 Friends who are fickle, women who are false  
 And planets unpropitious.

SYLVIE :

O, have done,  
 You are the world's eternal malcontent,  
 You nurse a grudge 'gainst all humanity !  
 Your sensibility's so exquisite,  
 The Zephyr seems to you a boreal blast,  
 The Summer sunshine not to be endur'd.

Methinks had you the power, you would call  
 Some all-annihilating ruin down  
 Upon this old earth. When the bearded star  
 Last Autumn seem'd to threat the beechen woods  
 So low it hung, so fiery-menacing,  
 I'd watch you gaze on it as tho' you pray'd  
 Some conflagration hasten on the day  
 Supreme when Earth, dismasted, derelict,  
 Shall roll thro' space her all-dispeopled hull  
 Drifting, abandon'd on the tide of stars  
 To split in shatter'd wrack athwart the prow  
 Of some huge planet's hostile oncoming.  
 What is it that you lack, that you lament,  
 What makes you go so sadly, in the sun?

**OMBRAGE :**

I seek a beauty Earth has not to give,  
 And I am tangl'd in as curs'd a web  
 As ever the weaving sisters wrought awry.

SYLVIE :

I wish you clearer vision, and sunnier mind,  
 What seek you fairer than this glade of ours,  
 Where the Court ladies with their gallants dance,  
 And like a butterfly the Eastern girl  
 The Jesuits sent from China for the Queen,  
 Flutters and poises, while the rippl'd lake  
 Glimmers in sunlit silver thro' the green.

OMBRAGE :

So you perceive it, thus to me appears  
 This—to your vision—so enchanted glade,  
 Trees heavy foliag'd and soon to fall,  
 Too old to stand for many winters more  
 Against the melancholy of a lake  
 Whence fever wakes at starset, and a sward  
 Where ladies over-ripe and listless swains,  
 —These young too long, and these too early  
 old—

Exchange their vows and murmur'd madrigal  
 With lip-devotion from the heart afar,  
 With words of flame that melt not lips that  
     freeze,

In faded light of yellow afternoon  
 They drowse their disillusion with a dance,  
 Subduing sorrow to a saraband,  
 Attuning madness to the minuet  
 And passion to the pavane,

*( To the dancers. )*

While you may,  
 O silken shepherd of the gilded crook,  
 And masquerading satin shepherdess  
 —Your single lamb perfum'd with bergamot,—  
 Play your brocaded pastoral ! play on  
 Your comedy of mimic love and hate,  
 With trivial interlude of muted strings  
 Or far-off winding of a huntsman's horn.  
 Soon the long-brooding thunderstorm shall break

Crashing athwart your dainty passionless play,  
 As when there peals the solemn organ-blast  
 Sonorous, of the deep Autumnal wind—  
 Dirge of cicala and of butterfly—  
 Drowning the languid songs of Summertime !

(SYLVIE *retires up stage, shrugging her shoulders.*  
*During OMBRAGE'S song HOU-CHE' approaches*  
*him. )*

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### STAR-GAZER'S SONG.

OMBRAGE.—(*Sings*) :

Star-stricken-constellation-cross'd  
 I call to the clear unanswering sky,  
 'Where lurks my foe, inimical stars ?  
 Silver Procyon, ruby Mars ?  
 A gem of the glittering galaxy ?'

Was it Aldeboran's rusted gold  
 Mis-rul'd my wayward destiny?  
 Whose was the influence malign?  
 Emerald Altair, was't thine?  
 Thine leaden Saturn, heavy and old?  
 Or Opaline Algol's evil eye?

---

HOU-CHÉ. — (*To OMBRAGE*):

You count yourself star-stricken, what of me?  
 The Weaving Sisters wrought me webs of woe,  
 The Oxen trod me underfoot, the Sieve  
 Sav'd me the sorrow, letting 'scape the joy.  
 The Watery Stars dropp'd rain of tears on me,  
 The northward pointing Dipper never pour'd  
 Me draught of gladness, only wine of myrrh.  
 My Father of a hundred cars was Lord,  
 His sway extending to the four far seas  
 And when he slept in pretious jade in-urn'd

My brother chose his bed in flowers to make  
 And lay him down beneath the willow tree,  
 Till driv'n from rule by a familiar foe  
 He drank of dragon's blood, and ended all.  
 Then was I sold to an Ambassador,  
 And overseas, a slave, in alien court  
 I please your princes with my strange array  
 An exile, in a foreign land, en'slav'd,  
 Sure there are many more ill-starr'd than you.

