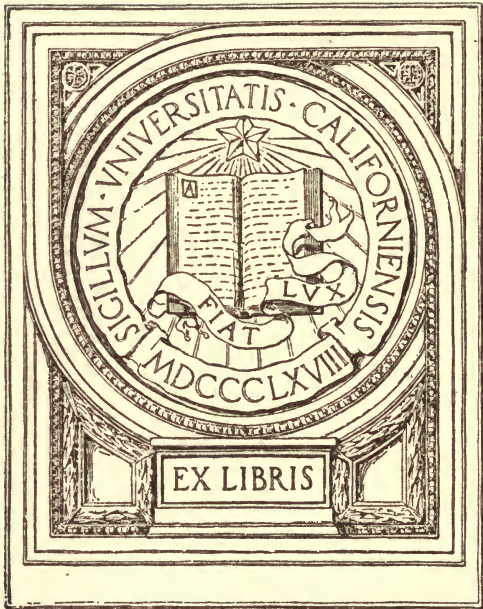


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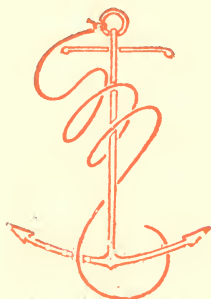


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THE FLOWER FROM THE  
ASHES AND OTHER VERSE

BY EDITH M THOMAS



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THOMAS BIRD MOSHER  
MDCCCCXV

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THE FLOWER FROM THE ASHES

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Quercetanus, the famous physician of King Henry the Fourth, tells us a wonderful story of a Polonian doctor that showed him a dozen glasses hermetically sealed in each of which was a different plant, for example, a rose in one, a tulip in another, a clove jilly-flower in a third, and so on of the rest. When he opened these glasses to your first view, you saw nothing in them but a heap of ashes in the bottom. As soon as he held some gentle heat under any of them, presently there arose out of those ashes the idea of a flower and the stalk belonging to those ashes, and it would shoot up and spread abroad to the due height and just dimensions of such a flower, and perfect colour, shape, magnitude and all other accidents, as if it really were that very flower. But when you drew the heat from it, would this flower sink down by little and little, till at length it would bury itself in its bed of ashes. And thus it would do as often as you exposed it to moderate heat, or withdraw it from it. I confess it would be no small delight to see this experiment with all the circumstances that Quercetan sets down. Athanasius Kircharus at Rome assured me that he had done it, and gave me the process of it. But no industry of mine could effect it.—SIR KENELM DIGBY in his *Discourse Concerning the Vegetation of Plants*.



## THE FLOWER FROM THE ASHES

*An imagined conversation between QUERCETANUS,  
a Magician, and SIR KENELM DIGBY.*

*In the Laboratory of Quercetanus.*

QUERCETANUS



T is a master-charm but few command.  
(You own, no industry of yours avails,  
And hence you come to me. And you  
do well).

'T was from a rare Polonian doctor old,  
Ay, shrunk so far in silvery age meseemed  
He was not other than that wondrous ash  
Enshrined within the crystal phial slim  
That in his spirit-slender hand he held  
For demonstration to a few elect.  
Yet, like the ash within that phial closed,

His fragile being housed a vital spark  
That made one lamping splendor of his eyes,  
The while he testified : " This glass, behold,  
Hath Beauty lapped in ashes — not of death,  
But of a life prepotent as the seed  
That overlives all Winter's cruel scath,  
Biding the sign of Spring to clothe in green.  
That seed — 't is proof to frosts no summer shoot  
Could e'er withstand ; so, even so this drift  
Of hoary dust, shut in by crystal walls,  
Is all alive — is all invincible ! "

So spake that rare Polonian doctor — then  
Shot round upon the drinkers of his lore  
A smile half mockery — angelic half.  
Continuing, he caught his own words up :  
" But said I ' ashes ? ' — Nay, I see a rose ! "  
And then, to me, " You do not see it — no ?  
But do not move your eyes. Regard this glass,  
Where even now the restless life begins. "

And then, as steadily I gazed, I saw  
A greening stalk cleave through that drift of gray ;  
And from the stalk shot balanced sprays each side,  
And from the branches leaves ; and midmost all  
A yearning flame that shot into a rose —  
A perfect rose — beyond perfection here,  
As if from Paradise that moment rapt !



