





ORPHEUS:  
A LYRICAL LEGEND



# ORPHEUS

A LYRICAL LEGEND BY  
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IN TWO VOLUMES OF WHICH  
THIS IS VOLUME TWO  
EACH ONE CROWN

SOCIETY  
FOR THE  
PROPAGATION  
OF  
RELIGIOUS  
TRUTH

**BOLESKINE  
FOYERS  
INVERNESS  
1905**

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**LIBER TERTIUS VEL LABORIS**



**TO THE MEMORY OF IEHI AOUR,  
WITH WHOM I WALKED THROUGH HELL, AND COMPELLED IT.**

Neither were his hopes frustrated: For having appeased them with the melodious sound of his voice and touch, prevailed at length so far, as that they granted him leave to take her away with him; but on this condition, that she should follow him, and he not to look back upon her, till he came to the light of the upper World; which he (impatient of, out of love and care, and thinking that he was in a manner past all danger) nevertheless violated, insomuch that the Covenant is broken, and she forthwith tumbles back again headlong into Hell.—*The Wisdom of the Ancients.*

Moody Pluto winks while Orpheus plays.—*Rape of Lucrece.*

ORPHEUS TRAVELS TO HADES

As I pass in my flight  
On the awed storm cloud,  
Steeps steeper than sleep,  
Depths deeper than night,  
I have furrowed and ploughed  
(Deep calling to deep !)  
Through the spaces of light,  
The heads of them bowed  
For the fears that weep,  
And the joys that smite,  
And the loves disallowed.  
They are risen ; they leap ;  
They wing them in white,  
Crying aloud  
Words widowed that keep  
The frost of their fires forgotten and faded from Memory's  
steep.

As I pass in my glory  
O'er sea and land,  
I smite the loud tune  
From a fervid hand,  
By the promontory,  
The mountainous moon.

Vivid and hoary,  
Twin birds, as I hark,  
Take fire, understand  
The ways of the dark,  
As an angel did guide me,  
Waving the brand  
Of the dawn's red spark.  
My measures mark  
The influence fine  
Of the voyage divine  
Of the airy bark  
Wherein I travel  
O'er mountain and level.  
The land, and the sea,  
And the beings of air,  
And the lives of the land,  
And the daughters of fire,  
And the sons of the Ocean,  
Come unto me ;  
My chariot bear,  
My tunes understand,  
My love desire,  
Share my emotion.  
They gather, they gather,  
Apollo, O father !  
They gather around ;  
They echo the sound  
Of the tune that rejoices,  
The manifold measure  
Of feet tuned to voices

Of terrible pleasure.  
We pass in our courses  
Above the grey treasure  
Of seas in Earth's forces,  
Her girdle, her splendour.  
We bridle the horses  
Of sea as we lend her  
Tunes subtle and tender  
To sink in her sources.  
The air's love? We rend her!  
We pass to the West,  
We sink on the breast  
Of the Ocean to rest.

As I pass, as I madden  
In fury of flight,  
The sea's billows gladden  
Invoking the light.  
The depths of her sadden  
Not seeing the sight  
Of the glorious one,  
Whose steed is the Sun,  
Whose journey is certain,  
Who speeds to the gate,  
The visible curtain  
Of visible fate.  
My soul takes no hurt in  
Their gloom: I await  
The portals to rise  
In the desolate skies.

I trust to my song  
Irresistibly strong  
    To sunder and shatter  
    Those towers of matter.  
They rise! Oh! They rise,  
    The terrible towers  
    Of Hades: they lift  
Across the white skies  
    Those terrible-cliffed  
    Rocks, where the hours  
Beat vainly: where lies  
    The horrible rift  
    Of the earth's green bowers  
    Where the wan ships drift,  
    And the sun's rays shift,  
And the river runs  
    Whose banks have no flowers,  
Whose waves have no suns.  
    Sheer to the terror  
Of heaven, the walls  
    Strike; and the mirror  
Of water recalls  
    No truth, but dim error.  
The soul of me falls  
    Down to the glamour  
Of dream; and fear  
    Beats like a hammer.  
Here! it is here!  
    Lost are my friends;  
The elements shrink



Where the life-world ends  
On the icy brink  
Of the sunless river ;  
Ends, and for ever !

I pass to the portals  
Of death in my flight.  
I sound at the gates.  
I call the immortals  
Of death and of night.  
I call on the Fates  
By the summons of light.  
The gates are rended ;  
The rocks divide ;  
My soul hath descended  
Abreast of the tide.  
I, single and splendid,  
Death have defied !

I pass by the terrible gates and the guardians dragon-  
eyed.

I thunder adown  
The vast abyss.  
(The journey's crown  
Is a woman's kiss !),  
What terrors to master !  
What fear and disaster  
To gain the renown  
And the fadeless bliss !

**I thunder aloud**

**On the rocks as I fly,  
Borne on a cloud**

**In the gloomy sky.  
Shaped like a shroud,  
Draped like a pall,  
I shrink not ; I fall  
To the blackness below  
With my soul aglow.**

**No taint of a fear !  
For I know, I know  
Eurydice near,  
Eurydice here !  
The purpose divine  
Thrills my soul as wine.**

**Now I pass to the soul of the dark, confronting the inner-  
most shrine.**

**Hail to ye, warders  
That guard the borders  
Of Hades ! All hail to ye, dwellers of night !  
But I am the soul  
In a man's control.  
Ye have nought to do with the dweller of  
light !**

**Hail to ye, hail  
In the hollow vale,  
Your weapons are lifted against me in vain.  
My lyre shall charm ye,**

My voice disarm ye,  
For I am the soul overshadowed of  
pain!

Hail to ye, wardens  
Of Death's grey gardens!  
O flowerless and vineless your bowerless  
vale!  
But I must alone  
To the wonderful throne.  
Let fall the vain spears, shadows! Hail  
to ye! Hail!

The phantoms diminish,  
The shadows fall back.  
Lost is the vision  
In fires that finish  
Stark and black  
With lust and derision;  
And all the illusion  
Is fallen to the ground.  
The warders are beaten;  
They go in confusion;  
Their place is not found.  
The air hath eaten  
With wide-gaping jaws  
A furious folk.  
Lost is the cause  
In Tartarean smoke.

I, through the wall  
Of impassable gloom,  
Apart from the sun,  
Pass as a ghost,  
Bearing the lyre.  
The sad notes fall  
To the sorrowful womb ;  
One after one  
They leap as a host  
With weapons of fire  
On a desolate coast,  
Where love is lost  
And the bitterness clings of fear, and the sadness dogs  
of desire!

Thrice girded with brass,  
Thrice bound with iron,  
The gate is in three  
Pillars of gold.  
But I will pass  
(My heart as a lion,  
My lyre as a key! )  
To the gates of old,  
To the place of despair  
And the walls of dread,  
The halls of the doomed,  
The homes of the dead,  
The houses where  
The beautiful air  
Is as air entombed.

Nothing can shake  
Those terrible walls.  
No man can wake  
With silver calls  
The home of the lost and the lone, the gate of the  
Stygian thralls.

But thou, O Titan!  
O splendour triform!  
Gloomiest dweller  
Of uttermost night!  
My journey enlighten!  
O soul of the storm!  
Waker and queller  
Of sombre delight,  
Hecate! hearken  
The soul of my prayer!  
Glitter and darken  
Through sulphurous air!  
Let the sacrifice move thee to joy, the invoker thy glory  
declare  
In words that shall please  
Thy terrible peace,  
O speedy to save,  
In flames of fine fire that bedew the deepest Tartarean  
cave!

[*Invoking Hecate*]

O triple form of darkness! Sombre splendour!  
Thou moon unseen of men! Thou huntress dread!  
Thou crownèd demon of the crownless dead!  
O breasts of blood, too bitter and too tender!  
Let me the offering  
Unseen of gentle spring  
Bring to thy shrine's sepulchral glittering!  
I slay the swart beast! I bestow the bloom  
Sown in the dusk, and gathered in the gloom  
Under the waning moon,  
At midnight hardly lightening the East;  
And the black lamb from the black ewe's dead womb  
I bring, and stir the slow infernal tune  
Fit for thy chosen priest.

Here where the band of Ocean breaks the road  
Black-trodden, deeply-stooping, to the abyss,  
I shall salute thee with the nameless kiss  
Pronounced toward the uttermost abode  
Of thy supreme desire.  
I shall illumine the fire  
Whence thy wild stryges shall obey the lyre,  
Whence thy Lemurs shall gather and spring round,  
Girdling me in the sad funereal ground  
With faces turnèd back,  
My face averted! I shall consummate  
The awful act of worship, O renowned  
Fear upon earth, and fear in hell, and black  
Fear in the sky beyond Fate!

I hear the whining of thy wolves! I hear  
The howling of the hounds about thy form,  
Who comest in the terror of thy storm,  
And night falls faster ere thine eyes appear  
Glittering through the mist.  
O face of woman unkissed  
Save by the dead whose love is taken ere they wist!  
Thee, thee I call! O dire one! O divine!  
I, the sole mortal, seek thy deadly shrine,  
Pour the dark stream of blood,  
A sleepy and reluctant river  
Even as thou drawest, with thine eyes on mine,  
To me across the sense-bewildering flood  
That holds my soul for ever!

The night falls back ;  
The shadows give place ;  
The threefold form  
Appears in the black,  
As a direful face  
Half seen in the storm.

I worship, I praise  
The wonderful ways  
Where the smitten rays  
Of darkness sunder.  
The hand is lifted ;  
The gates are rifted ;  
The sound is as thunder!  
She comes to the summons,  
Her face as a woman's,

Her feet as a Fear's,  
Turned back on her path  
For a sign of wrath :—  
She appears, she appears !  
I step to the river.  
The lyre-strings quiver ;  
The limbs of me shudder ;  
So cold is the mist ;  
So dark is the stream ;  
So fearful the boat ;  
So horrid the rudder ;  
So black is the tryst ;  
So frightful the beam ;  
So fearing to float ;  
The steersman so dread,  
The shadowy shape of a ghost that guides the bark of  
the dead !

Agèd and foul,  
His locks wreath about him.  
Horrid his scowl !  
Haggard his soul !  
My songs control  
While they fear him and doubt him.  
I step in the boat,  
And the waters ache,  
And the old boards shake.  
I shall hardly float,  
So heavy the soul  
Of a living man



On those waters that roll  
Nine times around  
The fatal ground ;  
Yet still to my singing we move on the river Tartarean.

So darker and colder  
The stream as we float :  
Blacker and bleaker,  
The mist on the river !  
Stronger the shoulder  
Impels the sad boat.  
Sadder and weaker  
Shudder and quiver  
The notes of the lyre.  
Quenched is my fire  
In the fog of the air.  
Dim my desire  
Cuts through the snare.  
The cold confounds me ;  
The mist surrounds me ;  
Life trembles and lowers ;  
Earth fades from my life.  
The love of my wife,  
The light of the flowers,  
Earth's beautiful bowers,  
Pass, and are not.  
I am awed by the soul of the place, the hopeless, the  
desolate spot.

Here is the wharf  
Wearily standing,

Misshapen and dwarf,  
Well fit for such landing!  
Darker the bloom  
Of the night-flowers glows,  
Shadowing the tomb,  
The indicible woes.  
Dark and unlovely the cypress still grows  
Deformed and blistered,  
Stunted and blackened,  
Where the dead gleams glistered,  
The dusk-lights slackened.  
Such is the shore  
Who reacheth may never  
Return o'er the river!  
Here pace evermore  
The terrible ghosts  
Malignant of men,  
Whose airless hosts  
In wars unjust  
Went down to the den;  
Whose fury and lust  
Turned poison or steel  
On their own bad lives.  
Here whirls the grim wheel  
Where the dead soul strives  
Ever to climb  
To the iron nave,  
Find Space and Time,  
Or a God to save,  
Or a way o'er the wave.

The Fate contrives  
That he never thrives.  
Revolving anon,  
The gleam is gone,  
And the shadowy smile  
Of Hecate darkens.  
My sad soul hearkens ;  
Moves fearfully on :—

O place of all places discrowned ! Lamenting, I linger  
awhile !

But fronting me tearful,  
Me full of lament,  
Shoots up the fearful  
Den of the hound.  
Ages they spent,  
Gods, in the graving  
That cavern profound,  
That temple of hate  
Of horror and craving :—  
O who shall abate  
The moaning, the raving ?  
Dark the dull flame  
Of the altar, the flood  
Of the black lamb's blood !  
But who shall proclaim  
That his soul can descry

The depth of that cavern immense where the guardian of  
Orcus may lie ?

Sleepest thou, devil ?  
Monster of evil !

Spawn of Typhon  
By Echidna's lust!  
The hateful revel  
In blood and dust!  
The obscene crone  
And the monster's terror!  
The hideous thrust  
Of an unclean thirst  
In the halls of error!  
Expunged and accurst,  
A lapping of hate,  
A bride-bed rotten,  
And thou, miscreate  
And misbegotten!

