



APRIL WEATHER

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BLANCHE BANE KUDER



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APRIL WEATHER

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BY
BLANCHE BANE KUDER



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TO MY FATHER
THEODORE BANE

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APRIL WEATHER

THE INVITATION

O all you little poet folk
Who play around with me,
Come out into the garden for
A quiet cup of tea.

We'll sit beneath the arbor old
Where honeysuckles twine,
And you will read me all your songs,
And I will read you mine.

And after you have fed my soul
With pleasant words—and true—
I'll very gladly say the same
Enchanting things to you.

APRIL WEATHER

And when the time for parting comes,
—It will seem far too soon—
We'll all agree that we have spent
A charming afternoon!

THE WET ROAD

Leave the stretch of the dusty highway, strip your
fettters and make you free,
Heedless of lure of lane and by-way, forsake your
dreaming and come with me
The way of the gray and the shining surges, the
long wet road that is called the sea.

Why do you sigh for the spring-time maying, scent
of hawthorn and lilac sweet,
And the beckoning fields where you two went stray-
ing when youth was laughter and life com-
plete?
Do you not know that the primrose path may never
be trod by returning feet?

APRIL WEATHER

There is a voice that is all-compelling, dominant,
not to be denied,
Harking you out from your inland dwelling to take
your way with the ebbing tide
Where the sun is a friend and the gulls are
brothers, and a star is set as the only guide.

And the years hold promise of glad tomorrows and
of great joys that are yet to be,
And the keenest sorrow of all your sorrows
becomes but a shadowy memory,
When you take the road where the winds are run-
ning, the long wet road that is called the sea!

TO LIEUTENANT PAT O'BRIEN

Grand were the gifts they brought to you, the fairies
that came to your christening,
Them that danced in the midnight dew and trod the
green of the pixy ring.
Sure, themselves must have liked you fine when
they laid in your cradle tokens three,
The gift of smiles, and the gift of wings, and the
gift of friends in a far countree.

So it was yoursilf that rode the sky for a bit of a
chat with the Northern Star,
Or watched the great cloud ships sail by from the
charted space where the airlines are.
Faith, and I think you laughed at death as you
curved and dipped in the shining blue,
Did you know that he held never a dart that would
serve to shatter the wings of you?

APRIL WEATHER

Ever hot-foot to dangers new with a heart forgetting the dangers past.

The Little Green Men were good to you, for the luck of the Irish-born held fast.

And now that you've winged it a bit too high to the place where the longest journey ends,
It's Peter himself flung wide the gate with a "Welcome, lad, you're among your friends!"

THE FAIRY TOWN

That I should see a Fairy Town,
Half hidden in a shining mist!
That I should be the blessed one
The Little Man in Green had kissed!
The Little Man in Green had kissed
And spread before my waking eyes
A Fairy Town of amethyst,
A Fairy Town with silver skies!

That I should see a Fairy Town
All emerald and rose and blue!
And in a moment I might see
The Fairy Folk come tripping through.
The Fairy Folk come tripping through,
In kirtles green and kirtles brown,
To draw me in a magic ring
Into the heart of Fairy Town.

APRIL WEATHER

That I should see a Fairy Town!

The golden fingers of the sun
Came swiftly, surely pulling down

The silver curtains, one by one.

The silver curtains, one by one
The fingers brushed them all away,
And smiled before me in the dawn,
My Little Town of every day.

THE STRANGE WOMAN

Than honey knew I love was sweeter,
Than arrow knew I death was fleeter,
 Then did I dread the poisoned cup
Or turn me that I might not meet her?

I hastened to the dancing place,
For that mad hour grant me grace!
 And glamoured by the leaping fire
My hot eyes sought and found her face.

A slender thing of frost and flame,
Gray were the years until she came,
 She drew me with a scarlet thread,
And bound my feet with cords of shame.

My breast that pillowed once her head
Until the eastern sky burned red,
 Knows well what price she asked of me,
For that one night my soul is dead.

APRIL WEATHER

Yet knew I love than honey sweeter,
Than arrow far was my death fleeter,
 I shrank not from the cup she bore,
My heart outran my feet to meet her!

THE RETURN

They say the snow drifts deep and cold,
And yet no snow I see.
Spring laughs within my heart—to-day
My Dear comes home to me.

