EARTH the bright sky cool grew the weary earth,
And many a bud in that fair hour had birth
Upon the garden bushes; in the west
The sky got ready for the great sun's rest,
And all was fresh and lovely; none the less,
Although those old men shared the happiness
Of the bright eve, 'twas mixed with memories
Of how they might in old times have been wise,
Not casting by for very wilfulness
What wealth might come their changing life to bless;
Lulling their hearts to sleep, amid the cold
Of bitter times, that so they might behold
Some joy at last, e'en if it lingered long;
That, wearing not their souls with grief and wrong,
They still might watch the changing world go by,
Content to live, content at last to die.
ALAS! if they had reached content at last,
It was perforce when all their strength was past;
And after loss of many days once bright,
With foolish hopes of unattained delight.

CROSS the gap made by our English hinds
Amidst the Roman's handiwork, 
Far off the long-roofed church;
the shepherd binds
The withy round the hurdle of his fold,
Down in the foss the river fed of old,
That through long lapse of time has grown to be
The little grassy valley that you see.

Rest here awhile, not yet the eve is still,
The bees are wandering yet, and you may hear
The barley mowers on the trench'd hill,
The sheep-bells, and the restless changing weir,
All little sounds made musical and clear
Beneath the sky that burning August gives,
While yet the thought of glorious Summer lives.

Ah, love! such happy days, such days as these,
Must we still waste them, craving for the best,
Like lovers o'er the painted images
Of those who once their yearning hearts have blessed?
Have we been happy on our day of rest?
Thine eyes say Yes, but if it came again,
Perchance its ending would not seem so vain.

45Amidst the Roman's handiwork: According to May Morris (Collected Works 4xi-xiii) Morris here described a definite place, the Roman camp on Sinodun Hill, which looks across the Thames to the small town of Dorchester and its medieval abbey church.
NOW came fulfilment of the year's desire,
The tall wheat, coloured by the August fire,
Grew heavy-headed, dreading its decay,
And blacker grew the elm-trees day by day.
About the edges of the yellow corn,
And o'er the gardens grown somewhat outworn,
The bees went hurrying to fill up their store;
The apple-boughs bent over more and more;
With peach and apricot the garden wall
Was odorous, and the pears began to fall
From off the high tree with each freshening breeze.
SO in a house bordered about with trees,
A little raised above the waving gold,
The Wanderers heard this marvellous story told,
While 'twixt the gleaming flasks of ancient wine
They watched the reapers' slow advancing line.

Pygmalion and the Image:
The Classical Tale for August

Narrative:
Set in a frame that celebrates the fullness of harvest, "Pygmalion and the Image" has the most unproblematically happy ending of any of the spring or summer tales. The lonely sculptor and devout aesthete Pygmalion, unable to find a companion in Cyprus, lovingly sculpts a female Image whose finely wrought beauty becomes the obsessive focus of his life. He does not neglect his worship of Venus, however (whose likeness he has already attempted), and prays to her during a votive procession to grant him the companion he seeks. When he reaches home, the newly animated Image affectionately greets him and carefully recounts the experience of her awakening and subsequent tutelage at the hands of Venus. As the tale ends, the lovers continue to exchange "murmuring words...beneath the glimmering light."

Sources:
Morris amplified and deepened his sources for this tale—Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Book X) and Jean de Meun's *Roman de la Rose* (sections CVI and CVII). He adds a description of the sculptor's environs, and accounts of his prior carving of a statue of Venus, careful attendance at her altar, and near-religious passion for his craft. Morris also adds a quasi-edenic scene in which Venus robes the Image as she becomes human, and its sequel, in which Pygmalion is startled and comforted when the enlivened statue first approaches him with words of love.

The Image's warm invitation and fluent conversation as the two walk together and discuss the nature of love contrasts well
PYGMALION AND THE IMAGE.

The Argument.

A MAN OF CYPRUS, A SCULPTOR NAMED PYGMALION, MADE AN IMAGE OF A WOMAN, FAIRER THAN ANY THAT HAD YET BEEN SEEN, AND IN THE END CAME TO LOVE HIS OWN HANDIWORK AS THOUGH IT HAD BEEN ALIVE; WHEREFORE, PRAYING TO VENUS FOR HELP, HE OBTAINED HIS END, FOR SHE MADE THE IMAGE ALIVE INDEED, AND A WOMAN, AND PYGMALION WEDDED HER.

T' Amathus,¹ that from the southern side
Of Cyprus looks across the Syrian sea,²
There did in ancient time a man abide³
Known to the island-dwellers, for that he
Had wrought most godlike works in imagery,
And day by day still greater honour won,
Which man our old books call Pygmalion.

