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# IOLÄUS

## *BY THE SAME AUTHOR*

A SON OF CAIN: POEMS. Cr. 8vo. 3/6 net.

IN THE WAKE OF THE PHENIX: POEMS. F'cap. 8vo. 3/6 net.

## IOLÄUS:

### THE MAN THAT WAS A GHOST

BY

## JAMES A. MACKERETH

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1913

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TO THE MEMORY OF  
MY FRIEND  
ARTHUR RANSOM

---

## HAIL AND FAREWELL

To A.R.

We range the ringing slopes of life; but you  
Scale the last summit, high in lonelier air,  
Whose dizzy pinnacle each soul must dare  
For valedictions born and ventures new.  
From dust to spirit climb, O brave and true!  
Strong in the wisdom that is more than prayer;  
High o'er the mists of pain and of despair,  
Mount to the vision, and the far adieu.

Merged in the vastness, with a calm surmise

Mount, lonely climber, brightened from afar;  
Whose soul is secret as the evening-star;  
Whose steps are toward the ultimate surprise:  
No dubious morrow dims those daring eyes—  
Divinely lit whence truth's horizons are.

---

*The sonnets in this volume have previously appeared in the columns of "The Academy," "The Eye-Witness," and "The Yorkshire Observer." My thanks are due to the Editors of these publications for their kind permission to republish.*

J.A.M.

*Stocka House,  
Cottingley,  
Bingley.*

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## IOLÄUS:

### THE MAN THAT WAS A GHOST

Gold light across the golden coomb;  
The sun went west with horns of fire;  
Athwart the sweet, sea-breathing room  
The swallows swooped; the village spire  
Glowed red against a gleam of broom;  
While earth its scented secrets told,  
There, silent, sunset-aureoled,  
Sat Ioläus, mild and old.

In distance large the moving ships  
Sailed on into the evening skies.  
He gazed, and saw not. In eclipse  
He tensely sat, like one who grips  
Some semblance that his dream describes,  
With such a look of far surprise  
That half-uncanny seemed the man,  
So warped with age, so weirdly wan:  
He had such ghostly eyes.

Then half to self, and half to me,  
Aloof in passion and lone despair,  
He spoke like one whose secrets flee  
From silence unaware:  
Now plaintively from a grief gone blind,  
Heavy with cumbering care,  
Now, thrilling thought like a white sea-wind,  
His words, the echoes of his mind,  
Haunted the air:

... 'Tis gone like the roses of long ago:  
Yet a dawn's impassioned thrill  
Makes blush the blossom's virgin snow  
Far on in a faery hill.  
Two faces there in the glamour glow  
In a place that is strangely still.

On the rim of the world is a ruined tower  
Sky-poised above wide sea-foam,  
Where a beautiful spirit waits hour by hour,  
Far-eyed 'gainst a dawn like a phantom flower,  
Till a ghostly lover comes home....

To leeward spread the freshening deep  
Purple beneath a rosy gleam.  
From a high, mist-engirdled steep  
Thin anthems to the orient beam  
Came faint as languid waves of sleep  
That lap the lonely strands of dream.

We sank our anchor solemnly  
Into that lustrous, splendid sea;  
For we, that chased the summer's smile  
Across the world a wondering while,  
Hailed at the heart the Happy Isle,  
The haunted shores of Faëry!

Beyond a gently-heaving brine  
We broke with oars a trembling bay.  
The swerving water, like rare wine,  
Slid iridescent from our way.  
A lovely hand was laid on mine  
Pensively as to say:  
"Life is divine!"

The drifting, witching wonder grew.  
From out the burgeoning bounds of space  
It seemed some morn unearthly drew  
To that grave glamorous place,  
Where, fearful of some far adieu,  
I talked with one who never knew  
The peril of her face.

The joy that lives is mightier far  
Than foretaste of all grief unborn.  
The earth to youth is a silver star  
That glitters on the edge of morn,  
A star! a star! a dancing star.

The fair, the mystic, happy morn!  
Dawn glimmered on the gladdening sea;  
Each zephyr blew an elfin horn  
To echoes in felicity.  
All sounds to silver rhythm ran:  
Came flutings as from piping Pan  
In purpled hills of Arcady!

Seaward we heard the breakers roar;  
And the belated nightingales  
Sang all their moonlight raptures o'er,  
Enchanted still in echoing vales.  
We lingered by the brightening shore;  
We leapt upon the roseate strand:  
The joy that in our hearts we bore  
We loved, nor longed to understand.  
Soft siren voices evermore  
Chanted to chimes in Faeryland.

