

“Christmas Morn at Shasta” by Joaquin Miller
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“And God said let there be light and there was light.”

How beautiful is God’s first born
When pushing back the veil of Dusk
To kiss the new born baby, Morn,
And breathe its soft, moist breath of musk!

Light burst the Orient doors of Dawn
And like a cannon shot it came:
From peak to peak, on and on,
It flashed and lit the snows to flame.
A flaming sword in high right hand,
In left, red javelins of light,
A brow to conquer and command,
An eye to pierce the house of Night.

Light paused on Shasta, bowed a face
As awed before such majesty,
And seemed to pray a little space,
And I, too, bowed nor dared to see.
My very soul was sore afraid,
The glory was so passing sweet.
Then lo! the Sun uprose and laid
His sword of fire at my feet.

Below white sea mists of the main,
Possessed the mountain pass and lay
Like legions fortified, then the plain,
Uprose in gorgeous, glittering array.
The Sun caught up his sword of light
And, flushed with anger, swept right on,
And hip and thigh he smote black Night –
Hewed left and right for golden Dawn.

Back, back, the sea mists surged, and now
The mountains blazed with battle, then
Such glory wrapped the Mountain’s brow
As never had been seen of men;
Then down sank Night into the sea,
Submerged, as Pharoah’s hosts, and Morn,
Full grown, gold-garmented and free,
Tiptoed and laughed ‘lorn Night to scorn.