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YOUTH

BORZOI POETRY

1922

VERSE, *by Adelaide Crapsey*

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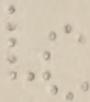
THE MASTER-MISTRESS, *by Rose O'Neill*

SONGS OF YOUTH, *by Mary Dixon Thayer*

COLLECTED POEMS *of James Elroy Flecker*

# SONGS OF YOUTH

MARY DIXON THAYER ✓



NEW YORK  
ALFRED · A · KNOFF

1922

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## DEDICATION

Mother, who gave all I sing,  
Take this book—my offering.

Think of it as a bouquet  
Of wild flowers picked today;

May the fragrance of their bloom  
Fill, awhile, your quiet room.

They will fade. I do not know  
Where the Everlastings grow.

The author is indebted to the editor of *The Saturday Evening Post* for permission to reprint certain of the poems in this book.

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SONGS  
OF  
YOUTH



## YOUTH

Ho! I am Youth!

Harken! ye who are weak and old  
To me! Come! Touch my cheek  
For it is wondrous smooth! And  
sleek

My hair is, it is full of gold  
That runs like fire in its strands.  
And feel my hands'  
They are so white and strong. . . .  
They shall right every wrong!

Ho! I am Youth!

The summer wanders in my heart.  
Souls are flowers  
Sown underneath the stars; and blown  
Through gorgeous hours.  
I drink wine of the moon. Apart  
I tear the purple veil  
Of Paradise and dart  
Within. Death is a silly tale  
Old men and women think is true  
(And so it grew)  
For me it shall not be  
More than a whispered word at dusk—  
More than a rotten, cast off husk

Of thought. I cannot die  
For I am Youth. . . . Ho! Youth am I!

Yes! Crowd about and envy me,  
All ye  
With hesitating ways,  
And shallow, furtive, teary eyes  
That are so dull—in which surprise  
Has vanished—ye who cannot see  
But into faded other days  
And seem to be  
Half alive. . . . Oh!  
Do you never crave to know  
The joy that a sky-lark flings  
Into the Dawn? The secret things  
And glad,  
That go  
Through the instants,  
And the mad  
Pulses that beat  
Blood to fire?  
Flesh into heat?

Higher. . . . Higher. . . .  
I leap than any steer  
Bounding in wild despair  
Through the wild forest air  
From hunters. But I fear  
Not hunters, I!  
For I am Youth. I shall not die.

Ho! I am Youth!  
For me the trees

Are red with fruit. For me the breeze  
Is dipped in fragrance; tinted; and  
For me pale oceans swing, the sand  
Is white as crumpled sheets,  
The cool world meets  
The sun,  
And ages run  
Into a nonsense rhyme.  
All time  
Is made for me! For me!  
I laugh at Destiny!

Ho! I am Youth!  
Death is a lie.  
Beauty is truth—  
And so am I!  
Ho! So am I!

## A THOUGHT

Oh! There is so much to say!  
Shall I ever get it said?  
Life is always just "today"—  
Can I never run ahead  
Up to God, and turn, and see  
What today will do to me?

## MY LOVES

I love. But my dearest loves are not  
Aware of me. . . .

I love a tree  
Swaying against a sunset pale as faded roses,  
With branches quivering  
Like pointed fingers,  
Sunburnt and strong,  
To where a long  
Cloud lingers,  
And daylight closes.

I love a star that opens wholly  
At dusk, like a young lily lifting  
In some still, shadowed pool  
Tinged with the cool  
Green sense of Dawn, and drifting  
Upon white silences. . . .

I love the hour  
When love commences,  
And the strange power  
Of little things—  
I love blue shadows laid—  
Like curling plumes—on snow;  
And icicles, clear shafts of jade;  
And dreams that a thrush flings  
Against cold stars. . . .

I love wild streams that flow  
Eternally in quiet places,  
Tumbling, like silk spilt out and laces,  
Torn and shimmering. And I love low,  
Trembling branches, eager and young,  
That touch my cheek,  
And only speak  
In whispers. I love songs sung  
And half forgotten—melodies that break  
Unending through us, and that make  
The tunes our hearts beat time to. . . .

I love each day  
More than the last. . . .  
What *is*, I love, and what is past—  
What will be—even Death,  
The swirling, unrestrained breath  
Of God, that sweeps a world and me  
To a hidden Destiny.

## CREATION

Listen, God! I understand  
Your laughter as you made the land  
And oceans, as you stood and hurled  
World upon world—world upon world!

You felt as I feel when I make  
One little song that does not break.  
You felt as I feel when I've said  
New words that I find in my head.

Listen, God! "Let there be light!"  
You cried—I too know the delight  
You knew as suns flashed and obeyed,  
And all the universe was made!

You felt as I feel when I seize  
One chord out of dim harmonies.  
You felt as I feel when I blow  
One note—only more so . . . more so!

Listen, God! I comprehend  
Your agony when you descend  
Upon the earth, and see each thing  
That you have caused there, perishing.

## NAMES

What does a Lover care for names?  
Are the gold threaded weeds that bend  
Keen, blue-tipped points upward, and send  
Timorous shadows o'er meadows  
(Like slim, grey-lipped, wind floated flames)  
Less fair because I have not cared  
To seek through pages that are penned  
For syllables that fools have dared  
To blend?

Do Lovers need a word?  
Or is the star that drops to blow  
Between the poplars, and the low  
Cry of a cloud-entangled bird  
Less dear to me because I heard  
Not what men have called bird or star—  
And not what men think Wonders are?

Oh! Come with me into the world!  
I wander where the sun is curled  
Moist and unheeded round the breast  
Of flowers, and I do not rest  
Till I have kissed the Dawn, and felt  
Her arms about me, and have knelt  
Dumb, in stillness, praying a prayer  
That is forever, everywhere.

Oh! Come with me! Forget your books  
Scatched with black lines and broken hooks!  
Forget your wisdom! Only seek  
To understand young leaves that speak,  
And grope and toss, and stretch and lean  
Toward you, and are cold and clean!

Come—come with me! The tall trees sway  
Against the dreams of Yesterday.  
The world rocks with them. We shall lie  
And touch the sunset, stealing by,  
And we shall feel pale thunders creep  
Through the hot earth, and we shall weep—  
Gladness of life—sadness of death—  
Creation's pulse—breath of its breath.

Will you heed then the *names* of things?  
Life is ecstasy! Spread your wings!  
Drink the moonlight! Laugh with the sea!  
Love with the flowers! Follow me!

## MORNING

I lay in bed. I heard the sun  
Cry out "Today—Today's begun!"

I lay in bed. I kept my eyes  
Tight closed. I knew that all the skies

Were washed in pale pink soapsuds there,  
But I thought that I did not care.

I lay in bed. A little breeze  
Came hurrying among the trees,

And, jumping o'er the window-sill,  
Crept close beside me, and was still.

And then a bird began to sing  
"Wake up! Wake up! you lazy thing!"

I tumbled out of my warm bed—  
Oh! the sky was as red—as red!

And the world trembled, every bit!  
I laughed. And kissed my hand to it.

## DAISY FIELDS

There is a wondrous field I know  
In which a million daisies grow  
Like giant flakes of shiny snow.

And all the night and all the day  
The daisies jerk their heads, and sway  
From side to side. I think that they

Would love to break their stems and be  
White stars among the clouds, and free,  
Instead of in the world with me.

I think the daisies always try  
To float away—and that is why  
They toss about and sigh—and sigh.

## TO A HERMIT THRUSH

Though I lost all the songs I made,  
Though I forgot all prayers I prayed,  
Dost think that this were aught to me  
If I could sing one song, as thee?

Through the low sigh that never ends  
Of forests, thy sweet voice ascends—  
Carol of loveliness more brief  
Than shattered wave, or falling leaf.

Hark! Thou canst never sing for long  
Alone! The earth is pierced with song,  
And every leaf and every tree  
Trembles in hushed expectancy.

Poet of twilight and of dawn,  
God of the misty places,  
Lover of the green silences,  
Mocker of human faces!

Lo! I bow down my heart to thee!  
I break my little lays!  
Thou art a minstrel whom no words  
Of mine can rightly praise.

Sing! Sing, Enchantress! Ages pass.  
The sunlight moves. The sky  
Is dark with shadows, white with stars,  
And men are born and die.

Still on the wings of restless winds,  
Over cloud thickened lakes,  
Thy dream is hung, thy madness flung,  
Soars upward—lingers—breaks.  
Dost think I would not sleep, while yet  
Waking is ecstasy?  
Or die—while thou art singing and  
Pass unreluctantly?

## GRATITUDE

I would give back to the world  
All it has given to me.  
The blood of every dying leaf;  
Joy of summers, and the grief  
Of endings; gestures of a tree,  
And every pulse of life that stirred  
More life in me; notes of a bird,  
And fresh dew gathered into balls  
Of crystal, tipped  
On swaying grasses; waterfalls;  
And waves that slipped  
Across soft sands; and whisperings  
In forests of forgotten things;  
The touch of flowers, and the ways  
Of fir-trees, and enchanted days;  
And the sweetest of all learning—  
Youth, and youth's impassioned yearning.

I would give to the world  
The sense of stars and sea;  
Dawn; God; and ecstasy;  
And then would draw myself apart,  
And break and toss the world my heart,  
And with an echo for a name  
Return to Silence, whence I came.

## A QUESTION

How can I squeeze my soul into  
The words you think are best?  
How can I pound it stale and flat  
And leave it for the world to pat  
And taste—and test?

So you would have me do, I know,  
For when I've caught the beat  
Of a young heart and pinned it tight  
Upon a page with all my might—  
A wondrous feat!

When I have dipped the swaying wind  
Out of the dusk, or kept  
The dream of rose-buds on my pen  
That scribbled words you asked for—then—  
Although I wept,

You wiped the coolness from the wind,  
And broke the rose that lay  
Curled in sweetness under the ink  
Dreaming of hours blue and pink—  
And went away. . . .

## SKETCH

Smoke tainted mist brushes the city,  
Buildings lose color and their edges,  
Dulled, sink deep into the oval sky.  
Beyond, the river past its hedges,  
Woods and fields, slips by.