O, life was like a bird that sings  
At morning on a vernal bough!  
The springtide at the heart of things  
Sang as the spring knows how.  
And fair was she, and both were young;  
We knew not what made time so good;  
Nature with glamour-tutored tongue  
Spread glory in the blood.

We climbed the dim and dreaming streets:  
We reached a plateau crowned with pine:  
The leaning roses breathed their sweets  
'Mid many a subtle-scented vine.  
We wreathed our brows with ivy-twine.

In mouldering majesty sublime,  
Misty with eld, the mute of time,  
A castle, dawn-enchanted, there  
Above th' abyss sheer, shimmering fair,  
Hung like a perilous dream in air.  
Poised on a dizzy turret high,  
Enfolded with the gorgeous sky,  
We listened, she and I,  
In wonder, 'mazed. Without a word  
A soul had spoken, soul had heard.  
All suddenly came, charged with tears,  
The sweetness of the human years.

We saw deep forests far away  
Kindle to meet the kiss of day;  
And mists with morn's delight uprise  
Like love thoughts in a maiden's eyes.  
We shared the dream that never dies.

Our hearts were hushed with vague desire;  
We breathed in kingdoms wildly new,  
Enthralled by Memnon's mystic lyre  
In regions whence the Phœnix flew;  
Dumb splendour round us blown, and higher  
On heaven's deep dome—the peacock's hue,  
Bright flakes of crimsoning fire!

Dew-fresh was all the wavering air.  
We heard the reef's far rollers croon  
About the ocean's margent, where  
Loitered the waning moon ...  
So fond the hour; the scene so fair;  
And fate came home so soon ...  
Some sorrow wept,—I knew not where.  
Some sudden presence made the air  
Chill as the breathless moon.

Silent, upon a lonelier steep,  
I gazed across a deeper deep,  
Where the pale mists pass from the isles of sleep.—

Lost voices called in other years:  
Old sweetness like a breaking grief  
Rose in the heart and stung to tears:  
In that clear moment brief  
Life's dearest, dead so long before,  
Returned to bless and die once more.

The faintly crooning sabbath bells  
At evening in the golden fells  
I heard; the tinkle of the rills  
In haunts where childish fancy fed;  
I saw the orchard daffodils  
About the calm homestead;  
Ah, saddest thought that ever fills  
An errant heart that memory thrills,  
The heath-smell of his homeland hills  
To one whose loves are dead ...

What yearnings burn the human breast;  
What wild desires like prisoned birds  
Impel the heart from east to west;  
What urgings baffling words  
Beat up from nature unexpressed  
Till soul distinct stands manifest,  
On guard for heaven, or, wanton, hurled  
Toward judgment through the world.

Long following beauty's floating flame  
Beneath the sky from sea to sea

No isle of rest, no haven could claim  
The lonely, homeless heart in me.  
Sick loneliness no more should be  
Companion to my soul, for She  
To fill the questing vision came,  
Came down the breadths of blossoming foam  
To give to loveliness a name,  
To happiness a home!

Yet thought toward passion moved with dread,  
Like one who, hurrying to be wed,  
Steps, darkling, on the dead.

Far down we saw mute wavelets leap  
Feebly as though remembering sleep;  
The wheeling sea-birds proudly sway  
In glory o'er the opal bay;—  
But at the heart the world grew grey;  
Some joy had perished from the day;  
Some love was grieving far away.

No voice stirred through the haunted hill  
Touched with the morn's inviolate gleam.  
All fearfully wild heart and will  
Drank rapture in the face of ill!  
Our spirits thrilled to answer thrill,  
And trembled in their dream.

Truth comes, and tears, and glamour goes.  
There's speech within the blood  
More eloquent than language knows,  
And woes make signal unto woes  
While pity breathes and passion blows:  
We looked:—we understood.  
On summer's heart fell winter's snows ...  
The death that dissipates the rose  
Was busy in the bud ...

The spectre beckoned: none could save ...  
The Sundering grave ... The Sundering grave! ...  
Our lonely love in time could be  
But whisper of a broken wave  
Lost in a boundless sea ...  
She spoke, so fair, so pale, so brave,—  
Across infinity!

Ah meekness mute with tragedy!...  
My body stirred as in a grave,  
And looked forth wonderingly ...  
The everlasting sea serene  
'Neath everlasting sky  
Shone, and across the morning sheen  
The deathless winds went by.  
And a face was there that I never had seen;  
And a shadow stood where a glory had been;  
The beauty hung at my heart like pain;  
And love was lovely, but life was bane,  
For all should die,—but the wonder remain,  
And the earth, and the sea, and the sky ...

