

# THE GLEBE

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P O E M S  
George Cronyn



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Editor

**ALFRED KREYMBORG**

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# POEMS







# POEMS

GEORGE W. CRONYN



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By

Albert and Charles Boni



To touch the sleeping lids of Beauty  
Drawing thru finger-tips her dream—a birth  
Of hell and heaven for a nobler earth;  
    This is the poet's duty.

To sleep with stars, to dream a flower,  
From passing shadows pluck profound relation,  
With a divine wonder at its emanation;  
    This is the poet's power.



# DIONYSUS ELEUTHERIOS

## THE PRAYER

Like a cat beside a pool  
More than half afraid of it,  
Fishing gingerly I sit  
Here beside this pool of wit—  
Dumb as any fool!  
Chirrup humor in the grass;  
Winds of tickling laughter pass,  
And the world grows wise forsooth,  
Lest gleam amused tooth  
Seeing in this water-glass  
Jests that swim the depths of truth,  
And like fins of fishes shiver  
It to fretful quirk and quiver.  
Ripples break and bubbles rise  
Catching smiles from out the skies  
In their globed eyes.  
Surely, surely there was never  
Such a pleasant river!  
Only I am out of tune  
Like an icicle in June,  
Or a monster from the moon.

Dionysus, hear my prayer!  
Spreading arms to the mute air,  
I entreat thee, fashion me  
One with this gay company,



One in mirth and one in song  
Dartling their minds among.  
Loosener of lips and heart,  
Draw my sullen mouth apart.  
Give a gleam to guide me by  
As a phare in a night-sky—  
Grace of tongue and warmth of eye;  
Give me of thy fire and dew;  
Give me flash of mimic art—  
Spice of Godhead in this brew  
To pierce my fellows thru and thru.

Oh, thou vintal Deity,  
Loose my limbs that they may fly  
With this reckless revelry!  
Sick of sober ways am I;  
In this tumult I alone  
Am a satyr turned to stone;  
Satyr—satyr—not a man!  
Gifts I ask not of Apollo—  
Wine is good and grief is hollow;  
I would follow after Pan;  
I would follow, follow, follow  
After Pan!  
Or if he wander ways too quiet,  
Shepherd ways of warmth and ease,  
Let me taste a wilder riot  
In thy mysteries—  
Let me quaff it, laugh it, cry it!  
Give me, give me, give me these—



Fleet foot after those that flee,  
Hot veins amorous to seize  
Maenads maddened by the wine,  
Wound with hair and wreathed with vine,  
Maenads stained with purple lees—  
Give me, give me, give me these.  
Only this I ask of thee  
Dionysus, Dionysus, son of Semele!

THE ANSWER

Lo! the God of purple pleasure  
Heard and hearkened to his prayer,  
Reft the swathed bands that bound him,  
From his cloak of Self unwound him,  
Filled him with supernal seizure  
That his humor's jewelled treasure  
Leaped and sparkled in the air—  
Till the night was bright around him.  
Never such a jestful fit  
Dreamt he in his wildest wishes!  
Never from the pool of wit  
Had he drawn such shining fishes!  
Humid flame glowed in each eye  
And his face had changed its vesture,  
And his arms moved with strange gesture  
Apt in every mimicry.  
With the spell of Fire and Dew  
He pierced his fellows thru and thru.  
Surely Dithyrambus pressed him!



Surely the Great God possessed him!  
And the mystic sisters too,  
Oeno, Spermo, and Elais,  
(Who knoweth what their way is?)  
Surely they caressed him!  
He whose tongue of old was frozen—  
As he quaffs, with this potation  
Deep and deeper inspiration  
Seems to grow a Prophet—chosen,  
For he speaks by divination!  
Never were such fancies woven  
From the carded thoughts of mortal.  
Some are mazed, and some deride him,  
“Lo, his wits have gone astray,  
What a fool he is!” they say.  
Others whisper (those beside him)  
“He hath crossed another portal—  
He is one whose foot is cloven.  
Do ye hear wild creatures beat  
Lifted hoof and naked feet  
On the quiet woodland sod?  
Do ye mark what mood that strain is?  
Hints it not the Shepherd God  
With his pipings shrill and sweet—  
Snubnose, Sweetwine, old Silenus,  
All his creatures shy and fleet?”

Deeper, deeper, Fire and Dew  
Drains he of the Wine-God's brew  
Craving furthest essence—thus  
Heareth now another voice



Terrible and new,  
Luring—appalling,  
“Iachus! Iachus! Iachus!  
Wine! Wine! Wine! Rejoice!”  
Thru the forest calling.  
And the sky is red and golden  
And the red, red stars are falling,  
Falling to the earth in showers.  
And the fresh blood-scents embolden  
Gold and sable leopards, sleeping,  
To come crawling, writhing, leaping,  
Over gold and purple flowers.  
And the autumn sun is swollen  
With the sweetness he has stolen  
From the wine, and he is wine, wine-red.  
Come ye now with wreathed head,  
Come ye now  
With ivy bound on your white brow,  
And forgotten, forgotten be the hours!