Low in the west a crimson scar  
Pulses, where a great Hand  
Stabbed swift the fluttering heart of day  
Till her warm blood gushed out. The sand  
Is red. Poplars sway

With the cold breath of fainting light,  
And grasses by the water's rim  
Shudder. Each tiny blade,  
A compass true, points up to Him  
Who knows. I am afraid.

The city's lost in cloud.  
Its reassuring din is stilled.  
I am alone—a dreamer standing on a dream—  
All is unreal, the void filled  
With tiny sounds. The smothered scream  
Of engines thundering, somewhere

Afar, pierces and terrifies.  
Swallows, dipping in the mist,  
Fly on. The pale world sighs.  
Grey shadows crack and sift.

## BATHING

Ho! Winds! Sweep through me now! I stand  
Upon a puckered seam of land,  
Basted with green silk ripples thread,  
Pinned with a silver pin of light.  
I fling my arms above my head!  
Am I not fair? Am I not white?

Ho! Winds! Ho! Trees! Ho! Clouds that cling  
To the old world! Ho! Anything!  
Watch me! Watch me! Now I shall run  
Upon those lazy waves, I'll stare  
Into those purple eyes! What fun  
To pinch their bodies, pull their hair,

And laugh! I'll tease them! They will chase  
Me tumblingly, and kiss my face,  
And when I'm tired, their arms about  
My neck shall draw me close, and we  
Shall pick the stars as they come out  
At dusk, and blossom in the sea!

## THE SONG-MAKER

The little songs I sing are true  
Because I sing them about you.

The wisest critics nod, and call  
Me "Poet"—I were not at all

A poet had you never come  
Into my life—I had been dumb,

And walked with harnessed soul, and bowed,  
Nor dared to weep or laugh aloud.

As some would measure happiness  
I had been happy—loving less;

As some would reckon woman's bliss  
I had been stronger—wanting this.

Shadows of broken clouds that hush  
A world, and naked dawns that blush

At their own flagrant loveliness!  
Oh stars and sea! oh consciousness

Of ages! What are words of men  
Before your silent thunder? When

The last day topples from the brim  
Of years, and we look up at Him

Who caused us, and caused love, yet kept  
Our lives apart—we who have wept

With the forbidden wantonness  
Of youth—may He then stoop and bless

Us, whispering—"Now Time is dead—  
Eternity lies all ahead. . . .

## RECKONING

These I have lost: The ecstasy  
Only to live; the touch of dawn;  
And the mad, aching, free  
Thoughts of my youth—the drawn  
White veils of life—and little things  
That mark the rhythm as God sings.

And I have lost the sense of awe;  
Before deserted shrines  
I pass unseeing. Never more  
Kneel down if a star shines,  
Or falls, or if sweet fragrance blows,  
Or if a friend dies, or a rose.

This I have learned: The way to wait,  
And the strange loveliness of you;  
A secret that, too late,  
I understood; A few  
Dear, foolish words; the way to weep;  
And the long, lonely way—to sleep.

## FATALISM

There are two Eyes I cannot see  
Smiling at me . . . smiling at me. . . .  
There is a Voice I do not know  
Bidding me go . . . bidding me go. . . .

Out through the crooked, narrow ways  
Alone . . . alone. . . .  
Beyond our crumpled Yesterdays  
Where but a child still laughs and plays,  
And not a moan  
Is known. Where sunset petals curl  
In fading amethyst and pearl;  
Into a universe unreal,  
To a half understood Ideal  
Who turns her face aside, and weeps,  
Because she keeps  
Man's little dreams, toward her flown,  
Beneath her heel.

Alone . . . alone. . . .  
I go and feel  
The sunlight in my heart, and each  
Lesson that Sages strive to teach  
Open, unfingered, in my soul—

A wondrous scroll  
Antiquity  
Has left to me;  
For in the tremor of a rose  
Is love's Passion;  
In the fashion  
Of a pale, drooping cloud that goes  
Between the years, and breaks, and throws  
Itself against Immensity,  
Cannot you see  
A symbol of our life? We too  
Creep in the vastness undismayed;  
We, too, trace a dim channel through  
Our time, and fade  
Suddenly, like a broken cloud,  
And but a tarnished, torn shroud  
Will cover what we hoped and dreamed,  
And what we were, and what we seemed. . . .

Oh God! I thank you that you give  
Us this great privilege to live!  
For I have pressed  
Young flowers, here, against my breast,  
And trembled with the little breeze  
That fills, with secrets, little trees. . . .  
And I have lain very still  
Among the ferns on some warm hill  
That yet dashes  
Up, and splashes  
The glassy sky with mists of green. . . .  
Oh! I have seen  
Swift, tiny ripples all of gold

Around the throats of daisies fold,  
And clasp and sway,  
At end of day.

Then mellow grasses everywhere—  
Wisps of the blonde earth's yellow hair—  
Have brushed my cheek, and I have smelt  
Their fragrance. Oh, and I have felt  
The ageless vigor of the world  
Rush through me, like a comet hurled  
In space, as, held in ecstasy  
With earth's brown body close to me,  
The forces of her throbbing blood  
Mingled with mine in such a flood  
Of life—Youth leaped to break its bars  
And dance forever with the stars!  
We kissed. My face crushed to her face—  
All of her strength and ageless grace,  
With the first meeting of our lips  
Tingled into my finger tips. . . .

Oh! Not a bird that swirls and dips  
On high but it has set my heart  
A faster tune, and not a dart  
Of shadow, or the sound of wings  
Or waves—there is no wind but brings  
Fresh joys, keener love of being—  
Seeking, knowing, feeling, seeing!

God!

Thanks for this supreme, mad glance  
Into the things of Circumstance—

This vision of Eternity  
That you are giving now to me. . . .

Might it be true (as Prophets say)  
Our Night but waits another Day,  
And though flesh crumbles into dust,  
Our spirits, ever upward thrust,  
Live on! If *this* indeed were true?  
And I should sometime meet the You  
That caused, and causes still, the Me?  
But . . .

There are Eyes I cannot see  
Looking at me . . . looking at me. . . .  
There is a Voice I do not know. . . .  
And I must go . . . and I must go. . . .

## TO A SCRIBBLER

You—who make yourself a Poet—  
Are a fool, and ought to know it.  
Unless a song bursts in your heart  
Like petals blown wide apart. . . .  
Unless you cannot *help* but sing  
For God's sake write not anything!

## SPRING SONG

Oh wicked, wicked little bird!  
Why do you laugh at me?  
Is it because I'm young—and bound—  
And you are young—and free?

Oh beautiful, swan-throated cloud!  
Why do you float away  
Into the night, nor turn and glance  
Once backward, on Today?

Oh restless, pale blue slippered waves!  
How can you dance, nor tire  
Forever? Is there nothing that  
You have not—and desire?

## TO A WILD ROSE

Little wild rose I've found you. See!  
Under your cool, wet leaves  
You lift a pale, sweet face to me,  
And all the summer grieves.

For summer knows that I can stretch  
My hand, and snap your soul  
Like a pink string, where shadows swing  
And silence brims the bowl

Of your frail life—why do you live  
Thus hidden, little rose?  
Did you, then, fear if I came near,  
Your happiness must close

Into my hand that has crushed what  
Is most lovely, that takes  
A bud—a butterfly—a song—  
To play with—though one breaks?

Oh, little rose, bow down your head  
And blush—I do not dare  
To touch you. I am sad and old  
And you are very fair.

Draw back your petals—fold your  
thoughts.

Into the dusk she goes

Who loves you better than to take

You with her, little rose!

## CREDO

Deeply to live. That is to be  
A part of nature—like a tree.  
To sway beneath a breath of God,  
To feel our roots beneath the sod;  
To grow—to strain toward a cloud  
Beyond our reach—to prick the shroud  
Of twilight with a leaf, to die—  
Nor envy him who passes by.

Deeply to love. That is to seek  
For words which, found, we cannot speak.  
It is belief in things untried,  
A grandeur in what is denied,  
An ecstasy beyond our sense,  
A gesture—without recompense.  
It is a dream more sadly sweet  
Than hearts that touch, or lips that meet.

## REMEMBRANCE

Might I have loved you? I do not know.  
But I think if your hand had once touched mine  
As we stood on the hill where the pale clouds blow  
Close to the world, and Time runs slow  
Under the Pine. . . .

If our hands had touched, and eyes had met,  
The thing that is dead in my heart had stirred,  
And I think that we both might be standing yet  
There on the hill I can't forget  
Without a word. . . .

The crooked trees would have stooped and seen  
Strange wonder in our eyes,  
And the greedy white waves that scrape so clean  
The flat blue rocks, would have suddenly been  
Cold with surprise,

And slim, warm fingered winds would have  
brushed  
Stars through the dusk for this—  
That the lips of Eternity be hushed,  
And all of the centuries' love be crushed  
Into our kiss.

## COMMUNION

What fun to lie down in a daisy field! The stems of the daisies are polished and moist, and they tremble a little—ever so little—as though they were afraid—but I think it is because they are happy. I, too, tremble when I am happy.

I am lying so still, so still; the daisies do not understand. They lean over me to see what is the matter, and their faces are very pale. I look up into their golden eyes and laugh.

Sometimes, between the daisies, a caterpillar comes. I am not frightened—though it is big—as big as an elephant, and its body is covered with hair. Slowly, smoothly, it swings from one stem to another. The daisies shudder as it passes over them, and they droop their lovely heads. No one knows about the caterpillar but the daisies—and I.

Sometimes a cricket sits on my hand and sings. Its voice is hoarse—but we like it—the daisies and I—because it is meant to be beautiful.

Sometimes white butterflies come drifting . . . they are the souls of daisies.

Sometimes cloud shadows touch us like sighs, and sometimes a thrush sings. But always the daisies lean over me, and the world is powder and gold.

## THE WAY

I walk a-tip-toe in the woods  
For Beauty slumbers there,  
Her breathing shakes the youngest leaves  
And ripples in my hair.

I walk a-tip-toe across fields,  
Or I might break the wings  
Of butterflies, and crush the heart  
Of buds, and other things.

I pass a-tip-toe through the world  
And hardly dare to weep—  
Lest God should brush away this dream  
Of life—and let me sleep.

