The Story of Orpheus and Eurydice

– Argument –

Orpheus the Tracian singer having lost his love by death, would yet not believe that she might not be won back again, but sought her where none else has dared to seek, and there, as it were, compelled the Gods to grant him somewhat; which nevertheless his own folly cast away again, and he was left to live and die a lonely man.

Down in the south Laconian country-side
About mount Tenarus, a wood spreads wide
And toward the heart of it holm oak and yew
Make it right hard for light to struggle through,

Make twilight in the noonday. Ere ye reach
This darkest place, the crisp leaves of the beach
Make a sweet ceiling overhead; the oak
And many-keyed ash good for shaft and yoke
Grow sparser next above the thin hard grass;

Then through a clear space doth a swift stream pass
A rod from whose bank the black wood uprears
Its mighty mass of dread: in long passed years
So was it at the least, as tells my tale;
And in those days no quarry might avail
To draw the hunter to the further shore
Of that small stream, though, folk said, golden ore
Rolled from the hills thick on its shallows lay
To wait, belike, the coming of the day
When Pan should die, and all the Gods should leave
The world all changed, as folk did then believe
Should one day come to pass. All men did dread
That wood exceeding much, and deemed the dead
Walked there at whiles; and that the Gods who least
Love mortal men, whose dreadful altar-feast
Needeth men’s blood, at whiles would haunt the place

Yet one there was in such a fearful case
That hope from fear she never more might tell
Who e’en amidst the very place did dwell
And with the dead held converse; nor might men
Number the years this fearful one bore then;
Or know if she would die for ever she,
As tells the tale, in all folks’ memory
Had been the same to look on: so it was
That sometimes would her awful shadow pass
Long in the sunset, long in the low moon
Over the hay-field, and the maidens’ tune
Would quaver and die out, and hand from hand
Would fall away and youth and damsel stand
Trembling and scarcely daring to draw breath,
As love grew faint before the coming death.
Yet since strange tales went of her wondrous lore,
Sometimes would folk that hard need pressed full sore
Cry from the stream’s bank on her dreadful name,
They durst not name else; and the hag still came
At the seventh call, and, for such homely hire
As wollen cloth, or knife fresh from the fire,
Wheat-meal, or kid fit for the slaughtering,
Fresh oil or honey, or such like other thing,
Would speak in dreadful voice that scarcely seemed
To come from her, and of ill dreams thrice dreamed
Would tell the import; or teach fearful skill,
How to gain love perforce, and how to kill
Far-off unseen – in battle to prevail
To heal the half-dead and make weak the hail.

That wood, and she who dwelt therein did curse
The country-side, I deem: more wild and fierce
More cruel and hard in love, more fell in hate
Were those than other folk, content to wait
With blind eyes in this changing doubtful home
The bitter and the sweet that were to come
With none of these our story dealeth now
But with a stranger who went to and fro
Amid the dwellings that stood round about
The wood, and hearkened tales of dark and doubt
Men told thereof, silent himself, distraught
Amid the wondering men with bitter thought
With grief untold to these, which yet our tale
Shall tell of somewhat. In a Thracian vale
He dwelt erewhile, and Orpheus had to name,
And from a proud and mighty race he came
Of which few words folk tell, but know that he
Could deal with measured words and melody
As no man else, and all the people moved,
And in all matters was right well beloved:

Now this man wooed the maid Eurydice
And won her, and the days wore by till she
Was wedded to him, but or ere the night
When all their longing into pure delight
Should melt away, as her fair feet did pass
Over the sweetest of the garden grass
And he beheld them, unbeheld there crept
A serpent through the flowers oer which she stepped
And stung her unshod foot in deadly wise
So that before the July moon might rise
To gleam upon the rose-strewn fragrant bed.
She, the desire of all the world, lay dead.
Ye who shall read what after followeth
May deem belike how this man first saw death;
Who none the less at last arose from pain
So great, that from its heart he needs must gain
Some little hope, if he should yet live on,
And so this grew until at last he won
91 Some] [folio 4 c/\]
A bitter courage from his lone despair,
That scarcely would believe in death or bear
The burden of the changeless Gods while love
Was yet alive the very death to move.
What lore he gained, or in what what hidden place,
But so it was that still he set his face
Toward Tenarus, until at last outworn

With grief and watching, on a bitter morn
Upon the border of that stream he stood
With strained eyes fixed upon the fearful wood.

Black was his raiment, and a withered wreath
Of flowers that once had felt the summers breath
Was round his head; an ivory harp, well strung
With golden string, about his neck there hung:
Lovely he was, well-wrought of every limb,
But white and wasted was the face of him
Beneath his golden hair, a thing to move

The best of Goddesses to ruth and love,
If she might dream a little while that fate,
Stayed by the hand of love, an hour could wait
To let her taste the fear and hope and pain,
That still we strive to think not wholly vain.

Mid winter was it, dark the full stream ran
Betwixt two shelves of ice; the sun grew wan
Already, as the promise of the day
Was marred by the long cloud-bars dull and grey
That the light frosty wind drew from the north;

From the brown brake-side peered a grey wolf forth
And snarled behind him, e’en while overhead
A raven wheeled, glad that the year was dead

96 move.] move, CW
97 what hidden place.] hidden place. CW
104 summers] summer’s CW
107 limb.] limb; CW
110 ruth] ruth<s> c4
112 hour] <#> hour c4
115 it[,] it c3
116 ice; the sun] ice, the <sky> \sun/ c3
116 Betwixt] \be/Twixt c3
117 Already] Already c3
118 marred] spoil c3
118 cloud-bars dull and] cloud bars dull & c3
119 That ... north;:] The light cold wind bore up from the north c3
120 brake-side ... a] brake side peered the c3
121 And ... overhead] Behind the man and snarled & over head c3
122 wheeled,] wheeled c3
To make him rich. Then Orpheus seemed to wake  
As from a dream, and looked around, & spake  

125  “Long hast thou been a dying, O bitter year,  
Whose summer-tide such woe to me did bear!

And dieth not time withal, though still I strive  
A little, and a little hope doth live.  
But I – I shall not die, I shall not die  

130  E’en when this hope is utterly gone by,  
But, living, unconsumed by misery still,  
Into a timeless changeless sea of ill,  
Made but to waste my wretched soul shall float,  
As from a dark stream’s mouth an unmanned boat  

135  Floats into a windless sea fulfilled of death.”

123 rich. Then Orpheus] rich – now the man c3  
124 dream.] dream c3; [folio 5 c4]  
124 around, & spake] around and spake c3;  
124 around and spake: CW  
125 “Long] Long c3  
125 a dying O] a dying O c3; a-dying O CW  
125 year.] year c3  
126 summer-tide such woe] soft springtide such woes c3  
126 bear!] bear – c3  
127 And .. withal] <O may time die> And <is> \doth/ not time <dead> \die/ now c3; And <will> \dieth/  
not time <die too> \withal/, c4; [No new verse paragraph c3]  
128 little.] little c3  
128 live.] live – c3  
129 But I – ] And I, c3  
129 die,] die c3  
130 E’en] Een c3  
130 utterly gone by,] dead but living (float c3  
131-33 But ... float.] [No corresponding lines c3]  
134 from ... stream’s] \from the sea t/ from a `dark streams/ rivers c3  
135 sea ... death.”] sea) fullfilled of death. c3; ful<\l> filled of death.” c4  
136 He] __________________ still  
Into a timeless changeless waste of ill  
Made but to hate my wretched soul shall  
He c3
He clenched his hands, and drew a weary breath,
And o’er the grass that through the thin dry snow
Struggled aloft, he went with footsteps slow
Until he came to the stream’s shallowest place,

Then, with his sick hope quivering in his face
Crashed through the ice and splashed the ripple through
And gained the bank, and toward the dark wood drew,

Beneath his golden hair a thing to move
A very goddess with sweet ruth & love
If she might dream a little while that fate
Stayed by the hand of love an hour could wait
To let her taste the hope & fear and pain
That men on earth must think not we must strive to think not wholly vain)

And o’er] X (Black was his raiment and a withered wreath
Of flowers that once had known the summers breath
Was round his head, an ivory harp well strung
With golden strings about his neck there hung
Lovely the man was most well wrought of limb
But white and wasted was the face of him
That none in memory of aught alive
Had dared to seek, with death and hell to strive.

But he for nought that might abide him quailed,
E’en when the winter day’s sick sunlight failed
Beneath the black boughs, and the twilight dim
Betwixt the tree-trunks needs must seem to him
Gained not from day but from some strange place shed

Where day and night need not the changeless dead.
Nought living in that wood his eyes might see,
Scarcely might the snow betwixt thick tree & tree
Reach the sparse herbage, or the hard brown ground:
Though the wind rose without now, no real sound

But of his hasty feet therein he heard;
Yet by the silence nowise was he feared,
For, wrapped about in grief and strong intent,
Scarcely he saw the way on which he went
Or took note of the trees, as one by one
From out the gloom his eyes were fixed upon
They grew, then met him, then were left behind

Thus darkling through the changeless woodways blind
Long time he went, till suddenly a light
Red, dusky, flickering, through the silent night
Of the moveless boughs sent a long wavering way
Changing to black and red the treetrunks grey.
No cry came from his lips, nor did his feet
Falter one whit, but swifter moved to meet
The heart of the strange light, until at last
Into a treeless open space he passed,
Though what was over head he might not say,
Sky or what else; for surely the world’s day
Had scarce waned yet, yea and were it night
With neither moon or star the sky to light

175 Scarce had this wide-spread twilight glimmered there
To mingle with the red blaze that did flare
From out the windows of a house of stone,
White and unstained as is a wind-bleached bone
In a dry land: he looked down toward his feet,

180 And might not name the flowers that they did meet
Tough blossoms certainly that glare did light
Not the thin grey grass and snow dusty-white
Of the cold world without; whereby he knew
That some strange land he thus had journeyed to,

185 But felt no fear, nay rather hope, that strange
Should all be round him, and the changeless change
Of seasons, each slaying each, and night and day
Waxing and waning thus were passed away

172 else;] else, c3
172 world’s] worlds c3
173 yet, night] yet though dusk had all been there c3
174-76 With flare] But for the red light that he now saw glare c3; [Line drawn across folio c3]
174 With] <And> \With/ c4
175 there] <round> \there/ c4
177 stone,] stone c3
179 land: he] land he c3; land. He CW
179 feet,] feet c3 CW
180 might ... they] And <scarcely> know \no what/ what flowers they c3
180 meet] meet, CW
182 thin grey grass] sparse herbage c3
182 dusty-white] dusty white c3
183 cold ... whereby] world without so that c3
184 some ... thus] a most dread place he c3
184 to,] to c3
185 But] Yet c3
185 fear, nay] fear but c3
185 hope,] hope
186 Should ... and] Was all about him that c3
186 him,] him; CW
187 seasons,] seasons
187 each, ... night and] each & night & c3
188 Waxing] Wax<ed>\ing/ c4
188 and waning thus] & waning clear c3
188 away] away, CW
So now unto the doorway of that hall
Swiftly he passed, and as his feet did fall
Upon its threshold, wild new hopes there came
Across his heart. He entered; a great flame
Shot up from floor to ceiling of that place
Reddening his raiment and his wild white face

And lighting every nook and cranny there.
A mighty had he had accounted fair
Mid the world’s sunlight with the boughs of trees
Brushing its windows in the fitful breeze;
But here, mid utter silence of all else

Save the flame’s roar, mid horror such as dwells
Amidst a city where all folk have died,

189 doorway of that] door of that strange c3; door\way/ of that <strange> c4 [folio 7 c4]
190 passed, and as] passed and when c3
191 its ... hopes] the threshold might thoughts c3
192 heart. He entered;] heart – he entered – c3
193 Shot ... that] Ran up from fl<oor to roof <a>\o/f that strange c3
194 and] & c3
195 and] & c3
195 there.] there c3
196 had he ... fair] hall he might have reckoned fair c3; [hall] had he accounted fair CW
197 Mid] Amid c3 [folio 2 verso c3]
197 sunlight] sunlight, CW
197 with ... trees] and the doubtful breeze c3
198 Brushing ... breeze; ] The windows \brushed/ <looked through> by <the> boughs of flickering
trees c3
199 here,] here c3
200 Save roar,] But the flames roar c3
201 Amidst where] Upon a city w/\ere c3
201 died,] died c3
Dreadful it seemed, and even he did bide
Doubtful a little while, with eyes all dazed
As through the smokeless swirling flame he gazed;

All was of stone there, flawless smooth, and white,
Pavement and walls and roof, but for the light
That reddened it: betwixt the fire and door
A laver was there sunken in the floor
Whose moveless water mirrored the straight flame;

A brazen bowl there floated in the same,
And by the pillar that rose up anigh
A black-fleeced ram lay gasping piteously
The red blood running from his breast apace.

Now sounded a shrill voice adown the place;

"Draw nigher Orpheus, tell thy tale to me
Of the glad world unmeet for me and thee
That hast a mind the heavens and earth to move.
Tales wherein hope is told of, and sweet love,
Where each loves each in sweet and equal wise
Beneath the just Gods’ happy unseen eyes.”