SIR KENELM

And was it given you to touch the flower,  
To learn if flower-like its tissues were,  
Or if thin air and flame its semblance gave?

QUERCETANUS

I? — touch the thing my master's art evoked? —  
Nay, touched I not, nor would I seek to touch!  
But all that marvel fine was bloomed and shed  
In but the tith of time that I have used  
To tell you of it — gone most utterly.

SIR KENELM

But in the crystal phial was there nought?

QUERCETANUS

Even the powdery drift was seen before.

SIR KENELM

I pray you, may I see that flower, myself?  
I doubt not, featly works the charm for you,  
Though failed the process that was given me.

QUERCETANUS

A phial I shall show you presently;  
I had it from that rare Polonian's hand.

SIR KENELM

What! nothing but a drift of ashes left  
In a dark phial — Rose, thy funeral urn!

QUERCETANUS

Some flower-in-ashes all men hoard away,  
Nor know they hoard until a master's art  
In transient Beauty bids it bloom again.



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OTHER VERSE

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## THOUGHT-DRIFT



IM hour by hour through autumn's wane  
The silkweed lets her plumes adrift :  
They rove — they sink — and yet again  
Upon the wavering breeze they lift.

No count is made of where they roam ;  
They are not found, they are not lost, —  
Soft wanderers without a home,  
Yet scathless to the sworded frost.

Not otherwise dim hour by hour  
I shed white thoughts into the wind, —  
Sole drift of my life's vanished flower :  
They are not lost — yet none may find.

## “FROST TO-NIGHT”

**A**PPLE-GREEN west and an orange bar,  
And the crystal eye of a lone, one star. . .  
And, “Child, take the shears and cut what you will.  
Frost to-night — so clear and dead-still.”

Then, I sally forth, half sad, half proud,  
And I come to the velvet, imperial crowd,  
The wine-red, the gold, the crimson, the pied, —  
The dahlias that reign by the garden-side.

The dahlias I might not touch till to-night !  
A gleam of the shears in the fading light,  
And I gathered them all, — the splendid throng,  
And in one great sheaf I bore them along.

---

In my garden of Life with its all-late flowers  
I heed a Voice in the shrinking hours :  
“Frost to-night — so clear and dead-still . . .”  
Half sad, half proud, my arms I fill.

## VOS NON VOBIS

**T**HERE was a garden planned in Spring's young days,  
Then Summer held it in her bounteous hand,  
And many wandered through its blooming ways,  
But ne'er the one for whom the work was planned.

And it was vainly done —  
For what are many, if we lack the one?

There was a song that lived within the heart  
Long time — and then on Music's wing it strayed !  
All sing it now, all praise its artless art,  
But ne'er the one for whom the song was made.

And it was vainly done —  
For what are many, if we lack the one?

## WANDER-LURE

**I**T was a rosy morning long ago.  
None was beside me on the sleek gray sand,  
When, dabbling in the water's wrinkling flow,  
I something touched that reached to kiss my hand.  
The shell, the sobbing shell,  
That seemed so innocent!  
For me it had been well  
If I no heed had lent.

I drew it from the rose-lit water — dim,  
And sadly colored as a sunless sea;  
But when I laid my ear against its brim,  
Its sweet, tumultuous pleadings conquered me!  
The shell, the sobbing shell,  
It moaned and would not cease!  
“Enchanted here I dwell —  
But thou canst bring release.”

And then it told me with its broken cry  
Where hidden cure for such enchantments lay —  
Another shore, another sea and sky!  
To bring it there I wandered night and day.  
The shell, the sobbing shell,  
Still drives — to east, to west;  
The spirit in its cell  
It never lets me rest!



## FOOL'S PARADISE

**W**E all are gathered here, who else no  
refuge had,  
We all are here, we Fools, — the sad, the glad,  
the mad,  
So counted by a world that missed us never-  
more,  
That fed us grudgingly — or starved us on its  
store.

