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The IMMORTAL DWELLER

BY

ERNEST FEWSTER

AUTHOR OF

"My Garden Dreams"
"White Desire"

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THE IMMORTAL DWELLER

*I am a dweller on the Eternal Hills,
For me the fragrant winds
Blow ever through the Gateways of Eternity,
And my unageing eye
Through periods unmeasured and unthought
New beauty finds,
New glories breaking from Infinity.*

*I am a sailor on the Eternal Sea,
For me the tranced shore
Bears endless processional of capes and bays,
Nights' mysteries and days'
Perpetual wonder, shewing evermore
Unfading summer with her blossomed ways.*

*I am a dweller of all lands and seas,
For me there is no death—
The Life within all life is mine,
And through the garments of my soul doth shine
Spirit which breathes God's deep immortal Breath,
The burning glory of the Fire Divine.*

THE TRUTH

I was a prism through whose crystal walls
The glory of an unseen sun was crushed,
Was split to rainbows with celestial colors flushed:
"How great," men cried, "From whom such wonder falls!"

I was an instrument whose echoing strings
Caught unheard harmonies from out the Universe,
And all men praised and lauded me in prayer and verse—
"How great is he through whom such music rings!"

I was a trumpet from whose sounding throat
A new crusade in mighty tones was flung
And all men praised me for the words that rung
And splendid throbbed in every rushing note.

And so I toiled nor did I once refrain
From dawn till dark until Death called to me.
Men prayed in terror. "Losing him then we
Shall lose the Truth and fail our destiny!"
But Death replied,
"Not for one life is righteousness denied."

KNOWLEDGE

The more I know the less I am myself;
The less I am myself, the more I am;
The more I grow into the Universe—
Into the hills, the seas, the clouds, the storms,
The sun, the skies and all the Infinite and God.

THE CEDAR

I will sing a song of you, O Cedar—
I will sing a song to you.
Yet how much greater than all song are you—
You who are a song incarnate!
A green hymn shouting upward of triumphant life!
I lose myself in your majesty.
The whisper of the evening winds within your boughs
Is prophecy of God unto my soul,
Is better than all hymns,
Is sweeter than temple music,
Finer than all priests' sermons.

Your presence beats proudly on my spirit.
It oppresses me, even as does God,
With a divine uplift, a great exaltation.

Before you spreads the incurious sea,
Behind you waits the forest
Reverent and still in the hush of sunset,
Your branches lift themselves strongly into the air.
The clasping twilight kisses them
And sets in crystal vision every spray.

Proud are you above all words to tell.
Beauty fails before you,
For you are greater than beauty.
Your lips are washed with silence—
Silence that speaks as sound.

In the hush of your presence man is dumb;
His life fades before your centuries,
His little tribes are strown as ashes about your feet.
He laughs at you and you shelter him from the storm;
He derides you and you shade him from the heat;
He condemns you
And you stand between him and the terrible stars;
He praises you,

You turn calm eyes on the passing gull.

The sea bays at your feet,
The tempest closes in darkness about you—
He wonders if the night will not destroy you.
But the daybreak reveals you steadfast, unperturbed, proud,
The glory of your green boughs untouched.

Our voices, praises, blames,
Are blown about your branches
As spume and dust are blown by drifting winds.
Our lives pass you as bird shadows.

You are a living fact that menaces our fancies
Yet somewhere leans to touch our souls with understanding.
You are a spray of life bursting from the invisible.
The fineness of the dawn is yours.
The solemnity of night is one with you.
The utter joy of day is of your natural mind.

You are a Form inwrought of God,
Spirit made substance,
The Invisible made manifest,
A door to God,
A vision standing between the Eternal and Myself!

SPRING GOLD

She comes with blossoms garlanded and feet like birds at play—
There's gold upon the willows and there's gold along the way!
And the merry winds are ringing like all the pipes o' May
And every throat is singing in one mad roundelay!

The yellow violets called to her before the trilliums woke.
The chipping sparrow sang the news and waked the sleeping folk—
That there's gold adown the valleys where sunny meadows slope,
And gold across the mountains like the golden throne of hope!

She comes with gladness garlanded, her eyes are oriole bright,
Her lips are like twin rosebuds kissed into birth by light.
The bluebirds fly at her left hand, the larks fly on her right;
Her robes that sweep the woodlands are fragrant with delight
Where the lacey tasseled maple flings her golden leaves to sight.

There's a lush green on the cedars and the salmon-berry spray
Is like the fairy sceptre that children use for play,
And there's gold upon the hillsides, and down the woodland way
There are crowds of robins singing like all the lips o' day,
That life is gold and winter is a thousand miles away!

EVOLUTION

The mountains crushed the summer clouds to rain,
That falling on the distant thirsty plain
Broke into flowers, then rose in clouds again.

MAY MORNING

All the woods are waking up,
Chill winds heed their warning,
Life goes laughing down the road
To meet May-Morning!

Green is on the misted hills,
Flowers the meads adorning,
Life goes laughing down the road
To meet May-Morning!

Carol birds upon the trees,
Kine low at dew-dawning,
Life goes laughing down the road
To meet May-Morning!

Comes my love with radiant eyes,
Lips no more forlorn,
Life goes laughing down the road
To meet May-Morning!

So my heart with rapture thrills,
All old sorrows scorning,
Life goes laughing down the road
To meet May-Morning!

THE FLOWERING CURRANT

The crimson fire of the glade's deep heart,
The sign of the Spring's new birth,
Softly asway to the kissing winds—
Red lips of the wakening Earth.
The cheery call of the careless birds
Ring sweet through the sun-lit leaves,
But the Currant lifts a lilting bloom,
And a daintier welcome weaves.

Where the logging trail cuts cool and dim

The heart of the ancient woods,
Where the golden day is shot with dusk
Through brooding solitudes,
There springs to life like a word of joy
In the sober speech of Earth,
To challenge the gloom to laughing light,
This blossom of crimson mirth.

For clear and glad in the silent lands,
Morning, and noon, and night,
Where the benches stoop to touch the sea
Or tower to greet the light,
There lifts the Currant her tinkling bells,
Elfin and sheer they ring,
To fill the woods with their magic chimes—
The dance for the Flowers of Spring!

THE PRIMROSE CLIFFS

Dawns and twilights lighting them
With midday gold and night,
Velvets of old loveliness
Sweet and still with light.

Here the first Spring breezes blow
Bright with jewelled laughter,
Caught between the urge of day
Star-roof and rafter.

Here a thousand Maytimes gone
Primroses have fashioned
Roundelays of moonlight music
Deeply impassioned!

Singings out of Elfland mornings
Breaking sheer asunder
Sea-cry and broom-lit uplands
Primroses and wonder.

EARTHBOUND

I'm weary tonight and the lights burn low,
My soul is tired of its casing clay,
The breath's demands and the aching brain,
The grate and fret of the heavy day.

O meadows that beckon beyond the stars—

My spirit yearns for your rest tonight,
My parchéd lips are athirst, athirst
To drink again of the Infinite!

ADAM

From "Lilith"

Dawn lit the hills of Paradise with torch of gold,
On all its wind-swept hills the leafy trees awoke
And down the sleeping vales the silence broke
In silver birdsong where the light mist rolled.

Behold him as he walks in Paradise—
The new-made man with kingship in his eyes.

Behold him how he greets the coming light
With lips that challenge as a conqueror's might.

He recks not of the beasts that at his feet
Do follow him with motion far more fleet;

Nor that the birds who cleave the morning air
Know fields on which his feet may never fare.

Weakest of all, his body of soft clay
Yet homes a spirit mightier than they,

That laughs at Earth, then crashing through her bars
Doth measure suns and understand the stars.

Though clay, no time may his great aims reverse—
His home is in the untrod Universe.

Strength dwelleth in his face; his flesh shall be
But red-stained cloke for his divinity.

He walks on Eden's paths yet fronts the skies
And questions God with quiet serious eyes.

