

The Hangman's Beautiful Daughter: A Film Treatment with Music

by [Geoffrey Clarfield](#) (March 2019)



Detail from *Portraits in an Interior*, Le Nain Brothers, 1647

A long, long time ago the hangman's beautiful daughter freed a young man from the scaffold. Together, they found adventure,

love and with the help of a very wise man, saved a kingdom and its people from an evil usurper . . .

ACT ONE

The Hanging



The film begins as the camera pans a rural agricultural setting with a preindustrial feel. It is an area which is prosperous. People are coming home from the market, carrying bags of various kinds of foodstuffs, driving sheep, goats and cattle back to their homesteads. Children are playing by the side of the road. There's a bit of dust on the roads. It is a sunny day with clouds and the world looks as if it is at peace. This is accentuated by the background music. The film begins with the song White Bird (All songs and music included here were created and recorded by The Incredible String Band).

*Who among you has not laid his head
Beneath some holy awning
Would think that such a night of tortured travelling*

*Could bring such a glory morning
And feel his heart sucked to his head
His head so wide that all life says
Has room to live and breathe and have its being—and more*

*For such a scene of beauty
For such a scene of beauty
Encompasses
See the white bird on the water*

*In beauty calm and still
White bird, white bird, white bird
Of the morning*

*White bird, white bird,
White bird, white bird, white bird
Of the morning*

*White bird, white bird,
See he watches the white bird
Of the morning
White bird, white bird*

The overall impression of the camera work, the music and a white dove or series of white birds that flit in and out of view, give the scene its pastoral feeling. As it says in the

hymn, it is an “all things bright and beautiful moment” soon to be shattered by ugly reality.

The camera then moves toward a middle-aged man. He is somewhat portly but strong as someone who is used to outdoor labour. His black beard has bits of white in it and his blue eyes suggests a once, more whimsical nature. But he is determined and focused as he is building a scaffold.

[Read More in New English Review:](#)

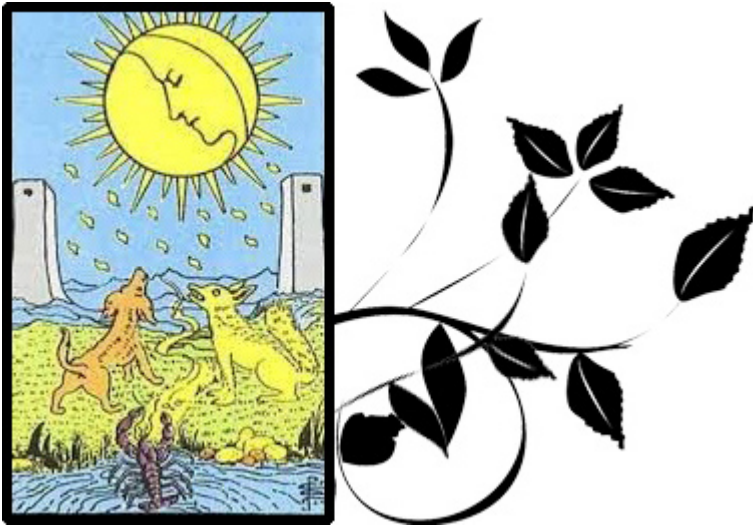
- [The Battling, Baffling Watergate Editor](#)
- [Real People](#)
- [Ronald from the Library](#)

As we see him build and test the scaffold we begin to realize that it is a scaffold built to hang someone. We realize that this man in the brown apron is a kind of reluctant executioner. He takes no joy in what he does but he has to do it well, as if he is under some obligation.

As the camera watches him work from various angles it does close-ups on his hands while the song White Bird fades out and there is silence, as we simply hear the sounds of nature while we watch the craftsmen at his work.

As finishes his work a new song begins.

The Waltz of the New Moon



This next song, Waltz of the New Moon, is the background for the emergence of the prisoner who we see finishing his last meal in his cell. The camera goes back and forth from his cell to the various aspects of nature around him, the early new moon bright on the horizon on this very early morning, the morning of his hanging.

The victim, a handsome young man, is brought out by the hangman and the prisoner must run a gauntlet of irate villagers who pelt him with stones and rotten fruit as he walks towards the scaffold. The hangman walks behind him, his head hung in shame. He is not enjoying this. The prisoner mounts the scaffold with his hands tied behind him. The hangman then offers him a hood which he refuses. As the hangman puts the noose around his neck the young man cries out to the assembled crowd, "May a hero arise from among you will avenge me and return justice to the land."

The hangman pulls the lever and the man falls to his death. The crowd becomes subdued and leaves, giving a sense that they felt guilty for having scourged the man. Among the people in the crowd there is a young woman in her 20s with long black

hair. There is great sadness on her face, and she turns away, walking towards her father's house. She is the hangman's beautiful daughter.

