

# Gallows Tree

Fitz-James O'Brien (1826-1862)

J. Dyer

There was no West, there was no East, No star a-broad for eye to see, But

5 Nor-man spurred, his jad-ed beast, hard by the terr-i ble gal-lows tree

(The Demon Gibbet)

There was no west, there was no east, no star abroad for eye to see;  
And Norman spurred his jaded beast hard by the terrible gallows-tree.

"O Norman, haste across this waste for something seems to follow me!"  
"Cheer up, dear Maud, for, thanked be God, we nigh have passed the gallows-tree!"

He kissed her lip; then spur and whip! And fast they fled across the lea!  
But vain the heel and rowel steel, for something leaped from the gallows-tree!

"Give me your cloak, your knightly cloak, that wrapped you oft beyond the sea;  
The wind is bold, my bones are old, and I am cold on the gallows-tree."

"O holy God! O dearest Maud, quick, quick, some prayers, the best that be!  
A bony hand my neck has spanned, and tears my knightly cloak from me!"

"Give me your wine, the red, red wine, that in the flask hangs by your knee!  
Ten summers burst on me accurst, and I'm athirst on the gallows-tree."

"O Maud, my life! my loving wife! have you no prayer to set us free?  
My belt unclasps, a demon grasps and drags my wine-flask from my knee!"

"Give me your bride, your bonnie bride, that left her nest with you to flee!  
O, she hath flown to be my own, for I'm alone on the gallows-tree!"

"Cling closer, Maud, and trust in God! Cling close! Ah, heaven, she slips from me!"  
A prayer, a groan, and he alone rode on that night from the gallows-tree.