

Astrophobos

- In the midnight heavens burning
 Thro' ethereal deeps afar,
 Once I watch'd with restless yearning
 An alluring, aureate star;
 Ev'ry eye aloft returning, 5
 Gleaming nigh the Arctic car.
- Mystic waves of beauty blended
 With the gorgeous golden rays;
 Phantasies of bliss descended 10
 In a myrrh'd Elysian haze;
 And in lyre-born chords extended
 Harmonies of Lydian lays.
- There (thought I) lie scenes of pleasure,
 Where the free and blessed dwell, 15
 And each moment bears a treasure
 Freight with a lotus-spell,
 And there floats a liquid measure
 From the lute of Israfel.
- There (I told myself) were shining 20
 Worlds of happiness unknown,
 Peace and Innocence entwining
 By the Crowned Virtue's throne;
 Men of light, their thoughts refining
 Purer, fairer, than our own.
- Thus I mus'd, when o'er the vision 25
 Crept a red delirious change;
 Hope dissolving to derision,
 Beauty to distortion strange;

- Hymnic chords in weird collision,
 Spectral sights in endless range. 30
- Crimson burn'd the star of sadness
 As behind the beams I peer'd;
 All was woe that seem'd but gladness
 Ere my gaze with truth was sear'd;
 Cacodaemons, mir'd with madness, 35
 Thro' the fever'd flick'ring leer'd.
- Now I know the fiendish fable
 That the golden glitter bore;
 Now I shun the spangled sable
 That I watch'd and lov'd before; 40
 But the horror, set and stable,
 Haunts my soul for evermore.