

# **Songs and Sonnets**

Mathilde Blind



# Table of Contents

<b><u>Songs and Sonnets</u></b> .....	<b>1</b>
<u>Mathilde Blind</u> .....	2
<u>LOVE IN EXILE</u> .....	4
<u>I</u> .....	5
<u>II</u> .....	6
<u>III</u> .....	7
<u>IV</u> .....	8
<u>V</u> .....	9
<u>VI</u> .....	10
<u>VII</u> .....	11
<u>VIII</u> .....	12
<u>IX</u> .....	13
<u>X</u> .....	14
<u>XI</u> .....	15
<u>XII</u> .....	16
<u>XIII</u> .....	17
<u>XIV</u> .....	18
<u>XV</u> .....	19
<u>XVI</u> .....	20
<u>XVII</u> .....	21
<u>XVIII</u> .....	22
<u>XIX</u> .....	23
<u>XX</u> .....	24
<u>XXI</u> .....	25
<u>XXII</u> .....	26
<u>XXIII</u> .....	27
<u>XXIV</u> .....	28
<u>XXV</u> .....	29
<u>XXVI</u> .....	30
<u>L'ENVOI</u> .....	31
<u>SONGS</u> .....	33
<u>PAUPER POET'S SONG</u> .....	34
<u>SNOW OR SNOWDROPS?</u> .....	35
<u>A SPRING SONG</u> .....	36
<u>"ALL MY HEART IS STIRRING LIGHTLY."</u> .....	37
<u>APRIL RAIN</u> .....	38
<u>APPLE-BLOSSOM</u> .....	39
<u>THE MUSIC-LESSON</u> .....	40
<u>"ONCE ON A GOLDEN DAY."</u> .....	41
<u>ROSE D'AMOUR</u> .....	42
<u>ONLY A SMILE</u> .....	43
<u>THE SONGS OF SUMMER</u> .....	44
<u>"YEA, THE ROSES ARE STILL ON FIRE."</u> .....	45
<u>AUTUMN TINTS</u> .....	46
<u>ON AND ON</u> .....	47
<u>A CHILD'S FANCY</u> .....	48
<u>ON A VIOLA D'AMORE</u> .....	49
<u>BROWN EYES</u> .....	50

# Table of Contents

## Songs and Sonnets

<u>MY LADY</u> .....	51
<u>SOMETIMES I WONDER</u> .....	52
<u>MANY WILL LOVE YOU</u> .....	53
<u>A DREAM</u> .....	54
<u>GREEN LEAVES AND SERE</u> .....	55
<u>THE HUNTER'S MOON</u> .....	56
<u>A PARTING</u> .....	57
<u>LASSITUDE</u> .....	58
<u>SEEKING</u> .....	59
<u>SONNETS</u> .....	60
<u>CLEAVE THOU THE WAVES</u> .....	61
<u>HOPE</u> .....	62
<u>THE DEAD</u> .....	63
<u>TIME'S SHADOW</u> .....	64
<u>A SYMBOL</u> .....	65
<u>SUFFERING</u> .....	66
<u>ANALKH</u> .....	67
<u>SLEEP</u> .....	68
<u>DEAD LOVE</u> .....	69
<u>DESPAIR</u> .....	70
<u>TO MEMORY</u> .....	71
<u>SAVING LOVE</u> .....	72
<u>HAUNTED STREETS</u> .....	73
<u>MOTHERHOOD</u> .....	74
<u>THE AFTER-GLOW</u> .....	75
<u>TO THE OBELISK</u> .....	76
<u>MANCHESTER BY NIGHT</u> .....	77
<u>THE RED SUNSETS, 1883</u> .....	78
<u>THE RED SUNSETS, 1883</u> .....	79
<u>THE SLEEPING BEAUTY</u> .....	80
<u>THE ROBIN REDBREAST</u> .....	81
<u>A WINTER LANDSCAPE</u> .....	82
<u>ON THE LIGHTHOUSE AT ANTIBES</u> .....	83
<u>BEAUTY</u> .....	84
<u>IN THE ST. GOTTHARDT PASS</u> .....	85
<u>CAGNES</u> .....	86
<u>HEART'S-EASE</u> .....	87
<u>UNTIMELY LOVE</u> .....	88
<u>THE PASSING YEAR</u> .....	89
<u>CHRISTMAS EVE</u> .....	90
<u>THE EVENING OF THE YEAR</u> .....	91
<u>NEW YEAR'S EVE</u> .....	92
<u>NIRVANA</u> .....	93

# Songs and Sonnets

**Mathilde Blind**

This page copyright © 2002 Blackmask Online.  
<http://www.blackmask.com>

- LOVE IN EXILE
- I.
- II.
- III.
- IV.
- V.
- VI.
- VII.
- VIII.
- IX.
- X.
- XI.
- XII.
- XIII.
- XIV.
- XV.
- XVI.
- XVII.
- XVIII.
- XIX.
- XX.
- XXI.
- XXII.
- XXIII.
- XXIV.
- XXV.
- XXVI.
- L'ENVOI.
- SONGS
- PAUPER POET'S SONG.
- SNOW OR SNOWDROPS?
- A SPRING SONG.
- "ALL MY HEART IS STIRRING LIGHTLY."
- APRIL RAIN.
- APPLE-BLOSSOM.
- THE MUSIC-LESSON.
- "ONCE ON A GOLDEN DAY."
- ROSE D'AMOUR.
- ONLY A SMILE.
- THE SONGS OF SUMMER.
- "YEA, THE ROSES ARE STILL ON FIRE."
- AUTUMN TINTS.
- ON AND ON.
- A CHILD'S FANCY.

## Songs and Sonnets

- ON A VIOLA D'AMORE.
- BROWN EYES.
- MY LADY.
- SOMETIMES I WONDER.
- MANY WILL LOVE YOU.
- A DREAM.
- GREEN LEAVES AND SERE.
- THE HUNTER'S MOON.
- A PARTING.
- LASSITUDE.
- SEEKING.
- SONNETS
- CLEAVE THOU THE WAVES.
- HOPE.
- THE DEAD.
- TIME'S SHADOW.
- A SYMBOL.
- SUFFERING.
- ANALKH.
- SLEEP.
- DEAD LOVE.
- DESPAIR.
- TO MEMORY.
- SAVING LOVE.
- HAUNTED STREETS.
- MOTHERHOOD.
- THE AFTER-GLOW.
- TO THE OBELISK
- MANCHESTER BY NIGHT.
- THE RED SUNSETS, 1883.
- THE RED SUNSETS, 1883.
- THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.
- THE ROBIN REDBREAST.
- A WINTER LANDSCAPE.
- ON THE LIGHTHOUSE AT ANTIBES.
- BEAUTY.
- IN THE ST. GOTTHARDT PASS.
- CAGNES.
- HEART'S-EASE.
- UNTIMELY LOVE.
- THE PASSING YEAR.
- CHRISTMAS EVE.
- THE EVENING OF THE YEAR.
- NEW YEAR'S EVE.
- NIRVANA.

Songs and Sonnets

**LOVE IN EXILE**



## Songs and Sonnets

### I.

**SHE** stood against the Orient sun,  
Her face inscrutable for light;  
A myriad larks in unison  
Sang o'er her, soaring out of sight.

A myriad flowers around her feet  
Burst flame-like from the yielding sod,  
Till all the wandering airs were sweet  
With incense mounting up to God.

A mighty rainbow shook, inclined  
Towards her, from the Occident,  
Girdling the cloud-wrack which enshrined  
Half the light-bearing firmament.

Lit showers flashed golden o'er the hills,  
And trees flung silver to the breeze,  
And, scattering diamonds, fleet-foot rills  
Fled laughingly across the leas.

Yea, Love, the skylarks laud but thee,  
And writ in flowers thine awful name;  
Spring is thy shade, dread Ecstasy,  
And life a brand which feeds thy flame.

