

# THE DIVINE VAGABOND

BY  
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TO  
LITTLE BELOVED CHANDRALEKHA,  
OLD WISDOM ON YOUNG SHOULDERS,  
WHO TOLD ME THE STORY OF THE SECRET LINK,  
AND INSPIRED ME TO WRITE IT IN VERSE

2nd Sept. 1950

## FOREWORD

For over half a century the poetry of England and the United States has been balefully influenced by the prevailing materialism of the age. They remind me of our Indian ants who bite the yellow rind only, and never penetrate into the sweet pulp. The Poetry of today with its rhythms and imageries appeals mainly to the mind. Not that they are not exquisite in their way; they certainly do give delight. Yet nevertheless it can be said of these poets:

'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces,  
That miss the many-splendored thing.

Of course here and there are a few exceptions, like Alice Maynell Francis Thompson, A.E. Yeats, Cousins, and a few others. But in the main, I who love poetry greatly have felt a profound dissatisfaction with the poems I have read. It is the same with the poetry of Spanish America and Brazil, and without any depreciation of the artistic value of French poetry, we can say that the poetry of France for several centuries has never touched that "other world," as did Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats.

When young Harindranath Chattopadhyaya published, when he was nineteen, his first book of poems, *The Feast of Youth*, Dr. J. H. Cousins, who wrote the foreword, began by regretting that young Indian poets were not writing in the Indian vernaculars, but at the end of the foreword he had to admit that our poet is "a true bearer of the Fire." It is this striking quality of his poems, written in such excellent English, that made Lawrence Binyon, himself a poet, say of our poet, "He has drunk from the same fount as Shelley and Keats." It was at the same time that "Q" (Quiller-Couch), who had read some of the poems, said regarding the admission of our poet as a research scholar in the University of Cambridge, "We would have given Shelley and Keats a chance. Why not this young poet?"

From the first poems of Harindranath Chattopadhyaya which I read, I felt at once that here was the voice of ancient India speaking in fine English, without losing in the least the true quality of Indian civilization and culture. Such a fine critic of literature as Sri Aurobindo (himself a poet), wrote "We may well hope to find in him a supreme singer of the vision of God in Nature and Life and the meeting of the divine and human which must be at first the most vivifying and liberating part of India's message to a humanity that is now touched everywhere by a growing will for the spiritualizing of the earth-existence."

Harindranath, as he is known to his friends, has a remarkable creative quality which has manifested itself not only in the usual verse forms. He created a play, *Abu Hassan*, the tale taken from the Arabian Nights, mostly versified, which was staged in Madras. The lyrics were to Indian tunes. And the dramatist in his play "The Sleeper Awakened," did a

rare and venturesome thing in bringing in a certain number of actors as Brahmins who sang English verse to ancient Vedic meter. With many others I witnessed this play, which held us all thrilled with delight because of its intense charm and rollicking fun.

Not the least of our poet's creations as revealing India are the few Verse-Plays, wherein he dramatizes incidents in the lives of the famous Hindu saints Tukaram, Raidas, the Cobbler Saint, Pundalik, and the saintly woman, Saku Bai.

When a few months ago Harindranath brought me this book of poems written in 1934, my instant reaction was that it should be published by the Theosophical Publishing House, as on three previous occasions. I am most glad to give all assistance to our poet's genius in his message, in whose wake no one else in India has followed.

The soil of India is steeped with a certain atmosphere of mysticism and spirituality which is at the basis of her ever-changing but undying life. It is something of this life that pervades the mind and heart of Harindranath Chattopadhyaya. In these days of India's life as a great young nation among the many nations of the world, where we in India are proclaiming that India has a message for the whole world, one priceless element of that message is revealed in the many works of Harindranath Chattopadhyaya. I can only say that if anyone wants to discover a little of the hidden secret of India, about which many have written but few have truly revealed, here is a poet who reveals something of that secret.

C. JINARÂJADÂSA

## PRELUDE

I am a vagabond, but never ask me  
From where I came.

I only know that I came like a shadow,  
I'll pass like a flame.

Every man that you meet on the roadway  
And in the street,  
Without his knowing hides a great vagabond's  
Tune in his feet.

What is the sun but a vagabond's laughter?  
What are the stars but a vagabond's tears?  
And the wide world is a wandering vagabond  
Looking for someone through the long years.

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## THROUGH CONTRARIES

If I am to believe that He controls  
The destiny of dust,  
Unseen maneuverer of mortal souls,  
Then I must needs lay my implicit trust  
In the wise pattern shot with light and shade:  
To grow afraid  
Or wince at circumstance were to insult  
His wisdoms which to us seem difficult.

Since who am I to doubt,  
Prevaricate or insolently ask?  
Both the enkindled flame and the flame put out  
Are twin-appearances of one same mask  
Hiding His face,  
Dark, undiscovered fountainhead of grace.

The universe is His unique attire  
Donned in a feast of forms . . . Lo! He has wed  
A mother's laughter to the funeral-pyre  
On which her babe lies dead.  
Across eternity He walks alone,  
Robed in a state of master-ease,  
Behind variety, rich monotone,  
Between brief ever-changing contraries.

No shape but casts a shadow, and no breath  
But serves a milestone-mark  
Measuring the inescapable road of death  
Betwixt the light and dark.  
Thus, with my head low-bowed,  
Unquestioning and uncomplaining man,  
I let myself be moved like to a cloud  
Blindly across the heaven of His wide plan.



## EMBARKING-TIME

Beloved, my life grows deeper and vaster  
Beneath thy transfiguring touch;  
In gradual depth I will grow to a master  
And shall be acknowledged as such!  
Through airs that are dead and through clouds that are vapid,  
My flight grows more and more certain and rapid,  
The wings of my spirit move faster and faster,  
I am conscious, at least, of so much!

With many a guerdon thy hands have booned me,  
Beloved! with many and many a gift;  
In what a brief while thou hast wrought me and tuned me  
Lyre-like to a fire-like note to uplift  
The music of being, intense though desireless,  
Whose rhythm is happy and mighty and tireless,  
Strengthening my substance,—now nothing can wound me,  
No arrow of time, be it ever so swift.

The darkness is conscious that it is thy ray-time,  
Already thy lustres are streaming apace,  
All life is becoming a diamond daytime  
With one orb in the heavens, thy magical face.  
With a poise of repose for constant neighbor,  
All labor is rapture, all rapture is labor,  
In eternity, time is only my playtime  
Since now I belong to thy love and thy grace!

High vision to me groweth common as sparrow,  
As frequent as grass, as familiar as mud:  
The springtides of myriad centuries narrow  
Themselves in my heart, thy all-mastering bud.  
Whatever in nature is lovely and tender  
Occurs through my Nature's immortal surrender  
To thee, O triumphant! whose white-fire-arrow  
Hath stained the dawn-sky with my life's red blood.

My seal of achievement is yonder sun-setting  
Whose sovereign color has set a mark  
On all past sorrow and past regretting,

On all that was only a glare of the dark.  
Beloved, I am sure . . . and the boat is ready,  
The sail in the wind keeps silent and steady,  
On the dark rich waters of God, forgetting  
All distance and time, behold I embark!

## WHITE-FIRE

Who said my love was cold, apart,  
Who dares to challenge the Divine?  
Say, can the love within your heart  
Bear the white flame that burns in mine?

It is not distant and aloof  
As stars at midnight you behold  
Through the blue slits along your roof,  
Far and immeasurably cold.

I am the richest fire of love  
That lit your body long ago. . . .  
Like a warm cascade from above  
I pour into your world below.

I rush across the mountain-rim  
In liquid rapture, and possess  
The bride of life in every limb  
And hold her in a swift caress.

Ten million million bodies' lust  
Would turn to ashes in my fire.  
What can your drowsy world of dust  
Know of my masterful desire?

I kiss each tiny speck and grain  
Until they glow in rapture whirled:  
I am the fire that comes again  
And yet again to wed the world.

## IMMORTAL DESTROYER

All things the Master can destroy  
And make the centuries disperse  
Full of the self-same generous joy  
That went to build the universe.

Holding the heaven in His hand  
With graceful and untrembling ease  
He can withdraw its wonder, and  
Crumple its blue serenities.

Say, is there aught He cannot do?  
Behold, with just one fleeting glance  
He can exile each drop of dew  
And stop the midnight's purple dance.

The Lord of Life is Lord of Death,  
Controller of all form and name.  
Lo, He can with a single breath  
Extinguish time's poor candle-flame.

## RAW MATERIAL

Had it not been for human grief  
God-woods could not have known a leaf.  
Had it not been for human sorrow  
Today could not have met tomorrow.

Man is an earthen pitcher wrought  
To shape upon his wheel of thought:  
The weakness in the clay that lingers  
Strengthens the conscious Potter's fingers.

## EXCHANGE

Nobody has given up  
Anything for you,  
Each has brought an empty cup  
For the honey-dew  
Of your tender, silent-sweet  
Smile that conquers strife:  
Each has placed before your feet  
But a hollow life.

What a pale and fugitive  
Offering is ours;  
Master! what have we to give  
But life's faded flowers,  
And poor broken lamps of clay  
With their glimmers shed:  
Shadows of a bygone day.  
Music of the dead?

We have only brought our pain  
Like a desert bare,  
You have showered your gracious rain  
Cooling all the air  
Of a lifetime that was spent  
In a barren way;  
You have given hue and scent  
To its desert-clay.

We have brought you sin and strife,  
Scar and sore and burn,  
Guerdon of eternal life  
Has been your return:  
Dreams that cry and thoughts that drift  
We have brought you, yet  
You have given us the gift  
Swiftly to forget.

We have brought the poison-bowl  
Of lives undivine,  
You have changed each to a soul

Flooded with your wine:  
Yea, for every hurt and bruise,  
Every broken power,  
Love of human loves! you choose,  
To return a flower.

And behold, for every dark  
Doubt that lurks in us  
You return a magic spark  
That soon works in us  
Miracles of light on light  
As the days go no:  
When we bring to you our night,  
You return us dawn.

Who are we to ever deem  
We have given aught?  
You who dwell beyond our dream,  
Far beyond our thought,  
High beyond all human speech,  
And our huge conceit!  
Can we ever hope to reach  
To your lotus-feet?

We have brought you all the mud  
With its flowerless gloom,  
You have slowly made it bud,  
Bud and break and bloom:  
We have brought you hearts of grief,  
Shame and misery,  
You have opened them to leaf  
On your magic tree.

Nobody has given up  
Anything for you!  
Each has brought a hollow cup  
Stained and broken, too!  
You accept it with a smile,  
Make it whole again,  
And within a little while  
Flood it with your rain.

## WING-INTOXICATED

My will is like an olden  
And lonely standing hill:  
God's solitary eagle  
Of vision proud and regal  
With pinions wide and golden  
Is monarch of my will:  
My will is like an olden  
And lonely-standing hill.

My love is like a boundless  
Ever-unclouded sky:  
No shade shall ever trample  
Its azure, deep and ample,  
Below, time is a soundless  
And ineffectual cry:  
My love is like a boundless  
Ever-unclouded sky.

