

THE JILT.

“WHO is that slinkard moping down the street,
That youth—scarce thirty—bowed like sixty”
“Oh,
A woman jilted him.” “Absurd!” “Conceit!
Some youths take life—are Puritans, you know!”

I heard it, sitting in the window—glowed,
Rushed to my wife and kissed her. Lithe and
young
The rapture of some ardent madness flowed;
And—bye-and-bye—its miracle found tongue.

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Guess, guess the secret why I burn for you
These years so cold to woman as I was!
Guess why your laugh, your kiss, your touch run
through
My body, as it were a tuned glass!

You cannot guess?—false devil that you are!
To Cruelty's add calm's analysis!
You love me? Yes—then crown me a bearded Sar
Bull-breasted by my sleek Semiramis!

Did you not hear those men below? They spoke
Of one I think you have forgotten long;
Talked of his ruined life—half as a joke—
But I—But I—it is my whole heart's song!

I love you when I think of his pale lips
Twitching, and all his curls of gold awry;
Your smile of poison as he sighs and sips;
Your half-scared laughter as his heart-beats
die—

Let him creep on, a shattered, ruined thing!
A ship dismasted on a dreadful sea!
And you—afar—some word of largesse fling
Pitifully worded for more cruelty!

His death lends savour to our passionate life;
His is the heart I taste upon your tongue;
His death-spasms our love-spasms, my wife;
His death-songs are the love-songs that you
sung!

Ah! Sweet, I love you as I see him stagger
On with hell's worm a-nuzzling to his heart,
With your last letter, like a poisoned dagger,
Biting his blood, burning his bones apart.

Ah! Sweet, each kiss I drink from you is warm
With the dear life-blood of a man—a man!
The scent of murder lures me, like a charm
Tied by some subtlety Canidian.

Ay! as you suck my life out into bliss,
Its holier joy is in the deadlier thirst
That drank his life out into the abyss
Of torture endless, endless and accurst.

I know him little ; liking what I know.
But you—you offer me his flesh and blood.
I taste it—never another vintage owe,
Nor bid me sup upon another food !

This is our marriage ; firmer than the root
Of love or lust could plant our joy, my wife,
We stand in this, the purple-seeded fruit
Of yon youth's fair and pitiable life.

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Do I not fear that you may treat me so ?
One day your passion slake itself somehow,
Seek vigour from another murder ? No !
You harlot, for I mean to kill you—now.