*I hear that the emperor of china used to wear iron shoes
with ease*

*We are the tablecloth and also the table also the fable of
the dancing leaves*

*The new moon is rising the axe of the thunder is broken
As never was not since the flood nor yet since the world
began*

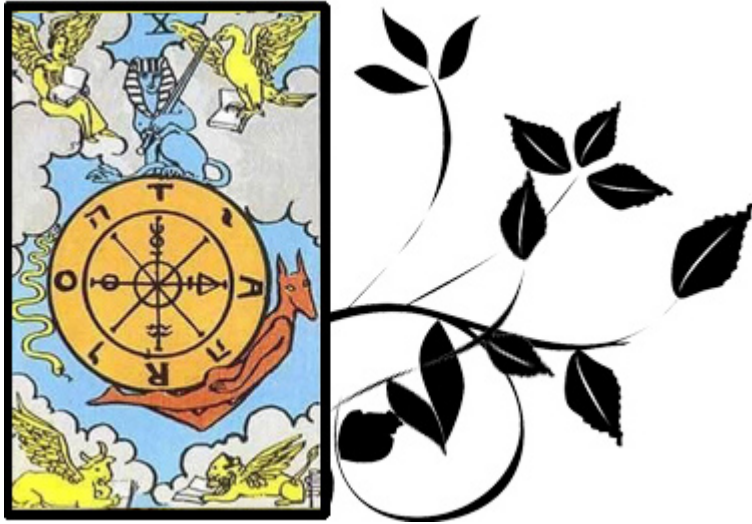
*The new moon is shining the angels are washing their
windows*

*Above the years whose jumble sale goes spinning on below
Ask the snail beneath the stone, ask the stone beneath the
wall*

Are there any stars at all

Like an eagle in the sky tell me if air is strong

Father and Daughter



The daughter returns to their house. She is subdued. Her father is sitting at the head of a long wooden table in the rustic kitchen of their house. She is preparing food and sets two places. She places hot tea and wholesome food on the table. Her father begins eating, clearly without appetite. He is deeply disturbed. She looks at her feet and cannot eat.

She asks him who was the man that he hung. He haltingly explains that he was a young man from a village not far away. He was handsome, a good farmer and a good herdsman. He was handy with a bow and arrow. One day the king's men found him in the forest with a dead deer and his arrows in it. He was taken to the King's court and sentenced to death for poaching. A few days earlier he was delivered to the hangman and the King's men announced that he must die on the morning of the full moon.

The daughter protests and says that the people are hungry and that the King's Men and tax collectors are cruel and take only the best from the people, leaving them little. She becomes angry with her father and challenges him on why he has chosen this horrible job. The father is shaken and there is silence.

Finally, he explains to her that he has no choice.

Once upon a time, many years ago, when he was a young man, he was caught by the King in the forest with a deer that he had just killed. He was sentenced to death but the king gave him a choice. He could become the hangman or be hung himself. And so, he made a choice. He then explains that her mother couldn't live with this and after one hanging left, leaving him with a child to raise and a cursed vocation.

This scene is given a surreal feeling from the music of A Very Cellular Song. It is dreamlike and implies that there is something loving and marvelous going on between the father and the daughter, and that somehow, they must overcome this situation in order to regain happiness and balance.

*Winter was cold and the clothing was thin
But the gentle shepherd calls the tune
Oh, dear mother what shall I do?
First please your eyes and then your ears, Jenny
Exchanging love tokens say goodnight*

Lay down my dear sister
Won't you lay and take your rest?
Won't you lay your head upon your saviors breast?
And I love you but Jesus loves you the best

And I bid you goodnight, goodnight, goodnight
Lord, I bid you goodnight, goodnight, goodnight

One of these mornings bright and early and fine
Goodnight, goodnight
Not a cricket, not a spirit going to shout me on
Goodnight, goodnight

I go walking in the valley of the shadow of death
Goodnight, goodnight
And his rod and his staff shall comfort me
Goodnight, goodnight

Oh John, the wine he saw the sign
Goodnight, goodnight
Oh, John say, I seen a number of signs
Goodnight, goodnight

Water, Water See the Water Flow



The two of them finish eating and the daughter then goes outside to do various chores on the edge of the river near their house. Here she dries out the grain, churns butter, tends the fishnets and the irrigation channels. This is all done to the background music of the Water Song:

*Water water see the water flow
Glancing dancing see the water flow
Oh wizard of changes water water water
Dark or silvery mother of life
Water water holy mystery heaven's daughter*

*God made a song when the world was new
Waters laughter sings it is true
Oh, wizard of changes, teach me the lesson of flowing*

The Prisoner



As the daughter walks back to her house from her chores, she sees armed men bringing a prisoner to her father's house. Her father stands there quietly while the captain of the men tells him that he has brought another poacher, who must be hanged the next morning. The King's Men leave and the hangman leads the man to his cell. The hangman is even more depressed now and the burden of the other hanging is crushing him.

