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THE HOUR OF DEATH.

LEAVES have their time to fall,  
And flowers to wither at the North-wind's breath,  
And stars to set—but all,  
Thou hast *all* seasons for thine own, oh, Death !

Day is for mortal care,  
Eve for glad meetings round the joyous hearth,  
Night for the dreams of sleep, the voice of prayer—  
But all for thee, thou Mightiest of the Earth !

The banquet hath its hour,  
Its feverish hour of mirth, and song, and wine ;  
There comes a day for Grief's o'erwhelming power,  
A time for softer tears—but all are thine !

Youth and the opening rose  
May look like things too glorious for decay,  
And smile at thee !—but thou art not of those  
That wait the ripen'd bloom to seize their prey !

Leaves have their time to fall,  
And flowers to wither at the North-wind's breath,  
And stars to set—but all,  
Thou hast *all* seasons for thine own, oh, Death !

We know when moons shall wane,  
When summer-birds from far shall cross the sea,  
When autumn's hue shall tinge the golden grain—  
But who shall teach us when to look for thee ?

Is it when spring's first gale  
Comes forth to whisper where the violets lie ?  
Is it when roses in our paths grow pale ?  
They have *one* season—*all* are ours to die !

Thou art where billows foam,  
Thou art where music melts upon the air ;  
Thou art around us in our peaceful home,  
And the world calls us forth—and thou art there !

Thou art where friend meets friend,  
Beneath the shadow of the elm to rest ;  
Thou art where foe meets foe, and trumpets rend  
The skies, and swords beat down the princely crest.

Leaves have their time to fall,  
And flowers to wither at the North-wind's breath,  
And stars to set—but all,  
Thou hast *all* seasons for thine own, oh, Death !

F. H.

THE CHILD OF THE FORESTS.

Is not thy heart far off amidst the woods  
Where the red Indian lays his father's dust,  
And, by the rushing of the torrent-floods,  
To the Great Spirit bows in silent trust?  
Doth not thy soul o'ersweep the foaming main,  
To pour itself upon the wilds again?  
They are gone forth, the Desert's warrior-race,  
By stormy lakes to track the elk and roe;  
But where art thou, the swift one in the chase,  
With thy free footstep and unfailing bow?  
Their singing shafts have reach'd the panther's lair,  
And where art thou?—thine arrows are not there!  
They rest beside their streams—the spoil is won—  
They hang their spears upon the cypress-bough,  
The night-fires blaze, the hunter's work is done—  
They hear the tales of old—and where art thou?  
The night-fires blaze beneath the giant-pine,  
And there a place is fill'd, that once was thine.  
For thou art mingling with the City's throng,  
And thou hast thrown thine Indian bow aside,  
Child of the forests! thou art borne along  
Ev'n as ourselves, by life's tempestuous tide!  
But will this be?—and canst thou *here* find rest?—  
Thou hadst thy nurture on the Desert's breast.  
Comes not the sound of torrents to thine ear,  
From the Savannah-land, the land of streams?  
Hear'st thou not murmurs which none else may hear?  
Is not the forest's shadow on thy dreams?  
They call—wild voices call thee o'er the main—  
Back to thy free and boundless woods again!  
Hear them not! hear them not!—thou canst not find  
In the far wilderness what once was thine!  
Thou hast quaff'd knowledge from the founts of mind,  
And gather'd loftier aims and hopes divine.  
Thou know'st the soaring thought, th' immortal strain—  
Seek not the deserts and the woods again!

F. H.

BRING FLOWERS.

BRING flowers, young flowers, for the festal board,  
To wreathe the cup ere the wine is pour'd :  
Bring flowers ! they are springing in wood and vale,  
Their breath floats out on the southern gale,  
And the touch of the sunbeam hath waked the rose,  
To deck the hall where the bright wine flows.

Bring flowers to strew in the Conqueror's path—  
He hath shaken thrones with his stormy wrath !  
He comes with the spoils of nations back,  
The vines lie crush'd in his chariot's track,  
The turf looks red where he won the day—  
Bring flowers to die in the Conqueror's way !

Bring flowers to the Captive's lonely cell,  
They have tales of the joyous woods to tell ;  
Of the free blue streams, and the glowing sky,  
And the bright world shut from his languid eye ;  
They will bear him a thought of the sunny hours,  
And a dream of his youth—Bring him flowers, wild flowers.

