

Andrew Lang (1844-1912)

6 *The Three Captains*

All beneath the white-rose tree  
Walks a lady fair to see,  
She is as white as the snows,  
She is as fair as the day:  
From her father's garden close 5  
Three knights have ta'en her away.

He has ta'en her by the hand,  
The youngest of the three —  
'Mount and ride, my bonnie bride,  
On my white horse with me.' 10

And ever they rode, and better rode,  
Till they came to Senlis town;  
The hostess she looked hard at them  
As they were lighting down.

'And are ye here by force,' she said, 15  
'Or are ye here for play?'  
'From out my father's garden close  
Three knights me stole away.

'And fain would I win back,' she said,  
'The weary way I come; 20  
And fain would see my father dear,  
And fain go maiden home.'

'Oh, weep not, lady fair,' said she,  
'You shall win back,' she said,  
'For you shall take this draught from me 25  
Will make you lie for dead.'

'Come in and sup, fair lady,' they said,  
'Come busk ye and be bright;  
It is with three bold captains

That ye must be this night.' 30

When they had eaten well and drunk,  
She fell down like one slain:  
'Now, out and alas! for my bonnie may  
Shall live no more again.'

'Within her father's garden stead 35  
There are three white lilies;  
With her body to the lily bed,  
With her soul to Paradise.'

They bore her to her father's house,  
They bore her all the three, 40  
They laid her in her father's close,  
Beneath the white-rose tree.

She had not lain a day, a day,  
A day but barely three,  
When the may awakes, 'Oh, open, father, 45  
Oh, open the door for me.

'Tis I have lain for dead, father,  
Have lain the long days three,  
That I might maiden come again  
To my mother and to thee.' 50

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