## Songs and Sonnets

### II.

**WINDING** all my life about thee,  
Let me lay my lips on thine;  
What is all the world without thee, Mine —oh mine!

Let me press my heart out on thee,  
Grape of life's most fiery vine,  
Spilling sacramental on thee Love's red wine.

Let thy strong eyes yearning o'er me  
Draw me with their force divine;  
All my soul has gone before me Claspings thine.

Irresistibly I follow,  
As whenever we may run  
Runs our shadow, as the swallow Seeks the sun.

Yea, I tremble, swoon, surrender  
All my spirit to thy sway,  
As a star is drowned in splendour Of the day.

## Songs and Sonnets

### III.

**I CHARGE** you, O winds of the West, O winds with the wings of the dove,  
That ye blow o'er the brows of my Love, breathing low that I sicken for love.

I charge you, O dews of the Dawn, O tears of the star of the morn,  
That ye fall at the feet of my love with the sound of one weeping forlorn.

I charge you, O birds of the Air, O birds flying home to your nest,  
That ye sing in his ears of the joy that for ever has fled from my breast.

I charge you, O flowers of the Earth, O frailest of things, and most fair,  
That ye droop in his path as the life in me shrivels consumed by despair.

O Moon, when he lifts up his face, when he seeth the waning of thee,  
A memory of her who lies wan on the limits of life let it be.

Many tears cannot quench, nor my sighs extinguish, the flames of love's fire,  
Which lifteth my heart like a wave, and smites it, and breaks its desire.

I rise like one in a dream when I see the red sun flaring low,  
That drags me back shuddering from sleep each morning to life with its woe.

I go like one in a dream, unbidden my feet know the way  
To that garden where love stood in blossom with the red and white hawthorn of May.

The song of the throstle is hushed, and the fountain is dry to its core,  
The moon cometh up as of old; she seeks, but she finds him no more.

The pale-faced, pitiful moon shines down on the grass where I weep,  
My face to the earth, and my breast in an anguish ne'er soothed into sleep.

The moon returns, and the spring, birds warble, trees burst into leaf,  
But Love once gone, goes for ever, and all that endures is the grief.

IV.

**THOU** walkest with me as the spirit–light  
Of the hushed moon, high o'er a snowy hill,  
Walks with the houseless traveller all the night,  
When trees are tongueless and when mute the rill.  
Moon of my soul, O phantasm of delight,  
Thou walkest with me still.

The vestal flame of quenchless memory burns  
In my soul's sanctuary. Yea, still for thee  
My bitter heart hath yearned, as moonward yearns  
Each separate wave–pulse of the clamorous sea:  
My Moon of love, to whom for ever turns  
The life that aches through me.

## Songs and Sonnets

### V.

**I THINK** of thee in watches of the night, I feel thee near;  
Like mystic lamps consumed with too much light  
Thine eyes burn clear.

The barriers that divide us in the day  
And hide from view,  
Like idle cobwebs now are brushed away  
Between us two.

I probe the deep recesses of thy mind  
Without control,  
And in its inmost labyrinth I find  
My own lost soul.

No longer like an exile on the earth  
I wildly roam,  
I was thy double from the hour of birth  
And thou my home.

VI.

**I WAS** again beside thee in a dream:

Earth was so beautiful, the moon was shining;  
The muffled voice of many a cataract stream  
Came like a love-song, as, with arms entwining,  
Our hearts were mixed in unison supreme.

The wind lay spell-bound in each pillared pine,  
The tasselled larches had no sound or motion,  
As my whole life was sinking into thine—  
Sinking into a deep, unfathomed ocean  
Of infinite love—uncircumscribed, divine.

Night held her breath, it seemed, with all her stars:  
Eternal eyes that watched in mute compassion  
Our little lives o'erleap their mortal bars,  
Fused in the fulness of immortal passion,  
A passion as immortal as the stars.

There was no longer any thee or me;  
No sense of self, no wish or incompleteness  
The moment, rounded to Eternity,  
Annihilated time's destructive fleetness:  
For all but love itself had ceased to be.

VII.

**OUR** souls have touched each other,  
Two fountains from one jet;  
Like children of one mother  
Our leaping thoughts have met.

We were as far asunder  
As green isles in the sea;  
And now we ask in wonder  
How that could ever be.

I dare not call thee lover  
Nor any earthly name,  
Though love's full cup flows over  
As water quick with flame.

When two strong minds have mated  
As only spirits may,  
The world shines new created  
In a diviner day.

Yea, though hard fate may sever  
My fleeting self from thine,  
Thy thought will live for ever  
And ever grow in mine.

**VIII.**

**I AM** athirst, but not for wine;  
The drink I long for is divine,  
Poured only from your eyes in mine.

I hunger, but the bread I want,  
Of which my blood and brain are scant,  
Is your sweet speech, for which I pant.

I am a-cold, and lagging lame,  
Life creeps along my languid frame;  
Your love would fan it into flame.

Heaven's in that little word—your love!  
It makes my heart coo like a dove,  
My tears fall as I think thereof.



**IX.**

**I WOULD** I were the glow-worm, thou the flower,  
That I might fill thy cup with glimmering light;  
I would I were the bird, and thou the bower,  
To sing thee songs throughout the summer night.

I would I were a pine tree deeply rooted,  
And thou the lofty, cloud-beleaguered rock,  
Still, while the blasts of heaven around us hooted,  
To cleave to thee and weather every shock.

I would I were the rill, and thou the river;  
So might I, leaping from some headlong steep,  
With all my waters lost in thine for ever,  
Be hurried onwards to the unfathomed deep.

I would—what would I not? O foolish dreaming!  
My words are but as leaves by autumn shed,  
That, in the faded moonlight idly gleaming,  
Drop on the grave where all our love lies dead.

Songs and Sonnets

X.

**THE** woods shake in an ague-fit,  
The mad wind rocks the pine,  
From sea to sea the white gulls flit  
Into the roaring brine.

The moon as if in panic grief  
Darts through the clouds on high,  
Blown like a wild autumnal leaf  
Across the wilder sky.

The gusty rain is driving fast,  
And through the rain we hear,  
Above the equinoctial blast,  
The thunder of the Weir.

The voices of the wind and rain  
Wail echoing through my heart—  
That love is ever dogged by pain  
And fondest souls must part.

You made heart's summer, O my friend,  
But now we bid adieu,  
There will be winter without end  
And tears for ever new.

Songs and Sonnets

**XI.**

**DOST** thou remember ever, for my sake,  
When we two rowed upon the rock-bound lake?  
How the wind-fretted waters blew their spray  
About our brows like blossom-falls of May  
One memorable day?

Dost thou remember the glad mouth that cried—  
"Were it not sweet to die now side by side,  
To lie together tangled in the deep  
Close as the heart-beat to the heart—so keep  
The everlasting sleep?"

Dost thou remember? Ah, such death as this  
Had set the seal upon my heart's young bliss!  
But, wrenched asunder, severed and apart,  
Life knew a deadlier death: the blighting smart  
Which only kills the heart.

**XII.**

**LIKE** some wild sleeper who alone at night  
Walks with unseeing eyes along a height,  
    With death below and only stars above;  
I, in broad daylight, walk as if in sleep,  
Along the edges of life's perilous steep,  
    The lost somnambulist of love.

I, in broad day, go walking in a dream,  
Led on in safety by the starry gleam  
    Of thy blue eyes that hold my heart in thrall;  
Let no one wake me rudely, lest one day,  
Startled to find how far I've gone astray,  
    I dash my life out in my fall.

**XIII.**

**O MOON**, large golden summer moon,  
Hanging between the linden trees,  
Which in the intermittent breeze  
Beat with the rhythmic pulse of June!

O night–air, scented through and through  
With honey–coloured flower of lime,  
Sweet now as in that other time  
When all my heart was sweet as you!

The sorcery of this breathing bloom  
Works like enchantment in my brain,  
Till, shuddering back to life again,  
My dead self rises from its tomb.

And, lovely with the love of yore,  
Its white ghost haunts the moon–white ways;  
But, when it meets me face to face,  
Flies trembling to the grave once more.