O Hecate, hear me!  
The terrors awaken,  
The cavern is shaken  
With horrible groanings.  
Cryings and moanings  
And howlings draw near me.  
I tremble, I fear me!  
My lyre is forsaken.  
The air of the hollow  
Is helpless to bear  
The notes of Apollo  
Through Stygian air.

But heavier shrieking  
Revolves and resounds

In the ghastly profound ;  
And the voice unspeaking  
Of the hound of the damned  
Runs eager, and bounds,  
Malignantly crammed  
In my ears, and the noise  
Of infernal joys  
In the houses of sin :—  
Let me pass to a direr place, to the terrors unspoken  
within !

Dead silence succeeds  
The sound of the prayer.  
Again the loud lyre  
Shudders and bleeds  
In the desolate air  
With a sound as of fire !  
The hound recedes ;  
But the gates stand there,  
Barring desire,  
Barring the way  
Of the dead unburied,  
Unshrived, and unblessed ;  
They stand and pray  
In legions serried,  
Beating the breast,  
Tearing the hair,  
Rending the raiment.  
There is none to care,  
No golden payment

Availleth at all.  
There is none to call ;  
    There is none to pity :  
They stand in their pain  
    At the gate of the city.  
    There is none to feel  
    Or give relief ;  
They are lost ; they are vain ;  
    They are eaten of grief.  
They are sore afraid,  
    They are weary with care.  
There is none to aid.  
    There is none to pity.  
    They wail in despair  
    At the gate of the city.

But I, shall I halt  
    At the thrice-barred portal  
In the lampless vault,  
    I, half an immortal ?  
By love of my mother,  
    By might of my lyre,  
    By Nature's assistance,  
I, I, not another  
    Demand my desire,  
    Rebuke your resistance,  
By mighty Apollo  
    Whose power yet abides,  
Though his light may not follow  
    Through Stygian tides !

By my power over things  
Both living and dead,  
By my influence splendid  
In heavenly court,  
The song of me springs.  
My favour is dread.  
Be your portals rended !  
Your bolts be as nought !  
The ethereal kings  
Encompass my head.  
My soul hath transcended  
The limits of thought !  
Unbar me the gates !  
Revolve me the hinges !  
Mine be the Fate !  
Mine be the springes  
Wherein ye have taken  
The spirits forsaken !  
But I, shall I quail at a nod ?  
Shall I fail for a God ?  
Is the soul of me shaken ?

Darklier winding  
And steeper the way,  
Baffling and blinding'  
Eyes used to the day.  
Rocks cloven by thunder  
And shattered by storm  
Awry or asunder  
Rise and reform

In marvellous coils  
Round the adamant road  
Whose tangles and toils  
Lead on the abode,  
Where dwell in the light  
Of justice infernal  
The judges that smite,  
That judge men aright,  
Whose laws are eternal !  
Those kings that in reigning  
For bribing or feigning  
Swerved never an hair  
From justice and truth ;  
Turned never a care  
To wrath or to ruth ;  
Did justice, and died.

Thither I haste  
To face the austere  
Faces of peace.  
Shall the lyre cease ?  
Its music be waste ?  
Themselves not hear ?  
I stride to the presence and sing : and my soul is not  
conquered of fear.

Now the road widens and grows darker still  
As if the shadow of some ancient tower  
Cast its deep spell on the reluctant will.



Still tortuous winds the deep descent ; the hour  
Lies bitterer on my soul : I fear to fail,  
To loose in vain the lyre's dissolving power

On the white souls armed in that triple mail  
Of justice, virtue, truth : percipience  
Beyond the mute and melancholy veil

That covers from the drowsy eye of sense  
The subtle thought that hides behind the mask,  
I fear indeed : but now the soul intense

Of truth precedes me and informs the task  
Of the steep ways : I gladden and go on  
Ready to sing, to answer, or to ask

As all may happen : now the stern light shone  
Vivid across the blackness, and the rock  
Recedes : the narrow stair is changed and gone

And the wide air invades : a mighty shock  
To my numbed senses void of vital air  
And to my lyre reverberate to mock

With clanging echoes and discordant, where  
The dome reached up, almost to earth, so high  
Rolled back the pillars and the walls, aglare

With iron justice' frightful symmetry  
Blazoned in blood-like flame, gushing from springs  
Unseen, unguessed, incredible! There fly

The dreaded banners of the demon kings  
In fearful colours, and the vast inane  
Dome catches music from my mouth, and rings

Back iron curses to the blessings vain  
I pour in desperate fervour from the lyre.  
So, baffled by the echoes of hell's pain,

Blinded by grisly glamour of hell's fire,  
I take my refuge in the solitude  
And grandeur of that irony of ire,

That mockery of mercy: thus I brood  
Apart, alone, upon the cause of Things  
And wait those fearful Three. A lifeless mood

Stirs my grey being: ay! no passion springs  
In flowerless halls as these: awhile the mind  
Wanders on void unprofitable wings

No whither: gains new strength at last to find  
Custom breed sight and hearing: in the hall  
The sounds grow clear, the black fires fail to blind.

I see the mighty buttress of the wall  
Lost in its mighty measure : hear again  
The lyre's low notes and light distinctly fall

A gentle influence in the place of pain.  
Oh now the central glory of the place  
Falls splendid on the unbewildered brain,

And I am found contemplating a face  
More passionless than mortals' : central sits  
Throned on pure iron, with brass for carapace,

Minos : and either side of him befits  
The mighty Rhadamanthus throned on gold  
And canopied with silver : sternly knits

His brows the awful Æacus, in cold  
Splendour of justice throned on carven lead ;  
And o'er his head twin dragons bend and hold

A cobra's hood made of some metal dread  
Impossible on earth : how calm, how keen  
Flash their wise eyes, those judges of the dead,

In silent state : how eager, how serene  
Are the broad brows : the heart shrinks up and sinks,  
Seeing no gallery to slip between

And pass those aged ones—oft a man thinks  
He faces truth! I know this hour, alas!  
That face to face with naked truth he shrinks.

His web of woven fiction may not pass  
(He who believes it to be truth) with them  
Who see his mind as though it were a glass

Without a shadow. Yet the ninefold gem  
And million-facet glory of my song  
Glittering, made splendid in the diadem

Of flashing music shall assoil the wrong,  
A finer truth interpret. Though the heart  
And core of music hold a poisonous throng

Of lies—yet, sing it to sufficient Art,  
The lie abolishes itself—the tune  
Redeems the darkness—the keen flashes start

Of truth availing though the midnight moon  
Darken, the stars be quenched in utter cloud,  
And the high sun eclipsed at very noon.

So flash I back the glory calm and proud  
Irradiating the Three. So shall my lyre  
Sweep the vast courts with acclamation loud

Of splashing music, of exulting fire  
That revels in its penetrating cover  
Of azure life that smites its flickering spire

Of sworded splendour inwards, to discover  
Not justice, not discernment, not desire,  
Not passion, but the sheer will of a lover!

#### MINOS

Substantial, stern, and strong,  
Who lifts an alien lyre?  
Confounds our echoes dire  
With strange and stubborn song?

#### ÆACUS

Here in the House of Dole  
Where shadows hardly dare  
Stand, who doth deem to fare  
Forth from the outer air  
Mortal, a strenuous soul?

#### RHADAMANTHUS

The large and lordly land  
Fertile of earth hath sent  
With dolorous intent  
Some shape or element.  
What spell of might hath rent  
The veil of Hell, and bent  
Death's purpose to his hand?

**MINOS**

**What shaft from the bow of Apollo ?**

**ÆACUS**

**What quiver of wonder  
Hath cleft the black walls of the hollow ?**

**RHADAMANTHUS**

**What terror ?**

**MINOS**

**What thunder  
Hath shaken Hell's gates to the base ?**

**ÆACUS**

**Hath mockèd the guards to their face ?**

**RHADAMANTHUS**

**Hath rent him asunder  
The portals of Dis in his wrath ?**

**MINOS**

**Hath made for his will  
An arrow of light for his path ?**

ÆACUS

Left stagnant and chill  
The waters of Styx unappeased?  
The keys of our prison hath he seized,

RHADAMANTHUS

A mortal!

MINOS

An ill  
Most alien to Heaven, by Zeus!

ÆACUS

But impiety's doom,  
By Poseidon, shall fill for his use  
No well-omened tomb.

RHADAMANTHUS

By Hades, our dogs let us loose!  
Let death in the gloom  
Bring peace to the Hall of the Dead!

MINOS

A passionate being!  
No weal to the light of his head  
In the place of the seeing!

**ÆACUS**

Awake, wild justice of dread!  
Lest shadows be fleeing  
In fear of the portent to lurk  
In a deeper-detested  
Cave, ere we wake to the work.

**RHADAMANTHUS**

Black snakes many-crested,  
Arise! lest the calm of the murk  
From our places be wrested.

**MINOS**

Who art thou?

**ÆACUS**

What ails thee to irk  
From earth tender-breasted  
To the milkless dug of the grave  
And the iron breasts of the pit?

**RHADAMANTHUS**

Can a bodily presence save  
Against a shadowy wit?



**MINOS**

Thy hope doth dwell, O slave,  
Where thy mother fashioned it,  
Oh heart of a fool, in thy breast.

**ÆACUS**

Away, away to the skies!

**RHADAMANTHUS**

That our dead may take their rest.

**MINOS**

Arise to the air, arise!

**ÆACUS**

Away to the mountain crest!

**RHADAMANTHUS**

Veil, veil from the awful eyes!

**MINOS**

Endure thy heart as it may,  
And steel thine heart,  
Thou shalt hear and know and obey  
As I say "Depart";  
Lest the arrow find its way  
And the sternly-shapen dart.

ÆACUS

A second our justice waits.

RHADAMANTHUS

It falleth anon.

MINOS

O fool of hopes and hates  
Arise and begone!

ÆACUS

O toy of the mirthless fates!  
Who art thou to con  
The mysteries of the dead in the black-souled  
bastion?

MINOS, ÆACUS, RHADAMANTHUS

Away! away! to the light of day!  
Now as it may: then as it must.  
We are loath to pardon, and loath to slay,  
Void of greed and anger and lust,—  
But we are iron and thou art clay;  
We are marble and thou but dust.

ORPHEUS

O iron, bow to silver's piercing note!  
O marble, see the shape of ivory!  
My justice fountains from a sweeter throat  
My death is bound beyond eternity.

O wise and just, hear ye the voice of man,  
Not seeking to involve in woven spells  
Or trickery the decree Tartarean,  
By words to blink that justice which is Hell's!

I came indeed before this awful throne  
To seek a party favour, but I wait  
Shuddering and silent, stedfast and alone,  
And change my music at the call of Fate.

For while ye spake in tumult, in this ear  
A music rang from earth's remotest mine,  
From star and comet, flaming wheel and sphere,  
From Hell's deep vault and from the House divine.

A voice diverse, a voice identical  
Called me this hour from bitterest woes and black,  
Constraining eloquence and mighty thrall  
Of cosmic agony, and wrung me back

From my poor plea to challenge in my song  
The whole domain of deeply-seated law,  
Launch thunders not Olympic at the strong  
Bars of the Order backed with strength and awe

That men call Will of Zeus: the after scheme  
And primal fate and most primordial plan  
Shaped from the earth's first protoplasmic dream  
Up to the last great mischief that is man.

All this I challenge: that the suns and stars  
Work in due order and procession meet  
Without caprice in viewless, changeless bars,  
Nor self-determinate in their wingless feet.

All nature and all consciousness and thought  
He hath thrown asunder and divided them ;  
Fixing a gulf of agony athwart,  
Where rolls a tide no soul of man may stem.

Himself fixed high, he mocked us with his name  
Of "reconciler," and of "one beyond all" ;  
And cast his shadow to the deep, to shame  
That oneness in its own division's thrall ;

So that Himself appears in cloud and fire  
Distorted in the world's distorted mirror ;  
And dark convulsion and confusion dire  
Stands for his form of error and of terror.

But I perceive, I Orpheus, Lord of Song,  
And every Lord of Song that me shall follow  
Down steep of time's own agony and wrong,  
Shall see the lightning bridge the dreadful hollow

With jagged flame of master-music, hear  
The blind curse thunder forth against in vain  
When the swift glory of the rolling sphere  
Of song pours forth its utterance, keen with pain,

Mad with delight, and calm beyond woe and pleasure.  
Yea, every son of this my soul shall know  
In the swift concourse of his music's measure  
One thing impatient of this to and fro

March of hell's dancers. I perceive a key  
To lock the prison of the world on him  
That built the iron walls and made decree  
Long past in æons now grown gray and dim,

Like halls ancestral whence their folk have fled,  
The marbles all are broken, and the weeds  
Grown o'er the bones of the unquiet dead,  
And time's remorse avails not on its deeds.

