

## 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.
2. **Autograph draft 2**, Fitzwilliam Library MS EP25, ff. 1-67 (probably c. 1861-62):  
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.
4. **Autograph draft 4**, Fitzwilliam Library MS EP25, f. 14-15:  
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.
5. **Autograph draft 5(?)**, British Library MS 45,299, ff. 66-105: eighty-seven stanzas of an intermediate version of the tale. May Morris called this draft "version B," and dated it from late 1869 or 1870. It is reprinted in Florence Boos, *The Design of WM's EP*, 449-476.
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 dearth, /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.
9. **Autograph fair copy 9**, Huntington Library MS 6418 (1870).
10. **Printed version 1870**

68  
 The humming King of the Mountain  
 Had hidden within the valley  
 The frost of ruined snow, look down  
 The last deep frown, lingering in her  
 Had brought the wrinkle to her lip  
 No soft pain, or terror yet had been  
 That ever she had known  
 When on the Riviera winter  
 The sun was on her face  
 The pink tipped flower & the green  
 The meadow by the day  
 These things was her loss with little  
 And with forget them till they come  
 But who can be for other  
 Her beauty, grace, or even take delight  
 In ought but her, or be as he had been  
 Or be in her  
 When life is mine who  
 He can behold

49  
 He looked behind him a vague  
 Of time he passed of craving  
 Made him now think the  
 He must have had strength  
 In there he stood as a  
 With a close brake of  
 With no deed there  
 Yet is a new born  
 In his years  
 You in a flash may see  
 The pain the pleasure  
 And stopped of over  
 So he bear see  
 In one most minute  
 But even as he moves  
 As swift as death  
 Came fresh desire  
 With a fresh hope  
 The new delight  
 The new delight  
 And the sweet tangle  
 Trembling and thinking  
 The world did die  
 He should not wake  
 Yet nowise knew  
 Where to turn  
 Within dash to  
 Yet slowly he passed  
 The wandering wood  
 The deep of far off  
 He passed the swift  
 The first red rose  
 The first red rose

PRAISE OF VENUS

Their yellow locks, their bosoms white  
 Their limbs well wrought for all delight  
 Seemed fruitless things that mined death  
 As hopeless as the flowers beneath  
 The nearness of unblissed feet  
**HEREFORE** O Venus well may we  
 Praise the green ridges of the sea  
 O'er which upon a happy day  
 Thou camest to take our shame away  
 Well may we praise the curling foam  
 Amidst the which thy feet did bloom  
 Flowers of the Gods; the yellow sand  
 They kissed betwixt the sea and land  
 The bee-beset ripe seeded grass  
 Through which thy five limbs first did pass  
 The purple dusted butterfly  
 First blown against thy quivering thigh  
 The first red rose that touched thy side  
 And overblown and fainting died;  
 The flickering of the orange shade  
 Where first in sleep thy limbs were laid  
 The happy days sweet life and death  
 Whose air first caught thy balmy breath

PRAISE OF VENUS

Yet all these things well praised may be  
 But with what words shall we praise thee  
**OVENUS** O thou love alive  
 How to give grace to words that praise thee  
 The wandering wood  
 The deep of far off  
 The swift  
 The first red rose

