

## POEMS OF MANHOOD

### LENORE

AH broken is the golden bowl! the spirit flown forever!  
Let the bell toll!--a saintly soul floats on the Stygian river;  
And, Guy De Vere, hast thou no tear?--weep now or never more!  
See! on yon drear and rigid bier low lies thy love, Lenore!  
Come! let the burial rite be read--the funeral song be sung!--  
An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever died so young--  
A dirge for her the doubly dead in that she died so young.

"Wretches! ye loved her for her wealth and hated her for her pride,  
"And when she fell in feeble health, ye blessed her--that she died!  
"How shall the ritual, then, be read?--the requiem how be sung  
"By you--by yours, the evil eye,--by yours, the slanderous tongue  
"That did to death the innocent that died, and died so young?"

Peccavimus; but rave not thus! and let a Sabbath song  
Go up to God so solemnly the dead may feel so wrong!  
The sweet Lenore hath "gone before," with Hope, that flew beside  
Leaving thee wild for the dear child that should have been thy bride--  
For her, the fair and debonair, that now so lowly lies,  
The life upon her yellow hair but not within her eyes--  
The life still there, upon her hair--the death upon her eyes.

"Avaunt! to-night my heart is light. No dirge will I upraise,  
"But waft the angel on her flight with a Paeon of old days!  
"Let no bell toll!--lest her sweet soul, amid its hallowed mirth,  
"Should catch the note, as it doth float--up from the damned Earth.  
"To friends above, from fiends below, the indignant ghost is riven--  
"From Hell unto a high estate far up within the Heaven--  
"From grief and groan, to a golden throne, beside the King of Heaven."

TO ONE IN PARADISE.

THOU wast all that to me, love,  
For which my soul did pine--  
A green isle in the sea, love,  
A fountain and a shrine,  
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,  
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!  
Ah, starry Hope! that didst arise  
But to be overcast!  
A voice from out the Future cries,  
"On! on!"--but o'er the Past  
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies  
Mute, motionless, aghast!

For, alas! alas! with me  
The light of Life is o'er!  
No more--no more--no more--  
(Such language holds the solemn sea  
To the sands upon the shore)  
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,  
Or the stricken eagle soar!

And all my days are trances,

And all my nightly dreams  
Are where thy dark eye glances,  
And where thy footstep gleams--  
In what ethereal dances,  
By what eternal streams.

1835.

## THE COLISEUM.

TYPE of the antique Rome! Rich reliquary  
Of lofty contemplation left to Time  
By buried centuries of pomp and power!  
At length--at length--after so many days  
Of weary pilgrimage and burning thirst,  
(Thirst for the springs of lore that in thee lie,)  
I kneel, an altered and an humble man,  
Amid thy shadows, and so drink within  
My very soul thy grandeur, gloom, and glory!

Vastness! and Age! and Memories of Eld!  
Silence! and Desolation! and dim Night!  
I feel ye now--I feel ye in your strength--  
O spells more sure than e'er Judæan king  
Taught in the gardens of Gethsemane!  
O charms more potent than the rapt Chaldee  
Ever drew down from out the quiet stars!

Here, where a hero fell, a column falls!  
Here, where the mimic eagle glared in gold,  
A midnight vigil holds the swarthy bat!  
Here, where the dames of Rome their gilded hair  
Waved to the wind, now wave the reed and thistle!  
Here, where on golden throne the monarch lolled,

Glides, spectre-like, unto his marble home,  
Lit by the wanlight--wan light of the horned moon,  
The swift and silent lizard of the stones!

But stay! these walls--these ivy-clad arcades--  
These mouldering plinths--these sad and blackened shafts--  
These vague entablatures--this crumbling frieze--  
These shattered cornices--this wreck--this ruin--  
These stones--alas! these gray stones--are they all--  
All of the famed, and the colossal left  
By the corrosive Hours to Fate and me?

"Not all"--the Echoes answer me--"not all!  
"Prophetic sounds and loud, arise forever  
"From us, and from all Ruin, unto the wise,  
"As melody from Memnon to the Sun.  
"We rule the hearts of mightiest men--we rule  
"With a despotic sway all giant minds.  
"We are not impotent--we pallid stones.  
"Not all our power is gone--not all our fame--  
"Not all the magic of our high renown--  
"Not all the wonder that encircles us--  
"Not all the mysteries that in us lie--  
"Not all the memories that hang upon  
"And cling around about us as a garment,  
"Clothing us in a robe of more than glory."

1833.

## THE HAUNTED PALACE.

IN the greenest of our valleys  
By good angels tenanted,  
Once a fair and stately palace--  
Radiant palace--reared its head.  
In the monarch Thought's dominion--  
It stood there!  
Never seraph spread a pinion  
Over fabric half so fair.

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,  
On its roof did float and flow,  
(This--all this--was in the olden  
Time long ago,)  
And every gentle air that dallied,  
In that sweet day,  
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,  
A winged odour went away.

Wanderers in that happy valley,  
Through two luminous windows, saw  
Spirits moving musically,  
To a lute's well-tuned law,  
Round about a throne where, sitting  
(Porphyrogene)



In state his glory well befitting,

The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing

Was the fair palace door,

Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,

And sparkling evermore,

A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty

Was but to sing,

In voices of surpassing beauty,

The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,

Assailed the monarch's high estate.

