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# *The Passing of Mars*

A Modern Morality Play

By

MARGUERITE WILKINSON

Author of "In Vivid Gardens" and  
"By a Western Wayside"



*Once, long ago, a peasant greatly desired to visit his king that he might obtain of him judgment and equity, and perhaps find favor. But he said within himself, "I am a faulty man; a homespun smock will scarce commend me to a king. I will stay at home and let others plead my case." And when his case was taken before the king, (who was a good and just man) the king said, "Why did he not come himself? Homespun I can forgive if a man bring his soul and stand before me bravely. I will have no dealings with go-betweens."*

*Here then, is my work, faulty, and plainly clad, but brave enough to go humbly before you who read and think, and by your thinking rule. If it find favor, it can be clothed anew in finer raiment. If judgment and equity prevail against it, surely it is well enough shrouded.*

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To the memory of  
my father,  
a strong and valiant lover of the soul of man, and  
to his brave mate  
my mother

By ~~the~~ ~~author~~  
The White House.

PERSONS OF THE PLAY

MARS, the ancient god of war.  
 SOUL OF MAN, his immortal enemy.  
 CAPITAL, } in cartoon costumes.  
 LABOR, }  
 RELIGION, two personalities.  
 CULT, the bastard brother of RELIGION, a fantastic  
*poseur*.  
 FLIP, a modern, the sophisticated intellect of large  
 cities.  
 SCIENCE, a strong youth in laboratory costume.  
 POETRY, a serene old bard with a lyre.  
 MUSIC, a fair woman.  
 GLAMOUR, her seducer, wearing tinsel.  
 TRADE, a harlot.  
 THE OLD MOTHER, a plain sibyl of the people.  
 Men, women and children of the fighting nations of  
 Europe in national peasant costumes.

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ANOTHER WOMAN

Well, there's a plenty. We are neighbors all  
 And what one lacks the others can supply,  
 For all the world will share the harvest feast.

THE OLD MOTHER,

Yea, all the world is here, or will be soon,  
 Save my good mate and my five strapping lads  
 Who were my world and rotted years ago.

THE WOMAN

There, mother, there—forget the old sad past,  
 For all the world is sweet with harvest scent,  
 And we are glad. Come, share with us our joy.

THE OLD MOTHER,

Forget? Forget? Who tells me to forget?  
 A silly chit with everything to learn,  
 A ninny who has lived while life is peace  
 And therefore thinks that peace has always been  
 As it is now. Say, girl, would you forget  
 That man of yours torn from between your breasts  
 And sent to splice with sabres and with shells?  
 Could you forget a baby's filthy death  
 By plague or famine or infesting flies—  
 A son's abasement or a daughter's rape—  
 These things could you forget? I never shall.  
 I would be of another race and kind,  
 A woman who remembers what has been,  
 Who knows that some day it may come again—

THE FIRST WOMAN

Poor soul, there—I am sorry. I did not know.  
 We speak but foolishly to soothe a pain  
 Which we have never felt.

THE OLD MOTHER,

Ah, pray that you  
 May never, never know what I have known.

THE WOMAN

Ay, that I will. But come, and share our joy,  
 For there is none to-night to presage woe.

THE OLD MOTHER,

None save myself. My old bones feel the cold—  
 I sense a sorry blackening of the sun  
 As night comes on, and any heap of fruit,  
 Yes, any wagon load of yellow grain  
 May hide from these old eyes their enemy.

THE WOMAN

*(shrugging her shoulders)*

Well, hide your grief, poor soul, if grieve you must;  
 The men, who look for rest, will soon be home.

THE OLD MOTHER,

But not to me are any comings home,  
 Although I keep The World Inn day by day. . . . .  
 Yet 'tis an ill thing and a sign of trouble  
 For to be weeping when the men come home—  
 The men, who should find smiles at set of sun,  
 Who should be fed and oodled to their rest,  
 These splendid children, when they come to us.  
 I will make ready. I will dry my tears.

*(Exit The Old Mother into the World Inn. Voices are heard  
 without, coming nearer.)*

A WOMAN

The men!

ANOTHER WOMAN

The men!

THE SCENE

*The World Field, at harvest time and set of sun.  
 On the right is The World Inn, and, in front of it,  
 on the ground, a prostrate figure, clad in black  
 and bound, SOUL OF MAN. On the left, near the  
 front, are trees and flowers, piles of fruit and vege-  
 tables, a wagon load of grain, and, in the foreground,  
 a tangle of vines, in which lies MARS, fast asleep. On  
 the steps of The World Inn sits THE OLD MOTHER  
 watching the women of all nations who are sitting  
 sewing, chatting and tending babies in the center.  
 At the back a road winds across from left to right  
 and young girls are walking up and down with arms  
 around each other's shoulders, singing and laughing.  
 The melody ("The Happy Farmer") dies away gradu-  
 ally and a church bell is heard—The Angelus. There  
 is a religious silence lasting for a moment or two.*



A WOMAN

The Angelus!