The hills have winds, the fields have flowers;  
Not all alone is the wintry tree;  
The stars that gleam in cloudy bowers  
Have stars for company;  
The waste hath peace of the drifting hours;  
And night brings joy to the hoary sea:

But the heart of man is a lonely thing;  
And lone the soul of the secret vows,  
With its wasted love and its wounded wing,  
In a withered world that hath no spring,  
No burgeoning boughs:  
The soul of man is the loneliest thing  
In life's eternal wandering  
That God allows ...

O, isle of dreams, and orient shore!  
Ah miracle in sea and sky!  
Ah youth that fleeting love made soar  
To heaven! The glory upon high  
To dusk hath waned, yet comes once more  
A wonder and a cry!...

The ship's bell tolled off that fair land;  
The sails bulged buoyantly:  
The sun rose mute, and large, and bland;  
The favouring wind swung free.  
We stood from that enchanted strand  
Into the morning sea.

We rode down swinging winds away,  
Far o'er the moving waters wan,  
Seen low at pale meridan,  
The land was grey.

The dusk came down; and like a ghost  
Rose the sad moon; the waves 'gan moan:  
There on the deep no kindly coast,—  
The dark alone.

And in two faces stared, and stared  
The being without blood or breath,  
The stilly spectre, horror-haired,  
That haunteth all he murdereth;  
At noon, at midnight stared, and stared  
When sunrise flashed, when sunset flared,  
The grizzly phantom horror-haired:—

Stalking frail beauty to her grave  
I saw him moving evermore  
A stealthy wanderer on the wave,  
A shrouded shadow on the shore,  
The worm his bondsman, and the brave  
His victims evermore ...

The Power that drives all mortal things,  
Upbuoys all being's wanderings,  
Moved in the void his urgent wings ...

On down the weltering world we sped;  
Across the lonely, drifting noon;  
Along the wreathèd tides we fled  
Beneath the memoried moon.  
Sad love pursued where sorrow led;  
And beauty, waiting to be dead,  
Kissed under the dead moon.

Love, speechless, yearned in hopeless eyes;  
And hearts that hungered craved in vain.  
Dumb pity heard sad pity's sighs;  
And grief soothed grief again.  
Fond smile to smile sent faint replies,  
And faded back to pain.

Entangled in the toils of fate,  
Two stood at Eden's open gate—  
Banned, in a world found desolate ...  
And love made league with hate ...  
All time's long woe since man's wet eyes  
Peered toward a promised paradise  
Pressed home,—the weight of smothered cries,  
Dead dreams, and hopeless pain  
Of souls in silence slain.

We saw the loathsome waste of death;  
Sad soul at war with sense;  
And suffering doomed to lingering breath;  
And slandered innocence;  
And beauty ravished at the bloom;  
Saw strength flung prostrate; fall  
The brave, life-worsted from the womb;  
White truth made criminal:

Impotent, passionate, counting all,  
We kissed—across a tomb ...

The lustrous clouds trailed proudly by:  
And through a rift of dazzling sky  
I cursed God with a dreary cry ...

The silence of the starry night;  
The silver of the moonlit sea;  
And loud in secret, stern, and trite,  
The pulse of destiny.  
Ah sadness scourged with doomed delight!  
Ah wondrous misery!

Pale topsails in the offing shone,  
And faded into foam:  
And down the noontide, one by one,  
The pale, proud ships would roam;  
Each sailor to his love went on;  
Each wanderer to his home.

And, ceasing not, death's nearing knell  
Tolled in a heart that dreamed no more.  
Our lips shook, sad as lips in hell;  
But, fearful of the rending shore,  
To fill all time with sad farewell  
We would have sailed for evermore!

For pleasantly a song she'd croon,  
And feign the world a kindly place;  
And tender was the haunting tune  
To match her haunting grace;  
And tenderly the witching moon  
Toyed with her feeling face ...

Our love was like the scent of flowers  
To her who watches by the bed  
Of one that dies in the dark hours,  
The one her youth had wed:  
At dawn she scares her tears away,  
And through the cloud-enamelled day  
Jests bravely for their bread.

She shared with all the brighter part;  
The witching sallies lightly flew;  
Her thoughts seemed, spilt by subtle art,  
Half tear-drops and half dew.  
They loved her for her gracious heart,  
And the glad winds blew.

The sunbeam of her fleeting life  
Gladdened the unsuspecting days;  
And all the dusky imps of strife  
Paled in her wisdom's lambent rays.  
Her laugh to *one* was as a knife:  
But she had pleasure's praise.