His hands shall chain the lightning, curb the sea,
Shall cage the winds and make the darkness flee.

Adam shall rise above his parent sod
And stand with reverence, face to face with God.

LOVE SONG

How shall I sing of thee, Maiden and Flower,
Dream and creation in one—
Spirit of loveliness caught in that hour
When the World's glory was young?

God-given thoughts are not fairer than thou—
How shall I know which they be?
Vision on vision they come to me now
Drifted with beauty of thee.

Gold of the sunshine, and sweet of the moon
Caught in thy spirit are one;
Crystal of starlight, warmth of the noon
Are ended in thee and begun.

How shall I worship thee, maiden, nor miss
Floods of desire? I would fain
Touch the sweet flesh of thee, dare thy rich kiss,
Sweeten my lips with thy name.

Breaths of thy mouth more fragrant than winds are
Blown through a morning of Spring—
Sway of thy limbs more dainty than wings are
Where the pink apple-blossoms swing.

Child of the gods, how shall I draw nigh thee?
Spirit of Joy, yet earth-whole.
Sweetheart and Vision, a glory set by me
Mistress and Love of my soul.

GREY DRIFT

Wind and rain and shadow of clouds
And a great grey drift of sea.
A far hill under a rainy dawn,
Calling to me.

Grief and memories of old songs
And a great, grey drift of years.
A far voice calling my aching heart,
Abrim with tears.

RAIN SONG

O shout, my heart, for the rain today—
For the dancing rain!
Each drop is a minstrel singing gay
For spring again.

Each splash to Earth is a merry song
Of the widening hours,
A call to the winds that drift among
The growing flowers.

Each drop is a kiss from the lips of joy
To the grass and trees,
And the face of the world lifts glad and coy
To the laughing breeze.

So shout, my heart, for the dancing rain
On the opening flowers—
For love reborn into joy again
And the song-clad hours.

THE OREAD OF THE TORCH

When the edge of Summer crumbles
'Neath the weight of bronzing sheaves,
When the magian wand of Autumn
Lights the torches of the leaves,

When the Maple weaves her colors
Like the sunset gone astray,
And the Dogwood stands triumphant
In a cloke of crimson-grey.

Then there walks a lovely spirit,
Fair as morning after night,
On the mountains stilled with beauty,
Down the valleys of the light.

Some may call her "Maid of Autumn,"
Or "The Spirit of the Fall,"
But "The Oread of the Torch,"
Is the happiest name of all.

Dimpled limbs when roguish breezes
Whip the dainty gown astray,
With a voice like sleepy music,
Or of distant birds at play.

Where the Bracken hides the wood-path,
You may see her wand'ring down,
With her belt of scarlet berries
And her frock of golden-brown.

If she sees you not a-coming,
You may catch her by surprise
When her glance is like the moon-fire
Hiding dreams within her eyes,

Shedding faint perfume of Asters,
Or the tang of Goldenrod,
And a sound like fairies singing
Down the paths her feet have trod.

So she passes field and meadow,
Comes and goes with footsteps light,
While the Breath of Silence follows
As she touches vale and height.

Where the edge of Summer crushes
To a foam of bronzing gold,
And the ecstasy of Autumn
Burns to beauty mead and wold.

There perchance you'll hear her laughing,
While the fire of sunshine fills
All the wood and valley fountains
And the chalice of the hills.

Some may call her "Flame of Autumn,"
Or the "Golden Maid of Fall,"
But "The Oread of the Torch,"
Is the happiest name of all!

GRANVILLE STREET BRIDGE

The long, thin bridge, dusty from shuffling feet,
Noisy from traffic plied unceasingly;
Far out the sunset in the quiet sky
And glimpses of the blue unfettered sea—

And round me tired and frocked humanity
Reading the tawdry news, the novel light,
While through the open windows they might see
The silent mountains waiting for the night.

DAWN SONG

There is joy in the Morning, Beloved,
In the birds and the flowers,
The seas, the hills and the woods.
A joy intense and radiant, a glory apart
From the world of sorrow and anxious care.
Life and the Trumpet Dawn
Is ringing with music
And the winds and the hills

Are filled with miracle song.

There is joy in my heart, Beloved,
For the Spirit has touched me with music
And vision and hearing and sound.
There is always Dawn in the Universe
And joy and wings
For the soul who lives, the soul who slumbers not.
For life is fragrant with song
And the gladness and glory of things
That have wrought from the dew and the dust,
And sorrow's desire and death's stings,
The knowledge that nothing can die,
And the soul who knoweth this understands
That Life Immortal and Joy and Light
Are our Makers, Companions and Kings,
And the Universe is of their hands.
Today through the gold of the Sun,
The peal of the Clarion Light,
Through flower and song, and the freshness of Dawn,
And the deeps in my heart,
Their mandate of happiness rings.
O I who believe, am Immortal
With gladness fulfilled!

There is globing dew on the flowers and the grass
Touched with the rainbow's wings,
I hear the shout of their music,
The crash of their marvellous song,
I hear unreliable things!
I am One! One! One! One with a Royal Universe;
One with its music, its ultimate Light,
For have I not visioned the Makers—Companions of Joy,
And have I not counselled with Kings!

BONDAGE

How shall I walk your close and narrow streets
Or wander down your narrow dusty roads—
I, whose glad heart the morning sunlight greets
On glorious mountains and the storms' abodes?

How shall I sing your prisoning walls of brick
Or chant the hours of earth's time-haunted homes—
I, who have watched the glittering stars shine thick
About the vast where my winged spirit roams?

How shall I love the noisy halls of earth,
The fretful cries that beat upon my ears—
I, who have dwelt where music hath its birth
And heard the tonal vespers of the spheres?

I, who have known the everlasting skies,
I, who have held the heritage of space,
Shall I, from hills where dawn forever lies,
Accept the bondage of earth's time and place?

IMPRISONED

Boldly she stopped me on the street
In tawdry skirt and painted face,
Offering to sell her body's grace
For shelter and a crust to eat.
I checked my scorn, for with surprise,
Holy and sad I saw and sweet,
The glory of the Paraclete
Gaze at me through her burning eyes.

So passed me one in fine attire,
Whose hands were merciless and bold
To wield the power of cruel gold
And trample men into the mire;
I would have cursed him in my pride
Yet something checked my sudden tongue,
For shadowy on his brows there hung
The thorn that crowned the Crucified.

So passed I hate and sinful whim,
Deliberate wrong and wicked waste,
Within each sullen glance I traced
The glory of a Seraphim.
Dumbly they pled for sympathy,
For blind by sin and sorrow kept,
Their souls, like Jesus, darkened, wept
Each in his own Gethsemane.

WINGS OF JOY

I dreamed I rode on wings of joy
Through festivals of light,
And all the lovely things of Earth
Came out to join our flight!

There like a moonbeam flusht with rose
I saw the glad-faced May
Break through the throng, her visioned eyes
Sweet with the lore of Day.

Spirits of every flower that grew

Stormed singing through the skies,
Shadows from twilights rare in heaven
Caught in their every hue,
With gold of far hill dawns
And all the wondrous dyes
Of Sun-enchanted mornings
And rainbow tangled dew,
When Earth foams into blossom
Beneath young Summer's eyes.

I dreamed I rode on wings of light,
All lovely things of Earth
Joined in one mad, glad storm of joy,
A sweet unusual mirth,
Because some glorious Thing of Heaven
Had flashed to mortal birth!

THE ANGEL OF THE STAR

She is not like the quiet angels of the calm and peaceful face.
But full of happy laughter and a wild and winsome grace.

She dwells beyond the gates of stars which light the fields of heaven,
A place more fair than fairest dreams to whitest angels given.

She moves in trembling rays of rose wherein her soft light clings;
Her coming is it seems to me as thought of a thousand wings.

White like flame her body and limbs when the clinging glory slips;
Red rose of love and snows of love dwell in her face and lips.