The daughter brings the young man food and water and hands it to him through the bars of his cell. He explains that the King's Men are demanding even more food from the people and, they are demanding that the firstborn son of each family must serve the King and his army. Thousands of young men are running away. He and his friends have fled to the forest to avoid conscription and he was caught hunting deer.

The daughter returns to her bedroom but she cannot sleep. She cannot bear the idea that this young man will die. She is caught between duty to her father and the just cause of her age mate.

She has The No Sleep Blues.

*Cracks rack the windows, howls hold the floor
Rains rot the rafters and do you just have to snore?
It's a most inclement climate, for the season of the night
Is that mouse playing football, oh, I thought they didn't
like the light?*

*And the dawn comes sneaking up when it thinks I'm not
looking
I am starting to grieve, man, I used to know but now I
believe, man
They tell me sleep is a gas and if I want to lay down
But I'm sorry I woke you, I mean I've got the no sleep
blues*

There's mayhem in this mansion, since the cows were coming home
With delirium no sleep um, in a cloud of nylon foam
But release scours the outhouse and a hard rain sears the sky
But if you let the pigs decide it, they will put you in the sty

And the dawn comes sneaking up when it thinks I'm not looking
I am starting to grieve, man, I used to know but now I believe, man
They tell me sleep is a gas and if I want to lay down
But I'm sorry I woke you, I mean I've got the no sleep blues

I think I'll get a picture and I think I'll put it on a nail
I think I'll get another one and put it in a pail
But the pail got so rusty I called it red, red, red for fun
And I laughed like a leaver till you ought to seen it run

And the dawn comes sneaking up when it thinks I'm not looking
I am starting to grieve, man, I used to know but now I believe, man
They tell me sleep is a gas and if I want to lay down
But I'm sorry I woke you, I mean I've got the no sleep blues

The size of the future declared itself no part

*Aloof like a Sultan in the autumn of your heart
But the heart got so hearty, that it pulled for the shore
And the sailors fired a big salute and it made my ears
quite sore*

*And the dawn was sneaking up when it thinks I'm not looking
I am starting to grieve, man, I used to know but now I
believe, man
They tell me sleep is a gas and I want to lay down
But I'm sorry I woke you, I mean I've got the no sleep
blues*

*I mixed stones and water, just to see what it would do
And the water it got stoney and the stones got watery too
So I mixed my feet with water, just to see what could be
seen
And the water it got dirty and the feet they got quite
clean*

*And the dawn comes sneaking up when it thinks I'm not
looking
I am starting to grieve, man, I used to know but now I
believe, man
They tell me sleep is a gas and if I want to lay down
But I'm sorry I woke you, I mean I've got the no sleep
blues*

The song fades in and out and just before dawn, the daughter creeps into her father's room while he is sleeping and takes

the key to the cell. She goes outside of the house and feeds a choice piece of meat to the guard dog who gobbles it up. She puts another piece in a sack and goes to the cell. She releases the young man and they quietly steal away from her homestead. She tells him that there is a path to the cliff. She tells him that there is a very narrow path down the cliff and when they get to the bottom, there is a river that they can cross. From there they can enter no man's land, far from the King's men. She tells him that she's only been there once, that there are both good people there as well as robbers and thieves , but that it is better than staying behind and waiting for the King to conscript all the young men in the realm.

ACT TWO

The Escape



They begin running as time is short. Soon a pack of dogs is coming after them. Her father is not far behind and her very own guard dog, to whom she gave meat, is leading the pack. They run even faster, desperate to find the trail but instead,

they find themselves on the edge of the cliff looking down at the river below them. The dogs are coming after them and it looks as if they will have to jump to their death or, be torn apart by the dogs. Just as the dogs begin to face them, she throws a piece of meat towards the dog. Her dog stops. He looks at her and him and growls. He looks at the meat and gives a growl. This happens a couple of times. He then picks up the meat and leads the dogs back to the homestead. The young woman tells her partner to follow her. She breaks through some brambles and finds the trail. They hurry down the trail towards the river.

They make it to the edge of the water where they find a deserted boat and they get in quickly, pushed downstream by the current. The camera then spends time panning back and forth between them in the boat, having just emerged from their second life-threatening challenge. As they float downstream, we hear the following song, Puppies:

*Even the birds when they sing
It's not everything to them
Fiddle-head ferns and daffodils
Made me want to play
To the puppies having their little breakfast
So I picked up six fine strings
And I began to play*

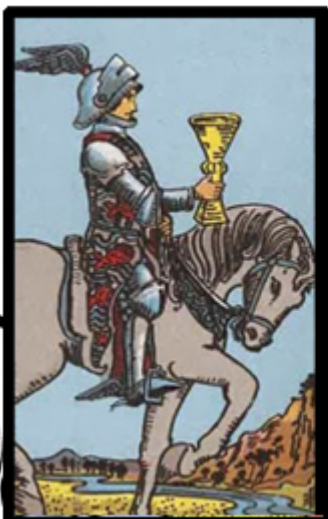
*What I thought that new
Born fur would like best
Hey, hey, such a new born morn
Hey, hey, the puppies they have gone
Left me here holding this song
Music is so much less than what you are
Just how far can you take me*