Yet in the praise of men small joy he had,
But walked abroad with downcast brooding face.
Nor yet by any damsel was made glad;
For, sooth to say, the women of that place
Must seem to all men an accursed race,⁴

Who with the Turner of all Hearts¹ once strove;
And now their hearts must carry lust for love.
Upon a day it chanced that he had been
About the streets, and on the crowded quays,
Rich with unopened wealth of bales, had seen
The dark-eyed merchants of the southern seas
In chafferm⁵ with the base Propoetides,⁶
And heavy-hearted got him home again,
His once-loved life grown idle, poor, and vain.

And there upon his images he cast
His weary eyes, yet little noted them,
As still from name to name his swift thought passed.
For what to him was Juno’s well-wrought hem,⁷
Diana’s shaft, or Pallas’ olive-stem?
What help could Hermes’ rod⁸ unto him give,
Until with shadowy things he came to live?

Yet note, that though, while looking on the sun,
The craftsman o’er his work some morn of spring
May chide his useless labour never done,

¹Amathus: a city on the southern coast of Cyprus, which flourished from 2 B. C. to 70 A. D. The city was noted in Roman times for its magnificent temple of Aphrodite and Adonis.
²Syrian Sea: probably the Eastern Mediterranean, where the island of Cyprus is located.
³There did in ancient time . . . : None of Morris’s sources mentions Pygmalion’s previous fame as a sculptor.
⁴the women of that place / Must seem to all men an accursed race . . . : According to Ovid, Venus forced the women of Amathus into prostitution for denying her divinity, and when they adapted, further satisfied her anger by transmuting them into stones (Metamorphoses X, 221-238).
⁵the Turner of all Hearts: Venus, one of whose Roman epithets was “Verticordia” — “Heart-Turner” — the title of a painting by the Victorian painter and poet Dante G. Rossetti.
⁶chafferm: haggle, bargain.
⁷Propoetides: the prostitutes of Amathus.
⁸Juno’s well-wrought hem . . . : the traditional attributes of these deities in mythology: Juno, goddess of wealth and wifely virtue, appeared richly dressed but veiled from head to foot, and Diana, the huntress, carried her arrows. The olive was Athena’s (Pallas’s) sacred gift to the city of Athens.
⁹Hermes’ rod: the caduceus—a staff entwined with two snakes—symbolized Hermes’s cunning and his role as the gods’ messenger. Pygmalion expects help from Hermes when “with shadowy things he came to live,” because it was Hermes who led souls to the underworld.
For all his murmurs, with no other thing
He soothes his heart, and dulls thought's poisonous sting,
And thus in thought's despite the world goes on;
And so it was with this Pygmalion.

Unto the chisel must he set his hand,
And slowly, still in troubled thought must pace,
About a work begun, that there doth stand,
And still returning to the self-same place,
Unto the image now must set his face,
And with a sigh his wonted toil begin,
Half-loathed, half-loved, a little rest to win.

The lessening marble that he worked upon,
A woman's form now imaged doubtfully,
And in such guise the work had he begun,
Because when he the untouched block did see
In wandering veins that form there seemed to be,
Whereon he cried out in a careless mood:
O lady Venus, make this presage good!

And then this block of stone shall be thy maid, 10
And, not without rich golden ornament,
Shall bide within thy quivering myrtle-shade. 11
So spoke he, but the goddess, well content,
Unto his hand such godlike mastery sent,
That like the first artificer 12 he wrought,
Who made the gift that woe to all men brought.

10 this block of stone shall be thy maid: In Ovid's Metamorphoses and Jean de Meun's Romance of the Rose, the statue is carved of ivory. In substituting marble, Morris follows Lemprêtre, and perhaps recalled a brief reference to Pygmalion in James Thomson's The Castle of Indolence, which Morris seems to have known and liked (Bellas, 130).
11 myrtle-shade: The myrtle was Venus's sacred tree. Pygmalion's prayer for guidance and pledge of the finished statue to Venus are Morris's inventions.
12 first artificer: Vulcan allegedly created Pandora, the first woman, "the gift

And yet, but such as he was wont to do,
At first indeed that work divine he deemed,
And as the white chips from the chisel flew
Of other matters languidly he dreamed,
For easy to his hand that labour seemed,
And he was stirred with many a troubling thought,
And many a doubt perplexed him as he wrought.

And yet, again, at last there came a day
When smoother and more shapely grew the stone,
And he, grown eager, put all thought away
But that which touched his craftsmanship alone,
And he would gaze at what his hands had done,
Until his heart with boundless joy would swell
That all was wrought so wonderfully well.

