

THE GIAOUR

In Charlotte Dacre's *Hours of Solitude* – a book which has been credited with giving Byron the idea for the title of his first book, *Hours of Idleness* – he would have found the following poem:

MOORISH COMBAT

THE breeze was hush'd; the modest moon-beam slept
 On the green bosom of the treach'rous wave;
 The lover Marli wander'd forth alone,
 And trembling linger'd near the well-known cave.

A snow-white turban crown'd his brow severe,
 Its crescent sparkled like the beamy morn;
 A dazzling vest his graceful form array'd,
 And gems unnumber'd did his belt adorn.

“Come, lovely Ora, pure as angels are,
 Light as yon clouds that o'er the moon now sail;
 And let thy beauteous form like hers appear,
 Refulgent, thro' the dim night's dusky veil.

Come, gentle as the mild refreshing dew
 Upon th' enamour'd bosom of the rose;
 Come thou, and calm my eager thirsty soul,
 And like the dew upon my breast repose.

Come, Paradise of sweets! thy fragrant love
 Shall steal through ev'ry fibre of my brain;
 Thy sight shall seem unto my fever'd sense,
 As doth to desert sands the pitying rain.”

He said – when sudden from the cavern dark,
 Like a fair sprite soft issuing from the tomb,
 An angel form was slowly seen to rise,
 And trembling pause, as doubtful of her doom.

“My Ora's form!” the panting youth exclaim'd,
 And eager clasp'd her to his love-sick breast;
 Wild throbb'd his heart, and from his sparkling eyes
 The fire of love shot quick, as Ora prest.

Say, did they rest between each fervent kiss?
 Ah! no; but while their flutt'ring sighs unite,
 No moisture e'er their glowing lips might cool,
 Swiftly dried up by passion's fierce delight.

How vain to stem their rapture as it flow'd,
 Or whisper to their stagg'ring sense, beware!
 His eyes inebriate wander'd o'er her charms,
 While hers to earth were cast with chastened air.

Lo! from a mountain's steep and shadowy side,
 O'er which obliquely yet the beams were thrown,
 The fierce Zampogni, vengeance in his eye,
 Shot like a flaming meteor swiftly down.

And now he paus'd, and scowling fell around,
 His arm uplifted, and his breath restrain'd,
 The flow'rs and herbage wither'd in his gaze,

While he from instant vengeance scarce refrain'd.

Not long on thoughts of horror did he pause –
 Bright as the beam that gilds the ev'ning cloud,
 His sparkling sabre swift divides the pair,
 And seeks in either breast a crimson shroud.

But wrath intemp'rate ne'er can justly aim. –
 For deeds of valour as for love renown'd,
 The gallant Marli drew his keen-edg'd blade,
 And fierce Zampogni bit the dusty ground.

Yet swift he rose, and urg'd the dubious fight;
 Such warriors sure before had ne'er engag'd;
 While victory alternate promis'd each
 The lovely prize for whom the battle rag'd.

She, beauteous maid! like a bright genius stood,
 With hands and eyes uplifted to the sky;
 While steely sparks commingling with the beam,
 Were not more bright than shot from either eye.

But now a thrust with vengeful fury giv'n,
 Flush'd in Zampogni's cheek the hopeful blood;
 Mysterious fate directs the flying steel –
 Ah, Marli! thou hast ne'er the stroke withstood.

On Ora, see, his dying eyes are cast –
 “Thou art Zampogni's now,” he faintly said;
 “Yet, sunshine of my soul – ah! let me gaze
 Upon those charms which from before me fade.”

“Yes, thou art *mine*,” the fierce Zampogni cried;
 And to the maid advanc'd with frantic air.
 “Rather the Grave's,” indignant Ora cried. –
 “Die, traitor! and avenge my love's despair.”

A dagger, in her vest till now conceal'd,
 She buried in the gloomy rival's breast.
 He fell, in death majestic – withering rage
 And stern contempt his features *still* exprest.

“And thou, Oh, Marli! thou for whom alone
 The wretched Ora liv'd – thou *yet* art mine;
 Then thus with reeking steel our *vow* I bind,
 In death as life, oh, Marli! only thine.”

The poem is economical in its story-telling, but vulgar in its title's implication that such passions as those depicted can only flourish in Islamic countries, and not, for example, on the Sussex downs, or in Whitechapel, or at Carlton House.

When he came to write *The Giaour*, Byron – if, indeed, he still remembered Dacre – changed or neutralised the religion of one of the male protagonists, adding a *sort of* Christian-Islamic dialectic to the narrative: he removed the suggestion that such passions reigned only in non-Frankish breasts: and removed the heroine's feminist objection to being treated as a possession to be passed on to the Stronger adversary, an objection which leads in Dacre's poem to a violence which he finds distasteful, and reserves for his (to him) frightening heroine, Gulnare in *The Corsair*.

But there's more to it. *The Giaour* may be based in part on an incident which – so others asserted – had happened to Byron during his mysterious, out-of-reach, partially-chronicled, Hobhouse-less year in Greece. His seafaring friend the Marquis of Sligo wrote

The new governor, unaccustomed to have the same intercourse with the Christians as his predecessor, had, of course, the barbarous Turkish ideas with regard to women. In consequence, and in compliance with the strict letter of the Mohammedan law, he ordered this girl to be sewed up in a sack, and thrown into the sea – as, indeed, quite customary at Constantinople. As you were returning from bathing in the Piraeus, you met the procession going down to execute the sentence of the Waywode on this unhappy girl. Report continues to say, that on finding out what the object of their journey was, and who was the miserable sufferer, you immediately interfered; and on some delay in obeying your orders, you were obliged to inform the leader of the escort that force should make him comply; that, on further hesitation, you drew a pistol, and told him, that if he did not immediately obey your orders, and come back with you to the Aga's house, you would shoot him dead. On this the man turned about and went with you to the governor's house; here you succeeded, partly by personal threats, and partly by bribery and entreaty, in procuring her pardon, on condition of her leaving Athens. I was told that you then conveyed her in safety to the convent, and despatched her off at night to Thebes, where she found a safe asylum, Such is the story I heard, as nearly as I can recollect it.

The tale is often told – it has been twice dramatised on TV – but to use it as subtext to *The Giaour* ignores the fact that Leila *is* drowned; the protagonist is unable to save her. Drowning adulterous women – or even potentially, or reputedly, adulterous women – was not rare in the East in Byron's day. The tale of Phrosyne and her companions, drowned by Byron's friend Ali Pacha and referred to in the note to the poem's last line below, is still commemorated in modern Greece.

The Giaour is unusual for a "Turkish Tale" in the fragmented structure of its narrative, and the different perspectives from which its story is told. Sometimes the narrator is a Turkish fisherman – sometimes the Giaour himself – sometimes an objective third-person storyteller. Byron never tries this experiment again; the remaining five Tales are continuous in action, and single-perspective (though there is some minute juggling with first-person narrative at the end of *Lara*). Perhaps for this reason *The Giaour* is the most cryptic, powerful, and popular of the six poems. It is the most discussed and written-about, in part because it raises far more questions than any of the others. What was the relationship between the Giaour and Hassan? Was Hassan present at Leila's drowning? How he recapture Leila? Where was the Giaour when he did so? Does the Giaour confess, and if so, to whom? Is there one, or are there two priests in the last section?



Leila¹

The poem emerged from Byron's creative subconscious in bursts, so that he didn't know when it was finished, and, ignoring Horace's dictum (and his own – he had written *Hints from Horace* only eighteen months before) published it at once, rather than keep it nine years. The consequence was innumerable additions over twelve editions, which will be found, colour-coded for the sake of clarity, in a text-only version below.

¹: Illustration from <<http://people.bu.edu/jwvail/byron_illustrations.html>>

THE GIAOUR

A FRAGMENT OF A TURKISH TALE.

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The tale which these disjointed fragments present, is founded upon circumstances now less common in the East than formerly; either because the ladies are more circumspect than in the “olden time;” or because the Christians have better fortune, or less enterprize. The story, when entire, contained the adventures of a female slave, who was thrown, in the Mussulman manner, into the sea for infidelity, and avenged by a young Venetian, her lover, at the time the Seven Islands were possessed by the Republic of Venice, and soon after the Arnauts were beaten back from the Morea, which they had ravaged for some time subsequent to the Russian invasion. The desertion of the Mainotes, on being refused the plunder of Misitra, led to the abandonment of that enterprize, and to the desolation of the Morea, during which the cruelty exercised on all sides was unparalleled even in the annals of the faithful.

No breath of air to break the wave
 That rolls below the Athenian’s grave,
 That tomb which, gleaming o’er the cliff, *
 First greets the homeward-veering skiff,
 High o’er the land he saved in vain – 5
 When shall such Hero live again?

* The tomb above the rocks on the promontory, by some supposed the sepulchre of Themistocles.²

* * * * *

Fair clime! where every season smiles
 Benignant o’er those blessed isles,
 Which, seen from far Colonna’s³ height,
 Make glad the heart that hails the sight, 10
 And lend to loneliness delight.
 There, mildly dimpling, Ocean’s cheek
 Reflects the tints of many a peak
 Caught by the laughing tides that lave
 These Edens of the eastern wave; 15
 And if at times a transient breeze
 Break the blue chrystal of the seas,
 Or sweep one blossom from the trees,
 How welcome is each gentle air,
 That waves and wafts the odours there! 20
 For there – the Rose o’er crag or vale,
 Sultana of the Nightingale, *
 The maid for whom his melody –
 His thousand songs are heard on high, 25
 Blooms blushing to her lover’s tale;
 His queen, the garden queen, his Rose,
 Unbent by winds, unchilled by snows,
 Far from winters of the west
 By every breeze and season blest,
 Returns the sweets by Nature given 30
 In soft incense back to Heaven;

2: Themistocles (523-458 BC), Athenian general, victor over the Persians at Salamis; see *Don Juan*, III, 708.

3: Colonna is Cape Sunium. See *Don Juan* III, 779.

And grateful yields that smiling sky
 Her fairest hue and fragrant sigh.
 And many a summer flower is there,
 And many a shade that Love might share, 35
 And many a grotto, meant by rest,
 That holds the pirate for a guest;
 Whose bark in sheltering cove below
 Lurks for the passing peaceful prow,
 Till the gay mariner's guitar † 40
 Is heard, and seen the Evening Star;
 Then, stealing with the muffled oar,
 Far shaded by the rocky shore,
 Rush the night-prowlers on the prey,
 And turns to groan his roundelay. 45
 Strange – that where Nature loved to trace,
 As if for Gods, a dwelling place,
 And every charm and grace hath mixed
 Within the Paradise she fixed –
 There man, enamoured of distress, 50
 Should mar it into wilderness,
 And trample, brute-like, o'er each flower
 That tasks not one laborious hour;
 Nor claims the culture of his hand
 To blood along the fairy land, 55
 But springs as to preclude his care,
 And sweetly woos him – but to spare!
 Strange – that where all is peace beside,
 There Passion riots in her pride,
 And Lust and Rapine wildly reign, 60
 To darken o'er the fair domain.
 It is as though the Fiends prevailed
 Against the Seraphs they assailed,
 And, fixed on heavenly thrones, should dwell
 The freed inheritors of Hell – 65
 So soft the scene, so formed for joy,
 So curst the tyrants that destroy!

* The attachment of the nightingale to the rose is a well-known Persian fable – if I mistake not, the “Bulbul of a thousand tales” is one of his appellations.⁴

† The guitar is the constant amusement of the Greek sailor by night; with a steady fair wind, and during a calm, it is accompanied always by the voice, and often by dancing.

He who hath bent him o'er the dead
 Ere the first day of Death is fled,
 The first dark day of Nothingness, 70
 The last of Danger and Distress,
 (Before Decay's effacing fingers
 Have swept the lines where Beauty lingers,)
 And marked the mild angelic air –
 The rapture of Repose that's there – 75
 The fixed yet tender traits that streak

4: Bulbul is Persian and Arabic for nightingale. The love of the bird for the flower is a well-known Persian myth. See *Vathek* (ed. Lonsdale, p.143 / 58n2).

The languor of the placid cheek,
 And – but for that sad, shrouded eye,
 That fires not – wins not – weeps not – now –
 And but for that chill, changeless brow, 80
 Where cold Obstruction's apathy *
 Appals the gazing mourner's heart,
 As if to him it could impart
 The doom he dreads, yet dwells upon –
 Yes, but for these and these alone, 85
 Some moments – aye – one treacherous hour,
 He still might doubt the Tyrant's power;
 So fair – so calm – so softly sealed,
 The first – last look – by Death revealed! †
 Such is the aspect of his shore – 90
 'Tis Greece – but living Greece no more!
 So coldly sweet, so deadly fair,
 We start, for Soul is wanting there.
 Hers is the loveliness in death,
 That parts not quite with parting breath; 95
 But beauty with that fearful bloom –
 That hue which haunts it to the tomb –
 Expression's last receding ray,
 A gilded Halo hovering round decay,
 The farewell beam of Feeling past away! 100
 Spark of that flame – perchance of heavenly birth –
 Which gleams – but warms no more its cherished earth!

* “Aye, but to die and go we know not where, / To lie in cold obstruction.” *Measure for Measure*, III i 118-19.⁵

† I trust that few of my readers have ever had an opportunity of witnessing what is here attempted in description, but those who have will probably retain a painful remembrance of that singular beauty which pervades, with few exceptions, the features of the dead, a few hours, and but for a few hours after “the spirit is not there.” It is to be remarked in cases of violent death by gun-shot wounds, the expression is always that of languor, whatever the natural energy of the sufferer's character; but in death from a stab the countenance preserves its traits of feeling or ferocity, and the mind its bias, to the last.⁶

Clime of the unforgotten brave! –
 Whose land from plain to mountain-cave
 Was Freedom's home or Glory's grave – 105
 Shrine of the mighty! can it be,
 That this is all remains of thee?
 Approach, thou craven crouching slave –
 Say, is this not Thermopylae?⁷
 These waters blue that round you lave – 110
 Oh servile offspring of the free –
 Pronounce what sea, what shore is this?
 The gulf, the rock of Salamis!
 These scenes – their story yet unknown –
 Arise, and make again your own; 115
 Snatch from the ashes of your Sires

⁵: Claudio's words to Isabella, expressing his terror of death.

⁶: It is not clear that B. had, in 1813, ever seen bodies of people who had been either shot or stabbed.

⁷: Battle in 480 BC, when Leonidas, King of Sparta, with a force of three hundred men, held the Thermopylae pass against the Persians under Xerxes, allowing the rest of Greece time to organise; see *Don Juan III*, 730.

The embers of their former fires;
 And he who in the strife expires
 Will add to theirs a name of fear
 That Tyranny shall quake to hear, 120
 And leave his sons a hope, a fame,
 They too will rather die than shame;
 For Freedom's battle once begun,
 Bequeathed by bleeding Sire to Son,
 Though baffled oft is ever won.⁸ 125
 Bear witness, Greece, thy living page!
 Attest it many a deathless age!
 While Kings, in dusty darkness hid,
 Have left a nameless pyramid,
 Thy Heroes – though the general doom 130
 Hath swept the column from their tomb,
 A mightier monument command,
 The mountains of thy native land!
 There points thy Muse to stranger's eye
 The graves of those that cannot die! 135
 'Twere long to tell, and sad to trace,
 Each step from Splendour to Disgrace;
 Enough – no foreign foe could quell
 Thy soul, till from itself it fell;
 Yet! Self-abasement paved the way 140
 To villain-bonds and despot sway.

What can he tell who tread thy shore?
 No legend of thine olden time,
 No theme on which the Muse might soar
 High as thine own days of yore, 145
 When man was worthy of thy clime.
 The hearts within thy valleys bred,
 The fiery souls that might have led
 Thy sons to deeds sublime,
 Now crawl from cradle to the Grave, 150
 Slaves – nay, the bondsmen of a Slave, *
 And callous, save to crime;
 Stained with each evil that pollutes
 Mankind, where least above the brutes;
 Without even savage virtue blest, 155
 Without one free or valiant breast,
 Still to the neighbouring ports they waft
 Proverbial wiles, and ancient craft;
 In this the subtle Greek is found,
 For this, and this alone, renowned. 160
 In vain might Liberty invoke
 The spirit to its bondage broke
 Or raise the neck that courts the yoke –
 No more her sorrows I bewail,
 Yet this will be a mournful tale,⁹ 165
 And they who listen may believe,

8: Lines 123-5 were, in the translation by Adam Mickiewicz, quoted at the gates of the Gdansk shipyards during the events of 1980.

9: The tale which now ensues has nothing to do with Greek history or with her current aspirations for freedom, so that the break here is violent.

Who heard it first had cause to grieve.

* * * * *

* Athens is the property of the Kislár Aga¹⁰ (the slave of the seraglio and guardian of the women), who appoints the Waywode.¹¹ A pandar and eunuch – these are not polite but true appellations – now *governs* the *governor* of Athens.

