

III CANTO  
ARGUMENT

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### ARGUMENT.

*Praise of Love—Psyche's Champion, with his attendant Constance, described—The Knight assumes the command of Passion, who appears as a Lion—Psyche proceeds under the protection of the Knight—Persuaded to repose in the Bower of loose Delight—Her escape from thence—Led by Innocence to Retirement—Psyche meets Vanity and Flattery—Betrayed by them into the power of Ambition—Rescued by her Knight.*



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CANTO III.

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Oh, who art thou who darest of Love complain?  
He is a gentle spirit and injures none!  
His foes are ours; from them the bitter pain,  
The keen, deep anguish, the heart-rending groan,  
Which in his milder reign are never known.  
His tears are softer than the April showers,  
White-handed Innocence supports his throne,  
His sighs are sweet as breath of earliest flowers,  
Affection guides his steps, and peace protects his bowers.



But scarce admittance he on earth can find,  
 Opposed by vanity, by fraud ensnared,  
 Suspicion frights him from the gloomy mind,  
 And jealousy in vain his smiles has shared,  
 Whose sullen frown the gentle godhead scared ;  
 From passion's rapid blaze in haste he flies,  
 His wings alone the fiercer flame has spared ;  
 From him ambition turns his scornful eyes,  
 And avarice, slave to gold, a generous lord denies.

But chief Inconstancy his power destroys ;  
 To mock his lovely form, an idle train  
 With magic skill she dressed in transient toys,  
 By these the selfish votaries she can gain  
 Whom Love's more simple bands could ne'er detain.  
 Ah ! how shall Psyche through such mortal foes  
 The fated end of all her toils attain ?  
 Sadly she ponders o'er her hopeless woes,  
 Till on the pillowy turf she sinks to short repose.



But, as the careless lamb whom playful chance  
 Thoughtless of danger has enticed to rove,  
 Amidst her gambols casts a sudden glance  
 Where lurks her wily foe within the grove,  
 Anxious to fly, but still afraid to move,  
 All hopeless of escape—so looks the maid,  
 Such dread her half-awakened senses prove,  
 When roused from sleep before her eyes dismayed  
 A knight all armed appears close mid the embowering  
 shade.

Trembling she gazed, until the stranger knight  
 Tempering with mildest courtesy, the awe  
 Which majesty inspired, low in her sight  
 Obeisance made; nor would he nearer draw,  
 Till, half subdued surprise and fear, he saw  
 Pale terror yielding to the rosy grace,  
 The pure congealed blood begin to thaw,  
 And flowing through her crystal veins apace  
 Suffuse with mantling blush her mild celestial face,



Gently approaching then with fairest speech  
 He proffered service to the lonely dame,  
 And prayed her that she might not so impeach  
 The honour of his youth's yet spotless fame,  
 As aught to fear which might his knighthood shame;  
 But if her unprotected steps to guard,  
 The glory of her champion he might claim,  
 He asked no other guerdon or reward,  
 Than what bright honour's self might to his deeds award.

Doubting, and musing much within her mind,  
 With half suspicious, half confiding eye,  
 Awhile she stood; her thoughts bewildered find  
 No utterance, unwilling to deny  
 Such proffered aid, yet bashful to reply  
 With quick assent, since though concealed his face  
 Beneath his helm, yet might she well espy  
 And in each fair proportion plainly trace  
 The symmetry of form, and perfect youthful grace.



Hard were it to describe the nameless charm  
That o'er each limb, in every action played,  
The softness of that voice, which could disarm  
The hand of fury of its deadly blade :  
In shining armour was the youth arrayed,  
And on his shield a bleeding heart he bore,  
His lofty crest light plumes of azure shade,  
There shone a wounded dragon bathed in gore,  
And bright with silver beamed the silken scarf he wore.

His milk-white steed with glittering trappings blazed,  
Whose reins a beauteous boy attendant held,  
On the fair squire with wonder Psyche gazed,  
For scarce he seemed of age to bear the shield,  
Far less a ponderous lance, or sword to wield ;  
Yet well this little page his lord had served,  
His youthful arm had many a foe repelled,  
His watchful eye from many a snare preserved,  
Nor ever from his steps in any danger swerved.



