

1: The Defence of Guenevere and other poems (eBook,) [www.enganchecubano.com]

The Defence of Guenevere and Other Poems has 47 ratings and 2 reviews. Steve said: A little bit of this can go a long way. I actually found out about thi.

In the course of the next hundred-odd years some of the best critics would delight in the purity of passion, energy, color, and enchantment they discovered in these any poems. William Fredeman would call them "the most Pre-Raphaelite volume of poetry which the movement produced. One of them was R. Dixon, who intuited the stature of these poems after a single recitation: I cannot recollect what took place afterwards, but I expressed my admiration in some way, as we all did From that time onward, for a term or two, he came to my rooms almost every day with a new poem" Mackail I, p. In this congenial environment and for hose friends Morris wrote all thirty of the poems which he then published in under the title *The Defence of Guenevere, and Other Poems*. In writing only for these ardent supporters, Morris could take for granted a certain mutual dedication and background. Members of his closely-knit Oxford coterie called themselves "The Brotherhood," a complex allusion to the ideological debt they owed the earlier Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, to their abandoned dream of founding a monastery, and to their own sense of harboring [p. These interests they championed during in their poetry, tales, and essays for *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*, which they originally thought of calling *The Brotherhood*. In a sense, the *Guenevere* volume, which includes five poems from the *Magazine*, illustrates the same esoteric interests but with a power and unity of vision that the earlier literary undertaking lacked. Although unappreciated and largely misunderstood by the Victorian public, the preferences which these young men so zealously avowed were neither original nor abstruse. Thus, Morris could count on his small audience of initiates to expect and applaud medieval settings. Even more specifically, since the friends habitually read to each other, he could count on their intimacy with particular medieval texts and legends and with certain nineteenth-century poets. Worshipfully, the undergraduate set read aloud from Tennyson, and Dixon remembers "that we all had the feeling that after [Tennyson] no farther development was possible: It was not until the autumn of that Morris and Burne-Jones discovered Malory, but thereafter the adventures of the Round Table utterly absorbed them. And finally, Morris repeatedly regaled his cohorts with readings from the medieval chronicles of Froissart and Monstrelet. Constant discussions of poetry augmented the shared readings during these years. It is crabbed, and involved, and stiff, and broken-backed in metre You cannot quite make out what it means, or whether it means anything taken altogether" 20 November , pp. The twentieth-century critic, trained to enlighten and appreciate obscurity, will find these poems rather more direct and immediate than crabbed and involved. Read in conjunction with the edited text, these notes also help clarify how Morris worked with his sources, whether medieval or modern, toward a pew kind of poetryâ€”one that spurns intellectual complication, that pretends to no moral or spiritual message that unravels the intricate weave of human experience down to a common thread of basic emotion. By ignoring the claims of intellect and morality by elevating human passion and perception, Morris in the *Guenevere* volume denied certain fundamental assumptions of Victorian poetics and thereby reconnoitered a new poetic territory for such twentieth-century explorers as Yeats and Pound. The critical introduction which follows pursues this line of argument. A *Bibliocritical Study* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, , p. Its authors lamented the last simplicity of pre-industrial society and a coherent system of beliefs. More deeply if less consciously, they mourned the possibility of decisive action, objective perception, human communication which had passed from the modern world. Seeking comfort in this cataclysm, many poets combed through history for soil in which their thwarted imaginations could take root. They returned now with Arnold to the Greeks "who saw life steadily and saw it whole," now with Pater and Browning to the Renaissance, but most often to the Middle Ages with poets like Scott, Keats, Tennyson, Morris, and Rossetti. Other poets recalled private rather than public history and found their consolation in memories of childhood. Wordsworth perhaps inaugurated this line of thinking in his *Intimations* ode. By mid-century Ruskin could, without seeming absurd, identify childhood as the locus of genius. To exemplify his epithet he cited in first three stanzas of "Golden Wings," which he called "the best description of happiness in the world"ignoring that [p. For to Yeats all that Morris