I see that time is one : future and past  
Are but one present ; space is one, the North  
And South and all the sixfold shame holds fast  
No more : the poet's fiat hath gone forth

And tamed the masters of division. Me  
Nor sun can burn, nor moon make mad, nor time  
Alter : I drown not in the deepest sea,  
Nor choke where icy mountain ridges climb

The steps of heaven : but these, these children, cry  
Their bitter cry for justice. Mighty Ones,  
Lords of the Dusk, incline ye, mercifully,  
Rightly, to misery of all stars and suns

And planets and all grains of dust that sorrow—  
Hark! from grim Tartarus, most doleful bound,  
Their throats of anguish notes of triumph borrow  
At my loud strain's unprofitable sound.

For who are ye? Poor judges of the dead,  
In your stern eyes the sadness is mine own,  
Mingled with sense that all your forces dread  
Are vain to take the spirit from one stone.

I would have called to ye in wild strong joy;  
“Arise, O Lords of Justice, and be girt  
With lightnings, and be ardent to destroy  
This Fool's creation and to heal its hurt

With swift annihilation!” Ye are vain,  
Alas! poor powers! But yet the damned rejoice  
Hearing the splendour, prophet in my strain,  
And certain comfort in my mighty voice.

For this shall be, that in the utter end  
Shall be an end, that in the vast of time  
Shall come a ceasing, and the steel bar bend  
Of the God's will, himself from his sublime

Pinnacled house in heaven headlong cast  
Like his own thunder to the abyss of nought  
When space and time and being shall be past,  
And the grim thinker perish with his thought.

Therefore I leave in hands unshakable  
The destinies of being, and care not  
For all the miseries of the damned in hell,  
Or the vain gods' unenviable lot.

I leave the cry of chaos, and recall  
My private pang and woe particular,  
One drop of water by mischance let fall  
From some white slave's divinely carven jar.

O Lords of Justice, universal woe  
Hath yet its shadows in a singer's soul,  
He feels the arrow from a party bow  
Who yet hath strength to struggle with the whole.

I love my wife. The many-coloured throne  
Of Grecian meadows hath nor charm nor lure  
Now she is gone. Lamenting and alone  
My dulled heart aches, most that it must endure.

Give this decree, O masters! Few the days  
And light the hours since Heracles descended  
The dusky steep, the intolerable ways,  
And one prey—Theseus—from your prisons rended

By might of godhead and the skill of man.  
But now with music from a Muse's breast  
Sweetened with milk of tenderness, I scan  
Your eyes with hope, and with a man's unrest

And a man's purpose I appeal. Be just,  
O ye whom greater justice baulks and bars!  
Return my lover from the unkind dust  
To the sweet light of the eternal stars!

Be kind, and from the unjust place of fear  
Return by kindness her, the innocent one,  
From the grey places to the waters clear  
And meadows fair, and light of moon and sun!

Relent. Reverse the doom. I see your eyes  
Quiver despite ye : but your hands ye wring ;  
Little by little bitter tears arise  
Like stubborn water from a frozen spring,

And deep unrest is seated in your limbs.  
Ye pity me. Ye pity. Mute and weak  
With the long trouble of persistent hymns  
I bow myself and listen while ye speak.

### MINOS

Brethren, what need of wonder  
That Hell is burst asunder  
Shaken from base to brow, as if with Zeus' own  
thunder?  
What wonder if our peace  
Broke, and our mysteries  
Quaked at the prescience of these solemnities?



ÆACUS

Child of the earth and heaven,  
Our spirits thou hast riven  
With words we must admit, with power of song—whence  
given?

Neither of God nor man,  
Thy song's amazing span  
Hath caused strange joy among the woes Tartarean.

RHADAMANTHUS

Never in the centuries  
Till godlike Heracles  
Burst the wild bonds, hath mortal found the fatal  
knees;

Nor hath the bitter cry  
Of worlds in agony  
Answered the groans of those who weep, and cannot die.

MINOS

Iron of heart and strong,  
We also suffer wrong.  
We know these words are just. We avail not. Though  
thy song

Were the sole word of Zeus,  
Should that avail to loose

The bands of being firm, invulnerable dews  
    Tincturing its bitter brass,  
    Shielding its vital mass  
From every word that cries, " Thus, and thy day shall  
    pass."

#### ÆACUS

Typhon ! Typhon ! Typhon !  
    Heard ye that awful moan  
Leap through the blackness from the miserable throne ?  
    Vain as each pallid ghost,  
    Where is thy fatal boast,  
Destroyer named of old on Khem's disastrous coast ?  
    Old power of evil curled  
    Below the phantom world,  
Canst thou destroy, whose might to misery is hurled ?

#### RHADAMANTHUS

What god beyond these twain  
    Abides or may remain  
Seated, too strong to quell, the Lord of Being's pain.  
    Aloof from time and chance  
    Fate, will and circumstance,  
Canst Thou not wither Life with one indignant glance ?  
    Thy name we know not ; Thine  
    Is the unbuilted shrine.  
We doubt us if Thou be among the powers divine !

**MINOS**

Bound by strict line and law,  
Fearful with might and awe,  
We hold the powerless power  
For many an aged hour.  
We move not from our place.  
We ask nor give not grace,  
Nor change our lordly looks before a suppliant's face.

**ÆACUS**

Stern in all justice, we  
Assent aloud to thee,  
We affirm thy cause as right :  
We put forth all the might  
Of aid : and all is done.  
Our utmost power is none  
To lift one soul to live and look upon the sun.

**RHADAMANTHUS**

For righteous thought and deed  
Apportioning its meed ;  
For evil act and mind  
Rewarding in its kind ;  
So sit we : but our power  
Apportions not an hour  
To light the dying lamp, revive the faded flower.

**MINOS**

But thou, be strong to sing !

ÆACUS

Loose arrows from the string !

RHADAMANTHUS

Bid the wild word take wing !

MINOS

Hades hath evil fame  
To suppliants—bitter shame !—  
Inexorable.

ÆACUS

Aim

Yet the swift prayer, abide  
His word whate'er betide.  
What worse ?

RHADAMANTHUS

The Gods thy guide !  
Go and assail him !

MINOS

Stay,

The Queen of Hell !

ÆACUS

That way  
Leads to the light of day.

RHADAMANTHUS

A woman's heart may yearn,  
To a man's love may turn.

MINOS

Should she, the ravished, spurn  
A man whose love is reft ?

ÆACUS

Meadows and flowers she left  
To Him—O bosom cleft  
With a wife's loss!—a wife.

RHADAMANTHUS

Too doubtful is the strife.

MINOS

Yet go ! perchance to life.

ÆACUS

Go ! and the Gods above  
Guard thee, O soul of love !

RHADAMANTHUS

I doubt me much thereof.

ORPHEUS

Ah me! I find ye but ill counsellors.  
For I will conquer. Have I spent these stores  
Of will and song for nought? Hell's heart may rend,  
But mine endureth even to the end.

Severe and righteous Lords, O fare ye well!  
Are not my feet forced forward on a road  
Leading to innermost abodes of Hell

Exalted as above the green abode  
Of nymphs on broad Olympus, raises high  
Its head the kingly snow, gigantic load

Of sombre whiteness cleaving through the sky  
For gods to dwell in—so I pass the hall  
And seek the gloomy thrones of majesty,

Where I may pledge my last despairing call  
Unto the mightiest of the House of Dread,  
And loosen Death's inexorable thrall

And bring my lover from among the dead.  
Now in the blackness of the rocks that span  
The dolorous way I spy a golden thread

Veined in the strength of the obsidian  
Flowing and growing, joining vein to vein,  
Like fresh blood in the arteries of man,

Up to the very heart. And as I go  
Loosen the knees of anguish and grow dim  
The shattering flames of pain : the songs of woe

Flicker and alter to a solemn hymn  
Chanted in slowest measure in deep awe:  
Now as a yew-tree sends a mighty limb

Shooting to sunset, the black road's black maw  
Gapes to the westward ; the great trunk divides  
And all the armies of infernal law

Stand ranked about the venerable sides  
Of the black cave : they speak not ; dumb they stand  
And all the frost of all the air abides

Upon them, as a vampire stooped and spanned  
The white throat of a maiden and held still  
Her powers by virtue of its hate's command,

Somewhat like love's : so all the solemn chill  
Invades those statued ranks of warriors,  
And I pass through, the lightning of my will

A steady stream of flame : high instinct pours  
Its limpid light of water on my mind,  
So that I range inhospitable shores

Assured of Her I shall most surely find  
Ere the end be : awake, O living lyre,  
Since in the narrow way and pass confined

I see a darkness infinite as fire,  
Clear as all spirit vision, lustrous yet  
As ebony shows in caverns rendered dire

By dreadful magic, or as if pure jet  
Had taken of itself an inner light,  
And its own blackness filled night's coronet

With a new jewel : so I see aright  
Where no light is like earth's. The path grows broad  
And lofty, till the whole hall springs to sight,

And I am standing where the dreaded Lord  
And Lady of the region of the lost  
Hold awful sway : yet here the flaming sword

Of sight is broken by the deadly frost  
That clusters round their thrones : a mist of fire  
Congealed to vital darkness : yet exhaust



Like a seer's magic glass of air : expire  
The dumb black hours in fear : but I am ware,  
Well ware, by instinct surer still and higher

Than the own sight of soul that they are there,  
No mockery of their presence : so even hither  
My mother's might is on me, on I flare

Into wild war of song : my keen notes wither  
The flowers of frost about me and I turn  
Ever the strength and mastering frenzy thither

With energy of madness : yea, I burn !  
My soul burns up upon the lyre ! I lend  
My whole life's vigour to one song, to earn

Their guerdon of the gods, a god to friend,  
And seek through devious ways a single end.

*[Invoking Hades*

*Str. I*

Now is the gold gone of the year, and gone  
The glory of the world, and gathered close  
The silver of the frost. Far splendid snows  
Shine where the bright anemone once shone.  
Ay ! for the laughter live  
Of youths and maids that strive  
In amorous play, the ancient saws of eld  
And wisdom mystical  
From bearded lips must fall,

Old eyes behold what young eyes ne'er beheld :  
Namely, the things beyond the triple veil  
    Of space and time and cause, eternal woof  
    Of misery overproof :  
And aged thoughts assail  
    The younger hopes, and passion stands aloof,  
And silence takes possession, and the tale  
    Of earth is told and done.  
Then from the Sire of all the Gods, from War  
    And Love and Wisdom and the eternal Sun  
Worship is torn afar :  
    While unto Thee, O Hades, turn we now,  
    Awful of breast and brow,  
And hear thee in the sea, behold thee in the Star.

*Ant. 1 [Echo of the Damned]*

Ay! is the earth and upper ether gone,  
    And all the joy of earth, and gathered close  
    The darkness and the death-wind and the snows  
On us on whom the sun of air once shone.  
    What souls are left alive  
    Vainly lament and strive,  
For they shall join the dead of utmost eld ;  
    The concourse mystical  
    Who see the seasons fall  
Shall soon behold what all we have beheld :—  
The accursed stream, the intolerable veil  
    Of night and death and hell, disastrous woof  
    Of anguish overproof

That fruitless wills assail  
Ever in vain : good fortune stands aloof  
And all kind gods : we, taking up the tale  
Of dead men past and done,  
Declare that ceaseless is the eternal war,  
And victory stedfast set against the Sun.  
Yet we perceive afar  
Even in Hades, at the end, not now,  
Some light upon his brow,  
Some comfort in the sea, some refuge in the Star.

*Str. 2*

O thou ! because thy chariot is golden,  
And beautiful thy coursers, and their manes  
Flecked with such foam as once upon the sea  
Bore Aphrodite, and thy face is olden,  
Worn with dim thought and unsuspected pains,  
And all thy soul fulfilled of majesty ;  
Because the silence of thy house is great,  
And thy word second spoken after Fate,  
And thy light stricken of thine own grim hand ;  
Because thy whisper exceedeth the command  
Of Zeus ; thy dim light far outshines his glory ;  
Because, as He the first is, Thou the last :—  
Therefore I take up sorrow in my hands,  
And ply thine ear with my most doleful story,  
Asking a future, who have lost a past :  
A guerdon of my singing like the land's  
When spring breaks forth from winter, and the blood  
Of the old earth laughs in every new-born bud.

*Ant. 2 [Echo of the Damned]*

O thou ! because thy lyre is keen and golden,  
And beautiful thy numbers through our veins  
Pouring delight, as on the starry sea  
Burn gems of rapture ; though the houses olden  
Relax awhile their unredeeming pains,  
And through dead slaves thrill bounteous majesty ?  
Though the strong music of thy soul be great :—  
Shall thy desire avail to alter Fate ?  
Or impious hands unloose the awful hand ?  
Or futile words reverse the great command ?  
Or what availeth ? Though great Hades' glory  
Stoop to thy prayer, and answer thee at last,  
Should Clotho catch the thread in weaving hands,  
Respin what Atropos once cut—that story  
Were vain for thee—that which is past is past,  
Nor can Omnipotence avail the land's  
Death—Spring's is alien though ancestral blood,  
And a new birth is current in the bud.

*Str. 3*

Think, then, the deed impossible is done  
Since Theseus fared forth to the ambient air !  
His thread once cut—was that indeed respun  
Or patched by witchery ? a deceit ? a snare ?  
I tell ye ; past and future are but one,  
And present—nothing ; shall not Hades dare  
His own omnipotence against the Sun,  
And let no tittle of his glory share

With all the earth's recuperating wheel,  
And every dawn's sure falchion-flash of steel?

