

The Song of Songs

By Alice M. Winlow.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The Shulamite Maid sits at her window and gazes out through the lattice. A song is heard in the distance.

The maid speaks:

"The voice of my Beloved!

He comes to me leaping upon the mountains,
My Beloved is fleet of foot as the hart,
Swift as an arrow of light."

The rustic lover, approaching the lattice window:

"Come, my love, my fair one,
Arise and come with me,
The winter is past and the rain is over and gone,

The birds are singing,
The voice of the turtle is heard in the land,
All the earth is lovely and fair to look upon.
Green figs are on the fig tree,
And the vines with the tender grape give a good smell.

Arise, my love, and come with me.
O my Dove! in thy sweet shelter
Guarded from all harm and evil,
Speak, let me hear thy voice."

The maid (singing the vineyard song):

"Take us the foxes, the little foxes,
They spoil the vines and our vines have tender grapes."

(She reaches out her arms and clasps her lover's hands.)

"My Beloved is mine and I am his.
Your garments are fragrant of the lilies;
Down among the lilies you have eaten,
Your garments have the sweet smell of the fields.

But night comes, O my Beloved,
Like an arrow of light from yonder sinking sun,

O turn, my Beloved, and leave me;
But when the shadows flee and the day breaks,
Wait for me in the garden,
You shall look on my face, O my Beloved."

SCENE II.

The Shulamite Maid is in the garden in the early morning. She watches her lover approach from a distance. Her hair is twined with leaves and tendrils of the vine. She dances the Dance of the Vineyard and sings:

"My Beloved is mine and I am his,
He feedeth among the lilies."

Suddenly the sound of chariots is heard and loud laughter. The maid turns to flee.

Voice: "Return, return, O Shulamite,
The King bids thee return."

The maid stands still. King Solomon and attendants appear.

The Maid: "What will ye see in the Shulamite maid?"

Solomon: "I see in thee the beauty of the angel hosts

As they danced at Mahanaim,
Thy dancing is as the dancing of the angels,
The form of beauty not less fair."

He turns to the attendants and gives an order to seize the maid. The attendants seize her and carry her

to the chariot. The rustic lover follows after the chariots, distracted.

ACT II. SCENE I.

The royal harem. Beautiful women recline, they are gorgeously arrayed, and prattle of their desire to win the favor of Solomon.

First Beauty:

"Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth."

Second Beauty (stretching out her arms):

"Thy love is better than wine!"

Chorus of Women:

"Thy name is as ointment poured forth,
Therefore do the virgins love thee!"

Third Beauty:

"Invite me into thy presence!"

Chorus:

"We will obey thy kingly word."

In the midst of song and jest the Shulamite maid is brought in. She is very dark, but splendid and beautiful as a night of stars.

The Maid (amazed at the fair beauty of the women):

"I am black."

Chorus of Women:

"But thou art comely."

Maid:

"O ye Daughters of Jerusalem,
I am black as those that dwell in the tents of Kedar."

Chorus:

"Thou art beautiful as the curtains of Solomon."

Maid (turning away):

"Gaze not upon me,
I am black because the sun hath looked upon me,
My mother's children hated me,
They made me the keeper of the vineyard,
My own vineyard have I not kept."

The maid is led to a divan, gazing out of the window she murmurs:

"O thou whom my soul loveth,
Where are thy flocks resting?
Why should I be as one veiled?
My heart is with thee where thou feedest among the lilies."

Chorus of Women (deriding her):

"Go away, then, thou fairest among women,
And find out where thy shepherd is;
Feed thy kids beside the shepherd's tent."

Solomon enters; he approaches the maid, who makes obeisance.

"O my love, thou art like a sleek black mare,
Thy cheeks shall be comely with jewels,
Thy neck adorned with chains of gold,
These braids of hair shall be splendid with gold and silver."

The Maid (repulsing him):

"My Beloved is a bundle of myrrh to me,
All night shall he be in my heart,
He is a cluster of henna-flowers,
His garments smell of their fragrance."

Solomon:

"Behold, thou art fair, my love,
Thou hast dove's eyes."

Maid (turning from him and stretching her arms toward the vineyard):

"Behold, Thou art fair, my Beloved;
In our bower of beauty,