

Tiriel

1.

- And Aged Tiriel. stood before the Gates of his beautiful palace
With Myratana. once the Queen of all the western plains
- 5 But now his eyes were darkned. & his wife fading in death
They stood before their once delightful palace. & thus the Voice
Of aged Tiriel. arose. that his sons might hear in their gates
Accursed race of Tiriel. behold your father
Come forth & look on her that bore you. come you accursed sons.
- 10 In my weak arms. I here have borne your dying mother
Come forth sons of the Curse come forth. see the death of Myratana
His sons ran from their gates. & saw their aged parents stand
And thus the eldest son of Tiriel raised his mighty voice
Old man unworthy to be called. the father of Tiriels race
- 15 For every one of those thy wrinkles. each of those grey hairs
Are cruel as death. & as obdurate as the devouring pit
Why should thy sons care for thy curses thou accursed man
Were we not slaves till we rebelled. Who cares for Tiriels curse
His blessing was a cruel curse. His curse may be a blessing
- 20 He ceased the aged man raised up his right hand to the heavens
His left supported Myratana shrinking in pangs of death
The orbs of his large eyes he opened. & thus his voice went forth
Serpents not sons. wreathing around the bones of Tiriel
Ye worms of death feasting upon your aged parents flesh
- 25 Listen & hear your mothers groans. No more accursed Sons
She bears. she groans not at the birth of Heuxos or Yuva
These are the groans of death ye serpents These are the groans of death
Nourished with milk ye serpents. nourished with mothers tears & cares
Look at my eyes blind as the orbless scull among the stones
- 30 Look at my bald head. Hark listen ye serpents listen
What Myratana. What my wife. O Soul O Spirit O fire
What Myratana. art thou dead. Look here ye serpents look
The serpents sprung from her own bowels have drained her dry as this[.]
Curse on your ruthless heads. for I will bury her even here
- 35 So saying he began to dig a grave with his aged hands
But Heuxos called a son of Zazel. to dig their mother a grave
Old cruelty desist & let us dig a grave for thee
Thou hast refused our charity thou hast refused our food

Thou hast refusd our clothes our beds our houses for thy dwelling
40 Chusing to wander like a Son of Zazel in the rocks
Why dost thou curse. is not the curse now come upon your head
Was it not you enslavd the sons of Zazel. & they have cursd
And now you feel it. Dig a grave & let us bury our mother
There take the body. cursed sons. & may the heavens rain wrath
45 As thick as northern fogs. around your gates. to choke you up
That you may lie as now your mother lies. like dogs. cast out
The stink. of your dead carcasses. annoying man & beast
Till your white bones are bleachd with age for a memorial.
No your remembrance shall perish. for when your carcasses
50 Lie stinking on the earth. the buriers shall arise from the east
And. not a bone of all the soils of Tiriel remain
Bury your mother but you cannot bury the curse of Tiriel
He ceast & darkling oer the mountains sought his pathless way

55

2.

He wanderd day & night to him both day & night were dark
The sun he felt but the bright moon was now a useless globe
Oer mountains & thro vales of woe. the blind & aged man
60 Wanderd till he that leadeth all. led him to the vales of Har
And Har & Heva like two children sat beneath the Oak
Mnetha now aged waited on them. & brought them food & clothing
But they were as the shadow of Har. & as the years forgotten
Playing with flowers. & running after birds they spent the day
65 And in the night like infants slept delighted with infant dreams
Soon as the blind wanderer enterd the pleasant gardens of Har
They ran weeping like frightened infants for refuge in Mnethas arms
The blind man felt his way & cried peace to these open doors
Let no one fear for poor blind Tiriel hurts none but himself
70 Tell me O friends where am I now. & in what pleasant place
This is the valley of Har said Mnetha & this the tent of Har
Who art thou poor blind man. that takest the name of Tiriel on thee
Tiriel is king of all the west. who art thou I am Mnetha
And this is Har & Heva. trembling like infants by my side
75 I know Tiriel is king of the west & there he lives in joy
No matter who I am O Mnetha. if thou hast any food
Give it me. for I cannot stay my journey is far from hence
Then Har said O my mother Mnetha venture not so near him
For he is the king of rotten wood & of the bones of death

