

Sydney King  
Russell  
Selected Poems



# Sydney King Russell

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# Young Love

(To C. M. R.)

On the threshold of my thought  
You pause ... hesitate,  
Then enter softly, altogether without ostentation,  
As one who is a foe to forwardness.  
So must you have come into the world  
On tiptoe,-fearing to waken it.  
Your eyes have the look of a timid goddess  
Afraid of her reflection in Nature's pool  
And your hands convey a mute appeal  
As they glide into mine ...  
When I mention love  
You blush like the eastern sky  
At the kiss of dawn.

# Lotus Leaves

## I

Oh, Miru San,  
Thy soft footfalls are like the tinkling waterfall  
Of Yoto Soy, at dusk.  
Thy heart's murmuring is like the distant hoof beat  
Of the mounted messengers of the Emperor  
Bearing tidings from Kioto.  
Thy hands are tired lotus blossoms  
Drowsing in the sun.

## II

The Emperor-son of the high SunHath  
twelve good traits,  
Twelve stalwart qualities  
To endear him to his subjects.  
But one of the twelve is a traitor.  
Traitors are ever fomenting trouble  
And some fine evening  
When the eleven are asleep in the lotus garden  
This one shall betray him  
And accomplish his downfall.  
And it shall be for some such paltry price  
As thirty pieces of silver.

## III

The mountains of Satsuma  
Are hermits of the great open Way.  
They have never known the press of cities,  
The fevered jostle of the throng.  
They live in the breath of their own Silence  
And the song of the winds is peace.  
If it were not so,—  
If they bathed in the spume of the metropolis,  
Felt its hot breath upon their straining necks,

They would not be mountains,  
Nor would they reach up so  
With joyous yearning  
To what men call sky.

# Moods

Mistress of a thousand moods,  
Whims that know no peace,  
Ah, well I call her tenderly  
My lady of caprice.

A little shrug proclaims a mood  
Of careless nonchalance,  
A passing word, a frown beget  
A calm insouciance.

Again a mood that trembles close  
Upon the brink of tears;  
Yet still she sits in firm command,  
All smiling, through her fears.

She turns from mood to mood at will,  
Brooding, yearning, weighing,  
Wearing a mood as one would don  
A cloak to go a'maying.

Mistress of a thousand moods  
Save one, which holds her slave,—  
The mood to love, when love allures  
With manner gay or grave!

# Legend

Nausicäa's passion came to this  
Long ago, in the full of the moon, A  
midnight tryst, a fevered kiss;  
But what said the gypsy rune?

“Two shall ride and one shall sleep  
Soon as the deed be done!”—  
Nausicäa thinks of the word of fate,  
Knows the dread hour is run.

Come clattering hoofs, a challenge clear;  
On guard, son of the dust!”-  
The play of darting steel on steel,  
Death in the silent thrust.

Two who speed in the starless gloam,  
A frightened steed astride,  
One who sleeps in the wind-swept loam  
With none to rest beside.

# Music in the Bowl

(Hollywood, California)

Out of a flurry of words  
Silence  
Grown suddenly expectant;  
The wistful plea of a violin,  
And a Voice filled the air,  
Rose, and soared,  
Circling the hushed and eager hills,  
Storming the walled places;  
A Voice that was not more nor less  
Than the shimmering fabric of a dream,  
An equal part of Beauty  
With April's shining bud  
And autumn's far-flung glory. Scarcely voice  
As much as silver mist, afloat  
Between us and the outer world  
Grown suddenly remote.  
I did not guess at length the song was done,  
For when the last clear shining note had fled  
And gloved hands gave gracious applause,  
I sat still, listening  
To murmurs of waterfalls,  
Leaves that stirred in slumber  
And a bird singing from far;  
Thrilling with eager nostrils  
To the pungent aroma of morning;  
Sensing, almost in unbelief, a miracle  
The flowering of imperishable spring  
In the waste places of my heart.

# The Ten Little Sins Of Reverend Doane

Reverend Doane had sins twice five,  
Twice five sins, that followed him far  
From porch to pulpit and home again,  
Parasites all, as little sins are.

