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# ZADORA:

A Romance,

or

THE GREAT CITY BABYLON.

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"Mene Mene Tchel Upharsin."—DANIEL.

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—  
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NADORA

THE GREAT CITY BARBON

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LONDON :

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## PREFACE.

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Who says that poetry is extinct in the present age? that the taste for poetry is vanished?

Be he who he may, king or kaiser, fashionable novel scrawler, or hapless trash-bedeviled reviewer, he errs and wanders in darkness.

So long as there be life, there will be poetry; for poetry is life—life in its strength, its fulness, and its glory. It is the life of heroes, of fierce and mighty spirits, that live swiftly in grand emotions, and passions, and philosophies!

Granted that men love not the sighings and the whisperings, and the weak repinings—for *they* cannot rise to the splendour of despair—of the Album-writers, and the song-scribblers, and the Byronizers; granted that it is wise to prefer the humourists, and the jesters, and the funnydogs! are we, therefore, to despond and become renegades from the faith in the beautiful, the ideal, and the sublime.

Magnificent as is the genius of Shakespere, of Goethe, of Milton, of Byron, one greater than all may arise with the morrow, and arouse the nations with his voice from their mammonism and their mental sloth.

But who says we are without poets? Read he, if never he hath read, "The Zenoii," of Lytton; "The Past and Present," of Carlyle; "The Voices from the Crowd" of Mackay!

Even now, methinks I desery, as in the trance of magnetism, standing in distant places, sad and forlorn, some great and lovely spirits of pale and care-worn countenances, cased in the adamantine arm our of endurance, who wait and hope!

To what end this prologue?—simply this, fair reader—we must strive, boldly aspire with knightly minstrel bravery, aim at the high ideal, not decent mediocrity—in fine—the guardian of the threshold,\* trembling doubt, must first be conquered, trampled on, subdued; true hero-worship† must replace the false; and in our hearts, the universal life must find an echo, progress be acknowledged the law of nature, every living soul a pilgrim of eternity.||

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\* See "Zenoii."

† See "Hero-worship," or "Past and Present."

|| See "The Clairvoyante," in "Voices from the crowd."

I am here, ah! well I know  
 This is called a world of woe;  
 There are worse—could we remember  
 All that we have seen, and done,  
 In our progress from the outer  
 Utter darkness to the sun!

What is the quintessence of earthly happiness, the philosopher's stone, the *Ton Kalon* of the allegory?

Contentment?—pshaw! who longs for calm indifference, did well—to sleep.

No, men! it is excitement, an eternal successive change of emotions, which we seek vainly in cold reality, (so called, as if the mind's creations were less real.) This it is, the poet brings, or ought to bring; otherwise he is no true alchemist-poet. Likewise true philosophy, conferring certainty of immortal being, is the *elixir vite*, and all others are false delusions, hollow forms of words!

To conclude. In his one-and-twentieth autumn, a writer of certain books, not utterly unknown, a pale metaphysician, calm before his time, aroused from the sleep and dust of years, a little manuscript, which bore some impress of the fresh joyousness of youth. Reminiscences of fair distant lands, and still fairer features, crowded impetuous on the heart of the stern and desolate thinker; and he—pausing not to judge, to criticise,

Magnificent as is the genius of Shakespere, of Goethe, of Milton, of Byron, one greater than all may arise with the morrow, and arouse the nations with his voice from their mammonism and their mental sloth.

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¶ See "The Claymore," in "Voices from the crowd."

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Unfettered by the chain,  
 That binds me to one race—  
 One scene of joy and pain,  
 One spot in time and space.  
 A moment let me be,  
 Whilst beauty-drunk I sing,  
 As in past worlds, a free  
 And fearless spirit king ! \*  
 Arouse ye legions bright,  
 Arouse ye at the word  
 Of long-enslumbered might,  
 Ye must obey when heard.  
 I know not how ye came  
 In dust my soul to bind ;  
 Dust cannot bind the flame  
 Of pure essential mind !  
 Eternal, infinite,  
 The wise such bondage scorn,  
 Know well th' ungiven right ;  
 And if incarnate born,  
 Live free to choose the hour,  
 When, through the gates of night,  
 They dare return to power,  
 To glory, and to light !  
  