wrote seemed "like the make-believe of a child who is remaking the world" p. These early poems exhibit no philosophy, no network of image or symbol to complicate the expression of pure feeling--whether love-longing, paralyzing loneliness, lust for violence, or struggle for chastity. Morris so effortlessly animated medieval dreams that all his work recalled to Yeats an enviable innocence which usually vanishes with adulthood and industrialization but which in Morris oddly survived both. The younger poet looked back to Morris in troubled wisdom and saw an ease and assurance forever denied his own more complicated sensibility. Hugh Kenner precisely captures the childlike charm of Morris for his successors in his cameo of Ezra Pound with H. He had brought her. One "early world" Morris revived in this volume was the private world of childhood emotion: These techniques, explored below in "The Nineteenth-Century Poetic Heritage," formed his legacy to poets of the [p. The other "early world" that Morris recovered was the early history of modern Europe as recorded in medieval chronicles, legends, and fairy tales, ballads, hymns,. Here again, as indicated in "Morris and Medieval-ism," he worked with his sources to bring back only those forms. These two early worlds are ultimately inseparable as they inform the poems of the Guenevere volume: And to some extent he does. Yet he also grew up and wrote these poems in full sympathy with a medieval revival that had been influencing public taste for nearly a hundred years. Morris and Medievalism During the last half of the eighteenth century England enjoyed a Gothic revival which affected both architecture and literature. The newer taste called for complexity, Irregularity, and individuality. As it happened, all of these new principles characterized the Gothic architecture which still dotted the English countryside in spite of attempted Neoclassical face-lifts. As interest in and knowledge about the Middle Ages increased, novelists began to buttress their medieval stories with historical details. Most prominent among the practitioners of the medieval historical novel was Sir Walter Scott, who did more than any other English author to secure the role of the Middle Ages in nineteenth-century literature. Perhaps most importantly, the Middle Ages also represented to Scott a period during which individual deeds of heroism could significantly affect a larger social fabric, during which poignancy could be easily wrung from a single act of valor. If Scott had revived the Middle Ages in search of romance, Thomas Carlyle found in the same era a social and religious object lesson. In Past and Present Carlyle made explicit the contrast between modern and medieval society that Scott had only implied. Accurately recreating characters from the *Chronica Jocelini de Brakelonda*, Carlyle, like Scott, located in the Middle Ages what he missed in his own: Without these Carlyle could envision no heroic action. To Ruskin Gothic architecture manifested a stable and fulfilling hierarchy among workman, master, and God and signaled a healthy state of public morality. Thus, Scott, Carlyle, and Ruskin all sought to reweave the tattered fabric of social obligation, and all three looked to the Middle Ages as a model. Due to the prestige of these medievalist precursors, the young William Morris could dispense with overt comparisons between Victorian and medieval England in his first volume of poetry. He could assume rather than assert that the Middle Ages provided the only setting congenial to the expression of intense passion, heroic action, mystery, and beauty. According to Mackail I, p. He never lost touch with that first fresh wonder at the giant figures of romance, the haunting creatures of fairyland. By Morris had read both Carlyle and Ruskin, and [p. What Morris wrote in his preface to the Ruskin essay signals the strength and endurance of his admiration for that work: To some of us when we first read it, now many years ago, it seemed to point out a new road on which the world should travel" AWS I, p. Not surprisingly, Morris incorporated in the characters and techniques of his first poems most of the elements which, according to "The Nature of Gothic," define the Gothic mind: The critic helped to pinpoint a bygone mentality which the artist was uniquely qualified to animate. For freshness of vision and truth to nature they turned to artists before Raphael and hence styled themselves the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Along with other Victorian medievalists, the Pre-Raphaelites thus sought in the Middle Ages the authority for their own ideas. Yet their paintings actually owe more to nineteenth-century natural science and historiography than they do to such hate medieval painters as Fra Angelico. Like careful scientists [p. Morris was to import this treatment of detail into the poetry of his Guenevere volume. A similar respect for detail and an enthusiasm for archeology led nineteenth-century historians to depict the trappings of past eras with unprecedented accuracy. And in their frequent Biblical, literary, or historical settings the Pre-Raphaelite painters strove for just such faithful representations. By the original Pre-Raphaelites had dispersed both

