Amal. I'm afraid I'm sleepy. I don't know, I feel like it at times. I have been sitting a long while and I'm tired; my back aches.

A Boy. It's hardly midday now. How is it you're sleepy? Listen! The gong's sounding the first watch.

Amal. Yes, Dong, dong, dong; it tolls me to sleep.

A Boy. We had better go, then. We'll come in again to-morrow morning.

Amal. I want to ask you something before you go. You are always out—do you know of the King's postmen?

Boys. Yes, quite well.

Amal. Who are they? Tell me their names.

A Boy. One's Badal.

Another Boy. Another's Sarat.

Another Boy. There's so many of them.

Amal. Do you think they will know me if there's a letter for me?

A Boy. Surely, if your name's on the letter they will find you out.

Amal. When you call in to-morrow morning, will you bring one of them along so that he'll know me?

A Boy. Yes, if you like.

CURTAIN
ACT II

(Amal in Bed)

Amal. Can't I go near the window to-day, Uncle? Would the doctor mind that too?

Madhav. Yes, darling; you see you've made yourself worse squatting there day after day.

Amal. Oh, no, I don't know if it's made me more ill, but I always feel well when I'm there.

Madhav. No, you don't; you squat there and make friends with the whole lot of people round here, old and young, as if they are holding a fair right under my eaves—flesh and blood won't stand that strain. Just see—your face is quite pale.

Amal. Uncle, I fear my fakir 'll pass and not see me by the window.

Madhav. Your fakir; whoever's that?

Amal. He comes and chats to me of the many lands where he's been. I love to hear him.

Madhav. How's that? I don't know of any fakirs.

Amal. This is about the time he comes in. I beg of you, by your dear feet, ask him in for a moment to talk to me here.

(Gaffer enters in a Fakir's guise)

Amal. There you are. Come here, Fakir, by my bedside.

Madhav. Upon my word, but this is——

Gaffer (winking hard). I am the Fakir.

Madhav. It beats my reckoning what you're not.

Amal. Where have you been this time, Fakir?

Gaffer. To the Isle of Parrots. I am just back.

Madhav. The Parrots' Isle!

Gaffer. Is it so very astonishing? I am not like you. A
journey doesn’t cost a thing. I tramp just where I like.

_Amal_ (clapping). How jolly for you! Remember your promise to take me with you as your follower when I’m well.

_Gaffer._ Of course, and I’ll teach you so many travelers’ secrets that nothing in sea or forest or mountain can bar your way.

_Madhav._ What’s all this rigmarole?

_Gaffer._ Amal, my dear, I bow to nothing in sea or mountain; but if the doctor joins in with this uncle of yours, then I with all my magic must own myself beaten.

_Amal._ No. Uncle won’t tell the doctor. And I promise to lie quiet; but the day I am well, off I go with the Fakir, and nothing in sea or mountain or torrent shall stand in my way.

_Madhav._ Fie, dear child, don’t keep on harping upon going! It makes me so sad to hear you talk so.

_Amal._ Tell me, Fakir, what the Parrots’ Isle is like.

_Gaffer._ It’s a land of wonders; it’s a haunt of birds. No men are there; and they neither speak nor walk, they simply sing and they fly.

_Amal._ How glorious! And it’s by some sea?

_Gaffer._ Of course. It’s on the sea.

_Amal._ And green hills are there?

_Gaffer._ Indeed, they live among the green hills; and in the time of the sunset when there is a red glow on the hillside, all the birds with their green wings go flocking to their nests.

_Amal._ And there are waterfalls!

_Gaffer._ Dear me, of course; you don’t have a hill
without its waterfalls. Oh, it's like molten diamonds; and, my dear, what dances they have! Don't they make the pebbles sing as they rush over them to the sea! No devil of a doctor can stop them for a moment. The birds looked upon me as nothing but a man, merely a trifling creature without wings—and they would have nothing to do with me. Were it not so I would build a small cabin for myself among their crowd of nests and pass my days counting the sea-waves.

Amal. How I wish I were a bird! Then——

Gaffer. But that would have been a bit of a job; I hear you've fixed up with the dairyman to be a hawker of curds when you grow up; I'm afraid such business won't flourish among birds; you might land yourself into serious loss.

Madhav. Really this is too much. Between you two I shall turn crazy. Now, I'm off.

Amal. Has the dairyman been, Uncle?

Madhav. And why shouldn't he? He won't bother his head running errands for your pet fakir, in and out among the nests in his Parrots' Isle. But he has left a jar of curds for you saying that he is busy with his niece's wedding in the village, and has to order a band at Kamalipara.

Amal. But he is going to marry me to his little niece.

Gaffer. Dear me, we are in a fix now.

Amal. He said she would be my lovely little bride with a pair of pearl drops in her ears and dressed in a lovely red saree; and in the morning she would milk with her own hands the black cow and feed me with warm milk with foam on it from a brand-new earthen cruse; and in the evenings she would carry the lamp. 244
round the cow-house, and then come and sit by me to
tell me tales of Champa and his six brothers.

Gaffer. How charming! It would even tempt me, a
hermit! But never mind, dear, about this wedding. Let
it be. I tell you that when you marry there'll be no lack
of nieces in his household.

Madhav. Shut up! This is more than I can stand.

[Exit

Amal. Fakir, now that Uncle's off, just tell me, has
the King sent me a letter to the Post Office?

Gaffer. I gather that his letter has already started; it
is on the way here.

Amal. On the way? Where is it? Is it on that road
winding through the trees which you can follow to the
end of the forest when the sky is quite clear after rain?

Gaffer. That is where it is. You know all about it
already.

Amal. I do, everything.

Gaffer. So I see, but how?

Amal. I can't say; but it's quite clear to me. I fancy
I've seen it often in days long gone by. How long ago I
can't tell. Do you know when? I can see it all: there,
the King's postman coming down the hillside alone, a
lantern in his left hand and on his back a bag of letters;
climbing down for ever so long, for days and nights, and
where at the foot of the mountain the waterfall becomes
a stream he takes to the footpath on the bank and walks
on through the rye; then comes the sugar-cane field and
he disappears into the narrow lane cutting through the
tall stems of sugar-canpes; then he reaches the open
meadow where the cricket chirps and where there is not
a single man to be seen, only the snipe wagging their
tails and poking at the mud with their bills. I can feel
him coming nearer and nearer and my heart becomes glad.

Gaffer. My eyes are not young; but you make me see all the same.

Amal. Say, Fakir, do you know the King who has this Post Office?

Gaffer. I do; I go to him for my alms every day.

Amal. Good! When I get well I must have my alms too from him, mayn’t I?

Gaffer. You won’t need to ask, my dear; he’ll give it to you of his own accord.

Amal. No, I will go to his gate and cry, “Victory to thee, O King!” and dancing to the tabor’s sound, ask for alms. Won’t it be nice?

Gaffer. It will be splendid, and if you’re with me I shall have my full share. But what will you ask?

Amal. I shall say, “Make me your postman, that I may go about, lantern in hand, delivering your letters from door to door. Don’t let me stay at home all day!”

Gaffer. What is there to be sad for, my child, even were you to stay at home?

Amal. It isn’t sad. When they shut me in here first I felt the day was so long. Since the King’s Post Office was put there I like more and more being indoors, and as I think I shall get a letter one day, I feel quite happy and then I don’t mind being quiet and alone. I wonder if I shall make out what’ll be in the King’s letter?

Gaffer. Even if you didn’t wouldn’t it be enough if it just bore your name?

(Madhav enters)

Madhav. Have you any idea of the trouble you’ve got me into, between you two?
Gaffer. What's the matter?

Madhav. I hear you've let it get rumoured about that the King has planted his office here to send messages to both of you.

Gaffer. Well, what about it?

Madhav. Our headman Panchanan has had it told to the King anonymously.

Gaffer. Aren't we aware that everything reaches the King's ears?

