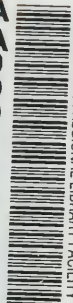


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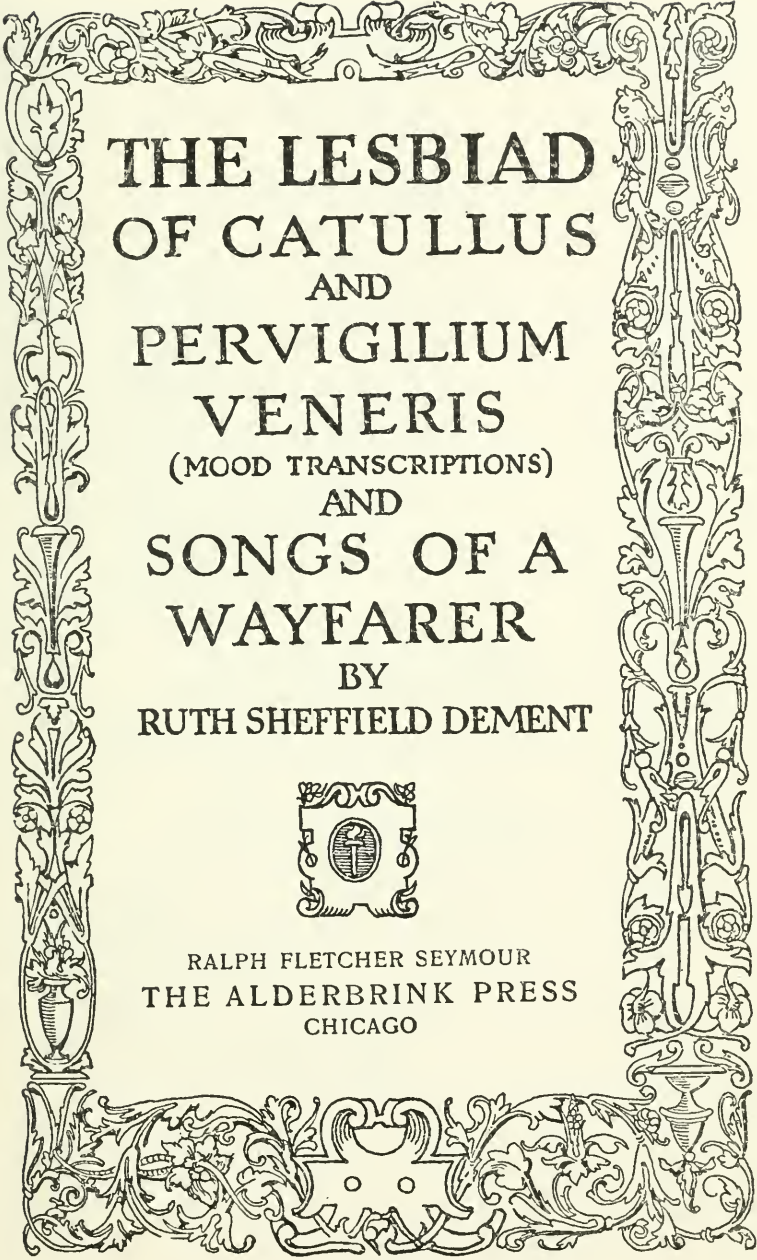
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THE LESBIAD
OF CATULLUS
AND
PERVIGILIUM VENERIS
SONGS OF A WAYFARER



THE LESBIAD
OF CATULLUS
AND
PERVIGILIUM
VENERIS
(MOOD TRANSCRIPTIONS)
AND
SONGS OF A
WAYFARER
BY
RUTH SHEFFIELD DEMENT



RALPH FLETCHER SEYMOUR
THE ALDERBRINK PRESS
CHICAGO

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CONTENTS

THE LESBIAD

1.	Catullus V.	6
	Da Mi Basia! <i>a</i>	7
	Da Mi Basia! <i>b</i>	8
	Da Mi Basia! <i>c</i>	9
2.	Catullus VII.	11
	Quot Basia?	11
3.	Catullus LI.	13
	Te Spectat et Audit Dulce Ridentem	13
4.	Catullus VIII.	15
	Miser Catulle Desinas Ineptire	16
5.	Catullus CVII.	18
	O Lucem Candidiore Nota!	19
6.	Catullus CVII et CIX	21
	Facite ut Vere Promittere Possit	21
7.	Catullus XCII	23
	Quo Signo?	23
8.	Catullus LXXVI	25
	O Di, Me Adspicite!	26

AND

PERVIGILIUM VENERIS

	Pervigilium Veneris	28
	Spring Song of Venus	29

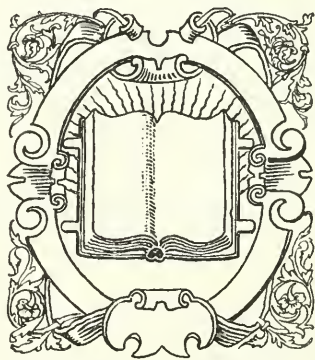
SONGS OF A WAYFARER

1.	Promise	41
2.	Freedom	42
3.	Wishing	43
4.	Happiness	44
5.	White Butterflies	45
6.	Ah, Multitudinous Night!	47
7.	Petition	48
8.	The Singing Star	49
9.	The Song of the River	51
10.	There Is a Garden in the Hills	53

