Drafts for "The Hill of Venus":

Morris included this title before Jason in his earliest list of proposed EP tales (c. 1861). In the notice for the projected second volume at the end of vol. I, he listed it second, after the never-written "Story of Theseus."

1. **Autograph draft 1**, Fitzwilliam Library MS EP25, ff. 11-13 (probably c. 1861-62):
   Three loose manuscript pages ripped from small notebook, placed inside autograph draft 2, below.
   F. 11 is in pencil, f. 12, in pen and pencil, and f. 13 in pen; 7 stanzas.
   F. 11 begins "But therewithal was all thought swallowed up/ By longings that he had no power to stay."
   F. 13 ends with "That turned to royal state her wretchedness."
   The whole seems to be an early draft for the second part of draft 2, below.

   relatively finished early draft
   This begins, "I saw a forest once, in Germany/ Set in a lordship called Turingia"
   In her introduction to CW, vol. 6, May Morris quoted from this draft and described it as "the first form of 'The Hill of Venus.'"

3. **Copyist's draft 3**, Huntington Library MS 6423:
   a copyist's draft of the above with a few corrections in Morris's hand.

   Two loose manuscript pages ripped from small notebook and placed inside autograph draft 2, above.
   There are small drawing of flowers at the top, and f. 14 begins, "The burning kisses of a thousand years." This appears to be an early draft for st. 39 of draft 5, below.


6. **Autograph draft 6(?),** British Library MS 45,299., ff. 49-65 (probably c. 1869-70):
   a rough draft of 220 stanzas, of which 115 roughly parallel the final version. This seems to be May Morris's "version A," which she described as "a complete but shortened form of the poem as it stands in the printed text." It begins with stanza 33 of the printed version, "He looked behind him a vague memory/ Of time late passed, of craving restless pain." It ends with Orpheus's return to the cave, "As now at last its story echoing deearth, /And dull dark closed betwixt him and the earth."

7. **Autograph draft 7(?),** probably c. 1869-70:
   May Morris identifies a "fragment C," which "works on B and selects passages and single stanzas from it, but it, too, is almost completely rejected." It is possible that 4 above was taken from it.

8. **[Autograph draft 8](c. 1869 or 1870):** This may be a missing first draft of the final version.


10. **Printed version 1870**
PRAISE OF VENUS

O'er which, upon a happy day
That came to take our theme away
Well may we praise the crimson flame
At whose high fire the fates did shine
Flowers of the gods; the yellow sand
They kissed beneath the rainbow land
The bee heart, ripe seeded grain
Through which the sun's limbs first did pass
The purple daisies, blearly
First blown against the quivering shade
The first red rose that touched the sky
And overblown and fainting died
The flickering of the orange shade
When first in sleep they limbs were laid
The happy days, sweet life, and death
Where are our lashes, thy lovely breast

There yellow locks, then becomes white
Their limbs well wrought, for all doth light
Some sweet-smelling things that mixed down
As hopeless as the flowers beneath
The coffin of unfinished foot

HEREFOR I VENUS well may
Praise the green shades of the sea

But with what words shall we praise
VENUS's bow she who

A Book of Verses 1870