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THE PASSIONS—A MASQUE.

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I dream'd,—(as wrapt in sleep I lay)—  
My Soul,—enfranchis'd,—fled  
To realms untrod by living clay,  
Unknown, save to the dead,—  
And to the Passions, which there rove,  
Provoking ghostly mirth,  
'Mid elfin scenes, by stream or grove,  
In mockery of earth.  
Methought I saw their phantom forms,  
As o'er this world they sweep,  
Uprifting soul of man, as storms,  
The bosom of the deep.  
Around an open space, there stood  
The shadowy multitudes,—  
In groups, in crowds,—by plain, by wood,  
In various attitudes,—  
Expecting the phantastic scene  
Which soon burst on the eye,—  
The Passions 'tir'd in actor sheen  
To mock man's misery!

SCENE I.

First came Revenge, with rapid stride,  
His dark eyes flashing fire,  
His raven locks he flung aside,  
And gnash'd his teeth with ire;  
His robe flew wildly in the wind:  
A crimson robe he wore,  
His hands, by contrast, slightly dimm'd—  
For they were red—with gore!  
His eye fell sudden on the stain—  
When quick as lightning's glare,  
A scorching glance flash'd from his brain,—  
He gasp'd,—as if for air,—  
But not for air, it was, I trow,  
Revenge, ne'er needs relief,  
Unknown to him remorse or wo,  
Nor heeds he wail of grief.  
He gasp'd,—'twas with concentr'd rage,  
As rapidly he trac'd  
With blood-shot eye, on Mem'ry's page,  
Foul inj'ry uneffac'd.  
'Twas for a moment only—then,  
As famish'd tiger might,  
That springs infuriate from his den—  
He bounded out of sight.

No sooner gone—than there arose,  
From out the shadowy crowd,  
Derisive shouts at human woes,  
Continued long and loud.  
A shrill, wild, goblin laugh there rang  
High sounding sharp and clear,—  
Uproarious although the clang  
Of mirthful jest and jeer.  
“Ho! Ho!” it rang in accents wild,  
And thus a voice was heard,  
“Oh Man!—thou less than idiot child,  
With animals go herd”

SCENE II.

Next Pride, with stately step advanc'd  
His lofty brow uprais'd,—  
Around him, rapidly he glanc'd,  
Then upwards sternly gaz'd—  
As though he scorn'd the world, its bars,  
The meannesses of Earth,—  
And sought beyond the distant stars,  
For priceless, spotless, worth.  
The lofty port,—the haughty look,  
The lip of high disdain,—  
All mark'd the mind that cannot brook  
The base, the mean, the vain.  
He pass'd:—again was heard the sound  
Of laughter shrill and loud  
The quip and jest flew quickly round,  
Derisive of the Proud.  
An elfin voice above it rang  
High sounding sharp and clear,  
Uproarious although the clang  
Of mirthful jest and jeer.  
“Ho! Ho!” it rang in accents wild,  
And thus the Elf jeer'd he  
“Oh Man! thou worse than idiot child,  
Too mean for mockery.”

SCENE III.

Then came Despair, with matted hair,  
And hollow, sunken, eyes,—  
Betraying in their vacant stare,  
The Worm that never dies.  
In vain, in vain, he sought relief!—  
He madly quaff'd the bowl,—