Graced with the gift of a perpetual youth,  
 No lapse of years had power his form to change;  
 Constance was named the boy, whose matchless truth  
 Though oft inticed with other lords to range  
 Nor fraud, nor force could from that knight estrange;  
 His mantle of celestial blue was made,  
 And its bright texture wrought with art so strange  
 That the fresh brilliant gloss could never fade,  
 And lustre yet unknown to Psyche's eyes displayed.

Thus while she gazed, behold with horrid roar  
 A lion from the neighbouring forest rushed,  
 A golden chain around his neck he bore,  
 Which richly glowing with carbuncles blushed,  
 While his fierce eye-balls fiery rage had flushed:  
 Forth steps the youth before the affrighted fair,  
 Who in his mighty paw already crushed  
 Seems in the terrors of her wild despair,  
 And her mute quivering lips a death-like paleness wear.



But scarce the kingly beast the knight beheld,  
 When crouching low, submissive at his feet,  
 His wrath extinguished, and his valour quelled,  
 He seemed with reverence and obeisance sweet  
 Him as his long acknowledged lord to greet.  
 While, in acceptance of the new command,  
 Well pleased the youth received the homage meet,  
 Then seized the splendid chain with steady hand  
 Full confident to rule, and every foe withstand.

And, when at length recovered from her fear  
 The timid Psyche mounts his docile steed,  
 Much prayed, she tells to his attentive ear  
 (As on her purposed journey they proceed)  
 The doubtful course the oracle decreed :  
 And how observant of her friendly guide,  
 She still pursued its flight, with all the speed  
 Her fainting strength had hitherto supplied :  
 What pathless wilds she crossed ! What forests dark-  
 ling wide !



Which having heard, the courteous knight began  
 With counsel sweet to sooth her wounded heart;  
 Divinely eloquent, persuasion ran  
 The herald of his words ere they depart  
 His lips, which well might confidence impart,  
 As he revealed how he himself was bound  
 By solemn vow, that neither force nor art  
 His helmet should unloose, till he had found  
 The bower of happiness, that long sought fairy ground.

" I too (he said) divided from my love,  
 " The offended power of Venus deprecate,  
 " Like thee, through paths untrodden, sadly rove  
 " In search of that fair spot prescribed by fate,  
 " The blessed term of my afflicted state,  
 " Where I the mistress of my soul shall find,  
 " For whose dear sake no toil to me seems great,  
 " Nor any dangers to my search assigned  
 " Can from its purpose fright my ardent longing mind.



“ Psyche ! thy soft and sympathising heart  
 “ Shall share the rapture of thy loyal knight ;  
 “ He too, in thy content shall bear a part,  
 “ Blest witness of thy new restored delight ;  
 “ My vows of true allegiance here I plight,  
 “ Ne’er to forsake thee till thy perils end,  
 “ Thy steps to guard, in thy protection fight,  
 “ By counsel aid, and by my arm defend,  
 “ And prove myself in all, thy champion and thy friend.”

So on they went, her cheerless heart revived  
 By promised succour in her doubtful way ;  
 And much of hope she to herself derived,  
 From the warm eagerness his lips display  
 In their pursuit to suffer no delay :  
 “ And sure, (she softly sighed) my dearest Lord,  
 “ Thy watchful love still guides me as I stray,  
 “ Not chance alone could such an aid afford,  
 “ Lo ! beasts of prey confess the heaven-assisted sword.”



Now from his crystal urn, with chilling hand,  
 Vesper had sprinkled all the earth with dew,  
 A misty veil obscured the neighbouring land,  
 And shut the fading landscape from their view;  
 A beaten path they eagerly pursue,  
 (For now refreshment and repose they need  
 As Psyche weary of long travel grew)  
 Where by a river's bank it seemed to lead,  
 Along its sinuous course they heedlessly proceed.

At length the lordly beast that bore the knight  
 Explored the river's depth with sudden bound:  
 Psyche, who heard the plunge with strange affright,  
 Her champion re-assured with welcome sound,  
 That he the other bank had safely found;  
 And, while he spoke, emerging from the shade,  
 A joyous goodly train appear around,  
 Of many a gallant youth and white robed maid,  
 Who grateful welcome gave, and courteous greeting paid.



