

The Haunted Hour eBook

The Haunted Hour

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THE HAUNTED HOUR

THE FAR AWAY COUNTRY

NORA HOPPER CHESSON

Far away's the country where I desire to go, Far away's the country where the blue roses grow, Far away's the country and very far away, And who would travel thither must go 'twixt night and day.

Far away's the country, and the seas are wild That you must voyage over, grown man or chrisom child, O'er leagues of land and water a weary way you'll go Before you'll find the country where the blue roses grow.

But O, and O, the roses are very strange and fair, You'd travel far to see them, and one might die to wear, Yet, far away's the country, and perilous the sea, And some may think far fairer the red rose on her tree.

Far away's the country, and strange the way to fare, Far away's the country—O would that I were there! It's on and on past Whinny Muir and over Brig o' Dread. And you shall pluck blue roses the day that you are dead.

“THE NICHT ATWEEN THE SANCTS AN' SOULS”



ALL-SOULS: KATHERINE TYNAN

The door of Heaven is on the latch
To-night, and many a one is fain
To go home for one night's watch
With his love again.

Oh, where the father and mother sit
There's a drift of dead leaves at the door
Like pitter-patter of little feet
That come no more.

Their thoughts are in the night and cold,
Their tears are heavier than the clay,
But who is this at the threshold
So young and gay?

They are come from the land o' the young,
They have forgotten how to weep;
Words of comfort on the tongue,
And a kiss to keep.

They sit down and they stay awhile,
Kisses and comfort none shall lack;
At morn they steal forth with a smile
And a long look back.

ALL-SAINTS' EVE: LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE



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Oh, when the ghosts go by,
Under the empty trees,
Here in my house I sit and cry,
My head upon my knees!

Innumerable, white,
Like mist they fill the square;
The bolt is drawn, the latch made tight,
The shutter barred there.

There walks one small and glad,
New to the churchyard clod;
My little lad, my little lad,
A single year with God!

I sit and hide my head
Until they all are past,
Under the empty trees the dead
That go full soft and fast.

Up to my chamber dim,
Back to my bed I plod;
Oh, would I were a ghost with him,
And faring back to God!

A DREAM: WILLIAM ALLINGHAM

I heard the dogs howl in the moonlight night;
I went to the window to see the sight;
All the dead that ever I knew
Going one by one and two by two.

On they pass'd and on they pass'd;
Townsfellows all, from first to last;
Born in the moonlight of the lane,
Quench'd in the heavy shadow again.

Schoolmates, marching as when they play'd
At soldiers once—but now more staid;
Those were the strangest sight to me
Who were drown'd, I knew, in the open sea.

Straight and handsome folk, bent and weak, too;
Some that I loved, and gasp'd to speak to;



Some but a day in their churchyard bed;
Some that I had not known were dead.

A long long crowd—where each seem'd lonely,
Yet of them all there was one, one only,
Raised a head or looked my way;
She linger'd a moment—she might not stay.

How long since I saw that fair pale face!
Ah! Mother dear! might I only place
My head on thy breast, a moment to rest,
While thy hand on my tearful cheek were press'd!

On, on, a moving bridge they made
Across the moon-stream, from shade to shade,
Young and old, women and men;
Many long-forgot, but remember'd then,

And first there came a bitter laughter;
A sound of tears a moment after,
And then a music so lofty and gay,
That every morning, day by day,
I strive to recall it if I may.

THE NEIGHBORS: THEODOSIA GARRISON

*At first cock-crow
The ghosts must go
Back to their quiet graves below.*

Against the distant striking of the clock
I heard the crowing cock,
And I arose and threw the window wide;
Long, long before the setting of the moon,
And yet I knew they must be passing soon—
My neighbors who had died—
Back to their narrow green-roofed homes that wait
Beyond the churchyard gate.

I leaned far out and waited—all the world
Was like a thing impearled,
Mysterious and beautiful and still:
The crooked road seemed one the moon might lay,
Our little village slept in Quaker gray,
And gray and tall the poplars on the hill;
And then far off I heard the cock—and then
My neighbors passed again.



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At first it seemed a white cloud, nothing more,
Slow drifting by my door,
Or gardened lilies swaying in the wind;
Then suddenly each separate face I knew,
The tender lovers drifting two and two,
Old, peaceful folk long since passed out of mind,
And little children—one whose hand held still
An earth-grown daffodil.

And here I saw one pausing for a space
To lift a wistful face
Up to a certain window where there dreamed
A little brood left motherless; and there
One turned to where the unploughed fields lay bare;
And others lingering passed—but one there seemed
So over glad to haste, she scarce could wait
To reach the churchyard gate!

The farrier's little maid who loved too well
And died—I may not tell
How glad she seemed. My neighbors, young and old,
With backward glances lingered as they went;
Only upon one face was all content,
A sorrow comforted—a peace untold.
I watched them through the swinging gate—the dawn
Stayed till the last had gone.

A BALLAD OF HALLOWE'EN: THEODOSIA GARRISON

*All night the wild wind on the heath
Whistled its song of vague alarms;
All night in some mad dance of death
The poplars tossed their naked arms.*

Mignon Isa hath left her bed
And bared her shoulders to the blast;
The long procession of the dead
Stared at her as it passed.

“Oh, there, methinks, my mother smiled,
And there my father walks forlorn,



And there the little nameless child
That was the parish scorn.

“And there my olden comrades move,
And there my sister smiles apart,
But nowhere is the fair, false love
That bent and broke my heart.

“Oh, false in life, oh, false in death,
Wherever thy mad spirit be,
Could it not come this night,” she saith,
“And keep tryst with me?”

Mignon Isa has turned alone,
Bitter the pain and long the years;
The moonlight on the old gravestone
Was warmer than her tears.

*All night the wild wind on the heath
Whistled its song of vague alarms;
All night in some mad dance of death
The poplars tossed their naked arms.*

THE FORGOTTEN SOUL: MARGARET WIDDEMER

'Twas I that cried against the pane on All Souls' Night
(O pulse of my heart's life, how could you never hear?)
You filled the room I knew with yellow candlelight
And cheered the lass beside you when she cried in fear.

'Twas I that went beside you in the gray wood-mist
(O core of my heart's heart, how could you never know?)
You only frowned and shuddered as you bent and kissed
The lass hard by you, handfast, as I used to go.



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'Twas I that stood to greet you on the churchyard pave
(O fire of my heart's grief, how could you never see?)
You smiled in careless dreaming as you crossed my grave
And hummed a little love-song where they buried me!

ALL-SOULS' NIGHT: DORA SIGERSON

O mother, mother, I swept the hearth, I set his chair
and the white board spread,
I prayed for his coming to our kind Lady when Death's
doors would let out the dead;
A strange wind rattled the window-pane, and down the
lane a dog howled on,
I called his name and the candle flame burnt dim, pressed
a hand the door-latch upon.
Deelish! Deelish! my woe forever that I could not sever
coward flesh from fear.
I called his name and the pale ghost came; but I was
afraid to meet my dear.

O mother, mother, in tears I checked the sad hours past
of the year that's o'er,
Till by God's grace I might see his face and hear the
sound of his voice once more;
The chair I set from the cold and wet, he took when he
came from unknown skies
Of the land of the dead, on my bent brown head I felt
the reproach of his saddened eyes;
I closed my lids on my heart's desire, crouched by the fire,
my voice was dumb.
At my clean-swept hearth he had no mirth, and at my
table he broke no crumb.
Deelish! Deelish! my woe forever that I could not sever
coward flesh from fear.
His chair put aside when the young cock cried, and I
was afraid to meet my dear.

JANET'S TRYST: GEORGE MACDONALD

"Sweep up the flure, Janet,
Put on anither peat.



It's a lown and starry nicht, Janet,
And neither cold nor weet.

And it's open hoose we keep the nicht
For ony that may be oot;
It's the nicht atween the Sancts an' Souls
Whan the bodiless gang about.

Set the chairs back to the wall, Janet,
Mak' ready for quaiet fowk,
Hae a' thing as clean as a windin'-sheet—
They comena ilka ook.

There's a spale upo' the flure, Janet,
And there's a rowan berry.
Sweep them into the fire, Janet,—
They'll be welcomer than merry.

Syne set open the door, Janet,—
Wide open for wha kens wha:
As ye come to your bed, Janet,
Set it open to the wa'."

She set the chairs back to the wa',
But ane made of the birk,
She swept the flure, but left ane spale,
A long spale o' the aik.

The nicht was lown, and the stars sat still
A-glintin' doon the sky:
And the sauls crept oot o' their mooly graves,
A' dank wi' lyin' by.

When midnight came the mither rase—
She wad gae see an' hear.
Back she cam' wi' a glowrin' face,
An' sloomin' wi' verra fear.



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“There’s ane o’ them sittin’ afore the fire!
Janet, gae na to see;
Ye left a chair afore the fire,
Whaur I tauld ye nae chair sud be.”

Janet she smiled in her mither’s face:
She had brunt the roddin reid:
And she left aneath the birken chair
The spale frae a coffin lid.

She rase and she gaed but the hoose,
Aye steekin’ door and door,
Three hours gaed by ere her mother heard
Her fit upo’ the flure.

But whan the grey cock crew she heard
The soun’ o’ shoeless feet,
Whan the red cock crew she heard the door
An’ a sough o’ wind an’ weet.

An’ Janet cam’ back wi’ a wan face,
But never a word said she;
No man ever heard her voice lood oot—
It cam’ like frae ower the sea.

And no man ever heard her lauch,
Nor yet say alas nor wae;
But a smile aye glimmert on her wan face
Like the moonlicht on the sea.

And ilka nicht ‘twixt the Sancts an’ Souls
Wide open she set the door;
And she mendit the fire, and she left ae chair
And that spale upo’ the flure.

And at midnight she gaed but the hoose,
Aye steekin’ door and door.
Whan the red cock crew she cam’ ben the hoose,
Aye wanner than before.

Wanner her face and sweeter her smile,
Till the seventh All-Souls Eve
Her mither she heard the shoeless feet,
Says “She’s comin’, I believe.”



But she camna ben, an' her mither lay;
For fear she cudna stan',
But up she rase an' ben she gaed
Whan the gowden cock hed crawn.

And Janet sat upo' the chair,
White as the day did daw,
Her smile was as sunlight left on the sea
Whan the sun has gane awa.

HALLOWS' E'EN: WINIFRED M. LETTS

The girls are laughing with the boys, and gaming by the fire,
They're wishful, every one of them, to see her heart's desire,
Twas Thesie cut the barnbrack and found the ring inside,
Before next Hallows' E'en has dawned herself will be a bride.
But little Mollie stands alone outside the cabin door,
And breaks her heart for one the waves threw dead upon the shore.

Twas Katie's nut lepped from the hearth, and left poor Pat's alone
But Ellen's stayed by Christy Byrne's upon the wide hearthstone.
An' all the while the childher bobbed for apples set afloat,
The old men smoked their pipes and talked about the foundered boat,
But Mollie walked upon the cliff, and never feared the rain;
She called the name of one she loved and bid him come again.

Young Peter pulled the cabbage-stump to win a wealthy wife,
Rosanna threw the apple-peel to know who'd share her life;
And Lizzie had a looking-glass she'd hid in some dark place
To try if there, foreninst her own, she'd see her comrade's face.
But Mollie walked along the quay where Terry's feet had trod,
And sobbed her grief out in the night, with no one near but God.



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She heard the laughter from the house, she heard the fiddle played;
She called her dead love to her side—why should she be afraid?
She took his cold hands in her own, she had no thought of dread,
And not a star looked out to watch the living kiss the dead.

The lads are gaming with the girls, and laughing by the fire.
But Mollie in the cold, dark night, has found her heart's desire.

ON KINGSTON BRIDGE: ELLEN M.H. CORTISSOZ

(On All Souls' Night the dead walk on Kingston
Bridge.—*Old Legend*.)

On Kingston Bridge the starlight shone
Through hurrying mists in shrouded glow;
The boding night-wind made its moan,
The mighty river crept below.
'Twas All Souls' Night, and to and fro
The quick and dead together walked,
The quick and dead together talked,
On Kingston Bridge.

Two met who had not met for years;
Once was their hate too deep for fears:
One drew his rapier as he came,
Upleapt his anger like a flame.
With clash of mail he faced his foe,
And bade him stand and meet him so.
He felt a graveyard wind go by
Cold, cold as was his enemy.
A stony horror held him fast.
The Dead looked with a ghastly stare,
And sighed "I know thee not," and passed
Like to the mist, and left him there
On Kingston Bridge.

'Twas All Souls' Night, and to and fro
The quick and dead together walked,
The quick and dead together talked,
On Kingston Bridge.

Two met who had not met for years:
With grief that was too deep for tears



They parted last.
He clasped her hand, and in her eyes
He sought Love's rapturous surprise.
"Oh, Sweet!" he cried, "hast thou come back
To say thou lov'st thy lover still?"
—Into the starlight, pale and cold,
She gazed afar—her hand was chill:
"Dost thou remember how we kept
Our ardent vigils?—how we kissed?—
Take thou these kisses as of old!"
An icy wind about him swept;
"I know thee not," she sighed, and passed
Into the dim and shrouding mist
On Kingston Bridge.

'Twas All Souls' Night, and to and fro
The quick and dead together walked,
The quick and dead together talked,
On Kingston Bridge.

ALL SOULS' NIGHT: LOUISA HUMPHREYS

Canice the priest went out on the Night of Souls;
"Stay, oh stay," said the woman who served his board
"Stay, for the path is strait with pits and holes,
And the night is dark and the way is lone abroad;
Stay within because it is lone, at least."
"Nay, it will not be lone," said Canice the priest.

Dim without, and a dim, low-sweeping sky;
A scent of earth in the night, of opened mould;
A listening pause in the night—and a breath passed by—
And its touch was cold, was cold as the graves are cold
Canice went on to the waste where no men be;
"Nay, I will not be lone to-night," said he.



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Shades that flit, besides the shades of the night;
Rustling sobs besides the sobs of the wind;
Steps of feet that pace with his on the right,
Steps that pace on the left, and steps behind.
“Nay, no fear that I shall be lone, at least!
Lo, there are throngs abroad,” said Canice the priest.

Deathly hands that pluck at his cassock’s hem;
Sighings of earthly breath that smite his cheek;
Canice the priest swings on, atune with them,
Hears the throbbings of pain, and hears them speak;
Hears the word they utter, and answers “Yea!
Yea, poor souls, for I heed; I pray, I pray.”

Lo, a gleam of gray, and the dark is done;
Hark, a bird that trills a song of the light.
Canice hies him home by the shine of the sun.
What to-day of those pallid wraiths of the night?
What of the woeful notes that had wailed and fled?
“Maria, ora pro illis!” Canice said.

“ALL THE LITTLE SIGHING SOULS”

MARY SHEPHERDESS: MARJORIE L.C. PICKTHALL

When the heron’s in the high wood and the last long furrow’s sown
With the herded cloud before her and her sea-sweet raiment blown
Comes Mary, Mary Shepherdess, a-seeking for her own.

Saint James he calls the righteous folk, Saint John he calls the kind,
Saint Peter seeks the valiant men all to loose or bind,
But Mary seeks the little souls that are so hard to find.

All the little sighing souls born of dust’s despair,
They who fed on bitter bread when the world was bare,
Frighted of the glory gates and the starry stair.

All about the windy down, housing in the ling,
Underneath the alder-bough linnets-light they cling,
Frighted of the shining house where the martyrs sing.

Crying in the ivy-bloom, fingering at the pane,
Grieving in the hollow dark, lone along the lane,
Mary, Mary Shepherdess gathers them again.



And O the wandering women know, in workhouse and in shed,
They dream on Mary Shepherdess with doves about her head,
And pleasant posies in her hand, and sorrow comforted.

Saying: there's my little lass, faring fine and free,
There's the little lad I laid by the holly tree,
Dreaming: There's my nameless bairn laughing at her knee.

When the bracken-harvest's gathered and the frost is on the loam
When the dream goes out in silence and the ebb runs out in foam,
Mary, Mary Shepherdess, she leads the lost lambs home.

If I had a little maid to turn my tears away,
If I had a little lad to lead me when I'm gray,
All to Mary Shepherdess they'd fold their hands and pray.

THE LITTLE GHOST: KATHERINE TYNAN

The stars began to peep
Gone was the bitter day,
She heard the milky ewes
Bleat to their lambs astray.
Her heart cried for her lamb
Lapped cold in the churchyard sod,
She could not think on the happy children
At play with the Lamb of God.



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She heard the calling ewes
And the lambs answer alas!
She heard her heart's blood drip in the night,
As the ewes' milk on the grass.
Her tears that burnt like fire
So bitter and slow ran down
She could not think on the new-washed children
Playing by Mary's gown.

Oh, who is this comes in
Over her threshold stone?
And why is the old dog wild with joy
Who all day long made moan?
This fair little radiant ghost,
Her one little son of seven,
New 'scaped from the band of merry children
In the nurseries of Heaven.

He was all clad in white
Without a speck or stain;
His curls had a ring of light,
That rose and fell again.
"Now come with me, my own mother,
And you shall have great ease,
For you shall see the lost children
Gathered at Mary's knees."

Oh, lightly sprang she up
Nor waked her sleeping man,
And hand in hand with the little ghost
Through the dark night she ran.
She is gone swift as a fawn,
As a bird homes to its nest,
She has seen them lie, the sleepy children,
'Twixt Mary's arm and breast.

At morning she came back;
Her eyes were strange to see.
She will not fear the long journey,
However long it be.
As she goes in and out
She sings unto herself;
For she has seen the mother's children
And knows that it is well.



TWO BROTHERS: THEODOSIA GARRISON

The dead son's mother sat and wept
And her live son plucked at her gown,
"Oh, mother, long is the watch we've kept!"
But she beat the small hands down.

The little live son he clung to her knee—
And frightened his eyes and dim—
"Have ye never, my mother, a word for me?"
But she turned her face from him,

Saying, "Oh and alack, mine own dead son,
Could I know but the path aright,
How fast and how fast my feet would run
Through the way o' Death to-night!"

Saying, "Oh and alack, for thy empty place
And the ache in my heart to hide!"
The little live son has touched her face,
But she thrust his hands aside.

The mother hath laid her down and wept
In the midnight's chill and gloom;
In the hour ere dawn while the mother slept
The ghost came in the room.

And the little live son hath called his name
Or ever he passed the door,
"Oh, brother, brother, 'tis well ye came,
For our mother's grief is sore!

"Oh, brother, brother, she weeps for thee
As a rain that beats all day,
But me she pushes from off her knee
And turneth her eyes away."

And the little dead son he spake again,
"My brother, the dead have grace
Though they lay them low from the sight of men
With a white cloth on their face.

"Oh, brother, the dead have gifts of love,
Though lonely and low they lie,
By my mother's love do I speak and move
And may not wholly die."



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The little live son he sighed apart,
“Oh, brother, ye live,” quoth he,
“In my mother’s grief and my mother’s heart
And my mother’s memory.

“And vain for thee is my mother’s cry,”
The little live son hath said,
“For ye are loved and ye may not die—
It is only I who am dead!”

THE LITTLE DEAD CHILD: JOSEPHINE DASKAM BACON

When all but her were sleeping fast,
And the night was nearly fled,
The little dead child came up the stair
And stood by his mother’s bed.

“Ah, God!” she cried, “the nights are three,
And yet I have not slept!”
The little dead child he sat him down,
And sank his head and wept.

“And is it thou, my little dead child,
Come in from out the storm?
Ah, lie thou back against my heart,
And I will keep thee warm!”

*That is long ago, mother,
Long and long ago!
Shall I grow warm who lay three nights
Beneath the winter snow?*

* * * * *

“Hast thou not heard the old nurse weep?
She sings to us no more;
And thy brothers leave the broken toys
And whisper in the door.”

*That is far away, mother,
Far and far away!*



*Above my head the stone is white.
My hands forget to play.*

* * * * *

*“What wilt thou then, my little dead child,
Since here thou may’st not lie?
Ah, me! that snow should be thy sheet,
And winds thy lullaby!”*

*Down within my grave, mother,
I heard, I know not how,
“Go up to God, thou little child,
Go up and meet him now!”*

*That is far to fare, mother,
Far and far to fare!
I come for thee to carry me
The way from here to there.*

*“Oh, hold thy peace, my little dead child.
My heart will break in me!
Thy way to God thou must go alone,
I may not carry thee!”*

* * * * *

*The cock crew out the early dawn
Ere she could stay her moan;
She heard the cry of a little child,
Upon his way alone.*

THE CHILD ALONE: ROSAMUND MARRIOTT WATSON

*They say the night has fallen chill—
But I know naught of mist or rain,
Only of two small hands that still
Beat on the darkness all in vain.*

*They say the wind blows high and wild
Down the long valleys to the sea;
But I can only hear the child,
Who weeps in darkness, wanting me.*

*Beyond the footfalls in the street,
Above the voices of the bay,*



I hear the sound of little feet,
Two little stumbling feet astray.

Oh, loud the autumn wind makes moan,
The desolate wind about my door,
And a little child goes all alone
Who never was alone before.



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THE CHILD: THEODOSIA GARRISON

I heard her crying in the night,—
So long, so long I lay awake,
Watching the moonlight ebb and break
Against the sill like waves of light.

I tried to close my eyes nor heed
And lie quite still—but oh, again
The little voice of fright and pain
Sobbed in the darkness of her need.

Strange shadows led me down the stair;
Creaked as I went the hollow floor;
I drew the bolt and flung the door
Wide, wide, and softly called her there.

*Ah me, as happy mothers call
Through the tender twilights to the gay,
Glad truant making holiday
Too long before the evenfall.*

The garden odors drifted through,
The scent of earth and box and rose,
And then, as silently as those,
A little wistful child I knew.

So small, so frightened and so cold,
Ah, close, so close I gathered her
Within my arms, she might not stir,
And crooned and kissed her in their hold.

*As might a happy mother, when,
Aghast for some quaint, trifling thing,
One runs to her for comforting,
And smiles within her arms again.*

All night upon my heart she lay,
All night I held her warm and close,
Until the morning wind arose
And called across the world for day.

The garden odors drifted through
The open door; as still as they



She passed into the awful day,
A little, wistful child I knew.

Think you for this God's smile may dim
(His are so many, many dead)
Seeing that I but comforted
A child—and sent her back to Him!

SUCH ARE THE SOULS IN PURGATORY: ANNA HEMPSTEAD BRANCH

Three days she wandered forth from me,
Then sought me as of old.
“I did not know how dark 'twould be,”
She sobbed, “nor yet how cold.

“And it is chill for me to fare
Who have not long been dead.
If thou wouldst give away thy cloak
I might go comforted.”

I would have soothed her on my breast
But that she needs must go.
The dead must journey without rest
Whether they will or no.

But I had kept for love of her
The cloak she wore, the shoes,
And every day I touched the things
She had been wont to use.

All night the dead must hurry on,
They may not ever sleep.
And so I gave away her cloak
That I was fain to keep.

The second time she sought me out
Her eyes were full of need.
“If thou wouldst give away my shoes
Perchance I would not bleed.”

I cried to her aloud, “My child,
They are all I have to keep,
To lay my hand upon and touch
At night before I sleep.



“The earth shall keep the body I bore,
And Heaven thy soul. I may not choose.
Let be—I ask a little thing,
That I should keep thy shoes.