*Ant. 3 [Echo of the Damned]*

Indeed, a deed impossible was done  
Were the new Theseus heavier than the air.  
Nay! but a new thread phantom-frail was spun  
And men's blind eyes discovered not the snare,  
Else were that elder cord and this yet one,  
Cut but in fancy. Yet, shall mortal dare  
To fling a wanton word against the Sun,  
And stand forth candidate for lot and share  
Where hangs Prometheus, rolls Ixion's wheel,  
And the stone rolls upon the limbs of steel?

*Epode*

These echoes, in my mind foul torturers,  
Present my fears, and image my distrust.  
No answer comes, no voice the silence stirs  
With joyful "may" or melancholy "must."  
Nor, though the gloom requicken, may I see  
Hades enthroned, my prayers who heedeth nought  
Nor glowing tear of bowed Persephone  
Drooped earthward for the ninefold misery wrought.  
In utter sorrow ever bound she stays,  
Hears not my song, nor heedeth anything,  
Whose mind lamenting turns to ancient days  
And Nysian meadows and the hour of spring

Yea, but perchance to touch that secret chord  
Were to awake that sorrow into life ;  
Sting, as a wound a deep-venomed sword,  
The inmost soul of the Aidonean wife.  
Listen ! I tune my music to that hour ;  
The careless maidens and the virgin laughter,  
The bloom of springtide and the fatal flower,  
And all that joy the sorrow echoing after.  
So that, dread Hades, thou mayst hear and yield,  
Thyself unmastered and inexorable,  
The gentle maid as crying in that field,  
Now thy soul's keeper on the throne of Hell !  
Hail, Hades ! Thou who hearest not my song,  
Repealest not the heaven's unjust decree,  
Revengest not for me the woe and wrong,  
Shalt glean my sorrow from Persephone.  
Hail, Hades ! In the gloom the echoing cry  
Swells, and the chorus darkens as I sing,  
And all the fibres of Eternity  
Shake as I loose the loud indignant string.  
Hail, Hades ! hear thy wrong proclaimed aloud,  
And thou the wronger safe because too great.  
To like offence harden thy neck, and proud  
Blow thou the dismal challenge unto Fate !

In Asia, on the Nysian plains, she played,  
A slender maid,  
With the deep-bosomed Oceanides ;  
Where the tall trees

Girded the meadow with grave walls of green.  
Alone, unseen,  
The tender little lady strayed,  
Moving across the breeze.

It was a meadow of soft grass and flowers,  
Where the sweet hours  
Lingered and laughed awhile ere noon reposes.  
There were red roses  
And crocus, and flag-flowers, and violets,  
And hyacinth, regrets  
Of the ill-fortuned God, the quoit-player ;  
And soft cool air  
Stirred all the field—and there were jessamines  
And snaky columbines.  
So all these maidens played, and gathered them  
From sad green stem  
Rejoicing blooms with sunlight mixed therein.  
But she, for sin  
And iron heart of the ill-minded Zeus,  
Caught up the dews  
Deep on her ankles, and went noiselessly  
Toward the laughing sea,  
And sought new blossoms—O the traitor, Earth,  
That brought to birth  
That day, as favouring the desire that swelled  
Beneath her heart of eld,  
Where dwelt the lonely, the detested one  
Intolerant of the sun,

Hades! But Earth for love of him, for spite  
Of the young girl's delight,  
And shame of her own age, brought forth that  
hour  
The fatal flower,  
Narcissus—which what soul of man shall smell  
Goes down to hell,  
Caught in the scent of sin—for such a doom  
Demeter's flying loom  
Hath woven for revenge and punishment.  
The bright child went  
Thither; an hundred heads of blossom sprang;  
The green earth sang,  
And the skies laughed, and danced the sea's young  
feet  
For joy of it.  
So the child went across that fairest plain  
To pluck, to strain  
That blossom of all blossoms to her heart.  
Her long hands dart,  
Exceeding delicate and fair, to cull  
That bloom too beautiful,  
Eager to gather the fresh floral birth.  
The grim black earth  
Gaped; roared athwart the gulf the golden car;  
And flaming far  
The four white horses with their flashing manes!  
The might-resisting reins  
Lay in the ghastly hands, the arms of fear  
Of that dread charioteer,



Death ; and great Hades armed stood glittering,  
    Stooped to his spring,  
And whirled the child to the beneath abode.  
    O heavy load !  
O bitter harvest of rich-rolling tears !  
    What cry who hears ?  
A shrill shrill cry to father Zeus cried she,  
    Forlorn Persephone !  
Heard was that agony of grief by none  
    Save only by the Sun,  
And Her who sat within her awful cave,  
    Contemplative and grave,  
Hecate, veiled with a shining veil  
    Utterly frail  
As the strange web of dainty thoughts she wove,  
    Somewhat like love.  
She heard, and great Apollo : neither stayed  
    Hades, nor stretched to aid  
A pitying hand. O pitiful ! O grief  
    Baffling belief !  
The gentle child—the cruel god—Ah me !  
    Persephone !  
Thus of thy grace, thy sorrow, thy young way  
    Torn from the day  
Of all thy memory of soft shining flowers  
    And happy-hearted hours,  
Mayst thou be very pitiful to me  
    Who aye have pitied thee,  
    Persephone !

PERSEPHONE

Ah me ! I feel a stirring in my blood.  
Pours through my veins a delicate pale flood  
Of memory. Not the pale and terrible  
Goddess whose throne is manifest in Hell  
—I am again a child, a playful child.

ORPHEUS

And therefore, O most beautiful and mild  
Sweet mother ! art the girl beloved again  
Of Hades mighty on the Nysian plain.  
And therefore are thine eyes with sorrow dim  
For me, and thy word powerful with Him.

PERSEPHONE

Ah me ! no fruit for guerdon,  
Who bore the blossom's burden ;  
There shines no sunlight toward Persephone.  
Ravished, O iron-eyed !  
From my young sister's side,  
Torn and dragged down below the Sundered sea,  
No joy is mine in all thy bed,  
And all thy sorrow shaken on my head.

Cursed above gods be thou  
Whose blind unruffled brow  
Rules the grim place of unsubstantial things !  
Hated, to me thy face

Turns not the glance of grace.  
I rule unloved above the infernal kings,  
And only thee in all deep Hell  
I charm in vain, despair my royal spell.

By might of famine long  
And supplication strong  
Demeter won the swift Hermetic word :  
In bitter days of eld  
Thus by great force compelled  
The glad earth saw me, careless of my lord,  
Rise to her crystal streams and sapphire seas,  
And Theseus thus owed life to Heracles.

Thou mockest me with power ;  
Thy sceptre's awful dower  
Avails me nothing. Shall a mortal bring  
Such pity wrapped in song  
And Echo's choral throng  
Of all things live and dead to hear me sing ;—  
And I by pity moved and love  
Have not thy voice to grant him grace thereof ?

Inexorable Lord !  
Accursèd and abhorred  
Of men, begin in Hell to show thy grace !  
Not to a man's weak life,  
Not to thy shuddering wife,  
But to the queen's unfathomable face  
Dread beyond sorcery and prayer,  
And fearful even because it is so fair !

Yea ! from the ghastly throne  
Unchallenged and unknown  
Let the fierce accents roll athwart the skies !  
My voice is given, my power  
Fares forth to save the flower  
Broken but plucked not by these fingers wise.  
I love the song—be thou not mute,  
But turn a lucky lot towards the suit !

#### ORPHEUS

In vain, O thou veiled  
Immutable queen !  
Thy strong voice bewailed,  
Thy fair face was seen !  
It flushed up and paled ;  
The song echoed clean—  
But alas ! for the veil of the night and the fear that is  
ever between !

Of pity unfilled  
And void of remorse,  
He moves unappealed  
In the terrible course.  
But the lyre is unchilled :—  
By force unto force  
He shall answer me power unto power at the source of  
its source !

Dost thou hear how the weight  
Of the earth and the moon

Shudder, as if fate  
Were involved in the tune?  
The portals of hate  
Shake at the rune  
Of the magical nature-cry, the song from the mountains  
hewn!

To the horrible hollow  
In Tartarus steep,  
O song of me, follow!  
I flee to the deep.  
That word of Apollo  
Shall shudder and leap;  
That word in the uttermost night shall awake them who  
know not of sleep.

Hear, O ye Three,  
In the innermost pit  
Dwellers that be!  
Tartarus, split!  
Arise unto me  
For I call ye with wit  
Of the words that constrain and compel, of the summons  
ordered and fit!

O daughter of Earth,  
Tisiphone dread,  
The ophidian girth,  
And the blood-dripping head,

In hideous mirth  
Bring living and dead  
To torture! Arise! I conjure by the might of the words  
I have said.

Megæra, thou terror,  
O daughter of Night  
Whose sight in a mirror  
Is death of affright,  
Wingèd with error,  
I chain thee, and cite  
The words that thy soul must obey if a mortal but say  
them aright!

Alecto! I call thee,  
My words ring thee round.  
My spells enwall thee.  
My lyre is crowned  
With might to appal thee  
With terror profound.  
Arise! O Alecto, arise! for my song hath compelled  
thee and bound.

Ye furies of Hell!  
Ye terrors in Heaven!  
The strength of the spell  
Is as thunder at even  
The rocks of the fell  
That hath blasted and riven.  
Come forth! I invoke ye, Erinyes, the charm of the One  
that is seven.

By the Five that be One,  
And the One that is Ten ;  
By the snake in the sun  
And her mirror in men ;  
By the Four that run  
And return them again ;  
By the fire that is lit in the Lion, the wave in the Scorpion  
den !

By the One that is Seven,  
The whirling eyes ;  
The Two made Eleven,  
The dragon's devise ;  
The Eight against Heaven,  
All crowns of lies ;  
Come forth ! I invoke ye, Erinyes ! Move, answer, take  
shape and arise !

By the cross and the wheel  
I call ye to hear ;  
By the dagger of steel  
I command ye, give ear !  
By the word that ye feel,  
The summons of Fear ;  
Come forth ! I invoke ye, Erinyes, move, answer, arise  
and appear !

For my purpose is swift,  
And my vengeance strong ;

I shall not shift ;  
I shall cry the wrong.  
My voice I uplift  
In terrible song  
As your forms take shape before me in the likeness for  
which ye long.

The shape of my passion  
And bitter distress  
Shall clothe ye, and fashion  
An equal dress.  
Ye shall force compassion  
With awful stress  
From the soul that hath mocked me, and turned his heart  
from my song's excess.

The ruler of Hell,  
The invisible Lord,  
Hath laughed at my spell,  
Hath slept at my word.  
He hath heard me well—  
Awake, O Sword !  
Shall he flout a suppliant thus and no answer of favour  
accord ?

If mercy be sundered  
From splendour and power ;  
If he answer with thunder  
The plaint of a flower ;



Shall justice wonder  
If Furies devour  
So bitter a heart, set a term to his date that was aye but  
an hour?

Avenge me, ye forces  
Of horror and wrath!  
Clear the dread courses!  
Split open the path!  
With cruel remorse is  
His heart brought to scath.  
And a terror is on him at last, the seed of his hate's  
aftermath.

MEGÆRA

Ha! who invokes? What horror rages  
Here, to compel our murderous hands to smite?

ALECTO

What mortal summons? Who his battle wages  
So strongly as to call the seed of Night?

TISIPHONE

Ha! The grim tyrant of despair engages  
Our deadly anguish with his useless might.

HADES

Detested fiends! avaunt!

MEGÆRA

He speaks !

ALECTO

He thunders !

TISIPHONE

His lightnings split the living rock.

MEGÆRA

Hell sunders  
The livid walls and iron-bound prisons of death.

HADES

Thus ! to your towers and wail !

ALECTO

He speaks !

TISIPHONE

His breath  
Is cold as ours.

HADES

Depart ! Due silence keep,  
Lest I enchain ye in a fouler deep  
Than aught your horror pictures !

MEGÆRA

Dost thou hear,

Sister ?

ALECTO

Sweet sister !

TISIPHONE

Dost thou think we fear

Who are all fear ? or feel, who are but pain ?

MEGÆRA

Creep round his heart, and cluster in his brain,  
Ye serpents of my hair !

ALECTO

His blood shall drip  
For sweet warm juice on my decaying lip.

TISIPHONE

My fearful wings enfold him !

ALECTO

My fowl eyes  
Hold his in terror !

MEGÆRA

All my agonies  
Crawl in his vitals!

TISIPHONE

He is mine, mine, mine!  
Pour forth of Thebes' abominable wine!  
Mine, O thou god, detested and adored!

MEGÆRA

Mine! he is mine! my lover and my lord!

ALECTO

Mine! I am in his shape!

MEGÆRA

Despair! Dispute  
Never my passion!

TISIPHONE

Sisters! Be ye mute!  
I am the livid agony that starts  
Damp on his brow; the horror in his heart's  
Envenomed arteries! and I the fear,  
The torment, and the hate!

