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WIDENER



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JEWELS
OF
ROMANCE

GEORGE FAUNCE WHITCOMB

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To Gamaliel Bradford
with deepest gratitude,

Joseph Bruce Blount

Easter 1930

Brookline Mass.

JEWELS OF ROMANCE

o
JEWELS OF ROMANCE

BY

GEORGE FAUNCE WHITCOMB

AUTHOR OF

"EAGLE QUILLS"

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Mr. ...

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ENCORE A TOI

CONTENTS

TO YOU WHO READ	2-3
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JEWELS OF ROMANCE

THE LAND OF ROMANCE	6
OBSESSION	7
MIRAGE OF DESIRE	8
TO THEE	9
REMEMBRANCE	10
NORTHERN LIGHTS	11
PERLE DE LA MEMOIRE	12
LOATHING	13
AMOURACHE	14-15

SOLITUDE STUDIES

SOLITUDE

According to the Lover	19
According to the Murderer	20
According to the Tramp	21
According to the Mother	22

QUATRAINS

FRAGMENT	25
REQUEST	26
TWO QUESTIONS	27
AFTERMATH	28
DISAPPOINTMENT	29
ENCORE	30
TWILIGHT	31

CONTENTS (Continued)

THE ENTICEMENT OF FAME

THE ENTICEMENT OF FAME	35
To —	36
RESPONSE	37
To A VIOLINISTE	38
DISCRETION	39
LYRIC for A. Borodin's "Dissonance"	40
A PLEA TO DAWN	41
WE TWO	42
A FEAR	43
THE MISSION	44

TO YOU WHO READ

Jewels of Romance

TO YOU WHO READ

Old men write and sing of Love's entrancing vale,
Whose perfumed bowers they knew so well;
And strive with memory's blessed arms to scale
The fortress where young romances dwell.

Young men write and ponder on philosophy,
Whose vagueness sharpens their intent
To fathom Life's overwhelming mystery,
To taste Fame's semblance of content.

What a piteous sight as old men try to pen
The wondrous spirit of romance;
Forgetting that ghosts can only mock again,
A truth their efforts but enhance.

Jewels of Romance

What a piteous thing that young men seldom write
Of their passion while it enthralls;
How sad it is they take not time to recite
Love's ecstasy before it palls.

So, my friends, in these my poems, may you find
The ardor of youthful romance;
And as mine is but an errant pen, be kind,
Nor seek to view my moods askance.

JEWELS OF ROMANCE

Jewels of Romance

THE LAND OF ROMANCE

You want me, my love, to carry you away,
Far away from these laws that oppress,
To some Twilight shore where happiness
Reigns over all, and Life is a roundelay;
To a land of rapt'rous tenderness,
Where Laughter and Love are forever at play?

I know just such a land, ah, 'tis wondrous fair,
Yet I dare not lead you to its shore,
For lovers who have been there before
Have returned in sorrow, hearts laden with care,
Cursing the kingdom forevermore —
Its ecstasies were greater than they could bear.

Jewels of Romance

OBSESSION

The appeal of wondrous ages hidden deep within
your eyes;
The million rubies ablaze on your lips seem to
tyrannize
My very soul, like a subtle obsession which
terrifies.

An obsession persistent, enthralling, a force which
enchains
Ev'ry part of my being to yours, and with its
might sustains
My longing to know the strength of your passion
before it wanes.

Jewels of Romance

MIRAGE OF DESIRE

I have heard thy voice these many nights,
Vague, beck'ning with promise of delights
I dare not even hope to know.

Thy slender arms with their soft, lithe strength
Seemed wrapped about me until at length
I slept within their precious fold.

The satin feel of thy vibrant breast
Brought anew that delicious unrest
Which sated my soul once before.

And when I begged for thy lips' moist fire
Each vein pulsed once again with desire
To mold thy blest being to mine.

But as I stretched my arms to enfold thee,
My arms with their youth meant to hold thee,
Thou hadst vanished — mirage of desire.

Jewels of Romance

TO THEE

The myst'ries of the sea and air,
The treasures hidden 'neath the ground,
And flowers blooming everywhere,
Grant not the fascination found
In the sorcery of your hair.

Jewels of Romance

REMEMBRANCE

Far off, a valley bathed in star-dust met
Our view, and beckoned through the latticed
door:

And just beyond, a mountain's silhouette —
The waning moon its golden epaulet.