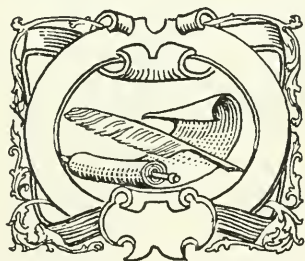
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LIBRARY

LESBIAD
DE CARMINIBUS
CATULLI
ET
PERVIGILIUM
VENERIS



SONGS OF
LESBIA
(MOOD TRANSCRIPTIONS)
FROM CATULLUS
TO LESBIA
AND THE
SPRING SONG
OF VENUS





LESBIAD DE CARMINIBUS
CATULLI

CATULLUS V

VIVAMUS, mea Lesbia, atque amemus,
Rumoresque senum severiorum
Omnes unius aestimemus assis.
Soles occidere et redire possunt:
Nobis, cum semel occidit brevis lux,
Nox est perpetua una dormienda.
Da mi basia mille, deinde centum,
Dein mille altera, dein secunda centum,
Deinde usque altera mille, deinde centum,
Dein, cum milia multa fecerimus,
Conturbabimus illa, ne sciamus,
Aut ne quis malus invidere possit,
Cum tantum sciat esse basiorum.



THE LESBIAD OF CATULLUS

(DA MI BASIA!)

(a)

WE live, Lesbia,
And we love, Lesbia,
And what do we care what the world
may say?
The sun goes down,
And the sun comes up,
But our little lives pass away
In a day,
Our poor little lives pass away.

Then oh my Lesbia!
Live and love!
Quick to my arms, and quick to my heart!
A thousand kisses!
Ten thousand kisses!
Have done with a million! Then start
Again; for I fear
Some wretch may envy us, dear,

If we live, Lesbia,
 And love, Lesbia,
 And link with our lips a charmed chain.
 Dear heart and true,
 With my love for you
 My hot tears start while my kisses rain,
 And I drain
 This utmost joy to its dregs of pain!


(DA MI BASIA!)

(b)

WE live, Lesbia, and we love, Lesbia,
 And what do we care for the tattle of men?
 The sun and the moon and the stars sink
 to rest,
 The sun and the moon and the stars rise again,
 Yet when the shaft of our daylight lies shattered,
 Hopeless the darkness and endless the sleep.
 Lesbia, Lesbia, as if it mattered!
 Come to me, Lesbia, close to me creep.
 Give me your lips, and your heart to mine beating,
 Give me your hands! Knit your fingers in mine—
 Give me one kiss—no! Quick! Kiss me to madness,
 Till I am drunk at your mouth, of its wine!
 Yet with our lips bright and warm in their burning,
 Sweet with the incense of kisses, ah then
 We live, Lesbia! And we love, Lesbia!
 And what do we care for the tattle of men!

(DA MI BASIA!)

(c)


LESBIA, Lesbia, live to live!
 And Lesbia, Lesbia, live to love!
 The poor little life that the little gods
 give
 Glints like the laugh of the stars above,
 And is gone
 With the dawn.

Evening on evening the azure cup
 Drops from its rim the wine-red sun;
 Morning on morning it dips it up
 Out of the east where the shadows run.

But Lesbia, Lesbia, night comes fast,
 And night for us means an endless sleep
 With never a blush of a life-love, past,
 But stillness and void and a dreamless deep!


Then kiss me, Lesbia, twenty-fold!
 Kiss me, sweetheart, a thousand more!
 Kiss me, dear, till the game grows old,
 Then kiss me double the times before!

Mine the madness that wrings the heart,
 Thine the gladness, and thine the art
 Fine and cruel that drains the breath,
 Mine that was, now thine till death!


Yet never a word of your love for me!
Our infinite kisses must secret be.
For the gods that change and love again
Send death to the faithful loves of men!

No kiss of mine shall my secret tell—
That I love you truly and long and well!

VII


UAERIS quot mihi basiationes
 Tuae, Lesbia, sint satis superque.
 Quam magnus numerus Libyssae harenae
 Laserpiciferis iacet Cyrenis,
 Oraclum Iovis inter aestuosi
 Et Batti veteris sacrum sepulcrum,
 Aut quam sidera multa, cum tacet nox,
 Furtivos hominum vident amores,
 Tam te basia multa basiare
 Vesano satis et super Catullo est,
 Quae nec pernumerare curiosi
 Possint nec mala fascinare lingua.

(QUOT BASIA)


OW many kisses have I yet to mate with
 yours, you ask?
 How call the hot sands to the rains,
 The sands that burn on Cyrene's plains?
 Go, sweep the plains, or know my lips, and count
 the garner of your task!

How many kisses have I yet to gather from your
 mouth?

How glow the ripe stars on the vine
 Whose roots drink at the living wine,

The light of ages, flooding east and west and north
and south?

The stars hang in a purple sky as many, sweet-
heart mine,
As I would from you kisses take—
Come, Lesbia, my thirsting slake!
With orchard kisses blush my lips with crimson
kisses fine!

How many kisses have I yet to gather? Oh, my
dear!
The fool may watch from June till June!
Let scandal count from noon till noon!
My kisses span the year, my dear! Dear love, they
span the year!