Forgotten and forgotten! Ah the night has fled away,  
And the wine is spilt, and the stars are gray,  
For the old cold dawn abashes  
All the torches turned to ashes,  
But the feasters—where are they?  
Fled, the sound of pipes at last;  
Fled, the panting, goat-shankid clan,  
And the maenad rout have passed,  
And the echoes caught and cast  
Died where they began.



Never, never, never  
A more sombre river  
From such springs of laughter ran!  
And the lucid pool of wit—  
What a scum has clouded it!  
Past each stately Parian column  
Day comes, gaunt and pale and shrunken  
And her step is very solemn.  
On the veined marble sunken,  
Reft of breath of Deity,  
Prone there, lies the Priest—the Chosen,  
Huddled, bestial, bleared and drunken—  
Like a body that is frozen  
(That such things should be!)  
Shape of shapeless mockery  
He had tasted all one can;  
He had heard the pipes of Pan;  
He had followed in thy van  
Dionysus, Dionysus, son of Semele—  
Satyr?—not a satyr he—a man!



## THE TRAIL BY NIGHT

No human foot-print here before my own!  
And it is strange to come so far—alone—  
So far into this frozen forest world  
Of moonlight and of shadow and deep snow,  
And things I do not know,  
That strike the civil vestments from my soul—  
As if all law-born years were backward hurled  
Toward some dim and other pole—  
Some brute primordial reign  
Whose voice was terror and whose life was pain.

On—up the trail I go;  
Beneath my feet cold streams of moonlight glow,  
And in the silver-sifted dark strange, naked fancies  
    grow,  
While the vast pines in vista, round by round,  
Move with an unearthly sound,  
And every tree with its white hair is crowned.

On—up—I go,  
And as thru ancient Gothic arches seen  
I glimpse the valley far below  
That glistens with a fine fantastic sheen.

On—up—I pass,  
Nor reckon the night-wrought spells about me thrown,  
Heedless—sucked dry of thought or will  
Save to peer curious into this magician's glass,



And see the forest dreams thru forest moonlight  
blown.

On—up I plunge—until  
Bending, discern before me, with a thrill  
The signs where some wild beast has gone.

Who knows but that within the silence here  
The cedar shadows gloom about a deer,  
That stands with body lithe and slim  
Struck to a statue by surprise?

Who knows but that, upon some snowy limb  
A lynx, lean-bellied, pricks his tufted ear  
And watches me with evil, amber eyes?

. . . . .  
Surely beyond the stars my man-world lies—  
For close to me unhallowed mountains rise  
And fill my heart with fear!



## SONG IN WINTER

Burning stars in a frosty sky,  
Thread-bare winds from the hollow west,  
“Give us a garment of beauty!” they cry,  
“For the waters of truth our throats are dry,  
And phantoms of chaos uncover the bones of our  
breast,  
Leaving us little rest.”

Bitter stars in a frozen sky,  
Tattered winds from the lonely west,  
Haggard beggars of hours that die—  
(Begging the gift of a golden lie!)  
Is it with you as with us, no rest, no rest—  
Is it with you no rest?



The lacy chequer of aerial boughs  
That winter weaves with delicate wizardry.

\* \* \*

Far away—who knows how far?—  
Against the flaming calm of winter twilight,  
I hear the voice of speed—muffled and hoarse,  
Sounding across the hills.

\* \* \*

Locomotive, locomotive,  
Over the hills at night,  
Running on your far-away groove  
With the husky pant of things that move  
And cannot turn to left or right,  
Of things that toil and things that pass  
In the murk of smoke and the stench of gas,  
Serf of the monstrous city,  
What pity—oh what pity  
For the dearth of your delight,  
Locomotive, locomotive,  
Over the hills at night!



## CLOUDS

Whence do you come, oh silken shapes,  
Across the silver sky?  
We come from where the wind blows  
And the young stars die.

Why do you move so fast, so fast  
Across the white moon's breast?  
The cruel wind is at our heels  
And we may not rest.

Are you not weary, fleeing shapes,  
That never cease to flee?  
The forkéd trees' chained shadows are  
Less weary than we.

Whither do you go, O shadow-shapes  
Across the ghastly sky?  
We go to where the wind blows  
And the old stars die.



My head is circl'd with fire—  
And I think of the failing of one's desire—  
And I hear outside the pitiful dropping of rain;  
Which is the greater pain?

I yearn for the birth of the brain—  
Be it child of blood and pain,  
(I pray to endure the pain)—  
My heart—lo! my heart is afire  
With hue as of purple or Tyre—  
With hope of Promethean fire—  
And oh God! God! God! the desire  
For what only the Gods attain!

In the white moonlight stand  
With every finger on a star, and feel  
Infinity as an engulfing wave.



