

# **PHILO; AN EVANGELIAD**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649170012

Philo; an evangeliad by Sylvester Judd

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

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**SYLVESTER JUDD**

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SCENE — *A Village.*

*Philo.* WHERE are you going, Charles? Come,  
walk with me.

*Charles.* Of latest style of prints, my wife  
bade me

Get samples.

*Philo.* I am looking for a stranger;  
A secret intimation draws me out;  
It is no steamboat traveller, I ween,  
But from the moon, or otherwheres. Who turned  
The corner just now? Let us search the streets.

*Charles.* You are no dotard, Philo, yet methinks

Your words the dotard play. Why pant, as you  
Were standing mast-head in a burning sun,  
Watching for whales? Keep to what's palpable;  
Let mysteries alone.

*Philo.* Therefrom may rise  
Our hope.

*Charles.* Why this to me? I have no hope.

*Philo.* That you may have. The sky hath a  
rare glow,  
And summer-showers its beauty on the world:  
Might it not ray intelligence to us,  
Or one of its inhabitants send forth  
To visit?

*Charles.* Woe is me! In her de laine  
To see an angel, my dear wife would swoon.  
The mystery of merchants' packages  
She longs to handle. You are too well bred  
Philo, to disappoint a woman's wish.  
Good-by; be pleasure yours, and folly too,  
If such it is; and mine — to do my errand.

*Philo.* Beneath the trees he stands, — it must  
be he, —

Fast by the church. What there attracts his eye?  
No antique saints, or welkin-aping dome.  
An open belfry, and four heavy walls,  
Are the sum total. Let me speak to him.  
Hail! sky-descended, — such thy look imports, —  
A mortal welcomes thee, as mortal may.

*Gabriel.* Unto a certain Philo I was sent,  
Who has his lodgings hereabouts. My name  
Is Gabriel.

*Philo.* And I am Philo called.  
In vision of the night I heard of thee,  
And was constrained to look for thee. The times,  
Indeed, do hardly promise such a good;  
Yet this, the steadfast compass of my faith,  
That Israel will be redeemed, the Fall  
Reversed. In words familiar, yet  
Sincerely put, I hope I see thee well.

*Gabriel.* The upper blue, through which I  
fared, was cold  
And moist. Secured in our peculiar vest,

I sailed it heedless. Yonder sky appears  
As years ago, when we prepared the bed  
Of this great globe; not great indeed to one,  
A traveller through the starry ways, and who  
Has seen the central orb of all, and spent  
A century exploring base of His  
Appropriate seat; that dazzling, central vast,  
Which mocks your science, and confounds survey;  
God's own, and overviewed by God alone.  
How excellent the alchemy that turns  
The turbid mist and cold vacuity  
To azure day, and golden purified eve!  
Such was my reverie as you approached.  
I came last night near the first cock-crowing;  
Traversed the streets; none were abroad, no lights  
From windows shone. I set me on these steps  
To see the planets rise, and galaxy,  
Whose creamy flood my swimmer-pinions pierced.  
*Philo.* How gladly we had been thy host,  
          bestowed  
Our hospitality, like those of old,  
With all the ardor of a modern heart!



The gospel rule will have us entertain  
The stranger ; we an angel too had found.

*Gabriel.* I have no lack. Love is my food,  
my bed,

And roof. Love is my wing, my impulse love,  
And soul and circumstance, my joy and prayer.

In love I dwell in God, and God in me.

Not otherwise is seen the great Unseen ;

And the high host of us, in love, all dwell

Together, brother, sister, cherubim.

Heaven, stars, time, place, and their inhabitants,

Subsist in love— as love itself in God—

Wherethrough these maples leaf, and those thick  
clouds

Their lustre draw. In love are visitors,

Attendance, ministry, and fellowship ;

Sphere answering to sphere, and heart to heart,

Within the Soul of All, concentrical ;

To seraph, seraph speaking, musical

And glad ; inaudible to sin alone.

Truly I nothing crave, but that you love,

And mortals all ; whence it shall come to pass,

That our effulgent scope shall earth comprise,  
 And, man into the flaming circle falling,  
 This human state reflect the heavenly. —  
 Is this a church, of which the echoing prate  
 Has reached our ears ?

*Philo.* So called. Go in with me.  
 These are the people's seats, named pews ; and there  
 The pulpit, our good pastor's place ; above,  
 The choir collect : hast never heard their songs ?  
 Our minister keeps you no distant suit ;  
 He wells with love, and yearns for the Redemption ;  
 His life is hid with Christ in God. His name  
 Hast thou not seen on the Lamb's Book ? A heart  
 To high heroic ecstasy attuned,  
 He owns, great Virtue's self beholds, and turns  
 To the same image ; 'midst tempestuous times  
 Our Eddystone ; Christ's passion beareth he,  
 And scorn of hypocrites. We follow him,  
 Our lesser shepherd, as he Christ, the Great.  
 Resolved and calm, both meek and wise is he ;  
 Of spiritual drift, and simple human ways ;  
 In comprehension large, of liberal taste ;

Loving all things, and gathering truth from all ;  
Sharp-set for rectitude, with frailty mild,  
Stubborn to sin and hate alone. And thus  
In pastures green a grateful flock is fed.  
Here we commune, and sing, and pray ; and here  
Our fleshly tabernacle glows with light  
Celestial.

*Gabriel.* What is that across the street ?

*Philo.* A church.

*Gabriel.* Those spires below ?

*Philo.* Are churches too.

*Gabriel.* Twelve candlesticks, and all in bright  
array ?

Twelve ministers to keep the altar fires ?

What quantities of love ! How thronged the way

Of Life ! No sin with nice precision, none

With ruffian force, shall dare attempt the place.

Thrice happy he who dwells within these walls.

*Philo.* Spare, Gabriel, spare ; both me and all  
of us.

Too palpable thy veil doth make our vice ;

Thy thin blade lances deeper than the quick.