# **Classic Poetry Series**

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- poems -

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# Box, The

Once upon a time, in the land of Hush-A-Bye, Around about the wondrous days of yore, They came across a kind of box Bound up with chains and locked with locks And labeled "Kindly do not touch; it's war." A decree was issued round about, and all with a flourish and a shout And a gaily colored mascot tripping lightly on before. Don't fiddle with this deadly box, Or break the chains, or pick the locks. And please don't ever play about with war. The children understood. Children happen to be good And they were just as good around the time of yore. They didn't try to pick the locksOr break into that deadly box. They never tried to play about with war. Mommies didn't either, sisters, aunts, grannies neither 'Cause they were quiet, and sweet, and pretty In those wondrous days of yore. Well, very much the same as now, And not the ones to blame somehow For opening up that deadly box of war. But someone did. Someone battered in the lid And spilled the insides out across the floor. A kind of bouncy, bumpy ball made up of guns and flags And all the tears, and horror, and death that comes with war. It bounced right out and went bashing all about, Bumping into everything in store. And what was sad and most unfair Was that it didn't really seem to care Much who it bumped, or why, or what, or for. It bumped the children mainly. And I'll tell you this quite plainly, It bumps them every day and more, and more, And leaves them dead, and burned, and dying Thousands of them sick and crying. 'Cause when it bumps, it's really very sore. Now there's a way to stop the ball. It isn't difficult at all. All it takes is wisdom, and I'm absolutely sure That we can get it back into the box, And bind the chains, and lock the locks. But no one seems to want to save the children anymore. Well, that's the way it all appears, 'cause it's been' bouncing round for years and years In spite of all the wisdom wizzed since those wondrous days of yore And the time they came across the box, Bound up with chains and locked with locks, And labeled "Kindly do not touch; it's war."

#### **Emblems of Love**

#### She

ONLY to be twin elements of joy
In this extravagance of Being, Love,
Were our divided natures shaped in twain;
And to this hour the whole world must consent.
Is it not very marvellous, our lives
Can only come to this out of a long
Strange sundering, with the years of the world between us?

#### He

Shall life do more than God? for hath not God Striven with himself, when into known delight His unaccomplisht joy he would put forth,-This mystery of a world sign of his striving? Else wherefore this, a thing to break the mind With labouring in the wonder of it, that here Being—the world and we—is suffered to be!— But, lying on thy breast one notable day, Sudden exceeding agony of love Made my mind a trance of infinite knowledge. I was not: yet I saw the will of God As light unfashion'd, unendurable flame, Interminable, not to be supposed; And there was no more creature except light,— The dreadful burning of the lonely God's Unutter'd joy. And then, past telling, came Shuddering and division in the light: Therein, like trembling, was desire to know Its own perfect beauty; and it became A cloven fire, a double flaming, each Adorable to each; against itself Waging a burning love, which was the world;— A moment satisfied in that love-strife I knew the world!—And when I fell from there, Then knew I also what this life would do In being twin,—in being man and woman! For it would do even as its endless Master, Making the world, had done; yea, with itself Would strive, and for the strife would into sex Be cloven, double burning, made thereby Desirable to itself. Contrived joy Is sex in life; and by no other thing Than by a perfect sundering, could life Change the dark stream of unappointed joy To perfect praise of itself, the glee that loves And worships its own Being. This is ours! Yet only for that we have been so long Sundered desire: thence is our life all praise.— But we, well knowing by our strength of joy There is no sundering more, how far we love

From those sad lives that know a half-love only, Alone thereby knowing themselves for ever Sealed in division of love, and therefore made To pour their strength always into their love's Fierceness, as green wood bleeds its hissing sap Into red heat of a fire! Not so do we: The cloven anger, life, hath left to wage Its flame against itself, here turned to one Self-adoration.—Ah, what comes of this? The joy falters a moment, with closed wings Wearying in its upward journey, ere Again it goes on high, bearing its song, Its delight breathing and its vigour beating The highest height of the air above the world.

# She

What hast thou done to me!—I would have soul, Before I knew thee, Love, a captive held By flesh. Now, inly delighted with desire, My body knows itself to be nought else But thy heart's worship of me; and my soul Therein is sunlight held by warm gold air. Nay, all my body is become a song Upon the breath of spirit, a love-song.

#### He

And mine is all like one rapt faculty, As it were listening to the love in thee, My whole mortality trembling to take Thy body like heard singing of thy spirit.

# She

Surely by this, Beloved, we must know Our love is perfect here,—that not as holds The common dullard thought, we are things lost In an amazement that is all unware; But wonderfully knowing what we are! Lo, now that body is the song whereof Spirit is mood, knoweth not our delight? Knoweth not beautifully now our love, That Life, here to this festival bid come Clad in his splendour of worldly day and night, Filled and empower'd by heavenly lust, is all The glad imagination of the Spirit?

#### He

Were it not so, Love could not be at all: Nought could be, but a yearning to fulfil Desire of beauty, by vain reaching forth
Of sense to hold and understand the vision
Made by impassion'd body,—vision of thee!
But music mixt with music are, in love,
Bodily senses; and as flame hath light,
Spirit this nature hath imagined round it,
No way concealed therein, when love comes near,
Nor in the perfect wedding of desires
Suffering any hindrance.

#### She

Ah, but now,
Now am I given love's eternal secret!
Yea, thou and I who speak, are but the joy
Of our for ever mated spirits; but now
The wisdom of my gladness even through Spirit
Looks, divinely elate. Who hath for joy
Our Spirits? Who hath imagined them
Round him in fashion'd radiance of desire,
As into light of these exulting bodies
Flaming Spirit is uttered?

#### He

Yea, here the end
Of love's astonishment! Now know we Spirit,
And Who, for ease of joy, contriveth Spirit.
Now all life's loveliness and power we have
Dissolved in this one moment, and our burning
Carries all shining upward, till in us
Life is not life, but the desire of God,
Himself desiring and himself accepting.
Now what was prophecy in us is made
Fulfilment: we are the hour and we are the joy,
We in our marvellousness of single knowledge,
Of Spirit breaking down the room of fate
And drawing into his light the greeting fire
Of God,—God known in ecstasy of love
Wedding himself to utterance of himself

#### From "Vashti"

WHAT thing shall be held up to woman's beauty? Where are the bounds of it? Yea, what is all The world, but an awning scaffolded amid The waste perilous Eternity, to lodge This Heaven-wander'd princess, woman's beauty? The East and West kneel down to thee, the North And South; and all for thee their shoulders bear The load of fourfold space. As yellow morn Runs on the slippery waves of the spread sea, Thy feet are on the griefs and joys of men That sheen to be thy causey. Out of tears Indeed, and blitheness, murder and lust and love, Whatever has been passionate in clay, Thy flesh was tempered. Behold in thy body The yearnings of all men measured and told, Insatiate endless agonies of desire Given thy flesh, the meaning of thy shape! What beauty is there, but thou makest it? How is earth good to look on, woods and fields, The season's garden, and the courageous hills, All this green raft of earth moored in the seas? The manner of the sun to ride the air, The stars God has imagined for the night? What's this behind them, that we cannot near, Secret still on the point of being blabbed, The ghost in the world that flies from being named? Where do they get their beauty from, all these? They do but glaze a lantern lit for man, And woman's beauty is the flame therein.