They all are here, — those darling truants from  
the rod,  
Who learned no lesson save the boundless love  
of God.  
And they are here, — the laughers whom their  
world frowned down,  
Who danced to all the pipes that stray from  
town to town !

And moody ones are with us, — souls of smoul-  
dering fire  
That blew alive and caught at Wrong in sud-  
den ire ;  
And prophet-spirits mild whom none would  
ever heed ;  
And child-like men of might that any child  
could lead.

And those that loved, unloved — who nothing  
else could do  
But spend their all — O truest lovers of untrue !  
And those that have gone mad for deathless  
Beauty's sake,  
Who winged her songful praise none later  
could awake !

We are all gathered here, — the sad, the glad,  
the mad. . . .  
God made a Paradise for Fools, and straight  
forbade  
Its seraph-guarded gates to all His thriftier-  
wise,  
But He Himself oft walks with us this Para-  
dise.

#### L'ENVOI

Princes, or Peasants, this to you I send from  
far :  
Whoe'er ye be, if so some little ancient scar  
Ye bear in either palm, ye cannot be denied —  
For you, with golden sound, the garden gates  
swing wide.

## HIDDEN HERITAGE

I AM not half so poor as they  
Who have greath wealth but in to-day.  
Beneath this time an undertime,  
My hidden heritage sublime ;  
Beneath this world an underworld,  
With mass and shards above it hurled.

I always knew that it was there,  
But how descend it, how to dare ?  
I always knew my noontide draft  
In its deep well had darkly laughed ;  
How nightly Sleep, that shepherd sooth,  
There led the dream-flocks of my youth.

I knew, because each joy of mine  
Had under-grief the more divine ;  
And, ah, because no sorrow pressed  
So hard but that it also blessed !  
With up-sent dew my tears were pearled —  
Beneath this world such underworld !

I always knew that it was there,  
And did this solid world upbear ;  
So, were I weak, its voices rose,  
“ Fear not ; strength rushes in thy blows.”  
And, were I witless and unread,  
Some nether sun its light upshed.

I always knew, I know, 't is there ;  
But how to reach it, how to dare,  
The shards that hide it how upheave,  
And to its heart full pathway cleave,  
As one who must descend, not climb,  
Unto a heritage sublime !

## FLIGHT OF KRISHNA

*When the Lord acquireth a body and when he abandoneth it He seizeth these (the senses and the mind) and goeth with them, as the wind takes fragrances from their retreats. — BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ.*

**N**OW, forth, and nothing leave behind !  
For, going, even as the wind  
That taketh from its dim retreat  
A flower's whole soul of fragrance sweet —  
So I pluck out both sense and mind  
And carry them where none may find.

Yet, if I will, these I may bind,  
Returning them to forms inclined ;  
So that again they have their seat  
In life's fair blossom, as is meet.  
Again, I go. And, dust consigned,  
But dust is left, both deaf and blind !

On, on — and in and out, I wind :  
I, bearing with me sense and mind,  
Shall see, shall hear, in life-blood beat,  
Shall prove by touch, shall drink, shall eat ;  
But in one moment — unconfined —  
Am gone, such dalliance left behind !

Then where? No man hath yet divined.  
But knoweth man where lives the wind  
That leaveth bowed the blossom sweet?  
I go, with more than wingéd feet;  
But naught — not form — have I resigned:  
This, too, in mine own self is shrined.

## HALF-DISCLOSURE

**T**HERE is a crying in the wind —  
I do not know what it may be ;  
But for the moment it can find,  
Can search, the heart of me.

There is a signal in the fire —  
A flame beyond the violet flame !  
It wakens fine and far desire  
For which I have no name.

And airs there are, so sweet, that rise  
And flow from wolds where snow lies deep —  
Breath of the Flowers of Paradise,  
Or of the dreams of sleep !

Each sense a subtler sense awakes —  
Wakes for an instant, and no more,  
A wave from far that, once it breaks,  
Revisits not this shore.

Such are the intimations strange  
That leave the soul unreconciled,  
Lost from some world of magic change  
Wherein I dwelt a child —

A child unspoiled that nearer dwelt  
    Unto the precious heart of things ;  
Its throbbing ( now too rarely felt )  
    This half-disclosure brings.



