

The wicked sister clapt her hands and laught ;
Then all the dead fell on him.

Aldwyth. Edith, Edith—

Edith. What was he like, this husband
like to thee ?

Call not for help from me. I knew him not.
He lies not here : not close beside the stand-
dard.

Here fell the truest, manliest hearts of
England.

Go further hence and find him.

Aldwyth. She is crazed !

Edith. That doth not matter either. Lower
the light.
He must be here.

*Enter two Canons, Osgod and Athelric, with
torches. They turn over the dead bodies and ex-
amine them as they pass.*

Osgod. I think that this is Thurkill.

Athelric. More likely Godric.

Osgod. I am sure this body
Is Altwig, the king's uncle.

Athelric. So it is !

No, no—brave Gurth, one gash from brow to
knee ?

Osgod. And here is Leofwin.

Edith. And here is *He* !

Aldwyth. Harold ! Oh no—nay, if it were—
my God,
They have so maim'd and martyr'd all his face
There is no man can swear to him.

Edith. But one woman !

Look you, we never mean to part again.

I have found him, I am happy.

Was there not some one ask'd me for forgive-
ness ?

I yield it freely, being the true wife
Of this dead King, who never bore revenge.

Enter Count William and William Malet.

William. Who be these women ? and what
body is this ?

Edith. Harold, thy better !

William. Ay, and what art thou ?

Edith. His wife !

Malet. Not true, my girl, here is the Queen !

[*Pointing out Aldwyth.*]

William to Aldwyth. Wast thou his Queen ?

Aldwyth. I was the Queen of Wales.

William. Why then of England. Madam,
fear us not.

[*To Malet.*] Knowest thou this other ?

Malet. When I visited England,
Some held she was his wife in secret—some—
Well—some believed she was his paramour.

Edith. Norman, thou liest ! liars all of you,

Your saints and all ! I am his wife ! and she—
For look, our marriage ring !

[*She draws it off the finger of Harold.*]

I lost it somehow—

I lost it, playing with it when I was wild.

That bred the doubt : but I am wiser now. . .

I am too wise . . . Will none among you all

Bear me true witness—only for this once—

That I have found it here again ? [*She puts
it on.*]

And thou,

Thy wife am I for ever and evermore.

[*Falls on the body and dies.*]

William. Death!—and enough of death for
this one day,

The day of St. Calixtus, and the day,

My day, when I was born.

Malet. And this dead king's,
Who, king or not, hath kinglike fought and
fallen,

His birthday, too. It seems but yester-even

I held it with him in his English halls,

His day, with all his roof-tree ringing 'Harold,'

Before he fell into the snare of Guy ;

When all men counted Harold would be king,

And Harold was most happy.

William. Thou art half English.

Take them away !

Malet, I vow to build a church to God

Here on this hill of battle ; let our high altar

Stand where their standard fell . . . where
these two lie.

Take them away, I do not love to see them.

Pluck the dead woman off the dead man,
Malet !

Malet. Faster than ivy. Must I hack her
arms off ?

How shall I part them ?

William. Leave them. Let them be ?

Bury him and his paramour together.

He that was false in oath to me, it seems

Was false to his own wife. We will not give him

A Christian burial : yet he was a warrior,

And wise, yea truthful, till that blighted vow

Which God avenged to-day.

Wrap them together in a purple cloak

And lay them both upon the waste sea-shore

At Hastings, there to guard the land for which

He did forswear himself—a warrior—ay,

And but that Holy Peter fought for us,

And that the false Northumbrian held aloof,

And save for that chance arrow which the
Saints

Sharpen'd and sent against him—who can
tell ?—

Three horses had I slain beneath me : twice

I thought that all was lost. Since I knew
battle,

And that was from my boyhood, never yet—

No, by the splendour of God—have I fought
men

Like Harold and his brethren, and his guard

Of English. Every man about his king

Fell where he stood. They loved him : and,
pray God