



***LOUISE IMOGEN  
GUINEY***

***HAPPY ENDING:  
THE COLLECTED  
LYRICS OF LOUISE  
IMOGEN GUINEY***

**Louise Imogen Guiney**

# **Happy Ending: The Collected Lyrics of Louise Imogen Guiney**

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# PREFACE

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THIS volume has been garnered from the author's earlier books. Two poems have been chosen from "The White Sail" (1887); nine Oxford Sonnets from a privately printed booklet (1895), since added to, and much altered; and many lyrics, under a revised form, from "A Roadside Harp" (1893), and "The Martyrs' Idyl" (1899), plus some twenty newer titles transferred, with grateful acknowledgments, from *McClure's Magazine*, *The Atlantic*, *Harper's*, *Scribner's*, and *The Century*. The principle of exclusion goes far enough to cover all poems in narrative form, or of any appreciable length, or translated; also, any which seemed out of keeping with the character of the present collection. Such as that is, it comprises the less faulty half of all the author's published verse.

L.I.G.

BOSTON, October 21, 1909.

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# HAPPY ENDING

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## The Kings

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A MAN said unto his Angel:  
"My spirits are fallen low,  
And I cannot carry this battle:  
O brother! where might I go?

"The terrible Kings are on me  
With spears that are deadly bright;  
Against me so from the cradle  
Do fate and my fathers fight."

Then said to the man his Angel:  
"Thou wavering witless soul,  
Back to the ranks! What matter  
To win or to lose the whole,

"As judged by the little judges  
Who hearken not well, nor see?  
Not thus, by the outer issue,  
The Wise shall interpret thee.

"Thy will is the sovereign measure  
And only event of things:

The puniest heart, defying,  
Were stronger than all these Kings.

"Though out of the past they gather,  
Mind's Doubt, and Bodily Pain,  
And pallid Thirst of the Spirit  
That is kin to the other twain,

"And Grief, in a cloud of banners,  
And ringletted Vain Desires,  
And Vice, with the spoils upon him  
Of thee and thy beaten sires,—

"While Kings of eternal evil  
Yet darken the hills about,  
Thy part is with broken sabre  
To rise on the last redoubt;

"To fear not sensible failure,  
Nor covet the game at all,  
But fighting, fighting, fighting,  
Die, driven against the wall."

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## **The Squall**

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WHILE all was glad,  
It seemed our birch-tree had,  
That August hour, intelligence of death;  
For warningly against the eaves she beat

Her body old, lamenting, prophesying,  
And the hot breath  
Of ferny hollows nestled at her feet  
Spread out in startled sighing.

Across an argent sea,  
Distinct unto the farthest reef and isle,  
The clouds began to be.  
Huge forms 'neath sombre draperies, awhile  
Made slow uncertain rally;  
But as their ranks conjoined, and from the north  
The leader shook his lance, Oh, then how fair  
Unvested, they stood forth,  
In diverse armour, plumed majestically,  
Each with his own esquires, a King in air!

Up moved the dark vanguard,  
With insolent colours that o'erdued the skies,  
And trailed from beach to beach:  
Massed orange and mould-green; vermilion barred  
On bronze or mottled silver; saffron dyes  
And purples migratory  
Fanned each in each,  
As the long column broke, athirst for glory.

Sudden, the thunder!  
Upon the roofed verandas how it rolled,  
Twice, thrice: a thud and flame of doom that told  
New-fallen, nor far away,  
Some black destruction on the innocent day.