

HILL FRAGMENTS

MADELINE MASON-MANHEIM

With an Introduction by ARTHUR SYMONS

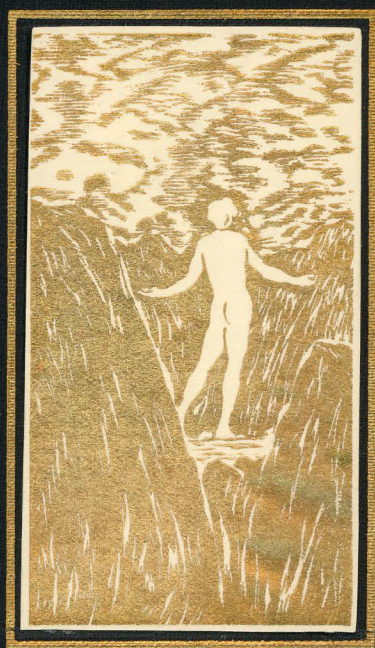
and Drawings by KAHLIL GIBRAN

EXTRACT FROM THE PREFACE

“. . . Her verses are musical in the highest sense of the word; those that are finest have that rhythm which should move to no distinguishable action, which is already awake in the void waters, out of which a world is to awaken.

“Certainly the disembodied voice of a ghost, or it might be of a spirit, sings to us out of some of these verses, and with a simplicity so intense, and so casual in seeming, such as only the finest elaborations could extract from the confusions and complexities of Nature. Her preference for the homeliest words, and for the rhythms in which the art—as I have said—consists in a seeming disregard of art, is in her favour; . . . she obtains effects, not merely of abstract passion and depth of thought, of unrestrained emotion, of a sense of mystery, of tragic ecstasy, of a rapture that radiates joy, but also of fantastic subtlety, of remote and curious charm.”

CECIL PALMER



Madeline Mason-Manheim
to

Jessie J. McLean,
who is one of the sweet
memories of Banff.

Banff, 1925.

HILL FRAGMENTS



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BY

MADELINE MASON-MANHEIM

With a Preface by ARTHUR SYMONS

And Five Drawings by KAHLIL GIBRAN



LONDON: CECIL PALMER

CHANDOS STREET, W.C.2.

CONTENTS—*Continued.*

Dead Stars	- - - - -	39
Moon Thought	- - - - -	40
Swallows at Dawn—Venice	- - - - -	41
The Cripple	- - - - -	42 & 43
The Mummy	- - - - -	44
Speech	- - - - -	45
The Uttermost	- - - - -	46
Life Answers	- - - - -	47, 48 & 49
The Rich Man and the Poet	- - - - -	50 & 51
The Blessed	- - - - -	52
Glow-Worms	- - - - -	53
Shall Love be Silent?	- - - - -	54
Longing	- - - - -	55
Body and Spirit	- - - - -	56 & 57
Close of Day—St. James's Park	- - - - -	58

DRAWINGS

by

KAHLIL GIBRAN.

Frontispiece	- - - - -	Facing Title Page
Silence	- - - - -	„ Page 11
Compensation	- - - - -	„ „ 24
Loneliness	- - - - -	„ „ 37
Life Answers	- - - - -	„ „ 47

PREFACE

By *ARTHUR SYMONS*

TO
MY MOTHER AND FATHER

POETRY begins where prose ends, and it is at its chief peril if it begins sooner; for prose listens at the doors of all the senses, and repeats their speech almost in their own tones. "Poetry," wrote Baudelaire, "is akin to music through a prosody whose roots plunge deeper in the human soul than any classical theory has indicated." The one safeguard for the poet is to say to himself: When I can write in prose I will not allow myself to write in verse, out of mere honour towards my material. The farther I can extend my prose, the farther back do I set the limits of verse. The region of poetry will then be always the beyond, the ultimate, and with the least possible chance of any confusion of territory. I have often found that the real merit, that true originality (as in the verses about which I am writing) will but disconcert the student of poetry who has come to love certain formulas, the formulas of his masters, which seem to him, as every form of truth must seem to "young ignorance and old custom," a form immortal in itself. In no two ages of the world has the eternal beauty manifested itself under the same form. It has revealed itself to every lover under a new disguise, which in Catullus is a self-consuming flame, in whom the passion of love or hate burns flame-like, setting the verse on fire. It is in his haste to escape from the subtle snares of his Lesbia that a "flaming heart" burns outward to escape the intolerable pain of its reclusion.

I hate and I love: you ask me how I can do it?

I know not: I know that it burns: I am going through it.

Santa Teresa's most passionate verses have the same supreme lyric quality as those of San Juan de la Cruz: personal passion moulding individual form. Teresa gives herself to God, as it were, with a great leap into his arms. In San Juan, the obscure night of the soul is a way, the negation of all earthly things, of the earthly senses, even, a means to the final union with God: and it is in this union that darkness blossoms into the glittering delight of the poems. Christina Rossetti's genius is essentially sombre, or it writes itself on a dark background of gloom. The thought of death has a constant fascination for her, almost such a fascination as it had for Leopardi and Baudelaire.

Miss Mason-Manheim's verses have the disadvantage of being written in *vers libre*; and I often wonder whether it is an unreasonable prejudice that inclines me to question the wisdom of doing without rhyme in measures that seemed to demand it. To do without rhyme is to do without one of the beauties of poetry, I should say one of the inherent beauties. In the absence of rhyme, the fundamental question is whether the lines scan or do not scan. These lines from *Samson Agonistes* are the most perfect example of blank verse varied into half-lyric measure.

But who is this? What thing of sea or land—
 Female of sex it seems—
 That so bedecked, ornate, and gay,
 Comes this way sailing,
 Like a stately ship
 Of Tarsus, bound for the isles
 Of Javan and Gadire,
 With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,
 Sails filled, and streamers waving,
 Courted by all the winds that hold them play?

Judged by this standard, the best poems in this book are varied into half-lyric measures; her verses

are musical in the highest sense of the word; those that are finest have that rhythm which should move to no distinguishable action, which is already awake in the void waters, out of which a world is to awaken. Music, in itself, is not a representation of the world, but an immediate voice of the world. And, as I turn over these verses, I say to myself: Why is it that music is not limited in regard to length, as a poem is, a lyrical poem, to which music is most akin? Is it not because the ecstasy of music can be maintained indefinitely and at its highest pitch, while the ecstasy of verse is shortened by what is definite in words? There are poems of Swinburne which attempt to compete with music on its own ground, *Tristram of Lyonesse*, for example; and they tire the ear which the music of Wagner's *Tristan* keeps passionately alert for a whole evening. This is because we ask of words some more definite appeal to the mind than we ask of music and an unsubstantial ecstasy wearies us like the hollow voice of a ghost, which we doubt while we hear it.

Certainly the disembodied voice of a ghost, or it might be of a spirit, sings to us out of some of these verses, and with a simplicity so intense, and so casual in seeming, such as only the finest elaborations could extract from the confusions and complexities of Nature. Her preference for the homeliest words, and for the rhythms in which the art—as I have said—consists in a seeming disregard of art, is in her favour; for with these unadorned words that come to our lips when we speak to one another, she obtains effects, not merely of abstract passion and depth of thought, of unrestrained emotion, of a sense of mystery, of tragic ecstasy, of a rapture that radiates joy, but also of fantastic subtlety, of remote and curious charm.