Madhav. Then why don't you look out? Why take the King's name in vain? You'll bring me to ruin if you do.

Amal. Say, Fakir, will the King be cross?

Gaffer. Cross, nonsense! And with a child like you and a fakir such as I am? Let's see if the King be angry, and then won't I give him a piece of my mind!

Amal. Say, Fakir, I've been feeling a sort of darkness coming over my eyes since the morning. Everything seems like a dream. I long to be quiet. I don't feel like talking at all. Won't the King's letter come? Suppose this room melts away all on a sudden, suppose——

Gaffer (fanning Amal). The letter's sure to come today, my boy.

(Doctor enters)

Doctor. And how do you feel to-day?

Amal. Feel awfully well to-day, Doctor. All pain seems to have left me.

Doctor (aside to Madhav). Don't quite like the look of that smile. Bad sign that, his feeling well! Chakradhan has observed——

Madhav. For goodness' sake, Doctor, leave Chakradhan alone. Tell me what's going to happen?

Doctor. Can't hold him in much longer, I fear! I warned you before—this looks like a fresh exposure.
Madhav. No, I've used the utmost care, never let him out of doors; and the windows have been shut almost all the time.

Doctor. There's a peculiar quality in the air to-day. As I came in I found a fearful draught through your front door. That's most hurtful. Better lock it at once. Would it matter if this kept your visitors off for two or three days? If some one happens to call unexpectedly—there's the back door. You had better shut this window as well, it's letting in the sunset rays only to keep the patient awake.

Madhav. Amal has shut his eyes. I expect he is sleeping. His face tells me—Oh, Doctor, I bring in a child who is a stranger and love him as my own, and now I suppose I must lose him!

Doctor. What's that? There's your headman sailing in!—What a bother! I must be going, brother. You had better stir about and see to the doors being properly fastened. I will send on a strong dose directly I get home. Try it on him—it may save him at last, if he can be saved at all. [Exeunt Madhav and Doctor

(The Headman enters)

Headman. Hello, urchin!—

Gaffer (rising hastily). 'Sh, be quiet.

Amal. No, Fakir, did you think I was asleep? I wasn't. I can hear everything; yes, and voices far away. I feel that mother and father are sitting by my pillow and speaking to me.

(Madhav enters)

Headman. I say, Madhav, I hear you hobnob with bigwigs nowadays.

Madhav. Spare me your jokes, Headman; we are but common people.
Headman. But your child here is expecting a letter from the King.

Madhav. Don’t you take any notice of him, a mere foolish boy!

Headman. Indeed, why not! It’ll beat the King hard to find a better family! Don’t you see why the King plants his new Post Office right before your window? Why, there’s a letter for you from the King, urchin.

Amal (starting up). Indeed, really!

Headman. How can it be false? You’re the King’s chum. Here’s your letter (showing a blank slip of paper). Ha, ha, ha! This is the letter.

Amal. Please don’t mock me. Say, Fakir, is it so?

Gaffer. Yes, my dear. I as Fakir tell you it is his letter.

Amal. How is it I can’t see? It all looks so blank to me. What is there in the letter, Mr. Headman?

Headman. The King says, “I am calling on you shortly; you had better have puffed rice for me.—Palace fare is quite tasteless to me now.” Ha! ha! ha!

Madhav (with folded palms). I beseech you, Headman, don’t you joke about these things——

Gaffer. Joking indeed! He would not dare.

Madhav. Are you out of your mind too, Gaffer?

Gaffer. Out of my mind; well then, I am; I can read plainly that the King writes he will come himself to see Amal, with the State Physician.

Amal. Fakir, Fakir, ’sh, his trumpet! Can’t you hear?

Headman. Ha! ha! ha! I fear he won’t until he’s a bit more off his head.

Amal. Mr. Headman, I thought you were cross with me and didn’t love me. I never could have believed you
would fetch me the King’s letter. Let me wipe the dust off your feet.

Headman. This little child does have an instinct of reverence. Though a little silly, he has a good heart.

Amal. It’s hard on the fourth watch now, I suppose. Hark, the gong, “Dong, dong, ‘ding—Dong, dong, ding.” Is the evening star up? How is it I can’t see—

Gaffer. Oh, the windows are all shut; I’ll open them.

(A knocking outside)

Madhav. What’s that?—Who is it?—What a bother!

Voice (from outside). Open the door.

Madhav. Headman—I hope they’re not robbers.

Headman. Who’s there?—It is Panchanan, the headman, who calls.—Aren’t you afraid to make that noise? Fancy! The noise has ceased! Panchanan’s voice carries far.—Yes, show me the biggest robbers!—

Madhav (peering out of the window). No wonder the noise has ceased. They’ve smashed the outer door.

(The King’s Herald enters)

Herald. Our Sovereign King comes to-night!

Headman. My God!

Amal. At what hour of the night, Herald?

Herald. On the second watch.

Amal. When my friend the watchman will strike his gong from the city gates, “Ding dong ding, ding dong ding”—then?

Herald. Yes, then. The King sends his greatest physician to attend on his young friend.

(State Physician enters)

State Physician. What’s this? How close it is here! Open wide all the doors and windows. (Feeling Amal’s body.) How do you feel, my child?

Amal. I feel very well, Doctor, very well. All pain is
gone. How fresh and open! I can see all the stars now twinkling from the other side of the dark.

Physician. Will you feel well enough to leave your bed when the King comes in the middle watches of the night?

Amal. Of course, I'm dying to be about for ever so long. I'll ask the King to find me the polar star.—I must have seen it often, but I don't know exactly which it is.

Physician. He will tell you everything. (To Madhav.) Arrange flowers through the room for the King's visit. (Indicating the Headman.) We can't have that person in here.

Amal. No, let him be, Doctor. He is a friend. It was he who brought me the King's letter.

Physician. Very well, my child. He may remain if he is a friend of yours.

Madhav (whispering into Amal's ear). My child, the King loves you. He is coming himself. Beg for a gift from him. You know our humble circumstances.

Amal. Don't you worry, Uncle.—I've made up my mind about it.

Madhav. What is it, my child?

Amal. I shall ask him to make me one of his postmen that I may wander far and wide, delivering his message from door to door.

Madhav (slapping his forehead). Alas, is that all?

Amal. What'll be our offerings to the King, Uncle, when he comes?

Herald. He has commanded puffed rice.

Amal. Puffed rice. Say, Headman, you're right. You said so. You knew all we didn't.

Headman. If you would send word to my house I could manage for the King's advent really nice—
Physician. No need at all. Now be quiet, all of you. Sleep is coming over him. I’ll sit by his pillow; he’s dropping asleep. Blow out the oil-lamp. Only let the star-light stream in. Hush, he sleeps.

Madhav (addressing Gaffer). What are you standing there for like a statue, folding your palms?—I am nervous.—Say, are there good omens? Why are they darkening the room? How will star-light help?

Gaffer. Silence, unbeliever!

(Sudha enters)

Sudha. Amal!

Physician. He’s asleep.

Sudha. I have some flowers for him. Mayn’t I give them into his own hand?

Physician. Yes, you may.

Sudha. When will he be awake?

Physician. Directly the King comes and calls him.

Sudha. Will you whisper a word for me in his ear?

Physician. What shall I say?

Sudha. Tell him Sudha has not forgotten him.

CURTAIN
LOVER’S GIFT
LOVER'S GIFT

II
Come to my garden walk, my love. Pass by the fervid flowers that press themselves on your sight. Pass them by, stopping at some chance joy, which like a sudden wonder of sunset illumines, yet eludes.

For love's gift is shy, it never tells its name, it flits across the shade, spreading a shiver of joy along the dust. Overtake it or miss it for ever. But a gift that can be grasped is merely a frail flower, or a lamp with a flame that will flicker.

IV
She is near to my heart as the meadow-flower to the earth; she is sweet to me as sleep is to tired limbs. My love for her is my life flowing in its fullness, like a river in autumn flood, running with serene abandonment. My songs are one with my love, like the murmur of a stream, that sings with all its waves and currents.