And I who loved that conquering smile,  
And felt the tears in secret shed,  
Who watched her life with kindly guile  
Veiling its darlings dead,  
Held in a choking hush the while  
A heart that feigned—and bled ...

Onward with blind rebellious breast  
I ranged, with love, with bale opprest,  
Piteous, passionate, all unblest,  
The dispossessèd,—God-possessèd ...

More lonely grew the leaden wave  
That broke against the leaning sky;  
The melancholy winds 'gan rave  
Among the whimpering shrouds on high:  
Most lonely up the leaden wave  
Two climbed toward yet a lonelier grave—  
Where only one should lie.

We neared a grey and grievous land  
That thundered by a wintry sea;  
I touched the sorrow of her hand,  
But nothing sad said she:  
She turned from love at death's command  
To death eternally.

We passed the numbly moaning bar;  
We heard the harbour bell,  
Its dull fog-muffled clang from far  
Came like a lorn death-knell.  
The quay-lights pushed a livid flare  
Through shrouding mist; and all things there  
Moved like grim shades in hell.

The hammer's clamp on resonant steel;  
The siren's shriek; the scream and whirr  
Reverberant from forge and wheel;  
The fury and the clangorous stir  
And plunge of traffic; Vulcan's heel  
Crashing on iron,—and the reel  
Of sense at loss of *her*.—

None guessed when, playfully, she said,  
With smile that brightened toward her dead,  
"To-day across the world I ride  
To meet a bridegroom, I the bride."  
They thought her mischief lied.

Around us was the deafening roar,  
A void, a wild and drear eclipse.  
A sadder sweetness than before  
Shook her pale, smiling lips;  
She waved adieu through vapours hoar,  
And vanished in the shadows frore  
Among the heedless ships ...  
In that dread lapse of all farewell  
The spirit, listening, plain could tell  
That devils laughed in drifting hell  
With guile upon their lips ...

The world seemed all a hollow ghost  
That would dissolve away;  
And life itself a random boast  
Of elements at play;  
And time a swift elusive gleam,  
And man the mockery of a dream,  
A foam-bell to a moment's beam  
Flung from the spray.

I had worshipped her with sacred sighs,  
Loved with the love that wondereth;  
My life had found her maiden-wise,  
And sweeter than the rose's breath;  
Lit by a soul in paradise  
The lights within her holy eyes,  
The lady loved of death ...

Bereft, forlorn, by passion driven,  
And blanched with loss, by suffering riven,  
With impious heart I fled from Heaven ...

Thought like a frost gripped all the brain:  
With frozen tears opprest,  
The conscious blood with sullen pain  
Lunged at the callous breast,  
Where hope and love, a pallid twain,  
Sat with a ghoul for guest.

Over the watery wastes I fled  
Where'er dim desolation led  
Beneath sad sun and moon!  
For faith was dead, and joy was dead,  
And love was where the phantoms tread,  
And bitterness was passion's bread:  
"Grant, jester Death," I, laughing, said,



"Thy haggard fool a boon!" ...

And unforgiving, unforgiven,  
A derelict, by tempest driven,  
I drave beneath the breadth of heaven ...

Grim sorrow fell on all things fair;  
To dust was turned the lover's breath.  
Ah longing, like a pariah bare,  
And passion, led by lewd despair  
To kiss the smelling jowl of death!

As in a sunless cavern cold,  
Like one who flies a crime,  
Fearful, and old as God is old,  
The spirit shrank from time;  
For a stifled scream was the angry gold  
Of the weird sunset, and the noonday bold  
Was the stare on the face of a crime.

I saw as brain-blurred drunkards see;  
I felt, yet could not feel;  
I seemed in moving time to be  
In nerveless immobility  
As dust upon a wheel.

Some world material moved around,  
Mazed breadths of spume and brine;  
Strange voices spake as from a bound  
Far off, I answered with a sound,  
Nor knew the answer mine;  
And sometimes like a weary hound  
I heard the darkness whine.

In throbbing night 'twixt sleep and sleep  
My tortured spirit heard  
A wail that wandered down the deep,  
A sorrow on the windy deep  
Wail like a wounded bird;  
And I wept as a haunted man doth weep  
Who dare not speak a word.

Sometimes I sensed heaven's bellied gloom,  
Storm like dumb and pregnant doom  
Scowl on the waters wild;  
Or tempest 'neath a plunging sky  
Down crashing waves with haunting cry  
Scream like a tortured child;

A blind thing staggering in the night  
Strained, groaning, 'gainst a pervious power  
That flashed and eddied, wild and white,  
That wheeled and wailed from hour to hour;  
And, somewhere, strangely burned to sight  
Dawn like a doom a-flower ...