 Oh death ! thou phantom vain,  
 Thou sabled child of sin,  
 This smile of calm disdain,  
 Outscorns thine cyclops grin.

\* We trust a poet may be excused for being a Platonist.

Poor demon! on the weak,  
The fools, the cowards, the bad,  
Thy petty torments wreak,  
And draw grimaces sad,  
O'er those, whose visions clear,  
Transcend the veils of sense;  
Thou loDEST not in fear,  
Or doubt, or dark suspense.  
They know thee, charlatan!  
Mere porter at a gate,  
Through which each son of man  
May reach a nobler state,  
Beyond that gate they dwell,  
Thy dismal rule above,  
No tenants mark of hell,  
But stars of light and love!  
And thence in memory wild,  
Of former princely sway,  
Ere by thy touch defiled,  
I summon them to-day.  
Come, spirits of the past!  
Your shapes, and thoughts, and deeds!  
Come crowding far and fast!  
A bard your presence needs,  
Whose magic wand ye own,  
Who seeks no crown of bays,  
But to dwell awhile alone  
With the shades of vanished days!"

A car of mystic form,  
On floating clouds of gold,  
Round which a phantom swarm,  
In dizzy circles rolled,  
With steeds of mighty limb,  
Whose nostrils snorted fire,  
In aspect vast and dim,  
Urose at his desire.  
A single fearless bound—  
No dust the poet trod,  
But through the dark profound,  
With whirlwind swiftness rode!

Dull matter bowed his head  
Before the car of light,  
And time, the earth-king fled—  
Fled backwards at the sight.  
And days of old returned,  
And men and thoughts, long dead,  
As centuries were spurned,  
Before his coursers' tread.  
Those rains stood no more,  
Where Ghouls and Afrites roam,  
Where lions nightly roar,  
And bandits seek a home,  
Yet queen-like Babel reared  
Her hundred giant portals,  
Emblazoned and venerated  
By arts unknown to mortals.

Yet Nimrod's tower arose,  
    (By God's own thunder riven,  
As legends fell disclose)  
    And mocked whilst kissing heaven ;  
Yet arched the terraced gardens  
    O'er palaces of pride ;  
Yet roiled the broad Euphrates,  
    His ancient rushing tide ;  
Yet Persian tents were gleaming  
    In Sol's last crimson rays ;  
Before the poet dreaming,  
    Mid shades of vanished days !

## SCROLL II.

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THE DEEP RECESSES OF THE MAGIAN'S SOUL ARE  
REVEALED TO THE POET.

"Thrice sacred fires ! would I had been  
Blind from my birth, that form unseen,  
Robed in such all-subduing grace,  
Those rounded limbs, that angel face,  
So strangely, beautifully, wild,  
That even spirits earth defiled  
By years of falsehood, vice, and hate,  
Gazing, become regenerate ;  
Scorn their past baseness, and give scope  
To grander passions, purer hope,  
Fall down all trembling and adore,  
Almost in fear to long for more !

Oh! had I courage, strength to tear  
 The sweet, yet maddening bonds I wear,  
 To chase away the visioned shape,  
 For ever present, and escape  
 From those dark soul-entrancing eyes,  
 That seem to proffer Paradise;  
 But like the dread mirage to fly,  
 And ever tempting—still deny!  
 Those rose-like dewy lips, whose smile  
 Gives such sweet agony the while  
 Creating, yet refusing—heaven!  
 That brow, on which the seal is graven  
 Of intellect's proud majesty;  
 Transcendant summary of all,  
 That bards inspired, most lovely call;  
 That, once beheld, more joy can give  
 Than ten Elysian lives to live;  
 Whose loss, were loss of vital breath,  
 A joyless life, a living death!

\* \* \* \* \*

Oh! cursed be every syren word  
 By which my phrenzied soul was lured!  
 Accursed the hour, when first my sight  
 Inhaled the poisonous delight,  
 To rankle in my fated breast,  
 Eternal antidote to rest!

