

**MAE MADDEN, WITH  
AN INTRODUCTORY  
POEM**

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Mae Madden, with an Introductory Poem by Mary Murdoch Mason & Joaquin Miller

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**MARY MURDOCH MASON & JOAQUIN MILLER**

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AN INTRODUCTORY  
POEM**



# MAE MADDEN,

BY MARY MURDOCH MASON.

WITH AN

INTRODUCTORY POEM,

BY

JOAQUIN MILLER.

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The wheel of fortune guide you,  
The boy with the bow beside you  
His eye in the way, till the dawn of day  
And a luckier lot betide you.

*Ben Jonson.*

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## A DREAM OF ITALY.

AN ALLEGORY INTRODUCING "MAE MADDEN."

### I.

We two had been parted, God pity us, when  
The stars were unnamed and when heaven was dim;  
We two had been parted far back on the rim  
And the outermost border of heaven's red bars;  
We two had been parted ere the meeting of men  
Or God had set compass on spaces as yet.  
We two had been parted ere God had set  
His finger to spinning the spaces with stars,—  
And now, at the last in the gold and set  
Of the sun of Venice, we two had met.

### II.

Where the lion of Venice, with brows afrown,  
With tossed mane tumbled, and teeth in air,  
Looks out in his watch o'er the watery town,  
With a paw half lifted, with his claws half bare,  
By the blue Adriatic, in the edge of the sea,  
I saw her. I knew her, but she knew not me.  
I had found her at last! Why, I had sailed  
The antipodes through, had sought, had hailed  
All flags, had climbed where the storm clouds curled,  
And called from the awful arched dome of the world.

## III.

I saw her one moment, then fell back abashed  
 And filled full to the throat. . . . Then I turned me  
 once more  
 So glad to the sea, while the level sun flashed  
 On the far, snowy Alps. . . . Her breast! Why,  
 her breast  
 Was white as twin pillows that allure you to rest;  
 Her sloping limbs moved like to melodies, told  
 As she rose from the sea, and she threw back the gold  
 Of her glory of hair, and set face to the shore. . . .  
 I knew her! I knew her, though we had not met  
 Since the far stars sang to the sun's first set.

## IV.

How long I had sought her! I had hungered, nor ate  
 Of any sweet fruits. I had tasted not one  
 Of all the fair glories grown under the sun.  
 I had sought only her. Yea, I knew that she  
 Had come upon earth and stood waiting for me  
 Somewhere by my way. But the pathways of fate  
 They had led elsewhere. The round world round,  
 The far North seas and the near profound  
 Had failed me for aye. Now I stood by that sea  
 While a ship drove by, and all dreamily.

## V.

I had turned from the lion a time, and when  
 I looked tow'rd the tide and out on the lea  
 Of the town where the warm sea tumbled and teemed  
 With beauty, I saw her. I knew her then,  
 The tallest, the fairest fair daughter of men.

— J. G. V. M.



O, Venice stood full in her glory. She gleamed  
In the splendor of sunset and sensuous sea;  
Yet I saw but my bride, my affinity,  
While the doves hurried home to the dome of Saint Mark  
And the brass horses plunged their high manes in the  
dark.

## VI.

Was it well with my love? Was she true? Was she  
brave  
With virtue's own valor? Was she waiting for me?  
O, how fared my love! Had she home? Had she bread?  
Had she known but the touch of the warm-tempered  
wave?  
Was she born upon earth with a crown on her head;  
Or born like myself, but a dreamer, instead?  
So long it had been! So long! Why the sea,  
That wrinkled and surly old time-tempered slave,  
Had been born, had his revels, grown wrinkled and hoar  
Since I last saw my love on that uttermost shore.

## VII.

O, how fared my love? Once I lifted my face  
And I shook back my hair and looked out on the sea;  
I pressed my hot palms as I stood in my place  
And cried, "O, I come like a king to your side  
Though all hell intervene." . . . "Hist! she may be  
a bride!  
A mother at peace, with sweet babes on her knee!  
A babe at her breast and a spouse at her side! . . .  
Have I wandered too long, and has destiny  
Set mortal between us?" I buried my face  
In my hands, and I moaned as I stood in my place.

## VIII.

'Twas her year to be young. She was tall, she was fair  
Was she pure as the snow on the Alps over there?  
'Twas her year to be young. She was fair, she was tall  
And I knew she was true as I lifted my face  
And saw her press down her rich robe to its place  
With a hand white and small as a babe's with a doll.  
And her feet—why, her feet, in the white shining sand,  
Were so small they might nest in my one brawny hand.  
Then she pushed back her hair with a round hand  
that shone  
And flashed in the light with a white starry stone.

## IX.

Then, my love she was rich. My love she was fair.  
Was she pure as the snow on the Alps over there?  
She was gorgeous with wealth. "Thank God, she has  
bread,"  
I said to myself. Then I humbled my head  
In gratitude. Then I questioned me where  
Was her palace? her parents? What name did she bear?  
What mortal on earth came nearest her heart?  
Who touched the small hand till it thrilled to a smart?  
'Twas her day to be young. She was proud, she was fair.  
Was she pure as the snow on the Alps over there?

## X.

Now she turned, reached a hand; then a tall gondolier  
That had leaned on his oar, like a long lifted spear,  
Shot sudden and swift and all silently  
And drew to her side as she turned from the tide. . . .  
It was odd, such a thing, and I counted it queer

That a princess like this, whether virgin or bride,  
Should abide thus apart, and should bathe in that sea;  
And I shook back my hair, and so unsatisfied.  
Then I fluttered the doves that were perched close about,  
As I strode up and down in dismay and in doubt.

## XI.

Then she stood in the boat on the borders of night  
As a goddess might stand on that far wonder land  
Of eternal sweet life, which men have named Death.  
I turned to the sea and I caught at my breath,  
As she drew from the boat through her white baby hand  
Her vestment of purple imperial, and white.  
Then the gondola shot! swift, sharp from the shore.  
There was never the sound of a song or of oar  
But the doves hurried home in white clouds to Saint  
Mark,  
And the lion loomed high o'er the sea in the dark.

## XII.

Then I cried, "Quick! Follow her. Follow her.  
Fast!  
Come! Thrice double fare if you follow her true  
To her own palace door." There was plashing of oar  
And rattle of rowlock. . . . I sat leaning low  
Looking far in the dark, looking out as we sped  
With my soul all alert, bending down, leaning low.  
But only the oaths of the men as we passed  
When we jostled them sharp as we sudden shot thro'  
The watery town. Then a deep, distant roar—  
The rattle of rowlock, the rush of the oar.