Her voice is thrilling and low and sweet, rich as a bell's soft chime!
Her shining eyes are deep and clear, they gaze straight into mine.

She brims with laughter, sings with joy; she walks with dancing feet;
She meets my thought with winsome tongue, her speech is swift and sweet.

Her touch a thrill of melody, yet hath no lack of power—
She lays me low with a quick caress, then flees like a frightened flower.

Her smile is roguish, keenly pure; her love a passionate grace;
'Tis said the land she dwelleth in holds none of fairer face.

I sometimes see her bright eyes wet which I dare not understand;
Heaven knows not tears and yet her home is a far diviner land.

Passionate joy and passionate tears deeper than heaven can tell,
And lights more high and shades more deep within her land doth dwell.

There mightier sunsets flare and fade; more powerful dawns rise there;
With love blood-red, life more intense than Earth or Heaven could dare.

I fear to understand her tears, I hold in leash my will,
Such loveliness of love, such grace; O heart of mine, be still!

After this Earth hath passed away, after long Heaven is done,
When towards her land on eager wings, I mount up sun by sun,

I know whose kiss shall glad her soul and who her eyes shall dry—
Who holds her love—O heart be strong—'Tis I—'Tis I—'Tis I!

THE MOUNTAIN BLUE-BIRD

Dainty of shape as the Maid of Spring,
Spirit and flash and flame,
Bluer than angel's eyes that fling
Desire and joy and shame.

The Alder leaps to a sapphire bloom—
The trembling Cedar spray
Sees an azure gleam in its ancient gloom,
A touch of the sky and away.

Blue as the sea in olden lands,
O bird of the mountain spires,
The gods wrought well when you left their hands,
Thou Flame of their keen desires!

PRIMROSE APRIL

There ran laughter down the meadows,
And the buds grew sweet with a name,
There was daffodil-gold in the woodlands
A hyacinth flash in the rain.

As a gem was the scented morning,
Where the thrush found a silver flute,
While the new-waked wind was aquiver
Like the strings of a singing lute.

Came a cry of joy from the valley
As a voice on the hills like flame
Called "April, April, April!"
Primrose April is here again!"

THOU AND I

Thou dost sing in the dawning,
But I, I cry in the night
To those who strive in darkness,
Who see no sign of light.

Thou dost sing of the certain,
The fulfillment of all hope;
But the doubt is thick I cry in,
Through which my brave souls grope.

Thou dost sing of victory,
Of the joy that crowns the right;
I cry to the souls defeated
The value of the fight.

Thou dost shout with the victor—
I cry, "Though naught be won
The fight is worth the fighting—
O souls, fight on, fight on!"

THE LAND OF THE SOUL

There is a land my soul knows where—
Where blue and white the Springtimes break,
Where man is more than self and clay
And master of the thrust of fate.

There is a land my soul knows where—
Where Summer is a world of gold
And Life is more than Time and Tide,
The Past is not a tale that's told.

There is a land my soul knows where—
Where life is in the very wind,
Where Ecstasy is day and night,
And Love the substance of the mind.

MY CITY GARDEN

I sing my garden, that clear pool of peace
Beside the troubled waters of the street.

I sing my garden, that contented plot
Carved from the noises of the city strife,
The abode of silence spite of clash and clang,
Wherein my heart may rest,
Where I may sit and smooth
The ruffled wings of dreams,

Think once again old thoughts and think new thoughts,
Where I may get the straight of things
And puzzle out the tangles till I see the end;
Until the scent of flowers creeps through my heart;
The low, sweet talking of the leaves
Smooths the worn brain, dissolves the lines of care.

I sing my garden where the passing wind,
Voiceless upon the street, reveals a tongue
And talks of friendship, love and loyalty,
Of childhood's old delights, of country lanes,
Of bending clovers on the morning hills
And skies untainted, where no city smoke
Stains the rich blue or fouls the living air.

I sing my garden, where the careless birds
Pour out the wine of song for thirsty ears,
Where little, eager winds come rushing in
To tell the news of pleasant things beyond,
The happenings in the world of my desire.

My neighbours roam afar in search of peace,
In search of life and joy and dreams,
But I sit in my garden plot, and dreams
In cloudy flocks come winging to my soul,
Laden with life and joy and plumed with peace.

Gateways to undiscovered lands swing wide their bars
That I may enter and explore their ways.
There spirits come with eyes that shine
Whispering dear names and news of happy things.

My garden has not much of space to ramble in,
Nor many flowers to sweet the loitering air:
Just three green trees and some low bushes grown
To cast a shade of calm to rest my soul,
A place for birds to nest in and to sing
And one small plot of grass to cool my feet.

Men laugh at its small measurements and say—
"Four walls hold many a room of nobler size"—
They do not know, they cannot understand
That in my garden is a grace
Which all the city's turmoil cannot shake.

My garden has no measurements for me—
Skies are its boundaries, the summer stars
Keep outposts there, streams pour their music out
To send a song of gladness to its trees,
While sunrise and the sunsets claim its widths their own.

For it has great relationships with all Earth's loveliness—
Uncharted seas whisper their secrets there,
The grasses of untrodden plains, the flowers
Of hidden glades, the mountain crags

Rich with their climbing trees
Send messages at morn, and midnight words of joy
To that small grass plot at my feet,
While the low shrubs, leafing beside the walk
Hear fairies singing on far moonlit hills
And when its blossoms bend before the wind,
I know the clovers sway in unison
Upon the scented fields beyond the town.

Or when a robin calls at Dawn, or turns
Eve's twilight silence into song,
I know that in deep woods afar
The pillared cool is lit with song,
As night with stars, of many a thousand birds
Singing harmonious to that robin's call.

My garden is not made from city lulls,
Not something snatched from noise and moil,
Nor some brief hour less stained than fellow hours
Plucked from the city's life of care;
But is a part of that great peace,
Which wraps the unspoiled wilderness of Earth.

It is a living fragment of her primal life,
A place wherein her beauty lingers still.

Here holy hands press wine from Grapes of God
To feed my soul and cleanse the vision of my dreams.

It is a corner of Earth's heart—
An outpost of her ancient life, a trysting place
Where I may stand before her face
And win the consummation of her kiss.

DESOLATION

Desolate blows the headland,
Desolate blows the sea
And the lone wind in the forest
Is chill like the heart of me.

Silence is on the clearing—
Silence and wind and rain—
And the great gaunt crags know shadow
As my own heart knoweth pain.

Dreary the dead dawn rises
And bleak on the sodden wave
The thin wind-form lies grayly
Like snow on a winter's grave.

For the headland—lonely twilight;
The sea—a lonely shore,
And in my heart the keening
Of sorrow forevermore.

THE VICTOR

I am tired tonight of the beating storm,
The drift of the cloud and the sullen rain—
My aching heart with grief is torn
And fain would return to the dark again.

What use is the day when condemned to the night,
Or sun unto heavy, blinded eyes?
What help to grief is lost delight,
Or joy, to the unwinged, beckoning skies?

I am tired, my heart, for the foe was stern—
And though I have won the heavy fight
But an ashen crown my sword did earn,
And a bitter drink for my lips tonight.

THE DAY BEFORE WINTER

Gone is the finer glory, gone the song,
Hushed too the trouble of the harvest days,
The happy rustle of the fruit and sheaves,
The croon of apples to their clinging leaves.

Silent of birdcall all the woodland ways,
Only the creek between its cliffs of green,
Heedless of time, goes singing on,
As though it knew some hidden cause for mirth—
Some secret that the wider lands may never know,
Yet that the wandering winds who come and go
May whisper to us if we hold our hearts
Like chalices uncovered, to the vagrant ebb and flow
Of all the World's wild beauty and her wayward grace.
Then at that whisper shall our hearts o'erflow and face to face
That moment we shall stand before a Day that Summer never knew,
That Spring had missed or never lured to Earth—
A Day with shining feet whose wondrous eyes
Are clear as waters, deep as turquoise skies—
A Day—a Being—in whose voice there hides
No hint of sadness and no touch of strife,
But in whose virile beauty and swift step there bides
A splendid health, a wise intoxication of the soul

In all that's fine, all that our dreams unroll
Of loveliness and High Adventure, as divine
As that Far Land where lips breathe joy in every breath,
Where Time may come not with his servant Death,
Where tears are things once heard of and forgot, and grief
A traveller's tale long told and past belief.

