

**RABBI BEN EZRA - A
DRAMATIC
MONOLOGUE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649764686

Rabbi Ben Ezra - A Dramatic Monologue by Robert Browning

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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ROBERT BROWNING

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BENEZRA

A DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE
BY ROBERT BROWNING



RABBI BEN EZRA



I
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!"

II

NOT 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!"

III

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
 To That which doth provide
 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.

b

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.