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“But I will give away my own.
Lord, Lord, wilt Thou not see?
Let Thou her road to Paradise
This way be eased by me.”

All night alone by brier and stone
I ran that road unshod,
So I might know instead of her
The pains that lead to God.

When next she came for a brief space
She tarried at my side,
So happy was she in that place,
So glad that she had died.

“The last night that I roamed,” she said,
“Some one had gone before.
I followed where those feet had led,
And found it rough no more.

“And then I came to a good place,
So kind, so dear are they
I may not come again,” and so
She smiled and went away.

Dear Christ, Who died to save us all,
Who trod the ways so cold and wild,
The love of Mary in thy heart
Did let me ease my child.

She may not leave the place of bliss,
I may not touch her hands and hair,
But every night I touch and kiss
The shoes she used to wear.

THE OPEN DOOR: ROSAMUND MARRIOTT WATSON

O listen for her step when the fire burns hollow
When the low fire whispers and the white ash sinks,
When all about the chamber shadows troop and follow
As drowsier yet the hearth's red watchlight blinks.

While bare black night through empty casements staring
Waits to storm the wainscot till the fire lies dead,



Fast along the snowbound waste little feet are faring—
Hush and listen—listen—but never turn your head.

Leave the door upon the latch—she could never reach it—
You would hear her crying, crying there till break of day,
Out on the cold moor 'mid the snows that bleach it,
Weeping as once in the long years past away.

Lean deeper in the settle-corner lest she find you—
Find and grow fearsome, too afraid to stay:
Do you hear the hinge of the oaken press behind you?
There all her toys were kept, there she used to play.

Do you hear the light, light foot, the faint sweet laughter
Happy stir and murmur of a child that plays:
Slowly the darkness creeps up from floor to rafter,
Slowly the fallen snow covers all the ways.

Falls as it once fell on a tide past over,
Golden the hearth glowed then, bright the windows shone;
And still, she comes through the sullen drifts above her
Home to the cold hearth though all the lights are gone.

Far or near no one knew—none would now remember
Where she wandered no one knew—none will ever know;
Somewhere Spring must give her flowers, somewhere white December
Calls her from the moorland to her playthings through the snow.

MY LADDIE'S HOUNDS: MARGUERITE ELIZABETH EASTER

They are my laddie's hounds
That rin the wood at brak o' day.
Wha is it taks them hence? Can ony say
Wha is it taks my laddie's hounds
At brak o' day?



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They cleek aff thegither,
And then fa' back, wi' room atween
For ane to walk; sae aften, I hae seen
The baith cleek aff thegither
Wi' ane atween!

And when toward the pines
Up yonder lane they loup alang
I see ae laddie brent and strang,
I see ae laddie loup alang
Toward the pines.

I follow them in mind
Ilk time; right weel I ken the way,—
They thrid the wood, an' speel the staney brae
An' skir the field; I follow them,
I ken the way.

They daddle at the creek,
Whaur down fra aff the reachin'-logs
I stoup, wi' my dear laddie, and the dogs,
An' drink o' springs that spait the creek
Maist to the logs.

He's but a bairn, atho'
He hunts the mountain's lonely bree,
His doggies' ears abune their brows wi' glee
He ties; he's but a bairn, atho'
He hunts the bree.

Fu' length they a' stretch out
Upon ae bink that green trees hap
In shade. He whusslits saft; the beagles nap
Wi' een half shut, a stretchin' out
Whaur green trees hap.

And noo he fades awa'
Frae 'tween the twa—into the blue.
My sight gats blind; gude Lord, it isna true
That he has gane for aye awa
Into the blue!

They are my laddie's hounds
That mak the hill at fa' o' day



Wi' dowie heads hung laigh; can ony say
Wha is it hunts my laddie's hounds
Till fa' o day?

THE OLD HOUSE: KATHERINE TYNAN

The boys who used to come and go
In the grey kindly house are flown.
They have taken the way the young feet know;
Not alone, not alone!
Thronged is the road the young feet go.

Yet in the quiet evening hour
What comes, oh, lighter than a bird?
Touches her cheek, soft as a flower.
What moved, what stirred?
What was the joyous whisper heard?

What flitted in the corridor
Like a boy's shape so dear and slight?
What was the laughter ran before?
Delicate, light,
Like harps the wind plays out of sight.

The boys who used to go and come
In the grey house are come again;
Of the grey house and firelit room
They are fain, they are fain:
They have come home from the night and rain.

SHADOWY HEROES

BALLAD OF THE BURIED SWORD: ERNEST RHYS

In a winter's dream, on Gamellyn moor,
I found the lost grave of Lord Glyndwr.

I followed three shadows against the moon,
That marched while the thin reed whistled the tune,

Three swordsmen they were out of Harry's wars,
That made a Welsh song of their Norman scars,

But they sang no longer of Agincourt,
When they came to a grave, for there lay Glyndwr.

Said the one, "My sword, th'art rust, my dear,
I but brought thee home to break thee here."



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And the second, "Ay, here is the narrow home,
To which our tired hearts are come!"

And the third, "We are all that are left, Glyndwr,
To guard thee now on Gamellyn moor."

Straightway I saw the dead forth-stand,
His good sword bright in his right hand,

And the marsh-reeds with a whistling sound,
To a thousand gray swordsmen were turned around.

The moon did shake in the south to see,
The dead man stand with his soldiery.

But the brighter his sword, the grave before,
Turn'd its gate of death to a radiant door.

Therein the thousand, before their Lord,
Marched at the summons of his bright sword.

Then the night grew strange, the blood left my brain,
And I stood alone by the grave again.

But brightly his sword still before me shone,
Across the dark moor as I passed alone.

And still it shines, a silver flame,
Across the dark night of the Cymraec shame.

THE LOOKING-GLASS: RUDYARD KIPLING

The Queen was in her chamber, and she was middling old,
Her petticoat was of satin, and her stomacher was gold.
Backwards and forwards and sideways did she pass,
Making up her mind to face the cruel looking-glass.
The cruel looking-glass that will never show a lass
As comely or as kindly or as young as what she was!

The Queen was in her chamber, a-combing of her hair.
There came Queen Mary's spirit and it stood behind her chair,
Singing, "Backwards and forwards and sideways may you pass,
But I will stand beside you till you face the looking-glass."



The cruel looking-glass that will never show a lass
As lovely or unlucky or as lonely as I was.”

The Queen was in her chamber, a-weeping very sore,
There came Lord Leicester’s spirit and it scratched upon the door,
Singing, “Backwards and forwards and sideways may you pass,
But I will walk beside you till you face the looking-glass.
The cruel looking-glass that will never show a lass,
As hard and unforgiving and as wicked as you was!”

The Queen was in her chamber, her sins were on her head.
She looked the spirits up and down and statelily she said:—
“Backwards and forwards and sideways though I’ve been,
Yet I am Harry’s daughter and I am England’s Queen!”
And she faced the looking-glass (and whatever else there was)
And she saw her day was over and she saw her beauty pass
In the cruel looking-glass, that can always hurt a lass
More hard than any ghost there is or any man there was!

DRAKE’S DRUM: HENRY NEWBOLT

Drake he’s in his hammock an’ a thousand miles away,
 (Capten, art tha sleepin’ there below?)
Slung atween the round shot in Nombre Dios Bay,
 An’ dreamin’ arl the time o’ Plymouth Hoe.
Yarnder lumes the Island, yarnder lie the ships,
 Wi’ sailor lads a dancin’ heel-an’-toe,
An’ the shore light flashin’ an’ the night-tide dashin’
 He sees et arl so plainly as he saw et long ago.



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Drake he was a Devon man, an' ruled the Devon seas,
 (Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?)
Rovin' tho' his death fell, he went with wi' heart of ease
 An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
"Take my drum to England, hang et by the shore,
 Strike et when your powder's runnin' low;
If the Dons sight Devon, I'll quit the port o' Heaven,
 An' drum them up the channel as we drummed them long ago."

Drake he's in his hammock till the great Armadas come,
 (Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?)
Slung atween the round shot, listenin' for the drum,
 An' dreamin' all the time of Plymouth Hoe.
Call him on the deep sea, call him up the Sound,
 Call him when ye sail to meet the foe
Where the old trade's plyin' an' the old flag flyin'
 They shall find him ware and wakin', as they found him long ago!

THE GREY GHOST: FRANCIS CARLIN

From year to year there walks a Ghost in grey,
 Through misty Connemara in the West;
And those who seek the cause of his unrest,
 Need go but to the Death-dumb in the clay,
To those that fell defiant in the fray,
 Among the boggy wilds of Ireland, blest
 By Cromwell, when his Puritanic jest
Left Hell and Connaught open on their way.
As I have heard so may the stranger hear!
 That he who drove the natives from the lawn,
 Must wander o'er the marsh and foggy fen
Until the Irish gather with a cheer
 In Dublin of the Parliaments at dawn.
 God rest the ghost of Cromwell's dust, Amen!

BALLAD OF DOUGLAS BRIDGE: FRANCIS CARLIN

On Douglas Bridge I met a man
Who lived adjacent to Straban,
 Before the English hung him high
For riding with O'Hanlon.



The eyes of him were just as fresh
As when they burned within the flesh;
And his boot-legs widely walked apart
From riding with O'Hanlon.

"God save you, Sir!" I said with fear,
"You seem to be a stranger here."
"Not I," said he, "nor any man
Who rides with Count O'Hanlon."

"I know each glenn from North Tyrone
To Monaghan, and I've been known
By every clan and parish, since
I rode with Count O'Hanlon."

"Before that time," said he with pride,
"My fathers rode where now they ride
As Rapperees, before the time
Of Trouble and O'Hanlon."

"Good night to you, and God be with
The Tellers of the tale and myth,
For they are of the spirit-stuff
That rides with Count O'Hanlon."

"Good night to you," said I, "and God
Be with the chargers, fairy-shod,
That bear the Ulster's heroes forth
To ride with Count O'Hanlon."

On Douglas Bridge we parted, but
The Gap o' Dreams is never shut,
To one whose saddled soul to-night
Rides out with Count O'Hanlon.



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THE INDIAN BURYING GROUND: PHILIP FRENEAU

In spite of all the learned have said,
I still my old opinion keep;
The posture that we give the dead
Points out the soul's eternal sleep.

Not so the ancients of these lands;—
The Indian, when from life released,
Again is seated with his friends,
And shares again the joyous feast.

His imaged birds and painted bowl,
And venison, for a journey dressed,
Bespeak the nature of the soul,
Activity, that wants no rest.

His bow for action ready bent,
And arrows with a head of stone,
Can only mean that life is spent,
And not the old ideas gone.

Thou, stranger that shalt come this way,
No fraud upon the dead commit,—
Observe the swelling turf and say,
They do not lie, but here they sit.

Here still a lofty rock remains,
On which the curious eye may trace,
(Now wasted half by wearing rains,)
The fancies of a ruder race.

Here still an aged elm aspires,
Beneath whose far projecting shade,
(And which the shepherd still admires,)
The children of the forest played.

There oft a restless Indian queen,
(Pale Shebah with her braided hair,)
And many a barbarous form is seen
To chide the man that lingers there.

By midnight moons, o'er misting dews,
In habit of the chase arrayed,



The hunter still the deer pursues,
The hunter and the deer—a shade!

And long shall timorous Fancy see
The painted chief and pointed spear,
The Reason's self shall bow the knee
To shadows and delusions here.

“RANK ON RANK OF GHOSTLY SOLDIERS”

THE SONG OF SOLDIERS: WALTER DE LA MARE

As I sat musing by the frozen dyke,
There was one man marching with a bright steel pike,
Marching in the daylight, like a ghost came he,
And behind me was the moaning and the murmur of the sea.

As I sat musing, 'twas not one but ten—
Rank on rank of ghostly soldiers marching o'er the fen,
Marching in the misty air they showed in dreams to me,
And behind me was the shouting and the shattering of the sea.

As I sat musing, 'twas a host in dark array,
With their horses and their cannon wheeling onward to the fray,
Moving like a shadow to the fate the brave must dree,
And behind me roared the drums, rang the trumpets of the sea.

BY THE BLOCKHOUSE ON THE HILL: HELEN GRAY CONE

A Ballad of Ninety-eight

The soul of the fair young man sprang up
From the earth where his body lay,
And he was aware of a grim dark soul
Companioning his way.

“Who are you, brother?” the fair soul said,
“We wing together still!”
And the soul replied that was swart and red,
“The spirit of him who shot you dead
By the blockhouse on the hill.



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“Your men and you on the crest were first,
And the last foe left was I,
In the crackle of rifles I dropped and cursed,
Lightning-struck as the cheer outburst
And the hot charge panted nigh.

“You saw me writhe at the side of the trench;
You bade—I know not what;
With one last gnash, with one last wrench,
I sped my last, sure shot.

“The thing that lies on the sodden ground
Like a wrack of the whirlwind’s track,
Your men have made of the body of me,
But they could not call you back!

“In that black game I won, I won!
But had you worked your will,
Speak now the shame that you would have done
In the blockhouse under the hill!”

“God judge my men!” said the fair young soul,
“He knows you tried them sore.
Had He given me power to bide an hour
I had wrought that they forebore.

“I bade them, ere your bullet brought
This swift, this sweet release,
To bear your body out of the fire
That you might rest in peace.”

Said the grim dark soul, “Farewell, farewell,
Farewell ’twixt you and me
Till they set red Judas free from Hell
To kneel at the Lord Christ’s knee!”

“Not so, not so,” said the fair young soul,
“But reach me out your hand:
We two will kneel at the Lord Christ’s knee,
And he that was hanged on the cruel tree
Will remember and understand.

“We two will pray at the Lord Christ’s knee
That never on earth again



The breath of the hot brute guns shall cloud
The sight in the eyes of men!"

The clean stars came into the sky,
The perfect night was still;
Yet rose to heaven the old blood-cry
From the blockhouse under the hill.

NIGHT AT GETTYSBURG: DON C. SEITZ

By day Golgotha sleeps, but when night comes
The army rallies to the beating drums;
Columns are formed and banners wave
O'er armies summoned from the grave.

The wheat field waves with reddened grain
And the wounded wail and writhe in pain.
The hard-held Bloody Angle drips anew
And Pickett charges with a ghostly crew,

While where the road to the village turns
Stands the tall shadow of old John Burns!

THE RIDERS: KATHERINE TYNAN

Rheims is down in fire and smoke,
The hour of God is at the stroke,

Round and round the ruined place,—
Jesus, Mary, give us grace!

There are two riders clad in mail
Silver as the moon is pale.

One is tall as a knight's spear,
The younger one is lowlier.

Small and slim and like a maid—
Steeds and riders cast no shade.

Who are then these cavaliers?
There was a sound as Heaven dropt tears.

Who are those who ride so light,
Soundless in the flaming light,



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Where Rheims burns, that was given
By France to Mary, Queen of Heaven?

Oh, our Rheims, our Rheims is down,
Naught is left of her renown.

Hist! what sound is in the breeze
Like the sighing of forest trees?

Or the great wind, or an army,
Or the waves of the wild sea?

The tall knight rides fierce and fast
To the sound of a trumpet-blast.

The little knight in fire and flame,
Slender and soft as a dame,

Rides and is not far behind:
His long hair floats on the wind,

And ever the tramp of chivalry
Comes like the sound of the sea.

This is Michael rides abroad,
Prince of the army of God,

And this like a lily arrayed
Is Joan, the blessed Maid.

Rheims is down in fire and smoke
And the hour of God's at the stroke.

THE WHITE COMRADE: ROBERT HAVEN SCHAUFFLER

Under our curtain of fire,
Over the clotted clods,
We charged, to be withered, to reel
And despairingly wheel
When the signal bade us retire
From the terrible odds.
As we ebb'd with the battle-tide,



Fingers of red-hot steel
Suddenly closed on my side.
I fell, and began to pray.
I crawled on my hands and lay
Where a shallow crater yawned wide;
Then,—I swooned....

When I woke, it was yet day.
Fierce was the pain of my wound,
But I saw it was death to stir,
For fifty paces away
Their trenches were.
In torture I prayed for the dark
And the stealthy step of my friend
Who, staunch to the very end,
Would creep to the danger zone
And offer his life as a mark
To save my own.

Night fell. I heard his tread,
Not stealthy, but firm and serene,
As if my comrade's head
Were lifted far from that scene
Of passion and pain and dread;
As if my comrade's heart
In carnage took no part;
As if my comrade's feet
Were set on some radiant street
Such as no darkness might haunt;
As if my comrade's eyes
No deluge of flame could surprise,
No death and destruction daunt,
No red-beaked bird dismay,
Nor sight of decay.

Then in the bursting shells' dim light
I saw he was clad in white.
For a moment I thought that I saw the smock
Of a shepherd in search of his flock.
Alert were the enemy, too,
And their bullets flew
Straight at a mark no bullet could fail;
For the seeker was tall and his robe was bright;
But he did not flee nor quail.
Instead, with unhurrying stride
He came,



And gathering my tall frame,
Like a child, in his arms....

Again I slept,
And awoke
From a blissful dream
In a cave by a stream.
My silent comrade had bound my side.
No pain now was mine, but a wish that I spoke,—
A mastering wish to serve this man
Who had ventured through hell my doom to revoke,



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As only the truest of comrades can.
I begged him to tell me how best I might aid him,
And urgently prayed him
Never to leave me, whatever betide;—
When I saw he was hurt—
Shot through the hands that were clasped in prayer!
Then as the dark drops gathered there
And fell in the dirt,
The wounds of my friend
Seemed to me such as no man might bear.
Those bullet-holes in the patient hands
Seemed to transcend
All horrors that ever these war-drenched lands
Had known or would know till the mad world's end.
Then suddenly I was aware
That his feet had been wounded too;
And, dimming the white of his side,
A dull stain grew.
“You are hurt, White Comrade!” I cried.
His words I already foreknew:
“*These are old wounds,*” said he,
“*But of late they have troubled me.*”

GHOSTS OF THE ARGONNE: GRANTLAND RICE

You can hear them at night when the moon is hidden;
They sound like the rustle of winter leaves,
Or lone lost winds that arise, unbidden,
Or rain that drips from the forest eaves,
As they glide again from their silent crosses
To meet and talk of their final fight,
Where over the group some stark tree tosses
Its eerie shadow across the night.

If you'll take some night with its moonless weather,
I know you will reason beyond a doubt
That the rain and the wind and the leaves together
Are making the sounds you will hear about:
The wintry rustle of dead leaves falling,



The whispering wind through the matted glen;
But I can swear it's a sergeant calling
The ghostly roll of his squad again.

They talk of war and its crimson glory,
And laugh at the trick which Fate has played;
And over and over they tell the story
Of their final charge through the Argonne glade;
But gathering in by hill and hollow
With their ghostly tramp on the rain-soaked loam,
There is one set rule which the clan must follow:
They never speak of returning home.

They whisper still of the rifles' clatter,
The riveting racket machine guns gave,
Until dawn comes and the clan must scatter
As each one glides to his waiting grave;
But here at the end of their last endeavor
However their stark dreams leap the foam
There is one set rule they will keep forever:
"Death to the Phantom who speaks of home!"

NOVEMBER ELEVENTH: RUTH COMFORT MITCHELL

It was three slim young wraiths that met in the heart of
a great play-ground,
And two of them watched the shining sports in the fields
that ringed them round,
But one of them bent an earthward ear to follow a far-off
sound.

"Listen," he cried, "they *know*, down there! Oh! don't
you hear the bells?"

"Not I," said one, with a wise young smile, "I used
to hear the shells.

Not now; oh, not for ages now! I came from the Dardanelles."



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“I from the Marne,” the third one sighed, “but these are only names.
Eh bien, mon vieux, one must forget those little strifes and fames!
Here is a host of Golden Lads, that play at golden games.”

But the new boy ran to the turf’s green rim and bent with an anxious frown,—
“It’s the curfew bell! I hear them cheer! It’s my little own home town!
I hear my dad! I can almost see—” and his eager gaze plunged down.

“Soon, mon ami,” soothed the dark-eyed wraith, “these teasing dreams will cease!
One plays all day, one leaps the stars, one seeks the Golden Fleece!”
Still the new boy turned his white young face from the Land of the Great Release.—
“But I was killed two hours ago, while they signed the terms of peace.”

SEA GHOSTS

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN: CHARLES GODFREY LELAND

We met the *Flying Dutchman*,
By midnight he came,
His hull was all of hell fire,
His sails were all aflame;
Fire on the main-top,
Fire on the bow,
Fire on the gun-deck,
Fire down below.

Four-and-twenty dead men,
Those were the crew,
The devil on the bowsprit,
Fiddled as she flew,
We gave her the broadside,
Right in the dip,
Just like a candle,
Went out the ship.



THE PHANTOM SHIP: HENRY W. LONGFELLOW

In Mather's Magnalia Christi,
Of the old colonial time,
May be found in prose the legend
That is here set down in rhyme.

A ship sailed from New Haven,
And the keen and the frosty airs,
That filled her sails at parting,
Were heavy with good men's prayers.

"O Lord, if it be thy pleasure"—
Thus prayed the old divine—
"To bury our friends in the ocean,
Take them, for they are thine."

But Master Lamberton muttered,
And under his breath said he,
"This ship is so crank and walty,
I fear our grave she will be!"

And the ships that came from England,
When the winter months were gone,
Brought no tidings of this vessel
Nor of Master Lamberton.

This put the people to praying
That the Lord would let them hear
What in his greater wisdom
He had done with their friends so dear.

And at last their prayers were answered:
It was in the month of June,
An hour before the sunset
Of a windy afternoon.

When steadily steering landward,
A ship was seen below,
And they knew it was Lamberton, Master,
Who sailed so long ago.

On she came with a cloud of canvas,
Right against the wind that blew,
Until the eye could distinguish
The faces of the crew.



Then fell her straining topmasts,
Hanging tangled in the shrouds.
And her sails were loosened and lifted,
And blown away like clouds.



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And the masts, with all their rigging,
Fell slowly, one by one,
And the hulk dilated and vanished,
As a sea-mist in the sun!

And the people who saw this marvel
Each said unto his friend,
That this was the mould of the vessel,
And thus her tragic end.

And the pastor of the village
Gave thanks to God in prayer,
That, to quiet their troubled spirits,
He had sent this ship of air.

THE PHANTOM LIGHT OF THE BAIE DES CHALEURS: ARTHUR WENTWORTH
HAMILTON EATON

'Tis the laughter of pines that swing and sway
Where the breeze from the land meets the breeze from the bay,
'Tis the silvery foam of the silver tide
In ripples that reach to the forest side;
'Tis the fisherman's boat, in the track of sheen,
Plying through tangled seaweed green,
O'er the Baie des Chaleurs.

Who has not heard of the phantom light
That over the moaning waves at night
Dances and drifts in endless play,
Close to the shore, then far away,
Fierce as the flame in sunset skies,
Cold as the winter light that lies
On the Baie des Chaleurs.

They tell us that many a year ago,
From lands where the palm and olive grow,
Where vines with their purple clusters creep
Over the hillsides gray and steep,
A knight in his doublet, slashed with gold,
Famed in that chivalrous time of old,
For valorous deeds and courage rare,
Sailed with a princess wondrous fair
To the Baie des Chaleurs.



That a pirate crew from some isle of the sea,
A murderous band as e'er could be,
With a shadowy sail, and a flag of night,
That flaunted and flew in heaven's sight,
Swept in the wake of the lovers there,
And sank the ship and its freight so fair
 In the Baie des Chaleurs.