Quick through the trees a thousand torches blazed  
 The gloom to banish, and the scene disclose  
 To Psyche all irresolute, amazed :  
 A bridge with stately arch at distance rose,  
 Thither at once the gay assembly goes,  
 Not unattended by the charmed knight,  
 Inviting Psyche to partake repose,  
 Pointing where shone their bower illumined bright,  
 Their bower so passing fair, the bower of loose Delight.

At length with timid foot the bridge she past,  
 And to her guardian knight clung fearfully,  
 While many a doubting glance around she cast,  
 If still her watchful dove she might espy ;  
 Feebly it seemed on labouring wing to fly,  
 Till, dazzled by the sudden glare around,  
 In painful trance it closed its dizzy eye,  
 And had it not fair Psyche's bosom found,  
 Its drooping pinion soon had touched the unhallowed  
 ground.



Hence there arose within her heart sore dread  
Which no alluring pleasure could dispel;  
The splendid hall with luscious banquet spread,  
The soft-breathed flutes which in sweet concert swell,  
With melody of song unspeakable;  
Nor the light dancing troop in roses drest,  
Could chase the terrors which she dared not tell,  
While fondly cherished in her anxious breast  
She strove in vain to sooth the fluttering bird to rest.

On a soft downy couch the guests are placed,  
And close behind them stands their watchful page,  
But much his strict attendance there disgraced,  
And much was scorned his green and tender age,  
His calm fixed eye, and steady aspect sage:  
But him nor rude disdain, nor mockery,  
Nor soothing blandishments could e'er engage  
The wanton mazes of their sports to try,  
Or from his lord to turn his firm adhering eye.



White bosomed nymphs around with loosened zones  
 All on the guests obsequiously tend,  
 Some sing of love with soft expiring tones,  
 While Psyche's melting eyes the strain commend ;  
 Some o'er their heads the canopy suspend,  
 Some hold the sparkling bowl, while some with skill  
 Ambrosial showers and balmy juices blend,  
 Or the gay lamps with liquid odours fill  
 Whose many coloured fires divinest sweets distil.

And now a softer light they seemed to shed,  
 And sweetest music ushered in their queen :  
 Her languid steps by winged boys are led,  
 Who in their semblance might have Cupids been ;  
 Close wrapt in veils her following train was seen ;  
 Herself looked lovely in her loose attire,  
 Her smiling eyes gave lustre to the scene,  
 And still, where'er they turned their wanton fire,  
 Each thrilling nerve confessed the rapture they inspire.



The stranger guests she viewed with welcome glad,  
And crowned the banquet with reception sweet,  
To fill the glowing bowl her nymphs she bad,  
And graceful rising from her splendid seat  
She would herself present the sparkling treat;  
When lo! the dove alarmed with sudden start,  
Spurned the bright cup and dashed it at her feet,  
For well he knew 'twas mixed with treacherous art  
To sting his Psyche's breast with agonizing smart.

Regardless of her supplicating tears  
Each eye with vengeful rage the insult sees,  
Her knight's protection now in vain appears;  
The offended sovereign anxious to appease,  
A thousand hands prepare the dove to seize:  
Nor was this all, for as the tumult rose,  
Sudden more thick than swarm of summer bees,  
The secret dens their venomed hoards disclose,  
And horror at the sight her vital spirits froze.



Hissing aloud with undulations dire,  
 Their forked tongues unnumbered serpents show,  
 Their tainted breath emitting poisonous fire,  
 All turn on Psyche as their mortal foe;  
 But he, whose arm was never weak or slow,  
 Now rushed before her with resistless spring,  
 On either side the oft-repeated blow  
 Repulsed the malice of their deadly sting,  
 While sparks of wrathful fire from their fierce jaws they  
     fling.

