

Nicodemus

"Christabel"

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"Tis the middle of the night by the castle clock.
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock.
Tu-whit! Tu-whoo!
And bark again, the crowing cock.
How drowsily it crew"
This exquisite child of the Baron roams.
Through the forest mesmerized by moonlight alone.
Here she dreams in fear, for her betrothed knight.
Until her prayers are torn asunder by a moan of fright.

What evil secrets lie behind the giant oak?
A desperate vision of female perfection dressed in
white.
She glittered to the eye, sensual and luminescent.
She seems to glow, she seemed to glow...
How did she come to the lands of Sir Leoline?
Will her prayers protect her night so well?
Hush, healing heart of Christabel!

Revealed to her upon the asking of maiden lost.
The name of Geraldine and the story of...
Crime against a lady of noble line.
For she did tell a strange and frightful tale, with voice
so sweet.
She shall enchant, she will entrance.
Her glow would cast a shadow that would...
Swallow the sweet child whole.

A willing audience here in the wood shrouded cold.
Left to wait in brisk midnight, by dark and faceless
rouges.
She makes demand on thy lady's hand.
To see this maiden home,
Together women of night make haste for candlelight.
To the estate of Sir Leoline, to hell it chimes.
To rest her there for the evening to pass unfold.

Over the moat to the gate of his chivalry bold.
Geraldine fell, sweet Christabel.
Carry her over the threshold well.
Though up she came as if she never were in pain.

Past the hearth and into the view of the portrait of
Baron.

But when the lady passed,
There came a tongue of light, and a fit of flame.

Thy temptress is divine!

"Sweet Christabel, her feet doth bare.
And jealous of the listening air.
They steal their way from stair to stair.
Now in the glimmer, and now in the gloom.
And now they pass the Baron's room.
As still as death, with stifled breath.
And now they have reached her chamber door.
And now Geraldine doth press down,
The rushes of the chamber floor.
Christabel trims the light,
And makes it bright again!"

The forlorn maiden drinks,
A wild flower wine for Geraldine.
Standing now in pride, she summons her savior.
"Quoth Christabel, so let it be.
And as the lady bade did she.
Her gentle limbs dis he undress,
And lay down in her loveliness."

And as she lay in wait,
Her heart will race for the night to wait for.
A sinful view she keeps,
As robes fall to the maiden's feet.

Eyes that burn the soul.
She lay beside this latest prize.
And in her words she doth told,
Her prisoner, in arms she holds:

"In the touch of this bosom there worketh a spell.
Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel.
Thou knowest tonight, and wilt know tomorrow.
This mark of my shame, this seal of my sorrow."

... Sunrise...

Oh what evil night was this?
To wake the morn in sinful bliss?
Her look askance seethes disease.
For the dawn hath no rest when by sin she pleased.

With tear for if her mother near.
A watching angel hath no fear.

From her death she came from her desire.
To be loved, returned by this noble sire.

But now upon the waking moans of dawn,
Her magic lay me still at mouth.
Anxious mementos with the drawing in of breath.
Be still my beating heart, for it doth quake beneath my
breast!

My father kind and strong for now he gaze upon.
The beauty that stands before his noble grace.
Her name and face ring familiar.
A lost friend by poisoned words,
So long ago but now his daughter here.

The Bard he bade make haste.
To right the wrongs of time lost wrongs.
To move swiftly and carry verse to his dear lost friend.
But the Bard awaits to tell a tale, a dream to him last
night.
A dove with voice of mine, as upon its neck a snake
doth feed.
And swelled its neck as if swelled hers.

Christabel escapes the dying trance of beauty,
And gains her senses, paused, and silently prayed.
She dare not allow the unholy passions reign.
As she doth fall to the Baron's feet,
So by her father's countenance she may be saved.

Here upon the castle floor, she cries in bitter anguish.
Her secrets of the passing night, she dare not tell.
Sweet Christabel doth plead for her father to heed her
wishes.
Upon her lost mother's seal to send the creature.
Back to the night from whence it came.

"Within the Baron's heart and brain.
If thoughts, like these, had any share,
They only swelled his rage and pain.
And did but work confusion there,
His heart was cleft with pain and rage.
His cheeks they quivered, his eyes were wild.
Dishonored thus in his old age:
Dishonored by his only child."

"And all his hospitality,
To the wronged daughter of his friend.
By more than woman's jealousy,
Brought thus to a disgraceful end...
He rolled his eye with stern regard,

Upon the gentle minstrel bard,
And said in tones abrupt, austere...
'Why Bracy! Dost thou loiter here!
I bade thee hence! ' The bard obeyed,
And turning from his own sweet maid,
The aged knight, Sir Leoline,
Led forth the lady Geraldine!"

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