MEGÆRA

Be of good cheer!  
Rend him apart! Hunger and lust we sate,  
Equal in terror on that heart of hate.

ALECTO

Hell's throne be kingless !

TISIPHONE

Mortal ! is it well,  
Our vengeance on the impious lord of Hell ?

ORPHEUS

Well ! it is well ! And yet my eyes are wet  
To see such anguish.

MEGÆRA

Tear the fatal net !

ALECTO

Bite with strong acid his congealing blood !

TISIPHONE

Rend out the bowels !

MEGÆRA

Pour the monstrous flood  
Of unclean wisdom in his soul !

PERSEPHONE

Desist !

ALECTO

O face of woman wretched and unkissed,  
What hast thou here to do with us?

TISIPHONE

Be quiet!

MEGÆRA

Quench not the fire of murder!

ALECTO

Loose the riot  
Of worms beneath the skull!

TISIPHONE

Tear wide apart  
The jaws!

MEGÆRA

Force fear against the inmost heart!

PERSEPHONE

Mercy! I plead, sweet sisters!

ORPHEUS

And I plead  
Vengeance, and help in my extremest need.

Pile up the torture! Had he not the power,  
And silence mocked me?

MEGÆRA

Urge us hour by hour,  
Thou couldst not add one particle of pain.

ALECTO

He speaks not! Bid his torture speak again!

TISIPHONE

Speak, murderer!

MEGÆRA

Hades! answer us!

ALECTO

Expel  
These torments from thy being, us from Hell,  
Or Zeus from Heaven!

TISIPHONE

Or else obey!

MEGÆRA

Obey!

ALECTO

Obey!

## HADES

O throne of Hell! O night! O day  
Of anguish exquisite beyond control,  
Fibre and substance of my inmost soul!  
There is a power not mine, and yet in me  
Burning its cold and cruel agony  
With icy flames, its cutting poison fangs  
Striking my being with detested pangs.  
Alas! of me and not to be expelled,  
Conjured, assuaged, averted. Grey as eld  
The juice of blood that stagnates in my veins,  
Appals their current with avenging pains :—  
O pain! O pitiful and hateful sense  
Of agony and grief and impotence!  
O misery of the day when Orpheus bore  
First his loud lyre across the Stygian shore!  
Hath Hell no warders? Is the threefold gate  
Brazen in vain against the foot of Fate?  
Now is but little choice—abase my pride,  
Or sink for ever to the gloomy tide  
Of fire beneath the utmost reach and span  
Of Stygian deeps and walls Tartarean.  
Yet I abide.

## MEGÆRA

Fall! Fall!

## ALECTO

Descend the abyss!



TISIPHONE

Link the lewd fiend with your incestuous kiss !

MEGÆRA

Hither !

ALECTO

Oh hither !

HADES

                    Steams a newer shape  
Of threefold terror.

TISIPHONE

                    Shall the god escape  
The monstrous wedlock ?

ALECTO

                    Let him turn again  
His horrid passion to the Nysian plain !

MEGÆRA

Echidna !

ALECTO

                    Mother of the Sphinx and snake  
Of Colchus, and the marsh-beast of the lake  
Lernean, of Chimaera and Hell's hound—

**TISIPHONE**

Answer!

**ALECTO**

Arise!

**MEGÆRA**

Awake from the profound!

**TISIPHONE**

Here is a worthy partner unto thee  
To wake thy womb with monstrous progeny  
Yet more detested and detestable  
Than all the shapeless brood of hate and Hell.

**ECHIDNA**

Ha! rose-lipped lover! Welcome to this bed!

**MEGÆRA**

She plays with words of love!

**ALECTO**

Her black eyes shed  
Disease for tears.

**TISIPHONE**

Her fangs and lips are red  
With gouts of putrid blood.

MEGÆRA

Her guile employs  
The sweet soft shape of words of upper joys  
More bitterly to rack his soul.

ALECTO

Ha, sister,  
The embrace!

TISIPHONE

She conquers.

MEGÆRA

He hath moved.

ALECTO

He hath kissed her!

TISIPHONE

Ha! the worse hate of hate in love's white dress.

MEGÆRA

And lewdness tricked to look like loveliness.

ALECTO

Uttermost pain in pleasure's hour supreme.

**MEGÆRA**

Hate's nightmare waking love's unreal dream.

**ALECTO**

Claws, teeth, and poison !

**TISIPHONE**

How she plies her pest !

**MEGÆRA**

Strangling she holds him.

**ALECTO**

In the inmost breast  
Her hands defile him.

**TISIPHONE**

In his rotting brain  
Her teeth, her breath, pass all imagined pain.

**MEGÆRA**

Sisters !

**ALECTO**

We conquer !

**TISIPHONE**

Have we power ?

MEGÆRA

The king  
Endures, and is not moved at anything.

ALECTO

He will not now relent.

TISIPHONE

He's ours for ever!

HADES

Ai! Ai!

MEGÆRA

Hark!

ALECTO

Listen!

TISIPHONE

Now he yields—or never!

HADES

Release! Relent!

ECHIDNA

Fair lover, let my embrace  
Still gladden thee to rapture! let my face  
Be like a garden of fresh flowers to cull,

And all thy being and thy body full  
As mine of gentle love—then sink to sleep!

MEGÆRA

Ha! Ha! She mocks him! In the utter deep,  
Her house of evil, sleep is stranger there.

ALECTO

She sings!

TISIPHONE

The final misery! Beware!

ECHIDNA

O tender lover!  
My wings still cover  
Thy face, and my lips  
Are on thine, and my tresses  
Like Zephyr's caresses  
When the twilight dips.

HADES

This passes all. Relent. Release! Depart!  
I yield: my power is broken, and my heart  
Riven, and all my pride ruined, and me  
Compelled to earth to loose Eurydice.

ORPHEUS

Depart!

ERINYES

Baffled! O misery! Bethink,  
Proud Hades, ere thy torture gar thee drink  
Humiliation's utmost dregs!

HADES

I spake.  
Depart ye! lest my power regained awake,  
And smite ye with a terror more than ye.

MEGÆRA

We are borne on bitter winds.

ALECTO

We sink.

TISIPHONE

We flee!

MEGÆRA

To the abyss!

ALECTO

Descend!

TISIPHONE

Nor hope in vain  
The ill-hearted one shall feel our fangs again.

MEGÆRA

Murder and violation, deafened ear  
To suppliant, these our friends are.

ALECTO

Hate and fear  
Leave not for long that bosom.

TISIPHONE

Now away!  
Back from this night more splendid than our day

MEGÆRA

We may not drag him down this chance.

ALECTO

Despair  
Not, O my sisters!

TISIPHONE

The next suppliant's prayer  
Rejected—

MEGÆRA

Come, my sisters, we'll be there.

HADES

Well, be it so. O wizard, by this strength  
Thou hast availed in deepest Hell at length.  
I grant thy prayer. Eurydice be given  
To the sweet light and pleasant air of heaven!



Even on this wise. With Hermes for a guide  
Up the dread steeps there followeth thee thy bride,  
And thou before them singing. If thou yearn  
Towards her, if thy purpose change or turn  
While in these realms ; if thou thy face revert ;  
That shall be hostage unto me for hurt  
Of further magic : she shall fade and flee  
A phantom frail throughout Eternity,  
Driven on my winds, adrift upon my seas !  
These are thy favours, and thy duties these.  
Invoke thou Hermes, and thy lyre restring !

#### ORPHEUS

This I accept and this shall be, O king !

#### *[Invoking Hermes]*

O Light in Light ! O flashing wings of fire !  
The swiftest of the moments of the sea  
Is unto thee  
Even as some slow-foot Eternity  
With limbs that drag and wheels that tire.  
O subtle-minded flame of amber gyre,  
It seems a spark of gold  
Grown purple, and behold !  
A flame of gray !  
Then the dark night-wings glow  
With iridescent indigo,  
Shot with some violet ray ;

And all the vision flames across the horizon  
The millionth of no time—and when we say ;  
Hail !—Thou art gone !

The moon is dark beside thy crown ; the Sun  
Seems a pale image of thy body bare ;  
And for thine hair  
Flash comets lustrous with the dewfall rare  
Of tears of that most memorable One,  
The radiant Queen, the veiled Paphian.  
The wings of light divine  
Beneath thy body shine ;  
The invisible  
Rayed with some tangible flame,  
Seeking to formulate a name,  
A citadel ;  
And the winged heels are fiery with enormous  
speed,  
One spurning heaven ; the other trampling hell ;  
And thou—recede !

O Hermes ! Messenger of inmost thought !  
Descend ! Abide ! Swift coursing in my veins  
Shoot dazzling pains,  
The Word of Selfhood integrate of Nought,  
The Ineffable Amen ! the Wonder wrought.  
Bring death if life exceed !  
Bid thy pale Hermit bleed,  
Yet Life exude ;  
And Wisdom and the Word of Him

Drench the mute mind grown dim  
With quietude!  
Fix thy sharp lightnings in my night! My spirit free!  
Mix with my breath and life and name thy mood  
And self of Thee. ]

*Hermes appears : Orpheus departs.*

The magical task and the labour is ended ;  
The toils are unwoven, the battle is done ;  
My lover comes back to my arms, to the splendid  
Abyss of the air and abode of the sun.  
The sword be assuaged, and the bow be unbended !  
The labour is past, and the victory won.

The arrows of song through Hell cease to hurtle.  
Away to the passionate gardens of Greece,  
Where the thrush is awake, and the voice of the turtle  
Is soft in the amorous places of peace,  
And the tamarisk groves and the olive and myrtle  
Stir ever with love and content and release.

O bountiful bowers and O beautiful gardens !  
O isles in the azure Ionian deep !  
Ere ripens the sun, ere the spring-wind hardens  
Your fruits once again ye shall have me to keep.  
The sleep-god laments, and the love-goddess pardons,  
When love at the last sinks unwearied to sleep.

The green-hearted hours shall burst into flowers.  
The winds shall waft roses from uttermost Ind.

Our nuptial dowers shall be birds in our bowers,  
Our couches the delicate heaps of the wind,  
Where the lily-bloom showers all its light, and the powers  
Of earth in our twinning are wedded and twinned.

So singing I make reverence and retire ;  
Not with high words of worship fairly flung  
To that sad monarch from the magic lyre,

And half the triumphs in my heart unsung,  
Surpassing, as such triumphs must, all praise  
Of golden strings and human-fashioned tongue.

But now I follow the uprising ways  
By secret paths indubitably drawn  
Straight from the centre of the trackless maze

To light of earth and beauty of the dawn,  
A sure swift passage taught of wit divine  
To the wide ocean, the Achæan lawn.

For, wit ye well, not easy is that shrine  
Of access to the mortal, as some tell,  
Not knowing, : easy and exact the line

Of light to upper air : but awful spell  
And dire demand the inward journey needs :  
That is the labour, that the work : for Hell

Is not designed for men's aspiring deeds.  
The air is fatal, and the fear unspanned,  
Even ere the traveller fronts the Stygian meads

And utmost edge of the detested land.  
Wherefore already doth the light appear  
Shaped in the image of a little hand

Far up the rocky cavern : warm and clear  
The good air sends its fragrance : glory then  
To the great work accomplished even here,

Promise and purpose unto little men  
Bound in life's limits : death indeed I sever  
By will's efficiency and speechless ken

Of power not God's but man's. Forget this never,  
O mortals chained in life's detested den !  
I leave this heritage to you for ever.

O light of Apollo !  
O joy of the sky !  
We see thee, we follow,  
We draw to thee nigh.  
We see thee unclouded,  
Whose hearts have been thinned,  
Whose souls have been shrouded,  
Whose ears are bedinned,

By hell's clamour. How did  
The strength that has sinned  
Avail in the crowded  
Abodes of the wind ?

By lightning of rapture  
The soul of my song  
My love doth recapture ;  
Lead up to the long  
Years in blithe measure  
Of summer and ease ;  
Linger at leisure  
For passion and peace.  
Sadness and pleasure  
Relent and release :—  
A torrent, a treasure,  
A garden of Greece !

Selene, our sister,  
Our lover and friend,  
Thy light hath long missed her :  
That hour hath an end.  
All æons to squander  
We chance at our will :  
We may woo, work or wander  
Through time to our fill,  
Hither or yonder  
By fountain or hill,  
Each day growing fonder,  
Each night growing still !

Bright Hermes behind me  
Caduceus-armed  
Guides : shall he blind me?  
My spirit be charmed?  
The song shall not swerve her,  
Its glory shall shed  
Respite, deserve her  
From gulfs of the dead.  
Ah me! let it nerve her  
These conduits to tread  
That lead to the fervour  
Of earth overhead!

Fire, thou dear splendour  
Of uppermost space,  
Turn to me tender  
Thine emerald face!  
Thy rubies be blended  
With diamond light!  
Thy sapphires be splendid,  
Extended to sight!  
The portals be rended  
That govern the night,  
And the guardians bended  
To magical night!