“Fly, Psyche! these are slander’s hellish brood!  
 “Contest I know is vain,” her champion cried.  
 Her passage now the opposing train withstood;  
 Struck with disgust their hideous forms she spied,  
 For lo! each silken veil is thrown aside,  
 And foul deformity, and filth obscene,  
 With monstrous shapes appear on every side;  
 But vanished is their fair and treacherous queen,  
 And with her every charm that decked the enchanted scene.



Meanwhile the dove had soared above their reach,  
But hovered still in anxious Psyche's sight,  
Precursor of escape, it seemed to teach  
Whither she safest might direct her flight,  
And find a passport in her foes' despite ;  
One rugged path there lay with briars o'ergrown,  
Then dark and dismal with the shades of night,  
Thither the dove on rapid wing had flown,  
Conspicuous mid the gloom its silver plumage shone.

Yet she delayed, o'ercome by terror's power,  
And scarce her fainting form the knight could shield,  
When lo ! still active in the trying hour,  
Constance rushed fearless through the dreadful field,  
With breast-plate firm invulnerably steeled,  
He heeded not the storms which round him press,  
To any perils he disdained to yield,  
Endued with prudence as with hardiness,  
And ever skilled to bring due succour in distress.



Lo! swift returning on his master's steed,  
In his right hand he held the lion's chain,  
The mighty beast his gentleness could lead,  
Though little used to bear the curb or rein,  
And mid those groves accustomed to remain,  
Yet now prepared, with sweet submissive grace,  
He ready stands the knight to bear again,  
While trembling Psyche on the steed they place,  
Which swift as lightning flies far from the dreadful chase.

Rough was the rude wild way, and many a thorn  
Tore her loose garments in their rapid flight,  
O'er many a league the panting fair is borne,  
Till now, emerging from the shades of night,  
The grey-eyed morn stole forth her pallid light.  
Then first she paused, unable to proceed,  
Exhausted with fatigue, and pain, and fright.  
"Turn, Psyche," cried the youth, "relax thy speed,  
"And see thyself at length from thy pursuers freed."



Mid the thick forest was a lonely dell,  
Where foot of man was seldom known to tread,  
The sloping hills all round in graceful swell  
The little green with woods environed ;  
Hither the dove their passive course had led :  
Here the thin smoke blue rising mid the trees,  
Where broad and brown the deepest umbrage spread,  
Spoke the abode of safe retired ease,  
And Psyche gladly there her dove descending sees.

In lowly cottage, walled with mossy sod,  
Close by a little spring's perpetual rill,  
A hermit dwelt, who many a year had trod  
With sacred solitude that pine-clad hill,  
And loved with holy images to fill  
His soul enrapt ; yet courteous then besought  
A while secluded here to rest ; and still  
Replete with kind and hospitable thought,  
To a sequestered bower the wearied Pysche brought.



Skilled in the virtue of each healing flower,  
 And the wild fruit's restoring juice to blend,  
 He spreads the frugal fare of wholesome power,  
 And heedfully his cares their wants attend ;  
 A docile ear to his advice they lend,  
 And sage instruction from his precepts take,  
 Which much their future journey may befriend ;  
 Wisdom with soothing eloquence he spake,  
 Pleased to resolve their doubts, and all their cares partake.

In those sweet placid scenes awhile they rest,  
 Till Psyche finds her fainting strength revive ;  
 And here her dove, as in a quiet nest,  
 Delighted seems to sportive joy alive ;  
 And hence they surest confidence derive.  
 He plumes his wings, and through his swelling throat  
 (No more a ruffled, fearful fugitive)  
 In gentle murmurs pours his dulcet note,  
 While Psyche listening sits in some still vale remote.



Oh ! have you never known the silent charm  
 That undisturbed retirement yields the soul,  
 Where no intruder might your peace alarm,  
 And tenderness hath wept without control,  
 While melting fondness o'er the bosom stole ?  
 Did fancy never, in some lonely grove,  
 Abridge the hours which must in absence roll ?  
 Those pensive pleasures did you never prove,  
 Oh, you have never loved ! you know not what is love !

They do not love who can to these prefer  
 The tumult of the gay, or folly's roar ;  
 The Muse they know not ; nor delight in her  
 Who can the troubled soul to rest restore,  
 Calm contemplation : Yes, I must deplore  
 Their joyless state, even more than his who mourns  
 His love for ever lost ; delight no more  
 Unto his widowed heart indeed returns,  
 Yet, while he weeps, his soul their cold indifference spurns.