ANOTHER

Already day is gone  
 And gone almost as soon as we began it.  
 So goes it nowadays!

THE OLD MOTHER,

It was not so—  
 Days did not hurry through sweet hours to joy  
 When I was young, when I was bride and wife!

FIRST WOMAN

Another blessed eventide is come  
 To bring to happy women-folk at last  
 Their weary men, all hungry for their supper.

A CHILD

And some for me. I wants my suppie too!

ANOTHER WOMAN

My husband—there he is!

A CHILD

Here is my daddy! Daddy, gimme a kiss!

*(The men enter in groups of twos and threes with dinner pails and tools. They find their families or greet their sweethearts and most of the happy couples go off down the road together at the left. A few enter The World Inn. There is the rattle of dishes, laughter and good cheer. The sun sinks perceptibly and it grows darker. Enter Capital and Labor, quarreling.)*

CAPITAL

The pumpkins here are mine, good fellow, mine!  
I bought the seed, you know.

LABOR

I broke the earth—  
I strove with wind and frost and burning drought  
To make them grow more golden day by day.

CAPITAL

Tut, tut, man. That is nought. I own the land.  
You can but work it since I give consent.  
Small credit that a man does what he must  
If he would live.

LABOR

I gave my very life.

CAPITAL

*(snapping his fingers)*

What is your life but like a billion more?

*(Enter Flip, costumed as gentleman of fashion)*

FLIP

Are there indeed a billion Labors? If so, they will soon keep you busy, Capital, old top, as busy as you would like to keep them. You may grow thin—O consummation devoutly to be wished! just a little bit off the front—if these chaps keep on giving their lives to your pumpkins. But if there be a billion just alike—

CAPITAL

In all the world there are but few like me!

FLIP

Amen. So be it. Too many yous in one street car would be the hell of a crowd, if you travelled in street cars. And too many yous would be poor company for one another. Wherever one man has a bulge to his stomach, another must find his a siege and a retreat. Well, friends, tell me your troubles, and I will be a judge without the recall and a jury without opinions to settle the case.

LABOR

Both of us love the lady men call Trade.

FLIP

The prettiest of all she-devils, she—

LABOR

And she is pliant ever to his will  
Who has most power. And we do both contend  
That power resides in pumpkins—but I claim—

CAPITAL

Of pumpkins we were speaking. Be exact.

*(To Flip)*

He claims them all because he planted them.  
Could he have planted them without my aid  
Who pay the wage that buys his daily bread?

LABOR

I furnish you, your bread, O Capital,  
And cake besides. You do not live on pumpkins!  
All, all is mine. Without me you would die.

FLIP

Peace, peace. Neither of you could live on pumpkins, nor on power, nor would it suffice for either to have complete possession of his heart's desire, the harlot Trade. To live on pumpkins—Lord, what a diet! Thick—yellow—mushy—with never a hint of stimulation for the uplift of the soul. We must have souls, nowadays, for it is the thing. They are nearly as common as tuberculosis, and quite as tragic. But those who go aworting think not deeply of their souls lest they repent. And I would not feed my soul on pumpkin to outwit Capital and appease Labor—not I. Rather would I turn viticulturist and try the grape cure!

LABOR

Raisins or pumpkins, it is all the same;  
These things are mine, for I have made them be.  
I, I deliver earth of what she bears  
And am chief nurse at Nature's lying-in.

FLIP

A very shocking nurse I will be bound—to go from the sacredness of Nature's childbed, to woo Trade—verily, if the wages of sin be death, that would be going from the cradle to the grave!

CAPITAL

*(self-righteously)*

For my part I make no pretense at all!

FLIP

*(slapping Labor on the shoulder)*

Come, Labor, not so seriously, old top. It is not in good form to care so much. We are grown light of touch, to-day, and laugh at bombast. And as for the two of you, a true philosopher would tell you that, if you were a little more glib and smug, and Capital a little more smug and glib, men could scarce estimate the value of the one over the other? And what matters a label if, by accident, or skill, or the lack of it, the one of you can change places, sometimes, with the other? And what matters the ownership if I can so hamper your operations as to take too much toll from both?

CAPITAL

*(sulky and bewildered)*

I do but set my label on my own—

LABOR

A dollar sign on earth and sea and sky!

FLIP

A dollar sign is a good thing anywhere. I'd wear it over all the sense I have. And, were I to fill your place, Capital, I should be content with dollar signs and labels, and not dispute with poor Labor about his pumpkin pie. I would even give him more than one slice if he wanted it. He would then think himself rich, and lapse into content for an aeon or two. And surely there is more than one way of winning a lady?

