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A MASQUE

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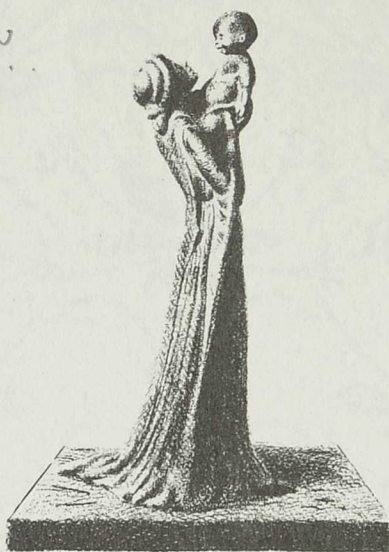
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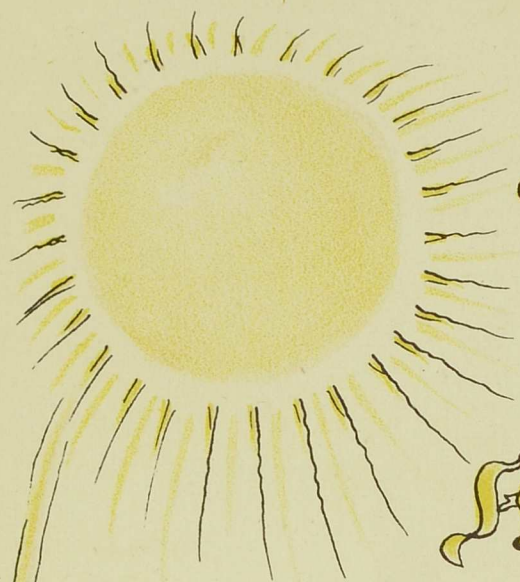
The sullen winter nearly spent,  
Queen Flora to her garden  
went,

To call  
the flowers  
from their long  
sleep,

The year's glad  
festivals  
to keep:







And one by one each  
making bold

Their silken vesture  
to unfold,

And peeping forth to meet  
the sun,

The long procession is begun:-





The Snowdrops first upon  
the scene,  
White-crested braved King  
Frost's demesne:





The little Crocus  
reaches up

To catch a sunbeam  
in his cup.





The Daffodil his trumpet blows,  
And after Spring a-

hunting  
goes.





Anemones rode out the gale,  
Frail Wind-flowers flutter'd,  
red & pale:





The Violet, and the Primrose dame,  
With modest mien but hearts  
a flame,





Green-kirtled from the brooklet's  
The rustic maid Marsh-fold,

Marigold:





The "Lady smocks all silver white"  
The milkmaids of the meadows  
bright,





Where shining Buttercups abound,  
Among the Cowslips on the  
ground.