Reverend Doane on Sunday morn  
Thundered his message to eager pews:  
“Awake! Repent!”—(Ten little sins  
Widened their eyes at the awful news.)

“Flee from greed!” cried Reverend Doane.  
“Evil’s roots are greed and graft!”—  
(One little sin perched high on a sill  
And crossed his legs, and slyly laughed.)

“Fast and pray,” was the high Command,  
“Look for truth, that makes men free.”—  
(Hear, oh hear!” cried the next little sin  
And stood on his head, and howled for glee.)

“Love thy neighbor as thine own self;  
Seek ye love, and turn from strife.”—  
Doane’s eyes wander, to rest at last  
In the eyes,—rapt eyes!—of his neighbor’s wife.

Ten little sins laughed long and loud,  
(Laughter heard by themselves alone,  
As heads were bent for the words of grace  
That fell from the lips of Reverend Doane.

Anon he walks, as one who deems  
His work well done, somewhat apart,  
Yet troubled on his homeward path  
By wayward voices in his heart.

Folly to think he could shake them off

As one may put by flesh and bone;  
Part and parcel,—ten little sins,—  
Of him the world calls Reverend Doane!

# His Father's Son

He was only a lad, her brown-eyed boy;  
It wasn't his guilt  
That buried its keen edge iil her heart  
Up to the hilt.

It wasn't the horror of public talk,  
The slow disgrace  
That grew to a flood when pitying eyes  
Looked in her face.

She heard them speak of the girl: "That minx,  
That common brat!"—  
But she knew the lad was as much to blame,  
For all of that.

For his father before him had caught her heart  
And torn it in twain,  
And he was his father's son. It was his  
So to tear it, again.

# A Friend

I knew him well; we fenced at many a bout  
As boys; jested, as you and I do now.  
He was my friend before, till fame reached out  
And laid the wreath of laurel on his brow.

And now he walks in kingly paths, and seeks  
Only such friends as kings desire to own;  
Now, with his head held high, he boldly speaks  
Of visions. But he walks no more alone.

The friends that gather at thy beck of fame  
Feed on the glamour of his brief renown.  
Among this crowd I found him, spoke his name  
And sought to add a jewel to his crown

With word well-turned. Though my intent was fair,  
Between us two the message went astray.—  
His answer strangely smote the empty air;  
Somehow there was so little left to say.

He does not mean, I fancy, to forget;  
A wound is quite the last thing he'd intend.  
The cunning world but trapped him in her net  
Of shining fame ... and I have lost a friend.

# I Walk Alone

Wise men say one. thing,  
Fools another;  
I am as one  
Who had no mother

To tell me truths  
From plain men hidden;  
I am as one  
Who came unbidden

To life's repast  
And go as surely  
As those who fare.  
Like me, but poorly.

Wise men say few things,  
Fools cry many,—  
I walk alone  
And speak not any.

# The Lovely Lady

The lovely lady  
Of Ballyclare  
Is not so pure  
As she is fair

And not so fine  
As she is proud  
Who goes with head  
Unbowed.

The lovely lady  
Knows full well  
Rich secrets  
Many a man will tell

In certain stress,—  
And this is why  
Good women pass her  
Coldly by.

When matrons chat  
In wayside inns  
And gossip runs  
To neighbors' sins,

Men's wives have  
Little cause to spare  
The lovely lady  
Of Ballyclare.

# Escape

Where you may seek I -shall not be,  
High in the ever-circling cloud  
Nor in that prison deep and proud  
Which underlies the changing sea.

Where you may look you will not find  
A trace of me. No remnant lingers  
Trapped in your searching, eager fingers;  
I am past reach of ties that bind.

But you will hear me in the tone  
Of many a woodland lullaby  
And you will wonder how or why  
I found a song to call my own.

And you will trace me in the speech  
Of ghostly birds that wake the night  
And you will follow till the light,  
Only to find me out of reach.

# Rebirth

I think it will be easy to dissolve  
The bands invisible which long have held  
Met to the earth; then slowly to evolve  
A being self-sufficient, uncompelled  
By that which orders me now here, now there  
With no regard for fitness or desire  
And bids me what to eat and what to wear,  
When to rejoice, when triumph, when aspire.  
I think it will be proper to discard  
All superfluities in folly borne  
For many a dreary day; to interlard  
With phrases new, discourses long outworn,  
And speaking as befits a heavenly bard,  
To hail divinely the celestial morn.