Night's vast stillness awed me, you sensed my fear,
And pressed me closer in your wondrous arms:
My lips, unbid, sought yours and found them
near —

My soul took fire — then — things grow dense
just here.

Dawn came too soon, and with it one regret;

Regret that we could never more be one.
But through the years you must not once forget
That my love for you burns deep within me yet.

Jewels of Romance

NORTHERN LIGHTS

You were not with me when the Northern Lights
Blazed white across the late March sky:
You did not see the wondrous, awful heights,
Which by their vastness, terrify.

You did not feel the strange and weird unrest
That comes into the soul of man
When Heaven's star-bejewelled lights attest
The meagreness of Life's vague span.

You did not sense the melancholy spleen
Of solitude which fills the mind,
Like some ugly dwarf with hideous mien,
Cursing the softness of Spring wind.

You did not crave, while drinking deep the wine
Of Heaven's wondrous potency,
The nearness of another to define
In silence, Love's great ecstasy.

Jewels of Romance

PERLE DE LA MEMOIRE

I was not near when first thy beauty shone
In all its youthful tenderness;
Nor dare I hope to be when years have flown
Away to silver loveliness;
Yet I do not grieve, because I have known
The velvet warmth of thy caress.

Jewels of Romance

LOATHING

I loathe the myst'ry concealed in your eyes,
Because I cannot escape its lure;
I loathe the appeal of your blood-red lips,
Because I know 'twill always endure.

I loathe the cling of your body to mine,
Because its yielding consumes my soul;
I loathe the thrill of your whispered delight,
Because — I love you, beyond control.

Jewels of Romance

AMOURACHÉ

Thy wondrous body ofttimes in rapture hath
given

Its fragrance, its warmth, and its softness to
mine;

The throbbing velvet of thy rose-crowned breasts
hath driven

Me mad, as I kissed the flaming tips divine.
And yet I wanted thee still more.

The pink-tinted plain beneath thy breasts' youth-
shapen curve

Hath ofttimes rested my head — my tongue
at loss

To describe in words the beauteous sight my
eyes observe,

Portals of thy soul, through strands of mid-
night floss.

And yet I wanted thee still more.

Jewels of Romance

And when my lips, drenched in the precious
wine of thy soul,

Once again sought clinging refuge upon yours,
The ecstasy glowing in thine eyes told me my
goal

Had been won — that thou wert mine forever-
more.

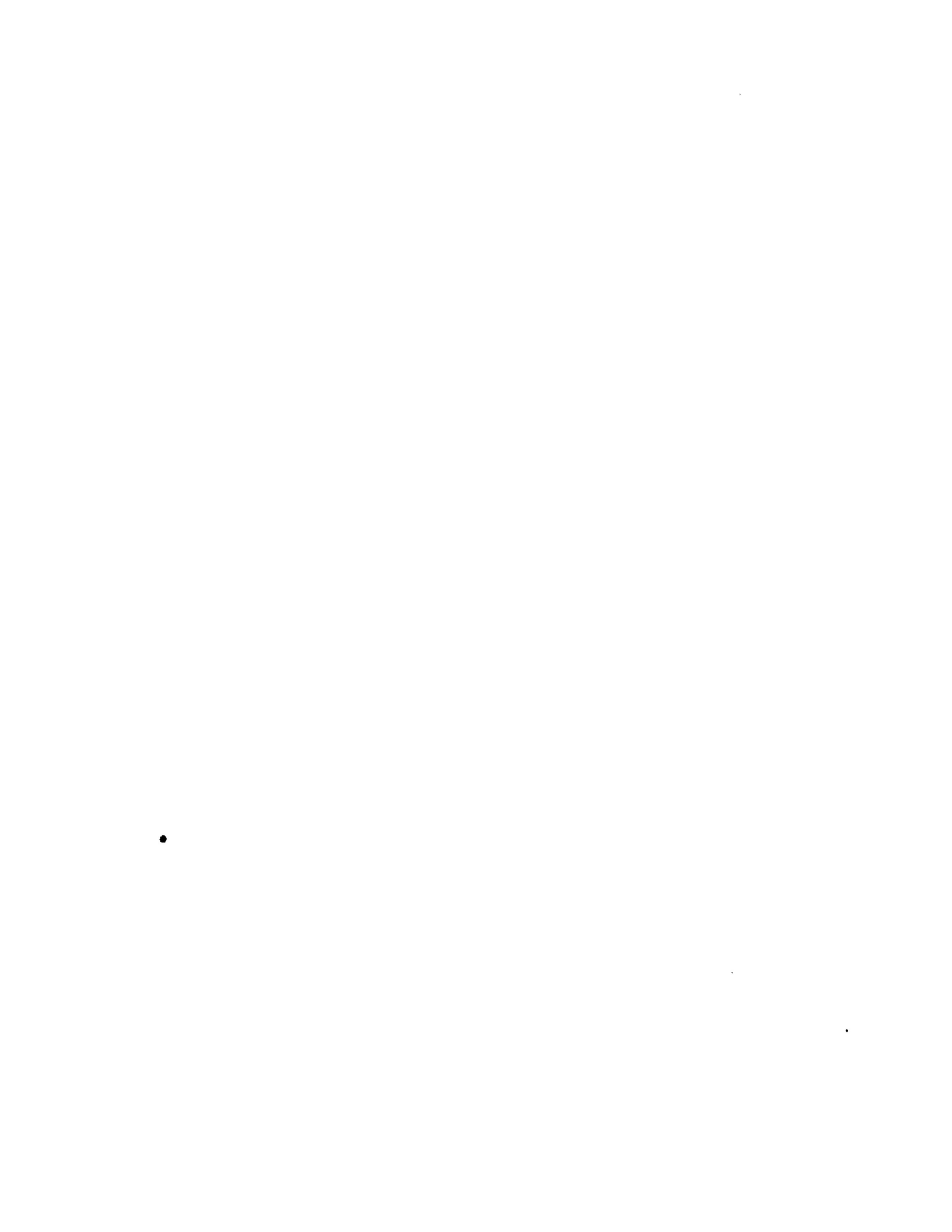
And yet I wanted thee still more.