MY SHADOWY GARDEN

The Evening in my garden is full of lovely light
When Twilight loiters in it with promises of night.

And there my heart goes wandering, half happiness, half pain,
For there old memories waken, old loves come back again.

The Night within my garden more still than stillness is
Though wind-touched leaves may utter their little litanies.

With cool and dewy fragrance the sweet dark-watches pass
With moon-fire on the pathways and moon-foam on the grass.

My knowledge of the garden it changes with the light
Its learning of the daytime is not the same at night.

The garden of the sunlight I know each plant and wall;
The garden of the shadows I scarcely know at all.

There Presences come to me more silent than no sound,
Of quietude of spirit, ineffable, profound.

They speak of radiant mornings in far forgotten years
That tremble into memory like laughter caught through tears.

They touch with joy the shadows and sing into the gloam,
Nearer to heart than blood is and softer breathed than home.

They come with living memories whose joy may never cease;
They bring an old heart-gladness and then return in peace.

And so my shadowy garden is holy ground to me
And filled with lovely whispers and spirit mystery.

And there I find new courage when day's harsh hours decline
I tread its moonlit pathways all human, all divine.

There are the years defeated, there change has lost its powers
When in my shadowy garden Night walks with dreams and flowers.

OUR WORLD

What though to you this World is but a toy
For fate to play with and after play destroy,
Or though to you this world is but a grave
Wherein the base are buried with the brave,
Where though the noble with ignoble sinks to nothingness
You weep no tear nor sing one song the less—

To me this World is that majestic steep
Whereon Heaven's glories well may meet
With Love's triumphal music and make one,
And where, when Time is set and Years are done,
O glorious World, your perfect work shall light
The wonder of the Thronéd Infinite!

THE PEARLY EVERLASTING

Flower of the shining Summer,
Love of the Autumn day,
Sea-grey leaves defiant
When blustering Fall winds play.

Child of the joy of nature,
Faring o'er hill and glade
Where wilding gales may kiss you
Vagrant and unafraid.

Time with a touch impatient
Falters before your will,
Like a quiet catch of laughter
You thread the woodlands still.

Mid the fireweed's ragged pillars,
And the bracken's brown distress,
Like broken pools of moonlight
Soft flutters your pearl-grey dress.

Older than Spring's old music,
Older than Summer skies,
Along the lonely ranges
Your sturdy challenge flies.

Shattered the comely beauty
Where the Sun's great riot ran,
But you are left like laughter
Or hope, in the heart of man.

A SONG OF DELIGHT

The joy of the world is mine today!
'Tis rich as the wine of God,
And sweet as a vale in Araby
Is the way my feet have trod.

The winds that ripple the laughter clear
From my lips as morning fills
Have brought a song that the wild bees hear
In the depths of the honeyed hills.

The world that beckons my heart astray
Is glad as old Paradise,
And every tree is a spirit gay
Calling to splendid skies.

While every sea that swings ashore
Is keen with the breath of life,
And the music drifting above its roar
Is the shout of a joyous strife.

My feet are songs on the fragrant sod,
Mine eyes hold a gladder sight
For my heart is caught 'tween a laugh of God
And the joy of its own delight.

MONK AND TROUBADOR

Who is so sorrowful as I
O grey monk o' my heart?
The pathway through the woods
Is damp with drizzled rain,
The fog, the gloomy trees are part
Of me, O dull monk o' my heart.

Who is this laughing maid,
O questioning heart o' mine?
Out from the woods she ran,
Out from the flowers and birds—
A maid with winsome eyes ashine.
O heart, do monks drink love's high wine?

Who is so glad today as I
O heart, gay troubador?
The woods are bright with flowers,
The sweet birds call, while light
My singing lips her charms adore,
O heart o' mine, blythe troubador!

FEBRUARY

The days move on. The Second Month doth creep
Reluctant from the womb of time to icy life,
To clouded days, to nights of driving sleet,
Long banks of snow which curve on curve repeat
Till field and meadow, wood and silent plain
Seem but continuous image of themselves again.
Yet mid its days of storm this month doth shew
Pale hours of sudden sun and there below
The sheltering wall or warmth of some thick bush
The white-belled snowdrops through the soft mould push,
Spring's bells of resurrection; sweet and clear
Their jangled music charms the eye and ear.

THE SPAN

Life dashed my eyes with sunshine,
My face with dew;
My ears were glad with the song of birds,
And through and through
Glittered the golden morning.
My slumbers broke
I woke.

Love dashed my life with dreaming,
My heart with fire;
My lips drank deep of his fragrant wine,
His great desire.
Creation flashed on my spirit—
My kingdom gained
I reigned.

Years smote my heart with winter,
My nerves with rust;
They touched my ears with silence,
My wine with must.
Death prest to my lips the poppy head—
Tasting, I wept
And slept.

THE BAY

Faint wisps of smoke drifting about the bay,

Blue roughened waters where the glad winds play,
And shadowy ships pass out
Beyond the horizons in the fading day.

TO AN APRIL MAID

I come to you in sober garments clad—
 You are not glad.
 You say that I should sing;
You do not see beneath the quiet of my eyes
 A world of laughter lies.

I come to you with blithesome song and gay—
 You turn away
 And say I should be sad,
And fail to hear beneath the song of mine that cheers
 The sound of falling tears.

O April Maid, what is it you desire
 Or cold or fire?
 Is't tears you wish or song?
Know the wild winds of God more wilful will than thine
 Of storm or shine?

Can I not satisfy your throbbing heart?
 What made you start?
 Do you desire still more?
You have but all I had, yet now your heart I'll prove,
 Take, Dear, my love.

THE STREET END

The quiet sea dusted with sunset gold,
 The brooding hills lifting legioned trees,
The distant snows that whiten to the blue—
 How doth my soul bow down and worship these!

A SONG OF AUTUMN

There's a sign in the Autumn world today,
 And a glint on the goldenrod;
There's a sound in the dusk of the whispering trees,
 And a voice in the crisping sod;

But the pearly-everlasting sings
A sunset song of leaves and wings.

There's a purple tint on the sea today,
Where the rainbow colors sweep,
And a fairy touch on the yellow shore
Like the light one sees in sleep.

But the happy robin calls and sings
Of fruiting orchards and of wings.

There's dew on the crimson dogwood leaves,
And dew on the maple's gold,
And a lazy mist on the distant hills
In many a filmy fold;

But the woodland thrush pipes up and sings
"Today she comes, today; with wings!"

There's a merry grace in the world today—
New color on land and sea—
And wild, sweet laughter on the winds—
And fragrance in every tree;

But fragrance, color and laughter sings,
"She comes, she comes! O Wings, O Wings!
Be swift on the wind for the joy she brings,
Is love, love, love! The Soul of Things!"

SERENADE

The passion-flowers for you blood-red
Within my garden blow,
And all the pleasant herbs like thoughts
About its borders grow.
The lilies shimmering 'neath the moon
Are heavy with the dew;
The roses with their perfect gifts
Are listening Love, for you.

My garden like a dream doth lie,
The full moon lights it fair.
It only needs your presence, dear
To make a heaven there.
My heart is like a stormy sea
Dashed white with trembling fear,
Nor dare I seek those happy walks
Until your steps draw near—

But when through shadowy trees your face
Slow glimmers into view,

And o'er the misty lawns you come
As silent as the dew,
Then heaven itself can never know
More perfect joy than mine,
Nor shall its angels find a grace
Nor lovelier star to shine.

