

THE WATCHMAN AND OTHER POEMS

LUCY M MONTGOMERY

## THE WATCHMAN

"And for fear of Him the keepers did shake and become as dead men."—Matthew 23 and 4.

My Claudia, it is long since we have met, So kissed, so held each other heart to heart! I thought to greet thee as a conqueror comes, Bearing the trophies of his prowess home, But Jove hath willed it should be otherwise—Jove, say I? Nay, some mightier stranger-god Who thus hath laid his heavy hand on me, No victor, Claudia, but a broken man Who seeks to hide his weakness in thy love.

How beautiful thou art! The years have brought An added splendor to thy loveliness, With passion of dark eye and lip rose-red Struggling between its dimple and its pride. And yet there is somewhat that glooms between Thy love and mine; come, girdle me about With thy true arms, and pillow on thy breast This aching and bewildered head of mine; Here, where the fountain glitters in the sun Among the saffron lilies, I will tell—If so that words will answer my desire—The shameful fate that hath befallen me.

Down in Jerusalem they slew a man, Or god—it may be that he was a god—Those mad, wild Jews whom Pontius Pilate rules. Thou knowest Pilate, Claudia—a vain man,<sup>[4]</sup> Too weak to govern such a howling horde As those same Jews. This man they crucified. I knew nought of him—had not heard his name Until the day they dragged him to his death; Then all tongues wagged about him and his deeds; Some said that he had claimed to be their King, Some that he had blasphemed their deity; 'Twas certain he was poor and meanly born, No warrior he, nor hero; and he taught Doctrines that surely would upset the world; And so they killed him to be rid of him—Wise, very wise, if he were only man, Not quite so wise if he were half a god!

I know that strange things happened when he died—There was a darkness and an agony, And some were vastly frightened—not so I! What cared I if that mob of reeking Jews Had brought a nameless curse upon their heads? I had no part in that blood-guiltiness. At least he died; and some few friends of his—I think he had not very many friends—took him and laid him in a garden tomb. A watch was set about the sepulchre, Lest these, his friends, should hide him and proclaim That he had risen as he had fore-told. Laugh not, my Claudia. I laughed when I heard The prophecy. I would I had not laughed!

I, Maximus, was chosen for the guard<sup>[5]</sup> With all my trusty fellows. Pilate knew I was a man who had no foolish heart Of softness all unworthy of a man! My eyes had looked upon a tortured slave As on a beetle crushed beneath my tread; I gloried in the splendid strife of war, Lusting for conquest; I had won the praise Of our stern general on a scarlet field; Red in my veins the warrior passion ran, For I had sprung from heroes, Roman born!

That second night we watched before the tomb; My men were merry; on the velvet turf, Bestarred with early blossoms of the Spring, They dined with jest and laughter; all around The moonlight washed us like a silver lake, Save where that silent, sealed sepulchre Was hung with shadow as a purple pall. A faint wind stirred among the olive boughs—Methinks I hear the sighing of that wind In all sounds since, it was so dumbly sad; But as the night wore on it died away And all was deadly stillness; Claudia, That stillness was most awful, as if some Great heart had broken and so ceased to beat! I thought of many things, but found no joy In any thought, even the thought of thee; The

moon waned in the west and sickly grew  
Her light sucked from her in the breaking  
dawn—Never was dawn so welcome as that pale,  
Faint glimmer in the cloudless,  
brooding sky!

Claudia, how may I tell what came to pass?  
I have been mocked at when I told the  
tale  
For a crazed dreamer punished by the gods  
Because he slept on guard; but mock not  
*thou*! I could not bear it if *thy* lips should mock  
The vision dread of that Judean morn.

Sudden the pallid east was all aflame  
With radiance that beat upon our eyes  
As from  
noonday sun; and then we saw  
Two shapes that were as the immortal gods  
Standing  
before the tomb; around me fell  
My men as dead; but I, though through my veins  
Ran a  
cold tremor never known before,  
Withstood the shock and saw one shining shape  
Roll  
back the stone; the whole world seemed ablaze,  
And through the garden came a rushing  
wind  
Thundering a paeon as of victory.

Then that dead man came forth! Oh, Claudia,  
If thou could'st but have seen the face of  
him!  
Never was such a conqueror! Yet no pride  
Was in it—nought but love and  
tenderness,  
Such as we Romans scoff at; and his eyes  
Bespake him royal. Oh, my  
Claudia,  
Surely he was no Jew but very god!

Then he looked full upon me. I had borne<sup>[7]</sup>  
Much staunchly, but that look I could not  
bear!  
What man may front a god and live? I fell  
Prone, as if stricken by a  
thunderbolt;  
And, though I died not, somewhat of me died  
That made me man. When my  
long stupor passed  
I was no longer Maximus—I was  
A weakling with a piteous woman-  
soul,  
All strength and pride, joy and ambition gone—  
My Claudia, dare I tell thee what  
foul curse  
Is mine because I looked upon a god?

I care no more for glory; all desire  
For conquest and for strife is gone from me,  
All  
eagerness for war; I only care  
To help and heal bruised beings, and to give  
Some comfort  
to the weak and suffering. I cannot even hate those Jews; my lips  
Speak harshly of them,  
but within my heart  
I feel a strange compassion; and I love  
All creatures, to the vilest of  
the slaves  
Who seem to me as brothers! Claudia,  
Scorn me not for this weakness; it will  
pass—Surely 'twill pass in time and I shall be  
Maximus strong and valiant once  
again,  
Forgetting that slain god! and yet—and yet—  
He looked as one who could not be  
forgot!

# SONGS OF THE SEA

## RAIN ALONG SHORE

Wan white mists upon the sea, East wind harping mournfully  
All the sunken reefs along,  
Wail and heart-break in its song,  
But adown the placid bay  
Fisher-folk keep holiday.

All the deeps beyond the bar  
Call and murmur from afar,  
'Plaining of a mighty woe  
Where the great ships come and go,  
But adown the harbor gray  
Fisher-folk keep holiday.

When the cloudy heavens frown,  
And the sweeping rain comes down,  
Boats at anchorage must bide  
In despite of time or tide;  
Making merry as they may  
Fisher-folk keep holiday.

Now is time for jest and song  
All the idle shore along,  
Now is time for wooing dear,  
Maidens cannot choose but hear;  
Daffing toil and care away  
Fisher-folk keep holiday.

Oh, the fretted reefs may wail,<sup>[12]</sup> Every man has furled his sail!  
Oh, the wind may moan in fear,  
Every lad is with his dear!  
Mirth and laughter have their way,  
Fisher-folk keep holiday.

## SEA SUNSET

A gallant city has been builded far  
In the pied heaven, Bannered with crimson,  
sentinelled by star  
Of crystal even;  
Around a harbor of the twilight glowing,  
With jubilant waves about its gateways flowing.

A city of the Land of Lost Delight  
On seas enchanted, Presently to be lost in mist moon-  
white  
And music-haunted;  
Given but briefly to our raptured vision,  
With all its opal towers and shrines elysian.

Had we some mystic boat with pearly oar  
And wizard pilot, To guide us safely by the  
siren shore  
And cloudy islet, We might embark and reach that shining portal  
Beyond  
which linger dreams and joys immortal.

But we may only gaze with longing eyes  
On those far, sparkling  
Palaces in the fairy-  
peopled skies,  
O'er waters darkling,  
Until the winds of night come shoreward  
roaming,  
And the dim west has only gray and gloaming.

## WHEN THE DARK COMES DOWN

When the dark comes down, oh, the wind is on the sea  
With lisping laugh and whimper  
to the red reef's threnody,  
The boats are sailing homeward now across the harbor  
bar  
With many a jest and many a shout from fishing grounds afar.  
So furl your sails and  
take your rest, ye fisher folk so brown,  
For task and quest are ended when the dark  
comes down.

When the dark comes down, oh, the landward valleys fill  
Like brimming cups of purple,  
and on every landward hill  
There shines a star of twilight that is watching evermore  
The  
low, dim lighted meadows by the long, dim-lighted shore,  
For there, where vagrant  
daisies weave the grass a silver crown,  
The lads and lassies wander when the dark comes  
down.

When the dark comes down, oh, the children fall asleep,<sup>[15]</sup>  
And mothers in the fisher  
huts their happy vigils keep;  
There's music in the song they sing and music on the  
sea,  
The loving, lingering echoes of the twilight's litany,  
For toil has folded hands to  
dream, and care has ceased to frown,  
And every wave's a lyric when the dark comes  
down.

## HARBOR MOONRISE

There is never a wind to sing o'er the sea  
On its dimpled bosom that holdeth in  
fee  
Wealth of silver and magicry;  
And the harbor is like to an ebon cup  
With mother-o'-  
pearl to the lips lined up,  
And brimmed with the wine of entranced delight,  
Purple and  
rare, from the flagon of night.

Lo, in the east is a glamor and gleam,  
Like waves that lap on the shores of dream,  
Or  
voice their lure in a poet's theme!  
And behind the curtseying fisher boats  
The barge of the  
rising moon upfloats,  
The pilot ship over unknown seas  
Of treasure-laden cloud argosies.

Ere ever she drifts from the ocean's rim, Out from the background of shadows dim,  
Stealeth a boat o'er her golden rim; Noiselessly, swiftly, it swayeth by  
Into the bourne of enchanted sky, Like a fairy shallop that seeks the strand  
Of a far and uncharted fairyland.

Now, ere the sleeping winds may stir,<sup>[17]</sup> Send, O, my heart, a wish with her,  
Like to a venturesome mariner; For who knoweth but that on an elfin sea  
She may meet the bark that is sailing to thee, And, winging thy message across the foam,  
May hasten the hour when thy ship comes home?

## BEFORE STORM

There's a grayness over the harbor like fear on the face of a woman,  
The sob of the waves has a sound akin to a woman's cry, And the deeps beyond the bar are moaning  
with evil presage Of a storm that will leap from its lair in that dour north-eastern sky.

Slowly the pale mists rise, like ghosts of the sea, in the offing, Creeping all wan and  
chilly by headland and sunken reef, And a wind is wailing and keening like a lost thing  
'mid the islands, Boding of wreck and tempest, plaining of dolor and grief.

Swiftly the boats come homeward, over the grim bar crowding, Like birds that flee to  
their shelter in hurry and affright, Only the wild grey gulls that love the cloud and the  
clamor Will dare to tempt the ways of the ravining sea to-night.

But the ship that sailed at the dawning, manned by the lads who love us—<sup>[19]</sup> God help  
and pity her when the storm is loosed on her track! O women, we pray to-night and keep  
a vigil of sorrow For those we speed at the dawning and may never welcome back!

## ON THE BAY

When the salt wave laps on the long, dim shore, And frets the reef with its windy  
sallies, And the dawn's white light is threading once more The purple firs in the landward  
valleys, While yet the arms of the wide gray sea Are cradling the sunrise that is to be,  
The fisherman's boat, through the mist afar, Has sailed in the wake of the morning star.

The wind in his cordage and canvas sings Its old glad song of strength and endeavor,  
And up from the heart of the ocean rings A call of courage and cheer forever; Toil and danger  
and stress may wait Beyond the arch of the morning's gate, But he knows that behind  
him, upon the shore, A true heart prays for him evermore.

When a young moon floats in the hollow sky,Like a fairy shallop, all pale and golden,And over the rocks that are grim and high,The lamp of the light-house aloft is holden;When the bay is like to a lucent cupWith glamor and glory and glow filled up,In the track of the sunset, across the foam,The fisherman's boat comes sailing home.

The wind is singing a low, sweet song<sup>[21]</sup>Of a rest well won and a toil well over,And there on the shore shines clear and strongThe star of the homelight to guide the rover:And deep unto deep may call and wailBut the fisherman laughs as he furls his sail,For the bar is passed and the reef is dimAnd a true heart is waiting to welcome him!

## SHORE TWILIGHT

Lo, find we here when the ripe day is o'er,A kingdom of enchantment by the shore!  
Behold the sky with early stars ashine,A jewelled flagon brimmed with purple wine.  
Like a dumb poet's soul the troubled seaMoans of its joy and sorrow wordlessly;  
But the glad winds that utter naught of griefMake silver speech by headland and by reef.  
Saving for such there is no voice or callTo mar the gracious silence over all—  
Silence so tender 'tis a sweet caress,A most beguiling and dear loneliness.  
Lo, here we find a beckoning solitude,A winsome presence to be mutely wooed,  
Which, being won, will teach us fabled lore,The old, old, gramarye of the sibyl shore!  
Oh, what a poignant rapture thus to beLingering at twilight by the ancient sea!

