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A Witch's Chant

James Hogg

Thou art weary, weary, weary,
Thou art weary and far away,
Hear me, gentle spirit, hear me,
Come before the dawn of day.

I hear a small voice from the hill,
The vapour is deadly, pale, and still—
A murmuring sough is on the wood,
And the witching star is red as blood.

And in the cleft of heaven I scan
The giant form of a naked man,
His eye is like the burning brand,
And he holds a sword in his right hand.



All is not well. By dint of spell,
Somewhere between the heaven and hell
There is this night a wild deray,
The spirits have wander'd from their way.

The purple drops shall tinge the moon
As she wanders through the midnight noon;
And the dawning heaven shall all be red
With blood by guilty angels shed.

Be as it will, I have the skill
To work by good or work by ill;
Then here's for pain, and here's for thrall,
And here's for conscience, worst of all.

Another chant, and then, and then,
Spirits shall come or Christian men—
Come from the earth, the air, or the sea,
Great Gil-Moules, I cry to thee!

Sleep'st thou, wakest thou, lord of the wind,
Mount thy steeds and gallop them blind;
And the long-tailed fiery dragon outfly
The rocket of heaven, the bomb of the sky.

Over the dog-star, over the wain,
Over the cloud, and the rainbow's mane,
Over the mountain, and over the sea,
Haste—haste—haste to me!

Then here's for trouble, and here's for smart,
And here's for the pang that seeks the heart;
Here's for madness, and here's for thrall,
And here's for conscience, the worst of all

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