The passion-flowers bloom crimson, dear,
Within my life for you,
The lilies pure as snow at dawn
Are sweet with chalice dew:
My heart is like a summer sea,
Dashed white with wind-kissed foam
When softly through the flowers I hear,
Your happy footsteps come!

ASTERS

When the towhees haunt the grasses
And the bush on quiet wing;
Then the staid October glory
Tells the world another story
Than the rush of leaf and flower in madcap Spring.

Then the starred wind-shaken Asters
Light the trails with frosty blue,
Where the silent forest meadows
Catch the twilight and the shadows
With a smoky orange sunset piercing through.

There the voices of the bluff wind
Through the blowing Autumn skies
Call the Asters to the sedges,
Down the broken forest edges,
Where the ruddy leafed viburnum spreads her dyes.

For the Aster is a wilding
And the solitary ways
See its beauty cool and slender
When some dawn breathes low and tender,
As the Summer flickers southward through the haze.

With the tang of leaf and bracken,
With the misty glades for home,
There the Aster greets the day
With its flower of twilight-grey
When the fog-wreathes wrap the hills with sleepy foam.

To the woodlands they are song-flowers,
And the golden Autumn moods
Hear the music of them ringing,

With the call of all birds singing
In the litany of sunset through the woods.

THE SEA CALL

I must go back to the sea to-night,
For the sea is in my blood,
I cannot rest and ever I hear
The voice of its great grey flood.

For I was bred by its running tide
And cradled by wave and foam,
Its windy plains were the dreams I rode,
Its shore-girt cliffs my home.

Your golden fields are pleasant lands
Where the gifts of life increase,
Your dawn-smit hills are a gladsome sight
Whose Presences are peace.

But I belong to the sea. My heart
Cries out for its fret and roar,
For the hiss and fling of its splendid surge
That crumples along the shore.

I know its strength when the waters flail
Their thunders upon the land,
I have heard its waves on a summer morn
Come whispering up the sand;

And all its voices are in my soul,
Its multitudinous tongue
Has told of lands like golden dreams
Whose songs have never been sung.

So I must fare from your ways to-night
And return to the living sea,
For a call has come on the twilight wind
And shaken the heart of me.

THE GOD WIND

The West Wind bloweth uncurbed tonight
From its gates on the star-bound sea,
My keel drives free through the cloudy light
And the spume beats white alee.

While out to windward the wild waves comb;

Rough crags on the fading sky
And the spray-hid shore and the lights of home
In the gathering darkness die.

Tonight my boat is a thing o' dream
And I, with a strength new-born,
Drive into the West where the low stars gleam
And the sunset sinks in storm:

Out to the West where there's room to breathe
And nothing to cramp the soul,
Where a wider sky the earth doth wreath
And life like a golden bowl

Is abrim with joy of the God's good wine—
I drink it with thirsty lips—
And lo, the springs of delight are mine
And leap to my finger tips!

My boat rides low and my boat rides high,
The winds rush in from the deep,
The great waves chaunt to the star-set sky
As their long crests landward sweep,

But I—I ride on the out-shore tide,
With the strong West Wind for wings
And over the storm-flung foam I drive
And my thrilling spirit sings—

"'Tis the God Wind out of Eternity
And filled with its Breath Divine,
The highroads of the Ancient Sea
And the Gates of the West are mine!"

YOUR FACE

Caught in the twilight of your hair
The aureole of sunset lies;
The wallflower's fragrant velvets share
The beauty of your morning eyes;

And joy is yours and pride of race,
Yet when I meet you on the street
There comes a light into your face
That makes my cup of joy complete.

There's something in your smiling glance
Like freshness of the mountain flowers,
It makes my toiling pulses dance
And glories all the passing hours;

The world her wondrous lore unfolds,

Is filled with messages for me,
Because I know your dear heart holds
The secret of my ecstasy!

THE GOLDEN HAWKWEED

Of all the sights of Canada
To tell in song and story,
Give me the Richmond meadows
Where the lush, green grasses grow;
Where the light-foot hours are holden
In a chain of blossoms golden,
When the Hawkweed in its glory
Sets the meadowland aglow!

On every road in Richmond
The level fields are golden,
When above the pluming grasses
Hang the sapphire skies of June,
While across the shining reaches
To the far-off, blue-rimmed beaches,
The meadowlark is netting
All the wonder in his tune!

There youth comes tripping back again
Across those golden meadows,
There joy returns to kiss you
With soft fingers on your lips;
While beyond the nodding blossoms
And apast the swift cloud-shadows,
The fleeting-footed laughter
Like a lovely Naiad slips,
And those golden flowers are swinging,
And the meadowlark is singing
That your cares shall flee like swallows
Above the golden hollows
For the wonder shall not miss you
If you understand his strain!

O there across those happy fields
A thousand winds are blowing,
With all the Summer's glamourie
Upon their scented wings;
There all the swaying headlands
Like golden roads are shewing,
While every lark from fluting throat
His sweetest message flings,
And like a sky of golden stars,
The Hawkweed flowers are glowing
And every honey-scented hour
A new enchantment brings!

For O, the fields of Hawkweed
With their bended grasses swaying,
The golden-blossomed Hawkweed
That sings the song of June,
In Richmond where the blue-eyed winds
About the fields are playing,
Where if you listen carefully
You'll hear above the rune
The meadowlark is singing,
Like a sudden, sweet bell ringing,
The Hawkweed's golden glory,
The golden Hawkweed's story
Sung to greet the sunshine
In a quaint and olden tune
On the level fields of Richmond,
The golden fields of Richmond,
Where all the world is golden
And the very sun is folden
In the Hawkweed's golden bloom!

TWILIGHT

You in whom the Gods immortal
Weave such mysteries,
Dare I, kneeling at your portal,
Bring dim songs like these?

In your soul forever ringing
Cosmic harmonies,
Glory unto glory singing—
Hills and winds and seas.

How shall my low songs delight you
Sobbing through few bars?
Shall these faltering lips requite you
For the loss of stars?

Splendour of far visions calling,
Deeps of burning light—
Here but rarely starlight falling
Through the heavy night.

You to whom the heavens gave Glory
In its joys had part,
Can you bend to list the story
Of one faltering heart?

Can you leave those realms of splendour,
Such great treasure trove,
For Earth's happiness so slender—
Trembling human love?

THE CHALICE

O Chalice fair
Filled with God's high wine!
Beauty is thine
As the hill blown apple bloom
White flushed rose without.
Blood-red is thy bowl within
As a crimson lily-cup
And sweet for the lips to sup.
While wreathing they rim about,
Wild thorns and apples of love
And fruits whereby men sin.

What is the wine thou holdest
To the thirsty lips of man
That he should be drunk of thy richness
Since ever the world began?
White wine thou hast for the children—
And the world is glad for it—
But whence is that fiery drink
That man should go mad for it
And burn at heart for his lips' desire?

Wine for the thirsty world
Spiced with perilous sweet:
Fragrant its trembling beat
To the rim as it shakes in light
With the joy of its own delight.

Wine thou hast for the nations,
Wine of laughter and tears,
Wine of life for the hungry—
The wine that lifts and cheers,
But red thou hast for the thirsty
That shaketh man's heart with fears,
The red that consumes like fire,
So salt that ever we thirst,
So bitter that ever we fear,
So hurting that naught may cure—
O wine of the Woman red
And still and deep and pure!
Yet all is forgot
When the lips are hot
Save the sweet and passionate lure.

O Chalice of Woman filled
To the brim with the welter of life,
With passionate stress and strife,
What wonderful gift is thine?
What madness divine?

What terrible ecstasy?
What marvel of deep desire,
That man should give all for thy beauty
Or die for the pain of thy fire?

O Cup of Desire that floweth
With essence divine
Thy mystery who knoweth,
That man shall receive thee and live?
That man shall deny thee and die?