# Pretense

In spite of all this photograph conveys  
I cannot think of you as more than cold,  
Your eyes that men are readiest to praise  
Will shed as little warmth when you are old  
And wise (perhaps too wise.), as they do now  
For all your improvising of this mood  
That flickers for an instant at your brow  
Where seldom warmth and tenderness intrude.

O deft insinuation of a pose  
That might 'outwit a less discerning eye!  
Here speaks one who has looked within, and knows  
The face of pretense rounded in a lie.  
If I were 'dead, my very dust would laugh  
And hail this matchless jest, your photograph!

# Three Things

Three things my heart  
Can scarcely bear,  
A violin crying  
A mournful air,

The look in the eyes  
Of one gone mad  
And you in the arms  
Of a lovesick lad.

# Revelation

Now I have watched you grow more chastely wise  
Through learning what you first refused to know  
Till there is revelation in your eyes  
Of that which wakes within, as if to show  
A longing unappeasable below,  
An eager reaching toward a changeless star  
As if each empty quest, foredoomed to woe,  
Had left upon you its unlovely scar  
And bade you somehow make your dream secure  
Against the last, inevitable hour,-  
So I have watched you grow more coldly pure  
Than marble. In your effigy of power  
I see only a statue's chill allure  
Who might have held the fragrance of a flower!

# A Censor

Day in, day out upon his classic quest  
He haunts the book stores one by one to scan  
Page after page assiduously, lest  
Some doubtful volume should escape his .ban.  
He thumbs the classics over, fondly lingers  
On Richardson and Sterne and Rabelais  
And turns their pages with excited fingers  
He'd censor Scripture if he had his way.

A few books he takes home for late inspection  
Long after dark when good folk are in bed.  
A dozen-moderns of his own selection  
Contribute thrills by which his mind is fed.  
On his chaste brow, then, let us twine the laurels  
Due him for elevating public morals!

## Paterfamilias

Girls of eighteen he loves, and even twenty,  
Pleasing and plump and eloquently young;  
In his own day he knew and courted plenty  
Whose praises tripped divinely from his tongue.  
Now that his daughter's chums come in to call  
And stay to taste his wife's Alsatian cooking  
He kisses each one fondly in the hall  
When he is sure his good wife isn't looking.

The boys who hang around he tolerates  
And marvels that a girl must have in tow  
Such callow lads who prattle of their dates;  
He patronizes all his daughter's beaux  
And smiles to hear Virginia call them "men"—  
What he could show them; were he young again!

# Movie Society Editor

The social gadabout of Hollywood  
Attends a dozen parties every week,  
Bearing her notebook as a scribbler should;  
Accepting tributes to her last critique  
And basking in the hospitality  
Of filmdom's latest favorite, whose Scotch  
And cigarettes are plentiful and free.  
Time slips away . . . The scribe ignores her watch.

A Latin lover stoops to kiss her hand,  
A sudden thrill that finds her acquiescent.  
“Gladys, I must be off. It's been too grand.  
Have I the names of everybody present?  
Good-night.” They watch her leave, erect and solemn  
And hope for mention in her Sunday column.

# Taxi Driver

Incredible anathemas that roll  
From out his lips convince the passer-by  
He has small love for his immortal soul;  
What heaven will he seek when he shall die?  
No paradise conventionally planned  
With thoroughfares superbly wrought in gold  
And everlasting trees on either hand;  
To anything but chaos he 'II be cold.

In darker realms he and his kind will toot  
Derisive horns as they go whirling by  
In ghostly motors. Mouths will not be mute  
Below, that have been long inured to cry  
Bright blasphemies upon the city street;  
In Satan's ears each oath shall echo sweet.

# Portrait

She boasts a close acquaintance with diseases  
Whose mention leaves but little room for doubt;  
She has known asthma and the fitful sneezes  
Dear to hay-fever sufferers-and gout.  
Her operation for appendicitis  
Made history for hospital and clinic;  
Again, when she was troubled with arthritis  
Hers was a record to confound the cynic.

