## Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)

## 11 Dinah in Heaven

("The Woman in his Life")

She did not know that she was dead,

That anxious spirits clomb —
She caught that step in all the hosts,
And knew that he had come.

But, when the pang was o'er,	
Sat down to wait her Master's tread	
Upon the Golden Floor,	
With ears full-cock and anxious eyes,	5
Impatiently resigned;	
But ignorant that Paradise	
Did not admit her kind.	
Persons with Haloes, Harps, and Wings	
Assembled and reproved;	10
Or talked to her of Heavenly things,	
But Dinah never moved.	
There was one step along the Stair	
That led to Heaven's Gate;	
And, till she heard it, her affair	15
Was — she explained — to wait.	
And she explained with flattened ear,	
Bared lip and milky tooth —	
Storming against Ithuriel's Spear	
That only proved her truth!	20
Sudden — far down the Bridge of Ghosts	

She left them wondering what to do,	25
But not a doubt had she.	
Swifter than her own squeal she flew	
Across the Glassy Sea;	
Flushing the Cherubs everywhere,	
And skidding as she ran,	30
She refuged under Peter's Chair	
And waited for her man.	
There spoke a Spirit out of the press,	
'Said: — "Have you any here	
That saved a fool from drunkenness,	35
And a coward from his fear?	
"That turned a soul from dark to day	
When other help was vain;	
That snatched it from Wanhope and made	
A cur a man again?"	40
"Enter and look," said Peter then,	
And set The Gate ajar.	
"If I know aught of women and men	
I trow she is not far."	
"Neither by virtue, speech nor art	45
Nor hope of grace to win;	
But godless innocence of heart	
That never heard of sin:	
"Neither by beauty nor belief	
Nor white example shown.	50
Something a wanton — more a thief —	
But — most of all — mine own."	

"Enter and look," said Peter then,	
"And send you well to speed;	
But, for all that I know of women and men	55
Your riddle is hard to read."	
Then flew Dinah from under the Chair,	
Into his arms she flew —	
And licked his face from chin to hair	
And Peter passed them through!	60

1932

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