She has woven a shroud for her love, woven out of unshed tears; and one thinks of Chatterton:

Hark ! the raven flaps his wing
 In the briary dell below ;
 Hark ! the death-owl loud doth sing,
 To the nightmares as they go.
 My love is dead,
 Gone to his death-bed
 All under the willow-tree !

As she kneels beside the sea at midnight she sees dark waters creep like serpents that coil stealthily about her, and one thinks of Whitman, of his marvelous phrase "the huge and thoughtful night," and "The Singers do not beget, only the Poet begets," and, when he makes one shudder (just as some of the lines in this book make one shudder) :

The murderer that is to be hung next day, How
 does he sleep ?
 And the murdered person, how does he sleep ?

Whitman is one of the voices of the earth, and it is only in Whitman that the paving stones really speak, with a voice as authentic as the voice of the hills. When I came to London I knew nothing of the great things that Whitman had done ; and I had my own feeling for London ; I was only trying to render what I saw before me, what I felt, and to make my art out of living material. "Books made out of books pass away" was a sentence I never forgot and my application of it was direct and immediate.

Madeline Mason-Manheim has also striven to make her art out of living material, and in this she has succeeded : never forgetting the phrase I have quoted : for one's art is one's own particular creation. She has not made her art out of cities, out of streets, out of gas-lamps—such wonderful material in Paris, when from the cafés one surveys a vivid and an everlasting world that never stops until long after mid-

night ; Paris, where men of genius such as Balzac and Baudelaire made it if anything more vital, a part of themselves, a part of creative literature. She chooses her words for their gentleness and suave sound, more than for their effect of colour ; as separate stitches in a tapestry, or slabs in a tessellated pavement, to be set together into pictures. Here is a Palace of Art in which life is a coloured and fragrant thing, moving in fine raiment, to the sound of stringed instruments plucked softly : and it is all part of the perfumed and cloudy atmosphere of the place where these dreams wander through their half-existence.

There is a kind of psychology in Miss Mason-Manheim's verses which goes deep down into the very roots of things. I will admit that the order of emotion which it renders is some order of abstract emotion which may as well belong to the philosopher brooding over the destinies of ideas as to the lover brooding over the religion of his passionate creed. Joubert said and with the utmost significance : "In the style of poetry every word reverberates like the sound of a well-tuned lyre, and leaves after it numberless undulations. Fine verses are those that exhale like sounds or perfumes." Baudelaire wrote :

Comme de longs échos qui de loin se confondent
 Dans une ténébreuse et profonde unité,
 Vaste comme la nuit et comme la clarté,
 Les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se répondent.

Joubert also says : "Nothing is poetry which does not transport ; the lyric is in a sense a winged instrument." Writing on Richard Strauss I said : "The whole tendency of German art is summed up in his tone-poems, and it is a tendency towards an orgy of the brain, at once idealistic and gross, a perversity which proceeds from impotence and culminates in that emphasis which is worse than vice, because it is vulgar." To Saint Augustine all life is

seen only in relation to the divine. In so far as it is natural, it is evil. In so far as it is corrected by divine grace, it leaves the human actors in it without merit; since all virtue is God's, though all vice is man's.

Life is the last thing Madeline Mason-Manheim has to learn. I said of Yeats in regard to *The Wind among the Reeds*: "Life is the last thing he has learnt, and it is life, an extraordinarily intense inner life, that I find in this book of lyrics, which may seem also to be one long 'hymn to intellectual beauty.'" An immense amount of reading in two languages—French and English—as in her case and in most cases, is the inevitable foundation-stone for one's art, not the stone which the builders have so often rejected—the foundation which as a matter of fact Meredith proved his own wisdom in rejecting. Did Burns learn much out of the books he read? He had, literally nothing to learn. It was Dionysus that awoke in Burns, and has never been out of the blood of any authentic poet since. He taught no one anything that anyone could learn, but this ploughman was Apollo to Admetus, incarnate song. These little pieces of Miss Mason-Manheim's, so short, simple, fragmentary in character, so intangible very often and so elusive in their charm, are a sort of seeing of the sensations of the soul—sensations almost "too simple and too sweet for words," too fleeting to be seized and recorded. This verse, which is never didactic, never attempts (what is of all things most impossible in poetry, and most abhorrent) the heresy, as it has been called, of teaching. It is herself, really, that she puts into these poems, her deeper self, and to give adequate expression to that, to the real self, is the utmost we can ask or get from any poet.

ARTHUR SYMONS.

Invocation

O THAT my heart might voice its silent prayer!
 O, that my spirit, ever dumb,
 Might speak!
 My words are but the tongues
 Of earthly selves that dwell within me.
 Beneath their cadences
 My heart, though voiceless, sings;
 My spirit, tongueless,
 Whispers tenderly.
 Your ear shall hear my words;
 Your lips shall answer.
 Earth shall meet earth,
 The while our spirits hold communion
 In their silences.

Creation

ONCE Life stood in darkness ; in her hand a bit
of mist
Torn from her heart in longing and in pain.
Creation stirred within her, and with fingers deft and
eager
She shaped the filmy substance
Till she held the semblance of a globe against her
breast.
Then she smiled and breathed upon it ere she hurled it
To the farthest reach of space.
And it glowed amidst the shadows,
And the darkness was abated,
And Life's heart was glad within her as she gazed
upon her work.

Then once more the anguish seized her and she rent
her breast asunder
At creation's mighty urge.
And again she drew the world-mist from her bosom
And she moulded from it stars and planets, suns and
moons.
And she sent them flying from her,
And some left their trails behind them,
Blazing paths of golden light amidst the gloom.
And a frenzy came upon her, as in numbers ever
greater
Worlds and universes grew beneath her hands.
And she flung them ever spinning, far into the dim
recesses
That had known nor light nor being ere before.

Then she raised her hands in triumph, while from
out her fingers
Drifted veils of world-mist still unformed.
And her spirit breathed upon them, and they swirled
into the heavens
Bearing embryonic worlds unnumbered in their folds.
And she saw all space a-glitter,
And the air was throbbing round her
With the light that she had sent into the void.
And the joy of work accomplished filled her spirit
and she rested
Till once more creative pain should stir her soul.

Aspiration

THERE lies deep hidden in your heart
 The memory of yesterday,
 Yea, of that farthest yesterday
 When you were one with Light and Air and Space,
 Enfolding all things and by all things enfolded.
 I know your anxious nights and days of longing,
 I watch you as you seek with restless feet
 The stepping-stones to your to-morrow.
 I share the heart-ache of the traveller
 Who would retrace his steps
 And find the way he came.
 I see you set your feet upon false trails;
 I see you gladdened by unlovely things
 That mask their ugliness.
 I watch remembrance growing dim within you
 Till you know not what you seek.
 I see you drugged and lulled to sleep
 With poisoned potions;
 I see your longing dulled with worthless pleasure.
 Yet deep within your heart
 There lies the memory of yesterday,
 Yea, of your farthest yesterday
 Which shall be your most far to-morrow.