My soul is like a lonely  
Ripe lustre-warmth that leavens  
Millenniums of greyness,  
And mortal far-awayness,  
Keen as a star when only  
One star is in the heavens,—  
My soul is like a lonely  
Ripe lustre-warmth that leavens.

My hope is like the playing  
Of some ecstatic flute,  
When, in unruffled weather,  
Sweet angels meet together  
In heaven, holidaying  
In childhood absolute:  
My hope is like the playing  
Of some ecstatic flute.

My prayer is like a branching  
Giant-aspiring tree:  
Rich with the bloom-and-wing-time,



God's everlasting springtime  
Which ne'er hath known the blanching  
By winters that might be:  
My prayer is like a branching  
Giant-aspiring tree.

My faith is like a mountain  
That rises higher and higher,  
Nothing dare overcome it,  
Since there, upon its summit,  
Playeth the deathless fountain  
Of death-consuming fire:  
My faith is like a mountain  
That rises higher and higher.

## SURRENDER

I will cry out from my soul,  
    Thy will be done!  
All thy ways I will extol,  
    Thy will be done!  
Naught shall hinder, naught shall bar  
My footfalls that journey far,  
Since thou art my guiding-star:  
    Thy will be done.

I will praise thee in all pain,  
    Thy will be done!  
Say again and yet again,  
    Thy will be done.  
Though the world with gloom be rife  
And around me bitter strife,  
I will cry out of my life:  
    Thy will be done.

I will bend before thy seat,  
    Thy will be done.  
I will kiss thy holy feet,  
    Thy will be done.  
Even should the future spring  
For my sake no blossom bring,  
I will like a glad bird sing.  
    Thy will be done.

I shall whisper night and day,  
    Thy will be done.  
Every second I will say,  
    Thy will be done.  
Even should my life be null,  
Even should my sky be dull  
And my soul a deathly lull:  
    Thy will be done.

I have learned one note to strike,  
    Thy will be done.  
In both birth and death alike,

Thy will be done.  
Whether it be light or shade,  
Blossom-gift or dagger-blade,  
Beloved! I am not afraid:  
Thy will be done.

Through the months and passing years,  
Thy will be done.  
Through all laughters, through all tears,  
Thy will be done.  
Through all loves that meet and part,  
Through each glad or broken heart  
May the single sentence start:  
Thy will be done.

Daybreak, noon and evenfall,  
Thy will be done.  
In the first bird's and last bird's call,  
Thy will be done.  
In the joys of dawn that sprout  
And by evening are put out,  
Let my soul arise and shout:  
Thy will be done.

In all gladness and all grief,  
Thy will be done,  
In belief and unbelief,  
Thy will be done.  
In all fullness and all dearth,  
In all sadness and all mirth,  
In all heaven and on earth:  
Thy will be done.

Thou art all-in-all to me,  
Thy will be done.  
Beloved! I belong to thee,  
Thy will be done.  
Thou wilt do as thou hast planned,  
Thou hast taken me in hand,  
On thy truth I take my stand:  
Thy will be done.

## DARK SONG

The lamp is ready,  
But you forget  
Your flame is not steady  
As yet.

The shore is ready,  
But you are caught  
In the wild eddy  
Of thought.

The hush is ready,  
When will you tire  
Of your dark, heady  
Desire?

## QUEST

Tireless I climb the thorny steep,  
A world of roses staking.  
My waking has become a sleep,  
My sleep become a waking.

Towards the near yet distant goal  
My feet go ever treading.  
I seek the silence of the soul,  
Which is a master-wedding.

Each pointed thorn upon the way  
That bruises is but dating  
My progress in the far-away  
Beauty where you are waiting.

Something in me until the end  
Will keep on ever humming:  
"O mighty master! gentle friend!  
Accept me, I am coming!"

Tireless I climb the kindling steep,  
A shadow-world forsaking.  
My waking state is now a sleep,  
My sleep is now a waking.

## INVITATION

Come in whatever form you like,  
Come as the fiercely reddening storm,  
Or as the cooling cataract;  
In any form, O master!

I am prepared for anything  
That comes from your unfaltering hand:  
I will not moan or say a word,  
I'll understand, O master!

Come in whatever form you like,  
Or make me sing or strike me dumb:  
In anyway, at any time,  
But only come, O master!

## RESTING PLACE

They are all tired of wandering:  
Lone-languid winds of noon  
And the long-drawn evening shadows  
With the cold returning moon;  
And between the morn and the mid-day  
White-bodied clouds that roam  
Are waiting to rest upon your breast  
Which was always their real home.

They are all weary with wandering:  
Long nights filled full of our tears  
Which seek and seek but never find  
The meaning of months and years;  
And the star on star that twinkle  
And whirl through the deepening gloam  
Are waiting to rest, O love! on your breast  
Which is surely their long-lost home.

Time, that old grey shepherd,  
With gold-black sandals on,  
Is weary of driving his sheep of hours  
Across the wide meadows of dawn,  
And our thoughts and dreams are tired  
Under the sky's blue dome  
And yearn to rest on your quiet breast  
Which was always their only home.

## UNIMPRISONED

All the chains have slipped and fallen,  
All the prison-walls are cracked,  
From the morning sky what glory  
Pours down like a cataract. . . .  
Suddenly to streams of splendor  
Melt the stones so dark and firm.  
We have in a sudden moment  
Served out life's entire term.

No more shall we watch the twilight  
Sadly from behind the bars,  
No more feel the separation  
From the high and distant stars.  
No more shall we hear the tolling  
Of time's ponderous prison-gong  
Which have marked our creeping moments  
Melancholily so long!

Hark! the prison-locks are opened  
And the prison-gates unbarred.  
No more shall we cast sad shadows  
On the lonely prison-yard.  
Brothers! no more shall we suffer  
Prison-living cold and damp,  
Nor compose life's master poem  
By the flickering prison-lamp.

Come, the ancestors await us  
In celestial voiceless bands:  
They have brought us victor garlands  
Shining whitely in their hands.  
Silence blows her silver trumpets  
To announce the great event  
Of the world's swift liberation  
From its old imprisonment.



## LOYALTY

I will wait for you  
Though you may not come,  
Though the hours be lonely  
And the night be dumb.

I will leave the door  
Open wide  
In case you wish some day  
To step inside,

Even though small  
And narrow be the room  
And full of a sort of  
Half-lit gloom.

I will light my little  
Dim lamp of clay,  
Hoping that you may arrive  
Some day.

I will weave the garland,  
Love! for you  
Though you come not,—and yet  
In case you do.

I will plant a tree  
In my garden plot;  
It will flower in the silence  
At the thought

That you may come  
Suddenly, at the end  
Of this waiting on the edge  
Of ages, friend!

## WAYFARING

Deeper I grow and dumber  
As the golden days go by,  
For my life has reached its summer  
Unfolding a fiery sky;  
All outer clash and clangor  
Are lost in a golden languor,  
And nothing is now welcomer  
Than this noonday silent and high.

And nothing is really deeper  
Than the mood that thy traveler knows,  
While treading the path that is steeper  
The further he travels and goes.  
While the naked noontide quivers  
On the open fields and rivers,  
And summer, the fiery reaper,  
Goes reaping the heavenly glows.

On the roadway each grain of gravel  
Sun-kissed, is a jewel of price  
That flashes along my travel  
With not the same lustre twice:  
Between strange lights I go ranging  
Whose colors are always changing  
While my footfalls ever unravel  
Thy road's long sacrifice.

The travel shall never exhaust me  
Whose feet with white fire are shod,  
With no one to greet or accost me,  
The loneliest path I have trod:  
I care not if sun rays blind me  
For I have left seeing behind me,  
And with deep closed eyes I have lost me  
In an ultimate vision of God.

I can feel both my heart and my head glow  
While I walk in the noonday heat,  
But soon I will meet with the red glow

Of the evening cool and sweet.  
But I who move higher and higher  
Above earth's pathways of fire,  
Shall behold in the lingering dead glow  
A homage of stars at my feet.

Already the silence is swimming,  
The starry silence of One  
Whose cool white beauty is brimming  
Beyond every setting sun:  
Although I am drunk with its heady  
Effulgence within, I am steady  
And my lone lamp needs no trimming,  
It will laugh when the day is done.

## WING-ACHE

In several little ways  
I err, I slip, I fall,—  
O bring thy searching gaze  
And help to show me all  
My errors and my faults,  
Be they or big or small,  
My stumblings and my halts,  
My ignorant delays.

Beloved, help me out  
Of every bog and pit,  
Nor let me roam about  
But draw me bit by bit  
Towards thy patient light,—  
O let my lamp be lit  
By thee in the black night  
Of starless human doubt.

Let not the gaudy nautch  
Of fleeting dreams attract  
My soul into a blotch  
Of darkness only cracked  
By stormy lightning-fire,  
For I have signed a pact  
To dream by thee entire,  
With thou by me to watch.

The lower nature still  
Might struggle to rebel,  
To hunger for a thrill  
Of passing dreams that dwell  
In earth's subconscious sleep,—  
O make a citadel  
Of all my life and keep  
Thy vigil, holy Will!

I want to come to thee,  
So near and yet so far!  
There is a thirst in me

Whose quenching naught shall bar,  
As wide as all the sky,  
As lonely as a star  
That glimmereth on high,  
As mighty as the sea.

My love, I want to reach  
Thy consciousness wherein  
Each life of mine, and each  
Death in the past, doth spin  
A universe of gold  
And silver discipline,  
In timeless rapture rolled,  
Surpassing human speech.

I am already stormed  
By thee, O light of broad  
Compassion! I have warmed  
To thee, and felt this clod  
Of body pass to sight.  
To nothing less than god  
Dost thou intend, my light!  
That I should be transformed.

To thee I travel straight  
Glad as an oriole,  
Nor need to know the date  
When it will reach the goal;  
All is a running glow  
Of deepening oversoul,—  
The goal?— O love! I know  
I have not long to wait.

The bell of silence rings  
Announcing worlds that start  
Like birds with fiery wings  
Out of the visioned heart;  
Calm orbs in clusters keep,  
In ecstasy apart,  
Chanting upon the deep  
Of paradisaal springs.

The winged fires are buoyed  
Along the mystic verge  
Of the unending void  
Aching with starry urge,—  
Along the shores of limbs,  
Thy silent glories surge  
From shyly-shimmering rims  
Of heavens unenjoyed.

In several little ways  
I err and fall and slip,—  
O bring thy tender gaze  
To bear on me, and drip  
Its honey on my pores,  
In sweet companionship  
Lead me unto thy doors,  
Beloved of my days.

## HERO

My faith in thee grows graver  
With the dawning of each day:  
And my feet grow firmer, braver,  
As I travel on the way.  
My Love! I never waver  
Nor dally nor delay.

Unmindful of the gravel,  
Fire-drenched with noonday heat  
With hungers to unravel  
The secret of my feet:  
Towards thee straight I travel  
And find it very sweet!

Beloved, I am bringing  
Myself to thee more near,  
My soul is hourly ringing  
More certain and more clear.  
A well of god is springing  
Out of each drop of tear.

