

CROSS ROADS

MARGARET E. SANGSTER*

To My Father

NOTE

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ACTION INDEPENDENCE DAY, 1919 SHAD-
OWS L'ENVOI

PREFACE

The candlelight sweeps softly through the room, Filling dim surfaces with golden laughter, Touching with mystery each high hung rafter, Cutting a path of promise through the gloom.

Slim little elves dance gently on each taper, Wistful, small ghosts steal out of shrouded corners – And, like a line of vague enchanted

mourners, Great shadows sway like wind-blown sheets of paper.

Gently as fingers drawn across your hair, I see the yellow flicker of it creep – And in a silence that is kin to sleep, I feel a world away from pain and care.

Roads stretch like arms across the world outside, Roads reach to strife, to happiness, to fame – Here, in the candlelight, I speak

your name, Here we are at life's cross way,
side by side!

OH, THERE ARE BROOKS THERE,
AND FIELDS THERE AND NOOKS THERE
– NOOKS WHERE A SEEKER MAY FIND
FOREST FLOWERS; BLUE IS THE SKY
THERE, AND SOFT WINDS CREEP BY
THERE, SINGING A SONG THROUGH
THE LONG SUMMER HOURS.

WOOD MAGIC

The woods lay dreaming in a topaz dream,
And we, who silently roamed hand in hand,
Were pilgrims in a strange, enchanted land,
Where life was love, and love was all a-
gleam.

And old remembered songs came back
to greet Our ears, from other worlds of long
ago, The worlds that we of earth may sel-

dom know – And to those songs we timed
our vagrant feet.

We did not speak, we did not need to
say The thought that lay so buried in our
hearts – The thoughts as sweet as spring-
time rain, that starts The buds to blossom-
ing in wistful May.

We did not need to speak, we could not
speak, The wonder words that we in silence

knew – We walked, as very little children
do, Who feel, but cannot tell, the thing they
seek.

Beyond a screen of bushes, bending low,
We knew that fair Titania lay at rest, Her
pillowed head upon her lover's breast, Her
kisses swift as birds that come and go!

And underneath a wall of mottled stone,
We knew the sleeping beauty lay in state,

Entangled in a mist of tears, to wait The
prince whose kiss would raise her to a throne.

Perhaps a witch with single flaming eye,
Was watching from beneath the hemlock
tree; And fairies that our gaze might never
see, Laughed at us as we, hand in hand,
crept by.

Laughed at us? No, I somehow think
they knew That you and I were kin to them

that day! I think they knew that we were
years away From everything but make-believe,
come true.

I think they knew that, singing through
the air, There thrilled a vague, insistent,
harp-like call – And that, where woodbine
blazed against the wall, You held me close
and kissed my wind-tossed hair!

WATERIN' TH' HORSES

I took th' horses to th' brook – to water
'em you know, Th' air was cold with just
a touch o' frost; And as we went a-joggin'
down I couldn't help but think, O' city folk
an' all the things they lost.

O' cause they have their lighted streets –
their Great White Way an' such, O' course
they have their buildings large an' tall; But,
my! they never know th' joy o' ridin' ter th'

brook, An' somehow I don't envy 'em at all!

Perhaps I'd like it – for awhile – to hear
th' songs an' laughter, But somehow, I don't
know exactly why; I'd feel th' country callin'
me; I'd long again fer silence, An' fer God's
mountains, blue against the sky.

I took th' horses to th' brook – to water
'em you know, Th' day was pretty as a day
can be; An' as we went a-joggin' down I

couldn't help but think, O' city folk an' all
they never see!

AT DAWN

I. THE CAVEMAN

I live! And the scarlet sunrise is climb-
ing the mountain steep, I live . . . And
below, in the caverns, the rest of my clans-
men sleep; But I – I am here, and chanting,
I could slay a beast with my hand, And I

thrill as the mist of the morning creeps up
from the rock-strewn land!

I live, I have strength for fighting – and
courage to rend and slay, I live! And my
eyes are lifting to gaze at the new- born
day; And I pause, on the way to my hewn-
out cave, though I know that she waits me
there, My mate, with her eyes on the scarlet
dawn, and the wind in her flame-like hair.

I live – and the joy of living leaps up in my searching eyes, I live, and my soul starts forward, to challenge the waking skies! Far down are the torrents roaring, far up are the clouds, unfurled; And I stand on the cliff, exultant, akin to the waking world.

The mists are gone, and an eagle sweeps down from the mountain high, And I wish that my arms were feathered and strong,

that I, too, might fly; I live! I am one with
the morning! Ah, I am a MAN, and free!
And I shout aloud, and the scarlet dawn
shouts back, on the gale, to me!

II. THE PIONEER

I creep along, but silently, For, oh, the
dawn is coming; I creep along, for I have
heard A flint-tipped arrow, humming; And
I have heard a snapping twig, Above the

wind's low laughter; And I have known –
and thrilled to know, That swift THEY fol-
lowed after!

The forest turns from black to grey, The
leaves are silver-shining; But I have heard a
far-off call – The war-whoop's sullen whin-
ing. And I have been a naked form, Among
the tree trunks prowling; And I have glimpsed
a savage face, That faded from me, scowl-

ing.

A rosy color sweeps the sky, A vagrant
lark is singing, But, as I steal along the
trail, I know that day is bringing A host of
red-skins in its train, Their tommy-hawks
are gleaming – I SEE THEM NOW; or can
it be The first pale sunlight beaming?

I creep along, but stealthily, For, oh, the
dawn is coming! I creep along – but I have

heard A flint-tipped arrow, humming. . . .
And yet, my heart is light, inside, My soul,
itself, is flying To greet the dawn! I AM
ALIVE – AND WHAT IS DEATH – BUT
DYING?

III. THE FARMER

The dawn is here! I climb the hill; The
earth is young and strangely still; A tender
green is showing where But yesterday my

fields were bare. . . . I climb and, as I
climb, I sing; The dawn is here, and with it
– spring!

My oxen stamp the ground, and they
Seem glad, with me, that soon the day Will
bring new work for us to do! The light
above is clear and blue; And one great cloud
that swirls on high, Seems sent from earth
to kiss the sky.

The birds are coming back again, They
know that soon the golden grain Will wave
above this fragrant loam; The birds, with
singing, hasten home; And I, who watch
them, feel their song Deep in my soul, and
nothing wrong, Or mean or small, can touch
my heart. . . . Down in the vale the
smoke-wreaths start, To softly curl above
the trees; The fingers of a vagrant breeze

Steal tenderly across my hair, And toil is
fled, and want, and care!

The dawn is here! I climb the hill; My
very oxen seem to thrill – To feel the mys-
tery of day. The sun creeps out, and far
away From man-made law I worship God,
Who made the light, the cloud, the sod; I
worship smilingly, and sing! The dawn
is here, and with it – spring!

THE HAUNTED HOUSE

It stands neglected, silent, far from the
ways of men, A lonely little cottage beside
a lonely glen; And, dreaming there, I saw
it when sunset's golden rays Had touched it
with the glory of other, sweeter days.

They say the house is haunted, and –
well, it is, I guess, For every empty win-
dow just aches with loneliness; With lone-

liness that tortures and memory that flays;
Ah, yes, the house is haunted with ghosts
of other days.

The ghost of childish laughter rings on
the narrow stair, And, from a silent corner,
the murmur of a prayer Steals out, and then
a love song, and then a bugle call, And steps
that do not falter along the quiet hall.

The story of the old house that stands

beside the glen? That story is forgotten by every one; but when The house is touched and softened by sunset's golden rays, I know that ghosts must haunt it, the ghosts of sweeter days.

TO A PAIR OF GLOVES

Jus' a little pair o' gloves, Sorter thin
an' worn; With th' fingers neatly darned,
Like they had been torn. Jus' a little pair

o' gloves, Not s' much ter see. . . . Not
a soul on earth can guess What they mean
ter me!

Jus' a little pair o' gloves, Sorter tossed
aside; Limp an' quiet, folded up, Like their
soul had died. Every finger seems ter look
Lonely, an' my hand Trembles as it touches
them – Who can understand?

Jus' a little pair o' gloves, Ah, she tossed

'em there. . . . Singin'-like, she turned ter
go, Didn't have a care! Kissin' them? A
prayer, a tear? God, my head WILL bow –
Jus' a little pair o' gloves, Empty,
now!

PEAKS

A storm may rage in the world below, It
may tear great trees apart; But here on the
mountain top, I know That it cannot touch

my heart.

I have struggled up through the lightning's glare, I have walked where the cliffs fell sheer To a gorge below, but I breathed a prayer, And my soul passed doubt and fear!

Here on the mountain top the air Is clear as a silver song; And the sun is warm on my unbound hair; AND WHAT THOUGH THE WAY WAS LONG?

What though the way was steep and
bleak, And what though the road was hard?
I stand at last on the mountain peak, With
my eyes upraised to God!

A storm may sweep through the world
below, It may rend great rocks apart; But
here on the crest of the world I know That
it cannot touch my heart.

LIL' FELLER

When th.' sunshine's golden-yeller Like
th' curls upon his head, Then he wakes – th'
lil' feller – An' he jumps up, outen bed; An'
he scrambles fer his knickers Flung, per-
haps, upon th' floor, An' he takes his hat
(my old 'un), An' he races through th' door
– An' I hear his voice, a-singin', In his odd,
ole-fashioned way, 'Cause he's glad – th' lil'
feller – In th' mornin' o' the day.

Kinder makes me feel, well, lazy, So I
hurry up, outside, Where th' mountains smile
down, friendly – And th' earth looks sorter
wide; An' I hear his voice a-callin', Sayin',
"Daddy, come an' see!" An' I find him makin'
gardens Where a rock pile uster be – An' I
shout, "How goes it, sonny?" An' my heart
feels light an' gay, Fer he's singin' – lil' feller
– In th' mornin' o' th' day.

Lil' feller, an' his gardens! It don't matter much ter him, If th' hoein's hard an' tedgious, An' th' crop he grows is slim; Fer he loves ter be a-workin', An' he loves ter see things start Outer nothin'. . . . There's a garden In th' rock-bed o' my heart That he's planted, just by singin' In his odd, ole-fashioned way – 'Cause he's glad, MY LIL' FELLER, In th' mornin' o' th' day!

TO AN OLD SCHOOLHOUSE

Down by the end of the lane it stands,
Where the sumac grows in a crimson thatch,
Down where the sweet wild berry patch,
Holds out a lure for eager hands. Down at
the end of the lane, who knows The ghosts
that sit at the well-scarred seats, When the
moon is dark, and the gray sky meets With
the dawn time light, and a chill wind blows?

Ghosts – well not ghosts, perhaps, but
dreams – Rather like wistful shades, that
stand Waiting a look or an outstretched
hand, To call them back where the morning
gleams – Dreams of the hopes we had, that
died, Dreams of the vivid youth we sold;
Dreams of a pot of rainbow gold – Gold
that we sought for, eager-eyed !

Dreams of the plans we made, that sleep

With the lesson books on the dusty rack,
Of the joyous years that will not come back
– That are drowned in the tears we have
learned to weep. Ghosts did I call them!
Sweet they are As a plant that grows in a
desert place, Sweet as a dear remembered
face – Sweet as a pale, courageous star.

Where the sumac grows in a flaming
wall, It stands, at the end of a little lane,

And there do the children come again, An-
swering, still, the bell's shrill call, Just as we
came, with their songs unsung, And their
hopes all new, and their dreams dew kissed,
Brave as the sun in a land of mist – JUST
AS WE CAME WHEN THE WORLD WAS
YOUNG!

THE OLD SAILOR

I've crossed the bar at last, mates, My

longest voyage is done; And I can sit here,
peaceful, And watch th' setting sun A-smilin'
kind of glad like Upon the waves so free. My
longest voyage is done, mates, But oh, the
heart of me, Is out where sea meets skyline!
My longest voyage is done. . . . But – can
I sit, in peace, mates, And watch the settin'
sun?

For what's a peaceful life, mates, When

every breeze so free, When every gale a-
blowin', Brings messages to me? And is the
sky so shinin', For all it's golden sun, To one
who loves the sea, mates, And knows his
voyage is done? And, can a year on land,
mates, Match with one day – at sea? Ah,
every wind a-singin' Brings memory to me!

I've crossed the bar at last, mates, My
longest voyage is past, And I must watch

the sunset, Must see it fade, at last. My
steps are not so light, mates, As they were,
years ago; And sometimes, when I'm tired,
My head droops kind of low – Yet, though
I'm old and – weary, The waves that dance
so free, Keep callin' to my soul, mates, And
thrill the heart of me!

THE RIVER AND THE TREE

"You are white and tall and swaying,"

sang the river to the tree, "And your leaves are touched with silver – but you never smile on me; For your branches murmur love songs to the sun- kissed turquoise sky, And you seem so far above me that I always hurry by!"

"You are laughing in your shallows, you are somber in your deeps, And below your shining surface there's a heart that never

sleeps; But all day you pass me, dancing,
and at evening time you dream, And I didn't
think you liked me," sang the birch- tree to
the stream.

So they got a bit acquainted on a glow-
ing summer day, And they found they liked
each other (which is often times the way);
And the river got so friendly, and it ran
so very slow, That the birch-tree shone re-

flected in the water down below!

AUTUMN SONG

Let's go down the road together, you
and I, Let's go down the road together, Through
the vivid autumn weather; Let's go down
the road together when the red leaves fly.
Let's go searching, searching after Joy and
mirth and love and laughter – Let's go down
the road together, you and I.

Let's go hunting for adventure, you and I,
For the romance we are knowing Waits for
us, alive and glowing, For the romance that
has always passed us by. Let's have done
with tears and sighing, What if summer-
time IS dying? Let's go hunting for adven-
ture, you and I.

Let's go down the road together, you
and I – And if you are frightened lest you

Weary grow, my arms will rest you, As we
take the road together when the red leaves
fly. Springtime is the time for mating? Ah,
a deeper love is waiting Down the autumn
road that calls us, you and I!