LI

ILLE mi par esse deo videtur,
 Ille, si fas est, superare divos
 Qui sedens adversus identidem te
 Spectat et audit

*Dulce ridentem, misero quod omnis
 Eripit sensus mihi: nam simul te,
 Lesbia, adspexi, nihil est super mi,
 Lesbia, vocis.*

*Lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artus
 Flamma demanat, sonitu suopte
 Tintinant aures, gemina teguntur
 Lumina nocte.*

TE SPECTAT ET AUDIT DULCE
 RIDENTEM

AH, glad the swain and mad the swain that
 sets him to beguiling
 My Lesbia, my Lesbia, that God has
 made so smiling!
 Again I mind, again I find the smart I knew that
 day
 My Lesbia, my Lesbia had laughed my heart away.

I knelt me there, I felt me there, as, lo, yon silly
lover
With Lesbia, with Lesbia! And heaven was above
her
And crowning her and drowning her in light that
sang its sweet,
And there was I to live or die in worship at her feet!

The days that bring a welcoming for me, from her,
have fled me.
But, Ah, the dart she sped my heart has near to
dying bled me!
And now the light that drinks my sight has wrought
me parched and dumb.
No song to sing my death a-wing with prayers, to
her, may come.

The thunders roll about my soul that clamors me
its yielding
To stiller rest than this my breast and forge can
grant its wielding.
My Lesbia, my Lesbia that God has made so bright,
Forbear the care that stays your hair, and veil you
from my sight!

And shadow in the cheek and chin that I would
bind again
In hands that know the fire and snow they glow to
find again,

And when my eyes in death arise to wake and
 mind again—
 Then—break your dawn my spirit on and make me
 blind again!

VIII

MISER *Catulle, desinas ineptire,
 Et quod vides perisse perditum ducas.
 Fulsero quondam candidi tibi soles,
 Cum ventitabas quo puella ducebat
 Amata nobis quantum amabitur nulla.
 Ibi illa multa tum iocosa fiebant,
 Quae tu volebas nec puella nolebat.
 Fulsero vere candidi tibi soles.
 Nunc iam illa non vult: tu quoque, impotens, noli,
 Nec quae fugit sectare, nec miser vive,
 Sed obstinata mente perfer, obdura.
 Vale, puella! iam Catullus obdurat,
 Nec te requiret nec rogabit invitam;
 At tu dolebis, cum rogaberis nulla.
 Scelestas, vae te! quae tibi manet vita!
 Quis nunc te adibit? cui videberis bella?
 Quem nunc amabis? cuius esse diceris?
 Quem basiabis? cui labella mordebis?
 At tu, Catulle, destinatus obdura.*

MISER CATULLE DESINAS
INEPTIRE

NOW from the shadows of my grief they
part,
Song of my love and echo of my heart.

Well, let them go, Catullus.

Ah, how the sun could shine when life was love!

When life was love, and love was young and true,
She lived your love, and loving that, loved you.
Happy the day you wooed like any boy,
Tuneful her answers, riotous your joy!

Well, let them go, Catullus.

Shattered forever in a mocking rain,
Calls to its leaves the rose, and calls in vain.
Never again will love exultant blow:
Showers the limpid pain its ruins low.

Well, let it go, Catullus.

Ah, how the sun could shine when life was love!

Quick to the forge, my heart, the steel glows white!
Thus would I gird thee fast, and bolt thee tight!

“Go, love of mine, forever!” cries my heart.
Break at your lips my rivetings apart?

So, speed her flight, Catullus

Yet could I pity you, the where you stand!
Who tries the petaled springtide of your hand?
Tossed by the wind that nested in the south
Hangs there one crazy bee above your mouth?

Now, may you laugh, Catullus!


Shake out the cloudy splendor of your hair!
Star with your eyes the midnight brooding there!
Catch back your tresses with a crescent arm!
Trembles a swain at one sweet baleful charm?

Laugh at her shame, Catullus!


Show me the wight that would your hours share!
Kiss at the memories wan that skim the air!
Pray for a lover new! Pray to forget!
Pray — God of love! Sweetheart, I love you yet!

Still am I your Catullus!

CVII

 *I cui quid cupido optantique obtigit unquam
Insperanti, hoc est gratum animo proprie.
Quare hoc est gratum nobis quoque, carius
auro,
Quod te restituis, Lesbia, mi cupido:
Restituis cupido atque inspiranti, ipsa refers te
Nobis. O lucem candidiore nota!
Quis me uno vivit felicior, aut magis hac res
Optandas vita dicere quis poterit?*

O LUCEM CANDIDIORE NOTA!


 HE hour for dawn, and blind and black,
 the night
 Stifles her breath and labors forth the day.
 My dreams rise, heavy winged, and beat
 their flight,
 And sleep, a numb-weighted grief, has rolled away.

Hope's sepulcher, my heart, thy rock-bound sleep
 Stopping that was thy door, who breaks its seal?
 My hope, whose bodied self I needs would keep,
 Who bids thee from thy shriven tomb to steal?

Ah Mystery, yield thy triple veil and greet
 Kindly the dimpled day I rise to meet!
 Lo! Mystery, revealed thou art complete
 In Lesbia before me, strangely sweet!

She stoops, and ever listening at my heart,
 Blushes her ear, and on her fingers there,
 Forcing the slender, petaled things apart,
 Presses her cheek, meek-banded in her hair.

The sun! The sun has risen! And slow revealing
 Light of a blinding day, the shadows rise,
 Hover her hair! Then one slow truant stealing
 Covers the dusk-winged lashes of her eyes!

She smiles her tender mocking to my fears,
Glow's like a summer dawn serene above,
Breaks like a cloud, rose flaming, bright with tears,
Sweet on my lips her sun-touched, storming love.