LABOR

Be silent, Flip; I do not like your wit.  
This is The World Field that I till and sow  
And woo and threaten, and at last, coerce,  
Until it is the wife of my command

To bear me children of my days of toil.  
Shall I be cheated of these children, then,  
With smiling face and showy courtesy?  
I tell you no. For I am grown too strong—  
And I am wiser than I used to be—  
I could make garbage of his flabby paunch  
And beat his brains to swill!

FLIP

*(with mock alarm, running to left and calling)*

Trade! Trade! you jade—Come here and see your precious lovers fight. . . .

*(Enter Trade, disdainfully, glancing first at Capital and then at Labor)*

CAPITAL

I claimed the pumpkins all for you, my dear.

LABOR

*(with less gallantry)*

What is not his no decent man can claim.

TRADE

*(laughing immoderately)*

Pumpkins? Who cares for pumpkins? No—not I.  
I only mentioned them to keep you busy,  
For I can hardly settle with you yet,  
Nor judge the better lover of the twain.  
For, at this time, great kings take thought for me—  
Princes and leaders of the people crave  
My kindness—and myself. You two must wait.

LABOR

Know then it was not all for you I spoke,  
But for a principle—for that I fight.

*(Labor turns up his sleeves, clenches his fist and takes a stride or two toward Capital, who is frightened and blows a whistle in alarm. Enter Religion from The World Inn, a little man in black, carrying a book, who trots up to Capital as to a master. Capital pinions his two arms and holds Religion in front of him. Labor laughs roughly and begins to pull off his shirt.)*

LABOR

Come, Flip, your wit is all too deep for me,  
But, if Religion is to second him,  
I would depend on you in my good cause.  
Come, help me strip and then, a fight, a fight!

FLIP

*(Hesitates, goes to help him, speaks gently.)*

A fight is a noisy affair, Labor, and wakes many sleepers. There is one over in the corner who should not on any account be disturbed. For, once awakened, he is hard to quiet.

LABOR

You speak too late—come—help—my shirt is tight!

FLIP

*(seizing the shirt, gives one tug and then withdraws in haste, holding his nose.)*

You are too sweaty, Labor. Sorry, old top, but I can't stand it. Muscles are a rare thing nowadays, and I would like to see yours, since you are not afraid to waken that old fear under the vines. And these modern epics are amusing, wherein Achilles carries a dinner pail and Ulysses turns syndicalist. But, if I must act as a second and pull off men's shirts, commend me to a man who has money enough to buy soap and time for a bath, and that, though he were not half so good to look upon.

LABOR

*(outraged, and flinging his shirt at Flip)*

Take you my sweat upon your silly face  
And stand aside to watch me fight alone. . . .

CAPITAL

*(Retreating and holding Religion in front of himself)*

Preach me a gospel to this fighting fool,  
A pretty gospel of The Prince of Peace,  
Religion, you whom I have paid and kept.

RELIGION

*(Trying to command himself and speaking hurriedly)*

I will, I will—but wait. For I must think—  
The Word has not the weight that once it had.  
Come, Labor, my good man, what is amiss?  
Come, come, no fighting—that is very wrong. . . .  
Be meek and humble as the good book says!

LABOR

I loved the good book and its precepts well  
In the old days when first my faith in you  
Kept me from fighting save at your behest  
And for your sake. I listened to you, then.  
You were the Light and in your way I walked,  
Loving and dreaming; but the dreams are gone  
Like your old stature, fervency and power.  
Sermons in livery I will not heed,  
A flunkey's stale rebuke I do abhor!  
A bought man cannot teach the strong and free—  
My soul is pure, and will not brook your touch!

FLIP

His soul? Where is it, I wonder? They always talk about them, but where are they? Two doubleheads and an adelpate trying to make righteousness out of their own inclinations by converse about souls! bah!

SOUL OF MAN

Yet, where men are, I am—yes, even here!

*(All look about and show that their attention has been arrested, but no one sees Soul of Man, nor discovers where the voice comes from.)*

LABOR

*(to Religion)*

Strip off that livery and get you gone.  
Because of faith that once I felt in you  
I cannot strike you now. But, O beware!  
For he must meet me face to face alone.

RELIGION

*(Struggling to free himself from Capital and escape)*

If they would only listen to me, now—

FLIP

But they will not, Blackcoat, no. I can make men behave a few minutes at a time because I amuse them. One would think your derivative graces almost funny enough to serve the same purpose. But men do not want you to be funny. They would have you large and majestic, and to-day you do not seem big enough to enforce attention from any but an audience of corpses. These two, Labor and Capital, are not corpses, but red-blooded men, having given themselves over to the same ha—fair lady, Trade. Unless you can regain your lost stature your day is over, Blackcoat, over. But do your best, for we still need you.

RELIGION

Then will I call my bastard brother Cult,  
To help me out and to abate this strife—  
O Cult, come hither, I have need of you.