## JOY

The cañons are covered with snow,  
But the sky doth over them lean  
With eyes that are warm and keen  
As if he could never know  
The gray despair of the snow;  
And snow and sky join hands together  
To dance a dance of wonderful weather!



## A VOICE

A woman spoke to me in the street—  
I do not remember how or why—  
But a breath blew over the winter sky  
And spring came in with silver feet!

## ANOTHER

A creature plucked at me in the street  
But well I knew the reason why  
The red stars sickened in the sky  
And Hell gaped open at my feet!



## IMPRESSIONS

This is the Gate of the Gray City—wrought  
With piled roofs and steeples dimly seen  
Thru the gray dusk—pale, wistful flakes of fire  
Kindled about its lower fringe—vast murk—  
A snuffling monster with an evil eye  
That surly pants to work some will unknown,  
Blowing white breaths—a semaphore  
With lifted arm—a form that swings a light  
In arcs, against infinitude of gray,  
Uneasy sounds, the clink and clank and groan  
Of things inanimate—the curves of rails  
In rhythmical convergence gathered up—  
(And gathering up what burdens from afar!)  
Monotony—monotony—despair!  
This is the Gate of the Gray City.



Whatever our immitigable end,  
The earth's our home and prison thru whose windows  
Our wistful scrutinizing minds traverse  
The sky's dissolving continents, exult  
In melancholy mountains or, shackled,  
Envy the inconstant sea that seems  
An uncontaminated god, alone, complete  
In mighty passion and the scorn of time.

\* \* \*

I love the skyward-spiring tree  
For its supreme unconsciousness of me.



So let us seek the lands that the Gods love,  
The soil unsown, the isles of sumptuous store;  
Where fallow fields yield yearly fee of grain,  
And vines unpruned produce perennial bloom,  
And olive slips engender faithfully,  
And dark figs deck their trees; the cavernous oaks  
Bleed honey'd drops, and from high hills descend  
The nimble waters with melodious feet.



## PRELUDE TO A PHANTASY

I will tell thee of Far-Away, of Far-Away, of  
Far-Away,

I will tell thee of Far-Away  
The home of wandering dreams ;  
For they come out of Far-Away  
To show us how to love and play,  
And when they've wandered for a day  
Must return, it seems.

There's more than gold in Far-Away, in Far-Away,  
in Far-Away,

There's more than gold in Far-Away,  
There's more than jewelled gleams.  
There's more than smiles in Far-Away,  
And coronals of laughter gay ;  
There's crystal tears that bloom always  
Beside forgotten streams.

We'll gather gold from Far-Away, from Far-Away,  
from Far-Away,

We'll gather gold from Far-Away,  
We'll steal the jewelled gleams.  
We'll hunt for smiles from Far-Away ;  
Following laughter by the way,  
But we must for another day  
Leave the tears it seems.



We'll find the road to Far-Away, to Far-Away, to  
Far-Away,  
We'll know the road to Far-Away  
By the feet of dreams;  
For they come out of Far-Away  
To love a little and to play,  
And when they've wandered for a day  
Must return it seems.



## RUNNING WATER

Oh you who stand by the river in a gown of willow-  
green,

I will make you an eager song of my heart to-night;  
I will find me a feather of a singing bird that has seen  
And touched the blue targe of the sky in its flight.

I will make me a quill of it, and dip in my heart and  
write!

I would not make you a threnody of sorrow that has  
been,

For you are no more than an eager child who demand  
Magical tales of me, of lacquered Arabian sheen;

I will speak very softly then with your hand

In mine, a rose petal, the things that you understand.

On the waxen and beautiful tablet that is your heart  
With a singing quill and the stain of my heart I will  
write;

I will write with the simplest words and the simplest  
art

All the splendors that glow so by night—

Of the Genie and the Bottle, and carpets of orient  
flight.

And you who are more than a princess in your gown  
of yellow-green

With your bird-like and trembling heart will under-  
stand



All the luxurious sorrows and loves that have been  
Written on parchment at a king's demand—  
And the simple words of them will flutter like birds  
in your hand.



## EPITHALAMION

The pale dawn went down unto the sea,  
Past the gray ships in the offing.  
The salt wind found her blowing hair  
And closed his wings and nested there,  
And the salt sea hungered for her rare  
Sweet body and forgot his scoffing.

The pale dawn went down unto the sea  
When all the world was sleeping;  
She lifted veils and veils of air  
Until her eager limbs were bare,  
And the salt sea shook his manéd hair,  
And the curl'd waves came to her, leaping.



## MARSH-LANDS

Sure in this spongy and luxuriant retreat—  
This lovely lyric little marsh  
Which nothing hath of fierce or harsh,  
Unhappy fancies to evoke,  
Where all life is most delicately attuned to sweet  
Melodious living, here we'll meet  
Naiads dainty and discreet  
With other watery folk  
And watch the twinkle of their iridescent feet.