Strange is the tale that the fishermen tell,—
They say that a ball of fire fell
Straight from the sky, with crash and roar,
Lighting the bay from shore to shore;
That the ship with a shudder and a groan,
Sank through the waves to the caverns lone
 Of the Baie des Chaleurs.

That was the last of the pirate crew,
But many a night a black flag flew
From the mast of a spectre vessel, sailed
By a spectre band that wept and wailed,
For the wreck they had wrought on the sea and the land,
For the innocent blood they had spilt on the sand,
 Of the Baie des Chaleurs.

This is the tale of the phantom light,
That fills the mariner's heart at night,
With dread as it gleams o'er his path on the bay,
Now by the shore, then far away,
Fierce as the flame in sunset skies,
Cold as the winter moon that lies
 On the Baie des Chaleurs.

THE SANDS OF DEE: CHARLES KINGSLEY



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“O Mary, go and call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
Across the sands of Dee!”
The western wind was wild and dank wi’ foam,
And all alone went she.

The western tide crept up along the sand,
And o’er and o’er the sand,
And round and round the sand,
As far as eye could see.
The rolling mist came down and hid the land—
And never home came she.

“Oh, is it weed, or fish, or floating hair—
A tress of golden hair,
A drowned maiden’s hair
Above the nets at sea?
Was never salmon yet that shone so fair,
Among the stakes of Dee.”

They rowed her in across the rolling foam,
The cruel, crawling foam,
The cruel, hungry foam,
To her grave beside the sea,
But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home,
Across the sands of Dee!

THE LAKE OF THE DISMAL SWAMP: THOMAS MOORE

“They made her a grave too cold and damp
For a soul so warm and true;
And she’s gone to the Lake of the Dismal Swamp,
Where all night long, by a firefly lamp,
She paddles her white canoe.

And her firefly lamp I soon shall see,
And her paddle I soon shall hear;
Long and loving our life shall be,
And I’ll hide the maid in a cypress-tree,
When the footstep of death is near!”



Away to the Dismal Swamp he speeds,—
His path was rugged and sore,
Through tangled juniper, beds of reeds,
Through many a fen where the serpent feeds,
And man never trod before!

And when on the earth he sunk to sleep,
If slumber his eyelids knew,
He lay where the deadly vine doth weep
Its venomous tear, and nightly steep
The flesh with blistering dew!

And near him the she-wolf stirred the brake,
And the copper-snake breathed in his ear,
Till he starting cried, from his dream awake,
“Oh, when shall I see the dusky Lake,
And the white canoe of my dear?”

He saw the Lake, and a meteor bright
Quick over its surface played,—
“Welcome,” he said, “my dear one’s light!”
And the dim shore echoed for many a night,
The name of the death-cold maid!

He hollowed a boat of the birchen bark,
Which carried him off from shore;
Far he followed the meteor spark,
The wind was high and the clouds were dark,
And the boat returned no more.

But oft from the Indian hunter’s camp,
This lover and maid so true,
Are seen at the hour of midnight damp,
To cross the lake by a firefly lamp,
And paddle their white canoe!

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN OF THE TAPPAN ZEE: ARTHUR GUITERMAN

On Tappan Zee a shroud of gray
Is heavy, dank, and low.
And dimly gleams the beacon-ray
Of white Pocantico.



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No skipper braves old Hudson now
Where Nyack's Headlands frown,
And safely moored is every prow
Of drowsy Tarrytown;

Yet, clear as word of human lip,
The river sends its shores
The rhythmic rulloch-clank and drip
Of even-rolling oars.

What rower plies a reckless oar
With mist on flood and strand?
That Oarsman toils forevermore
And ne'er shall reach the land.

* * * * *

Roystering, rollicking Ram van Dam,
Fond of a frolic and fond of a dram,
Fonder—yea, fonder, proclaims renown,—
Of Tryntje Bogardus of Tarrytown,
Leaves Spuyten Duyvil to roar his song!
Pull! For the current is sly and strong;
Nestles the robin and flies the bat.
Ho! for the frolic at Kakiat!

Merry, the sport at the quilting bee
Held at the farm on the Tappan Zee!
Jovial labor with quips and flings,
Dances with wonderful pigeon wings,
Twitter of maidens and clack of dames,
Honest flirtations and rousing games;
Platters of savory beef and brawn,
Buckets of treacle and good suppawn,
Oceans of cider, and beer in lakes,
Mountains of crullers and honey-cakes—
Such entertainment could never pall!
Rambout Van Dam took his fill of all;
Laughed with the wittiest, worked with a zest,
Danced with the prettiest, drank with the best.

Oh! that enjoyment should breed annoy!
Tryntje grew fickle or cold or coy;
Rambout, possessed of a jealous sprite,



Scowled like the sky on a stormy night,
Snarled a good-bye from his sullen throat,
Blustered away to his tugging boat.
After him hastened Jacobus Horn:
“Stay with us, Rambout, till Monday morn.
Soon in the east will the dawn be gray,
Rest from thy oars on the Sabbath Day.”

Angrily Rambout van Dam ripped back:
“Dunder en Blitzen! du Schobbejak!
Preach to thy children! and let them know
Spite of the duyvil and thee, I'll row
Thousands of Sundays, if need there be,
Home o'er this ewig-vervlekte zee!”
Muttering curses, he headed south.
Jacob, astounded, with open mouth
Watched him receding, when—crash on crash
Volleyed the thunder! A hissing flash
Smote on the river! He looked again.
Rambout was gone from the sight of men!

* * * * *

Old Dunderberg with grumbling roar
Hath warned the fog to flee,
But still that never-wearied oar
Is heard on Tappan Zee.

A moon is closed on Hudson's breast
And lanterns gem the town;
The phantom craft that may not rest
Plies ever, up and down,

'Neath skies of blue and skies of gray,
In spite of wind or tide,
Until the trump of Judgment Day—
A sound—and naught beside.

THE WHITE SHIPS AND THE RED: JOYCE KILMER



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With drooping sail and pennant
That never a wind may reach,
They float in sunless waters
Beside a sunless beach.
Their misty masts and funnels
Are white as driven snow,
And with a pallid radiance
Their ghostly bulwarks glow.

Here is a Spanish galleon
That once with gold was gay,
Here is a Roman trireme
Whose hues outshone the day.
But Tyrian dyes have faded,
And prows that once were bright
With rainbow stains wear only
Death's livid, dreadful white.

White as the ice that clove her
That unforgotten day,
Among her pallid sisters
The grim *Titanic* lay.
And through the leagues above her
She looked aghast and said:
"What is this living ship that comes
Where every ship is dead?"

The ghostly vessels trembled
From ruined stern to prow;
What was this thing of terror
That broke their vigil now?
Down through the startled ocean
A mighty vessel came,
Not white, as all dead ships must be,
But red, like living flame!

The pale green waves above her
Were swiftly, strangely dyed,
By the great scarlet stream that flowed
From out her wounded side.
And all her decks were scarlet
And all her shattered crew.
She sank among the white ghost ships
And stained them through and through.



The grim *Titanic* greeted her.
“And who art thou?” she said;
“Why dost thou join our ghostly fleet
Arrayed in living red?
We are the ships of sorrow
Who spend the weary night,
Until the dawn of Judgment Day,
Obscure and still and white.”

“Nay,” said the scarlet visitor,
“Though I sink through the sea,
A ruined thing that was a ship,
I sink not as did ye.
For ye met with your destiny
By storm or rock or fight,
So through the lagging centuries
Ye wear your robes of white.

“But never crashing iceberg
Nor honest shot of foe,
Nor hidden reef has sent me
The way that I must go.
My wounds that stain the waters,
My blood that is like flame,
Bear witness to a loathly deed,
A deed without a name.

“I went not forth to battle,
I carried friendly men,
The children played about my decks,
The women sang—and then—
And then—the sun blushed scarlet
And Heaven hid its face,
The world that God created
Became a shameful place!

“My wrongs cry out for vengeance,
The blow that sent me here
Was aimed in Hell. My dying scream
Has reached Jehovah’s ear.
Not all the seven oceans
Shall wash away that stain;
Upon the brow that wears a crown
I am the brand of Cain.”

When God’s great voice assembles
The fleet on Judgment Day,



The ghosts of ruined ships will rise
In sea and strait and bay.
Though they have lain for ages
Beneath the changeless flood,
They shall be white as silver,
But one—shall be like blood.



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FEATHERSTONE'S DOOM: ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER

Twist thou and twine! in light and gloom
A spell is on thy hand;
The wind shall be thy changeful loom,
Thy web the twisting sand.

Twine from this hour, in ceaseless toil,
On Blackrock's sullen shore:
Till cordage of the sand shall coil
Where crested surges roar.

'Tis for that hour, when from the wave
Near voices wildly cried;
When thy stern hand no succour gave,
The cable at thy side.

Twist thou and twine! In light and gloom
The spell is on thine hand;
The wind shall be thy changeful loom,
Thy web the shifting sand.

SEA-GHOSTS: MAY BYRON

O' stormy nights, be they summer or winter,
Hurricane nights like these,
When spar and topsail are rag and splinter
Hurled o'er the sluicing seas,

To the jagged edge where the cliffs lean over,
Climb as you best may climb;
Lie there and listen where mysteries hover,
Haunting the tides of Time.

* * * * *

The crumbling surf on the shingle rattles,
The great waves topple and pour,
Full of the fury of ancient battles,
Clamant with cries of war.



The gale has summoned, the night has beckoned—
Lo, from the east and west,
Stately shadows arise unreckoned
Out of their deeps of rest!

Wild on the wind are voices ringing,
Echoes that throng the air,
Valiant voices, of victory singing,
Or dark with sublime despair.

To the distant drums with their rumbling hollow,
The answering trumpets blow:
War-horn and fife and cymbals follow,
From galleys of long ago.

The crested breaker on reef and boulder
That swirls in cavernous black,
Carries a challenge from decks that moulder
To ships that never came back.

The gale that swoops and the sea that wrestles
Are one in their wrath and might
With the crash and clashing of armed vessels,
Grinding across the night.

Out of the dark the broadsides thunder,
Clattering to and fro:
The old sea-fighters, the old world's wonder,
Are manning their wrecks below.

You shall smell the smoke, you shall hear the crackle,
Shall mark on the surly blast
Rush and tear of the rending tackle,
Thud of the falling mast.

With the foam that flies and the spray that spatters,
Scourging the strand again,
A terrible outcry leaps and shatters—
Tumult of drowning men.

The steep gray cliff is alive and trembles—
Was never such fear as this!
A fleet, a fleet at its foot assembles
Out of the sea's abyss.

It quails and quivers, its grassy verges
Vibrant with uttermost dread:

It knows the groan of the laden surges,
The shout of the deathless Dead.



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In a rolling march of reverberations,
Marching with wind and tide,
Heroes of unremembered nations
Vaunt their immortal pride.

Briton, Spaniard, Phoenician, Roman,
Gallant implacable hosts—
Locked in fight with phantom foeman,
Gather the grim sea-ghosts.

FOG WRAITHS: MILDRED HOWELLS

In from the ocean the white fog creeps,
Blotting out ship, and rock, and tree,
While wrapped in its shroud, from the soundless deeps,
Back to the land come the lost at sea.

Over the weeping grass they drift
By well-known paths to their homes again,
To finger the latch they may not lift
And peer through the glistening window-pane.

Then in the churchyard each seeks the stone
To its memory raised among the rest,
And they watch by their empty graves alone
Till the fog rolls back to the ocean's breast.

CHEERFUL SPIRITS

CAPE HORN GOSPEL: JOHN MASEFIELD

"I was in a hooker once," said Karlssen,
"And Bill, as was a seaman, died,
So we lashed him in an old tarpaulin
And tumbled him across the side;
And the fun of it was that all his gear was
Divided up among the crew
Before that blushing human error
Our crawling little captain, knew.

"On the passage home one morning
(As certain as I prays for grace)
There was old Bill's shadder a-hauling



At the mizzen weather topsail brace.
He was all grown green with seaweed
He was all lashed up and shored;
So I says to him, I says, 'Why, Billy!
What's a-bringin' of you back aboard?'

"'I'm a-weary of them there mermaids,'
Says old Bill's ghost to me;
'It ain't no place for a Christian
Below there—under sea.
For it's all blown sand and shipwrecks
And old bones eaten bare,
And them cold fishy females
With long green weeds for hair.

"'And there ain't no dances shuffled,
And no old yarns is spun,
And there ain't no stars but starfish,
And never any moon or sun.
I heard your keel a-passing
And the running rattle of the brace,
And I says, "Stand by," says William,
"For a shift towards a better place."

"Well, he sogered about decks till sunrise,
When a rooster in the hen-coop crowed,
And as so much smoke he faded,
And as so much smoke he goed;
And I've often wondered since, Jan,
How his old ghost stands to fare
Long o' them cold fishy females
With long green weeds for hair."

LEGEND OF HAMILTON TIGHE: RICHARD HARRIS BARHAM

The Captain is walking his quarter-deck,
With a troubled brow and a bended neck;
One eye is down through the hatchway cast,
The other turns up to the truck on the mast;
Yet none of the crew may venture to hint
"Our skipper hath gotten a sinister squint!"



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The Captain again the letter hath read
Which the bum-boat woman brought out to Spithead—
Still, since the good ship sail'd away,
He reads that letter three times a-day;
Yet the writing is broad and fair to see
As a Skipper may read in his degree,
And the seal is as black, and as broad, and as flat,
As his own cockade in his own cock'd hat:
He reads, and he says, as he walks to and fro,
“Curse the old woman—she bothers me so!”

He pauses now, for the topmen hail—
“On the larboard quarter a sail! a sail!”
That grim old Captain he turns him quick,
And bawls through his trumpet for Hairy-faced Dick.
“The breeze is blowing—huzza! huzza!
The breeze is blowing—away! away!
The breeze is blowing—a race! a race!
The breeze is blowing—we near the chase!
Blood will flow, and bullets will fly,—
Oh, where will be then young Hamilton Tighe?”

—“On the foeman's deck, where a man should be,
With his sword in his hand, and his foe at his knee.
Cockswain, or boatswain, or reefer may try,
But the first man on board will be Hamilton Tighe!”

* * * * *

Hairy-faced Dick hath a swarthy hue,
Between a gingerbread-nut and a Jew,
And his pigtail is long, and bushy, and thick,
Like a pump-handle stuck on the end of a stick.
Hairy-faced Dick understands his trade;
He stand by the breech of a long carronade,
The linstock glows in his bony hand,
Waiting that grim old Skipper's command.

“The bullets are flying—huzza! huzza!
The bullets are flying—away! away!”—
The brawny boarders mount by the chains,
And are over their buckles in blood and in brains.
On the foeman's deck, where a man should be,



Young Hamilton Tighe waves his cutlass high,
And Capitaine Crapaud bends low at his knee.

Hairy-faced Dick, linstock in hand,
Is waiting that grim-looking Skipper's command:—
A wink comes sly from that sinister eye—
Hairy-faced Dick at once lets fly,
And knocks off the head of young Hamilton Tighe!

There's a lady sits lonely in bower and hall,
Her pages and handmaidens come at her call:
"Now look ye, my handmaidens, haste now and see
How he sits there and glow'rs with his head on his knee!
The maidens smile, and, her thought to destroy,
They bring her a little, pale, mealy-faced boy;
And the mealy-faced boy says, "Mother, dear,
Now Hamilton's dead, I've ten thousand a-year!"

The lady has donned her mantle and hood,
She is bound for shrift at St. Mary's Rood:—
"Oh! the taper shall burn, and the bell shall toll,
And the mass shall be said for my step-son's soul,
And the tablet fair shall be hung on high,
Orate pro anima Hamilton Tighe!"

Her coach and four Draws up to the door
With her groom, and her footman, and a half score more
The lady steps into her coach alone,
And they hear her sigh, and they hear her groan;
They close the door, and they turn the pin,
But there's One rides with her that never stept in!



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All the way there, and all the way back,
The harness strains, and the coach-springs crack,
The horses snort, and plunge, and kick,
Till the coachman thinks he is driving Old Nick;
And the grooms and the footmen wonder, and say,
“What makes the old coach so heavy to-day?”
But the mealy-faced boy peeps in, and sees
A man sitting there with his head on his knees!

'Tis ever the same—in hall or in bower,
Wherever the place, whatever the hour,
That Lady mutters, and talks to the air,
And her eye is fix'd on an empty chair;
But the mealy-faced boy still whispers with dread,
“She talks to a man with never a head!”

* * * * *

There's an old Yellow Admiral living at Bath,
As grey as a badger, as thin as a lath;
And his very queer eyes have such very queer leers,
They seem to be trying to peep at his ears;
That old Yellow Admiral goes to the Rooms,
And he plays long whist, but he frets and he fumes,
For all his knaves stand upside down,
And the Jack of Clubs does nothing but frown;
And the Kings and the Aces, and all the best trumps
Get into the hands of the other old frumps;
While, close to his partner, a man he sees
Counting the tricks with his head on his knees.

In Ratcliffe Highway there's an old marine store,
And a great black doll hangs out of the door;
There are rusty locks, and dusty bags,
And musty phials, and fusty rags,
And a lusty old woman, call'd Thirsty Nan,
And her crusty old husband's a Hairy-faced man!

That Hairy-faced man is sallow and wan,
And his great thick pigtail is wither'd and gone;
And he cries, “Take away that lubberly chap
That sits there and grins with his head in his lap!”
And the neighbors say, as they see him look sick,
“What a rum old covey is Hairy-faced Dick!”



That Admiral, Lady, and Hairy-faced man
May say what they please, and may do what they can;
But one things seems remarkably clear,—
They may die to-morrow, or live till next year,—
But wherever they live, or whenever they die,
They'll never get quit of young Hamilton Tighe!

THE SUPPER SUPERSTITION: THOMAS HOOD

A Pathetic Ballad

“Oh flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified!”—*Mercutio*.

'Twas twelve o'clock by the Chelsea chimes,
When all in a hungry trim,
Good Mr. Jupp sat down to sup
With wife, and Kate and Jim.

Said he, “Upon this dainty cod
How bravely I shall sup”—
When, whiter than the tablecloth,
A ghost came rising up!

“O father dear, O mother dear,
Dear Kate, and brother Jim—
You know when some one went to sea—
Don't cry—but I am him!

“You hope some day with fond embrace
To greet your lonesome Jack,
But oh, I am come here to say
I'm never coming back!



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“From Alexandria we set sail,
With corn, and oil, and figs,
But steering ‘too much Sow,’ we struck
Upon the Sow and Pigs!

“The ship we pumped till we could see
Old England from the tops;
When down she went with all our hands,
Right in the Channel’s Chops.

“Just give a look in Norey’s Chart,
The very place it tells:
I think it says twelve fathom deep,
Clay bottom, mixed with shells.

“Well, there we are till ‘hands aloft,’
We have at last a call,
The pug I had for brother Jim,
Kate’s parrot, too, and all.”

“But oh, my spirit cannot rest
In Davy Jones’s sod,
Till I’ve appeared to you and said,
‘Don’t sup on that there Cod!

“You live on land, and little think
What passes in the sea;
Last Sunday week, at 2 P.M.,
That Cod was picking me!

“Those oysters, too, that look so plump,
And seem so nicely done,
They put my corpse in many shells,
Instead of only one.

“Oh, do not eat those oysters, then,
And do not touch the shrimps;
When I was in my briny grave
They sucked my blood like imps!

“Don’t eat what brutes would never eat,
The brutes I used to pat,
They’ll know the smell they used to smell,
Just try the dog and cat!”



The spirit fled, they wept his fate,
And cried Alas, Alack!
At last up started brother Jim—
“Let’s try if Jack, was Jack!”

They called the Dog, they called the Cat,
The little Kitten, too,
And down they put the Cod and sauce
To see what brutes would do.

Old Tray licked all the oysters up,
Puss never stood at crimps,
But munched the Cod—and little Kit
Quite feasted on the Shrimps!

The thing was odd, and minus Cod
And sauce, they stood like posts;
Oh, prudent folks, for fear of hoax,
Put no belief in Ghosts!

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE: RICHARD HARRIS BARHAM

A Legend of Palestine and West Kent

Out and spake Sir Ingoldsby Bray,
A stalwart knight, I ween, was he,
“Come east, come west, Come lance in rest,
Come falchion in hand, I’ll tickle the best
Of the Soldan’s Chivalrie!”

Oh, they came west, and they came east,
Twenty-four Emirs and Sheiks at the least,
And they hammer’d away At Sir Ingoldsby Bray,
Fall back, fall edge, cut, thrust, and point,—
But he topp’d off head, and he lopp’d off joint;
Twenty and three, Of high degree,
Lay stark and stiff on the crimson’d lea,
All—all save one—and he ran up a tree!
“Now count them, my Squire, now count them and see!”
“Twenty and three! Twenty and three!—
All of them nobles of high degree:
There they be lying on Ascalon lea!”



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Out and spake Sir Ingoldsby Bray,
“What news? What news? Come tell to me!
What news? what news, thou little Foot-page?—
I’ve been whacking the foe till it seems an age
Since I was in Ingoldsby Hall so free!
What news? what news from Ingoldsby Hall?
Come tell me now, thou page so small!”

“O, Hawk and Hound Are safe and sound,
Beast in byre and Steed in stall;
And the Watch-dog’s bark, As soon as it’s dark
Bays wakeful guard around Ingoldsby Hall!”

—“I care not a pound For Hawk or for Hound
For Steed in stall or for Watch-dog’s bay.
Fain would I hear Of my dainty dear;
How fares Dame Alice, my Lady gay?”—
Sir Ingoldsby Bray, he said in his rage,
“What news? what news? thou naughty Foot-page.”

The little Foot-page full low crouch’d he,
And he doff’d his cap, and he bended his knee,
“Now lithe and listen, Sir Bray, to me:
Lady Alice sits lonely in bower and hall,
Her sighs they rise, and her tears they fall.
She sits alone, And she makes her moan;
Dance and song, She considers quite wrong;
Feast and revel Mere snares of the devil;
She mendeth her hose, and she crieth ‘Alack!
When will Sir Ingoldsby Bray come back?’”

“Thou liest! thou liest! thou naughty Foot-page,
Full loud doth thou lie, false Page, to me!
There in thy breast, ‘Neath thy silken vest,
What scroll is that, false Page, I see?”

Sir Ingoldsby Bray in his rage drew near,
That little Foot-page, he blanch’d with fear;

“Now where may the Prior of Abingdon lie?
King Richard’s confessor, I ween, is he,
And tidings rare To him do I bear,
And news of price from his rich Ab-bee!”



“Now nay, now nay, thou naughty Page!
No learned clerk I trow am I,
 But well I ween May there be seen
Dame Alice’s hand with half an eye;
Now nay, now nay, thou naughty Page,
From Abingdon Abbey comes not thy news;
 Although no clerk, Well may I mark
The particular turn of her P’s and Q’s!”

Sir Ingoldsby Bray in his fury and rage,
By the back of the neck takes that little Foot-page;
 The scroll he seizes, The page he squeezes,
And buffets—and pinches his nose till he sneezes;—
Then he cuts with his dagger the silken threads
Which they used in those days ’stead of little Queen’s heads.