Since sometimes in my treading  
The path I find the eyes  
A sudden teardrop shedding  
To take by sweet surprise  
A waiting star whose wedding  
Shall be in paradise.

My faith in thee grows truer  
And taller than a tower;  
My soul grows ever newer,  
Re-born in deeper power:  
My steps grow fewer, fewer  
Towards thee every hour.

Behold me swiftly gliding  
A-challenging the stark  
Bare waters, smoothly tiding  
O'er billows rough and dark,

Unto thy care confiding  
My tempest-haunted barque.

Though shadows grey and umber  
In light's apparent loss,  
Like deep and deathly slumber  
Brood heavily across  
The waters, I outnumber  
Their inky leap and toss

With my uncounted splendors  
Flung o'er them far and wide,  
Until each billow tenders  
A truce on every side,  
And silently surrenders  
To silence like a bride.

No shadow ever hurteth  
The light that is the whole  
Horizon-calm which skirteth  
The ocean of the soul:  
Never thy love deserteth  
The boat that seeks thy goal.

O let the darks grow thicker  
Around the outer seas,  
And let the gales blow quicker  
And wilder if they please:  
My soul without a flicker  
Burns through the centuries.

Destruction is mistaken  
If with its bleeding-black  
Deluge it thinks to waken  
Dread on my voyager's track:  
Behold! I am unshaken  
By its most dread attack.

My faith in thee shall shield me  
Against the darkling horde;  
Beloved, thou shalt wield me



Like an all-conquering sword,  
And every moment yield me  
A splendor unexplored.

## MASTERHOOD

Nothing delights me or annoys  
Which cometh from outside,  
My kingly spirit now enjoys  
A light that shall abide;  
A white unfaltering light which beams  
Outside small hates and hopes and dreams,  
And reigneth in an equipoise  
Immeasurable-wide.

Nothing shall hurt or break or mar  
The joy which I contain,  
Which never knew a wound or scar  
Or yet a trace of pain!  
An independent joy that grows  
To greater fullness in repose,  
A-glowing like a virgin star  
On God's blue-pearly plane.

Amidst life's ocean, dark and rough,  
I float, a kindled buoy,  
No billow was yet strong enough  
My balance to destroy.  
An inner peace devoid of strife  
Hath ever been my very life,—  
Eternally my spirit-stuff  
Hath been eternal joy!

On nothing outward I depend,—  
Of that thou art aware!  
Neither relation, foe nor friend  
Can my true meaning share.  
Since all the earth behind the veil  
Of me, is but a sacred grail,  
And all the heavens from end to end  
Are but my act of prayer.

I am a giant self-suspense  
Above all thee and me.  
My consciousness is but a sense

Of immortality.  
I am the timeless slowly hurled  
Into this time-imposed world:  
A singular omnipotence  
Outrayed to me and thee.

I watch the herds of nights and days  
Go by like drowsy sheep  
Along the twilight-haunted ways  
Of some untrodden deep:  
Behind them all I burn in peace  
Which golden-whitely stains their fleece,  
A spaceless, bare and awful blaze  
Wherein they drop asleep.

Of outer worlds I never ask  
Support for my delight,  
Fulfilling, as I do, my task  
By a sheer will of white!  
My real glory ever lurks  
Behind my labors and my works,  
The world is but a gaudy mask  
Which hides my depth and height.

My ecstasy is all superb  
Behind the little love  
Of man and beast and bloom and herb,  
Of water, tree and dove.  
My millionth reflex in a glass  
Grows visible in things that pass,  
While naught that passes can disturb  
My truth which broods above.

I am the secret law of laws  
Who operate and fill  
The universe with sound and pause,  
Color and shadow still,  
Who make the magic play called mind  
For time's performance, while, behind  
Its characters my light withdraws  
Naked, without a thrill!

And yet the shadow of my sight,  
Itself a vision, holds  
Divine and intimate delight  
While gazing on the golds,  
The changing silvers, blues and greens,  
Bright privilege of shades and sheens,  
And its outgazing from my height  
Fashions and breaks and molds.

Nothing delights me or annoys  
Which cometh from outside,  
Nothing supports me or destroys  
The ecstasy I hide—  
For I am in all things, and yet  
Above them all, unknown, unmet  
By aught which hath not drunk the poise  
Of self, illumined wide!

## EXEMPTION

Beloved, having tasted  
The bitter cup of earth  
I come to thee, a lover  
Of heaven, and discover  
That naught was ever wasted  
That I had done since birth,  
So fully having tasted  
The bitter cup of earth.

The magic cup of pleasure  
Pain-flooded to the brim,  
For years I drained cup after  
Strange cup of tears and laughter,  
And now I come to measure  
The golden wine of Him,  
Who drank the cup of pleasure  
Pain-flooded to the brim.

Through anguish and disaster  
Arrives this lonely soul,  
Along the way I scattered  
My life which hardly mattered.  
But now I am a master  
Of happy self-control.  
Through anguish and disaster  
Arrives my lonely soul.

How often torn and tortured,  
Yea, at the very root,  
My life, which growing duller,  
Each day was losing color!  
But now it is an orchard  
Of ripe and silent fruit,  
The life which once was tortured  
And wounded at the root.

Only thy love could pardon  
Old ways that might have placed  
My soul beyond redemption

Without its great exemption.  
Behold, a budded garden  
Where once there was a waste!  
Only thy love could pardon  
Thy love so wondrous chaste.

The past has been a very  
Desert of suffering  
Where all was dull and dreary  
And all was bare and weary,  
But now I am as merry  
As any bird in spring.  
The past had been a very  
Desert of suffering.

Yet was I no exception  
To life, nor something strange,  
Since dark is mortal living  
Until thy great forgiving,  
And thy divine reception  
Works the miraculous change.  
Lo, I was no exception  
To life, nor something strange!

For life is full of rancor,  
Falsehood and greed and guile,  
While it is lived without thee  
Where mortals mock and flout thee,  
Yea, and a poison-canker  
Dwells in each human smile,—  
For life is full of rancor  
And bitterness and guile.

In what a subtle manner  
The devil sets the snare  
To draw and to inveigle  
The soul's time-shadowed eagle  
Making each life a banner  
For hostile powers to bear.  
In what a subtle manner  
The devil sets his snare.

With what a gaudy glamour  
Time in the world goes by;  
How sorrowfully hollow  
The life which mortals follow,  
In love with clash and clamor,  
In love with moan and cry:  
With what a gaudy glamour  
Time in the world goes by.

The soul goes wildly reeling,  
How like a drunken thing!  
How like a bird forgetting  
That days are swiftly setting,  
Wounded, yet scarcely feeling  
The wound upon its wing!  
The soul goes wildly reeling,  
How like a drunken thing!

We choose the dark, exulting  
In colored dreams of dust,—  
When once thy love hath won us  
And calmly re-begun us,  
Say is it not insulting  
To thee and to thy trust,  
This treacherous exulting  
In colored dreams of dust?

Lo, thou hast oped thy portal  
Of splendours crystalline:  
And he who fain would enter  
Must dwell at the heart's centre,  
And who would grow immortal  
Must be entirely thine,—  
Lo, thou hast oped the portal  
Of splendors crystalline.

On earth the shadows revel,  
Thy glory shines above!  
Who wants the light must surely  
Hold on to it securely,

One cannot serve the devil  
And yet demand thy love,—  
On earth the shadows revel,  
Thy glory shines above.

When once the word is spoken.  
And once the vow is made,  
It must be kept and treasured  
And by a lifetime measured,  
For once that vow is broken  
Thy promise is delayed,  
And once the word is spoken  
Thy laws must be obeyed.

Beloved, I have taken  
An oath to be thine own.  
O let me be one living  
Expression of thy giving:  
Within me rouse and waken  
Thy melodies alone!  
Beloved, I have taken  
An oath to be thine own.

Nay, I will never hurt thee  
Nor thy sweet light resist.  
Upon thy guidance leaning  
My life assumes a meaning,  
Ah love, should I desert thee  
I could no more exist  
Nay, I will never hurt thee  
Nor thy sweet light resist.



## CHALLENGE

As the thunders of life grow louder  
And the rain-glooms around grow graver,  
I find that my heart grows prouder  
And my journeying footfalls braver.  
Since within me thou dost awaken  
The storms are sorely mistaken  
If they think that I shall be shaken  
Or that my spirit shall waver.

As the darkness around me grows dreader  
And the gathering mists grow thicker  
And the wakeful eyes grow redder,  
My steps move quicker and quicker:  
Since I have received thy pardon  
The desert hath changed to a garden,  
And my heart shall nevermore harden,  
And my flame shall nevermore flicker.

Let the winds blow wilder and stronger,  
I never will be overpowered,—  
No, I am afraid no longer.  
My love! I am no more a coward.  
I am not afraid of the whitening  
Swift fire of the fiercest lightning;  
My soul hath experienced a heightening  
And the being within me has flowered.

Let the waves grow greyer and rougher  
And the ocean rise up like a giant,  
Not a hair on my body shall suffer  
Nor the waters be long defiant.  
I have passed the last shadow of fearing  
And am certain the shore is nearing,  
Since thou, my beloved, art steering  
And the waves to thy will are pliant.

Let the hail fall faster and faster  
From a heaven of tragedy speeding,  
Through thy grace I have grown to a master

Of all menace and sorrow and bleeding.  
For within me a secret I hold now,  
Changing life to a vision of gold now,  
Through tests and through trials untold now  
Thou seest me always succeeding.

Let the road grow steeper and steeper.  
And the obstacles greater and greater.  
My silence grows deeper and deeper,  
And my travel grows straighter and straighter.  
The goal may seem farther than ever,  
But my travel shall tire me never,  
To reach it shall be my endeavour  
And I'll come to it sooner or later.

## FIRE-IMAGERY

Billions of balls of fiery gold,  
Unnumbered circles of silver-cold  
Stillness: for whose delight are they rolled?

Or are they, perhaps, beyond our guess,  
Maneuvers made in a game of chess  
On the board of some high inwardness?

And I wonder if spaces are aware  
Those mighty mysterious worlds are there  
Laboring roundly everywhere?

Or is all space but an orchard mute  
Where, independent of tree and root,  
Ripens his fire-encinctured fruit?

Ah nay, perhaps they are eyeballs lent  
Yon immemorial, smoothly-bent  
Eyelid of one single firmament.

Or are they wonderful birds of light  
Suspended aloft in a molten flight  
That marks off for man his day and his night?

Or are they the lamps of One, lone-lit,  
Each with a tranquil flame in it,  
At the festival of the infinite?

Or they may be great shields of glares  
Which, without a break, the timeless bears  
Lest bleak time take it unawares.

Or are they flaming drops in a cup  
By means of a magical power held up  
Awaiting the hour when the gods shall sup?

Or are those orbs in the boundless sky,  
Which dazzle the soul and dizzy the eye,  
But the ageless wounds in some hero's thigh?

Or are they bubbles of time, blown first  
When the invisible was universed,  
Bubbles of fire that shall never burst?

Or are they but so many blinding rings  
Worn, in his cycle-marryings  
With the queen of light, by the king of kings?

