

One evening in early August he was in a room in Chelsea, drinking and singing old songs. His face was flushed, and he was overexcited. The songs seemed a relief to him, and he sang one after another. At the end of the evening, after someone had sung one of the usual English songs, he jumped up waving his glass, and sang uproariously in a language we none of us understood. His face was transfigured as he sang, and he swayed his whole body with the rhythm of his tune. When he had finished singing he tossed the wine down his throat, looked queerly at us, and then laughed to himself and sat suddenly down.

Afterwards two of his friends walked with him to the Embankment, as he lived at that time in lodgings on the south side of the river. Just as they turned up over Battersea Bridge, a man and a woman stepped across the road and waited in the lamplight. The man had a cap over his eyes, and a loose necktie. He was very straight, and walked more easily than a loafer. The woman had a scarlet shawl. As the three of them went by, the poet humming a tune for the others to hear, the woman touched his arm, and he looked round into her face.

"Good-night, you fellows," he said to the two who were with him, shook hands with them, which was not his usual custom, and left them, and went off with that strange couple. They