*How far can you take me, Mother Nina
Before I'm on my own
Don't imagine that the pretty flower can sing a song
When the sun makes it's sap to rise
One by one the chorus swells till it's a mighty noise*

*Are you sure that it's not a silence?
Even the birds when they sing
It's not everything to them
Even the birds when they sing
Spread their wings to heaven and fly away*

As we hear this song, the camera goes back and forth between the young couple in the boat and the beauties of nature they see around them, back and forth from their idyllic boat ride to her father back in his house feeding his dogs. The dogs eat and play and the father sits and watches them as they play. He is devastated and he is all alone.

At the Dancing Horse



The hangman's beautiful daughter asks the young man what is his name and he tells her it is Robin. She laughs at him and tells him her name is Vanessa but she never really liked it and so all her friends called her by her second name, Marion. They joke the perhaps they will have the luck of Robin and Marion and find people in the forest who can protect them from the King's Men who will most certainly be coming after them, for theirs is a merciless king. Marion says she heard that he killed his brother and usurped the throne. Robin says nothing and fingers his ring which has a lion engraved on it.

As the river slows down their boat lands near a small settlement. They gingerly walk up to an inn called the Dancing Horse. They enter and they see villagers of all types, eating and drinking. The owner of the inn takes a liking to them. They explain to him that they are fugitives from the King's Men and he says he can help them on one condition. That is they must join him in the next song and dance which is the The Minotaur's Song. It should be done in a kind of Gilbert and Sullivan style.

*Straight from the shoulder
I think like a soldier
I know what's right and what's wrong
He knows what's right and what's wrong.*

*I'm the original discriminating buffalo man
And I'll do what's wrong as long as I can
He'll do what's wrong as long as he can*

*I live in a labyrinth under the sea
Down in the dark as dark as can be
I like the dark as dark as can be*

He likes the dark as dark as can be

*I'll even attack you or eat you whole
Down in the dark my bone mills roll
Porridge for my porridge bowl
Porridge for his porridge bowl*

[Chorus]

*I'm strong as the earth from which I'm born
He's strong as the earth from which he's born
I can't dream well because of my horns
He can't dream well because of his horns*

Moo

[Chorus]

*A minotaur gets very sore
His features they are such a bore
His habits are predicta-bull
Aggressively relia-bull, bull, bull*

[Chorus]

I'm the original discriminating buffalo man

In the Forest



Daniel is the owner of the inn and he knows the way to the rebels in the forest. He offers to take them there, but he explains to them that they will need clothes, knives, swords and arrows. Marion takes out a gold coin from the lining of her jacket and gives it to him. He takes them to the shed and they fit out with weapons and begin to walk through the forest.

As they walk through the forest looking at all the wildlife and flowers they walk in silence to the sounds of The Mad Hatters Song:

But just this section:

*Oh seekers of spring how could you not find contentment
In a time of riddling reasons in this land of the blind
By the joke of fate alone
It's sure that as the loved hand leaves you,
You clutch for the slip-stream, the realness to find.*

*But do what you like, do what you like, do what you like,
Do what you like, do what you like, do what you can,
Do what you can, live till you die
My poor little man.*

*For Jesus will stretch out his hand no more.
But in the south there's many a waving tree;
Oh would that musky fingers move your pain;
In the warm south winds the lost flowers bloom again.*

*The scene ends when they kill a deer, skin it roast it and
eat and go to sleep beside the fire under the stars.*

The Magus



Daniel brings them to the rebels in the forest. These are men and women of all races, creeds and colour who live and farm together. Their leader is a rabbi named Moses. He tells them that he came from Spain, where there arose Sultan who proclaimed that all the Jews of the kingdom must convert to Islam or die. He took his people on a long journey north, in

order to find refuge in a pagan kingdom that did not distinguish between Jew, Christian or Muslim and they finally arrived in this no-man's land.

Robin and Marion meet the men and women fleeing the King's Men and live among them. Moses and his people are renowned for their knowledge of herbs and their curative properties. They have established themselves among the men and women of the forest as harvesters of wild herbs and curers of disease. Slowly, even the young Jewish men have also learnt to fight, as they have had to protect their settlement from the raids of the King's Men as have so many first born who have been fleeing the King's latest decree.

In this scene we see Robin and Marion joining the community, working, eating and sleeping. Over time they fall in love. One night Robin comes to the house where the young women sleep and he brings her to a place in the forest where he has built a lean to, a fire and has some wine and food. She talks about her father. She explains that she imagines he was just like him before he was ensnared by the King. He talks vaguely about his childhood in the village and the ideal life he once led in the hope that someone persuade King to stop this persecution. Marion is sympathetic but puzzled as it does not ring true.

