

Even his religion presupposes grief,  
His morning is not certain of the night.

I have beheld, without regret, the trunk,  
Which propped three hundred sum-  
mers on its boughs,  
Which housed, of old, the merry bird,  
and drunk

The divine dews of air, and gave ca-  
rouse  
To the free winds of heaven, lie over-  
thrown  
Amidst the trees which its own fruitage  
bore.

Its promise is fulfilled. It is no more,  
But it hath been. Its destiny is done.

But the wild ash, that springs above the  
marsh!

Strong and superb it rises o'er the wild.  
Vain energy of being! For the harsh  
And fetid ooze already hath defiled  
The roots whose sap it lives by. Heaven  
doth give

No blessing to its boughs. The humid  
wind  
Rots them. The vapors warp them.  
All declined,  
Its life hath ceased, ere it hath ceased to  
live.

Child of the waste, and nursling of the  
pest!

A kindred fate hath watched and  
wept thine own.  
Thine epitaph is written in my breast.  
Years change. Day treads out day.  
For me alone  
No change is nurst within the brooding  
bud.

Satiety I have not known, and yet,  
I wither in the void of life, and fret  
A futile time, with an unpeaceful blood.

The days are all too long, the nights too  
fair,

And too much redness satiates the rose.  
O blissful season! blest and balmy air!  
Waves! moonlight! silence! years of  
lost repose!

Bowers and shades that echoed to the  
tread

Of young Romance! birds that, from  
woodland bars,

Sang, serenading forth the timid stars!  
Youth! beauty! passion! whither are  
ye fled?

I wait, and long have waited, and yet wait  
The coming of the footsteps which ye  
told

My heart to watch for. Yet the hour  
is late,  
And ye have left me. Did they lie, of  
old,

Your thousand voices prophesying bliss?  
That troubled all the current of a fate  
Which else might have been peaceful!

I await  
The thing I have not found, yet would  
not miss.

To face out childhood, and grow up to  
man,  
To make a noise, and question all one  
sees,

The astral orbit of a world to span,  
And, after a few days, to take one's  
ease

Under the graveyard grasses, — this, my  
friend,  
Appears to me a thing too strange but  
what

I wish to know its meaning. I would  
not  
Depart before I have perceived the end.

And I would know what, here below the  
sun,

He is, and what his place, that being  
which seems

The end of all means, yet the means of  
none;

Who searches and combines, aspires  
and dreams;

Seeking new things with ever the same  
hope,

Seeking new hopes in ever the same  
thing;

A king without the powers of a king,  
A beggar with a kingdom in his scope;

Who only sees in what he hath attained  
The means whereby he may attain to  
more;

Who only finds in that which he hath  
gained

The want of what he did not want be-  
fore;

Whom weakness strengthens; who is  
soothed by strife;

Who seeks new joys to prize the ab-  
sent most;

Still from illusion to illusion tost,  
Himself the great illusion of his life!

Why is it, all deep emotion makes us sigh  
To quit this world? What better  
thing than death

Can follow after rapture? "Let us die!"  
This is the last wish on the lover's  
breath.

If thou wouldst live, content thee. To  
enjoy

Is to begin to perish. What is bliss,  
But transit to some other state from  
this?

That which we live for must our life  
destroy.

Hast thou not ever longed for death? If  
not,

Not yet thy life's experience is at-  
tained.

But if thy days be favored, if thy lot  
Be easy, if hope's summit thou hast  
gained,

Die! Death is the sole future left to  
thee.

The knowledge of this life is bound,  
for each,

By his own powers. Death lies be-  
tween our reach

And all which, living, we have lived to  
be.

Death is no evil, since it comes to all.  
For evil is the exception, not the law.

What is it in the tempest that doth call  
Our spirits down its pathways? or the  
awe

Of that abyss and solitude beneath  
High mountain passes, which doth  
aye attract

Such strange desire? or in the cata-  
ract?

The sea? It is the sentiment of death.

If life no more than a mere seeming be,  
Away with the imposture! If it tend

To nothing, and to have lived seemingly  
Prove to be vain and futile in the end,

Then let us die, that we may really live,  
Or cease to feign to live. Let us  
possess

Lasting delight, or lasting quietness.  
What life desires, death, only death, can  
give.

Where are the violets of vanished years?  
The sunsets Rachel watched by La-  
ban's well?

Where is Fidele's face? where Juliet's  
tears?