V
I would ask for still more, if I had the sky with all its stars, and the world with its endless riches; but I would
be content with the smallest corner of this earth if only she were mine.

... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ...

VIII

There is room for you. You are alone with your few sheaves of rice. My boat is crowded, it is heavily laden, but how can I turn you away? Your young body is slim and swaying; there is a twinkling smile in the edge of your eyes, and your robe is coloured like the rain-cloud.

The travellers will land for different roads and homes. You will sit for a while on the prow of my boat, and at the journey’s end none will keep you back.

Where do you go, and to what home, to garner your sheaves? I will not question you, but when I fold my sails and moor my boat I shall sit and wonder in the evening,—Where do you go, and to what home, to garner your sheaves?

... ... ... ... ... ... ...

XIII

Last night in the garden I offered you my youth’s foaming wine. You lifted the cup to your lips, you shut your eyes and smiled while I raised your veil, unbound your tresses, drawing down upon my breast your face sweet with its silence, last night when the moon’s dream overflowed the world of slumber.

To-day in the dew-cooled calm of the dawn you are walking to God’s temple, bathed and robed in white, with a basketful of flowers in your hand. I stand aside in
the shade under the tree, with my head bent, in the
calm of the dawn by the lonely road to the temple.

She dwelt here by the pool with its landing-stairs in
ruins. Many an evening she had watched the moon
made dizzy by the shaking of bamboo leaves, and on
many a rainy day the smell of the wet earth had come to
her over the young shoots of rice.

Her pet name is known here among those date-palm
groves and in the courtyards where girls sit and talk
while stitching their winter quilts. The water in this
pool keeps in its depth the memory of her swimming
limbs, and her wet feet had left their marks, day after
day, on the footpath leading to the village.

The women who come to-day with their vessels to the
water have all seen her smile over simple jests, and the
old peasant, taking his bullocks to their bath, used to
stop at her door every day to greet her.

Many a sailing-boat passes by this village; many a
traveller takes rest beneath that banyan tree; the ferry-
boat crosses to yonder ford carrying crowds to the
market; but they never notice this spot by the village
road, near the pool with its ruined landing-stairs,—
where dwelt she whom I love.

Your days will be full of cares, if you must give me
your heart. My house by the cross-roads has its doors
open and my mind is absent,—for I sing.
I shall never be made to answer for it, if you must give me your heart. If I pledge my word to you in tunes now, and am too much in earnest to keep it when music is silent, you must forgive me; for the law laid down in May is best broken in December.

Do not always keep remembering it, if you must give me your heart. When your eyes sing with love, and your voice ripples with laughter, my answers to your questions will be wild, and not miserly accurate in facts,—they are to be believed for ever and then forgotten for good.

xix

It is written in the book that Man, when fifty, must leave the noisy world, to go to the forest seclusion. But the poet proclaims that the forest hermitage is only for the young. For it is the birthplace of flowers and the haunt of birds and bees; and hidden nooks are waiting there for the thrill of lovers’ whispers. There the moon-light, that is all one kiss for the mālati flowers, has its deep message, but those who understand it are far below fifty.

And alas, youth is inexperienced and wilful, therefore it is but meet that the old should take charge of the household, and the young take to the seclusion of forest shades and the severe discipline of courting.

xxii

I shall gladly suffer the pride of culture to die out in my house, if only in some happy future I am born a herd-boy in the Brinda forest.
The herd-boy who grazes his cattle sitting under the banyan tree, and idly weaves gunja flowers into garlands, who loves to splash and plunge in the Jamuna’s cool deep stream.

He calls his companions to wake up when morning dawns, and all the houses in the lane hum with the sound of the churn, clouds of dust are raised by the cattle, the maidens come out in the courtyard to milk the kine.

As the shadows deepen under the tomal trees, and the dusk gathers on the river-banks; when the milkmaids, while crossing the turbulent water, tremble with fear; and loud peacocks, with tails outspread, dance in the forest, he watches the summer clouds.

When the April night is sweet as a fresh-blown flower, he disappears in the forest with a peacock’s plume in his hair; the swing ropes are twined with flowers on the branches; the south wind throbs with music, and the merry shepherd boys crowd on the banks of the blue river.

No, I will never be the leader, brothers, of this new age of new Bengal; I shall not trouble to light the lamp of culture for the benighted. If only I could be born, under the shady asoka groves, in some village of Brinda, where milk is churned by the maidens!

XXVIII

I DREAMT that she sat by my head, tenderly ruffling my hair with her fingers, playing the melody of her touch. I looked at her face and struggled with my tears, till
the agony of unspoken words burst my sleep like a bubble.

I sat up and saw the glow of the Milky Way above my window, like a world of silence on fire, and I wondered if at this moment she had a dream that rhymed with mine.

xxxix

There is a looker-on who sits behind my eyes. It seems he has seen things in ages and worlds beyond memory’s shore, and those forgotten sights glisten on the grass and shiver on the leaves. He has seen under new veils the face of the one beloved, in twilight hours of many a nameless star. Therefore his sky seems to ache with the pain of countless meetings and partings, and a longing pervades this spring breeze,—the longing that is full of the whisper of ages without beginning.

xl

A message came from my youth of vanished days, saying, “I wait for you among the quiverings of unborn May, where smiles ripen for tears and hours ache with songs unsung.”

It says, “Come to me across the worn-out track of age, through the gates of death. For dreams fade, hopes fail, the gathered fruits of the year decay, but I am the eternal truth, and you shall meet me again and again in your voyage of life from shore to shore.”
ARE you a mere picture, and not as true as those stars; true as this dust? They throb with the pulse of things, but you are immensely aloof in your stillness, painted form.

The day was when you walked with me, your breath warm, your limbs singing of life. My world found its speech in your voice, and touched my heart with your face. You suddenly stopped in your walk, in the shadow-side of the Forever, and I went on alone.

Life, like a child, laughs, shaking its rattle of death as it runs; it beckons me on, I follow the unseen; but you stand there, where you stopped behind that dust and those stars; and you are a mere picture.

No, it cannot be. Had the life-flood utterly stopped in you, it would stop the river in its flow, and the footfall of dawn in her cadence of colours. Had the glimmering dusk of your hair vanished in the hopeless dark, the woodland shade of summer would die with its dreams.

Can it be true that I forgot you? We haste on without heed, forgetting the flowers on the roadside hedge. Yet they breathe unaware into our forgetfulness, filling it with music. You have moved from my world, to take seat at the root of my life, and therefore is this forgetting—remembrance lost in its own depth.

You are no longer before my songs, but one with them. You came to me with the first ray of dawn. I lost you with the last gold of evening. Ever since I am always finding you through the dark. No, you are no mere picture.
DYING, you have left behind you the great sadness of the Eternal in my life. You have painted my thought’s horizon with the sunset colours of your departure, leaving a track of tears across the earth to love’s heaven. Clasped in your dear arms, life and death united in me in a marriage bond.

I think I can see you watching there in the balcony with your lamp lighted, where the end and the beginning of all things meet. My world went hence through the doors that you opened—you holding the cup of death to my lips, filling it with life from your own.

THE road is my wedded companion. She speaks to me under my feet all day, she sings to my dreams all night.

My meeting with her had no beginning, it begins endlessly at each daybreak, renewing its summer in fresh flowers and songs, and her every new kiss is the first kiss to me.

The road and I are lovers. I change my dress for her night after night, leaving the tattered cumber of the old in the wayside inns when the day dawns.

I travelled the old road every day, I took my fruits to the market, my cattle to the meadows, I ferried my boat across the stream and all the ways were well known to me.

One morning my basket was heavy with wares. Men
were busy in the fields, the pastures crowded with cattle; the breast of earth heaved with the mirth of ripening rice.

Suddenly there was a tremor in the air, and the sky seemed to kiss me on my forehead. My mind started up like the morning out of mist.

