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King David

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King David was a sorrowful man:
No cause for his sorrow had he;
And he called for the music of a hundred harps,
To ease his melancholy.

They played till they all fell silent:
Played and play sweet did they;
But the sorrow that haunted the heart of King David
They could not charm away.

He rose; and in his garden
Walked by the moon alone,
A nightingale hidden in a cypress tree,
Jargoned on and on.

King David lifted his sad eyes
Into the dark-boughed tree
'Tell me, thou little bird that singest,
Who taught my grief to thee?'

But the bird in no-wise heeded;

And the king in the cool of the moon
Hearkened to the nightingale's sorrowfulness,
Till all his own was gone.