THE CITY – TOWERS AND CANYONS,
AND SLUMS, MAN BUILT. . . .
AND SOULS, GOD BUILT!
SCARLET FLOWERS

The window box across the street Is filled
with scarlet flowers; They glow, like bits
of sunset cloud, Across the dragging hours.
What though the mist be like a shroud What
though the day be dreary? The window
box across the street Is warm, and gay, and
cheery!

The window box across the street Is filled
with scarlet flowers; I almost catch their

perfume sweet. . . . Above the sound of
tramping feet, They sing of country bowers.
Against the house that looms so gray, They
smile in – well, a friendly way.

A tired shop girl hurries by; Their color
seems to catch her eye; She pauses, starts,
and wistfully She gazes up. It seems to me
That I can hear her longing sigh. . . . A
little shop girl hurries by.

A newsboy stops to sell his wares; The
crowds brush by him; no one cares To buy
his papers. But above The scarlet flowers
bravely grow In token of the Father's love.
. . . The crowds brush coldly by below.

A blind man stumbles, groping past; He
cannot see their scarlet shine; And yet some
memory seems to twine About his soul. For,
oh, he turns As trusting as a child who

yearns For some vague dream, and smilingly
He lifts the eyes that cannot see. .
. . A blind man stumbles, groping past.

The window box across the street Is filled
with scarlet flowers; They tell a secret, tender,
sweet, Through all the dreary hours.
And folk who hurry on their way Dream of
some other brighter day. . . . The window
box across the street Is filled with scarlet

flowers.

ON FIFTH AVENUE

I walked down Fifth Avenue the other day (In the languid summertime everybody strolls down Fifth Avenue); And I passed women, dainty in their filmy frocks, And much bespatted men with canes. And great green busses lumbered past me, And impressive limousines, and brisk little "lectrics.

I walked down Fifth Avenue the other day, And the sunshine smiled at me, And something, deep in my heart, burst into song. And then, all at once, I saw her – A woman with painted lips and rouge-touched cheeks – Standing in front of a jeweler's window. She was looking at diamonds – A tray of great blue-white diamonds – And I saw a flame leap out of her eyes to meet them

(Greedy eyes they were, and cold, like too-perfect jewels); And I realized, for the first time, That diamonds weren't always pretty.

And then I SAW THE OTHER ONE: A thin little girl looking into a florist's shop At a fragrant mass of violets, dew-purple and fresh. She carried a huge box on her arm, And a man, passing, said loudly, "I guess somebody's hat'll be late today!" And

the thin little girl flushed and hurried on,
But not before I had seen the tenderness in
her eyes – The tenderness that real women
show When they look at vast rolling hills,
or flowers, or very small pink babies.

I walked down Fifth Avenue the other
day. (All the world walks, leisurely, down
Fifth Avenue in the summertime.)

FROM A CITY WINDOW

The dust is thick on the city street, The
smoke on the city sky Hangs dense and gray
at the close of day – And the city crowds
surge by With heavy feet through the sum-
mer heat Like a sluggish sullen tide; ... But
hand in hand through a magic land We are
wandering side by side.

For somewhere, dear, there's a magic
land On the shores of a silver sea; And

there is a boat with turquoise sails – With
sails that are wide and free; A boat that is
whirling through the spray, That is coming
for you and me!

Somewhere, dear, there's a singing breeze
That creeps through the laughing air To the
wide-flung boughs of a blue-black tree – It
touches your joyous hair; And the touch of
it is as soft and light As a baby's lisping

prayer.

Somewhere, dear, there's a bit of beach
Where the sand is warm and white; Where
the sky seems close and the drifting clouds
Are tenderly, warmly bright. And there is
a ship with turquoise sails, With sails like
a living light!

Ah, the ship is bringing us dreams come
true, And hopes that are all dew-kissed; It

is bringing us days that are all aglow With
scarlet and amethyst; . . . Bringing us
faith to find our way Through a world that
is wrapped in mist.

Our window looks on the city street, We
can glimpse the city sky; But our hearts are
gay at the close of day, Though the tired
crowds pass by With heavy feet through the
blinding heat, Like a sullen, sluggish tide. .

. . For hand in hand through a magic land.
We are wandering side by side.

THE LADY ACROSS THE COURT

She only comes when night is near, And
stands a moment quietly Beside her win-
dow, in the dusk – She lives across the court
from me – And though I cannot see her
eyes Because she is too far away, I some-
how feel that they are kind, And very soft,

and widely gray!

Her hands are only dim white blurs, That
rest against the window pane; And yet I
know that they are firm, And cool and sweet
as April rain. And, oh, I cannot help but
wish As, through the dark, I go to bed,
That they might rest a moment like A little
prayer upon my head!

She only comes when night is near, I

do not know who she can be; I never see
her anywhere But just across the court from
me. . . . I am so small the curtains hide
The wistful smiles that I have smiled, And
yet I, somehow, think she feels The love of
me – a lonely child.

TO A PORCELAIN PUPPY DOG

Oh, pudgy porcelain puppy dog from
far-away Japan, I saw you in a shop to-

day where lonesomely you sat Upon a velvet
cushion that was colored gold and purple,
Between a bowl of goldfish, and a sleeping
wooden cat.

I wonder what you thought about as
stolidly you sat there, A grin of faint deri-
sion on your pudgy porcelain face; I wonder
if you dreamed about some cherry blossom
tea house, And if the goldfish bored you in

their painted Chinese case?

I wonder if you dreamed about the laughter of the geishas As languidly they danced across the shining lacquered floor, I wonder if your thoughts were with a purple clump of iris That bloomed, all through the summer, by the little tea house door?

I wonder if you hated us who passed, you by unheeding, You who had known the

temples of another, older land? And, oh, I
wonder if you knew when I had paused be-
side you To pat you, porcelain puppy dog,
that I could understand?

COLORS

I love color. I love flaming reds, And
vivid greens, And royal flaunting purples. I
love the startled rose of the sun at dawning,
And the blazing orange of it at twilight.

I love color. I love the drowsy blue of
the fringed gentian, And the yellow of the
goldenrod, And the rich russet of the leaves
That turn at autumn-time. . . . I love
rainbows, And prisms, And the tinsel glitter
Of every shop-window.

I love color. And yet today, I saw a
brown little bird Perched on the dull-gray
fence Of a weed-filled city yard. And as

I watched him The little bird Threw back
his head Defiantly, almost, And sang a song
That was full of gay ripples, And poignant
sweetness, And half-hidden melody.

I love color. ... I love crimson, and
azure, And the glowing purity of white. And
yet today, I saw a living bit of brown, A
vague oasis on a streak of gray, That brought
heaven Very near to me.

POSSESSION (A TENEMENT MOTHER
SPEAKS)

Y' ain't as pretty as some babies are –
But, oh, yer mine! Yer lil' fingers sorter
seem t' twine Aroun' my soul. Yer eyes are
bright, t' me, as any star, Yer hair's like
gol'.

Some people say yer hair is sandy-red,
An' that yer eyes is sorter wan an' pale, An'

that yer lil' body looks, well, frail. . . Y'
ain't been fed Like rich folks children are.
. . . It takes fresh air Ter keep a baby fat
an' strong an' pink! It takes more care, 'N
I have time ter give. . . An' yet, if God'll
only let yer live –

When yer first came, An' when I seen
yer face, deep down inside My heart I felt –
well, sorter broke an' tore, 'Cause when yer

came ter me I like ter died, An' I had lost
my job, there at th' store. I looked at you,
an' oh, it wasn't pride I felt, but bitterness
an' shame!

An' then yer gropin' fingers touched my
hand, As helpless as a snow-flake in the air,
Yer didn't know, yer couldn't understand,
('Cause yer was new t' this cold-hearted
land), That life ain't fair! Yer didn't know

if I was good, 'r bad, 'R much ter see –
Y' only knew that I belonged, an' oh, Yer
trusted me!

Somehow, right there, I didn't stop ter
think That yer was white an' thin – in-
stead o' pink, An' that yer lips, an' not yer
eyes, was blue. . . I got t' thinkin' how,
when work was through I'd sing t' yer, an'
rock yer off t' rest. I got t' thinkin' that

I had been blessed, More than th' richest
girl I'd ever knew! An' oh, I held yer tight
against my breast, An', lookin' far ahead, I
dreamed an' planned That I would work th'
fingers off my hand Fer you! An' mother-
love swept on me like a tide, An', oh, I cried!

Some people say yer hair is sandy-red,
But they don't know; They say yer eyes is
sorter pale an' weak, But it ain't so! It's jus'

because yer never been well fed, An' never
had a lil' cribby bed; It's jus' because yer
never had a peek At th' blue sky – That's
why!

Yer ain't so pretty as some babies are,
But, oh, t' me yer like a silver star That,
through th' darkest night can smile an' shine.
. . . Yer ain't as pretty as some babies are,
But, God, yer mine!

LIGHTS OF THE CITY

He was young, And his mind Was filled
with the science of economics That he had
studied in college. And as we talked about
the food riots, And high prices, And jobless
men, He said: "It's all stupid and wrong,
"This newspaper talk! "Folk have no busi-
ness to starve. "The price of labor always
advances, "Proportionally, "With the price

of food!"

"Any man," he said, A moment later,
"Can earn at least two dollars a day "By
working on a railroad, "Or in the street
cleaning department! "What if potatoes
DO cost "Eight cents a pound? "Wages are
high, too. . . . "People have no reason to
starve."

I listened to him prayerfully (More or

less), For I had never been to college, And
I didn't know much about economics.

But – As I walked to the window, And
looked out over the veiled, mysterious lights
Of the city, I couldn't help thinking Of a
little baby That I had seen a few days ago;
A baby of the slums – thin, and joyless, And
old of face, But with eyes Like the eyes of
the Christ Child. . . . A baby – crying for

bread –

And. . . . I wondered. . . .

STEEL

They think that we're just animals, almost,
We men who work with steel. A lady
visitor was here th' other day, She looked
at me, an' I could hear her say, "My, what
a life! I s'pose his only boast "Is muscles!"
She's wrong. We feel A certain pride, a cer-

tain sort o' joy, When some great blazin'
mass is tamed an' turned Into an engine
wheel. Our hands get burned, An' some-
times half our hair is scorched away – But,
well, it's fun! Perhaps you've seen a boy,
Who did hard work he loved, an' called it
play? Know what I mean? Well, that's the
way we feel, We men who work with steel.

A lady visitor was here th' other day;

She held her skirts right dainty in her hand,
An' as she passed me by, I heard her say, "I
wonder what he THINKS – or if his head
"Is just a piece o' metal, too!" She said It
laughin'-like. She didn't understand, She
couldn't know that we have dreams as grand,
As any SHE could have. We wonder where
Th' rivets that we make are goin' to, An' if
th' engine wheels we turn, will go Through

tropic heat, or if they'll plow through snow;
An' as we watch, we sorter grow to care
About th' steel. Why it's as shiny blue As
j'ew'ls! An' every bit is, well, a part Of life
to us. Sometimes my very heart Thanks
God that I've a man-sized job to do!

MUSIC OF THE SLUMS

I. THE VIOLIN-MAKER

Over a slum his sign swings out, Over

a street where the city's shout Is deadened
into a sob of pain – Where even joy has a
minor strain.

“Violins made,” read the sign. It swings
Over a street where sorrow sings; Over a
street where people give Their right to laugh
for a chance to live.

He works alone with his head bent low
And all the sorrow and all the woe, And all

the pride of a banished race, Stare from the
eyes that light his face.

But he never sighs and his slender hand,
Fastens the cat-gut, strand by strand – Fas-
tens it tight, but tenderly As if he dreams
of some melody.

Some melody of his yesterday. . . . Will
it, I wonder, find its way Out to the world,
when fingers creep Over the strings that lie

asleep?

Or will the city's misery Mould the song
in a tragic key – Making its sweetest, faintest
breath Thrill with sorrow, and throb with
death?

Maker of music – who can know Where
the work of his hand shall go? Maybe its
slightest phrase will bring, Comfort to ease
the suffering –

Maybe his dreams will have their part
Buried deep in the music's heart. . . . Out
of a chain of dreary days, Joy may come as
some master plays!

Over a slum his sign hangs out, Over a
street where dread meets doubt – "Violins
made," reads the sign. It swings Over a
street where sorrow sings.

II. THE PARK BAND

(Side by side and silent – eagerly they stand – Souls look out of tired eyes, hands are clasped together, Through the thrilling softness of the late spring weather, All a city slum is out to listen to the band.)

Young love and Maytime, hear the joyous strain, Listen to a serenade written long ago! You will recognize the song – you who care must know Fear that blends with hap-

piness, joy that touches pain.

Rabbi with the grizzled beard hear adventure's story! Hear the tale the music tells, thrilling with romance, Hear the clatter of a sword, hear a broken lance Falling from some hero's hand, red with blood-stained glory.

(Tenements on either side, light-flecked in the gloaming, Tenements on either side,

stark and tall and gray – Ah, the folk who
line your halls wander far away, All a crowded
city slum is a-gypsy roaming!)

Woman with the brooding gaze, hear
the lilting laughter Of the children that you
loved, feel their soft- lipped kisses; Think of
all the little joys that a hard world misses-
What though bitter loneliness always fol-
lows after?

Gangster with the shifty eyes, listen to
the sighing Of the hymn tune that you heard
at your mother's knee; Listen to the restless
ghost of the used-to-be, Listen to a wistful
ghost's empty-hearted crying.

(Tenements on either side – menacing
they stand – Light-flecked in the softness of
the late spring weather. . . . But young
love and broken life are standing close to-

gether, And all a city slum is out to listen
to the band.)

III. THE ORGAN MAN

He's very old, his music box is old and
rusty, too, And half the notes of it are harsh,
and half of them are slow; One wonders if
the coat he wears could ever have been new
– And if the tune he plays was quite forgot-
ten long ago.

He finds a sunny place to stand, and lifts
his bleary eyes, And smiles a bit – a tooth-
less smile half touched, perhaps, with fear;
And though he cannot see them he is look-
ing at the skies, As if he prays, but silently,
for hope and faith and cheer.

The foreign women pass him by, their
tarnished coins held tight, They toss their
heads and will not hear his music's wist-

ful hum – But through each alley way and street, like moths that seek the light, With eager eyes and laughing lips the little children come.