Parting

I HAVE heard you speak of parting;
 And I have seen you bid your friend farewell
 With trembling lips and tears upon your cheeks.
 Yet shall there be no lessening of your togetherness,
 Though all the earth should lie between you.

The clover's fragrance wanders far upon the summer
 wind,
 Yet takes nought from her sweetness.
 The thrush that fills your garden with its singing
 Loses not its song.
 And yonder star that sends its light to earth
 Shall not become less shining.

How shall you speak of parting?
 How shall the bands be loosened
 That Friendship fastened round you?

Sleep

SLEEP, soft-fingered comforter, healer of pain-torn hearts,
 Restorer of care-worn bodies and limbs too soon exhausted,
 Sleep, companion of Silence, walks in her garden;
 Walks 'midst her deathless poppies and gathers them to her breast.

Whiter are some than snows that touch not earth
 But drift among the crags of lonely peaks
 That bridge the gulf 'twixt earth and heaven.
 Others more red than blood of great men crucified,
 And flames of hate that would devour truth.
 And some more golden than the sunlight flooding happy days.

Sleep fills her arms with blossoms; then she steals
 Into the world of weary men.
 And tired eyelids close beneath the weight
 Of petals pressed against them;
 And the sweet, warm breath of Sleep
 Lulls the most restless e'en to slumber.
 Yet does she pass me by, and now wide-eyed I wander
 In endless quest of her fair garden.
 Oh, to be hidden in its mazes,
 To lie beneath the poppies while they nod
 To winds that whisper softly in my ears
 Glad tales of other worlds.
 To breathe the aromatic bitterness
 Of countless slumberous flowers.
 To close my eyes at last,
 And then to sleep and sleep.

Prayer

O MY soul, I would have you rest upon the bosom
 of the Infinite
 Which once enfolded you.
 O my heart, I would have you beat to the measure
 of that greater heart
 Of which you are a fragment.

I have heard the voice of the Infinite when men
 caressed my ears with loving words;
 But I would hear it loudest when men assail me with
 envenomed tongues.

I have caught Life's song while silently I stood upon
 the lonely mountain peak;
 But I would have her music in my ears amidst the
 din of cities.

I have seen the Cosmic Spirit sweep along the bound-
 less plain;
 But fain would I behold Life moving with majestic
 step

Through crowded streets and lowly places.
 The breath of the Eternal One came sweetly to my
 nostrils

While I stood in clover-scented fields.
 But I would be perfumed with everlasting fragrance,
 Yea, I would watch man's sacred incense
 Rising with man's most foul miasmas.

O my soul, I would have you rest upon the bosom
 of the Infinite
 Which once enfolded you.
 O my heart, I would have you beat to the measure
 of that greater heart
 Of which you are a fragment.

Moods

I STAND upon the mountain-top,
 A tiny figure in the midst of space.
 Beneath me swaying trees,
 Chanting the glory of the universe ;
 And, filling all my being with its power,
 A wind that has embraced the Infinite.
 Blow, wind, you shall not move me ;
 I laugh with you and breathe your fragrance
 That, like potent spirits, fires my blood.
 For I am strong
 Within a universe of beauty.

Upon the mountain-top I stand,
 An atom lost in endless space.
 Beneath me wind-tossed trees,
 Moaning the doom of earthly things.
 A wind ferocious, seeking to unplace me,
 Roars within my ears.
 O wind, I am as naught before your strength.
 Take me and hurl me to destruction,
 Weak, frail fragment
 Of a universe omnipotent and fearful.

I walk beside the sea at midnight.
 Softly the waters come to kiss my feet,
 Gently they sing their tender melodies.
 Within their depths
 A second firmament shines brightly.
 Cloud garlands hang upon the moon,
 Lamp that the Infinite has lighted
 On Night's altar.
 I listen, and while locusts numberless
 Make all the air a-ringing
 As with fairy bells,
 I hear the everlasting silences.

I kneel beside the sea at midnight.
 Dark waters creep like serpents
 Stealthily to coil about me.
 The moon, sad spirit mourning in the mist,
 Is wrapped in cloudy filaments.
 The locusts' droning, droning fills the air
 Until all space is throbbing
 As with bells that toll the dirge
 Of dying things
 And things that nevermore shall be.

I move through crowded streets,
 A lonely spirit caught within the multitude :
 Sad faces, eyes too often moistened
 By the tears that Sorrow sheds.
 Backs bent with burdens
 Borne through all the ages.
 Hard faces, wide-eyed
 Yet blind.
 Clenched fists that strike the weak
 And drain their hearts.
 Spiked feet that trample souls.
 I walk with them and see them driven
 By indomitable Law.

Through crowded streets I move,
 A spirit walking with its brothers.
 Glad eyes look into mine,
 Sweet faces smile at inward visions.
 The age-long load is carried
 By light-footed men with backs erect
 And hands outstretched in tenderness and pity.
 I walk with them,
 Their spirits speak to mine ;
 And lo ! I see them marching, hand in hand,
 With the Eternal One.

Music

O YE rivers and forests and mountains,
The hand of the Eternal is upon you
And ye give forth music
Vast as Space
And beauteous as Life
When her dark veil is lifted.
O ye winds,
The breath of the Eternal gives you song.
O ye seas,
The heart of the Eternal beats in you
And chants in mighty rhythms.

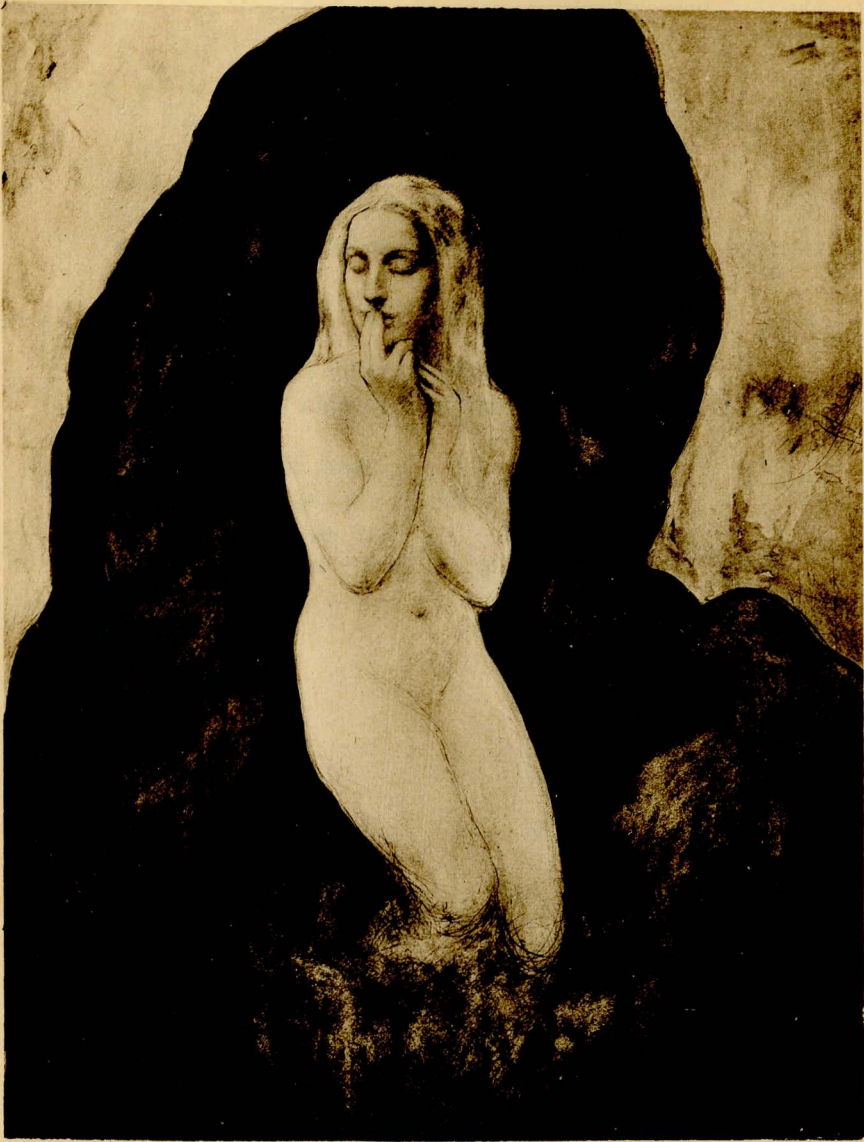
Symphonies of men,
Ye are but fragments of the Greater Music.
What need of you have I,
Who stand before your living source?