On ever onward, darkly driven,  
A soul, unsheltered, and unshriven,  
With lodestar gone, with raiment riven,  
Drove in the gale of the wrath of Heaven ...

The monsoon blew; the changing stars  
Rode by in deeper skies.  
At times between the raking spars  
I felt the blank moon rise;  
Or heard the chanties of the tars  
With a sad, sick surprise.

And once a heaven, the sapphire's hue,  
Flashed o'er the freshening wave;  
They hurt the heart as laughers do  
When love stands by a grave.

And now a level ocean grey  
Would lie along a level day,  
Unwhipt of wing or wind;

Or sunset make a carmine stain  
That sucked like sadness at the brain,  
    And sank into the mind,  
And touched me with some wandering pain,  
    Some sentience of mankind again.

... And where was *she*?... Could sorrow fail  
    In aching time ... Ah voice in vain  
That called for ever ... fading sail  
    On seas forlorn; sad wind and rain  
Whispering ... all-wandering pain ...  
    And in the heart the wail—  
Never again on earth—never again.

So dimly to a beauteous ghost  
    My being bowed a subject knee,  
And lived, with love's sad sunset lost,  
    Alone 'mid all the sea.  
A leper to a lonely coast,  
I fled from all I cherished most;  
And wildly, with a bleeding boast,  
    I clasped my agony ...

Sad nature strained the leash in vain,  
And flying, fled not; ever the chain  
Of the Fear that followed; ever again  
Relentless pity; guardian pain ...

Like torturing dreams the days went by,  
    With all save self denied;  
And Godward went man's desolate cry,  
    That Christ Himself had cried:  
Alone each soul upon its tree  
Cried to its kin,—but over me  
The darkness that crushed Calvary  
    When God was crucified.

The present lost, I found, aghast,  
A dying heart, a deathless past;  
And, ever nigh, and mocking me,  
A madness, or a mystery ...  
And hour by hour, in peril, passed  
A soul toward judgment through the vast ...

Life, a vague tumult in the blood,  
    Beat on 'gainst flesh and bone;  
And in its echoing solitude  
    The heart tapped like a stone;  
Till like some child at dark I stood  
That stands fear-frozen in a wood,—  
    Alone—yet not *alone*.—

For mine was ghostly company:  
    Chilled, in the eerie air  
I felt *myself* bend over me,  
    And point as with despair;  
And, horror-thrilled, I turned to see  
    My body selfless there,

And separate,—a house of clay  
    That mourned its tenant gone;  
Its vacant eyes would fain delay,  
Its piteous hands implored to stay  
    The soul that in it shone.  
Where one had been, in mute dismay  
Two, merged in mystery, went away—  
    I and that other One ...

With vision blurred, and bearings lost,  
Streamed on amid a phantom host  
The man that was a ghost ...

Apart from human years I stood  
A naked, probing mind.  
Aloof I heard the beating blood,  
The far-brought voices of the blood,

Flow round me like a wind;  
In an abysmal solitude  
I staggered like one blind.—

In wastes uncharted, far from bliss,  
I heard a writhing chaos hiss;  
And thought, that moved in time no more,  
Wept on some wild, pre-natal shore.—

Appalled, the boundless vision burst  
Through yawning gulfs of gloom;  
To human hunger, human thirst  
Infinite hell did loom;  
Infinite bale to vision burst  
In tracts of nebulous bloom;  
And life through peril, lorn, accurst,  
Passed on from doom to doom.

The depths were full of throes unknown,  
Weird wastes of vomited fire;  
Wild mists of thunderous flame were blown  
Athwart eclipse; I heard the groan  
Of travailing worlds stupendous thrown  
Through chaos to expire:  
My spirit, cowed with vastness dire,  
Gazed, poised in space,—alone,—  
Alone as a haunted life that lies  
On the death-brink when a dread past cries,  
And the live dark burns with eternal eyes.

Rang, terror-wrung from shrivelled pride:  
"Oh loneliest of the dead,  
Thou with the deeply riven side,  
And with the branded head,  
Lo, I, in blasphemy that died,  
Do envy all the dead,

"And, fleeing self-hood, fain would die—  
But this can never be!  
This mortal nevermore can lie  
To immortality.—  
Oh! hearken to my ghostly cry,  
Lone ghost of Calvary!"—  
I was my own infinity;  
The cry, the echo I ...

Oh brother, with the bone-sealed breast;  
Brother in hope, in shame,  
In joy, in sorrow, east and west  
We know, but man, earth's awful guest,  
Is vastness with a name,—  
Is spirit, hungry in the quest  
Of spirit whence he came ...