Sciatica and rheumatism she  
Can boast of. Seven winters found her lame.  
She blandly mentions water on the knee  
And subtler ills no specialist could name.  
Who knows what ailment, if she persevere,  
She may delightedly unearth next year?

## Bitter Brew

These aching days are more than we can bear  
Whose hearts are yet unschooled in fortitude;  
We shrink in dread of ultimate despair  
And fear to drain the cup that life has brewed  
Against our thirst. This is a bitter wine  
Whose sparkle mocks us from the rounded glass;  
Its ancient fruit upon some Stygian vine  
Ripened too long. If but the cup might pass

To stronger lips! But this were tempting fate,Let  
craven spirits cry the weakling's prayer.  
Lift high the glass before it be too late  
And drink a lingering death to black despair.  
The empty glass lies shattered at our feet  
Whose lips once found the lips of laughter sweet!

# Nocturne

On a night of rain and mist  
Noddy went a-wooing;  
Any idiot had guessed  
Here was trouble brewing.

Thunder muttered in the hills  
But the lanes were quiet;  
Expectation quickened  
Eager blood to riot.

Noddy skipped along the path  
To his lady's door,  
Pushed the knocker seven times,  
Shook it seven more,

Listened to the echoes die  
While a subtle terror  
Caught his heart as in a vise.  
What unreckoned error

Left him standing here alone,  
One instead of two?  
Noddy cocked his ear and heard  
Rain against the flue.

Something rustled in the dark,—  
Noddy thought he heard  
Murmured sighs across the lawn  
Where a whisper stirred.

Noddy's feet went crunching  
Over soil and gravel, Was  
there any mystery  
Love could not unravel?

Was it wind he thought he heard,

Was it muffled laughter?  
Noddy listened ... and recoiled  
From this silence after.

Lovers' eyes are cats' eyes,  
He could almost see  
Shadows,-was it one or two?—  
Past the apple tree.

Midnight passed in music,  
Silence stirred and slept.  
Cradled in the tall grass  
Noddy lay and wept.

# Susanna Passes

Harden not your hearts,  
You with whom the wise  
Sit as counsellors;  
Narrow not your eyes

When she walks your street  
With her band of fools  
Whose exultant feet  
Dancing, make your rules

Words of no account,  
Formulas outgrown.  
If she ask for bread  
Will you give a stone?

Furtive whispers pass,  
Lips and eyes are set.  
Shall this golden bird  
Tremble in your net?

In your hearts contempt  
Sets a knell to ringing;  
She will heed you not,  
She will pass you singing.

# Justus Coley

Justus Coley  
On his knees  
Many a night  
Found grateful ease

In thanking God  
Now and again  
That he was not  
As other men.

Each passing year  
Convinced him more  
That he was born  
Superior

To other mortals,  
Yet as friend  
That he might nobly  
Condescend.

And while he gloried  
In his heart  
That he was set  
As one apart,

His neighbors praised  
Jehovah wholly  
That they were not  
Like Justus Coley.

# Miss Annabel

On stem  
And unrelenting feet  
Miss Annabel  
Goes down the street

And does not glance  
To left or right.  
No man has watched her  
Out of sight

And no man pleads  
To take her home;  
Her thoughts have never  
Learned to roam

Save in the paths  
Her mother trod  
Who spoke familiarly  
Of God.

Yet with incentive  
Who can tell?  
She might ignore  
The transient hell

Her forbears feared  
And find that she  
Was blessed with undreamed  
Coquetry.

What lies beneath  
Her sober glance  
We may not guess;  
Yet, given the chance,

She might prove fire

Instead of ice  
If any man  
Looked at her twice!

*From This Mortal Love*

I

Against the couch your acquiescent form  
Weaves a familiar pattern of desire;  
I bend to you as eager blood runs warm  
And lips persuade from lips the answering fire.  
I gaze on you and dare not look away  
Venus has laid her sign upon your brow  
And I am snared. O close your eyes and pray  
That love forget to seal the urgent vow!

