

**PROEM**

*Where are they—the Afterwhiles—  
Luring us the lengthening miles  
Of our lives? Where is the dawn  
With the dew across the lawn  
Stroked with eager feet the far  
Way the hills and valleys are?  
Where the sun that smiles the frown  
Of the eastward-gazer down?  
Where the rifted wreaths of mist  
O'er us, tinged with amethyst,  
Round the mountain's steep defiles?  
Where are all the afterwhiles?*

*Afterwhile—and we will go  
Thither, yon, and too and fro—  
From the stifling city streets  
To the country's cool retreats—  
From the riot to the rest  
Where hearts beat the placidest:  
Afterwhile, and we will fall  
Under breezy trees, and loll*





PROEM

*In the shade, with thirsty sight  
Drinking deep the blue delight  
Of the skies that will beguile  
Us as children—afterwhile.*

*Afterwhile—and one intends  
To be gentler to his friends,—  
To walk with them, in the hush  
Of still evenings, o'er the plush  
Of home-leading fields, and stand  
Long at parting, hand in hand:  
One, in time, will joy to take  
New resolves for some one's sake,  
And wear then the look that lies  
Clear and pure in other eyes—  
He will soothe and reconcile  
His own conscience—afterwhile.*

*Afterwhile—we have in view  
A far scene to journey to,—  
Where the old home is, and where  
The old mother waits us there,  
Peering, as the time grows late,  
Down the old path to the gate.—  
How we'll click the latch that locks  
In the pinks and hollyhocks,*

PROEM

*And leap up the path once more  
Where she waits us at the door!—  
How we'll greet the dear old smile,  
And the warm tears—afterwhile!*

*Ah, the endless afterwhiles!—  
Leagues on leagues, and miles on miles,  
In the distance far withdrawn,  
Stretching on, and on, and on,  
Till the fancy is footsore  
And faints in the dust before  
The last milestone's granite face,  
Hacked with: Here Beginneth Space.  
O far glimmering worlds and wings,  
Mystic smiles and beckonings,  
Lead us through the shadowy aisles,  
Out into the afterwhiles.*



### HERR WEISER

HERR WEISER!—Threescore-years-and-ten,—  
A hale white rose of his countrymen,  
Transplanted here in the Hoosier loam,  
And blossomy as his German home—  
As blossomy and as pure and sweet  
As the cool green glen of his calm retreat,  
Far withdrawn from the noisy town  
Where trade goes clamoring up and down,  
Whose fret and fever, and stress and strife,  
May not trouble his tranquil life!

Breath of rest, what a balmy gust!—  
Quit of the city's heat and dust,  
Jostling down by the winding road,  
Through the orchard ways of his quaint abode.—  
Tether the horse, as we onward fare  
Under the pear-trees trailing there,

HERR WEISER

And thumping the wooden bridge at night  
With lumps of ripeness and lush delight,  
Till the stream, as it maunders on till dawn,  
Is powdered and pelted and smiled upon.

Herr Weiser, with his wholesome face,  
And the gentle blue of his eyes, and grace  
Of unassuming honesty,  
Be there to welcome you and me!  
And what though the toil of the farm be stopped  
And the tireless plans of the place be dropped,  
While the prayerful master's knees are set  
In beds of pansy and mignonette  
And lily and aster and columbine,  
Offered in love, as yours and mine?—

What, but a blessing of kindly thought,  
Sweet as the breath of forget-me-not!—  
What, but a spirit of lustrous love  
White as the aster he bends above!—  
What, but an odorous memory  
Of the dear old man, made known to me

HERR WEISER

In days demanding a help like his,—  
As sweet as the life of the lily is—  
As sweet as the soul of a babe, bloom-wise  
Born of a lily in paradise.



### THE BEAUTIFUL CITY

THE BEAUTIFUL CITY! Forever  
Its rapturous praises resound;  
We fain would behold it—but never  
A glimpse of its glory is found:  
We slacken our lips at the tender  
White breasts of our mothers to hear  
Of its marvellous beauty and splendor;—  
We see—but the gleam of a tear!

Yet never the story may tire us—  
First graven in symbols of stone—  
Rewritten on scrolls of papyrus  
And parchment, and scattered and blown  
By the winds of the tongues of all nations,  
Like a litter of leaves wildly whirled  
Down the rack of a hundred translations,  
From the earliest lisp of the world.