O air of the glorious  
Garb of the globe,  
Don thy victorious  
Glittering robe!

The sun is before us ;  
The moon is above.  
Rise and adore us  
Ye dwellers thereof !  
The Muses restore us  
To Greece : as we move  
Swell the wild chorus  
Of welcome and love !

Alas ! that ever the dark place  
Should from its rocky base  
Give up no echo of the god's strong stride,  
And no one whisper steal and thrill  
My heart, dissolve the ill  
That gathers close and fears me for my bride

I were no worse if I were blind.  
I may not look behind  
To catch one glimpse of the dear face that follows,  
Lest I should gain forbidden lore  
And wisdom's dangerous store  
Of the black secrets of those heights and hollows.

Alas ! the way is over long,  
And weary of my song  
I sing who yearn to catch my love, and hold  
In such ten-thousandfold caress  
As shall annul distress,  
And from the iron hours bring the years of gold.



Alas ! my soul is filled with fear,  
Is the hard conquest here ?  
Where is Eurydice ? The god hath faded  
Back to invisible abodes  
And on these rocky roads  
Comes no deep perfume of her hair light-braided.

Alas ! I listen ; and no breath  
Assures the walls of death  
That life remembers, that their hate is quelled.  
My ears, my scent avail me nought ;  
My eyes are slaved and bought  
By the command wherewith I am compelled.

Alas ! my heart sinks momentarily.  
Fear steals and misery.  
From faith in faith of Hell my thoughts dissever.  
Yet, O my heart ! abide, endure !  
Seek not by sight to assure,  
Or she is lost to thee and lost for ever !

Now breathes the night-air o'er the deep,  
And limb-dissolving sleep  
Laps my own country, and the maiden moon  
Gleans silver barley from the sea,  
And binds it royally  
Into a sheaf that waves to the wind's tune.

The rocky portals rise above.  
Here I may clasp my love,

Here Hermes shall deliver. Ah! how shook  
Yon cliff at the wind's ardent kiss!  
This is the hour of bliss—  
The sea! The sea! Eurydice! Look, Look!

Ai! but like wind-whirled flowers of frost  
The flying form is lost!  
Cancelled and empty of Eurydice  
The black paths where she trod!  
Ai! Ai! My God! My God!  
Apollo, why hast thou forsaken me?

EXPLICIT LIBER TERTIUS

LIBER QUARTUS VEL MORTIS



**TO MY WIFE**

LYSANDER (*reads*).

“The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals  
Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage.”

THESEUS.

That is an old device.

*Midsummer Night's Dream.*

What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore  
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son  
Whom universal Nature did lament  
When by the rout that made the hideous roar  
His gory body down the stream was sent  
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?

*Lycidas.*

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains  
From waves serener far ;  
A new Peneus rolls his fountains  
Against the morning star.  
Where fairer Tempes bloom, there sleep  
Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep.

.....  
Another Orpheus sings again  
And loves, and weeps, and dies.

*Hellas.*

**MOUNT IDA : The company of the Mænads**

**MÆNADS**

**Evoe ! Evoe Ho ! Iacche ! Iacche !**

**Hail, O Dionysus ! Hail !  
Wingèd Son of Semelé !  
Hail, O Hail ! The stars are pale.  
Hidden the moonlight in the vale ;  
Hidden the sunlight in the sea.**

**Blessed is her happy lot  
Who beholdeth God ; who moves  
Mighty-souled without a spot,  
Mingling in the godly rout  
Of the many mystic loves.**

**Holy maidens, duly weave  
Dances for the mighty mother !  
Bacchanal to Bacchus cleave !  
Wave his narthex wand, and leave  
Earthy joys to earth to smother !**

Io! Evoe! Sisters, mingle  
In the choir, the dance, the revel!  
He divine, the Spirit single,  
He in every vein shall tingle.  
Sense and sorrow to the devil!

Mingle in the laughing measure,  
Hand and lip to breast and thigh!  
In enthusiastic pleasure  
Grasp the solitary treasure!  
Laughs the untiring ecstasy!

Sisters! Sisters! Raise your voices  
In the inspired divine delight!  
Now the sun sets; now the choice is  
Who rebels or who rejoices,  
Murmuring to the mystic night.

Io! Evoe! Circle splendid!  
Dance, ye maids serene and subtle!  
Clotho's task is fairly ended.  
Atropos, thy power is rended!  
Ho, Lachesis! ply thy shuttle!

Weave the human dance together  
With the life of rocks and trees!  
Let the blue delirious weather  
Bind all spirits in one tether,  
Overwhelming ecstasies!



Io Evoe! I faint, I fall,  
Swoon in purple light; the grape  
Drowns my spirit in its thrall.  
Love me, love me over all,  
Spirit in the spirit shape!

All is one! I murmur. Distant  
Sounds the shout, Evoe, Evoe!  
Evoe, Iacche! Soft, insistent  
Like to echo's voice persistent:—  
Hail! Agave! Autonoe!

AGAVE

Evoe Ho! Iacche! Hail, O Hail!  
Praise him! What dreams are these?

AUTONOE

Sisters, O sisters!

AGAVE

Say, are our brethren of the rocks awake?

AUTONOE

The lion roars.

MÆNADS

O listen to the snake!

AUTONOE

Evoe Ho! Give me to drink!

AGAVE

Run wild !  
Mountain and mountain let us leap upon  
Like tigers on their prey !

MÆNADS

Crush, crush the world !

AGAVE

Tread earth as 'twere a winepress !

AUTONOE

Drink its blood,  
The sweet red wine !

MÆNADS

Ay, drink the old earth dry !

AGAVE

Squeeze the last drops out till the frame collapse  
Like an old wineskin !

AUTONOE

So the sooner sup  
Among the stars !

AGAVE

The swift, swift stars !

MÆNADS

O night!

Night, night, fall deep and sure!

AUTONOE

Fall soft and sweet!

AGAVE

Moaning for love the woods lie.

AUTONOE

Sad the land

Lies thirsty for our kisses.

MÆNADS

All wild things

Yearn towards the kiss that ends in blood.

AGAVE

Blood! Blood!

Bring wine! Ha! Bromius, Bromius!

MÆNADS

O sweet God,

Come forth and lie with us!

AUTONOE

We, maidens now

And then and ever afterwards!

AGAVE

Chaste, chaste !  
Our madness hath no touch of bitterness,  
No taste of foulness in the morning mouth.

AUTONOE

O mouth of ripe red sunny grapes ! God ! God !  
Evoe ! Dwell ! Abide !

AGAVE

I feel the wings  
Of love, of mystery ; they waft soft streams  
Of night air to my heated breast and brow.

MÆNADS

He comes ! He comes !

AGAVE

Silence, O girls, and peace !  
The God's most holy presence asks the hymn,  
The solemn hymn, the hymn of agony,  
Lest in the air of glory that surrounds  
The child of Semelé we lose the earth,  
And corporal presence of the Zeus-begot.

AUTONOE

Yea, sisters, raise the chant of riot ! Lift  
Your wine-sweet voices, move your wine-stained limbs  
In joyful invocation !

MÆNADS

Ay, we sing.

Hail, child of Semelé!  
To her as unto thee  
Be reverence, be deity, be immortality!

Shame! treachery of the spouse  
Of the Olympian house,  
Hera! thy grim device against the sweet carouse!

Lo! in red roar and flame  
Did Zeus descend! What claim  
To feel the immortal fire had then the Theban dame!

Caught in that fiery wave  
Her love and life she gave  
With one last kissing cry the unborn child to save.

And thou, O Zeus, the sire  
Of Bromius—hunter dire!—  
Didst snatch the unborn babe from that Olympian fire:

In thine own thigh most holy  
That offspring melancholy  
Didst hide, didst feed, on light, ambrosia, and moly.

Ay! and with serpent hair  
And limbs divinely fair  
Didst thou, Dionysus, leap forth to the nectar air!

Ay! thus the dreams of fate  
We dare commemorate,  
Twining in lovesome curls the spoil of mate and mate.

O Dionysus, hear!  
Be close, be quick, be near,  
Whispering enchanted words in every curving ear!

O Dionysus, start  
As the Apollonian dart!  
Bury thy horned head in every bleeding heart!

AGAVE

He is here! He is here!

AUTONOE

Tigers, appear!

AGAVE

To the clap of my hand  
And the wish of my wand,  
Obey!

### AUTONOE

I have found  
A chariot crowned  
With ivy and vine,  
And the laurel divine,  
And the clustering smell  
Of the sage asphodel,  
And the Dædal flower  
Of the Cretan bower ;  
Dittany's force,  
And larkspur's love,  
And blossoms of gorse  
Around and above.

### AGAVE

The tiger and panther  
Are here at my cry.  
Ho, girls! Span there  
Their sides!

### MÆNADS

Here am I!  
And I! We are ready.

### AGAVE

Strong now and steady!

### FIRST MÆNAD

The tiger is harnessed.

SECOND MÆNAD

The nightingale urges  
Our toil from her far nest.

THIRD MÆNAD

Ionian surges  
Roar back to our chant.

FOURTH MÆNAD

Aha! for the taunt  
Of Theban sages  
Is lost, lost, lost!  
The wine that enrages  
Our life is enforced.  
We dare them and daunt.

AGAVE

The spirits that haunt  
The rocks and the river,  
The moors and the woods,  
The fields and the floods,  
Are with us for ever!

MÆNADS

Are of us for ever.  
Evoe! Evoe!



AUTONOE

Agave! He cometh!

AGAVE

Cry ho! Autonoe!

ALL

Ho! Ho! Evoe Ho! Iacche! Evoe! Evoe!

The white air hummeth  
With force of the spirit.  
We are heirs : we inherit.  
Our joys are as theirs ;  
Weave with your prayers;  
The joys of a kiss!  
Ho! for the bliss  
Of the cup and the rod.

He cometh! O lover!  
O friend and O God,  
Cover us, cover  
Our faces, and hover  
Above us, within us!  
Daintily shod,  
Daintily robed,  
His witcheries spin us  
A web of desire.  
Subtle as fire  
He cometh among us.  
The whole sky globed  
Is on fire with delight,

Delight that hath stung us,  
The passion of night.  
Night be our mistress !  
That tress and this tress  
Weave with thy wind  
Into curls deep-vined !  
Passionate bliss !  
Rapture on rapture !  
Our hymns recapture  
The Bromian kiss.  
Blessèd our souls !  
Blessèd this even !  
We reach to the goals  
Of the starriest heaven.  
Daphnis, and Atthis, and Chrysis, and Chloe,  
Mingle, O maidens ! Evoe ! Evoe !

#### DIONYSUS

I bring ye wine from above,  
From the vats of the storied sun ;  
For every one of ye love,  
And life for every one.  
Ye shall dance on hill and level ;  
Ye shall sing in hollow and height  
In the festal mystical revel,  
The rapturous Bacchanal rite !  
The rocks and trees are yours,  
And the waters under the hill,  
By the might of that which endures,  
The holy heaven of will !

I kindle a flame like a torrent  
    To rush from star to star ;  
Your hair as a comet's horrent,  
    Ye shall see things as they are !  
I lift the mask of matter ;  
    I open the heart of man ;  
For I am of force to shatter  
    The cast that hideth—Pan !  
Your loves shall lap up slaughter,  
    And dabbled with roses of blood  
Each desperate darling daughter  
    Shall swim in the fervid flood.  
I bring ye laughter and tears,  
    The kisses that foam and bleed,  
The joys of a million years,  
    The flowers that bear no seed.  
My life is bitter and sterile,  
    Its flame is a wandering star.  
Ye shall pass in pleasure and peril  
    Across the mystical bar  
That is set for wrath and weeping  
    Against the children of earth ;  
But ye in singing and sleeping  
    Shall pass in measure and mirth !  
I lift my wand and wave you  
    Through hill to hill of delight :  
My rosy rivers lave you  
    In innermost lustral light.  
I lead you, lord of the maze,  
    In the darkness free of the sun ;

In spite of the spite that is day's  
We are wed, we are wild, we are one!

FIRST MÆNAD

O sweet soul of the waters! Chase me not!  
What would'st thou?

A VOICE AS OF RUNNING BROOKS

Love!

FIRST MÆNAD

Love, love, I give, I give.  
I yield, I pant, I fall upon thy breast,  
O sacred soul of water. Kiss, ah kiss,  
With gentle waves like lips my breast, my two small  
breasts,  
Rose flames on ivory seas!

SECOND MÆNAD

Nay! Nay! O soul  
Of ivy, clingst thou so for love?

A VOICE AS OF THE RUSTLING OF IVY

For love.

SECOND MÆNAD

Cling not so close! O no! cling closer then!  
Let thy green coolness twine about my limbs

And still the raving blood : or closer yet,  
And link about my neck, and kill me so !

THIRD MÆNAD

Soul of the rock ! Dost love me ?

A VOICE AS OF FALLING ROCK

I love thee.

THIRD MÆNAD

Woo me then !

Let all the sharp hard spikes of crystal dart,  
Press hard upon my body ! O, I fall,  
Fall from thy crags, still clinging, clinging so,  
Into the dark. Oblivion !