There comes no answer. There is  
none to tell

What we go questioning, till our mouths  
are stopt

By a clod of earth. Ask of the plan-  
gent sea,

The wild wind wailing through the  
leafless tree,

Ask of the meteor from the midnight  
dropt!

Come, Death, and bring the beauty back  
to all!

I do not seek thee, but I will not shun.  
And let thy coming be at even-fall,

Thy pathway through the setting of  
the sun.

And let us go together, I with thee,  
What time the lamps in Eden bowers  
are lit,

And Melancholy, all alone, doth sit  
By the wide marge of some neglected sea.

## PART II.

ONE hour of English twilight once again!  
Lo! in the rosy regions of the dew

The confines of the world begin to wane,  
And Hesper doth his trembling lamp  
renew.

Now is the inauguration of the night!  
Nature's release to wearied earth and  
skies!

Sweet truce of Care! Labor's brief  
armistice!

Best, loveliest interlude of dark and  
light!

The rookery, babbling in the sunken  
wood;

The watchdog, barking from the dis-  
tant farm,

The dim light fading from the hornéd  
flood,

That winds the woodland in its silver  
arm;

The massed and immemorial oaks, whose  
leaves

Are husht in yonder heathy dells be-  
low;

The fragrance of the meadows that I  
know;

The bat, that now his wavering circle  
weaves



Around these antique towers, and casements deep  
 That glimmer, through the ivy and the rose,  
 To the faint moon, which doth begin to creep  
 Out of the inmost heart o' the heavens' repose,  
 To wander, all night long, without a sound,  
 Above the fields my feet oft wandered once;  
 The larches tall and dark, which do ensconce  
 The little churchyard, in whose hallowed ground  
 Sleep half the simple friends my childhood knew:  
 All, all the sounds and sights of this blest hour,  
 Sinking within my heart of hearts, like dew,  
 Revive that so long parcht and drooping flower  
 Of youth, the world's hot breath for many years  
 Hath burned and withered; till once more, once more,  
 The revelation and the dream of yore  
 Return to solace these sad eyes with tears!

Where now, alone, a solitary man,  
 I pace once more the pathways of my home,  
 Light-hearted, and together, once we ran,  
 I, and the infant guide that used to roam  
 With me, the meads and meadow-banks among,  
 At dusk and dawn. How light those little feet  
 Danced through the dancing grass and waving wheat,  
 Where'er, far off, we heard the cuckoo's song!

I know now, little Ella, what the flowers  
 Said to you then, to make your cheek so pale;  
 And why the blackbird in our laurel bowers  
 Spake to you, only; and the poor, pink snail

Feared less your steps than those of the May-shower.  
 It was not strange these creatures loved you so,  
 And told you all. 'Twas not so long ago  
 You were, yourself, a bird, or else a flower.

And, little Ella, you were pale, because  
 So soon you were to die. I know that now.  
 And why there ever seemed a sort of gauze  
 Over your deep blue eyes, and sad young brow.  
 You were too good to grow up, Ella, you,  
 And le a woman such as I have known!  
 And so upon your heart they put a stone,  
 And left you, dear, amongst the flowers and dew.

God's will is good. He knew what would be best.  
 I will not weep thee, darling, any more;  
 I have not wept thee; though my heart, oppressed  
 With many memories, for thy sake is sore.  
 God's will is good, and great His wisdom is.  
 Thou wast a little star, and thou didst shine  
 Upon my cradle; but thou wast not mine,  
 Thou wast not mine, my darling; thou art His.

My morning star! twin sister of my soul!  
 My little elfin friend from Fairy-Land!  
 Whose memory is yet innocent of the whole  
 Of that which makes me doubly need thy hand,  
 Thy little guiding hand so soon withdrawn!  
 Here where I find so little like to thee.  
 For thou wert as the breath of dawn to me,  
 Starry, and pure, and brief as is the dawn.

Thy knight was I, and thou my Fairy Queen.  
 ('Twas in the days of love and chivalry!)  
 And thou didst hide thee in a bower of green.  
 But thou so well hast hidden thee, that I  
 Have never found thee since. And thou didst set  
 Many a task, and quest, and high emprise,  
 Ere I should win my guerdon from thine eyes,  
 So many, and so many, that not yet  
 My tasks are ended or my wanderings o'er.  
 But some day thou wilt send across the main  
 A magic bark, and I shall quit this shore  
 Of care, and find thee, in thy bower, again;  
 And thou wilt say, "My brother, hast thou found  
 Our home, at last?" . . . Whilst I, in answer, Sweet,  
 Shall heap my life's last booty at thy feet,  
 And bare my breast with many a bleeding wound.