## SONG OF THE SEA-WIND

When the sun sets over the long blue waveI spring from my couch of rest,And I hurtle and boom over leagues of foamThat toss in the weltering west,I pipe a hymn to the headlands high,My comrades forevermore,And I chase the tricky curls of foamO'er the glimmering sandy shore.

The moon is my friend on clear, white nightsWhen I ripple her silver way,And whistle blithely about the rocksLike an elfin thing at play;But anon I ravin with cloud and mistAnd wail 'neath a curdled sky,When the reef snarls yon like a questing beast,And the frightened ships go by.

I scatter the dawn across the sea  
Like wine of amber flung  
From a crystal goblet all far  
and fine  
Where the morning star is hung;  
I blow from east and I blow from  
west  
Wherever my longing be—  
The wind of the land is a hindered thing  
But the ocean  
wind is free!

## MORNING ALONG SHORE

Hark, oh hark the elfin laughter  
All the little waves along,  
As if echoes speeding  
after  
Mocked a merry merman's song!

All the gulls are out, delighting  
In a wild, uncharted quest—  
See the first red sunshine  
smiting  
Silver sheen of wing and breast!

Ho, the sunrise rainbow-hearted  
Steals athwart the misty brine,  
And the sky where clouds  
have parted  
Is a bowl of amber wine!

Sweet, its cradle-lilt partaking,  
Dreams that hover o'er the sea,  
But the lyric of its  
waking  
Is a sweeter thing to me!

Who would drowse in dull devotion  
To his ease when dark is done,  
And upon its breast  
the ocean  
Like a jewel wears the sun?

"Up, forsake a lazy pillow!"  
Calls the sea from cleft and cave,  
Ho, for antic wind and  
billow  
When the morn is on the wave!

## OFF TO THE FISHING GROUND

There's a piping wind from a sunrise shore  
Blowing over a silver sea,  
There's a joyous  
voice in the lapsing tide  
That calls enticingly;  
The mist of dawn has taken flight  
To the  
dim horizon's bound,  
And with wide sails set and eager hearts  
We're off to the fishing  
ground.

Ho, comrades mine, how that brave wind sings  
Like a great sea-harp afar!  
We whistle its  
wild notes back to it  
As we cross the harbor bar.  
Behind us there are the homes we  
love  
And hearts that are fond and true,  
And before us beckons a strong young day  
On  
leagues of glorious blue.

Comrades, a song as the fleet goes out,  
A song of the orient sea!  
We are the heirs of its  
tingling strife,  
Its courage and liberty.  
Sing as the white sails cream and fill,  
And the foam  
in our wake is long,  
Sing till the headlands black and grim  
Echo us back our song!



Oh, 'tis a glad and heartsome thing<sup>[26]</sup>To wake ere the night be done  
And steer the course that our fathers steered  
In the path of the rising sun.  
The wind and welkin and wave are ours  
Wherever our bourne is found,  
And we envy no landsman his dream and sleep  
When we're off to the fishing ground.

## IN PORT

Out of the fires of the sunset come we again to our own—  
We have girdled the world in our sailing under many an orient star;  
Still to our battered canvas the scents of the spice gales cling,  
And our hearts are swelling within us as we cross the harbor bar.

Beyond are the dusky hills where the twilight hangs in the pine trees,  
Below are the lights of home where are watching the tender eyes  
We have dreamed of on fretted seas in the hours of long night-watches,  
Ever a beacon to us as we looked to the stranger skies.

Hark! how the wind comes out of the haven's arms to greet us,  
Bringing with it the song that is sung on the ancient shore!  
Shipmates, furl we our sails—we have left the seas behind us,  
Gladly finding at last our homes and our loves once more.

## THE GULLS

### I

Soft is the sky in the mist-kirtled east,  
Light is abroad on the sea,  
All of the heaven with silver is fleeced,  
Holding the sunrise in fee.  
Lo! with a flash and uplifting of wings  
Down where the long ripples break,  
Cometh a bevy of glad-hearted things,  
'Tis morn, for the gulls are awake.

### II

Slumberous calm on the ocean and shore  
Comes with the turn of the tide;  
Never a strong-sweeping pinion may soar,  
Where the tame fishing-boats ride!  
Far and beyond in blue deserts of sea,  
Where the wild winds are at play,  
There may the spirits of sea-birds be free—  
'Tis noon, for the gulls are away.

### III

Over the rim of the sunset is blown  
Sea-dusk of purple and gold,  
Speed now the wanderers back to their own,  
Wings the most tireless must fold.  
Homeward together at

twilight they flock,Sated with joys of the deep,Drowsily huddled on headland and rock—Tis night, for the gulls are asleep.

## SUNRISE ALONG SHORE

Athwart the harbor lingers yetThe ashen gleam of breaking day,And where the guardian cliffs are setThe noiseless shadows steal away;But all the winnowed eastern skyIs flushed with many a tender hue,And spears of light are smiting throughThe ranks where huddled sea-mists fly.

Across the ocean, wan and gray,Gay fleets of golden ripples come,For at the birth-hour of the dayThe roistering, wayward winds are dumb.The rocks that stretch to meet the tideAre smitten with a ruddy glow,And faint reflections come and goWhere fishing boats at anchor ride.

All life leaps out to greet the light—The shining sea-gulls dive and soar,The swallows whirl in dizzy flight,And sandpeeps flit along the shore.From every purple landward hillThe banners of the morning fly,But on the headlands, dim and high,The fishing hamlets slumber still.

One boat alone beyond the bar<sup>[30]</sup>Is sailing outward blithe and free,To carry sturdy hearts afarAcross those wastes of sparkling sea;Staunchly to seek what may be wonFrom out the treasures of the deep,To toil for those at home who sleepAnd be the first to greet the sun.

## THE SEA SPIRIT

I smile o'er the wrinkled blue—Lo! the sea is fair,Smooth as the flow of a maiden's hair;And the welkin's light shines throughInto mid-sea caverns of beryl hue,And the little waves laugh and the mermaids sing,And the sea is a beautiful, sinuous thing!

I scowl in sullen guise—The sea grows dark and dun,The swift clouds hide the sunBut not the bale-light in my eyes,And the frightened wind as it fliesRuffles the billows with stormy wing,And the sea is a terrible, treacherous thing!

When moonlight glimmers dimI pass in the path of the mist,Like a pale spirit by spirits kissed.At dawn I chant my own weird hymn,And I dabble my hair in the sunset's rim,And I call to the dwellers along the shoreWith a voice of gramarye evermore.

And if one for love of me Gives to my call an ear, I will woo him and hold him dear, And teach him the way of the sea, And my glamor shall ever over him be; Though he wander afar in the cities of men He will come at last to my arms again.

## HARBOR DAWN

There's a hush and stillness calm and deep, For the waves have wooed all the winds to sleep In the shadow of headlands bold and steep; But some gracious spirit has taken the cup Of the crystal sky and filled it up With rosy wine, and in it afar Has dissolved the pearl of the morning star.

The girdling hills with the night-mist cold In purple raiment are hooded and stoled And smit on the brows with fire and gold; And in the distance the wide, white sea Is a thing of glamor and wizardry, With its wild heart lulled to a passing rest, And the sunrise cradled upon its breast.

With the first red sunlight on mast and spar A ship is sailing beyond the bar, Bound to a land that is fair and far; And those who wait and those who go Are brave and hopeful, for well they know Fortune and favor the ship shall win That crosses the bar when the dawn comes in.

## MY 'LONGSHORE LASS

Far in the mellow western sky, Above the restless harbor bar, A beacon on the coast of night, Shines out a calm, white evening star; But your deep eyes, my 'longshore lass, Are brighter, clearer far.

The glory of the sunset past Still gleams upon the water there, But all its splendor cannot match The wind-blown brightness of your hair; Not any sea-maid's floating locks Of gold are half so fair.

The waves are whispering to the sands With murmurs as of elfin glee; But your low laughter, 'longshore lass, Is like a sea-harp's melody, And the vibrant tones of your tender voice Are sweeter far to me.

## WHEN THE FISHING BOATS GO OUT

When the lucent skies of morning flush with dawning rose once more, And waves of golden glory break adown the sunrise shore, And o'er the arch of heaven pied films of vapor float. There's joyance and there's freedom when the fishing boats go out.

The wind is blowing freshly up from far, uncharted caves, And sending sparkling kisses o'er the brows of virgin waves, While routed dawn-mists shiver—oh, far and fast they flee, Pierced by the shafts of sunrise athwart the merry sea!

Behind us, fair, light-smitten hills in dappled splendor lie, Before us the wide ocean runs to meet the limpid sky—Our hearts are full of poignant life, and care has fled afar As sweeps the white-winged fishing fleet across the harbor bar.

The sea is calling to us in a blithesome voice and free,<sup>[35]</sup> There's keenest rapture on its breast and boundless liberty! Each man is master of his craft, its gleaming sails out-blown, And far behind him on the shore a home he calls his own.

Salt is the breath of ocean slopes and fresher blows the breeze, And swifter still each bounding keel cuts through the combing seas, Athwart our masts the shadows of the dipping sea-gulls float, And all the water-world's alive when the fishing boats go out.

## THE BRIDAL

Last night a pale young Moon was wed Unto the amorous, eager Sea; Her maiden veil of mist she wore His kingly purple vesture, he.

With her a bridal train of stars Walked sisterly through shadows dim, And, master minstrel of the world, The great Wind sang the marriage hymn.

Thus came she down the silent sky Unto the Sea her faith to plight, And the grave priest who wedded them Was ancient, sombre-mantled Night.

## THE SEA TO THE SHORE

Lo, I have loved thee long, long have I yearned and entreated! Tell me how I may win thee, tell me how I must woo. Shall I creep to thy white feet, in guise of a humble lover? Shall I croon in mild petition, murmuring vows anew?

Shall I stretch my arms unto thee, bidding thy maiden coyness, Under the silver of morning, under the purple of night? Taming my ancient rudeness, checking my heady clamor—Thus, is it thus I must woo thee, oh, my delight?

Nay, 'tis no way of the sea thus to be meekly suitor—I shall storm thee away with laughter wrapped in my beard of snow, With the wildest of billows for chords I shall harp thee a song for thy bridal, A mighty lyric of love that feared not nor would forego!

With a red-gold wedding ring, mined from the caves of sunset,<sup>[38]</sup> Fast shall I bind thy faith to my faith evermore, And the stars will wait on our pleasure, the great north wind will trumpet A thunderous marriage march for the nuptials of sea and shore.

## THE VOYAGERS

We shall launch our shallop on waters blue from some dim primrose shore, We shall sail with the magic of dusk behind and enchanted coasts before, Over oceans that stretch to the sunset land where lost Atlantis lies, And our pilot shall be the vesper star that shines in the amber skies.

The sirens will call to us again, all sweet and demon-fair, And a pale mermaiden will beckon us, with mist on her night-black hair; We shall see the flash of her ivory arms, her mocking and luring face, And her guiling laughter will echo through the great, wind-winnowed space.

But we shall not linger for woven spell, or sea-nymph's sorceries, It is ours to seek for the fount of youth, and the gold of Hesperides, Till the harp of the waves in its rhythmic beat keeps time to our pulses' swing, And the orient welkin is smit to flame with auroral crimsoning.

And at last, on some white and wondrous dawn, we shall reach the fairy isle<sup>[40]</sup> Where our hope and our dream are waiting us, and the to-morrows smile; With song on our lips and faith in our hearts we sail on our ancient quest, And each man shall find, at the end of the voyage, the thing he loves the best.

# SONGS OF THE HILLS AND WOODS

## TWILIGHT AND I WENT HAND IN HAND

Twilight and I went hand in hand,As lovers walk in shining Mays,O'er musky, memory-haunted ways,Across a lonely harvest-land,Where west winds chanted in the wheatAn old, old vesper wondrous sweet.

Oh, Twilight was a comrade rareFor gypsy heath or templed grove,In her gray vesture, shadow-wove;I saw the darkness of her hairFaint-mirrored in a field-pool dim,As we stood tip-toe on its rim.