A DISTANT VOICE

Io Evoe !

*[Orpheus enters.]*

CROWD OF MÆNADS

Evoe ! Evoe ! It is a lion !

FOURTH MÆNAD

Lion,  
O lion, dost thou love me ?

FIFTH MÆNAD

                                  Thee I love,  
O tawny king of these deep glades !

SIXTH MÆNAD

                                  What wood  
Were worthy for thy dwelling ?

CHORUS

                                  Come, come, come,  
O lion, and revel in our band !

ORPHEUS

                                  Alas !  
I sorrow, seeing ye rejoice.

FIRST MÆNAD

                                  O lion !  
That is not kind.

ORPHEUS

                                  Too kind. Since all is sorrow,  
Sorrow implicit in the purest joy,  
Sorrow the cause of sorrow ; evil still  
Fertile, and sterile love and righteousness.  
Eurydice, Eurydice !

SECOND MÆNAD

Drink wine!

ORPHEUS

Ay, mask the grisly head of things that are  
By drowning sense. Such horror as is hid  
In life no man dare look upon. Woe! Woe!

AGAVE

Call then reproach upon these maiden rites!

ORPHEUS

Nay! virtue is the devil's name for vice,  
And all your righteousness is filthy rags  
Wherein ye strut, and hide the one base thought.  
To mask the truth, to worship, to forget ;  
These three are one.

AGAVE

What art thou then? a man?

ORPHEUS

No more.

AGAVE

No longer?

ORPHEUS

Nothing.

AGAVE

What then here  
Dost thou amid these sacred woods ?

ORPHEUS

I weep.

AGAVE

Weep then red wine !

AUTONOE

Or we will draw thy tears,  
Red tears of blood.

AGAVE

On, girls ! this bitter fool  
Would stop our revel !

ORPHEUS

Nay ! ye bid me cease  
Weeping.

AGAVE

Then listen ! drink this deep full cup,  
Or here we tear thee limb from limb !



ORPHEUS

Do so!

Ay, me! I am Orpheus, poor lost fool of Fate,  
Orpheus, can charm the wildest to my lyre.  
Beasts, rocks, obey—ah, Hades, didst thou mock,  
Alone of all, my songs? Thee I praise not.  
Audacious woman!

AGAVE

Tear the fool in shreds!

Then to the dance!

ORPHEUS

The old Egyptian spell!

Stir, then, poor children, if ye can! Ah me!

[Sings.

Unity uttermost showed,  
I adore the might of thy breath,  
Supreme and terrible God  
Who makest the Gods and death  
To tremble before thee :—  
I, I adore thee!

O Hawk of gold with power enwalled,  
Whose face is like an emerald ;  
Whose crown is indigo as night ;  
Smaragdine snakes about thy brow  
Twine, and the disc of flaming light  
Is on thee, seated in the prow

Of the Sun's bark, enthroned above  
With lapis-lazuli for love  
And ruby for enormous force  
Chosen to seat thee, thee girt round  
With leopard's pell, and golden sound  
Of planets choral in their course !  
O thou self-formulated sire !  
Self-master of thy dam's desire !  
Thine eyes blaze forth with fiery light ;  
Thine heart a secret sun of flame !  
I adore the insuperable might :  
I bow before the unspoken Name.

For I am Yesterday, and I  
To-day, and I to-morrow, born  
Now and again, on high, on high  
Travelling on Dian's naked horn !  
I am the Soul that doth create  
The Gods, and all the Kin of Breath.  
I come from the sequestered state ;  
My birth is from the House of Death.

Hail ! ye twin hawks high pinnacled  
That watch upon the universe !  
Ye that the bier of God beheld !  
That bore it onwards, ministers  
Of peace within the House of Wrath,  
Servants of him that cometh forth  
At dawn with many-coloured lights  
Mounting from underneath the North,  
The shrine of the celestial Heights !

He is in me, and I in Him !  
Mine is the crystal radiance  
That filleth æther to the brim  
Wherein all stars and suns may dance.  
I am the beautiful and glad,  
Rejoicing in the golden day.  
I am the spirit silken-clad  
That fareth on the fiery way.  
I have escaped from Him, whose eyes  
Are closed at eventide, and wise  
To drag thee to the House of Wrong :—  
I am armed ! I am armed ! I am strong ! I  
am strong !  
I make my way : opposing horns  
Of secret foemen push their lust  
In vain : my song their fury scorns ;  
They sink, they grovel in the dust.

Hail, self-created Lord of Night !  
Inscrutable and infinite !  
Let Orpheus journey forth to see  
The Disk in peace and victory !  
Let him adore the splendid sight,  
The radiance of the Heaven of Nu ;  
Soar like a bird, laved by the light,  
To pierce the far eternal blue !

Hail ! Hermes ! thou the wands of ill  
Hast touched with strength, and they are  
shivered !

The way is open unto will !  
The pregnant Goddess is delivered !

Happy, yea, happy ! happy is he  
That hath looked forth upon the Bier  
That goeth to the House of Rest !  
His heart is lit with melody ;  
Peace in his house is master of fear ;  
His holy Name is in the West  
When the sun sinks, and royal rays  
Of moonrise flash across the day's !

I have risen ! I have risen ! as a mighty hawk of gold !  
From the golden egg I gather, and my wings the world  
enfold.

I alight in mighty splendour from the thronèd boats of  
light ;

Companies of Spirits follow me ; adore the Lords of  
Night.

Yea, with gladness did they pæan, bowing low before my  
car,

In my ears their homage echoed from the sunrise to the  
star.

I have risen ! I am gathered as a lovely hawk of gold,  
I the first-born of the Mother in her ecstasy of old.

Lo ! I come to face the dweller in the sacred snake of  
Khem ;

Come to face the Babe and Lion, come to measure force  
with them !

Ah! these locks flow down, a river, as the earth's before  
the Sun,  
As the earth's before the sunset, and the God and I are  
One.  
I who entered in a Fool, gain the God by clean en-  
deavour ;  
I am shaped as men and women, fair for ever and for  
ever.

*(The Mænads stand silent and quiet.)*

ORPHEUS

Worship with due rite, orderly attire,  
The makers of the world, the floating souls  
Whence fell these crystals we call earth. Praise  
Might  
The Limitless ; praise Pallas, by whose Wisdom  
The One became divided. Praise ye Him,  
Chronos, from whom, the third, is form perceived.  
Praise ye Poseidon, his productive power,  
And Juno, secret nature of all things,  
On which all things are builded : praise ye Love,  
Idalian Aphrodite, strong as fair,  
Strong not to loosen Godhead's crown by deed  
To blind eyes not a God's : and praise pure Life,  
Apollo in his splendour, whom I praise  
Most, being his, and this song his, and his  
All my desire and all my life, and all  
My love, albeit he hath forsaken me.  
These are One God in many : praise ye Him !

AGAVE

We praise indeed who made the choral world  
And stars the greatest, and all these the least  
Flowers at our feet : but also we may praise  
This Dionysus, lord of life and joy,  
In whom we may perceive a subtle world  
Hidden behind this masquerade of things.  
O sisters, thither, thither !

ORPHEUS

All deceit.

Delusive as this world of shadows is,  
That subtler world is more delusive yet,  
Involving deeper and still deeper : thought,  
Desire of life, in that warm atmosphere  
Spring up and blossom new, rank poisonous flowers,  
The enemies of peace. Nay ! matter's all,  
And all is sorrow. Therefore not to be,  
Not to think, love, know, contemplate, exist ;  
This Not is the one hope.

AGAVE

Believe it not !

Here is true joy—the woodland revellings,  
The smile, the kiss, the laughter leaping up,  
And music inward, musings multiform,  
Manifold, multitudinous, involved  
Each in the deep bliss of the other's love ;—  
Ay me ! my sisters. Thither !

AUTONOE

Wake the dance !

MÆNADS

Pour luscious wine, cool, sweet, strong wine !

Bring life,

Life overflowing from the cup !

ORPHEUS

Hush ! Hush !

I hymn the eternal matter, absolute,

Divided, chaos, formless frame of force,

Wheels of the luminous reach of space that men

Know by the name of Pan.

MÆNADS

Hail ! Hail !

Pan ! Son of Hermes ! God of Arcady

And all wild woodlands !

ORPHEUS

Neither Son, nor Sire,

Nor God : but he is all : all else in him

Is hidden : he the secret and the self

Shrined central in this orb of eyeless Fate,

Phantom, elusive, permanent. In all,

In spirit and in matter immanent,

He also is the all, and all is ill.

Three forms and functions hath the soul ; the sea  
Murmurs their names repeating : *Maris* call  
The soul as it engendereth things below ;  
*Neptune* the soul that contemplateth things  
Above ; and *Ocean* as itself retracts  
Itself into itself : choose ye of these !  
But I hymn Pan. Awake, O lyre, awake !  
As if it were for the last time, awake !

[*He sings.*

In the spring, in the loud lost places,  
In the groves of Arcadian green,  
There are sounds and shadowy faces  
And strange things dimly seen.  
Though the face of the springtide as grace is,  
The sown and the woodland demesne  
Have a soul caught up in their spaces,  
Unkenned, and unclean !

It takes up the cry of the wind.  
Its eyes with weeping are blind.  
A strong hate whirls it behind  
As it flees for ever.  
Mad, with the tokens of Fear ;  
Branded, and sad, without cheer ;  
Year after ghastly year,  
And it endeth never.

And this is the mystical stranger,  
The subtle Arcadian God



That lurks as for sorrow and danger,  
    Yet rules all the earth with his rod.  
Abiding in spirit and sense  
    Through the manifold changes of man,  
This soul is alone and intense  
    And one—He is Pan.

More subtle than mass as ye deem it  
    He abides in the strife that is dust.  
Than spirit more keen as ye dream it,  
    He is laughter and loathing and lust.  
He is all. Nature's agonies scream it ;  
    Her joys quire it clear ; in the must  
Of the vat is His shape in the steam. It  
    Is Fear, and Disgust.

For the spirit of all that is,  
The light in the lover's kiss,  
The shame and sorrow and bliss ;  
    They are all in Pan ;  
The inmost wheel of the wheels,  
The feeling of all that feels,  
The God and the knee that kneels,  
    And the foolish man.

For Pan is the world above  
    And the world that is hidden beneath ;  
He grins from the mask of love ;  
    His sword has a jewelled sheath.

What boots it a maiden to gird her?  
Her rape ere the æons began  
Was sure ; in one roar of red murder  
She breaks : He is Pan.

He is strong to achieve, to forsake her ;  
He is death as it clings to desire,  
Ah, woe to the Earth ! If he wake her,  
Air, water and spirit and fire  
Rush in to uproot her and break her :—  
Yet he is the broken ; the pyre,  
And the flame and the victim ; the maker,  
And master and sire !

And all that is, is force.  
A fatal and witless course  
It follows without remorse  
With never an aim.  
Caught in the net we strive ;  
We ruin, and think we thrive ;  
And we die—and remain alive :—  
And Pan is our name !

For the misery catches and winds us  
Deep, deep in the endless coil ;  
Ourselves is the cord that binds us,  
And ours is the self same toil.  
We are ; we are not ; yet our date is  
An age, though each life be a span ;

And ourself and our state and our fate is  
The Spirit of Pan.

O wild is the maiden that dances  
In the dim waned light of the moon !  
Black stars are her myriad glances :  
Blue night is the infinite swoon !  
But in other array advances  
The car of the holier tune ;  
And our one one chance is in mystical trances ;—  
Thessalian boon !

For swift as the wheels may turn,  
And fierce as the flames may burn,  
The spirit of man may discern  
In the wheel of Will  
A drag on the wheels of Fate,  
A water the fires to abate,  
A soul the soul to make straight,  
And bid " be still ! "

But ye, ye invoke in your city  
And call on his name on the hill  
The God who is born without pity.  
The horrible heart that is chill ;  
The secret corruption of ages  
Ye cling to, and hold as ye can,  
And abandon the songs of the sages  
For passion—and Pan !

O thou heart of hate and inmost terror!  
O thou soul of subtle fear and lust!  
Loathsome shape of infamy, thy mirror  
Shown as spirit or displayed as dust!  
O thou worm in every soul of matter  
Crawling, feasting, rotting; slime of hell!  
Beat and batter! shear and shatter!  
Break the egg that hides thee well!  
Pan! I call thee! Pan! I see thee in thy whirling citadel.

I alone of all men may unveil thee,  
Show the ghastly soul of all that is  
Unto them, that they themselves may hail thee,  
Festering corruption of thy kiss!  
Thou the soul of God! the soul of demon!  
Soul of matter, soul of man!  
Shew the gross fools, thine, that think them freemen,  
What thou art, and what thy heart,  
And what they are, that they are thee,  
All creation, whole and part,  
Thine and thee, near and far:—  
Come! I call thee, I who can.  
Pan! I know thee! Pan! I show thee! Burst thy  
coffin open, Pan!

What have I said? What have I done?

#### MÆNADS

Pan! Pan!

Evoc, Iacche! Pan!