On through the void I shuddering fled,  
Immortal, seeking to be dead,  
With God behind me, God ahead,  
Pursued, encompassed, lost,—and led ...

God's outcasts only have their ease:  
But I was not as these.  
From deep to deep my soul was blown  
Like sin toward judgment, ever alone  
With the Eye unseen, and the Hand unknown.

Sad nature strained the leash in vain,  
And, flying, fled not; ever the chain  
Of the Fear that followed; ever again  
Relentless pity, guardian pain ...

Slow time a sad nepenthe brought,  
Numb poignance with no sigh,  
When body, dim with sorrow, sought  
Day with a dead man's eye.—

As from far off I darkly saw:

I lay as doomed men lie:  
A lamb beneath a lion's paw,  
Mute-meek, that lamb was I;  
My soul I felt the monster gnaw,  
I heard my body die.

And, dumbly, 'thwart a dreader deep  
I drifted, as on awful sleep,  
Where sorrows burn, and never weep ...

Delirium reigned. Fell darkness dire,  
Vague terror, shapeless dole.  
Forever climbing ghâts of fire  
I struggled to a goal  
Where, lone upon the suttee pyre,  
I saw my life's long-lost desire—  
The widow of my soul!

Far and far through smoke-red light  
I saw her beckoning stand;  
Anon, like a burning bird in fright,  
She fled with a shriek through the lurid night,  
And I wailed like a lost soul banned;  
And an echo flew like an anguished sprite  
And wailed in a hollow land.

Then utter loss: and there was nought.  
My sentience wholly sped:  
No sound, no feeling, sight, or thought:  
Yet I knew with a vacuous dread  
I lay a thing by God unsought,—  
Dead, dead,—for ever dead ...

Slow ages seemed to have their will:  
And, moving toward the prime,  
Th' Eternal Immanency still  
Breathed in the senseless lime,  
Till a dead thing felt the procreant thrill,  
And shuddered back to time.

It might have been ten thousand years  
That over me had run;  
It might have been ten thousand years  
I had not sensed the sun.—  
Oh God, how much of sin that sears,  
How many, many bitter years  
Till soul from dust be won?  
Oh Lord of Light, make sweet their tears  
Who never see the sun!— ...

Mean as the dust, through the volant vast  
Flung like chaff, as ashes cast  
To the nether storms, I sank, pride past,  
On the waiting wings of the First and Last ...

Slowly, slowly came the grey  
Where all was dark before.  
Some monster left its mangled prey  
Because the night was o'er:  
And, sick beside an Indian shore,  
I knew that it was day—

And strangely cared. Some cloudy pain  
Seemed from my being rolled.  
Afar upon a misty plain  
The grey was turning gold.  
I slept, and dreamt of rustling rain  
On leaves in summers old.

And faintly in my dream the corn  
Shook under English skies;  
To wreathe with silvery song the morn  
I saw the laverock rise;  
And I saw the Dead by a snow-white thorn,  
Touched with the blush of a mounting morn,  
Singing in paradise;

And a seraph blew on a golden horn;  
And I saw with a mild surmise

White shapes pass panoplied from war  
In fields to sense unknown;  
And over them a targe-like star  
Blazed in its heaven alone;  
And a chant of joy was blown afar;  
And a soul-name rang 'neath that blinding star,  
Which deep in a world crepuscular  
My spirit knew for its own.  
Then I turned, for the star-gleam dazzled my eyes,  
And woke with a glad surprise!—

Woke with the earth-breath on my face.  
The sunbeams filtered through  
A tamarind in a stilly place;  
I saw the brazen blue:  
And suddenly Christ's healing grace  
Fell round like holy dew.

And kindly faces passed and smiled;  
And gentle voices spoke;  
And, wondering like a waking child,  
The night within me broke,  
And from a heart grown reconciled  
Went heavenward like thin smoke.

On all the bounds of ranging sight  
The lifting gloom was riven.  
The terrors of abysmal night  
Fled like hushed horrors fly from light  
By dawn's winged horsemen driven.  
On the drifting hills of morn shone bright  
The gonfalons of heaven.

Warm winds from palm-hung pleasancess  
Came through the lattice bars  
With scents and murmurous harmonies;  
Like splintered scimitars  
The moonbeams through the banyan trees  
Gleamed under Indian stars.

And far away, and far away  
My heart went out forlorn;  
'Mid benizons from far away  
I felt my soul reborn;  
And man from every palm-fringed bay  
And mountain town where sunsets stay,  
From sounding cities smoking grey  
Called, called me down the morn ...