Or are they but yellow and white and red  
Wheels of some chariot swiftly sped  
To the wedding of silence overhead?

Or are they at best but rapid dots  
Or the myriad joyous points he jots  
Down in a journal of his high thoughts?

All day and all night these eyes behold  
Unnumbered miraculous worlds unfold;  
For whose delight are they spun and rolled?

## FUSION

My heart grows fuller like a cloud  
Above a mountain-crest  
With inliest weight of diamond bowed,  
A mystery of rest.  
Above a lonely mountain-range,  
Secure upon a height,  
See how its quiet edges change  
In thine increasing light.

Starlike I hang in the unheard,  
And twinkle through the dew  
Of lampless distance, like a word  
Of godhead coming through:  
Nothing has ever reached as far  
As its one-pointed thrill,  
Beloved, since I am a star  
Created by thy will.

A quivering color, in the void  
Of centuries, I gleam  
Which but thy whiteness hath enjoyed  
In its unfathomed dream;  
A color solitary, mute,  
Whose reflex first began  
To warm the sun, the bird, the fruit,  
And the bright mood in man.

Through aeoned silences I float  
A vibrant voice of fire,  
An inextinguishable note  
Awakened on thy lyre;  
Through timeless time it speeds and goes  
With all the sky for veil,  
Echoed to music of the rose  
Which flood both hill and dale.

Wakens in me the ancient me  
Whose eyes begin to drowse  
Upon an inward-heaving sea

Whose waves are shining vows,  
Made at the vestal flame on high  
With-thee as beauty's priest,  
To pass into a state of sky  
Lit to an inner feast.

Deeper and deeper grows the soul  
To splendors that can awe.  
Behold, it is its own control,  
Its own unerring law:  
Whether in travel or at camp  
O'er paths untrod or trod,  
It burneth clearly like a lamp,  
A jeweled lamp of God.

## OUT OF THE DARK

How rapidly my life has changed,  
How swiftly I have climbed  
A consciousness that is estranged  
From beauty, human-timed;  
That laughs today and dies tomorrow  
Leaving behind a trail of sorrow;  
All life, somehow, for me is now  
Immortally arranged.

There was a time I used to pray  
For many gifts from thee,  
But thou didst only take away  
Even what I had, from me;  
Through bitter strife and dark denial,  
Through broken life and deadly trial,  
Didst lead my tread between the red  
Of fire and ashes grey.

And, through sheer weariness of grief,  
Through constant glooms, I passed  
Into a state of unbelief,  
Light's pitiful outcaste!  
The sky with all its jeweled blueness  
Seemed to my soul a huge untrueness,  
And so I sought to drown my thought  
In sorry things and brief.

I said, "All things are wearisome,  
All things are fools of time!  
And heaven is, at best, a dumb  
Summit we dare not climb!  
And there is no design or reason  
In cloud or wood or changing season,  
All these were meant as accident,  
They come and go and come!"

I said, "Yon moon so white and cool  
Is but a floated lie,  
And so is all the starry pull

Connected with the sky!  
Mere fleeting accidental poses  
Are rubies, rainbows, rivers, roses,—  
They peer and pass as in a glass,  
Nothing is beautiful!”

I said, “All Nature is a flaw,  
Which ought to disappear,  
For Death alone doth wield a law  
Unchallenged, old, austere.  
Then unto whom is life appealing  
In builded mosques and temples kneeling?  
Why should it hide a hope inside,  
Why should it feel such awe?”

But suddenly I felt thee pluck  
My soul one sudden day,  
Leaving me speechless as one struck  
With lightning on the way.  
A riper pain, a deeper grieving  
Drove me into a firm believing,  
In the wise plan thou hast for man  
And that, indeed, was luck!

And now I have discovered thou  
Chastisest to uplift,  
And all past sorrow on my brow  
Was but thy precious gift.  
It was to draw me ever nigher  
That thou didst lead me through the fire,  
Beloved mine, my Love divine!  
See, I have reached thee now!

I stand without the shadow-mask  
Of outer dream and love,  
And mine is but a simple task  
Of looking up above  
At thee, thy beauty and thy splendor  
With all a child’s entire surrender,  
Thou knowest, indeed, all that I need,—  
I never need to ask.



Sometimes, beloved, I have thought  
Thy countless gifts would bend  
My human vessel fragile-wrought  
And break it in the end,  
And so I have cried out, O Giver!  
Let not thy Grace flow like a river,  
With such a gush and speed and rush  
Lest I should bear it not.”

But gradually thou hast trained  
My human heart to hold  
The wondrous joy thou hast ordained  
That never shall be told;  
Untroubled, unexcited, speechless  
I reach to raptures that are reachless,  
And now I know the lambent-slow  
God-power that I have gained.

## ENTHRONED

It is time for You to enter  
My heart and rest in it.  
For already at its centre  
Your diamond lamp is lit.  
I have counted every beat  
Of your slow-approaching feet  
Towards the simple seat  
Of my life where you will sit.

It is not a regal mansion  
But a beggar's little room;  
It will meet with rare expansion  
When, in the golden gloom,  
You enter, beloved mine!  
Your presence, all-divine,  
Shall convert it to a shrine  
Thick-strewn with heavenly bloom.

In many a grey and numbing  
Life-winter with its frost  
I have waited for your coming,  
O Love beyond all cost!  
For I had known you when  
Spirit was alien  
To imaged worlds and men,  
And knew you were not lost.

Before the first pale twinkling  
Of star the heavens pearled,  
Before the slightest inkling  
Of God's created world,  
When there was neither sky  
Nor yet the firstling cry  
Of beauty, you and I  
Were in deep silence furled.

But when the lights were started  
A-dancing on the deep,  
Beloved One, we parted,

Twin portions of the sleep  
Of time and cramping thought,  
The seeker and the sought,  
Twin-hungers in the nought  
With fiery tears to weep.

We have looked for one another  
In forms which scarce abide,  
Sometimes as child and mother,  
Sometimes as groom and bride;  
Through passing joy and grief,  
Through anguish and relief,  
Through meetings all too brief  
We have sought each other's side.

As a comrade or a lover,  
As a brother or a son,  
I have striven to discover  
The counterpart, sweet one!  
Through the nights and through the days  
In a thousand different ways,  
Through fulfillments and delays,  
I have sought your union.

In deepest darkness groping,  
Through deluge, blast and squall  
I have ever sought you, hoping  
To reach you once for all.  
Now in the golden gloom  
You come into my room,  
Say, who has come to whom  
And who has heard whose call?

It was time for you to enter  
My heart and rest in it,  
So now within the centre,  
My Love, you calmly sit  
As though you always sat  
Upon my beggar's mat,  
Out of me looking at  
The jeweled Infinite.

## ALL-ONENESS

Beautiful! I love thee dearly  
With a love that grows and grows,  
Though the world may deem it merely  
Fleeting love that comes and goes.  
In my heart I hold thee ever  
Like an imaged light sublime,  
And without the least endeavor  
Hold thee inly all the time.

Life is now a daily diving  
Into thy deep ocean-trance,  
And, by slow degrees, arriving  
At the spirit's blue expanse  
That is rolling, ever rolling  
Past our knowledge of thy love,  
While thy heaven, soft-ensouling  
Magic silence, hangs above.

Every day I sit before thee  
By thy gazing aureoled,  
Life! to say that I adore thee  
Were to leave the truth untold.  
For the truth is even richer  
Than upon the surface seems,  
For this body is the pitcher  
From which thou dost pour thy dreams.

And my being is thy lyre  
Struck by thee to music-dew,  
Every drop a planet-fire  
Pearly-mellowed in the blue.  
All my spirit is a lightning  
Flashed above dim worlds of change,  
Like a naked laughter brightening  
Over death's long mountain-range.

I am one perpetual kneeling  
At thy silent sacred feet,  
Bearing in my life a feeling

That is wonderfully sweet.  
While, outside, the restless scoffer  
Strives to hurl at me his dart,  
Unto thee a faith I offer  
Rooted firmly in the heart.

## I WILL CRY OUT TO THEE

I will cry out to thee from the depth of my soul,

I will cry out to thee;

By crying to thee I will reach the goal,

I will cry out to thee.

Alone at thy door, O Divine, will I stand

With wounds on my feet and blooms in my hand,

Thou wilt deal me delight or wilt deal me dole,

I will cry out to thee.

Though the dawn be bright or the night be black,

I will cry out to thee.

Though the sky be blue or the rain-clouds crack,

I will cry out to thee.

I have journeyed, Beloved, mile after lone mile,

A pilgrim who seeks but a glimpse of thy smile,

And my journey has been o'er a broken track,

I will cry out to thee.

I have cried out to thee, my Love! from the first,

I have cried out to thee.

But my life in the past has been lonely and cursed,

I have cried out to thee.

I wanted to come to thee so long ago,

But my coming to thee has been sorry and slow,

So the thirst that I bring thee is no new thirst,

I will cry out to thee.

I will cry out to thee through all things that appear

I will cry out to thee.

I will cry out to thee through all music I hear;

I will cry out to thee.

Hereafter for me all ocean and sky

Shall be but a wonderful wandering cry,

Be the meeting with thee either distant or near,

I will cry out to thee.

I will cry out to thee in day-breaking light,

I will cry out to thee.

I will cry out to thee in the deepening night,

I will cry out to thee.  
I will cry out to thee in the glow-worm and star,  
In all shadows that brood and all colors that are;  
In the sunseting red and the moonrise-white,  
I will cry out to thee.

I will cry out to thee even when thou art dumb,  
I will cry out to thee.  
I will cry out to thee though no answer come,  
I will cry out to thee.  
It may take but a moment for thee to engage  
My soul in thy service, or, perhaps, an age,  
But to cry out to thee is not wearisome,  
I will cry out to thee.

Whatever the hour of night or of day,  
I will cry out to thee.  
Through the noonday's gold, or the evening's grey,  
I will cry out to thee.  
But my cry will not ever be stormy or wild,  
It will always contain the true note of a child,  
Of a child who but cries and has nothing to say,  
I will cry out to thee.

Though ages and ages may pass me by,  
I will cry out to thee.  
Though centuries bloom in thy gardens and die,  
I will cry out to thee.  
Though nobody listen, I will cry still  
From the depths of my being, my God, until  
My cry is a silence, my silence a cry,  
I will cry out to thee.

Whatever may happen, whatever betide,  
I will cry out to thee.  
I will cry out to thee from deep down inside,  
I will cry out to thee.  
With a cry I will storm thee some day and win,  
Thou wilt open the door and invite me in,  
I will cry out to thee as no man ever cried,  
I will cry out to thee.

## TRANSFIGURATION

Wisdom hath taken ignorance to wife  
And with his first caress has made her flower  
Into the deathless beauty that is life,  
Into the shining silence that is power.

    And now her blue-black mouth,  
Carven of venomous shadow, is rose-flushed  
With living nectar quenching all her drouth;  
    See how the blood has rushed  
Into her naked bosom lighting it  
Into a color which on earth was never lit.