My fingers touch your shoulder and your throat;  
My eyes have dared profane your loveliness.  
Of such as you, young Keats and Byron .wrote,  
And Shelley lay and dreamt of your caress,  
And myriad gallant souls, well-lost to fame,  
Perished in darkness, crying on your name.

VIII

One who has loved your body knows no rest,  
Try as he may he can forget you never-  
Once he has found your lips and touched your breast  
A strange caress will haunt his heart forever.  
He will go plunging toward oblivion  
Stopping his ears lest your remembered laughter  
Grieve him with music, lest the bright web spun  
Tightly about, ensnare him ever after.

Better, far better had he never bent  
To kiss the arched, pale throat and restless eyes.  
Better he had not learned the acrid scent  
And taste of love. He had been doubly wise  
Had he but bent his gaze where planets sprawl  
And never looked upon your face at all.

XI

I should not care to fathom you too well,  
To seek what lies behind the furtive mask  
You wear, nor hearken what your lips may tell  
Of scornful artifice. I shall not ask  
Whence you have come nor whither you may go;  
It is enough that in the cloak of dread  
You can defy the cunning of a foe  
Who wishes, but cannot behold you dead.

The semblance of a sneer that curls your lip  
And keeps a world at bay—is this the whole  
Of you? Should he find more who dared to strip  
The grin away and bare the gaping soul,  
Or would he look past terror and despair  
Upon the utter emptiness of air?

XIII

Continue to assure me of your hate  
And let your lips and eyes bear out the word;  
The curse is impotent that leaps too late—  
I smile and am not too profoundly stirred  
Recalling two who met upon the brink  
Of desolation, in a dateless hour.  
Repeat the awful curse, but dare not think  
The seed of your contempt will nobly flower.

Look not too long for any word to tell  
What none may well impart ... for words are dust.  
Invective is a boomerang-guard well  
Your own sweet breast against the fatal thrust  
Lest I who find the call to battle sweet  
Perceive you torn and bleeding at my feet.

XVIII

I think I know why worlds were subtly planned  
By One who fashioned rugged constellations

And held the twin seas in His mighty hand  
And laid the corner-stones of countless nations;  
I know the meaning of the tides that flow  
Unceasingly from changeless shore to shore,  
Of clouds that drift forever to and fro  
And waning moons, and April rains that pour.

I read His purpose not to be derided  
In every wheeling star that kindles heaven.  
His lavish gifts are equably divided  
Save that to you the world itself was given;  
I wonder now, and shall perhaps, forever-  
Why did God make you beautiful ... and clever?

# Bright Avowal

## XVII

The gracious gesture of renunciation  
Is profitless in this emergency;  
Invoke no symbol of a new frustration  
To cloud our eyes with sudd-en misery.  
Freedom is bitter to the lonely free  
Who walk the earth in lordly solitude  
Their eyes forever shut to ecstasy,  
Gnawing at husks of holiness for food.

Then bind upon your brow the sign of Venus  
And make your peace with her when you awake,  
Whose fingers wove this shining bond between us;  
Hers is a glowing universe at stake.  
Hear from the lips of love a nobler story  
Than pallid martyrs sing on thrones of glory!

## XVIII

IF when I shut the world away at night  
I send a gentle benediction far  
To you who are invulnerable as light,  
Remote forever as the morning star,  
If I repeat your name on faltering breath  
And close my eyes at last, only to see  
Your face as dear, as intimate as death,  
As visible as life itself to me,  
If calling back a shadowy hour of wonder,  
I sense anew the urgency of rain  
And find my heart remembering distant thunder  
With all the sweet and bitterness of pain,  
Oh, tell me; will you waken then and know  
The voice of one who grieving, loves you so?

XXXIV

To all appearances this room is still  
Unchanged. Its chairs stand, orderly and neat,  
Its floors are polished. On the window sill  
A bowl of pansies. Nothing incomplete  
To eyes that have not swept the scene before  
The desk, these etchings all in perfect taste,  
The lacquered book-case just beyond the door  
Breathe of a leisure sacrosanct and chaste.

But one who looks upon this room remembers  
The shining moment when it held a dream,  
When this still hearth knew more than greying embers,  
This room lives on, but it can never seem  
Aught but a phantom of the old retreat  
Across whose threshold two found laughter sweet!