*(Enter Cult in fantastic costume, carrying a crystal into which he gazes. He walks slowly, with an air of craft and mystery, and speaks in a droning monotone.)*

#### CULT

Abacadabra—someone spoke my name—  
The aura that I wear about me shivered  
As if for vocal contact. I am here.

*(While Cult is speaking Trade comes slyly forward from the back, where she has been sitting, watching in disdainful amusement, and gradually draws nearer to the sleeping Mars.)*

#### RELIGION

*(to Cult)*

Brother, I need you here to stop a fight;  
Labor and Capital—

#### CULT

Hush—I know all.  
I sense a mystery hidden in the brush—  
I feel, feel, feel, who am so sensitive.  
I will look through my crystal till I find it,  
And when I find it, that will stop the fight!

#### FLIP

Abacadabra! He would look through a crystal to  
find what is hidden in brush and pumpkins.

*(Trade seats herself on the shield of Mars and lights a cigarette.)*

#### LABOR

Enough of nonsense. I am not a child  
That I should swallow all this mystic mush.  
If old Religion were what once he seemed,  
He never would have called on you, O Cult.

*(Labor takes a step toward Capital again, and Religion makes a gesture of appeal to Flip.)*

#### FLIP

Blackcoat, there is no use. There is but one enemy  
who can drain them of their feverish passions and so  
reconcile them, the same who lies sleeping under the  
brush in the corner. He has slept long, and while  
he has been sleeping, women have indulged their hus-  
bands and borne too many children, and the world is  
full to overflowing; men have indulged their families  
in new luxuries of all kinds. All fear temperance as  
they fear death, for, like death it curbs desire. The  
Soul of Man, of whom we constantly hear, has not yet  
made himself conspicuous, although the women's  
clubs claim to know all about him. But, if the enemy  
should awaken—

*(Mars stirs in his sleep)*

#### CULT

*(Looking in another direction through his crystal)*

I see it in my glass that he is dead—

*(Trade, leaning over Mars, and glancing back at the others maliciously, drops her cigarette on Mars and awakens him. Mars sits up and looks about.)*

#### CULT

*(without seeing Mars and going off at right)*

By all the initiates, my aura feels  
The pressure of the knowledge of his death  
Who was the olden enemy. I know all.....

*(Mars rises and shakes his spear. Exeunt all the others, Capital and Labor in alarm, Religion timidly, Flip with a philosopher's shrug, Trade laughing contemptuously.)*

*(The sky grows dark and Mars strides up and down, singing or chanting and shaking his spear.)*

#### MARS

Long have I slept, but now have I awakened,  
I, mighty Mars, the lover of the arrow,

I, mighty Mars, the giver of the sabre,  
I, mighty Mars, the maker of the shrapnel,  
Monarch of heroes, gallantry and death.

I am a spirit of man's body gendered,  
And, in the race, I am for everlasting,  
Calling mankind from home and task and kindred,  
Making men mad with foaming blood-delight.  
Kings I have kissed, with Victory and solace;  
Kings I have ruined. Who can stand beside me?  
Who is strong to quell me? Let him show his face!

Long have I slept, while Trade, the busy harlot,  
Kept her delights for Capital and Labor;  
Now let the whirr of singing mills be silent!  
Now let the factory whistles hush their voices!  
Now let the harvests in the fields be rotted!  
Now let the shops be shut, the churches empty,  
That I may fill them with my sick and dying—  
Mine is dominion over day and night.

Night is at hand, and, in The World Inn feasting  
Sitteth mankind, while I am keeping vigil.  
Such blood is rich—the sweeter for my drinking—  
Yea, I am avid of the fat of babies—  
None will I have but such as are the strongest—  
Cleanest and truest, proudest, richest, bravest—  
(Never a weakling can abide my presence  
For I am Mars, and speak the word of death)  
Lo! I will call my servants to my colors—  
One deed of fury licks a world to ashes—  
Bright, blasting winds sweep overcroft and hearthside  
Leaving life dead. Who comes to challenge me?

#### SOUL OF MAN

I challenge you, O Mars, though straitly bound.  
Lo! I shall break with love your ugly power.

#### MARS

A slave who would defy his conqueror!  
Why, I did bind you with resistless chains  
Long centuries ago when earth was young.

#### SOUL OF MAN

I have grown strong since then.

#### MARS

Not strong enough.  
For I have wakened from my years of rest  
As zealous as a child to play his game,  
And you, not I, shall feel the limits of time  
Grow thin and sag and break beneath your form,  
Letting you fall into annihilation  
Through crackling fringes of what might have been.

#### SOUL OF MAN

You rave, O Mars. What ravel with my weight  
Would break with yours, and yet this ancient stuff,  
This fibre of the human race is strong.  
You have most straitly bound, who cannot slay,  
That I might work the less in your long sleep,  
You, drunk with blood of lovers, satiate  
With rape of many women! Yet men grow  
And love you less than when your sleep began.....