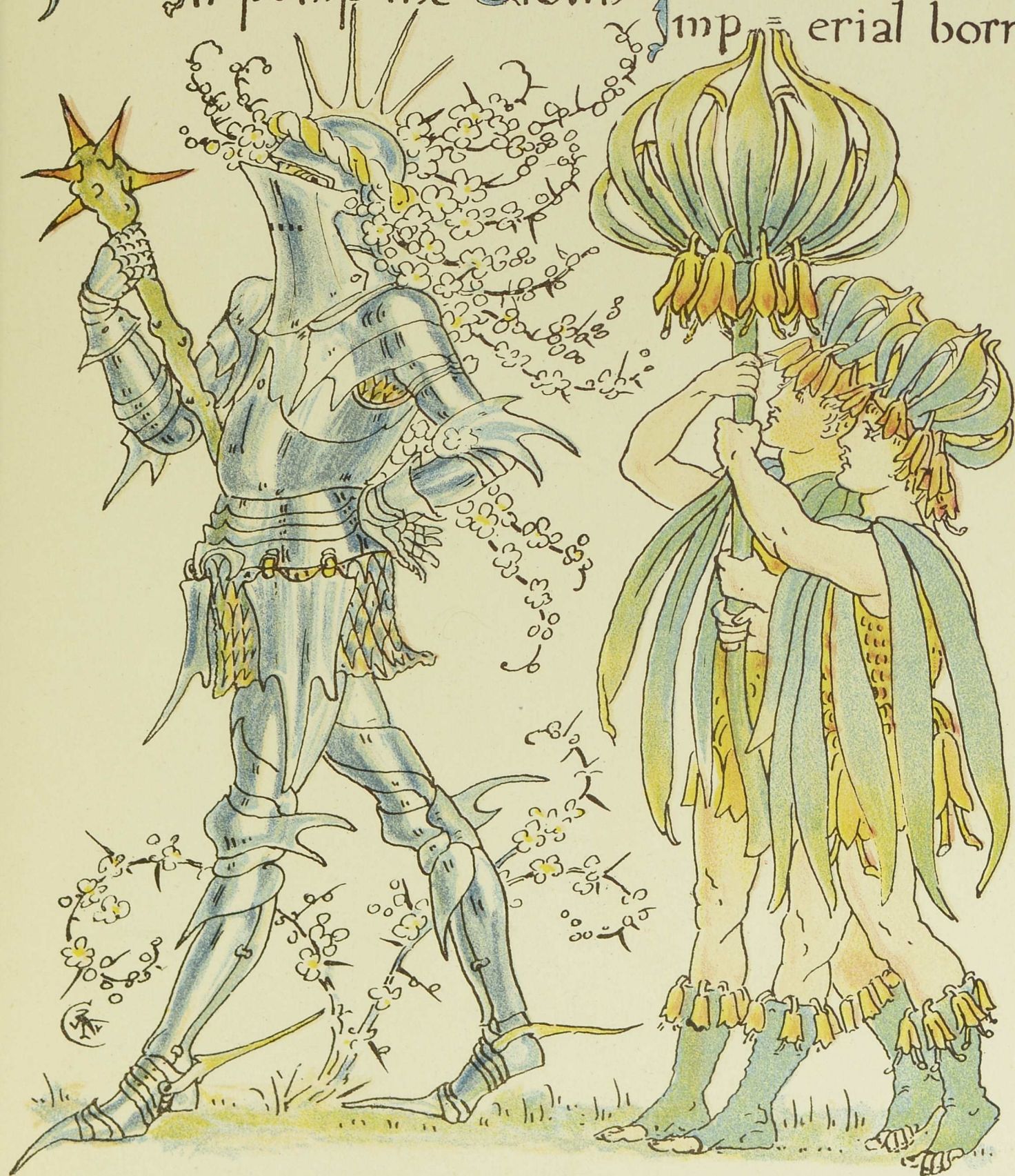


Here Lords and Ladies of the wood,  
With shaking spear, and riding-  
hood:





Black knight-at-arms, the white-plumed Thorn;  
In pomp the Crown-Imperial borne.





While Tulips lift the banner red,  
Or fill the cups with  
fire instead.





Sweet Hyacinths their bells did ring,  
To swell the music of the Spring.





With blazoned pennons from  
each spear,

The Iris  
and the  
Flag ap-  
pear





weet masking May, in white or red,  
Her snowy cloud of blossom spread.





And Chaucer's Daisy small & sweet.  
"Si douce est la Margarete."





The little Lilies of the Vale,  
White ladies delicate & pale;





Great Peonies in crimson pride,  
And budding ones  
in green that  
hide:





Fair Columbines that drew the car  
Of Venus  
from her distant  
star.





And Love's own flower the blushing  
The Queen of all the garden close: Rose,





And Roses from the hedgerow wild,  
Behind their thorns that faintly smiled.





And from the cressy brook's green  
"Forget-me-not", a small voice<sup>side,</sup>  
cried.