Silence

Know you Silence, my friend ?
It is the dumbness of the tongue when the heart
would be heard ;
It is the muteness of the lips when the spirit speaks
loudest.
It is the uttering of the unutterable.

It is the shroud that Night casts over Day ;
It is the quiet of the journey's end.
It is the hush of worlds a-tremble in Life's hand
Before their birth.

It is your stillness when you yield your ear to the
Infinite.
It is the companion of your sorrow and your joy's
own comrade.
It is the womb that bore your thought and your
longing.
It is beyond all things.



Narcissus

WHAT sudden ecstasy of earth
 Hath made thee, star-spray?
 O, the swift blossomings from darkness!
 O, the quick coming of winds
 Bearing strange perfumes!
 O, the sudden trembling of stars
 In our hands!

Pastorale

(*Verdreuil, Que.*)

AN ancient house with white walls ivy-hung
 Half hidden in the trees:
 Great elms with arms outstretched to shelter,
 Old willows that repeat
 The tales of yesterday.
 The setting sun pours golden rays
 A-down the quiet path,
 Where hollyhocks and tiger lillies
 Point the way to tranquil waters,
 Dimly shining through a maze of leaves.
 The last faint call of sparrow to its mate
 Mingles with whispered memories
 Of faithful friends come homeward,
 Their fishing-rods upon their shoulders,
 And their hearts aglow
 With the remembrance of the trusty years.
 Soft wisps of cloud drift lazily
 Through blushing skies,
 And over all the landscape
 Breathes the quiet of a great content.

The Ocean

O THOU restless one,
 What mighty urge is in thy bosom
 That nor night nor day
 Thy striving knoweth pause?
 Thou toilest ever to outreach thy bounds;
 Thou movest onward,
 Though the shroud of Night
 Lie heavy on thy breast;
 And in the golden sun
 Thou leapest merrily
 To distant goals.
 Earth fain would stay thee.
 O, thou art merciless:
 Thou woundest her
 Until the bonds are rent
 That hold thee.
 And yet thou lovest her well.
 But in thy longing for thine own fulfilment
 Is thy passion,
 And though thou bringest treasures
 And with tender sighing
 Layest them before her,
 Yet art thou ever distant,
 Lonely, unapproachable.
 O thou restless one,
 What mighty urge is in thy bosom
 As down the timeless aisles of Space
 Thou criest evermore: "Beyond! Beyond!"

Above the Valley

I DWELL upon the height;
 The clouds are gentle spirits
 Come to kiss my cheek.
 The wind is sacred wine
 From holy vessels flowing
 To quench my thirst.
 And it is perfume
 Poured from vials of heaven
 To sweeten all my being.
 The wide-flung streamers of the ages
 Shine beneath me in the valley:
 Jade waters winding, singing
 Through the silver meadows;
 Swift rivers that unresting weave their courses
 Through the pines, dark fingers
 Pointing to the sky.
 The mountains, mighty curtains
 Hung before the Face Eternal,
 Tell the day when earth in anguish writhing
 Pressed her lips against the sky.
 And there upon a distant hill
 A little church,
 A tiny altar placed by man
 Within the temple of the Infinite.

The Mountain

O MOUNTAIN, how beautiful you are,
 And how wise!
 In torment and in stress were you created;
 With anguish rent the earth that bore you
 Reared your mighty form to meet the sky.
 And now you stand, unmoved and distant
 Through all the ages.
 Upon your breast are carven
 Wondrous tales and dim remembrances;
 Yea, all the miracles of Time
 Are written in your heart.
 You have beheld the birth of man,
 And you have watched him
 Groping, groping in your shadow,
 Until at last he looked aloft
 And saw that you were pointing
 To the sun.
 The days have wound their garlands
 Tenderly about you.
 In cloud festoons have you been decked.
 The nights have woven diadems of mist
 To place upon your brow,
 And jewelled crowns are for your wearing,
 Bright with the purest gems of space.
 O Mountain, you are holy, holy;
 The moon has cast her veils aside,
 And lo, a halo shines above your head.
 Yet have you need of none of these;
 Your beauty scorns adornment;
 Your sacred nudity reveals
 Your majesty in fullest measure.
 Yea, I would see you bare, O Mountain,
 As mightily you stand
 Before the Infinite.

The Desert

THEY call you barren
 Who, unseeing, gaze upon you.
 Yet Time's most secret thoughts,
 The jewels of the ages
 Are buried in your breast
 As in your loneliness you lie
 Beneath the everlasting heights.
 The treasures of the earth are held within your sands;
 A little water
 And there shall be alchemy most wondrous:
 The sands shall turn to verdure
 And the stones to fruit.
 Yet who shall fathom you
 Or trace upon the trackless past
 Your history?
 What unknown sea has surged upon your breast?
 What gardens blossomed once within your heart,
 Swayed by no winds,
 Yet pulsing ever to the rhythm of the stars?
 What temples of the Infinite are these,
 These flaming rocks that bear the glory of the dawn?
 What idols these, by no man sculptured,
 Carven from rock stained as with blood of sacrifice?
 What monuments are here,
 What dreams fantastic
 Wrought in stone?
 Girdled with mystery and beauty is your solitude.
 Man flees you.
 His lips parch in your burning sands;
 His ears, sound-burdened,
 Fear your stillness.
 Only the redskin knows you.
 He is your brother.
 Tragic and vast and silent in his soul,
 He knows your vastness

And hears your silences.
 He knows that you are beautiful and boundless.
 He sees the Everlasting Spirit
 Move upon your breast.

Night and the Mountain

THE MOUNTAIN.