We went as lightly as on wingsThrough many a scented chamber fair,Among the pines and balsams, whereI could have dreamed of darling things,And ever as we went I knewThe peeping fairy folk went too.

I could have lingered now and thenBy gates of moonrise that might leadTo some forgotten, spicieried mead,Or in some mossy, cloistered glen,Where silence, very still and deep,Seemed fallen in enchanted sleep.

But Twilight ever led me on,<sup>[44]</sup>As lovers walk, until we cameTo hills where sunset's shaken flameHad paled to ashes dead and wan;And there, with footsteps stolen-lightShe left me to the lure of night.

## COME, REST AWHILE

Come, rest awhile, and let us idly strayIn glimmering valleys, cool and far away.

Come from the greedy mart, the troubled street,And listen to the music, faint and sweet,

That echoes ever to a listening ear,Unheard by those who will not pause to hear—

The wayward chimes of memory's pensive bells,Wind-blown o'er misty hills and curtained dells.

One step aside and dewy buds unclosethe sweetness of the violet and the rose;

Song and romance still linger in the green,Embossomed ways by you so seldom seen,

And near at hand, would you but see them, lieAll lovely things beloved in days gone by.

You have forgotten what it is to smile  
In your too busy life—come, rest awhile.

## AN APRIL NIGHT

The moon comes up o'er the deeps of the woods,  
And the long, low dingles that hide in  
the hills,  
Where the ancient beeches are moist with buds  
Over the pools and the  
whimpering rills;

And with her the mists, like dryads that creep  
From their oaks, or the spirits of pine-hid  
springs,  
Who hold, while the eyes of the world are asleep,  
With the wind on the hills  
their gay revellings.

Down on the marshlands with flicker and glow  
Wanders Will-o'-the-Wisp through the  
night,  
Seeking for witch-gold lost long ago  
By the glimmer of goblin lantern-light.

The night is a sorceress, dusk-eyed and dear,  
Akin to all eerie and elfin things,  
Who  
weaves about us in meadow and mere  
The spell of a hundred vanished Springs.

## RAIN ON THE HILL

Now on the hill  
The fitful wind is so still  
That never a wimpling mist uplifts,  
Nor a  
trembling leaf drop-laden stirs;  
From the ancient firs  
Aroma of balsam drifts,  
And the  
silent places are filled  
With elusive odors distilled  
By the rain from asters empearled and  
frilled,  
And a wild wet savor that dwells  
Far adown in tawny fallows and bracken dells.

Then with a rush,  
Breaking the beautiful hush  
Where the only sound was the lispings,  
low  
Converse of raindrops, or the dear sound  
Close to the ground,  
That grasses make  
when they grow,  
Comes the wind in a gay,  
Rollicking, turbulent way,  
To winnow each  
bough and toss each spray,  
Piping and whistling in glee  
With the vibrant notes of a merry  
minstrelsy.

The friendly rain<sup>[48]</sup>  
Sings many a haunting strain,  
Now of gladness and now of  
dole,  
Anon of the glamor and the dream  
That ever seem  
To wait on a pilgrim soul;  
Yea,  
we can hear  
The grief of an elder year,  
And laughter half-forgotten and dear;  
In the wind  
and the rain we find  
Fellowship meet for each change of mood or mind.

]

## FOR LITTLE THINGS

Last night I looked across the hills  
And through an arch of darkling pine  
Low-swung  
against a limpid west  
I saw a young moon shine.

And as I gazed there blew a wind,  
Loosed where the sylvan shadows stir,  
Bringing  
delight to soul and sense  
The breath of dying fir.

This morn I saw a dancing host  
Of poppies in a garden way,  
And straight my heart was  
mirth-possessed  
And I was glad as they.

I heard a song across the sea  
As sweet and faint as echoes are,  
And glimpsed a poignant  
happiness  
No care of earth might mar.

Dear God, our life is beautiful  
In every splendid gift it brings,  
But most I thank Thee  
humbly for  
The joy of little things.

## **SPRING SONG**

Hark, I hear a robin calling!  
List, the wind is from the south!  
And the orchard-bloom is  
falling  
Sweet as kisses on the mouth.

In the dreamy vale of beeches  
Fair and faint is woven mist,  
And the river's orient  
reaches  
Are the palest amethyst.

Every limpid brook is singing  
Of the lure of April days;  
Every piney glen is ringing  
With  
the maddest roundelays.

Come and let us seek together  
Springtime lore of daffodils,  
Giving to the golden  
weather  
Greeting on the sun-warm hills.

Ours shall be the moonrise stealing  
Through the birches ivory-white;  
Ours shall be the  
mystic healing  
Of the velvet-footed night.

Ours shall be the gypsy winding  
Of the path with violets blue,  
Ours at last the wizard  
finding  
Of the land where dreams come true.

## **A DAY OFF**

Let us put awhile away  
All the cares of work-a-day,  
For a golden time forget,  
Task and  
worry, toil and fret,  
Let us take a day to dream  
In the meadow by the stream.



We may lie in grasses cool  
Fringing a pellucid pool,  
We may learn the gay brook-  
runes  
Sung on amber afternoons,  
And the keen wind-rhyme that fills  
Mossy hollows of  
the hills.

Where the wild-wood whisper stirs  
We may talk with lispings  
We may gather honeyed blooms  
In the dappled forest glooms,  
We may eat of berries red  
O'er the emerald upland spread.

We may linger as we will  
In the sunset valleys still,  
Till the gypsy shadows creep  
From the starlit land of sleep,  
And the mist of evening gray  
Girdles round our pilgrim way.

We may bring to work again<sup>[52]</sup>  
Courage from the tasselled glen,  
Bring a strength unfailing won  
From the paths of cloud and sun,  
And the wholesome zest that  
springs  
From all happy, growing things.

## THE WIND

O, wind! what saw you in the South,  
In lilled meadows fair and far?  
I saw a lover kiss his  
lass  
New-won beneath the evening star.

O, wind! what saw you in the West  
Of passing sweet that wooed your stay?  
I saw a mother kneeling by  
The cradle where her first-born lay.

O, wind! what saw you in the North  
That you shall dream of evermore?  
I saw a maiden keeping tryst  
Upon a gray and haunted shore.

O, wind! what saw you in the East  
That still of ancient dole you croon?  
I saw a wan wreck on the waves  
And a dead face beneath the moon.

## THE WOOD POOL

Here is a voice that soundeth low and far  
And lyric—voice of wind among the  
pines,  
Where the untroubled, glimmering waters are,  
And sunlight seldom shines.

Elusive shadows linger shyly here,  
And wood-flowers blow, like pale, sweet spirit-  
bloom,  
And white, slim birches whisper, mirrored clear  
In the pool's lucent gloom.

Here Pan might pipe, or wandering dryad kneel  
To view her loveliness beside the  
brim,  
Or laughing wood-nymphs from the byways steal  
To dance around its rim.

'Tis such a witching spot as might beseem  
A seeker for young friendship's trysting  
place,  
Or lover yielding to the immortal dream  
Of one beloved face.

## DOWN STREAM

Comrades, up! Let us row down stream in this first rare dawnlight,  
While far in the clear north-west the late moon whitens and wanes;  
Before us the sun will rise, deep-purpling  
headland and islet,  
It is well to meet him thus, with the life astir in our veins!

The wakening birds will sing for us in the woods wind-shaken,  
And the solitude of the hills will be broken by hymns to the light,  
As we sweep past drowsing hamlets, still  
feathered by dreams of slumber,  
And leave behind us the shadows that fell with the  
falling of night.

The young day's strength is ours in sinew and thew and muscle,  
We are filled and thrilled with the spirit that dwells in the waste and wold,  
Glamor of wind and water,  
charm of the wildernesses—Oh, the dear joy of it, greater than human hearts can hold!

While the world's tired children sleep we bend to our oars with faces<sup>[56]</sup>  
Set in our eager gladness towards the morning's gate;  
Lo, 'tis the sweet of the day! On, comrades mine,  
for beyond us  
All its dower of beauty, its glory and wonder, wait.

## ECHO DELL

In a lone valley fair and far,  
Where many sweet beguilements are,  
I know a spot to lag and dream  
Through damask morns and noons agleam;  
For feet fall lightly on the fern  
And twilight is a wondrous thing,  
When the winds blow from some far bourne  
Beyond the hill rims westering;  
There echoes ring as if a throng  
Of fairies hid from mortal eyes  
Sent laughter back in spirit guise  
And song as the pure soul of song;  
Oh, 'tis a spot to love right well,  
This lonely, witching Echo Dell!

Even the winds an echo know,  
Elusive, faint, such as might blow  
From wandering elf-land bugles far,  
Beneath an occidental star;  
And I have thought the blue bells lent  
A subtle music to my ear,  
And that the pale wild roses bent  
To harken sounds I might not hear.  
The tasselled fir trees softly croon  
The fabled lore of elder days.  
And through the shimmering eastern haze  
Floats slowly up the mellow moon;  
Come, heart o' mine, for love must dwell  
In whispering, witching Echo Dell.

## THE ROVERS

Over the fields we go, through the sweets of the purple clover, That letters a message for  
us as for every vagrant rover; Before us the dells are abloom, and a leaping brook calls  
after, Feeling its kinship with us in lore of dreams and laughter.

Out of the valleys of moonlight elfin voices are calling; Down from the misty hills faint,  
far greetings are falling; Whisper the grasses to us, murmuring gleeful and airy, Knowing  
us pixy-led, seeking the haunts of faery.

The wind is our joyful comrade wherever our free feet wander, Over the tawny wolds to  
the meres and meadows yonder; The mild-eyed stars go with us, or the rain so swiftly  
flying, Racing us over the wastes where the hemlocks and pines are sighing.

Across the upland dim, down through the beckoning hollow—<sup>[59]</sup> Oh, we go too far and  
fast for the feet of care to follow! The gypsy fire in our hearts for the wilderness wide  
and luring; Other loves may fail but this is great and enduring.

Other delights may pall, but the joy of the open never; The charm of the silent places  
must win and hold us forever; Bondage of walls we leave with never a glance behind  
us. Under the lucent sky the delights of the rover shall find us.

## AMONG THE PINES

Here let us linger at will and delightsomely hearken Music aeolian of wind in the boughs  
of pine, Timbrel of falling waters, sounds all soft and sonorous, Worshipful litanies sung  
at a bannered shrine.

Deep let us breathe the ripeness and savor of balsam, Tears that the pines have wept in  
sorrow sweet, With its aroma comes beguilement of things forgotten, Long-past hopes of  
the years on tip-toeing feet.

Far in the boskiest glen of this wood is a dream and a silence—Come, we shall claim  
them ours ere look we long; A dream that we dreamed and lost, a silence richly  
hearted, Deep at its lyric core with the soul of a song.

If there be storm, it will thunder a march in the branches, So that our feet may keep true  
time as we go; If there be rain, it will laugh, it will glisten, and beckon, Calling to us as a  
friend all lightly and low.

If it be night, the moonlight will wander winsomely with us,<sup>[61]</sup> If it be hour of dawn, all  
heaven will bloom, If it be sunset, its glow will enfold and pursue us. To the remotest  
valley of purple gloom.

Lo! the pine wood is a temple where the days meet to worship,  
Laying their cark and care for the nonce aside,  
God, who made it, keeps it as a witness to Him forever,  
Walking in it, as a garden, at eventide.

## A DAY IN THE OPEN

Ho, a day Whereon we may up and away,  
With a fetterless wind that is out on the downs,  
And there piping a call to the fallow and shore,  
Where the sea evermore Surgeth over the gray reef, and drowns  
The fierce rocks with white foam;  
It is ours with untired feet to roam  
Where the pines in green gloom of wide vales make their murmuring home,  
Or the pools that the sunlight hath kissed  
Mirror back a blue sky that is winnowed of cloud and of mist!

Ho, a day Whereon we may up and away  
Through the orient distances hazy and pied,  
Hand in hand with the gypsy breezes that blow  
Here and there, to and fro,  
O'er the meadows all rosy and wide,  
Where a lyric of flowers Is sweet-sung to the frolicking hours,  
And the merry buds letter the foot-steps of tip-toeing showers;  
We may climb where the steep is beset  
With a turbulent waterfall, loving to clamor and fret!

