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In Youth The Panting Slave

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Come, master, observe the host of mankind.

How are they?

Wretched.

Why?

Because they are not free.

Why?

Because the giddy multitude are driven by the unpredictable

Must of their pleasures

and the sober few are bound by the inflexible

Ought of their duty, between which slaveries

there is nothing to choose.

Would you be happy?

Then learn to act freely.

Would you act freely?

Then learn to ignore those twin tyrants of appetite and conscience.

Therefore I counsel you, Master

Take Baba the Turk to wife.

Consider her picture once more,

and as you do so reflect upon my words.

In youth the panting slave pursues the fair evasive dame;

Then, caught in colder fetters, woos

Wealth, Office or a name;

Till, old, dishonoured, sick, downcast

And failing in his wits,

In Virtue's narrow cell at last

The withered bondsman sits.

That man, that man alone, that man alone his fate fulfils,

For he alone, for he alone is free

Who chooses what to will, and wills His choice as destiny.

No eye his future can foretell,

No law his past explain

Whom neither Passion may compel,

Nor Reason can restrain.