# **Hymn to Love**

We are thine, O Love, being in thee and made of thee, As théou, Léove, were the déep thought And we the speech of the thought; yea, spoken are we, Thy fires of thought out-spoken:

But burn'd not through us thy imagining Like fiérce méood in a séong céaught, We were as clamour'd words a fool may fling, Loose words, of meaning broken.

For what more like the brainless speech of a fool,—
The lives travelling dark fears,
And as a boy throws pebbles in a pool
Thrown down abysmal places?

Hazardous are the stars, yet is our birth And our journeying time theirs; As words of air, life makes of starry earth Sweet soul-delighted faces;

As voices are we in the worldly wind;
The great wind of the world's fate
Is turn'd, as air to a shapen sound, to mind
And marvellous desires.

But not in the world as voices storm-shatter'd, Not borne down by the wind's weight; The rushing time rings with our splendid word Like darkness fill'd with fires.

For Love doth use us for a sound of song, And Love's meaning our life wields, Making our souls like syllables to throng His tunes of exultation.

Down the blind speed of a fatal world we fly, As rain blown along earth's fields; Yet are we god-desiring liturgy, Sung joys of adoration;

Yea, made of chance and all a labouring strife, We go charged with a strong flame; For as a language Love hath seized on life His burning heart to story.

Yea, Love, we are thine, the liturgy of thee, Thy thought's golden and glad name, The mortal conscience of immortal glee, Love's zeal in Love's own glory.

# Sale of Saint Thomas, The

A quay with vessels moored

#### Thomas

To India! Yea, here I may take ship; From here the courses go over the seas, Along which the intent prows wonderfully Nose like lean hounds, and tack their journeys out, Making for harbours as some sleuth was laid For them to follow on their shifting road. Again I front my appointed ministry. --But why the Indian lot to me? Why mine Such fearful gospelling? For the Lord knew What a frail soul He gave me, and a heart Lame and unlikely for the large events. --And this is worse than Baghdad! though that was A fearful brink of travel. But if the lots, That gave to me the Indian duty, were Shuffled by the unseen skill of Heaven, surely That fear of mine in Baghdad was the same Marvellous Hand working again, to guard The landward gate of India from me. There I stood, waiting in the weak early dawn To start my journey; the great caravan's Strange cattle with their snoring breaths made steam Upon the air, and (as I thought) sadly The beasts at market-booths and awnings gay Of shops, the city's comfortable trade, Lookt, and then into months of plodding lookt. And swiftly on my brain there came a wind Of vision; and I saw the road mapt out Along the desert with a chalk of bones; I saw a famine and the Afghan greed Waiting for us, spears at our throats, all we Made women by our hunger; and I saw Gigantic thirst grieving our mouths with dust, Scattering up against our breathing salt Of blown dried dung, till the taste eat like fires Of a wild vinegar into our sheathed marrows; And a sudden decay thicken'd all our bloods As rotten leaves in fall will baulk a stream; Then my kill'd life the muncht food of jackals. --The wind of vision died in my brain; and lo, The jangling of the caravan's long gait Was small as the luting of a breeze in grass Upon my ears. Into the waiting thirst Camels and merchants all were gone, while I Had been in my amazement. Was this not A sign? God with a vision tript me, lest Those tall fiends that ken for my approach In middle Asia, Thirst and his grisly band Of plagues, should with their brigand fingers stop His message in my mouth. Therefore I said,

If India is the place where I must preach, I am to go by ship, not overland. And here my ship is berthed. But worse, far worse Than Baghdad, is this roadstead, the brown sails, All the enginery of going on sea, The tackle and the rigging, tholes and sweeps, The prows built to put by the waves, the mast's Stayed for a hurricane; and lo, that line Of gilded water there! the sun has drawn In a long narrow band of shining oil His light over the sea; how evilly move Ripples along that golden skin! -- the gleam Works like a muscular thing! like the half-gorged Sleepy swallowing of a serpent's neck. The sea lives, surely! My eyes swear to it; And, like a murderous smile that glimpses through A villain's courtesy, that twitching dazzle Parts the kind mood of weather to bewray The feasted waters of the sea, stretched out In lazy gluttony, expecting prey. How fearful is this trade of sailing! Worse Than all land-evils is the water-way Before me now. -- What, cowardice? Nay, why Trouble myself with ugly words? 'Tis prudence, And prudence is an admirable thing. Yet here's much cost -- these packages piled up, Ivory doubless, emeralds, gums, and silks, All these they trust on shipboard? Ah, but I, I who have seen God, I to put myself Amid the heathen outrage of the sea In a deal-wood box! It were plain folly. There is naught more precious in the world than I: I carry God in me, to give to men. And when has the sea been friendly unto man? Let it but guess my errand, it will call The dangers of the air to wreak upon me, Winds to juggle the puny boat and pinch The water into unbelievable creases. And shall my soul, and God in my soul, drown? Or venture drowning? -- But no, no; I am safe. Smooth as believing souls over their deaths And over agonies shall slide henceforth To God, so shall my way be blest amid The quiet crouching terrors of the sea, Like panthers when a fire weakens their hearts; Ay, this huge sin of nature, the salt sea, Shall be afraid of me, and of the mind Within me, that with gesture, speech and eyes Of the Messiah flames. What element Dare snarl against my going, what incubus dare Remember to be fiendish, when I light My whole being with memory of Him?

The malice of the sea will slink from me, And the air be harmless as a muzzled wolf; For I am a torch, and the flame of me is God.

A Ship's Captain

You are my man, my passenger?

Thomas I am.

I go to India with you.

Captain Well, I hope so.

There's threatening in the weather. Have you a mind To hug your belly to the slanted deck, Like a louse on a whip-top, when the boat Spins on an axlie in the hissing gales?

#### Thomas

Fear not. 'Tis likely indeed that storms are now Plotting against our voyage; ay, no doubt The very bottom of the sea prepares To stand up mountainous or reach a limb Out of his night of water and huge shingles, That he and the waves may break our keel. Fear not; Like those who manage horses, I've a word Will fasten up within their evil natures The meanings of the winds and waves and reefs.

