

Frightfully Interesting Reading List 3 – Bethnal Green to Spitalfields

The Blind Beggar's Daughter of Bethnal Green

It's of a blind beggar who had lost his sight,
And he had a daughter most beautiful bright,
Let me seek my fortune, dear father, said she
And the favour was granted to charming Betsy.

She set out of Rumford as I've heard say,
And arrived in London the very same day,
And when she came there well hired was she,
And so dearly beloved was charming Betsy.

She had not been there a very long time,
When a rich squire a courting he came,
Your silks shall be lined with jewels said he,
If you can but love me my charming Besty.

O yes I am willing to do it said she,
But first ask the father of pretty Betsy.
But who is your father come tell unto me,
And I will go with you your father to see.

My father is every day to be seen,
He is called the blind beggar of Bethnal green,
He is called the blind beggar, God knows it. said she,
And he's been a good father to charming Betsy.

If you are a blind beggar's daughter you will not do for me,
For no blind beggar's daughter my lady shall be,
No blind beggar's daughter my lady shall be,
And scornfully turned from charming Betsy.

Up jumps a young knight of courage and worth,
Thy a blind beggar's daughter she is never the worse,
Now your silks shall be lined with jewels said he,
If you can but love me my charming Betsy.

They went out of London, as I've heard them say,
And arrived in Rumford the very same day,
And when he came there her father to see,
He most glad was to hear of charming Betsy.

My daughter's not clothed so well as she shall,
For I will drop guineas with you to my girl,

They dropt till they dropt 10 guineas on the ground
And they dropt till it came to 10,000 pound.

Then take her and make her your jewel so bright,
For many a lord this wedding would spite,
And when you are married then I will lay down,
Ten hundred bright guineas to buy her a gown.

All things were made ready they went hand in hand
Young Billy and Betsey were both made as one,
e's the most beautiful damsel that ever was seen,
's the blind beggar's daughter of Bethnal Green.

(Traditional English ballad)

"how you men argue! I am sure I never can make out what you are talking about. Oh! Harry, I am quite vexed with you. Why do you try to persuade our nice Mr. Dorian Gray to give up the East End? I assure you he would be quite invaluable. They would love his playing."

"I want him to play to me," cried Lord Henry, smiling, and he looked down the table and caught a bright answering glance.

"But they are so unhappy in Whitechapel," continued Lady Agatha.

"I can sympathize with everything except suffering," said Lord Henry, shrugging his shoulders. "I cannot sympathize with that. It is too ugly, too horrible, too distressing. There is something terribly morbid in the modern sympathy with pain. One should sympathize with the colour, the beauty, the joy of life. The less said about life's sores, the better."

"Still, the East End is a very important problem," remarked Sir Thomas with a grave shake of the head.

"Quite so," answered the young lord. "It is the problem of slavery, and we try to solve it by amusing the slaves."

Oscar Wilde, The Picture of Dorian Grey, Ch. 3



From Hell - Chapter 4, page 32.

"... Have then rooms for me at the Great Eastern Hotel, so that I may be near to hand ..."

The first thing Van Helsing said to me when we met at Liverpool Street was, "Have you said anything to our young friend, to lover of her?"

...

He [Van Helsing] then made ready for his departure and shortly drove off to Liverpool Street. I took my way to Paddington, where I arrived about fifteen minutes before the train came in.

The crowd melted away, after the bustling fashion common to arrival platforms, and I was beginning to feel uneasy, lest I might miss my guest, when a sweet-faced, dainty looking girl stepped up to me, and after a quick glance said, "Dr. Seward, is it not?"

"And you are Mrs. Harker!" I answered at once, whereupon she held out her hand.

"I knew you from the description of poor dear Lucy, but. . ." She stopped suddenly, and a quick blush overspread her face.

The blush that rose to my own cheeks somehow set us both at ease, for it was a tacit answer to her own. I got her luggage, which included a typewriter, and we took the Underground to Fenchurch Street, after I had sent a wire to my housekeeper to have a sitting room and a bedroom prepared at once for Mrs. Harker.

Bram Stoker, Dracula (1897), chs. 9, 10 & 17