

A Book of Rhyme

Augusta Webster

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A Book of Rhyme

Augusta Webster

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POULAIN THE PRISONER.

I.

BEYOND his silent vault green springs went by,
The river flashed along its open way,
Blithe swallows flitted in their billowy play,
And the sweet lark went quivering up the sky.
With him was stillness and his heart's dumb cry
And darkness of the tomb through hopeless day,
Save that along the wall one single ray

POULAIN THE PRISONER.

Shifted, through jealous loop-holes, westerly.

One single ray: and where its light could fall
His rusty nail carved saints and angels there,
And warriors, and slim girls with braided hair,
And blossomy boughs, and birds athwart the air.
Rude work, but yet a world. And light for all
Was one slant ray upon a prison wall.

POULAIN THE PRISONER.

II.

One ray, and in its track hlie lived and wrought,
And in free wideness of the world, I know,
One said, "Fair sunshine, yet it serves not so,
It needs a tenderer when I shape my thought;"
And, "'Tis too brown and molten in the drought,"
And, "'Tis too wan a greyness in this snow,"
And would have toiled, but wearied and was woe,
While days stole past and had bequeathed him nought.

Maybe in Gisors, round the fortress mead
Gisors where now, when fair-time brings its press,
They seek the prisoner's tower to gaze and guess
And love the work he made in loneliness
One cursed the gloom, and died without a deed,
The while he carved where his one ray could lead.

POULAIN THE PRISONER.

III.

"Oh loneliness! oh darkness!" so we wail,
Crying to life to give we know not what,
The hope not come, the ecstasy forgot,
The things we should have had and, needing, fail,
Nor know what thing it was for which we ail,
And, like tired travellers to an unknown spot,
Pass listless, noting only "Yet 'tis not,"

POULAIN THE PRISONER.

And count the ended day an empty tale.

Ah me! to linger on in dim repose
And feel the numbness over hand and thought,
And feel the silence in the heart, that grows.
Ah me! to have forgot the hope we sought.
One ray of light, and a soul lived and wrought,
And on the prison walls a message rose.

A SONG OF A SPRING-TIME.

TOO rash, sweet birds, spring is not spring;
Sharp winds are fell in east and north;
Late blossoms die for peeping forth; Rains numb, frost blights;
Days are unsunned, storms tear the nights;
The tree-buds wilt before they swell.
Frosts in the buds, and frost-winds fell: And you, you sing.

But let no song be sweet in spring;
Spring is but hope for after-time,
And what is hope but spring-tide rime? But blights, but rain?
Spring wanes unsunned, and sunless wane
The hopes false spring-tide bore to die.
Spring's answer is the March wind's sigh: And you, you sing.

ONCE a sea-nymph loved a boy:
He and she they loved so well.
"Oh the foamy billow's joy!
Oh the rippling in the sun!
Oh the round waves, one by one, Swaying, swaying, swaying, To and fro.
Oh my pearl and coral cell, And the long weeds playing,
While the surges come and go, Come and go!"

Boy and nymph were hand in hand:
He and she they had much love.
"Oh the green and ripening land!
Oh the lime-scent in the trees!
Oh the langour of the breeze,

Wooing, wooing, wooing, Light and low!
Oh the twilight in my grove, And the cushats cooing;
While the brook steals soft and slow, Soft and slow."

Love, that heard them, laughed aloud, Took them to the side of him.
Was it land or leafy cloud?

A SONG OF A SPRING-TIME.

Was it billowy cloud or sea? 'Twas the home that eyes, kissed dim,
Look on as they'd have it be.

From *In a Day*, an unpublished Drama.

BELATED.

BLITHE summer blossom, born too late,
Wilt make my desert garden fair?
Lo Winter's hand is on the gate,
His breath is in the curdling air.

Still yesterweek, but yesterweek,
Thou hadst, unfolding in warm light,
Spread ripening to the crimson streak
And seed to make the next year bright.

But now there fall the latter rains,
The chills that brown the ferns are come;
Southward, above the shivering plains,
The eddying swallows hasten home.

Oh flower too frail, too late of birth,
There is no sun for such as thou:
Droop down upon the barren earth;
What boots it to have blossomed now?

SISTE VIATOR.

WHAT is it that is dead?
Somewhere there is a grave, and something lies
Cold in the ground, and stirs not for my sighs,
Nor songs that I can make, nor smiles from me,
Nor tenderest foolish words that I have said;
Something that was hushed, and will not be.

Did it go yesterday?
Or did it wane away with the old years?
There hath not been farewell, nor watchers' tears,
Nor hopes, nor vain reprieves, nor strife with death,
Nor lingering in a meted out delay;
None closed the eyes nor felt the latest breath.

But, be there joyous skies,
It is not in their sunshine; in the night
It is not in the silence, and the light

BELATED.

Of all the silver stars; the flowers asleep
Dream no more of it, nor their morning eyes
Betray the secrets it has bidden them keep.

Birds that go singing now
Forget it and leave sweetness meaningless;
The fitful nightingale, that feigns distress
To sing it all away, flows on by rote;
The seeking lark, in very heaven, I trow,
Shall find no memory to inform her note.

The voices of the shore
Chime not with it for burden; in the wood,
Where it has soul of the vast solitude,
It hath forsook the stillness; dawn and day
And the deep-thoughted dusk know it no more;
It is no more the freshness of the May.

Joy hath it not for heart;
Nor music for its second, subtler, tongue,
Sounding what music's self hath never sung;
Nor very Sorrow needs it help her weep.
Vanished from everywhere! what was a part
Of all and everywhere; lost into sleep!

What was it ere it went?
Whence had it birth? What is its name to call,
That gone unmissed has left a want in all?
Or shall I cry on Youth, in June-time still?
Or cry on Hope, who long since am content?
Or Love, who hold him ready at my will?

What is it that is dead?
Breath of a flower? sea-freshness on a wind?
Oh, dearest, what is that that we should find,
If you and I at length could win it back?
What have we lost and know not it hath fled?
Heart of my heart, could it be love we lack?

NOT LOVE.

I HAVE not yet I could have loved thee, sweet;
Nor know I wherefore, thou being all thou art,
The engrafted thought in me throve incomplete,

And grew to summer strength in every part
Of root and leaf, but hath not borne the flower.
Love hath refrained his fullness from my heart.

NOT LOVE.

I know no better beauty, none with power
To hold mine eyes through change and change as thine,
Like southern skies that alter with each hour,

And yet are changeless, and their calm divine
From light to light hath motionlessly passed,
With only different loveliness for sign.

I know no fairer nature, nor where, cast
On the clear mirror of thine own young truth,
The imaged things of Heaven lie plainer glassed;

Nor where more fit alike show tender ruth,
And anger for the right, and hopes aglow,
And joy and sighs of April–hearted youth.

But some day I, so wont to praise thee so
With unabashed warm words for all to hear,
Shall scarcely name another, speaking low.

Some day, methinks, and who can tell how near?
I may, to thee unchanged, be praising thee
With one not worthier but a world more dear;

With one I know not yet, who shall, maybe,
Be not so fair, be not in aught thy peer;
Who shall be all that thou art not to me.

THE FLOWER BY THE PATH.

A FLOWER was growing alone,
Then alone and for ever alone:Some one came by,
Saw the flower how fair it had grown,Chose it, plucked it to die.

And what is a flower alone,
Then alone and for ever alone,Come no one by?
Why should a flower be fair for its own?Choose it, pluck it to die.

THE OLDEST INHABITANT.

"**AND** when came I to this town?" did he say!
A question asked for the asking's sake,
Answered merely an answer to make,As stranger to stranger may;
Answered enough with "'Twas yesterday,"
And a talk of the journey travelled so fast.
Had I said, "Since I dwelt here first have passed
Hundreds of years away"!

Aye, and there be who, if they knew,
Would envy me, as a cripple must long,
Looking on limbs erect and strong,
To have his freedom given him too
And rise and reach to whither he would:
"What!" they would think, "Is the gift not good
Beyond all gifts for earth or for time?
Life, and no shadow of death o'er cast,
Life, and the joy of manhood's prime,
Life, and the lore of a boundless past,
Life, and still life to come and to last!" And I even, even now,
I know not what that spirit might be,
Whether of love or of hate to me,
That stood in the dusk on the mountain's brow,
Alone with the stars I had climbed to see nigh,
And smiled, and gave, and was no more there.
There was no trace broke the sky,
There was no breath stirred the air,
Nought from the heaven or the earth to tell
If it were well:
And how much surer to-day know I
Whether he meant me a boon or a curse,
Whether to wait or to die be worse?

Ah, how I joyed for so many years!
Death under my heel with his hindering fears,
And I the lord of my life for ever!
Leisure and labour limitless,
And always the joy of the earned success
Crowned with the joy of the new endeavour!
And I thought "I will make all wisdoms mine;"
And I thought "The world shall be glad of me."
Ah, how I joyed! for could I divine
What the fruit of immortal days must be?
But alas for the numbness of wont on all,
For the heart that has loved too often to prize,
For the eyes that have wept too often for tears,
For the listless feet and the careless ears,
For the brain that has learned that to learn is vain,

THE OLDEST INHABITANT.

For forgotten joy and forgotten pain,
For the life too frequent for memories!
And I taste no joy because it will pall,
And I watch no grace because it will wane,
And I seek no good for it will not remain,
And I knit no tie because it will sever.