I could love thee and sate thee for a thousand
more years;

I could build thee a palace still more sublime
Than the Taj Mahal, warm India's mansion of
tears,

For my love knows no limit of space or time —
And yet I would want thee still more.

SOLITUDE STUDIES



Jewels of Romance

SOLITUDE

According to the Lover

Deep sorrow envenoms my mind,
For the joy which could have been mine has flown,
And in its stead, with pondrous weight has grown
The lifelong curse of being blind
To the lasting love you offered.
I, too eager to grasp the cloak of Fame,
Gave no heed to your love's consuming flame,
And ignored each delight you proffered.

Jewels of Romance

SOLITUDE

According to the Murderer

The vulture of sad memory,
Whose piercing shrieks of inborn hatred sweep
Mercilessly away sweet longed-for sleep
Encircles me with fiendish glee.
Each time he sees my spirits dim
He bats his sordid wings, then digs his claws
Deep in my weary flesh with weird guffaws,
And revels in his power grim.

Jewels of Romance

SOLITUDE

According to the Tramp

Each lovelorn youth, each Jezebel,
All men of affairs, all songsters inspired,
All builders of dreams, all laborers tired,
Each solemn priest and idle swell
Have hastened to their dwelling place,
Where blaze huge logs on their hearthstones so
bright,
That troubles and cares are banished from sight,
While I trudge on from place to place.

