

**CHRIST IN ITALY; BEING THE  
ADVENTURES OF A MAVERICK  
AMONG MASTERPIECES. [NEW  
YORK-1912]**

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Christ in Italy; Being the Adventures of a Maverick Among Masterpieces. [New York-1912] by Mary Austin

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**MARY AUSTIN**

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# CHRIST IN ITALY

BEING THE ADVENTURES OF A  
MAVERICK AMONG MASTERPIECES

BY

MARY AUSTIN

AUTHOR OF "LAND OF LITTLE RAIN,"  
"LOST BORDERS," "THE ARROW MAKER"



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THE SONG OF THE MAVERICK.

I am too arid for tears, and for  
laughter

Too sore with unslaked desires.

My nights are scanty of sleep

And my sleep too full of dreaming;

The frosts are not cold enough

Nor the nights sufficiently burning:

The hollow waves are slack

And no wind from any quarter

Lifts strongly enough to outwear me.

My body is bitter with baffled lusts

Of work and love and endurance;

As a maverick, leaderless, lost from the  
herd,

Loweth my soul with the need of man-  
encounters.

For I am crammed and replete

With the power of desolate places;



### THE SONG OF THE MAVERICK

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I have gone far on faint trails  
And slept in the shade of my arrows;  
I have thrown Death and laughed  
And bid him up and come at me.  
Patience, forgiveness and might  
Ache in me, finding no egress,  
And Virtues stale that are too big for  
the out-gate.

I would run large with the man-herd,  
the hill-subduers;  
I would impress myself on the mould of  
large adventure  
Until all deeds of that ilk  
Should a long time carry  
The stripe of the firstling's father.  
For I am anguished with strength,  
Over fed with the common experience;  
My feet run wide of the rutted trails  
Toward the undared destinies.  
(From the Book of Medicine Songs).

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## PREFACE.

A Maverick, you understand, has no brand or mark. He is a strayed and unparented yearling overlooked in the annual round-up, and thereafter whoever first gets an iron on him claims him for his own.

The range in the west is wide; trails entice from it toward lovely, unforgettable places. Long ago, as long as when my class pin was new and the ribbon of my diploma not faded, I walked in one of those trails. It began in a country of fawn and silver swells that flowed and melted into ranks and ranks of hills and took on shadows of blueness. I remember how the fields on either side it smouldered with the burnt gold of poppies. . . .

## PREFACE

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It was a trail that led far and opened on incredible sights: sunk rivers, crawling dunes, also many delectable meadows under high, unappeasable, glacier polished Sierras. Wild things walked in it: deer shifting their feeding ground, bobcats, coyotes and furry, rat-tailed things whose moonlight friskings made lacy patterns on the sand, shepherders, pocket hunters, Indians and gods. Notably it led to the river of Hassayampa.

Hassayampa goes round and about Lost Borders; it flows and sinks and rises again in unnamed cañons, loops about desert ranges and is lost in the sand. Only Indians know where to find it with any certainty. Once there was a White man who thought he could guide people to its shallows—but that was a long time ago and he has been judged