Again she sighs and pillows on my heart;
In claspéd hands she draws to her my head—
Oh my beloved, thy kiss could heal the smart
Of dying—then reclaim me from the dead!

CVII (*see p. 18*)
and
CIX

IUCUNDUM, *mea vita, mihi proponis
amorem*
Hunc nostrum inter nos perpetuumque fore.
Di magni, facite ut vere promittere possit
Atque id sincere dicat et ex animo,
Ut liceat nobis tota perducere vita
Aeternum hoc sanctae foedus amicitiae.

FACITE UT VERE PROMITTERE
POSSIT

WHERE trod despair three-forked lies
Where you and I had parted,
Where faith upon the gibbet dies
And mocks the trustful hearted,
You came again, and on my eyes,
That late had wept for you,
Your hand you laid, and now there rise
The tears they kept for you.

The spring-time tears! The spring-time tears!
How can I stay the showers?
So long the years! So long the years!
They pent them for your flowers!


The crocus that the snowdrop knows,
Blythe-tippéd on your chin,
Close cloven, at a smile it blows
To pluck the dimples in!

The fitful poppies of your lips,
The eglantine that lingers
Apetaling the wanton tips
That blush and blush your fingers;
The velvet jasmine on your cheek
The rose that next it lies,
And oh! The gentian fringes meek
That shadow your dear eyes!


You came to me when hope was dead;
You touched his life to fire;
Home came the spirit I had sped
And wedded glad desire.
You came to me, unbidden too,
Uncoaxed, unsought, your coming,
And desert life a garden grew,
Where wingéd Loves were humming!

Oh love of mine, the grief of you
Weighs madness in its smart,
But joy of you, but joy of you
Is like to break my heart!
Oh love, my love, be true to me!
My heaven about you lies!
And life to me is you to me,
And death, your mocking eyes!

XCII


LESBIA mi dicit semper male nec tacet
 unquam
 De me: Lesbia me dispeream nisi amat.
 Quo signo? quia sunt totidem mea:
 deprecor illam
 Adsidue, verum dispeream nisi amo.

"QUO SIGNO?"


LAUGH, Lesbia!
 Laugh, Lesbia,
 Lesbia, Lesbia, child of spring!
 Shame me, Lesbia!
 Blame me, Lesbia!
 Barb your tongue with a bumble sting!

Laugh, Lesbia!
 Laugh, Lesbia!
 Bramble your heart with a wild rose vine!
 Say you sweetbrier
 Stays the wild fire,
 Thickets your heart when it flames for mine?

Oh, Lesbia,
Know, Lesbia,
Whatever the wiles of a maid may be,
These are simple things,
Frowns and dimplings!
Trust to a swain to guess and see!

So, dear Lesbia,
Hear, Lesbia,
How I could ever your fears guess out.
Lo, dissemblings,
Oh, and tremblings,
Trick with a man who lives in doubt.

And I, Lesbia,
Try, Lesbia,
Jealous of having my secret guessed,
To deceive you, Lesbia,
Grieve you, Lesbia,
Hurt you most when I love you best!

For men, Lesbia,
Then, Lesbia,
Love like girls, when their love is true.
So, just as I could,
I fancy you would,
And I read myself when I must read you!

LXXVI

S*I qua recordanti benefacta priora voluptas
Est homini, cum se cogitat esse pium,
Nec sanctam violasse fidem, nec foedere in
ullo*

*Divum ad fallendos numine abusum homines,
Multa parata manent in longa aetate, Catulle,
Ex hoc ingrato gaudia amore tibi.
Nam quaecumque homines bene cuiquam aut dicere
possunt*

*Aut facere, haec a te dictaque factaque sunt:
Omnia quae ingratae perierunt credita menti.
Quare cur tu te iam amplius excrucies?
Quin tu animo offirmas atque istinc teque reducis
Et dis invitis desinis esse miser?
Difficile est longum subito deponere amorem;
Dificile est, rerum hoc qua libet efficias.
Una salus haec est, hoc est tibi pervincendum;
Hoc facias, sive id non pote sive pote.
O di, si vestrum est misereri, aut si quibus unquam
Extremam iam ipsa in morte tulistis opem,
Me miserum adspicite et, si vitam puriter egi,
Eripite hanc pestem perniciemque mihi!
Hei mihi subrepens imos ut torpor in artus
Expulit ex omni pectore laetitias.
Non iam illud quaero, contra ut me diligit illa,
Aut, quod non potis est, esse pudica velit:
Ipse valere opto et taetrum hunc deponere morbum.
O di, reddite mi hoc pro pietate mea.*

O DI, ME ADSPICITE!

PRONE at the shrine that keeps the forkèd
 way,
 Bowed in the very dust my feet have trod,
 Hear me that lived to sing, and learned
 to pray,
 Hear me, Thou Mighty One, The Unknown God!

Hear me, that ever mindful of the gods,
 Sounded, with pious litany, the sky;
 Bend Thou to witness, broke beneath their rods,
 Driven, I come to shrive me and to die.

Dregs of a purple faith I pour to Thee,
 Lees of a heart that chalice'd brimming trust,
 Draining the drip, for Thou, unguessed to me,
 May of Thine untried Self be kind and just.

Stifle the thought that bids my passion boil,
 Give me the patient sufferance of men,
 Yield though Thou may my scars Thy healing oil,
 I, that was chaste, can never be again.

Father of outcast men, my work is yet
 Waiting my hand, my final strength to try;
 Then in the death, grant it that I forget
 Her that I love — forgetting is to die.

