

Nineteenth-Century Poems

Robert Southey's "Thalaba the Destroyer"

From the PREFACE

In the continuation of the Arabian Tales, the Domdaniel is mentioned; a Seminary for evil Magicians under the Roots of the Sea. From this seed the present Romance has grown. Let me not be supposed to prefer the metre in which it is written, abstractedly considered, to the regular blank verse; the noblest measure, in my judgement, of which our admirable language is capable. For the following Poem I have preferred it, because it suits the varied subject; it is the *Arabesque* ornament of an Arabian tale.

Lord Byron's "The Giaour: A Fragment of a Turkish Tale" (1813)

But thou, false Infidel! shalt writhe
Beneath avenging **Monkir's** scythe;
And from its torment 'scape alone
To wander round lost **Eblis'** throne;
And fire unquench'd, 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,
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;
Yet loathe the banquet which perforce
Must feed thy livid living corse;
Thy victims ere they yet expire
Shall know their daemon for their sire,
As cursing thee, thou cursing them,
Thy flowers are wither'd on the stem.
But one that for thy crime must fall—
The youngest—most lov'd of all,
Shall bless thee with a father's name—
That word shall wrap thy heart in flame!
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
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!
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
From spectre more accursed than they!

Lord Byron "The Corsair" (1814)

He thought on her afar, his lonely bride;
He turn'd and saw Gulnare, the homicide! (III.463)

...She for him had given
Her all on earth, and more than all in heaven!" (III.529-30)

THE BRIDE OF ABYDOS(1813)

Old Giaffir sate in his Divan:
Deep thought was in his aged eye;
And though the face of Mussulman
Not oft betrays to standers by
The mind within, well skilled to hide
All but unconquerable pride,
His pensive cheek and pondering brow
Did more than he was wont avow.
With Giaffir is none but his only son,
And the Nubian awaiting the sire's award.
"Haroun—when all the crowd that wait
Are passed beyond the outer gate,
(Woe to the head whose eye beheld
My child Zuleika's face unveiled!)
Hence, lead my daughter from her tower

Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Kubla Khan" (1816)

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted

By woman wailing for her demon lover!
 And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
 As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
 A mighty fountain momentarily was forced:
 Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
 Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
 Or chafly grain beneath the thresher's flail:
 And `mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
 It flung up momentarily the sacred river.
 Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
 Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
 Then reached the caverns measureless to man, And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
 And `mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
 Ancestral voices prophesying war!
 The shadow of the dome of pleasure
 Floated midway on the waves;
 Where was heard the mingled measure
 From the fountain and the caves.
 It was a miracle of rare device,
 A sunny pleasure dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer
 In a vision once I saw:
 It was an Abyssinian maid,
 And on her dulcimer she played,
 Singing of Mount Abora.
 Could I revive within me
 Her symphony and song,
 To such a deep delight `twould win me,
 That with music loud and long,
 I would build that dome in air,
 That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
 And all who heard should see them there,
 And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
 His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
 Weave a circle round him thrice,
 And close your eyes with holy dread,
 For he on honeydew hath fed,
 And drunk the milk of Paradise.

Thomas Moore “Lalla Rookh” An Oriental Romance (1817)

The Story of the Veiled Prophet of Khorassan

[*PART ONE* -- Lalla Rookh hears about Zelica and Azim]

[*PART TWO* -- A reunion under appalling circumstances]

[*PART THREE* -- The lovers meet their final fates]

The Story of Paradise and the Peri

[*PART FOUR* -- Lalla Rookh hears about the Peri's quest]

The Story of the Fire-Worshippers

[*PART FIVE* -- Lalla Rookh hears about Hinda and Hafed]

[*PART SIX* -- Hafed is betrayed]

[*PART SEVEN* -- Hinda is abducted]

[*PART EIGHT* -- The end of the ordeal]

The Story of the Light of the Haram

[*PART NINE* -- Nourmahal and her wiles]

Percy Bysshe Shelley “The Revolt of Islam” (1818)