

THOUGHTAUDIO



KUBLA KHAN

Or a Vision in a Dream. A Fragment

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KUBLA KHAN

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately Pleasure-Dome decree,
Where Alph, the sacred river ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.

So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers was girdled 'round,
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But, oh! That deep, romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill, athwart a cedarn cover:
A savage place! As holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath the waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her Demon Lover!

And from this chasm with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this Earth in fast, thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momentarily was forced,
Amid whose swift, half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail;
And 'midst these dancing rocks at once and ever,
It flung up momentarily the sacred river!

KUBLA KHAN

Five miles meandering with ever a mazy motion,
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean.
And 'mid this tumult, Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the Dome of Pleasure
Floated midway on the waves,
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device:
A sunny Pleasure-Dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.

Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such deep delight 'twould win me
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome within the air!

KUBLA KHAN

That sunny dome, those caves of ice,
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry: "Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle 'round him thrice,
And close your eyes in holy dread:
For he on honeydew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise!"

THE END