Thou art the Holy Grail
And the blood of thy bowl
Is the wine of thy sacrifice,
Yet a quenchless fount of joy,
And he who doth drink of it
Is drunken forevermore of thy love,
Though he knows not the cost of it
Nor how through what little rift
It ebbs with thy soul away.
Yet let him but shun thy bowl
Though he win of the world its throne,
And misseth but thee alone,
He knoweth not song nor star,
Nor joy, nor pain of desire,
Nor the glorious deeps of the soul,
Nor love that purgeth with fire.

What gift dost thou make to the world?
What intoxicate gift?
For let man but quaff at thy brim
He treadeth the peaks afar,
And is as the high gods are
Who compass the wrong from right
And ruleth the day and night!
The stars are as stairs for his feet,
The heavens an opened scroll,
For he findeth within thy bowl
The joy and meaning of things
That maketh his soul complete!
He cares not for crash of star,
The hurtle of suns afar,
But strong in thy might
He paces the staggering sod
And knoweth all depth and height
And ruleth all things as God.

O Chalice rare,
The whole world's lips
Must drink at thy bowl
Or ever the world be saved—
For thy wine is the Wine of Life.
Though when the white flush turns red
Man scoffs at its crimsoning
And bitters it sweet with lust,

And fouls it with treacherous must,
And ere his own soul be born
He spills it with selfish hands
And groans of the loss and stain,
Then fiercely dashes thy bowl away
And shatters it on the sands,
And waketh to weep and mourn,
To kneel by the shards and pray,
To restore it as best he may
And worship with heavier strife.

O Chalice, O Woman rare,
What terrible love is thine?
What wine dost thou give? O what wine!
For all men as one man thirst
Of the wine of thy soul
And all men as one man drink
Of thy fateful bowl,
And pledge thee life,
Aye, pledge thee heaven and soul.
For with thirst that is ever a thirst
And desire that is ever a desire,
With love that consumeth like fire,
With hope that chilleth like cold,
With madness he seeketh thy soul.
He drinks of thy life and returneth
As a moth to the light that burneth,
As drouth to the rain that saveth,
With torture of thee is he bent,
With beauty of thee is he spent,
With thy spirit is he fulfilled!
He strikes thee and wakens to judgment,
He scorns, but love coming after
Touches his eyes with vision
To see thy glory revealed,
The light of thy spirit unsealed.

* * *

And the ache of his thirst becomes laughter
And the sting of desire becomes song,
And the bleeding and taking are done,
For the drink of thy bowl hath redeemed,
O Chalice of God!
And his soul and thy soul are one!

THE EXILE

O Love, I've sought for thee from star to star
Since when I lost thee on that weeping hill,
Yet though heaven's deeps I search, I miss thee still.

On distant ways between the cloudy worlds
With aching heart I sought, yet sought in vain—
O Love, dost thou know loneliness or pain?

Glad days no more, nor flowers about my feet,
Nor singing winds through twilights of deep skies—
O Love, break thou the dark with thy sweet eyes!

Come from thy Heavens beyond my piercing wings,
Crush this surrounding dark to very light;
Sweet Star of Love, break through the bitter night!

* * *

Is not my punishment enough?

INVIOULATE

How shall I know thee, thou who strangely hidest
In garments of our fleshed mortality?
How shall I know thee, thou whose light abidest
Behind the beauty of the quiet eye?

I hear thine accents in the voice of laughter,
Thy whisper lurks within the questioning lip,
But when I turn, no knowledge follows after
The first quick flash the hiding tongue let slip.

Thou art, I know, as brilliant as the morning,
Yet here thou dwell'st in dusky garb of clay.
The stars weave radiance for thy robe's adorning—
These fleshly masks no hint of them betray.

Thine is a beauty past the mind's conceiving—
Thy face a loveliness beyond my dreams,
Yet thou art veiled and I am blind, receiving
No help from thee, no soul enlightening beams.

Forgive me if the mists of years unclearing
So fog the vision of my spirit sight
That I mistake some glorious face, appearing
To my dim eyes, for thine of sweet delight.

For while dear Loves of Earth are coming, going,
Though oft I fail and still clay blindeth me,
Some day, unveiled, thou'lt turn to meet me knowing
I kept my soul inviolate for thee.

SEARCHING

Ah, my Beloved, though I strive and strive,
Thou wilt not come nor wilt thou answer me.
Where art thou in the morning beams that drive
Across the hills and lessen down the sea?

I search for thee upon the busy streets
Or on the morning meadows seek thy feet;
No wonder of thy light my questing meets,
No shadows of thy wings across me beat.

Thou art not in the sunrise nor the day,
Nor in the silence of the holy night;
Thou art not in the eve where twilights stay;
Nor hid within the rapture of delight.

Thou com'st not clad in clear celestial fire,
My heart knows not the deeps of thine abode;
Thou ledest not the voicing, heavenly choir,
Nor shine thy feet on any marvelling road.

Thou hidden Glory, Light of God, O lead,
Beloved of my soul, my spirit home!
I may not storm thy grace by word or deed
For only when I'm ready wilt thou come.

Perchance within the mystery of the Dawn
Or in the hush of Twilight's fading hour
Thou'lt grow from out the shadows or wilt form
In my own soul swift blowing like a flower.

I cease my search: My hunger cry I still:
I make nor prayer nor any call for thee.
Thou wilt not come for striving so I kneel
That all thy Light may work its will in me.

My haste thy stern withholding shall make whole
'Till deep within, Love standing white and sweet,
Flings wide the gateways of my waiting soul
To greet the music of thy entering feet.

ALL IN ALL

A single blade of grass may hold all heaven on its spear
Of diamond light;
A single reed may shake to God's eternal laughter,
When winds blow right.

A globe of dew upon the cedar's twig doth know the force
That moulds the spars;

The gnat that hums about the rose doth sing the spherêd song
Of morning stars.

Each wayside rock doth hold the granite hills, each smallest tone
Speaks in our ears
God's greatest uttered Word wherewith He breaks Life out of Death
Moulds Void to years.

And so in everything doth bide doors to the all unknown.
Turn but the key
And straightway there doth rush upon the waking wondering soul.
Infinity.

UNDERSTANDING

If you would tell what I want to know
And say what my heart would understand,
Bring me a sprig of springtime cedar,
And one white trillium in your hand.

Then I shall know, though clouds may gather
That out of the heart of Life you come,
Where sweet of desire lives on forever,
The year of the world is forever young.

* * *

If you would tell what I want to know
And say what my soul would understand,
Bring me a dream of love's fulfilment,
Come with the gift of it in your hand.

Then I shall know, though skies may darken,
Though lights of the laughing eyes disperse,
My soul shall live, a joy forever,
With Spring in the Heart of the Universe.

DAYBREAK

The sunrise silvers on the hills
And down the waiting river spills,
The song-birds call from tree to tree
So joyously—

And suddenly across the world
Day's radiant messengers are hurled.

PEACE

"Not peace but a sword"

PROLOGUE

Terror her mother, hate hath been her sire;
Storm wove her cradle, her nursery was pain;
Hope shall not know her nor happier desire;
She shall seek comfort and pity woo in vain.

Tended by sorrow and shadowed thick by tears,
Joy shall not kiss her nor ease may bring her mirth;
She shall grow darkly, companioned by stark fears,
Wandering an outcast and desolate on Earth.

THEME

No pen shall write it under smiling skies,
No silken hand shall give it to the Earth,
No radiant dawn shall bloom it for our eyes,
Nor shall it come with heraldry of mirth.

We shall not sleep then waken to its kiss,
We shall not find it in the laughing throng;
But tears may gleam a moment in its bliss
And pain may glimpse it when the nights are long.

No angel, calm with unremembered years,
Shall bring peace to us as a heavenly gift;
No sudden glory, stilling all our fears,
Shall break, like morning, where the shadows lift.