Yet long it was ere he was satisfied,
And with the pride that by his mastery
This thing was done, whose equal far and wide
In no town of the world a man could see,
Came burning longing that the work should be
E'en better still, and to his heart there came
A strange and strong desire he could not name.

No song could charm him, and no histories
Of men's misdoings could avail him now,
Nay, scarcely seaward had he turned his eyes,
If men had said: The fierce Tyrrenhians 13 row

that woe to all men brought."
Pygmalion and the Image

All things were moving: as his hurried feet
Passed by, within the flowery swathe he heard
The sweeping of the scythe, the swallow fleet
Rose over him, the sitting partridge stirred
On the field's edge; the brown bee by him whirred,
Or murmured in the clover flowers below.
But he with bowed-down head failed not to go.

At last he stopped, and, looking round, he said:
Like one whose thirtieth year is well gone by,
The day is getting ready to be dead;
No rest, and on the border of the sky
Already the great banks of dark haze lie;
No rest: what do I midst this stir and noise?
What part have I in these unthinking joys?

With that he turned, and toward the city-gate
Through the sweet fields went swifter than he came,
And cast his heart into the hands of fate;
Nor strove with it, when higher 'gan to flame
That strange and strong desire without a name;
Till panting, thinking of nought else, once more
His hand was on the latch of his own door.

One moment there he lingered, as he said:

before Roman times.

13Tyrrenians: The Etruscans or Etrurians, who occupied what is now Tuscany, were the early Romans' strongest rivals, and the Homeric "Hymn to Dionysus" characterized them as skillful seafarers and pirates (cf. also Herodotus, Bk. I, Ch. 167) (A.P.M.W.).
14drachm: an ancient Greek coin and unit of measure (approximately an eighth of an ounce).
15I will get me to the woods and try...: The emphasis on Pygmalion's emotional distress is found only in the Romance of the Rose. Morris expands the description of his unhappiness still further.
16the Theban: Hercules, born in Thebes.
17beanfield: perhaps a field of lentils, since other beans were little cultivated
18poplar: Cultivated domestically in classical times, the poplar was grown from transplanted twigs, and according to Virgil, was associated with Hercules (Georgics II, 75-76).
19All things were moving...: Only in Morris does Pygmalion escape to the country to overcome his depression. One of Morris's favorite themes is the healing powers of nature.
20swathe: windrow or line of cut hay ready to be gathered.
21swallow: The swallow was a symbol of spring and good weather for the Greeks.
22the sitting partridge: Partridges were also found in Greece.
23brown bee: The bee was important to the Greeks since honey was the only
Over the lovely shoulders; with one hand
Reached out, as to a lover, did it stand,

The other held a fair rose over-struck;
No smile was on the parted lips, the eyes
Seemed as if even now great love had shown
Unto them, something of its sweet surprise,
Yet saddened them with half-seen mysteries,24
And still midst passion maiden-like she seemed;
As though of love unchanged for aye, she dreamed.

Reproachfully beholding all her grace,
Pygmalion stood, until he grew dry-eyed,
And then at last he turned away his face
As if from her cold eyes his grief to hide;
And thus a weary while did he abide,
With nothing in his heart but vain desire,
The ever-burning, un Consuming fire.

But when again he turned his visage round
His eyes were brighter and no more he wept,
As if some little solace he had found,
Although his folly none the more had slept,
Rather some new-born god-sent madness kept
His other madness from destroying him,
And made the hope of death wax faint and dim;

For, trembling and ashamed, from out the street
Strong men he called, and faint with jealousy
He caused them bear the ponderous, moveless feet25
Unto the chamber where he used to lie,
So in a fair niche to his bed anigh.

24 With half-seen mysteries: Compare the lines from Keats's "The Eve of St. Agnes": "Hoodwink'd with faery fancy; all amot / Save to ... the bliss to be before to-morrow morn."
25 He caused them bear the ponderous, moveless feet: In Ovid and de Meun, Pygmalion moves the statue by himself, and places it on rather than near his
Unwitting of his woe, they set it down,
Then went their ways beneath his troubled frown.

Then to his treasury he went, and sought
Fair gems for its adornment, but all there
Seemed to his eager eyes but poor and nought,
Not worthy e'en to touch her rippled hair,
So he, departing, through the streets 'gan fare,
And from the merchants at a mighty cost
Bought gems that kings for no good deed had lost. 26

These then he hung her senseless neck around, 27
Set on her fingers, and fair arms of stone,
Then cast himself before her on the ground,
Praying for grace for all that he had done
In leaving her untended and alone;
And still with every hour his madness grew
Though all his folly in his heart he knew.