THE SPRING SONG
OF VENUS

PERVIGILIUM
VENERIS



PERVIGILIUM VENERIS

CRAS amet qui numquam amavit quique
amavit cras amet!
Ver novum: ver iam canorum: vere natus
orbis, est!

*Vere concordant amores, vere nubunt alites
Et nemus comam resolvit de maritis imbribus:
Et recentibus virentis ducit umbras floribus.
Cras amorum copulatrix inter umbras arborum
Implicat casas virentis de flagello myrteo,
Cras Dione iura dicit fulva sublimi throno.
Cras amet qui numquam amavit quique amavit cras
amet!*

*Ipsa gemmis purpurantem pingit annum floridis,
Ipsa surgentis papillas de Favoni spiritu
Urget in nodos tepentis, ipsa roris lucidi,
Noctis aura quem relinquit, spargit umentis aquas.
En micant lacrimae trementes de caduco pondere:
Gutta praeceps orbe parvo sustinet casus suos.
En pudorem florulentae prodiderunt purpurae:
Umor ille quem serenis astra rorant noctibus
Mane virgines papillas solvit umentis peplo.
Ipsa iussit mane totae virgines nubant rosae;*



THE SPRING SONG OF VENUS

TOMORROW let him love that never
loved,
And we who have loved, let us love
again.

For Earth has gotten Spring of Paradise.
Her fettered arms, the laughing babe that rest
The sky has kissed with roses, bloomed of ice
That crystal-purple bound her, hand on breast.

Awake! You happy trees, shake out your hair
Above the grass that dimples at your feet,
And nests the baby loves that tumble there
And dream the dreams that make the summer sweet!

Tomorrow, let him love that never loved
And we, who have loved, let us love again.

From earth to heaven the wingéd things fly swift,
Upborne with thoughts of featherlings and nest,
In azure melody to dip and drift
And dream the trysting songs of love and quest.

*Facta Cypridis de cruore deque Amoris osculis
Deque gemmis deque flabris deque solis purpuris,
Cras pudorem qui latebat veste tectus ignea
Unico marita voto non rubebit solvere.*

*Cras amet qui numquam amavit quique amavit cras
amet!*

*Ipsa Nymphas diva luco iussit ire myrteo:
'Ite, Nymphae, posuit arma, feriatu est Amor:
Iussus est inermis ire, nudus ire iussus est,
Neu quid arcu neu sagitta neu quid igne laederet,'
It puer comes puellis: nec tamen credi potest,
Esse Amorem feriatum, si sagittas exiit;
Sed tamen, Nymphae, cavete, quod Cupido pulcer est:
Totus est in armis idem quando nudus est Amor.*

*Cras amet qui numquam amavit quique amavit cras
amet!*

*Compari Venus pudore mittit ante virgines:
'Una res est quam rogamus: cede, virgo Delia,
Ut nemus sit incruentum de ferinis stragibus.
Ipsa vellet te rogare, si pudicam flecteret,
Ipsa vellet ut venires, si deceret virginem.
Iam tribus choros videres feriantis noctibus
Congreges inter catervas ire per saltus tuos
Floreas inter coronas, myrteas inter casas.
Nec Ceres nec Bacchus absunt nec poetarum deus.
Perviglanda tota nox est, est recinenda canticis:
Regnet in silvis Dione: tu recede, Delia.'*

*Cras amet qui numquam amavit quique amavit cras
amet!*

For She the boy of wings and stings that bare,
Has tamed and named the thicket lands Her own.
Clasp hands, you wistful vines, down-dropping where
Tomorrow summons Venus to Her throne!

And She it is the morning mists that spun
And hung white trailing in the meadow ways,
And half Her flax was stolen from the sun
And half was stolen from the April days.

And She it is that mercy grants the maid
Who droops of unrequited love and dies,
And yields her gentle spirit to the shade
Abrood the violets that were her eyes.

And She the pale anemone that knows,
Anemone, faint dream, late fled her keep
Deep bedded in the bosom of a rose
That waits her June, close budded fast asleep,

Lo, She the pale anemone that knows,
And stills the tale this wee, wan ghost would tell
Of posy loves and posy hopes and fears
Has bodied her in this frail, tongueless bell!

The kirtled hills that blue in harebells lie,
Their trinketing in dandelions done,
She decks in azure faithful to the sky
And braves with jewels proudly for the sun.

*Iussit Hyblaeis tribunal stare diva floribus:
 Praeses ipsa iura dicet, adsidebunt Gratiae.
 Hybla, totos funde flores, quidquid annus adtulit,
 Hybla, florum subde vestem, quantus Ennae campus est.
 Ruris hic erunt puellae vel puellae fontium
 Quaeque silvas quaeque lucos quaeque montis
 incolunt.*

*Iussit omnes adsidere pueri mater alitis,
 Iussit at nudo puellas nil Amori credere:
 Cras amet qui numquam amavit quique amavit cras
 amet!*

*Cras erit quom primus aether copulavit nuptias,
 Ut pater totum crearet vernis annum nubibus,
 In sinum maritus imber fluxit almae coniugis,
 Unde fetus mixtus omnis aleret magno corpore.
 Tunc cruore de superno spumeo pontus globo
 Caerulas inter cavernas inter et viridis specus
 Fecit undantem Dionen de marinis imbribus.
 Cras amet qui numquam amavit quique amavit cras
 amet!*

*Ipsa venas atque mentem permeanti spiritu
 Intus occultis gubernat procreatrix viribus,
 Perque caelum perque terras perque pontum
 subditum
 Praevium sui teporem seminali tramite
 Inbuit iussitque mundum nosse nascendi vias.
 Cras amet qui numquam amavit quique amavit cras
 amet!*

The world-a-day is heaven at our feet!
Blush-gated, morningward it speeds the lark;
And oh, the world at night is wonder sweet
That yields it up for healing to the dark!