Then such a laughter on his ears did fall
As made him deem that in that dreadful hall
His sin and his despair did him abide,
A thing made manifest, that ere that tide
Dimly he knew, a dream: and yet his feet
How drew him on the worst of all to meet.
But as betwixt the pillars tall he passed
Lo, nor their whiteness, nor his blackness cast
A shadow on the pavement, in despite
Of that great swirling shaft of ruddy light.
But now all fear that his great heart drew round
At the first hearing of that dreadful sound

217  hast] hath c3; ha <th>\st/ c4
217  and] & c3
217  move:] move c3
218  Tales] <Su> Tales c3
218  of, and sweet love.] of & sweet love c3
219-20  Where ... eyes. “] [No corresponding lines c3]
221  Then] [No new verse paragraph c3] [folio 8 c4]
223  sin and his] own sin & c3
223  abide,] abide c3
224  manifest,] manifest c3
225  Dimly ... and] He had not known nor dreamed of c3
226  How ... on] Drew him along c3
226  meet,] meet c3
227  But ... tall] And as betwixt the pillars white c3
228  Lo, ... cast] Neither his blackness nor their whiteness c3
229  pavement, in] floor in all c3
230  Of] <And> Of c3
230  shaft ... light.] __________ of ruddy light – c3
231-32  But sound] [No corresponding lines c3]
Died clean away, as onward he did wend
And saw one sitting at the hall’s far end
On a great seat of stone, a woman, clad
In white wool raiment: in her hand she had
A rock wherefrom she span a coal-black thread;
Her face was as the face of one long dead
But for her glittering eyes, and white and long
Hung down her hair her raiment’s folds among.

“All hail, Worlds Hope, Worlds Love!” she cried we twain
Of such a meeting long have been most fain
Yea though thou knowest me not, yet oft indeed
Thou callest on me in thy bitter need,
To make thy face as brass thine heart as stone –
O good it is we twain are met alone!”

Now as he drew close, therewithal it seemed
As though this too with all these things were dreamed,
And had no import: as he stood there, still
One thought one hope his wasted heart did fill,
That in such wise from out his soul did flame
That oer his cheeks a ruddy flush there carne
Mocked from her corpse-like lips by laughter low
As if his thoughts she nowise failed to know.

Then with a proud and steady gaze he cried
"Mother, all hail! for though the world be wide,
Thus have we met; I who desire, and thou
Who hidden thing and life’s end well can show!"

"Mother of nought at all," she cried, “am I;
The love and hope that I saw wane and die,
I brought it not to birth, but in a dream
Was it made mine: the thought that once did seem

thought] thought, CW
heart] <life>\heart/ c4
fill] fill c3
from out] now from c3
oer his cheeks] oer his face c3; o’er his cheeks CW
Mocked ... corpse-like] From from her corpse like c3; [folio 9 c4]
if] [folio 3 recto c3] though c3
know.] know c3
Then] But c3
and steady gaze] & steady look c3
cried] cried: CW
“Mother, all hail!] <Yea> <h>\a/lI hail mother c3
wide,] wide c3
met;,] met c3
desire, and] desire & c3
life’s] lifes c3
show!'] show c3
at ... I:] \at/ she cried am I c3
and die,] & die c3
birth,] birth c3
made mine:] <brought to me> \made mine/ c3
Born from my very heart – who knows, who knows,
Whence it was born, amid what fearful throes

Of Gods, to mock me as alone I sit,
Mazed twixt the rising and the end if it.
Fool of the world, thou hearkenest not to me,
Deeming thy love a part of thee to be,
Knowing it mighty, thinking that thou too

Art grown a God all marvellous things to do –
– Assay it, 0 thou singer, who didst move
The little hearts of men ere thou didst love,
And canst not move them more, O hot-hearted fool,
Who then as now wert but the helpless tool

Of that undying worldwide melody
Whose sweet sound mocks the vain hearts made to die.
– Thou hearkenest not – how then shall I avail
Thy vain desire? Speak, tell me of they tale!"

Indeed with wandering eyes he turned to her,

– Assay it, 0 thou singer, who didst move
The little hearts of men ere thou didst love,
And canst not move them more, O hot-hearted fool,
Who then as now wert but the helpless tool

Whose sweet sound mocks the vain hearts made to die.
– Thou hearkenest not – how then shall I avail
Thy vain desire? Speak, tell me of they tale!"

As though no meaning all her words did bear,
But when she made an end of all, he said;

Indeed with wandering eyes he turned to her,
“Mother, folk say thou dealest with the dead,
Thyself alive – as old as thou mayst be,
As wise by lapse of years of misery,

I, young, unwise, methinks might look upon
The eyes of those that their last rest have won
As thou thyself dost: nor more lonely grow
E’en for that sight; because within me now
Instead of lore and wisdom is there set

Desire too strong to dally with regret,
To deal with dreamy bitter-sweet half-rest;
To strive for that which wise men call the best
Forgetfulness and blotting out of day;
Too strong but as a thinnest mask to bear

Sick-hearted patience through the days to wear.
Nay I need pray thee not, I know thy thought
As thou know’st mine; I am not come for nought,
Alone of all men, to this fearful place.”

Silent awhile upon him did she gaze,
Then cried: “Nay nay thou com’st not here to strive
Save with the Gods who kill and make alive
And know not why – so even let it be,
And as I may will I give help to thee;
I, who perchance am even one of these,
And shall not die to gain a little ease.
– Yet hearken now, thou as thou standest there,
So loving and so lovesome and so fair
All music on thy lips, and in thine heart –
– More than a God in this one thing thou art,
And if love ruled the world thou too shouldst rule.
But so it is not; love is but the tool
They use to make the morning bright and fair;
Even by the silence of they dull despair
The brown breast of the thoughtless nightingale
Is filled with longings vague to tell thy tale.
Through the cold patience of thy grief forgot,
A hundred thousand springs wax bright & hot,
A hundred thousand summers bear the rose;
And with the fruitful rest thine heart did lose
A hundred thousand autumns grow o’ersweet
Before the star-crowned winters cold white feet;
While thou thyself, a waif cast forth, shalt fare
Alone, unloved thou knowest not why or where.
Come then today and strive and strive and fail,
Beat down and conquered yet of more avail,
Sweeter and fairer to the world than though.
In triumph thou thy short life passedst through,
Glad every day and making others glad.”

Methinks he knew not, or for good or bad
The words she spake to him, but in his eyes
Gleamed a strange light, as he beheld her rise
And step down toward him; as a king’s eyes gleam
When from the hall forth unto battle stream
His folk foredoomed behind him, and the shout
Of foes unnumbered ringeth round about.

But now on his hot hand her hand did fall
Ice-cold, and slow she led him down the hall
Until they came unto the laver fair,
And there she bade him bide, and into the air
Departed, but returning presently
Bare store of herbs with her all strange to see,
With some whereof her dreadful hair she crowned,
And some she strewed about upon the ground,
Or cast into the water: then she took
The ram now dead, and from her long arms shook
The cumbering raiment back, and therewith strode
Unto the fire and cast therein her load,
That flesh and fell and bone the fire licked up;
Then from her girdle did she take a cup,

And filled it from that water, and then spake;
“Drink, and fear not; thine heart that so doth ache
Shall rest a while; lie down hereby, and sleep
Over the trouble of thy soul shall creep
Despite thyself: but when thou wak’st, take thou

Thine harp, if aught there be within thee now
Of melody; and in the sweetest wise
Thou mayest, sing thou of they miseries:
For doubt thou not, that those shall be anear
Who all thy tale shall nowise fail to hear

Howso they mock thee afterward. Farewell,
What end soe’er of this thou hast to tell,
Belike it is that ne’er shall meet again
Thine all devouring feverish longing vain
And my despair that the Gods needs must call

346 back, and therewith] and therewith she c3
347 and] & c3
347 load,] load c3
348 fire licked up;] flame licked up c3
349 cup,] cup c3
350 from that] with <wa>\th/at c3; [folio 12 c4]
350 spake;] spake c3; spake: CW
351 “Drink,] Drink c3; “Drink CW
351 not;] not: c3
352 a while; lie] in <sleep> a while lie c3; a while. Lie CW
354 thyself: but] thyself but c3; thyself. But CW
354 wak’st] wakst c3
355 harp,] harp c3
356 melody; ... the] melody <tell> in whatso c3
357 mayest, sing thou] mayest tell <y>\th/ou c3
358 not,] not c3
360 Howso] <Who> Howso c3
360 afterward. Farewell] afterwards – farewell c3
361 soe’er] soeer c3
361 tell,] tell c3
362 ne’er] neer c3
363 Thine all devouring] Thy <hopeless> all devouring c3; Thine all-devouring CW
364 the Gods] the <great> Gods c3
365 Patience and silence the great help of all."

He drank, and almost ere her speech was o’er
Sank with dim eyes upon the marble floor
Then twice he feebly raised his eyes to see
If she were gone, and twice sank languidly
370 Again; and yet again somewhat he strove
To look forth, but now scarcely might he move,
For heavy sleep was on him, ’gainst his will
And a void space; then dreams of the fair hill

365 Patience] <Patience> <Great patience> <with those last words> Patience c3
365 silence] silence, CW
365 all.”] all c3
366 drank,] drank c3
366 ere] <h>e’re/ c3
366 o’er] oer c3
367 floor] floor, CW
368 feebly] \feebly/ c3
369 gone,] gone c3
370 Again; and yet] Again, and ye c3
371 forth,] forth c3
371 move,] move c3
372 him, ’gainst] him gainst c3; him ’gainst CW
373 a ... fair] dreams withal of \the fair/ Thracian c3; a <long> \void/ space <of nought>; <and> then <the> \dreams of the fair/ c4
That hung in Thrace above his father’s house,
375 Beset with youths and maidens amorous,
That waited there his corning forth to them
With harp and fair song, that the wool robe’s hem
Might dance about the maidens dancing feet,
And her loosed hair smite with its tangles sweet,
380 The youths flushed trembling face drawn close anigh.
But from the house he dreamed there came a cry
‘Orpheus is dead, and will not corne again’
And therewithal he seemed to strive in vain
To add a cry unto the wailing loud
385 That burst out straightway from the lovesome crowd,
But as he strove all sight passed clean away,
And no more had he thought of night or day,
Or lapse of time, nay scarce if he did live;
But none the less ever his mouth did strive

374 fathers] father’s CW; [Lines 374-75 follow line 376 and are in parenthesis c3]
374 That ... house,] And at the foot thereof his father’s house c3
375 and maidens,] & maidens amorous c3
376 That waited] <He dreamed of> \that waited/ c4
376 to] <fo>\o c3
377 song, that] song till c3
377 robe’s] robes c3
378 Might] Should c3
378 maidens] maiden’s CW
378 feet,] feet c3
379 loosed] loosed <hair flying> c3
379 sweet,] sweet c3 CW
380 youths] youth’s CW
380 trembling ... anigh.] face drawn trembling her anigh c3
381 deemed] dreamed c3
382 ‘Orpheus is dead,] Orpheus is dead c3; “Orpheus is dead, CW
382 again” again c3; again,” CW
383 And] And even c3; [folio 13 c4]
383 therewithal] therewith c3
384 cry] scream c3
384 wailing] wailings c3
385 burst ... the] straightway burst out from that c3
385 crowd,] crowd c3; crowd; CW
386 But ... away,] But even there withal sight passed away c3
387 or day,] and day c3
388 time,] time c3
388 live:] live c3
With that dumb wail and made no sound at all;
Until at last the pillars of the hall
Midst a dim twilight did he now behold
Grow slowly from the dark void; quenched and cold
The fire was; great drops fell from on high

Into the laver, and a strange wild cry
Rang through the long place – O Eurydice
My love my love! – yet he knew not that he
Had ever cried: but as he slowly rose
Unto his feet and drew the raiment close

Unto his shivering body, and his heart
Strove to gain memory, his white lips did part,
And as the dead may call unto the dead
With listless hands down-dropped, and hopeless head,
He cried; “O love, O love Eurydice!”

And through the hall his voice rang mournfully,
And died away, nor other sound was there
Except the drip into the water near,
And his own breathing: so at last he moved
And his foot smote against his harp beloved,
And from its strings there came a jarring sound
Familiar once, but mid the marvels round,
In that last refuge of his hope and woe
A stranger sound then err he hearkened to.
Therewith he gan remember where he was
And all that hitherto had come to pass,
And of the bidding of the dreadful crone
Then with the pain of feeling so alone,
None nigh to tell of all his longing sore
His heart grew soft, and his vexed eyes ran o’er
With bitter unseen tears; and midst of these
Came thronging thick and fast the images
Of bygone days; he stooped adown to take
His harp up, and he felt the strained strings quake,
Trembling himself; them with a doubtful hand

Laid on the harp, a while there did he stand
Nor named his hope; until at last the hall
Heard his deft fingers on the red gold fall
And move in loving wise: though he belike
Scarce knew what music therefrom he did strike,
Scarce knew what words from his parched lips carne forth.
For all these things to him were grown nought worth,
Only his love lived, only his longing strove
To think the whole world filled with his sweet love.

Long ago has he gone, nor left behind
One work of his to loose love, or to bind,
Yet tells the tale his thought in words like these

Faint as they be to match his melodies.
While agone my words had wings
And might tell of noble things,

The wide warring of the kings,

bygone ... stooped] the old days he stood c3; [line drawn between 421-22 with 54 written in margin c3]
harp ... he] well loved harp and c3
quake,] quake c3
himself;] himself c3 425 harp,] strings c3
hope;] hope, c3
red gold] strained strings c3
wise;] wise, c3
strike,] strike c3
what] what <who> c3
forth,] forth c3
For] <W>\For c3
worth,] worth c3; worth: CW
lived,] lived c3
filled ... love,] peopled with his love c3
Long ... gone,] Long ago has he gone c3 [No new verse paragraph c3]
love, ... bind,] love or to bind c3
words like these] <such a wise>\words like these/ c3; words like these, CW
they be] it is c3
melodies,] melodies – c3 [Line drawn after 437 followed by line 486 c3]
While] [folio 5 recto is an inserted 34 lined white folio bearing lines 438-486 c3; WHILE CW
things,] things c3
And the going to and fro
Of the wise that the world do know
Then the sea was in my song,
And the wing blew rough & strong,

And the swift steeds swept along
And the gridding of the spears
Reached the hot heart through the ears

So a slim youth sang I then
Mid the beards of warring men;

Till the great hall rang again,
And the swords were on their knees
As they hearkened word like these.