Keen youth leaps timeless out of time grown old,  
Red springtide is an essence in the blood,  
And what was grey and barren turns to gold,  
And what was desert-soil begins to bud;

    All life takes on a tone  
Of such delight as never seems to end,  
A river is released out of the stone,  
    And under heaven's bend,  
Earth, that was but a ball of mud and mire,  
Changes into a carnival of luscious fire!

A joy with deep humility endowed,  
A whelming love which hardly speaks a word;  
A rainbowed glory hangs from cloud to cloud  
And a new music occupies the bird;

    Nature is now estranged  
From her dim past of death and incompleteness;  
Her pale recurrent processes are changed,  
    And even in the fleetness  
Of things which seem to fade and disappear  
The outline of true immortality grows clear!

I hear some lone and mighty organist  
Full, unpremeditated numbers play  
In moon-mad waters, in the mountain-mist  
And the blind depths of stark and ignorant clay,

    Breaking its bonds of sleep;  
There is another whistling in the wind,



Another-mooded music on the deep,  
Austerely disciplined,  
Through the wild wandering of every wave  
From age to age, into a note supremely grave.

The grain of life is severed from the chaff,  
The wine of truth hath drenched these lips that sing;  
A pure austerity which knows to laugh,  
A calm aloofness that, in everything,  
Dwells as a myriad one;  
And everywhere I send my flowing song,  
Like to a cataract of melting sun  
And planet sped along  
The lonely ways of time, I do discover  
That every waiting breath of life has found its lover.

The soul comes out of its blind chrysalid  
In magic colors burning through the skies,  
And the bright-winged flame within it hid  
Flares on the emptiness like a surprise  
And takes an easy flight;  
Leaving the shadow of mere earth, it goes  
Back once again towards the stainless light  
That opens like a rose,  
There, in the floated wideness, bare and broad,  
The vast unconsciousness of god that he is god.

O what transfiguration, love! is this  
Which worketh with the swiftness of desire;  
My soul is like an everlasting kiss  
Whose ecstasy is incense rising higher  
At every breath of breath,  
With dream-enjoyed elysian perfumes rife;  
Your touch of mercy hath not stricken death  
But changed it into life,  
Weaving its discords with a fluent ease  
Into the golden harmony of harmonies.

The crowded longings, of a bygone time,  
(Through which how many youthful hearts are aged!)  
Now seem to me a gaudy pantomime

By some black-mobled shadow poorly staged;  
    And every moan I moaned  
Was as a celebration of untruth,  
Lo! by inconscient nature well-nigh stoned  
    To countless dyings, youth  
Continues in a tragic world of tears,  
Revolving idly through dank mists of mournful years.

Even as a wave is spilt upon the sand  
In a large sweep of wastage, ocean-plucked,  
And swiftly disappears, leaving a bland  
Brief rainbow where the grains and pebbles sucked  
    The vagabonding wave,  
Youth leaps out of a sea of deep delight,  
Part of God's ocean magical and grave,  
    And passes out of sight  
Into the stretching sands of wasted hours  
Which burningly drink up its free unmeasured powers.

See how the myriad boats of lives are tossed  
Upon the whirl of uncontrolled pleasure  
Since, through long storms of selfhood, they have lost  
The secret of the ocean and its measure  
    Calm, mighty and superb;  
The sky of time unfolds to grey and black  
Of never-ending tempests that disturb  
    Life's lonely ocean-track,  
And will not wear the golden calms again  
Until they weep to God in a great mood of rain.

O world of agony and wretchedness!  
How long will you in lampless glooms be veiled?  
How long will you be held in a caress  
Of storm and deluge, thunderous and galed?  
    Surely you were not meant  
Only for falsehood, darkness and disease,  
O world? for lo, your heart is innocent  
    Under the tragedies  
Which weigh you down, the greed, the hate, the guilt  
Out of whose squalidness your structure seemeth built.

Nay, you shall rise again, and resurrect  
Into the pristine splendor that was yours;  
New-hearted men shall waken and erect  
Wonderful beauty on your hundred shores:  
    Mansions of love and dream,  
Sweet cities out of stillness, aureoled  
And wrought to minarets and spires that gleam  
    Like to unbodied gold,  
The kingly substance of the many-willed  
Immortal self which, through projected thought, shall build.

A quiet alteration in your codes  
Shall be effected in the future days  
When human feet shall walk on outer roads  
Bearing the knowledge of the inner ways;  
    The very dust shall start  
Under their rhythmic falls and beat with power  
As though it had contained a secret heart  
    Always about to flower;  
And every mile upon your earth-ways trod  
Will be a huge light-distance traveled unto God.

Your heavens shall change their aspect, being bowed  
With rarest wisdom that was never there,  
For man who is of earth a wandering cloud  
Shall, with a glance, transform the cloud in air  
    Into a conscious shape;  
Fire-argent wind shall play upon his pipe  
Until the vineyards of the spaces grape  
    Incalculably ripe;  
The nebulae will crystallize and be  
Distinct new heart-throbs of God-man-eternity!

Nature shall be a loveliness of loves  
Fulfilled into a miracled content:  
Her peacocks and her panthers and her doves  
Shall wear the colors of the firmament  
    And walk as though in Him;  
The lion and the stag will meet and sip  
The water of a single pool, and brim  
    With true companionship;

Nor will the jewel of one creature's eye  
Depend for its warm lustre on another's cry!

Man shall control the tempest and the rain,  
As he controlleth now a restive steed,  
Holding them by their silver-shadowy mane,  
And turn the lightning-flames that redly bleed  
Into a whip that cracks  
Merrily in the air, interpreter  
Of speed or slowness, working on the backs  
    Of elemental stir,  
Leading it onward towards the final poise  
That anything already held by light enjoys.

## FIRE-MESSENGERS

Myriads of mighty birds flew by,  
Their plumes of mingled gold and flame  
Clove all the air to splendors high:  
Who knows from what mysterious sky  
Into a dusky world they came?

They filled the silence with a whirl  
Of blended pinions whose flame-rush  
Was deeper silence naught could stir:  
Was each a fire-messenger  
Journeying from hush to deeper hush?

At first I did not realize  
Whence streamed the soft enchanted whirl,  
A spiraled light of changing dyes:  
But soon I saw them in their eyes  
Of wedded emerald, sapphire, pearl.

Birds of humility, a crowd  
Of the eternal rapture, sent  
Shot like bright pangs through every cloud  
Which dared to come between their proud  
Flight and the calling firmament.

Each curve of pinion seemed to hold  
An ecstasy that traced a bow  
At every point of speed, controlled  
By some far master-hand of gold  
Arrowing the air with birded glow.

So swift they flew; I could not count  
These dazzling hosts of angel-grace:  
But even their memories seem to mount  
Keenly to an immortal fount  
Flowing in some cool pilgrim-place.

High noon dissolved to dusk and passed  
Into a brooding night that was  
An emanation of the last

Self-revelation of the vast,  
Mirrored to depths of starry pause.

When, like a multitudinous roll  
Of precious honey poured from jars  
From pole to diamond-studded pole,  
The golden bird-wings from my soul  
Melted and covered up the stars.

Myriads of giant birds flew out:  
Each, an event that but occurs  
In realms unshadowed of all doubt:  
O ancient many-jeweled rout  
Of deathless fire-messengers!

## NATARAJ

Nataraj, the red-fire dancer,  
Poised in peace and clad in storms,  
Dances in his lonely rapture  
On the burning ghat of forms.  
See him dancing in elation  
Like a wild and drunken wind:  
He is dancing all creation  
To the pattern in his mind.

Ruthlessly he comes to shatter  
Everything that blocks his way,  
Piercing blind inconscient matter.  
With his all-consuming ray;  
Rocks and mountains grow transparent  
And the stars begin to beat  
Like the heart-throbs of the spirit  
Round his dance-ecstatic feet.

Time beneath his measured footfalls  
With its myriad moments marks,  
One by one, our passions flying  
From his dance like holy sparks.  
All our life that was unreal  
Is re-woven in its whirl  
For the naked-born ideal  
To a spirit-cloth of pearl.

Nataraj, the conscious dancer,  
With his rhythm comes to bless  
Every corner of creation  
Till it knows his consciousness.  
Streams and rivers stand suspended  
While the planets reel and swim  
As though stricken with the splendid  
Ether-drunken dance of him.

He has come at last to capture  
Unpremeditated bliss,  
Through the running lonely rapture

Born to beings, in his kiss.  
See him dancing, dancing, dancing  
Like a darkly-drunken breeze!  
He is breaking and re-making  
Terrible eternities.



## AN OLD OLD SONG

My song is her song:  
I didn't know it!  
I didn't know so long  
I was her poet!

All things are her moods,  
In gladness sing, O!  
Blue of the twilight-woods,  
Pink of flamingo!

See how they rise and rush  
At her least call, O!  
Silver of water-hush  
And sudden swallow!

The world out of her deep  
Joy she has made, O!  
White bud half-asleep  
And black tornado!

From her calm form of light  
Touched by her will, O!  
Wild winds perform their flight  
O'er the dark billow!

All human-hearted things  
That may have sinned, O!  
Sprout into angel-wings  
Under her window.

And yet my heart bleeds  
And I turn sad, O!  
Since for our sake she needs  
To cast a shadow.

Through me all day and night  
She sings . . . I know it . . .!  
And so I have a right  
To be her poet!

## SHAPER SHAPED

In days gone by I used to be  
A potter who would feel  
His fingers mould the yielding clay  
To patterns on his wheel;  
But now, through wisdom lately-won,  
That pride has died away:  
I have ceased to be the potter  
And have learned to be the clay.

In bygone times I used to be  
A poet through whose pen  
Innumerable songs would come  
To win the hearts of men;  
But now, through new-got knowledge  
Which I hadn't had so long,  
I have ceased to be the poet  
And have learned to be the song.

I was a fashioner of swords,  
In days that now are gone,  
Which on a hundred battlefields  
Glittered and gleamed and shone;  
And now that I am brimming with  
The silence of the lord,  
I have ceased to be sword-maker  
And have learned to be the sword.

In other days I used to be  
A dreamer who would hurl  
On every side an insolence  
Of emerald and pearl;  
But now that I am kneeling  
At the feet of the supreme,  
I have ceased to be the dreamer  
And learned to be the dream.

## EQUILIBRIUM

Can you be as calm  
As a palm  
In the shy light  
Of the twilight?

And can you repose  
Like a rose  
In the grey light  
Of old daylight?

Can you be a blade  
Unafraid  
Under frightening  
Yellow lightning?

Can you lie alone  
Like a stone  
Quiet under  
Dreadful thunder?

Can you be as cool  
As a pool  
In a deep  
Inward sleep?

Can you truly be  
As a tree  
Blossom-bowed  
To the cloud?

## HOMeward

Does the perfume that leaves the lily  
Ever yearn to return to it?  
And to the wide surging darkness  
The flame when once it is lit?

Does the sound that is struck in the tower  
Ever yearn to return to its bell?  
Does the water you fill in your pitcher  
Ever yearn to return to its well?

## DIVINE DRAMA

What are you doing, beloved!  
With this body's dim sad clay?  
"I am crowning it chosen hero  
In the spirit's beautiful play."  
What are you doing, beloved!  
With this frail white column of spine?  
"It is the master-musician's flute  
In the drama of the Divine."

