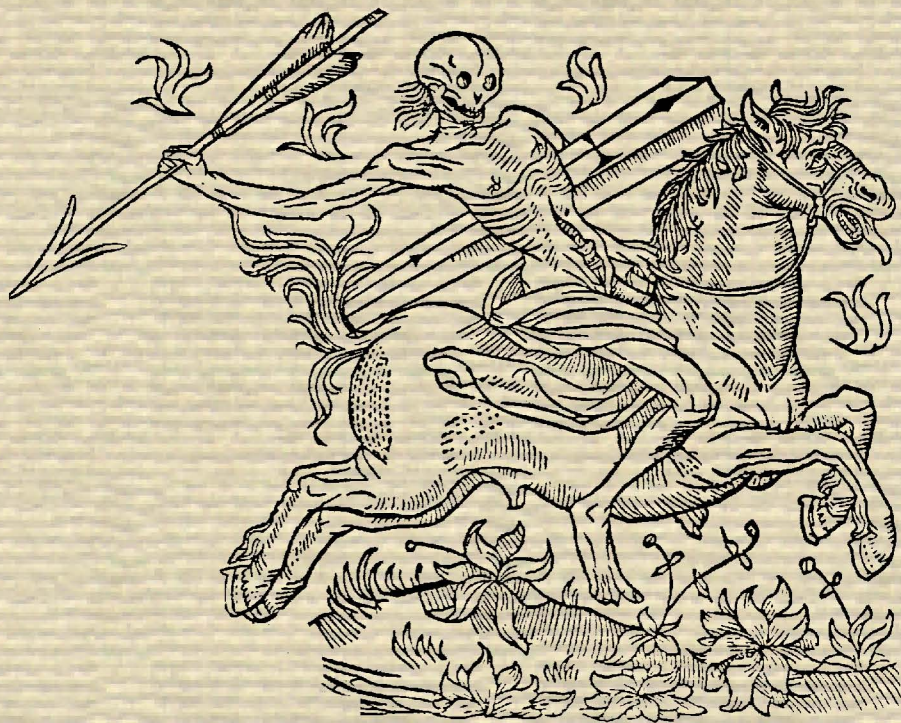


The 1801 Anthology That Launched
The Gothic-Romantic Poetry Movement

Tales of Wonder



VOLUME I

Written and Collected by
MATTHEW GREGORY LEWIS

New Annotated Edition by
BRETT RUTHERFORD



TALES
Of
WONDER

WRITTEN AND COLLECTED
BY
MATTHEW GREGORY LEWIS

IN TWO VOLUMES

A NEW CRITICAL EDITION
EDITED & ANNOTATED
BY
BRETT RUTHERFORD

VOLUME I



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INTRODUCTION

Tales of Wonder is a landmark work in the history of Gothic literature, and a milestone in Romantic poetry. Percy Shelley owned the book as a young man, and drew ghosts and monsters in its margins; indeed, a cluster of Shelley's juvenile poems are imitations of the supernatural ballads collected here. Sir Walter Scott allowed himself to be tutored by its author and compiler, and both Scott and Robert Southey provided Gothic poems and ballads for the collection, originally to be titled *Tales of Terror*.

When the promised anthology failed to appear in due course, Scott pulled together the poems he had in hand and privately printed a sampler, titled *An Apology for Tales of Terror*. Only five copies of this 1799 book survive, and its mere existence has led some scholars to believe, erroneously, that the *Apology* is the first edition of the present work.

Tales of Wonder was published in 1801 in two volumes in London, printed by W. Bulmer and Co., and sold by J. Bell. A second edition was issued in 1805 in Dublin, "printed for P. Wogan."

Another book, confusingly titled *Tales of Terror*, soon appeared, and as the bookseller suggested it as a suitable companion for Lewis's *Tales of Wonder*, it was mistakenly assumed by many to be Lewis's own work. The authorship of the spurious *Tales of Terror* has never been determined. The spurious anthology contains a number of inflated parodies of supernatural ballads. Aside from an interesting verse Apologia for the Gothic that reflects contemporaneous debates about horror and The Sublime, it is otherwise a sophomoric production, perhaps intended to ridicule Lewis. Lewis seems to have ignored it, or to have quietly enjoyed the further notoriety it produced. It cost someone a good deal of money to produce, so it is not beyond the realm of possibility that Lewis participated in some way.

More than two decades ago, I came into possession of a dog-eared copy of Henry Morley's 1887 book titled *Tales of Terror and Wonder*. Morley cobbled together the Lewis original with the spurious *Tales of Terror*, and, where pages were missing from his copies of the two books, he simply omitted those poems. Morley's introductory essay has so many rabbit holes of error that it is best not to read it, nor to torment others by citing it.

My original intent was simply to find Lewis's first edition and make it available once again.

At first glance, many of these poems seem to be works of pure imagination. Many occupy a Gothic realm of knights, libidinous monks, devils and witches, ravished damsels and haunted woods. Once I had

determined to annotate the poems, however — intending to limit myself to defining arcane words for today’s students or general readers — I discovered that many of these poems have a deep history, rooted not only in their literary sources but also in specific times and places. My intertextual detective work has sought out alternate tellings of the narrative in these poems, in some cases finding the actual source, one dating back to 300 BCE.

The research into these poems also introduced me to the work of several generations of scholars who collected Runic poetry and English and Scottish ballads. These eccentrics — some clerics and some gentlemen with the income and inclination to explore monastery libraries or transcribe Runic stone carvings — were at work in a serious intellectual project: to ground Britain in an alternate pre-history that was neither Biblical nor Greco-Roman. This paganistic yearning for Icelandic and Danish and Saxon literary and historical roots, is celebrated in some of the poems in this book. Although there are no dour Druids here, the lore of Wotan/Odin and the sombre epics of the North figure large.

The annotations in this new edition document the origins of the poems Lewis translated or selected. In some cases, I have inserted alternate translations or originals; in others I am content to point interested readers to the sources. The great mother lode of English and Scottish ballads can be found in Bishop Percy’s *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, LeGrand’s *Fabliaux*, Evans’ *A Collection of Old Ballads*, and Child’s *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*. These editors, who collected ballads from oral transmission, also stood on the shoulders of monks and chroniclers who passed along, in Latin, wonderful tall tales such as “The Old Woman of Berkeley.” One approaches these ballad compilations with awe and caution commingled: some of the poets in this collection were involved in the creation of mock ballads that passed back into the literature.

Now that this first of two volumes is in hand, it is possible to step back and look at the remarkable range of work Lewis has assembled, skewed as the first volume is with the compiler’s eagerness to put his own work forward. Here we are treated to a ghost/vampire tale first penned around 300 BCE; a Runic funeral song from the tenth century CE; a meeting between the Saxon invader of England and a Roman ghost; a Nordic warrior woman’s incantation to raise her father from the dead; Goethe’s blood-curdling multi-voiced “Erl-King” and fatal water nymphs; the monk and nun who try (unsuccessfully) to save their witch mother from the Devil; a proud painter’s encounters with Satan; a doomed romance set in the horrific landscape of the War of the Spanish Succession; and the endless forest ride of “The Wild Huntsmen.” (In

the second volume, the reader will encounter work by Burns, Dryden, Jonson, Gray, and Bürger, as well as items from the Percy and Evans collections of old ballads.)

One caveat for the reader weaned on modern poetry is that even the “Romantic” poets featured here employ forms, meters and language from an era earlier than their own, even sometimes to the extent of perpetrating a literary hoax à la Ossian. The Gothic esthetic by its nature is backward-looking. It takes some adjustment for today’s reader to enjoy these poems for what they are, and read them in the context of their own time. Against the stifling moral and correct tone of most 18th century verse, this is pretty strong stuff, a bracing counter-esthetic.

We need also remember that Lewis — whose Gothic plays shocked and appalled London audiences, and whose lurid novel, *The Monk*, mixed sex and demon possession — invested much in this book. Far more than just self-promotion of his own Gothic verses, the range of material selected demonstrates the unbroken interest in the weird and wonderful stretching back to antiquity.

A certain degree of macabre relish, what I call “the smile behind the skull,” is also evident throughout. The poems here are unlikely to frighten anyone other than the superstitious, or very small children; instead, they delight those of a Gothic predilection who enjoy the sublime frisson of danger and supernatural awe. The tone of this book sets the mode for erudition, arcane allusion, atmosphere and devastation — with a dose of *Grand Guignol* humor for the initiate — that we will see later in Edgar Allan Poe and H.P. Lovecraft. Lovecraft would have recognized Lewis and the antiquarian eccentrics whose work anticipates Gothic poetry, as brothers.

I would like to acknowledge Lance Arney, who many years ago undertook the task of typing the 1887 *Tales of Terror and Wonder* into a computer. He raised the question of whether some of the poems in that edition were so absurd as to be parodies, and, as it turned out, he was correct.

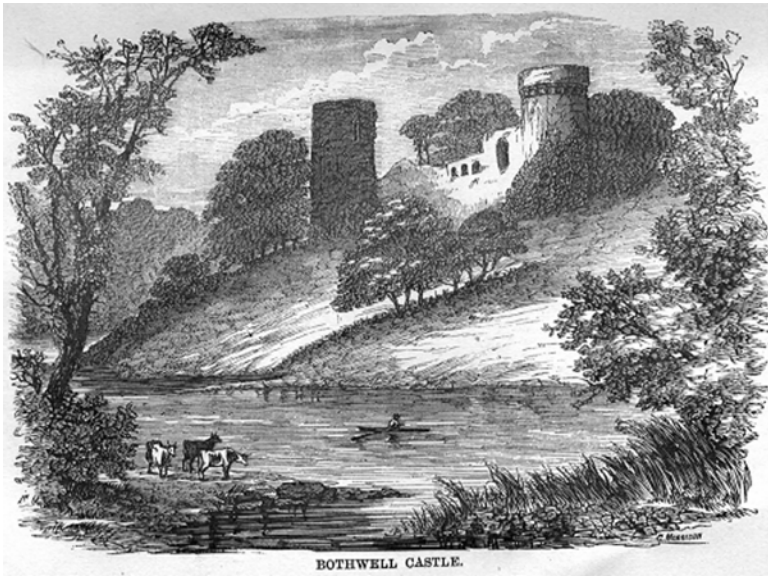
I hope that this new edition of the real *Tales of Wonder* will help restore Matthew Gregory Lewis to his rightful place in the history of Gothic literature and of Romanticism. Although biographers of Mary Shelley have made note of “Monk” Lewis’s visit to the Villa Deodati in 1816, and the sharing ghost stories among Lewis, Lord Byron, Dr. Polidori, and Percy and Mary Shelley, none seem to have realized who among them had the most to say about the writing of a ghost story.