Far, dark, along the blue sea glancing,
The shadows of the rocks advancing
Start on the fisher's eye like boat 170
Of island-pirate or Mainote;¹²
And fearful for his light caïque,¹³
He shuns the near but doubtful creek –
Though worn and weary with his toil,
And cumbered with his scaly spoil, 175
Slowly, yet strongly, plies the oar,
Till Port Leone's safer shore¹⁴
Receives him by the lovely light
That best becomes an Eastern night.

* * * * *

Who thundering comes on blackest steed? 180
With slackened bit and hoof of speed?
Beneath the clattering iron's sound
The caverned Echoes wake around
In lash for lash, and bound for bound;
The foam that streaks the courser's side 185
Seems gathered from the Ocean-tide –
Though weary waves are sunk to rest,
There's none within his rider's breast;
And though to-morrow's tempest lower,
'Tis calmer than thy heart, young Giaour! * 190
I know thee not, I loathe thy race,
But in thy lineaments I trace
What Time shall strengthen, not efface –
Though young and pale, that sallow front
Is scathed by fiery Passion's brunt; 195
Though bent on earth thine evil eye,
As meteor-like thou glidest by,
Right well I view thee and deem thee one
Whom Othman's sons should slay or shun.

* Infidel.¹⁵

On – on he hastened – and he drew 200

10: Athens was ranked forty-third amongst the cities of European Turkey; the Chief of the Black Eunuchs (the Kislár Aga) had lost his power over it in 1760, but regained it in 1800.

11: The Waywode was the Turkish civil governor.

12: Mainotes came from Maina: they were Greek pirates. B. had a narrow escape from some in 1810 – see BLJ 30-1. See also *Don Juan II*, 16, 2.

13: A caïque is a light skiff, propelled either by oars or sail. Compare *The Corsair*, 673.

14: Porte Leonei is Piræus, the port which serves Athens.

15: A Giaour (Arab jaur, Turkish gaovur) is roughly “one who deviates.” See *Vathek* p.128 / 14, where Lonsdale quotes not 1786, but 1816: “Giaour means infidel”.

My gaze of wonder as he flew;
 Though like a Demon of the night
 He passed, and vanished from my sight,
 His aspect and his air impressed
 A troubled memory on my breast, 205
 And long upon my startled ear
 Rung his dark courser's hoofs of fear.
 He spurs his steed – he nears the steep,
 That, jutting, shadows o'er the deep –
 He winds around – he hurries by – 210
 The rock relieves him from mine eye –
 For, well I ween, unwelcome he
 Whose glance is fixed on those that flee;
 And not a start that shines too bright
 On him who takes such timeless flight. 215
 He wound along; but ere he passed
 One glance he snatched – as if his last –
 A moment checked his wheeling steed –
 A moment breathed him from his speed,
 A moment on his stirrup stood – 220
 Why looks he o'er the olive wood? –
 The Crescent glimmers on the hill,
 The Mosque's high lamps are quivering still
 Though too remote for sound to wake
 In echoes of the far tophaike, * 225
 The flashes of each joyous peal
 Are seen to prove the Moslem's zeal,
 To-night – set Rhamazani's sun –
 To-night – the Bairam feast's begun –
 To-night – but who and what art thou 230
 Of foreign garb and fearful brow?
 And what are these to thine or thee,
 That thou should'st either pause or flee?

He stood – some dread was on his face,
 Soon Hatred settled in its place – 235
 It rose not with the reddening flush
 Of transient Anger's hasty blush,
 But pale as marble o'er the tomb,
 Whose ghastly whiteness aids its gloom.
 His brow was bent – his eye was glazed – 240
 He raised his arm, and fiercely raised,
 And sternly shook his hand on high,
 As doubting to return or fly;
 Impatient of his flight delayed,
 Here loud his raven charger neighed – 245
 Down glanced that hand, and grasped his blade –
 That sound had burst his waking dream,
 As Slumber starts at owl's scream. –
 The spur hath lanced his courser's sides –
 Away – away – for life he rides – 250
 Swift as the hurled on high jerreed †
 Springs to the touch his startled steed;
 The rock is doubled – and the shore
 Shakes with the clattering tramp no more –

The crag is won – no more is seen 255
 His Christian crest and haughty mien. –
 'Twas but an instant – he restrained
 That fiery barb so sternly reined –
 'Twas but a moment that he stood,
 Then sped as if by Death pursued; 260
 But in that instant o'er his soul
 Winters of Memory seemed to roll,
 And gather in that drop of time
 A life of pain, an age of crime.
 O'er him who loves, or hates, or fears, 265
 Such moment pours the grief of years –
 What felt *he* then, at once opprest
 By all that most distracts the breast?
 That pause – which pondered o'er his fate,
 Oh, who its dreary length shall date! 270
 Though in Time's record nearly nought,
 It was Eternity to Thought!
 For infinite as boundless space
 The thought that Conscience must embrace,
 Which in itself can comprehend 275
 Woe without name – or hope – or end.

* “Tophaike,” musket. – The Bairam¹⁶ is announced by the cannon at sunset; the illumination of the Mosques, and the firing of all kinds of small arms, loaded with *ball*, proclaim it during the night.

† Jerreed, or Djerrid, a blunted Turkish javelin, which is darted from horseback with great force and precision. It is a favourite exercise of the Mussulmans; but I know not if it can be called a *manly* one, since the most expert in the art are the Black Eunuchs of Constantinople. – I think, next to these, a Mamlouk at Smyrna was the most skilful that came within my own observation.¹⁷

The hour is past, the Giaour is gone;
 And did he fly or fall alone?
 Woe to that hour he came or went!
 The curse for Hassan's sin was sent 280
 To turn a palace to a tomb –
 He came, he went, like the Simoom, *
 That harbinger of Fate and gloom,
 Beneath whose widely-wasting breath
 The very cypress droops to death – 285
 Dark tree – still sad when others' grief is fled,
 The only constant mourner o'er the dead!

* The blast of the desert, fatal to every living thing, and often alluded to in eastern poetry.¹⁸

The steed is vanished from the stall;¹⁹
 No serf is seen in Hassan's hall;
 The lonely Spider's thin gray pall 290
 Waves slowly widening o'er the wall;
 The Bat builds in his Haram bower,

¹⁶: The Bairam or Bairum is a day-long festival occurring at the end of Ramadhan.

¹⁷: B. and H. saw djerid-practice at Smyrna on Sunday March 11th 1810.

¹⁸: For more references to the Simoom, see *Don Juan*, IV, 57, 8; or *Manfred*, III, i, 128.

¹⁹: This section, describing Hassan's deserted palace, is paralleled by a similar one near the end of Pushkin's *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*.

And in the fortress of his power
 The Owl usurps the beacon-tower;
 The wild-dog howls o'er the fountain's brim,²⁰ 295
 With baffled thirst, and famine, grim;
 For the stream has shrunk from its marble bed,
 Where the weeds and the desolate dust are spread.
 'Twas sweet of yore to see it play
 And chase the sultriness of day – 300
 As springing high the silver dew
 In whirls fantastically flew,
 And flung luxurious coolness round
 The air, and verdure o'er the ground. –
 'Twas sweet, when cloudless stars were bright, 305
 To view the wave of watery light,
 And hear its melody by night. –
 And oft had Hassan's Childhood played
 Around the verge of that cascade;
 And oft upon his mother's breast 310
 That sound had harmonized his rest;
 And oft had Hassan's Youth along
 Its bank been soothed by Beauty's song;
 And softer seemed each melting tone
 Of Music mingled with its own. – 315
 But ne'er shall Hassan's Age repose
 Along the brink at Twilight's close –
 The stream that filled that font is fled –
 The blood that warmed his heart is shed! –
 And here no more shall human voice 320
 Be heard to rage – regret – rejoice –
 The last sad note that swelled the gale
 Was woman's wildest funeral wail –
That quenched in silence – all is still,
 But the lattice that flaps when the wind is shrill – 325
 Though raves the gust, and floods the rain,
 No hand shall clasp its clasp again.
 On desert sands 'twere joy to scan
 The rudest steps of fellow man,
 So here the very voice of Grief 330
 Might wake an Echo like relief –
 At least 'twould say, "All are not gone;
 There lingers Life, though but in one –
 For many a gilded chamber's there,
 Which Solitude might well forbear; 335
 Within that dome as yet Decay
 Hath slowly worked her cankering way –
 But Gloom is gathered o'er the gate,
 Nor there the Fakir's self will wait;
 Nor there will wandering Dervise stay,²¹ 340
 For Bounty cheers not his delay;
 Nor there will weary stranger halt
 To bless the sacred "bread and salt." *
 Alike must Wealth and Poverty

20: For the fountain in the courtyard to have dried was irrefutable evidence that the lord of the house was no more.

21: Dervise or Dervish is Turkish for a wandering holy man, perhaps a Sufi. Fakir is the Arabic word for poor man. Not all fakirs are dervises; but all dervises must be fakirs. See *Vathek* p.144 / 60n3 (quoted on this website at *Corsair* 669n).

Pass heedless and unheeded by, 345
 For Courtesy and Pity died
 With Hassan on the mountain side. –
 His roof – that refuge unto men –
 Is Desolation's hungry den.
 The guest flies the hall, and the vassal from labour, 350
 Since his turban was cleft by the infidel's sabre! †

* * * * *

* To partake of food – to break bread and salt with your host – insures the safety of the guest, even though an enemy; his person from that moment is sacred.²²

† I need hardly observe, that Charity and Hospitality are the first duties enjoined by Mahomet; and to say truth, very generally practised by his disciples. The first praise that can be bestowed on a chief, is a panegyric on his bounty; the next, on his valour.²³

I hear the sound of coming feet,
 But not a voice mine ear to greet –
 More near – each turban I can scan,
 And silver-sheathed ataghan; * 355
 The foremost of the band is seen
 An Emir²⁴ by his garb of green; †
 “Ho! Who art thou?” – “This low salam ‡
 Replies of Moslem faith I am.”
 “The burden ye so gently bear, 360
 Seems one that claims your utmost care,
 And, doubtless, holds some precious freight,
 My humble bark would gladly wait.”

* The ataghan, a long dagger worn with pistols in the belt, in a metal scabbard, generally of silver; and, among the wealthier, gilt, or of gold.²⁵

† Green is the privileged colour of the Prophet's numerous pretended descendants; with them, as here, faith (the family inheritance) is supposed to supersede the necessity of good works; they are the worst of a very indifferent brood.²⁶

‡ Salam aleikoum! aleikoum salam! Peace be with you; be with you peace – the salutation reserved for the faithful; – to a Christian, “Urlarula,” a good journey; or saban hiresem saban serula; good morn, good even; and sometimes, “may your end be happy”; are the usual salutes.

“Thou speakest sooth – thy skiff unmoor,
 And waft us from the silent shore; 365
 Nay, leave the sail still furled, and ply
 The nearest oar that's scattered by,
 And midway to those rocks where sleep
 The channelled waters dark and deep. –
 Rest from your task – so – bravely done, 370
 Our course had been right swiftly run;

²²: See *Vathek* p.150 / 74n (quoted elsewhere on this website at *Corsair* 724n).

²³: The Christian or renegade Giaour has thus, by killing Hassan, ended the life of one who lived according to the primary edicts of Islam.

²⁴: An Emir, or Amir, was a ruler or chief.

²⁵: An ataghan, or a yataghan, is normally a hunting-knife.

²⁶: Green, Mahomet tells us, is the colour predominant in Paradise.

Yet 'tis the longest voyage, I trow,
That one of – * * * * *

* * * * *

Sullen it plunged, and slowly sank –
The calm wave rippled to the bank; 375
I watched it as it sank, methought
Some motion from the current caught
Bestirred it more, – 'twas but the beam
That checkered o'er the living stream –
I gazed, till vanishing from view, 380
Like lessening pebble it withdrew;
Still less and less, a speck of white
That gemmed the tide, then mocked the sight;
And all its hidden secrets sleep,
Known but to Genii²⁷ of the deep, 385
Which, trembling in their coral caves,
They dare not whisper to the waves.

* * * * *

As rising on its purple wing
The insect-queen of eastern spring,
O'er emerald meadows of Kashmeer * 390
Invites the young pursuer near,
And leads him on from flower to flower
A weary chase and wasted hour,
Then leaves him, as it soars on high,
With panting heart and tearful eye – 395
So Beauty lures the full-grown child,
With hue as bright, and wing as wild;
A chase of idle hopes and fears,
Begun in folly, closed in tears.
If won, to equal ills betrayed, 400
Woe waits the insect and the maid;
A life of pain, the loss of peace,
From infant's play, and man's caprice –
The lovely toy so fiercely sought
Hath lost its charm by being caught, 405
For every touch that wooed its stay
Hath brushed its brightest hues away,
Till charm, and hue, and beauty gone,
'Tis left to fly or fall alone.
With wounded wing, or bleeding breast, 410
Ah! Where shall either victim rest?
Can this with faded pinion soar
From rose to tulip as before?
Or Beauty, blighted in an hour,
Find joy within her broken bower? 415

27: See *Vathek*: Genn, or Ginn, in the Arabick, signifies a Genius or Demon, a being of a higher order, and formed of more subtle matter than man. According to the Oriental mythology, The Genii governed the world long before the creation of Adam. The Mahometans regarded them as an intermediate race between angels and men, and capable of salvation. Consonant with this, we read that, *when the Servant of God stood up to invoke him, it wanted little but that the Genii had pressed on him in crowds, to hear him rehearse the Koran* (1786 p.218: Lonsdale p.125 / 4 n1).

No – gayer insects fluttering by
 Ne'er droop the wing o'er those that die,
 And lovelier things have mercy shown
 To every failing but their own,
 And every woe a tear can claim 420
 Except an erring Sister's shame.

* * * * *

* The blue-winged butterfly of Kashmeer, the most rare and beautiful of the species.²⁸

The Mind, that broods o'er guilty woes,
 Is like the Scorpion girt by fire;
 In circle narrowing as it glows,
 The flames around their captive close, 425
 Till inly searched by thousand throes,
 And maddening in her ire,
 One sad and sole relief she knows –
 The sting she nourished for her foes,
 Whose venom never yet was vain, 430
 Gives but one pang, and cures all pain,
 And darts into her desperate brain –
 So do the dark in soul expire,
 Or live like Scorpion girt by fire; *
 So writhes the mind Remorse hath riven, 435
 Unfit for earth, undoomed for heaven,
 Darkness above, despair beneath,
 Around it flame, within it death! –

* * * * *

* Alluding to the dubious suicide of the scorpion, so placed for experiment by gentle philosophers. Some maintain that the position of the sting, when turned toward the head, is merely a convulsive movement; but others have actually brought in the verdict "Felo de se". The scorpions are surely interested in a speedy decision of the question; as, if once established as insect Catos, they will probably be allowed to live as long as they think proper, without being martyred for the sale of an hypothesis.²⁹

Black Hassan from the Haram³⁰ flies,
 Nor bends on woman's form his eyes; 440
 The unwonted chase each hour employs,
 Yet shares he not the hunter's joys.
 Not thus was Hassan wont to fly
 When Leila dwelt in his Serai.³¹
 Doth Leila there no longer dwell? 445
 That tale can only Hassan tell –
 Strange rumours in our city say
 Upon that eve she fled away
 When Rhamazan's last sun was set, *
 And flashing from each Minaret 450
 Millions of lamps proclaimed the feast

²⁸: See *Vathek*: The same insects are celebrated in an unpublished poem of Mesihi ... (1786 p.293: Lonsdale p.146 / 63n2).

²⁹: It is a "dubious" hypothesis: scorpions do not kill themselves as legend would have them do. But the famous image is meant to represent the Giaour, and the effect on him of his remorse.

³⁰: A haram means in Arabic a sanctified precinct. Normally it is that part of the house reserved for women.

³¹: Serai, Sarai, Seraglio (Italian) means palace, as in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*.

Of Bairam through the boundless East.
 'Twas then she went as to the bath,
 Which Hassan vainly searched in wrath;
 For she was flown her master's rage 455
 In likeness of a Georgian page,³²
 And far beyond the Moslem's power
 Had wronged him with the faithless Giaour.
 Somewhat of this had Hassan deemed;
 But still so fond, so fair she seemed, 460
 Too well he trusted to the slave
 Whose treachery deserved a grave;
 And on that eve had gone to Mosque,
 And thence to feast in his Kiosk.
 Such is the tale his Nubians tell, 465
 Who did not watch their charge too well;
 But others say, that on that night,
 By pale Phingari's trembling light, †
 The Giaour upon his jet-black steed³³
 Was seen – but seen alone to speed 470
 With bloody spur along the shore,
 Nor maid nor page behind him bore.

* * * * *

* The cannon at sunset close the Rhamazan; see note above [to line 225].

† Phinagri, the moon.