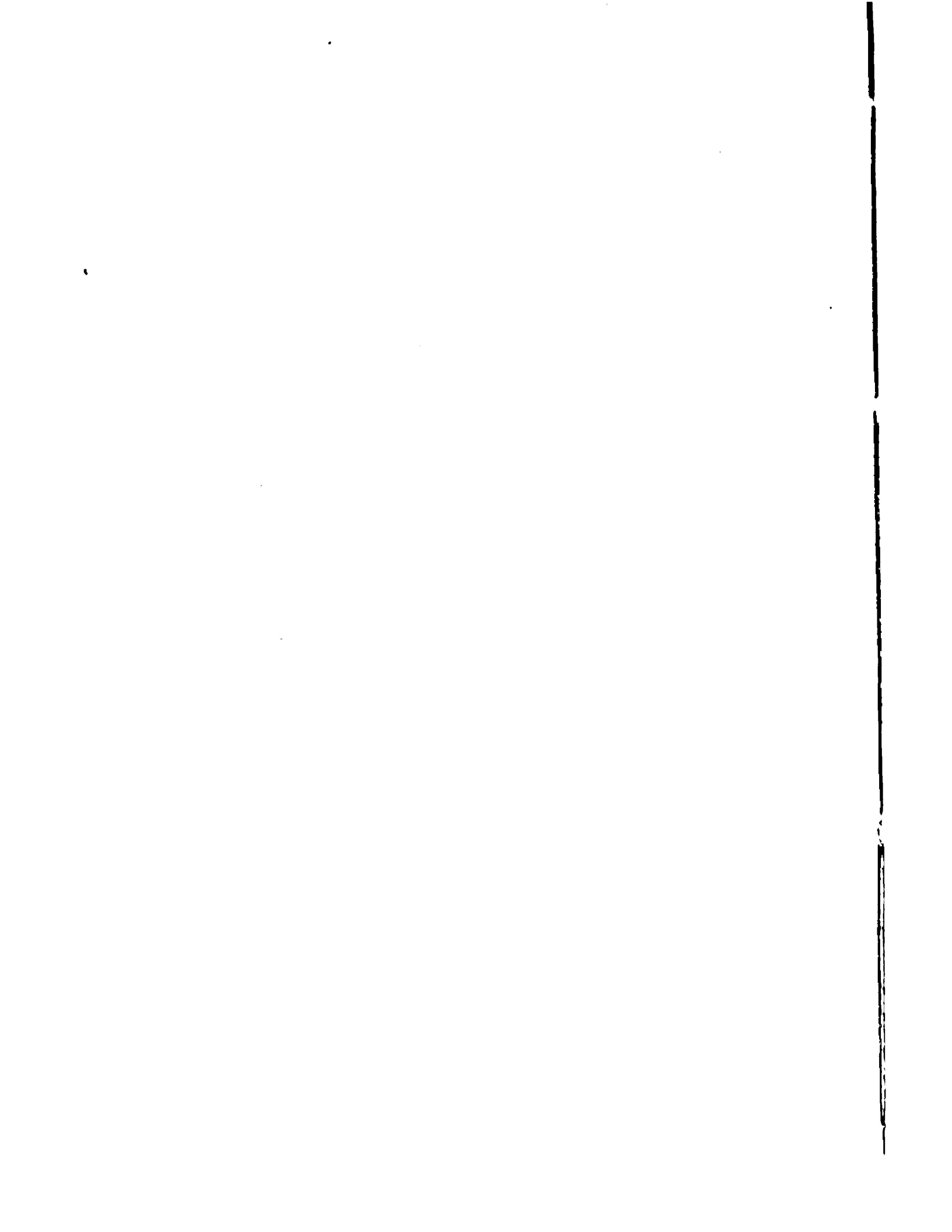
Jewels of Romance

SOLITUDE

According to the Mother

When I saw your lover kiss you,
The sorrow which filled my heart was so deep
That I cried myself into troubled sleep
And dreamed of how I would miss you.
In my dreams I envied the thrill
Which came to your lover each time he pressed
Your lips — lips which used to cling at my
breast —
Ah, that you were my baby still!

QUATRAINS



Jewels of Romance

FRAGMENT

If only I, from out this world of dreams,
Might have the choice of one apart
To weave forever in my soul, it seems
Thou would'st be of that dream, the heart.

Jewels of Romance

REQUEST

With heart anhungered and lips athirst,
I long for the warmth of your kiss.
Let the radiance from your soft brown eyes
Bespeak acquiescence to this.

Jewels of Romance

TWO QUESTIONS

You say, sweetheart, that our love is o'er;
That our lives lie apart from now;
Can we quiet the vast ocean's roar?
Can we gainsay Love's sacred vow?

Jewels of Romance

AFTERMATH

You still are you, just as you were that day
When first your slender fingers thrilled me —
While I — I am but Sorrow's protege,
Loving the memory that chilled me.

Jewels of Romance

DISAPPOINTMENT

Like a wounded bird I held you,
Hoping, in vain, that my embrace
Might soothe your hurts, and kindle new
Embers to warm our hearts apace.

Jewels of Romance

ENCORE

Once more the pathways of our lives converge,
 Bearing a heavy burden of regret;
While wonderful old memories emerge
 To taunt us with sweetness we would forget.

Jewels of Romance

TWILIGHT

Just as a naked dancer, tired from her play,
Of treading gayly grains of virgin sand,
Slows from her maddest whirling to a graceful
 sway,
Twilight creeps softly o'er the quiet land.

