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# The Unfortunate Concubine

Author Unknown

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E  
Unfortuna e Concubine

O R,  
ROSAMOND'S Overthrow.

Occasioned by her Brother's praising her Beauty to two young Knights of Salisbury, as they rid along the Road.



Sweet youthful charming ladies fair,  
Fram'd of the purest mold ;  
With rosy cheek and silken hair,  
Which shine like threads of gold.  
Soft tears of pity here bestow,  
On the unhappy fate,  
Of Rosamond, who long ago  
Prov'd most unfortunate.  
When as the second Henry reign'd,  
On the imperial throne,  
How he this beautiful flower gain'd,  
To you I will make known.  
With all the circumstances too  
Which did her life attend,

How first she into favour grew,  
And of her fatal end.  
As three young Knights of Salisbury,  
Were riding on their way,  
One boasted of a lady fair,  
Within her bower so gay.  
I have a sister Clifford swears,  
But few men do her know,  
Upon her face the skin appears  
Like drops of blood on snow.  
My sister's locks of curled hair,  
Outline the golden ore.  
Her skin for witness may compare,  
With the fine lily flower.

Her breasts were lovely to behold,  
Like to the driven snow,  
I would not for her weight in gold,  
King Henry should he know.  
King Henry had a bower near,  
Where she was sitting by,  
And he Clifford over-hears.  
Thought immediately  
That his brother should offend,  
For that fair white and red ;  
For her I am resolv'd to send,  
To grace my royal bed.  
The King who was of high renown,  
Would not his fancy plie ;  
For having writ his pleasure down,  
He did young Clifford call.  
Come come young Clifford call,  
I am the better out of hand,  
I am the better unto me.  
My messenger thou shalt be,  
Thy sister here have writ,  
Seal'd with gold,  
I think to fit  
Therefore behold,  
I mean to her hand with speed,  
Make the least delay,  
My pleasure let her read,  
And my commands obey.  
Young Henry when the letter took,  
From Henry's royal hand,  
Tho' with a melancholly look  
And mount'd out of hand,  
Soft tears bedew'd his noble sight,  
His griev'd heart was sad,  
Altho' he was as brave a knight  
As ever Henry had.  
With that this noble knight of fame,  
Rode on without delay,  
Until he to the bower came,  
Which was both rich and gay.  
She said when he knocked at the ring  
Who raps so fierce and bold ?  
Sister, I have brought from the king,  
Three letters seal'd with gold :  
Then with her fingers long and small  
She broke the seals of gold ;  
And as she did to reading fall,  
At first you might behold.  
The smiles of pleasant sweet delight,  
As if well satisfied ;  
But e'er she had concluded quite,  
She wrung her hands and cry'd,  
Why did you go beyond your bounds,  
When Oxford you did see ?  
You might have talked of your hounds,  
And never brag'd of me.  
When by the king I am deserv'd,  
My father's griefs begins,  
He'll have no comfort of his child,  
Nor come to my wedding.

Go fetch me down my planet book,  
Strate from my private room,  
For in the same I mean to look  
What is decreed my doom.  
The planet-book to her they brought  
And laid it on her knee,  
She found that all would come to nought  
And poisoned she should be.  
I cause you brother, then she cry'd,  
Who caus'd my destiny ;  
I might have been a Lord's fair bride,  
But you have ruin'd me.  
With that she call'd her waiting-mad,  
To bring her riding weed,  
And to her groom she likewise said,  
Saddle my milk-white steed.  
Some rode before her to report  
Her coming to the king,  
As she approach'd the royal court,  
Sweet peal of bells did ring.  
A garland over her head they bore,  
To magnify her charms,  
And as she came before the king,  
He clasp'd her in her arms.  
With blushes then she did beseech  
The king on her bare knee,  
These words she said, I pray my liege  
What is your will with me ?  
Said he, I sent for you, my rose  
To grace my royal bed,  
Now as he did his mind disclose,  
She blush'd like scarlet red.  
Blush not my fairest Rosamond,  
Fear no disastrous fate ;  
For by my kindly power I can  
Place thee in happy state.  
No lady in this court of mine,  
Can purchase thy desert,  
Thy pleasant looks and charms divine,  
Have won my royal heart.  
The gifts and presents of a king  
Did cause her to comply ;  
Thinking there was not any thing  
Like royal dignity.  
But as her bright and golden scene  
In court began to shine,  
The news was brought unto the queen,  
Of this new concubine.  
At which she was enraged so,  
With malice in her breast,  
That till she wrought her overthrow,  
She could not be at rest.  
She felt the fury of a queen,  
E'er she had flourish'd long,  
And dy'd, just as she had foreseen  
By force of poison strong.  
The angry queen with malice fraught  
Could not herself contain ;  
Till she had brought fair Rosamond  
To her sad dismal bane.

The said sweet and precious rose,  
King Henry's chief delight ;  
The queen she to the bower goes,  
And wrought her hateful spite.  
But when she to the bower came,  
Where lady Clifford lay ?  
Enraged Eleanor by name,  
She could not find the way.  
Until the silken clue of thread,  
Became a fatal guide,  
Unto the queen, who laid her dead,  
E'er she was satisfy'd.  
Alas, it was no small surprize,  
To Rosamond the fair ;  
When death appear'd before her eyes,  
No faithful friend was there.  
Who could stand up in her defence  
To put the poison by ;  
Thus by the hand of violence  
Compell'd she was to die.  
O most renown'd and gracious queen  
Compassion take on me ;  
I wish that I had never seen,  
This royal dignity.  
Betray'd I was, and by degrees  
A sad consent I gave ;  
And now upon my bended knees,  
Your pardon I do crave.  
I will not pardon you the cry'd,  
Then take this fatal cup ;  
And you may well be satisfy'd,  
I'll see you drink it up.  
Then with her fair and lilly hand,  
The fatal cug she took ;  
Which being drunk she could not stand,  
But soon the world forsook.  
Now when the king was well inform'd  
What Eleanor had done ;  
His breast he smote, in wrath he storm'd  
As if he would have run  
Besides his senses, and he swore  
For this inhuman deed,  
He never would bed with her more,  
His royal heart did bleed.  
The king stood not pausing long  
How to reward her spleen,  
But straitway in a prison strong  
He cast this cruel queen.  
Where she lay six and twenty years,  
A long captivity ;  
Bathed in floods of weeping tears,  
Till his death set her free,  
Now when her son did succeed,  
His father, Great Henry,  
His royal mother soon he freed,  
From her captivity.  
And she set more at large,  
Who long for debt had lain ;  
Her royal pity did discharge  
Thousands in Richard's reign.

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