When the contents of the scroll met his view,
Sir Ingoldsby Bray in a passion grew,
 Backward he drew His mailed shoe,
And he kicked that naughty Foot-page, that he flew
Like a cloth-yard shaft from a bended yew,
I may not say whither—I never knew.
 “Now count the slain Upon Ascalon plain—
Go count them, my Squire, go count them again!”



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“Twenty and three! There they be,
Stiff and stark on that crimson’d lea!—
Twenty and three?—Stay—let me see!
Stretched in his gore There lieth one more!
By the Pope’s triple crown there are twenty and *four*!
Twenty-four trunks I ween are there
But their heads and their limbs are no-body knows where!
Ay, twenty-four corpses, I rede there be,
Though one got away, and ran up a tree!”

“Look nigher, look nigher, My trusty Squire!”
“One is the corse of a bare-footed Friar!”

Out and spake Sir Ingoldsby Bray,
“A boon, a boon, King Richard,” quoth he,
“Now Heav’n thee save, A boon I crave,
A boon, Sir King, on my bended knee;
A year and a day Have I been away,
King Richard, from Ingoldsby Hall so free;
Dame Alice she sits there in lonely guise,
And she makes her moan, and she sobs and she sighs,
And tears like rain-drops fall from her eyes,
And she darneth her hose, and she crieth ‘Alack!
Oh, when will Sir Ingoldsby Bray come back?’
A boon, a boon, my liege,” quoth he,
“Fair Ingoldsby Hall I fain would see!”

“Rise up, rise up, Sir Ingoldsby Bray,”
King Richard said right graciously,
“Of all in my host That I love the most,
I love none better, Sir Bray, than thee!
Rise up, rise up, thou hast my boon;
But mind you make haste, and come back again soon!”

FYTTE II

Pope Gregory sits in St. Peter’s chair,
Pontiff proud, I ween, is he,
And a belted Knight, In armour dight,
Is begging a boon on his bended knee,
With sighs of grief and sounds of woe,
Featly he kisseth his Holiness’ toe.
“Now pardon, Holy Father, I crave,



O Holy Father, pardon and grace!
In my fury and rage A little Foot-page
I have left, I fear me, in evil case:
A scroll of shame From a faithless dame
Did that naughty Foot-page to a paramour bear:
I gave him a 'lick' With a stick, And a kick,
That sent him—I can't tell your Holiness where!
Had he as many necks as hairs,
He had broken them all down those perilous stairs!"

"Rise up, rise up, Sir Ingoldsby Bray,
Rise up, rise up, I say to thee;
A soldier, I trow, Of the Cross art thou;
Rise up, rise up, from thy bended knee!
Ill it seems that soldier true
Of Holy Church should vainly sue:—
—Foot-pages they are by no means rare,
A thriftless crew, I ween, be they;
Well mote we spare A Page—or a pair,
For the matter of that—Sir Ingoldsby Bray,
But stout and true Soldiers like you,
Grow scarcer and scarcer every day!—
Be prayers for the dead Duly read,
Let a mass be sung, and a *pater* be said:
So may your qualms of conscience cease,
And the little Foot-page shall rest in peace!"



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“Now pardon, Holy Father, I crave.
O Holy Father, pardon and grace!
 Dame Alice, my wife, The bane of my life,
I have left, I fear me, in evil case!
A scroll of shame in my rage I tore,
Which that caitiff Page to a paramour bore;
'Twere bootless to tell how I storm'd and swore;
Alack! and alack! too surely I knew
The turn of each P, and the tail of each Q,
And away to Ingoldsby Hall I flew!
 Dame Alice I found,—She sank on the ground,—
I twisted her neck till I twisted it round!
With jibe and jeer and mock and scoff,
I twisted it on—till I twisted it off!—
All the King's Doctors and all the King's Men
Can't put fair Alice's head on agen!”

“Well-a-day! well-a-day! Sir Ingoldsby Bray,
Why really—I hardly know what to say:—
Foul sin, I trow, a fair Ladye to slay,
Because she's perhaps been a little too gay.—
—Monk must chaunt and Nun must pray;
For each mass they sing, and each pray'r they say,
 For a year and a day, Sir Ingoldsby Bray
A fair rose-noble must duly pay!
So may his qualms of conscience cease,
And the soul of Dame Alice may rest in peace!”

“Now pardon, Holy Father, I crave,
O Holy Father, pardon and grace!
 No power could save That paramour knave;
I left him, I wot, in evil case!
 There midst the slain Upon Ascalon plain,
Unburied, I trow, doth his body remain
His legs lie here and his arms lie there,
And his head lies—I can't tell your Holiness where!”

“Now out and alas! Sir Ingoldsby Bray,
Foul sin it were, thou doughty Knight,
 To hack and to hew A champion true
Of holy Church in such pitiful plight!
Foul sin her warriors so to slay,
When they're scarcer and scarcer every day!—
 A chantry fair, And of Monks a pair,



To pray for his soul for ever and aye,
Thou must duly endow, Sir Ingoldsby Bray,
And fourteen marks by the year thou must pay
For plenty of lights To burn there o' nights—
None of your rascally '*dips*'—but sound,
Round, ten-penny moulds of four to the pound;—
And a shirt of the roughest and coarsest hair
For a year and a day, Sir Ingoldsby, wear!—
So may your qualms of conscience cease,
And the soul of the Soldier shall rest in peace!”

“Now, nay, Holy Father; now nay, now nay!
Less penance may serve!” quoth Sir Ingoldsby Bray.
“No champion free of the Cross was he;
No belted Baron of high degree;
No Knight nor Squire Did there expire;
He was, I trow, a bare-footed Friar!
And the Abbot of Abingdon long may wait,
With his monks around him, and early and late,
May look from loop-hole, and turret, and gate,
He hath lost his Prior—his Prior his pate!”



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“Now Thunder and turf!” Pope Gregory said,
And his hair raised his triple crown right off his head—
“Now Thunder and turf! and out and alas!
A horrible thing has come to pass!
What! cut off the head of the Reverend Prior,
And say he was ‘*only* (!!!) a bare-footed Friar!’—
‘What Baron or Squire, Or Knight of the shire
Is half so good as a holy Friar?’
O, turpissime! Vir nequissime!
Sceleratissime!—quissime!—issime!
Never, I trow, have the *Servi servorum*
Had before ‘em Such a breach of decorum,
Such a gross violation of *morum bonorum*,
And won’t have again *saecula saeculorum!*—
Come hither to me, My Cardinals three,
My Bishops in *partibus*, Masters in *Artibus*,
Hither to me, A.B. and D.D.,
Doctors and Proctors of every degree!
Go fetch me a book, go fetch me a bell
As big as a dustman’s!—and a candle as well—
I’ll send him where—good manners won’t let me tell!”

—“Pardon and grace!—now pardon and grace!” —Sir Ingoldsby Bray fell flat on his face
— “*Mea culpa!*—in sooth I’m in pitiful case. *Peccavi! peccavi!*—I’ve done every wrong!
But my heart it is stout and my arm it is strong, And I’ll fight for Holy Church all the day
long; And the Ingoldsby lands are broad and fair, And they’re here and they’re there and
I can’t tell you where, And the Holy Church shall come in for her share!” Pope Gregory
paused and he sat himself down, And he somewhat relaxed his terrible frown, And his
Cardinals three they picked up his crown.

“Now if it be so that you own you’ve been wrong,
And your heart is so stout and your arm is so strong,
And you really will fight like a trump all day long;—
If the Ingoldsby lands do lie here and there,
And Holy Church shall come in for her share,—
Why, my Cardinals three, You’ll agree With me,
That it gives a new turn to the whole affair,
And I think that the Penitent need not despair!
—If it be so, as you seem to say,
Rise up, rise up, Sir Ingoldsby Bray!
An Abbey so fair Sir Bray shall found,
Whose innermost wall’s encircling bound
Shall take in a couple of acres of ground;
And there in that Abbey, all the year round,



A full choir of monks and a full choir of nuns,
And Sir Ingoldsby Bray, Without delay,
Shall hie him again To Ascalon plain,
And gather the bones of the foully slain;
And shall place said bones, with all possible care,
In an elegant shrine in his abbey so fair;
And plenty of lights shall be there o' nights—
None of your rascally 'dips,' but sound,
Best superfine wax-wicks, four to the pound;
And Monk and Nun Shall pray, each one,
For the soul of the Prior of Abingdon!

And Sir Ingoldsby Bray, so bold and so brave,
Never shall wash himself, comb or shave,
Nor adorn his body, Nor drink gin-toddy,
Nor indulge in a pipe— But shall dine upon tripe
And blackberries gathered before they are ripe,
And forever abhor, renounce and abjure
Rum, hollands, and brandy, wine, punch and *liqueur!*"



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(Sir Ingoldsby Bray Here gave way
To a feeling which prompted a word profane,
But he swallowed it down, by an effort, again,
And His Holiness luckily fancied his gulp a
Mere repetition of *O mea culpa!*)

“Thrice three times on Candlemas-day,
Between Vespers and Compline, Sir Ingoldsby Bray
Shall run round the Abbey, as best he may,
Subjecting his back To thump and to thwack,
Well and truly laid on by a bare-footed Friar,
With a stout cat o’ ninetails of whip-cord and wire,
And not he nor his heir Shall take, use or bear,
Any more from this day, The surname of Bray,
As being dishonour’d, but all issue male he has
Shall, with himself, go henceforth by an *alias!*
So his qualms of conscience at length shall cease,
And Page, Dame and Prior shall rest in peace!”

Sir Ingoldsby (now no longer Bray)
Is off like a shot away and away,
Over the brine To far Palestine,
To rummage and hunt over Ascalon plain
For the unburied bones of his victim slain.
“Look out, my Squire, Look nigher and nigher,
Look out for the corpse of a bare-footed Friar!
And pick up the arms and the legs of the dead,
And pick up his body and pick up his head!”

FYTTE III

Ingoldsby Abbey is fair to see,
It hath manors a dozen, and royalties three,
With right of free-warren (whatever that be);
Rich pastures in front, and green woods in the rear,
All in full leaf at the right time of year;
About Christmas or so, they fall into the sear,
And the prospect, of course, becomes rather more drear;
But it’s really delightful in spring-time,—and near
The great gate Father Thames rolls sun-bright and clear.
Cobham woods to the right,—on the opposite shore
Landon Hill in the distance, ten miles off or more;
Then you’ve Milton and Gravesend behind—and before



You can see almost all the way down to the Nore.—
So charming a spot, It's rarely one's lot
To see, and when seen it's as rarely forgot.

Yes, Ingoldsby Abbey is fair to see,
And its Monks and its Nuns are fifty and three,
And there they all stand each in their degree,
Drawn up in the front of their sacred abode,
Two by two in their regular mode,
While a funeral comes down the Rochester road,
Palmer's twelve, from a foreign strand,
Cockle in hat and staff in hand,
Come marching in pairs, a holy band!
Little boys twelve, dressed all in white,
Each with his brazen censer bright,
And singing away with all his might,
Follow the Palmers—a goodly sight;
Next high in air Twelve Yeomen bear
On their sturdy backs, with a good deal of care,
A patent sarcophagus firmly rear'd
Of Spanish mahogany (not veneer'd),
And behind walks a Knight with a very long beard.
Close by his side Is a Friar, supplied
With a stout cat o' ninetails of tough cow-hide,
While all sorts of queer men
Bring up the rear—Men-at-arms,
Nigger captives, and Bow-men and Spear-men.



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It boots not to tell What you'll guess very well,
How some sang the *requiem*, some toll'd the bell;
Suffice it to say, 'Twas on Candlemas-day
The procession I speak of reached the *Sacellum*:
And in lieu of a supper The Knight on his crupper
Received the first taste of the Father's *flagellum*;—
That, as chronicles tell, He continued to dwell
All the rest of his days in the Abbey he'd founded,
By the pious of both sexes ever surrounded,
And, partaking the fare of the Monks and the Nuns,
Ate the cabbage alone without touching the buns;
—That year after year, having run round the *Quad*
With his back, as enjoin'd him, exposed to the rod,
Having not only kissed it, but bless'd it and thank'd it, he
Died, as all thought in the odour of sanctity,
When,—strange to relate! and you'll hardly believe
What I'm going to tell you,—next Candlemas Eve
The Monks and the Nuns in the dead of the night
Tumble, all of them, out of their bed in affright,
Alarm'd by the bawls, And the calls and the squalls
Of some one who seemed running all round the walls!

Looking out, soon By the light of the moon
There appears most distinctly to ev'ry one's view,
And making, as seems to them, all this ado,
The form of a Knight with a beard like a Jew,
As black as if steep'd in that "Matchless" of Hunt's,
And so bushy, it would not disgrace Mr. Muntz;
A bare-footed Friar stands behind him, and shakes
A *flagellum*, whose lashes appear to be snakes;
While, more terrible still, the astounded beholders
Perceive the Friar has NO HEAD ON HIS SHOULDERS,
But is holding his pate, In his left hand, out straight
As if by a closer inspection to find
Where to get the best cut at his victim behind,
With the aid of a small "bull-eye lantern,"—as placed
By our own new police,—in a belt round his waist.
All gaze with surprise, Scarce believing their eyes,
When the Knight makes a start like a race-horse and flies
From his headless tormentor, repeating his cries,—
In vain,—for the Friar to his skirts closely sticks,
"Running after him," so said the Abbot,—"like Bricks!"
Thrice three times did the Phantom Knight



Course round the Abbey as best he might
Be-thwack'd and be-smack'd by the headless Sprite,
While his shrieks so piercing made all hearts thrill,—
Then a whoop and a halloo,—and all was still!

Ingoldsby Abbey has passed away,
And at this time of day One can hardly survey
Any traces or track, save a few ruins, grey
With age, and fast mouldering into decay,
Of the structure once built by Sir Ingoldsby Bray;
But still there are many folks living who say
That on every Candlemas Eve, the Knight,
Accoutred, and dight In his armour bright,
With his thick black beard,—and the clerical Sprite,



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With his head in his hand, and his lantern alight,
Run round the spot where the old Abbey stood,
And are seen in the neighboring glebe-land and wood;
More especially still, if it's stormy and windy,
You may hear them for miles kicking up their wild shindy;
And that once in a gale Of wind, sleet and hail
They frighten'd the horses and upset the mail.

What 'tis breaks the rest Of those souls unblest
Would now be a thing rather hard to be guessed,
Though some say the Squire, on his death-bed, confess'd
That on Ascalon plain, When the bones of the slain
Were collected that day, and packed up in a chest,
Caulk'd and made water-tight,
By command of the Knight,
Though the legs and the arms they'd got all pretty right,
And the body itself in a decentish plight,
Yet the Friar's *Pericranium* was nowhere in sight;
So, to save themselves trouble, they pick'd up instead,
And popp'd on the shoulders a Saracen's Head!
Thus the Knight in the terms of his penance had fail'd,
And the Pope's absolution, of course, naught avail'd.

Now, though this might be, It don't seem to agree
With one thing which, I own, is a poser to me,—
I mean, as the miracle, wrought at the shrine
Containing the bones brought from far Palestine
Were so great and notorious, 'tis hard to combine
This *fact* with the reason these people assign,
Or suppose that the head of the murder'd Divine
Could be aught but what Yankees would call "*genu-ine*."
'Tis a very nice question—but be't as it may,
The Ghost of Sir Ingoldsby (*ci-devant* Bray),
It is boldly affirm'd by the folks great and small
About Milton and Chaulk, and round Cobham Hall,
Still on Candlemas-day haunts the old ruin'd wall
And that many have seen him, and more heard him squall.
So I think, when the facts of the case you recall,
My inference, reader, you'll fairly forestall,



Viz: that, spite of the hope Held out by the Pope,
Sir Ingoldsby Bray was d——d after all!

MORAL

Foot-pages, and Servants of ev'ry degree,
In livery or out of it, listen to me!
See what comes of lying!—don't join in the league
To humbug your master or aid an intrigue!

Ladies! married and single, from this understand
How foolish it is to send letters by hand!
Don't stand for the sake of a penny,—but when you
've a billet to send To a lover or friend,
Put it into the post, and don't cheat the revenue!

Reverend gentlemen! you who are given to roam,
Don't keep up a soft correspondence at home!
But while you're abroad lead respectable lives;
Love your neighbours, and welcome,—but don't love their wives!
And, as bricklayers cry from the tiles and the leads
When they're shovelling the snow off, "TAKE CARE OF YOUR HEADS"!



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Knights!—whose hearts are so stout, and whose arms are so strong,
Learn,—to twist a wife's neck is decidedly wrong!
If your servants offend you, or give themselves airs,
Rebuke them—but mildly—don't kick them downstairs!
To "Poor Richard's" homely old proverb attend,
"If you want matters well managed, Go!—if not, Send!"
A servant's too often a negligent elf!
—If it's business of consequence, DO IT YOURSELF!

The state of society seldom requires
People now to bring home with them unburied Friars,
But they sometimes do bring home an inmate for life;
Now—don't do that by proxy!—but choose your own wife!
For think how annoying 'twould be, when you're wed,
To find in your bed, On the pillow, instead
Of the sweet face you look for—A SARACEN'S HEAD!

POMPEY'S GHOST: THOMAS HOOD

'Twas twelve o'clock, not twelve at night,
But twelve o'clock at noon;
Because the sun was shining bright
And not the silver moon.
A proper time for friends to call,
Or pots, or penny-post;
When lo! as Phoebe sat at work,
She saw her Pompey's ghost!

Now when a female has a call
From people that are dead,
Like Paris ladies, she receives
Her visitors in bed.
But Pompey's spirit would not come
Like spirits that are white,
Because he was a Blackamoor,
And wouldn't show at night!

But of all unexpected things
That happen to us here,
The most unpleasant is a rise
In what is very dear.
So Phoebe screamed an awful scream
To prove the seaman's text,



That after black appearances,
White squalls will follow next.

“O Phoebe dear! Oh, Phoebe dear!
Don't go and scream or faint;
You think because I'm black, I am
The Devil, but I ain't!
Behind the heels of Lady Lambe
I walked while I had breath,
But that is past, and I am now
A-walking after death!

“No murder, though, I come to tell,
By base and bloody crime;
So, Phoebe dear, put off your fits
To some more fitting time.
No coroner, like a boatswain's mate,
My body need attack,
With his round dozen to find out
Why I have died so black.

“One Sunday, shortly after tea,
My skin began to burn,
As if I had in my inside
A heater like a urn.
Delirious in the night I grew,
And as I lay in bed,
They say I gathered all the wool
You see upon my head.

“His lordship for his doctor sent,
My treatment to begin;
I wish that he had called him out
Before he called him in!
For though to physic he was bred,
And passed at Surgeons' Hall,
To make his post a sinecure,
He never cured at all!

“The Doctor looked about my breast
And then about my back,
And then he shook his head and said,
'Your case looks very black.'
At first he sent me hot cayenne,
And then gamboge to swallow.
But still my fever would not turn
To scarlet or to yellow!



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“With madder and with turmeric,
He made his next attack;
But neither he nor all his drugs
Could stop my dying black.
At last I got so sick of life,
And sick of being dosed,
One Monday morning I gave up
My physic and the ghost!

“Oh, Phoebe dear, what pain it was
To sever every tie!
You know black beetles feel as much
As giants when they die.
And if there is a bridal bed,
Or bride of little worth,
It’s lying in a bed of mould,
Along with Mother Earth.

“Alas! Some happy, happy day,
In church I hoped to stand,
And like a muff of sable skin
Receive your lily hand.
But sternly with that piebald match,
My fate untimely clashes;
For now, like Pompey-double-i,
I’m sleeping in my ashes!

“And now farewell! a last farewell!
I’m wanted down below,
And have but time enough to add
One word before I go—
In mourning crepe and bombazine
Ne’er spend your precious pelf;
Don’t go in black for me—for I
Can do it for myself.

“Henceforth within my grave I rest,
But Death, who there inherits,
Allowed my spirit leave to come,
You seemed so near your spirits:
But do not sigh, and do not cry,
By grief too much engrossed,
Nor for a ghost of color turn
The color of a ghost!



“Again, farewell, my Phoebe dear!
Once more a last adieu!
For I must make myself as scarce
As swans of sable hue.”
From black to gray, from gray to nought
The shape began to fade—
And like an egg, though not so white,
The ghost was newly laid!”

THE GHOST: THOMAS HOOD

A Very Serious Ballad

In Middle Row, some years ago,
There lived one Mr. Brown;
And many folks considered him
The stoutest man in town.

But Brown and stout will both wear out—
One Friday he died hard,
And left a widow'd wife to mourn
At twenty pence a yard.

Now widow B. in two short months
Thought mourning quite a tax;
And wished, like Mr. Wilberforce,
To *manumit* her blacks.

With Mr. Street she soon was sweet;
The thing came thus about:
She asked him in at home, and then
At church, he asked her out!

Assurance such as this the man
In ashes could not stand;
So like a Phoenix he rose up
Against the Hand in Hand!

One dreary night the angry sprite
Appeared before her view;
It came a little after one,
But she was after two!

“Oh, Mrs. B., O Mrs. B.,
Are these your sorrow's deeds,
Already getting up a flame
To burn your widows' weeds?”



“It’s not so long since I have left
For aye the mortal scene;
My memory—like Rogers’s—
Should still be bound in green!



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“Yet if my face you still retrace
I almost have a doubt—
I’m like an old Forget-Me-Not
With all the leaves torn out!

“To think that on that finger-joint
Another pledge should cling;
O Bess! upon my very soul
It struck like ‘Knock and Ring.’

“A ton of marble on my breast
Can’t hinder my return;
Your conduct, ma’am, has set my blood
A-boiling in its urn!

“Remember, oh, remember how
The marriage rite did run,—
If ever we one flesh should be
’Tis now—when I have none!

“And you, Sir—once a bosom friend—
Of perjured faith convict,
As ghostly toe can give no blow,
Consider yourself kicked.

“A hollow voice is all I have,
But this I tell you plain,
Marry come up! you marry, ma’am,
And I’ll come up again.”

More he had said, but chanticleer
The spritely shade did shock
With sudden crow—and off he went
Like fowling piece at cock!

MARY’S GHOST: THOMAS HOOD

A Pathetic Ballad

’Twas in the middle of the night,
To sleep young William tried,
When Mary’s ghost came stealing in,
And stood at his bedside.



“O William dear! O William dear!
My rest eternal ceases;
Alas! my everlasting peace
Is broken into pieces.

“I thought the last of all my cares
Would end with my last minute;
But though I went to my long home
I didn’t stay long in it.

“The body-snatchers they have come
And made a snatch at me;
It’s very hard them kind of men
Won’t let a body be!

“You thought that I was buried deep,
Quite decent-like and chary,
But from her grave, in Mary-Bone,
They’ve come and boned your Mary.

“The arm that used to take your arm
Is took to Doctor Vyse;
And both my legs are gone to walk
The hospital at Guy’s.

“I vowed that you should have my hand,
But Fate gives us denial;
You’ll find it there, at Doctor Bell’s,
In spirits and a phial.

“As for my feet, the little feet
You used to find so pretty,
There’s one, I know, in Bedford Row,
The T’other’s in the City.

“I can’t tell where my head is gone,
But Doctor Carpue can;
As for my trunk, it’s all packed up
To go by Pickford’s van.

“I wish you’d go to Mr. P.,
And save me such a ride;
I don’t half like the outside place
They’ve took for my inside.

“The cock it crows—I must be gone!
My William, we must part!



But I'll be yours in death, altho'
Sir Astley has my heart.