## THE WATER OF DIRCE

. . . . Another comes and laments that he shall no longer drink of the water of Dirce. "Is the Marcian water worse than that of Dirce?" "But I was used to the water of Dirce." — EPICTETUS.

“IF but the Gods, of their mercy,  
    Would let me return, ere I die,  
To drink of the water of Dirce —  
    On the cool sprinkled margin to lie !

“Yes, I drank of the Marcian waters,  
    Of Bandusia’s song-haunted spring ;  
But not though Mnemosyne’s daughters  
    The crystal of Helicon bring —

“Not they — not the charm-weaving Circe  
    Could make me forget or forego —  
I was used to the water of Dirce,  
    I long for it, thirst for it so !

“The snows of Cithæron have chilled it —  
    I shall cease from this fever and pain,  
If but the Gods have so willed it  
    I taste that wild sweetness again !”

Then answered the Gods, of their mercy,  
    “ We give thee thy thirst and thy love,  
But seek not the water of Dirce —  
    For thy Youth was the sweetness thereof.”

## THE DARK

*The silver sickle went a-reaping ;  
We saw its blade, so bright, so keen,  
But not the sheaves in shadow sleeping  
In the high field of Night unseen.*

---

SHE came and rocked me in her arms,  
And low she spake : " I am thy Mother,  
With lullabies and fending charms  
That are for thee and for no other."  
Then answered I : " Oft groping have I felt  
Thy touch, and at thy knees would fain have knelt."

Next spake she level with mine ear,  
And sportively entreated me :  
" Twin-Sister could not be more near  
That ever I have been to thee."  
To this I answered : " Sister, more than twin,  
My bosom-mate from childhood thou hast been."

But closer still she drew — in sooth,  
So close my poor heart beat for two :  
" I am thy Lover, first in youth —  
That lover false — and thou so true !"  
Then made I answer through a world of tears,  
" But this it was that so enriched my years."

From in myself she spake at last :  
    “I am The Dark — am all thou art ;  
And I, The Dark, am all thou hast,  
    Both out and in — thy soul, thy heart.  
Yet all the stars are mine to give to thee.”  
Then answered I, “Thy stars make song in me.”

---

*The silver sickle went a-reaping ;  
    We saw its blade, so bright, so keen,  
But not the sheaves in shadow sleeping  
    In the high field of Night unseen.*

## THE UNDERLAND

IT is so glad a land,  
It is so sad a land,  
Where now I go to make my fast retreat.  
Once I but tarried there,  
Now I have carried there  
All my soul's treasure and will build my seat.

It is so sad a land,  
It is so glad a land,  
I know not if it be more sad or glad.  
No word is spoken there,  
That can be broken there,  
And — grief or joy, we have what we have had.

A blaze is on the hearth,  
It plays upon the hearth  
And on the brows of some that sit thereby.  
It leaps for aye the same  
It keeps for aye the same —  
Flitting from laughing lip to speaking eye.

Outside a garden blooms,  
In pride a garden blooms ;  
Nowhere so deep the grass, so bright the rose.  
No blessed hour departs,  
Nor leaf nor flower departs —  
But never any bud can there uncloset.

I go to hide me there,  
Since none will chide me there,  
And say, "Get hence, for here no part thou hast."  
It is the only place, —  
This peopled, lonely place,  
That is my own — and it is called The Past.

---

To you so lately gone,  
So sternly, straightly gone,  
Without a word, without a waving hand —  
To you I send this song,  
And you, befriend this song,  
Who make great brightness in The Underworld!

## THE HOUSE

I WAS leaving the House behind,  
And it said, as I crossed the sill :  
“ Because he is gone from me,  
Forever and ever gone,  
You too must be forth and away !  
You cannot bear me, you cry —  
The listening — the silence — the void !  
But how shall I bear myself,  
Who cannot arise and go,  
And be free of the silence that asks,  
That listens, and asks again —  
And be free of the void that aches ?