Upon a reed's high silver point  
Which early dews anoint,  
The Red-wing lights and poises, swaying,  
With throaty and delicious whistle playing  
Pan-music in the mellow morning light.  
It is like running water's flow  
A bit unearthly, and celestial quite—  
A golden tremolo;  
And satin robes of air half veil him from our sight.

The gay marsh-marigold  
Delights its small sun to unfold;  
And many a bulbous goblin thing,  
Ugly and grave,  
Into the dull mud burrowing  
Draws from some secret treasure-cave  
And to the sunlight heaves  
Green breadth—great leaves  
To build a vessel floating on an inland wave.



We'll be as busy as the clouds, with naught to do,  
And we will wonder at the curious striping,  
In saffron glimpses, of more distant pools  
Which the wind cools  
With deep reflected blue.  
And we will listen now to Hyla's piping—  
A thin small sprite  
That one may never see  
Calling to the sky his clear delight  
Filled with insatiate and unbounded ecstasy.



## SPRING FANCY

There is an orchard, old and rare,  
(I cannot tell you where!)  
With green doors opening to the sun;  
And the sky-children gather there  
To watch the blossoms, one by one,  
Falling wistfully thru the air  
From the trees' dishevelled hair.

The sky-children shake their wings  
With flutterings and gurglings—  
And love the light and kiss the sun,  
Nor heed the blossoms that have blown  
From the fruit-wives' ancient hair  
Earthward thru the glowing air,  
Wistfully—one by one.



## SONG

A Flicker, a Robin, a Song-sparrow

Have come from Arcady.

The Flicker was an imp that shouted in a tree;

The Robin was a winged laugh that Spring set free;

The Song-sparrow was a liquid arrow

That pierced to the heart of me.



## PLAYING

Three little girls and one little boy  
Out in the first warm sunshine ;  
The wind blows in and the wind blows out  
Voices cool as moonshine.

Six tin cans and a pile of dirt  
And the air smiles like a mother—  
The wind blows in and the wind blows out  
As they play with each other.

Sparrows on the fence and clothes on the line  
And somewhere someone's laughter—  
The wind blows in and the wind blows out.  
And it could not blow much softer !

Three little girls and one little boy  
Out in the first warm weather—  
The wind blows in and the wind blows out  
While they play together.



## SONG

Hi! hi! hi!

On this green morning

My soul is as taut as a greenwood-bow,

Feeling the sap in it mounting so,

Needs but a jog to loose without warning

An arrow into the infinite sky—

Hi! hi! hi!

On this green morning!



## A BUST BY RODIN, KNOWN AS CERES

With rhythmic feet and garments flowing free  
Draw near, draw near, bring largesse in full hand;  
Move as to music of the saraband  
Stately, before this Woman-deity.

Woman's—these billows of thick hair that roll  
Down the billowing breasts of her, and close  
Shadows of pain and mirth in firm repose—  
This delicate mask drawn tight across a soul!

A Goddess—Ultima Thule in her eye;  
For the sad wisdom of its steady gaze,  
Fixed on far, wintry fields and frozen ways,  
Goes out to larger things than you or I:

The Titan-sap makes gods of the spring hours,  
And Earth renews its children and its flowers!



## THE FLOWER'S WAY

I have stood long in the night  
Under a star;  
I have stood still with shadowy head  
And arrowy leaves outspread  
Under its trembling light  
Where green things are.

I have crept close to the grass  
Where the beetles dart,  
And the humming-bird and the dragon-fly  
Were visions in the sky,  
And the mendicant bees that pass  
Rifled my heart.

I have lain long in the day  
Under the sun,  
With my burning face in the arms of the wind,  
And my petals unconfin'd  
And my virginal robes a-sway—  
Thus joy is won!



## THE TREE'S WAY

The high trees are honest folk ;  
They do not stand so much aloof  
Up under heaven's roof,  
Altho they are earth's fairest cloak.  
Their lives are very calm and slow ;  
They wait for coming things to come,  
They wait, they rest, they ponder some  
Purpose forgotten long ago  
Like quiet folk ;  
And sometimes I am moved to stroke  
Hand-greeting as I pass them near,  
And often I am sure I hear  
An answer from these stately folk !



## CHILDREN

What a garden of surprise  
Out beyond my window lies!  
Fancy, when the night is there  
Gentle trees with drooping hair  
Rocking, rocking cradle-wise  
Little stars with yellow eyes!



VERSES TO A LITTLE CHILD  
(From Hofmannsthal)

Your feet have been fashioned as roses  
To seek the lands of the rainbow—  
The rainbow-kingdoms are open.  
There, haunting the taciturn tree-tops  
Millennial prophecies linger,  
The inexhaustible waters  
Abide there forever and aye.  
Beside the immeasurable forest  
From wooden bowl brimming will you then  
Apportion your milk with a hop-toad?  
So festive a banqueting almost  
Entices the stars to their fall!  
By borders of measureless waters  
Soon you will discover a playmate,  
A dolphin engaging and kind.  
He'll leap to dry-land at your bidding,  
And if he shall fail you sometimes  
The tender, innumerable zephyrs  
Will still your tempestuous sobbing.  
You'll find in the rainbow-kingdom  
The ancient exalted traditions  
Forever and ever unchanged.  
The sun with mysterious power  
Has fashioned your feet as the roses  
To enter his measureless kingdom.