Ho, a day<sup>[63]</sup> Whereon we may up and away  
To the year that is holding her cup of wild wine;  
If we drink we shall be as the gods of the wold  
In the blithe days of old  
Elate with a laughter divine;  
Yea, and then we shall know  
The rare magic of solitude so  
We shall nevermore wish its delight and its dreams to forego,  
And our blood will upstir and upleap  
With a fellowship splendid, a gladness impassioned and deep!

## MIDNIGHT IN CAMP

Night in the unslumbering forest! From the free,  
Vast pinelands by the foot of man untrod,  
Blows the wild wind, roaming rejoicingly  
This wilderness of God;  
And the tall firs that all day long have flung  
Balsamic odors where the sunshine burned,  
Chant to its harping primal epics learned  
When this old world was young.

Beyond the lake, white, girdling peaks uplift  
Untroubled brows to virgin skies afar,  
And o'er the uncertain water glimmers drift  
Of fitful cloud and star.  
Sure never day such mystic beauty held  
As sylvan midnight here in this surcease  
Of toil, when the kind darkness gives us peace  
Garnered from years of eld.

Lo! Harken to the mountain waterfall  
Laughing adown its pathway to the glen  
And nearer, in the cedars, the low call  
Of brook to brook again;  
Voices that garish daytime

may not know Wander at will along the bosky steeps, And silent, silver-footed moonlight  
creeps Through the dim glades below.

Oh, it is well to waken with the woods<sup>[65]</sup> And feel, as those who wait with God  
alone, The forest's heart in these rare solitudes Beating against our own. Close-shut  
behind us are the gates of care, Divinity enfolds us, prone to bless, And our souls kneel.  
Night in the wilderness Is one great prayer.

## THE HILL MAPLES

Here on a hill of the occident stand we shoulder to shoulder, Comrades tried and true  
through a mighty swath of the years! Spring harps glad laughter through us, and  
ministrant rains of the autumn Sing us again the songs of ancient dolor and tears.

The glory of sunrise smites on our fair, free brows uplifted When the silver-kirtled day  
steps over the twilight's bars; At evening we look adown into valleys hearted with  
sunset, And we whisper old lore together under the smouldering stars.

Crescent moons of the summer gleam through our swaying branches, Knee-deep in fern  
we stand while the days of the sun-time go; And the winds of winter love us—the keen,  
gay winds of the winter, Coming to our gray arms from over the plains of snow.

Down in the valleys beneath us is wooing and winning and wedding,<sup>[67]</sup> Down in the  
long, dim valleys earth-children wail and weep; But here on these free hills we grow and  
are strong and flourish, Comrades shoulder to shoulder our watch of the years to keep.

## A SUMMER DAY

### I

The dawn laughs out on orient hills And dances with the diamond rills; The ambrosial  
wind but faintly stirs The silken, beaded gossamers; In the wide valleys, lone and  
fair, Lyrics are piped from limpid air, And, far above, the pine trees free Voice ancient  
lore of sky and sea. Come, let us fill our hearts straightway With hope and courage of the  
day.

### II

Noon, hiving sweets of sun and flower, Has fallen on dreams in wayside bower, Where  
bees hold honeyed fellowship With the ripe blossom of her lip; All silent are her popped

vales  
And all her long Arcadian dales, Where idleness is gathered up  
A magic draught in summer's cup.  
Come, let us give ourselves to dreams  
By lisping margins of her streams.

### III

Adown the golden sunset way  
The evening comes in wimple gray;  
By burnished shore and silver lake  
Cool winds of ministration wake;  
O'er occidental meadows far  
There shines the light of moon and star,  
And sweet, low-tinkling music rings  
About the lips of haunted springs.  
In quietude of earth and air  
'Tis meet we yield our souls to prayer.

## SEPTEMBER

Lo! a ripe sheaf of many golden days  
Gleaned by the year in autumn's harvest ways,  
With here and there, blood-tinted as an ember,  
Some crimson poppy of a late delight  
Atoning in its splendor for the flight  
Of summer blooms and joys—This is  
September.

## IN LOVERS' LANE

I know a place for loitering feet  
Deep in the valley where the breeze  
Makes melody in lichened boughs,  
And murmurs low love-litanies.

There slender harebells nod and dream,  
And pale wild roses offer up  
The fragrance of their golden hearts,  
As from some incense-brimméd cup.

It holds the sunshine sifted down  
Softly through many a beechen screen,  
Save where, by deeper woods embraced,  
Cool shadows linger, dim and green.

And there my love and I may walk  
And harken to the lapsing fall  
Of unseen brooks and tender winds,  
And wooing birds that sweetly call.

And every voice to her will say  
What I repeat in dear refrain,  
And eyes will meet with seeking eyes,  
And hands will clasp in Lovers' Lane.

Come, sweet-heart, then, and we will stray<sup>[72]</sup>  
Adown that valley, lingering long,  
Until the rose is wet with dew,  
And robins come to evensong,

And woo each other, borrowing speech  
Of love from winds and brooks and birds,  
Until our sundered thoughts are one  
And hearts have no more need of words.

## ON THE HILLS

Through the pungent hours of the afternoon, On the autumn slopes we have lightly  
wandered Where the sunshine lay in a golden swoon And the lingering year all its  
sweetness squandered. Oh, it was blithesome to roam at will Over the crest of each  
westering hill, Over those dreamy, enchanted lands Where the trees held to us their  
friendly hands!

Winds in the pine boughs softly crooned, Or in the grasses complained most  
sweetly, With all the music of earth attuned In this dear ripe time that must pass so  
fleetly: Golden rod as we idled by Held its torches of flame on high, And the asters  
beckoned along our way Like fair fine ladies in silk array.

We passed by woods where the day aside Knelt like a pensive nun and tender, We looked  
on valleys of purple pride Where she reigned a queen in her misty splendor; But out on  
the hills she was wild and free, A comrade to wander right gipsily, Luring us on over  
waste and wold With the charm of a message half sung, half told.

And now, when far in the shining west<sup>[74]</sup> She has dropped her flowers on the sunset  
meadow, We turn away from our witching quest To the kindly starshine and gathering  
shadow; Filled to the lips of our souls are we With the beauty given so lavishly, And hand  
in hand with the night we come Back to the light and the hearth of home.

## AN AUTUMN EVENING

Dark hills against a hollow crocus sky Scarfed with its crimson pennons, and below The  
dome of sunset long, hushed valleys lie Cradling the twilight, where the lone winds  
blow And wake among the harps of leafless trees Fantastic runes and mournful melodies.

The chilly purple air is threaded through With silver from the rising moon afar, And from  
a gulf of clear, unfathomed blue In the southwest glimmers a great gold star Above the  
darkening druid glens of fir Where beckoning boughs and elfin voices stir.

And so I wander through the shadows still, And look and listen with a rapt  
delight, Pausing again and yet again at will To drink the elusive beauty of the night, Until  
my soul is filled, as some deep cup, That with divine enchantment is brimmed up.

## NOVEMBER EVENING

Come, for the dusk is our own; let us fare forth together,  
With a quiet delight in our hearts for the ripe, still, autumn weather,  
Through the rustling valley and wood and over the crisping meadow,  
Under a high-sprung sky, winnowed of mist and shadow.

Sharp is the frosty air, and through the far hill-gaps showing  
Lucent sunset lakes of crocus and green are glowing;  
'Tis the hour to walk at will in a wayward, unfettered roaming,  
Caring for naught save the charm, elusive and swift, of the gloaming.

Watchful and stirless the fields as if not unkindly holding  
Harvested joys in their clasp, and to their broad bosoms folding  
Baby hopes of a Spring, trusted to motherly keeping,  
Thus to be cherished and happed through the long months of their sleeping.

Silent the woods are and gray; but the firs than ever are greener,<sup>[77]</sup>  
Nipped by the frost till the tang of their loosened balsam is keener;  
And one little wind in their boughs, eerily swaying and swinging,  
Very soft and low, like a wandering minstrel is singing.

Beautiful is the year, but not as the springlike maiden  
Garlanded with her hopes—rather the woman laden  
With wealth of joy and grief, worthily won through living,  
Wearing her sorrow now like a garment of praise and thanksgiving.

Gently the dark comes down over the wild, fair places,  
The whispering glens in the hills, the open, starry spaces;  
Rich with the gifts of the night, sated with questing and dreaming,  
We turn to the dearest of paths where the star of the homelight is gleaming.

## OUT O' DOORS

There's a gypsy wind across the harvest land,  
Let us fare forth with it lightly hand in hand;  
Where cloud shadows blow across the sunwarm waste,  
And the first red leaves are falling let us haste,  
For the waning days are lavish of their stores,  
And the joy of life is with us out o' doors!

Let us roam along the ways of golden rod  
Over uplands where the spicy bracken nod,  
Through the wildwood where the hemlock branches croon  
Their rune-chant of elder days across the noon.  
For the mellow air its pungency outpours,  
And the glory of the year is out o' doors!

There's a great gray sea beyond us calling far,  
There's a blue tide curling o'er the harbor bar;  
Ho, the breeze that smites us saltly on the lips  
Whistles gaily in the sails of outbound ships;  
Let us send our thoughts with them to fabled shores,  
For the pilgrim mood is on us out o' doors!

Lo! the world's rejoicing in each spirit thrills,  
Strength and gladness are to us upon the hills;  
We are one with crimson bough and ancient sea,  
Holding all the joy of autumn



hours in fee, Hope within us like a questing bird upsoars, And there's room for song and laughter out o' doors.

## IN THE DAYS OF THE GOLDEN ROD

Across the meadow in brooding shadow I walk to drink of the autumn's wine—The charm of story, the artist's glory, To-day on these silvering hills is mine; On height, in hollow, where'er I follow, By mellow hillside and searing sod, Its plumes uplifting, in light winds drifting, I see the glimmer of golden-rod.

In this latest comer the vanished summer Has left its sunshine the world to cheer, And bids us remember in late September What beauty mates with the passing year. The days that are fleetest are still the sweetest, And life is near to the heart of God, And the peace of heaven to earth is given In this wonderful time of the golden-rod.

## A WINTER DAY

I

The air is silent save where stirs A bugling breeze among the firs; The virgin world in white array Waits for the bridegroom kiss of day; All heaven blooms rarely in the east Where skies are silvery and fleeced, And o'er the orient hills made glad The morning comes in wonder clad; Oh, 'tis a time most fit to see How beautiful the dawn can be!

II

Wide, sparkling fields snow-vestured lie Beneath a blue, unshadowed sky; A glistening splendor crowns the woods And bosky, whistling solitudes; In hemlock glen and reedy mere The tang of frost is sharp and clear; Life hath a jollity and zest, A poignancy made manifest; Laughter and courage have their way At noontide of a winter's day.

III

Faint music rings in wold and dell, The tinkling of a distant bell, Where homestead lights with friendly glow Glimmer across the drifted snow; Beyond a valley dim and far Lit by an occidental star, Tall pines the marge of day beset Like many a slender minaret, Whence priest-like winds on crystal air Summon the reverent world to prayer.

## TWILIGHT

From vales of dawn hath Day pursued the Night  
Who mocking fled, swift-sandalled, to  
the west,  
Nor ever lingered in her wayward flight  
With dusk-eyed glance to recompense  
his quest,  
But over crocus hills and meadows gray  
Sped fleetly on her way.

Now when the Day, shorn of his failing strength,  
Hath fallen spent before the sunset  
bars,  
The fair, wild Night, with pity touched at length,  
Crowned with her chaplet of out-  
blossoming stars,  
Creeps back repentantly upon her way  
To kiss the dying Day.

## THE CALL OF THE WINDS

Ho, come out with the wind of spring,  
And step it blithely in woodlands waking;  
Friend  
am I of each growing thing  
From the gray sod into sunshine breaking;  
Mine is the magic  
of twilights dim,  
Of violets blue on the still pool's rim,  
Mine is the breath of the blossoms  
young  
Sweetest of fragrances storied or sung—  
Come, ye earth-children, weary and  
worn,  
I will lead you over the hills of morn.

Ho, come out with the summer wind,  
And loiter in meadows of ripening clover,  
Where  
the purple noons are long and kind,  
And the great white clouds drift fleecily over.  
Mine  
is immortal minstrelsy,  
The fellowship of the rose and bee,  
Beguiling laughter of  
willowed rills,  
The rejoicing of pines on inland hills,  
Come, ye earth-children, by dale  
and stream,  
I will lead you into the ways of dream.