Methinks, unearthly lips I hear  
 In fiend-like whisper, harshly sweet,

' Cease fool, nor idle curses vent  
 ' On one, whose very element  
 ' They form, her life a demon spell,  
 ' And she, herself, a dream from hell !

\* \* \* \* \*

Or why should this cold shudder still  
 My fevered-blood-like winter chill ?  
 And at the gate of happiness,  
 Whilst yet her eye appears to bless,  
 With hateful fears my bosom fill,  
 Dashed back by hands invisible !

Thrice hath this happened, and if man,  
 With powers of darkness, e'er could cope,  
 Smerdis was he—the Magian.  
 But vanished now is courage, hope,  
 Cold reason, counsels flight alone,  
 From fruitless-love and Babylon !

For this, then, have I all unscared,  
 A thousand deadly-perils dared ;  
 Risked seizure as a base-born spy,  
 And by the headsman's axe to die ;  
 For this, did I my king desert,  
 To dwell by scowling foes, begirt,  
 Suspected here, as by the Mede ?  
 To crush my future as a reed,  
 The hope from which my life I draw,  
 My heart's first dream—last faith—sole law !

I spoke of flight—oh! doubly weak,  
 Of that man dares not act, to speak;  
 For grant, my limbs I could convey  
 Far hence, yet must my soul obey  
 The spell that bids it linger here.  
 Tho' Ormuzd should himself appear  
 In blazing pomp, commanding flight,  
 Yet should I stay, methinks, despite;  
 And in Zadora's presence bask,  
 Enthralled by the enrapturing task.

Oft, when reclining at her feet,  
 Our eyes will hold communion sweet;  
 I mark her bosom quicker heave,  
 And through the graceful undulation,  
 Of all her shape, a light vibration;  
 Whilst from her long dark silken lashes,  
 A gem-like dew-drow brightly flashes.  
 Nor can I other than believe  
 She loves—and yet, as gold with dust  
 Is oft found mingled; so distrust  
 Her love to temper would appear,  
 Or something yet more hateful—fear.  
 And fear of what?—In vain I strive  
 At this dark secret to arrive.  
 Sometimes she will begin to speak,  
 Abruptly, then, her utterance check;  
 As treading on forbidden ground;  
 Nor all my art avails to sound

This strange enigma—art? alas!  
 How easy to delude the mass!  
 How light for priests a race to frighten,  
 How hard one spirit to enlighten!

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### SCROLL III.

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ZADORA THE BEAUTIFUL—LOVE—HORROR—AND DAN-  
 CER.—THE VALOROUS ESCAPE OF THE MAGIAN.

---

Softly radiant the light,  
 In that hall of marble white;  
 Burnished gold, and sculpture rare,  
 Polished mirrors, too, are there,  
 Silken tissue'd curtains fall,  
 O'er each window of the hall;  
 All that power or gold can buy,  
 All is there to gladden the eye;  
 Perfumes sweet, and fountains clear  
 As an angel's pitying tear;  
 Eastern splendour ne'er displayed  
 Half more gloriously arrayed!

Lo in costly vases stand;  
Flowers of every hue and land;  
Opal and carbuncle peep,  
Mid the snow-gems of the deep;  
Yet, a far more costly pearl,  
On her couch a beautiful girl:  
Form and face alike divine,  
Gracefully doth there recline.  
Dark, voluptuous brunette,  
Sparkling eye of deepest jet;  
Softest glossy ringlets lie  
On a neck of ivory:  
And in wild luxuriance,  
With each lightest zephyr dance;  
And a milk-white bosom heaving  
Softly, as from secret grieving:  
Feet so delicately small,  
Gods upon their knees would fall,  
Kisses on them to imprint,  
Did not lips of ruby tint,  
By their fresh temptation fire  
A superior desire!  
Saint might hardly saint escape  
From beholding such a shape;  
(If that deeds and wishes are,  
As 'tis written, on a par;)  
Cowards would have outshone the brave,  
Beauty so supreme to save;  
Sculptors bid their art despair,  
To compete with curves so rare;

Never tint would painter find  
 For complexion so refined,  
 Never poet—save her lover,  
 Words to praise such charms discover.  
 Beauty can o'er all prevail,  
 Even Hades' monarch pale.  
 Orcus had forgone his prey,  
 And forbidding death to slay,  
 Humbly wooed her to his arms,  
 Gazing on such matchless charms!  
 Oh! there is a power in Beauty,  
 Stronger far than fear or duty;  
 Doubts and scruples it can banish,  
 Sacerdotal mandates vanish  
 Swiftly as a flash of light,  
 Or a dream before her might.  
 Mortal man his clay forgets,  
 Danger but the madness whets,  
 And a heaven of living love  
 Mocks the paradise above!