*(He struggles to free himself from his bonds, fails, in the attempt, falls forward on his face, groans. Mars laughs.)*

#### MARS

Now I have need of my good servant, Science.  
Ho! Science!

*(Enter Science in the costume of the laboratory with a test tube in his hand.)*



## SCIENCE

Yes, mighty Mars, I am here.

## MARS

Science, once more I have great need of you.  
I want the howitzers of Titan gods,  
And mad torpedoes mightier than of old,  
And airy fleets to rend the dizzy Heavens,  
Zeppelins and lighter craft, ill-omened birds  
To prey upon the tows that lie below;  
And I want wicked, wondrous submarines,  
Sly, devilish monsters of the deeps unknown,  
And battle cruisers ruinous and grim.  
Make me a ration that will keep men strong  
The longer for their task of blood and tears,  
Which is my game, my spectacle, my joy.  
And find me doctors, apt with splintered bones,  
And keen to cut the rotten flesh from sound,  
And to sew bodies up like burlap sacks  
That they may keep their contents still secure.  
What say you, Science, will you serve me still?

## SCIENCE

You know I am a neutral servant, Mars,  
To whomsoever can command my laws.  
I have not much emotion for a choice.  
Yet, were I free, to-day, I would say no;  
For I have great discoveries at heart  
And great experiments have undertaken  
Which yet may bring milleniums to men,  
Which must be interrupted if I yield.  
Therefore I would return to my own task,  
And yet, if Capital and Labor will it,  
I must obey you. I must do your will.

## MARS

Labor and Capital!

*(Enter Labor and Capital, still sullen)*

I must have war;  
Capital you must fight to save your own  
In every separate nation where you dwell.  
You, Labor, in all lands that you call home,  
Must fight to guard it, and acquit you well.

## LABOR

I like it not at all!

## CAPITAL

No more do I!

## LABOR

I wanted Trade, and peace.

## CAPITAL

And I the same.

## LABOR

And we had questions of our own to settle,  
This Capital and I. Not yet, old Mars!

## MARS

Ay, now. Why Capital, you have grown so great  
You can work wonders over all the world.  
Have you no pride, O Labor? Such a hero,  
With such great shoulders and such stalwart thighs,  
With such swart manhood and such virile temper,  
Meseems should hear my mandate with more joy.  
For both of you can learn the way of fighting  
And better settle your own private quarrel  
For lessons stern that I alone can teach you.

*(Labor and Capital turn toward each other and take a step or two away from Mars. They are muttering and murmuring together as Flip enters.)*

## FLIP

May Heaven have mercy on the sheepskin degree I  
cribbed for in college! What say the sages? A common  
fear unites foes of long standing. And here,  
verily, are Labor and Capital discoursing earnestly to-  
gether like young brides on the subject of biscuits.  
Are you, then, the cause of their peace, O Mars?

## MARS

Well asked. Indeed they are too much afraid  
To seem like men. Men used to be more bold  
When I was young. When earth was young with me  
They were not cowards—

## LABOR AND CAPITAL

*(wheeling about angrily)*

Nor are we cowards today!

## FLIP

More than a coward would fear you, master of blood-  
suckers. I like you not myself. I have come to dis-  
tract you a moment from your fell intention. If I  
were forced to do military service I should hope to  
eschew your company, albeit you have taken your  
place in history as a celebrity, some lion, take it from  
me. But, roar as you will, I won't invite you to my  
dinner parties. Nor could you convert me to your  
cause, for I am always ready to see both sides of a  
question, to embrace both ladies at once, as it were,  
with equal ardor and love. Apropos of that, friend  
Mars, a flea in your ear! . . . .

## MARS

Talk if you must, but do not talk too long. . . . .

## FLIP

*(speaking rapidly—even earnestly)*

If you raise hob now, it will not add to your popu-  
larity one whit. There is nothing but stage bombast  
to fight about. There is a little need of Capital for  
expansion, and of Labor for more bread, since he  
breeds fifty per cent. too fast. There is the hope of en-  
larging certain rooms in The World Inn to accommo-  
date more strangers, or else of reducing the number  
of travellers who wish to sojourn therein. But you  
are not essential in the development of these designs,  
nor will they give you a good background for the act-  
ing of melodrama. You cannot shout "God and the  
right!" as you did in the days when you were popu-  
lar and more or less necessary. To-day you are a bluff  
and we know it. So does your enemy, one Soul of  
Man, a personage as yet invisible to me, who may one  
day dissolve even my divine impudence into prudent  
beauty and make a hymnal out of my wit. With this  
thought I leave you. Look well before you leap, you  
heavy-weight. You may land in the trenches!