Captain

You have a talisman? I have one too;
I know not if the storms think much of it.
I may be shark's meat yet. And would your spell
Be daunting to a cuttle, think you now?
We had a bout with one on our way here;
It had green lidless eyes like lanterns, arms
As many as the branches of a tree,
But limber, and each one of them wise as a snake.
It laid hold of our bulwarks, and with three
Long knowing arms, slimy, and of a flesh
So tough they'ld fool a hatchet, searcht the ship,
And stole out of the midst of us all a man;
Yes, and he the proudest man upon the seas
For the rare powerful talisman he'd got.
And would yours have done better?

Thomas I am one
Not easily frightened. I'm for India.
You will not putme from my way with talk.

Captain

My heart, I never thought of frightening you. --Well, here's both tide and wind, and we may not start. **Thomas** 

Not start? I pray you, do.

Captain It's no use praying; I dare not. I've not half my cargo yet.

Thomas

What do you wait for, then?

Captain

A carpenter.

**Thomas** 

You are talking strangely.

Captain

I might as well broach all my blood at once,
Here as I stand, as sail to India back
Without a carpenter on board; -- O strangely
Wise are our kings in the killing of men!

Thomas

But does your king then need a carpenter?

Captain

Yes, for he dreamed a dream; and(like a man Who, having eaten poison, and with all Force of his life turned out the crazing drug, Has only a weak and wrestled nature left That gives in foolishly to some bad desire A healthy man would laught at; so our king Is left desiring by his venomous dream. But, being a king, the whole land aches with him.

Thomas

What dream was that?

A palace made of souls; --Captain Ay, there's a folly for a man to dream! He saw a palace covering all the land, Big as the day itself, made of a stone That answered with a better gleam than glass To the sun's greeting, fashioned like the sound Of laughter copied into shining shape: So the king said. And with him in the dream There was a voice that fleered upon the king: 'This is the man who makes much of himself For filling the common eyes with palaces Gorgeously bragging out his royalty: Whereas he hath not one that seemeth not In work, in height, in posture on the ground, A hut, a peasant's dingy shed, to mine. And all his excellent woods, metals, and stones, The things he's filched out of the earth's old pockets And hoisted up into walls and domes; the gold,

Ebony, agate stairs, wainscots of jade, The windows of jargoon, and heavenly lofts Of marble, all the stuff he takes to be wealth, Reckons like savage mud and wattle against The matter of my building.' -- And the king, Gloating upon the white sheen of that palace, And weeping like a girl ashamed, inquired 'What is that stone?' And the voice answered him, 'Soul.' 'But in my palaces too,' said he, 'There should be soul built: I have driven nations, What with quarrying, what with craning, down To death, and sure their souls stay in my work. And 'Mud and wattle' sneered the voice again; But added, 'In the west there is a man, A slave, a carpenter, whose heart has been Apprenticed to the skill that built my reign, This beauty; and were he master of your gangs, He'ld build you a palace that would look like mine.' --So now no ship may sail from India, Since the king's scornful dream, unless it bring A carpenter among its homeward lading: And carpenters are getting hard to find.

#### **Thomas**

And have none made for the king his desire?

# Captain

Many have tried, with roasting living men In queer huge kilns, and other sleights, to found A glass of human souls; and others seek With marvellous stone to please our desperate king. Always at last their own tormented bodies Delight the cruelty of the king's heart.

#### Thomas

Well then, I hope you'll find your carpenter, And soon. I would not that we wait too long; I loathe a dallying journey. -- I should suppose We'ld have good sailing at this season, now?

#### Captain

Why, you were looking, a few minutes gone, For rare wild storms: I hope we'll have them too; I want to see you work that talisman You boast about: I've a great love for spells.

#### Thomas

Let it be storm or calm, so we be sailing. I long have wished to voyage into mid sea, To give my senses rest from wondering On this preplexed grammar of the land Written in men and women, the strange trees,

Herbs, and those things so like to souls, the beasts. My wilful senses will keep perilously Employed with these my brain, and weary it Still to be asking. But on the high seas Such throng'd reality is left behind, --Only vast air and water, and the hue That always seems like special news of God. Surely 'tis half way to eternity To go where only size and colour live; And I could purify my mind from all Worldly amazement by imagining Beyond my senses into God's great Heaven, If I were in mid sea. I have dreamed of this. Wondrous too, I think, to sail at night While shaols of moonlight flickers dance beside, Like swimming glee of fishes scaled in gold, Curvetting in thwart bounds over the swell; The perceiving flesh, in bliss of such a beauty, Must sure feel fine as spiritual sight. --Moods have been on me, too, when I would be Sailing recklessly through wild darkness, where Gigantic whispers of a harassed sea Fill the whole world of air, and I stand up To breast the danger of the loosen'd sky, And feel my immortality like music, --Yea, I alone in the broken world, firm things All gone to monstrous flurry, knowing myself An indestructible word spoken by God. --This is a small, small boat?

Captain Small is nothing,
A bucket will do, so it know how to ride
Top upward: cleverness is the thing in boats.
And I wish this were cleverer: she goes crank
At times just when she should go sober.
But what? Boats are but girls for whimsies: men
Must let them have their freaks.

Thomas Have you good skill In seamanship?

Captain Well, I am not drowned yet,
Though I'm a grey man and have been at sea
Longer than you've been walking. My old sight
Can tell Mizar from Alcor still.

Thomas Ay, so;
Doubtless you'll bring me safe to India.
But being there -- tell me now of the land:
How use they strangers there?

Captain Queerly, sometimes

If the king's moody, and tired of feeling nerves Mildly made happy with soft jewels of silk, Odours and wines and slim lascivious girls, And yearns for sharper thrills to pierce his brain, He often finds a stranger handy then.

#### **Thomas**

Why, what do you mean?

Captain There was a merchant came
To Travancore, and could not speak our talk;
And, it chanced, he was brought before the throne
Just when the king was weary of sweet pleasures.
So, to better his tongue, a rope was bent
Beneath his oxters, up he was hauled, and fire
Let singe the soles of his feet, until his legs
Wriggled like frying eels; then the king's dogs
Were set to hunt the hirpling man. The king
Laught greatly and cried, 'But give the dogs words they know,
And they'll be tame.' -- Have you the Indian speech?

# **Thomas**

Not yet: it will be given me, I trust.

Captain

You'd best make sure of the gift. Another stranger, Who swore he knew of better gods than ours, Seemed to the king troubled with fleas, and slaves Were told to groom him smartly, which they did Thoroughly with steel combs, until at last They curried the living flesh from his bones And stript his face of gristle, till he was Skull and half skeleton and yet alive. You're not for dealing in new gods?

Thomas Not I.

Was the man killed?

Captain He lived a little while; But the flies killed him.

Thomas Flies? I hope India
Is not a fly-plagued land? I abhor flies.