But if soft hope illumines fancy's dream,  
Assuring him of love and constancy,  
How exquisite do then the moments seem,  
When he may hide himself from every eye,  
And cherish the dear thought in secrecy!  
While sweet remembrance soothes his thrilling heart,  
And brings once more past hours of kindness nigh,  
Recals the look of love when forced to part,  
And turns to drops of joy the tears that sadly start.

Forgetful of the dangers of her way,  
Imagination oft would Psyche bear  
To her long travel's end, and that blest day  
When Love unveiled should to her eyes appear;  
When she might view his charms exempt from fear,  
Taste his pure kisses, feel his balmy sighs,  
Rest in the fond embrace of arms so dear,  
Gaze with soft rapture on his melting eyes,  
And hear his voice divine, the music of the skies!



Their destined course impatient to achieve,  
 The knight is urgent onward to proceed :  
 Cheered with recruited strength they take their leave  
 Of their kind host, and pay their grateful meed  
 Of warmest thanks sincere ; onward they speed  
 Their sunless journey long through forests green,  
 And tangled thickets rank with many a weed ;  
 And when at closing day a hut is seen,  
 They seek the humble roof, nor scorn its welcome mean.

It happened once that early roused from sleep,  
 (Ere her damp veil the virgin morn had cast  
 From her pale face, not yet with blushes deep  
 Lovely suffused, as when approaching fast  
 His herald star proclaims her spouse at last)  
 Psyche forsaking soon her homely bed,  
 Alone had fearless the low threshold past,  
 And, to beguile the hours which lingering fled,  
 Light o'er the dewy plain walked forth with nimble tread.



Yet though the knight close wrapt in slumber lay,  
Her steps, at distance, still the page pursued,  
Fearful that danger might befall her way,  
Or lest, entangled in the mazy wood,  
Returning she should miss the pathway rude.  
The lark now hails the sun with rapturous song,  
The cheerful earth resounds with gratitude,  
O'er the gay scene, as Psyche tript along,  
She felt her spirits rise, her lightened heart grow strong.

And hark, soft music steals upon the ear!  
'Tis woman's voice most exquisitely sweet!  
Behold two female forms approaching near  
Arrest with wonder Psyche's timid feet;  
On a gay car, by speckled panthers fleet  
Is drawn in gallant state a seeming queen,  
And at her foot on low but graceful seat  
A gentle nymph of lovely form is seen,  
In robe of fairest white, with scarf of pleasant green.



In strains of most bewitching harmony,  
 And still adapted to her sovereign's praise,  
 She filled the groves with such sweet melody,  
 That, quite o'ercome with rapture and amaze,  
 Psyche stood listening to the warbled lays;  
 Yet with a sullen, scarce approving ear  
 Her mistress sits, but with attentive gaze,  
 Her eyes she fixes on a mirror clear  
 Where still by fancy's spell unrivalled charms appear.

And, as she looked with aspect ever new,  
 She seemed on change and novel grace intent,  
 Her robe was formed of ever varying hue,  
 And whimsically placed each ornament;  
 On her attire, with rich luxuriance spent,  
 The treasures of the earth, the sea, the air,  
 Are vainly heaped her wishes to content;  
 Yet were her arms and snowy bosom bare,  
 And both in painted pride shone exquisitely fair.



Her braided tresses in profusion drest,  
 Circled with diadem, and nodding plumes,  
 Sported their artful ringlets o'er her breast,  
 And to the breezes gave their rich perfumes ;  
 Her cheek with tint of borrowed roses blooms :  
 Used to receive from all rich offerings,  
 She quaffs with conscious right the fragrant fumes  
 Which her attendant from a censer flings,  
 Who graceful feeds the flame with incense while she sings.