Bring flowers, fresh flowers, for the Bride to wear !  
They were born to blush in her shining hair.  
She is leaving the home of her childish mirth,  
She hath bid farewell to her father's hearth,  
Her place is now by another's side—  
Bring flowers for the locks of the fair young Bride !

Bring flowers, pale flowers, o'er the bier to shed,  
A crown for the brow of the early Dead !  
For this through its leaves hath the white-rose burst,  
For this in the woods was the violet nurst.  
Though they smile in vain for what once was ours,  
They are Love's last gift—Bring ye flowers, pale flowers !

Bring flowers to the shrine where we kneel in prayer,  
They are Nature's offering, their place is *there* !  
They speak of hope to the fainting heart,  
With a voice of promise they come and part,  
They sleep in dust through the wintry hours,  
They break forth in glory—Bring flowers, bright flowers !

F. H.

THE CONQUEROR'S SLEEP.

SLEEP midst thy banners furl'd !  
Yes ! thou art there, upon thy buckler lying,  
With the soft wind unfelt around thee sighing ;  
Thou chief of hosts ! whose trumpet shakes the world !  
Sleep ! while the babe sleeps on its mother's breast—  
—Oh ! strong is night—for thou, too, art at rest !

Stillness has smooth'd thy brow,  
And now might love keep timid vigils by thee ;  
Now might the foe with stealthy foot draw nigh thee,  
Alike unconscious and defenceless thou !  
Tread lightly, watchers !—Now the field is won,  
Break not the rest of Nature's weary son !

Perchance some lovely dream  
Back from the stormy fight thy soul is bearing  
To the green places of thy boyish daring,  
And all the windings of thy native stream ;  
—Why, this were joy !—Upon the tented plain,  
Dream on, thou Conqueror !—be a child again.

But thou wilt wake at morn,  
With thy strong passions to the conflict leaping,  
And thy dark troubled thoughts all earth o'ersweeping,  
—So wilt thou rise, oh ! thou of woman born !  
And put thy terrors on—till none may dare  
Look upon thee—the tired one, slumbering there !

Why, so the peasant sleeps  
Beneath his vine !—And man must kneel before thee,  
And for his birthright vainly still implore thee—  
Shalt thou be stay'd because thy brother weeps ?  
Wake ! and forget that, midst a dreaming world,  
Thou hast lain thus, with all thy banners furl'd !

Forget that thou, e'en thou,  
Hast feebly shiver'd when the wind pass'd o'er thee,  
And sunk to rest upon the earth which bore thee,  
And felt the night-dew chill thy fever'd brow !  
Wake with the trumpet, with the spear press on !  
—Yet shall the dust take home its mortal son.

F. H.

THE MESSENGER-BIRD.

[Some of the Brazilians pay great veneration to a certain bird that sings mournfully in the night-time. They say it is a messenger which their deceased friends and relations have sent, and that it brings them news from the other world.

*Picart's Ceremonies and Religious Customs.*]

THOU art come from the Spirits' land, thou bird!  
Thou art come from the Spirits' land!  
Through the dark pine-grove let thy voice be heard,  
And tell of the shadowy band!  
We know that the bowers<sup>o</sup> are green and fair  
In the light of that distant shore,  
And we know that the friends we have lost are there,—  
They are there—and they weep no more.  
And we know they have quench'd their fever's thirst  
From the Fountain of Youth ere now,  
For *there* must the stream in its gladness burst,  
Which none may find below!  
And we know that they will not be lured to earth  
From the land of deathless flowers,  
By the feast, or dance, or song of mirth,  
Though their hearts were once with ours.  
Though they sat with us by the night-fire's blaze,  
And bent with us the bow,  
And heard the tales of our Fathers' days,  
Which are told to others now!  
Then tell us, thou bird of the solemn strain!  
Can those who have loved forget?  
We call, and they answer not again—  
Do they love—do they love us yet?  
Doth the warrior think of his brother *there*,  
And the father, of his child?  
And the chief, of those that were wont to share  
His wanderings o'er the wild?  
We call them far through the silent night,  
And they speak not from cave or hill;—  
We know, thou bird! that their land is bright,  
But say, do they love there still?

F. H.