What are you doing, beloved!  
With my weary human thought?  
"I am breaking it up and making it up  
Into a golden plot."  
What are you doing, beloved!  
With my dreams not ready as yet?  
"I am cutting them up and painting them  
Into a gorgeous set."

What are you doing, beloved!  
With my errors and sins and wrongs?  
"I am setting them all to music  
And striking them into songs."  
What are you doing, beloved!  
With the time I have not lived well?  
"O! out of that I am forging  
The clear, announcing bell!"

What are you doing, beloved!  
With my myriad human sense?  
"I am making the seats for ancestors  
Who will form the audience."  
And what are you doing, beloved!  
With my life so bruised and cracked?  
"I am recasting its substance  
And writing the final act."

## MOMENT OF TRANCE

I stood upon the edge of trance,  
On the blue margin of the night,  
And saw within the heart advance  
An utter loneliness of light.

My blood grew to a scented blush  
Of roses, while the body was  
A rich experience of hush,  
A rhythm-flowering of pause.

In that great moment I became  
One who had power to control  
Life's crimson-pointed candle-flame,  
And the white gem-fire of the soul.

Thus, while I stood upon the edge  
Of inwardness, I heard a voice  
Cry out, "I have fulfilled my pledge,  
And now, O flowered soul, rejoice!"

## POWERS

At the end of the silent secret lane  
I saw the ancient man turn,  
Swinging my soul in his calm right hand  
As though he were swinging a lantern.

And while he walked through that secret lane  
Whose name was inspiration,  
Each patterned shade that the lantern made  
Was a colorful creation.

Through dark transparencies I saw  
The flame of the lantern pass,  
Since all around it was walled and bound  
With squares of colored glass.

So while he walked through the secret lane  
The shadows to left and right  
Were stains of color although the flame  
Itself within was white.

## PILGRIM

Through desolations he goes on  
In flowing beauty, pouring out  
From the sweet pitchers of his dawn  
New-kindled faith on glooms of doubt.

We are the mystic deaths of him  
Through which himself he comes to meet  
Since every death is but a dim  
Grey shadow of his rose-red feet.

He seeks an ever-distant goal  
Through life's miraculous decay;  
Between the griefhoods of our soul  
He treads the hushful homeward way.



## PROTECTION

He knows to save his myriad loves,  
Sweet nurslings of eternal bliss:  
Lilies, his mating-moods, and doves,  
Pure revelations of his kiss.

Held safely in his equal joy  
All things grow strong and unafraid;  
No demon-force shall dare destroy  
These lovely things his hands have made.

Nothing shall die that dreams his dream  
Bearing, within, the holy spark,  
What though, sometimes, it almost seem  
As though his light were growing dark.

But lizard time shall never hold  
Between its sudden jaws, in death,  
Beauty's immortal moths of gold  
Dancing around his flamelike breath.

## EVASION

I have found you out at last,  
And this time without a doubt:  
Master of the golden vast!  
Surely I have found you out.

I have, in this instant, known  
That you have been waiting long  
To become my very own  
At the end of every song.

All expression on my part,  
Lo! however sweet or true,  
Does but draw away the heart  
From the silent heart of you.

I may never hope to reach  
The essential you who are  
Past all shadow-sound of speech,  
Silence deep-withdrawn and far.

When you give me songs to sing  
Something whispers in my breast  
You have run away, my king!  
To the lonely unexpressed.

How had I not known so long  
That, whene'er I sat to shape  
Your great beauty into song,  
You yourself had found escape?

Now I will not let you go!  
When I want you at your best,  
Master of the fire, I know  
You are in the unexpressed.

## REST

Let me rest my head in your lap, beloved!  
In the rest I have long desired.  
My eyes are full of sleep, beloved!  
And my heart is very tired.  
My dreams have escaped the mesh of flesh  
And the world's most tricky trap:  
I have come at last to rest, beloved!  
To rest my head in your lap.

I have roamed a great great deal, beloved!  
And my feet are bleeding and sore,  
But now I have reached your side, beloved!  
As a boat that has reached the shore.  
My heart still trembles mournfully  
When it thinks of the days now gone,  
When life was a long, long lonely night  
Without the least hope of a dawn,

When all the sky was a sigh, beloved,  
And all the earth was a pain . . .  
Thank God! those days are now of the past  
And will never come back again!  
Ah yes, those days are dead, beloved!  
The long sweet dawn has begun . . .  
Why need I think again, beloved!  
Of the days that are over and done?

There was a time when I used to strive  
To stir the lord with my prayer,  
But the heavens put on a callous blue  
And nobody seemed to care:  
And when the dawn did come, sometimes,  
It was hurled like a blood-red stone  
At my life that lay in a corner of hell  
And sorrowed alone, alone.

No need for worshipping now remains,  
Nor for prayers a-tremble in air,  
For you are the silent, very last

Fulfilment of mortal prayer.  
All life has now become, beloved!  
A quiet and mystic game  
Of shadow-worlds that move, beloved!  
Between a flame and a flame.

## SOLUTION

Bleak death hath sown the bitter seed of strife  
In every corner of the world that blows  
    Into a scarlet rose,  
Housing the canker in the heart of life.  
The winds of evil fate go whistling by  
    Under the darkening sky  
    Of mortal-mated time;  
While, midway between hope and anguish hung,  
The soul essays truth's ladder, rung by rung,  
    Most difficult to climb.

God's silence ever wandering on high  
Echoes into a concave of dark light  
    Which hangeth day and night,  
While He goes moving between cry and cry  
Of human lips grown pale with crying grief,  
    Whose laughters are but brief  
    As flowers that live a while;  
Man dies in pain and then again returns  
In deeper pain—nor knows what anguish burns  
    Behind his truest smile.

The mystery of life is hard to guess,  
Nor is it solvable until we reach,  
    Beyond all thought and speech,  
The naked light of a new consciousness,  
Wherein all struggling images but seem  
    The process of some dream  
    Within a timeless sleep  
From which, upon some golden day of days,  
Man shall awake, and, in strange silence, gaze  
    Across a shadowless deep.

Then shall he learn the meaning of his pain,  
The absolute significance of all  
    Time-tides which rise and fall,  
And look on both the slayer and the slain  
As but one masterful divine event  
    Brief mournful color lent

Of agony and blood;  
Yea, unimprisoned of the body's term,  
He shall grow spirit and behold the worm  
One with the flowering bud.

The lonely kite that circles in the air  
Bearing a helpless chicken in its beak,  
The loud and sanguine shriek  
Of pride victorious, and the moan of prayer  
Unheard, a-dropping from the vanquished prey;  
All these shall start some day  
Trails of a single voice;  
One will become the gold sun and grey mist,  
Earth and the sky, when no more shall exist  
The dual sense of choice.

But not until we reach the light within  
Shall we outgrow the need to want and choose,  
And some must bleed and lose  
In life's wild battle, some must laugh and win.  
While the dim selfhood drunk with greed and lust  
Shall wage a war of dust,  
Of hatred and of death,  
Continue yet a slave of cyclic law  
Twixt ruddy hours of grief, and sadly draw  
Poor temporary breath!

These fire-red wars of men shall never cease  
So long as they in wanton dark remain  
Of huge self-built pain,  
Nor yet arrive at life's authentic peace  
By sham indulgence, in a fleeting lapse  
Peace-signed and sealed on scraps  
Of paper whitely spread  
Before dishonest men who meet and know  
That, past their little whiteness, breaks the glow  
Of battles long and red.

How long, O sad humanity! how long  
Will you evade your own immortal meaning,  
Your ear forever leaning

To catch the echo of a battle-song?  
How long will you the silence veil with loud  
          Thunders which tear through cloud  
          On darkling cloud of hate?  
When will you leave the levels of a breathless  
Conflict of man with man, and reach your deathless  
          Original estate?

O Earth! refuse submission of the sheep  
Led to an idle slaughter for the feast  
Of self-intoxicated man grown beast!  
Arise and walk upon truth's shimmering deep,  
Bent like a stilly arch  
From heaven unto heaven of shining sleep  
Behold! One waits to watch your shadows march,  
Out of bare desert-lengths of pain that parch,  
Into a flowering vastness of the steep;—  
Out of the long and lingering human night  
Towards an ever-more established dawn of light.

## MASTERHOOD

I sat and watched them as they came  
Towards my myriad-mirrored room,  
Some, children of the rose-red flame,  
And others of the inky gloom.

Watching that host, I sat apart  
A king upon a throne of thrones;  
I shut the gateways of the heart  
Against their wild, bewildered moans.

Nurslings of nature, rose and black,  
Returning to their mother's womb  
Shall never dream of coming back  
To crowd my many-mirrored room.



## VOICES OF POEMS

I am sure—cried the little poems—  
Our poet would like to know  
That some of us come from the future,  
And some, from the long ago.  
We are all forerunners of wisdom,  
And all you have got to do  
Is to fill the being with twilight  
And let us twinkle through.

O poet! what you call poems  
Are so many ways and means  
Of reaching the virgin whiteness  
Behind the world's golds and greens,  
Divine attempts at storming  
The subtle wonder that slips  
Between the words you utter  
From your song-enchanted lips.

They sound the delicate heart-throbs  
Of an ever-elusive One  
Who reveals himself in the silence  
When all joy of singing is done.  
But you go on singing, my poet!  
In faith while the day is long:  
You will find his light through your shadow,  
You will touch his hush through your song.

## SEEKERS OF FIRE

There is a long way yet to go,  
O you who have received the call!  
Where is the end? I do not know  
If there be such a thing at all!  
I only know the fire burns  
Somewhere, beyond our shadowed ken,  
And that a something sweetly yearns  
Deep in the loneliest hearts of men.

There is a way that winds and goes  
Towards the lover, through the mists  
Of centuries, and no one knows  
For certainty if he exists.  
But when we dream such dreams and taste  
Such sweetness in the heart, he must  
Bloom like a rose beyond the waste  
Of doubt's unyielding desert-dust.

O soul! move on from age to age,  
Move on, my God-enchanted soul!  
Making your every goal a stage  
In some forever-distant goal;  
And may each end be but fulfilled  
Into beginning; nor forget  
The spiral process he hath willed  
For feet that need to travel yet.

Be still, O traveling soul! be still!  
Even in movement learn to rest!  
Unite your will unto his will  
And then, throughout your lonely quest,  
You will discover that you are  
The self-same master whom you seek  
From evening-star to evening-star,  
From mountain-peak to mountain-peak.

The light is brimming in your eyes,  
Your breath has scented all the wind;

In every footfall hidden lies  
The goal that you are out to find.  
The emptiness of time and space  
Grows to a fullness sudden-sweet,  
Each step becomes a resting place  
For the once-weary traveling feet.

## THE FORGING ANEW

Master, I am quite prepared now!  
I have torn the cloudy cloak,  
And my silent breast is bared now  
To your swiftest weapon-stroke.  
Master, I am not afraid now  
Of your angers, for I know  
I will surely be re-made now  
On your anvil, blow by blow.