Her eye's dark charm 'twere vain to tell,
 But gaze on that of the Gazelle,
 It will assist thy fancy well; 475
 As large, as languishingly dark,
 But Soul beamed forth in every spark
 That darted from beneath the lid,
 Bright as the jewel of Giamschid. *
 Yea, *Soul*, and should our Prophet say 480
 That form was nought but breathing clay,
 By Allah! I would answer nay;
 Though on Al-Sirat's arch I stood, †
 Which totters o'er the fiery flood,
 With Paradise within my view, 485
 And all his Houris³⁴ beckoning through.
 Oh! Who young Leila's glance could read
 And keep that portion of his creed, ‡
 Which saith that woman is but dust,
 A soulless toy for tyrant's lust? 490
 On her might Muftis³⁵ gaze, and own
 That through her eye the Immortal shone –

³²: Compare Kaled's disguise in *Lara*; or Caroline Lamb disguised as a page.

³³: Hassan is black (439); the Giaour's horse is black (this line, and 180).

³⁴: See *Vathek*: The VIRGINS OF PARADISE, called, from their LARGE BLACK EYES, *Hur al oyun*. An intercourse with these, according to the institution of Mahomet, is to constitute the principal felicity of the faithful. Not formed of clay, like mortal women, they are deemed, in the highest degree, beautiful; and exempt from every inconvenience incident to the sex. Al Koran; passim (1786, p.216-17; Lonsdale p.125 3 / n1).

³⁵: Muftis are Islamic clerics / priests / lawyers.

On her fair cheek's unfading hue
 The young pomegranate's blossoms strew
 Their bloom in blushes ever new – 495
 Her hair in hyacinthine flow, §
 When left to roll its folds below,
 As midst her handmaids in the hall
 She stood superior to them all,
 Hath swept the marble where her feet 500
 Gleamed whiter than the mountain sleet
 Ere from the cloud that gave it birth
 It fell, and caught one stain of earth.
 The cygnet nobly walks the water;
 So moved on earth Circassia's daughter – 505
 The loveliest bird of Franguestan! ||
 As rears her crest the ruffled Swan,
 And spurns the wave with wings of pride,
 When pass the steps of stranger man
 Along the banks that bound her tide; 510
 Thus rose fair Leila's whiter neck –
 Thus armed with beauty would she check
 Intrusion's glance, till Folly's gaze
 Shrank from the charms it meant to praise.
 Thus high and graceful was her gait; 515
 Her heart as tender to her mate –
 Her mate – stern Hassan, who was he?
 Alas! That name was not for thee!

* * * * *

* The celebrated fabulous ruby of Sultan Giamschid, the embellisher of Istakhar; from its splendour, named Schebgerag, “the torch of night;” also, “the cup of the sun,” &c.³⁶ – In the first editions “Giamschid” was written as a word of three syllables; so D’Herbelot has it; but I am told Richardson reduces it to a disyllable, and writes “Jamschid”. I have left in the text the orthography of the one with the pronunciation of the other.

† Al-Sirat,³⁷ the bridge of breadth less than the thread of a famished spider, over which the Mussulmans must *skate* into Paradise, to which it is the only entrance; but this is not the worst, the river beneath being hell itself, into which, as may be expected, the unskilful and tender of foot contrive to tumble with a “facilis descensus Averni,”³⁸ not very pleasing in prospect to the next passenger. There is a shorter cut downwards for the Jews and Christians.³⁹

‡ A vulgar error; the Koran allots at least a third of Paradise to well-behaved women;⁴⁰ but by far the greatest number of Mussulmans interpret the text in their own way, and exclude their moieties from

36: Jam, or Jamshid, was a legendary king of Persia. See *Vathek*: The author of *Giame al tavatikh*, mentions the cup, or concave mirror of Giamschid, formed of a gem, and called *the CUP of the SUN*. To this vessel the Persian Poets often refer, and allegorize it in different ways ... The gem it consisted of, appears to be the CARBUNCLE or oriental ruby ... (1786 p.307: Lonsdale p.149 / 71n3).

37: Sales, p.91.

38: Virgil, *Aeneid*, VI, 126: *Easy is the descent to Avernus*.

39: See *Vathek*: This bridge, called in Arabick *al Sirat*, and said to extend over the infernal gulph, is represented as narrower than a spider's web, and sharper than the edge of a sword (1786 pp.313-14: Lonsdale p.151 / 79n3). Jews go to Ladhâ, the second “storey” of Hell, Christians to al Hotama, the third (Sale, Preliminary Discourse, p.92).

40: Islam allows as many women into paradise as deserve to go. Koran, 33.35: “Verily the devout Moslems of either sex, and the true believers of either sex, and the devout men, and the devout women, and the men of veracity, and the women of veracity, and the patient *men*, and the patient *women*, and the humble *men* and the humble *women*, and the alms-givers of either sex, and the *men* who fast and the *women* who fast, and the chaste *men*, and the chaste *women*, and those of either sex who remember God frequently; for them hath God prepared forgiveness, and a great reward” (Sale’s translation).

heaven. Being enemies to Platonics, they cannot discern “any fitness of things” in the souls of the other sex, conceiving them to be superseded by the Houris.

§ An oriental simile, which may, perhaps, though fairly stolen, be deemed “plus Arabe qu’en Arabie”.

|| “Franguestan,” Circassia.⁴¹

Stern Hassan hath a journey ta’en
 With twenty vassals in his train, 520
 Each armed, as best becomes a man,
 With arquebuss and ataghan;
 The chief before, as decked for war,
 Bears in his belt the scimitar
 Stained with the best of Amaut blood 525
 When in the pass the rebels stood,
 And few returned to tell the tale
 Of what befell in Parne’s vale.⁴²
 The pistols which his girdle bore
 Were those that once a Pasha⁴³ wore, 530
 Which still, though gemmed and bossed with gold,
 Even robbers tremble to behold. –
 ’Tis said he goes to woo a bride
 More true than her who left his side;
 The faithless slave that broke her bower, 535
 And – worse than faithless – for a Giaour! –

* * * * *

The sun’s last rays are on the hill,
 And sparkle in the fountain rill,
 Whose welcome waters, cool and clear,
 Draw blessings from the mountaineer; 540
 Here may the loitering merchant Greek
 Find that repose ’twere vain to seek
 In cities lodged too near his lord,
 And trembling for his secret hoard –
 Here may he rest where none can see, 545
 In crowds a slave, in desarts free;
 And with forbidden wine may stain
 The bowl a Moslem must not drain. –

* * * * *

The foremost Tartar’s in the gap,
 Conspicuous by his yellow cap; 550
 The rest in lengthening line the while
 Wind slowly through the long defile –
 Above, the mountain rears a peak,
 Where vultures whet the thirsty beak,
 And theirs may be a feast to-night, 555
 Shall tempt them down ere morrow’s light;
 Beneath, a river’s wintry stream

⁴¹: Franguestan does not just mean Circassia, but any part of non-Islamic Europe.

⁴²: Parne is Mount Parnassus.

⁴³: A pasha was the governor of a province, as in Ali Pasha, or his son Veli Pasha.

Has shrunk before the summer beam,
 And left a channel bleak and bare,
 Save shrubs that spring to perish there; 560
 Each side the midway path there lay
 Small broken crags of granite gray,
 By time, or mountain lightning, riven
 From summits clad in mists of heaven;
 For where is he that hath beheld 565
 The peak of Liakura⁴⁴ unveiled?

* * * * *

They reach the grove of pine at last –
 “Bismillah! now the peril’s past; *
 For yonder view the opening plain,
 And there we’ll prick our steeds amain;” 570
 The Chiaus⁴⁵ spake, and as he said,
 A bullet whistled o’er his head;
 The foremost Tartar bites the ground!
 Scarce had they time to check the rein,
 Swift from their steeds the riders bound; 575
 But three shall never mount again –
 Unseen the foes that gave the wound,
 The dying ask revenge in vain.
 With steel unsheathed, and carbine bent,
 Some o’er their courser’s harness leant, 580
 Half sheltered by the steed;
 Some fly behind the nearest rock,
 And there await the coming shock,
 Nor tamely stand to bleed
 Beneath the shaft of foes unseen, 585
 Who dare not quit their craggy screen.
 Stern Hassan only from his horse
 Disdains to light, and keeps his course
 Till fiery flashes in the van
 Proclaim too sure the robber-clan 590
 Have well secured the only way
 Could now avail the promised prey;
 Then curled his very beard with ire, †
 And glared his eye with fiercer fire;
 “Though far and near the bullets hiss, 595
 I’ve ’scaped a bloodier hour than this.”
 And now the foe their covert quit,
 And call his vassals to submit;
 But Hassan’s frown and furious word
 Are dreaded more than hostile sword, 600
 Nor of his little band a man
 Resigned carbine or ataghan –
 Nor raised the craven cry, Amaun! ‡
 In fuller sight, more near and near,
 The lately ambushed foes appear, 605
 And, issuing from the grove, advance

44: Liakura is Mount Parnassus.

45: A chiaus is a messenger.

Some who on battle-charger prance. –
 Who leads them on with foreign brand
 Far flashing in his red right hand?
 “’Tis he! – ’tis he – I know him now; 610
 I know him by his pallid brow;
 I know him by the evil eye §
 That aids his envious treachery;
 I know him by his jet-black barb –
 Though now arrayed in Arnaut garb, 615
 Apostate from his own vile faith,⁴⁶
 It shall not save him from the death –
 ’Tis he! well met in any hour,
 Lost Leila’s love – accursed Giaour!

* Bismillah – “In the name of God”; the commencement of all the chapters in the Koran but one, and of prayer and thanksgiving.⁴⁷

† A phenomenon not uncommon with an angry Mussulman. In 1809, the Capitan Pacha’s whiskers at a diplomatic audience⁴⁸ were no less lively with indignation than a tiger cat’s, to the horror of all the dragomans; the portentous mustachios twisted, they stood erect of their own accord, and were expected every moment to change their colour, but at last condescended to subside, which, probably, saved more heads than they contained hairs.

‡ “Amaun,” quarter, pardon.

§ The “evil eye,” a common superstition in the Levant, and of which the imaginary effects are yet very singular on those who conceive themselves affected.

As rolls the river into ocean, 620
 In sable torrent wildly streaming;
 As the sea-tide’s opposing motion,
 In azure column proudly gleaming
 Beats back the current many a rood,
 In curling foam and mingling flood, 625
 While eddying whirl, and breaking wave,
 Roused by the blast of winter, rave;
 Through sparkling spray, in thundering clash,
 The lightnings of the waters flash
 In awful whiteness o’er the shore, 630
 That shines and shakes beneath the roar;
 Thus – as the stream and Ocean greet,
 With waves that madden as they meet –
 Thus join the bands, whom mutual wrong,
 And fate, and fury, drive along. 635
 The bickering sabres’ shivering jar;
 And pealing wide – or ringing near
 Its echoes on the throbbing ear,
 The deathshot hissing from afar;
 The shock – the shout – the groan of war – 640

⁴⁶: Hassan judges the Giaour to be a renegade, and when the Giaour meets the priest in the last section he does indeed despise him.

⁴⁷: See *Vathek*: This word (which is prefixed to every chapter of the Koran, except the ninth) signifies *in the name of the most merciful God* ... (1786 p.268: Lonsdale p.141 / 53n3).

⁴⁸: B and Hobhouse attended a meeting with the Turkish Capitan Pasha in Constantinople on Friday May 18th 1810 (not in 1809). Hobhouse does not report him as getting angry.

Reverberate along that vale
 More suited to the shepherds tale –
 Though few the numbers – theirs the strife
 That neither spares nor speaks for life!
 Ah! fondly youthful hearts can press, 645
 To seize and share the dear caress;
 But Love itself could never pant
 For all that Beauty sighs to grant
 With half the fervour Hate bestows
 Upon the last embrace of foes, 650
 When grappling in the fight they fold
 Those arms that ne'er shall lose their hold –
 Friends meet to part; Love laughs at faith –
 True foes, once met, are joined till death!

* * * * *

With sabre shivered to the hilt, 655
 Yet dripping with the blood he spilt;
 Yet strained within the severed hand⁴⁹
 Which quivers round that faithless brand;
 His turban far behind him rolled,
 And cleft in twain its firmest fold; 660
 His flowing robe by falchion torn,
 And crimson as those clouds of morn
 That, streaked with dusky red, portend
 The day shall have a stormy end;
 A stain on every bush that bore 665
 A fragment of his palampore; *
 His breast with wounds unnumbered riven,
 His back to earth, his face to Heaven,
 Fallen Hassan lies – his unclosed eye
 Yet lowering on his enemy, 670
 As if the hour that sealed his fate
 Surviving left his quenchless hate;
 And o'er him bends that foe with brow
 As dark as his that bled below. –

* * * * *

* The flowered shawls generally worn by persons of rank.⁵⁰

“Yes, Leila sleeps beneath the wave, 675
 But his shall be a redder grave;
 Her spirit pointed well the steel
 Which taught that felon heart to feel.
 He called the Prophet, but his power
 Was vain against the vengeful Giaour – 680
 He called on Alla – but the word
 Arose unheeded or unheard.
 Thou Paynim fool! – could Leila's prayer
 Be passed, and thine accorded there?

⁴⁹: Compare below, line 828.

⁵⁰: See *Vathek*: ... *fine linens of INDIA, painted in the most lively colours*, and representing *beasts, trees, flowers, &c.* (1786 p.259: Lonsdale 138 / 50n3 – though Lonsdale misdefines it as “a kind of chintz bedcover”).

I watched my time, I leagued with these, 685
 The traitor in his turn to seize;
 My wrath is wreaked, the deed is done,
 And now I go – but go alone.”

* * * * *
 * * * * *

The browsing camels' bells are tinkling –
 His mother looked from her lattice high – 690
 She saw the dews of eve besprinkling
 The pasture green beneath her eye,
 She saw the planets faintly twinkling –
 “’Tis twilight – sure his train is nigh.” –
 She could not rest in the garden-bower, 695
 But gazed through the grate of his steepest tower;
 “Why comes he not? his steeds are fleet,
 Nor shrink they from the summer heat;
 Why sends not the Bridegroom his promised gift?
 Is his heart more cold, or his barb less swift? 700
 Oh, false reproach! yon Tartar now
 Has gained our nearest mountain's brow –
 And warily the steep descends,
 And now within the valley bends;
 And he bears the gift at his saddle bow 705
 How could I deem his courser slow?
 Right well my largess shall repay
 His welcome speed, and weary way.” –

The Tartar lighted at the gate,
 But scarce upheld his fainting weight! 710
 His swarthy visage spake distress,
 But this might be from weariness;
 His garb with sanguine spots was dyed,
 But these might be from his courser's side;
 He drew the token from his vest – 715
 Angel of Death! 'tis Hassan's cloven crest!
 His calpac rent – his caftan red – *
 “Lady, a fearful bride thy Son hath wed –
 Me, not from mercy, did they spare,
 But this empurpled pledge to bear. 720
 Peace to the brave! whose blood is spilt –
 Woe to the Giaour! for his the guilt.”

* * * * *

* The “Calpac” is the solid cap or centre part of the head-dress; the shawl is wound round it, and forms the turban.⁵¹

A Turban carved in coarsest stone, *
 A Pillar with rank weeds o'ergrown,
 Whereon can now be scarcely read 725
 The Koran verse that mourns the dead,

⁵¹: The colour of the calpac denoted one's social rank: but we are not told the colour of Hassan's.

Point out the spot where Hassan fell
 A victim in that lonely dell.
 There sleeps as true an Osmanlie
 As e'er at Mecca bent the knee;⁵² 730
 As ever scorned forbidden wine,
 Or prayed with face towards the shrine,
 In orisons resumed anew
 At solemn sound of "Allah Hu!" †
 Yet died he by a stranger's hand, 735
 And stranger in his native land –
 Yet died he as in arms he stood,
 And unavenged, at least in blood.
 But him the maids of Paradise
 Impatient to their halls invite, 740
 And the dark Heaven of Houris' eyes
 On him shall glance for ever bright;
 They come – their kerchiefs green they wave, ‡
 And welcome with a kiss the brave!
 Who falls in battle 'gainst a Giaour, 745
 Is worthiest an immortal bower.⁵³

* * * * *

* The turban – pillar – and descriptive verse, decorate the tombs of the Osmanlies, whether in the cemetery or the wilderness. In the mountains you frequently pass similar mementos; and on enquiry you are informed that they record some victim of rebellion, plunder, or revenge.

† "Alla Hu!"⁵⁴ the concluding words of the Muezzin's call to prayer from the highest gallery on the exterior of the Minaret. On a still evening, when the Muezzin has a fine voice (which they frequently have) the effect is solemn and beautiful beyond all the bells in Christendom.

‡ The following is part of a battle song of the Turks: – "I see – I see a dark-eyed girl of Paradise, and she waves a handkerchief, a kerchief of green; and cries aloud, Come, kiss me, for I love thee," &c.