—Brett Rutherford
University of Rhode Island
October 10, 2010

PS. All of the unattributed annotations in this book are my own. The original footnotes by Lewis are marked as “—MGL,” and I have availed myself of Sir Walter Scott’s 1833 annotations to his own poetry, marking those “—WS.” I have added my initials to annotations only on those occasions where mine are interspersed with those of others, or where I wanted to make clear that a certain note was *not* by Lewis or one of the poets. I welcome correspondence from readers and scholars, and would be pleased to correct or elaborate on any of the notes should new information come to light. As the great Cuvier wrote: “An error corrected is new knowledge.”

The 32 items identified in the Table of Contents with large Roman numerals correspond to the items originally published in Volume I of *Tales of Wonder*. The indented items in the Table of Contents comprise the source documents, alternate texts and additional notes.

TALES OF WONDER



BOTHWELL CASTLE.

Bothwell's Bonny Jane

M. G. LEWIS

Bothwell Castle is beautifully situated upon the Clyde, and fronts the ruins of Blantyre Priory¹. The estate of Bothwell has long been, and continues to be, in the possession of the Douglas family.

Loud roars the north round Bothwell's hall,
And fast descends the pattering rain:
But streams of tears still faster fall
From thy blue eyes, oh! bonny Jane!

Hark! hark! — I hear, with mournful yell,
The wraiths² of angry Clyde complain;
But sorrow bursts with louder swell
From thy fair breast, oh! bonny Jane!

“Tap! — tap!” — who knocks? — the door unfolds;
The mourner lifts her melting eye,
And soon with joy and hope beholds
A reverend monk approaching nigh:

His air is mild, his step is slow,
His hands across his breast are laid,
And soft he sighs, while bending low,
“St. Bothan³ guard thee, gentle maid!”

To meet the friar the damsel ran;
She kissed his hand, she clasped his knee.
—“Now free me, free me, holy man,
Who com'st from Blantyre Prio-rie!”

¹ *Blantyre Priory*. Established in 1296 AD and abandoned by the 1600s.

² *Wraiths*. Water-spirits —MGL

³ *St. Bothan*. The patron saint of Bothwell. —MGL

— “What mean these piteous cries, daughter?
St. Bothan be thy speed!
Why swim in tears thine eyes, daughter?
From whom would’st thou be freed?” —

— “Oh! father, father! know, my sire,
Though long I knelt, and wept, and sigh’d,
Hath sworn, ere twice ten days expire,
His Jane shall be Lord Malcolm’s bride!” —

“Lord Malcolm is rich and great, daughter, —
And comes of a high degree;
He’s fit to be thy mate, daughter,
So, *Benedicite!*” —

— “Oh! father, father! say not so!
Though rich his halls, though fair his bowers, —
There stands a hut, where Tweed doth flow,
I prize beyond Lord Malcolm’s towers:

“There dwells a youth where Tweed doth glide,
On whom nor rank, nor fortune smiles;
I’d rather be that peasant’s bride,
Than reign o’er all Lord Malcolm’s isles.” —

— “But should you flee away, daughter,
And wed with a village clown,
What would your father say, daughter?
How would he fume and frown!”

— “Oh! he might frown and he might fume,
And Malcolm’s heart might grieve and pine,
So Edgar’s hut for me had room,
And Edgar’s lips were pressed to mine!” —

⁴ *Benedicite*. Latin: Bless you.

— “If at the castle gate, daughter,
At night, thy love so true
Should with a courser⁵ wait, daughter, . . .
What, daughter, would’st thou do?” —

— “With noiseless step the stairs I’d press,
Unclose the gate, and mount with glee,
And ever, as on I sped, would bless
The abbot of Blantyre Prio-rie!” —

— “Then, daughter, dry those eyes so bright;
I’ll haste where flows Tweed’s silver stream
And when thou see’st, at dead of night,
A lamp in Blantyre’s chapel gleam,

“With noiseless step the staircase press,
For know, thy lover there will be;
Then mount his steed, haste on, — and bless
The abbot of Blantyre Prio-rie!” —

Then forth the friar he bent his way,
While lightly danc’d the damsel’s heart;
Oh! how she chid the length of day,
How sighed to see the sun depart!

How joyed she when eve’s shadows came,
How swiftly gained her towers so high! —
— “Does there in Blantyre shine a flame?
Ah! no — the moon deceived mine eye!” —

Again the shades of evening lour;
Again she hails the approach of night.
— “Shines there a flame in Blantyre tower?
Ah! no — ’tis but the northern light!⁶” —

⁵ *Courser*. A fast horse, fit for racing or a rapid escape from pursuers.

⁶ *Northern light*. The Aurora Borealis.

But when arriv'd All-hallow E'en⁷,
What time the night and morn divide,
The signal-lamp by Jane was seen
To glimmer on the waves of Clyde.

She cares not for her father's tears,
She feels not for her father's sighs;
No voice but headstrong Love's she hears,
And down the staircase swift she hies.

Though thrice the Brownie⁸ shrieked — "Beware!" —
Though thrice was heard a dying groan,
She oped the castle gate. — Lo! there
She found the friendly monk alone.

— "Oh! where is Edgar, father, say?" —
— "On! on!" the friendly monk replied;
"He feared his berry-brown steed should neigh,
"And waits us on the banks of Clyde."

Then on they hurried, and on they hied,
Down Bothwell's slope so steep and green,
And soon they reached the river's side —
Alas! no Edgar yet was seen!

Then, bonny Jane, thy spirits sunk;
Filled was thy heart with strange alarms!
— "Now thou art mine!" exclaimed the monk,
And clasp'd her in his ruffian arms.

⁷ *All-hallow E'en*. On this night witches, devils, &c., are thought, by the Scotch, to be abroad on their baneful errands. See Burns' poem, under the title of "Hallowe'en."—MGL [The all-pervasive pagan holiday of Hallowe'en (Samhain) was so little known in Lewis's time that it required a footnote! Before Fraser's *The Golden Bough* and its revelations, the Christian mythos had almost completely obscured the origins of Hallowe'en as the eve of the Druid New Year.—BR]

⁸ *Brownie*. The *Brownie* is a domestic spirit, whose voice is always heard lamenting, when any accident is about to befall the family to which she has attached herself—MGL.

“Know, yonder bark must bear thee straight,
Where Blantyre owns my gay control:
There Love and Joy to greet thee wait,
There Pleasure crowns for thee her bowl.

“Long have I loved thee, bonny Jane,
Long breathed to thee my secret vow!
Come then, sweet maid! — nay, strife is vain;
Not heaven itself can save thee now!”

The damsel shrieked, and would have fled,
When lo! his poniard⁹ pressed her throat!
— “One cry, and ’tis your last” he said,
And bore her fainting tow’rds the boat.

The moon shone bright; the winds were chained;
The boatman swiftly plied his oar;
But ere the river’s midst was gained,
The tempest-fiend was heard to roar.

Rain fell in sheets; high swelled the Clyde;
Blue flamed the lightning’s blasting brand!
— “Oh! lighten the bark!” the boatman cried,
“Or hope no more to reach the strand.

“E’en now we stand on danger’s brink!
E’en now the boat half filled I see!
Oh! lighten it soon, or else we sink!
Oh! lighten it of . . . your gay la-die!”

With shrieks the maid his counsel hears;
But vain are now *her* prayers and cries,
Who cared not for her father’s tears,
Who felt not for her father’s sighs!

⁹ *Poniard*. A dagger.

Fear conquer'd love! — In wild despair
The abbot view'd the watery grave,
Then seized his victim's golden hair,
And plunged her in the foaming wave!

She screams! — she sinks! — “Row, boatman, row!
The bark is light!” the abbot cries;
“Row, boatman, row to land!” — When lo!
Gigantic grew the boatman's size!

With burning steel his temples bound
Throbb'd quick and high with fiery pangs;
He roll'd his blood-shot eyeballs round,
And furious gnash'd his iron fangs;

His hands two gore-fed scorpions grasp'd;
His eyes fell joy and spite express'd.
— “Thy cup is full!” he said, and clasped
The abbot to his burning breast.

With hideous yell down sinks the boat,
And straight the warring winds subside;
Moon-silvered clouds through aether float,
And gently murmuring flows the Clyde.

Since then full many a winter's powers
In chains of ice the earth have bound;
And many a spring, with blushing flowers
And herbage gay, has robed the ground:

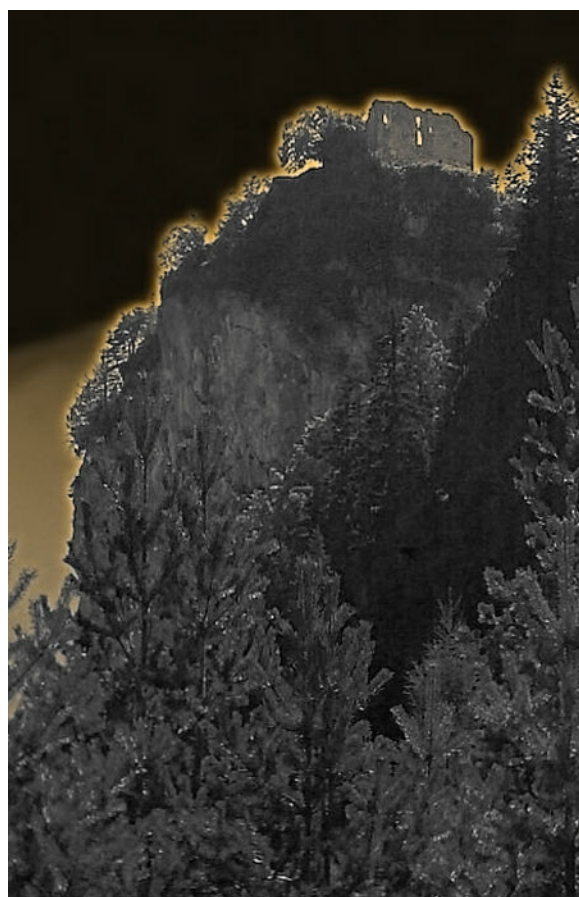
Yet legends say, at Hallow-E'en,
When Silence holds her deepest reign,
That still the ferryman-fiend is seen
To waft the monk and bonny Jane:

And still does Blantyre's wreck display
The signal-lamp at midnight hour;
And still to watch its fatal ray,
The phantom fair haunts Bothwell Tower;

Still tunes her lute¹⁰ to Edgar's name¹¹,
Still chides the hours which stay her flight;
Still sings — "In Blantyre shines the flame?
Ah! no! — 'tis but the northern light!"

¹⁰ *Lute*. Medieval plucked string instrument, still in use in the early 1700s; largely replaced by the mandolin and guitar. The lute remained a staple in Gothic literature, and is the instrument played by Roderick Usher in Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher*. The lute has enjoyed a revival as a result of the early music movement.

