

# PATH FLOWER

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PATH FLOWER  
AND  
OTHER VERSES

BY  
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of the verse included in this volume.*

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## P A T H F L O W E R

A RED-CAP sang in Bishop's wood,  
A lark o'er Golder's lane,  
As I the April pathway trod  
Bound west for Willesden.

At foot each tiny blade grew big  
And taller stood to hear,  
And every leaf on every twig  
Was like a little ear.

As I too paused, and both ways tried  
To catch the rippling rain,—  
So still, a hare kept at my side  
His tussock of disdain,—

Behind me close I heard a step,  
A soft pit-pat surprise,  
And looking round my eyes fell deep  
Into sweet other eyes;

## P A T H F L O W E R

The eyes like wells, where sun lies too,  
So clear and trustful brown,  
Without a bubble warning you  
That here's a place to drown.

“How many miles?” Her broken shoes  
Had told of more than one.  
She answered like a dreaming Muse,  
“I came from Islington.”

“So long a tramp?” Two gentle nods,  
Then seemed to lift a wing,  
And words fell soft as willow-buds,  
“I came to find the Spring.”

A timid voice, yet not afraid  
In ways so sweet to roam,  
As it with honey bees had played  
And could no more go home.

Her home! I saw the human lair,  
I heard the hucksters bawl,  
I stifled with the thickened air  
Of bickering mart and stall.

## P A T H F L O W E R

Without a tuppence for a ride,

Her feet had set her free.

Her rags, that decency defied,

Seemed new with liberty.

But she was frail. Who would might note

The trail of hungering

That for an hour she had forgot

In wonder of the Spring.

So shriven by her joy she glowed

It seemed a sin to chat.

(A tea-shop snuggled off the road ;

Why did I think of that ?)

Oh, frail, so frail ! I could have wept,—

But she was passing on,

And I but muddled “ You’ll accept

A penny for a bun ? ”

Then up her little throat a spray

Of rose climbed for it must ;

A wilding lost till safe it lay

Hid by her curls of rust ;

## PATH FLOWER

And I saw modesties at fence  
    With pride that bore no name ;  
So old it was she knew not whence  
    It sudden woke and came ;

But that which shone of all most clear  
    Was startled, sadder thought  
That I should give her back the fear  
    Of life she had forgot.

And I blushed for the world we'd made,  
    Putting God's hand aside,  
Till for the want of sun and shade  
    His little children died ;

And blushed that I who every year  
    With Spring went up and down,  
Must greet a soul that ached for her  
    With " penny for a bun ! "

Struck as a thief in holy place  
    Whose sin upon him cries,  
I watched the flowers leave her face,  
    The song go from her eyes.

## P A T H F L O W E R

Then she, sweet heart, she saw my rout,  
And of her charity  
A hand of grace put softly out  
And took the coin from me.

A red-cap sang in Bishop's wood,  
A lark o'er Golder's lane ;  
But I, alone, still glooming stood,  
And April plucked in vain ;

Till living words rang in my ears  
And sudden music played :  
*Out of such sacred thirst as hers*  
*The world shall be remade.*

Afar she turned her head and smiled  
As might have smiled the Spring,  
And humble as a wondering child  
I watched her vanishing.

## THE PIPER

I MET a crone 'twixt wood and wood,  
Who pointed down the piper's road  
With shaken staff and fearsome glance,—  
“Ware, ware the dance!”

But when the piper me did greet,  
The wind, the wind was in my feet,  
The rose and leaf on eager boughs  
Unvestalled them of dew-writ vows,  
And I as light as leaf and rose  
Danced to the summer's close.

Now every tree is weary grown,  
Of singing birds there is not one;  
All, all the world droops into grey,—  
O piper Love, must thou yet play?  
The wildest note of all he blew,  
And fast my worn feet flew.

## THE PIPER

Old is the year, the leaf and rose  
Are long, long gone ;  
So chill, so chill the gray wind blows  
Through heart and bone ;  
No grasses warm the winter ways  
That wound my feet ;  
But with unwearied fingers yet,  
Bold, undelayed on stop and fret,  
Unmercifully sweet,  
The piper plays . .

## TO A HERMIT THRUSH

DWELLER among leaves, and shining twilight boughs  
That fold cool arms about thine altar place,  
What joyous race  
Of gods dost serve with such unfaltering vows ?

Weave me a time-fringed tale  
Of slumbering, haunted trees,  
And star-sweet fragrances  
No day defiled ;  
Of bowering nights innumerable,  
And nestling hours breath-nigh a dryad's heart  
That sleeping yet was wild  
With dream-beat that thou mad'st a part  
Of thy dawn-fluting ; ay, and keep'st it still,  
Striving so late these godless woods to fill  
With undefeated strain,  
And in one hour build the old world again.  
Wast thou found singing when Diana drew  
Her skirts from the first night ?  
Didst feel the sun-breath when the valleys grew  
Warm with the love of light,



## TO A HERMIT THRUSH

Till blades of flower-lit green gave to the wind  
The mystery that made sweet  
The earth forever,—strange and undefined  
As life, as God, as this thy song complete  
That holds with me twin memories  
Of time ere men,  
And ere our ways  
Lay sundered with the abyss of air between?

*List, I will lay  
The world, my song,  
Deep in the heart of day,  
Day that is long  
As the ages dream or the stars delay!  
Keep thou from me,  
Sigh-throated man,  
Forever to be  
Under the songless wanderer's ban.  
I am of time  
That counteth no dawn;  
Thy wons yet climb  
To skies I have won,  
Seeking for aye an unrisen sun!*

## TO A HERMIT THRUSH

Soft as a shadow slips  
Before the moon, I creep beneath the trees,  
Even to the boughs whose lowest circling tips  
Whisper with the anemones  
Thick-strewn as though a cloud had made  
Its drifting way through spray and leafy braid  
And sunk with unremembering ease  
To humbler heaven upon the mossy heaps.  
And here a warmer flow  
Urges thy melody, yet keeps  
The cool of bowers; as might a rose blush through  
Its unrelinquished dew;  
Or bounteous heart that knows not woe,  
Put on the robe of sighs, and fain  
Would hold in love's surmise a neighbour's pain.

Ah, I have wronged thee, sprite!  
So tender now thy song in flight,  
So sweet its lingerings are,  
It seems the liquid memory  
Of time when thou didst try  
Thy gleaning wing through human years,

## TO A HERMIT THRUSH

And met, ay, knew the sigh  
Of men who pray, the tears  
That hide the woman's star,  
The brave ascending fire  
That is youth's beacon and too soon his pyre,—  
Yea, all our striving, bateless and unseeing,  
That builds each day our Heaven new.  
More deep in time's unnearing blue,  
Farther and ever fleeing  
The dream that ever must pursue.

*Heart-need is sorest  
When the song dies :  
Come to the forest,  
Brother of the sighs.  
Heart-need is song-need,  
Brother, give me thine !  
Song-meed is heart-meed,  
Brother, take mine !  
I go the still way,  
Cover me with night ;  
Thou goest the will way  
Into the light.*

TO A HERMIT THRUSH

*Dust and the burden  
Thou shalt outrun ;  
Bear then my guerdon,  
Song, to the sun !*

O little pagan with the heart of Christ,  
I go bewildered from thine altar place,  
These brooding boughs and grey-lit forest wings,  
Nor know if thou deniest  
My destiny and race,  
Man's goalward falterings,  
To sing the perfect joy that lay  
Along the path we missed somewhere,  
That led thee to thy home in air,  
While we, soil-creepers, bruise our way  
Toward heights and sunrise bounds  
That wings may know nor feet may win  
For all their scars, for all their wounds ;  
Or have I heard within thy strain  
Not sorrow's self, but sorrowing  
That thou did'st seek the way more free,  
Nor took with us the trail of pain

## TO A HERMIT THRUSH

That endeth not, e'er widening  
To life that knows what Life may be ;  
And ere thou fall'st to silence long  
Would golden parting fling :

*Go, man, through death unto thy star ;  
I journey not so far ;  
My wings must fail e'en with my song.*

## THANKSGIVING

SUPREMEST Life and Lord of All,  
I bring my thanks to thee ;  
Not for the health that does not fail,  
And wings me over land and sea ;  
Not for this body's pearl and rose,  
And radiance made sure  
By thine enduring life that flows  
In sky-print swift and pure ;

Not for the thought whose glowing power  
Glides far, eternal, free,  
And surging back in thy full hour  
Bears the wide world to me ;  
Not for the friends whose presence is  
The warm, sweet heart of things  
Where leans the body for the kiss  
That gives the soul its wings ;

## THANKSGIVING

Not for the little hands that cling,  
The little feet that run,  
And make the earth a fitter thing  
For thee to look upon ;  
Not for mine ease within my door,  
My roof when rains beat strong,  
My bed, my fire, my food in store,  
My book when nights are long ;

But, Lord, I know where on lone sands  
A leper rots and cries ;  
Find thou my offering in his hands,  
My worship in his eyes.  
As thou dost give to him, thy least,  
Thou givest unto me ;  
As he is fed I make my feast,  
And lift my thanks to thee.

## THE ROAD

ON Gilead road the shadows creep ;  
('Tis noon, and I forget ;)  
By Gilead road the ferns are deep,  
And waves run emerald, wind-beset,  
To some unsanded shore  
Of doe and dove and fay ;  
And I for love of that before,  
Forget the hindward way.

