

Excerpts from Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott" (1833 Version)

*Part the First.*

On either side the river lie  
Long fields of barley and of rye,  
That clothe the wold and meet the sky.  
And thro' the field the road runs by  
    To manytowered Camelot.  
The yellowleav'd waterlily,  
The greensheath'd daffodilly,  
Tremble in the water chilly,  
    Round about Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens shiver,  
The sunbeam-showers break and quiver  
In the stream that runneth ever  
By the island in the river,  
    Flowing down to Camelot.  
Four gray walls and four gray towers  
Overlook a space of flowers,  
And the silent isle imbowers  
    The Lady of Shalott.

Underneath the bearded barley,  
The reaper, reaping late and early,  
Hears her ever chanting cheerly,  
Like an angel, singing clearly,  
    O'er the stream of Camelot.  
Piling the sheaves in furrows airy,  
Beneath the moon, the reaper weary  
Listening whispers, "'tis the fairy  
    Lady of Shalott."

The little isle is all inrailed  
With a rose-fence, and overtrailed  
With roses: by the marge unhailed  
The shallop flitteth silkensailed,  
    Skimming down to Camelot.  
A pearl-garland winds her head:  
She leaneth on a velvet bed,  
Fully royally apparell'd,  
    The Lady of Shalott.

*Part the Fourth*

In the stormy eastwind straining  
The pale-yellow woods were waning,  
The broad stream in his banks complaining,  
Heavily the low sky raining  
    Over towered Camelot:  
Outside the isle a shallow boat  
Beneath a willow lay afloat,  
Below the carven stern she wrote,  
    THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

A cloudwhite crown of pearl she dight.  
All raimented in snowy white  
That loosely flew, (her zone in sight,  
Clasped with one blinding diamond bright,)  
    Her wide eyes fixed on Camelot,  
Though the squally eastwind keenly  
Blew, with folded arms serenely  
By the water stood the queenly  
    Lady of Shalott.

With a steady, stony glance—  
Like some bold seer in a trance,  
Beholding all his own mischance,  
Mute, with a glassy countenance—  
    She looked down to Camelot.  
It was the closing of the day,  
She loosed the chain, and down she lay,  
The broad stream bore her far away,  
    The Lady of Shalott.

As when to sailors while they roam,  
By creeks and outfalls far from home,  
Rising and dropping with the foam,  
From dying swans wild warblings come,  
    Blown shoreward; so to Camelot  
Still as the boathead wound along  
The willowy hills and fields among,  
They heard her chanting her death-song,  
    The Lady of Shalott.

A longdrawn carol, mournful, holy,  
She chanted loudly, chanted lowly,  
Till her eyes were darkened wholly,  
And her smooth face sharpened slowly

Turned to towered Camelot:

For ere she reached upon the tide  
The first house by the waterside,  
Singing in her song she died,

The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,  
By gardenwall and gallery,  
A pale, pale corpse she floated by,  
Deadcold, between the houses high,

Dead into towered Camelot.

Knight and burgher, lord and dame,  
To the plank'd wharfage came:  
Below the stern they read her name,  
"The Lady of Shalott."

They crossed themselves, their stars they blest,  
Knight, minstrel, abbot, squire and guest.

There lay a parchment on her breast,  
That puzzled more than all the rest,

The wellfed wits at Camelot.

*"The web was woven curiously  
The charm is broken utterly,  
Draw near and fear not—this is I,  
The Lady of Shalott.*