Over the trackless road he comes,
He journeys long and far,
The screaming gull his constant friend,
And for his guide a star.

Over the trackless road he comes,
The billows break in foam,
And miles to him are little things
For he is coming home.

And do you wonder that I feel
No wind that blasts and chills?
My Dear comes home to day—and spring
Is white upon the hills!

APRIL WEATHER

A MOTHER WALKS IN HER GARDEN

1917

The clipped hedge and the hollyhocks,
The pungent borders of the box,
The stretch of meadow, green and wide,
Somewhere in France a boy has died.

That I may walk in my garden dim,
His clean young soul is gone from him,
That I may loiter in sun-drenched dreams,
Over his head the wild shell screams.

The apricots by the southern wall,
The purple heaps where the ripe plums fall,
The fringed grass by the sunk pool's side,
Somewhere in France a boy has died.

That I may gather of fruit and bloom
His be the pain and rack and doom,
The ashen face and the tortured limb,
And mine own son may follow him!

THE SHROPSHIRE LAD

(A. E. HOUSMAN)

The cherry branches are white with flower,
The green's on meadow and fen—
Let me come to you for an hour
And walk with you again.

Tell me your tale of the poplar trees
That bordered the brook you knew,
And with never a wind to stir their leaves,
Sighed with the soul of you.

Take me away into Wenlock Town,
Where the broom is yellow as gold.
And you plucked the boughs from the hawthorn
tree
As full as your arms could hold.

APRIL WEATHER

And show me the tender trysting place
Under the aspen tree,
Where the aspen whispered as you went by
Its pitiful prophecy.

Take me away from these noisy streets,
These crowds of hurrying men,
Let me come to you for an hour
And walk with you again!

MY SHIP

It's I stand watching, watching across the waters
gray,

Where the old, old ships come slowly home and the
young ships sail away.

Where the old, old ships come slowly home, borne
on the tireless sea,

But when will the little ship I sent come sailing
back to me?

Never you saw a ship so fair, with her colors flying
far,

And the curving swell of her wind-filled sails as
white as the breakers are.

Straight she rode in her gallant pride, breasting
the windy dawn,

And I watched with eyes that were hot with tears
the way that my ship had gone.

APRIL WEATHER

The days are long, and the nights are drear, but
I've taken Hope for my friend,
And we wait in the curve of the harbor bay till the
voyage shall have an end;
We wait in the curve of the harbor bay—never our
hearts shall tire,
Better the sight of eyes that see than wandering
of desire!

Slowly the old, old ships loom up on the far
horizon's line,
But I give them never a second glance, for none of
these ships is mine.
It's the little ship that I'm longing for, and the
joy that must yet begin.
So Hope and I in the harbor watch and wait till
my ship comes in!

TO A ROSE TREE BROUGHT FROM THE
ALHAMBRA

Why did you die? Within my garden-close
Nor tender wind of spring nor summer rain
Could call your bud unto the bough again
Nor make you blush to bloom, most lovely Rose!

When that I took you from your crumbling wall,
“Here,” said my heart, “In mine own garden
fair

A rose of Spain shall perfume the still air
And petals murmur legends as they fall.”

Alas my dream! Not even my love could bring
The plashing of the fountain, nor the note
Of lute that was the nightingale’s own throat
As he poured out the passion of the spring.

Fool that I was! You could not live again
When all your soul, like mine, was far in Spain!

APRIL WEATHER

REMEMBERING HER GARDEN

And does my garden dream of me
Who loved each flower petal so,
Who thrilled with vernal ecstasy
When May's new buds began to blow?

O tell me, do my pansies turn
With tender eyes wide-questioning,
As though in eagerness to learn
Why I have gone away from spring?

Could I go back for just one day
To view the stately hollyhocks!
To mark the soldierly array
And stiff precision of the stocks!

To greet the pinks, half shy, half bold,
Like country damsels decked for town,
And pick a gaudy marigold
Dressed to the nines in brass and brown!

And does my garden dream of me,
 Who knew of every bloom the soul?
I sicken for its ministry,
 I crave its balm to make me whole!