XXXVII

I am not steadfast by your reckoning  
Nor diligent in all that you esteem,  
For I have strayed when stars were beckoning  
And I have followed many a fitful gleam  
Only to linger captive to a dream;  
I was not ever loyal by your measure,  
For to this spirit Beauty is supreme,  
The quest of loveliness alone its pleasure.

But I have learned delight you know not of  
Who have so little faith in sorcery,  
For I have leaned to kiss the lips of love  
And drained the heady wine of ecstasy.  
You call me base, you cannot guess how true  
I am to Beauty, being false to you!

# Reminder

My songs are not of vanity nor mirth,  
Of beauty such as fools and knaves despoil,  
But they are fashioned out of honest earth,  
Their roots are deep in elemental soil. •  
Laboriously they blossom, in the way  
Of all slow-growing things. They are not spent  
With years, nor with the rigor of the fray,  
But make their peace with time, and are content.  
My songs are pilgrims, penniless but proud  
Who face the years serene and unafraid;  
They do not seek the plaudits of the crowd,  
Like mincing mannequins upon parade,  
But children of the soil and wind and sun,  
They breast the fierce tides of oblivion.

## “Love Came To Dwell With Them”

Love? It's a word that's freely tossed about,  
I hear young people use it carelessly,  
Blaming their woes, their handicaps on love,  
Blind to the void in their own shallow souls.  
I see them court frustration with divorce,  
Telling their troubles glibly to a judge,  
Paying their way to what they label freedom  
That they may squander, in the name of love,  
The coin they cannot see is counterfeit,  
Pursuing phantoms blindly down a road  
That leads to emptiness and disillusion.

I turn from them and their unhappy brood  
To climb a wind-swept hill and cross a meadow  
Where Jason's farm lies, sentinelled with elms;  
Here Jason, with his wife and help-meet, Ella,  
Has spent his years, brought up eleven children,  
Tilling the soil and raising cows and chickens.  
Jason, a stalwart son of wind and rain  
Beginning as his father did before him,  
With little but the will to wrest a living;  
Alert and up at dawn to feed the stock  
And start the chores that mark another day,  
To work serenely and without complaint  
As he has toiled these forty-seven years;  
And Ella cooking, washing, mending, scrimping  
To feed and clothe the brood, and finding time  
To school them somewhat in the homespun virtues  
With which they may meet life on its own terms.

Each time I cross the road to chat with Ella  
Or briefly pass the time of day with Jason,  
I take my hat off to their generation-  
To watch them gather for the evening meal  
Is to see industry and thrift rewarded;  
Each word and glance from Jason's wife to Jason

Reflects a joy quite indescribable,  
A peace that others seek and have not found .  
Within their simple homestead lies the answer  
To questions left unanswered or ignored  
By those who idly take Love's name in vain.

On sturdy Jason's tombstone and on Ella's  
Beneath the elms, I hope to see it graven"  
Love came to dwell with them, and lingered on."

# Adjuration

Let no bright interval betray  
The heart that, having lost its way  
Within a maze so wide and deep  
Must fall an early prey to sleep;  
Within a maze so deep and wide  
The heart must roam unsatisfied  
In search of imminent delight  
Beyond the reach of mortal sight.

Let there be gentle light and rest  
To compensate the weary breast,  
Familiar voices and a warm  
Retreat in time of stress and storm,  
That this our load be ever light  
And each day more serenely bright,  
Each gleaming hour a friend to us  
And every pathway luminous.

Let no remote mirage confuse  
The groping mind, nor yet accuse  
The vague and undiscerning eye  
Let there be light to journey by,  
An honest light above that may  
Not lead the pilgrim far astray  
On strange detours that twist and bend  
Along a path that knows no end.

# Proud Tryst

I

I do not fear the pattern, warm and eager  
Your supple body makes, nor am I led  
To build a shrine to one whose faith is meagre;  
It is no lure of perilous lips I dread  
But that which I may neither touch nor tell,  
That which my curious heart may never see,  
Although it cry aloud it knows you well  
And tremble at its own intensity.

It is that part of you Time may not change,  
That which my will, though patiently it try,  
May scarcely alter. Passionate and strange,  
It will not give me peace until I die,  
For mine it is to fear your unresigned,  
Your cunning and intolerable mind!