spiritually and geographically. The chief monument to this period of Pre-Raphaelitism was the fresco project for the Oxford Union: Earlier, many of the objects in his paintings had served not only as minutely observed details but also as common religious symbols. In these two [p. It is this vivid and haunting dreamscape that Morris perfectly captures in his poems with corresponding titles. From earliest boyhood the poet had inhabited a world of romance, enhanced by his reading but not entirely dependent upon it. His life began on the edge of Epping Forest, where primeval thickets and hornbeams suggested the life of a far older England. According to Mackail, Woodford Hall, where Morris spent his boyhood, also preserved links with medieval England: Woodford Hall brewed its own beer, and made its own butter, as much as a matter of course as it baked its own bread. Just as in the fourteenth century, there was a meal at high prime, midway between breakfast and dinner. Many of the old festivals were observed; Twelfth Night especially was one of the great days of the year, and the Masque of St. George was always then presented with considerable elaboration. In , after the death of his father, the Morris family moved to Water House in nearby Walthamstow. Behind the tote was an island planted with an aspen grove and surrounded t moat. The boy and his brothers played there constantly. Influenced by the Gothic and High Church tendencies of the recent Oxford Movement, he and most of his Oxford friends planned to enter the Church. Morris even seriously considered devoting the whole of his considerable fortune to the establishment of a monastery. As so often in his childhood, Morris seemed to be playing out a vision of the Middle Ages in his own life. Morris takes his stainless knight from Malory, yet the curiously medieval course of his own young life allowed him, perhaps better than any of his medievalist contemporaries, to project his own nearly Gothic experience and outlook into a character culled from a medieval storybook. The poet chooses a Middle English hymn to the Virgin as the vehicle of his admiration for Jane Burden, whom he met in and married in Like the medieval court poet, the speaker of this poem assumes a supplicating and reverential posture toward a quasi-divine mistress, persistently urges his own unworthiness, and seems to expect disappointment. The poet seems to have been so wholly immersed in his medieval notions of chivalry, generosity, and self-sacrifice that he arranged his marriage to require them. In the first poem he reveals his own monastic struggle through the medieval hero who perhaps inspired it. In the second he expresses his dawning love through the attitude and even the stanza of a popular kind of medieval lyric.

2: The Defence of Guenevere and Other Poems by William Morris

The Defence of Guenevere, in full The Defence of Guenevere and Other Poems, collection of poetry by William Morris, published in The poems that make up the collection, many of which are dramatic monologues, fall into three groups.