**XIV.**

**I PLANTED** a rose tree in my garden,  
In early days when the year was young;  
I thought it would bear me roses, roses,  
While nights were dewy and days were long.

It bore me once, and a white rose only—  
A lovely rose with petals of light;  
Like the moon in heaven, supreme and lonely;  
And the lightning struck it one summer night.

**XV.**

**WHY** will you haunt me unawares,  
And walk into my sleep,  
Pacing its shadowy thoroughfares,  
Where long-dried perfume scents the airs,  
While ghosts of sorrow creep,  
Where on Hope's ruined altar-stairs,  
With ineffectual beams,  
The Moon of Memory coldly glares  
Upon the land of dreams?

My yearning eyes were fain to look  
Upon your hidden face;  
Their love, alas! you could not brook,  
But in your own you mutely took  
My hand, and for a space  
You wrung it till I throbbd and shook,  
And woke with wildest moan  
And wet face channeled like a brook  
With your tears or my own.

**XVI.**

**WHEN** you wake from troubled slumbers  
With a dream–bewildered brain,  
And old leaves which no man numbers  
Chattering tap against the pane;  
And the midnight wind is wailing  
Till you very life seems quailing  
As the long gusts shudder and sigh:  
Know you not that homeless cry  
Is my love's, which cannot die,  
Wailing through Eternity?

When beside the glowing embers,  
Sitting in the twilight lone,  
Drop on drop you hear November's  
Melancholy monotone,  
As the heavy rain comes sweeping,  
With a sound of weeping, weeping,  
Till your blood is chilled with fears;  
Know you not those falling tears,  
Flowing fast through years on years,  
For my sobs within your ears?

When with dolorous moan the billows  
Surge around where, far and wide,  
Leagues on leagues of sea–worn hollows  
Throb with thunders of the tide,  
And the weary waves in breaking  
Fill you, thrill you, as with aching  
Memories of our love of yore,  
Where you pace the sounding shore,  
Hear you not, through roll and roar,  
Soul call soul for evermore?



**XVII.**

**I**N a lonesome burial-place  
Crouched a mourner white of face;  
    Wild her eyes—unheeding  
Circling pomp of night and day—  
Ever crying, "Well away,  
    Love lies a-bleeding!"

And her sighs were like a knell,  
And her tears for ever fell,  
    With their warm rain feeding  
That purpureal flower, alas!  
Trailing prostrate in the grass,  
    Love lies a-bleeding.

Through the yews' black-tufted gloom  
Crimson light fell on the tomb,  
    Funeral shadows breeding:  
In the sky the sun's light shed  
Dyed the earth one awful red—  
    Love lies a-bleeding.

Came grey mists, and blanching cloud  
Bore one universal shroud;  
Came the bowed moon leading,  
    From the infinite afar  
Star that rumoured unto star—  
    Love that lies a-bleeding.

**XVIII.**

**DEEP** in a yew-sequestered grove  
I sat and wept my heart away;  
A child came by at close of day  
With eyes as sweet as new-born love.

He came from sun-bleached meadows where  
High on the hedge the topmost rose  
Curtseys to every wind that blows.  
A wanton of the summer air.

The sunset aureoled his brow,  
Kindling the roses in his hand,  
And by my side I saw him stand  
To offer me his rose-red bough:

Take back thy gift—I sighed forlorn,  
And showed where like the yew's red seed,  
My blood had trickled, bead on bead,  
From wounds made by his cruel thorn.

He smiled and said:—Nay, take my Rose;  
You know, when all is said and done,  
There's not a joy beneath the sun  
Worth lovers' joys but lovers' woes.

**XIX.**

**O**N life's long round by chance I found  
A dell impearled with dew;  
Where hyacinths, gushing from the ground,  
Lent to the earth heaven's native hue  
Of holy blue.

I sought that plot of azure light  
Once more in gloomy hours;  
But snow had fallen overnight  
And wrapped in mortuary white  
My fairy ring of flowers.

Songs and Sonnets

**XX.**

**AH**, yesterday was dark and drear,  
My heart was deadly sore;  
Without thy love it seemed, my Dear,  
That I could live no more.

And yet I laugh and sing to-day;  
Care or care not for me,  
Thou canst not take the love away  
With which I worship thee.

And if to-morrow, Dear, I live,  
My heart I shall not break:  
For still I hold it that to give  
Is sweeter than to take.

**XXI.**

**I TOOK** your face into my dreams,  
It floated round me like a light;  
Your beauty's consecrating beams  
Lay mirrored in my heart all night.  
As in a lonely mountain mere,  
Unvisited of any streams,  
Supremely bright and still and clear,  
The solitary moonlight gleams,  
Your face was shining in my dreams.

**XXII.**

**WE** met as strangers on life's lonely way,  
And yet it seemed we knew each other well;  
There was no end to what thou hadst to say,  
Or to the thousand things I found to tell.  
My heart, long silent, at thy voice that day  
Chimed in my breast like to a silver bell.

How much we spoke, and yet still left untold  
Some secret half revealed within our eyes:  
Didst thou not love me once in ages old?  
Had I not called thee with importunate cries,  
And, like a child left sobbing in the cold,  
Listened to catch from far thy fond replies?

We met as strangers, and as such we part;  
Yet all my life seems leaving me with thine;  
Ah, to be clasped once only heart to heart,  
If only once to feel that thou wert mine!  
These lips are locked, and yet I know thou art  
That all in all for which my soul did pine.

**XXIII.**

**YOU** make the sunshine of my heart  
And its tempestuous shower;  
Sometimes the thought of you is like  
A lilac bush in flower,  
Yea, honey—sweet as hives in May.  
And then the pang of it will strike  
My bosom with a fiery smart,  
As though love's deeply planted dart  
Drained all its life away.

My thoughts hum round you, Dear, like bees  
About a bank of thyme,  
Or round the yellow blossoms of  
The heavy—scented lime.  
Ah, sweeter you than honeydew,  
Yet dark the ways of love,  
For it has robbed my soul of peace,  
And marred my life and turned heart's—ease  
Into funereal rue.

Songs and Sonnets

**XXIV.**

**AH**, if you knew how soon and late  
My eyes long for a sight of you  
Sometimes in passing by my gate  
You'd linger until fall of dew, If you but knew!

Ah, if you knew how sick and sore  
My life flags for the want of you,  
Straightway you'd enter at the door  
And clasp my hand between your two, If you but knew!

Ah, if you knew how lost and lone  
I watch and weep and wait for you,  
You'd press my heart close to your own  
Till love had healed me through and through, If you but knew!



Songs and Sonnets

**XXV.**

**YOUR** looks have touched my soul with bright Ineffable emotion;  
As moonbeams on a stormy night  
Illume with transitory light  
A seagull on her lonely flight Across the lonely ocean.

Fluttering from out the gloom and roar, On fitful wing she flies,  
Moon-white above the moon-washed shore;  
Then, drowned in darkness as before,  
She's lost, as I when lit no more By your beloved eyes.

**XXVI.**

**WHAT** magic is there in thy mien  
What sorcery in thy smile,  
Which charms away all cark and care,  
Which turns the foul days into fair,  
And for a little while  
Changes this disenchanted scene  
From the sere leaf into the green,  
Transmuting with love's golden wand  
This beggared life to fairyland?

My heart goes forth to thee, oh friend,  
As some poor pilgrim to a shrine,  
A pilgrim who has come from far  
To seek his spirit's folding star,  
And sees the taper shine;  
The goal to which his wanderings tend,  
Where want and weariness shall end,  
And kneels ecstatically blest  
Because his heart hath entered rest.

Songs and Sonnets

**L'ENVOI.**

**THOU** art the goal for which my spirit longs; As dove on dove,  
Bound for one home, I send thee all my songs With all my love.

Thou art the haven with fair harbour lights; Safe locked in thee,  
My heart would anchor after stormful nights Alone at sea.

Thou art the rest of which my life is fain, The perfect peace;  
Absorbed in thee the world, with all its pain And toil, would cease.

