
SONG AT MIDNIGHT by ROBERT E. HOWARD

I heard an old gibbet that crowned a bare hill
Creaking a song in the midnight chill;
And I shivered to hear that grisly refrain
That moaned in the night through the fog and
the rain.

"Oh, where are the men who came to me
"And danced all night on the gallows tree?
"Gallant and peasant, man and maid,
"Many have walked in that long parade.
"My chains are broken and red with rust,
"My wood is sealed with the moldy crust.
"Have men forgotten their debt to me,
"That they come no more to the gallows tree?"

The drear wind moaned for a dark refrain,
And a raven called in the drifting rain:
"Oh, where are the feasts that awaited me
"Long, long ago on the gibbet tree?"

A slow-worm spoke from the gallows foot:
"Death is spoils for a crow to loot.
"The winds and the rain they worked their will,
"The kites and the ravens have had their fill,
"But last of all when the chains broke free,
"The fruit of the gallows came to me.
"Men and their works, so swiftly past,
"Come to a feast for the worms at last.
"Here I have gnawed on this narrow good,
"Here now I gnaw on this crumbling wood.
"For men and their works are a feast for me - -
"The bones, and the noose, and the gallows tree."