(HOU-CHE *retires* LEFT. FATHER BERNARDINE *and*  
 SOPHRON *enter from BACK in conversation.*)

FATHER BERNARDINE :

Surely the Golden Age rolls round again  
 Since this fair summer came to bless our shore,  
 Each day brings a fresh wonder to the birth,  
 Or turns some wonted beauty fairer still  
 More meekly musical these crooning doves

More iris-hued their neck, more coralline  
 The little feet that follow where she goes,  
 This Stranger-Lady, pilgrim from the sea,  
 Around whose galley, day-long, dolphins play !

SOPHRON :

Aye, sea-gulls who at starkest winter-tide  
 Still shun the inland neighbourhood of man,  
 Come idly circling all the noonday through,  
 And shake with wings aslant the rose-leaves  
                   down  
 Upon their Siren-Mistress !

FATHER BERNARDINE :

The lagoon

Warmer and bluer growing at every tide  
 Bears from the open ocean to our shore  
 A sand more silver, amber and ambergris.  
 Treasure of rosy-hued or emerald weed,  
 Dyed with intenser colour, fairer shells



Than I had thought our cold sea held in store,  
 But sure some genial influence abroad  
 Breathes from the deep or showers from on high,  
 For on the gray wall of our abbey grange  
 An old vine droops, tho' trebly secular  
 With weight of grapes beyond man's memory,  
 And as gold day turns silver evening  
 We mark, rose-flaming in a violet sky  
 The planet Hesper burn as bright, as clear  
 As wedding torch of epithalamy  
 Lit for this old world's spousal with a star !

(FATHER BERNARDINE *and* SOPHRON *pass out* LEFT.)

(*Enter* COLETTE, SYLVIE, *and* YOUNG MEN.)

COLETTE :

Here let us rest, one cannot dance all day !  
 Our farandôle is finish'd, soon the Court  
 Will tread their study'd stately minuet,  
 Pacing and pausing as the cadence falls.

L

SYLVIE :

Bring me a draught from yonder brimming urn  
 A drowsy river-nymph lets lean, and drip,  
 Just now it were as welcome as a cup  
 Drawn from the faëry people's wishing-well,  
 'The well in the wood, where the dearest dream  
     comes true'  
 Our grandames, spinning, us'd to sing us of.

COLETTE :

I had forgotten the strange old spinning song.  
 'The well in the wood, where the dearest dream  
     comes true,  
 The wood where grows the herb of Heart-  
     content,  
 O'er which the trusting youth or maiden, bent,  
 Finds dream-fulfilment, aye, and Hearts'-ease  
     too !'  
 That's but the burthen, I forget the song !

YVES :

I fear that well ran dry long years ago,  
 But far in the beechen wood the sources spring  
 Which feed this fountain, think to your content,  
 This is the true well's water, drink and dream  
 And waking have your wish !

ALL :

The cup, the cup !

AMIS :

If that be all, drink you at any spring,  
 'Twill serve your purpose, act but steadfastly,  
 Waste no while wishing, will and dare and do !  
 The dream-sick soul is barren, the virile mind  
 Begets and brings his purpose to the birth,  
 Moulding the plastic forces of his life  
 That way or this as bids a strenuous will.  
 So dare to live your poem and your play  
 Nor keep distinct the deed and the desire,  
 The act's anticipation, and the act !

CELADON :

If we had found the woodland wishing-well,  
What would you wish for ?

AMIS :

What does youth and prime  
And old age wish for, Very Beauty.

SOPHRON :

Aye !

But what is Very Beauty, seeking which  
Sculptor, painter, and poet have differing aims,  
Young Anthony still scribbles in his book  
Whilst Yves the Sonnet's sequence still pursues,  
Yet each is longing for and seeking—what ?  
And where to find it, that we all would know.

GASPARD :

Maybe that I can tell you, there are days  
When Nature seems so near to us, so kind,

So comprehending, you might almost deem  
 All Earth were standing tiptoe, in a hush  
 Breathless, expectant of some spoken word  
 Breath'd from the sky or whisper'd from the sea  
 A spell to heal the hurt of the wounded world,  
 To win discordant stars to tune again.  
 So must we dwell with Nature till the hour  
 When she reveal her secret !

AMIS :

Art for me !

For art is nature better'd.

GASPARD :

Say you so ?

AMIS :

Nature is like the ever-flowing spring  
 Running to waste at whiles, and breaking bounds,  
 Art is the wilful water canaliz'd,

Stor'd for refreshment and for pleasure baths  
 Breaking in fountains to delight the eye.  
 Since Beauty dwell alone in mind of man  
 Nature knows not that she is beautiful,  
 And those ideas which all confusédly  
 And all obscurely Nature may present  
 Art orders, varys, harmonizes, clears.

SOPHRON :

How, then, define your beauty—what it is?

GASPARD :

Diversity reduc'd to unity,  
 The multiple made simple.