Captain

You will see strange ones, for our Indian life Hath wonderful fierce breeding. Common earth With us quickens to buzzing flights of wings As readily as a week-old carcase here Thrown in a sunny marsh. Why, we have wasps That make your hornets seem like pretty midges; And there be flies in India will drink

Not only blood of bulls, tigers, and bears, But pierce the river-horses' creasy leather, Ay, worry crocodiles through their cuirasses And prick the metal fishes when they bask. You'll feel them soon, with beaks like sturdy pins, Treating their stinging thirsts with your best blood. A man can't walk a mile in India Without being the business of a throng'd And moving town of flies; they hawk at a man As bold as little eagles, and as wild. And, I suppose, only a fool will blame them. Flies have the right to sink wells in our skin All as men to bore parcht earth for water. But I must do a job on board, and then Search the town afresh for a carpenter.

Thomas (alone)

Ay, loose tongue, I know how thou art prompted. Satan's cunning device thou art, to sap My heart with chatter'd fears. How easy it is For a stiff mind to hold itself upright Against the cords of devilish suggestion Tackled about it, though kept downward strained With sly, masterful winches made of fear. Yea, when the mind is warned what engines mean To ply it into grovelling, and thought set firm, The tugging strings fail like a cobweb-stuff. Not as in Baghdad is it with me now; Nor canst thou, Satan, by a prating mouth, Fell my tall purpose to a flatlong scorn. I can divide the check of God's own hand From tempting such as this: India is mine! --Ay, fiend, and if thou utter thy storming heart Into the ocean sea, as into mob A rebel utters turbulence and rage, And raise before my path swelling barriers Of hatred soul'd in water, yet will I strike My purpose, and God's purpose, clean through all The ridges of thy power. And I will show This mask that the devil wears, this old shipman, A thing to make his proud heart of evil Writhe like a trodden snake; yea, he shall see How godly faith can go upon the huge Fury of forces bursting out of law, Easily as a boy goes on windy grass. --O marvel! that my little life of mind Can by mere thinking the unsizeable Creatures of sea enslave! I must believe it. The mind hath many powers beyond name Deep womb'd within it, and can shoot strange vigours: Men there have been who could so grimly look That soldiers' hearts went out like candle flames Before their eyes, and the blood perisht in them. --

But I -- could I do that? Would I not feel The power in me if 'twas there? And yet 'Twere a child's game to what I have to do, For days and days with sleepless faith oppress And terrorise the demon sea. I think A man might, as I saw my Master once, Pass unharmed through a storm of men, yet fail At this that lies before me: men are mind, And mind can conquer mind; but how can it quell The unappointed purpose of great waters? --Well, say the sea is past: why, then, I have My feet but on the threshold of my task, To gospel India, -- my single heart To seize into the order of its beat All the strange blood of India, my brain To lord the dark thought of that tann'd mankind! --O, horrible those sweltry places are, Where the sun comes so close, it makes the earth Burn in a frenzy of breeding, -- smoke and flame Of lives burning up from agoniz'd loam! Those monstrous sappy jungles of clutcht growth, What can such fearful increase have to do With prospering bounty? A rage works in the ground, Incurably, like frantic lechery, Pouring its passion out in crops and spawns. 'Tis as the mighty spirit of life, that here Walketh beautifully praising, glad of God, Should, stepping on the poison'd Indian shore, Breathing the Indian air of fire snd steams, Fling herself into a craze of hideous dancing, The green gown whipping her swift limbs, all her body Writhen to speak inutterable desire, Tormented by a glee of hating God. Nay, it must be, to visit India, That frantic pomp and hurrying forth of life, As if a man should enter at unawares The dreaming mind of Satan, gorgeously Imagining his eternal hell of lust. --

They say the land is full of apes, which have Their own gods and worship: how ghastly, this! -- That demons (for it must be so) should build, In mockery of man's upward faith, the souls Of monkeys, those lewd mammets of mankind, Into a dreadful farce of adoration! And flies! a land of flies! where the hot soil Foul with ceaseless decay steams into flies! So thick they pile themselves in the air above Their meal of filth, they seem like breathing heaps Of formless life mounded upon the earth; And buzzing always like the pipes and strings Of solemn music made for sorcerers. --

I abhor flies, -- to see them stare upon me Out of their little faces of gibbous eyes; To feel the dry cool skin of their bodies alight Perching upon my lips! -- O yea, a dream, A dream of impious obscene Satan, this Monstrous frenzy of life, the Indian being! And there are men in the dream! What men are they? I've heard, naught relishes their brains so much As to tie down a man and tease his flesh Infamously, until a hundred pains Hound the desiring life out of his body, Filling his nerves with such a fearful zest That the soul overstrained shatters beneath it. Must I preach God to these murderous hearts? I would my lot had fallen to go and dare Death from the silent dealing of Northern cold! --

O, but I would face all these Indian fears, The horror of the huge power of life, The beasts all fierce and venomous, the men With cruel souls, learned to invent pain, All these and more, if I had any hope That, braving them, Lord Christ prosper'd through me. If Christ desired India, He had sent The band of us, solder'd in one great purpose, To strike His message through those dark vast tribes. But one man! -- O surely it is folly, And we misread the lot! One man, to thrust, Even though in his soul the lamp was kindled At God's own hands, one man's lit soul to thrust The immense Indian darkness out of the world! For human flesh there breeds as furiously As the green things and the cattle; and it is all, All this enormity of measureless folk, Penn'd in a land so close to the devil's reign The very apes have faith in him. -- No, no; Impetuous brains mistake the signs of God Too easily. God would not have me waste My zeal for Him in this wild enterprise, Of going alone to swarming India; -- one man, One mortal voice, to charm those myriad ears Away from the fiendish clamour of Indian gods, One man preaching the truth against the huge Bray of the gongs and horns of the Indian priests! A cup of wine poured in the sea were not More surely lost in the green and brackish depths, Than the fire and fragrance of my doctrine poured Into that multitudinous pond of men, India. -- Shipman! Master of the ship! --I have thought better of this journey; now I find I am not meant to go.

Captain

Not meant?

**Thomas** 

I would say, I had forgotten Indian air Is full of fevers; and my health is bad For holding out against fever.

Captain

As you please.

I keep your fare, though.

**Thomas** 

O,{ 'tis yours. -- Good sailing!

As he makes to depart, a Noble Stranger is seen approaching along the

Captain

quay.

Well, here's a marvel: 'Tis a king, for sure! 'Twould take the taxes of a world to dress A man in that silken gold, and all those gems. What a flash the light makes of him, nay, he burns; And he's here on the quay all by himself, Not even a slave to fan him! -- Man, you're ailing! You look like death; is it the falling sickness? Or has the mere thought of the Indian journey Made your marrow quail with a cold fever?

The Stranger (to the Captain)
You are the master of this ship?

