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THE WOOD TURTLE

BY EDGAR FAWCETT.

GIRT with the grove's aerial sigh,
In clumsy stupor, deaf as fate,
Near this coiled naked root you lie,
Imperiously inanimate!

Between these woodlands where we met
And your grim languor, void of grace,
My glance, dumb sylvan anchoret,
Mysterious kinsmanship can trace.

For in your chequered shape are shown
The miry black of swamp and bog,
The tawny brown of lichened stone,
The inertness of the tumbled log!

But when you break this lifeless pause
And from your parted shell outspread
A rude array of lumbering claws,
A length of lean dark snaky head;

I watch from sluggish torpor start
These vital signs, uncouth and strange,
And mutely murmur to my heart:
'Ah me! how lovelier were the change

'If yonder tough oak, seamed with scars,
Could give some white wild form release,
With eyes amid whose wistful stars
Burned memories of immortal Greece!'