This is where we the audience see Robin and Marion falling in love. Robin asks Marion to marry him. He give her his ring. He then explains that he is the former king's son, that his uncle caused his father's death and took over the kingdom, that he made it dangerous for him to stay in the court and so he ran off to join the rebels. They kiss passionately and go inside the Bower. Robin comes out and sits alone, he explores the darkness of the forest, the sounds of the forest, the leaves

rustling in the wind, stars and the moon as we listen to October Song. We hear the song and see his different moods as he watches the fire and waits for what morning brings. There are animals of the which the camera follows, wolves, badgers, beavers etc.

*I'll sing you this October song,
Oh, there is no song before it.
The words and tune are none of my own,
for my joys and sorrows bore it.*

Beside the sea
The brambly briars, in the still of evening,
Birds fly out behind the sun,
and with them I'll be leaving.

The fallen leaves that jewel the ground,
They know the art of dying,
And leave with joy their glad gold hearts,
In the scarlet shadows lying.

When hunger calls my footsteps home,
The morning follows after,
I swim the seas within my mind,
And the pine-trees laugh green laughter.
I used to search for happiness,
And I used to follow pleasure,
But I found a door behind my mind,
And that's the greatest treasure.

*For rulers like to lay down laws,
And rebels like to break them,
And the poor priests like to walk in chains,
And God likes to forsake them.*

*I met a man whose name was Time,
And he said, "I must be going,"
But just how long ago that was,
I have no way of knowing.*

*Sometimes I want to murder time,
Sometimes when my heart's aching,
But mostly I just stroll along,
The path that he is taking.*

The Attack



As they return to the camp, they see the King's men on horseback attacking the village and villagers. King's men, on horse set, fire to numerous dwellings and one of the fields of corn. This is a pitched battle. Marion uses her bow as does Robin. They move back to back as they defend themselves and the villagers against the King's men. At a certain point they

are separated. Marion is forced to the ground as one of the king's men prepares to kill her with his sword. From apparently nowhere Moses the leader of brings down his sword on her attacker. Eventually they drive off the kings men tend to the wounded, the fires and bury the dead.

Invocation

*You that create the diversity of the forms
Open to my words
You that divide it and multiply it
Hear my sounds*

*I make yield league to you
Ancient associates and fellow wanderers
You that move the heart in fur and scale
I join with you*

*You that sing bright and subtle
Making shapes that my throat cannot tell
You that harden the horn
And make quick the eye*

*You that run the fast fox and the zigzag fly
You size less makers of the mole
And of the whale
aid me and I will aid you*

*I make a blood pact with you
You that lift the blossom and the green branch*

*You who make symmetries more true
You who consider the angle of your limbs*

*Who dance in slower time
Who watch the patterns
You rough coated
Who eat water*

*Who stretch deep and high
With your green blood
My red blood let it be mingled
Aid me and I will aid you*

*I call upon you
You who are unconfined
Who have no shape
Who are not seen*

*But only in your action
I will call upon you
You who have no depth
But choose direction*

*Who bring what is willed
That you blow love upon the summers of my loved ones
That you blow summers upon those loves of my love
Aid me and I will aid you*

I make a pact with you

*You who are the liquidness
Of the waters
And the spark of the flame*

*I call upon you
You who make fertile the soft earth
And guard the growth of the growing things
I make peace with you*

*You who are the blueness of the blue sky
And the wrath of the storm
I take the cup of deepness with you
Earth shakers*

*And with you the sharp and the hollow hills
I make reverence to you
Round wakefulness
We call the earth*

*I make wide eyes to you
You who are awake
Every created thing both solid and sleepy
Or airy light*

*I weave colors 'round you
You who will come with me
I will consider it
Beauty*

*I will consider it
Beauty, beauty*

In The Court of the Usurper



The king and his court are feasting. His Queen sits beside him. She hates him as she knows he killed his brother, her former husband. His prime minister, a good man, fears him. The Jester is moving about. Musicians and singers and dancers are entertaining the court. They sing the ballad of Black Jack Davy as the king becomes angrier and angrier.

*Black Jack David is the name that I bear been alone in
the forest for a long time
But the time is coming when
a lady I'll find I will love her
Hold her singing through
the green green trees*

And the skin on my hands is like the leather I ride
and my face is hard from the cold wind
But my heart so warm with
the song that I sing
Charm a fair lady
Singing through the green green trees

Fair Eloise rode out that day
From her fine fine home in the morning
In the flush of the dawn came a sound to her ear
Drifting and floating
Singing through the green green trees

Now fifteen summers was
all that she'd seen
And her skin was as soft as the velvet
But she's forsaken her fine fine home
And Black Jack David is
Singing through the green green trees

Last night she slept on a fine feather bed
Far far from Black jack David
But tonight she will sleep on the cold cold ground
And love him and hold him
Singing through the green green trees

Saddle me up my fine gray mare
Cried the lord of the house next morning
For the servants tell me
my daughter's gone
With Black Jack David