The spoils of time! the trophies of the world!  
 The keys of conquered towns, and captived kings;  
 And many a broken sword, and banner furled;  
 The heads of giants, and swart Soldan's rings;  
 And many a maiden's scarf; and many a wand  
 Of baffled wizard; many an amulet;  
 And many a shield, with mine own heart's blood wet;  
 And jewels, dear, from many a distant land!

God's will is good. He knew what would be best.  
 I thought last year to pass away from life.  
 I thought my toils were ended, and my quest  
 Completed, and my part in this world's strife

Accomplish'd. And, behold! about me now  
 There rest the gloom, the glory, and the awe  
 Of a new martyrdom, no dreams foresaw;  
 And the thorn-crown hath blossomed on my brow.

A martyrdom, but with a martyr's joy!  
 A hope I never hoped for! and a sense  
 That nothing henceforth ever can destroy:—  
 Within my breast the serene confidence  
 Of mercy in the misery of things;  
 Of meaning in the mystery of all;  
 Of blessing in whatever may befall;  
 Of rest predestined to all wanderings.

How sweet, with thee, my sister, to renew,  
 In lands of light, the search for those bright birds  
 Of plumage so ethereal in its hue,  
 And music sweeter than all mortal words,  
 Which some good angel to our childhood sent  
 With messages from Paradisal flowers,  
 So lately left, the scent of Eden bowers  
 Yet lingered in our hair, where'er we went!

Now, they are all fled by, this many a year,  
 Adown the viewless valleys of the wind,  
 And nevermore will cross this hemisphere,  
 Those birds of passage! Never shall I find,  
 Dropt from the flight, you followed, dear, so far  
 That you will never come again, I know,  
 One plumelet on the paths by which I go,  
 Missing thy light there, O my morning star!

Soft, over all, doth ancient twilight cast  
 Her dim gray robe, vague as futurity,  
 And sad and hoary as the ghostly past,  
 Till earth assumes invisibility.  
 I hear the night-bird's note, wherewith she starts  
 The bee within the blossom from his dream.  
 A light, like hope, from yonder pane doth beam,  
 And now, like hope, it silently departs.



Hush! from the clock within yon dark  
church spire,  
Another hour broke, clanging, out of  
time,  
And passed me, throbbing like my own  
desire,  
Into the seven-fold heavens. And now,  
the chime  
Over the vale, the woodland, and the  
river,  
More faint, more far, a quivering echo,  
strays  
From that small twelve-houred circle  
of our days,  
And spreads, and spreads, to the great  
round Forever.

Pensive, the sombre ivied porch I pass.  
Through the dark hall, the sound of  
my own feet  
Pursues me, like the ghost of what I  
was,  
Into this silent chamber, where I  
meet  
From wall to wall the fathers of my  
race;  
The pictures of the past from wall to  
wall;  
Wandering o'er which, my wistful  
glances fall,  
To sink, at last, on little Ella's face.

This is my home. And hither I re-  
turn,  
After much wandering in the ways of  
men,  
Weary but not outworn. Here, with  
her urn  
Shall Memory come, and be my deni-  
zen.  
And blue-eyed Hope shall through the  
window look,  
And lean her fair child's face into the  
room,  
What time the hawthorn buds anew,  
and bloom  
The bright forget-me-nots beside the  
brook.

Father of all which is, or yet may  
be,  
Ere to the pillow which my childhood  
prest  
This night restores my troubled brows,  
by Thee  
May this, the last prayer I have  
learned, be blest!

Grant me to live that I may need from  
life  
No more than life hath given me, and  
to die  
That I may give to death no more  
than I  
Have long abandoned. And, if toil and  
strife

Yet in the portion of my days must be,  
Firm be my faith, and quiet be my  
heart!  
That so my work may with my will agree,  
And strength be mine to calmly fill my  
part  
In Nature's purpose, questioning not the  
end.  
For love is more than raiment or than  
food.  
Shall I not take the evil with the good?  
Blesséd to me be all which thou dost  
send!

Nor blest the least, recalling what hath  
been,  
The knowledge of the evil I have known  
Without me, and within me. Since, to  
lean  
Upon a strength far mightier than my  
own  
Such knowledge brought me. In whose  
strength I stand,  
Firmly upheld, even though, in ruin  
hurled,  
The fixed foundations of this rolling  
world  
Should topple at the waving of Thy hand.