Captain

I am.

Stranger

This huddled man belongs to me: a slave Escaped my service.

Captain Lord, I knew not that. But you are in good time.

Stranger And was the slave For putting out with you? Where are your bound?

Captain

To India. First he would sail, and then Again he would not. But, my Lord, I swear I never guesst he was a runaway.

Stranger

Well, he shall have his mind and go with you To India: a good slave he is, but bears A restless thought. He has slipt off before, And vexes me still to be watching him. We'll make a bargain of him.

Captain I, my Lord?
I have no need of slaves: I am too poor.

Stranger

For twenty silver pieces he is yours.

Captain

That's cheap, if he has a skill. Yes, there might be Profit in him at that. Has he a trade?

Stranger

He is a carpenter.

Captain A carpenter! Why, for a good one I'ld give all my purse.

Stranger

No, twenty silver pieces is the price;
Though 'tis a slave a king might joy to own.
I've taught him to imagine palaces
So high, and tower'd so nobly, they might seem
The marvelling of a God-delighted heart
Escaping into ecstasy; he knows,
Moreover, of a stuff so rare it makes
Smaragdus and the dragon-stone despised;
And yet the quarries whereof he is wise
Would yield enough to house the tribes of the world
In palaces of beautiful shining work.

Captain

Lo there! why, that is it: the carpenter I am to bring is needed for to build The king's new palace.

Stranger

Yea? He is your man.

Captain

Come on, my man. I'll put your cunning heels Where they'll not budge more than a shuffled inch. My lord, if you'll bide with the rascal here I'll get the irons ready. Here's your sum. --

Stranger

Now, Thomas, know thy sin. It was not fear; Easily may a man crouch down for fear, And yet rise up on firmer knees, and face The hailing storm of the world with graver courage. But prudence, prudence is the deadly sin, And one that groweth deep into a life, With hardening roots that clutch about the breast. For this refuses faith in the unknown powers

Within man's nature; shrewdly bringeth all Their inspiration of strange eagerness( To a judgment bought by safe experience; Narrows desire into the scope of thought. But it is written in the heart of man, Thou shalt no larger be than thy desire. Thou must not therefore stoop thy spirit's sight To pore only within the candle-gleam Of conscious wit and reasonable brain; But search into the sacred darkness lying Outside thy knowledge of thyself, the vast Measureless fate, full of the power of stars, The outer noiseless heavens of thy soul. Keep thy desire closed in the room of light The labouring fires of thy mind have made, And thou shalt find the vision of thy spirit Pitifully dazzled to so shrunk a ken, There are no spacious puissances about it. But send desire often forth to scan The immense night which is thy greater soul; Knowing the possible, see thou try beyond it Into impossible things, unlikely ends; And thou shalt find thy knowledgeable desire Grow large as all the regions of thy soul, Whose firmament doth cover the whole of Being, And of created purpose reach the ends.

# Song from Judith 3

BALKIS was in her marble town, And shadow over the world came down. Whiteness of walls, towers and piers, That all day dazzled eyes to tears, Turned from being white-golden flame, And like the deep-sea blue became. Balkis into her garden went; Her spirit was in discontent Like a torch in restless air. Joylessly she wandered there, And saw her city's azure white Lying under the great night, Beautiful as the memory Of a worshipping world would be In the mind of a god, in the hour When he must kill his outward power; And, coming to a pool where trees Grew in double greeneries, Saw herself, as she went by The water, walking beautifully, And saw the stars shine in the glance Of her eyes, and her own fair countenance Passing, pale and wonderful, Across the night that filled the pool. And cruel was the grief that played With the queen's spirit; and she said: 'What do I here, reigning alone? For to be unloved is to be alone. There is no man in all my land Dare my longing understand; The whole folk like a peasant bows Lest its look should meet my brows And be harmed by this beauty of mine. I burn their brains as I were sign Of God's beautiful anger sent To master them with punishment Of beauty that must pour distress On hearts grown dark with ugliness. But it is I am the punisht one. Is there no man, is there none, In whom my beauty will but move The lust of a delighted love; In whom some spirit of God so thrives That we may wed our lonely lives. Is there no man, is there none? ' She said, 'I will go to Solomon.'

#### The Box

Once upon a time, in the land of Hush-A-Bye, Around about the wondrous days of yore, They came across a kind of box Bound up with chains and locked with locks And labeled "Kindly do not touch; it's war." A decree was issued round about, and all with a flourish and a shout And a gaily colored mascot tripping lightly on before. Don't fiddle with this deadly box, Or break the chains, or pick the locks. And please don't ever play about with war. The children understood. Children happen to be good And they were just as good around the time of yore. They didn't try to pick the locks Or break into that deadly box. They never tried to play about with war. Mommies didn't either, sisters, aunts, grannies neither 'Cause they were quiet, and sweet, and pretty In those wondrous days of yore. Well, very much the same as now, And not the ones to blame somehow For opening up that deadly box of war. But someone did. Someone battered in the lid And spilled the insides out across the floor. A kind of bouncy, bumpy ball made up of guns and flags And all the tears, and horror, and death that comes with war. It bounced right out and went bashing all about, Bumping into everything in store. And what was sad and most unfair Was that it didn't really seem to care Much who it bumped, or why, or what, or for. It bumped the children mainly. And I'll tell you this quite plainly, It bumps them every day and more, and more, And leaves them dead, and burned, and dying Thousands of them sick and crying. 'Cause when it bumps, it's really very sore. Now there's a way to stop the ball. It isn't difficult at all. All it takes is wisdom, and I'm absolutely sure That we can get it back into the box, And bind the chains, and lock the locks. But no one seems to want to save the children anymore. Well, that's the way it all appears, 'cause it's been' bouncing round for years and years In spite of all the wisdom wizzed since those wondrous days of yore And the time they came across the box, Bound up with chains and locked with locks, And labeled "Kindly do not touch; it's war."

