

A Ballad of the Heart's Bounty

By Laurence Alma Tadema

“WHAT shines at my window out there in the night?”
Said she then: “For you is the Lamp that I bear . . .”
But his pillow was bright with the mist of gold hair,
And he answered: “I have my light.”

“Who stands at my door on the edge of the mere?”
Said she then: “The Jewel I bring is for you . . .”
But his cheek touched the lashes, the veiled eyes were blue,
And he answered: “My gems are here.”

“Who sings in the dark when the woods are mute?”
Said she then: “This Music is yours to keep . . .”
But sweet is the sound of low laughter in sleep,
And he answered: “I need no lute.”

At New Day he rose, for the bed's warmth was gone,
But Death had smiled first in the face that he sought . . .
Her white fingers yielded the gifts she had brought,
And he fled to the hills alone.