“ How shall I bear myself ?  
As full of sweet memories, I,  
As of honey the autumn hive —  
But the sweet of my honey stings !  
Where now are his hat and his coat  
That hung in the hall by the door,  
And the good cane leaned beside,  
That was used to the feel of his hand,  
That was warm with the clasp of his hand ?  
They are taken and hidden away ;  
But the place where they were still asks :  
‘ Why must I lose what was mine ? ’

“And the pen that none other might touch,  
And the letter half written, and left ;  
And the book at the head of the bed,  
Where the late lamp loved to shine  
(The book that was old and good),  
With the leaves that he slowly turned  
With the leaves that he loved the best ;  
And the reading-glass slipped between !  
They are all put by, put by ;  
But I know, though they hide, where they are —  
I am full of keen memories, I,  
As of arrows the saint in the shrine !

“How shall I bear myself?”  
Said the House that was left behind.  
“How shall I bear myself?”  
Said the haunting Voice of the House,  
As over the sill I passed.  
And the Voice was the silence that asks,  
That listens, and asks again ;  
And its Eyes were the windows that gazed,  
That gazed at me long and hard,  
And wondered that I went forth.  
“Nevertheless, O House,  
I must leave you — must go,” I said.



## INCLUSION

**I** SHALL not care if I shall live no more,  
As men know life, as I myself have known.  
The waves that race so hard to reach the shore —  
They break, and backward to their deep are thrown.  
They are not, yet they are — become the Sea. . . .  
I lose my life, but Life will not lose me !

I shall not care if I shall love no more,  
As time knows love, and, ah, as I have known !  
The fire goes out and open lies the door  
When summer's high ascendant sun has shone. . . .  
My little fire of love burned bright, burned free —  
How greater, midst the Sun of Love to be !

“YOU HAVE COME BACK ”

“**Y**OU have come back,” they say to me,  
The people of the old, old town.  
In speech I with their speech agree,  
But doubts have I that will not down.

For more and more to me it seems  
That both the village and its folk,  
Whom I so oft have seen in dreams  
(Have seen, then lingeringly awoke) —

Have but returned, dream-wise, again,  
And as a vision will go by.  
So to make answer I am fain,  
“’T is you who have come back — not I.”

## THE TRIUMPH OF FORGOTTEN THINGS

**T**HERE is a pity in forgotten things,  
Banished the heart they can no longer fill,  
Since restless Fancy, spreading swallow wings,  
Must seek new pleasure still.

There is a patience, too, in things forgot ;  
They wait, they find the portal long unused,  
And, knocking there, it shall refuse them not —  
Nor aught shall be refused !

Ah, yes ! though we, unheeding years on years,  
In alien pledges spend the heart's estate ;  
They bide some blessed moment of quick tears —  
Some moment without date —

Some gleam on flower or leaf or beaded dew,  
Some tremble at the ear, of memoried sound  
Of mother-song : they seize the slender clew —  
The old loves gather round !

When that which lured us once now lureth not,  
But the tired hands their gathered dross let fall,  
This is the triumph of the things forgot —  
To hear the tired heart call !

And they are with us at Life's farthest reach,  
A light when into shadow all else dips,  
As, in the stranger's land, their native speech  
Returns to dying lips !

## THE OVERFLOW

**T**HE flood-tide sets into the stream,  
That then fills up its grassy banks ;  
But never does the rivulet dream  
How to the sea it oweth thanks !

My little loves are fed, each one,  
By a great Love they cannot know :  
Upbrimmed, they ripple in the sun —  
They have my full heart's overflow.

## THE VOICE OF THE LAWS

**T**HIS from that soul incorrupt whom  
Athens had doomed to the death,  
When Crito brought promise of freedom :  
“Vainly thou spendest thy breath !  
Dost remember the wild Corybantes ? feel they  
the knife or the rod ?  
Heed they the fierce summer sun, the frost,  
or winterly flaws ? —  
If any entreat them, they answer, ‘ We hear  
but the flutes of the God ! ’

“So even am I, O my Crito ! Thou pleadest  
a losing cause !  
Thy words are as sound without import — I  
hear but the Voice of the Laws,  
And, know thou ! the Voice of the Laws is to  
me as the flutes of the God.”