If I were not alone: if the gift were shared
With but some one soul in the world beside,
Some one for whom I might have cared,
Who would not so soon have grown old and died.
But ever and ever to build all anew,
And ever and ever to see all decay;
To fashion my life as the others do
And have my place among fellow-men,
To sit content in my home and then
To have lived, and the rest has faded away:
There are the graves, and I part of the past,
Forgotten with them whom I outlast.
Let it be; 'tis a foolish game,
The game that children play on the beach,
With its ending always the same,
Building amain till the tide-waves reach
And the sands will be bare to build on to-morrow. Let it be; for what is the worth?
Long since I wearied of saying good-bye:
And what or whom should I cherish on earth
Where I go as might one from some world on high
Unmeet for the short-lived pleasure or sorrow? Only the men who look to die
Can have or hope in a world where death reigns:
Do I pity that slight ephemeral fly,
Whirling and resting there in the sun,
Because his day will be so soon done?
All remains while his day remains;
He will not have known that a rosebud wanes.
How if he lived for ever, as I?

Truly 'tis even so,
To die betimes is scarcely to know
How death is around us everywhere.
But ever for me the birth and blow
Are but a part of decay that is there, And the living come but to go:
Till at length I am one who, drawing aside,
Where the crowd sweeps by in one jostling race,
Stands unstirred in his lonely place
And leaves off noting face after face;
I am one who wait stranded, alone, by the tide
Of Life, which has also Death for name
Because for the world the two are the same,
The tide that goes winding back whence it came, Bearing all thither save me;
And I dream and I scarcely seem to be,

And I know no count of time as it flies,
And the river passes, passes, passes,
Smooth and for ever, and changelessly glasses
Summers and winters and changing skies, Passes, and passes, and passes,
And nothing abides and nothing is strange;
And oh for rest to my languid eyes
Weary of change that is never change!

Ah! men might marvel to hear me say
The world of my youth is the world of to-day;
Here, in this very home of my birth,
How they would answer from some old book,
"Thus and thus was the past; now look,
Are we as they of the older earth,
We and our ways, and the fields we plough?"
And the first-met gossip who knows but Now
Counts chances a score in half a year,
Tells me this was that, and there was here,
A hall is burnt, a new market is made,
A railway runs where the school-boys played,
He is married, and he is dead,
And he so rich goes begging his bread;
"Tis a world of change," he will soberly sigh
For point to his tales: why, and so say I;
Chances and changes enough, I deem,
In a world that goes on like a shifting dream;
But, oh, the long sameness! Ebb and flow:
Billows that come, and billows that go!
Nothing is but will drift away, Nothing was but will come:
Future finds Past, old becomes new;
What men have done that they will do.
'Tis but the counting coins of to-day To measure the former sum, But the naming laterwise
Things and thoughts of an ancient guise:
And what change for me who see life as some star,
The expanses of earth in one from afar?
Hill grows valley and valley grows hills
'Tis a world of hills and valleys still.

Did I dream I could have been wearied thus,
With truth and with wisdoms left to seek?
Alas, my learners who heard me speak
"Is not to learn enough for us?
Is not to strive a strength for the soul,
Though she never gained one foot to the goal?"
If you could waken now where you lie,
You and your graves forgotten as I
In our town that would tell our names for its praise;
If you could hear, and your pitying gaze
Could know the teacher who made you bold!

Nay, sleep on unconscious there in the mould:
 You died with a joy as of something gained,
Something given to the world you left;
I laboured on to be ever bereft
 Of the skill achieved, of the science attained.
For, lo, the end of all learning is this,
Only to know one has learned amiss,
 Only to know that the art or the lore
 With its rules and its axioms was nothing more
Than a working guess that did for the while;
 Only to know that sage after sage
 Has passed on a dream from age to age,
Till the world awakes, and the children smile
 At the thoughts of the foolish grown-men of old.
Aye, sleep, ye who counted your lives well spent,
Sleep, ye who dreamed; ye are content
 Thou who hadst gained the secret of gold,
Save that one last fusion left me to find;
 Thou who hadst tracked the sun's path through the air;
 Thou with thy skill of the stars; thou there
In the chapel vault, with thy name still shown
To sauntering strangers, cut on the stone,
With thy chronicle of the world left behind;
 Thou who hadst learned and hadst lighted on cures
 For every ill man's body endures,
And leftst me thy leechcrafts for legacy;
 Thou; and thou; and thou; oh, poor fools,
Who dreamed ye had found the thing ye sought,
Sleep, sleep and know not. All goes by,
 Lores, and crafts, and beliefs, and schools;
Wrought is unravelled; thought is new-thought;
Till meseems that truth's very self must die,
 And be born again unto younger rules.

Whereto is life for me? And I would
 I had now departed and knew the end.
Death 'tis a way even I might wend But were it evil or good?
Oh, had it been but a word to speak,
 But a blow at once, or a venomous draught,
 Long since I had said, or struck, or quaffed: But all a seven days' week!

Each dawn and each dusk of a seven days' week,
To will it unwavering: all a week! Vain, vain, o'er and o'er,
 A thousand times and a thousand yet:
Lo, life with some one poor hope once more,
 Some one poor grace worth a while for regret;
Lo, death grown awful with dread and doubt.
 And oh, feeble will, and oh, sluggish heart,
 Almost too weary to long to depart!

Yet, dusk is at hand, see, the sunset fades out:
And here where was home life is loneliest to bear,
'Twere a goodly time to renew the test;
And I will it Nay, is it worth the care?
'Tis but beginning a strife and unrest.
Seven days for life to lure back her thrall.
Oh, if I knew the end! knew all!
But, what if even life were the best?
What, if death were a new despair?

THE WIND'S TIDINGS IN AUGUST 1870.

"OH voice of summer winds among the trees,
What soft news art thou bringing to us here?
Dost thou come whispering of hushed scenes like these,
Languid in sunlight, while the drowsy deer
Couch placidly at rest, and from the brake
The song of fearless wild birds rings out clear,
And groves and meadows and this baby lake
Are dreaming to thy dreaming lullaby?
Art telling of hushed scenes like these? Awake,
Answer, sweet dying wind, and do not die."

And the voice of the faint winds, dying away, Answered me, "Nay."

"Oh voice of summer winds, then art thou come
From fluttering in the tangles of the vines
Beside the blue blue seas, in the far home
Of the dim olives and the dusky pines,
And from the cypress bosks, and where the air
Grows lush and heavy 'twixt the dark starred lines
Of orange hedge a-bloom, and the wide glare
Floods soft round hills with southern perfect day?
Answer again, low voice, hast thou been there?
Art telling of the dreamland far away?"

And the voice of the winds sighed over my head, "Nay, nay," it said.

"Oh sweet low voice of winds, whose wavering flights
Smoothly, like flickering swallows, come and go,
What, is thy tale of where the ceaseless heights
Rest white and cloudlike in their virgin snow?
Hast thou been wandering round the scented firs,
And where the dauntless shrub-flowers bud and blow
Against the pale chill sea that never stirs,

And where the midway foam hangs o'er the cleft?
Speak, slumbrous voice, to slumbrous listeners,
Art telling us of these that thou hast left?"

And the voice of the dying winds breathed low, "Nay, nay; not so."

"Oh voice of dying winds, make sweet reply,
Whence hast thou come? What does thy whisper say?
Answer, oh dying voice, and do not die."
It whispered in a hush, "The dead men lay
Fallen together like the sickled grain;
Onward still dashed the whirlwind and the fray;
The thunders and the tramlings shook the plain;
There was the crash and clash of host to host,
Throes, and the blood-pools widening, death and pain."
And waning in a murmur it was lost.

NO NEWS FROM THE WAR.

I. AT THE CAMP.

"**IS** she sitting in the meadow
Where the brook leaps to the mill,
Leaning low against the poplar,
Dreamily and still?"

Now, with joined hands, grave, now smiling,
Gathering now and then
From her lap her woodland darlings,
Pale sweet cyclamen?

Sitting as she sat that evening,
Trying to feel that sweet same
Who was waiting me and knew not,
Feel as when I came?

Feel again the strange shy newness,
The betrothing one first kiss?
Oh, my own, you are remembering
In an hour like this."

II. IN THE MEADOW.

"**HERE**, here it was he made me promise him;
He stood beneath that branch; here was his seat,
Just where the bole's shade makes the sunlights dim,
Beside me, at my feet.

Ah, since, so many times we have sat here:
And who can tell when that shall be again?
My love! my love! But what have I to fear?
Could prayers like mine be vain?

He will not fall, my hero; he will come
Bringing ripe honours more to honour me;
He will come scatheless back, and tell his home
He helped to keep it free.

Oh, love! I was so proud of you before,
How can I be so much much prouder now?
And how can I grow prouder more and more?
Ah! but my heart knows how."

III. FROM A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT'S LETTER.

* * * * *

"**AND** still no news to matter. Fights each day;
Hundreds of killed and wounded; but we wait
This great impending battle which, they say,
Will be more terrible even than the late.

It must come soon: to-morrow it might be.
Now, since I can tell nothing, let me give
An incident, merely to make you see
How near to death all of us here must live.