## THE SCULPTOR

I said in my heart: Before death spoil  
And pull me under the damp, black soil—  
Under the white, invisible things—

Before my flesh is hurled  
Into the vitals of the world,  
I shall stand up and toil  
For Beauty. I shall find her, make  
Her real to you. For Beauty sings  
Unto my soul. Oh! I shall break  
Mountains to reach her, and, alone,  
(For others will but think me mad)  
I shall carve out of a blank stone  
Her image.

From her frozen sleep,  
Hot and alive, Beauty shall leap  
Into the eyes of men. . . .  
Oh! then. . . .  
I can die—not caring—  
With my Beauty daring  
The clouds. Supreme! High! Unafraid!  
Beauty! The Beauty that *I* made!

And so I clenched my hands and toiled  
In the dim Night.

Black vultures fanned the burning air  
Waiting my death—greedy to tear  
My heart in shreds. I heard them, there,  
Shrieking in the empty spaces  
Between the stars. Empty faces  
Grinned out at me  
In mockery. . . .

Time—stupid, cruel, staring—sat  
Beside me—even thought to pat  
My body ere he pierced it through  
And mangled it. I've watched him do  
The same to others. Murderer!  
But I would make him wait—for Her!

She grew! Under my trembling hands  
No one understands  
How, she grew!

White were her tiny feet  
As opened waves, and fleet.  
Her limbs washed in the dew  
Out of a morning mist—  
Her marble flesh I kissed  
To make it pink.

Oh! Can you think  
How beautiful she was? Her breasts  
Were young petals, tender, curving  
Beneath a faint transparent moon—  
Tantalizing, and unnerving  
Every little timid breeze

Draping futile harmonies  
On her shoulder.  
To behold her  
Was to swoon.

Oh, there was rapture in her eyes!  
Rosy arms up to the skies  
She flung. On her lips, Loveliness,  
And the dream of a caress. . . .

Beauty! Beauty! I had won. . . .  
Lo! My Task of tasks was done!  
Up I leaped triumphantly. . . .  
But viper-like, suddenly  
Time plunged his fangs into my heart—  
I felt the awful poisons dart  
Through every vein  
In stabs of pain—  
I fell . . . and could not rise again. . . .

My heart's blood flooded Beauty's feet  
(No doubt she thought it cool and sweet)  
My stiffened arms in agony  
I stretched to her . . . she did not see. . . .  
I died. But in the vastness there  
Did Beauty care?

## A FAREWELL

Tonight you sleep. You sleep, at last.  
Life is a dream. Your dream is past.  
Farewell. The crowd that came to weep  
Has left—to laugh. Alone, you sleep.  
The night is here. The grass is wet.  
The stars are white. Shall I forget?

## DRAWING IN PENCIL

Pale gray waves, and pale gray sky,  
Tips of pines a-quiver,  
Pale gray winds like a child's first sigh—  
Song from over the river.

Ye who sing, in this dim world,  
What would your voices say?  
Blood tipped, the notes fall in my heart—  
They fall—and the world is gray.

## TO A SQUIRREL

Poor, funny, tiny, frantic beast  
Who prattles from a tree,  
And fixes shiny, impish eyes  
Between the leaves, at me!

I watch the pounding of your heart  
Against your furry breast,  
You tremble lest I should disturb  
The fuzz-balls in your nest.

I am your Fate, your God, your Hell,  
And still you scamper near,  
And boldly chatter out your wrath  
In agonies of fear.

I go. May He who looks beyond  
The little ways of men,  
Hush, as He comes, our terror and  
Smile down upon us, then.

## AUTUMN

Oh muse, infuse my heart and brain  
That I may utter the refrain  
I hear and lose, and hear again!

Now Autumn walks in majesty  
Between the ages; never old,  
She sprinkles thick the world with gold,  
And loops, in passing tree to tree,  
Veils of a blue transparency.

There is a brooding and a hush  
O'er vale and forest. As I pass  
There is a trembling in the grass;  
And there are tints no artist's brush  
May hope to catch. There is a flush

Of triumph on the earth's brown cheeks,  
And into nature's solitudes  
Comes now a Presence that intrudes—  
A Soul that yearns, and never speaks,  
And seeking, tells not what it seeks.

Spirit of sadness and of awe!  
Silent and lonely wanderer!

I feel your breath, I watch the stir  
Of leaves beneath your step. Before  
Your unseen image I adore.

Oh, Might I only voice the things  
You whisper me! Could I but tell  
The beauty of your long farewell,  
And weave in songs a poet sings  
Your falling tears, and murmurings,

And melodies and silence, your  
Enchantment tremulous and fair,  
Your golden eyes, and loosened hair,  
And wayward gestures! Oh to lure  
You into words that might endure!

I cannot. Even as I write  
The splendour dies. I grope; I find  
A broken flower left behind;  
A faded thought; and where was Light  
There darkness enters. There is night.

## MEDITATION

I touch myself. My skin,  
Though warm and sweet,  
Soon shall be meat  
For worms. It will begin  
To sift to air  
And, crumbling there,  
That stinking dust of me  
Will touch Infinity.

Oh! The dark pain to know  
That I must go. . . .

Stars, suns and flowers,  
And beasts and hours—  
They know not this.

I yearn a bliss  
I cannot reach—  
I learn a song  
I cannot teach. . . .  
I shudder in the vastness. Blend  
In what I cannot comprehend.

TO CAROLINE S. JONES

Willow, lean over her, awake her gently,  
And you, little flowers, listen intently!  
Hush; and oh listen! Perhaps you can hear  
The sound of her breathing, for you are near;  
You are so close to my darling—stoop low—  
She may be weeping, and I do not know.  
She may be laughing, and never a sound  
Breaks through! I lie with my face to the ground.  
Will you listen, tiny white flowers for me?  
Can you wake her, arms of the pale willow-tree?

## MY "IF"

If I could only sing  
The blueness of one flow'r  
Growing unnoticed, there,  
Through its blue curtained hour  
Of sun and wind and air. . . .  
Bending its tiny face to bring  
The vigor of grass rippled hills  
And polished skies into its stem,  
As Pan a hollow reed-stick fills  
With rapture, blows it forth again,  
Whispered, slow drifting melody  
Of cloud encircled plain,  
Of shadowed, pulsing sea,  
Caught in his pipe, and woven free,  
And tossed back, sweet, to them. . . .

If I could only sing  
The tremor of one leaf  
Floating upon an oval pool,  
And the unpitied grief  
Of the great Mother Tree, beyond,  
Sobbing; who strives to fling  
Gaunt arms about the sky and tear  
From its closed fist her children, there. . . .

Huge Thing, half human and half fool,  
Dumb, aching, over fond,  
Who shudders so, and grieves  
Although she knows  
That Spring will bring  
Her other leaves. . . .  
And summer goes. . . .

If I could only sing  
The blackness of a moon swept beach,  
Wet, blurred with little stars,  
The laughter of young waves that reach  
In knotted, lace edged bars  
Across it, and that swing  
Out echoes of a diamond song  
Dropped from a billow stretched along  
The sand, until it broke—  
Until its soul awoke  
And, waking, cried  
The agony  
Of timeless sea  
Before it died. . . .

Oh, if I could but sing  
One of your smiles—just one—  
So that the world might look  
And learn the wisdom of a Book  
Unwritten. Everything  
That were a part  
(Since worlds begun)  
Of brain and heart  
Of man who longed to know, or knew

Love's beauty, were a part of you—  
And might I sing  
Of anything—  
That's fair, and sing it true—  
My singing were a lover's trial  
(Who found all beauty in your smile)  
To give it back to you.

## SONG OF THE MORNING

Hail, little singers of the grass  
Who are—and with a summer—pass!  
Hail, little flowers turned to see  
The dawn, and wave farewell with me!

We seek forgotten paths that lead  
Through old, enchanted ways;  
We seek gold mornings, and the breath  
Of unreturning days.

Hail, little shadows, gently keen!  
Hail, silence, deeply soft and green!  
Hail, little poets of the grass!  
Awake and sing! And sing . . . and pass. . . .

## TO A PERSONAGE

Have you never felt your heart  
Open, like a rose,  
When the sun bounds out and throws  
Itself through Infinity  
Like a wind-tossed, weightless ball—  
Have you not felt this at all?

Have you never felt your life  
Lift itself, and soar  
Like a bird that vanishes,  
And returns no more?  
Like a rising moon that we  
Watch imprisoned in a sea?

Have you never felt the dawn  
Touch, with white fingers,  
A toneless string that lingers  
Deep within you—till it breaks—  
Leaves but shining strings well strung  
For the song that must be sung?

Have you never madly laughed—  
Paused—to wonder why?  
Have you never wept because  
Flowers, too, must die?  
If you have not, it is true  
That I do not envy you!

## THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN

If I were dead—and lying here—  
I think the birds would come quite near,  
The squirrels clamber on my knee,  
The ferns droop, sighing, over me.

If I were dead and stretched, as now,  
Beneath the trees, the trees would bow  
Their heads, and rosy winds would creep  
Softly, lest they disturb my sleep.

I am not dead. And while I live  
The forest cannot yet forgive  
My life. Oh! But I'm glad that I  
Shall be forgiven—when I die!

## ONE OF US

She passed; in silks and golden fur;  
In motor, whose unending purr  
Was like an ocean, deep and slow.  
She passed. I stood and watched her go.  
How pale her face! And all the lace  
Of veiling could not hide her eyes  
In which I saw—as long before—  
A sick surprise. . . .

Her tryst, now, is with death—ah, but  
She cannot cease to smirk and strut  
And, insincere,  
Struggling to quell some Phantom here,  
Moves on, a pitied, fearing Thing  
Through the gay world that does not bring  
Her rest. The crowded, gaudy street,  
The cackling fops,  
The tinted glitter of the shops,  
The noise and the sticky heat—  
All terms of life's reality—  
Are but a painted mockery,  
Strange pictures held in trembling hands—  
Pictures nobody understands—  
For such as she!

Oh! Drive her on! And let her stare  
Dumbly from her glass prison there  
Upon the outer, polished shell  
Of being, that can hide so well  
The horrors of an inner Hell  
She feels, but that she cannot see—  
Yet dreads, in her mortality.

