



# Tristram of Lyonesse: And Other Poems

*Algernon Charles Swinburne*

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## Salymar says

One of the Greek classics I loved back in my high school days :)

“And her heart sprang in Iseult, and she drew  
With all her spirit and life the sunrise through  
And through her lips the keen triumphant air  
Sea-scented, sweeter than land-roses were,  
And through her eyes the whole rejoicing east  
Sun-satisfied, and all the heaven at feast  
Spread for the morning; and the imperious mirth  
Of wind and light that moved upon the earth,  
Making the spring, and all the fruitful might  
And strong regeneration of delight  
That swells the seedling leaf and sapling man,  
Since the first life in the first world began  
To burn and burgeon through void limbs and veins,  
And the first love with sharp sweet procreant pains  
To pierce and bring forth roses; yea, she felt  
Through her own soul the sovereign morning melt,  
And all the sacred passion of the sun;  
And as the young clouds flamed and were undone  
About him coming, touched and burnt away  
In rosy ruin and yellow spoil of day,  
The sweet veil of her body and corporal sense  
Felt the dawn also cleave it, and incense  
With light from inward and with effluent heat  
The kindling soul through fleshly hands and feet.  
And as the august great blossom of the dawn  
Burst, and the full sun scarce from sea withdrawn  
Seemed on the fiery water a flower afloat,  
So as a fire the mighty morning smote  
Throughout her, and incensed with the influent hour  
Her whole soul's one great mystical red flower  
Burst, and the bud of her sweet spirit broke  
Rose-fashion, and the strong spring at a stroke  
Thrilled, and was cloven, and from the full sheath came  
The whole rose of the woman red as flame:  
And all her Mayday blood as from a swoon  
Flushed, and May rose up in her and was June.  
So for a space her hearth as heavenward burned:  
Then with half summer in her eyes she turned,  
And on her lips was April yet, and smiled,  
As though the spirit and sense unreconciled  
Shrank laughing back, and would not ere its hour

Let life put forth the irrevocable flower.  
And the soft speech between them grew again”

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### **Clifton says**

My doctoral dissertation is a Jungian analysis of "Tristram," so I'm biased. I have long felt he has been underrated in the century since his death. In my considered opinion, he ranks with Tennyson and Robert Browning as among the three greatest Victorian poets, certainly better than Arnold, both in quantity and quality.

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