This morning, on my chosen slope, from whence
My watch, I thought, was safe, I chanced to see
A young and stalwart captain leap a fence
To pluck a cyclamen, not far from me,

NO NEWS FROM THE WAR.

Which made me note his face: this afternoon
On that same slope I saw his body lie
Among a dozen. Well, you may look soon
For tidings of some moment. Now, good-bye."

THE SWALLOWS.

AH! swallows, is it so?
Did loving lingering summer, whose slow pace
 Tarried among late blossoms, loth to go,
Gather the darkening cloud-wraps round her face
And weep herself away in last week's rain?
Can no new sunlight waken her again?"Yes," one pale rose a-blow
Has answered from the trellised lane;
 The flickering swallows answer "No."

From out the dim grey sky
The arrowy swarm breaks forth and specks the air,
 While, one by one, birds wheel and float and fly,
And now are gone, then suddenly are there;
Till lo, the heavens are empty of them all.
Oh, fly, fly south, from leaves that fade and fall,From shivering flowers that die;
Free swallows, fly from winter's thrall,
 Ye who can give the gloom good-bye.

But what for us who stay
To hear the winds and watch the boughs grow black,
 And in the soddened mornings, day by day,
Count what lost sweets bestrew the nightly track
Of frost-foot winter trampling towards his throne?
Swallows, who have the sunlight for your own,Fly on your sunward way;
For you has January buds new blown,
 For us the snows and gloom and grey.

On, on, beyond our reach,
Swallows, with but your longing for a guide:
 Let the hills rise, let the waves tear the beach,
Ye will not balk your course nor turn aside,
But find the palms and twitter in the sun.
And well for them whose eager wings have wonThe longed for goal of flight;
But what of them in twilights dun
 Who long, but have no wings for flight?

THE BROOK RHINE.

SMALL current of the wilds afar from men,
 Changing and sudden as a baby's mood;
 Now a green babbling rivulet in the wood,
Now loitering broad and shallow through the glen,

Or threading 'mid the naked shoals, and then
 Brattling against the stones, half mist, half flood,
 Between the mountains where the storm—clouds brood;
And each change but to wake or sleep again;
 Pass on, young stream, the world has need of thee;
Far hence a mighty river on its breast
 Bears the deep—laden vessels to the sea;
Far hence wide waters feed the vines and corn.
Pass on, small stream, to so great purpose born,
 On to the distant toil, the distant rest.

TO—DAY.

OH God, where hast thou hidden Truth? Oh Truth, Where is the road to God?
Lo, we, that should be old, have learned our youth;
 We are not manly ripe; we have not dower
Of all the wisdom that a world can gain
In the centuries of work, peace, war, hope, pain;
 We are not strong with all the gathered power
From age to age left our inheritance;
We stand not near the goal, there by the advance
 Of step on step, through mire and blood and tears, Forgotten fathers trod;
We are new in a new world; where shall we know, Where in the ancient years,
Sign—marks to guide us on the way we go?

We are new in a new world. As children learn Life by surprise and doubt,
So life must learn itself at each return
 Of the upsoaring Phoenix birth from sleep
Among the ashes of an ended Past.
In its own strength, and singly from the last,
 Each age's long To—day begins to creep
In baby paces whitherward it goes.
And from too far with too unsure a close,
 Like void sonorous echoes in the hill, Yesterday's voice rings out,
So gives the questioning turmoil of our cries Answer such as we will.
Has Past writ Present in its histories?

Our fathers saw, we see not with their eyes, Knew, and we learned in vain:
We seek old wisdoms in a novel wise;
 We toil beginners of the things that are;
Like lessons which we early get by rote,
Heedless of meaning in the words we quote,
 And by and by, the schoolroom left afar,
Discern at last their sense or find a new,
The just, the unjust, the counterfeit, the true,
 We said from books upon our fathers' shelves, All must be learned again:
We, children—like, still wondering as we grow,
 Change, and become ourselves,

TO—DAY.

And only as ourselves can henceforth know.

How shall we know? what must we do? what be? Answer us, Life, instead:

Past speaks us a dead tongue, we look to thee

And know thee teacher yet a tardy one;

For now we labour, fearing to what end;

We journey, dimly seeing where we tend;

We do, and question was it rightly done;

Doubt and distrust of self beside us stand;

And who will find us Truth? where is her hand

To guide us on or back by the round path, Leading but whence it led,

She travels on from God to reach him by? What is the name she hath

To find her by to-day? Life, make reply.

JOY that's half too keen, and true, Makes us tears.

Oh! the sweetness of the tears!

If such joy at hand appears,

Snatch it, give thine all for it;

Joy that is so exquisite, Lost, comes not new.

One blossom for a hundred years.

Grief that's fond and dies not soon Makes delight.

Oh! the pain of the delight!

If thy grief be love's aright,

Tend it close and let it grow:

Grief so tender not to know Loses Love's boon.

Sweet Philomel sings all the night.

From *In a Day*, an unpublished Drama.

MY LOSS.

IN the world was one green nook I knew,

Full of roses, roses red and white,

Reddest roses summer ever grew,

Whitest roses ever pearled with dew;

And their sweetness was beyond delight, Was all love's delight.

Wheresoever in the world I went,

Roses were; for in my heart I took

Blow and blossom and bewildering scent;

Roses never with the summer spent,

Roses always ripening in that nook, Love's far summer nook.

In the world a saddened plot I know

MY LOSS.

Blackening in this chill and misty air,
Set with shivering bushes in a row,
One by one the last leaves letting go:
Wheresoe'er I turn I shall be there, Always sighing there.

Ah, my folly! Ah, my loss, my pain!
Dead, my roses that can blow no more!
Wherefore looked I on our nook again?
Wherefore went I after autumn's rain,
Where the summer roses bloomed before, Bloomed so sweet before?

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

HAD I a heart till that day? Who knows, who knows?
Ere the leaf burst upwards can any say
"Here is a green thing hidden away
In the lingering new year snows"?

Could I have loved one not her? Can I tell, can I tell?
When northern seas feel their life, and stir
In their one day's dawn, can they judge and aver
"Some other dawn were as well"?

Could I, she lost, love again? May be, may be.
The dead man moulders through sun and rain,
While a soul forgets his joy and his pain;
Yet that soul which forgets is still he.

ST. AMÉ.

A SUNNY glade below the bridge;
Clear shadows branching through a stream;
A hillock purple to the ridge
With velvet thyme; and the far gleam
Of white clouds in a dream,
Floating above the dusky lines
Of silent mountains black with pines.

An idle hour to lose away,
To question not, nor muse, nor know:
The ripples ripple where they may
From brown into the amber glow; The moments drift and go.
And what is life, and toil, and fret?
We only breathe, and we forget.

So in their summer fields might rest
 Disprisoned shades that henceforth share
The careless strength of souls possessed
 By but the moment that is there, The strength which children wear;
Might so be stilled from thought or speech,
Passed into calm beyond their reach.

And lo, the dragon-fly's locked wings
 Upon the leaf my breath could stir;
And on my sleeve undoubting springs
 A merry-minded grasshopper; And, see, behind that fir,
A rat across our brook has come,
And rustles past us to his home.

And the sweet air is hushed with sound
 More tranceful than low lullabies,
The plashings of the waters drowned
 In babble of small insect cries And surge of leafy sighs.
We hear, not heed: enough for us
Resting to feel that rest is thus.

Not now. Oh vacant hour long past,
 Wherefore to-day live back in thee?
Ill hour that grew no growth to last,
 Flower without seed, unfruitful tree, Hast thou still right to be?
Fade out forgotten, ghost of nought,
What worth or wisdom hast thou brought?

Nay, seedless, fruitless hour, not so;
 Fade not, but hide from sterner looks.
We have a secret we two know,
 The secret of the woods, the brooks, Of wild flowers in their nooks,
Of all glad growing things' delight
That live and never long for night:

A secret hidden from thought and will,
 And only given to those who cease
From toil and pondering and are still,
 The secret of that soulless peace, The soul's joy and release,
To sit and see the sun and smile
Only because we live the while.

TOO soon so fair, fair lilies;
To bloom is then to wane;

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

The folded bud has still
To-morrow at its will;
Blown flowers can never blow again.

Too soon so bright, bright noontide;
The sun that now is high
Will henceforth only sink
Towards the western brink;
Day that's at prime begins to die.

Too soon so rich, ripe summer,
For autumn tracks thee fast;
Lo, death-marks on the leaf!
Sweet summer, and my grief;
For summer come is summer past.

Too soon, too soon, lost summer;
Some hours and thou art o'er.
Ah! death is part of birth:
Summer leaves not the earth,
But last year's summer lives no more.

From *Yu-Pe-Ya's Lute*.

HER MEMORIES.

NOT by her grave: thither I bid them take
Fresh garlands of the flowers that pleased her best,
And lay them by the headstone, for my sake,
My token and remembrance with the rest:
But here, where in the brightening of the west
I see her mountains grow into the sky,
Her native world, and mine because of her,
Here, where that low sigh of the pinewood's stir,
That was her dearest music, fills all sound, I am with her;
And always, always, past comes passing by,
Lost in her grave, but here as if half found.

Not by her grave: it is too still, too cold,
And save my loss is nothing with me there.
What memories have I there of her of old?
They came not there, the dear lost days that were;
Not **she** lies there, but only my despair;
Not **she**, but death and all my loneliness.
What memories save all memories love must shun?
I would not think of death and her as one;

HER MEMORIES.