But, knowing now that they would have her speak,
She threw her wet hair backward from her brow,
Her hand close to her mouth touching her cheek,
As though she had had there a shameful blow,
And feeling it shameful to feel ought but shame
All through her heart, yet felt her cheek burned so,
She must a little touch it; like one lame
She walked away from Gauwaine, with her head
Still lifted up; and on her cheek of flame
The tears dried quick; she stopped at last and said:
Because you must be right, such great lords; still
"Listen, suppose your time were come to die,
And you were quite alone and very weak;
Yea, laid a dying while very mightily
"The wind was ruffling up the narrow streak
Of river through your broad lands running well:
Suppose a hush should come, then some one speak:
Whatever tears her full lips may have drunk,
She stood, and seemed to think, and wrung
her hair, Spoke out at last with no more trace
of shame, With passionate twisting of her body there:
Autumn, and the sick Sure knowledge things
would never be the same, "However often
Spring might be most thick Of blossoms and buds,
smote on me, and I grew Careless of most things,
let the clock tick, tick, "To my unhappy pulse,
that beat right through My eager body; while
I laughed out loud, And let my lips curl up
at false or true, "Seemed cold and shallow
without any cloud. Pray you, does the Lord
Will that all folks should be quite happy
and good? I love God now a little, if this
cord "Were broken, once for all what striving
could Make me love anything in earth or
heaven? Do I not know now of a day in
Spring? No minute of the wild day ever
slips "From out my memory; I hear thrushes
sing, And wheresoever I may be, straightway
Thoughts of it all come up with most fresh
sting: But shouting, loosed out, see now!
After that day why is it Guenevere grieves?
Gauwaine be friends now, speak me lovingly.
God of mercy, how he turns away! So, ever
must I dress me to the fight, "So: Gauwaine,
I say, See me hew down your proofs: Yea,
sirs, by cursed unknighly outrage; though
"You, Gauwaine, held his word without a
flaw, This Mellyagraunce saw blood upon my
bed: Whose blood then pray you? Not so,
fair lords, even if the world should end
"This very day, and you were judges here
Instead of God. Did you see Mellyagraunce
When Launcelot stood by him? Is there a
good knight then would stand aloof, "When
a queen says with gentle queenly sound:
I will not tell you more to-day, Judge
any way you will:

3: William Morris Archive

*The Defence of Guenevere and Other Poems (Dodo Press) [William Morris] on www.enganchecubano.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. William Morris () was an English artist, writer, socialist and activist.*

The only surviving fruits of that intention are the first four poems of this volume and three fragments preserved by May Morris: Her punishment is to burn at the stake. The action of this poem occurs just before the fire is kindled. Guenevere structures a complicated self-defense, hoping to mark time until Launcelot, here as in Malory, can ride to her rescue. And so thenne her ghoostly fader was broughte to her to be shryuen of her mysdedes. But there were but fewe in comparyson that wold bere ony armour for to strengthe the dethe of the quene. A Further Note" 6 and Carole G. Moreover, the dramatic confrontation and intense emotion of "The Defence" combine with its headlong meter and insistent self-justification to make it one of the most Browningsque of the poems in this volume. See introductory note to "The Haystack in the Floods. Morris has added psychological and moral complexity to his dramatic situation by giving Guenevere a relatively respected opponent. Gauwaine was sorely grieved over the loss of these two brothers see note for lines and swore to avenge the deaths on Launcelot. These are recorded in the thirteenth-century Vulgate Lancelot, with which Morris may not have been directly acquainted. But Malory also speaks of clocks. In the thirteenth-century version, the lovers meet in a meadow, not a garden, and Guenevere brings three of her ladies. Launcelot is so timid that Guenevere must offer the first kiss. If by no other means, Morris undoubtedly knew the story of the first kiss from Dante Inferno V, lines ff. Just after the Grail episode, Guenevere sent Launcelot away to divert suspicion about their dalliance, then gave a dinner party for twenty-four other knights. Readers of Malory would realize that the Queen had been falsely accused on that occasion and might more seriously consider whether the present charge were not also false. This is the second detail see note for line 46 on which Morris departs from Malory. Morris again compresses events from Malory. The Queen had taken ten unarmed knights a-maying. Mellyagraunce, long lusting for the Queen, took advantage of these festivities to kidnap her, wounding, rather than slaying, all of her companions in the process Book XIX, Chs. Afraid to meet Launcelot in the field after he had challenged him, Mellyagraunce invited Launcelot on a tour of his castle, then contrived to have his guest fall through a trap door into a dungeon Book XIX, Ch. Mellyagraunce is first unhorsed, then begs for mercy. Launcelot offers to fight with his head and left side uncovered and his left hand tied behind him. On the medieval idea that beauty manifests the mind of God and is hence intrinsically virtuous, see D. The Pre-Raphaelites carried this notion to the extreme of exonerating criminals on grounds of their personal beauty. Oswald Doughty in *A Victorian Romantic: Dante Gabriel Rossetti* London, relates the following anecdote: In Malory, Agravaire suggests that the King stay out all night hunting so that Mordred, Agravaire, and the other knights can take Launcelot and Guenevere in the act of adultery. Their plan goes off perfectly. Ironically, it is Gauwaine in Malory who suggests these innocent possibilities for the interaction between Launcelot and Guenevere: See note for line Guenevere has good reason to expect her deliverer. Malory provides this earlier exchange: The watercolor now owned by E. The Glastonbury thorn takes up the right foreground. And thou were the curtoyste knyghte that euer bare shelde. In Malory, Guenevere had secluded herself in a convent at Almesbury, not Glastonbury. But Glastonbury was where Arthur was buried--and where his wife was later laid to rest beside him. So Morris had to relocate Guenevere to make the scenario of this poem work. In Malory, Gareth and Dinadan are friends and often joust in the same tournament. A red lily or hyacinth is used as a symbol of martyred innocence in the classical story of Apollo and Hyacinthus. Maiden Margaret is St. Margaret of Antioch, a virgin martyr who refused either to marry or to give up her Christianity even under the most extreme torture. Neither scarlet nor white lilies are usually associated with her, though they would be appropriate to a virgin martyr. Morris admits that his knowledge of iconography is limited CW I, p. Arthur, according to Malory, had died in battle against Mordred near Salisbury. Not until the fourteenth century was Joseph associated with Glastonbury. Later legends assert that he planted his staff there and it blossomed. Apple-trees are also linked, if less directly, with Glastonbury. In Malory, Guenevere notices Launcelot walking in the cloister and swoons. There are two possible sources