80 He wanders. without eyes. & passes thro thick walls & doors

Thou shalt not smite my mother Mnetha O thou eyeless man

A wanderer. I beg for food. you see I cannot weep

I cast away my staff the kind companion of my travel

And I kneel down that you may see I am a harmless man

85 He kneeled down & Mnetha said Come Har & Heva rise

He is an innocent old man & hungry with his travel

Then Har arose & laid his hand upon old Tiriels head

God bless thy poor bald pate. God bless. thy hollow winking eyes

God bless thy shriveld beard. God. bless. thy many wrinkled forehead

90 Thou hast no teeth old man & thus I kiss thy sleek bald head

Heva come kiss his bald head for he will not hurt us Heva

Then Heva came & took old Tiriel in her mothers arms

Bless thy poor eyes old man. & bless the old father of Tiriel

Thou art my Tiriels old father. I know thee thro thy wrinkles

95 Because thou smellest. like the figtree. thou smellest like ripe figs

How didst thou lose thy eyes old Tiriel. bless thy wrinkled face

Mnetha said come in aged wanderer tell us of thy name

Why shouldest thou conceal thyself from those of thine own flesh

I am not of this region. said Tiriel dissemblingly

100 I am an aged wanderer once father of a race

Far in the north. but they were wicked & were all destroyd

And I their father sent an outcast. I have told you all

Ask me no more I pray for grief hath seald my precious sight

O Lord said Mnetha how I tremble are there then more people

105 More human creatures on this earth beside the sons of Har

No more said Tiriel but I remain on all this globe

And I remain an outcast. hast thou any thing to drink

Then Mnetha gave him milk & fruits. & they sat down together

110

3.

They sat & eat & Har & Heva smild on Tiriel

Thou art a very old old man but I am older than thou

How came thine hair to leave thy forehead how came thy face so brown

115 My hair is very long my beard. doth cover all my breast

God bless thy piteous face. to count the wrinkles in thy face

Would puzzle Mnetha. bless thy face for thou art Tiriel

Tiriel I never saw but once I sat with him & eat

He was as chearful as a prince & gave me entertainment

120 But long I staid not at his palace for I am forced to wander

What wilt thou leave us too said Heva thou shalt not leave us too
 For we have many sports to shew thee & many songs to sing
 And after dinner we will walk into the cage of Har
 And thou shalt help us to catch birds. & gather them ripe cherries
 125 Then let thy name be Tiriël & never leave us more
 If thou dost go said Har I wish thine eyes may see thy folly
 My sons have left me did thine leave thee O twas very cruel
 No venerable man said Tiriël ask me not such things
 For thou dost make my heart to bleed my sons were not like thine
 130 But worse O never ask me more or I must flee away
 Thou shalt not go said Heva till thou hast seen our singing birds
 And heard Har sing in the great cage & slept upon our fleeces
 Go not for thou art so like Tiriël. that I love thine head
 Tho it is wrinkled like the earth parchd with the summer heat
 135 Then Tiriël rose up from the seat & said god bless these tents
 My Journey is oer rocks & mountains. not in pleasant vales
 I must not sleep nor rest because of madness & dismay
 And Mnetha said Thou must not go to wander dark. alone
 But dwell with us & let us be to thee instead of eyes
 140 And I will bring thee food old man. till death shall call thee hence
 Then Tiriël frownd & answerd. Did I not command you saying
 Madness & deep dismay posses[s] the heart of the blind man
 The wanderer who seeks the woods leaning upon his staff
 Then Mnetha trembling at his frowns led him to the tent door
 145 And gave to him his staff & blest him. he went on his way
 But Har & Heva stood & watchd him till he enterd the wood
 And then they went & wept to Mnetha. but they soon forgot their tears

4.

