

Nay, stretch my length before you, in the dust
Darken the hair you praise, with very death
Entreat, beseech you, only that you go.

DE LOTBINIERE. There, lest my heart break. There, poor
child, I'll go.

DORETTE. Now? Now?

DE LOTBINIERE. Now, now. Why, you will make me laugh
At these so tender terrors. I will slip
Into the berried elder-brake that throws
Shade on your sill, and wait till he's within
And the door shut.

DORETTE. Go, go!

DE LOTBINIERE *slips from the door, which he leaves open,
and hides in the thicket that throws leaf-shadows upon
it throughout the afternoon. DORETTE again kneels
before the Pieta.*

DORETTE. Keep open door,
O Saviour, of Your mercy. Blot him out
In soft leaf-shadows like a little death.
Close Thou his eyes with webs, his breath with buds,
Shadow his life with slumber. Strew Thou me
Quick on the wind to blind them so they see not,
Nor hear. . . Ah!

JEAN *is heard singing as he approaches the house.*

JEAN. Three kings rode to Bethlehem
By the sand and the foam.
Three kings rode to Bethlehem,
Only two rode home.
O, he hath stayed to watch her face
And make his prayer thereto,
And to lay down, for his soul's grace,
The straw beneath her shoe.