But thou, false Infidel! shalt writhe⁵⁵
 Beneath avenging Monkir's scythe;⁵⁶ *
 And from its torment 'scape alone
 To wander round lost Eblis' throne; † 750
 And fire unquenched, unquenchable –
 Around – within – thy heart shall dwell;
 Nor ear can hear nor tongue can tell
 The tortures of that inward hell! –
 But first, on earth as Vampire sent, ‡ 755
 Thy corse shall from its tomb be rent –
 Then ghastly haunt thy native place,
 And suck the blood of all thy race;

⁵²: It was and is of course not necessary to be Turkish ("Osmanlie") to be a Moslem.

⁵³: Koran, 4:74: "Let them therefore fight for the religion of GOD, who part with the present life in exchange for that which is to come; for whosoever fighteth for the religion of GOD, whether he be slain, or be victorious, we will surely give him a great reward" (Sale's translation). But the Giaour was a renegade Christian. Was Hassan fighting in the way of Allah anyway? It was a blood feud, not a jihad.

⁵⁴: In fact "Allahu Akbar" (God is great). This is in fact the opening of the muezzin's call (repeated, and then repeated again), not its concluding words, which are "La ilaha il Allah" (there is no God but God).

⁵⁵: It is not clear whom we are to hear speaking this next section. See below, 1228.

⁵⁶: It is perhaps this curse, rather than any normal guilt or sorrow, which causes the Giaour to suffer as he does in the last sections of the poem.

There from thy daughter, sister, wife,⁵⁷
 At midnight drain the stream of life; 760
 Yet loathe the banquet which perforce
 Must feed thy livid living corse –
 Thy victims ere they yet expire
 Shall know the dæmon for their sire,
 As cursing thee, thou cursing them, 765
 Thy flowers are withered on the stem.
 But one that for thy crime must fall –
 The youngest – most beloved of all,
 Shall bless thee with a *father's* name –
 That word shall wrap thy heart in flame! 770
 Yet must thou end thy task, and mark
 Her cheek's last tinge, her eye's last spark,
 And the last glassy glance must view
 Which freezes o'er its lifeless blue;
 Then with unhallowed hand shalt tear 775
 The tresses of her yellow hair,
 Of which in life a lock when shorn
 Affection's fondest pledge was worn,
 But now is borne away by thee,
 Memorial of thine agony! 780
 Wet with thine own best blood shall drip
 Thy gnashing tooth and haggard lip; ¶
 Then stalking to thy sullen grave –
 Go – and with Gouls⁵⁸ and Afrits rave;⁵⁹
 Till these in horror shrink away 785
 From Spectre more accursed than they!

* * * * *

* Monkir and Nekir are the inquisitors of the dead, before whom the corpse undergoes a slight noviciate and preparatory training for damnation. If the answers are none of the clearest, he is hauled up with a scythe and thumped down with a red hot mace till properly seasoned, with a variety of subsidiary probations. The office of these angels is no sinecure; there are but two; and the number of orthodox deceased being in a small proportion to the remainder, their hands are always full.⁶⁰

† Eblis, the Oriental Prince of Darkness.⁶¹

‡ The Vampire superstition is still general in the Levant. Honest Tournefort⁶² tells a long story, which Mr Southey, in the notes on Thalaba, quotes about these “Vroucolochas,” as he calls them. The Romaic term is “Vardoulacha.” I recollect a whole family being terrified by the scream of a child, which they imagined must proceed from such a visitation. The Greeks never mention the word without horror. I find that

⁵⁷: The Giaour seems to have no family.

⁵⁸: See *Vathek*: Goul, or *Ghul*, in Arabick, signifies any terrifying object, which deprives people of the use of their senses. Hence it became the appellative of that species of monster which was supposed to haunt forests, cemeteries, and other lonely places: and believed not only to tear in pieces the living, but to dig up and devour the dead (1796 pp.304-5: Lonsdale p.149 / 70n2).

⁵⁹: Afrits, or Ifrits, are Quranic demons. See *Vathek*: These were a kind of Medusa, or Lamia, supposed to be the most terrible and cruel of all the orders of the Dives (1786, p.259: Lonsdale, p.138 / 50n4).

⁶⁰: See *Vathek*: Monker and Nakir] These are two black angels of a tremendous appearance, who examine the departed on the subject of his faith: by whom, if he give not a satisfactory account, he is sure to be cudgelled with maces of red-hot iron, and tormented more variously than words can describe (1786 p.313: Lonsdale p.151 / 79n2). B. mixes up the names of the angels but otherwise follows Beckford / Henley closely.

⁶¹: Eblis, or Iblis, is the Quranic equivalent of Satan. See *Vathek*: ... the appellation conferred by the Arabians upon the Prince of the Apostate Angels, whom they represent as exiled to the infernal regions, for refusing to worship Adam, at the command of the Supreme (1786 p.324: Lonsdale p.154 / 104n2).

⁶²: J.P. de Tournefort, *A Voyage to the Levant* (1741).

“Broucolokas” is an old legitimate Hellenic appellation – at least is so applied to Arsenius, who, according to the Greeks, was after his death animated by the Devil. – The moderns, however, use the word I mention.

¶ The freshness of the face, and the wetness of the lip with blood, are the never-failing signs of a vampire. The stories told in Hungary and Greece of these foul feeders are singular, and some of them most *incredibly* attested.

“How name ye yon lone Caloyer?⁶³
 His features I have scanned before
 In mine own land – ’tis many a year,
 Since, dashing by the lonely shore, 790
 I saw him urge as fleet a steed
 As ever served a horseman’s need.
 But once I saw that face – yet then
 It was so marked with inward pain,
 I could not pass it by again; 785
 It breathes the same dark spirit now,
 As death were stamped upon his brow.

“’Tis twice three years at summer tide
 Since first among our freres he came;
 And here it soothes him to abide 800
 For some dark deed he will not name.⁶⁴
 But never at our Vesper prayer,
 Nor e’er before Confession chair
 Kneels he, nor recks he when arise
 Incense or anthem to the skies, 805
 But broods within his cell alone,
 His faith and race alike unknown.⁶⁵
 The sea from Paynim land he crost,
 And here ascended from the coast;
 Yet seems he not of Othman race, 810
 But only Christian in his face –
 I’d judge him some stray renegade,
 Repentant of the change he made,
 Save that he shuns our holy shrine,
 Nor tastes the sacred bread and wine. 815
 Great largess to these walls he brought,
 And thus our Abbot’s favour bought;
 But were I Prior, not a day
 Should brook such stranger’s further stay,
 Or pent within our penance cell 820
 Should doom him there for aye to dwell.
 Much in his visions mutters he
 Of maiden ’whelmed beneath the sea;
 Of sabres clashing – foemen flying,
 Wrongs avenged – and Moslem dying. 825
 On cliff he hath been known to stand,
 And rave as to some bloody hand

⁶³: A caloyer is a monk.

⁶⁴: “Why a Greek of that period should have been so oppressed with remorse (although wholly impenitent) for killing a Moslem in what he would have considered a fair fight, or why Leila should have been guilty in leaving a husband or master to whom she was presumably united without her consent, are questions that we cannot answer” – T.S.Eliot, *Byron*.

⁶⁵: Did the monks not make sure, before allowing the stranger in, that he was at least a Christian?

Fresh severed from its parent limb,⁶⁶
 Invisible to all but him,
 Which beckons onward to his grave, 830
 And lures to leap into the wave.”

* * * * *
 * * * * *

Dark and unearthly is the scowl
 That glares beneath his dusky cowl –
 The flash of that dilating eye
 Reveals too much of times gone by – 835
 Though varying – indistinct its hue,
 Oft will his glance the gazer rue –
 For in it lurks that nameless spell,
 Which speaks, itself unspeakable,
 A spirit yet unquelled and high, 840
 That claims and keeps ascendancy;
 And like the bird whose pinions quake –
 But cannot fly the gazing snake –
 Will others quail beneath his look,
 Nor 'scape the glance they scarce can brook. 845
 From him the half-affrighted Friar,
 When met alone, would fain retire –
 As if that eye and bitter smile
 Transferred to others fear and guile –
 Not oft to smile descendeth he, 850
 And when he doth 'tis sad to see
 That he but mocks at Misery.
 How that pale lip will curl and quiver!
 Then fix once more as if for ever –
 As if his sorrow or disdain 855
 Forbade him e'er to smile again.
 Well were it so – such ghastly mirth
 From joyaunce ne'er derived its birth. –
 But sadder still it were to trace
 What once were feelings in that face – 860
 Time hath not yet the features fixed,
 But brighter traits with evil mixed –
 And there are hues not always faded,
 Which speak a mind not all degraded
 Even by the crimes through which it waded – 865
 The common crowd but see the gloom
 Of wayward deeds, and fitting doom –
 The close observer can espy
 A noble soul, and lineage high;
 Alas! though both bestowed in vain, 870
 Which Grief could change – and Guilt could stain –
 It was no vulgar tenement
 To which such lofty gifts were lent,
 And still with little less than dread
 On such the sight is riveted. – 875
 The roofless cot, decayed and rent,

66: Compare above, line 657.

Will scarce delay the passer-by –
 The tower by war or tempest bent,
 While yet may frown one battlement,
 Demands and daunts the stranger's eye – 880
 Each ivied arch – and pillar lone,
 Pleads haughtily for glories gone!

“His floating robe around him folding,
 Slow sweeps he through the columned aisle –
 With dread beheld – with gloom beholding 885
 The rites that sanctify the pile.

But when the anthem shakes the choir,
 And kneel the monks, his steps retire –
 By yonder lone and wavering torch
 His aspect glares within the porch; 890
 There will he pause till all is done –
 And hear the prayer – but utter none.

See – by the half-illuminated wall
 His hood fly back – his dark hair fall –
 That pale brow wildly wreathing round, 895
 As if the Gorgon there had bound

The sablest of the serpent-braid
 That o'er her fearful forehead strayed –
 For he declines the convent oath,
 And leaves those locks unhallowed growth – 900
 But wears our garb in all beside;

And – not from piety, but pride,
 Gives wealth to walls that never heard
 Of his one holy vow nor word. –
 Lo! – mark ye – as the harmony 905
 Peals louder praises to the sky,

That livid cheek, that stony air
 Of mixed defiance and despair!
 Saint Francis, keep him from the shrine!
 Else may we dread the wrath divine 910
 Made manifest by awful sign. –

If ever evil angel bore
 The form of mortal, such he wore –
 By all my hope of sins forgiven,
 Such looks are not of earth nor heaven!” 915

To love the softest hearts are prone,
 But such can ne'er be all his own;
 Too timid in his woes to share,
 Too meek to meet, or brave despair;
 And sterner hearts alone may feel 920
 The wound that time can never heal.

The rugged metal of the mine
 Must burn before its surface shine,
 But plunged within the furnace-flame,
 It bends and melts – though still the same; 925
 Then tempered to thy want, or will,
 'Twill serve thee to defend or kill;
 A breast-plate for thine hour of need,
 Or blade to bid thy foeman bleed;

But if a dagger's form it bear, 930
 Let those who shape its edge, beware!
 Thus Passion's fire, and Woman's art,
 Can turn and tame the sterner heart;
 From these its form and tone are ta'en,
 And what they make it, must remain, 935
 But break – before it bend again.

* * * * *
 * * * * *

If solitude succeed to grief,
 Release from pain is slight relief;
 The vacant bosom's wilderness
 Might thank the pang that made it less. 940
 We loathe what none are left to share –
 Even bliss – 'twere woe alone to bear;
 The heart once left thus desolate
 Must fly at last for ease – to hate.
 It is as if the dead could feel 945
 The icy worm around them steal,
 And shudder, as the reptiles creep
 To revel o'er their rotting sleep,
 Without the power to scare away
 The cold consumers of their clay! 950
 It is as if the desert-bird, *

Whose beak unlocks her bosom's stream
 To still her famished nestlings' scream,
 Nor mourns a life to them transferred,
 Should rend her rash devoted breast, 955
 And find them flown her empty nest.
 The keenest pangs the wretched find
 Are rapture to the dreary void –
 The leafless desert of the mind –
 The waste of feelings unemployed – 960
 Who would be doomed to gaze upon
 A sky without a cloud or sun?
 Less hideous far the tempest's roar
 Than ne'er to brave the billows more –
 Thrown, when the war of winds is o'er, 965
 A lonely wreck on fortune's shore,
 'Mid sullen calm, and silent bay,
 Unseen to drop by dull decay –
 Better to sink beneath the shock
 Than moulder piecemeal on the rock! 970

* * * * *

* The pelican is, I believe, the bird so libelled, by the imputation of feeding her chickens with her blood.

“Father! thy days have passed in peace,
 'Mid counted beads, and countless prayer;
 To bid the sins of others cease,
 Thyself without a crime or care,
 Save transient ills that all must bear, 975

Has been thy lot from youth to age;
 And thou wilt bless thee from the rage
 Of passions fierce and uncontrolled,
 Such as thy penitents unfold,
 Whose secret sins and sorrows rest 980
 Within thy pure and pitying breast.
 My days, though few, have passed below
 In much of Joy, but more of Woe;
 Yet still in hours of love or strife,
 I've 'scaped the weariness of Life – 985
 Now leagued with friends, now girt by foes,
 I loathed the languor of repose.
 Now nothing left to love or hate,
 No more with hope or pride elate,
 I'd rather be the thing that crawls 990
 Most noxious o'er a dungeon's walls,⁶⁷
 Than pass my dull, unvarying days,
 Condemned to meditate and gaze.
 Yet, lurks a wish within my breast
 For rest – but not to feel 'tis rest – 995
 Soon shall my fate that wish fulfil;
 And I shall sleep without the dream
 Of what I was, and would be still,
 Dark as to thee my deeds may seem –
 My memory now is but the tomb 1000
 Of joys long dead – my hope – their doom –
 Though better to have died with those
 Than bear a life of lingering woes –
 My spirit shrunk not to sustain
 The searching throes of ceaseless pain; 1005
 Nor sought the self-accorded grave
 Of ancient fool and modern knave –
 Yet death I have not feared to meet;
 And the field it had been sweet,
 Had Danger wooed me on to move 1010
 The slave of Glory, not of Love.
 I've braved it – not for honour's boast;
 I smile at laurels won or lost. –
 To such let others carve their way,
 For high renown, or hireling pay; 1015
 But place again before my eyes
 Aught that I deem a worthy prize;
 The maid I love – the man I hate –
 And I will hunt the steps of fate,
 (To save or slay – as these require) 1020
 Through rending steel, and rolling fire;
 Nor needest thou doubt this speech from one
 Who would but do – what he *hath* done.⁶⁸
 Death is but what the haughty brave –
 The weak must bear – the wretch must crave – 1025
 Then let life go to Him who gave;
 I have not quailed to danger's brow –

67: Compare *Othello*, III, iii, 274-7 (though the context is different): *I had rather be a toad, / And live upon the vapour of a dungeon, / Than keep a corner in the thing I love / For other's uses.*

68: Compare *Parisina*, 203-4: *Well – let that pass – there breathes not one / Who would not do as I have done ...*

When high and happy – need I *now*?

* * * * *

“I loved her, Friar! nay, adored –
 But these are words that all can use – 1030
 I proved it more in deed than word –
 There’s blood upon that dinted sword –
 A stain its steel can never lose –
 ’Twas shed for her, who died for me,
 It warmed the heart of one abhorred – 1035
 Nay, start not – no – nor bend thy knee,
 Nor midst my sins such act record;
 Thou wilt absolve me from the deed,
 For he was hostile to thy creed!
 The very name of Nazarene 1040
 Was wormwood to his Paynim spleen.
 Ungrateful fool! since but for brands
 Well wielded in some hardy hands,
 And wounds by Galileans given –
 The surest pass to Turkish heaven – 1045
 For him his Houris still might wait
 Impatient at the Prophet’s gate.
 I loved her – Love will find its way
 Through paths where wolves would fear to prey;
 And if it dares enough, ’twere hard 1050
 If Passion met not some reward –
 No matter how – or where – or why,
 I did not vainly seek – nor sigh;
 Yet sometimes, with remorse, in vain
 I wish she had not loved again. 1055
 She died – I dare not tell thee how;
 But look – ’tis written on my brow!⁶⁹
 There read of Cain the curse and crime,⁷⁰
 In characters unworn by Time –
 Still, ere thou dost condemn me – pause – 1060
 Not mine the act, though I the cause.
 Yet did he but what I had done
 Had she been false to more than one.
 Faithless to him – he gave the blow;
 But true to me – I laid him low; 1065
 Howe’er deserved her doom might be,
 Her treachery was truth to me;
 To me she gave her heart, that all
 Which Tyranny can ne’er enthrall;
 And I, alas! too late to save, 1070
 Yet all I then could give – I gave –
 ’Twas some relief – our foe a grave.
 His death sits lightly; but her fate
 Has made me – what thou well mayest hate.
 His doom was sealed – he knew it well, 1075
 Warned by the voice of stern Taheer,⁷¹

69: The Giaour seems to feel responsible for Leila’s death.