150 Over the weary hills the blind man took his lonely way
 To him the day & night alike was dark & desolate
 But far he had not gone when Ijim from his woods come down
 Met him at entrance of the forest in a dark & lonely way
 155 Who art thou Eyeless wretch that thus obstructst the lions path
 Ijim shall rend thy feeble joints thou tempter of dark Ijim
 Thous hast the form of Tiriël but I know thee well enough
 Stand from my path foul fiend is this the las of thy deceits
 To be a hypocrite & stand in shape of a blind beggar
 160 The blind man heard his brothers voice & kneeld down on his knee
 O brother Ijim if it is thy voice that speaks to me

Smite not thy brother Tiriel tho weary of his life
 My sons have smitten me already. and if thou smitest me
 The curse that rolls over their heads will rest itself on thine
 165 Tis now seven years since in my palace I beheld thy face
 Come thou dark fiend I dare thy cunning know that Ijim scorns
 To smite the[e] in the form of helpless age & eyeless policy
 Rise up for I discern thee & I dare thy eloquent tongue
 Come I will lead thee on thy way & use thee as a scoff
 170 O Brother Ijim thou beholdest wretched Tiriel
 Kiss me my brother & then leave me to wander desolate
 No artful fiend. but I will lead thee dost thou want to go
 Reply not lest I bind thee with the green flags of the brook
 Ay now thou art discoverd I will use thee like a slave
 175 When Tiriel heard the words of Ijim he sought not to reply
 He knew twas vain for Ijims words were as the voice of Fate
 And they went on together over hills thro woody dales
 Blind to the pleasures of the sight & deaf to warbling birds
 All day they walkd & all the night beneath the pleasant Moon
 180 Westwardly journeying till Tiriel grew weary with his travel
 O Ijim I am faint & weary for my knees forbid
 To bear me further. urge me not lest I should die with travel
 A little rest I crave a little water from a brook
 Or I shall soon discover that I am a mortal man
 185 And you will lose your once lovd Tiriel alas how fain I am
 Impudent fiend said Ijim hold thy glib & eloquent tongue
 Tiriel is a king. & thou the tempter of dark Ijim
 Drink of this runing brook. & I will bear thee on my shoulders
 He drank & Ijim raisd him up & bore him on his shoulders
 190 All day he bore him & when evening drew her solemn curtain
 Entered the gates of Tiriels palace. & stood & calld aloud
 Heuxos come forth I here have brought the fiend that troubles Ijim
 Look knowst thou aught of this grey beard. or of these blinded eyes
 Heuxos & Lotho ran forth at the sound of Ijims voice
 195 And saw their aged father borne upon his mighty shoulders
 Their eloquent tongues were dumb & sweat stood on. their trembling limbs
 They knew twas vain to strive with Ijim they bowd & silent stood
 What Heuxos call thy father for I mean to sport to night
 This is the Hypocritic that sometimes roars a dreadful lion
 200 Then I have rent his limbs & left him rotting in the forest
 For birds to eat but I have scarce departed from the place
 But like a tyger he would come & so I rent him too

Then like a river he would seek to drown me in his waves
But soon I buffeted the torrent anon like to a cloud
205 Fraught with the swords of lightning. but I braved the vengeance too
Then he would creep like a bright serpent till around my neck
While I was Sleeping he would twine I squeezed his poisonous soul
Then like a toad or like a newt. would whisper in my ears
Or like a rock stood in my way. or like a poisonous shrub
210 At last I caught him in the form of Tiriël blind & old
And so I'll keep him fetch your father fetch forth Myratana
They stood confounded. and Thus Tiriël raised his silver voice
Serpents not sons why do you stand fetch hither Tiriël
Fetch hither Myratana & delight yourselves with scoffs
215 For poor blind Tiriël is returned & this much injured head
Is ready for your bitter taunts. come forth sons of the curse
Mean time the other sons of Tiriël ran around their father
Confounded at the terrible strength of Ijim they knew 'twas vain
Both spear & shield were useless & the coat of iron mail
220 When Ijim stretched his mighty arm. the arrow from his limbs
Rebounded & the piercing sword broke on his naked flesh
Then is it true Heuxos that thou hast turned thy aged parent
To be the sport of wintry winds. (said Ijim) is this true
It is a lie & I am like the tree torn by the wind
225 Thou eyeless fiend. & you dissemblers. Is this Tiriël's house
It is as false [as] Matha. & as dark as vacant Orcus
Escape ye fiends for Ijim will not lift his hand against ye
So saying. Ijim gloomy turned his back & silent sought
The secret forests & all night wandered in desolate ways

230

5.