Or before the maids that led
The white oxen sleek full fed,

When the field gave up its dead,
The dead lover of the sun
Sweet I sang when day was done.

440  The wide} Of the c3
440  kings, } kings c3
441  and} & c3
442  the ... world] wise men <#> that the word c3
442  know] know. CW
443  song, } song c3
444  And} Or c3
444  & strong,] and strong c3; and strong, CW
445  And} Or c3
445  swept] raced c3
446  And} Or c3
447  ears] ears. CW
448  So][folio 15 c4]
449  men; } men c3
450  again, ] again c3
452  As] When c3
452  these. ] thesec3
454  oxen sleek] oxen, sleek, CW
454  fed, ] fed c3
455  dead, ] dead c3
456  sun] sun, CW
Hearts I gladdened limbs made light
When the feet of girls gleamed white
In the odorous torch-lit night,
And Belike my heart did flame
Though my cheek told lies of shame

Or in days not long agone,
Would I sit as if alone
Though around stood many a one,
Each as if alone we were
For of fresh love sang I there.

All such things could I sing now,
And to this dull silence show
How the life of man doth grow;
Of all love and hope and hate
And unseen slow-creeping fate.

But of this how shall I sing?
The sick hope whereto I cling,
The despair that everything,
Moaneth with about mine eyes,
This dull cage of miseries?

457  I sang] sang I CW
457  done, ] done c3
458  gladdened] gladdened CW
458  light] light, CW
459-60  When ... night,] In the odorous torchlit light
462  shame] <fl> shame c4; shame.
463  agone,] agone c3
464  sit] sing c3
465  one,] one c3
466  we were] wee <c>r c3; we<c>r were c4
467  there,] there c3
468  All such things] Yea <oft> all such c3
470  grow; ] grow c3
471  hope and] <war> hope & c3
472  slow-creeping fate.] slow creeping fate c3
473  sing?] sing c3
474  The sick] the <#> sick c3
474  cling,] cling c3
475  that everything,] <w>hat everything c3; that everything CW
476  mine eyes,] mi<#>ne
Slow died the sweet wail of his voice along
The dusk of the hall; an echo of his song
He deemed came back, he knew not whence or how
But there a long while stood he silent now
Amid the silence, till a sudden thought
An unseen frown unto his white brow brought
And once again he smote his harp and sang
Great words that wildly through the dread hush rang

O ye, who sit alone And bend above the earth,
So great that the world’s gain Is but a hollow dearth,
And pain forgot like laughter, And love of fleeting worth,
Did ye teach me how to sing Or where else did I gain

The tears slow born of bliss, The sweetness drawn from pain?

I stand alone and longing Nor know if aught doth live
Except myself and sorrow Nor know with whom to strive,
Nor know if ye have might To hold back or to give,
Nor know if ye can love, Or what your hate shall be
Or if ye are my foes, Or the love that burns in me.

Can ye hearken as men hearken, Can I move you as ere while
I moved the happy kings, And the wise men did beguile,
When the lover unbefriended Must sigh with rest and smile
For the sweetness of the song That made not light of woe,

And the youngling stand apart, And learn that life must go

O ye who ne’er were fettered, By the bonds of time and ill,
Give give, if ye are worthy Or leave me worthier still:
For the measure of my love No gain of love should fill.
If I held the hands I love, If I pressed her who is gone,

love, Or] love or c3; love, <O>/O/n c4
shall be] may c3
my foes, On] <my> /fo/es or c3
burns] stirs c3
hearken, Can] hearken can c3
er while] erewhile c3 CW
kings, And] kings & c3
did beguile,] I beguiled c3; did beguile? CW
When] [folio 6 recto c3]; And c3
Must] must c3
and] & c3
That] that c3
woe,] woe c3
And] <And the maids did drop their lids & their full hearts fuller grow> And c3
apart, And] apart and c3
go,] go c3
who ... By] who <se hands are> \never were/ by c3
and ill,] or ill c3
give, ] give c3
worthily Or] worthy/ or c3
still:] still c3
No] no c3
should] should ever c3
held] he <e>/d c3
love, If] love <l>/f c3 503 her ... gone,] who is gone c3
Living breathing to my breast, Not e’en so were all well won.

O be satisfied with this, That no end my longing knows
If the years might not be counted, For we twain to sit all close
As on earth we sat a little Twixt the lily and the rose,
Sat a little and were gone Ere we mingled in the strife

Ere we learned how best to love, Ere we knew the ways of life
Folk pray to us of earth, To be loved, and sick at heart
Must turn their eyes away, And from every hope depart
We are lone who cannot give, And grow hard beneath the smart
But ye have wealth and might, Ye can hearken & can give,

What gain is there in death, 0 be wise and make alive.

He ceased and listened, for he deemed a sound
Unnameable stirred the still air around

505  Living breathing to my breast, Not e’en so were all well won
506  this, That no end my longing knows
507  counted, For we twain to sit all close
508  As on earth we sat a little Twixt the lily and the rose,
509  Ere we learned how best to love, Ere we knew the ways of life
510  Folk pray to us of earth, To be loved, and sick at heart
511  Must turn their eyes away, And from every hope depart
512  We are lone who cannot give, And grow hard beneath the smart
513  But ye have wealth and might, Ye can hearken & can give,
514  What gain is there in death, 0 be wise and make alive.
515  He ceased and listened, for he deemed a sound
516  Unnameable stirred the still air around
But knew not if from his own heart it was;
But into utter silence all did pass.

520 Whateer it might be, in a while, and he
Stood in that place a moment silently,
Then passed unto the door, and gazed about
And the same glimmering twilight was without
As in the hall, and silence as of death,

525 So that the very drawing of his breath,
His feet just scarcely moving 'gainst his will
Seemed a great sound, portentous, mid the still
Warm moveless air: till now he 'gan to think:
“Yea, perchance death it was that I did drink,

530 From the crone's cup, and this is but death's life
Silent and lonely, yet with memory rife,
With all the pain of the old struggle left,
With all the love unsatisfied; hope reft
Away from us alone — Ah is it so

That in such wise with thee the hours do go,
And thou art lone, O love, as I am lone?
Yet if thy love for me is no more gone,
Than is my love, sure we shall meet again
To weep and smile above the tales of pain

That threatened, mocking, it would never cease.
Ah, if a word of mine might give thee peace,
Now or we meet, now while thou wanderest
Amid the languor of this dull unrest!”

And once again his hands ran oer the strings,
And once again with thought of long-past things
His heart swelled into music, and his song
Within that echoless land rang sweet and strong.

O me, a white house there was
Set amid the Thracian grass,

And the wood-dove moaned thereover,
And the Thracian loved and lover,
Passing by the garden-close
Speaking words that no one knows,
Stopped awhile to smile and say

555  ‘Orpheus shall be wed to day’
‘The white feet of Eurydice
Fair, as thou art fair to me
Soft beneath the lilies white –’
‘Bear her forth to full delight
Till the night and morn shall touch.’

560  ‘Corne then love, for overmuch
Them and us the Gods do bless
With enduring happiness.’
‘Yea love, for the grass is green
Still, and thrushes run between
The faint mallows overworn
And the berries of the thorn
Know no ruddy threat of death!

So they felt each other’s breath
And each others shoulders warm,
And the weight of hand and arm

552  garden-close] garden close c3
553  knows, ] knows c3
554  and] & c3
555  ‘Orpheus ... day’ ] Orpheus will be wed today c3; “Orpheus shall be wed today –” CW
556  ‘The ... of] <And white armed> \The white of c3
557  ‘The] “The CW
558  Fair,] Fair c3 CW
559  “Bear ... delight] <Shall> pass\eth/ <to bring him all> \delight/ c3
560  morn shall touch.’] day shall touch c3; <day> \morn/ shall touch.’ c4; morn shall touch.” CW
561  ‘Come then love,] Come then love c3; “Come then, love, CW
562  enduring happiness.’] their summer happiness c3
563  happiness.’ ] happiness.” CW
564  ‘Yea love, for] Come then while c3; “Yea love, for CW
565  Still, and] And the c3
566  overworn] overworn, CW
567  death!] death c3; death!” CW
569  other’s] others c3; [No new verse paragraph c3]
570-71 And each ... arm] [No corresponding lines c3]
As they went amid the grass;
There her naked feet did pass
And her hand touched blossoms fair

By the poison lurking there
In the yellow-throated snake;
But their beauty did not wake
His dull heart and evil eyes
And belike in happy wise

They abide now, and shall come
Yet again unto that home.

Ah, the gate is open wide,
And the wild bees only hide
In the long-cupped blossoms there,
And the garden-god is bare
Of the flowers he used to have,
And no scythe the sward doth shave
And the wilding grasses meet
High above their faltering feet
Where the lilies used to grow
And unnailed the peach hangs now
No more is the fountain full
And the dial’s gold is dull;
And the foot worn pink veined stone
Of the peach all green hath grown;

572 grass;] grass c3
573 There] And c3
576 snake;] snake c3
577 beauty] fairness c3
578 eyes] <wise> \eyes/ c3 c4
580 now, and shall] and sometimes c3
581 now,] <, > now, c4
582 Yet ... that] To that red roofed pillared c3
583 Ah, ... wide,] Ah <me> <a> & the gate is \open/ wide c3
583 long-cupped] long cupped c3
584 there,] there c3
585 garden-god] garden god c3
586 have,] have c3
587 scythe] s\c/ythe c4
591 unnailed ... peach] the peach unnailed c3
591 noe, CW
592-93 No ... full] [No corresponding lines c3]
594 And ... worn] Down the wall the c3
594 foot ... veined] foot-worn pink-veined CW
595 Of] In c3
595 hath grown;] has grown c3
Through the empty chambers cold
Moans the wind as it did hold
Dull winter mid the summer’s heart.

Think ye that the twain depart
Glad that they alone are glad?
They who saw the clothes that clad
Her fair body that fair night,
Yellows as the jasmine white
Yellows as it fades away,
And how withered roses lay
On the pillows of the bed
That neer touched her golden head?

They who looked so close they saw
The bed-gear into creases draw;
Drawn that noon so by my mouth
Feverish with half-happy drouth.

And the threshold, saw they not
Where my lips thereon were hot
Ere she came, that she might feel
As her feet there o’er did steal

597 Moans] Moan c3
598 mid] <in>\mid/ c4; [folio 7 recto c3]
598 summer’s heat.] summers heart c3
599 Think] [No new verse paragraph c3]
600 glad?] clad c3
601 They who] For they c3; [folio 20 c4]
602 night.] night c3
604 Yellows] Yellow\s/ <th> c4
604 away.] away c3
605 And how] <And the> c3
607 neer touched] neer felt c3; ne’er touched CW
607 head?] head c3 [Evergreen bough drawn after “head” c3]
608 They] <Did> They c3 [No new verse paragraph c3]
609 bed-gear] white clothes c3
609 draw:] draw c3
611 half-happy drouth.] its happy drowth – c3
612 And] On c3 [No new verse paragraph c3]; <On> \And/ c4
614 came.] <s>\c/ame c3
615 thereo’er] thereoer c3
Trembling sweet, and know not why,
Fluttering hope so soon to die
In the heart of utter bliss
As the still night saw our kiss.

Think ye that these twain might rest
Till they knew why they, so blessed
Such a sorrow of heart should feel?
Through the summer day they steal,
E'en as folk who dwell alone

In a land whence all are gone
Where their shame hath wrought the thing.
For their hands forget to cling
Each to each, and their sweet eyes
Are distraught with mysteries

Hard to solve and hard to leave.
Till at ending of the eve
Folk they meet at last to tell
How the death of joy befell.

He ceased now, trembling sore, for certainly
A murmur like a gathering wind went by;
Then as it were, a strange laugh musical
But mocking, fearful, on his ears did fall.
“Yet hearken, O ye hearken, cried he then,
Yet hearkening do ye mock the woes of men?

O speak, speak, yet again O song of mine!
Wilt thou be dumb, now, when this love divine
Meeteth the very Gods naked, alone,
And unafraid as though the world were gone
Adown the void?”

Already as he spake

A step across the threshold did he take,
And with his heart a-fire and flaming eyes
He let the fountain of his song arise.
O if ye laugh, then am I grown
O Gods, as here I stand alone

The body of a ceaseless moan,
Yet better than ye are, a part
Of the world’s woe and the world’s heart.

For the world laughed not on the morn
When my full woe from night was born

When first I called on you forlorn:
The world laughed not, although I feared
When first its waking breath I heard.

O me! the morn was bright enow;
A little westering wind did blow

Across the rye-fields outer row,
Across her white breast no more warm
Across my numbed enfolding arm

The July morn was bright and clear
No more the cock’s cry did I hear,

Now when the sparrows wakened there,
Now when all things awoke around
Mine arms about her heart enwound.
Then o'er the edge of earth and sky
The sun arose, and silently
Lit up the lily-heads anigh;
The sun stole through the room to light
Her arm hung down, her fingers white.

Higher and higher arose the sun
Until unto our breasts it won
And burned there till the noon was done;
Upon my head the sun was hot
And scorched me sore, but harmed her not.

Then toward the west it gan to wend,
No wind was left the rye to bend
Till drew the day unto an end;
No wind until the night grew cold
Above the face my hands did hold.

Yet all that bright day mocked me nought,
Through sunny hours its end was wrought
Yet was it sad enow methought;
Its end was wrought mid clam and peace
Yet mournfully did it decrease.