Ho, when the wind of autumn rings  
Through jubilant mornings crisp and golden,  
Come  
where the yellow woodland flings  
Its hoarded wealth over by-ways olden.  
Mine are the  
grasses frosted and sere,  
That lisp and rustle around the mere,<sup>[84]</sup>  
Mine are the flying  
racks that dim  
The lingering sunset's reddening rim,  
Earth-children, come, in the waning  
year,  
I will harp you to laughter and buoyant cheer.

Ho, when the wind of winter blows  
Over the uplands and moonlit spaces,  
Come ye out to  
the waste of snows,  
To the glimmering fields and the silent places.  
I whistle gaily on  
starry nights  
Through the arch of the elfin northern lights,  
But in long white valleys I  
pause to hark  
Where the ring of the home-lights gems the dark.  
Come, ye earth-children,  
whose hearts are sad,  
I will make you valiant and strong and glad!

## **A WINTER DAWN**

Above the marge of night a star still shines, And on the frosty hills the sombre  
pines Harbor an eerie wind that crooneth low Over the glimmering wastes of virgin  
snow.

Through the pale arch of orient the morn Comes in a milk-white splendor newly-born, A  
sword of crimson cuts in twain the gray Banners of shadow hosts, and lo, the day!

## **THE FOREST PATH**

Oh, the charm of idle dreaming Where the dappled shadows dance, All the leafy aisles  
are teeming With the lure of old romance!

Down into the forest dipping, Deep and deeper as we go, One might fancy dryads  
slipping Where the white-stemmed birches grow.

Lurking gnome and freakish fairy In the fern may peep and hide ... Sure their whispers  
low and airy Ring us in on every side!

Saw you where the pines are rocking Nymph's white shoulder as she ran? Lo, that music  
faint and mocking, Is it not a pipe of Pan?

Hear you that elusive laughter Of the hidden waterfall? Nay, a satyr speeding after Ivy-  
crowned bacchanal.

Far and farther as we wander Sweeter shall our roaming be, Come, for dim and winsome  
yonder Lies the path to Arcady!

## **AT NIGHTFALL**

The dark is coming o'er the world, my playmate, And the fields where poplars stand are  
very still, All our groves of green delight have been invaded, There are voices quite  
unknown upon the hill;

The wind has grown too weary for a comrade,It is keening in the rushes spent and low,  
Let us join our hands and hasten very softlyTo the little, olden, friendly path we know.

The stars are laughing at us, O, my playmate,Very, very far away in lonely skies,  
The trees that were our friends are strangers to us,And the fern is full of whispers and of sighs.

The sounds we hear are not what we may share in,We may not linger where the white moths roam,  
We must hasten yet more swiftly, little playmate,To the house among the pines that is our home.

The dark is creeping closer yet, my playmate,And the woods seem crowding nearer as we go,  
Oh, how very, very bold have grown the shadows,They may touch us as they flutter to and fro!

The silence is too dreadful for our laughter,The night is very full of strange alarms,  
But it cannot hurt us now, O, little playmate,One more step and we are safe in mother's arms!

## THE TRUCE O' NIGHT

Lo, it is dark,Save for the crystal sparkOf a virgin star o'er the purpling lea,  
Or the fine, keen, silvery grace of a youngMoon that is hungO'er the priest-like firs by the sea;  
Lo, it is still,Save for the wind of the hill,And the luring, primeval sounds that fill  
The moist and scented air—"Tis the truce o' night, away with unrest and care!

Now we may forgetLove's fever and hate's fret,Forget to-morrow and yesterday;  
And the hopes we buried in musky gloomWill come out of their tomb,  
Warm and poignant and gay;  
We may wander wide,With only a wish for a guide,  
By heath and pool where the Little Folk bide,  
We may share in fairy mirth,And partake once more in the happy thoughts of earth.

Lo, we may rest<sup>[89]</sup>Here on her cradling breastIn the wonderful time of the truce o' night,  
And sweet things that happened long ago,Softly and slow,Will creep back to us in delight;  
And our dreams may beCompact of young melody,Just such as under the Eden Tree,  
'Mid the seraphim's lullabies,Eve's might have been ere banished from Paradise.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### TO MY ENEMY

Let those who will of friendship sing, And to its guerdon grateful be, But I a lyric garland bring  
To crown thee, O, mine enemy!

Thanks, endless thanks, to thee I owe For that my lifelong journey through Thine honest  
hate has done for me What love perchance had failed to do.

I had not scaled such weary heights But that I held thy scorn in fear, And never keenest  
lure might match The subtle goading of thy sneer.

Thine anger struck from me a fire That purged all dull content away, Our mortal strife to  
me has been Unflagging spur from day to day.

And thus, while all the world may laud The gifts of love and loyalty, I lay my meed of  
gratitude Before thy feet, mine enemy!

### AS THE HEART HOPES

It is a year dear one, since you afar Went out beyond my yearning mortal sight—A  
wondrous year! perchance in many a star You have sojourned, or basked within the  
light Of mightier suns; it may be you have trod The glittering pathways of the  
Pleiades, And through the Milky Way's white mysteries Have walked at will, fire-shod.

You may have gazed in the immortal eyes Of prophets and of martyrs; talked with  
seers Learned in all the lore of Paradise, The infinite wisdom of eternal years; To you the  
Sons of Morning may have sung, The impassioned strophes of their matin hymn, For you  
the choirs of the seraphim Their harpings wild out-flung.

But still I think at eve you come to me For old, delightsome speech of eye and  
lip, Deeming our mutual converse thus to be Fairer than archangelic comradeship; Dearer  
our close communings fondly given Than all the rainbow dreams a spirit knows, Sweeter  
my gathered violets than the rose Upon the hills of heaven.

Can any exquisite, unearthly morn,<sup>[95]</sup> Silverly breaking o'er a starry plain, Give to your  
soul the poignant pleasure born Of virgin moon and sunset's lustrous stain When we

together watch them? Oh, apart  
A hundred universes you may roam,  
But still I know—I  
know—your only home  
Is here within my heart!

## TWO LOVES

One said; "Lo, I would walk hand-clasped with thee  
A down the ways of joy and sunlit  
slopes  
Of earthly song in happiest vagrancy  
To pluck the blossom of a thousand  
hopes.  
Let us together drain the wide world's cup  
With gladness brimméd up!"

And one said, "I would pray to go with thee  
When sorrow claims thee; I would fence thy  
heart  
With mine against all anguish; I would be  
The comforter and healer of thy  
smart;  
And I would count it all the wide world's gain  
To spare or share thy pain!"

## THE CHRISTMAS NIGHT

Wrapped was the world in slumber deep,  
By seaward valley and cedarn steep,  
And bright  
and blest were the dreams of its sleep;  
All the hours of that wonderful night-tide  
through  
The stars outblossomed in fields of blue,  
A heavenly chaplet, to diadem  
The King  
in the manger of Bethlehem.

Out on the hills the shepherds lay,  
Wakeful, that never a lamb might stray,  
Humble and  
clean of heart were they;  
Thus it was given them to hear  
Marvellous harpings strange and  
clear,  
Thus it was given them to see  
The heralds of the nativity.

In the dim-lit stable the mother mild  
Looked with holy eyes on her child,  
Cradled him  
close to her heart and smiled;  
Kingly purple nor crown had he,  
Never a trapping of  
royalty;  
But Mary saw that the baby's head  
With a slender nimbus was garlanded.

Speechless her joy as she watched him there,<sup>[98]</sup>  
Forgetful of pain and grief and  
care,  
And every thought in her soul was a prayer;  
While under the dome of the desert  
sky  
The Kings of the East from afar drew nigh,  
And the great white star that was guide to  
them  
Kept ward o'er the manger of Bethlehem.

## IN AN OLD FARMHOUSE

Outside the afterlight's lucent rose  
Is smiting the hills and brimming the valleys,  
And shadows are stealing across the snows;  
From the mystic gloom of the pineland  
alleys. Glamour of mingled night and day  
Over the wide, white world has sway,  
And through their prisoning azure bars,  
Gaze the calm, cold eyes of the early stars.

But here, in this long, low-raftered room,  
Where the blood-red light is crouching and  
leaping, The fire that colors the heart of the gloom  
The lost sunshine of old summers is  
keeping—The wealth of forests that held in fee  
Many a season's rare alchemy, And the  
glow and gladness without a name  
That dwells in the deeps of unstinted flame.

Gather we now round the opulent blaze  
With the face that loves and the heart that  
rejoices, Dream we once more of the old-time days,  
Listen once more to the old-time  
voices! From the clutch of the cities and paths of the sea  
We have come again to our own  
roof-tree, And forgetting the loves of the stranger lands  
We yearn for the clasp of our  
kindred's hands.

There are tales to tell, there are tears to shed,<sup>[100]</sup>  
There are children's flower-faces and  
women's sweet laughter; There's a chair left vacant for one who is dead  
Where the firelight crimsons the ancient rafter;  
What reck we of the world that waits  
With care and clamor beyond our gates,  
We, with our own, in this witching light,  
Who keep our tryst  
with the past to-night?

Ho! how the elf-flames laugh in glee!  
Closer yet let us draw together, Holding our revel  
of memory In the guiling twilight of winter weather;  
Out on the waste the wind is  
chill, And the moon swings low o'er the western hill,  
But old hates die and old loves burn  
higher  
With the wane and flash of the farmhouse fire.

## A REQUEST

When I am dead I would that ye make my bed  
On that low-lying, windy waste by the  
sea, Where the silvery grasses rustle and lisp;  
There, where the crisp  
Foam-flakes shall fly  
over me, And murmurs creep  
From the ancient heart of the deep,  
Lulling me ever, I shall  
most sweetly sleep. While the eerie sea-folk croon  
On the long dim shore by the light of  
a waning moon.

I shall not hear  
Clamor of young life anear, Voices of gladness to stir an unrest;  
Only the wandering mists of the sea  
Shall companion me; Only the wind in its quest  
Shall come where I lie, Or the rain from the brooding sky  
With furtive footstep shall pass me by, And  
never a dream of the earth  
Shall break on my slumber with lure of an out-lived mirth.

## MEMORY PICTURES

### I

A wide-spring meadow in a rosy dawn  
Bedropt with virgin buds; an orient sky  
Fleeced with a dappled cloud but half withdrawn;  
A mad wind blowing by, O'er slopes of rippling  
grass and glens apart; A brackened path to a wild-woodland place  
A limpid pool with a fair, laughing face  
Mirrored within its heart.

### II

An ancient garden brimmed with summer sun  
Upon a still and slumberous afternoon; Old  
walks and pleasancess with shadows spun  
Where honeyed odors swoon; A velvet turf  
with blossoms garlanded; A hedge of Mary-lilies white and tall;  
And, shining out against a lichened wall,  
A stately-golden head.

### III

An autumn hilltop in the sunset hue,  
Pine boughs uptossed against the crystal west, And,  
girdled with the twilight dim and blue, A valley peace-possessed;  
A high-sprung heaven stained with colors rare,  
A sheen of moonrise on the sea afar, And, bright and soft as any  
glimmering star, Eyes holy as a prayer.

## DOWN HOME

Down home to-night the moonshine falls  
Across a hill with daisies pied, The pear tree by  
the garden gate Beckons with white arms like a bride.

A savor as of trampled fern  
Along the whispering meadow stirs, And, beacon of  
immortal love, A light is shining through the firs.

To my old gable window creeps  
The night wind with a sigh and song, And, weaving  
ancient sorceries, Thereto the gleeful moonbeams throng.

Beside the open kitchen door  
My mother stands all lovingly, And o'er the pathways of  
the dark She sends a yearning thought to me.

It seeks and finds my answering heart  
Which shall no more be peace-possessed Until I  
reach her empty arms And lay my head upon her breast.

## THE CHOICE



Life, come to me in no pale guise and ashen, I care not for thee in such placid fashion! I would share widely, Life, In all thy joy and strife, Would sound thy deeps and reach thy highest passion, With thy delight and with thy suffering rife.

Whether I bide with thee in cot or palace, I would drink deeply, Life, of thy great chalice, Even to its bitter lees—Yea, shrinking not from these, Since out of bitterness come strength and solace And wisdom is not won in slumberous ease.

Wan peace, uncolored days, were a poor favor; To lack great pain and love were to lack savor. Life, take the heart of me And fill it brimmingly, No matter with what poignant brew or flavor, So that it may not shrunk and empty be.