Soon as her glance fair Psyche's form had caught,  
 Her soft attendant smiling she addressed :  
 " Behold, Lusinga ! couldst thou e'er have thought  
 " That these wild woods were so in beauty blest ?  
 " Let but that nymph in my attire be drest  
 " And scarce her loveliness will yield to mine !  
 " At least invite her in our bower to rest,  
 " Before her eyes let all my splendor shine,  
 " Perhaps to dwell with us her heart we may incline."



With softest smile applauding all she heard,  
Lusinga bowing left her golden seat,  
And Psyche, who at first in doubt had feared  
While listening to the lay so silver sweet,  
Now passive followed with unconscious feet;  
Till Constance, all alarmed, impatient flew,  
And soft his whispers of the maid entreat  
To fly the Syren's song, for well he knew  
What lurking dangers hence would to his Lord ensue.

“ Oh, do not trust her treacherous lips,” he cried,  
“ She is the subtle slave of Vanity,  
“ Her queen, the child of folly, and of pride,  
“ To lure thee to her power each art will try,  
“ Nor ever will release thee peaceably.”  
He spoke, but spoke in vain, for lo! from far,  
Of giant port they fast approaching spy  
A knight, high mounted on a glittering car,  
From whose conspicuous crest flames wide a dazzling star.



"Psyche, escape! Ambition is at hand!"  
 The page exclaims: while swift as thought he flies;  
 She would have followed, but with parley bland  
 Lusinga soon her terrors pacifies.  
 "Fair nymph, ascend my car," the sovereign cries,  
 "I will convey thee where thy wishes lead,  
 "Haply the safest course I may advise  
 "How thou thy journey mayst perform with speed;  
 "For ne'er in woods to dwell such beauty was decreed."

So gently urgent her consent they wooed  
 With much persuasion of the stranger knight,  
 That yielding Psyche now no more withstood,  
 But pointing out to her observant sight  
 The humble cot where she had passed the night,  
 She prayed her kind conductress there to turn,  
 And promised to herself what vast delight  
 Her wondering knight would feel at her return,  
 And with what blushing shame the timid page would  
 burn.



But scarcely had she climbed the fatal car  
 When swifter than the wind the panthers flew,  
 The traversed plains and woods, receding far,  
 Soon shut from trembling Psyche's anxious view  
 The spot where she had left her guardian true;  
 With desperate efforts, all in vain she tries  
 To escape the ills which now too sure she knew  
 Must from her ill-placed confidence arise:  
 Betrayed—Ah! self-betrayed, a wretched sacrifice.

She strove to quit the car with sudden bound,  
 Ah, vain attempt! she now perceived too late  
 A thousand silken trammels, subtly wound  
 O'er her fair form, detained her as she sate:  
 Lost in despair she yields to her sad fate,  
 And silent hears but with augmented fright  
 The queen describe her brother's splendid state,  
 Who now outstripped them by his rapid flight,  
 And prest his foaming steeds to gain the arduous height.



High o'er the spacious plain a mountain rose,  
A stately castle on its summit stood :  
Huge craggy cliffs behind their strength oppose  
To the rough surges of the dashing flood ;  
The rocky shores a boldly rising wood  
On either side conceals ; bright shine the towers  
And seem to smile upon the billows rude.  
In front the eye, with comprehensive powers,  
Sees wide extended plains enriched with splendid bowers.

Hither they bore the sad reluctant fair,  
Who mounts with dizzy eye the awful steep ;  
The blazing structure seems high poised in air,  
And its light pillars tremble o'er the deep :  
As yet the heavens are calm, the tempests sleep,  
She knows not half the horrors of her fate :  
Nor feels the approaching ruin's whirlwind sweep :  
Yet with ill-boding fears she past the gate,  
And turned with sickening dread from scenes of gorgeous  
state.



In vain the haughty master of the hall  
 Invites her to partake his regal throne,  
 With cold indifference she looks on all  
 The gilded trophies, and the well-wrought stone  
 Which in triumphal arches proudly shone :  
 And as she casts around her timid eye,  
 Back to her knight her trembling heart is flown,  
 And many an anxious wish, and many a sigh  
 Invokes his gallant arm protection to supply.