Thus spake that soul incorrupt. And wherever,  
since hemlock was quaffed,  
A man has stood forth without fear — has  
chosen the dark deep draught —  
Has taken the lone one way, nor the path of  
dishonor has trod,  
Behold ! he, too, hears but the Voice of the  
Laws, the flutes of the God.

## IN THE LILAC-RAIN

ALL in the lilac-rain  
Tender and sweet,  
Brushing the window-pane  
Sudden — and fleet !

Came the dear wraith of her  
Out of lost Mays —  
(Ah, but the faith of her,  
True to old ways !)

Scarcely her face I knew,  
Dim in the wet ;  
Only her eyes of blue  
Who could forget !  
Hands full of lilacs, too —  
Lilac crowned, yet !

These were the flowers she loved  
In the far years ;  
These were the showers she loved —  
Light as her tears !  
These were the hours she loved —  
Hope chasing fears !

---

Veiled in the lilac-rain,  
Comes she — and goes. . . .

Sun through the clouds again,  
Fresh the wind blows.  
Mine, a swift pleasure-pain  
None other knows



## OLD SIGHT

**T**HOU never more shalt see so clear  
As formerly the things a-near,  
As when thy two round hills of sight  
Caught all there was of heaven's light.

In youth thine eye, so true, so keen,  
One leaf among its brethren green,  
Keeping its dance upon the tree,  
It was thy pure delight to see.

One blade of grass would catch thine eye,  
One rose, 'mid roses climbing high.  
Now, know them lovely in the mass,  
But singly let them blend and pass.

Thine eyes are old, and they are tired ;  
No longer be of them required  
The labor they were wont to do :  
Ease them, as servants tried and true.

Still shall they serve, if thou art wise,  
With longer span of earth and skies ;  
But know, all little things that be,  
All trivial lines, must fade from thee.

And if the face of thine own friend  
In the dense human stream shall blend,  
Thine oldened sight, like arrow fine,  
Pierces some farther, heavenly sign !

And dimmer still, in life's decline,  
Things near thy vision shall divine ;  
But there shall be no veil, no bar,  
Between thine eyes and things afar !

## THE PASSER-BY

STEP lightly across the floor,  
And somewhat more tender be.

There were many that passed my door,  
Many that sought after me.  
I gave them the passing word —  
Ah, why did I give thee more?  
I gave thee what could not be heard,  
What had not been given before ;  
The beat of my heart I gave. . . .  
And I give thee this flower on my grave.

My face in the flower thou mayst see.  
Step lightly across the floor.

## THE YOUNG HEART IN AGE

**L**ET fall the ashen veil  
On locks of ebon sheen ;  
And let Time's furrowing tale  
On once-smooth brows be seen.

And let my eyes forego  
Their once-keen shaft of sight ;  
Let hands and feet not know  
Their former skill or might.

Take all of outward grace,  
Ye Aging Powers — but hold !  
Touch not the inner place,  
Let not my heart be old !

Then, Youth, to me repair ;  
And be my soothéd guest ;  
All things with you I share  
Save one, — that wild unrest !

## EVOE!

*"Many are the wand-bearers, few are the true bacchanals."*

### I

**M**ANY are the wand-bearers;  
Their windy shouts I hear,  
Along the hillside vineyard,  
And where the wine runs clear;  
They show the vine-leaf chaplet,  
The ivy-wreathen spear.  
But the god, the true Iacchus,  
He does not hold them dear.

### II

Many are the wand-bearers,  
And bravely are they clad;  
Yes, they have all the tokens  
His early lovers had.  
They sing the master passions,  
Themselves unsad, unglad;  
And the god, the true Iacchus—  
He knows they are not mad!

### III

Many are the wand-bearers;  
The fawn-skin bright they wear;

There are among them mænads  
That rave with unbound hair.  
They toss the harmless firebrand —  
It spends itself in air :  
And the god, the true Iacchus,  
He smiles — and does not care.

IV

Many are the wand-bearers.  
And who (ye ask) am I?  
One who was born in madness,  
“Evoe!” my first cry —  
Who dares, before your spear-points,  
To challenge and defy ;  
And the god, the true Iacchus,  
So keep me till I die !