Soon there shall creep unwept, away,  
Into unnumbered Yesterday,  
A life that, living, never knew  
It lived, nor dying, death was true.

## YVONNE

How gay her laughter!  
(Yet a fool knows  
Storms lie in sunsets,  
Thorns in a rose.)

How sweet her face is!  
(No one can see  
Worms that are gnawing  
Roots of a tree.)

How red her lips are!  
(Could a man guess  
Their wine were poison  
For lips to press?)

## WISDOM

Watch but a leaf fall down, too soon,  
From off the tree that bore it.  
See but a flower blanch and swoon  
Because a maiden wore it.  
Follow an echo till it ends,  
Dream but one dream that's broken—  
You have learned wisdom that transcends  
All that is ever spoken.

## A SECRET

There in the forest, under the dew—  
(You'd laugh if I told—if ever you knew!)  
Under the heaped up needles of Pine  
Lies buried—your letter.

It was so slim and so cold—so stiff!  
It was quite dead; and I thought, then, that if  
Words died—yes, even your words and mine,  
Dear, it were much better

To lay them down in some quaint, far place,  
We had loved together. Is there disgrace  
In loving and ceasing to understand?  
In dreaming—forgetting?

Oh, but I wish you had been there, too!  
It was so quiet, and I tried to do  
This last thing bravely, and yet my hand  
Trembled. Was I letting

My own life into the little grave  
That I had made? It was hard to be brave!  
Oh! Even the shadows bent and cros't  
My heart. The birds withdrew.

And there your letter will lie—will lie. . . .  
Forever and ever—while you and I  
Wander, seeking the dreams we have lost. . . .  
Would you laugh—if you knew?

## APRIL

Little fires of delight sweep me when the soft petals of a flower blow unexpectedly against my cheek, when a bird breaks its heart in a song, when the purple moss that falls always in the swamps, rocks gently, between pointed shadows.

What a day it is! The long grass of the fields beats in pale, yellow ripples against the sky. The tips of Pine trees are swaying, stiffly. Above, a hawk is floating.

It is as though somebody's heart were throbbing under the earth—setting the fingers of the trees trembling, pulsing through the blades of grass.

I run down the hill. Through my loose hair the wind flows like the breath of a sleeping giant. It is warm in the valley. There, it is the bosom of the world. Spring leans there first, star-eyed and eager. . . .

Out of the branches of Willows rosy-gray balls are bursting. I tear one away. How soft it is! How gentle! I press the furry bud against my cheek.

Clouds are lurching in the sky—splintering, and rolling away. It is very quiet.

## CHANT OF THE SEA

Who loves to kiss my lips at night  
Knows they are cold, knows they are white.  
Who lays his head upon my breast  
Shudders. I give eternal rest.  
Come! Merge your little lives in me!  
I am the Sea. I am the Sea.

A million ages are, and go.  
I laugh at them. I do not know  
The lash of time, the laws of death.  
I pant with being, and my breath  
Goeth, and bloweth back to me.  
I am the Sea. I am the Sea.

Unnumbered Dawns have poured their light  
Over my pulsing limbs. The bright,  
Gold stars dropt down into my arms,  
Men swooned beneath my cruel charms.  
Think not to know the depths of me!  
I am the Sea. I am the Sea.

Sometimes I stretch myself out prone  
Beneath the sky, and all alone  
Whisper unto faint worlds above

The endless secret of my love.  
Sometimes I rear myself and fling  
My arms around the cliffs, and sing.

Sometimes I laugh. Often my hair  
I tie with long white ribbons fair,  
And dance until the young clouds break  
Their hearts into the chords I make.  
Then, if you dare, come dance with me!  
I am the Sea. I am the Sea.

Oh! I can teach you how to hate  
As well as love. Come be my mate!  
I'll twine your throat with colored pearls,  
I'll pin blue star-fish in your curls,  
And your warm body I shall hold  
Till it is white. Till it is cold.

Then I shall hurl it suddenly  
Against the rocks. Then I shall flee,  
And, licking my pale lips with glee,  
Muttering incoherently,  
Recoil into Eternity!  
I am the Sea. I am the Sea.

## THE UNSEEN

In sunlit silences,  
Through midnight hours,  
I sought—I seek thee—Loveliness. . . .

In the frail cups of flow'rs  
That dusk drenches,  
In the long, strange caress  
Of waves, and in the secret parts  
Of time, and within human hearts.

Vanishing, beautiful, gone—when regainable,  
Dreamless I seek for thee, Dream unattainable!

Is there a leaf that drops—  
Worlds that must fade?  
Is there a life that stops—  
Are new worlds made?

Wonder and argument,  
Love, mystery,  
Sadness and merriment  
Lead but to thee.

Does morning sweep the air  
With glist'ning wings—

Do children wander where  
A skylark sings—

Are great words spoken and  
Misunderstood—  
Are young thoughts broken and  
Lost, because good. . . .

All that is sadly and  
Wondrously true,  
All that is gladly  
Eternal, or new. . . .

Power unchanging and that yet changes all—  
Shadowing, shadowless one! Is aught small?  
Is aught great? Or seems anything most—or  
less—  
To thee in an universe—Loveliness?

## THOUGHTS

In sooth, I know not if I be  
In love with love—or love but thee!  
Hadst thou not better come and see?

The moon is very round and white.  
Alone, I watch it, every night—  
Yet I am young—oh! what a plight!

Each morning sees the sun arise  
And burst apart the bolted skies.  
It looks at me with its red eyes.

And all day long the shadows fling  
Their arms about, and big clouds swing;  
And all day long the thrushes sing.

Sometimes I wander near the brink  
Of waterfalls. Sometimes I drink.  
Sometimes I only stand and think.

Sometimes I watch the twilight creep  
Across the hills, and then I sleep.  
Sometimes I lie awake, and weep.

And all night long, stoops over me  
A thought—perhaps it is of thee.  
Dost thou not care to come and see?

## TO A WATERLILY

Here on my desk it lies,  
Glory of sun and air!  
Ivory, gold filigree, and green—  
How did it draw from the dullēd sheen  
Of quiet pool and thick, staled ooze  
A life so brilliant and so fair?

Cool, cooler than star wet skies—  
Child of Light and God's dreaming, whose  
Soul fills all my own with fragrance—  
Poem unuttered and sublime  
That but an echo learns . . . and time. . . .

What! Fading? All your petals curl. . . .  
Was my touch rough, sweet flower?  
Ah! would that I too might furl  
My life as yours, and in one hour  
Opened, as you—broken—turn whence  
I came; giving, as you have given yourself;  
    thus close;  
Fade as a lily fades . . . go as a lily goes!

## BUBBLES

It is hard to believe in Death. Death is so unlikely! Why should I believe in it? But perhaps it is true—yes, there are people who say that it is. And yet—how ridiculous. . . .

I go into the garden. A little fountain is tumbling about. The sun cuts it through and through but the bubbles do not break. The bubbles are blue and yellow. They look as hard as stones. They are like colored pebbles under the sea.

There are butterflies in the garden, too—thousands of them. It is as though the petals of the flowers had been torn away and sent floating through the wind.

The grass is warm. When I stretch myself upon it it seems to me that I am lying upon a silk quilt—a quilt that is as big as the world.

There are birds in the trees and I am glad that I do not know their names. I only want to shut my eyes and to laugh—to laugh softly, forever, all alone. It is wonderful to be alone!

I am trying to believe in Death. The birds are singing deliciously. The flowers are so quiet . . . they are listening. The world is a bubble too—squeezed between crumpled clouds. How can I believe in Death? How can I believe in it . . . till the bubble breaks?

## CHILDHOOD

I loved, then, meadows softly sweet,  
Powdered with flow'rs, a cloud  
Edged thick with gold; the sobbing, fleet  
Song of a bird, the loud  
Moan of forests curbed low in grief;  
A star I loved—a world—a leaf—

A daisy. Twilights and blue days,  
Wind, snowflakes, people's eyes,  
A sled, a rabbit, and a dream. . . .  
Life was a long surprise.  
I loved the moon; I loved ice cream,  
And laughter, and to touch cool silk,  
Or velvet—loved the taste of milk. . . .

I loved to run; I loved to feel  
The wind upon my face,  
Fingering all my curls and, too,  
I loved brown leaves; a place  
Where rich earth crumpled with cold dew  
Silvering all its perfumed cuts.  
I loved the soft, warm, crooked ruts

Of wagon wheels through woody lanes  
Where white bloodroots trembled;  
Loved streams in abandon rushing

Past prim buds assembled  
At the grassy edges—hushing  
Vague music in the undertones  
Of water splashed on colored stones.

I loved all, and I scarcely knew  
What I loved most—myself  
Or others—or the magic world  
With its unhoarded wealth  
Of tints and sounds and feelings whirled  
Together; I was but a part  
Of that which was and is—a heart

That beat itself in rightful tune  
With creation. A spray  
Of purple blossoms touching me  
Could wound me, or could sway  
My soul in flaming ecstasy,  
And life—it only seemed as this—  
A lover's endless passion kiss.

## SELF

I sing. A part of me  
Joins not in song.  
I move—the heart of me  
Moves not along.

I speak—yet thoughts I know  
Are never spoken.  
I dream, but whence dreams go  
I have not token.

Somewhere the soul of me  
Lags far behind.  
Somehow the whole of me  
I cannot find.

## LAST NIGHT

How still the night was! And I lay  
So quietly, and tried to pray.

But all my thoughts just whirled and flew  
Around Heaven, and back to you.

I held your letter in my hand,  
And I tried hard to understand.

But when I read it once again  
I knew not anything but pain.

The moonlight trembled on the floor,  
Though I had bolted every door

And window—moonlight speaks of you,  
It trembled—and I trembled too.

There comes an hour when we find  
That all our life we have been blind.

There comes an instant when we feel  
All other instants were unreal.

So in the stillness of the night  
I learned this lesson, fought this fight,

And wept one last, long, time. The rest  
Is silence—and silence is best.

## JUBILATE

I am happy!  
Notoriously!  
Gloriously!  
Uproariously!