Yea, Life, thus would I live, nor play at living, The best of me for thy best gladly giving, With an unfaltering cheer, Greeting thee year by year, Even in thy dourest mood some good achieving, Until I read thy deep-hid meaning clear.

## **TWILIGHT IN THE GARDEN**

The scent of the earth is moist and good In the dewy shade Of the tall, dark poplars whose slender tops Against the sunset bloom are laid, And a robin is whistling in the copse By the dim spruce wood.

The west wind blowing o'er branch and flower Out of the wold, Steals through the honeysuckle bower And bears away on its airy wings Odors that breath of paradise; Dim are the poppies' splendid dyes, But many a pallid primrose swings Its lamp of gold.

A white moth flits from tree to tree Like a wandering soul; Deep in the lily a muffled boom Tells of a honey-drunken bee Wildered with sweets in that ivory bowl; Many a subtle melody, Many a rare sound all unknown To the lusty daylight's fuller tone Threads with its magic this hush and gloom.

Many a dear thought deep in the heart,<sup>[106]</sup> Many a memory, dulcet and fine, Wakes as we walk in the garden to-night, In this soft kissing of dark and light, When the world has drawn itself apart From our spirit's shrine.

## **MY LEGACY**

My friend has gone away from me From shadow into perfect light, But leaving a sweet legacy.

My heart shall hold it long in fee—A grand ideal, calm and bright,A song of hope for ministry,

A faith of unstained purity,A thought of beauty for delight—These did my friend bequeath to me;

And, more than even these can be,The worthy pattern of a white,Unmarred life lived most graciously.

Dear comrade, loyal thanks to theeWho now hath fared beyond my sight,My friend has gone away from me,But leaving a sweet legacy.

## GRATITUDE

I thank thee, friend, for the beautiful thoughtThat in words well chosen thou gavest to me.Deep in the life of my soul it has wroughtWith its own rare essence to ever imbue me,To gleam like a star over devious ways,To bloom like a flower on the drearest days—Better such gift from thee to meThan gold of the hills or pearls of the sea.

For the luster of jewels and gold may depart,And they have in them no life of the giver,But this gracious gift from thy heart to my heartShall witness to me of thy love forever;Yea, it shall always abide with meAs a part of my immortality;For a beautiful thought is a thing divine,So I thank thee, oh, friend, for this gift of thine.

## FANCIES

Surely the flowers of a hundred springsAre simply the souls of beautiful things!

The poppies aflame with gold and redWere the kisses of lovers in days that are fled.

The purple pansies with dew-drops pearledWere the rainbow dreams of a youngling world.

The lily, white as a star apart,Was the first pure prayer of a virgin heart.

The daisies that dance and twinkle soWere the laughter of children in long ago.

The sweetness of all true friendship yetLives in the breath of the mignonette.

To the white narcissus there must belongThe very delight of a maiden's song.

And the rose, all flowers of the earth above,Was a perfect, rapturous thought of love.

Oh! surely the blossoms of all the springs  
Must be the souls of beautiful things.

## ONE OF THE SHEPHERDS

We were out on the hills that night  
To watch our sheep;  
Drowsily by the fire we lay  
Where the waning flame did flicker and leap,  
And some were weary and half asleep,  
And some talked low of their flocks and the fright  
Of a lion that day.

But I had drawn from the others apart;  
I was only a lad,  
And the night's great silence so filled my heart  
That I dared not talk and I dared not jest;  
The moon had gone down behind the hill  
And even the wind of the desert was still;  
As the touch of death the air was cold,  
And the world seemed all outworn and old;  
Yet a poignant delight in my soul was guest,  
And I could not be sad.

Still were my thoughts the thoughts of youth  
Under the skies:  
I dreamed of the holy and tender truth  
That shone for me in my mother's eyes;  
Of my little sister's innocent grace,  
And the mirthful lure in the olive face  
Of a maid I had seen at the well that day,  
Singing low as I passed that way,  
And so sweet and wild were the notes of her song,  
That I listened long.

Was it the dawn that silvered and broke<sup>[111]</sup>  
Over the hill?  
Each at the other looked in amaze,  
And never a breathless word we spoke.  
Fast into rose and daffodil  
Deepened that splendor;  
athwart its blaze  
That pierced like a sword the gulf of night  
We saw a form that was shaped of the light,  
And we veiled our faces in awe and dread  
To hearken the tidings the Bright One told—  
Oh! wonderful were the words he said—  
Of a Child in Bethlehem's manger old.

The stars were drowned in that orient glow;  
The sky was abloom like a meadow in spring;  
But each blossom there was a radiant face  
And each flash of glory a shining wing;  
They harped of peace and great good will,  
And such was their music that well I know  
There can never again in my soul be space  
For a sound of ill.

The light died out as the sunset dies  
In the western skies;  
Swift went we to the Bethlehem khan,  
Many our questions laughed to scorn,  
But one, a gray and wrinkled man,  
With strange, deep eyes that searched the heart,  
Led us down to the child new-born  
In a dim-lighted cave apart.

There on the straw the mother lay<sup>[112]</sup>  
Wan and white,  
But her look was so holy and rapt and mild  
That it seemed to shed a marvellous light,  
Faint as the first rare gleam of day,  
Around the child.

It was as other children are  
Saving for something in the eyes,  
Starlike and clear and strangely wise—  
Then came a sudden thought to me  
Of a lamb I had found on the waste afar;  
Lost and sick with hunger and cold,  
I had brought it back in my arms to the fold  
For tender ministry.

Dawn had flooded the east as a wave  
When we left the cave;  
All the world suddenly  
seemed to be Young and pure and joyous again;  
The others lingered to talk with the  
men, Full of wonder and rapture still;  
But I hastened back to the fold on the hill  
To tend the lamb that had need of me.

## IF MARY HAD KNOWN

If Mary had known  
When she held her Babe's hands in her own—  
Little hands that were  
tender and white as a rose,  
All dented with dimples from finger to wrist,  
Such as mothers  
have kissed—  
That one day they must feel the fierce blows  
Of a hatred insane.  
Must  
redden with holiest stain,  
And grasp as their guerdon the boon of the bitterest pain,  
Oh, I think that her sweet, brooding face  
Must have blanched with its anguish of knowledge  
above her embrace.

But—if Mary had known,  
As she held her Babe's hands in her own,  
What a treasure of  
gifts to the world they would bring;  
What healing and hope to the hearts that must  
ache,  
And without him must break;  
Had she known they would pluck forth death's  
sting  
And set open the door  
Of the close, jealous grave evermore,  
Making free who were  
captives in sorrow and darkness before,  
Oh, I think that a gracious sunrise  
Of rapture had  
broken across the despair of her eyes!

If Mary had known<sup>[114]</sup>  
As she sat with her baby alone,  
And guided so gently his bare  
little feet  
To take their first steps from the throne of her knee,  
How weary must be  
The path that for them should be meet;  
And how it must lead  
To the cross of humanity's  
need,  
Giving hissing and shame, giving blame and reproach for its meed,  
Oh, I think that  
her tears would have dewed  
Those dear feet that must walk such a hard, starless way to  
the Rood!

But—if Mary had known,  
As she sat with her Baby alone,  
On what errands of mercy and  
peace they would go,  
How those footsteps would ring through the years of all time  
With  
an echo sublime,  
Making holy the land of their woe,  
That the pathway they trod  
Would  
guide the world back to its God,  
And lead ever upward away from the grasp of the  
clod,  
She had surely forgot to be sad  
And only remembered to be most immortally glad!

If Mary had known,<sup>[115]</sup>  
As she held him so closely, her own,  
Cradling his shining, fair  
head on her breast,  
Sunned over with ringlets as bright as the morn,  
That a garland of  
thorn  
On that tender brow would be pressed  
Till the red drops would fall  
Into eyes that  
looked out upon all,  
Abrim with a pity divine over clamor and brawl,  
Oh, I think that her  
lullaby song  
Would have died on her lips into wailing impassioned and long!

But—if Mary had known,  
As she held him so closely, her own,  
That over the darkness  
and pain he would be  
The Conqueror hailed in all oncoming days,  
The world's hope and  
praise,  
And the garland of thorn,  
The symbol of mocking and scorn  
Would be a victorious

diadem royally worn, Oh, I think that ineffable joy  
Must have flooded her soul as she  
bent o'er her wonderful Boy!

## AT THE LONG SAULT

("Searching the pile of corpses the victors found four Frenchmen still breathing. Three had scarcely a spark of life ... the fourth seemed likely to survive and they reserved him for future torments."

Parkman's History.)

A prisoner under the stars I lie, With no friend near;  
To-morrow they lead me forth to die,  
The stake is ready, the torments set,  
They will pay in full their deadly debt;  
But I fear them not! Oh, none could fear  
Of those who stood by Daulac's side—  
While he prayed and laughed and sang and fought  
In the very reek of death—and caught  
The martyr passion that flamed from his face  
As he died!

Where he led us we followed glad,  
For we loved him well; Some there were that held  
him mad, But we knew that a heavenly rage had place  
In that dauntless soul; the good  
God spake To us through him; we had naught to do  
Save only obey; and when his  
eyes Flashed and kindled like storm-swept skies,  
And his voice like a trumpet thrilled us  
through, We would have marched with delight for his sake  
To the jaws of hell.

The mists hung blue and still on the stream<sup>[117]</sup> At the marge of dawn;  
The rapids laughed till we saw their teeth  
Like a snarling wolf's fangs glisten and gleam;  
Sweetly the pine trees underneath  
The shadows slept in the moonlight wan;  
Sweetly beneath the steps  
of the spring The great, grim forest was blossoming;  
And we fought, that springs for  
other men Might blossom again.

Faint, thirst-maddened we prayed and fought  
By night and by day; Eyes glared at us with  
serpent hate—Yet sometimes a hush fell, and then we heard naught  
Save the wind's shrill harping far away,  
The piping of birds, and the softened calls  
Of the merry, distant water-falls;  
Then of other scenes we thought—  
Of valleys beloved in sunny France,  
Purple vineyards of song and dance,  
Hopes and visions roseate; Of many a holy  
festal morn, And many a dream at vesper bell—  
But anon the shuddering air was torn  
By noises such as the fiends of hell  
Might make in holding high holiday!  
Once, so bitter the death-storm hailed,  
We shrank and quailed.

Daulac sprang out before us then,<sup>[118]</sup> Shamed in our fears;  
Glorious was his face to see,  
The face of one who listens and hears  
Voices unearthly, summonings high—  
Rang his tone like a clarion, "Men,  
See yonder star in the golden sky,  
Such a man's duty is to him,  
A beacon that will not flicker nor dim,  
Shining through darkness and despair.  
Almost the martyr's crown is yours!  
Thinking the price too high to be paid,  
Will you leave the sacrifice half made?  
I tell you God will answer the prayer  
Of the soul that endures!

"Comrades, far in the future I see  
A mighty land;Throned among the nations of  
earth,Noble and happy, calm and free;  
As a veil were lifted I see her stand,  
And out of that future a voice to me  
Promises that our names shall shine  
On the page of her story  
with lustre divine  
Impelling to visions and deeds of worth.

"Ever thus since the world was begun,<sup>[119]</sup>  
When a man hath given up his life,  
Safety and freedom have been won  
By the holy power of self-sacrifice;  
For the memory of your  
mother's kiss  
Valiantly stand to the breach again.  
Comrades, blench not now from the  
strife,Quit you like men!"

Oh, we rushed to meet at our captain's side  
Death as a bride!All our brave striplings  
bravely fell.I, less fortunate, slowly came  
Back from that din of shot and yell  
Slowly and gaspingly, to know  
A harder fate reserved for me  
Than that brief, splendid agony.  
Through many a bitter pang and throe  
My spirit must to-morrow go  
To seek my comrades; but I bear  
The tidings that our desperate stand  
By the Long Sault has saved  
our land,  
And God has answered Daulac's prayer.

## THE EXILE

We told her that her far off shore was bleak and dour to view,  
And that her sky was dull and mirk while ours was smiling blue.  
She only sighed in answer, "It is even as ye say,  
But oh, the ragged splendor when the sun bursts through the gray!"