And aged Tiriël stood & said where does the thunder sleep
Where doth he hide his terrible head & his swift & fiery daughters
235 Where do they shroud their fiery wings & the terrors of their hair
Earth thus I stamp thy bosom rouse the earthquake from his den
To raise his dark & burning visage thro the cleaving ground
To thrust these towers with his shoulders. let his fiery dogs
Rise from the center belching flames & roarings. dark smoke
240 Where art thou Pestilence that bathest in fogs & standing lakes
Rise up thy sluggish limbs. & let the loathsomest of poisons
Drop from thy garments as thou walkest. wrapt in yellow clouds
Here take thy seat. in this wide court. let it be strewn with dead

And sit & smile upon these cursed sons of Tiriell
 245 Thunder & fire & pestilence. here you not Tiriels curse
 He ceast the heavy clouds confusd rolld round the lofty towers
 Discharging their enormous voices. at the fathers curse
 The earth trembled fires belched from the yawning clefts
 And when the shaking ceast a fog possest the accursed clime
 250 The cry was great in Tiriels palace his five daughters ran
 And caught him by the garments weeping with cries of bitter woe
 Aye now you feel the curse you cry. but may all ears be deaf
 As Tiriels & all eyes as blind as Tiriels to your woes
 May never stars shine on your roofs may never sun nor moon
 255 Visit you but eternal fogs hover around your walls
 Hela my youngest daughter you shall lead me from this place
 And let the curse fall on the rest & wrap them up together
 He ceast & Hela led her father from the noisom place
 In haste they fled while all the sons & daughters of Tiriell
 260 Chained in thick darkness utterd cries of mourning all the night
 And in the morning Lo an hundred men in ghastly death
 The four daughters stretchd on the marble pavement silent all
 fallen by the pestilence the rest moped round in guilty fears
 And all the children in their beds were cut off in one night
 265 Thirty of Tiriels sons remaind. to wither in the palace
 Desolate. Loathed. Dumb Astonishd waiting for black death

6.

270 And Hela led her father thro the silent of the night
 Astonishd silent. till the morning beams began to spring
 Now Hela I can go with pleasure & dwell with Har & Heva
 Now that the curse shall clean devour all those guilty sons
 This is the right & ready way I know it by the sound
 275 That our feet make. Remember Hela I have savd thee from death
 Then be obedient to thy father for the curse is taken off thee
 I dwelt with Myratana five years in the desolate rock
 And all that time we waited for the fire to fall from heaven
 Or for the torrents of the sea to overwhelm you all
 280 But now my wife is dead & all the time of grace is past
 You see the parents curse. Now lead me where I have commanded
 O Leagued with evil spirits thou accursed man of sin
 True I was born thy slave who askd thee to save me from death—
 Twas for thy self thou cruel man because thou wantest eyes

285 True Hela this is the desert of all those cruel ones
 Is Tiriell cruel look. his daughter & his youngest daughter
 Laughs at affection glories in rebellion. scoffs at Love:—
 I have not eat these two days lead me to Har & Hevas tent
 Or I will wrap the[e] up in such a terrible fathers curse
 290 That thou shalt feel worms in thy marrow creeping thro thy bones
 Yet thou shalt lead me. Lead me I command to Har & Heva
 O cruel O destroyer O consumer. O avenger
 To Har & Heva I will lead thee then would that they would curse
 Then would they curse as thou hast cursed but they are not like thee
 295 O they are holy. & forgiving filld with loving mercy
 Forgetting the offences of their most rebellious children
 Or else thou wouldest not have livd to curse thy helpless children
 Look on my eyes Hela & see for thou has eyes to see
 The tears swell from my stony fountains. wherefore do I weep
 300 Wherefore from my blind orbs art thou not siezd with poisonous stings
 Laugh serpent youngest venomous reptile of the flesh of Tiriell
 Laugh. for thy father Tiriell shall give the[e] cause to laugh
 Unless thou lead me to the tent of Har child of the curse
 Silence thy evil tongue thou murderer of thy helpless children
 305 I lead thee to the tent of Har not that I mind thy curse
 But that I feel they will curse thee & hang upon thy bones
 Fell shaking agonies. & in each wrinkle of that face
 Plant worms of death to feast upon the tongue of terrible curses
 Hela my daughter listen. thou art the daughter of Tiriell
 310 Thy father calls. Thy father lifts his hand unto the heavens
 For thou hast laughed at my tears. & curst thy aged father
 Let snakes rise from thy bedded locks & laugh among thy curls
 He ceast her dark hair upright stood while snakes infolded round
 Her madding brows. her shrieks apalld the soul of Tiriell
 315 What have I done Hela my daughter fearst thou now the curse
 Or wherefore dost thou cry Ah wretch to curse thy aged father
 Lead me to Har & Heva & the curse of Tiriell
 Shall fail. If thou refuse howl in the desolate mountains