70: The Giaour regards Hassan as his Abel – his brother.

71: One of B.’s servants in Greece had been Dervise Tahiri.

Deep in whose darkly boding ear *
 The deathshot pealed of murder near –
 As filed the troop to where they fell!
 He died too in the battle broil – 1080
 A time that heeds nor pain nor toil –
 One cry to Mahomet for aid,
 One prayer to Allah – all he made;
 He knew and crossed me in the fray –
 I gazed upon him where he lay, 1085
 And watched his spirit ebb away –
 Though pierced like Pard by hunters’ steel,
 He felt not half that now I feel.⁷²
 I searched, but vainly searched, to find
 The workings of a wounded mind; 1090
 Each feature of that sullen corse
 Betrayed his rage, but no remorse.
 Oh, what had Vengeance given to trace
 Despair upon his dying face!
 The late repentance of that hour, 1095
 When Penitence hath lost her power
 To tear one terror from the grave –
 And will not soothe, and cannot save.

* * * * *

* This superstition of a second hearing (for I never met with down right second-sight in the East) fell once under my own observation. – On my third journey to Cape Colonna early in 1811, as we passed through the defile that leads from the hamlet between Keratia and Colonna, I observed Dervish Tahiri riding rather out of the path, and leaning his head upon his hand, as if in pain. – I rode up and enquired. “We are in peril,” he answered. “What peril? We are not now in Albania, nor in the passes to Ephesus, Messalunghi, or Lepanto; there are plenty of us, well armed, and the Choriates have not the courage to be thieves” – “True, Affendi, but nevertheless the shot is ringing in my ears.” – “The shot! – not a tophaike has been fired this morning.” – “I hear it notwithstanding – Bom – Bom – as plainly as I hear your voice.” – “Psha.” – “As you please, Affendi; if it is written, so will it be.” – I left this quickeared predestinarian, and rode up to Basili, his Christian compatriot; whose ears, though not at all prophetic, by no means relished the intelligence. – We arrived at Colonna, remained some hours, and returned leisurely, saying a variety of brilliant things, in more languages than spoiled the building of Babel, upon the mistaken seer. Romaic, Arnaout, Turkish, Italian, and English were all exercised, in various conceits, upon the unfortunate Mussulman. While we were contemplating the beautiful prospect, Dervish was occupied about the columns. – I thought he was deranged into an antiquarian, and asked him if her had become a “*Palao-castro*” man: “No,” said he, “but these pillars will be useful in making a stand;” and added other remarks, which at least evinced his own belief in his troublesome faculty of *fore-hearing*. On our return to Athens, we heard from Leoné (a prisoner set ashore some days after) of the intended attack of the Mainotes, mentioned, with the cause of its not taking place, in the notes to *Childe Harold*, Canto 2d. – I was at some pains to question the man, and he described the dresses, arms, and marks of the horses of our party so accurately, that with other circumstances, we could not doubt of *his* having been in “villainous company,” and ourselves in a bad neighbourhood. – Dervish became a soothsayer for life, and I dare say is now hearing more musquetry than ever will be fired, to the great refreshment of the Arnaouts of Berat, and his native mountains. – I shall mention one trait more of this singular race. In March 1811, a remarkably stout and active Arnaout came (I believe the 50th on the same errand) to offer himself as an attendant, which was declined: “Well, Affendi,” quoth he, “may you live! – you would have found me useful. I shall leave the town for the hills to-morrow; in the winter I shall return, perhaps you will then receive me.” – Dervish, who was present, remarked as a thing of course, and of no consequence, “in the

72: The Giaour’s sorrow at Hassan’s death, as Eliot notes, seems unconvincing.

mean time he will join the Klephts” (robbers) which was true to the letter. – If not cut off, they come down in the winter, and pass it unmolested in some town, where they are often as well known as their exploits.

“The cold in clime are cold in blood,
 Their love can scarce deserve the name; 1100
 But mine was like a lava flood
 That boils in Ætna’s breast of flame.
 I cannot prate in puling strain
 Of Ladye-love, and Beauty’s chain;
 If changing cheek, and searching vein – 1105
 Lips taught to writhe, but not complain –
 If bursting heart, and maddening brain –
 And daring deed, and vengeful steel –
 And all that I have felt – and feel –
 Betoken love – that love was mine, 1110
 And shown by many a bitter sign.
 ’Tis true, I could not whine nor sigh,
 I knew but to obtain or die.
 I die – but first I have possessed,
 And come what may, I *have been* blessed. 1115
 Shall I the doom I sought upbraid?
 No – reft of all – yet undismayed
 But for the thought of Leila slain,
 Give me the pleasure with the pain,
 So would I live and love again. 1120
 I grieve, but not, my holy Guide!
 For him who dies, but her who died –
 She sleeps beneath the wandering wave
 Ah! had she but an earthly grave,
 This breaking heart and throbbing head 1125
 Should seek and share her narrow bed.
 She was a form of Life and Light –
 That seen – became a part of sight;
 And rose – where’er I turned mine eye –
 The Morning-star of Memory! 1130

“Yes, Love indeed is light from heaven –
 A spark of that immortal fire
 With angels shared – by Allah given,
 To lift from earth our low desire. 1135
 Devotion wafts the mind above,
 But Heaven itself descends in Love –
 A feeling from the Godhead caught,
 To wean from self each sordid thought –
 A Ray of Him who formed the whole –
 A Glory circling round the soul! 1140
 I grant *my* love imperfect – all
 That mortals by the name miscall –
 Then deem it evil – what thou wilt –
 But say, oh say, *hers* was not Guilt!
 She was my Life’s unerring Light – 1145
 That quenched – what beam shall break my night?
 Oh! would it shone to lead me still,
 Although to death or deadliest ill! –

Why marvel ye, if they who lose
 This present joy, this future hope, 1150
 No more with Sorrow meekly cope –
 In phrensy then their fate accuse –
 In madness do those fearful deeds
 That seem to add but Guilt to Woe?
 Alas! the breast that inly bleeds 1155
 Hath nought to dread from outward blow –
 Who falls from all he knows of bliss,
 Cares little into what abyss. –
 Fierce as the gloomy vulture's now
 To thee, old man, my deeds appear – 1160
 I read abhorrence on thy brow,
 And this too was I born to bear!
 'Tis true, that, like that bird of prey,
 With havock have I marked my way –
 But this was taught me by the dove – 1165
 To die – and know no second love.
 This lesson yet hath man to learn,
 Taught by the thing he dares to spurn –
 The bird that sings within the brake,
 The swan that swims upon the lake, 1170
 One mate, and one alone, will take.
 And let the fool still prone to range,
 And sneer on all who cannot change –
 Partake his jest with boasting boys;
 I envy not his varied joys – 1175
 But deem such feeble, heartless man,
 Less than yon solitary swan –
 Far – far beneath the shallow maid
 He left believing and betrayed.
 Such shame at least was never mine – 1180
 Leila – each thought was only thine! –
 My good, my guilt, my weal, my woe,
 My hope on high – my all below.
 Earth holds no other like to thee,
 Or, if it doth, in vain for me – 1185
 For worlds I dare not view the dame
 Resembling thee, yet not the same.
 The very crimes that mar my youth,
 This bed of death – attest my truth –
 'Tis all too late – thou wert – thou art 1190
 The cherished madness of my heart!

 “And she was lost – and yet I breathed,
 But not the breath of human life –
 A serpent round my heart was wreathed,
 And stung my every thought to strife. – 1195
 Alike all time – abhorred all place,
 Shuddering I shrunk from Nature's face,
 Where every hue that charmed before
 The blackness of my bosom wore;
 The rest – thou dost already know, 1200
 And all my sins, and half my woe –
 But talk no more of penitence;

Thou see'st I soon shall part from hence –
 And if thy holy tale were true –
 The deed that's done canst *thou* undo? 1205
 Think me not thankless – but this grief
 Looks not to priesthood for relief. *
 My soul's estate in secret guess –
 But wouldst thou pity more – say less –
 When thou canst bid my Leila live, 1210
 Then will I sue thee to forgive;
 Then plead my cause in that high place
 Where purchased masses proffer grace –
 Go – when the hunter's hand hath wrung
 From forest-cave her shrieking young, 1215
 And calm the lonely lioness –
 But soothe not – mock not *my* distress!

* The monk's sermon is omitted. It seems to have had so little effect upon the patient, that it could have no hopes from the reader. It may be sufficient say, that it was of a customary length (as may be perceived from the interruptions and uneasiness of the penitent), and was delivered in the nasal tone of all orthodox preachers.

“In earlier days, and calmer hours,
 When heart with heart delights to blend,
 Where bloom my native valley's bowers – 1220
 I had – Ah! have I now? – a friend! –
 To him this pledge I charge thee send –
 Memorial of a youthful vow;
 I would remind him of my end;
 Though souls absorbed like mine allow 1225
 Brief thought to distant Friendship's claim,
 Yet dear to him my blighted name.
 'Tis strange – he prophesied my doom,
 And I have smiled – (I then could smile –)
 When Prudence would his voice assume, 1230
 And warn – I recked not what – the while –
 But now Remembrance whispers o'er
 Those accents scarcely marked before.
 Say – that his bodings came to pass,
 And he will start to hear their truth, 1235
 And wish his words had not been sooth –
 Tell him – unheeding as I was –
 Through many a busy bitter scene
 Of all our golden youth had been,
 In pain, my faltering tongue had tried 1240
 To bless his memory – ere I died;
 But Heaven in wrath would turn away,
 If Guilt should for the guiltless pray.
 I do not ask him not to blame –
 Too gentle he to wound my name; 1245
 And what have I to do with Fame?
 I do not ask him not to mourn,
 Such cold request might sound like scorn;
 And what than Friendship's manly tear
 May better grace a brother's bier? 1250
 But bear this ring – his own of old –

And tell him – what thou dost behold!
 The withered frame, the ruined mind,
 The wrack by passion left behind –
 A shrivelled scroll, a scattered leaf, 1255
 Seared by the autumn blast of Grief!

* * * * *

“Tell me no more of Fancy’s gleam,
 No, father, no, ’twas not a dream;
 Alas! the dreamer first must sleep. 1260
 I only watched, and wished to weep;
 But could not, for my burning brow
 Throbbled to the very brain as now –
 I wished but for a single tear,
 As something welcome, new, and dear;
 I wished it then – I wish it still; 1265
 Despair is stronger than my will.
 Waste not thine orison – despair
 Is mightier than thy pious prayer;
 I would not if I might, be blest;
 I want no Paradise – but rest. 1270
 ’Twas then – I tell thee – father! then
 I saw her – yes – she lived again;
 And shining in her white symar, *
 As through yon pale gray cloud – the star
 Which now I gaze on, as on her, 1275
 Who looked and looks far lovelier;
 Dimly I view its trembling spark –
 To-morrow’s night shall be more dark;
 And I – before its rays appear,
 That lifeless thing the living fear. 1280
 I wander – father! for my soul
 Is fleeting towards the final goal.
 I saw her – friar! and I rose
 Forgetful of our former woes;
 And rushing from my couch, I dart, 1285
 And clasp her to my desperate heart;
 I clasp – what is it that I clasp?
 No breathing form within my grasp,
 No heart that beats reply to mine,
 Yet, Leila! yet the form is thine! 1290
 And art thou, dearest, changed so much,
 As meet my eye, yet mock my touch?
 Ah! were thy beauties e’er so cold,
 I care not – so my arms enfold
 The all they ever wished to hold.⁷³ 1295

73: This is the section about which Anne Elliot is speaking in Jane Austen’s *Persuasion* (1818) I, 11: “... having talked of poetry, the richness of the present age, and gone through a brief comparison of opinion as to the first-rate poets, trying to ascertain whether *Marmion* or *The Lady of the Lake* were to be preferred, and how ranked the *Giaour* and *The Bride of Abydos*; and moreover, how the *Giaour* was to be pronounced, he shewed himself so intimately acquainted with all the tenderest songs of the one poet, and all the impassioned descriptions of hopeless agony of the other; he repeated, with such tremulous feeling, the various lines which imaged a broken heart, or a mind destroyed by wretchedness, and looked so entirely as if he meant to be understood, that she [Anne] ventured to hope he did not always read only poetry; and to say, that it was the misfortune of poetry, to be seldom safely enjoyed by those who enjoyed it completely; and that the strong feelings which alone could estimate it truly, were the very feelings which ought to taste it but sparingly.”

Alas! around a shadow prest,
 They shrink upon my lonely breast;
 Yet still – 'tis there! – in silence stands,
 And beckons with beseeching hands!
 With braided hair, and bright black eye – 1300
 I knew 'twas false – she could not die!
 But *he* is dead – within the dell
 I saw him buried where he fell;
 He comes not – for he cannot break
 From earth – why then art *thou* awake?⁷⁴ 1305
 They told me wild waves rolled above
 The face I view, the form I love;
 They told me – 'twas a hideous tale! –
 I'd tell it – but my tongue would fail –
 If true – and from thine ocean-cave 1310
 Thou com'st to claim a calmer grave;
 Oh! pass thy dewy fingers o'er
 This brow that then will burn no more;
 Or place them on my hopeless heart –
 But, Shape or Shade! – whate'er thou art, 1315
 In mercy ne'er again depart –
 Or farther with thee bear my soul
 Than winds can waft – or waters roll!" –

* * * * *

* "Symar" – Shroud.

"Such is my name, and such my tale.
 Confessor – to thy secret ear 1320
 I breathe the sorrows I bewail,
 And thank thee for the generous tear
 This glazing eye could never shed.
 Then lay me with the humblest dead,
 And, save the cross above my head, 1325
 Be neither name nor emblem spread –
 By prying stranger to be read,
 Or stay the passing pilgrims tread."
 He passed – nor of his name and race
 Hath left a token or a trace, 1330
 Save what the Father must not say
 Who shrived him on his dying day –
 This broken tale was all we knew
 Of her he loved, or him he slew. *

* The circumstance to which the above story relates was not very uncommon in Turkey. A few years ago the wife of Mughtar Pacha complained to his father of his son's supposed infidelity; he asked with whom, and she had the barbarity to give in a list of the twelve handsomest women in Yanina. They were seized, fastened in sacks, and drowned in the lake the same night! One of the guards who was present informed me, that not one of the victims offered a cry, or shewed a symptom of terror at so sudden a "wrench from all we know, from all we love". The fate of Phrosine, the fairest of this sacrifice, is the subject of many a Romaic and Arnaut ditty. The story in the text is one told of a young Venetian many years ago, and now nearly forgotten. – I heard it by accident recited by one of the coffee-house story-tellers who abound in

74: The Giaour seems to regard Hassan as a version of himself.

the Levant, and sing or recite their narratives. – The additions and interpolations by the translator will be easily distinguished from the rest by the want of Eastern imagery; and I regret that my memory has retained so few fragments of the original.

For the contents of some of the notes I am indebted partly to D’Herbelot, and partly to that most eastern, and as Mr. Weber justly entitles it, “sublime tale,” the “Caliph Vathek”. I do not know from what source the author of that singular volume may have drawn his materials; some of his incidents are to be found in the “Bibliothèque Orientale”; but for correctness of costume, beauty of description, and power of imagination, it far surpasses all European imitations; and bears such marks of originality, that those who have visited the East will find some difficulty in believing it to be more than a translation. As an Eastern tale, even *Rasselas* must bow before it; his “Happy Valley” will not bear a comparison with the “Hall of Eblis”.

THE GIAOUR: sequence of accretions

COLOUR CODING:

FIRST EDITION *first public edition 5th June 1813: 684 lines (1-6, 168-99, 277-87, 352-87, 422-503, 519-602, 604-19, 655-88, 723-38, 739-831, 916-98, 1029-79, 1099-126, 1319-34)*

SECOND EDITION *second edition early July 1813: 816 lines (added: 7-20, 46-102, 603, 620-54, 999-1023)*

THIRD EDITION *third edition mid-August 1813: **first state** 950 lines (added: 21-45, 200-50, 253-76, 504-18, 1080-98); **second state** 1014 lines (added: 288-351)*

FOURTH EDITION *fourth edition late August 1813: 1048 lines (added: 689-722)*

FIFTH EDITION *fifth edition early September: 1215 lines (added: 103-67, 251-2, 1131-91, 1218-56)*

SIXTH EDITION: *no changes*

SEVENTH EDITION *seventh edition: 1334 lines, December 1813 (added: 832-915, 1024-8, 1127-30, 1192-217)*

EIGHTH, NINTH, TENTH, AND ELEVENTH EDITIONS: *no changes*

CPW III would have “TWELFTH, COMPLETE EDITION *(added: 236-7”;* *but these lines are in the eighth edition)*

THE GIAOUR

No breath of air to break the wave
 That rolls below the Athenian's grave,
 That tomb which, gleaming o'er the cliff, *
 First greets the homeward-veering skiff,
 High o'er the land he saved in vain – 5
 When shall such Hero live again?

