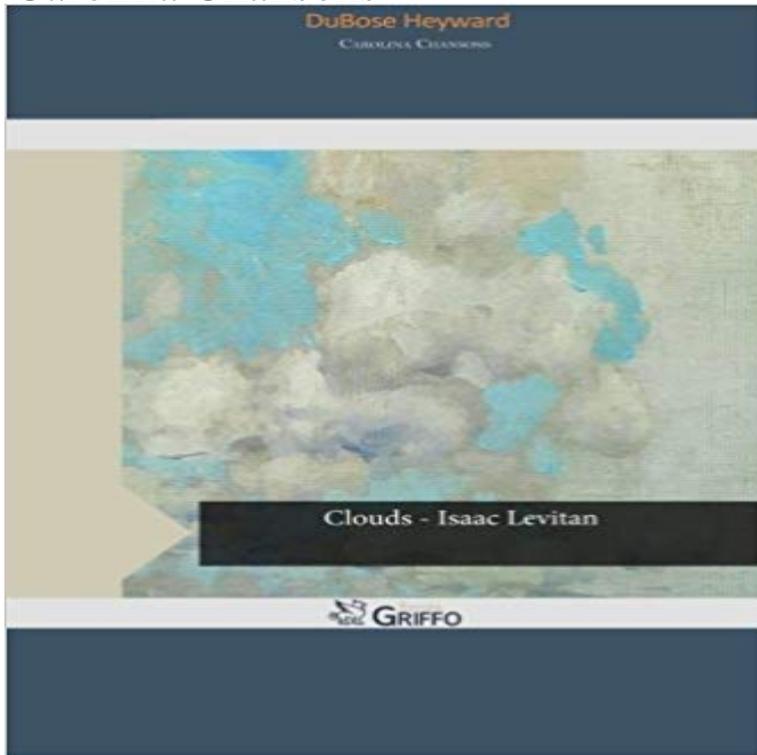


Carolina Chansons



[...] And must the old priest wake with fright
Because the wind is high tonight?
Because the yellow moonlight dead
Lies silent as a word unsaid
What dreams had he upon his bed?
Listen the storm! The winter moon scuds high and bare;
Her light is old upon his hair;
The gray priest muses in a prayer:
Christ Jesus, when I come to die
Grant me a clean, sweet, summer sky,
Without the mad winds panther cry.
Send me a little garden breeze
To gossip in magnolia trees;
For I have heard, these fifty years,
Confessions muttered at my ears,
Till every mumble of the wind
Is like tired voices that have sinned,
And furtive skirling of the leaves
Like feet about the priest-house eaves,
And moans seem like the unforgiven
That mutter at the gate of heaven,
Ghosts from the sea that passed unshriven.
And it was just this time of night
There came a boy with lantern light
And he was linen-pale with fright;
It was not hard to guess my task,
Although I raised the sash to ask
Oh, Father, cried the boy, Oh, [...].

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