Singing through the green green trees

*And he rode all day and he rode all night
But he never did find his daughter
But he heard from afar
come adrift on the wind
Two voices laughing
Singing through the green green trees*

*Oh Black Jack David is
the name that I bear
Been alone in the forest for a long time
But now I have found me a lady so fair
I will love her and hold her
Singing through the green green trees*

The King is furious. He feels he is begin mocked and he throws out the musicians. He turns in exasperation to his Prime Minister who fears him. His pagan head priest is standing beside the prime minister. The Prime minister tells them they're doing everything they can to catch the rebels in the forest but they keep on moving. They attack them. They kill them. But their own soldiers are killed, and the soldiers are growing more and more afraid, for it seems that the battle can never be won.

The head priest pulls the king aside. He tells him that the reason they cannot win is that the ancestors of the king are upset with him. He must sacrifice something dear to him in

order to defeat the rebels. He asks the king to make a human sacrifice. The Head priest tells him that the hangman has lost control and maybe is disloyal and that the rebels are growing stronger because he has stopped hanging the poachers.

The king makes an announcement. The gods are angry. In order to show them his obedience he orders the sacrifice of a young female virgin who is being kept in prison. We discover to our horror that she is Marion's sister and that she was taken by the king at a young age, to ensure that the hangman never wavered in his loyalty to the king. The king announces that the hangman's beautiful daughter will herself hang in the grove of the ancestors in a week's time. The proclamation is read but he will show clemency if the rebels turn themselves in.

The jester cryptically foresees that right will right wrong and wrong will not be right. The King glares at him. The Jester laughs.

Challenge



We are back in the forest and a runner rouses everyone. He announces that the king is going to sacrifice the hangman's beautiful daughter if they do not surrender. Robin is conflicted and Marion pulls him aside. She explains that it is her twin sister who had been captured by the king she tells Robin that he is done enough, and he does not have to risk his life for her sister. Robin goes to Moses. He is frightened and Moses tells him to do what he thinks is best. Robin chooses to prepare an attack on the king, but Moses cautions him and explains that when he crosses the river into the king's domain, it is protected by an enormous snake and he can only kill it if he finds the right herbs. The two of them go to the forest. They collect the magical herbs to defeat the dragon and Moses gives them to him. He tells him that they will only work if before he comes upon the snake, he recites a special incantation. He also gives him a herb that he must now take and that will give him a vision of the territory that he must enter. When the effects of the herb wear off he can then take up his quest.

As Robin takes the herb we hear the song Swift as the Wind. We see him shamanistically and he is transformed into a bird. During his mystical flight he explores the kingdom and finds the secret underground entrance into the castle where he finds the cell of Marion's sister and returns to consciousness.

For my delight
Swift as the wind flies
His chariot and wings
Shine in the light of a thousand suns
For he comes from the land of no night
He comes from the land of no night

There is no land
The night is all around my child
You must stop imagining all this
You must stop imagining all this
For your own good
Why don't you go with the rest and play downstairs

Closing my eyes
I see him so clear
The blood on his sword
Flashes so bright as is
Falls to the skulls by his feet

But his eyes they know all things
His eyes they know all

There is no blood
No-one knows all my child
You must stop imagining all this
You must stop imagining all this
For your own good
Why don't you go with the rest and play downstairs

*Swift as the wind
Stay if you will now
Seeing you again will be in your castle so fair
But I make take some time on the way
And I may have to spend some time downstairs*

For the Love of A Sister



After the king's announcement the young prime minister sneaks into Marion's sister cell. We discover that he has visited her the last year giving her news of her sister and the efforts of the men of the forest to resist the king. He tells her that he loves her. She embraces him. He tells her that if both of them are seen leaving the castle they'll both die. So, as he recently discovered a secret tunnel this will allow her to escape. He draws her a map and sends her away.

He goes back to his room and he paces. The room is filled with

alchemical and astrological symbols, gargoyles and old manuscripts. As he moves through the room, he is pensive and fearful and we hear the following song, The Half-Remarkable Question.

*Who moved the black castle
Who moved the white queen
When Gimmel and Daleth where standing between?*

*Out of the evening growing a veil
Pining for the pine woods that ached for the sail
There's something forgotten I want you to know
The freckles of rain are telling me so*

*O it's the old forgotten question
What is that we are part of?
What is it that we are?
And an elephant madness has covered the sun*

*The judge and the juries they play for the fun
They've torn up the roses and washed all the soap
And the martyr who marries them dares not elope
O it's the never realised question*

*O long O long e're yet my eyes
Braved the gates enormous fire
And the body folded 'round me
And the person in me grew*

*The flower and its petal
The root and its grasp
The earth and its bigness
The breath and its gasp*

*The mind and its motion
The foot and its move
The life and its pattern
The heart and its love*

O it's the half-remarkable question.