I can see your new creation  
Bloom out of inconscient dark:  
Every moment, a pulsation  
Of my nerve, becomes a spark  
Wandering into the radiant  
Emptinesses hung afar,  
And in its untroubled gradient  
Widening into a star.

Out of your heroic scourging  
Broken life is rendered whole.  
In red pain-fires you are forging  
The perfection of the soul.  
In your ruthless joy are shaken  
The dark habits of the earth;  
Out of broken things you waken  
Scent of resurrected birth.

Nay, the lord will not allow us  
Fallow-sleeps of death too long!  
With sharp ploughshares he will plough us  
Into ripe, nascent song;  
For the master knows to hold us  
Through our losses in the past  
And to some new rapture mould us  
Dearer to him than the last.

## SONG OF FLOWER-AND-FRUIT

Master-player! play your flute!  
Since it is my being's flame-time:  
Lo, I am both flower and fruit  
At the same time.

See my petals open wide  
Where the God-bee comes and settles  
Drunk with honey-aeons inside  
The circling petals.

Concentrated, ripe and mute,  
Inly-gathered, inly-sweet now  
I lie as a voiceless fruit  
At your feet now.

Master-player! in this hour  
Of enchantment stop your playing:  
Gather up both fruit and flower  
Without delaying.

## RAREFIED RAPTURE

White stork standing on the dim water-edge!  
Your vision, oh so delicate, has been with me for years:  
I wonder if you indicate the still and lonely pledge  
Of life fulfilled along the mournful margin of our tears.

White moon bubbled from the fringes of the night!  
Are you just a wandering round echo come again  
Out of the shout he shouted from his purple mountain-height  
When he heard his new creation cry its first wild cry of pain?

White thought blossomed on the borders of the deep!  
Say, are you the motherhood of all white flowers?  
While around your beauty black shadows rise and leap  
You stand stainlessly for hours on rippling hours.

## UNFETTERED

I am no more the fated  
And fettered thing that I was,  
Who loved and longed and hated  
Being caught in time's red claws.  
Behold, I am grown undated  
Being suddenly liberated  
From the dark chains struck and created  
By birth and its cyclic laws.

From bondage of life I am freed now,  
Yea, freed in every sense,  
No more does my bosom bleed now  
In slaveries long and intense;  
The heart hath hardly a need now  
Of hunger whose fiery seed now  
Grows heavenly wings that lead now  
To skies of omnipotence.

I am not bound by aught now,  
By color or shape or sound.  
O life of my life! by naught now  
Am I fettered or cramped or bound.  
Not even a dream or thought now  
Can hold me awhile . . . I am wrought now  
Into liberty which is not caught now  
In the vast of its own profound!

When the star grows a habit, I dim it,  
And song, when it runs in a groove;  
When hush grows a habit, I hymn it  
This freedom of mine to prove.  
Ere emptiness gathers I brim it  
With fullness,— I round it and rim it  
With fullness of truth without limit,  
From freedom to freedom I move!

## INVITATION TO A WORLDLY FRIEND

There is peace here and hush and twilight  
And love that but angels win  
And a garden named the beloved  
And a flowering called within:  
Come away, sad friend, come away  
Out of your dark wild whirl  
For the world is an ocean of sorrow  
And life is a broken pearl.

There is truth here and tireless dreaming  
And a state that is stainless-still  
And a miracle named the beloved  
And a magic wand called will:  
Come away, sad friend, come away  
From your world of anguish and shame  
Where time is a naked candle  
And life is a bleeding flame.

There is warmth here and sacred safety  
And a fullness of sweet release  
And a great mood named the beloved  
And a perfect expression called peace:  
Come away, sad friend, come away  
From your world where the winds blow sharp  
And the fingers of death go playing  
Your life like a mournful harp.

There is poise here and quiet wisdom,  
And a light on every face,  
And a birthday named the beloved  
And a carnival called grace:  
Come away, sad friend, come away  
For the world is a drunken blot  
And draining your dreams life flings you darkly  
Away like an empty pot!



## ASCENSION

Face to face in a lonely place of the deep still heart we have met, my love!  
Hour by hour the day is a-flower, and each star of night is a pure white dove;  
Song by song, the lone year long, my soul draws closer to heaven above.

Note by note, from a mortal throat I have learned to an immortal tune,  
Pain by pain, again and again, to an image of rapture I have been hewn;  
Aloof, quiescent, my life's dim crescent has almost reached its plenilune.

My weak wing is drunk with a spring whose rich red glory shall never fade;  
Out of clay, day after day, the wonder of fire is being made,  
Stroke by stroke, thus having awoke to the meaning of life, I am not afraid.

See! I wear the whole blue air like a regal mantle woven for me,  
And the dark billows that mark incessant rhythms for the wide sea  
Beat by beat roll at my feet like to divine dream-imagery.

We have met as one and yet, beloved of Light! we remain apart,  
But we are the single star invisible yet to the human chart,  
White and rich with truth, and which hangs high above the hues of the heart.

Even as twain we must remain to fulfill the rules of the mystic game,  
Each to each must speak the speech of severance masked in form and name;  
We are two, yet I and you are separate lamps that bear one flame.

Time and space meet face to face eternally in sky and land,  
But now they seem as a painted dream to us who meet in the soul, and stand  
High above the world and its love and its prison of tremulous eye and hand.

## ONE-POINTED

The nearer I come  
To you, my love!  
The further you seem  
To go from me,  
Your star is a drum  
That sounds above  
Like a note in a dream  
Of your victory.

From day to day  
And from night to night,  
This heart of mine  
Goes looking for you,  
O far-away  
Unreachable light!  
Say, where do you shine,  
In what high blue?

As time goes by  
My life, somehow,  
Like a mateless dove  
On a bough sits dumb.  
There's no other cry  
In my whole life now  
But "Come, O love,  
Oh come, oh come!"

The wind blows damp  
And the night is chill,  
And the bleak black seas  
Are rising like doubt,  
I have lit my lamp,  
It is burning still,  
In spite of the breeze  
That would put it out.

In spite of the thunder,  
In spite of the sleet,  
In spite of the gale

I will yet come through:  
For am I not under  
An oath, my sweet?  
Though storm prevail,  
I will come to you.

Nothing can block  
My journey, or crack  
My boat that is sped  
To your haven afar,  
Nor deluge-shock  
Nor the starless black,  
For my sail is spread  
To your guiding star.

## TO TIME

O time! who move from dark to dark,  
Whose mystery no man can guess,  
Behold me lonelily embark  
Upon a timeless consciousness;  
Now that your darkling waves are crossed  
Your narrow memory is lost.

To you my heart has grown immune:  
In me your clock forgets to strike,  
For now your pale diurnal tune  
Dims in the distance echo-like.  
The markings of your moon and sun  
Are being forgotten one by one.

To the whole world you bring the news  
Of dream and happiness and strife,  
Of musics, fragrances and hues,  
Summed up between a death and life;  
While in my deepest self I hide  
Wide mysteries to you denied.

With shades you dapple, stain and stripe  
The silent earth in silver swoon  
When overhead the sky is ripe  
With the lone rondure of the moon,  
But deep inside me, lo, I bear  
Shadowless scintillating air.

See how your sun with weary tread  
Drops down behind yon hill and dies,  
Striking all heaven with a red  
Fire-mood reflected from its eyes,  
While in my heart a diamond sun  
Eternally is just begun.

O Time! I have forgot your face,  
All trace of you has in me died,  
I even have forgotten space  
Who is your ever-changing bride:

Lo, I am wonderfully lit  
To a lone sense of infinite.

## SURRENDER

You have shot me, and I go  
Straight across the worlds and bear  
The fire-message of your bow  
Quivering through the cloudy air;  
For your bow is deftly wrought  
To a curve surpassing thought,  
And the dart it speeds along  
Is a happy dart of song.

You have struck me on your drum  
To a brave determined note,  
Which vibrates "I come, I come  
O'er the centuries afloat!"  
And the resonance of it  
Correspondingly is lit  
In the firmament to round  
Twinkling images of sound.

You have held me like a cloud  
In your sky of conscious sleep  
And have felt extremely proud  
To behold me in the deep  
Concave of the precious light  
Flooded into seerhood-sight,  
Tranquil, voiceless, poised and keen,  
Like a mood of seen unseen.

You have sent me like a beam  
Through the blackness of the night  
From the lighthouse of your dream  
Over seas that asked for light:  
Yet, in severance, have I still  
Been connected with your will,  
Always borne the deathless stamp  
Of true oneness with your lamp.

## THE DEATH OF TIME

Time weighs no longer anywhere  
With dark monotony of hours:  
Days are red roses in your hair  
And nights are bluey-burning flowers.

We are eternal, we are free!  
The sun and moon are fruits that warm  
Life's mystical immortal tree  
Unshaken by the frowning storm.

Grey cycles roam across the world,  
Pale wanderers without an aim.  
The mighty breath within us whirled  
Blows out the spaces flame by flame.

No more the tolling of the bell  
To keep us on the edge of time  
Since in god-liberty we dwell  
Lost in a dream of the sublime.

Behold! the past and future meet  
In a clear vision of the soul  
While years are sandals on your feet  
Which lightly move towards the goal.

## REALIZATION

Who says that you are far  
Or that you do not care?  
How near to us you are,  
O intimacy rare!  
Beloved! I have but  
These human eyes to shut,  
And lo, your love is there  
A-shining like a star.

It is your presence drapes  
The universe with glows;  
Out of your dream escapes  
The color of the rose,  
The wing-beat of a bird,  
The music of a word;  
A universe of shapes  
Is born of your repose.

What atom, grain or dot,  
Is of your joy devoid?  
What moment, mood or spot,  
Apparently destroyed  
In time, has ever ceased  
Or suffered in the least,  
O love! since are they not  
Within you re-enjoyed?

I see you everywhere,  
An image warm and true,  
The rainbow in the air  
Is but a streak of you.  
Yon birdling's yellow bill  
Is painted by your will,  
Beloved! it is your care  
That makes all heaven blue.

Again and yet again  
You meet me through the hours:  
I sense you in the rain,



I smell you in the flowers;  
I hear your endless tune  
Played in the sun and moon;  
On changing plane on plane  
You wield your magic powers.

Beauty! at every turn  
I hear your passing feet,  
I feel you glow and burn,  
In every lane and street;  
In every passerby  
I see you drawing nigh,  
At every step you yearn  
Myself in me to meet.

You have possessed me quite  
In your enchanted grip;  
Across deep miles of light  
I seem to drop and slip  
Like a lone drop of dew  
Into the depths of you  
Until upon a height  
I share your comradeship.

## LIGHT DIVINE

O light I already face to face  
I meet you everywhere I go;  
Already I begin to know  
The poignant bliss of your embrace.

The colored lights which fill the skies  
Of moon and sun and star on star,  
Now that you flood my being, are  
Reflected shadows from my eyes.

One touch of you, O light sublime,  
O alchemy of alchemies!  
Transmutes this fretting flesh and frees  
The spirit from the bonds of time.

The dust of lanes beneath my feet  
Is dappled with your warmth of gold;  
It is your flowering I behold  
In every man in every street.

