

Life and Death

By Ellis J. Wynne

LIFE is a desert drear,
A sandy plain ;
A waste, a wild career
For phantom forms of Fear,
Sorrow and Pain.
No guide hath man, no guide—
Self must on self confide ;
No hand to lead him on,
No hope to rest upon—
Nought but the grave !

Man veils his eyes, and lo, blind Phantasy
Sits at her loom and weaves a sacred mystery,
A magic woof of dreams—glad dreams of liberty—
To mock a slave !

And Death ? Ah Death's a sage
Who stills our fears ;
Our doubts and faiths engage
The wisdom of his age—
And eke our tears.

Hushed

Life and Death

Hushed in expectancy
We stake life's paltry fee ;
A last-drawn sigh, a sleep,
And Death calls "Laugh," or "Weep,"—
'Tis then we know

Thy form aright, O Master ! from the guise
Of Life's prim pageant, Thee, with unsealed eyes—
Sum of our hopes or fears—we recognise
For weal or woe !