ACT THREE

The Slaying of the Serpent



Robin sets out to kill the serpent. On the way, they are attacked by the King's men and only manage to fend them off a pitched battle, killing most of their attackers and sending the rest back retreating to the castle of the king. Slowly they approach the river. Robin goes out by himself with his sword drawn. The Snake rears up and backs away. Robin creeps up and this happens a few times. On the last attempt he spews the herbs on this path. The snake begins to eat them and as he eats, the last herb is just a few feet from Robin. Robin lifts his sword as the serpent comes down to strike him, but the serpent begins to lose control of its lower jaw and the head of the serpent falls on Robin sword. Robin is terrified and paralyzed with fear but realizes that he has killed the beast. He goes back to his men and they run towards the Kings Castle. On a forest path they meet Marion's twin sister who tells him about the secret tunnel. Robin sends the twin sister back to the forest with one of his men and they proceed forward.

As they move through the forest we hear this song:

My Name is Death

*I am the question that cannot be answered
I am the lover that cannot be lost
Yet small are the gifts of my servant the soldier
For time is my offspring, pray what is my name?*

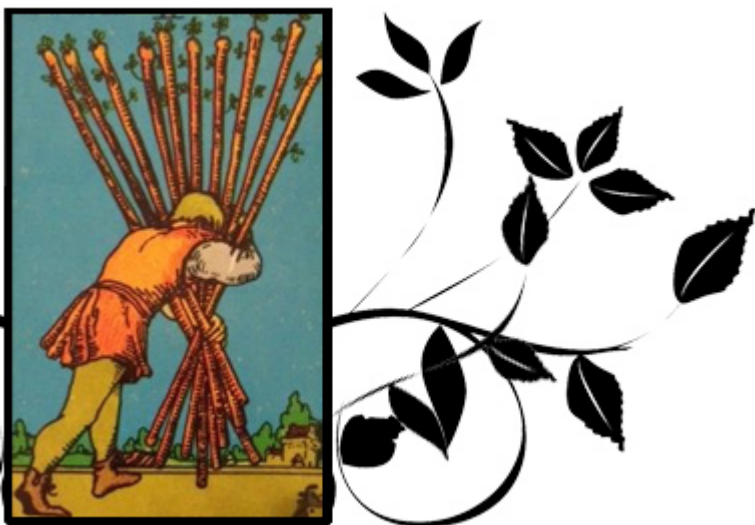
*My name is death, cannot you see?
All life must turn to me
Oh, cannot you see?*

*And you must come with me
You must come with me*

*I'll give you gold and jewels rare
And all my wealth in store
All pleasure's fair
If I may live but a few short years more*

*Oh lady, lay your jewels aside
No more to glory in your pride
Tarrying here there is no way
Your time has come that you must away
And you must come to clay*

The Scapegoat



The King storms in to the room of the Prime Minister. He tells him that he knows that he has freed the hangman's beautiful

daughter and that he will pay for it with his own life. Instead of the daughter the king says he will hang him in public, and then the Gods will be pleased and he will personally take the war to the forest and destroy the rebels. The prime minister is taken to the same dungeon where the hangman's beautiful daughter was once imprisoned.

Revenge and Justice



Meanwhile Robin and his men use the tunnel to invade the palace. This is a long fight scene with the killing of the king's bodyguard. The good guys are about to lose but are saved by the Hangman who has collected young men to join the fight and arrives in the nick of time. They capture the king and his high priest. The Jester brings them to the dungeon and they free the prime minister. Robin announces that he is the nephew of the false king and the son the rightful king. No one believes him. They have to wait for Marion to arrive when he asks her for his ring. He shows everyone in the court the ring which they know was his father's and they kneel in fealty to him. He announces that Marion will be the new queen.

A Royal Wedding



The last scene is a double wedding. Moses is brought to officiate.

There is lots of music, dancing and pageantry. Various princes of the realm swear fealty to the new King Robin. Wedding ceremonies commence the usual revelry. The Hangman's beautiful daughter father has been brought to court. He asks forgiveness for the lateness of his bravery. It is given. He stands behind side Moses when the wedding takes place. He is placed beside the queen and clearly there is electricity between the two of them hinting of a marriage later on.

[Stories and Poetry in New English Review:](#)

- [• On the Eighth Day](#)
- [• We Walk](#)
- [• Differential Release Liners](#)

The new king makes a proclamation about his kingdom where there will justice, freedom of religion and little taxation.

At the same time we cut back and forth to a boat where a servant of the new King takes his uncle and the high priest to a deserted island where they will live out their days in guarded exile-it also allows for a sequel where they escape and raise a rebellion.