(Ah, let us mourn!--for never sorrow

Shall dawn upon him desolate!)

And round about his home the glory

That blushed and bloomed,

Is but a dim-remembered story

Of the old time entombed.

And travellers, now, within that valley,

Through the red-litten windows see

Vast forms, that move fantastically

To a discordant melody,

While, lie a ghastly rapid river,

Through the pale door  
A hideous throng rush out forever  
And laugh--but smile no more.

1838.

## THE CONQUEROR WORM.

LO! 'tis a gala night

    Within the lonesome latter years!

An angel throng, bewinged, bedight

    In veils, and drowned in tears,

Sit in a theatre, to see

    A play of hopes and fears,

While the orchestra breathes fitfully

    The music of the spheres.

Mimes, in the form of God on high,

    Mutter and mumble low,

And hither and thither fly--

    Mere puppets they, who come and go

At bidding of vast formless things

    That shift the scenery to and fro,

Flapping from out their Condor wings

    Invisible Wo!

That motley drama--oh, be sure

    It shall not be forgot!

With its Phantom chased for evermore,

    By a crowd that seize it not,

Through a circle that ever returneth in

    To the self-same spot,

And much of Madness, and more of Sin,  
And Horror the soul of the plot.

But see, amid the mimic rout  
A crawling shape intrude!  
A blood-red thing that writhes from out  
The scenic solitude!  
It writhes!--it writhes!--with mortal pangs  
The mimes become its food,  
And the angels sob at vermin fangs  
In human gore imbued.

Out--out are the lights--out all!  
And, over each quivering form,  
The curtain, a funeral pall,  
Comes down with the rush of a storm,  
And the angels, all pallid and wan,  
Uprising, unveiling, affirm  
That the play is the tragedy, "Man,"  
And its hero the Conqueror Worm.

1838.

## SILENCE

THERE are some qualities--some incorporate things,  
That have a double life, which thus is made  
A type of that twin entity which springs  
From matter and light, evinced in solid and shade.  
There is a two-fold Silence--sea and shore--  
Body and soul. One dwells in lonely places,  
Newly with grass o'ergrown; some solemn graces,  
Some human memories and tearful lore,  
Render him terrorless: his name's "No More."  
He is the corporate Silence: dread him not!  
No power hath he of evil in himself;  
But should some urgent fate (untimely lot!)  
Bring thee to meet his shadow (nameless elf,  
That haunteth the lone regions where hath trod  
No foot of man,) commend thyself to God!

1840.

## DREAM-LAND

BY a route obscure and lonely,  
Haunted by ill angels only,  
Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,  
On a black throne reigns upright,  
I have reached these lands but newly  
From an ultimate dim Thule--  
From a wild weird clime that lieth, sublime,  
    Out of SPACE--out of TIME.

Bottomless vales and boundless floods,  
And chasms, and caves, and Titian woods,  
With forms that no man can discover  
For the dews that drip all over;  
Mountains toppling evermore  
Into seas without a shore;  
Seas that restlessly aspire,  
Surging, unto skies of fire;  
Lakes that endlessly outspread  
Their lone waters--lone and dead,--  
Their still waters--still and chilly  
With the snows of the lolling lily.

By the lakes that thus outspread  
Their lone waters, lone and dead,--

Their sad waters, sad and chilly  
With the snows of the lolling lily,--  
By the mountains--near the river  
Murmuring lowly, murmuring ever,--  
By the grey woods,--by the swamp  
Where the toad and the newt encamp,--  
By the dismal tarns and pools  
    Where dwell the Ghouls,--  
By each spot the most unholy--  
In each nook most melancholy,--  
There the traveller meets aghast  
Sheeted Memories of the Past--  
Shrouded forms that start and sigh  
As they pass the wanderer by--  
White-robed forms of friends long given,  
In agony, to the Earth--and Heaven.

For the heart whose woes are legion  
'Tis a peaceful, soothing region--  
For the spirit that walks in shadow  
'Tis--oh 'tis an Eldorado!  
But the traveller, travelling through it,  
May not--dare not openly view it;  
Never its mysteries are exposed  
To the weak human eye unclosed;  
So wills its King, who hath forbid

The uplifting of the fringed lid;  
And thus the sad Soul that here passes  
Beholds it but through darkened glasses.

By a route obscure and lonely,  
Haunted by ill angels only,  
Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,  
On a black throne reigns upright,  
I have wandered home but newly  
From this ultimate dim Thule.

1844.



## HYMN

AT morn--at noon--at twilight dim--  
Maria! thou hast heard my hymn!  
In joy and wo--in good and ill--  
Mother of God, be with me still!  
When the Hours flew brightly by  
And not a cloud obscured the sky,  
My soul, lest it should truant be,  
Thy grace did guide to thine and thee;  
Now, when storms of Fate o'ercast  
Darkly my Present and my Past,  
Let my Future radiant shine  
With sweet hopes of thee and thine!

1835.