Thou art the heaven to which my soul would go! O dearest eyes,  
Lost in your light you would turn hell below To Paradise.

Thou all in all for which my heart–blood yearns! Yea, near or far—  
Where the unfathomed ether throbs and burns With star on star,

Or where, enkindled by the fires of June, The fresh earth glows,  
Blushing beneath the mystical white moon Through rose on rose—

Thee, thee, I see, thee feel in all live things, Beloved one;  
In the first bird which tremulously sings Ere peep of sun;

In the last nestling orphaned in the hedge, Rocked to and fro,  
When dying summer shudders in the sedge, And swallows go;

When roaring snows rush down the mountain–pass, March floods with rills  
Or April lightens through the living grass In daffodils;

When popped cornfields simmer in the heat With tare and thistle,  
And, like winged clouds above the mellow wheat, The starlings whistle;

When stained with sunset the wide moorlands glare In the wild weather,  
And clouds with flaming craters smoke and flare Red o'er red heather;

When the bent moon, on frostbound midnights waking, Leans to the snow  
Like some world–mother whose deep heart is breaking O'er human woe.

As the round sun rolls red into the ocean, Till all the sea  
Glows fluid gold, even so life's mazy motion Is dyed with thee:

For as the wave–like years subside and roll, O heart's desire,  
Thy soul glows interfused within my soul, A quenchless fire.

Yea, thee I feel, all storms of life above, Near though afar;  
O thou my glorious morning star of love, And evening star.



**SONGS**

**PAUPER POET'S SONG.**

**SUN**, moon, and stars, the ample air,  
The birds shrill whistling everywhere,  
    Fields white with lambs and daisies;  
The pearls of eve, the jewelled morn,  
The rose rich blowing on the thorn,  
    The glow of blush-rose faces;  
The silver glint of sun-smit rain,  
The shattered sun-gold of the main,  
    And heaven's sweet breath that moves it;  
The earth, our myriad-bosomed nurse,  
This whole miraculous universe  
    Belongs to him who loves it!

Why fret then for the gold of this,  
The fame of that man, or the bliss,  
    Or such another's graces?  
Oh heart that chim'st with golden verse,  
My heart, thou art the magic purse  
    Which all dull trouble chases;  
Thine too fruition of all fame  
When the live soul, as flame with flame,  
    Weds the dead soul that moves it;  
Then sing for aye, and aye rehearse,  
This whole miraculous universe  
    Belongs to him who loves it!

## SNOW OR SNOWDROPS?

**IS** it snow or snowdrops' shimmer  
Whitens thus the bladed grass,  
With a faint aërial glimmer,—  
Spring or winter, which did pass?  
For the sky is dim and tender  
With an evanescent light,  
And the fading fields are white,  
White with snow or snowdrops, under  
The fair firstling stars of night.

Little robin, softly, cheerly  
Piping on yon wintry bough,  
Why have all the fields that pearly  
Iridescence, knowest thou?  
Did old Winter, grim and hoary,  
Aim a parting dart at Spring  
As she fled on azure wing,  
Or did she with rainbow glory  
In his face her snowdrops fling?

**A SPRING SONG.**

**DARK** sod pierced by flames of flowers,  
Dead wood freshly quickening,  
Bright skies dusked with sudden showers,  
Lit by rainbows on the wing.

Cuckoo calls and young lambs' bleating,  
Nimble airs which coyly bring  
Little gusts of tender greeting  
From shy nooks where violets cling.

Half-fledged buds and birds and vernal  
Fields of grass dew-glistening;  
Evanescent life's eternal  
Resurrection, bridal Spring!



**"ALL MY HEART IS STIRRING LIGHTLY."**

**ALL** my heart is stirring lightly  
Like dim violets winter-bound,  
Quickening as they feel the brightly  
Glowing sunlight underground.

Yea, this drear and silent bosom,  
Hushed as snow-hid grove but now,  
Breaketh into leaf and blossom  
Like a gleaming vernal bough.

Oh the singing, singing, singing!  
Callow hopes that thrill my breast!  
Can the lark of love be winging  
Back to its abandoned nest?

**APRIL RAIN.**

**THE** April rain, the April rain,  
Comes slanting down in fitful showers,  
Then from the furrow shoots the grain,  
And banks are fledged with nestling flowers;  
And in grey shaw and woodland bowers  
The cuckoo through the April rain Calls once again.

The April sun, the April sun,  
Glints through the rain in fitful splendour,  
And in grey shaw and woodland dun  
The little leaves spring forth and tender  
Their infant hands, yet weak and slender,  
For warmth towards the April sun, One after one.

And between shower and shine hath birth  
The rainbow's evanescent glory;  
Heaven's light that breaks on mists of earth!  
Frail symbol of our human story,  
It flowers through showers where, looming hoary,  
The rain-clouds flash with April mirth, Like Life on earth.

**APPLE-BLOSSOM.**

**BLOSSOM** of the apple trees!

Mossy trunks all gnarled and hoary,  
Grey boughs tipped with rose-veined glory,  
Clustered petals soft as fleece  
Garlanding old apple trees!

How you gleam at break of day!

When the coy sun, glancing rarely,  
Pouts and sparkles in the pearly  
Pendulous dewdrops, twinkling gay  
On each dancing leaf and spray.

Through your latticed boughs on high,

Framed in rosy wreaths, one catches  
Brief kaleidoscopic snatches  
Of deep lapis-lazuli  
In the April-coloured sky.

When the sundown's dying brand

Leaves your beauty to the tender  
Magic spells of moonlight splendour,  
Glimmering clouds of bloom you stand,  
Turning earth to fairyland.

Cease, wild winds, O, cease to blow!

Apple-blossom, fluttering, flying,  
Palely on the green turf lying,  
Vanishing like winter snow;  
Swift as joy to come and go.

**THE MUSIC-LESSON.**

**A THRUSH** alit on a young-leaved spray,   And, lightly clinging,   It rocked in its singing  
As the rapturous notes rose loud and gay;   And with liquid shakes,   And trills and breaks,  
Rippled though blossoming bough of May.

Like a ball of fluff, with a warm brown throat   And throbbing bosom,   'Mid the apple-blossom,  
The new-fledged nestling sat learning by rote   To echo the song   So tender and strong,  
As it feebly put in its frail little note.

O blisfullest lesson amid the green grove!   The low wind crispeth   The leaves, where lispeth  
The shy little bird with its parent above;   Two voices that mingle   And make but a single  
Hymn of rejoicing in praise of their love.

**"ONCE ON A GOLDEN DAY."**

**ONCE** on a golden day,  
In the golden month of May,  
I gave my heart away—  
    Little birds were singing.

I culled my heart in truth,  
Wet with the dews of youth,  
For love to take, forsooth—  
    Little flowers were springing.

Love sweetly laughed at this,  
And between kiss and kiss  
Fled with my heart in his:  
    Winds warmly blowing.

And with his sun and shower  
Love kept my heart in flower,  
As in the greenest bower  
    Rose richly glowing.

Till, worn at evensong,  
Love dropped my heart among  
Stones by the way ere long;  
    Misprizèd token.

There in the wind and rain,  
Trampled and rent in twain,  
Ne'er to be whole again,  
    My heart lies broken.

**ROSE D'AMOUR.**

**OH** haste while roses bloom below,  
Oh haste while pale and bright above  
The sun and moon alternate glow,  
    To pluck the rose of love.

Yea, give the morning to the lark,  
The nightingale its glimmering grove,  
Give moonlight to the hungry dark,  
    But to man's heart give love!

Then haste while still the roses blow,  
And pale and bright in heaven above  
The sun and moon alternate glow,  
    Pluck, pluck the rose of love.

**ONLY A SMILE.**

**NO** butterfly whose frugal fare  
Is breath of heliotrope and clove,  
And other trifles light as air,  
Could live on less than doth my love.

That childlike smile that comes and goes  
About your gracious lips and eyes,  
Hath all the sweetness of the rose,  
Which feeds the freckled butterflies.