Everyone enjoys the wedding and celebrates their newfound freedom. We hear the final song, Little Cloud:

*How sweet to be a cloud
Floating in the blue*

*Lying awake, late the other night
I heard above me a trembling
I looked up, it was a little cloud
From which a gold string was dangling*

*You know, I gave the string a little pull
Just to see what was on the other end
Just then a voice came down to me and says
"Hey, now, don't you want to be my friend"*

*And float with me to distant lands, wondrous and fair
Float with me to distant lands, wondrous and fair*

*You see I'm just a happy little cloud
I laugh and the float and the sing my song
But the other clouds don't like me none
They say, I am behaving so very wrong*

You see a cloud's supposed to be sad
To cry and weep and tear its hair and all
And don't matter how hard I try
I can't get the first little tear to fall

Oh float with me to distant lands, wondrous and fair
Float with me to distant lands, wondrous and fair

I said, "Hey, I like you little cloud
You are a nice little fellow, yes"
"You making some, kind of a joke?", said the cloud
"Now can't you see I'm wearing such a pretty dress?"

You see I am the prettiest little chick cloud
That you'd find anywhere up above
I just dropped in on you awhile
To see if you could give me some kind of love

And float with me to distant lands, wondrous and fair
Float with me to distant lands wondrous and fair

Just then the chief cloud come into view
And says, "Hey, girl, now what you think you're doing
there?"
I told you so many times before
You just don't seem at all to care

*You know you should be floating up above
Now don't let me catch you down here again
And as my cloud rolled out of view
There come falling down a gentle shower of rain*

*Happy rain come falling down
Red, green, blue and golden
And every drop, as it fell, it smiled
And, throwing back its head, began singing*

*Oh, float with me to distant lands, wondrous and fair
Float with me to distant lands, wondrous and fair*

Funeral for a King



They go out on the river with the royal Viking ship of the former king, whose body is taken from a temporary grave, for a Viking style funeral. It will be set on fire as it goes out to

sea. The camera focuses on the sadness and contentment on the Hangman's face and the warm smiles that he gets from the queen. As the boats move out to sea, she comes to stand beside him and then holds his hand as she snuggles up beside him. The third marriage is implied and the so Hangman will become the husband of the queen, the father of the king and still of his own daughter, the new queen. As the song states, The Circle is Unbroken.

*Seasons they change while cold blood is raining
I have been waiting beyond the years
Now over the skyline I see you're traveling
Brothers from all time gathering here
Come let us build the ship of the future
In an ancient pattern that journeys far
Come let us set sail for the always island
Through seas of leaving to the summer stars*

*Seasons they change but with gaze unchanging
O deep eyed sisters is it you I see?
Seeds of beauty ye bear within you
Of unborn children glad and free
Within your fingers the fates are spinning
The sacred binding of the yellow grain
Scattered we were when the long night was breaking
But in the bright morning converse again*

The final boat scene;

They paddle down to the river and reach the open sea while warriors in the boats beat on their shields. The royal funeral boat is set on fire.

End of Story

Captions

Gently Tender Falls the Rain

*Gently tender falls the rain
Washing clean the slate again
But leave me please, behind my brain
This light doesn't shadow on her*

*Shadows dancing through the pink milk blankets
Where my mind lay dreaming gently of my loving you
Sometimes I think I was true
But then I loved the stone beneath my feet as much, usually*

*Gently tender snow-drop grows
See the past tense quietly go
Kill the chord but let me know
This light doesn't shadow on her*

Shadows dancing through the green bush trees

Where my toes crept breathing lightly of my loving you
Sometimes I think I was true
But then I loved the stone beneath my feet as much, usually

Slowly spitting crawls the snake
See the branches bend and break
Venom that might easily shake
This light doesn't shadow on her

Good, good loving, she gave me good loving
Good, good loving, she gave me good loving
Good, good loving, she gave me good
And now all my wine is water
To her all my wine is water
All water, and my pearls are clear

Good, good loving, she gave me good
Good, good loving, she gave me good
Good, good loving, she gave me good
And now all my wine is water
To her all my wine is water
All water, and my pearls are clear

She gave to me good loving
She gave to me good loving
She gave to me good loving
Ohh good loving

New song for second half of captions, Banks of Sweet Italy:

*And must you go my flower my gem
My laughter and my hope of joy
To follow fortune through all the world
Make luck pursue you my darling boy*

*The sun shines bright in France
Yellow it shines on high Barbaree
Oh, be my light of day
Carry not long on the banks of sweet Italy*

*A golden ring is a precious thing
Red stockings and shoes of green
A dwelling place with painted door
A wide white bed to love you in*

*Summer's gone with calm days
Ungentle now is Biscay Bay
A cold fear claims my heart
God save all sailors from the cruel waves*

«[Previous Article](#) [Home Page](#) [Next Article](#)»

Geoffrey Clarfield is an anthropologist at large. For twenty years he lived in, worked among and explored the cultures and societies of Africa, the Middle East and Asia. As a development anthropologist he has worked for the following clients: the UN, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Norwegian, Canadian, Italian, Swiss and Kenyan governments as well international NGOs. His essays largely focus on the translation of cultures.

Follow NER on Twitter [@NERIconoclast](https://twitter.com/NERIconoclast)