#### The Sale of Saint Thomas

A quay with vessels moored

#### **Thomas**

To India! Yea, here I may take ship; From here the courses go over the seas, Along which the intent prows wonderfully Nose like lean hounds, and tack their journeys out, Making for harbours as some sleuth was laid For them to follow on their shifting road. Again I front my appointed ministry. --But why the Indian lot to me? Why mine Such fearful gospelling? For the Lord knew What a frail soul He gave me, and a heart Lame and unlikely for the large events. --And this is worse than Baghdad! though that was A fearful brink of travel. But if the lots, That gave to me the Indian duty, were Shuffled by the unseen skill of Heaven, surely That fear of mine in Baghdad was the same Marvellous Hand working again, to guard The landward gate of India from me. There I stood, waiting in the weak early dawn To start my journey; the great caravan's Strange cattle with their snoring breaths made steam Upon the air, and (as I thought) sadly The beasts at market-booths and awnings gay Of shops, the city's comfortable trade, Lookt, and then into months of plodding lookt. And swiftly on my brain there came a wind Of vision; and I saw the road mapt out Along the desert with a chalk of bones; I saw a famine and the Afghan greed Waiting for us, spears at our throats, all we Made women by our hunger; and I saw Gigantic thirst grieving our mouths with dust, Scattering up against our breathing salt Of blown dried dung, till the taste eat like fires Of a wild vinegar into our sheathed marrows; And a sudden decay thicken'd all our bloods As rotten leaves in fall will baulk a stream; Then my kill'd life the muncht food of jackals. --The wind of vision died in my brain; and lo, The jangling of the caravan's long gait Was small as the luting of a breeze in grass Upon my ears. Into the waiting thirst Camels and merchants all were gone, while I Had been in my amazement. Was this not A sign? God with a vision tript me, lest Those tall fiends that ken for my approach In middle Asia, Thirst and his grisly band Of plagues, should with their brigand fingers stop

His message in my mouth. Therefore I said, If India is the place where I must preach, I am to go by ship, not overland. And here my ship is berthed. But worse, far worse Than Baghdad, is this roadstead, the brown sails, All the enginery of going on sea, The tackle and the rigging, tholes and sweeps, The prows built to put by the waves, the masts Stayed for a hurricane; and lo, that line Of gilded water there! the sun has drawn In a long narrow band of shining oil His light over the sea; how evilly move Ripples along that golden skin! -- the gleam Works like a muscular thing! like the half-gorged Sleepy swallowing of a serpent's neck. The sea lives, surely! My eyes swear to it; And, like a murderous smile that glimpses through A villain's courtesy, that twitching dazzle Parts the kind mood of weather to bewray The feasted waters of the sea, stretched out In lazy gluttony, expecting prey. How fearful is this trade of sailing! Worse Than all land-evils is the water-way Before me now. -- What, cowardice? Nay, why Trouble myself with ugly words? 'Tis prudence, And prudence is an admirable thing. Yet here's much cost -- these packages piled up, Ivory doubless, emeralds, gums, and silks, All these they trust on shipboard? Ah, but I, I who have seen God, I to put myself Amid the heathen outrage of the sea In a deal-wood box! It were plain folly. There is naught more precious in the world than I: I carry God in me, to give to men. And when has the sea been friendly unto man? Let it but guess my errand, it will call The dangers of the air to wreak upon me, Winds to juggle the puny boat and pinch The water into unbelievable creases. And shall my soul, and God in my soul, drown? Or venture drowning? -- But no, no; I am safe. Smooth as believing souls over their deaths And over agonies shall slide henceforth To God, so shall my way be blest amid The quiet crouching terrors of the sea, Like panthers when a fire weakens their hearts; Ay, this huge sin of nature, the salt sea, Shall be afraid of me, and of the mind Within me, that with gesture, speech and eyes Of the Messiah flames. What element Dare snarl against my going, what incubus dare Remember to be fiendish, when I light

My whole being with memory of Him? The malice of the sea will slink from me, And the air be harmless as a muzzled wolf; For I am a torch, and the flame of me is God.

A Ship's Captain

You are my man, my passenger?

Thomas
I go to India with you.

Captain Well, I hope so.

There's threatening in the weather. Have you a mind To hug your belly to the slanted deck, Like a louse on a whip-top, when the boat Spins on an axlie in the hissing gales?

I am.

# **Thomas**

Fear not. 'Tis likely indeed that storms are now Plotting against our voyage; ay, no doubt The very bottom of the sea prepares To stand up mountainous or reach a limb Out of his night of water and huge shingles, That he and the waves may break our keel. Fear not; Like those who manage horses, I've a word Will fasten up within their evil natures The meanings of the winds and waves and reefs.

Captain

You have a talisman? I have one too;
I know not if the storms think much of it.
I may be shark's meat yet. And would your spell
Be daunting to a cuttle, think you now?
We had a bout with one on our way here;
It had green lidless eyes like lanterns, arms
As many as the branches of a tree,
But limber, and each one of them wise as a snake.
It laid hold of our bulwarks, and with three
Long knowing arms, slimy, and of a flesh
So tough they'ld fool a hatchet, searcht the ship,
And stole out of the midst of us all a man;
Yes, and he the proudest man upon the seas
For the rare powerful talisman he'd got.
And would yours have done better?

Thomas I am one Not easily frightened. I'm for India. You will not putme from my way with talk.

#### Captain

My heart, I never thought of frightening you. --Well, here's both tide and wind, and we may not start. Thomas

Not start? I pray you, do.

Captain It's no use praying; I dare not. I've not half my cargo yet.

Thomas

What do you wait for, then?

Captain

A carpenter.

Thomas

You are talking strangely.

Captain But not idly.

I might as well broach all my blood at once,

Here as I stand, as sail to India back
Without a carpenter on board; -- O strangely
Wise are our kings in the killing of men!

Thomas

But does your king then need a carpenter?

Captain

Yes, for he dreamed a dream; and(like a man Who, having eaten poison, and with all Force of his life turned out the crazing drug, Has only a weak and wrestled nature left That gives in foolishly to some bad desire A healthy man would laught at; so our king Is left desiring by his venomous dream.

But, being a king, the whole land aches with him

But, being a king, the whole land aches with him.

Thomas

What dream was that?

Captain A palace made of souls; --Ay, there's a folly for a man to dream! He saw a palace covering all the land, Big as the day itself, made of a stone That answered with a better gleam than glass To the sun's greeting, fashioned like the sound Of laughter copied into shining shape: So the king said. And with him in the dream There was a voice that fleered upon the king: 'This is the man who makes much of himself For filling the common eyes with palaces Gorgeously bragging out his royalty: Whereas he hath not one that seemeth not In work, in height, in posture on the ground, A hut, a peasant's dingy shed, to mine. And all his excellent woods, metals, and stones, The things he's filched out of the earth's old pockets And hoisted up into walls and domes; the gold, Ebony, agate stairs, wainscots of jade, The windows of jargoon, and heavenly lofts Of marble, all the stuff he takes to be wealth, Reckons like savage mud and wattle against The matter of my building.' -- And the king, Gloating upon the white sheen of that palace, And weeping like a girl ashamed, inquired 'What is that stone?" And the voice answered him, 'Soul.' 'But in my palaces too,' said he, 'There should be soul built: I have driven nations, What with quarrying, what with craning, down To death, and sure their souls stay in my work.' And 'Mud and wattle' sneered the voice again; But added, 'In the west there is a man, A slave, a carpenter, whose heart has been Apprenticed to the skill that built my reign, This beauty; and were he master of your gangs, He'ld build you a palace that would look like mine.' --So now no ship may sail from India, Since the king's scornful dream, unless it bring A carpenter among its homeward lading: And carpenters are getting hard to find.