She shall be only life-ful in my mind, With life's self one;
A name of glad remindings and old bliss,
So something of her presence left behind.

Not by her grave: some day will I return,
When sorrow keeps its wont unvexed by place,
And, sitting on the turf beside, will learn
To call before me there her waking face,
Not that white face that slept and took no trace
Of change because I kissed it, nor for tears.
Some day; for now I should forget her so,
Lose the fair happy woman and but know
The coldness and the silence when she died, Lose her all so,
My love that was my life of all for years.
She loved this music when the pinewoods sighed.

WAITING.

A **YOUNG** fair girl among her flowers,
And, as to blossoms born in May,
Her morrows still brought sunnier hours
Than made up sunny yesterday.
She did but wait: "Hope is so sweet;
We love so well, my love and I;
The hours that come, the hours that fleet,
End all in one glad by and by."

A pale worn woman, scarcely sad,
But tired, like those who, too long pent,
Forget the joy they have not had
Of the free winds, and droop content.
She did but wait: "Ah, no, to me
The silent hope is never dead;
What are the days that are to be
But part of the dear days long fled?"

He came: "The wealth we need is mine;
And now?" "Alas!" she said, "in vain.
The love I love is noway thine,
I wait who never comes again.
Oh, for my lover of old days,
We two from all the world apart!
I must go lone on earth's bleak ways,
He is not now save in my heart."

He wed another. She, alone,

WAITING.

Patient and weary, toiled for bread.
And bygone still was never gone,
The silent hope was never dead.
She did but wait: "I have the past;
The new days live the old days o'er,
And there abides until the last
The by and by that was before."

SEEDS with wings, between earth and skyFluttering, flying;
Seeds of a lily with blood-red core
Breathing of myrrh and of giroflore:
Where winds drop them there must they lie,Living or dying.

Some to the garden, some to the wall,Fluttering, falling;
Some to the river, some to earth:
Those that reach the right soil get birth;
None of the rest have lived at all. Whose voice is calling:

"Here is soil for winged seeds that near,Fluttering, fearing,
Where they shall root and burgeon and spread.
Lacking the heart-room the song lies dead:
Half is the song that reaches the ear,Half is the hearing "?

From *Yu-Pe-Ya's Lute*.

IN AFTER YEARS.

LOVE is dying. Why then, let it die.
Trample it down, that it die more fast.
What is a rose that has lost its bloom?
What is a fruit with its freshness past?
And where is the worth of the twilight gloom?
Let the night come when the day has gone by:Let the dying die.

Leave your useless smiles and your tears,
Weepings and woings are, oh, so vain!
Sunlights and rains bid the blossoms blow,
But waken no waning blossom again.
Nay, but say "It was always so;
Love was not love in the other years,There is nought for tears."

Say "We lose what was never ours,
Lo, we were fooled by a fond deceit;
Because we chanced to be side by side,
Because we were young and love is sweet,

IN AFTER YEARS.

Love seemed there: but could love have died?
When has decay touched immortal hours? Love was never ours."

Ah, my heart, is it true? is it true?
Did all longings and fears mean no more?
Whispers and vows and the gladness mean this?
What, we grow wiser when years are o'er,
And weary in soul of a mimic bliss!
Did we but dream, hand in hand, we two? Must it needs be true?

THE OLD LOVE.

I.

YOU love me, only me. Do I not know?
If I were gone your life would be no more
Than his who, hungering on a rocky shore,
Shipwrecked, alone, observes the ebb and flow
Of hopeless ocean widening forth below,
And is remembering all that was before.
Dear, I believe it, at your strong heart's core
I am the life; no need to tell me so.
And yet Ah husband, though I be more fair,
More worth your love, and, though you loved her not,
(Else must you have some different, deeper, name
For loving me) dimly I seem aware,
As though you conned old stories long forgot,
Those days are with you hers before I came.

THE OLD LOVE.

II.

THE mountain traveller, joyous on his way,
Looks on the vale he left and calls it fair,
Then counts with pride how far he is from there,
And still ascends. And, when my fancies stray,
Pleased with light memories of a by-gone day,
I would not have again the things that were.
I take their thought like fragrance in the air
Of flowers I gathered in my childish play.

THE OLD LOVE.

And thou, my very soul, can it touch thee
If I remember her or I forget?
Does the sun ask if the white stars be set?
Yes, I recall, shall many times, maybe,
Recall the dear old boyish days again,
The dear old boyish passion. Love, what then?

DEAREST, this one day we own,
Stolen from the crowd and press,
Let it be sweet silence's.
We two, heart in heart, alone; Any speech were less.

We are weary, even thus,
Talk might turn to discontent
Else be practised merriment:
Earth and sky will speak for us Nearer as we meant.

We two in the stillness, dear,
Fair dreams come without our quest;
Not to talk of life is best.
Ah, our holiday is here, Let it all be rest.

From *Disguises*.

HARK the sky-lark in the cloud,
Hark the cricket in the grass,
Trilling blitheness clear and loud,
Chirping glee to all who pass.
Oh, the merry summer lay!
Earth and sky keep holiday.

Hear the leaves that kiss the air,
Hear the laughter of the bees:
Who remembers winter care
In the shining days like these?
Oh, the merry lay of June!
All our hearts are glad in tune.

From *Disguises*.

A COARSE MORNING.

OH the yellow boisterous sea,
The surging, chafing, murderous sea!
And the wind-gusts hurtle the torn clouds by,

A COARSE MORNING.

On to the south through a shuddering sky,
And the bare black ships scud aloof from the land.
 'Tis as like the day as can be,
When the ship came in sight that came never to strand,
The ship that was blown on the sunken sand
 And he coming back to me!

Oh the great white snake of foam,
The coiling, writhing, snake of white foam,
Hissing and huddering out in the bay,
Over the banks where the wrecked ship lay,
Over the sands where the dead may lie deep!
 There are some in the churchyard loam,
Some two or three the sea flung to our keep:
Their mothers can sit by a grave to weep,
 But **my** son never came home.

Never, never, living or dead
Oh, never, Willie, living or dead,
Could you keep your word and come back to me!
Oh, my darling! As like this day as can be,
When the ship came in sight that came never to strand,
 When the ship came rounding the head,
Close to the haven and close to the sand.
And their graves are long green that were tossed to land.
 Ah, "Sure to come back," he said!

NI-CHAN'S DIRGE FOR YEN-OEY.

SO soon asleep! Now must the coming years
 Weep ignorantly their loss they cannot know,
And life miss ever what has never been
We weep to-day, let theirs be sadder tears
Who have not seen thee near as we have seen,
 Who shall but learn a hope died long ago.
Alas for flowers untimely winds have broken,
 That should have scattered seed of following flowers!
Alas for ruin of unbuilt towers!
Alas for ripening words that die unspoken!
 But let them weep with sadder tears than ours
 Who shall but learn a hope died long ago, A world's hope long ago.

From *Yu-Pe-Ya's Lute*.

YU-PE-YA'S DIRGE FOR TSE-KY.

DEAD, my beloved! This small purple weed
That grows upon thy grave shall have its time
To ripen and to wane, to bloom and seed;
But thou, strong doer, mightst not wait thy deed,
But thou, oh noblest, mightst not wait thy meed:
Dead in thy prime!

Gone, my beloved! I that held thine hand
Left sudden in a joyless waste alone!
I tossing on life's sea, and thou to stand
Hidden in the shadows of the silent strand.
Thou seeing me from where I may not land!
Gone from me, gone!

Sleep well: but what for me who still must wake?
Dream joys: but what for me who can but weep?
Oh darkened days where never dawn shall break!
Oh weary troth-plight I with sorrow make!
But thou, rest peaceful; care not for my sake.
Dear, sleep thy sleep.

"**NEWS** to the king, good news for all,"
The corn is trodden, the river runs red.
"News of the battle," the heralds call,
"We have won the field; we have taken the town;
We have beaten the rebels and crushed them down."
And the dying lie with the dead.

"Who was my bravest?" quoth the king,
The corn is trodden, the river runs red.
"Whom shall I honour for this great thing?"
"Threescore were best, where none were worst;
But Walter Wendulph was aye the first."
And the dying lie with the dead.

"What of my husband?" quoth the bride,
The corn is trodden, the river runs red.
"Comes he to-morrow; how long will he bide?"
"Put off thy bridegear, busk thee in black;
Walter Wendulph will never come back."
And the dying lie with the dead.

From *The Auspicious Day*.

YU-PE-YA'S DIRGE FOR TSE-KY.

AUTUMN WARNINGS.

SOFT voices of the woods, that make
The summer air a harmony,
Winged whispers through the leaves where wake
Long wind-wafts dying in a sigh,
Replies of birds from brake to brake,
Plash of the runnel on its stones,
Soft voices, sweet for summer's sake,
There is a word in all your tones,
A word that not till now ye spake, "Goodbye, goodbye."

And yet, see, dearest, overhead
The branches bar a sultry sky,
No earliest fleck of tanned or red
Mid all the leafage far and nigh,
And, with their serried curves outspread,
The fresh green fern-fronds know no frost.
Nought gone; but still some grace is dead:
Nought changed; but still some hope is lost:
Listen, and every voice has said "Goodbye, goodbye."