Here stately Lilies, pale and proud,  
In vesture pure as summer cloud;

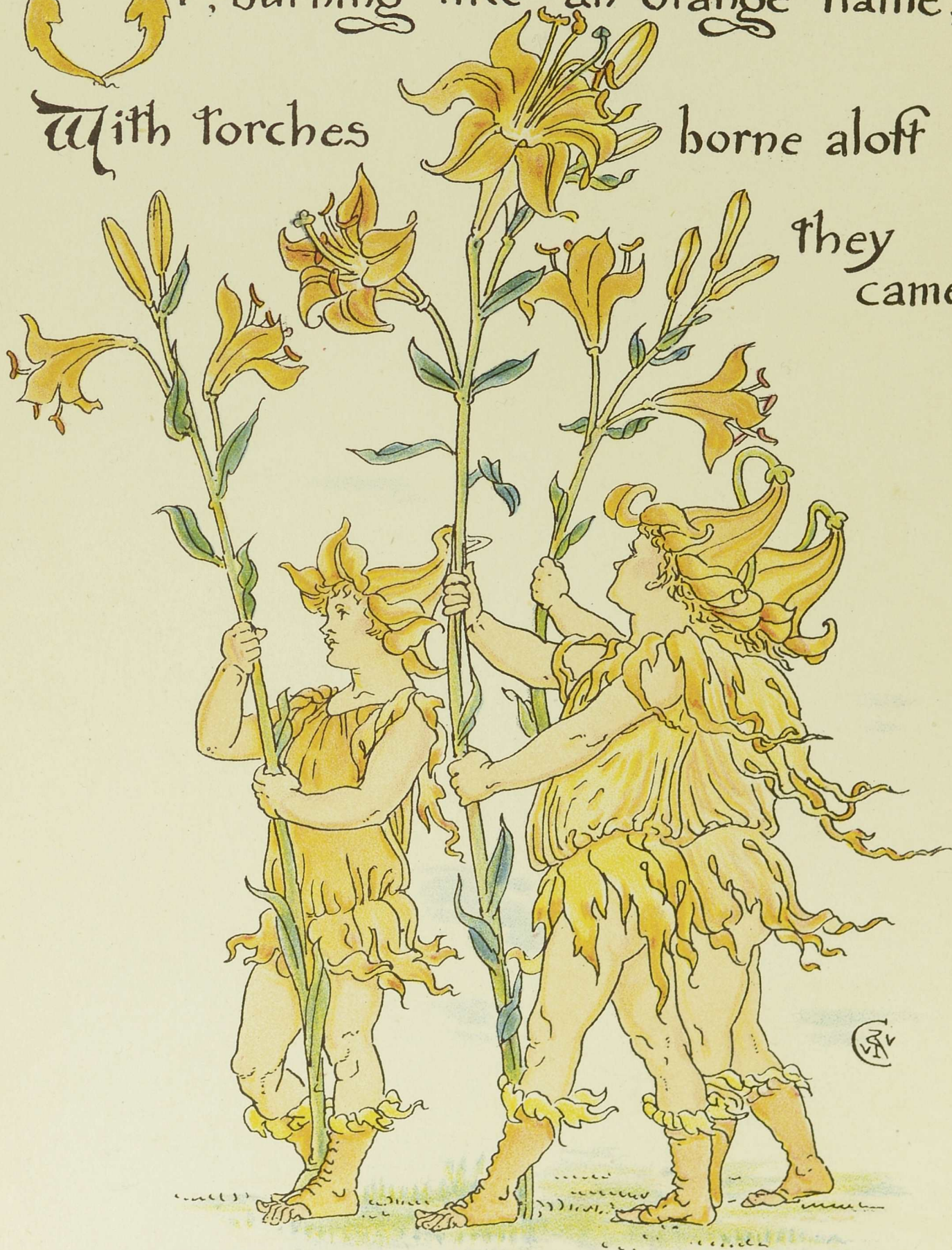




Or, burning like an orange flame,

With torches borne aloft

they  
came.





