

**ANGELO: A
POEM, PP. 10-104**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649441280

Angelo: A Poem, pp. 10-104 by Stuart Sterne

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STUART STERNE

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The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass., U. S. A.
Electrotyped and Printed by H. O. Houghton & Co.

TO
RICHARD GRANT WHITE,
WHOSE MOST MAGNANIMOUS APPRECIATION
OF WHAT LITTLE HAD BEEN DONE,
WHOSE NOBLE CONFIDENCE IN WHAT MORE MIGHT YET BE DONE,
BY ONE HE DID NOT KNOW AND HAD NEVER SEEN,
LIKE A FLOOD OF GENEROUS SUNSHINE
EARLIER QUICKENED INTO GROWTH WHATEVER POWERS,
WHATEVER GERMS AND POSSIBILITIES OF HIGHER DEVELOPMENT
THAT STRANGER MAY POSSESS,
WITH THE EARNEST HOPE THAT HE MAY FIND IT
WORTHIER OF HIS ACCEPTANCE THAN HE COULD HAVE FOUND
ANY PREVIOUS EFFORT,
His Labor of Love
IN WARMEST GRATITUDE IS DEDICATED
BY
S. S.

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ANGELO

A Poem

BY

STUART STERNE, *pseud.*

Gertrude Bloede

TWENTY-FIRST EDITION



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
1897

Meet face to face, yet 't is but three days since
That I returned here from my journey north,
Where I was much detained."

"Let us be seated,"

She said again, and stepping back through those
Upon whose busy tongues silence had fallen
As Angelo approached, who one and all
Saluted reverently and made way,
Prayed him sit by her side.

"And you, my friends,"

She asked, turning to them once more, "will you
Not now take up again the broken thread
Of your discourse?" And then to Angelo, —
"We were discussing as you came, Maestro,
The sister arts of brush and chisel, wherein
You are consummate master."

"How, Marchesa,

You bid us now continue," one rejoined,
"Here before him, the lion in our path!"
Glancing half timidly at Angelo,
"Who might confound us all with but a breath,
If it so pleased him?"

"Aye, and wherefore not?

Another in gay garb, with laughing eyes,
Cried out more boldly. "Have we each of us
Not his own head upon his shoulders? What

If none dispute how Master Angelo
Towers like a giant over all us pigmies,
The greatest of his age and clime!"

And seeing

How Angelo himself by a grave smile,
And motion of his hand to heed him not,
Approved the manly speech, they all fell back
Into their former converse. The Marchesa
Listened most part in silence, earnestly
Sometimes, and sometimes half amused, but
rarely

Joining in any argument, yet ever
Turning to Angelo with some remark
In tone subdued; and once she asked, "Maestro,
Does all this chatter vex you? Say the word,
And I will send them all away!" "No, no!"
He answered, who had scarce once lent his ear
To all they said, but sat wrapt up and lost
In silent contemplation of herself.

How passing fair she was, how stately still,
She who had been so many years a wife,
And then a mourning widow! Time nor grief
Had power to dim the lustre of her beauty,
And what they took from it of the first flower
Of youth and freshness, rendered amply back,

In all the charms of mellow womanhood.
How like a queen of ripest, royal blood,
Yet half unconscious of her sovereign state,
With mildness crowned more than with majesty,
Grave gentleness and winning dignity
Most happily blended with a girlish grace
In form and features! A white brow so placid
It seemed eternal peace shone there serene;
And yet about the delicate lips, carved proudly,
But full of latent sweetness, a fine trace
Of secret pain, that told how this great peace
Was won not without struggle, gained, mayhap,
Through bitter storms enough. In her deep
eyes

A calm, still light, as in the gaze of one
Whose hopes are set above all earthly things,
Beyond or time or death unchangeably
Fixed on eternity. The delicate cheek
But faintly tinted with the quiet blood
That yet sometimes played easily through it,
coming

And going swiftly; her luxuriant hair,
Like pale red gold, humbly bound back, and
gathered

Into a simple coil, yet not so close
But that some willful locks had burst their fetters

And now hung loosely quivering on her shoulders
Beneath the dense, dark veil of finest web,
Nevermore laid aside since the first days
Of ceaseless sorrow. Her robe, too, was dark,
Of some rich, sombre fabric, without sheen,
That broke into deep shadows and dim lights,
Where from her waist it flowed in heavy folds
Down to the floor, concealing the light foot ;—
Confined upon her gently heaving bosom
By one great, shimmering pearl, — a precious tear,
So fancied Angelo. A plain gold circle,
Her marriage ring, on her white, slender hand ;
An ivory rosary and crucifix,
Carved richly, and emitting some fine fragrance
Suspended from her girdle.

Thus she sat
Unconscious of the gaze that hung on her,
But more and more enrapt, clung ever closer,
Like to an eager bee upon some flower
O'erflowing with sweet honey, thirstily
Drank in each tint and line of beauty, rounded
So marvelously to a perfect whole,
Fed on each look, each breath ; till, when at last
A pause had fallen in the gay converse round
 them,
She turned to him again, —