AMIS :

Nay, for me,  
 A certain consonance of things diverse.

CELADON :

The outcome of an order'd energy,  
 Contrast and correspondence.

YVÈS :

Symmetry,  
 Variety, or regularity.

SOPHRON :

You seem but ill-agreéd, and I affirm  
 That art of Sculptor, Painter, Poet, Bard  
 Is Charm and Pleasure, never Strength and Life.  
 Truth is the only living Beauty. You  
 Who prate of Very Beauty Visible,  
 You seem—at least to us Philosophers—  
 Most like to children playing on the shore  
 To one who has explor'd the middle sea,  
 The sunless depth where groves unearthly wave,  
 Of giant weed and growth unfathomable.  
 Who, safe escap'd the dreadful Remora

And clasping polyp, comes to shore again,  
 Breathing a deep draught of the living air,  
 Shaking the tangled weed from breast and brow,  
 To find his deeds of deep discovery  
 Discounted and disputed, travers'd, weigh'd,  
 As false or true, by forward babbling boys  
 Who guage the dim recesses of the deep  
 By ankle-deep exploring of the bay !  
 Truth is a pearl that lies in the deep sea  
 A snowy peak that towers overhead,  
 Your ' Beauty's ' but a mocking mirage !

OMBRAGE :

Aye,

But we who on the desert border dwell  
 Prefer the mirage to the wilderness,  
 The imag'd waters to the barren sands,  
 We know that brackish springs for us must  
     serve  
 We seek no draught of water from that lake,



Yet love its very unreality,  
 Catching a fancy'd coolness from its blue,  
 A feign'd refreshment from its waving palms,  
 Content, so that it veil the burning sand  
 That rings us round about, inevitably.

YVES.—(*To SOPHRON*):

And since you say that unattainable  
 Your Truth, that is the only Beauty dwells  
 Thron'd on a high crag, out of reach, afar,  
 Past waters ferryless, unfordable,  
 Unnavigable lakes and bridgeless streams,  
 How know you but that some delusive mist  
 Colour the sheer peak to a lovely hue,  
 A black rock masquing in a painted veil,  
 Unlovely, barren?

CELADON :

Fairer, better far  
 Than sterile Truth, a fertile Fantasy !  
 A lovely dream than dun reality !

FATHER BERNARDINE :

Let be, let be, to all who love her well  
Still Beauty speaks a universal tongue  
Unknowing strife of Babel-jargoning,  
And Art can make you from your servitude  
Of task unlovely, uncongenial toil,  
Free citizens of dear Callipolis  
The Soul's ideal city ! Never deem  
That Beauty is a thing remote, ensky'd  
Outside our daily being, think her not  
A parasite upon the Tree of Life,  
But that fair bough's supremest blossoming.  
Essential Beauty mortals never know  
But Nature's beauty, its reflection,  
Partaker in it, but by matter marr'd  
The fair face mirror'd in a metal dim.  
Still when very Beauty comes to birth  
Led of a legend, steering by a star,  
The world's Wise Men set forth on pilgrimage,  
And if they find it they are bless'd indeed,

And if they seek it still, and never find  
 Yet are they bless'd in seeking, till life's end,  
 When, as we hope, the very Beauty's self  
 May in a distant country smile on each  
 Who thought, who sought, who wrought,  
 Who fought for her !

(FATHER BERNARDINE *retires up stage.* COLETTE  
*and GILLES pass to front of stage from LEFT.*)

COLETTE :

Have you then nothing you would say to me?  
 Each day's the same, we wander hand in hand  
 You never tell me that my eyes are blue  
 Nor mark the 'sunshine captive in my hair,'  
 That is what someone tells me—you are dumb,  
 Yet once you used to say you loved me, lost  
 You seem, by daylight, blinking like an owl  
 Who waits for sunset.

GILLES :

Aye, the Moon for me !

For I am of the lunar brotherhood.

She gazed upon us in our cradle-sleep

And with her whiteness all our cheeks grew pale

Our wild eyes open'd wider, wondering,

Are glaucous as the grey moon-glassing sea,

Minions we of the fantastick Moon

Who sways her wistful wayward votaries,

And dowers them with kinship to the tides,

With wills that shift like reefs of quaking sand,

With fitful calm and fickle energy.

Our wits unstable wax and wane with Her !

COLETTE :

Fantastick truly the Moon's minions,

Who leave the world that roars beside their gate

To listen in an echo-breathing shell

How murmur dreamy memories of the sea.

Who mourn the bud when full the blossom blows

The blossom as the fruit succeeds the flower,  
 And, all too late, the fruit when boughs are bare !  
 Who, when they should be doing dream so late  
 They sleep the clock round, wilder'd with false  
     fires,  
 Waking, deem sunset sunrise, dusk the dawn,  
 The star of evening the morning star.  
 Fantastick truly is the moonstruck crew !

