

“The Lady of Shalott”  
by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

PART I

1 On either side the river lie  
2 Long fields of barley and of rye,  
3 That clothe the wold and meet the sky;  
4 And thro' the field the road runs by  
5 To many-tower'd Camelot;  
6 And up and down the people go,  
7 Gazing where the lilies blow  
8 Round an island there below,  
9 The island of Shalott.

10 Willows whiten, aspens quiver,  
11 Little breezes dusk and shiver  
12 Thro' the wave that runs for ever  
13 By the island in the river  
14 Flowing down to Camelot.  
15 Four gray walls, and four gray towers,  
16 Overlook a space of flowers,  
17 And the silent isle imbowers  
18 The Lady of Shalott.

19 By the margin, willow veil'd,  
20 Slide the heavy barges trail'd  
21 By slow horses; and unhail'd  
22 The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd  
23 Skimming down to Camelot:  
24 But who hath seen her wave her hand?  
25 Or at the casement seen her stand?  
26 Or is she known in all the land,  
27 The Lady of Shalott?

28 Only reapers, reaping early  
29 In among the bearded barley,  
30 Hear a song that echoes cheerly  
31 From the river winding clearly,  
32 Down to tower'd Camelot:  
33 And by the moon the reaper weary,  
34 Piling sheaves in uplands airy,  
35 Listening, whispers " 'Tis the fairy  
36 Lady of Shalott."

PART II

37 There she weaves by night and day  
38 A magic web with colours gay.  
39 She has heard a whisper say,  
40 A curse is on her if she stay  
41 To look down to Camelot.  
42 She knows not what the curse may be,  
43 And so she weaveth steadily,  
44 And little other care hath she,  
45 The Lady of Shalott.

46 And moving thro' a mirror clear  
47 That hangs before her all the year,  
48 Shadows of the world appear.  
49 There she sees the highway near  
50 Winding down to Camelot:  
51 There the river eddy whirls,  
52 And there the surly village-churls,  
53 And the red cloaks of market girls,  
54 Pass onward from Shalott.

55 Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,  
56 An abbot on an ambling pad,  
57 Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,  
58 Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,  
59 Goes by to tower'd Camelot;  
60 And sometimes thro' the mirror blue  
61 The knights come riding two and two:  
62 She hath no loyal knight and true,  
63 The Lady of Shalott.

64 But in her web she still delights  
65 To weave the mirror's magic sights,  
66 For often thro' the silent night  
67 A funeral, with plumes and lights  
68 And music, went to Camelot:  
69 Or when the moon was overhead,  
70 Came two young lovers lately wed:  
71 "I am half sick of shadows," said  
72 The Lady of Shalott.

PART III

73 A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,  
74 He rode between the barley-sheaves,  
75 The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,  
76 And flamed upon the brazen greaves  
77 Of bold Sir Lancelot.  
78 A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd  
79 To a lady in his shield,  
80 That sparkled on the yellow field,  
81 Beside remote Shalott.

82 The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,  
83 Like to some branch of stars we see  
84 Hung in the golden Galaxy.  
85 The bridle bells rang merrily  
86 As he rode down to Camelot:  
87 And from his blazon'd baldric slung  
88 A mighty silver bugle hung,  
89 And as he rode his armour rung,  
90 Beside remote Shalott.

91 All in the blue unclouded weather  
92 Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,  
93 The helmet and the helmet-feather  
94 Burn'd like one burning flame together,  
95 As he rode down to Camelot.  
96 As often thro' the purple night,  
97 Below the starry clusters bright,  
98 Some bearded meteor, trailing light,  
99 Moves over still Shalott.

100 His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd;  
101 On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode;  
102 From underneath his helmet flow'd  
103 His coal-black curls as on he rode,  
104 As he rode down to Camelot.  
105 From the bank and from the river  
106 He flash'd into the crystal mirror,  
107 "Tirra lirra," by the river  
108 Sang Sir Lancelot.

109 She left the web, she left the loom,  
110 She made three paces thro' the room,  
111 She saw the water-lily bloom,  
112 She saw the helmet and the plume,  
113 She look'd down to Camelot.  
114 Out flew the web and floated wide;  
115 The mirror crack'd from side to side;  
116 "The curse is come upon me," cried  
117 The Lady of Shalott.

#### PART IV

118 In the stormy east-wind straining,  
119 The pale yellow woods were waning,  
120 The broad stream in his banks complaining,  
121 Heavily the low sky raining  
122 Over tower'd Camelot;  
123 Down she came and found a boat  
124 Beneath a willow left afloat,  
125 And round about the prow she wrote  
126 The Lady of Shalott.

127 And down the river's dim expanse  
128 Like some bold seer in a trance,  
129 Seeing all his own mischance--  
130 With a glassy countenance  
131 Did she look to Camelot.  
132 And at the closing of the day  
133 She loosed the chain, and down she lay;  
134 The broad stream bore her far away,  
135 The Lady of Shalott.

136 Lying, robed in snowy white  
137 That loosely flew to left and right--  
138 The leaves upon her falling light--  
139 Thro' the noises of the night  
140 She floated down to Camelot:  
141 And as the boat-head wound along  
142 The willowy hills and fields among,  
143 They heard her singing her last song,  
144 The Lady of Shalott.

145 Heard a carol, mournful, holy,  
146 Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,  
147 Till her blood was frozen slowly,  
148 And her eyes were darken'd wholly,  
149 Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.  
150 For ere she reach'd upon the tide  
151 The first house by the water-side,  
152 Singing in her song she died,  
153 The Lady of Shalott.

154 Under tower and balcony,  
155 By garden-wall and gallery,  
156 A gleaming shape she floated by,  
157 Dead-pale between the houses high,  
158 Silent into Camelot.  
159 Out upon the wharfs they came,  
160 Knight and burgher, lord and dame,  
161 And round the prow they read her name,  
162 The Lady of Shalott.

163 Who is this? and what is here?  
164 And in the lighted palace near  
165 Died the sound of royal cheer;  
166 And they cross'd themselves for fear,  
167 All the knights at Camelot:  
168 But Lancelot mused a little space;  
169 He said, "She has a lovely face;  
170 God in his mercy lend her grace,  
171 The Lady of Shalott."