White stars, bright-blossomed in the purple Way
How fall their tears like radiant prayer! The dew
Along the reverent-fingered ferns that lay
Drops groundward in its utter joyance too.

And She who weds her blushes to the sun
And busks the roses they in wedding bear
Breast high, with crimson tippéd thorns, that none
May try a careless hand of pleasure there,

Lo, She that petals forth the halting year,
When loth tomorrow from her slumber parts
Will summon all the virgin roses here,
And bid them yield forevermore their hearts!

Tomorrow, let him love that never loved,
And we, who have loved, let us love again!

Then ho! You Nymphs that glint the groves among,
Let fly the clasps that bid your terrors stay!
For Love denies his darts and bow bestrung
To dimple out tomorrow's holiday!

*Ipsa Troianos penatis in Latinos transtulit,
 Ipsa Laurentem puellam coniugem nato dedit,
 Moxque Marti de sacello dat pudicam virginem,
 Romuleas ipsa fecit cum Sabinis nuptias.
 Unde Ramnes et Quirites atque prolem posterum
 Romulo marem crearet et nepotem Caesarem;
 Cras amet qui numquam amavit quique amavit cras
 amet!*

*Rura fecundat voluptas, rura Venerem sentiunt ;
 Ipse Amor puer Dionae rure natus dicitur.
 Hunc ager cum parturiret ipsa suscepit sinu,
 Ipsa florum delicatis educavit osculis.
 Cras amet qui numquam amavit quique amavit cras
 amet!*

*Ecce iam subter genestas explicant tauri latus,
 Quisque tutus quo tenetur coniugali foedere:
 Subter umbras cum maritis ecce balantum greges.
 Iam loquaces ore rauco stagna cygni perstrepunt:
 Et canoras non tacere diva iussit alites:
 Adsonat Terei puella subter umbram populi,
 Ut putes motus amoris ore dici musico
 Et neges queri sororem de marito barbaro.
 Illa cantat: nos tacemus? quando ver veniet meum?
 Quando fiam uti chelidon ut tacere desinam?
 Perdidi Musam tacendo nec me Phoebus respicit.
 Sic Amyclas cum tacerent perdidit silentium.
 Cras amet qui numquam amavit quique amavit cras
 amet!*

Tomorrow comes, and lo! tomorrow goes!
And who the maid that then unarméd is?
Ah happy, happy she, who, wary, knows
That love is surest that unarméd is!

Then ho! Diana! Rid you from the wood,
Nor foul the covert dingle with the slain,
For chaste are they as chaste your maidenhood
That She would gather hither in her train.

If right She had to bid you, goddess, come,
How mete, how sweet your summoning would be!
If vows of chastity could echo dumb,
How mad, how glad your morrow-morn could be!

Your morrow-morn could be—but go your way!
And we to speed your flight with wine and song!
Catch up the garlands garnered for the day
And Hybla, Hybla fetch your gauds along!

And Hybla, Hybla, net your eglantine,
Let yield your thicket fastnesses their dress
And work a wilful canopy, and line
Its dome ablush, to praise Her loveliness!

And hither, you that heart the talking trees,
And hither, you the laughing torrent bears,
And wary, wary, wary foot the leas,
For Love is surest that unarméd fares!

Tomorrow, let him love that never loved,
And we, who have loved, let us love again!

Oh wingéd joy that beats against my breast!
The mourning swallow puts her trouble by;
The scrannel-throated swan forsakes her nest
And sings and sings, how sweetly sings! And I?

My heart sits brooding like a little bird,
From some low prison to the wayside tossed.
The song his long forgotten freedom heard,
Dead echoed now, in cloister-ways, and lost,

The song his freedom lilted to his mate,
When all the world was blythe-aleaf to him
Stabs like dry pain his eager throat grown strait
With silence, and the song is grief to him.

Ah time and tears and she that faithless proved,
And pride that rent my thought from her apart,
How stark the yester-love that storming moved
To breast the song now heavy on my heart:

“Tomorrow let him love that never loved
And we who have loved, let us love again!”

SONGS OF A
WAYFARER



SONGS OF
A
WAYFARE R
BY
RUTH SHEFFIELD DEMENT



SONGS OF A WAYFARER

PROMISE

UPWARD and westward, cleaving for
the evening,
Mounting with strokes that know and
claim the sky,
Speeding before the night—whose cool, resistant
Winds as they find them beaten push insistent,
Sullen and close beneath the wings that fly,—
Travels the bird, that, cleaving through the evening
Cheats the pursuing night and far and high
Strives for the promises in clouds that lie.

Spirit of mine with wings half lifted, trembling,
Would I could loose the bonds that do thee gird!
Heaven, if heaven there be that west resembling,
Heaven with ruddy heart where prayers are heard,
Loose from my spirit this one day's dissembling,
Then shall I mount to praise thee, like that bird!

FREEDOM

LEAN me from my window high
And leave the light behind.
The river stands in stillness by,
As quiet as my mind
And looks into the starry sky
Where it may wonders find.