GILLES :

But when we leave this uncongenial earth,  
 Then is our guerdon, then our great reward,  
 Departing, happy, the luminous path we take  
 Where melts the mirror'd brightness of our  
     star  
 Reticulate in silver on the sea,  
 And happy, follow the green and silver way  
 Up to the regent of our lunacy,  
 Our Goddess, Mistress, Queen and Mother Moon.

COLETTE :

Mock me no more with moonshine promises  
Go and be happy with a moon-maiden !

(COLETTE *and* GILLES *go off* RIGHT *and* LEFT.  
SYLVIE *and* CASSANDRE *enter from* BACK.)

SYLVIE :

Again I tell you, only for the child  
And for the sake of Ysabeau, my friend  
Who left her baby motherless, for them  
I may consent to marry you, but now  
We'll talk no more of it, I'll rest me here,  
They spoke of Beauty but a while ago.

CASSANDRE :

You think too much of Beauty, 'tis a thing  
Outside of our existence, which beseems  
Great churches or the palaces of Kings  
But has no place within a cottage door,

For poor folks Beauty is utility,  
 And fitness, home-spun habit and grogram gown.  
 Care for the woven web and plenishing gear  
 And healthful labour shall be your concern,  
 With no fantastick care for Beauty.

SYLVIE :

Nay,

You will not chide me, leaning at the loom,  
 If from the lattice I may gaze at whiles  
 Upon the giant pear-tree at your door,  
 I us'd to dream the fairies lov'd the tree  
 And I would garland it each holyday,  
 At dawn and twilight it would whisper me  
 A message from the fairies.—

CASSANDRE :

Ah, the pear,

With all its bounteous blossom, it fruited ill,  
 I fell'd it lately, grubb'd the root away,

And turn'd its place into the cabbage garth.  
 It may not murmur to you any more  
 Of fairies dancing under the cold blue moon  
 But whisper you of hearth-warm sanctities,  
 And fireside duty, and the cares of home,  
 Gilding our pewter as the log flames high.

SYLVIE :

Fell'd the old pear tree, silver in the moon?  
 That shower'd each springtime down its scented  
     snow  
 Which melted not on brow or bosom, nay,  
 You should have ask'd me 'ere you fell'd the tree  
 That was my childhood's glory, and the grace  
 Of that poor cottage; O, I thought to take  
 Your dead wife's place, because I lov'd her child,  
 But now I see you'll never understand  
 One mood of mine, and I should sit and hear  
 A voice that cry'd at midnight by the door,  
 A footfall lingering, loth to leave the place



Where late she rul'd her household, I should feel  
 A sighing presence as the log burn'd low,  
 And mark a gray shade bend a moment's space  
 To bless—if ghost may bless—the cradled babe,  
 The mother left behind her, friend farewell,  
 Seek a bride elsewhere, I am not for you !

CASSANDRE :

Here is a pretty coil about a tree !

---

(PEREGRINA'S *song is heard in the distance. After first verse she appears down CENTRE with HERMES.*)

### PEREGRINA'S SONG.

Far, very far, steer by my star,  
 Leaving the loud world's 'wildering clamour,  
 In the mid-sea waits you maybe  
 The isle of glamour where Beauty reigns

From coasts of commerce and myriad-marted  
 Towns of traffic by wide seas parted,  
 Past shoals unmapp'd and by reefs uncharted  
 The single-hearted my isle attains !

---

Under a sky cloudless and high,  
 The blue sea's pearl and the green world's wonder  
 Dreams thro' her day by that fair bay  
 Where no waves thunder, where no winds veer,  
 No friends forgetful, for hearts remember  
 When no change mars and no years dismember,  
 Where the flame sinks never to ashen ember  
 Where no December deflowers the year.

---

Each soul may find faith to her mind,  
 Seek you the peace of the groves Elysian,  
 Or the ivy twine and the wands of vine,  
 The Dionysian, Orphic rite ?

To share the joy of the Mænad's leaping  
 In frenzy'd train thro' the dusk glen sweeping  
 The dew-drench'd dance, and the star-watch'd  
     sleeping,  
 Or temple-keeping, in Vestal white?

---

Ye who regret suns that have set  
 Lo, each God of the ages golden  
 Here is enshrin'd, ageless and kind,  
     Unbeholden the dark years through.  
 Their faithful oracles yet bestowing  
 By laurel's whisper and clear stream's flowing  
 Or the leafy stir of the Gods own going  
     In oak-trees blowing may answer you !

---

In my fair land perfected stand  
 What artist's dreaming and poet's leisure  
 Only in thought fashion'd and wrought  
     For very pleasure, for Beauty's sake.