He plays his ancient, shaky song, his mouth moves to its sway, He does not know the tune of it is old and out of key; For, through his eyes, a soul stares out that wanders far away, In some fair land of youth and

love – some land that used to be.

The little children cluster close, bare-headed, bare of limb – They hold their ragged frocks and dance, they do not care – or know, That they are like a garden place, a fragrant dream to him, Or that the tune he plays was quite forgotten long ago.

”BE OF GOOD CHEER!”

Temptation came to me today, And oh,

I felt that I must stray Down primrose paths,
forgetting all. . . . The city's fevered,
siren call Spoke to my soul, its whispered
cry Said, "Live, for Youth, too soon, will
die!"

So all alone, when work was done, I sought
the park. The setting sun Had left a bit of
warmth for me – I found a bench beneath a
tree, And sat and thought. My life is hard,

Sometimes my heart seems battle-scarred,
With longings keen, and bitter fears, And
want, and suffering, and tears.

Temptation spoke, and Youth spoke back;
The night seemed cold and grimly black,
And every light was like a star That cleft
the sky – they were so far, So very far away!
And I Was lonely, there, beneath the sky. .

There used to be a little farm A tiny
place, remote from harm; There used to
be a mother frail And sweet, with hair as
silver-pale As the faint moon. She heard
me say The words when first I learned to
pray. . . .

Above me in the silent trees, I heard the
rustles of the breeze, It sounded like her
step, as light As dreams across an endless

night. My mother – Ah, the name so sweet,
Brought memories on noiseless feet, And
softly in the darkness, there, I breathed my
little childhood prayer. . . .

Do prayers have answers? As I prayed
A Presence came, and gently laid A Hand
upon my arm. I knew That Someone kind,
and good, and true Was very near. Upon
my soul A peace swept down, and left it

whole. I felt a calm steal over me, The same
that stilled the troubled sea Where Jesus
walked. My fears were laid, Temptation left
me unafraid. And as I smiled, there in the
park, A voice spoke through the fragrant
dark. "Be of good cheer!" the words rang
out Like music through the city's shout.

And all the lights that I could see Were
stars of home, a gleam for me!

FROM MY ROOM

I love you, dear. . . . Here, alone in my
room tonight, it is all that matters, Out
through my window, vaguely hushed, the
city clatters, Telling ever its tale of woe and
mirth, Sighing ever its song of death and
birth, Singing ever its potent, mad refrain,
Swept with tears and the bitter weight of
pain.

Here in my room I kneel, alone, to pray,
But there seems very little, dear, to say
Even to God. So, kneeling by my bed, I
think dim thoughts, and dream long dreams
instead. Wide-eyed I kneel and watch the
candle flame, Making swift shadows on the
wall; your name Throbs in my heart, and
makes my pulse to thrill – Wide-eyed I kneel,
with soul a-light, until Somewhere a clock

starts chiming. . . . It is late. . . .
Out through the dark wan tenderness and
hate Press pale kisses upon the city's lips –
Dawn comes creeping, the weary nighttime
slips Furtively by, like some hurt thief with
plunder. . . . Dear, I cross to my window,
and I wonder Whether you are asleep, or if
you lie, Sleepless beneath the smoke-hung
purple sky. . . .

Down in the streets the tired city vaguely
clatters, Here alone in my room I stand, and
nothing matters, Only. . . . I love you!

THE BALCONY SCENES

The stage is set, like a garden, And the
lights are flickering and low; And a Romeo
with fat legs, Is telling a Juliet with dyed
hair and tired, disillusioned eyes, That love
– real love – is the only thing in the world.

And up in the balcony of the theatre
Where the seats cost twenty-five cents, A
slim little girl in a shiny serge frock, And
a boy with a wistful mouth Are holding
hands. And as they listen, breathlessly, to
the studied voice of the actor, Their fingers
are all a-thrill, With the music of the ages.

A BOWERY PAWN-SHOP

A dusty, musty little shop set in a dingy

street, A doorsill old and scarred and worn
by many tired feet, A row of cases, vaguely
glassed, a safe against the wall, And, oh,
the ache of many hearts – the fabric of it
all!

A violin with broken strings that fingers
have caressed, A diamond-set betrothal ring
that lover's lips have pressed, A high shell
comb, a spangled fan, a filmy bit of lace, A

heart-shaped locket, ribbon-tied, that frames
a laughing face.

A pair of blankets folded up, an over-
coat, a shawl, A tall old clock that might
have chimed in some wainscoted hall, And
in the farthest corner, where the purple shad-
ows lie, The echo of a woman's sob, the
phantom of a sigh.

Ah, wedding-rings – a score of them –

not many of them new, A grim revolver laid
beside a baby's tiny shoe, A satin coat, a
ragged gown, a gold-clasped book of verse,
A necklace of bedraggled pearls, an empty
silver purse.

A dreary weary little shop set in a sun-
less place. A little shop where love has met
with sorrow and disgrace. . . . A row
of cases, double-locked, a safe against the

wall; And, oh, the ache of countless hearts
that lies behind it all!

SPRING IN THE CITY

I saw a crocus blooming in the park, I
felt a hint of magic in the air, I heard faint
music sighing everywhere, And so, as all the
world, grew softly dark –

I found again the hope that never dies,
And hungrily, with out-flung arms, I came

Once more to you. And when you spoke
my name I read springtime eternal in your
eyes!

ROSE PETALS IN THE EARLY RAIN,
FORGOTTEN DREAMS, AND A TORN
SKETCH BOOK!

L'L EMPTY CLOSET

There's a li'l empty closet in a li'l empty
room, Where th' shadows lie like dust upon

th' floor; It uster be HIS closet not s' very long ago – That's why I don't go near it any more. Every li'l hook is empty, 'ceptin' one, an' from it hangs (Th' whitest li'l ghost that ever grew In a heart that's near ter breakin' with it's agony o' grief!) An empty flannel nightie piped with blue.

Jus' a li'l flannel nightie that was shrunken in th' wash, In spots th' blue has ran inter

th' white; But I've seen him in it, sleepy,
when I tucked th' covers in, An' kissed him,
soft, an took away th' light. Jus' a li'l flan-
nel nightie, hangin' empty on a hook, As if
it was ashamed – or in disgrace – Jus' a li'l
flannel nightie an' it ain't no use no more,
But I couldn't bear t' take it from its place!

Jus' a li'l empty closet in a li'l empty
room, Where th' shadows lie like dust upon

th' floor – It uster be his closet, where I'd
put his clothes away, That's why I hate ter
go there any more. But I've left his li'l
nightie hangin' on a single hook, I sorter
had ter leave it there, I guess; Ah, that
li'l empty closet in that li'l empty room Is
crowded – crowded ful o' loneliness!

TWO LULLABYS

I. To A DREAM BABY

Oh, little child whose face I cannot see,
I feel your presence very near tonight, I feel
the warmth of you creep close to me. . .
The grey moths drift across the candlelight,
And tiny shadows sway across the floor,
Like wistful elves who do a fairy dance; The
wind is tapping softly at the door, And rain
is beating, like a silver lance, Against the
tightly curtained window pane. Oh, little

child whose face I cannot see, The loneli-
ness, the twilight, and the rain, Have brought
your dearness very close to me. And though
I rock with empty arms, I sing A lullaby
that I have made to croon Into your drowsy
shadow ear – a song About the star sheep
and the shepherd moon!

II. POPPY LAND

Sleep, little tired eyes, close to the heart

of me, Sleep while the sun trembles low in
the west; You who are dream of my dreams,
and a part of me – Sleep with your head
lying warm on my breast.

Dear, there's a land that is filled with
red flowers, Poppies, they call them, that
sway in the breeze; Sometimes their petals,
in soft scarlet showers, Fall in warm drifts
that are high as your knees. . . . Dear,

in your dreams you will laugh as you roll
through them, Waving your arms in an ef-
fort to creep; Gently they nod as the wind
sings its soul through them, Sleep, little
tired eyes, sleep. . . .

Dear, in this land there's a sky like a
feather, Blue in some places, or white as
a star; And there's a fragrance – a plant
that's called heather Grows in the spot where

the butterflies are. Dear, there are pastures
as gay as glad laughter, Dotted with hun-
dreds of woolly white sheep, Dear, you can
pat them, for they'll follow after You, as
you sleep. . . .

Dream, little tired eyes, close to the breast
of me, Wander in fields where red flowers
are gloaming; All of my heart wanders with
you, the rest of me Watches your dreaming.

· · ·

I DREAMED YOUR FACE

I dreamed your face, one night, when
Heaven seemed resting, Against the trou-
bled fever of the earth; I dreamed that vivid
throated birds were nesting, In trees that
shook with elfin-hearted mirth. I dreamed
that star-like purple flowers were springing
A-throb with perfume all about the place,

And that there was a far-off sound of singing
– And then – I dreamed your face!

I dreamed your face, and then I waked
from dreaming, (The creeping dawn seemed
very cold and bare!) The rising sun seemed
pallid in its beaming, Because its coming
did not find you there! And I – I rose
despondent in the morning, As one whose
burning thirst has not been slaked; I dreamed

your face, a wonder world adorning, And
then – I waked.

And so I went upon a quest to find you,
A quest that led through many bitter years;
I journeyed far with strands of love to bind
you, And found, not you, but bitterness and
tears – So I returned, discouraged, through
the gloaming, My shoulders bowed with weariness
unguessed; I came back, unsuccessful,

from my roaming – My sorry quest!

I had a bit of garden that I tended, It
helped me dream, again, my dream of you
– It was a joyous place of colors blended –
A place where pansies and Sweet William
grew. And one bright day I hummed as I
was planting A border row of flowers slim
and fair, And raised my eyes to see pale
sunlight slanting Across your hair!

ANSWER

I am myself – you cannot take my dreams
And pull the filmy stuff of them apart! I
am myself – and life IS what it seems. I
am myself, and love is in my heart! You
cannot make me think by fast set rule, You
cannot laugh beliefs like mine away, Expe-
rience MAY be a bitter school, And yet. .
. . The golden sun shines every day, And

stars at night lend magic to the sky, And
all the world is vividly a-glow, You cannot
make me pause to question why For we who
dare to dream have learned to know!

THE WORLD IS RIGHT! There is a
friendly One Who smiles when we have tried
to do our part – I will not flinch, my jour-
ney's just begun. . . . I AM MYSELF –
YOU CANNOT BREAK MY HEART!

A BABY'S HANDS

God made the rivers, the hills, and the seas, God made the flowers, the grass, and the trees; God made the clouds, and the waves, silver-crested, Then God made the hands of a baby – and rested!

How did He make them? Well, nobody knows – Some say He dreamed of the bud of a rose, And that He woke as the dawn swept

away Night in the dancing pink promise of
day.

Maybe He thought of the light of a star,
(That's why He made them as soft as they
are!) Maybe He watched while a new but-
terfly, Light as a sunbeam, went fluttering
by.

Maybe He walked in a garden, dew-kissed,
That's why He made them as frail as the

mist – Then as He leaned from His heaven
above, God made them strong as His great-
est gift – LOVE!

God made the mountains – we wonder
at these – God made the splendor of sunsets
and trees; God made vast mines where a
world's wealth is piled, Then God made the
hands of a baby – and smiled!

ALL ALONG THE BROAD HIGHWAY

All along the broad highway the little
dreams were growing, White as hope, and
red as life, and bluer than the sea – All
along the broad highway I felt their petals
blowing, Like a storm of fragrant snow across
the lips of me! So I danced with joyous
heart, and bent above them singing. So I
skipped along the road and smiled into the
skies; ALL ALONG THE BROAD HIGH-

WAY THE LITTLE DREAMS WERE SPRING-
ING, FRAGRANT AS THE DEW OF STARS
AND GLAD AS BUTTERFLIES!

All along the broad highway I danced
and sang unheeding, Till One came with
haughty step and traveled by my side; Trav-
eled first beside my path then, suddenly,
was leading – One who drew me after him
and murmured, "I AM PRIDE!" All along

the broad highway I hurried, ever faster,
Faster through the purple dust that blinded
like a mist, Blinded me until I felt that
only Pride was master, (And I saw the little
dreams through clouds of amethyst!)

All along the broad highway I toiled,
no longer glancing Anywhere but straight
ahead . . . I had no heart to sing – All
along the broad highway, my feet no longer

dancing; Followed I the steps of Pride, and
felt the thick dust sting In the tired eyes
of me . . . the eyes too sad for weeping!
Still I struggled – struggled on until quite
suddenly – All the strength that kept me
up seemed drowsy, almost sleeping – And
I paused with drooping head and lo, Pride
went from me!

All along the broad highway the silent

dusk was stealing, Quite alone I stood and
stared about me in the gloom; And the
voice of me was still, and my heart was
kneeling Like a weary pilgrim soul in an at-
tic room. And I stretched my empty hands
to where the ghostly lighting, Showed a crum-
pled mist of blue, a heap of white and red –
There along the broad highway like armies
after fighting, All the gallant little dreams

were lying gaunt and dead!

MY MOTHER

My mother's kinder chubby – she's fat,
th' fellers say – My mother's kinder chubby,
but I like her that a-way! 'Cause she's awful
sorter jolly, an' she makes th' bestest pies,
An' she laughs when I'm a-jokin' 'till th'
tears are in her eyes. An' she pats me on th'
shoulder when I'm feelin' sad an' blue, An'

whispers, "Little feller, yer mother's proud
o' you!"

She don't wear silks 'at rustle, like Tom-
mie's mother does, But I like her gingham
better 'cause it's – well, just 'cause it's hers!
An' she don't look young an' girl-like, an'
her hands are sorter red, But, my, they're
awful gentle when she tucks you inter bed.
. . . She hasn't got a di'mond like th' lady

crost th' street, But she's got two great big
dimples, an' her smile is mighty sweet!

My mother's sorter chubby – but say,
her step is light – She's never cross 'r tired
– not even when it's night! An' her shoul-
ders JUST as comfy when yer heart is feelin'
sore, When you wish you was a baby – an'
not a boy no more – Oh, her arms are cush-
ion tender at th' twilight time o' day, Yes –

my mother's sorter chubby – But I like her
that a-way!

