

## — THE ARROW —

### AFTER "OUIDA."

She sat alone.

Solitude that must be infinitely wearying to thee,  
lovely maid.

For she is lovely.

Her eyes are blue with the blueness of the bluing  
water in the wooden tub, in which the bare-armed rosy-  
cheeked hired girl plunges the clothes on the *first* Mon-  
day of the yet infant week.

Her fragile nose is straight as the narrow path that  
leadeth to salvation.

Her brow is smooth and white as a sheet of note  
paper, e'er the cruel hand and the black marks of the  
devastating pen have left their blight upon it.

Her lips, soft and shining as butter in the burning  
months of sweetest summer, rival the blood-red glories  
of the tropic sunset in colour.

Her hair is gold; not the golden glint of the corn cob,  
nor the yellow shimmering of the sunflower, but gold—  
gold—as 18 carots.

Its interesting masses are crushed into a true lover's  
knot at the back of her unresponsive entêtée head, the  
front curls forming a fair and altogether heart-breaking  
pin-befrizzed bang; add to this a grace *all her own*,  
not vainly distributed, and a figure that combines the  
delicious curves of the old-fashioned hour-glass with the  
straight, erect fineness of the modern dude's cane, and  
you have Luisiana Deluvlymade in her eighteenth year.

A shadow fell, even stumbled, across her path.

A man—young, wildly handsome—with the horsey  
air of Byron's corsair came before her.

"You!!"

He bowed in silence, but into his night black eyes  
there flashed a red-hot A-1 tenderness born of the  
sound of her sleigh-bell-like voice.

"I thought," she continued in forty-below-zero tones,  
though her rose-tipped heaven-scented lips quivered,  
"we had said good-bye." A tide (composed of many  
waves) of emotion crossed the lover's Byronic all-soul  
face.

"I will not take your answer," he said.

"You *must*." Stern and unalterable as the laws of  
the Knights of Labour were the monosyllabic words  
that fell from that seemingly weak-as-a-kitten mouth.

They fell as sticks of green firewood on a tender corn  
upon his bursting heart.

He knelt at her feet; he took her hand, unresponsive  
to his touch as a brush handle, in his; he pressed those  
fingers, white and soft as slightly boiled macaroni, to his  
lava-like lips; he pleaded, as only the altogether mashed  
can plead, but she answered not.

Only she laughed a laugh that sounded to his tortured,  
mad-touched love-devoured heart like the cruel hum  
of the musquito when one is alone in the darkness of  
the sad never-to-be-forgotten hours of the ink-black  
night—alas!

"Tell me," he whispered at length, in a voice hoarse  
as a crow's, with double-distilled emotions, "that you  
love me even an iota."

She answered not.

"Tell me, at least, you love not Bob Williams."

"You ask too much." The cold tones of glassy rebuke,  
icy as the wind round the toboggan slide at night when  
one is waiting one's turn, stung him like a bumble bee's  
sharp bite, and his great self-control bust.

"Give me 'ope," he moaned; "give me 'ope, or I die."

(He was not illiterate, far from it: but an "early

English" education had rendered the aspiration of the  
letter H to him well nigh an impossibility.

What of that? Did not the fair damsel in "Patience"  
plead, "If not aesthetic, *at least* be "early English.")

She rose; she drew away her macaroni-like fingers  
from his touch.

"Ope on," she mocked, showing her pearly teeth like  
the beads along the edge of the—the coming fashionable  
white summer bonnet, "Ope ever; but go if you would  
please me, and never come back."

He stood for a moment, irresolute as the potato  
beetle on the city side walk, and then with slow, linger-  
ing step, like a tramp leaving the too charitable door, he  
went out of the well loved and ever to him gloriously  
enrapured presence.

She stood alone, in the sun-kept garden flower en-  
shrined, with the smile, mocking as empty beer bottles  
and yet sweet as strawberries and cream, still lingering  
on her tomato-like lips.

"He will come back," she said, "and then we shall be  
as happy as Yum Yum and Nanki Poo."

But she never saw him again.

He sunk under her cruel handspike-like words, and  
rapid consumption had him for her own.

He had gone far from home, taking with him only a  
valise containing some underclothes, a clean pair of  
socks, his bible and some flowers that *she* had gathered,  
and he left no address, so she had not even the poverty-  
stricken consolation of kissing him a last good-bye.

Vain *then* were the salt sea tears she shed, and black  
and bitter as a black draught was her soul-scorching  
remorse, as she lay on her face (her golden hair, like a  
load of upset straw, falling in wild confusion round her),  
prostrate by her great woe as a knocked down lightning  
rod.

Peace—even happiness came to her in the future, but  
slowly as a snail.

Young and soul-entrancingly beautiful though she  
was, the memory of "what had been" cast a gloom upon  
her life.

It had been bright as the first-class electric light.

It was now dull as the glow from an ill-trimmed,  
badly polished coal-oil-bespotted stable lantern.

Ever in the utterly silent hours of the night a face,  
Byronic and all-souled, rises before her, and she seems  
again to hear that hoarse and crow-like voice, "Give me  
'ope."

Such is life, alas! alas!

Oh! trifle not with happiness, she comes but once.

TRIX.

### A GROWL FROM A MIDSHIPMITE.

If there is a sound I hate  
'Tis to hear the bell strike eight,  
When resting of my pate  
On the pillow;  
For it is a sound I fear,  
Most terrible to hear,  
To them as earns their beer  
On the billow.

For then you have to go  
And leg it to and fro  
On deck, and not below,  
In the air;  
And hear the sentries tell,  
Whenever they strike the bell,  
How everything is well  
Everywhere.