TO ZANTE

FAIR isle, that from the fairest of all flowers,  
Thy gentlest of all gentle names dost take  
How many memories of what radiant hours  
At sight of thee and thine at once awake!  
How many scenes of what departed bliss!  
How many thoughts of what entombed hopes!  
How many visions of a maiden that is  
No more--no more upon thy verdant slopes!  
No more! alas, that magical sad sound  
Transforming all! Thy charms shall please no more--  
Thy memory no more! Accursed ground  
Henceforth I hold thy flower-enamelled shore,  
O hyacinthine isle! O purple Zante!  
"Isoa d'oro! Fior di Levante!"

1837.

SCENES FROM "POLITIAN"

AN UNPUBLISHED DRAMA.

I.

ROME.--A Hall in a Palace Alessandra and Castiglione.

Alessandra. Thou art sad, Castiglione.

Castiglione. Sad!--not I.

Oh, I'm the happiest, happiest man in Rome!

A few days more, thou knowest, my Alessandra,

Will make thee mine. Oh, I am very happy!

Aless. Methinks thou hast a singular way of showing

Thy happiness!--what ails thee, cousin of mine?

Why didst thou sigh so deeply?

Cas. Did I sigh?

I was not conscious of it. It is a fashion,

A silly--a most silly fashion I have

When I am very happy. Did I sigh? (sighing.)

Aless. Thou didst. Thou art not well. Thou hast indulged

Too much of late, and I am vexed to see it.

Late hours and wine, Castiglione,--these  
Will ruin thee! thou art already altered--  
Thy looks are haggard--nothing so wears away  
The constitution as late hours and wine.

Cas. (musing.) Nothing, fair cousin, nothing--not even deep  
sorrow--  
Wears it away like evil hours and wine.  
I will amend.

Aless. Do it! I would have thee drop  
Thy riotous company, too--fellows low born--  
Ill suit the like with old Di Broglio's heir  
And Alessandra's husband.

Cas. I will drop them.

Aless. Thou wilt--thou must. Attend thou also more  
To thy dress and equipage--they are over plain  
For thy lofty rank and fashion--much depends  
Upon appearances.

Cas. I'll see to it.

Aless. Then see to it!--pay more attention, sir,  
To a becoming carriage--much thou wantest

In dignity.

Cas. Much, much, oh! much I want  
In proper dignity.

Aless.(haughtily) Thou mockest me, sir!

Cas. (abstractedly.) Sweet, gentle Lalage!

Aless. Heard I aright?  
I speak to him--he speaks of Lalage!  
Sir Count! (places her hand on his shoulder) what art thou dreaming?  
he's not well!  
What ails thee, sir?

Cas. (startling.) Cousin! fair cousin!--madam!  
I crave thy pardon--indeed I am not well--  
Your hand from off my shoulder, if you please.  
This air is most oppressive!--Madam--the Duke!

Enter Di Broglio.

Di Broglio. My son, I've news for thee!--hey?--what's the  
matter? (observing Alessandra)  
I' the pouts? Kiss her, Castiglione! kiss her,  
You dog! and make it up, I say, this minute!

I've news for you both. Politian is expected  
Hourly in Rome--Politian, Earl of Leicester!  
We'll have him at the wedding. 'Tis his first visit  
To the imperial city.

Aless. What! Politian  
Of Britain, Earl of Leicester?

Di Brog. The same, my love.  
We'll have him at the wedding. A man quite young  
In years, but grey in fame. I have not seen him,  
But Rumour speaks of him as of a prodigy  
Pre-eminent in arts and arms, and wealth,  
And high descent. We'll have him at the wedding.

Aless. I have heard much of this Politian.  
Gay, volatile and giddy--is he not?  
And little given to thinking.

Di Brog. Far from it, love.  
No branch, they say, of all philosophy  
So deep abstruse he has not mastered it.  
Learned as few are learned.

Aless. 'Tis very strange!  
I have known men have seen Politian

And sought his company. They speak of him  
As of one who entered madly into life,  
Drinking the cup of pleasure to the dregs.

Cas. Ridiculous! Now I have seen Politian  
And know him well--nor learned nor mirthful he.  
He is a dreamer and a man shut out  
From common passions.

Di Brog. Children, we disagree.  
Let us go forth and taste the fragrant air  
Of the garden. Did I dream, or did I hear  
Politian was a melancholy man? (exeunt.)

## II

ROME. A Lady's apartment, with a window open and looking into a garden.  
Lalage, in deep mourning, reading at a table on which lie some books and a  
hand mirror. In the background Jacinta (a servant maid) leans carelessly  
upon a chair.

Lal. [Lalage] Jacinta! is it thou?

Jac. [Jacinta] (pertly.) Yes, Ma'am, I'm here.

Lal. I did not know, Jacinta, you were in waiting.

Sit down!--Let not my presence trouble you--

Sit down!--for I am humble, most humble.

Jac. (aside.) 'Tis time.

(Jacinta seats herself in a side-long manner upon the chair, resting her elbows upon the back, and regarding her mistress with a contemptuous look. Lalage continues to read. )

Lal. "It in another climate, so he said,  
"Bore a bright golden flower, but not i' this soil!"  
(pauses--turns over some leaves, and resumes)  
"No lingering winters there, nor snow, nor shower--  
"But Ocean ever to refresh mankind  
"Breathes the shrill spirit of the western wind."  
O, beautiful!--most beautiful--how like  
To what my fevered soul doth dream of Heaven!  
O happy land (pauses) She died!--the maiden died!  
A still more happy maiden who couldst die!  
Jacinta!