*(Exit Flip)*

## MARS

He talks too much. I live for gallant deeds!  
You fellows here were arguing with me  
About my war. I will have your consent—  
They would be cowards who would answer nay. . . .

*(Reenter Flip)*

## FLIP

Here is The Daily Bewilderer running headlines that  
will delight you, O Mars. Somebody has shot an arch-  
duke somewhere. Now, indeed, we shall be unable to  
hold you back! Now indeed we have fine cause for  
war!

LABOR AND CAPITAL

(going rapidly to Mars)

We are not cowards. We serve you, mighty Mars.

MARS

My shield, my spear! Now am I well content.  
Go, Science, and prepare for this great war  
As Capital and Labor shall agree,  
And send me Poetry, my ancient friend!

(Exit Science, Labor, Capital, and Flip. Enter Poetry.)

MARS

Poetry, it was you, who made my fame,  
Who taught the people all the best of me—

POETRY

Mars, I shall sing your praises nevermore,  
Nor shall the people need you evermore.  
I sing the people, as I always have,  
And, as they change, the new song of new times.  
Who till The World Field for the harvest's sake  
And feast in The World Inn at set of sun,  
And mate with healthy joy in one another,  
And gladly breed the children of the flesh  
And of the spirit, and who build our homes,  
Who cleanse and fashion, and repair your wrongs,  
These are my folk, and their new songs I sing,  
And a new era, burning bright with peace.

(A chain breaks and frees the right arm of Soul of Man, who extends it in blessing toward Poetry.)

SOUL OF MAN

O Poetry, your word has broken bonds  
Forged long ago when earth was very young.  
Sing you for me till you and I together  
Shall heaven all this lump of humankind  
With the new yeast of kindly brotherhood.  
We'll purge the old earth of this festering fear  
And heal this cancer! Poetry, sing on!

MARS

(earnestly, to Poetry)

I need you not, then. I can do without you  
If I have Music and her seducer, Glamour.  
Come, Music!

(Exit Poetry. Enter Music, in bonds to Glamour.)

GLAMOUR

I brought her in. She would have stayed behind  
To sing with Poetry for all mankind.  
But, once deceived, she can go free no more  
Save in the triumph of the Soul of Man,  
Who is your thrall. Come, Music, my good wench,  
Tell Mars your service and your song are his.

MUSIC

If I must give myself against my will  
And where my instinct would make swift refusal,  
I will so give myself through Mars to men  
That, treading in his flashing path of pain,  
They shall know less of him because of me.  
And I shall be their glory when his guns  
Vomit black horror upon body and soul,  
And I shall be their solace in the hours  
When stiffening Death would have them for his own.  
Oh woe is me that listened unto Glamour!  
Yet I await your freedom, Soul of Man.

MARS

Tush, girl, a beauty like your precious self  
Has ever need of a more lusty lover—  
And such am I, and such is Glamour here!

What captive can a woman's kisses keep?  
Come, take my kiss, and then, throughout the world,  
Sing me the ballads that do make men wild!  
Give me the froward chanteys of the camp,  
Beat me the marches unto Victory,  
Or, with bravado, even unto Death.  
Come, come; begin. The whole world waits for you!

(Music wipes tears from her eyes and sets a bugle to her lips. Exit Music, sounding the advance, followed by Glamour. Then in close succession and increasing volume are heard the national anthems of the warring nations of Europe, in the order in which they declared war. It is dark and lights flash out in the distance. There is more or less noise and confusion at the back. Horses, artillery, men, crossing and recrossing, running, marching, working. Mars, proudly erect in the center shouts "Good!" and repeats it. A man, marching in with others, leaves his group and runs to the steps of The World Inn.)

THE MAN

Are you there, dear? I have come to say farewell!

A WOMAN

(coming out to meet him.)

Beloved, must you go? I am alone,  
Alone in all the world, and of our love  
A child, a little human flower is coming—  
Surely I need you most!

THE MAN

Tell him his father tried to do his duty  
And loved his country. Dear one, I must go . . .

(They kiss passionately and the man rejoins his group and marches off. The woman flings herself down on the steps of The World Inn and weeps bitterly. There is more noise and confusion and then three youths come to the steps and call out.)

THREE YOUTHS

Mother . . . . O Mother . . . . Mother!

(A woman comes forward holding wide arms for the three)

THE WOMAN

Children, you are not going—you, my babies?  
It seems but yesterday my body held you—  
It seems but yesterday your toys were lying,  
Toy cannon and bright soldiers made of tin  
Upon the cottage floor. O children, children,  
Who are just old enough at last to leave me—  
Surely you will not leave your poor old mother?

ONE BOY

The bugle called us and we must be going—

THE WOMAN,

A bugle calls more strongly than a mother . . . .

THE SECOND BOY

We will come back to you as heroes, mother . . . .

THE WOMAN,

You were my heroes when you were my babies . . . .