## PART III.

HAIL thou! sole Muse that, in an age of  
toil,  
Of all the old Uranian sisterhood,  
Art left to light us o'er the furrowed soil  
Of this laborious star! Muse, unsub-  
dued  
By that strong hand which hath in ruin  
razed  
The temples of dread Jove! Muse  
most divine,  
Albeit but ill by these pale lips of mine,  
In days degenerate, first named and  
praised!

Now the high airy kingdoms of the day  
Hyperion holds not. The disloyal seas

Have broken from Poseidon's purple  
sway.  
Through Heaven's harmonious golden  
palaces  
No more the silver-sandalled messengers  
Slide to sweet airs. Upon Olympus'  
brow  
The gods' great citadel is vacant now.  
And not a lute to Love in Lesbos stirs.

But thou wert born not on the Forkéd Hill,  
Nor fed from Hybla's hives by Attic  
bees,  
Nor on the honey Cretan oaks distil,  
Or once distilled, when gods had homes  
in trees,  
And young Apollo knew thee not. Yet  
thou  
With Ceres wast, when the pale mother  
trod  
The gloomy pathway to the nether god,  
And spake with that dim Power which  
dwells below

The surface of whatever, where he wends,  
The circling sun illumineth. And thou  
Wast aye a friend to man. Of all his  
friends,  
Perchance the friend most needed:  
needed now  
Yet more than ever; in a complex age  
Which changes while we gaze at it:  
from heaven  
Seeking a sign, and finding no sign  
given,  
And questioning Life's worn book at  
every page.

Nor ever yet, was song, untaught by  
thee,  
Worthy to live immortally with man.  
Wherefore, divine Experience, bend on  
me  
Thy deep and searching eyes. Since  
life began,  
Meek at thy mighty knees, though oft  
reproved,  
I have sat, spelling out slow time with  
tears,  
Where down the riddling alphabet of  
years  
Thy guiding finger o'er the horn-book  
moved.

And I have put together many names:  
Sorrow, and Joy, and Hope, and Mem-  
ory,

And Love, and Anger; as an infant  
frames  
The initials of a language wherein he  
In manhood must with men communi-  
cate.  
And oft, the words were hard to un-  
derstand,  
Harder to utter; still the solemn hand  
Would pause, and point, and wait, and  
move, and wait;

Till words grew into language. Lan-  
guage grew  
To utterance. Utterance into music  
passed.  
I sang of all I learned, and all I knew.  
And, looking upward in thy face, at  
last,  
Beheld it flusht, as when a mother hears  
Her infant feebly singing his first  
hymn,  
And dreams she sees, albeit unseen of  
him,  
Some radiant listener lured from other  
spheres.

Such songs have been my solace many a  
while  
And oft, when other solace I had none,  
From grief which lay heart-broken on a  
smile,  
And joy that glittered like a winter  
sun,  
And froze, and fevered: from the great  
man's scorn,  
The mean man's envy; friends' un-  
friendliness;  
Love's want of human kindness, and  
the stress  
Of nights that hoped for nothing from  
the morn.

From these, and worse than these, did  
song unbar  
A refuge through the ivory gate of  
dreams,  
Wherein my spirit grew familiar  
With spirits that glide by spiritual  
streams;  
Song hath, for me, unsealed the genii  
sleeping  
Under mid seas, and lured out of their  
lair  
Beings with wondering eyes, and won-  
drous hair,  
Tame to my feet at twilight softly  
creeping.



And song hath been my cymbal in the  
 hours  
 Of triumph; when behind me, far  
 away,  
 Lay Egypt, with its plagues; and, by  
 strange powers,  
 Not mine, upheld, life's heaped ocean  
 lay  
 On either side a passage for my soul.  
 A passage to the Land of Promise!  
 trod  
 By giants, where the chosen race of  
 God  
 Shall find, at last, its long predestined  
 goal.

The breath which stirred these songs a  
 little while  
 Has fled by; and, with it, fled too  
 The days I sought, thus singing, to be-  
 guile  
 Of thoughts that spring like weeds,  
 which will creep through  
 The blank interstices of ruined fanes,  
 Where Youth, adoring, sacrificed —  
 its heart,  
 To gods forever fallen.

Now, we part,  
 My songs and I. We part, and what  
 remains?

Perchance an echo, and perchance no  
 more,  
 Harp of my heart, from thy brief mu-  
 sic dwells  
 In hearts, unknown, afar: as the wide  
 shore  
 Retains within its hundred hollow  
 shells  
 The voices of the spirits of the foam,  
 Which murmur in the language of the  
 deeps,  
 Though haply far away, to one who  
 keeps  
 Such ocean wealth to grace an inland  
 home.