for the many golden-haired women in this volume: Even in her present state of penitent humility, Guenevere cannot escape the idea that beauty can be excused anything. See note for line of "The Defence. See, for instance, 2 Corinthians 3: Guenevere identifies herself with Mary Magdalene, who in Luke 7: A "V" was supposed to distinguish a poisonous snake. But in Malory the bodies were then taken to Rome, not Camelot. In Malory, Lucius is killed by Arthur, not Launcelot. Launcelot did have one encounter with Breuse who, as ever, managed to escape. The two drink a love potion intended for Iseult and King Mark, her husband-to-be. The love triangle among Tristram, Iseult, and Mark is a clear parallel to the one formed by Guenevere, Launcelot, and Arthur. But, still pining for La Belle Iseult, he never consummated the marriage. Yet I grew curious of my shame, And sometimes in the church, On hearing such a sin rebuked, Have held my girdle-glass unhooked To see how such a woman looked. But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. She knows him for a prophet when he tells her she has had five husbands "and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband. Luke 7 and 8 recount the stories of the woman who was a sinner and Mary Magdalene. Both probably refer to the same woman, who was a harlot forgiven by Jesus for her sin because of her humble repentance. Gauwaine never "scowls" in Malory, but parts of his career might have given him good reason to. During one of his first exploits he accidentally slew a lady with a stroke intended for her lover Book III, Ch. The grief this incident provoked followed him for several chapters. See also note to line 46 of "The Defence. He is therefore called Beaumains or "Fair Hands. And he hadde suche a customme that he loued euery good knyghte, and euery good knyght loued hym ageyne" Book X, Ch. See notes for lines and on the subject of his love life. In Malory he never fights with his helmet off. In , the year this poem was written, Morris was engaged with Rossetti and a group of other artists in decorating the walls of the Oxford Union with frescoes on Arthurian themes. He pursued it with an almost religious zeal, invested it with all the frustrated love he felt for Iseult, and, naturally, never quite caught up with it. In the later books of Malory when Gareth is only a minor character, he is often overcome in jousts. When Gareth was finally granted his first adventure, Kay teasingly rode out after him, thinking him incapable of knightly strength. He often defeats Dinadan in Malory. In heraldry a bend-sinister is two parallel lines from the upper left to the lower right corner of a coat-of-arms. It is one of the marks of bastardy. Guenevere alludes back to line And at the last he was ware of an hermytage. At about this time, the two artists decorated one chair back with Guendolen in the witch tower and another with the arming of a knight from "Sir Galahad" Mackail I, p. Thus, it seems safe to assume that the chair back decorated with the arming of the knight was completed sometime during the winter of The genesis of this poem is a complicated literary and biographical one. See note for lines 49 ff. Edward Burne-Jones, co-author of the idea, wrote on May 1, , "I have set my heart on founding a Brotherhood. For one as addicted to a secular world of action and romance as the young Morris, this cannot have been an easy decision. Unsatisfied with utter purity, Morris seems eager to attribute to Galahad some of the moral and psychic tension that in Malory belongs rather to Launcelot. Morris was probably aware of the pun on "quest. Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss, Though winning near the goal--yet, do not grieve; She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss, For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair! Galahad was hence a kind of Launcelot without the taint of earthly faults. More bounteous aspects on me beam, Me mightier transports move and thrill; So keep I fair through faith and prayer A virgin heart in work and will. Candlemas, February 2, is, significantly, the feast day of the Virgin. Sleeves were separate garments in medieval dress and so more prominent than they are today.