By Gilead road a river runs,  
(To what unshadowed sea ?)  
Bough-hidden here,—there by the sun's  
Gold treachery unbared to me.  
O Beauty in retreat,  
From beckoned eyes you steal,  
But the pursuing heart, more fleet,  
Lifts your secretest veil.



## THE ROAD

A thrush! What unbuilt temples rear  
Their domes where thrushes sing!  
My heart glides in, a worshipper  
At shrines that ne'er knew offering,  
Nor eye hath seen, and yet  
What soul hath not been there,  
Deep in song's fane where we forget  
To pray, for we are prayer.

And now the shadows start and glide;  
I hear soft, woodland feet;  
And who are they that deeper bide  
Where beechen twilights meet?  
What tranced beings smile  
On things I may not see?  
As with a dream they would beguile  
Their own eternity?

I too shall find my own as they;  
('Tis eve, and I forget;)  
Here in this world where mortals play  
As gods with no god's leave or let.

## THE ROAD

My hope in high purlieus  
Desire erst lockt and kept,  
On wing unbarred shall seek and choose,—  
Ay, choose, when I have slept.

For happy roads may yet be long,  
And bliss must sometime bed.  
Fern-deep I fall, lose sight and song,  
The slim palms close above my head,  
And Life, the Shadow, weaves  
The charm on sleepers laid  
Till Time's spent ghost comes not nor grieves  
An hourless Gilead.

Ay me, I dream my eyes are wet;  
I sigh, I turn, I weep.  
Alack, that waking we forget  
But to remember when we sleep!  
O vision of closed eyes,  
That burns the heart awake!  
O the forgotten truth's reprise  
For the forsaken's sake!

## THE ROAD

Far land, blood-red, I feel again  
Thy hot, unsilenced breath ;  
Meet the unburied eyes of pain  
That, dying ever, find no death ;  
See childhood's one gold hour  
Bartered for crust and bed,  
And man's o'erdriven noon devour  
His evening peace and bread.

I hear men sob,—ay, men,—and shout  
To souls on Gilead road :  
“Tell us the way—we sent ye out—  
We bought ye free—we paid our blood !”  
Gaunt arms make signal mad ;  
O, feel the woe-waves break !  
Does no one hear in Gilead ?  
Will one, not one turn back ?

Rolls higher from the land blood-red  
That sea-surge of despair !  
A flame creeps over Gilead,  
Unseen, unfelt by any there.

## THE ROAD

They look not back, the while  
Doom shadows round them dance,  
And smile meets slow, unstartled smile  
As in a sleep's mid-chance.

“We give our days, we give our blood,  
We send ye far to see!  
We break beneath the double load  
That ye may walk unbowed and free!  
’Tis ours, the healing shade;  
’Tis ours, the singing stream;  
’Tis ours, the charm on sleepers laid;  
’Tis ours, the toil-won dream!”

Dim grown is Gilead, ashen, lost  
To me who hear that cry.  
“Our every star is hid with dust;  
The way, the way! Let us not die!”  
Up from the trampled ferns,  
(O Beauty's praying hands!)  
I stricken start, as one who turns  
From plague's unholy lands.

## THE ROAD

Pale is the dream we dream alone,  
    An unresolving fire,  
Till beacon hearts make it their own  
    And men are lit with man's desire.  
I mourn no Gilead fair,  
    Back to my own I speed,  
And all my tears are falling where  
    They sell the sun for bread.

Mine too the blow, the unwept scar ;  
    Mine too the flames that sere ;  
And on my breast not one proud star  
    That leaves a brother's heaven bare.  
Life is the search of God  
    For His own unity ;  
I walk stone-bare till all are shod,  
    No gold may sandal me.

I come, O comrades, faster yet !  
    For me no bough-hung shade  
Till every burning foot be set  
    In ferns of Gilead.

## THE ROAD

The old, old pain of kind,  
Once mine, is mine once more ;  
And I forget the way behind,  
So dear is that before.

## LA DAME REVOLUTION

RED was the Might that sired thee,  
White was the Hope that bore thee,  
Heaven and Earth desired thee,  
And Hell from thy lovers tore thee ;  
But barren to the ravisher,  
Thou bearest Love thy child,  
Immortal daughter, Peace ; for her  
Waits Man, the Undefined.

## THE REBEL

A RIOT-MAKER! Can the fruit  
Of frenzy be a gracious thing?  
His soul has hands; above the bruit  
They lift a song-bird quivering.

World-wrecker! Shall he trampling go  
Till Beauty's drenched and lonely eyes  
Mourn a deserted earth? But no!  
Men go not down till men arise.

The game is Life's. She plays to win;  
And whirls to dust her overlings;  
Her abluent winds shall spare no sin,  
Though hidden in the breast of kings;

And Earth is smiling as she takes  
To her old lap their fallen bones,  
For down the throbbing ways there wakes  
The laughter of her greater sons.



## THESE LATTER DAYS

TAKE down thy stars, O God! We look not up.  
In vain thou hangest there thy changeless sign.  
We lift our eyes to power's glowing cup,  
Nor care if blood make strong that wizard wine,  
So we but drink and feel the sorcery  
Of conquest in our veins, of wits grown keen  
In strain and strife for flesh-sweet sovereignty,—  
The fatal thrill of kingship over men.  
What though the soul be from the body shrunk,  
And we array the temple, but no god?  
What though, the cup of golden greed once drunk,  
Our dust be laid in a dishonoured sod,  
While thy loud hosts proclaim the end of wars?  
We read no sign. O God, take down thy stars!

## ABNEGATION

CHRIST, dear Christ, were the wood-ways sweet  
By the long, white highway bare,  
Where the hot road dust made grey Thy feet?  
Ay,—but the woman's hair!

Brother, my Christ, when thou camest down  
The cup of water to give,  
Did a poet die on the mount's cool crown?  
Ay,—and for that dost thou live!

## THE LITTLE TREE

It pushed a guided way between  
The pebbles of her grave ;  
A poplar hastening to be green  
And silver signals wave.

And we who sought her with the moon,  
Were met by branches stirred,  
And whiter grew as grew the croon  
That seemed her hidden word.

“O, she would speak !” my heart-beat said ;  
My eyes were on the mound ;  
And lowlier hung my waiting head  
Above the prisoning ground.

Then smiled the lad and whispered me,—  
The lad who most did love ;  
“She stoops to us ; the little tree  
Is wakened from above !”

## THE GAME

'Tis played with eyes; one uttered word  
    Would cast the game away.  
As silent as a sailing bird,  
    The shift and change of play.

So many eyes to me are dear,  
    So many do me bless;  
The hazel, deep as deep wood-mere  
    Where leaves are flutterless;

The brown that most bewildereth  
    With dusking, golden play  
Of shadows like betraying breath  
    From some shy, hidden day;

The black whose torch is ever trimmed,  
    Let stars be soon or late;  
The blue, a morning never dimmed,  
    Opposing Heaven to fate;

## THE GAME

The grey as soft as farthest skies  
That hold horizon rain ;  
Or when, steel-darkling, stoic-wise,  
They bring the gods again ;  
And wavelit eyes of nameless glow,  
Fed from far-risen streams ;  
But oh, the eyes, the eyes that know  
The silent game of dreams !

Three times I've played. Once 'twas a child,  
Lap-held, not half a year  
From Heaven, looked at me and smiled,  
And far I went with her.

Out past the twilight gates of birth,  
And past 'Time's blindfold day,  
Beyond the star-ring of the earth,  
We found us room to play.

And once a woman, spent and old  
With unavailing tears,  
Who from her hair's down-tangled fold  
Shook out the grey-blown years,

## THE GAME

Sat by the trampled way alone,  
And lifted eyes—what themes!  
I could not pass, I sat me down  
To play the game of dreams.

And once . . . a poet's eyes they were,  
Though earth heard not his strain;  
And since he went no eyes can stir  
My own to play again.

## BALLAD

WHEN I with Death have gone on quest,  
And grief is mellowed in your breast ;  
    When you do nothing fret  
If jest come gently in with tea,  
And Purr is stroked for want of me ;  
When thought robust bestirs your mind,  
And with a candid start you find  
    The world must move  
    To living love  
And you forthright on travel set ;

I do not ask you strive to keep  
Awake the woe that winks for sleep,  
    Or swell the lessening tear ;  
I do not ask ; dear to me still  
May be the eyes regret would fill ;

## BALLAD

And, sooth, in vain I'd Nature sue  
To go a little out for you ;  
    But whether 'tis  
    Or that or this  
Is from the matter there and here.

Forget the kisses dying not  
Till each a thousand more begot ;  
    Such easy progeny  
You with small trouble still may have ;  
(Though women die, love has no grave ;)  
Forget the quaint, the nest-born ways,  
And ponder things more to my praise,  
    That I may long  
    Be worth a song  
Though deep in tongueless clay I be.

Admit my eye, than yours less keen,  
Still knew a bead of Hippocrene  
    From baser bubbles bright ;  
My ear could catch, or short or long,  
The echo of true-hammered song ;



## BALLAD

And many a book we journeyed through ;  
Some turned us home again, 'tis true,  
    (Not all who pen  
    Are more than men,)  
And some, like stars, outwore the night.

Say I could break a lance with Fate,  
Took half, at least, my troubles straight,  
    (Let women have their boast ;)   
Homed well with chance, and passing where  
The gods kept house would take a chair,  
Perchance at ease, with naught ado,  
With Jove would toss a quip or two ;  
    The nectar stale,  
    A mug of ale  
On goodly earth would serve a toast.