### THE BEAUTIFUL CITY

We compass the earth and the ocean,  
From the Orient's uttermost light,  
To where the last ripple in motion  
Lips hem of the skirt of the night,—  
But the Beautiful City evades us—  
No spire of it glints in the sun—  
No glad-bannered battlement shades us  
When all our long journey is done.

Where lies it? We question and listen;  
We lean from the mountain, or mast,  
And see but dull earth, or the glisten  
Of seas inconceivably vast:  
The dust of the one blurs our vision,  
The glare of the other our brain,  
Nor city nor island Elysian  
In all of the land or the main!

We kneel in dim fanes where the thunders  
Of organs tumultuous roll,  
And the longing heart listens and wonders,  
And the eyes look aloft from the soul:



THE BEAUTIFUL CITY

But the chanson grows fainter and fainter,  
Swoons wholly away and is dead;  
And our eyes only reach where the painter  
Has dabbled a saint overhead.

The Beautiful City! O mortal,  
Fare hopefully on in thy quest,  
Pass down through the green grassy portal  
That leads to the Valley of Rest;  
There first passed the One who, in pity  
Of all thy great yearning, awaits  
To point out The Beautiful City,  
And loosen the trump at the gates.

LOCKERBIE STREET

SUCH a dear little street it is, nestled away  
From the noise of the city and heat of the day,  
In cool shady coverts of whispering trees,  
With their leaves lifted up to shake hands with the  
breeze  
Which in all its wide wanderings never may meet  
With a resting-place fairer than Lockerbie street!

There is such a relief, from the clangor and din  
Of the heart of the town, to go loitering in  
Through the dim, narrow walks, with the sheltering  
shade  
Of the trees waving over the long promenade,  
And littering lightly the ways of our feet  
With the gold of the sunshine of Lockerbie street,



LOCKERBIE STREET

And the nights that come down the dark pathways of  
dusk,  
With the stars in their tresses, and odors of musk  
In their moon-woven raiments, bespangled with dews,  
And looped up with lilies for lovers to use  
In the songs that they sing to the tinkle and beat  
Of their sweet serenadings through Lockerbie street.

O my Lockerbie street! You are fair to be seen—  
Be it noon of the day, or the rare and serene  
Afternoon of the night—you are one to my heart,  
And I love you above all the phrases of art,  
For no language could frame and no lips could repeat  
My rhyme-haunted raptures of Lockerbie street.



DAS KRIST KINDEL

I HAD fed the fire and stirred it, till the sparkles in de-  
light  
Snapped their saucy little fingers at the chill December  
night;  
And in dressing-gown and slippers, I had tilted back  
“my throne”—  
The old split-bottomed rocker—and was musing all  
alone.

I could hear the hungry Winter prowling round the  
outer door,  
And the tread of muffled footsteps on the white piazza  
floor;  
But the sounds came to me only as the murmur of a  
stream  
That mingled with the current of a lazy-flowing dream.



DAS KRIST KINDEL

Like a fragrant incense rising, curled the smoke of my  
cigar,  
With the lamplight gleaming through it like a mist-  
enfolded star;—  
And as I gazed, the vapor like a curtain rolled away,  
With a sound of bells that tinkled, and the clatter of a  
sleigh.

And in a vision, painted like a picture in the air,  
I saw the elfish figure of a man with frosty hair—  
A quaint old man that chuckled with a laugh as he ap-  
peared,  
And with ruddy cheeks like embers in the ashes of his  
beard.

He poised himself grotesquely, in an attitude of mirth,  
On a damask-covered hassock that was sitting on the  
hearth;  
And at a magic signal of his stubby little thumb,  
I saw the fireplace changing to a bright proscenium.

DAS KRIST KINDEL

And looking there, I marvelled as I saw a mimic stage  
Alive with little actors of a very tender age;  
And some so very tiny that they tottered as they walked,  
And lisped and purled and gurgled like the brooklets,  
when they talked.

And their faces were like lilies, and their eyes like purest  
dew,  
And their tresses like the shadows that the shine is woven  
through;  
And they each had little burdens, and a little tale to tell  
Of fairy lore, and giants, and delights delectable.

And they mixed and intermingled, weaving melody with  
joy,  
Till the magic circle clustered round a blooming baby-  
boy;  
And they threw aside their treasures in an ecstasy of  
glee,  
And bent, with dazzled faces and with parted lips, to  
see.