AGAVE  
The victim !

AUTONOE  
Rend  
The sole pure thing in this impure gross lump,  
The shapeless, formless horror that is us  
And God—Ah ! rend him limb from limb !

ORPHEUS  
Apollo !  
This is the night. This is the end of all,  
No force detains. No power urges on.  
I am free ! Alas ! alas !—Eurydice !

*(He is torn to pieces. A faint voice  
—like his—is still heard, ever reced-  
ing and failing.)*

O night !  
Fade, love ! Fade, light !  
I pass beyond Life's law.  
I melt as snow ; as ice I thaw ;  
As mist I dissipate : I am borne, I draw  
Through chasms in the mountains : stormy gusts  
Of ancient sorrows and forgotten lusts  
Bear me along : they touch me not : I waste.  
The memory of long lives interlaced  
Fades in my fading. I disintegrate,  
Fall into black oblivion of Fate.  
My being divides : I have forgot my name.

I am blown out as a thin subtle flame.  
I am no more.

#### A SPIRIT

What is ? what chorus swells  
Through these dark gorges and untrodden dells !  
What whisper through the forest ? Far entwines  
The low song with the roses and the vines,  
The high song with the mountains and the pines,  
The inmost song with secret fibre of light,  
And in the boiling pools and quorns and chasms  
Chases the stryges, Death's devote phantasms,  
Into a brilliant air wherein they are lost.  
Deep in the river moans the choral roar,  
Till the deep murmur of the Lesbian shore  
Washed of the luminous sea gives answer, while  
The angry wail of Nature doth beguile  
The hours, the wrath of Nature rest of one,  
The sole strong spirit that was Nature's sun,  
The orb she circled round, the one thing clean  
From all her gross machinery, obscene  
And helpless :—and the lonely mother-cry,  
The Muse, her hope down-stricken. Magically  
The full deep chorus stirs the sky ;  
Hark ! one voice beyond all  
Gives love's own call,  
Not hers, Eurydice's,  
But thine, thou sweet blood-breasted nightingale  
Waking thy choral wail  
From Mitylene to remotest seas !

THE RIVER HEBRUS

Was e'er a stream before  
So sad a burden bore  
Rolling a melancholy sorrow down from shore to shore?

CALLIOPE

O this is bitterness beyond belief,  
Grief beyond grief.  
Boots it to weep? I help him not with  
force :  
What should avail—remorse?

RIVER HEBRUS

Hear upon high the melancholy  
Antistrophe  
Matching the strophe's agony !  
Tides on a terrible sea !

CALLIOPE

Bear, bear the laurelled head  
Of him I loved, him dead,  
O Hebrus, ever downward on thy bosom iron-red

RIVER HEBRUS

All Nature's tunes are dull.  
The beautiful,  
The harmony of life is null.

CALLIOPE

What unto us remains  
But in these broken strains  
To hymn with voices jarred the jarred world's shriek of  
woe?

O! O!

RIVER HEBRUS

This discord is an agony  
Shuddering harsh in me;  
My waters will empoison the fair fresh-water sea!

CALLIOPE

Nay! all is ended now.  
Cover the beaten brow!  
Carry the brain of music into the wide  
Ægean!  
No priest pronounce thy pæan  
Ever again, Apollo,  
Thou false, thou fair, thou hollow!  
Die to a groan within a shrine!  
Despair thy force divine!  
Thou didst achieve this ruin; let the seas  
Roar o'er thy lost name of Musagetes!

THE LESBIAN SHORE

Welcome, O holy head!  
Welcome, O force not dead!



Reverberating joy of music subtly shed!  
Welcome, O glorious, O laurelled one!  
Own offspring of the Sun,  
The ancient harmony was hardly yet begun.  
By thee and by thy life  
Arose the Lesbian maiden.  
Thou art perished as thy wife ;  
My shores with magic loves and songs of life are laden.

#### CALLIOPE

Weep, weep no more !  
O loyal Lesbian shore,  
I hear a murmur sound more sweet than murmur ever  
bore.

Not ocean's siren spell  
Soft-sounded in a spiral shell  
Were quite so exquisite, were all so admirable !

#### LESBIAN SHORE

Nay! but the agony of the time  
Rings in the royal rhyme!  
She hath touched the intimate, and chanced on the sublime.

#### CALLIOPE

Ay! Ay! a woman's silky tone  
Makes music for eternity her own,  
Till all men's victories in song seem a discordant groan.

### LESBIAN SHORE

Upon my cliffs of green,  
Beneath the azure skies,  
She stands with looks of fire,  
Sappho. Her hands between  
Lies the wild world ; she flies  
From agony to agony of desire.

### CALLIOPE

Him, Orpheus, him she sings ;  
Loosing the living strings,  
Till music fledged fares forth sunward on moon-wrought  
wings.

### LESBIAN SHORE

Yea, by the solar name,  
Orpheus her lips acclaim,  
The centre and the silence ! O ! the torrent of fine flame  
Like hair that shooteth forth  
To the ensanguine North  
Whence ran the drunken crew, Bassarids in their wrath.

### SAPPHO

Woe is me ! the brow of a brazen morning  
Breaks in blood on water athirst of Hebrus.  
Sanguine horror starts on her hills tenebrous :  
Hell hath not heard her !

Dumb and still thy birds, O Apollo, scorning  
Song ; yells drown them, lecherous anthems gabbled,  
Laughter splashed of Bassarids, blood-bedabbled,  
Mad with their murder !

O thou many-coloured immortal maiden,  
Dawn ! O dew, delight of a world ! A sorrow  
Hides your holy faces awhile. To-morrow  
Comes for your calling ?

Still the notes of musical Orpheus, laden  
Never now of pain or of failing, follow ;  
Follow up the height, or adown the hollow  
Fairy are falling.

O my hopeless misery mind of longing !  
O the anguish born in a breast unloved !  
Women, wail the face of a God uncovered,  
Brain dead and breath dumb !

Wail the sense of infinite ardours thronging  
Fast and fast and faster athwart the heaven,  
Keen as light and cruel as fire, as levin  
Swift and as death dumb !

Freedom, rapture, victory, fill the chorus,  
Dying, ever dying, among the billows ;  
Whispered, ever whispered among the willows :—  
Pour the libation !

Now springs up a notable age. Adore us  
Masters now of music above his magic,  
Lords of change, leaps pastoral up to tragic,  
Thanks to the Thracian !

Ah, my pain ! what desolate female bosoms,  
Smitten hearts of delicate males, uncover ;  
Grip not life for poet or sage or lover,  
Feed on derision.

Yea, in these mature me avenger blossoms,  
Swift as swords to sever the subtle ether,  
Lift the earth, see infinite space beneath her,  
Swoon at the vision.

This, O Orpheus, this be a golden guerdon  
Unto thee for gift of amaze and wonder !  
This thy sorrow, sword of a heart asunder,  
Beareth a flower.

This the heart of woman—a bitter burden !—  
Thou hast filled with seed—O a seed of madness !  
Seed of music ! seed of a royal sadness !—  
This be our dower !

Ah ! the bitter legacy left of lyre-light !  
Thou wast Nature's prophet, a wise magician ;  
Magic falls, and love is a false physician :—  
Deep our disease is !

Now to us the crouching over the firelight,  
Eating out for hunger of love our vitals !  
(Eaten out the hollower for respitals  
Swift as the breeze is.)

Ay! the golden age is a broken vessel.  
All the golden waters exhale, evanish.  
Joy of life and laughter of love we banish :  
Damned is the will dead.

Now with brass and iron we writhe and wrestle.  
Now with clay the torrent of fire is tainted.  
Life apes death: the lily is curled and painted ;  
Gold is regilded.

Master, we lament thee, as awful anguish  
Seizes on the infinite maze of mortals.  
See we love that yearns to the golden portals  
Bound of the grey god.

Love, thy children, laughter and sunlight, languish.  
Aphrodite, miracle of the flashed foam,  
Burns with beaten agony in the lashed foam ;  
Down is the day-god.

Ay! this first of Lesbian lamentations  
Still shall burn from æon to idle æon !  
(Chorus, epithalamy, ode, and pæan  
Dumb or dishevelled !)

Still my songs shall murmur across the nations,  
Gain their meed of misery, praise, and yearning,  
Smite their stroke on centuries foully burning,  
Drunk or bedevilled.

Song? No beauty shine in a sphere of music!  
Me? my voice be dull, be a void, be toneless!  
Match me, sea! than me thou hast many a moan less,  
Many a million.

Sun, be broken! Moon, be eclipsed; be dew sick!  
Ocean flat and poisonous, earth demented!  
Living souls go shuddering through the tented  
Air, his pavilion!

Ay; the pectis clangs me a soulless discord:—  
Let me break my visible heart a-weeping!  
Loving? Drinking? Misery. Singing, sleeping  
Touch not my sorrow.

Orpheus, turn the sorrow-chord to the bliss-chord!  
All may rise the easier that the one set.  
So our eyes from saddening at the sunset  
Turn to to-morrow.

#### CALLIOPE

Silence. I hear a voice  
That biddeth me rejoice.  
I know the whole wise plan  
Of Fate regarding Man.

## THE LESBIAN SHORE

It is the sun's dark bride  
Nuith, the azure-eyed.  
No longer Sappho sings her spell;  
His heart divorced, her heart insatiable.  
There is deep silence. Earth hath passed  
To a new kingdom. In a purpose vast  
Her horoscope is cast.

## NUITH

Enough. It is ended, the story  
Of magical æons of song;  
The sun is gone down in his glory  
To the Houses of Hate and of Wrong.  
Would ye see if he rise?  
In Hesperian skies  
Ye may look for his rising for long.

The magical æon beginneth  
Of song in the heart of desire,  
That smiteth and striveth and sinneth,  
But burns up the soul of the lyre.  
There is pain in the note:—  
In the sorcerer's throat  
Is a sword, and his brain is afire!

Long after (to men: but a moment  
To me in my mansion of rest)

Is a sundawn to blaze what the glow meant  
Seen long after death in the west ;  
A magical æon !  
Nor love-song nor pæan,  
But a flame with a silvery crest.

There shall rise a sweet song of the soul  
Far deeper than love or distress ;  
Beyond mortals and gods shall it roll ;  
It shall find me, and crave, and caress.  
Ah ! me it shall capture  
In torrents of rapture ;  
It shall flood me, and fill, and possess.

For brighter from age unto age  
The weary old world shall renew  
Its life at the lips of the sage,  
Its love at the lips of the dew.  
With kisses and tears  
The return of the years  
Is sure as the starlight is true.

Yet the drift of the stars is to beauty,  
To strength, and to infinite pleasure.  
The toil and the worship and duty  
Shall turn them to laughter and leisure.  
Were the world understood  
Ye would see it was good,  
A dance to a delicate measure.



Ye fools, interweaving in passion  
The lyrical light of the mind !  
Go on, in your drivelling fashion !  
Ye shall surely seek long and not find.  
From without ye may see  
All the beauty of me,  
And my lips, that their kisses are kind.

For Eurydice once I lamented ;  
For Orpheus I do not lament :  
Her days were a span, and demented ;  
His days are for aye, and content.  
Mere love is as nought  
To the love that is Thought,  
And idea is more than event.

O lovers ! O poets ! O masters  
Of me, ye may ravish my frown !  
Aloof from my shocks and disasters !  
Impatient to kiss me, and crown !  
I am eager to yield.  
In the warrior field  
Ye shall fight me, and fasten me down.

O poets ! O masters ! O lovers !  
Sweet souls of the strength of the sun !  
The couch of eternity covers  
Our loves, and our dreams are as done.  
Reality closes

Our life into roses ;  
We are infinite space : we are one.

There is one that hath sought me and found me  
In the heart of the sand and the snow :  
He hath caught me, and held me, and bound me,  
In the lands where no flower may grow.  
His voice is a spell,  
Hath enchanted me well !  
I am his, did I will it or no.

But I will it, I will it, I will it !  
His speck of a soul in its cars  
Shall lift up immensity ! fill it  
With light of his lyrical bars.  
His soul shall concentrate  
All space ; he shall enter  
The beautiful land of the stars.

He shall know me eternally wedded  
To the splendid and subtle of mind ;  
For the pious, the arrogant-headed,  
He shall know they nor seek me nor find.  
O afloat in me curled !  
Cry aloud to the world  
That I and my kisses are kind !

O lover ! O poet ! O maiden  
To me in my magical way !

Be thy songs with the wilderness laden !  
Thy lyre be adrift and astray :—  
So to me thou shalt cling !  
So to me thou shalt sing  
Of the beautiful law of the day !

I forbid thee to weep or to worship ;  
I forbid thee to sing or to write !  
The Star-Goddess guideth us her ship ;  
The sails belly out with the light.  
Beautiful head !  
We will sing on our bed  
Of the beautiful law of the Night !

We are lulled by the whirr of the stars ;  
We are fanned by the whisper, the wind ;  
We are locked in unbreakable bars,  
The love of the spirit and mind.  
The infinite powers  
Of rapture are ours ;  
We are one, and our kisses are kind.

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