We brought her dew-wet roses from our fairest summer bowers,  
We bade her drink their fragrance, we heaped her lap with flowers;  
She only said, with eyes that yearned, "Oh, if ye might have brought  
The pale, unscented blossoms by my father's lowly cot!"

We bade her listen to the birds that sang so madly sweet,  
The lyric of the laughing stream that dimpled at our feet;  
"But, O," she cried, "I weary for the music wild that  
stirs  
When keens the mournful western wind among my native firs!"

We told her she had faithful friends and loyal hearts anear,<sup>[121]</sup>  
We prayed her take the fresher loves, we prayed her be of cheer;  
"Oh, ye are kind and true," she wept, "but  
woe's me for the grace  
Of tenderness that shines upon my mother's wrinkled face!"

## THE THREE SONGS

The poet sang of a battle-field  
Where doughty deeds were done,  
Where stout blows rang on helm and shield  
And a kingdom's fate was spun  
With the scarlet thread of victory,  
And honor from death's grim revelry  
Like a flame-red flower was won!  
So bravely he sang

that all who heard  
With the sting of the fight and the triumph were stirred,  
And they cried, "Let us blazon his name on high,  
He has sung a song that will never die!"

Again, full throated, he sang of fame  
And ambition's honeyed lure,  
Of the chaplet that garlands a mighty name,  
Till his listeners fired with the god-like flame  
To do, to dare, to endure!  
The thirsty lips of the world were fain  
The cup of glamor he vaunted to drain,  
And the people murmured as he went by, "He has sung a song that will never die!"

And once more he sang, all low and apart,  
A song of the love that was born in his heart,  
Thinking to voice in unfettered strain  
Its sweet delight and its sweeter pain;  
Nothing he cared what the throngs might say<sup>[123]</sup>  
Who passed him unheeding from day to day,  
For he only longed with his melodies  
The soul of the one beloved to please.

The song of war that he sang is as naught,  
For the field and its heroes are long forgot,  
And the song he sang of fame and power  
Was never remembered beyond its hour!  
Only to-day his name is known  
By the song he sang apart and alone,  
And the great world pauses with joy to hear  
The notes that were strung for a lover's ear.

## IN AN OLD TOWN GARDEN

Shut from the clamor of the street  
By an old wall with lichen grown,  
It holds apart from jar and fret  
A peace and beauty all its own.

The freshness of the springtime rains  
And dews of morning linger here;  
It holds the glow of summer noons  
And ripest twilights of the year.

Above its bloom the evening stars  
Look down at closing of the day,  
And in its sweet and shady walks  
Winds spent with roaming love to stray,

Upgathering to themselves the breath  
Of wide-blown roses white and red,  
The spice of musk and lavender  
Along its winding alleys shed.

Outside are shadeless, troubled streets  
And souls that quest for gold and gain,  
Lips that have long forgot to smile  
And hearts that burn and ache with pain.

But here is all the sweet of dreams,<sup>[125]</sup>  
The grace of prayer, the boon of rest,  
The spirit of old songs and loves  
Dwells in this garden blossom-blest.

Here would I linger for a space,  
And walk herein with memory;  
The world will pass me as it may  
And hope will minister to me.

## THE SEEKER

I sought for my happiness over the world, Oh, eager and far was my quest; I sought it on mountain and desert and sea, I asked it of east and of west. I sought it in beautiful cities of men, On shores that were sunny and blue, And laughter and lyric and pleasure were mine In palaces wondrous to view; Oh, the world gave me much to my plea and my prayer But never I found aught of happiness there!

Then I took my way back to a valley of old And a little brown house by a rill, Where the winds piped all day in the sentinel firs That guarded the crest of the hill; I went by the path that my childhood had known Through the bracken and up by the glen, And I paused at the gate of the garden to drink The scent of sweet-briar again; The homelight shone out through the dusk as of yore And happiness waited for me at the door!

## THE POET'S THOUGHT

It came to him in rainbow dreams, Blent with the wisdom of the sages, Of spirit and of passion born; In words as lucent as the morn He prisoned it, and now it gleams A jewel shining through the ages.

## THE CALL

Mother of her who is close to my heart Cease to chide! For no small thing must I wander afar From the tender arms and lips of my bride— My love with eyes like the glowing star In the twilight sky apart.

Couldst't thou have seen Him standing there Ere the day was born, With the mild high look that was like a prayer, Thou wouldst't not marvel that I must leave all I hold most dear to answer the call Of that wonderful morn.

We were casting our nets in the sea, Andrew and I; Over the mountains a young wind came To kiss the waters of Galilee, And in the calm blue northern sky The gleaming crest of old Hermon rose Girt with its diadem of snows, And the east was smit with flame.

All our thoughts were simple and glad As toilers' should be; Andrew, that careless, dark-eyed lad Sang a song right merrily, Joyous of melody and word, As he worked with oar and net and sail, But I dreamed of the face that would blush and pale<sup>[129]</sup> When my step should be heard!



Then, as we lifted heedless eyes,We saw Him there,Where the silver waters curled on the shore;Behind Him the radiance of the skiesShining over His long, fair hairWreathed it as with a crown of light;And oh, the grandeur and the graceOf that pale and kingly face—We were weary and hungered with toil of the nightBut we thought not of it more!

He looked upon us with eyes that must seeFar in our hearts past mortal ken;All the delights of the world grew dim—Sweeter is seemed to suffer painAnd wander, outcast of men with Him,Than share in another's joy and gain;Spake He thus royally, "Come with me;I will make you fishers of men."

Mother of her who weeps at my sideCease to chide!Thou knowest not how that one word ringsEver by day and by night in my ear,I cannot hearken to olden thingsI cannot listen to hope or fear;Mother of her who is dearest of all,I must follow the Nazarene's call!

## THE OLD HOME CALLS

Come back to me, little dancing feet that roam the wide world o'er,I long for the lilt of your flying steps in my silent rooms once more;Come back to me, little voices gay with laughter and with song,Come back, little hearts beating high with hopes, I have missed and mourned you long.

My roses bloom in my garden walks all sweet and wet with the dew,My lights shine down on the long hill road the waning twilights through,The swallows flutter about my eaves as in the years of old,And close about me their steadfast arms the lispings pine trees fold.

But I weary for you at morn and eve, O, children of my love,Come back to me from your pilgrim ways, from the seas and plains ye rove,Come over the meadows and up the lane to my door set open wide,And sit ye down where the red light shines from my welcoming fireside.

I keep for you all your childhood dreams, your gladness and delights,<sup>[131]</sup>The joy of days in the sun and rain, the sleep of carefree nights,All the sweet faiths ye have lost and sought again shall be your own,Darlings, come to my empty heart—I am old and still and alone!

## GENIUS

A hundred generations have gone into its making,With all their love and tenderness,  
with all their dreams and tears;Their vanished joy and pleasure, their pain and their  
heart-breaking,Have colored this rare blossom of the long-unfruitful years.

Their victory and their laughter for this have strong men given,For this have sweet, dead  
women paid in patience which survives—That a great soul might bring the world, as  
from the gate of heaven,All that was rich and beautiful in those forgotten lives.

## LOVE'S PRAYER

Beloved, this the heart I offer theeIs purified from old idolatry,From outworn hopes,  
and from the lingering stainOf passion's dregs, by penitential pain.

Take thou it, then, and fill it up for meWith thine unstinted love, and it shall beAn  
earthy chalice that is made divineBy its red draught of sacramental wine.

## THE PRISONER

I lash and writhe against my prison bars,And watch with sullen eyes the gaping crowd  
...Give me my freedom and the burning stars,The hollow sky, and crags of moonlit  
cloud!

Once I might range across the trackless plain,And roar with joy, until the desert airAnd  
wide horizons echoed it amain:I feared no foe, for I was monarch there!

I saw my shadow on the parching sand,When the hot sun had kissed the mountain's  
rim;And when the moon rose o'er long wastes of land,I sought my prey by some still  
river's brim;

And with me my fierce love, my tawny mate,Meet mother of strong cubs, meet lion's  
bride ...We made our lair in regions desolate,The solitude of wildernesses wide.

They slew her ... and I watched the life-blood flowFrom her torn flank, and her proud  
eyes grow dim:I howled her dirge above her while the low,Red moon clomb up the  
black horizon's rim.

Me, they entrapped ... cowards! They did not dare<sup>[135]</sup>To fight, as brave men do,  
without disguise,And face my unleashed rage! The hidden snareWas their device to win  
an untamed prize.

I am a captive ... not for me the vast,White dome of sky above the blinding sand,The sweeping rapture of the desert blastAcross long ranges of untrodden land!

Yet still they fetter not my thought! In dreamsI, desert-born, tread the hot wastes once more,Quench my deep thirst in cool, untainted streams,And shake the darkness with my kingly roar!

## COMPANIONED

I walked to-day, but not alone,Adown a windy, sea-girt lea,For memory, spendthrift of her charm,Peopled the silent lands for me.

The faces of old comradeshipIn golden youth were round my way,And in the keening wind I heardThe songs of many an orient day.

And to me called, from out the pinesAnd woven grasses, voices dear,As if from elfin lips should fallThe mimicked tones of yesteryear.

Old laughter echoed o'er the leasAnd love-lipped dreams the past had kept,From wayside blooms like honeyed beesTo company my wanderings crept.

And so I walked, but not alone,Right glad companionship had I,On that gray meadow waste betweenDim-litten sea and winnowed sky.

## YOU

Only a long, low-lying laneThat follows to the misty sea,Across a bare and russet plainWhere wild winds whistle vagrantly;I know that many a fairer pathWith lure of song and bloom may woo,But oh! I love this lonely strathBecause it is so full of *you*.

Here we have walked in elder years,And here your truest memories wait,*This* spot is sacred to your tears,*That* to your laughter dedicate;Here, by this turn, you gave to meA gem of thought that glitters yet,This tawny slope is graciouslyBy a remembered smile beset.

Here once you lingered on an hourWhen stars were shining in the west,To gather one pale, scented flowerAnd place it smiling on your breast;And since that eve its fragrance blowsFor me across the grasses sere,Far sweeter than the latest rose,That faded bloom of yesteryear.

For me the sky, the sea, the wold,<sup>[138]</sup>Have beckoning visions wild and fair,  
The mystery of a tale untold,  
The grace of an unuttered prayer.  
Let others choose the fairer path  
That winds the dimpling valley through,  
I gladly seek this lonely strath  
Companioned by my dreams of you.

## UNRECORDED

I like to think of the many words  
The Master in his early days  
Must have spoken to them  
of Nazareth—Words not freighted with life and death,  
Piercing through soul and heart  
like swords.  
But gracious greeting and grateful phrase,  
The simple speech  
That plain folk utter each to each.

Ere over him too darkly lay  
The prophet shadow of Calvary,  
I think he talked in very truth  
With the innocent gayety of youth,  
Laughing upon some festal day,  
Gently, with sinless boyhood's glee.

I think if he had ever said  
To a mother apart,  
Cradling her baby's shining head,  
"Thy man-child is strong of limb and heart,"  
"She must have been from that gladsome day  
Thrilled with enduring pride  
always,  
Fearless of any future dread,  
Knowing the son upon her knee  
Worthy her pain and love would be.

Or if by the dusty wayside well,<sup>[140]</sup>  
From the glare and heat  
Of the burning noon  
a wayfarer sought  
A moment's rest where the palm shade fell,  
And he said to him, "The day is hot,  
And your road is rough for wandering feet,"  
Then I think on his way  
the pilgrim went  
As one who has shared in a sacrament,  
Feeling no longer on him press  
The burden of his weariness.

If he said to a maid, "The sunset lies  
Redly on Nazareth hills to-night,"  
Each sunset of her life would bring  
A benedictive memory  
Of his haunting face and holy eyes;  
Or if to a bridegroom thus in spring,  
"The wife of thy youth is fair and wise,"  
So would she ever have seemed to be  
In her husband's sight.

If he but bade a passing guest  
His meal to share,  
Would not the one so honored deem  
Himself of all most highly blessed,  
The food he ate heaven's manna rare?  
Or when he to a friend addressed  
A word of thanks for service done,  
Or homely, familiar favor,  
none  
Of richer recompense could dream.

No evangelist's golden pen<sup>[141]</sup>  
Wrote them for us—The words of the Master  
to those he might meet  
By the carpenter's bench or in Nazareth street—  
But in them I think there well might be—  
It is surely sweet to fancy thus—  
All of the benediction for men  
All of the tender humanity,  
That leaven the words of his later age  
On the holy page.