We shall not see the summer wane,
But, with a start of memory,
When the long chills have come again,
Awake and know that it did die:
So slowest loss is sudden pain;
We have not known till all is o'er;
'Tis summer till the autumn's rain.
Yet has there stolen long before
That sadness through some sweetest strain "Goodbye, goodbye."

Ah, love, hear all the thought that grew;
Mock it away; I'll mock it, I:
Summer, and I sit here with you,
Your great eyes smiling tenderly,
Your silence wooing me to woo,
A meaning in your lightest word
As though love made it something new
And what if all the while I heard
The autumn whisper sighing through "Goodbye, goodbye"?

WHERE found Love his yesterday?
When is Love's to-morrow? say.
Love has only now.
We can swear it, we who stand

AUTUMN WARNINGS.

In Love's present, hand in hand,
Thou and I, dear, I and thou.

By and by and Long ago;

Last month's buds, next winter's snow;
Love has only now.
Do we wot of rathe or sere
In Love's boundless summer year,
Thou and I, dear, I and thou?

Suns that rose and suns to set;

Gone for ever and Not yet;

Love has always now.
Do we count by dawn and night,
Dwelling in Love's perfect light,
Thou and I, dear, I and thou?

From *The Auspicious Day*.

BETROTHED.

I DID not think to love her. As we go
We pluck a hedge-rose blushing in its sheath,
Fresh, and at hand; and not the less we know
That where rich garden blossoms take the breath
With eddying sweets and wear a thousand hues
We shall be fain to linger and to choose. And who indeed
Would pass the garden by to choose the weed,
The little wayside rose we hold and lose?

Fair; and so loving. With the young surprise
Of children who still newly understand
Their right and wrong out of their mother's eyes,
She watches for my thought. Her trustful hand
Creeps into mine and rests. Ah, little one,
Hadst thou loved less I had not been undone; My wayside rose.
I love thee, sweet: some hopes have found their close
Ere yet their aim; some joys ceased unbegun.

I had not thought to love her. She is fair;
But I had pictured eyes which, meeting mine,
Should kindle something in me that was there
But waited Her arousing; I divine
A love, that was to be, past hence unborn,
The sun o'erclouded ere it rose at morn. I love thee, yes:
Let hopes be dead which thou couldst never guess.

BETROTHED.

Sweet, could I let thy blossom drop unworn?

NOT TO BE.

THE rose said "Let but this long rain be past,
And I shall feel my sweetness in the sun
And pour its fullness into life at last." But when the rain was done,
But when dawn sparkled through unclouded air, She was not there.

The lark said "Let but winter be away,
And blossoms come, and light, and I will soar,
And lose the earth, and be the voice of day." But when the snows were o'er,
But when spring broke in blueness overhead, The lark was dead.

And myriad roses made the garden glow,
And skylarks carolled all the summer long
What lack of birds to sing and flowers to blow? Yet, ah, lost scent, lost song!
Poor empty rose, poor lark that never trilled! Dead unfulfilled!

A BIRD and flower upon the tree, Sweet peony and oriole, Each of them a perfect soul, Song and
sweetness manifest The bird and flower we love the best
Side by side on the tall tree.

"Flower who art sunlight and fire, flower who art perfume and joy, Sweetest of sweet,
Ah for the gift withheld! Ah for the given gift's alloy!
Why must thy spirit exhale only in beauty and breath?
Ah for the voice thou hast not! I by thy side on the tree,
Telling the world of love, pain, and all raptures that be,
Raptures of laughter and life, raptures of tears and death,
Singing my heart to heaven, singing to earth at my feet; Silence in thee."

"Bird who art dew-drops and flame, bird who art rapture and song, Sweetest of sweet,
Lo there's a voice part mine, songs that to me too belong,
Songs that grew of my growth, voice that has breathed my breath.
Bird that while I sit mute singest beside on the tree,
Hast thou ever a song taking no perfume of me?
Give forth my sweetness in song; bird, thou art singing for both,
Singing our hearts to heaven, singing to earth at our feet; My voice in thee."

On the tree-top side by side, Sweet oriole and peony; Music rings through earth and sky, Sweet and
sweet in sweetness lost The flower and bird we love the most,
On the tree-top side by side.

From *Yu-Pe-Ya's Lute*.

NOT TO BE.

ONCE.

I SET a lily long ago;
I watched it whiten in the sun;
I loved it well, I had but one.
Then summer–time was done,
The wind came and the rain, My lily bent, lay low.
Only the night–time sees my pain Alas, my lily long ago!

I had a rose–tree born in May;
I watched it burgeon and grow red,
I breathed the perfume that it shed.
Then summer–time had sped,
The frost came with its sleep, My rose–tree died away.
Only the silence hears me weep Alas, lost rose–tree! lost, lost May!

The garden's lily blows once more;
The buried rose will wake and climb;
There is no thought of rain and rime
After, next summer–time.
But the heart's blooms are weak; Once dead for ever o'er.
Not night, not silence knows me seek My joy that waned and blooms no more.

WHILE the woods were green,
"Oh I" she sang, "my heart is new,
Leaping, longing, in my breast:
Let him come that loves me true,
Let him come that I love best,
I will tell him what I mean,
Now the wood–birds tell it too,
Now the woods are green."

While the woods were bare,
"Oh I" she sighed, "my heart is grey,
Shrinking, shivering, in my breast:
Love me, hate me, as they may,
None of them do I love best:
Let me be alone with care,
Now the wood–birds hide away,
Now the woods are bare."

From *Disguises*.

DISENCHANTED.

Alas, I thought this forest must be true,
And would not change because of my changed eyes;

I thought the growing things were as I knew,
And not a mock; I thought at least the skies
Were honest and would keep that happy blue
They used to wear before I learned to see. But woe the day!
Lo, I have wandered forth and thought to stay
Here where some gladness still might be for me, Where some delight
Should still break on my now too faithful sight;
And, lo, not even here may I go free.
Oh, hateful knowledge, pass and let me be:
Why am I made thy slave? why am I wise
Who once beheld all life with glamoured eyes?

Ah, woe the day! this bleak and shrivelled wood,
These rotted leaves, and all the wild flowers dead:
And here the ferns lie bruised and brown that stood
My tall green shelter: and, above my head,
The naked creaking branches show the sky
Athwart their lattice one murk sunless grey. Ah, woe the day!
I see, and beauty has all passed away.
Woe for my desolate wisdom, woe! Ah why
Must the sweet spell be broken ere I die?

Dear glad-tongued lark, come down and talk with me;
Tell me, oh tell me, hast thou caught, maybe, Some little word,
Some word from heaven to make the meaning plain
Of this great change, or change me back again?
And, chattering sparrow from the eaves, come here
And tell me, thou who seest men so near, Canst thou have heard
Some talk among them, out of all their lore,
To teach me, who have learned to see as they, To be like them still more
And smile at hateful things or pass them o'er?
Sky-bird and house-bird, do you know the way?

Come hither, let me tell you all my woe;
Have you not known me in my carelessness?
I was that joyous child, not long ago,
The fairies hid away from life's distress
And eager weariness of burdened men
To live their darling in the elfin glen;
I was that thing of mirth and fantasies,
More antic than young squirrels at their play,
More wilful wanton than coy butterflies
Teasing the flowers with make-believes to kiss,
More happy than the early thrush whose lay
Awakes the woodlands with spring melodies
And sings the year to summer with his bliss: And now I am so sad:
For, listen, I am wise, my eyes see truth,
And nothing wears the brightness that it had, Nothing is fair or glad;

All joy and grace were dreams, dead with my fairy youth.

Ah, had you seen our home!
For the great hall one amethyst clear dome
Fretted with silver or, who could say which,
With white pure moonbeams; and the floors made rich
With patens of all rare translucent gems
And musky flower-buds bending down their stems
For weight of diamonds that hung like dews;
 And everywhere the radiance of carved gold,
And pearls' soft shimmer, and quick various hues
 Of mystic opals glinting manifold;
And everywhere the music and the gleams
Of clear cool water's sparkling iris beams
 In emerald and crystal fountains wrought
Like river lilies with their buds and leaves, Or as late briar shoots caught
In the first glittering rime-webs blithe October weaves.

Ah me, so fair, so bright!
Had you but seen! But, lo, the other night
 I was alone and watching how the sky
Made a new star each moment and grew dim, And singing to the moon, when he came by,
The wise weird man what need had I of him?
 The wise weird man who can see fairy folk
 And break all spells, he saw me and he spoke "Poor changeling child, How is thy heart beguiled,
 And thy blind eyes made foolish with false sight!
 Let the spell end: be wise, and see aright."
Then with a frozen salve that brought sharp tears
 Signed both my eyes, and went. And from that hour
 I am made weary with the cruel dower
 Of sight for evil. For mine eyes before
 Made beauty where they looked, and saw no more.
Ah happy eyes! Ah sweet, blind, cheated years!

Alas! the glories of our fairy halls:
 Alas! the blossoms and the gems and gold: Dreams, dreams, and lies.
Broken and clammy are the earthen walls,
 The mildew is their silvering; where of old
 The jewels shimmered shimmers moist and cold
The dew of oozing damp; and, for the dyes
 And the fair shapes of diamond laden flowers,
Foul toadstool growths that never saw the skies;
 And, for the fountains, pools; and, for the bowers,
Blank caves. Nought, nought in its old gracious guise.
And what is left for beauty is a mock:
 Spangles and gilt and glass for precious things,
Bedraggled tinsel gauzes to enfrock
Unlovely nakedness of earth and rock,
 And painted images and cozenings.
Ah me! ah me! the beauty, the delight: Dreams, dreams, and lies.