APRIL WEATHER

“HOW MANY APRILS”

How many Aprils I shall see
With fadeless shimmering
And misty bloom on lilac-tree
Repeat another spring

I do not know. And yet today
Your eyes held by my own,
I dreamed of Aprils far away
That I have never known.

I dreamed of Aprils far away,
All peacock-green and blue,
Perfected, soft, enchanting, gay,
And lacking only you!

O little ghosts of Aprils far
So tender, warm and sweet,
To those dim places where you are
I turn my willing feet,

I hasten down your leafy way,
I scent your lilac-tree,
And live, unmindful of today,
In Aprils yet to be!

APRIL WEATHER

SONG

There was a rose that fell to dust
 There was a wind that blew.
And a butterfly with yellow wings,
 And you—and you!

The dust of the rose is scattered far
 The wings are clogged with dew,
The little wind died when the sun went down,
 And you—and you?

THE WIND AND THE ROAD

There is a road that bids me go, winding o'er hill
and hollow,
Eager my heart leaps forth to lead the way that
my feet would follow,
Lured by the pipe of the blackbird's cry and the
flashing wings of the swallow.

There is a wind that calls to love—it is the south
wind sighing.
And one of the winds is a battle call—it is the
north wind crying.
And the east wind calls for a man to grieve o'er
the grave where his youth is lying.

But the wind from the west—O heart, my heart,
quiet your ache and yearning.
Cease, my eyes, to implore the skies where the sun-
set fires are burning.
My feet are held from the ribboned road—for me
there is no returning.

APRIL WEATHER

A knapsack full of thwarted plans and a broken
life to greet her!

Her eyes like a quiet mountain lake and her voice
than throistles sweeter,

What could I say of all my hopes when I turned
my face to meet her?

Lured by the pipe of the blackbird's cry and the
flashing wings of the swallow

There is a road that bids me go, winding o'er hill
and hollow.

'There is a wind that blows my heart where I would
that my feet might follow!

THE MEETING

(James E. Flecker and Rupert Brooke)

So swift and strangely passed the hours
Above his tawny golden head
That, seeing half familiar flowers,
He did not know that he was dead.

The last his earthly eyes had known
Before death set his spirit free,
The red light of the sunset, thrown
Across the blue Aegean sea.

One greeted him with friendly eyes:
—Untaught, he knew the heavenly tongue—
“You know me, here in Paradise?
I was a poet, I was young!”

APRIL WEATHER

“Is this, indeed, the Lord’s great town?
Treading these beds of asphodel,
I thought that I had wandered down
In Grecian ways I knew so well.”

Then passed, in shining flight, God’s choir.
He turned and smiled, remembering,
“Or I may be in Grantchester—
‘The evening hush, the homing wing!’ ”

“IF, IN THE SKYEY BLUE”

If, in the skyey blue,
My eyes can see your eyes,
If I can dream your wind-blown hair,
That shines in Paradise;

If every lyric bird
Bursting its throat with spring,
Can make me hear your voice, your voice
In joyous carolling;

If patter of the rain
From autumn boughs that drips,
Can make me feel the poignant touch
Of your compelling lips;

Then should my sad heart grieve
That we must walk apart,
For lack of your dear hand in mine—
My heart against your heart?

APRIL WEATHER

If, in the skyey blue,
My eyes may meet your eyes,
Then can my spirit, touched with flame
Chant high in Paradise!

TO GEORGE MEREDITH

(Died at Boxhill, May, 1909)

A spray of white bean at his side,
White roses on his breast
He lies. How very peacefully
He takes his meed of rest.

“Let the gods rob of what they will,
If they leave what is sure,”
Thus wrote he to his friend, “the heart,
The brave heart to endure.”

How very peacefully he lies
With things he loved a part,
White rose and flowering bean above
His brave enduring heart.

APRIL WEATHER

TODAY

“When I come back,” you said to me,
 “‘It will be thus and thus,
We’ll count the honeyed sweets in store
 The future has for us.
Our days will all be golden days,
 And nothing shall we lack.
Oh, spring of the year and love, my Dear,
 For us—when I come back!’”

“When you come home,” I said, “my heart
 Will be a bird that sings
The haunting airs of loveliness
 Of all our wasted springs.
No space too high our souls to reach,
 Too vast for us to roam.”
My voice said “When,” but oh, my heart
 Cried out, “*If* you come home!”