HEREDITY

You told me, last night, In a strange
and sudden burst of confidence; That a New
England ancestor of yours, Had burned witches
– And at last I knew. . . .

Why your eyes are always so grim, And
why your mouth is cut, In a straight line,

And why you can never see beauty and mirth
In the sweep of wind over a wheat field, Or
in the sunlight on a baby's hair. At last I
knew Why you can never see romance In
the long gypsie trail, Or magic, In the still
purple woods.

I knew why life, To you, Was something
to be struggled with, Not a glorious ad-
venture; And why death was the end of

things, And not the beginning. And I knew
at last, Why you could never understand,
That tears may cover laughter, And that
laughter may be a veil For tears.

You told me, last night, That an ances-
tor of yours, Had burned witches, And, oh,
as I sat in the candlelight, Watching you, I
couldn't help wishing, That somewhere be-
hind you, in the shadows,

There was another ancestor – A gay cavalier ancestor – Who rode hard, And fought with his sword, And wore his hat, rakishly, On the back of his head, And knew – love.

APRIL

I had not meant to love again – all that was lost to me, For I had felt love's fear and pain, as well as ecstasy; I closed my heart, and locked the door, and tossed away the

key.

All through the winter-time I sat before
my flaming fire, And listened to the sleigh-
bells chime, and watched the flames leap
higher, To grasp at shadows, sombre-hued,
with fiendish, red desire.

And then mad April came again – I felt
the breezes blowing, And I forgot the fear,
the pain. . . . I only knew that, glowing, In

shady nook and garden spot, pale hyacinths
were growing.

And when across the perfumed lea (for
nothing could defeat him!) My vagrant
love crept back to me . . . I did not mean to
greet him; But April opened up my heart,
and, oh, I ran to meet him!

THE DESERT PATH – SEVEN SON-
NETS

I.

The camel tracks led whitely across the
desert sand, And one came riding after with
furtive mystery; Ah, one came swiftly rid-
ing, a dagger in his hand, And he was bent
on plunder – a nomad thief was he! He
did not heed the starshine that glimmered
from on high, For laden beasts had trav-
eled along the lonely way. He did not see

the glory that swept the Eastern sky, For he
had far to journey before the dawn of day.

He followed through the desert, and then
at last he saw An inn upon the outskirts of
some small village place; And there were
camels resting before the stable door – He
left his horse, crept nearer, with greed upon
his face; And peering o'er the threshold,
he saw that gold was piled, With precious

stones and incense, before a little Child.

II.

A thief he was by calling, who to the
stable came, A thief whose youthful fin-
gers had learned to steal their fill; A thief
he was who valued his heritage of shame,
YET STANDING BY THAT DOORWAY,
HE DID NOT WANT TO KILL! A thief
he was, but – watching, – he saw a Baby

face, And, bending near, a Mother, whose
joy was undefiled; And for one breathless
moment across the stable space, The Baby's
eyes gazed at him – AND THEN THE BABY
SMILED!

A thief he was by calling, but there be-
side the door He saw a Holy Vision – he
knelt and tried to pray – And something,
thrilling, whispered of love forever- more –

And then he rose, half weeping – and it was
Christmas Day! A thief he was by calling,
who felt the Father's plan, But back across
the desert there silent rode a man!

III.

The years are met as milestones upon a
winding road, And some slip by like shad-
ows, and some are fair with flowers; And
some seem dreary, hopeless – a leaden chain

of hours – And some are like a heart-throb,
and some a heavy load, The thief, a thief no
longer, a lonely figure strode Heart-weary
down life's pathway, through tempest and
through showers, But always prayed that
somewhere among sweet- scented bowers, A
Baby's smile might show him where happi-
ness abode.

For he was often hungry – a thief, re-

formed, must eat – And there were folk who
shunned him, and turned his plea away;
And there were those who scourged him
from out the market place – (They were
the ones who told him to earn his bread
and meat!) Yet ever he walked onward, and
dreamed of some fair day When he would
find the Christ-Child with love upon His
face!

IV.

Where work lay for the asking it seemed
that men MIGHT work, But prejudice was
rampant in every shop and field; And, "What
if you ARE trying, MY scythe you may not
wield!" Men told the thief, who answered –
"Indeed, I will not shirk!" And carpenters
and builders turned from him with a smirk,
And farmers hurried by him to house the

harvest's yield. And so he took his dagger,
all rusted, and his shield, And sought again
the highway where thieves and jackals lurk.

And yet the spark of manhood still flamed
within his heart, And still he saw the Baby,
beyond the stable door; And oftentimes at
even, as crimson daytime died, He knelt,
a sorry figure, from all of life apart. And,
"Oh, if I could see Him – and feel His love

once more, "If I could see Him smiling, I would not steal!" he cried.

V.

It was a glowing ruby that caused the thief to fall, But – he was very hungry, and lonely, too, and cold; And youth lay all behind him, a tattered funeral pall, For he was very tired, and he was growing old. It was a glowing ruby that lay upon the breast Of

one who had not earned it, who wore it with
a sneer; The thief was very weary, he only
longed for rest; He was too wan for caring,
he was too numb for fear!

It was a glowing ruby – he held it in
his hand – His hand was thin and with-
ered, it shook beneath the gem; He took
the vivid ruby, the ransom of a land, And
tied it firmly, tightly, within his garment's

hem; And then he shuffled forward, but like
a thorn within His soul he bore the torment
of bitterness and sin!

VI.

They caught him when the morning had
tinged the Eastern skies; The gem was found
upon him, as red as guilty blood; He stood,
his head sunk forward, with listless, shal-
low eyes, And hopelessness submerged him

like some unholy flood; A Thief he was by
calling. The law? The law was great; What
chance had he for pity? His fate was sealed
and done; He was unclean, an outcast, a
menace to the state; A thing to be avoided,
a stain against the sun!

They led him to his hearing, the hall was
still and light; A judge was seated higher,
who passed him with a glance; And sud-

denly, forgetting his weariness and fright,
The thief cried, leaping forward, "I did not
have a chance!" The judgment hall was spa-
cious, and coldly white and wide – And
coldly came the sentence – "He shall be cru-
cified!"

VII.

They nailed him, God's creation, upon
a cross of shame; They nailed him up with

laughter, they heeded not his tears; And
people looking at him were moved to soul-
less jeers, And agony was on him – a sear-
ing, breathless flame! And then, as he hung
sobbing, a sudden feeling came Of peace
that, reaching toward him across the sound
of sneers, Was like a burst of music that
one more feels than hears – For, from some-
where beside him, a Voice had breathed his

name.

Ah, he was weak with anguish, and yet
he turned his head, And saw a cross beside
him, and on the cross a Form; And he forgot
the tumult, the horror and the storm – And
someone, down below him, said, "Look, the
thief is dead!" But, safe from fear and tor-
ture beyond their scornful cries, The thief
had gazed at Heaven in Christ's triumphant

eyes!

SUMMER SONG

If I might go with my True Love, To
some far, dream-swept land, I'd be content
to sit all day Upon the silver sand, And
watch the sea come creeping in, The sigh-
ing, singing sea – If I might go to some far
land, And take True Love with me!

If I could go with my True Love, To

some far, lonely place; The world might well
be lost, and I Could look upon Love's face.
And wealth would seem a little thing, While
happiness might be – If I could go to some
far land, And take True Love with me.

Ah, Love would smile, and ruffle up,
The hair above my brow; And we would
laugh at all that seems So very sober, now.
And monkey-folk, and scarlet birds, Would

peer from every tree, And try to understand
the words My True Love said to me!

If I might go with my True Love, To
some far, dream-swept land; I would not
miss the world, for I Could always touch
Love's hand, And feel the magic of his lips
– Oh, by the singing sea, And Eden-place
would bloom a-new For my True Love and
me!

COMPREHENSION – A MOTHER’S
SONG

I KNOW HOW MARY FELT, THERE
IN THE HAY, MY LITTLE SON WAS BORN
ON CHRISTMAS DAY!

I know, as she bent tenderly above Him,
She did not think of majesty or power, For
he was hers – and she was there to love Him!
His hands, as pinkly tinted as a flower, Seemed

all too small to carve His deathless story
– What though a star gleamed glorious to
guide Him? She snatched Him to her breast
as if to hide Him From harm, and fear, and
even – yes, from glory.

And when the wise men came to give
their treasure, She smiled at them as proud
as any queen; She scarcely saw the jewels in
countless measure, The gold that gleamed;

her gaze was far, serene, Upon the hills where
shepherds watched, alone. She did not think
of crosses or of dying, For He was just a
drowsy baby, lying Wrapped in her love –
A baby – all her own!

I KNOW HOW MARY FELT, THERE
IN THE HAY, MY LITTLE SON WAS BORN
ON CHRISTMAS DAY!
SINGING ON THE MARCH

God put a song into my heart one day,
A little song as light as ocean foam, A little
song of love and hope and home, A little
song to cheer me on my way.

And though I bowed beneath the load I
bore, I found that, when I sang, the way was
bright, And that my footsteps swifter grew,
and light; And all my life seemed fairer than
before.

God has a song that fits in every heart,
And though that song may seem a tiny thing,
It is your task – so forge ahead, and SING –
And you will find that you have done your
part!

EASTER

He came to call last night – And we be-
gan to talk, as young folk will, Half care-
lessly, and half in awe, of God. It was the

springtime, and the night was still And fragrant, all about us. And the sod Was fresh with tender grass, And overhead a crescent moon shone bright. And, "God," he said, "Has built the world on laws, "Like some great watch, and every breathing space "Is measured; and the system has no flaws, "And nothing moves from its appointed place. "God is the Master Scientist," he said, His voice

was bold and had a ring of truth – But God
seemed ponderous, and far away. . . .

And then a gentle breeze danced over-
head, And caused the timid, new-born leaves
to sway, And we began to talk of love, and
youth.

And then, I sent him home, and went
upstairs, To my still room, and flung the
windows wide; And as I knelt to say my

evening prayers I saw the stars, far smiling, in the sky. And, all at once, I knew the reason why I worshipped God . . . knew why He had sent His son to save the world from sin and shame; And, suddenly, like some sweet, healing tide, The meaning of my life swept over me; And, through the dark, my groping soul could see The Christ Who loved us, and was crucified.

And, as I knelt and watched the star's
faint shine, I felt God's hand, a moment,
touching mine!

RESURRECTION

You took the lilt from my heart of hearts,
And the breath of song from my soul; And
the mind of me that had once been free And
buoyantly young, and whole; Grew calm
and still as a barren sea, Where never a

star beam shone, A sea where never a ripple danced – That reflected your face along.

I walked in a daze down well-worn paths
– Paths that your feet had trod; I thought
your thoughts and I spoke your tongue, I
knelt to your hostile God. And the dreams
that had been a part of me, I tossed with
a sigh away, And left to rust in the misty
dust Of the land called Yesterday.

My hands lay folded in slim repose, Quite
as you bade them rest; Folded, meek, o'er
the leaden heart That tortured my gypsie
breast. And I smiled with my lips – my
eyes were numb – I smiled for I never knew,
That the mind of me was a lifeless sea, Re-
flecting the face of you!

You took the lilt from my carefree life,
And the song from my singing heart; But

there came a day when the world grew gray,
When I knew that we must part. . . . So
I tore you out of your soul-bound shrine –
And, oh, though it caused me pain, I raised
my face to the sky and knew That my song
would come again!

THE QUEEN

"Barefooted came the beggar maid," So
ran the minstrel's lay – "Barefooted came

the beggar maid "Before the King Corpethua."
But, oh, her face was like a light, Her hair
was black as middle night, And whispers
ran from left to right – "She is more beau-
tiful than day!"

"In robe and crown the king stepped
down," So ran the minstrel's lay – "In robe
and crown the king stepped down, "To meet
and greet her by the way." And so the beg-

gar maid became, A Queen, but just a queen
in name, For, with her gypsy eyes aflame,
Her mirror heard her say –

I was a beggar maid, I used to lie Silent
and unafraid, beneath the sky, And watch
the stars – my little sisters, they, I used to
wake at dawning time of day To plunge my
body in some mountain stream – I was a
beggar maid! Is this a dream, This golden

crown I wear upon my head? This robe of
royal purple and of red, This rope of pearls,
this ring, these silken shoon?

Not long ago the silver crescent moon
Was like a hand that beckoned me to stray,
And cities seemed vast centuries away; And
as my feet – swift feet, they were, and light
– Carried me through the wonder of the
night, I never thought of kings, or kingly

power – My life was all one splendid, singing
hour!

I love my king – He raised me from the
dust, And looked at me with wonder, and
with trust; My hair hung, tangled, to the
waist of me, He brushed it from my eyes,
that he might see Deep into them! He set
me on his steed, He never knew my name,
or asked my creed, He just believed in me

– and told me so. I love my king, I love
him well, but, oh – Once I wore poppies,
red upon my brow, (A crown seems very
heavy to me, now,) And once I wore, for all
the world to see A gown of rags. (Now, vel-
vets stifle me!) And once my hands (how
soft they are!) were strong To toil for me.
The days seem very long While I must sit
in state above the land – I love my king

. . . But does he understand? I was a
beggar maid, I used to lie Silent and un-
afraid beneath the sky – And, now that I
am queen, my being longs To hear, once
more, the little slumber songs Of night birds
nesting in some forest tree – I want to be
myself, again, and free! I want to climb the
crest of some great hill, And watch the sun-
set clouds, again, and thrill Before the color

of them! I would stand Alone, once more,
and see the wistful land Take on the tint
of twilight. I would pray My gypsie prayer,
again, at close of day!

I love my king – for he has given me
Rare pearls, the treasure of a sighing sea,
And rubies, red as sunset clouds a-glow And
opals like the wistful winds that blow At
twilight-time.

But I would wear, instead, Wild forest flowers, twined about my head – And I would dance, barefooted, on the sod, An innovation to my pagan God!

Am I a queen? What is this crown I wear? I tear it from my smoothly plaited hair – I lay my ring, my rope of pearls, aside; Am I a queen – am I a monarch's bride? The soul of me is still a gypsy thing

– I pull them off, the glowing gems, the ring.