¹¹ *Tunes her lute to Edgar's name*. There may be a word-play here since the name "Edgar" contains the four musical notes E, D, G, and A.



Osríc the Líon

M. G. LEWIS

Since writing this Ballad, I have seen a French one, entitled “La Veillée de la Bonne Mère,” which has some resemblance with it.

Swift roll the Rhine’s billows, and water the plains,
Where Falkenstein Castle’s¹ majestic remains
Their moss-covered turrets still rear:
Oft loves the gaunt wolf ’midst the ruins to prowl,
What time from the battlements pours the lone owl
Her plaints in the passenger’s ear.

No longer resound through the vaults of yon hall
The song of the minstrel, and mirth of the ball;
Those pleasures for ever are fled:
There now dwells the bat with her light-shunning brood,
There ravens and vultures now clamour for food,
And all is dark, silent, and dread!

Ha! dost thou not see, by the moon’s trembling light
Directing his steps, where advances a knight,
His eye big with vengeance and fate?
’Tis Osríc the Líon² his nephew who leads,
And swift up the crackling old staircase proceeds,
Gains the hall, and quick closes the gate.

¹ *Falkenstein Castle* (Burg Falkenstein), “Falcon-Stone,” originally *Castrum Pffronten*, is a castle-ruin in the Bavarian Alps. It is the highest castle in Germany, built between 1270 and 1280 CE.

² *Osríc the Líon*. Lewis mixes Anglo-Saxon and German names in this poem. According to *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Osríc was a ruler of Northumbria (718-729 CE). Another Osríc, King of Sussex, died in 915 CE.

Now round him young Carloman³ casting his eyes,
Surveys the sad scene with dismay and surprise,
 And fear steals the rose from his cheeks.
His spirits forsake him, his courage is flown;
The hand of Sir Osric he clasps in his own,
 And while his voice falters he speaks.

— “Dear uncle,” he murmurs, “Why linger we here?
'Tis late, and these chambers are damp and are drear,
 Keen blows through the ruins the blast!
Oh! let us away and our journey pursue:
Fair Blumenberg’s Castle⁴ will rise on our view,
 Soon as Falkenstein forest is passed.

“Why roll thus your eyeballs? why glare they so wild?
Oh! chide not my weakness, nor frown, that a child
 Should view these apartments with dread;
For know, that full oft have I heard from my nurse,
There still on this castle has rested a curse,
 Since innocent blood here was shed.

“She said, too, bad spirits, and ghosts all in white,
Here used to resort at the dead time of the night,
 Nor vanish till breaking of day;
And still at their coming is heard the deep tone
Of a bell loud and awful — hark! hark! ‘twas a groan!
 “Good uncle, oh! let us away!” —

³ *Carloman*. A royal name: King Carloman (d. 771 CE) the son of Charles Martel, was succeeded by his son Charlemagne. This poem probably refers, however, to Carloman, King of Bavaria from 877 to 880 CE.

⁴ *Blumenberg* is a mountain peak near Eichstätt, Bavaria. Eichstätt is the home of the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, the first Bavarian University, founded in 1472. In Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, the hero travels to this university to conduct his studies. Was this poem one of the “ghost stories” Lewis shared with his hosts during his visit to the Shelleys, Byron and Dr. Polidori in the summer of 1816? One hastens to add that there is no “castle” in Mary Shelley’s novel: the monster is created in Victor Frankenstein’s student lodgings in Ingolstadt.

— “Peace, serpent!” thus Osric the Lion replies,
While rage and malignity gloom in his eyes;
 “Thy journey and life here must close:
Thy castle’s proud turrets no more shalt thou see;
No more betwixt Blumenberg’s lordship and me
 Shalt thou stand, and my greatness oppose.

“My brother lies breathless on Palestine’s plains,
And thou once removed, to his noble domains
 My right can no rival deny:
Then, stripling, prepare on my dagger to bleed;
No succour is near, and thy fate is decreed,
 Commend thee to Jesus, and die!” —

Thus saying, he seizes the boy by the arm,
Whose grief rends the vaulted hall’s roof, while alarm
 His heart of all fortitude robs;
His limbs sink beneath him; distracted with fears,
He falls at his uncle’s feet, bathes them with tears,
 And — “spare me! oh, spare me!” — he sobs.

But vainly the miscreant he strives to appease;
And vainly he clings in despair round his knees,
 And sues in soft accents for life;
Unmoved by his sorrow, unmoved by his prayer,
Fierce Osric has twisted his hand in his hair,
 And aims at his bosom a knife.

But ere the steel blushes with blood, strange to tell!
Self-struck, does the tongue of the hollow-toned bell
 The presence of midnight declare:
And while with amazement his hair bristles high,
Hears Osric a voice, loud and terrible, cry,
 In sounds heart-appalling — “Forbear!”



Straight curses and shrieks through the chambers resound,
Shrieks mingled with laughter: the walls shake around;
 The groaning roof threatens to fall;
Loud bellows the thunder, blue lightnings still flash;
The casements they clatter; chains rattle; doors clash,
 And flames spread their waves through the hall.

The clamour increases, the portals expand! —
O'er the pavement's black marble now rushes a band
 Of demons, all dropping with gore,
In visage so grim, and so monstrous in height,
That Carloman screams, as they burst on his sight,
 And sinks without sense on the floor.

Not so his fell uncle: — he sees, that the throng
Impels, wildly shrieking, a female along,
 And well the sad spectre he knows!
The demons with curses her steps onward urge;
Her shoulders, with whips formed of serpents, they scourge,
 And fast from her wounds the blood flows.

“Oh! welcome!” she cried, and her voice spoke despair;
“Oh! welcome, Sir Osric, the torments to share,
Of which thou hast made me the prey.
Twelve years have I languished thy coming to see;
Ulrilda, who perished dishonoured by thee,
Now calls thee to anguish away!

“Thy passion once sated, thy love became hate;
Thy hand gave the draught which consigned me to fate,
Nor thought I death lurked in the bowl:
Unfit for the grave, stained with lust, swelled with pride,
Unblessed, unabsolved, unrepenting, I died,
And demons straight seized on my soul.

“Thou com’st, and with transport I feel my breast swell:
Full long have I suffer’d the torments of hell,
And now shall its pleasures be mine!
See, see, how the fiends are athirst for thy blood!
Twelve years has *my* panting heart furnished their food,
Come, wretch, let them feast upon thine!” —

She said, and the demons their prey flocked around;
They dashed him, with horrible yell, on the ground,
And blood down his limbs trickled fast;
His eyes from their sockets with fury they tore;
They fed on his entrails, all reeking with gore,
And his *heart* was Ulrilda’s repast.

But now the grey cock told the coming of day!
The fiends with their victim straight vanished away,
And Carloman’s heart throbbed again;
With terror recalling the deeds of the night,
He rose, and from Falkenstein speeding his flight,
Soon reached his paternal domain.

Since then, all with horror the ruins behold;
No shepherd, though strayed be a lamb from his fold,
 No mother, though lost be her child,
The fugitive dares in these chambers to seek,
Where fiends nightly revel, and guilty ghosts shriek
 In accents most fearful and wild!

Oh! shun them, ye pilgrims! though late be the hour,
Though loud howl the tempest, and fast fall the shower;
 From Falkenstein Castle be gone!
There still their sad banquet hell's denizens share;
There Osric the Lion still raves in despair:
 Breathe a prayer for his soul, and pass on!

Sir Hengist

German —M. G. LEWIS

Hermann, or Arminius¹, is the favourite hero of Germany, whose liberty he defended against the oppression of Rome: Flavus, his brother, sided with the Romans, and in consequence his memory is as much detested by his countrymen as that of Arminius is beloved. — I forget where I met the original of this Ballad².

Where rolls the Weser's³ golden sand,
Did erst Sir Hengist's⁴ castle stand,
A warrior brave and good;
His lands extended far and wide,
Where streamed full many a plenteous tide,
Where frowned full many a wood.

¹ *Arminius* (c. 18 BCE – 21 CE), led an array of Germanic tribes in battles against Roman armies, including the infamous Battle of Teutoberg Forest (9 CE), the greatest defeat ever suffered by Rome. The captured Romans were butchered and ritually sacrificed. At various times, Arminius or “Hermann” has been offered as the original model of Sigurd or Siegfried, and monuments to Arminius have been raised both in Germany and abroad.

² *Original*. There may not be an original from German or Danish. The poem's use of a British proto-founder encountering the ghost of Flavus makes it suspiciously British in origin, and very much a late 18th-century product of English Gothic enthusiasm. Lewis may be playing Ossian here, *i.e.*, attempting a literary hoax, an attempt at Saxon-Roman synthesis.

³ *Weser*. The longest river contained entirely in Germany, beginning at Hann. Münden and flowing north to Bremen on the North Sea. The references to “sand” and “tide” suggest that Hengist's castle is near the mouth of the river, not inland.

⁴ *Hengist*. A Saxon name. Bede refers to Hengist and Horsa, as great-grandchildren of “Uoden,” in *Historia Ecclesiastica I:15*. Hengist and his brother Horsa led the 5th Century Anglo-Saxon-Jute invasion of Britain. Hengist's exploits are given imaginative elaboration in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (1136 CE). Hengist and Horsa, the “horse brothers,” occupy a parallel space in the British mythos to Romulus and Remus, brothers suckled by a wolf mother.

It chanced, that homewards from the chase
Sir Hengist urged his courser's pace,
 The shadowy dales among,
While all was still, and late the hour,
And far off, in the castle tower,
 The bell of midnight rung.

Sudden a piercing shriek resounds
Throughout the forest's ample bounds;
 A wildly dreadful yell;
The dogs, by trembling, own their fear,
As if they scent some bad thing near,
 Some soul enlarged from hell!

— "See, father!" cried young Egbert⁵; "see
Beneath the shade of yonder tree
 What fearful form is spread!
How fire around his temples glows!
How from his lance and fingers flows
 The stream of bloody red!"

— "Stay here!" said Hengist, then with speed
Towards the stranger spurred his steed;
 "What brings thee here, Sir Knight,
Who darest in my domains to bear
A lance, and by thy haughty air
 Seem'st to demand the fight?" —

— "Long has my arm forgot to wield
The sword, and raise the massy shield,"
 Replied the stranger drear:
"Peace to this brown oak's hallowed shade!
Peace to the bones which here are laid,
 And which we both revere!"

⁵ *Egbert*. *The Anglo Saxon Chronicle* for the year 455 refers to Hengist's son as "Esc."



Odin rides to Hel.

“Know’st thou not Siegmar⁶, Herman’s sire,
That arm of steel, that soul of fire?