'Twas a wondrous little fellow, with a dainty double-  
 chin,  
 And chubby-cheeks, and dimples for the smiles to blossom in;  
 And he looked as ripe and rosy, on his bed of straw and reeds,  
 As a mellow little pippin that had tumbled in the weeds.  
 And I saw the happy mother, and a group surrounding her  
 That knelt with costly presents of frankincense and myrrh;  
 And I thrilled with awe and wonder, as a murmur on the air  
 Came drifting o'er the hearing in a melody of prayer:—

*By the splendor in the heavens, and the hush upon the sea,  
 And the majesty of silence reigning over Galilee,  
 We feel Thy kingly presence, and we humbly bow the knee  
 And lift our hearts and voices in gratefulness to Thee.*

*Thy messenger has spoken, and our doubts have fled and gone  
 As the dark and spectral shadows of the night before the dawn;  
 And, in the kindly shelter of the light around us drawn,  
 We would nestle down forever in the breast we lean upon.*

*You have given us a shepherd—You have given us a guide,  
 And the light of Heaven grew dimmer when You sent him from  
 Your side,—  
 But he comes to lead Thy children where the gates will open  
 wide  
 To welcome his returning when his works are glorified.*

*By the splendor in the heavens, and the hush upon the sea,  
 And the majesty of silence reigning over Galilee,—  
 We feel Thy kingly presence, and we humbly bow the knee  
 And lift our hearts and voices in gratefulness to Thee.*

Then the vision, slowly failing, with the words of the  
 refrain,  
 Fell swooning in the moonlight through the frosty  
 window-pane;  
 And I heard the clock proclaiming, like an eager sentinel  
 Who brings the world good tidings,—“It is Christmas—  
 all is well!”



## ANSELMO

YEARS did I vainly seek the good Lord's grace,—  
Prayed, fasted, and did penance dire and dread;  
Did kneel, with bleeding knees and rainy face,  
And mouth the dust, with ashes on my head;  
Yea, still with knotted scourge the flesh I flayed,  
Rent fresh the wounds, and moaned and shrieked  
insanely;  
And froth oozed with the pleadings that I made,  
And yet I prayed on vainly, vainly, vainly!

A time, from out of swoon I lifted eye,  
To find a wretched outcast, gray and grim,  
Bathing my brow, with many a pitying sigh,  
And I did pray God's grace might rest on him.—  
Then, lo! a gentle voice fell on mine ears—  
"Thou shalt not sob in suppliance hereafter;  
Take up thy prayers and wring them dry of tears,  
And lift them, white and pure with love and  
laughter!"

So is it now for all men else I pray;  
So is it I am blest and glad alway.

## A HOME-MADE FAIRY TALE

BUD, come here to your uncle a spell,  
And I'll tell you something you mustn't tell—  
For it's a secret and shore-'nuf true,  
And maybe I oughtn't to tell it to you!—  
But out in the garden, under the shade  
Of the apple-trees, where we romped and played  
Till the moon was up, and you thought I'd gone  
Fast asleep,—That was all put on!  
For I was a-watchin' something queer  
Goin' on there in the grass, my dear!—  
'Way down deep in it, there I see  
A little dude-Fairy who winked at me,  
And snapped his fingers, and laughed as low  
And fine as the whine of a mus-kee-to!  
I kept still—watchin' him closer—and  
I noticed a little guitar in his hand,



A HOME-MADE FAIRY TALE

Which he leant 'ginst a little dead bee—and laid  
His cigarette down on a clean grass-blade,  
And then climbed up on the shell of a snail—  
Carefully dusting his swallowtail—  
And pulling up, by a waxed web-thread,  
This little guitar, you remember, I said!  
And there he trinkled and trilled a tune,—  
“My Love, so Fair, Tans in the Moon!”  
Till, presently, out of the clover-top  
He seemed to be singing to, came, k'pop!  
The purtiest, daintiest Fairy face  
In all this world, or any place!  
Then the little ser'nader waved his hand,  
As much as to say, “We'll excuse *you!*” and  
I heard, as I squinted my eyelids to,  
A kiss like the drip of a drop of dew!