Frigid worldlings! would-be wise,  
 Who would teach us to despise  
 Life's most glorious sensations;  
 Learn to know those aspirations,  
 Fiery dreams of god-like passions,  
 Raising man above the state,  
 Grovellers like ye deem his fate!

Woe to him whose life rolls by,  
 Bound in custom's slavery ;  
 Curbing every nobler passion,  
 By the galling rein of fashion :  
 Traquiling grander feelings down  
 By the world's opinion.  
 Deeming life's sublimest aim,  
 Is to make each day the same  
 Wretched shade of yesterday,  
 Daily rent and tax to pay.  
 Pass the morn in earning bread,  
 And at even go to bed ;  
 Daily snoring by the side  
 Of a wisely chosen bride.  
 This existence?—hopes of youth !  
 Dare we whisper now the truth ?  
 Thoughts are free—the proverb goes—  
 Daily man its falsehood shews.

\* \* \* \* \*

Zadora raised her lovely head,  
 Full well she knew that distant tread ;  
 Through all her veins soft tremor ran,  
 As entered the bold Magian.  
 He entered through a secret door  
 With silken curtains covered o'er ;  
 Not Oromasdes' self could show,  
 A prouder bearing, loftier brow.  
 His snowy mantle robed a form,  
 With free and youthful impulse warm ;

Yet 'twas as hero's well-knit frame,  
 Short curling beard and eye of flame;  
 Beneath whose magnetising power,  
 A starving lion well might cower;  
 So full of faith and courage seemed,  
 The orbs that on Zadora beamed,  
 With soft-compassioned gaze. Such glances  
 Out-speak whole volumes of romances:  
 Make laboured words a sorry jest,  
 Or pallid shade of truth at best.

She started, and her bosom rose  
 Like waves of liquid ivory;  
 Flushed her soft cheek like Persian rose,  
 All heaven sparkled in her eye,  
 Fixed on her mystic lover's form,  
 Still silent motionless as lie  
 The deep sea's billows ere a storm.

Long, long with sad but ardent gaze  
 They viewed each other face to face;  
 Reflecting all impassioned love,  
 As the pale constant moon above  
 Meets the bright sun-god's fierce advances,  
 And sends him back his burning glances;  
 Oft intercepted by our vales  
 To lighten earthly lover's tales.  
 "Zadora!"—"Smerdis!"—burst at length  
 From either lip, with thrilling strength.

“What means this barrier of air,  
 That showing bliss, commands despair?  
 No more!———”

The Magian awoke from a trance to start,  
 Maddened by more than earthly charms,  
 And clasped Zadora in his arms,  
 And wildly pressed her to his heart,  
 Whilst in one long impassioned kiss  
 He strove to seal his desperate bliss;  
 And she—she loved—she suffered all;  
 Small time had prudence to appal!

But not the wanderer in a brake,  
 Who treads on most envenomed snake;  
 Not the base wretch more basely hired,  
 For deadliest crime, who meets dismayed  
 His murdered victim's bleeding shade;  
 Tyrant from poisoned goblets brink,  
 Ne'er back recoiled more suddenly,  
 With wilder shriek of agony,  
 Than did those princely lovers shrink  
 From that embrace so long desired!

Upon her couch Zadora fell,  
 Colder her blood than Para's well--  
 The Magian staggered, icy pains  
 Like poignards pierced his heart and veins--  
 'Twas o'er—the weakness he distained,  
 With one vast effort calm regained,

Bent on his mistress frown more fell,  
 Than interchange the ghoulds of hell,  
 Where Ahranian the fiend-king-reigns,  
 " Girl! speak—this damning secret tell!