Here is his grave. — My name
Is Flavius⁷ — at that sound the woods
With curses ring, and Weser’s floods
My infamy proclaim!

“For such is vengeful Odin’s⁸ will
And doom, that traitor-curses still
Thick on my head shall be,
Till from the blood of brethren slain,
My gory hands and lance again
I pure and spotless see.

⁶ *Siegmar*. Segimerus, chieftain of the Cheruscan German tribe.

⁷ *Flavius*. Brother or brother-in-law of Arminius. Flavius means “yellow” in Latin, and may have been a reference to blond hair.

⁸ *Odin*. Norse equivalent of Wotan, king of the gods.



Hengist and Horsa. "The Arrival of the First Ancestors of Englishmen out of Germany into Britain," from *A Restitution of Decayed Intelligence* by Richard Verstegan (1605)

“Still then, when midnight hours permit
Pale spectres Hela’s⁹ realm to quit,
I seek this hallowed place;
With tears bedew these crimson blots,
And strive to wash away the spots
No pains can now efface!”

He ceased; when Odin’s eagle came,
By Odin armed with blasting flame,
And seized the phantom knight:
Loud shrieks the spectre’s pangs reveal’d,
And soon a cloud his form concealed
From awe-struck Hengist’s sight.

— “Son!” said the chief, with horror chill’d,
While down his brows cold dews distill’d,
“Now take your sword in hand,
And swear with me, each drop of gore,
That swells your veins, well pleased to pour
To guard your native land!”

⁹ *Hela*. In Norse Myth, Hel is the realm of the dead, akin to The Greek Hades as a universal destination after death, not a place of punishment. The ruler of Hel, also named “Hel,” is female, and Lewis may have feminized her name here. Thomas Gray precedes Lewis in this usage: “Hela” is named in his poem, “The Descent of Odin.” (*Poems by Mr. Gray*, 1768, p. 49). Hela also suggests Mt. Hekla in Iceland, a volcano widely believed since the 12th century to contain the entrance to Hell.

Alonzo the Brave and fair Imogene

Original. — M. G. LEWIS

This was first published in the third volume of Ambrosio, or the Monk.

A warrior so bold and a virgin so bright
Conversed, as they sat on the green;
They gazed on each other with tender delight:
Alonzo the Brave was the name of the knight,
The maid's was the Fair Imogene.

— “And, oh!” said the youth, “since to-morrow I go
To fight in a far distant land,
Your tears for my absence soon leaving to flow,
Some other will court you, and you will bestow
On a wealthier suitor your hand.”

— “Oh! hush these suspicions,” Fair Imogene said,
“Offensive to love and to me!
For, if you be living, or if you be dead,
I swear by the Virgin, that none in your stead
Shall husband of Imogene be.

“And if e'er for another my heart should decide,
Forgetting Alonzo the Brave,
God grant, that, to punish my falsehood and pride,
Your ghost at the marriage may sit by my side,
May tax me with perjury, claim me as bride,
And bear me away to the grave!” —

To Palestine hastened the hero so bold;
His love she lamented him sore:
But scarce had a twelvemonth elapsed, when behold,
A Baron all covered with jewels and gold
Arrived at Fair Imogene's door.

His treasure, his presents, his spacious domain,
 Soon made her untrue to her vows:
He dazzled her eyes; he bewildered her brain;
He caught her affections so light and so vain,
 And carried her home as his spouse.

And now had the marriage been blessed by the priest;
 The revelry now was begun:
The tables they groaned with the weight of the feast;
Nor yet had the laughter and merriment ceased,
 When the bell of the castle toll'd — “one!”

Then first with amazement Fair Imogene found
 That a stranger was placed by her side:
His air was terrific; he uttered no sound;
He spoke not, he moved not, he looked not around,
 But earnestly gazed on the bride.

His vizor was closed, and gigantic his height;
 His armour was sable to view;
All pleasure and laughter were hushed at his sight;
The dogs, as they eyed him, drew back in affright;
 The lights in the chamber burnt blue!

His presence all bosoms appeared to dismay;
 The guests sat in silence and fear:
At length spoke the bride, while she trembled — “I pray,
Sir Knight, that your helmet aside you would lay,
 And deign to partake of our cheer.” —

The lady is silent: the stranger complies,
 His vizor he slowly unclosed;
Oh! then what a sight met Fair Imogene's eyes!
What words can express her dismay and surprise,
 When a skeleton's head was exposed!

All present then uttered a terrified shout;
All turned with disgust from the scene.
The worms they crept in, and the worms they crept out,
And sported his eyes and his temples about,
While the spectre addressed Imogene:

“Behold me, thou false one! behold me!” he cried;
“Remember Alonzo the Brave!
God grants, that, to punish thy falsehood and pride,
My ghost at thy marriage should sit by thy side,
Should tax thee with perjury, claim thee as bride,
And bear thee away to the grave!”

Thus saying, his arms round the lady he wound,
While loudly she shrieked in dismay;
Then sank with his prey through the wide-yawning ground:
Nor ever again was Fair Imogene found,
Or the spectre who bore her away.

Not long lived the Baron: and none since that time
To inhabit the castle presume;
For chronicles tell, that, by order sublime,
There Imogene suffers the pain of her crime,
And mourns her deplorable doom.

At midnight four times in each year does her sprite,
When mortals in slumber are bound,
Arrayed in her bridal apparel of white,
Appear in the hall with the skeleton-knight,
And shriek as he whirls her around.

While they drink out of skulls newly torn from the grave,
Dancing round them pale spectres are seen:
Their liquor is blood, and this horrible stave
They howl: “To the health of Alonzo the Brave,
And his consort, the False Imogene!”

Giles Jollup the Grave, and Brown Sally Green

Original — M. G. LEWIS

This is a parody upon the foregoing Ballad.¹ I must acknowledge, however, that the lines printed in italics, and the idea of making an apothecary of the knight, and a brewer of the baron, are taken from a parody which appeared in one of the newspapers², under the title of “Pil-Garlic³ the Brave, and Brown Celestine.”

A doctor so prim and a sempstress so tight
Hob-a-nobbed in some right marasquin⁴;
They sucked up the cordial with truest delight;
Giles Jollup the Grave *was just five feet in height,*
And four feet the brown Sally Green.

— “And as,” said Giles Jollup, “to-morrow I go
To physic a feverish land,
At some sixpenny hop, or perhaps the Mayor’s show,
You’ll tumble in love with some smart City beau,
And with him share your shop in the Strand.”

“Lord! how can you think so?” brown Sally Green said;
You must know mighty little of me;
For if you be living, or if you be dead,
I swear, ’pon my honour, that none in your stead
Shall husband of Sally Green be.

¹ This poem was published as a note in the fourth and fifth editions of Lewis’s novel, *The Monk*. It would seem to demonstrate that Lewis preferred being noticed and ridiculed, to not being noticed at all, in which wisdom he anticipates Oscar Wilde.

² Lewis’s parody itself must have been in a newspaper, since it is reprinted in *Spirit of the Public Journals* for 1799 (1:321).

³ *Pil-garlic*. A bald man.

⁴ Marasquin. A liqueur made from maraschino cherries. This line is cited in the OED as the earliest documented print appearance of the word “marasquin.”

“And if e’er for another my heart should decide,
False to you and the faith which I gave,
God grant that, at dinner too amply supplied,
Over-eating may give me a pain in my side;
May your ghost then bring rhubarb to physic the bride,
“And send her well-dosed to the grave!” —

Away went poor Giles, to what place is not told;
Sally wept till she blew her nose sore!
But scarce had a twelvemonth elapsed, when behold!
A brewer, quite stylish, his gig that way roll’d,
And stopped it at Sally Green’s door.

His wealth, his pot-belly, and whisky of cane,
Soon made her untrue to her vows:
The steam of strong beer now bewildering her brain,
He caught her while tipsy! denials were vain,
So her carried her home as his spouse.

And now the roast beef had been blessed by the priest,
To cram now the guests had begun:
Tooth and nail like a wolf fell the bride on the feast;
Nor yet had the clash of her knife and fork ceased,
When a bell (’twas a dustman’s) toll’d — “one!”

Then first with amazement brown Sally Green found
That a stranger was stuck by her side:
His cravat and ruffles with snuff were embrowned;
He ate not, he drank not, but, turning him round,
Sent some pudding away to be fried!!!

His wig was turned forwards, and short was his height:
His apron was dirty to view:
The women (oh! wondrous) were hushed at his sight:
The cats, as they eyed him, drew back (well they might),
For his body was pea-green and blue!

Now, as all wished to speak, but none knew what to say,
They looked mighty foolish and queer:
At length spoke the bride, while she trembled — “I pray,
Dear sir, your peruke that aside you would lay,
And partake of some strong or small beer!”—

The sempstress is silent; the stranger complies,
And his wig from his phiz deigns to pull.
Adzooks! what a squall Sally gave through surprize!
Like a pig that is stuck how she open’d her eyes,
When she recognized Jollup’s bare skull!

Each miss then exclaimed, while she turned up her snout,
— “Sir, your head isn’t fit to be seen!” —
The potboys ran in, and the potboys ran out,
And couldn’t conceive what the noise was about,
While the Doctor addressed Sally Green:

— “Behold me, thou jilt-flirt! behold me!” he cried;
“You’ve broken the faith which you gave!
God grants, that to punish your falsehood and pride,
Over-eating should give you a pain in your side:
Come, swallow this rhubarb! I’ll physic the bride,
And send her well-dosed to the grave!”

Thus saying, the physic her throat he forced down,
In spite of whate’er she could say;
Then bore to his chariot the damsel so brown;
Nor ever again was she seen in that town,
Or the Doctor who whisked her away.

Not long lived the Brewer: and none since that time
To make use of the brewhouse presume;
For ’tis firmly believed, that, by order sublime,
There Sally Green suffers the pain of her crime,
And bawls to get out of the room.

At midnight four times in each year does her sprite
With shrieks make the chamber resound:
“I won’t take the rhubarb!” she squalls in affright;
While, a cup in his left hand, a draught in his right,
Giles Jollup pursues her around!

With wigs so well powdered, their fees while they crave,
Dancing round them twelve doctors are seen;
They drink chicken-broth, while this horrible stave
Is twanged through each nose: “To Giles Jollup the Grave,
And his patient, the sick Sally Green!”

Elver's Hoh

[HERDER] Danish/German — M. G. LEWIS

The original is to be found in the Kiampe-Viiser, Copenhagen, 1739¹. My version of this Ballad (as also of most of the Danish Ballads in this collection) was made from a German translation to be found in Herder's² Volkslieder³.