4: German addresses are blocked - www.enganchecubano.com

The Defence of Guenevere and Other Poems by William Morris This was the title poem of William Morris's most renowned collection, *The Defence of Guenevere and Other Poems*, originally published in

But, knowing now that they would have her speak,
She threw her wet hair backward from her brow,
Her hand close to her mouth touching her cheek,
As though she had had there a shameful blow,
And feeling it shameful to feel ought but shame
All through her heart, yet felt her cheek burned so,
She must a little touch it; like one lame
She walked away from Gauwaine, with her head
Still lifted up; and on her cheek of flame
The tears dried quick; she stopped at last and said:
O knights and lords, it seems but little skill
To talk of well-known things past now and dead.
God wot I ought to say, I have done ill,
And pray you all forgiveness heartily!
Because you must be right, such great lords;
still Listen, suppose your time were come to die,
And you were quite alone and very weak;
Yea, laid a dying while very mightily
The wind was ruffling up the narrow streak
Of river through your broad lands running well:
Suppose a hush should come, then some one speak:
After a shivering half-hour you said:
Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,
Whatever may have happened through these years,
God knows I speak truth, saying that you lie.
Whatever tears her full lips may have drunk,
She stood, and seemed to think, and wrung her hair,
Spoke out at last with no more trace of shame,
With passionate twisting of her body there:
Christmas and whitened winter passed away,
And over me the April sunshine came,
Made very awful with black hail-clouds,
yea And in the Summer I grew white with flame,
And bowed my head down: Autumn, and the sick
Sure knowledge things would never be the same,
However often Spring might be most thick
Of blossoms and buds, smote on me, and I grew
Careless of most things, let the clock tick,
tick, To my unhappy pulse, that beat right through
My eager body; while I laughed out loud,
And let my lips curl up at false or true,
Seemed cold and shallow without any cloud.
Pray you, does the Lord Will that all folks
should be quite happy and good? I love God now
a little, if this cord Were broken, once for all
what striving could Make me love anything in earth
or heaven? Do I not know now of a day in Spring?
No minute of that wild day ever slips
From out my memory; I hear thrushes sing,
And wheresoever I may be, straightway
Thoughts of it all come up with most fresh sting:
I was half mad with beauty on that day,
And went without my ladies all alone,
In a quiet garden walled round every way;
I was right joyful of that wall of stone,
That shut the flowers and trees up with the sky,
And trebled all the beauty: But shouting, loosed out,
see now! Never within a yard of my bright sleeves
Had Launcelot come before: After that day why is it
Guenevere grieves? Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine,
lie, Whatever happened on through all those years,
God knows I speak truth, saying that you lie.
Being such a lady could I weep these tears
If this were true? Gauwaine be friends now,
speak me lovingly. God of mercy, how he turns away!
So, ever must I dress me to the fight, So:
Gauwaine, I say, See me hew down your proofs:
Yea, sirs, by cursed unknighly outrage; though
You, Gauwaine, held his word without a flaw,
This Mellyagraunce saw blood upon my bed:
Whose blood then pray you? Your hands are white,
lady, as when you wed, Where did you bleed?
Not so, fair lords, even if the world should end
This very day, and you were judges here
Instead of God. Did you see Mellyagraunce
When Launcelot stood by him? Setter of traps,
I pray you guard your head, By God I am so glad
to fight with you, Stripper of ladies, that my hand
feels lead For driving weight; hurrah now! But in your
chamber Launcelot was found: Is there a good knight
then would stand aloof, When a queen says with gentle
queenly sound: O true as steel come now and talk
with me, I love to see your step upon the ground
Unwavering, also well I love to see That gracious
smile light up your face, and hear Your wonderful words,
that all mean verily The thing they seem to mean:
For no man cares now to know why I sigh; And no man
comes to sing me pleasant songs, Nor any brings me
the sweet flowers that lie So thick in the gardens;
therefore one so longs To see you, Launcelot; that we
may be Like children once again, free from all wrongs
Just for one night. Did he not come to me? What thing
could keep true Launcelot away If I said, Come? I will
not tell you more today, Judge any way you will:
Now while I ride how quick the moon gets small,
As it did then: I tell myself a tale That will not
last beyond the whitewashed wall, Thoughts of some joust
must help me through the vale, Keep this till after:
Verily then I think, that Guenevere, Made sad by dew
and wind, and tree-barred moon, Did love me more than