. . . .

I love my king, I love him well – but, oh,
GIVE ME MY RAGS, AGAIN, AND LET
ME GO!

FRAGMENTS

A WITHERED ROSE

A book of verse, And one withered rose
Between two pages. . . .

My love is as faded as the petals, But
still faintly fragrant With sweet memories.

ASHES OF LOVE

Dust on the letters you sent me And I
did not know that they had been forgotten.

Does it mean that I love again?

IT'S LOTS OF FUN –

It's lots of fun to play around, To dance
and sing; And not be tied to anyone, Or

anything!

It's lots of fun to live my life, Beneath
the sky; To have no one who owns the right
To question "Why"?

It's lots of fun to come and go, Through
storm and strife, With no one by my side
who hopes To mould my life.

(But sometimes at the twilight time, When
night birds cry; I dream, perhaps, that some-

thing fair Has passed me by!)

And yet – it's good to play around, To
laugh and sing; And not be tied to anyone,
Or anything!

VALENTINE

I wonder if you know, up there in heaven,
That I have kept your roses, crumpled now.
I wonder if you guess that still I treasure A
faded ribbon that once touched your brow.

I wonder if you dream, as dusk is falling,
Of how I read that note you sent to me. I
wonder if you think, up there in heaven, Of
all the golden days that used to be.

I wonder if you smile up there in heaven,
And pass by, lightly, in your robes of white;
Or if you sometimes think of me a little.
You seem so near, so very near tonight. I
wonder if that last shy kiss I gave you Can

make you lonely, just a bit, for me. I wonder
if you long, up there in heaven, For all the
golden plans that used to be.

Do they have valentines up there in heaven?
A love like mine is surely strong to go The
little way from earth to where you wait me,
Although it be beyond the stars' faint glow.
I want you dear; my tired heart is calling;
My eyes are searching, though they may

not see; I wonder if you're lonely, there in
heaven, For all the golden dreams that used
to be.

THE SACRIFICE

I started out in a cloak of pride, With
talent, too, that I did not hide; I started
out on Life's stony road, Ambition's weight
was my only load, And the way seemed fair
in the dawn's first glow, And I hurried – ran

– FOR I DID NOT KNOW!

Love smiled from a garden by the way,
And called to me, but I would not stray
From the road that stretched like a ribbon
white, Up endless hills to an endless night.
Love smiled at me, but I pushed ahead, And
love fell back in the garden – dead – But I
did not care as I hastened by, And I did
not pause for regret or sigh. . . . The

road before was a path of hope, And every
hill with its gentle slope Led up to heights
I had dreamed and prayed To reach some
day – Ah! I might have stayed With Love
and Youth in the garden gay, That smiled
at me from beside the way.

I plodded up, and the gentle hills Grew
hard to climb, and the laughing rills Were
torrents peopled with sodden forms; The

sky grew black with the threat of storms,
And rocks leaped out and they bruised my
feet, And faint I grew in the fever heat.
(But ever on led the path that lay As grey
as dust in the waning day.) My back was
bent, and my heart was sore, And the cloak
of pride that I grandly wore Was rent and
patched and not fair to see – Ambition, tal-
ent, seemed naught to me. . . . But I

struggled on 'till I reached the top, FOR
ONLY THEN DID I DARE TO STOP!

I stood on the summit gazing down, And
the earth looked sordid and dull and brown,
And neutral-tinted and neutral-souled; And
all of life seemed a story told, And the only
spot that was bright to see Was a patch
of green that had bloomed for me Where
a garden lived in a spring long fled, When

Love stood smiling – BUT LOVE WAS DEAD!
TO A CERTAIN ROOM

Your room is still the dainty little place,
That used to seem so much a part of you
– The draperies of faded rose and blue
Still hold a shadow of their former grace. The
windows still are hung with frosty lace, And
sometimes, when the moonlight glimmers
through, I watch your mirror, half expect-

ing to See once again, reflected there, your
face!

And yet, the little room seems much too
neat, It seems quite colorless, and very bare,
Because the filmy things you used to wear
Are laid away. Because the perfume sweet
That clung about you has been swept aside.
. . . Your room is there – but, oh, its soul
has died!

OTHER DAYS

I wonder if you ever dream of other days,
Because, sometimes, at twilight when the
sunset plays Half wistfully across the pol-
ished oaken floor, I see you smiling – stand-
ing in your place once more.

(Do you remember little things we used
to say? They wouldn't mean so very much
to us to-day. . . . Do you remember how

I wore a gown of blue, Because it brought
the haze of autumn clouds to you? Do you
remember how I said you didn't care – And
how you laughed at me and rumped up my
hair? Do you remember how the tears stood
in my eyes At your good-by when darkness
overhung the skies?)

I wonder if you ever dream of other days?
Because, sometimes at twilight when the

sunset plays Half wistfully across your empty
cozy-chair, I turn and half expect to see you
smiling there!

THIS IS TO YOU, DEAR, TO YOU,
UNKNOWING; JUST AS THE SOUTH WIND
WISTFULLY BLOWING TOUCHES SOME
FLOWER –

SO IS MY SONG, DEAR, THROUGH
EVERY HOUR, ALL THE DAY LONG,

DEAR, TO YOU, UNKNOWNING!
AT TWILIGHT

You came to me through the candle-
light, When the world, outside, was grey.
. . . You came to me through the can-
dlelight When the day was done, and the
misty night Crept through the land. And
your eyes were bright, And they seemed to
laugh and pray. You came to me through

the candlelight, And you took my hands,
and you held them tight, And you didn't
speak, but, dear, I KNEW – And my heart
and my soul were part of you.

You came to me through the candle-
light, When the world, outside, was grey;
And I looked in your eyes and, glowing there,
I saw a hope and I read a prayer; And I
knew, at last, that I didn't care, If life were

a troubled, weary way, As long as I walked
with you. You came to me, at the close
of day, Through the candlelight – when the
world was grey – And dreams of Heaven
seemed strangely new. . . . And I told
you, dear, to stay!

THERE ARE SUCH WEARY LITTLE
LINES

There are such weary little lines about
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the mouth of you, Such tragic little mirth-
less lines – they mock at dreams come true,
And twist your lips when you would smile,
until all joy is dead, And I, who want to
laugh with you, am fain to weep instead!

There are such dreary little lines about
the mouth of you, They make me want to
whisper that summer sky is blue, And that
the rain is like a lance of silver through the

air, And that the flowers in the lane are
growing tall and fair!

There are such tired little lines about
the mouth of you – As if you thought that
life was cold and loving friends were few. .
. . They are such lonely little lines I think
that I, some day, Will creep close to you in
the dusk, and kiss them quite away!

THREE SONGS OF AWAKENING

1.

The flowers spring from the broken heart,
Of the frozen winter sod – Rending their
prison bars apart, They smile in the face of
God!

The birds sweep up to the wind-blown
plain, E'er ever the land knows spring; To
sway on a budding branch again, To chal-
lenge the world, and sing!

And I with my tired eyes a-dance, And
my weary heart a-flame; Have felt the call
of the old romance, And thrilled to a whis-
pered name!

2.

I saw a sky as blue as eyes I know, I
felt a breeze, as soft as kisses, blow; And,
dear, I saw one golden sunbeam creep From
Heaven, lighting all the world below, Like

love that wakens, dewy-eyed, from sleep!

3.

We who have wondered know the answer, now; For Spring stands, joyous, on the purple brow Of the far hill; and doubt is swept away, And all the mirth-mad world makes holiday!

We who have wandered long, and half afraid, Find answer in each dreaming wood-

land glade; HEARTS THAT HAVE BRO-
KEN MAY BE BOUND TOGETHER, WHEN
SPRING HAS TRIUMPHED OVER WIN-
TER WEATHER!

IN A CANOE

Starlight, and the silver lake Clasp the
skies – And two nearer, dearer stars, Your
eyes!

Elfin voices seem to call Through the

night, But your arms are warm, and they
Hold me tight.

Pallidly the moon slides down, Hour by
hour slips; Ah, the deathless magic of Your
lips!

Dark the shadows as we creep Past the
shore – Dear, that we might drift like this
Evermore!

CAPTIVE-HEART

Now that the day is done I am ready to
greet you, Smiling, the way that I know you
would have me smile; I will open the door,
and will run down the walk to meet you, As
if I had missed you, dear, for a weary while!
I will listen, breathless, the while you tell of
your toiling, All day long in the dust and
the city's heat; And, dear, you will never
know that my blood is boiling – Back of
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the smile that is calm and tenderly sweet.

You will never know that the soul of me,
dear, is flying, Out where the seagull dips
in the ocean's foam; You will never know
that something of me is dying, Every night
as I smile and welcome you home. You will
never know that my heart is soaring above
you – You will be content with my mask of
a smile – KNOWING I LOVE YOU!

EVENING SONG

I do not want to be worshipped, From
a distance; Like some idol carved in wood,
Or stone. I want to be loved As every real
woman Wants to be loved!

And so. . . . Lay aside the book
that you are reading from – What if Le-
ander did swim the Hellespont? And what
if burning Sappho Did sing? What do I care

for Launcelot and Elaine, Or Tristram and
Isolt, Or Aucassin and Nicholette?

Lay aside the book that you are reading
from, And cross the room quickly, And take
my cold hands between your two Warmer
ones. . . . And here, in the vivid dusk, We
will make our own love songs!

AFTER A DAY OF WAITING

All day long I waited – waited with soul

aflame – And then through the still of evening,
humming a tune, you came; Came with a
jest on your smiling lips, and eyes that were
all too gay; And the light died out of my
waiting heart with the words that I could
not say.

We laughed through the star-flecked twi-
light – what though my laugh was strained?
You, who were there beside me, laughed

with a mirth unfeigned! And at last when I
bade you leave me you went, and you never
knew That with soul aflame I had waited,
all through the day, for you.

INTANGIBLE

Dear, you are like the summer dusk to
me, The summer dusk when all the world
seems still; When purple shadows creep along
the hill, And birds are softly crooning in

each tree. You are the gentle-cool-eyed mystery
Of twilight hours. Sometime I think
you will Melt from me out into the dark,
until You turn to star-shine, silvering the
sea.

Dear, even when your head is on my
breast, You seem no nearer than a moon-
beam thrown Across my heart. Your fin-
gers have caressed My hair so lightly that I

scarce have known Their pressure. You are
like that time when rest Steals up so softly
that one feels alone!

AT FIRST SIGHT

Seeing you once, how can I forget That
our eyes have smiled and our hands have
met? That our souls have known and our
hearts have cried, Though our lips were dumb.
Ah, the world is wide, And love there is for

us both to know – But my eyes were dim as
I watched you go!

You may wander far, you may come no
more, But you hold the key to the inmost
door Of my heart of hearts! For our hands
have met, And our eyes have smiled, and I
CAN'T FORGET!

FIVE SONNETS

I. THE COMING

I know that Love will come to me, some
day, Though I have never loved, or looked
on Love; I know that Love will wait be-
side the way And smile at me. The tender
skies above Will be alight with all the joy
of spring, And flowers will lift their heads
above the earth, And some far bird will stay
its flight and sing, And fill the land with sil-
ver throated mirth.

I know that Love, at last, with smiling
eyes, Will pause beside my half-swung cot-
tage door, And I will lift my gaze, without
surprise, To see his shadow dance across
the floor. I know that Love will come to
me, some day, When springtime blossoms,
shyly, into May!

II. REALIZATION

I know that you are not the one that I

Should fall in love with, for your eyes are
blind To all the things that make my world
the kind I want to live in. Often, when I
cry At some vague beauty that has caught
my eye, You laugh! You cannot dream the
dreams I find, In forest places where dim
pathways wind Up to the Heaven-land so
far and high.

I know that I should never learn to care,

And yet, sometimes the blueness of your
eyes Can make me half forget the smiling
skies. . . . And, when I see the sunlight on
your hair, I do not stop to reason, dear, for
oh – My heart throbs faster, and I know –
I know!

III. THE RAIN OUTSIDE

You close beside me, and outside, the
rain, Which, stealing through the darkness

of the night, Seems tapping out with fingers
softly light, A world-old song upon my win-
dow pane – A song of happiness with a re-
frain That throbs in suffering. You hold me
tight, Your eyes, that search my own, are
warmly bright, Your lips touch mine again,
and yet again!

Ah, what though years must pass, though
you and I May live our lives, quite silently,

apart? Whenever rain comes, when the day
is through, And, tapping on my casement,
seems to sigh, A dream will blossom, fra-
grant, in my heart, A dream of youth eter-
nal, and of – you.

IV. I USED TO WRITE

I used to write so many songs of love – I
wrote them carefully, I did not know That
love was more than moonlight from above,

And pretty words set in an even row, I held
my pencil calmly in my hand, And sang of
arms and lips and tender eyes; I wrote of
love – who did not understand – And hoped
that folk would think me very wise!

I used to write so many songs . . .
To-day My hands are folded, and I cannot
sing, I sit, instead, and watch the sunlight
stray Across my desk. And I am wonder-

ing If God, who lights a million stars each
night, Laughed at the groping words I tried
to write!

V. MOON-GLOW

I wonder if, dim centuries ago, We watched
the moon together, on some night When
stars hung very near, and softly bright? I
wonder if my tired head drooped low Against
your breast? And if you seemed to know

(As you know now) the dreams that, like a
light, Shone in my soul? For, dear, it seems
so right – So very right that you should hold
me so!

Here, in the moonlight, there is nothing
new, The very arms that crush me to your
heart, Seem almost like a memory, a part Of
some vague yesterday that has come true –
I feel tonight as if I, dear, might start A

journey back, across the years, with you!

FORGIVEN

You left me when the weary weight of
sorrow Lay, like a stone, upon my bursting
heart; It seemed as if no shimmering to-
morrow Could dry the tears that you had
caused to start. You left me, never telling
why you wandered – Without a word, with-
out a last caress; Left me with but the love

that I had squandered, The husks of love
and a vast loneliness.