2

Compulsion looks out strangely from your eyes  
Marked by a longing not to be denied,  
An ardor that will scarcely brook disguise  
Even at the stern sacrifice of pride.  
This bright anachronism, this perverse  
And obstinate delight is ours to share  
Against the moment when our hearts rehearse  
A song of desolation and despair.

What intimation should a sharp caress  
Waken in one unfathomable and old.  
As Time itself, but young in tenderness,  
What fable should this truce of ours unfold,  
What answering note of passion darkly spoken  
In phrases inarticulate and broken?

This love was no less love because it came  
As silently and strangely as it went,  
This love that flowered skyward like a flame,  
Blazing its trail across the firmament.  
No less exultant that its song was brief,  
Its gallant pledge a mockery of trust,  
No less triumphant that it tasted grief  
And saw its banners trampled into dust.

Call it by what indifferent name you will,  
Laugh it to scorn as fools and cravens do,  
Beauty inscrutable is beauty still  
And love denied will rise again when you  
And I are chaff the winds of time have hurled  
Rudely across the ramparts of the world!

# Portrait

Laughter was,  
Her firm defence  
Against the years'  
Indifference—

Laughter was her  
Most becoming  
Garment, whom  
The slow and numbing

Tide of hatred  
Could not drown.—  
Laughter was  
A glittering crown

Resting lightly  
On her head.  
Those who shared  
Her wine and bread

Took away with them  
Her mirth  
Elemental  
As the earth.

Those who loathed her,  
Those whose pride  
Drove them sharply  
From her side,

Never could escape  
Thereafter  
The constant music  
Of her laughter.

# Dora Shelton

She dreams herself a modern Joan of Arc  
Till martyrdom itself becomes a passion,  
But since no foes await her in the dark  
And burning c;lt.ht e stake is out of fashion,  
She vainly looks for causes to espouse,  
For ramparts she may valiantly defend,  
Loathing the drudgery of keeping house,  
Knowing her labor thwarted in the end.

Hers is a cloistered, rather saintly air—  
A martyr to the sins her friends commit,  
She lays her white soul delicately bare;  
And yet, somehow the halo does not fit  
One who, denouncing worldly gain and loss  
Stands where the gaping world may view her cross!

# Marian Carr

She strove to analyze her own reactions,  
An end not always easy to achieve  
When life was full of glittering distractions  
And formulas invented to deceive.  
Herself at last she could. not classify  
Who wondered why she loved and why she hated  
And why she lived to watch her fellows die,  
Content to go her. way unloved, unmated.

Life on this whirling planet was a strange  
Phenomenon not easy to explain;  
She watched the stars melt and the seasons change  
And knew an odd presentiment of pain  
That she must face, even in Death's bright kiss  
A riddle which defied analysis.

## Grace Clover

Yours was a heart afraid of happiness,  
Distrustful of its promise—far too wise  
To seek the sum of love in a caress,  
Preferring the indifferent surmise  
To fathoming the intricate disguise  
Confronting you. A doubter's heart alone  
Could thus forswear the race, eschew the prize  
And ask no bread lest it receive a stone.

Yours was a timorous heart afraid to seize  
The radiant interval; reluctant lest  
Tomorrow stealing find you on your knees,  
A luckless pilgrim on an empty quest.  
And so you . \Went your way, secure, alone,  
Dreaming of beauty you had never known! Interim  
Death came and found him—suddenly, in sleep  
Where he had thrown himself for weariness  
Upon his homely couch and shut the door  
On all the cares that marked his day of toil.  
Somewhere a clock struck seven; voices rose  
Beyond, and fell; then all again was still.  
A fly buzzed vaguely on the window pane.  
Soft breezes stirred the curtains; this his room  
With faded walls, familiar chairs and bed,  
Its window looking to the quiet west,  
Seemed as before, yet subtly different  
When she, his wife, came in and stood and coughed  
Her little conscious cough, and spoke his name,  
Smiled to herself, crossed over, drew the blinds  
And spoke his name again close at his side,  
And leaned, and could not waken him at all.













































































