THE THIRD BOY

You would not have us cowards to be near you . . . .

THE WOMAN,

I am Love's coward—I never . . . should . . . have . . .  
made you . . . . .

(The lady kisses their mother and tear themselves from her arms. The anthems of the nations are repeated. The guns volley in the distance, getting louder and louder. Fires flame up and there is more or less noise and confusion. A woman runs out from The World Inn, sobbing.)

THE WOMAN,

I want my lover who was never mine.  
Will they not let him come to say farewell?  
Where are you, O Desired of all my days?

*(She runs hither and thither looking for him, wildly, and finally stumbles against Mars, shrieks, and tries to escape, but is caught and held by him. Mars roars his elation and carries her off at left screaming. There is a pause, utter quiet, absolute darkness. Then Mars returns alone and stumbles into The World Inn.)*

#### MARS

Now I can feast me to my full content,  
And then, a little while, I shall have rest.

*(Exit Mars. There is another pause and silence while it gradually becomes lighter. Men and women are heard groaning, and, in the pale, eerie light, weird moth-like figures, like ghosts of the dead, flit here and there across the field. When it becomes light enough to see, all the world is changed. Flowers, fruit, produce are gone. The wagon that held the grain is now filled with corpses. On the ground are the sick and wounded, bandaged. The women waiting on them are lean, ragged, haggard. A few children are huddled together in silent terror. The scene is blackened as if by fire. On the steps of The World Inn sits The Old Mother, as in the beginning.)*

#### A WOMAN

The dawn is nearly here, the strange grey dawn!

#### ANOTHER WOMAN

What bodes it now? Sunset or dawn or noon  
Are all alike to those who have seen hell  
And bear in body and soul the brand of sorrow.

#### THE OLD MOTHER,

'Twas even as I feared and as I spoke.  
So was it, children, in my younger days,  
The days that I can nevermore forget.

*(She rises and hobbles toward the wounded men.)*

Children of mothers' flesh this cannot last  
Forever. I am old and soon I die,  
And nothing can torment me very long,  
Wherefore I speak what youth might fear to say  
To you, as to my sons of long ago,  
Who died, as all your friends have died, in war.

#### A MAN

Speak, for we listen.

#### THE OLD MOTHER,

That is very well,  
For this is murder that ye did commit,  
For glamour and for vanity and lust,  
For selfishness in trade, and for all freedom  
To breed your own kind over all the earth,  
Each for himself and his own kind alone,  
Forgetting that ye all have suckled mothers,  
Forgetting that ye owe us fealty,  
And that ye owe it to yourselves to be  
Staunch farmers of the World Field, and good friends,  
One flesh, one love, one state, one family.

#### A MAN

Even that we might be able to achieve  
If one would help us to the holy way.  
We fight not for ourselves, good mother, no!  
We fight for place, for honor and for home,  
For what the great, who lead us, say is best,  
The whims of senators, the dreams of kings;  
And often know not why our blood is poured,  
A turbulent, unholy river of lust.  
And when the people cry for war and shout  
The sure destruction of another nation  
It is because they fear and know that fear  
Is far more terrible than roughest strife.  
Nor are we fools to give up life with joy,  
Save when the feud of Capital and Labor  
Has made our minds a Hell of sordid warfare  
And clothed our gayety in querulous crepe.  
Then, in our desperate mourning for young joy,

The sweetness and variety of life,  
The rainbow radiance and the cloth of gold  
That are youth's great inalienable right,  
We know no other way and follow blindly  
The one mad way that gives a thrill of glory,  
And frees our pulsing life. So are we made. . . .  
But we, who lie on beds of bloody sweat,  
Washed by our women's tears, we faint would see  
Another era of mankind made new,  
Young Titans, strong enough to war on war,  
This hoary curse from the stringy throat of Mars  
To answer and to silence and to choke!

#### OTHER MEN

Mother, the way—the upward way from Hell!

#### THE OLD MOTHER,

I'll show it, thankfully, and, if I do,  
I can go gaily, gladly to my grave  
As one who treads a quickstep of her youth.  
See, children, that strange figure, Soul of Man,  
In bonds to our arch enemy and his?  
He is our friend, and all our life would share  
If we would only take him for our own.  
There is no morning made by sun and sea  
And towering mountains, larksong, flower breath  
And rapture, but his coming into it  
Can give a finer and diviner joy.  
There is no darkness, damp and fraught with death,  
Down-bearing, stifling, but his coming makes  
A rift of light, an easement of the strain.  
Now Mars, his foe, is held in ugly sleep,  
Full-fed on thin, raw flesh of women's babes,  
Deep drunken on the sap of many hearts—  
Be not deceived, for he will wake again,  
Unless ye learn of this good Soul of Man  
How to defy this Mars, and get you peace.  
Children, commend you to the Soul of Man.

