

# NEKROPOLIS

Isolde Kurz



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A CITY is standing in the waves  
That rose from deepest lair,  
There each of the houses the water laves  
And kisses each marble stair;  
There palaces stand in their glory's pride  
And gilded is pillar and wall,  
But over the battlements far and wide  
Destruction is brooding for all.  
No sound of wheel or of hoof is known  
The lion to wake from his dream,  
But low from the Lido the night-winds moan  
And sea-gulls ocean-wards scream.  
The moon makes silver the silent tide,  
The gondolas glide their way,  
And sea-weeds on the water ride—  
Like storm-tossed corpses stray.  
Oh pearl, thou of all in the deep most fair,  
Thou beauty out of the sea,  
Where are thy daughters with golden hair.  
Thy sons oh where may they be?  
And where is thy splendor, the gleam of thy  
gold,  
That all the earth would dread?  
The arts that so many a heart would hold?  
Where is thy realm? With the dead.  
By night, though, the greatest canal along  
Where flickering night-lights play  
Rise sounds like whisp'ring and amorous song  
Of shades that deserted stray.  
Frolicking swarms of masks whirl round  
Upon the piazza near by,  
And clashing swords on the Riva resound;  
The masts are dark'ning the sky.  
It seems as if from the night and deep  
Had risen the Venice of old.  
The sea-wind wakes and the wave from sleep,  
Her corpse to rock and to hold.  
The sea is rising, with passionate arms  
There by the canal-bed to cling,  
As if the young spouse with his kisses and charms  
To beauty new life should bring.