I forgot to follow the track. I stepped a few paces from the path, and my familiar world appeared strange to me, like a flower I had only known in bud.

My everyday wisdom was ashamed. I went astray in the fairyland of things. It was the best luck of my life that I lost my path that morning, and found my eternal childhood.

XLIX

WHERE is heaven? you ask me, my child,—the sages tell us it is beyond the limits of birth and death, unswayed by the rhythm of day and night; it is not of this earth.

But your poet knows that its eternal hunger is for time and space, and it strives evermore to be born in the fruitful dust. Heaven is fulfilled in your sweet body, my child, in your palpitating heart.

The sea is beating its drums in joy, the flowers are a-tiptoe to kiss you. For heaven is born in you, in the arms of the mother-dust.

LII

TIRED of waiting, you burst your bonds, impatient flowers, before the winter had gone. Glimpses of the unseen comer reached your wayside watch, and you
rushed out running and panting, impulsive jasmines, troops of riotous roses.

You were the first to march to the breach of death, your clamour of colour and perfume troubled the air. You laughed and pressed and pushed each other, bared your breast and dropped in heaps.

The Summer will come in its time, sailing in the flood-tide of the south wind. But you never counted slow moments to be sure of him. You recklessly spent your all in the road, in the terrible joy of faith.

You heard his footsteps from afar, and flung your mantle of death for him to tread upon. Your bonds break even before the rescuer is seen, you make him your own ere he can come and claim you.

* * * * * * *

LIV

In the beginning of time, there rose from the churning of God’s dream two women. One is the dancer at the court of paradise, the desired of men, she who laughs and plucks the minds of the wise from their cold meditations and of fools from their emptiness; and scatters them like seeds with careless hands in the extravagant winds of March, in the flowering frenzy of May.

The other is the crowned queen of heaven, the mother, throned on the fullness of golden autumn; she who in the harvest-time brings straying hearts to the smile sweet as tears, the beauty deep as the sea of silence,—brings them to the temple of the Unknown, at the holy confluence of Life and Death.

* * * * * * *

264
THE evening was lonely for me, and I was reading a book till my heart became dry, and it seemed to me that beauty was a thing fashioned by the traders in words. Tired I shut the book and snuffed the candle. In a moment the room was flooded with moonlight.

Spirit of Beauty, how could you, whose radiance overbrims the sky, stand hidden behind a candle’s tiny flame? How could a few vain words from a book rise like a mist, and veil her whose voice has hushed the heart of earth into ineffable calm?

THINGS throng and laugh loud in the sky; the sands and dust dance and whirl like children. Man’s mind is aroused by their shouts; his thoughts long to be the playmates of things.

Our dreams, drifting in the stream of the vague, stretch their arms to clutch the earth,—their efforts stiffen into bricks and stones, and thus the city of man is built.

Voices come swarming from the past,—seeking answers from the living moments. Beats of their wings fill the air with tremulous shadows, and sleepless thoughts in our minds leave their nests to take flight across the desert of dimness, in the passionate thirst for forms. They are lampless pilgrims, seeking the shore of light, to find themselves in things. They will be lured into poets’ rhymes, they will be housed in the towers of the town not yet planned, they have their call to
arms from the battlefields of the future, they are bidden
to join hands in the strifes of peace yet to come.

LX

Take back your coins, King's Councillor. I am of those
women you sent to the forest shrine to decoy the young
ascetic who had never seen a woman. I failed in your
bidding.

Dimly day was breaking when the hermit boy came
to bathe in the stream, his tawny locks crowded on his
shoulders, like a cluster of morning clouds, and his
limbs shining like a streak of sunbeam. We laughed and
sang as we rowed in our boat; we jumped into the river
in a mad frolic, and danced around him, when the sun
rose staring at us from the water's edge in a flush of
divine anger.

Like a child-god, the boy opened his eyes and watched
our movements, the wonder deepening till his eyes shone
like morning stars. He lifted his clasped hands and
chanted a hymn of praise in his bird-like young voice,
thrilling every leaf of the forest. Never such words were
sung to a mortal woman before; they were like the
silent hymn to the dawn which rises from the hushed
hills. The women hid their mouths with their hands,
their bodies swaying with laughter, and a spasm of
doubt ran across his face. Quickly came I to his side,
sorely pained, and, bowing to his feet, I said, "Lord,
accept my service."

I led him to the grassy bank, wiped his body with
the end of my silken mantle, and, kneeling on the
ground, I dried his feet with my trailing hair. When I
raised my face and looked into his eyes, I thought I felt the world's first kiss to the first woman,—Blessed am I, blessed is God, who made me a woman. I heard him say to me, "What God unknown are you? Your touch is the touch of the Immortal, your eyes have the mystery of the midnight."

Ah, no, not that smile, King's Councillor,—the dust of worldly wisdom has covered your sight, old man. But this boy's innocence pierced the mist and saw the shining truth, the woman divine. . . .

The women clapped their hands, and laughed their obscene laugh, and with veils dragging on the dust and hair hanging loose they began to pelt him with flowers. Alas, my spotless sun, could not my shame weave fiery mist to cover you in its folds? I fell at his feet and cried, "Forgive me." I fled like a stricken deer through shade and sun, and cried as I fled, "Forgive me." The women's foul laughter pressed me like a crackling fire, but the words ever rang in my ears, "What God unknown are you?"
CROSSING
CROSSING

IV

ACCEPT me, my lord, accept me for this while.
Let those orphaned days that passed without thee be forgotten.
Only spread this little moment wide across thy lap,
holding it under thy light.
I have wandered in pursuit of voices that drew me yet led me nowhere.
Now let me sit in peace and listen to thy words in the soul of my silence.
Do not turn away thy face from my heart’s dark secrets,
but burn them till they are alight with thy fire.

V

THE scouts of a distant storm have pitched their cloud-
tents in the sky; the light has paled; the air is damp
with tears in the voiceless shadows of the forest.
The peace of sadness is in my heart like the brooding
silence upon the master’s lute before the music begins.
My world is still with the expectation of the great pain
of thy coming into my life.
VIII

THE lantern which I carry in my hand makes enemy of the darkness of the farther road.
And this wayside becomes a terror to me, where even the flowering tree frowns like a spectre of scowling menace; and the sound of my own steps comes back to me in the echo of muffled suspicion.
Therefore I pray for thy own morning light, when the far and the near will kiss each other and death and life will be one in love.

IX

WHEN thou savest me the steps are lighter in the march of thy worlds.
When stains are washed away from my heart it brightens the light of thy sun.
That the bud has not blossomed in beauty in my life spreads sadness in the heart of creation.
When the shroud of darkness will be lifted from my soul it will bring music to thy smile.

X

THOU hast given me thy love, filling the world with thy gifts.
They are showered upon me when I do not know them, for my heart is asleep and dark is the night.
Yet though lost in the cavern of my dreams I have been thrilled with fulsome gladness;
And I know that in return for the treasure of thy great worlds thou wilt receive from me one little flower of love in the morning when my heart awakes.
XVII

Pick up this life of mine from the dust.
Keep it under your eyes, in the palm of your right hand.
Hold it up in the light, hide it under the shadow of death; keep it in the casket of the night with your stars, and then in the morning let it find itself among flowers that blossom in worship.

XVIII

I know that this life, missing its ripeness in love, is not altogether lost.
I know that the flowers that fade in the dawn, the streams that strayed in the desert, are not altogether lost.
I know that whatever lags behind in this life laden with slowness is not altogether lost.
I know that my dreams that are still unfulfilled, and my melodies still unstruck, are clinging to some lute-strings of thine, and they are not altogether lost.

XX

The day is dim with rain.
Angry lightnings glance through the tattered cloud-veils
And the forest is like a caged lion shaking its mane in despair.
On such a day amidst the winds beating their wings, let me find my peace in thy presence.
For the sorrowing sky has shadowed my solitude, to deepen the meaning of thy touch about my heart.