" He—he?"—she pointed to the door,

" He can reveal—I know no more!"

And, sinking backwards as she spoke,

The hush of life her lips forsook.

Swiftly the Magian turned, and saw  
 That stranger seer, whose will was law  
 Through Balyion, and all domains,  
 O'er which Belshazzar held the reigns;  
 Sternly he met the prophet's eye,  
 And drew his sword, prepared to die.

" What! Smerdis?—Thou!—a Magian! here?"

The Hebrew muttered with a sneer,

" And in the royal Zadora's room

Of Babylon's kingly line;

Death, were thy fate but as a spy

Who wrongs the harem's right divine,

Must find another—darker doom!"

The prophet stamped—with savage din

A band of eunuch-guards rushed in.

And Smerdis answered not a word,

But tighter grasped his faithful sword;

And rushing on the unequal foe,  
Struck to the earth with one bold blow  
Their prophet chief—and called aloud  
His name—chill terror struck the crowd;  
Renowned through Habel was the deed,  
For many a high and fearless deed.  
As when a lion turns at bay,  
His huntsmen dark, surprised, give way.  
So with our young and princely brave,  
Each seemed the first advance to waive;  
One glance he on his mistress bent,  
The curtained door aside he rent,  
Dashed down a way to all unknown,  
Their fright recovered, he was gone!

## SCROLL IV.

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### THE FEAST OF BELSHAZZAR.

---

"MRNE, MRNE, TEKEL FREDS!"  
With the sight his eye he werries,  
From the monarch's pallid brow,  
Drops of cold sweat trickling flow.  
In his aspect, rage, and fear,  
Swift as light, by turns appear;  
Not in vain he longs to speak,  
Knows not where his ire to wreak.

All his thousand guests amazed  
On the mystic cyphers gazed;  
All beheld the words of flame,  
None knew how, or where they came.

Then from Belshazzar's mouth there burst,  
 "Honor and gold to him, who first  
 To me the hidden meaning name  
 Of yonder mystic words of fame!  
 Or be it cunning jugglery,  
 Or warning from the gods on high,  
 Or be he priest or warrior brave,  
 Of noblest blood, or baseborn slave,  
 In robes of scarlet clad, shall he  
 Third ruler in our kingdom be!"

He spoke; all eyes were on the wall,  
 But silence thro' the festal hall  
 Reigned autocrat. All Babel's court  
 Vainly th' interpretation sought,  
 And all the king's wise men were found  
 Useless the secret to expound.  
 Astrologers, Chaldeans, all,  
 In silence, gazed upon the wall.

"MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIS!"  
 With the sight his eye he wearies.  
 "None?" he exclaims, "what! are there none?  
 A voice behind him—"King! yes one.  
 "For thee may rise no morrow's sun,  
 Weighed, wanting, found, thus destines heaven,  
 Thy realm is to thy foeman given,  
 The Medes and Persians are at hand  
 With conquering fire, and victor brand,

*E'en now they stand thy gates before.  
The king Belshazzar's reign is o'er!"*

Then smiled the king in hapious scorn,  
And bade in purple robes adorn  
The Hebrew slave—"And now shall he  
Third ruler, in our kingdom, be!  
Then fill the sacred cups with wine,  
The cups we tore from Sacer's shrine—  
Fill to the brink! if quickly past,  
Enjoy our glories, whilst they last,  
And to my draught whilst yet I live  
A sacrifice some zest may give!"

He drank the wine from the sacred cup  
Little thought he with the shades to sup,  
Heard not the stealthy Persian's tread  
Along the river's streamless bed;  
Till a distant hum, a swelling sound,  
To the wassailers ears its way had found,  
With a crash, and a shout—ere to arms they could  
Ere the guards could be roused, or defence could  
The Medes and the Persians shout "render or  
The Medes and the Persians with bow and with  
The Medes and the Persians with bow and with

Then, with a momentary glance,  
 Each sought the prophet's countenance,  
 Each deemed him traitor. He had fled.  
 Each heaped a curse upon his head  
 With the deep concentrated power  
 Of men who near their dying hour :

"Friends!" cried the king, ere yet the roar  
 Of raging bloodshed reached the door,  
 "We battle now for death alone,  
 With no vain hope of crown or throne,  
 Throw down your arms, and wisely yield,  
 Preserve yourselves for Babylon,  
 And many a less inglorious fight!  
 For me--an empire lost--I cherish  
 One only hope--in arms to perish;  
 The victors jeering scorn, to fly,  
 And if there be, when warriors die,  
 A refuge for the great and bold,  
 If fire-souls burn, when clay is cold,  
 To join my hero-sires of old,  
 Now Gods in earthly Minstrelsy!"