668 oer] at c3; o’er CW
669 The sun arose.] <That morn> the sun arose <to die> c3
670 Lit up] <And> Lit up/ c3
670 anigh:] anigh c3
672 down, ... white.] down all waxen white c3
673 and higher arose] & higher clomb c3
675 done;] done c3
677 sore,] sore c3
677 not.] not c3
678 west it gan] went it gan c3; west it ’gan CW
678 wend,] wend c3
680 end;] end c3
682 hold,] hold c3
683 Yet all that] And still the c3
683 nought,] nought c3
684 Through] <The hours in sun and calm were caught> Through c3
684 was] was <was> c3
684 methought;] methought c3
687 and] & c3
And if men went upon their ways
Een as in other summer days,
Surely they toiled with no glad face
Amid the bright day did they seem
To toil as in a hapless dream
And so at first I thought indeed
The world was kind to help my need
No thing therein from man to weed
But it was kind my love to lack
To help my need and wish her back.
But ye help not nor know how I
Would help the whole world’s misery
And give it bliss ne’er passing by,
Ne’er passing by, if I might sit
Above the world, and yearn to it.

He ceased and once more passed the murmur by
And after it a sound as of a sigh
That sounded sweet to him, for in his heart
This seemed at last to have a little part.
Then through the dark he cried:

“May it be then
That if no more I see the sons of men
Yet even so I am not quite alone!”

Then in the air again he heard a moan,
And then a voice cried Orpheus thrice aloud
And with that sound such strange wild hopes did crowd
About him, that the very death indeed,
Whate’er that is, had well nigh been his meed,

But when his senses cleared he heard again
A voice that spake:

“O Orpheus, not in vain
Thou sayst that the world mocked thee not: and we
Unnamed, unknown, how then should we mock thee;
But how shall song move that which hath no ears

Or love the thing that nought of longing bears,
Or grief move that, which never doth behold
The world amid unnumbered griefs grown old
Yet still alive more griefs to bear and more?
But for as much as thy grief is as sore

As many are, thy will exceeding strong
Mid earthly wills, some semblance of a wrong
Done to the world thou yet from us mayst win

Orpheus,” CW

[No new verse paragraph]
To satisfy thy lust; some gift wherein
Shall poison seem to lurk: this shalt thou take
And fear not for the end; if for the sake
Of that which thou hast set thine heart upon
Een such a lonely gift thou deemest well won;
But ere thou standest lone and strong, look forth
And weigh how much thy grain of woe is worth
Amid the measureless dust of woes by gone.”

Then ceased the voice, but that strong hearted one
Put back his hair to gaze, and lo, a light
Spread slowly through the dusk of that half night
Until the flowers showed bright, the last trees stood
Grey ’gainst the blackness of the bounding wood;
And then a low and moaning wind, and then
Came and passed by the forms of sad faced men
And weary women; nor failed each to turn
Such eyes on him as into his heart did burn
An added grief: nor might he turn away,
Till as the unending flock of rain clouds grey
Oer the sea streaming did they grow to be
And each one with its unmatched misery
Unnamed, unhealed: until the dusk again
Dropped slowly down over that world of pain
And left him voiceless sightless, void of thought.

734 weigh] see c3
734 grain ... is] small grain may be c3
735 by gone.”)] by gone – c3; bygone.” CW
736 voice, but] voice & c3
736 gaze, and lo,] gaze and lo c3
738 dusk] gloom c3
739 bright,] & c3
740 ’gainst] gainst c3
740 wood,] wood c3
741 and] sa<i>d c3
741 wind, and] wind & c3
742 Carne ... by] First one by one c3
742 sad faced] sad-eyed c3; sad <eyed> \faced/ c4; sad-faced CW
743 weary ... to ] women passed him by and each did c3; <and> \nor failed/ each <one did> \to/ c4
745 An added grief;] An <d> added grief c3
745 away,] away c3
746 rain clouds] rain-clouds CW
747 Oer ... streaming] Driven by the west c3
747 Oer] O’er CW
747 be] be, CW
748 unmatched] different c3
749 Unnamed, unhealed:] Unnamed unhealed – c3
750 over] and hid c3
751 voiceless sightless,] voiceless sightless c3; voiceless, sightless, CW
751 thought,] thought c3
And so again the voice to him was brought;

“O Orpheus, hast thou seen and measured this,
And wilt thou wail out for a life of bliss,
And deem thyself great-hearted; knowest thou
If even those thou criedst at e’en now
Live as live happy men who die? – then pray
And gain the grace that the Gods give today!”

Thought stirred within him, but his mouth was dumb
A long time, for faint sickness still did come
Betwixt him and his prayer, until at last
From out his gasping lips a cry was cast
Forth to the dark:

“O love Eurydice!
Where then amid this mournful crowd is she:
With mine own eyes these gazed into my face
And yet I knew them not.”

Then through the place

752 And so] Then once c3 [No new verse paragraph c3]; [folio 25 c4]
752 brought;] brought c3
753 “O Orpheus,”] O Orpheus c3
753 and measured this,] enow of this c3
753 thou] <y>th/ou c4
754 wail out for] <s> now still ask c3
754 bliss,] bliss c3 CW
755 great-hearted; knowest thou] great hearted speak & pray c3; great-hearted? knowest thou CW
756-57 If ... pray] [No corresponding lines c3]
756 at] \at/ c4
758 And ... give] Because some grace belike thou gainst c3
759 him,] him c3
760 time,] time c3
761 prayer,] prayer c3
762 lips a] lips c3
763 dark: “O] dark O c3 [No new verse paragraph c3]
764 then amid] then <is she/> amid c3
764 she:] she c3; she? CW
765 not.”] not – then c3
There came a trembling, and the voice grown great
Filled all the air, and shuddering did he wait
Till he might know its meaning, and it said:

"O Orpheus, this thy love is of the dead
As well thou knowest: none shall tell thee now
Whereas she dwelleth; yet perchance, when thou
Goest to the dead land, this and a many thing
Thine eyes shall see clear – O thou tuneful king

What wilt thou have of us; speak out and pray,
Gaining the grace that the Gods give today!

But therewithal cried Orpheus eagerly;
"O ye if men should learn that one might die
And yet return, should not their grief be less

Because of hope; should not their happiness
Falter no more twixt time of longing pain
And time of gaining all that they may gain?"

Soft spake the voice; "And thou, O Orpheus then,
Wilt bear this thing alone of living men,
And as thou hitherto hast helped them well,
Help them in this and leave a tale to tell.
For whereas neither God nor man indeed
Thou fain wouldst be yet may we grant thy need.
Great art thou, great and strong all things to bear!”

No laughter through the darkness did he hear,
Yet a sick fear possessed him, he gan quake
As the reed set amid the stream: then spake
The voice again:

“No laughter through the darkness did he hear,
Yet a sick fear possessed him, he gan quake
As the reed set amid the stream: then spake
The voice again:

“Nay be thou of good cheer
For hither soon shall come the Messenger
And speak to thee what thou mayest understand,
And give thee tidings from the unknown land.
– O glorious Orpheus, leader of the earth,
Into the paths of rest and endless mirth,
Well hast thou done to seek us face to face
And win despite our will a little grace
For the world’s weary sorrow: surely thou
Art clean apart from all men born ere now,
And as thou wieldest grief so joy can wield,
And hold thy patience as an untouched shield

Then died the voice, and nothing might he hear
Save his own heart a-beating: but strange fear
Unreasoning, of some huge mocking ill

Hanging about him, half his soul did fill
And struggled with the other half, wherein
Was fluttering joy of what he looked to win
Mixed with confused longing: and so dealt
These thing together, that at last he felt

Nought round about him; nor know where he was,
But over him a heaviness gan pass
As if of coming happy death, and slow
He sank adown on the halls threshold now,
And in dead sleep lay long in that dull land

With fear and wonder close on either hand.
He woke up with the sound of his own name
Filling the air: a sense of wrong and shame
Wrought in him as his heavy head he raised
And round about him through the half-dusk gazed:

Howeer it was, beat down he felt, brought low
Who had been proud and great a while ago:
He rose at last, and therewithal he heard
His name given forth, and afterward this word:

“O Orpheus, art thou ready for the sake
Of love this burden on thy soul to take;
Unknowing mid unknowing men to dwell
With one who many a secret thing could tell
Yet may not? art thou willing to see eyes
Thou lovest so grow cold amid surprise

Of thee and thy desires, and all the ways
Of mortal men who wear away blind days,
They know not why? Wilt thou be satisfied
To have a living body that shall hide
A shuddering soul, restless gazing across

The world’s shows and its idel gain and loss
Unto the things that shall at least endure –
A soul to whom nought earthly shall be pure
Or strange or great – nay nay not e’en thy love,
Thou deemest greater than the Gods above?

Is it enough, the gain we offer thee?
Bethink thee; get thee back, and thou shalt see
Thy world again, and nurse thy grief therein,
Thy grief and love, then a short space win
The rest of death, and gifts thou dream'st not of.

Or else bear all, and thou shalt see thy love
Ere this world's-day is ended – speak and pray,
And take the gift the Gods will give today!"

Then Orpheus cried; “O whose'er thou art
That speaketh: surely I can hear a part
Of what thou sayest; telling me that I
Shall surely see mine own love presently,
She and I face to face – e'en she whom men
Once called Eurydice, in old days, when
We found each other – for the rest it seems

Thou ... above?] Wherewith thou deemest all things thou mayst move c3; <Wherewith thou deemst thou mov'st> \Thou deemest greater than the Gods above? c4

enough,] enough c3
thee?] thee c3
thee;] thee, c3
nurse .. therein,] <in a short space win> \nurse thy grief therein,/ c4
and ... space] & love & in a few days c3
The] The<y> c3
death,] death c3
dream'st not of.] dreamst not of c3
else bear all,] e<en>\ls/e bear all c3
Love] love c3
world's-day] world's day CW
speak and pray,] speak and say c3; Speak and pray, CW
And ... today!] For mighty grace is granted thee today. c3
cried; “O Whoseoe'rr] cried a who soeer c3; cried; “O Whoseoe'rr CW; [No new verse paragraph c3]
speaketh,] speakest c3; speaketh: CW
part] part <of> c3
sayest,] speakest c3; sayest, CW
presently,] presently c3
face – ... whom] face<& she> \een/ she who\m/ <the> c3
Eurydice,] Eurydice c3
day,] days c3
other – ] other, c3
it seems] me<d> seams c3
The air holds soundless thoughts, that as in dreams
Flicker about my heart, but show nought clear—
—The babble of the mind—If thou canst hear,
And understand, hear this: Give thou me back
The only thing my heart shall ever lack,

Or let me be—and let the world grow worse
And men and Gods, that heed me nothing, curse
Each other, and the endless wrack begin,
The endless strife where nought there is to win
But worser swifter ruin—O let me be,

A helpless hapless mass of misery,
But lonely at the least, with no pretence
To bless or curse your vain omnipotence,
To be a part of what your hands have wrought,
Who knoweth how, for nought, for nought for nought.”

There stood he panting: but these words being said,
Long silence was there, till there grew sick dread
Within him, that but mocks the promise was,
And nothing from henceforth would come to pass
Except that lonely death for which he cried.

But midst his fears a light gan glimmer wide
Betwixt the trees, and grew, until he saw
A strange and lustrous shape anigh him draw;
Man-like it was, not over great to see
More than a man, but wings sprang wondrously

From his two shoulders, bright of changing hue;
Moreover when still nigher him he drew,
And seemed about himself strange light to bear,
In nought might Orpheus see his visage clear;
Now burned his eyes with wild and dreadful light,

Now soft they grew, as though his soul had sight
Of something good past words, an odorous air
Stirred in his long locks, from his pinions fair,
Till his bright cheeks were half veiled; then all stern
His mouth grew as of one who needs must learn

Dread things not dreading them himself, & then
In even speech unlike to speech of men
He spake and said:

“Since thou hast made thy choice,
Here an I sent to bid thee to rejoice
Yet amid trembling, for e’en so it is
That e’en this little shred of earthly bliss
Thou hast so wailed for, O thou lonely one,
Is not yet gained, or the deed fully done
The Gods have mind to do – nay what strange pain
Of hope deferred sickens thine heart again?

Be strong, for thou art not amidst a dream,
And I am he for whom on earth ye deem
The name of Hermes meet. And now behold,
Thou sayest that thy love would wax not cold
How many years soever thou mightst live
Thou deemst thyself full strong enow to strive
With all the Gods, to live and long alone
And it may be that thou art such an one
E’en as thou deemest – then in very deed
Well shall thy strength now help thee at thy need,
Behold somewhat the glimmering light doth grow,
A sign of help to thee, of help enow
If thou fail’st not. Toward the world set thy face

897 said: “Since] said – Since c3
897 choice.] choice c3
899-904 Yet ... dream.] And make thee ready to get back again
     Not lonely now to that abode again –
     And for a sight that ye are in no dream c3
899 Yet] <E>\Y/et c4
901 thou] [folio 30 c4]
906 And ... earth] I am een <y>\h/e <that> \for whom/ on <the> earth c3
907 And now behold.] and now behold c3
908 sayest] deemest c3
908 cold] cold. c3
909 mightst live] shouldst live c3; might’st live, CW
910 deemst] deem’st CW
911 Gods,] Gods c3
911 alone.] alone c3
913 E’en CW
913 – then] for c3
914 need.] need c3
915 Behold somewhat] Behold greater c3; Behold <greater> \somewhat/ c4; Behold, somewhat CW
915 grow; ] grow c3
916 of ... enow] is that of help <to thee true now> come nigh thee now/ c3; [folio 10 recto c3]
917 If ... set] So to the outer world set thou c3
Nought doubting of the way, and when the place
Thou gainest, whence thou enteredst first this wood,

Then look beside thee – and how fair and good
The snow-drift and the winter then shall seem
Unto thine eye! how like a wretched dream
The overburdened summer of they woe!
For she thine outstretched hand shall surely know,

But yet forgetting all the hollow past
Shall wonder at thine eyes so over cast
With wonder, and the pinning of thy cheek.
Thy trembling lips, and why thou dost not speak,
And why thou shuddrest there upon the brink

Of the dark stream and e en somewhat must shrink
Away from her – yea and belike the tears
Shall dim her eyes, drawn forth by tender fears
Of anger risen within thee, or some change
To make the dead forgotten days all strange

But then withal the pain of her and thee,
The pity for each other’s agony
Shall make love greater – deem’st thou not that earth
Shall tremble somewhat through its changing girth
When round about her heart thine arms are cast
And lips to lips your bodies meet at last –
O happy, happy shall ye be that tide!”