The bronze cast fair to the heart's desire,  
 The sweet song fashion'd of tears and fire  
 No languid string and no jarring wire,  
       Where no hands tire, no voices break !

---

YVES :

Thank you, sweet Lady, for your silver song  
 We at the noon of this sweet Summer's day  
 Told of our aspirations and desires,  
 And you have wound them in a melody  
 And show'd us there the Beauty that we crav'd  
 And fairer than we deem'd it.

PEREGRINA :

So young sir,  
 Men still love Beauty ?

YVES :

Ease and wealth and power  
 Men for the most part follow, but a few,

And those few young men very Beauty seek.  
That seems the tragedy of growing old,  
To lose the dear ideal you saw and sought  
With happy fever all your April days,  
Renounce your dream and sit contented down  
To beef and broth, ambrosia all forgot !

PEREGRINA :

Yet here is a happy boy who dreams awake,  
What is your name, who lean upon your book,  
And so intently scan the festal scene,  
Drawing the dancers in their shadowy glade ?

ANTONY :

My name is Antony.

PEREGRINA :

Ah, once I knew  
An Antony who lost the world for love,  
As you for Beauty you shall still pursue,

A Beauty subtler, more evasive yet,  
 A vision fainter, fairer, farther still  
 Than ever your eye may mark, your hand  
       translate !

That fleeting vision seeking, you shall know  
 The soul of Sorrow in the guise of Joy,  
 The sob that breaks thro' all the lilt of lutes,  
 Madness of Mirth that turns to tears so soon,  
 And still the shadowy sighing in the song !  
 Not the green rapture of the riotous Spring  
 Shall sway your brooding fancy, not the noon,  
 But Autumn's tenderer, more regretful tone,  
 The strange sea-green of skys crepuscular,  
 The bitter even-scent of box and bay,  
 The glimmering whiteness of the garden gods,  
 Thro' earlier falling dusk of the yellowing year,  
 These most shall match your mood, when sunset  
       brings

The violet sky holding one hopeless star,  
 The tragic dusk that deepens to despair !

## FATHER BERNARDINE :

He is a strange child, for he will not play  
 With other urchins, racing, or at ball.  
 His pencil never absent from his hand  
 As tho' he fear'd that night would fall too soon,  
 He'll watch the fountains all an Autumn day,  
 Mount and descend against the sky serene,  
 Until the gloaming deepen thro' the glade.

## PEREGRINA :

His hand shall falter and his purpose fail  
 Attainment, as the sky-aspiring jets  
 Of frustrate fountains falling back in spray  
 Sink sighing to their marble bason's pen,  
 Missing the goal they strove for, with a sob  
 To find the stars so unattainable.  
 Still seeking very Beauty, as a moth  
 Flitting across a hall of festal lights  
 May feverishly beat a little hour

Against an alabaster-guarded lamp,  
Craving the flame, in passionate impotence,  
Vainly, and passing leave for only trace  
The delicate dusk that deck'd a downy wing,  
—So evanescent, so ephemeral—  
Out of the dark emerging, into the dark  
Returning.

FATHER BERNARDINE :

Let him only love the light,  
And seek it earnestly, all will be well !

PEREGRINA :

Who is this gentle, placid, kind old man  
Whose long white locks frame so serene a face ?

OMBRAGE :

He is our good priest, Father Bernardine.



PEREGRINA :

So there are priests yet, servants of what Gods ?  
 Is this a priestess this so rainbow-hued,  
 Like some bright Eastern bird ?

HOU-CHE :

No Lady, no !

Incense I burn no more to any Gods,  
 Mine own forsook me, and the new are strange,  
 But you, O mistress, I would choose to serve  
 Likest a lady on a lotus set  
 Out Goddess of all Beauty and all Love  
 Who smil'd on me 'neath favourabler skys.  
 And I believe you come from far away  
 From some more happy to this sadder star !

PEREGRINA :

To me as unto you their Gods are strange,  
 For, in the temples I was us'd to know,  
 Inscrutable and immemorial,

Clad in their strict and all-encincturing  
 Close-pleated vesture hieratical  
 The old Gods sate and watch'd the world go by.  
 Their writhen mouth and long-drawn dreaming  
     eyes  
 Frozen to smiling immobility,  
 Their calm brows set in vague unearthly gaze  
 Contemplative of unimagi'n'd space,  
 Looking beyond the incense and the lights,  
 Impassive of the pains, the pray'rs of men !

