

Andrew Lang (1844-1912)

1 *The Bridge of Death*

'The dance is on the Bridge of Death
And who will dance with me?'
'There's never a man of living men
Will dare to dance with thee.'

Now Margaret's gone within her bower 5
Put ashes in her hair,
And sackcloth on her bonnie breast,
And on her shoulders bare.

There came a knock to her bower door,
And blithe she let him in; 10
It was her brother from the wars,
The dearest of her kin.

'Set gold within your hair, Margaret,
Set gold within your hair;
And gold upon your girdle band, 15
And on your breast so fair.

'For we are bidden to dance to-night,
We may not bide away;
This one good night, this one fair night,
Before the red new day.' 20

'Nay, no gold for my head, brother,
Nay, no gold for my hair;
It is the ashes and dust of earth
That you and I must wear.

'No gold work for my girdle band, 25
No gold work on my feet;
But ashes of the fire, my love,
But dust that the serpents eat.'

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They danced across the Bridge of Death
 Above the black water, 30
And the marriage bell was tolled in hell
 For the souls of him and her.

(From *The Poetical Works of Andrew Lang*. Vol. 3. Ed.
Mrs. Lang. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1923)