I feed my love on smiles, and yet  
Sometimes I ask, with tears of woe,  
How had it been if we had met,  
If you had met me long ago,

Before the fast, defacing years  
Had made all ill that once was well?  
Ah, then your smiling breeds such tears  
As Tantalus may weep in hell.

**THE SONGS OF SUMMER.**

**THE** songs of summer are over and past!  
The swallow's forsaken the dripping eaves;  
Ruined and black 'mid the sodden leaves  
The nests are rudely swung in the blast:  
And ever the wind like a soul in pain  
Knocks and knocks at the window-pane.

The songs of summer are over and past!  
Woe's me for a music sweeter than theirs—  
The quick, light bound of a step on the stairs,  
The greeting of lovers too sweet to last:  
And ever the wind like a soul in pain  
Knocks and knocks at the window-pane.



**"YEA, THE ROSES ARE STILL ON FIRE."**

**YEA**, the roses are still on fire  
With the bygone heat of July,  
Though the least little wind drifting by  
Shake a rose-leaf or two from the brier,  
Be it never so soft a sigh.

Ember of love still glows and lingers  
Deep at the red heart's smouldering core;  
With the sudden passionate throb of yore  
We shook as our eyes and clinging fingers  
Met once only to meet no more.

**AUTUMN TINTS.**

**CORAL-COLOURED** yew-berries

Strew the garden ways,  
Hollyhocks and sunflowers  
Make a dazzling blaze  
In these latter days.

Marigolds by cottage doors  
Flaunt their golden pride,  
Crimson-punctured bramble leaves  
Dapple far and wide  
The green mountain-side.

Far away, on hilly slopes  
Where fleet rivulets run,  
Miles on miles of tangled fern,  
Burnished by the sun,  
Glow a copper dun.

For the year that's on the wane,  
Gathering all its fire,  
Flares up through the kindling world  
As, ere they expire,  
Flames leap high and higher.

**ON AND ON.**

By long leagues of wood and meadow  
On and on we drive apace;  
In the dreamy light and shadow  
Veiling earth's autumnal face.

Rosy clouds are drifting o'er us,  
Rooks rise parleying from their tryst,  
And the road lies far before us,  
Fading into amethyst.

On and on, through leagues of heather,  
Deeps of scarlet beaded lane,  
Like a pheasant's golden feather  
Golden leaves around us rain.

On and on, where woodlands hoary,  
In October's lavish fire,  
Flame up with unearthly glory,  
Beauteous summer's funeral pyre.

On and on, where casements blinking  
Lighten into transient gules,  
As the dying day in sinking  
Splashes all the wayside pools.

On and on; the land grows dimmer,  
And our road recedes afar;  
While on either hand there glimmer  
Setting sun and rising star.

Would I knew what thoughts steal o'er you,  
As the long road lengthens yet:  
Ah, like hope it winds before you,  
And behind me like regret.

**A CHILD'S FANCY.**

"**HUSH**, hush! Speak softly, Mother dear,  
So that the daisies may not hear;  
For when the stars begin to peep,  
The pretty daisies go to sleep.

"See, Mother, round us on the lawn,  
With soft white lashes closely drawn,  
They've shut their eyes so golden-gay,  
That looked up through the long, long day.

"But now they're tired of all the fun—  
Of bees and birds, of wind and sun  
Playing their game at hide-and-seek;—  
Then very softly let us speak."

A myriad stars above the child  
Looked down from heaven and sweetly smiled;  
But not a star in all the skies  
Beamed on him with his Mother's eyes.

She stroked his curly chestnut head,  
And whispering very softly, said,  
"I'd quite forgotten they might hear;  
Thank you for that reminder, dear."

**ON A VIOLA D'AMORE.**

**CARVED WITH A CUPID'S HEAD, AND PLAYED ON FOR THE FIRST TIME AFTER MORE THAN A CENTURY.**

**WHAT** fairy music clear and light,  
Responsive to your fingers,  
Swells rippling on the summer night,  
And amorously lingers  
Upon the sense, as long ago  
In days of rouge and rococo!

A century of silence lay  
On strings that had not spoken  
Since powdered lords to ladies gay  
Gave, for a lover's token,  
Fans glowing fresh from Watteau's art,  
Well worth a marchioness's heart.

Your dormant music, tranced and bound,  
Was like the Sleeping Beauty  
Prince Charming in the forest found,  
And kissed in loyal duty:  
And when she woke her eyes' blue fire  
Turned the dumb forest to a lyre.

Thus Amor with the bandaged eyes,  
Fit symbol of hushed numbers,  
Most musically wakes and sighs  
After an age of slumbers:  
Beneath your magic bow's control  
The Viol has regained her soul.

**BROWN EYES.**

**OH**, brown Eyes with long black lashes, Young brown Eyes,  
Depths of night from which there flashes  
Lightning as of summer skies,  
Beautiful brown Eyes!

In your veiled mysterious splendour Passion lies  
Sleeping, but with sudden tender  
Dreams that fill with vague surmise  
Beautiful brown Eyes.

All my soul, with yearning shaken, Asks in sighs—  
Who will see your heart awaken,  
Love's divine sunrise  
In those young brown Eyes?

**MY LADY.**

**LIKE** putting forth upon a sea  
On which the moonbeams shimmer,  
Where reefs and unknown perils be  
To wreck, yea, wreck one utterly,  
It were to love you, lady fair,  
In whose black braids of billowy hair  
The misty moonstones glimmer.

Oh, misty moonstone-coloured eye,  
Latticed behind long lashes,  
Within whose clouded orbs there lies,  
Like lightning in the sleeping skies,  
A spark to kindle and ignite,  
And set a fire of love alight  
To burn one's heart to ashes.

I will not put forth on this deep  
Of perilous emotion;  
No, though your hands be soft as sleep,  
They shall not have my heart to keep,  
Nor draw it to your fatal sphere.  
Lady, you are as much to fear  
As is the fickle ocean.

**SOMETIMES I WONDER.**

**SOMETIMES** I wonder if you guess  
The deep impassioned tenderness  
Which overflows my heart;  
The love I never dare confess;  
Yet hard, yea, harder to repress  
Than tears too fain to start.

Sometimes I ponder, O my sweet,  
The things I'll tell you when we meet;  
But straightway at your sight  
My heart's blood oozes to my feet  
Like thawing waters in the heat,  
Confused with too much light.

I hardly know, when you are near,  
If it is love, or joy, or fear  
Which fills my languid frame;  
Enveloped in your atmosphere,  
My dark self seems to disappear,  
A moth entombed in flame.



**MANY WILL LOVE YOU.**

**MANY** will love you; you were made for love;  
For the soft plumage of the unruffled dove  
    Is not so soft as your caressing eyes.  
You will love many; for the winds that veer  
Are not more prone to shift their compass, dear,  
    Than your quick fancy flies.

Many will love you; but I may not, no;  
Even though your smile sets all my life aglow,  
    And at your fairness all my senses ache.  
You will love many; but not me, my dear,  
Who have no gift to give you but a tear  
    Sweet for your sweetness' sake.

Songs and Sonnets

**A DREAM.**

**ONLY** a dream, a beautiful baseless dream; Only a bright  
Flash from your eyes, a brief electrical gleam, Charged with delight.

Only a waking, alone, in the moon's last gleam Fading from sight;  
Only a flooding of tears that shudder and stream Fast through the night.

**GREEN LEAVES AND SERE.**

**THREE** tall poplars beside the pool  
Shiver and moan in the gusty blast,  
The carded clouds are blown like wool,  
And the yellowing leaves fly thick and fast.

The leaves, now driven before the blast,  
Now flung by fits on the curdling pool,  
Are tossed heaven-high and dropped at last  
As if at the whim of a jabbering fool.

O leaves, once rustling green and cool!  
Two met here where one moans aghast  
With wild heart heaving towards the past:  
Three tall poplars beside the pool.

