

DOUBTFUL POEMS

ALONE

FROM childhood's hour I have not been
As others were—I have not seen
As others saw—I could not bring
My passions from a common spring—
From the same source I have not taken
My sorrow—I could not awaken
My heart to joy at the same tone—
And all I loved—I loved alone—
Thou—in my childhood—in the dawn
Of a most stormy life—was drawn
From every depth of good and ill
The mystery which binds me still—
From the torrent, or the fountain—
From the red cliff of the mountain—
From the sun that round me roll'd
In its autumn tint of gold—
From the lightning in the sky
As it passed me flying by—
From the thunder and the storm—
And the cloud that took the form
(When the rest of Heaven was blue)
Of a demon in my view.

March 17, 1829.

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To Isadore

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TO ISADORE

I
BENEATH the vine-clad eaves,
Whose shadows fall before
Thy lowly cottage door—
Under the lilac's tremulous leaves—
Within thy snowy claspèd hand
The purple flowers it bore.
Last eve in dreams, I saw thee stand,
Like queenly nymphs from Fairy-land—
Enchantress of the flowery wand,
Most beauteous Isadore!

II
And when I bade the dream
Upon thy spirit flee,
Thy violet eyes to me
Upturned, did overflowing seem
With the deep, untold delight
Of Love's serenity;
Thy classic brow, like lilies white
And pale as the Imperial Night
Upon her throne, with stars bedight,
Enthralled my soul to thee!

III
Ah! ever I behold
Thy dreamy, passionate eyes,
Blue as the languid skies
Hung with the sunset's fringe of gold;

Now strangely clear thine image grows,
 And olden memories
 Are startled from their long repose
 Like shadows on the silent snows
 When suddenly the night-wind blows
 Where quiet moonlight lies.

IV

Like music heard in dreams,
 Like strains of harps unknown,
 Of birds forever flown—
 Audible as the voice of streams
 That murmur in some leafy dell,
 I hear thy gentlest tone,
 And Silence cometh with her spell
 Like that which on my tongue doth dwell,
 When tremulous in dreams I tell
 My love to thee alone!

V

In every valley heard,
 Floating from tree to tree,
 Less beautiful to me,
 The music of the radiant bird,
 Than artless accents such as thine
 Whose echoes never flee!
 Ah! how for thy sweet voice I pine:—
 For uttered in thy tones benign
 (Enchantress!) this rude name of mine
 Doth seem a melody!

THE VILLAGE STREET

IN these rapid, restless shadows,
 Once I walked at eventide,
 When a gentle, silent maiden,
 Walked in beauty at my side.
 She alone there walked beside me
 All in beauty, like a bride.

Pallidly the moon was shining
 On the dewy meadows nigh;
 On the silvery, silent rivers,
 On the mountains far and high—
 On the ocean's star-lit waters,
 Where the winds a-weary die.

Slowly, silently we wandered
 From the open cottage door,
 Underneath the elm's long branches
 To the pavement bending o'er;
 Underneath the mossy willow
 And the dying sycamore.

With the myriad stars in beauty
 All bedight, the heavens were seen,
 Radiant hopes were bright around me,
 Like the light of stars serene;
 Like the mellow midnight splendor
 Of the Night's irradiate queen.

Audibly the elm-leaves whispered
 Peaceful, pleasant melodies,
 Like the distant murmured music
 Of unquiet, lovely seas:
 While the winds were hushed in slumber
 In the fragrant flowers and trees.

Wondrous and unwonted beauty
 Still adorning all did seem,
 While I told my love in fables
 'Neath the willows by the stream;
 Would the heart have kept unspoken
 Love that was its rarest dream!

Instantly away we wandered
 In the shadowy twilight tide,
 She, the silent, scornful maiden,
 Walking calmly at my side,
 With a step serene and stately,
 All in beauty, all in pride.

Vacantly I walked beside her.
 On the earth mine eyes were cast;
 Swift and keen there came unto me
 Bitter memories of the past—
 On me, like the rain in Autumn
 On the dead leaves, cold and fast.