O magic of the morning sky!  
O wonder of the moonlit sea!  
O life—the vision and the cry  
Into eternity!—  
Eternity beneath, on high,  
Veiled within cloud and clod,  
That life in folly would vainly fly  
Through the nethermost deep, through the uttermost  
high,—  
Life that is God-doomed never to die  
To the agony of God.

Too long to self my life had given  
What was for soul alone;  
To rob the sanctuaries had striven  
To build a lone love's throne.  
In vain we prop each little heaven  
While men's souls turn to stone.

The good in ill let no man scorn;  
The ill in good let all men find.  
Our knowledge is the lesser morn;  
Large night with stars behind  
Shews most. Of spirit still is born

All life, all wonder; it shall bind  
All hearts in wisdom. Unforlorn  
He lives in deserts, though he mourn,  
Who loveth all the Kind ...

With storm gone by, from jeopardy,  
With loss for gain, and blindness past,  
Home to divine reality  
The tides have borne me,—home at last.  
Time like a silver flower doth blow  
And blossom o'er a subtler sod,  
And through the meads of light I go  
Beneath the golden boughs of God ...

My soul hath won to the city of love  
With the burnished walls of the dreams' desires;  
And my life is glad as a glittering dove  
That coos in the sun upon golden spires;  
And I welcome the winds of the world, and move  
To the music of unseen choirs.

Great powers are for us; mighty wings  
Toward man's proud peril speed.  
Life nourished at eternal springs,  
Beats up through star and creed,  
Till soul, ascendant, fetter-freed,  
A soaring seraph sings!...

On the rim of the world is a rosy tower  
Sky-poised above wide sea-foam,  
Where a beautiful spirit waits hour by hour,  
Far-eyed 'gainst a dawn like a phantom flower,  
Till a ghostly lover comes home ...

Ah! love is as lust till it count love lost;  
The soul is as sin till it weep sin's cost;  
O, happy is he, though he suffer most,  
Who wins to the Holy Ghost!

So spake old Ioläus. There  
That drifting, chant-like monody,  
Its eerie passion, weird despair,  
Had wrought on me like wizardry;—  
Withál he moved through strange eclipse  
With God's faint finger at his lips,  
And with such tense and far surprise,  
That half uncanny seemed the man  
With cloudy hair, in human guise,  
So warped with age, so weirdly wan,  
Whose dry flesh into spirit ran,  
And saw with ghostly eyes.

---

## THE RETURN

(To E.W.)

Home, O most pale adventurer, are you bound  
From that strange kingdom where no love may  
trace  
The life it loves to its abiding place,  
Or hail it from afar with cheerful sound.  
From deeps whose marges mortal ne'er hath found  
You steal, and we are awed before your face—  
For you are weird with wonder, with the grace  
Of death's most delicate lilies are you crowned.

After the ranging sunset of Farewell—  
When life's loved country fades, and hope is lorn,  
Is it not fair from that dim, tideless bourn  
To drift back home to man's own star and dwell  
Fondly with time, in tune with bud and bell,  
With midnight's shimmer of stars and the sheen of  
morn?

---

## THE SOUL AND THE SEA

I hear the shouting of th' exultant sea,  
Its reel and crash along the shuddering strand;  
Through muffling mist the wide reverberant land  
In thunderous labour laughs exultantly;  
The wrestling wind's tumultuous revelry  
Whips into whirling clouds the blanched sea-sand;  
The primal powers in grim convulsion grand  
Strive, straining agonists, frenzied to be free.

And in the lapses of the roaring gale  
I hear the cries of lives that rage and weep,  
That sow for ever, and that never reap;  
Brave hearts that travail with all hopes that fail  
Break with the breakers; with a wandering wail  
Flies sorrow with white lips along the deep.

---

## NATIONS ESTRANGED

### THE VOICE OF THE MILLIONS

Bound to one triumph, of one travail born,  
Doomed to one death, in one brief life we moil;  
The pangs that maim us and the powers that spoil  
Are common sorrows heired from worlds outworn.  
Alike in weakness, time too long hath torn  
Our mother, Patience, and our father, Toil.  
Brothers in hatred of the fates that foil,  
Say not in vain we murmur and we mourn!

O, by the love that lights our mothers' eyes,  
By hearth and home, by common hopes and fears,  
By all sad sweetness of the human years,  
Partings, and meetings, by our infants' cries—  
One are we, through the heart's divine allies,  
In long allegiance to eternal tears!