(Jacinta returns no answer, and Lalage presently resumes.)

Again!--a similar tale  
Told of a beauteous dame beyond the sea!  
Thus speaketh one Ferdinand in the words of the play--  
"She died full young"--one Bossola answers him--  
"I think not so--her infelicity  
"Seemed to have years too many"--Ah luckless lady!



Jacinta! (still no answer)

Here 's a far sterner story,  
But like--oh, very like in its despair--  
Of that Egyptian queen, winning so easily  
A thousand hearts--losing at length her own.  
She died. Thus endeth the history--and her maids  
Lean over and weep--two gentle maids  
With gentle names--Eiros and Charmion!  
Rainbow and Dove!----Jacinta!

Jac. (pettishly.) Madam, what is it?

Lal. Wilt thou, my good Jacinta, be so kind  
As go down in the library and bring me  
The Holy Evangelists.

Jac. Pshaw! (exit.)

Lal. If there be balm  
For the wounded spirit in Gilead it is there!  
Dew in the night time of my bitter trouble  
Will there be found--"dew sweeter far than that  
Which hangs like chains of pearl on Hermon hill."  
(re-enter Jacinta, and throws a volume on the table.)  
There, ma'am, 's the book. Indeed she is very troublesome. (aside.)

Lal. (astonished.) What didst thou say, Jacinta? Have I done aught  
To grieve thee or to vex thee?--I am sorry.  
For thou hast served me long and ever been  
Trust-worthy and respectful. (resumes her reading.)

Jac. I can't believe  
She has any more jewels--no--no--she gave me all. (aside.)

Lal. What didst thou say, Jacinta? Now I bethink me  
Thou hast not spoken lately of thy wedding.  
How fares good Ugo?--and when is it to be?  
Can I do aught?--is there no farther aid  
Thou needest, Jacinta?

Jac. Is there no farther aid!  
That's meant for me. (aside) I'm sure, madam, you need not  
Be always throwing those jewels in my teeth.

Lal. Jewels! Jacinta,--now indeed, Jacinta,  
I thought not of the jewels.

Jac. Oh! perhaps not!  
But then I might have sworn it. After all,  
There 's Ugo says the ring is only paste,  
For he 's sure the Count Castiglione never

Would have given a real diamond to such as you;  
And at the best I'm certain, Madam, you cannot  
Have use for jewels now. But I might have sworn it. (exit.)  
(Lalage bursts into tears and leans her head upon the table--after a  
short pause raises it.)

Lal. Poor Lalage!--and is it come to this?  
Thy servant maid!--but courage!--'tis but a viper  
Whom thou hast cherished to sting thee to the soul!  
(taking up the mirror)  
Ha! here at least 's a friend--too much a friend  
In earlier days--a friend will not deceive thee.  
Fair mirror and true! now tell me (for thou canst)  
A tale--a pretty tale--and heed thou not  
Though it be rife with woe: It answers me.  
It speaks of sunken eyes, and wasted cheeks,  
And Beauty long deceased--remembers me  
Of Joy departed--Hope, the Seraph Hope,  
Inurned and entombed:--now, in a tone  
Low, sad, and solemn, but most audible,  
Whispers of early grave untimely yawning  
For ruined maid. Fair mirror and true--thou liest not!  
Thou hast no end to gain--no heart to break--  
Castiglione lied who said he loved--  
Thou true--he false!--false!--false!  
(While she speaks, a monk enters her apartment, and approaches

unobserved.)

Monk. Refuge thou hast,  
Sweet daughter, in Heaven. Think of eternal things!  
Give up thy soul to penitence, and pray!

Lal. (arising hurriedly.) I cannot pray!--My soul is at war  
with God!  
The frightful sounds of merriment below  
Disturb my senses--go! I cannot pray--  
The sweet airs from the garden worry me!  
Thy presence grieves me--go!--thy priestly raiment  
Fills me with dread--thy ebony crucifix  
With horror and awe!

Monk. Think of thy precious soul!

Lal. Think of my early days!--think of my father  
And mother in Heaven think of our quiet home,  
And the rivulet that ran before the door!  
Think of my little sisters!--think of them!  
And think of me!--think of my trusting love  
And confidence--his vows--my ruin--think--think  
Of my unspeakable misery!--begone!  
Yet stay! yet stay!--what was it thou saidst of prayer  
And penitence? Didst thou not speak of faith

And vows before the throne?

Monk. I did.

Lal. Lal. 'Tis well.

There is a vow were fitting should be made--

A sacred vow, imperative, and urgent,

A solemn vow!

Monk. Daughter, this zeal is well!

Lal. Father, this zeal is anything but well!

Hast thou a crucifix fit for this thing?

A crucifix whereon to register

This sacred vow? (he hands her his own)

Not that--Oh! no!--no!--no! (shuddering)

Not that! Not that!--I tell thee, holy man,

Thy raiments and thy ebony cross affright me!

Stand back! I have a crucifix myself,--

I have a crucifix Methinks 'twere fitting

The deed--the vow--the symbol of the deed--

And the deed's register should tally, father!

(draws a cross-handled dagger, and raises it on high)

Behold the cross wherewith a vow like mine

Is written in Heaven!