At last asleep before her feet he lay,
Worn out with passion, yet this burning pain
Returned on him, when with the light of day
He woke and wept before her feet again;
Then of the fresh and new-born morning sain,
Into his garden passed, and therefrom bore
New spoil of flowers his love to lay before.

A little altar, with fine gold o'erlaid,
Was in his house, that he a while ago

bed.
26 which kings for no good deed had lost: Even in these romanticized medieval settings, Morris routinely dismisses monarchy and other forms of authoritarian rule.
27 These then he hung her senseless neck around: Morris's account contrasts with those of the Metamorphoses and the Romance of the Rose, both of which include long descriptive passages on the adornment of the statue. Ovid's Pygmalion offers his creation jewels, flowers, seashells, and pet birds, and De Meun's clothes her/it in elaborate and fashionable costumes.

At some great man's command had deftly made,
And this he now must take and set below
Her well-wrought feet, and there must red flame glow
About sweet wood, and he must send her thence
The odour of Arabian frankincense.

Then as the smoke went up, he prayed and said:
Thou, image, hearst me not, 28 nor wilt thou speak,
But I perchance shall know when I am dead,
If this has been some goddess's sport, to seek
A wretch, and in his heart infirm and weak
To set her glorious image, so that he,
Loving the form of immortality,

May make much laughter for the gods above:
Hear me, and if my love misliketh thee 29
Then take my life away, for I will love
Till death unfeared at last shall come to me,
And give me rest, if he of might may be
To slay the love of that which cannot die,
The heavenly beauty that can ne'er pass by.

No word indeed the moveless image said,
But with the sweet grave eyes his hands had wrought
Still gazed down on his bowed imploring head;
Yet his own words some solace to him brought,
Gilding the net wherein his soul was caught
With something like to hope, and all that day
Some tender words he ever found to say;

And still he felt as something heard him speak;
Sometimes he praised her beauty, and sometimes
Reproached her in a feeble voice and weak,
And at the last drew forth a book of rhymes,

28 Thou, image, hearst me not: Morris adds here Pygmalion's literal worship of the image.
29 If my love misliketh thee: if you do not like my love.
Wherein were writ the tales of many climes,
And read aloud the sweetness hid therein
Of lovers' sorrows and their tangled sin.

And when the sun went down, the frankincense
Again upon the altar-flame he cast,
That through the open window floating thence,
O'er the fresh odours of the garden passed;
And so another day was gone at last,
And he no more his love-lorn watch could keep,
But now for utter weariness must sleep.

But in the night he dreamed that she was gone,
And knowing that he dreamed, tried hard to wake
And could not, but forsaken and alone
He seemed to weep as though his heart would break,
And when the night her sleepy veil did take
From off the world, waking, his tears he found
Still wet upon the pillow all around.

Then at the first, bewildered by those tears,
He fell a-wondering wherefore he had wept,
But suddenly remembering all his fears,
Panting with terror, from the bed he leapt
But still its wondred place the image kept,
Nor moved for all the joyful ecstasy
Wherewith he blessed the day that showed it nigh.

Then came the morning offering and the day,
Midst flowers and words of love and kisses sweet
From morn, through noon, to evening passed away,
And scarce unhappy, crouching at her feet
He saw the sun descend the sea to meet;
And scarce unhappy, through the darkness crept

30 And read aloud the sweetness hid therein: Only in Morris does Pygmalion read to the image. Reading aloud was an important social activity for Morris and his friends, and Morris read aloud to Jane Burden when he courted her.

31 And in their midst upon a car of gold. ... : Ovid mentions neither the procession nor the statue. In De Meeu's account, as in Morris's, Pygmalion joins the ceremony in progress. In no classical source does Pygmalion carve an image of Venus. Such an action gives Venus a stronger motive to help Pygmalion in Morris's tale.
And followed after as the goddess led.

But long and vain unto him seemed the way
Until they came unto her house again;
Long years, the while they went about to lay
The honey-hiding dwellers on the plain,\(^{33}\)
The sweet companions of the yellowing grain
Upon her golden altar; long and long
Before, at end of their delicious song.

They stripped her of her weed with reverend hands,
And showed the ivory limbs his hand had wrought;
Yea, and too long e'en then ere those fair bands,
Dispersing here and there, the shadow sought
Of Indian spice-trees o'er the warm sea brought
And, toward the splashing of the fountain turned,
Mocked the noon sun that o'er the cloisters burned.

But when the crowd of worshippers was gone,
And through the golden dimness of the place
The goddess' very servants paced alone,
Or some lone damsels murmured of her case
Apart from prying eyes, he turned his face
Unto that image made with toil and care,
In days when unto him it seemed most fair.