**THE HUNTER'S MOON.**

**THE** Hunter's Moon rides high,  
High o'er the close-cropped plain;  
Across the desert sky  
The herded clouds amain  
Scamper tumultuously, Chased by the hounding wind  
That yelps behind.

The clamorous hunt is done,  
Warm-housed the kennelled pack;  
One huntsman rides alone  
With dangling bridle slack;  
He wakes a hollow tone, Far echoing to his horn  
In clefts forlorn.

The Hunter's Moon rides low,  
Her course is nearly sped.  
Where is the panting roe?  
Where hath the wild deer fled?  
Hunter and hunted now  
Lie in oblivion deep: Dead or asleep.

**A PARTING.**

**THE** year is on the wing, my love,  
With tearful days and nights;  
The clouds are on the wing above  
With gathering swallow-flights.

The year is on the wing, my sweet,  
And in the ghostly race,  
With patter of unnumbered feet,  
The dead leaves fly apace.

The year is on the wing, and shakes  
The last rose from its tree;  
And I, whose heart in parting breaks,  
Must bid adieu to thee.

**LASSITUDE.**

**I LAID** me down beside the sea,  
Endless in blue monotony;  
The clouds were anchored in the sky.  
Sometimes a sail went idling by.

Upon the shingles on the beach  
Grey linen was spread out to bleach,  
And gently with a gentle swell  
The languid ripples rose and fell.

A fisher-boy, in level line,  
Cast stone by stone into the brine:  
Methought I too might do as he,  
And cast my sorrows on the sea.

The old, old sorrows in a heap  
Dropped heavily into the deep;  
But with its sorrow on that day  
My heart itself was cast away.

**SEEKING.**

**I**N many a shape and fleeting apparition,  
Sublime in age or with clear morning eyes,  
Ever I seek thee, tantalising Vision, Which beckoning flies.

Ever I seek Thee, O evasive Presence,  
Which on the far horizon's utmost verge,  
Like some wild star in luminous evanescence, Shoots o'er the surge.

Ever I seek Thy features ever flying,  
Which ne'er beheld I never can forget:  
Lightning which flames through love, and mimics dying In souls that set.

Ever I seek Thee through all clouds of error;  
As when the moon behind earth's shadow slips,  
She wears a momentary mask of terror In brief eclipse.

Ever I seek Thee, passionately yearning;  
Like altar-fire on some forgotten fane,  
My life flames up irrevocably burning, And burnt in vain.

---

---

**SONNETS**



**CLEAVE THOU THE WAVES.**

**CLEAVE** thou the waves that weltering to and fro  
Surge multitudinous. The eternal Powers  
Of sun, moon, stars, the air, the hurrying hours,  
The winged winds, the still dissolving show  
Of clouds in calm or storm, for ever flow  
Above thee; while the abysmal sea devours  
The untold dead insatiate, where it lowers  
O'er glooms unfathomed, limitless, below.

No longer on the golden-fretted sands,  
Where many a shallow tide abortive chafes,  
Mayst thou delay; life onward sweeping blends  
With far-off heaven: the dauntless one who braves  
The perilous flood with calm unswerving hands,  
The elements sustain: cleave thou the waves.

**HOPE.**

**ALL** treasures of the earth and opulent seas,  
Metals and odorous woods and cunning gold,  
Fowls of the air and furry beasts untold,  
Vineyards and harvest fields and fruitful trees  
Nature gave unto Man; and last her keys  
Vouched passage to her secret ways of old  
Whence knowledge should be wrung, nay power to mould  
Out of the rough, his occult destinies.

But tired of these he craved a wider scope:  
Then fair as Pallas from the brain of Jove  
From his deep wish there sprang, full-armed, to cope  
With all life's ills, even very death in love,  
The only thing man never wearies of—  
His own creation—visionary Hope.

**THE DEAD.**

**THE** dead abide with us! Though stark and cold  
Earth seems to grip them, they are with us still:  
They have forged our chains of being for good or ill;  
And their invisible hands these hands yet hold.  
Our perishable bodies are the mould  
In which their strong imperishable will—  
Mortality's deep yearning to fulfil—  
Hath grown incorporate through dim time untold.

Vibrations infinite of life in death,  
As a star's travelling light survives its star!  
So may we hold our lives, that when we are  
The fate of those who then will draw this breath,  
They shall not drag us to their judgment bar,  
And curse the heritage which we bequeath.

**TIME'S SHADOW.**

**THY** life, O Man, in this brief moment lies:

Time's narrow bridge whereon we darkling stand,  
With an infinitude on either hand  
Receding luminously from our eyes.  
Lo, there thy Past's forsaken Paradise  
Subsideth like some visionary strand,  
While glimmering faint, the Future's promised land,  
Illusive from the abyss, seems fain to rise.

This hour alone Hope's broken pledges mar,  
And joy now gleams before, now in our rear,  
Like mirage mocking in some waste afar,  
Dissolving into air as we draw near.  
Beyond our steps the path is sunny-clear,  
The shadow lying only where we are.

**A SYMBOL.**

**HURRYING** for ever in their restless flight  
The generations of earth's teeming womb  
Rise into being and lapse into the tomb  
Like transient bubbles sparkling in the light;  
They sink in quick succession out of sight  
Into the thick insuperable gloom  
Our futile lives in flashing by illumine—  
Lightning which mocks the darkness of the night.

Nay—but consider, though we change and die,  
If men must pass shall Man not still remain?  
As the unnumbered drops of summer rain  
Whose changing particles unchanged on high,  
Fixed, in perpetual motion, yet maintain  
The mystic bow emblazoned on the sky.

**SUFFERING.**

**OH** ye, all ye, who suffer here below,  
Schooled in the baffling mystery of pain,  
Who on life's anvil bear the fateful strain,  
Wrong as forged iron, hammered blow on blow.  
Take counsel with your grief, in that you know,  
That he who suffers suffers not in vain,  
Nay, that it shall be for the whole world's gain,  
And wisdom prove the priceless price of woe.

Thus in some new-found land where no man's feet  
Have trod a path, bold voyagers astray,  
May fall foredone by torturing thirst and heat:  
But from the impotent body of defeat—  
The winners spring who carve a conquering way—  
Measured by milestones of their perished clay.

**ANALKH.**

**LIKE** a great rock which looming o'er the deep  
Casts his eternal shadow on the strands,  
And veiled in cloud inexorably stands,  
While vaulting round his adamantine steep  
Embattled breakers clamorously leap,  
Sun-garlanded and hope-uplifted bands,  
But soon with waters shattered in the sands  
Slowly recoiling back to ocean creep:

So sternly dost thou tower above us, Fate!  
For still our eager hearts exultant beat,  
Borne in the hurrying tide of life elate,  
And dashing break against thy marble feet.  
But would Hope's rainbow-aureole round us fleet,  
Without these hurtling shocks of man's estate?

**SLEEP.**

**LOVE—CRADLING** Night, lit by the lucent moon,  
Most pitiful and mother-hearted Night!  
Blest armistice in life's tumultuous fight,  
Resolving discords to a spheral tune!  
When tired with heat and strenuous toil of noon,  
With ceaseless conflict betwixt might and right,  
With ebb and flow of sorrow and delight,  
Our panting hearts beneath their burdens swoon:

To thee, O star-eyes comforter, we creep,  
Earth's ill-used step-children to thee make moan,  
As hiding in thy dark skirts' ample sweep;  
—Poor debtors whose brief life is not their own;  
For dunned by Death, to whom we owe its loan,  
Give us, O Night, the interest paid in sleep.



**DEAD LOVE.**

**MOTHER** of the unfortunate, mystic form,  
Who calm, immutable, like oldest fate,  
Sittest, where through the sombre swinging gate  
Moans immemorial life's encircling storm.  
My heart, sore stricken by grief's leaden arm,  
Lags like a weary pilgrim knocking late,  
And sigheth—toward thee staggering with its weight—  
Behold Love conquered by thy son, the worm!