## NIGHT-FLOWERS

This night hath no disease;  
It knows not wrecks nor wars  
Nor deaths of human minds.  
The feet of the sweet winds  
Break all the river's peace  
Into marmoreal bars.  
The tops of moonlit trees  
Have blossomed with white stars,  
And perfumes that one finds  
In old Arabian jars  
Had never blooms like these!



## THE NIGHT

Sorrows confide their secrets; joys lead lives  
Of lonely splendor. Mankind tells all things  
To me, knowing I will not ever speak.

## DISILLUSION

The night was like a jewell'd crown—  
(Could jewels be so soft a thing!)  
For stars and wind were in the town  
And by the highways entering,  
Plucked there as on a viol string,  
Until—somewhere—a woman's scream—  
Sharply shattered the dream!



Silence within

The upper twilight of a temple lies  
Asleep, with pendant plumes—a dreaming god—  
And dreams the pageantry of things—and dreams  
The gifts that he has given with his hands—  
The gifts that he has taken with his hands—  
And dreams his own eternity.

\* \* \*

I am one that loves

The stars of labyrinthine night whom the shrill dawn  
Devours, the quietude of ultimate slopes  
Thoughtful of twilight, peering moons that shed  
Unrisen glammers thru the umbrageous wood  
With gnome and goblin rife, and the light spray  
Of gray spring rains enveloping the hills.



## SONG

Would I were a bird  
To nest in a cover  
Of leaves that hover  
'Twixt earth and heaven  
Where no sound is heard—  
Only the uneven  
Brush of winds that slumber  
With no thought to cumber;  
Would I were a bird!

Would I were a wave  
To rise for a moment  
From the ocean's foment,  
To puff my lips asunder  
Blowing bubbles brave,  
To dream and to wonder  
Of the depths below me  
And the winds that blow me—  
Would I were a wave!

Bird, canst thou fashion  
Song of things that grieve thee?  
Wave hast thou passion  
For things that will deceive thee?  
Bird and wave I leave ye!



## RONDEAU

A Sunday-calm, ornate, profound,  
Enchanting sense, subduing sound,  
Enjoins its ritual to prepare;  
The day is bland with unctuous prayer  
That leaps to heaven at a bound.

And bells ope throats in mellow round  
Of sweet antiphonal resound,  
And virtue glistens everywhere—

A Sunday-calm.

Draw breath! Away to virgin ground!  
But where the fields are flower-crowned  
The cattle with self-conscious stare  
Chide my undeprecative air,—  
Good heavens! Can they too have found

A Sunday-calm?



## SUNSET BURIAL

The trees upheaven filigrane fingers of desire  
To touch a ruby-throated cloud-face fanned  
By a bronze breath and globous mouth of fire;  
Beneath, the rigid gravestones stand,  
Each one a cadaver that cannot close its hand.

## FAIRY SONG

I can live in a golden fruit  
Whose core is hung with honey;  
I can swing on golden wing  
In elfin ceremony—  
But oh! for the power  
To open as a flower  
When the air is sunny!



## A YOUNG GIRL'S LOVE

The season is less stubborn now ;  
Over the youngling world we see  
A white sky full of scudding blue,  
A white wind that runneth as a child  
Touching most delicately the new  
Sweet buds, and having touched and smiled,  
Goes to seek out some pale anemone,  
And wreathe with maiden flowers her fragile brow.



## A YOUNG MAN'S LOVE

If I were your sister I'd lie with you the night-long  
To feel your bosom's beating;  
If I were your brother I'd wake you with a day-song  
And give a kiss as greeting;  
If I were your mother I'd hold you as a shut flower  
When the dark comes creeping;  
If I were your father I'd enter at the dawn-hour  
To look upon you, sleeping.  
What is there left over  
For me, who am your lover?



## SONG

A cup full of star-shine  
That glowed as an ember,  
(Oh, star of my delight!)  
With smiles I do remember  
And words forgotten quite,  
A cup full of star-shine  
I drank with you to-night.

A cup full of sea-sound  
That was as summer thunder—  
(Oh sea of my delight!)  
With love that lay under  
Seven heavens bright,  
A cup full of sea-sound  
I drank with you to-night.



## SONG

*(After an old English tune)*

I will bring thee a silver crown.  
I will bring thee an ell of vair,  
Cloth of gold and ermine rare  
To make thee a gown.

Thou hast brought me a marble frown.  
Thou hast brought me a cold, cold stare,  
Heart of lead and wry despair,  
And a mad-man's swown.