To the tips of my toes  
My blood a-tingle goes!  
My limbs are white!  
My soul is light!

Sing! Little birds your funny melodies!  
Fling! Little winds your arms around the trees!  
Pour! Brimming sun your wine into the sky!  
You are not madder  
Or gladder  
Than I!

Into my drifting hair  
I pin moon-flowers rare;  
My cheeks are stained, you see,  
With the red youth in me!

Dance! Little elves in the blue forest shade!  
Kiss! Poor young lovers who sigh

For the love you will lose—the love you made—  
You are not happy as I!

Happy am I!  
Curiously!  
Furiously!  
Flauntingly!  
Tauntingly!  
Pass me not by!

## A PRAYER

God, is it sinful if I feel  
His arms about me when I kneel  
To pray? His arms that thrilled and drew  
Me along paths the world's youth knew?

Or is it sin if I mistake  
Eternity for time—and break  
One instant from the dust of years  
To mix with ecstasy, and tears?

God, oh my God, the way is long  
Alone. Can it be very wrong  
To dream of ways I did not tread?  
To weep for words I never said?

## CHAPTERS

We who love life—we who love all  
That is—shadow pierced and tall  
Trees bent with a golden weight  
Of sun; and flowers, dreaming late;  
Ferns that lingeringly unfold  
Green souls; and all the naked, cold  
Clouds that wander across hills—  
We who have heard, when silence fills  
A night, the laughter of a star,  
And who have trod where wonders are;  
We who have touched an angel's wings,—  
Who listen—if an angel sings. . . .

What matter if the hungry earth  
And sea and air reclaim us? Mirth  
Is ours and the sweet agony  
Of love—that which was or can be—  
We know, together. Let us stand  
And read the instants, hand in hand,  
Till they grow dim, till we divine  
Not their full meaning—the last line  
Holds yet, perhaps, some strange, clear truth—  
Proves death another, fairer youth.

## FRAGMENTS

I am a part of all things seen,  
Of all that is; of all that's been;  
I am part dust of world and sky,  
And I am Thought that cannot die.

### TO M. B. JR.

There is not wealth, nor the acclaim  
Of multitudes—there is no fame  
I would not forfeit to one end—  
The “good! I like this!” of a friend.

## THE BARRIER

If I look in another's eyes  
It is your eyes I see.

If a hand touches mine I think  
It is yours touches me.

All laughter bears the undertone  
Of yours, all tears the pain,

All life the ecstasy you gave  
Me once—and took again.

Is it not strange that I who tread  
Youth's flowered, careless way,

Cannot forget the dreams we made,  
The words we spoke, one day?

Must always your heart beat between  
My heart and others? Will

The mem'ry of your kisses seal  
My lips to others, still?

Life were too sweet, perhaps, could we  
Make real the thoughts we know—

Death is not sad for those who weep.  
God has ordained it so.

## STARS

The night is like black crystal sprinkled with gold. I sit beside my mother on the high seat of the carriage and feel the night pressing against us—closer, closer, it presses—as though it would crush us between thick shadows.

My mother talks of many things but I do not try to understand. I hear only the silence of the night and I wonder why silence is loud.

Then my mother says “Look at the stars!” And I look up. It is the first time I behold them though I have seen them many times before.

Stars!  
I have seen them and forgotten them. Now I see—and afterward I do not forget. Suddenly I love them. Oh! how I love them! They speak to me, and I answer softly, in a whisper—for we know only wonderful things.

## FANTASY

Under the moon I lie  
And sing.  
Breezes die,  
And the big stars swing  
Like rosaries in a purple sky,  
Like golden beads on a velvet ground.

I count them there. . . .  
To count is a prayer  
That does not end, and that does not sound—  
A prayer I found  
Under the moon as I lay and sang  
To the moon top, where the star-beads hang.

And my rosary, star on star,  
Loops the universe round—so far  
That I cannot see  
Where its end may be.  
But ever I pray  
For I think, one day,  
I shall break and toss  
My body free  
And kiss the cross  
Of my rosary!  
Wet is the moonlight,

And it is cold,  
And it is white.  
Fold on pale fold  
It covers me deep  
And I fall asleep. . . .

## TO LIFE

Life! Wrap your arms about me  
Tightly. . . .  
For they are cruel and strong,  
For they are brown and long,  
And they can reach me.

Teach me  
To love the pain  
Of your embrace. Again,  
Oh, teach me not to strain  
From out it!

Life, you are like a man  
Passionate and proud. I can  
Not live and doubt it.

Take me, life! I would feel  
Your great heart beat  
And steal  
All the wild heat  
Of you, flaming to meet  
And sear through  
What is not real. . . .

Oh! I am sick of dreams!  
Sick of a world that seems

Fed upon shadows. . . . Do  
Take me, life, when you will,  
And my pale being thrill  
With the red strength of you!

## WAITING

Foolish one,  
I love you so!  
Can it be  
You do not know?

Timid one,  
But come to me!  
I am bound—  
And you are free.

Where the shadows  
On the grass  
Stretch pale bodies—  
There I pass. . . .

Where the sunlight  
Runs in streams,  
I have laid my  
Little dreams.

In the darkness,  
All alone,  
I have heard the  
Ages moan.

There is nothing  
Love makes plain  
That I have not  
Learned again,

There is nothing  
That I do  
Done without a  
Thought of you.

Foolish one!  
And youth must go—  
Can it be  
You do not know . . . ?

## MARRIAGE

Close, little door of my heart  
Against the winds of the world!  
To faces, voices, and tears  
Close, like a flower furled  
At dusk. Once, wide apart  
Your portals flew  
At Dawn. The heedless years  
Entered. Then you,  
Filled with dull pain,  
Shut not again.

Close, little door of my heart!  
Today there has entered in  
Through the years  
And the tears,  
Through voices, and faces, sin,  
Weariness,—one Face, one Voice—  
And now—rejoice!  
Close! And you prison there  
In the dim chapel where  
Strangers and fools paraded  
And youth faded,  
Him, for whose coming you swung

A-jar;  
Him, for whose soul you flung  
So far  
The rusted key  
Of mystery.

Close, little door! Never  
Fear but your lock is strong—  
Stronger than love is long!  
Close . . . forever. . . .

## THE PAST

It is best, perhaps, that we cease to care,  
Having once cared finely, sweetly,  
Best that, in parting, we meet despair  
One instant, proudly, fleetly.

It is best that, loving, we did not spill  
Out all our young passion madly,  
That we turned our eyes aside, still  
Pass one another sadly.

Yet what instants we might have known, each sense  
In dizziest union thrilling!  
What ecstasy, what recompense  
Of love with more love filling!

Or what unimagined glories had seen,  
Or dreams Paradise had disdained—  
All this—all this that might have been—  
Cannot ever be regained.

## CRY OF A DEAD POET

See, stranger, my grave! Grasses sway  
Over me, and your gleaming Day  
Sinks not beneath the frost chilled ground  
Where I have found  
Relief.

I, too, have trod the worn way  
Of grief—  
I too have loved and suffered, and  
Have agonized to understand. . . .

I, too, have smiled.  
And now black, stiffened earth is piled  
Over my thought.

Almost, I caught  
The hem of a swift floating gown  
Of light, sweeping  
Beyond our life—  
Almost had sung  
Its wonder—when a dripping knife  
Severed my frantic hands that clung—  
And I was flung  
Down, down. . . .  
Weeping. . . .

## THE LAST GOODNIGHT

Goodnight!

The day that was so full of sun—  
The little day that was begun  
So brilliantly, and just for me,  
Is ending. Twilight, quietly,  
Is creeping to its burnished rim  
And worlds are dim. . . .

Goodnight!

A strange wind clasps the fading hills  
And strangeness fills  
The valleys. Naked now, and stark,  
Out of the dark  
Shadows are lifting,  
And I am drifting  
Upon them. . . .

Goodnight!

The last rays fall along  
My life, and like a song  
Too gently sung—Day goes;  
Silence flows  
Over me. . . .

## TO A YOUNG POET

Let not the laughter of a world  
Silence one song.  
Raise up thy voice and sing!  
Art liveth long.

Demand not praise. Nor praise nor  
blame  
Can make thee less  
Or greater. Bend thy heart  
To Loveliness.

Feel, if thou can'st, the grandeur of  
An unseen God.  
Trace, if thou can'st, His touch  
Beneath the sod.

Be quiet. A million secrets  
Then shalt thou hear.  
Walk humbly; and angels  
Thou shalt come near.

Love. And yet wonder not if thou  
Art not loved too,  
For thou must suffer more  
Than others do.

## DEATH

Death lives in every flow'r  
That grows.  
Death flows  
In every hour,  
And blows  
Around a woman's heart. . . .

In part  
Death leaves  
Its traces  
In faces,

Is found  
In the warm smell of ground  
Fresh turned,  
In the white smoke of burned,  
Fragrant dreams;  
In bright streams  
Pouring out glory  
Death weaves a story  
Of sadness.

Life is but a farewell,  
And life's gladness  
A halting tale we tell

Upon the edge of Time,  
A broken rhyme  
We try to sing  
And, failing, fling  
Away. . . .

## MEMORY

The thought of you is like a wound.  
It comes when I am most happy.  
And then my happiness bleeds,  
And falls in thick drops out of my  
    heart,  
Until my body and my soul are white—  
White with the stiff whiteness of dead  
    things.

The thought of you is like a splash  
    of stars  
Against hot nights.  
It is like song, whose lilt I cannot  
    catch.  
It is the coolness of a woman's hand,  
Caressing.  
It is a little glimpse of God  
Through the gray shutters of  
Life. . . .

## THE ARTIST'S FEAR

Is it a waste of time to dip  
My pen into rich sun  
That lies in puddles all about  
Since Morning was begun?

Is it a waste of time to spread  
Bright colors on a page  
That will be glued into a book  
And shut, as in a cage?

Is it worth while to dream and hope,  
To love and work and pray,  
When like a book I shall be read  
And closed, and put away?

TO C. E. K.

Last night I dreamed  
I was a little girl once more,  
And you—you seemed,  
As in those days of yore—  
A Presence lovely, yet remote,  
Farthest when near,  
Strange, but most dear—  
Like a high note  
Which, faintly heard, we strain  
To hear again. . . .