ONCE.

Ah me! and a curse more has come with sight;
There is no sweetness left me for my ears:
For when they sing the fairy melodies,
Like voice of laughters and like voice of sighs
And voice of running brooks and voice of birds
And voice of lovers' wooing, and the words
Are those that fill the heart of each who hears,
I hate the song, for I hear all the while "Dreams, dreams, and lies."
Yea, and I see no loving in a smile;
For, when they soothe me tenderly, and praise,
And speak the soft words of the former days,
My heart is cold and wise as are mine eyes,
And I grow sick of pleasant flatteries
And talk of bliss and ancient merry ways:
For, lo, the hollow old content was vain, How shall it live again? Dreams, dreams, and lies.

And even here is change. For not till now
Have I seen barrenness, and leaves lie dank.
For me the leaf was green upon the bough
The livelong year, my tall ferns never sank,
Some sweet and tender blossom always grew,
The summer and the winter skies were blue;
And when the snow came in a winter freak
To make the blossoms play me hide and seek
I laughed because I knew that they were there. Ah woe is me!
I said "I will steal forth and make my lair,
Like some strayed foxcub, in the sheltered wood,
For that will be as it was wont to be:
And I will live among the careless birds
And happy forest beasts and insect herds
Who in blithe wanderings find their easy food,
And feed and sport and rest in ceaseless glee,
Having their world all real and all fair."

Alas! for it was falseness even here!
The beauty has gone by, it was my dream,
And all the black and dripping trees lie bare,
Soddening in fog and in dull mists that steam
From the unwholesome barren earth and where
The dead leaves fester that were born this year.
Ah me, I am grown wise, my sight is clear:
And to see clear is weeping, wisdom is despair.

Kind birds, oh tell me, whither shall I hie?
Dear lark, hast thou looked down out of thy sky
On the sweet quiet of some summer land
Where truth and beauty yet go hand in hand? Nay, but would'st thou be here!
Tell me, half human sparrow, hast thou seen,

Among the homes of men where thine has been,
A home where I might be among my kind
And love it, and love them, not being blind? Tell me; draw near.
Oh answer me, for now I learn desires
For men's strong life to stir me, and were fain
To lose old dreams, warm by their hearthside fires.
Yea, and I **must** go, though it all were pain:
The doom of my new wisdom is on me.
Woe for my fairy youth! Man among men
I must go forth and suffer, for I see.
Woe for the blind days in the happy glen!

And the lark answered "Nay, I am not wise;
I can teach nought. Only, the other day,
I heard them singing who sing in the skies,
And ceaselessly I whisper low that lay,
To sing it when the summer comes again: **In the world are Love and Pain: Foes yet lovers they remain: Pain strengthens Love till Love slay Pain.**"
The sparrow said "I could not hear thee plain,
For I was chirruping the merry rhyme
I heard men sing last night at supper-time: **Reap the grain, and sow the grain, To grow by sunshine and by rain.**"
Then the sad fairies' foster-child arose,
And saw the grey day darkening to its close,
And passed out from the wood, and wandered down,
Along the misty hillside, to the town.

DAY is dead, and let us sleep, Sleep a while or sleep for aye, 'Twere the best if we unknow
While to-morrow dawned and grew;
It may bring us time to weep: We were glad to-day.
Joy a little while is won,
Joy is ending while begun;
Then the setting of the sun.
Afterwards is long to rue.

From *Disguises*.

A COMRADE.

"**I AM** Joy," she said; but her voice was low, Too low for laughter;
"I am Love "; but her eyes lacked Love's quick glow, And the tear that springs after;
"I am Life"; but she seemed too calm, too still, Like one who waits, but forgets to-morrow;
Then she took my hand, and I did her will, And knew she was Sorrow.

And she led me on through the world we see, Where smiles are many;
Through the fever and stir of life's hot glee That waits never for any;
Through the silence of rest when dreams are o'er And stillness is sweeter than hope's best pleasure;

A COMRADE.

Through the peace when nought is to garner more
Of Love's plenished treasure.

So at length we twain were the truest pair, More kind than lovers.

Then she said "After blight the boughs are bare, Yet the strong tree recovers;
And anew hast thou Life, Love, Joy, at call: Unclasp my hand." And I clasped, denying;
"Thou art best, more strong, more true than all; And after thee dying."

ONE star only for Love's heaven;
One rose only for Love's breast;
One love only to be given.

Star that gathers all stars' glory
Rose all sweetness of the rest;
Love that is all life's glad story.

From *The Auspicious Day*.

A SUMMER MOOD.

BUT wait. Let each by each the days pass by,
One faded and one blown like summer flowers;
What need of hope, with summer in the sky?
What of regret, with all fair morrows ours? If yesterday be gone, No reck, 'twas not alone,
To-morrow will have just so sweet long hours.
But yet to-day is sweetest till 'tis flown.

But wait. Let summer day be changed from day,
Like following surges of the ebb and flow;
And flow brings breath of saltness and blithe spray,
And ebb long music of seas plashing low. The waves, stolen out of reach, Have no farewell for speech;
Next tide will roll as swift, as rippling go.
And yet 'tis now that's best along the beach.

Ah wait. The while we linger our lives live,
Our summer ripens purpose through our dreams;
Flower-petals fallen leave a seed to thrive,
Spent tides heap treasures from the deep sea streams; Now drifts by unaware, And Afterwards is heir;
To-morrow wins the wealth of yester gleams.
Yet 'tis to-day that summer makes most fair.

TELL thee truth, sweet; no.
Truth is cross and sad and cold:
Lies are pitiful and kind,
Honey-soft as Love's own tongue: Let me, love, lie so.

A SUMMER MOOD.

Lies are like a summer wind,
Wooing flower-buds to unfold
Lies will last while men are young. Tell thee truth, love; no.

Let me, sweet, lie so.
Lies are Hope's light ministers,
Footless birds upon the wing:
Truth's a name for plodding care: Tell thee truth, sweet; no.
Truth's the east wind on the Spring
'Tis the wind, not Spring-time, errs.
Lies will last while maids are fair. Let me lie, love, so.

From *Disguises*.

THE SKY-LARK'S SONG.

WINGED voice to tell the skies of earth,
Dear earth-born lark, sing on, sing clear,
Sing into heaven that she may hear; Sing what thou wilt, so she but know
Thine ecstasy of summer mirth, And think "'Tis from the world below!"

Instant, old wont returns fresh brought,
And her desire goes seeking me,
For whom her whole world used to be And all my world for sake of her;
She cannot think an earthward thought That shall not seem my messenger.

She will be glad for love, and smile,
Saying "Thank God for joy like ours:
Saying "There come the kind home hours: His work-day will be sped ere long,
That keeps him hence this little while." Sing, lark, until she know thy song.

Sing of the earth, but sing no care,
Sing thine own measureless content;
She will remember what it meant; Griefs are too base, but, carolling thus,
Thou with thy joy mayst reach her there, And she joy too remembering us.

TELL me not of morrows, sweet;
All to-day is fair, and ours, Thine and mine;
Mar not Now with needing more. Neither speak of yesterdays; Lose not Now with backward gaze,
Lingering on what went before.
Watch for all to-day's new flowers, Mine and thine,
Else to-day were incomplete.

Nay, but speak of morrows, sweet;

THE SKY-LARK'S SONG.

Lest to-day seem loss of ours, Thine and mine,
Leaving nought to come again. Nay, but speak of yesterdays,
Lest, forgetting trodden ways,
We have trodden them in vain.
Make one love-time of all hours, Mine and thine,
Else to-day were incomplete.

From *In a Day*, an unpublished Drama.

WHERE HOME WAS.

'Twas yesterday; 'twas long ago:
And for this flaunting grimy street,
And for this crowding to and fro,
And thud and roar of wheels and feet, Were elm-trees and the linnet's trill,
The little gurgles of the rill,
And breath of meadow-flowers that blow
Ere roses make the summer sweet.

'Twas long ago; 'twas yesterday:
Our peach would just be new with leaves,
The swallow pair that used to lay
Their glimmering eggs beneath our eaves
Would flutter busy with their brood, And, haply, in our
hazel-wood,
Small village urchins hide at play,
And girls sit binding blue-bell sheaves.

Was the house here, or there, or there?
No landmark tells. All changed; all lost;
As when the waves that fret and tear
The fore-shores of some level coast
Roll smoothly where the sea-pinks grew. All changed, and all
grown old anew;
And I pass over, unaware,
The memories I am seeking most.

But where these huddled house-rows spread,
And where this thickened air hangs murk
And the dim sun peers round and red
On stir and haste and cares and work, For me were baby's daisy-chains,
For me the meetings in the
lanes,
The shy good-morrows softly said
That paid my morning's lying lurk.

Oh lingering days of long ago,
Not until now you passed away.
Years wane between and we unknow;
Our youth is always yesterday. But, like a traveller home who craves
For friends and finds forgotten
graves,

WHERE HOME WAS.