Panting stood Orpheus, with eyes staring wide
As from the Gods lips forth the fair speech flowed,
Gentle, heart-piercing; and his whole soul glowed
With warmth of happy love: yea was it not
That all that sweetness from his own heart, hot
With hope returning, meeting love had come:
Yet when he strove to speak his lips were dumb.
Nay scarce he knew if yet his aching eyes
Beheld the God or in what wondrous wise
Things were changed round him: then the voice again
And oer his heart there swept a wave of pain,
Bitter and clod, as, smooth word knit to word
Rose up threat, an overhanging sword:

The sounds he heard from his own heart did flow
And scarcely now might he behold the God
Or know whereon his restless footsole rod.
And now he knew that the God spake

As though entangled in time weary met
His hope his every love he might forget

Bitter and cold, as, smooth word knit

overhanging
He saw himself entangled in time’s net,
Of love forgotten, helpless to forget,
Yet longing and its sweetness all gone by,
And no one left to note his misery –
Ah me, a space of time ere he should touch
The lips that once with longing overmuch
Had changed his life! before the words were said
Face to face stood he with this newborn dread,
And moaned for pity, as confused and dim
Slowly their import floated on to him
As from a waste land:

Happy shalt thou be,
O Orpheus, if the love that is in thee
Deal not with time or change or doubt, but still
Thou lookest onward through all pain and ill
Unto the goal believing that thy love
Can never die howso the world may move:
But ah, how hapless, if thou shouldst forget
That thou upon the steps of death art set,
If thou shouldst deem this minute all in all
And let such dreadful longing on thee fall
That thou must needs turn around about to gaze
On the changed body and the sightless face
That ne’er can mate thee, living as thou art;
Then certainly a fearful wall shall part

957-60 Of ... overmuch] Before his hand once more <th>\sh/ould feel the touch that long ago with
longing overmuch c3
961 Had ... said] Ha<n>d/ changed his life; the words went passed his ears c3
962-63 Face ... dim] As by a lover’s soul the strange <f>v/ague fears
When first love lays his burning hand on him –
But through the magic of sound confused & dim c3
962 newborn] newborn c4
964-65 Slowly ... be.] These ‘seemed to reach him/ thoughts his heart made – happy shalt thou be c3
965 Happy] “Happy CW
966 Orpheus.] Orpheus c3
967 Deal] Deals c3
967 doubt, but] doubt & c3
968 onward] on ward c3
969 goal] goal, CW
970 move:] move c3
971 ah, how hapless,] ah how hapless c3
972 set,] set c3
973 If ... this] And deem this little c3
975 That] [folio 10 verso c3]
977 ne’er] neer c3
977 thee,] thee c3
977 art:] art c3; art! CW
978 fearful] drea<r>d/ful c3
Thy soul and her soul; then they love is weighed
And found a light thing.”

“O hollow sound of empty words again!
What thing of earth and heaven can know my pain,
If ye, O Gods, shall doubt my love? – nay this
Rather I say; ye grudge to see love’s bliss

Here, where things die not: only on the earth
Beset by cold death’s ever narrowing girth
Ye let us love – Come love, I know no more
How much of that sweet space is now passed o’er
Wherein we have to love – come, unseen sweet.

Be not too far behind my hurrying feet!
Come the Gods slew thee I redeemed thee dear!
Come from the dreadful silence hard to bear
Unto the place where each to each we twain
May weep the loss of all we hoped to gain!”

And therewithal he hastened to be gone
And saw no more by him the Shining One,
Nay methinks scarce now had a thought of him,
As oer the open space into the dim
Close wood he hurried: on he went until
1000 The sweetness of this love his heart gan fill
With many a thought, until his harp, his friend
He gan to handle, and therefrom did send
A low sweet sound, and his soul’s longing fell
Into sweet words whereof e’en these may tell.

1005 Winter in the world it is
Round about the unhoped kiss
Whose shadow I have long moaned o’er;
Round about the longing sore
That the touch of thee shall turn
Into joy too deep to burn.
Round thine eyes and round thy mouth
Passeth no murmur of the south,
When my lips a little while
Leave thy quivering tender smile,
As we twain hand touching hand
Once again together stand:
Sweet is that as all is sweet,
For the cold drift shalt thou meet,
Kind and cold-cheeked and mine own,
Wrapped-about with deep-furred gown
In the wide-wheeled chariot:
Then the north shall spare us not;
The wide-reaching waste of snow
Wilder, lonelier shall grow,
As the short-lived sun falls down.

But the warders of the town,
When they flash the torches out
O’er the snow amid their doubt,
And their eyes at last behold
Thy red litten hair of gold,
Shall they open, or in fear
Cry ‘alas what cometh here,
Whence hath come this heavenly one?
To tell of all the world undone?
They shall open, and we shall see
The long street litten scantily
With the stream of light before
The guest-hall’s just opened door,
And our horses’ bells shall cease

1040 As we gain the place of peace:
Thou shalt tremble, as at last
The worn threshold is oerpast
And the firelight blindeth thee:
Trembling shalt thou cling to me

1045 As the sleepy merchants stare
At thy cold hands slim and fair
Thy soft eyes and happy lips
Worth ten times their richest ships.

O my love, how over-sweet,

1050 That first kissing of thy feet,
When the fire is sunk alow,
And the hall made empty now
Groweth solemn dim and vast!
O my love the night shall last
Longer than men tell thereof
Laden with our lonely love!
Somewhat he lingered now, his hand he laid
Upon his forehead even as if he weighted
Strange thoughts within him; then he hurried on

Once more, as eager all should be well won,
Nor spake aught a long while; and then once more
A wave of sweet fresh longing swept all o'er
His troubled heart: slower a while he went
And from his parched mouth song again he sent.

Shall we wake one morn of spring,
Glad at heart of everything,
Yet pensive with the thought of eve?
Then the white house shall we leave,
And go walk about the meads

Till our very joyance needs
Rest at last; and we shall come
To that Sun-god's lonely home,
Lonely till the feast-time is,
When with prayer and praise of bliss,

Thither comes the country side.
There awhile shall we abide,
Sitting low down in the porch

love!] love c3
Somewhat] New verse paragraph CW
forehead] forehead, CW
him:] him c3
more,] more c3
won,] won c3
while; and then] while – then c3; while; and then<ce> c4
A ... everything, ] [These lines are written in pencil by May Morris c4]
all o'er] well oer c3; [folio 35 c4]
heart:] heart c3
song again] such a strain c3
spring,] spring c3; [new verse paragraph CW]
everything,] everything c3
eve?] eve c3
leave,] leave c3
And ... needs] Pass the wind-flowers and the bays,
Through the garth, and go our ways,
Wandering down among the meads K RT
last:] last c3
To ... home,] Lonely on the hill-side grey,
Whence the sheep have gone away K RT
Sun-god's] sun Gods c3
feast-time is,] feast time is c3
prayer ... bliss,] hope & prayer of bliss c3
thither ... side.] Thereto cometh the country side c3
abide,] abide c3
By that image with the torch:
Thy one white hand laid upon
The black pillar that was won
From the far-off Indian mine;
And my face nigh toucheth thine,
But not touching; and thy gown
Fair with spring-flowers cast adown
From thy bosom and thy brow.
There the south-west wind shall blow
Through thine hair to reach my cheek,
As thou sittest, nor mayst speak,
Nor mayst move the hand I kiss
For the very depth of bliss;
Nay, nor turn thine eyes to me.

Then desire of the great sea
Nigh enow, but all unheard,
In the hearts of us is stirred,
And we rise, we twain at last,
And the daffodils downcast
Feel thy feet and we are gone
From the lonely Sun-Crowned one.
Then the meads fade at our back,
And we twain grow yet more glad.
And apart no more may go
When the grassy slope and low
Dieth in the shingly sand:
Then we wander hand in hand
By the edges of the sea,
And I weary more for thee
Than if far apart we were,
With a space of desert drear
'Twixt thy lips and mine, O love!
– Ah, my joy, my joy thereof!

Now as he sang he 'gan to wend more slow
Yea well nigh stopped, and seemed to hearken now

[Notes: May Morris's note: “From CFM's printer's <copy> M. S. of Poems by the Way From the Up land to the Sea.”]
For footsteps following – no sound might he hear
But his own heart a-beating, and great fear
Stung sudden to the quick, and forth he sprang
And from his random-smitten harp there rang
A loud discordant noise: swift he passed on

A long while silent, till upon him won
A dreadful helpless sinse of loneliness
That with all fear his spirit did oppress;
And at the last he cried: “Eurydice
O hearken if thou art anigh to me!

Hearken lest I faint and fear thou too
Shoulds faint and fear, and all be left to do
Once more – O hearken sweet – this is a dream
And all our sorrow now doth only seem
And thou art mine and I am thine: we lie,

We twain, at home so soft and quietly
In the moon-litten bed amid the sound
Of leaves light rustling, and my arms are wound
About thy body, but thy hands fall down
Away from me, O sweet, mine own, mine own!

Doubtful e'en now with thy last waking shame.”

Therewith from lips and harp the sweet song came.

O my love how could it be
But summer must be brought to me
Brought to the world by thy full love?

Long within thee did it move,
Move and bud and change and grow,
Till it wraps me wholly now,
And I turn from thee a while
Its o'er sweetness to beguile

With a little thought of rest.

Ah me have I gained the best,
Have I no more to desire
No more hope to vex and tire
No more fear to sicken me.

Nought but the full gift of thee,
All my soul to satisfy.
Ah sweet, lest my longing die
Een a moment, rise and corne,
For the roses of our horne,
1155 For the rose and lily here,
Are too sweet for us to bear
Let us wander through the wood
Till a little rest seem good
To our weary limbs, till we
1160 As the eve dies silently
Neath the chestnut boughs are laid,
Faint with love but not downweighted
By the summer’s restlessness,
Wearied but most fain to bless
1165 Pity-laden summer, sad
With the hope the spring once had.

1152-53 Ah ... come,] Ah if longing ere can die
With fulfilling of all bliss
Then the love that no lips kiss
Do I desire the love that lies
Alone enwrapped in mysteries
Too <sweet> deep' to solve to sweet to break
Knowing not how to touch or take
If the prize lay cast adown
Won at last and all its <t> own
Life grown a dream dream grown to be
Lonely lived reality
Gain in loss and joy in pain
Poor love that is not loved again –
X (Pity laden summer sa<id> dire/ With the hope the spring once had)
Is thy sweetness come to this
That amid all wealth of bliss
<O> \\Trust/ turned about <the> \\to/ praise
The wanderer of the barren ways)
'O sweet lest my longing die/
<O my love a> 'In this midday/ rise & come c3

1153 Een] E’en CW
1155 here,] here c3 CW
1156 bear] bear. CW
1159 limbs, till we] limbs; <and l> till we c3; limbs, till we, CW
1160 As] <At thy feet my love may lie> As c3
1160 silently] silently, CW
1161 laid.] laid c3 CW
1162 but not downweighted] <belike> but not down weighed c3
1163 restlessness.] restlessness c3
1165-66 Pity ... had.] X [An X indicates that the parenthetical lines from the passage which corresponds with lines 1151-52 belong here c3. ]
He broke his song off therewithal; but vain
His hurrying feet seemed the sweet end to gain
How so he hastened: in his ears there grew
Noises of things that for nought real he knew:
Noises of lands lonely of men, but full
Of uncouth things; the heavy sound and dull
Of earth cast unto earth, the swallowing sea
Changing to roaring fire presently;
Whining of strange beasts, driving of the rain
Against the lone hall’s rattling window-pane;
Low moaning of the wind that was not there
Swift wings of pigeons that the heavy air
Might never nourish: things known that did change
E’en in their midst to things unknown and strange,
Till his brain gan to reel, and soon he thought,
How if to dreamlike hearing there were brought

therewithal; but [threw]withal <some pain in>but/ c3
His [He] <seemed> <hastened> His c3
How so he hastened:] Yet still he hastened c3
for ... know:] dreamed & nought he knew c3
for &] ‘for’ c4
of lands] <of lands> c4
men,] men c3
things;] things c3
and] & c3
unto] onto c3
presently;] presently c3
beasts,] beasts c3
hall’s] halls c3
window pane;] window pane c3; window-pane; CW
Low] <And> <low> c3
there] there, CW
wings] flight c3
the] that c3
air] a<re>ir/ c4
nourish: things known] nourish, known things c3
E’en] E’en c3
things ... strange,] unknown things and strange c3
gan to reel,] gan to reel c3; gan to reel, CW
thought,] thought c3
hearing] hearing <dream> c3
The sight of dreams? And even therewithal
It seemed to him a crowd his name did call

In moaning unison, that to shriek
Was growing, when the darkness seemed to break,
And once more through the shadowless strange day
Came thronging forth that crowd of sorrows grey,
Silent, slow-moving staring all at him;

Thereat with sickened heart, and tottering limb
He stayed and hid his eyes a while to cry;
"O if they mocked me not, and thou art nigh,
Help with thy love thy patience O my sweet,
To take these unseen fetters from my feet
And pierce this wall of dreams, that I may move.
O help me yet, dear spirit of my love,
Help me Eurydice;"

Sweet was the name
Upon his lips, and over him there came
A feeling as of rest: the tumult sank,

And when, with eyes from that wild dream that shrank,
He gazed again, empty the dim dusk was,
And onward once again he gan to pass.
Yet in a while, when nothing changed he saw
The wood, then terror ‘gan again to draw

About him; he felt caged prisoned there,
And scarce his love and longing now seemed fair,
And time was dead, and he left all alone
Wandering through space where nothing might be won
By will or strength of courage: yet withal

The old wont of song upon his heart did fall
And with the last shred left of hope did blend,
As wearily and slowly he did wend
On through the eyeless dusk, and once again
The harp-strings wailed in answer to his pain.