The knight laid his head upon Elver's Hoh,
Soft slumbers his senses beguiling;
Fatigue pressed its seal on his eyelids, when lo!
Two maidens drew near to him, smiling;
The one she kissed softly Sir Algamore's eyes;
The other she whispered him sweetly,
— "Arise! thou gallant young warrior, arise,
For the dance it goes gaily and featly!

"Arise, thou gallant young warrior, arise,
And dance with us now and for ever!
My damsels with music thine ear shall surprise,
And sweeter a mortal heard never."
Then straight of young maidens appeared a fair throng,
Who their voices in harmony raising,
The winds they were still as the sounds flew along,
By their silence their melody praising.

¹ *Kiampe-Viiser*. Lewis's — and Herder's — original is from the 1695 Danish compilation by Anders Sørensen Vedel and Peder Syv, *Et Hundrede udvalde Danske Viser*. An earlier collection by Vedel from 1591, and several later compilations, are referred to collectively as the *Kæmpe-Viser* (Farley 177).

² *Herder*. Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803), German poet, critic, and philosopher. Karl Guthke remarks that Lewis was "the first to bring out translations from Herder in Herder's name" (52).

³ *Volkslieder*. Herder's *Volkslieder*, Book 2, No. 14 (185-88)

The winds they were still as the sounds flew along,
The wolf howl'd no more from the mountains;
The rivers were mute upon hearing the song,
And calm'd the loud rush of their fountains;
The fish as they swam in the waters so clear,
To the soft sounds delighted attended,
And nightingales, charm'd the sweet accents to hear,
Their notes with the melody blended.

— “Now hear me, thou gallant young warrior, now hear!
If thou wilt partake of our pleasure,
We'll teach thee to draw the pale moon from her sphere,
We'll show thee the sorcerer's treasure!
We'll teach thee the Runic rhyme, teach thee to hold
The wild bear in magical fetters,
To charm the red dragon, who broods over gold,
And tame him by mystical letters.” —

Now hither, now thither, then danced the gay band,
By witchcraft the hero surprising,
Who ever sat silent, his sword in his hand,
Their sports and their pleasures despising.
— “Now hear me, thou gallant young warrior, now hear!
If still thou disdain'st what we proffer,
With dagger and knife from thy breast will we tear
Thine heart, which refuses our offer!” —

Oh! glad was the knight when he heard the cock crow!
His enemies trembled and left him:
Else must he have stayed upon Elver's Hoh,
And the witches of life had bereft him.
Beware then, ye warriors, returning by night
From Court, dressed in gold and in silver;
Beware how you slumber on Elver's rough height,
Beware of the witches of Elver!

The Sword of Angantyr

Runic — M. G. LEWIS

The original is to be found in Hickeys' Thesau. Lit. Septen². I have taken great liberties with it, and the catastrophe is my own invention.³ Several versions of this Poem have already appeared⁴, particularly one by Miss Seward.— MGL

[Bishop Percy provides the following Introduction to the poem: “Andgrym the grandfather of Hervor, was prince of a part of Sweden, now in the province of Smaland: He forcibly carried away out of Russia Eyvor the daughter of Suafurlama, by whom he had twelve sons, four whereof were Hervardur, Hiorvardur, Hrani, and Angantyr the father of Hervor. These twelve brethren, according to the usual practice of those times, practiced piracy. In one of their expeditions they landed in the territories of Hialmar king of Thulemark, where a fierce battle ensuing they all lost their lives. Angantyr fell the last of his brethren, having first with his own hand killed their adversary Hialmar. They

¹ *Hickeys*. George Hickeys, D.D. (1642-1715). A theologian and polymath who, when he was not immersed in ecclesiastic and political debates, devoted the remainder of his time to researching the oldest documents and relics of Anglo-Saxon history, including the Icelandic sagas. He was, in his day, regarded as one of the most learned men in England. He had access to original Saxon manuscripts that are no longer extant.

² *Thesau. Lit. Septen*. Bishop Percy cites Hickeys' “*Thesaurus Antiq. Literaturae Septentrion*, Vol. 1, p. 193” as his source. Lewis cites “*Thesau. Ling. Septen*” and misspells Hickeys' name. Since Lewis comes far closer to the actual title of the book, *Linguarum Veterum Septentrionalium Thesaurum Grammatico-Criticum et Aechaeologium*, he is unlikely to have merely cribbed the source title from Percy, who got it wrong. I have yet not been able to locate Hickeys' 1703 magnum opus, so the extent of Percy's “emendation” (frequently bowdlerization in his case) remains unknown, nor do we know how Hickeys' original and notes may have affected Lewis's translation.

³ The ending of this version of the poem is indeed Lewis's own. The poet seems unwilling to leave a female protagonist unravished or alive. Since the poem is about the commencement of the long and violent career of the female heroine of *The Hervarar Saga*, Lewis does considerable violence, undermining Hervor's epic, rather like having Superman killed by a bus on his first day in Metropolis. After the end of Lewis's poem, I have appended the original ending, as translated/adapted by Percy.

⁴ *Several versions...* The Runic poem was widely known, translated by Percy as “The Incantation of Hervor” in *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry Translated from the Icelandic Language* (1763). Lewis does not mention Herder, whose German version of this appears in *Volkslied*, Vol. 2 No 15 as “Zauberspräch Angantyr's und Hervors.” Since it immediately follows “Elvers Hoh” in Herder's book, it is inconceivable that Lewis did not use Herder's poem as his principal model.

were buried in the field of battle, together with their arms: and it is at their tombs that Hervor, who had taken a voyage thither on purpose, makes the following invocation."⁵—BRJ

HERVOR

Angantyr⁶, awake! awake!
Hervor bids thy slumbers fly!
Magic thunders round thee break,
Angantyr, reply! reply!⁷

Reach me, warrior, from thy grave
Schwafurlama's magic blade;
Fatal weapon, dreaded glaive⁸,
By the dwarfs⁹ at midnight made.

Hervardur¹⁰, obey my charms,
Hanri too, and Angantyr:
Hither, clad in bloody arms,
Haste with helmet, sword, and spear!

Hasten, heroes, hasten all;
Sadly pace the spell-bound sod;
Dread my anger, hear my call,
Tremble at the charmer's rod!

⁵ Introduction from Percy, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* (1763, pp. 3-4).

⁶ *Angantyr*. "One who bravely does his duty" (Olaus Verelius 49). Angantyr and his twelve warrior brothers were berserkers, famous for warlike exploits, but also for acts committed in uncontrollable rage.

⁷ The original Icelandic has an epic, rhetorical force. The opening lines transliterate as "Vakadnu Angantyr! / Vekur thig Hervor/ Einka dotter/ Yckar Suafu:/ Sel thu mer ur hauge/ Hardan maekir,/ Than er Suafurlama/ Slogu duergar."

⁸ *Glaive*. A broadsword.

⁹ *Dwarfs*. Percy cites Olaus Verelius, who prepared the earliest print edition of *The Hervarer Saga* in Swedish in 1672, with the observation that the dwarfs mentioned here are not the diminutive creatures of children's fairy tales, but instead a powerful race of lesser demons whose specialty is the manufacture of weapons (Verelius, Vol 2: 44-45).

¹⁰ *Hervardur*. "A preserver of the army" (Olaus Verelius 49).

Are the sons of Angrym's race¹¹,
They whose breasts with glory burned,
All deprived of manhood's grace,
All to dust and ashes turn'd?

Where the blasted yew-tree grows,
Where the bones of heroes lie,
What, will none his grave unclose,
None to Hervor's voice reply?

Shades of warriors cold and dead,
Fear my wrath, nor longer stay!
Mighty souls to Hela fled,
Come! my powerful spells obey.

Either instant to my hand
Give the sword of mystic power,
Which the dwarf and spectre-band
Bathed in blood at midnight hour;

Or, in Odin's hall of cheer,
Never shall ye more repose,
Never more drink mead and beer
From the skulls of slaughter'd foes!

ANGANTYR

Hervor! Hervor! cease thy cries,
Nor oblige, by impious spell,
Ghosts of slaughter'd chiefs to rise;
Sport not with the laws of hell!

Know, nor friend's, nor parent's hand
Laid in earth's embrace my bones:
Natives of a distant land
Raised yon monumental stones:

¹¹ *Angrym*. Angrym or Arngrim was Angantyr's father.

I the Tyrfing¹² gave to these;
'Twas but justice; 'twas their due.
Hervor! Hervor! rest in peace,
Angantyr has told thee true.

HERVOR

Dar'st thou still my anger brave?
Thus deceitful dar'st thou speak?
Sure as Odin dug thy grave,
Lies by thee the sword I seek.

I alone may call thee sire,
I alone thine heir can be;
Give me then the sword of fire,
Angantyr, oh! give it me!

ANGANTYR

Hervor! Hervor! cease, and know,
It endures no female hand;
Flames around her feet shall glow,
Who presumes to touch the brand:

But from thee a son shall spring
(So the Valkyries¹³ declare),
Who shall reign a mighty king;
He the magic blade shall wear.

¹² *Tyrfing*. The name of the sword Angantyr received from his father. The blade could cut through any material, and a man died each time the sword was unsheathed.

¹³ *Valkyries*. Maidens who carry the souls of slain heroes to Valhalla.

HERVOR

Hela! Hela! thrice around
This enchanted spot I pace:
Hela! Hela! thrice the ground
Thus with mystic signs I trace.

While I swear by Odin's might,
Balder's¹⁴ locks, and Sculda's wing,
By the god renowned in fight,
By the rhymes the sisters¹⁵ sing,

Still the dead unrest shall know,
Still shall wave my magic rod,
Still the shivering ghosts shall go
Round and round this spell-bound sod,

Till the sword, the death of shields,
Shall my sire to me resign;
Till my hand the Tyrfin'g wields,
As in *his* grasp, fear'd in mine!

ANGANTYR

Bold enchantress, since no prayers
Can this impious zeal abate;
Since thy haughty bosom dares
To dispute the will of Fate,

¹⁴ *Balder*. A beloved Nordic god, son of Odin and Frigg, a kind of Nordic Achilles, who seemed indestructible, until felled and killed by a piece of mistletoe (Mallet-Percy, Vol. 2, pp. 103-105).

¹⁵ *Sisters*. In the *Eddas*, the Valkyries have two roles: choosing who will die in battle, and then carrying the fallen to Valhalla. Alternately, the Norns, the Nordic equivalent of the Three Fates, are given the task of tending the loom that marks the hero's lifeline, and choosing when the hero will die. Lewis here treats both roles as belonging to Valkyries.

I no more retard thy doom:
Armed with magic helm and spear
Seek the Tyrfing, seek my tomb,
When the midnight hour is near.