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XXIII

I came nearest to you, though I did not know it,—when I came to hurt you.
I owned you at last as my master when I fought against you to be defeated.
I merely made my debt to you burdensome when I robbed you in secret.
I struggled in my pride against your current only to feel all your force in my breast.
Rebelliously I put out the light in my house, and your sky surprised me with its stars.

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XXV

I hid myself to evade you.
Now that I am caught at last, strike me, see if I flinch.
Finish the game for good.
If you win in the end, strip me of all that I have.
I have had my laughter and songs in wayside booths and stately halls,—now that you have come into my life, make me weep, see if you can break my heart.

XXVI

When I awake in thy love my night of ease will be ended.
Thy sunrise will touch my heart with its touchstone of
fire, and my voyage will begin in its orbit of triumphant suffering.
I shall dare to take up death's challenge and carry thy voice in the heart of mockery and menace.
I shall bare my breast against the wrongs hurled at thy children, and take the risk of standing by thy side where none but thee remains.

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xxix

I have met thee where the night touches the edge of the day; where the light startles the darkness into dawn, and the waves carry the kiss of the one shore to the other.

From the heart of the fathomless blue comes one golden call, and across the dusk of tears I try to gaze at thy face and know not for certain if thou art seen.

xxx

If love be denied me then why does the morning break its heart in songs, and why are these whispers that the south wind scatters among the new-born leaves?

If love be denied me then why does the midnight bear in yearning silence the pain of the stars?

And why does this foolish heart recklessly launch its hope on the sea whose end it does not know?

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No guest had come to my house for long, my doors
were locked, my windows barred; I thought my
night would be lonely.
When I opened my eyes I found the darkness had
vanished.
I rose up and ran and saw the bolts of my gates all
broken, and through the open door your wind and
light waved their banner.
When I was a prisoner in my own house, and the doors
were shut, my heart ever planned to escape and to
wander.
Now at my broken gate I sit still and wait for your
coming.
You keep me bound by my freedom.

FREE me as free are the birds of the wilds, the wanderers
of unseen paths.
Free me as free are the deluge of rain, and the storm
that shakes its locks and rushes on to its unknown end.
Free me as free is the forest fire, as is the thunder that
laughs aloud and hurst defiance to darkness.

I LIVED on the shady side of the road and watched my
neighbours' gardens across the way revelling in the
sunshine.
I felt I was poor, and from door to door went with my hunger.
The more they gave me from their careless abundance
the more I became aware of my beggar's bowl.
Till one morning I awoke from my sleep at the sudden
opening of my door, and you came and asked for alms.
In despair I broke the lid of my chest open and was startled into finding my own wealth.

XLVIII

THOU hast taken him to thine arms and crowned him with death, him who ever waited outside like a beggar at life's feast.
Thou hast put thy right hand on his failures and kissed him with peace that stills life's turbulent thirst.
Thou hast made him one with all kings and with the ancient world of wisdom.

LIII

I HAVE come to thee to take thy touch before I begin my day.
Let thy eyes rest upon my eyes for awhile.
Let me take to my work the assurance of thy comradeship, my friend.
Fill my mind with thy music to last through the desert of noise!
Let thy Love's sunshine kiss the peaks of my thoughts and linger in my life's valley where the harvest ripens.
LIV

STAND before my eyes, and let thy glance touch my songs into a flame.
Stand among thy stars and let me find kindled in their lights my own fire of worship.
The earth is waiting at the world's wayside;
Stand upon the green mantle she has flung upon thy path; and let me feel in her grass and meadow flowers the spread of my own salutation.
Stand in my lonely evening where my heart watches alone; fill her cup of solitude, and let me feel in me the infinity of thy love.

LV

LET thy love play upon my voice and rest on my silence.
Let it pass through my heart into all my movements.
Let thy love like stars shine in the darkness of my sleep and dawn in my awakening.
Let it burn in the flame of my desires
And flow in all currents of my own love.
Let me carry thy love in my life as a harp does its music, and give it back to thee at last with my life.

LVI

You hide yourself in your own glory, my King.
The sand-grain and the dew-drop are more proudly apparent than yourself.
The world unabashed calls all things its own that are yours—yet it is never brought to shame.
You make room for us while standing aside in silence; therefore love lights her own lamp to seek you and comes to your worship unbidden.
LVII

WHEN from the house of feast I came back home, the
spell of the midnight quieted the dance in my
blood.
My heart became silent at once like a deserted theatre
with its lamps out.
My mind crossed the dark and stood among the stars,
and I saw that we were playing unafraid in the
silent courtyard of our King’s palace.

LX

WITH his morning songs he knocks at our door bringing
his greetings of sunrise.
With him we take our cattle to the fields and play our
flute in the shade.
We lose him to find him again and again in the market
crowd.
In the busy hour of the day we come upon him of a
sudden, sitting on the wayside grass.
We march when he beats his drum,
We dance when he sings.
We stake our joys and sorrows to play his game to the
end.
He stands at the helm of our boat,
With him we rock on the perilous waves.
For him we light our lamp and wait when our day is
done.
LXII

When bells sounded in your temple in the morning,
men and women hastened down the woodland path
with their offerings of fresh flowers.
But I lay on the grass in the shade and let them pass by.
I think it was well that I was idle, for then my flowers
were in bud.
At the end of the day they have bloomed, and I go to
my evening worship.

LXVIII

There are numerous strings in your lute, let me add
my own among them.
Then when you smite your chords my heart will break
its silence and my life will be one with your song.
Amidst your numberless stars let me place my own
little lamp.
In the dance of your festival of lights my heart will
throb and my life will be one with your smile.

LXIX

Let my song be simple as the waking in the morning,
as the dripping of dew from the leaves,
Simple as the colours in clouds and showers of rain in
the midnight.
But my lute-strings are newly strung and they dart
their notes like spears sharp in their newness.
Thus they miss the spirit of the wind and hurt the light
of the sky; and these strains of my songs fight hard
to push back thy own music.
LXX

I have seen thee play thy music in life’s dancing-hall;
in the sudden leaf-burst of spring thy laughter has
come to greet me; and lying among field flowers I
have heard in the grass thy whisper.
The child has brought to my house the message of thy
hope, and the woman the music of thy love.
Now I am waiting on the seashore to feel thee in death,
to find life’s refrain back again in the star-songs of
the night.

LXXI

I remember my childhood when the sunrise, like my
play-fellow, would burst in to my bedside with its
daily surprise of morning; when the faith in the
marvellous bloomed like fresh flowers in my heart
every day, looking into the face of the world in
simple gladness; when insects, birds and beasts, the
common weeds, grass and the clouds had their
fullest value of wonder; when the patter of rain at
night brought dreams from the fairyland, and
mother’s voice in the evening gave meaning to the
stars.
And then I think of death, and the rise of the curtain
and the new morning and my life awakened in its
fresh surprise of love.

LXXII

When my heart did not kiss thee in love, O world,
thy light missed its full splendour and thy sky
watched through the long night with its lighted
lamp.

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My heart came with her songs to thy side, whispers were exchanged, and she put her wreath on thy neck. I know she has given thee something which will be treasured with thy stars.

LXXIII

THOU hast given me thy seat at thy window from the early hour.
I have spoken to thy silent servants of the road running on thy errands, and have sung with thy choir of the sky.
I have seen the sea in calm bearing its immeasurable silence, and in storm struggling to break open its own mystery of depth.
I have watched the earth in its prodigal feast of youth, and in its slow hours of brooding shadows.
Those who went to sow seeds have heard my greetings, and those who brought their harvest home or their empty baskets have passed by my songs.
Thus at last my day has ended and now in the evening I sing my last song to say that I have loved thy world.

LXXIV

It has fallen upon me, the service of thy singer.
In my songs I have voiced thy spring flowers, and given rhythm to thy rustling leaves.
I have sung into the hush of thy night and peace of thy morning.
The thrill of the first summer rains has passed into my tunes, and the waving of the autumn harvest.
Let not my song cease at last, my Master, when thou
breakest my heart to come into my house, but let it burst into thy welcome.