And yet if you came back with arms
stretched toward me, Came back to-night,
with carefree, smiling eyes, And said: "My
journeying has somehow bored me, And love,
though broken, never, never dies!" I would
forget the wounded heart you gave me, I
would forget the bruises on my soul. My

old-time gods would rise again to save me,
My dreams would grow supremely new and
whole. What though youth lay, a tattered
garment, o'er you? Warm words would leap
upon my lips, long dumb; If you came back,
with arms stretched out before you, AND
TOLD ME, DEAR, THAT YOU WERE
GLAD TO COME!

THE WRITING

Sometimes a mist of sunlight across a
stranger's hair, Sometimes the vague ex-
pression upon a stranger's face, Can make
me feel your presence – can fill a lonely
place With dreams of life half realized. Faint
music through the air Can make me hear
your foot-fall, again, upon the stair – Some-
times a dancer moving with quite uncon-
scious grace, Can make my pulse beat faster;

and for a breathless space Can make me
turn, expecting to find you standing there!

You have not gone! The passing of ev-
ery empty day Has only brought you nearer.
Those things that were a part Of all we
planned together are bits of you that stay,
To bruise my soul as sharply as any flame-
tipped dart. Ah, time may hold its healing
– but years that pass away Cannot erase

the writing you traced upon my heart!

AT PARTING

Love of my life, the time has come for parting – For, dearest, I must leave you while we care! Leave you while tears of vain regret are starting, While I can look at you and find you fair. Could we endure a morn of bitter waking, Could we accept a love that would seem less? Dear, I must go

the while my heart is breaking – Go while
my world is filled with happiness.

Love of my soul, our dream has been so
flaming, That, if we waited, it might smoul-
der down – Leaving dead ashes only, ashes
shaming All that was vivid – ashes dimly
brown. We will have memories as sweet
as flowers, We who have left, untouched,
Fate's cup of woe; Kiss me once more to

bridge life's aching hours – Love of my heart
– the time has come to go!

WHEN I AM OLD –

When I am old and drenched in worlds
of sadness, And wear a lacy cap upon my
head; When, looking past the future's singing
gladness, I linger, wistful, in the years long
dead. When I am old, and young folk all
about me, Speak softly of religion, WHEN

THEY SPEAK, When parties are a grand
success without me; And when my laugh is
fluttering and weak –

Will I then be content to raise my glances,
Serenely to the cloud-entangled sky? And
will I be content to watch at dances, With-
out a heartbreak, as the hours pass by?
Or when I see young lovers' fingers twine,
WILL I REMEMBER, DEAR, YOUR LIPS

ON MINE?

THE REFUGE

We hurried, once, down the purple road,
When a storm hung low in the sky; And
we gained the door of Love's abode As the
silver rain flashed by. Our steps rang out
as we crossed the sill, And the place was
dimly bright, And even our hearts seemed
strangely still, While our searching hands

clasped tight.

We waited there while the wind moaned
past And the thunder crashed in the air;
And the door of Love's abode blew fast, But
we didn't know – or care! For we heard
a song in the driving rain, And the sky
seemed warmly gray; And the tempest rang
with a mad refrain, And the world seemed
years away.

We have wandered far from the road of
dreams, We have crept from the house of
love; And the scorching sun of the noonday
gleams From the pitiless sky above. But
once, ah, once – in that dusky place, When
the lightning flashed through the air, I saw
its flame on your upturned face, And its
glow on your vivid hair.

We have strayed away – we have strayed

away – For the world is all too wide. . . .
But once I came through the stormy day,
And you walked, proud, at my side. AND,
OH, FOR THE FEEL OF THE RAIN AGAIN,
AND, OH, FOR THE PURPLE ROAD, AND,
OH, FOR THE JOY AND THE PAIN AGAIN,
THAT WE KNEW IN LOVE'S ABODE!
TO DREAM ALONE. . . .
How long the days may seem, how long

each night, (And yet, how short the evenings
used to be!) How strange it is that I can
never see, Warm pictures in the hearth that
glows so bright. We used to watch the laugh-
ing firelight, And build dream castles in it –
Ah, but we Built castles everywhere! And
now the sea Is swept between us. You have
gone to fight.

And I – I wait and try to dream alone,

And try to smile, to dance and laugh and
sing; And, somehow, cannot think of any-
thing, But just the thrilling roughness of
your tone, The light that lights your eyes,
your lips that cling, And love – the flame of
love that we have known!

NOW I MAY SING OF SADNESS. . .

Knowing, dear, that my whole heart lies

at rest Deep in the heart of you, I may
sing a song Telling the tale of bitterness
and wrong. . . . Knowing, dear, that my
head lay on your breast Only last night, I
may sing of dreams that died, And hopes
that never were born, and faith betrayed,
Of weary feet that have left the road and
strayed Out of the narrow way, to pastures
wide.

Dear, when my songs were gay, I did not
know Whether you cared. And so I had to
sing Gladly, to mask grim fear – I had to
bring Sunlight to point the path that I must
go! Now that the clouds are silver sweet
above, I may sing songs of sadness. I am
blessed Knowing, dear, that my whole heart
lies at rest, Knowing, dear, that I have your
love – your love!

KNOWING THAT YOU HAVE WALKED
HER MUDDY ROADS WEARILY, AFTER
BITTER TIMES OF FIGHTING; KNOW-
ING THAT YOU HAVE CARRIED HEAVY
LOADS OVER HER HILLS – WHILE I,
AT HOME, WAS LIGHTING DIM YEL-
LOW CANDLES ON THE MANTEL SHELF.
. . . KNOWING YOU SUFFERED AGONY
AND LOSS, UNDER THE VERY SHADOW

OF A CROSS – FRANCE HOLDS A BIT
OF YOU – AND OF MYSELF!

WHEN WAR CAME

War came, one day, and drew us close
together, Although it swept us many miles
apart; The love that lay as lightly as a feather,
Now rests, a precious weight, upon my heart.
And all the dreams I dreamed for just the
dreaming, Have taken on a meaning that is

new; And somehow all the lonely world is
seeming, To cry aloud my aching need of
you!

Because you were so much a part of liv-
ing, Like sunshine and the freshness of the
air, The priceless gift of faith that you were
giving Seemed small to me. Scarce know-
ing you were there I took your heart-strings
in my careless fingers, And played a song

as light as summer dew, And yet, today,
its wistful echo lingers And fills an empty
world with thoughts of you.

I did not think that I would ever miss
you, I did not dream the time would come
to be When I would long to touch your
hand, to kiss you – To hear your voice say
tender words to me. I did not know that I
would wonder whether My head would rest,

once more, against your heart. . . . War
came, my dear, and drew us close together,
Although it swept us many miles apart!

WHEN YOU WENT BY

I stood in the rain and watched you pass,
I stood in the blinding rain. . . . And I
thought of a fragrant summer night, When
the room was glowing with candlelight, And
a shower beat on the window glass With a

wonderful, low refrain. I thought of your
arms that held me tight, And your eyes that
were near and warmly bright; I thought of
– all, as I watched you pass, And my soul
was wrung with pain.

"Tramp, tramp, tramp!" rang your col-
umn's tread. "Tramp, tramp, tramp!" through
the street. (Ah, dear, it was summer once,
and there Were flower scents on the misty

air – Honeysuckle and mignonette, poignantly,
sadly sweet!) "Tramp, tramp, tramp!" rang
your column's tread, And my eyes were dim
as I bowed my head; And my heart seemed
broken and old and dead, Under your march-
ing feet.

I stood in the rain and watched you pass
– There in the autumn rain. . . . And I
thought, my dear, of the night when you

Had kissed me first. (Ah, your eyes were
blue, And very tender, and Heaven-true,
There in the candlelight!) I thought of a
misty summer night, When a shower fell on
the vivid grass (There, through the rain, I
watched you pass!) I thought of a mystic
summer night That never may come again.

"TRAMP, TRAMP, TRAMP!" RANG
YOUR COLUMN'S TREAD, "TRAMP, TRAMP,

TRAMP!" IN THE STREET; AND I TRIED
TO SMILE – WITH A LIFTED HEAD –
BUT MY HEART LAY, CRUSHED, AT
YOUR FEET!

IN MEMORIAM

To an American Aviator

He went to battle in the mist-hung sky,
Like some gold-hearted bird with pinions
strong; He went with courage, with a snatch

of song, In all his splendid youth! And God
on high Looked down with love to watch
him dip and fly, Then lifted him to where
the brave belong. He went to right a bleed-
ing nation's wrong, And proved that he was
not afraid to die!

So we, who stare across the lonely hours,
Must only think of that great gift he gave;
Must think of other lives that his will save;

And know that, when the tender, healing
showers Have fallen in a stranger-land, the
flowers Will bloom, like prayers, upon a hero's
grave!

A PEASANT GIRL SINGS

Somewhere, Out There, he is – just a
boy, that's all – (Laughter sparkled in his
eyes – he was always singing!) Just a boy
who answered when he heard his country's

call; (Somewhere, Out There, he is – how
my thoughts go winging –) Ready to do or
dare, (Like sunlight was his hair,) Just a
boy, a laughing boy, Somewhere, Out There.

Idle my wheel, to-day, hushed is it's spin-
ning – (Ah, but his eyes were blue – blue
as the sea –) Somewhere, Out There, he is
. . . Losing – or winning! (Boy with the
carefree heart, come back to me!) Blood

red the cannon's flare, (God, can you hear
my prayer?) Keep him, my boy, from harm
– Somewhere, Out There.

TOGETHER

THEY LAY TOGETHER IN THE SUN
AND WAITED FOR THE END; SIDE BY
SIDE, TOGETHER, BEARDED FOE AND
FRIEND; JEAN FROM THE PLEASANT
FIELDS OF SINGING, SOUTHERN FRANCE,

JEAN FROM THE POPPY FIELDS SIGH-
ING WITH ROMANCE; FRITZ FROM A
FATHERLAND HE BLINDLY LOVED AND
SERVED, FRITZ WHOSE SOFT-NOSED
BULLETS HAD NEVER FLINCHED NOR
SWERVED; AND PETER, WHOSE TIRED
EYES WERE WIDE AND DEEP AND BROWN,
PETER FROM DELANCEY STREET, IN
NEW YORK TOWN.

They didn't speak, these three, They
didn't know each other's tongue; And, then,
When men Whose songs are nearly sung
Are lying side by side, Their breathing not
so . . . free, The gulf is rather wide.

In the sun they lay there; And Fritz's
hair Was very bright. He was a foe To kill
on sight – And yet the light Upon his hair
was so, So very fair. . . .

Jean found himself remembering HER
hair; Of palest gold it was, a magic snare
To net men's soul in! She had bade him go,
Sobbing, "Je t'aime" – which means, "I love
you so!" Her hair – her hands – her lips, Red
as a sunset cloud when daytime slips
Into the night. No, redder! Like a flower
That blooms upon the earth for just an hour; A
poppy flower, fragile, soft. . . . HER LIPS

Red as the heart-blood of a man, that drips
Into eternity. . . . Jean sighed, And died.

PERHAPS HER LIPS WERE VERY
NEAR – WHO KNOWS? WHEN EYES
MUST CLOSE AGAINST THE SUN, AND
LIFE, WHO CARES? ONE ONLY DARES
TO WONDER!

Fritz lay still. He felt the strength, the
faith, the stubborn will, Drop from him like

worn garments, till he lay Half-frightened
in the burning light of day. He had killed
many, yes. . . . From under His tunic,
gropingly, he drew a cross; He wondered
would it make, for her, the loss A little
less? Ah, to press His bearded lips once
more upon her cheek, To hear her speak. .

..

Yes, he had killed, and killed – And he

had thrilled To do it. . . . But just to
sit Beside her, in the shade, THAT had
been paradise! Her soft arms laid About
his throat. . . . THEY STRANGLED
HIM – His eyes grew dim. . . . He choked
– once . . . twice. . . .

Peter from Delancey Street, laughed with
white- lipped pluck. "Dyin' side o' HIM!"
he coughed. "Ain't it rotten luck! "Poor

guy, they got him, though – got him same as me. . . .” Peter, from Delancey Street, stopped talking suddenly.

He saw – A candy store, On the busy, smelly corner of a crowded city slum; He heard the hum Of traffic in the street, The sound of feet Upon the pavement; and he saw, Behind the counter there, THE GIRL. She wore Her hair Plastered tight to her

little shell-like ears. He felt her tears Upon
his face The night he told her that he'd left
his place, His steady paying job, to go and
fight.

"Good night!" He'd said to her. "Some-
body's gotta go! Yerself, you know, We
gotta STIR T'lick them fellers Over There!"
Her slicked-back hair Had roughened up against
his khaki sleeve, And she had cried: "Dear,

MUST you leave?" And he had dried Her
eyes, and smudged the powder on her nose.

. . .
"Here goes!" Said Peter of Delancey Street.
He saw A candy store – A city slum, a girl
with plastered hair, Who waited there. . .

.
THEY LAY TOGETHER IN THE SUN
– BRAVELY TO THE END, SIDE BY SIDE,

TOGETHER, BEARDED FOE AND FRIEND.
JEAN FROM THE POPPY FIELDS, SIGH-
ING WITH ROMANCE, JEAN FROM THE
LAUGHTER-LILTING FIELDS OF SOUTH-
ERN FRANCE; FRITZ FROM A FATHER-
LAND HE BLINDLY LOVED AND SERVED,
FRITZ, WHOSE FAITH, ALTHOUGH BE-
TRAYED, HAD NEVER FLINCHED OR
SWERVED; AND PETER, WHOSE TIRED

EYES WERE QUESTIONING AND BROWN,
PETER, FROM DELANCEY STREET, IN
NEW YORK TOWN.

JIM-DOG

He wasn't, well, a fancy kind o' dog –
Not Jim! But, oh, I sorter couldn't seem
ter help A-lovin' him. He always seemed
ter understand. He'd rub his nose against
my hand If I was feelin' blue or sad. Or if

my thoughts was pretty bad; An' how he'd
bark an' frisk an' play When I was gay!

