RABBI BEN EZRA - A DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE

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Rabbi Ben Ezra - A Dramatic Monologue by Robert Browning

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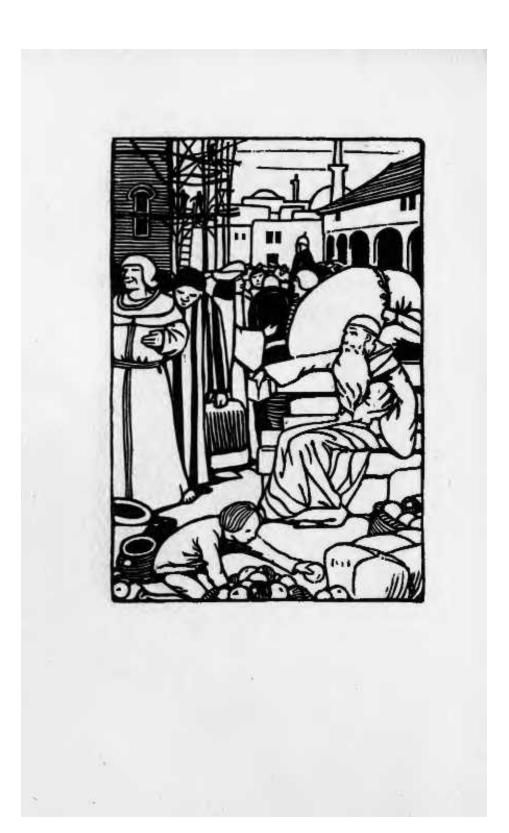
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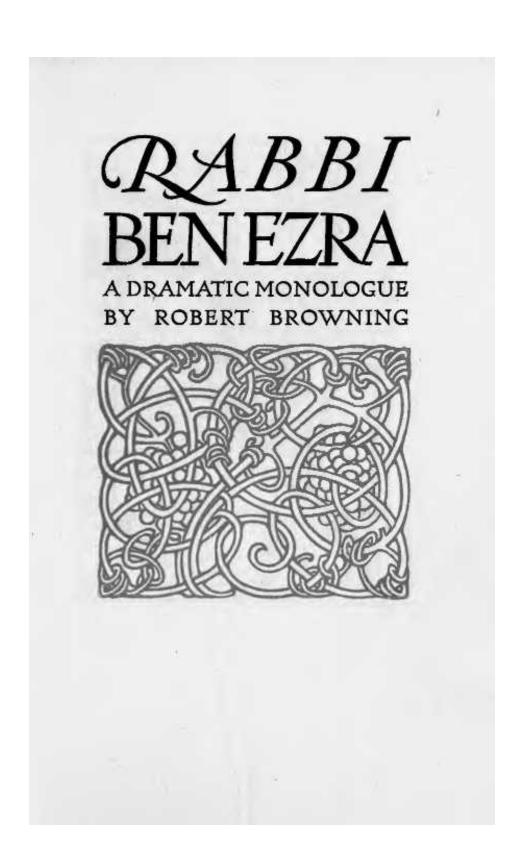
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ROBERT BROWNING

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Trieste





RABBI BEN EZRA



ROW OLD A. LONG WITH ME: THE BEST IS YET TO BE. THE LAST OF LIFE, FOR WHICH THE FIRST WAS MADE: OUR TIMES ARE IN HIS HAND WHO SAITH "A WHOLE

I PLANNED. YOUTH SHOWS BUT HALF: TRUST GOD: SEE ALL NOR BE AFRAID!"

OT that, amassing flowers, Youth sighed, "Which rose make ours, Which lily leave and then as best recall?" Not that, admiring stars, It yearned, "Nor Jove, nor Mars; Mine be some figured flame which blends, transcends them all!"

ш

Not for such hopes and fears Annulling youth's brief years, Do I remonstrate: folly wide the mark! Rather I prize the doubt Low kinds exist without, Finished and finite clods, untroubled by a spark.

IV

Poor vaunt of life indeed, Were man but formed to feed On joy, to solely seek and find and feast: Such feasting ended, then As sure an end to men; Irks care the crop-full bird? Frets doubt the maw-crammed beast?

V

REJOICE we are allied And not partake, effect and not receive! A spark disturbs our clod; Nearer we hold of God Who gives, than of His tribes that take, I must believe.

VI

Then, welcome each rebuff That turns earth's smoothness rough, Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go! Be our joys three parts pain! Strive, and hold cheap the strain; Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe!

VII

For thence,—a paradox Which comforts while it mocks,— Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail: What I aspired to be, And was not, comforts me: A brute I might have been, but would not sink i' the scale.