LXXVII

"TRAVELLER, where do you go?"
"I go to bathe in the sea in the redd'ning dawn, along the tree-bordered path."
"Traveller, where is that sea?"
"There where this river ends its course, where the dawn opens into morning, where the day droops to the dusk."
"Traveller, how many are they who come with you?"
"I know not how to count them. They are travelling all night with their lamps lit, they are singing all day through land and water."
"Traveller, how far is the sea?"
"How far is it, we all ask. The rolling roar of its water swells to the sky when we hush our talk. It ever seems near yet far."
"Traveller, the sun is waxing strong."
"Yes, our journey is long and grievous. Sing who are weary in spirit, sing who are timid of heart."
"Traveller, what if the night overtakes you?"
"We shall lie down to sleep till the new morning dawns with its songs, and the call of the sea floats in the air."
LXXVIII

Comrade of the road,
Here are my traveller's greetings to thee.
O Lord of my broken heart, of leave-taking and loss,
    of the grey silence of the dayfall,
My greetings of the ruined house to thee!
O Light of the new-born morning,
Sun of the everlasting day,
My greetings of the undying hope to thee!
My guide,
I am a wayfarer of an endless road,
My greetings of a wanderer to thee!
STRAY BIRDS
STRAY BIRDS

I

STRAY birds of summer come to my window to sing and fly away.
And yellow leaves of autumn, which have no songs, flutter and fall there with a sigh.

II

O TROUPE of little vagrants of the world, leave your footprints in my words.

III

The world puts off its mask of vastness to its lover.
It becomes small as one song, as one kiss of the eternal.

IV

It is the tears of the earth that keep her smiles in bloom.

V

The mighty desert is burning for the love of a blade of grass who shakes her head and laughs and flies away.

VI

If you shed tears when you miss the sun, you also miss the stars.
VII
The sands in your way beg for your song and your movement, dancing water. Will you carry the burden of their lameness?

VIII
Her wistful face haunts my dreams like the rain at night.

IX
Once we dreamt that we were strangers.
We wake up to find that we were dear to each other.

X
Sorrow is hushed into peace in my heart like the evening among the silent trees.

XI
Some unseen fingers, like an idle breeze, are playing upon my heart the music of the ripples.

XII
"What language is thine, O sea?"
"The language of eternal question."
"What language is thy answer, O sky?"
"The language of eternal silence."

XIII
Listen, my heart, to the whispers of the world with which it makes love to you.
xiv
The mystery of creation is like the darkness of night—it is great. Delusions of knowledge are like the fog of the morning.

xv
Do not seat your love upon a precipice because it is high.

xvi
I sit at my window this morning where the world like a passer-by stops for a moment, nods to me and goes.

xvii
These little thoughts are the rustle of leaves; they have their whisper of joy in my mind.

xviii
What you are you do not see, what you see is your shadow.

xix
My wishes are fools, they shout across thy songs, my Master.
Let me but listen.

xx
I cannot choose the best.
The best chooses me.

xxi
They throw their shadows before them who carry their lantern on their back.
XXII

That I exist is a perpetual surprise which is life.

XXIII

"We, the rustling leaves, have a voice that answers the storms, but who are you, so silent?"

"I am a mere flower."

XXIV

Rest belongs to the work as the eyelids to the eyes.

XXV

Man is a born child, his power is the power of growth.

XXVI

God expects answers for the flowers he sends us, not for the sun and the earth.

XXVII

The light that plays, like a naked child, among the green leaves happily knows not that man can lie.

XXVIII

O Beauty, find thyself in love, not in the flattery of thy mirror.

XXIX

My heart beats her waves at the shore of the world and writes upon it her signature in tears with the words, "I love thee."


XXX

'Moon, for what do you wait?'
'To salute the sun for whom I must make way.'

XXXI

The trees come up to my window like the yearning voice of the dumb earth.

XXXII

His own mornings are new surprises to God.

XXXIII

Life finds its wealth by the claims of the world, and its worth by the claims of love.

XXXIV

The dry river-bed finds no thanks for its past.

XXXV

The bird wishes it were a cloud.
The cloud wishes it were a bird.

XXXVI

The waterfall sings, "I find my song, when I find my freedom."

XXXVII

I cannot tell why this heart languishes in silence.
It is for small needs it never asks, or knows or remembers.

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XXXVIII

Woman, when you move about in your household
service your limbs sing like a hill stream among its
pebbles.

XXXIX

The sun goes to cross the Western sea, leaving its last
salutation to the East.

XL

Do not blame your food because you have no appetite.

XLI

The trees, like the longings of the earth, stand a-tiptoe
to peep at the heaven.

XLII

You smiled and talked to me of nothing and I felt that
for this I had been waiting long.

XLIII

The fish in the water is silent, the animal on the earth
is noisy, the bird in the air is singing.

But Man has in him the silence of the sea, the noise
of the earth and the music of the air.

XLIV

The world rushes on over the strings of the lingering
heart making the music of sadness.

XLV

He has made his weapons his gods.

When his weapons win he is defeated himself.

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XLVI

GOD finds himself by creating.

XLVII

SHADOW, with her veil drawn, follows Light in secret meekness, with her silent steps of love.

XLVIII

THE stars are not afraid to appear like fireflies.

XLIX

I THANK thee that I am none of the wheels of power but I am one with the living creatures that are crushed by it.

L

THE mind, sharp but not broad, sticks at every point but does not move.

LI

YOUR idol is shattered in the dust to prove that God’s dust is greater than your idol.

LII

MAN does not reveal himself in his history, he struggles up through it.

LIII

WHILE the glass lamp rebukes the earthen for calling it cousin, the moon rises, and the glass lamp, with a bland smile, calls her,—“My dear, dear sister.”

293
LIKE the meeting of the seagulls and the waves we meet and come near. The seagulls fly off, the waves roll away and we depart.

My day is done, and I am like a boat drawn on the beach, listening to the dance-music of the tide in the evening.

LIFE is given to us, we earn it by giving it.

We come nearest to the great when we are great in humility.

The sparrow is sorry for the peacock at the burden of its tail.

Never be afraid of the moments—thus sings the voice of the everlasting.

The hurricane seeks the shortest road by the no-road, and suddenly ends its search in the Nowhere.

Take my wine in my own cup, friend. It loses its wreath of foam when poured into that of others.
LXII

The Perfect decks itself in beauty for the love of the Imperfect.

LXIII

God says to man, "I heal you, therefore I hurt, love you, therefore punish."

LXIV

Thank the flame for its light, but do not forget the lampholder standing in the shade with constancy of patience.

LXV

Tiny grass, your steps are small, but you possess the earth under your tread.

LXVI

The infant flower opens its bud and cries, "Dear World, please do not fade."

LXVII

God grows weary of great kingdoms, but never of little flowers.

LXVIII

Wrong cannot afford defeat but Right can.

LXIX

"I give my whole water in joy," sings the waterfall, "though little of it is enough for the thirsty."
LXX
WHERE is the fountain that throws up these flowers in a ceaseless outbreak of ecstasy?

LXXI
THE woodcutter’s axe begged for its handle from the tree. The tree gave it.

LXXII
In my solitude of heart I feel the sigh of this widowed evening veiled with mist and rain.

LXXIII
CHASTITY is a wealth that comes from abundance of love.

LXXIV
THE mist, like love, plays upon the heart of the hills and brings out surprises of beauty.

LXXV
WE read the world wrong and say that it deceives us.

LXXVI
THE poet wind is out over the sea and the forest to seek his own voice.

LXXVII
EVERY child comes with the message that God is not yet discouraged of man.

LXXVIII
THE grass seeks her crowd in the earth. The tree seeks his solitude of the sky.
LXXIX

MAN barricades against himself.