“Don't go to weep upon my grave,
And think that there I be;
They haven't left an atom there
Of my anatomie.”



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THE SUPERSTITIOUS GHOST: ARTHUR GUITERMAN

I'm such a quiet little ghost,
Demure and inoffensive,
The other spirits say I'm most
Absurdly apprehensive.

Through all the merry hours of night
I'm uniformly cheerful;
I love the dark; but in the light,
I own I'm rather fearful.

Each dawn I cower down in bed,
In every brightness seeing
That weird uncanny form of dread—
An awful Human Being!

Of course I'm told they can't exist,
That Nature would not let them:
But Willy Spook, the Humanist,
Declares that he has met them!

He says they do not glide like us,
But walk in eerie paces;
They're solid, not diaphanous,
With arms! and legs!! and faces!!!

And some are beggars, some are kings,
Some have and some are wanting,
They squander time in doing things,
Instead of simply haunting.

They talk of "art," the horrid crew,
And things they call "ambitions."—
Oh, yes, I know as well as you
They're only superstitions.

But should the dreadful day arrive
When, starting up, I see one,
I'm sure 'twill scare me quite alive;
And then—Oh, then I'll be one!



DAVE LILLY: JOYCE KILMER

There's a brook on the side of Greylock that used to be
full of trout,
But there's nothing there now but minnows; they say
it is all fished out.
I fished there many a Summer day some twenty years
ago,
And I never quit without getting a mess of a dozen or so.

There was a man, Dave Lilly, who lived on the North
Adams road,
And he spent all his time fishing, while his neighbors
reaped and sowed.
He was the luckiest fisherman in the Berkshire hills, I
think.
And when he didn't go fishing he'd sit in the tavern and
drink.

Well, Dave is dead and buried and nobody cares very
much;
They have no use in Greylock for drunkards and loafers
and such,
But I always liked Dave Lilly, he was pleasant as you
could wish,
He was shiftless and good-for-nothing, but he certainly
could fish.

The other night I was walking up the hill from Williamstown
And I came to the brook I mentioned, and I stopped
on the bridge and sat down.
I looked at the blackened water with its little flecks of
white,
And I heard it ripple and whisper in the still of the
Summer night.

And after I'd been there a minute it seemed to me I could
feel
The presence of someone near me, and I heard the hum
of a reel.
And the water was churned and broken, and something
was brought to land
By a twist and a flirt of a shadowy rod in a deft and
shadowy hand.



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I scrambled down to the brookside and hunted all
about;
There wasn't a sign of a fisherman; there wasn't a sign of
a trout.
But I heard somebody chuckle behind the hollow oak
And I got a whiff of tobacco like Lilly used to smoke.

It's fifteen years, they tell me, since anyone fished that
brook;
And there's nothing in it but minnows that nibble the
bait off your hook.
But before the sun has risen and after the moon has set
I know that it's full of ghostly trout for Lilly's ghost to get.

I guess I'll go to the tavern and get a bottle of rye
And leave it down by the hollow oak, where Lilly's ghost went by.
I meant to go up on the hillside and try to find his grave
And put some flowers on it—but this will be better for Dave.

MARTIN: JOYCE KILMER

When I am tired of earnest men,
Intense and keen and sharp and clever,
Pursuing fame with brush or pen,
Or counting metal disks forever,
Then from the halls of Shadowland,
Beyond the trackless purple sea,
Old Martin's ghost comes back to stand
Beside my desk and talk to me.

Still on his delicate pale face
A quizzical thin smile is showing,
His cheeks are wrinkled like fine lace,
His kind blue eyes are gay and glowing.
He wears a brilliant-hued cravat,
A suit to match his soft grey hair,
A rakish stick, a knowing hat,
A manner blithe and debonair.

How good that he who always knew
That being lovely was a duty,
Should have gold halls to wander through
And should himself inhabit beauty.



How like his old unselfish way
To leave those halls of splendid mirth
And comfort those condemned to stay
Upon the dull and sombre earth.

Some people ask: "What cruel chance
Made Martin's life so sad a story?"
Martin? Why, he exhaled romance,
And wore an overcoat of glory.
A fleck of sunlight in the street,
A horse, a book, a girl who smiled,
Such visions made each moment sweet
For this receptive ancient child.

Because it was old Martin's lot
To be, not make, a decoration,
Shall we then scorn him, having not
His genius of appreciation?
Rich joy and love he got and gave;
His heart was merry as his dress;
Pile laurel wreaths upon his grave
Who did not gain, but was, success!

HAUNTED PLACES

THE LISTENERS: WALTER DE LA MARE

"Is anybody there?" said the Traveller,
Knocking on the moonlit door;
And his horse in the silence champed the grasses
Of the forest's ferny floor:
And a bird flew up out of the turret,
Above the Traveller's head:
And he smote upon the door again the second time;
"Is there anybody there?"



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he said.
But no one descended to the Traveller;
 No head from the leaf-fringed sill
Leaned over and looked into his gray eyes,
 Where he stood perplexed and still.
But only the host of phantom listeners
 That dwelt in the lone house then
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight
 To that voice from the world of men:
Stood thronging the moonbeams on the dark stair,
 That goes down to the empty hall,
Harkening in an air stirred and shaken
 By the lonely Traveller's call:
And he felt in his heart their strangeness,
 Their stillness answering his cry,
While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,
 'Neath the starred and leafy sky.
For he suddenly smote upon the door, even
 Louder, and lifted his head:—
"Tell them I came and no one answered,
 That I kept my word," he said.
Never the least stir made the listeners,
 Though every word he spake
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house
 From the one man left awake:
Aye, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,
 And the sound of iron on stone,
And how the silence surged softly backward,
 When the plunging hoofs were gone.

HAUNTED HOUSES: HENRY W. LONGFELLOW

All houses wherein men have lived and died
 Are haunted houses. Through the open doors
The harmless phantoms on their errands glide,
 With feet that make no sound upon the floors.

We meet them at the doorway, on the stair,
 Along the passages they come and go,
Impalpable impressions on the air,
 A sense of something moving to and fro.



There are more guests at table than the hosts
Invited; the illuminated hall
Is thronged with quiet, inoffensive ghosts,
As silent as the pictures on the wall.

The stranger at my fireside cannot see
The forms I see, or hear the sounds I hear;
He but perceives what is; while unto me
All that has been is visible and clear.

We have no title-deeds to house or lands;
Owners and occupants of earlier dates
From graves forgotten stretch their hands,
And hold in mortmain still their old estates.

The spirit-world around this world of sense
Floats like an atmosphere, and everywhere
Wafts through these earthly mists and vapors dense
A vital breath of more ethereal air.

Our little lives are kept in equipoise
By opposite attractions and desires:
The struggle of the instinct that enjoys,
And the more noble instinct that aspires.

These perturbations, this perpetual jar
Of earthly wants and aspirations high,
Come from the influence of an unseen star,
An undiscovered planet in our sky.

And as the moon from some dark gate of cloud
Throws o'er the sea a floating bridge of light,
Across whose trembling planks our fancies crowd
Into the realm of mystery and night—



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So from the world of spirits there descends,
A bridge of light, connecting it with this,
O'er whose unsteady floor, that sways and bends,
Wander our thoughts above the dark abyss.

THE BELEAGUERED CITY: HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

I have read in some old marvellous tale,
Some legend strange and vague,
That a midnight host of spectres pale
Beleaguered the walls of Prague.

Beside the Moldau's rushing stream,
With the wan moon overhead,
There stood, as in an awful dream,
The army of the dead.

White as a sea-fog, landward bound,
The spectral band was seen,
And with a sorrowful deep sound,
The river flowed between.

No other voice nor sound was there,
No drum nor sentry's pace,
The mist-like banners clasped the air
As clouds with clouds embrace.

And when the old cathedral bell
Proclaimed the morning prayer,
The white pavilions rose and fell
On the alarmed air.

Down the broad valley fast and far
The troubled army fled:
Up rose the glorious morning star,
The ghastly host was dead.

I have read in the marvellous heart of man,
That strange and mystic scroll,
That an army of phantoms vast and wan
Beleaguer the human soul.



Encamped beside Life's rushing stream,
In Fancy's misty light,
Gigantic shapes and shadows gleam
Portentous through the night.

Upon its midnight battle-ground
The spectral camp is seen,
And, with a sorrowful, deep sound,
Flows the River of Life between.

No other voice nor sound is there,
In the army of the grave;
No other challenge breaks the air,
But the rushing of Life's wave.

And then the solemn and deep church-bell
Entreats the soul to pray,
The midnight phantoms feel the spell,
The shadows sweep away.

Down the broad Vale of Tears afar
The spectral camp is fled;
Faith shineth as a morning star,
Our ghastly fears are dead.

A NEWPORT ROMANCE: BRET HARTE

They say that she died of a broken heart
(I tell the tale as 'twas told to me);
But her spirit lives, and her soul is part
Of this sad old house by the sea.

Her lover was fickle and fine and French;
It was more than a hundred years ago
When he sailed away from her arms,—poor wench!—
With the Admiral Rochambeau.

I marvel much what periwigged phrase
Won the heart of this sentimental Quaker,
At what gold-laced speech of those modish days
She listened,—the mischief take her!

But she kept the posies of mignonette
That he gave; and ever as their bloom failed
And faded (though with her tears still wet)
Her youth with their own exhaled.



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Till one night when the sea fog wrapped a shroud
Round spar and spire and tarn and tree,
Her soul went up on that lifted cloud
From this sad old house by the sea.

And ever since then, when the clock strikes two,
She walks unbidden from room to room,
And the air is filled as she passes through
With a subtle, sad perfume.

The delicate odor of mignonette,
The ghost of a dead-and-gone bouquet,
Is all that tells of her story; yet
Could she think of a sweeter way?

* * * * *

I sit in the sad old house to-night—
Myself a ghost from a farther sea;
And I trust that this Quaker woman might,
In courtesy, visit me.

For the laugh is fled from the porch and lawn,
And the bugle died from the fort on the hill,
And the twitter of girls on the stairs is gone,
And the grand piano is still.

Somewhere in the darkness a clock strikes two;
And there is no sound in the sad old house,
But the long veranda dripping with dew,
And in the wainscot a mouse.

The light of my study-lamp streams out
From the library door, but has gone astray
In the depths of the darkened hall; small doubt
But the Quakeress knows the way.

Was it the trick of a sense o'erwrought
With outward watching and inward fret?
But I swear that the air just now was fraught
With the odor of mignonette!

I open the window and seem almost—
So still lies the ocean—to hear the beat



Of its great Gulf Artery off the coast,
And to bask in its tropic heat.

In my neighbor's windows the gas lights flare
As the dancers swing in a waltz from Strauss;
And I wonder now could I fit that air
To the song of this sad old house.

And no odor of mignonette there is,
But the breath of morn on the dewy lawn;
And maybe from causes as slight as this
The quaint old legend was born.

But the soul of that subtle sad perfume,
As the spiced embalmings, they say, outlast
The mummy laid in his rocky tomb,
Awakens my buried past.

And I think of the passion that shook my youth,
Of its aimless loves and its idle pains,
And am thankful now for the certain truth
That only the sweet remains.

And I hear no rustle of stiff brocade,
And I see no face at my library door;
For now that the ghosts of my heart are laid,
She is viewless forevermore.

But whether she came as a faint perfume,
Or whether a spirit in stole of white,
I feel, as I pass from the darkened room,
She has been with my soul to-night.

A LEGEND: MAY KENDALL

Ay, an old story, yet it might
Have truth in it—who knows?
Of the heroine's breaking down one night
Just ere the curtain rose.



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And suddenly, when fear and doubt
Had shaken every heart,
There stepped an unknown actress out,
To take the heroine's part.

But oh, the magic of her face,
And oh the songs she sung,
And oh the rapture of the place,
And oh the flowers they flung!

But she never stooped: they lay all night,
As when she turned away,
And left them—and the saddest light
Shone in her eyes of grey.

She gave a smile in glancing round,
And sighed, one fancied, then—
But never they knew where she was bound,
Or saw her face again,

But the old prompter, grey and frail,
They heard him murmur low,
“It only could be Meg Coverdale,
Died thirty years ago,

“In that old part, who took the town;
And she was fair, as fair
As when they shut the coffin down
On the gleam of her golden hair;

“And it wasn't hard to understand
How a lass as fair as she
Could never rest in the Promised Land,
Where none but angels be.”

A MIDNIGHT VISITOR: ELIZABETH AKERS ALLEN

After all the house is dark,
And the last soft step is still,
And the elm-bough's clear-cut shadow
Flickers on the window sill—

When the village lights are out,
And the watch-dogs all asleep,



And the misty silver radiance
Makes the shade look black and deep—

When, so silent is the night,
Not a dead leaf dares to fall,
And I only hear the death-watch
Ticking, ticking in the wall—

When no hidden mouse dares gnaw
At the silence dead and dumb,
And the very air seems waiting
For a Something that should come—

Suddenly, there stands my guest,
Whence he came I cannot see;
Not a door has swung before him,
Not a hand touched latch or key,

Not a rustle stirred the air;
Yet he stands there, brave and mute,
In his eyes a look of greeting,
In his hand an old-time flute.

Then, with all the courtly grace
Of the old Colonial school,
From the curtain-shadowed corner
Forth he draws a three-legged stool—

(Ah, it was not there before!
Search as closely as I may,
I can never, never find it
When I look for it by day!)

Places it beside my bed,
And while silently I gaze
Spell-bound by his mystic presence,
Seats himself thereon and plays.

Gracious, stately, grave and tall,
Always dressed from crown to toe
In the quaint elaborate fashion
Of a hundred years ago.

Doublet, small-clothes, silk-clocked hose;
Wears my midnight melodist,
Snowy ruffles in his bosom,
Snowy ruffles at his wrist.



Silver buckle at his knee,
Silver buckle on his shoe;
Powdered hair smoothed back and plaited
In a stiff old-fashioned queue.



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If I stir he vanishes;
If I speak he flits away;
If I lie in utter silence,
He will sit for hours and play;

Play old wailing minor airs,
Melancholy, wild and slow,
Such, mayhap, as pleased the maidens
Of a hundred years ago.

All in vain I wait to hear
Ghostly histories of wrong
Unconfessed and unforgiven,
Unavenged and suffered long;

Not a story does he tell,
Not a single word he says—
Only sits and gazes at me
Steadily, and plays and plays.

Who is he, my midnight guest?
Wherefore does he haunt me so;
Coming from the misty shadows
Of a hundred years ago?

HAUNTED: AMY LOWELL

See! He trails his toes
Through the long streaks of moonlight,
And the nails of his fingers glitter;
They claw and flash among the tree-tops.
His lips suck at my open window,
And his breath creeps about my body
And lies in pools under my knees.
I can see his mouth sway and wobble,
Sticking itself against the window-jamb,
But the moonlight is bright on the floor,
Without a shadow.
Hark! A hare is strangling in the forest,
And the wind tears a shutter from the wall.



THE LITTLE GREEN ORCHARD: WALTER DE LA MARE

Some one is always sitting there,
 In the little green orchard;
Even when the sun is high
In noon's unclouded sky,
And faintly droning goes
The bee from rose to rose,
Some one in shadow is sitting there,
 In the little green orchard.

Yes, and when twilight's falling softly
 On the little green orchard;
When the gray dew distils
And every flower cup fills;
When the last blackbird says,
"What—what!" and goes her way—ssh!
I have heard voices calling softly
 In the little green orchard.

Not that I am afraid of being there,
 In the little green orchard;
Why, when the moon's been bright,
Shedding her lonesome light,
And moths like ghosties come,
And the horned snail leaves home:
I've stayed there, whispering and listening there,
 In the little green orchard.

Only it's strange to be feeling there,
 In the little green orchard;
Whether you paint or draw,
Dig, hammer, chop or saw,
When you are most alone,
All but the silence gone ...
Some one is waiting and watching there,
 In the little green orchard.

FIREFLIES: LOUISE DRISCOLL

What are you, fireflies,
That come as daylight dies?
Are you the old, old dead,
Creeping through the long grass,

To see the green leaves move
And feel the light wind pass?



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The larkspur in my garden
Is a sea of rose and blue,
The white moth is a ghost ship
Drifting through.

The shadows fall like lilacs
Raining from a garden sky,
Pollen laden bees go home,
Bird songs die.

The honeysuckle breaks a flask,
And a breeze, on pleasure bent,
Catches in her little hands
The sharp scent.

In the darkness and the dew
Come the little, flying flames,
Are they the forgotten dead,
Without names?

Did they love the leaves and wind,
Grass and gardens long ago
With a love that draws them home
Where things grow?

For an hour with green leaves,
Love immortal leaped to flame,
From the earth into the night
Old hearts came.

What are you, fireflies,
That come as daylight dies?

THE LITTLE GHOST: EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

I knew her for a little ghost
That in my garden walked;
The wall is high—higher than most—
And the green gate was locked.

And yet I did not think of that
Till after she was gone—
I knew her by the broad white hat,
All ruffled, she had on.



By the dear ruffles round her feet,
By her small hands that hung
In their lace mitts, austere and sweet,
Her gown's white folds among.

I watched to see if she would stay,
What she would do—and oh!
She looked as if she liked the way
I let my garden grow!

She bent above my favorite mint
With conscious garden grace,
She smiled and smiled—there was no hint
Of sadness in her face.

She held her gown on either side
To let her slippers show,
And up the walk she went with pride,
The way great ladies go.

And where the wall is built in new
And is of ivy bare
She paused—then opened and passed through
A gate that once was there.

HAUNTED: LOUIS UNTERMAYER

Between the moss and stone
The lonely lilies rise;
Wasted and overgrown
The tangled garden lies.
Weeds climb about the stoop
And clutch the crumbling walls;
The drowsy grasses droop—
The night wind falls.

The place is like a wood;
No sign is there to tell
Where rose and iris stood
That once she loved so well.
Where phlox and asters grew,
A leafless thornbush stands,
And shrubs that never knew
Her tender hands....

Over the broken fence
The moonbeams trail their shrouds;



Their tattered cerements
Cling to the gauzy clouds,
In ribbons frayed and thin—
And startled by the light
Silence shrinks deeper in
The depths of night.

Useless lie spades and rakes;
Rust's on the garden-tools.
Yet, where the moonlight makes
Nebulous silver pools
A ghostly shape is cast—
Something unseen has stirred....
Was it a breeze that passed?
Was it a bird?



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Dead roses lift their heads
Out of a grassy tomb;
From ruined pansy-beds
A thousand pansies bloom.
The gate is opened wide—
The garden that has been
Now blossoms like a bride....
Who entered in?

GHOSTS: MADISON CAWEIN

Low, weed-climbed cliffs, o'er which at noon
The sea-mists swoon:
Wind-twisted pines, through which the crow
Goes winging slow:
Dim fields the sower never sows,
Or reaps or mows:
And near the sea a ghostly house of stone
Where all is old and lone.

A garden, falling in decay,
Where statues gray
Peer, broken, out of tangled weed
And thorny seed;
Satyr and Nymph, that once made love
By walk and grove:
And, near a fountain, shattered, green with mould,
A sundial, lichen-old.

Like some sad life bereft,
To musing left,
The house stands: love and youth
Both gone, in sooth:
But still it sits and dreams:
And round it seems
Some memory of the past, still young and fair,
Haunting each crumbling stair.

And suddenly one dimly sees,
Come through the trees,
A woman, like a wild moss-rose:
A man, who goes
Softly: and by the dial



They kiss a while:
Then drowsily the mists blow round them, wan,
And they like ghosts are gone.

THE THREE GHOSTS: THEODOSIA GARRISON

The three ghosts on the lonely road,
Spake each to one another,
“Whence came that stain upon your mouth
No lifted hand can cover?”
“From eating of forbidden fruit,
Brother, my brother.”

The three ghosts on the sunless road,
Spake each to one another,
“Whence came that red burn on your foot
No dust or ash may cover?”
“I stamped a neighbor’s hearth-flame out,
Brother, my brother.”

The three ghosts on the windless road,
Spake each to one another,
“Whence came that blood upon thy hand
No other hand may cover?”
“From breaking of a woman’s heart,
Brother, my brother.”

“Yet on the earth, clean men we walked,
Glutton and thief and lover,
White flesh and fair, it hid our stains,
That no man might discover,”
Naked the soul goes up to God,
Brother, my brother.

“YOU KNOW THE OLD, WHILE I KNOW THE NEW”

AFTER DEATH: CHRISTINA ROSSETTI



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The curtains were half drawn, the floor was swept
And strewn with rushes; rosemary and may
Lay thick upon the bed on which I lay,
Where through the lattice ivy-shadows crept.
He leaned above me, thinking that I slept
And could not hear him; but I heard him say,
“Poor child, poor child”: and as he turned away
Came a deep silence, and I knew he wept.
He did not touch the shroud, or raise the fold
That hid my face, or take my hand in his,
Or ruffle the smooth pillows for my head:
He did not love me living; but once dead
He pitied me; and very sweet it is
To know he still is warm though I am cold.

THE PASSER-BY: EDITH M. THOMAS

Step lightly across the floor,
And somewhat more tender be.

There were many that passed my door,
Many that sought after me.
I gave them the passing word—
Ah, why did I give thee more?
I gave thee what could not be heard,
What had not been given before;
The beat of my heart I gave....
And I give thee this flower on my grave.

My face in the flower thou mayst see.
Step lightly across the floor.

AT HOME: CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

When I was dead, my spirit turned
To seek the much-frequented house.
I passed the door, and saw my friends
Feasting beneath green orange-boughs;
From hand to hand they pushed the wine,
They sucked the pulp of plum and peach;
They sang, they jested, and they laughed,
For each was loved of each.



I listened to their honest chat.

Said one, "To-morrow we shall be
Plod-plod along the featureless sands,
And coasting miles and miles of sea."

Said one, "Before the turn of tide
We will achieve the eyrie-seat."

Said one, "To-morrow shall be like
To-day, but much more sweet."

"To-morrow," said they, strong with hope,
And dwelt upon the pleasant way:

"To-morrow," cried they one and all,
While no one spoke of yesterday.

Their life stood full at blessed noon;

I, only I had passed away:

"To-morrow and to-day," they cried;

I was of yesterday.

I shivered comfortless, but cast

No chill across the tablecloth;

I, all-forgotten, shivered, sad

To stay and yet to part how loth:

I passed from the familiar room,

I whom from love had passed away,

Like the remembrance of a guest

That tarrieth but a day.

THE RETURN: MINNA IRVING

I pushed the tangled grass away

And lifted up the stone,

And flitted down the churchyard path

With grasses overgrown.

I halted at my mother's door

And shook the rusty catch—

"The wind is rising fast," she said,

"It rattles at the latch."



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I crossed the street and paused again
Before my husband's house,
My baby sat upon his knee
As quiet as a mouse.
I pulled the muslin curtain by,
He rose the blinds to draw—
"I feel a draught upon my back,
The night is cold and raw."

I met a man who loved me well
In days ere I was wed,
He did not hear, he did not see,
So silently I fled.
But when I found my poor old dog,
Though blind and deaf was he,
And feeble with his many years,
He turned and followed me.

THE ROOM'S WIDTH: ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS WARD

I think if I should cross the room,
Far as fear,
Should stand beside you like a thought—
Touch you, dear,

Like a fancy—to your sad heart
It would seem
That my vision passed and prayed you,
Or my dream.