AT A WAYSIDE SHRINE

Mary, Mother, my heart is sad, like thine own dear
heart it is pierced with sorrow,
Ever with dusk I dread the night, ever with night
I fear the morrow.

Ever with dusk I dread the night—what can it
bring but hopeless waking?
And the crimson glow in the burnished west but
mocks a heart that is sore with aching.

It was thy Son for forty days in the wilderness
strove with pride and lust.
It is my son who strove and failed, and the gifts of
Satan have turned to dust.

Empty-handed—thou knowest where—sleeps he
or wakes? Is he dead or living?
Lead him back where his mother waits, rich with
the gifts for love's own giving.

APRIL WEATHER

Sin-worn face with graven lines carved by follies,
I do not see.

Only my baby, tired with play, stretches his arms
and cries for me.

Mary, Mother, thy Name I plead, of thy mercy I
ask a sign—

Look on the face of Christ, Thy Son—know me
mother—and send me mine.

THE FLIGHT

That night there was a great wind that blew across
the sky,
So strong it struck the steady stars when swift it
hurtled by,
I thought I saw the bright things like fireflies at
play,
A great wind, a strong wind—and it blew my soul
away.

Light as a feather from faery bird my gay soul
rose and flew,
My soul that was vague as wind-blown smoke with
star-shine sifting through.
My soul that was clad in rainbow dyes, joyous and
fair and free,
And I was brushed with magic wings when my soul
came back to me.

APRIL WEATHER

Oh, I walk in the market-place, I speak with my
neighbor's tongue,
But what knows he of the wind and night when my
soul and I were young?
What knows he of the dancing stars blowing about
the sky
When my soul went up like a singing flame on the
great wind rushing by!

CANDLE TIME

I ought to light the candles,
The room is growing dim,
I ought to light the candles,
But I want him!

The gray shadows' footsteps
Steal around his chair,
My eyes ache with straining,
He is not there.

He used to light the candles
When twilight came,
Smiling, as shot up
The yellow clear flame.

He did not like the shadows,
So, for his sake—
Oh, if I light the candles,
My heart will break!

APRIL WEATHER

THE LOVER PRAISES HIS MISTRESS

The hills are happy because they kiss the sandals
of the Lord,

They reach up their leaves—suppliant hands
touching his skirts with adoring fingers,

And when the south wind blows

They clap their hands with joy, because it is his
breath.

They are glad when night comes and the stars that
fall from the shoes of his angels

Fringe them with scintillant spangles.

The hills are happy because they kiss the sandals
of the Lord,

And my heart is happy if I may kiss your feet.

'Twas APRIL BROUGHT THE DAFFODIL

'Twas April brought the daffodil,
An empty cup of flame
It burned upon the greening hill
The morning that you came.

And after that brief lovely year,
—Or was it but a day?—
The daffodil was flaming, dear,
The night you went away.

Why daffodils for love's demands?
The whitest blooms they knew
They should have placed within your hands
To show the soul of you!

Now April brings the daffodil.
There grows for my desire,
A common flower upon the hill,
Where once burned yellow fire.

APRIL WEATHER

ELEGIE—LEMARE

Come bring the fragrant mignonette and place the
white sweet lilies dim,
And chant the hymn,
And light the slender waxen tapers clear, and let
them for her burn,
Who will no more return.

Why do you weep? Can all your rain of bitter
unavailing tears
Bring back those years
When you and she, hand clasped in hand, wan-
dered through apple blossom ways
Of unforgotten Mays?

How still she lies! The winds of earth her hair no
more may stir, her feet
That were so white and sweet,
Tread the eternal happy fields, and the soft smil-
ing of her eyes
Looks upon Paradise!

THE NEST

Last night I dreamed of a nest,
Carefully fashioned, hair-lined and warm,
A shelter from rain and the driving storm,
Poised in the crotch of the tree with care
For the frail little fledglings hidden there,
And that was the best.

Tonight I will dream of a nest.
The hollow of my shoulder, warm and living,
Formed for the gift of love's own giving,
The hour of trial I will not dread,
Ah, soon shall I feel the little head,
And that will be best!

APRIL WEATHER

THE POET

Out of the loves of a thousand years
Deep as the sea, as the sea as strong,
Of love's sweet sorrows and love's sweet fears,
The poet made his song.