Dusky and dim, though rich with gems and gold,\(^{34}\)
The house of Venus was; high in the dome
The burning sun-light you could now behold,

32 Mother of Desire. Venus.
33 The honey-hiding dwellers on the plain: wildflowers, which often grow in wheatfields.
34 Dusky and dim, though rich with gems and gold. . . : This description of Venus's temple, with its attention to light, resembles Ruskin's account of St. Mark's Cathedral: "What else there is of light is from torches, or silver lamps, burning ceaselessly in the recesses of the chapels; the roof sheathed with gold, and the polished walls covered with alabaster, give back at every curve and angle some feeble gleaming to the flames" (The Stones of Venice, vol. 2, chap. 4).

From nowhere else the light of day might come,
To shame the Shame-faced Mother's\(^{35}\) lovely home;
A long way off the shrine, the fresh sea-breeze,
Now just arising, brushed the myrtle-trees.

The torches of the flower-crowned, singing band
Erewhile, indeed, made more than daylight there,
Lighting the painted tales of many a land,
And carved heroes, with their unused glare;
But now a few soft, glimmering lamps there were,
And on the altar a thin, flickering flame
Just showed the golden letters of her name.

Blue in the dome yet hung the incense-cloud,
And still its perfume lingered all around;
And, trodden by the light-foot, fervent crowd
Thick lay the summer flowers upon the ground,
And now from far-off halls uprose the sound
Of Lydian music,\(^{36}\) and the dancer's cry,
As though some door were opened suddenly.

So there he stood, some help from her to gain,
Bewildered by that twilight midst of day;
Downcast with listening to the joyous strain
He had no part in, hopeless with delay
Of all the fair things he had meant to say;
Yet, as the incense on the flame he cast,
From stammering lips and pale these words there passed:

O thou forgotten help, dost thou yet know

35 the Shame-Faced Mother. Venus. Compare Lemprière's description of Venus's statue, modelled by Praxiteles, as "naked with one hand hiding what modesty keeps concealed."
36 Lydian music. One of the ancient Greeks' four "modes" (Lydian, Dorian, Ionian, and Phrygian), the Lydian was considered gentle and plaintive, designed to stir the emotions and soften the heart. For this reason, Plato forbade the rulers of his ideal state to listen to Lydian music, which he declared
What thing it is I need, when even I,
Bent down before thee in this shame and woe,
Can frame no set of words to tell thee why
I needs must pray, O help me or I die!
Or slay me, and in slaying take from me
Even a dead man's feeble memory?

Say not thine help I have been slow to seek;
Here have I been from the first hour of morn,
Who stand before thy presence faint and weak,
Of my one poor delight left all forlorn;
Trembling with many fears, the hope outworn
I had when first I left my love, my shame,
To call upon thine oft-sung glorious name.

He stopped to catch his breath, for as a sob
Did each word leave his mouth; but suddenly,
Like a live thing, the thin flame 'gan to throb
And gather force, and then shot up on high
A steady spike of light, that drew anigh
The sunbeam in the dome, then sank once more
Into a feeble flicker as before.

But at that sight the nameless hope he had
That kept him living midst unhappiness,
Stirred in his breast, and with changed face and glad
Unto the image forward must he press
With words of praise his first word to redress,

unfit "even for women" (Republic III, 398E-399A).
371 ... can frame no set of words: De Meun's Pygmalion says exactly what he wants in brashly forthright, almost comic terms: "... grant me, on my promise to flee into banishment if I do not avoid chastity from now on, that the beautiful one who ... so truly resembles ivory may become my loyal friend and have the body, soul and life of a woman" (344). Ovid's Pygmalion hesitates slightly: "I pray to have as my wife—he did not dare add 'my ivory maid,' but said 'one like my ivory maid'" (Metamorphoses X, 274-276). Morris tends to underscore Pygmalion's confusion and pain.
38then shot up on high: In Ovid the flames on the altar leap thrice, presumably

But then it was as though a thick black cloud
Altar, and fire, and ivory limbs did shroud.

He staggered back, amazed and full of awe;
But when, with anxious eyes, he gazed around,
About him still the worshippers he saw
Sunk in their wonted works, with no surprise
At what to him seemed awful mysteries;
Therewith he sighed and said: This, too, I dream,
No better day upon my life shall beam.

And yet for long upon the place he gazed
Where other folk beheld the lovely Queen;
And while he looked the dusky veil seemed raised,
And everything was as it erst had been;
And then he said: Such marvels I have seen
As some sick man may see from off his bed:
Ah, I am sick, and would that I were dead!

Therewith, not questioning his heart at all,
He turned away and left the holy place,
When now the wide sun reddened towards his fall,
And a fresh west wind held the clouds in chase;
But coming out, at first he hid his face
Dazed with the light, and in the porch he stood,
Nor wished to move, or change his dreary mood.