THE SOUTH WIND AND THE SUN

O THE South Wind and the Sun!  
How each loved the other one—  
Full of fancy—full of folly—  
Full of jollity and fun!  
How they romped and ran about,  
Like two boys when school is out,  
With glowing face, and lipping lip,  
Low laugh, and lifted shout!

And the South Wind—he was dressed  
With a ribbon round his breast  
That floated, flapped and fluttered  
In a riotous unrest,  
And a drapery of mist  
From the shoulder and the wrist  
Flowing backward with the motion  
Of the waving hand he kissed.



THE SOUTH WIND AND THE SUN

And the Sun had on a crown  
Wrought of gilded thistle-down,  
And a scarf of velvet vapor,  
And a ravelled-rainbow gown;  
And his tinsel-tangled hair,  
Tossed and lost upon the air,  
Was glossier and flossier  
Than any anywhere.

And the South Wind's eyes were two  
Little dancing drops of dew,  
As he puffed his cheeks, and pursed his lips,  
And blew and blew and blew!  
And the Sun's—like diamond-stone,  
Brighter yet than ever known,  
As he knit his brows and held his breath,  
And shone and shone and shone!

And this pair of merry fays  
Wandered through the summer days;  
Arm-in-arm they went together  
Over heights of morning haze—

THE SOUTH WIND AND THE SUN

Over slanting slopes of lawn  
They went on and on and on,  
Where the daisies looked like star-tracks  
Trailing up and down the dawn.

And where'er they found the top  
Of a wheat-stalk droop and lop  
They chucked it underneath the chin  
And praised the lavish crop,  
Till it lifted with the pride  
Of the heads it grew beside,  
And then the South Wind and the Sun  
Went onward satisfied.

Over meadow-lands they tripped,  
Where the dandelions dipped  
In crimson foam of clover-bloom,  
And dripped and dripped and dripped;  
And they clinched the bumble-stings,  
Gauming honey on their wings,  
And bundling them in lily-bells,  
With maudlin murmurings.



THE SOUTH WIND AND THE SUN

And the humming-bird that hung  
Like a jewel up among  
The tilted honeysuckle-horns,  
They mesmerized, and swung  
In the palpitating air,  
Drowsed with odors strange and rare,  
And, with whispered laughter, slipped away,  
And left him hanging there.

And they braided blades of grass  
Where the truant had to pass;  
And they wriggled through the rushes  
And the reeds of the morass,  
Where they danced, in rapture sweet,  
O'er the leaves that laid a street  
Of undulant mosaic for  
The touches of their feet.

By the brook with mossy brink  
Where the cattle came to drink,  
They trilled and piped and whistled  
With the thrush and bobolink,

THE SOUTH WIND AND THE SUN

Till the kine in listless pause,  
Switched their tails in mute applause,  
With lifted heads and dreamy eyes,  
And bubble-dripping jaws.

And where the melons grew,  
Streaked with yellow, green and blue,  
These jolly sprites went wandering  
Through spangled paths of dew;  
And the melons, here and there,  
They made love to, everywhere,  
Turning their pink souls to crimson  
With caresses fond and fair.

Over orchard walls they went,  
Where the fruited boughs were bent  
Till they brushed the sward beneath them  
Where the shine and shadow blent;  
And the great green pear they shook  
Till the fallow hue forsook  
Its features, and the gleam of gold  
Laughed out in every look.



THE SOUTH WIND AND THE SUN

And they stroked the downy cheek  
Of the peach, and smoothed it sleek,  
And flushed it into splendor;  
And, with many an elfish freak,  
Gave the russet's rust a wipe—  
Prankt the rambo with a stripe,  
And the wine-sap blushed its reddest  
As they spanked the pippins ripe.

Through the woven ambushade  
That the twining vines had made,  
They found the grapes, in clusters,  
Drinking up the shine and shade—  
Plumpt, like tiny skins of wine,  
With a vintage so divine  
That the tongue of fancy tingled  
With the tang of muscadine.

And the golden-banded bees,  
Droning o'er the flowery leas,  
They bridled, reigned, and rode away  
Across the fragrant breeze,

THE SOUTH WIND AND THE SUN

Till in hollow oak and elm  
They had groomed and stabled them  
In waxen stalls oozed with dews  
Of rose and lily-stem.

Where the dusty highway leads,  
High above the wayside weeds  
They sowed the air with butterflies  
Like blooming flower-seeds,  
Till the dull grasshopper sprung  
Half a man's height up, and hung  
Tranced in the heat, with whirring wings,  
And sung and sung and sung!

