

# P. H. Pearse

## The Rebel

I am come of the seed of the people, the people  
that sorrow,  
That have no treasure but hope, no riches laid  
up but a memory of an ancient glory  
My mother bore me in bondage, in bondage my  
mother was born,  
I am of the blood of serfs; The children with  
whom I have played,  
The men and women with whom I have eaten,  
Have had masters over them, have been under  
the last of masters,  
And, though gentle, have served churls;  
The hands that have touched mine, the dear  
hands whose touch is familiar to me,  
Have worn shameful manacles, have been  
bitten at the wrist by manacles,  
Have grown hard with the manacles and the  
task-work of strangers,  
I am flesh of the flesh of these lowly, I am bone  
of their bone,  
I that have never submitted  
I that have a soul greater than the souls of my  
people's masters,  
I that have vision and Prophecy and the gift of  
fiery speech,  
I that have spoken with God on the top of His  
holy hill.

And because I am of the people, I understand  
the people,  
I am sorrowful with their sorrow, I am hungry  
with their desire;  
My heart has been heavy with the grief of

mothers,  
My eyes have been wet with the tears of  
children,  
I have yearned with old wistful men; and  
laughed or cursed with young men;  
Their shame is my shame, and I have reddened  
for it,  
Reddened for that they have served, they who  
should be free,  
Reddened for that they gone in want, while  
others have been full,  
Reddened for that they have walked in fear of  
lawyers and of their jailor  
With writs of summons and their handcuffs,  
men mean and cruel!  
I could have borne stripes on my body rather  
than this shame of my people.

And now I speak, being full of vision;  
I speak to my people, and I speak in my  
people's name to the master's of my people.  
I say to my people that they are holy, that they  
are august, despite their chains,  
That they are greater than those that hold them,  
and stronger and purer,  
That they have but need of courage, and to call  
on the name of their God,  
God the unforgetting, the dear God that loves  
the people  
For whom he died naked, suffering shame  
And I say to my people's masters; Beware,  
Beware of the thing that is coming, beware of  
the risen people



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Who shall take what ye would not give. Did ye  
think to conquer the people,  
Or that Law is stronger than life and than men`s  
desire to be free?

We will try it out with you, ye that have harried  
and held,

Ye that have bullied and bribed, tyrants,  
hypocrites, liars!

-The

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