Yet in a while the freshness of the eve
Pierced to his weary heart, and with a sigh
He raised his head, and slowly 'gan to leave
The high carved pillars; and so presently
Had passed the grove of whispering myrtles by,
And, mid the many noises of the street,
Made himself brave the eyes of men to meet.

as a token of Venus's divinity.
39thick black cloud: absent from Morris's sources. A similar "fog" accompanies Venus's appearance in "The Ring Given to Venus," the medieval Earthly
Thronged were the ways with folk in gay attire,
Nursing the end of that festivity;
Girls fit to move the moody man's desire
Brushed past him; and soft dainty minstrelsy
He heard amid the laughter, and might see,
Through open doors, the garden's green delight,
Where pensive lovers waited for the night;

Or resting dancers round the fountain drawn,
With faces flushed unto the breeze turned round,
Or wandering 'o'er the fragrant trodden lawn
T ook up their fallen garlands from the ground,
Or languidly their scattered tresses bound,
Or let their gathered raiment fall adown,
With eyes downcast beneath their lovers' frown.

What hope Pygmalion yet might have, when he
First left the pillars of the dreamy place,
Amid such sights had vanished utterly.
He turned his weary eyes from face to face,
Nor noted them, as at a lagging pace
He got towards home, and still was murmuring:
Ah life, sweet life! 40 the only godlike thing!

And as he went, though longing to be there,
Whereas his sole desire awaited him,
Yet did he loath to see the image fair,
White and unchanged of face, unmoved of limb,
And to his heart came dreamy thoughts and dim
That unto some strange region he might come,
Nor ever reach again his loveless home.

Yet soon, indeed, before his door he stood,

*Paradise* tale for January.

40Ah life, sweet life!: The desire to escape "loveless" everyday life to an ideally "strange region" is, of course, a dominant theme in *The Earthly Paradise*.

And, as a man awaking from a dream,
Seemed waked from his old folly; 41 nought seemed good
In all the things that he before had deemed
At least worth life, and on his heart there streamed
Cold light of day: he found himself alone,
Reft of desire, all love and madness gone.

And yet for that past folly must he weep,
As one might mourn the parted happiness
That, mixed with madness, made him smile in sleep;
And still some lingering sweetness seemed to bless
The hard life left of toil and loneliness,
Like a past song too sweet, too short, and yet
Enmeshed for ever in the memory's net.

Weeping he entered, murmuring: O fair Queen,
I thank thee that my prayer was not for nought,
Truly a present helper hast thou been
To those who faithfully thy throne have sought!
Yet, since with pain deliverance I have bought,
Hast thou not yet some gift in store for me,
That I thine happy slave henceforth may be?

HUS to his chamber at the last he came,
And, pushing through the still half-opened door,
He stood within; but there, for very shame
Of all the things that he had done before,
Still kept his eyes bent down upon the floor,
Thinking of all that he had done and said
Since he wrought that luckless marble maid.

Yet soft his thoughts were, and the very place
Seemed perfumed with some nameless heavenly air;
So gaining courage, did he raise his face

41Seemed waked from his old folly : : : Pygmalion's loyal resignation and
Unto the work his hands had made so fair,
And cried aloud to see the niche all bare
Of that sweet form, while through his heart again
There shot a pang of his old yearning pain.

Yet while he stood, and knew not what to do,
With yearning a strange thrill of hope there came;
A shaft of new desire now pierced him through,
And therewithal a soft voice called his name,«
And when he turned, with eager eyes aflame,
He saw betwixt him and the setting sun
The lively image of his loved one.

He trembled at the sight, for though her eyes,
Her very lips, were such as he had made,
And though her tresses fell but in such guise
As he had wrought them, now was she arrayed
In that fair garment that the priests had laid
Upon the goddess on that very morn,
Dyed like the setting sun upon the corn.

Speechless he stood, but she now drew anear,
Simple and sweet as she was wont to be,
And all at once her silver voice rang clear,
Filling his soul with great felicity,
And thus she spoke: Pygmalion come to me,
O dear companion of my new-found life,
For I am called thy lover and thy wife.

acceptance of the situation are for Morris marks of heroic grace.
42a soft voice called his name . . . : Morris extensively modifies here his
sources' accounts of the statue's ensoulment. In Ovid's sensual fantasy,
Pygmalion simply finds the statue already semi-animated, and wordlessly
caresses and kisses it into full life. De Meun's Pygmalion avers that "I am
neither demon nor phantom, sweet friend, but your sweetheart. . . " (345).
Morris's Pygmalion expresses awe before the mystery of the goddess's creation,
and the quickened Image offers not only her body but her "new-made soul."
Morris also adds the Image's pointed curiosity about life and request for