V

Many are the wand-bearers.  
I bear with me no sign ;  
Yet, I was mad, was drunken,  
Ere yet I tasted wine ;  
Nor bleeding grape can slacken  
The thirst wherewith I pine ;  
And the god, the true Iacchus  
Hears now this song of mine.

## A SONG ABOUT A SONG

A SONG about a song  
That lives within my heart,  
There only — all day long  
It sings aloof, apart,

More solitary-sweet  
Than rare æolian string  
That waits but to repeat  
What winds from Heaven bring.

Oh, never ask the theme !  
For if I say, “ ’T is Joy,”  
Too much its closes seem  
What Sorrow would employ.

And if I say, “ ’T is Grief —  
’T is Grief, and Grief alone,”  
Comes Joy, like very thief,  
To make the theme his own !

A song about a song. . . .  
But had I perfect art  
To voice it clear and strong,  
It would forsake my heart.

I will not do that wrong :  
The song is in my heart,  
My heart is in the song —  
I know them not apart !



## THE GOING DOWN

( PERSEPHONE )

**G**OING down among the shadows, in the  
ever shortening days,  
She has many going with her through the hol-  
low sunken ways,  
With the sighing, sighing, sighing of the wind  
that round her plays.

All that yet of beauty lingers, in the ever  
shortening days,  
Listens for her warning footfall, strains to meet  
her fateful gaze :  
Once her glance it hath encountered in its  
place no more it stays.

Is it some late flower that ventures, in the ever  
shortening days —  
Flower faint blushing on the bramble, violet  
or primrose strays,  
Truant blooms of quince or apple, with the  
grace of vanished Mays?

If that flower her garment brushes, in the ever  
shortening days,

Parent stem cannot withhold it, in her path  
it lightly sways,  
With the sighing, sighing, sighing of the wind  
that round her plays.

Lingers still in greenless thicket, in the ever  
shortening days,  
One lone singer of the choir ceaseless in  
sweet summer's praise? —  
Whist the singer at her passing! some unheard  
voice it obeys.

And it spreads its wings belated in the ever  
shortening days;  
Henceforth, nor at morn nor even sound its  
piping roundelays,  
For the bird has fluttered with her where not  
noontide sends its rays!

You, O Flower of Mortal, you, too, in the ever  
shortening days,  
Guard, O shepherd youths and maidens, care-  
less in the dancing maze,  
Guard, lest one of you — the loveliest! for her  
kingdom she purveys.

Yet let none cry out upon her, in the ever  
shortening days;

The bereaved and the bereaver—never, never  
she betrays!

Springtime comer, Autumn goer, such the price  
that all life pays.

She—the darling of Demeter, in the ever short-  
ening days.

She has many going with her through the  
hollow sunken ways,

With the sighing, sighing, sighing of the wind  
that round her plays.

## SNOW-BURDEN

**T**HEY bear the burden of the snow —  
They bear it with a patient grace,  
The drooping trees! Yet well they know  
A melting hour comes on apace.

Ah, if but Time, that crowns me white,  
An equal clemency would show,  
Then, I some soft, mild day or night,  
Would drop the burden of the snow!

## THE ONLOOKERS

THEY are withdrawn — and they are near ;  
No eyes — they see ; no ears — they hear ;  
They speak together, without sound —  
They Who Look On, while Time runs round !

I know not where their place, their stand,  
Nor of the distance that is spanned,  
When they their influence impart —  
They Who Look On and ease my heart.

They ease my heart, for they can take  
From Life all fever, all heart-ache ;  
In any crowd or turmoil rude,  
They Who Look On make Quietude.

And sweetly do they send reproof  
To turn me from world-pride aloof ;  
Nor any scorn can strike, nor hate —  
They Who Look On so guard my state !

Not safer was the hero caught  
In the bright veil Love round him wrought  
To bear him from the press of foes —  
They Who Look On thus round me close.

I deem they will abide with me,  
Perchance, apparent they will be  
When I shall breathe my last of breath. . . .  
They Who Look On have looked past Death.

“WHY WILT THOU VISIT IN DREAMS?”