ever, was more dear To me than ever, she would let me lie And kiss her feet, or, if I sat behind, Would drop her hand and arm most tenderly, And touch my mouth. And she would let me wind Her hair around my neck, so that it fell Upon my red robe, strange in the twilight With many unnamed colours, till the bell Of her mouth on my cheek sent a delight Through all my ways of being; like the stroke Wherewith God threw all men upon the face When he took Enoch, and when Enoch woke With a changed body in the happy place. The stars shone out above the doubtful green Of her bodice, in the green sky overhead; Pale in the green sky were the stars I ween, Because the moon shone like a star she shed When she dwelt up in heaven a while ago, And ruled all things but God: I did not sleep long, feeling that in sleep I did some loved one wrong, so that the sun Had only just arisen from the deep Still land of colours, when before me one Stood whom I knew, but scarcely dared to touch, She seemed to have changed so in the night; Moreover she held scarlet lilies, such As Maiden Margaret bears upon the light Of the great church walls, nathless did I walk Through the fresh wet woods, and the wheat that morn, Touching her hair and hand and mouth, and talk Of love we held, nigh hid among the corn. Back to the palace, ere the sun grew high, We went, and in a cool green room all day I gazed upon the arras giddily, Where the wind set the silken kings a-sway. I could not hold her hand, or see her face; For which may God forgive me! These memories Launcelot was quick to drink; And when these fell, some paces past the wall, There rose yet others, but they wearied more, And tasted not so sweet; they did not fall So soon, but vaguely wrenched his strained heart sore In shadowy slipping from his grasp: Joseph in the days past preached. At first she said no word, but lay quite still, Only her mouth was open, and her eyes Gazed wretchedly about from hill to hill; As though she asked, not with so much surprise As tired disgust, what made them stand up there So cold and grey. Those dismal hours while the cloudless blue Drew the sun higher: He did give her grace; Because at last she rose up from her bed, And put her raiment on, and knelt before The blessed rood, and with her dry lips said, Muttering the words against the marble floor: Speak to me, Christ! I kiss, kiss, kiss your feet; Ah! Do you not know me, are you gone mad? This thing we did while yet he was alive, Why not, O twisting knight, now he is dead? Thereat the people shouted: And through the spears I saw you drawing nigh, You and Lord Arthur: Launcelot, Launcelot, why did he take your hand, When he had kissed me in his kingly way? Why did your long lips cleave In such strange way unto my fingers then? So eagerly glad to kiss, so loath to leave When you rose up? Why were you more fair Than aspens in the autumn at their best? Was it nought then, my agony and strife? When as day passed by day, year after year, I found I could not live a righteous life! Didst ever think queens held their truth for dear? O, but your lips say: Yea, but she was cold Sometimes, always uncertain as the spring; When I was sad she would be overbold, Longing for kisses. You hated her, And left her moaning while you fought your fill In the daisied meadows! Loud lips, wrung heart! Where is Launcelot To wipe with some kerchief those tears away? Another answer sharply with brows knit, And warning hand up, scarcely lower though: You speak too loud, see you, she heareth it, This tigress fair has claws, as I well know, As Launcelot knows too, the poor knight! Perchance indeed quite ladyless were best. Alas, my maids, you loved not overmuch Queen Guenevere, uncertain as sunshine In March; forgive me! The thrushes sang in the lone garden there: But where you were the birds were scared I trow: O Palomydes, with much honour bear Beast Glatysaunt upon your shield, above Your helm that hides the swinging of your hair, And think of Iseult, as your sword drives through Much mail and plate: O God, let me be there A little time, as I was long ago! Bend over, ladies, to see all you can! Sir Dinadan rolleth overthrown. I shall go mad, Or else die kissing him, he is so pale, He thinks me mad already, O bad! Let me lie down a little while and wail. Here let me tell you what a knight you are, O sword and shield of Arthur! O sickle cutting hemlock the day long! That the husbandman across his shoulder hangs, And, going homeward about evensong, Dies the next morning, struck through by the fangs! I loved him once, with a sad sigh, Now I have slain him, Lord, let me go too, I pray. I know not what to do, If I run fast it is perchance that I May fall and stun myself, much better so, Never, never again! My head and hands were bleeding from the stone, When I rose up, also I heard a bell. Heartless and stupid, with no touch of awe Upon me, half-shut eyes upon the ground, I thought: Night after night your horse treads down alone The sere damp fern, night after night you sit Holding the bridle like a man of stone, Dismal, unfriended: And what if Palomydes also ride, And over many a mountain and bare heath Follow the questing beast with none beside? Is he not able still to hold his breath