* * * * *

2ND ED'N

Fair clime! where every season smiles
 Benignant o'er those blessed isles,
 Which, seen from far Colonna's height,
 Make glad the heart that hails the sight, 10
 And lend to loneliness delight.
 There mildly dimpling – Ocean's cheek
 Reflects the tints of many a peak
 Caught by the laughing tides that lave
 These Edens of the eastern wave; 15
 And if at times a transient breeze
 Break the blue chrystal of the seas,
 Or sweep one blossom from the trees,
 How welcome is each gentle air,
 That waves and wafts the odours there! 20

3RD ED'N

For there – the Rose o'er crag or vale,
 Sultana of the Nightingale, *
 The maid for whom his melody –
 His thousand songs are heard on high, 25
 Blooms blushing to her lover's tale;
 His queen, the garden queen, his Rose,
 Unbent by winds, unchilled by snows,
 Far from winters of the west
 By every breeze and season blest,
 Returns the sweets by Nature given 30
 In soft incense back to Heaven;
 And grateful yields that smiling sky
 Her fairest hue and fragrant sigh.
 And many a summer flower is there,
 And many a shade that Love might share, 35
 And many a grotto, meant by rest,
 That holds the pirate for a guest;
 Whose bark in sheltering cove below
 Lurks for the passing peaceful prow,
 Till the gay mariner's guitar † 40
 Is heard, and seen the Evening Star;
 Then stealing with the muffled oar,
 Far shaded by the rocky shore,
 Rush the night-prowlers on the prey,
 And turns to groan his roundelay. 45

2ND ED'N

Strange – that where Nature loved to trace,
 As if for Gods, a dwelling place,
 And every charm and grace hath mixed
 Within the Paradise she fixed –
 There man, enamoured of distress, 50

Should mar it into wilderness,
 And trample, brute-like, o'er each flower
 That tasks not one laborious hour;
 Nor claims the culture of his hand
 To blood along the fairy land, 55
 But springs as to preclude his care,
 And sweetly woos him – but to spare!
 Strange – that where all is peace beside,
 There Passion riots in her pride,
 And Lust and Rapine wildly reign, 60
 To darken o'er the fair domain.
 It is as though the Fiends prevailed
 Against the Seraphs they assailed,
 And, fixed on heavenly thrones, should dwell
 The freed inheritors of Hell – 65
 So soft the scene, so formed for joy,
 So curst the tyrants that destroy!

2ND ED'N

He who hath bent him o'er the dead
 Ere the first day of Death is fled,
 The first dark day of Nothingness, 70
 The last of Danger and Distress,
 (Before Decay's effacing fingers
 Have swept the lines where Beauty lingers,)
 And marked the mild angelic air –
 The rapture of Repose that's there – 75
 The fixed yet tender traits that streak
 The languor of the placid cheek,
 And – but for that sad shrouded eye,
 That fires not – wins not – weeps not – now –
 And but for that chill, changeless brow, 80
 Where cold Obstruction's apathy *
 Appals the gazing mourner's heart,
 As if to him it could impart
 The doom he dreads, yet dwells upon –
 Yes, but for these and these alone, 85
 Some moments – aye – one treacherous hour,
 He still might doubt the Tyrant's power;
 So fair – so calm – so softly sealed,
 The first – last look – by Death revealed! †
 Such is the aspect of his shore – 90
 'Tis Greece – but living Greece no more!
 So coldly sweet, so deadly fair,
 We start, for Soul is wanting there.
 Hers is the loveliness in death,
 That parts not quite with parting breath; 95
 But beauty with that fearful bloom,
 That hue which haunts it to the tomb –
 Expression's last receding ray,
 A gilded Halo hovering round decay,
 The farewell beam of Feeling past away! 100
 Spark of that flame – perchance of heavenly birth –
 Which gleams – but warms no more its cherished earth

5TH ED'N

Clime of the unforgotten brave! –

Whose land from plain to mountain-cave
 Was Freedom's home or Glory's grave – 105
 Shrine of the mighty! can it be,
 That this is all remains of thee?
 Approach, thou craven crouching slave –
 Say, is this not Thermopylæ?
 These waters blue that round you lave, – 110
 Oh servile offspring of the free –
 Pronounce what sea, what shore is this?
 The gulf, the rock of Salamis!
 These scenes – their story yet unknown –
 Arise, and make again your own; 115
 Snatch from the ashes of your Sires
 The embers of their former fires;
 And he who in the strife expires
 Will add to theirs a name of fear
 That Tyranny shall quake to hear, 120
 And leave his sons a hope, a fame,
 They too will rather die than shame:
 For Freedom's battle once begun,
 Bequeathed by bleeding Sire to Son,
 Though baffled oft is ever won. 125
 Bear witness, Greece, thy living page!
 Attest it many a deathless age!
 While Kings, in dusty darkness hid,
 Have left a nameless pyramid,
 Thy Heroes – though the general doom 130
 Hath swept the column from their tomb,
 A mightier monument command,
 The mountains of thy native land!
 There points thy Muse to stranger's eye
 The graves of those that cannot die! 135
 'Twere long to tell, and sad to trace,
 Each step from Splendour to Disgrace;
 Enough – no foreign foe could quell
 Thy soul, till from itself it fell;
 Yet! Self-abasement paved the way 140
 To villain-bonds and despot sway.

What can he tell who tread thy shore?
 No legend of thine olden time,
 No theme on which the Muse might soar
 High as thine own days of yore, 145
 When man was worthy of thy clime.
 The hearts within thy valleys bred,
 The fiery souls that might have led
 Thy sons to deeds sublime,
 Now crawl from cradle to the Grave, 150
 Slaves – nay, the bondsmen of a Slave, *
 And callous, save to crime;
 Stained with each evil that pollutes
 Mankind, where least above the brutes;
 Without even savage virtue blest, 155
 Without one free or valiant breast,
 Still to the neighbouring ports they waft

Proverbial wiles, and ancient craft;
 In this subtle Greek is found,
 For this, and this alone, renowned. 160
 In vain might Liberty invoke
 The spirit to its bondage broke
 Or raise the neck that courts the yoke:
 No more her sorrows I bewail,
 Yet this will be a mournful tale, 165
 And they who listen may believe,
 Who heard it first had cause to grieve.

* * * * *

Far, dark, along the blue sea glancing,
 The shadows of the rocks advancing
 Start on the fisher's eye like boat 170
 Of island-pirate or Mainote;
 And fearful for his light caique,
 He shuns the near but doubtful creek:
 Though worn and weary with his toil,
 And cumbered with his scaly spoil, 175
 Slowly, yet strongly, plies the oar,
 Till Port Leone's safer shore
 Receives him by the lovely light
 That best becomes an Eastern night.

* * * * *

Who thundering comes on blackest steed? 180
 With slackened bit and hoof of speed?
 Beneath the clattering iron's sound
 The caverned Echoes wake around
 In lash for lash, and bound for bound;
 The foam that streaks the courser's side 185
 Seems gathered from the Ocean-tide:
 Though weary waves are sunk to rest,
 There's none within his rider's breast;
 And though to-morrow's tempest lower,
 'Tis calmer than thy heart, young Giaour! * 190
 I know thee not, I loathe thy race,
 But in thy lineaments I trace
 What Time shall strengthen, not efface:
 Though young and pale, that sallow front
 Is scathed by fiery Passion's brunt; 195
 Though bent on earth thine evil eye,
 As meteor-like thou glidest by,
 Right well I view thee and deem thee one
 Whom Othman's sons should slay or shun.

3RD ED'N

On – on he hastened – and he drew 200
 My gaze of wonder as he flew:
 Though like a Demon of the night
 He passed, and vanished from my sight,
 His aspect and his air impressed
 A troubled memory on my breast, 205

	And long upon my startled ear Rung his dark courser's hoofs of fear. He spurs his steed – he nears the steep, That, jutting, shadows o'er the deep – He winds around – he hurries by –	210
	The rock relieves him from mine eye – For, well I ween, unwelcome he Whose glance is fixed on those that flee; And not a start that shines too bright On him who takes such timeless flight.	215
	He wound along; but ere he passed One glance he snatched – as if his last – A moment checked his wheeling steed – A moment breathed him from his speed, A moment on his stirrup stood –	220
	Why looks he o'er the olive wood? – The Crescent glimmers on the hill, The Mosque's high lamps are quivering still Though too remote for sound to wake In echoes of the far tophaike, *	225
	The flashes of each joyous peal Are seen to prove the Moslem's zeal, To-night – set Rhamazani's sun – To-night – the Bairam feast's begun – To-night – but who and what art thou Of foreign garb and fearful brow? And what are these to thine or thee, That thou should'st either pause or flee?	230
3 RD ED'N	He stood – some dread was on his face, Soon Hatred settled in its place –	235
“12 TH ED'N” (- CPW III)	It rose not with the reddening flush Of transient Anger's hasty blush,	
3 RD ED'N 1 ST STATE	But pale as marble o'er the tomb, Whose ghastly whiteness aids its gloom. His brow was bent – his eye was glazed – He raised his arm, and fiercely raised, And sternly shook his hand on high, As doubting to return or fly; – Impatient of his flight delayed, Here loud his raven charger neighed – Down glanced that hand and, and grasped his blade – That sound had burst his waking dream, As Slumber starts at owlet's scream. – The spur hath lanced his courser's sides – Away – away – for life he rides –	240
5 TH ED'N	Swift as the hurled on high jerreed † Springs to the touch his startled steed;	245
3 RD ED'N 1 ST STATE	The rock is doubled – and the shore Shakes with the clattering tramp no more – The crag is won – no more is seen His Christian crest and haughty mien. – 'Twas but an instant – he restrained That fiery barb so sternly reined – 'Twas but a moment that he stood,	255

Then sped as if by Death pursued; 260
 But in that instant o'er his soul
 Winters of Memory seemed to roll,
 And gather in that drop of time
 A life of pain, an age of crime.
 O'er him who loves, or hates, or fears, 265
 Such moment pours the grief of years –
 What felt he then, at once opprest
 By all that most distracts the breast?
 That pause – which pondered o'er his fate,
 Oh, who its dreary length shall date! 270
 Though in Time's record nearly nought,
 It was Eternity to Thought!
 For infinite as boundless space
 The thought that Conscience must embrace,
 Which in itself can comprehend 275
 Woe without name – or hope – or end.

The hour is past, the Giaour is gone;
 And did he fly or fall alone?
 Woe to that hour he came or went!
 The curse for Hassan's sin was sent 280
 To turn a palace to a tomb:
 He came, he went, like the Simoom, *
 That harbinger of Fate and gloom,
 Beneath whose widely-wasting breath
 The very cypress droops to death – 285
 Dark tree – still sad when others' grief is fled,
 The only constant mourner o'er the dead!

3RD ED'N 2ND STATE

The steed is vanished from the stall;
 No serf is seen in Hassan's hall;
 The lonely Spider's thin gray pall 290
 Waves slowly widening o'er the wall;
 The Bat builds in his Haram bower,
 And in the fortress of his power
 The Owl usurps the beacon-tower;
 The wild-dog howls o'er the fountain's brim, 295
 With baffled thirst, and famine, grim;
For the stream has shrunk from its marble bed,
 Where the weeds and the desolate dust are spread.
 'Twas sweet of yore to see it play
 And chase the sultriness of day – 300
 As springing high the silver dew
 In whirls fantastically flew,
 And flung luxurious coolness round
 The air, and verdure o'er the ground. –
 'Twas sweet, when cloudless stars were bright, 305
 To view the wave of watery light,
And hear its melody by night. –
 And oft had Hassan's Childhood played
 Around the verge of that cascade;
 And oft upon his mother's breast 310
 That sound had harmonized his rest;
 And oft had Hassan's Youth along

Its bank been soothed by Beauty's song;
 And softer seemed each melting tone
 Of Music mingled with its own. – 315
 But ne'er shall Hassan's Age repose
Along the brink at Twilight's close –
 The stream that filled that font is fled –
 The blood that warmed his heart is shed! –
 And here no more shall human voice 320
 Be heard to rage – regret – rejoice –
 The last sad note that swelled the gale
 Was woman's wildest funeral wail –
 That quenched in silence – all is still,
 But the lattice that flaps when the wind is shrill – 325
 Though raves the gust, and floods the rain,
No hand shall clasp its clasp again.
 On desert sands 'twere joy to scan
 The rudest steps of fellow man,
 So here the very voice of Grief 330
 Might wake an Echo like relief –
 At least 'twould say, "All are not gone;
 There lingers Life, though but in one –
 For many a gilded chamber's there,
 Which Solitude might well forbear; 335
 Within that dome as yet Decay
Hath slowly worked her cankering way –
 But Gloom is gathered o'er the gate,
 Nor there the Fakir's self will wait;
 Nor there will wandering Dervise stay, 340
 For Bounty cheers not his delay;
 Nor there will weary stranger halt
 To bless the sacred "bread and salt". *
 Alike must Wealth and Poverty
 Pass heedless and unheeded by, 345
 For Courtesy and Pity died
With Hassan on the mountain side. –
 His roof – that refuge unto men –
 Is Desolation's hungry den.
 The guest flies the hall, and the vassal from labour, 350
 Since his turban was cleft by the infidel's **sabre!** †

* * * * *

I hear the sound of coming feet,
 But not a voice mine ear to greet –
 More near – each turban I can scan,
 And silver-sheathed ataghan; * 355
 The foremost of the band is seen
 An Emir by his garb of green: †
 "Ho! Who art thou?" – "This low salam ‡
 Replies of Moslem faith I am."
 "The burden ye so gently bear, 360
 Seems one that claims your utmost care,
 And, doubtless, holds some precious freight,
 My humble bark would gladly wait."

“Thou speakest sooth: thy skiff unmoor,
 And waft us from the silent shore; 365
 Nay, leave the sail still furled, and ply
 The nearest oar that’s scattered by,
 And midway to those rocks where sleep
 The channelled waters dark and deep. –
 Rest from your task – so – bravely done, 370
 Our course had been right swiftly run;
 Yet ’tis the longest voyage, I trow,
 That one of – * * * * *

* * * * *

Sullen it plunged, and slowly sank,
 The calm wave rippled to the bank; 375
 I watched it as it sank, methought
 Some motion from the current caught
 Bestirred it more, – ’twas but the beam
 That checkered o’er the living stream –
 I gazed, till vanishing from view, 380
 Like lessening pebble it withdrew;
 Still less and less, a speck of white
 That gemmed the tide, then mocked the sight;
 And all its hidden secrets sleep,
 Known but to Genii of the deep, 385
 Which, trembling in their coral caves,
 They dare not whisper to the waves.

* * * * *

As rising on its purple wing
 The insect-queen of eastern spring,
 O’er emerald meadows of Kashmeer * 390
 Invites the young pursuer near,
 And leads him on from flower to flower
 A weary chase and wasted hour,
 Then leaves him, as it soars on high,
 With panting heart and tearful eye: 395
 So Beauty lures the full-grown child,
 With hue as bright, and wing as wild:
 A chase of idle hopes and fears,
 Begun in folly, closed in tears.
 If won, to equal ills betrayed, 400
 Woe waits the insect and the maid;
 A life of pain, the loss of peace,
 From infant’s play, and man’s caprice:
 The lovely toy so fiercely sought
 Hath lost its charm by being caught 405
 For every touch that wooed its stay
 Hath brushed its brightest hues away,
 Till charm, and hue, and beauty gone,
 ’Tis left to fly or fall alone.
 With wounded wing, or bleeding breast, 410
 Ah! Where shall either victim rest?
 Can this with faded pinion soar

From rose to tulip as before?
 Or Beauty, blighted in an hour,
 Find joy within her broken bower? 415
 No: gayer insects fluttering by
 Ne'er droop the wing o'er those that die,
 And lovelier things have mercy shown
 To every failing but their own,
 And every woe a tear can claim 420
 Except an erring Sister's shame.

* * * * *

The Mind, that broods o'er guilty woes,
 Is like the Scorpion girt by fire;
 In circle narrowing as it glows,
 The flames around their captive close, 425
 Till inly searched by thousand throes,
 And maddening in her ire,
 One sad and sole relief she knows –
 The sting she nourished for her foes,
 Whose venom never yet was vain, 430
 Gives but one pang, and cures all pain,
 And darts into her desperate brain –
 So do the dark in soul expire,
 Or live like Scorpion girt by fire; *
 So writhes the mind Remorse hath riven, 435
 Unfit for earth, undoomed for heaven,
 Darkness above, despair beneath,
 Around it flame, within it death! –

* * * * *

Black Hassan from the Haram flies,
 Nor bends on woman's form his eyes; 440
 The unwonted chase each hour employs,
 Yet shares he not the hunter's joys.
 Not thus was Hassan wont to fly
 When Leila dwelt in his Serai.
 Doth Leila there no longer dwell? 445
 That tale can only Hassan tell:
 Strange rumours in our city say
 Upon that eve she fled away
 When Rhamazan's last sun was set, *
 And flashing from each Minaret 450
 Millions of lamps proclaimed the feast
 Of Bairam through the boundless East.
 'Twas then she went as to the bath,
 Which Hassan vainly searched in wrath;
 For she was flown her master's rage 455
 In likeness of a Georgian page,
 And far beyond the Moslem's power
 Had wronged him with the faithless Giaour.
 Somewhat of this had Hassan deemed;
 But still so fond, so fair she seemed, 460
 Too well he trusted to the slave

Whose treachery deserved a grave:
 And on that eve had gone to Mosque,
 And thence to feast in his Kiosk.
 Such is the tale his Nubians tell, 465
 Who did not watch their charge too well;
 But others say, that on that night,
 By pale Phingari's trembling light, †
 The Giaour upon his jet-black steed
 Was seen – but seen alone to speed 470
 With bloody spur along the shore,
 Nor maid nor page behind him bore.