And if I left thee by a stile  
Where thou didst choose to dream, the while  
    I sought a farther mead,  
Or clomb a ridge for flowers that wore  
Of earth the less, of stars the more,

## BALLAD

I hastened back, confess of me,  
To lay my treasure on thy knee ;  
    Nor didst thou hear  
    Of stone or brere,  
Or how my hidden feet did bleed.

And in the piping season when  
The whole round world takes heart again  
    To rise and dance with Spring ;  
When robin drives the snow-wind home,  
And sweetened is the warmed loam,  
When deeper root the violets,  
And every bud its fear forgets  
    With upward glance  
    For lovers' chance  
In Venus' dear and fateful ring ;

Let not a thought of my cold bed  
Bechill thy warm heart beating red,  
    And thy new ardours dim ;  
But if, good hap, you rove where I  
Beneath the twinkling moss then lie,

## BALLAD

Be glad to see me decked so gay,  
(Spring's the best handmaid without pay,)  
    I like things new,  
    In season too,  
And fain must smile to be so trim.

Then hie thee to some bonny brake  
Another mate to woo and take,  
    And as thy soul to love.  
Rise with the dew, stay not the noon,  
What's good cannot be found too soon,  
The wind will not be always south,  
Nor like a rose is every mouth,  
    Time's quick to press,  
    Do thou no less,  
And may the night thy wisdom prove.

And as all love doth live again  
In great or small that loved hath been,  
    Keep this sole troth with me,—  
Forget my name, my form, my face,  
But meet me still in every place,

## BALLAD

Since we are what we love, and I  
Loved everything beneath the sky.  
So may I long  
Be worth a song,  
Though I who sang forgotten be.

## A DIRGE

MORTAL child, lay thee where  
Earth is gift and giver ;  
Midnight owl, witch, or bear  
Shall disturb thee never !

Softly, softly take thy place,  
Turn from man thy waning face ;  
Fear not thou must lie alone,  
Sleep-mates thou shalt have anon.

(Clock of Time none commands,  
Driveth not the winter floods,  
Where the silent, tireless sands  
Run the ages of the gods.)

Thine is not a jealous bed ;  
Pillow here hath every head ;  
All that are and all to be  
Shall ask a little room of thee.

## A DIRGE

(Feet of flame, haste nor creep  
Where the stars are of thy pace ;  
Heart of fire, in shadows sleep,  
With the sun in thy embrace.)

Babe of Time, old in care,  
Sweet is Earth, the giver ;  
Owlet, witch, or midnight bear  
Shall disturb thee never.

## HIS ARGUMENT

ONE time I wooed a maid (dear is she yet!)  
All in the revel eye of young Love's moon.  
Content she made me,—ah, my dimpling mate,  
My Springtime girl, who walked with flower-  
shoon!

But near me, nearer, steals a deep-eyed maid  
With creeping glance that sees and will not see,  
And blush that would those yea-sweet eyes up-  
braid,—

O, might I woo her nor inconstant be!  
But is not Autumn dreamtime of the Spring?  
(Yon scarlet fruit-bell is a flower asleep;)  
And I am not forsworn if yet I keep  
Dream-faith with Spring in Autumn's deeper kiss.  
Then so, brown maiden, take this true-love ring,  
And lay thy long, soft locks where my heart is.

## THE CONQUEROR

O SPRING, that flutter'st the slow Winter by,  
To drop thy buds before his frosty feet,  
Dost thou not grieve to see thy darlings lie  
In trodden death, and weep their beauty sweet?  
Yet must thou cast thy tender offering,  
And make thy way above thy mournèd dead,  
Or frowning Winter would be always king,  
And thou wouldst never walk with crownèd head.  
So gentle Love must make his venturous way  
Among the shaken buds of his own pain;  
And many a hope-blown garland meekly lay  
Before the chilly season of disdain;  
But as no beauty may the Spring outglow,  
So he, when throned, no greater lord doth know.



## TO MOINA

THERE were no heaven but for lovers' eyes ;  
Save in their depths do all Elysiums fade ;  
And gods were dead but for the life that lies  
In kisses sweet on sweeter altars laid.  
There were no heroes did not lovers ride,  
And pyramid high deeds upon new time ;  
Nor tale for feast, or field, or chimney-side,  
And harps were dumb and song had ne'er a rhyme.  
Then live, proud heart, in happy fealty,  
Nor sigh thee more thy dear bonds to remove ;  
Thou art not thrall to liege of mean degree,  
For all are kings who bear the lance of love ;  
No wight so poor but may his tatters lose,  
And find his purple if his lady choose.

“T H E R E ’ S   R O S E M A R Y ”

O LOVE that is not love, but dear, so dear !  
That is not love because it goes so soon,  
Like flower born and dead within one moon,  
And yet is love for that it comes full near  
The guarded fane where love alone may peer,  
Ere like young Spring by Summer soon outshone,  
It trembles into death, but comes anon,  
As thoughts of Spring will come though Summer's  
here.

O star full sweet, though one arose more fair,  
Within my heart I'll keep a heaven for thee  
Where thou mayst freely come and freely go,  
Touching with thy pale gold the twilight air  
Where dream-closed buds could never flower show,  
Yet fragrant keep the shadowy way for me.

## AT THE GRAVE OF HEINE

SOUTH-HEART of song  
In winter drest,  
Death mends thy wrong ;  
That is life's best.

Bird, who didst sing  
From a bare bough,  
Call, and what Spring  
Will answer now !

And haste with her  
Bud-legacy,—  
O, not to share,  
To take of thee !

Thy night, slow, dark,  
Yet song-lit shone,  
Till who did hark  
Missed not the moon ;

AT THE GRAVE OF HEINE

When Morning found  
Thy cold, pierced breast,  
'Twas she who moaned,  
To thy thorn pressed.

*Here lies the thorn-wound of the dawn  
Through whose high morn the bird sings on.*

## TO A LOST COMRADE

WE found the spring at eager noon,  
And from one cup we drank ;  
Then on until the forest croon  
In twilight tangle sank ;

The night was ours, the stars, the dawn ;  
The manna crust, bird-shared ;  
And never failed our magic shoon,  
Whatever way we fared.

If caged at last, ceased not the flow  
Of sky-gleam through the bars ;  
And where were wounds I only know  
Tear-kisses hid the scars.

And when, as round the world death-free  
We wind-embodied roam,  
I hear the gale that once was thee  
Cry "Hollo!" I will come.

FOR M. L. P.

ROSE Love lay dreaming where I passed,  
Like flower blown from careless stem ;  
So still I dared to touch at last  
Her white robe's hem.

Rose Love looked up and caught my hand,  
Though in her eyes the sea-birds were ;  
When o'er my brow there blew a strand  
Of cold, grey hair.

Rose Love stood up unriddling this,  
Till shadows in my eyes grew old ;  
Then warmed the lock with sudden kiss ;  
Now flames it gold.

## TO SLEEP

O SILENT lover of a world day-worn,  
Taking the weary light to thy dusk arms,  
Stealing where pale forms lie, sun-hurt and torn,  
Waiting the balm of thy oblivious charms,  
Make me thy captive ere I guess pursuit,  
And cast me deep within some dreamless close,  
Where hopes stir not, and white, wronged lips are  
muted,  
And Pain's hot wings fold down o'er hushèd woes.  
And if ere morn thou choosest me to free,  
Let it not be, dear jailer, through the door  
That timeward opes, but to eternity  
Set thou the soul that needs thee nevermore;  
So I from sleep to death may softly wend  
As one would pass from gentle friend to friend.

## “LE PENSEUR”

WARM in this marble, that is stone no more,  
Life at wound-pause lifts ear to woundless mind ;  
Backward the ages their slow clew unwind,  
And step by step, and star by star, lead o'er  
The trail again, where eyeless passion tore  
Its red way to a soul. Mist-bound and blind  
No more, the thinker waits, and God grown kind  
Flashes a foot-print where He goes before.

Not to be followed ! Falls the cloud again ;  
Folds the stern form around the striving doubt,  
And curve betrays to curve the silent birth  
That shall be voice to later times and men ;  
While lone in unlit dark, within, without,  
He sits immortal on a godless earth.



## VISION

Look in, O Mystic, on thy lease,  
    Thou tenant soul in God's demesne ;  
Forego the show of eyes that fail,  
And walk the world that cannot pale,  
    Thine by a sealed and termless lien  
Within His met eternities.

Yet look thou out from thy still hour  
    With eyes that know and bear His fire ;  
Till kindling on thy wonder's verge  
The transient days immortal merge  
    In Him fulfilled as worlds expire  
In nestled love, a song, a flower.

## S A F E

My dream-fruit tree a palace bore  
In stone's reality,  
And friends and treasure, art and lore,  
Came in to dwell with me.

But palaces for gods are made ;  
I shrank to man, or less ;  
Gold-barriered, yet chill, afraid,  
My soul shook shelterless.

I found a cottage in a wood,  
Warmed by a hearth and maid,  
And fed and slept, and said 'twas good,—  
Ah, love-nest in the shade !

The walls grew close, the roof pressed low,  
Soft arms my jailers were ;  
My naked soul arose to go,  
And shivered bright and bare.

## S A F E

No more I sought for covert kind ;  
The blast blew on my head ;  
And lo, with tempest and with wind  
I felt me garmented.

Here on the hills the writhing storm  
Cloaks well and shelters me ;  
I wrap me round and I am warm,  
Warm for eternity.