O NIGHT, the fires of departing Day
 Are lighted on my brow,
 That from afar thou mayest see
 Her tribute and her welcome.
 And I, the chosen one,
 The bearer of those sacred flames
 Salute thee.
 Long hours have I burned
 Beneath the sun,
 And now I crave thy cooling touch.
 Lo, the pine trees sway beneath thy passing,
 And the air is hushed
 As slowly thou descendest
 From thy kingdom in the mist.
 All hail, O Night, all hail!
 I lift my head
 And look into thine eyes,
 The while thy tender arms enfold me.
 All hail, O Night, all hail!
 The mighty mountain
 Humbly blesses thee.

NIGHT.

I come, O Mountain, from the deep
 To deck thy majesty.
 Pale mist, blue mist I bring
 To wrap around thee,
 And with me come the moon and stars
 unnumbered
 To light thy beauty and to clothe thee
 In silver robes.
 Man gazing shall not know thee :
 Thou art no more of earth ;
 Thou art a dream-height
 In an unknown realm.
 Thou art a mighty throne
 For unknown gods.
 The lake that lies beneath thee
 Is a black pearl laid in tribute
 At their feet.
 The flaming star above thee
 Is a jewel upon an unseen sceptre
 Held by a hand invisible.
 No sound shall stir the stillness :
 Only the moaning of the owl,
 Voice of the ages speaking
 From the black depths of the forest ;
 Only the owl's moaning
 And my own Vast Song.

The River

TH**ES**E are not waters flowing ;
 They are jewels in fusion.
 The cold, gray stones, O River,
 Are transmuted into flaming gems :
 Turquoise and amethyst and palest jade.
 I have seen you catch the brand of morning
 And transform its fire into liquid rubies ;
 And I have watched you turn the light of evening
 To pearls that glow upon the tides of night.
 Once you rested on the bosom of the sea.
 But yesterday you were enfolded
 In the veil that wrapped the mountain.
 And then you were a tiny drop
 Within the fastness of the forest.
 The heavens fed you ;
 From the fullness of his heart the mountain nourished
 you.
 And so you grew ; now stream, now rivulet, now
 river,
 Ever moving, ever singing down the ages ;
 Till now, a thing of might,
 You roar defiance to the earth that nursed you.
 Nor rock nor mountain stays your going :
 The rocks you grind to dust,
 The mountains are as naught before your strength
 Unresting, exultingly you speed to join the sea.
 The dark pines know your secret ;
 They look into the mist
 And there behold your destiny.
 Your destiny, O River,
 It is even as the destiny of man.
 O, ye are brethren,
 Souls unharboured,
 Seeking to regain the Sea.

The Forest

O THOU green stillness,
 Where peace abideth,
 Thou art the sanctuary of the silent.
 Their prayers, too deep for words,
 Rise even as the fragrance
 That comes from thy heart's core.
 Here stands no priest with ritual to say :
 "Now kneel ; now rise ; and now be seated."
 They kneel always who worship in thy shade.
 And when thou throbbest
 With the chanting of the winds
 Their spirits sing with thine
 The Vast Hymn of the Universe.
 Who gaze into thy pools
 Behold the mirrors of Eternity.
 They hear the ages speak
 Who walk a-tiptoe down thy ways ;
 And in their ears thy brooks sing tenderly
 Of mists and dews and boundless seas.
 Life's secret and Death's mystery bide in the worm
 That moves across the path and then is still.
 Life's fingers touched it but a moment,
 Ere Death breathed coldly on the clay.
 The rhythm of the stars bounds in the deer.
 And Time's own majesty stirs in the trees
 That sway in measure to a song unheard.
O thou green stillness,
 Mighty forest,
 All vastness is in thee.
 Who fain would compass space
 Hath but to sound thy depths.
 Who fain would know
 The universes of the skies
 Hath but to question thee,
Who art thyself a universe.

Christmas

THEY speak to-day
 Who move in silence through the year.
 The hand of Him who knew not Hate
 Has freed the lute-strings of their spirits
 And the air is throbbing with man's Deeper Song.
 Man's holy light that darkness veiled but yesterday
 Shines bright on Christmas morn,
 And all that slumbered in the shadows
 Wakes to a loving noon.
 But we, my friend,
 Who wait not for this hour to voice our tenderness,
 How shall we find new words
 For that which trembles in our spirits every day ?

Compensation

I AM unhappy,
But my heart is singing.
My heart knows that tears
Are weavers of beauty from mist,
Sorrow-magic turning its nebulae
To wonder-stars
And dream-suns.

When men are cruel,
It matters not.
Their swords are plough-blades
Making ready the seed-beds of my heart.
The stones that bruise me
Shall lie in the furrows, dreaming,
And they shall blossom and fill my being
With perfumes akin to trembling music.

My heart sings while I weep.
My heart knows
That Sorrow is a trail of dreams
To farther worlds.



Plaint

I STOOD long at your door, unheeded.
How could you see me—
A mist and a shadow ?

I sang long at your threshold, unanswered.
How could you hear me—
A silent whisper ?

Love Hidden

ALL silently Love dwells within my heart.
 He fain would speak,
 But no one bids him
 Voice his tenderness.
 He fain would twine his garlands
 Sweetly round another,
 Yet no one bids him
 Bring his blossoms.
 Shyly he hides
 Within my heart.
 He will not speak,
 Lest no one answer.
 He will not bring his flowers,
 Lest they die, uncherished.
 All silently Love dwells within my heart,
 Nor speaks till he is bidden.

Elegy

I HAVE fashioned a shroud for my love,
 From my unshed tears is it woven ;
 From the mists of my heart
 That the long years turned to crystal,
 To crystals of pain sharp-edged
 That lay in my breast.
 O, the weight of tears concealed ;
 O, the burden of hidden sorrow.
 I have fashioned a shroud for my love,
 From my unshed tears is it woven.

I have buried my love in the tomb
 That memory builded of dreams
 And of visions that knew not fulfilment.
 The blossoms Hope planted
 Are gathered and laid at Love's feet.
 And Longing, the pale one,
 Who walks in the void and is silent
 Kneels at the door.
 I have buried my love ;
 Yet my love is not dead.

The Pool

BENEATH these troubled waters
 That are you and I
 There is a pool,
 Unfathomed, still,
 Wherein our spirits dwell.
 In its cool deep
 We are at peace.
 Beauty, dream-laden, comes
 To gaze at her own face,
 And there with eager fingers
 Weaves the hours into shining strands
 That bind our spirits close.
 All that we are is mirrored
 In that pool.
 We are revealed,
 You to me, and I to you.
 And in the sacred hush
 We hear each silent murmur.

Beneath these troubled waters
 That are you and I
 There is a pool
 Wherein our spirits dwell.
 What matter if the rushing torrent
 Dim our sight
 And close our ears?
 Our spirits dwell in peace,
 And underneath the surge of words
 We hear them singing,
 Silently, their songs.

Disillusion

I CAME to you with all my youth
 And all my eagerness.
 Faith in my heart,
 And in my eyes
 Light of stars.
 Singing, I came to you,
 Filling my hands with dreams
 And hope's bright flowerings.
 I gazed at you——
 The air was sweet with music,
 Borne I know not whence
 On wings of perfume.
 I gazed again :
 Lo, in my heart faith trembled
 And was gone.
 And from my hands
 My dreams, like dying butterflies,
 Fell to the earth.
 Silenced my song,
 Faded the flowers of hope.
 I gazed at you,
 And saw the barrenness
 Of your reality.