THE ENTICEMENT OF FAME

Jewels of Romance

THE ENTICEMENT OF FAME

With languorous arms and thighs the Goddess of
Fame

Entices the weary poet from shore,
And bids him sacrifice his very life to claim
Her dazzling surrender forevermore.

He sees the captive chain about her slender wrist
And, knowing she can never come to him,
Insanely tries to win her favor with a twist
Of genius which may gratify her whim.

But as he strives to reach her side, he does not see
The vultures circling near to tear his soul;
Nor does he hear the moaning, deathlike melody
Of other slaves who failed to reach their goal.

Jewels of Romance

TO —

Would that the softness of your young, white
breast

Needed but my embrace

To satisfy the longing in your heart.

Ah, could I find the trace

Of your sweet consent that I so desire.

Does your silence grant me grace?

Jewels of Romance

RESPONSE

I asked you if you liked the poplar trees,
Their slender grace and gentle charm,
Enhancing the winding drive like a frieze
Of ancient Greece — stately and calm;
And for answer you pressed my hand.

I asked you if you liked the rolling lawn,
Where the late Fall sun was at play,
Casting a loitering shadow upon
The quiet pool across the way;
And for answer you pressed my hand.

I asked you if you liked at Dawn's first ray
To gallop madly o'er the field,
Not to return till the glory of day
Had passed beneath cool Twilight's shield;
And for answer you pressed my hand.

I asked you if, when Twilight's hours have sped,
A vague yearning cries in your soul,
Craving the warmth of a word yet unsaid,
Some rapture you could not control —
And for answer you pressed — not my hand.

Jewels of Romance

TO A VIOLINISTE

The lightest touch of your fingers
 Makes wild fancies leap from within;
The ardor of passion lingers
 From each tone of your violin.

Just as the leaves from maple trees
 Are blown gently down in the Fall,
Just so glides each cadence with ease
 From sorrow to joy at your call.

In my heart I envy each tone
 That sings from the strands of your bow,
Because in your soul it has known
 Those secrets my heart yearns to know.

Jewels of Romance

DISCRETION

A young maiden crooned to a youth close by,
“When you wander by a lovely rose,
“Do you stoop and pluck it where it grows,
“And leave it forlorn and withered to die?”

The youth replied with a smile, “No, not I,
“Whene’er I pass a rose in bloom,
“I simply drink in its sweet perfume,
“And go, that I may return bye and bye.”

Jewels of Romance

Lyric for

ALEXANDER BORODIN'S

DISSONANCE

Your eyes form the dream that enchants me,
Your lips breathe "I love you," and yet
A dissonance vague enthralls me,
Like the haunting veil of regret
That you reveal to delude me.

Jewels of Romance

A PLEA TO DAWN

Dawn, Dawn,
The still glory of your early morn glow
Steals over my being like wine;
The blended shades of your blues and grays throw
Nameless yearnings into my mind.

Dawn, Dawn.

Dawn, Dawn,
The subtlety of your advent and flight
Increases my longing to know
The mystery of your brilliance and might.
Bare your secret before you go.

Dawn — Dawn!

Jewels of Romance

WE TWO

We have smiled together, we two,
For many more years than it seems;
We have played together, and you
Have put happiness into my dreams.

We have wandered afar, we two,
And have known separation's chill;
We have loved under heaven's blue
And have trembled at passion's will.

And we found through it all, we two,
That our love puts sorrow away;
And each year that comes we find new
Joys in being together alway.

Jewels of Romance

A FEAR

The years between have not saddened your eyes,
Nor spirited your laughter afar:
Nor has adulation's mocking disguise
Left on your heart its heinous scar.

Yet there is something quite changed about you:
And I fear that if we part again
A longing would creep in my heart, a new
Ecstasy that I could not explain.

Jewels of Romance

THE MISSION

I have slept many nights in the Mission,
Called Chinatown's haven of rest;
Where exist broken men with ambition
But to escape Life's leering jest.

I have dwelt in marble halls and have known
The mockery of Fortune's smile;
I have earned the world's respect — yet have
flown
From it — for 'twas based upon guile.

I have loved in many strange, foreign lands,
Trying to ease my weariness;
Searching blindly for some soft, loving hands
To shield me from dread loneliness.

But as I failed in my search, the Mission
Called loud to my soul craving rest;
So I shall dwell here without ambition
Safe at last from Life's hollow jest.

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