**HOU-CHE :**

Sought or unsought still the old Gods endure !  
 Near to my home, the other side the world,  
 A God awaits his vanish'd worshippers,  
 Deep in the still recesses of a wood  
 Where once a mighty city teem'd with men  
 A myriad fires smok'd, a thousand bells  
 Called from the temples years and years along !  
 Temple and town have pass'd to nothingness,

But still among the cedars secular,  
 Deep in the dim wood still the sun salutes  
 The musing golden God who agelessly,  
 —Breathing no incense but the pillar'd pines—  
 Deathlessly dreams the lagging years away.

**PEREGRINA :**

Alas, no more thro' dewy underwoods  
 Do Dionysos frenzy'd worshippers—  
 Dight in the dappl'd vesture of a fawn,  
 These rosy-hued thro' Coan garment seen,  
 These frankly white but for their ivy-crown,  
 These wreathing verdant clusters of the vine,  
 Purple and amber twined with trailing green,—  
 With clash of cymbal and with sobbing flute  
 Divide the darkness with opposing song  
 Of rousing rapture, or a low lament ;  
 But now you serve some stern ascetic God,  
 You seem to count it shame that a form be fair,  
 And muffle you like vestals !

HERMES :

## Nakedness

In the palaistra or among the vines  
 Bathed of the dew, and sunshine-sanctified,  
 Was God-like once that Beast-like is to-day !  
 All innocent joys and frank are turned morose  
 And harmful made, albeit more sweet by you  
 Who spice each joy with savour of a sin !  
 Yet tho' the vile impute his villainy  
 To Beauty, still the marble Goddess stands  
 A statue scribbled by the lounge's coal  
 With trivial inscription, or unclean,  
 Calm and impassive, heedless of the stain,  
 Since one night's dew shall wash her white once  
 more.

COLETTE.—(*To PEREGRINA*) :

Lady, fair stranger, like a soothsayer  
 You prophesied for little Antony,  
 I have a——friend, you mark him yonder, Gilles,  
 Have you no cure for his moon-madness ?

PEREGRINA :

Aye !

He is of those who fear, too much, the sun,  
 The gold great sun who all our lives should light,  
 Too much you minister to the maddening moon,  
 Mother of all Thessalian Sorcery,  
 Strange spells and enigmatic oracles,  
 Come forth into the sunlight from the dusk,  
 And find how fair are flowers of the earth !

(PEREGRINA, *smiling, joins hands of GILLES and COLLETE.*)

OMBRAGE.—(*To PEREGRINA*) :

Lady, or Goddess, for you seem to me  
 Fairer than mortal, come from very far,  
 Those glens and glades where Mænads dance  
 and dwell  
 You told us lately of. Are those your home ?  
 'Ere you shall pass as strangely as you came,

Leave us some message for our comfort. Tell  
 Us Beauty-seekers how we may attain,  
 How we may hope to hale our Goddess down  
 From coursing on the high star-haunted hills,  
 She only breathes that thin transcendant air,  
 Drinking the clear spring at its icy source,  
 And we who fain would climb, grow faint and fall,  
 Since Very Beauty, true Philosophy  
 Dwell far, so far !

PEREGRINA :

O single-hearted, seek !  
 What though the quest should seem as vain as his,  
 Who strives to trace the sources of the Nile,  
 Yet sometime it has chanc'd clear vision'd men  
 Have almost found the very Beauty's fount,  
 As Spring-diviners with their speaking staves,  
 Threading the forest light on hidden wells.  
 Sculptor, musician, painter, poet, aye—  
 The poet chiefly maybe, as he leans

To catch the echo of Her flying feet,  
 To mark the flutter of Her waving veil,  
 Still seeking Beauty as a blind man light,  
 A babe the breast, seaman the pilot star.  
 If but Her shadow fall across his book  
 His verse is ageless attar, in a vase  
 Close-seal'd against the tyranny of Time.  
 You take it from it's shelf, and lift the lid,  
 Scent of a long dead Summer breathes again  
 Subtle and sweet as this last June's, that pass'd  
 With all her thronging roses !

**HERMES :**

Carve or sing,

Model or paint, but ever in your work  
 Set what is best in Beauty's honour, grave  
 Your golden sentence with a golden pen,  
 For Style is the expression fair and feat  
 Of exquisite impression. So the die  
 The minter presses on the molten gold

Gives out the perfect medal to the world.  
 Each face of guardian God or hero-head,  
 Their clear-cut brows bound with the victor's  
     palm,  
 With towers crown'd or bays, or ears of corn,  
 As power or plenty, wealth or glory will,  
 And Genius that God-engraven die  
 We call.

SYLVIE :

    Must Beauty ever be richly hous'd  
 In splendid palace roof'd of fretted gold  
 With pretious marble colonnades arow ?

PEREGRINA :

Nay, often with the simplest, Beauty dwells  
 If flaw'd your agate, your cornelian,  
 Your oriental alabaster be,  
 Still may a fragment fashion'd to a cup  
 Sweeten the homely draught of every day.