Then you would look with lonely eyes—
Lift your head—
And you would stir and sigh, and say,
"She is dead."

Baffled by death and love, I lean
Through the gloom.
O Lord of life! Am I forbid
To cross the room?



HAUNTED: DON MARQUIS

A ghost is a freak of a sick man's brain?
Then why do you start and shiver so?
That's the sob and drip of a leaky drain?
But it sounds like another noise we know!
The heavy drops drummed red and slow,
The drops ran down as slow as fate—
Do ye hear them still?—it was long ago!—
But here in the shadows I wait, and wait!

Spirits there be that pass in peace;
Mine passed in a whirl of wrath and dole;
And the hour that your choking breath shall cease
I will get my grip on your naked soul—
Nor pity may stay nor prayer cajole—
I would drag ye whining from Hell's own gate:
To me, to me, ye must pay the toll!
And here in the shadows I wait, I wait!

The dead they are dead, they are out of the way?
And the ghost is a whim of an ailing mind?
Then why did ye whiten with fear to-day
When ye heard a voice in the calling wind?
Why did ye falter and look behind?
At the creeping mists when the hour grew late?
Ye would see my face were ye stricken blind!
And here in the shadows I wait, I wait!

Drink and forget, make merry and boast,
But the boast rings false and the jest is thin—
In the hour that I meet you ghost to ghost,
Stripped of the flesh that you skulk within,
Stripped to the coward soul 'ware of its sin,
Ye shall learn, ye shall learn, whether dead men hate!
Ah, a weary time has the waiting been,
But here in the shadows I wait, I wait!

“MY LOVE THAT WAS SO TRUE”

ONE OUT-OF-DOORS: SARAH PIATT



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A ghost—is he afraid to be a ghost?
A ghost? It breaks my heart to think of it.
Something that wavers in the moon, at most;
Something that wanders: something that must flit
From morning, from the bird's breath and the dew.
Ah, if I knew,—ah, if I only knew!

Something so weirdly wan, so weirdly still!
O yearning lips that our warm blood can flush,
Follow it with your kisses, if you will;
O beating heart, think of its helpless hush.
Oh, bitterest of all, to feel we fear
Something that was so near, that was so dear!

No—no, he is no ghost; he could not be;
Something that hides, forlorn, in frost and brier;
Something shut outside in the dark, while we
Laugh and forget by the familiar fire;
Something whose moan we call the wind, whose tears
Sound but as rain-drops in our human ears.

SAILING BEYOND SEAS: JEAN INGELOW

Methought the stars were blinking bright,
And the old brig's sail unfurl'd;
I said, "I will sail to my love this night
At the other side of the world."
I stepp'd abroad,—we sail'd so fast,—
The sun shot up from the bourn;
But a dove that perch'd upon the mast
Did mourn and mourn and mourn.
O fair dove! O fond dove!
And dove with the white, white breast,
Let me alone, the dream is my own,
And my heart is full of rest.

My true love fares on this great hill,
Feeding his sheep for aye;
I look'd in his hut, but all was still,
My love was gone away.
I went to gaze in the forest creek,
And the dove mourn'd on apace;
No flame did flash, nor fair blue reek



Rose up to show me his place.
O last love! O first love!
My love with the true, true heart,
To think I have come to this your home,
And yet—we are apart!

My love! He stood at my right hand,
His eyes were grave and sweet.
Methought he said, "In this far land,
O, is it thus we meet?
Ah, maid most dear, I am not here;
I have no place,—no part,—
No dwelling more by sea or shore,
But only in thy heart."
O fair dove! O fond dove!
Till night rose over the bourn,
The dove on the mast, as we sail'd fast,
Did mourn and mourn and mourn.

BETRAYAL: ALINE KILMER

Four hundred times the glass had run
And seven times the moon had died
Since my lover rode in his silver mail
Away from his new-made bride.

A ghost-light gleamed in the field beyond
And a wet, wet wind blew in from the sea
When out of the mist my own true love
Came up and stood by me.

My heart leapt up that had been still,
My voice rang out that had been sad,
Till my sister left her busy wheel
To see what made me glad.



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She saw my arms about his neck,
She saw my head upon his breast.
Oh, why did my sister hate me so
That she would not let me rest?

Loud then laughed my cruel sister,
False and fair of face was she,
“O that is never your own true love,
For he lies dead in a far country!”

I loosed the clasp of my clinging arms
And his shining face grew still and white;
My tears ran down like bitter rain
As I watched him fade from sight.

May the salt sea bury me in its waves,
May the mountains fall and cover my head,
Since I had not faith in my only love
When he came back from the dead.

THE TRUE LOVER: A.E. HOUSMAN

The lad came to the door at night,
When lovers crown their vows,
And whistled soft and out of sight
In shadow of the boughs.

“I shall not vex you with my face
Henceforth, my love, for aye;
So take me in your arms a space
Before the east is gray.

“When I from hence away am past
I shall not find a bride,
And you shall be the first and last
I ever lay beside.”

She heard and went and knew not why;
Her heart to his she laid;
Light was the air beneath the sky
But dark under the shade.

“Oh, do you breathe, lad, that your breast
Seems not to rise and fall,



And here upon my bosom prest
There beats no heart at all?"

"Oh, loud, my girl, it once would knock,
You should have felt it then;
But since for you I stopped the clock
It never goes again."

"Oh, lad, what is it, lad, that drops
Wet from your neck on mine?
What is it falling on my lips,
My lad, that tastes like brine?"

"Oh like enough 'tis blood, my dear,
For when the knife has slit
The throat across from ear to ear
'Twill bleed because of it."

Under the stars the air was light
But dark below the boughs,
The still air of the speechless night,
When lovers crown their vows.

HAUNTED: G.B. STUART

When candle-flames burn blue,
Between the night and morning,
I know that it is you,
My love, that was so true,
And that I killed with scorning.

The watch-dogs howl and bay;
I pale, and leave off smiling.
Only the other day
I held your heart in play
Intent upon beguiling.

A little while ago
I wrung your soul with sighing,
Or brought a sudden glow
Into your cheek by low
Soft answers, in replying.

My life was all disguise,
A mask of feints and fancies;
I used to lift my eyes,



And take you by surprise
With smiles and upward glances.

And now, where'er I go,
Your sad ghost follows after;
And blue the flame burns low,
And doors creak to and fro,
And silent grows the laughter.



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THE WHITE MOTH: SIR ARTHUR QUILLER-COUCH

If a leaf rustled she would start:
And yet she died, a year ago.
How had so frail a thing the heart
To journey where she trembled so?
And do they turn and turn in fright,
Those little feet, in so much night?

The light above the poet's head
Streamed on the page and on the cloth,
And twice and thrice there buffeted
On the black pane a white-winged moth:
'Twas Annie's soul that beat outside,
And, "Open, open, open!" cried.

"I could not find the way to God;
There were too many flaming suns
For signposts, and the fearful road
Led over wastes where millions
Of flaming comets hissed and burned—
I was bewildered and I turned.

"O, it was easy then! I knew
Your window, and no star beside.
Look up and take me back to you!"
He rose and thrust the window wide.
'Twas but because his brain was hot
With rhyming; for he saw her not.

But poets polishing a phrase
Show anger over trivial things:
And as she blundered in the blaze
Towards him, on ecstatic wings,
He raised a hand and smote her dead;
Then wrote, "That I had died instead!"

THE GHOST: WALTER DE LA MARE

"Who knocks?" "I, who was beautiful,
Beyond all dreams to restore,
I, from the roots of the dark thorn am hither,
And knock on the door."



“Who speaks?” “I,—once was my speech
Sweet as the bird’s on the air.
When echo lurks by the waters to heed;
'Tis I speak thee fair.”

“Dark is the hour!” “Aye, and cold.”
“Lone is my house.” “Ah, but mine?”
“Sight, touch, lips, eyes yearn in vain.”
“Long dead these to thine....”

Silence. Still faint on the porch
Brake the flames of the stars.
In gloom groped a hope-wearied hand
Over keys, bolts and bars.

A face peered. All the grey night
In chaos of vacancy shone;
Nought but vast Sorrow was there—
The sweet cheat gone.

LUKE HAVERGAL: EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON

Go to the western gate, Luke Havergal,—
There where the vines cling crimson on the wall,—
And in the twilight wait for what will come.
The wind will moan, the leaves will whisper some,—
Whisper of her, and strike you as they fall;
But go, and if you trust her she will call.
Go to the western gate, Luke Havergal—
Luke Havergal.

No, there is not a dawn in eastern skies
To rift the fiery night that’s in your eyes;
But there where western glooms are gathering,
The dark will end the dark, if anything:
God slays Himself with every leaf that flies,
And hell is more than half of paradise.
No, there is not a dawn in eastern skies—
In eastern skies.



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Out of the grave I come to tell you this,—
Out of the grave I come to quench the kiss
That flames upon your forehead with a glow
That blinds you to the way that you must go.
Yes, there is yet one way to where she is,—
Bitter, but one that faith can never miss.
Out of the grave I come to tell you this,
To tell you this.

There is the western gate, Luke Havergal,
There are the crimson leaves upon the wall.
Go,—for the winds are tearing them away,—
Nor think to riddle the dead words that they say,
Nor any more to feel them as they fall;
But go! and if you trust her she will call.
There is the western gate, Luke Havergal—
Luke Havergal.

THE HIGHWAYMAN: ALFRED NOYES

1

The wind was a torrent of darkness among the gusty trees,
The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,
The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,
And the highwayman came riding—
 Riding—riding—
The highwayman came riding, up to the old inn-door.

2

He'd a French cocked-hat on his forehead, a bunch of lace
 at his chin,
A coat of the claret velvet, and breeches of brown doe-skin;
They fitted with never a wrinkle: his boots were up to the thigh!
And he rode with a jewelled twinkle,
 His pistol butts a-twinkle,
His rapier hilt a-twinkle, under the jewelled sky.

3

Over the cobbles he clattered and clashed in the dark inn-yard,
And he tapped with his whip on the shutters, but all was



locked and barred;
He whistled a tune to the window, and who should be waiting there
But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,
 Bess, the landlord's daughter,
Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.

4

And dark in the dark old inn-yard a stable-wicket creaked
Where Tim, the ostler, listened; his face was white and peaked;
His eyes were hollows of madness, his hair like mouldy hay,
But he loved the landlord's daughter;
 The landlord's red-lipped daughter,
Dumb as a dog he listened, and he heard the robber say—

5

“One kiss, my bonny sweetheart, I'm after a prize tonight,
But I shall be back with the yellow gold before the morning light;
Yet if they press me sharply, and harry me through the day,
Then look for me by moonlight,
 Watch for me by moonlight,
I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should bar the way.”

6

He rose upright in the stirrups; he scarce could reach her hand,
But she loosened her hair i' the casement! His face burnt like a brand
As the black cascade of perfume came tumbling over his breast;
And he kissed its waves in the moonlight,
 (Oh, sweet black waves in the moonlight,)
Then he tugged at his reins in the moonlight, and galloped
away to the West.



The tip of one finger touched it; she strove no more for the rest!
Up, she stood to attention, with the barrel beneath her breast,
She would not risk their hearing: she would not strive again;
For the road lay bare in the moonlight;
 Blank and bare in the moonlight;
And the blood of her veins in the moonlight throbbed to
her love's refrain.

6

Tlot-tlot; tlot-tlot! Had they heard it? The horse-hoofs
ringing clear—
Tlot-tlot, tlot-tlot in the distance? Were they deaf that
they did not hear?
Down the ribbon of moonlight, over the brow of the hill,
The highwayman came riding,
 Riding, riding!
The red-coats looked to their priming! She stood up
straight and still!

7

Tlot-tlot, in the frosty silence! *Tlot-tlot* in the echoing night!
Nearer he came and nearer! Her face was like a light!
Her eyes grew wide for a moment; she drew one last deep breath,
Then her finger moved in the moonlight,
 Her musket shattered the moonlight,
Shattered her breast in the moonlight and warned him—with her death.

8



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He turned; he spurred him Westward; he did not know who stood
Bowed with her head o'er the musket, drenched with her own red blood!
Not till the dawn he heard it, and slowly blanched to hear
How Bess, the landlord's daughter,
 The landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Had watched for her love in the moonlight, and died in
 the darkness there.

9

Back, he spurred like a madman, shrieking a curse to the sky,
With the white road smoking behind him, and his rapier
 brandished high!
Blood-red were his spurs i' the golden moon; wine-red
 was his velvet coat;
When they shot him down on the highway,
 Down like a dog on the highway,
And he lay in his blood on the highway, with the bunch
 of lace at his throat.

* * * * *

*And still of a winter's night, they say, when the wind is in the trees, When the moon is a
ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas, When the road is a ribbon of moonlight over
the purple moor, A highwayman comes riding—
 Riding—riding—
A highwayman comes riding, up to the old inn-door.*

10

*Over the cobbles he clatters and clangs in the dark inn-yard; And he taps with his whip
on the shutters, but all is
 locked and barred;
He whistles a tune to the window, and who should be waiting there But the landlord's
black-eyed daughter,
 Bess, the landlord's daughter,
Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.*

THE BLUE CLOSET: WILLIAM MORRIS

THE DAMOZELS

Lady Alice, Lady Louise,
Between the wash of the tumbling seas



We are ready to sing, if so you please;
So lay your long hands on the keys;
Sing "*Laudate pueri.*"

*And ever the great bell overhead Boom'd in the wind a knell for the dead, Though no
one toll'd it, a knell for the dead.*

LADY LOUISE

Sister, let the measure swell
Not too loud; for you sing not well
If you drown the faint boom of the bell;
He is weary, so am I.

*And ever the chevron overhead Flapp'd on the banner of the dead; (Was he asleep, or
was he dead?)*

LADY ALICE

Alice the Queen, and Louise the Queen,
Two damozels wearing purple and green,
Four lone ladies dwelling here
From day to day and year to year;
And there is none to let us go;
To break the locks of the doors below,
Or shovel away the heap'd-up snow;
And when we die no man will know
That we are dead; but they give us leave,
Once every year on Christmas-eve,



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To sing in the Closet Blue one song:
And we should be so long, so long,
If we dared, in singing; for, dream on dream,
They float on in a happy stream;
They float from the gold strings, float, from the keys,
Float from the open'd lips of Louise:
But, alas! the sea-salt oozes through
The chinks of the tiles of the Closet Blue;

And ever the great bell overhead Booms in the wind a knell for the dead, The wind plays on it a knell for the dead.

(THEY SING ALL TOGETHER)

How long ago was it, how long ago,
He came to this tower with hands full of snow?
“Kneel down, O love Louise, kneel down,” he said,
And sprinkled the dusty snow over my head.

He watch'd the snow melting, it ran through my hair, Ran over my shoulders, white shoulders and bare.

“I cannot weep for thee, poor love Louise,
For my tears are all hidden deep under the seas;

“In a gold and blue casket she keeps all my tears, But my eyes are no longer blue, as in old years;

“Yea, they grow gray with time, grow small and dry, I am so feeble now, would I might die.”

And in truth the great bell overhead Left off pealing for the dead, Perchance because the wind was—dead.

Will he come back again or is he dead?
Or is he sleeping, my scarf round his head?

Or did they strangle him as he lay there,
With the long scarlet scarf I used to wear?



Only I pray thee, Lord, let him come here;
Both his soul and his body to me are most dear.

Dear Lord, that loves me, I wait to receive
Either body or spirit this wild Christmas-eve.

Through the floor shot up a lily red, With a patch of earth from the land of the dead, For he was strong in the land of the dead.

What matter that his cheeks were pale,
His kind kiss'd lips all gray?
"O love Louise, have you waited long?"
"O my Lord Arthur, yea."

What if his hair that brush'd her cheek
Was stiff with frozen rime?
His eyes were grown quite blue again.
As in the happy time.

"O, love Louise, this is the key
Of the happy golden land!
O, sisters, cross the bridge with me,
My eyes are full of sand,
What matter that I cannot see,
If ye take me by the hand?"

And ever the great bell overhead, And the tumbling sea mourned for the dead; For their song ceased, and they were dead.

THE GHOST'S PETITION: CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI

"There's a footstep coming; look out and see."—
"The leaves are falling, the wind is calling;
No one cometh across the lea."—

"There's a footstep coming; O sister, look."—
"The ripple flashes, the white foam dashes;
No one cometh across the brook."—



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“But he promised that he would come:
To-night, to-morrow, in joy or sorrow,
He must keep his word, and must come home.

“For he promised that he would come;
His word was given; from earth to heaven,
He must keep his word, and must come home.

“Go to sleep, my sweet sister Jane;
You can slumber, who need not number
Hour after hour, in doubt and pain.

“I shall sit here awhile and watch;
Listening, hoping for one hand groping,
In deep shadow, to find the latch.”

After the dark and before the light,
One lay sleeping, and one sat weeping,
Who had watched and wept the weary night.

After the night and before the day,
One lay sleeping; and one sat weeping—
Watching, weeping for one away.

There came a footstep climbing the stair,
Some one standing out on the landing
Shook the door like a puff of air.—

Shook the door and in he passed.
Did he enter? In the room center
Stood her husband; the door shut fast.

“O Robin, but you are cold—
Chilled with the night-dew; so lily white you
Look like a stray lamb from our fold.

“O Robin, but you are late:
Come and sit near me—sit here and cheer me.”—
(Blue the flame burnt in the grate.)

“Lay not down your head on my breast:
I cannot hold you, kind wife, nor fold you
In the shelter that you love best.



“Feel not after my clasping hand:
I am but a shadow, come from the meadow,
Where many lie, but no tree can stand.

“We are trees that have shed their leaves:
Our heads lie low there, but no tears flow there;
Only I grieve for my wife who grieves.

“I could rest if you would not moan
Hour after hour; I have no power
To shut my ears as I lie alone.

“I could rest if you would not cry,
But there’s no sleeping while you sit weeping—
Watching, weeping so bitterly.”—

“Woe’s me! Woe’s me! For this I have heard.
Oh night of sorrow—oh, black to-morrow!
Is it thus that you keep your word?

“Oh, you who used so to shelter me,
Warm from the least wind—why, now the east wind
Is warmer than you, whom I quake to see.

“Oh, my husband of flesh and blood,
For whom my mother I left, and brother,
And all I had, accounting it good,

“What do you do there, under the ground,
In the dark hollow? I’m fain to follow.
What do you do there? What have you found?”—

“What I do there I must not tell,
But I have plenty—kind wife, content ye:
It is well with us: it is well.

“Tender hand hath made our nest;
Our fear is ended; our hope is blended
With present pleasure, and we have rest.”

“Oh, but Robin, I’m fain to come,
If your present days are so pleasant,
For my days are so wearisome.



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“Yet I'll dry my tears for your sake:
Why should I tease you, who cannot please you
Any more with the pains I take?”

HE AND SHE: SIR EDWIN ARNOLD

“She is dead!” they said to him; “come away;
Kiss her and leave her,—thy love is clay!”

They smoothed her tresses of dark brown hair;
On her forehead of stone they laid it fair.

Over her eyes that gazed too much
They drew the lids with a gentle touch;

With a tender touch they closed up well
The sweet thin lips that had secrets to tell;

Above her brows and beautiful face
They tied her veil and her marriage lace,

And drew on her white feet her white-silk shoes
Which were the whitest no eye could choose,—

And over her bosom they crossed her hands.
“Come away,” they said, “God understands.”

And there was silence, and nothing there
But silence and scents of eglantere,

And jasmine, and roses and rosemary,
And they said: “As a lady should lie, lies she.”

And they held their breath till they left the room,
With a shudder, a glance at its stillness and gloom.

But he who loved her too well to dread
The sweet, the stately, the beautiful dead,

He lit his lamp, and he took the key
And turned it—alone again, he and she.

He and she; but she would not speak,
Though he kissed, in the old place, the quiet cheek.



He and she; yet she would not smile,
Though he called her the name she loved erewhile.

He and she; still she did not move
To any passionate whisper of love.

Then he said, "Cold lips and breast without breath,
Is there no voice or language of death,

"Dumb to the ear and still to the sense,
But to heart and soul distinct, intense?

"See now; I will listen with soul, not ear:
What is the secret of dying, dear?

"Was it the infinite wonder of all
That you ever could let life's flower fall?

"Or was it a greater marvel to feel
The perfect calm o'er the agony steal?

"Was the miracle greater to find how deep
Beyond all dreams sank downward that sleep?

"Did life roll back its record, dear,
And show, as they say it does, past things clear?

"And was it the innermost heart of the bliss
To find out so, what a wisdom love is?

"O perfect dead! O dead most dear!
I hold the breath of my soul to hear.

"I listen as deep as to terrible hell,
As high as to heaven, and you do not tell.

"There must be pleasure in dying, sweet,
To make you so placid, from head to feet!

"I would tell you, darling, if I were dead,
And 'twere your hot tears upon my brow shed,—

"I would say, though the Angel of Death had laid
His sword on my lips to keep it unsaid,—



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“You should not ask vainly, with streaming eyes,
Which of all deaths was the chiefest surprise,

“The very strangest and suddenest thing
Of all the surprises that dying must bring.”

Ah, foolish world! O most kind dead!
Though he told me, who will believe it was said?

Who will believe that he heard her say,
With the old sweet voice, in the dear old way,

“The utmost wonder is this—I hear
And see you, and love you, and kiss you, dear;

“And am your angel, who was your bride.
And know, that though dead, I have never died.”

SHAPES OF DOOM

THE DEAD COACH: KATHERINE TYNAN

At night when sick folk wakeful lie,
I heard the dead coach passing by,
Heard it passing wild and fleet,
And knew my time had come not yet.

Click-clack, click-clack, the hoofs went past,
Who takes the dead coach travels fast,
On and away through the wild night,
The dead must rest ere morning light.

If one might follow on its track,
The coach and horses midnight black,
Within should sit a shape of doom
That beckons one and all to come.

God pity them to-night who wait
To hear the dead coach at their gate,
And him who hears, though sense be dim,
The mournful dead coach stop for him.

He shall go down with a still face,
And mount the steps and take his place,



The door be shut, the order said,
How fast the pace is with the dead!

Click-clack, click-clack, the hour is chill,
The dead coach climbs the distant hill.
Now, God, the Father of us all,
Wipe Thou the widow's tears that fall!

DEID FOLK'S FERRY: ROSAMUND MARRIOTT WATSON

'Tis They, of a veritie—
They are calling thin an' shrill;
We maun rise an' put to sea,
We maun gi'e the deid their will,
We maun ferry them owre the faem,
For they draw us as they list;
We maun bear the deid folk hame
Through the mirk an' the saft sea-mist.

"But how can I gang the nicht,
When I'm new come hame frae sea?
When my heart is sair for the sicht
O' my lass that lang's for me?"
"O your lassie lies asleep,
An' sae do your bairnes twa;
The cliff-path's stey and steep,
An' the deid folk cry an' ca'."

O sae hooly steppit we,
For the nicht was mirk an' lown,
Wi' never a sign to see,
But the voices all aroun'.
We laid to the saut sea-shore,
An' the boat dipped low i' th' tide,
As she micht hae dipped wi' a score,
An' our ain three sel's beside.

O the boat she settled low,
Till her gunwale kissed the faem,
An' she didna loup nor row
As she bare the deid folk hame;
But she aye gaed swift an' licht,
An' we naething saw nor wist,
Wha sailed i' th' boat that nicht
Through the mirk an' the saft sea-mist.