* * * * *

Her eye's dark charm 'twere vain to tell,
 But gaze on that of the Gazelle,
 It will assist thy fancy well; 475
 As large, as languishingly dark,
 But Soul beamed forth in every spark
 That darted from beneath the lid,
 Bright as the jewel of Giamschid. *
 Yea, Soul, and should our Prophet say 480
 That form was nought but breathing clay,
 By Alla! I would answer nay;
 Though on Al-Sirat's arch I stood, †
 Which totters o'er the fiery flood,
 With Paradise within my view, 485
 And all his Houris beckoning through.
 Oh! Who young Leila's glance could read
 And keep that portion of his creed, ‡
 Which saith that woman is but dust,
 A soulless toy for tyrant's lust? 490
 On her might Muftis gaze, and own
 That through her eye the Immortal shone –
 On her fair cheek's unfading hue
 The young pomegranate's blossoms strew
 Their bloom in blushes ever new – 495
 Her hair in hyacinthine flow, §
 When left to roll its folds below,
 As midst her handmaids in the hall
 She stood superior to them all,
 Hath swept the marble where her feet 500
 Gleamed whiter than the mountain sleet
 Ere from the cloud that gave it birth
 It fell, and caught one stain of earth.

*The cygnet nobly walks the water;
 So moved on earth Circassia's daughter – 505
 The loveliest bird of Franguestan! ||
 As rears her crest the ruffled Swan,
 And spurns the wave with wings of pride,
 When pass the steps of stranger man
 Along the banks that bound her tide; 510
 Thus rose fair Leila's whiter neck:–
 Thus armed with beauty would she check
 Intrusion's glance, till Folly's gaze*

Shrunk from the charms it meant to praise.
 Thus high and graceful was her gait; 515
 Her heart as tender to her mate –
 Her mate – stern Hassan, who was he?
 Alas! That name was not for thee!

* * * * *

Stern Hassan hath a journey ta'en
 With twenty vassals in his train, 520
 Each armed, as best becomes a man,
 With arquebuss and ataghan;
 The chief before, as decked for war,
 Bears in his belt the scimitar
 Stained with the best of Amaut blood 525
 When in the pass the rebels stood,
 And few returned to tell the tale
 Of what befell in Parne's vale.
 The pistols which his girdle bore
 Were those that once a Pasha wore, 530
 Which still, though gemmed and bossed with gold,
 Even robbers tremble to behold. –
 'Tis said he goes to woo a bride
 More true than her who left his side;
 The faithless slave that broke her bower, 535
 And – worse than faithless – for a Giaour! –

* * * * *

The sun's last rays are on the hill,
 And sparkle in the fountain rill,
 Whose welcome waters, cool and clear,
 Draw blessings from the mountaineer: 540
 Here may the loitering merchant Greek
 Find that repose 'twere vain to seek
 In cities lodged too near his lord,
 And trembling for his secret hoard –
 Here may he rest where none can see, 545
 In crowds a slave, in desarts free;
 And with forbidden wine may stain
 The bowl a Moslem must not drain. –

* * * * *

The foremost Tartar's in the gap,
 Conspicuous by his yellow cap; 550
 The rest in lengthening line the while
 Wind slowly through the long defile:
 Above, the mountain rears a peak,
 Where vultures whet the thirsty beak,
 And theirs may be a feast to-night, 555
 Shall tempt them down ere morrow's light;
 Beneath, a river's wintry stream
 Has shrunk before the summer beam,
 And left a channel bleak and bare,

Save shrubs that spring to perish there: 560
 Each side the midway path there lay
 Small broken crags of granite gray,
 By time, or mountain lightning, riven
 From summits clad in mists of heaven;
 For where is he that hath beheld 565
 The peak of Liakura unveiled?

* * * * *

They reach the grove of pine at last:
 “Bismillah! now the peril’s past; *
 For yonder view the opening plain,
 And there we’ll prick our steeds amain:” 570
 The Chiaus spake, and as he said,
 A bullet whistled o’er his head;
 The foremost Tartar bites the ground!
 Scarce had they time to check the rein,
 Swift from their steeds the riders bound; 575
 But three shall never mount again:
 Unseen the foes that gave the wound,
 The dying ask revenge in vain.
 With steel unsheathed, and carbine bent,
 Some o’er their courser’s harness leant, 580
 Half sheltered by the steed;
 Some fly behind the nearest rock,
 And there await the coming shock,
 Nor tamely stand to bleed
 Beneath the shaft of foes unseen, 585
 Who dare not quit their craggy screen.
 Stern Hassan only from his horse
 Disdains to light, and keeps his course
 Till fiery flashes in the van
 Proclaim too sure the robber-clan 590
 Have well secured the only way
 Could now avail the promised prey;
 Then curled his very beard with ire, †
 And glared his eye with fiercer fire;
 “Though far and near the bullets hiss, 595
 I’ve ’scaped a bloodier hour than this.”
 And now the foe their covert quit,
 And call his vassals to submit;
 But Hassan’s frown and furious word
 Are dreaded more than hostile sword, 600
 Nor of his little band a man
 Resigned carbine or ataghan –
 Nor raised the craven cry, Amaun! ‡
 In fuller sight, more near and near,
 The lately ambushed foes appear, 605
 And, issuing from the grove, advance
 Some who on battle-charger prance. –
 Who leads them on with foreign brand
 Far flashing in his red right hand?
 “’Tis he! – ’tis he – I know him now; 610
 I know him by his pallid brow;

2ND ED’N

I know him by the evil eye §
 That aids his envious treachery;
 I know him by his jet-black barb: 615
 Though now arrayed in Arnaut garb,
 Apostate from his own vile faith,
 It shall not save him from the death:
 'Tis he! well met in any hour,
 Lost Leila's love – accursed Giaour!

2ND ED'N

As rolls the river into ocean, 620
 In sable torrent wildly streaming;
 As the sea-tide's opposing motion,
 In azure column proudly gleaming
 Beats back the current many a rood,
 In curling foam and mingling flood, 625
 While eddying whirl, and breaking wave,
 Roused by the blast of winter, rave;
 Through sparkling spray, in thundering clash,
 The lightnings of the waters flash
 In awful whiteness o'er the shore, 630
 That shines and shakes beneath the roar;
 Thus – as the stream and Ocean greet,
 With waves that madden as they meet –
 Thus join the bands, whom mutual wrong,
 And fate, and fury, drive along. 635
 The bickering sabres' shivering jar;
 And pealing wide – or ringing near
 Its echoes on the throbbing ear,
 The deathshot hissing from afar;
 The shock – the shout – the groan of war – 640
 Reverberate along that vale
 More suited to the shepherds tale:
 Though few the numbers – theirs the strife
 That neither spares nor speaks for life!
 Ah! fondly youthful hearts can press, 645
 To seize and share the dear caress;
 But Love itself could never pant
 For all that Beauty sighs to grant
 With half the fervour Hate bestows
 Upon the last embrace of foes, 650
 When grappling in the fight they fold
 Those arms that ne'er shall lose their hold:
 Friends meet to part; – Love laughs at faith –
 True foes, once met, are joined till death!

* * * * *

With sabre shivered to the hilt, 655
 Yet dripping with the blood he spilt;
 Yet strained within the severed hand
 Which quivers round that faithless brand;
 His turban far behind him rolled,
 And cleft in twain its firmest fold; 660
 His flowing robe by falchion torn,
 And crimson as those clouds of morn

That, streaked with dusky red, portend
 The day shall have a stormy end;
 A stain on every bush that bore 665
 A fragment of his palampore; *
 His breast with wounds unnumbered riven,
 His back to earth, his face to Heaven,
 Fallen Hassan lies – his unclosed eye
 Yet lowering on his enemy, 670
 As if the hour that sealed his fate
 Surviving left his quenchless hate;
 And o'er him bends that foe with brow
 As dark as his that bled below. –

* * * * *

“Yes, Leila sleeps beneath the wave, 675
 But his shall be a redder grave;
 Her spirit pointed well the steel
 Which taught that felon heart to feel.
 He called the Prophet, but his power
 Was vain against the vengeful Giaour: 680
 He called on Alla – but the word
 Arose unheeded or unheard.
 Thou Paynim fool! – could Leila's prayer
 Be passed, and thine accorded there?
 I watched my time, I leagued with these, 685
 The traitor in his turn to seize;
 My wrath is wreaked, the deed is done,
 And now I go – but go alone.”

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4TH ED'N

The browsing camels' bells are tinkling –
 His mother looked from her lattice high – 690
 She saw the dews of eve besprinkling
 The pasture green beneath her eye,
 She saw the planets faintly twinkling:
 “'Tis twilight – sure his train is nigh.” –
 She could not rest in the garden-bower, 695
 But gazed through the grate of his steepest tower:
 “Why comes he not? his steeds are fleet,
 Nor shrink they from the summer heat;
 Why sends not the Bridegroom his promised gift?
 Is his heart more cold, or his barb less swift? 700
 Oh, false reproach! yon Tartar now
 Has gained our nearest mountain's brow –
 And warily the steep descends,
 And now within the valley bends;
 And he bears the gift at his saddle bow 705
 How could I deem his courser slow?
 Right well my largess shall repay
 His welcome speed, and weary way.” –

The Tartar lighted at the gate,

But scarce upheld his fainting weight! 710
 His swarthy visage spake distress,
 But this might be from weariness;
 His garb with sanguine spots was dyed,
 But these might be from his courser's side; –
 He drew the token from his vest – 715
 Angel of Death! 'tis Hassan's cloven crest!
 His calpac rent – his caftan red – *
 "Lady, a fearful bride thy Son hath wed –
 Me, not from mercy, did they spare,
 But this empurpled pledge to bear. 720
 Peace to the brave! whose blood is spilt –
 Woe to the Giaour! for his the guilt."

* * * * *

A Turban carved in coarsest stone, *
 A Pillar with rank weeds o'ergrown,
 Whereon can now be scarcely read 725
 The Koran verse that mourns the dead,
 Point out the spot where Hassan fell
 A victim in that lonely dell.
 There sleeps as true an Osmanlie
 As e'er at Mecca bent the knee; 730
 As ever scorned forbidden wine,
 Or prayed with face towards the shrine,
 In orisons resumed anew
 At solemn sound of "Allah Hu!" †
 Yet died he by a stranger's hand, 735
 And stranger in his native land –
 Yet died he as in arms he stood,
 And unavenged, at least in blood.
 But him the maids of Paradise
 Impatient to their halls invite, 740
 And the dark Heaven of Houris' eyes
 On him shall glance for ever bright;
 They come – their kerchiefs green they wave, ‡
 And welcome with a kiss the brave!
 Who falls in battle 'gainst a Giaour, 745
 Is worthiest an immortal bower.

* * * * *

But thou, false Infidel! shalt writhe
 Beneath avenging Monkir's scythe; *
 And from its torment 'scape alone
 To wander round lost Eblis' throne; † 750
 And fire unquenched, unquenchable –
 Around – within – thy heart shall dwell;
 Nor ear can hear nor tongue can tell
 The tortures of that inward hell! –
 But first, on earth as Vampire sent, ‡ 755
 Thy corse shall from its tomb be rent:
 Then ghastly haunt thy native place,
 And suck the blood of all thy race;

There from thy daughter, sister, wife,
 At midnight drain the stream of life; 760
 Yet loathe the banquet which performe
 Must feed thy livid living corse:
 Thy victims ere they yet expire
 Shall know the dæmon for their sire,
 As cursing thee, thou cursing them, 765
 Thy flowers are withered on the stem.
 But one that for thy crime must fall –
 The youngest – most beloved of all,
 Shall bless thee with a father's name –
 That word shall wrap thy heart in flame! 770
 Yet must thou end thy task, and mark
 Her cheek's last tinge, her eye's last spark,
 And the last glassy glance must view
 Which freezes o'er its lifeless blue;
 Then with unhallowed hand shalt tear 775
 The tresses of her yellow hair,
 Of which in life a lock when shorn
 Affection's fondest pledge was worn,
 But now is borne away by thee,
 Memorial of thine agony! 780
 Wet with thine own best blood shall drip
 Thy gnashing tooth and haggard lip;
 Then stalking to thy sullen grave –
 Go – and with Gouls and Afrits rave;
 Till these in horror shrink away 785
 From Spectre more accursed than they!

* * * * *

“How name ye yon lone Caloyer?
 His features I have scanned before
 In mine own land – 'tis many a year,
 Since, dashing by the lonely shore, 790
 I saw him urge as fleet a steed
 As ever served a horseman's need.
 But once I saw that face – yet then
 It was so marked with inward pain,
 I could not pass it by again; 785
 It breathes the same dark spirit now,
 As death were stamped upon his brow.

“'Tis twice three years at summer tide
 Since first among our freres he came;
 And here it sooths him to abide 800
 For some dark deed he will not name.
 But never at our Vesper prayer,
 Nor e'er before Confession chair
 Kneels he, nor recks he when arise
 Incense or anthem to the skies, 805
 But broods within his cell alone,
 His faith and race alike unknown.
 The sea from Paynim land he crost,
 And here ascended from the coast;

Yet seems he not of Othman race, 810
 But only Christian in his face:
 I'd judge him some stray renegade,
 Repentant of the change he made,
 Save that he shuns our holy shrine,
 Nor tastes the sacred bread and wine. 815
 Great largess to these walls he brought,
 And thus our Abbot's favour bought;
 But were I Prior, not a day
 Should brook such stranger's further stay,
 Or pent within our penance cell 820
 Should doom him there for aye to dwell.
 Much in his visions mutters he
 Of maiden 'whelmed beneath the sea;
 Of sabres clashing – foemen flying,
 Wrongs avenged – and Moslem dying. 825
 On cliff he hath been known to stand,
 And rave as to some bloody hand
 Fresh severed from its parent limb,
 Invisible to all but him,
 Which beckons onward to his grave, 830
 And lures to leap into the wave.”

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7TH ED'N

Dark and unearthly is the scowl
 That glares beneath his dusky cowl –
 The flash of that dilating eye
 Reveals too much of times gone by – 835
 Though varying – indistinct its hue,
 Oft will his glance the gazer rue –
 For in it lurks that nameless spell,
 Which speaks, itself unspeakable,
 A spirit yet unquelled and high, 840
 That claims and keeps ascendancy;
 And like the bird whose pinions quake –
 But cannot fly the gazing snake –
 Will others quail beneath his look,
 Nor 'scape the glance they scarce can brook. 845
 From him the half-affrighted Friar
 When met alone would fain retire –
 As if that eye and bitter smile
 Transferred to others fear and guile –
 Not oft to smile descendeth he, 850
 And when he doth 'tis sad to see
 That he but mocks at Misery.
 How that pale lip will curl and quiver!
 Then fix once more as if for ever –
 As if his sorrow or disdain 855
 Forbade him e'er to smile again.
 Well were it so – such ghastly mirth
 From joyaunce ne'er derived its birth. –
 But sadder still it were to trace
 What once were feelings in that face – 860

Time hath not yet the features fixed,
 But brighter traits with evil mixed –
 And there are hues not always faded,
 Which speak a mind not all degraded
 Even by the crimes through which it waded – 865

The common crowd but see the gloom
 Of wayward deeds – and fitting doom –
 The close observer can espy
 A noble soul, and lineage high:
 Alas! though both bestowed in vain, 870
 Which Grief could change – and Guilt could stain –
 It was no vulgar tenement
 To which such lofty gifts were lent,
 And still with little less than dread
 On such the sight is riveted. – 875
 The roofless cot, decayed and rent,
 Will scarce delay the passer-by –
 The tower by war or tempest bent,
 While yet may frown one battlement,
 Demands and daunts the stranger's eye – 880
 Each ivied arch – and pillar lone,
 Pleads haughtily for glories gone!