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With thoughts of Iseult? For unto such a man love-sorrow is So dear a thing unto his constant heart, That even if he never win one kiss, Or touch from Iseult, it will never part. And he will never know her to be worse Than in his happiest dreams he thinks she is: But me, who ride alone, some carle shall find Dead in my arms in the half-melted snow, When all unkindly with the shifting wind, The thaw comes on at Candlemas: I know Indeed that they will say: Before the trees by autumn were well bared, I saw a damozel with gentle play, Within that very walk say last farewell To her dear knight, just riding out to find Why should I choke to say it? Right so I fell upon the floor and knelt, Not as one kneels in church when mass is said, But in a heap, quite nerveless, for I felt The first time what a thing was perfect dread. But mightily the gentle voice came down: Her warm arms round his neck half throttle ME, The hot love-tears burn deep like spots of lead, Yea, and the years pass quick: Poor Palomydes fretting out his soul!

5: The Defence Of Guenevere Poem by William Morris - Poem Hunter

The Defence of Guenevere, and Other Poems, the first collection of poems published by William Morris, is one of the three or four principal expressions of Pre-Raphaelitism in poetry. Although.

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from: The Defence of Guenevere, and Other Poems (Pp. 1 - 8) But, knowing now that they would have her speak, She threw her wet hair backward from her brow.

8: Editions of The Defence of Guenevere and Other Poems by William Morris

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