Her eyes are gray as the sea-gull's wing,
Her hair a fragrance of dusky shade,
And her voice was a calling, living thing
In the song the poet made.

Sanctuary is at her feet,
She will shrive from your secret sin.
Her love is a refuge all complete,
Once you have entered in.

He broke my heart with a whole world's pain
Think you he will sing that song again?

Lord and Master of death is he
For he sang my dead love back to me!

RAIN IN SPRING

Hear the marching and the beat
In the shadowed lane,
Of the mystic, maddened, fleet,
Million-footed rain.

Well I know the cherry boughs
Hidden in the gloom,
Make a wet and fragrant house
Of their dripping bloom.

Hawthorn white with laughing May,
Oh, how strange it seems
I was with you yesterday,
Maying—in my dreams!

APRIL WEATHER

THREE SONGS FROM ARCADY

I

THE WIND THAT SHAKES THE ASPEN TREE

The wind that shakes the aspen tree,
A kindly wind it is to me,
For, while the quivering aspen heaves
Its multitudes of silver leaves
It whispers of dim lovely things,
Of blooms of half-remembered springs,
Of April airs all warm and sweet,
Of wandering paths that drew my feet
Through fragrant ways most dear to me,
And led me straight to Arcady!

O but those fields are fresh and fair!
O but the winds are gentle there!
The blossom laughs upon the bough—
Would I could see those blossoms now!
There shines on every greening hill
The yellow light of daffodil,
In every sheltered garden close
Blooms the unfading Perfect Rose,
And spring's and summer's ecstasy
Are merged in one, in Arcady.

APRIL WEATHER

Pan is not dead! His voice is heard
In every call of every bird,
The little haunted brooks that run
Laughing and bright beneath the sun,
Or hid in shadowy wood-aisles dim,
Sing their low songs because of him.
And 'tis his voice that through the days
Calls back the unforgotten ways,
When soft winds shake the aspen tree
And lure me straight to Arcady.

II

ARCADY

“Why are your eyes so wide and sad?
 (Bitter the tears they must have known)
Why do you turn from the haunts of men,
 Why do you follow your path alone?”

“Gray is the drift of the flying cloud,
 Gray the stretch of the rain-swept sea,
Who can tell me the way to go,
 Which is the way into Arcady?”

“I dwelt there once, in the long ago,
 My eyes were blind to its beauty then,
And I turned my back on the shining fields
 To follow after the ways of men.

“Long have I travelled the dreary road
 (Cruel the wind with its cutting cold)
Seeking the joy that I may not know,
 Longing for that which I may not hold.

APRIL WEATHER

“Now my eyes they are old and sad,
They ache for the vision they may not see.
I have lost the way to my heart’s desire,
I have lost the way into Arcady!”

III
THE MEADOW

I know a way—will you go, my dear?
Will you follow the path with me?
The path that leads from the Now and Here
Forth into Arcady?
Where always the rose is red and sweet,
Where always the skies are blue,
Where there is rest for wandering feet
In the Meadow Where Dreams Come True.

Leave behind you your bitter grief,
Laugh at your haunting care.
Loose the fetters of unbelief—
Arcady's flowers are fair!
Make you a garland of daffodils
With never a sprig of rue,
And we'll follow the path o'er the Happy Hills
To the Meadow Where Dreams Come True.

APRIL WEATHER

We will dream our dreams as the hours go,
We will fashion them fair and fine,
And all of my dreams will be yours, you know,
And all of your dreams be mine.
Dear, will you follow the path with me?
I'm waiting for you, for you,
To take the path into Arcady,
To the Meadow Where Dreams Come True.

A FAR COUNTRY

O to go home again, just as the dusk is falling!
From out the bush by the broken gate to hear a
 robin calling!
To see the green o' the meadow, drenched with the
 heavy dew,
And to know that back o' that door are warmth
 and light and you!

This is a splendid town, but there's never a song-
 bird in it,
I can walk the whole of the day and not see the red
 throat of a linnet,
I can walk the whole of the day, and the only
 flowers I see
Are the roses and pinks in the flower shops that
 have no call for me.

APRIL WEATHER

I mind the bunch of marigolds you always kept on
the shelf,

Does the house seem very quiet now when you're
there all by yourself?