## ON BOSWORTH FIELD

HERE, Richard, didst thou fall, caparisoned  
With kingdoms of thy lust ;  
And here wouldst lie, by Fame's bent gleaners  
shunned,  
But came unto thy dust  
A swaggerer, perdy !  
Who cried " A horse, a horse ! " and straight  
Thou wert abroad again on kingly feet  
To tread eternity.

## OLD FAIRINGDOWN

SOFT as a treader on mosses  
I go through the village that sleeps;  
The village too early abed,  
For the night still shuffles, a gipsy,  
In the woods of the east,  
And the west remembers the sun.

Not all are asleep; there are faces  
That lean from the walls of the gardens;  
Look sharply, or you will not see them,  
Or think them another stone in the wall.  
I spoke to a stone, and it answered  
Like an aged rock that crumbles;  
Each falling piece was a word.  
“Five have I buried,” it said,  
“And seven are over the sea.”

## OLD FAIRINGDOWN

Here is a hut that I pass,  
So lowly it has no brow,  
And dwarfs sit within at a table.  
A boy waits apart by the hearth ;  
On his face the patience of firelight,  
But his eyes seek the door and a far world.  
It is not the call to the table he waits,  
But the call of the sea-rimmed forests,  
And cities that stir in a dream.  
I haste by the low-browed door,  
Lest my arms go in and betray me,  
A mother jealously passing.  
He will go, the pale dwarf, and walk tall among  
giants ;  
The child with his eyes on the far land,  
And fame like a young, curled leaf in his heart.  
  
The stream that darts from the hanging hill  
Like a silver wing that must sing as it flies,  
Is folded and still on the breast  
Of the village that sleeps.  
Each mute, old house is more old than the other,  
And each wears its vines like ragged hair

## OLD FAIRINGDOWN

Round the half-blind windows.  
If a child should laugh, if a girl should sing,  
Would the houses rub the vines from their eyes,  
And listen and live?  
A voice comes now from a cottage,  
A voice that is young and must sing,  
A honeyed stab on the air,  
And the houses do not wake.

I look through the leaf-blowzed window,  
And start as a gazer who, passing a death-vault,  
Sees life sitting hopeful within.  
She is young, but a woman, round-breasted,  
Waiting the peril of Eve;  
And she makes the shadows about her sweet  
As the glooms that play in a pine-wood.  
She sits at a harpsichord (old as the walls are),  
And longing flows in the trickling, fairy notes  
Like a hidden brook in a forest  
Seeking and seeking the sun.

I have watched a young tree on the edge of a wood  
When the mist is weaving and drifting.

## OLD FAIRINGDOWN

Slowly the boughs disappear and the leaves reach out  
Like the drowning hands of children,  
Till a grey blur quivers cold  
Where the green grace drank of the sun.  
So now, as I gaze, the morrows  
Creep weaving and winding their mist  
Round the beauty of her who sings.  
They hide the soft rings of her hair,  
Dear as a child's curling fingers ;  
They shut out the trembling sun of eyes  
That are deep as a bending mother's ;  
And her bridal body is scarfed with their chill.

For old and old is the story ;  
Over and over I listen to murmurs  
That are always the same in these towns that sleep ;  
Where grey and unwed a woman passes,  
Her cramped, drab gown the bounds of a world  
She holds with grief and silence ;  
And a gossip whose tongue alone is unwithered  
Mumbles the tale by her affable gate ;  
How the lad must go, and the girl must stay,  
Singing alone to the years and a dream ;



## OLD FAIRINGDOWN

Then a letter, a rumour, a word  
From the land that reaches for lovers  
And gives them not back ;  
And the maiden looks up with a face that is old ;  
Her smile, as her body, is evermore barren,  
Her cheek like the bark of the beech-tree  
Where climbs the grey winter.

Now have I seen her young,  
The lone girl singing,  
With the full round breast and the berry lip,  
And heart that runs to a dawn-rise  
On new-world mountains.  
The weeping ash in the dooryard  
Gathers the song in its boughs,  
And the gown of dawn she will never wear.  
I can listen no more ; good-bye, little town, old  
Fairingdown.

I climb the long, dark hillside,  
But the ache I have found here I cannot outclimb.  
O Heart, if we had not heard, if we did not know  
There is that in the village that never will sleep !

## THE KISS

I STOLE into the secret room  
Where Love lay dying ;  
Mystic and faint perfume  
Met me like sighing ;  
As heaven had cast a still-born star  
He lay nor stirred ; the shell-thin hand  
Nerveless of high command  
Where once the lord-veins sped their fire.

And I had thought me glad  
To let him go. " He reaps  
His own," I pious said.  
But this, ah, this  
Unpleading helplessness !  
" Give me thy death," I cried,  
And took it from his lips.

## THE KISS

The windows burst them wide.  
The sun came in ;  
And Love high at my side  
Stood sovereign.

## YOUTH

HE hears the hour's low hint and springs  
To the chariot-side of Truth, while fast  
The wild car swings  
Through dust and cloud ;  
And the watchful elders, prophet-proud,  
Give o'er his bones  
To the wracking stones—  
But he has passed !

A weft of sky, and castles stare  
High from a wizard shore,  
Sun-arrowed, tower-strong ;  
Gold parapets in air  
Down-pour, down-pour  
Sea-falls of peri song ;  
Then earth, the dragon's lair ;  
Cave eyes and burning breath ;  
And the lance the Grail lords bore  
This day flies swift and fair,  
This day of the dragon's death.

## YOUTH

Must doff the wind-wreath, find thee lone?  
Put on meek age's hood?  
Feel but the frost within the dawn?  
Wrap courage in a swaddling mood?  
His bare throat flings  
All-powered nay;  
The world, his vast, unfingered lyre,  
Stirs in her thousand strings;  
Lit with redemptive flame  
Burns miracle desire,  
And dedicated day  
Is long as freedom's dream.

Youth of the lance, youth of the lyre,  
How far, how far shalt go?  
Where will the halting be?  
Sun-courier, whose roads of fire  
Bridge God's delay,  
The hearts that know thee, ah, they know,  
Ageless in clay,  
Sole immortality!

## TO MIRIMOND

(HER BIRTHDAY, IN DECEMBER)

Dost think that Time, to whom stars vainly sue,  
Will for thy beauty keep one fixed place?  
Or that he may, o'er-weighed with seasons due,  
Forget one Spring where veinlet trendrils lace  
Rose over rose to make this flower, thy face?  
Look round thee now, dear dupe of sweet hey-day!  
Of what once blooming joy canst thou find trace  
Save in the bosom of a cold decay?  
What violet of Summer's yester sway  
Usurps these clouds to throne her slender moon?  
Look on the wrinkling year, the shrunken way,  
The wintry bier of all that gaudy shone,  
And gather love ere loveliness wear pall,  
If thou, when all is gone, wouldst still have all.

## SOROLLA

“I AM fleet,” said the joy of the sun,  
Trembling then on the breast  
Of the summer, white, still;  
“I am fleet, I am gone!”  
Smiling came one  
With brush and a will,  
Undelaying, unpessed,  
And the glancing gold of the tremulous sun  
Lingers for man, inescapable, won.

“Not here, nor yet there,”  
Cried the waves that fled,  
“Shall ye set us a snare.  
Motion is breath of us,  
Stillness is death of us;  
We live as we run,  
We pause and are sped!”  
Laughing came one

## SOROLLA

With brush and a will,  
And the waves never die and are nevermore  
still.

“I pass,” said the light  
On the joy-child’s face ;  
But softly came one  
And it leaves not its place.  
Here ‘Time shall replight  
His faith with the dawn,  
And his ages, gaunt gray,  
Ever cycling, behold  
Their youth never flown  
In a world never old,  
Though they pass and repass with their trailing  
decay.

“We stay,” said the shadows, and hung  
On the brush of the master ; “we are thine own.”  
Fearless he flung  
The magical chains around them, and said,  
“Ye too shall be light, and to life bring the sun !”  
And man delayed



## SOROLLA

By the captive pain's revealing glow  
Feeleth earth's breathing woe,  
And his vow is made ;  
“ Ye shall pass, ye shadows, yea ;  
And life, as the sun, be free ;  
The God in me saith ! ”  
And the shadows go ;  
For joy is the breath  
Of eternity,  
And sorrow the sigh of a day.

## IN THE BLUE RIDGE

THE mountain night is shining, Jim of Tellico,  
Shining so it hurts the heart to see  
The gleam upon the laurel leaf, the locust shaking  
snow  
To the rippling Nantahala that is laughing up to  
me,  
Hurts till the cry comes and the big tears are  
free.  
O, why should my heart cry to you that will not  
hear,  
Yonder where the ridges lie so still above the  
town?  
But the pain that's calling seems to bring you near,  
As the tears in my eyes bring the stars a-swimming  
down.  
Mother sits and cries, with my baby on her knee ;  
Father curses deep, a-breathing hard your name ;

## IN THE BLUE RIDGE

But never do I hear and never do I see,  
I with my head low, working out my shame,  
Eyes burning dry and my heart like a flame ;  
For I hate you then—I hate you, Jim of Tellico,  
And grip my needle tighter, every stitch a sin,  
The hate growing bigger till the thing I sew  
Seems a shroud I'm glad a-making just to lay  
you in.