LXXX

YOUR voice, my friend, wanders in my heart, like the muffled sound of the sea among these listening pines.

LXXXI

WHAT is this unseen flame of darkness whose sparks are the stars?

LXXXII

LET life be beautiful like summer flowers and death like autumn leaves.

LXXXIII

HE who wants to do good knocks at the gate; he who loves finds the gate open.

LXXXIV

IN death the many becomes one; in life the one becomes many.

Religion will be one when God is dead.

LXXXV

THE artist is the lover of Nature, therefore he is her slave and her master.

LXXXVI

"How far are you from me, O Fruit?"
"I am hidden in your heart, O Flower."

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LXXXVII

This longing is for the one who is felt in the dark, but not seen in the day.

LXXXVIII

“You are the big drop of dew—under the lotus leaf, I am the smaller one on its upper side,” said the dewdrop to the lake.

LXXXIX

The scabbard is content to be dull when it protects the keenness of the sword.

XC

In darkness the One appears as uniform; in the light the One appears as manifold.

XCI

The great earth makes herself hospitable with the help of the grass.

XCII

The birth and death of the leaves are the rapid whirls of the eddy whose wider circles move slowly among stars.

XCIII

Power said to the world, “You are mine.”

The world kept it prisoner on her throne.

Love said to the world, “I am thine.”

The world gave it the freedom of her house.

XCIV

The mist is like the earth’s desire.

It hides the sun for whom she cries.
XCV

Be still, my heart, these great trees are prayers.

XCVI

The noise of the moment scoffs at the music of the Eternal.

XCVII

I think of other ages that floated upon the stream of life and love and death and are forgotten, and I feel the freedom of passing away.

XCVIII

The sadness of my soul is her bride’s veil.
   It waits to be lifted in the night.

XCIX

Death’s stamp gives value to the coin of life; making it possible to buy with life what is truly precious.

C

The cloud stood humbly in a corner of the sky.
   The morning crowned it with splendour.

CI

The dust receives insult and in return offers her flowers.

CII

Do not linger to gather flowers to keep them, but walk on, for flowers will keep themselves blooming all your way.
ROOTS are the branches down in the earth.
    Branches are roots in the air.

THE music of the far-away summer flutters around the autumn seeking its former nest.

Do not insult your friend by lending him merits from your own pocket.

THE touch of the nameless days clings to my heart like mosses round the old tree.

THE echo mocks her origin to prove she is the original.

GOD is ashamed when the prosperous boasts of his special favour.

I CAST my own shadow upon my path, because I have a lamp that has not been lighted.

MAN goes into the noisy crowd to drown his own clamour of silence.
CXI

That which ends in exhaustion is death, but the perfect ending is in the endless.

* CXII

The sun has his simple robe of light. The clouds are decked with gorgeousness.

CXIII

The hills are like shouts of children who raise their arms, trying to catch stars.

CXIV

The road is lonely in its crowd, for it is not loved.

CXV

The power that boasts of its mischiefs is laughed at by the yellow leaves that fall, and clouds that pass by.

CXVI

The earth hums to me to-day in the sun, like a woman at her spinning, some ballad of the ancient time in a forgotten tongue.

CXVII

The grass-blade is worthy of the great world where it grows.

CXVIII

Dream is a wife who must talk,
    Sleep is a husband who silently suffers.
CXIX

THE night kisses the fading day whispering to his ear,
"I am death, your mother. I am to give you fresh
birth."

CXX

I feel thy beauty, dark night, like that of the loved
woman when she has put out the lamp.

CXXI

I carry in my world that flourishes the worlds that
have failed.

CXXII

Dear friend, I feel the silence of your great thoughts of
many a deepening eventide on this beach when I listen
to these waves.

CXXIII

The bird thinks it is an act of kindness to give the fish
a lift in the air.

CXXIV

"In the moon thou sendest thy love letters to me,"
said the night to the sun.
"I leave my answers in tears upon the grass."

CXXV

The Great is a born child; when he dies he gives his
great childhood to the world.

CXXVI

Not hammer-strokes, but dance of the water sings the
pebbles into perfection.
CXXXVII

Bees sip honey from flowers and hum their thanks when they leave.

The gaudy butterfly is sure that the flowers owe thanks to him.

CXXXVIII

To be outspoken is easy when you do not wait to speak the complete truth.

CXXXIX

Asks the Possible of the Impossible, "Where is your dwelling-place?"

"In the dreams of the impotent," comes the answer.

CXXX

If you shut your door to all errors truth will be shut out.

CXXXI

I hear some rustle of things behind my sadness of heart,—I cannot see them.

CXXXII

Leisure in its activity is work.

The stillness of the sea stirs in waves.

CXXXIII

The leaf becomes flower when it loves.

The flower becomes fruit when it worships.
THE roots below the earth claim no rewards for making
the branches fruitful.

THIS rainy evening the wind is restless.
I look at the swaying branches and ponder over the
greatness of all things.

STORM of midnight, like a giant child awakened in the
untimely dark, has begun to play and shout.

THOU raisest thy waves vainly to follow thy lover, O
sea, thou lonely bride of the storm.

"I AM ashamed of my emptiness," said the Word to
the Work.
"I know how poor I am when I see you," said the
Work to the Word.

TIME is the wealth of change, but the clock in its
parody makes it mere change and no wealth.

TRUTH in her dress finds facts too tight.
In fiction she moves with ease.
CXLII

Let me think that there is one among those stars that
guides my life through the dark, unknown.

CXLIII

Woman, with the grace of your fingers you touched my
things and order came out like music.

CXLIV

One sad voice has its nest among the ruins of the years.
It sings to me in the night,—"I loved you."

CXLV

The flaming fire warns me off by its own glow.
Save me from the dying embers hidden under ashes.

CXLVI

I have my stars in the sky,
But oh for my little lamp unlit in my house.

CXLVII

The dust of the dead words clings to thee.
Wash thy soul with silence.
CXLVIII
Gaps are left in life through which comes the sad music of death.

CXLIX
The world has opened its heart of light in the morning.
Come out, my heart, with thy love to meet it.

CL
My thoughts shimmer with these shimmering leaves and my heart sings with the touch of this sunlight; my life is glad to be floating with all things into the blue of space, into the dark of time.

CLI
God’s great power is in the gentle breeze, not in the storm.

CLII
This is a dream in which things are all loose and they oppress. I shall find them gathered in thee when I awake and shall be free.

CLIII
"Who is there to take up my duties?" asked the setting sun.
"I shall do what I can, my Master," said the earthen lamp.

CLIV
By plucking her petals you do not gather the beauty of the flower.
CLV

SILENCE will carry your voice like the nest that holds the sleeping birds.

CLVI

THE Great walks with the Small without fear.
The Middling keeps aloof.

CLVII

THE night opens the flowers in secret and allows the day to get thanks.

CLVIII

POWER takes as ingratitude the writhings of its victims.

CLIX

WHEN we rejoice in our fullness, then we can part with our fruits with joy.

CLX

THE raindrops kissed the earth and whispered,—“We are thy homesick children, mother, come back to thee from the heaven.”

CLXI

THE cobweb pretends to catch dewdrops and catches flies.

CLXII

LOVE! when you come with the burning lamp of pain in your hand, I can see your face and know you as bliss.
CLXIII

"The learned say that your lights will one day be no more," said the firefly to the stars.

The stars made no answer.

CLXIV

In the dusk of the evening the bird of some early dawn comes to the nest of my silence.

CLXV

Thoughts pass in my mind like flocks of ducks in the sky.

I hear the voice of their wings.

CLXVI

The canal loves to think that rivers exist solely to supply it with water.

CLXVII

The world has kissed my soul with its pain, asking for its return in songs.

CLXVIII

That which oppresses me, is it my soul trying to come out in the open, or the soul of the world knocking at my heart for its entrance?

CLXIX

Thought feeds itself with its own words and grows.
CLXX

I have dipped the vessel of my heart into this silent hour; it has filled with love.

