

**MORBIDA, OR, PASSION  
PAST, AND OTHER POEMS,  
FROM THE CYMRIC AND  
OTHER SOURCES**

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Morbida, or, Passion past, and Other Poems, from the Cymric and Other Sources by Morbida

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**MORBIDA**

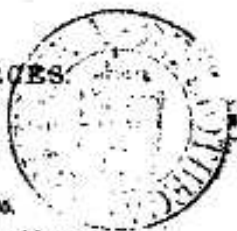
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"Morbida aër." — *Lucr.* vi. 1090.

"Inde, ubi . . . . . pectus complebat, et ipsam  
Morbida vis in cor memetum confluerat aëris;  
Omnia tum vero vitæ claustra labebant." — 1142.

"Who loves, raves — 'tis youth's frenzy."

"And spake of passions, but of passion past."

"Pistol. Nym, thou hast spoke the right;  
His heart is fracted and corroborate."

LONDON  
SAUNDERS AND OTLEY CONDUIT STREET  
HANOVER SQUARE.  
1854.

280. s. 39.

"LET us do right, and whether happiness come or unhappiness is no very mighty matter. If it come, life will be sweet; if it do not come, life will be bitter—bitter, not sweet, and yet to be borne. On such a theory alone is the government of this world intelligibly just. The well-being of our souls depends only on what we are, and nobleness of character is nothing else but steady love of good, and steady scorn of evil. The government of the world is a problem while the desire of selfish enjoyment survives. . . . Only to those who have the heart to say, we can do without that, it is not what we ask or desire, is there no secret. Man will have what he deserves, and will find what is really best for him, exactly as he honestly seeks for it."—*Westminster Review*, Oct. 1853, p. 440.

## PREFACE.

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SOME of these poems, the "Morbida,"\* appear to be passages from a fictitious autobiography, supposed utterances of an imaginary "passion." The title might be translated, "Love-Ghosts; or, Evil Imaginations." The word "Ghosts" suggests the theme and characteristics of these strains; the ideal, the departed; the something grave and the something grotesque. The "Cymric" element perhaps implies something barbaric.

The sentiment, even in its most grotesque expression, may, possibly, be recognised among the experiences of some of "us that are young;" though we now speak like Polonius†; and look back upon

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\* Adj. plur.

† "He is far gone, far gone: and truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love; very near this."

our "salad days\*"; and "visions"† which we "do despise."‡

It may be said that there is more "evil" than "imagination" here. There is some imagination in one sense; and things which may be supposed to be personal may be but imaginarily so; or if there be any real nucleus, it may be but a minute or remote one.

"Imogen" (a merely poetical name) may stand for Image, *Eidolon*, Idol. "We know that an idol is nothing in the world."

Some things will probably be identified, as things which ingenious persons can see very plainly, but

\* "My salad days

When I was green in judgment:— cold in blood,  
To say as I said then!"—*Ant. and Cleop.*

† "What visions have I seen!

Methought I was enamour'd"—*Mids. N. D.*

‡ "I have long dream'd 'of such a kind of man,

So surfeit-swell'd, so old, and so profane;

But, being awake, I do despise my dream."—*2 K. H. 4.*



which *I* could not identify, and of the existence of which *I* am not aware. If there be one word which may seem interpretable into any reflection or allusion calculated to cause personal annoyance, I am unconscious of it: the offence is as involuntary and imaginary as to do any such thing would be unfair — I need not seek a stronger word.

Most of these pieces were written long ago. I am quite aware that it is no reasonable plea to state that they were written very rapidly; but I venture to mention the fact, as it is a kind of excuse. The second, third, fourth, and fifth poems were written in about a dozen nights; and some of the others, of considerable length, at a single sitting each. Several are unfinished, almost all unpolished, and some much mutilated also.

I am conscious that I ought to endeavour to amend much of what I now commit to the press, and not to "shoot" these clearings of my desk there; but I do not think it worth while to expend any pains upon such materials. I fear it would be in vain to try to

make these compositions worth much: "the foundations are too sandy." I may have no further opportunity of essaying any literary work.

The poems from the "Cymric," "Spanish," and "Portuguese" were *translated* in imitation of Mrs. Browning's "from the Portuguese."

1854.

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