But the slow sun passes with its day-long stare,  
Like a bold eye at the window when the blind  
Is missing and you mustn't know the eye is there,—  
Just shut your heart up close and hide the thing  
you mind ;  
And comes the blessed twilight calling of its  
kind,  
When all the little creatures with soft voices stir,  
Little hiding things that cry so tremblingly,  
Till I lay my needle by,—O, how the sweet woods  
whirr !  
And fly down to the river that is laughing up to  
me.

## IN THE BLUE RIDGE

Then the hate goes out o' me with the moonlight  
creeping in,

And the water crooning cool-like in my veins.

Who could smell the white azalea thinking then of  
sin,

Or look on laurel buds a-caring for her pains?

It's just my heart breaks open and the wild flood  
rains.

O beauty of the moon-mist winding, winding slow,

'Till the tall lynns quiver vainly up to hold

One leafy moment more the breathing, gliding flow

Of the loosened wreath of silver lifting into gold!

The moosewood bride is glowing, all her curls awave,

The colt's-foot in millions makes the ground like  
a bed,

So sweet-breathed and green now, in winter scarlet  
brave,

And blossom lips of tulip trees are meeting over-  
head,

But never shall a tear fall for their love spent and  
dead.

## IN THE BLUE RIDGE

Doves are building yonder in that clump of maples  
deep,

Do maple leaves come soonest for they love to  
hide

The earliest nest and hear the first faint cheep

'Telling them of joy too dear, too sweet to hide?

The joy that was my own, Jim, when our birdling  
came,

Telling me that love is never spent and dead,—

Though you left the tears to me, and left to me the  
shame,—

For the wildwood broke in blossoms round my bed,  
And the fairest on my bosom laid its stainless head.

Can God who made this night His own great heart  
to please,

And made that other night like this a year ago,

Be mad at us for loving? O, I fall upon my knees

And beg Him bless you, bless you ever, Jim of  
Tellico!

## YE WHO ARE TO SING

O SILENCE of all silences, where wait  
Fame's unblown years whose choir my soul would  
greet !  
Graves, nor dead Time, are sealed so dumb in fate,  
For Death and Time must pass on echoing feet.  
No grass-locked vault, no sculptured winding-  
sheet,  
No age-embalmèd hour with mummied wing,  
Is bosomed in such stillness, vast, complete,  
As wraps the future, and no prayer may bring  
From that unfathomed pause one minstrel murmur-  
ing.  
Yet never earth a lyreless dawn shall know ;  
No moon shall move unharped to her pale home ;  
No midnight wreath its chain of choric glow  
But answering eye flash rhythmic to the dome.  
No path shall lie too deep in forest gloam

## YE WHO ARE TO SING

For the blithe singer's tread ; no winds fore'er  
Blow lute-lorn barks o'er unawakened foam ;  
Nor hidden isle sleep so enwaved but there  
Shall touch and land at last Apollo's mariner.

And soon shall wake that morrow's melody,  
When men of labour shall be men of dream,  
With hand seer-guided, knowing Deity  
That breathes in sonant wood and fluting stream,  
Shapes too the wheel, the shaft, the shouldering  
beam,

Nor ceased to build when Magian toil began  
To lift its towered world. What chime supreme  
Shall turn our tuneless march to music when  
Sings the achieving God in conscious hearts of men !

And one voice shall be woman's, lifting lay  
Till all the lark-heights of her being ring ;  
Majestic she shall take the chanted way,  
And every song-peak's golden bourgeoning  
Shall thrill beneath her feet that lyric spring  
From ventured crest to crest. Strong, masterless,  
She, last in freedom, as the first shall sing,

## YE WHO ARE TO SING

Who, great in freedom, takes by Love her place,  
Wife, mother,—more, her starward moving self—  
the race.

Ay, ye shall come, ye spirits girt with light  
That falls o'er heaven's hills from dawn to be ;  
Ye warders in the planet house of night,  
Gliding to unguessed doors with prophet key,  
And out where dim paths stir with minstrelsy  
Wordless and strange to man until your clear  
Doubt-shriven strain interprets to the clay.  
Oh, might I hear ye as the world shall hear,  
Nearer, a poet's journey, to the Golden Year !

Dear, honoured bards of centuries dim and sped,  
Yet glowing ever in your fadeless song,  
No dust shall heap its silence o'er ye dead,  
No cadent seas shall drown your chorus strong  
In more melodious waves. I've lingered long  
By your brave harps strung for eternity ;  
But now runs my wild heart to meet the throng  
Who yet shall choir. O wondrous company,  
If graves may listen then, I then shall listening be !



“AND THE LAST SHALL BE FIRST”

OF the dumb, bayed god in men,  
Of the burdened mother eyes,  
Of the little, lifted hands,  
Of the passion and the dream  
Sighing up from trodden lands,  
Fearless, he is born again ;  
Bold inquisitor of skies,  
Treading earth unmastered, free,  
And the way grows wide for him  
Walking with the day to be.

Dead the grasp of custom then,  
Silent grows her voice and pen ;  
Part as air the birth-wrong bands,  
Break as thread the steel-drawn strands,

## “AND THE LAST SHALL BE FIRST”

Graves no longer over-awe,  
Dust is dust and men are men ;  
A living tongue again gives living law.

Trophies ours by gold and gun,  
Little treasures, houses,—nay,  
Guerdons of our dearest fight,  
Now are fuel for his sun,  
And the dreams that lit the night  
Burn as candles in the day.  
Yet we made thee, Man of Right,  
As our being plead to rise ;  
Of our straining arm thy might ;  
Even as we prayed for sight,  
Lo, afar thou hadst thy prophet eyes.

Ay, thy gleaming spear is ours ;  
Ours thy fearless, golden bow ;  
And our shining arrows go  
From thy bright untaken towers.  
Thou art what we will to be,  
Sceptre, star, and wingèd cloud ;

“AND THE LAST SHALL BE FIRST”

We are blood and brawn of thee,  
Glowing up through sod and stone,  
Burning through thy rended shroud,  
Moving with thee, chainless, on,  
Till the world, a quickened whole,  
Truth-delivered, naked, free,  
Once again hath found its deathless soul.

## MAGDALEN TO HER POET

TAKE back thy song ; or let me hear what thou  
    Heardst anciently from me,  
        The woman ; now  
This wassail drift on boughless shores ;  
    Once lyre-veined leading thee  
        To singing doors  
    Out of the coiling dark ;  
    Teaching thee hark  
Earth's virgin candours, blossomed wonderings,  
And sanctities inaudible till strings  
    Of lyric gentleness  
    Wooded Heaven to confess  
    Her world, and I was near,  
    The earliest listener,  
Who of my bosom then made Arcady,  
And drew thy forest feet to Castaly.

## MAGDALEN TO HER POET

Take back thy pity. Is it not from man  
Who made that world his own?

As barbican

Sends out its darts, and after flings

A dole of myrrh where groan

Is loudest, sings

'Thy grace to me, me thus

Unbeauteous

By thee. Uneased thy covenanted bit

From Levite ark till now. 'Thy judges sit,

Gods ruminant, to keep

Earth pure for dulcet sleep

Of babe and mother. Ay,

Drones yet the lulling lie,

Whilst I, Disease unincinctured, darkly mate

With guard and sentry of thy hierarchate.

Thine ages, are they fair? Shall they yet draw

Child-homage from our eyes?

The woman awe

As her own babe? Far stretch the avid spans

Of fame-drunk emperies,

And all are man's;

## MAGDALEN TO HER POET

But from what tower of praise

Does Justice gaze?

Art is thy boast? "See how we garland her,  
The goddess of our hands?" Yea, yea, but where  
Is Truth, save by whose breath  
Art is a laurelled death?

"Our churches these, and this

Our Holy Writ; there wis

Our altars high, and sanctuarised sod!"

But what, care-taking soul, hast done with God?

The bairning time I knew, the whispering breast,

But in thy world no place

Was for my nest,

Fragrant for perilous brooding pause.

Thou went'st thy pace;

My gathered straws

And grasses cast to dust

To make thy lust

A wayside couch. Deep from the nation's root,

The bower-tree where homes are nesting fruit,

Thy blight creeps up unseen

On bitten way to the green,

## MAGDALEN TO HER POET

Till no hope-banneret  
Makes Spring in windy fret  
Of flagellant boughs that whip my fingers bare,  
Too chill at last to build, to bleed, to care.

Must surge so late with Nature's spawning ruse ?  
Her stintless passioning  
Lest she should lose  
The younglet of her dearest pang ?  
To thee, her tenderling,  
She gave lust-fang  
To run the jungle's harm ;  
Now strives thee to disarm,  
And fend Life from that weapon lent thy wear  
Till thou, forsaking dust, mightst capture her.  
What need now of the blood  
Whose wasteful plenitude  
Swept thee through hostile slime  
To shores of light and time,  
Man-minim safe mid frost and poison dews  
Where naught could live that had not life to  
lose ?

## MAGDALEN TO HER POET

Yet dost thou foster it as thy veined sun ;  
    'Thy Heaven and Holy Rood  
        Build toppling on  
Its strifeful hell ; root there thy art,  
    Thy dreams of tenderest bud ;  
        Gaze on the heart  
    Of its fetidity,  
    This wreck of me,  
And sing. O God, what death in eyes so bound,  
They see Life's beauty in her draining wound !  
    Lay thou the blind thing down  
    With saurian tusk and bone,  
    With dust of sworded maw  
    And peril's fossil claw,  
Lest sexton Earth even Man inter, nor trover  
Of after-law untomb for Love her Lover !  
  