The Monk that wears the hood of  
blue,  
The Bells of  
Canterbury,  
too:





Pride Oxeyes in the meads  
that gaze

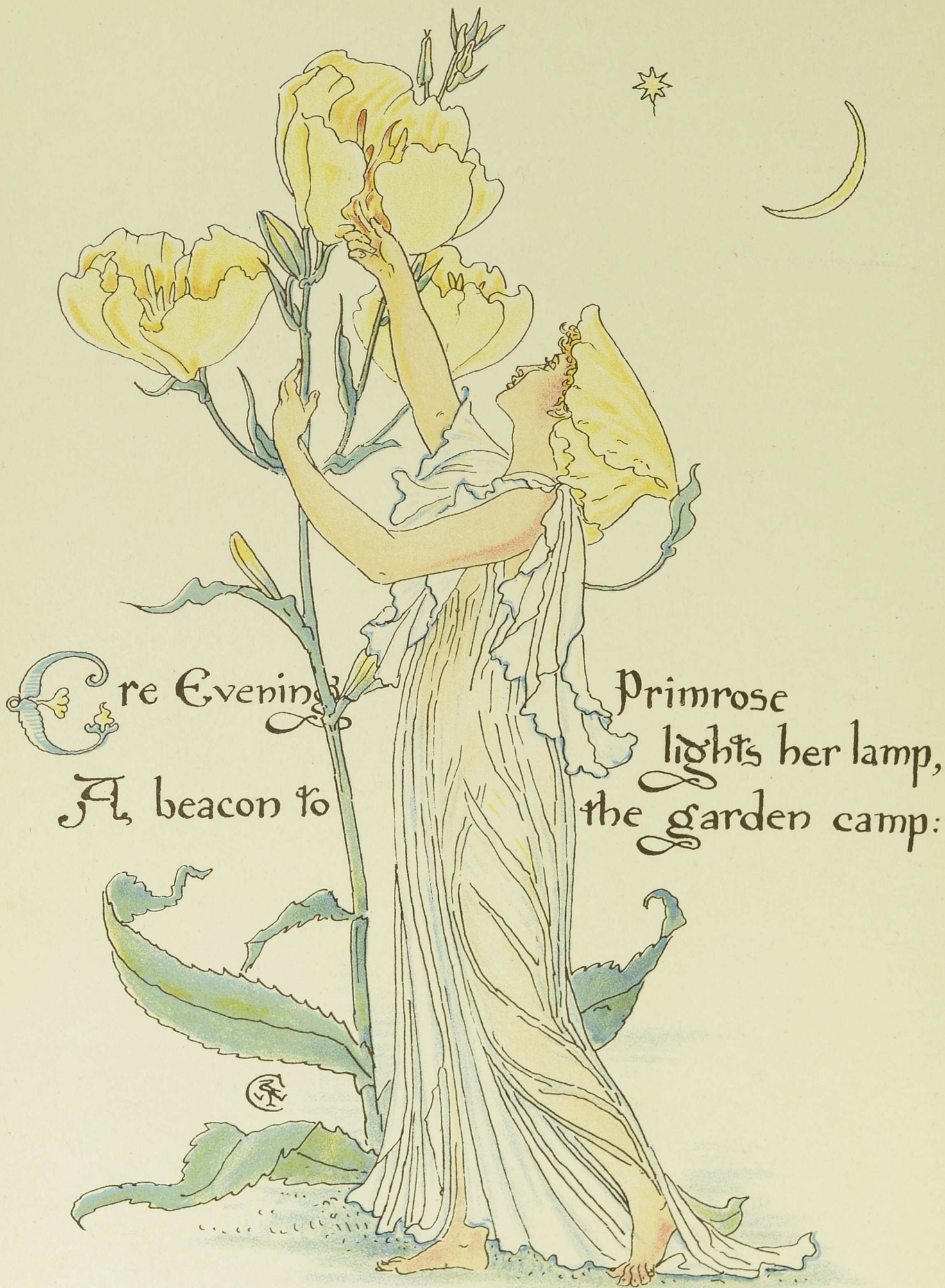




n scarlet Poppy-heads a-blaze:









When Lilies of the day are done,  
And sunk the golden westering sun.





Fresh Pinks cast incense on the air,  
In fluttering garments fringed & rare.





Their cousin from the corn in blue;  
Corn Marigold of golden hue.





The fond Convolvulus still clings,  
The Honeysuckle spreads his wings.