Monk. Thy words are madness, daughter,  
And speak a purpose unholy--thy lips are livid--  
Thine eyes are wild--tempt not the wrath divine!  
Pause ere too late!--oh, be not--be not rash!  
Swear not the oath--oh, swear it not!

Lal. 'Tis sworn!

### III.

An apartment in a Palace. Politian and Baldazzar.

Baldazzar.-----Arouse thee now, Politian!  
Thou must not--nay indeed, indeed, shalt not  
Give away unto these humors. Be thyself!  
Shake off the idle fancies that beset thee,  
And live, for now thou diest!

Politian. Not so, Baldazzar! Surely I live.

Bal. Politian, it doth grieve me  
To see thee thus.

Pol. Baldazzar, it doth grieve me  
To give thee cause for grief, my honoured friend.

Command me, sir! what wouldst thou have me do?  
At thy behest I will shake off that nature  
Which from my, forefathers I did inherit,  
Which with my mother's milk I did imbibe,  
And be no more Politian, but some other.  
Command me, sir!

Bal. To the field, then--to the field--  
To the senate or the field.

Pol. Alas! Alas!  
There is an imp would follow me even there!  
There is an imp hath followed me even there!  
There is--what voice was that?

Bal. I heard it not.  
I heard not any voice except thine own,  
And the echo of thine own.

Pol. Then I but dreamed.

Bal. Give not thy soul to dreams: the camp--the court,  
Befit thee--Fame awaits thee--Glory calls--  
And her the trumpet-tongued thou wilt not hear  
In hearkening to imaginary sounds  
And phantom voices.

Pol. It is a phantom voice!

Didst thou not hear it then?

Bal. I heard it not.

Pol. Thou heardst it not!--Baldazaar, speak no more

To me, Politian, of thy camps and courts.

Oh! I am sick, sick, sick, even unto death,

Of the hollow and high-sounding vanities

Of the populous Earth! Bear with me yet awhile!

We have been boys together--schoolfellows--

And now are friends--yet shall not be so long--

For in the eternal city thou shalt do me

A kind and gentle office, and a Power--

A Power august, benignant and supreme--

Shall then absolve thee of all further duties

Unto thy friend.

Bal. Thou speakest a fearful riddle

I will not understand.

Pol. Yet now as Fate

Approaches, and the Hours are breathing low,

The sands of Time are changed to golden grains,

And dazzle me, Baldazzar. Alas! alas!



I cannot die, having within my heart  
So keen a relish for the beautiful  
As hath been kindled within it. Methinks the air  
Is balmier now than it was wont to be--  
Rich melodies are floating in the winds--  
A rarer loveliness bedecks the earth--  
And with a holier lustre the quiet moon  
Sitteth in Heaven.--Hist! hist! thou canst not say  
Thou hearest not now, Baldazzar?

Bal. Indeed I hear not.

Pol. Not hear it!--listen now!--listen!--the faintest sound  
And yet the sweetest that ear ever heard!  
A lady's voice!--and sorrow in the tone!  
Baldazzar, it oppresses me like a spell!  
Again!--again!--how solemnly it falls  
Into my heart of hearts! that eloquent voice  
Surely I never heard--yet it were well  
Had I but heard it with its thrilling tones  
In earlier days!

Bal. I myself hear it now.  
Be still!--the voice, if I mistake not greatly,  
Proceeds from yonder lattice--which you may see  
Very plainly through the window--it belongs,

Does it not? unto this palace of the Duke.  
The singer is undoubtedly beneath  
The roof of his Excellency--and perhaps  
Is even that Alessandra of whom he spoke  
As the betrothed of Castiglione,  
His son and heir.

Pol. Be still!--it comes again!

Voice "And is thy heart so strong  
(very faintly) As for to leave me thus  
Who hath loved thee so long

In wealth and woe among?  
And is thy heart so strong  
As for to leave me thus?  
Say nay--say nay!"

Bal. The song is English, and I oft have heard it  
In merry England--never so plaintively--  
Hist! hist! it comes again!

Voice "Is it so strong  
(more loudly) As for to leave me thus  
Who hath loved thee so long  
In wealth and woe among?

And is thy heart so strong

As for to leave me thus?

Say nay--say nay!"

Bal. 'Tis hushed and all is still!

Pol. All is not still!

Bal. Let us go down.

Pol. Go down, Baldazzar, go!

Bal. The hour is growing late--the Duke awaits use--  
Thy presence is expected in the hall  
Below. What ails thee, Earl Politian?

Voice            "Who hath loved thee so long  
(distinctly)    In wealth and woe among,

And is thy heart so strong?

Say nay--say nay!"

Bal. Let us descend!--'tis time. Politian, give  
These fancies to the wind. Remember, pray,  
Your bearing lately savored much of rudeness

Unto the Duke. Arouse thee! and remember

Pol. Remember? I do. Lead on! I do remember.

(going.)

Let us descend. Believe me I would give,  
Freely would give the broad lands of my earldom  
To look upon the face hidden by yon lattice--  
"To gaze upon that veiled face, and hear  
Once more that silent tongue."

Bal. Let me beg you, sir,  
Descend with me--the Duke may be offended.  
Let us go down, I pray you.

(Voice loudly) Say nay!--say nay!