Her lover yet uncarnate ; of thy race  
    To be ; long-dreamèd mate  
        Of her embrace ;  
Whose godling fruit, too prized, too dear  
    For bandit breath, shall wait  
        The Garnerer.



## MAGDALEN TO HER POET

Not then mute, anguished wives,  
Dumb in law's gyves,  
Shall shrink to mother a soul-famined brood,—  
Unbudding sentiencies of flowerhood,  
Shut miracles no wand  
May touch, that from the hand  
Of Toil, the reaver, fall  
To dust, their grudgèd pall,  
Leaving imperial web to those who wear  
That woof of blood and tears as gossamer.

Not then! Where now the wailing way o'erteems,  
And baffled starvelings bar  
The way of dreams;  
Pouring to Want, grey-veined Disease,  
To Greed, and lurking War,—  
Brute goblinries  
With horde-lip sateless on  
God-food dust-thrown,—  
Lover and Love shall pass, each babe of theirs,  
Darling of Life, born for the higher wars  
Where knights of spirit sway,  
Summoned to holiest fray

## MAGDALEN TO HER POET

By heralds never bare  
To clodded vision. There,  
Shriven and sure, the sun-dipped lance shall  
leap  
Till Dream uncorselet clay and put off sleep.

For me one rift! Through this sepulchral blight  
A breath runs living, new ;  
Unburdening light  
As when the flame-borne prophet on  
The Syrian ploughman threw  
A people's dawn.  
The world is Heaven worth,  
The cradle earth  
Casts orphanhood, a Bethlehem God-swung  
From crimson grapple with his lyric young.  
Here triumph I, so low,  
Knowing that Lust shall go,  
With whited, anarch train,—  
Shall pass, this curbless, vain  
Usurping deity that would compel  
The Mary-longing Love to yet mould Jezebel.

## MAGDALEN TO HER POET

Drug me with life that keeps Death shadow-near  
Till I, unfrighted, wake  
His charnel fear  
In every face that wariful  
Meets mine; this bud-mouth make  
Unkissable  
With kisses; and up-lap  
My soul's youth sap  
Till 't withers to a clutch about the gold  
You think pays all; yet from this reedy mould,  
This swamped, unfructant sedge,  
Gentility's marsh edge,  
I, on free wing, shall take  
My swan-course o'er the brake,  
Leaving the chanson of thy sin to thee  
Who hast not seen, not touched the unstainable me.  
Yet art thou dear, O singer! When we rest  
Past all Life's hostel doors,  
On her home crest;  
And 'neath our feet the dark vat night  
From pain's crushed star-grapes pours  
The climbing light;

## MAGDALEN TO HER POET

There thou, beside me then,  
With moteless ken,  
Remembering these, thy pity and thy song,  
Dropped at the cross where thou didst nail me long,  
Shalt sereless 'scape the aim  
Of hot, lance-darting shame,  
For over thee shall fall  
The dawn-tressed coronal  
Of Love I then shall be, wrapping thee in  
The pity at whose touch dies every sin.

## FRIENDS

THERE'S one comes often as the sun  
And fills my room with morning; comes with step  
Light as a youth's that joy has hurried home.  
If he should greet my cheek, so might a wind  
Blow roses till they touch, silk leaf to leaf,  
And on their beauty leave no deeper dye;  
But with that touch an old world is untombed,  
Gay, festal-gowned; and two with nuptial eyes  
Walk arm-locked there, flinging the curls of Greece  
From proud, smooth brows. As trapped between  
    two throbs,  
Their laughter dies in silent passion's kiss;  
And I from glow of ancient dust look up  
To meet the untroubled eyes of my friend's bride,  
Her pretty, depthless eyes that smile and smile  
Possessingly, not grudging alien me  
A footstool place about her sceptred love.  
And I, too, from imperial largess, smile.

## F R I E N D S

Another comes more rarely than new moon,  
And always with a flower,—one; pours tea  
Like an old picture softly made alive,  
Sings me a ballad that once teased the ears  
Of golden Bess, and reads the book I love.  
If he must journey, first he comes to lay  
Knight-service on my hand; no passion then  
More swift than when a last cool petal falls  
To faded summer grass; but as he goes  
I see a girl deep in a forest lane,  
A narrow lane dark-roofed with locking firs;  
And there are purple foxgloves shoulder high,  
And round the girl's knees Canterbury bells.  
Upon the air is scent of wounded trees,  
As though a storm had passed there, and great owls  
Ruffle a shade unloved of birds that sing.  
But at the green lane's end, far down  
A bit of heart-shaped sun tells where the road  
Lies wide and open; on the sun the still  
Dark shadow of a steed: and by the girl  
One who shall ride,—unvisored now, and pale.  
“And when I come,” he says, to me who know

## FRIENDS

He'll come that way no more; then hear my door  
Closed softly on a sob ten centuries old.

And there is one whom never sun or moon  
Brings to my gate; but when amid a throng  
That fills some worldly room I see him pass,  
The light about me is of regions where  
Cold peaks are blue against a colder sky,  
And in the dusk-line where begins the Doubt  
Men call the Known, we stand in wingless pause,  
Unheavened weariness in untaught feet,  
And in our hearts sad longing for the fire  
Of stars from whence we came. "The earth," he  
says,

And warms in his my hand amazed to lie  
In strange, near comfort,—blossom of first pain.  
Then low we dip into the clinging night  
That is the Lethe of God-memories;  
Stumble and sink in chains of time and sense  
Tangle in treacheries of a weed-hung globe,  
And tread the dun, dim verges of defeat  
Till spirit chafes to vision, and we learn

## FRIENDS

What morning is, and where the way of love.  
In that gold dawn we part, knowing at last  
That earth can not divide us. With a smile  
He goes, and Fate leads not but runs before  
Like an indulgèd child. That smile again  
I sometimes see across the world—a room.



## TRYST

(AFTER READING FROM SHAKESPEARE)

NIGHT, thou art heavy, with no stars to chain  
Thy darkness unto heaven, that thy feet  
May dance along these cliffs in gay retreat  
Of the pursuing sea ; heavy as pain  
Where eyes see not the end, or tears that stain  
The joy of him who conquers by defeat ;  
Or this dark sea whose heart doth climb and beat  
The stones that make no sign, then falls again.

Cry with the night and wrestle with the wave,  
Ye two-edged winds that cut this shore and me ;  
I warm me still with thinking of a grave  
That can not hold the dust's eternal part ;  
For here across the centuries and the sea,  
A dead hand lies like flame upon my heart.

## IN THE STUDIO

BOWED in the firelight's softly climbing gleam,  
I sit a shadow, in a shadow's place ;  
While through the great, gray window vaguely  
stream

Twilight caresses on each pictured face  
That one hour gone was cold in art's repose ;  
Now each still canvas answers tremblingly,  
Till eyes unveil and living spirit glows

Where no light was while the rude Day went by.  
And rudest Day, that passed so sternly bare,  
Cold as the life that walks without desire,  
Unbeauteous as duty or despair,

Plucked by a hope that will not set her free,  
Turns back, while memory's soft, informing fire  
Falls on her face, and Beauty looks at me.

## LOVERS' LEAP

IN Greece I found the place, though earth  
Has many such ; and wandering there alone,  
One Autumn evening when the moon rose late,  
I heard this song, though none was there to sing.  
A ghostly rune, yet left the alarmed dark  
Quivering with life, tear-warm and murmuring :

No morrow is if hearts say no ;  
Life is gone when love doth go.  
No tear to weep, no prayer to pray ;  
Endeth time with lovers' day.

This trailing night will pale and flee,  
And dawn again creep o'er the sea ;  
Light's tender hands will earth attire,  
Aloft will swim the golden fire,  
And every bird begin his lay,  
But I shall know there is no day.

## LOVERS' LEAP

And Spring shall come. With teary cheek,  
But heart of Bacchus, she will seek  
With healing eyes each winter wound,  
Till little minstrels of the ground,  
The choral buds, in wonder wake  
To croon the dewy songs they take  
From brooks that haunt the woodman's glade  
And lose a dream in every shade.  
And ere the Spring has vanished,  
Summer will make her rosy bed  
And new loves take with every wind  
Till earth be laden with her kind  
And foster-bosomed Autumn come  
To nurse the darlings of her womb.

But naught of season, change, or sun,  
Recks the heart whose love is done.  
Oh, ne'er again will beauty wear  
For my sad eyes a robe more fair,  
And ne'er again will music make  
A sweeter song for my poor sake.  
No tear to weep, no prayer to pray!  
Endeth time with lover's day.

## LOVERS' LEAP

No morrow is if hearts say no ;  
Life is gone when love doth go.  
Death, O Death, why dost thou flee  
From one whose wish is but for thee ?  
Here is thy pillow, on my breast.  
No dove but would its spicèd nest  
Forego to couch in this sweet bed  
That here I open for thy head.  
Thou wilt not hear? 'Thou wilt not come?  
Then must I seek thee in thy home.  
Once more lift up this stone-dead heart,  
And leap to find thee where thou art !

## H A V E N E D

COME, Flower of Life, and lay thy beauty's rose  
Upon the breast that storm and thee divide ;  
And like true knights whose queen no laggard  
knows,  
Forth gently shall my love-bid fancies ride  
To serve thy heart, and bring thy wishes in ;  
And shuttling rhyme a web shall make thee then  
Whilst thou dost gaze, nor thy poor weaver chide.