The world lies broad and dark and bright
With lights that put asunder
The shadows of the gentle night
That draw them back in wonder
And shun the searching window light
To lurk the low trees under.

And heart of mine—so glad am I
That none can claim thy will!
I hear the stars, thy sisters, cry
Thee welcome to their hill
Where they like Easter flowers lie
And shine, content and still
With little, flaming hearts that try
Their snowy bells to fill!

WISHING

SING, cricket, in the moonlight, in the
weeds
Where dust and dark and moonlight
wrap the seeds
Of useful green things, useful in a lot
Whose city-wants call Nature's humbly-got.
Sing, and in singing help me to forget
The day long struggle, failure, triumph, fret
Of grown-up living in this grown-up life
Where living means an ever striving strife.
Sing cricket, sing! Kind, universal, true!
How like the voice of Hope itself are you,
Hope that a Promise is, and falling due!
Ah, could you sing of grown-up happiness,
Voice that the reverent weeds so humbly bless,
Voice of some baby happiness that needs
Must sing itself asleep among the weeds!

HAPPINESS


 OW long can a little, dancing flame keep
 tiptoe to the char?
 How long can a gentian lidded star
 outwatch another star?
 How long can a yellow garden rose withstand a
 summer breeze?
 As long as the joy of an innocent maid may vie with
 itself and these!


I'm glad when the yellow flame makes flight and
 goes where the sunlight dies,
 And joins with the stars in the dawn of the paling
 night in the high mid-skies!
 And I'm glad when the breath of the rose takes
 wing and the life of a maid can lift
 Up to the flame and the star and the soul of a rose—
 where the star snows drift!

WHITE BUTTERFLIES

HEVERY time true lovers kiss
God makes a butterfly!
Every leap a true heart beats
It sends one wing as high
As its brave self is strong.
Ah, then, if one of two hearts beat
Less glorious along
Under the bluest summer sky
Unless the winds come whistling by
Little by little falls the wingéd rose;
And if no winds come whistling by,
Straight to the earth it goes.
But if two hearts beat equally
And brave as they are strong,
Straight to the sun their wings they send
In visible song.
And if the hearts are innocent
White petals are their wings,
And if their hearts are passionate,
Purple, bewildered things.
I love to think that innocent dreams
Come every starlit night
And kindle with their blesséd steps
Paths of radiant light
For all the white winged butterflies
To follow in their flight
When the air is yellow with the sun

And flickers to the sight.
And when upon a summer's day
There stream into the sky
Companies of true-love flights,
Near and far and high,
The world grows better in my sight
Because so many wings are white!

MULTITUDINOUS NIGHT

H, multitudinous night! Whose vault-
less sky
Seems gray between the stars where
broad winds lie

Like birds invisible floating with outstretched wings
Over the stiller world of visible things,
Blessed the night that sends its gifts to me:—
Vast waves of light—still thought—the gift to see
Descending presences that once have wept
And laughed and vigils like mine own have kept!

Ancient or child or youth or maid, each brings
The light of peace upon his silent wings.
And in that waving host each visitant stands
Reaching toward me with kind, compassionate
hands.

All these I see—and boys unborn, upraising
Grave level eyes—and gentle girls, upgazing.

PETITION

TO feel the gift of strength that I may
give
Hope to the weak and chance, to some,
to live!

To sing the song dumb-stricken in my heart!

To play right gallantly my actor's part!

To paint the semblance of a perfect face!

To see, to hear, to know some fragrant place!

Lord Jesus of the one-time Chivalrie

Heal Thou mine ills—let fall thy peace on me

That sorely, Lord, bewildered, needeth thee!

THE SINGING STAR

IDREAMED I heard the singing of a star
In the azure heaven.
His voice was as the songs imagined are.
The songs were seven.

He sang the song of fragrances that rise
When the year is young,
And memories in their vagrancies surprise
With silent tongue!

He sang the song of sounds that quake the breast
For loveliness.
He sang the song of visions yet unguessed
For perfectness.

He sang the song of fruits whose various taste
Is as their blossoms were—
Of dear caresses that the years of waste
Make wistfuller.

He sang that strange, sixth sense whose wisdoms
brood
In sure advice.
And then he sang of loves whose plenitude
Themselves suffice.

All this I heard him sing. I dreaming heard.
I woke, and it was night.
And yet the heavens sang on as though a bird
Had passed. A star burned white!

THE SONG OF THE RIVER

THERE is a river, in the land of Dim-
Forgot,
That flows down to the sea,
And by that river stand the many folk
That once were self to me!
Nearest and clearest stands a woman dark,
Gaunt eyed, with passionate hair
That whips and curls half hateful to itself
For the grey, fast whitening there.
Across the stream, red-lipped and in the sun
That wakes red fire in her hair and eyes,
Wavers her image,—younger by a year,—
Immortal-seeming, in her glad surmise.
Along the far shore wait the images glad,
Along the nearer stand their alternates;
And every shape of ecstasy or sad
Sends its long shadow back to the far gates
That lock the mountain walls of fastnesses
That send the river out—
The river of the land of Dim-Forgot,
Bordered with my selves of faith or doubt!
Dear God in Heaven, if god in Heaven there be,
Who sent this mirrored river on its way
When ever and again I cross the river,
As often as I change from grieved to gay,
Mid-stream I pause for one hard moment sighting
The far, straight distance back to Dim-Forgot