I seek you where you dwelt, and, lo,
Even farewells not left to say.

DEAR love, good–night. And, tender sleep, Seal up her lids like these drowsed flowers,
To make day fair when they unclose.
Be hushed around her, Night, and keep
Thy silent guard on her repose; But speed thine hours.

Dear love, sleep on. This weary space I wake and long for day and thee,
And count the slow stars from their west.
Sleep while I hunger for thy face,
Sleep, dearest, in unbroken rest; But dream of me.

From *The Auspicious Day*.

THE FIRST SPRING DAY.

THE sunshine died long ago, Stifled out long ago,
And the waste of the world was grey,
And night was the best to know,
For night was to doze and forget the day,
To be warm and forgetting and still,
And need not the sun and know not the chill:
But oh, for the day that was darkened so!

Why gaze on a barren heaven, Void and unchanging heaven,
On a barren earth in the grime,
And not a poor blossom given,
No thing that was thinking of sunshine time,
For a promise, a praise of the past?
And so one forgot the sunshine at last;
And sleep could avail, but what to have striven?

The sunshine wakes once anew, Wakes and is born anew,
And the Age of the earth grows young,
And heaven has its youth for hue,
And hope is the tune of the spring–bird's tongue,
And the leaves in their prisons all hark,
And blossoms will know there is end of the dark:
One hour of the sdn, and the spring–time grew!

The sunshine new on the earth, Heaven to brighten the earth,
And the deathful dimness gone by,
The barren and winter dearth!
And to–day is the best till the next is nigh,

THE FIRST SPRING DAY.

And to-night is to-morrow begun,
To-morrow, when blossoms remember the sun!
Dead hopes, are ye born with the blossoms birth?

THE SEA-MAID'S SONG.

"OH, love me! love me!"
The sea-maid sings on the pebbly shore "Love me! oh, love me!"
The tears they gather, the tears run o'er;
She looks to the sea, she looks to the hill,
But no one comes, and the night is still "Oh, love me! love me!"

"Oh, love me I love me!"
Singing so sadly, singing so long "Love me! oh, love me!"
I would give true love, so deep, so strong,
To him who would give true love to me."
Nought on the hill, and nought on the sea "Oh, love me! love me!"

"Love me! oh, love me!"
Singing so long, and singing so late "Love me I oh, love me!"
My heart is lone, I weep while I wait."
She looks to the sea, she looks to the hill,
But no one comes, and the night is still "Oh, love me I love me I"

THE OLD DREAM.

NAY, tell me not. I will not know.
Because of her my life is bare,
A waste where blow-seeds spring and grow
Then die because the soil is spent,
And leave no token they were there;
A soddened mere where marsh-lights gleam,
But no star sees the ray it lent
Because of her despoiled and bare.
What then? she did a wrong unmeant. Leave me my dream.

Tell me no more. I will not know.
My life, if she had harsher eyes,
Did her sweet voice not deepen so,
Had maybe missed this bitterness;
Maybe I should have been more wise
If she were sterner, or could seem,
If she could have been pitiless.
Too sweet low voice! too trustful eyes!
What then? she could not judge their stress. Leave me my dream.

I will not know. Rob not my heart:

THE SEA-MAID'S SONG.

It is too poor to lose yet more.
Leave the old dream where she was part:
Are all smiles ill, all sweetness lies?
One blossom once my life-time bore,
It wakened at her April beam,
Then froze; yet dead 'tis still some prize
It shows mine blossoms were of yore.
Let be: I need some memories: Leave me my dream.

WAITING, waiting. 'Tis so far
To the day that is to come:
One by one the days that are
All to tell their countless sum;
Each to dawn and each to die
What so far as by and by?

Waiting, waiting. 'Tis not ours,
This to-day that flies so fast:
Let them go, the shadowy hours,
Floating, floated, into Past.
Our day wears to-morrow's sky
What so near as by and by?

From *Yu-Pe-Ya's Lute*.

FAREWELL: we two shall still meet day by day, Live side by side;
But never more shall heart respond to heart.
Two stranger boats can drift adown one tide,
Two branches on one stem grow green apart. Farewell, I say.

Farewell: chance travellers, as the path they tread, Change words and smile,
And share their travellers' fortunes, friend with friend,
And yet are foreign in their thoughts the while,
Several, alone, save that one way they wend. Farewell; 'tis said.

Farewell: ever the bitter asphodel Outlives love's rose;
The fruit and blossom of the dead for us.
Ah, answer me, should this have been the close,
To be together and be sundered thus? But yet, farewell.

THE MISSING STAR.

WHY did the star leave the sky, The far, pure sky?
Shone she not high and hallowed and fair?
Could she not tarry her life-time there? Why must she fall and fade? She had heaven nigh.

THE MISSING STAR.

I of the earth, I would she had stayed In her lonely air.

Higher than love lived my star, My clear, cold star.

Why must she droop to our mists below?

Ah, for the glory of long ago! Ah, for the pride no more! When she stood so far.
Would she were lost in the days before, In the perished glow.

Star wandered out of my light, Once all my light,

Seeing the sky through a dullness of tears,

Crying for thee to the empty years, Where should I seek for thee Mid the. desert night?
Not on the earth. Ah! the star that nears Has forgotten to be.

YOUNG May sat fainting and chill,

And neither could live nor die;

She looked and hated the sky,

Yet knew not what was her ill. Ah well—a-day! For the lonely May.

She tired of weeping, and slept;

Who woke her up but the Sun?

And joy and love had begun

To teach her why she had wept. Oh bright new day For the startled May!

From *The Auspicious Day*.

MILES and miles of here and there

Our eager river forced its way,

Bent to be it knew not where.

It had no rest in delay;

And for its haste it had no aim;

Wherefore go? But wherefore stay?

Here and there led both the same;

By any winding it could make

Near its secret goal it came.

When it reached the crystal lake

It knew its aim and found its rest;

All the miles were for love's sake.

Mid the blue hills of the west

Our river lies in the lake's breast.

THE MISSING STAR.

From *The Auspicious Day*.

BEYOND THE SHADOW.

SOME quick kind tears, some easy sorrow, And then 'tis past.
'Twas sad; yet sadness has its morrow;
Blue skies succeed skies overcast: Why should grief last?

Something that's passing, something dying. Well, weep one's fill,
Spend grief's sweet courtesy, go sighing;
But violets break from snow—time's chill: Who can mourn still?

Aye, let me pass. No life will miss me Save few first days.
A shudder, stooping down to kiss me,
A little love and tardy praise; Then the old ways.

THE BUTTERFLY.

VIATOR loquitur

"Royal in purple and gold and red, Free, and unknowing sorrow,
Blithely and lithely to and fro,
With flowers for thy choosing still a—blow, Flaunt through the idle noon:
But the day is short and the summer sped,
 And alas for the end of joy so soon;
The days are short and the rose is dead, And thou wilt be dying to—morrow."

BUTTERFLY loquitur

"Sunshine and blossoms are on my way; What is thy talk of sorrow?
Blithe on the wing, with the flowers for rest,
Hither and thither as likes me best: Oh! the joy of the while!
Minutes are many to bask and to play, The earth is glad and the blue skies smile;
Minutes are many and joy is to—day; Dying is far till to—morrow."

WHITE ROSE AND RED.

WHITE rose sighed in the morn,
 Red rose laughed in the noon,
 And "Sweetest sweetness is ended soon,"
And "Never heed for the thorn."

"Love's hour passes away,"
 White rose breathed in my ear;
 Red rose whispered "No need to fear;

BEYOND THE SHADOW.

The day is enough for day."

Shall I heed white or red?
Shall I heed both aright?
Sighing and laughing, red and white,
'Tis "Love her" they both have said.

ENGLISH STORNELLI

MARJORY.

Spring.

THE RIVULET.

OH clear smooth rivulet, creeping through our bridge
With backward waves that cling around the shore,
And is thy world beyond the dim blue ridge
More dear than this, or does it need thee more?
Oh lingering stream, upon thy ceaseless way
Glide to to-morrow; yet 'tis fair to-day:
Beyond the hills and haze to-morrows hide;
To-day is fair; glide lingering, ceaseless tide.

SPRING AND SUMMER.

And summer time is good; but at its heat
The fair poor blossoms wither for the fruit,
And song-birds go that made our valley sweet
With useless ecstasies, and the boughs are mute.
And I would keep the blossoms and the song,
And I would have it spring the whole year long:
And I would have my life a year-long spring
To never pass from hopes and blossoming.

THE VIOLET AND THE ROSE.

The violet in the wood, that's sweet to-day,
Is longer sweet than roses of red June;
Set me sweet violets along my way,
And bid the red rose flower, but not too soon.
Ah violet, ah rose, why not the two?
Why bloom not all fair flowers the whole year through?

Why not the two, young violet, ripe rose?
Why dies one sweetness when another blows?

THE PRIMROSE.

Dear welcome, sweet pale stars of hope and spring,
Young primroses, blithe with the April air;
My darlings, waiting for my gathering,
Sit in my bosom, nestle in my hair.
But, oh! the fairest laughs behind the brook,
I cannot have it, I can only look:
Oh happy primrose on the further beach,
One can but look on thee, one cannot reach.

LINNET AND LARK.