Underneath the elms we parted,
 By the lowly cottage door;
 One brief word alone was uttered—
 Never on our lips before;
 And away I walked forlornly,
 Broken-hearted evermore.

Slowly, silently I loitered,
 Homeward, in the night, alone;
 Sudden anguish bound my spirit,
 That my youth had never known;
 Wild unrest, like that which cometh
 When the Night's first dream hath flown.

Now, to me the elm-leaves whisper
 Mad, discordant melodies,
 And keen melodies like shadows
 Haunt the moaning willow trees,
 And the sycamores with laughter
 Mock me in the nightly breeze.

Sad and pale the Autumn moonlight
 Through the sighing foliage streams;
 And each morning, midnight shadow,
 Shadow of my sorrow seems;
 Strive, O heart, forget thine idol!
 And, O soul, forget thy dreams!

THE FOREST REVERIE

'Tis said that when
 The hands of men
 Tamed this primeval wood,
 And hoary trees with groans of woe,
 Like warriors by an unknown foe,
 Were in their strength subdued,
 The virgin Earth
 Gave instant birth
 To springs that ne'er did flow—
 That in the sun
 Did rivulets run,
 And all around rare flowers did blow—
 The wild rose pale
 Perfumed the gale,
 And the queenly lily adown the dale
 (Whom the sun and the dew
 And the winds did woo),
 With the gourd and the grape luxuriant grew.

So when in tears
 The love of years
 Is wasted like the snow,
 And the fine fibrils of its life
 By the rude wrong of instant strife
 Are broken at a blow—
 Within the heart

Do springs upstart
 Of which it doth now know,
 And strange, sweet dreams,
 Like silent streams
 That from new fountains overflow,
 With the earlier tide
 Of rivers glide
 Deep in the heart whose hope has died—
 Quenching the fires its ashes hide,—
 Its ashes, whence will spring and grow
 Sweet flowers, ere long,—
 The rare and radiant flowers of song!

NOTES

Of the many verses from time to time ascribed to the pen of Edgar Poe, and not included among his known writings, the lines entitled "Alone" have the chief claim to our notice. *Fac-simile* copies of this piece had been in possession of the present editor some time previous to its publication in "Scribner's Magazine" for September, 1875; but as proofs of the authorship claimed for it were not forthcoming, he refrained from publishing it as requested. The desired proofs have not yet been adduced, and there is, at present, nothing but internal evidence to guide us. "Alone" is stated to have been written by Poe in the album of a Baltimore lady (Mrs. Balderstone?), on March 17th, 1829, and the *fac-simile* given in "Scribner's" is alleged to be of his handwriting. If the caligraphy be Poe's, it is different in all essential respects from all the many specimens known to us, and strongly resembles that of the writer of the heading and dating of the manuscript, both of which the contributor of the poem acknowledges to have been recently

added. The lines, however, if not by Poe, are the most successful imitation of his early mannerisms yet made public, and, in the opinion of one well qualified to speak, "are not unworthy on the whole of the parentage claimed for them."

While Edgar Poe was editor of the "Broadway Journal," some lines "To Isadore" appeared therein, and, like several of his known pieces, bore no signature. They were at once ascribed to Poe, and in order to satisfy questioners, an editorial paragraph subsequently appeared saying they were by "A. Ide, junior." Two previous poems had appeared in the "Broadway Journal" over the signature of "A. M. Ide," and whoever wrote them was also the author of the lines "To Isadore." In order, doubtless, to give a show of variety, Poe was then publishing some of his known works in his journal over *noms de plume*, and as no other writings whatever can be traced to any person bearing the name of "A. M. Ide," it is not impossible that the poems now republished in this collection may be by the author of "The Raven." Having been published without his usual elaborate revision, Poe may have wished to *hide* his hasty work under an assumed name. The three pieces are included in the present collection, so the reader can judge for himself what pretensions they possess to be by the author of "The Raven."