And in my dream  
There was a field of daisies, white  
As drifted snow,  
And a small stream  
Pale bloodroot rimmed, where I  
    would go  
To gather buds for you. . . .  
A summer's night  
Washed in cold dew—  
Stars, and the slow, infinite drone  
Of locusts. In the dusk, alone,  
I listened for your voice, a child  
Whose world was Eden if you smiled.

And in my dream such tears  
As only Youth can brew,  
Bewilderments, vague longings, fears  
And hopes because of you.

The dim road beckons; we will tread  
Where you have trodden first, ahead—  
So was it always, you would be  
A little further on than we!

## SOME DAYS

Some days my voice is mute, my heart  
Quite empty, and I tread  
All silently, with lagging steps,  
The path that leads ahead.

Some days I cannot understand  
The loveliness of rest,  
But stumble onward, with hands clenched,  
Upon an endless quest.

The birds still sing. I do not hear.  
The stars crowd all the sky.  
The beauty of the world puts out  
Its arms—and I pass by.

Half blind, half deaf, aware—yet cold—  
I pass, and human eyes  
Look into mine and turn away  
Sadly, in hurt surprise.

## ON RETURNING A PIPE

Take back your pipe!  
What need to tell  
The story that you know full well?  
Upon the mantlepice it lay  
In haughty pride, as though to say,  
"Oh careless mortals, pause! behold!  
He cherished me, yet I am cold—  
He loved me, now his lips on mine  
Draw fire from my heart  
No more. I pine  
For him and still my part  
In all his life is small.

Pause, mortals, pause!  
I symbol am  
Of what you, too, will come to know.  
Old friendships and familiar things,  
Smiles, dreams, far hopes, all that life  
brings,  
One day like me  
Forgot will be,  
And Time's long fingers, deft and tried,  
Will lay *you* on the shelf aside!

## CRITICS

Like bees that suck a flower's heart  
And buzz importantly,  
And sting who interrupts their meal—  
So Critics seem to me.

Scarce has a wee bud opened wide  
Its petals to the sun,  
Than many bees assemble and  
Invade it, one by one.

They crawl into its inmost soul,  
Down where the seedlets are,  
And drink its fragrance, smudge its  
gown,  
And leave a tiny scar.

The kindest bee is very rough—  
May abuse his powers,  
And, (sometimes without knowing it)  
Wounds the sweetest flowers.

Men say that bees are useful, and  
Make delicious honey,  
And that "good" bees are always  
worth  
A vast sum of money.

But I have seen a baby rose  
All pale and trembling, try  
To hide her head as a bee flew  
Inquisitively by.

## THE ANSWER

“Do I love you?” This you ask,  
Setting me the hardy task  
Of all time, and rhyme, and youth,  
As you whisper, “Tell the truth”. . .  
So I ponder  
While out yonder  
The transparent moon swings low,  
And a bird calls,  
And a star falls,  
But the answer—can I know?

Suns and planets, winds and flowers,  
Nights and days and misty hours,  
Clouds, a pearl, a butterfly—  
Things eternal, things that die—  
Are glad in being;  
Strong, not seeing  
Through the dimness. At each turn  
I am doubting,  
And am pouting,  
And I am afraid to learn.

If to love you is to know  
Where the twilight purples go,  
And the glory

Of a story  
Dreamed—if loving is to drink  
Out of sadness,  
Out of madness. . . .  
Why, I love you then . . . I think. . . .

## A SUICIDE'S PRAYER

Oh! Blue-white stream!  
Listen! Could I but tear  
My sad heart out, and there  
Under your sweetness,  
Under your fleetness  
Hold it an instant,

Would it not then soon be  
Of its dark stains washed free?  
Would it not beat as wild  
As the heart of a child?

But, Blue-white stream,  
I cannot wrench it free  
From the black depths of me. . . .  
Come then! Dash over me!

Break, you, my flesh apart,  
Find, you, this prisoned heart—  
Touch it with your cool lips,  
And on a wave that slips  
Into Immensity  
Whisper a memory. . . .

## THE COQUETTE

Tonight before my mirror blue  
I stand. Candles at either side  
Flicker. A pinkish, orange hue  
Sinks in the glass.

Oft I have tried  
To know myself in that strange face  
Confronting me between the lace  
Of shadows. Yes! its true—its true!  
I'm young—and I am passing fair!  
Ringlets I have, of auburn hair,  
Each light entangled curl inwrought  
With finest gold, and my dark eyes  
Are large and soft, my skin is white,  
My lips made for a kiss—  
(There's one who tries—  
As others might—  
To prove their worth, in this!)

See! not a wrinkle does begin  
To squirm, wormlike, upon my skin!  
Come nearer! nearer! stand by me—  
Gaze in the mirror too, and see  
How fair I am! Really, almost  
I'd like to kiss myself—were not

The gloom so deep . . . so thick . . . a  
ghost,  
Almost, to my own eyes, I seem—  
No! But a lovely, untold dream—  
An angel's dream . . . by one forgot. . . .

How strange! As though the vision were  
Not I! As though the unheard stir  
Of formless things had wafted her  
Between the dimness and the light  
Into my mirror here—tonight!

I gaze and gaze . . . queerly she smiles  
And watches me out of the haze,  
Lays fingers on her lips, and piles  
Of shadows lurch and fall and blow  
More closely round her, like the flow  
Of gray, innumerable years.  
Now tell me, do you think it tears  
That make her lovely eyes so bright? . . .  
The woman in my glass . . . tonight? . . .

I thought I knew her! Oft before  
We've played upon a distant shore,  
Laughing together, hand in hand  
Strayed down some little flowered slope  
Of life . . . and now I grope . . . and  
grobe. . . .

And touch her not, nor understand  
How she can smile, how she can weep. . . .  
The shadows are thick, shadows creep  
Over and under—everywhere—

Along the smoothness of her throat,  
Into the glory of her hair  
And eyes, and ever more remote  
Her gestures. Tell me—is it shame—  
Or is it but the candle flame—  
Floods those lovely cheeks with fire?  
Do you think it is desire? . . .  
I had believed she could not bow  
That proud young head . . . and now . . .  
    and now. . . .  
We're strangers—but I know not why—  
The woman in the glass, and I!

## THE DREAMER

I am as one who only stands  
And carves a name upon the sands—  
A wanderer—lost to the world—  
Upon a misty island hurled.

I am a ship-wrecked dreamer there  
In a sad Paradise more fair  
Than dreams, where but a dream is left  
To love, since of a God bereft.

On sands of life my dreams I lay,  
But Time, the ocean, floods Today—  
Tomorrow's beach is polished clean  
By waves that creep where I have been.

TO J. P. K.

Words . . . words . . . how can words  
always flow

When this—and only this I know—  
That you are dead? There, in some  
room,

There, in the empty gloom  
Are laid! God, have you made  
The glory of our little day  
To sweep it utterly away?

(I falter, and my faith is weak.  
Eternal One! Lean down and speak  
To me! I'm blind. . . . I cannot see  
Your face, or find in mystery,  
Your answer. . . . I beseech you, speak!  
Eternal One! I am so weak. . . .)

Dearest, your life with mine was  
bound,  
Through childhood and through youth  
I found  
Your eyes upon me, and your hand  
In mine, and did not understand.

Now you are dead. Dead. Dead.  
And the last prayer is said. . . .

Words . . . oh, I cannot write  
Calmly, is not the Night  
Between us? What is rhyme  
Crushed in the fist of Time?

## A VIOLINIST

You played. And then I closed my  
eyes  
And listened. Time  
Drifted away. The pale, young skies  
Bent to that lifted sacrament  
Of sound. I found  
Your soul in one white, naked note  
That, laughing, fell  
From Paradise  
In which you dwell.

## POETS

Poets, they tell me, do not care  
To live in cities—  
A thousand pities!  
Because it must be true that there  
Are poets everywhere—  
Even in cities. . . .

If poets yearn  
For sun washed fields  
And Autumn woods aglow,  
If but the moods that Nature yields  
A poet longs to know—  
If he would watch a baby fern  
(And seek therein delight)  
Open its baby fist and turn  
Itself toward the light. . . .  
If poets cannot happy be,  
And poets cannot Beauty see  
Or wonder find  
In great cities—  
Poets are blind  
Weavers of ditties.

For see! In every dingy town  
Sometimes the rain comes drifting  
down—

A million strands of silver thread  
Unwound, and overhead  
The round clouds, swinging gently,  
    flow  
Between the house-tops, very low,  
And golden lamp-lights spill and sway  
Like dahlias on the street;  
Somewhere between the mist, Today  
Mingles with Night. Their breath  
    is sweet.

In cities, too, at twilight time  
A star floats very high  
Above the canyons red and gray  
Where little people work and play  
And laugh and weep and die. . . .  
And if you choose with me to climb  
Upon the faerie crest  
Of some gigantic palace, there,  
(A white wave held at rest)  
Then hand in hand we'll stand above  
The foolish things we used to love,  
And watch the sun burst red and go  
Into the dimness far below.

The city hums a sleepy song  
And cuddles down between the long  
Thick folds of greenish fog that creep  
Upon it and are soft and deep. . . .  
And all the world melts into blue—  
And space and life—and I and you—  
And silence brims into our thought.

We are but atoms, strangely caught  
In time, who ride  
An instant side by side,  
And in an instant fall  
Back, into All.

Oh! Cannot poets ever see  
The poems in Eternity?

And in great cities there are days  
Filled with a dusty sparkle-haze  
When every brick and every stone—  
Even the piles of rubbish thrown  
Aside, are painted glory tints  
You cannot buy with all the mints  
Of ages. Look!  
White doorsteps glimmer smooth and  
    clean,  
And on the pavements is a sheen  
Of varnish. Every edge and crook  
Of everything is dipped in bright  
Clear bubbling light,  
And, in every city Square,  
Children laugh forever there....

Go, Poets! Seek your woodlands,  
    then!  
Forget this weary world of men!  
We are not poets—we remain  
To find its beauty in its pain.

## MY JEWELS

I have seen the swelling sun,  
Like a blood filled bubble, fall  
To the sharpened world, and burst on  
    the tip  
Of a Pine tree that is tall.