Listen, these words the Dread One bade me say
That was with me e'en now: Pygmalion,
My new-made soul I give to thee to-day,
Come, feel the sweet breath that thy prayer has won,
And lay thine hand this heaving breast upon!
Come, love, and walk with me between the trees,
And feel the freshness of the evening breeze

Sweep mine hair round thy neck; behold my feet,
The oft-kissed feet thou thoughtst should never move,
Press down the daisies! draw me to thee, sweet,
And feel the warm heart of thy living love
Beat against thine, and bless the Seed of Jove
Whose loving tender heart hath wrought all this,
And wrapped us both in such a cloud of bliss.

Ah, thou art wise to know what this may mean!
Sweet seem the words to me, and needs must I
Speak all the lesson of the lovely Queen:
But this I know, I would we were more nigh,
I have not heard thy voice but in the cry
Thou utterestst then, when thou believedst gone
The marvel of thine hands, the maid of stone.

She reached her hand to him, and with kind eyes
Gazed into his; but he the fingers caught
And drew her to him, and midst ecstasies
Passing all words, yea, well-nigh passing thought,
Felt that sweet breath that he so long had sought,
Felt the warm life within her heaving breast
As in his arms his living love he pressed.

But as his cheek touched hers he heard her say:
Wilt thou not speak, O love? why dost thou weep?
Art thou then sorry for this long-wished day,
Or dost thou think perchance thou wilt not keep

information about her situation.
This that thou holdest, but in dreamy sleep?  
Nay, let us do the bidding of the Queen,  
And hand in hand walk through thy garden green;

Then shalt thou tell me, still beholding me,  
Full many things whereof I wish to know,  
And as we walk from whispering tree to tree  
Still more familiar to thee shall I grow,  
And such things shalt thou say unto me now  
As when thou deemedst thou wast quite alone,  
A madman, kneeling to a thing of stone.

But at that word a smile lit up his eyes  
And therewithal he spake some loving word,  
And she at first looked up in grave surprise  
When his deep voice and musical she heard,  
And clung to him as grown somewhat afraid;  
Then cried aloud and said: O mighty one!  
What joy with thee to look upon the sun.

Then into that fair garden did they pass  
And all the story of his love he told,  
And as the twain went o'er the dewy grass,  
Beneath the risen moon could he behold  
The bright tears trickling down; then, waxen bold,  
He stopped and said: Ah, love, what meaneth this?  
Seest thou how tears still follow earthly bliss?  

43 "Then shalt thou tell me . . . : Compare Dante G. Rossetti's "The Blessed Damozel":
  We two will lie i' the shadow of  
  That living mystic tree . . .  
  And I myself will teach to him  
  I myself, lying so,  
  The songs I sing here; which his voice  
  Shall pause in, hushed and slow  
  And find some knowledge at each pause  
  Or some new thing to know. (st. 15)

Then both her white arms round his neck she threw,  
And sobbing said: O love, what hurrieth me?  
When first the sweetness of my life I knew,  
Not this I felt, but when I first saw thee  
A little pain and great felicity  
Rose up within me, and thy talk e'en now  
Made pain and pleasure ever greater grow.

O sweet, he said, this thing is even love,  
Whereof I told thee; that all wise men fear,  
But yet escape not; nay, to gods above,  
Unless the old tales lie, it draweth near.  
But let my happy ears I pray thee hear  
Thy story too, and how thy blessed birth  
Has made a heaven of this once lonely earth.

My sweet, she said, as yet I am not wise,  
Or stored with words, aright the tale to tell,  
But listen: when I opened first mine eyes  
I stood within the niche thou knowest well,  
And from mine hand a heavy thing there fell  
Carved like these flowers, nor could I see things clear,  
And but a strange confused noise could hear.

At last mine eyes could see a woman fair,  
But awful as this round white moon o'erhead,  
So that I trembled when I saw her there,  
For with my life was born some touch of dread,  
And therewithal I heard her voice that said:  
Come down, and learn to love and be alive,  
For thee, a well-prized gift, to-day I give.

Then on the floor I stepped, rejoicing much,  
Not knowing why, not knowing aught at all,

44 how tears still follow earthly bliss: a recurrent theme in all of Morris's work.  
45 a heavy thing there fell . . . : Morris adds the carved flower in the Image's hand.
Till she reached out her hand my breast to touch,
And when her fingers thereupon did fall,
Thought came unto my life, and therewithal
I knew her for a goddess, and began
To murmur in some tongue unknown to man.