HERVOR

Stormy clouds around me lour!
All is silent, mortals sleep!
'Tis the solemn midnight hour!
Angantyr, thy promise keep.

'Tis the time, and here the grave:
Lo! the grate with pain I lift:
Father, reach me forth the glaive,
Reach the dwarf's enchanted gift.

ANGANTYR

Know beneath my head it lies,
Deep embrownd with hostile gore.
Hervor, daughter, cease thy cries,
Hervor, daughter, ask no more.

Flames curl round in many a spire,
Flames from Hilda's mystic hand;
Ne'er may woman touch the fire,
Ne'er may woman wield the brand!

HERVOR

Wherefore, father, this delay,
Wherefore break the word you gave?
Coldly burn the flames which play
In a breathless warrior's grave.

Give me straight the spell-fraught sword,
Then my potent charms shall cease:
Be the dead to sleep restored,
Rest, sad spirit, rest in peace!

ANGANTYR

Oh! what demon's direful power,
Hapless Hervor, fires thy brain?
Fain would I retard the hour,
Destined for my daughter's pain!

Yet be wise, the sword forego:
It endures no female hand;
Flames around her feet shall glow,
Who presumes to touch the brand.

HERVOR

Wilt thou still the brand conceal?
I must haste my friends to join,
Where Hidalvar, clad in steel,
Leads his troops, and waits for mine:

Father, now the sword bestow;
Soon 'twill hew my path to fame;
Soon 'twill make each trembling foe
Shrink with fear at Hervor's name!

ANGANTYR

Hark! what horrid voices ring
Through the mansions of the dead!
'Tis the Valkyries who sing,
While they spin thy vital thread.

— “Angantyr!” I hear them say,
Sitting by their magic loom,
— “Yield the sword, no more delay,
Let the sorceress meet her doom!

“Soon the proud one shall perceive,
Anguish ends what crimes begin:
Lo! her web of life we weave,
Lo! the final thread we spin!” —

I obey the voice of hell,
It ensures repose to me:
Hervor, now unbind the spell,
And the Tyrfing thine shall be.

HERVOR

Since thy dread commands, my sire,
Force the Tyrfing to forego,
On thine altars, sisters dire,
Thrice twelve heroes' blood shall flow.

With respect the mandate hear;
Angantyr, the sword resign:
Valued gift, to me more dear,
Than were Norway's sceptre mine.

ANGANTYR

I obey! the magic glaive
Thirty warriors' blood hath spilt;
Lo! I reach it from my grave,
Death is in the sheath and hilt!

Now 'tis thine: that daring arm
Wields at length the flaming sword;
Hervor, now unbind the charm,
Be my ghost to sleep restored.

HERVOR

Rest in peace, lamented shade!
Be thy slumbers soft and sweet,
While, obtained the wondrous blade,
Home I bend my gladsome feet.

But from out the gory steel
Streams of fire their radiance dart!
Mercy! mercy! oh! I feel
Burning pangs invade my heart!

Flames amid my ringlets play,
Blazing torrents dim my sight!
Fatal weapon, hence away!
Woe be to thy blasting might!

Woe be to the night and time,
When the magic sword was given!
Woe be to the Runic rhyme,
Which reversed the laws of Heaven!

Curst be cruel Hilda's fire,
Which around the weapon curled!
Curst the Tyrfing's vengeful ire,
Curst myself, and curst the world.

What! can nothing cool my brain?
Nothing calm my anguish wild?
Angantyr, oh, speak again!
Father! father! aid your child!

ANGANTYR

'Tis in vain your shrieks resound,
Hapless prey of strange despair!
'Tis in vain you beat the ground,
While you rend your raven hair!

They, who dare the dead to wake,
Still too late the crime deplore:
None shall now my silence break,
Now I sleep to wake no more!

HERVOR

Curses! curses! oh! what pain!
How my melting eye-balls glow!
Curses! curses! through each vein
How do boiling torrents flow!

Scorching flames my heart devour!
Nought can cool them but the grave!
Hela! I obey thy power,
Hela! take thy willing slave!

BISHOP PERCY'S PROSE TRANSLATION OF THE ORIGINAL ENDING:¹⁶

ANGANTYR. False woman, thou dost not understand that thou speakest foolishly of that in which thou dost rejoice: for Tirfing shall, if thou doest believe me, maid, destroy all thy offspring.

HERVOR. I must go to my seamen. Here I have no mind to stay longer. Little do I care, O royal ancestor, about what my sons may hereafter quarrel.

ANGANTYR. Take and keep Hialmar's bane, which thou shalt long have and enjoy; touch but the edge of it, there is poison in them both: it is a most cruel devourer of men.

HERVOR. I shall keep, and take in hand, the sharp sword, which thou hast let me have: I do not fear, O slain father, about what my sons may hereafter quarrel.

ANGANTYR. Farewel, daughter: I do quickly give thee twelve men's death: if thou canst believe with might and courage: even all the goods, which Andgrym's sons left behind them.

HERVOR. Dwell all of you safe in the tomb. I must be gone, and hasten hence; for I seem to be in the midst of a place where fire burneth round about me.

¹⁶ Percy. *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* (1763), pp. 19-20.

King Hacho's¹ Death-Song

[EYVINDUR-HERDER] — Runic — M. G. LEWIS

The original, but in a mutilated state, is inserted in Bartholin, Caus. Contempt. Mort.² Here again, as also for the translations of "The Water King," and of the "Erl King's Daughter," I must express my obligations to Mr. Herder's Collection.—MGL

"Hacon was son of the celebrated Harold Harfax, [the first king of all Norway] whose death is recorded in Regner's Ode. He was the great hero of the Norwegians, and the last of their Pagan kings. Hacon was slain about the year 960, in a battle with the Danes, in which eight of his brethren fell before him. Eyvindur, his cousin, a famous scald or poet, who was present at the battle, composed this poem to be sung at his funeral. — What seems to have suggested the plan of the ode, was Hacon's surviving the battle, and afterwards dying of his wounds, which were not at first apprehended to be mortal. Although this is not very clear from the history, something of this kind must be understood, to render the poem intelligible."
—Percy

¹ *Hacho*. Actually Hakon. Mallet and Percy render the name as "Hacon" and Lewis got "Hacho" possibly as a misreading of Herder's black-letter German script. This is "König Hako's Todesgesang" in *Völklied* Vol 2 No. 16 pp. 198-207. I have inserted Percy's Introduction from *Five Icelandic Poems* above the poem. This poem is also known as *The Elogium of Hacon*.

² Percy traced the tortuous path of this work thus: "The Icelandic original of this poem is preserved in Snorro Sturleson's *Hist. Regum Septentrionalium*, fol. Vol. 1 p. 163. The Latin version of Peringskiöld has been chiefly followed, except in some places, in which preference was given to that of [Thom] Bartholin, in his *Causae de Contempt. a Danis Mortis* [Lib. 2, Cap. II], and to the French prose translation of the Chev. Mallet (Percy-Mallet 181-185). Lewis asserts a familiarity with the Bartholin Latin version, but in fact uses Herder as his model.

Gaundul and Skogul³ came from Thor⁴
To choose a king from out the war,
Who to Valhalla's⁵ joys should speed,
And drink with Odin⁶ beer and mead.⁷

Of Ingwa's race the king renown'd,
Biarnar's brother, soon they found,
As arm'd with helmet, sword, and shield,⁸
With eager step he sought the field,
Where clashing glaives⁹ and dying cries
Already told the combat's rise.

With mighty voice he bids appear
Haleyger brave, and Halmygeer,
Then forth to urge the fight he goes,
The hope of friends, and fear of foes.
The Norman host soon round him swarms,
And Jutland's monarch stands in arms.

Firmly is grasped by Hacho bold,
The millstone-splitter's hilt of gold,
Whose blows give death on every side,
And, as 'twere water, brass divide;
A cloud of javelins veils the sky;
The crashing shields in splinters fly;

³ *Skogul*. Lit. "Raging." One of the Valkyrie maidens ("choosers of the slain") who transport dead heroes to Valhalla, Skogul is associated with the arrival and announcement of Kings in Valhalla. Percy calls Gondul and Skogul "the goddesses of destiny."

⁴ *Thor*. Norse god of thunder, lightning, and the seasons. Armed with a mace or club, he is the defender and avenger of the gods.

⁵ *Valhalla*. Dwelling place of dead heroes in Norse mythology.

⁶ *Odin*. King of the gods, Norse form of the German Wotan, "the terrible and severe god; the father of slaughter; the god that carrieth desolation are fire" (*The Eddas*, from Percy-Mallet 73).

⁷ *Mead*. Fermented beverage made with honey and yeast.

⁸ *Shield*. Scandinavian shields were narrow, and as long as the warrior's full height. For details on the versatility of the shield, even as a flotation device, see Percy-Mallet 202-205.

⁹ *Glaive*. Generally, a broadsword. The word can also refer to a halberd-type weapon consisting of a blade on the end of a pole. Since the word "sword" is used later in the poem, Lewis intends the former meaning here.

And on the casques of warriors brave
Resounds the stroke of many a glaive.

Now Tyr's and Bauga's¹⁰ weapons brown
Break on the Norman¹¹ monarch's crown;
Now hotter, fiercer grows the fight,
Low sinks the pride of many a knight.
And, dyed in slaughter's crimson hue,
Torrents of gore their shields bedew;
From meeting weapons lightning gleams;
From gaping wounds the life-blood streams:
With falling corses¹² groans the land,
And purple waves slash Storda's sand.

The warring heroes now confound
Buckler with buckler,¹³ wound with wound:
As eager as were battle sport,
Renown they seek, and death they court;
Till, never more to rise, they fall
In myriads; while, to Odin's hall,
The daemon of the tempest brings
A blood stream on his sable wings.

¹⁰ *Tyr and Bauga*. Subordinate war gods.

¹¹ *Normans*. Scandinavian people (Norsemen) who settled in the North of France, founding a nation that would conquer England in 1066 CE, as well as kingdoms in Sicily and southern Italy. Lewis blurs history by using the name "Norman" rather than Percy's "northern warriors" or the original poem's "Northmanns." By obscuring the historical date of the poem and by using the more modern name "Norman," the reader might mistake this for a depiction of battles during the Norman invasion of England, during which period pagan Danish invaders arrived in English and joined in the war. This blurring Anglicizes the narrative. Hakon's death is a century before the Norman invasion of England.

¹² *Corses*. Corpses

¹³ *Buckler*. A small shield, made of leather or wood, held in the fist, used offensively to strike an opponent's face or sword arm, or defensively to deflect an opponent's blade.

Apart the hostile chiefs were placed,
Broken their swords, their helms¹⁴ unlaced;
Yet neither thought his fate would be,
The hall of Odin soon to see.