## WITH TEARS THEY BURIED YOU TO-DAY

With tears they buried you to-day, But well I knew no turf could hold  
Your gladness long beneath the mould, Or cramp your laughter in the clay;  
I smiled while others wept for you Because I *knew*.

And now you sit with me to-night Here in our old, accustomed place;  
Tender and mirthful is your face, Your eyes with starry joy are bright—  
Oh, you are merry as a song For love is strong!

They think of you as lying there Down in the churchyard grim and old;  
They think of you as mute and cold, A wan, white thing that once was fair,  
With dim, sealed eyes that never may Look on the day.

But love cannot be coffined so In clod and darkness; it must rise  
And seek its own in radiant guise, With immortality aglow,  
Making of death's triumphant sting A little thing.

Ay, we shall laugh at those who deem<sup>[143]</sup> Our hearts are sundered! Listen, sweet,  
The tripping of the wind's swift feet Along the by-ways of our dream,  
And hark the whisper of the rose Wilding that blows.

Oh, still you love those simple things, And still you love them more with me;  
The grave has won no victory; It could not clasp your shining wings,  
It could not keep you from my side, Dear and my bride!

## IN MEMORY OF "MAGGIE"

A pussy-cat who was the household pet for seventeen years.

Naught but a little cat, you say; Yet we remember her, A creature loving, loyal,  
kind, With merry, mellow purr; The faithful friend of many years,  
Shall we not give her meed of tears?

Sleek-suited in her velvet coat, White-breasted and bright-eyed,  
Feeling when she was praised and stroked A very human pride;  
A quiet nook was sure to please Where she might take her cushioned ease.

Little gray friend, we shall not feel Ashamed to grieve for you;  
Many we know of human-kind Are not so fond and true;  
Dear puss, in all the years to be We'll keep your memory loyally.

## REALIZATION

I smiled with skeptic mocking where they told me you were dead,  
You of the airy laughter and lightly twinkling feet;"They tell a dream that haunted a chill gray dawn," I said,  
"Death could not touch or claim a thing so vivid and so sweet!"

I looked upon you coffined amid your virgin flowers,  
But even that white silence could bring me no belief:"She lies in maiden sleep," I said, "and in the youngling hours  
Her sealed dark eyes will open to scorn our foolish grief."

But when I went at moonrise to our ancient trysting place ...And, oh, the wind was keening in the fir-boughs overhead!...And you came never to me with your little gypsy face,  
Your lips and hands of welcome, I knew that you were dead!

## THE GARDEN IN WINTER

Frosty-white and cold it lies  
Underneath the fretful skies;  
Snowflakes flutter where the red  
Banners of the poppies spread,  
And the drifts are wide and deep  
Where the lilies fell asleep.

But the sunsets o'er it throw  
Flame-like splendor, lucent glow,  
And the moonshine makes it gleam  
Like a wonderland of dream,  
And the sharp winds all the day  
Pipe and whistle shrilly gay.

Safe beneath the snowdrifts lie  
Rainbow buds of by-and-by;  
In the long, sweet days of spring  
Music of bluebells shall ring,  
And its faintly golden cup  
Many a primrose will hold up.

Though the winds are keen and chill  
Roses' hearts are beating still,  
And the garden tranquilly  
Dreams of happy hours to be—  
In the summer days of blue  
All its dreamings will come true.

## THE DIFFERENCE

When we were together, heart of my heart, on that unforgotten quest,  
With your tender arm about me thrown and your head upon my breast,  
There came a grief that was bitter and deep and straitly dwell with me,  
And I shunned it not, so sweet it was to suffer and be with thee.

And now when no more against mine own is beating thine eager heart,  
When thine eyes  
are turned from the glance of mine and our ways are far apart,  
A dear and long-sought  
joy has come my constant guest to be,  
And I love it not, so bitter it is, unfelt, unshared,  
by thee.

## THE POET

There was strength in him and the weak won freely from it,  
There was an infinite pity,  
and hard hearts grew soft thereby,  
There was truth so unshrinking and starry-  
shining,  
Men read clear by its light and learned to scorn a lie.

His were songs so full of a wholesome laughter  
Those whose courage was ashen found it  
once more aflame,  
His was a child-like faith and wandering feet were guided,  
His was a  
hope so joyous despair was put to shame.

His was the delicate insight and his the poignant vision  
Whereby the world might learn  
what wine-lipped roses know,  
What a drift of rain might lisp on a gray sea-dawning,  
Or a  
pale spring of the woodland babble low.

He builded a castle of dream and a palace of rainbow fancy,<sup>[149]</sup>  
And the starved souls of  
his fellows lived in them and grew glad;—And yet—there were those who mocked the  
gifts of his generous giving,  
And some—but he smiled and forgave them—who deemed  
him wholly mad!

## THE MOTHER

Here I lean over you, small son, sleeping  
Warm in my arms,  
And I con to my heart all  
your dew-fresh charms,  
As you lie close, close in my hungry hold ...  
Your hair like a  
miser's dream of gold,  
And the white rose of your face far fairer,  
Finer, and rarer  
Than all  
the flowers in the young year's keeping;  
Over lips half parted your low breath creeping  
Is  
sweeter than violets in April grasses;  
Though your eyes are fast shut I can see their  
blue,  
Splendid and soft as starshine in heaven,  
With all the joyance and wisdom  
given  
From the many souls who have stanchly striven  
Through the dead years to be  
strong and true.

Those fine little feet in my worn hands holden ...  
Where will they tread?  
Valleys of  
shadow or heights dawn-red?  
And those silken fingers, O, wee, white son,  
What valorous  
deeds shall by them be done  
In the future that yet so distant is seeming  
To my fond

dreaming?What words all so musical and goldenWith starry truth and poesy oldenShall those lips speak in the years on-coming?<sup>[151]</sup>O, child of mine, with waxen brow,Surely your words of that dim to-morrowRapture and power and grace must borrowFrom the poignant love and holy sorrowOf the heart that shrines and cradles you now!

Some bitter day you will love another,To her will bearLove-gifts and woo her ... then must I shareYou and your tenderness! Now you are mineFrom your feet to your hair so golden and fine,And your crumpled finger-tips ... mine completely,Wholly and sweetly;Mine with kisses deep to smother,No one so near to you now as your mother!Others may hear your words of beauty,But your precious silence is mine alone;Here in my arms I have enrolled you,Away from the grasping world I fold you,Flesh of my flesh and bone of my bone!

## TO ONE HATED

"Hate is only Love that has missed its way."

Had it been when I came to the valley where the paths parted asunder,Chance had led my feet to the way of love, not hate,I might have cherished you well, have been to you fond and faithful,Great as my hatred is, so might my love have been great.

Each cold word of mine might have been a kiss impassioned,Warm with the throb of my heart, thrilled with my pulse's leap,And every glance of scorn, lashing, pursuing, and stinging,As a look of tenderness would have been wondrous and deep.

Bitter our hatred is, old and strong and unchanging,Twined with the fibres of life, blent with body and soul,But as its bitterness, so might have been our love's sweetnessHad it not missed the way—strange missing and sad!—to its goal.

## WHILE THE FATES SLEEP

Come, let us to the sunways of the west,Hasten, while crystal dew the rose-cups fill,Let us dream dreams again in our blithe questO'er whispering wold and hill.Castles of air yon wimpling valleys keepWhere milk-white mist steals from the purpling sea,They shall be ours in the moon's wizardry,While the fates, wearied, sleep.

The viewless spirit of the wind will singIn the soft starshine by the reedy mere,The elfin harps of hemlock boughs will ringFitfully far and near;The fields will yield their trove of spice and musk,And balsam from the glens of pine will fall,Till twilight weaves its tangled shadows allIn one dim web of dusk.

Let us put tears and memories away,While the fates sleep time stops for revelry;Let us look, speak, and kiss as if no dayHas been or yet will be;Let us make friends with



laughter 'neath the moon,With music on the immemorial shore,Yea, let us dance as  
lovers danced of yore—The fates will waken soon!

## THE FAREWELL

He rides away with sword and spur,Garbed in his warlike blazonry,With gallant glance  
and smile for herUpon the dim-lit balcony.Her kiss upon his lips is warm,Upon his  
breast he wears her rose,From her fond arms to stress and stormOf many a bannered  
field he goes.

He dreams of danger, glory, strife,His voice is blithe, his hand is strong,He rides  
perchance to death from lifeAnd leaves his lady with a song;But her blue-brimmed eyes  
are dimWith her deep anguish standing there,Sending across the world with himThe  
dear, white guerdon of her prayer.

For her the lonely vigil waitsWhen ashen dawns come and go,Each bringing  
through the future's gatesIts presages of fear and woe;For her the watch with soul and  
heartGrown sick with dread, as women may,Yet keeping still her pain apartFrom the  
wan duties of the day.

'Tis hers to walk when sunsets yield<sup>[155]</sup>Their painted splendors to the skies,And dream  
on some far battlefieldPerchance alone, unwatched, he dies;'Tis hers to kneel in patient  
prayerWhen midnight stars keep sentinel,Lest the chill death-dews damp the hairUpon  
the brow she loves so well.

So stands she, white and sad and sweet,Upon the latticed balcony,From golden hair to  
slender feetNo lady is so fair as she;He loves her true, he holds her dear,But he must  
ride on dangerous quest,With gallant glance and smile of cheer,And her red rose upon  
his breast.

## THE OLD MAN'S GRAVE

Make it where the winds may sweepThrough the pine boughs soft and deep,And the  
murmur of the seaCome across the orient lea,And the falling raindrops singGently to his  
slumbering.

Make it where the meadows wideGreenly lie on every side,Harvest fields he reaped and  
trod,Westering slopes of clover sod,Orchard lands where bloom and blowTrees he  
planted long ago.

Make it where the starshine dim  
May be always close to him,  
And the sunrise glory  
spread  
Lavishly around his bed.  
And the dewy grasses creep  
Tenderly above his sleep.

Since these things to him were dear  
Through full many a well-spent year,  
It is surely  
meet their grace  
Should be on his resting-place,  
And the murmur of the sea  
Be his dirge  
eternally.

## **FOREVER**

### **I**

With you I shall ever be;  
Over land and sea  
My thoughts will companion you;  
With yours  
shall my laughter chime,  
And my step keep time  
In the dusk and dew  
With yours in  
blithesome rhyme;  
In all of your joy shall I rejoice,  
On my lips your sorrow shall find a  
voice,  
And when your tears in bitterness fall  
Mine shall mingle with them all;  
With you in  
waking and dream I shall be,  
In the place of shadow and memory,  
Under young  
springtime moons,  
And on harvest noons,  
And when the stars are withdrawn  
From the  
white pathway of the dawn.

### **II**

O, my friend, nothing shall ever part  
My soul from yours, yours from my heart!  
I am  
yours and you mine, in silence and in speech,  
Death will only seal us each to  
each.  
Through the darkness we shall fare with fearless jest,  
Starward we shall go on a  
joyous new quest;  
There be many worlds, as we shall prove,  
Many suns and systems, but  
only one love!

## **BY AN AUTUMN FIRE**

Now at our casement the wind is shrilling,  
Poignant and keen  
And all the great boughs of  
the pines between  
It is harping a lone and hungry strain  
To the eldritch weeping of the  
rain;  
And then to the wild, wet valley flying  
It is seeking, sighing,  
Something lost in the  
summer olden.  
When night was silver and day was golden;  
But out on the shore the  
waves are moaning  
With ancient and never fulfilled desire,  
And the spirits of all the  
empty spaces,  
Of all the dark and haunted places,  
With the rain and the wind on their  
death-white faces,  
Come to the lure of our leaping fire.

But we bar them out with this rose-red splendor  
From our blithe domain, And drown the  
whimper of wind and rain With undaunted laughter, echoing long,  
Cheery old tale and gay old song;  
Ours is the joyance of ripe fruition, Attained ambition.  
Ours is the treasure of tested loving, Friendship that needs no further proving;  
No more of springtime hopes, sweet and uncertain,<sup>[159]</sup>  
Here we have largess of summer in fee—Pile high the logs till  
the flame be leaping, At bay the chill of the autumn keeping,  
While pilgrim-wise, we may go a-reaping  
In the fairest meadow of memory!

***Freeditorial*** 