

IN THE ROUND TOWER AT JHANSI

Christina Georgina Rossetti

A hundred, a thousand to one: even so;
Not a hope in the world remained:
The swarming howling wretches below
Gained and gained and gained.

Skene looked at his pale young wife.
'Is the time come?'—'The time is come.'
Young, strong, and so full of life,
The agony struck them dumb.

Close his arm about her now,
Close her cheek to his,
Close the pistol to her brow—
God forgive them this!

'Will it hurt much?' 'No, mine own:
I wish I could bear the pang for both.'—
'I wish I could bear the pang alone:
Courage, dear, I am not loth.'

Kiss and kiss: 'It is not pain
Thus to kiss and die.
One kiss more.'—'And yet one again.'—
'Good-bye.'—'Good-bye.'