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# Weird Tales

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WEIRD TALES ISSUED 1st OF EACH MONTH

# Which Will Scarcely Be Understood

By ROBERT E. HOWARD

Small poets sing of little, foolish things,  
As more befitting to a shallow brain  
That dreams not of the pre-Atlantean kings,  
Nor launches on that dark uncharted Main  
That holds grim islands and unholy tides,  
Where many a black mysterious secret hides.

True rime concerns her not with bursting buds,  
The chirping bird, the lifting of the rose—  
Save ebon blooms that swell in ghastly woods,  
And that grim, voiceless bird that ever broods  
Where through black boughs a wind of horror blows.

Oh, little singers, what know you of those  
 Ungodly, slimy shapes that glide and crawl  
 Out of unreckoned gulfs when midnights fall,  
 To haunt the poet's slumbering, and close  
 Against his eyes thrust up their hissing head,  
 And mock him with their eyes so serpent-red?

Conceived and bred in blackened pits of hell,  
 The poems come that set the stars on fire;  
 Born of black maggots writhing in a shell  
 Men call a poet's skull—an iron bell  
 Filled up with burning mist and golden mire.

The royal purple is a moldy shroud;  
 The laurel crown is cypress fixed with thorns;  
 The sword of fame, a sickle notched and dull;  
 The face of beauty is a grinning skull;  
 And ever in their souls' red caverns loud  
 The rattle of the cloven hoofs and horns.

The poets know that justice is a lie,  
 That good and light are baubles filled with dust—  
 This world's slave-market where swine sell and buy,  
 This shambles where the howling cattle die,  
 Has blinded not *their* eyes with lies and lust.

Ring up the demons from the lower Pit,  
 Since Evil conquers goodness in the end;  
 Break down the Door and let the fires be lit,  
 And greet each slaving monster as a friend.

Let obscene shapes of Darkness ride the earth,  
 Let sacrificial smokes blot out the skies,  
 Let dying virgins glut the Black Gods' eyes,  
 And all the world resound with noisome mirth.

Break down the altars, let the streets run red,  
 Tramp down the race into the crawling slime;  
 Then where red Chaos lifts her serpent head,  
 The Fiend be praised, we'll pen the perfect rime.