Even a beechen bowl is beautiful,  
 A cedar, fallen, makes a fragrant press,  
 Or breathes it's sweetness out in glowing fire.  
 Nothing so grand that it awake not joy,  
 Nothing so slight but you may joy in it,  
 Fragrance of flowers, cool of water-spring,  
 A Gothic Fane's capricious fantasy  
 As in an Attic Temple's line and law,  
 Savour of fruit as warmth of winter fire  
 The silver stars, the splendour of the sun,  
 The placid and the vex'd complaining sea !

OMBRAGE :

Lady, have you no oracle for me,  
 What of my future ?

PEREGRINA :

Like the wandering bird  
 That builds no nest, that has no resting-place,  
 That never furls a travel-weary wing,

But evermore, reposeless voyager  
Drifting in tempest, floating in the calm,  
Oars with untiring flight the deep of heav'n,  
You'll wander the wide world thro', preferring  
still

To calm of Summertime the Winter's storm,  
Leaning to hear, in Autumn, by the sea  
The myriad voices of the deep's despair,  
Lamenting some irreparable wrong,  
Some incommunicable agony,  
Or listen thro' the sunny Autumn noon  
To sky and ocean's speechful silences.  
Still leaving the order'd hearth, the guarded  
flame,  
To follow a glimmering lure of wandering lights,  
The faltering fires of some failing star,  
You'll know the insistent summons of the dusk,  
The unquiet prompting of the wooing woods,  
That stirs the ageless sylvan in his sleep,  
That calls the slumb'ring woodman to wake.

The Faun, the Centaur harbours in you yet,  
 Thrilling responsive to the night-fall's spell,  
 As passing to the wizard woods you find  
 A philtre in the drenching of the dew ;  
 And ever waking or sleeping you shall hear  
 A soft wind blowing from behind the moon,  
 From past the sunset, from beyond the stars,  
 Whispering you remembrance and regret,  
 —A sweet regret, a poignant memory—  
 That once you met with Beauty face to face,  
 And that She pass'd from you upon Her way !  
 But what blows hither as the night-wind wakes ?

OMBRAGE :

The first sun - wither'd leaves come rustling  
                   down,  
 Approaching Autumn's avant-couriers  
 Clad in the russet of his liveries,  
 Heralding in tumultuous Equinox.

Soon shall the flail o' the wind, the threshing  
rains

Winnow the wet woods with the vans of storm.

PEREGRINA :

Already Autumn, I must seek my ship  
And steer a far course to my Island Home,  
The lost Atlantis.

OMBRAGE :

Not Cythera, then ?

PEREGRINA :

Not to the old Cythera, ruin'd now  
By generations of barbaric men,  
An arid rock where all the groves are dead,  
The Lover's roses as the Sybil's bay  
And Poet's laurel, only now remain  
For wine and honey spill'd and spoil'd and sped,  
Cliffs amber yellow like dun honeycomb

Rising at evening from the wine-hued sea  
Violet.

OMBRAGE :

Mourning, for a present past  
That rose from those fair waters long ago.  
Yet still that presence broods upon the sea,  
And I shall go the gladder all my days  
Nursing the memory, the sweet regret  
For that I once have seen the living light,  
A flame late litten at that sacred fire  
An emanation of the Essential Beauty,  
Which burns for ever in the Absolute  
Immutable, immortal, immanent,  
Many and diverse be the lamps that hold  
From age to age the ever-burning flame,  
But one the light that shines within them still !

PEREGRINA :

Impending Autumn threatens, I must pass  
Before the swallow, soon to greet again

The denizens of the dear elder world,  
 Oread, Centaur, Nereid, and Faun,  
 Who wait for me in my far island home.

HERMES :

Yet even here they are not wholly dead,  
 In gallant horseman and a perfect horse  
 The once-dissever'd Centaur lives again,  
 For heart-whole heady rapture of the chase,  
 The forest-haunting lad is half a Faun,  
 Spoiling the vineyard, harrying the hive,  
 The wine-warm'd peasant a Silenus seems.  
 The girl who meets her lover in the woods,  
 Who bathes at noontide in the forest pool  
 Is almost Nymph.

PEREGRINA :

Aye, still Eternal Youth

As Dionysos cries upon the hills  
 Holloaing up the hunt, each April-tide

As young Adonis wakes again from sleep,  
 With the divine renascence of the year.  
 So long as the native gladness of the world,  
 The pure primæval passion of the Spring  
 Breathe in the soft wind, pulse in the sea wave,  
 Stir in the blood and beacon from the eye,  
 Reigns, and shall reign the Universal Pan,  
 Who is not dead, who never died at all,  
 Nor ever can die whilst the world endure !