Striving to see the gates I half remember
And yet remember not!
And sighting, ever wilfully refusing
To see the figures lining either shore
Ever in wistfulness I try to see the farthest image
And no image more!
That farthest image, closest to the gates,
Sometimes in crossing with clear eyes I see.
And even when the mist lies on the river,
Dimly it beckons me, in memory!
But seen or but remembered, standing wistful
Ever I find it waiting at the gates.
Very serious are its baby features,
Patient it stands and ever patient, waits.
When I have traveled all that life-long river
That flows down to the sea,
And that sea takes me, will my selves along the
river
Flock after me?
And shall we perish like a bird flock beaten
Into the sea by winds that reckon not?
Or shall we—I and my selves together—return
And welcomed be, in Dim-Forgot?
Oh, farthest, farthest image by the river,
Waiting ever, and farthest from the sea,
What look of yours will welcome or reject, then,
Me, and my divergent company!

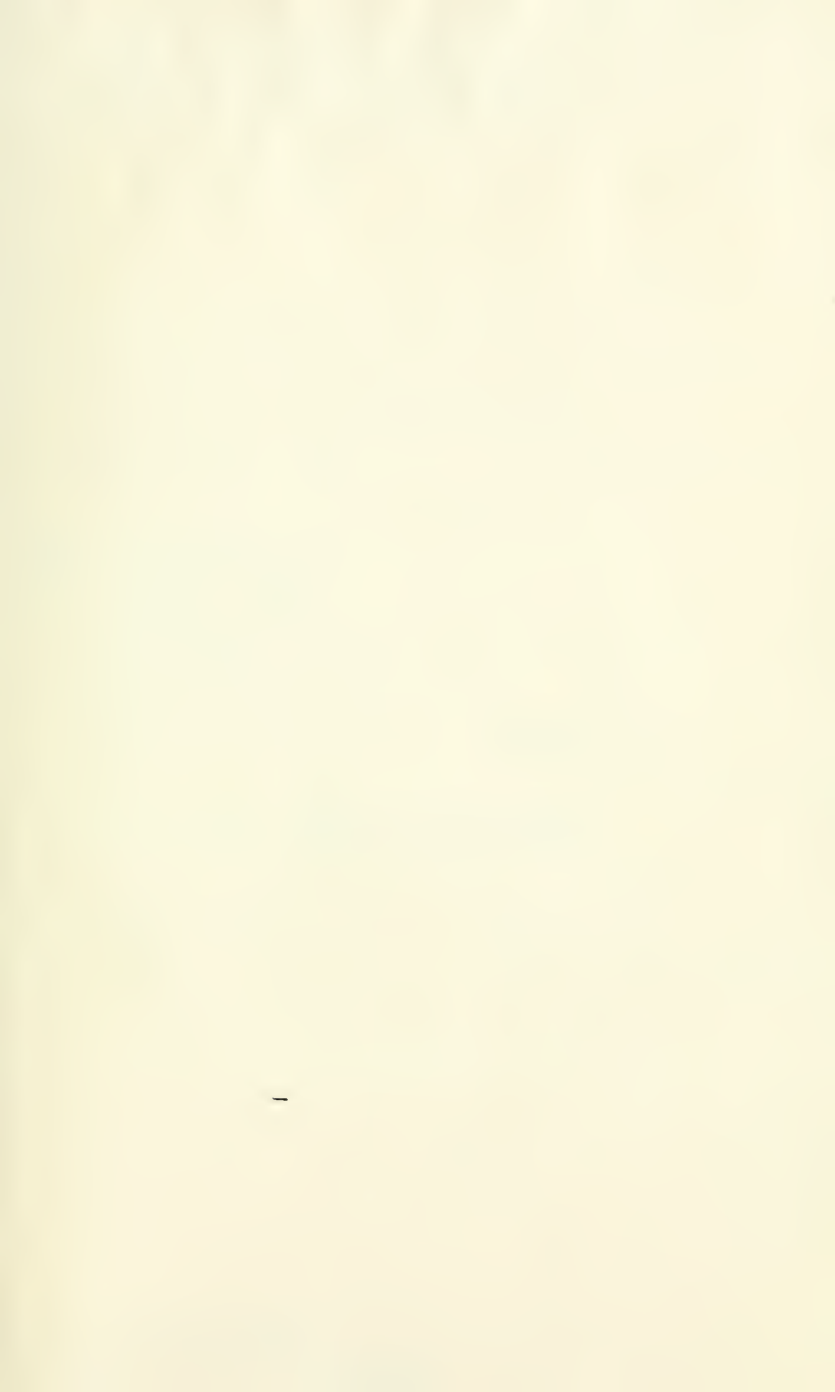
THERE IS A GARDEN IN THE HILLS

THERE is a garden in the hills—the sunny
 hills of Dim-Forgot
 And all day long the water trills in many
 a golden shadowed spot
 Where yellow-throated birds hop 'round
 About the sun-flecks on the ground!

No vivid things flash in and out the pillared trees
 and tufted grass
 Where only friendly creatures flout the genial ear
 or tail and pass
 Toward earthy hutch or tree-side nest
 To munch the profits of the quest.

Only the sun and noon and strength unguessed and
 peace of heart are there.
 The garden was my dwelling place till length of
 life outcast me where
 Day dawns, night falls, and need
 Whips on to present deed.

Sometimes I visit in my dreams that noon en-
 charmed garden place
 And often there I meet the friends that late have
 shown the treacherous face.
 But even they are constant where
 All must be true to gather there!



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