O Love, how the dying year
Love amid its death doth bear –
– Death, for though the younglings play
On the green patch by the way,
Through the blue-clad maidens sing

O'er the end of vintaging;
Though to then no pain is love
But a dear joy that shall move
Heaven and earth to do their will;
Yet hangs death above us still;
And no hope of further gain,
But foreboding of a pain
But the dread of surefoot fate
Makes thine eyes so passionate
Makes thy hands so fain to cling.

Hearking sweet love, how they sing,
And their song is prayer and praise
To the givers of good days,
Though we twain sit all alone
Thinking how that all things won

Are as nought and nought and nought
To the joy our fresh love brought
When all fear of change was dead.
O my love, turn not thine head
For they laugh amid their song,
And they deem themselves so strong,
That if ever they shall cry
From the midst of misery
There is that shall help their need.
O my love, look not, nor heed
For they deem themselves divine,
And shall curse those eyes of thine
Where death gathers now, and grows
Thy passion to its fainting close.
On me, look awhile on me!
And if nought thine eyes can see,
And if nought thy breast can feel
For the sickness that doth steal
Oer desire that was thine heart,
Yet not all alone thou art
For my lips and hands are nigh,
And I fail and faint and die
As thou diest, O my sweet

Our souls meet, and our loves meet,
And at last we know for sure

What shall change and what endure.

O my love look down and see
What they deem felicity!
Look down on the autumn earth
And their terror-girded mirth;

Speak with words that have no name
All thy love and pity and shame!

With a wild cry he dropped his harp a down
Scarce knowing what a change in him was grown,
He smote his hands together, and ran on

As though he deemed at last the end nigh won,
For far away betwixt the trees gan gleam
A feeble light, that verily did seem
To be the day:

“O me, Eurydice,
Be swift,” he cried, “to follow after me,

For in the world, if nowhere else love lives,
And with the very best of all he gives
Shall we be glad, if for a little space.
O the fair earth, my sweet, the joyous place,
Filled with the pleasure of thy loveliness

1280 New-born at last my weary eyes to bless!

No answer to his breathless cry there came
Whatso he hoped; again he cried her name,
And the light broadened, as his swift feet drew
On toward it, until breathless, dazed, he knew

1285 The goal anigh, but on he staggered still:
The trees grew thinner, the world’s light did fill
His eyes, his heart: yet e’en with all so won
The last sick fear and horror fell upon
His quivering soul – was all a dream, drawn forth

1290 From is great grief that the Gods held no worth
More than anothers?

Sick and faint he stood
Now on the very border of the wood,
And strove to think and strove to heed & see:
Without the winter wind sang mournfully

About the lonely place, and the light snow
Was driven round about & to and fro,
Veiling the sky and earth: he gasped for breath
For all seemed failing:

"O thou bitter Death,"

He cried, "and shall I die, and shall she live,
Is then all the gift that thou wilt give,
Her life for my life?"

Still he faced the world
And heard no sound but of the wind that hurled
The white snow up and on; till suddenly
Rigid and stark he grew, and shrieked;

"A lie!

A lie! she never followed me, but dwells
Down in the dark depths whereof no tongue tells."

Then with a dreadful face slowly he turned
Unto the wood, and through the dark there burned
A sudden white light, pure, that blinded not.

1292  Now] Een c3
1292  wood,] wood c3
1293  strove to] strove c3
1293  & see:] & see c3; and see. CW
1295  place, and] place & c3
1296  & to and fro] & to and f<ore>ro/ c3; and to and fro CW
1297  earth: he gasped] earth – he g<sp>asped c3
1298  For all] All things c3
1298  failing: “O] failing O c3 [No new verse paragraph c3]
1298  Death,”] death c3
1299  cried ... live,] cried <at last>: am I to die & she to live c3
1300  Is] Is [this] CW
1300  give, ] give c3
1301  for my life?”] without mine. c3 [No new verse paragraph c3]
1302  of the wind] the north wind c3
1303  and on; till] & on then c3
1304  Rigid and] & c3
1304  grew, ... lie,] grew & cried A lie c3
1304  shrieked,] shrieked: CW
1305  lie!] lie c3
1305  me,] me c3
1306  Down in] Down c3
1306  tells.”] tells – c3
1307  dreadful face] dreadful c3
1308  wood,] wood c3
1308  Unto the] its c3
1309  light, pure,] light pure c3
1309  not,] not c3
And for an instant all was well forgot
But very love; for through the midst of it
His mortal eyes beheld her body flit,
Yea coming toward him: her remembered eyes
Gazing upon him in no other wise

Then when upon the earth in some fair wood
Their feet drew each to each and all was good.

So was it for a space no man may name
Or measure; then a dreadful darkens came
Oer all things, such a sickening void as though

His feet alone must wander to and fro
About a wide waste world made all in vain,
The very body of the deathless pain
Immeasurable, that was himself, his soul.
He moved and knew it not; the wind did roll

The snowflakes greater grown still o’er & o’er,
And in the close set beech-trees did it roar,
As on the white world went the dusk adown
Mid cold and clamour: but o’er him was thrown
The dreadful silence of the Gods, as he
Went through he unheeding world most listlessly,
With heart too dead to thing of life or death
Which was the best, or why he yet drew breath

1329 The dreadful] Pall like the c3
1329 Gods,) Gods c3
1330 unheeding world most] world regained all c3
1331 death,) death, CW
1332 best,) best c3
1332 breath] breath – c3; [Twelve blank lines left at the bottom of folio c4; breath. CW; [No correspondence for the following lines from folio 14 recto and part of verso of c3:]

1
Now in what wise the Gods who thus did give
So much, and took so much kept him alive
The tale <s> tells not but men of old did say
That when the winter tide was passed away

Unto the desolate place that was his home
Once again did the lone Orpheus come
Changed more than It – timeless & songless now
<With< Grey haired <and> with hollow cheeks and furrowed brow
And on<cee> "a morn/ as through the woods a maiden went

10 <Alone one> \Alone/ <A ma> she saw a man with head down bent
Standing beneath an oak grown thich with June
And piteous with the wood doves moaning tune
Faltered her feet when she beheld the man
Because his hair was matted his face wan

15 His raiment wild and strange X but as she stayed
And trembled at the first too much afraid
To flee or go on the man raised his face
And on the soft grey eyes of her gan gaze
Then a great pity through her fear there came
For spite of all she knew him for the same
Who but the past year oft would sit & sing
< There > in the < temple > \holy / close while youth & maiden
Foot unto foot a dancing – like a God

[Two lines written in the left margin may belong here or may belong where the X is marked eight lines above:] \That of the wood folk he mighter who brought
Great ills on men at whiles/

There would he sit and take with smiling mouth<s>

25 Kisses of maidens fain to quench the drouth
<Of sweet and> bitter <love> \sweet desire/ that burned them then
To be loved of that most sweet of men
Yea she herself had memory of the tide
When <#>aw's she crept full softly to his his side

30 And kissed the wonder waking hand--but now
With dreadful eyes from neath his haggard brow
He glared upon her till all faint she knew
Then from his lips at last did there out break
Startling the wild wood things a dreadful shriek

35 And swift he fled away as one who fears
To hear pursaeing footsteps fell his ears
Then trembling full of pity forth she went
Upon the way whereon she wa.<a>\s/ intent –
But that same autumn tide when folk

40 With all the joyous streams their vats had had
Along the banks of wooded Hebrus strayed
Damsels of Bacchus making <a>\awns afraid
<T> With their wild joy mad with youth & wine
And seeing all the world glad and devine

45 Patient of nought dull were they at that tide
As through the berried woods they wandered wide
Losing the river here where swift it turned
Away from some steep hill – then were it burned
Wide in the sun betwixt green banks and low
Regaining it, so onward did they go
And still the wild wood tangles stayed them not
The woodland pools called not their limbs o'er hot
And looser grew their hair with ivy crowned
And less their 'hurt' feet felt the uneven grow

And still the wild wood tangles stayed them not
The woodland pools called not their limbs o'er hot
And looser grew their hair with ivy crowned
And less their 'hurt' feet felt the uneven grow

Wider their raiment floated in the wind
Bolder their limbs a##ting air to find
So through a hazel thicket at the last
Wildly with raiment torn aside they passed

[Wider their raiment floated in the wind
Bolder their limbs a##ting air to find
So through a hazel thicket at the last
Wildly with raiment torn aside they passed

And in the sleepy sunlight then did gleam
Glitter attire white flesh and shiny hair
Bejewelled feet great gems on shoulders <fair> bare
Gold-plated vine wreathed stones tossed wildly up
With <###>he/re & there a thin beat jeweled cup

\Thin/ Raiment slipped adown or floating out
From eager limbs as with their maddening shout
Adown the slopes unto the ford they ran;
Then from the stream side slowly turned a man

85  Then rose in hands too eager mad to feel
The golden staves, and round gan surge and reel
The <maddened> crowd all maddened by blind god like hate
Until the autumn sun sank over late
And in the river did the pale moon gleam

90  And them as waking a fevered dream
They drew back trembling and began to stare
Each upon each and on a thing laid there
<Hopeless> Moveless and dead, then some beside him knelt
Sighing & weak as sick folk and some felt

His wasted hands, and 'weeping' some <his dear hand> upraised
<Weeping> His head w/h/erefrom his fixed and sad eyes gazed
Reproachfully upon <h>th/cm as to s<\l>ay
The very love chased from the world has chased away
Yet would not let live lonely wondering –

100  How shall ye live without this precious thing –
Then gan low wailing round about to be
And in a while they raised him tenderly
And for his corpse a bier of boughs they wove
And slowly <through> to the golden house of love

Bore through the solemn shadows of the night
Orpheus the singer called the world delight
Who'se spirit/ strove with Gods and had prevailed
But that the flesh looked back ward once & failed

[These last 70-108 lines of folio 14 verso c3 correspond with the 40 lines of the Alternate ending of c4.]
What fell to him after that last sad sight
How shall I say? it may be that cold night

1335 More than most nights of winter was fulfilled
With mournful aimless dreams; that the morn, stilled
By iron frost, white world, and sky of grey,
Had more of blank despair than een such day
Will often have – that on his weary bed

1340 The hopeless lover lifted up his head
To hearken, and a strange wild thrill did cross
His dreary oft-told tale of endless loss
And waning hope, as the wind rushing by
Seemed in the breast of it to bear a cry

1345 That well nigh shaped itself into a name,
A name unknown: until there grew a shame
Of his own lonely grief within his heart
And to that cry he cried to have a part
In some more godlike sorrow than the days
Shed dully on his petty tangled ways –
I know not I – but know as the years grew
Some rumour of the tale twixt false and true
Did reach men’s hearts, whereof it came that some
Told of sad shapes haunting that Thracian home,

Sad voices in the chestnut-woods about.
And some that when the night held most of doubt
And terror round the black Laconian wood,
When heaviest the dark oer it did brood,
When wildest roared the wind about its trees,

When most the moonlight made ill images
Of the o’erhanging boughs about its brink
And to its narrowest the vexed stream did shrink –
– That at such tides, amid the wind heard shrill,
Cleaving the dark like threat of godsent ill,

Low in the hush of the dread summer night
The name of that dead love that lost delight
Would come upon the world—Eurydice
What hideth so thy hands thine eyes from me?—

But the world wore through years of good & bad
And tales that less of pity in them had,
Or more of hope, of Orpheus men 'gan tell:
Such as how death at last to him befell
Long after this: for he was slain they said
By the God-maddened bands that Bacchus led
Adown the banks of Hebrus: other some
Say that the tuneful muses took him home,
That on the cloud-hid steep of Helicon
From out the worlds’s grief a calm life he won
Nothing forgotten of this feverish pain
Nothing regretted, but all spent and vain,
And he not glad nor grieved, but God indeed.
Ah let such go their ways, his earthly need
Ye know; his earthly longing and defeat.
Thank him low-voiced that even this is sweet
Unto our dying hearts that needs must gain
A little hope from pity and from pain.
And faced them, pale and gaunt & wild
With eyes and lips that seemed as ne'er they smiled
Or changed, and rude skin-clouded foul attire,
Bright flamed their eyes as they beheld him nigher,
But with no wonder looked he, as they came
Dancing about him, calling on the name
Of him who moved them; till they ringed him round
And closed upon him: then a dreadful sound
Burst from his lips of hate & fear & scorn,
And therewithal across the rout was born
A curse on Gods and women –

Then the lord
Who unseen ruled their hearts, moved by the word
Cast rage into their hearts as tells the tale
Their changed eyes scowled upon his visage pale
As round about him a short space they stood
In sudden silence boding nothing good:
Then rose in hands too eager mad to feel
The golden staves and round gan surge & reel
That crowd made blind & mad by God sent hate;
Until the autumn sun sank overlate,
And in the river did the pale moon gleam;
And in a while they raised him tenderly
And for his corpse a bier of boughs they wove
And slowly to the golden House of Love
Bore through the solemn of the night
Orpheus the singer, once the World’s Delight,
Whose spirit strove with Gods, & had prevailed
But that the flesh looked backward once & failed
O long ago, and long ago, they say
Orpheus the singer at the end of day,
Nigh to the gate of his own close of flowers,
Stood, wearied with the thronged and slow-foot hours;
Sore wearied, as with head hung down, he heard
The first notes of the brown slim-throated bird
Mix with departing voice of maid and man,
And rustle of the hedge-rows as they ran,
That joyous company, from rose to rose:
Sore wearied as the light wind swept the close
Yet rustled something more than leaves or grass;
Wearied and faint, as a half-sigh did pass
His ears confused that was not of the wind:
Weak, sick with love, as now his eyes, half-blind,
Yet not with sunset saw her standing there,
Alone and his after the toil and care;

0.1 [Fragment ... Orpheus] [Note by May Morris c1]
1 ago, ... ago,] ago and long ago c1
2 at ... day,] stood at end of day c1
3 flowers,] flowers c1
4 Stood,] <Sore>Stood/ c1
5 slow-foot hours,] slow foot hours c1
5 Sore wearied,] <Sore wearied shame faced as his eyes he turned
     <And smooth young> checks <with more than> that more than with the sunset
     buried/> Sore wearied c1
5 down,] down c1
6 brown slim-] slim brown c1
7 Mix] Mixed c1
7 and man,] & man c1
9 company,] company c1
9 rose,] rose c1
10 as] as <the wide> c1; a<n>/c2
10 close] <#> close. c1
11 Yet] <T>Yet/ c1
11 grass,] grass c1
12 faint,] faint c1
12 pass,] pass, c1
13 His] <That the wind made not> His c1
13 that] <not> that c1
13 wind,] wind c1
14 Weak, ... love,] Weak sick with love c1
14 eyes, half-blind,] eyes half blind c1
15 saw] saw <th> c1
15 there,] there c1
16 care,] care c1
Alone and his if but a little while!