Oh buoyant linnet in the flakes of thorn,
Sing thy loud lay; for joy and song are one.
Oh skylark floating upwards into morn,
Pour out thy carolling music of the sun.
Sing, sing; be voices of the life-ful air,
Glad things that never knew the cage nor snare:
Be voices of the air, and fill the sky,
Glad things that have no heed of by-and-by.

Summer.

THE BEES IN THE LIME.

AMID the thousand blossoms of the lime,
The gossip bees go humming to and fro:
And oh the busy joy of working time!
And oh the fragrance when the lime trees blow!
Take the sweet honeys deftly, happy bees,
And store them for the later days than these:
Store, happy bees, these honeys for the frost,
That sweetness of the blossom be not lost.

THE CORNFLOWER.

A field-plant in my sheltered garden bed,
And I have set it there to love it dear;
It makes blue flowers to match skies overhead,
Blue flowers for all the while the summer's here.

THE PRIMROSE.

Sky—blooms that woke and budded with the wheat,
Ye last and make the livelong summer sweet:
Spread while the green wheat passes into gold,
Sky—blooms I planted in the garden—mould.

THE FLOWING TIDE.

The slow green wave comes curling from the bay
And leaps in spray along the sunny marge,
And steals a little more and more away,
And drowns the dulse, and lifts the stranded barge.
Leave me, strong tide, my smooth and yellow shore;
But the clear waters deepen more and more:
Leave me my pathway of the sands, strong tide;
Yet are the waves more fair than all they hide.

THE WHISPER.

Some one has said a whispered word to me;
The whisper whispers on within my ear.
Oh little word, hush, hush, and let me be;
Hush, little word, too vexing sweet to hear.
And, if it will not hush, what must I do?
The word was "Love"; perchance the word was true:
And, if it will not hush, must I repine?
I am his love; perchance then he is mine.

THE HEART THAT LACKS ROOM.

I love him, and I love him, and I love:
Oh heart, my love goes welling o'er the brim.
He makes my light more than the sun above,
And what am I save what I am to him?
All will, all hope I have, to him belong;
Oh heart, thou art too small for love so strong:
Oh heart, grow large, grow deeper for his sake;
Oh love him better, heart, or thou wilt break!

THE LOVERS.

And we are lovers, lovers he and I:
Oh sweet dear name that angels envy us;
Lovers for now, lovers for by and by,
And God to hear us call each other thus.
Flow softly, river of our life, and fair;
We float together to the otherwhere:

THE FLOWING TIDE.

Storm, river of our life, if storm must be,
We brunt thy tide together to that sea.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

From the dusk elm rings out a changing lay;
The human-hearted nightingale sings there.
Why not, like little minstrels of the day,
Sweet voice, fling only raptures on the air?
'Tis that she's kin to us and has our woe,
Something that's lost or something yet to know:
'Tis that she's kin to us and sings our bliss,
Loving, to know love is yet more than this.

THE STORM.

Storm in the dimness of the purpled sky,
And the sharp flash leaps out from cloud to cloud:
But the blue, lifted, corner spreads more high,
Brightness, and brightness, bursts the gathered shroud.
Aye, pass, black storm, thou hadst thy threatening hour;
Now the freed beams make rainbows of the shower:
Now the freed sunbeams break into the air;
Pass, and the sky forgets thee and is fair.

BABY EYES.

Blue baby eyes, they are so sweetest sweet,
And yet they have not learned love's dear replies;
They beg not smiles, nor call for me, nor greet,
But clear, unshrinking, note me with surprise.
But, eyes that have your father's curve of lid,
You'll learn the look that he keeps somewhere hid:
You'll smile, grave baby eyes, and I shall see
The look your father keeps for only me.

THE BINDWEED.

In all fair hues from white to mingled rose,
Along the hedge the clasping bindweed flowers;
And when one chalice shuts a new one blows,
There's blooming for all minutes of the hours.
Along the hedge beside the trodden lane
Where day by day we pass and pass again:
Rosy and white along the busy mile,
A flower for every step and all the while.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

Autumn.

THE HEATHER.

THE leagues of heather lie on moor and hill,
And make soft purple dimness and red glow;
No butterfly may call the blithe wind chill
That brings the ruddy heather-bells a-blow.
The song-birds half forget the world is fair,
And pipe no lays because the heather's there:
Oh foolish birds that have no joyous lay,
With hill and moor a garden ground to-day!

THE PINE.

The elm lets fall its leaves before the frost,
The very oak grows shivering and sere,
The trees are barren when the summer's lost:
But one tree keeps its goodness all the year.
Green pine, unchanging as the days go by,
Thou art thyself beneath whatever sky:
My shelter from all winds, my own strong pine,
'Tis spring, 'tis summer, still, while thou art mine.

LATE ROSES.

The swallows went last week, but 'twas too soon;
For, look, the sunbeams streaming on their eaves;
And, look, my rose, a very child of June,
Spreading its crimson coronet of leaves.
Was it too late, my rose, to bud and blow?
For when the summer wanes her roses go:
Bloom, rose, there are more roses yet to wake,
With hearts of sweetness for the summer's sake.

THE BRAMBLES.

So tall along the dusty highway row,
So wide on the free heath the brambles spread;
Here's the pink bud, and here the full white blow,
And here the black ripe berry, here the red.
Bud, flower, and fruit, among the mingling thorns;
And dews to feed them in the autumn morns:

THE BINDWEED.

Fruit, flower, and bud, together, thou rich tree!
And oh but life's a happy time for me!

WE TWO.

The road slopes on that leads us to the last,
And we two tread it softly, side by side;
'Tis a blithe count the milestones we have passed,
Step fitting step, and each of us for guide.
My love, and I thy love, our road is fair,
And fairest most because the other's there:
Our road is fair, adown the harvest hill,
But fairest that we two are we two still.

WE TWO.

We two, we two! the children's smiles are dear
Thank God how dear the bonny children's smiles!
But 'tis we two among our own ones here,
We two along life's way through all the whiles.
To think if we had passed each other by;
And he not he apart, and I not I!
And oh to think if we had never known;
And I not I and he not he alone!

THE APPLE ORCHARD.

The apple branches bend with ripening weight,
The apple branches rosy as with flowers;
You'd think red giant fuchsias blooming late
Within this sunny orchard ground of ours.
Give us your shade, fair fountain trees of fruits;
We rest upon the mosses at your roots:
Fair fountain trees of fruits, drop windfalls here;
Lo, ripening store for all the coming year.

Winter.

THE SNOWS.

THE green and happy world is hidden away;
Cold, cold, the ghostly snows lie on its breast;
The white miles reach the shadows wan and grey
'Neath wan grey skies unchanged from east to west.

WE TWO.

Sleep on beneath the snows, chilled, barren, earth;
There are no blossoms for thy winter dearth:
Break not nor melt, fall still from heaven, wan snows;
Hide the spoiled earth, and numb her to repose.

THE HOLLY.

'Tis a brave tree. While round its boughs in vain
The warring wind of January bites and girds,
It holds the clusters of its crimson grain,
A winter pasture for the shivering birds.
Oh patient holly, that the children love,
No need for thee of smooth blue skies above:
Oh green strong holly, shine amid the frost;
Thou dost not lose one leaf for sunshine lost.

THE GRAVEYARD.

They sleep here well who have forgotten to-day,
They weep not while we weep, nor wake each morn
To bitter new surprise, as mourners may
That knew not in their rest they were forlorn.
Calm graveyard, 'tis more pleasant to sit here
Than where loud life pretends its eager cheer:
Calm graveyard, where he waits and I shall be,
Thou hast the spot of earth most dear to me.

THE FROZEN RIVER.

Dead stream beneath the icy silent blocks
That motionless stand soddening into grime,
Thy fretted falls hang numb, frost pens the locks;
Dead river, when shall be thy waking time?
"Not dead;" the river spoke and answered me,
"My burdened current, hidden, finds the sea"
"Not dead, not dead;" my heart replied at length,
"The frozen river holds a hidden strength."

THE DAUGHTER.

Go forth, my darling, in the wreath and veil;
My hand shall place them for thee; so goodbye.
Thou hast Love's rose, and tend it without fail;
It withers, dear, if lovers let it lie.
Go, my own singing bird, and be his now;
And I am more than half as glad as thou.

THE HOLLY.

Ah me! the singing birds that were our own
Fly forth and mate: and 'tis long life alone.

WE TWO.

We two that could not part are parted long;
He in the far-off Heaven, and I to wait.
A fair world once, all blossom-time and song;
But to be lonely tires, and I live late.
To think we two have not a word to change:
And one without the other here is strange!
To think we two have nothing now to share:
I wondering here, and he without me there!

WE TWO.

We two, we two! we still are linked and nigh:
He could not have forgotten in any bliss;
Surely he feels my being yet; and I,
I have no thought but seems some part of his.
Oh love gone out of reach of yearning eyes,
Our hearts can meet to gather-in replies:
Oh love past touch of lip and clasp of hand,
Thou canst not be too far to understand.

THE FLOWERS TO COME.

The drift is in the hollows of the hill,
Yet primrose leaves uncurl beneath the hedge;
Frosts pierce the dawn, and the north wind blows chill,
Yet snowdrop spikelets rim the garden edge.
Dear plants that will make bud in coming spring,
Ye were not for one only blossoming:
More than one blossoming for all fair flowers;
And God keeps mine till spring is somewhere ours.
THE END.