320

7.

She howling led him over mountains & thro frightened vales
 Till to the caves of Zazel they approachd at even tide
 Forth from their caves old Zazel & his sons ran. when they saw
 325 Their tyrant prince blind & his daughter howling & leading him

They laughd & mocked some threw dirt & stones as they passd by
 But when Tiriel turnd around & raisd his awful voice
 Some fled away but Zazel stood still & thus began
 Bald tyrant. wrinkled cunning listen to Zazels chains
 330 Twas thou that chaind thy brother Zazel where are now thine eyes
 Shout beautiful daughter of Tiriel. thou singest a sweet song
 Where are you going. come & eat some roots & drink some water
 Thy crown is bald old man. the sun will dry thy brains away
 And thou wilt be as foolish as thy foolish brother Zazel
 335 The blind man heard. & smote his breast & trembling passed on
 They threw dirt after them. till to the covert of a wood
 The howling maiden led her father where wild beasts resort
 Hoping to end her woes. but from her cries the tygers fled
 All night they wanderd thro the wood & when the sun arose
 340 They enterd on the mountains of Har at Noon the happy tents
 Were frighted by the dismal cries of Hela on the mountains
 But Har & Heva slept fearless as babes. on loving breasts
 Mnetha awoke she ran & stood at the tent door & saw
 The aged wanderer led towards the tents she took her bow
 345 And chose her arrows then advanced to meet the terrible pair

8.

And Mnetha hasted & met them at the gate of the lower garden
 350 Stand still or from my bow receive a sharp & winged death
 Then Tiriel stood. saying what soft voice threatens such bitter things
 Lead me to Har & Heva I am Tiriel King of the west
 And Mnetha led them to the tent of Har. and Har & Heva
 Ran to the door. when Tiriel felt the ankles of aged Har
 355 He said. O weak mistaken father of a lawless race
 Thy laws O Har & Tiriels wisdom end together in a curse
 Why is one law given to the lion & th patient Ox
 And why men bound beneath the heavens in a reptile form
 A worm of sixty winters creeping on the dusky ground
 360 The child springs from the womb. the father ready stands to form
 The infant head while the mother idle plays with her dog on her couch
 The young bosom is cold for lack of mothers nourishment & milk
 Is cut off from the weeping mouth with difficulty & pain
 The little lids are lifted & the little nostrils opend
 365 The father forms a whip to rouze the sluggish senses to act
 And scourges off all youthful fancies from the newborn man

Then walks the weak infant in sorrow compelld to number footsteps

Upon the sand. &c

And when the drone has reachd his crawling length

370 Black berries appear that poison all around him. Such was Tiriell

Compelld to pray repugnant & to humble the immortal spirit

Till I am subtil as a serpent in a paradise

Consuming all both flowers & fruits insects & warbling birds

And now my paradise is falln & a drear sandy plain

375 Returns my thirsty hissings in a curse on thee O Har

Mistaken father of a lawless race my voice is past

He ceast outstretchd at Har & Hevas feet in awful death

(3948 words)

Quelle: <http://archive.org/stream/poemsofwilliambl00blak#page/146/mode/2up>