Sweet wonder lay upon my opening eyes  
That showed me in a gracious court of trees  
Whose leaves were clouds that caught and lost  
sunrise,  
And fell in mist upon a twirling breeze  
That traced the ground and to a river grew,  
Casting its tender spray in tinted dew  
As curved its silver way with laughing ease.

## H A V E N E D

I followed, forest deep, this wooing guide  
Through fragrant gloom of cliff and bower o'er-  
grown,  
Free as a fawn the stream 'twas born beside,  
Nor held my step with fear at sounds unknown,—  
High murmurings among the cloudy leaves,  
As when some dull and dreamy throng receives  
Strange lyric stir from power not its own.

And more and more the murmurs grew like song,  
Save that no song could drop such honey-rain ;  
The lyre-god's self would do it unsweet wrong,  
Were he that golden sound to breathe again ;  
And as my guide into a cave did pass,  
That closèd seemed, and yet unclosèd was,  
That airy cadence stooped and bore me in.

Then wandered life from out my memory,  
Gone from desire, as ghost at last must go ;  
Nor shadow fell, where shadow could not be,  
From those dark lures that make our worldly  
woe.

## H A V E N E D

O Sweet, forgive that my inconstant tongue  
Should dim the glories that I moved among  
    With name of gloom that wrongs the world we  
    know.

The dome was fair as Heaven, or Heaven, in sooth,  
    It might have been, but that there shone,  
The centre 'neath, a fountain-featured truth  
    That might no rival of its radiance own.  
Ah, this was Heaven's heart, if Heaven be,  
And the bright dome but its gold boundary ;  
    Yet gleamed here no crown or mounted throne.

The music budded till it dropped soft showers ;  
    All things to other changed, though here no mage ;  
Clouds turned to light, and light to sweeter  
    powers,  
    And chance and change to all was privilege ;  
The air was full of phantom-stirring things,  
And I not breathed but that I touched new wings,  
    And sent some dream on airy pilgrimage.

Ere my delight had held me pausing long  
    Beneath a cloud that rained me lilies cool,



## H A V E N E D

A stir awoke amid a ferny throng  
That leaned their trembling grace above a pool,  
And following the flutter of a song  
To feathery rest where blossoms minute-young  
Oped arms of vermeil soft, and dawning gule,

Mine eye saw Love. White on a verge's mount,  
That swelled to show its burden dear, she lay ;  
A sighing mist that partly filled the fount,  
And o'er the brink sought tenderly to stray,  
For her fair body pillowed soft the ground,  
Growing glad upward arms to clasp her round  
And of each grace take new and sweet account.

In nymphlike mould her gentle figure ran,  
Though nymph so bright did never sport in dell ;  
Her eyes an angel's were, if angels' can  
Be thousand times more fair than dream can tell ;  
Unfalling tears they held, yet so could please  
They might have hermits made forget their knees  
And kings find out they had them, such their  
spell.

## H A V E N E D

Above her forehead hovered close a star,  
Like spirit guard, whose ever-changing ray  
Was fed with fires of sacrifice that are  
Love's life,—the offerings earth lovers lay  
Upon her shrine, and as they pale or glow  
She smiles or droops as this true star doth show,—  
Or dim or bright as serve we or betray.

Beside her was an instrument of tune,  
Of changeful beauty as her couch of cloud,  
And as I looked she woke it to strange rune,  
As in low murmur moved her thoughts aloud,—  
For all Love's thoughts are music,—but to make  
That ditty o'er, what heart would undertake,  
And with a mortal chant her utterance shroud?

A near her stood a youth bare of all guise  
Save when a light enwrapped him in its flame ;  
He bore the ages in his listening eyes,  
And prophecy there waited for a name ;  
Joy loved him best, and gave eternity,  
And his lithe, lustrous being seemed to say  
“I am the aspiration of all dream.”

## HAVENED

Upward he gazed as though he would read o'er

The scroll of rising winds, the burst of suns,  
And lists—ah, might it be earth's shore

Freed of her epic hates and tunèd groans!  
War's passion beat, and woe's sad chorus past,  
And all her song pure-winnowed, clear at last,  
Pouring the music of her happy moons!

Then moved his lips, but yet unborn is he

Who may with their resound make sweet his own;  
He who shall come as morning walks the sea,

Mate of the Wind when all her harps are one;  
So much we know by frail yet quenchless light  
That creeps through shadows of our lute-poor  
night,—

The brave rose-glimmers of his singing dawn.

Lo, every dream new-homing from far ways

On silent wing or spirit wave of air,  
Came circling o'er his head in hovering maze,  
Seen not, nor heard, albeit I knew them there;  
But as each passed before his lifted face,  
They gleamed to sight, and grace so mounted grace  
My eyes seemed there anointed, though afar.

## H A V E N E D

Then radiant couriers shook the fountain Heart  
And turned me thither. Sweet and bold surprise  
Took all my being with such tremorous start  
I marvelled how aught else had held my eyes.  
I could not tell what the bright wonder was  
Whose garner-breast held every beauteous cause  
Makes earth remember, and forget, the skies.

There shone the star that lit man's first desire,  
And there his hope that latest fluttered bare ;  
One look translating made me as a lyre  
Swept with a joy the heart of Truth might share,—  
Truth that is silent, wanting joy to sing,—  
But ere I breathèd had for wondering,  
A face out-flashed wreathed with sun-flinging hair.

Youth was the angel of that countenance,  
Where graces sprang in ever fairer throng ;  
Yet she was old ere any star's birth-dance,  
If word of earthly time, or old or young,  
Means aught of eyes whose brooding splendour swept  
The silences when Uncreation slept  
And gave the dream that woke the suns in song.

## H A V E N E D

Each age that left a glory left it writ  
    Upon her brow, as with a pen of light  
Whose track was pearls, and as each whiter lit  
    The story there, the court grew softlier bright ;  
Each dullsome thing—Oh, no thing there was dull !  
Flushed o'er itself with glow more beautiful,  
    As might fair, sleeping gods wake to delight.

Then all the wonder that made vague her form,  
    Oped on a figure splendent so to view ;  
Mine eyes an instant swooned ; and as from storm  
    Of warring rainbows it endeared grew  
To shape of her who 'gan descending slow,  
Fair Love looked up, and Poesy knelt low :  
    'Twas Beauty's self, and mother of the two.

Whilst yet I gazed all vanished were the three ;  
    And as a sighing shore no more may hold  
The mermaid wave that would go out to sea,  
    So slipped the vision from my fancy bold.  
O Flower of Life, no rest for me but this,  
    To dream awhile, and then awake to press  
Upon my heart thy curls' beloved gold !

## M I D - M A Y

HAND clamped to desk,  
And eyes on task undone,  
I see a meadow pool,  
With shaken willows silvering.  
O, gods that trouble me,  
Wherefore, wherefore?—  
Pan is at the door.

An arabesque  
Of sifted sun  
And forest star-grass, cool  
With shadows tunnelling :  
Witch-work that tauntingly  
Webs my bare floor :  
Ah, Pan is at the door.

I'm civilized,  
And in my veins  
The mountain brook is still

## M I D - M A Y

As water in a jar ;  
But oh, the heart hill-born,  
It paineth sore,  
For Pan is at the door.

Ye sacrificed  
Of earth, what rains  
Have wept their will  
And drowned your rebel star,  
That ye should sit forlorn,  
Telling Greed's score,  
When Pan is at the door ?

## THE LOSS

WHEN thou shalt search thy glass nor find the flower  
That there so long smiled gay, unwithering,  
And from sad vantage of a forlorn hour  
That fore nor aft unmasks one hint of Spring,  
Thou mourn'st the barrenness of beauty spent  
With no reservèd treasure for the day  
When all that youth and sunny fortune lent  
No more should light adoring eyes to thee,  
And fear'st thyself a-cold, by the last storm  
Beat to thine inn, a still, uncarping guest,  
Thy once bright eye a pilot to the worm  
Making his dungeon way to his new feast,  
Drop not a tear then for thy beauty fled,  
But for the wounds it healed not bow thy head.



## C A L L E D

I RISE, I pass ;

The feast is on, bright is the board,  
Undrained the comrade glass ;  
Love's sheltering eyes are deep and nigh ;

Fame waits with shining word ;  
But sweeter, goldening the sphere,  
A voice falls from another sky ;

The wasting world I do not hear,  
And no god laughs as I pass by,  
A wanderer.

Unpausing lowers

The gleam of her from other airs,  
And Being's guarded doors  
Are open wide for journey free

Where wait my chosen stars ;  
And o'er me, O what lustres break

## C A L L E D

Of that desire, Reality,  
That burns a thousand suns to make  
One nightingale to sing for me,  
A soul awake !

Far, far I sped  
Down moonless lanes from doubt to doubt ;  
With hasting, hungry tread  
Up slopes of frost unpitying  
Where the last star went out ;  
There fell I in unlifting dark,  
And lying while an æon's wing  
Dragged o'er me bare, wind-stript and stark,  
As leafless planets dream of Spring,  
Dreamed she would hark.

Then by me bound,  
Came one who wore my lost career  
With star on star pinned round,  
And stood him by my bones to stare.  
With pity's ancient sneer  
He mocked my bleachen nudity ;

## C A L L E D

Then did she turn, then did she care,  
And pausing where I might not see  
She let the winds blow back her hair  
And cover me.

## SONG OF TO-MORROW

SOUND, O Harp of Being, set  
Deathless in the winds of time!  
All thine ancient part forget,  
Wailing lust, and strife, and crime!  
Clouds of hate are now sweet rain:  
Thou shalt never moan again.