---

## THE PASSING-BELL

### AN IMPRESSION

A roaring furnace, and a passing-bell;  
Grim vitreous gloom, and one low, raking gleam  
From a spent sun that spills its passive beam  
Athwart a smouldering city. Comes the smell  
Of sweat and labour. The sad, sullen knell  
*Booms* in the brain. As in a baleful dream  
A panting siren, veiled with hissing steam,  
Shrieks like a *looming* horror deep in hell.

A flaccid flood of faces, blanched with *doom*,  
And raucous cries from out a blinking dark  
Crowd on the callous dusk. With haunting *bark*  
Death hunts his hapless victims. Heaven's sick *bloom*  
Swoons in the frost. Through droning twilight—  
hark!  
The slow, thick, ominous burden of the *tomb*.

---

## CONDEMNED

*FIAT JUSTITIA: FIAT LUX*

Our deeds avail not; and our dreams are thrust  
Into the dark and wither from the sky.  
We live in duress, and to sweetness die;  
And lo! our guerdon is the world's distrust.  
Yet have we dreamt of judgment that is just,  
And seen a splendour trailing from on high;  
From mean abortion mounts our piteous cry:  
"Out of the dust, O Christ! out of the dust!"

We are as leaves within the winter gale,  
And are through tribulation darkly driven;  
And all the promise that the prime hath given  
Is as faint smoke before the winds that wail.  
Wan from the drowning pools of bitter bale  
Our futile faces front the hush of heaven!

---

## TO AMERICA

### I.

Thou of the starry wing, that canst not soar,  
Confused power, still seeking, still unblest;  
For ever clutching to a braggart breast  
The hope portentous and the worldling's lore.  
Furiously futile, with a raucous roar  
Thy dizzy moments mock th' eternal quest;  
To feverish ends, by factions fierce distrest,  
Toiling, a sanguine Titan evermore,—

America!—Ah, burthen of the mind!—  
Cradled in truth, and 'mid distractions born  
To pure emprise on that despotic morn  
When freedom yearned along the westering wind,  
And tyranny, that hound among the blind,  
Bayed toward the deep where faith went forth—  
forlorn.

### II.

Thou who didst dare th' unknown, precarious sea,  
And down the unbounded winds adventurous  
roam,  
Searching the world's horizons for a home,  
A haven for the heart of liberty:—  
Boaster of freedom, found no longer free,  
What vaporous phantom from time's ocean-foam  
Blurs the translucence of th' eternal dome  
Where sang the burning stars that beckoned thee?

Thy heart hath caught the siren's doom-sweet cries,  
And sips oblivion at fond Circe's nod.  
Oh! for a seer whose soul is lightning-shod,  
To stand imperial 'gainst th' impervious skies,  
As Lincoln stood, with brave heaven-gazing eyes,  
To appeal from guile's impermanence to God!

---

## TO ITALY

### I.

Italia, seated by the sapphire sea,  
Crooning of summers rich from long ago,  
Dreamer mid dreams, thy peerless face aglow  
With rare romance and passionate poesy;  
Hath time's delirium taken even thee,  
Mother of Petrarch, Raphael, Angelo?  
And dost thou purblind speed to weltering woe,  
Dead to the wonder that was *Italy*?



Farewell thy peace, farewell thy pride, farewell  
The roseate rapture of the radiant years.  
Thy breast shall nourish sorrows, and thy fears  
Shall haunt the olives and the sunset bell;  
Ah, thou shalt sigh for Francis and his cell,  
And beat with Dante to the bourn of tears.

## II.

Italia, dowered with Asia's amorous eyes,  
With India's glow through snows Circassian,  
The Muses' love since Dorian lightning ran  
Kindling the west to perilous surprise,—  
Crowned with thy dawn-star, lo! portentous-wise,  
Steps the stern pupil of the Mantuan  
And lowers toward moon-mute deserts African  
Where, stained with rapine's rose, thy honour lies.

Dim grows the vision of th' enchanted shore.  
Queen of the lovely and the lonely vow,  
Farewell. False time hath charmed thee, and thy  
brow  
Is toward eclipse and storms that rend and roar.  
Fond valedictions fade afar, but thou  
Canst be our dream's Italia nevermore.

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- This book was part of Distributed Proofreaders' 2009 Halloween bash.
- Pages 15, 16, and 18: left in variant spellings "faery" and "faëry," because there was too little textual evidence to decide to normalize either way.
- Page 86: Corrected "endeavours" to "endeavours."
- Page 87: Normalized "Literary World" to "Literary World." (i.e. included a full-stop).
- In the TXT version, the œ-ligature has been transcribed as [OE] (capital) or [oe] (small letters)
- Page numbers have been retained in the HTML version as (invisible) A elements—use View Source or the equivalent function of your web browser to view them.

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