

She heard the dead man say
\ "Look for me by the moonlight
Watch for me by the moonlight
I \ 'll come to thee by the moonlight, though hell should bar the way! \ "

She twisted her hands behind her, but all the knots held good!
She writhed her hands till her fingers were wet with sweat or blood!
They stretched and strained in the darkness and the hours crawled by like years!
Till, now, on the stroke of midnight,
Cold, on the stroke of midnight,
The tip of one finger touched it!
The trigger at least was hers!

Tlot-tlot! Had they heard it? The horse-hoofs were ringing clear
Tlot-tlot, in the distance! Were they deaf that they did not hear?
Down the ribbon of moonlight, over the brow of the hill,
The highwayman came riding,
Riding, riding!
The red-coats looked to their priming!
She stood up straight and still!

Tlot in the frosty silence! Tlot, in the echoing night!
Nearer he came and nearer! Her face was like a light!
Her eyes grew wide for a moment! She drew one last deep breath,
Then her finger moved in the moonlight,
Her musket shattered the moonlight,
Shattered her breast in the moonlight and warned him with her death.

He turned; he spurred to the west; he did not know she stood
Bowed, with her head o \ 'er the musket, drenched with her own red blood!
Not till the dawn he heard it; his face grew grey to hear
How Bess, the landlord \ 's daughter,
The landlord \ 's black-eyed daughter,
Had watched for her love in the moonlight, and died in the darkness there.

Back, he spurred like a madman, shrieking a curse to the sky
With the white road smoking behind him and his rapier brandished high!
Blood-red were the spurs i \ ' the golden noon; wine-red was his velvet coat,
When they shot him down on the highway,
Down like a dog on the highway,
And he lay in his blood on the highway, with the bunch of lace at his throat
.

Still of a winter \ 's night, they say, when the wind is in the trees,
When the moon is a ghostly galleon, tossed upon the cloudy seas,
When the road is a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,
A highwayman comes riding,
Riding, riding,
A highwayman comes riding, up to the old inn-door.