Pol. (aside) 'Tis strange!--'tis very strange--methought the  
voice  
Chimed in with my desires, and bade me stay!

(approaching the window.)

Sweet voice! I heed thee, and will surely stay.  
Now be this Fancy, by Heaven, or be it Fate,  
Still will I not descend. Baldazzar, make  
Apology unto the Duke for me;

I go not down to-night.

Bal. Your lordship's pleasure  
Shall be attended to. Good-night, Politian.

Pol. Good-night, my friend, good-night.

#### IV.

The gardens of a Palace--Moonlight Lalage and Politian.

Lalage. And dost thou speak of love  
To me, Politian?--dost thou speak of love  
To Lalage?--ah, woe--ah, woe is me!  
This mockery is most cruel--most cruel indeed!

Politian. Weep not! oh, sob not thus!--thy bitter tears  
Will madden me. Oh, mourn not, Lalage--  
Be comforted! I know--I know it all,  
And still I speak of love. Look at me, brightest  
And beautiful Lalage!--turn here thine eyes!  
Thou askest me if I could speak of love,  
Knowing what I know, and seeing what I have seen.  
Thou askest me that--and thus I answer thee--  
Thus on my bended knee I answer thee. (kneeling.)  
Sweet Lalage, I love thee--love thee--love thee;

Thro' good and ill--thro' weal and wo I love thee.  
Not mother, with her first-born on her knee,  
Thrills with intenser love than I for thee.  
Not on God's altar, in any time or clime,  
Burned there a holier fire than burneth now  
Within my spirit for thee. And do I love? (arising.)  
Even for thy woes I love thee--even for thy woes-  
Thy beauty and thy woes.

Lal. Alas, proud Earl,  
Thou dost forget thyself, remembering me!  
How, in thy father's halls, among the maidens  
Pure and reproachless of thy princely line,  
Could the dishonored Lalage abide?  
Thy wife, and with a tainted memory-  
MY seared and blighted name, how would it tally  
With the ancestral honors of thy house,  
And with thy glory?

Pol. Speak not to me of glory!  
I hate--I loathe the name; I do abhor  
The unsatisfactory and ideal thing.  
Art thou not Lalage and I Politian?  
Do I not love--art thou not beautiful-  
What need we more? Ha! glory!--now speak not of it.  
By all I hold most sacred and most solemn-

By all my wishes now--my fears hereafter-  
By all I scorn on earth and hope in heaven-  
There is no deed I would more glory in,  
Than in thy cause to scoff at this same glory  
And trample it under foot. What matters it-  
What matters it, my fairest, and my best,  
That we go down unhonored and forgotten  
Into the dust--so we descend together.  
Descend together--and then--and then, perchance-

Lal. Why dost thou pause, Politian?

Pol. And then, perchance  
Arise together, Lalage, and roam  
The starry and quiet dwellings of the blest,  
And still-

Lal. Why dost thou pause, Politian?

Pol. And still together--together.

Lal. Now Earl of Leicester!  
Thou lovest me, and in my heart of hearts  
I feel thou lovest me truly.

Pol. Oh, Lalage!

(throwing himself upon his knee.)

And lovest thou me?

Lal. Hist! hush! within the gloom  
Of yonder trees methought a figure passed-  
A spectral figure, solemn, and slow, and noiseless-  
Like the grim shadow Conscience, solemn and noiseless.

(walks across and returns.)

I was mistaken--'twas but a giant bough  
Stirred by the autumn wind. Politian!

Pol. My Lalage--my love! why art thou moved?  
Why dost thou turn so pale? Not Conscience' self,  
Far less a shadow which thou likenest to it,  
Should shake the firm spirit thus. But the night wind  
Is chilly--and these melancholy boughs  
Throw over all things a gloom.

Lal. Politian!  
Thou speakest to me of love. Knowest thou the land  
With which all tongues are busy--a land new found--  
Miraculously found by one of Genoa--  
A thousand leagues within the golden west?  
A fairy land of flowers, and fruit, and sunshine,



And crystal lakes, and over-arching forests,  
And mountains, around whose towering summits the winds  
Of Heaven untrammelled flow--which air to breathe  
Is Happiness now, and will be Freedom hereafter  
In days that are to come?

Pol. O, wilt thou--wilt thou  
Fly to that Paradise--my Lalage, wilt thou  
Fly thither with me? There Care shall be forgotten,  
And Sorrow shall be no more, and Eros be all.  
And life shall then be mine, for I will live  
For thee, and in thine eyes--and thou shalt be  
No more a mourner--but the radiant Joys  
Shall wait upon thee, and the angel Hope  
Attend thee ever; and I will kneel to thee  
And worship thee, and call thee my beloved,  
My own, my beautiful, my love, my wife,  
My all;--oh, wilt thou--wilt thou, Lalage,  
Fly thither with me?

Lal. A deed is to be done--  
Castiglione lives!

Pol. And he shall die! (exit)

Lal. (after a pause.) And--he--shall--die!--alas!