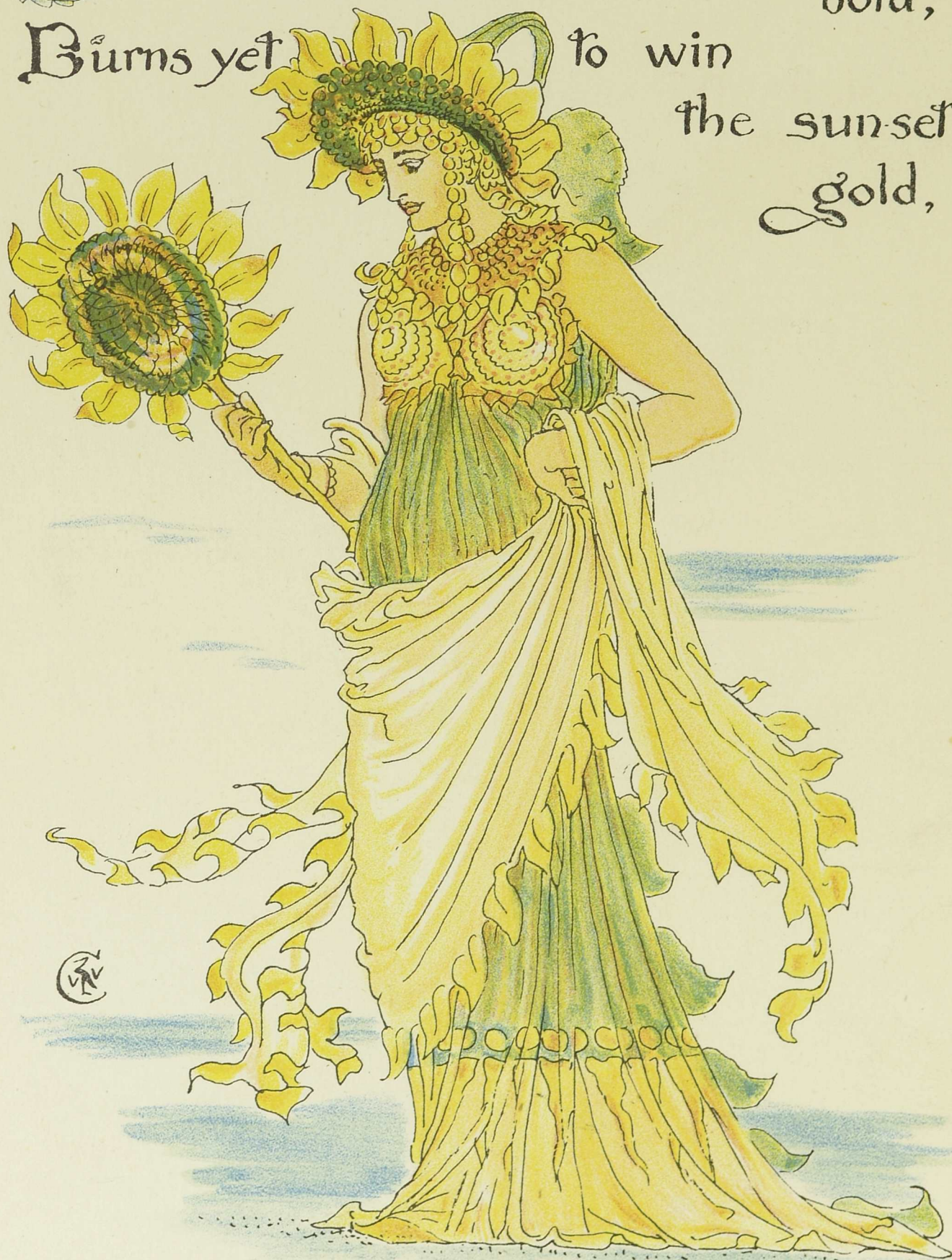








The blazing Sunflower, black and  
bold,  
Burns yet to win  
the sunset's  
gold,





That, reddening on the Triton's  
spear,  
Foretells the waning of the year.





When lilies, turned to Tigers,  
blaze  
Amid the garden's  
tangled maze.





Here still in triumph, stiff with gold,  
The rich Chrysanthemums unfold.





Here doth the floral pageant close  
With one last flower -  
a Christmas Rose.



∞ The End. ∞







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