Sudden the lurid heavens obscurely frown,  
 And sweeping gusts the coming storm proclaim ;  
 Flattery's soft voice the howling tempests drown,  
 While the roofs catch the greedy lightning's flame.  
 Loud in their fears, the attendant train exclaim  
 The light built fabric ne'er can stand the blast,  
 And all its insecure foundations blame :  
 Tumultuously they rush : the chief aghast  
 Beholds his throne o'erturned, his train dispersing fast.



Psyche dismayed, yet thoughtful of escape,  
 In anxious silence to the portal prest;  
 And freedom would have hailed in any shape  
 Though seen in death's tremendous colours drest:  
 But ah! she feels the knight's strong grasp arrest  
 Her trembling steps. "Think not," he cries, "to fly  
 "With yon false crowd who by my favours blest,  
 "Can now desert me when with changeful eye  
 "Inclement fortune frowns from yon dark angry sky."

While yet he spoke loud bursts the groaning hall,  
 With frightful peal the thundering domes resound,  
 Disjointed columns in wild ruin fall,  
 While the huge arches tremble to the ground.  
 Yet unappalled amid the crush is found  
 The daring chief: his hold he firm maintains  
 Though hideous devastation roars around;  
 Plunged headlong down his prey he still sustains,  
 Who in his powerful grasp in death-like swoon remains.



Down sinks the palace with its mighty lord,  
 Hurl'd from the awful steep with vehemence  
 Even to the floods below, which angry roared  
 And gaping wide received the weight immense :  
 Indignant still, with fearless confidence  
 He rose, high mounting o'er the heaving waves ;  
 Against their rage one arm is his defence,  
 The other still his lovely burden saves,  
 Though strong the billows beat, and fierce the tempest  
     raves.

The blazing star yet shone upon his brow,  
 And flamed triumphant o'er the dashing main ;  
 He rides secure the watery waste, and now  
 The sheltering shore he might in safety gain ;  
 The sheltering shore he shuns with proud disdain,  
 And breasts the adverse tide. Ah, rash resource !  
 Yon vessel, Prince, thou never shalt attain !  
 For plunging 'mid the deep, with generous force,  
 See where the lion's lord pursues thy hardy course !



Psyche a well known voice to life restores,  
Once more her eyes unclosing view the light,  
But not the waters, nor receding shores,  
One only object can arrest her sight,  
High o'er the flood she sees her valiant knight,  
And sudden joy, and hopes scarce trusted cheer  
Even in that awful moment's dread affright ;  
Her feeble cry indeed he cannot hear,  
But sees her out-stretched arms, and seems already near.

In vain the giant knight exerts his strength ;  
Urged by the impetuous youth the lion prest,  
And gaining fast upon his flight, at length  
Prepared his daring progress to arrest,  
And seized with furious jaw his struggling breast ;  
Gasping he loosed his hold—and Psyche lost  
The  $\delta$ 'erwhelming wave with ruin had opprest,  
But Constance, ever near when needed most,  
The sinking beauty caught and bore her to the coast.



Stung with the shame of the relinquished prey,  
Mad with revenge, and hate, and conscious pride,  
The knight, recovered from his short dismay,  
Dashes resistless through the foaming tide ;  
The billows yielding to his arm divide,  
As rushing on the youth he seeks the shore ;  
But now a combat strange on either side  
Amid the waves begins ; each hopes no more  
The engulfing deep his foe shall e'er to light restore.

Beside the cold inhospitable lands  
Where suns long absent dawn with lustre pale,  
Thus on his bark the bold Biscayen stands,  
And bids his javelin rouse the parent whale :  
Fear, pain, and rage at once her breast assail,  
The agitated ocean foams around  
Lashed by the sounding fury of her tail,  
Or as she mounts the surge with frightful bound,  
Wide echoing to her cries the bellowing shores resound.



Fierce was the contest, but at length subdued,  
The youth exulting sees his giant foe.  
With wonder still the enormous limbs he viewed  
Which lifeless now the waves supporting show ;  
His starred helm, that now was first laid low,  
He seized as trophy of the wonderous fight,  
And bade the sparkling gem on Constance glow,  
While Psyche's eyes, soft beaming with delight,  
Through tears of grateful praise applaud her gallant  
knight.