Within these cells of song, how frail so-  
 e'er,  
 The vast and wandering tides of human  
 life  
 Have murmured once; and left, in pass-  
 ing, there,  
 Faint echoes of the tumult and the  
 strife  
 Of the great ocean of humanity.

Fairies have danced within these hol-  
 low caves,  
 And Memory mused above the moonlit  
 waves,  
 And Youth, the lover, here hath lingered  
 by.

I sung of life, as life would have me sing,  
 Of falsehood, and of evil, and of wrong;  
 For many a false, and many an evil  
 thing,  
 I found in life; and by my life my  
 song  
 Was shaped within me while I sung: I  
 sung  
 Of Good, for good is life's predestined  
 end;  
 Of Sorrow, for I knew her as my friend;  
 Of Love, for by his hand my harp was  
 strung.

I have not scrawled above the tomb of  
 Youth  
 Those lying epitaphs, which represent  
 All virtues, and all excellence, save  
 truth.  
 'T were easy, thus, to have been elo-  
 quent,  
 If I had held the fashion of the age  
 Which loves to hear its sounding flat-  
 tery  
 Blown by all dusty winds from sky to  
 sky,  
 And find its praises blotting every page.

And yet, the Poet and the Age are one.  
 And if the age be flawed, howe'er  
 minute,  
 Deep through the poet's heart that rent  
 doth run,  
 And shakes and mars the music of his  
 lute.

It is not that his sympathy is less  
 With all that lives and all that feels  
 around him,  
 But that so close a sympathy hath  
 bound him  
 To these, that he must utter their dis-  
 tress.

We build the bridge, and swing the  
 wondrous wire,  
 Bind with an iron hoop the rolling  
 world;  
 Sport with the spirits of the ductile fire;  
 And leave our spells upon the vapor  
 furled;

And cry — Behold the progress of the  
 time!  
 Yet are we tending in an unknown  
 land,  
 Whither, we neither ask nor under-  
 stand,  
 Far from the peace of our unvalued  
 prime!

And Strength and Force, the fiends  
 which minister  
 To some new-risen Power beyond our  
 span,  
 On either hand, with hook and nail,  
 confer  
 To rivet the Promethean heart of man  
 Under the ravening and relentless beak  
 Of unappeasable Desire, which yet  
 The very vitals of the age doth fret.  
 The limbs are mighty, but the heart is  
 weak.

Writhe on, Prometheus! or whate'er  
 thou art,  
 Thou giant sufferer, groaning for a  
 race  
 Thou canst not save, for all thy bleeding  
 heart!  
 Thy wail my harp hath wakened;  
 and my place  
 Shall be beside thee; and my blessing be  
 On all that makes me worthy yet to  
 share  
 Thy lonely martyrdom, and with thee  
 wear  
 That crown of anguish given to poets,  
 and thee!

If to have wept, and wildly; to have  
 loved  
 Till love grew torture; to have grieved  
 till grief  
 Became a part of life; if to have proved  
 The want of all things; if, to draw  
 relief  
 From poesy for passion, this avail,  
 I lack no title to my crown. The sea  
 Hath sent up nymphs for my society,  
 The mountains have been moved to hear  
 my wail.

Nature and man were children long ago  
 In glad simplicity of heart and speech.  
 Now they are strangers to each other's  
 woe;  
 And each hath language different from  
 each.

The simplest songs sound sweetest and  
 most good.  
 The simplest loves are the most loving  
 ones.  
 Happier were song's forefathers than  
 their sons.  
 And Homer sung as Byron never could.

But Homer cannot come again: nor ever  
 The quiet of the age in which he sung.  
 This age is one of tumult and endeavor,  
 And by a fevered hand its harps are  
 strung.

And yet, I do not quarrel with the time;  
 Nor quarrel with the tumult of my  
 heart,  
 Which of the tumult of the age is  
 part;  
 Because its very weakness is sublime.

The passions are as winds on the wide sea  
 Of human life; which do impel the  
 sails  
 Of man's great enterprise, whate'er that  
 be.  
 The reckless helmsman, caught upon  
 these gales,  
 Under the roaring gulfs goes down  
 aghast.  
 The prudent pilot to the steadying  
 breeze  
 Sparingly gives head; and, over peril-  
 ous seas,  
 Drops anchor 'mid the Fortunate Isles,  
 at last.