The battle's flame alone shall blazon peace;
The storm that devastates the shaking land
Shall drop a stillness when its thunders cease—
Let fall the pearl from its destroying hand.

Who holdeth Truth though blessed Hope be dim,
Through days of rage, 'mid hosts of hate and gloom,
With sudden splendour Peace shall come to him
And Time's slow centuries break to golden bloom;

For he shall see upon that startled morn,
Horrid with shoutings, red with sword at feast,
Beyond the carnage all the stormy dawn
Breaks like God's laughter on a world at peace.

For him shall serve the day to heal his wound,
For him the kiss of love and rest by night—

Then shall be given, lest his spirit swoond—
A new sword and a sterner war to fight.

EPILOGUE

Death may not touch her nor terror check her pace,
War shall not smother nor weakness smite her will,
Strong through the turmoil with glory on her face
Always her legions shall see her fighting still.

Stayed not by sorrow nor blinded by her tears,
Torn though be her vestures, broken hope her crown.
Battling through the storm-wrack, guarded by stark fears,
Dawn shall see her triumph, Hate's last sword go down.

THE PRODIGAL

I sing not for the ruck of men, the milling crowd,
Those souls who wear and worship the chains of mob or priest;
Nor light I torch for burning, I singe no Ruler's beard;
I bear no whip to sting, no threat to chill the feast.

I sing not for the prodigal content to feed the swine,
Who in his soul doth hunger not for truth,
But kneels to food and wine or silken robe and flesh,
For him I raise no song, I feel no touch of ruth.
I would not lift one link of all his chains;
I would not take one step to raise that prodigal.

And yet I sing and yet I search for men,
And yet I cry aloud across the dark—
Perchance there may be one who tired of chains
Doth raise the "Hammer Will" to break his links apart.

Or lest one prodigal who tired of swine,
Doth turn from them remembering his Home;
For him I sing, for him I cry aloud—for he is mine—
"Awake and seek! Awake and seek! Alone
Break thou the chains! Slay thou the swine!
The hills of Home lie yonder and the road is thine!
Thine is the "Sword Desiring," which the swine shall slay;
Thine is the "Hammer Will," with which thy chains to break;
This is thy hour, this the new-born day:
Beauty is thine and Strength and High Desire:
Break loose thy prisoned soul, arise and shake
The dust from off thy feet. O Prodigal! O Child of Fire!

Look up! The sky is dreaming of the sun,
Though paths be steep and dark the Winds of Night,

Though others hug their chains or love their swine,
Yonder the hills are rippling into light!

Leave ye the thongs and husks and let us climb:
I reach to thee my hands, O Brother, clasp them tight.
Home is beyond the sunrise and the way
Is white with wonder of the coming day.
I am thy Spirit, the Light of thy Desire!
Splendour of Urging Wings! The Uncreated Fire!
We will arise together, Desire and Sword and Will—
See how the Dawn-Star gleams on yonder hill!

A SONG OF SPRING

The meadow larks I hear them in the dim and fragrant dawn—
(I wonder why my heart rejoices so).
There are glad calls in the leafage, there are wings upon the lawn;
There is wine within the romping wind
That sets the blood aglow.

There is something in the morning that the winter did not chill.
(I wonder why my heart rejoices so).
There is song adown the valley, there is music on the hill;
And every living thing is glad
For each red life doth know

That there's springtime in the morning, that there's greenness
on the Earth.
(And that's why every heart rejoices so).
The hills are gowned with flowers and the valley's filled with mirth—
For the laughing eyes of Springtime
Have set the world aglow.

THE PRESENCE

Swift as some valley morning, keen with frost,
Made brilliant by the sun, new waked
From Summer's dreaming, Summer lost
Or fled with all her swooning hours,
Her purple twilights, her unchoosing flowers,
With the sharp tang from fern and leaf,
With greening stubble and delaying sheaf—

There comes a Presence, calm, intangible.
Clear as a mountain wind, that cool and sweet
Sharpens about the trails with winey breath,
When shadow after shadow, cloudy crag and peak

Lift on the blue horizons where at noon
Leaves like little flames drift down from bough to bough
Or breaking through pleached trees,
With slow desire seek the lone paths to sleep—
 So comes that Presence, silent, beautiful,

When Autumn bids his first farewell and all the air
Is sweet with fading incense of the flowers—
When golden lie the resting fields and rare
With crimson-gold the maples flame and crimson-grey
The dogwood stands, while all the day
Is silent as the night-time's velvet hours—
 Then broods that Presence, close, inscrutable.

'Tis then, when Spring's sweet turbulence is past
And Summer's fervency and Autumn gales are gone,
Ere yet the Winter comes with frosty beard, wan blast
Of snow-winds, and days grow dark with storm,
There comes that Presence, holy, mystical,
Who bending, parts the curtains of our soul that hid
The splendour of His skies,
And lays strong deathless fingers on our foolish eyes,
With gift of Light,
And breathes immortal beauty on our wayward hearts.

THE DIVINE BEAUTY

Spirit of the mighty rhythms
 Where the star-led chorus swings,
Here we woo your glorious Presence
 With the music of our strings;
With the charm of line and color
 With the spell of word and lute,
Till we stand before your portals
 And the storming notes grow mute.

In our hearts the wild obsessions
 That the worlds of life have raised,
Bow before your Feet in Worship,
 Sink before your Face amazed:
All the passion of our searching,
 All achievements of our day,
Lost in wonder at your Beauty,
 In that wonder fade away.

For the pulsing of your measures,
 For the rhythm of your Song,
Brings to us the Higher Vision
 Where the sun-crowned spirits throng:
Wakes in us an ancient beauty,
 Whose returning, long delayed

Lures us with its dazzling splendour
To the Hills of Gold and Jade.

To the richness of your Presence,
To the marvel of that Place,
Where the throngs of the Immortals
Cast their dreams before your Face.
So to win your benediction
And your Beauty gleaming through
Wakes our soul's ecstatic vision,
Sets our feet to climb anew.

Spirit of the Cosmic Rhythms,
Mistress of the Living Spheres,
Here we catch but broken glimpses
Through the radiance of your Tears.

LOVE UNCHANGING

Shall I not sing to thee, O my Beloved?
Dawn cometh swiftly with kirtle of gold?
Shall I not sing to thee, lo, blue-eyed morning
Lifts her shy beauty o'er meadow and wold.

Shall I not sing to thee, Mistress, Beloved?
Low at thy feet now my heart lays its worth—
All it has gathered these brief years of living,
All the long harvests from Death unto Birth.

Shall I not sing to thee, O my Beloved?
(Though the world whitens our souls grow not old).
My love which sang to thee through those past wanderings
Sings thee today, for love groweth not cold.

Shall I not sing to thee, O my Beloved,
Songs that I sang to thee aeons ago,
Ere the white moon lit the Earth with her splendour,
Or the hot sun burned from Darkness to Dawn?

Shall I not bring to thee sheaves of my praises
Garnered from passion in lives of our past?
Kneel as I kneeled to thee ages on ages,
Sing thee the loveliest song at the last?

THE WOLF-WIND

The Wind of the Wolves is awake tonight
For a storm brews in the hills—

The black Wolf-Wind tongues on the ridge
As the gathering darkness fills—

It fills with the howl of the grey Wolf-Wind,
Grim hunters twain are they,
For black and grey, the great Storm-Wolves
Will hunt till break of day.

In lonely valleys the forests wail
At the Wolf-Wind's sudden sweep,
In whispering fear the pine-trees tell
Of the way the Wind-Wolves leap.

For the Wolves are ranging the hills tonight,
The Wolves of the stooping storm,
From smoking crags and clouded bench
Fierce eyed and gaunt of form.

There's sound in the hills like a demon call,
So faint you can hardly hear
It grows and dies again, again,
Each time more deadly clear.

The Wind-Wolves bay to the shrouded moon
As the dark night gathers in;
The grey Wolf cries, the black replies,
Ere the dreadful hunt begin.