Silences

THERE are silences I do not understand :
 Not the silences that are dreams unspoken,
 Silent songs, heart-tremblings ;
 But the silences that are wordless
 When there is much for lips to say.
 I hear the unuttered, voiceless things.
 I know the silence born of too much music
 In the spirit.
 But the stillness that comes from a void
 In the heart—
 That troubles me.

I Walk Alone

I WALK alone.
 I hold no hand in mine.
 To me no comrade speaks.
 I walk alone.

My heart is veiled.
 I bared it once and learned
 That man seeks hearts unguarded,
 That he may stab them.
 He shall not wound me more.
 My heart is veiled.

My path is peaceful.
 I hear no din of strife
 Since I have trod the lonely way.
 Man's battles touch not me.
 My path is peaceful.

I walk alone.
 My soul is brave ;
 I do not falter.
 And yet 'twere sweet
 To lean upon a kindly breast.
 'Twere good to know
 The joy of sweet communion.
 Alas, how shall it be ?
 I walk alone.

Shadows

O THE light of my heart !
 Once my breast was filled
 With dancing rays.
 Then came a shadow,
 A tiny, fleeting mist
 That vanished in the glow.
 Then another,
 Trembling upon a beam of light.
 And shadows passed
 Like breaths of night upon the sun.
 And shadows came
 Like flocks of night-birds
 Beating dark wings against the moon.
 Ah me, my heart was but a pallid flower
 Drifting upon a black, relentless deep,
 A song a-quiver
 In a surge of silence.
 Shadows, shadows,
 Mourning fingers
 Weaving a shroud.

Yet underneath grief's pall
 I feel the light a-stir.
 Beneath the sorrowed hush
 My heart sings evermore.

Letters

MY thought is ever near you,
 Silent, unseen.
 But I would utter it to-day.

When in the wood we find the hidden violet,
 We rejoice,
 Though all the while we felt it there
 And breathed its fragrance.
 And when in some far heaven
 We behold a star
 That we have long awaited,
 Do we not bless the vision ?
 Yet all the while
 It shone before our inner eye.
 Thus when from silence
 Thoughts come drifting to our hands,
 We greet them joyfully,
 Bright butterflies that we can touch,
 Songs weaving magic
 In the ear.

Hold this my little thought
 Within your hand,
 Feeling its better part
 A-tremble in your spirit.

To a Poet

WE cannot count the number of your births,
 The countless flights from universe to universe,
 The endless questing and the everduring pain
 Of one alone in stranger-spheres.
 We can but name the day that brought you here,
 A fleeting light upon our shadowed ways,
 A hand come from the mist,
 Pointing to farther paths,
 A song of boundless seas,
 A whisper of enfolding wings.
 We count the years
 Since that bright hour that bore you earthward,
 The while our hearts forever sanctify,
 Forever bless your birthday.

To My Mother

I WOULD weave you a song, my mother,
 You who have given me all my music.
 Yours the tender hand
 Upon my breast ;
 Yours the voice
 Sounding ever in my ears.

There is beauty so rare,
 We may not gaze upon it
 Without a catch in the heart
 And a stilling of the tongue.
 And when from some far universe
 There comes a breath of stars
 We can but kneel.
 Thus when I think of you,
 My thoughts are soundless
 And my eyes are dim with mists.
 Look well, and you shall see my love
 Mirrored in my tears.
 Hearken, and you shall hear
 My silent song.

To My Mother on Her Birthday

THERE is one golden day in all my year,
One day most dear—so consecrate and pure,
That heaven opens wide and from the skies
Come whir of wings and breath of angel-song.
Upon this day in a most blessed year
A radiant soul was sent
To lay cool hands upon our troubled earth
And weave a spell of sweetness as she passed,
Fragrant and bright, a-down our troubled ways.
You are the magic one, the beauty all men dream,
The loveliness of dawn, the peace of night;
You are a living prayer, a tenderness,
A glory, not of earth, but of the deep
Where wingèd thoughts are born.
Unselffull you give all, nor ask you aught,
And where you walk, men see a wonder-light.

There is one golden day in all my year,
One day most sanctified.
O, that all men might kneel before your shrine,
While heaven and earth pour forth a birthday song
In one vast hymn of Motherhood.

Loneliness

I SING man's loneliness !
 Year end unto year end
 With pitiful devices
 He would stay the knowledge of his solitude—
 Restless fingers clasping restless fingers,
 Anguished companionings of those who walk alone.

The paths of man's aloneness—
 They are everywhere,
 Stretching their weary length
 From dim deep to dim deep.
 The surging crowd is cleaved,
 And each man treads the lonely way to him ordained
 When swift the watchword of the universe went forth :
 "Alone—alone forevermore."

The pale, first ray that trembled through the shadows
 Knew no companion.
 And in the bow of light
 Each beam is separate,
 Even as the single note in music's flow
 Has its own pathway marked upon the ether.
 See how the leaf falls, fluttering, from the tree.
 The wind shall lift it and alone
 It shall be borne upon its quest.
 And where the rose, faint with fulfilment's pain,
 Drops from her heart her petals,
 Each drifts, alone,
 To farther destinies.
 The burning mists in space unwind new worlds,
 Yet each shall move in solitary might,
 Unbefriended.



I sing man's loneliness.
 Year end unto year end
 He walks midst phantoms.
 His cry is ever "Brother" !
 But his soul
 Echoes the ultimate decree :
 Alone—alone forevermore !

Dead Stars

MAN is a thing of might,
 Of many parts compounded,
 Each man complete—
 A world.
 And though no man may blend his deeper essence
 With another, even as star with star shall never mingle,
 Yet he may pour his light on the less shining,
 And receive in turn
 Breath of their joy, songs for his pilgrimage.
 Though foredoomed to solitude,
 Man sweetens his lone way
 With kindness.
 But there are some,
 The debris of old worlds decayed,
 Sad fragments of dead stars.
 These are not men,
 They are but spectres, lost among the living.
 Their hands are empty,
 And who passes near
 May feel a rush of poisoned breath.
 Call them not evil,
 Wait and forbear—
 They shall be gathered into space,
 And there, new-fused with life and light,
 They shall be born—
 Men !

Moon Thought

THERE is a moon to-night,
 A mist-shrouded gleam of loveliness
 In the starless deep.
 There is a moon floating like a pale joy
 Upon the black depths of my heart.

Long were the hush and the gloom,
 Windless and starless the nights,
 And my heart, dark and still,
 Waiting, longing.
 But the moon is come,
 And now through the shade
 Stars are stealing,
 Silver thoughts piercing the night's vast brow.
 A breath is astir,
 And down the dim aisles Memory passes,
 Trailing her dreams.

Wind of my yesteryears,
 Blow in my heart to-night.
 Moon of my gladness,
 Light a new joy in my breast.
 And you, smiling stars,
 Bring me new hopes, new awakenings, new dreams.