— “Great is the feast of gods to-day,”
Propped on her sword, did Gaundul say,
“Since to their table they invite
Hacho, and all his chiefs from flight!” —

The fated monarch hears too plain,
How speaks the chooser of the slain;
Too plain beholds his startled eye,
On their black coursers¹⁵ mounted high,
The immortal maids, who near him stand,
Each propped on her resistless brand.¹⁶

— “Goddess of Combat!” Hacho cries,
“Thus dost thou give the battle’s prize?
And do then victory’s gods deny
To view my arms with friendly eye?” —
— “Chide not!” fierce Skogul thus replied,
For conquest still shall grace thy side;
Thou shalt prevail, the foe shall yield,
And thine remain the bloody field.” —

She said, and urged her coal-black steed
Swift to the hall of gods to speed;
And there to Odin’s heroes tell
A king drew near with them to dwell.

¹⁴ *Helm*. Helmet. “Unlaced” refers to the chinstrap holding the helmet on the head.

¹⁵ *Courser*. A knight’s battle horse, bred for strength and speed.

¹⁶ *Brand*. “Lance” in the Percy-Mallet version (183)

“Hither,” thus Odin spoke, “the king
Let Hermoder and Braga¹⁷ bring;
A monarch comes, an hero guest,
Who well deserves with me to rest.”

Said Hacho, while his streaming blood
Poured down his limbs its crimson flood,
— “God Odin’s eyes, my brethren bold,
Our arms with hostile glance behold!” —

The Braga spoke: — “Brave monarch, know,
Thou to Valhalla’s joys shalt go,
There to drink mead in skulls of foes,
And at the feast of gods repose:
To greet thee at the magic gate,
E’en now eight hero-brothers wait,
With joyful eyes thy coming see,
And wish, thou foe of kings, for thee.” —

— “Yet be my sword,” the King replied,
“Once more in Norman slaughter dyed;
Let me, as heroes should, expire,
And fall in fight, as fell my sire:
So shall my glory live, and fame
Shall long remember Hacho’s name.” —

He ceases, and to combat flies
He fights, he conquers, and he dies;
But soon he finds what joys attend,
Who dare in fight their days to end:
Soon as he gains Valhalla’s gate,
Eight heroes there to greet him wait;
The gods a friend the monarch call,
And welcome him to Odin’s hall.

¹⁷ *Braga*. God of poetry and eloquence.

Who in Valhalla thus shall be
Loved and revered, oh! bless'd is he;
His conquest and his fame shall long
Remember'd be, and live in song.
Wolf Fenris¹⁸ first his claim shall break,
And on mankind his fury wreak,
Ere walks a king in Hacho's trace,
Or fills so well his vacant place.

Since to the gods the king hath fled,
Heroes and valiant hosts have bled:
The bones of friends have strow'd the sand;
Usurping tyrants sway the land;
And many a tear for Hacho brave
Still falls upon his honoured grave.

¹⁸ *Wolf Fenris*. Fenrir or Fenris Ulfur, son of Loke, the giant wolf destined to devour Odin at Ragnarok (The Twilight of the Gods), the foretold end of the world: a nemesis or adversary figure feared even by the gods.



The Erl-King

[GOETHE] German M. G. LEWIS¹

Though founded on a Danish tradition², this Ballad was originally written in German, and is the production of the celebrated Goethe³, author of “Werther,” &c.

Who is it that rides through the forest so fast,
While night frowns around him, while shrill roars the blast?
The father, who holds his young son in his arm,
And close in his mantle has wrapped him up warm.

¹ Lewis inserted this translation into the fourth edition of *The Monk* in 1798. It was originally published in *The Monthly Mirror*, October 1796.

² See notes for the following poem on Herder’s “The Erl-King’s Daughter” as inspiration for Goethe’s Erl-King.

³ This ballad by Johann Wolfgang Goethe, author of *Faust* and *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, occupies a place of pride among German ballad poems, thanks to Schubert’s setting of the poem as his first published song. The song, in which one singer imitates all four voices in the poem over a terrifying piano accompaniment, struck the art of lieder-writing like a thunderbolt. This poem, and the songs and ballads embedded inside the *Faust* dramas, remain at the apex of German art song.

“Why trembles my darling? why shrinks he with fear?”
“Oh! father! my father! the Erl-King is near!
The Erl-King, with his crown and his beard long and white!”
“Oh! your eyes are deceived by the vapours of night.”

“Come, baby, sweet baby,⁴ with me go away!
Fine clothes you shall wear, we will play a fine play;
Fine flowers are growing, white, scarlet, and blue,
On the banks of yon river, and all are for you.”

“Oh! father! my father! and dost thou not hear,
What words the Erl-King whispers low in mine ear?”
“Now hush thee, my darling, thy terrors appease;
Thou hear’st ’mid the branches, where murmurs the breeze.”

“Oh! baby, sweet baby, with me go away!
My daughter shall nurse you, so fair and so gay;
My daughter, in purple and gold who is dressed,
Shall tend you, and kiss you, and sing you to rest!”

“Oh! father! my father! and dost thou not see
The Erl-King and his daughter are waiting for me?”
“Oh! shame thee, my darling, ’tis fear makes thee blind,
Thou seest the dark willows which wave in the wind.”

“I love thee! I doat on thy face so divine!
I must and will have thee, and force makes thee mine!”
“My father! my father! oh! hold me now fast;
He pulls me, he hurts, and will have me at last!”

⁴ *Baby, sweet baby*. Lewis’s penchant for referring to all pre-adolescents as babies is unfortunate, and makes the poem sound ludicrous to modern readers. Lewis could have chosen rival translations, but favored his own instead. Sir Walter Scott’s translation, for example, uses “boy” and “child,” employing “infant” only in the last line.

The father he trembled, he doubled his speed;
O'er hills and through forests he spurred his black steed;
But when he arrived at his own castle door,
Life throbb'd in the sweet baby's bosom no more.

SIR WALTER SCOTT'S TRANSLATION⁵

O who rides by night thro' the woodland so wild?
It is the fond father embracing his child;
And close the boy nestles within his loved arm,
To hold himself fast, and to keep himself warm.

“O father, see yonder! see yonder!” he says;
“My boy, upon what dost thou fearfully gaze?”
“O, 'tis the Erl-King with his crown and his shroud.”
“No, my son, it is but a dark wreath of the cloud.”

The Erl-King Speaks:

“O come and go with me, thou loveliest child;
By many a gay sport shall thy time be beguiled;
My mother keeps for thee many a fair toy,
And many a fine flower shall she pluck for my boy.”

“O father, my father, and did you not hear
The Erl-King whisper so low in my ear?”
“Be still, my heart's darling — my child, be at ease;
It was but the wild blast as it sung thro' the trees.”

⁵ Scott, impatient for the appearance of his work in Lewis's anthology, produced his own small book in 1799 titled *An Apology for Tales of Terror*, in which he included this translation. Scott's book — of which only five copies survive — also includes some of Lewis's poems available to Scott, namely those that had appeared in *The Monk*. *An Apology* is the rarest of all books in the Gothic canon. The full text of Scott's *Apology* as well as exhaustive background about the correspondence between the two writers can be found online at www.walterscott.lib.ed.ac.uk/works/poetry/apology/contents.html.

Erl-King:

“O wilt thou go with me, thou loveliest boy?
My daughter shall tend thee with care and with joy;
She shall bear thee so lightly thro’ wet and thro’ wild,
And press thee, and kiss thee, and sing to my child.”

“O father, my father, and saw you not plain
The Erl-King's pale daughter glide past thro’ the rain?”
“Oh yes, my loved treasure, I knew it full soon;
It was the grey willow that danced to the moon.”

Erl-King:

“O come and go with me, no longer delay,
Or else, silly child, I will drag thee away.”
“O father! O father! now, now, keep your hold,
The Erl-King has seized me — his grasp is so cold!”

Sore trembled the father; he spurr’d thro’ the wild,
Clasping close to his bosom his shuddering child;
He reaches his dwelling in doubt and in dread,
But, clasp’d to his bosom, the infant was dead.

GOETHE'S ERLKÖNIG

Wer reitet so spät durch Nacht und Wind?
Es ist der Vater mit seinem Kind;
Er hat den Knaben wohl in dem Arm,
Er faßt ihn sicher, er hält ihn warm.

“Mein Sohn, was birgst du so bang dein Gesicht?” —
“Siehst, Vater, du den Erlkönig nicht?
Den Erlenkönig mit Kron und Schweif?” —
“Mein Sohn, es ist ein Nebelstreif.”

“Du liebes Kind, komm, geh mit mir!
Gar schöne Spiele spiel' ich mit dir;
Manch' bunte Blumen sind an dem Strand,
Meine Mutter hat manch gülden Gewand.” —

“Mein Vater, mein Vater, und hörest du nicht,
Was Erlenkönig mir leise verspricht?” —
“Sei ruhig, bleibe ruhig, mein Kind;
In dürren Blättern säuselt der Wind.” —

“Willst, feiner Knabe, du mit mir gehen?
Meine Töchter sollen dich warten schön;
Meine Töchter führen den nächtlichen Reihn,
Und wiegen und tanzen und singen dich ein.” —

“Mein Vater, mein Vater, und siehst du nicht dort
Erlkönigs Töchter am düstern Ort?” —
“Mein Sohn, mein Sohn, ich seh es genau:
Es scheinen die alten Weiden so grau. —”

“Ich liebe dich, mich reizt deine schöne Gestalt;
Und bist du nicht willig, so brauch ich Gewalt.” —
“Mein Vater, mein Vater, jetzt faßt er mich an!
Erlkönig hat mir ein Leids getan!” —

Dem Vater grauset's, er reitet geschwind,
Er hält in Armen das ächzende Kind,
Erreicht den Hof mit Müh' und Not;
In seinen Armen das Kind war tot.

The Erl-King's Daughter

Danish M. G. LEWIS¹

The original is in the Kiampe-Viiser.²

O'er the mountains, through vallies, Sir Oluf he wends
To bid to his wedding relations and friends;
'Tis night, and arriving where sports the elf band,
The Erl-King's proud daughter presents him her hand.

— “Now welcome, Sir Oluf! oh! welcome to me!
Come, enter our circle my partner to be.” —
— “Fair lady, nor can I dance with you, nor may;
To-morrow I marry, to-night must away.” —

— “Now listen, Sir Oluf; oh, listen to me!
Two spurs of fine silver thy guerdon shall be;
A shirt too of silk will I give as a boon,
Which my queen-mother bleached in the beams
of the moon.

“Then yield thee, Sir Oluf! oh, yield thee to me!
And enter our circle my partner to be.”
— “Fair lady, nor can I dance with you, nor may;
“To-morrow I marry, to-night must away.” —

¹ Lewis inserted this translation into the fourth edition of *The Monk* in 1798. Originally published in *The Monthly Mirror*, October 1796.