The Monarch spake, each grasped his blade,  
 Nor dreamed of flight, nor answer made;  
 But crowding on th' unequal foe,  
 Rendered fiercely blow for blow,  
 Whilst mingled streams of wine and gore  
 In purple torrent stained the floor,

Death groans and women shrieks between  
Gave wilder horrors to the scene,  
Belshazzar foremost in the van  
Met Smerdis the bold Magian.

    Proudly upon the chief he gazed,  
In whose bright features, might be traced  
The wish to save—"O Magian!"  
He cried, "I thank thee!"—and he ran  
Upon the Mede's extended sword,  
Expiring with that parting word.  
Vainly did Smerdis strive to save:  
He, whom as God a realm adored,  
Now asked for temple—but a grave.

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## SCROLL V.

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THE TEMPTER—THE RESCUE—AND THE SPELL BROKEN  
FOR EVER!

---

MEANWHILE, amidst the tumult dire,  
In hastily exchanged attire,  
The dark-browed prophet bent his way  
To where the bright Zadora lay,  
Her features pale, as low her breath,  
As if the icy wind of death  
The fatal Sansar o'er her blew.  
And yet she started with affright,  
For the grim prophet's step she knew  
Better than o'er her lover's tread.  
Thus spake the Seer—"Belshazzar dead,  
The Medes and Persians hold the town;

Taken, is far-famed Babylon !  
 Princess ! thy only hope is flight,  
 I come to guard thee and to save,  
 What am I ?—dust !—thy veriest slave !”

“ Flight ! and from what ?—with sickly girls  
 Do heroes war ? For me, I claim  
 From Cyrus aid ; a royal name,  
 ‘ Though fall’n demands respect ! ’ The curls  
 Shadowed Zadora’s blushing cheek  
 More proudly yet she seemed to speak.

“ There is a chief, before whose brow  
 His foes turn pale, and even thou  
 Wouldst rather meet the dark king’s shape,  
 Where untamed lions hideous gape,  
 Than cross the path of that one man,  
 Smerdis the princely Magian !”

“ Nay, listen, ere thou scornst my aid,”  
 With eager haste the prophet said ;  
 “ If I, of captive race, have dared  
 To view thy charms—and not despaired,  
 Pardon my too presumptuous glance,  
 Yet know, the Persian’s countenance  
 Can I assure for thee and thine,”  
 And on her arm his hand he laid.

“ Hence man ! is then the right divine  
 Of hospitality betrayed,

Fit theme for boasting, canst thou yet  
 Belshazzar's favors all forget?  
 Thou dardest not thus pollute my ear  
 Were the avenging Smerdis near!"

"Doth Abraman restore his prey?"  
 Spoke the grim seer with accent gay;  
 Whilst his licentious arm embraced  
 The pale Zadora's shrinking waist,  
 "Smerdis is dead! and in the fray  
 I saw him fall, and grovelling die,  
 By all the Gods! I—"

"Swear a lie!"

Hissed a deep voice behind the seer,  
 That made his blood congeal with fear,  
 "I fell, but rose again, and live  
 A shameless slave's reward to give!"

Then in the Megiau's iron grasp  
 The prophet felt his shoulder clasp,  
 Felt all the visions of his pride  
 Beneath that flashing eye subside,  
 And on the verge of state and power,  
 Dread retribution o'er him lower.

"One moment pause, thy wrath restrain!"  
 Exclaimed Zadora, and again  
 The rose had faded from her cheek;  
 "With *him* the secret dies we seek,

He can alone our hopes complete,  
Confirm our bliss, or all defeat!"