O lean and grim are their flitting forms,
The grey, the black as they run
With fiery eyes and burning breath,
They're gathering one by one.

Aye, one by one till the packs be full
There's fear in the moaning pines,
Gaunt shadows drift to the smoking hills
Where a Wolf, impatient, whines.

A vibrant roar through the clouded crags
'Tis the Wind-Wolves out at last,
Full cry through the din of the crashing trees
They hunt with howling blast.

There's a sudden rush of trampling feet,
Hark! to that snarling sound!
They spring at the throat of a trembling pine
And bear it to the ground.

So the Wind-Wolves spring from their cloudy lairs
The fierce, wild packs go free,
To ravage and tear the shrieking woods
And worry the startled sea.

The foam flecks white 'neath their trampling feet,
The wind is their fiery breath,

The roar of the storm is their hunting howl,
The meat of their jaws is death.

The Wind of the Wolves is Lord tonight,
Ruthless, and grim, and stark,
While Fear rides high with the mouthing packs
That rush through the frightened dark.

The valleys and hills are gaunt with fear,
The waters lashed with dread,
For the wild Wolf-Wind will hunt tonight
Till its ravening maws be fed.

FAME

How do you sleep, my Brothers,
You of the "deathless fame?"
You were the poets of Babylon,
You were the seers of Ashkelon,
Your words men built their altars on,
But—we have forgotten your name!

How do you sleep, my Brothers,
Who won the World's acclaim?
You were the Sword of Nineveh,
You were the Spear of Kerbela,
You were the Voice of Ellasa,
But—we have forgotten your name!

Are these your mounds, my Brothers?
There are thousands around the same.
While the desert winds are heavy,
With dust of the grave-worm's levy,
Though the pen of the years write steady,
It writes in the air your name!

Should you return, my Brothers,
Your visions to tell again,
And sing through the spice-sweet mornings,
Your loves, your joys and your scornings,
And men bring the old adornings,
Would you trouble your heart for fame?

Once you went questing, Brothers,
And what did you win of Earth?
"A Name? Did she know you after?
"A Fame?" Was it aught but laughter,
That rang to a cobwebbed rafter
In a house of bubble's worth?

You may rejoice, my Brothers,

That once you breathed the air,
Knew beauty and love's sweet clinging,
Saw life as a dawn's beginning
And sang for the joy of singing,
That death was a night as fair,

So sleep you well, my Brothers,
Who won so well of fame.
You were the Spear of Chalcedon,
You were the Sword of Barcelon,
You were the lance of Avalon,
But—we have forgotten your name!

ECSTASY

O life is sweet and the blood is racing,
The dew is adawn in May's new eyes,
And Hope and Joy go out together
With Youth to shout to the singing skies.
And they shall roam through the endless heavens,
Shall drink with the Gods their mighty wine,
With Beauty and Love one Flame forever
Filling their hearts with a Life Divine.

THE SINGLE DELIGHT

Daintily blow
Fresh as new snow
Under the forest trees,
Little white Queen
Of the moss carpet green
Scenting the wandering breeze.

Far from the ken
Of the world of men
Lifting thy petals sweet,
Fragile and light
As the mists of night
Where pools and the moonbeams meet.

Glad is thy hour
Fairy wee flower,
Child of the hills untrod;
In thy Northland
The great trees stand,
But thou art the kiss of God.

A WISH

Ah, my Beloved—to feel thy kiss tonight
Falling like evening dew when day fades in the West—
To see the sweetness of thy shining eyes
Like twilight stars awatch above my rest—
And then to sleep till heartache all be gone,
And waken some fresh morning calm and near to thee
There meet the kiss of thy enraptured lips
And in thine eyes read Immortality.

THE ETERNAL NOW

There is not any life more blest than this
Through all the glittering wonder of the skies—
Not any angel in a white starred heaven
Can know more joy than in my own soul lies.

Though years be brief and pains assail my flesh
And though grey-fingered age must touch my head,
Such exultation doth my soul possess
As would bring laughter though earth's hopes were dead.

Though some may dream of distant worlds of joy
And some may teach through doors of death, a light,
I know that gladness wraps me round today,
A sun hath risen which doth know no night.

I ask no future for its promised flowers.
Nor any heaven for life of finer way,
Within myself doth spring Eternal joy
And I rejoice forever in Today.

THE CRAG

Below doth reach a sea of green,
Beside a waterfall doth rave,
And granite wall and windy cave
With furrowing valleys in between.
Beyond the tumbled hills is seen—
Where the last lights of sunset lag—
Black, forbidding, desolate,
In the lone sky—A mighty crag!

NOVEMBER

Now chill November with a hand of night
Doth clip the borders of the cheerful light
And with a pall of cloud upon the skies
Doth mourn the tomb where Summer's beauty lies.
Yet still there dwells a wonder in the woods,
A power to meet the spirit's various moods:
In forest ways the scent of fallen leaves,
Bramble and brake, and tangled tufts of grass—
The wild folks' home, the birds' ungarnered sheaves—
Wherein the velvet feet of nature pass
From sound to silence, earth to spirit sense,
While he who on the lonely hills intrudes
Or wanders through the forest solitudes
Will meet a beauty not to summer known,
A dignity enrobed in browns and greys
Not seen when Spring ascends her vernal throne
Nor glimpsed along the Summer's brilliant ways,
And for the scent of June's surprising rose
Will catch the tang of Nature's ancient spell,
Essence of olden chemistry distilled
Ere she had charmed the violet from the skies
Or taught the lily morn's impassioned hour,
Or trained the bee's delight to seek the flower!

THRILLS CONSUMING

A song and a laugh and a woman's kiss,
 These three mail my heart,
From scorn and grief and ugliness
 And hatred's venom'd dart.
A truth, a deed and a brave ideal,
 These three fire my soul,
When the drab and grind of life reveal
 Hope like a broken bowl.

THE SPIRIT WITHIN

I sought for Beauty on the shining verge of day,
But one cried, "Sorrow," and I turned away.
I sought for Truth about the meadows with their flowers,
One cried "Delusion," and I fled the singing bowers.

I sought for Joy beneath the lovely midnight skies,
But tears came at a call and blurred my eyes.

I, wounded, sought the silence of my soul,
And there a spirit met and touched and made me whole.
Then Dawn broke golden in the living East,
Then Earth was beauty-decked as for a feast.
The land was glad with laughter and along
The very winds raced music, radiance, song.
For Truth and Joy and Beauty, one spirit yet apart,
Reached me through loneliness and left
Three glories in my heart.

ETERNITY

I saw Eternity. In form 'twas as a child
With clear fresh lips and wonderful deep eyes,
And everlasting childhood on its face. And wise
And tender was its look towards far off skies
Through me and beyond me. Yet methought it smiled.

I saw Eternity. And 'twas a dreadful face
That knew all sin, and suffering, and reckoned them as naught.
All joy, all hope, all love that men or angels wrought
It knew, and knew them as a swift keen thought—
A light, a shade of no abiding place.

I saw Eternity. Most glorious its features,
Most wonderful its beauty was and power.
Methought it measured all man's triumphs hour by hour,
As the long pregnant years budded and burst in flower
And faded, the great ideals of all earth's striving creatures.

It was God's face. I saw not, yet I saw.
The stars shone through it, yet more real than they
It did persist. Its loveliness was of the flowers of day,
The day-flowers that bloom as ages pass away;
Or mystic wonderments of nights when moon and stars hold sway,
The beauty of Inexorable, Living, Glorious Law.

It had the youngness of the spring upon its brow,
Of all the springs that break on all the worlds of space.
White wings of thought made cloudy that great face
That knew no age yet caught all years, all times, all aeons,
and set their place
In one great consummation of Eternal Law.

I saw Eternity. In face 'twas as a child,
Supernal, dreadful, overwhelming
Yet methought—IT smiled.

[End of *The Immortal Dweller*, by Ernest Fewster]