They drew anigh, their lips forgot to smile;
Their eyes forgot to weep, their palms knew not
If air or fire within them they had got;
Until – ah me! – breast unto breast they clung
So long so long! high up the white moon hung,
From out the pear-tree sang the nightingale;
The thin stream trickling down the grassy vale
Found voice in the still eve; the shepherd’s call
Was heard from far, by night made musical,
And rustle of the leaves was round about,
And night grew cold, and all the stars were out
When next twixt face and face the scented wind
A little room to play about could find:
How long a space of the worlds life! – No no;
So short so short, when set against the woe
Of hungry lips cold cheeks and unkissed eyes
That een this this and this ne’er satisfies!

Now blind and trembling side by side a space
They wandered down the green path of the place
Her knee brushed down the bending lilies there
Scattering their golden dust and on her hair

but... while] for a little while c1
anigh,[ anigh c1 [No indentation c1]
smile;] smile c1
They[ their c1
air or fire[ fire or air c1
got;] got c1
Until – ah me! – ] And now ah me c1
So ... long!]] Who knows how long – c1; <Who knows how> 'So long so/ long! c2
hung,] hung c1
pear-tree] pear tree c1; <pl> pear-tree c2
nightingale;] nightingale c1
eve; ... call] eve, <and 'far/ cries of men> 'and distant call/ c1
Was ... far,] <Made muse> Of <maid & man> 'was heard afan/ c1
about,] <them when about> 'about/ c1; [folio 2 c2]
cold, ... were] cold and many a star was c1
twixt] tween c1
room] space c1
find:] find – c1
How ... satisfies!] [No corresponding lines c1]
So short[ <How was> 'S'o 'short/ c2
Now ... trembling| Then trembling c1
down ... of the] slowly down the grassy c1
Her ... me!] [No corresponding lines c1]
Fell the last apple-blossoms of the May
As neath the low hung boughs she needs must sway
From head to foot her unmatched daintiness
The heart of his sick longing did caress,
And seemed to say, all made for thee for thee!
How can it be thou turnest not to me!

But nought they spoke, till with a cry he turned,
And once again her quivering red lips burned
Upon his lips, and hand in hot hand lay
With feverish trembling of the long delay
Complaining sore, and still no word they spake

Afraid the dreamlike ecstasy to break,
Fearful lest all should begin again
Mid scanty sight and unquenched longing pain.
And yet once more because of time’s hard hand
They needs must part a little yet, and stand

Beneath the changed moon, and the sky turned grey
While the soft wind did in her raiment play,
And cooled his burning cheek, that had been laid
So close to hers; and some faint speech they made,
Whose sound no letters written yet will show,
Then turned and saw the fair house all aglow
With lamps that made the dim and wavering green
Of windy night a strange thing to be seen,
As wide it stream o'er trees and flowery grass
Then on they went until they too did pass

Into that light whereby he might behold
Her sweet face flushing with her love untold,
And see the wonder of her sandalled feet
The close-shut dewy daisies lightly meet
In such wise, as if they too felt his love

And scarce knew how for joy of it to move.

But when at last close to the porch they were
Him-seemed he scarce might see her beauty clear,
Despite the growing light; so passion burned
Within his heart, and therewithal he turned

With arms outspread, and opened mouth to speak;
But e'en therewith through the fair night did break –
– O from her lips? – a sound half sigh half scream,
And all was changed as in fearful dream,
To fearful to be real; on the cold sward
All huddled up she lay, as though a sword
Had smitten her unseen; with such wild fear
As words may tell not did he kneel by her
And caught her hand, and found it weak & cold,
And bared the breast he had not dared behold

For very love and longing heretofore,
And pressed the lips such fruit of love that bore,
And strove to cry her name, and while he clung
About her, fawning on her; but his tongue
Seemed withered in the mouth of him, and she

Lay dead there, ere his nameless agony
Mingling with rage against the Gods that slew,
The world that would not heed, from changed lips drew
A dreadful wordless sound, unlike to aught
That men may dream of ere the souls are caught

Within the meshes of despair: all night
He lay upon her bosom cold and white,
Blind, deaf, and, after that first bitter cry –
Dumb also; with no hope, not e'en to die;
Not e'en to die; for was it all so sure
That the underworld of dead folk would endure
To see their deep joy in the dreary place
If they at last should yet meet face to face
In whatsoever wise.

So there he lay
Not heeding when the night turned into day
105 And the sun rose; not heeding when folk came
And called in terror on his well-loved name:
Scarce heeding when their hands in gentle wise
Drew him away, nor when before his eyes
They sought for his love's hurt. Of what avail
To add another word unto the tale
But this: 'She that time past turned days to years
Because of longing, and then dried my tears,
Weeping when I had creased to weep for pain,
Is gone is gone, and will not come again!'

He stood and heard not while they told him there
How dead she lay, her foot, he knew so fair
All changed and swollen by the deadly sting
Of a green-scaled cold-hearted creeping thing
Charged with the inner venom of the earth;

He scarce knew if the cries meant woe or mirth
The maidens cried above: when they said

103 wise.
So.] wise – So el
104 day] [A long branch of leaves is drawn after “day” el] well loved name: well loved name el
108 him away,] him, el
109 hurt. Of] hurt of el
111 this: ... to] this, She that hath made days el
112 Because ... tears,] because of longing, who hath dried my tears el
113 I \ wax dry eyes/ el
113 pain,] pain el
114 gone,] gone el
114 again! /] again-- el 115 He] No indentation el
116 dead] there el; dead/ el
116 lay, her foot.] lay her \her/ foot el; lay, \her/ foot, c2
117 All] all el
118 a ... cold-hearted] some green scaled cold hearted el
118 thing,] th\sing c2
119 earth,] earth el
120 the] the el
121 above:] above her el
‘Wilt thou not kiss thy sweet one lying dead,’
He stooped a down een as a well-taught child
And close to her dead lips his white lips smiled,
Yet touched them not because no smile there was
Upon them and no breath thenceforth did pass.
Thereafter hours, or days or years passed by,
He knew not which, and then he stood anigh
A high-raised pile upon a flowery knoll,
And round his head the incense cloud did roll,
And white things moved about him, and he saw
A red torch to the odorous faggots draw,
And their red tongues of flame leapt up, and then
Sore wails he heard, as if of maids and men,
Crying Eurydice Eurydice!
Yet not aright he seemed to hear and see.
And one spake anigh to him, and said
In a low voice; ‘Alas as one long dead
Moving by magic art he seems to be;’
He thought; ‘Yea, yea this is eternity,
122  ‘Wilt [Wilt e1]
122  thy ... dead,’] her as she lieth dead e1
123  well-taught child] well taught child, e1
124  And] <Cl> And e1
124  smiled,] smiled e1
125  Yet] [folio 5 c2]
125  because] because <t> e2
126  thenceforth ... pass.] from them did pass e1
127  hours,] hours e1 [No new verse paragraph e1]
127  by,) by e1
128  which, and] which & e1
129  high-raised] high raised e1 [folio 2 recto e1]
129  knoll,] kno<o>_l/l e1
130  cloud did roll,) wreath did roll e1
131  him,) him e1
132  odorous faggots draw,) flower strewn <pile> heaped wood draw e1; <scent strewn heaped wood>
‘odorous faggots/draw, e2
133  their] then e1
133  up,) up e1
134  heard,) heard e1
134  men,) men e1
135  Eurydice Eurydice!] <aloud> Eurydice Eurydice – e1
136  not] nought e1
136  see,) see e1
137  one ... and] when he heard some one anigh who e1
138  voice; ‘Alas] voice, alas e1
139  by) my e1; <my> by e2
139  to be;’] <to now> to be e1
140  thought; ‘Yet,) thought yea e1
140  eternity,) eternity e1
Therefore no change, no rest at all I know
And all the world is but a hollow show;
Because I shall not die nor go to her,
Who now being dead, and knowing all, must bear

145 My woe, as I bear hers for evermore –
“When will the Gods die and all things be oer.
So folk say that the mourning country side
Expected nought but that he should have died
And with hushed voices would they pass his house

150 And the gay blossomed place was dolorous
Neath the June sunlight to their timorous eyes
Who feared so great a grief-due sacrifice
They did unto the Gods that be they loved
So lasting well might yet again be moved

155 By the sweet gift of song that heretofore
The sweet strange troubles of his wooing bore
Belike it was they did not pray in vain
Because the gods who sit above our pain
Have given us no such strength as theirs to bear

160 The torment of the never ending year
Since they have taken from us all the best
And pain grows old and sickens like the rest
And dies unless we die before its death.
Nathless the summer long my story saith

165 Sat Orpheus silent and the noon tide sun
Was grievous to him and the long day done
Still left the night amidst of scanty sleep
Over his ever restless head to creep
Yet day passed day and came not back again

170 Although it well might seem to him that vain
And empty was the changeless slow process
Of pitiless time to hear his wretchedness
How know I how hope grows again when all
Has seemed for aye into the dark to fall
The rude grained twisted oak that hung above
Our heads when we were young and glad with love
Seemed changeless as that love as day by day
We watched the evening sunlight fade away
Twixt its high branches now our love is dead
And we are gone and unremembered
And three feet further do its acorns fall
Upon the green and three inches more
It bole hath gained of girth from bark and core
Nor any easier to note than this
The growth was of the yearning after bliss
In the sad singer’s mind since dead & gone
Time was to him, and he all left alone
Amid a world that once was well beloved
And no more might avail now or be moved
By what he was was and had been – yet the earth
So wellbeloved that pleasant place of mirth
Amid all things so held him with its chains
That still no thought he had to end his pain
Or strive to end or through doubtful night
Go seek a joy that mid the blaze of light
He might not hold, so passed the summer by
Mid shifting of his silent misery
But when it grew to the mid autumn tide
He crept abroad again and wandered wide
About the land: and oft he stood to watch
The children playing on the wayside patch
Of dewy green in early morn or saw
The mist from off the noisy vine and draw
As languidly the day drew on to noon
Or he would melt beneath the early moon
Some little knot of vintagers and stand
Beside the way while hand locked fast in hand

175  The rude grained] No \The/ rude grained <oak>
176  heads] <gleaming eyes> \heads/
179  its] <h> its
188  that ... beloved] <who now no one> that <even as images> \once was will beloved/
195  mid ... of] <still escaped the> \mid the blaze of/
196  He] [Line drawn beneath line 196 and a long leafed design is drawn in the right margin.]
198  mid] <sad> \mid/
203  noisy vine and] noisy/ vine <clad terrace> \and/
and eyes fixed on the yellow litten stead
Down by the stream the goal of the hot head
210 Wearied by love those twain past down the road;
And after them with firm feet onward strode
215 The man of forty summers pondering
In weary mood and then the broken string
Of fair young girls darkening the moonlit way
Of their brown raiment making the night sweet
With laugh & song and patter of light feet –
And then perchance some ## pair walking slow
220 Unto the house that no more hope did know
Of merry days and yet was rest withal
225 And then night’s hush rose up an unseen wall
Twixt hope and truth to these but unto him
A path of hope however thin and dim –
For as unto his own abode he went
230 Amid his dull weary longings fair hope sent
A strange sweet thing that made him live on still
That made him feel a weak new birth of will
Yea that it happed to him once and again
That in such wise had softened his great pain
235 That when he bore unto his own abode
On such an eve’s end his most grievous load
And gazed upon this fair white nuptial bed
Whereon she should be lying, his worn head
Fell on the pillow and such grace was his
That he might weep for that departed bliss
240 And on a day when thin-leaved grew the year
And the last end of its last hope was near
So much more sweet grew his unquenched pain
That mends ears heard his harp strings click again
242 Amid the fallen leaves amidst a wood
his back against a knotted oak he stood
Once hazy afternoon unvexed by wind
And mid his weary longing did find
His harp within his hand he looked at
While stings of fresh rain o'er his heart did flit,
He looked at it till he began once more
To weep unused tears: then he turned it o'er
Like an untaught man who has found a thing
He knows no how to use; then string by string
It 'gan to tremble and his fingers moved
Over the ghosts of lays his lost love loved
And the harp sounded as if soft it dreamed
Then from his wet eyes suddenly there gleamed
A flash of joy and living love upright
He stood amid the faint and flickering light
And like a heaven taught master dealt withal
With the strange passion that o'er him did fall
The tale remembers words alike to this
How much soe'er their loveliness we miss
O love love love folk told me thou wert dead
And O my folly! I believed their tale
And I have gone about with hanging head
And found no place in hill or wood or bale
Lonely enough that there I might bewail;
All dead things heard my breath & gazed and moved
And cried I sorrow sorrow unbeloved –
The wood laid hand upon me when I screamed
The grass clung round about my heavy feet
The cruel sun upon my my hot head streamed
The heavy circling air my face did meet
In measured cadence did the worlds pulse beat
About my ears and whereso e'er I moved
Cried sorrow sorrow sorrow unbeloved
I know not what I said for 'dead' I cried
And when shall I forget and all things cease
Ah fool for rather nothing at that tide
Did I remember and no dream brought ease