I will bring thee a leaden crown,  
Cloth of Raines in thirty-fold!  
I will bring thee a bed on the wold  
To lay thee down.

Thou hast brought me out of the town  
To the earth upturned where the bell is tolled—  
Fires of hell and the river's cold  
My sorrows drown!



## TRISTAN AND ISOLDE

The sea is here, it hath not any shore,  
Nor moves with moving of wind-driven waves  
Which, undulant and writhing—naked slaves  
To the uneasy wanderer of heaven's floor,  
Bow sullen backs beneath their master's store  
He brought with viewless hands from broken graves—  
The sea is here, and in its silent caves  
Moves not, tho the wind clamors more and more.

The sea is here, an infinite undertone;  
But lo! upon its surface I descry  
Two floating bubbles, wonderfully blown  
Toward each other, flame-like from the sky—  
Meet—melt with lyric splendor into one—  
Then, wind-prick'd, vanish—o'er the Sea, a cry!



## PALINURUS

Starlight: with deep and quiet breathing slept  
The southern sea. The white-wing'd ship that bore  
The good Aeneas from his Dido's shore  
Ghostlike, with rippling furrows, onward crept,  
And only faithful Palinarus kept  
The midnight watch—but ah, the magic bough,  
The opiate dew that dript upon his brow,  
The vacant post, the friends who waking wept.

The gods demand their victims; who shall know  
What failures Time and Circumstance compel?  
Yet, if such doom were mine, I would 'twere so  
That they would mark my absence thus: "How well  
Even unto the last he struggled, lo!  
He tore the rudder with him when he fell!"



## THE DERELICT

I cannot remember whither I was bound—  
I cannot remember why I was found  
Moving without a sound  
Moving in mystery—  
Derelict, derelict,  
Over the sea!

I too carry a cargo in my hold,  
Underneath sea-water and green with mold—  
I cannot remember how old!  
For terrible it is to be  
Derelict, derelict,  
Over the sea!

Feebler ships weather bravely into port;  
Running a course that is safe and short—  
My voyage is another sort;  
No master guideth me—  
Derelict, derelict,  
Over the sea!

Nights have shadow'd me with phantom stride—  
Stars have peer'd at me, eerie-eyed—  
Goblin lights and magic tide  
Keep me company,  
Derelict, derelict,  
Over the sea!



Setting suns have rowell'd me with crimson'd heel—  
Winds have flung laughter, peal after peal—  
But they shall not know that I feel  
Mute in my agony—  
Derelict, derelict,  
Over the sea!

Rudderless, by ways uncharted blown—  
Some day shall waken to find me gone—  
What matter? I have drifted alone  
Ever—alone—yet free—  
Derelict, derelict,  
Over the sea!



## THE SQUIRE OF DAMES TO HIS LADY

Why should our meeting borrow  
A sense of shame or sorrow  
That each must go his way?  
Love liketh no fetter  
Therefore our roads were better  
If you go yours to-morrow,  
And I go mine to-day.

I hold you for a minute—  
You'd catch the hour and pin it—  
But if I held you longer  
Would you have more assurance  
In days of richer durance,  
Life with more rapture in it,  
Passion more wise and stronger?

The Daughter of Illusion  
Hath made our love seem fusion  
Of two strange things in one—  
But loving hath not taught her  
That strange as fire to water,  
Love becomes bleak intrusion  
When all the glamor's gone.

You say I've brought you sorrow  
And pay not debts I borrow—  
But mirth is what's to pay!  
So part our paths in laughter,



And, since your heart is softer,  
You go your way to-morrow—  
And I'll go mine to-day.



## GAS-LIGHT HEROICS

With this night's carousal  
We will close the portal  
On our poor espousal—  
Sacrament and housel  
For a love too mortal!

With this gay delaying  
We'll delay yet longer—  
Care not what the saying  
Of the World—that braying  
Evil tattle-monger!

Pleasure has as thunder  
Scorched and jangled thru me;  
Now I'll sit and wonder  
At the day-star yonder  
And your face, grown gloomy.



You are known as "Lily"  
And they mock your gender;  
Is it but a silly  
Fancy, you seem stilly  
Lily-souled and tender?

Underneath the bitter  
Mockery of color,  
Underneath the titter  
Is there something fitter?  
Something finer, fuller?

Something (can I hear it  
In your secret eyes?)  
When I come too near it  
Like a frightened spirit  
Running from the skies?

Girl, you know that glow meant  
Dawn's thin lips of scarlet—  
Bubble of life's foment  
Stay your soul a moment!

. . . . .  
Bah! You're drunk, you harlot!



## MISTS

### I

I am most weary of this fatuous me  
That doth obtrude a niddering death's head  
At a blithe feast of Springtide jollity,  
Of revelling buds and flowers unsurfeited.  
I am most weary of this chained thought  
That hath forgotten where its mansions are—  
And lost the dew its seven-spher'd courses caught  
Wandering in plunged dark from star to star.  
I am most weary of my stagnant soul  
That neither thirsts, nor hungers, nor is stirred  
By the gigantic thunders that have rolled  
From the white, hurtling lightning of a word.