We pray against the tempest and the  
 strife,  
 The storm, the whirlwind, and the  
 troublous hour,  
 Which vex the fretful element of life.  
 Me rather save, O dread disposing  
 Power,  
 From those dead calms, that flat and  
 hopeless lull,  
 In which the dull sea rots around the  
 bark,  
 And nothing moves save the sure-  
 creeping dark,  
 That slowly settles o'er an idle hull.

For in the storm, the tumult, and the stir  
 That shakes the soul, man finds his  
 power and place  
 Among the elements. Deeps with deeps  
 confer,  
 And Nature's secret settles in her face.



Let ocean to his inmost caves be stirred;  
Let the wild light be smitten from the  
cloud.  
The decks may reel, the masts be  
snapt and bowed,  
But God hath spoken out, and man  
hath heard!

Farewell, you lost inhabitants of my  
mind,  
You fair ephemerals of faded hours!  
Farewell, you lands of exile, whence  
each wind

Of memory steals with fragrance over  
flowers!

Farewell, Cordelia! Ella! . . . But not so  
Farewell the memories of you which  
I have

Till strangers shall be sitting on my  
grave  
And babbling of the dust which lies  
below.

Blesséd the man whose life, how sad  
soe'er,  
Hath felt the presence, and yet keeps  
the trace

Of one pure woman! With religious care  
We close the doors, with reverent feet  
we pace

The vacant chambers, where, of yore, a  
Queen

One night hath rested. From my  
Past's pale walls

Yet gleam the unfaded fair memorials  
Of her whose beauty there, awhile, hath  
been.

She passed, into my youth, at its night-  
time,  
When low the lamplight, and the  
music husht.

She passed and passed away. Some  
broken rhyme  
Scrawled on the panel or the pane:  
the crusht

And faded rose she dropped: the page  
she turned  
And finished not: the ribbon or the  
knot

That fluttered from her . . . Stranger,  
harm them not!  
I keep these sacred relics undiscerned.

Men's truths are often lies, and women's  
lies  
Often the setting of a truth most tender

In an unconscious poesy. The child  
cries

To clutch the star that lights its rosy  
splendor

In airy Edens of the west afar.  
"Ah, folly!" sighs the father, o'er  
his book.

"Millions of miles above thy foolish  
nook

Of infantile desire, the Hesperus-star

"Descends not, child, to twinkle on thy  
cot."

Then readjusts his blind-wise specta-  
cles,

While tears to sobs are changing, were  
it not

The mother, with those tender sylla-  
bles

Which even Dutch mothers can make  
musical too,

Murmurs, "Sleep, sleep, my little one!  
and I

Will pluck thy star for thee, and by  
and by

Lay it upon thy pillow bright with dew."

And the child sleeps, and dreams of stars  
whose light

Beams in his own bright eyes when he  
awakes.

So sleep! so dream! If aught I read  
aright

That star, poor babe, which o'er thy  
cradle shakes,

Thy fate may fall, in after years, to be  
That other child that, like thee, loves  
the star,

And, like thee, weeps to find it all so  
far,

Feeling its force in his nativity:—

That other infant, all as weak, as wild,  
As passionate, and as helpless, as thou  
art,

Whom men will call a Poet (Poet, or  
child,

The star is still so distant from the  
heart!)

If so, heaven grant that thou mayst find  
at last,

Since such there are, some woman,  
whose sweet smile,

Pitying, may thy fond fancy yet be-  
guile

To dream the star, which thou hast  
sought, thou hast!

For men, if thou shouldst heed what  
they may say,

Will break thy heart, or leave thee,  
like themselves

No heart for breaking. Wherefore I do  
pray

My book may lie upon no learned  
shelves,

But that in some deep summer eve, per-  
chance,

Some woman, melancholy-eyed, and  
pale,

Whose heart, like mine, hath suffered,  
may this tale

Read by the soft light of her own romance.

Go forth over the wide world, Song of  
mine!

As Noah's dove out of his bosom flew  
Over the desolate, vast, and wandering  
brine.

Seek thou thy nest afar. Thy plaint  
renew

From heart to heart, and on from land  
to land

Fly boldly, till thou find that unknown  
friend

Whose face, in dreams, above my own  
doth bend,

Then tell that spirit what it will under-  
stand,

Why men can tell to strangers all the  
tale

From friends reserved. And tell that  
spirit, my Song,

Wherefore I have not faltered to unveil  
The cryptic forms of error and of  
wrong.

And say, I suffered more than I re-  
corded,

That each man's life is all men's lesson.  
Say,

And let the world believe thee, as it  
may,

Thy tale is true, however weakly worded.