A soldier's dog don't have much time ter
whine Like little pets a-howlin' at th' moon.
A soldier's dog is bound ter learn, right
soon, That war is war, an' what a steady
line Of men in khaki means. (What, dogs
don't know? You bet they do! Jim-dog,
he had ter go Along th' trenches oftentimes

at night; He seemed ter sense it when there was a fight A-brewin'. Oh, I guess he knew, all right!) I was a soldier, an' Jim-dog was MINE.

Ah, what's the use? There never was another dog like him. Why, on th' march I'd pause an' call – "Hey, Jim!" An' he'd be there, his head tipped on one side, A-lookin' up at me with love an' pride, His

tail a-waggin', an' his ears raised high. . .

I wonder why my Jim-dog had ter die?
He was a friend ter folks; he didn't bite; He
never snapped at no one in th' night; He
didn't hate a soul; an' he was GAME! An'
yet . . . a spark o' light, a dartin' flame
Across th' dark, a sneaky bit o' lead, An'
he was . . . dead!

They say there ain't no heaven-land for
him, 'Cause dogs is dogs, an' haven't any
right; But let me tell yer this; without my
Jim Th' very shinin' streets would seem less
bright! An' somehow I'm a-thinkin' that if
he Could come at that last stirrin' bugle
call Up to th' gates o' gold aside of me,
Where God stands smilin' welcome to us
all, An' I said, "Father, here's my dog .

. . . here's Jim," They'd find some corner,
touched with love, fer him!

SIX SONNETS

I. SOMEHOW

Somehow I never thought that you would
go, Not even when red war swept through
the land – I somehow thought, because I
loved you so, That you would stay. I did not
understand That something stronger than

my love could come, To draw you, half-
reluctant, from my heart; I never thought
the call of fife and drum Would rend our
cloak of happiness apart!

And yet, you went . . . And I – I did
not weep – I smiled, instead, and brushed
the tears aside. And yet, when night-time
comes, I cannot sleep But silent lie, while
longing fights with pride – YOU ARE MY

MAN, THE FOE YOU FIGHT MY FOE,
AND YET – I NEVER THOUGHT THAT
YOU WOULD GO!

II. I WONDER

I wonder if you dream, across the night,
When watchfires cut the vivid dark in twain,
Of long dim rooms, and yellow candlelight,
And gardens drenched in vaguely perfumed
rain? I wonder if you think, when shot

and shell And molten fire are singing songs
of hate, Of that last throbbing moment of
farewell When, in your arms, I promised
you to wait!

I wonder, should grim death reach out
his hand, And speak, above the strife, of
peace and rest; If you, alone in that dark
stranger land, Would feel again my head
upon your breast? And if, as light and love

and living slips, Your prayer would be my
kiss upon your lips. . . .

III. SOME DAY

Some day when on exultant feet you come
Back through the streets that echo at your
tread – My soul will thrill to hear the throbbing
drum, And yet, perhaps, I'll sit with
drooping head, Not caring, quite, to meet
your steady gaze, Not daring, quite, to look

into your eyes; Afraid because a weary stretch
of days, Each one a million years, between
us lies.

My heart – my heart is ever yours to
hold, And yet, while I have waited here
for you, You have seen faith betrayed, and
brave youth sold, You have seen meadows
drenched in bloody dew – It may have changed
you, and your eyes may be A little harder

when they look at me!

IV. DREAM

Sometimes I dream that you are back
with me, And that with hands together clasped
we go Like little children, young and glad
and free, A-down a magic road we used to
know. Sometimes I dream your eyes upon
my face, And feel your fingers softly touch
my hair. . . . And when I wake from

dreaming all the place, Seems lonelier be-
cause you are not there.

What is a dream? Not very much, they
say, An idle vision made in castled Spain
– Well, maybe they are right. . . . And
yet, today, When all the warring world was
swept with pain, The suffering and sorrow
ceased to be, Because I dreamed that you
were back with me!

V. UNDERSTANDING

Now, when I stand in some great crowded
place, I see the souls of other women stare
Out of their eyes – And I can glimpse the
care And worry that has banished light and
grace From every life. Upon each woman-
face I see the mark of tears, the hint of
prayer That, one short year ago, had not
been there – I see what time will never quite

erase!

Before you left, I did not notice eyes –
Because I knew that I might touch your
hand, I did not dream the dread that swept
our land. . . Ah, dear, the months have
made me very wise! Now, one with every-
thing, I understand, And heart meets heart
and I can sympathize.

VI. THE WAKING

Now war is over and a world set free,
And youth returns, triumphant, to our land
– And dear-heart, you'll be coming back
to me, With eager lips, and tender out-
stretched hand! You will be coming as you
came of old, At evening time, with laughter
lilting gay; Glad of the little things that life
may hold – And I will meet you in the self
same way. . . .

Yes, in the shadows by my oaken door,
I will be waiting as I used to wait – And
I will feel that you are come, before I hear
the clicking of the garden gate. And, in the
darkness there, my pulse will leap, Reviving
dreams that long have lain asleep!

AFTER PEACE

”I wonder what they’re doin’ home tonight?”
Jim said – We sat there, in the yellow fire-

light, There, in a house in France – Some
of us, maybe thinkin' of romance – Some
of us missin' buddies who was dead – And
some just dreamin' Sorter hardly seemin'
Ter make th' dream come clear.

An' then – Jim spoke – "I wonder what
they're doin' home ternight?" Says Jim –
An' some of us felt, well – as if we'd like Ter
smother him! An' some of us tried hard-like

not ter choke, Th' smoke Was pretty thick
an' black! A-thinkin' back, Across th' ocean
I could sort of see A little house that means
just all ter me And, though nobody said
a word I knew Their thoughts was goin' on
th' self-same track – Thoughts do Out here,
in France.

Home – HOME – No wonder that we all
was still – For one of us was thinkin' of a
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hill, With pine trees on it black against th'
moon – And one of us was dreaming of a
town, All drab an' brown – An' one of us
was lookin' – far an' high Ter some one who
had gone back home too soon To that real
home that is beyond the sky.

Nobody of us spoke fer quite a while –
We didn't smile – We just sat still an' won-
dered when there'd be An order for ter send

us home – Back 'crost the sea. Th' war was
won – An' we was DONE! We wanted faces
that we loved an' knew, An' voices too –

We sat an' watched th' dancin' fire fling
Its shadders on th' floor – Bright shapes,
an' dim. An' then Jim coughed as if his
throat was sore, An' – "Say – let's sing!"
Says Jim.

FROM THE DECK OF A TRANSPORT

(A Returning Soldier Speaks)

I am coming back with a singing soul
through the surge of the splendid sea, Com-
ing back to the land called home, and the
love that used to be – I am coming back
through a flash of spray, through a con-
quered tempest's hum, I am coming back, I
am coming back. . . . But, God, do I want
to come?

I have heard the shriek of the great shells
speak to the dawn of a flaming day; And a
growling gun when the fight was won, and
the twilight flickered gray, I have seen men
die with their chins raised high, and a curse
that was half a prayer – I have fought alone
when a comrade's groan was tense on the
blinding air.

I have tramped a road when a burn-

ing load was strapped to my aching back,
Through miles of mud that was streaked
with blood, when my closing eyes turned
back – I have cried aloud to a heedless crowd
of a God that they could not know, And
have knelt at night when the way was bright
with a rocket's sullen glow.

I am going home through the whirling
foam – home to her arms stretched wide –

I am going back to the beaten track and
the sheltered fireside, With gasping breath
I have sneered at death, and have mocked at
a shell's swift shirr, And safe again, through
the years of pain, I am going back – to HER!

I am coming back with a singing soul
through the surge of the splendid sea, Com-
ing back – BUT MY SINGING SOUL WILL
NEVER BE QUITE FREE – For I have

killed, and my heart has thrilled to the call
of the battle hum. . . . I am coming back
to the used-to-be – But, God, do I want to
come?

TIM – MY BUNKIE

I met Tim th' other day On Broadway;
Hadn't seem him since he fell, Covered like
with streaks of blood, In th' Argonne's bat-
tle hell.

Tim an' me was bunkies; we Marched
together Through th' water an' th' slime –
SUNNY FRANCE, HEY? We seen weather
That we hadn't dreamed COULD be Any-
where or any time. We had fought – well,
hand to hand, Over miles o' broken land,
Through th' Vesle, an' by th' Aisne, When
th' shrapnel fell like rain – Tim an' me was
bunkies – see?

Smilin' sort o' cuss was Tim; Never seen
th' beat o' him! He could whistle when a
pack Was like lead upon his back; He could
smile with blistered feet; Never swore at
monkey meat, Or at cooties, or th' drill;
Always laughin' – never still – That was
Tim!

Say, th' fellers loved that boy! Chap-
lain said that he "was joy All incarnate –
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" Sounds all right, But th' men said he
was WHITE, That meant most to us, I'd
say! Why, we never seen th' day When he
wouldn't help a guy. If he had a franc he'd
buy Chocolate or chow for us, Gen'rus little
smilin' cuss – That was Tim!

When THEY got him, I can see Even
now, th' way he slipped To th' ground be-
side o' me. Red blood dripped From his tu-

nic an' his chin, But he choked out, "Fellers,
win! "Me, I don't much matter, GRIN!"

Sure we had ter leave him lay; War is
always that-a-way; An' we thought o'course
he'd die. Maybe that's the reason why We
could fight th' way we did; Why we found
th' guns THEY hid; Why we broke their
line in two, Whistlin' a tune HE knew All
th' time we pushed 'em back, Crowdin' on

'em whack fer whack!

I seen Tim th' other day On Broadway;
He had lef' one arm in France, But his eyes
was all a-dance When he seen me face t'
face. "Say," he shouts, "ain't this SOME
place? Ain't it great th' war is through?
Glad I seen it, though; ain't you?"

Smilin' sort o' little cuss, Meetin' me
without a fuss – Tim, my bunkie, livin'!

. . . Tim! That's him!

A PRAYER FOR OUR BOYS RETURN-
ING

God, bring them back just as they went
away; A little wiser, maybe, but unchanged
In all the vital things – let them today Take
up the lives that war has disarranged. Let
them renew the youth they laid aside To
fight their battles in the world of men, God,

bring to life their little dreams that died,
And build their altars new again, and then

—
Give them the vivid youth that they
have sought for Through bloody mists on
bloody fields of strife; Show them the gal-
lant truth that they have fought for; Show
them, anew, the better things of life. God
of the hosts, blot out the months of pain

– And let them have their boyhood back
again. AMEN.

PARIS

I. AFTER PEACE

The city thrills once more to joyous singing;
Glad laughter sounds again upon the street,
And music throbs again, until young feet
Trip merrily upon their way; the ringing
Of hour chimes are gallant voices, flinging

Their challenges through each crowded space,
to greet Old friends who linger where they
used to meet With other friends long gone.
. . . The summer, bringing

The light of peace, has seemed to fill
the city, With happiness that echoes far and
wide In sounds of joy; there seems no room
for sorrow – Yet, like a minor chord sub-
mersed in pity, There steals above the mu-

sic of tomorrow, The weary footsteps of the
ones who died.

II. THE RUE DE LA PAIX – (A STREET
OF JEWELS)

The windows glow with many jewels,
with rubies fire-entangled, And glowing bits
of emerald, and diamonds like the dew –
But, Paris, can you quite forget the bodies
lying mangled Beneath the snow on Flan-

ders fields – your lost who call to you?).

The windows of each little shop are gay
with gem- like laughter, With rings to fit
milady's hand, and drops to deck her ear;
(But, Paris, can you quite forget Verdun,
and Ypres, and – after? And, far beneath
the sounds of mirth, one wonders what you
hear.)

The windows glow with countless jewels,

the shop- girls stop to wonder, The little
shopgirls who are still, so many, dressed in
black – (But, oh, the saddened hearts of
them no doubt are lying under Some sandy
stretch along the Marne, where grim defeat
turned back!)

The windows gleam enticingly, and eyes
light up to see them, For Paris thrills to
loveliness, as Paris always thrilled – (Oh,

God of beauty, touch the lives that war
has crushed, and free them From broken
dreams, an empty faith, and hopes forever
stilled!)

III. THE FLOWER WAGONS

Violets and mignonette, crowded close
together, Crowded close together on the cor-
ner of each street, Through the chilling damp-
ness of the misty weather, Violets and mignonette

– ah, so close together – Making all the
Paris day colorful and sweet!

Roses faintly touched with pink; see, a
soldier lingers Close beside the flower-stand,
dreaming of the day When she broke a sin-
gle bud with her slender fingers, Pressed it
to her wistful mouth – see, a soldier lingers
Dreaming of a summertime very far away.

Lilacs white and pure and new, fragrant

as the morning – One pale widow, passing
by, pauses for a space, Thinking of the lilac
tree that once grew, adorning All a little
cottage home, in life's fragrant morning; Of
a lilac tree that grew in a garden place.

Pansies for a thought of love, lilies for
love's sorrow, Bay leaves green as hopes
that live, berries red and brown; Flowers
vivid for a day, gone upon the morrow, Flow-

ers that are sweet as faith, that are sad as
sorrow – Flowers for the weary souls of a
weary town.

Violets and mignonette, crowded close
together, Crowded close together on the cor-
ner of each street; Singing of the summer-
time, through the misty weather, Violets
and mignonette – ah, so close together –
Making all the Paris day colorful and sweet!

IV. ACROSS THE YEARS

(Marie Antoinette walked down the steps
of a certain Chapel on her way to the guil-
lotine.)

They say a queen once walked along the
marble steps with grace, To meet grim death
by guillotine – a smile was on her face, A
smile of scorn that lifted her above the howl-
ing crowd, A smile that mocked at pallid

fear – a smile serene and proud.

Yes, it was Marie Antoinette – she walked
with steady tread, She sauntered down the
marble steps with proudly lifted head; And
there were those among the crowd who watched
with indrawn breath, To see a queen walk
out with smiles to keep a tryst with death!

I stood beside those marble steps just
yesterday, and saw, A bride upon a sol-

dier's arm – a poilu brave who wore A Croix
de Guerre upon his breast – and oh, they
smiled above The busy throng that hurried
by, unconscious of their love.

And though, across the mist of years,
I glimpsed a fair queen's face, A face that
smiled, but scornfully, above her land's dis-
grace – I will remember, on those steps, the
little new-made wife, Who came, her eyes

all filled with trust, to keep her tryst with
life.