And they loitered, hand in hand,  
Where the snipe along the sand  
Of the river ran to meet them  
As the ripple meets the land,  
Till the dragon-fly, in light  
Gauzy armor, burnished bright,  
Came tilting down the waters  
In a wild, bewildered flight.



THE SOUTH WIND AND THE SUN

And they heard the killdee's call,  
And afar, the waterfall,  
But the rustle of a falling leaf  
They heard above it all;  
And the trailing willow crept  
Deeper in the tide that swept  
The leafy shallop to the shore,  
And wept and wept and wept!

And the fairy vessel veered  
From its moorings—tacked and steered  
For the centre of the current—  
Sailed away and disappeared:  
And the burthen that it bore  
From the long-enchanted shore—  
“Alas! the South Wind and the Sun!”  
I murmur evermore.

For the South Wind and the Sun,  
Each so loves the other one,  
For all his jolly folly  
And frivolity and fun,

THE SOUTH WIND AND THE SUN

That our love for them they weigh  
As their fickle fancies may,  
And when at last we love them most,  
They laugh and sail away.



### THE LOST KISS

I PUT by the half-written poem,  
While the pen, idly trailed in my hand,  
Writes on,—“Had I words to complete it,  
Who'd read it, or who'd understand?”  
But the little bare feet on the stairway,  
And the faint, smothered laugh in the hall,  
And the eerie-low lisp on the silence,  
Cry up to me over it all.

So I gather it up—where was broken  
The tear-faded thread of my theme,  
Telling how, as one night I sat writing,  
A fairy broke in on my dream,  
A little inquisitive fairy—  
My own little girl, with the gold  
Of the sun in her hair, and the dewy  
Blue eyes of the fairies of old.

'Twas the dear little girl that I scolded—  
“For was it a moment like this,”  
I said, “when she knew I was busy,  
To come romping in for a kiss?—

### THE LOST KISS

Come rowdying up from her mother,  
And clamoring there at my knee  
For ‘One ’ittle kiss for my dolly,  
And one ’ittle uzzer for me!’”

God, pity the heart that repelled her,  
And the cold hand that turned her away,  
And take, from the lips that denied her,  
This answerless prayer of to-day!  
Take, Lord, from my mem'ry forever  
That pitiful sob of despair,  
And the patter and trip of the little bare feet,  
And the one piercing cry on the stair!

I put by the half-written poem,  
While the pen, idly trailed in my hand,  
Writes on,—“Had I words to complete it,  
Who'd read it, or who'd understand?”  
But the little bare feet on the stairway,  
And the faint, smothered laugh in the hall,  
And the eerie-low lisp on the silence,  
Cry up to me over it all.



### THE SPHINX

I KNOW all about the Sphinx—  
I know even what she thinks,  
Staring with her stony eyes  
Up forever at the skies.

For last night I dreamed that she  
Told me all the mystery—  
Why for æons mute she sat:—  
She was just cut out for that!

### IF I KNEW WHAT POETS KNOW

If I knew what poets know,  
Would I write a rhyme  
Of the buds that never blow  
In the summer-time?  
Would I sing of golden seeds  
Springing up in ironweeds?  
And of raindrops turned to snow,  
If I knew what poets know?

Did I know what poets do,  
Would I sing a song  
Sadder than the pigeon's coo  
When the days are long?  
Where I found a heart in pain,  
I would make it glad again;  
And the false should be the true,  
Did I know what poets do.



IF I KNEW WHAT POETS KNOW

If I knew what poets know,  
I would find a theme  
Sweeter than the placid flow  
Of the fairest dream:  
I would sing of love that lives  
On the errors it forgives;  
And the world would better grow  
If I knew what poets know.

IKE WALTON'S PRAYER

I CRAVE, dear Lord,  
No boundless hoard  
Of gold and gear,  
Nor jewels fine,  
Nor lands, nor kine,  
Nor treasure-heaps of anything.—  
Let but a little hut be mine  
Where at the hearthstone I may hear  
The cricket sing,  
And have the shine  
Of one glad woman's eyes to make,  
For my poor sake,  
Our simple home a place divine;—  
Just the wee cot—the cricket's chirr—  
Love, and the smiling face of her.

I pray not for  
Great riches, nor