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There was never a sign to see,
But a misty shore an' low;
Never a word spak' we,
But the boat she lichtened slow,
An' a cauld sigh stirred my hair,
An' a cauld hand touched my wrist,
An' my heart sank cauld and sair
I' the mirk an' the saft sea-mist.

Then the wind raise up wi' a maen,
('Twas a waefu' wind, an' weet).
Like a deid saul wud wi' pain,
Like a bairnie wild wi' freit;
But the boat rade swift an' licht,
Sae we wan the land fu' sune,
An' the shore showed wan an' white
By a glint o' the waning mune.

We steppit oot owre the sand
Where an unco' tide had been,
An' Black Donald caught my hand
An' coverit up his een:
For there, in the wind an' weet,
Or ever I saw nor wist,
My Jean an' her weans lay cauld at my feet,
In the mirk an' the saft sea-mist.

An' it's O for my bonny Jean!
An' it's O for my bairnies twa,
It's O an' O for the watchet een
An' the steps that are gane awa'—
Awa' to the Silent Place,
Or ever I saw nor wist,
Though I wot we twa went face to face
Through the mirk an' the saft sea-mist.

KEITH OF RAVELSTON: SYDNEY DOBELL

The murmur of the mourning ghost
That keeps the shadowy kine,
"Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!"



Ravelston, Ravelston,
The stile beneath the tree,
The maid that kept her mother's kine,
The song that sang she!

She sang her song, she kept her kine,
She sat beneath the thorn
When Andrew Keith of Ravelston
Rode through the Monday morn;

His henchmen sing, his hawk-bells ring,
His belted jewels shine!
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!

Year after year, where Andrew came,
Comes evening down the glade,
And still there sits a moonshine ghost
Where sat the sunshine maid.

Her misty hair is faint and fair,
She keeps the shadowy kine;
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!

I lay my hands upon the stile,
The stile is lone and cold.
The burnie that goes babbling by
Says naught that can be told.

Yet, stranger! here from year to year,
She keeps her shadowy kine;
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!

Step out three steps where Andrew stood,—
Why blanch thy cheeks for fear?
The ancient stile is not alone,
'Tis not the burn I hear!

She makes her immemorial moan,
She keeps her shadowy kine,
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!



THE FETCH: DORA SIGERSON SHORTER

“What makes you so late at the tryst,
What caused you so long to be?
I have waited a weary time
For the hour you promised me.”



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“Oh, glad were I here by your side,
Full many an hour ago,
But for what there passed on the road
All so mournfully and so slow.”

“And what have you met on the road
That kept you so long and so late?”
“O full many an hour has gone
Since I left my father’s gate.

“As I hastened on in the gloom,
By the road to you tonight,
I passed the corpse of a young maid
All clad in a shroud of white.”

“And was she some friend once cherished,
Or was she a sister dead,
That you left your own true lover
Till the trysting hour had sped?”

“I could not see who it might be,
Her face was hidden away,
But I had to turn and follow
Wherever her resting lay.”

“And did it go up by the town,
Or went it down by the lake?
I know there are but two church yards
Where a corpse its rest may take.”

“They did not go by the town,
Nor by the lake stayed their feet,
But buried the corpse all silently
Where the four cross roads meet.”

“And was it so strange a sight
That you should go like a child
Thus to leave me to wait, forgotten,
By a passing sight beguiled?”

“Oh, I heard them whisper my name,
Each mourner that passed by me;
And I had to follow their path,
Though their faces I could not see.”



“And right well I would like to know
Who this fair young maid might be,
So take my hand, my own true love,
And hasten along with me.”

He did not go down by the lake
He did not go by the town,
But carried her to the four cross roads,
And there he did set her down.

“Now I see no track of a foot,
I see no mark of a spade,
And I know well in this white road
There never a grave was made.”

He took her hand in his right hand,
And he led her to town away,
And there he questioned the old priest,
Did he bury a maid that day.

He took her hand in his right hand,
Down to the church by the lake,
And there he questioned a young priest,
If a maiden her life did take.

But there was no tale of death
In all the parish round,
And neither had heard of a maid
Thus put in unholy ground.

He loosed her hand from his hand,
And turned on his heel away.
“I know you are false,” he said,
“From the lie you told today.”

And she said, “Oh, what evil things
Did tonight my senses take?”
She knelt down by the water side
And wept as her heart would break.

And she said, “Oh, what fairy sight
Was it thus my grief to see!
I'll sleep well 'neath the still water,
Since my love has turned on me.”

* * * * *

And her love he went to the north,
And far to the south went he,
But still he heard her distant voice
Call, weeping so bitterly.



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He could not rest in the daytime,
He could not sleep in the night,
Hastened back to the old road,
With the trysting-place in sight.

What first he heard was his love's name,
And keening both loud and long;
What first he saw was his love's face
At the head of a mourning throng.

And white she was as the dead are,
And never a move made she,
But passed him by on her black pall,
Still sleeping so peacefully.

And cold she was as the dead are,
And never a word she spake,
When they said, "Unholy is her grave,
Since she her life did take."

Silent she was, as the dead are,
And never a cry she made
When there came, more sad than the keening,
The ring of a digging spade.

No rest they gave in the town church,
No grave by the lake so sweet,
But buried her in unholy ground,
Where the four cross roads do meet.

THE BANSHEE: DORA SIGERSON SHORTER

God be between us and all harm,
For I to-night have seen
A banshee in the shadow pass
Along the dark boreen.

And as she went she keened and cried,
And combed her long white hair,
She stopped at Molly Reilly's door,
And sobbed till midnight there.

And is it for himself she moans,
Who is so far away?



Or is it Molly Reilly's death
She cries until the day?

Now Molly thinks her man has gone
A sailor lad to be;
She puts a candle at her door
Each night for him to see.

But he is off to Galway town,
(And who dare tell her this?)
Enchanted by a woman's eyes,
Half-maddened by her kiss.

So as we go by Molly's door
We look towards the sea,
And say, "May God bring home your lad
Wherever he may be."

I pray it may be Molly's self
The banshee keens and cries,
For who dare breathe the tale to her,
Be it her man who dies?

But there is sorrow on the way,
For I tonight have seen
A banshee in the shadow pass
Along the dark boreen.

THE SEVEN WHISTLERS: ALICE E. GILLINGTON

Whistling strangely, whistling sadly, whistling sweet and
clear,
The Seven Whistlers have passed thy house, Pentruan of
Porthmeor;
It was not in the morning, nor the noonday's golden
grace,
It was in the dead waste midnight, when the tide yelped
loud in the Race:
The tide swings round in the Race, and they're plaining
whisht and low,
And they come from the gray sea-marshes, where the gray
sea-lavenders grow,
And the cotton-grass sways to and fro;
And the gore-sprent sundews thrive
With oozy hands alive.



Canst hear the curlews' whistle through thy dreamings dark and drear,
How they're crying, crying, crying, Pentruan of Porthmeor?



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Shall thy hatchment, mouldering grimly in yon church amid the sands,
Stay trouble from thy household? Or the carven cherub-hands
Which hold thy shield to the font? Or the gauntlets on the wall
Keep evil from its onward course as the great tides rise and fall?
The great tides rise and fall, and the cave sucks in the breath
Of the wave when it runs with tossing spray, and the
ground-sea rattles of Death;
 "I rise in the shallows," 'a saith,
 "Where the mermaid's kettle sings,
 And the black shag flaps his wings!"
Ay, the green sea-mountain leaping may lead horror in its rear,
When thy drenched sail leans to its yawning trough, Pentruan
of Porthmeor!

Yet the stoup waits at thy doorway for its load of glittering ore,
And thy ships lie in the tideway, and thy flocks along the moore;
And thine arishes gleam softly when the October moonbeams wane,
When in the bay all shining the fishers set the seine;
The fishers cast the seine, and 'tis "Heva!" in the town,
And from the watch-rock on the hill the huers are shouting down;
 And ye hoist the mainsail brown,
 As over the deep-sea roll
 The lurker follows the shoal;
To follow and to follow, in the moonshine silver-clear,
When the halyards creek to thy dipping sail, Pentruan of Porthmeor!

And wailing, and complaining, and whistling whisht and clear,
The Seven Whistlers have passed thy house, Pentruan of Porthmeor!
It was not in the morning, nor the noonday's golden grace,—
It was in the fearsome midnight, when the tide-dogs
 yelped in the Race:
The tide swings round in the Race, and they're whistling
 whisht and low,
And they come from the lonely heather, where the fur-edged fox-gloves
 blow,
 And the moor-grass sways to and fro,
 Where the yellow moor-birds sigh,
 And the sea-cooled wind sweeps by.
Canst hear the curlew's whistle through the darkness
 wild and drear,—
How they're calling, calling, calling, Pentruan of Porthmeor?



THE VICTOR: THEODOSIA GARRISON

*The live man victorious
Rode spurring from the fight;
In a glad voice and glorious
He sang of his delight,
And dead men three, foot-loose and free,
Came after in the night.*

And one laid hand on his bridle-rein—
Swift as the steed he sped—
“O, ride you fast, yet at the last,
Hate faster rides,” he said.
“My sons shall know their father’s foe
One day when blades are red.”

And one laid hand on his stirrup-bar
Like touch o’ driven mist,
“For joy you slew ere joy I knew,
For one girl’s mouth unkissed,
At your board’s head, at mass, at bed,
My pale ghost shall persist.”

And one laid hands on his own two hands,
“O Brother o’ mine,” quoth he,
“What can I give to you who live
Like gift you gave to me?
Since from grief and strife and ache o’ life
Your sword-stroke set me free.”



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*The live man victorious
Rode spurring from the fight;
In a glad voice and glorious
He sang of his delight,
And dead men three, foot-loose and free,
Came after in the night.*

MAWGAN OF MELHUACH: ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER

'Twas a fierce night when old Mawgan died:
Men shuddered to hear the rolling tide:
The wreckers fled fast from the awful shore,
They had heard strange voices amid the roar.

“Out with the boat there,” someone cried,—
“Will he never come? We shall lose the tide:
His berth is trim and his cabin stored,
He’s a weary long time coming aboard.”

The old man struggled upon the bed:
He knew the words that the voices said;
Wildly he shrieked as his eyes grew dim,
“He was dead! He was dead when I buried him.”

Hark yet again to the devilish roar!
“He was nimbler once with a ship on shore;
Come, come, old man, ’tis a vain delay,
We must make the offering by break of day.”

Hard was the struggle, but at the last
With a stormy pang old Mawgan passed,
And away, away, beneath their sight,
Gleamed the red sail at pitch of night.

THE MOTHER’S GHOST: HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Svend Dyring he rideth adown the glade;
I myself was young.



There he has wooed him so winsome a maid;
Fair words gladden so many a heart.

Together were they for seven years,
And together children six were theirs;

Then came Death abroad through the land,
And blighted the beautiful lily-wand.

Svend Dyring he rideth adown the glade,
And again hath he wooed him another maid.

He hath wooed him a maid and brought home a bride,
But she was bitter and full of pride.

When she came driving into the yard,
There stood the six children weeping so hard.

There stood the small children with sorrowful heart;
From before her feet she thrust them apart.

She gave to them neither ale nor bread;
“Ye shall suffer hunger and hate,” she said.

She took from them their quilts of blue,
And said, “Ye shall lie on the straw we strew.”

She took from them the great wax light,
“Now ye shall lie in the dark at night.”

In the evning late they cried with cold,
The mother heard it under the mould.

The woman heard it in the earth below:
“To my little children I must go.”

She standeth before the Lord of all:
“And may I go to my children small?”

She prayed Him so long and would not cease,
Until He bade her depart in peace.

“At cock-crow thou shalt return again;
Longer thou shalt not there remain!”

She girded up her sorrowful bones,
And rifted the walls and the marble stones.



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As through the village she flitted by,
The watch-dogs howled aloud to the sky.

When she came to the castle gate,
There stood her eldest daughter in wait.

“Why standest thou here, dear daughter mine?
How fares it with brothers and sisters thine?”

“Never art thou mother of mine,
For my mother was both fair and fine.

“My mother was white, with cheeks of red,
But thou art pale and like to the dead.”

“How should I be fair and fine?
I have been dead; pale cheeks are mine.

“How should I be white and red,
So long, so long have I been dead?”

When she came in at the chamber door,
There stood the small children weeping sore.

One she braided and one she brushed,
The third she lifted, the fourth she hushed.

The fifth she took on her lap and pressed,
As if she would suckle it at her breast.

Then to her eldest daughter said she,
“Do thou bid Svend Dyring come hither to me.”

Into the chamber when he came
She spake to him in anger and shame.

“I left behind me both ale and bread;
My children hunger and are not fed.

“I left behind me the quilts of blue;
My children lie on the straw ye strew.

“I left behind me the great wax light;
My children lie in the dark at night.



“If I come again into your hall,
As cruel a fate shall you befall!

“Now crows the cock with feathers red,
Back to the earth must all the dead.

“Now crows the cock with feathers swart;
The gates of heaven fly wide apart.

“Now crows the cock with feathers white;
I can abide no longer to-night.”

Whenever they heard the watch-dogs wail,
They gave the children bread and ale.

Whenever they heard the watch-dogs bay,
They feared lest the dead were on their way.

Whenever they heard the watch-dogs bark,
I myself was young.
They feared the dead out there in the dark.
Fair words gladden so many a heart.

THE DEAD MOTHER: ROBERT BUCHANAN

1

As I lay asleep, as I lay asleep,
Under the grass as I lay so deep,
As I lay asleep in my cotton serk
Under the shade of Our Lady's Kirk,
I waken'd up in the dead of night,
I waken'd up in my death-serk white,
And I heard a cry from far away,
And I knew the voice of my daughter May:
“Mother, Mother, come hither to me!
Mother, Mother, come hither and see!
Mother, Mother, Mother dear,
Another Mother is sitting here:
My body is bruised and in pain I cry,
On straw in the dark afraid I lie,
I thirst and hunger for drink and meat,
And Mother, Mother, to sleep were sweet!”
I heard the cry, though my grave was deep,
And awoke from sleep, and awoke from sleep.



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2

I awoke from sleep, I awoke from sleep,
Up I rose from my grave so deep!
The earth was black, but overhead
The stars were yellow, the moon was red;
And I walk'd along all white and thin,
And lifted the latch and enter'd in,
And reached the chamber as dark as night,
And though it was dark, my face was white:
"Mother, Mother, I look on thee!
Mother, Mother, you frighten me!
For your cheeks are thin and your hair is gray!"
But I smiled and kissed her fears away,
I smooth'd her hair and I sang a song,
And on my knee I rocked her long:
"O Mother, Mother, sing low to me—
I am sleepy now, and I cannot see!"
I kissed her, but I could not weep,
And she went to sleep, and she went to sleep.

3

As we lay asleep, as we lay asleep,
My May and I, in our grave so deep,
As we lay asleep in the midnight mirk,
Under the shade of Our Lady's Kirk,
I waken'd up in the dead of night,
Though May my daughter lay warm and white,
For I heard the cry of a little one,
And I knew 'twas the voice of Hugh my son:
"Mother, Mother, come hither to me;
Mother, Mother, come hither and see!
Mother, Mother, Mother dear,
Another Mother is sitting here:
My body is bruised and my heart is sad,
But I speak my mind and call them bad;
I thirst and hunger night and day,
And were I strong I would fly away!"
I heard the cry, though my grave was deep,
And awoke from sleep, and awoke from sleep!

4



I awoke from sleep, I awoke from sleep,
Up I rose from my grave so deep,
The earth was black, but overhead
The stars were yellow, the moon was red;
And I walk'd along all white and thin,
And lifted the latch and enter'd in.
"Mother, Mother, and art thou here?
I know your face and I feel no fear;
Raise me, Mother, and kiss my cheek,
For oh I am weary and sore and weak."
I smoothed his hair with a mother's joy,
And he laugh'd aloud, my own brave boy:
I raised and held him on my breast,
Sang him a song, and bade him rest.
"Mother, Mother, sing low to me—
I am sleepy now and I cannot see!"
I kissed him and I could not weep,
As he went to sleep, as he went to sleep.

5

As I lay asleep, as I lay asleep,
With my girl and boy in my grave so deep,
As I lay asleep, I awoke in fear,
Awoke, but awoke not my children dear,
And I heard a cry so low and weak
From a tiny voice that could not speak;
I heard the cry of a little one,
My bairn that could neither talk nor run,
My little, little one, uncaress'd,
Starving for lack of the milk of the breast;
And I rose from sleep and enter'd in,
And found my little one, pinch'd and thin,
And croon'd a song, and hush'd its moan,
And put its lips to my white breast-bone;
And the red, red moon that lit the place
Went white to look at the little face,
And I kiss'd and kiss'd and I could not weep,
As it went to sleep, as it went to sleep.



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As it lay asleep, as it lay asleep,
I set it down in the darkness deep,
Smooth'd its limbs and laid it out,
And drew the curtains round about;
Then into the dark, dark room I hied
Where he lay awake at the woman's side,
And though the chamber was black as night,
He saw my face, for it was so white;
I gazed in his eyes, and he shrieked in pain,
And I knew he would never sleep again,
And back to my grave went silently,
And soon my baby was brought to me;
My son and daughter beside me rest,
My little baby is on my breast;
Our bed is warm and our grave is deep,
But he cannot sleep, he cannot sleep!

LEGENDS AND BALLADS OF THE DEAD

THE FOLK OF THE AIR: WM. BUTLER YEATS

O'Driscoll drove with a song,
The wild duck and the drake
From the tall and the tufted weeds
Of the drear Heart Lake.

And he saw how the weeds grew dark
At the coming of night tide,
And he dreamed of the long dark hair
Of Bridget his bride.

He heard while he sang and dreamed
A piper passing away,
And never was piping so sad,
And never was piping so gay.

And he saw young men and young girls
Who danced on a level place,
And Bridget his bride among them,
With a sad and a gay face.



The dancers crowded about him,
And many a sweet thing said,
And a young man brought him red wine,
And a young girl white bread.

But Bridget drew him by the sleeve,
Away from the merry bands,
To old men playing at cards
With a twinkling of ancient hands.

The bread and the wine had a doom,
For these were the folk of the air;
He sat and played in a dream
Of her long dim hair.

He played with the merry old men,
And thought not of evil chance,
Until one bore Bridget his bride
Away from the merry dance.

He bore her away in his arms,
The handsomest young man there,
And his neck and his breast and his arms
Were drowned in her long dim hair.

O'Driscoll got up from the grass
And scattered the cards with a cry;
But the old men and the dancers were gone
As a cloud faded into the sky.

He knew now the folk of the air,
And his heart was blackened by dread,
And he ran to the door of his house;
Old women were keening the dead.

And he heard high up in the air
A piper piping away;
And never was piping so sad
And never was piping so gay.

THE RECONCILIATION: A. MARGARET RAMSAY

“The snow has ceased, the wind has hushed,
The moon shines fair and clear,
The night is drawing on apace,
Yet Evan is not here.



“The deer is couched among the fern,
The bird sleeps on the tree;
O what can keep my only son,
He bides so long from me?”



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“O mother, come and take your rest,
Since Evan stays so late;
If we leave the door unbarred for him,
What need to sit and wait?”

“Now hold your peace, my daughter,
Be still and let me be,
I will not seek my bed this night
Until my son I see.”

And she has left the door unbarred,
And by the fire sat still;
She drew her mantle her about
As the winter night grew chill.

The moon had set beyond the moor,
And half the night had gone,
When standing silent by her side
She saw Evan her son.

“I did not hear your step, Evan,
Nor hear you lift the pin.”
“I would not wake my sister, mother,
So softly I came in.”

“Now sit ye down and rest, Evan,
And I will give you meat.”
“I have been with my cousin John, mother,
And he gave me to eat.”

“Then have ye laid the quarrel by
That was 'twixt him and you,
And given each other pledge of faith
Ye will be friends anew?”

“We have laid the quarrel by, mother,
Forevermore to sleep,
And he has given me his knife,
As pledge of faith to keep.”

“O is it blood or is it rust
That makes the knife so red,
Or is it but the red firelight
That's shining on the blade?”



“No rust is on the blade, mother,
Nor the firelight’s ruddy hue;
The bright blood ran upon the knife
To seal our compact true.”

“O is it with the pale gray gleam
That comes before the dawn,
Or are ye weary with the road
That ye look so ghastly wan?”

“A long and weary road, mother,
I fared to reach my home,
And I must get me to my bed
That waits for me to come.”

“The night is bitter cold, Evan,
See that your bed be warm,
And take your plaid to cover you,
Lest the cold should do you harm.”

“Yes, cold, cold is the night, mother,
Yet soundly do I rest,
With the bleak North wind to cover me,
And the snow white on my breast.”

THE PRIEST’S BROTHER: DORA SIGERSON SHORTER

Thrice in the night the priest arose
From broken sleep to kneel and pray.
“Hush, poor ghost, till the red cock crows,
And I a Mass for your soul may say.”

Thrice he went to the chamber cold
Where, stiff and still uncoffined
His brother lay, his beads he told,
And “Rest, poor spirit, rest,” he said.

Thrice lay the old priest down to sleep
Before the morning bell should toll;
But still he heard—and woke to weep—
The crying of his brother’s soul.

All through the dark, till dawn was pale,
The priest tossed in his misery,



With muffled ears to hide the wail
The voice of that ghost's agony.

At last the red cock flaps his wings,
To trumpet of a day new born.
The lark, awaking, soaring, sings
Into the bosom of the morn.



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The priest before the altar stands
He hears the spirit call for peace;
He beats his breast with shaking hands.
“Oh, Father, grant this soul’s release.

Most Just and Merciful, set free
From Purgatory’s awful night
This sinner’s soul, to fly to Thee
And rest forever in Thy sight.”

The Mass is over—still the clerk
Kneels pallid in the morning glow.
He said, “From evils of the dark
Oh, bless me, father, ere you go.

“Benediction, that I may rest,
For all night did the banshee weep.”
The priest raised up his hands and blest—
“Go now, my child, and you will sleep.”

The priest went down the vestry stair,
He laid his vestments in their place,
And turned—a pale ghost met him there
With beads of pain upon his face.

“Brother,” he said, “you have gained me peace,
But why so long did you know my tears,
And say no Mass for my soul’s release
To save the torture of those years?”

“God rest you, brother,” the good priest said,
“No years have passed—but a single night.”
He showed the body uncoffined
And the six wax candles still alight.

The living flowers on the dead man’s breast
Blew out a perfume sweet and strong.
The spirit paused ere he passed to rest—
“God save your soul from a night so long.”



THE BALLAD OF JUDAS ISCARIOT: ROBERT BUCHANAN

'Twas the body of Judas Iscariot
Lay in the Field of Blood;
'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Beside the body stood.

Black was the earth by night,
And black was the sky:
Black, black were the broken clouds,
Though the red Moon went by.

'Twas the body of Judas Iscariot
Strangled and dead lay there;
'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Looked on in its despair.

The breath of the World came and went
Like a sick man's in rest;
Drop by drop on the World's eyes
The dews fell cool and blest.

Then the soul of Judas Iscariot
Did make a gentle moan—
"I will bury underneath the ground
My flesh and blood and bone.

"I will bury it deep beneath the soil,
Lest mortals look thereon,
And when the wolf and raven come
My body will be gone!

"The stones of the field are sharp as steel,
And hard and cold, God wot;
And I must bear my body hence
Until I find a spot!"

