

The  
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*Reddite qua sunt Casaris, Casari; et qua sunt Dei, Deo.—Matt 22: 21.*

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CONQUEST.

A Roman boy, one of the court of Pilate,  
One morn stood musing 'gainst the temple wall  
Ere yet its golden gate had caught the rays  
Flashed from the sun now-up and flung them back  
To greet the quiet glory of the East.

The night before, ere he had left the street,  
He saw a dark and grumbling mass of men  
Moving in haste, all menacing of mood,  
And he, his boyish eagerness aroused,  
Mixed and went with them all the way until  
Gethsemani's dark garden had been reached.  
He saw the kiss, the seizure, and the blow  
That lopped the ear of one amongst the mob.  
A soldier's son, he loved to see a man  
Whose arm was faltered not by hopeless odds,  
But rather who would stand upon his right,  
Whatever the cost. But when he heard the voice  
Of Him the most aggrieved, requiring peace,  
The blood, that but a moment since had leaped  
Along his veins, was given pause, and he  
Fell silent and so watched what passed about.

He slept but light. Before the dawn he rose  
All ready to observe what might transpire,  
For he was certain that the rabble meant  
And did intend that harm should fall upon  
Him whom the previous night they had distrained.  
As by the temple wall he waiting stood,  
The sun all glorious arose and cast  
Its warmth against the chill of dark. So soon  
As day had come he heard the hum of voices  
And out from every way there came in pairs,  
And little groups, all kinds of men in age,  
Condition and behaviour.

One more hour,  
Then all the throng with voices-raised were met  
About the hall where Roman ruler gave  
The law unto Judea's conquered race.  
The throne that waited Pilate was upraised  
Upon a platform terraced round with steps,  
And 'gainst a pillar of the arch that spanned  
The judgment seat, there stood the boy again.  
The prisoner came, and his accusers came  
And Pilate. Then the boy stood straight and watched  
But never did his hardy spirit let  
The smallest semblance gleam athwart his face  
Of all that passed within his mind that hour  
Save once, once only, only when he turned away  
And blushed that Roman could be so debased,  
As to forgive himself a coward's act;  
Then shame his cheeks encrimsoned, and his hands  
Were clenched until the nails bit deep the flesh.

The long, long way where went the cross he went,  
He saw its falls, and weakness rising up  
To fall again, and yet again to fall;  
Saw Veronica soothe the wounded face,  
The holy women weep, and Simon strong  
Accept the galling weight on shoulders broad  
Unwillingly. He saw the hands and feet  
Transfixed with nails; a Man's full weight reared thus  
Against the sky twixt two suspended thieves.  
Anon he stood, still silent, reverent,  
For the end had come, and there he never left  
Until there came good men, with linens fine  
To wrap the dead. The sepulchro was reached,  
The last rites done, and all withdrew save him.  
A short way off he stayed, now on his knees  
Unmindful there of dark or storm or fright.

While yet he knelt, he thought that he could hear  
A sound of mighty chorus welling forth,  
And springing up he listened more intent  
And heard the anthem grow in sound, and swell  
Its volume out until it seemed to roll  
In waves against the sealed gates of Heaven.  
In time so short that he could scarcely count  
A dozen passing breaths, the music ceased,  
And all the air took on a noiseless calm.  
He never knew a time so still before;  
No, never in the nights when he had walked  
Alone far out from his great father's camp,  
While Roman legions dreamed of war and Rome,  
For even there, though naught else human was,  
Sweet birds of night and croaking things there were  
To mark out periods of night with sound.  
But now, not even one small twig did drop,  
No breath of air disturbed a single leaf,  
No star glanced out; the city's walls were hid,  
And all the breath of nature, save his own,  
Seemed fled.

The spell was broke by tramp of men  
Who came to guard the tomb. He then threw off  
His manner and stole back into the city.  
But who shall say what thoughts had all day long  
Impelled him on his course: or what they were  
That stayed him in the house alone all day  
When day sprang fair again from that foul night.  
The moon had reached its height and just begun  
Its course adown the western sky to take,  
When gliding from the house, the boy passed out  
Beyond the city's wall, and swiftly went  
In bright expectancy, until he reached  
The spot where he had heard the chorus grand  
And marked the awful stillness of the night,  
And there awaited patiently the dawn,  
His eyes unwavering fixed upon the tomb.  
All glorious rose the sun on Easter day,  
The weary guard marked gratefully its pace  
When sudden rose a shout of dire alarm  
From their astonished lips, and from the boy's  
A cry of joy; back the great stone rolled  
And coming forth the Son of Man appeared  
Like some ethereal spirit radiant.  
Then the boy fell down in lowly worship  
And 'twas long ere he arose.

Among the first,  
He fell in Rome in after years, although  
He was a Roman nobly born, and young,  
And pleasing in the sight of all who knew.

CYRIL.

EASTER HYMN.

Angel bands now sweetly sing,  
Cherub fingers strike the lyre,  
"Glory to our risen King,"  
Hymns the burning seraph choir.  
Earth and heaven, sky and sea,  
All rejoice, oh God! with Thee.  
Ceaseless echoes, glad refrains,  
Far and wide the world proclaims;  
Silvery bells of Easter bright,  
Fill all hearts with pure delight,  
Mingling in the sweetest strains  
Christ triumphant ever reigns.  
To Thee, Father, King divine,  
From the soul's unworthy shrine  
Fervent prayers of deepest love,  
Mount High unto your throne above.  
May we with you, 'mong the blest,  
One day rise for endless rest.

PAULINE BOWEN