I have seen a clear, glass cloud,  
Painted with pink and with gray,  
Float to the top of the tilted gold cup  
Of the dawn, and spill away.

I have heard a Woodpecker  
Beating the heart of a tree,  
And I have kissed naked young leaves that  
    stretched  
Cold washed faces up to me.

## HOURS

Here on the hill I fling myself  
Deep in the sun-tipped grass.  
I am an elf!  
Green clad and glad!  
Stung with a mad  
Young love—and here I pass  
Round, shining hours  
While silent flow'rs  
Bend their gentle faces  
Above, out of places  
Hidden from men—

Gold sprinkled corridors,  
Tiny, endless, that lead  
Through tufted shafts the laughing  
seed  
Of things that grow. . . .

And here I know  
The secrets that your books can't tell—  
Swift magic, and a twilight bell  
Rocking from out a distant town  
Tumbles the giddy sunset down  
Upon my head;  
And on this bed

Of swift, drifting, tingling glory  
I strain, I catch at the story  
I have not heard  
Told word on word.

If the pale grass trembles,  
I tremble too.  
Night wanders, and the dew  
Falls from her eyes  
Upon my cheek.  
Her fingers slip through mine and  
    speak  
Far things you would not understand—  
Far, broken things—and now my hand  
Is touched by One beyond our Time,  
And kissed by Lips beyond a  
    rhyme. . . .

## WHEN I AM DEAD

The fires that toss through my clear  
blood—

Soon these will cool to ashes;  
And all my love of love—this flood  
Of reaching life, that flashes  
Through me into the universe—  
This shall be hid by Time, the nurse,  
Who pulls a sheet across the face  
Of tortured Youth; and every trace  
Of me upon the earth I tread  
Shall be but earth—when I am dead.

## POEMS

I am tired of poems of love, the moon,  
Of stars and of passion and death—  
I am sick of odes upon Nature and Hope  
And Spring and its “balmy breath.”

Must always the lines that poets contrive  
Be twisted the same foolish way?  
Have none of our poets who babble so much  
Got anything new to say?

And yet, what is new? The world is so old!  
The universe never began!  
Sing, then! Little Shadows before you must  
fade!  
Sing! Little Phantoms called Man!

The moon does not care if you think it fair—  
A rose is no redder for you,  
And the sky does not hear your praises, I  
fear,  
When it is a turquoise blue!

Sing! Little Phantoms! Forget, in your  
songs,  
If you can—you live but Today—

Forget that your stars and your moons and  
your Springs  
Heed not at all what you say!

For your moons and stars and Summers and  
Springs  
Move on with the long step of Time,  
And smile with a cruel and pitying smile  
Through Eternity at rhyme!

Oh! Gather your queer little words and string  
Them out from the point of your pen,  
And study your metre, and torture your brain,  
And give to the Phantoms—Men—

Wise little stupid melodious thoughts,  
And the Phantoms will shout your name—  
But your moon and stars, and your Summer  
and Spring  
Will never hear of your fame.

Ages shall fall like a seamless white pall  
And bury your words in a pile—  
But the moon and the stars and Summer and  
Spring  
Smile an inscrutable smile.

## THE WOODNYMPH

Out in the forest all alone  
A woodnymph sits upon a stone  
Of amber, and she combs her hair  
And smiles—because she is so fair.

An oval pool is at her feet,  
Twined with white moss and flowers sweet,  
And all day long upon the stone  
The woodnymph sits, and dreams alone

The big trees love her, shut her out  
From eyes of men, and all about  
Stretch bearded, gentle faces down  
And touch her, and pretend to frown.

The shadows yearn—but never dare  
To twist themselves into her hair,  
And all day long she combs it through  
And laughs—what *can* a lover do?

He can slay all the selfish trees!  
He can find her and he can seize  
Her little hands—so small—so white—  
That fold his dreams into the night!

Woodnymph! Combing your sun-drenched  
hair!

Laughing and sighing—dreaming there  
In the dim forest all alone  
Upon a polished amber stone—

Do you believe I cannot break  
That little comb of yours and take  
You from the sobbing forest and  
Kiss you until you understand?

## LAUGHTER

“Beauty is sadness” . . . once I smiled  
When men spoke thus. I was a child  
Of laughter then—and laughter mad—  
I smiled, if men called beauty sad.

And all my merry, wise youth through  
I laughed and laughed—till I met you. . . .  
And then I stopped; then laughter seemed  
A sort of noise that I had dreamed.

But this is strange . . . I'd rather be  
Possessed of just one memory  
Of you—than to forget love's pain  
And have my laughter back again!

## WEDDING OF NATURE AND A SOUL

It is my wedding day! The dawn  
Laughs out across the hills.  
The sleepy Pine trees wake, and yawn  
And stretch, and wonder fills  
My cup of life to its gold brim. . . .  
I wait—I wait alone—for him!

Long we have loved. When but a child  
I felt strange lips on mine—  
Now swiftly opened, beating wild  
Wings touch me, a divine  
Tremor shakes all the world—a sigh  
Of dreams that only yearn to fly.

And so I wait. Blinded joy feels  
Its way through thought. I wait.  
A stupid, rosy Cupid steals  
My veil—shoots arrows late.  
Young flowers titter; then I see  
Them weeping dewy tears for me.

Will he forget? But hush . . . oh  
hush . . .

He comes! The forest bends  
To meet him, and the pale clouds blush—  
He comes! Now he descends

Upon me . . . oh! His arms are strong!  
Oh! I have loved him—loved him long!

Sing, forest! Every tiny leaf  
Burst out your veins with song!  
Cling, flowers, to us! All belief  
In Beauty's to belong  
To Beauty, and to hold it fast  
An instant, ere it flashes past.

## SEA-GULLS

Against the evening sky  
Hosts of great Sea-gulls fly  
In slanting bars.  
Is it not strange that they  
Should know a trackless way  
Among the stars?

## ECSTASY

To the smooth, cool, sun-washed dome  
Of a hill I crept.  
The forest slept.  
I was far from home.

Far, far from home!  
White grasses fell  
In waves against me. I could tell  
Where Pines pricked open Paradise.  
In me burst a mad surprise.

I stood and flung my arms out wide.  
Youth was in me! Could I hide  
Its glory? And the trees stooped wet  
And bare; oh! could I forget  
That I was young?

Clouds were lilies. Down they swung  
In loose garlands from the skies.  
Perfume stung my heart. My eyes  
Were blind with light—then I trod,  
Laughing sadly, up to God.

## A PORTRAIT

Your eyes are strange. I do not know  
Their color, nor their meaning, though  
I've searched them secretly to find  
The secret thing that is your mind.  
Woman with the cold red lips  
And pale, strong hands! Your spirit dips  
Far into mine and drinks—but I  
Tremble when I pass you by.

Ah, may I never touch that hand?  
Or kiss those eyes? . . . or understand?  
I love you! But you only smile  
Sadly, and for a little while. . . .

## FLOWERS

The Master Painter mixes  
His colors far on high,  
And sweeps them soft at evening  
Across the empty sky.  
Faint blue and gold and carmine,  
Purple, silver, and green,  
Mingle and throb in sunsets,  
Shimmer and fade and gleam.  
Tints on that mighty easel  
Fade in the distant hush,  
Only flowers are left us—  
The drippings from his brush. . . .

## PLATITUDES

“Creatures of Time!”  
The hackneyed phrase  
Sings over dully in my brain  
Through sunlit days. . . .  
And joy . . . and pain. . . .

“Creatures of Time!”  
What more? And yet  
We strut long futile hours  
    through  
Laughing, forget  
What once we knew.

The endless tide  
Sweeps on, and we,  
Sinking, stretch out our hands to  
    grasp,  
And smile to see  
Bright things flit past.

## TO THE MUSE

God of the Tints and Tones  
No Art can teach!  
Power above the thrones  
I may not reach!  
Glance down out of Infinity  
And pity me . . . and pity  
me. . . .

Only a twisted note is flung  
To earth as your vast song is sung,  
Only a bubble drifts to me  
Out of your spangled symphony.

## SUPPLICATION

Thou whom we name flippantly. . . . God. . . .  
Oh vast uncreated!  
To whom we mouth our greedy lips  
In countless words freighted  
With futile wants—Who alone grips  
The stars between strong fingers, hears  
All silently our little fears. . . .

Thou, who hast woven Ages, and  
Whose blood as energy  
Nourishes worlds—Thought Unsleping,  
Unsolved, Eternity  
Itself—Behold! We are weeping,  
Wanting Thee—time wound tops that dance  
Awhile, and break on Circumstance.

Art thou sad, oh Being Eternal?  
Art thou sad?  
Or is our weeping naught to Thee?  
Are we mad?  
Dost Thou laugh, Being Eternal? See  
Our individual life released  
At death—in other forms increased?

What we called “soul” in us poured down  
As sunlight on a star?

What we called "flesh" crushed into dust  
And all we were and are  
Made something else? Creator, must  
Our little hopes but fall apart  
As fall the pulsings of our heart?

I do not know—when shall I know?  
And yet I do believe  
That Thou who called me into being,  
Canst not myself deceive  
Forever into feeling, seeing  
Thyself in everything, if Thou  
Art to me nothing then, or now.

Why make me, Lord, to seek Thee if  
The search is but a jest?  
Why tempt me, Lord, to find Thee if  
To lose Thee were my rest?  
Why does my spirit, like a skiff  
Shattered against a rocky shore  
Still love the Sea that floods it o'er?

Thou are not cruel . . . Thou are not cruel. . . .  
In this I place my trust,  
And, trusting, lift my eyes to Thee  
Because I must. . . . I must. . . .  
Grant then, Creator, that I see  
Thyself at last, or do now close  
My eyes from seeing, like a rose

That lives, indeed, and living, sheds  
Its beauty—just a flow'r

That yearns not passion, yearns not love,  
Feels not, is but an hour  
Becoming, hopes not things above  
Itself—is happy for it knows  
Always, only, it is a rose.