I am most weary, love; so let thy face—  
The sponge that sops my gaze, myself erase.



## II

Oft in the groping night I am afraid,  
For this, mine opaque organism, seems  
A glass, a mere reflex of trooping dreams—  
A polished boss where images parade.  
And to see these doth make my senses cold—  
This globe become a visionary face—  
This little spinning soul of me—in space—  
I dare not think of what that space may hold!  
Such thoughts are as the charnel mists that rise  
From feverish and mortuary ground  
Thru which one sees the country all around—  
Yet near, the dead—and far away, the skies.

But at the thought of you my life expands  
Until it holds all life within its hands!



## SCEPTIC

### I

This hour has shut us like a tent  
From all but night; we two, alone,  
So close, so poignantly alert, have grown,  
That trivial speech, from silence rent,  
Breaks off—a useless instrument.

For all the opening world is ours,  
And you, tho scarce a woman yet,  
Your eyes with feasts of lights and vintage set,  
Hold all the dewy wealth of flowers,  
And gold of Babylonian towers.

Our lives will alter if we move—  
It were so easy now to rise  
And tell my unimpassioned soul it lies—  
And claim youth's heritage of love,  
Let bald life prove what it may prove!

It were so easy to conceive  
Your lack my lack would compensate—  
And by one stroke undo the knot of fate;  
It were so easy to believe  
The lies that such a thing could weave!



Or shall I stumble through the night  
Biting my lips to hold the tears  
Because your incommunicable years  
Must spend their summer of delight  
Without my reach—beyond my sight?

The house is still; the midnight seems  
Inscrutable—no answer there.  
Oh God!—to break this tension of despair.  
Between us the calm lamplight streams—  
“Good night!” and “Pleasant dreams!”—yes—dreams.



## II

I would I had lain with my love to-night ;  
Her eyes trembled for her body said,  
“I have smoothed a pillow and made a bed”—  
But I smiled against it  
And turned away my head  
To come into the cold starlight.

I would I had lain with my love to-night,  
For I know how flowers are shed,  
And the cynical scintillant stars are dead—  
Dead, dead utterly!  
Yet I turned away my head  
To come into the cold starlight.

I would I had lain with my love to-night!  
Oh, indolent Gods, we too can tread  
On the silent spirits, the uncomforted!  
She did not reproach me,  
Tho I turned away my head  
And came into the starlight.



### III

Love (as a cloud on the sea  
Hung between poles of blue)  
Hangs in the heart of me  
Between the eyes of you.  
Love, as a cloud on the sea,  
Claims the tears of two.

Love (as a wind in a tree  
Shaking its tower of green)  
Shakes all the heart of me  
And leaves no peace between.  
Love, as the wind the tree  
Tears with hands unseen.

Love (as a storm on the sea  
Shatters the sleep of the wave)  
Shatters the heart of me  
With desires that grope and crave.  
Love, as the storm the sea,  
Boasts not me his slave.



#### IV

You, flower-named, and as a flower arrayed,  
Open to all the wandering airs that pass,  
Opened to me—yet I drew back afraid,  
Craven to the blood that would have preyed  
And the sly viper coiling in the grass.

#### V

Love, when you smiled and beckoned  
My cold thought stood aloof and reckoned  
Some heights above you.  
But now you have turned and gone  
Smiling, fugitive as dawn,  
I know (oh fool!) I love you.



## VI

Love, with her queen's face and child lips  
Walked at my side; her hair about her head  
Streamed, with riotous and exuberant spread  
Like sails and cordage of sea-breasting ships,  
And as the tides, her mirthful glints and dips  
Tugged at my anchor'd calmness—then she said,  
Chilling to gravity, "You are lead."  
It was as when the bright blade cruelly slips,  
For in my soul that hid its vain desires  
Under closed hatch, I knew the stifled fires  
Devoured in silence, as stealthy serpents writhe  
Their folds about their prey; and seemed to hear  
The passing of some irrevocable year,  
And faint for whistle of a monstrous scythe.

## VII

Pain of widest range—  
The intimate grown strange.



## ARMA VIRUMQUE CANO

And so the good Aeneas went away.  
It was not dawn, and yet the sleepless sea  
Felt as a mother, the still unborn day.  
The stars were brighter than they ought to be.  
A milky foam curled from the vessel's breast  
Whose long blades lifted to each lifting crest.

Happy were the sailors to be aboard once more,  
And the laughing sea answered to their shouts afar  
off shore.

Dido the Queen  
Knew he was gone.  
No need to have seen  
From the casement withdrawn;  
No need to be told;  
Her heart had guessed  
By the aching unrest  
And empty breast—  
Empty and cold.

Oh, plain her Maidens at their spinning,  
Love has end that had beginning.