O light! Already you have come  
Into my life without delay;  
These lips have nothing more to say  
Beyond that they are stricken dumb!

## THE SECRET LINK

Long, long ago—what does it matter when?—  
There lived a king, accounted among men  
A real king—in other words, a king  
Loved by the State; the ruby in his ring  
Contained his people's laughter, not their blood;  
His crown preserved their honor, and his throne  
Was conscious that his kingship was their own  
Being established but by their consent;  
To him, authentic king, his kingdom meant  
The people's happiness based on their trust,  
Which losing, it would crumble into dust  
And he be all unsceptered and uncrowned;  
The people loved him with a love profound,  
Leaving no room for base intrigue and strife,  
He was true trustee of the people's life  
Nourished by him with care . . .

In everything

They were consulted by their noble king  
Who, not in error even, took one measure  
Which might evoke a murmur of displeasure.  
And so, he ruled not merely over the State,  
But over their hearts . . .

No king was ever great

Without the people's love and confidence,  
Nor ever won from them obedience  
Unless himself he was obedient,  
Nor loyalty, unless himself he gave  
Loyalty in exchange . . .

What is a wave

Except a rhythm of ocean? yet, withal,  
Part of the ocean in its rise and fall . . .  
The people are the ocean, and the king  
Only one wave its waters gladly fling  
Up to a crested height to catch the rays  
Of some gold-climbing sun.

And thus he reigned:

His rule was crowned with blessings, and unstained  
By curses such as fall from mouths that moan  
In hunger round a tyrant's bloody throne.

Day after day inside his marble fort  
The king appeared, sun-glorious, and held court  
Surrounded by his subjects. Each complaint  
Was heard and helped.

Was he a man or saint?  
Men wondered in their hearts: He is, for sure,  
A superman, so wonderfully pure,  
So strong, so gifted with uncommon grace,  
A godly lustre floods his quiet face;  
His hands are big with largess, and his heart  
Wider than his own kingdom.

Lords of art  
Revealed their works before him; singers sang  
And dancers danced; a hundred musics rang  
Echoing joyously from hall to hall,  
And time itself became a waterfall  
Of liquid jewels sparkling as it came  
Pouring out of the senses,—wedded flame  
Of myriad colors, making one supreme  
Carnival of life.

The palace was a dream,  
Its walls enameled gorgeously, its floors  
Patterned with precious stones, its massive doors  
Carven by master hands,—which opened wide  
On crystal hinges,—and no one denied  
Access into the hall where the king sat  
Still as a statue, calmly gazing at  
His various performers who performed  
Miracles of art, such miracles as warmed  
The bosom of the king and every heart;  
Oh! art is life, in truth, and life is art  
Since, of creation, melody is breath  
And rhythm, blood-beat, triumphing over death,  
Leaving but space for immortality;  
And in the midst of such regality  
Came men from near and far with myriad wares:  
Vendors of carpets, velvet oblongs, squares  
Of many-tinted plush; each blushed design  
Flowing as though traced in translucent wine,

Edged and embroidered, honey-dark or light;  
Jewelers with jewelry that struck the sight  
Blind as with lightning . . . Idol-makers brought  
Breath-taking idols, breath-instinct, and wrought  
Of stone or bronze,—so utterly divine  
Their craftsmanship in mood and curve and line,  
You almost heard them tingle, turn and melt  
To Beauty which can be at best but felt,  
Like immortality, a flowing gold  
Of essence that our eyes dare not behold.

And conjurors, turbaned colorfully, came  
And wrought such wonder-feats as put to shame  
Our so-called rational thinking,—challenged science  
Feat upon feat performed, in sheer defiance  
Of laws so far discovered that exist  
To the poor knowledge of the scientist.  
Snake-charmers with their several-throated pipes  
Making wild serpents sway of stains and stripes  
Yellow and black and brown and green and mauve,  
Embodiments of rhythm born in grove  
And forest, caught with ease by human hands  
Through fatal love of music.

Jesters split

The mighty audience-hall with mightier wit  
Until it roared and rang from roof to rafter  
With laughter which kept doubling up with laughter.  
Then came proud acrobats who bore the seal  
Of strength upon their brow, a sense of steel  
About their limbs which had, through stern gymnastic,  
Acquired exceeding grace and grown elastic.

Astrologers with wisdom in their look  
To whom sidereal heaven was a book  
With time for binding, nights and days for pages,  
Their science coming down through countless ages,  
Being coeval with creation: they  
Familiar with wheeling stars could say  
Such things as took the future by surprise . . .  
Indeed, in the vicinity of their eyes  
Old planets dwelt, discussing plan on plan

And summing up the destiny of man.

The kingdom was a veritable hive  
With busy bees of various trades alive,  
Each adding more and more, and more and more  
With diligence, to the kings' honey-store  
Of large prosperity, which, all the same,  
Not he alone, but all alike could claim  
With equal-hearted gladness.

Now, it chanced  
That on a certain day a man advanced  
Towards the king and bowed before his throne,  
He is a sandal merchant and was known  
In all the kingdom. Elegant and tall,  
Nobility in his mien, with nothing small  
About his nature.

Everybody cheered  
The moment he, like to a prince, appeared  
Among the crowds, for he was just and good,  
His soul, sweet-scented as the sandalwood  
In which he traded.

But the king, he held  
His breath; the merchant's sight, somehow, repelled  
His royal nature, while his bosom stirred  
With hatred . . . but he never said a word.

Week after week the silent ruler eyed  
That prince of sandalwood who multiplied  
His visits to the court; his hatred grew  
From more to more, and yet, he hardly knew  
The reason for such hatred—was there one?—  
And, after all, what had the merchant done  
Either in word or deed? he could detect  
No flaw in his behavior. What respect,  
What courtesy, what manliness, what grace!  
What exquisite serenity in his face!  
And yet the king could hardly overcome  
The heart's corroding poison: hatred.

"Some  
Reason exists for certain. I must know,  
Wise minister! why thus, from top to toe,

From head to foot, I grow so cold and queer  
The instant the good merchant enters here?  
You are aware my years of life have been  
Replete with peace, with naught to come between  
Me and my love of men. Alas! today  
I cannot with a conscience truly say  
I do not hate. Oh, hatred is as treason  
To God and Nature . . . There must be some reason,  
Some secret cause for this that we must find,  
Root out forever, and relieve my mind.”

The minister in silence heard the king  
And made reply: “It is a little thing,  
It shall be done before the week is done.  
My lord! we look upon you as a sun  
No cloud should vex or stain.

My own heart states  
That your heart but imagines that it hates,  
Yet, really does not, since it never did  
Ever before . . .”

The king said: “God forbid  
My nature grow to sour. All things above  
I hate all hate, even as I love all love.”

The minister was wisdom-gifted, and  
It did not take him long to understand  
A riddle howsoever intricate,  
It was his genius that helped the State  
And spared it of dark problems.

In a wink  
He understood, nor had he long to think:  
He would befriend the merchant, probe his heart,  
Then, detail upon detail, draw a chart  
Of its veiled secrets, dive into his mind,  
Record its subtle mechanism, find  
The pattern of its working.

“Your renown  
Rings everywhere, O merchant! every town  
And every city celebrates your name.  
How rich you are, how simple all the same!

The people honor you and call you great,  
You are a noble asset to our State . . .”  
It was no flattery to turn his head,  
The minister meant every word he said.

To which the merchant quietly replied:  
“The pride of wealth, Sir, is a venomous pride  
Slaying its owner’s life by slow degrees:  
Thank heavens, I have ever walked with ease  
On humble ways with an untroubled tread,  
What though I bear a burden on my head . . .”

“Burden?”

“Uncommon is the trade I ply,  
I deal in wood few can afford to buy,  
I talk of sandalwood, the rarest since  
Creation. Yes, indeed, I am a prince  
Of SANDAL-forests; yet, my hands are bare,  
My wealth imprisoned in yon trees that stare  
Frowningly at me—but I let them frown!  
A day will come when I will hew them down,  
Yea, precious sandal-trees, mile upon mile  
Of forest for the royal funeral-pile:  
And then alone my sandalwood will find  
Fit value and spread odors on the wind.”

The minister returned unto the king  
And said: “It is the closing-time of Spring,  
Soon shall we have to face a scorching Summer,  
My lord, I think there is no thought welcomer,  
Than to construct a palace, which we should,  
A precious Summer one of sandalwood,  
Red sandalwood and white: so be it willed  
Our royal masons shall begin to build  
A palace such as will delight our hearts  
And stand completed ere the Summer starts.”  
The king consented, and the merchant sold  
Whole forests of the wood for as much gold  
As weighed against it on the royal scales,  
Oh, such a deal it was, as fairy tales



Could scarcely dream of.

Then day after day  
The palace rose in height in the strange way  
An image rises silently and seems  
Moulded out of the very stuff of dreams.

And once the deal was done, the royal brow  
Shook off its cloud, the king was happy now,  
His heart unburdened of all bitterness  
Towards the merchant; yet, he could not guess  
The hidden reason for the sudden change,  
The mystic transformation swift and strange  
Effected without effort.

The king swore  
It was a miracle and nothing more,  
And, surely, nothing less. His bosom swelled  
With heavenly calm, he was no more repelled  
By him, the merchant, as he used to be.  
“Pray, minister! what is the mystery  
Behind it?” asked the king in wonderment.  
The minister replied: “The mind is bent  
Like to a bow while thoughts are winged darts  
Speeding invisibly twixt human hearts,  
Some tipped with nectar, others tipped with gall,  
Each thought is blended with the thoughts of all  
Or far or near. Yea, every thought one thinks  
Is but one psychic link of countless links  
In life’s unending chain. Existence runs  
Not on the gaudy wheels of orbéd suns  
But on the thoughts of men, beggars and kings;  
Thoughts are no trifles, but tremendous things  
Binding the worlds together, near and far.  
A thought can build or break, can make or mar  
The beauty of existence. What you sensed  
Of hatred for the merchant-prince commenced  
Not in *your* heart, but *his*, since at its core  
He entertained a thought he does no more,  
That sent unkind vibrations to your heart  
Troubling its natural calm, with hurt and smart  
And hatred as result . . .”

“What thought, I pray?”

“The thought, O king! that you would die some day  
And be cremated as a monarch should  
Upon a precious pyre of sandalwood  
Purchased from him inevitably, since  
Of sandalwood he is acknowledged prince.”  
The king sat silent, musing for a while,  
Then all his face broke to a golden smile  
Which made the people wonder. “It was well  
We purchased all the stocks he had to sell  
To build our Summer palace. Verily  
A masterstroke for both himself and me!  
And now that serpent hatred has been killed,  
Not a mere temporal palace shall we build,  
But of high truth, costlier than sandalwood,  
A fortified palace of eternal brotherhood.”

## EPILOGUE

They dwell like shadows in a book,  
Strange patterns of a haunted mind:  
Words are pathetic eyes that look  
For beauty that they cannot find.

Somehow, the heart grows sad and sadder  
Whenever I essay to write:  
Each poem is a shadow-ladder  
Reaching towards a kindled height.