Swallows at Dawn: Venice

THROBBING wings, stirring the morning calm,
 Of what far world are you the questing
 thoughts?
 What longing pipes the swift, shrill note
 That like an anxious hope, half fear,
 Troubles the dawn?
 These sleeping streets, these dreaming waterways
 Shall wake once more to see their dreams a-wing,
 Dark fragments of the night that soar
 And melt into the mist,
 Fearful before the vast reality of day.

The Cripple

POOR, twisted body,
 Whence come you,
 From what wild vortices of space?
 You have been fashioned by one overwrought with
 longing;
 Life's impotence to mould her further dream,
 Creation's anguish bent your bones and sent you forth,
 Living remembrance of the hour
 When longing, turned to bitterness,
 Pounded the clay to strange, unwonted shapes.
 A vision unfulfilled are you,
 A dream turned gruesome in the dreaming.

Brave soul, flame-tenant
 Of a sad, distorted dwelling,
 These stricken walls confine you not.
 You roam upon the winds,
 Singing afar the songs of space.
 Here glows a light more holy than light of temple-
 lamps
 And Beauty stands once more revealed.

Some gaze on you,
 Seeing but flesh outraged.
 Upon their spirits Pity breathes
 That they, like leaves unfolding,
 May grow to greater fullness.
 Others, all wonder-moved, behold your glory,
 And kneeling, hands outstretched, receive your
 bounty.
 You give to them new vision
 That their souls, rising upon your wings,
 May quest for farther realms.

Atoned Life's fleeting madness,
 The agonied distortion of the flesh.
 She has turned impotence to might
 And forged from you an instrument more fit
 To shape her dreams of man.
 You are yourself creator, not of the palpable clay,
 But of the subtler spirit.
 Lo, Life through you shall turn man's dawn to noon
 And man himself to God.

The Mummy

STILL veiled, O Life, still wrapped in darkness !
 Shall I no more behold thy face,
 No more feel thy quick breath upon me ?
 I am an outcast, sealed from the blessèd airs
 That fain would turn this drying flesh to wings,
 This sorry impotence to might.
 Here lies an empty shell, from all world-beauty barred.
 O, for the feel of roots and tender, pulsing things
 Stirring within me,
 Making the clay to tremble as it trembled once,
 Ere death came soundlessly
 To light my spirit's path to farther worlds.
 O vanity of man, that still would hold me
 From my heritage.
 Jasmine now might sing within my heart
 And from my breast come fragrance,
 Wingèd things, swift thoughts of life.
 Unnumbered spirits wait upon the day
 That shall deliver me to light and air
 And breath of stars.
 Hateful tomb, wisdomless void,
 Sad monument to man's unheeding ears
 That listen not when the Eternal speaks,
 When shalt thou be consumed,
 And I go singing on the wind ?

A little while, O Life, and I shall lift Death's veil
 And gaze on thee !

Speech

SPEECH, thou child of loneliness,
 Why dost thou flee, affrighted,
 When my heart calls ?
 Why art thou ever distant
 From my spirit ?

Slow was thy birth,
 Thou trembling ray,
 That but a moment shone
 On man's aloneness
 Ere thou left him,
 More solitary than before.
 A dream-child thou,
 That wert to be a tender hand
 Binding all men together.
 Thou gropest in man's shadows,
 Gathering weeds ; thou canst not pluck
 His hidden flowers.
 Oftimes thou bearest roots of hate,
 And when man bids thee carry
 Sprays of love
 Thou stealest mournfully away.
 Too frail art thou ; too shy ; too dim thy sight ;
 Man's sacred jewels gleam not in thy fingers ;
 Man's holy candle burns not in thy hands.

O Speech, thou child of loneliness,
 Why dost thou flee
 When my heart bids thee sing ?
 Why art thou ever distant
 From my spirit ?

The Uttermost

DO you know pain, my friend?
Long nights I watched you toss upon your bed
And moan in anguish.
But do you know the pain
Which numbs the senses
Till you feel it not?

Do you know grief, my friend?
With tears and lamentations
I have seen you rend your breast.
But do you know the grief
Which is enclosed in perfect silence?

Do you know joy, my friend?
I see you dance,
I hear your happy song.
But do you know the joy
That seals your lips
And fastens leaden weights about your feet?

Do you know space, my friend?
I see you with your rod and rule;
With compass and with telescope
You would reduce the universe to numbers.
But do you know the space
Which you shall never measure,
Because your eye perceives it not?

Do you know Life, my friend?
Do you behold her hidden jewels,
Does your ear catch her silent song?
Do you with trusting fingers left her veil
And touch the Uttermost?

Life Answers

O, THE pain of fruitlessness !
 O, Full-wombèd Life, thou knowest not the anguish
 Of the barren.
 And you who groan beneath your burden,
 Know you the weight
 Of emptiness ?
 You heavy-laden,
 Mocking my empty hands,
 Mine is the greater load.
 O, the pain of fruitlessness !
 Full-wombèd Life,
 Deliver me from this.

*Foolish, foolish !
 The desert is not barrenness,
 Nor is sleep death.
 The desert is a dream
 That rests a moment ere its flowering,
 And sleep a silent sowing.
 Yea, and your cry of emptiness
 Itself an urge.
 They also sing whose lips are dumb,
 They too bear fruits
 Who seem but empty-handed.
 Space hides its stars,
 And I too have my hidden suns.
 Look well—they shine within your heart.
 Patience—and you shall hold them,
 Trembling, in your hands.*

O, the weariness of sound !
 The tortured going and coming !
 This dinning multitude !
 I spoke to men with love—
 Why did they close their ears ?
 I gave my hand in faith—



Why is it bleeding?
 I held my cheek for men to kiss—
 Why felt I only fevered breath
 Scorching the flesh?
 Lead me, O Life, beyond these troubled ways
 To an untrodden path where Silence walks alone.

Vain words!

*Would you lie, sleeping, in a tomb,
 A living mummy?
 Would you un-sound the universe?
 Bid the winds be silent,
 And the stars stand in their courses?
 Would you uproot the urge
 That sends the ocean, thundering, to the land?
 Shall the fires be quenched,
 And all eternity be a pulseless, futile void?
 Nay, for joy sings upon the wind,
 And it is ecstasy that moves the stars.
 The nebulae cry not of weariness
 As slow they weave the mist to perfect worlds.
 Nor shall man rest from strife
 But in his striving know the deeper joy
 That stirs the heavens.
 What seek you?
 There is in all the universe
 No silent place, no untrod path.
 Unto the farthest deep
 One Voice resounds;
 Beyond the dim utmost
 One Pulse beats evermore.*

O Life, I kneel in shame.
 My eyes, so lately blind, now see.
 And in my ears new voices ring.
 Within my breast strange stirrings tell
 That is not void which is unseen.
 And when I speak,

Men answer sweetly.
 Yet when they answer not,
 I hear a silent uttering
 Of greater words than mine.
 I turn my cheek—
 Their kisses, like cool dews, fall gently.
 Yet if again the hot breath scorch,
 I shall but bless thy chastening flame.
 My hands no longer bleed.
 But if the wounding come,
 Blessed be the blade
 That cuts the weeds which bind my soul.