## SNOW

Over the city washed with gray  
The snow-flakes sway. . . .  
Sway, and mingle, and gently fall  
And touch the dirty street, where all

Noise is hushed. The loose clouds  
    flow  
Against the world. Sparks of snow  
Drift, like petals through the skies,  
From a rose in Paradise.

My life is like a snow-flake. I  
Float an instant on the sigh  
Of ages, swelled with light—and free—  
Strangers soon will trample me.

## TO A FRIEND

Sometimes your spirit touches mine  
But you, I think, do not divine  
The instant when the two entwine. . . .

I am a brook.  
You are the sea.  
Am I to you what  
You are to me?

My shallows turn to depth in you,  
My colors burn a clearer hue,  
And blackness, rippling in my heart,  
Gathers to waves that burst apart  
In majesty  
When you touch me.

You are the sun.  
I—a flow'r  
Daring to love you  
For an hour. . . .

Can a sun know that its vast light  
Fondles a petal till the tight  
Closed bud unfolds,  
And fragrance holds?

## CONFESSION

The world's a dream to me, I know  
Whate'er I do, where'er I go,  
If plunged in vast affairs of state  
Nor let my actions time abate,  
Though every instant pregnant be  
With deeds of sound reality,  
Yet all life and all actions seem  
The floating rainbow of a dream,  
A colored, sun-shot drift of spray  
Waft of an ocean depths away,  
A star-spun web of Beauty not  
Vanished a moment till forgot.

And yet each instant, though unreal,  
Vibrates with wonder, and I feel  
The inner, mystic Mind that wills,  
And with hot force each atom thrills.

We hate and clash, we little men,  
Make peace—then hate and clash again—  
And build a garden or a town  
To, when its finished, tear it down.  
Like puppets are we wound and set  
To rush about, and fume and fret  
And grasp, and in a tumble vie

With one another till we die?  
And then like insects too profuse  
Earth mingled be, and find our use  
In richening the clay? The gain?  
A flower brighter for our pain!

Volumes I've read, and pondered slow,  
More than the common man to know;  
Yet all of knowledge comes to this—  
We are, and while we are, seek bliss.  
There is a something in our soul,  
Urging the part to find the whole—  
Life argues God. We strain to see,  
And finite yearns Infinity.

Music, the written word, all Art's  
Symbolic of the groping heart  
Of man which, in its highest reach,  
Teaches in that it fails to teach.  
The beauty of our life is such  
We only soil it when we touch  
Its form with analytic skill—  
Science, life mocks, and lures us still  
To marvel and applaud, adore  
Its Maker and attempt no more.

Not that we should but blindly stare  
The Universe, quite unaware,  
Or take for granted all we see  
Not questioning how it may be,  
But that, in seeking, we refrain  
To set the key at lower plane.

Because creation's pitch is high  
For us to sing, must we then try  
To warp the octave, scales to change,  
And thus its harmony derange?

Is it not wonderful to be—  
To think and feel, to do and see—  
And yet, in being, know that all

Oneself and every thought is small?  
Set like a pin point t'wixt two seas  
Of ignorance, we strain and seize  
At straws of knowledge—theories dim—  
And, with this aid, essay to swim  
Toward an unchartered goal. We pride  
Ourselves on Reason and decide  
Naught is, that Reason cannot mark;  
Of life, has Reason found the spark?

Belief in God but once denied  
This Reason wavers, and is dyed  
In bogs of speculation thick  
With Contradictions. There we stick  
And, sinking, do not extricate  
Ourselves until it is too late.

Think, fool! Look up! If we could see  
All that that Is then would we be  
Not man, but God—and have no need  
Of Wonderment, of Faith or Creed—  
Or Past or Future. But since you  
Created are, then it is true

In your weak state you cannot hope  
Doors of all mysteries to ope  
And through Creation's Portals gape.

Oh men! who claim that from an ape  
You sprang, yet, still assured, intend  
To sway the Planets—God transcend  
And put away! Were your vaunts not  
So pitiful much mirth, I wot,  
They'd brew in Heaven—but, scarce spoke,  
The speaker dies. His brain is broke  
In bits by worms and he is done.  
(Still all the universe can run.)

Ages repeat, our Reason used  
Aright, is never sense abused—  
Endow dead earth with heart and mind—  
Say: "herb, beast, man, are of one Kind  
And from the one the other drew  
Out life," is but to trace anew  
God's work. A thousand epochs can  
Not in mere time account for man  
Design left out. Seek not to tell  
Us chance has ruled all things thus well  
And order keeps. Star beyond star  
Moves in its ordained groove. Afar,  
Unnumbered worlds revolving see  
Controlled. Their awful majesty  
Veilēd in distance, lest we feel,  
Sickened with dread, that God is real.  
Above the universe He waits  
Eternally; loves; recreates.

Meanwhile we live, or think we do—  
A cramped existence. It is true  
We know not much—but be content  
Our souls are up—not downward—bent;  
Part of the circle now we scan—  
All of it soon—the perfect Plan  
At last we'll see, and until then  
Mark how the patterns fit! My pen  
Is guided by a Hand unseen  
Till it must move, and all I mean  
To say is spoken by a Voice  
Through me. And I have little choice  
Of words, but still must write—nor try  
To pause. So write, scarce knowing why  
Or what. This Power urging me  
Is the same conscious Energy  
Moving vast worlds—and men speak wrong  
Who say the Poet makes his song.

## A CHILD

I am very small and important, and I demand to be loved. Always, I want you to love me—but there is something sad in you, something far away.

I like to kiss you, and if you do not kiss me in return, I weep . . . but you never know. For I weep at night in bed, where I lie with my rag doll clenched in my arms and am alone.

Then it seems to me that the world is lonely because you are not with me, and because I have kissed you, but you have not cared.

I listen to the locusts humming . . . humming . . . in the garden, and I wonder. . . . Why do you not love me? I am very small, and I am so important, and it is so necessary that I be loved!

Oh, if you understood!

One morning I rush to you, laughing. I am happy, and it seems to me that you must be happy too. I fling my arms about you and wait. But you look at me strangely—and forget to smile. . . .

## A WORD

There is a word I hate—  
And you have used it,  
Mocking my trust in Fate—  
Others excused it.

What is this little word  
That I abhor—  
This that I have not heard  
You speak before?

Ah, but you know it well!  
And you are clever!  
The meaning is "farewell"—  
The word is—"never."

## ALONE

Voices and faces, laughter, tears—  
And great halls filled with Youth,  
And little twisted roads where years  
Slip past the thing called Truth. . . .

Through these I walk, and hardly know  
For what I seek, yet fling  
My arms out wide to catch the sun—  
And touch not anything.

Flesh is but Shadow wrapped in cloth,  
And Soul I cannot see,  
And all the turmoil of the earth  
Is like a dream to me.

Why do ye laugh, who are so gay?  
Why weep, who are so sad?  
The children of our little day  
Are beautiful—and mad.

So I must pass (I know not if  
It is your fault or mine)  
Unloved, alone, I must pass on  
To where all paths entwine. . . .

And God will take us in His arms—  
The sinners and the good—  
And smile away the tears of those  
Who have misunderstood.

## A WALK

In the taut silence of the wood  
Where Angels tread,  
Fingers on lips,  
And overhead  
Brown clouds are twisted round the tips  
Of trees that brush  
Warm dreams against the sky, and hush  
Time with long whispers, as it slips  
Under the stillness—there we stood;

And you—you talked of foolish things,  
And laughed out loud—  
The pale, star-dripping veil that swings  
Back from the proud  
Black head of Night, fluttered, and swept  
Over my heart. . . . I could have wept,  
Then, because you did never feel  
The kiss of groping thoughts that steal  
Out of the world—nor breath of wings  
Passing . . . but talked—of foolish things. . . .

## A GARDEN

My garden's quaint,  
And it is bright  
With golden light  
And rainbow paint.

A tiny pond  
Is set in grass. . . .  
A looking-glass  
For all beyond.

Great pigeons sway  
On snowy wings.  
The fountain sings;  
The wind blows gay.

The shadows sift,  
And butterflies  
In thousands rise—  
Petals adrift.

## WHILE YOU TALK

Sometimes, when you have been talking  
Of houses, and people, and things,  
A mad, up-leaping fire flings  
Me far—I hear not what you say  
For I am swept into a Day  
That is, was, and shall ever be—  
A day of that Eternity  
You can forget.

And when you fret  
Because I do not comprehend  
The sentences that never end—  
The sentences about your Things—  
Then bear with me, for Beauty clings  
Around my heart, and what you feel  
Is life, to me is then less real  
Than shadows that a curved moon throws  
Upon the world, or hope that goes  
Dancing across pale dreams to sleep—  
Or thoughts only the Angels keep.

## A WOMAN

You would give your red lips to press  
On mine forever—would caress  
Me with your white, unused arms  
And fill me with the sweet alarms  
Love sends through Man;

And you would nail your heart to mine,  
And with your laughter would entwine  
My soul and body, till the two  
Were one—and always one—for you.  
This is your plan.

## MY WILL

Oh Death! Great and unrealized goal  
Of all who live! Only a dream  
Your vast, unclosing portals seem,—  
A vague half truth—  
To me whose soul  
Is drunk with Youth. . . .

Strange Death! What are you now to me  
Who quaffs the glittered ecstasy  
Of being? who treads a path of light  
Leading away into the night  
I do not fear? . . . but that is near. . . .

Violet shadows on a wall,  
And drifting clouds, an owl's far call—  
A flower wet with starry dew—  
*These* are more real, oh Death, than you!

And still you come. Your pauseless tread  
Dimly I hear. I shall be dead. . . .  
And who loved, and who loves me yet  
Will weep a moment, then forget—  
And all my smiles, and all my tears,  
Will fade into the drifted years.

But this I ask. Who e'er you be  
That watches my last agony,  
And shuts my eyes in that long sleep  
The unnamed, ageless millions keep,

Pull not a sheet across my face,  
Nor draw the blinds and dim the place  
And speak in whispers. This I hate,  
With feigned affection, coming late,  
And windy sighs, and solemn airs,  
And cast down eyes in unfelt prayers.

Open the windows! Do not chide  
The boys who shout in play outside—  
Nor what is joyous, what is bright;  
For these I loved. I loved the Light.

THE END

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