And thinking on what never left his ###>

And

hand] hand <an> [folio 3 recto]

folk] <they said> 'folk

thou] thou<gh>

all] <beat peace?> all

tide] <d>t/ide
No dream of all the kisses and the peace.
Yea I was dead though on the Earth I moved

O sorrow sorrow sorrow unbeloved

But not perchance perchance a love I live
For all around me is the world dead now
All unregarded and meet to give
Pleasure or pain from out its painted show

And clearer now the dreams of thee do grow
When oer thy face my love my loved lips moved –
O sorrow sorrow sorrow unbeloved
Perchance I live & certainly though livest
And must I ever then be left alone

While thou new joy to unseen people givest
O strange a strange if thou so hard art grown
That thou mayst sit apart and hear my moan
Once was thine heart not all so hardly moved –
O sorrow sorrow sorrow unbeloved

Sweet solace lowly sorrow well beloved –
The singer looked up when his song was done
And twist the streaks of shadow and of sun
And melancholy autumn trees he saw
A company of maidens toward him draw

Slow footed black robed crowned with rosemary
As though they went on some solemnity
Then as in a dumb dream where nought is told
But all is known strange memories oer him rolled
And he knew now that he had heard of these

That week by week they went thus to appease
Their longings for the sight of his dead love
By casting wreaths of woven flowers above
Her tear washed tomb, shuddering he stole away
A duller veil had crept across his day

280 beloved] [A bouquet of flowers is drawn between the two stanzas.]
285 dreams] dream<†#>∅/
287 unbeloved] <unblo> unbeloved
296 The] [folio 3 verso]
299 of] of <black#>
304 knew] knew <#>
304 heard] heard <#>
308 Her] <The tomb wherein she stay> Her
309 veil] veil <now>
At sight of the fresh forces that scarce seemed
As though they knew what sorrow meant or dreamed
Of hopeles longing hanging like a chain
Still lengthening on the long days passed in vain
So on then passed his song still in their ears

To shed oer her perchance such happy tears
Soon dried as make a softer thing of life
But he with hate of all the world at strife
With a strange hope within him went his ways
Until he reached his lorn abiding place

And there a long while did he sit alone
Till long ago twilight and dusk were done
And in the dead midnight when certainly
It seemed the sun would never rise to die
Amidst the waking wind abroad he stole

Until he reached the true encircled knoll
Whereon was made his lost love’s fair tomb
And laid his hand thereon Yet toward the gloom
Of clashing woods still oer his shoulder gazed
A little while and then his hand he raised

And and looked about and with an angry cry
Smote the hard stone and sent forth clear & high
Oer the wild night and dark wind tortured trees
And dying flowers such measured worlds as these –

O hollow image of the very death
Despite of what the dull void threateneth
Despite the dull curse that thy silence saith
My feet are on the way to meet my love
O eyeless thing the night is dark about
The hounds of hard lipped fear are loosed and out

Low hangs the sky above the dull earths doubt
I tremble too but hope my heart doth move
I know thee when the clover flowers did pine
They set thee here cold thing to be a sign
That neath thee lay all life that once was mine

O low feet low O feet to meet my love.
The lied tomb of my love and made thee lie
Harken harp strings clear voice her sweet name cry
Once Eurydice and no reply
Unto the heart of hope my heart to move –

Nay nay thou art not God’s abiding place
And with none else but God now dwells that face
That gave me once clear nights and shadowy days
Be patient feet scarce time to meet my love
And yet strangely O thou lie thou holdest me,

And with strained eyes I stare as though to see
Through thy dull void the lips once laid on me
Speak midst the silence, love, my heart to move.

Loud clear and strange his voice rang through the night
And as it waned quick by some strange affright

He crouched adown and trembled, but no sound
He heard except the wind that swept around
The grassy knoll, yet therewith presently
With no charge coming oer the half seen sky
As oft rain gan to fall, and when he raised

A white face up and oer the blind world gazed
The tears of autumn from his worn cheek washed
The bitter brine of woe, for the rain plashed
In heavy drops on marble and dark wreath
whose fairness mocked the hopeless sign of death

Then down the knoll he dropped and through the trees
Went underneath the slowly dying breeze,
And reached his home long hours before the day
All fear had died all thought had passed away
From out his heart but this that on and on & on
His feet must press until the rest were won,
That poison of his love and pain had brought
The thronged world with hope and fear to nought
And filled him with a strength that might be weighed
Against the ceaseless toil its sweetness made

The toil of longing never waxing old
That still in shadowy coils about him rolled
Changing and changing not, een as the smoke
That from the low kiln oer the potter’s folk
Rolls beaten by the rain & mingling still

With the low clouds that sweep the blue-clad hill.
So southward from the wooded hills of Thrace
Through the blind rainy night he set his face
Nor had he wondered if the dawn had died
For ever and no whit did he abide

When now the dull dawn fouler than the night
Because the down beat world beneath its light
Could now be seen struggling unhelped in vain
Unto the sunless noon through wind and rain
Still on he pushed and when at last he stayed

His weary feet his heart was scarce delayed
But oer again & oer again still wove
Fresh pictures of the meeting of his love
For time was dead, and souless things and dim

Seemed all the folk mid whom his feet did rest
Who held him certes as one God possessed
And tended him in aweful silent care
Yet when he went the day seemed grown more fair
An ill dream gone from them – yet mid these folk

So was it that from time to time he woke
As unto real life – on a day it fell
That nigh a place where he had quested well
Upon an hillside close beside the way
He saw folk gather about noon of day

Nor shunned the concourse this tide but pressed through
The clustering folk as though full well he knew
What was amid them and there lay a man
Of thirty summers, with dead face and wan

375  His feet must press until the rest were won,
That poison of his love and pain had brought
The thronged world with hope and fear to nought
And filled him with a strength that might be weighed
Against the ceaseless toil its sweetness made

380  The toil of longing never waxing old
That still in shadowy coils about him rolled
Changing and changing not, een as the smoke
That from the low kiln oer the potter’s folk
Rolls beaten by the rain & mingling still

385  With the low clouds that sweep the blue-clad hill.
So southward from the wooded hills of Thrace
Through the blind rainy night he set his face
Nor had he wondered if the dawn had died
For ever and no whit did he abide

390  When now the dull dawn fouler than the night
Because the down beat world beneath its light
Could now be seen struggling unhelped in vain
Unto the sunless noon through wind and rain
Still on he pushed and when at last he stayed

395  His weary feet his heart was scarce delayed
But oer again & oer again still wove
Fresh pictures of the meeting of his love
For time was dead, and souless things and dim

400  Seemed all the folk mid whom his feet did rest
Who held him certes as one God possessed
And tended him in aweful silent care
Yet when he went the day seemed grown more fair
An ill dream gone from them – yet mid these folk

405  So was it that from time to time he woke
As unto real life – on a day it fell
That nigh a place where he had quested well
Upon an hillside close beside the way
He saw folk gather about noon of day

410  Nor shunned the concourse this tide but pressed through
The clustering folk as though full well he knew
What was amid them and there lay a man
Of thirty summers, with dead face and wan
Turned upward to the sky, a myrtle wreath
About his head, his right hand stiff with death
Clutching a blood-stained knife, and close beside
Where maidens with loose hair that wailed and cried
About him; and so when the singer's eyes
Gan question of the thing, his name did rise
To the folks wondering lips, for all did know
The mover of the world but not his woe--
Then did an old man answer to his gaze
That he who lay there bore for many days--
The burden of great love unsatisfied
Until the bitter thing he might not hide
And at the last his piteous love gained hate
From such an one as all compassionate
Folk held aforetime--how should he live then
Or strive again to deal with happy men
His death should hurt her not who loved him not
His bitter life would swiftly be forgot
And so of all this knife and hand made end--
And through what dark ways now his soul may wend
We know not but O Thracian if thou mayst
Be kind and some what of they music waste
On this poor wretch who never happy was
And on thy way with his poor blessing pass
Then Orpheus trembled sore and gazed around
For with a fresh pain tortured him his wound
Undreamed of erst mingled of fear and doubt
But soft from harp and lips the song welled out--

Love set me in a flowery world and fair
Love showed me many marvels moving there
And said take these if nought thine heart doth dare
To feel my fiery hand upon thy heart
Take these and live and lose the better part
Love showed me death and said make no delay
Love showed me change and said joy ebbs away
Love showed me eled, mid vain regrets grown grey
I laughed for joy and round his heart I clung,
Sickened & swooned by bitter sweetness stung
But I awoke at last and born again
Said eager hands upon unrest & pain
And wrapped myself about with longing vain
Ah better still and better all things grew
As more the root and heart of love I knew
O Love love love what is it thou hast done
All pains all tears I knew save only one
Where is the green earth now where is the sun
Thou diest not say my love might never move
Her hands her eyes her lips to bless my love!

Ending with strange wild face he turned away
Nor might abide to hear what face would say
Or meet their eyes, for in his heart was born
A dreadful fear that made him more forlorn
Than he had deemed it possible to be
Since unreal dealt first smote him suddenly
A dreadful fear that he een at the best
When his head lay upon the heaving breast
Of his own love sweet living and alive
Unto himself alone her love did give
That he was all alone yea even then
Himself rear to himself all other men
And hopes and fears and longings wild but his
Shadows and nought, ah that his vanished bliss
Should come back now to call itself a lie
To scream what profit of the days gone by
Since if they perish ever were they nought
To cry seek seek een as this wretched has sought
Seek and find nothing but the void of space
And thou with thine ownself brought face to face
Face to face nought to help thee – fool that sayst
How can love die how shall this anguish waste
Sure something it shall move what shall it move
But that which I desire and bring me love –
Yea joy in love or pain in love – poor fool
Thy love shall move thyself make the tool
Of what thou knowest not – yea turn back again

Said] <Caught with #> Said
say] say <##>
face] fac<##>/
he ... be] <since that first wild hour his heart had been/> <A dreadful fear/> \he had deemed it possible to be/
fears] fears <but>
face to] <##>/face to
Sure] Sure<ly>
move] move <and>
Look at the wretch who lies abed of pain
Is he not helpless – ah sweet at first
Did that pain seem that thus his life hath cursed
Yea a sweet secret not to be expressed
For fear the world at hearing of it blessed
Should falter in its course for fear that she
Should faint at thought of its felicity
Een though she cannot love me –

Than since the first days he had been – ah love
Ah love he thought that all the gods should move
Yet canst not move withal thine agony

One heart of woman: swiftly hurried by
Wild thoughts across his heart and this at last
That all the love and happiness gone past
Was but a dream a thing himself had made
From his own heart that shrinking and afraid

Of his own dreadful self in the void space
He should wake up one one day, and find no face
No voice of any man or God while he
Drifted about the dread eternity
Should never die should never hope or fear

Should have no love no hate to come anear
Nay no voice left to cry come back again
Come back my folly come my yearning pain
Come back a bitterness of heaven and earth
Yea what I called despair once that had birth

Within my heart while somewhat was mine own
Before I knew that I was quite alone!
Wrapped in such thoughts he hurried on and on
Not resting where his evening rest was won
And thinking less of those he left behind

When the new risen sun his face did find
Crossing the threshold than a happy man
Thinketh at morn of his pale dreams & wan
And yet at whiles his lips his lyre would speak
Things that his heart scarce knew as faint & weak

Thought of the old fresh earthly life would strive
With that desire that kept his heart alive
That made his body strong yet slew in him
The simple love of earth – his eyes would swim
At such whiles, for a minute soft and sweet,

A with vain regretful pain his longing feet

492 Yea] [folio 5 verso]
507 God] God <to meet>
522 of] <a>of</a>
525 thought ... fresh] <Picture>\Thought/ of <bygone happy life> \the old fresh/
His quivering face would turn to his old home
Till once again the dreadful pang would come
Born of despair, yet driving him like hope
With all the loneliness of life to cope

Now had the winter fallen on the land
Yet smote it with no hard remorseless hand
For hazy morns red litten sun set skies
Bright windless noons left hopes & memories
Unto lark haunted fallow and slim trees

Why by a homestead door amid a rood
Of fresh turned garden nigh a leafless wood
Sat Orpheus on an eve a goodman grey

531 His] <T>H/is
537 For] <#>For
538 left hopes &] <still> left <#> \hopes &/
539 Unto] <Of autumn past and spring that spring was to be> <to fallow nameless stem twiggged> Unto
542 Orpheus] Or<e>pheus