O sacred ways of pain!
 O endless striving!
 I join the throngs of space:
 Singing, we march together,
 Joyful toilers,
 Weavers of paths for the Dawn.

The Rich Man and the Poet

TAKE of my gold, O Poet!

*It is a potent magic
And a stream of life.
Your desires shall blossom in its light,
The shrouded nights shall turn to blazing noons,
And you shall taste of every hidden fruit,
And know the fragrance of an answered prayer.
Build of my gold O Poet,
A sanctuary for your heart.
Joy shall bless the shining walls,
Bringing new songs to your soul,
And to your breast
The quiet hand of peace.*

The weight of your gold
Crushes my wings,
And binds me to the earth.
My eyes are dazzled by the gleam,
The gentle dawn-light comes no more
To open the drowsy buds of my thought.
The nights that once were filled with throbbing suns,
With silver voices
Singing of wonder-stars,
Now pass in silent darkness,
Void and barren as the blackened fields
Where once a flaming mountain
Sent its longing to the sky.

I have built of your gold
A tomb for my heart.
No prayer stirs in the still shrine,
No hope flutters beneath the pall.
Peace, heavy and dumb,
Guards my soul.

O, lift your treasure!
Longing dies when the senses are steeped in gold;
And longing alone shall turn this dead pool
And this ashen sky
To a living sea
And a singing deep.

He only lives whose hope is unfulfilled,
And he alone creates
Whose breast is ever pregnant
With unanswered prayer.

The Blessed

BLESSED are you
 Who move in peace and majesty among us.
 Bearers of light
 And dreamers of dreams,
 Your light was gathered
 In the trembling glory of the Dawn
 That sent you forth.
 Your dreams, remembrances of that first hour,
 Shall waken memories
 In those who dream no more
 Because they have forgotten.
 The blossoms of your kindness
 Have made sweet our ways.
 The music of your speech
 Has been a song within our ears.
 The weak have blessed you,
 And the strong have bowed before you.
 The visionless have gazed into your eyes and seen ;
 And they whose life is girded round with visions
 Have walked with you in sweet communion.

Blessed, thrice blessed,
 You know not how far you roam.
 They who never shall behold you
 Hear your songs
 And meet your spirits
 Wandering upon the wind.

Glow Worms

THERE in the night a spark is gleaming,
 A breath of the Infinite breathed upon earth.
 A worm and a star by a charm united,
 The deep and the high joined in a flame.

There in the night a spark is gleaming,
 A breath of the Infinite breathed upon earth.
 Love in my heart like a glow-worm shining,
 Steadfast and holy in the night.

Shall Love be Silent

SHALL Love be silent?
 Shall the tender whispers of the heart
 Rise to the lips and expire,
 Breaths of mist that melt
 In Love's too potent sun?
 Shall the fluttering swallows of thought
 Be dazzled and still in the vastness of the dawn?
 Shall Silence hold the Deeper Truth of your heart
 And the Greater Song that stirs the unfathomable
 spirit?
 Is speech a muffling of the ear,
 And are words chains wound about your wings?
 Shall Love be silent?

O, let your tenderness pulse like a sea,
 Silence and speech commingled in a mighty rhythm.
 When the great wave breaks, from the sounding deep
 Love shall soar, a rainbow-winged bird.
 And in the still pauses, when the thunder dies,
 And the waters are quiet,
 Let the silent echo of Love
 Ring in your heart,
 Till speech surge and swell anew,
 Sweeping you on to shining bays
 Where Love is harboured.

O, let your tenderness pulse like a sea,
 Its waves your songs,
 Its silences your prayers.

Longing

MY longing is a wan ghost
 Stealing down phantomed ways.
 My longing is a pale flame
 Trembling in the cold wind of life.
 My longing is a dark stream
 That earth holds from the sun.
 My longing is an aching hand clasping the void.
 My longing is a fluttering bird
 Seeking, yet never finding, the larger sky.
 My longing is a voice wandering, unanswered, in the
 mist
 Forevermore.

Body and Spirit

I THE Body all-powerful,
 Sing to you, Spirit!
 Your wings are crushed
 When the arteries pound;
 In the surge of my blood
 You are drowned and still.
 Of hunger and thirst I weave my nets
 To snare you and hold you, prisoned, dumb;
 With fear and hate and envy and greed
 I spin a shroud to muffle your call.

I am Life made Form.
 I am Beauty and Light.
 I am Passion, the flame-way,
 That spans the sky!

And you, poor naught,
 Whom none may see,
 And whom none may touch,
 Whose very being none may prove,
 Dare you speak to me,
 Your mighty lord?

I, the Body, sing to you, Spirit!
 In the surge of my blood
 You are drowned and still.

I, the Spirit, answer you, Body!
 And the chant of my voice in your bloody seas
 Shall turn their waves to mountains that rise
 With infinite longing towards the sky.
 The wind of my wings shall sweep you aloft,
 Till you soar in the dawn, an earth-freed bird.
 The chained is free, the winged takes flight,
 While you, O my proud one,
 Are but earth's slave,
 And I your saviour, your shining guide.

I breathe a magic into your clay;
 Till my candle burns your eyes are dim.
 I lend my voice to your trembling tongue;
 My lamp is your beauty and your light.
 And your passion, O blind one, but for my flame
 Were only a trail of charred debris,
 Pale cinders and cold, cold dust.
 I am the power that weaves the lips
 To a bridge of wonder that lovers cross
 To farther realms of each raptured kiss.
 I am the glory that makes of flesh
 A temple, a living prayer.

I, the Spirit, answer you, Body!
 When the loam of the earth is about your limbs,
 And you melt away, and are lost and gone,
 I, the Spirit, shall call a-new:
 I am the whisper in the wind.
 I am the breath of Eternity!

Close of Day

ST JAMES'S PARK.

GRAY souls, stealing down misty avenues of trees,
 Weary feet, weaving through dusky paths
 Their homeward way.
 Long lines of slow humanity,
 Moving, tired and wan,
 Yet with a quiet urge
 And with the silent power of patience, waiting.
 The trees are vague shadows
 And the bushes strange, blurred phantoms
 In a grey, grey mist.
 Only afar the sky holds still the glow
 Of fair, sweet, blushing things,
 Beauty smiling a last, long smile
 Before the tomb.
 London has opened wide her doors, and tired toilers
 Slip into the night like silent ghosts
 Seeking the old, worn ways.
 As in a trance they near the hearth-lights
 Shining, somewhere, beyond these mists and shadows,
 Beyond these quivering lights that blossom in the
 grey leaves.
 Day is behind, and all her cares
 So heavy on the heart,
 That thought, the restless bird, scarce stirs a wing,
 And longing sleeps, enshrouded deep
 In worry's breast.
 Mist and languor like a pall
 Wrap them round,
 Muffling their dreams,
 Their hopes and fears and all the dim uncertainties of
 life
 That gnaw the heart to a slim thread
 Spun between Time and Eternity.

Gray souls, stealing down misty avenues of trees,
 Weary feet, weaving through dusky paths
 Their homeward way.
 Lone worlds upon a lonely star,
 Pilgriming in the night to farther skies.



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