

# The Digger

From the Portuguese of Guerra Junqueiro

By Edgar Prestage

THE cock crows this December night . . .  
The cock crows hoarsely this dark night . . .

—Misery ! oh, misery !

Villager sleep not ! Call the wight . . .

Black sorrow, hasten, call the wight ! . . .

—Misery ! oh, misery !

The digger is thy slave of right,

Out with his hoe, for he of right,

Black sorrow, is a slave to thee !

Howls the wind, the nests are shaking . . .

In dread night the nests are shaking . . .

—Misery ! oh, misery !

Cold as ermine snow is flaking . . .

In the dusk the snow is flaking . . .

—Misery ! oh, misery !

Maledict his way is making,

Hoe on shoulder he is making,

That digger, a dark phantom he !

The

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The morning star doth purple grow . . . .

The morning star doth pallid grow . . . .

—Misery ! oh, misery !

The hills are bare, the frost below,

And stiff as bronze the frost below ! . . . .

—Misery ! oh, misery !

How grimly bends he o'er his hoe,

And tears and trenches with his hoe,

That digger, a dark phantom he !

He digs and digs from dawn of day

Until the stroke of middle day . . . .

—Misery ! oh, misery !

Then standing, sadly sets to pray,

Upon the lonely slope to pray,

—Misery ! oh, misery !

And putting down his hoe to say

“Hail Mary !” silently to say,

That digger, a dark phantom he !

He digs the savage mountainside,

From dawn to even, the mountainside . . . .

—Misery ! oh, misery !

And with some broth Thou dost requite

Him, God ! and with six bairns requite,

—Misery ! oh, misery !

The Angelus rings through the night,

“Blessed be Thou, Heavenly Sire, this night !”

The digger cries, a phantom he !

Ten hills are dug . . . where is the wheat?  
Six mouths begotten . . . where is the wheat?

—Misery! oh, misery!

Upon his door comes Hunger's beat,  
And Death's re-echoing the beat . . .

—Misery! oh, misery!

“The peace of God, I now entreat!  
The peace of God, I now entreat!”

The digger sighed, and ceased to dree!