Castiglione die? Who spoke the words?  
Where am I?--what was it he said?--Politian!  
Thou art not gone--thou are not gone, Politian!  
I feel thou art not gone--yet dare not look,  
Lest I behold thee not; thou couldst not go  
With those words upon thy lips--O, speak to me!  
And let me hear thy voice--one word--one word,  
To say thou art not gone,--one little sentence,  
To say how thou dost scorn--how thou dost hate  
My womanly weakness. Ha! ha! thou art not gone--  
O speak to me! I knew thou wouldst not go!  
I knew thou wouldst not, couldst not, durst not go.  
Villain, thou art not gone--thou mockest me!  
And thus I clutch thee--thus!--He is gone, he is gone  
Gone--gone. Where am I?--'tis well--'tis very well!  
So that the blade be keen--the blow be sure,  
'Tis well, 'tis very well--alas! alas!

V.

The suburbs. Politian alone.

Politian. This weakness grows upon me. I am faint,  
And much I fear me ill--it will not do  
To die ere I have lived!--Stay, stay thy hand,  
O Azrael, yet awhile!--Prince of the Powers

Of Darkness and the Tomb, O pity me!  
O pity me! let me not perish now,  
In the budding of my Paradisal Hope!  
Give me to live yet--yet a little while:  
'Tis I who pray for life--I who so late  
Demanded but to die!--what sayeth the Count?

Enter Baldazzar.

Baldazzar. That knowing no cause of quarrel or of feud  
Between the Earl Politian and himself.  
He doth decline your cartel.

Pol. What didst thou say?  
What answer was it you brought me, good Baldazzar?  
With what excessive fragrance the zephyr comes  
Laden from yonder bowers!--a fairer day,  
Or one more worthy Italy, methinks  
No mortal eyes have seen!--what said the Count?

Bal. That he, Castiglione' not being aware  
Of any feud existing, or any cause  
Of quarrel between your lordship and himself,  
Cannot accept the challenge.

Pol. It is most true--

All this is very true. When saw you, sir,  
When saw you now, Baldazzar, in the frigid  
Ungenia Britain which we left so lately,  
A heaven so calm as this--so utterly free  
From the evil taint of clouds?--and he did say?

Bal. No more, my lord, than I have told you, sir:  
The Count Castiglione will not fight,  
Having no cause for quarrel.

Pol. Now this is true-  
All very true. Thou art my friend, Baldazzar,  
And I have not forgotten it--thou'lt do me  
A piece of service; wilt thou go back and say  
Unto this man, that I, the Earl of Leicester,  
Hold him a villain?--thus much, I prythee, say  
Unto the Count--it is exceeding just  
He should have cause for quarrel.

Bal. My lord!--my friend!-

Pol. (aside.) 'Tis he!--he comes himself? (aloud) Thou reasonest  
well.

I know what thou wouldst say--not send the message-

Well!--I will think of it--I will not send it.

Now prythee, leave me--hither doth come a person

With whom affairs of a most private nature  
I would adjust.

Bal. I go--to-morrow we meet,  
Do we not?--at the Vatican.

Pol. At the Vatican. (exit  
Bal.)

Enter Castiglione.

Cas. The Earl of Leicester here!

Pol. I am the Earl of Leicester, and thou seest,  
Dost thou not? that I am here.

Cas. My lord, some strange,  
Some singular mistake--misunderstanding--  
Hath without doubt arisen: thou hast been urged  
Thereby, in heat of anger, to address  
Some words most unaccountable, in writing,  
To me, Castiglione; the bearer being  
Baldazzar, Duke of Surrey. I am aware  
Of nothing which might warrant thee in this thing,  
Having given thee no offence. Ha!--am I right?  
'Twas a mistake?--undoubtedly--we all

Do err at times.

Pol. Draw, villain, and prate no more!

Cas. Ha!--draw?--and villain? have at thee then at once,  
Proud Earl! (draws.)

Pol. (drawing.) Thus to the expiatory tomb,  
Untimely sepulchre, I do devote thee  
In the name of Lalage!

Cas. (letting fall his sword and recoiling to the extremity of the  
stage)

Of Lalage!

Hold off--thy sacred hand!--avaunt, I say!  
Avaunt--I will not fight thee--indeed I dare not.

Pol. Thou wilt not fight with me didst say, Sir Count?  
Shall I be baffled thus?--now this is well;  
Didst say thou darest not? Ha!

Cas. I dare not--dare not--  
Hold off thy hand--with that beloved name  
So fresh upon thy lips I will not fight thee--  
I cannot--dare not.

Pol. Now by my halidom

I do believe thee!--coward, I do believe thee!

Cas. Ha!--coward!--this may not be!

(clutches his sword and staggers towards POLITIAN, but his purpose is changed before reaching him, and he falls upon his knee at the feet of the Earl)

Alas! my lord,

It is--it is--most true. In such a cause

I am the veriest coward. O pity me!

Pol. (greatly softened.) Alas!--I do--indeed I pity thee.

Cas. And Lalage-

Pol. Scoundrel!--arise and die!

Cas. It needeth not be--thus--thus--O let me die

Thus on my bended knee. It were most fitting

That in this deep humiliation I perish.

For in the fight I will not raise a hand

Against thee, Earl of Leicester. Strike thou home--

(baring his bosom.)

Here is no let or hindrance to thy weapon-  
Strike home. I will not fight thee.

Pol. Now, s' Death and Hell!