PEREGRINA :

*( To the group in foreground. )*

Farewell good people, dwell you here secure,  
 And lead you still your comfortable lives  
 Thrill'd by no passion, stung by no despair,  
 Your dense peace vex'd by no fraternal strife,  
 Of mind and soul and body's enmity,  
 Of earthly influence warring with the sky's.

## OMBRAGE :

Yet who shall say they are not happiest, these,  
 Whose dull soul never quickens with a pang,  
 Who never know the dear divine unrest,  
 The stirring of a worthy discontent,  
 Fretted by no such fever as attends  
 The sprouting of the vans celestial  
 Which wither'd from us when to earth we fell !  
 The clods' indifference to a wooing star,  
 Is theirs, and crass contentment of the clod.

*( To the By-standers. )*

But shun you Beauty as a very bane  
 Which like the sea in equinoctial might  
 May break the dyke that guards your sluggish  
     lives,  
 Sweeping unwonted currents on your calm,  
 Ruinous, overwhelming——



PEREGRINA :

So farewell,  
For I withdraw me to my island home.

OMBRAGE :

You pass, you leave us ?

PEREGRINA :

Yonder lies my barque,  
Twinning herself upon the crystal tide,  
So clear so sharp her mere reflection.  
You wonder which is shadow, and which is ship,  
If both be real or both a fantasy  
Moulded of magic this mid-August eve,  
And I must pass upon that galley of dream  
To my fair island of unfading May  
Set in a sea of sempiternal Spring.  
Follow me, find me, thro' the ivory gate  
Lies the way thither, to the happy land,  
The fortunate isle where the dearest dream comes  
true !

GILLES :

The Moon is far, here's for the moon-flower !

*(As PEREGRINA and HERMES retire up the stage  
a song is heard from the ship.)*

---

ISLAND FORTUNATE.

Fare fortunately mariners ! who steer neath Summer  
skys

To nearer ports, for surer gain, full freighted  
argosies.

Your trafficking unhinder'd be by harms the Fates  
inflict

The blind oncoming of the berg, or galley derelict.  
Better ye deem to tempt the deep than moulder at  
the quay,

Sure, what the heedful merchant dare, we—how  
much rather—may.

All ocean patent to our quest, who seek with hearts  
elate

The shining happy palaces of Island Fortunate.

---

We pass'd a convoy guarded fleet in sunset waters  
rock'd

The careful coasters cried to us, the men of battle  
mock'd

As half regretfully we gazed where floating fair  
and free

The pennons of the fighting ships dipp'd silken to  
the sea.

We know not how their traffic throve, nor how the  
battle sped

But these we left to count their pelf, and these to  
tell their dead.

As vain their dream of petty gain, as theirs of  
martial state

To us who sought the wide world through for  
Island Fortunate.

What waits us, once our goal attain'd? For each  
 one as I deem

The utter realising of his every dearest dream

I think that as our wave-worn ship drops anchor in  
 that bay

A honey-colour'd harvest-moon will mock the paler  
 day

Lighting the league-long gardens up, whose hidden  
 hollows hold

The ruddy glow of oranges, the citron's paler gold,  
 Whilst,—sunder'd half a life-time long by some  
 untoward fate

Lost lovers wait to welcome us to Island Fortunate.

---

Our company grows still the less, for certain of  
 our train

A seeming Eldorado once gleam'd golden from  
 the main,

I think that on that barren reef some specious  
 magic burn'd,

Never our comrades came again, never their boat  
return'd.

And some one long long Winter slept and waked  
no more in Spring,

And some were lost who rowed at night to hear  
the mermaid sing.

More witching music they had heard had they but  
heart to wait

Melody passing sirens' song, in Island Fortunate.

---

Young-hearted as at setting forth—grey-headed,  
say the churls?

'Tis that the sea-spray dusts with white our salt-  
encumber'd curls.

Still in a wild and wintry waste we fare upon our  
quest

Not elsewhere can we find a home, nor elsewhere  
a rest.

To catch what wind of Heaven may blow, our sails  
are still unfurl'd,

We sail the vast uncharted deep, the wondrous  
water-world

Somewhere to find, somewhere to see, somehow to  
win, though late

The fair far haven in the sea of Island Fortunate.

---

Cradled by some consoling dream he who should  
vigil keep

An hour before a shameful death, sinks smiling  
into sleep.

And Mirage-mock'd, the cast-away, scanning a  
sail-less sea

Leaps headlong down the glassy deep in meadow  
green to be ;

It turns the wasted wilderness to water'd paradise  
Last vision, as the sandstorm blinds the dying  
pilgrim's eyes.

Our life is ruled by Mirages, and just beyond the  
gate

Whether of Horn or Ivory lies Island Fortunate.