“His floating robe around him folding,
 Slow sweeps he through the columned aisle –
 With dread beheld – with gloom beholding 885
 The rites that sanctify the pile.
 But when the anthem shakes the choir,
 And kneel the monks – his steps retire –
 By yonder lone and wavering torch
 His aspect glares within the porch; 890
 There will he pause till all is done –
 And hear the prayer – but utter none.
 See – by the half-illumined wall
 His hood fly back – his dark hair fall –
 That pale brow wildly wreathing round, 895
 As if the Gorgon there had bound
 The sablest of the serpent-braid
 That o'er her fearful forehead strayed:
 For he declines the convent oath,
 And leaves those locks unhallowed growth – 900
 But wears our garb in all beside;
 And – not from piety but pride
 Gives wealth to walls that never heard
 Of his one holy vow nor word. –
 Lo! – mark ye – as the harmony 905
 Peals louder praises to the sky,
 That livid cheek, that stony air
 Of mixed defiance and despair!
 Saint Francis, keep him from the shrine!
 Else may we dread the wrath divine 910
 Made manifest by awful sign. –
 If ever evil angel bore
 The form of mortal, such he wore –
 By all my hope of sins forgiven,

Such looks are not of earth nor heaven!" 915

To love the softest hearts are prone,
 But such can ne'er be all his own;
 Too timid in his woes to share,
 Too meek to meet, or brave despair;
 And sterner hearts alone may feel 920
 The wound that time can never heal.
 The rugged metal of the mine
 Must burn before its surface shine,
 But plunged within the furnace-flame,
 It bends and melts – though still the same; 925
 Then tempered to thy want, or will,
 'Twill serve thee to defend or kill;
 A breast-plate for thine hour of need,
 Or blade to bid thy foeman bleed;
 But if a dagger's form it bear, 930
 Let those who shape its edge, beware!
 Thus Passion's fire, and Woman's art,
 Can turn and tame the sterner heart;
 From these its form and tone are ta'en,
 And what they make it, must remain, 935
 But break – before it bend again.

* * * * *
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If solitude succeed to grief,
 Release from pain is slight relief;
 The vacant bosom's wilderness 940
 Might thank the pang that made it less.
 We loathe what none are left to share –
 Even bliss – 'twere woe alone to bear;
 The heart once left thus desolate
 Must fly at last for ease – to hate. 945
 It is as if the dead could feel
 The icy worm around them steal,
 And shudder, as the reptiles creep
 To revel o'er their rotting sleep,
 Without the power to scare away 950
 The cold consumers of their clay!
 It is as if the desert-bird, *
 Whose beak unlocks her bosom's stream
 To still her famished nestlings' scream,
 Nor mourns a life to them transferred,
 Should rend her rash devoted breast, 955
 And find them flown her empty nest.
 The keenest pangs the wretched find
 Are rapture to the dreary void –
 The leafless desert of the mind –
 The waste of feelings unemployed – 960
 Who would be doomed to gaze upon
 A sky without a cloud or sun?
 Less hideous far the tempest's roar
 Than ne'er to brave the billows more –

Thrown, when the war of winds is o'er, 965
 A lonely wreck on fortune's shore,
 'Mid sullen calm, and silent bay,
 Unseen to drop by dull decay; –
 Better to sink beneath the shock
 Than moulder piecemeal on the rock! 970

* * * * *

"Father! thy days have passed in peace,
 'Mid counted beads, and countless prayer;
 To bid the sins of others cease,
 Thyself without a crime or care,
 Save transient ills that all must bear, 975
 Has been thy lot from youth to age;
 And thou wilt bless thee from the rage
 Of passions fierce and uncontrolled,
 Such as thy penitents unfold,
 Whose secret sins and sorrows rest 980
 Within thy pure and pitying breast.
 My days, though few, have passed below
 In much of Joy, but more of Woe;
 Yet still in hours of love or strife,
 I've 'scaped the weariness of Life: 985
 Now leagued with friends, now girt by foes,
 I loathed the languor of repose.
 Now nothing left to love or hate,
 No more with hope or pride elate,
 I'd rather be the thing that crawls 990
 Most noxious o'er a dungeon's walls,
 Than pass my dull, unvarying days,
 Condemned to meditate and gaze.
 Yet, lurks a wish within my breast
 For rest – but not to feel 'tis rest – 995
 Soon shall my fate that wish fulfil;

2ND ED'N

And I shall sleep without the dream
 Of what I was, and would be still,
 Dark as to thee my deeds may seem –
 My memory now is but the tomb 1000
 Of joys long dead – my hope – their doom –
 Though better to have died with those
 Than bear a life of lingering woes –
 My spirit shrunk not to sustain
 The searching throes of ceaseless pain; 1005
 Nor sought the self-accorded grave
 Of ancient fool and modern knave:
 Yet death I have not feared to meet;
 And the field it had been sweet,
 Had Danger wooed me on to move 1010
 The slave of Glory, not of Love.
 I've braved it – not for honour's boast;
 I smile at laurels won or lost. –
 To such let others carve their way,
 For high renown, or hireling pay; 1015
 But place again before my eyes

7TH ED'N

Aught that I deem a worthy prize; –
 The maid I love – the man I hate –
 And I will hunt the steps of fate,
 (To save or slay – as these require) 1020
 Through rending steel, and rolling fire:
 Nor needest thou doubt this speech from one
 Who would but do – what he hath done.

Death is but what the haughty brave –
 The weak must bear – the wretch must crave – 1025
 Then let life go to Him who gave:
 I have not quailed to danger's brow –
 When high and happy – need I now?

* * * * *

“I loved her, Friar! nay, adored –
 But these are words that all can use – 1030

I proved it more in deed than word –
 There's blood upon that dinted sword –
 A stain its steel can never lose:

'Twas shed for her, who died for me,
 It warmed the heart of one abhorred: 1035

Nay, start not – no – nor bend thy knee,
 Nor midst my sins such act record;

Thou wilt absolve me from the deed,
 For he was hostile to thy creed!
 The very name of Nazarene 1040

Was wormwood to his Paynim spleen.

Ungrateful fool! since but for brands
 Well wielded in some hardy hands,
 And wounds by Galileans given –
 The surest pass to Turkish heaven – 1045

For him his Houris still might wait
 Impatient at the Prophet's gate.

I loved her – Love will find its way
 Through paths where wolves would fear to prey;
 And if it dares enough, 'twere hard 1050

If Passion met not some reward –
 No matter how – or where – or why,

I did not vainly seek – nor sigh:
 Yet sometimes, with remorse, in vain

I wish she had not loved again. 1055

She died – I dare not tell thee how;

But look – 'tis written on my brow!

There read of Cain the curse and crime,
 In characters unworn by Time:
 Still, ere thou dost condemn me – pause – 1060

Not mine the act, though I the cause.

Yet did he but what I had done
 Had she been false to more than one.

Faithless to him – he gave the blow;
 But true to me – I laid him low: 1065

Howe'er deserved her doom might be,

Her treachery was truth to me;

To me she gave her heart, that all

3RD ED'N 1ST STATE

Which Tyranny can ne'er enthrall;
 And I, alas! too late to save, 1070
 Yet all I then could give – I gave –
 'Twas some relief – our foe a grave.
 His death sits lightly; but her fate
 Has made me – what thou well mayest hate.
 His doom was sealed – he knew it well, 1075
 Warned by the voice of stern Taheer,
 Deep in whose darkly boding ear *
 The deathshot pealed of murder near –
 As filed the troop to where they fell!
 He died too in the battle broil – 1080
 A time that heeds nor pain nor toil –
 One cry to Mahomet for aid,
 One prayer to Alla – all he made:
 He knew and crossed me in the fray –
 I gazed upon him where he lay, 1085
 And watched his spirit ebb away:
 Though pierced like Pard by hunters' steel,
 He felt not half that now I feel.
 I searched, but vainly searched, to find
 The workings of a wounded mind; 1090
 Each feature of that sullen corse
 Betrayed his rage, but no remorse.
 Oh, what had Vengeance given to trace
 Despair upon his dying face!
 The late repentance of that hour, 1095
 When Penitence hath lost her power
 To tear one terror from the grave –
 And will not soothe, and cannot save.

* * * * *

“The cold in clime are cold in blood,
 Their love can scarce deserve the name; 1100
 But mine was like a lava flood
 That boils in Ætna's breast of flame.
 I cannot prate in puling strain
 Of Ladye-love, and Beauty's chain:
 If changing cheek, and searching vein – 1105
 Lips taught to writhe, but not complain –
 If bursting heart, and maddening brain –
 And daring deed, and vengeful steel –
 And all that I have felt – and feel –
 Betoken love – that love was mine, 1110
 And shown by many a bitter sign.
 'Tis true, I could not whine nor sigh,
 I knew but to obtain or die.
 I die – but first I have possessed,
 And come what may, I have been blessed. 1115
 Shall I the doom I sought upbraid?
 No – reft of all – yet undismayed
 But for the thought of Leila slain,
 Give me the pleasure with the pain,
 So would I live and love again. 1120

- I grieve, but not, my holy Guide!
 For him who dies, but her who died:
 She sleeps beneath the wandering wave
 Ah! had she but an earthly grave,
 This breaking heart and throbbing head 1125
 Should seek and share her narrow bed.
- 7TH ED'N
 She was a form of Life and Light –
 That seen – became a part of sight;
 And rose – where'er I turned mine eye –
 The Morning-star of Memory! 1130
- 5TH ED'N
 “Yes, Love indeed is light from heaven –
 A spark of that immortal fire
 With angels shared – by Alla given,
 To lift from earth our low desire. 1135
 Devotion wafts the mind above,
 But Heaven itself descends in Love –
 A feeling from the Godhead caught,
 To wean from self each sordid thought –
 A Ray of Him who formed the whole –
 A Glory circling round the soul! 1140
 I grant my love imperfect – all
 That mortals by the name miscall –
 Then deem it evil – what thou wilt –
 But say, oh say, hers was not Guilt!
 She was my Life's unerring Light – 1145
 That quenched – what beam shall break my night?
 Oh! would it shone to lead me still,
 Although to death or deadliest ill! –
 Why marvel ye, if they who lose
 This present joy, this future hope, 1150
 No more with Sorrow meekly cope –
 In phrensy then their fate accuse –
 In madness do those fearful deeds
 That seem to add but Guilt to Woe?
 Alas! the breast that inly bleeds 1155
 Hath nought to dread from outward blow –
 Who falls from all he knows of bliss,
 Cares little into what abyss. –
 Fierce as the gloomy vulture's now
 To thee, old man, my deeds appear – 1160
 I read abhorrence on thy brow,
 And this too was I born to bear!
 'Tis true, that, like that bird of prey,
 With havock have I marked my way –
 But this was taught me by the dove – 1165
 To die – and know no second love.
 This lesson yet hath man to learn,
 Taught by the thing he dares to spurn –
 The bird that sings within the brake,
 The swan that swims upon the lake, 1170
 One mate, and one alone, will take.
 And let the fool still prone to range,
 And sneer on all who cannot change –
 Partake his jest with boasting boys;

I envy not his varied joys – 1175
 But deem such feeble, heartless man,
 Less than yon solitary swan –
 Far – far beneath the shallow maid
 He left believing and betrayed.
 Such shame at least was never mine – 1180
 Leila – each thought was only thine! –
 My good, my guilt, my weal, my woe,
 My hope on high – my all below.
 Earth holds no other like to thee,
 Or, if it doth, in vain for me – 1185
 For worlds I dare not view the dame
 Resembling thee, yet not the same.
 The very crimes that mar my youth,
 This bed of death – attest my truth –
 'Tis all too late – thou wert – thou art 1190
 The cherished madness of my heart!

7TH ED'N

“And she was lost – and yet I breathed,
 But not the breath of human life:
 A serpent round my heart was wreathed,
 And stung my every thought to strife. – 1195
 Alike all time – abhorred all place,
 Shuddering I shrunk from Nature's face,
 Where every hue that charmed before
 The blackness of my bosom wore: –
 The rest – thou dost already know, 1200
 And all my sins, and half my woe –
 But talk no more of penitence;
 Thou see'st I soon shall part from hence –
 And if thy holy tale were true –
 The deed that's done canst thou undo? 1205
 Think me not thankless – but this grief
 Looks not to priesthood for relief. *
 My soul's estate in secret guess –
 But wouldst thou pity more – say less –
 When thou canst bid my Leila live, 1210
 Then will I sue thee to forgive;
 Then plead my cause in that high place
 Where purchased masses proffer grace –
 Go – when the hunter's hand hath wrung
 From forest-cave her shrieking young, 1215
 And calm the lonely lioness –
 But soothe not – mock not my distress!

5TH ED'N

“In earlier days, and calmer hours,
 When heart with heart delights to blend,
 Where bloom my native valley's bowers – 1220
 I had – Ah! have I now? – a friend! –
 To him this pledge I charge thee send –
 Memorial of a youthful vow;
 I would remind him of my end:
 Though souls absorbed like mine allow 1225
 Brief thought to distant Friendship's claim,
 Yet dear to him my blighted name.

'Tis strange – he prophesied my doom,
 And I have smiled – (I then could smile –)
 When Prudence would his voice assume, 1230
 And warn – I recked not what – the while –
 But now Remembrance whispers o'er
 Those accents scarcely marked before.
 Say – that his bodings came to pass,
 And he will start to hear their truth, 1235
 And wish his words had not been sooth:
 Tell him – unheeding as I was –
 Through many a busy bitter scene
 Of all our golden youth had been,
 In pain, my faltering tongue had tried 1240
 To bless his memory – ere I died;
 But Heaven in wrath would turn away,
 If Guilt should for the guiltless pray.
 I do not ask him not to blame –
 Too gentle he to wound my name; 1245
 And what have I to do with Fame?
 I do not ask him not to mourn,
 Such cold request might sound like scorn;
 And what than Friendship's manly tear
 May better grace a brother's bier? 1250
 But bear this ring – his own of old –
 And tell him – what thou dost behold!
 The withered frame, the ruined mind,
 The wrack by passion left behind –
 A shrivelled scroll, a scattered leaf, 1255
 Seared by the autumn blast of Grief!

* * * * *

“Tell me no more of Fancy's gleam,
 No, father, no, 'twas not a dream;
 Alas! the dreamer first must sleep.
 I only watched, and wished to weep; 1260
 But could not, for my burning brow
 Throbb'd to the very brain as now:
 I wished but for a single tear,
 As something welcome, new, and dear;
 I wished it then – I wish it still; 1265
 Despair is stronger than my will.
 Waste not thine orison – despair
 Is mightier than thy pious prayer:
 I would not if I might, be blest;
 I want no Paradise – but rest. 1270
 'Twas then – I tell thee – father! then
 I saw her – yes – she lived again;
 And shining in her white symar, *
 As through yon pale gray cloud – the star
 Which now I gaze on, as on her, 1275
 Who looked and looks far lovelier;
 Dimly I view its trembling spark –
 Tomorrow's night shall be more dark;
 And I – before its rays appear,

That lifeless thing the living fear. 1280
 I wander – father! for my soul
 Is fleeting towards the final goal.
 I saw her – friar! and I rose
 Forgetful of our former woes;
 And rushing from my couch, I dart, 1285
 And clasp her to my desperate heart;
 I clasp – what is it that I clasp?
 No breathing form within my grasp,
 No heart that beats reply to mine,
 Yet, Leila! yet the form is thine! 1290
 And art thou, dearest, changed so much,
 As meet my eye, yet mock my touch?
 Ah! were thy beauties e'er so cold,
 I care not – so my arms enfold
 The all they ever wished to hold. 1295
 Alas! around a shadow prest,
 They shrink upon my lonely breast;
 Yet still – 'tis there! – in silence stands,
 And beckons with beseeching hands!
 With braided hair, and bright black eye – 1300
 I knew 'twas false – she could not die!
 But he is dead – within the dell
 I saw him buried where he fell;
 He comes not – for he cannot break
 From earth – why then art thou awake? 1305
 They told me wild waves rolled above
 The face I view, the form I love;
 They told me – 'twas a hideous tale! –
 I'd tell it – but my tongue would fail –
 If true – and from thine ocean-cave 1310
 Thou com'st to claim a calmer grave;
 Oh! pass thy dewy fingers o'er
 This brow that then will burn no more;
 Or place them on my hopeless heart –
 But, Shape or Shade! – whate'er thou art, 1315
 In mercy ne'er again depart –
 Or farther with thee bear my soul
 Than winds can waft – or waters roll!" –

* * * * *

“Such is my name, and such my tale.
 Confessor – to thy secret ear 1320
 I breathe the sorrows I bewail,
 And thank thee for the generous tear
 This glazing eye could never shed.
 Then lay me with the humblest dead,
 And, save the cross above my head, 1325
 Be neither name nor emblem spread –
 By prying stranger to be read,
 Or stay the passing pilgrims tread.”
 He passed – nor of his name and race
 Hath left a token or a trace, 1330
 Save what the Father must not say

Who shrived him on his dying day:
This broken tale was all we knew
Of her he loved, or him he slew. *

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First thirteen editions 12,050 copies. Copyright 500 gs to Byron.

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