CLXXI

Either you have work or you have not.
When you have to say, "Let us do something," then begins mischief.

CLXXII

The sunflower blushed to own the nameless flower as her kin.
The sun rose and smiled on it, saying, "Are you well, my darling?"

CLXXIII

"Who drives me forward like fate?"
"The Myself striding on my back."

CLXXIV

The clouds fill the water-cups of the river, hiding themselves in the distant hills.

CLXXV

I spill water from my water-jar as I walk on my way.
Very little remains for my home.

CLXXVI

The water in a vessel is sparkling; the water in the sea is dark.
The small truth has words that are clear; the great truth has great silence.

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CLXXVII

YOUR smile was the flowers of your own fields, your talk was the rustle of your own mountain pines, but your heart was the woman that we all know.

CLXXVIII

IT is the little things that I leave behind for my loved ones,—great things are for everyone.

CLXXIX

WOMAN, thou hast encircled the world’s heart with the depth of thy tears as the sea has the earth.

CLXXX

THE sunshine greets me with a smile.
   The rain, his sad sister, talks to my heart.

CLXXXI

My flower of the day dropped its petals forgotten.
   In the evening it ripens into a golden fruit of memory.

CLXXXII

I AM like the road in the night listening to the footfalls of its memories in silence.

CLXXXIII

THE evening sky to me is like a window, and a lighted lamp, and a waiting behind it.
He who is too busy doing good finds no time to be good.

I am the autumn cloud, empty of rain, see my fullness in the field of ripened rice.

They hated and killed and men praised them. But God in shame hastens to hide its memory under the green grass.

Toes are the fingers that have forsaken their past.

Darkness travels towards light, but blindness towards death.

The pet dog suspects the universe for scheming to take its place.

Sit still, my heart, do not raise your dust. Let the world find its way to you.

The bow whispers to the arrow before it speeds forth—"Your freedom is mine."
CXCI
WOMAN, in your laughter you have the music of the fountain of life.

CXCII
A MIND all logic is like a knife all blade.
It makes the hand bleed that uses it.

CXCIII
GOD loves man's lamp-lights better than his own great stars.

CXCIV
THIS world is the world of wild storms kept tame with the music of beauty.

CXCV
"My heart is like the golden casket of thy kiss," said the sunset cloud to the sun.

CXCVI
By touching you may kill, by keeping away you may possess.

CXCVII
THE cricket's chirp and the patter of rain come to me through the dark, like the rustle of dreams from my past youth.

CXCVIII
"I HAVE lost my dewdrop," cries the flower to the morning sky that has lost all its stars.
CC

The burning log bursts in flame and cries,—"This is my flower, my death."

CCI

The wasp thinks that the honey-hive of the neighbouring bees is too small.
His neighbours ask him to build one still smaller.

CCII

"I CANNOT keep your waves," says the bank to the river.
"Let me keep your footprints in my heart."

CCIII

The day, with the noise of this little earth, drowns the silence of all worlds.

CCIV

The song feels the infinite in the air, the picture in the earth, the poem in the air and the earth;
For its words have meaning that walks and music that soars.

CCV

When the sun goes down to the West, the East of his morning stands before him in silence.

CCVI

Let me not put myself wrongly to my world and set it against me.
CCVII

PRAISE shames me, for I secretly beg for it.

CCVIII

LET my doing nothing when I have nothing to do become untroubled in its depth of peace like the evening in the seashore when the water is silent.

CCIX

MAIDEN, your simplicity, like the blueness of the lake, reveals your depth of truth.

CCX

THE best does not come alone.
It comes with the company of the all.

CCXI

God's right hand is gentle, but terrible is his left hand.

CCXII

My evening came among the alien trees and spoke in a language which my morning stars did not know.

CCXIII

Night's darkness is a bag that bursts with the gold of the dawn.

CCXIV

Our desire lends the colours of the rainbow to the mists and vapours of life.
CCXV

GOD waits to win back his own flowers as gifts from man's hands.

CCXVI

My sad thoughts tease me asking me their own names.

CCXVII

The service of the fruit is precious, the service of the flower is sweet, but let my service be the service of the leaves in its shade of humble devotion.

CCXVIII

My heart has spread its sails to the idle winds for the shadowy island of Anywhere.

CCXIX

MEN are cruel, but Man is kind.

CCXX

MAKE me thy cup and let my fulness be for thee and for thine.

CCXXI

The storm is like the cry of some god in pain whose love the earth refuses.

CCXXII

The world does not leak because death is not a crack.
LIFE has become richer by the love that has been lost.

My friend, your great heart shone with the sunrise of
the East like the snowy summit of a lonely hill in the
dawn.

THE fountain of death makes the still water of life
play.

THOSE who have everything but thee, my God, laugh
at those who have nothing but thyself.

THE movement of life has its rest in its own music.

KICKS only raise dust and not crops from the earth.

OUR names are the light that glows on the sea waves
at night and then dies without leaving its signature.

LET him only see the thorns who has eyes to see the
rose.

SET the bird's wings with gold and it will never again
soar in the sky.
CCXXXII

The same lotus of our clime blooms here in the alien water with the same sweetness, under another name.

CCXXXIII

In heart’s perspective the distance looms large.

CCXXXIV

The moon has her light all over the sky, her dark spots to herself.

CCXXXV

Do not say, “It is morning,” and dismiss it with a name of yesterday. See it for the first time as a newborn child that has no name.

CCXXXVI

Smoke boasts to the sky, and Ashes to the earth, that they are brothers to the fire.

CCXXXVII

The raindrop whispered to the jasmine, “Keep me in your heart for ever.”
- The jasmine sighed, “Alas,” and dropped to the ground.

CCXXXVIII

Timid thoughts, do not be afraid of me.
I am a poet.

CCXXXIX

The dim silence of my mind seems filled with crickets’ chirp—the grey twilight of sound.

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CCXL

ROCKETS, your insult to the stars follows yourself back to the earth.

CCXLI

THOU hast led me through my crowded travels of the day to my evening’s loneliness.
I wait for its meaning through the stillness of the night.

CCXLII

THIS life is the crossing of a sea, where we meet in the same narrow ship.
In death we reach the shore and go to our different worlds.

CCXLIII

THE stream of truth flows through its channels of mistakes.

CCXLIV

My heart is homesick to-day for the one sweet hour across the sea of time.

CCXLV

THE bird-song is the echo of the morning light back from the earth.

CCXLVI

“ARE you too proud to kiss me?” the morning light asks the buttercup.

CCXLVII

“How may I sing to thee and worship, O Sun?” asked the little flower.
“By the simple silence of thy purity,” answered the sun.
CCXLVIII

Man is worse than an animal when he is an animal.

CCXLIX

Dark clouds become heaven's flowers when kissed by light.

CCL

Let not the sword-blade mock its handle for being blunt.

CCLI

The night's silence, like a deep lamp, is burning with the light of its Milky Way.

CCLII

Around the sunny island of life swells day and night death's limitless song of the sea.

CCLIII

Is not this mountain like a flower, with its petals of hills, drinking the sunlight?

CCLIV

The real with its meaning read wrong and emphasis misplaced is the unreal.

CCLV

Find your beauty, my heart, from the world's movement, like the boat that has the grace of the wind and the water.
CCLVI

The eyes are not proud of their sight but of their eyeglasses.

CCLVII

I live in this little world of mine and am afraid to make it the least less. Lift me into thy world and let me have the freedom gladly to lose my all.

CCLVIII

The false can never grow into truth by growing in power.

CCLIX

My heart, with its lapping waves of song, longs to caress this green world of the sunny day.

CCLX

Wayside grass, love the star, then your dreams will come out in flowers.

CCLXI

Let your music, like a sword, pierce the noise of the market to its heart.

CCLXII

The trembling leaves of this tree touch my heart like the fingers of an infant child.

CCLXIII

The little flower lies in the dust.

It sought the path of the butterfly.