You're busy all of the day, I know, but when the
twilight falls

Does never my voice speak to you out of the lone-
some walls?

O to go home again, to the house that I was leav-
ing!

Was it myself was glad to go, though I saw your
eyes were grieving?

Fool that I was to want the town because it was
strange and new,

*And to think that back of that door are warmth
and light and you!*

OBLIVION

When I am beaten up by the hoofs,
Dust of the dust from whence I came,
Done with hatreds—not with loves!—
Unremembered, without a name,
May my gods grant me the gift of this,
My dust may find your dust to kiss!

Think of it! Madness? Say not so,
Here in the flesh my lips met yours,
We are but shapes that come and go,
Bodies perish—but love endures!
Mist of stars and the bluebird's wing,
Rose of dawn and the cry of spring!

APRIL WEATHER

How shall I know you in the air
 Beaten up by careless feet?
Here in the flesh you are so fair,
 Flower-flushing and flower-sweet,
When that time comes—as it will—suppose
I long in the blue for the dust of a rose!

IN EDEN

The apple boughs blossomed in Eden.

“Will you pluck—do you dare?”

Said Adam to Eve.

“Ah no—by your leave—

With boughs blossom bare

There'll be no apples there.”

The apples hung ripened in Eden.

“If *you* do not dare

Permit *me*,” said Eve,

“And I'll take what you leave!

See, thanks to my care

How the fruitage is fair.”

They fled in a panic from Eden.

“Oh, how could you dare,”

Indignant sobbed Eve

“Those blossoms to leave!

Had we stripped the boughs bare

There were no apples there!”



APRIL WEATHER

HOMESICK

There is a garden where riotous roses sweeten the
sunny day,
And the walks are bordered with heliotrope that
purples all the way.

Sweet-peas flutter their fragrant wings, lavender,
mauve, and white.
Or are they a flock of butterflies in a rush of deli-
cate flight?

And there are trees—two apple trees—and one
little slender peach.
It blossomed bravely a year ago, but the blossoms
were out of reach.

Curving line of a rosy flame out on the topmost
bough.
I wonder if that same little peach has put forth
blossoms now!

Curving line of a rosy flame burning against the
blue.

And, pointing the blossoms out to me, sweeter than
blossoms—you!

I am sick of alien sights and sounds here by a for-
eign sea!

I want to go to a place where you and a garden
wait for me.

Ever your voice is calling to me—ever it bids me
come.

There is a garden—oh, my heart! I want—I want
to go home!

APRIL WEATHER

THE HOUSE

The house that Love has built for me
Is just as rare and fair to see
As is the flash of bluebird's wing,
As are the maple buds in spring.
With tender mist of cherry bloom
He roofed each dim and lovely room,
He raised the walls with minstrelsy
Of that dear house he built for me.

If Love should build for you a house
With lyric walls and roof of boughs,
Would you, like me, be full content
To have its roof your firmament,
To ask no other joy than this
But to dwell where fulfilment is
Of all the dearest dreams you knew
Within the house Love built for you?

QUATRAIN

Love, place me in your window for a while,
That I may burgeon in your shining room—
Bringing my heart into its perfect bloom,
Beneath the benediction of your smile.

APRIL WEATHER

APRIL WIND

The wind that blows in April
Is not the wind of May.
April's wind is a restless wind
With luring things to say.

The wind of May is quiet
Caressing lip and brow,
April's wind is a vagrant wind,
And it is April now!

The wind that blows in April
—Oh, for the peace of May!—
Has blown my heart out of my breast,
Has carried my soul away!

FOR A VERY LITTLE PERSON

The Moon speaks.

Last night I saw a little boy

Who did not want to go to bed.

He put the nursery window up.

“You horrid moon,” he said,

“You always make me stop my play!

I think I’d like to run and hide.”

And then he wrinkled up his nose

And cried and cried and cried!

APRIL WEATHER

To-night another little boy
All scrubbed and clean and pink and white,
With Teddy Bear and Peter Pup
Came up to say goodnight.
He blew a little kiss to me
And gaily trotted off to bed.
“I’m just as tired as I can be,
Good night, dear Moon,” he said.

If all the little boys I see
Were only just that nice to me!

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