#### A MAN

How can we free you, free you, Soul of Man?

#### SOUL OF MAN

I tremble—for my hour of joy is near. . . .  
Ah, can it be that I shall rise at last,  
Gay winged and glorious with the rising sun,  
To hover where mankind shall bloom anew  
In The World Field where only stubble was?  
Hearken! For now, together ye must go,  
Not here a few and there a few, but all,  
And hale him forth, this monster butcher, now,  
While he is full and has no lust to feed,  
Yes, hale him forth into the light and look,  
And looking, know him truly as he is.  
If for that look he wake, defy his power,  
For your own sakes fight one more fight for peace.

#### A MAN

Alas, we are too weak for this god Mars,  
And some of us have known him all too well.

#### SOUL OF MAN

Who does my bidding has no sense of fear—  
For all the stars will shine into his night  
And all the winds acclaim him to the end.  
And this was true of Socrates and Christ,  
Of Lincoln and of all great harvesters  
In The World Field. It shall be so for you  
On the same terms of brave obedience.  
Do ye my bidding and ye shall be free  
And I, to live and grow with you, forever.

*(The people talk together in twos and threes. Enter Capital and Labor, two lean cripples supporting one another, followed by Flip, who is swearing deep mourning.)*

SOUL OF MAN

Labor and Capital, be well content  
To lend me but yourselves. I ask no money.  
I lay no tax upon you as did Mars.  
And I do promise you an opulent peace,  
Wrought out with right goodwill between you soon  
For I know well what others do not know,  
But should discover by your present plight,  
That you must ever win or lose together,  
Sharing each other's burden and reward  
And I do promise sweet regeneration  
Your broken selves shall be made whole again  
When you have helped the people set me free . . .

*(Capital and Labor discuss the offer.)*

FLIP

What will you do for me, O Soul of Man, whom I can  
see and perceive at last? I have lost many rich relations  
in this war and profited nothing—wherefore I  
wear mourning! But if I turn my wit to good account  
by making men's anger funny, what will you do for  
me?

SOUL OF MAN

Your name, I'll change, and you yourself, good Flip,  
You shall be my own Humor, kindly spoken,  
And my strong Reason leading men to Truth—  
But look who comes with face of Galahad  
And thews of Ajax, wearing spotless white—

*(Enter Religion, a new personality, athletic and beautiful, wearing a short white garment with the symbols of the great religions wrought in gold upon the hem and carrying a shining cross. All the people turn and look and with one accord make obeisance.)*

THE PEOPLE

Religion . . . . O Religion . . . . . Religion!

SOUL OF MAN

Religion, have you come to serve the people?

LABOR

*(joyfully)*

Are you the old guest, radiant and serene?

CAPITAL

And will you lead against this bully, Mars?

RELIGION

Listen, for with new power I come to you  
Seeking to serve, claiming a mighty task.

I was a sinner who had nibbled Truth  
And let its sweetness all dissolve away  
Into the rancid spittle of dead dogmas.  
The loss of your allegiance was the stroke  
That cleansed and chastened me. I have spewed out  
All the old wordy liquor of dead days,  
And all the prowdness of my being now  
Shall foster and defend the Soul of Man.

*(The people cheer. A chain breaks, releasing the left arm of Soul of Man who reaches out both arms in benediction.)*

SOUL OF MAN

Then welcome, and thrice welcome, good Religion—  
Coming to serve, men will be glad to follow.  
O happy folk of ages yet to be  
New flowering from the pollen of the past,  
I see your budding glory everywhere.  
This is the spring and this the shining dawn—  
The men shall be as great grave trees at rest  
With the new strength that grapples, grows, and gives,  
And the world's women even as her men,  
And fruitful as the orchards of the valley,  
And little children dancing with delight  
Shall blossom fearlessly, in perfect grace,  
Like windblown poppies nodding in the sun.  
And all The World Field shall be cropped in peace  
And all the sheaves of life shall be brought home—  
Such fruitage for High God is in your lives  
As I had never dreamed in life's beginning.  
This is the dawn, the spring, and we are planting  
The harvest that the race shall gather in.  
Therefore to Mars, and quickly bring him hither!

*(Religion and The Old Mother lead the people up the steps and into The World Inn, the people cheering and shouting. Then there is a moment of silence, after which they come out again, carrying the dead body of Mars.)*

A MAN

He is dead, old Mars, and must have died of fear!

*(The chains drop from the body of Soul of Man, and he, leaping to his feet, runs to take his place in the center, in front of the body of Mars and in a widening semi-circle of the people. His black garment falls on Mars, and Soul of Man is transfigured, a radiant figure in blue and gold and crimson, with flaming wings rising behind him and above. The people, also, are glorified by the rising of the sun behind them. They kneel.)*

*(There is heard the triumphant singing of "The Hallelujah Chorus").*

CURTAIN

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