He stung him mid the roses' purple bloom,  
The Rose of roses, yea, a thing so sweet,  
Haply to stay blind Change's flying feet,  
And stir with pity the unpitying tomb.  
Here, take him, cold, cold, heavy and void of breath!  
Nor me refuse, O Mother almighty, death.

**DESPAIR.**

**THY** wings swoop darkening round my soul, Despair!  
And on my brain thy shadow seems to brood  
And hem me round with stifling solitude,  
With chasms of vacuous bloom which are thy lair.  
No light of human joy, no song or prayer,  
Breaks ever on this chaos, all imbrued  
With heart's-blood trickling from the multitude  
Of sweet hopes slain, or agonising there.

Lo, wilt thou yield thyself to grief, and roll  
Vanquished from thy high seat, imperial brain,  
And abdicating turbulent life's control,  
Be dragged a captive bound in sorrow's chain?  
Nay! though my heart is breaking with its pain,  
No pain on earth has power to crush my soul.

**TO MEMORY.**

**OH** in this dearth and winter of the soul,  
When even Hope, still wont to soar and sing,  
Droopeth, a starveling bird whose downy wing  
Stiffens ere dead through the dank drift it fall—  
Yea, ere Hope perish utterly, I call  
On thee, fond Memory, that thou haste and bring  
One leaf, one blossom from that far-off spring  
When love's auroral light lay over all.

Bring but one pansy: haply so the thrill  
Of poignant yearning for those glad dead years  
May, like the gusty south, breathe o'er the chill  
Of frozen grief, dissolving it in tears,  
Till numb Hope, stirred by that warm dropping rain,  
Will deem, perchance, Love's springtide come again.

**SAVING LOVE.**

**WOULD** we but love what will not pass away!  
The sun that on each morning shines as clear  
As when it rose first on the world's first year;  
The fresh green leaves that rustle on the spray.  
The sun will shine, the leaves will be as gay  
When graves are full of all our hearts held dear,  
When not a soul of those who loved us here,  
Not one, is left us—creatures of decay.

Yea, love the Abiding in the Universe  
Which was before, and will be after us.  
Nor yet for ever hanker and vainly cry  
For human love—the beings that change or die;  
Die—change—forget: to care so is a curse,  
Yet cursed we'll be rather than not care thus.

**HAUNTED STREETS.**

**L**O, haply walking in some clattering street—  
Where throngs of men and women dumbly pass,  
Like shifting pictures seen within a glass  
Which leave no trace behind—one seems to meet,  
In roads once trodden by our mutual feet,  
A face projected from that shadowy mass  
Of faces, quite familiar as it was,  
Which beaming on us stands out clear and sweet.

The face of faces we again behold  
That lit our life when life was very fair,  
And leaps our heart toward eyes and mouth and hair:  
Oblivious of the undying love grown cold,  
Or body sheeted in the churchyard mould,  
We stretch out yearning hands and grasp—the air.

**MOTHERHOOD.**

**FROM** out the front of being, undefiled,  
A life hath been upheaved with struggle and pain;  
Safe in her arms a mother holds again  
That dearest miracle—a new-born child.  
To moans of anguish terrible and wild—  
As shrieks the night-wind through an ill-shut pane—  
Pure heaven succeeds; and after fiery strain  
Victorious woman smiles serenely mild.

Yea, shall she not rejoice, shall not her frame  
Thrill with a mystic rapture! At this birth,  
The soul now kindled by her vital flame  
May it not prove a gift of priceless worth?  
Some saviour of his kind whose starry fame  
Shall bring a brightness to the darkened earth.

**THE AFTER-GLOW.**

**IT** is a solemn evening, golden-clear—  
The Alpine summits flame with rose-lit snow  
And headlands purpling on wide seas below,  
And clouds and woods and arid rocks appear  
Dissolving in the sun's own atmosphere  
And vast circumference of light, whose slow  
Transfiguration—glow and after-glow—  
Turns twilight earth to a more luminous sphere.

Oh heart, I ask, seeing that the orb of day  
Has sunk below, yet left to sky and sea  
His glory's spiritual after-shine:  
I ask if Love, whose sun hath set for thee,  
May not touch grief with his memorial ray,  
And lend to loss itself a joy divine?

**TO THE OBELISK**

**DURING THE GREAT FROST, 1881.**

**THOU** sign-post of the Desert! Obelisk,  
Once fronting in thy monumental pride  
Egypt's fierce sun, that blazing far and wide,  
Sheared her of tree and herb, till like a disk  
Her waste stretched shadowless, and fraught with risk  
To those who with their beasts of burden hied  
Across the seas of sand until they spied  
Thy pillar, and their flagging hearts grew brisk:

Now reared beside out Thames so wintry grey,  
Where blocks of ice drift with the drifting stream,  
Thou risest o'er the alien prospect! Say,  
Yon dull, blear, rayless orb whose lurid gleam  
Tinges the snow-draped ships and writhing steam,  
Is this the sun which fired thine orient day?



**MANCHESTER BY NIGHT.**

**O'ER** this huge town, rife with intestine wars,  
Whence as from monstrous sacrificial shrines  
Pillars of smoke climb heavenward, Night inclines  
Black brows majestic with glimmering stars.  
Her dewy silence soothes life's angry jars:  
And like a mother's wan white face, who pines  
Above her children's turbulent ways, so shines  
The moon athwart the narrow cloudy bars.

Now toiling multitudes that hustling crush  
Each other in the fateful strife for breath,  
And, hounded on by diverse hungers, rush  
Across the prostrate ones that groan beneath,  
Are swathed within the universal hush,  
As life exchanges semblances with death.

**THE RED SUNSETS, 1883.**

**THE** twilight heavens are flushed with gathering light,  
And o'er wet roofs and huddling streets below  
Hang with a strange Apocalyptic glow  
On the black fringes of the wintry night.  
Such bursts of glory may have rapt the sight  
Of him to whom on Patmos long ago  
The visionary angel came to show  
That heavenly city built of chrysolite.

And lo, three factory hands begrimed with soot,  
Aflame with the red splendour, marvelling stand,  
And gaze with lifted faces awed and mute.  
Starved of earth's beauty by Man's grudging hand,  
O toilers, robbed of labour's golden fruit,  
Ye, too, may feast in Nature's fairyland.

**THE RED SUNSETS, 1883.**

**THE** boding sky was characterized with cloud,  
The scripture of the storm—but high in air,  
Where the unfathomed zenith still was bare,  
A pure expanse of rose-flushed violet glowed  
And, kindling into crimson light, o'erflowed  
The hurrying wrack with such a blood-red glare,  
That heaven, igniting, wildly seemed to flare  
On the dazed eyes of many an awe-struck crowd.

And in far lands folk presaged with blanched lips  
Disastrous wars, earthquakes, and foundering ships,  
Such whelming floods as never dykes could stem,  
Or some proud empire's ruin and eclipse:  
Lo, such a sky, they cried, as burned o'er them  
Once lit the sacking of Jerusalem!

**THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.**

**THERE** was intoxication in the air;

The wind, keen blowing from across the seas,  
O'er leagues of new-ploughed land and heathery leas,  
Smelt of wild gorse whose gold flamed everywhere.  
And undertone of song pulsed far and near,  
The soaring larks filled heaven with ecstasies,  
And, like a living clock among the trees,  
The shouting cuckoo struck the time of year.

For now the Sun had found the earth once more,  
And woke the Sleeping Beauty with a kiss;  
Who thrilled with light of love in every pore,  
Opened her flower-blue eyes, and looked in his.  
Then all things felt life fluttering at their core—  
The world shook mystical in lambent bliss.

**THE ROBIN REDBREAST.**

**THE** year's grown songless! No glad pipings thrill  
The hedge-row elms, whose wind-worn branches shower  
Their leaves on the sere grass, where some late flower  
In golden chalice hoards the sunlight still.  
Our summer guests, whose raptures used to fill  
Each apple-blossomed garth and honeyed bower,  
Have in adversity's inclement hour  
Abandoned us to bleak November's chill.