"Speak, slave—and live!" the Magian said,  
And half reluctant, sheathed his blade.

"Weak worshipper of senseless fire!"  
Replied the soor in frantic ire,  
"Tear off the azure talisman  
Suspended from yon girl's slight waist,  
And love may greet thee, less than man,  
Where death were otherwise embraced!"

"Know that in days of old, from heaven  
Spirits like thine, rebellious, driven,  
Sought madly in fair mortals' arms  
Voluptuous, to discover charms,  
By which their torture and regret,  
For virtue lost, they might forget.  
And thy Zadora, infidel!  
Descended from the chief of hell,  
Satan, the God-defier, gave  
That wondrous amulet to to save,  
From such as thee, her beauty rare,  
'Twas stolen from the sacred tomb  
Of kings pre-Adamite. Despair  
Eternal be thy withering-doom!  
Mayst thou too like that outlawed spirit,  
Too late a vain remorse inherit,  
My deadliest curse!"

" Peace, traitor, go!

I pledged my word, I spare my blow,  
Thy curse I scorn, thy vengeance mock,  
Unmoved amid the battle's shock,  
The flight of darts, the crash of swords,  
And heaven's own thunders—what are words  
That I should value them! Nor care  
To fumble with thy dagger there;  
I need but wave my arm in mirth,  
To stretch thee lifeless in the earth.  
Or true or false, thy mystic tale,  
Such love as ours, can ne'er assail!

He spake—the Jew, with demon scowl,  
(Such as perchance when tigers prowl,  
Their savage features oft displayed),  
Looked round for a more equal blade;  
And tore his beard, and beat his head  
In vain—he wavered—yelled, and fled!

Then bold advanced the Magian,  
And seized the hated talisman,  
And dashed it on the marble floor;  
The curse was on their love no more,  
The talisman had lost its power,  
The spell was broken from that hour!

And at Zadra's feet he fell,  
The Magian in his martial pride,  
Star of my soul! thy fear dispel,

'This day—this hour thou art my bride,  
Not the leagued powers of earth and hell,  
Henceforward tear thee from my side !'

Then, by her lover's arms inclosed,  
In blushing whispers she exposed,  
Freed from all dark unearthly fears,  
Her virgin love, mid joyous tears,  
Resting upon the soft divan,  
With Smerdis, the bold Magian,  
Forgotten, then, her kinsman's fate,  
Her conquered country's fallen state,  
Forgotten all but one desire,  
One all absorbing living fire,  
Of feeling, hopes, and thoughts untold,  
And whirlwind passions long controlled !

Better that man should never live,  
Who seems for life alone to strive,  
Who as from birth to grave he moves,  
In unimpassioned dullness plods ;  
Whilst he who fondly—madly loves,  
Needs not to envy men or—gods !



## NOTES.

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### SCROLL II.

"Smerdis was he—the Magian."—It is quite unnecessary to inform the student of chronology, that this Smerdis was an entirely different person from the Magian, who, during the expedition of Cambyses to Egypt, usurped the throne of Persia, and was by his want of care betrayed to the wife of his lawful sovereign, to whom he bore otherwise so striking a resemblance. The Smerdis in the text is supposed to be in full possession of those ornamental curricular appendages.

### SCROLL III.

Oromasdes, or Ormuzd—the principle of good in the ancient Persian mythology, as Ahrahman or Arimanes represented that of evil.

### SCROLL IV.

"Mene Mene Tekel Pares!"—Pares signifies a Persian. In the book of Daniel it is written at first—Upharsin; and we have more than once been requested to explain this anomaly. The fact is, that Pharsin is the Hebrew plural—Persians, and the U is simply the conjunction.

### SCROLL V.

"Tear off you azure talisman."—I need not enlarge upon the popularity throughout the Orient, of charms, amulets, &c., in ancient and modern times. As, however, some of my readers fair, or otherwise, may not be quite so credulous, I may suggest the bare possibility of putting an allegorical interpretation upon the dread gift of Zaido's unearthly ancestor. Who, for example, that hath visited remote lands, hath not, at least once in his life, experienced how dire a spell to separate lovers is that abortion of infernal parentage—superstition.