*I questioned them narrowly, all,  
If any went out or in :  
And they answered me, wondering, all,  
That no one went out or in.*

---

WHY wilt thou visit in dreams? —  
Once with a little harp  
Held up in thy hands to play,  
And thy down-smiling eyes on my face.  
But when I would raise me to hear,  
There was only the wind so lone —  
And the wind was thy harp and thou.

Why wilt thou visit in dreams?  
Once with a tendrilled wreath  
Hung over thy rounded arm,  
As though thou wert fain to dance.  
But when I would watch thee at dance,  
The vine at the casement swung low —  
And the vine was thy wreath and thou.

Why wilt thou visit in dreams?  
Once with a lamp of pure light  
Wherein things hidden were clear.  
But when I would walk by thy light,

Only the westering moon —  
The low moon at my window, looked in —  
And the moon was thy lamp and thou.

Why wilt thou visit in dreams?  
Once with a cup that o'erflowed  
With a draught that could heal, could save  
But when I would whisper, "I thirst!"  
Only the fountain I heard,  
The laugh of the fountain by night —  
And the fountain was thou and thy cup.

---

*I questioned them narrowly, all,  
If any went out or in:  
And they answered me, wondering, all,  
That no one went out or in.*



## THE EMPTY ROOM

**I** FOUND me standing at your door,  
Belovéd ! having come in sleep,  
Dreaming I yet had watch to keep,  
And all was as it was before,  
When the dim hours my care outwore.

Your little room so very still,  
Belovéd ! still, and sweet with you ;  
My senses, tranced, such balm indrew !  
Yet my feet stayed upon the sill,  
For something held my clouded will.

The moonlight lay along the floor,  
And — soft as is the swan's soft breast —  
On your smooth pillow, aye unpressed,  
Belovéd ! — moonlight and no more !  
I waked and found me at your door.

## FRIENDS WITH THE WORLD

**T**HE World has played fair with me  
    (And I with the World, I trust!) —  
Broken no pact nor plight;  
    No wrong but Love could adjust;  
    Or, if fight we must,  
We ever shook hands with a will,  
    At the end of the fight.

If a Better World there be —  
    Let be! I can only say,  
Here I have found delight  
    That steads me upon my way,  
    Going out with day. . . .  
I have been good friends with you, World —  
    Good night, good night!

## TO RETURN!

**L**OVE me now, and love me aye —  
Life is but a passing day!  
(But the day is still reborn.)  
Love me now, and love me aye,  
When all lives have passed away —  
On some fair Eternal Morn!

Thou shalt pass, and I shall pass  
Like the raindrops on the glass,  
Shared between the sun and wind!  
Thou and I, we onward pass  
To return! — but we, alas!  
How shall we each other find?

Thou and I — to come again!  
Shall my day be on the wane  
When thy day is only young?  
Thou and I — to come again!  
But shall one land hold us twain?  
Wilt thou even speak my tongue?

Thou and I — to come and go,  
Know each other — or not know,  
Flung together — flung apart!  
Thou and I — to come and go,  
Life, like leaves, behind us strow —  
Shall I find thee where thou art?

We shall pass — shall we return?  
Shall the soul its own discern  
    When the myriad lives are fled?  
We shall pass. . . . Ere we return,  
Oh, to set some Lamp to burn  
    On the dim ways we must tread!

OUT of it all. . . . And now I see clearly  
How little there was that touched me nearly,  
Though I hated (how idly!) and loved (how dearly!),  
Though I deemed this great, and judged that small;  
Now the bounds I set are a crumbled wall—  
Out of it—out of it all!

Out of the years that lagged, or hasted,  
Out of the power of the griefs that wasted,  
Out of the sway of the joys that, half-tasted,  
Leave the heart sick, that so soon they can pall—  
Out of the drive, the tumult, the brawl,  
Out of it—out of it all!

Out of it all. . . . And the world receding,  
Who, or what, is there whither leading?  
Through a space unknown, I, unknown, am speeding,  
And the fashions that were, away from me fall. . . .  
What was that word I would fain recall? —  
“ Out of it—out of it all! ”





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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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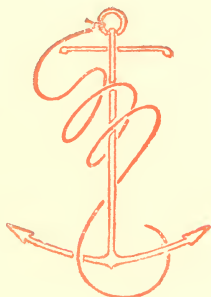
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