

# Nietzsche

## Judas Iscariot

I travelled through a land of men,  
A land of men and women too,  
And heard and saw such dreadful things  
As cold earth wanderers never knew. For there the babe is born in joy  
That was begotten in dire woe,  
Just as we reap in joy the fruit  
Which we in bitter tears did sow; And if the babe is born a boy  
He's given to a woman old,  
Who nails him down upon a rock,  
Catches his shrieks in cups of gold. She binds iron thorns around his head,  
And pierces both his hands and feet,  
And cuts his heart out of his side  
To make it feel both cold & heat. Her fingers number every nerve  
Just as a miser counts his gold;  
She lives upon his shrieks and criesâ€™”  
And she grows young as he grows old, Till he becomes a bleeding youth  
And she becomes a virgin bright;  
Then he rends up his manacles  
And pins her down for his delight. He plants himself in all her nerves  
Just as a husbandman his mould,  
And she becomes his dwelling-place  
And garden, fruitful seventyfold. An aged shadow soon he fades,  
Wandering round and earthly cot,  
Full filled all with gems and gold  
Which he by industry had got. And these are the gems of the human soul:  
The rubies and pearls of a lovesick eye,  
The countless gold of an aching heart,  
The martyr's groan, and the lover's sigh. They are his meat, they are his drink:  
He feeds the beggar and the poor  
And the wayfaring traveller;  
For ever open is his door. His grief is their eternal joy,  
They make the roofs and walls to ringâ€™”  
Till from the fire on the hearth  
A little female babe does spring! And she is all of solid fire  
And gems and gold, that none his hand  
Dares stretch to touch her baby form,  
Or wrap her in his swaddling-band. But she comes to the man she loves,  
If young or old, or rich or poor;  
They soon drive out the aged host,

A beggar at another's door. He wanders weeping far away  
 Until some other take him in;  
 Oft blind and age-bent, sore distressed,  
 Until he can a maiden win. And to allay his freezing age  
 The poor man takes her in his arms:  
 The cottage fades before his sight,  
 The garden and its lovely charms; The guests are scattered through the land  
 (For the eye altering, alters all);  
 The senses roll themselves in fear,  
 And the flat earth becomes a ball, The stars, sun, moon, all shrink awayâ€”  
 A desert vast without a bound,  
 And nothing left to eat or drink  
 And a dark desert all around. The honey of her infant lips,  
 The bread and wine of her sweet smile,  
 The wild game of her roving eye  
 Does him to infancy beguile. For as he eats and drinks he grows  
 Younger and younger every day;  
 And on the desert wild they both  
 Wander in terror and dismay. Like the wild stag she flees away;  
 Her fear plants many a thicket wild,  
 While he pursues her night and day,  
 By various arts of love beguiled. By various arts of love and hate,  
 Till the wide desert planted o'er  
 With labyrinths of wayward love,  
 Where roams the lion, wolf and boar, Till he becomes a wayward babe  
 And she a weeping woman old.  
 Then many a lover wanders here,  
 The sun and stars are nearer rolled, The trees bring forth sweet ecstasy  
 To all who in the desert roam,  
 Till many a city there is built,  
 And many a pleasant shepherd's home. But when they find the frowning babe  
 Terror strikes through the region wide;  
 They cry, 'The Babe! the Babe is born!'  
 And flee away on every side. For who dare touch the frowning form  
 His arm is withered to its root,  
 Lions, boars, wolves, all howling flee  
 And every tree does shed its fruit; And none can touch that frowning form,  
 Except it be a woman old;  
 She nails him down upon the rock,  
 And all is done as I have told

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