As the course was traced Aeneas paced,  
His thoughts uprising like a flock of birds;  
And one flew west, to the new the unknown nest,  
And one that was wing'd with flaming words—  
Something the Queen had uttered, tender—sweet,—  
Fluttered back and died—just at her feet.

Ho! chants a Rower, straining at the sweep,  
Leave the landsman to his pillow, the sailor to the  
deep.

All night the Queen  
In fever burned;  
A dream returned  
Long ago seen:  
A dream of ships,  
Of one who came  
Out of a flame  
And cried her name  
And kissed her lips.

Somewhere in the dawn Someone's singing:  
"Lo! what gifts love's hands are bringing!"



Jet-black, the palms like sculptured fountains loomed  
Above the lovers; one star blazed all night.  
Beyond the river was the sea that boomed.  
Their barge was lit with lightnings of delight.  
Of this, the good Aenaes too had dreamed  
While the unshaken towers of Ilium gleamed.

Ah! cry the sailors, "whom we loved must wait.  
There's no turning back from the open track to the  
gates of fate."

The cicadas drone;  
Desert winds blow  
As oarsmen row  
Their Queen alone  
Down the river.  
Alone, she cried  
Alone! to the tide.  
And the sea replied  
Forever!

La, croon the Women, nimbly weaving,  
"Whose heart do we hear grieving?"



Months bring all wanderings to a close.  
The fleet years flee; Aeneas wisely wed,  
Often, when wind and sea strike mighty blows,  
Wakening from dreams half ecstasy, half dread,  
That come upon him from another life,  
Touches the calm breast of his sleeping wife.

Hum, the Night Watch mutters, leaning on his spear,  
“ ’Tis a strange world to be in and to have no fear.”

The sea at last  
Brings pain to end.  
The desert vast  
Becomes her friend.  
Her people fear it:  
“The Queen,” they say,  
“Grows day by day  
Paler, but still gay—  
As a spirit.”

Oh, they murmur, “Queen Dido goes away  
To where the dark river runs, sunless and gray.”



## A HYMN TO DIONYSUS IN SPRING

Yellow the sands of the shores of Elis, and over the  
    creaming

Foam-flakes that flutter and curl on the edge of the  
    dreaming

Mediterranean, Jupiter arches his azure dome.

Here to the somnolent sands the Aeolian women have  
    come,

The dreamers, all languid with silence of spring-tide  
    dreaming,

And they stand with their hair unbound and their feet  
    in the foam.

The heart of the morning beats with a swooning,  
    amorous beating,

And the nymph-cool waters and brazen sunshine meet-  
    ing,

Mingle where indolent spring-tide ripples shimmer  
    and burn;

Out to the dim horizon the eyes of the dreamers  
    yearn,

And like flutes are the low, soft voices that chant thus,  
    entreating

The God, Dionysus, to rise from the sea and return.



“Bitter thy roving hath been, O Hunter, and stricken  
with madness,  
And thy winter frenzy hath torn us with torment of  
sadness—  
Horror of blood in the mouth and of murderous lusts  
that bring  
Shadows a-couch in the forest from under us shud-  
dering.  
We are sick of the feverish nights that have stolen  
our gladness—  
Ah! we are weary of winter and fain of the Spring!”

“Thy foes, O Hunter, have goaded thy soul, but their  
goadings is over,  
For every unfolding leaf is a shield for thy cover  
And every grass-blade upraises a spear that is scimi-  
tar-keen,  
Gladly the flowers will weave thee a mantle to wander  
unseen.  
Slim as a willow-wand, Ariadne awaits thee, her lover,  
And her heart is full of the dreams that are cool and  
green.”



“Hyé, the Dew, thy mother, sorrows because of thy  
going,  
And the film-pale, rain-sweet Hyades fleeing and flow-  
ing,  
Dissolved from the rainbow and river to rise in the  
sap of the tree,  
Leave never their dolorous grieving, lamenting in  
quest of thee.  
And the succulent vine and the spirit of all things  
growing  
Cry ‘Dionysus, return! Oh, return from the sea!’ ”

“Wilt thou forsake us forever, unheeding our sedulous  
plainings?  
See’st not the clusters of pale green globes, crescent  
and straining  
Sunwards, that long for thy hand to engarb them  
with royal attire?  
Hear us, O Wine-God; return to us! Kindle once  
more Desire!”  
So chant the Aeolian women till the light be waning  
While the foam breaks over their feet in soft folds  
of fire.



The robes of the sun are red, and close to the earth  
he dozes;

The long day lingers, then slowly and silently closes  
The shadowy orient gates, climbing upward stair by  
stair,

Raising her evening face to the stars in the spring-  
tide air.

Lo! the sea is aglow and aflame with the odor of  
roses!

Lo! a glimpse of the God with the sun in his yellow  
hair!



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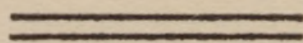
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