V. SUNLIGHT

The sun shines over Paris fitfully, As if
it really were afraid to shine; And clouds of
gray mist curl and twist and twine Across
the sky. As far as one can see The streets
are wet with rain, and suddenly New rain
falls in a straight, relentless line – And silver

drops, like needles, slim and fine, Drip from
the branches of each gaunt-limbed tree.

Ah, Paris, can the very wistful sky Look
down into the center of your heart, That
has been bruised by war, and torn apart –
The once glad heart that has been taught
to sigh? The sun is like your smile that
flutters by Like some lost dream, before the
tear-drops start.

VI. THE LATIN QUARTER – AFTER

They were the brave ones, the gallant
ones, the laughing ones, Who were the very
first to go – to heed their coun- try's call;
They were the joyous ones, the carefree ones,
the chaffing ones, Who were the first to
meet the foe, who were the first to fall.

Artists and poets, they; the talented and
youthful ones – All the world before their

feet, their feet that loved to stray; We have
heard about their lives; stories crude, and
truthful ones Of the carefree lives they lived,
in the yesterday.

Ah, the Latin Quarter now; boarded up,
the most of it, Studios are bare, this year,
and little models sigh, For the ones who
died for France, died and are the boast of
it, Died as they had always lived, with their

heads held high!

But a spark of it remains, in forgotten
places, For I saw a blinded boy strumming
a guitar, Playing with his face a-smile, with
the arts and graces Of a troubadour of old.
He had wandered far.

Through the flaming hell of war – wan-
dered far and home again, To the corner
that he loved when his eyes could see; And

he played a jolly tune, he who may not roam
again, Played it on an old guitar – played
it smilingly.

And I saw another sit at a tiny table,
In a dingy eating house; he had laughed
and drawn Sketches on the ragged cloth,
boasting he was able Still to draw as well
as most – with two fingers gone. . . .

VII. NOTRE DAME

Through colored glass, on burnished walls,
Soft as a psalm, the sunlight falls; And, in
the corners, cool and dim, Its glow is like a
vesper hymn. And, arch by arch, the ceil-
ings high Rise like a hand stretched toward
the sky To touch God's hand. On every
side Is misty silence; and the wide Untrou-
bled spaces seem to tell That Peace is come
– and all is well!

A slender woman kneels in prayer; The
sunlight slants across her hair; A pallid child
in rusty black Stands in the doorway, look-
ing back. . . . A poilu gropes (his eyes
are wide) Along the altar rail. The tide Of
war has cast him brokenly Upon the shore
of life. I see A girl in costly furs, who cries
Against her muff; I see her rise And hurry
out. Two tourists pause Beside the grated

chancel doors, To wonder and to speculate;
To stoop and read a carven date.

In uniform the nations come; Their voices
are a steady hum Until they feel some subtle
thrill That makes them falter, holds them
still – Bronzed boys, who shrugged and laughed
at death, They stand today with indrawn
breath, Half mystified. The colors steal Into
my heart, and I can feel The rapture that

the artists knew Who, centuries before me,
drew Their very souls into the glass Of ev-
ery window. . . . Hours pass Like beads
of amber that are strung Upon a rainbow,
frail and young.

Through mellow glass, on hallowed walls,
The twilight, like faint music, falls; And in
each corner, cool and dim, The music is a
splendid hymn. And, arch on arch, the ceil-

ings high Seem like a hand stretched toward
the sky To touch a Hand that clasped a
Cross – FOR FRANCE, NEW-RISEN FROM
THE LOSS, AND PAIN AND FEAR OF
BATTLE-HELL, KNOWS PEACE, AT LEAST,
AND ALL IS WELL!

VIII. SUNDAY MORNING

The streets are silent, and the church
bells ring Across the city like the silver chime

Of some forgotten memory. They bring The
phantom of another, sweeter time, When
war was all undreamed. They seem to say,
"Come back, come back, across the years of
strife "To One who reaches out a Hand to-
day, "A Hand that brings your dead again
to life!"

A little white-haired woman hurries past,
A tiny prayer-book in one wrinkled hand;

Her eyes are calm, as one who knows at
last What only age may really understand;
That, as a rainbow creeps across the rain,
The God of Paris smiles above its pain!

SONGS FROM FRANCE

SCARS

Summer sweeps, like sad laughter, over
France, Touching the fields with flower-tinted
mirth; Bringing its wistful gladness to an

earth That has been stabbed with sorrow's
bitter lance; Bringing again the hint of old
romance, Bringing again the magic of re-
birth; Paying again the price that youth
was worth – OVER DIM WAYSIDE MOUNDS
THE GRASSES DANCE!

Where there were shell holes summer
sends, un- heeding, Blossoms to deck the
broken country side; Where, in another sea-

son, heroes, bleeding, Fell for the cause of
righteousness, and died, Green creeper twines
its vivid arms, half-pleading, But there are
scars that summer cannot hide!

FROM PARIS TO CHATEAU THIERRY

The road winds out its weary way, Where
fields are torn with sorrow; It is a road of
yesterday, That dreams no fair tomorrow.

It is silent, saddened road, A lonely road

to follow; For in its dust red rivers flowed,
And now, from every hollow, The crows rise
up in sullen flight The crows that, blackly
flying Against the skyline, speak of night,
And bitterness, and dying.

It is a road that creeps around Farm-
houses that lie broken; That pauses at each
shallow mound, At every blood-stained to-
ken. A helmet by the way one sees; A

pistol, bent and rusty; And hung between
two shattered trees, A coat mildewed and
musty. It is a sad, forgotten road, But oh, it
tells the story Of youth that bore another's
load Without a thought of glory! For every
tattered homestead cries Of vengeance that
descended; And memory that never dies,
From hearts that stay unmended!

The road winds out its weary way, A

lonely way to follow; And crows rise black
against the day From every tree and hollow.

A RUINED CHURCH

They could not take the living God away,
Although they left His altar blank and bare;
Their ruthless hands could never rend and
tear More than the walls, they could not
hope to sway The utter faith that is the na-
tion's heart; They could not bring a real

destruction where Hymn music had been
softly wont to play! They smothered beauty,
and tore hope apart; But in the house of
One who is supreme, The marks they left
will now be sanctified; The broken walls,
when war is but a dream, Will be a mon-
ument to those who died; And every shell-
torn scar will stand for One Whose hands
were scarred, the Christ men crucified!

I think, perhaps, the very morning sun,
Will slant more gently through the broken
tower – And, in good season, that some
tender flower Will bloom beside the ruined
threshold, where Folk paused before they
entered in to prayer. . . .

CHILD FACES

Child faces saddened, older than they
should be, And wiser than a lived-out span

of years; One wonders what those self same
faces would be, If they had never looked on
pain – if tears Had never been their por-
tion; if the morrow, Had never held the
pallid ghost of care – Child faces, graven
deep with worlds of sorrow, Until the light
of childhood is not there!

Child faces, once a gleam with carefree
laughter, Wide eyes, where smiles like baby

rainbows grew; They are the heritage of
ever after, They are the dreams that never
will come true. They are the words of fate
that have been spoken, And when the tu-
mult of the war is gone, They will remind a
world that hearts were broken, For, in their
souls, France goes to meet her dawn!

AFTER HEARING MUSIC COMING
FROM A DEVASTATED FARMHOUSE

Just a little wisp of song played softly in
the twilight, Such a happy little song – and
oh, the dusk is gray! Such a joyous little
song, and oh, the night is coming – Coming
with the bitter chill that marks the death
of day.

Almost like a dance it is, it holds no
hint of sorrow, Almost like a waltz it is, to
set the pulse a-thrill; Not a hint of tears in

it – and oh, the night is coming – Coming
like a purple shroud across the purple hill!
Sad the little farmhouse is, the doors swing
on their hinges, All the windows look like
wounds, pitiful and bare, And a shell has
torn a gash in the broken roof of it, But the
music lilts along like a happy prayer.

Do pale ghostly fingers play on a ghostly
violin? (War has swept the countryside of

the songs it knew!) Merry is the little tune
– not a wistful questioning – Merry with a
rosy thrill of a dream come true.

Just a little wisp of song played softly in
the twilight, Such a happy little song – and
oh, the dusk is gray! Such a joyous little
song, and oh, the night is coming – Coming
with the bitter chill that marks the death
of day!

RETURN

Now that the tumult of the war is over,
The fairy folk are coming back to France;
They push their way through tangled grass
and clover, To find the ring where once they
used to dance. They come half-wistfully,
the little people, Through broken town, and
battered market place, They come past shell-
torn church with shattered steeple, They

come as smiles come to a tear-stained face.

They come with packs of dreams, with
love and laughter, They come with songs
rolled snugly up in sacks; They come with
promises for ever after, Tied neatly into
bundles on their backs! They bring the
seeds of magic so that flowers, The flowers
of new happiness and mirth, May bloom,
once more, in sweet enchanted bowers, Above

the heart-ache of a tortured earth.

Now that the angry powder smoke has
vanished, The fairy folk are coming as of
yore, The fairy folk that hate and war had
banished . . . They pause beside a loosely
swinging door, To set it right on hinges
that were breaking, They lift an old rag doll
with tender care, And hurry on – because
their hearts are aching, For one-time child-

ish faces that were there.

They cross forgotten meadows in the gloaming,
Through forest aisles at even-time they creep;
Where trenches were, their little feet are roaming,
And where the heroes of the conflict sleep,
They stop, a moment, wistful – and their singing
Dies down into the semblance of a prayer;
And tiny bells in far-off elf land ringing,
Sound, like a silver

promise, on the air.

NOW THAT THE TUMULT OF THE
WAR IS OVER, ONCE MORE THE COUN-
TRY WAKENS TO ROMANCE; FOR, THROUGH
THE TANGLE OF THE GRASS AND CLOVER,
THE FAIRY FOLK ARE COMING BACK
TO FRANCE.

THE PHOENIX

The ruined wheat fields lying in the sun

Will smile again, e'er many seasons pass;
The crooning breeze will sway the golden
grass, The way it did before a blazing gun,
Mowed down the meadow poppies in red
heaps; And battered villages will rise anew,
And homes will stand where one-time gar-
dens grew, And, in dim forests where an
army sleeps, The little birds will sing their
evening songs, The way they did before a

blasting rain, Of shrapnel cut their tiny nests
in twain; For France will rise, triumphant,
from her wrongs –

Yes, France will rise once more in faith,
and pave Her roads anew with shattered
stones of life, Her songs will rise, once more,
above the strife – But what about the hearts
that gave – and gave!

A PRAYER ON EASTER FOR OUR

BOYS KILLED IN ACTION

Dear God, they will not come again,
those lads of ours, Who went to fight with
honor's foe across the sea – Who died with
eyes set straight ahead, amid the showers
Of shrapnel, as they cleared a path to vic-
tory, They will not come again . . . And it
is Easter weather, And all the world is wak-
ing to the call of life, But they lie sleeping,

Over There, our lads, together, Who died
before their hearts could know the end of
strife.

Dear God, they will not come again,
those lads of ours, Who left this land so
gallantly to do their best – And so I ask
that You will send gay springtime flowers,
To deck each shell-torn meadow where their
bodies rest. I ask that You will let them

hear the joyous singing, Of some deep-throated
bird whose heart tones throb and swell; God,
let them feel the thrill that Easter time is
bringing, That death is only life asleep –
and all is well! AMEN.

INDEPENDENCE DAY – 1919

Over the mists of a century they come,
and their tramping feet Are light as the
dust on the broad highway, or the wind

that sways in the wheat; Out of the haze
of the years between their shadowy hands
stretch wide To welcome the heroes home
again who have fought for their cause and
died.

They went to battle at Concord Bridge,
and they fell on Bunker Hill; The odds were
great, but they struggled on with a stub-
born Yankee will; They lay in the fields at

Lexington when the sun in the west was red,
And the next year's violets grew on the spot
where their valiant blood was shed.

But they won in the end – with their
broken guns and without much food to spare,
Won at the end of a bitter war, by means
that they knew were fair; And some of them
wandered back to their plows, and some lay
wrapped in the loam, And slept the sleep of

the fearless heart that has fought at home
– for home!

Fought for their homes, at home, they
did – but these other boys today Fought for
the homes of stranger folk three thousand
miles away; FOUGHT FOR THE HONOR
OF THE WORLD, and were not afraid to
die In a muddy trench, in a foreign land,
and under a foreign sky!

They fought on the Marne, at Belleau
Wood; they swept through the mad Ar-
gonne; Chateau-Thierry was theirs to take;
they took it and then surged on; And now
that the fight they fought is won, though
they lie in a far-off grave, Their souls come
back to the land they loved – the land that
they LEFT to save.

And so, through the damp of the sorry

sea, through the wreck of the shell-torn plain,
They are coming back to homes they loved
– they are coming back again! And light as
the wind that sways in the wheat, or the
dust on the broad highway, They march to
their rendezvous with the ones who died in
the yesterday.

SHADOWS

You come to me at twilight, when the

others, Are laughing in the fullness of their
joy; When glad-eyed women folk, when wives
and mothers, Are welcoming some other bronze-
cheeked boy. You come to me, all silent, in
the gloaming, A shadow form, with curly
shadow hair – And, dear, I somehow feel
that you are roaming Between two shadow
worlds – the Here and There.

They ask me, do those others, why I

wander Down dewy lanes, alone, at eventide
– They do not know my heart's a shadow –
yonder. . . They do not know that part of
me has died. They do not know that your
dear presence stands Just out of reach with
misty, wide-flung hands!

L'ENVOI

Only we two, dear . . . and the candle-
light, Seems to be softer than it was before,

Country and city, vivid dream lands, war –
Dear, they are very far from us to-night!

Woven of promise from life's golden loom,
Pale threads of light have bound us heart
to heart; Laughter and sorrow – they are
things apart – ALL OF OUR WORLD IS
IN THIS LITTLE ROOM.

Outside the branches sway, and winter
weather Sweeps, with a cry of triumph, through

the land Dear, it is springtime, when you
touch my hand – Only we two, and magic,
here together!