But hearken! Yonder russet bird among  
The crimson clusters of the homely thorn  
Still bubbles o'er with little rills of song—  
A blending of sweet hope and resignation:  
Even so, when life of love and youth is shorn,  
One friend becomes its last, best consolation.

**A WINTER LANDSCAPE.**

**ALL** night, all day, in dizzy, downward flight,  
Fell the wild-whirling, vague, chaotic snow,  
Till every landmark of the earth below,  
Trees, moorlands, roads, and each familiar sight  
Were blotted out by the bewildering white.  
And winds, now shrieking loud, now whimpering low,  
Seemed lamentations for the world-old woe  
That death must swallow life, and darkness light.

But all at once the rack was blown away,  
The snowstorm hushing ended in a sigh;  
Then like a flame the crescent moon on high  
Leaped forth among the planets; pure as they,  
Earth vied in whiteness with the Milky Way:  
Herself a star beneath the starry sky.

**ON THE LIGHTHOUSE AT ANTIBES.**

**A STORMY** light of sunset glows and glares  
Between two banks of cloud, and o'er the brine  
Thy fair lamp on the sky's carnation line  
Alone on the lone promontory flares:  
Friend of the Fisher who at nightfall fares  
Where lurk false reefs masked by the hyaline  
Of dimpling waves, within whose smile divine  
Death lies in wait behind Circean snares.

The evening knows thee ere the evening star;  
Or sees that flame sole Regent of the bight,  
When storm, hoarse rumoured by the hills afar,  
Makes mariners steer landward by thy light,  
Which shows through shock of hostile nature's war  
How man keeps watch o'er man through deadliest night.

**BEAUTY.**

**EVEN** as on some black background full of night  
And hollow storm in cloudy disarray,  
The forceful brush of some great master may  
More brilliantly evoke a higher light;  
So beautiful, so delicately white,  
So like a very metaphor of May,  
Your loveliness on my life's sombre grey  
In its perfection stands out doubly bright.

And yet your beauty breeds a strange despair,  
And pang of yearning in the helpless heart;  
To shield you from time's fraying wear and tear,  
That from yourself yourself would wrench apart,  
How save you, fairest, but to set you where  
Mortality kills death in deathless art?



**IN THE ST. GOTTHARDT PASS.**

**THE** storm which shook the silence of the hills  
And sleeping pinnacles of ancient snow  
Went muttering off in one last thunder thro  
Mixed with a moan of multitudinous rills;  
Yea, even as one who has wept much, but stills  
The flowing tears of some convulsive woe  
When a fair light of hope begins to glow  
Athwart the gloom of long remembered ills:

So does the face of this scarred mountain height  
Relax its stony frown, while slow uprolled  
Invidious mists are changed to veiling gold.  
Wild peaks still fluctuate between dark and bright,  
But when the sun laughs at them, as of old,  
They kiss high heaven in all embracing light.

**CAGNES.**

**ON THE RIVIERA.**

**IN** tortuous windings up the steep incline  
The sombre street toils to the village square,  
Whose antique walls in stone and moulding bear  
Dumb witness to the Moor. Afar off shine,  
With tier on tier, cutting heaven's blue divine,  
The snowy Alps; and lower the hills are fair,  
With wave-green olives rippling down to where  
Gold clusters hang and leaves of sunburnt vine.

You may perchance, I never shall forget  
When, between twofold glory of land and sea,  
We leant together o'er the old parapet,  
And saw the sun go down. For, oh, to me,  
The beauty of that beautiful strange place  
Was its reflection beaming from your face.

**HEART'S-EASE.**

AS opiates to the sick on wakeful nights,  
As light to flowers, as flowers in poor men's rooms,  
As to the fisher when the tempest glooms  
The cheerful twinkling of his village lights;  
As emerald isles to flagging swallow flights,  
As roses garlanding with tendrilled blooms  
The unweeded hillocks of forgotten tombs,  
As singing birds on cypress-shadowed heights,

Thou art to me—a comfort past compare—  
For thy joy-kindling presence, sweet as May,  
Sets all my nerves to music, makes away  
With sorrow and the numbing frost of care,  
Until the influence of thine eyes' bright sway  
Has made life's glass go up from foul to fair.

**UNTIMELY LOVE.**

**PEACE**, throbbing heart, nor let us shed one tear  
O'er this late love's unseasonable glow;  
Sweet as a violet blooming in the snow,  
The posthumous offspring of the widowed year  
That smells of March when all the world is sere,  
And, while around the hurtling sea-winds blow—  
Which twist the oak and lay the pine tree low—  
Stands childlike in the storm and has no fear.

Poor helpless blossom orphaned of the sun,  
How could it thus brave winter's rude estate?  
Oh love, more helpless, why bloom so late,  
Now that the flower-time of the year is done?  
Since thy dear course must end when scarce begun,  
Nipped by the cold touch of relentless fate.

**THE PASSING YEAR.**

**NO** breath of wind stirs in the painted leaves,  
The meadows are as stirless as the sky,  
Like a Saint's halo golden vapours lie  
Above the restful valley's garnered sheaves.  
The journeying Sun, like one who fondly grieves,  
Above the hills seems loitering with a sigh,  
As loth to bid the fruitful earth good-bye,  
On these hushed hours of luminous autumn eves.

There is a pathos in his softening glow,  
Which like a benediction seems to hover  
O'er the tranced earth, ere he must sink below  
And leave her widowed of her radiant Lover,  
A frost-bound sleeper in a shroud of snow,  
While winter winds howl a wild dirge above her.

**CHRISTMAS EVE.**

**ALONE**—with one fair star for company,  
The loveliest star among the hosts of night,  
While the grey tide ebbs with the ebbing light—  
I pace along the darkening wintry sea.  
Now round the yule-log and the glittering tree  
Twinkling with festive tapers, eyes as bright  
Sparkle with Christmas joys and young delight,  
As each one gathers to his family.

But I—a waif on earth where'er I roam—  
Uprooted with life's bleeding hopes and fears  
From that one heart that was my heart's sole home,  
Feel the old pang pierce through the severing years,  
And as I think upon the years to come  
That fair star trembles through my falling tears.

**THE EVENING OF THE YEAR.**

WAN mists enwrap the still-born day;  
The harebell withers on the heath;  
And all the moorland seems to breathe  
The hectic beauty of decay.  
Within the open grave of May  
Dishevelled trees drop wreath on wreath;  
Wind-wrung and ravelled underneath  
Waste leaves choke up the woodland way.

The grief of many partings near  
Wails like an echo in the wind:  
The days of love lie far behind,  
The days of loss lie shuddering near.  
Life's morning-glory who shall bind?  
It is the evening of the year.

**NEW YEAR'S EVE.**

**ANOTHER** full-orbed year hath waned to-day,  
And set in the irrevocable past,  
And headlong whirled long Time's winged blast  
My fluttering rose of youth is borne away:  
Ah rose once crimson with the blood of May,  
A honeyed haunt where bees would break their fast,  
I watch thy scattering petals flee aghast,  
And all the flickering rose-lights turning grey.

Poor fool of life! plagued ever with thy vain  
Regrets and futile longings! were the years  
Not cups o'erbrimming still with gall and tears?  
Let go thy puny personal joy and pain!  
If youth with all its brief hope disappears,  
To deathless hope we must be born again.



**NIRVANA.**

**DIVEST** thyself, O Soul, of vain desire!

    Bid hope farewell, dismiss all coward fears;  
    Take leave of empty laughter, emptier tears,  
And quench, for ever quench, the wasting fire  
Wherein this heart, as in a funeral pyre,  
    Aye burns, yet is consumed not. Years on years  
    Moaning with memories in thy maddened ears—  
Let at thy word, like refluent waves, retire.

Enter thy soul's vast realm as Sovereign Lord,  
And, like that angel with the flaming sword,  
    Wave off life's clinging hands. Then chains will fall  
From the poor slave of self's hard tyranny—  
And Thou, a ripple rounded by the sea,  
    In rapture lost be lapped within the All.