² *Kiampe-Viiser*. The 1695 Danish compilation by Anders Sørensen Vedel and Peder Syv, *Et Hundrede udvalde Danske Viser*. An earlier collection by Vedel from 1591, and several later compilations, are referred to collectively as the *Kæmpe-Viser* (Farley 177). As Lewis notes earlier, he has adapted Herder's translation (“Erlkönigs Tochter,” *Volkslieder*, Part 2, Book 2, 27 pp. 224-227). Goethe's famous poem, “Erlkönig,” has a different story-line, but is directly inspired by Herder's poem.

³ *Erl-King*. From the Danish *elverkonge*, or Elf-King. This makes “Erlkönig” a borrowed word in German, literally meaning “Alder-King” in that language. The Erl-King is associated with omens of death, much like the Irish banshee. This story is fairy lore, and not part of the Wotan mythos.

— “Now listen, Sir Oluf; oh, listen to me!
An helmet of gold will I give unto thee!” —
— “A helmet of gold would I willingly take,
“But I will not dance with you, for Urgela’s sake.” —

— “And deigns not Sir Oluf my partner to be?
Then curses and sickness I give unto thee;
Then curses and sickness thy steps shall pursue:
Now ride to thy lady, thou lover so true.” —

Thus said she, and laid her charmed hand on his heart; —
Sir Oluf, he never had felt such a smart;
Swift spurred he his steed till he reached his own door,
And there stood his mother his castle before.

— “Now riddle me, Oluf, and riddle me right:
Why look’st thou, my dearest, so wan and so white?” —
— “How should I not, mother, look wan and look white?
I have seen the Erl-King’s cruel daughter to-night.

“She cursed me! her hand to my bosom she pressed;
Death followed the touch, and now freezes my breast!
She cursed me, and said, ‘To your lady now ride;’
Oh! ne’er shall my lips press the lips of my bride.” —

— “Now riddle me, Oluf, and what shall I say,
When here comes the lady, so fair and so gay?” —
“Oh! say I am gone for awhile to the wood,
To prove if my hounds and my coursers are good.” —

Scarce dead was Sir Oluf, and scarce shone the day,
When in came the lady, so fair and so gay;
And in came her father, and in came each guest,
Whom the hapless Sir Oluf had bade to the feast.

They drank the red wine, and they ate the good cheer;
— “Oh! where is Sir Oluf? oh, where is my dear?” —
— “Sir Oluf is gone for awhile to the wood,
To prove if his hounds and his coursers are good.” —

Sore trembled the lady, so fair and so gay;
She eyed the red curtain; she drew it away;
But soon from her bosom for ever life fled,
For there lay Sir Oluf, cold, breathless, and dead.

The Water-King¹

Danish — M. G. LEWIS.

*The Original is in the Kiampe-Viiser.*²

With gentle murmur flow'd the tide,
While by its fragrant flowery side
The lovely maid, with carols gay,
To Mary's church pursued her way.

The Water-Fiend's malignant eye
Along the banks beheld her hie;
Straight to his mother-witch he sped,
And thus in suppliant accents said:

— “Oh! mother! mother! now advise,
How I may yonder maid surprise:
Oh! mother! mother! now explain,
How I may yonder maid obtain.” —

The witch she gave him armour white;
She formed him like a gallant knight:
Of water clear next made her hand
A steed, whose housings were of sand.

¹ Lewis included this translation in the first edition of *The Monk* in 1796. It was also published anonymously in *Scots Magazine*, March 1797.

² *Kiampe-Viiser*. The 1695 Danish compilation by Anders Sørensen Vedel and Peder Syv, *Et Hundrede udvalde Danske Viser*. An earlier collection by Vedel from 1591, and several later compilations, are referred to collectively as the *Kæmpe-Viser* (Farley 177). Lewis has adapted Herder's translation (“Der Wassermann,” *Volkslieder*, Part 2, Book 2:26, pp. 221-223). As will be seen from the literal translation he appends, Lewis has greatly expanded upon the original, very much in the folk-ballad tradition.

The Water-King then swift he went;
To Mary's church his steps he bent:
He bound his courser to the door,
And paced the churchyard three times four.

His courser to the door bound he,
And paced the churchyard four times three;
Then hastened up the aisle, where all
The people flocked, both great and small.

The priest said, as the knight drew near,
— "And wherefore comes the white chief here?" —
The lovely maid she smiled aside:
— "Oh! would I were the white chief's bride!" —

He stepped o'er benches one and two;
— "Oh! lovely maid, I die for you!" —
He stepped o'er benches two and three;
— "Oh! lovely maiden, go with me!" —

Then sweetly smiled the lovely maid;
And while she gave her hand, she said,
— "Betide me joy, betide me woe,
O'er hill, o'er dale, with thee I go." —

The priest their hands together joins;
They dance, while clear the moonbeam shines:
And little thinks the maiden bright,
Her partner is the Water-Spright.

Oh! had some spirit deign'd to sing,
— "Your bridegroom is the Water-King!" —
The maid had fear and hate confess'd,
And cursed the hand which then she press'd.

But nothing giving cause to think
How near she strayed to danger's brink,
Still on she went, and hand in hand
The lovers reach the yellow sand.

— “Ascend this steed with me, my dear!
We needs must cross the streamlet here:
Ride boldly in; it is not deep;
The winds are hushed, the billows sleep.”

Thus spoke the Water-King. The maid
Her traitor bridegroom's wish obeyed:
And soon she saw the courser lave
Delighted in his present wave.

— “Stop! stop! my love! The waters blue
E'en now my shrinking foot bedew.” —
— “Oh! lay aside your fears, sweet heart!
We now have reached the deepest part.” —

“Stop! stop! my love! For now I see
The waters rise above my knee.” —
— “Oh! lay aside your fears, sweet heart!
We now have reached the deepest part.” —

— “Stop! stop! for God's sake, stop! for oh!
The waters o'er my bosom flow!” —
Scarce was the word pronounced, when knight
And courser vanished from her sight.

She shrieks, but shrieks in vain; for high
The wild winds rising, dull the cry;
The fiend exults; the billows dash,
And o'er their hapless victim wash.

Three times, while struggling with the stream,
The lovely maid was heard to scream;
But when the tempest's rage was o'er,
The lovely maid was seen no more.

Warned by this tale, ye damsels fair,
To whom you give your love beware!
Believe not every handsome knight,
And dance not with the Water-Spright!

As I have taken great liberties with this Ballad, and have been much questioned as to my share in it, I shall here subjoin a literal translation:—MGL

THE WATER-MAN

— “Oh! mother, give me good counsel:
How shall I obtain the lovely maid?”—

She formed for him a horse of clear water,
With a bridle and saddle of sand.

She armed him like a gallant knight,
Then rode he into Mary's churchyard.

He bound his horse to the church door,
And paced round the church three times and four.

The Waterman enter'd the church;
The people thronged about him both great and small.

The priest was then standing at the altar.
— “Who can yonder white chieftain be?” —

The lovely maiden laughed aside--
— “Oh! would the white chieftain were for me!” —

He stepp'd over one stool, and over two;
— “Oh! maiden, give me thy faith and troth!” —

He stepped over stools three and four;
— “Oh! lovely maiden, go with me!” —

The lovely maid gave him her hand.
— “There hast thou my troth; I follow thee readily.”—

They went out with the wedding guests:
They danced gaily, and without thought of danger.

They danced on till they reached the strand:
And now they were alone hand in hand.

— “Lovely maiden, hold my horse:
The prettiest little vessel will I bring for you.” —

And when they came to the white sand,
All the ships made to land.

And when they came to deep water,
The lovely maiden sank to the ground.

Long heard they who stood on the shore,
How the lovely maiden shriek'd among the waves.

I advise you, damsels, as earnestly as I can,
Dance not with the Water-man.

The fire-King

Original — WALTER SCOTT

“The blessings of the evil genii, which are curses, were upon him.”

—*Eastern Tale*

(By the translator of Goethe’s “Goetz of Berlichingen.” For more of this gentleman’s Ballads, both original and translated, see “Glenfinlas,” and the poems following it.)

Bold knights and fair dames, to my harp give an ear,
Of love, and of war, and of wonder to hear,
And you haply may sigh in the midst of your glee
At the tale of Count Albert and fair Rosalie.

O see you that castle, so strong and so high?
And see you that lady, the tear in her eye?
And see you that palmer,¹ from Palestine’s land,
The shell² on his hat, and the staff in his hand?

— “Now, palmer, grey palmer, O tell unto me
“What news bring you home from the Holy Countrie;
And how goes the warfare by Galilee’s strand,
And how fare our nobles, the flower of the land?” —

¹ *Palmer*. A pilgrim returning from the Holy Land carried a palm leaf, or the symbol of a palm leaf, as proof of the journey made.

² *Shell*. A scallop shell was associated with pilgrimages to the shrine of St. James the Greater (Santiago de Compostella) in Spain, but it later became associated with pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Pilgrims wore badges with objects or symbols indicating their status as pilgrims. Initially, the badges were worn upon returning, but later were worn when setting out. The pilgrim badge helped protect pilgrims from bandits, at least if the bandits were superstitious. Shells and other shrine symbols were often cast or stamped in metal and sold as souvenirs at shrines.

—“Oh, well goes the warfare by Galilee’s wave,
For Gilead, and Nablous, and Ramah we have,
And well fare our nobles by Mount Lebanon,
For the Heathen have lost, and the Christians have won.” —

A rich chain of gold ’mid her ringlets there hung;
That chain o’er the palmer’s grey locks has she flung;
— “Oh! palmer, grey palmer, this chain be thy fee,
For the news thou hast brought from the East Countrie.

“And, palmer, good palmer, by Galilee’s wave,
Oh, saw ye Count Albert, the gentle and brave?
When the Crescent went back, and the Red-cross rushed on,
Oh, saw ye him foremost on Mount Lebanon?”

“O lady, fair lady, the tree green it grows,
O lady, fair lady, the stream pure it flows,
Your castle stands strong, and your hopes soar on high,
But lady, fair lady, all blossoms to die.

“The green boughs they wither, the thunderbolt falls,
It leaves of your castle but levin³-scorched walls,
The pure stream runs muddy, the gay hope is gone,
Count Albert is taken on Mount Lebanon.” —

Oh, she’s ta’en a horse should be fleet at her speed,
And she’s ta’en a sword should be sharp at her need,
And she has ta’en shipping for Palestine’s land,
To ransom Count Albert from Soldanrie’s⁴ hand.

³ *Levin*. Lightning.

⁴ *Soldanrie*. Sultans.