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THE SATURNIENNE

by CLARK
ASHTON
SMITH



Beneath the skies of Saturn, pale and many-mooned,
Her palace is;
Her wyvern-warded spires of sinoper, enruned
With names benign and mightier names of malefice,
Illume with fulgent phares
A marish by the black, lethargic seas lagooned;
Her molure-holden stairs
Go down in coiling jet and gold on some unplumbed abyss.

Long as a leaping flame, superb, magnificent,
Across the sun,
Her banners bear Aidennic blooms armorial
And beasts infernal on a field of ciclaton;
Amid her agate courts,
Like to a demon ichor, towering proud and tall,
A scarlet fountain spurts,
To fall upon parterres of dwale and deathly hebenon.

From out her amber windows, gazing languidly
On a weird land,
Where conium and cannabis and upas-tree
Seem wrought in verdigris against the copper sand,
She sees and sees again
A trailing salt like leprous dragons from the sea,
Far-crawled upon the fen;
And foam of monster-cloven gulfs beyond a fallow strand.

Or looking from her turrets to the south and north,
She notes the gleam
Of molied mountains and of rivers pouring forth,
Clear as the dawn, to fail in fulvous rill and stream
The widening waste amid;
Or swell the fallen meres, abominable, swarth,
In green mirages hid
To be the unquested grails of hell, of death and deathful
dream.