#### Thomas

And have none made for the king his desire?

# Captain

Many have tried, with roasting living men In queer huge kilns, and other sleights, to found A glass of human souls; and others seek With marvellous stone to please our desperate king. Always at last their own tormented bodies Delight the cruelty of the king's heart.

#### Thomas

Well then, I hope you'll find your carpenter, And soon. I would not that we wait too long; I loathe a dallying journey. -- I should suppose We'ld have good sailing at this season, now?

#### Captain

Why, you were looking, a few minutes gone, For rare wild storms: I hope we'll have them too; I want to see you work that talisman You boast about: I've a great love for spells.

# **Thomas**

Let it be storm or calm, so we be sailing. I long have wished to voyage into mid sea, To give my senses rest from wondering On this preplexed grammar of the land

Written in men and women, the strange trees, Herbs, and those things so like to souls, the beasts. My wilful senses will keep perilously Employed with these my brain, and weary it Still to be asking. But on the high seas Such throng'd reality is left behind, --Only vast air and water, and the hue That always seems like special news of God. Surely 'tis half way to eternity To go where only size and colour live; And I could purify my mind from all Worldly amazement by imagining Beyond my senses into God's great Heaven, If I were in mid sea. I have dreamed of this. Wondrous too, I think, to sail at night While shaols of moonlight flickers dance beside, Like swimming glee of fishes scaled in gold, Curvetting in thwart bounds over the swell; The perceiving flesh, in bliss of such a beauty, Must sure feel fine as spiritual sight. --Moods have been on me, too, when I would be Sailing recklessly through wild darkness, where Gigantic whispers of a harassed sea Fill the whole world of air, and I stand up To breast the danger of the loosen'd sky, And feel my immortality like music, --Yea, I alone in the broken world, firm things All gone to monstrous flurry, knowing myself An indestructible word spoken by God. --This is a small, small boat?

Captain Small is nothing,
A bucket will do, so it know how to ride
Top upward: cleverness is the thing in boats.
And I wish this were cleverer: she goes crank
At times just when she should go sober.
But what? Boats are but girls for whimsies: men
Must let them have their freaks.

Thomas Have you good skill In seamanship?

Captain Well, I am not drowned yet,
Though I'm a grey man and have been at sea
Longer than you've been walking. My old sight
Can tell Mizar from Alcor still.

Thomas Ay, so;
Doubtless you'll bring me safe to India.
But being there -- tell me now of the land:
How use they strangers there?

Captain Queerly, sometimes
If the king's moody, and tired of feeling nerves
Mildly made happy with soft jewels of silk,
Odours and wines and slim lascivious girls,
And yearns for sharper thrills to pierce his brain,
He often finds a stranger handy then.

### Thomas

Why, what do you mean?

Captain There was a merchant came
To Travancore, and could not speak our talk;
And, it chanced, he was brought before the throne
Just when the king was weary of sweet pleasures.
So, to better his tongue, a rope was bent
Beneath his oxters, up he was hauled, and fire
Let singe the soles of his feet, until his legs
Wriggled like frying eels; then the king's dogs
Were set to hunt the hirpling man. The king
Laught greatly and cried, 'But give the dogs words they know,
And they'll be tame.' -- Have you the Indian speech?

#### Thomas

Not yet: it will be given me, I trust.

Captain

You'd best make sure of the gift. Another stranger, Who swore he knew of better gods than ours, Seemed to the king troubled with fleas, and slaves Were told to groom him smartly, which they did Thoroughly with steel combs, until at last They curried the living flesh from his bones And stript his face of gristle, till he was Skull and half skeleton and yet alive. You're not for dealing in new gods?

Thomas Not I.

Was the man killed?

Captain He lived a little while; But the flies killed him.

Thomas Flies? I hope India Is not a fly-plagued land? I abhor flies.

Captain

You will see strange ones, for our Indian life Hath wonderful fierce breeding. Common earth With us quickens to buzzing flights of wings As readily as a week-old carcase here Thrown in a sunny marsh. Why, we have wasps That make your hornets seem like pretty midges;

And there be flies in India will drink Not only blood of bulls, tigers, and bears, But pierce the river-horses' creasy leather, Ay, worry crocodiles through their cuirasses And prick the metal fishes when they bask. You'll feel them soon, with beaks like sturdy pins, Treating their stinging thirsts with your best blood. A man can't walk a mile in India Without being the business of a throng'd And moving town of flies; they hawk at a man As bold as little eagles, and as wild. And, I suppose, only a fool will blame them. Flies have the right to sink wells in our skin All as men to bore parcht earth for water. But I must do a job on board, and then Search the town afresh for a carpenter.

# Thomas (alone)

Ay, loose tongue, I know how thou art prompted. Satan's cunning device thou art, to sap My heart with chatter'd fears. How easy it is For a stiff mind to hold itself upright Against the cords of devilish suggestion Tackled about it, though kept downward strained With sly, masterful winches made of fear. Yea, when the mind is warned what engines mean To ply it into grovelling, and thought set firm, The tugging strings fail like a cobweb-stuff. Not as in Baghdad is it with me now; Nor canst thou, Satan, by a prating mouth, Fell my tall purpose to a flatlong scorn. I can divide the check of God's own hand From tempting such as this: India is mine! --Ay, fiend, and if thou utter thy storming heart Into the ocean sea, as into mob A rebel utters turbulence and rage, And raise before my path swelling barriers Of hatred soul'd in water, yet will I strike My purpose, and God's purpose, clean through all The ridges of thy power. And I will show This mask that the devil wears, this old shipman, A thing to make his proud heart of evil Writhe like a trodden snake; yea, he shall see How godly faith can go upon the huge Fury of forces bursting out of law, Easily as a boy goes on windy grass. --O marvel! that my little life of mind Can by mere thinking the unsizeable Creatures of sea enslave! I must believe it. The mind hath many powers beyond name Deep womb'd within it, and can shoot strange vigours: Men there have been who could so grimly look That soldiers' hearts went out like candle flames