Am I not--am I not sorely--grievously tempted  
To take thee at thy word? But mark me, sir,  
Think not to fly me thus. Do thou prepare  
For public insult in the streets--before  
The eyes of the citizens. I'll follow thee  
Like an avenging spirit I'll follow thee  
Even unto death. Before those whom thou lovest-  
Before all Rome I'll taunt thee, villain,--I'll taunt thee,  
Dost hear? with cowardice--thou wilt not fight me?  
Thou liest! thou shalt! (exit.)

Cas. Now this indeed is just!

Most righteous, and most just, avenging Heaven!

{In the book there is a gap in numbering the notes between 12 and 29.  
--ED}

NOTE

29. Such portions of "Politian" as are known to the public first saw the light of publicity in the "Southern Literary Messenger" for December,



1835, and January, 1836, being styled "Scenes from Politian: an unpublished drama." These scenes were included, unaltered, in the 1845 collection of Poems, by Poe. The larger portion of the original draft subsequently became the property of the present editor, but it is not considered just to the poet's memory to publish it. The work is a hasty and unrevised production of its author's earlier days of literary labor; and, beyond the scenes already known, scarcely calculated to enhance his reputation. As a specimen, however, of the parts unpublished, the following fragment from the first scene of Act II. may be offered. The Duke, it should be premised, is uncle to Alessandra, and father of Castiglione her betrothed.

Duke. Why do you laugh?

Castiglione. Indeed

I hardly know myself. Stay! Was it not  
On yesterday we were speaking of the Earl?  
Of the Earl Politian? Yes! it was yesterday.  
Alessandra, you and I, you must remember!  
We were walking in the garden.

Duke, Perfectly.

I do remember it-what of it-what then?

Cas. O nothing-nothing at all.

Duke. Nothing at all!

It is most singular that you should laugh

'At nothing at all!

Cas. Most singular-singular!

Duke. Look you, Castiglione, be so kind

As tell me, sir, at once what 'tis you mean.

What are you talking of?

Cas. Was it not so?

We differed in opinion touching him.

Duke. Him!--Whom?

Cas. Why, sir, the Earl Politian.

Duke. The Earl of Leicester! Yes!--is it he you mean?

We differed, indeed. If I now recollect

The words you used were that the Earl you knew

Was neither learned nor mirthful.

Cas. Ha! ha!--now did I?

Duke. That did you, sir, and well I knew at the time

You were wrong, it being not the character  
Of the Earl-whom all the world allows to be  
A most hilarious man. Be not, my son,  
Too positive again.

Cas. 'Tis singular!  
Most singular! I could not think it possible  
So little time could so much alter one!  
To say the truth about an hour ago,  
As I was walking with the Count San Ozzo,  
All arm in arm, we met this very man  
The Earl-he, with his friend Baldazzar,  
Having just arrived in Rome. Hal ha! he is altered!  
Such an account he gave me of his journey!  
'Twould have made you die with laughter-such tales he told  
Of his caprices and his merry freaks  
Along the road-such oddity-such humor--  
Such wit-such whim-such flashes of wild merriment  
Set off too in such full relief by the grave  
Demeanor of his friend-who, to speak the truth,  
Was gravity itself--

Duke. Did I not tell you?

Cas. You did-and yet 'tis strange! but true as strange,  
How much I was mistaken! I always thought

The Earl a gloomy man.

Duke. So, so, you see! Be not too positive. Whom have we here?  
It can not be the Earl?

Cas. The Earl! Oh, no! 'Tis not the Earl-but yet it is-and leaning  
Upon his friend Baldazzar. AM welcome, sir!

(Enter Politian and Baldazzar.)

My lord, a second welcome let me give you  
To Rome-his Grace the Duke of Broglio.  
Father! this is the Earl Politian, Earl  
Of Leicester in Great Britain. [Politian bows haughtily.]

That, his friend  
Baldazzar, Duke of Surrey. The Earl has letters,  
So please you, for Your Grace.

Duke. Hal ha! Most welcome  
To Rome and to our palace, Earl Politian!  
And you, most noble Duke! I am glad to see you!  
I knew your father well, my Lord Politian.  
Castiglione! call your cousin hither,  
And let me make the noble Earl acquainted  
With your betrothed. You come, sir, at a time  
Most seasonable. The wedding--

Politian. Touching those letters, sir,  
Your son made mention of--your son, is he not?  
Touching those letters, sir, I wot not of them.  
If such there be, my friend Baldazzar here--  
Baldazzar! ah!--my friend Baldazzar here  
Will hand them to Your Grace. I would retire.

Duke. Retire!--So soon?

Came What ho! Benito! Rupert!  
His lordship's chambers-show his lordship to them!  
His lordship is unwell. (Enter Benito.)

Ben. This way, my lord! (Exit, followed by Politian.)

Duke. Retire! Unwell!

Bal. So please you, sir. I fear me  
'Tis as you say--his lordship is unwell.  
The damp air of the evening-the fatigue  
Of a long journey--the--indeed I had better  
Follow his lordship. He must be unwell.  
I will return anon.

Duke. Return anon!  
Now this is very strange! Castiglione!

This way, my son, I wish to speak with thee.  
You surely were mistaken in what you said  
Of the Earl, mirthful, indeed!--which of us said  
Politian was a melancholy man? (Exeunt.)