Harp of Being, O forget  
Hesper dead that played on thee,  
All her golden fingers wet  
With the blood of misery!  
Morning sweeps along thy strings;  
Thou art done with yester things.

Bright thou art with drops that fell  
Watering earth's long-buried Spring;  
Thou hast quivered safe through Hell  
Where Love found immortal wing;

## SONG OF TO-MORROW

Sound, while Life unfrenzied calls  
Joy to hallowed Bacchanals!

Harp of Dawn, forget, forget!

    Sound thee of the hours now come  
When the vine and violet

    Bind to earth the fallen drum.  
Palsied as a dying star  
Fails the shaken torch of war!

From each pennoned pinnacle

    Of the cities of the free,  
Clasped in time invisible,  
    Flows the wonder down to thee;  
Thou so swift to throb and start  
With the singing earth's new heart!

By the light that sets mind free,

    By the night that once it wore,  
By the soul man is to be,

    By the beast he is no more;  
By thy past, unmeasured pain,  
Thou shalt never moan again.

## LITTLE DAUGHTERS

### I

WHAT is sweeter, sweet, than you?  
Not the fairy dew  
Of these bee-sipped pastures where  
Time, unsandalled, unaware,  
Rests him ere he tire.

Shall I his forgotten hour  
Strike for thee?  
Fatefully,  
Lift the wand that wakes  
Woman in the flower?  
Then o'er dream's horizon breaks  
Rose of other fire;  
From a world more sweet  
Rival rise the fragrant floods;  
Breath that makes  
Thy morning meadows dun,  
Mutes their dew-bells, misty hoods  
Every leaf that shone;

## LITTLE DAUGHTERS

Sets thy daisy-fondled feet  
Twinkling to be gone ;  
Down the ways and up the ways,  
Hope-fleet, trampling care  
As curling buds,  
Iris goal joy-near ;  
Then a-creep on praying knees,  
Frail shoulders bent to bear  
Heaven's falling sphere.

Ah, not yet, heart's wonder !  
A little hour we'll stay,  
And thou wilt give me grace of dawn  
For travelled, dusk array.  
This gown of mottled years,  
By noon and gnome-light spun,  
Enchant me to surrender  
To Ariel ministers ;  
Here poised with thee before  
Thy summer world's wide door,  
And glory that is hers ;  
This soft, unclamorous sky  
That makes a lotus ship of every eye

## LITTLE DAUGHTERS

Up venturing ; song's sail that pilotless  
Drifts down, a wing's caress  
On billowed field and climbing shore  
Whose veiny tidelets beat and cling,  
Bloom-labouring,  
Invincibly sweet and far,  
Up looming cone and scaur,  
And clambering spill  
To lap of ledge and aproned hill  
The heaped and whispering greenery  
Of beauty's burden that unburdens me !

And thou, the fairest thing  
In this fair shaman-ring,  
Shall my sore magic loose thee wandering ?  
Has Life such faltering need,  
Mid outlands where she runs,  
She cannot reach the suns  
Save thou dost bleed ?  
Shall she go fleet,  
With heart of stouter cheer,  
Because thou givest her  
Thy little, bruised feet ?



## LITTLE DAUGHTERS

Thou'dst earn thy Heaven? Dear, I know  
Heaven must not ban thee shining so!  
Why shouldst thou laden bow,  
And climb, and slip, and toil,  
And blanch thy cheek to keep thy soul as white,  
Inviolate as now?  
O, we have dreams we shall not put away  
Till earth be fair as they;  
When all this work-night coil  
Shall be unwound by wizard fingers bright  
That send our own to play;  
And wisdom, wiser than we know, shall find  
The birth trail to the mind;  
Nor spirit waver, panting here and yon  
Seeking sun-vantage, for all heights are won.  
Shall not we then be as the flowers,  
Drinking dew dowers  
As now thou dost?  
Glad petals that unclose  
About Life's heart,—at last the perfect Rose?  
Sweet, I will trust  
Love and the morn;  
Fold here the wakeful wand,

## LITTLE DAUGHTERS

Leave thee in dewy bond  
Of blossomy sleep.  
Who knows but thou hast won the steep  
By silent, angel way,  
Hidden and heavenly,  
That leaves no trace of thorn?  
Star-flower, keep thy sky;  
If man must climb, let him go up to thee;  
A daisy may be nearer God than he—  
Than I.

## II

What crime was hers, that she lies hushed,  
Dead with the price, while you and I,  
With lifted head, walk sinless by?  
Pause then,—but spare  
That easy tear; the tale I'll bare.  
Mid stones that pushed  
Her eager life back, grudged her room  
For root without one bloom,  
There strangely blushed

## LITTLE DAUGHTERS

Some little dreams,—not gloriously fine  
As yours and mine,  
But vague, and veiled, and few ;  
She hardly knew their names, but felt the stir  
That filled her heart with whispers as they grew,  
And knew that life lay in them, life for her.  
When Hunger came she turned her breast  
And let him feed. Cold followed, gripped  
Her veins and sipped  
The thin blood thinner ; both she pressed  
As close as lovers, lest  
A darker fiend might creep within  
Her empty arms ; lest she might buy,  
With one swift hour of sin,  
A poisoned ease from tooth of need,—  
A little food, a little fire, and die ;  
And she had dreams to shelter, little dreams to feed.  
Oh, unresisting dumb !  
In wide earth's harvest-gold  
She asked no share,  
If in the dust a crumb  
Might be for her ;

## LITTLE DAUGHTERS

If she might round her aching body fold  
One hour's undriven sleep,—  
But one hour more,  
Safe from the Want that pried  
Her thin and shaken door,—  
That hour the shivering dawn denied  
With scream that cut life through,  
And made her wretched pillow seem a rose  
Her clinging cheek would keep  
In soft, ungoaded death! And ah, suppose  
A few more pence the day  
Were richly hers, to make youth gay  
With ribbon or a flower ere it flew!  
(So soon toil's wrinkles come!)  
Then would she make her dreams a fairer home;  
Then would her heart be stronger where they grew;  
Then would she walk more bravely knowing them;  
Then would her eyes be brighter showing them.  
Yet did they whisper, yet they stirred  
Uptremblingly, till half their breath  
Was music, half was song;  
Told of free hours and a wild heath

## LITTLE DAUGHTERS

Where wind and sun ran dappling ; of a bird  
Bough-throned, whose trill  
Turned all the forest leaves to wings,—  
His singing young ;  
Of a moon-goldened hill  
Where blossoms danced ; of sweeter, holier things ;  
A sea-beach gray,  
Where waves were drownèd twilight, and the day  
Hung in a pause that softly, suddenwise,  
Became a soul. She too would have a soul,  
And hours with God and friends ; no more give all,  
Now there were dreams, to the machine.  
Then rose with young, star-driven eyes  
To face the lords of gain,  
And here she lies.

Lift up the cotton, thinned with wear,  
That hides the poor, starved shoulder ; bare  
The bruise shows, like a printed paw.  
Haste, draw the dumb, frayed sheet again,  
And think you cover so the stain  
Upon our hearts ; for—have the truth!—

## LITTLE DAUGHTERS

'Twas we who put the club of law  
Into bought hands to strike her battling youth.  
She kept her virtue's gold,  
Fought hunger, fiend, and cold  
Unvanquished ; when the might of Hell  
Rose in law's name and ours, she broken fell.  
O friend, when next you smooth the golden head  
Like nestled morning 'gainst your knee,  
Look farther,—see  
Fair girlhood dead.  
These lips, unvisited by love, were sweet  
As are thy fondling's ; this want-hollowed cheek  
A little ease had made  
Playground of dimples, joy's rose-seat ;  
And could these eyes ope they would speak  
Of one who bought her dreams of Death and paid.  
If blind thou shrinkest yet  
To meet Truth bare,  
Then as thou'st dealt with this pale maid  
Life shall thine own besiege.  
Injustice holds  
No sanctuary folds ;

## LITTLE DAUGHTERS

To fence out care  
We must the planet hedge ;  
Justice is God, and waits  
Behind our blood-built tower-gates ;  
And as indifference  
Was once our soul's pretence,  
Who then shall heed us, who shall understand,  
When our crushed hearts lie in the vengeant hand ?  
But is she dead ? Faint on my ears  
A far-off singing falls,  
Sweet from time's sleep  
Amid the stainless years  
Yet unawake to men.  
Nearer it calls,  
Like music through a rain,  
And o'er the distant ridges sweep  
Soft garments and young feet. O maidens, ye  
Are like a cloud in beauty,—nay, more swift !  
If that the milky stream of stars could lift  
Its clustered glory, hasten free,  
And while we marvelled pass from east to west,  
Then ye would mirrored be !

## LITTLE DAUGHTERS

The hills seem lit with brides,  
And she whose death-cold breast  
Was shrouded here, is't she who guides  
This fearless company  
Sure of earth's welcome as a maiden Spring?  
And in their eyes the dreams she fought for,  
In their hands the flowers she sought for,  
On their lips the songs that here she did not sing!

Not dead! While Destiny hath need  
Of living dream and deed,  
Ay, she shall deathless be!  
While aught availeth, and God is,  
For in her hope lay His!  
O, ye who mar Love's face  
Ere Love be born, leave not this place,  
Pass not this white form by,  
Till from assaulted skies ye hear the cry,  
"She is not dead till ye have murdered Me!"