

## Ode to a Dentist

### THE NIGHT ATTACK OF TOOTHACHE

O thou, who in the stillness of the night  
 Art gnawing at my unsuspecting jaw,  
 Whilst I, poor victim of thy cruel jest,  
 Awake and startled, wishing for the maw

Of opium or the like, and giving vent  
 To maddened groans, too frightful to the ear  
 Now desperately aim at checking thee;  
 Who thus, attacking with thy vicious spear.

And gloating o'er the misery thus wrought,  
 No mercy shewest. Foe to man and beast  
 And all that living throng that must needs chew  
 To live in health, from mightiest to the least.

So through the hours of night I labour on,  
 A woeful tale of misery untold  
 Until sweet Morpheus, by sheer mercy moved,  
 Me in his charitable arms doth fold.

Oh sleep . . . thou fairest of the gifts that be,  
 Forsake me not in this mine hour of need.  
 Smooth, fair oblivion, my fevered brow,  
 For this thine act is merciful indeed . . .

### THE DREAM

Softly come stealing,  
 Tumbling and reeling,  
 Phantoms uncanny,  
 Dreadful but true;  
 Surely approaching,  
 Rudely encroaching,  
 Harshly attacking,  
 Piercing me through.

Hither and thither,  
 Knowing not whither,  
 Upper or lower,  
 This way or that;  
 Spitefully gnawing,  
 Wounding and drawing,  
 Stabbing and sawing,  
 Fierce to combat.

## AWAKENING

Away that dream! Be gone ye evil wights!  
Depart from hence, ye agonizing foes,  
Tormentors of my sore oppressed soul  
Who thus disturbed my halcyon repose.

Away, away: Thus morning doth unveil  
A gloomy picture, grievous to behold,  
Of swathed jawbones, asp'rins and the like,  
Of bedlam pacing frenzied in the cold . . .

No comfort here for me, nor yet relief,  
Till in my feeble brain there doth appear  
One ray of hope, and faint as it may be,  
'Tis hope, though overcast by bitter fear.

## ODE

Thus to the dentist I repair in haste,  
That uncrowned hero, grand amid his tools  
Of torture, cause of many groans and wails,  
Whose grating drill all yammer overrules.

And knowing not what took me here or how  
I found my quaking members on his chair  
To drain the cup of sorrows to the dregs  
In writhing agony defying all compare.

One thing is sure, if sur'ty there may be;  
He handled forceps with the utmost skill  
And with abrading notes than rent the air  
Thus started forth my hollow jaws to fill.

And crowning all with limitless success  
Dismissed my shaky substance with a smile;  
The deed is done and victory is gained;  
For thee, O Hercules, a threefold „Heil”!

O Paragon, whose light outshineth all,  
Whose skilful hand thus saved me from distress,  
Hail thee! thou peerless of the firmament,  
Thou valiant friend of kingly nobleness!

And glorious with unseen laurels won;  
Triumphantly he doth my cash imburse;  
Thus leaving me, the product of his skill,  
A bankrupt with full jaws and empty purse.

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