And then indeed not in this guise was I,
No sandals had I, and no saffron gown,
But naked as thou knowest utterly,
E'en as my limbs beneath thine hand had grown,
And this fair perfumed robe then fell adown
Over the goddess' feet and swept the ground,
And round her loins a glittering belt was bound.

But when the stammering of my tongue she heard
Upon my trembling lips her hand she laid,
And spoke again: Nay, say not any word,
All that thine heart would say I know unsaid,
Who even now thine heart and voice have made;
But listen rather, for thou knowest now
What these words mean, and still wittier grow.

Thy body, lifeless till I gave it life, 46
A certain man, my servant, well hath wrought;
I give thee to him as his love and wife,
With all thy dowry of desire and thought,
Since this his yearning heart hath ever sought;
Now from my temple is he on the way,
Deeming to find thee e'en as yesterday;

Bide thou his coming by the bed-head there,
And when thou seest him set his eyes upon
Thine empty niche, and hear'st him cry for care,

46 Thy body, lifeless till I gave it life . . . : Only in Morris's version does Venus bless the now-living Image and clothe her in Venus's own robe. The Image is also the only one of Morris's heroines to be advised and empowered by a benign female deity, a favor granted with some regularity to male heroes in the Earthly Paradise.

Then call him by his name, Pygmalion,
And certainly thy lover hast thou won;
But when he stands before thee silently,
Say all these words that I shall teach to thee.

With that she said what first I told thee, love,
And then went on: Moreover, thou shalt say
That I, the daughter of almighty Jove,
Have wrought for him this long-desired day;
In sign whereof, these things that pass away,
Wherein mine image men have well arrayed,
I give thee for thy wedding gear, O maid.

Therewith her raiment she put off from her,
And laid bare all her perfect loveliness,
And, smiling on me, came yet more anear,
And on my mortal lips her lips did press,
And said: Now herewith shalt thou love no less
Than Psyche loved my son in days of old;
Farewell, of thee shall many a tale be told.

And even with that last word was she gone,
How, I know not, and I my limbs arrayed
In her fair gift, and waited thee alone.
Ah, love, indeed the word is true she said,
For now I love thee so, I grow afraid
Of what the gods upon our heads may send;
I love thee so, I think upon the end.

What words he said? How can I tell again
What words they said beneath the glimmering light?
Some tongue they used unknown to loveless men
As each to each they told their great delight,
Until for stillness of the growing night
Their soft sweet murmuring words seemed growing loud,
And dim the moon grew, hid by fleecy cloud.

Paradise.
UCH was the ending of his ancient rhyme,
That seemed to fit that soft and golden time,
When men were happy, they could scarce tell why,
Although they felt the rich year slipping by.
The sun went down, the harvest moon arose,
And 'twixt the slim trees of that fruitful close
They saw the corn still falling 'neath its light,
While through the soft air of the windless night
The voices of the reapers' mates rang clear
In measured song, as of the fruitful year
They told, and its delights, and now and then
The rougher voices of the toiling men
Joined in the song, as one by one released
From that hard toil, they sauntered towards the feast
That waited upon the strip of grass
That through the golden-glimmering sea did pass.
But those old men, glad to have lived so long,
Sat listening through the twilight to the song;
And when the night grew, and all things were still
Throughout the wide vale from green hill to hill,
Unto a happy harvesting they drank,
Till once more o'er the hills the white moon sank.

UGUST had not gone by, though now was stored
In the sweet-smelling granaries all the hoard
Of golden corn; the land had made her gain,
And winter should howl round her doors in vain.
But o'er the same fields, grey now and forlorn,
The old men sat and heard the swineherd's horn,
Far off across the stubble, when the day
At end of harvest-tide was sad and grey;
And rain was in the wind's voice, as it swept
Along the hedges where the lone quail crept,
Beneath the chattering of the restless pie.
The fruit-hung branches moved, and suddenly
The trembling apples smote the dewless grass,
And all the year to autumn-tide did pass.
E'en such a day it was as young men love
When swiftly through the veins the blood doth move,
And they, whose eyes can see not death at all,
To thoughts of stirring deeds and pleasure fall,
Because it seems to them to tell of life
After the dreamy days devoid of strife,
When every day with sunshine is begun,
And cloudless skies receive the setting sun.
On such a day the older folk were fain
Of something new, somewhat to dull the pain
Of sad, importunate old memories
That to their weary hearts must needs arise.
Alas! what new things on that day could come
From hearts that now so long had been the home
Of such dull thoughts? nay, rather let them tell
Some tale that fits their ancient longings well.
Rolf was the speaker, who said: Friends, behold
This is e'en such a tale as those once told
Unto my greedy ears by Nicholas,
Before our quest for nothing came to pass.