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
So grim, and gaunt and grey,
Raised the body of Judas Iscariot
And carried it away.

And as he bare it from the field
Its touch was cold as ice,



And the ivory teeth within the jaw
Rattled aloud, like dice.

As the soul of Judas Iscariot
Carried its load with pain,
The Eye of Heaven, like a lantern's eye,
Opened and shut again.

Half he walked, and half he seemed
Lifted on the cold wind;
He did not turn, for chilly hands
Were pushing from behind.



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The first place that he came unto
It was the open wold,
And underneath were prickly whins,
And a wind that blew so cold.

The next place that he came unto
It was a stagnant pool,
And when he threw the body in
It floated, light as wool.

He drew the body on his back
And it was dripping chill,
And the next place that he came unto
Was a Cross upon a hill.

A Cross upon the windy hill,
And a Cross on either side,
Three skeletons that swung thereon,
Who had been crucified.

And on the middle cross-bar sat
A white Dove slumbering;
Dim it sat in the dim light,
With its head beneath its wing.

And underneath the middle Cross
A grave yawned wide and vast,
But the soul of Judas Iscariot
Shivered and glided past.

The fourth place that he came unto
It was the Brig of Dread,
And the great torrents rushing down
Were deep and swift and red.

He dared not fling the body in
For fear of faces dim,
And arms were waved in the wild water
To thrust it back to him.

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Turned from the Brig of Dread,
And the dreadful foam of the wild water
Had splashed the body red.



For days and nights he wandered on,
Upon an open plain,
And the days went by like blinding mist,
And the nights like rushing rain.

For days and nights he wandered on
All through the Wood of Woe;
And the nights went by like the moaning wind
And the days like drifting snow.

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Came with a weary face—
Alone, alone, and all alone,
Alone in a lonely place!

He wandered east and he wandered west,
And heard no human sound;
For months and years in grief and tears,
He wandered round and round.

For months and years, in grief and tears,
He walked the silent night,
Then the soul of Judas Iscariot
Perceived a far-off light.

A far-off light across the waste,
As dim as dim might be,
That came and went like a lighthouse gleam,
On a black night at sea.

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot,
Crawled to the distant gleam,
And the rain came down, and the rain was blown
Against him with a scream.

For days and nights he wandered on,
Pushed on by hands unseen,
And the days went by like black, black rain,
And the nights like rushing rain.

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot,
Strange and sad and tall,
Stood all alone at the dead of night,
Before a lighted hall.

And all the wold was white with snow,
And his foot-marks black and damp,



And the ghost of the silver Moon arose,
Holding her yellow lamp.

And the icicles were on the eaves,
And the walls were deep with white,
And the shadows of the guests within
Passed on the window-light.



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And the shadows of the wedding guests
Did strangely come and go,
And the body of Judas Iscariot
Lay stretched along the snow.

The body of Judas Iscariot
Lay stretched along the snow,
'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Ran swiftly to and fro.

To and fro, and up and down,
He ran so swiftly there,
As round and round the frozen Pole
Glideth the lean white bear.

'Twas the Bridegroom sat at the table-head,
And the lights burned bright and clear—
“Oh, who is there?” the Bridegroom said,
“Whose weary feet I hear?”

'Twas one looked up from the lighted hall,
And answered soft and low,
“It is a wolf runs up and down,
With a black track in the snow.”

The Bridegroom in his robe of white,
Sat at the table-head—
“Oh, who is that who moans without?”
The blessed Bridegroom said.

'Twas one looked from the lighted hall,
And answered fierce and low,
“'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Gliding to and fro.”

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Did hush itself and stand,
And saw the Bridegroom at the door
With a light in his hand.

The Bridegroom stood in the open door,
And he was clad in white,
And far within the Lord's Supper
Was spread so long and bright.



The Bridegroom shaded his eyes and looked
And his face was bright to see—
“What dost thou here at the Lord’s Supper
With thy body’s sins?” said he.

’Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Stood black, and sad, and bare—
“I have wandered many nights and days;
There is no light elsewhere.”

’Twas the wedding guests cried out within,
And their eyes were fierce and bright—
“Scourge the soul of Judas Iscariot
Away into the night!”

The Bridegroom stood in the open door,
And he waved hands still and slow,
And the third time that he waved his hands
The air was full of snow.

And of every flake of falling snow,
Before it touched the ground,
There came a dove, and a thousand doves
Made sweet sound.

’Twas the body of Judas Iscariot
Floated away full fleet,
And the wings of the doves that bare it off
Were like its winding sheet.

’Twas the Bridegroom stood at the open door,
And beckoned, smiling sweet;
’Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Stole in and fell at his feet.

“The Holy Supper is spread within,
And the many candles shine,
And I have waited long for thee
Before I poured the wine!”

The supper wine is poured at last,
And the lights burn bright and fair,
Iscariot washes the Bridegroom’s feet,
And dries them with his hair.



THE EVE OF ST. JOHN: WALTER SCOTT

The Baron of Smaylho'me rose with the day,
He spurr'd his courser on,
Without stop or stay down the rocky way,
That leads to Brotherstone.



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He went not with the bold Buccleuch,
His banner broad to rear;
He went not 'gainst the English yew,
To lift the Scottish spear.

Yet his plate-jack was braced, and his helmet was laced,
And his vaunt-brace of proof he wore:
At his saddle-girth was a good steel sperthe,
Full ten pound weight and more.

The Baron return'd in three days' space,
And his looks were sad and sour,
And weary was his courser's pace,
As he reach'd his rocky tower.

He came not from where Ancram Moor
Ran red with English blood;
Where the Douglas true and the bold Buccleuch,
'Gainst keen Lord Evers stood.

Yet was his helmet hack'd and hew'd,
His acton pierced and tore,
His axe and his dagger with blood imbrued,—
But it was not English gore.

He lighted at the Chapellage,
He held him close and still;
And he whistled thrice for his little foot-page;
His name was English Will.

“Come thou hither, my little foot-page,
Come hither to my knee;
Though thou art young and tender of age,
I think thou art true to me.

“Come tell me all that thou hast seen,
And look thou tell me true!
Since I from Smaylho'me tower have been,
What did my ladye do?”—

“My lady each night, sought the lonely light,
That burns on the wild Watchfold;
For from height to height, the beacons bright
Of the English foemen told.



“The bitter clamor’d from the moss,
The wind blew loud and shrill;
Yet the craggy pathway she did cross
To the eiry Beacon Hill.

“I watch’d her steps, and silent came
Where she sat her on a stone;—
No watchman stood by the dreary flame,
It burned all alone.

“The second night I kept her in sight,
Till to the fire she came,
And, by Mary’s might! an Armed Knight
Stood by the lonely flame.

“And many a word that warlike lord
Did speak to my lady there;
But the rain fell fast and loud blew the blast,
And I heard not what they were.

“The third night there, the night was fair,
And the mountain-blast was still,
As again I watch’d the secret pair,
On the lonesome Beacon Hill.

“And I heard her name the midnight hour,
And name this holy eve;
And say ‘Come this night to thy lady’s bower,
Ask no bold Baron’s leave.

“He lifts his spear with the bold Buccleuch;
His lady is all alone;
The door she’ll undo, to her knight so true
On the eve of the good St. John.’—

“I cannot come, I must not come:
I dare not come to thee;
On the eve of St. John I must wander alone,
In thy bower I may not be.’—

“Now, out on thee, faint-hearted knight!
Thou shouldst not say me nay;
For the eve is sweet, and when lovers meet,
Is worth the whole summer’s day.



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“And I’ll chain the blood-hound, and the warder shall not sound,
And rushes shall be strew’d on the stair:
So by the black-rood stone, and by holy St. John,
I conjure thee, my love, to be there!”

“Though the blood-hound be mute and the rush beneath my foot,
And the warder his bugle should not blow,
Yet there sleepeth a priest in a chamber to the east,
And my foot-step he would know.’—

“O fear not the priest, who sleepeth to the east,
For to Dryburgh the way he has ta’en,
And there to say mass, till three days do pass,
For the soul of a knight that is slayne.’

“He turn’d him around and grimly he frown’d;
Then he laugh’d right scornfully—
’He who says the mass-rite for the soul of that knight,
May as well say mass for me!

“At the lone midnight hour, when bad spirits have power,
In thy chamber will I be’—
With that he was gone and my lady left alone,
And no more did I see.”

Then changed, I trow, was that bold Baron’s brow,
From the dark to the blood-red high;

“Now tell me the mien of the knight thou hast seen,
For, by Mary, he shall die!”—

“His arms shone full bright, in the beacon’s red light,
His plume, it was scarlet and blue,
On his shield was a hound, in a silver leash bound,
And his crest was a branch of the yew.”

“Thou liest, thou liest, thou little foot-page,
Loud dost thou lie to me!
For that knight is cold and laid in the mould,
All under the Eildon-tree.”—

“Yet hear but my word, my noble lord!
For I heard her name his name;
And that lady bright she called the knight
Sir Richard of Coldinghame!”



The bold Baron's brow then changed, I trow,
From the high blood-red to pale—
"The grave is deep and dark—and the corpse is stiff and stark—
So I may not trust thy tale.

"Where fair Tweed flows round holy Melrose,
And Eildon slopes to the plain.
Full three nights ago, by some secret foe,
That gay gallant was slain.

"The varying light deceived thy sight,
And the wild winds drown'd the name;
For the Dryburgh bells ring, and the white monks do sing,
For Sir Richard of Coldinghame!"

He pass'd the court-gate, and he oped the tower-gate,
And he mounted the narrow stair,
To the bartizan-seat, where, with maids that on her wait,
He found his lady fair.

That lady sat in mournful mood;
Look'd o'er hill and vale;
Over Tweed's fair flood, and Mertoun's wood,
And all down Teviotdale.

"Now hail, now hail, thou lady bright!"—
"Now hail, thou Baron, true!
What news, what news from Ancram fight?
What news from the bold Buccleuch?"

"The Ancram moor is red with gore,
For many a Southron fell;
And Buccleuch has charged us, evermore,
To watch our beacons well."—



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The lady blush'd red, but nothing she said:
Nor added the Baron a word,
Then she stepp'd down the stair to her chamber fair,
And so did her moody lord.

In sleep the lady mourn'd and the Baron toss'd and turn'd,
And oft to himself he said:—
“The worms round him creep, and his bloody grave is deep.
It cannot give up the dead!”

It was near the ringing of matin-bell,
The night was well-nigh done,
When a heavy sleep on that Baron fell,
On the eve of good St. John.

The lady look'd through the chamber fair,
By the light of the dying flame;
And she was aware of a knight stood there—
Sir Richard of Coldinghame!

“Alas! away! away!” she cried,
“For the holy Virgin's sake!”—
“Lady, I know who sleeps by thy side,
But, lady, he will not wake.

“By Eildon-tree, for long nights three,
In bloody grave have I lain;
The mass and the death-prayer are said for me,
But, lady, they are said in vain.

“By the Baron's brand, near Tweed's fair strand,
Most foully slain I fell;
And my restless sprite on the beacon's height,
For a space is doom'd to dwell.

“At our trysting place, for a certain space,
I must wander to and fro,
But I had not had power to come to thy bower,
Hadst thou not conjured me so.”

Love master'd fear—her brow she cross'd;
“How, Richard, hast thou sped?
And art thou saved or art thou lost?”—
The vision shook his head!



“Who spilleth life, shall forfeit life;
So bid thy lord believe:
That lawless love is guilt above,
This awful sign receive.”

He laid his left hand on an oaken beam,
His right upon her hand,
The lady shrunk, and fainting sunk,
For it scorched like a fiery brand.

The sable score, of fingers four,
Remains on that board impress'd,
And forever more that lady wore
A covering on her wrist.

There is a nun in Dryburgh bower,
Ne'er looks upon the sun,
There is a monk in Melrose tower,
He speaketh word to none.

That nun, who ne'er beholds the day,
That monk that speaks to none,—
That Nun was Smaylho'me's Lady gay,
That monk the bold Baron.

FAIR MARGARET'S MISFORTUNES

“I am no love for you, Margaret,
You are no love for me.
Before to-morrow at eight of the clock,
A rich wedding you shall see.”

Fair Margaret sat in her bower-window
Combing her yellow hair;
There she espied sweet William and his bride,
As they were a-riding near.

Down she laid her ivory comb,
And up she bound her hair;
She went away out of her bower,
And never returned there.

When day was gone and night was come,
And all men fast asleep,
There came the spirit of fair Marg'ret,
And stood at William's feet.



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“Are you awake, sweet William?” she said,
“Or, William, are you asleep?
God give you joy of your gay bride-bed,
And me of my winding sheet.”

When day was come and night was gone,
And all men waked in from sleep,
Sweet William to his ladye said,—
“Alas I have cause to weep.

“I dreamt a dream, my dear ladye,—
Such dreams are never good,—
I dreamt my bower was full of red swine,
And the walls ran down with blood.”

He called up his merry men all,
By one, by two, and by three;
Saying, “I’ll away to fair Margaret’s bower,
By the leave of my ladye.”

And when he came to fair Margaret’s bower,
He knocked at the ring;
And who so ready as her seven brethren,
To let sweet William in.

He turned down the covering-sheet,
To see the face of the dead;
“Methinks she looks all pale and wan;
She hath lost her cherry red.

“I would do more for thee, Margaret,
Than would any of thy kin.
And I will kiss thy pale cold lips,
Though a smile I cannot win.”

With that bespake the seven brethren,
Making most piteous moan,
“You may go and kiss your jolly brown bride,
And let our sister alone!”

“If I do kiss my jolly brown bride,
I do but what is right;
I ne’er made a vow to yonder poor corpse,
By day, nor yet by night.”



“Deal on, deal on, ye merry men all,
Deal on your cake and wine.
Whatever is dealt at her funeral to-day,
Shall be dealt to-morrow at mine!”

Fair Margaret died as it might be to-day,
Sweet William he died the morrow,
Fair Margaret died for pure true love,
Sweet William he died for sorrow.

Margaret was buried in the lower chancel,
And William in the higher;
And out of her breast there sprang a rose tree,
And out of his a brier.

They grew till they grew unto the church-top,
And when they could grow no higher;
And there they tied a true lover’s knot,
Which made all the people admire.

At last the clerk of the parish came,
As the truth doth well appear,
And by misfortune he cut them down,
Or else they had now been here.

SWEET WILLIAM’S GHOST

There came a ghost to Marjorie’s door,
Wi’ many a grievous moan,
And aye he tirmed at the pin,
But answer made she none.

“Oh, say, is that my father?
Or is’t my brother John?
Or is it my true love Willy,
From Scotland new come home?”

“’Tis not thy father, Marjorie,
Nor not thy brother John;
But ’tis thy true love Willy
From Scotland new come home.

“Oh Marjorie sweet! oh Marjorie dear!
For faith and charitie,
Will ye gie me back my faith and troth
That I gave once to thee?”



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“Thy faith and troth thou gavest to me,
And again thou’lt never win,
Until thou come within my bower
And kiss me cheek and chin.”

“My lips they are sae bitter,” he says,
“My breath it is sae strang,
If ye get ae kiss from me to-night,
Your days will not be lang.

“The cocks are crawling, Marjorie,—
The cocks are crawling again:
The dead wi’ the quick they mustna stay,
And I must needs be gone.”

She followed him high, she followed him low,
Till she came to yon church-yard green,
And there the deep grave opened up,
And young William he lay down.

“What three things are these, sweet William,
That stand beside your head?”
“O it’s three maidens, Marjorie,
That once I promised to wed.”

“What three things are these, sweet William,
That stand close at your side?”
“O it’s three babes,” he says, “Marjorie,
That these three maidens had.”

“What three things are these, sweet William,
That lie close at thy feet?”
“O it’s three hell-hounds, Marjorie,
That’s waiting my soul to keep.”

And she took up her white, white hand,
And struck him on the breast;
Saying, “Have here again thy faith and troth,
And I wish your soul good rest.”

CLERK SAUNDERS

Clerk Saunders and may Margaret
Walked ower yon garden green;



And deep and heavy was the love
That fell thir twa between.

“A bed, a bed,” Clerk Saunders said,
“A bed for you and me!”
“Fye na, fye na,” said may Margaret,
“Till anes we married be!”

“Then I’ll take the sword frae my scabbard
And slowly lift the pin;
And you may swear, and save your aith,
Ye ne’er let Clerk Saunders in.

“Take your napkin in your hand,
Tie up your bonnie een,
And you may swear and save your aith,
Ye saw me na since yestreen.”

It was about the midnight hour,
When they asleep were laid,
When in and came her seven brothers,
Wi’ torches burning red:

When in and came her seven brothers,
Wi’ torches burning bright:
They said, “We hae but one sister,
And behold her lying with a knight!”

Then out and spake the first o’ them,
“We will awa’ and let them be.”
And out and spake the second o’ them,
“His father has nae mair but he.”

And out and spake the third o’ them,
“I wot that they are lovers dear.”
And out and spake the fourth o’ them,
“They hae been in love this mony a year.”

Then out and spake the fifth o’ them,
“It were great sin true love to twain,”
And out and spake the sixth o’ them,
“It were shame to slay a sleeping man.”

Then up and gat the seventh o’ them,
And never a word spake he;
But he has striped his bright brown brand
Out through Clerk Saunders’ fair bodye.



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Clerk Saunders he started, and Margaret she turned,
Into his arms as asleep she lay;
And sad and silent was the night
That was atween thir twae.

And they lay still and sleepit sound
Until the day began to daw;
And kindly she to him did say,
“It is time, true love, you were awa’.”

But he lay still and sleepit sound,
Albeit the sun began to sheen;
She looked between her and the wa’,
And dull and drowsie were his een.

Then in and came her father dear;
Said, “Let a’ your mourning be;
I’ll carry the dead corpse to the clay,
And I’ll come back and comfort thee.”

“Comfort weel your seven sons,
For comforted I will never be:
I trow ’twas neither knave nor loon
Was in the bower last night wi’ me.”

The clinking bell gaed through the town,
And carried the dead corpse to the clay.
Young Saunders stood at may Margaret’s window,
I wot, an hour before the day.

“Are ye sleeping, Margaret?” he says,
“Or are you waking presentlie?
Give me my faith and troth again,
True love, as I gied them to thee.”

“Your faith and troth ye sall never get,
Nor our true love sall never twin,
Until ye come within my bower,
And kiss me cheek and chin.”

“My mouth it is full cold, Margaret,
It has the smell now of the ground;
And if I may kiss thy comely mouth,
Thy days will soon be at an end.



“O, cocks are crowing a merry midnight;
I wot the wild fowls are boding day.
Give me my faith and troth again,
And let me fare me on my way.”

“Thy faith and troth thou sall na get,
And our true love sall never twin,
Until ye tell wha’ comes o’ women,
Wot ye, who die in strong traivelling?”

“Their beds are made in the heavens high,
Down at the foot of our good Lord’s knee,
Weel set about wi’ gillyflowers;
I wot, sweet company for to see.

“O, cocks are crowing a merry midnight;
I wot the wild fowls are boding day;
The psalms of heaven will soon be sung,
And I, ere now, will be missed away.”

Then she has taken a crissom wand,
And she has stroken her troth thereon;
She has given it him out at the shot-window,
Wi’ mony a sad sigh and heavy groan.

“I thank ye, Marg’ret; I thank ye, Marg’ret;
Ever I thank ye heartilie;
But gin I were living, as I am dead,
I’d keep my faith and troth with thee.”

It’s hosen and shoon, and gown alone,
She climbed the wall, and followed him,
Until she came to the green forest,
And there she lost the sight o’ him.

“Is there ony room at your head, Saunders?
Is there ony room at your feet?
Is there ony room at your side, Saunders?
Where fain, fain, I wad sleep?”



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“There’s nae room at my head, Marg’ret,
There’s nae room at my feet;
My bed it is fu’ lowly now,
Amang the hungry worms I sleep.

“Cauld mould is my covering now,
But and my winding-sheet;
The dew it fall nae sooner down
Then my resting place is weat.”

Then up and crew the red, red cock,
Then up and crew the gray;
“’Tis time, ’tis time, my dear Marg’ret,
That you were going away.

“And fair Marg’ret, and rare Marg’ret,
And Marg’ret, o’ veritie,
Gin e’er ye love another man,
Ne’er love him as ye did me.”

THE WIFE OF USHER’S WELL

There lived a wife at Usher’s Well,
And a wealthy wife was she;
She had three stout and stalwart sons,
And sent them o’er the sea.

They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely ane,
When word cam’ to the carline wife
That her three sons were gane.

They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely three,
When word cam’ to the carline wife
That her sons she’d never see.

“I wish the wind may never cease,
Nor fish be in the flood,
Till my three sons come hame to me,
In earthly flesh and blood!”

It fell about the Martinmas,
When nights are lang and mirk,



The carline wife's three sons cam' hame,
And their hats were o' the birk.

If neither grew in shye nor ditch
Nor yet in any small shugh;
But at the gates o' Paradise
That birk grew fair eneugh.

"Blow up the fire, my maidens!
Bring water from the well!
For a' my house shall feast this night,
Since my three sons are well."

And she has made to them a bed,
She's made it large and wide;
And she's ta'en her mantle round about,
Sat down at the bedside.

Up then crew the red, red cock,
And up and crew the gray;
The eldest to the youngest said,
"Tis time we were away.

"The cock doth craw, the day doth daw,
The channerin' worm doth chide;
Gin we be miss'd out o' our place,
A sair pain we maun bide."

"Lie still, lie still but a little wee while,
Lie still but if we may;
Gin my mother should miss us when she wakes,
She'll go mad ere it be the day.

"Our mother has nae mair but us;
See where she leans asleep;
The mantle that was on herself,
She has happ'd it round our feet."

O it's they have ta'en up their mother's mantle,
And they've hung it on a pin;
"O lang may ye hing, my mother's mantle,
Ere ye hap us again!

"Fare ye weel, my mother dear!
Fareweel to barn and byre!
And fare ye weel, the bonny lass
That kindles my mother's fire!"

A LYKE-WAKE DIRGE



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This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
—*Every nighte and alle,*
Fire and sleet and candle-lighte,
And Christe receive thy saule.

When thou from hence away art passed,
—*Every nighte and alle,*
To Whinny-muir thou com'st at last;
And Christe receive thy saule.

If ever thou gavest hosen and shoon,
—*Every nighte and alle,*
Sit thee down and put them on;
And Christe receive thy saule.

If hosen and shoon thou ne'er gav'st nane,
—*Every nighte and alle,*
The whins sall prick thee to the bare bane;
And Christe receive thy saule.

From Whinny-muir when thou mayst pass,
—*Every nighte and alle,*
To Brig o' Dread thou com'st at last;
And Christe receive thy saule.

From Brig o' Dread when thou may'st pass,
—*Every nighte and alle,*
To Purgatory Fire thou com'st at last;
And Christe receive thy saule.

If ever thou gavest meat or drink,
—*Every nighte and alle,*
The fire sall never make thee shrink;
And Christe receive thy saule.

If meat or drink thou never gav'st nane,
—*Every nighte and alle,*
The fire will burn thee to the bare bane;
And Christe receive thy saule.

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
—*Every nighte and alle,*
Fire and sleet and candle-lighte,
And Christe receive thy saule.



THE END

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Transcriber's Notes:

Page 88: changed Sine to Since.

Page 192: changed Thy to They.

The unusual spacing in "The Ingoldsby Penance" has been preserved from the original.