Before their eyes, and the blood perisht in them. --But I -- could I do that? Would I not feel The power in me if 'twas there? And yet 'Twere a child's game to what I have to do, For days and days with sleepless faith oppress And terrorise the demon sea. I think A man might, as I saw my Master once, Pass unharmed through a storm of men, yet fail At this that lies before me: men are mind, And mind can conquer mind; but how can it quell The unappointed purpose of great waters? --Well, say the sea is past: why, then, I have My feet but on the threshold of my task, To gospel India, -- my single heart To seize into the order of its beat All the strange blood of India, my brain To lord the dark thought of that tann'd mankind! --O, horrible those sweltry places are, Where the sun comes so close, it makes the earth Burn in a frenzy of breeding, -- smoke and flame Of lives burning up from agoniz'd loam! Those monstrous sappy jungles of clutcht growth, What can such fearful increase have to do With prospering bounty? A rage works in the ground, Incurably, like frantic lechery, Pouring its passion out in crops and spawns. 'Tis as the mighty spirit of life, that here Walketh beautifully praising, glad of God, Should, stepping on the poison'd Indian shore, Breathing the Indian air of fire snd steams, Fling herself into a craze of hideous dancing, The green gown whipping her swift limbs, all her body Writhen to speak inutterable desire, Tormented by a glee of hating God. Nay, it must be, to visit India, That frantic pomp and hurrying forth of life, As if a man should enter at unawares The dreaming mind of Satan, gorgeously Imagining his eternal hell of lust. --

They say the land is full of apes, which have Their own gods and worship: how ghastly, this! -- That demons (for it must be so) should build, In mockery of man's upward faith, the souls Of monkeys, those lewd mammets of mankind, Into a dreadful farce of adoration! And flies! a land of flies! where the hot soil Foul with ceaseless decay steams into flies! So thick they pile themselves in the air above Their meal of filth, they seem like breathing heaps Of formless life mounded upon the earth; And buzzing always like the pipes and strings

Of solemn music made for sorcerers. --I abhor flies, -- to see them stare upon me Out of their little faces of gibbous eyes; To feel the dry cool skin of their bodies alight Perching upon my lips! -- O yea, a dream, A dream of impious obscene Satan, this Monstrous frenzy of life, the Indian being! And there are men in the dream! What men are they? I've heard, naught relishes their brains so much As to tie down a man and tease his flesh Infamously, until a hundred pains Hound the desiring life out of his body, Filling his nerves with such a fearful zest That the soul overstrained shatters beneath it. Must I preach God to these murderous hearts? I would my lot had fallen to go and dare Death from the silent dealing of Northern cold! --

O, but I would face all these Indian fears, The horror of the huge power of life, The beasts all fierce and venomous, the men With cruel souls, learned to invent pain, All these and more, if I had any hope That, braving them, Lord Christ prosper'd through me. If Christ desired India, He had sent The band of us, solder'd in one great purpose, To strike His message through those dark vast tribes. But one man! -- O surely it is folly, And we misread the lot! One man, to thrust, Even though in his soul the lamp was kindled At God's own hands, one man's lit soul to thrust The immense Indian darkness out of the world! For human flesh there breeds as furiously As the green things and the cattle; and it is all, All this enormity of measureless folk, Penn'd in a land so close to the devil's reign The very apes have faith in him. -- No, no; Impetuous brains mistake the signs of God Too easily. God would not have me waste My zeal for Him in this wild enterprise, Of going alone to swarming India; -- one man, One mortal voice, to charm those myriad ears Away from the fiendish clamour of Indian gods, One man preaching the truth against the huge Bray of the gongs and horns of the Indian priests! A cup of wine poured in the sea were not More surely lost in the green and brackish depths, Than the fire and fragrance of my doctrine poured Into that multitudinous pond of men, India. -- Shipman! Master of the ship! --I have thought better of this journey; now I find I am not meant to go.

Captain

Not meant?

**Thomas** 

I would say, I had forgotten Indian air Is full of fevers; and my health is bad For holding out against fever.

Captain

As you please.

I keep your fare, though.

**Thomas** 

O,{ 'tis yours. -- Good sailing!

As he makes to depart, a Noble Stranger is seen approaching along the

Captain

quay.

Well, here's a marvel: 'Tis a king, for sure! 'Twould take the taxes of a world to dress A man in that silken gold, and all those gems. What a flash the light makes of him, nay, he burns; And he's here on the quay all by himself, Not even a slave to fan him! -- Man, you're ailing! You look like death; is it the falling sickness? Or has the mere thought of the Indian journey Made your marrow quail with a cold fever?

The Stranger (to the Captain)
You are the master of this ship?

Captain

I am.

Stranger

This huddled man belongs to me: a slave Escaped my service.

Captain Lord, I knew not that.

But you are in good time.

Stranger And was the slave For putting out with you? Where are your bound?

Captain

To India. First he would sail, and then Again he would not. But, my Lord, I swear I never guesst he was a runaway.

Stranger

Well, he shall have his mind and go with you To India: a good slave he is, but bears A restless thought. He has slipt off before, And vexes me still to be watching him.

We'll make a bargain of him.

Captain I, my Lord?
I have no need of slaves: I am too poor.

Stranger

For twenty silver pieces he is yours.

Captain

That's cheap, if he has a skill. Yes, there might be Profit in him at that. Has he a trade?

Stranger

He is a carpenter.

Captain A carpenter! Why, for a good one I'ld give all my purse.

Stranger

No, twenty silver pieces is the price;
Though 'tis a slave a king might joy to own.
I've taught him to imagine palaces
So high, and tower'd so nobly, they might seem
The marvelling of a God-delighted heart
Escaping into ecstasy; he knows,
Moreover, of a stuff so rare it makes
Smaragdus and the dragon-stone despised;
And yet the quarries whereof he is wise
Would yield enough to house the tribes of the world
In palaces of beautiful shining work.

Captain

Lo there! why, that is it: the carpenter I am to bring is needed for to build The king's new palace.

Stranger Yea? He is your man.

Captain

Come on, my man. I'll put your cunning heels Where they'll not budge more than a shuffled inch. My lord, if you'll bide with the rascal here I'll get the irons ready. Here's your sum. --

Stranger

Now, Thomas, know thy sin. It was not fear; Easily may a man crouch down for fear, And yet rise up on firmer knees, and face The hailing storm of the world with graver courage. But prudence, prudence is the deadly sin, And one that groweth deep into a life, With hardening roots that clutch about the breast.

For this refuses faith in the unknown powers Within man's nature; shrewdly bringeth all Their inspiration of strange eagerness( To a judgment bought by safe experience; Narrows desire into the scope of thought. But it is written in the heart of man, Thou shalt no larger be than thy desire. Thou must not therefore stoop thy spirit's sight To pore only within the candle-gléam Of conscious wit and reasonable brain; But search into the sacred darkness lying Outside thy knowledge of thyself, the vast Measureless fate, full of the power of stars, The outer noiseless heavens of thy soul. Keep thy desire closed in the room of light The labouring fires of thy mind have made, And thou shalt find the vision of thy spirit Pitifully dazzled to so shrunk a ken, There are no spacious puissances about it. But send desire often forth to scan The immense night which is thy greater soul; Knowing the possible, see thou try beyond it Into impossible things, unlikely ends; And thou shalt find thy knowledgeable desire Grow large as all the regions of thy soul, Whose firmament doth cover the whole of Being, And of created purpose reach the ends.